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A FRAGMENT OF THE *GREAT DOXOLOGY* IN THE BODLEIAN LIBRARY

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πατρι χάρις

Ms. Gr. class. d 19 (P)

14.9 x 9.7 cm

Seventh/eighth century

This papyrus came to the Bodleian Library (Oxford) in 1888, the year of the acquisition of the famous ‘Hawara Homer’.<sup>1</sup> It has been mounted on a glass frame together with ten documentary fragments datable to the seventh and eighth centuries; most of them are letters (one in Coptic), while there is one receipt mentioning Hermopolis (this need not be a clue to the provenance of our text).

The writing, in black ink, is along the fibres. The other side carries four line-beginnings in Arabic, written across the fibres and upside down in relation to the text on the front. The generous right-hand margin left by the scribe of the Arabic text may suggest that not much text has been lost to the left of the actual line-beginnings of the Greek text.

The hand, heavyish, with very modest, if any, pretensions to elegance, is of a common type: a degenerate specimen of the ‘sloping pointed majuscule’, if one opts for grouping it with Greek bookhands, a plain one, if one sees it as Coptic. Remarkable letter-forms: elongated right-hand oblique and horizontal of δ, split κ, ν occasionally somewhat similar to μ. It bears some resemblance to G. Cavallo, H. Maehler, *Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period* (1987) nos. 53a, 53c (both VII/VIII), 54b (VIII). It may therefore be assigned to the late seventh or, more likely, early eighth century.

The fragment comes from the so-called δοξολογία μεγάλη or *hymnus angelicus*, printed in A. Rahlfs, *Psalmi cum Odis* (21967) as *Ode 14 ὕμνος ἑωθινός*. For literature on this text, which counts a fair number of ‘papyrological’ attestations, see H. Quecke, *Untersuchungen zum koptischen Stunden-gebet* (1970) 274–99, and F. Maltomini, *ZPE* 60 (1985) 268–71, whose sigla I have adopted.<sup>2</sup> It is probable that the sheet originally contained only the *Great Doxology* and no other text. This seems to be the case with P and V too. It will presumably have served for liturgical purposes, or in private worship.

The text was written continuously, without colon divisions. No lectional signs are in evidence. *Nomina sacra* have been contracted in all possible cases.

‘Ortografia selvaggia’ wrote Maltomini, loc. cit. 267, about the piece he published (V); this also applies to the Bodleian papyrus (as well as to M<sub>1-2</sub> and C), and is no great surprise in view of the nature and date of the text. There is little doubt that the writer was not a native speaker of Greek. This is particularly obvious in the treatment of certain consonants (γ, δ, θ), clear evidence of ‘bilingual interference’; there also seems to be evidence for a Coptic orthographic convention, see further 1 n. (The phonetic renderings of the /e/ and /i/ phonemes cannot be conclusive: such orthographic variants have never been absent from the writing of native Greek speakers since Hellenistic times.)

If the papyrus comes from an Egyptian-speaking environment, we may recall that the Greek version of the *Great Doxology* was inscribed in the White Monastery (I), that V contains a Coptic form (ϠΔΜΗΝ), and that most of the Egyptian testimonies of this text in Greek are transmitted in otherwise

<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the Keeper of Special Collections and Western Manuscripts of the Bodleian for the permission to publish the text and reproduce the photograph here.

<sup>2</sup> It may be worth repeating the details here: A = *Codex Alexandrinus*; C = BN Copt. 68, ed. Quecke, op. cit. 500–05; I = van Haelst no. 773; K = PBerol inv. 364, ed. K. Treu, *APF* 24–25 (1976) 114–17; M<sub>1</sub>, 2 = Pierpont Morgan 574, ed. Quecke, op. cit. 424, 426; P = PBerol inv. 17449, ed. Treu, *APF* 21 (1971) 75–78 (= van Haelst no. 891); S = *Codex Scheide*, ed. H.-M. Schenke, *Das Matthäus-Evangelium im mittelägyptischen Dialekt des Koptischen* (1981) 128 ff.; T = Zürich, Stadtbibl., C.85; V = PVindob G 26030, ed. Maltomini, loc. cit. 271–72; 55 = Vat. Regin. graec. 1. The Bodleian papyrus may be assigned the siglum B. – I have not been able to see A. Baumstark, *Die Textüberlieferung des „Hymnus angelicus“, in Hundert Jahre A. Marcus und E. Webers Verlag 1818–1918* (1919) 83–87.

Coptic manuscripts (S, M1-2, C). Although a Coptic version was available, it did not lead to the demise of the Greek. In fact, Greek continued to have a place in functions of the Coptic church long after the Islamic conquest of Egypt, at a time when Greek was understood by only a few – and it still does. (Naturally, there were translations, cf. the texts published by Quecke, *op. cit.*) What was perceived as a part of the ecclesiastic tradition was allowed to survive across the centuries, even if it were largely incomprehensible. But of course such phenomena are not restricted to the Coptic church.

There are a number of variants, all of them corrupt, but the most noticeable feature is the omission of verses 32–41 Rahlfs. I have found nothing similar in the MSS. The Coptic version shows a remarkable state of textual flux at this point, see Quecke, *op. cit.* 287–89, and we might consider whether we are dealing with a transposition, or an otherwise unattested textual tradition. But, given that the text was probably copied for private use, it is perhaps more likely that the omission is due to careless copying, or, if the text was written down from memory, to a memory lapse.



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καθημ]ενος ντεκκι[α] τ[ου] π̄ρς ελε[ησον	(23)
μον]ος κ̄ε̄ ῑς χ̄ς συν αγιον [	(26–27)
κα]τ̄ εκακτην ειμεραν ευλ[ογησω	(29)
] εις τον̄ εωνα κε εις τον̄ [	(30–31)
5 ] σε κατεφυκα διδοξον̄ μαι το ποιειν	(42–43)

A normalised version of this part of the text, including the parts now lost, reads as follows (the parts preserved are underlined; the line breaks are only *exempli gratia*):

καθήμενος ἐν δεξιῶ τοῦ π(ατ)ρ(ὸ)ς ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. ὅτι σὺ εἶ μόνος  
 ἅγιος, σὺ εἶ μόνος κ(ύρι)ος, Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστὸ)ς σὺν ἁγίον πν(εῦμ)α εἰς δόξαν Θ(εο)ῦ π(ατ)ρ(ὸ)ς  
 ἀμήν. καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν εὐλογῶ σε καὶ αἰνέω τὸ ὄνομά  
 σου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος. < > κ(ύρι)ε πρὸς  
 σὲ κατέφυγα· δίδασόν με τὸ ποιεῖν τὸ θέλημά σου κτλ.

1 In printing ντεκκι[α], I have assumed Coptic influence; a copying mistake, i.e. to read καθημ]ενος (ε)ν, seems less likely. At this point, C has ΝΤΕΞΙΔΝ; in Coptic, Ṣ is a voiced consonant (the supralinear stroke functions as a vowel), and when pronounced it would have approximated the sound of Greek ἐν (note that Ṣ is often written as ΕΝ). The damage makes it impossible to know whether the supralinear stroke was added, but it must be said that fairly often the stroke was not written at all. The phenomenon

is not isolated to manuscripts of the *Great Doxology*; the Easter hymn PKöln IV 173 also displays many of the phonetic spellings found in the Bodleian papyrus, cf. PKöln IV pp. 60–61.

τεκκι[α], l. δεξιῶ. For τ instead of initial δ, and κκ instead of ξ, see F. T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* i.80, 139; for the spelling, cf. C and V.

2 συν αγιον: so I (πνεῦμα): cὺν ἀγίῳ (πνεύματι) K C 55: cὺν τῷ ἀγίῳ S: om. A T. On this passage see Quecke, *op. cit.* 289–91. The reading of B and I mars the grammar. It is probably an influence from the collocation Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα in v. 16, while the disappearance of the dative at that time may also have played a role.

Spacing excludes that after ἅγιος the papyrus had cὺ εἰ μόνος ὕψιστος with S.

3 κα]τ, l. καθ'. A phonetic spelling, see Gignac, *op. cit.* 91. Other MSS have theta.

ειμεραν, l. ἡμέραν. For the interchange η > ει, see Gignac, *op. cit.* 239.

4 εωνα κε, l. αἰῶνα καί. For αι > ε, a common interchange, see Gignac, *op. cit.* 192–93.

5 κατεφυκα (l. κατέφυγα): so P K I C A: κατέφυγον 55.

For intervocalic γ > κ, see Gignac, *op. cit.* 79.

διδοξον, l. δίδαξον. The interchange α > ο is well attested, see Gignac, *op. cit.* 286–87.

το π[οιειν: τοῦ ποιεῖν MSS. A banalisation, unless this is another phonetic spelling, cf. Gignac, *op. cit.* 211.