



Oath in Coptic Documents

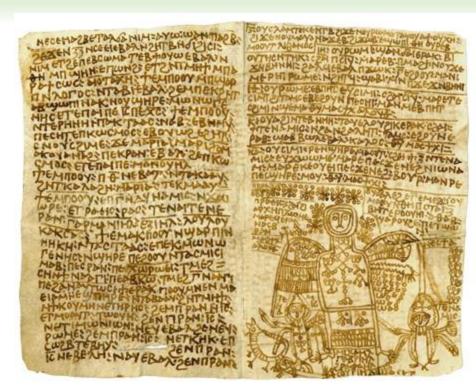
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Outlines

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http://digi.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/diglit/p_kopt_686/0012





What is Coptic?

- Ancient Egyptian is a language with written records dating from around 3200 BCE
- Coptic is a variant of it but written in the Coptic alphabet (24 Greek letters + 6-8 Demotic), standardized from ca. 3rd century CE
- Survived as the language of the Coptic Orthodox Church's liturgy to the present day
- Discontinued as a spoken language in the 17th century at the latest, but there has been a language revival movement

= The final stage of

the Ancient Egyptian language (world's longest written period)



Hleroglyphs in Coffin of Ukhhotep, son of Hedjpu, ca. 1981–1802 B.C. Rogers Fund, 1912 12.182.132a, b, MET, PB



Leaves from a Coptic Manuscript, 6th–14th century (?), Rogers Fund, 1921, 21.148.1a, b, MET PB

Ancient Egyptian Oaths

- S worn in name of ruling king, god(s), or both
- Blended religious, moral, and social aspects
- Invoked higher authority to guarantee integrity
- Based on belief in oath's supernatural force

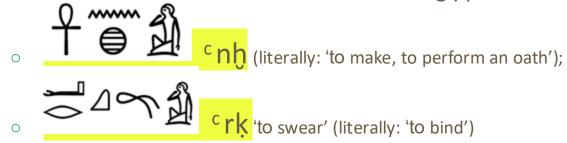
A imed to prevent perjury through fear of divine punishment





Historical Context

- Ancient Egyptian Practices
 - R ole of oaths in pre-C hristian society
- Terminology of the oath in Ancient Egypt



- Greco-Roman Influence
 - Integration of oaths into Coptic practices through cultural exchange.

Terminology and Usage

In Coptic, the word commonly translated by "oath"

is

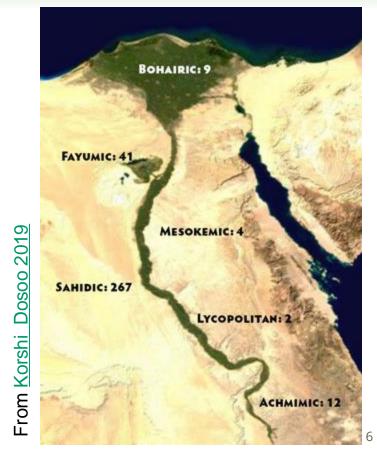
(Sahidic, Bohairic) <mark>ΔΝΔϢ</mark>, plural: ΔΝΔΥϢ

• (A khm im ic) ع

• (Favvumic NEW, ΔΝΗΨ, plural: ΔΝΗΥΨ)



(Pre-Coptic Egyptian equivalent)



Terminology and Usage

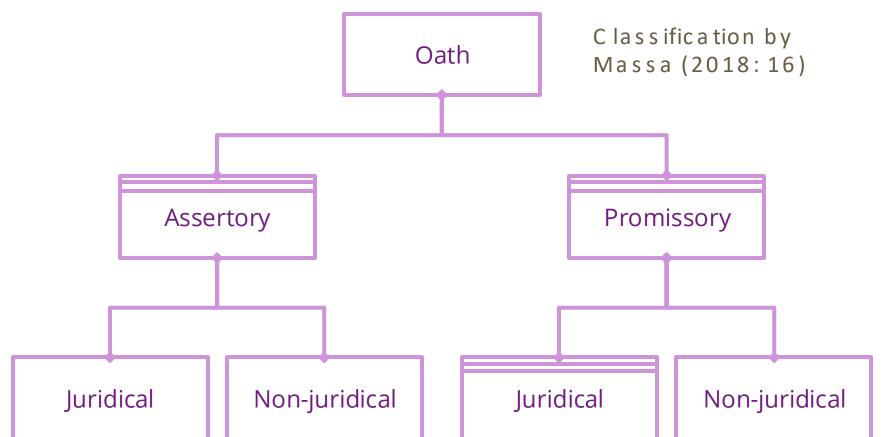
In Coptic, the verb commonly translated by "swear, swear oath, do swear" [gk: ομνυειν,

επιορκιζειν] are:



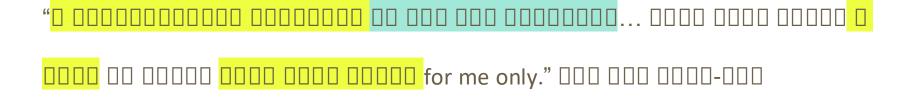
- ωρκ "to swear"
- <mark>търко</mark> "to make to swear, adjure, entreat" (< causative dj + сrķ)
- 20μολοΓει "to acknowledge" (G reek loanword)

Functional Classification of Oaths



Assertory Oaths 1

• ΕΙ2ΟΜΟλΟΓΕΙ ΕΙϢ $\overline{
m PK}$ ΜΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΠΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤϢm P... ΧΕ Π $\overline{
m NT}$ ΑΙΤΑΑm Q ΝΑΥ ΑΥΤΑΑm Q 2ΑΡΟΪ ΟΥΜΟΝΟm N



Assertory Oaths 2

• ЕІШРК ИППОҮТЕ ППАНТОКРАТШР ИНПОҮХАІ ННЕНХІСООЎЕ ЕТАМАЗТЕ

ЕІЗОМОЛОГЕІ ЕІДШРІЗЕ НШЕНОЎТЕ ПАМЕРІТ НШНРЕ ЕЗОЎН ЕПМОНАСТНРІОН

ЕТОЎЗАВ ЕТИМАЎ

"Iswear to God the Almighty and the health of our lords who rule,

(and) Iacknowledge that Iam donating Shenoute my beloved son to that

holy monastery." (P.KRU 93.24-29)

Promissory Oaths 1

• ϵ IMPK NTETPIAC ETOYAAB N20MOOYCION... ETMTPEAAAY NПАРАВАСІС ϵ WMTE N2HTC

- $\frac{\mathsf{EIWPK}}{\mathsf{EINOTE}}$ $\frac{\mathsf{EIWPK}}{\mathsf{EINOTE}}$ $\frac{\mathsf{EIWPK}}{\mathsf{EINOTE}}$ $\frac{\mathsf{EIWPK}}{\mathsf{EIMOTE}}$
 - "<mark>D 00000 00 000 000 00000000</mark>... DDDD <mark>D 0000 00000</mark> for you..." DDDD DD DDDD

- **ΕΙΨΡΚ** ΜΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΠΑΝΤΟΓΡΑΤΨΡ...ΧΝΝΕΙΕΨΠΑΡΑΒΑ ΝλΑΑΥ ΝΨΑΧΕ ΕΥCH2 2ΝΤΙΜΙCΘWCIC

Coptic Oath Formulae

Coptic oath formula contains several variations in its opening phrase, including:

- ειωρεκ (Δε) Ν- "(and) I swear"
- μαλλοη ειωρεκ (Δε) η- "(and) moreover I swear"
- ειωρκ (Δε) μννςως ν- "(and) I swear hereafter"
- μννςως ειωρκ ν- "subsequently I swear"
- εχηναι σε τηρογ ειωρκ ν- "and above all I swear"

Coptic Oath Formulae

- The Coptic oath formula can be divided into two main sections:
 - An initial main clause containing a verb of swearing
 - The argument clause which completes this verb
- The main verb is <mark>ωρκ "to swear"</mark>, and verb Ταρκο "to adjure", verb 2ομολοςει "to acknowledge"
 - ειωρκ Δε μννοως μπνογτε ππαντοκρατωρ "And I swear hereafter to God the Almighty..." (P.KRU 15.23-25)
 - ב פו<mark>ד בא κο א א א צו εξογεία "l adjure</mark> every ruler and every power..." (P .C LT 4.21)

Oath Formulae in Legal Texts

- Oath formula usually after the penalty formula and before witnesses attestation
- CLT 4, from Jeme, A release: the addressor, merkurios, has received full payment of a millstone set up in the bakery of the monastery of Apa Paulos.

ENONO HEAT FOY OFE S TOY YOU STOYMAY THE EIPH HANGE NO YP KR INDIKS TOWETHE !-The firety promotes with an experience of the proposition of the firety and the firety promotes and the firety THEN HOTOY AND WEIGHT MANAY OF CHITTOON FUT KATPON WENTERNOUSE NTHONGONE EFFILL MY MIDE LINTETNIMT FIWT ELWINNSYNDHATCH KHEZPEI EPOI OY DE COTERIXIN GON MASTILL DO AM METHON THE OALDOS MEELIO ELLIX BHA HELONY LETTO MELLIMONY ENT ANHTH PTRAYAH NEWNE TO NTO TOO OF ENTEKALPONOLULA WHARIOTE EN WEEK APOR THEN NOWOYNICTEYENLY AYWINDON METERS ETEICANCHUMPETITIENE MANNOY BLOCKE EX CYNTHUSE PHOCAGNAPHENNING ENDIKE ON MINOYTE EXTERNIZIONXE EPOYNIMAN ENGLANTIMASE MUSE ECHAY NTPILLACION NINOY EICENATE OYN FROMONOITE LEATETH ATTO NO HIS EN A PLYCHAT ATPIPHETON FAXWKN TEETHHAYELETOOT ENDNOYDY FYLLER TETNIENT ELWTOYN ETE HAXABLE NOTHING NETTO TO COCETURE PROTECTION PLONDETTO MONDETAPION ET \$120/000 LANGER NO EIK N NECHAY IN MXOEBON ETETPANIZANNEHICE ENTETN GINERTOOFNICE DY ETPAPON NOUT PIRIMIN FROMONONS XEFTTENNOK FITTENNING FITEKALJONOHOL FIRMITTE ETTE KEPWILLETION OUTSTENDE FITE XWE FITE XWEN XWE NA EXLAND WHE FUND TWO HATERON & TI FTIN HONDE The ION ENT MYNAMINE ENTENTION ENTENTINE Y WINCOUTH WATER NO YOUNG ETREXE ATEIN AMONOMISE NOW NITE CTIME ALFIETOFF EC WANGEMED FROTEKON PUR XPONE KONDON BANDTETPONON METHOTON WY EIERON ENETH FLO NACTH PION EN INPO CALLETY MY ONW ME LUDDE ON THIENDE ON NEWEDITHIN MENTO ME MALLED IN LOUR WHEN MINEY CONTRACTOR AND EI SHALLEICHIMEI +ZOYCI MAREYNA -COOY TONOK WINDOCTIMENT AYO HON FPENITNIPA DONNA WWINE EYTAXPHY WALMER ENTOPICONOPYTH NIMEITZONCIANIA TEPHOLENIPAGONNE FOTO PENONTE MANTE POPENTO LE SONEN EX WN ETHINGS LE HUO Y YOUND ET WP XNTETN HUT FIWTS WORKAN NATH FZPN LINN STNAY HIN A CUITE EY MANY LINE EY O PROMEY KY DIE XCON CHUNNILL YNA FLIPANIS PLLOY NEKTY CHINAY The high worth of ac withy confination or another of the come to the company of the DINAGE TO THE THE THE PROPERTY OF A WERDWINE TO WAREN COYN ENTERONING

LANDHEIRY VIOLENCY EXCAPERSONNESCOCHASORBADE

Oath Formula

Witness Names

Translation (CLT 4, Schiller 1932)

Oath Formulae in Legal Texts

CLT 8, from Jeme, deed of sale of a portion of a house

Legal Oath: To settle a financial dispute:

- O.Crum ad. 42
 - + **WE ПІТОПОС WE TEQTOM** †СООҮН 2N ОҮШРХ ХЕ NTA КҮРІАКОС ТИНООЎ ДАНІНА ПЕЦХАІВЕКН Є2РАІ НА ПЕІШТ НІШСНФ ЕЦТ ТПАЩЕ N2ОЛОК(ОТТІНОС) НАЦ ЕЦТНООЎЦ 2A НАРШІН ЕІС ПАІ ПЕ ПАНАЩ NTA КАЛН ОРКЦ НА ІШСНФ 2A ТПАЩЕ N2ОЛОК(ОТТІНОС) НПЕІШТ НІШСНФ НА2РИ КОЛЛОЎӨОС ПЛАЩАНЕ ХОІАК ІЄ ІНДІК(ТІ)О(NOC) ІЄ

"By this topos! By its power! I know with certainty that Kyriakos sent Daniel, his hired help, down to the father of Joseph, so that he would give him the half solidus, and so that he would send him concerning the lentils. This is the oath which Kale has sworn for Joseph with respect to the half solidus for the father of Joseph, in the presence of Kollouthos, the lashane, 15 Choiak, of indiction 15 (?)." (Text: W. E. Crum; trans.: G. Schenke)

Oath Formulae in Legal Texts

Typical Addressees of Oath

- ΠΝΟΥΤЄ "God" 🗆 🗎 🗎 🗎
- ППРАНП ПНОΥТЄ ППАНТОКРАТШР "(the name of) God the Almighty"
- □тбом № тетріас єтоуаав № промооусіос □пєїшт мипшнрє мипєпиєўма єтоуаав) "(the power of) the holy consubstantial trinity (the father and the son and the holy spirit)"
- ΠΟΥΧΔΙ ΤСШΤΗΡΙΑ ΝΝΕΝΧΙΟΟΟΎΕ ΠΝΡΡΟΟΎ) "the health of our (kingly) lords"
- ПТа.ХРО МИТАІАНОМН NNENXICOOY NPPOOY "the strength and the power of our kingly lords"
- ΤΚΑΘΟλΙΚΗ ΝΕΚΛΗCIA "the universal church" 🛛 🗎 🗎 🗎 🗎 🗎 🗎 🗎
- ПЕΝΧΟЄІС ПЄРО МАΥРІКЄ "our lord King Mauricius" 🛛 🗎 🗎 🗎 🗎
- мароүшрк наі μπεγαιγελίον "let them swear me by the Evangelium"

Oaths by Saints 1

- P.Mon.E piph. 162
- letter, 6th 7th century, from the monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes
 (Upper Egypt) mentioning an oath sworn to John

ЕЗІШРК МПЕЗГІОС МЕЗИННЕ ЖЕ МУВШК ЕПШММО

"I was swearing by saint John, that I am unable to go abroad" (Gesa Schenke, Cult of

Saints, E02438 - http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E02438)

Oath by the Catholic church

- Lines 9—00 0000 00 0000000

<mark>еішрк</mark> ипноүте □п□пантшкратор ин ткаөолікн неклнсіа ин пеүха ипеөрон□ос□ ипенеішт иаркос пеуанкелістно х□е□ нне євол єпігшв ща єнєг

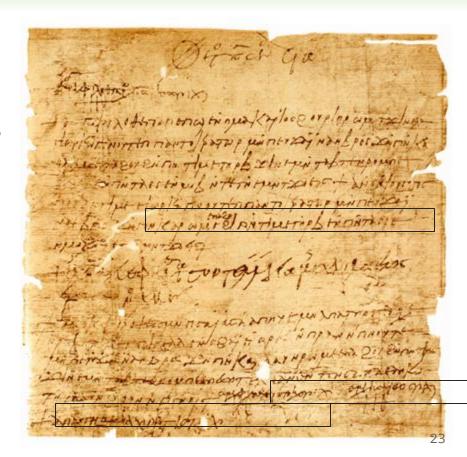
E04038 - http://csla.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E04038)

Oath by the Governor

Pap. BM 1079

Coptic Texts On Behalf Of 'Amr Ibn al-'Āṣ (d. 43 AH / 663 CE)

- єїшрк шпиоутє пантогратшр шипеухаї наврос
- емшрк шпмоүте памтогратшр шпрам шпмоүте шмпеухан мамврос



Magic and oath

- P. Kell. Copt. 35 "swearing by the Lord Paraclete"
- After invocations to Jewish-Christian God, he wrote the spell and declares to his brother:



Coptic Texts and False Swearing

- Religious Context
 - Coptic Christianity heavily relies on the Bible, which forbids false swearing.
 - The Ten Commandments and Jesus' teachings in the New Testament condemn false swearing and emphasize honesty.
- Jesus' teachings in the New Testament, particularly in the Gospel of Matthew (5:33-37), condemn the practice of swearing falsely and emphasize the importance of honesty: "Let your yes be yes and your no, no; anything beyond this comes from evil." These teachings are echoed in Coptic homilies and sermons.

Consequences of Breaking Oaths

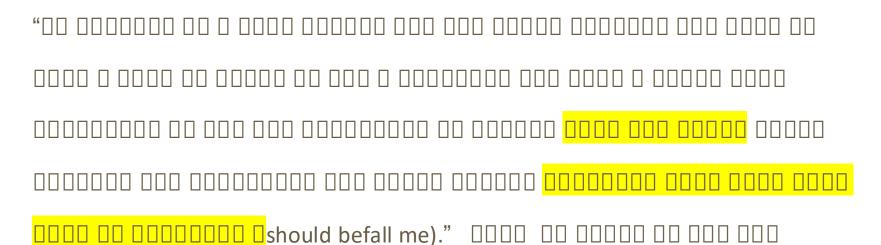
Language and Terminology

- Specific words are used for concepts like
- ωρκ ΝΝΟΥΧ "false swearing/ perjurers"
- ρεμωρκ ννογχ "false swearer"

Shenoute the Archimandrite prohibits oaths (?)

- Н ИНТАУ ЙИАУ НОУЗАП- НӨЕ ЕНТАУНАУ ЕПАІ ЕТЕИНТАЦ ИИАУ НОУСУННӨІА ЕЎАНАЩ НЛААУ НАНАЩ АЛЛА ЕУНТАЦ НТОЦ НОУЎПИЕЕУЕ ЗРАЇ НЗНТЦ- ЕТРЕПЕЦЩАХЕ ЩШПЕ НСЕНСЕ- АУШ ПЕЦИИШН ЙИОН КАТАТЙТОЛН ИПХОЕІС- АУШ ЕАЦЎАНАЩ ЙОУСОП АУШ СНАУ ИПИТО ЕВОЛ ЙПНОУТЕ ЗИПЕЦИА ЕТОУААВ- ЗИПАЩАІ ИПНОО́НЕО́ ЙНЕТЕІРЕ ИППОННРОН-

False Swearing in Legal Context



Punishment of PEYWPK NNOYX "false swearer"

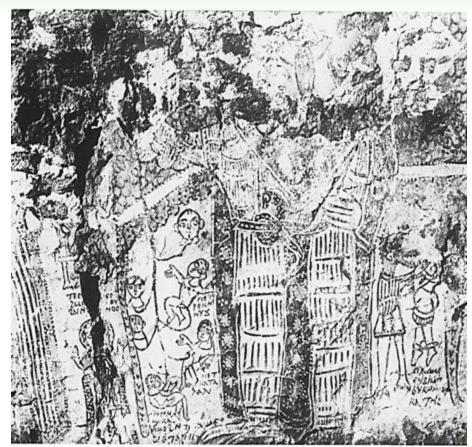
- ΔΒΔΙΜΕλΟΥ□ΧΟС□□ ΠΑΓΓΕλΟC ΝΝΕΚωλΑCIC, "Abdimelouchos, the angel of the punishments," in chapter 40, 2, of the Apocalypse of Paul as "the angel in charge of the punishments" ΠΑΓΓΕλΟC ΕΤ2ΙΧΝ ΝΚΟΛΑCIC

Curse against perjuries

"I adjure you (s.) by the true names, Raphael, Adōnai, Sabaōth: $\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box\Box$ to me, the one who is over the 00000 00000 00000 00000 wreak vengeance for me upon he who will swear falsely by your name" 00000

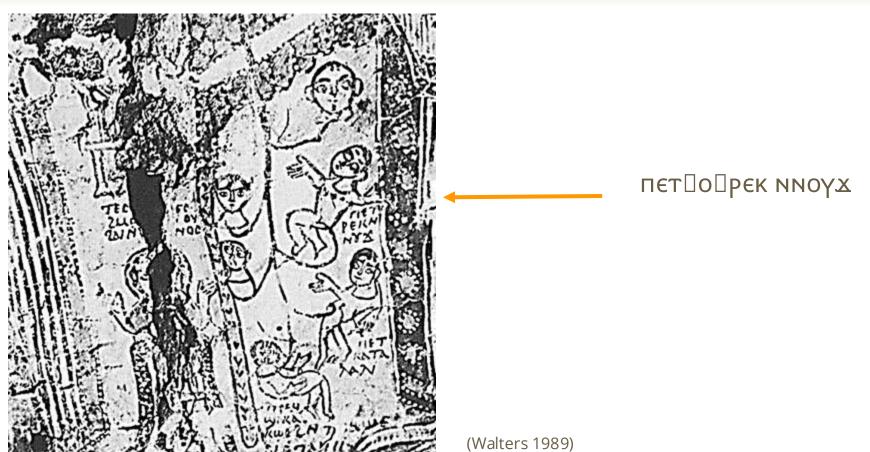
Abaddon the Angel of Death

- Painting from perhaps the 10th century C E
- From a church in the Fayum discovered in 1899
- A demon with crocodile like jaws who seems to draw the intestines out of someone who "robs the workmen of their salary" (πρωμε εqвι μπβγκη ΝΝερκλτης)



(Walters 1989)

Abaddon the Angel of Death



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Literary Texts

- C optic E ncomion on K ollothos, a physician and martyr of Antinoopolis, narrates
 his exceptional childhood, early adult life, martyrdom, and miracles at his burial
 shrine, dated to 7th century AD.
- The fifth miracle account tells of a moneylender who is tricked by his scribe. The
 scribe secretly removes his debt document, claims he never received money, and
 is asked to swear in the presence of saint Kollouthos. This decision leads to fatal
 consequences for the scribe
- "The man who had sworn falsely swelled up entirely. He died, before the sun had set. He was taken away and buried."

Conclusions

- ullet

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