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**A FRAGMENT OF A LITURGICAL CALENDAR  
FROM GEBEL ADDA (EGYPTIAN NUBIA)**

Gebel Adda was an important settlement located on the east Nile bank, some dozens of kilometres north of the second cataract. It was inhabited from at least the beginning of the Common Era until modern times, with its heyday being in the Christian period (6th-15th centuries), especially towards the end of it. During those late-Christian times, the site, known as Atwa in internal Nubian sources and Daw in external Arabic ones, apparently performed the functions of a capital for the Christian Nubian Kingdom of Makuria. Excavated by the mission of the American Research Center in Egypt within the frame of the so-called Nubian Campaign of the 1960s, Gebel Adda is now lost under the waters of the Nubian Lake. Except for some preliminary reports, the results of the excavations were never published, while the artifacts discovered were dispersed all over the world<sup>1</sup>. The most important objects remained in Egypt and are housed in the Egyptian, Coptic, and Islamic Museums in Cairo, and in the Nubia Museum in Aswan. The majority of the finds, however, alongside the documentation of the dig, ended up in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, and a small selection of objects was allotted to the National Geographic Society in Washington DC.

In 2007, A. Łajtar was invited by the Royal Ontario Museum to study and publish the Christian textual material from Gebel Adda in the museum's collection. He was able to identify 57 inscribed objects in stone, ceramic, wood, textile, parchment, and paper<sup>2</sup>, featuring texts in the three principal languages of Christian Nubian literacy, namely Greek, Sahidic Coptic and Old Nubian<sup>3</sup>. They represent a variety of textual categories, in-

<sup>1</sup> N. B. MILLET, *Gebel Adda Preliminary Report for 1963*, in *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*, 2 (1963), p. 147-165, pls XLV-XLVII; ID., *Gebel Adda Expedition Preliminary Report, 1963-1964*, *ibid.*, 3 (1964), p. 7-14, pls I-VIII; ID., *Gebel Adda Preliminary Report, 1965-1966*, *ibid.*, 6 (1967), p. 53-63.

<sup>2</sup> For a general presentation of this material, see A. ŁAJTAR, *A Survey of Christian Textual Finds from Gebel Adda Kept in the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto*, in *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond. Proceedings of the 12<sup>th</sup> International Conference for Nubian Studies*, ed. J. R. ANDERSON – D. A. WELSBY (= *British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan*, 1), Leuven, 2014, pp. 951-959.

<sup>3</sup> For a presentation of the Old Nubian material from Gebel Adda, see A. ŁAJTAR, *Old Nubian Texts from Gebel Adda in the Royal Ontario Museum*, in *Dotawo*, 1 (2014), p. 185-201.

cluding literary and para-literary compositions, epitaphs, magical and apotropaic texts, writing exercises, owners' marks, legal documents, lists and registers, and also some items which are difficult to classify. The last group includes a tiny parchment fragment with the vestiges of a liturgical calendar<sup>4</sup>.

The fragment (ROM 973.24.2932) has no find-spot recorded. It measures 4 cm (height) by 6.3 cm (width). It preserves portions of the side and the bottom edges of a leaf, most probably coming from a codex. Due to the prolonged use of the codex, the corner is rounded and considerably blackened, while the edges are cracked. The parchment is inscribed on both sides, and the physical characteristics of the fragment show that the sequence of writing is hair side-flesh side. The writer used two colours of ink: black for the names of saints and red for day numbers with neighbouring colons marking the numerals (note, however, that the colon is black to the left of the numeral Δ on the hair side, unless red ink blackened in this place). Red ink is also found in the filling of the interior of the round element in ϕ<sup>5</sup>. Letters are small or even very small, ranging between 0.25 cm (o) and 0.7 cm (ϕ) in height; the average height of letters tends to be 0.3-0.4 cm. Paleographically, they may be classified as sloping majuscules. The hand is trained and skilful, though not particularly nice while writing the extant fragment. The scribe abbreviates common words thrice, in lines 2, 3 and 5 of the hair side, through cutting their ends and putting the last preserved letter over the line. καί in line 4 of the flesh side is abbreviated through crossing the lower oblique stroke of κ with a sign resembling the Latin letter S, which otherwise is used as a *siglum* for καί. Numerals are marked with colons on either side of the letter. Colons are not visible with ε. This, however, is probably not due to scribal omission, but to the state of preservation: the red ink faded completely in this part.

The codex, from which the fragment under discussion comes, was probably a Nubian product, even if one cannot exclude the possibility that it was imported from Upper Egypt<sup>6</sup>. Palaeographically, it resembles manu-

<sup>4</sup> The fragment was briefly mentioned and illustrated in ŁAJTAR, *A Survey of Christian Textual Finds...*, p. 955 with fig. 11.

<sup>5</sup> For the custom of filling the round element of ϕ with red ink, widespread in Christian Nubian literacy, see A. TSAKOS, *A Palaeographic Detail from Nubian Manuscripts: the Decoration of the Lobes of the Letter <ϕ> with Red Ink*, in *Greece, Rome, Byzantium and Africa. Studies Presented to Benjamin Hendrickx on his Seventy-fifth Birthday*, ed. W. HENDERSON – E. ZACHAROPOULOU, Athens, 2016, p. 637-652.

<sup>6</sup> Books travelled freely between Upper Egypt and Lower Nubia as is best demonstrated by the so-called Esna-Edfu hoard consisting of manuscript produced mostly in Upper Egyptian scriptoria but partly to the Nubian command and for use in Nubian churches. For the Nubian

scripts with literary texts in Greek, found within the Qasr Ibrim cathedral and originally belonging probably to the cathedral library which was dispersed during the sack of the town by Egyptian troops in 1172/3<sup>7</sup>. Palaeographic criteria including the filling of the round element of ϕ with red (see above) suggest a date in the 10th/11th century.

#### Hair side

Diplomatic transcript	Reading text
[ - - - - - ]ΩΝ	[ - - - - - ]ων
[ - - - - ] . α ρ ` . ´ : Δ :	[ - - - - ] . αρ . ( ) : δ :
[ - - - - ] . ΟΥ Μ Α Ρ ` Τ ´ ε	[ - - - - ] . ου μάρτ(υρος) [ : ] ε [ : ]
4 [ - - - ] Υ : Σ : ΑΘΗΝΩ	[ - - - - ] υ : ς : Ἀθηνω-
[ - - - ] ΩΣΙΟΥ · ΕΠΙΣΚ´	[ γένους ] ὁσίου ἐπισκ(όπου)

#### Flesh side

Diplomatic transcript	Reading text
...Υ . [ - - - ]	...υ . [ - - - Μ α ]-
ΚΑΡΙΟΥ [ - - - ]	καρίου [ - - - ]
ΕΥΦΗΜ [ - - - ]	Εὐφημ[ίας κ(αὶ) Τρύ]-
4 ΦΩΝΟΣ Κ Μ [ - - - ]	φωνος κ(αὶ) Μ[ενελάου]

#### Hair side

2. Vague traces of a letter above α suggest that we are dealing with an abbreviated word. One is tempted to read [ - - - - ] μάρτ(υρος) as in the following line.

4-5. The correct spelling should be Ἀθηνογένους ὁσίου. The scribe replaced twice ο with ω.

#### Flesh side

3. With its 12 letters, the line as reconstructed above is a little bit too short in comparison with lines 5 on the hair side and 4 on the flesh side,

component of the Esna-Edfu hoard, see J. VAN DER VLIET, *Nubian Voices from Edfu: Egyptian Scribes and Nubian Patrons in Southern Egypt*, in *Nubian Voices. II: New Texts and Studies on Christian Nubian Culture*, ed. A. ŁAJTAR – G. OCHAŁA – J. VAN DER VLIET (= *Journal of Juristic Papyrology. Supplement*, 27), Warsaw, 2015, p. 263-277.

<sup>7</sup> The closest similarity show paper fragments with liturgical texts identified by the editors as prayers relating to censuring of the altar and welfare of travellers; cf. W. H. C. FREND – G. DRAGAS – S. KONTOYIANNIS, *Some Further Greek Liturgical Fragments from Q'asr Ibrim*, in *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, 35 (1992), p. 127-129, pl. 3a./f.

which have 15 and 14 letters respectively. Perhaps the conjunction καί was written in full, which would give 14 letters as in the next line.

### *The saints*

Among the fragmentary names preserved on this scrap, we can with confidence recognise three saints: Athenogenes (Ἀθηνῶ[γένους]), Euphemia (Εὐφημ[ίας]), and Tryphon (Τρύ[φωνος]). All of them are martyrs whose feasts were celebrated in July in several ecclesiastical calendars.

Athenogenes, bishop of Pedachthoe in Armenia and martyr, was celebrated on 24 July according to the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*<sup>8</sup>, and on 17 July according to the saint's Greek *Passiones* (BHG 197b, 197), and the Constantinopolitan *Synaxarium*<sup>9</sup>. He was a martyred bishop, also described as the head of a monastery in his later martyrdom account (BHG 197), which would justify his characterization as both an *episokopos* and *hosios* — the latter is normally used for monastic saints in the Greek tradition<sup>10</sup>.

It is tempting to suggest an alternative reading for ὁσίου as Ἀθαν[ασίου], and to regard him as Athanasius of Klysma, a martyr of great popularity in the Ethiopian tradition, whose feast fell on 18 July — one day after Athenogenes<sup>11</sup>. Yet neither the space available nor the pretty clear writing of ὁσίου favour this reading. Besides, Athanasius was not a bishop.

With regard to Euphemia of Chalcedon, the *Synaxarium of Constantinople*, and the Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium* place her feast on 11 July<sup>12</sup>,

<sup>8</sup> *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, VIII kalend. Aug. (= AASS, Nov. t. II/1, p. 95).

<sup>9</sup> *Synax. CP*, col. 825 (17 Jul., 2°).

<sup>10</sup> P. MARAVAL, *La Passion inédite de S. Athénogène de Pédachthoé en Cappadoce* (BHG 197b) (= *Subs. hag.*, 75), Bruxelles, 1990; E. RIZOS, *The Cult of Saints*, E02993 (<http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E02993>), E03171 (<http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E03171>). Online corpus, accessed 10/02/2019

<sup>11</sup> BHG 193: A. PAPADOPOULOS-KERAMEUS, Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας, V, Saint-Petersburg, 1898, p. 360-367; *The Martyrdom of Athanasius of Klysma, a Saint from the Egyptian Desert*. Study, edition and translation of the Greek and Arabic Texts by V. CHRISTIDES – Chr. HØGEL – J. P. MONFERRER-SALA, Athens, 2012, p. 73-81 (Greek text) and 83-89 (English translation). Georgian Calendar of Ioane Zosime, 18 July (ed. G. GARITTE, *Le calendrier palestino-géorgien du sinaiticus 34 [X<sup>e</sup> siècle]* [= *Subs. hag.*, 30], Bruxelles, 1958, p. 79 and 283); N. ALEKSIDZE, *The Cult of Saints*, E03804 (<http://csa.history.ox.ac.uk/record.php?recid=E03804>).

<sup>12</sup> *Synax. CP*, col. 811; *Coptic Synaxarium*, 17 Abib / 11 July (ed. R. BASSET, *Le synaxaire arabe jacobite (redaction copte)*. V: *Les mois de Baunah, Abib, Mesorè et jours complémentaires* (= *Patrologia Orientalis*, 17/3), Paris, 1923, p. 661 [1203]-662 [1204]); the *Coptic Synaxarium* also records a feast of Euphemia on 12 Paona / 6 June (*ibid.*, p. 557 [1099]-559 [1101]).

whereas the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum* records her earlier, on 3 July. On the same day, the *Hieronymianum* also records the feast of Tryphon and Menelaus, which was celebrated at both Constantinople and Alexandria<sup>13</sup>. These names can therefore be suggested for reconstructing the words Τρύ]φωνος κ(αὶ) Μ[ενελάου], following Euphemia's. No hagiography has survived for Tryphon and Menelaus, so the profile of these saints remains obscure.

Just above the name of Euphemia there seems to be the word Makarios (Μα]καρίου). If this is the name of a saint, it is not recorded in the Greek and Latin sources. It can perhaps be identified as the Egyptian martyr Macarius, “son of Basilides, minister of Diocletian”, whose feast is recorded on 22 Epiphi (16 July) in the Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium*, and is still observed on that day by the Coptic Orthodox Church. Alternatively, the word may be an epithet (“blessed”) accompanying the lost name of a saint.

All this leads us to two possible reconstructions. If the sequence of writing was hair side to flesh side, as the physical characteristics of the fragment indicate, the feasts will have followed an unusual sequence from later to earlier, as follows:

[...]

Athenogenes of Pedachthoe, 17 or 24 July

[...]

Macarius / a blessed saint

Euphemia of Chalcedon, 3 or 11 July

Tryphon and Menelaus, 3 July.

Such a reading seems unlikely for a calendar, and is not supported by the appearance of numerals next to the names of hair side, which indicate a normal sequence, from earlier to later. Thus the likeliest reconstruction suggests a flesh to hair side reading, and a sequence of feasts as follows:

Macarius / a blessed saint

Euphemia of Chalcedon, 3 July

Tryphon and Menelaus, 3 July

[...]

Athenogenes of Pedachthoe, 17 or 24 July

For its tiny size, the fragment of Gebel Adda provides an interesting attestation of a liturgical calendar used by the Nubian Church, which apparently shared common elements with other early Christian calendars of the East. The inclusion of Athenogenes of Pedachthoe among the saints is

<sup>13</sup> *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, V nonas Iul. (= AASS, Nov. t. II/1, p. 86).

particularly interesting, since it confirms the presence of this Armenian martyr's cult in the lands of the Nile. Although his feast was not included in the calendars of the Coptic tradition, Athenogenes' cult in Egypt is attested, since he is one of the saints who occasionally accompany St Menas on his ampullae<sup>14</sup>.

The combination of the names corresponds to saints whom most of the known Christian calendars record in July, and in a sequence consistent with them. Yet did the absolute dates in the Nubian manuscript coincide with those known from the Greek, Latin, and Coptic calendars? Before Athenogenes' name, there appears the numeral Ϛ. If this is the sixth of a month, it would either be 6 Mesore (30 July) or 6 Epiphi (30 June). Both dates are quite far from the saint's feast on 16/17 July, but 6 Mesore is relatively close to 24 July. In either case, this would mean substantial discrepancies of several days in the Nubian calendar.

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*Résumé.* Cet article propose l'édition d'un fragment de parchemin trouvé dans les années 1960 au Gebel Adda (Nubie égyptienne) et aujourd'hui conservé au Royal Ontario Museum, à Toronto. Le fragment, copié sur les deux faces, provient probablement d'un codex datable des X<sup>e</sup>/XI<sup>e</sup> s., sur base de la paléographie. Il offre un fragment de calendrier liturgique en grec, donnant les noms de saints et les jours d'un mois. Les noms lisibles comprennent Athénogène (de Pédachthoé), Euphémie (de Chalcédoine), Tryphon et Ménélas. Tous étaient des martyrs vénérés en juillet selon divers calendriers chrétiens, parmi lesquels le Martyrologe hiéronymien, le Synaxaire de Constantinople et le Synaxaire copto-arabe. Les dates précises de ces fêtes sur le fragment du Gebel Adda ne peuvent être identifiées avec certitude, mais leur succession concorde avec les autres calendriers, attestant ainsi que le calendrier liturgique utilisé en Nubie chrétienne ne différait pas foncièrement de ceux des autres parties du monde chrétien.

<sup>14</sup> C. M. KAUFMANN, *Archäologische Miscellen aus Ägypten*, in *Oriens Christianus*, 2-3 (1913), p. 105-106; J. WITT, *Werke der Alltagskultur. Teil 1: Menasampullen (= Spätantike – Frühes Christentum – Byzanz. Grundlagen und Monumente, 2)*, Wiesbaden, 2000, p. 55.



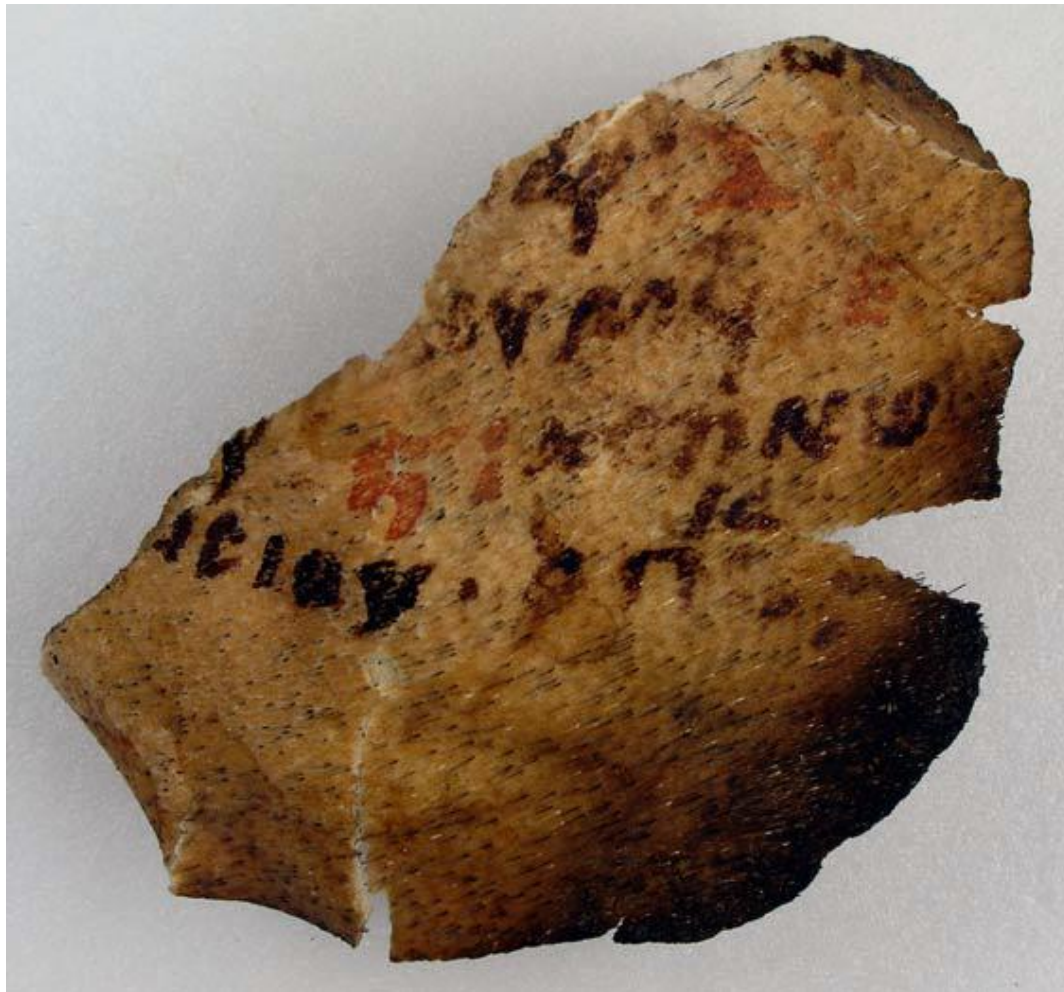


Fig. 1: Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum, fragm. ROM 973.24.2932. Hair-side  
@ Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, phot. Bill Pratt



Fig. 2: Toronto, Royal Ontario Museum, fragm. ROM 973.24.2932. Flesh-side  
@ Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, phot. Bill Pratt