

Ten Unpublished Coptic Orders on Ostraca from Bawit

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Abstract:

Coptic orders are economic documents that help identify the types and quantities of agricultural crops that were grown and consumed in specific regions during certain time periods. The aim of the present paper is to publish ten Coptic orders on ostraca, which are now kept in the Abou El-Goud storage magazine at Luxor. However, I have found no information on these texts except that they were in the possession of a person called Zaki Mohareb. Eight of these documents are for wheat, while the remaining two relate to liquid commodities; one is about wine, and the other is about a liquid commodity that is unclear due to the incompleteness of the text.

الملخص:

الطلبات القبطية هي وثائق اقتصادية تساعد في التعرف على أنواع وكميات المحاصيل الزراعية التي زُرعت وأستهلكت في مناطق معينة خلال فترات زمنية محددة. وتهدف هذه الورقة البحثية إلى نشر عشر طلبات قبطية مكتوبة على أوستراكا، وهي محفوظة الآن بالمخزن المتحفي بأبو الجود بالأقصر. ومع ذلك، لم أجد أية معلومات عن هذه النصوص سوى أنها كانت في حيازة شخص يدعى زكي محارب. ثمانية من هذه الوثائق مخصصة لمحصول القمح، بينما تتعلق الوثيقتان المتبقيتان بسلع سائلة؛ إحداهما تتعلق بالنبيذ، والأخرى بسلعة سائلة غير واضحة بسبب عدم اكتمال النص.

Keywords:

Abou El-Goud storage magazine, Bawit, Coptic orders, Wheat, Wine.

الكلمات الدالة:

المخزن المتحفي بأبو الجود، باويط، طلبات قبطية، قمح، نبيذ.

Introduction:

The ten Coptic ostraca published below are currently kept in the Abou El-Goud storage magazine at Luxor. They are registered in a collection entitled Zaki Mohareb.¹ Regrettably, no further contextual data has been recorded that would help identify their origins. I have observed that all of these ostraca begin with the formula $\omega\pi\iota\kappa\epsilon\ \text{nc}\alpha$ -, a phrase widely employed in the Bawit area.² In contrast, this formula appears only once in the regions of Dayr El-Balizah and Madinet Habu.³ This expression constitutes a key component of orders concerning the transportation of goods—a practice particularly prevalent in Bawit during the eighth century AD.⁴ It is worth noting also that these ostraca: eight are dedicated to wheat (nos. 736, 2536, 3622, 3595 and 2824). As for the remaining two, one is dedicated to wine (no. 3622), while the other (no. 2824) is a fragment that appears relate to a liquid commodity, and the measure *laken* confirms that.

1. Orders to supply Wheat:

i. O.Abou el-Goud⁵ 736

Zaki Mohareb

11.3 × 7 cm

Bawit

Register no.1: 736 (Figs. 1–2)

8th cent. (?)

Ribbed dark brown pottery. The script is composed of seven lines of Sahidic Coptic in black ink. The text opened with the Staurogram.⁶ The ink is faded at the beginning of the last line and there is an ink stain at the end. Both of these factors affect the reading of the date. The hand is skillful: letters are clear, upright, and some of them are neat with ligatures. Hyphen is used twice (ll. 1 and 5). Trema occurs irregularly (ll. 4–5). The period (·) is used once (l. 6). A supralinear stroke is never used.

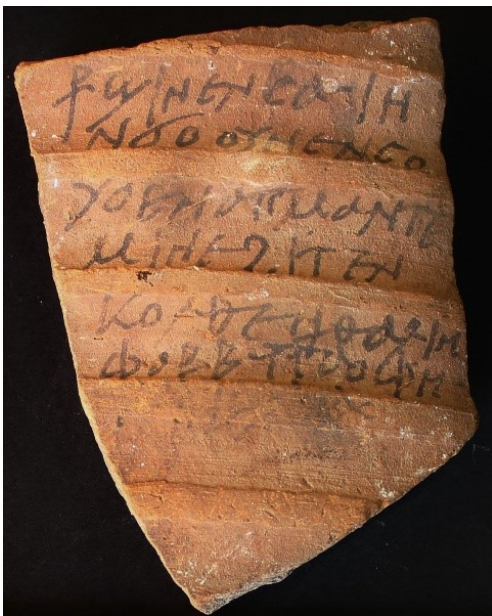


Fig. 1. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

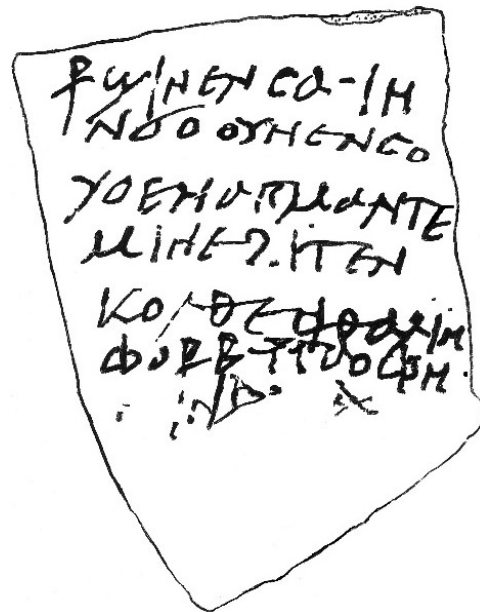


Fig. 2. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

ⲫⲱⲛⲉⲛϥⲁ-ⲓⲛ
 ⲛⲟⲟⲟⲩⲛⲉⲛϥ
 ⲩⲟⲩⲛⲁⲛⲙⲁⲛⲧⲉ-
 ⲙⲓⲛⲉⲩⲓⲧⲉⲛ
 5 ⲕⲟⲗⲑⲉⲛⲓⲧⲁⲩ-ⲓⲛ
 ⲫⲟⲣⲓⲃⲛⲁⲟⲫⲏ .
 . [] ⲓⲛⲁⲩⲓ traces ⲁⲓ

5 γίνεται, ⲛⲓ ostr. θαλλία, ⲑⲁⲓ ostr. 6 φορά, ⲫⲟⲣ ostr. 7 ἰνδικτιών, ⲓⲛⲁⲩ ostr.

ⲫ Enquire after 18 sacks of wheat which belong to the place of Temine through Kolthe. Total: 18 sacks. 2nd convoy. [] (day of the month) Paophi, [] (year of) Indiction ...

It is noted that the writer divided this order into six phrases; the $\omega\iota\eta\epsilon\ \text{NCA}$ formula (l. 1), the quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–4), the carrier's name (ll. 4–5), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (l. 5), the number of the *phora* (l. 6), and finally the date formula (ll. 6–7).

- 1–4 - $\iota\eta\ |\ \text{NCOOYNE NCO|YO ENA NMA NTE|MINE}$. The writer put the punctuation mark (hyphen) to the left side of the number 18 here and on the fifth line as well, perhaps to highlight the required quantity of wheat. The use of the relative particle ϵ instead of the genitive article NTE is rare, appearing only in three barley orders from Bawit.⁷ Moreover, this toponym NMA NTEMINE does not appear elsewhere in the texts.
- 5 $\text{KOLΘE GI/ ΘA/ - } \iota\eta$. The name of carrier KOLΘE is a Greek variant of κολοῦθος .⁸ It is mentioned in many texts from Bawit.⁹ The Greek equivalent $\sigmaίτου$ of the Coptic word COYO is neglected, a phenomenon attested in two orders to supply wheat, both dating back to the eighth century AD, with the first originating from Bawit ($\gammaί(\nu\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota)\ \theta\alpha\lambda(\lambda\acute{\iota}\alpha)$) and the second likely from there as well ($\gammaί(\nu\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota)\ \theta\alpha\lambda\lambda(\acute{\iota}\alpha)$).¹⁰
- 6 ΦOP/ B . The placement of the number of the *phora* before the date formula constitutes an exceptional case not attested elsewhere in this type of text.
- 6–7 $\text{NAOΦH | [] } \iota\eta\Delta/$. The Coptic word NAOΦH is close to NAOΦH , this interchange of O and ω is usual.¹¹ The last line is faded, making its reading difficult.

ii. O. Abou el-Goud 2536

Zaki Mohareb
Register no. 2: 2536 (Figs. 3–4)

9.1 × 7 cm

Bawit
8th cent. (?)

Ribbed brown pottery. This text consists of six lines of Sahidic Coptic written in black ink and begins with the Latin cross.¹² Some parts are faint. Letters are written in a clear majuscule script, slightly tilting to the right with a few ligatures. Trem is employed once (l. 1). A supralinear stroke is used irregularly (ll. 2–4).

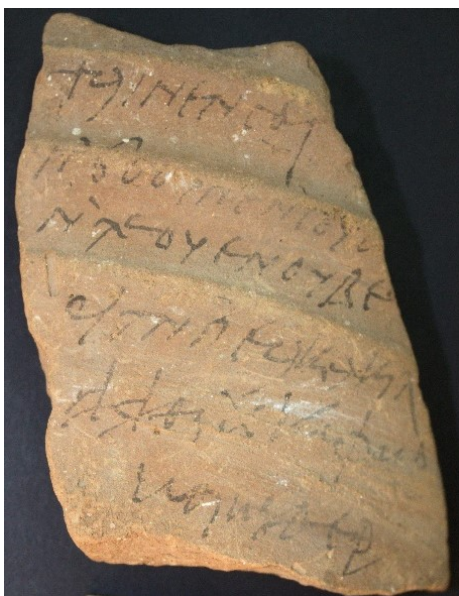


Fig. 3. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

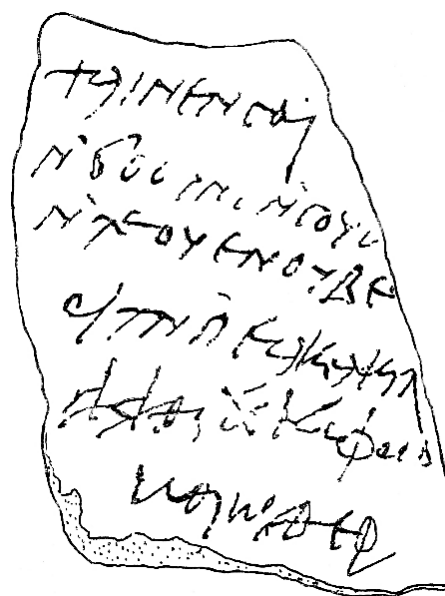


Fig. 4. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

ⲛⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ ⲓ
 ⲛⲃⲟⲟⲩⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲟⲩⲟ
 ⲛⲧⲉ ⲟⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩⲃⲉ
 ⲛⲧⲛ ⲡⲉⲩⲕⲁⲕⲁ

5 Ⲓⲓ/ ⲕⲓ/ ⲙⲓ ⲁⲉⲕⲁ ⲡⲁⲱⲡ
 ⲕⲙ ⲓⲛⲁ/ ⲙⲉ ⲉ ⲡⲓ/

5 γίνεται, Ⲓⲓ/ ostr. σίτου, ⲕⲓ/ ostr. θαλλία, ⲙⲓ ostr. δέκα Φαῶφι, ⲡⲁⲱⲡ ostr. 6 ἰνδικτιῶν, ⲓⲛⲁ/ ostr. φορά, ⲡⲓ/ ostr.

Enquire after 10 sacks of wheat from Ouenoube through Pefkaki. Total: ten sacks of wheat. 21st (day of the month) Phaoph, 9th (year of) Indiction. 5th convoy.

This script composed of six phrases: the ⲛⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ formula (l. 1), the quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–3), the carrier's name (l. 4), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (l. 5), the date formula (ll. 5–6), and finally the number of the *phora* (l. 6).

3 ⲟⲩⲉⲛⲟⲩⲃⲉ. A similar variant ⲟⲩⲛⲟⲩⲃⲉ of this toponym is mentioned in an order to supply wheat from Bawit. Regarding this place, Hasitzka believes that it may be close to Bawit, as it is located within Hermopolite region.¹³

4 ⲡⲉⲩⲕⲁⲕⲁ. The name of this carrier, Pefkaki, is not attested elsewhere.

iii. O. Abou el-Goud 3622

Zaki Mohareb

8 × 9.7 cm

Bawit

Register no. 2: 3622 (Figs. 5–6)

8th cent. (?)

Brown pottery. The order is comprised of five lines of Sahidic Coptic in black ink. The Greek cross¹⁴ comes at the beginning of the text. The script is clumsy and upright with a few ligatures. Trema is used once (l. 1). Supralinear strokes and dots occur in alternation over ⲛ (ll. 1–3).

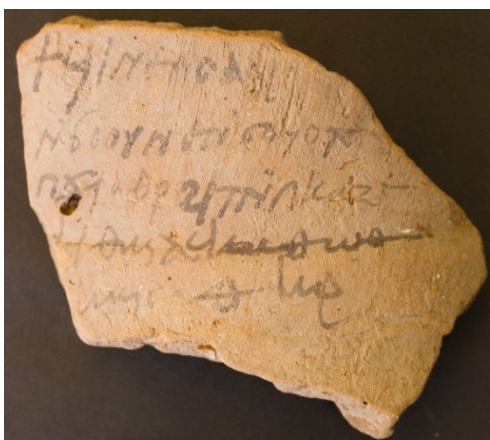


Fig. 5. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

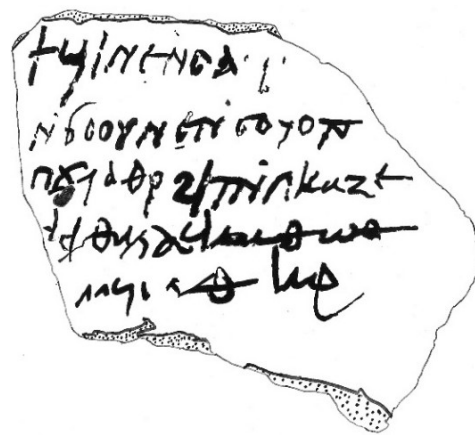


Fig. 6. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

+ ⲛⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ ⲓ
 ⲛⲃⲟⲟⲩⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲟⲩⲟ ⲛⲧ[ⲉ]

ΠΧΙΑΘΡ ΖΙΤΝ ΠΚΑΖΕ

ΓΙ/ CΙ/ ΘΑΛΛΑ, ΔΕΚΑ Ι ΘΩΘ

5 ΙΝΔΙΚ/ Θ ΙΒ Φ/

4 γίνεται, ΓΙ/ ostr. σίτου, CΙ/ ostr. θαλλία, ΘΑΛΛΑ ostr. δέκα Θώθ 5 ἰνδικτιών, ΙΝΔΙΚ/ ostr. φορά, Φ/ ostr.

+ Enquire after 10 sacks of wheat of Pjiathr through Pkaze. Total: ten sacks of wheat. 10th (day of the month) Thot, 8th (year of) Indiction. 12th convoy.

This script is composed of six phrases: the $\omega\eta\eta\epsilon\ \eta\kappa\alpha$ formula (l. 1), the quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–3), the carrier's name (l. 3), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (l. 4), the date formula (ll. 4–5), and finally the number of the *phora* (l. 5).

3 ΠΧΙΑΘΡ. This toponym, Pjiathr, appears in this variant ΠΧΙΑΘΡ/ in an order to supply bread dated between the seventh and eighth centuries.¹⁵

3 ΖΙΤΝ ΠΚΑΖΕ. Although the name of this carrier, Pkaze, is not attested elsewhere, the name ΠΚΑΣ represents a close orthographic form.¹⁶

iv. O. Abou el-Goud 3622

Zaki Mohareb

6 × 7.4 cm

Bawit

Register no. 2: 3622 (Figs. 7–8)

8th cent. (?)

Ribbed brown pottery. This ostracon consists of five lines of Sahidic Coptic written in black ink. The Staurogram¹⁷ is written at the start of the text.¹⁸ Unfortunately, the fading of the ink on the right side of the lines had a negative effect on the readability of the text. The handwriting appears clear, thin, and slanting to right with a few ligatures. Supralinear strokes and dots occur irregularly over η (ll. 1–2).

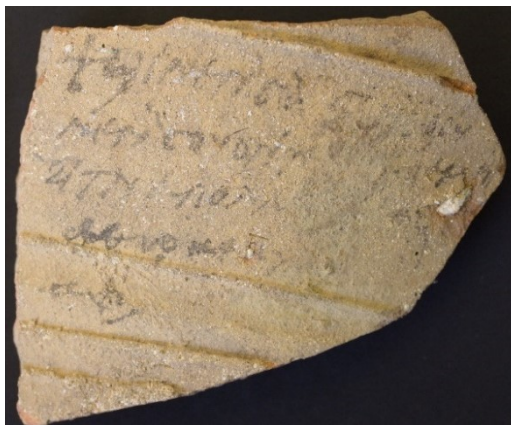


Fig. 7. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

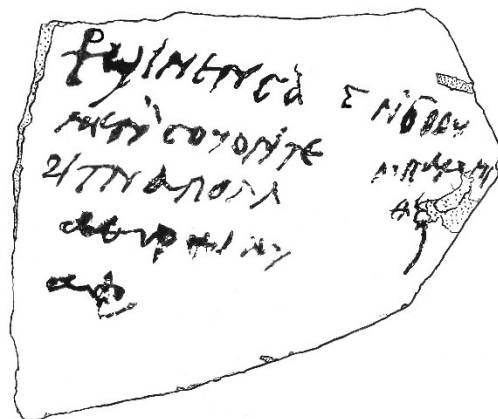


Fig. 8. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

† $\omega\eta\eta\epsilon\ \eta\kappa\alpha\ \varsigma\ \eta\delta\theta\theta\gamma-$

$\eta\epsilon\ \eta\kappa\theta\gamma\theta\ \eta\tau\epsilon\ [\]\ \theta\varsigma\ \pi\alpha\iota\lambda\eta$

$\varsigma\iota\tau\eta\ \alpha\pi\theta\alpha\lambda\lambda[\omega\ \Gamma\iota/\ C\iota/] \ \Theta/\ \chi[1]$

αθϣρ ιε ινα/ []
5 α φ/

3 γίνεται, ρι/ ostr. σίτου, ci/ ostr. θαλλία, θ/ ostr. εξι, ζ[ι] ostr. 4 Ἀθύρ ἰνδικτιών, ινα/ ostr. 5 φορά, φ/ ostr.

Enquire after 6 sacks of wheat of []ocpaile through Apoll[o. Total:] si[x] sacks [of wheat], 15th (day of the month) Hathyr, [] (year of) Indiction. 1st convoy.

This text composed of the opening formula the $\omega\iota\eta\epsilon\ \eta\varsigma\alpha$ (l. 1), the quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–2), the carrier's name (l. 3), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (l. 3), the date formula (l. 4), and finally the number of the *phora* (l. 5).

3 ἀπολλ[ω]. The name of this carrier, Apollo, is mentioned in several ostraca from Bawit.¹⁹

v. O. Abou el-Goud 3622

Zaki Mohareb

9.2 × 11.2 cm

Bawit

Register no. 2: 3622 (Figs. 9–10)

8th cent. (?)

Brown pottery. The text consists of six lines of Sahidic Coptic written in black ink. Letters are generally clear, with some slightly sloping to the right and a few ligatures. Faded ink sometimes affects readability, and a break in the upper right corner has caused the loss of part of the text. The script begins with the Latin cross.²⁰ Supralinear strokes are employed irregularly (ll. 1–3).

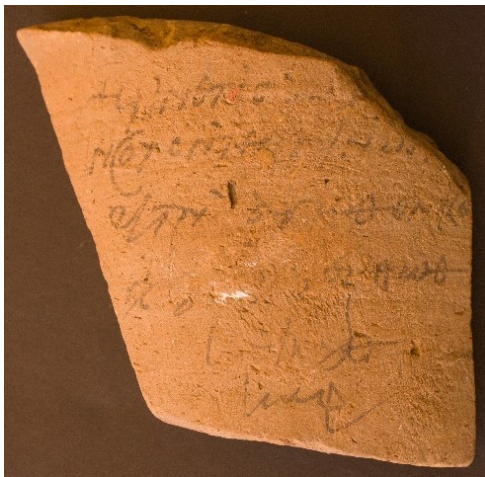


Fig. 9. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

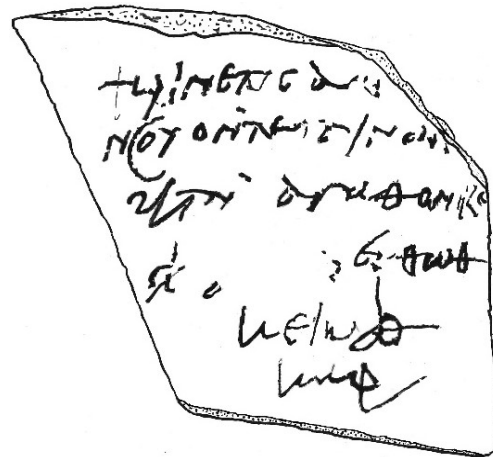


Fig. 10. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

† $\omega\iota\eta\epsilon\ \eta\varsigma\alpha\ \theta$ [Ἰϥϣϣϣϣϣϣ]
 $\eta\varsigma\omicron\gamma\omicron\ \eta\tau\epsilon$ [ἈΝ]ΤΙΝΟΟ[Υ]
 ϣΙΤῆ ἈΓΑΘΟΝΚΕ
 ρι/ c[ι] θαλλ/ εἰν[ε]α ἑωθ
 5 κε ινα/ θ
 κα φ/

4 γίνεται, ρι/ ostr. σίτου, ci/ ostr. θαλλία, θαλλ/ ostr. εννέα ἑωθ 5 ἰνδικτιών, ινα/ ostr. 6 φορά, φ/ ostr.

† Enquire after 9 [sacks] of wheat of [An]tino[e] through Aghathonke. Total: ni[n]e sacks of wheat]. 25th (day of the month) Thot, 9th (year of) Indiction. 21st convoy.

The writer has divided this order into six phrases; the $\omega\iota\eta\epsilon \ \acute{\nu}\alpha$ formula (l. 1), quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–2), the carrier's name (l. 3), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (l. 4), the date formula (ll. 4–5), and the number of the *phora* (l. 6).

- 2 $\alpha\tau\tau\iota\eta\eta\omega[\chi]$. This variant of the toponym, Antinoe, is mentioned in a few texts from Bawit.²¹
- 3 $\alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\omega\eta\kappa\epsilon$. This variant of the name, Aghathonke, is not attested elsewhere, but a close related orthographic form $\alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\omega\eta\kappa\epsilon$ occurs in a text dated to the eighth century AD.²²

vi. O. Abou el-Goud 3622

Zaki Mohareb

8.5 × 6.1 cm

Bawit

Register no. 2: 3622 (Figs. 11–12)

8th cent. (?)

This order, written in black ink on ribbed brown pottery, with complete seven lines in Sahidic Coptic. The text begins with the Staurogram.²³ Letters seem irregular and slightly tilting to the right with a few ligatures. Although the ink is faded and smudged in places, the text is somewhat legible. Supralinear strokes appear irregularly (ll. 1–4), A supralinear dot is written in $\acute{\nu}\alpha$ (l. 1).



Fig. 11. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

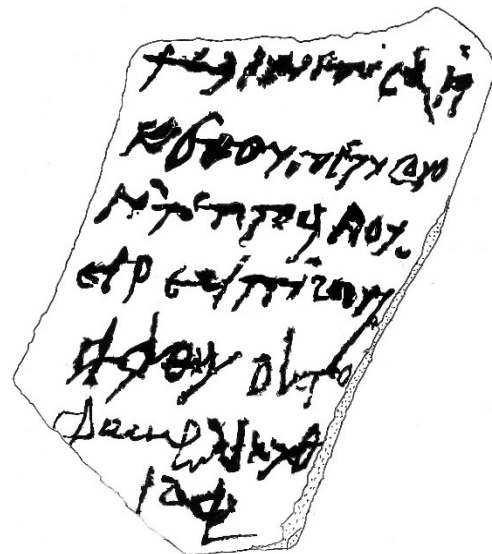


Fig. 12. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

† $\omega\iota\eta\epsilon \ \acute{\nu}\alpha \ \eta$
 $\bar{\eta}\bar{\sigma}\bar{\sigma}\bar{\omega}\bar{\gamma}\bar{\eta}\bar{\epsilon} \ \bar{\eta}\bar{\sigma}\bar{\omega}\bar{\gamma}\bar{\omega}$
 $\bar{\eta}\bar{\tau}\bar{\epsilon} \ \bar{\rho}\bar{\tau}\bar{\omega}\bar{\gamma} \ \bar{\eta}\bar{\omega}\bar{\gamma}\bar{\omega}$
 $\bar{\epsilon}\bar{\iota}\bar{\rho}\bar{\epsilon} \ \bar{\gamma}\bar{\iota}\bar{\tau}\bar{\eta} \ \bar{\gamma}\bar{\omega}\bar{\omega}\bar{\gamma}\bar{\iota}$
 5 $\bar{\rho}\bar{\iota} \ \bar{\sigma}\bar{\iota} \ \bar{\theta}\bar{\alpha}\bar{\lambda}\bar{\iota} \ \bar{\omega}\bar{\kappa}\bar{\tau}\bar{\omega}$

ΦΔΩΦ/ Δ ΙΝΔ/ Θ
ΙΑ Φ/

5 γίνεται, ΓΙ/ ostr. σίτου, CΙ/ ostr. θαλλία, ΘΑΛ/ ostr. οκτώ 6 Φαῶφι, ΦΔΩΦ/ ostr. ἰνδικτιών, ΙΝΔ/ ostr. 7 φορά, Φ/ ostr.

Enquire after 8 sacks of wheat of the mountain of Oueire through Hooui. Total: eight sacks of wheat. 4th (day of the month) Phaophi, 9th (year of) Indiction. 14th convoy.

This script composed of six phrases: the $\omega\iota\eta\epsilon\ \nu\epsilon\alpha$ formula (l. 1), the quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–4), the carrier's name (l. 4), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (l. 5), the date formula (l. 6), and finally the number of the *phora* (l. 7).

2–3 $\pi\tau\omicron\gamma\ \eta\omicron\gamma\omega\lambda\epsilon\iota\epsilon$. This variant $\tau\omicron\gamma$ is not listed in Crum²⁴ and Kasser,²⁵ and it seems that the scribe used the assimilation between $\omicron$ and $\omicron\omicron$ ²⁶ in an exceptional manner in this word only. I think that reading the origin of the wheat place is the mountain of Oueire but it is possible that it is the mountain of Osiris. Since some letters are faded, it should be noted that this place, in either reading, is not mentioned somewhere else.

4 $\zeta\omicron\omicron\gamma\iota$. This name is not attested elsewhere, but it appears to be derived from the Bohairic word $\zeta\omicron\omicron\gamma\iota$ “strike, cast, lay”.²⁷

vii. O. Abou el-Goud 3595

Zaki Mohareb

10.2 × 8.5 cm

Bawit

Register no. 2: 3595 (Figs. 13–14)

8th cent. (?)

The text consists of five lines of Sahidic Coptic. Although the black ink is faded in places, the text remains readable. The pottery is ribbed and brown. Letters are clear, thin, and sloping to the right with a few ligatures. The Latin cross²⁸ is placed in front of the text. A double oblique hyphen is placed on either side of the number κ (l. 1). Supralinear strokes occur irregularly (ll. 1–2). A supralinear dot is written in $\zeta\iota\tau\eta$ (l. 3). A supralinear dot is written in $\zeta\iota\tau\eta$ (l. 3).

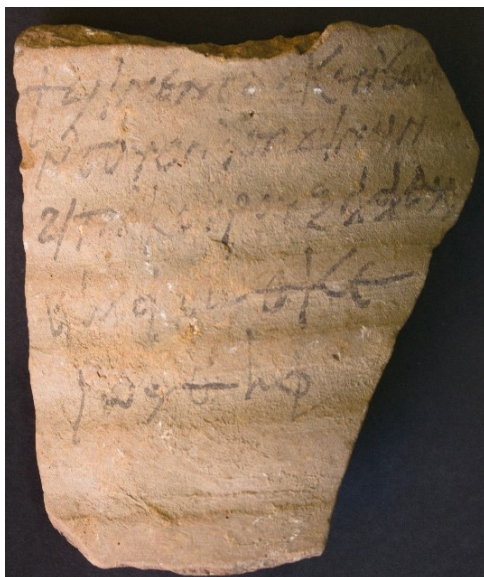


Fig. 13. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

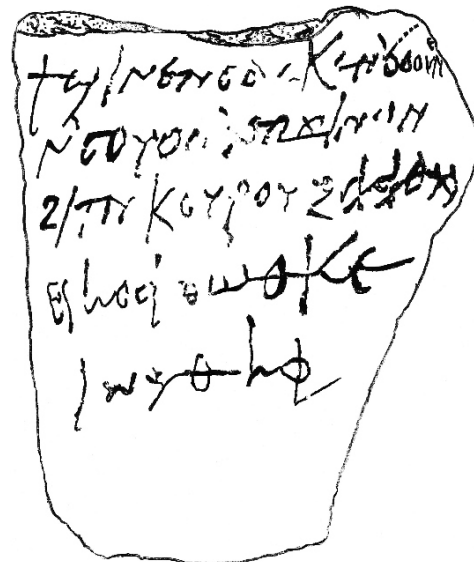


Fig. 14. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

† ωΙΝΕ ΝCΔ ϰϰ ἸCΘOYNE
 ἸCΘYO ἸTE ΠXINΩN
 ΣITḲ KOYPOY2 ΓI/ CI/ ΘAΛ,
 EIKOCI ΘΩΘ KE

5 ΙNΔ/ Θ Η Φ/

3 γίνεται, ΓI/ ostr. σίτου, CI/ ostr. θαλλία, ΘAΛ, ostr. 4 εἴκοσι Θωθ 5 ἰνδικτιών, ΙNΔ/ ostr. φορά, Φ/ ostr.

† Enquire after 20 sacks of wheat of Pjinon through Kourouh. Total: twenty sacks of wheat. 25th (day of the month) Thot, 9th (year of) Indiction. 8th convoy.

The writer divided this order into six phrases: the ωΙΝΕ ΝCΔ formula (ll. 1), the quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–2), the carrier's name (l. 3), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (ll. 3–4), the date formula (ll. 4–5), and the number of the *phora* (l. 5).

- 1 ϰϰ ἸCΘOYNE. The use of the double oblique hyphen on both sides of the number is known in Bawit orders.²⁹ Perhaps the purpose of this was to highlight the required quantity.
- 2 ΠXINΩN. This toponym, which may be the name of a monastery, has not been mentioned anywhere.
- 3 ΣITḲ KOYPOY2. The name of the carrier, Kourouh, seems to be uncommon as it has not occurred anywhere else.

viii. O. Abou el-Goud 2824

Zaki Mohareb

10.7 × 10.2 cm

Bawit

Register no. 2: 2824 (Figs. 15–16)

8th cent. (?)

The ostracon is written on brown pottery; it is composed of five lines in Sahidic Coptic. The handwriting is clear, uneven, and slightly tilting to the right with a few ligatures. The text starts with the Latin cross.³⁰ Supralinear strokes are used irregularly (ll. 1–2). Supralinear dots occur twice (ll. 2–3).

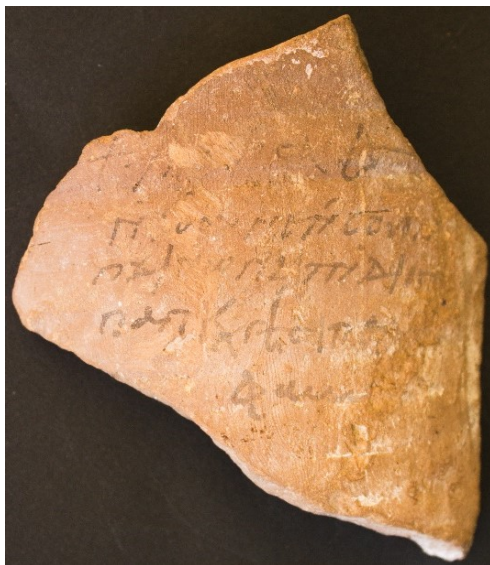


Fig. 15. – Order to supply Wheat
 (photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

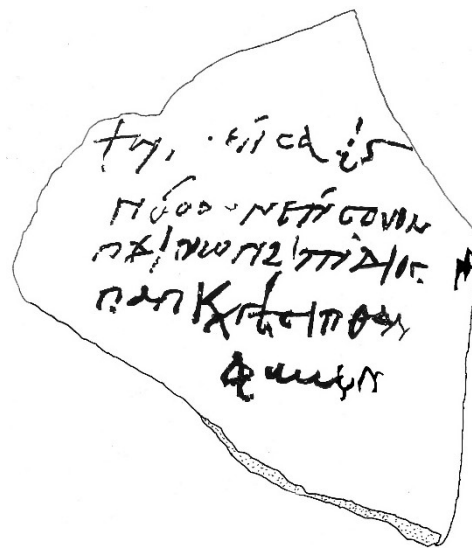


Fig. 16. – Order to supply Wheat
 (drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

† ⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ ⲓⲥ
 ⲛⲉⲟⲟⲩⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲟⲩⲟ ⲛ[ⲧⲉ]
 ⲛⲭⲓⲛⲟⲛ ⲥⲓⲧⲛ ⲁⲓⲟⲥ[ⲕⲟ]ⲣⲉ
 ⲛⲁⲛⲕ/ ⲓ/ ⲥⲓⲧ/ ⲑⲁⲗⲗ/ [ⲁⲉⲕⲁⲉⲗⲓ]

5 ⲡⲁⲱⲡ/ ⲥ

4 καμηλών, κ/ ostr. γίνεται, ⲓ/ ostr. σίτου, ⲥⲓⲧ/ ostr. θαλλία, ⲑⲁⲗⲗ/ ostr. δεκάξι 5 Φαῶφι, ⲡⲁⲱⲡ/ ostr.

† *Enquire after 16 sacks of wheat of Pjinon through Dios[ko]re, the camel driver. Total: [sixteen] sacks of wheat. 6th (day of the month) Phaophi.*

This order included five phrases: the ⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ formula (ll. 1), the quantity and origin of the wheat (ll. 1–3), the carrier's name (ll. 3–4), the summary of the required quantity of wheat (l. 4), and the date formula (l. 5).

3 ⲛⲭⲓⲛⲟⲛ. It is worth noting that this toponym has only appeared previously in the preceding text (no. 7), and this may indicate that it was one of the sites that played an important economic role in bringing wheat.

3–4 ⲥⲓⲧⲛ ⲁⲓⲟⲥ[ⲕⲟ]ⲣⲉ | ⲛⲁⲛⲕ/. The carrier's name ⲁⲓⲟⲥ[ⲕⲟ]ⲣⲉ is not attested in other orders from Bawit. As for his occupation as a camel driver ⲛⲁⲛⲕ/ (i.e. who belongs to stable), this function played a prominent role in the economic activity of Bawit, as they were the main transport link for goods associated with this monastery. Some orders indicate that this function was assigned to serve specific internal departments within the monastery. However, it was not clear whether these drivers were monks serving the units in which they worked or hired workers from outside the monastery.³¹

5 ⲡⲁⲱⲡ/ ⲥ. Sometimes, in orders from Bawit region, the date formula was restricted to mentioning only the day and month.³² It is, however, remarkable that the number of the *phora* is not mentioned here, and this also appeared in the Bawit region.³³

2. Orders to supply liquid commodities:

i. O. Abou el-Goud 3622

Zaki Mohareb
 Register no. 2: 3622 (Figs. 17–18)

8.9 × 9.3 cm

Bawit
 8th cent. (?)

The order is composed of five lines written in Sahidic Coptic. Brown pottery and black ink were used to write the text. Even though the uneven surface of the ostrakon and fading of the ink in some places, the readability of the text was not affected. The text is written between two crosses, the Latin cross and the Staurogram.³⁴ Letters are clear, neat and upright with a few ligatures. Neither supralinear stroke nor supralinear dot is used in the text.

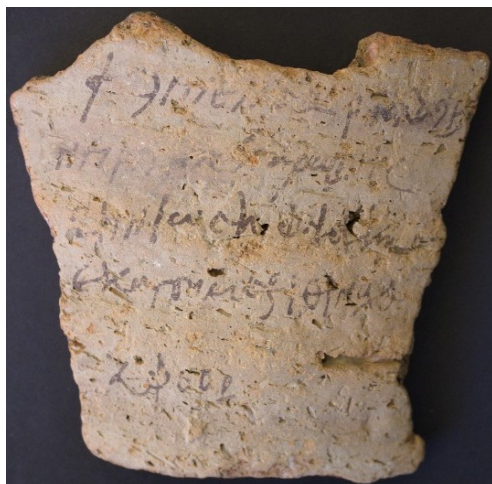


Fig. 17. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

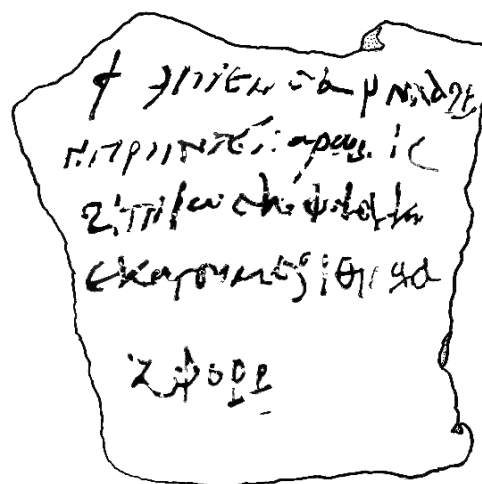


Fig. 18. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

† ΩΙΝΕ ΝCΔ Ρ ΝΛΔΣΕ
ΝΗΡΠ ΝΤΕ ΧΑΡΩΒΙC
ΣΙΤΝ ΙΩCΗΦ ΓΙ/ ΟΙ/ ΚΝΔ/
ΕΚΑΤΟΝ ΜCΙ'Ο' ΙΘ ΙΝΔ/ Δ
5 Ζ ΦΟΡ/ Ρ

3 γίνεται, ΓΙ/ ostr. οἶνου, ΟΙ/ ostr. κνίδια, ΚΝΔ/ ostr. 4 ἑκατον ἰνδικτιών, ΙΝΔ/ ostr. 5 φορά, ΦΟΡ/ ostr.

† Enquire after 100 lahe of wine of Harwnih through Joseph. Total: a hundred kinidia of wine.
19th (day of the month) Msio, 1st (year of) Indiction. 7th convoy ρ

This script composed of six phrases: the ΩΙΝΕ ΝCΔ formula (l. 1), the quantity and origin of the wine (ll. 1–2), the carrier's name (l. 3), the summary of the required quantity of wine (ll. 3–4), the date formula (l. 4), and finally the number of the *phora* (l. 5).

1–2 λΔΣΕ | ΝΗΡΠ ΝΤΕ ΧΑΡΩΒΙC. The λΔΣΕ measure is one of the instruments used for gauging certain liquids, particularly wine.³⁵ Although this variant λΔΣΕ of the Coptic word λΔΣΗ does not appear in Crum³⁶ or Kasser,³⁷ the interchange of ε and η is common.³⁸ It is noteworthy that Coptic texts indicate that this measure was commonly known among the inhabitants of Bawit and Edfu. By contrast, its Greek equivalent λάνη was recorded only among the people of Oxyrhynchite nome.³⁹ As for the capacity of this measure, it is explained by its Greek equivalent, κνίδιον, which is five Xestai, i.e., the equivalent of two and a half liters.⁴⁰ Accordingly, the one hundred *lahe* of wine mentioned in the order under study are equivalent to approximately two hundred and fifty liters. Regarding ΧΑΡΩΒΙC, if the reading of this toponym is correct, it is not attested elsewhere.

3 ΙΩCΗΦ. The carrier's name, Joseph, occurs in other orders from Bawit.⁴¹

4 ΜCΙ'Ο'. A close variant, ΜΕCΙΟ, of this month's name, Messori, is listed in Kasser.⁴²

ii. O. Abou el-Goud 2824

Zaki Mohareb

9 × 7.8 cm

Bawit

Register no. 2: 2824 (Figs. 19–20)

8th cent. (?)

Ribbed brown pottery. The text consists of five lines written in Sahidic Coptic. It is incomplete due to wear on the engraving surface and fading of black ink in some places. The staurogram is at the beginning of the text.⁴³ Letters are upright, occasionally slanting to the right. The ligature between letters seems a little. Supralinear strokes occur irregularly (ll. 2–3).

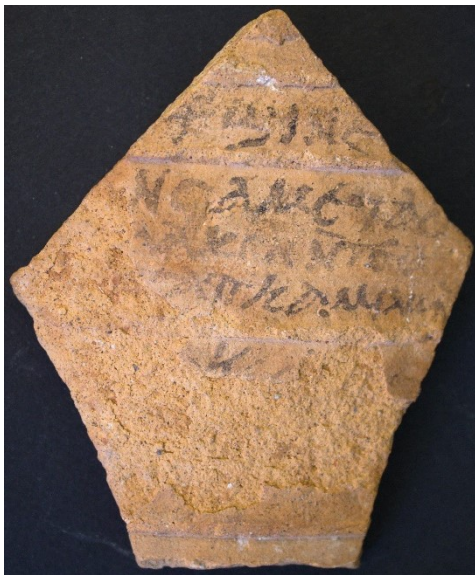


Fig. 19. – Order to supply Wheat
(photo: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

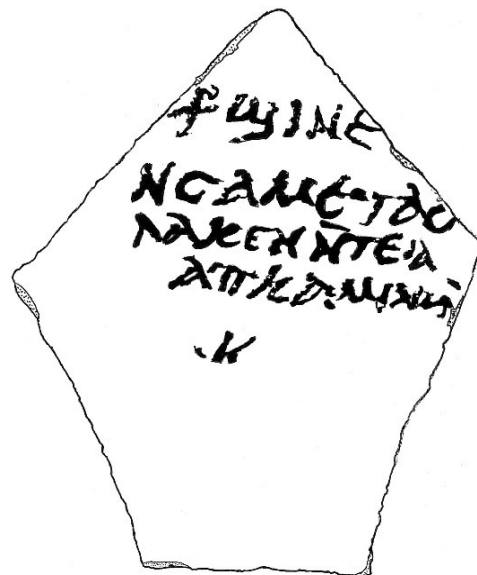


Fig. 20. – Order to supply Wheat
(drawing: Ahmed T. A. Khalil)

ⲫ ⲱⲓⲛⲉ
 ⲛⲥⲁ ⲙⲉⲧⲁⲥ
 [ⲉ ⲛ]ⲗⲁⲕⲉⲛ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲁ[]
 [ⲛ]ⲁⲡⲕⲁⲙⲓⲗⲟⲛ
 5 []ⲕ[]
 3 ⲗⲁⲕⲟⲛ 4 ⲕⲁⲙⲓⲗⲟⲛ

ⲫ Enquire after 16 laken of a[the] camel driver [].

The remaining phrases of this order included the ⲱⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ formula (ll. 1–2), the quantity and origin of the *laken* (ll. 2–3), a part of the function of the carrier's name (l. 4).

- 3 ⲗⲁⲕⲉⲛ. It is worth noting that this word may be derived either from the word ⲗⲁⲕⲛ “Jug” – which occurs only once in the texts⁴⁴ or from the word ⲗⲁⲕⲟⲛ “measure” which was widely utilized in the Bawit region.⁴⁵
- 4 [ⲛ]ⲁⲡⲕⲁⲙⲓⲗⲟⲛ. Although the carrier's name has unfortunately been lost, his occupation as a camel driver is recorded.

Conclusion:

It was found from the eight orders for the wheat crop that the quantities requested did not exceed 20 sacks (no. 7). Furthermore, it was noted that the most frequently mentioned months, in order of frequency, are: Paopi (nos. 1, 2, 6 and 8), followed by Tout (nos. 3, 5 and 7), and then Hathor (no. 4). This indicates that there was a shortage and a great need to this crop during these three months, perhaps that is because the cultivation of this crop actually begins in the month of Bābah (11–12 October) and its harvesting phase starts in the month of Baramūdah (9 April).⁴⁶ As for the two liquid commodities orders, the first is for wine and the quantity required is 100 *lahe* (no. 1), while the other text, the requested commodity is unknown due to the text being broken, and it may also be for wine and the required quantity is 16 *laken* (no. 2). Unfortunately, only the month Msio (Messori or Misrā) is mentioned in the first text (no. 2). It is the last month of the grape harvest (7 August), the summer crop whose harvest begins in the month of Ba‘ūnah (8 June).⁴⁷

It is also noteworthy that the camel driver who was relied upon in the monastery of Bawit to transport the goods is mentioned twice, once in the wheat order (no. 8) and once in the order for an unknown liquid commodity (no. 2).

Because the arrangement of the formulae and the handwriting of the scribes in the present texts closely resemble those from Bawit,⁴⁸ these orders were indeed written in the same region and date back to the eighth century AD.

Endnotes:

¹ Zaki Mohareb Todros (1901–1978) is actually a renowned antiquities dealer based in Luxor, see, F. Hagen and K. Ryholt, *The Antiquities Trade in Egypt 1880–1930: The H. O. Lange Papers*, (Copenhagen, 2016), 248–250.

² See W. J. Tait, “A Coptic ‘Enquiry’ about a Delivery of Wheat”, in *The Unbroken Reed: Studies in the Culture and Heritage of Ancient Egypt in Honour of A. F. Shore*, eds. C. Eyre, A. Leahy and L. M. Leahy, (London, 1994), 337–342; O.Bawit 247–248; P.Mon.Apollo 7, 16; O.BawitFAO 2–3, 6–7; P.Bawit Clackson 6; O.BawitFribourg 1–9; Lincoln H. Blumel, “Two Coptic ostraca in the Brigham young University collection,” *Chronique d’Egypte* 88 (2013): 185–187.

³ O.Medin.HabuCopt. 27 no. 208; P.Bal. II 691 no. 263; O.BawitFribourg 1 footnote 1.

⁴ S. Clackson, “Reconstructing the archives of the Monastery of Apollo at Bawit”, in *Atti del XXII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia, Firenze, 23–29 agosto 1998 Vol. I*, eds. I. Andorlini, G. Bastianini, M. Manfredi, G. Menci, (Firenze, 2001), 229.

⁵ Ostraca from the Abou El-Goud storage magazine (hereafter O.Abou el-Goud).

⁶ J. H. F. Dijkstra, *Syene I: The Figural and Textual Graffiti from the Temple of Isis at Aswan*, (Darmstadt/Mainz, 2012), 81.

⁷ See O.BawitFAO 32 no. 12.2, 33 no. 13.3, 34 no. 14.4.

⁸ W. E. Crum, “Colluthos, the martyr and his name,” *ByzZeit* 30, no. 1 (1929/30): 323; H. Satzinger, “The Old Coptic Schmidt Papyrus,” *JARCE* 12 (1975): 41.

⁹ O.Bawit 405; P.Mon.Apollo 98 no. 34.1, x+7; SB Kopt. III, 114 no. 1492.25–26.

¹⁰ CPR XXXI, 9 no. 4.4; B. P. Muhs, K. A. Worp, and J. van der Vliet, “Ostraca and Mummy Labels in Los Angeles,” *BASP* 43 (2006): 55–56 no. 33.4–5(= SB Kopt. IV, 74 no. 1817.4–5).

¹¹ Crum, *Compléments*, 44a; for the assimilation between o and ω, see P.Bal. I 90 §61.

¹² Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81.

¹³ CPR XXXI, 9 no. 4.1.3; Å. Engsheden, *An Index of Toponyms in Coptic Papyrological Texts*, (Leuven, 2023), 34.

¹⁴ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81.

¹⁵ SB Kopt. III 87 no. 1433.2–3; Engsheden, *An Index of Toponyms*, 59.

¹⁶ NB Copt. 81.

¹⁷ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81.

- ¹⁸ It is noted that there is a right-hand bend at the end of the vertical arm of this Staurogram, this feature occurs frequently in many orders from Bawit, see e.g. O.BawitFAO 98–99 O. Nancy; O.BawitFribourg 11–12 no. 1, 13 no. 3, 14 no. 4, 15 no. 5, 18 no. 8.
- ¹⁹ See e.g. O.BawitFAO 15–16 no. 3.5, 98 O. Nancy 1.4; O.BawitFribourg 58–59 no. 50.3, 72 no. 63.3–4.
- ²⁰ Dijkstra, *Syene*, 81; this cross is utilized also in the texts nos. 7 and 8, and it is distinguished by the fact that the end of its vertical arm is curved to the right. It is one of the crosses that appears repeatedly in many orders of Bawit, cf e.g. CPR XX 24 no. 11.1 (Tafel. 6), 28 no. 16.1 (Tafel. 8); O.Bawit 260, 323 no. 18.1; O.BawitFribourg 48 no. 40.1, 50 no. 42.1, 56 no. 48.1.
- ²¹ See P.Bawit Clackson 11, 46–47 no. 12.5, 115 no. 88.2.
- ²² NB Copt. 7; CPR IV 142 no. 157.4.
- ²³ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81.
- ²⁴ Crum, Dict. 440b–441b.
- ²⁵ Crum, *Compléments*, 68b–69a.
- ²⁶ P.Bal. I 83–84 §48.
- ²⁷ Crum Dict., 732b.
- ²⁸ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81.
- ²⁹ O.BawitFribourg 34 no. 26.2, 67 no. 58.2.
- ³⁰ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81.
- ³¹ O.BawitFribourg 5–6; J. Wegner, “The Bawit monastery of Apa Apollo in the Hermopolite nome and its relations with the ‘world outside’,” *JJP* 46 (2016): 268–269.
- ³² CPR XX 22 no. 9.1; O.Bawit 291 no. 64.1; O.BawitFAO 33 no. 13.1, 34 no. 14.1, 36 no. 15.1; SB Kopt. IV 74 no. 1818.1.
- ³³ O.BawitFribourg 49 no. 41.
- ³⁴ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81; although the use of the cross only at the beginning of the text is most common, there are some cases in which the scribes of Bawit began and concluded their orders with the cross as well, cf e.g. O.Bawit 259 no. 17.1.6, 271 no. 37.1.5, 272 no. 39.1.4; O.BawitFribourg 39 no. 31.1.5, 42 no. 34.1.8.
- ³⁵ Crum, Dict. 149a; S. Bacot, *Ostraca grecs et coptes de Tell Edfou. O.EdfouCopte I–145* (Bibliothèque d’études coptes 19; Cairo, 2009), 65; CPR XXXI, 6 no. 2.2.
- ³⁶ Crum, Dict. 149a.
- ³⁷ Crum, *Compléments*, 24b.
- ³⁸ P.Bal. I 75 §34.
- ³⁹ K. Worp, “Notes on Coptic Containers of Liquids in Greek Papyri,” in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium: Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden, 27 August–2 September 2000*, vol. 1, eds. M. Immerzeel and J. van der Vliet, (Leuven, 2004), 564–565; Bacot, *Ostraca grecs et coptes*, 10, 65; CPR XXXI 6–7 no. 2.2; T. Vorderstrasse, “Terms for Vessels in Arabic and Coptic Documents and Their Archaeological and Ethnographic Correlates,” in *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, eds. Alexander T. Schubert and Petra M. Sijpesteijn, Islamic History and Civilization 111 (Leiden, 2015), 215–216 footnote 131.
- ⁴⁰ O.Sarga 23–24 §12; Worp, “Notes on Coptic Containers,” 565; Bacot, *Ostraca grecs et coptes*, 10, 65; CPR XXXI 6 no. 2.2.
- ⁴¹ O.BawitFAO 52 no. 29.4; CPR XXXI 6 no. 2.4; O.BawitFribourg 21 no. 11.4, 22 no. 12.3–4, 31 no. 21.2.
- ⁴² Crum, *Compléments*, 30a.
- ⁴³ Dijkstra, *Syene I*, 81.
- ⁴⁴ O.Vind.Copt. 36 no. 141.2; Förster, *WB*, 460.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. e.g. CPR XX 17 no. 1.1; O.Bawit 284 no. 55.1–2; O.BawitFAO 72–73 no. 46.4; P.Bawit Clackson 18; O.BawitFribourg 68 no. 59.3–4; Förster, *WB*, 460–462; María J. A. Martínez and Leia J. Torres, “More New Accounts and Lists from Bawit in the Palau-Ribes Collection,” *APF* 68, no. 2 (2022): 399.
- ⁴⁶ For the wheat planting and harvesting season, see C. W. Wassef, “Calendar and Agriculture”, in *Copt.Enc.* 2 (1991), 440b, 442b; O.BawitFribourg 8.
- ⁴⁷ For the grape harvest season, see Wassef, Calendar, 443a-b; O.BawitFribourg 8.
- ⁴⁸ CPR XX 32–33 no. 22; O.Bawit 247–248, 254 no. 7, 257 no. 13, 264 nos. 24, 25; O.BawitFAO 6; CPR XXXI 9–10 no. 4; SB Kopt. IV 74–75 no. 1819; O.BawitFribourg 47 no. 39.