

Demotica et Coptica

I

Three Demotic Problems

1. In *Demotic Tax - Receipts*, V (Proceedings of the Society for Biblical Archaeology, XXXV, pages 261-263) Sir HERBERT THOMPSON discussed the tax designated *ʒntwge*. A. S. HUNT, whose advice he had sought, was not thoroughly satisfied with either ἐντύχη or ἐνδοκὴ as an interpretation.

I suggest that *ʒntwge* is not the name of a specific tax, but stands for ἐνδική (if this feminine termination can be allowed), roughly equivalent to ἔννομος — that is to say, « the lawful or statutory tax ».

2. Magical Texts from a Bilingual Papyrus in the British Museum (BELL, NOCK and THOMPSON), column V line 6, σαλβανακα (1). THOMPSON convincingly explains the later part of this word as « of the living sun », but σαλ remains mysterious. Could it be the well-known *śnb* (« heal », ecc.) conflated with SALUS (AUGUSTI), a familiar legend on Roman imperial coins?

3. *Ib.*, column V line 17, *e.mn hyps*. As Thompson points out, this means « without shoulder », but the context requires something like « without deception ».

Possibly the associated word *nahcb*, which Chabas in his edition of the Harris Magical Papyrus, page 132, renders « soutenir, supporter », may supply the necessary semantic link. « Support » leads to « pretext, pretence » (compare Greek σκήπτω, ἄσκηπτος): *e.mn hyps* might consequently be ἀπροφασίστως, ἀπλῶς.

(1) If the form καλβαναχαμβρη found in a Greek papyrus, is correct, F. Li. Griffith's explanation seems plausible.

II

A Coptic Magical Papyrus in the Library of the University of Aberdeen

The Library of Aberdeen University owns a small Coptic magical papyrus of the 4th century, which was edited and annotated by W. E. CRUM, *La Magie Copte*, pages 537-544, in *Recueil d'Études Égyptologiques dédiées à la mémoire de Jean-François Champollion*, Paris, 1922 (see pages 539-540). I know of no other study than Crum's, and, since he had to leave certain points unexplained, I venture on one or two very tentative suggestions.

Of the opening word, **μαριας** CRUM says: « Pourquoi génitif? Et qui est-ce? La Vierge, ou bien l'objet de la malédiction? Qui donc serait Marthe (**μαρθα** nominatif) dans la ligne 7 ? ».

The document falls into two roughly similar parts, one headed by **μαριας** and the other by **μαρθα**. Either by itself would form a complete *defixio*. It seems to me that we may have a joint imprecation by two sisters (copied out by only one of them) against an obnoxious third woman, possibly their stepmother. **μαριας** is a Greek genitive: « Mary's (petition) ». The second part begins in the nominative: « Martha (says) ». The Biblical name may have been real, or were assumed for their supposed efficacy.

I pass to the mysterious **ακαωαατ αρτοοβαλατωε** where, besides difficulties of dialect, we may have to allow for what Crum calls « une déformation . . . au profit de la magie, pour qui tout surcroit d'obscurité était le bienvenu ». Could **τοοβαλατωε** be a distortion of **τύχη αγαθή** — the **ω**, which constantly usurps novel functions in this papyrus, representing the Greek aspirate? If **ωαατ** were for **ταατ** (« give me ») or **καατ** (« place me ») we might render freely: « Bring me into a state of good fortune ». Or should we perhaps took for some derivative of **μπωα**, « be worthly »?