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THE COPTIC APOCALYPSE OF PETER

(NAG-HAMMADI-CODEX VII,3)

EDITED BY HENRIETTE W. HAVELAAR



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Preface

This study aims at making more accessible the Coptic Apocalypse of Peter (Apoc.Pet.), the third text of Codex VII of the Nag Hammadi library. As a matter of course I will build on earlier research of this complicated text since the first publication in 1973 of the Coptic text and a German translation by M.Krause and M.Girgis.

Over the last two decades several translations of the text have been brought out: M.Krause, M.Girgis 'Die Petrusapokalypse' in: F. Altheim, R. Stiehl (eds.) *Christentum am Roten Meer* II, Berlin/New York (1973), 152-179; A. Werner 'Die Apokalypse des Petrus, die dritte Schrift von Nag Hammadi Codex VII. Eingeleitet und übersetzt vom Berliner Arbeitskreis für Koptisch-Gnostische Schriften', *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 99 (1974), 575-584; S.K. Brown, C.W. Griggs 'The Apocalypse of Peter, introduction and translation', *Brigham Young University Studies* 15 (1974/75), 131-145; J.A. Brashler *The Coptic Apocalypse of Peter, a genre analysis and interpretation*, Claremont 1977 (Unpubl. Diss.); J.A. Brashler, R.A. Bullard 'Apocalypse of Peter' in: J.M. Robinson (ed.), *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, Leiden 1988; A. Werner 'Koptisch-Gnostische Apokalypse des Petrus' in: W. Schneemelcher (ed.) *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, Tübingen 5.Auflage 1987-1989, 633-644. J.A. Brashler, "Apocalypse of Peter", in: B.A. Pearson (ed.) *Nag Hammadi Codex VII*. Leiden 1996, 201-249. Despite the fact that we now have at our disposal seven different translations (and several translations of parts of the text), considerable interpretational problems have remained.

These problems call for an annotated translation which incorporates the insights articulated by the above-mentioned authors.

The only earlier study exclusively dedicated to Apoc.Pet. was carried out by J.A. Brashler (1977), cited above. It contains the Coptic text, a translation and chapters dedicated to questions of genre, Christology and the identity of the adversaries of Apoc. Pet. The present study owes a great deal to this project but also differs from it to an important extent as will become clear especially in the chapters on genre and Christology. Another significant study, is K. Koschorke's *Die Polemik der Gnostiker gegen das kirchliche Christentum*, Leiden 1978. Koschorke has tried to solve the problem of the identity of the adversaries of the Petrine Gnostics. This problem has here been reconsidered, resulting in an alternative proposal regarding the relationship between the group behind Apoc.Pet. and its opponents.

While a complete commentary on the text has not appeared before, the commentary presented here is indebted to various earlier investigations concerned with different details from Apoc.Pet. namely H.-M. Schenke 'Zur Faksimile-Ausgabe der Nag Hammadi-Schriften, Die Schriften des Codex VII'. *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache* 102 (1975), 277-285; K.-W. Tröger: *Die Passion Jesu Christi in der Gnosis nach den Schriften von Nag Hammadi*.

Humboldt Universität 1977 (Unpubl. Diss.); J.A. Cozby *Gnosis and the Cross: The Passion of Christ in Gnostic Soteriology as Reflected in the Nag Hammadi Tractates*, Duke University 1985 (Unpubl. Diss.); Ph. Perkins *The Gnostic Dialogue*, New York 1985; G. Shellrude *Nag Hammadi Apocalypses: A Study of the Relation of Selected Texts to the Traditional Apocalypses*, St. Andrews University 1986 (Unpubl. Diss.); U. Schönborn *Diverbium Salutis, Studien zur Interdependenz von literarischer Struktur und theologischer Intention des gnostischen Dialogs, ausgeführt an der koptischen "Apokalypse des Petrus" aus Nag Hammadi (NHC VII,3)*, Marburg/Lahn 1987 (Unpubl. Habilitationsschrift).

The structure of the present study

Different approaches will be used to analyse the text: a philological approach dominates in chapters one, two and three and the registers; a literary approach in chapters four and five. And a combination of philological and literary insights is found in chapter six. Chapter seven analyses Apoc.Pet. with the help of sociological notions. The different approaches are not divided from each other as strictly as is suggested here. The commentary in particular combines aspects of the different methods in order to present a comprehensive interpretation. And in chapter six and seven, for instance, the Christology of Apoc.Pet. and the identity of the adversaries are discussed with the help of philological observations as well. But in general this division will be sustained.

The first three chapters are dedicated to philological questions: a description of the manuscript, an inventory of linguistic peculiarities, an edition of the Coptic text, a translation, grammatical annotations, and a commentary make up this part of the project. It is completed by a register which is included at the end of the book.

The Coptic text, based on my study of the manuscript in the Coptic Museum, corrects on several minor points the first edition by Krause. The translation is as literal as possible, without making concessions to syntactic and grammatical consistency. The commentary draws attention to the difficulties of our text and proposes an interpretation of these difficulties. I will avoid, therefore, piling up information and references that do not directly serve the main goal: explanation of the Apocalypse of Peter.

Chapter four is concerned with the question of genre. This chapter makes more explicit what has silently been assumed in the commentary viz. that Apoc.Pet. is a specimen of the genre apocalypse. Genre study is an important line of investigation in current literary research. The question as to what a genre is and, more specifically, the discussion on the apocalyptic genre, have been of particular importance the last two decades. The genre of Apoc.Pet. will be analyzed with the help of recent insights in the field of literary theory. The text is described as an apocalypse in which both general apocalyptic and more specific Gnostic features have been combined.

One of the features which helped us establish the text as an apocalypse forms the subject matter of chapter five. The abundance of references to Scripture is a characteristic element

of apocalyptic texts. In the case of Apoc.Pet. we deal with the relationship between this text and the New Testament. This relationship is very complicated and requires a thorough description. The text contains over twenty references to New Testament texts, a considerable amount for this relatively short document (14 codex pages). Many of these references seem to be taken from the Gospel of Matthew but other texts from Scripture have also been identified.

The next chapter is concerned with the Christology of Apoc.Pet. It is essential for our understanding of the text to analyze how the Saviour, who is both the subject and the object of the revelation, has been represented. It appears that the interpretation of the crucifixion is revealed to Peter by the narrating Saviour or *angelus interpres*. The crucified Saviour, who can be characterized as docetic, is described as consisting of three non-material 'natures', temporarily connected with a material body. This representation of the Saviour is found in more Christian Gnostic texts. An important parallel with another text from Nag Hammadi can be found in the Second Treatise of the Great Seth in the same codex.

In chapter seven, finally, it is tried to retrieve in which sort of religious community Apoc. Pet. may have originated. It is argued that the text functioned as the programme of a newly formed Christian Gnostic group. The author of the text could have been a spokesman of this group who polemically formulated the religious ideas of his devotees. The adversaries who are so vehemently opposed in Apoc.Pet. are thought to have formed previously a unity with the Petrine Gnostics. It is hypothesized that within this proto-orthodox community, our group gradually became a subgroup. Religious differences, finally, led to a voluntary or involuntary schism which separated the Petrine Gnostics from their parental group. This interpretation partly results from the chapters five and six in which respectively the relation with the New Testament and the Christology of Apoc.Pet. has been described. From both chapters it appears that our text has been influenced to a large extent by the Christian tradition. In particular the canonical story of the Passion has appeared to be fundamental to the composition of Apoc.Pet.

Introduction

In 1945 a collection of thirteen 4th-century papyrus codices was found near Nag Hammadi in Upper-Egypt which is now kept in the Coptic Museum in Cairo. With only a few letters missing at the bottom of some pages, Apoc.Pet. (Codex VII,3) is among the best preserved texts of the whole library. The real problem with the text lies in the difficulty the Coptic causes us. Although most of the text can be interpreted with a high degree of certainty, a number of phrases remain which are very difficult to construe, possibly due to the inadequacy of the Coptic translation of the Greek original.

Place and Date of Origin

In all probability the original text was written in Greek. However, the question as to where Apoc.Pet. was written cannot be answered with certainty. A possible place of origin seems to be Syria. Indications for this are the prominent role the apostle Peter plays in Apoc.Pet. and the preference of the author for the Gospel of Matthew, which is apparent, for instance, from the self-designation of the people behind Apoc.Pet. as 'little ones'. Apoc.Pet. also shows some resemblances with other apocryphal Peter-literature, for instance with the *Kerygmata Petrou* in the Pseudo-Clementines. The docetic Christology forms the main resemblance between Apoc.Pet. and these texts. Since this literature is usually located in Syria, it is feasible that Apoc.Pet. originated there as well.¹

As to the date of origin of Apoc.Pet., we cannot be sure of that either, but a *terminus post quem non* can be given with certainty since in the leather cover of Codex VII some paper scraps, used to strengthen the cover, were found on which the dates 333, 341, 346 and 348 are written.² When we assume that with the mention of Hermas, in Apoc.Pet. (78.18), the author of The Shepherd of Hermas is intended. A *terminus a quo* of 150 could be established, since the Shepherd of Hermas is dated usually in the first part of the second century. This

¹ Cf. however Pearson 1990b, 71 who proposes Egypt as the place of origin. This suggestion is based on the expression "waterless canals" in Apoc.Pet. 79.30-31. According to him this is possibly an allusion to the expression "waterless springs" in 2 Peter 2.17 which has been adapted to fit an Egyptian geographical environment. The passage is discussed in Ch. 5.4.3.

² Cf. Barnes 1975, 12. These dates are only reliable of course when the papyruspages were written before the manufacturing of the codex. If the codex was written on after it was manufactured, the manuscript must be dated either *in* or *after* the year 348.

leaves us with a period of about 200 years, viz. 150-333, in which Apoc.Pet. has to be situated. The docetic Christology of the work does not provide us with a clue since it might just as well point to a very early date shortly after Ignatius of Antioch who already discusses this theme, as to a somewhat later date contemporary with Irenaeus and Tertullian. The many references to texts which were to become part of the New Testament might point to a later date as well. Apparently these texts had authority for the author and therefore they might have been in circulation for some time. This observation is supported by the lack of any serious concern with Old Testament texts, references to which are virtually absent. In Apoc.Pet. 76.31-34, where it is told that the opponents of the Petrine Gnostics boast that "the mystery of truth" belongs to them only, Brashler has detected an indication of a date of origin in the third century: "By citing this as a boast of his opponents, the author of Apoc. Pet. indicates that he is writing in the third century, when the exclusive claims of the orthodox church were increasingly pressed upon the minorities who did not accept orthodox teaching and practice".³ Finally, the nature of the polemic in Apoc.Pet. directed at emerging orthodoxy and ongoing institutionalization, might point by its use of Matthew 16.18-19 to a date of origin after Tertullian's *De Pudicitia*, in which the use of this text as a source of orthodox episcopal authority occurs for the first time as far as we know.⁴ However, this argument is not decisive either: we might equally consider Apoc.Pet. as the older source in which Matthew 16 is used to legitimize episcopal aspirations. Considering these arguments, a date of origin at the beginning of the third century is possible but not certain.⁵

Apoc. Pet. and the Other Texts from Nag Hammadi⁶

It might be fruitful to compare Apoc.Pet. with different clusters of texts from the Nag Hammadi collection. Since our text is part of Codex VII one could ask if there is any system in this codex. As far as the text is an apocalypse we could compare it with the other apocalypses of the Nag Hammadi library, especially with the apocalypses of Codex V.⁷ As our text is one in which Peter is one of the main characters the other Petrine texts from Nag Hammadi should be taken into account.

³ Brashler 1977, 217.

⁴ Cf. Koschorke 1978, 17.

⁵ See for instance Smith 1985, 8, who proposes an earlier date, some time in the second century.

⁶ The Nag Hammadi texts cited in this study and their abbreviations are taken from *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, Leiden 3rd rev. ed. 1988 (NHLE), with the exception of the translation of Apoc.Pet. and some other passages which will be indicated.

⁷ See Ch. 4.

The first comparison, viz. with the other texts in Codex VII turns out to be negative. Codex VII contains five texts. Only the Second Treatise of the Great Seth (VII,2) shows some important, mainly Christological, parallels. The other three texts (Paraph.Shem VII,1; Teach.Silv. VII,4 and Steles Seth VII,5) have nothing to do with our text. But it is noteworthy that the language, Sahidic with some Bohairic traits, is consistent throughout the codex. The second group of texts we want to collate is formed by the other apocalypses of the Nag Hammadi library. As will become clear also from chapter 4, the Apocalypse of Peter has more generic traits in common with Jewish and non-Gnostic Christian apocalypses than with the specifically Gnostic apocalypses from Nag Hammadi. Especially the visions, a characteristic feature of Jewish apocalypses, which take up a considerable part of Apoc.Pet., are rare among the Nag Hammadi apocalypses;⁸ the accent in Gnostic apocalypses is usually on the spoken word. However, there are some elements in common with Gnostic apocalypses: with the Apocalypse of Paul (NHC V,2), the Apocalypse of Adam (V,5) and the second Apocalypse of James (V,4). Apoc.Pet. shares a few features, typical of Gnostic apocalypses: present salvation by knowledge, personal afterlife and otherworldly elements described as good and evil.⁹ Upon closer examination these parallels appear to be less important. The main story of the Apocalypse of Paul is the report of a heavenly journey of Paul who is guided by an angel from the third up to the tenth heaven.¹⁰ The Apocalypse of Adam comes closer to the Jewish Testament genre in that it contains the last words of Adam directed at his son Seth. The Second Apocalypse of James, finally, only contains a smaller part which can be labeled apocalyptic. The work as a whole is not an apocalypse.¹¹

The third group, finally, texts in which the apostle Peter plays an important role, is also not very specific in its relation with Apoc.Pet. Apoc.Pet. relates more to other Peter literature such as the canonical Second Letter of Peter and the Gospel of Peter, although the similarities with these texts should not be overestimated. In addition to Apoc.Pet. the Nag Hammadi Library contains two texts and the Codex Bezae Cantabrigiae one text in which Peter plays a central role. These texts are: the Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles (VI,1), The Letter of Peter to Philip (VIII,2) and The Act of Peter (BG 8502,4). Of these texts only Ep. Pet.Phil is a Gnostic text just like Apoc.Pet. The two Acts show no explicitly Gnostic features. The only parallels between Apoc.Pet. and Acts Pet. 12 Apost. is, apart from the important position of Peter, the allusion to Mt. 16,13-19 in Acts Pet. 12 Apost. (VI,1) 9,1-15: "He said to Peter, 'Peter!' and Peter was frightened, for how did he know that his name was Peter? Peter

⁸ Vision accounts occur only in Apoc.Pet. (VII,3), Allogenes (XI,3), Zostrianos (VIII,1) and Apoc.Pl. (V,2).

⁹ Fallon 1979, 148.

¹⁰ The otherworldly journey is a common theme in Jewish apocalypses. We find it e.g. in Apocalypse of Abraham, I Enoch 1-36. 2 Enoch, 3 Baruch. It is also found in a few Nag Hammadi texts like Zostrianos (VIII,1) and the Paraphrase of Shem (VII,2).

¹¹ See Shellrude 1986, 6.

responded to the Saviour, 'How do you know me, for you called my name'? Lithargoel (a cryptic name of the Saviour, hwh) answered, 'I want to ask you, who gave the name Peter to you'? He said to him, 'It was Jesus Christ, the son of the living God. He gave this name to me'. He answered and said, 'It is I! Recognize me, Peter'".¹² The Act of Peter in the *Codex Berolinensis* in which the story of Peter's paralyzed daughter is the central theme, does not resemble Apoc.Pet. at all, except for the name of the main figure.

Closer to Apoc.Pet. comes Ep.Pet.Phil. (VIII,2). The same atmosphere of esoteric revelation concerning the suffering of Jesus and the prominent role of Peter can be found in this text. Although Ep.Pet.Phil. is not an apocalypse, but a letter followed by a revelation dialogue, it has more in common with Apoc.Pet. than any of the other texts. There is no evidence, however, of a literary relation. Peter also plays an important role in the Apocryphon of James (I,2). In this text the Saviour grants a revelation to James and Peter. It is explicitly said that Peter and James take a special position among the disciples. In other Gnostic texts Peter plays a less positive role. In the Gospel of Thomas (II,2), and the Gospel of Mary (BG,1) Peter is depicted as the opponent of Mary.¹³

There are some additional elements of agreement between Apoc.Pet. and the other Nag Hammadi texts. The most important feature is the implicit use of references to Scripture.¹⁴ We find this in the Gospel of Truth (NHC I,3 & XII,2)¹⁵ and, for instance, in the Testimony of Truth (NHC IX,3).¹⁶ A second general point of agreement is the pessimistic dualistic anthropology of Apoc.Pet. which can be found throughout the Nag Hammadi library. The same goes for the Christology of Apoc.Pet. which shares its docetic character with at least six other texts.¹⁷ Finally, the polemic against orthodoxy and maybe against other, Gnostic, groups occurs in some of the other texts as well.¹⁸

¹² Robinson 1988, 292-293. Cf. Apoc.Pet. 71,14-71,21.

¹³ See for instance Smith 1985, 102-117 for details on the anti-Peter tendency in these texts.

¹⁴ See Ch. 5.

¹⁵ Cf. Williams 1988.

¹⁶ Cf. Pearson 1990, 29f., 39f.

¹⁷ See Ch. 6.

¹⁸ Cf. Treat.Seth (VII,2); Test.Ver. (IX,3); Melch. (IX,1).

1. Manuscript, Orthography and Language

1.1 Manuscript

The Apocalypse of Peter, the third text of codex VII, is kept in the Coptic Museum of Old Cairo and bears the inventory number 10546. In the manuscript our text is preceded by The Paraphrase of Shem (VII 1,1-49,9), The Second Treatise of the Great Seth (VII 49,10-70,12), and followed by The Teachings of Silvanus (VII 84,15-118,9) and The Three Steles of Seth (VII 118,10-127,32).

The five texts were stitched as one quire into a leather binding, which is conserved separately.¹⁹ The papyrus pages, which are conserved in plexiglass frames, still show the points of attachment. The quality of the papyrus is average compared to codex II or VIII for example.²⁰ The papyrus is thicker than in these two codices and has many spots, slits and holes which are not due to old age but to the inaccurate manufacturing of the papyrus. The colour varies from light beige to a reddish brown. In one instance the papyrus is not two but four layers thick viz. page 81/82 where an extra layer of papyrus is affixed, possibly as consolidation.

The text of Apoc.Pet. takes up 14 closely covered codex pages. The original size of a page was 16 x 29.2 cm²¹, the average column of writing measures 10/11.5 cm x 22.5 cm. Each page contains 30-39 lines. The upper and lower margins measure about three centimeters, the outer margin is also three centimeters, and the inner margin is about two and a half centimeters. The Coptic scribe has numbered the pages from $\overline{\text{O}}$ (70) to $\overline{\text{ΠΔ}}$ (84). These numbers are written in the upper left corner of every oddnumbered page and in the upper right corner of every evennumbered page, a little more than one centimeter from the upper edge of the papyrus and three centimeters from the left and right edges respectively.

Kollèseis (joints where the papyrus has been pasted) are present on the following pages: 71, left over right at two-third of the page on the right side; 72, right over left, verso of 71; 79, left over right, at about three centimeters of the right margin, 80, verso of 79. In the last case the pasting is untidy but original, for the handwriting runs across the spots and creases.

¹⁹ See Facsimile Edition, *Introduction* 1984.

²⁰ The criteria of papyrus quality are: thinness, regularity of fibers, surface smoothness and uniformity of colour. Cf. Lewis, 1974.

²¹ The edges of all pages are slightly damaged by insects, humidity and old age.

Apoc.Pet. and codex VII as a whole are written by one scribe. The handwriting style may be identified with the second hand of codex XI (Allogenes) as already pointed out by King.²² Close examination makes this identification most likely. The script of both texts is a formal round majuscule. It averages 18 to 20 letters per line, with rarely a variance of more than three letters. Black ink was used throughout. The handwriting of codex XI might be a little rounder in shape than the one from codex VII but this must be due to the normal variation within an individual's handwriting. Several features of the hand of codex VII occur in the second hand of codex XI as well: e.g., the circumflex above the combinations $\overline{\text{ZI}}$ and $\overline{\text{EI}}$, the backstroke on the **T** and the tendency to write the letters at the end of each line smaller than the ones at the beginning. Though the handwriting has been characterized as "a poor and mannered class one"²³, it is in general very regular and even beautiful. Furthermore it has some minor orthographic characteristics in common with codices IV, V, VI, VIII and IX.²⁴

The manuscript is in very good condition. Screening the text with the help of an ultraviolet lamp has yielded no new results. With the exception of small lacunae involving only a few letters all of which can be restored with a high degree of certainty, the text is complete.²⁵

1.2 Orthography

The first letter of the text after the title, the **ε** of **εϥζμοοϥ**, is probably meant to be a capital. It is clearly larger in size than the other letters at the beginning of a line which are up to twice as big as the letters at the end of a line. The only other decorations in the text of Apoc.Pet. consist in a carelessly drawn framework around the title at the beginning of the text and a similar ornament at the end.

The left and right margins are regular. The only noticeable deviation can be found in Apoc.Pet. 72.15 (right margin) and 72.16 (left margin) where the letters '**λμ**' and '**πι**-' extend in the right and left margins respectively.

The supralinear stroke, functioning as a syllable marker, appears regularly above single consonantal sonants (**M**, **N**, **P**; once also **B**) which form syllables of their own or above two or more consonants of any sort forming syllables. The supralinear stroke over single or double consonants is generally in the rounded form of the circumflex; whereas over three or more consonants, the stroke is straight. There are a few more noticeable accents viz. the circumflex or spiritus asper above vowels in 76.5 **ἦ**, 77.3 **εοϥω** and 77.33 **ἐι̇ε̇π̇ω̇τ**

²² King 1984 (typescript), 198.

²³ Layton 1974, 4, 358.

²⁴ Robinson 1975, 170.

²⁵ Lacunae: 70.31; 71.33,34; 72.31; 78.34; 79.32,33; 80.33; 81.32; 82.32; 83.33,34.

and above the combination **EI** in four instances: 72.26; 75.4; 77.33; 79.19. A characteristic feature of the orthography of Apoc.Pet. which also appears in the orthography of codices IV, V, VI, VIII, IX and XI, is the appearance of the stroke above the combination 'Z' in every form (**ⲕⲓⲗⲛ̄**, **ⲕⲓⲛⲁ̄**, **ⲕⲓⲧⲟⲟⲧ̄**, **ⲕⲓⲧⲛ̄**, **ⲕⲕⲓⲙⲉ̄**, **ⲕⲓⲙⲁⲣⲙⲉⲛⲛ̄** etc.). The function of this stroke has not been satisfactorily explained so far.²⁶ In addition, the supralinear stroke appears constantly above standard contractions (**ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̄**, **ⲕⲧⲟⲕ̄**, **ⲕⲱⲣ̄** etc.) and once as emphasizing stroke (**ⲉⲗⲱⲉⲓⲙ̄**). A stroke is never used at the end of a line to indicate a final **N**.²⁷

Since I had the opportunity to study the original manuscript in the Coptic Museum it is possible to add some, more detailed, information than can be obtained from the facsimile edition. After checking the few lacunae once again together with various instances in which the facsimile edition was not clear enough with respect to a raised dot or other accent, the following adaptations have been made. In five instances the present punctuation deviates from Krause's first edition and follows Brashler's: 75.26 raised dot added; 77.10 raised dot removed; 79.18 raised dot added; 80.16 raised dot removed because the black spot seems to be a stain instead of a raised dot, and 80.18 raised dot added. In one case the scribe has corrected a word, namely 77.13: **ⲕⲓⲧⲟⲟⲧ̄** has been corrected into **ⲕⲓⲧⲟⲟⲧⲟⲩ̄** by writing a very small **O** between **T** and **Y**. In 83.21 the letter **I** is blemished and therefore hardly readable.

There is one instance of a ligature that has not been registered before: 74.17 **ⲡⲗⲗⲛⲛ̄ N** and **H** are written as one letter. Another case of ambiguous spelling worth discussing can be found in 77.18-19: **ⲉⲕⲱⲁⲛⲭⲓⲑⲟⲙ̄** / **ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̄ ⲛⲛⲟⲉⲣⲟⲛ̄**. Here, the supralinear stroke from **ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̄** seems to form one whole with the 'tail' of the **ϣ** of **ⲉⲕⲱⲁⲛⲭⲓⲑⲟⲙ̄** above it. Krause transcribes **ⲡⲛ̄ⲁ̄**, Brashler renders **ⲡⲛⲗⲗ**, without the stroke. Careful examination of the original shows that there is a separate stroke over **ⲡⲛⲗⲗ**.

The serif, in the form of a backstroke, appears only with the letter **T** and functions as an element to indicate a closed syllable and the end of a word, although its use is not consistent: there are many instances where the letter **T** at the end of a syllable has no hook. Its major occurrence is with the morphemes **ⲉⲧ̄-**, **ⲗⲧ̄-**, and **ⲙⲛ̄ⲧ̄-**. It is present consistently at the end of words ending with **T**.²⁸

The raised dot is used frequently, though not consistently, to mark the end of a sentence or clause. In some instances it is used to separate words and in this respect its use must be

²⁶ See Polotsky 'Review of Till, *Koptische Grammatik*', in: Polotsky 1971, 226-233.

²⁷ Perhaps with one exception: **ⲙ̄** = **ⲙⲛ̄**. See Gramm. Ann. 72.15.

²⁸ Böhlig/Wisse 1975, 2 n.5.: "The reason for pointing final letters of a word or syllable is most likely an effort to facilitate reading aloud." The serif in codex VII,3 probably has the same function, although this only occurs with **T**-. The same use of the serif occurs in codices IV, V, VI, VIII and XI.

considered rather arbitrary.²⁹ Another means of punctuation in this codex is the diaeresis. It is used to mark a consonantal **l**, as in: **παῖ**, **ταῖ**, **ναῖ**, **ζραῖ**, **ῖωτ** etc. In a few cases grammatical difficulty may be identified as an error of the copyist. We found a possible dittography³⁰ of **ναῖ** in 71.10f., the omission of **ζεν-** in 76.8, a haplography of **ογ-** in 82.20, the omission of **πε** in 83.8, and omission of **ογν-** in 83.29.

1.3 Language

It is the scholarly consensus that Apoc.Pet. is written in Sahidic and that this Sahidic is a translation of a Greek original.³¹ The text does show, however, both minor internal variations and deviations from the (e.g. biblical) Sahidic. This is partly due to influence from Upper-Egyptian dialects, however: also some Lower-Egyptian features are present both in morphology and syntax.

I will determine specifically which linguistic features come into consideration. These are listed below and are divided into three larger groups: 1) internal variants comprehensible within the scope of Sahidic; 2) features giving evidence of a specific dialectal influence: Akhmimic, Subakhmimic or Lycopolitan, Bohairic; 3) traits not associated with any single dialect.³²

Under each of these three divisions are headings supplying general categories under which the various alternatives are grouped. In parentheses following each item, the number of occurrences in Apoc.Pet. is given. Items which occur in parentheses themselves indicate Sahidic terms which do not occur in Apoc.Pet. They are only supplied for purposes of comparison.

²⁹ Cf. e.g. 70.19 where the raised point between **ετονζ** and **νατχωζμ** does not have a clear function.

³⁰ But see Gramm. Ann. 71.10f.

³¹ Indeed, there is no reason to doubt the consensus that all the Nag Hammadi tractates have been translated from Greek into Coptic; cf. e.g. MacRae 1976, 613 and Brashler 1977, 10.

³² The divisions of the language characteristics in the three above-mentioned groups is based on King's description of the language of NHC XI,2 (Allogenes), 1984.

1) Internal variants of Apoc.Pet. comprehensible within the scope of Sahidic

-EI instead of -ī

suff. 1st ps. sg. (17) suff. 1st ps. sg. (10)

-I instead of -EI

ΠΙΩΤ (3) (ΠΕΙΩΤ)

(ΖΕΝ)ΖΟΙΝΕ (1) (ΖΕΝ)ΖΟΕΙΝΕ (2)

I instead of EI in Greek words

ΑΝΤΙΚΙΜΕΝΟC (1) (ΑΝΤΙΚΕΙΜΕΝΟC)

ΖΙΜΑΡΜΕΝΗ (1) (ΖΕΙΜΑΡΜΕΝΗ)

ΤΕΛΙΟC (2) (ΤΕΛΕΙΟC)

ΦΘΟΝΙ (1) (ΦΘΟΝΕΙ)

-Υ (after Ε-) instead of -ΟΥ

art. Υ- (4) ΟΥ- (1)

ΥΝΤΑ (1) ΟΥΝΤΑ (1)

ΥΝ (2) (ΟΥΝ)

αα instead of α

ΧΕΚΑΑC (1) (ΧΕΚΑC)

absence of anaptyctic Ν

ΩΟΜΤ (1) (ΩΟΜΝΤ)

absence of Ζ

ΑΡΕ (1) (ΖΑΡΕ)

Ε instead of Η

ΜΕ (1) (ΜΗ)

2) Features possibly giving evidence of a dialectal influence

a) Upper Egyptian (Akhmimic and/or Subakhmimic) Traits:

Stative of $\epsilon\iota\rho\epsilon$ ³³

ϵ (6) (O)

Plural of $\mathbf{B}\bar{\lambda}\lambda\epsilon$ ³⁴

$\mathbf{B}\bar{\lambda}\lambda\epsilon\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$ (4) ($\mathbf{B}\bar{\lambda}\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon/\mathbf{B}\bar{\lambda}\lambda\epsilon\epsilon\gamma$)

ϵ instead of λ ³⁵

$\mathbf{M}\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ (2) $\mathbf{M}\lambda\tau\epsilon$ (2)

$\mathbf{N}\epsilon\lambda^{\nearrow}$ (1) ($\mathbf{N}\lambda\lambda^{\nearrow}$)

Prep.:

$\bar{\mathbf{N}}\tau\eta^{\nearrow}$ $\mathbf{N}\tau\alpha^{\nearrow}$

$\bar{\mathbf{N}}\tau\eta\epsilon\iota$ (1) $\bar{\mathbf{N}}\tau\alpha\ddot{\iota}$ (2)

λ instead of ϵ ³⁷

$\mathbf{M}\lambda\zeta$ (1) $\mathbf{M}\epsilon\zeta$ (1)

$\bar{\mathbf{N}}\tau\alpha\rho\epsilon^{\nearrow}$ (1) ($\bar{\mathbf{N}}\tau\epsilon\rho\epsilon^{\nearrow}$)

$\mathbf{M}\lambda\gamma^-$ (1) ($\mathbf{M}\epsilon\gamma^-$)

³³ Cf. Till 1961. § 204.

³⁴ Cf. Crum 38a.

³⁵ Cf. Till 1961, § 23-54.

³⁶ The form $\mathbf{N}\epsilon\lambda^{\nearrow}$ is rare, appearing only in the Nag Hammadi codices at: II,64.15f.; V,46.10; VI,96.7, 71.30; VII,64.20, 72.24; XI,57.12.22.

³⁷ Cf. Till 1961, § 265.

-OY instead of -EY³⁸

art.poss. 3rd ps.pl.:

-OY (5) -EY (9)

ḢḢPAĪ instead of ḢPAĪ³⁹

ḢḢPAĪ (21) ḢPAĪ (1)

Fut.II instead of Fut.III

ḢINA XE EYNA- (1) (EYE-)

Ḣ- as prefix for verbs borrowed from Greek⁴⁰

Greek verbs with Ḣ- (8) (Greek verbs without Ḣ-)

b) Bohairic Traits

Vocabulary: CPḠḢ/CTPḠḢ (4)⁴¹

Morphological Elements:

-I instead of -E⁴²

ḠNI (1) ḠNE (1)

³⁸ Cf. Till 1961, § 128.

³⁹ Cf. Crum 698a.

⁴⁰ Cf. Till 1961, § 187.

⁴¹ Cf. Crum 358a.

⁴² Cf. Till 1961, § 54.