Demotica From Qasr Ibrim Marital Problems and Love-Affair in Two Messages Written in a Single Letter From Ptolemaic Egypt (Papyrus Cairo JE 95205) EL-HUSSEIN ZAGHLOUL

At a distance of approximately 235 km south of Assuan the site of Qasr Ibrim, located on the east bank of the Nile in Lower Nubia, is reached. (1) It was a fortified citadel that became an important centre of administrative, religious and commercial activity in Egyptian Nubia from c. 1000 BC to AD 1812. (2)

The oldest monuments recorded at Qasr Ibrim appear to be from the New Kingdom. Documents from the Late Period are also said to have been found at Ibrim. The site was still used in the Graeco-Roman times down to the modern Era. (3)

Because of its great historical importance, excavation of the site has been conducted by the Egypt Exploration Society since 1961 and is still in progress. (4) A large number of objects of all

⁽¹⁾ Porter-Moss VII, 92 - 94; LÄ V, 43-45; Karl-Heinz Priese, "Orte des mittleren Niltals in der Überlieferung bis zum Ende des christlichen Mittelalters", in: Meroitistische Forschungen 1980, Meroitica 7, 1984, p. 488

⁽²⁾ Mark Horton, "Africa in Egypt: New Evidence from Qasr Ibrim", in: Egypt and Africa, Nubia from Prehistory to Islam (edited by W.V. Davies), London 1991, 264-277

⁽³⁾ LÄ V, 43-45; M. Horton, Ibid.; T. Säve-Söderbergh, Temples and tombs of Ancient Nubia, London 1987, 212-213

⁽⁴⁾ See the literature quoted by Ricardo A. Caminos, in: LÄ V, 45; see also the excavation reports by field directors W.Y. Adams, J.A. Alexander, R. Allen, B. Driskell, M.C. Horton, in: JEA 69, 1983, 43-60; 70, 1984, 3-4

kinds and sizes has been found therein. In addition, Qasr Ibrim has yielded much textual material inscribed in: Hieroglyphic, Demotic, Coptic, Greek, Latin, Meroïtic, Old Nubian and Arabic. (6)

Of particular interest are the Demotic documents emerging, for the first time (from 1974 onwards), from Qasr Ibrim, as far as I am aware; an amount of material and information has been amassed, but often not comprehensively recorded. Coming from a series of separate spots or positions there, the Demotic documents were written on papyrus, potsherds and amphorae; most fragmentary, some in good preservation. Among the documents are bilingual texts, Demotic on one side, Greek on the other. There was reuse of earlier fragments, Hieratic on Demotic. Once they are published, these texts will undoubtedly reveal many details of Nubian history and of Egypt as a whole during the Graeco-Roman (editorial note); 71, 1985, 12-26; 72, 1986, p. viii (editorial note); 74, 1988, vii-ix (editorial note); 76, 1990, vii-ix (editorial note).

⁽⁵⁾ See, e.g., LÄ V, 44

⁽⁶⁾ The objects found during the excavations of the EES at Qasr Ibrim within the years 1961-1991/92 are included in five Cataloques (or Registers) distinguished with Nos. 20 (1), 20, 20 (B), 20 (4), and 20 (D) (at present in the possession of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo).

⁽⁷⁾ A large number of the Demotic textual finds yielded from Qasr Ibrim is very fragmentary and extremely fragile. Most texts are, therefore, extraordinarily bad preserved, even the materials needing much conservation.

 $^{^{(8)}}$ See, e.g., J.A. Alexander and B. Driskell, in : JEA 71, 1985, p. 13

period. The bilingual texts will also give important clues to a fuller understanding of the two known languages -Demotic and Greek. In order to make the study more useful for those interested in Demotic, a list of these Demotic documents that are housed in the Egyptian Museum ⁽⁹⁾ at Cairo is given here. ⁽¹⁰⁾

⁽⁹⁾ As their eventual home these documents, like almost all Qasr Ibrim textual material from recent excavations, went to the Egyptian Museum, Cairo. The very fragmentary and ill preserved documents among them will be added to the Regional Museums' collections.

⁽¹⁰⁾ N.B., more Demotic documents from Qasr Ibrim survived than those listed here.

DEMOTIC DOCUMENTS FROM QASR IBRIM IN THE EGYPTIAN MUSEUM AT CAIRO

	Season 1974			
JE	Description	Excavator's No.		
93944	Collection of papyrus fragments inscribed in Hieratic, Demotic and Greek	255 Mar. 1974		
Season 1976				
94227	Demotic ostracon : 6.0 x 3.7 cm	136/76		
	Cat. 20, Season 1978			
Series No.	Description	Exc. No.		
247 252	4 Dem. ostraca: 7.5 x 6 cm 3.5 x 3 cm c. 13 x 9 cm 8 x 14 cm Dem. papyrus fragments: 2.5 x 1.5 cm 2 x 4 cm	78.2.23/6 78.3.9/2 78.3.15/39 78.3.27/3 78.3.22/15		
	Cat. 20, Season 1980	·		
95206) 2 (=JF	Dem. letter was rolled with string and seal (6.2 x 22.8 cm). Dem. letter was rolled with string and seal (7.5 x 25.8 cm).	80.2.16/10 80.2.4/79		
3 (=JI 95207	Dem. papyrus fragments: $3.1 \times 2.2 \text{ cm}$ $1 \times 2.2 \text{ cm}$	80.2.2/5 80.1.28/46		
5 (=J1 95209	Dem. Papyrus fragments: 1.9 x 2.6 cm up to 3 x 6.5 cm 2.3 x 3.5 cm	80:2.12/3 80:2.13/3 80:2.13/8 80:2.18/1		

Cat. 20, Season 1980 (continued)				
13-40	28 Dem. ostraca:(11)	20 x 18.5 cm	80.1.21/1	
		$13.5 \times 10.8 \text{ cm}$	80.1.29/2	
		$8.7 \times 17 \text{ cm}$	80.2.27/4	
	ļ.	$9.4 \times 6.6 \text{ cm}$	80.2.14/29	
		$7.5 \times 16 \text{ cm}$	80.2.11/54	
		8.9 x 8.4 cm	80.1.31/41	
		8.5×11 cm	80.1.23/10	
		$9.2 \times 4.5 \text{ cm}$	80.2.11/83A	
		10 x 10.1 cm	80.2.4/31A	
		$9.8 \times 7.8 \text{ cm}$	80.2.2/24 B	
		5.8 x 8.3 cm	80.2.4/31B	
•		$4 \times 5.3 \text{ cm}$	80.1.28/15	
		$4.3 \times 7.9 \text{ cm}$	80.2.4/32	
		$10.1 \times 8.2 \text{ cm}$	80.2.5/22	
		$5 \times 4.8 \text{ cm}$	80.2.4/23	
		$5.1 \times 6.7 \text{ cm}$	80.2.9/7	
		$7.8 \times 6.9 \text{ cm}$	80.2.4/31C	
		$5.2 \times 5.6 \text{ cm}$	80,2.9/27	
		$7 \times 10 \text{ cm}$	80.2.12/42	
		$8.5 \times 6.4 \text{ cm}$	80.2.16/8	
!		$7.2 \times 7.7 \text{ cm}$	80.1.20/44	
r.		$4.4 \times 7.8 \text{ cm}$	80.2.11/56A	
		$7.2 \times 5.8 \text{ cm}$	80.2.11/5	
-		$6.9 \times 11.4 \text{ cm}$	80.2.7/65B	
		$6.1 \times 8.7 \text{ cm}$	80.2.28/1	
		$9.5 \times 7.7 \text{ cm}$	80.1.24/2	
		$5.5 \times 9.5 \text{ cm}$	80.2.6/53A	
		$4.7 \times 4.3 \text{ cm}$	80.1.31/40	
	The Add that			
46	Dem. ostracon:	$6.1 \times 8.3 \text{ cm}$	80.2.6/53 C	
523	8 Dem. ostraca:(11)	11.5 cm	80.2.13/38A	
	O DOM. ODDING.	$8.7 \times 7.5 \text{ cm}$	80.2.16/20	
			·	

⁽¹¹⁾ Now they are the property of the Regional Museums' collections.

·· Activitization (Color Color	Cat. 20, Season	1980 (continued)	
- 5, mp. Alba (1966) p. Million Schreiber (1964) (1964) (1964) (1964)	made algorithm in Marketin (VIII-Marketin place in Region member dies de labor der einem verse). Hann in Nove de sognifie der Appendix Albert de A	8 x 4.9 cm	80.2.16/30A
		9.3 x 8 cm	80.2.17/8
		9.4 x 7.5 cm	80.2 18/6A
		$9.5 \times 5.7 \text{ cm}$	80.2.18/6B
•		$8.9 \times 6.6 \text{ cm}$	80.2.18/16
		7.1 x 6.9 cm	80.2.19/4
614(=JE	Dem. papyrus fragments :	5.3 x 6.7 cm	80.3.6/1
95222)	D Garage Purply a series and a	4.4 x 1.9 cm	80.3.13/13
· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			
	Cat. 20 (B),	Season 1984	
25	Dem. papyrus fragments:	2.1 x 0.7 cm	84.1.22/23A-C
20	Dent. papyrus frugimorios.	2.1 x 1.2 cm	
		2.7 x 2.0 cm	
70	Dem. papyrus fragments:	· .	84.2.4/16A+B
*0	pupyrus rugrisiis	$1.0 \times 0.7 \text{ cm}$	
71	Dem. papyrus fragment :	3.4 x 1.1 cm	84.2.7/22
72	Dem. papyrus fragments:	2.5 x 1.8 cm	84.2.8/4A-B
. • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	Party and a series	1.6 x 1.8 cm	
73 & 74	2 Dem. ostraca :	5.8 x 4.0 cm	84.1.16/1
, 3 , .		8.5 x 6.1 cm	84.2.9/1
75	Dem. papyrus fragments :	6.5 x 1.6 cm	84.2.6/23A-B
	Popularia de la companya de la compa	0.8 x 1.2 cm	
214 & 215	2 Dem. ostraca:	3.2 x 4.1 cm	84.1.30/50
. WITE OU WILL	a Doll. Gov. wow.	5.5 x 4.6 cm	84.2.23/82
361 & 364	2 Dem. ostraca:	6.6 x 5.6 cm	84.1.25/49
		6.3 x 5.4 cm	84.2.23/86
725	Dem. ostracon :	4.5 x 5.7 cm	84.2.2/37

The management sense are as					
ers hader on mornel of the last had properly	Cat. 20 (B), Season 1984 (continued)				
745(=JE 97867)	Demotic and Hieratic papyrus fragments (111 pieces in various small sizes 2 largest at 12.5 x 20.5 cm)	84.2.5/42			
	Cat. 20 (4), Season 1989/1990 ⁽¹²⁾				
463,467, 686 & 690	Demotic Inscriptions-Ostraca	89.12.31/47 90.1.13/10 90.1.14/15 90.1.6/54A+B 90.2.8/3 etc.			
Cat. 20 (D), Season 1991/1992					
23	Two bilingual inscription-fragments of papyrus with Greek on one side and Demotic on the other.	a. 10 111/A 1 b. 10 302/A 1			

According to the rules of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, the excavator has all rights of publishing the material from his work within a period of (maximum) five years. This period begins from the discovery's date.

DEMOTIC PAPYRUS CAIRO JE 95205

Two private letters, Pap. Cairo JE 95205 and 95206, have come to light from the South Rampart Street⁽¹⁾ at Qasr Ibrim; both are written in the Egyptian-Middle-Demotic idiom. One deals with matters of daily life headed with (p3) dd kh p3 mh knb.t. The other, which is the subject of the present article, is composed of two short messages written in a single letter by two different hands and preserved absolutely in full. No other copy, either whole or fragmentary, is known to exist.

The contents of the papyrus in question⁽²⁾ are interesting and valuable for the reconstruction of social life within the walls of Ibrim under Ptolemaic rule. Although the form of the Demotic text on the papyrus is, so far as I know, unique, it never seems to have drawn the attention of any scholar.

Both messages or communications written on the papyrus are dateless and begin with the identification of the senders (two

⁽¹⁾ See W.Y. Adams, J.A. Alexander, and R. Allen, "Qasr Ibrim 1980 and 1982", in: JEA 69, 1983, pp. 57 ff.

⁽²⁾ For this type of document, cf. El-Hussein Zaghloul, Frühdemotische Urkunden aus Hermupolis, BCPS 2, 1985, pp. 64 ff., 89-90 fn. 114.

women), followed by brief introductory salutations to the recipient (one and the same man).

The topic of the first message seems to be clear. A married woman, Prjmhj, writes to her friend Klndj3n (who bears a non-Egyptian name), describing her present misfortune and consulting (the priests) for advice in her case before the oracle of Amun. She complains of having been sent away from house by her husband, probably P3-šr-Wsir, whom she also accuses of having an adulterous relationship with a woman named Ta-Pr-c3. (1) Closing her message Prjmhj refers (in reaction to her unfaithful husband to herself) committing that very (offence of illegal or immoral) sexual behaviour with a man called by name Pa-In-ḥr.t (as a sort of self-revenge).

The contents of the second message refer to a case or affair similar to the preceding one. A married man, very probably P3-hs, had presumably a concubine or cohabiting with an unnamed woman, incensing the relations of his legal wife, Ta-mnrwp,

On the ancient Egyptian sexual life, see L. Manniche, Sexual life in ancient Egypt, London 1987; C.J. Eyre, "Crime and adultery in ancient Egypt", in: JEA 70, 1984, 92-105; Ph. Derchain, "La perruque et le cristal", in: SAK 2, 1975, pp. 66 ff.; LÄ II, 4-11, s.v. "Erotik"; III, 415-417, s.v. "Keuschheit" as well as 1036-7, s.v. "Liebe", and V, 919-921, s.v. "Sexualethos (-ethik)".

who threatened to forsake him alone in house as her reaction to his love affair. In a message Ta-mnrwp sent to klndj3n, urging him to invite the intervention of the magistrate P3-šr-p3-rjt in her private matter by asking the guilty parties for testimony before giving his judicial verdicts.

The first message begins with line 1 and ends at line 11 and the second begins with line 12. The name Prjmhj (l.1) may perhaps mean "The one of Ibrim". The name of the addressee klndj3n (l.13) is followed by "t3 rj.t ntj etc", which seem to point out that our single letter was not sent from afar; it could have been brought by whoever was going in the desired direction and reached the person for whom it was intended within a short time, since the distance was not great. Therefore, all persons mentioned in the letter are apparently inhabitants from Ibrim or at least connected with it in one way or another.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPYRUS

(pls I - VI)

The papyrus is light brown in colour and well preserved; it consists of one sheet with a maximum length of 25.8 cm and width of 7.5 cm. It has suffered slight damage, mostly in the lower half, from a seal, but no lines have been lost. There are twenty full lines of text on the recto (H/V), and two very short ones on the verso (V/H). These do not fill up the entire breadth of the sheet. The margin is uneven on the left, some lines reaching the extreme edge, which suggests that the papyrus was originally somewhat wider, and that it was cut from a roll after the text had been written. The script begins about 1 cm below the upper edge of the sheet, as preserved, and there is a gap uninscribed at the bottom. The verso bears the name of the addressee on its left-hand side. This was written lengthwise on the sheet, and must have been added after the papyrus was rolled, tied, and sealed (see pls. I, V and VI).

The letter had been folded from the top of the verso outwards, according to the usual practice. Eleven folds can be recognised, the strips increasing in height from the bottom recto to the top.

The papyrus is divided into two parts (i.e. two messages) with a wide blank space between them. Both parts (one bearing 11 lines on the recto and the latter 9 lines plus the name of the recipient on the verso) are written in two different clear hands and errors do not occur. There is a small oblique stroke at the end of each part (lines 11 and 20) which appears to signify the end of each statement. There are no traces that the papyrus is a palimpsest, nor can any joints be discerned. So far as I am aware, the papyrus appears never to have been published.

TRANSLITERATION

Recto (Message 1)

- 1. Prjmhj t3 šr.t n
- 2. T3- $\$ r.t-p3-tj- $\$ r.t t3 ntj sm r
- 3. Klndj3n
- 4. mj šn=w hpr=j m-b3h Imn
- 5. <u>dd n t3j hr rnp.t r.ir=j r</u>
- 6. bnr n p3 m3° n p3j=j š°-(sic)
- 7. hj š° p3 hrw ntj iw
- 8. w3h P3-šr-Wsir tj Ta-pr-c3
- 9. r.ḥr=j n.im=f bn-pw=j nḫt.ţ=s nk
- 10. bn-pw=j ph irm rmt m-s3 Pa-In-hr.t

11. P3-šr-n-grjmj3⁽¹⁾

Recto (continued/Begin of Message 2)

- 12. Ta-mnrwp sm r
- 13. Klndj3n t3 rj.t
- 14. ntj iw P3-hs n.im=s iw=f hpr iw=j
- 15. $h3^{c} = f hn = s wb3 t3^{(2)} ntj m-s3 = s$
- 16. hb n=j ht (?)=s mtw=k tj nw.t=w
- 17. wtj P3-šr-p3-rjt r ir n3j=f šn.w
- 18. irm n3 mt.w ntj iw=f wh3=w mtw=k
- 19. tj hn ntj m3° t3 ntr. t r tm
- 20. tj ir=w s n hjj.t

Verso

- 1. klndj-
- 2. 3n

TRANSLATION

Recto (Message 1)

- 1. Prjmhj, daughter of
- (1) Or p3 šr n Grjmj3,
- (2) Or n3 "those".

- 2. T3-šr.t-p3-tj-Hr, greets⁽¹⁾
- 3. klndj3n.
- 4. May one inquire (about) the fact of my matter before Amun.
- 5. A statement from (3) the year when I went
- 6. away from the (dwelling-) place of my
- 7. husband⁽⁴⁾, till the day, on which
- 8. P3-šr-wsir has (already) preferred Ta-pr-°3
- 9. to me⁽⁵⁾ (therein). I could not prevent her (from) fornicating⁽⁶⁾.
- 10. I did not have intercourse with a man, with the exception of Pa-In-hr.t, (son of)
- 11. P3-šr-n-grjmj3.

Recto (continued/Begin of Message 2)

- 12. Ta-mnrwp greets
- 13. Klndj3n (on) the side (of the house)
- (1) Literally "she who greets".
- (2) Or "the reality of my situation".
- (3) Literally "in taking off from".
- (4) Literally "man (or male) husband"!
- (5) Or "over me".
- (6) Literally "I did not protect her (from) copulating".

- 14. where P3-hs lives (1). If it happens (that I have) to
- 15. leave him therein because of (2) that (woman) who follows it (3),
- 16. send me her ht (?). You are to let them see
- 17. the magistrate, P3-šr-p3-rjt, to do his investigations
- 18. and reports (4) which he wants. You are to
- 19. put (in) order, in truth of the goddess, (5) that
- 20. they do it without trouble. (6)

Verso

- 1. Klndj-
- 2. 3n

⁽¹⁾ Literally "where P3-hs is therein".

⁽²⁾ Literally "opposite or against".

⁽³⁾ Literally "who is behind it".

⁽⁴⁾ Literally "sayings or words".

⁽⁵⁾ Literally "which is the goddess's truth, or which is (fully) justified (as to) the goddess".

⁽⁶⁾ Literally "not to let them to do it with trouble".

NOTES

- 1.1 Prjmhj: the reading is certain. This proper name is so far attested in Demotic only in this text. There is even no such example of the name in Hieroglyphic to hand. The name may perhaps mean "The one of Ibrim", which is the meaning of the Meroitic personal name Apodimeteye (cf. J.A. Alexander and B. Driskell, "Qasr Ibrim 1984", in: JEA 71, 1985, p. 13; Karl-Heinz Priese, in: "Meroitistische Forschungen 1980, Meroitica 7, 1984, p. 488).
- 1.3 Ķlndj3n seems to be a non-Egyptian name; cf. W. Erichsen, Dem. Glossar, 567 (klnd); H. Ranke, PN, I, 336.7.
- 1.6/7 §°-hj "husband", lit. "man (or male) husband"! Although the word hj "husband" (Erichsen, Dem. Glossar, 267) is well known, the add of §° here is absolutely new. This is a variant of s° (Papyrus Louvre 3229, 6/25)⁽¹⁾, deriving from s "man, person" (Erichsen, op. cit., 400).
- 1.9 nk "to copulate with; intercourse; fornicator; lover"; see

 (1) J. Johnson, in: Enchoria 7, 1977, pp. 55 ff., pls. 10-17.

Erichsen, Dem. Glossar, 229; Papyrus Insinger, 7/24;⁽¹⁾ Papyrus Bologna 3173, verso 5;⁽²⁾ Papyrus British Museum 10508, 13/12 (njk).⁽³⁾ For the word in compound, see \$p-nq "pervert" in E. Lüddeckens, Festschrift Otto, 1977, p. 329, who translates "procurer".

1.10 ph irm rmt "to have intercourse with": J. Ray, The Archive of Hor, 1976, p. 58, note "d"; compare also there ph t3 3tj.t"penetrate the vulva" (=Ostracon Hor 14, verso 5).

Pa-In-ḥr.t (gr. ΠανουΡΙς; copt. Παν2ΟΥΡε)⁽⁴⁾ seems to have been ascertained; as far as is known this name is not yet attested in Demotic. See the same writing of In-ḥr.t here in Ns-in-ḥr.t by E. Lüddeckens, Dem. Namenbuch, L. 9, 1989, 658 (examples 5 & 6).

1.11 P3-šr-n-grjmj3 seems a possible reading, but there is no example available of such a combination. The reading p3 šr n Grjmj3 "the son of Grjmj3", is also possible. Grjmj3

⁽¹⁾ F. Lexa, Papyrus Insinger, 1926

⁽²⁾ E. Bresciani, et al., EVO 1, 1978, pp. 95-99, 101-103

S.R.K. Glanville, The Instructions of Conchsheshongy, P. BM 10508 (Cat. of the Dem. Pap. in the BM, Vol. II, part I), London 1955

⁽⁴⁾ H. Ranke, PN, I, 106. 12

reminded us of the Demotic word grmj3 "fire" (copt. KPWM)⁽¹⁾, occurring in Papyrus Vienna 10000, 2/1.⁽²⁾ For the name Grjmj3, cf. A. Burkhardt, Ägypter und Meroiten im Dodekaschoinos, Meroitica 8, 1985, 94-95 (Krnj3); cf. also F.Ll. Griffith, Catalogue of the Demotic Graffiti of the Dodecaschoenus, 1937, 280:757 (Qrnye); 281:771 (Ty-Grne); 304/305:869 (grny as a title).

The scribe drew a small oblique stroke after Grjmj3, "as though consciously concluding one part of the document". The same feature of the script is best observed in line 20 after hjj.t. On the use of marks and lines in Demotic texts, see Nur El-Din, Enchoria 9, 1979, 49-62.

- 1.12 Ta-mnrwp: The reading can hardly be wrong. We know of no other occurrence of this name in either Hieroglyphic or Demotic records.
- 1.14 P3-hs. The reading is certain. This proper name is not mentioned elsewhere; it differs from P3-hsj "Der Gelobte"

W.E. Crum, A Coptic Dictionary, Oxford 1962, p. 115; W. Westendorf, Koptisches Handwörterbuch, Heidelberg 1977, p. 68

Janssen, Varia Historica, 1954, 28-29, pl. 2 & 3; Zauzich, Festschrift Rainer, 1983, 165-174, pl. 2; Zauzich, Enchoria 6, 1976, 127-130

1992

mentioned by E. Lüddeckens, Dem. Namenbuch, L. 3, 1983, 205. Cf. also Zauzich, Schreibertradition, II, p. 319 (T3-hs).

- 1.16 ht: Reading uncertain and meaning unknown. This word might be, I guess, one of the small objects or properties of the woman that is desired to be presented for inspection.
- 1.17 wtj: the group which precedes P3-šr-p3-rjt seems to form a title of this person. Considering it as wtj seems possible, when compared with the way in which wtj is written in Erichsen, Dem. Glossar, 103-104, and the translation as "magistrate, judge, arbitrator" is well-meaning. This meaning derives from wtj which is a variant of the word wd° "to separate, distinguish, judge" of Wb 1, 404-406. For wtj in compound, see wtj-m3°.t "He who judges Truth" (as epithet of Thoth), in H. Thompson, Magical texts from a bilingual papyrus, 1933, P.BM 10588, verso 14.

On the name P3-šr-p3-rjt, see Nur El-Din, Dem. Ostr. Leiden, p. 509.

CONCLUSION

The discovery at Qasr Ibrim of the present Papyrus in 1980 suggests to me, together with other indications, that the entire correspondence provenanced from that castle. It was produced by or written to a small group of related persons.

The events recorded in the papyrus reminded us of the English custom called a "skimmington ride", (1) but there are differences between "The Ancient Egyptian Skimmington" (?) and those in Hardy's The Mayor of Casterbridge. A skimmington is a ludicrous procession expressing and ridiculing marital quarrels, with effigies carried on a pole. (2) The background of the two present cases, namely flagrant adultery, may be the same, but the reactions of the community are more vehement - the warning to go away from her husband's house (1.14-15) and the wish to obtain a "ht-object or trace"?(1.16) of the woman (presumably to be able to

⁽¹⁾ Cf. Seymour-Smith in the Penguin edition of The Mayor of Casterbridge, Harmondsworth 1978, 435, note 334

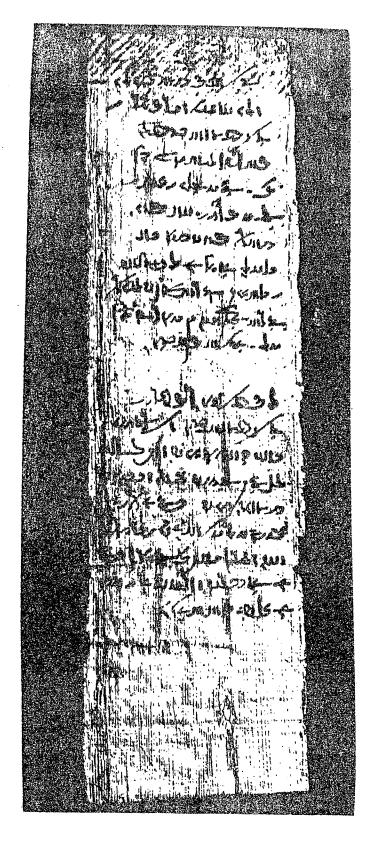
Jac J. Janssen, Late Ramesside letters and communications (Hieratic papyri in the British Museum VI), London 1991, p. 32

influence badly upon her by black magic?)⁽¹⁾. So far as I know, this is the only surviving Demotic document of such events, which, therefore, adds a new facet to our knowledge about Egyptian Nubian society and its customs at the Period of the Ptolemies.

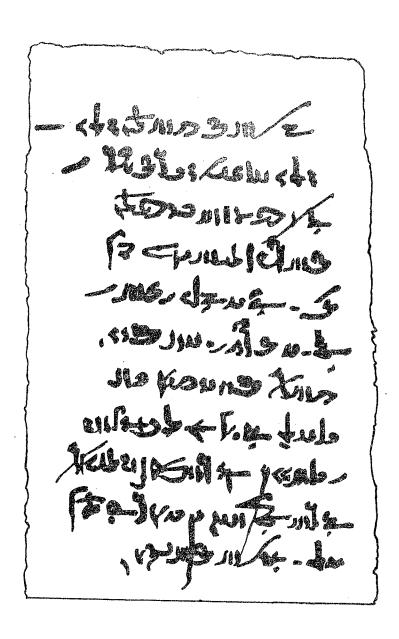
Admittedly, such a reconstruction is hardly more than a plausible conjecture, but it would be in agreement with the concepts of sin, and punishment, prevailing in Lower Nubia in the Ptolemaic Period.



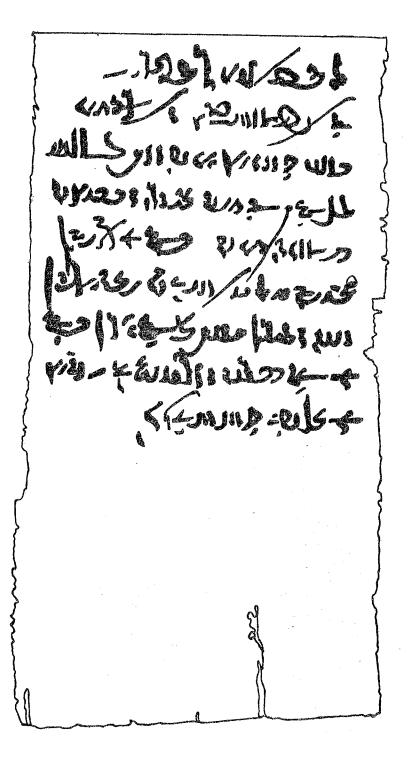
Cairo JE 95205: Papyrus-roll tied and sealed before mounting under a sheet of glass



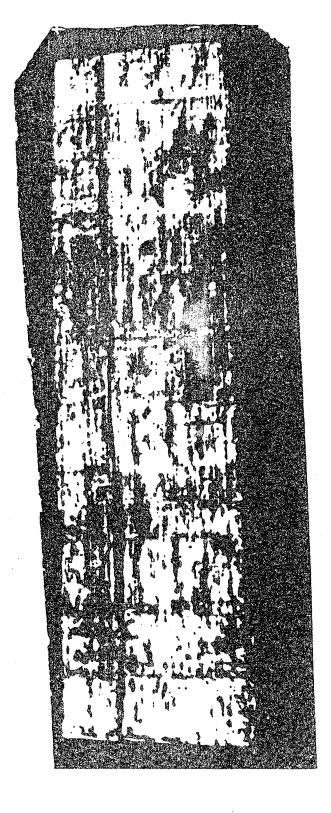
Dem. Papyrus Cairo JE 95205. Recto



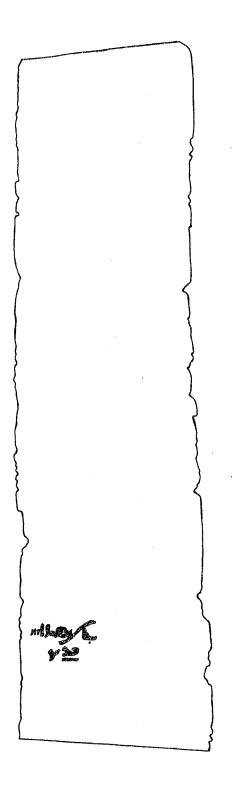
Dem. Papyrus Cairo JE 95205. Recto (A)



Dem. Papyrus Cairo JE 95205. Recto (B)



Dem. Papyrus Cairo JE 95205. Verso



Dem. Papyrus Cairo JE 95205. Verso