Alia HANAFI

TWO PRIVATE LETTERS
FROM THE COLLECTION OF COPENHAGEN

P.Haun. inv. Arab. 5  
13 x 13.7 cm  
Provenance Al-Fayyum  
III A.H. (IX AD)

The papyrus is of moderate quality, torn off irregularly at the bottom and left-hand-side. There are also a number of small holes in the middle. It has been folded six times.

Two private letters from the Tulunid period were written on the recto and on the verso by two different hands. Clearly the letter written on the recto is from a father to his son. The language of the letter and the orders that have been directed to the receiver (cf. Ll. 2; 4; 5) prove this. Besides, the letter on the verso is a reply from that son to his father (cf. L.3).

On the recto, the letter was written in 8 lines, in black ink. At the top, there is a margin of 3.8 cm. The handwriting is of skilled scribe. Diacritical points occur rarely.

The suggested provenance and date that is before 270 A.H. depend on the appearance of the hair of Ishaq b. Kamil, also called ‘Allan = علان (cf. L.1) in APEL, IV, 235, 15, 16 (dated in 270 A.H.).

On the verso, there is a margin at the right-hand-side of 1.8 cm.

The handwriting is large, clear, points to 3rd c. AD (cf. APEL, vol., V, 296, pl. VII). The document is a letter from a son to his father (cf. L.3). It was written in 9 lines, in black ink. In this letter, the son explains to his father that he got from his uncle what he had demanded from the wheat and he sent it to him (cf. Ll. 2, 7).
1- A Letter from a Father to his Son

وأتمّ نعمتهم [ علىك وصلت إلى جبارة كتبك، مع علان، وضعه بكم

؟ سألوه عن سلامتك وسلماء أخواتك فسر في الله وأكثره

شر جار في الدنيا - يقولون لابن داود: هم المحاس [ ] 3- 2

؟ وأخذ مداه رهن ويلك اخرج إليه وخذ حقك منه [ ] 4-

وألم إن خرجوا مع بر مصر تكويروا [ ] 5-

وقال: القتل يعد الرحمن أبو الحسن يبعث الدين [ ] 6- 7

ولكم أ [ د ] ينها ألف لا غير يرد فيه [ ] 7- 8

TRANSLATION:

1- ............ and may He fulfill His loving kindness] unto you. Your letters have been delivered to Gubara by 'Allan and I sent letters

2- ............ I asked] him? about your safety and the safety of your brothers. Go on depending on Allah, and pay attention to

3- .....................] an evil moves in the world (= in the present time) - They say to Ibrahim, the coppersmith

4- ............ and he got?] from him a security. Damn you. Go ahead to him, and take your right from him.

5- ............] . and I insist if you go out along with the land of Misr, you will be

6-............ and?] Abder-Rahman Abu al-Hassan, [said to him?] to send the debt
7- ........] and I gave him on credit one thousand not more but he sleeps on it (i.e. he did not pay it).
8- ........] and his safety?

Commentary:

L.1 - وأَن نَعْمَه [ عليكم: Clearly this line is the first line in the letter. It bears the salutation formula or the opening formula of the letter. See Al-Qalqashandi, Subhi El-‘Asha, vol. VIII, p.160, ff.

أَمَّلَكُ الله وَحَفظَكُ وَأَن نَعْمَه عليكم (= may Allah preserve you and may he protect unto you) or أَطَال الله نَعْمَكُ وأَدَم عَزُوكُ وَكَرَامَكُ وَتَأيِّيدهُ وَسَاعَدَكُ وَأَن نَعْمَع عليكم (= may Allah prolong your life and may cause your might honour, strength and happiness to continue and complete his favors towards you) or similar formula could be restored. See BACPS, VI, P. Haun. 10, note 4; and cf. APLE, V, 309, 2-3).

جَبَارَة: the name is dotted. جَبَارَة or جَبَارَة could be vocalized according to AD-DAHABI, Moschtabih, p. 83. We met a person named جَبَارَة in APEL, V, 291, 13 dated in IVth A.H. It seems that he is not the same person of our document since we met the hair of Ishaq b. Kamil also called ‘Allan in APEL, IV, 234, r., 15; 16 dated in 270 A.H.

عَلِنَ: The name عَلِنَ is superscribed. In APEL, IV, 234, r., ll.15; 16 (270 A.H.), we met the heirs of Ishaq b. Kamil, also called ‘Allan.

Clearly كَبِّك mentions more than one letter. If it is one letter only, and the alif of كَبِّك is omitted as usual, the verb will be Wصلت not وصلت.
According to IBN AL-ATHYIR, *Al-Kamil fi Al-Tarikh*, vol. VI, p. 51 ff., in the year 270 A.H., there was big troubles because of the death of Ahmed b. Tulun. So, perhaps the sender of the letter asked 'Allan about the safety of the receiver and his brothers.


وأكرهت: It means وافتم (= take care or pay attention). The sender advises his son also to pay himself attention. Usually the word comes in negative form such as ما أكبرت له; but here the word is affirmative and this is rare (see Ibn MANZOUR, *Lisan Al-'Arab*, vol. V, p. 3848).

شر جار في الدنيا = an evil moves in the world (= in the present time). This sentence may mention to some troubles in Egypt in that time or because of the security on a debt (cf. note L.2, and L.4).

The proper name `هیم النحاس was written according to the local not to classical language. He has not been identified. النحاس is either a surname or a profession (= coppersmith).

may be restored since the sender of the letter exhorts the receiver to go and to take his rights from someone. Clearly the
security is movable. It could be jewels and alike. وَأَلَّم (= damn you): this expression indicates that the sender of the letter is in higher position than the receiver such as a father or someone from his relatives such as his uncle.

L.5: there are two variant readings for this word; either وَأَلَّم (= and I insist) or وَأَلَّم (= and he insists). The first reading is preferable in the context.

تَكْرِيئًا is a conditional particle here because إن : إن تَخْرَجْوا مع بر مصر تَكْرِيئًا is an apodosis (جواب الشرط) of the conditional sentence (see W. Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language, vol. II, p. 14 ff.). The verb تَخْرَجْوا (نَفَعُ الشرط = فعل الشرط) is a transitive verb. It should be followed by the preposition لِنَع, or to omit the preposition according to classical Arabic syntax. This verb is from الخروج (=going out). It is opposite of الدخول (=entrance). It is said: دخلت البيت (=I entered the house). The correcting sentence is دخلت إلى البيت (=I entered to the house). The preposition لِنَع is omitted (see Ibn MANZOUR, Lisan Al-'Arab, vol. 2, p. 1341). And so forth verb خروج. The preposition مع (= with, along with) indicates association and connection in time or place, as the Arab grammarian's remark (see W. Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language, vol. II, p. 164). One of the usage's of إلى indicates also to association (see W. Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language, vol. II, p. 145, c. So, It seems to me that there is an
interchanging here between them. Using the preposition مع in this sentence is a vulgar language.

من قوم ل (see Ibn MANZOUR, Lisan Al-'Arab, vol. 1, p. 254). This is another advice from the sender of the letter. He insists to push the receiver of the letter and his brothers to go out of their residence.

L.7- يرقد عليه (L.7, literally: sleeps on it). It is a colloquial expression means that the borrower has delayed the payment for a long time. The expression is still used to date.

L.8- For the restoration cf. L.2.

II- A Letter from a Son to his Father

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2- من هم أنه أريد أن أصيب من ا تقص؟

3- يا بابا جعلت فذاك الدعاء كيرا لله عسِّي

4- كرشي قدير وأ [ن] أترك بدعا دع <تك ول

5- ذكرت بر مصر وحسيمه مد .

6- لا أصل إلى حا...ال...

7- حمل قمح إليك وأرجو أ [ن]

8- عدوا ولكن لا تكتب ما
Translation:

1- [ ]......[ ]
2- ] from uncle, as I want, to obtain from the [wheat ?]
3- ] O father, may I be made your ransom, to pray so much for Allah
   perhaps [ and Allah has]
4- the power to do all that He will, and I seek the blessing of your
   prays and.[ and we went out as]
5- you mentioned along the land (or desert) of Misr, and he
   imprisoned him
6- I do not reach to ....[ ]
7- an amount of wheat for you, and I hope to[ ]
8- an enemy, but do not write to? [ ]
9- to you[ ]

Commentary:

L.2- الم : The word is not dotted. It is either الم (= the uncle) or الم
   (= the grieve). I prefer the first the word since it is followed by
   أريد (= as I want), and the wanting here is perhaps wheat (cf. L.7).

أصيب : There is one dot under the word أصب. It is written
   between the letter yaa and the letter baa. It should be under the yaa because
   أصيب is an infinitive after verb أرد (= I want) See W. Wright, A Grammar

م : is possible restoration (cf. L.7).
L.3-4: is a vulgar language. The classical Arabic language is 


Al-Qalqashandi in his book *Subhi El-ʿAsha*, vol. VIII, p.161, says that this expression is a part the opening letter in that time (cf. also *APEL*, V, 326, 2; 332,1; 2; 358, 2; 360, 2).

The *hamza* is omitted. It is a usual phenomenon in that period.

L.1.3/4 For the restoration see *surah al-baqara* (the caw), II, 285. This *surah* is used in praying by Muslims when they are in trouble, and obviously the sender of the letter was in trouble (cf. the recto Ll. 2-5; and the verso Ll. 5,7).

بدعاه (pap. بدعا > ك). It is a colloquial expression. For *hamza* at the end of a word see W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, vol. I, p. 17.

L.1.4/5 For the restoration see L.5, r. إن "خرجنا كا؟ ذكرت بر مصر "This line affirms that this letter is the replay of the letter written on the recto. Here, it is clear that there is no preposition before بر مصر (= the land of Misr).

حبسه (= and he imprisoned him). Who is imprisoned here? It is not clear. Perhaps he is one of the brothers of the sender of the letter. So this could be the reason behind the advising of their father to leave their place.
and to go out along with the land of Misr (cf. L. 5, r.). Ibn IJAS (in his book "بِدائع الزهور وفُلانيان الدهور) vol. I, 1, p. 168) says "غير أنه كان شديد الغضب..... حتى قيل مات في "حبسه ثانية ألف إنسان" (= he (Ahmad ibn Tulun) was generous ...... but he was more severe in his angry .......... as far as it is said that 18000 persons died in his prison.). Is there a relation between the imprisoned person here and what Ibn IJAS says in his book? We do not know.

L.7- حمل قمح إليك: The word حمل is either a verb حمل (= carried) or حمل (= an amount of wheat), see Ibn MANZOUR, Lisan Al-‘Arab, vol., 2, p. 1002. ويقول "والحمل بالكسر: ماحمل على ظهر أرأس"والحمل: "ثم الحمل: وراث الشجر، والكسر فيه". I prefer the second because if حمل is a verb the word قمح should be accusative قمحا according to the classical Arabic grammar. (cf. L. 2 and its note, and see W. Wright, A Grammar of the Arabic Language, vol. I, p. 236).

L.8- عدو: the word is undotted. عدو (= an enemy) or عدو (= running ) may be read. I prefer the first because it goes with the context (cf. Ll. 3; 4; 5, r. and L. 5, v.).
TWO PRIVATE LETTERS

Recto

P. Haun. inv. Arab. 5
13 x 13.7 cm
Provenance al-Fayyūm
3rd c. AH / 9th c. AD
ALIA HANAFI

Verso
P. Haun. inv. Arab. 5
13 x 13.7 cm
Provenance al-Fayyum
3rd c. AH / 9th c. AD
REVIEW

TEETER, Timothy M., Columbia Papyri XI
The American Society of Papyrologists
Scholars Press, Atlanta, Georgia, USA, 1998

Reviewed by Prof. Dr. Alia HANAFI
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Columbia Papyri XI is originally a dissertation of doctorate to
Columbia University. It contains eleven unpublished papyrus
documents. One of them did not appear in the dissertation. The title of
the theses was *Ten Christian papyri in the Columbia collection*. The
first four papyri are literary and liturgical text while the other seven
are documentary. The writer used the standard "Leiden" system in
editing this volume. He added beside the main work bibliographical
references, indices for literary, liturgical, and documentary texts. A
concordance and photos are given at the end of the book. It numbers
38 in series of *American studies in papyrology*.

With careful attention to details, with truly ability to restore the
missing or ambiguous texts, and with a full and reliable translation of
the texts TEETER, Timothy M. gave the reader a good standard of
preparing this kind of studying. He has provided English translation,
commentary, ad an introduction for each text to discuss several
aspects relating to the texts especially the third one where he has
treated the celebrating of the sermon of 6th of January with skill.
TEETER, Timothy M. has chosen to maintain the original shape of
the texts correcting them separately. Such a separation makes
checking the translation and the critical apparatus an easy job.
However, TEETER, Timothy M. did not give a full bibliography
although he has used more than the list he has given shone. I would
suggest for p. 79 to be titled as *ABBREVIATED AND SHORT TITLES*,
or to write a full bibliography of the whole research.

Yet, this book is valuable for classicists as well as to those who
are interested in the history of the churches. The value of having a
print in Scholars Press is definitely great.

Prof. Dr. Alia HANAFI
ABSTRACTS
LES TROUVAILLES DES PAPYRUS ARABES, DE HIRBET EL MIRD A PALESTINE

Par
Ahmed Fouad Sayed

Tous Ces Collections des documents arabes, prouvent la Justice de l'état Islamique, la propagation de la Culture arabe Islamique, la tolérance religieuse à legard les Zimmittes, les droits de la femme a l’islam.