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FROM WORK ON THE PETRA PAPYRI: ARABIC ON A GREEK OSTRACON FROM
ROMAN EGYPT AND THE NAME OF THE CHURCH FATHER SOZOMEN

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In P. Petra inv. 10,¹ written probably in the 520's or 530's AD, three brothers divide among themselves a large amount of land and dwellings and a small number of slaves. In line 38, the name of one of the slaves is [Cα]λαμάνιος. The reading and restoration seem certain in view of the name of the mosaicist of the 6th-century Church of the Apostles at Madaba in Jordan. At the center of the mosaic that paves the nave of this church is an emblem depicting personified Sea (Θάλασσα) surrounded by a border containing a short prayer: *IGLSyrie XXI.2*, 142 Κ(ύριε) ὁ Θε(εὸς) ὁ ποιήσας τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν, δὸς ζῶην Ἀναστασίῳ καὶ Θωμᾷ καὶ Θεοδώρᾳ κ(αὶ) Καλαμανίου (τ. -νίῳ) ψηφ(οθέτη).² There is also the support of a tombstone from the Golan Heights, *SEG XLVI* 1983.12 μνημῖλον Καλι[α]μανίου. Furthermore, the spelling Καλαμάνις in *IGL Syrie IV* 1935 and *SEG XLIV* 1434 may be for Καλαμάνιος (see below with notes 4 and 8).

The personal name Salamanios grecoizes Semitic *Slmn*, from the root *slm* meaning 'safe', 'healthy', 'unimpaired', etc.³ It is a by-form of Καλαμάνης (rarely Καλαμάνος), a name that is widespread in inscriptions and papyri from the area of modern-day Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Israel and Lebanon.⁴ To this documentation may be added: the first name of the church father Sozomen from the area of Gaza as transmitted by Photius (on this, see below); a Palestinian monk named Salamanes mentioned by Sozomen (*Hist. eccl.* VI 32. 5; VIII 15. 2); and another monk of the same name from the village Kaparsana on the west bank of the Euphrates (Theodoretus, *Hist. rel.* 19).

The many attestations of the name Salamanes may support what is regarded to be one of the three names borne by the fifth-century church father Sozomen from Bethlelea near Gaza in Palestine. Now that Καλαμάνιος is well attested, however, the evidence for Sozomen's full name should be looked at again. Photius, *Bibl.* I 36 gives it as Καλαμάνου Ἑρμείου ᾠζομενοῦ. So modern editors give Sozomen's name in his *Ecclesiastical History* – relegating all manuscript readings to the *apparatus criticus* – in keeping with the advice of the 17th century humanist Henri de Valois (Valesius).⁵ The name as

¹ Also called Papyrus Petra Khaled & Suha Shoman in honor of its adoptive parents. [The papyrus is to be published by T. Gagos, O. al-Ghul, L. Koenen and the undersigned together with the collaboration of others.] The present article lightens the commentary to that text of a digression into matters that are tangential to it and that may be of interest to scholars in other fields. For a brief description of and select bibliography on the Petra papyri, see *ZPE* 122 (1998) 195–196.

As with all matters pertaining to our work on the Petra papyri, the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the University of Michigan, and the American Center of Oriental Research in Amman is gratefully acknowledged. In the preparation of the present article I profited from consultation with W. Diem, O. al-Ghul and F. Kaltz in matters pertaining to Semitic languages. Thanks also go to G. Azzarello, K. Maresch and F. Reiter for useful remarks.

² Καλαμανίου for Καλαμανίῳ, probably a confusion of ω and ου (see Gignac, *Grammar* I, 208–210; see also J. Humbert, *La disparition du datif en grec* [Paris 1930], 162–184). L. A. Hunt suggested ψηφ(οθέταις), but see the remarks in *SEG XLIV* 1378. For photographs of the mosaic's emblem and inscription, see *IGLSyrie XXI.2*, Pl. XXVIII (100) and, much better, M. Piccirillo, *The Mosaics of Jordan* (Amman 1993), p. 96 fig. 78, p. 98 fig. 80.

³ See M. Sartre, *Bostra. Des origines à l'Islam* (Paris 1985) 236.

⁴ Cf. *IGLSyrie XXI.2*, 96b (= *SEG XXXIV* 1510); Le Bas – Waddington VI 2262; 2412i; *PAESyria* IIIA 724; 727; *Inscr. Moab* 123; 147; 150; 272; 320; 325; 326; *Inscr. Ness.* 82; *Inscr. Negev* 50; 65; *SEG VII* 1126; XXXI 1428; 1443; XXXVI 1334; XXXVIII 1658; 1659; XLII 1490d; XLVI 1927; 1995; *P. Dura* 21. 8. In *IGLSyrie IV* 1935 Καλαμάνις may be a iotacist spelling of Καλαμάνης, but Καλαμάνι<ο>c cannot be ruled out (see above; see also below with n. 8); see Gignac, *Grammar* II, 25–29. The evidence for Καλαμάνης adduced here does not pretend to be complete, nor has evidence for other Greek forms of Semitic names based on *slm* been included (e.g., common Καλαμάνης and rarer Καλαμ).

⁵ The pertinent part of his *Annotationes* is given in Migne, PG 67, coll. 853–854. In basic agreement with de Valois's conclusion that Καλαμινίου (and variants) is to be rejected in favor of Καλαμάνου as transmitted by Photius: J. Bidez, *La*

transmitted by Photius is close to some of the variant readings in Sozomen's work:⁶ Καλαμίου (I tit.) and Καλαμάνου (IX tit.), both preceding Ἑρμείου Κοζομενοῦ. However, an important group of manuscripts grecizes the Semitic name differently and sets it at the end of the series: Ἑρμείου Κοζομενοῦ Καλαμηνίου (Ded. tit. and I tit.). In some of these manuscripts Καλαμηνίου is corrected to Καλαμινίου, which looks like a scribal attempt to make the former sensible to the Greek ear and eye. It is the latter form that de Valois knew and rejected in favor of Καλαμάνου with Photius. He could not know and later scholars might hardly know that Καλαμήνιος, with the η emended to α,⁷ yields the now well-attested name Καλαμάνιος as in the mosaic at Madaba, the Petra papyrus and the Golan tombstone all referred to above. Since the variant reading is defensible, the issue regarding the name of this church father is not as clear-cut as it was thought to be till now.

Whereas the name Salamanes is well-attested in texts from the Roman and Byzantine Near East, to my knowledge there are at most only two instances of it in the much greater quantity of Greek documents from Greco-Roman Egypt. A possible one is on an inscription that was excavated at 'Abu Sha'ar on the Red Sea coast. The text is a Christian prayer that was first published by R. S. Bagnall and J. A. Sheridan in *JARCE* 31 (1994) 163–164 (= *SEG XLIV* 1434), who date it on palaeographic grounds to the 4th–6th centuries and give its text as follows: †κ(ύρι)ε Ἰ(ησοῦ) Χ(ριστ)έ, κ̅ω̅σ̅ον̅ κ(α)ὶ ἐλ̅ή̅ο̅ι̅ς̅ον̅ τ̅ων̅ (r. ἐλέησον τὸν) δοῦλόν σου Κα[λ]αμάνις [.] . . . ου†. The editors suggested that Καλαμάνις may be a variant Καλαμάνης⁸ and that, since the name is typical of Syria and Palestine, the person probably “came from that region, perhaps via a Sinai port.”

A certain occurrence of the name in Greco-Roman Egypt is on an ostrakon containing a message dealing with a shipment of vegetables. The text, which was published with a photograph and commentary by Edda Bresciani in *La Parola del Passato* 14 (1959) 140–141 (= *SB VI* 9610), is of interest not only for the name that is rare in Egypt, but also because it contains a much stranger word:

Τύχη Καλαμάνη χ(αίρειν). Πέμψον τὰ λάχανα ΟΛΓΙΤΤΑ | ἃ Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅⁹ ἡμέρον ἔγραψεν ὅτι ἐκόλυσα ἀρθῆναι· ἴ̅ο̅ρα̅ οὖν̅ μὴ̅ ἀ̅με̅λ̅ή̅ς̅η̅ς̅, | μὴ̅ ἴ̅να̅ ἐ̅ξ̅ε̅λ̅θ̅ῶν̅ ἐ̅μ̅π̅α̅ί̅ξ̅η̅¹⁰ σοι· οὐκ̅ ἐ̅στι̅ γὰρ̅ ἀ̅γ̅έ̅λ̅η̅ν̅η̅τον̅ π̅λ̅ε̅ί̅ο̅ν̅ων̅ ἀ̅υ̅τ̅ῶ̅ν̅ πο̅τε̅ χ̅ρ̅ή̅ζ̅ειν̅ λα̅λ̅χ̅άν̅ων̅. Ἐ̅ρ̅ρ̅ω̅ο̅. | Λ̅α̅β̅ῶ̅ν̅ τ̅ὸ̅ ὄ̅τ̅ρα̅κ̅ον̅ | κ̅ά̅τ̅α̅ξ̅ον̅.

tradition manuscrite de Sozomène (TU 32. 2b, Leipzig 1908), 23; G. Grillet in A. J. Festugiere – G. Sabbah, *Histoire ecclésiastique de Sozomène I* (SC 306, Paris 1983), 9–10; J. Schamp, *Photios, historien des lettres* (Paris 1987), 201 note 14.

⁶ Variants are cited according to the edition of Sozomen by J. Bidez – G. C. Hansen (GCS, NF 4, Berlin² 1995).

⁷ Scribal miscopying is a sufficient explanation of α > η, although one might consider the possibility of the influence of an Arabic pronunciation of the name. The phonetic phenomenon known as 'imāla, i.e. long and short a pronounced as long and short e and i, was and is widespread in many Arabic dialects; see C. Brockelmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der semitischen Sprachen I* (Berlin 1908), 141–142; W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language I* (Cambridge 1933³), 7, 9, 10; J. Cantineau, *Études de linguistique arabe* (Paris 1960), 96–99. For evidence of 'imāla in Arabic as transliterated in Coptic, Coptic-Arabic and Greek-Arabic papyri, see J. Karabacek, *MPER V* (1892) 59–62.

⁸ If so, it is undeclined. The same would apply to undeclined Κα[λ]αμάνι<ο>ς, see n. 4 on *IGLSyrie IV* 1935. Also possible: Κα[λ]αμάν (cf. *Namenbuch*, s.v. Καλαμᾶς) and then, e.g., Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅|ἰ̅δ̅ῶ̅ρου̅ or Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅|ἰ̅δ̅ῶ̅του̅.

⁹ Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅ ἡμέρον: the first editor gave Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅δ̅[. . .] τὸ ἡμέρον, though the dots under τὸ are only in her commentary. She suggested Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅δ̅[ω̅ρος̅] or Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅δ̅[ο̅τος̅], but the fourth letter is more likely an o open at the top (cf. 9 τόν) or an ω with a flat bottom (closest would be the ω in 6) than a δ, which should be more angular (unfortunately, the text has no other δ for comparison). Between this letter and τὸ is hardly enough space for 4 letters. The photograph shows traces of two letters of normal size: first, the foot of a vertical (e.g., the lower left of η, υ or π); then two verticals that might suit η or υ. A correction seems to be involved in the letter that the editor regarded as the τ of τὸ. The last letter might be o or ω. A possible reading is Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅ὸ̅νη̅ (or Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅ὸ̅νη̅) τὸ ἡμέρον. However, both variants of the woman's name are rare, vs. common Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅ῶ̅ν̅, and ἐ̅ξ̅ε̅λ̅θ̅ῶ̅ν̅ in the next sentence suggests a man's name. If Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅ὸ̅νη̅ (or Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅ὸ̅νη̅) is correct, the subject of the following sentence is not expressed. If Ἰ̅ϰ̅ι̅ῶ̅ν̅ is read, the next three letters are a problem. Thanks go to F. Maltomini for checking the ostrakon which E. Bresciani kindly put at his disposal. He reports that the original at this place now shows less than the published photograph.

¹⁰ ἐ̅μ̅π̅α̅ί̅ξ̅η̅: the first editor gave ἐ̅μ̅π̅α̅ί̅ξ̅η̅, but the ξ is made as in 6 ἐ̅ξ̅ε̅λ̅θ̅ῶ̅ν̅. It is not ζ as in 9 χ̅ρ̅ή̅ζ̅ειν̅.

“Tyche greets Salamanes. Send the vegetables *olgitta* which Isi- - wrote today that you prevented from being picked up. See to it that you are not negligent lest he leave and make a fool¹¹ of you. For it is not without precedent that he at times needs more vegetables. Farewell. After you receive this ostrakon, have them brought down¹².”

There can be no doubt that *ολγιττα* was correctly read and little doubt concerning the sense expected. As the editor suggested, the word or words ought to refer to a kind of vegetable. The sequence of letters, however, does not yield Greek or Latin even if one allows for phonetic interchanges in this part of a text that elsewhere has standard Greek spelling only.

Another language should provide an explanation. Egyptian comes into question given the virtually certain provenance of the ostrakon,¹³ but the distinguished Egyptologist who edited it would have remarked on this possibility if it could be entertained seriously. Fortunately, the name Salamanes invites consideration of another group of languages. The editor already noted that it might reflect the Aramaic name *Šlmn*¹⁴, but in the present case (see below) it may just as well grecize the equivalent name in Arabic, i.e. *Slmn*.

If one looks to possibilities in a Semitic language to explain *ολγιττα*, one may consider Arabic *al-qittā* ‘the cucumbers’, which falls squarely in the semantic category expected and which corresponds fairly closely with the Greek letters, even if one would normally expect Arabic *al-qittā* to be rendered by the Greek letters *αλ-κιθθα*.

In classical Arabic, *qittā* (collective singular, also vocalized *qittā*) denotes cucumbers in general (also called *hīyār*) or snake-cucumbers in specific.¹⁵ In the Arabic translation of Dioscurides’ *Materia medica* and in Arabic commentaries on it, the cultivated cucumber, *κύκνος ἡμερος*, is translated as *al-qittā al-bustānī* (‘the garden cucumber’) and the wild cucumber, *κύκνος ἄγριος*, as *al-qittā al-barrī* (‘the wild cucumber’) as well as *qittā al-himār* (‘the donkey cucumber’).¹⁶

Many roots and words are common to all Semitic languages. In the case of *γιττα*, however, if I have hit on the correct root, it almost certainly transliterates Arabic *qittā*¹⁷ and not a cognate. The Greek letters are closer to the Arabic word than to Semitic equivalents with the same meaning such as Aramaic *qaṭṭūtā* (sg.), *qaṭṭajjā* (pl.).¹⁸ The preceding letters *ολ*, then, would seem to be the definite article *al-*, which is distinctively Arabic,¹⁹ as opposed, e.g., to Hebrew *ha-* and Aramaic (affixed) *-ā*.

¹¹ Or “defraud” or “cheat”.

¹² *κάταξον*: normally ‘bring down’, but here the word seems to be roughly synonymous with *πέμψον* in lines 1–2 and hence to be used causatively. The prefix *κατ-* probably indicates movement northwards, i.e. ‘down’ the Nile, or possibly movement from a city to an outlying village; see H. C. Youtie, *HTHR* 41 (1948) 15 n. 36 (= *Scriptiunculae* I 493).

¹³ It was acquired in Cairo, though no further details as to its provenance are known.

¹⁴ Referring to S. A. Cook, *A Glossary of the Aramaic Inscriptions* (Cambridge 1898) 114 and to M. Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik* (Gießen 1902–15) II 73 A, 78 B and 80 A and, for Greek *Καλαμάνης*, to H. Wuthnow, *Die semitischen Menschennamen* (Leipzig 1930), 102–103.

¹⁵ See E. W. Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London 1863–1893), 2487b. Today in the Levant the word *qittā* denotes specifically the snake-cucumber, as opposed to *hīyār*, which is used of cucumbers in general. This agrees with what was reported on the terms some 70 years ago by G. Dalman, *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina* II (Gütersloh 1932), 283.

¹⁶ For the Arabic translations of *κύκνος ἡμερος* and *κύκνος ἄγριος* (Diosc., *Mat. med.* II 135 and IV 150), see A. Dietrich, *Dioscurides triumphans. Ein anonym arabischer Kommentar (Ende 12. Jahrh. n. Chr.) zur Materia medica*. 2. Teil: Übersetzung und Kommentar (Göttingen 1988), II 117 and IV 139. F. Kaltz kindly brought this work to my attention.

¹⁷ For τ regarded as rendering Arabic *t*, see Sartre, *op. cit.* (note 3), 181 *s.n.* *Αουιτος*, 185–6 *s.n.* *Αυθος*, 192 *s.n.* *Γαυτος*. The only instance that I have found for a γ regarded as possibly rendering Arabic *q* is Lidzbarski, *op. cit.* (note 14) II 339.

¹⁸ For other cognates, see L. Koehler – W. Baumgartner, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament* II (Leiden 1995³), 1073b.

¹⁹ For the Arabic definite article *al-* in late Nabataean texts roughly contemporaneous with the ostrakon, see J. Cantineau, *Le Nabatéen* (Paris 1930–32) I 61 and II 61. That *al-* is spelled *ολ* on the ostrakon seems negligible. I have not come across an example of the Arabic article rendered by Greek *ολ*, but it may be noted that *Αλειφος*, *Ολεφος*, *Αλφιτος* and *Ολφιτος* are all regarded as rendering Nabataean *Hlfw* or related Semitic names; see Sartre, *op. cit.* (note 3), 172–3. For *α > o* in Greek as pronounced in Egypt, see Gignac, *Grammar* I, 286–287.

Tyche's instructions to Salamanes may now be given as Πέμψον τὰ λάχανα, ολ-γιττα, where the presumably Arabic word for 'the cucumbers' stands in apposition to τὰ λάχανα. The detail may add to evidence provided by papyri and inscriptions for pre-Islamic Arabic in Greek transliteration.

Since the text is of linguistic interest, it is important to know roughly when it was written. The editor assigned its handwriting to the 2nd century AD, but the 3rd century seems likelier to me, and diaeresis placed over initial ι favors such a later date.²⁰ Palaeographical comparison may allow one to come even closer. The writer made the thick, mainly unconnected, roundish letters in a way that so closely resembles the second hand of *P. Oxy.* XIV 1646 of A.D. 270²¹ that it does not seem too hazardous to date the ostrakon to the second half of the 3rd century.²²

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CORRIGENDUM: NO ARABIC ON A GREEK OSTRACON

When writing on the ostrakon SB VI 9610 in this journal (Vol. 131 [2000] 173–176), I proposed that ολγιττα in line 2 may be Arabic *al-qittā* 'the cucumbers'. As J. Cowey kindly informed me, however, I had overlooked A. Bülow-Jacobsen's article "Ghost-Vegetable: A re-edition of SB VI 9610" (this journal, Vol. 110 [1996] 124–126), where it is convincingly suggested that ολγιττα should be read as *Caγίττα*, the Latin personal name in the dative. Sagitta, then, must be the masculine subject of the ostrakon's lines 9 ff. ἐξελθὼν ἐμπαίξει κτλ. (see footnote 9 of my article), and so ἂ Ἰσιόνη (or Ἰσιόνη) τὸ χήμερον seems to be a plausible reading of line 3 (see the same footnote).

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²⁰ The ostrakon has in 3 ἰι- and in 6 ἰι. Referring to a few isolated examples of diaeresis in dated texts of the 1st and 2nd centuries, H. I. Bell and T. C. Skeat (*Fragments of an Unknown Gospel* [London 1935], 5) remarked: "Later instances are too numerous to be worth collecting." For a few other early examples, see Turner – Parsons, *Greek Manuscripts*², 10 n. 46.

²¹ J. R. Rea discussed the date of this papyrus in *ZPE* 26 (1977) 227–229; photograph after p. 230.

²² The hand is also similar to *BGU* XIII 2280a of A. D. 276 (see plate X).