

Alin SUCIU

**A COPTIC FRAGMENT FROM JOHN CHRYSOSTOM,
QVOD NEMO LAEDITVR NISI A SEIPSO (CPG 4400; BHG 488d)**

Neither the fatigue of the long voyage to Cucusa, the desolate town of his second exile, where he would eventually perish, nor the cold Armenian winter, nor the frequent raids of the Isaurians, nor the stomach disease which severely damaged his health, could make John Chrysostom forget the congregation of believers which he left behind in Constantinople. His pastoral care is transparent in the letters that he regularly sent from afar to his community and friends until his death in 407.

Among these, we find the letter commonly known by the Latin title *Quod nemo laeditur nisi a seipso* (CPG 4400; BHG 488d), or the “Letter from exile”, as the French editor entitled it¹. According to the hypothesis of Baur² — which enjoyed a considerable vogue and has been followed, among others, by Dom Wilmart³ — *Quod nemo laeditur* was translated into Latin at an early date by the Pelagian Annianus of Celeda⁴. However, this possibility has not yet been proven philologically in a satisfactory manner, as it has not been explained why such a text would attract the interest of a Pelagian like Annianus⁵.

¹ PG 52, coll. 459-480. See the edition, Jean Chrysostome. *Lettre d'exil à Olympias et à tous les fidèles* (*Quod nemo laeditur*), ed. A.-M. MALINGREY (= *Sources Chrétiennes*, 103), Paris, 1964.

² Chr. BAUR, *L'entrée littéraire de S. Chrysostome dans le monde latin*, in *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 8 (1907), pp. 249-265; Id., *S. Jean Chrysostome et ses œuvres dans l'histoire littéraire* (= *Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres des conférences d'histoire et de philologie*, 18), Louvain – Paris, 1907, pp. 61, 64-65. Baur tried to clarify a hypothesis that was first suggested in the 17th century by the Jesuit scholar Jean Garnier (cf. *PL* 48, coll. 257-378).

³ A. WILMART, *La collection des 38 homélies latines de saint Jean Chrysostome*, in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 19 (1918), pp. 305-327, at p. 307.

⁴ Critical edition of the Latin text in A.-M. MALINGREY, *Une ancienne version latine du texte de Jean Chrysostome* ‘*Quod nemo laeditur...*’, in *Sacris Erudiri*, 16 (1965), pp. 320-354.

⁵ In her *La tradition latine d'un texte de Jean Chrysostome* (*Quod nemo laeditur*), in *Studia Patristica. Vol. 7: Papers presented to the Fourth International Conference on Patristic Studies held at Christ Church, Oxford, 1963*, part I, ed. F. L. CROSS (= *Texte und Untersuchungen*, 92), Berlin, 1966, pp. 248-254, A.-M. Malingrey has promoted the hypothesis put forward by Baur, but her arguments concerning the attribution of the Latin translation to Annianus are not decisive. See in this regard S. J. VOICU, *Le prime traduzioni latine di Crisostomo*, in *Cristianesimo latino e cultura greca sino al sec. IV. XXI Incontro di studiosi dell'antichità cristiana*, Roma, 7-9 maggio 1992 (= *Studia Ephemeridis “Augustinianum”*, 42), Rome, 1993, pp. 397-415.

Beside the Latin rendering, *Quod nemo laeditur* was also translated into Syriac⁶ and Old Slavonic. The Slavonic translation of the “Letter from exile” is included in the Zlatostruy, a collection of works by John Chrysostom which was compiled and translated in Bulgaria during the reign of Tsar Symeon (893-927)⁷. To these versions in ancient languages, we can add now a fragment from what must have been, if not a complete version, at least an extract from the letter of John Chrysostom in the Sahidic dialect of Coptic. Although numerous literary pieces are preserved in Sahidic and Bohairic under Chrysostom’s name⁸, no other copy of *Quod nemo laeditur* is known to survive in the Coptic language.

The fragment in question is kept in the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, where it currently bears the call number BnF Copte 131⁵, fol. 39. The volume in which the folio is bound today contains a modern miscellany that brings together disparate parchment fragments from several codices which belonged to the White Monastery, situated in Upper Egypt, near present-day Sohag. This monastery, led during the 4th and 5th century by the authoritarian figure of the archimandrite Shenoute, possessed once a rich library with numerous Patristic works in Coptic⁹. The thousands of fragments preserved today bear testimony to its bygone greatness. Unfortunately, after the library fell into decay, the surviving codices emerged from their cache as dismembered pieces which arrived in different loca-

⁶ A. BAUMSTARK, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur mit Ausschluß der christlich-palästinensischen Texte*, Bonn, 1922, p. 80, note 13, which mentions a manuscript in the British Library; cf. W. WRIGHT, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, Acquired Since the Year 1838*, London, 1870, p. 696 (= no. 753, 1c). A second manuscript, now in Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, was announced for the first time by J.-M. SAUGET, *Deux homéliaires syriaques de la Bibliothèque Vaticane*, in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 27 (1961), pp. 387-424, at p. 423.

⁷ See F. J. THOMSON, *Chrysostomica Palaeoslavica. A Preliminary Study of the Sources of the Chrysorrhoeas (Zlatostruy) Collection*, in *Cyrrillomethodianum*, 6 (1982), pp. 1-65, at p. 30. The Slavonic text is available in the Menologium of the Metropolitan Macarius, *Velikiya Minei Chetii, sobrannyya vserossiyskim mitropolitom Makariyem. Noyabr' dni 13-15*, St. Petersburg, 1899, pp. 1661-1684, and, more recently, in A. MINCHEVA, *Bălgarski kirikski otkásletsi*, Sofia, 1978, pp. 57-73, 203-258 (edition of the Slavonic with the corresponding Greek text).

⁸ For a partial list of the Chrysostomic and pseudo-Chrysostomic works identified so far in Coptic, see S. J. VOICU, *Per una lista delle opere trasmesse in copto sotto il nome di Giovanni Crisostomo*, in *Christianity in Egypt: Literary Production and Intellectual Trends. Studies in Honor of Tito Orlandi*, ed. P. BUZI – A. CAMPLANI (= *Studia Ephemeridis “Augustinianum”*, 125), Rome, 2011, pp. 575-610.

⁹ For a general introduction to the ancient library of the White Monastery, see T. ORLANDI, *The Library of the Monastery of St. Shenute at Atripe*, in *Perspectives on Panopolis: An Egyptian Town from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest*, ed. A. EGBERTS – B. P. MUHS – J. VAN DER VLIET (= *Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava*, 31), Leiden, 2002, pp. 211-231.

tions, this situation seriously inhibiting the endeavor to reconstruct them. Their dispersal resembles to some extent that of the Cairo Genizah or of the Dunhuang manuscripts, although the large scattering of the White Monastery fragments is the testimony of an even more unfortunate destiny. Among the most important collections that hold White Monastery manuscripts are the British Library, Bibliothèque nationale in Paris, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (Vienna), the National Library “Vittorio Emanuele III” (Naples), the Bibliotheca Apostolica (Vatican), or the Coptic Museum (Cairo). Given that much of the material is lost, the original codices can be only partly reconstructed. It is precisely the case of the codex which contained the “Letter from Exile”, from which only a few bits have survived. They will be discussed in the following lines.

The parchment folio containing the text of *Quod nemo laeditur* ended up in the Bibliothèque nationale de France. The leaf measures 36 × 26 cm¹⁰ and bears the page numbers 11-12 in the upper outer corners of the pages. The text is arranged in two columns of 29 lines each. One of the bottom corners, a little bit less than a quarter of the folio, has disappeared completely leaving a significant lacuna on both sides. The same scribe copied several other codices for the White Monastery, including Shenoute’s *Fourth Canon*¹¹ (codex MONB.GI¹²). Since the codices containing the original works of Shenoute were exclusively copied in the White Monastery, we can infer that the manuscript to which Paris 131⁵, fol. 39 originally belonged was also produced in the local scriptorium. Unfortunately, the age of the fragment cannot be properly ascertained without a dated colophon, although a 10th to 11th century dating seems probable.

The identification of 131⁵, fol. 39 as a portion of *Quod nemo laeditur*¹³ was based on the occurrence of the *Leitmotiv* “the one who does not

¹⁰ The paleographical information is based on my own examination of the fragment, in June 2011. For his part, E. PORCHER, *Analyse des manuscrits coptes 131¹⁻⁸ de la Bibliothèque nationale, avec indication des textes bibliques (suite)*, in *Revue d’Égyptologie*, 1 (1933), pp. 231-278, at p. 251, gave the dimensions 27 × 22 cm. It became apparent only after I measured it that Porcher noted the size of the written area and not that of the folio.

¹¹ On the ambiguous Shenoutean usage of the term “canon,” see S. EMMEL, *Shenoute’s Place in the History of Monasticism*, in *Christianity and Monasticism in Upper Egypt*. Vol. 1: *Akhmim and Sohag*, ed. G. GABRA – H. N. TAKLA, Cairo – New York, 2008, pp. 31-46, at pp. 38-39.

¹² Cf. S. EMMEL, *Shenoute’s Literary Corpus*, vol. 1 (= *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium*, 599; *Subsidia*, 111), Louvain, 2004, pp. 161-163, 433-434, for relevant codicological and bibliographical information concerning codex MONB.GI.

¹³ Our Coptic text covers pages 132-136 of the *Sources Chrétiennes* edition: from p. 132, line 45 to p. 136, line 13.

injure himself, nobody else will be able to harm him”, which must be understood as a dictum regarding John Chrysostom’s own tribulations in the exile:

John Chrysostom,
***Quod nemo laeditur* 16, 1-2**

BnF, Copte 131⁵, fol. 39^r ii, 25-v i, 1

Ὁρᾶς ὅτι τὸν μὴ ἑαυτὸν ἀδικοῦντα, α{Υ}ΝΑΥ¹⁴ ΔΕ ΠΕΤΕΝῆΝΔΕΛΑΠΤΕΙ` ΜΜΟϢ
οὐδεὶς ἕτερος παραβλάψαι δυνήσεται; ΔΝ ΜΑΥΔΑϢ ΜῆΝΔΑΥ ΝΔΕΦΔΕΛΑΠΤΕΙ` ΜΜΟϢ.

Now, the original page numbers of the leaf (i.e. 11-12), suggest that the Sahidic version of *Quod nemo laeditur* did not conform exactly to the preserved Greek text. The Paris fragment contains the end of § 15 and the beginning of § 16, which represent a homiletic approach of the episode concerning the Three Hebrew Youths from the book of Daniel. The investigation of stichometry reveals that the first ten pages of the codex could not have contained the previous paragraphs of the letter, since the missing parts cover no less than thirty-nine pages of Greek text in the French edition, and over fifteen columns in Migne’s *Patrologia Graeca*.

Several possibilities emerge from this incongruity, although none of them can be proved for certain due to the lack of appropriate data. There are, however, reasons to believe that the manuscript contained only an extract from *Quod nemo laeditur*, more precisely the section concerning the Three Hebrew Youths in the Fiery Furnace, which forms an independent literary unit extending from § 15 to § 17¹⁵. The assumption of a shortened version of *Quod nemo laeditur* is based on the hagiographic character of the codex, from which at least three other fragments have survived:

- PARIS, BnF, Copte 132¹, fol. 83 (Ps.-Cyril of Alexandria, *Miracles of the Three Hebrew Youths*; CPG 5272, *Clavis coptica* 0110)¹⁶
- PARIS, Louvre E 9977 + R 233

¹⁴ The Coptic verb is emended at this point on the basis of the Greek text. The form ΔΥΝΑΥ must be an error for ΔΝΑΥ = ὁρᾶς, which arose at a certain moment during the transmission of the text in Coptic.

¹⁵ It is not incidental that both F. HALKIN, *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*³, vol. 1 (= *Subs. hag.*, 8a), Brussels, 1957, p. 149 and ID., *Novum auctarium bibliothecae hagiographicae graecae* (= *Subs. hag.*, 65), Brussels, 1984, p. 60 mention *Quod nemo laeditur* under the lemma *Daniel et tres pueri* and *Daniel*.

¹⁶ The text of Ps.-Cyril is preserved completely in two Bohairic copies from the Vatican Library: *Vaticani coptici* 62 & 69; description in A. HEBBELYNCK – A. VAN LANTSCHOOT, *Codices coptici Vaticani, Barberiniani, Borgiani, Rossiani*. Vol. 1: *Codices coptici Vaticani*, Vatican, 1937, pp. 441-442, 520-522. The version of *Vaticanus copticus* 62 was published by H. DE VIS, *Homélies coptes de la Vaticane*, vol. 2 (= *Coptica*, 5), Copenhagen, 1929, pp. 160-202 (parallel of the Sahidic fragment at page 179). The identity of BnF 132¹, fol. 83 has been revealed to me by Mr. Enzo Lucchesi, to whom I am grateful for this information.

Another fragment from the National Library in Paris, namely BnF 129¹⁶, fol. 37 (= *Translation of the relics of St. Febronia*; cf. BHG 659, BHO 302-303, *Clavis coptica* 0507)¹⁷, is paleographically related to the aforementioned fragments and might belong either to our codex or to a different one copied by the same scribe.

It is interesting to note that the two Louvre fragments concern in their turn the legend of the Three Youths. Thus, the right-hand column of the Hair side contains the phrase (...) *ⲛⲉϣⲟⲟⲡ ⲟⲛ ⲛⲉⲓⲡⲕⲱⲗⲧ ⲉⲣⲱⲕⲗ ⲛⲛⲉⲧⲉⲡⲉⲓⲙⲡⲱ ⲡⲉ ⲣⲱⲕⲗ ⲛⲥⲱⲟⲩ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲓⲁⲣ ⲙⲡⲉⲧⲉⲛⲉⲣⲓⲁ ⲙⲡⲕⲱⲗⲧ ⲡⲱⲱⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲣⲙⲟⲟⲩ* (...), which resembles *Quod nemo laeditur* 17, lines 23-24: καὶ τῆς οἰκείας ἐνεργείας ἐπελάθετο καὶ πηγὴ ψυχρῶν ὑδάτων γέγονε τοῦ πυρὸς ἢ κάμινος. However, no other portion of the text parallels the “Letter from exile”.

These fragments, together with the one from Ps.-Cyril of Alexandria’s *Miracles of the Three Youths*, might indicate that the codex was dedicated to the feast of the Three Hebrews in the Fiery Furnace, which are celebrated by the Coptic Church on the 10th of Pashons (5 May according to the Julian calendar). It seems thus likely either that the scribe copied from *Quod nemo laeditur* just the section related to the Three Saints, or that this part of the letter already circulated, at least in Coptic, as an autonomous hagiographic piece meant for liturgical reading during the feast of Ananias, Misael and Azarias.

¹⁷ BnF, Copte 129¹⁶, fol. 37 corresponds to the Greek text in AASS, Iun. t. 5, Antwerp, 1709, pp. 33-34. Febronia was a nun in Syria and was martyred under Diocletian at Nisibis; for the ancient versions of her martyrdom, see the *claves* numbers mentioned above. According to a Coptic legend, there was another St. Febronia, who lived in an Egyptian monastery and was killed by the Bashmurites, cf. *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighbouring Countries Attributed to Abū Ṣāliḥ, the Armenian*, ed. B. T. A. EVETTS – A. J. BUTLER (= *Anecdota Oxoniensia*), Oxford, 1895, pp. 240-242. Concerning the story of the Syrian St. Febronia in Coptic and Copto-Arabic sources, cf. R.-G. COQUIN, *Febronia, Saint*, in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. Z. ATIYA, vol. 4, New York, 1991, coll. 1109-1110; R. BASSET, *Le Synaxaire arabe jacobite. V: Les mois de Baounah, Abib, Mesoré et jours complémentaires*, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, t. 17/3, Paris, 1923, pp. 612-614 [1154]-[1156]; *résumé* in DE LACY O’LEARY, *The Saints of Egypt*, New York, 1937, pp. 139-140. It still remains to be checked whether the fragment BnF, Copte 129¹⁶, fol. 37 corresponds to the Arabic texts about Febronia signaled, for example, in A. KHATER – O. H. E. KHS-BURMERSTER, *Catalogue of the Coptic and Christian Arabic MSS. Preserved in the Library of the Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus Known as Abū Sarḡah at Old Cairo* (= *Bibliothèque de manuscrits*, 3), Cairo, 1977, p. 42 (= no. 117); G. GRAF, *Catalogue de manuscrits arabes chrétiens conservés au Caire* (= *Studi e testi*, 63), Vatican, 1934, p. 268 (= no. 713_{1,5}); G. TROUPEAU, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes. I: Manuscrits chrétiens*, vol. 1, Paris, 1972, p. 235 (= no. 266₄). On the other hand, M. SIMAIKA – Y. ‘ABD AL-MASIH, *Catalogue of the Coptic and Arabic Manuscripts in the Coptic Museum etc.*, vol. 2/1 (= *Publications of the Coptic Museum*), Cairo, 1942, p. 110 (= no. 264₁₇) record the existence of certain “Extracts from the Saying of St. Febronia”.

The theme of the Three Youths from Babylon is popular in Coptic Egypt¹⁸ and recurrent in the work of John Chrysostom as well¹⁹. It should not be totally ruled out that the text of BnF 131⁵, fol. 39 may have belonged to one of the many forgeries attributed to John Chrysostom after his death, some of which interpolate passages from his genuine literary pieces. However, this position is hard to evaluate since the portion preserved in Coptic is not known to appear elsewhere in the pseudo-Chrysostomic corpus²⁰. It may be cautious, thus, to treat this matter with care until new evidence is found. As it often happens in the study of Coptic literature, we are completely at the mercy of future discoveries.

Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari

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Résumé. *Quod nemo laeditur nisi a seipso* (CPG 4400) est une lettre écrite par Jean Chrysostome durant son second exil. Jusqu'à présent, on pensait que ce texte avait été conservé en grec, en latin, en syriaque et en vieux-slave. Le présent article met en lumière un fragment, jusqu'alors inconnu, d'une version copte du *Quod nemo laeditur*. Ce nouveau fragment provient du monastère d'Apa Shenouté (appelé aussi le Monastère Blanc), situé en Haute-Égypte. Sur la base d'arguments codicologiques, l'article suggère que cette version copte de la lettre de Jean Chrysostome était abrégée. Il est en effet possible qu'un remaniement éditorial ait été réalisé en vue d'insérer la lettre *Quod nemo laeditur* dans un codex hagiographique consacré aux Trois Hébreux dans la fournaise.

¹⁸ Cf. M. VAN ESBROECK, *Three Hebrews in the Furnace*, in *Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. Z. ATIYA, vol. 7, New York, 1991, coll. 2257-2259, and more recently, U. ZANETTI, *Le roman de Bakhéos sur les Trois jeunes saints de Babylone. Fragments coptes sahidiques*, in *Philomathestatos. Studies in Greek and Byzantine Texts Presented to Jacques Noret for his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. B. JANSSENS – B. ROOSEN – P. VAN DEUN (= *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*, 137), Leuven, 2004, pp. 713-747.

¹⁹ On John Chrysostom's use of this theme, see L. BROTTIER, 'Et la fournaise devint source': l'épisode des trois jeunes gens dans la fournaise (Dan. 3) lu par Jean Chrysostome, in *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*, 71 (1991), pp. 309-327.

²⁰ J. A. DE ALDAMA, *Repertorium pseudochrysostomicum* (= *Documents, études et répertoires publiés par l'Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes*, 10), Paris, 1965, lists four pseudo-Chrysostomic works which contain passages from *Quod nemo laeditur* (nos. 58, 82, 340 and 491), but none of them uses §§ 15-16.

BnF, Copte 131⁵, fol. 39 (hair side)

1a

1 τὰγαὰν· ἀγ†πεϣ
 οὐοεῖ· ἐπεσιούρ ε
 τμμαγ· παῖ
 ετεγῆταγ μμαγ
 5 ἐντεζούσια· ἐζου(ν)
 ἐροοϣ ἀγπῑε μ
 μοϣ ῥμπωαδε·
 ἐπειδν· ἀγζε· ἐροϣ·
 ἐϣῶ ἡζοτε ἀγω
 10 ἐϣστωτ· ἀγω
 ἐϣαγωμῑζε ἐτβε
 πεϣογδαῖ·
 ἀγω ἐρεῑοτε μ
 πμοϣ νοεῖν· ἡτεϣ
 15 ψγχн[·]†ῑζοτε
 γαρ· ζнт[ῑ] μπαϣο
 εῖς· πῑ[ρο· πεϣαϣ·]
 μнπο[τε]
 ε[]
 20 παρa[]
 μ[]
 []
 []
 []λ
 25 []μ
 []εῖ ἐβολ
 []τεῖχα
 [ρις]ἐπῑε
 []εβολ·δε ἀγ

1 ῤΕΥΕΘΟΜ ΤΗΡ̄C·
ΑΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΞΩΩΨ·
ΟΥΕΝ̄Ξ ΤΕΨΘΟΜ·
ΕΒΟΛ· ΟΥΤΕ ΓΑΡ ΠΚΑ
5 ΤΟΡΘΩΜΑ ΠΑΠΝΟΥ
ΤΕ ΟΥΑΑΨ ΠΕ·
ΜΜΟΝ· ΕΡΕΝΕΤ̄ΜΜΑΥ
ΝΑΔ̄Ι ΚΛΟΜ ΕΤΒΕ
ΟΨ· ΑΛΛΑ ΕΠΕΙΔΗ·
10 ΤΑΡΧΗ· Μ̄ΠΖΩΒ·
ΕΠΕΠΡΟΞΑΙΜΙΟΝ
ΠΑΤΕΓΝΩΜΗ ΠΕ
Ν̄ΝΕΤ̄ΜΜΑΥ·
ΕΤΒΕ ΠΑΪ Ν̄ΤΑΥΕΠ·
15 ΠΕΔΡΟ· ΕΡΟΟΥ·
ΑΥΟΥΕΝ̄Ξ ΤΕΨΘΟΜ
ΤΗΡ̄C ΕΒΟΛ Μ̄ΝΤΕ[Υ]
Μ̄ΝΤΔΩΨΡΕ·
ΕΑΥCΩΚ ΨΑΡΟΥ
20 ΛΟΙΠΟΝ· Ν̄ΤΒΟΗ
ΘΙΑ· ΤΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤ̄Μ
ΠΝΟΥΤΕ· ΑΥΩ
ΠΕΤΟΥCΠΟΥΔΑ
ΖΕ ΕΡΟC· ΑΥΔΟΚΨ
25 ΕΒΟΛ· Α{Υ}ΝΑΥ
ΔΕ ΠΕΤΕΝ̄ΧΝΑ
ΒΛΑΠΤΕΙ· Μ̄ΜΟC
ΑΝ ΜΑΥΑΨ· Μ̄Ν
ΛΑΔΥ ΝΑΕΨΒΛΑΠ

BnF, Copte 131⁵, fol. 39 (flesh side)

IB

1 τει̅ μμοϣ̅· εις
 ζη̅ντε̅ μ̅πετ̅μ̅ντ̅
 ϣ̅ηρε̅ ϣ̅ημ̅·
 μ̅πετ̅ⲁ̅ⲓ̅ⲭ̅ⲙ̅ⲁ̅ⲗ̅
 5 ϣ̅ⲁ̅ μ̅πετ̅μ̅ντ̅ⲟ̅ρ̅
 ϕ̅ⲁ̅ⲛⲟ̅ϥ· μ̅πετ̅
 ϭ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅ⲃ̅ⲱ̅ⲕ̅ ⲛ̅ⲙ̅ⲧ̅ⲱ̅
 μ̅ντ̅ⲟ̅ρ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅· μ̅ν̅
 ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲛ̅ⲙ̅ⲁ̅ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲉⲧ̅
 10 ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ⲃ̅ⲟ̅ⲛ̅ⲑ̅ⲉⲓ̅ ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ⲟ̅ϥ·
 [μ̅]ⲛ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲱ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ ⲉ̅
 [ϭ̅]ⲟ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ μ̅ν̅ⲑ̅ⲟ̅ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ μ̅
 ⲣ̅ⲙ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ ⲧ̅ⲁ̅ⲓ̅ ⲉ̅ⲧ̅ⲕ̅ⲱ̅
 ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ϥ̅ⲓ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅·
 15 μ̅ν̅ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲟ̅ⲉ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅
 μ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ⲙ̅ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲛ̅ⲧ̅· μ̅ν̅
 ⲧ̅μ̅ν̅ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ⲛ̅ⲕ̅ⲉ̅ μ̅ν̅
 ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ϥ̅ⲃ̅ⲟ̅ⲕ̅ ⲛ̅ⲑ̅ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ⲓ̅ⲕ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅
 μ̅ν̅ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅ⲱ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ ⲉ̅ⲛ̅
 20 ⲧ̅ⲙ̅ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ ⲛ̅ν̅ⲃ̅ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲃ̅ⲁ̅
 ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅· μ̅ν̅ⲑ̅ⲉ̅ ⲉ̅ⲧ̅ⲉ̅
 ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ϥ̅ⲁ̅ⲁ̅ⲉ̅ ⲟ̅ ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ⲟ̅
 ⲉⲓ̅ⲥ̅ ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅· μ̅ν̅ⲧ̅
 ⲉ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲁ̅ⲓ̅ ⲉ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ⲓ̅ⲁ̅
 25 μ̅ⲣ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅· μ̅ν̅
 ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ⲧ̅ⲁ̅ϥ̅ⲉ̅ ⲛ̅
 ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ⲧ̅ⲱ̅ⲟ̅ⲟ̅ⲣ̅ ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ϥ̅
 ⲧ̅ⲛ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅· μ̅ν̅ⲑ̅ⲉ̅
 ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲁ̅ϥ̅ⲣ̅ ϣ̅μ̅ⲙ̅ⲟ̅·

1 ⲉ̅ⲛ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅· μ̅ν̅ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅
 ⲣ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ϕ̅ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲛ̅ⲥ̅· μ̅ν̅
 ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ⲧ̅ⲕ̅ⲓ̅ ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ ϣ̅ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅
 ⲟ̅ϥ̅· μ̅ν̅ⲛ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ⲱ̅ⲧ̅ⲛ̅
 5 ⲉ̅ⲃ̅ⲟ̅ⲗ̅· μ̅ν̅ⲛ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅·
 μ̅ν̅ⲧ̅ⲉ̅ⲓ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ⲱ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅
 ⲛ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ϥ̅ⲁ̅ⲗ̅ⲙ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅·
 ⲁ̅ϥ̅ⲱ̅ μ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ⲗ̅ⲁ̅ⲁ̅ϥ̅ ⲉ̅ⲛ̅
 ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ⲓ̅ ⲧ̅ⲛ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ ⲉ̅ϣ̅ⲧ̅
 10 ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ⲣ̅ ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ϥ̅· ⲛ̅ ⲉ̅ⲃ̅
 ⲗ̅ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲧ̅ⲉⲓ̅ μ̅ⲙ̅ⲟ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅·
 ⲁ̅ⲗ̅ⲗ̅ⲁ̅ ⲛ̅ⲧ̅ⲁ̅ϥ̅ⲱ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅
 ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ⲟ̅ⲕ̅ⲓ̅ⲙ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅
 ⲟ̅ ⲣ̅ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ⲟ̅ϥ̅ⲟ̅ⲉ̅ⲱ̅
 15 ⲉ̅ⲛ̅ⲉ̅ϥ̅ⲁ̅[ⲣ̅ⲟ̅]ⲗ̅ⲁ̅ϥ̅ ⲛ̅
 ⲛ̅ⲁ̅ⲓ̅ ⲉ̅ⲛ̅[ⲧ̅]ⲉ̅ϥ̅ⲣ̅ⲁ̅ⲧ̅ⲣ̅ⲓ̅ⲥ̅
 ⲁ̅ϥ̅[]ⲧ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ϥ̅ⲕ̅ⲁ̅
 []ⲱ̅ⲟ̅ⲙ̅ⲧ̅
 []
 20 []ⲟ̅ⲣ̅ⲉ̅ⲣ̅
 []ⲣ̅ⲣ̅ⲟ̅
 []
 μ̅[]
 μ̅[]
 25 ⲉ̅ⲣ̅[]
 ⲣ̅ⲁ̅ⲛ̅[]
 ⲑ̅ⲟ̅ⲧ̅[ⲉ̅]
 ⲁ̅ϥ̅ⲁ̅[]
 ⲉ̅ϣ̅ⲃ̅ⲗ̅[ⲁ̅ⲣ̅ⲧ̅ⲉⲓ̅]

TRANSLATION

(recto I) 15. ... they approached that eunuch, the one who had authority (ἐξουσία) over them. They persuaded (πείθειν) him by the word because (ἐπειδή) they found him frightened, shivering and struggling (ἀγωνίζεσθαι) for his safety, and because the fear of death shook his soul (ψυχή). “I am afraid [of] my lord, the [king,” said he,] “lest (μήποτε) [...]” ... *8 lines damaged*... [...] this favor (χάρις) [...] because they have **(recto II)** made everything that was in their power, God, in his turn, manifested his strength. For (γάρ) the achievement (κατόρθωμα)²¹ is not (οὐδέ) of God alone, or else why would those be rewarded? But (ἀλλά) because (ἐπειδή) the beginning (ἀρχή) of the deed and also (ἢ) the prelude (προοίμιον) belongs to the decision (γνώμη) of those, therefore the victory was counted to them. They revealed their whole power and strength, attracting to them hereafter (λοιπόν) the help (βοήθεια) from God. And what they were looking for (σπουδάζειν), they completed.

16. Perceive that the one who does not harm (βλάπτειν) himself, nobody else will be able to harm (βλάπτειν) **(verso I)** him. Behold that nor did youthfulness, nor did imprisonment (αἰχμαλωσία), nor did the fact of being orphan (ὀρφανός), nor did shipwrecking, and the wrath (ὀργή), and the isolation (ἐρημία) from those that would help (βοηθεῖν) them, and the wicked command, and the fear of death — the one that seized the eunuch —, and the shaking of his heart, and the poverty, and the smallness of age (ἡλικία), and living in the midst of the barbarians (βάρβαρος), and the way that their enemies became masters over them, and falling into the hands of the king, and the separation (ἀποτάσσειν) from all those who were theirs, and the way in which they became estranged **(verso II)** from priests and prophets (προφήτης) and from those who care for them, and from libations and temple, and being deprived of the psalms (ψαλμός), and nothing of all these could scandalize them or (ἢ) harm (βλάπτειν) them, but (ἀλλά) they were more esteemed (δόκιμος) than (παρά-) in the moment when they enjoyed (ἀπολαύειν) these in their country (πατρίς). ... *13 lines damaged*...

²¹ For the meanings of κατόρθωμα, cf. G. W. LAMPE, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford, 1961, pp. 735-736.



Fig. 1: Paris, BnF, Copte 131⁵, fol. 39 (hair side)
Photo by Bibliothèque nationale de France

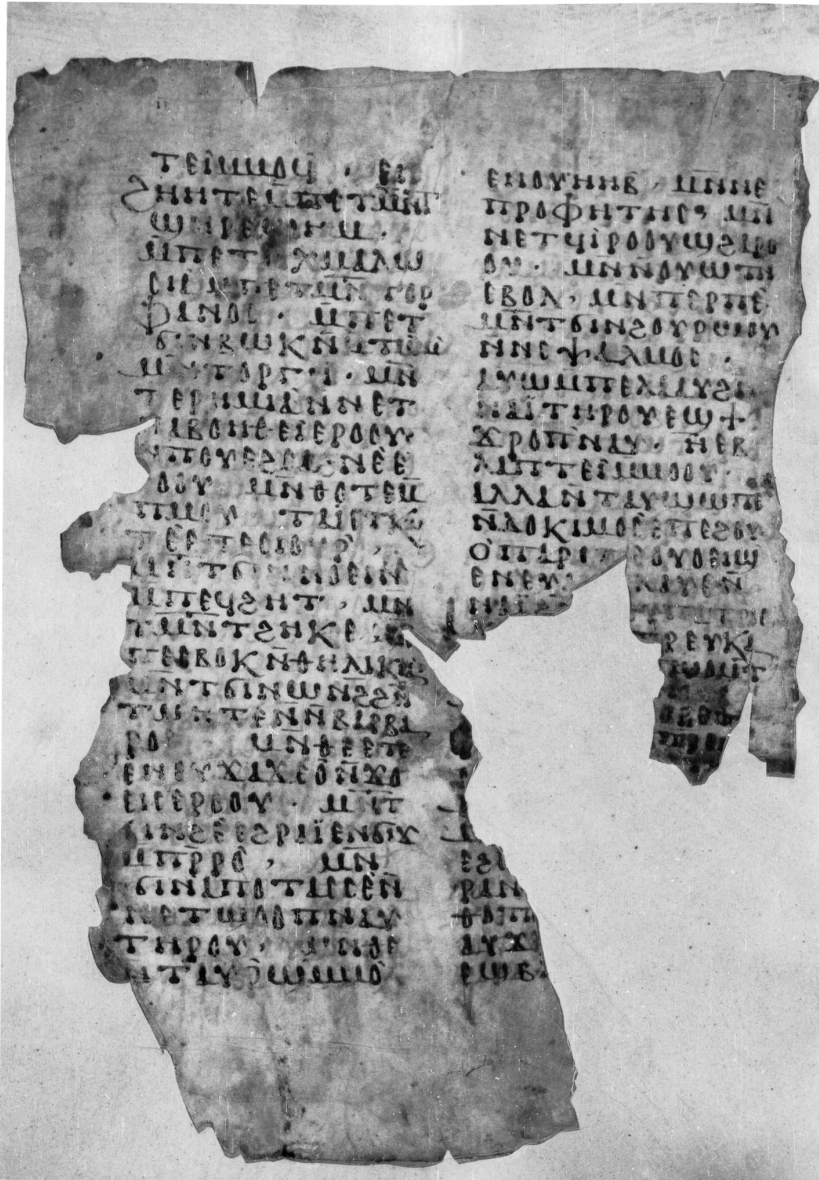


Fig. 2: Paris, BnF, Copte 131⁵, fol. 39 (flesh side)

Photo by Bibliothèque nationale de France