TWO SAHIDIC FRAGMENTS
OF JOHN 13:29-14:2:
GARRETT COPTIC MS 6

BY BRICE C. JONES

I present here Garrett Coptic MS 6, two previously unpublished Sahidic fragments of the Gospel of John, which are housed in the Manuscript Division, Department of Rare Books and Special Collection, Princeton University Library. The fragments were purchased by Mr. Robert Garrett in the first half of the 20th century, and they have remained unpublished since the time of Mr. Garrett’s large donation of manuscripts to Princeton in 1942.

Garrett Coptic MS 6 is comprised of two fragments of the lower portions of folios of a codex written in a single column. The thin parchment is in bad condition and the fine, straight edges suggest that the folios have been torn or, more probably, cut. The extremely generous lower, left and right margins of each fragment have been preserved. The first fragment (fol. 1) preserves five lines of text on recto and verso, and the second (fol. 2) preserves six lines on recto and verso. Taking into account the measurements of the average number of letters per line (roughly 14-17), the height of the original parchment is estimated to have been ca. 10-12 cm, excluding margins.

The fragments are written in standard Sahidic in an elegant biblical majuscule or unimodular script. The letters are detached and upright. Some letters display finials, especially ē, τ, †. Oblique and horizontal strokes are very thin. m is in four separate strokes, which is more characteristic of manuscripts from the pre-Arab conquest period. The scribe regularly employs logical punctuation (raised dot), as well as the trema for ī. The Coptic macron is confined to the sonorants m, n, p, with one

1 I would like to thank the curator of manuscripts at Princeton University Library, Don C. Skemer, for kindly giving me permission to publish Garrett Coptic MS 6 here, along with photographs.

2 Fol. 1a lower margin 3 cm, left margin 1.5 cm, right margin 2.2 cm; fol. 1b lower margin 3 cm, left margin 2.4 cm, right margin 1.4 cm. Fol. 2a lower margin 2.5 cm, left margin 1.5 cm, right margin 2.3 cm; fol. 2b lower margin 2.7 cm, left margin 2.5 cm, right margin 1.3 cm.
exception (κ) in fol. 2b l. 1, and the supralinear stroke is employed for the *nomen sacrum* for Jesus in fol. 2a l. 4. There are a few orthographic errors that will be discussed in the notes section below. In the right margin of fol. 2b another scribe has written the letters e, m, π, and a couple other letters that are illegible. It is not clear what purpose these letters served.

Dating small Coptic fragments such as the ones presented here is notoriously difficult; wide dating parameters are necessary. There are essentially no reliable methods in the dating of Coptic manuscripts due to the lack of external and internal evidence, and so I have left the dating open. As mentioned above, the four-stroke m is more common in the pre-conquest period, and the overall impression of the script suggests a pre-conquest date. A useful *comparandum* for this script may be found in sa 505 (reference according to Schüssler), a 6th century manuscript of John. Nothing else can be said, however, with any precision with respect to dating.

Garrett Coptic MS 6 11.4 × 5.9 cm; 10.8 x 5.3 cm Provenance Unknown

For convenience, restorations of lacunae and word division are based on Horner.3 The fragments are collated against Quecke’s edition4 of P.Palau Rib. Inv.-Nr. 183, sa 505, sa 506, sa 507, sa 508, and sa 561, “H” is the abbreviation for Horner’s edition, and “Q” is Quecke’s edition.

Fol. 1a; John 13:29-30

| 1 | ητα ιε ξοος [η]α[β]ι αε βε | Πετήχρια Μμομ Επωμ | (29) |
| 2 | η δεκας εειει έγινε | Κε Ίτέρεψι | Δε Μπο | (30) |
| 5 | Ανοκ Εινα Εροχ Νμοω- | Οψιν Νάω | Εν Τενου |

Fol. 2a; John 13:36

| 1 | [Νέρην] ιε ξαα Ναι Νμι- | Σιμων Πτρος Ε Πιο- | (36) |
| 3 | Εκ Εκεν Ειω Αρω- | Ωμ Ναι Νμιι Ε Πιο | |
| 5 | Ανοκ Εινα Εροχ Νμοω- | Οψιν Νάω | Αν Τενου |

Fol. 1b; John 13:33

| 1 | Νε [ιεωε] Αχω Κατα | Ε Επταίχωος Νμαι- |
| 3 | Δα Δε Πμ Ανοκ Ειν- | Ναβωθ Εροχ Ντωτυ |
| 5 | Ντέτμπαιντ Αλ Εροχ |

Fol. 2b; John 13:38-14:2

| 1 | Εμπατκαρθ Νμοι Νι- | (38) |
| 3 | Νομι Νοιον Επτερθ | (14:1) |
| 5 | Ντέτμπιντε Ερο- | Ουν Νμαι Νμαι |

3 Horner, *Coptic Version*.
4 Quecke, *Das Johannesevangelium saidisch*.
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Fol. 1a
2: $\text{πέτν}¶\text{πέτετν}¶\text{Q}$
3: $\text{xεκας}||\text{xεκας} sa 505$
3: $\text{ειει}||\text{ειει} sa 507 sa 508 H$
4: $\text{δε}||\text{δε} sa 505 sa 506 sa 508 sa 561 H Q$

Fol. 1b
2: $\text{ενταίξω}||\text{νταίξω} sa 506 sa 507 sa 508$
5: $\text{ντετάνα}||\text{ντετάνα} sa 505 sa 506 sa 507 sa 507 sa 561 H Q;$
$\text{ντετάνα}||\text{ντετάνα} sa 508$

Fol. 2a
5: $\text{ε}||\text{να}||\text{να}||\text{βωκ} sa 508; \text{ε}||\text{να}||\text{βωκ} sa 561 Q$
5-6: $\text{ννα}||\text{ννα}||\text{ωγαζ}||\text{ννα}||\text{ωγαζ}||\text{κ} sa 505 sa 506 sa 507 H;$
$\text{ννα}||\text{ωγαζ}||\text{κ} sa 508; \text{κ}||\text{ωγαζ}||\text{κ} sa 561 Q$
6: $\text{νκωει}||\text{νκωει} sa 505 sa 506 sa 507 sa 508 sa 508 sa 561 H Q$

Fol. 2b
1: $\text{εμπατ}||\text{καρνα}||\text{μπκαπαρνα} sa 505 sa 506 sa 506 sa 561 H Q;$
$\text{μπκαπαρνα} sa 508$
5: $\text{ντετ}||\text{πι}||\text{κτε}||\text{γε}||\text{ντετ}||\text{πι}||\text{κτε}||\text{γε} sa 505 sa 506 sa 507 sa 508$
$sa 561 H Q$
5-6: $\text{ερο}||\text{ερο}||\text{i} sa 505 sa 506 sa 507 sa 508 H$

Notes

Fol. 1a
3 The manuscript tradition is divided over the addition or omission of ε before the split optative conjugation base.

Fol. 1b
1 I have restored as $\text{ν[κωε]}$, the one place where I have not followed Horner. This restoration is most probable given the spelling tendencies of the scribe (e.g., $\text{ερο}||\text{ερο}||\text{i}$ [fol. 2b, ll. 5-6]), but also because $\text{νκωε}||\text{ι}$ appears in l. 6 of fol. 2a. Thus, the scribe regularly writes the phoneme /y/ as a diagram.5
2 Our fragment agrees with Horner, sa 505 and sa 561 in reading the sentence converter $\text{εν}||\text{τ}$ instead of $\text{ντ}$ before the affirmative past.

The manuscript tradition is divided over whether to read εἴνα or εἴνα ὑπόκ. At John 13:36b, the NA27 reads ὁποῦ ὑπάγω οὖ δύνασαι μοι νῦν ἀκολουθήσαι.

With Schüssler’s sa 507 our fragment reads the “not yet” conjugation base ἔπαικ instead of the negative past ἐπίκ, the reading of the vast majority of MSS.

The non-standard spelling of Ντεμπίστευ might be explained as an error made in scriptio continua, where the scribe wrote μ in order to account for the bi-labial consonant π in πίστευε.

Bibliography


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Garrett Coptic MS 6. Fol. 1b (top) and Fol. 2a (bottom)