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Tomasz Derda

SOME NON-DOCUMENTARY TEXTS  
FROM DEIR EL-NAQLUN\*

The texts I have chosen to present in this paper come from Deir el-Naqlun, a monastic centre in the Fayum oasis excavated since 1986 by a Polish mission.<sup>1</sup> Among the Greek non-documentary texts found at Naqlun the Psalms and texts in some way related to them are a great majority; some of them coming from a dossier of a monk living in the 6th century in one of the Naqlun hermitages are published in *P. Naqlun I* (nos. 1-8), some others with a considerable part of a Psalter-codex will be included in *P. Naqlun II*. Of the remaining Greek non-documentary texts the four presented in this paper are in fact the only ones whose the state of preservation permits publication. This is a fact worth emphasizing in itself, especially if we compare the relatively small amount of Greek literary texts with the abundance of Coptic texts of similar character but of later date found in the same monastery. It is also interesting that the two papyri published in this paper (3 and 4) have on verso shorthand signs (see plates IV and VI). Neither of them comes from a codex; one may have been written for liturgical use, although private piety cannot be excluded as its main purpose.

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\* A version of this paper was read at the 21st International Congress of Papyrology, held in Berlin, August 13-19, 1995.

<sup>1</sup> On Deir el-Naqlun, its history and the history of Polish research on this site, see T. DERDA, *Deir el-Naqlun. The Greek Papyri*, Warszawa 1995 (= *P. Naqlun I*), esp. pp. 19-39. In *Bibliography* (pp. 11-17) there is an up-to-date list of publications on Deir el-Naqlun, mostly by members of the Polish mission.

## 1-2

OSTRACA NAQLUN INV. 53/88 AND 64/86  
(MATTH. 7.18-20 AND 7.29-8.4)

Two texts, or rather one preserved in two fragments on two different ostraca. Ostraca are rare finds in Naqlun, which cannot be considered surprising in the Fayum. These two are in fact the only Greek ostraca found so far in Naqlun; beside them there are a few Coptic ones.

O. Naqlun inv. 53/88 is preserved partially, O. Naqlun 64/86 completely. They come from different pots made of different clay. The text written on O. Naqlun 64/86 runs along the amphora's ribbing.

These ostraca contain two almost contiguous passages of the Gospel according to Matthew. It looks as if they were written for the personal use of a monk. In van Haelst's *Catalogue*<sup>2</sup> we find an interesting parallel: there is a set of twenty ostraca published by G. Lefebvre in 1904.<sup>3</sup> Among them there are two series of texts succeeding without a lacune. On one of these ostraca there is a name either of their copyist or of their owner.

The text preserved on two Naqlun ostraca does not differ substantially from that of the edition of the New Testament by Nestle-Aland.<sup>4</sup> One difference is in line 5 of the first ostrakon: the word *οὐν*, although attested in many manuscripts, has not been accepted by Nestle and Aland for the text. In line 15 of the second ostrakon there is a conjunction *ὅτι* after the participle *λέγων* added evidently under the influence of everyday language. The most puzzling is, however, line 21, i.e. the last line of the second ostrakon, where I am unable to establish the text, but without doubt the copyist did not follow the text *ὄρα μηδενὶ εἴπης, ἀλλὰ ὑπαγε σεαυτὸν δειξὸν τῷ ἱερεὶ κτλ.* There is no variant in the apparatus which could fit the letters *κα* clearly visible on the ostrakon. It might then be suggested that at this point the scribe stopped copying and noted probably the number of the ostrakon belonging to the whole series. If so, it would be ostrakon 21 (*κα'*).

Both ostraca are written with many spelling mistakes which sometimes even can be a real obstacle in understanding the text (*δυτε* instead of *δύνатаι* in line 1 of the first ostrakon). The author wrote consequently *κε* instead of *καί*, and *αυτο* instead of the dative *αὐτῷ*. There is an interesting form *δέτρον* for

<sup>2</sup> J. VAN HAELST, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens*, Paris 1976, no. 384

<sup>3</sup> G. LEFEBVRE, 'Fragments grecs des Évangiles sur Ostraka', *BIFAO* 4, 1904, pp. 1-15.

<sup>4</sup> *Novum Testamentum Graece*, hrsg. von E. NESTLE – E. NESTLE – K. ALAND, 25th ed., Stuttgart – New York 1963.



Plate I. O. Naqlun inv. 53/88 (Math., 7.18-20)  
– photo Tomasz Derda

ⲁⲛⲓⲛⲟⲩ repeated three times in the first ostrakon,<sup>5</sup> although not inserted the



<sup>5</sup> Cf. J. KRAMER, *Zyche* 3, 1988, pp. 36-37.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. F. TH. GIGNAC, *A* Plate II. O. Naqlun inv. 64/86 (Math., 7.29-8.4)

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 80-81. — photo Tomasz Derda

δένδρον repeated three times in the first ostrakon;<sup>5</sup> although not attested the form is quite well understandable: omission of medial nasals before stops is very frequent in the papyri<sup>6</sup> as well as interchange of voiced and voiceless stops is the most frequent in the case of dentals.<sup>7</sup>

O. Naqlun inv. 53/88  
kom, sector B

8,6 cm x 6,9 cm

VIth-VIIth century  
Plate I

	οὐ δυτε δέτ[ρον ἀγα-]	7. 18
	θὸν καρποὺς πο[νηροὺς]	
	ἐνεγκίῳ. οὐδὲ δέτρ[ου]	
4	[σαπ]ρὸν καρποὺς καλο[ύς]	
	[ἐνεγκείν.] πᾶν οὖν δέτρο[ν]	7. 19
	[μὴ ποιούν] καρπὸν κα[λὸν]	
	[ἐκκόπτεται καὶ] ἰς πῦρ βά[λλεται.]	
8	[ἄρα γε ἀπὸ τῶ]ν καρπ[ῶν αὐτῶν]	7. 20
	[ἐπιγνώσεσ]θε [αὐτούς.]	
	].. [	

1. δύναται, δένδρον 3. ἐνεγκείν, δένδρον  
5. οὖν om. Nestle–Aland; δένδρον 7. εἰς

O. Naqlun inv. 64/86  
kom, sector B

11,9 cm x 14,0 cm

VIth-VIIth century  
Plate II

	ἦν γὰρ διδάσ-	7. 29
	κου αὐ[τ]οὺς ὅς	
	ἐξουσίαν ἔχον	
4	κὲ οὐχ ὅς οἱ γραμα-	
	τῆς αὐτῶν. καταβέ-	8. 1
	νουτος δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄ-	
	ρους ἠκολούθησαν αὐ-	
8	τῷ ὄχλοι πολλοί. κὲ εἰδού	8. 2
	λεπρὸς προσελθὸν προσ-	

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J. KRAMER, *Tyche* 3, 1988, pp. 36-37

<sup>6</sup> Cf. F. Th. GIGNAC, *A Grammar*, I, pp. 116-118

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 80-81.

	εκύνοι αὐτῷ λέγον·	
	κ(ύρι)ε, ἐὰν θ[έ]λης, δύνα-	
12	σέ με καθαρ[ί]σαι]. κέ	8.3
	ἐκτίνας τὴν χ[εῖρ]α	
	[ῥ]ατο [α]ὐτοῦ λέγον,	
	ὅτι θέλω καθαρ[ί]σ-	
16	θητι. κέ εὐθος ἐκ-	
	αθαρίσθι αὐτοῦ	
	ἢ λέ[π]ρα. κέ	8.4
	λ[έγει αὐ]τῷ ὁ Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς· ὄρα	
20	[μηδε]νὶ [εἰ]π[η]-	
	s κα . blank	

1-2. διδάσκων 2. ὡς 3. ἔχων 4. καί, ὡς 4-5. γραμματεῖς  
5-6. καταβαίνοντος 7-8. αὐτῷ 8. πολλοὶ καὶ ἰδοῦ 9-10. προσ-  
εκύνει αὐτῷ λέγων 11-12. δύνασαι 12. καί 13. ἐκτίνας 14. λέγων  
15. ὅτι om. Nestle-Aland, θέλω 16. καὶ εὐθέως 16-17. ἐκαθαρίσθη  
18. καί 19. αὐτῷ

## 3

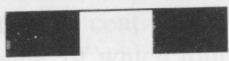
P. NAQLUN INV. 20/87  
(FRAGMENT OF CREED)

The third text, a fragment of a creed, is written on recto of P. Naqlun inv. 20/87. This is a small piece of light brown papyrus. On verso the papyrus has two lines of unintelligible signs, probably of Greek tachygraphy (shorthand). The papyrus was found in room C (kitchen) of Naqlun hermitage 2. The text on recto was written in majuscule by a hand showing some experience; the letters are sometimes linked in ligatures. The hand is similar to that of six Biblical texts coming from hermitage 89 (published as *P. Naqlun* 1-6); P. Naqlun inv. 20/87 was written more carefully and more slowly. The palaeographical analogies are the same as quoted for *P. Naqlun* 1-6 — *BGU* XII 2198 of AD 545 or 560 and *P. Ant.* 24, first half of the 6th cent.,<sup>8</sup> which means that a possible date of this text is the 6th cent.

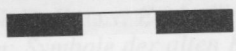
There is space between some words; its function is to make the reader sure that in this place a new phrase starts. Perhaps it was intended as a help for

<sup>8</sup> Both papyri are reproduced on pl. 27a in: G. CAVALLO, H. MAEHLER, *Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period* (= *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, Supplement* 47), London 1987.

17  
 ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΕΙΣΤΗΤΑΙ ΟΙΣ ΤΟ ΤΟΙ  
 ΚΟΙΝΟΝ ΕΙΣΤΗΤΑΙ ΚΤΩΝΟΝ  
 ... ΚΟΙΝΟΝ  
 ... ΚΟΙΝΟΝ



... 432 ...  
 ... 432 ...



On the name of the creed see J. ...  
 texts of the creeds, see *ibidem*, *passim*, *Symbole der alten Kirche*, hrsg. von H. Lietzmann, Bonn 1906 and *Il Simbolo di Nicea e di Costantinopoli*, ed. G. L. Dorner, Roma 1967.

10 Published by ... Plate III. P. Naqlun inv. 20/87 recto (fragment of a creed) and verso (tachygraphy?) – photo Waldemar Jerke



## 4

P. NAQLUN INV. 46/88  
(FRAGMENT OF A PATRISTIC TEXT)

The fourth text has not so far been identified, which in the age of computer tools may suggest that we have either a fragment of a new unknown text or a composition of some fragments coming from different works.

P. Naqlun inv. 46/88 was found during our excavation carried out on the *kom*, in its Sector B, where in the first centuries of the existence of the cenobitic monastery there was a vast refuse dump. The hand is an experienced, not rapid but also not too elegant script, similar to some extent to that of the previous text. This hand, however, shows some features characteristic for hands of the 5th century, and, as far as palaeography is concerned, could be dated to the end of this century or to the first half of the 6th. This papyrus would be, therefore, one of the earliest pieces from the *kom* where the archaeological evidence is not earlier than the turn of the 5th and 6th cent.

The copyist at least knew some of the rules of writing literary texts. He used *nomina sacra* as well as a sign for *spiritus asper* (in line 6). He also left space between some words in order to point out the end of a phrase (e.g. in line 4 in front of ἐπειδή).

The papyrus has on verso fragments of seven lines of signs which most probably constitute a fragment of a text written in tachygraphy. Apart from this papyrus and the other described before there are two other examples of fragmentarily preserved short hand texts from Naqlun. It is interesting to compare this evidence with the well known fact of monks being employed as specialists in shorthand script during synods and councils. They were probably taught in monasteries; Deir el-Naqlun might have probably been one of them.

The text on the recto of P. Naqlun inv. 46/88 is of literary character. There are *nomina sacra* noted in abbreviated form with usual strokes. It is, however, worthy noting that the noun πατήρ is written in line 4 as a *nomen sacrum* while in line 11, where it without doubt refers to God, is noted in full.

As it was already mentioned, I was not successful in my attempts to identify this text. But the subject of our text is absolutely clear. It concerns the Arians (line 7: τῶν Ἀρειανῶν) and the nature of God (line 11: ὁ μὲν πατήρ ἀγέννητος ...). Line 1 (τῆς ἀντῆς οὐσίας) and line 10, where the noun προβλημα and *nomen sacrum* τὸν υἱὸν occur, are connected with the same question. The πρόβλημα then concerns the nature of Christ, which was the crucial point of theological disputes at the time, and its relation with God the Father. In order to enhance the importance of the arguments the author quotes a passage of the Scripture (line 2: κατὰ τὰς θείας [sc. γραφάς]).

Athanasius was of course the first author coming to mind while I was looking on this fragmentarily preserved text. But neither *TLG* nor *Lexicon Athanasium* gave a positive answer when consulted e.g. about the phrase  $\acute{\alpha}\mu\epsilon\nu\ \pi\alpha\tau\eta\rho\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\epsilon\upsilon\nu\eta\tau\omicron\varsigma$  not far from the word  $\pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\beta\lambda\eta\mu\alpha$  (line 10). The answer was also negative when the search was committed for other Christian writers on *TLG* version "D". What is then possible is to quote some passages parallel to particular lines of our text without determining even its genre. It could be, e.g., a dispute, or a dialogue; these were common forms of Christian texts of polemic nature, but in our text the beginnings of particular questions are lacking.

P. Naqlun inv. 46/88 does not come from a codex; its appearance is similar to that of P. Naqlun inv. 20/87. Both these texts may have been handy copies prepared for personal or liturgical use, what is however quite easily understandable in the case of the creed is much more difficult to accept for a 6th century fragment of a patristic text concerning the Arian controversy. It is an interesting question, how deeply people leaving 200 years later could be interested in such texts.<sup>11</sup>

Some of the phrases and expressions which can be read in P. Naqlun inv. 46/88 lead us towards the works of Athanasius or attributed to him. If we in fact have here a compilation of fragments coming from different works, it would be the second text from Egypt with prose of this author. In the monastery of St. Epiphanius in Thebes there is a graffito containing Athanasius' famous letter to monks. In van Haelst's *Catalogue* there is no other item connected with him. But works by Athanasius were translated into Coptic which means of course that he was read at least in some milieus.<sup>12</sup>

P. Naqlun inv. 46/88  
kom, sector B

16,5 cm x 15,0 cm

VIth cent.  
Plates IV and V

τῆς αὐτῆς οὐσίας  
]ρχουν κατὰ τὰς θείας  
] ἐπ' ἀναγκ[αι]α ]  
4 . ] π(ατέ)ρα. ἐπειδὴ περ]

<sup>11</sup> One cannot exclude another possibility of interpretation of our text — the term Arians could refer not to the Arians of the IVth century, but to members of other schismatic groups; cf. G. W. H. LAMPE, *A Greek Patristic Lexicon*, s.v.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. T. ORLANDI, *Elementi di lingua e letteratura copta*, Milano 1970, pp. 75-78; IDEM, 'Le traduzioni dal greco e lo sviluppo della letteratura copta', [in:] *Graeco-Coptica. Griechen und Kopten im byzantinischen Ägypten*, Halle (Saale) 1984, pp. 181-203, esp. p. 194.

ἴπτεω δὲ ἀκριβ[  
 ].ους ἠγείται μ...[  
 ]. τῶν Ἀριανῶν [

8 ἰ. ἐπιχειρησασ[  
 ]ας οὐκ ἀνατρε.[.]. σῶν  
 πρόβλημα τὸ εἰ μὲν τὸν υ(ἰ)ὸν  
 [...] ὁ μὲν πατὴρ ἀγέννητος ... [

6. ἢ παρ. 7. Ἀρειανῶν

- 9-10 οὐκ ἀνατρέψουσιν (or ἀνατρέπουσιν) ... τὸ πρόβλημα? Cf. ἀνατρέπειν πρόβλημα in: Alexander Aphrodisiensis, *In Topica*, 514.28.
- 10-11 Cf. e.g. Ps.-Athanasius, *De trinitate* (Migne, PG XXVIII, col. 1605): καὶ ὅτι ὁ μὲν Πατὴρ γεννήτωρ καὶ προβολεὺς, γεννήτωρ μὲν τοῦ Υἱοῦ, προβολεὺς δὲ τοῦ Πνεύματος· ὁ δὲ Υἱὸς γέννημα, τὸ δὲ Πνεῦμα πρόβλημα. Καὶ ὁ μὲν Πατὴρ ἀγέννητος, ὁ δὲ Υἱὸς γεννητὸς διὰ δύο νν, τὸ δὲ Πνεῦμα ἐκπορευτόν.

[Warszawa]

Tomasz Derda