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A DEMOTIC VERSION OF NECTANEBOS' DREAM (P. CARLSBERG 562)

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NECTANEBOS' DREAM (P. CARLSBERG 562)¹

One of the earliest Greek narratives from Egypt to be published was Nectanebos' Dream, a prophecy concerning the demise of Nectanebos II (359-342 BC), the last native ruler of Egypt. The manuscript (P. Leiden I 396) was purchased by J. d'Anastasy around 1820. It subsequently passed into the collection of the Leiden National Museum, in 1829, and was already discussed in print the following year by C. J. C. Reuvens.² In 1843 a facsimile publication by C. Leemans followed, and the text has since been reedited and discussed on many occasions.³

P. Carl. 562

The manuscript was found at the Serapeum in Memphis, where it formed part of the famous archive of the *katochos* Apollonios, dating to the early second century BC.⁴ It is complete in itself, but Apollonios, who personally wrote the text, did not copy the entire narrative. Just as a love story is about to evolve, he ceased copying, thus leaving his modern audience in suspension since the text was first made available.

It has long been supposed that the Greek text was copied from an Egyptian original, but until recently only this one Greek version was known. The situation changed in 1997, when the present writer discovered parts of four Demotic manuscripts in the Collection of Carlsberg Papyri that all concern Nectanebos' Dream. One of these contains a parallel to the beginning of the Apollonios manuscript, whereas the three others contain the beginning of a sequel to Nectanebos' Dream.

All four Demotic manuscripts belong to the Tebtunis Temple Library, and can be dated palaeographically to the late 1./early 2. century AD. Accordingly, they are about 250 years later than the Apollonios manuscript. The three manuscripts containing the sequel to Nectanebos' Dream (P. Carlsberg 424, 499 and 559) were all written by the same scribe, and appear to represent scribal exercises. A publication of these manuscripts is planned for the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*.

The fourth manuscript, which is published here, was written by a different scribe. Only a small fragment of the manuscript has been identified. There are almost certainly further fragments of this manuscript to be found among the thousands of fragments from the Tebtunis Temple Library scattered around the world. Unfortunately, the hand is rather nondescript from what little is preserved on the one fragment. Like many other texts from Tebtunis, the Demotic text is written on the reverse (fibres ↑) of a discarded papyrus. The front (fibres →) presumably contained a Greek text, but only a faint trace re-

¹ I would like to thank Dr. J. F. Quack for his comments on this paper.

² C. J. C. Reuvens, *Lettres à M. Letronne sur les Papyrus bilingues et grecs et sur quelques autres monuments gréco-égyptiens du Musée d'antiquités de Leyde, troisième lettre* (Leyde 1830), 76-79.

³ Edito princeps: C. Leemans, *Papyri Graeci Musei antiquarii publici Lugduni Batavi* (Lugduni Batavorum, 1838), 122-129. Later text editions are U. Wilcken in *Mélanges Nicole* (Geneva 1905), 579-596; B. Lavagnini, *Eroticorum Fragmenta Papyracea* (Leipzig 1922), 37-42; U. Wilcken, *UPZ I* (Berlin - Leipzig 1927), 81; G. Manteuffel, *De Opusculis Graecis Aegypti e Papyris, Ostracis Lapidibusque Collectis* (Warsaw 1930), 10; and especially L. Koenen, *BASP* 22 (1985)171-194, which includes a discussion of the genre and nature of the narrative. Photographs are published in E. Boswinkel - P. J. Sijpesteijn, *Greek Papyri, Ostraca and Mummy Labels* (Amsterdam 1968), pls. 6a-6b; M. J. Raven, *Van Bies tot Boekrol* (Zutphen 1982), 14. The latest translation is W. Clarysse, in K. R. Veenhof (ed.), *Schrijvend verleden* (Leiden - Zutphen 1983), 367-371. The text is listed as no. 2476 in R. Pack, *The Greek and Latin Literary Texts from Greco-Roman Egypt* (Ann Arbor² 1965).

⁴ For this archive, see Wilcken, in *Mel.* (n. 3) *op. cit.*, 104-116; W. Clarysse, in E. Van't Dack - P. Van Dessel - W. Van Gucht (eds.), *Egypt and the Hellenistic World*, *Studia Hellenistica*, 27 (Louvain 1983), 58.

mains and it is impossible to make out the script. For these reasons, it has therefore proven more difficult than usual to identify further parts of the manuscript.

Transliteration

1	hpr 1 rnp.t-sp 18 (n) p3 1 h3 3 n p3 pr-3 Nxt- n3y=w-hr-hb iw=f n nsw mnḥ n t3 dr=f]	(Greek 5: ἔτους ἰϛ + Egyptian introductory formula)
2	r Kmy [šnb n nfr nb n p3y=f h3 ...	(Egyptian introductory formula continued)
3	i.ír=f pry [r-r=f n rswy ...	(Greek II.6: ἐνόπν<ι>ον πλοῖον παπύρινον)
4	hr-3t 3 [...	(cf. Greek II.8: ἐπί τε τούτου)
5	h3' w' ntr '3 [rdwy.t=f r t3 mtry ...	(Greek II.12f.: ἕνα δὲ προελθόντα εἰς τὸ μέσον)
6	↑pnygy↑ n-drt.t=f [...	
7	wn-n3w ssw [...	(cf. III.1: ἕως τοῦ νῦν, perhaps also III.3: ἄμ' αὐτὸς)
8	Kmy [...	(cf. II.21: τὴν χώραν)
9	Nxt-n3y=w-hr-[hb ...	(cf. III.2f.: Νεκτοναβῶ)
10	p'1y] [=f hn t3 rswy.t iw n3y n3.w nw=f r-r=w...	(III.11f.: ἰδὼν τὸν ὄνειρον διεγέρθη ...)
11	... [...	

Translation

1	It happened in year 18 of the reign [of king Nectanebos (II), who was a beneficent king of the entire land,]
2	Egypt being [united with all good things in his time ...
3	He saw [himself in a dream ...
4	upon [...
5	A great god set [forth (i.e. went) into the middle ...
6	strangled (?) by him [...
7	time [...
8	Egypt [...
9	Nectanebos (II) [...
10	[He] awoke [from the dream, these being the things that he had seen ...
11	... [...

Textual Notes

1-2. The first two lines partly preserve a standard introductory formula in Roman date Demotic narratives. Among the published material, it only appears in II Khamwase. It is, however, further attested in P. CtYBR 422 vs.⁵ and the three Teb-tunis manuscripts that form a sequel to Nectanebos' Dream and contain identical copies of that text, i.e. P. Carlsberg 424, 499 and 559.

II Khamwase, III/32-IV/1⁶: hpr w' ssw n p3 h3 n pr-3 Mnḥ-p3-R' S3-Imn iw=f n nsw mnḥ n p3 t3 dr=f iw Kmy 1 šj bn n1 n-1 nfr nb n p3y=f h3

P. CtYBR 422 vs., 1: ...] nsw mnḥ [n p3 t3 dr=f] iw Kmy šnb (n) 1 n-1 nfr [nb n p3]y=f h3

P. Carlsberg 424, 1-2: [hpr] rnp.t-sp 16 n p3 h3 n] pr-3 [Nḥt]-1 n3 y=wj -hr-1 ḥbj 1 iwj =f n 1 nsw mnḥj n t3 dr=f r Kmy 1 šnb n in-nfr [nb n p3]y=f h3]


P. Carlsberg 499, 1: hpr rnp.t-sp 16 n p3 h3 n p3 pr-3 1 Nḥtj -n3y=w-hr-1 ḥbj iw=f n nsw mnḥ (end of text)


P. Carlsberg 559, 1-2: hpr rnp.t-sp 16 [... long lacuna ...] r Kmy š[nb ...

⁵ I thank J. F. Quack for referring me to this papyrus. I have examined the papyrus at the Beinecke Library, and a scan is available on the internet.

⁶ F. Ll. Griffith, *Stories of the High Priests of Memphis* (Oxford 1900). Griffith (pp. 172-173) reads [e Km]y wbn n ḥ?-nfr nb, but to judge from the published photograph, the supposed wbn may equally well be read 1 r šj bn which would suit the parallels. The reading of the group following the preposition n is discussed below in the textual notes.

An 'abbreviated' version of the formula occurs in Amasis and the Sailor:⁷ P. Bibl. Nat. 215 vs, Col. A, 1: ḥpr w' ssw n p3 h3 (n) pr- 3 'Iḥ-ms



In P. CtYBR 422 vs. and II Khamwase, the group nfr—or rather the sign before it—presents some difficulty. In P. Carlsberg 424 it is written in-nfr, which is not altogether common. However, in Roman date Demotic the prefix in- is sometimes added in the noun-form of specific stems. One such example is the adjective b3 n, "evil", which is frequently used in opposition to the adjective nfr, "good". With the prefix in, the former comes to mean "evil (thing)" (or even "wrath", Coptic ΜΒΟΝ), and by analogy in-nfr would acquire the meaning "good (thing)". This meaning is unproblematic since nfr can, in itself, be used absolutely. The two other manuscripts are more complicated. There, the sign before nfr is certainly not in, but looks more like the relative converter nty except that it is smaller than otherwise in the former, and larger than otherwise in the latter. J. F. Quack suggests to me that the sign could represent a rounded form of the regular n (Hieroglyphic ) , bent to accommodate the following nfr. In this case, the group would read n-nfr, and I have tentatively followed this reading.

A noteworthy detail in the present manuscript is the evil-determinative (Hieroglyphic ) , a fallen warrior) added to the word Kmy, "Egypt", which thus acquires the sense "(the evil) Egypt". This writing occurs again in line 8. Presumably this determinative is used because of pharaoh's neglect and the impending disaster to which the prophecy pertains.

3: 'I.īr=f pry r-r=f n rswy is the standard "dream formula" in Demotic narratives, and the restoration can be regarded as certain. It may be noted that the verb pry in Demotic and Coptic literature is only used of seeing in Dreams, except in archaic texts where it simply has the historical meaning "to see". The Greek narrative has ἐνύπν<ι>ον (II.6) which is used in a similar manner.

4: Only the preposition ḥr-ḫ3, "upon", is preserved, which presumably corresponds to ἐπί (τε τούτου ...) in II.8 of the Greek version.

5: The sentence can be restored with some confidence as ḥ3' w' ntr 3 [rdwy.t=f r t3 mtry], which is almost directly represented by the Greek ἐνα δὲ προελθόντα εἰς τὸ μέσον (II.12f.). The expression ḥ3' rdwy, "march, go, set forth" (lit. "set foot") survives in Coptic as ΚΩΡΔΤ. Among published Demotic literature, an identical passage occurs in the Demotic narrative of P. Krall, IX/5: ḥ3' NN rdwy r t3 mtry m-b3ḥ pr-3 r.īw=f dd, and it is possible that our passage should be restored similarly, i.e. as ḥ3' w' ntr 3 [rdwy.t=f r t3 mtry m-b3ḥ 'Is.t... īw=f dd], "A great god set forth into the middle before Isis (epithets of Isis), and he said: (etc.)".



6: A word of foreign appearance is added above the line. The final phonetic sign is slightly doubtful. It is almost certainly to be read y, although the last of the three strokes is rather more vertical than usual; normally the bottom part curves towards the left. If the word is correctly read pnygy, then we might be dealing with a form of the Greek verb πνίγω, "to choke, throttle, strangle". This would suit the "striking-arm"-determinative (Hieroglyphic ) well, since this is mostly used for verbs involving the notion of force. With this interpretation, the prepositional n-drt.t=f would introduce the agent, "by him". Alternatively, the reading of the final sign as s, i.e. pnygs, might also be worth considering since this could represent the Greek noun πνίγος, "stifling heat", or πνιγέυς, "oven". It is, however, not quite satisfying palaeographically, and for a word of such meaning the fire-determinative (Hieroglyphic ) , rather than the "striking-arm"-determinative, would be expected. A problem with either interpretation of the word is that it cannot be brought into harmony with the Greek version.

6-7: Only the preterit converter followed by the noun ssw, "time", is preserved in this line. Like the previous line, it is difficult to match directly with the Greek version. If it corresponds to ἕως τοῦ νῦν (III.1) or the doubtful ἄμ' αὐτός (III.3), then one version is slightly paraphrased in relation to the other.

Concerning ἄμ' αὐτός it may be noted that this is a recent emendation (proposed by Clarysse, *op. cit.*, p.369): ... Νεκτοναβῶ τοῦ βασιλέως{c} ἄμ' αὐτός. The passage has previously been read ... Νεκτοναβῶ τοῦ βασιλέωςCαμαῦτος, "Nectanebos of (i.e. the son of) King Smaus". This reading is, in itself, unproblematic. The problems lies in the fact that Nectanebos II is known not to have been the son of a king; he was in fact a nephew of king Tachos. However, the name Cαμαῦς, Egyptian T3y-n-īm=w, falls remarkably close to the historical name of Nectanebos II's father, T3y-Ḥpy-n-īm=w. The former is, in fact, nothing but a hypocoristic form of the latter. When it is further noted that the titles of Nectanebos' father included king's son (s3 -nsw), king's brother (sn-nsw), and king's father (it-nsw, var. it-bit), it is not difficult to see how a corruption of any of these may have resulted in the designation as king; it requires simply that a single element, s3, sn or it, was lost in the transmission of the text, either in the Egyptian original or the Greek translation. For the family of Nectanebos II, see H. de Meulenaere, *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache* 90 (1963) 90-93, who likewise suggests that Cαμαῦς of Nectanebos' Dream should be identified with T3y-Ḥpy-n-īm=w, Nectanebos II's father (p. 92, n. 1). As Koenen notes, this changes his assumed colometry (if, indeed, rhythmization can be assumed for the Demotic text translated into Greek).

8: For the evil-determinative of Kmy, "Egypt", see note on line 2 above.

⁷ W. Spiegelberg, *Die sogenannte Demotische Chronik des Pap. 215 der Bibliothèque Nationale zu Paris*, Demotische Studien 7 (Leipzig 1914), 26-28.

9: The unetymological writing of the personal name of Nectanebos II is noteworthy. It is here preserved as $N\dot{h}t-n_3 y=w-$ $\dot{h}b$, and in P. Carlsberg 424 and 499, where it is similarly written, it is preserved as $[N\dot{h}t]_1 n_3 y=w_1 -\dot{h}r-1 \dot{h}b_1$ and $1 N\dot{h}t_1 n_3 y=w-\dot{h}r-1 \dot{h}b_1$. In relation to the historical writing, the element $\dot{H}r$, "Horus" (Hieroglyphic ) is substituted with the homonym $\dot{h}r$, "face" (Hieroglyphic ) and the possessive article $n_3 y=w$ is added for phonetic reasons, i.e. to provide the n that appears in the Greek transcription.

10: The determinative of the verb $p'y$ is not preserved, but between the two words usually written thus in Demotic, that meaning "jump, leap" is preferable in the context to that meaning "kiss" (Coptic $\Pi\epsilon\iota$). Most important here is that $p'y=f \dot{h}n \dot{t} rswy.t r n_3 y n_3 .w nw=f r-r=w$ seems to be a standard formula for waking after having had a dream. The formula is not attested in any published Demotic text, but it occurs in P. Carlsberg 129 and P. Carlsberg 324, as well as a few other texts where it is not completely preserved. A more precise definition of $p'y$, the verb of motion, is given by M. Smith, *Enchoria* 15 (1987) 71-72: "swift or agitated motion, often, but not exclusively, in an upward direction". Within the context of the above-mentioned formula, $p'y$ would therefore seem to have the meaning of a sudden, agitated awakening.

11: Possible readings of the few signs preserved in this line include $\dot{t} y=w$, "they/one took", and $tw=w$, "they/one gave" or "they/one let (something be done)".

General Commentary

The Demotic version of Nectanebos' Dream here edited, minor as it is, nevertheless sheds light on a few points of interest. First of all, the identity of Nectanebos is now clearly ascertained. Both the present Demotic version and the Demotic sequel to Nectanebos' Dream preserve the name of the king as $N\dot{h}t-n_3 y=w-\dot{h}r-\dot{h}b$, which represents an unetymological writing of Nectanebos II's personal name (Historical form: $N\dot{h}t-\dot{H}r-\dot{h}b$), in contrast to that of Nectanebos I which is $N\dot{h}t-nb=f$. Thus the king is indeed Nectanebos II as it has always been suspected.

More surprising is the fact that the date is recorded as the 18th regnal-year, whereas both the Greek version and all three versions of the Demotic sequel are dated to the 16th regnal-year (cf. above, textual notes, 1-2). The new date makes sense in so far that Nectanebos actually ruled 18 years and the prophecy thus falls in his final regnal-year. However, as L. Koenen has kindly pointed out to me, the date Parmouthi 21/22 coincides with a fullmoon in year 16, but not in year 18. Hence we are likely to be dealing with a later emendation. Our Roman-date Demotic version of Nectanebos' Dream does not include the precise date and the mention of fullmoon. It is therefore plausible that some copist who knew that Nectanebos II ruled 18 years was confused why the prophecy concerning his demise was dated two years prior to the end of his reign, and simply emended the year to Nectanebos' last.

Be this as it may, the main interest of the present papyrus fragment is that it provides the first known Egyptian version of Nectanebos' Dream. It has long been the general belief that the Greek version of this prophecy was copied from an Egyptian original, and indeed this seems very likely since the Greek text betrays typical Demotic narrative formulae and common Egyptian motives.

Unfortunately, much too little is preserved in the Demotic version to determine whether it represents an exact copy of the original from which the Greek version was made. Since the Demotic version is about 250 years later than the Greek version, it may have been reworked like many other Demotic narratives from the Tebtunis Temple Archive. The possibility must also be considered that a Greek version could have been retranslated into Egyptian independently of the original Egyptian version. This might explain the foreign word in line 6 which is, perhaps, Greek. On the other hand, the formulae in lines 1-2, 3 and 5 are typical Demotic formulae so the scribe would have done a remarkable job of translating. In fact, these are exactly the formulae one would expect in the original from which the Greek version was made.

All in all it seems unwise to prolong a discussion at this stage since more pieces of the Demotic manuscript will almost undoubtedly come to light as work progresses on the thousands of fragments from the Tebtunis Temple Library. Once the Demotic text is better known, we will, hopefully, be on firmer grounds.