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Collection Froehner 81, a Christian epitaph from Nubia : notes on the reading

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.
To Zbyszek, Master and Friend,

μνήμη ἔχαριν

Collection Froehner 81 is a Greek Christian epitaph containing a prayer for the dead of the Euchologion Mega type. The prayer indicates a Nubian origin of the stone, though its exact provenance is unknown. In analogy to other Nubian epitaphs of this group, the inscription lists at its end information...
tion about the deceased, the date of his demise in particular. This fragment of the inscription was read by previous editors in various ways (listed are only the important variants of the reading):

1. ἀπὸ μαρτύρων | ἡτει ξ', σελήνης (ἡμέρα), ιθ' Χοιάκ, ἀνάπαυσον | (καὶ τὸν) γράφαντα — A. Dumont.
2. ἀπὸ μαρτύρων | (ἡτει) ξ', σελήνης (ἡμέρα), ιθ' Χοιάκ. Σωτηρ ἀνάπαυςον | καὶ τὸν γράφαντα — A. Dumont, Th. Homolle.
3. ἀπὸ μαρτύρων ιθ' σελήνην ιθ' Χοίακ. ΟΠ ἀναπαύσοο ΞΠ αψ(?).ονα — W. Weissbrodt
4. ἀπὸ μαρτυρων | θξ σεληνι ιθ' Χοιακ πρ(ωτη), άναπανσον | [και του] γραφουνα ("γραφουνα pour γραφαντα") — G. Lefebvre
5. ἀπὸ μαρτυρων | θξ σεληνι ιθ' Χοιακ(α)κ σ[ω]τ(η)ρ αναπαυσοο [και του] γραφουνια — S. de Ricci.
6. ἀπὸ μαρτυρων | — : σεληνι ιθ' Χοιακ(α)κ πι(κ)τ(η)ρ ἀναπαυσον | ΟΤΑΨΟΝΑ — L. Robert.

A verification of these readings is possible thanks to an excellent photograph of the inscription accompanying Robert’s publication. On its basis the transliteration of ll. 21-23 should be as follows:

21 ΑΠΟ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΩΝ
22 ΣΕΛΗΝΙ ιθ' ΧΟΙΑΚ ΠΡΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΟΝ
23 ΟΒ ΔΡΟΝΑ

This gives the reading:

21 ἀπὸ Μαρτύρων
22 ἡτει Χοιάκ, ἀνάπαυσον
23 ὉΟΒ ΔΡΟΝΑ.

II. 21-22: For the date contained in these lines, cf. R. S. Bagnall, K. A. Worp, Chronological Systems of Byzantine Egypt, (= "Studia Amstelodamensia" I), Zutphen 1978, p. 49; id., BASP XVII, 1980, p. 18; id., CdE LXI, 1986, p. 353. Believing that a large theta with double circle represents the numeral 900, Bagnall and Worp date this inscription to Choiak 1st, year 960 of the Era of the Martyrs, i.e. November 27, 1243. W. Weissbrodt guessed at this date⁴, which S. de Ricci recognized⁵ and U. Monneret de Villard ac-

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³ Weissbrodt, “Verzeichniss ... Braunsberg”, WS 1905/6, p. 22 sq. (cf. note 1).
⁴ De Ricci, CRAI 1909, p. 161 (cf. note 1).
cepted. The day given according to the lunar calendar (19th of the moon) is late by 7 days in comparison to the day of the month (Choiak 1st).

II. 22-23: A horizontal stroke above OB at the beginning of line 24 clearly indicates that we are dealing here with a numeral — 72. What follows the numeral is not in Greek but in Old Nubian: ἀγόνα (= añona). It is the third person singular indicative of the preterite of the verb ἀνόην — “to live”. To my knowledge, this form of ἀνοί does not have been attested till now, but analogous constructions occur frequently in Old Nubian texts. Most probably the preterite I appears here in its function of “a descriptive imperfect” and thus, the final fragment of the inscription is to be read: ἀνάπαυσον. ὦ ἀγόνα. — “(God), give rest to him). He lived 72 (years).

Other derivatives from the root ἀνοί occur in the same place in other Nubian epitaphs with the prayer of the Euchologion Mega Type. In an inscription of unknown provenance, dated to A.D. 1157, the final clause in Old Nubian reads as follows: ἀνάπαυσον ὦ ἀγόνα Ἰσραήλ. ἀγόνα Ἰσραήλ Ἰσραήλ Ἰσραήλ Ἰσραήλ Ἰσραήλ Ἐβράων — “all the days of her life were 72. She departed on Mesore 13th”. The third example comes

7 The terminology used is that of G. M. BROWNE, Nubian Verbal System, BASP XIX, 1982, pp. 9-38. E. ZYCHLARZ, Grundzüge der nubischen Grammatik im christlichen Frühmittelalter (Ainubisch) (= “Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes” XVIII, 1). Leipzig 1928, p. 61, calls this conjugation “emphatisch” and the tense “modus perfecti”.
8 BROWNE, BASP XIX, 1982, p. 23; cf. also infra: ἀποκατάστασις, preterite I from the verb ἀπαίτη — “to perish”.
9 BROWNE, loc.cit.
10 H. KORTENBEUTEL, Ein griechischer Grabstein aus Nubien, ZNTW XXXVII, 1938, pp. 61-64 (= SB V 8763 = TIBILETTI BRUNO, Iscr. Nubiane 10). It should be noted that the Old Nubian text correctly read by Kortenbeutel was misprinted by the editor of SB V and M. G. TIBILETTI Bruno.
11 For this particular use of the word “day” (mainly in Greek texts) in the meaning “year” while quoting the years of life in Nubian epitaphs, cf. the discussion by T. Hägg, op. cit. (note 1), p. 59.
12 J. W. B. BARNES, Christian Monuments from Nubia, “Kush” II, 1954, p. 28, pl. Vb, fig. 2 (transliteration). As for the date, the editor notes: “precise date omitted; seems contemporary with last” (another inscription with the prayer of the Euchologion Mega type, dated to A.D. 1161/2 – A.E.). J. W. B. Barnes is mistaken when he thinks that the inscription does not contain the date. In lines 22-23 he transliterates: ἈΠΩ ΜΑΡΙΩ, understanding it most probably (his text edition is lacking) as: ἀπὸ Μαρτύρων. There are no doubts, however, that the reading in this place should be: ἀπὸ Μαρτύρων ω', year 800 of the Era of the Martyrs, A.D. 1084.
The name of the person commemorated in the inscription Collection Froehner 81 is mentioned in it twice (II. 6-7 and 18-19), the letters being in both cases disposed similarly, and was read by all editors as παπά Σωρή Τοσίνα. However, the photograph published by L. Robert shows clearly enough that above the final eta in what was taken until now to be the deceased’s first name there is a suspended letter marking an abbreviation. Most probably this is gamma with a vertical stroke which constitutes an extension of the left stroke of eta. The presence of an abbreviated word prompts me to divide these two fragments of the inscription in a different way: Παπασινε | θηγ( ) Τοσίνα. In this reading I would consider only Παπασινε to be the name of the deceased person. This name has not been attested yet to my knowledge, but in 12th. century documents from Qasr Ibrim written in Old Nubian there are several instances of the name ПАПАСИЧЕР. What is more, in one of these cases (Browne, op. cit., no. 44.7) we read КАПОТИ ПАПАСИЧЕР — “Kapoti, daughter of P.,” and it cannot be excluded that here the name of the father is in fact ПАПАСИЦЕР and the final -N, the suffix of recension. The name ПАПАСИЦЕР derives from ПАПАСИ, Greek loan-word in Old Nubian for bishop. From the same root come also other Old Nubian names ПАПАСИЦ, ПАПАСИНА and ПАПАСИЦОУА. The abbreviated word θηγ( ) appears to denote the function of ПАПАСИЦЕР, Papasine theg( ) of Tossine, but I am unable to reconstruct its full form. If so, ПАСИЦЕР is probably a toponym connected with Papasine’s function or the name of another person in whose employ Papasine stayed.

14 L. Robert, op. cit. (footnote 1), p. 126, remarks: “on voit que le H apres le Θ, semble lié à un I”.
16 Tibiletti Bruno, no. 16 (= SB 6035 = 8765): Faras, A. D. 1181; Browne, op. cit., nos. 30.10, 30.37, 31.11, 34 II.32, 58.12.
17 Browne, op. cit., 33.17, 33.18, 33 1.34, 61.3, 62 II.4.
19 The presence of theta which in Old Nubian appears only in loan-words may suggest that the abbreviated word is a Greek one.