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Tomasz Derda

P. NAQLUN INV. 53/86: A LETTER FROM BISHOP(?) NICOLAOS
TO COMES BASILEIOS*

During the seven seasons of fieldwork conducted since 1986 by a Polish archaeological mission at Naqlun, a monastic site in the Fayum Oasis, several hundred fragments of papyri documents were discovered¹. Most are in very poor condition, preserved in small pieces. The largest fragments were found either in sector B on the kom, in the rubbish mound adjacent to the monastery, or in the storage pits inside the hermitages, which were all sooner or later turned into refuse pits. Needless to say, in neither case were the conditions conducive to the preservation of papyrus, and therefore the number of complete documents and those in a good state is rather small.

Among the better preserved pieces is the papyrus published here, P. Naqlun inv. no. 53/86 (fig. 2), found in sector B on the kom. Originally, it must have been folded in two, to judge by the crease which seems to break the document into two at about the middle of the width. P. Naqlun inv. 53/86 is a completely preserved papyrus sheet of a dark brown colour, measuring 32.2 x 9.4 cm. The text of the letter is to be found on both sides: crosswise to the fibres on the recto and taking the same direction as the fibres on the verso. The address is on the recto, parallel to the text, but upside down in respect to it.

The letter, with just two spelling mistakes, is quite correct in this respect, but the style is hardly without error; in fact, the letter is far from clear in places. There can be no doubt that the author of the letter belonged to the Coptic intellectual elite, was well read and liked to use chosen expressions (l. 9: Θεὸς ἀπο-
λύει, λέγω σοι) and rare words (l. 3: οικειόμαί, l. 9: περιπέτεια, l. 10: ὀλιγωρία) —

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¹ For Polish excavations at Naqlun see: W. Godlewski, T. Herbich, E. Wipszycka, *Deir el-Naqlun (Nekluni) 1986-87: First Preliminary Report*, "Nubica" 1-2, 1989, pp. 171-207; W. Godlewski, T. Derda, T. Górecki, *Deir el-Naqlun (Nekluni) 1988-89: Second Preliminary Report*, "Nubica" 3 (in press) — both reports contain preliminary remarks on papyri found during the 1986 to 1989 seasons; W. Godlewski, *Deir el-Naqlun 1990* [in:] *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean II: Reports 1989-1990*, Warsaw 1991, pp. 48-53; T. Derda, *Deir el-Naqlun 1990: The Greek Papyri*, ibidem, pp. 54-56; idem, *Polish Excavations at Deir el-Naqlun 1986-1991: Interdependence of Archaeology and Papyrology* [in:] *Proceedings of the 20th International Congress of Papyrologists*, Copenhagen (in press).

sometimes, however, without having understood them correctly. The writing itself is that of an educated person — experienced and well shaped, even though written with haste; it can be classified as an intermediate type between majuscule and cursive. Dioscoros of Aphrodito wrote in the same manner, cf. P. Cairo i 67097 and ii 67177². The dates of Dioscoros would thus place P. Naqlun inv. 53/86 in the middle of the 6th century.

The letter's meaning is not quite clear to the modern reader. The text appears to be composed of three parts written by the same hand and separated by signs of the cross. The first part ends with the farewell formula *ἔρρωσθε ἐν κυρίῳ* in the middle of line 5 and, considering the layout of the letter, one should think the author had planned to end his letter here. The first postscript fills the rest of the space on the recto side; the letters are smaller showing that the author, obviously the same hand, did everything to fit his text into the remaining space. This postscript also ends with a cross. Later, perhaps even after addressing the letter, the author added one more postscript, lines 9-11 on the verso, also ending it with a cross.

It is not easy to determine who was the author of this letter. *Νικόλαος* appears in the address as the sender. The first postscript, however, begins with the words *ἐγὼ δὲ ἅπα Ὁρ* (l. 5). It would appear that the official sender of the letter was Nicolaos (perhaps the abbot or even a bishop³), who resided in the monastery⁴, while the actual writer of the text was a monk, *αρα* Hor, who presumably served in the capacity of secretary to the bishop. In fact the papyrus seems to contain two or even three separate letters — the first one by Nicolaos, the other one(s) by *αρα* Hor.

Comes Basileios as the addressee seems to be beyond doubt. Interestingly, in the main body of the letter (ll. 1-5) Basileios is titled *ποθεινότης* and accordingly the text is written in the third person. But in both notes (ll. 5-11) *αρα* Hor addresses Basileios directly in the second person, forgoing the titles. Possibly *αρα*

² Photographs of both papyri are published in L. M a c C o u l l, *Dioscorus of Aphrodito*, plates 6 and 10.

³ Nicolaos of P. Naqlun inv. 53/86 could be identical with a bishop Nicolaos who is known from a small fragment of a letter (P. Naqlun inv. 81/86 - ined.) which has the sign of a cross and two letters from the beginning of the text partly preserved on the recto and on the verso the address: *τ|ῷ ἄββᾶ Νικολάῳ ἐπισκόπῳ τ|...* In favour of such an identification is the fact that Nicolaos, the sender of P. Naqlun inv. 53/86, made use of a secretary and signed the letter with just his name, not giving either his office or titles.

⁴ There is enough evidence to assume that bishops often chose monasteries as the place of their permanent residence. Aphu, bishop of Oxyrhynchos at the end of the 4th century, habitually lived in a monastery (cf. T. O r l a n d i, *Aphu (monk and bishop)* [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, New York — Toronto 1991, vol. I, pp. 154-155; *Vite di monaci copti*, ed. T. O r l a n d i, traduzione di A. C a m p a g n i a n o e T. O r l a n d i, Roma 1984, p. 63); Abraham, bishop of Hermonthis (6th/7th cent.), resided in the monastery of Phoibammon in Deir el-Bahari (cf. M. K r a u s e, *Abraham of Hermonthis* [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, vol. I, p. 13); Pisentius, bishop of Coptos (7th cent.) had his *episkopeion* (episcopal dwelling) in the monastery named after him (cf. C. D. G. M ü l l e r, G a w d a t G a b r a, *Pisentius, Saint and Bishop of Qift (Coptos)* [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, vol. VI, pp. 1978-1980; R.-G. C o q u i n, M. M a r t i n, *Dayr Anba Pisentius*, [in:] *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, vol. III, p. 757).

Καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐστὶν ἡ πόλις ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται
 ἔγραψεν ἡμεῖς καὶ ἡ πόλις ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται
 οἱ Κηρυκτοὶ ἀρχοῦντων ἐπιτοκίων ἐπιτοκίων ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται
 ἀρχομένων ἐπιτοκίων ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται
 καὶ τῶν ἀρχομένων ἐπιτοκίων ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται
 ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται

καὶ τῶν ἀρχομένων ἐπιτοκίων ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται
 ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἀρχῆς ὡς ἔχεται

ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΣ

ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΣ

Fig. 2. P. Naqlun inv. 53/86; to: T. DERDA.

Hor's acquaintance with the *comes* went back to a time before he entered the monastery; he was obviously at least his equal in social status (he most certainly could not have been from the lower classes of society if his education is anything to go by).

The first part of the letter (ll. 1-5) is a politely worded order from Nicolaos to the *comes* to give a certain *kyrios* Timotheos two receipts of some kind or rather documents, one written by a *grammateus*, the other by an *epimeletes*. In the next sentence we are informed that this Timotheos had illegally appropriated (or bought) some plots of land (*οικειώσατο τὰ χωρία τῶν ἐποικίων*). The interpretation depends on the meaning of the verb *οικειόομαι* which in papyri usually refers to "seizing, appropriating something (illegally)". However, should this verb be taken to mean "buy", the situation would be much easier to understand: Timotheos had bought some plots of land (perhaps vineyards), possibly from the monastery, and Nicolaos was making sure that *comes* Basileios provided the new owner with the proper documents. If the verb *οικειόομαι* indeed was used here with the meaning "to buy", this fact might be interpreted as reflecting *apa* Hor's disposition to use rare words without having understood them correctly (*ὀλιγωρία* in line 10 is the best example of this). In any case, the object of sale or dispute were τὰ χωρία τῶν ἐποικίων (l. 3); this expression, which is by no means clear, could refer to vineyards⁵.

In the next lines of the letter Nicolaos requests information about the answer of a certain *kyra* Ioannia; there is also mention made of a certain *kyrios* Philoxenos, but this passage of the letter remains unclear.

Neither is the meaning of the postscripts entirely clear, although one can try to understand what *apa* Hor is speaking of. Lines 5-6 should perhaps be considered as ironical⁶: *apa* Hor expresses his surprise that *comes* Basileios visited the monastery, but failed to mention anything of a list of wine supplies. Apparently the *comes* had brought the wine for a group of monks connected in some way with the monastery (perhaps *anachoretai* living in hermitages around the monaste-

⁵ Cf. *infra*, com. ad v. 3.

⁶ Ironical statements are not easily discernible in presently known private letters; suffice it to recall here the long discussion between papyrologists started by F. Preisigke, *Familienbriefe aus alter Zeit*, "Preussische Jahrbücher" 108, 1902, pp. 94-95, who stated that the authors of letters written at the time were insufficiently educated (nor did they have the freedom of language) to use such expressions. Preisigke's views were questioned by B. Olsson, *Papyrusbriefe aus der frühesten Römerzeit*, Upsala 1925, pp. 12-13, who gave a number of examples of texts (from various periods) which contained, in his opinion, statements of an evidently ironical nature. And though J. G. Winter, *Life and Letters in the Papyri*, Ann Arbor 1933, pp. 96-97, in questioning Olsson's opinions, seems to agree with Preisigke in this matter, it would appear that at least some of Olsson's quotations should indeed be read as full of irony — especially P. Meyer 20.17 (first half of the 3rd cent. A.D.); P. Oxy. vii 1070.47-49 (3rd cent. A.D.); P. Oxy. viii 1160.24-25 (3rd-4th cent. A.D.). One should add to this list P. Oxy. i 119 (2nd-3rd cent. A.D.), a letter from young Theon to his father, also Theon, which is one of the most frequently quoted and printed papyrus documents (a list of reeditions and reprints of this letter is given by J. G. Winter, *op. cit.*, p. 60, n. 3) for its specific humour and its importance for the study of family life in Roman Egypt, l. 1: *καλῶς ἐποίησες οὐκ ἀπένηχές με μετ' ἐσοῦ εἰς πόλιον* (that is to Alexandria).

ry⁷). The *comes* consciously or unconsciously let himself in (l. 11: ἡπαιτήθης, passive aorist instead of a medial one) for a loss (l. 10: ζημία) not giving the monastery a receipt for the wine he had supplied. Nicolaos did not like this form of gift for the monastery and was embarrassed by the whole situation (l. 10: ἐν πολλῇ ὀλιγωρίᾳ ἐστίν). What is more, Basileios even failed to present at the monastery a list of the persons he had given wine to, presumably because he wished not to receive payment for his gift. Nicolaos, however, decided to return at least part of the cost of the wine given to the hermits, so he gave Basileios the same amount of *kouri* of must (l. 7: τὰ ἴσα κούρι μούστου) which, of course, had a lower price, but which constituted indeed a partial compensation for the expenses laid out by the *comes*. In the words of his secretary Nicolaos expressed satisfaction (or perhaps this was a polite request) that Basileios had accepted the must without even wanting to check its value (l. 7: πλὴν καλῶς ποιείτε δεχόμενοι παραυτὰ τὰ ἴσα κούρι μούστου καὶ μὴ ζητῆσαι τιμὴν). Finally, *apa* Hor asked the *comes* not to write to Nicolaos himself, who would be disturbed by the whole matter, but to inform him directly (ll. 9–10: γράψον μοι οὖν τὴν τοῦ πράγματος περιπέτειαν and further οἶδας γὰρ ὅτι οὐ θέλομεν παρενοχλῆσαι τὰς ἀκοὰς τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν).

The interpretation presented here could be changed a little, if the noun *ζημία* were considered as signifying "penance". Then the *comes* made the gift for the monastery having considered it as some sort of penance which he had demanded for himself (l. 11: ἡπαιτήθης), presumably from Nicolaos himself. In favour of this interpretation could be comforting words directed by *apa* Hor to Basileios (l. 9: καὶ πρὸς δὲ Θεὸς ἀπολύει, λέγω σοι). In this case we would have another example of misunderstanding Greek words by *apa* Hor.

The letter, although not fully clear, is an important document for understanding the ties between the monastery and the outside world represented by the *comes*. Should the interpretation of the letter presented here be true, then the document would be referring to a gift for the monastery, made, surprisingly enough, contrary to the will of the bishop.

(recto)

† Καταξίωση ἢ ὑμετέρα ποθεινότης ἀποδιδῶναι τὰς δύο ἀποχὰς ἃς ἔχει, μίαν λέγω τοῦ ἐπιμελητοῦ καὶ μίαν τοῦ γραμματέως, τῷ κυρίῳ Τιμοθέῳ. Αὐτὸς γὰρ οἰκειόσατο τὰ χωρία τῶν ἐποικίων. Καὶ σημάνη μοι, διὰ τοῦ εὐρισκομένου παρ' αὐτῆς ἐρχομένου ἐγγὺς ἡμῶν, καὶ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν τῆς κύρας Ἰωαννίας καθὼς εἶπον αὐτῇ 5. καὶ τῷ κυρίῳ Φιλοξένῳ. Ἐρρωσθε ἐν κ(υρί)ῳ. † Ἐγὼ δὲ ἅπα ὦρ ἐθαύμασα εἰς τὴν μεγάλην σου φρόνησιν ὅτι ἦλθες καὶ ἀπῆλθες καὶ οὐδέν μοι ἀ[β]έθου περὶ τῆς γνώσεως τῶν οἰναρίων. Τί ἀπέβη περὶ τῶν ὀνομασθέντων παρὰ σοῦ ἐσχηκέναι τὸν οἶνον; Πλὴν καλῶς ποιείτε δεχόμενοι παραυτὰ τὰ ἴσα κούρι μούστου καὶ μὴ ζητῆσαι τιμὴν ἵνα κἂν οὕτως δυνηθῶμεν πληρωθῆναι. †

⁷ The Naqlun complex consists of the coenobitic monastery and *laura* with many rock-cut hermitages around it; see literature quoted in note 1.

(verso)

Καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο ἤρесеυ τῷ πατρὶ ἡμῶν. Γράψου μοι οὖν τὴν τοῦ πράγματος
 περιπέτειαν καὶ πρὸς δὲ Θεὸς ἀπολύει, λέγω σοι.

10. Οἶδας γὰρ ὅτι οὐ θέλομεν παρενοχλῆσαι τὰς ἀκοὰς τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν ὅτι ἐν
 πολλῇ ὀλιγωρίᾳ ἐστὶν διὰ τὴν ζημίαν ἣν
 ἠπαιτήθησ. †

† τῷ ποθειν(οτάτῳ) μου υἱῷ κυρ(ίῳ) Βασιλείῳ κόμ(ετι)

† Νικόλαος †

1. ἡ ὑμετέρα ποθειν *pap.*, *lege* ἀποδιδόναι 3. *lege* οἰκειώσατο = ᾠκειώσατο; cf. com., κ
pap. 4. Ἰωαννίας *pap.* 5. ἐν κῶ *pap.* 6. τι *corr.* ex το 7. τα ἴσα *pap.* 9. και κ *corr.* ex ολ
 12. τῷ ποθειν' μὸ υἱῷ κυρ βασιλειῷ κομ' *pap.*

"Would Your Dearness kindly give *kyrios* Timotheos two receipts which you have, namely one [from] the *epimeletes*, the other [from] the *grammateus*. For he (Timotheos?) appropriated (*or*: bought) the plots of land (vineyards?) [found] in the *epoikia*. And please [Your Dearness] let also me know through the person who is with you and is coming to us [from you] the answer of *kyra* Ioannia, as I told Your Dearness, and *kyrios* Philoxenos. Stay well in God!

And I, *apa* Hor, am really surprised at your great prudence that you came and went and did not say anything to me (*or*: did nothing for me) about the matter of the list of wine [supplies]. What has happened [in the matter] of those who are mentioned as having received wine from you? But you do well to accept at once the same number of *kouri* of must and not to check (*or*: not to ask about) the price, so that we can pay you in this form at least.

(verso) For it is thus that our father has decided. Write me then about the course of the matter. Besides, I tell you: God forgives [us our sins]! You know well that we wish not to bother the ears of our father, for he is in great embarrassment because of the loss you have let yourself in (*or*: because of the penance you have demanded for yourself [from him])."

1. καταξίωση ... ἀποδιδόναι (*coniunctivus iussivus*) is an elegant though conventional equivalent of the imperative, which often occurs with a polite title of some kind in place of the subject (in P. Naqlun inv. 53/86 this role is played by the title *ποθεινότης*; this construction is especially characteristic of letters from the Byzantine period, cf. B. Mandilaras, *The Verb*, Athens 1973, pp. 251-252 §558; H. A. Steen, *Les clichés épistolaires dans les lettres sur papyrus grecques*, "Classica et Mediaevalia" 1, 1938, pp. 146-147.

ποθεινότης is a polite expression encountered primarily in papyri from the 6th and 7th centuries. H. Ziliacus, *Untersuchungen zu den abstrakten Anredeformen und Höflichkeitstiteln im Griechischen*, Helsingfors 1949 (Societas Scientiarum Fennica — Commentationes Humanum Litterarum XV.3), p. 90 quotes only one papyrus in which this title appears, P. Oxy. xvi 1869, a letter of the 6-7th century addressed to the *dioiketes* Phoibammon. A full list of letters the addressees of which are referred to as *ποθεινότης* is given by B. Kramer, P. Köln vi 256, com. ad l. 6. In literature this Greek form occurs in a Latin letter of the emperor Theodosius to Licinia Eudoxia (Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 54.878C) and in a letter of Maximus the Confessor

(ep. 3, *Migne, Patrologia Graeca* 91.408C); cf. G. W. H. Lampe, *A Greek Patristic Lexicon*, Oxford 1968, s.v.; E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods (from 146 B.C. to A.D. 1100)*, New York, s.v.

2. λέγω was used here in the meaning "... namely"; in such cases the verb is usually accompanied by the particle δὴ (F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch*, s.v. λέγω 11: "λέγω δὴ = und zwar"; LSJ, s.v. λέγω, does not distinguish this meaning of the verb).

3. οἰκειώσατο = ὠκειώσατο; verbs beginning with οι- do not have an augment as a rule, even in Attic; cf. A. N. Janjari, *An Historical Greek Grammar*, London 1897, p. 186 §716; B. Mandilaras, *The Verb*, pp. 118-119 §§ 256-257.

τὰ χωρία τῶν ἐποικίων; obviously, in this case the noun χωρίον cannot have the meaning "village, hamlet", which is encountered most often in papyri of the Byzantine period; this is because the words χωρίον and ἐποίκιον would be almost synonyms, and the whole expression as an object of the verb οἰκειώσατο would not make any sense (a discussion of the meaning of χωρίον has been presented by M. Drew-Bear, *Le nome hermapolite*, pp. 41-42). The noun χωρίον can also mean a plot of land (WB, s.v., "Raum, Gelände jeder Art", hence: "Ackerstück, Landstück, Grundstück, Landgut, Landbesitz"); but this meaning is too general to fit our document for the plots of land referred to here appear to be very specific plots of land known to both the author and the addressee, which were probably appropriated illegally (or bought) by this Timotheos. The noun χωρίον often appears in connection with the adjective ἀμπελικόν; such a term means simply "vineyard". Sometimes, however, as in P. Oxy. lv 3804 (565/6 A.D., the annual listing of income and expenditures of one part, προνοησία, of the estate of the Apions' family in the Oxyrhynchite nome, prepared by its administrator, προνοητής Theodoros) and 3805 (after 566 A.D., verso of the preceding text with figures concerning the administration of the Apions' estates prepared by the officials from the main office of the estates located in Oxyrhynchos), the adjective can be missing and only the context can help discern the proper meaning of the noun χωρίον. In P. Oxy. lv 3804 income π(αρά) τοῦ κοιν(οῦ) τῶν γεωργ(ῶν) καὶ ἀμπελουρ(ῶν) ὑπὲρ ἀποτάκ(του) χωρ(ίω)ν is noted (ll. 34, 47, 101), and in P. Oxy. lv 3805 the rent paid by particular persons (ll. 76, 87). It is interesting that in both documents mentioned here the word ἀπότακτον is used exclusively in reference to the rent paid as a land annuity from χωρία, suggesting that χωρίον is a technical term meaning a specific category of land. Moreover, the expression ἀπότακτον οἴνου was used once (P. Oxy. lv 3805, l. 68) in place of ἀπότακτον χωρίων, confirming the opinion of the editor of these papyri, J. Rea, that in both these documents χωρίον means simply "vineyard".

σημάνη; the reading σημᾶναί μοι (an expression encountered very frequently in papyri of the Byzantine period) has to be excluded on palaeographic grounds. Thus, σημάνη should be understood as *coniunctivus iussivus* used in the same manner as καταξίωση in line 1; cf. supra, com. ad l. 1

διὰ τοῦ εὑρισκομένου παρ' αὐτῆς ἐρχομένου ἐγγὺς ἡμῶν; the sense of this expression is quite obvious, even though its syntax remains unclear. παρ' αὐτῆς can be connected with the participle εὑρισκομένου ("through the person who is with Your Dearness [and] who comes to us") although in that case one should rather expect the dative case. However, παρά with the genitive instead of παρά with the dative does appear sporadically already in Classical prose (cf. LSJ, s.v. A.III), more often in Byzantine texts (cf. E. A. Sophocles, *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, s.v. 1) and in the Greek of the papyri (cf. E. Mauser, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit*, II.2.2, pp. 369-370).

5. ἐθάυμασα εἰς τὴν μεγάλην σου φρόνησιν is an interesting sentence from the point of view of syntax. The verb θαυμάζω in the meaning "be surprised (at something)" requires, in papyri always and in Greek literature usually, a direct object, that is an accusative, but it would be difficult then to find justification for the interjected prepo-

sition εἰς. Sometimes, however, θαυμάζω does appear together with the dative case (cf. LSJ, s.v. 4), and dative case is slowly abandoned as Greek develops. One of the forms used in its place is the construction εἰς + accusativus (cf. E. S c h w y z e r, *Griechische Grammatik* II, pp. 170-171). In the New Testament a number of verbs with a meaning similar to θαυμάζω (e.g., πιστεύω, ἐλπίζω) has a double rection: with a dative or with the construction εἰς + accusativus (cf. F. B l a s s, A. D e b r u n n e r, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, 16. Aufl., Göttingen 1984, pp. 150-152 §187).

6. καὶ οὐδέν μοι ἀ[.]ξέθου περὶ ...; unfortunately, there is no palaeographic evidence which could allow us to decide whether we have to read ἀπέθου or ἀνέθου. Both verbs impart meaning to this sentence; in favour of reconstructing ἀπέθου in this place would be the fact that the verb ἀποτίθημι (med.) in the meaning "settle (a matter)" appeared in another papyrus of the 6th century, P. Cairo Masp. iii 67291, l. 7: σπουδῆ γάρ ἐστὶν ἕκαστον πρᾶγμα πρὸς τὸ δυνατὸν ἀποτίθεσθαι; cf. WB, s.v. ἀποτίθημι 5 (Med.), "erledigen". On the other hand, one should not forget that the author of our letter surely read the New Testament, where the verb ἀνατίθεσθαί τινι appears exclusively in the meaning "to explain (something to someone)" (cf. J. P. L o u w, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, New York 1988, p. 406 § 33.151: "to explain something, presumably by putting forward additional or different information, to explain, to make clear"; F. B l a s s, A. D e b r u n n e r, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, p. 164 §202.1: "befragend vorlegen"; LSJ, s.v. ἀνατίθημι B.1.2: "impart, communicate, τινί τι"; G. W. H. L a m p e, *A Greek Patristic Lexicon*, s.v. B.2: "set forth, communicate". The pronoun μοι accompanying the verb ἀνέθου is quite understandable and it should be considered as a *dativus commodi* when it appears with the verb ἀπέθου "and you did not arrange (make) for me in this matter...".

7. καλῶς ποιεῖτε δεχόμενοι is used in plural most probably with respect not to the comes himself but rather to his subordinates (in other places ἀπα Hor consequently addresses comes Basileios in the singular).

Kouri is the name of a wine measure, often encountered in Greek papyri of the Byzantine and Arab periods. The word, which is usually written as κουρι, appears in one document, P. Lond. II 395, p. 334, as κορι (it is interesting that in this papyrus both forms are to be encountered: κορι — seven times, κουρι — twice). In the same period the same measure occurs quite frequently in documents written in Coptic. The word, however, is not recorded in Coptic dictionaries; instead there is the word κωρ/σωρ with the same meaning (W. E. C r u m, *A Coptic Dictionary*, Oxford 1939, p. 115a; J. Č e r n y, *Coptic Etymological Dictionary*, Cambridge 1976, p. 61). It would seem, however, that this word is used exclusively in literary texts as an equivalent of the Hebrew kor, which often appears in the Bible (I know of not one example of the use of this word in non-literary Coptic papyri).

It is still problematic whether the word κουρι in Greek is declinable or not (in papyrological dictionaries and indices there appear two forms: undeclinable κοῦρι and declinable κούριον). The word, however, is always written as κουρι (without the abbreviation mark) or κουρ (with such a mark). In a few papyri the number of kouri of wine (or another liquid) was recorded with numerals written in full and using the word κουρι without an abbreviation mark, and was then repeated using figures with the word κουρ written in the abbreviated version (e.g., SPP III 193; P. Lond. II 390, p. 332). It would seem that the word κοῦρι was actually undeclinable.

7-8. Ἴνα κᾶν οὕτως δυνηθῶμεν, "that we can at least in this form ..."; κᾶν (= καὶ ἐάν) here is used to introduce the conjectural concessive clause (*hypotetisch-konjessive Nebensatz*: E. M a y s e r, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit*, II.3, p. 92 §159 Anm. 10; cf. F. B l a s s, A. D e b r u n n e r, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, p. 305 §374). An analogy to the expression κᾶν οὕτως is to be

found in a private letter of the 3rd-4th century, P. Oxy. i 123. 7: *κᾶν ὧς, δέσποτά μου, ἀντίγραφου...*

9. *γράφου μοι οὖν τὴν τοῦ πράγματος περιπέτειαν*; cf. P. Apoll. Ano 11 (A.D. 705).3-4: ἡ θεοφύλακτος ἡμῶν ἀδελφότης γράψῃ μοι τὴν περιπέτειαν τοῦ πράγματος. The noun *περιπέτεια* does not appear in papyri earlier than the 6th century; besides the letter of 705 cited above, this noun occurs in P. Cairo Masp. i 67002. 8 (A.D. 567; cf. BL i, p. 100); 67009.9 (6th cent.) and 67064 (first half of the 6th century)

Another matter drawing attention in the sentence quoted above is the use of an attributive genitive in intermediate position, which is, in the *koine* of the New Testament, less frequent than in postposition (cf. F. B l a s s, A. D e b r u n n e r, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, p. 222 §271). Lacking a synthesis of syntax of the language used in papyri of the Roman and Byzantine period, it is difficult to be certain about the statistical ratio of the use of an attributive genitive in intermediate position, but generally it would seem to be a rare phenomenon and should be treated on the whole as an expression of the erudition and even a certain pretentiousness on the part of the author.

Θεὸς ἀπολύει, "God forgives (sc. us our sins)"; I should think the phrase is a reflection of the author's erudition. The most frequent meaning of the verb *ἀπολύω* is "to free, send away (sc. wife, i.e., divorce)", but this does not make sense with the subject Θεός (in this meaning the verb *ἀπολύω* appears in the Septuagint always and in the New Testament very often). In one case, however, in the New Testament the verb occurs in the meaning "forgive, absolve (sc. a sinner his sins)": Lc. 6.36-37: ἀπολύετε καὶ ἀπολυθήσεσθε; cf. J. P. L o u w, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, p. 503 §40.8.

λέγω σοι; cf., e.g., Lc. 22.34: ὁ δὲ εἶπε' Λέγω σοι, Πέτρε, ...; Mt. 5.28: ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῶν ὅτι...

10. *οἶδας* is a form of the second person singularis created by analogy to the first person *οἶδα*. The form *οἶδας* which appears sporadically in literature from Homer on, is predominant in papyri where the correct form *οἶσθα* is very rare (cf. F. Th. G i g n a c, *Grammar*, II, pp. 409-410; B. M a n d i l a r a s, *The Verb*, p. 83 §135).

ὀλιγωρία is a word which is not used in Greek of the papyri after the beginning of the second century B.C. It appears five times in papyri from the Zenon Archive (cf. P. W. P e s t m a n e t alii, *A Guide to the Zenon Archive*, P.L. Bat. 21, p. 688) and once in another document of the third century B.C. (P. Tebt. iii 759; 226 B.C.). In papyrological lexica under the heading *ὀλιγωρία* there is a reference to SB vi 8994 (6th cent.), but in this particular case the word is largely reconstructed (l. 14: [α]ὐτοὺς ταύτης τῆς ὀλιγωρίας ἐλευθέρωσε(ι)ν κτλ.), so that even the editor himself (H. O e l l e c h e r, *Ein Wiener Urkundenpapyrus*, "Mnemosyne" 3. Ser., vol. 8, 1946, pp. 46-47) favoured the reading *ὀλιγ[α]ρχί[α]ς* instead (cf. app. ad loc. cit.).

In Greek literature the noun *ὀλιγωρία* was in frequent use throughout the Hellenistic and Roman period, but it did not make its way into the Septuagint (even such a common verb as *ὀλιγωρέω* appears there only once!) or the New Testament. It started being used in Christian literature at a relatively late date, in the second half of the fourth century, thanks to John Chrisostomos, a writer educated in pagan literature.

The noun *ὀλιγωρία* usually has the meaning "contempt, negligence" but in this place it was used wrongly by *apa* Hor who most probably attributed to it the meaning "embarrassment".

11. *ἡπαιτήθης*; some compound verbs usually have an *augmentum temporale* in the prefix in the Roman and Byzantine periods; the phenomenon is especially frequent in the conjugation of verbs beginning with *ἀμφι-* and *ἀπο-* (cf. F. Th. G i g n a c, *Grammar*, II, pp. 248-250). In G i g n a c's opinion the verb *ἀπαιτέω* belongs to a group which forms the past tenses in this way, as exceptions rather than the rule, but it is inter-

esting that all the examples he cites come from very late papyri (7th and 8th centuries).

If the interpretation of this fragment presented in the introduction is correct, then what we have here is a passive aorist used erroneously instead of a medial aorist; cf. B. M a n d i l a r a s, *The Verb*, p. 147 §314.

12. *κόμης*, a word of Latin origin (*comes*), was used in Egypt to denote officials of various rank. The noun appears in papyri in the third century and until the fifth it is used exclusively as the title of officials of high rank (e.g., P. Oxy. xx 2267.29: *ὁ λαμπρότατος κόμης τῶν δεσποτικῶν* = *comes rei privatae* of Constantius II; cf. com. ad loc.; BGU iv 1092.3: *ὁ λαμπρότατος κόμης καὶ μαγίστρος στρατιωτῶν* = *magister militum*). In the 6-7th century the term continued to be used as the title of high ranking functionaries, but at the same time in many documents it appears before the name, where we would rather expect a title instead of the name of a function (cf. CPR x 43.3 com.). This could suggest that the term was used so often and in so broad a meaning that it became a honorific title which almost every official of medium and high rank could use (cf. G. W. H. L a m p e, *A Greek Patristic Lexicon*, s.v. "title of the occupant of certain state offices", e.g., P. Cairo Masp. i 67030A.1: *ὁ μεγαλο[π]ρε(πέστατος) κόμ(ης) καὶ ἄρχ(ων) τῆς Θεβ(αίων) ἐπαρχείας* — *praeses* of Thebaid; the same title in SB v 8028.1, 6; P. Form. (= SPP III) 138.2: *κόμης καὶ ῥιπάριος*; P. Oxy. xvi 2002.1: *κόμης καὶ πολυτενόμενος*). The term deserves a full study, which is still lacking, the entry in *Real-Encyklopädie* (S e e c k, *Comites*, RE IV, coll. 622-679) being the fullest discussion to date; on the title *κόμης* in Greek documents from Egypt, cf. G. R o u i l l a r d, *L'administration civile de l'Égypte byzantine*, ed. 2, Paris 1928, p. 33; J. M a s p e r o, *L'organisation militaire de l'Égypte byzantine*, Paris 1912, pp. 75-76; A. C. J o h n s o n, L. C. W e s t, *Byzantine Egypt: Economic Studies*, Princeton 1949, p. 33 (*comes largitionum sacrarum* = *praefectus praetorium, comes rerum privatarum*). A list of Greek documents containing this term is given by S. D a r i s, *Il lessico latino*, pp. 58-60.

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