TEBTUNIS ON THE ARNO (AND BEYOND): TWO "ARCHIVES"

The collection that I oversee, that of the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri of the University of California, Berkeley – the largest and oldest major collection in the United States – is closely connected to those of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana and the Istituto Papirologico «G. Vitelli». The relationships between our texts are multi-dimensional – thus I am thinking not only of the physical connections that exist between papyri but also of links of both content and "context" – and beyond these connections are others – a complex matrix of papyri scattered over the globe from Copenhagen to Cairo to my own California that encompasses a library meriting mention alongside that (or those) of the Villa dei Papiri. And while the Herculaneum house seems to have contained a larger number of rolls¹, I would dare to suggest that Tebtunis has yielded the richer library – certainly this is so from the perspective of the ancient historian – given that we know so very much, and diachronically over centuries, about the readers of its texts by virtue of the documents found alongside them². But I am getting ahead of myself concerning this particular assemblage of Tebtunis papyri, the first of the "archives" mentioned in my title and the one to which the bulk of this paper is devoted, the papyri of the priests of Soknebtunis.

The Florentine lot of these priestly papyri came to light on 10 March 1931, during the excavations by Carlo Anti and Gilberto Bagnani³. In describing the

¹ This is a lightly revised version of the paper that I presented in Florence on 12 June 2008. Notes have also been added to the text; these are not intended to be comprehensive. For further discussion of many of the issues that are broached below see the excursus (The Priests of Soknebtunis) in my Writing Histories from the Papyri (Oxford Handbook of Papyrology, in press); a fully annotated treatment of the Tebtunis priesthood will appear in P. Tebt. IX. I remain grateful to Guido Bastianini for his kind invitation to speak at the June congress, and I thank him and his colleagues for their unparalleled Florentine hospitality. Assistance from Rosario Pintaudi, Dominic Rathbone, Mark Depauw, Ekona Ghodini, Marco Stroppa, Simona Russo, Diletta Minutoli, Ian Begg, and Alessandra Menegazzi was essential for the completion of the original presentation, and I remain in their debt. Finally, I thank the Academic Senate of the University of California, Berkeley, and, especially, Mr. Warren Hellman and the Hellman Family Faculty Fund for their generous support of my research on the priests of Tebtunis.


find, I do not think that I can surpass Bagnani’s own words, in a letter written to his wife Stewart on the day following the discovery:

“We had been working on some houses on the east wall of the temenos of the Temple and had been finding bits of papyrus. We were very much afraid that it had already been plundered since we knew from our workmen and also from the Cairo dealers that some natives had dug there last year and had found a very large quantity of papyri.”

Here it may be noted that finds from these clandestine excavations ended up in Copenhagen, Lund, and New Haven, among other places.

“So we hadn’t much hope, but we thought that perhaps some small cache might have been overlooked. We got down to two small cellars side by side and we began to empty them at about half past ten ... Very soon we found ... that the cellar had been filled practically to the top with papyri ... We had been used up till now to keep the bits of papyrus we found in old cigarette boxes and, the better bits, in fairly large tin boxes like flat biscuit tins. We at once came to the end of our available boxes and had to put the papyri in baskets. We worked at that cellar all the morning ... [After lunch] Anti went back at once to the dig and ... [an hour later] I too went back to the cellars. When night fell we got the lanterns and by seven at night we got those cellars clear. We got about 18 large baskets full of papyri. The quantity is so enormous that we have made no attempt at sorting them, but have filled three large suitcases and some eight tin boxes with them and on Saturday Anti is going to take them to Cairo and deposit them at the Bank. The star piece is a hieratic papyrus that when unrolled will measure some eight to ten feet in length.”

This is the well-known Florence manuscript of the Book of the Fayum, of course. Bagnani continues:

“They seem to be written in every language under the sun: hieroglyphic, hieratic, Demotic, Greek, and apparently another language.”

I am not sure to which language Bagnani might be referring here.

“There is certainly a page of Homer ...”

I would suggest that this “page” is PSI II. 21 (LDAB 1759), despite the attribution of said papyrus to Breccia’s excavation at Kom ‘Ali al-Gam man in

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4 Published in D.G.I. Begg, “It was Wonderful, Our Return in the Darkness with ... the Baskets of Papyrus!” Papyrus Finds at Tebtunis from the Bagnani Archives, 1931-1936. BASP 35 (1998), pp. 189-191.


the spring of 1932. Bagnani’s Homer was both substantial and readily identifiable. Of the Florentine Homeric fragments with an Arsinoite connection that are known to me, only PSI II. 21, which has an account likely to be of Arsinoite origin on its recto, meets these requirements. It looks like a “page” (as opposed to a “fragment”), and the excavators would have had no trouble whatsoever recognizing it as Iliad thanks to its colophon. The Oxyrhynchite provenance that is reported for it should not trouble us too much. The Kôm Gamman papyri were excavated around the same time as the temple texts – roughly a year later – and the Tebtunis papyri had been sent to Cairo for Medea Norsa to treat and study. PSI II. 21 (or rather its largest fragment, PSI XI 1188) is still part of the papyrus collection at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. A mix-up or misattribution does not seem unthinkable. It might also be noted that many of the Egyptian papyri from the Tebtunis temple find in the Vitelli collection were mistakenly attributed to Oxyrhynchus. Finally, an administrative or fiscal account of Arsinoite origin on the recto suits the temple assemblage perfectly, since very many of the Egyptian literary texts have Greek rectos of this sort. In fact, the next item on Bagnani’s list – he writes, “[A]nother Greek papyrus is a list of taxes” – was probably awaiting reuse for the copying of literature. In contrast, most of the Kôm Gamman texts were written on the recto, with empty versos. Bagnani continues:

“[T]here are a number of Greek literary texts ...”.

Perhaps to be included here are the medical receipts published as PSI X 1180.

«... As the refuse was thrown out of the cellar there were eight boys who went over it all and got some six baskets full of stuff just of the small bits that weren’t taken up in the cellar itself ...

Anti last week, in his search for money, had written to Senator Vitelli to ask him for 20,000 lire. So last night he at once sent off a telegram to tell him to send his assistant, the Signorina Norsa, to deal with the papyri, that is to say to unroll them and to press them so that they can be taken to Italy and

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7 Although there were no specialists on hand, the archaeologists were able to identify the text within a day of the papyrus’s discovery.

8 The account is SB XXVI 16644.

9 See PSI II., pl. VIII.

10 E.g., PSI inv. 1439, 2185, 2191, 2192, 2194, 2196, 2204, 2361 (all labeled “Ossirinco” or “Abu Teir”).

11 Cfr., e.g., Ryholt, cit. at note 1, p. 144. The day after the find Bagnani himself remarked: «[A] number of the Demotic ones [literary texts] have Greek on the back». Here I would note that PSI XV 1457 (LDAB 2081) also has features suggestive of a Tebtunite provenance.

studied. To-day we have just received Vitelli’s answer to the letter saying that he is sending the money and the Norsa».

The location of these finds, of the two cellars, can be pinpointed thanks to Fausto Franco’s plan of the temple precinct preserved in Padua\(^3\).

There are additional accounts of the discovery of the papyri, in the published and unpublished reports of those involved with it, e.g., and in the correspondence of papyrologists and others. For my purposes today, only one of these accounts, a letter, merits mention, and it comes to us not from one of the principals, but from the great historian Rostovtzeff, then at Yale and a buyer on behalf of its collection. From the letter in question, dated 7 April 1931, we learn that Rostovtzeff had informed Anti and Bagnani about the clandestine excavations by the fellahin within the temenos, and that the Italians, returning to the scene of the crime, had then recovered «15 baskets full of papyri, mostly demotic and hieratic, only 30 fragments of Greek papyri»\(^14\). Now I am disposed to believe the participant Bagnani regarding the number of baskets, but what is striking to me is Rostovtzeff’s description of the Greek papyri, for which Bagnani does not give us a count. They are a pittance, all the more so if one considers that some Greek papyri from the find were present only because they had been reused for Egyptian texts; these recycled documents as a rule have nothing to do with their owners the priests but are fiscal or administrative in nature\(^15\). It is the order of magnitude, the ratio of Greek to Egyptian, that is really important, not the precision of Rostovtzeff’s figure, and on this score, given the small number of Greek texts from the find that have been published and my own knowledge of the unedited material in the Vitelli collection, I am inclined to believe that the ancient historian’s account has merit. So where was all the Greek\(^16\)? The suggestion that we should not expect much Greek to have been found in a priestly context is simply untenable, even if we confine ourselves to

\(^{13}\) Cfr. plan 2 in V. Rondot, Tebtynis II. Le temple de Sekhmetnis et son dromos, Cairo 2004 (Fouilles IFAO 50). The due ripostigli sotterranei were in structure 36A (Rondot, p. 31).

\(^{14}\) Rostovtzeff’s letter is quoted in G.M. Parassoglou, On Priests and Their Affairs in Roman Egypt, St.Pap. 12 (1973), pp. 7-8, note 1.

\(^{15}\) Cfr. C. Salvaterra, L’amministrazione fiscale in una società multietnica. Un esempio dall’Egitto romano sulla base di P.Carlsberg 421, «Politics, Administration and Society in the Hellenistic and Roman World», Leuven 2000 (Stud.Hell. 36), pp. 313-314, a work that also furnishes one of the few published examples (SB XXVI 16697). I have confirmed my statement through autoptic examination of nearly all of the relevant texts. Though the priests did have administrative duties (cfr. note 73), these texts do not appear to pertain to them.

\(^{16}\) Implicit in this question is the conclusion that the structure in which the papyri were found was not the temple library or “House of Life” (cfr. Begg, cit. at note 4, p. 191) but merely a place in which literary and documentary papyri from within the temenos had been deposited. See further below.
considering the official Greek texts – census documents, temple inventories, i.e., the γραφαὶ ἱερέων καὶ χειρισμοῖ, petitions, ordinances, and so on – of which the priests would have had or kept copies. On the contrary, we should expect the priests to have more Greek, and it in fact exists, just not in the Florentine collections; presumably it had been dug out before the Italians cleared the cellars. Some of the Greek papyri had certainly gone into the hands of the fellahin, and it was Rostovtzeff, in fact, who purchased a substantial number of them for Yale, pieces like the temple graphe SB XII 11156. At Copenhagen, the other large purchaser of material from the illicit excavations, there is, however, very little Greek; the Danes, like Rostovtzeff, selected the material that was of interest, in their case, Egyptian texts. We do find texts divided between both collections, e.g., SB XX 15024. Pace this text’s editors, however, it very likely has nothing to do with the temple or its personnel; it was part of the find because its verso had been reused for part of the Petubastis Cycle. New Haven was attracted to the recto, Copenhagen to the verso!

Yet the fellahin only take us so far, for the cellars (or their “house”) contained more Greek papyri than may be currently studied at Yale and the other collections with purchased material. A Florence papyrus, a manual for treating pulmonary ailments presented in a very fine edition by Isabella Andorlini, provides critical insight; we might think of it as a sort of Rosetta Stone for understanding the papyri that were discovered in or near the ripostigli. Other fragments of this text, since transferred to the Vitelli, were once part of the Copenhagen collection, and there are further pieces in Lund and in Milan at the Statale. All of these additional fragments can be attributed to fellahin activity. But the pieces of the text that are in Berkeley – P.Tebt. II 677, 681, and a recent discovery of mine, P.Tebt. suppl. 1017 – were certainly

17 In this paragraph and the next, I am echoing D.W. Rathbone. An extraordinary cache of papyri, apparently dumped as rubbish with a few objects (coins, statuettes, etc.), in some priests’ rooms along the western [sic] side of the enclosure wall, was uncovered in stages, first by Grenfell and Hunt, then perhaps by Rubensohn, then by sekhlin, and lastly in 1931, when the Italian expedition cleared out the two underlying cellars. The cache comprised thousands of documents, most of which are still unpublished. The upper layers consisted mainly of private and administrative documents concerning the affairs of the priests and temple ... of the first to mid-third centuries AD [emphasis added]; the lower layers contained mostly religious, literary, scientific and reference texts in Greek, demotic, hieratic and hieroglyphic, mainly of the same period, but including some ‘antique’ documents. These texts must have come from the temple library, the ‘House of Life,’ or from the priests’ own collections; see at:
http://tebtunis.berkeley.edu/lecture/tebtfull.html, 24.xi.08.
18 There is demotic “religious poetry” on verso of this text, a rare instance of the priests reusing their own papyri.
19 The Yale fragment was published separately as SB XII 11157.
unearthed by Grenfell and Hunt over three decades earlier; they bear the duo’s packing numbers, and from these T-numbers (677: T43; 681: T25; 1017: T5), we can determine that they were recovered within the temple, probably inside or in very close vicinity to the cellars during the first days of the excavation in December 1899.

Andorlini’s medical text is the best example of the physical connections between our collections; but there are others, e.g., LDAB 4299, a large astronomical almanac to which a Berkeley fragment belongs. And then there is a second category, consisting of links of content, the connections of the practices fossilized in the documents within the temple find and beyond. These associations are much more numerous, of course, the web more tangled, and many leads remain to be pursued or even discovered. Today I will limit myself to one such set of connections, and it should be noted that I am not following every clue to its logical conclusion. My point of departure is a census return from the temple find, PSI X 1147 (AD 202-203). It is at the Laurenziana, but a related piece, less substantial – with an almost identical text, it seems, and in a similar (if not the same) hand – is among the unpublished material at the Vitelli (inv. 57). This fragment helps with some of the lost and damaged portions of 1147. The return’s declarant is Maron, an exempt (apolytikos) priest from the Tebtunis temple; he is the son of Pakebkis ho kai Zosimos, the grandson of Pakebkis. Maron figures in several Berkeley papyri dating to the end of the second century and the beginning of the third: a declaration of death for a minor priest for whom he was guardian – also documenting this relationship is a text presently under study in the Yale collection – a receipt for linen for the mummification of the Mnevis bull – one of our latest documentary papyri with the demotic script – and a graphe

21 For these Berkeley fragments, see most recently I. Andorlini, Old and New Greek Papyri from Tebtunis in the Bancroft Library of Berkeley, «Graeco-Roman Fayum – Texts and Archaeology», Wiesbaden 2008, pp. 4-6.
24 The Vitelli fragment is being prepared for publication (in P. Tebt. IX) by Simona Russo.
25 A photo kindly furnished by Rosario Pintaudi indicates that the beginning of 1147, 13 reads εἰπὲ Μάρων ὁ [προφήτης] θειευμένος. Accordingly, παρὰ Μάρωνος (which better suits the space) should be supplied at the beginning of the lacuna in l. 1.
26 C.Pap.Gr. II 64 = P. Tebt. II 301 (AD 190).
27 P. Tebt. II 313 (AD 210-211). This is also the last securely dated text to refer to Maron.
hieracon that reveals, not unexpectedly, his membership in the fourth phyle, just like his father Pakebkis ho kai Zosimos. This latter figure appears in two unpublished fragments in Oxford – a graphe hieracon and as a signatory to a certification of priestly origin – while reference to an examination of his own priestly credentials is made in a Berkeley text, which in turn gives the name of his mother, i.e., Maron’s paternal grandmother, Thaisas. It is this woman, perhaps aged sixty-four at the time, for whom Pakebkis ho kai Zosimos acts as kyrion in the marriage of his sister Thenpsuphis to a certain Pakebkis, son of Onnophris; the union is documented by SB XII 11159, almost certainly from the temple cache. One could further pursue the lineage of the groom Pakebkis, son of Onnophris, but for my purposes today I would like to shift focus back to Maron and his issue.

In his census return, Maron reveals that he has been married twice; at the time of the declaration, his spouse is a woman named Thaisa. His first wife, whose name is lost, had died, but not before bearing a son for him, a child now also a priest and named Kronion. The return further reveals that Pakebkis’ current wife was a full-blooded sister of his first wife, i.e., that sororate marriage had been practiced. The sisters’ parentage is unknown, but their mother’s name, Isidora, is extant. It seems unlikely that this can be anyone else besides the priestess (and, probably, prophetis) Isidora, who is well known to us from the Berkeley papyri and the Tebtunis Tait texts in Oxford, and whose ancestry can be traced back into the Julio-Claudian period. The milieu accords perfectly, of course, as does the date, and in the

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28 SB XVIII 13118, 19, 25. Same phyle as we might have expected from OGIS I 56 (the Canopus Decree). οὖν δὲ καὶ τοῦ ἐξάγωνον αὐτῶν αὑτὸ τοῦ νόμου καταχωριζθαι εἰτέ τὰ αὐτῶ φαλὰ, ἐν αὐτῷ ὁικητής εἰν (A. 29).
29 P. Tebt. II 291 (AD 161-162).
30 Notes on II. 7 ff. of this text:
7 ἐν... Πολεμαρχοῦ Δρυμῶν — [διὰ... Πολεμαρχοῦ Δρυμῶν (cfr. already Aegyptus 66 [1986], p. 152)
9 Πολεμαρχοῦ — [Πολεμαρχοῦ πολεμαρχοῦ
10-11 τοῦ ἔρωτος — [λογίμου ἔρωτος — τοῦ ἔρωτος
11-12 τοῦ ἔρωτος;
14-16 τοῦ ἐνατός;
11-12 Τε病因
31 At the beginning of PSI X 1147, 22 read: ἱερέας ἐς τὸν Παλαιοῦ Θείκου καὶ Κρότιου.
32 Deut. 25, 5-9, e.g., requires levirate marriage; I am not aware of a similar injunction in Egyptian sources. For sororate marriage, see I.M. Lewis, Social and Cultural Anthropology in Perspective, New Brunswick 2003, p. 246. In sororate marriage, the “replacement” spouse is typically younger, as was almost certainly the case here.
33 Cfr. the working stemma in my contribution to the Oxford Handbook of Papyrology.
comprehensive survey of Tebtunis temple papyri that I have conducted during the preceding three years, I have encountered no one else among the priesthood of Soknebtunis with the name. Isidora’s husband was the diadochos prophetias Kronion, and she is attested with at least one child, a boy named Pakebkis34. Here it may be noted that a Pakebkis, son of Kronion, i.e., someone with the same name as Isidora’s son, is connected with one of Maron’s properties, either as co-owner or former owner, situations suggestive of a familial relationship.35 P.Tebt. II 357 (AD 197) illuminates matters. In this receipt for the telios katalochismos, a Maron pays on behalf of three minors for whom he is epitropos: his own son Kronion and Pakebkis and Thaesis, the children of a Kronion. Though no mention of priestly rank is made, the correspondence of names can hardly be coincidental.36 After the death of Isidora’s husband Kronion, Maron became the guardian of his minor children, i.e., his late wife’s siblings, one of whom would later become his second wife.38 In a letter written by Kronion, several individuals are greeted before his glukutaton huion (the aforementioned Pakebkis?); in order they are Thaisas, Sarapammon, and Thaesis. The presence of a Thaesis suggests that these individuals might be Kronion’s other children, possibly mentioned from eldest to youngest.39 If this hypothesis is correct, Maron’s first wife was perhaps named Thaisas. In any case, it is possible that Isidora or Kronion and Maron’s father, Pakebkis ho kai Zosimos, were siblings, i.e., that Maron and the children of Isidora were first cousins, a predictable occurrence if, as Wilcken long ago suggested, the priests were a breeding isolate.40

34 Cfr. P.Tebt. II 292, 21-23 (AD 189-190).
36 The T-number on 357 is 142. This need not be considered too high for a priestly context; an unedited letter from Isidora to Kronion is T-196 (see also note 48 below). Note the remarks in O’Connell, cit. at note 22, pp. 818-819.
37 Kronion, or rather one of his slaves, is last referenced in the Charta Borgiann (SB I 5124, 36, AD 193). The transfer tax on catechic land was presumably occasioned by the children’s inheritance; Maron’s son received his share of the land through his (deceased) mother.
38 R.S. Bagnall - B.W. Frier, The Demography of Roman Egypt, Cambridge 1994, p. 112: «It appears ... that Egyptian women began to marry at or soon after age 12».
39 P.Tebt. II 616, 19-21. Isidora is not mentioned and may well be the recipient of the letter; the Maron of PSI 1147 (etc.) is probably greeted right after Kronion’s “dearest son”. Kronion’s son Pakebkis was seven in 189-190 (P.Tebt. II 292, 23).
40 Cfr. fig. 1, p. 81.
Despite Grenfell and Hunt's ground-breaking section of texts in P.Tebt. II entitled "The Priests of Soknebtunis" and Vitelli and Norsa's analogue in PSI X, most of the scholarly energy directed toward the papyri from the temple find in recent decades has come from Egyptology and has been focused on the literary and subliterary texts preserved in the demotic, hieratic, and hieroglyphic scripts\(^2\). There has also been some debate over the nature of the find: was the building in which the papyri were discovered the temple library or "House of Life"? I find this proposition highly unlikely\(^4\). Did the find include the contents of the temple library, or do the literary works represent the holdings of individual priests? This seems an instance of misplaced emphasis, for we are not simply concerned with literary texts. That the contents of the cellars represent several deposits, much like the famous cantina dei papiri of the 1934 excavation season, seems probable to me after three years spent surveying Tebtunis material in Europe and America. What is now needed is a critical sifting of the entire find — then can the work of synthesis come, though certainly already there exist enough data to create interpretative frameworks that might be tested in the course of research. This critical sifting will require many hands, and they should be interdisciplinary hands — with a few admirable exceptions, study of the temple find has hitherto been the work-product of monoglot ghettos. To subject the Tebtunis priests, a preeminently bilingual group of individuals, to such treatment seems a crime of scholarship.

It is with said bilingualism that I will close this section of my paper. The phenomenon has certainly been noted in the past, by van Minnen and Rathbone and others\(^5\), but it deserves additional attention and elaboration. That the priests were reading, writing, and speaking Greek should be a banal statement at this point, but what they were reading (or having read to them), what, how, and how often they were writing, and, to the extent that we can address it, when they were conversing — these issues are rather more interesting. The evidence from Tebtunis during the Ptolemaic period is scant and equivocal\(^6\). To be sure, the priests received official and private

\(^{12}\) Ryholt, cit. at note 1, provides a good overview of this research.

\(^{13}\) Cfr. note 16 above.


\(^{15}\) Christelle Fischer-Bovet has since alerted me to the intriguing case of Apollomios, son of Hermias, a rmj btr (diviner) who was also hmr-nfr (prophetes) of Soknebtunis. Fischer-Bovet posits a "mixed background"; his abilities in Greek are unknown. See W. Erichsen, Ein demotisches Papyrifragment. ZAS 87 (1962), pp. 8-11 (= TM 43999). Note also the Ptolemaic fragment of the Phoeniceae, mentioned below.
communications in Greek and were quite capable of coping with them. When it comes to their own communications, letters and petitions and so on, matters are less certain: such texts exist, but the role of intermediaries remains unclear. One noteworthy piece is the temple find P.Tebt. I 42\(^{46}\), a petition from a priest of Soknebtunis "written in very bad Greek". The quality of the Greek suggests that an Egyptian composed the text, and it might even be an autograph; the priest was complaining against a \textit{synallagmatographos}, so it may not have been prudent to avail himself of the local scribal services. The combination of a competent hand with substandard Greek does not hinder this hypothesis; one need only recall the Narmouthis ostraka, where this pattern is typically repeated\(^{49}\).

Matters become clearer in the Roman period. Specimens of priestly hands become abundant; they range from the "alphabetic" to the "evolving"\(^{50}\), into competent and rapid hands such as those of Harpocration, Isidora's great-grandfather, who could have "moonlighted" as a contract writer, and the \textit{diadochos prophetes} Kronion, Isidora's husband\(^{51}\). Again, if we are familiar with the writing of the ostraka from the Narmouthis temple, these competent, even fluid, hands are not a surprise. What is noticeably different is the Greek itself, a disparity that may presumably be explained by the pedagogical context of the ostraka. At Narmouthis we are dealing with an "interlanguage"\(^{52}\).

One could argue that this engagement with Greek at Tebtunis (and for that matter, Narmouthis) was driven by administrative requirements\(^{53}\), but this

\(^{46}\) E.g., P.Tebt. I 59.
\(^{47}\) Cfr., e.g., P.Bingen 57.
\(^{48}\) T-181; ed.: "found in a house within the temple area at Tebtunis".
\(^{49}\) Cfr. R.S. Bagnall, \textit{Reflections on the Greek of the Narmouthis Ostraka}, "New Archaeological and Papyrological Researches on the Fayyum", Galatina 2007 (Pap.Lup. 14), pp. 16-17. The hand of P.Tebt. 42 is, however, rather more ligatured ("professional") than the Narmouthis examples that I have seen.
\(^{50}\) Terminology taken from R. Cribiore, \textit{Writers, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt}, Atlanta 1996 (ASP 36), pp. 102-118. Examples: P.Mich. V 322a (AD 46; hand of Psoiphis, s. Sarapion, ll. 38 ff.); P.Tebt. II 300 (AD 151; hand of Paopis, s. Psoiphis, ll. 18 ff.); PSI X 1143 (AD 164; hands of Psaphis, s. Pakebkis [ll. 27 ff.], and Panesis, s. Pakebkis [ll. 32 ff.]; image kindly furnished by Rosario Pintaudi).
\(^{51}\) Examples: P.Tebt. II 309 (AD 116-117; Harpocration, s. Marepsemis = Isidora's great-grandfather, ll. 23 ff.); P.Tebt. II 311 (AD 134; Pakebkis [ll. 34 ff.] subscribes for his "slow-writing" father Omnomphis, s. Pakebkis [ll. 31 ff.]); P.Tebt. II 293 (c. AD 187; Kronion, s. Pakebkis = Isidora's husband [ll. 1 ff.], Maron, s. Maron [ll. 24 ff.]; Pakebkis, s. Kronion [ll. 26 ff.]). With the exception of the first example, I would classify these in the same genus as the typical Narmouthis hands.
\(^{53}\) As, e.g., G. Fowden, \textit{The Egyptian Hermes. A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind}, Cambridge 1986, p. 16. Resistance to learning Greek is suggested, famously, by O.Narm.Dem. 5. «Io non scrivere in lettere greche (di) scrittura ... Io sono ostinato». 
contention evaporates when confronted with the evidence, both documentary and literary. I myself would even go so far as to suggest that Greek was the language of preference for at least some of the priests, possibly even those placed highest in the temple hierarchy. Among the Berkeley inedita there is a letter from Isidora to her husband Kronion. In such communication, between a husband and wife of the same ethnic background, we might expect the choice of language to be participant driven, though scenarios in which the discourse is determinative are conceivable. In any case, the letter spurs some interesting questions. It leads one to wonder, e.g., to what extent the shift from demotic to Greek oracle questions under the Romans was driven by priestly preference, as opposed to the needs of the populace. Or to what extent translations of Egyptian texts, like the Greek version of the Myth of the Sun’s Eye (LOAB 5054) or the Oxyrhynchite Book of the Temple (LOAB 4926), reflect priestly requirements and interests, as opposed to demands from Greek outsiders. Whatever our answers to such questions, it is clear that some room must be left for the individual; we need to remember that linguistic and cultural phenomena are highly individualized, that they resist our generalizations. Within the temple find, figuratively if not literally alongside Isidora’s letter, there are two specimens of demotic correspondence, cut from the same papyrus and written in a literary hand that is rather difficult to decipher. I myself am inclined to view them as model texts for students, but it is also conceivable that they represent a conscious choice against Greek in correspondence. It is even possible that we possess a sample of their sender’s Greek handwriting.

If we turn now to the Greek literary texts found within the temple, even the most cursory examination requires disagreement with Tait’s assessment that the priests of Tebtunis were «not cut off from Greek culture, but their
concern with it was curiously limited. On the contrary, and as van Minnen has already noted on a “macro” level, the priests' interests extended beyond the medical and scientific texts that we might expect them to have in their libraries, papyri like Andorlini’s pulmonary handbook and the illustrated herbal illuminated by Ann Hanson at the Florence Papyrology Congress a decade ago. Considering only Berkeley, there is Homer, the Hesiodic Catalogue, a grammatical text, probably Xenophon’s Oeconomicus, and possibly Euripides’ Phoenissae. With the exception of the Xenophon, which also may have been part of a “deluxe” edition, these texts are suggestive of a Greek school environment: Homer functioning as the backbone of the system, of course; the Phoenissae being, in Cribiore’s words, the “grammarians’ choice”; and the Catalogue having appeal at higher levels of instruction for its mythological and heroic genealogies. In fact Cribiore, not aware of its temple context, has already indicated that the Berkeley Catalogue may have had a pedagogical use. Looking beyond Berkeley we find, e.g., P.TebT.Tait 38, an Iliad fragment that is likely to have been a product of the classroom, and Giovanna Menci has broached a school context for PSI II. 21 – if it may be conceded that I am correct in reassigning this text to the temple. Again, that the priests learned Greek should not be a source of wonder, but how they

85 van Minnen, cit. at note 44, p. 169.
87 E.g., P.TebT. II 425 (T-2) = LDAB 1556. Like so many of the literary texts in the temple find, this one is written on the verso of a document (specifically, a census declaration from the nome metropolis Arsinoe).
88 P.TebT. II 271 (T-16) = LDAB 1220. An additional fragment of this text was recently discovered.
89 Apparently: P.TebT. II 270 (T-80) = LDAB 4951.
90 P.TebT. II 682 (T-171) = LDAB 4192. For a discussion of this fragment, including its connection to other papyri, see N. Pelle, Xénophon dans le Fayyum, «New Archaeological and Papyrological Researches on the Fayyum», Galatina 2007 (Pap.Lup. 14), pp. 211-214 (I thank the author for sending me a copy of her publication).
91 P.TebT. suppl. 1245 (T-48) = LDAB 109205. Prima facie, the T-number suggests the temple, as does the Ptolemaic date, cfr. C. Gallazzi - G. Hadji-Minaglou, Tebtynis I. L' reprise des fouilles et le quartier de la chapelle d’Isis-Thermoudis, Cairo 2000 (Fouilles IFAO 42), pp. 5-6. The papyrus is, however, part of a short range of T-numbers, the texts of which, also of Ptolemaic date, do not have an obvious connection with the priests (cfr. P.TebT. II 466-468).
93 Gymnastics of the Mind. Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, Princeton 2001, p. 198, note 57. Her assessment may have been influenced, however, by the description in the ed. pr.
94 Menci goes on to reject a school context in her edition, based in part on her understanding of the text’s provenance.
appear to have been doing it – using the same techniques and texts, the paideia, that served to form and bind “Hellenic” elites across the Roman East – is surely noteworthy. This is not the place to pursue such issues; suffice it to say that the temple papyri signify the ambiguous actions of an indigenous elite, a representative of legitimate (divinely sanctioned) power, that was both displaced and actively cultivated, even protected, by a conquering empire. The Second Sophistic is of great relevance for understanding the social and cultural phenomena of the late Egyptian temple.

The mention of Hellenic elites furnishes a suitable occasion to turn to the second archive of my title, the so-called “Family Archive of Tebtunis” – more fittingly identified as the archive, or better, dossier, of Philosarapis – which is divided between the Laurenziana and collections in Berlin, Copenhagen, Giessen, London, New Haven, and Hamburg. I myself have not subjected this assemblage of texts to serious study, and my remarks about it, accordingly, will be rather brief. My reason for including it today is simply to indicate a promising opportunity for research.

From the perspective of “museum archaeology”, PSI XII 1227 is a critical text of the Philosarapis dossier. A copy of a census return made by Oualerios ho kai Philantinoos in August 188 and directed to Antinoite officials, it is said to have been found at Tebtunis during the 1934 season, specifically by the “Missione archeologica italiana” Anti - Bagnani. If this information is accurate, PSI 1227 had to have been unearthed before 4 March 1934, when, as one of Bagnani’s notebooks suggests, the excavation was transferred to the Regia Università di Milano. That the distribution of finds was impacted by this transfer is shown in a masterful article published by Claudio Gallazzi; in
other words, all of the papyrological material in Florence from the 1934 season should derive from the month before the Milanese excavations began. Most of the dates in the Vitelli collection are not that precise, but at least one Tebtunis papyrus from 1934 season, PSI inv. 1511, is labeled 21 February, i.e., within the period during which the Regia Missione archeologica was still running the excavation, with the papyri going to Florence. The excavation records for the 1934 season indicate only two papyrological discoveries during the month after 4 February, both in the southern half of what would in short order become known as the insula dei papiri: first, in a rectangular house assigned to the Roman period, well finished and with stone foundations—a find is recorded here on 20 February, i.e., the day before the date recorded on PSI inv. 1511—and then in the dung heaps of two courtyards where animals had been kept, structures that Bagnani identified as stables (during their last phase of occupation, which he considered to be the third or fourth century).

This information would seem, then, to localize the Florentine papyri from the 1934 season. PSI 11. 12, e.g., presumably was found in one of these locations. More interesting is the association of at least part of the Philasarapis dossier with one or both of the structures, as well as a related proposition, the possible connection of a portion of the unstudied material in Florence from 1934 to the same dossier. A preliminary examination of PSI inv. 1511 suggests that it does indeed belong, but a definitive solution to the question must await the next century of Florentine papyrology. May it be as glorious as the last.

TODD M. Hickey

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80 There may be some exceptions, e.g., material sent to Florence by Vogliano.
82 Gallazzi, cit. at note 79, p. 163; Begg, cit. at note 81, "Stables".
83 Cfr. P.Fam.Tebt. 10 (AD 108).
fig. 1: The relations of the priest Maron, fl. AD 190-210