

# *Booklets in Ancient Coptic Society*

VOL.I

*Eleven Coptic Papyri from Beinecke Library  
Yale University  
With Glossary of Currency*



*Prepared and Edited by  
Sohair Ahmed*

**Cairo 2020**

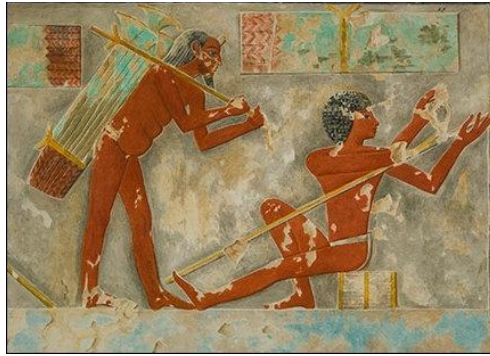
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# Booklets in Ancient Coptic Society

VOL.1

Eleven Coptic Papyri from Beinecke Library  
Yale University  
With glossary of currency

Revised



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**To Professors & Coptologists:  
W. E. Crum +**

**Stephen Emmel, Bentley Layton, Peter Grossman,  
Jain Gardener, Heike Behlmer, Leo Depuydt  
, Alain Delattre, Hans Förster & Monika  
Hasitzka**

**To professors:  
James Allen & Robert Garland**

**To Beinecke Library of Rare Books and  
Manuscripts, Yale University, New Haven**

**To the soul of my dead father**

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# Signs of publishing

Hereunder marks used in both transcription and translation:

[ ]	Lacuna in the Papyrus.
[ΔΒΓ]	Lacuna with restored text.
<αβγ>	Letters omitted by the scribe.
...	Letters which could not be read in text.
αβγ	Letters not clear entirely in the text.
{ΔΒΓ}	letters written as mistakes
[.....]	words couldn't be suggested
( )	In translation: words not written in Coptic.
?	Uncertain reading/ translation.
R	Recto
V	Verso

## **Preface**

This volume represents the first booklet of a series about the ancient Coptic Society and it deals with publishing eleven papyri from the Beinecke Library of Rare Books and Manuscripts of Yale University, USA.

I asked permission for publishing them through email and they replied me that the unpublished papyri are available to any scholar after being sure they are not published.

I downloaded their pictures from the website of papyri info.

These eleven papyri represent incomplete unpublished documentary texts and all transcriptions, translations and comment are made by me here.

I had the idea of this series of booklets which will present various parts of daily life in Ancient Coptic society either cultural topics or publishing texts.

The Coptic documentary texts always include much information about the everyday life of Copts.

The editor of this series is me and I encourage co-operation with any Coptologist have a topic from Ancient Coptic society to be published as a booklet in this series.

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Printed for first time in January 2020  
Revised (by me) in Spring 2020

## **Cultural introduction**

The Coptic documentary texts can be divided into:

- **Letters** (private, official/ business & ecclesiastical)
- **Contracts** (for sale, work, loan & assignment of property)
- **Receipts for** (paying taxes &attaining money)
- **Orders for payments**
- **Orders for transportation**
- **Accounts**
- *Aparche* collection texts
- **Lists of proper names**
- **Lists of objects/articles**
- **School exercises**

The topics of Coptic letters are numerous like request, begging, blaming, informing, recommendation, giving advice, greetings only and business matters, and there was kind of letters sent from the village magistrate to a person needs and asks protection (called promise of protection), the reason for writing this official letter is



suggested to be escaping of many common people because of taxes and loans but after a period they hope to return their home safely without harm or arresting.

The letters were delivered by either postman usually as camel driver or by messenger or by a trusted person (man /woman), or by boys/children perhaps as servants or slaves.

The address of letters in the case of papyri was written in the back while in ostraca usually is written at the end of texts and rarely at the beginning of texts but in all cases written without mention the place names perhaps because it will delivered by person who knew the sender and recipient and if it would be delivered by camel driver, he submitted all letters to the steward of monastery (*oikonomos*) and I think the people went to receive their letters from the monastery.

The Coptic contracts represented agreements either for sale (grains or animals like donkey) while mentioned the rent in many

texts like rent camel for operating waterwheel.

The contracts for work were drawn between two persons or between a monastery with craftsman or between skilled craftsman and a boy for training him.

The agreement of loan represents a promise from debtor to creditor that he will repay the loan with /without interest in certain date without delay or objection. It is not necessary to repay the lent thing itself it is allowed to repay other thing for example lending a money and repayment it as grain, etc.

There are some penalties for delay repayment such as paying fine or increasing the interest.

The contract of assignment was written by the owner of something like land/house to other person or more usually after a judgment from the court which orders the owner to leave the property to other person and promises if he will not do that he will

pay financial fine such as 3 golden coins (O. Cairo Mus., nos. 19 & 20).

Many contracts written by professional scribes and closing with signature of witnesses.

Taxes were represented load for many Copts; the tax collector was usually a hard person and was accompanied by some soldiers during collecting tax.

The taxes were various as tax of lands, wheat, cattle, domestic birds, salt, etc.

It was paid in money or in kind, the tax receipt must include the names of tax payer and his father and the money written as cardinal number. In some cases the payer allowed to pay the money as parts divided on some months.

There are many lists of proper names of men without knowing its purpose; some of them suggested to be of tax payers didn't pay their tax. If the list of names followed by numbers it represents an account which sometimes represents wages of some officials and

craftsmen which were paid often in wine and in wheat instead of money.

Also the orders for payments are including different kinds of measures of wine, grains and oil and mentioned the salted fish among wages.

The cereals mentioned widely in the orders from the monastery of Bawit which start with  $\omega\gamma\eta\epsilon\ \kappa\epsilon\alpha$  and show transportation of wine and grains. Some texts represent just list of articles/tools needed in a church/monastery.

The school exercises for writing official letters were known from ancient Egypt but Copts always taught the formulas of letter addressed to clerics.

Also there were many exercises of writing and drawing on ostraca.

The writing materials used by Copts were papyri, parchment, ostraca, wooden tablets and paper which were known later.

There was lacking of papyri in Coptic Egypt especially in villages and it was expensive so some papyri were reused again. The Copts referred to papyri with two terms one from Greek as  $\chi\alpha\rho\tau\eta\varsigma$  and other is Egyptian is  $\kappa\omega\omega\mu\epsilon$  this later was referring also to book even if it was made from Parchment. Papyri were known since the Dynastic period and still used until the 11<sup>th</sup> century it was replaced by the paper which was introduced to Egypt in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

There is an apology formula in Coptic letters was written in the case of the person didn't find a papyrus and obligated to write on ostraca (potsherds).

***Texts with translation & comment***

(1)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 4494
<b>Physical description</b>	48 x 84 mm, (A) 4 lines, top margin, (B) 1 lines, top bottom margin
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Document
<b>Contents</b>	Contract (?) of sale (?)
<b>Acquisition</b>	1996b

**Information added by Sohair Ahmed<sup>1</sup>:**

**Content:** Incomplete agreement/undertaking of repayment a loan. The loan seems to be coin and repayment will be in barley.<sup>2</sup>

**Provenance:** Middle Egypt, perhaps from the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit because of similar texts with title ΠΑCΟΝ.<sup>3</sup>

**Date:** The 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D<sup>4</sup>.

**Note:** the strokes stretched over the letter N in the text are written as curve (^).

---

<sup>1</sup> All the information of content, provenance, date and note are written by me after every table in this volume.

<sup>2</sup> There was cheap bread of barely eaten by poor people in Coptic Egypt because barley was used mainly as food for animals in Roman period but it was used also in making beer as known in ancient Egypt, Ahmed, Parts from Daily life of Copts, (in Arabic) p. 69, 40.

<sup>3</sup> Mention as *Pason Loukas* in loan agreement, see: P. Mon. Apollo, no.40

<sup>4</sup> Cf: Clackson & Delattre, P. Baouit, nos.16-18





### Text (R):

- 1- [ΑΝΟΚ ΠΑΣΟΝ̄ ΛΟΥΚΑΣ Μ]ΗΠΑΣΟΝ̄ ΣΤΕΦΕΝ'  
〈Μ〉ΜΟΝΑΧ[ΟC ΜΠΙΤΟΠΟC Π̄ΑΠΑ ΑΠΩΛΛΟ?]
- 2- [ΕΝCΖΑΙ Μ̄ΠΕΙΩΤ . . ΧΕ ΤΗ]ΧΡΕΩCΤΕΙ Ν̄ΤΕΚ  
ΜΗ[ΤΕ]ΙΩΤ [ . . Π̄.....]
- 3- [ΑΝΧΙ ΠΤΕΡΜΗCΙ]ΟΝ̄? Ν̄ΤΟΟΤ̄Κ̄ ΕΥΧΡΕ[ΙΑ]<sup>5</sup>
- 4- [Τ̄Π̄ Ο Ν̄ΖΕΤΟΙΜΟC<sup>6</sup> Ν̄ΤΗΤΑΔΔ<sup>7</sup>]Ν̄ΕΙΩΤ<sup>8</sup>[ ...]

### (V):

- 1- † ΤΑCΦΑΛΙΑ Ν̄<sup>9</sup> ΛΟΥΚΑΣ [ Μ̄ΝCΤΕΦΕΝ ?.... ]

### Translation (R):

- 1-[I am the brother Loukas and] the brother Stephen the monks [of the monastery of Apa Apollo?]
- 2- [We write to the father NN that we] owe to your fatherhood [ ...with.....<sup>10</sup>]
- 3- [ we took this termes]on<sup>11</sup>(? )from you for a need[ ]
- 4- [And we are ready to pay it] in (or with) barley [ ]

---

<sup>5</sup> Usually ΕΤΑΧΡΕΙΑ "for my need" (but there are two debtors), perhaps it can read as ΕΤΧΡΕΙΑ.

<sup>6</sup> See more than one debtor with this formula in: Kopt. Ostraka I, no.8

<sup>7</sup> As conjunctive here , similar texts in: Ahmed, "Three Coptic potsherds", p.189,190, Ahmed, Two Coptic Legal Ostraca, p.1318

<sup>8</sup> It cannot translated as "to father" because it is usually written "I/ we will pay it to you ( ΝΔΚ)", so I can read it as Ν̄ ΟΡ Μ̄Π̄ - ΕΙΩΤ " in barley or with barely" which paid here as a repayment or an interest.

<sup>9</sup>The same formula in: Clackson, Coptic Documents relating to Monasteries of Apa Apollo at Bawit and Titkooh, PH.D, UCL 1996, plate 1,back, ΔCΦΑΛΙΑ referred to this kind of texts , Ahmed, Two Coptic Legal Ostraca, p.1317

<sup>10</sup>The loan was written here.

<sup>11</sup>Perhaps more than one coin or half of this coin (see the glossary of currency here).

**(V):**

1- †This agreement of Loukas [and Stephen ?... ]

Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

أنا الاخ لوكاس والأخ ستيفن رهبان (دير ابا ابوللو؟) نكتب الى الأب  
.....!أنا مدينين لأبوتك بـ(عدد كذا من عملات الترميسيون؟).....

نحن استلفنا الترمسيون منك للعوزة (ونحن مستعدون أن نرجعه) شعير (أو  
مع الشعير كفائدة)

هذه الاتفاقية للوكاس (و ستيفن؟)

**(2)**

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 1468
<b>Physical description</b>	76 x 68 mm, 4 lines, bottom margin
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Document
<b>Acquisition</b>	1928

**Content:** An end of legal text including signature of the writer and signature of a witness.

**Provenance and date:** Unknown but suggested date as the 5<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

**Note:** Semi- cursive script.



### Text (R):

1. ἀΝΟΚΙΩΣΗΦ [ . . . ]
2. [Π] ΜΟΝΑΧ<sup>12</sup> ΝΤΑΙΣϚ[ΑΙ . . .]<sup>13</sup>
3. ]ΝΤΑΤΟϚ<sup>14</sup> ΗΖΙΤ<sup>15</sup> [NN]
4. [ΠΕ] ΠΟΥΡΕϚΒΥ<sup>16</sup> ΜΑΡΤΡΩ,<sup>17</sup>[

<sup>12</sup> An Abbreviated of ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ "monk", sometimes, it was appeared without the oblique stroke (the stroke appeared here is belonging to the letter τ in the next line).

<sup>13</sup> Perhaps "this undertaking" as ΔΟΦΑΜΙΑ or "this document" ΧΑΡΤΗΣ.

<sup>14</sup> Usually written as ΝΤΑΔΙΧ in Thebes and Middle Egypt.

<sup>15</sup> ΝΖΗΤ<sup>15</sup>=ΝΑΖΡΕΗ and means "before" in: Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 671b.

<sup>16</sup> Unusual form is not cited in Förster, WB, pp.673-676.

<sup>17</sup> About the end of the word here, the letter ω is written inside ρ and after it written either the stroke of abbreviation or as a Coptic letter or cross, this word written in similar form in: Kopt. Ostraka I, no 16. (I observed a similar τ in the word ϚΑΤ in a papyrus was studied by Adel, S. in her MA thesis about Coptic manuscripts from the Coptic Museum in Cairo, reviewed by me in 2020).

### Translation (R):

- 1- I am Joseph [ the son of NN]
- 2- [the] monk , I wrote [this document]
- 3- With my hand before [NN]
- 4- the Priest<sup>18</sup> witnesses [(perhaps another witness was written)]

Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

انا يوسف (ابن فلان ) الراهب ، انا كتبت ( هذه الوثيقة ) بيدي أمام (فلان)  
القس شاهدا

(3)

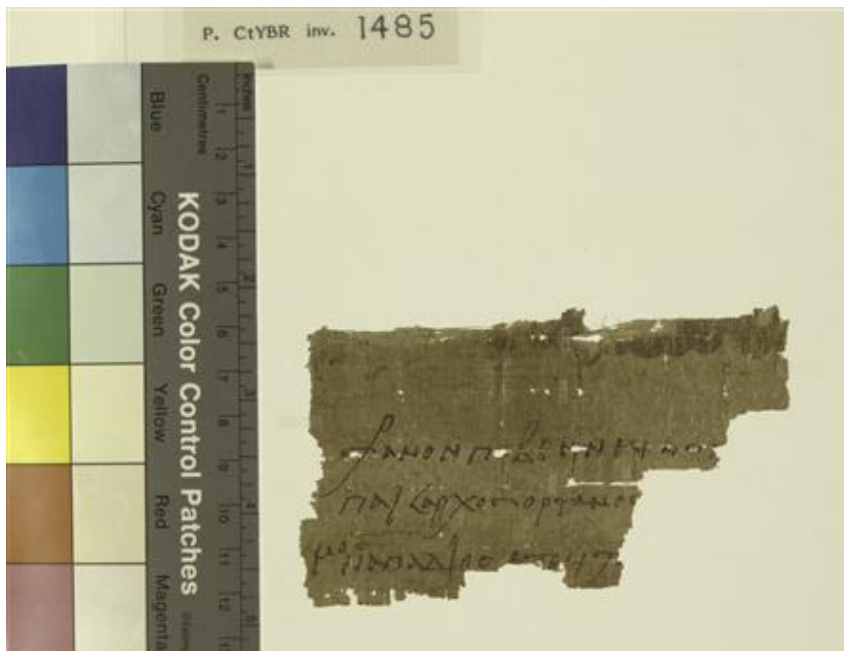
<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 1485(second text)
<b>Physical description</b>	67 x 113 mm, (A) 4 lines, top left margins, (B) 2 lines, top right bottom margins
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Letter
<b>Other reference</b>	P.Yale inv. 1485a
<b>Acquisition</b>	1928

---

<sup>18</sup>Also as proper name (Hasitzka, Namen, p 84b,85a).

**Content:** Beginning of official text perhaps letter or contract mentioned the pagarch (a high official represents the responsible for taxes and the ruler over a district/ Nome; he got the title prince "*amir*" in the Islamic era.

**Date:** the title Pagarch suggested to be appeared for the first time in 460 /470A.D.<sup>19</sup> and the papyri was used as writing material until the 11 century A.D. so I can suggest dating this text as the 5<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.



---

<sup>19</sup> Ahmed, "Professions, Trades, Occupations, JCS vol.12 , p.137

## Text (R):

1. ϘΑΝΟΝ ΠΕΒΕ<sup>20</sup> ΜΝ(Ν)ΕϘ ΜΑΡ[ΑΤΕ<sup>21</sup>Ν ...<sup>22</sup>ΕΤ-]
2. [C2ΔΙ ΜΠΑΜΙΡΑ Μ]ΠΑΚΑΡΧΟΣ<sup>23</sup> ΟΡΪΑΝΟΣ<sup>24</sup> [ ΧΕ
3. [...π]<sup>ΜΟ</sup>Ν<sup>Ϟ</sup><sup>25</sup> ΑΠΑ ΔΙΟΣ ΕΤΕϘΤ[ΜΟΝΗ?...]

## Translation:

- 1- + We Pebe and his bel[oved brothers/fathers]
- 2-[who write to the *amir*, the] Pagarch Orianus? [that...]
- 3-[...the] monk Apa Dios to his [house/chamber or monastery?]

## Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

نحن بيبي واحبائه الاخوة ( أو الاباء) نكتب ( للامير ) الباجارك أوريانوس  
(أو: أريجانوس) (بأن .....<sup>26</sup>). الراهب أبا ديوس الى (منزله أو  
حجرته أو ديره؟)

---

<sup>20</sup>Mentioned in: Hasitzka, Namen , p. 75b

<sup>21</sup>Usually as ΜΕΡΑΤΕ (Crum, Copt. Dict., 156b)

<sup>22</sup>ΜΝΗΥ or ΕΙΟΤΕ

<sup>23</sup>It is written in this form with κ instead of γ in the 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. mention in: Förster, WB, P.599-600 .

<sup>24</sup> It looks Orianus (or perhaps Origanos?) but there is the name ΑΡΙΑΝΟΣ "Arianus", mentioned in: Hasitzka, Namen, p.16a and in Crum , Copt. Dict., p.431b .I think this name became now Orian  
عريان

<sup>25</sup>Abbreviation of ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ " monk"

<sup>26</sup> ربما : عاد الراهب أبا ديوس الى منزله أو حجرته ..الخ

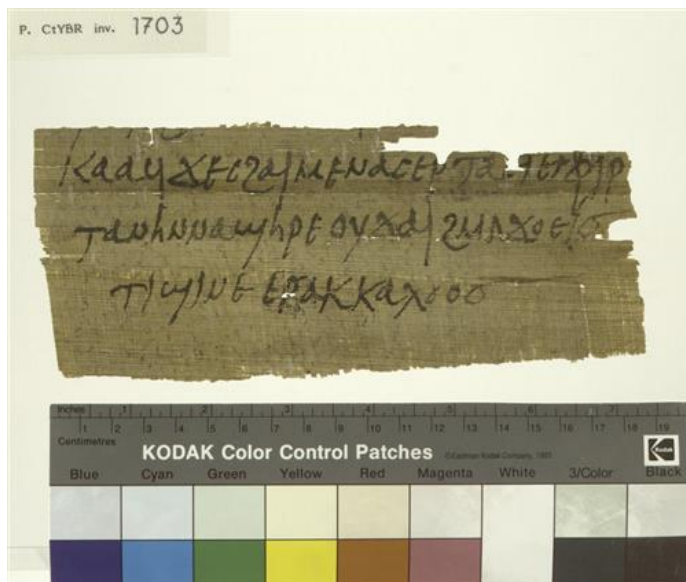
(4)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 1703(A)
<b>Physical description</b>	83 x 195 mm, 4 lines, right bottom left margins
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Letter
<b>Acquisition</b>	1951

**Content:** Part of private letter for lacuna in the top of papyrus, it is mentioned artaba (dry measure) of something definitely mentioned above, this measure sent or will be send by a man called Phiph to the children of the sender. Greeting and closing formulas of Coptic letters are remaining here. Perhaps school exercise for some mistakes.

**Note:** Script as uncial and clear, Greek C is written.

**Provenance:** Not from Thebes.



**Text (R):**

+1.....

2.καλα<sup>27</sup>χε ςζαι <μ>μενας ερταπ<sup>28</sup> ετφιφ<sup>29</sup>

3.ταον<sup>30</sup>πναωηρε ουζαι ζμπχοεις

4.τιωινε ερακκαλυος<sup>31</sup>

**Translation (R):**

+ 1.....

2. Place<sup>32</sup>it and write to Menas (the) artaba which Phiph

3. send? to my son, be well in the Lord

4. I greet you well

Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

ضعه ( احفظه) واكتب الى مينا عن الاردب الذي "فيف" أرسل؟ الى  
ابنائي، فلتعافى بالرب (الله يدبك الصحة)، أنا أحبيك (بسلم عليك أوى).

<sup>27</sup>κω or καλ "place, preserve", Crum, Copt. Dict.,p. 94b-95

<sup>28</sup> Similar forms ερταβ or ρτοπ are not Theban, Crum, Copt.

Dict. P.305b, similar π in Clackson & Delattre, P. Baouit, no.59

<sup>29</sup> A proper name mentioned in Greek, Hasitzka, Namen, p. 107a.

Perhaps from the name of month Ephiph.

<sup>30</sup> Perhaps it is misspelling of ταοϑο "to send" or τამε/ταμο "inform", Crum ,Copt. Dict., p.441b, 413b

<sup>31</sup> This formula is mentioned in: Engelbach, A Coptic Ostrakon

Mentioning Ieb (Elephantine), ASAE 38,p.51, mentioned also in:

Briefformular, p.86

<sup>32</sup>Or Preserve or keep.



(5)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 5006
<b>Physical description</b>	134 x 148 mm, (A) 8 lines, left bottom margins, (B) blank
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Document
<b>Acquisition</b>	1997a

**Content:** letter /order for payment? Mentioned measure(s) and the golden coin called *olokotinos* (= solidus)

**Note:** the strokes over p and n here are written as curve.



## Text (R)

1. +1. . . . .
2.  $\bar{p}$  πα[ωε ..]
3. μεν<sup>33</sup>[ ..
4.  $\bar{m}\bar{n}\tau$ [ .. $\bar{n}$ ]
5. κου! [ $\bar{n}$ κολλα-<sup>34</sup>]
6. θε νρ[π<sup>35</sup>?..]
7. ρολοκ[ ]
8.  $\bar{n}$ αγ ει[
9. λιχωδ<sup>36</sup>?[

## Translation

- +1.....
- 2- divide (make half)?]
- 3- with (or *ment*?).....[
- 4- (number)<sup>37</sup>[ of]
- 5- small *Kollothon*<sup>38</sup>
- 6- of w[ine ?...]
- 7-solidus[
- 8-For them (and) I[.....]
- 9-I completed (or baked)?[

---

<sup>33</sup>Perhaps as preposition "with, and" or the dry measure called ment

<sup>34</sup>Small kolothon is mentioned in WS, p.22

<sup>35</sup> As "wine " in Crum , Copt. Dict., p. 66 b

<sup>36</sup> Perhaps var. of χωκ

<sup>37</sup> Number between eleven and nineteen.

<sup>38</sup> Or it is just κογλλαθε and written in two lines. The Greek measure for wine , stigma (wine mixed with honey) and oils called κολλοθον (about 12 liter and in Egypt called now Pallas ) used also for cheese , Ahmed, Parts from Daily life of Copts, p.54

Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

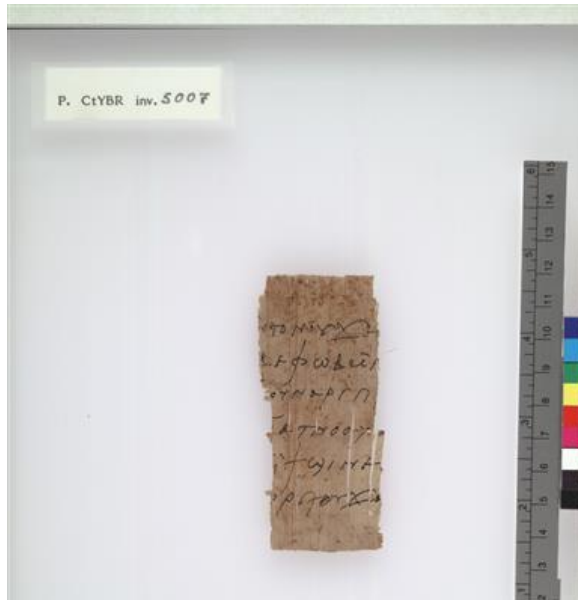
قسمّ المكيال منت من ....؟ وقسم (او احضر او ارسل او اعط) رقم كذا ( فى العشرات) من معيار الكولاثى من النبيذ ، و هولكوتينوس (اسم عملة)... لهم وانا ..... وانا اكملت؟.....

(6)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 5007
<b>Physical description</b>	85 x 39 mm, (A) 6 lines, top bottom margins, (B) 1 line (address?), top bottom margins
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Letter
<b>Acquisition</b>	1997a

**Content:**

Private letter concerning sending something, mentioned closing formula and the address is written in the back.  
From a person called Shere (?).



## Text (R)

1. [ ]ῆΤΟΝΟΥ ΧΕ[..]
2. [ΕΤ]ΒΕ ΦΩΒ ᾠΠ[..]
3. [ ]ΟΥΝ<sup>39</sup>ΑΡΙΠ[ΝΑ ΝΓ̄ ...]
4. [ᾠ]ΤΑΤΝΟΟΥ[...]
5. [..]ῆ †ΩΙΝΕ[Ε]
6. [ΟΥΝΟΒ]ΡΙ† ΟΥΧΑ[Ι]

## (V):

1. [ΤΑΔΟΝ ...ΩΙ]ΤΝ ΩΗΡΕ<sup>40</sup>

## Translation

### (R):

- 1-[ ]Immediately because[.....]
- 2- [con]cerning the matter of the [.....]
- 3- [..]....Do favor[ and.....]
- 4- [ ]and I (will) send [.....]
- 5- [..] I ask[ about] (=greet)
- 6-[Wnob] ri<sup>41</sup>+ be well

## (V):

1. [Give it to NN fr]om Shere

---

<sup>39</sup> Perhaps ΕΩΟΥΝ" inside" or personal name.

<sup>40</sup>Means "son" and it was used as proper name , see Hasitzka, Namen 113b

<sup>41</sup>Perhaps written here a proper name (I think as ΟΥΝΟΒΡΙ, see: Hasitzka, Namen, p.68 a), iota combined with the cross in the text here, the same iota in ΑΡΙ above in the same text.

Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

فى الحال انه..... بخصوص موضوع..... اعمل معروف واعمل.....وانا  
سأرسل ..... انا أسلم على ونوبري، كن معافى (العواف) +

الخلف:

(اعطه (أى الخطاب) لفلان من ) شيرى

(7)

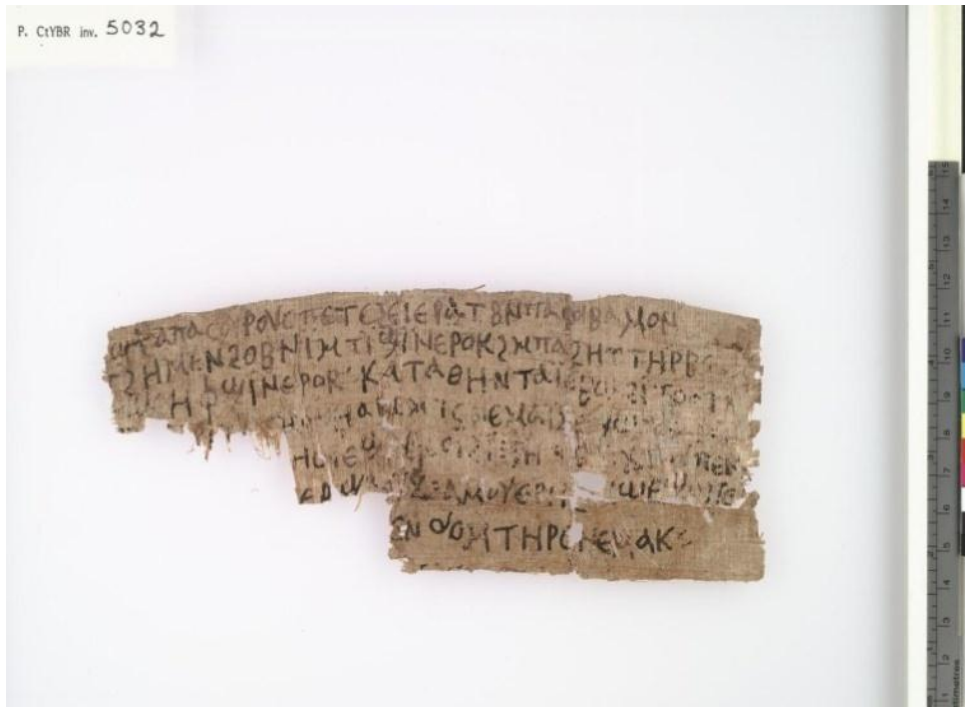
<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 5032 qua
<b>Physical description</b>	81 x 251 mm, (A) 7 lines, top right bottom margins, (B) blank
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Letter
<b>Contents</b>	From Apa Koyroys to Paphoibammom
<b>Acquisition</b>	1998a

**Content:** A private letter from Apa Sourous to Apa Phoibamon mentioned a person called Joseph, the sender informs that he worked by someone and asks coming to south.

**Provenance:** I suggested it from Fayyum because the beginning formula "ϠΑΤϠΗ ΜΕΝ ΝϠΟΒ ΝΙΜ which was popular in Middle Egypt<sup>42</sup> and for the Fayyumic dialect of some words.

**Date:** the 6<sup>th</sup> century –the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D. according to greeting formula.

**Note:** unusual Ϡ in the last line.



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<sup>42</sup> Ahmed, Coptic Correspondence, MA thesis, Ain Shams University (in Arabic), Cairo 2008 p.82

## Text (R):

1. [ΑΝΟΚ ΠΙ]Ω† ΑΠΑ ΣΟΥΡΟΥΣ<sup>43</sup> ΠΕΤΣΖΕΙ  
ΕΡΑΤΒ Ν(Α)ΠΑ ΦΟΙΒΑΜΟΝ<sup>44</sup>
2. [ΖΑ]ΤΖΗ ΜΕΝ<sup>45</sup> <Ν>ΖΟΒ ΝΙΜ ΤΙΩΙΝΕ ΕΡΟΚ  
ΖΜΠΑΖΗΤ ΤΗΡΣ<sup>46</sup>
3. [Ι]ΩΨΗΦ ΩΙΝΕ ΕΡΟΚ ΚΑΤΑ ΘΗ ΝΤΑΙ ΕΡΟΒ<sup>47</sup>  
ΖΙΤΟΟΤ Μ[ ]
4. [ ] ... ΗΑΜΜΙΣ ΝΕΜΑΙ ...Ω . [ ]
5. [ ] Η.ΕΩ[Α]Ν. ΣΙΨ ΝΤΗ[ΡΒ]? . . Χ ... ΠΕΚ[ ]
6. [ ] ΕΡΨΑΟΥ<sup>48</sup> ΧΕ ΑΜΟΥ ΕΡΗΣ [ΑΥ]Ω ΕΩΡΟΠΕ[ ]
7. [ ] ΖΝΣΟΜ ΤΗΡΣ ΝΕΜΑΚΣ[ ]
8. [ . . . . . ]

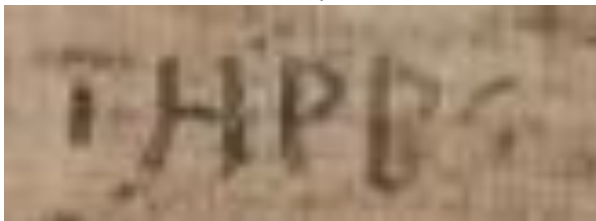
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<sup>43</sup> A personal name mentioned in Thebes, Wadi Sarga and Kharga oasis I suggest it means "thorn" from ΣΟΥΡΕ

<sup>44</sup>I can add that the name Phoibamon, it is Egyptian name consists of names of two gods are Hibis and Amun. this kind of names of pagan deities still existed among Copts, they received them from their fathers and grandfathers and some of them associated with victories , healing and knowledge in ancient Egypt (Ahmed, Parts from Daily life of Copts, p.4-5).

<sup>45</sup> I think ΖΑΘΗ is noun means "beginning" from Egy. *h3t* and ΜΕΝ is the Greek article used always for emphasizing.

<sup>46</sup> Punctuation mark after ΤΗΡΣ



<sup>47</sup> Fayyumic for Π ΖΩΒ "do work" , (see Crum, Copt. Dict., 653a)

<sup>48</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., pp. 599b-600a.



## Translation:

- 1-[I am the father] Apa Sourous the one who writes to<sup>49</sup> Apa Phoibamon.
- 2-[At] beginning of everything I greet you from all my heart
- 3 -[J]oseph greets you, as follows I worked by [ ]
- 4-[ ].....with me.....[ ]
- 5-[ ]...if ..... your [ ]
- 6-[ ] Be useful and come southward and if [ ]
- 7- [ ] in all power with you[ ]
- 8- [.....]

## Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

أنا الأب أبا سوروس الذى يكتب الى (موطىء) قدمى<sup>50</sup> أبا فويب امون، فى بداية كل شىء انا احبيك من كل قلبي ويوسف يحييك ، هكذا انا اشتغلت بواسطة.....معى...واذا.....ك.... اعمل منفعة (خير) و تعالى جنوبا واذا.... بكامل القوة (تكون) معك.....

---

<sup>49</sup> Lit. toward his feet but it is translated as" to" and written for reverence ( Crum, Copt. Dict, p.382a & Abdelnoor , Dictionary, 424a)

<sup>50</sup> اسلوب احترام فى الكتابة لمن هو كبير مقاما

(8)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 1512
<b>Physical description</b>	57 x 70 mm, 3 lines, top bottom (?) margins
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Document
<b>Other reference</b>	P.Yale inv. 1512a
<b>Acquisition</b>	1928

**Content:**

Letter from a person advises another one that he must be strong and don't be afraid from a man mentioned in the text.



## Text (R):

1. [ετ]βε φἰρωμε επμα[ῆ ...]
2. [.]αλλα τεκρο[τε . . .]
3. [ῆ]πρ ατζομ<sup>51</sup> ερ[οι ...]

## Translation:

- 1-[ con]cerning this man of the place [of...]
- 2-[ ] but your fe[-ar...]
- 3-[don't] do powerless with [him...]<sup>52</sup>

## Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

بخصوص رجل قرية.....<sup>53</sup>..ولكن خوفك (منه) .....لا تكن ضعيف  
معه .....

---

<sup>51</sup> Feminine word in Sahaidic means "power , strength"  
(Abdelnoor, Dictionary,758a)

<sup>52</sup> =Don't be weak before him.

<sup>53</sup> اسم مكان او اسماء مثل مطعم مخزن الخ

(9)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 4491
<b>Physical description</b>	126 x 117 mm, (A) 9 lines, top left margins, (B) 1 line
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Letter (?)
<b>Acquisition</b>	1996b

**Content:** Official letter sent to monastic superior in the form of complaint<sup>54</sup>, the sender complains a man called Ammwne son of Kaeis. And mentions quarrel between both of them because of something missed in the text for lacuna.

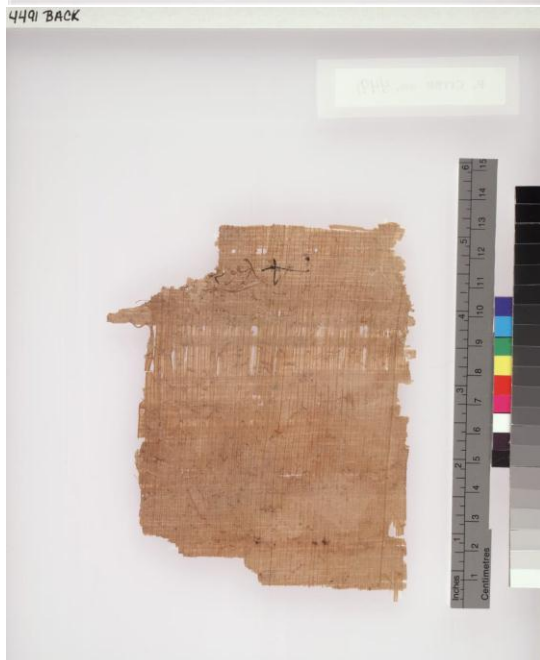
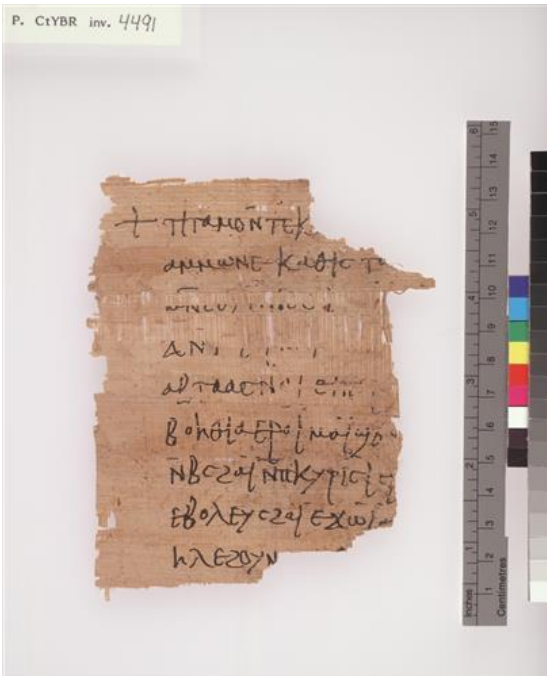
**Provenance:** Middle Egypt (perhaps from Fayyum)

**Date:** Suggested as the 6<sup>th</sup> –the 11<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

**Note:** No lacuna in the left side and in the top.

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<sup>54</sup> Cf: A complaint from a village magistrate (*lashane*) on behalf of the people of the whole village written in a letter addressed to a monastic superior asking him to punish a person because he did many evils, published in O. Crum, no.115 , comment on this letter in : Ahmed, Coptic Correspondence , p.48.



## Text (R):

1. † ΤΙΤΑΜΟ Ν̄ΤΕΚ[ΜΝΤΕΙΩΤ (ΕΤΟΥΑΔΒ?) ΧΕ]
2. ΑΜΜΩΝΕ <Ν̄> ΚΑΕΙC<sup>55</sup> ΤΟ[ΛΜΑ<sup>56</sup>]
3. [Ν̄]Β̄Ν̄ÇΟΥ ΜΠ̄ΞΟΙ!?[ ]
4. ΑΝΓ ..[ ]
5. ΑΒΤΑΔC Ν̄ΑΙ Ξ̄Π[ ]
6. ΒΟΗΘΙΑ ΕΡΟῙ ΜΑ<sup>57</sup> Ἰ̄ Ω̄ΔΝ[ΗΝ<sup>58</sup> . .]
7. Ν̄ΒCΖΔῙ Ν̄ΠΚΥΡΙCΙC<sup>59</sup>[ΗΔΥ?]
8. ΕΒΟΛ ΕΥCΖΔῙ ΕΧΩῙ. [...]
9. ΗΛ<sup>60</sup> ΕΖΟΥΝ[ ]

## (v):

[ΤΑΔC ΜΠΑΙΩΤ ΑΠΑ ΝΝ ΖΙΤΝ ΝΝ ΠΕΚΖΜ]ΖΑΛ†

## Translation (R)

- 1- † I inform<sup>61</sup> your[ holy fatherhood that]
- 2- Amwne (son of) Kaeis dar[es
- 3- and he brings them, to [the field ?]
- 4- I .....[..]

---

<sup>55</sup> Proper name as ΚΑΕΙC (Hasitzka , Namen, p,47a) and it is derived from name of wine jar, closed ε as Ϸ

<sup>56</sup> Examples as verb "to dare" in: Foerster, WB, p.812

<sup>57</sup> Translated as: if, when and as negation of 1<sup>st</sup> aorist tense in Crum, Copt. Dict., 155b and 182b.

<sup>58</sup> In Bohairic dialect only means " contend, quarrel", also in the word "quarreler", Abdelnoor, Dictionary, p.584a, Crum, Copt. Dict., pp.618b-619a. I suggested reading at first as Ω̄ΟΝ[Τ] "quarrel" (Crum, Copt. Dict, p. 572b) but I found it can be read as Ϸ not Ο.

<sup>59</sup> This word refers to " reply" either it is written in letter or just speech , Ahmed, Coptic Correspondence, p. 70 .

<sup>60</sup> Perhaps a (Hebrew) proper name of an official like Daniel , Ezekiel , or perhaps as title ΠΡΩΜΙ Ν̄ΠΔΛΜΠ̄CΗΛ " man of post station" (O. Crum , VC, no.49 and Ahmed, Professions, Trades, p. 190) or other word as something registered (see: Strasbach, Dictionaire Inverse, pp.78b-79a)

<sup>61</sup> Usually after greeting formula in letters Crum , Copt. Dict., 413b-414a

- 5- and he gave / paid it to me [ in the field?... ]  
 6-help me , I am not used to quarrel [ .... ]  
 7-and he published the reply/letter [ to them?]  
 8- they inscribe/register for me [ ....]  
 9- .....[ ...]

**(V):**

-[ give it to NN From NN your ] servant †<sup>62</sup>

**Comment:**

Ⲭⲓⲁⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ = publish

Ⲭⲓⲁⲓ ⲉⲓⲟⲩⲛ = inscribe / register (something)<sup>63</sup> and also  
 write a complaint, request<sup>64</sup>

Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

من الامام:

انا ابلغ ابوتك بأن أموني بن كاييس تجراً واحضرهم الى الحقل؟ وانا ....  
 وهو اعطاها الى في (الحقل؟) ... ساعدنى انا لم اعتاد أن اتشاجر و هو قد اذاع  
 الجواب لهم لذا فهم كتبوا (او سجلوا) من اجلى (شكوى؟)

من الخلف:

(اعطه لأبي فلان من فلان) خادمك

<sup>62</sup> Or perhaps as personal name "Hal", O. Kharga Mus., no.3

<sup>63</sup> Crum, Coptic Dictionary, p.383a

<sup>64</sup> According to examples from literary texts in: Abdelnoor, Dictionary,424b

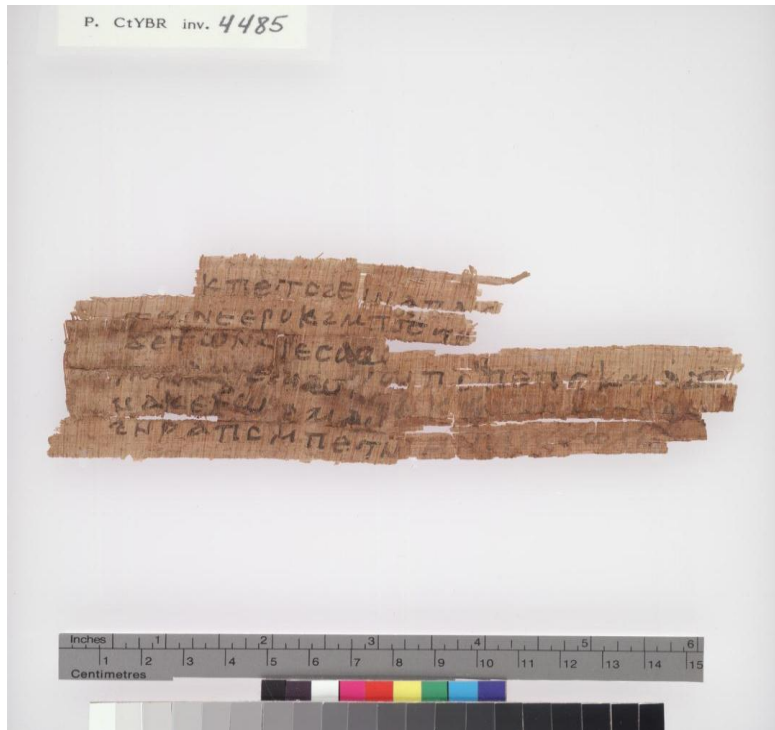
(10)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 4485
<b>Physical description</b>	60 x 168 mm, 7 lines, left margin, (B) blank
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Letter (?)
<b>Acquisition</b>	1996b

**Content:**

Private letter, I can say that the sender was a weaver called Isak who sent to Apakere , perhaps other weaver or sewer, he mentioned clothes, work and some needles, the letter includes greeting formula

**Dialect:** Bohairic and Fayyumic influences.





## Text (R):

1. [ΑΝΟΚΙCΑ]Κ (?) ΠΕΤCΖΕΙ<sup>65</sup> ΝΑΠΑΚ[ΙΡΕ<sup>66</sup> (?)]
2. †Ω[Ι]ΝΕ ΕΡΟΚ ΖΜΠCΤΚΑ[ΙΡΕ?]<sup>67</sup>
3. ΧΕ †ΩΝΖ ΤΕCΩΖΕ<sup>68</sup> [ ]
4. . . traces .ΕΖΑΖ ΝΖΩΠC<sup>69</sup> ΠΕ ΠΕΚΩΔΧΕ<sup>70</sup> [ ]
5. ΜΑΚ ΕΡΕΩΒ ΜΜ<sup>71</sup> ΙΔΚΩ[Β]....traces . [ ]
6. ΖΝ ΡΑΠC<sup>72</sup> ΜΠΕΤΝ . ....traces.. [ ]

## Translation:

- 1- [I am Isa]k the one who writes to Apak[ere]
- 2- I greet you in the Lord gre[eting ]
- 3- that I live (and) I weave [....]
- 4- ... many clothes/coverings, your speech<sup>73</sup> didn't [...]

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<sup>65</sup> Fayyumic dialect , see Crum, Coptic Dict., p.381b

<sup>66</sup> Apakere in: Hasitzka, Namen, p.13b

<sup>67</sup> Usually as χαίρε , it seems to be ωα[ιρε] here but this form is not attested in Förster WB, p.862-863 perhaps as mistake.

<sup>68</sup> Crum, Coptic Dict., p.381a, the writer wrote ω as λ then corrected it



<sup>69</sup> Mentioned in this form in Bohairic dialect meaning covering, grave clothes, clothes, written in Sahaidic as ΖΩΒC (Abdelnoor, Dictionary, p.722a, Crum, Copt. Dict., p.659b)

<sup>70</sup> I think it represents negation of first perfect tense and the infinitive is missing here, ωαχε means "speech" but it refers also to "letter" and reply of the letter see: Ahmed, Coptic Correspondence, p. 53,62,63 and O. Cairo Mus., p.2

<sup>71</sup> See: O.NMEC, no.137

<sup>72</sup> Cited a Fem. Bohairic word as ΘΡΑΠC or ΤΡΑΠC درفس أو متقب awl, spike among shoemaker's tool in :Crum, Copt. Dict., 431b while ραπις or ραφίς translated as "needle" in: LSJ, p.1566a, it is associated with the title of cobbling tailor in Greek even until now in Egypt as "raffa" who used needle in his work, I think this word refers to different kinds of needles and here refers to the loom needles .

<sup>73</sup> Reply/ letter

5- that you didn't used to work with Jaco(b)..... [ ]

6- some (loom) needles of your..... [ ]

Arabic translation:

ترجمة عربية:

أنا اسحق الذى يكتب الى أبا كبير ، أنا احبيك وبالرب تحية (سلام) اننى أعيش وأنسج ..... العديد من الاقمشة ( أو الاكفان أو الأغطية) ، وكلامك أو خطابك لم ... . أنك لم تعناد على العمل مع يعقوب(ب)..... شوية ابر (بتاعة النول) من عند.....كم.....

(11)

<b>Call Number</b>	P.CtYBR inv. 1480
<b>Physical description</b>	93 x 151 mm, (A) 5 lines, top bottom left margins, (B) 1 line, top right bottom margins
<b>Language</b>	Egyptian\Coptic
<b>Genre</b>	Letter
<b>Other reference</b>	P.Yale inv. 1480 + 1520
<b>Acquisition</b>	1928

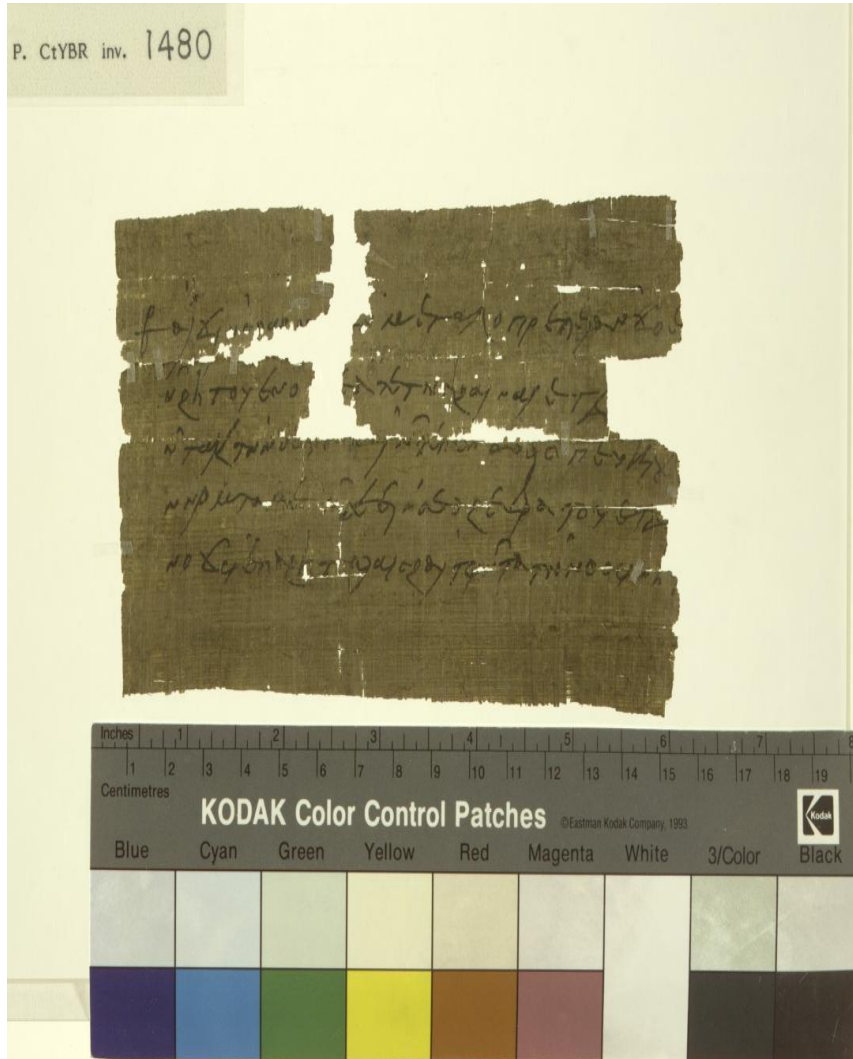
**Content:** I suggest that to be an official letter sent to the ruler /prince over Nome/district perhaps *Pagarch*, the sender seems to be an official. It represents a reply for a previous letter, the topic about something asked by recipient (missed in the text because of lacuna) will be written and sent by the sender and I suggested it to be a report or an account or a certain list.

On the back, I think it is other letter starts as do favor with certain person and this kind represents begging

letters which include request for helping poor, widows and orphans and usually sent to clerics<sup>74</sup>.

**Provenance:** Middle Egypt-Thebes.

**Note:** on Recto, all the strokes over the letter N here are written as curve (^)



<sup>74</sup> O. Cairo Mus., p.2

## Text on (R):

1. Ϝαῖχι η(ε)ϙῥαι η[πε]τημεγαλοπρ<sup>75</sup> επετη  
χοε[ιϙ αιειμε ενετ-]
2. ηῖητοῦ<sup>76</sup> ενο[ ]εα τετηνϙῥαι<sup>77</sup> ηαι  
ετβ[ε ...]
3. ητακτηνοῦϙου η[α]ι ητετηῖϙοος <ε><sup>78</sup>  
πεϙκλ<sup>79</sup> [ηδοῦζ<sup>80</sup> η-]
4. ηηρητηνε<sup>81</sup> ητετηῖσεαῖ ε{ϕ}ρατοῦ<sup>82</sup>  
ετβ[ε ... αῦ-]
5. ηοϙϙ επαῖητ ψαιϙῥαιτϙ ητατηηοο(ῦ)ϙ  
ηητ[η . . .]

---

<sup>75</sup> As epithet/title for princes especially the pagarch see: Ahmed, Professions , Trades, Occupations, JCS 12, p.132

<sup>76</sup> The same formula in: O. Crum VC, no.58

<sup>77</sup> This word as feminine also in Sahaidic , Crum Copt. Dict, 383a

<sup>78</sup> Suggested to be ϙοοϙ "say (it)" with prep. ε means "say to", (Crum, Coptic Dictionary, 754a-b).

<sup>79</sup> εϙκλεεστατος "glorious", esp. with the title δοῦζ and αμπα ητποαιϙ, this abbreviated form εϙκλ/ was known in examples dating to the 7<sup>th</sup> –the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. ( Förster, WB, p.305 ).

<sup>80</sup> Translated as military governor (Förster, WB, p.210) but I suggest this title is the same as the ruler/prince of town and it was known in Roman Egypt to choose these commanders to be rulers of village or town or district (Cf *Strategos*).

<sup>81</sup> ΜΟΝΗ or ΜΩΝΗ Greek fem. word means port, station, house, chamber and found in place names, now in Arabic as *Mena* ميناء "port", Abdelnoor, Dictionary , p.165a , Crum Copt. Dict., 174a, also as "monastery" in online Coptic Dictionary ,on: coptic-dictionary.org.

<sup>82</sup> The same as ϙῥαι ερατϙ "write to" (lit. write to the feet of, and used for reverence), the verb written here in a dialect similar to Fayyumic ϙεῖῖ and Sub-Akhmimic ϙαῖ . Although ϕατ means also foot/knee but usually they used ϙατ with this verb (see Crum, Copt. Dict.,p. 381b,382a), and the writer seems to write here ϕ at first then corrected it as ϙ .

### Translation (R):

- 1- ꝒI have received the letters of your magnificence and your lordship[ and am aware of what is]
- 2- Therein<sup>83</sup> [...] your letter to me about [(the orders)?]
- 3- Which you sent them to me and you<sup>84</sup> said it to the glorious [magistrate together with]
- 4- the men of the monastery<sup>85</sup> (?) and you wrote to them concerning [the report /the account<sup>86</sup> ,they]
- 5- left it to me<sup>87</sup> , I used to write it and I (will) send it to you [ ... ]

### Comment:

Line 4: It is the same form here of the letters read as CЄ by Clackson.<sup>88</sup>



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<sup>83</sup> Another formula as " I rejoiced very much for finding about your health from them", in O. NMEC, no.441.

<sup>84</sup> Honorable plural used many times here.

<sup>85</sup> Cf the title ϩⲏⲏⲏ "man of monastery" not superior but as steward, as a responsible in the monastery (Ahmed, Professions,189 )

<sup>86</sup> I suggest that because the guards of the seaport usually wrote reports or lists about transportation of grains and submitted it to the ruler over the Nome who usually at first gave orders to the responsible of granary for transportation the grains by ships (Fayez, Transportation in Greco Roman Egypt,111,229 ) .

<sup>87</sup> ⲏⲟⲗⲥⲉ means "throw at /put into" in Sahaidic and Bohairic dialects (Crum, Copt. Dict. , p.247a-b), but not attested with " heart" in the dictionary of Crum, but I suggest the meaning here as "throw it at my heart" to be as " leave it to me", referring to person gives/leaves tasks to other person, cf: ⲏⲟⲗⲥⲉⲡⲏⲁⲗⲟⲩ " cast behind , postpone" (Crum, Copt. Dict. , p.248b)

<sup>88</sup> Coptic Documents relating to Monasteries of Apa Apollo at Bawit and Titkooh, PH.D, UCL 1996, no.63A



*the text on verso*

### **Text:**

1. Ϝ αρ[ι] †αγαπηεκομ<sup>ε</sup>ρε[της<sup>89</sup>ιω2α] ννηε Ϝ

### **Translation:**

1. [D]o charity with the cultiv[ator/gardener Jo]hn

### **Arabic translation:**

ترجمة عربية:

من الامام : استلمت خطابات فخامتكم وسيادتكم وعلمت بما هو بداخلها ...  
خطابكم لى بخصوص (الوامر) الذى انت ارسلتها لى وقتوهم (الى)  
الموقر (حاكم المدينة) (و) رجال الدير (أو حراس الميناء ؟) انتم كتبتم لهم  
بخصوص (تقرير او الاحصاء؟) لقد اوكلوه لى ، انا معتاد على كتابته  
وسأرسله اليكم.

من الخلف: اعمل محبة مع الجنائنى أو المزارع يوحنا.

---

<sup>89</sup> κωμαρετης mentioned in account of palm bundles and vegetables,  
WS,no.147

## ***Conclusion***

In some agreements of loan on papyri, it was written a docket for the texts (on the back of papyri, see: no.1).

In the Coptic legal texts, the scribe usually wrote a formula that he wrote with his hand used usually the word ⲁⲓⲭ but he used ⲧⲞⲐⲧ instead of it (in the text no.2), then he mentioned the date or the witnesses or sometimes he acts as the witness too. The scribes were monks or deacons or priests in many cases.

The forms of abbreviations here:

The word ⲠⲞⲨⲁⲭⲞⲐ abbreviated by writing as superscription (no.3), Abbreviation with/ without the oblique stroke (nos.2, 3,11), and the nomina sacra abbreviation were used also (no.10).

Writing the conjunction ⲭⲈ between two imperative verbs to mean "and" (nos.4,7)

Using also "I greet you well" instead of "I greet you warmly", as a greeting formula (no.4)

The containers of liquids were from Greek or Egyptian origin and in many cases included small and big sizes of the same measure (no.5).

The address was written in the back of papyrus (nos.6,9)

There is a formula when the sender wrote to a person of high position that the sender writes toward his feet and that for reverence (nos.7,11)

Writing the title ⲁⲠⲁ as Ⲡⲁ (no.7)

The formula "Be useful" is mentioned before asking a visit (no.7). Writing ϕ as β in Fayyomic (nos.7,9)

The writer didn't repeat the two similar letters in many cases and wrote it as one letter only, for example: the double M wrote as one M and double € and double N too (nos.1, 7)

The punctuation marks as raised double strokes and the raised point also (no.7)

Using € instead of genitival N (as Bohairic?) (no.8)

Writing a letter in a form of complaint to an ecclesiastical superior and the sender described himself as "your servant" and this was common in the Coptic letters addressed to clerics (no.9 , V)

The names derived from names of the ancient Egyptian deities like Phibamon, Ammwne and Wnobri still existed to express good meanings associated with these gods in the Dynastic period

Mention the needle as ϩⲗⲡⲚ (not ϩⲣⲗⲡⲚ) and this is uncommon form, referring here to the loom needle according to context (no.10)

The adjective ϩⲗϩ "many" in Coptic from ancient Egyptian number means million.

The superliner strokes written sometimes as curved (nos.1,5, 11)

The high official were described with some magnified titles (no.11)

The expression "throw it to my heart" (no.11) , I suggest it to mean "leave it to me" for similar expressions used now in Egypt.



## **Indexes**

### **Proper Names**

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ΑΠΑΚ[ΕΡΕ] ? no.10  
ΔΙΟΣ no.3  
ΙΑΚΩΒ no.10  
[ΙΣΑ]Κ? no.10  
[Ι]ΩΣΗΦ no.2, 7  
[ΙΩΨΑ]ΗΝΗΣ no.11(V)  
ΚΑΕΙΣ no.9  
ΛΟΥΚΑΣ no.1  
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ΟΡΙΑΝΟΣ no.3  
[ΟΥΝΟΒ]ΡΙ no.6  
ΠΕΒΕ no. 3  
ΣΟΥΡΟΥΣ no.7  
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### **Titles of monks and clerics**

ΑΠΑ ,ΠΑ nos. 3, 7  
ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ, ΜΟΝΟ, ΜΟΝΑΧ nos.1,2, 3  
ΜΗΤΕΙΩΤ nos.1, 9?  
ΠΑΣΟΝ no.1  
ΠΟΥΡΕΣΒΥ(ΤΗΡΟΣ) no.2 (or perhaps as proper name? )

### **Titles, jobs and trades**

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ΚΩΜΕΡΕΤΗΣ no.11(V)  
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ΠΑΚΑΡΧΟΣ no.3  
ΠΕΤΗΧΟΕΙΣ no.11(R)  
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[τερησι]οῦ? no.1

## Measures

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μαρτρω no. 2  
  
ραπс no.10  
  
τολμα no.9  
χρε[ια] no.1  
χρεωσται no.1  
ωλ[ιρε] (for χαιρε?) no.10

# Plate 1



Flask of Apa Mena from Coptic Museum, Cairo, this name Mena / Menas (no. 4) was known from ancient Egypt but it was well known in Coptic because of this holy saint.

(Picture is taken by me and the description taken from the Coptic Museum, Cairo)

# Plate 2



Ancient Egyptian tools used for manufacture the textiles including bronze needle (see no.10).

# Plate 3



The Coptic farmer as harvester or gardener in the vines  
and gardens of dates

From Coptic Museum, Egypt

See ΚΩΜΕΡΕΤΗC

(Text no. 11 back)

(Picture is taken by me and the description taken from  
Coptic Museum, Cairo)

# Plate 4



Golden coins from the Monastery of St. Shenoute (the white Monastery) at Sohag in December 1987. It contains Byzantine gold coins including coins from the reigns of the Emperors Phocas (602-610) and Heraclius (610-641) and his son Constantinus. The pot which contained the coins dates to the 7<sup>th</sup> century.

(Picture is taken by me and the description from Coptic Museum, Cairo)

## Plate 5



Gold and bronze coins with the cross inscribed on its back found inside a pottery jar from Saqqara

Under studying by the archaeologist Mohamed, Ibrahim.

(The photos are taken by him and he gave me the permission to use the photos here)

I think these coins can be dated from the Byzantine period and perhaps the bronze coins represent the carat or obol or perhaps she-coins

## Glossary of Currency in Coptic

ⲁⲗⲁⲕⲱⲧⲥⲈ : solidus, var. of ⲒⲠⲗⲠⲠⲠⲧⲧⲒⲛⲠⲠⲠ

ⲁⲗⲭⲁⲣⲣⲟⲟⲛⲉ : The kharrobah, Arabic small coin and weight (= ± 0.195 gm<sup>90</sup>), Lit. means "the (pod of) carob", mentioned also in some Arabic papyri (see خروبة, in: www.naher-osten.lmu.de/apd).

ⲁⲙⲛⲁ: Greek coin and weight equals 29 ounces<sup>91</sup> (I think perhaps the same as Gr. *mna* ?), see ⲙⲙⲛⲁ

ⲁⲛⲑⲃⲁ: Myriad, in Bohairic, see: ⲧⲃⲁ

ⲁⲣⲮⲮⲣⲟⲥ (ⲛ): from Gr. origin means silver coin.<sup>92</sup> Also for money, copper or bronze coins.<sup>93</sup>

ⲁⲥⲥⲁⲣⲒⲠⲠⲠ (ⲛ): as, assarion, assarius (Roman copper coin, worth 1/16<sup>th</sup> of a denarius.<sup>94</sup> and 1/10 of drachma<sup>95</sup>

ⲗⲛⲛⲁⲣⲒⲠⲠⲠ<sup>96</sup>, ⲧⲛⲛⲁⲣⲒⲠⲠⲠ (ⲛ): "Denarius" as Roman silver coin<sup>97</sup>.

ⲗⲓⲗⲣⲁⲭⲙⲠⲠⲠ (ⲛ): didrachma = double drachma =kite<sup>98</sup>. As silver coin.

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<sup>90</sup> Ahmed, Arabic terms in Coptic,13, mentioned as weight in the Coptic texts but mentioned as coin in Arabic texts .

<sup>91</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary,846a

<sup>92</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 848b

<sup>93</sup> Cherix, Index Grec-Copte ,23b

<sup>94</sup> Online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>95</sup> Cherix , Lexique Grec Copte, 32a

<sup>96</sup> Cherix, Index Grec-Copte ,40a

<sup>97</sup> online Coptic Dictionary (on: coptic-dictionary.org)



Δραχμῆ, τραπεζῆ (τ): drachma = ⲃⲓⲕⲓⲧⲉ. Gr. Coin  
Doc. dirham<sup>99</sup> as silver coin.

ⲏⲧⲟⲥ (ⲛ): money, coin.<sup>100</sup>

ⲕⲁⲥ (ⲛ): lit. "bone"<sup>101</sup> refers to "carat" as coin= 1/24 of  
solidus<sup>102</sup>, mainly made from bronze/copper, Latin as Keratium  
equal 0.189 gm.

ⲕⲁⲥⲕⲉⲣⲁⲧ (ⲛ): half of carat, as money/weight<sup>103</sup> (ⲕⲁⲥ here  
means half).

ⲕⲁⲥ ⲛⲗⲓⲕⲛⲁ, ⲕⲁⲥ ⲛⲗⲓⲅⲛⲉ (ⲟⲩ): half of likna, as small copper  
/bronze coin<sup>104</sup>

ⲕⲉⲣⲁⲧⲥⲉ (ⲛ,ⲧ): keration ( lit . "horn" =carat) , Gr. coin<sup>105</sup>  
minted mainly from copper or bronze but sometimes mentioned  
as gold coin<sup>106</sup>, var. as ⲕⲉⲣⲁⲧ and ⲕⲁⲥ.

ⲕⲉⲣⲙⲁ (ⲛ): means "money, coins from bronze/copper"<sup>107</sup> (Gr),  
as small change<sup>108</sup> .

ⲕⲓⲧⲉ, ⲕⲓⲧ (τ): kite is silver coin = double drachma , (9.1 gm),  
and 1/2 stater, Demotic form as *kdt* or *kt*<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Cherix, Index Grec-Copte ,43a

<sup>99</sup> Cherix, Lexique Grec-Copte ,55b,

<sup>100</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 860b

<sup>101</sup> **I think choosing this term "bone" referring to this coin in Coptic relating to the link between silver and bones of god in ancient Egypt (Cf: the myth of destruction of mankind) and the silver associated always with minting coins**

<sup>102</sup> CED, p.63

<sup>103</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 91b

<sup>104</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 678b

<sup>105</sup> CED,p.63

<sup>106</sup> ST, no. 64, see pl. no. 5 here.

<sup>107</sup> Cherix, Index Grec-Copte ,23a

<sup>108</sup> Online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>109</sup> CED, p.65 AND Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 100b

κοροϥ: a coin less than carat<sup>110</sup>, see the next term (perhaps the same)

κωρ: "kwr", a coin less than carat<sup>111</sup>.

λεπτον, λεπτος (π): lepton فلس, a small coin minted from copper = 1/28 of Dinar, mentioned in Bible<sup>112</sup>.

λικνε, λικνα, λικ/ (π): likna used as coin<sup>113</sup> Mentioned from copper/bronze (*homent*).<sup>114</sup>

μνα (π): mna, coin mentioned in Kellis texts<sup>115</sup> (Mina coin)

νομισμα, νομισματα, να/ (π): Gr. Refers to money, or to the gold coin often specifically a solidus/dinar<sup>116</sup>.

νοϥβ (π): lit. means "gold", general term for golden coins

νοϥμος, ναϥμεις (π): Nummus, a coin with little value, Gr.<sup>117</sup>, as bronze/copper (*homent*) coin<sup>118</sup> worth 25 dinarri<sup>119</sup>

οβολος, ροβολος (π): obol, silver coin (worth 1/6 drachma)<sup>120</sup>, see: φολος

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<sup>110</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 115b, online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>111</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 111b, Crum, Copt. Dict., 115a

<sup>112</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 868a, Cherix, Index Grec-Copte ,99a, online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>113</sup> Förster WB,472

<sup>114</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 678b, O. Saint Marc.,p.283

<sup>115</sup> Kellis 2, no.78

<sup>116</sup> Förster WB,546, online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>117</sup> Förster WB,,551, Online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>118</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 678b

<sup>119</sup> P. Kellis 1, 58

<sup>120</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 875a Cherix, Index Grec-Copte ,172a, online Coptic Dictionary,

[www.brown.edu/Departments/Joukowsky\\_Institute/courses/greekpast/4792.html](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Joukowsky_Institute/courses/greekpast/4792.html)

παυτερ//<sup>121</sup>, παυτριμ<sup>122</sup> πηυε τερμηςιον<sup>123</sup>,  
 πωτριμηςε<sup>124</sup> (τ, οϣ): Half tremis or 1/6 of solidus as a  
 golden coin, no equivalent in Greek/Latin, and equals about 4  
 carats and 40 (or 48) of ωε-coin, it is mentioned in Arabic papyri  
 as 1/6 of Dinar, I think to refer to it.

πηυε ηρολοκοτ/, πηυε ηρολοκ/ (οϣ): Half solidus, as a  
 gold coin<sup>125</sup>, it is Coptic translation of Latin *semissis* = half solidus/  
 ηρολοκοττινος and I think it equals 12 carats and 120 (or 144  
 ) of the coin called ωε.

σατεερε, σαθερι, σατηηλ, στατηρος (τ): Stater is a  
 silver coin= 4 drachmas (=two of κιτε), mentioned as σατεερε  
 ηρατ<sup>126</sup> Demotic as *sttr*<sup>127</sup>, mentioned also as copper (*homent*)  
 coin<sup>128</sup> was about 13.5 metric grams.<sup>129</sup>

τβα, οϣτβα, ανθβα: lit "ten thousand", Egy. as *tb<sup>c</sup>*, *db<sup>c</sup>*, in  
 Latin as *myriad*<sup>130</sup>, used also as coin<sup>131</sup> equals 6 2/3 of talent,  
 when used alone it referred to a coin (the Aes 3)<sup>132</sup>. Mentioned as  
 copper/bronze coin<sup>133</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> This form is written in a papyrus from Coptic museum, Cairo studied by S.  
 Adel in her MA thesis which was reviewed and judged by me.

<sup>122</sup> Kopt. Ostraka. no.15

<sup>123</sup> O. Med.Habu Copt.,no.57

<sup>124</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 278b

<sup>125</sup> Mentioned many times esp. in Thebes

<sup>126</sup> Förster WB, 747, <sup>126</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 883a, 885b, Crum, Copt. Dict.,  
 366a

<sup>127</sup> CED, p.166.

<sup>128</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 678b

<sup>129</sup> P. Kellis 1, 59

<sup>130</sup> CED, p.182

<sup>131</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 399a, online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>132</sup> P. Kellis 1, 58

<sup>133</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 678b

ΤΕΒΙ (π,τ): "obol" coin, used in Demotic as a silver coin called *tb* perhaps used as seal because of the figures stamped on it<sup>134</sup>, as 20 parts of stater<sup>135</sup>, often from silver.

ΤΕΡΜΗΣΙΟΝ (π): Trimissis, Byzantine coin as "one third", is a gold coin=1/3 solidus (holkottinos), (about 1.5 gm or less) equals 8 carats (and also 80 or 96 of  $\omega\epsilon$ ).

ΤΕΡΖΑΜ (π): Dirham<sup>136</sup>, a silver coin called that in Islamic era, suggested from the Greek name of coin called drachma.

ΤΕΤΑΡΤΟΝ (π): means "quarter" but I think it refers to a coin minted from copper (or bronze)<sup>137</sup>

ΦΟΛΟΣ, ΦΟΡΟΣ, ΦΟΖΛΙΣ (π): follis in Latin, as coin less than carat<sup>138</sup>, minted from bronze or copper, common on Islamic era, its name means now in Egypt as *fellos* means "money"

ΧΡΥΣΟΣ (π): gold coin from Greek word<sup>139</sup>

ΧΡΗΜΑ : money, currency, from Greek word<sup>140</sup>

$\omega\epsilon$ : small coin, known in Coptic only and no Greek equivalent for it, lit means "wood"<sup>141</sup>, but it made of bronze, mentioned sometimes as  $\omega\epsilon$   $\eta\chi\omicron\mu\eta\tau$  equals 1/10 or 1/12 of carat.

ΧΑΤ (π): general term for coins minted of silver<sup>142</sup>.

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<sup>134</sup> Crum, Copt. Dict., 397a, CED, p. 180

<sup>135</sup> Cherix, Index Grec-Copte, 113b

<sup>136</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 889b

<sup>137</sup> See examples in: Förster WB, 803

<sup>138</sup> Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 91b

<sup>139</sup> Cherix, Index Grec-Copte, 177a, Abdelnoor, Dictionary, 895b

<sup>140</sup> Online Coptic Dictionary

<sup>141</sup> **I think the name of this coin relating to consideration the wood is less than metal and also  $\omega\epsilon$  means cross perhaps there was a cross printed on it, see pl. no.5 here.**

<sup>142</sup> CED, p. 298

ϪΟΖΟΚΟΤΤΙΝΟΣ, ΖΟΥΚΤ , ϪΟΖΟΚ/ (π, τ): olokottinos in Coptic and Greek , Latin as solidus, a gold Byzantine coin , known in Arabic as Dinar, known in Roman Empire after 312 A.D., in Bohairic written as ΖΟΥΚΟΧΕ<sup>143</sup> and became feminine in some dialects . The standard weight of this coin is 4.5 gm of gold, equals approx. 24 carats, see: ΠΑΨϪΟΖΟΚ/ , ΤΕΡΜΗΝΣΙΟΝ and ΠΑΨΤΕΡ/

ϪΟΖΟΚΟΤΤΙΝΟΣ ΠΑΡΙΘΜΑ: reckoned solidus equals 22 carats<sup>144</sup>

ϪΟΜΗΤ , ϪΟΜΤ, ϪΑΜΤ(Π): money, copper or bronze coins<sup>145</sup>

ϪΙΝϪΩΡ, ΧΕΝϪΩΡ (Π): Demotic as krkr, a silver coin, Latin as talent , coin and weight from Hebrew kikar<sup>146</sup>. I think it is used as weight when mentioned equals 6000 drachma (1500 denarii)<sup>147</sup>, it is difficult to be coin in this weight. Mentioned also as a coin has incredible value.

ϪΙΣΚΙΤΕ: half kite = one drachma as silver coin.

ϪΡΟΜΠΕΝΝΟΥΒ: "gold dove" mentioned sometimes in loan agreements and other texts, it is suggested to be coin of gold or bronze<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Many forms in Cherix, Index Grec-Copte , 115b

<sup>144</sup> The same as nomisma arithma , see half nomisma arithma worth 11 carats , and one third of nomisma arithma worth 7 1/4, in Worp, Tax Receipts, 312.

<sup>145</sup> CED, P.283, P. Kellis 1, 58

<sup>146</sup> CED, p.334

<sup>147</sup> P. Kellis 1, 59

<sup>148</sup> O. Saint Marc., no. 267

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سلسلة كتب في المجتمع القبطي القديم  
العدد الأول

احدى عشرة بردية قبطية من مكتبة باينكى  
جامعة ييل الأمريكية  
مع قائمة بالعملات فى القبطية



اعداد ونشر  
د. سهير أحمد

القاهرة ٢٠٢٠

نسخة مجانية غير مخصصة للبيع