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AN OLD NUBIAN SALE FROM GEBEL ADDA*

THE SITE OF GEBEL ADDA was excavated by the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) under the direction of Nicholas B. Millet between 1963 and 1966 as part of the salvage archaeological campaign in Nubia, after earlier exploration by Ugo Monneret de Villard and Mustafa el-Amir of the University of Alexandria.¹ Although many of the finds from

* The following sigla and abbreviations are used in the article: Aswan – F. LI. GRIFFITH, ‘Christian documents from Nubia’, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 14 (1928), pp. 18–30; AW – A. ŁAJTAR & V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, ‘Two Old Nubian inscriptions from Akasha West’, *Études et travaux* 32 (2019), pp. 89–97; DBMNT – Database of Medieval Nubian Texts, <<http://www.dbmnt.uw.edu.pl/>> (last accessed 25 November 2022); GAB – V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, A. ŁAJTAR, & M. WOŹNIAK, ‘The Gebel Adda burial shroud from the Royal Ontario Museum’, in preparation; I. *Banganarti* II – A. ŁAJTAR, *A Late Christian Pilgrimage Centre in Nubia: The Evidence of Wall Inscriptions in the Upper Church at Banganarti* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 39], Leuven – Paris – Bristol, Ct. 2020; K. – G. M. BROWNE, *Literary Texts in Old Nubian* [= *Beiträge zur Sudanforschung Beiheft* 5], Vienna – Mödling 1989, pp. 10–15; Nauri – GRIFFITH, ‘Christian documents’, pp. 12–18; OND – G. M. BROWNE, *Old Nubian Dictionary* [= *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 556, *Subsidia* 90], Leuven 1996; P. *Qasr Ibrim* III – G. M. BROWNE, *Old Nubian Texts from Qasr Ibrim III* [= *Texts from Excavations* 12], London 1991; P. *Qasr Ibrim* IV – G. R. RUFFINI, *The Bishop, the Eparch and the King: Old Nubian Texts from Qasr Ibrim IV* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 22], Warsaw 2014; WN – V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, ‘The Old Nubian memorial for King George’, [in:] A. ŁAJTAR & J. VAN DER VLIET (eds.), *Nubian Voices: Studies in Christian Nubian Culture* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 15], Warsaw 2011, pp. 225–262; WNS – M. M. KHALIL, *Wörterbuch der nubischen Sprache (Fadidja/Mahas-Dialekte)*, Warsaw 1996.

¹ N. B. MILLET, ‘Gebel Adda. Preliminary report for 1963’, *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 2 (1963), pp. 147–165, at 147. The author would like to thank Adam

Gebel Adda remain unpublished, Adam Łajtar published a survey of the textual finds in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto,² as well as an overview of the twenty-nine Old Nubian texts held there.³ Recently, he published a fragmentary calendar⁴ and, in collaboration with the present author, a bilingual Old Nubian-Greek lunary,⁵ while an edition of four Old Nubian burial shrouds is currently in preparation.⁶

The present text, an Old Nubian land sale (DBMNT 700), was uncovered during the fourth and last season of the ARCE mission between 26 December 1965 and 26 April 1966. According to the preliminary report of Millet, the sale was found ‘at a considerable distance from the palace’,⁷ part of ‘Late Christian remains’. According to Millet, the palace was likely ‘one of the residences of a king who may well have maintained a movable court, going from town to town in his limited domain’.⁸

The document, describing a land sale from the perspective of a woman called Sewamē, is written in a Nubian-type majuscule in black ink on leather. The dimensions of the text are unknown. The transcription offered below is based on photographs made by Kaori Kobayashi in August 2020,⁹

Łajtar for his helpful comments to a draft of this paper and Grzegorz Ochała for several pertinent onomastical observations during his copyediting and typesetting of this text.

² A. ŁAJTAR, ‘A survey of Christian textual finds from Gebel Adda in the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto’, [in:] J. R. ANDERSON & D. A. WELSBY (eds.), *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond. Proceedings of the 12th International Conference for Nubian Studies* [= *British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan* 1], Leuven – Paris – Walpole, MA 2014, pp. 951–959.

³ A. ŁAJTAR, ‘Old Nubian texts from Gebel Adda in the Royal Ontario Museum’, *Dota-wo: A Journal of Nubian Studies* 1 (2014), pp. 185–201.

⁴ A. ŁAJTAR & E. RIZOS, ‘A fragment of a liturgical calendar from Gebel Adda (Egyptian Nubia)’, *Analecta Bollandiana* 138 (2020), pp. 86–92.

⁵ A. ŁAJTAR & V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, ‘An Old Nubian lunary with a Greek addition from Gebel Adda’, *Le Muséon* 133/1–2 (2020), pp. 13–30.

⁶ V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, A. ŁAJTAR, & M. WOŹNIAK, ‘Four Old Nubian burial shrouds from Gebel Adda’, in preparation.

⁷ N. B. MILLET, ‘Gebel Adda preliminary report, 1965–66’, *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 6 (1967), pp. 53–63, at 62.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹ To my great frustration, I was unable to locate the document, which previously had been seen by Robin Seignobos, during my own visit to the museum in August 2019. Kobayashi ini-

when the document was on display at the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities in Cairo; the inventory number of the document, as well as its present whereabouts remain unknown.

- † $\overline{\text{πρo}}$ εινι παρρε ειςακα εινι αννογ̃τι
 ὀανα δι σε̃αμηκα Δενο διον ειςα
 σε̃εκα εινι λιο νε̃αρηκα τ̃σελο
 4 εнка διειρα γακαριλο τοτιλα αссила
 διειρα γακαριλο γ̃αρηκα ὀα̃τι ενна κρ̃
 γογ̃ακα ὀα̃τι τοτα γρ̃α ὀογαὀαγα καει̃α πα-
 λαμη ὀειτενλο γελλика ορ̃α παλαμη ὀοραμη
 8 † εν ονοματι τογ̃ $\overline{\text{πρc}}$ κ̃ τογ̃ $\overline{\text{ιγ}}$ κ̃ τογ̃ α̃γιογ̃ $\overline{\text{πνα}}$
 ὀμνη παπιδε οη γαδε οη σε̃γ̃ε̃δεκε̃ν τα̃γ̃-
 σιλο ὀω̃α παρτακοναλο ἱ̃ω̃ηλ ογρογ̃α ἱ̃νι ἱ̃σ̃ο̃ηη
 ε̃[ο]η̃νενα εινιν ἱ̃σακι φογ̃εα ε̃ι̃νιν κοα̃δι соγ̃-
 12 τογ̃ε̃ εινιν μογ̃κογ̃τ̃ Δοκναγ̃ια̃ εινιν [[α]] αββα
 мерки παпaci εφραμ πα̃πα̃са εινιν ει̃κι̃ω̃ι̃ мiki-
 тоγ̃τογ̃ сого̃ὀа εινιν δι σε̃αμη αν γακα
 νε̃αρηκα̃ παρρε та̃νηка ὀаноса Δαппиро διον
 16 παρρε αν̃ника қассака τ̃σελο γακι̃κ̃ψ̃φ̃ло ма-
 тоγ̃ παρрека τ̃σεло εινι ма̃та̃ри̃го̃γ̃ло ὀер̃те̃па
 коγ̃р̃ке̃ти γα̃ω̃ω̃αλο φογ̃α̃ло ам̃ма̃ψ̃αλο γα̃π̃-
 ре̃ло те̃ψ̃фи̃га̃ὀ̃ὀ̃ло πολολο πα̃π̃и̃не̃γα̃ло ει̃σι̃то̃ти̃ло
 20 Δε̃ω̃ω̃ι̃ло τι̃Δα̃γ̃αλο πε̃τι̃ρι̃ло τι̃ма̃κ̃ε̃σι̃ло $\overline{\text{ϕ}}$ λο ογ̃ρ̃-
 ти̃га̃ὀ̃а $\overline{\text{ϕ}}$ ло ρε̃. а̃ ρ̃а̃фа̃η̃λ γα̃ψ̃и̃μι̃ло ма̃ρ̃то̃с̃ε̃а
 Δι̃ὀ̃го̃но̃ πε̃та̃ [4-6] το̃λο̃ [3-4] τι̃ω̃α̃ло . . . ι̃α̃λο̃ τ̃λ̃. . . γ̃а
 [3-4] ρ̃η̃ τ̃ *traces*
 24 [5-6] . . α̃[μ]η̃ το̃ . *traces* τογ̃λα̃ τε̃με̃. α̃ло̃
traces νε̃λο̃ [3-4] ο̃. ι̃α̃ $\overline{\text{ϕ}}$ λο̃ τι̃
traces τι̃. . κ̃ο̃ [7-9] πα̃ει̃σε̃λ̃ο̃ [7-8]
 τογ̃ски̃ α̃λο̃ . . . а̃ [7-8] ε̃ ει̃μι̃ι̃λ̃. . λο̃ τι̃η̃ι̃. . λο̃

tially shared the photos on Twitter on 8 August 2020 (https://twitter.com/iunu_akorisi/status/1291933952400400386), after which they were tagged as Old Nubian by Sō Miyagawa. After I contacted Kobayashi, they were kind enough to send me high-res photos.

† *First. When you sold your son Annouwi's plot of land to me Sewamē, I sold your other son Lio(s plot of land) to (my son) Newarē. Whoever denies this in his heart, denies in his heart his son and daughter. May he cause his mother to disavow him and his son to exclaim shame, and leave naked and burning hot! May he hastily dress in glowing coals and leave. May he go!*

† *In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen. It was written in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. While Iōēl is king, Iēsousonē is queen mother, Isaki is overseer of the granaries, Koddī is scribe, Moukout is doknaši, Bishop Abba Merki is bishop of Ibrim, Eikiši is eparch of the Nobadians. When I, Sewamē, sold his (sc. Lio's) plot of land to my son Newarē, I sold my own plot of land to Kassa. Without denial I have sold the eastern land.*

These (are the) witnesses: Jertepa Kourketi the ḡašš, Šouda, Ammaña, Napire, Teññigajji, Polo, Papinenga, Eisitoti, Dešši, Tidaḡa, Petiri, the timmakis, the priest, Ourtigajai the priest, [---] the ḡaṇimi of (the Church of) Raphael, Martosḡa the deacon, [---] I wrote [---] (I received) 1 touski bread [---] millet (?) [---].

GRAMMATICAL ANALYSIS

1. $\overline{\text{πρϚ}}$: abbreviation for $\overline{\text{πρϚη}}$ *vel sim.* 'first', cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 109 r^o, l. 1: $\overline{\text{πρϚη}}$.

$\epsilon\iota\iota$: second singular personal pronoun genitive/property form $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ (*OND*, p. 74), frequently encountered in documentary texts, for example, *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 72 r^o, ll. 15–16: $\overline{\text{Ϛ}}\lambda\iota\theta\iota \text{ } \overline{\text{Ϛ}}\alpha\kappa\iota\overline{\text{η}} \text{ } \epsilon\alpha\iota\iota\iota \text{ } \epsilon\alpha\pi\overline{\text{λ}} \text{ } \overline{\text{Ϛ}}\lambda\text{ο}$, 'Of the son of Olithi Isak: 3 gold pieces'. Note that in this case and elsewhere in the text, the genitive pronoun precedes the noun.

$\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$: $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$, 'plot of land' (*OND*, p. 147). There is no case marking, which suggests that $\epsilon\iota\alpha\kappa\alpha$ belongs to the same noun phrase.

$\epsilon\iota\alpha\kappa\alpha$: $\epsilon\alpha\rho$, 'son' (*OND*, p. 196), with second singular possessive prefix $\epsilon\iota$ - and accusative $-\kappa\alpha$. $\epsilon\iota\iota \pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon \epsilon\iota\alpha\kappa\alpha$ is the direct object of $\delta\alpha\iota\alpha \dots \Delta\epsilon\iota\sigma\text{o}$ in line 2.

$\epsilon\iota\iota$: see above, $\epsilon\iota\iota$.

$\alpha\iota\iota\iota\overline{\text{Ϛ}}\text{η}$: proper name Annouwi, cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 109 r^o, l. 1: $\alpha\iota\iota\iota\overline{\text{Ϛ}}\text{η}$. For the construction $\epsilon\iota\iota \pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon \epsilon\iota\alpha\kappa\alpha \epsilon\iota\iota \alpha\iota\iota\iota\overline{\text{Ϛ}}\text{η}$, see the general commentary below.

2. $\delta\alpha\iota\alpha$: $\delta\alpha\iota$, 'to exchange' (*OND*, p. 187), with predicate marker $-\alpha$. Converb dependent on $\Delta\epsilon\iota\sigma\text{o}$. $\delta\alpha\iota\alpha \Delta\epsilon\iota\sigma\text{o}$ means 'to sell' (*OND*, p. 187).

αι: first person singular personal pronoun.

σεῖαμηκα: previously unattested proper name Sewamē with accusative -κα. Indirect object of δανα ... ΔΕΝΟ in line 2. The name σεῖαμη has not been attested elsewhere, but follows the structure of verb root + predicate marker -α and jussive -μη, so literally ‘may he/she inherit’. Cf. similar names such as κοναμη, αφαμη, and σογαμη.¹⁰

ΔΕΝΟ: ΔΕΝ, ‘to give (to me)’, perhaps < ΔΕΝΟΝ with past 1 second / third person singular ending, cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 37, l. 17: αικα δανα ΔΕΝΟΝ ‘(she) sold it to me’. For the loss of the final *nu*, cf. l. 4: εακαριλο, and the general commentary.

αιον: first person singular personal pronoun αι with topic marker -ον.

ειγα: ‘your son’ with predicate marker -α in the scope of σεῖεκα in the next line; cf. l. 1: ειγακα.

3. σεῖεκα: σεγῆ, ‘other’ (*OND*, p. 158), with accusative -κα. Direct object of τῶσελο.

εινι: see l. 1: εινι.

λιο: previously unattested proper name. Initial *lambda* is exceedingly rare in a proper name, but perhaps should be compared here to another name starting with a liquid, *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 71 r^o, l. 8: ριδ. Another option is a variant of the Greek name λεων, with the final *nu* dropped. παρρε is here implied, and made later explicit in line 15: παρρε ταννικα. For the construction ειγα σεῖεκα εινι λιο, see the general commentary below.

νεῖαρηκα: previously unattested proper name Newarē with accusative -κα. Indirect object of τῶσελο.

τῶσελο: τῆ, ‘to give (to s.o. else)’, with past 2 -c, first person singular + predicate marker -ε and focus marker -λο. Implied is δανα, with the meaning of ‘to sell (to s.o. else)’.

4. ενκα: proximal demonstrative pronoun ε(ι)ν (*OND*, p. 70) with accusative -κα. Object of εακαριλο.

αιερα: αι(ρ), ‘heart’ (*OND*, l. 7), with locative -(λ)α.

εακαριλο: unattested form of εαγτ, ‘to deny’ (*OND*, p. 194). This verb is part of the curse formula, which here ends in line 7 with the jussive verbs παλαμη δοραμη. For further discussion, see the general commentary below.

τοτιλα: τοτ, ‘son, child’ (*OND*, p. 180), with locative -(λ)α.

ασιλα: ας, ‘daughter’ (*OND*, p. 20), with locative -(λ)α. For the geminated *sigma*, cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 52, l. 7: ασιλαεκελκα. The two datives τοτιλα ασιλα here appear instead of the otherwise attested comitative -ααλ, ‘against’, cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* 35, ll. 15–16: τλλλααλ εαγτιραλο, ‘denies against God’, and ll. 17–18: τογσκο εῶεααλ εαγτιραλο, ‘denies against the Holy Trinity’.

¹⁰ I thank Grzegorz Ochała for this suggestion.

5. αἰεῖρα: see l. 4: αἰεῖρα.

γακαρίλο: see l. 4: γακαρίλο.

ῥαρμικα: previously unattested noun with accusative -κα. Probably related to the Nobiin *waram*, an interjection meaning ‘no’ (G. W. Murray, *An English–Nubian Comparative Dictionary* [= *Harvard African Studies* 4], London 1923, p. 184). For the epenthetic vowel, cf. ῥαρμ > N. *har(a)m*, ‘heaven’ (WNS, p. 128). Object of δαῖτι; together ῥαρμικα δαῖτι must mean something like ‘to publicly say no, disavow’. ῥαρμικα δαῖτι ἐννα κῥᾱ is parallel to γοῦδκα δαῖτι τοῦτα γῥᾱ in line 6.

δαῖτι: δαῖ, ‘to announce publicly’ (OND, p. 188). The form is perhaps an infinitive in -ι.

ἐννα: ἐν, ‘mother’ (OND, p. 72), with accusative -κα and progressive assimilation ἐνκα > ἐννα.

κῥᾱ: causative verb γῥ with predicate marker -α, cf. l. 6: γῥᾱ. Converb dependent on παλαμν in line 6.

6. γοῦδκα: previously unattested form of γοῦτ-, ‘shame’ (OND, p. 33), with accusative -κα, elsewhere attested as K. 31, ll. 1–2: γοῦτ-τ-, ‘to shame’, and in the complex noun K. 25, l. 5: γῥ-τᾱ-εἰκανε-, ‘shame(fulness)’. Object of δαῖτι.

δαῖτι: see l. 5: δαῖτι.

τοῦτα: τοῦτ, ‘son, child’, with accusative -κα, progressive assimilation, and haplography: τοῦτκα > τοῦττα (cf. AW 2, l. 3: τοῦττα) > τοῦτα.

γῥᾱ: causative verb γῥ with predicate marker -α. Converb dependent on παλαμν.

δοῖαδοῖα: previously unattested reduplicated verb with predicate marker -α. Related to *jugajug*, ‘to burn completely’,¹¹ from *jug*, ‘brennen; heiß sein’ (WNS, p. 130). Converb dependent on παλαμν. See general commentary.

καεῖῥα: previously unattested form of καῖ(ει), ‘to be naked’ (OND, p. 84), with predicate marker -α. Converb dependent on παλαμν.

παλαμν: παλ, ‘to leave’ (OND, p. 143), with predicate marker -α and singular jussive -μν.

7. δειτενλο: previously unattested compound noun. The first part is no doubt δει, ‘foot’ (OND, p. 123), the second part -τεν is likely related to the Nobiin *tin*, ‘Hast, Eile’ (WNS, p. 106). With locative -λο and an adverbial interpretation, ‘on hasty feet, hastily’.

εἰλλικα: previously unattested noun, related to the Nobiin *nell*, ‘Glut, glühende Kohle’ (WNS, p. 78). The meaning makes sense in the context of δοῖαδοῖα in line 6. Object of οῖα.

οῖα: previously unattested verb with predicate marker -α. Possibly related to the Nobiin *orj*, ‘to put on as clothing, dress’.¹²

¹¹ Personal communication of Mazin Khalil and Elyas Abdu Khalil Suleman.

¹² Personal communication of Mazin Khalil and Elyas Abdu Khalil Suleman, who told me that Mahas speakers use the verb for any type of clothing, whereas Halfawi only use

παλαμν: see l. 6: παλαμν.

δοραμν: δορ, 'to go' (*OND*, p. 191), with predicate marker -α and singular jussive -μν.

8. εν ονοματι του πρε ζ του ιϛ ζ του αγιου πνα δμην: Greek invocation of the Trinity.

9. παπιδε: παπ, 'father' (*OND*, p. 144), with coordinator -δε.

ον: ον, 'and'.

εαδε: εα(ρ), 'son', with coordinator -δε.

σεγεδδεκεν: abbreviation of σεγαρτι εδς, 'Holy Spirit' (*OND*, pp. 157, 200), with terminal coordinator -δεκε(ρ) and genitive -ν. Dependent on ταδεσιλο.

ταδεσιλο: ταδε, 'name' (*OND*, p. 168), with locative -λο

10. δωδ: postposition δωδ, 'through, by', following locative-marked ταδεσιλο.

παρτακοναλο: πα(ρ), 'to write' (*OND*, p. 145), with passive -τακ, past 1 second /third person singular -ον, predicate marker -α, and focus marker -λο.

ιδηλ: proper name Iōēl. See the general commentary.

ογρογδ: ογρογ, 'king' (*OND*, p. 140), with predicate marker -δ.

ινι: probably a form of ειν, 'to be' (*OND*, p. 69), with phonologically reduced ending, presumably present second/third singular -ιν; cf. l. 11: ειμιν. Not to be confused with ειμι in lines 1 and 3.

ιδωνη: proper name Iēsousonē. See the general commentary.

11. ε[ο]μημενα: εονμεν, 'queen mother' (*OND*, p. 203), with predicate marker -α. The smudge to the left of the second *nu* is probably the first *nu* squished in after the no longer legible *omikron*.

ειμιν: ειμ, 'to be', with present second/third singular -ιν.

ισακι: proper name Isaki. See the general commentary.

ωογεα: ωογεα, 'overseer of the granaries' (*OND*, p. 186), probably related to the Nobiin *šouna*, 'Varratsbehälter aus Lehm, Kornspeicher' (*WNS*, p. 124).¹³

εϛμιν: see l. 11: ειμιν.

κοδαι: proper name Koddi, also attested in *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 63, l. 5, and *I. Banganarti* II 226.

σογτογδε: σογντογδε, 'scribe' (*OND*, p. 162), frequently attested official title, for instance in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 35, l. 7; 36, l. 9; and *I. Banganarti* II 294, l. 2. The spelling without the *nu* was heretofore unattested.

12. ειμιν: see l. 11: ειμιν.

μωγκογτ: previously unattested proper name Moukout.

it for shoes. They provided the example *kitig orjaja kajana*, 'wear (pl.) some clothes and come'.

¹³ See also A. OSMAN, 'The post-medieval kingdom of Kokka', [in:] J. M. PLUMLEY (ed.), *Nubian Studies: Proceedings of the Symposium for Nubian Studies, Selwyn College, Cambridge, 1978*, Warminster 1982, pp. 185–197, at 195.

ΔΟΚΝΑΩΙΔ: *doknašī* (official title), also attested elsewhere as *joknaš(š)il*,¹⁴ with predicate marker -α.

ΕΙΝΙΝ: see l. 11, ΕΙΝΙΝ.

ΑΒΒΑ: honorific title *abba* (*OND*, p. 3).¹⁵

13. ΜΕΡΚΙ: proper name Merki, also attested in, for example, *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 63, l. 6, and IV 88 r^o, l. 1. Probably a hypochoristic form of μερκοῦριος.

ΠΑΠΑΣΙ: παπας, 'bishop' (*OND*, p. 145).

ΕΦΡΑΜ: toponym Ibrim, usually spelled without initial *epsilon*, cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* II 25, l. 11: ΦΡΜ; III 34 ii, l. 11: ΦΡΜ; 36 I, l. 7: ΦΡΜ; but see *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 67, l. 7: ΕΦΡΕΜ. The spelling with the *alpha* was heretofore unattested. Genitive is dropped.

ΠΑ\ΠΑ\СА: παпас, 'bishop', with predicate marker -α.

ΕΙΝΙΝ: see l. 11: ΕΙΝΙΝ.

ΕΙΚΩΙ: either the proper name Eikiši or the official title *eikši*, cf. Aswan, l. 11: ΕΙΚΩΙ.

ΜΙΚΙΤΟΥΤΟΥ: миг, 'Nobadia', with nominalizer -т and plural marker -тоу. Genitive is dropped.

14. СОГОДА: согод, 'eparch' (*OND*, p. 160), with predicate marker -α.

ΕΙΝΙΝ: see l. 11: ΕΙΝΙΝ.

ΑΙ: first person singular personal pronoun.

СЕЖАМН: proper name Sewamē; see l. 2: СЕЖАМНКА. ΑΙ СЕЖАМН is the subject of ΘΑΝΟΣΑ ΔΑΠΠΙΡΟ.

ΑΝ: genitive of the first person singular personal pronoun.

ΓΑΚΚΑ: Γαρ, 'son', with accusative -κα.

15. ΝΕΨΑΡΗΚΑ: proper name Newarē with accusative -κα; see l. 3: ΝΕΨΑΡΗΚΑ. Indirect object of ΘΑΝΟΣΑ ΔΑΠΠΙΡΟ.

ΠΑΡΡΕ: парре, 'plot of land'; see l. 1: парре.

ΤΑΝΝΙΚΑ: genitive ΤΑΝ of the third person singular personal pronoun with accusative -κα. ΠΑΡΡΕ ΤΑΝΝΙΚΑ is the direct object of ΘΑΝΟΣΑ ΔΑΠΠΙΡΟ. It is assumed that ΤΑΝΝΙΚΑ refers back to λιο in line 3.

ΘΑΝΟΣΑ: дан, with suffix -ос, 'to sell' (*OND*, p. 188), and predicate marker -α.

¹⁴ For an overview, see A. ŁAJTAR, 'A fragmentary wooden icon from the Church of Archangel Raphael (SWN.B.V)', [in:] W. GODLEWSKI, D. DZIERZICKA, & A. ŁAJTAR (eds.), *Dongola 2015–2016. Fieldwork, Conservation and Site Management* [= *PCMA Excavation Series* 5], Warsaw 2018, pp. 147–154, at 154.

¹⁵ See T. DERDA & E. WIPSZYCKA, 'L'emploi des titres *abba*, *apa* et *papas* dans l'Égypte byzantine', *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 24 (1994), pp. 23–56. For its usage inside Nubia, see T. DERDA & A. ŁAJTAR, 'Organization of the Church in medieval Nubia in the light of a newly discovered wall inscription in Dongola', *Jahrbuch des österreichischen Byzantinistik* 69 (2019), pp. 135–154, at 149.

ΔΑΠΠΡΟ: originally ΔΑΠΠῚ, ‘to destroy’ (*OND*, p. 37), but here used in a more recent meaning ‘to sell’, cf. *WNS*, p. 39: *daf-ir-*, ‘verkaufen, weggeben’. ΔΑΝΟCΑ ΔΑΠΠΡ- is a converb construction meaning ‘to sell’. The verbal ending -ο is unclear, though it must agree somehow with the first person singular subject. Perhaps the interpretation should be past tense, as a back vowel usually characterizes past 1; cf. l. 2, ΔΕΝΟ.

ΔΙΟΝ: first person singular personal pronoun ΔΙ with topic marker -ΟΝ; see l. 2: ΔΙΟΝ.

16. ΠΑΡΡΕ: ΠΑΡΡΕ, ‘plot of land’; see l. 1, ΠΑΡΡΕ.

ΔΗΝΙΚΑ: genitive ΔΗ of the first person singular personal pronoun with accusative -ΚΑ. ΠΑΡΡΕ ΔΗΝΙΚΑ is direct object of τῶCΕΛΟ.

ΚΑΣCΑΚΑ: proper name Kassa with accusative -ΚΑ; cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 62 i, l. 4: ΚΑΣΑ-. Indirect object of τῶCΕΛΟ.

τῶCΕΛΟ: see l. 2: τῶCΕΛΟ. Also in this case the meaning is ‘to sell to s.o. else’; ΔΑΝΟCΑ is implied.

ΕΑΚΙΚῚΡΛΟ: ΕΑΓΓ, ‘deny’, with negative nominalizer -ΚῚΡ, ‘without’, and locative -ΛΟ. For the spelling, see l. 4: ΕΑΚΑΡΙΛΟ.

ΜΑΤΟΥ: most likely an unattested variant of ΜΑΤΤΟ, ‘eastern’ (*OND*, p. 112).

17. ΠΑΡΡΕΚΑ: ΠΑΡΡΕ, ‘plot of land’, with accusative -ΚΑ. Direct object of τῶCΕΛΟ.

τῶCΕΛΟ: see l. 2: τῶCΕΛΟ.

ΕΙΝΙ: proximal demonstrative pronoun ‘this, these’. The final *iota* may be a remnant of plural ΕΙΝῚ, perhaps analogous formation to copula ἱνι in line 10.

ΜΑΤΑΡΙΓΟΥΛΟ: ΜΑΤΑΡ, ‘witness’ (*OND*, p. 112), with plural -ΙΓΟΥ and focus marker -ΛΟ.

Ἰερτεπα: previously unattested proper name Jertepa.

18. ΚΟΥῚΡῚΚΕΤΙ: proper name Kourketi, probably with metathesis from Kourteki.¹⁶

ΕΑΩΩΑΛΟ: official title ΕΑΩΩ, ‘*ḥašš*’ (*OND*, p. 198), with predicate marker -Α and focus marker -ΛΟ. Cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 37, l. 5: ΕΑΩ-.

ΩΟΥΔΑΛΟ: proper name Šouda with focus marker -ΛΟ. Multiple attestations from Baganarti as ΩΟΥ(Δ)Α(Δ): *I. Baganarti* II 109, 202, 338, 439, 503, 808, 837.

ΑΜΜΑΦΑΛΟ: previously unattested proper name ‘Ammaña’ with focus marker -ΛΟ.

ΕΑΠΡΕΛΟ: proper name Napire with focus marker -ΛΟ. Also attested in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 36 I, l. 35; 37, l. 31; 42, l. 11; 43, l. 5; IV 91 v^o, l. 1.

19. ΤΕΦΡΙΓΑΔΔΙΛΟ: proper name Teññigajji with focus marker -ΛΟ. Perhaps a composite name of ΤΕΦΡΑ (attested in *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 67, l. 26) and the verbal root ΓΑΔ, ‘to rejoice’ (*OND*, p. 26) which can also be found in a variety of other proper names.

¹⁶ See G. OCHAŁA, ‘Nubica onomastica miscellanea III: Notes on and corrections to personal names found in Christian Nubian written sources’, *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 48 (2018), no. 3.

πολολο: proper name Polo with focus marker -λο. Also attested in *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 109 r^o, l. 20: πολλο. Perhaps related to *I. Banganarti* II 665: πολε, and 216: πολλη.

παπινεαλο: proper name Papinenga, lit. 'son of Papine', with focus marker -λο. The name παπινι has been attested in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 33, l. 15.

εισιτοτιλο: proper name Eisitoti, lit. 'child of Eisi', with focus marker -λο. Attested elsewhere, for instance, in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 37, l. 32: εἰστοτῶλο, and 38, l. 21: ἱηστοτι.

20. δεσωωιλο: proper name Dešši with focus marker -λο. Also attested twice in the as yet unpublished inscriptions from the church in Sonqi Tino.

τιδαααλο: proper name Tidawa with focus marker -λο. Also attested in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 34 ii, l. 14; 40, l. 20; 38 app., l. 3; 47 i, l. 4; 62 ii, l. 7; IV 72 v^o, l. 9.

πετιριλο: proper name Petiri with focus marker -λο. Also attested as πετρι in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 32, l. 21; 33, l. 16; 34 ii, l. 20; 40, l. 21; 41, l. 12; 42, l. 9; IV 72 r^o, l. 5; 73 v^o, l. 5.

τιμμακῆσιλο: official title *timmakis* with focus marker -λο. Usually written with a single *mu*.

ϣλο: siglum for πρεσβυτερος, 'priest', with focus marker -λο.

ογρτιγαδαι: proper name Ourtigajai. Perhaps a composite name with a second part based on the verb γαδ (cf. line 19, τεψφιγαδδωιλο). Also attested as ογρτιγαδη in *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 63, l. 10, and ογρτιγαδι on an ostrakon from Gebbel Adda (A. Łajtar, 'A survey of Christian textual finds from Gebel Adda in the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto', [in:] Anderson & Welsby [eds.], *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond* [cit. n. 2], p. 953, pl. 5, fr. A). The first part ογρτι- has been attested in *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 101 r^o, l. 2: ογρτι; *I. Banganarti* II 281: ογρτια, and as component in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 34 ii, l. 9: ογρτικαωωι.

21. ϣλο: siglum for πρεσβυτερος, 'priest', with focus marker -λο.

ρε. α: unknown.

ραφανη: proper name Raphaël, probably referring to a church.

εαφιμιλο: perhaps a church title *ḡaṇimi* with focus marker -λο, as suggested by the phrase ραφανη εαφιμιλο, 'ḡaṇimi (of the Church of) Raphael'.

μαρτοσεα: proper name 'Martosḡa', perhaps a hypocharistic of μαρτυροφορος with εα, 'son'.

22. διαγονο: διαγον, 'deacon' (*OND*, p. 44), with focus marker -λο assimilated to final nasal; cf. *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 41, l. 11: διακ'νο. For the spelling with *gamma*, see *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 49 i, l. 6: διαγον.

24. τογλα: τογ, 'belly' (*OND*, p. 181), with dative -λα, meaning 'inside'.

τεμε. αλο: unknown word, perhaps cf. Nauri, l. 5: τεμελο.

26. παεισελο: παρ, 'to write' (*OND*, pp. 145–146), with past 2 -ιc, first person singular + predicate marker -ε and focus marker -λο. The presence of this verb here indicates the signature of the scribe.

27. ΤΟΥΚΚΙ: ‘*touski*-bread’ (OND, p. 183).¹⁷

ἄλλο: number ‘1’ with focus marker -λο. ΤΟΥΚΚΙ ἄλλο is no doubt part of the payment the scribe received for his services.

εἰμιιλ: ‘millet (?)’ (OND, p. 69).

...λο: possibly a number followed by focus marker -λο.

τινι: perhaps ΤΙΝΙ, ‘cows’ (OND, p. 173)?

.λο: possibly a number followed by focus marker -λο.

GENERAL COMMENTARY

The Gebel Adda sale can be divided into several distinct sections. The document opens with a description of the sale, namely Sewamē’s sale of Lio’s plot to her son Newarē (ll. 1–3). This description is followed by an extensive curse (ll. 4–7). We then find a cross and the invocation of the Trinity, first in Greek (ll. 8–9) and then in Old Nubian (ll. 9–10), followed by the protocol (ll. 10–14). Then we encounter another description of the same sale, which starts with a repetition of Sewamē’s sale of Lio’s land to her son Newarē, adding the sale of a plot of land to Kassa, which is then described as ‘eastern land’ (ll. 14–17). The document ends with the customary list of witnesses (ll. 17–25?) and the (largely illegible) signature of the scribe, mentioning also his payment (ll. 26–27).

The phenomenon of repetition of the description of land sales is not unattested. For example, the large land sale *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 36 contains several repetitions in the plot description.¹⁸ What is more remarkable, however, is the fact that the first description of the sale precedes the cross and Trinitarian formula. In all other attested Old Nubian land sales, the cross and invocation of the Trinity open the text. Perhaps it is the

¹⁷ See G. OCHAŁA, ‘Old Nubian lists of goods and money: A preliminary presentation’, [in:] ANDERSON & WELSBY (eds.), *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond* (cit. n. 2), pp. 971–976; A. ŁAJTAR & G. OCHAŁA, ‘Two wall inscriptions from the Faras cathedral with lists of people and goods’, [in:] A. ŁAJTAR, G. OCHAŁA, & J. VAN DER VLIET (eds.), *Nubian Voices II: New Texts and Studies on Christian Nubian Culture* [= *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 27] Warsaw 2015, pp. 73–102, at 88–89.

¹⁸ V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, ‘For sale: Geography in Nubian land sales’, *Dotawo: A Journal of Nubian Studies* 6 (2019), pp. 89–111, at 105–106.

case that the sale was initially described more informally, ending with the curse, after which a more proper, legal formulation was added, starting with the cross and the Trinitarian formula and ending with the scribe's signature as customary. This would also explain the shift in authorial perspective. In the first, top version of the sale, the text refers to an unnamed 'you', whereas the second, bottom version of the sale takes the customary approach of describing the transaction from a first-person perspective, 'I, Sewamē'. From the paleography, it appears that both 'versions' of the sale were written by the same scribe, though an interpretation of two subsequent versions of the same sale written on the same document, perhaps at different moments in time, may account for the fact that lines 1–7 curve upwards to the right, whereas lines 8–10 curve downward. This could, however, also be attributed to the curvature of the leather carrier. In any case, the two versions of the sale, the 'informal' and 'formal' one are clearly visually distinct.

The linguistic features of the text indicate an increased influence of spoken language on written conventions. As the orthography of literary Old Nubian remained relatively stable over centuries, it is safe to assume that by the second half of the fifteenth century, there was a considerable distance between these written conventions and the language(s) spoken by the Nubians. We see this in the presence of assimilated spellings such as $\epsilon\eta\eta\eta$ (l. 5) < $\epsilon\eta\kappa\alpha$ and $\tau\omicron\tau\alpha$ (l. 6) < $\tau\omicron\tau\tau\alpha$ < $\tau\omicron\tau\kappa\alpha$, with additional haplography of *tau* also found in $\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\gamma$ (l. 16) and the alternation of velar stops κ and γ , for example in $\epsilon\alpha\kappa$ - (ll. 4 and 16) for the root usually spelled $\epsilon\alpha\gamma\gamma$, and $\mu\iota\kappa\iota\tau$ - (l. 13) for the usual $\mu\iota\gamma\iota\tau$. There is an alternation between $\kappa\tilde{\alpha}$ (l. 5) and $\gamma\tilde{\alpha}$ (l. 6), while in line 22 we find $\Delta\iota\tilde{\alpha}\gamma\omicron\eta\omicron$ for the more frequent $\Delta\iota\tilde{\alpha}\kappa\omicron\eta$.

Striking in this text is also the loss of the word-final *nu* in several different forms. In line 2 we find the second/third person singular past 1 form $\Delta\epsilon\eta\omicron$ < $\Delta\epsilon\eta\omicron\eta$, in line 10 the second/third person singular present form $\epsilon\eta\eta$ < $\epsilon\eta\eta\tilde{\eta}$, and in line 17 the plural proximal demonstrative $\epsilon\eta\eta$ < $\epsilon\eta\eta\tilde{\eta}$. The verbal forms are a direct precursor to the present-day Nobiin third person singular present and past tense endings, which are *-i* and *-o*, respectively.¹⁹ The phonological reduction of the verbal forms is also reflected in

¹⁹ R. WERNER, *Grammatik des Nobiin*, Hamburg 1987, pp. 147, 149.

the curse formula in lines 4–5: $\epsilon\kappa\alpha\ \alpha\iota\epsilon\iota\pi\alpha\ \epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\pi\iota\lambda\omicron\ \tau\omicron\tau\iota\lambda\alpha\ \alpha\varsigma\varsigma\iota\lambda\alpha\ \alpha\iota\epsilon\iota\pi\alpha\ \epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\pi\iota\lambda\omicron$, ‘Whoever denies this in his heart, denies in his heart his son and daughter’. A comparable example is *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 31, ll. 15–16: $\epsilon\tilde{\eta}\kappa\alpha\ \epsilon\alpha\gamma\tau\alpha\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\ \tau\lambda\lambda\lambda\alpha\lambda\ \epsilon\alpha\gamma\tau\iota\pi\alpha\lambda\omicron$, ‘Whoever will deny this, denies against God’. Whereas the main verb $\epsilon\alpha\gamma\tau\iota\pi\alpha\lambda\omicron$ is mirrored here by $\epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\pi\iota\lambda\omicron$ in line 5, with metathesis of the middle α and ι , the form $\epsilon\alpha\gamma\tau\alpha\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron$ has no obvious parallel in $\epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\pi\iota\lambda\omicron$ in line 4, which ought to be a verbal noun, perhaps deriving from $*\epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\pi\iota\lambda\omicron\text{on}$ with final loss of the *nu* as in the forms above, already visible in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 35, l. 17: $\epsilon\alpha\gamma\tau\alpha\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron$, in a release of a servant from 31 July 1188. In that case, we are witnessing here the result of a convergence of the verbal noun and the main verb, with morphological deterioration caused by the relatively high frequency with which such cursing formulas were used.²⁰ Also remarkable is the complete absence of the determiner $-\lambda$, except perhaps in the fossilized form $\epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\pi\iota\lambda\omicron$ (l. 4). This is an otherwise attested feature of late Old Nubian texts.²¹ Another feature is the disappearance of the initial *lambda* of the dative in $\alpha\iota\epsilon\iota\pi\alpha$ (l. 4); cf. GAB 1.4: $\gamma\alpha\rho\mu\alpha\ \omicron\text{N}\ \check{\epsilon}\kappa\tau\tau\alpha$, ‘in heaven and on earth’, and WN 14: $\varsigma\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\ \mu\epsilon\text{NEN}\ \epsilon\epsilon\epsilon\iota\delta\ \mu\epsilon\text{NEN}$, ‘in either word or deed’.

The sale also features a number of words not previously attested in Old Nubian texts, but whose meaning can be plausibly reconstructed based on present-day Nobiin: $\delta\omicron\gamma\alpha\delta\alpha\gamma-$ (l. 6), cf. N. *jugajug*, ‘to burn completely’; $\delta\epsilon\iota-\tau\epsilon\text{N}$ - (l. 7), cf. *tin*, ‘Hast, Eile’ (WNS, p. 106); $\epsilon\epsilon\lambda\lambda-$ (l. 7), cf. N. *nell*, ‘Glut, glühende Kohle’ (WNS, p. 78); $\omicron\pi\delta-$ (l. 7), cf. N. *orj*, ‘to put on as clothing, dress’. We also find an otherwise known root $\alpha\lambda\pi\pi-\text{P}$ - (l. 15), in literary texts usually translated with ‘to destroy’, but here used in a shifted meaning, namely as ‘to sell’, cf. N. *daf-ir*-, ‘verkaufen, weggeben’ (WNS, p. 39). These types of semantic shifts are not unexpected and have already been proposed elsewhere.²²

²⁰ A comparable effect can be seen in the transformation of *hoc est corpus* into *bocus pocus*.

²¹ See also V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, *A Reference Grammar of Old Nubian* [= *Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta* 299], Leuven 2021, § 16.1.

²² For example, $\pi\epsilon\omega\gamma$ usually translated with ‘to judge’, but later used in the meaning ‘to seek, ask’. See V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI & A. TSAKOS, ‘Apostolic memoirs in Old Nubian’, [in:] I. MIROSHNIKOV (ed.), *Parabiblica Coptica*, forthcoming.

Syntactically remarkable are several of the possessive constructions with proper names that occur in the text, in which it appears that possessive pronouns, sometimes repeated in the same clause, have an emphatic function: $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha\kappa\alpha$ $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\alpha\eta\eta\omicron\upsilon\gamma\tau\iota$, ‘your son Annouwi’s land (lit. your land your-son your Annouwi)’ (l. 1); $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha$ $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\alpha$ $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\lambda\iota\omicron$, ‘your other son Lio (lit. your-son other your Lio)’ (ll. 2–3). Both examples have an analogous structure, with an accusative-marked noun phrase, $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha\kappa\alpha$ and $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha$ $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\alpha$, followed by the name of the son, $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\alpha\eta\eta\omicron\upsilon\gamma\tau\iota$ and $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\lambda\iota\omicron$ respectively. What complicates the interpretation of both phrases is the absence of $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ in the second example. Once we supplement that together with the necessary converb, the parallel is evident:

$\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha\kappa\alpha$ $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\alpha\eta\eta\omicron\upsilon\gamma\tau\iota$ $\delta\alpha\eta\alpha$ $\alpha\iota$ $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\mu\eta\kappa\alpha$ $\Delta\epsilon\eta\omicron$
 $\alpha\iota\omicron\eta$ { $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ } $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha$ $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\alpha$ $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\lambda\iota\omicron$ { $\delta\alpha\eta\alpha$ } $\eta\epsilon\tau\alpha\rho\eta\kappa\alpha$ $\tau\bar{\varsigma}\varsigma\epsilon\lambda\omicron$

In both cases we are dealing with a direct object consisting of a plot of land preceding the converb, $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha\kappa\alpha$ $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\alpha\eta\eta\omicron\upsilon\gamma\tau\iota$ and { $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rrho\epsilon$ } $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha$ $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\alpha$ $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\lambda\iota\omicron$ respectively, and an indirect object between the converb and the main verb, $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\mu\eta\kappa\alpha$ and $\eta\epsilon\tau\alpha\rho\eta\kappa\alpha$ respectively. That this is the correct interpretation is confirmed by $\alpha\iota$ $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\mu\eta$ $\alpha\eta$ $\epsilon\alpha\kappa\kappa\alpha$ $\eta\epsilon\tau\alpha\rho\eta\kappa\alpha$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ $\tau\alpha\eta\eta\iota\kappa\alpha$ $\delta\alpha\eta\omicron\varsigma\alpha$ $\Delta\alpha\pi\pi\iota\omicron$ (ll. 14–15), where the direct object $\pi\alpha\rho\rho\epsilon$ $\tau\alpha\eta\eta\iota\kappa\alpha$ refers back to { $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\pi\alpha\rho\rrho\epsilon$ } $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\alpha$ $\varsigma\epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\alpha$ $\epsilon\iota\iota\iota$ $\lambda\iota\omicron$, and the recipient $\eta\epsilon\tau\alpha\rho\eta\kappa\alpha$ is revealed to be the seller Sewamē’s son. Note that in this case the accusative case marker on $\alpha\eta$ $\epsilon\alpha\kappa\kappa\alpha$ is repeated on $\eta\epsilon\tau\alpha\rho\eta\kappa\alpha$, which is rare.

Following the description of the first part of the sale, we find an extensive curse between lines 4 and 7, which features many of the previously unattested words discussed above:

$\epsilon\eta\kappa\alpha$ $\alpha\iota\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha$ $\epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\tau\iota\lambda\omicron$ $\tau\omicron\tau\iota\lambda\alpha$ $\alpha\varsigma\varsigma\iota\lambda\alpha$ $\alpha\iota\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha$ $\epsilon\alpha\kappa\alpha\tau\iota\lambda\omicron$ $\tau\alpha\rho\mu\iota\kappa\alpha$ $\delta\alpha\tau\iota$ $\epsilon\eta\eta\alpha$ $\kappa\bar{\rho}\alpha$
 $\gamma\omicron\gamma\alpha\kappa\alpha$ $\delta\alpha\tau\iota$ $\tau\omicron\tau\alpha$ $\gamma\bar{\rho}\alpha$ $\delta\omicron\gamma\alpha\delta\alpha\gamma\alpha$ $\kappa\alpha\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha$ $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\mu\eta$ $\delta\epsilon\iota\tau\epsilon\eta\lambda\omicron$ $\epsilon\epsilon\lambda\lambda\iota\kappa\alpha$ $\omicron\bar{\rho}\delta\alpha$
 $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\mu\eta$ $\delta\omicron\bar{\rho}\alpha\mu\eta$

Whoever denies this in his heart, denies in his heart his son and daughter. May he cause his mother to disavow him and his son to exclaim shame, and leave naked and burning hot! May he hastily dress in glowing coals and leave. May he go!

We have other curses attested in Old Nubian with a similar pattern, such as the extensive curse toward the end of a royal decree from Qasr Ibrim *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 30, ll. 30–35, a curse in *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 35, ll. 17–18,²³ and a fragment from Faras Cathedral.²⁴ Except for the petrified forms discussed in the grammatical commentary above, the structure of the curse is what we have come to expect. Its imagery invoking the intense heat of burning hot, glowing coals as punishment, however, is stunning and fits with a general tendency of Old Nubian to associate heat with (negative) exposure. In fact, already in the famous triumphal inscription of King Silko at the temple of Kalabsha, we find a reference to the midday heat being used as punishment: ‘(As for) the rulers (*despotes*) of the other peoples who contend with me, I do not allow them to sit in the shade, but in the sun outside’.²⁵ Considering the climate and terrain that the Nubians inhabited, it is indeed unsurprising that such metaphor took root.

We can now turn to the second important aspect of the sale, namely its placement in time. In his excavation report, Millet dates the document to ‘the late fifteenth century’.²⁶ An exact date of 1484 first appears in an article by Stuart Munro-Hay,²⁷ but, frustratingly, without any reference to its origin. The document is also referenced by Adam Łajtar, with a date of 1483,²⁸ again without further argument. Although such a late dating would make the Gebel Adda sale the most recently recorded document in Old

²³ For such curses in the Qasr Ibrim materials, see G. R. RUFFINI, *Medieval Nubia: A Social and Economic History*, Oxford 2012, pp. 138–139.

²⁴ See V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEL, ‘An Old Nubian curse from the Faras Cathedral’, *Études et travaux* 32 (2013), pp. 81–88.

²⁵ T. EIDE *et alii* (eds.), *Fontes historiae Nubiorum: Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD*, III: *From the First to the Sixth Century AD*, Bergen 1998, no. 317.

²⁶ MILLET, ‘Gebel Adda preliminary report, 1965–66’ (cit. n. 7), p. 62.

²⁷ S. C. MUNRO-HAY, ‘Kings and kingdoms of ancient Nubia’, *Rassegna di studi etiopici* 29 (1982–1983), pp. 87–137, at 130, n. 145, and 131; A. ŁAJTAR, ‘New finds of Greek epitaphs at Dongola’, [in:] A. ŁAJTAR & J. VAN DER VLIET (eds.), *Nubian Voices: Studies in Christian Nubian Culture [= The Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement 15]*, Warsaw 2011, pp. 37–94, at 50.

²⁸ ŁAJTAR, ‘A survey of Christian textual finds’ (cit. n. 2), p. 951, and the DBMNT.

Nubian,²⁹ there is no obvious sequence of letters in the Gebel Adda sale that could be construed as a date. It is therefore unclear to me how these datings could have been credibly established in the first place. If we, instead focus on the available evidence at hand, a dating around, possibly before 1463 is more likely. Our main evidence here comes from the protocol between lines 10 and 14:³⁰

ĩḳḥl oγpoyā ĩni
 ĩḳōnh ɛ[o]ḥnēna einin
 ĩcaki ɔoyɛa ɛ'ɣ' nin
 koΔΔi coγtōyɛ einin
 moγkoγt Δoknaɔiā einin
 [[a]] abba merki papaci efram pa`pa'ca einin
 eikiɔi mikitoγoγ coɛoða einin

This protocol features striking parallels with a protocol from *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 63, ll. 3–6, dated 14 November 1463:³¹

ĩḳḥl Δɔtaɔon oγpoyā einñ
 ĩḳōnh ɛonnēna einñ
 eicaɣh ɔoyɛa einñ
 Δoyperh oγpteɔɔa einñ
 koΔΔh oΔōorh Δayēpa einñ
 teΔΔherpe miɣinɣonɣ coɛoða einñ
 merkh cḥmñ papaca einñ

The editors of *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 63 further connect the Gebel Adda sale to the Old Nubian inscriptions from Tamit, published by Sergio Donadoni (DBMNT 723), and Abu Oda, first published by Francis Ll. Griffith (DBMNT 682).³² The inscription from Tamit can be dated to the same

²⁹ Cf. A. ŁAJTAR & G. R. RUFFINI, 'Qasr Ibrim's last land sale, AD 1463 (EA 90225)', [in:] ŁAJTAR & VAN DER VLIET (eds.), *Nubian Voices* (cit. n. 27), pp. 121–131, at 122.

³⁰ In both protocols cited below I have introduced line breaks to elucidate the structure.

³¹ See ŁAJTAR & RUFFINI, 'Qasr Ibrim's last land sale' (cit. n. 29).

³² S. DONADONI, 'Le iscrizioni', [in:] *Tamit* (1964). *Missione archeologica in Egitto dell'Università di Roma*, Rome 1967, pp. 61–74, no. 1; F. LL. GRIFFITH, *The Nubian Texts of the Chris-*

period as the Gebel Adda and Qasr Ibrim sales, mentioning both ογρογ ἰὼηλαο, ‘king Iōēl’ (l. 9), and μερκὶ εἰμη πᾶπαελο, ‘bishop Merki of Ibrim’ (l. 14).³³ The inscription from Abu Oda can unfortunately not be reconstructed from the photographic plates made during the 1908/10 Prussian Expedition to Philae,³⁴ so we have to rely on Griffith’s own transcription, which mentions on line 2 αἰ ἰὼηλ ογρογτῆ Δωταγτων ογρογ, ‘I, Iōēl, king of the kingdom of Dotawo’.

Our main comparative evidence thus derives from *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 63. Besides the fact that in both protocols Iōēl is featured as king, his retinue also largely overlaps. In both texts we find I(ēsou)sonē as queen mother, Isaki/Eisagē as *šouḡ*, and Merki/Merkē as bishop of Ibrim. In the Gebel Adda sale, Merki is listed above the eparch of Nobadia, while in the Qasr Ibrim sale, he is listed below him. It is unclear what the implications are in this case. Was Merki promoted or demoted in between? Or was Teddēerre more senior when he was eparch than Eikiši? Ruffini’s study of the protocols in the Qasr Ibrim materials ranks the bishop of Ibrim nearly as high as the eparch of Nobadia in terms of number of appearances in legal protocol, so it may very well be that other factors than office alone determined the relative ordering between bishop and eparch in any given protocol.³⁵ Both protocols also feature a certain Koddi/Koddē, who had changed office from scribe in the Gebel Adda sale to great *odjor* in the Qasr Ibrim sale, most likely the same office as that of great *odñor* found elsewhere. In other protocols, the office of scribe is consistently mentioned later than that of the great *odñor* (e.g. *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 35, 36), which suggests that Koddi was promoted between the Gebel Adda and Qasr Ibrim sales. A demotion in the other direction seems less likely, as the existing datable protocols only show evidence of promotions: Papanil promoted from scribe to great scribe between *P. Qasr Ibrim* III 35 and 36.

tian Period, Berlin 1913, pp. 64–65; see LAJTAR & RUFFINI, ‘Qasr Ibrim’s last land sale’ (cit. n. 29), pp. 125–126.

³³ See G. OCHALA, ‘Nubica onomastica miscellanea III’ (cit n. 16), no. 12.

³⁴ Preuß. Expedition nach Philae 1908/1910 Berlin Photo Nr. 748, 749 (Altnubische Inschrift Abu Hoda).

³⁵ G. R. RUFFINI, in *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV, pp. 33–38.

Similarly, Ruffini tentatively suggests a dating of *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 65 after 1286 based on the promotion of Dourerē from *ourtaši* to great *ourtaši*, and perhaps similarly *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 69 should be dated after *P. Qasr Ibrim* IV 67 considering the additional title given to Gourresē, the deputy eparch of Nobadia, who also became *samat* (head of cultivation) in Faras.³⁶

From the evidence found in five protocols from securely dated Qasr Ibrim documents spanning 1155–1199 (*P. Qasr Ibrim* III 30, 35, 36, 38, & 40), we find that the longest stretches in office (apart from king and queen mother) are held by Douddil, who was great *odñor* for twelve years from 1187 to 1199, and Papanil/Papannē, Zak(h)ari, and Perse(l), who were respectively great scribe, *nešš* of the *odñor*, and *nešš* of the city (*dippin*) for eight years between 1190 and 1199 serving under both king Moses George and king Basil. If our assumption is correct that Koddi was indeed promoted from scribe to great *odñor*, thus suggesting that the Gebel Adda sale should be dated before the one from Qasr Ibrim, and we assume that the maximum length of service in most offices was about a decade, the Gebel Adda sale should be dated to the 1450s or early 1460s.

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³⁶ For this interpretation, see V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI & G. FERRANDINO, ‘On the possible Meroitic origin of the Old Nubian titles *cameṭ* and *cameṭieṭo*’, *Orientalia* 91/1 (2022), pp. 118–133.