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P.Ghent inv. 47 completed. A Coptic letter from Papa Diane to Dioscorus of Aphrodito

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- §1 I propose here an extended edition of a papyrus that consists of two fragments kept on different continents: one published (Ghent) and one unpublished (Cairo).¹ The first, unpublished fragment (hereafter fragment A) preserves the line beginnings of the papyrus; I studied and photographed it in the Coptic Museum, Cairo, during a postdoctoral stay in February 2019.² The second fragment – recently published by Y. Amory and J. V. Stolk (hereafter fragment B)³ – contains the line endings of the same text.
- §2 Fragment A is kept in the Coptic Museum, Cairo (inv. 841). The glass currently contains two fragments (including our fragment A) and a complete unpublished opisthograph letter. According to its records, the Coptic Museum has been in possession of fragment A since its transfer from the Egyptian Museum (Cairo) in 1937. The join between P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 841 and P.Ghent. inv. 47 indicates that inventory numbers 822 to 850 of the Coptic Museum collection entered the Egyptian Museum at an early stage probably as part of the same 1908 purchase as the Ghent fragment, which confirms that this set of papyri is indeed of Aphroditan (Kūm Išqāw) provenance. G. Robinson was the first to call attention to the Kūm Išqāw provenance of this lot of papyri (inv. 822–850),⁴ and I have been able to verify this origin thanks to internal criteria set out here.
- §3 According to my preliminary autopsy of the originals, I can now lay out the following pieces of information about this series of inventory numbers:
- Inv. 822, *nunc* Crum Mss V 4.4 recto (one of Lacau’s transcriptions kept in the Griffith Institute) = *olim* Gr.Inst.(c). Papyrus inv. 822, is a glass currently containing 33 fragments of which 20 could be joined in the lower part and 4 in the upper part.⁵
 - Inv. 829 joins inv. 4054, is another Coptic letter from Aphrodito (ed. in preparation).
 - According to my paleographical analysis, “scribe A”, the most prolific writer of Coptic letters from Aphrodito, wrote fragments inv. 840 and 850.⁶
 - Inv. 847 is another Coptic letter addressed to “my brother” Dioscorus (see below).
- §4 The *ed. pr.* of fragment B explains how the fragment came to the Ghent collection.⁷ It was sold to Ghent University Library soon after the famous discovery of the Byzantine Aphrodito papyri in the

¹ Cf. *inter alia* Keenan 1984: 52–53; Vanderheyden 2012: 793–795; Vanderheyden (forthcoming), introduction.

² I hereby thank L. Bavay, director of the IFAO at that time, for granting a postdoctoral fellowship that facilitated my work on papyri kept in Cairo.

³ See Amory and Stolk 2021.

⁴ See Robinson 1987: 71.

⁵ A full new edition of this text will soon be published as P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 19, in Vanderheyden (forthcoming).

⁶ Named “scribe digraphe anonyme” in Amory 2018 I: 50–61 and “scribe A” in Vanderheyden (forthcoming), § 1.3.3.3.

⁷ Amory and Stolk 2021 proposed to identify perhaps another Coptic letter addressed to Dioscorus in the Ghent collection (inv. 48) in their paper entitled “The Coptic Papyri from Ghent University Collection: Two New Documents from the Archive of Dioscorus of Aphrodite?” given on the 11.07.2022 at the 12th International Congress of Coptic Studies, Brussels.

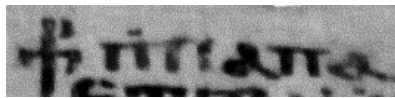
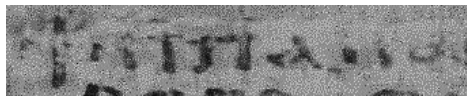

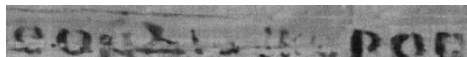

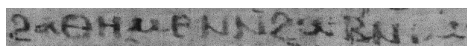
village of Kūm Iṣqāw in 1905⁸ and is now kept in the “Fonds Cumont,” named after the historian who acquired it through the antiquities market in 1908.⁹

- §5 The composite text published here brings important additional information, such as recognition of a new anonymous scribe who penned a dossier of three letters, clearer identification of monastic titles (esp. *Papa* probably as head of the Pharou monastery), and more insight into Aphrodito place names. Finally, the identity of the sender of the letter, a certain Papa Diane whose name is attested only in the Cairo fragment, has been established.

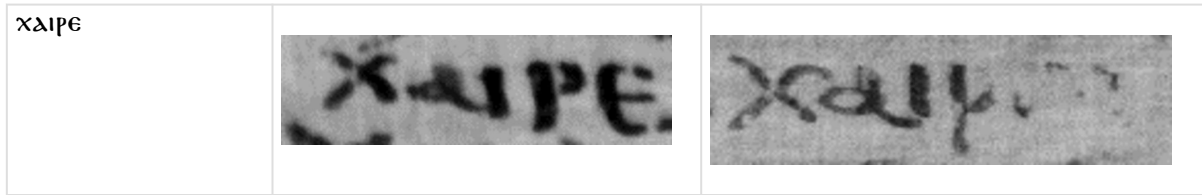
Paleography

- §6 Paleographical analysis was the key to joining these two fragments. The Coptic writing style, close to the unimodular majuscule, is a straight bilinear writing with few ligatures. As described in the edition of fragment B, *mu*, *alpha* and *upsilon* shapes divert from the regular biblical majuscule form, while *hori*, *shai*, *psi*, *beta*, and *fai* occasionally descend below the line, breaking the bilinearity of the script. The scribe used interpunction to divide the structure of the letter (before ⲕⲁⲓ ⲓⲁⲣ l. 6 and before ⲉⲧⲃⲉ l. 7), features that give a particular bookish impression to his hand.¹⁰ In comparison to other Aphrodito letters, it shows general characteristics similar to P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 5 or 19, both written in monastic environments.
- §7 A certain Papa Diane (mentioned in l. 1 and 13) sent this letter to Dioscorus and his brothers. However, the anonymous scribe who penned it also probably wrote another unpublished Coptic letter (P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 847): I have recognized the same hand in this much-abraded letter sent by another person, a certain *Papa* Apollo, the *reader* (ⲛⲣⲉⲣⲱⲱ), to the same “brother” Dioscorus.¹¹ Although inv. 847 is poorly preserved, a comparison of a few words in it with those in our fragments A and B strongly suggests that the same hand (see hereafter Table 1) wrote the two documents:

Table 1: Paleographic comparison between Ghent. inv. 47 + P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 841 and P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 847

	Fragments A and B	P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 847 (ined.)
ⲫ ⲛⲁⲛⲁ		
CON ΔΙΟΚΚΟΡΟΣ		
ⲁⲗ ⲉⲩ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲛⲁⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ		

- ⁸ On the circumstances of the find, see [Fournet and Magdelaine 2008](#) (preface): 7–8; [Fournet 2009a](#): 117; [Amory 2018](#): 6 and n. 9. Centered on the Apollos’ and later Dioscorus’ archives, these slightly more than 700 texts include many relating to the administration of the village. About the rediscovery of Apollos’ papers and his important role in the village, which was overshadowed for a century by interest in his son, see [Vanderheyden 2020](#).
- ⁹ The Ghent collection hosts some Greek Aphrodito papyri, such as [SB 3 6704](#) (Ghent inv. 44 = TM 18825; picture available at the url <http://lib.ugent.be/catalog/rug01:001484515>) and [SB 3 7201](#) written by Dioscorus (Ghent inv. 45 = TM 18861; picture available at the url <http://lib.ugent.be/catalog/rug01:001484516>). See [Amory and Stolk 2021](#): 147–148.
- ¹⁰ Description in [Amory and Stolk 2021](#): 148.
- ¹¹ I am planning to publish this letter as part of the next catalogue of Coptic letters from Aphrodito.



- §8 Could Apollo the *reader* and Diane, both bearing the title *Papa*, have used the service of the same anonymous scribe to write their letters to Dioscorus? Alternatively, should we assume that this hand belongs to either *Papa* Apollo or *Papa* Diane and that one of them wrote for the other?

Circumstances of the letter

- §9 The reason the letter was sent to Dioscorus is now unclear because of the poor state of preservation of lines 8 to 12, which must have featured the actual message. However, it is likely that it concerned property management, probably on behalf of a monastery, since it mentions fields and perhaps camels.
- §10 The extant part of the letter mostly contained greetings (8 lines on 12) and, therefore, this letter raises the issue of monastic titles.
- §11 First of all, as already stated in [Amory and Stolk 2021](#): 151, who mention Crum Mss V 4.6, 4, the term ⲗⲁⲟⲥ generally qualifies the monks of a coenobitic monastic community and in Aphrodito more precisely the monks of the Apa Apollos monastery in Pharoou.¹² Thanks to our Cairo-Ghent re-constructed letter and P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 847, both written by the same scribe, as well as Crum Mss V 4.6, one could think that we are in the presence of a small dossier constituted by three letters sent by superiors of the Pharoou community bearing the title *Papa* (Phoibammôn, Diane, and Apollos *the reader*). In these three letters *papa* seems to refer to the “father” of the monastery and not to the function of priest. The presence of the “men of ⲭⲕⲕⲟⲟⲩ”¹³ and of the name [S]ophia, probably Dioscorus’ wife, in Crum Mss V 4.6, 5 reinforces the hypothesis that Dioscorus was indeed the recipient of these three letters, in his function of curator of his father’s monastery.
- §12 On the other hand, the title ⲟⲩⲱⲓⲛⲣⲉ ⲛⲱⲟⲩⲗⲱⲩ “*the worthy-of-being-loved son*” is well attested in Aphrodito (twice in the plural form ⲛⲱⲟⲩⲗⲱⲩⲟⲩ).¹⁴ P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 7, written by Apollos himself (dated July 11, 545), was sent to his “beloved and *worthy-of-being-loved sons*.” There it certainly referred to members of the Pharoou monastic community, which was funded by Apollos himself.¹⁵ Then, about 30 years later, P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 18.18 (dated between 573 and 580), sent to “my *worthy-of-being-loved* venerable fathers Phoibammôn and Dioscorus” by Mousês their “son,” referred probably to the two leaders of the Pharoou community. I have proposed elsewhere that these two characters are the famous Dioscorus of Aphrodito and Phoibammôn, son of Triadelphos, both heirs of Apollos.¹⁶ In that perspective, the *worthy-of-being-loved son/father* was perhaps an equivalent to

¹² *Ed. pr.* quotes Crum Mss V 4.5 (transcription) according to Kahle’s reading, rightfully avoiding [MacCoull 1993](#): 37 wrong reading. However, studying the original transcriptions in the Griffith Institute has revealed that Crum Mss V 4.6 actually keep a sepia picture of a lost papyrus, on the back of which, one can read the following note: “May 1907. One of the papyri found at Aphrodito (Jkôou) by (?) G. Lefebvre in 1905/06. Photogr. Brugsch (for Maspero) (not Dioscorus’ hand)”. The recipient of Crum Mss V 4.6 remains unknown but even if the papyrus was already damaged and abraded when photographed, I read on the picture: ⲫⲥ ⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲫⲟⲩⲃⲁⲙⲙⲟⲛ ⲛⲱⲩⲧ ⲙⲉⲧⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲛⲁⲛⲁ ⲁⲛⲟⲗⲗⲱ ⲙⲫⲗⲁⲟⲩⲱⲩ | ⲙⲛ ⲛⲗⲁⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲉ ⲙⲛⲟⲩⲱⲧⲉ ⲙⲛ ⲛⲉⲥⲛⲏⲟⲩ ⲛⲉⲛⲏⲕⲗⲁⲟⲩ, “Papa Phoibammôn, father of the mountain/monastery of Apa Apollos of Pharaou, alongside with the whole people of God and the poor brothers”. I hope to find the original papyrus in the Coptic Museum, Cairo, the same way I have identified other texts transcribed by Lacau at the beginning of the 20th century.

¹³ Written here with two *kappas* while ⲭⲕⲕⲟⲩ is the most common form in Coptic.

¹⁴ P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 7.36 and 18.18.

¹⁵ See [Vanderheyden 2020](#): 122–124.

¹⁶ Vanderheyden (forthcoming), § 3.1.7.

the $\pi\omega\eta\rho\epsilon/\pi\omega\tau$ $\mu\pi\tau\omicron\pi\omicron\varsigma$ attested as Dioscorus' title in P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 17.13. As proposed in the edition of fragment B,¹⁷ our composite text dates from the last years of Dioscorus' archive, probably between 573 and 580, the confirmed date of his death.¹⁸

Language

§13 The structure of the letter follows that which is well attested in the Aphrodito corpus. It starts with an inner address X $\pi\epsilon\tau\varsigma\alpha\iota$ N Y $\chi\alpha\iota\rho\epsilon\Delta\epsilon$ (l. 1–4) with the inserted formula *we greet you with all [our] heart and all our soul* (l. 2–3). This traditional prescript gives the letter an ancient and respectful form that is common in early and monastic letters.¹⁹ Then additional greetings follow (l. 4–7), which are often used by senders who wish to give more solemnity and to strengthen the politeness of their greetings. There we can read diverse clichés: *we remember you and the whole community from the oldest to the youngest, so that God straightens your path* (l. 4–6), *it is our very wish [...]* and *everyone loves you because you are one worthy-of-being-loved son* (l. 6–7). Across the corpus of the Aphrodito Coptic letters, professional copyists who use a type of non-cursive bilinear upright writing mostly use these clichés as monastic formulas.²⁰ Then, $\epsilon\tau\beta\epsilon$ introduces the main section of the letter (l. 7–11) and in the end, final greetings are partly preserved (l. 12). The address on the verso (l. 13–14) follows the expected pattern $\tau\alpha\alpha\varsigma$ N Y $\gamma\iota\tau\eta$ $X1$ $\mu\eta$ $X2$.

§14 As usual when the sender writes in a literary handwriting, the letter is close to the standard Sahidic with only few peculiarities from the Middle Egypt dialectal influence. In addition to an accidental elision of the η in $\eta\epsilon\langle N\rangle\mu\epsilon\rho\iota\tau$ $N\varsigma\omicron N$ (l. 12), one can note $\eta\omega\gamma\omicron\gamma\alpha\omega$ (= $S\eta\omega\gamma\omicron\gamma\alpha\omega$), l. 7 which seems the common form in Aphrodito (see thereafter 7n.). Unsurprisingly, the common phonetic Δ for τ confusion in Greek loanwords in Coptic is also attested in $\chi\alpha\iota\rho\epsilon\Delta\epsilon$ for $\chi\alpha\iota\rho\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ (l. 4).²¹

P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 841+
P.Ghent inv. 47

A = H. 7.2 × W. 9.5 cm
B = H. 11 × W. 17 cm

ca. 573–580

§15 Fragment A is dark brown, which is characteristic of a large part of the Aphrodito papyri.²² It constitutes the upper left corner of the letter, as is clear from the fact that both the upper and left margins are preserved. Fragment B is the right part of our Coptic letter, with upper, right and bottom margins complete. The state of preservation shows that it was separated from the original piece at an early stage.

§16 A strip of ca. 2.5 cm (4–5 letters) is missing between the two non-joining fragments A and B; the expected original width of the letter is in accordance with the horizontal Byzantine format measuring ca. 30 cm.²³

¹⁷ See [Amory and Stolk 2021](#): 149.

¹⁸ See [SB 22 15522](#). Date in [Fournet and Magdelaine 2008](#), p. 22, n. 21.

¹⁹ E.g. SB Kopt. 3 1311, 1–3 and 1312, 1–2. See [Choat 2006a](#): 26 and 102; [Choat 2010](#): 155; [Richter 2008](#): 761–762 (table 2:2).

²⁰ See P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 2, 4, 5, and 17.

²¹ See [Girgis 1970](#): 57, § 20a; [Gignac 1976](#): 80–83; [Clackson 2010](#): 80.

²² See P.Aphrod.Lit. 1: 10.

²³ In this format, the length of the lines cannot exceed the height of the *volumen* and the text is written perpendicular to the vertical fibers of the papyrus. See [P.Oxy. 59 4005](#): 176; [Fournet 2009b](#): 31–32; [Amory and Stolk 2021](#): 148.

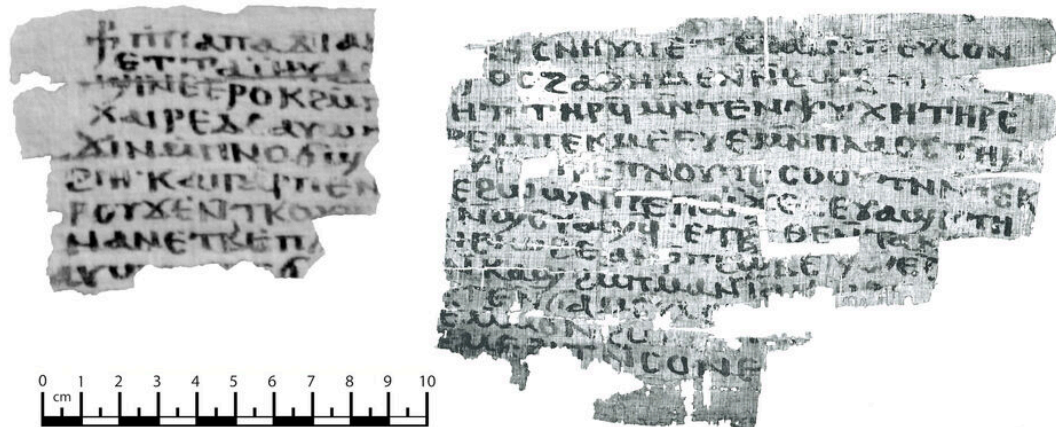


Fig. 1: Reassembly of P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 841 + P.Ghent inv. 47, recto

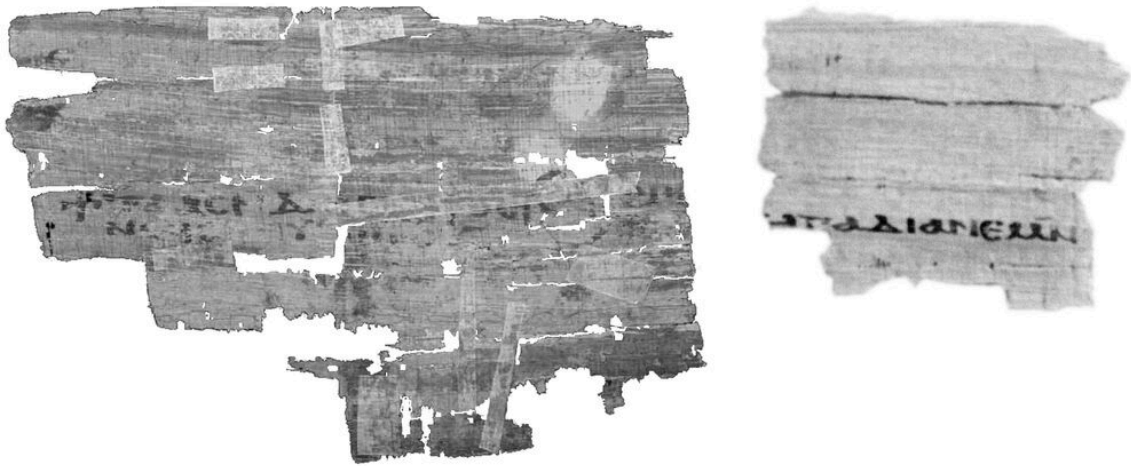


Fig. 2: Reassembly of P.Cair.Copt.Mus. inv. 841 + P.Ghent inv. 47 verso.

Γ

ⲫ ⲡⲡⲁⲡⲁ ⲁⲓⲁ[ⲛⲉ ⲙⲛ ⲛ]ⲉϣⲥⲛⲛⲩⲩ ⲛⲉⲧϣⲁⲓ ⲙⲡⲉϣⲥⲟⲛ
 ⲉⲧⲧⲁⲓⲛⲩ ⲁⲓ[ⲟⲥⲕⲟ]ⲣⲟⲥ ϩⲁ ⲑⲏ ⲙⲉⲛ ⲛⲁⲱⲃ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲧⲛ-
 ⲱⲛⲉ ⲉⲣⲟⲕ ϩⲙ ⲡ[ⲉⲛⲁ]ⲛⲧ ⲧⲛⲣⲁ ⲙⲛ ⲧⲉⲛⲭⲩⲧⲏ ⲧⲛⲣⲥ
 ⲭⲁⲓⲣⲉⲁⲉ ⲁϥⲱ ⲧ[ⲛⲉⲓ]ⲣⲉ ⲙⲡⲉⲕⲙⲉⲉϥⲉ ⲙⲛ ⲡⲁⲁⲟⲥ ⲧⲛⲣⲁ
 5 ⲭⲓⲛ ⲙⲡⲛⲟⲥ ⲱ[ⲁ ⲡⲕ]ⲟϥⲓ [ⲉ]ⲧⲣⲉⲡⲛⲟϥⲧⲉ ⲥⲟⲟϥⲧⲏ ⲛⲧⲉⲕ-
 ϩⲓⲛⲥ ⲕⲁⲓ ⲓⲁⲣ ⲡⲉⲛ[. . .] ⲉ ϩⲱⲱⲛ ⲡⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ ⲭⲉ ⲥⲉϥⲁⲱⲕ ⲧⲛ-
 ⲣⲟϥ ⲭⲉ ⲛⲧⲕ ⲟϥ ⲱ[ⲛⲣ]ⲉ ⲛⲱⲟϥⲁⲱⲥ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲑⲉ ⲛⲧⲁⲕⲥⲁⲓ
 ⲛⲁⲛ ⲉⲧⲃⲉ ⲡⲁ[.] ⲛⲉⲓⲱⲁⲉ ⲁⲛⲣ ⲡⲁⲱⲃ ⲉϥⲱⲉ ⲉ[. . .]
 ⲁϥⲱ ⲉ ⲥ[.] ⲛⲕⲁⲱ ϩⲙ ⲡⲙⲁ ⲛⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃ [.]
 10 [-ca.13-] ⲉⲧⲉ ⲛⲁⲙⲟϥⲕ ⲟ . . [-ca.10-]
 [-ca.14-] ⲉ ⲙⲙⲟⲛ ϩⲱⲱⲧ [-ca.9-]

[ΟΥΧΑΙ ΖΜ ΠΧΘΕΙC Π]Ε<Ν >ΜΕΡΙΤ ΝCΟΝ Ε[ΤΤΑΪΗΥ -ca.?-]

v

ⲫ ⲧⲁⲗⲥ ⲛⲁⲓⲟⲥⲕⲟⲣⲟⲥ (*locus sigilli*) ⲥⲓⲧ[Ν *vac.* Π]ⲡⲁⲡⲁ ⲁⲓⲁⲛⲉ ⲙⲛ
ⲛⲉϣⲥⲛⲛⲩⲩⲩ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ

ⲓ.2 μέν ⲓ.3 ψυχὴ ⲓ.4 χαίρετε λαός ⲓ.5 ἐτρεπνοῦτε prev. ed. ⲓ.6 καὶ γάρ ⲓ.8 νειώζε prev. ed.

This is Papa Diane [and] his brothers who write to their [venerable] brother Dioscorus. Before anything else, we greet you with all [our] heart and all our soul. Greetings! Moreover, we remember you and the whole community from the oldest to the youngest, so that God straightens your path. Indeed, it is our very ..., since everyone loves you because you are one worthy-of-being-loved son. Concerning what you wrote to us about the [...] field(s?), we did the work. If (?) it is appropriate, [...]. Moreover ... [...] reeds in the place of Iakôb [...] [...] camels [...] otherwise (?) myself [...] [Greetings in the Lord], our beloved and venerable brother... Send to Dioscorus, from Papa Diane and all his brothers.

- §17 1 ⲡⲁⲡⲁ: title worn by bishops and priests, corresponds to a real ecclesiastical function and is not merely honorary (see [Derda & Wipszycka 1994](#): 54–56; [P.Bru.x.Bawit 34](#).ln and p. 65, n. 93). Here it applies to the superior of a monastic community.
- §18 ⲁⲓⲁ[ⲛⲉ]: reading confirmed by the verso (l. 13) where the name of the sender is easily readable in the address. [Ruffini 2011](#): 154 lists two instances of Diane in Aphrodito, one a masculine personal name for a guardian (*phrouros*) and the second a female name. A new third entry can be added for our *Papa*. In the eighth-century [P.Lond. 4 1419.831–832](#), the “sons of Diane” (ϣῖων Διανῆ) pay for a share of the *topos* Sasou and for a share of the *topos* for the church of Saint Mary. Should we identify our “Papa Diane [and] his brothers” with a 6th century community, the name of which would persist as a monastic community, and thus a collective taxpayer in our 8th century register? The noteworthy rarity of the name Diane could point in this direction. An example of this designation appears e.g. in [P.Sorb. 2 69](#), 26 A1 where a monastery is named after the “sons of Germanos,” as well as a *diakonia* bearing the same name (see [P.Sorb. 2 69](#): 82–83).
- §19 2–3 ⲥⲙ ⲧⲏⲣⲉ̅̅̅ ⲙⲛ ⲧⲁϣ̅̅̅ⲩⲩⲩ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ : senders who wish to give more solemnity to their greetings employ an additional formula that reinforces politeness after the archaic inner address X ⲛⲉⲧⲥⲁⲓ Ν Y. As far as the Aphrodito letters corpus shows, copyists who use the non-cursive bilinear practiced handwriting (such as our scribe) tend to use these clichés (see Vanderheyden, forthcoming, § 1.3.1.2 and § 1.4.2.3) but it is not exclusive, since Apollos uses it too (see e.g. P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 7.1, 8.1 and 9.1, probably all dated in summer 545).
- §20 4 About ⲡⲗⲁⲟⲥ generally qualifying a coenobitic monastic community, see inter alia introduction to P.Bawit.Clackson 81 and Förster WB s.v. λαός. It refers more precisely to the monks of the Apa Apollos monastery, in Pharoou, in the Aphrodito texts (see introduction).
- §21 5–6 [ε]τρεπνοῦτε σοοῦτῃ̅̅̅ ⲛ̅̅̅ⲧⲉⲕ|ⲥⲓⲛ. This formula is probably a biblical echo or allusion to “(God) straightening your way,” as already stated in the [Amory and Stolk 2021](#): 152. For the use of biblical echoes/quotations in Coptic early letters, see [Choat 2006b](#), in Coptic documents, see [Richter 2015](#), and in the Aphrodito Coptic letters, see Vanderheyden (forthcoming), § 1.4.7.3.

- §22 7 ⲟⲩⲱⲩⲣⲉ ⲛⲱⲟⲩⲁⲱⲩ “the worthy-of-being-loved son” (l. ⲟⲩⲱⲩⲣⲉ ⲛⲱⲟⲩⲁⲱⲩ). The non-standard form ⲛⲱⲟⲩⲁⲱⲩ is the expected one in Aphrodito (see P.Aphrod.Let.Copt. 7.36 and 18.18, both in the plural form ⲛⲱⲟⲩⲁⲱⲟⲩ). One can also propose ⲣ and read ⲣⲱⲙⲉ instead of ⲱⲩⲣⲉ.
- §23 8 ⲉⲱⲱⲉ ⲉ[. . .]: ⲉⲱⲱⲉ ⲉⲗⲗⲁ or ⲉⲣⲟⲕ? “as it is right to do it?” or “as it is right for you.” ⲁⲅⲱ at the beginning of l. 9 prevents a new conditional clause from starting here.
- §24 9 ↗ Amory and Stolk 2021: 153 has already shown that the first occurrence of the *ma* of Iakôb in the Byzantine Aphrodito sources is of particular interest for the geography of the village, since it was attested only in fiscal documents of the Umayyad Aphrodito so far.²⁴ The place name Tankash is kept in ↗ P.Lond. 4 1419 (fiscal register, Aphrodito, 716–717 CE).²⁵ The *topos* Tankesh refers to a larger group of composite crops.²⁶ My first idea was to restore [ⲛⲧⲁ]ⲛⲕⲁⲱ ⲛⲙⲁ ⲛⲓⲁⲕⲱⲃ here, the *topos* Tankesh being a smaller division “inside” the *ma* of Iakôb. This hypothesis stands alone and cannot be proved by contemporary parallels and since this restoration is close to a lacuna, one should remain cautious in order not to contradict *lex Youtie*. Moreover, the supralineation ⲛⲕⲁⲱ speak against this interpretation, and one should consider the possibility that “reeds” are mentioned here, as proposed in the *ed. pr.* Nevertheless, the verb ⲕⲱⲱⲣⲉ ⲕⲁⲱ “cut, gather reeds” that could make sense here does not match with the traces.
- §25 10 A *topos* located in the “five eastern *Pediades*” called (ⲁⲃⲟⲩ/ⲛⲁⲡⲟ) ⲧⲗⲁⲙⲟⲩⲗ/ⲕⲁⲙⲟⲩⲗ is attested in the Umayyad Aphrodito documents as a place name (see ↗ Marthot 2013 II: 358). According to Marthot, it seems to be a peculiar name used locally in Aphrodito under the form ⲧⲗⲁⲙⲟⲩⲗ (see also ↗ Ruffini 2011: 586). In this text could ⲉⲁⲙⲟⲩⲗ be a field of unknown location, or someone’s name (see *NB Copt.* 119), or is the sender of this letter indeed talking about real camels as guessed in the *ed. pr.*? The fragmentary state of these lines prevent us from answering these questions.

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24 About this place name, see also ↗ Marthot 2013, II: 91 and its attestations in Aphrodito, in ↗ P.Lond. 4 1421.14, 113 (705), ↗ P.Lond. 4 1422.20 (707/708), ↗ P.Lond. 4 1419.874, 883, 913, 921 (716/717) and ↗ P.Lond. 4 1442.57 (8th c.).

25 ↗ Marthot 2013, II: 336 notes two different orthographies in the same register ↗ P.Lond. 4 1419: ⲧⲁⲛⲕⲁⲱ (l. 686) and ⲧⲁⲛⲕⲁⲱ (l. 834).

26 See ↗ Marthot 2013 I: 230–231.

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