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THE COPTIC AND GREEK PAPYRI  
OF THE ISTITUTO NAZIONALE DI ARCHEOLOGIA  
E DI STORIA DELL'ARTE\*

JENNIFER A. CROMWELL · TODD M. HICKEY

THE Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e di Storia dell'Arte (hereafter *INASA*) possesses a small collection of late antique papyri in Coptic and Greek. The history of these objects is uncertain. Dr Massimo Pomponi discovered them in a cabinet in July 2012, but there was no indication of their origin on either the portfolio or the individual sheets that enclosed them. Their most probable source seems to be Gilbert Bagnani, given that a document in the Istituto's archives (FIG. 1) indicates that Bagnani had consigned a group of objects, including «[t]re cartelle con frammenti di papiri in scrittura copta»,<sup>1</sup> to *INASA* on his return from the *Missione archeologica italiana in Egitto*; Bagnani had been serving as de facto field director of the *Missione's* excavations at Tebtynis since 1933.<sup>2</sup> The language of the *INASA* document is ambiguous,<sup>3</sup> but the consignment

would have had to have taken place in the 1930s, perhaps after the 1935 season,<sup>4</sup> or in 1936 when Bagnani closed the Tebtynis excavation for good and shortly thereafter departed for Canada.<sup>5</sup> The *INASA* document, however, dates to 1954, when most of the artefacts – but not, apparently, the papyri – were given to Roberto Paribeni.<sup>6</sup> If Bagnani is the source of the papyri – and on the assumption that he did not acquire them from the antiquities market<sup>7</sup> – they must stem from the excavations at Tebtynis. If this was in fact the case, the monastic context of the Coptic texts most immediately suggests an origin in the 1933 season, when Bagnani excavated a «monastic complex» in the northeastern part of the site.<sup>8</sup> Whether the Greek fragments could have come from the same locus is unclear. Their content is unhelpful for the question, while their earlier dates perhaps indi-

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<sup>1</sup> Dr Pomponi discovered a single portfolio containing two folded paper sheets enclosing fragments of papyri. The apparent discrepancy with Bagnani's «tre cartelle» could simply be due to a change of housing. Loss during the intervening years is also possible, of course.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. BEGG 1998, p. 393.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., how, precisely, is «ritorno» to be understood? It might also be helpful to know whether Bagnani delivered the items in person.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. BASTIANINI, GALLAZZI 1991, p. 44, «Alla fine degli scavi da lui compiuti a Tebtynis nel 1935, Gilberto Bagnani mandò in Italia una quantità ragguardevole di reperti rinvenuti sia in quell'anno, sia nelle campagne precedenti svolte fra il 1930 e il 1934». These authors continue, however, «Fatta eccezione per i papiri e per gli ostraka, per pochi utensili e alcuni oggetti domestici, che furono spediti all'Università di Padova, tutto il materiale fu consegnato al Museo Nazionale Romano, all'epoca meglio conosciuto come Museo delle Terme di Roma».

<sup>5</sup> Cf. BEGG 1998, p. 401.

<sup>6</sup> Paribeni (d. 13/6/1956) is described (anachronistically) as the Direttore delle Missioni (sc. scientifiche italiane in Levante); the objects transferred are said to belong to the «Direzioni Archeologiche Ita-

liane in Levante». For the involvement of Paribeni, who also served as head of Antichità e belle arti from 1928 to 1933, in the funding of the Tebtynis excavations, see BEGG 2004, pp. 23-29. It is at present unknown whether he deposited the objects that he took with the other archaeological material from the excavation (see n. 4), and one wonders if his leaving the papyri has any significance.

<sup>7</sup> Bagnani did travel in Egypt, and he was not averse to visiting dealers (cf. BEGG 2010, p. 73), while BEGG 1998, p. 392, records that Bagnani and his wife Stewart had a «growing interest in monasteries», precisely the context suggested for the Coptic papyri edited below. Begg, however, thinks it unlikely that Bagnani purchased the papyri (pers. comm., 7 January 2018).

<sup>8</sup> See BAGNANI 1933-1934, pp. 121-134 (122: «una notevole chiesa copta con il suo Der o monastero e costruzioni annesse»); BEGG 2010, pp. 70-73. It should be noted, however, that Bagnani's monastic identification has not been universally accepted; cf., e.g., BOUTROS 2005, p. 119. A second possibility for the find is the conclusion of the 1931 season, when two churches were dug «nel quartiere copto del kôm, che è quello maggiormente esposto ai guasti dei ricercatori di sebbāk» (ANTI 1931, p. 391; cf. also BEGG 2010, p. 70). For all of the churches excavated by the Italian mission, see further GROSSMANN 2005. No publications concerning these structures (or the pertinent excavations more generally) mention the discovery of papyri, and Begg kindly reports to us (pers. comm., 7 January 2018) that the unpublished records in the Bagnani archive at Trent University are likewise silent about such finds. (A request for information from the Istituto Veneto, where the papers of Tebtynis field director Carlo Anti are held, went unanswered).

ISTITUTO NAZIONALE D'ARCHEOLOGIA  
E STORIA DELL'ARTE

ROMA - PIAZZA S. MARCO, 49 - TELEF. 681.817

Oggetti consegnati all'Istituto Nazionale d' Archeologia  
e Storia dell'Arte dal Dott. Gilberto Bagnani di ritorno dalla  
Missione Archeologica Italiana in Egitto, in parte sovvenziona-  
ta a suo tempo dall'Istituto.

- Tre cartelle con frammenti di papiri in scrittura  
copta.
- Dieci amuleti e pietre dure.
- Una fuseruola.
- Un bronzetto Egizio.
- Un sigillo in pietra a forma di fuso.

F.to Valerio Mariani

Roma, 25 maggio 1954

*Oggetti consegnati:* Oggetti consegnati dal prof. P. Monneret de Villard di  
ritorno dalla Missione Arch. di Huber  
Istituzione Museo Archeologico Italiano in Egitto

FIG. 1. 1954 memorandum concerning objects consigned to INASA by Gilbert Bagnani.

cate that another findspot should be considered.<sup>9</sup> It does seem probable, though, that they would have been discovered in the same part of the site.<sup>10</sup> Late antique papyri in any language are a rarity at Tebtynis, and though the INASA documents are fragmentary and damaged – only three bear substantial texts – their probable connection to the settlement enhances their historical interest and value.

#### THE COPTIC PAPYRI

Despite their fragmentary nature, the six INASA Coptic papyri represent a considerable addition to the body of Sahidic non-literary texts from the Fayum and the first such documents to be published from Tebtynis (if the proposed provenance is correct). Approximately ten percent of non-literary texts from the Fayum are written in Sahidic (or Sahidic with Fayumic influence): 47 of 439 documents.<sup>11</sup> The six papyri here published therefore increase the number of Sahidic documents by over ten per cent. Of this corpus, 24 texts are undated, and the other texts range in date from the IV/V century to the XI century, rendering it difficult to assign a date to the six papyri edited here.

On palaeographic and material grounds – the fact that our texts are written on papyrus and not paper – post-IX century dates can be ruled out.<sup>12</sup> Examination of the available images of papyri from the Fayum (especially those written in Sahidic) provides close comparanda ranging from the VII to IX centuries. These hands exhibit the following characteristic features: they are unligatured; they lean slightly to the right; letters have long vertical strokes (especially in  $\iota$ ,  $\rho$ ,  $\tau$ ,  $\phi$ ),  $\omega$  has a long tail,  $\eta$  is large and rounded, and  $\epsilon$ ,  $\theta$ ,  $o$ , and  $c$  typically are narrow.<sup>13</sup> On the basis of their writing, the INASA texts can be broadly dated to these centuries. The possible reference to Apa Georgios in Papyrus INASA (hereafter P.INASA) Copto I may connect this letter to the VIII/

IX-century material from Deir el-Hammam, so a date at the end of the aforementioned range is proposed for that document. Since there are palaeographic similarities between text I and texts V and VI, late dates are also suggested for those two documents.

The hand of P.INASA Copto II is the only one of the group not to conform to the above description. Its script is larger and rounder, although it too is unligatured and has generally similar letter formations, e.g.,  $\Delta$ ,  $\omega$ ,  $\eta$ . It is possible that this papyrus is either slightly earlier than the others or was written by a scribe more accustomed to producing literary works. In general, the lack of securely datable parallels in conjunction with the considerable research still necessary on the palaeography of Coptic papyri from the Fayum makes it likely that the dates proposed for the INASA papyri will be refined in the future.

The INASA pieces are letters from monastic contexts. This is clear on the basis of the use of titles, e.g., Brother, Father, successor (*diadochos* in P.INASA Copto VI), and epithets. P.INASA Copto I refers to the needs of the letter's recipient, including garments, and mentions a local revered figure, Apa Georgios; II mentions a visit on the Sabbath; several goods seem to be the subject of III, but nothing further can be said; the only readable words in IV concern «all the brethren»; V is a letter to a monk mainly comprising polite phrases; and VI is a letter to a priest that seems to be an apology for being unable to visit the recipient.

#### P.INASA COPTO I:

#### LETTER TO A MONASTIC ELDER<sup>14</sup>

Tebtynis?; 15.2 × 33.7 cm; ca. VIII/IX cent (FIG. 2)

**Description:** An unknown amount of text is lost at the left and, in some cases, the right (some lines appear to be complete at the right, but only ink traces remain). No traces are

<sup>9</sup> For their (palaeographic) dates, see «The Greek Papyri» below.

<sup>10</sup> For the Byzantine sector of the site and its excavation in more recent years, see GALLAZZI 2010 (p. 185 discusses its location; pp. 186 and 203, the discovery of textual material).

<sup>11</sup> These figures are drawn from the Brussels Coptic Database (checked January 2018).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. e.g., P.Lips. inv. 250, a Sahidic list and account on paper from the X/XI century; image published in RICHTER 2008, p. 215.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. P.Fay.Copt. 11 and, especially, 14 (the dialect of both these letters is a mix of Sahidic and Fayumic); P.Col. inv. 552a, published in WESTERFELD 2013 (note the writing of the uncommon Coptic letter  $\sigma$ , with a long horizontal upper element similar to that found in P.INASA Copto I); P.Lond.Copt. I 695, edited with image in WILFONG

2008 (note especially  $\mu$  and  $\phi$ ); SB Kopt. III 1283, image in URBANIAK-WALCZAK 1999, Tafel IV; and the single line of Coptic on SB XVIII 13249. It must be stressed that the provenance of these papyri is the Fayum but not specifically Tebtynis (SB Kopt. III 1283, e.g., is from Deir el-Naqlun), so only general similarities are found rather than exact parallels. The dates suggested for these comparanda range from the VI to IX centuries, and they are often broad to account for the difficulty of identifying analogous material with a secure date. P.Lond.Copt. I 695, e.g., is dated to the VI-VIII centuries, while P.Fay.Copt. 11 and 14 are part of the VIII/IX-century dossier associated with the monastery of Deir el-Hammam.

<sup>14</sup> We are grateful to Dr Anne Boud'hors for her comments on this text, in particular for those concerning Apa Georgios.

visible along the top edge, suggesting that the first line may be preserved. However, as the line spacing in this letter is quite substantial, it is possible that lines may be missing from the beginning. Consequently, the original height and width of the document cannot be reconstructed. The papyrus has suffered damage through burning (for the burning of papyri at Tebtynis, see GALLAZZI 2016, pp. 151-152), and the resulting discolouration has obscured considerable sections of text, to the point of illegibility. Its condition is further exacerbated by a number of small holes and the loss of vertical fibres.

**Palaeography:** An unligatured, right-leaning majuscule, with long descending strokes on ι, ρ, and †; use of the supralinear stroke and diaeresis over ī (when following λ). Sentences are demarcated by small spaces. The hand shows many similarities with P.INASA Copto v and vi (on this hand-type, see the general introduction).

**Dialect:** Sahidic.

The papyrus preserves a letter to a monastic elder, as indicated by both terms of address (lines 8 and 9: «God-honoured ... lord holy Father») and terms of deference (line 3: «your esteemed letters», «I am ready to serve you»). The letter's tone suggests that it was not written by a subordinate but perhaps the superior of another community. The content is not always easy to follow but concerns the first party's need for various items. The writer refers to various shares that he is to receive, but these are not elucidated in the surviving text. The letter mentions an Apa Georgios «who is among the Saints», which may be a reference to the well-known archimandrite of Deir el-Hamman, whose corpus dates to the late VIII/IX century. The date assigned to the text is derived from this identification; i.e., it assumes that these men are one and the same.

↓

- 1 [- ca.? -]. [..]ϫϛ. [- ca. 28 -]. Ν ΜΠΝΡΠΑΙ  
ϠΑΝΤΝ̄ΣΗΜΑΝΕ ΝΗΤΝ̄ [- ca.? -]
- 2 [- ca.? - ρ]ΩΣ ΤΕΤΝΡΧΡΕΙΑ ΔΝ ΤΞΝΟΥ vac.? ΔΥΩ  
ΟΥ ΜΟΝΟΝ ΩΤΗΝ ΑΛΛΑ ΖΩΒ ΝΙΜ ΕΤΕΤΝΡΧΡΕΙΑ Μ̄  
[- ca.? -]
- 3 [- ca.? -]ΝΞΝΜΕΡΟΣ vac. ΣΗΜΑΝΕ ΝΑΙ ΖΝ̄ ΝΕΤΝ̄ΣΖΑΙ  
ΕΤΤΑΙΝΥ ΔΥΩ †Ο ΝΞΕΤΟΙΜΟΣ ΝΡ̄ΣΑΥΟΝ [- ca.? -]
- 4 [- ca.? -]. Μ̄ ΝΩΗΡΕ ΝΘΕ ΜΠΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ ΕΤΞΝ̄  
ΝΕΤΟΥΑΑΒ ΑΠΑ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ vac. ΠΙΣΤΕΥΕ ΓΑΡ ΝΑΙ  
[- ca.? -]
- 5 [- ca.? - Ο]ΥΝΟΒΝΟΣ Ν̄ΛΥΠΗ . . . . ΝΑΝ ΕΧ̄Ν̄ ΠΕΦΩΚ  
ΕΒΟΛ ΔΥΩ ΩΑ ΤΕΝΟΥ ΣΜΗΝ ΕΒΟΛ Ν̄ΜΜΑΝ
- 6 [- ca.? -]. [..] ϫε ΤΝΡΧΡΕΙΑ Μ̄ΜΟΥ ΠΑΡΑ ΠΩΙ ΖΝ  
[Ν]ΕΙΚΑΙΡΟΣ ΕΤΧΑΔΩ ΕΜΑΤΕ ΕΝΤΑΝΚΑΤΑΝΤΑ  
ΕΡΟΥ

- 7 [- ca.? -]. [..]ε.. ΔΙΧΑΧΙΝ ΕΞΟΥ[Ν].....  
ΔΙΘ̄.. Ε ΝΑΙ ΧΕ.. ΤΕ ΕΤΠΑΩΕ ΜΠ[ΕΝ]ΜΑ
- 8 [- ca.? -]ΒΩΚ ΝΗΜΗΤΝ vac. ΔΥΩ ΔΙΜΕ ΧΕ.....ϣ ΔΙ  
... vac. †ΑΣΠΑΖΕ ΔΕ Ν̄ΤΕΤΝΘΕΟΤΙΜ(ΗΤΟΣ)
- 9 [- ca.? -] Ν̄ΧΟ[ΕΙC Ν]ΕΙΩΤ̄ ΕΤΟΥΑΑΒ Μ[Ν] ΝΞCΝΗΥ  
ΤΗΡΟΥ ΕΤΝ̄ΜΗΤΝ̄ ΚΑΤΑ ΝΕΥΡΑΝ . . . . . +

1. σημαίνω 2. ὥς?; χρεία; οὐ μόνον; ΩΤΗΝ l. ΝΩΤΗΝ; ἀλλά
3. μέρος; σημαίνω; ἐτοιμος 4. μακάριος; πιστεύω; γάρ
5. λύπη 6. χρεία; παρά; καιρός; καταντάω 8. ἀϊ<ει>με;  
ἀσπάζομαι; παρ. θεοτιμ/; θεοτίμητος 9. κατά

[...] we did not do this, until we explained to you [...] as you do not have need now. Further, not only garments, but everything that you need [...] our shares. Inform me in your esteemed letters. Furthermore, I am ready to serve [you...] the sons, just like the blessed [i.e., deceased] one who is among the Saints, Apa Georgios. For, believe me [...] <sup>(5)</sup> a great sadness ... to us because of his passing away, and until now it stays with us [...] because we need him beyond measure in these very hard times that we have experienced [...] ...? ... which is half of [our?] place [...] go with you. Moreover, I understood that ... I greet your God-honoured [...] lord holy Father and all the brethren who are with you, individually [...] +

2. Alternatively, it is possible to divide the text ΖΩCΤΕ ΤΝΡΧΡΕΙΑ, but the use of ΖΩCΤΕ with the I Present is unusual and the 2PL subject occurs again at the end of this line.

2. ΤΞΝΟΥ seems to be, at least in part, a correction, with *epsilon* and *nu* overwriting the original letters. It is unclear whether what follows is an intentional space or an erasure. While faint ink traces do seem to be present, the writer also uses small spaces between sentences, as discussed in the commentary to line 3.

3. ΝΞΝΜΕΡΟΣ ΣΗΜΑΝΕ: There is a small space, one to two letters wide, between these two words. The writer seems consistent in his use of such spaces to separate sentences, and if that is the case here, ΣΗΜΑΝΕ is the start of a new clause and thus the imperative. Alternatively, if «our shares» is the subject, the conjugation base is lost, but the construction must be passive, i.e., «our shares were(?) explained to me in your esteemed letters».

4. It seems probable that the text is referring to a person, not an institution (*topos*). If this is correct, it is attractive to link Apa Georgios with the homonymous archimandrite of the monastery of Deir el-Hammam, who is well known from a corpus of

letters dating to the VIII/IX century, on which see SCHMELZ 2009. The INASA letter would thus postdate this holy man's death. The phrase «the deceased one who is among the Saints» finds parallel in two VII/VIII-century Theban documents: ΕΙΣΖΑΙ ΕΝΝΩΗΡΕ ΜΠΑΚΑΡ(Ι)Ο(Σ) ΑΠΑ ΠΑΥΛΟΣ ΠΑΝΑΧΩΡΙΤΗΣ ΠΑΙ ΕΤΞΝ ΝΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ ΤΕΝΟΥ, «I write to the successors of the deceased anchorite Apa Paul, who is now among the Saints» (*P.CLT* 1.12-13); ΝΤΑΙΑΝΑΛΥΤΡΩΣΕ ΖΙΤΟΟΤΥ ΜΠΤΟΠΟΣ ΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ ΜΠΕΤΡΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΗ ΝΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ ΠΖΑΓΙΟΣ ΔΒΒΑ ΨΑΤΕ ΜΠΤΟΟΥ ΜΠΕΝΚΑΣΤΡΟΝ, «which I redeemed from the holy *topos* of the one who shines among the Saints, the holy Abba Psate of the mount of our *castrum*» (*P.KRU* 50.16-18). (Both Paul and Psate were local, i.e., Theban, figures after whom *topoi* were named. Usage at the monastery of Apa Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahri may be contrasted: there the eponymous Phoibammon is referred to throughout the legal documents involving the monastery as «the Saint», i.e., ΠΠΕΤΟΥΔΑΒ, while the founder of the monastery Apa Abraham is «among the Saints» [*P.KRU* 75.18 and 69].)

As for institutions in the Fayum that were named for St George: a church in the Paremboule quarter of Arsinoe is well attested in documentary texts; see *Stud.Pal.* III<sup>2</sup> 126, 1n. with refs. In addition, a church of St George in Narmouthis is named as the donee in the colophon of a IX-century Coptic codex: «he gave the book to the church of St George the martyr in Narmouthis» (ΑΦΤΑΑΦ ΕΞΟΝ ΕΤΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΜΠΖΑΓΙΟΣ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΣ ΠΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΝΧΩΩΡΕ ΖΕΝ ΝΑΡΜΟΥΤΕ); VAN LANTSCHOOT 1929, pp. 46-48 (number 26) = CMCL MICH.AJ (*Corpus dei manoscritti copti letterari*), for which see ORLANDI 2002, p. 217.

5. At the beginning of the line, ΝΟΘΝΟΘ is understood as the doubling of ΝΟΘ, «great», for hyperbolic effect, heightening the writer's feeling of sadness. In the proposed λΥΠΗ, *lambda* is not certain, as only one thick stroke before *upsilon* is now clear. Following λΥΠΗ, a verb is required, but the presence of a lacuna and further damage here mostly obscures the text. It may be possible to read the letter Ϟ, but the space between this and ΝΑΝ may be too large for ϞΩΠΕ. This verb would, however, suit the context: «a great sadness happened to us».

5. ΕΧΝ̄: ε is a correction over an original letter, possibly η.

5. ΠΕΦΩΚ is problematic, especially the reading of π (which here seems smaller and narrower), ε

(which is narrow, more so than *epsilon* elsewhere in this text, resembling a stretched *sigma*), and σ (for which there may be too many strokes). A preferable reading may be ΒΩΚ, although *beta* is also difficult. In the case of either σΩΚ or ΒΩΚ, the meaning remains the same: both are used as euphemistic expressions for death. While ΒΩΚ is more common with this sense, this use of σΩΚ occurs, e.g., in *P.KRU* 65.4: [Ξ]ΙΤΗ ΠΕΥΜ[Ο]Υ ΜΗ ΠΩΚ ΕΒΟΛ ΝΝΕΝΕΙΟΤΕ ΜΜΑΙ[ΠΡ]ΟΦΟΡΑ, «through their death and the passing away of our blessing-loving fathers».

6. [Ν]ΕΪΚΑΙΡΟΣ: The *kappa* overwrites an original *alpha*.

6. ΚΑΤΑΝΤΑΩ is previously attested only three times in Coptic documentary texts: *O.CrumST* 193, *P.Lond.Copt.* I 607, and *SB Kopt.* I 780.

7. Χ̄ΙΝ seems certain, but it is difficult to make sense of the letters that immediately precede and follow this group. As no traces are visible immediately before the *alpha*, ᾱι is most likely the I Perfect, rather than (e.g.) the demonstrative pronoun ΠᾹΙ/ΤᾹΙ/ΝᾹΙ. One possibility is Χ̄ΑΧΙ with Ν introducing the object, with Χ̄ΑΧΙ derived from ΧΑΧΕ («be hard»), echoing ΕΤΧΑΧΩ on the previous line. A compound with ΧΑΧ- may also be considered. The uncertainty or illegibility of subsequent letters requires the matter to be left open.

7. ᾹΙΘ̄ . . Ε ΝᾹΙ is uncertain, and an extra letter may be lost between the proposed σ and ε – σΙΝΕ seems impossible. The I Perfect construction seems secure, based on the clear diaeresis. The traces before ΠΑΩΕ may instead be read ΚΑΤΑ, but this reading seems less secure.

9. At the end of the line, there appear to be the traces of a cross, marking the conclusion of the letter. However, this reading is far from certain, and it is possible that additional lines are lost.

## P.INASA COPTO II: LETTER

Tebtynis?; 17.0 × 9.9 cm; ca. VII/VIII cent.? (FIG. 3)

**Description:** The beginnings of the final ten lines of this letter survive, but the first line comprises mainly traces. The amount of text lost from the top and right cannot be determined, but a large bottom margin remains (ca. 5 cm). There is a *kollēsis* between lines x + 2 and x + 3. There are possible burn marks along the edges and a number of small holes (none of which result in the loss of text).

**Palaeography:** The hand is large with well-spaced, rounded letters and no ligatures. «Bookhand» forms of Δ and X are used, and there are rounded finials on some letters, notably Δ, κ, γ, and x. Spaces are left between words, although this practice is not consistent.

**Dialect:** Sahidic.

A letter, as indicated by the use of second-person pronouns and final epistolary formulae, apparently asking if the recipient is able to visit on the Sabbath. Too little text survives to provide further details.

↓

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x + 1 .....ΤΑΙ. [- ca.? -]

x + 2 ΣΟΜ ΟΥΝ ΝΓΕΙ ΕΜ[- ca.? -]

x + 3 ΜΠΣΑΝΒΑΤΟ[Ν - ca.? -]

x + 4 ΛΑΔΥ ΝΡΩΜΕ.[- ca.? -]

x + 5 ΟΥΔΕ ΖΑΖΤΗΝ [- ca.? -]

x + 6 ΟΥΝ ΔΦΡΜΖΕ Ε[- ca.? -]

x + 7 ΖΩΚ ΕΚΟΥΕΩ.[- ca.? -]

x + 8 Ν ΟΝ ΠΣΑΒΑΝΤΟΝ [- ca.? -]

x + 9 ΕΤΕΖΝΑΚ ΖΝ ΤΕ[- ca.? -]

x + 10 ΤΗΡΣ ΟΥΧΑΙ ΖΜ [ΠΧΘΕΙΣ - ca.? -]

x + 2, x + 6(?). οὖν x + 3, x + 9. σάββατον x + 5. οὐδέ

[...] this [... If you are] able, then, come to [...] the Sabbath [...] anyone [...] nor amongst us [...] he became free [...] yourself, as you wish [...] again the Sabbath [...] that pleases you among the [...] entire [...]. Farewell in [the Lord. ...]

x + 4. λαδυ: The first Δ is a correction.

x + 6. ΔΦΡΜΖΕ: A possible incidence of haplography; double rho (i.e., ΔΦΡ-ΡΜΖΕ) may have been intended. The preceding ΟΥΝ may be the particle οὖν or may belong to the end of a verb.

#### P.INASA COPTO III: FRAGMENT

Tebtynis?; 7.6 × 7.6 cm; ca. VIII cent. (FIG. 4)

**Description:** Parts of the final four lines of the text survive, with traces of another, perhaps, along the top edge. The bottom margin is 3 cm, but the amount of papyrus lost on all other sides cannot be determined. There is burn damage, causing discolouration of the surface. As a result of this, as well as areas of wear and a lacuna in the bottom lines, very few words can be read completely, and the purpose of the document is unknown.

**Palaeography:** Too little of the text survives to allow significant palaeographic comments. Letters are detached and curved (especially η).

**Dialect:** Sahidic, but though the remains of the text are scant, some words exhibit non-standard Sahidic orthography, possibly due to Fayumic influences; note, e.g., CΑΝ for CON in line x + 4. (For CΔΜ at the beginning of line x + 3, see the commentary.)

The precise nature of the text is indeterminable due to how little survives, although a reference to «our esteemed brother» in line x + 4 suggests a monastic context.

→

-----

x + 1 vestig?

x + 2 [- ca.? -].Η ΝΕCΚΗΥΕ.[- ca.? -]

x + 3 [- ca.? -]CΔΜ ΔΥΩ ΕΝΕΖΤΩ...[- ca.? -]

x + 4 [- ca.? - Π]ΕΝCΑΝ ΕΤΑΙΝΥ ΨΑΖ[- ca.? -]

x + 5 ]ΛΙΟ[.]ΝΨ... [- ca.? -]

x + 3. CΔΜ l. ΚΑΜ or CΩΜ x + 4. CΑΝ l. CΟΝ

[...] the objects [...] reed pen(?). Moreover, the horses(?) [...] our esteemed brother, master [...]...

x + 3. CΔΜ may be a variant of ΚΑΜ, «reed, rush pen», or CΩΜ, «garden, vineyard».

x + 3. ΕΝΕΖΤΩ... The ink between ζ and the vertical stroke is read as the left end of the crossbar of tau. The traces following ω are too faint to confirm this reading of «horses» and (if correct) whether the writing is ζΤΩΩΡΕ or ζΤΩΡΕ.

x + 4. CΑΝ for CΟΝ: The exchange of omicron for alpha is very common in Sahidic texts from the Fayum; see KAHLE 1954, pp. 80-81. As the noun is in its singular form, [Π]ΕΝCΑΝ, «our esteemed brother», can be reconstructed.

x + 4. It is difficult to determine whether ΨΑΖ means «the scribe» or «the master»; if ΝΨ on the following line is to be construed as the beginning of ΝΨΑΖ, these lines may refer to a number of men using the honorific «master».

#### P.INASA COPTO IV: FRAGMENT

Tebtynis?; 6.8 × 10.9 cm; ca. VIII cent. (FIG. 5)

**Description:** A heavily mutilated fragment preserving traces of the final four lines of the text; the final line preserves the left margin. A detached, tiny fragment (0.6 × 0.7 cm) bears no text. The presence of burn damage along with a loss of fibres causes the little writing that survives to be barely legible.



FIG. 2. P.INASA Copto I: Letter to a monastic elder.

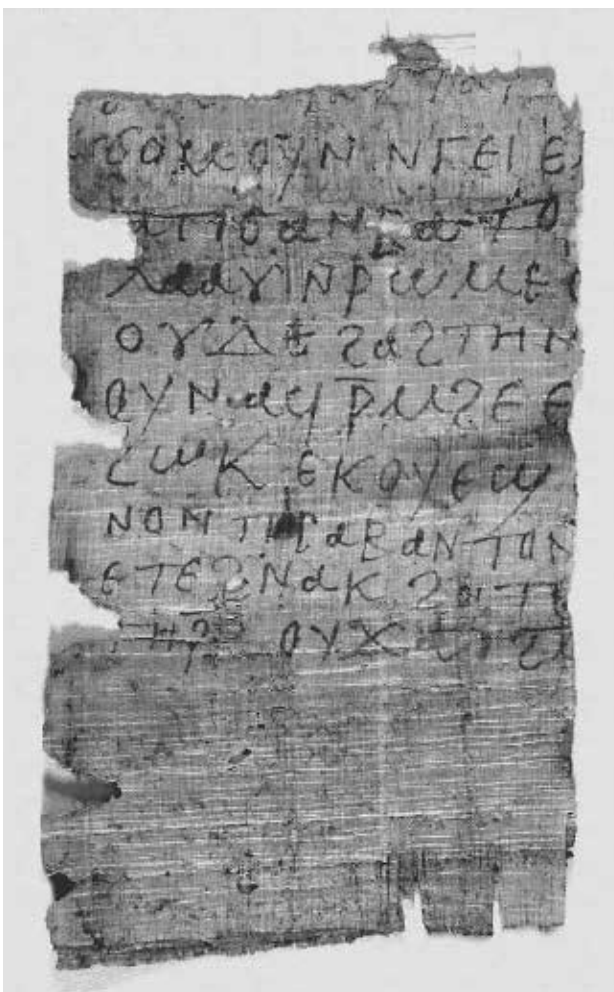


FIG. 3. P.INASA Copto II: Letter.



FIG. 4. P.INASA Copto III: Fragment.





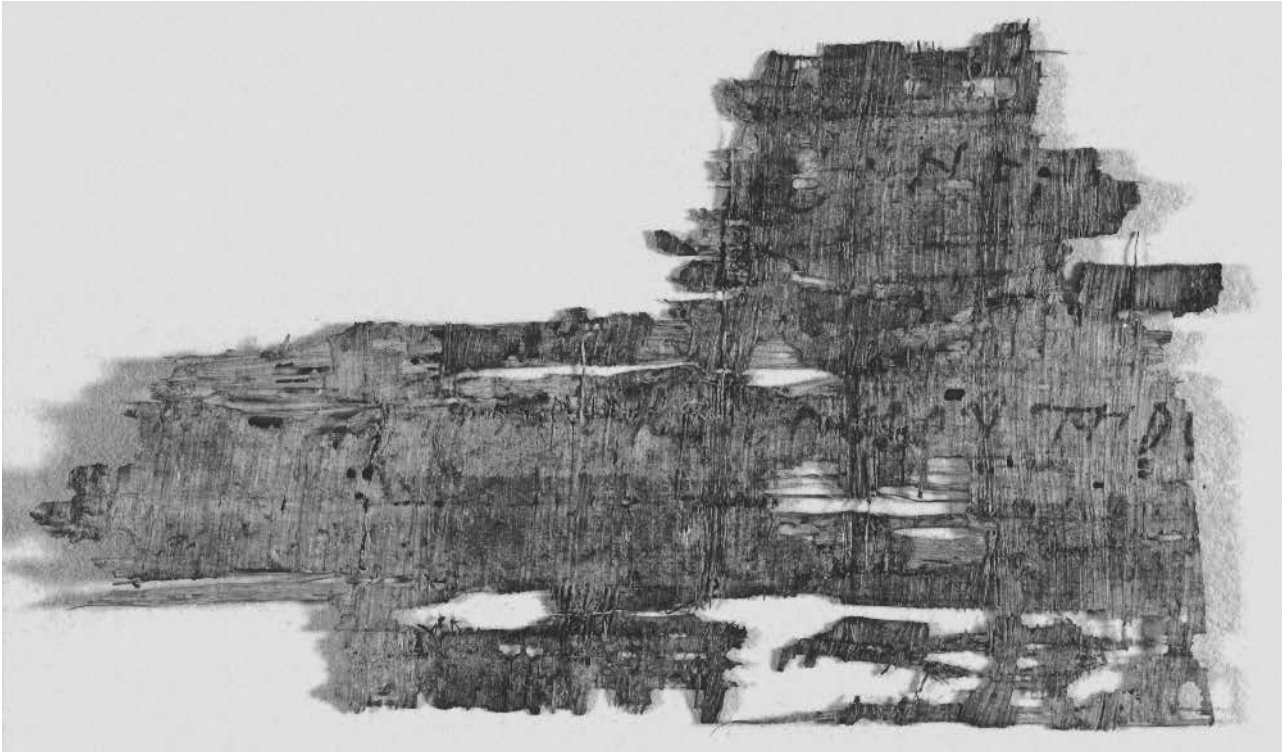


FIG. 5. P.INASA Copto IV: Fragment.



FIG. 6. P.INASA Copto v: Letter to a monk (front).

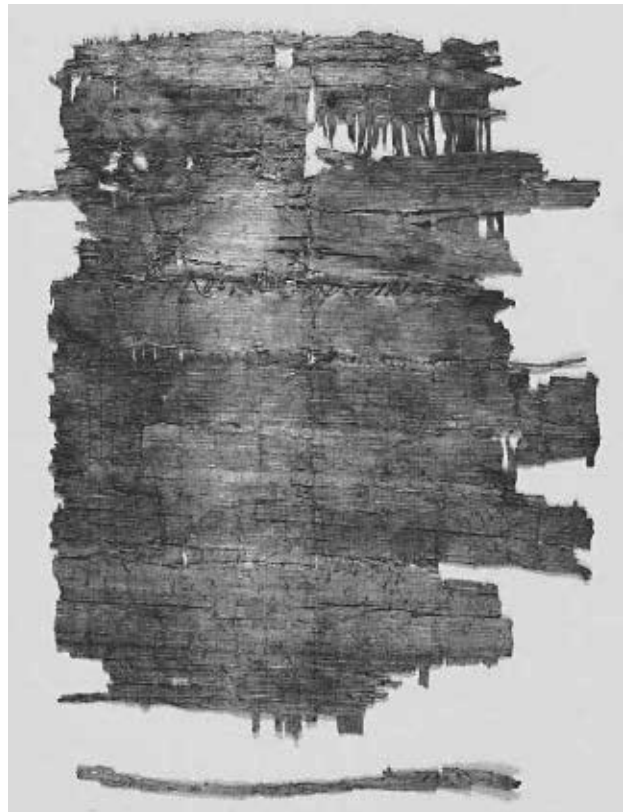


FIG. 7. P.INASA Copto v: Letter to a monk (back).

5. ἀλλ(α) ἀναναπλ.[: The scribe's supralinear mark may indicate an abbreviated writing, i.e., ἀλλ' for ἀλλα (for abbreviated writings with an oblique abbreviation stroke, ἀλλ/, see FÖRSTER 2002, p. 32), or a case of elision. In any case, the following α can be read as the I Perfect conjugation base. The verb ἀναπλ.[...] is perhaps ἀναπλέω, «to sail upstream» (i.e., south), which is otherwise unattested in Coptic papyri but is well attested in Greek texts. Alternatively, the traces support ἀναπν[...], possibly for ἀναπνέω, «to recover, revive», etc. However, while this would fit well the following mention of health and good condition, the word is found neither in Coptic nor Greek papyri from Egypt.

6. The use of the preposition μῆν indicates that οὐχαῖ is here a noun, and so τετῆν can be reconstructed in the lacuna: [- ca.? -]τ[ετῆν]οὐχαῖ.

8. ..ο σενδοουχαῖ: It is possible that an error has occurred here due to haplography, specifically that -ο<C> σενδοουχαῖ should be read, with -ο<C> being the end of a Greek noun.

9. ἰκνοποδιον is a compound of ἴχνος (sole of foot) and πόδιον (foot), for which πεικνος πνετῆνοφερτε, «the soles of your feet», is more common; see references in FÖRSTER 2002, p. 355. The following abbreviation, εἰςλογημ( )τ, is understood to be the superlative ἐυλογημώτατος based on the reading of a superscript τ (which is written with an elaborate curved element). If this suspended letter is in fact ε, εἰςλογημένος is the underlying Greek word.

10. ραρετην is understood here as a variant of ραρωτῆν; no other explanations seem plausible.

P.INASA COPTO VI: LETTER TO A PRIEST

Tebtynis?; 15.1 × 15.7 cm; ca. VIII/IX cent. (FIGS. 8-9)

**Description:** In addition to the main fragment, there are twelve small pieces, only some of which bear text. Nine lines survive on the main fragment and one line on a second fragment (2.6 × 7.5 cm); the amount of papyrus lost between the two pieces is unknown. The top and bottom margins are extant – the former on the main fragment, the latter on the second fragment – but as an indeterminable amount of text is lost between the fragments, the original height of the document cannot be calculated. Additionally, both the left and right margins are lost. The papyrus is burnt in several places, mainly around the edges of the main piece; on the burning of papyri at Tebtynis, see GAL-

LAZZI 2016, pp. 151-52. There are also a number of small holes along the top and right side. The result is the loss or illegibility of a number of letters. The rest of the writing is well preserved, for the most part.

**Palaeography:** A regular, angular, right-leaning majuscule. There are long ascending and descending strokes (see especially ι, ρ, φ, ω, and sometimes the upper part of κ), which are accommodated by large spaces between the lines. A curved supralinear stroke is used, and the diaeresis occurs over ï when following α (on most occasions) and once after ε. The hand shows many similarities with P.INASA Copto I and especially v (on this hand-type, see the general introduction).

**Dialect:** Sahidic.

The text is a letter to a priest (the names in the address are lost). The principal matter appears to be an apology by the sender for not visiting the recipient, although certainty is elusive in view of the amount of lost text.

- ↓
- 1 [- ca.? -]...νηφτο τη...[- ca.? -]
  - 2 [- ca.? -]. ντεγκαιρια νπεοφιλ(εστατος) μηρεφ [- ca.? -]
  - 3 [- ca.? -]ἀναγκαιον πε ρζαῖ · πρωτον μεν ἡσπαζε[ε - ca.? -]
  - 4 [- ca.? -]τητα]ρο ἡμωτῆν δε λνει ωα τπολις ρ. C σῆν θε[ω - ca.? -]
  - 5 [- ca.? -]νεωδῆσομ νει δε ἡπογσυτχωρει να[η - ca.? -]
  - 6 [- ca.? -]ἡικω(φορος)· αρι ταγαπη οῦν σημανε ναν μηρετ[- ca.? -]
  - 7 [- ca.? -]ροφορια ναωωπε ναν · ναῖ να.ω [- ca.? -]
  - 8 [- ca.? -]ωπαῖον ἡπερωηρε πετνσον παιακ[ον - ca.? -]
  - 9 [- ca.? -].κ δε δαμιανος [- ca.? -]
  - 
  - 10 [- ca.? -]..πεληφεις ἡωτη τ [- ca.? -]
- 
11. [- ca.? -]..... ρ αγω παιατ(ο)χ(οc) vac. + .. [- ca.? -]

2. εὐκαιρία; ραρ. θεοφιλ; θεοφιλέστατος; πρεσβύτερος?
3. ἀναγκαιῶν; πρωτον; μέν; <τ>ἡσπαζε; ἀσπάζομαι
4. πόλις; σὺν θεῷ 5. συγχωρέω 6. ραρ. ]ηικω; νικηφόρος; ἀγάπη; οὔν; σημαίνω 7. πληροφορία? 8. διάκονος
11. ραρ. παιατ<sup>x</sup>; διάδοχος

[...] of Phto, we [...] of the prosperity of the most God-loving priest [...]... it is necessary (to) write.



FIG. 8. P.INASA Copto VI: Letter to a priest (front).

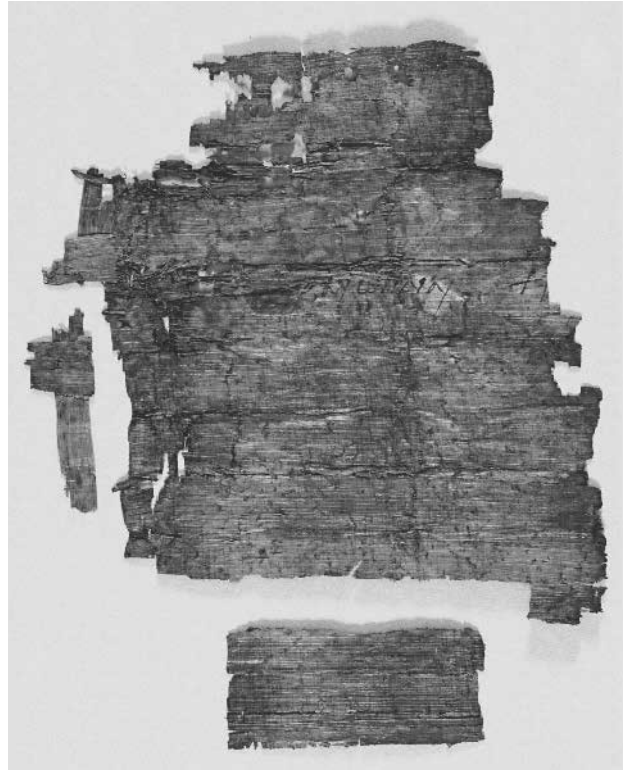


FIG. 9. P.INASA Copto VI: Letter to a priest (back).

First, we greet [... we info]rm you that we came to the city H[.]s, God-willing [...<sup>(5)</sup> we were un]able to come, because [we?] were not permitted [...] victorious. Please, then, give us a sign of what [...] certainty(?) will be ours. These will [...] opaion our son, your brother the deacon [...]... Damianos [...] <sup>(10)</sup> ...? [...]

[...]... and the successor. + ... [...]

1.  $\eta\phi\tau\omicron$ : The reading of *phi*, rather than an alternative such as  $\omicron\phi$ , is based on its form in lines 2 and especially 7, in which the circular body is not a complete circle and the ascending element is a continuation of the circular part. A zoophoric personal name  $\phi\tau\omicron$  (for  $\eta\phi\tau\omicron$ ) «The Horse», is not otherwise attested, and the Greek equivalent, ἵππος, is rare (see NB, s.v., and *Lexicon of Greek personal names*, vols. 1, 2a, and 3a, s.v., or at <http://www.lgpn.ox.ac.uk>).

2.  $\mu\eta\rho\epsilon\upsilon$ [...]: FÖRSTER 2002, p. 673, includes a number of variant writings of *πρεσβύτερος* without *sigma*, and  $\eta$  for  $\beta$  is a common dialectical feature; see KAHLE 1954, pp. 93-94.

3.  $\alpha\lambda\alpha\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\eta\eta\epsilon\ \epsilon\zeta\alpha\iota$  is perhaps to be reconstructed as  $[\omicron\gamma]\alpha\lambda\alpha\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\eta\eta\epsilon\ \epsilon\zeta\alpha\iota$ , with haplography resulting in the single *epsilon*; cf. *O.CrumST* 258.4-6:  $\omicron\gamma\alpha\lambda\alpha\gamma\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\eta\eta\epsilon\ \epsilon\tau\tau\alpha\epsilon\zeta\alpha\iota\ \eta\epsilon\eta\omicron\gamma\chi\alpha\iota\ \eta\eta\tau\eta\eta$ .

3. The scribe erroneously writes the 1PL pronominal subject as  $\bar{\eta}$ -, not  $\tau\bar{\eta}$ -.

4. The toponym  $\zeta.c$  may be  $\zeta\eta\epsilon$  (a variant of  $\zeta\eta\epsilon\epsilon$  /  $\zeta\eta\eta\epsilon$  /  $\zeta\eta\eta\epsilon$ ), all of which are attested variants of Ichnasiya al-Madina (Heracleopolis); see TIMM 1984-2007, pp. 1161 ff.

5. The negative construction  $\bar{\mu}\rho\omicron\gamma\epsilon\omega\delta\bar{\eta}\delta\omicron\mu$  suggests that the preceding construction should also be negative. Since the negative particle  $\lambda\eta$  is absent, the negative I Perfect,  $[\bar{\mu}\rho]\epsilon\eta\epsilon\omega\delta\bar{\eta}\delta\omicron\mu$ , «we were unable», should probably be understood.

7.] $\rho\omicron\phi\omicron\rho\iota\alpha$  should probably be reconstructed as  $\pi\lambda\eta\rho\omicron\phi\omicron\rho\iota\alpha$ , of which there are a small number of attestations in Coptic texts; see FÖRSTER 2002, pp. 653-654. The alternatives –  $\delta\epsilon\eta\delta\rho\omicron\phi\omicron\rho\iota\alpha$  («tree production»),  $\delta\omega\rho\omicron\phi\omicron\rho\iota\alpha$  («the bringing of gifts»),  $\rho\omicron\rho$

φυροφορία («wearing of purple garments»), ὑδροφορία («water-carrying») – do not suit the context, and none of them, moreover, is attested in Coptic (with only ὑδροφορία appearing in the Greek papyrological corpus).

8. ]ΩΠΑΙΩΝ is understood as the end of the name of the individual mentioned in this line, specifically as a variant spelling of -παιων / -ΠΑΙΩΝ. (The name Παῖων, which is attested as ΠΑΙΩΝ in *SB Kopt.* III 1395, is also possible.) Another possibility would be to divide the letters as [ΔΥ]Ω ΠΑΙ ΩΝ «and also this one».<sup>15</sup>

9. ΔΑΜΙΑΝΟΣ is clearly uncertain, but it does fit the surviving traces.

10. The reading of ΠΕΛΠΕΙΣ, «the hope», is very insecure, and all occurrences of ἐλπεις in Coptic non-literary texts have an initial ϣ; see FÖRSTER 2002, p. 249. The similarity of the writings of ΙΤ (on line 6) and Π demonstrates how difficult it is to identify letters securely in this text when only the lower elements survive (two short vertical strokes could also, for example, belong to Η). Furthermore, epsilon and sigma, both of which are narrow letters, are difficult to differentiate when broken. The reading of the text on this detached fragment is therefore highly doubtful.

11. ΔΙΑΤΟΧΟΣ for διάδοχος is also attested in *CPR* IV 195.3 (unprovenanced) and *P.Lond.Copt.* I 1046.2 (Hermopolite), but this is its only attested abbreviated writing in Coptic; for attestations and variants of διάδοχος in Coptic, see FÖRSTER 2002, p. 178.

#### THE GREEK PAPYRI

The two Greek papyri are too fragmentary to justify complete editions and are thus presented as *descripta*. Neither bears a date or any other content that enables their time of writing to be pinpointed or even narrowed significantly. The limited samples of script that they preserve furthermore hinder palaeographic dating. In the case of P.INASA Greco I, a date in the second half of the fourth century or the first

half of the fifth seems likely (cf. *CPR* x 110; Arsinoite, 407),<sup>16</sup> though some forms current in later Byzantine hands (cf., e.g., ερ in l. 6 with the same combination in *P.Köln* III 158.22 [Heracleopolite, AD 599]) appear. In any case, the text predates the Coptic documents. P.INASA Greco II is harder to classify because its textual remains largely consist of numerals and the abbreviation (effectively a symbol) for νομισμάτων (*P.Köln* v 235 [Oxyrhynchite, AD 496] may be compared for its specific form). In the case of this papyrus, «late antique» is the best date that may be offered.

#### P.INASA GRECO I: FRAGMENT FROM A DOCUMENT<sup>17</sup>

Tebtynis?; 9.8 × 3.0 cm; IV / V cent. (FIG. 10)

**Description:** A thin strip of papyrus bearing the remains of eight lines of a cursive script that was written with the fibres. The top margin of the text appears to be extant but no others. No *kollēsis* is visible. The back of the papyrus is blank.

**Palaeography:** See introduction to «The Greek Papyri».

The content of this text is clearly documentary, but its precise nature is indeterminate owing to the small amount of writing preserved. Since it does not reproduce any contractual boilerplate, it is likely to be a less formulaic text such as a letter. Line 7 clearly reads,] ἀρούρας ὀκτ[ώ, and a second reference to land (a single *aroura*) is present in line 5. ἦ]λθεσ βουλο[, i.e., the second-singular aorist of ἐρχομαι or one of its compounds followed by the nominative singular participle of βούλομαι, may appear in line 3. If this suggestion is correct, it would support identifying the text as a letter.

#### P.INASA GRECO II: FRAGMENT OF AN ACCOUNT OF MONEY

Tebtynis?; 14.3 × 5.2 cm; Late Antiquity (FIG. 11)

**Description:** A fragment of papyrus bearing the beginnings of six lines that were written against the fibres. (It is possible that seven lines are preserved, but it seems more likely that the oblique strokes beneath l. 6 belong to that line; cf. the similar strokes on παρ(ά) in l. 5.) Well-defined

<sup>15</sup> We thank Dr Anne Boud'hors for this alternative reading.

<sup>16</sup> We thank Dr Sophie Kovarik for her advice concerning the date of the hand.

<sup>17</sup> We are grateful to Dr Sophie Kovarik and Professors Nikolaos Gonis and James Keenan for their comments on the text.

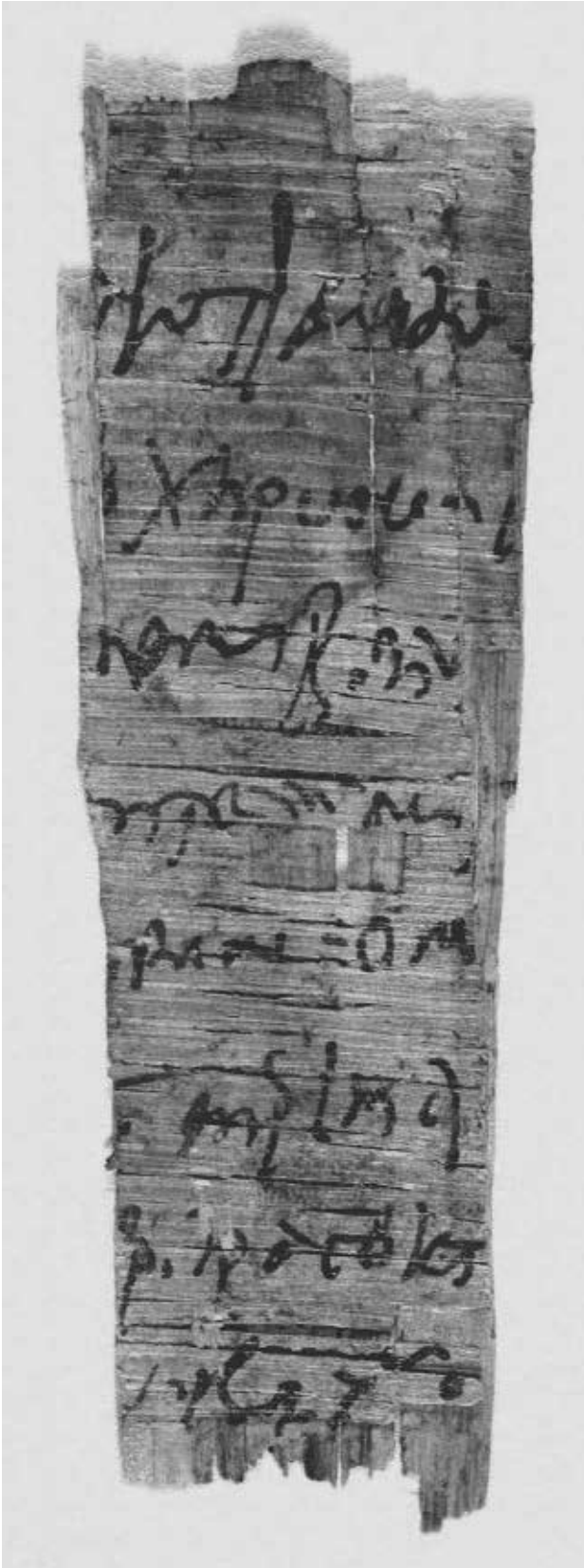


FIG. 10. P.INASA Greco I: Fragment from a document.

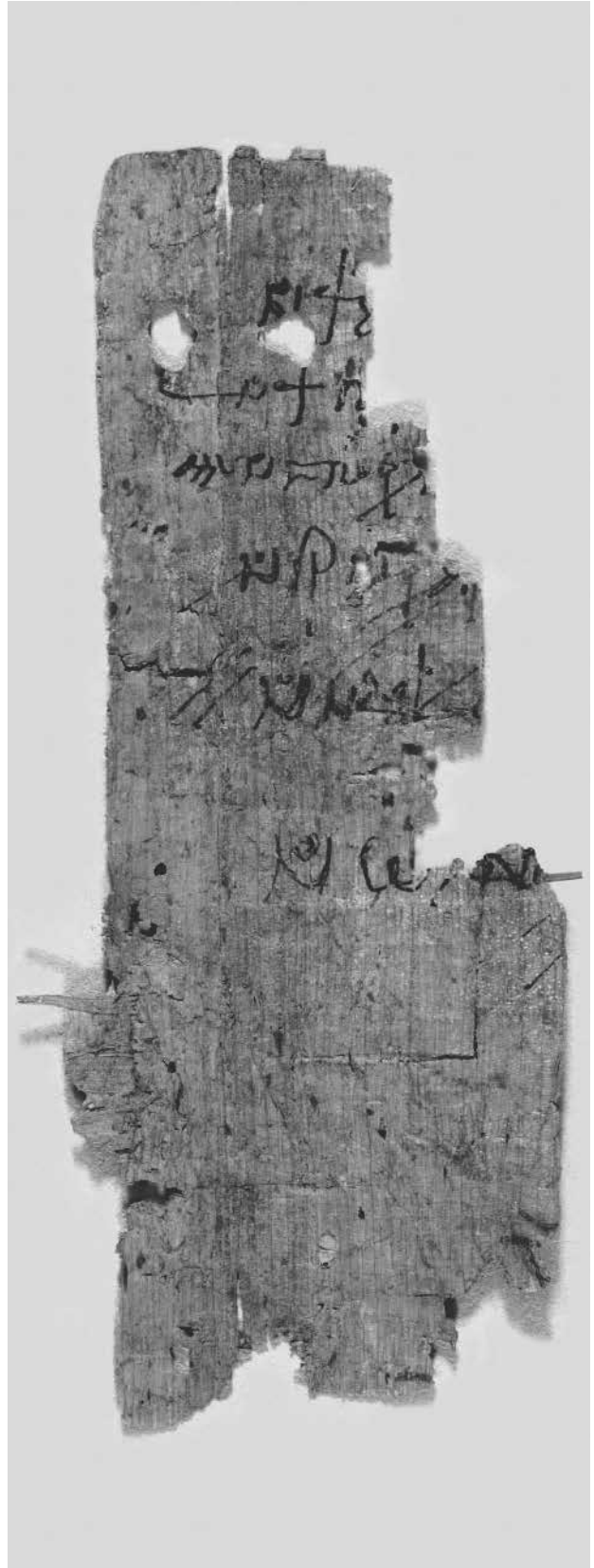


FIG. 11. P.INASA Greco II: Fragment of an account of money.

margins are extant on the top and left. The bottom margin may have been ample (> 4.75 cm), but traces of ink (apparently from a duller *kalamos*) on the bottom right of the fragment suggest that the text may not have ended at l. 6 (or 7). Part of a *kollēsis* may be preserved on the left edge of the fragment, approximately one third up from its bottom; at the location in question, a small piece of papyrus with horizontal fibres is joined to the main fragment. If this interpretation of the structure of the fragment is correct, the text occupied (the back of) the second sheet of the roll. The reverse of the fragment is blank.

**Palaeography:** See introduction to «The Greek Papyri».

The fragment preserves an account of money, but the absence of a heading or other specifiers prevents comment concerning its precise nature. The sums of money are not trivial; that in l. 6 (> 834 *solidi* – the equivalent of more than 11.5 pounds of gold – before any deductions that were made after the break) may be the total of ll. 2 and 5.

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**ABSTRACT** · Publication of six Coptic and two Greek papyri in the Istituto Nazionale di Archeologia e di Storia dell'Arte, deriving most probably from the excavations of Gilbert Bagnani at Tebtynis in the Fayum. The more complete of the Coptic texts are identifiable as letters from monastic contexts. The most substantial fragment, P.INASA Copto 1, mentions an Apa Georgios «who is among the Saints», perhaps a reference to a well-known archimandrite of Deir el-Hamman; such an identification would indicate an VIII/IX-century date for the document. The remaining Coptic papyri can, for the most part, be dated on palaeographic grounds to these same centuries, while the rather fragmentary Greek documents (a letter, possibly, and an account) are earlier.

**KEYWORDS:** Coptic epistolography, Gilbert Bagnani, monasticism, Tebtynis.