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THE SUNNARTI LUKE

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### The Sunnarti Luke

**Thesis:** ZPE 37 (1980) 173-178 (+ 53 [1983] 259f.); **antithesis:** *Nubia et Oriens Christianus* (Cologne 1987) 245-267; **synthesis** (see Tafel IV):

ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΣΗ ΤΑΓΓΛΟΝ  
 ΜΑΡΙΑΜΕΙΟ ΤΑΡΤΑ ΙΒΕΝΝΟΝ ΤΑΚ  
 ΚΑ ΔΑΥΑ ΤΡΑ ΠΕΦΕΝΑ ΠΣΣΕΣΩ ΤΤ  
 ΤΙΚΟΑ ΕΟΔΑΛΟ ΗΔΔΑΛ ΔΟΥΜΑΔ  
 ΤΑΡΟΝ ΕΑΛΔΩ ΠΑΝΝΙΣΝΑ ΔΝΚΑΕΙ  
 ΟΝ ΤΑΚΑ ΠΕΦΕΝΑ ΤΡΙΤΙΜΝΝΑ ΕΙΝ  
 ΝΑ ΕΙΝΔΑΥΕΙΤΑ

As now reconstructed, the text has between 23 and 25 letters per line (for lines 2-6) and thus conforms to the format of the Old Nubian version of Ps.-Chrysostom, *In venerabilem crucem sermo* (see my *Chrysostomus Nubianus* [Rome-Barcelona 1984]), with the hand of which (for pp. 1-24.17) it is strikingly similar.

#### Transcription:

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 ] ΠΑΡ[Θ]ΕΝΟ[ΣΗ ΤΑΓΓΛΟΝ]  
 [ΜΑΡΙΑΜΕ]ΙΟ·ΤΑΡΓΑΚΙ[ΒΕΝΝΟΝ ΤΑΚ]  
 [ΚΑ ΔΑΥ]Α ΤΡΑ ΠΕΣΣ[Α ΠΣΣΕΣΩ ΤΤ]  
 4 [ΤΙΚΟΑ Γ]ΟΔΑΛΟΗΔ[ΔΑΛ ΔΟΥΛΛΑΔ]  
 [ΤΑΡΟΝ]ΣΑΛΔΩΠΑ[ΝΝΙΣΝΑ ΔΝΚΑΕΙ]  
 [ΟΝ ΤΑΚ]ΚΑ ΠΕΣΣ[Α ΤΡΙΤΙΜΝΝΑ ΕΙΝ]  
 [ΝΑ ΕΙΝ]ΔΑΥΕΙΤΑ[  
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**Translation:** (Lk 1.27) ... And the name of the virgin is Mary. (28) And when he came to her, giving her the good news, he said: "Hail, you who have grace! The Lord is with

you." (29) And she became troubled at the word, and reflecting, she said to herself: "Of what sort is this greeting?"

**Reconstructed Greek Vorlage** (the text is Nestle-Aland, *Novum Testamentum Graece*<sup>26</sup>, except for material in angle brackets, for which see the apparatus; italics indicate words extant in the Nubian translation): (1.27) ... καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς παρθένου Μαρίας. (28) καὶ εἰσελθὼν πρὸς αὐτήν (εὐηγγελίσατο αὐτήν καὶ) εἶπεν· χαίρε, κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ κύριος μετὰ σοῦ. (29) ἡ δὲ ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ διεταράχθη καὶ διελογίζετο (ἐν ἑαυτῇ λέγουσα) ποταπὸς εἶη ὁ ἀσπασμὸς οὗτος.

28 εὐηγγελίσατο αὐτήν καὶ Λ 229<sup>c</sup> 262 1071 (εὐαγγ-) 1187 1195 1241 1443 (αυτη) l 253 Sh Ps.-Chry. sol. (Textes et études liturgiques 1.99) Quodvultdeus pro. 3.5 (SC 102.508) Lvt (b) 29 ἐν ἑαυτῇ λέγουσα X Ψ 33 213 892 1241 1542b<sup>c</sup> 2542 Sh (White) marg. Et Protevangelium Jacobi 11.2 (de Strycker 114) Serapion Man. 37 (HTS 15.55), Titus Bostr. Man. 3.4.54 (PG 18.1217); cf. *The New Testament in Greek: the Gospel According to St. Luke*, edited by the American and British Committees of the International Greek New Testament Project, Part I, Chapters 1-12 (Oxford 1984) 11f.

That the Nubian translators of the New Testament followed a text that often deviated from Nestle-Aland is obvious if one examines the reconstructed Greek Vorlage in my revision of Griffith's Old Nubian Lectionary (Rome-Barcelona 1982). Consequently the appearance of the two additional phrases in the passage in question need cause no uneasiness, especially since each is amply attested.<sup>1</sup>

**Commentary** (supplementary to that in ed. pr. The abbreviations are those in normal use; in addition note that ION is for my *Introduction to Old Nubian*, Meroitica [forthcoming], IN I, II and III = *Old Nubian Texts from Qaşr Ibrîm* I [London 1988], II and III [forthcoming]).<sup>2</sup>

2 ΜΑΡΙΔΜΕ] ἰῶ: = ΜΑΡΙΔΜΙ-ΛΟ(ION §§ 3.3.6, 2.5.6.a). For the following clause cf. M. 15.8, IN II 14 i 16-17, I 5 i 26-27.

3 ἘΛΥ]Δ ΤΡΔ: εὐηγγελίσατο; cf. IN I 9 i 2, where the same Nubian verbal complex also translates εὐαγγελίσαι.

3-4 ΤῚΤΙΚΟΔ: a personal name in IN 80.3.11/2.27 (ined.); cf. also SC 4.13, WN 14 and ION §3.4.2.

4 For the clause cf. IN II 17 i 6-8, 14 i 14-15; and for the terminal -Δ see ION § 4.8.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also B.M. Metzger, "The Christianization of Nubia and the Old Nubian Version of the New Testament," *Historical and Literary Studies, Pagan, Jewish, and Christian*, New Testament Tools and Studies 8 (Leiden and Grand Rapids 1968) 122: "If one may generalize on the basis of such a limited amount of textual data, it appears that the Old Nubian version was made from a Greek text which was predominately Byzantine in character, but which preserved a mixture of other readings as well." The revision of the Lectionary, as well as the publication of the new Ibrim texts (see Commentary below), confirms the correctness of Metzger's statement. Professor Metzger has also written to me that my methodology is "entirely correct, in searching in various *apparatus critici* for evidence from any witnesses that may read what the Old Nubian text reads in Luke 1.27-29."

<sup>2</sup> I should here note that Professor D. Hagedorn has kindly examined the Sunarti fragment at my request; he finds that 1) ΠΔPin line 1 "suits the remnants very well," 2) the terminal 0 in Γ]0Δ̄̄̄̄0in 4 is "almost certain," as is the λin ΠΔ[ in 5, 3) the terminal λin ἘΛΥ]Δin 3 is "likely," and 4) the other dotted letters in the transcript are at least possible as readings.

5-6 ΔΝΚΔΕΙΟΝ: see e.g. SC 9.18; for the sentence pattern cf. M. 2.2-4; and for the change in construction cf. IN I 4 ii 3.

6 ΤΔΚ]ΚΔ: cf. IN II 12 ii 10-11. ΤΡΙΤΙΜ̄: very hypothetical; cf. St. 7.4-5 and SC 3.9 (with L. 100.13).

7 ΔΔΥΕΙΤ-: ἄπασιμός; ΔΔΟΥΜΜΕΛΟ (also written ΔΔΥΕΙΜΜΕΛΟ, with the same spelling of the base as in ΔΔΥΕΙΤ-)³ renders ἄπασιζομαι throughout the Old Nubian letters published in IN II and III: cf. e.g. IN III 54 i 4-6 ΔΙΟΥ ΙΣΟΥ ΔΟΥΚ ΜΜΕΛΟ ΔΔΔΔ ΔΔΟΥΜ ΜΕΛΟ, "I pay homage to Isou, I greet David the Priest," with IN 74.1.30.6A.96-97 (ined.) ΔΝΟΚ ΕΙΦΤΤΔ ΤΗΠΡΟΚΥΝΩ⁴ ΔΥΖΩ †ΔCΠΔΖΕ⁵ ---, "I, Eīñitta, pay homage to and greet ..."⁶ After ΔΔΥΕΙΤ̄ perhaps read Δ (cf. above on 4 and also SC 7.12).

On the verso: ]0 or 0[ (ZPE 53.259), perhaps an identifying note, like that on the reverse of a Coptic psalm text (P. Mich. inv. 3589): ΨΔ]ΛΜΟCΜΠΔΟΕΙC[ (see ZPE 37.177).

The Sunnarti Luke should be studied in conjunction with another text from the same excavation, which I have identified as a Nubian translation of Mark 11.6-11 (see ZPE 66 [1986] 49-52): cf. E. Dinkler, "Miscellanea Archaeologiae Christianae," *Theologische Rundschau*, N.F. 46.3 (1981) 235: "Es ist vielleicht nicht zufällig, daß die Stücke zu Perikopen von Festtagen gehören: der Lukas-Text zu Mariä Verkündigung, die Lesung des Einzugs in Jerusalem [i.e. the piece with Mk 11.6-11] zum 1. Advent wie auch zum Palmsonntag, also zur Eröffnung der Karwoche. Es ist kaum anzunehmen, daß in der Sunnarti-Kirche eine Vollbibel zuhause war. Die fehlenden Spuren wie auch die Kleinheit des Baues sprechen dagegen. So stellt sich die Vermutung ein, daß die Fragmente aus einem nubischen Lektionar oder Evangeliar stammen."

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I should here make several observations on the study cited at the beginning of this article (under "antithesis"):

p. 256, note to line 3 of the text: "gebend/veranlassend sprach er/sie." — Two objections are in order: 1. the Nubian does not mean "veranlassend," as is evident from F. Hintze's basic treatment in BanG III (*Altorientalische Forschungen* 2 [1975] 16-17); 2. the author's ΠΕCCL means "that which he/she spoke": see *BASP* 19 (1982) 19.

line 4 of the text: -λε? — The reading is paleographically impossible (so D. Hagedorn) and produces an unparalleled syntagma.

note to line 6 of the text: "oder: spricht (Tempus nicht feststellbar)." — The form transcribed by the author can only be preterite, as in line 3.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. in IN 84.1.9/21.1 (ined.).

<sup>4</sup> Note that ΔΟΥΚ- also translates προκυνω in SC 10.16 and IN I 9 i 7, 17, ii 7.

<sup>5</sup> Ἀπασιζομαι enters Coptic as †ΔCΠΔΖΕ: cf. e.g. W. Till, *Koptische Grammatik*<sup>2</sup> § 280.

<sup>6</sup> With the Coptic cf. also IN 82.1.25/39.1-2 (ined.) ΔΙ ἰΗCΟΥ ΕΠΔ(P)X (OC) ΝΟΒΔΔΙΔC ΔΟΥΚ ΜΜΕΛΟ ΔΔΟΥΜΜΕΛΟ.

p. 266: when the author resurrects C.D.G. Müller's interpretation of the Sunnarti fragment as a documentary text, we should recall that Müller regarded the piece as a *Coptic* document, because he thought that in lines 3 and 6 he could restore ΠΕCCΤ[ΕΙΩΘΕ "her field," even though CTEIΩΘΕ, attested only as feminine, would require TEC-, not ΠEC-: see his remarks in *Oriens Christianus* 62 (1978) 143.

p. 267: the author tells us that there is still "kein Stück des Lukasevangeliums in altnubischer Sprache." We do, however, have a citation of Lk 11.10 in St. 35.5-9; cf. my note in *Studia Papyrologica* 22 (1983) 118 (ad 35.6).

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Sunnarti-Lukas 1,27-29