

SITTING IN THE CELL: THE LITERARY DEVELOPMENT OF AN ASCETIC PRAXIS IN PAUL OF TAMMA'S WRITINGS. WITH AN EDITION OF SOME HITHERTO UNKNOWN FRAGMENTS OF *DE CELLA*

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Abstract

This article focuses on Paul of Tamma, a fourth- or fifth-century Egyptian author who wrote a series of ascetic texts, preserved only in the Sahidic dialect of Coptic. The first part examines the ancient sources concerning Paul of Tamma, which are exclusively hagiographic. Although they contain many unreliable elements, there is good evidence that Paul was a contemporary of the great Egyptian ascetics Shenoute, Aphu of Oxyrhynchus, Pshoi of Jeremiah, Apollo of Tetkooh, and Isidore of Scetis, who all lived at the end of the fourth and early in the fifth centuries. The article goes on to examine the manuscript evidence of the *Asceticon* of Paul of Tamma, identifying new fragments of his works. I propose that Paul originally wrote in Coptic, not Greek, and that his texts have literary contacts with the ascetic literature of the monastic centres of Scetis, Nitria, and Kellia. The article also includes an edition and English translation of a hitherto unknown Sahidic miniature manuscript of Paul of Tamma's *De Cella*.

OUR information concerning Paul of Tamma can be gleaned from a few hagiographic sources: his biography (BHO *sine numero*;¹ *clavis coptica* 0152²), attributed to a certain disciple named Ezekiel, the *Life of Pshoi* (BHG 1402–3; BHO 181–2; CPG 2503), ascribed to John Kolobos, and Ps.-Theodotus of Ancyra's *Encomium on St George* (BHO 320; CPG 6141; *clavis coptica* 0390). While these documents may contain some reliable information, their hagiographic character makes it difficult to disentangle historical facts from mere fiction. In addition to these

¹ P. Peeters, *Bibliotheca hagiographica orientalis* (Subsidia hagiographica, 10; Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1910), p. 200.

² 'Clavis coptica' refers to the *Clavis Patrum Copticorum*, available online at www.cmcl.it (accessed October 2016).

pious stories, a series of ascetical texts have survived under Paul of Tamma's name in the Sahidic dialect of Coptic.³

The main focus of the present article will be on *De Cella* (clavis coptica 0251), a writing of Apa Paul concerning the monastic cell. Judging on the basis of the manuscript evidence, this text was quite popular among Egyptian ascetics.⁴ First, I will survey the principal ancient sources concerning Paul of Tamma. Then I will give a description of the manuscripts of his works. This will offer the opportunity to touch upon the identification of several new fragments of Paul's writings, including some previously unknown fragments of *De Cella*, which belonged to a miniature manuscript. Finally, in the last part I will analyse this treatise in the context of late antique Egyptian monastic literature. I will argue that although Paul of Tamma probably belonged to Middle Egyptian monasticism, he was seemingly familiar with the literature of Scetis, Nitria, and Kellia. I also provide an edition and English translation of the new manuscript of *De Cella*.

HAGIOGRAPHIC SOURCES CONCERNING PAUL OF TAMMA

As I have already pointed out, some details about Paul of Tamma are supplied in a few hagiographic sources. The first of these, the *Life of Paul of Tamma*, is preserved fragmentarily in Sahidic and completely in Arabic. The most important witness to the Coptic text is an incomplete parchment manuscript from the Monastery of Apa Shenoute (codex MONB.FI).⁵ This

³ Paul's writings have been edited with an Italian translation in T. Orlandi, *Paolo di Tamma: Opere* (Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari; Rome: C.I. M., 1988).

⁴ This text has also received some attention in modern times. Beside Orlandi's Italian rendering, there is an English translation in T. Vivian and B. A. Pearson, 'Saint Paul of Tamma: *On the Monastic Cell (De Cella)*', *Hallel* 23 (1998), pp. 86–107, reprinted in T. Vivian, *Words to Live By: Journeys in Ancient and Modern Monasticism* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2005), pp. 139–202, and a French one in P. Luisier, 'Paul de Tamma, *Lettre sur la cellule*: Une traduction française', in A. Bastit-Kalinowska and A. Carfora (eds.), *Vangelo, trasmissione, verità: Studi in onore di Enrico Cattaneo nel suo settantesimo compleanno* (Oì Christianoi, 15; Trapani: Il pozzo di Giacobbe, 2013), pp. 265–83.

⁵ É. Amélineau, *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne*, vol. 2 (Mémoires publiés par les membres de la mission archéologique française, 4/2; Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1895), pp. 515–16, 759–69, published some fragments of this codex; supplementary fragments of the same manuscript appear in E. Lucchesi, 'Trois nouveaux fragments coptes de la Vie de Paul de Tamma par Ézéchiél', in U. Zanetti and E. Lucchesi (eds.), *Ægyptus Christiana: Mélanges d'hagiographie égyptienne et orientale dédiés à la mémoire du P. Devos bollandiste* (Cahiers d'orientalisme, 25; Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 2004), pp. 211–24.

fragmentary codex is written in a Sahidic influenced by the Middle Egyptian dialects.⁶ Fragments of two other Sahidic papyrus codices of the same text are also extant.⁷ The Arabic version is available in two different redactions, one long and one short, the latter being an abridgement of the former.⁸

It is difficult to establish how much reliable historical information is embedded in Paul's *vita*. The text is rather a *rocambolesque*

⁶ Rodolphe Kasser suggested that the idiom is Sahidic, with influences from the dialect H: see Lucchesi, 'Trois nouveaux fragments', p. 211. Amélineau, *Monuments*, vol. 2, p. 515, believed that the dialect is Bashmouric. BHO mentions under the lemma 'Paulus Tammanus mon. in Aegypto' that the dialect of the text would be Fayyumic.

⁷ T. Orlandi, *Papiri copti di contenuto teologico* (Mitteilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer, NS 9; Vienna: Brüder Hollinek, 1974), pp. 155–8 published fragments of a papyrus codex in Vienna. M. Pezin, 'Nouveau fragment copte concernant Paul de Tamma (P. Sorbonne inv. 2632)', in *Christianisme d'Égypte: Hommages à René-Georges Coquin* (Cahiers de la bibliothèque copte, 9; Paris and Louvain: Peeters, 1995), pp. 13–20 offered the edition of a small fragment from a different Sahidic codex in the collection of Paris-Sorbonne University. The Sahidic and Fayyumic fragments discovered at Bala'izah, tentatively attributed to the *Life of Paul of Tamma* by P. E. Kahle, *Bala'izah: Coptic Texts from Deir el-Bala'izah in Upper Egypt*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 436–7 do not belong to this text. W. E. Crum, 'The Coptic Manuscripts', in W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Gizeh and Rifeh* (British School of Archaeology in Egypt and Egyptian Research Account Thirteenth Year, 1907; London: School of Archaeology in Egypt and Bernard Quaritch, 1907), pp. 39–43, at 41, suggested that the Fayyumic fragment might belong to a *Life of Paul the Simple*. Similarly, the papyrus fragments in the Chester Beatty collection published by A. Pietersma and S. T. Comstock, 'Coptic Texts in the Chester Beatty: Pshoi and Cephalon', *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 29 (1992), pp. 67–78, at 67–72 and plates 11–14, do not belong to the *Life of Paul of Tamma* either.

⁸ On the Arabic redactions see R.-G. Coquin, 'Paul of Tamma, Saint', in A. S. Atiya (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, vol. 6 (New York: Macmillan, 1991), pp. 1923b–25b. Coquin thought that there are three different Arabic redactions. However, further research established that there are only two, one long and one short: see A. Wadi, 'Le recensioni arabe della vita di Paolo di Tamma', in D. Righi (ed.), *La letteratura arabo-cristiana e le scienze nel periodo abbaside (750–1250 d.C)* (Patrimonio culturale arabo-cristiano, 11; Turin: Silvio Zamorani Editore, 2009), pp. 325–32. The short Arabic redaction has been edited without translation by A. Wadi, 'La recensione breve della Vita araba di Paola din Tamma', in Zanetti and Lucchesi, *Ægyptus Christiana*, pp. 195–210; French translation in N. Vanthieghem, 'Traduction de la Recension brève de la vie de Paul de Tamma', *Studia Orientalia Christiana: Collectanea* 41 (2008), pp. 103–15. The Arabic text of the long redaction is available in A. Wadi, 'La recensione lunga della vita araba di Paolo di Tamma: Presentazione, edizione e indice', *Studia Orientalia Christiana: Collectanea* 38 (2005), pp. 115–78; Italian translation in B. Pirone, 'Traduzione della Vita di Anbā Paolo di Tamma', *ibid.*, pp. 73–114.

adventure during which Paul dies several times following some severe mortifications, but is brought back to life by divine intervention after each death.⁹ According to the long Arabic redaction of the *Life*, Ezekiel met Paul in Tūh (طوخ), where the latter lived as a recluse. During their peregrinations along the Nile valley, Paul and Ezekiel encounter some of the great champions of late fourth- and early fifth-century Egyptian monasticism, including Aphu of Pemje/Oxyrhynchus, Pshoi of Jeremiah, Apollo of Tetkooh, Phib, Anoup, and Isidore, the priest of Scetis. Another important monastic figure mentioned in the *Life* is Shenoute of Atripe, the famous archimandrite of the White Monastery, to whom Paul sends a letter.¹⁰

Of special interest is the connection between Paul of Tamma and Pshoi of Jeremiah. Thus, towards the end of his life, Christ informs Paul in a vision that he will die on Bābah 7 and will be buried together with Pshoi in Antinoe. The relationship between Abba Pshoi and Paul of Tamma is further explained in the *Life* of the former, which has been preserved in Greek,¹¹ Syriac,¹²

⁹ D. Bumazhnov, 'Ascetic Suicides in the Vita of St Paul of Tamma: An Egyptian Drama and its Ethiopian Continuation', in D. Nosnitsin (ed.), *Veneration of the Saints in Christian Ethiopia: Proceedings of the International Workshop Saints in Christian Ethiopia: Literary Sources and Veneration, Hamburg, April 28–29, 2012* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2015), pp. 1–13.

¹⁰ The text says that Shenoute was building at that time a church in his monastery. The construction of this church, which scholars agree to be historically accurate, is mentioned by Shenoute in his works, but it appears also in other hagiographic sources, like the *Life of Shenoute* attributed to Besa (BHO 1074–1078; clavis coptica 0461); see D. N. Bell, *Besa, the Life of Shenoute* (Cistercian Studies Series, 73; Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1983), pp. 51–2. On the relevance of the church erected by Shenoute, one of the largest in Late Antiquity, see A. G. López, *Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty: Rural Patronage, Religious Conflict, and Monasticism in Late Antique Egypt* (Transformation of the Classical Heritage, 50; Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 2013), pp. 47–51.

¹¹ Interestingly, the Greek version translates Pshoi's name as Paisios. The Greek text was published on the basis of two manuscripts by И. Помяловский, *Житие преподобнаго Паисія Великаго и Тимофея патріарха Александрійскаго Повѣствованіе о чудесахъ Св. Великомученика Мины* (Записки историко-филологическаго факультета Императорскаго С.-Петербургскаго Университета, 20; С.-Петербургъ: Типографія Императорской Академіи Наукъ, 1900), pp. 1–61. L. Papadopoulos and G. Lizardos, *Saint Paisios de Great, by John the Dwarf of Egypt* (2nd edn., Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1998), translated into English Nicodemus the Hagiorite's rendering of the text into modern Greek.

¹² P. Bedjan, *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, vol. 3 (Paris and Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1892), pp. 572–620. Some lacunae in the text of Bedjan were filled on the basis of another manuscript by V. Scheil, 'Restitution de deux textes dans le récit syriaque de la vie de Mar Bischoï (ed. Bedjan)', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 15 (1900), pp. 103–6.

Arabic,¹³ and Gə'əz.¹⁴ A Coptic version, on which at least the Arabic translation seems to be based, must also have existed, although no fragment has been discovered until now. The four extant versions of the *Life of Pshoi* feature many differences, the text probably being adapted according to the needs of the different Christian communities that used it. In the following pages, I will mainly refer to the Ethiopic translation, not only because it contains certain readings that are more relevant for the present argument, but also because it is the only version properly edited.

The work is attributed to John Kolobos, who narrates the life of Pshoi, the founder of the famous monastery in Scetis that bears his name. Elsewhere in the text, and also in the *Life of Paul of Tamma*, the same personage is called 'Pshoi of Jeremiah'. The explanation of this name is given in both writings: because of Pshoi's devotion to Jeremiah, the Old Testament prophet used to visit him often in his cell. Thus, in the long Arabic redaction of the *Life of Paul of Tamma*, Paul asks Christ in a vision why his friend is called 'Pshoi of Jeremiah'. Christ replies:

ذلك الشيخ حفظ يارامياس ظاهر قلب، وإذا ما تلا فيه، يجيء يارامياس، ويقف عنده، إلى حين يتلوه، ويفرغ. وكثير من الإخوة دخلوا عنده، فوجدوه، وهو يكلمهم فمنا بقم، ومن أجل هذا دعوه باسمه، الذي هو بيشوي يارامياس.

This elder learned by heart (the book of) Jeremiah. Therefore, while he was reciting it, Jeremiah used to come and stand next to him until he finished reading. Many brothers entered (his cell) and found him speaking to Jeremiah mouth to mouth. Because of this, they called his name Bišoy Jeremiah.¹⁵

¹³ The Arabic is not yet critically published, but a summary was given by Hugh G. Evelyn White from a manuscript in Paris translated especially for him by Basil Evetts: see H. G. Evelyn White, *The Monasteries of the Wādī 'N Natrūn*, part 2: *The History of the Monasteries of Nitria and of Scetis* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition; New York, NY: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1932), pp. 111–15, 158–60. The Arabic text has been translated into Italian from a manuscript in the National Library in Paris (BnF arabe 4796, fols. 119^r–169^v) by B. Pirone, *Vite di santi egiziani: Macario, Massimo e Domezio, Mosè il Nero, Paolo di Tammah, Anbā Bishoy, Arsenio, Apollo e Phib* (Milan: Edizioni Terra Santa, 2013), pp. 205–48.

¹⁴ Summary of the Gə'əz version in R. Beylot, 'La Version éthiopienne de "L'histoire de Besoy"', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 203 (1986), pp. 169–84. Edition and French translation in G. Colin, *La Version éthiopienne de L'histoire de Bsoy* (Patrologia Orientalis, 49.3; Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).

¹⁵ Arabic text in Wadi, 'La recensione lunga', p. 169–70; Italian translation in Pirone, 'Vita di Anbā Paolo di Tamma', p. 111.

This aligns well with what we find in the *Life of Pshoi*:

ወወትረ፡ ይጸሊ፡ ትንቢተ፡ ኤርምያስ፡ ነቢይ፡ ወሶብ፡ ያነብብ፡ ይመጽኩ፡ ጎቤሁ፡ ኤርምያስ፡ ነቢይ፡ ወይተረጉሞ፡ ሎቱ፡ መጽሐፎ፡ ወይነግሮ፡ ወይትፌሣህ፡ በርክየቱ። ወይከሥት፡ ሎቱ፡ ብዙኅ፡ ትምህርተ፡ ወይነግሮ፡ መንፈሳዊ።

He (Pshoi) always prayed with the prophecy of the prophet Jeremiah, and while he was reciting it, the prophet Jeremiah used to visit him, explaining him his book, talking to him and being pleased to see him. He revealed to him numerous teachings and talked with him about the spiritual (things).¹⁶

These two quotations indicate that Pshoi of Jeremiah, with whom Paul of Tamma is often associated,¹⁷ was not a Middle Egyptian monk from the Monastery of Apa Jeremias, as some scholars have inferred, but must rather be identified with Pshoi of Scetis.¹⁸ The appellation 'of Jeremiah' refers to his devotion to the Weeping Prophet.

Paul appears twice in Pshoi's biography. The first episode that involves him concerns a young monk named Poimen, who wants to meet Pshoi. Aware of their friendship, Poimen asks Paul to introduce him to the holy man. Paul appears for the second time in the *Life of Pshoi* in the context of Pshoi's death and transfer of his relics to Antinoe. This episode must be connected with the aforementioned vision of Paul from his *vita*, during which Christ reveals to him that he will be buried together with Pshoi of

¹⁶ Colin, *La Version éthiopienne de L'histoire de Bsoy*, pp. 16–17 (Gə'əz text and French translation). The Greek text expresses the same idea, συνεχώς δὲ καὶ τῇ προφητείᾳ τοῦ θεοπεσίου Ἱερεμίου διωμίζει καὶ αὐτῷ πολλάκις ἐκεῖνος ὀφθεῖς λέγεται τὰ τῆς προφητείας διερμηνεύων ἀπόρρητα καὶ διὰ τῶν κεκρυμμένων ἐννοιῶν διεγείρων ἐκεῖνον τὸν νοῦν εἰς ἔρωτα τῶν ἐπηγγεμένων ἀγαθῶν; Помяловскій, Жизнь преподобнаго Паисія, p. 7.

¹⁷ The two saints are mentioned together in the manuscript of a Coptic calendar from Oxyrhynchus: W. E. Crum, 'Fragments of a Church Calendar', *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 37 (1938), pp. 23–32, at 25, 28.

¹⁸ N. de G. Davies, *The Rock Tombs of Deir El Gebrawi*, part 2: *Tomb of Zau and Tombs of the Northern Group* (Archaeological Survey of Egypt, 12; London: Egypt Exploration Fund et al., 1902), p. 46b; Kahle, *Bala'izah*, vol. 1, pp. 22–3; Coquin, 'Paul of Tamma', p. 1924b; Pietersma and Comstock, 'Coptic Texts in the Chester Beatty: Pshoi and Cephalon', p. 69. Of a different opinion from mine are Jean Doresse and Enzo Lucchesi, according to whom there were two distinct monks, Pshoi of Scetis and Pshoi of Jeremias, whose figures were mistakenly assimilated by hagiographers: see J. Doresse, *Les Anciens Monastères coptes de Moyenne-Égypte (du Gebel-et-Teir à Kôm Ishgaou) d'après l'archéologie et l'hagiographie*, vol. 1 ([Ph.D. diss., Université de Paris] Neges Ebrix: Bulletin de l'Institut d'archéologie yverdonnoise, 3; Yverdon-Les-Bains: Institut d'archéologie yverdonnoise, 2000), pp. 102–3, 177–8; Lucchesi, 'Trois nouveaux fragments', p. 223, n. 33.

Jeremiah in Antinoe. Remarkably, the Greek *Life of Pshoi* refers to him simply as 'Paul', without any further specification. Consequently, the chances of recognizing Paul of Tamma behind this figure are basically nil, unless one is familiar with the parallel passages in the Arabic or Gə'əz versions. (In the Syriac translation of the text, he is named 'Abba Pawlē from Ṭamaws' [ܐܒܒܐ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܥܕ ܬܡܐܘܫ].¹⁹ The Syriac ܡܠܬܐ seems to derive from the Arabic طموه, the final ه being simply a corruption of ܫ. In this case, one may infer an Arabic *Vorlage* for the Syriac.)

In the Gə'əz version of the *Life of Pshoi*,²⁰ Paul and Pshoi confess to a certain disciple named Siras (ሰራስ) their wish to be buried together after death. When Pshoi dies on Ḥamlē 8 (= Bābah 8), his disciples bury him in a place called Mukyadu (ሙክሃዱ).²¹ The text mentions that Paul died the day before, on Ḥamlē 7 (= Bābah 7), and was buried in a different location from his companion. Hearing that the two elders had passed away, Siras, whose name appears now as Abba Sirwəs (ኣቡ ሰርወስ) in the manuscript edited by Gérard Colin, intended to transfer the body of Pshoi to a newly built shrine in Antinoe.²² Sailing along the Nile, when the boat with the body of the saint arrived near the place where Paul was buried, it stopped in the middle of the river and could not be moved. Then an anchorite told the monks that the boat would not move unless the body of Paul was also taken and buried in the same place as Pshoi. When they heard this, the monks decided to take the relics of both saints and bury them together in Antinoe.

Unlike the Gə'əz version, the Arabic text says that the disciple who transferred the relics of Pshoi and Paul to Antinoe was called Athanasius.²³ Furthermore, the Greek names him Isidorus.²⁴ While it is true that the original reading is difficult to establish with precision, the Gə'əz version may contain a better text at this point. It is possible that Abba Siras/Sirwəs is the same person as

¹⁹ Bedjan, *Acta martyrum*, vol. 3, p. 589.

²⁰ Colin, *La Version éthiopienne de L'histoire de Bsoy*, pp. 70–1.

²¹ The Arabic version mentions that he was buried in Minyat as-Saqr: Evelyn White, *The History of the Monasteries*, p. 159; Pirone, *Vite*, p. 244 and n. 62. This place has not yet been identified.

²² The Arabic version also refers to Antinoe: Evelyn White, *The History of the Monasteries*, p. 159. To the contrary, the Greek mentions that the relics of the saints were transferred to Pisidia: Помяловскій, Житіє преподобнаго Паисія, p. 60.

²³ Evelyn White, *The History of the Monasteries*, p. 159; Pirone, *Vite*, pp. 244–6.

²⁴ Помяловскій, Житіє преподобнаго Паисія, pp. 59–60.

Apa Sourous (ⲁⲡⲁ ⲥⲟⲩⲣⲟⲩϥ), who appears often in the company of Paul of Tamma and Pshoi in epigraphic sources of Egyptian provenance. Thus, two inscriptions from the Monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit enumerate 'Pshoi of Jeremiah, Paul of Tamma, Sourous', together with Pita, Jeremias, Enoch, Apollo, and others.²⁵ A similar list that includes the three saints appears as well in an inscription from Deir el-Gabrawi,²⁶ in one from Esna,²⁷ and in two others from the Monastery of Apa Jeremias at Saqqara.²⁸ Likewise, a funerary stela invokes 'Apa Apollo, Apa Phib, Apa Anoup, Apa Macarius, Apa Paul of Tamma, Apa Pshoi of Jeremiah, Apa Sourous'.²⁹ In the Arabic version of the *Life of Paul of Tamma*, a certain Sūrus (سورس), or Apa Soures (ⲁⲡⲁ ⲥⲟⲩⲣⲥ) according to the Coptic fragments, is depicted as companion of Apa Apollo.³⁰ It is therefore tempting to speculate on the basis of the aforementioned sources which associate Apa Sourous with Paul of Tamma and Pshoi of Jeremiah that the name Abba Siras/Sirwās in the Ethiopic version of the *Life of Pshoi* is actually a corruption of 'Sourous', possibly thorough an Arabic intermediary in which the vowels had not been noted properly. The fluctuating spelling of the name in Gə'əz only strengthens the hypothesis of a corruption made by a scribe.

Paul of Tamma plays a minor role in the *Encomium on St George* attributed to Theodotus of Ancyra, a hagiographic text attested in Bohairic,³¹ Arabic,³² and Gə'əz.³³ According to the

²⁵ Nos. 448 and 452 in J. Maspero and E. Drioton, *Fouilles exécutées à Baouît* (MIFAO 59; Cairo: Imprimerie de l'IFAO, 1931), pp. 130, 132.

²⁶ Davies, *The Rock Tombs of Deir El Gebrāwi*, vol. 2, p. 46b.

²⁷ S. Sauneron, *Les Ermitages chrétiens du désert d'Esna*, vol. 1 (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'IFAO, 1972), pp. 111.

²⁸ Nos. 203 and 240 in J. E. Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara (1908-9, 1909-10): The Monastery of Apa Jeremias* (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'IFAO, 1912), pp. 59-61, 75-6.

²⁹ U. Bouriant, 'Notice des monuments coptes du Musée de Boulaq', *Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie égyptiennes et assyriennes* 5 (1884), pp. 60-70, at 63.

³⁰ Wadi, 'La recensione lunga', p. 144; Italian translation in Pirone, 'Vita di Anbā Paolo di Tamma', p. 93. For the Coptic text see Amélineau, *Monuments*, vol. 2, p. 761.

³¹ E. A. W. Budge, *The Martyrdom and Miracles of Saint George of Cappadocia* (London, 1888), pp. 83-173 (Bohairic text), 274-331 (English translation); re-edited in I. Balestri and H. Hyvernât, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. 2 (repr.; CSCO 86, *Scriptores coptici*, 6; Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1953), pp. 183-269.

³² G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. 1 (Studi e testi, 118; Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1944), p. 366.

³³ The Ethiopic manuscript tradition of this text is particularly rich because it became part of the official collection of the Ethiopic acts of St George

Bohairic version, the emperor Theodosius II (408–50) erected a basilica dedicated to St George in his twentieth year of his reign. An encomium on St George was read during the consecration of the church, in which it was said that George is more exalted than any other saint. Perplexed by this statement, Theodotus wants to find out why George occupies such a prominent place among the saints. The answer comes during the following night, when he has a heavenly vision. Being carried to heaven, he meets there a winged old man who introduces himself as Paul of Tamma (παῦλε οὐρενταμμα). The monk plays the role of the *angelus interpretis* in the vision of Theodotus, showing him why George is exalted above all the other saints in heaven.³⁴ The details of the story are of little relevance for the purpose of this article. Suffice it to say that according to the *Encomium on St George*, Paul of Tamma was already dead by 428, the twentieth year of the reign of Theodosius II.

Besides the three texts examined above, the Copto-Arabic synaxary provides for Bābah 7, the day when the Coptic church commemorates Paul of Tamma's death, an abridged form of his *Life*.³⁵ The synaxary does not offer an original narrative, but it rather combines some details from the *Life of Paul of Tamma* and the *Life of Pshoi*. Thus, it contains the accounts of the seven deaths of Paul and the story of his burial together with Pshoi. There is, however, one notable difference: according to the synaxary, the bodies of the two saints were not transferred to Antioch, but rather to the Monastery of St Macarius in Scetis.

Given the purely hagiographic character of these writings, it is difficult to ascertain whether the data that can be extracted from them are historically reliable, or whether they rather conceive a

(ⲓⲉⲁ: ⲛⲣⲥⲓⲛ), which was popular. See e.g. the following manuscripts micro-filmed by the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library (Collegeville, MN): EMMML 776, EMMML 1735, EMMML 1877, EMMML 2048, EMMML 2249, EMMML 2536, EMMML 2719, EMMML 2739, EMMML 2861, EMMML 3052, EMMML 3077, EMMML 3417, EMMML 3456, EMMML 3966, EMMML 4031, EMMML 4050, EMMML 4068, EMMML 5330, EMMML 5490, EMMML 5639, EMMML 6048, EMMML 6187, EMMML 6360, EMMML 6368, EMMML 6371.

³⁴ Budge, *The Martyrdom and Miracles of Saint George of Cappadocia*, pp. 167–70 (Bohairic text), 328–30 (English translation).

³⁵ R. Basset, *Le Synaxaire arabe jacobite (redaction copte)*, vol. 1 (Patrologia Orientalis, 1/3; Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1907), pp. 107–8; Arabic text in J. Forget, *Synaxarium Alexandrinum: Pars Prior* (CSCO 47, Scriptores arabici, ser. 3, vol. 18; Beirut, Paris, and Leipzig: E Typographeo catholico, Carolus Poussielgue, and Harrassowitz, 1945), pp. 53–4 (Arabic text); J. Forget, *Synaxarium Alexandrinum* (CSCO 78, Scriptores arabici, 42; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1921), pp. 58–9 (Latin translation).

literary strategy meant to consolidate Paul among other great names of the Egyptian monasticism. Nevertheless, if Paul of Tamma is indeed the author of the writings that have survived under his name,³⁶ and he had indeed connections to Apollo, Phib, Jeremias, and the other monks mentioned not only in his *vita*, but also in the aforementioned epigraphic evidence, then we may probably place his literary activity in the second half of the fourth or early fifth centuries. This possibility seems to be confirmed by a couple of references to the vision of 'the image of God' (ΘΙΚΩΝ ἸΜΠΝΟΥΤΕ) in *De Cella* 24 and 64. This terminology may suggest a mystical theology which came under fire during the anthropomorphite crisis of 399–400.³⁷

FURTHER FRAGMENTS OF CODEX MONB.GU

Orlandi used two Sahidic manuscripts for his edition of Paul of Tamma's writings. The first of them is a parchment codex kept in the collection of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, under the inventory number MS 166. This manuscript is one of the five Sahidic codices discovered in a buried jar around the year 1924 near the pyramids of Giza. Three of them are kept today in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin, while two are in the University

³⁶ I do not find serious reasons to doubt that Paul of Tamma is the author of the ascetical texts that are transmitted under his name. However, Walter Ewing Crum speculated that there were two different characters named Paul of Tamma, the ascetic author and the saint whose *Life* has survived: see his review of W. H. Worrell, *Coptic Texts in the University of Michigan Collection*, in *JTS*, OS 44 (1943), pp. 122–8, at 123, n. 4. Crum based his hypothesis on the fragmentary Sahidic *Life*, but this possibility is now dismissed by new evidence, provided especially by the complete Arabic *Life*, which explicitly mentions that Paul penned a series of ascetical texts.

³⁷ Cf. also *De humilitate* 4–8, where it is said that the monk who has humility will perceive physically the vision of God. According to D. Bumazhnov, *Visio Mystica im Spannungsfeld frühchristlicher Überlieferungen* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum, 52; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), pp. 190–1, Paul expresses here a position radically different from that adopted by the anti-anthropomorphite authors like Evagrius. However, I think it is hard to establish to which side Paul belonged because the passages in his work that seem to pertain to the anthropomorphite crisis are obscure and, consequently, difficult to interpret. In general on the ambiguity of the sources concerning the anthropomorphite crisis, see G. Gould, 'The Image of God and the Anthropomorphite Controversy in Fourth Century Monasticism', in R. J. Daly (ed.), *Origeniana Quinta: Papers of the 5th International Origen Congress, Boston College, 14–18 August 1989* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium, 105; Louvain: Peeters, 1992), pp. 549–57.

of Michigan Library.³⁸ The evidence supplied by the colophons indicates that the manuscripts belonged to the Monastery of Apa Jeremias at Saqqara.³⁹ The codices can be roughly dated to the late sixth century on the basis of some coins discovered together with them, which came from the period of the emperors Justinian, Justin, and, perhaps, Maurice Tiberius.⁴⁰ Michigan MS 166 is the most damaged of the five manuscripts. It contains two works by Paul of Tamma, conventionally designated in Orlandi's edition as *Epistula* (clavis coptica 0248) and *De Cella*. The first of them is a brief collection of ascetical advices in the form of an epistle from a Christian sage to his spiritual son. The second, *De Cella*, will be more thoroughly discussed in this article. The Michigan codex also includes the apocryphal correspondence between Christ and King Abgar, as well as three biblical texts, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Ruth.

The second manuscript used by Orlandi is the White Monastery codex MONB.GU, of which only fragments are preserved, scattered in several collections around the world. Orlandi identified and edited eight folios of this manuscript (nos. 1, 6–11 in the list below). In addition to these, he wrongly attributed to MONB.GU two other folios from Venice (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Or. 192, fols. 99–100),⁴¹ editing them among Paul of Tamma's writings as *Opus sine titulo*. About a decade later, Enzo Lucchesi identified the fragments in question as belonging to a different White Monastery manuscript, which contained the

³⁸ On the discovery and acquisition of the five codices see H. Thompson, *The Coptic Version of the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles in the Sahidic Dialect* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932), pp. ix–xx; L. A. Shier, 'Old Testament Texts on Vellum', in W. Worrell, *Coptic Texts in the University of Michigan Collection* (Ann Arbor and London: University of Michigan Press, Humphrey Milford, and Oxford University Press, 1942), pp. 23–167, at 27–32; they are described in C. T. Lamacraft, 'Early Book-Bindings from a Coptic Monastery', *The Library: Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 4th ser. 20 (1939–40), pp. 214–33.

³⁹ On the Monastery of Apa Jeremias at Saqqara see Quibell, *Excavations at Saqqara (1908–9, 1909–10): The Monastery of Apa Jeremias*; C. Wietheger, *Das Jeremias-Kloster zu Saqqara unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Inschriften* (Arbeiten zum spätantiken und koptischen Ägypten, 1; Altenberge: Oros-Verlag, 1992).

⁴⁰ Thompson, *The Coptic Version of the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline Epistles*, p. x. The coins range between the years 527 and 602.

⁴¹ *Editio princeps* in G. L. Mingarelli, *Aegyptiorum codicum reliquiae Venetiis in Bibliotheca Naniana asservatae* (Bologna: Typis Laelii a Vulpe, 1785), pp. 328–37 (= no. 15).

Sermo asceticus of Stephen of Thebes (CPG 8240).⁴² In an article published in 2006 in *Mélanges Wolf-Peter Funk*,⁴³ Lucchesi added to codex MONB.GU, and to the works of Paul of Tamma, seven new fragments (nos. 3, 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15 in the list below). To the leaves of this codex identified by Orlandi and Lucchesi can now be added at least four others (nos. 2, 16, 17, 18). In the current state of documentation, we have knowledge of the following *membra disjecta* of MONB.GU:

1. Cairo, Coptic Museum 9261 (paginated 95–6)⁴⁴
2. Cairo, Coptic Museum 9290 (paginated 115–16)⁴⁵
3. Cairo, IFAO no. 198 (paginated 123–4)⁴⁶
4. Vienna, K 9795 (paginated 125–6); unpublished⁴⁷
5. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 158²⁶ (paginated 145–6)
- 6–11. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF),
Copte 129¹³, fols. 47–52 (paginated 147–58)
12. Cambridge, University Library, 1699 N (paginated 191–2); unpublished⁴⁸
13. Moscow, Pushkin Museum, I.1.b.655 (paginated 201–2)⁴⁹

⁴² For the identification of the fragments see E. Lucchesi, 'Une version copte du *Sermo asceticus* d'Étienne le Thébain', *Analecta Bollandiana* 115 (1997), p. 252. The possibility that the Venice fragments belonged in fact to another codex had already been raised by Orlandi himself in *Paolo di Tamma*, p. 8. Enzo Lucchesi expressed his doubts concerning the codicological ascription to MONB.GU earlier in 'À propos d'une édition récente des œuvres de Paul de Tamma', *Studia Orientalia Christiana: Collectanea* 28 (1995), pp. 161–6.

⁴³ E. Lucchesi, 'Entretiens d'Apa Paul sur le discernement', in L. Painchaud and P.-H. Poirier (eds.), *Coptica-Gnostica-Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk* (Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section 'Études', 7; Québec, Louvain, and Paris: Les Presses de l'Université Laval and Peeters, 2006), pp. 529–34.

⁴⁴ *Editio princeps* in H. Munier, *Manuscripts coptes* (Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, nos. 9201–9304; Cairo: Imprimerie de l'IFAO, 1916), pp. 87–9 and pl. xvii.

⁴⁵ Edited without identification in Munier, *Manuscripts coptes*, pp. 157–9.

⁴⁶ Description in C. Louis, *Catalogue raisonné des manuscrits littéraires coptes conservés à l'IFAO du Caire: Contribution à la reconstitution de la bibliothèque du Monastère Blanc* (Ph.D. diss.; École Pratique des Hautes Études, Section des Sciences Religieuses, Paris, 2005), pp. 443–5 (= no. 101).

⁴⁷ Identified in Lucchesi, 'Entretiens d'Apa Paul', p. 531.

⁴⁸ Identified *ibid.*

⁴⁹ The Moscow fragment was edited and translated in A. I. Elanskaya, *Coptic Literary Texts of the Pushkin State Fine Arts Museum in Moscow* (Studia

Unplaced fragments:

14. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, K 9792 (pagination lost); unpublished⁵⁰
15. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, K 9793 (pagination lost); unpublished⁵¹
16. Paris, BnF, Copte 131⁵, fol. 120 (pagination lost); unpublished
17. Paris, BnF, Copte 131⁶, fol. 3 (pagination lost); unpublished
18. Strasbourg, University Library, K 23 (pagination lost); unpublished

Of the newly identified leaves, while Coptic Museum 9290, which is paginated 115–16, must be placed between Coptic Museum 9261 (paginated 95–6) and IFAO no. 198 (paginated 123–4), the position of the folios lacking page numbers in the original manuscript is difficult to establish. Given that, with the exception of *De Cella* (also found in the Michigan codex) and a small portion of *De Humilitate* (see below), the writings of Paul of Tamma in MONB.GU are attested only in this codex, the attribution of the aforementioned fragments is based primarily on their palaeographical features. Nevertheless, in addition to the palaeographical argument, the fragments without pagination can be attributed to Paul also on thematic and stylistic grounds. For example, BnF Copte 131⁵, fol. 120^r, col. B, l. 6 contains the peculiar vocative ω πῆβιην ('O wretched one'), which is a common form of address employed by Paul of Tamma.⁵² Similarly, in BnF Copte 131⁵, fol. 120^r, col. B, ll. 9, 24 and BnF Copte 131⁶, fol. 3^r, col. A, l. 4 the scriptural quotations are introduced by the formula

Aegyptiaca, 13; Budapest: Loránd Eötvös University, 1991), pp. 106–11, 250–1 and pl. xxx; Elanskaya, *The Literary Coptic Manuscripts in the A. S. Pushkin State Fine Arts Museum in Moscow* (Supplements to *Vigiliae Christianae*, 18; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1994), pp. 333–8 and pl. cxxv–cxxvi. Identified in Lucchesi, 'Entretiens d'Apa Paul', p. 531.

⁵⁰ Identified in Lucchesi, 'Entretiens d'Apa Paul', p. 531.

⁵¹ Identified *ibid.* On the upper left corner of the verso of this fragment is still visible the first digit (P = 100) of a number formed of at least two digits.

⁵² Cf. the concordance in Orlandi, *Paolo di Tamma*, p. 157, s.v. πῆβιην (9 occurrences).

'it is written' (ϣϥϣ), which has numerous occurrences in the other fragments of Paul's works.⁵³

THE EXTENT OF PAUL'S *ASCETICON*

The Moscow leaf of MONB.GU contains a colophon which mentions that the transcription of the manuscript was completed in the year 696 Era of the Martyrs (= 979–80 CE).⁵⁴ As Lucchesi has remarked, Paul of Tamma's writings began on page 95 of MONB.GU (= Coptic Museum 9261^r).⁵⁵ A decorated title at the top of the first column of this page reads: 'Sayings (ⲉⲛⲟⲩⲁⲩⲉ) of our beloved father Apa Paul on discernment (ⲉⲃⲁⲣⲓⲥⲓⲥ). In peace, Amen.' These lines obviously represent the superscription of the entire literary corpus of Paul of Tamma. Apparently, his writings filled the rest of the codex to page 201 (Moscow I.1.b.655^r). Therefore, Paul's work stands out as an extensive corpus of early ascetical texts which covered over one hundred manuscript pages, albeit most of it now lost. No fragment has been identified until now from the leaves preceding page 95, which means that we do not know what other texts were included in MONB.GU beside Paul of Tamma's *Asceticon*. Not least because of the large number of newly identified fragments of this codex, the works of Paul of Tamma obviously deserve a fresh edition.⁵⁶

Together the two manuscripts used by Orlandi contain the following writings of Paul of Tamma: *Epistula*, *De Cella*, *De paupertate* (clavis coptica 0250), and *De humilitate* (clavis coptica 0252).⁵⁷ It needs to be emphasized that, while the first two titles are supported by the subscriptions of the respective texts in the manuscripts, the last two have been coined by Orlandi on the basis of their content. In his edition, he mentioned yet another writing, entitling it *De iudicio*.⁵⁸ According to Orlandi, all that remained of this work is the *subscriptio* which survived on the recto of Coptic Museum 9261, the first fragment of Paul's writings in

⁵³ Cf. the concordance in Orlandi, *Paolo di Tamma*, pp. 178–9, s.v. ϣϥ (13 occurrences). The expression occurs often also in the fragments not published by Orlandi and, therefore, not included in his concordance.

⁵⁴ A. van Lantschoot, *Recueil des colophons des manuscrits chrétiens d'Égypte* (Bibliothèque du Muséon, 1; Leuven: J.-B. Ista, 1929), pp. 94–6 (= no. 58).

⁵⁵ Lucchesi, 'Entretiens d'Apa Paul', p. 530.

⁵⁶ I am hoping to edit all available fragments of Paul of Tamma's writings in the near future.

⁵⁷ It is possible that the unplaced fragments of MONB.GU belong to other texts of Paul of Tamma.

⁵⁸ Orlandi, *Paolo di Tamma*, pp. 13–14. In the clavis coptica *De iudicio* erroneously features as an independent work, having the number 0249.

MONB.GU. However, as I have pointed out in the previous paragraph, this is not the title of an individual work which filled the previous pages, but rather the superscription of the *Asceticon* of Paul of Tamma. Furthermore, the Greco-Coptic word διακρίσις must definitely not be translated 'final judgement', as Leslie MacCoull proposed.⁵⁹ The term διακρίσις belongs to the ascetic vocabulary of the desert fathers, being one of the principal themes of ascetic literature. Διακρίσις is an indispensable virtue in the desert, referring, among other things, to the capacity of the recluse to discern between good and evil thoughts. For example, the tenth book of the systematic collection of the *Apophthegmata Patrum* (CPG 5562) treats precisely this subject and bears the same title as Paul's literary corpus, Περὶ διακρίσεως.

At the end of the *Life of Paul of Tamma*, Paul's secretary, Ezekiel, briefly talks about the writings of his master. The text provides at this point a brief description of Paul of Tamma's works, including what seem to be two quotations from his texts:

وإني جلست بجانبه. وكتب لأجل الجلوس في القلاية. وكتب من أجل الفكر الكثير، الذي يجي على الإنسان، الذي هو فكر الزنا، الذي لقطة الإيمان، وكتب من أجل النفس والخروج، والنجس الذي للزنا، هذا الذي يجعل الروح القدس خارجاً عن النفس. وكتب أيضاً لأجل خروج الريف، لبيع شئل البذر، يقول: 'اهتم، واحرس عينيك، واهتم واحرس أفكارك واحرس جسدك، لا تترك العدو يسرق كنزك'. وكتب أيضاً: 'لا تجلس مع أحد يكون كثير الكلام البتة'.

I sat next to him, and he wrote about sitting in the cell. He wrote also about a multitude of thoughts that assail the human being, that is, the thought of fornication because of the weakness of faith; he wrote also on inferiority and mediocrity or impurity, which is (the result) of fornication, the one that keeps the Holy Spirit out of the person; he also wrote about how to go to the countryside to sell the work of the hands. He says: 'Pay attention to control and guard your eyes, thoughts, and all your body, do not let your enemy steal your treasure.' He also wrote: 'Do not stay at all with the one who talks a lot.'⁶⁰

It is fairly certain that the first work mentioned is *De Cella*. As to the other titles, it is difficult to speculate to which texts they refer. The two quotations supplied by Ezekiel cannot be identified among the surviving portions of Paul of Tamma's writings, albeit it seems safe to assume their authenticity as they are in the same apodictic style of the rest of his works.

⁵⁹ L. S. B. MacCoull, 'Paul of Tamma and the Monastic Priesthood', *Vigiliae Christianae* 53 (1999), pp. 316–9.

⁶⁰ Arabic text in Wadi, 'La recensione lunga', p. 170–71; Italian translation in Pirone, 'Vita di Anbā Paolo di Tamma', p. 112. The fragment published by Pezin, 'Nouveau fragment copte concernant Paul de Tamma', provides a partly parallel list of Paul's writings.

An extract from Paul of Tamma features in a Sahidic fragment from a miniature codex, which is housed at the Montserrat Abbey near Barcelona under the inventory number P. Monts. Roca inv. no. 735.⁶¹ This fragment contains two texts. While the second one is headed ‘The commandments of our beloved Father Apa Anoup (?) of ...’,⁶² the first is in fact a portion of Paul of Tamma’s *De Humilitate* 23–5:

MONB.GU, p. 147⁶³

For it is written: ‘My son, do not give your soul the desire that pleases her’ (Sirach 18:31), so that the spirits of deceit do not turn their path towards you. And do not follow your desires, but restrain from the things you desire (Sirach 18:31). And the heavenly Jerusalem will be for you a holy city and no foreigner will walk in it. And it will happen in that day that the mountains will pour out sweetness and the hills will pour out milk, and all the rivers of Judah will produce much water, and a spring will come forth from the house of the Lord and it will give drink to the torrents of thorns. Egypt will be a destruction, which are your enemies, and the Lord will dwell in Sion (Joel 3:17–21). O wretched one, do not let your bowels master you and you shall become the son of the Most High, inherit the kingdom and its goods, and reign with Christ forever.

P. Monts. Roca inv. no. 735r⁶⁴

‘... the desire that pleases her’ (Sirach 18:31), so that the spirits of deceit do not lead their path towards you. And it is written again: ‘Do not follow your desires, (but) restrain from the things you desire’ (Sirach 18:31). And again: ‘My son, do not let your bowels master you and you shall become the son of the Most High and inherit the goods of the kingdom of Christ, which remains forever and ever.’

⁶¹ S. Torallas Tovar, ‘A New Sahidic Coptic Fragment: *Sortes Sanctorum* or *Apophthegmata Patrum*’, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 17 (2015), pp. 153–64.

⁶² Sofia Torallas Tovar proposes the reading ‘Anoup of Nerte’, which is indeed possible but not certain since some of the letters are not clear enough on the photos available. The toponym ‘Nerte’ is not attested elsewhere.

⁶³ My translation of the Coptic text in Orlandi, *Paolo di Tamma*, p. 130.

⁶⁴ My translation of the Coptic text in Torallas Tovar, ‘A New Sahidic Coptic Fragment’, p. 157.

A significant difference between the two texts is the extensive quotation from Joel 3:17–21, which the Montserrat fragment omits. Moreover, *De humilitate* continues with other sayings in the White Monastery manuscript MONB.GU, while the Montserrat fragment stops here.

A NEW MINIATURE MANUSCRIPT OF *DE CELLA*

As has already been pointed out, *De Cella* is the only work of Paul of Tamma that is known to survive both in Michigan MS 166 and in the White Monastery codex MONB.GU. Yet a third manuscript of the same work, previously unknown, is currently kept in the British Library in London. All that remains from it are four small-size parchment folios, which feature under the accession number Or. 5438(1) in Walter Ewing Crum's catalogue of the Coptic manuscripts in the British Museum.⁶⁵ It seems that when the manuscript collections of the British Museum were transferred to the newly founded British Library, the fragments of *De Cella* received a new inventory number. In the copy of Crum's catalogue available on the shelves of the reading room of Asia, Pacific and Africa Collections, someone indicated in a note written in pencil on the margin of the page that the new accession number of the fragments in question is Or. 4918(1). An autoptic examination of the material in the British Library confirmed that this is indeed the case.

The London manuscript measures about 7 cm in height by 6.5 cm in breadth. The pages contain fourteen lines of text arranged in a single column written in a minuscule hand. While one of the other codices of *De Cella*, Michigan MS 166, is a pocket book, measuring c.9.5 × 8 cm, the manuscript to which the folios in the British Library originally belonged falls into the category of miniature codices.⁶⁶ There is a certain confusion as regards the

⁶⁵ W. E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: British Museum, 1905), pp. 117b–118b (= no. 264).

⁶⁶ I agree with L. W. Bondy, *Miniature Books: Their History from the Beginnings to the Present Day* (London: Sheppard Press, 1981), p. 1, that a miniature book is smaller than 3 inches (= 7.3 cm) in height and breadth. For his part, E. G. Turner, *The Typology of the Early Codex* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), pp. 22, 29–30, defines the miniature codex as having a breadth of less than 10 cm.

succession of the leaves in Crum's catalogue. The right order of the folios is as follows (the references to *De Cella* are according to Orlandi's division of the text into paragraphs):

- fol. 1 = Crum fol. 2 (*De Cella* 6–10a)
- fol. 2 = Crum fol. 3 (*De Cella* 17b–22a)
- fol. 3 = Crum fol. 1 (*De Cella* 53b–59a)
- fol. 4 = Crum fol. 4 (*De Cella* 59b–64a)

A few codicological remarks are in order here. The real folios 1 and 2, on the one hand, and the real folios 3 and 4, on the other, form two separate bifolios. Folios 3–4 offer a running text, indicating that they were the innermost bifolio of a quire. As on the recto of folio 3 the page number κα (= 21) is visible, we may infer that folios 3–4 were originally paginated 21–4.

The small format of the newly identified fragments and their palaeographical aspect are similar to those of the codex of *De Cella* which belonged to the Monastery of Jeremias, kept today in the Michigan collection. Based on their close resemblance, the new manuscript of *De Cella* can tentatively be dated to the same period, that is, to the late sixth century.

The fact that Paul of Tamma's writings appear in three small-format codices is not without some relevance. First of all, such artefacts were ideal *vademecums* for solitary monks. What is more, it is possible that ascetical texts like those of Paul were inscribed in small-format manuscripts because, as they are formed of brief *sententiae*, they could be conveniently shortened when the lack of space required, without sacrificing the coherence of the writing. Actually, the copy of *De Cella* in codex Michigan MS 166 is shorter than the one in MONB.GU. It is likely that the brief version has a connection to the format of the Michigan manuscript, whose small dimensions made the scribe skip the final part of the text, thus leaving space for other writings to be accommodated in the same codex.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ The shorter version of *De Cella* comprises 102 paragraphs according to Orlandi's division, this number including also the final doxology and the *subscriptio* of the text, whereas the longer version has 126 paragraphs.

In the first section of this article I have shown that the figure of Paul of Tamma is difficult to contextualize historically because of the scantiness of the sources. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that the hagiographic account of Paul's life ensured for him an everlasting fame among Coptic Christians. To the contrary, he is almost completely absent from the Greek and Latin sources pertaining to Egyptian monasticism. The *Life of Pshoi*, which seems to be the only Greek writing that mentions him, laconically calls him 'Paul'. As a consequence, Paul of Tamma's memory faded in the Byzantine world, despite the fact that Pshoi's *vita* had a relatively wide diffusion in Greek monasteries.⁶⁸ Paul's absence from the Greek and Latin literature could be explained by the fact that he may have written in Coptic, rendering his works unavailable to an audience unfamiliar with the vernacular language of Egypt.⁶⁹

Philippe Luisier has examined the biblical quotations in *De Cella* and concluded that they conform to the Sahidic version of the Bible. However, he has adroitly remarked that this argument does not constitute a decisive proof that the text was composed in Coptic, because the translators could easily adjust the quotations from the Bible according to the version with which they were familiar.⁷⁰ On the other hand, Paul of Tamma's *De Humilitate* features a quotation from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (CANT 211. III), which would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to identify by an ancient translator or scribe. We have good evidence that, because of its ascetic tendency, this early Christian text was popular reading among the Egyptian monks, being attested also in two papyrus manuscripts written in the Lycopolitan dialect of Coptic.⁷¹ Remarkably, the quotation in *De Humilitate*

⁶⁸ The Pinakes database (<http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr>) allows the identification of twelve codices containing the Greek *Life of Pshoi*, which range from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries (accessed July 2016).

⁶⁹ See Luisier, 'Paul de Tamma', p. 267, for a possible philological argument that the original language of Paul's writings is Coptic.

⁷⁰ Luisier, 'Paul de Tamma', p. 267.

⁷¹ On the cult of Thecla and the reception of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* in Egyptian Christianity, see S. J. Davis, *The Cult of St Thecla: A Tradition of Women's Piety in Late Antiquity* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 83–194.

corresponds exactly to the version of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* extant in Coptic:

<i>De Humilitate</i> 10 ⁷²	<i>Acts of Paul and Thecla</i> 6 (Lycopolitan) ⁷³	<i>Acts of Paul and Thecla</i> 6 (Greek) ⁷⁴
ϣⲕⲉⲣ ⲉⲁⲣ ϫⲉ ⲛⲁⲓⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲛⲛⲉⲥⲟⲩⲁ ⲛⲛⲓⲙⲡⲁⲣⲑⲉⲛⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲡⲃⲩⲕⲏ ⲛⲡⲉⲩⲧⲃⲃⲟ ⲛⲁⲣⲉ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲁⲛ.	ⲛⲉⲉⲓⲁⲧⲟⲩ ⲛⲛⲓⲥⲓⲱⲙⲁ ⲛⲛⲓⲙⲡⲁⲣⲑⲉⲛⲟⲥ ϫⲉ ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲣⲉⲛⲉⲩ ⲛⲡⲓⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲃⲉⲕⲉ ⲛⲡⲉⲩⲧⲟⲩⲃⲟ ⲛⲁⲣⲁⲉⲓⲉ ⲁⲃⲁⲗ ⲉⲛ.	Μακάρια τὰ σώματα τῶν παρθένων, ὅτι αὐτὰ εὐαρεστήσουσιν τῷ θεῷ καὶ οὐκ ἀπολέσουσιν τὸν μισθὸν τῆς ἀγνεΐας αὐτῶν.
For it is written: 'Blessed are the bodies of the virgins for they will not lose the wage of their purity.	Blessed are the bodies of the virgins for they will be pleas- ing to God and they will not lose the wage of their purity.	Blessed are the bodies of the virgins for they will be pleas- ing to God and they will not lose the wage of their purity.

The similarity of the Sahidic and Lycopolitan cannot be the result of a mere coincidence, but it rather indicates that Paul of Tamma used here the Coptic text of the *Acts of Paul*, albeit he eliminated a phrase in the middle of the sentence he quoted. The close parallel suggests that he knew the *Acts of Paul* either according to the Lycopolitan version that has survived or, more likely, according to a lost Sahidic version which must be the *Vorlage* of the Lycopolitan. Be that as it may, this quotation makes us believe that the original language of *De Humilitate* was Coptic.

⁷² Orlandi, *Paolo di Tamma*, p. 128.

⁷³ C. Schmidt, *Acta Pauli aus der Heidelberger koptischen Papyrushandschrift Nr. 1* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1904), p. *6.

⁷⁴ L. Vouaux, *Les Actes de Paul et ses Lettres apocryphes: Introduction, textes, traduction et commentaire* (Documents pour servir à l'étude des origines chrétiennes. Les apocryphes du Nouveau Testament; Paris: Librairie Letourzey et Ané, 1913), p. 158.

It has often been suggested that Paul of Tamma belonged to late fourth- or early fifth-century Middle Egyptian monasticism.⁷⁵ This hypothesis is based mainly on the data that can be gleaned from the *Life* attributed to Ezekiel, which affirms that Paul lived as a hermit in Middle Egypt. Moreover, as we have seen, the *vita* connects Paul with Aphu, Apollo of Bawit, Phib, and Anoup, who were all important Middle Egyptian monastic figures. Although we must be careful not to infer too much from the hagiographic story attributed to Ezekiel, which probably post-dates the literary corpus that has survived under Paul of Tamma's name, there is no strong argument to deny this geographical contextualization.

While accepting that Paul was a Middle Egyptian monk, David Brakke argued along different lines.⁷⁶ Brakke believes that, unlike Anthony, for whom church and orthodoxy constituted two major vectors of spirituality, for Paul of Tamma this pair was less relevant. What really matters for Paul is the fulfilment of the self through a complete withdrawal from the world and, implicitly, from the community of believers. Brakke remarked that, although Paul copiously quoted from the Bible, he also referred no fewer than three times in the surviving portions of his writings to non-canonical apocryphal texts: the *Visio Pauli* (CANT 325), the *Acts of Andrew and Matthias* (CANT 236), and the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (CANT 211.III).⁷⁷ To these, one should add the *Physiologus* (CPG 3766), whose chapter about the lion was apparently known to Paul, as Luisier indicated.⁷⁸ Such reading may imply that our author was probably not within the episcopal orbit

⁷⁵ See especially Doresse, *Les Anciens Monastères coptes*, vol. 1, pp. 93–104; Orlandi, *Paolo di Tamma*, pp. 10–13; Luisier, 'Paul de Tamma', pp. 268–9.

⁷⁶ D. Brakke, 'The Making of Monastic Demonology: Three Ascetic Teachers on Withdrawal and Resistance', *Church History* 70 (2001), pp. 19–48, at 41–6.

⁷⁷ The quotation from the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 6 in *De Humilitate* 10 was first identified by Brakke, 'The Making of Monastic Demonology', p. 41. See also D. Bumazhnov, 'Reigentanz der zwölf Tugenden in der Seele eines Demütigen: Eine Plotinreminiszenz bei dem koptischen Mönch Paulus von Tamma? Zum Problem der Traditionszuordnungen im frühen ägyptischen Mönchtum', in D. Bumazhnov (ed.), *Christliches Ägypten in der spätantiken Zeit: Akten der 2. Tübinger Tagung zum Christlichen Orient (7.–8. Dezember 2007)* (Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum, 79; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), pp. 93–111, at 101, n. 38.

⁷⁸ See *De Cella* 7, Luisier, 'Paul de Tamma', p. 268.

established by Athanasius, albeit this does not necessarily mean that he was heterodox.⁷⁹

Analysing Paul of Tamma's works in the context of early Egyptian ascetic literature, Mark Sheridan has reached a different conclusion concerning his historical contextualization.⁸⁰ Sheridan has remarked that Paul's interest in the interior life and ascetic vocabulary are similar to those found in the monastic sources connected to Lower Egypt, but also in the writings of Pachomius and his disciples. Finally, Paul sometimes develops allegorical interpretations of the Scriptures, which betrays his familiarity with the Alexandrian exegetical school. Leslie MacCoull and Dmitrij Bumazhnov have also defended the influence of the Hellenistic, notably Alexandrian, tradition upon the work of Paul of Tamma.⁸¹

PAUL OF TAMMA'S *DE CELLA* AND OTHER EGYPTIAN WRITINGS ON THE MONASTIC CELL

Although we have no serious reasons to doubt Paul's association with Middle Egyptian monasticism, there is good reason to believe that he was familiar with the literature produced in the spiritual centres of Lower Egypt, that is, Nitria, Scetis, and Kellia. This is suggested by some clear parallels between *De Cella* and other Egyptian literary documents that underline the importance of the cell in ascetic praxis. I shall start with a description of the contents of *De Cella* and then point out some of the literary contacts that connect it to other Lower Egyptian ascetic writings.

While *De Cella* is summarized in the subscription of the Michigan manuscript as 'the letter of Apa Paul of Tamma on the cell' (ἐπιστολὴ ἡ ἀπὸ παύλου πρὸς τὰ ἐν τῇ κυττῷ), the title in

⁷⁹ The idea that Paul of Tamma avoided being integrated into the ecclesiastical system established by Athanasius had already been suggested by MacCoull, 'Paul of Tamma'.

⁸⁰ M. Sheridan, 'The Development of the Interior Life in Certain Early Monastic Writings in Egypt', in M. Starowieyski (ed.), *The Spirituality of Ancient Monasticism: Acts of the International Colloquium Cracow-Tyniec, 16–19.11.1994* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Benedyktynów, 1995), pp. 91–104; reprinted in Sheridan, *From Nile to the Rhone and Beyond: Studies in Early Monastic Literature and Scriptural Interpretation* (Studia Anselmiana, 156; Analecta monastica, 12; Rome: Pontificio Ateneo di S. Anselmo, 2012), pp. 21–30, at 24–30; Sheridan, 'Il mondo spirituale e intellettuale del primo monachesimo egiziano', in A. Camplani (ed.), *L'Egitto cristiano: Aspetti e problemi in età tardo-antica* (Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum, 56; Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1997), pp. 177–216, at 201–7.

⁸¹ MacCoull, 'Paul of Tamma'; Bumazhnov, 'Reigentanz der zwölf Tugenden'.

MONB.GU says that it is a rule (οὐεντολὴ ἡτέαπα παύλε εἶναι τρι, 'rule of Apa Paul on the cell'). Given the general unreliability of the titles and authorships in the manuscripts containing ascetic writings, this apparent discrepancy is not surprising. Like the other writings of Paul of Tamma, *De Cella* contains spiritual advice for novices and truths about Christian moral life, being written in the gnomic style which is proper to collections of wise sayings. This was a well-established genre in monastic literature, which culminated in the treatises of Evagrius of Pontus. One can argue that Christian gnomic literature represents an adaptation, written in the mould of the biblical sapiential books, of the pagan collections of sayings of the philosophers. The resemblance goes so far that, for example, some of the maxims attributed to Evagrius (CPG 2443–2445) are simply taken from certain non-Christian collections like the sayings of Clitarchus and the *Sententiae Pythagoreorum*.⁸² In this regard, it is nevertheless interesting that Paul of Tamma often calls the Christian ascetic 'the sage' (πασβε) (*De Cella* 1, 38, 39, 44, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 68, 73, 75, 76, 77).

As Paul's writings are formed of brief moral sentences, they do not follow a precise line of argument, nor do they aim to discuss thoroughly a theme, but rather to provide truths using only a few words. *De Cella* is formed of a series of maxims for ascetics who are struggling in their cell against the physical and mental passions. For Paul of Tamma, the cell is more than a habitat, it is foremost a fortress that protects the ascetic in the battle against the demons, who 'fight naked against man in the desert' (*De Cella* 60), probably a reference to the evil spirits that often appear to the monks as naked women in monastic literature.⁸³ Moreover, the cell becomes an active part of this struggle. A monk who knows the correct physical posture in the cell will transform it into an ally, 'If you find the way to stay in the cell, being safe from vain glory and estranged from pride, you will be safe from all these and every moment strong in the battle' (*De Cella* 118). Thus, the cell will carry the monk on the waters of the Acherusian lake, to the church of the firstborn, who are written in heaven (*De Cella* 2). Here it is interesting to note the reference to

⁸² A. Elter, *Gnomica*, vol. 1: *Sexti Pythagorici, Clitarchi, Evagrii Pontici sententiae* (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1892).

⁸³ On this theme, see L. Regnault, *La Vie quotidienne des Pères du desert en Égypte au IV^e siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1990), pp. 39–43; D. Brakke, *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 182–212.

the Acherusian lake, which seems to derive from an apocryphal source, probably the *Apocalypse of Peter* (CANT 317) or the *Visio Pauli*.⁸⁴ Although it protects the monk from the attacks of the demons, the cell is not always completely safe because the enemies can creep inside it by planting all sorts of evil thoughts in the mind of the ascetic. The demons 'have no pity in them for the man who sits alone quietly in the cell', says Paul (*De Cella* 61).

One can observe in *De Cella* an interiorization of the cell, a transition from mere topography to a mystical approach to the monastic residence. For example, this spiritual understanding of the habitat is apparent in a passage which is fragmentary in the edition of Orlandi but well preserved in the newly identified London manuscript. Paul exhorts the monk to be humble, because in this way 'your cell will become to you a trustworthy spring and a pure river, and you will become a living sea' (*De Cella* 18). The cell is invested with a mystical dimension, being the numinous place *par excellence*: the divine mysteries are revealed (*De Cella* 55, 86) and the monk reaches the knowledge of God (*De Cella* 34) inside it. Elsewhere in *De Cella*, Paul compares allegorically the cell to the temple of God. The monk that sits in it represents the altar, the burning incense (*De Cella* 52–3), the golden jar, the rod of Aaron, and the tables of the covenant (*De Cella* 68). A similar metaphor is employed by Stephen of Thebes, who compares the monk seated in the cell with a wise steersman who guides a boat.⁸⁵ There is yet another interesting literary connection between Paul of Tamma and Stephen of Thebes: they seem to be the only authors who use the peculiar expression 'grace of the cell' (ἡμοῦς ἡτρί/χάρισμα τοῦ κελλίου).⁸⁶ Once acquired, the monk must avoid losing the grace of the cell, which is the most significant of his possessions (*De Cella* 15, 62, 88).

Like the desert fathers and mothers of the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, Paul of Tamma insists that the anchorites should not leave their cell, or at least not if they are not ready to resist the dangers of the outside world and the attacks of the demons. Be careful, he says, 'that the words of people should not drag you back from the cell' (*De Cella* 93), and again, 'Do not leave your

⁸⁴ On *De Cella* 2 and other apocalyptic sources about the Acherousian lake, see K. P. Copeland, 'Sinners and Post-Mortem "Baptism" in the Acherusian Lake', in J. N. Bremmer and I. Czachesz (eds.), *Apocalypse of Peter* (Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha, 7; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), pp. 91–107, at 103–4.

⁸⁵ E. des Places, 'Le "Discours ascétique" d'Étienne de Thèbes: Texte grec inédit et traduction', *Le Muséon* 82 (1969), pp. 35–59, at 40–1.

⁸⁶ See Luisier, 'Paul de Tamma', p. 269.

cell' (*De Cella* 51). The cell-oriented praxis which transpires in Paul of Tamma's writings, particularly in *De Cella*, is radically different from what we find in the literature of the coenobitic communities. Thus, the Egyptian monastic authors of coenobitic extraction, like the Pachomian writers or Shenoute, are more interested in keeping together large communities of monks by enforcing the moral dimension of the *koinonia*. It should be underlined that, although it was not unusual for anchorites to live in isolated cells all over the Egyptian wasteland and, at least theoretically, some of them could have authored literary texts, the cell-focused literature seems to be a peculiar and well-defined literary genre that appeared in the semi-anchoritic settlements of Lower Egypt. From a literary point of view, the best points of comparison with Paul of Tamma's writings will be found in the literature of the monastic foci that emerged in the western part of the Nile Delta.

For example, the expression that Paul often uses, 'while you are sitting in your cell', accompanied by a wise moral saying, is typical of the ascetic literature connected to Scetis, Nitria, and Kellia. In this kind of literature, a daily physical activity of the monks was transformed into a literary theme.⁸⁷ We often encounter it in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, Evagrius, Isaiah of Scetis's *Logoi* (CPG 5555), and the *Sermo asceticus* of Stephen of Thebes.⁸⁸ Compare the following examples,

The thoughts of the sage who sits in his cell are verdicts (Paul of Tamma, *De Cella* 38)

A sage sitting in his cell will be hidden from the evils that are coming (Paul of Tamma, *De Cella* 49)

You shall take for yourself the crown of joy from God for your toils while you are sitting in your cell (Paul of Tamma, *De Cella* 106)

While you are sitting in your cell, invoke God in order to be granted the grace of the cell, for great is the grace of the cell (Stephen of Thebes, *Sermo asceticus* 46)⁸⁹

⁸⁷ This theme is explored in detail by F. Dodel, *Sitzen der Wüstenväter: Eine Untersuchung anhand der Apophthegmata Patrum* (Paradosis: Beiträge zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur und Theologie, 42; Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1997).

⁸⁸ I have argued elsewhere that Stephen of Thebes must be integrated into the context of Lower Egyptian monasticism; see A. Suci, 'Revisiting the Literary Dossier of Stephen of Thebes: With Preliminary Editions of the Greek Redactions of the Ascetic *Commandments*', *Adamantius* 21 (2015), pp. 301–25.

⁸⁹ Des Places, 'Le "Discours ascétique" d'Étienne de Thèbes', p. 42.

While you are sitting in your cell, withdraw your mind and remember the day of your death, and you will see that your body is decaying (Evagrius, *Rerum monachalium rationes*; CPG 2441)⁹⁰

While you are sitting in your cell, take care constantly of these three things: the work of your hand, meditation, and prayer (Isaiah of Scetis, Greek *Logos IX*)⁹¹

As far as our evidence goes, the literary theme of the symbiosis between the monk and the cell was used for the first time in the writings connected with the semi-anchoritic communities from Scetis, Nitria, and Kellia.⁹² From there, this literary *topos* was taken over by John Climacus, who systemized the previous Egyptian ascetic teachings, and from him it passed to the hesychast monks.⁹³ The centrality of the cell in ascetic praxis is prominent in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*. The advice given by Abba Moses to a novice is paradigmatic in this regard: 'Remain seated in your cell and your cell will teach you everything' (Moses 6).⁹⁴ For his part, Paul of Tamma develops his spiritual teaching about

⁹⁰ R. E. Sinkewicz, *Evagrius of Pontus: The Greek Ascetic Corpus* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 9.

⁹¹ R. Dragnet, *Les Cinq recensions de l'Ascéticon syriaque d'Abba Isaïe*, vol. 1: *Introduction au problème isaïen. Version des logoi I–XIII avec des parallèles grecs et latins* (CSCO 293, Scriptores Syri, 122; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1968), p. 21. See also the English translation in J. Chrysavgis and P. Penkett, *Abba Isaiah of Scetis: Ascetic Discourses* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2002), p. 96.

⁹² Cf. A. Guillaumont, *Un Philosophe au désert: Évagre le Pontique* ('Textes et traditions, 8; Paris: Vrin, 2004), pp. 197–200. On the interiorization of the monastic cell, see D. L. Brooks Hedstrom, 'Divine Architects: Designing the Monastic Dwelling Place', in R. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 368–89; Brooks Hedstrom, 'The Geography of the Monastic Cell in Early Egyptian Monastic Literature', *Church History* 78 (2009), pp. 756–91; D. Brakke, 'From Temple to Cell, from Gods to Demons: Pagan Temples in the Monastic Topography of Fourth-Century Egypt', in J. Hahn, S. Emmel, and U. Gotter (eds.), *From Temple to Church: Destruction and Renewal of Local Cultic Topography in Late Antiquity* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, 163; Leiden and Boston: E. J. Brill, 2008), pp. 91–112.

⁹³ Cf. the passages in the *Ladder of Divine Ascent* in PG 88, cols. 1097D, 1109A, 1110C.

⁹⁴ AP/Alph Moses 6; AP/Syst II.19. Greek text of the alphabetic collection in PG 65, cols. 71–440; for the systematic collection, see J.-C. Guy, *Les Apophtegmes des Pères: Collection systématique*, vol. 1 (Sources chrétiennes, 387; Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1993), pp. 134–5 (Greek text and French translation).

the cell along similar lines: 'Remain in your cell (πεῖμα ἡσυχαστῆ) ... while your cell remains with you in your heart' (*De Cella* 1), 'Do not leave your cell' (*De Cella* 51), 'A wretched one who remains in his cell is king and lord' (*De Cella* 119).

As these passages show, Paul has a 'hesychast' understanding of the monastic life, which is proper, at least in the fourth and fifth centuries, to the literature linked to the three major monastic settlements situated in the western part of the Nile Delta. In these sources, the recluse will experience quietness (ἡσυχία) and rest (ἀνάπαυσις) by his isolation in the cell. As Darlene L. Brooks Hedstrom writes,

The spatial importance of the cell in the early centuries of Egyptian monasticism evolves into the essential location for seeking God, particularly in communities that were composed of monks who elected to live in smaller groupings with a servant or disciple. The literary sources for the fourth and fifth centuries in Egypt attest to a development in thought in which the cell first became the place of spiritual engagement. Within a military ethos, the monks were armed to battle the mysterious demons that had laid claim to the forgotten landscapes of Egypt. A generation later, the cell evolved into the area to fight personal demons of distraction and depression. The dwelling facilitates true monastic work: the cultivation of a self aligned with God and fellow monastics.⁹⁵

While Paul of Tamma's personality remains shrouded in mystery, the centrality of the cell in his works, which he shares with Evagrius, Stephen of Thebes, Isaiah of Scetis, and the *Apophthegmata Patrum*, suggests that he was familiar with the literature that emerged there.

A NEW EDITION OF THE LONDON FRAGMENTS OF *DE CELLA*

The following pages feature a new edition of the London fragments of *De Cella*, which aims to replace their previous publication by Crum.⁹⁶ The motive for the re-edition is that, on the one hand, the two previously known manuscripts of *De Cella* allow us to make a better reconstruction of Crum's text, and, on the other, some lacunose portions in Orlandi's edition can now be restored on the basis of the London fragments. The numbering of the paragraphs is that established by Orlandi.

⁹⁵ Hedstrom, 'The Geography of the Monastic Cell', p. 759.

⁹⁶ See above, n. 65.

Paul of Tamma, De Cella (*London, British Library Or.* 4918[1] = Crum no. 264)

fol. 1 = Crum fol. 2 (*De Cella* 6–10a)

recto:

verso:

ΠΕΝΤΑΠΝΟΥΤΕ

ΤΑΘΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΕΤΒΗΗ

ΝΤΚ̄ ΕΧΩϞ ΑΜΑΖΤΕ

Τῴ ΨΑΦΜΟΟΨΕ Ε

ΜΗΟΥ ΖΝΟΥΖΥΠΟ

ΖΡΑΪ ΖΝΟΥΠΑΡΗΘΙΑ·

ΜΟΝΗ· ΜΠΡ̄ΚΑ

ΤΕΝΟΥ ΘΕ ΜΠΡ̄ΚΑ

ΠΖΗΤ ΕΒΟΛ· ΜΠΡ̄Α

ΠΖΗΤ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΜΠΕΪ

ΜΕΛΙ ΕΠΕΖΜΟΤ ΨΑ(Ν)

ΚΟΜΟС· ΨΑΝΤΚ̄

ΤΚ̄ΒΩΚ ΕΖΡΑΪ ΨΑ

ΜΟΟΨΕ ΕΖΡΑΪ ΨΑ

ΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΖΝΟΥΟΥ

ΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΖΝΟΥΧΡΟ·

ΝΟΥ ΜΝΟΥΧΡΟ·

Ω ΠΕΒΗΝ· ΕΚΨΑΝ

ΚΑΙΓΑΡ ΨΑΡΕΠΝΟΥΪ

ΤΟС̄Κ̄ ΕΠΧΘΕΙС ΗΑΥ

ΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΠΧΑΪΕ·

ΑΑΥ· ΠΧΘΕΙС ΟΝ

ΨΑΦΚΑ Π[Ε]ΨΑΥ ΖΙ

ΝΑΘΩ Ν̄ΗΜΑΚ Ε

Χ̄ΝΝΕΨΤΑΘ̄СЕ ΕΨ

ΤΡΕΚ̄Ρ̄Ρ̄ΡΟ Ν̄ΗΜΑΥ·

ΨΑΝΜΑΤ[Ε ΔΕ Μ]ΠΕΝ

ΤΕΝ[ΟΥ] Θ̄Ξ ΠΕΒΗΝ

(recto) that which God brings upon you, endure it patiently. Do not let the mind dissipate. Do not neglect the grace until you ascend to God joyfully and victoriously. For also the lion comes out from the desert and puts his tail upon his footprints, [but] if he obtains that (verso) for which he came out,⁹⁷ he walks away boldly. Now then, do not let the mind dissipate in this world, until you go up to God victoriously. O wretched one, if you attach yourself to the Lord alone, the Lord will also remain with you so that you reign with him. Now then, wretched one ...

⁹⁷ I.e. the prey.

fol. 2 = Crum fol. 3 (*De Cella* 17b–22a)

recto:

verso:

[ΟΥC]MINE NAĪ PE'

ECΘOPΘ ZĪN̄...

[ZĪ]ΟΥΘΒΒΙΟ ΔΕ ΜΟ

ΝΓΤ̄ΜΕΙΜΕ ΕΤ[ΕΚ]

[ΝΟ]Ν ΠΩΤ ΝΑΚ ΖĪ

Μ̄Ν̄Τ̄Ρ̄ΜΔΟ' [Μ̄Ν̄]

[ΟΥ]CΘΟΥΝ ΕΚΘ̄

ΠΩΙΚ ΝΤCΘΦ[ΙΔ ΕΤ]

[ΒΗΥ Δ]Ε ΠΕΟΥΕΙΩ

ΝΑΩΩΠΕ ΝΔ[Κ]

[Ν̄Ο]Λ̄Κ ΠΕ' ΔΥΩ ΤΕ

Ζ̄Ν̄ΤΡΙ' ΕΚΑΜΔ[ΖΤΕ]

ΚΡΙ ΝΑΩΩΠΕ ΝΑΚ

Ν̄ΤΕCΒΩ Ζ̄Ν̄ΟΥΘ̄

Ν̄ΟΥΠΗΓΗ ΕC̄Ν̄ΖΟΤ

ΒΙΟ' ΝΓ̄ΧΟΟC ΖΩΩ[Κ]

ΝC̄Ρ̄ΟΥΕΙΕΡΟ ΕCΤ̄Θ̄

ΟΝ ΔΕ Ω ΠΩΙΚ Ν̄

ΒΗΥ ΝΑΚ' ΝΓΩΩ

Τ̄Ν̄Ν̄Τ̄Ρ̄ΜΔΟ Μ̄Ν̄

ΠΕ Ν̄ΟΥΘΑΛΑCCA

ΤCΘΦΙΑ' ΝΓ̄Ρ̄Ρ̄ΡΟ

ΕCΟΝ̄C' ΝΓΩΩΠΕ

Μ̄Ν̄ΠΝΟΥΤΕ Ζ̄Ν̄ΤΡΙ'

Ν̄ΟΥΠΟΛΙC ΕCΟΡ̄C̄

ΕΚΘ̄ΚΟ Ν̄ΝΕΚΔΔ

Ζ̄ΙΖΟΥΝ ΔΥΩ Ζ̄Β̄Ρ̄Λ

ΔΕ Ζ̄Μ̄ΠΚΟCΜΟC Ζ̄Μ̄

(recto) is [a] confirmation for me. But only humbly withdraw to yourself, being [humble] in knowledge, [for] it is time for you to withdraw,⁹⁸ and your cell will become to you a trustworthy spring and a pure river, and you will be a living sea, a city fortified inside and outside, (verso) which is provided with ...,⁹⁹ and you do not understand [your] treasure [and] the depth of wisdom [that] will happen to [you] in the cell. Holding humbly the doctrine and saying also in your turn, 'O depth of the richness and wisdom',¹⁰⁰ you reign with God in the cell, humiliating your enemies in the world with ...

⁹⁸ 1 Cor. 7:29 (Sahidic); see Luisier, 'Paul de Tamma', p. 267.

⁹⁹ Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts*, p. 118a, suggests the reading, Ζ̄Ν̄Ν̄[ΩΝ]Ε, 'with stones'.

¹⁰⁰ Rom. 11:33.

fol. 3 = Crum fol. 1 (*De Cella* 53b–59a)

recto:

verso:

κα

[κβ]

πε οὐσαβε εἰς τὸν

ἐπιτὶ ἡλῶτ· ἀπαγ

[τε]φρι· τεφρι μερ

ἱεῖλος οὐν βοκ [εζ]

[ν]ῆτ· νογχε ἡναγ

οὐν ἐπιτὶ ἡτῶ

[ν]ῆμ εβολ ε ἡπαρ

βιας ἀγῶ τῶβ[ιτ]

πὸς ἡνεφρβηγε ε

εἰπεφρβη· ἀγβφκ

τῆναδογού· πεοογ

οὐν εζογν ἐπιτὶ ἡ

ἡπνογτε ναογῶ

μανῶε· τένογ

νῆ ναγ εβολ ἡρητῶ·

σε πεβην ἡπρ

ἀπαγγελος ἡπχο

τακε περμὸτ ἡ

εἰς οὐωνῆ εβολ ἡ

τρι· οὐν ταλῶ

zacharias εἰσογν

ἡν ἡαῶππε ἡ

ἡπεθγιαστηριον

εἰτῶ· ἡνεκτ ἡ

ἡπρωγρηνε· ἀναγ

πεκρογί εἰτρι

[γελ]ος βοκ εζογν

ἀχῆσβῶ εἰτβε

(recto, p. 21) is a sage who is in his cell. His cell is filled every moment [with] good odour from the fruit of his good works. The glory of God will appear to him inside it. The angel of the Lord appeared to Zacharias inside the altar of incense.¹⁰¹ The angels entered (verso, p. [22]) into the house of Lot.¹⁰² The angel also entered [into the] house of Tobias and Tobit in [his] house.¹⁰³ He entered also into the house of Manoe.¹⁰⁴ Now then, wretched one, do not corrupt the grace of the cell and every remedy will be inside it. You shall not approach the cell without instruction because of

¹⁰¹ Cf. Luke 1:11.

¹⁰² Cf. Gen. 19:3.

¹⁰³ Cf. Tob. 5:10. The parallel passage in the MONB.GU codex reads instead, τῶβιτ ἡἵτεφρβημε, ‘Tobit and his wife’, but our manuscript is supported at this point by University of Michigan, MS 166. This may suggest that εἰπεφρβη was probably the *lectio difficilior*.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Judg. 13:3–5.

fol. 4 = Crum fol. 4 (*De Cella* 59b–64a)

recto:

verso:

[κΓ]

[κΔ]

ἡνῆρτῖς ἀλ' ὧα

οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ὧα

ρενδαιμων γὰρ

ὡς ἀκα πολέμος

μὴ εἴς μὴ πρὸς

μὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων

ἐπὶ πλάττει ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα πρὸς

ἐν ὧα ἐκ τῆς γὰρ κα

μὴ. καὶ ἐν ὧα πρὸς

ἐν ὧα μὴ πρὸς

ἐν ὧα μὴ πρὸς

ἐν ὧα παῖς μὴ

ὅτι. ὡς λὼτ ἡ πόλις

μὴ ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα μὴ

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ὅς ἐν ὧα μὴ

μὴ ὧα μὴ ὧα ἐν

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

ἐν ὧα ἐν ὧα

(recto, p. [23]) the trespassing. For the demons fight naked against man in the desert, for they are stripped of God. Because of this, there is no pity in them for the man who sits alone quietly in the cell. Then, if you obtain the grace of the cell, guard yourself on the (verso, [p. 24]) right, because the war of compassion to save people is waged against you, in order to take from you the grace of the cell. O Lot, 'save yourself to the mountain'.¹⁰⁵ Then who will give me a dwelling-place in the desert to flee and cry for myself? Let down your thought believing that there is (*sic desinit*)

¹⁰⁵ Gen. 19:17.