LIVIA TAGLIAPIETRA

A NEW FRAGMENT OF ARISTOPHANES’ *PLUTUS* (182–189, 211–219)


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CUL Green 134/1–2 are two fragments from a leaf of a papyrus codex containing a direct attestation of Aristophanes’ Plutus. The item belongs to the collection of Coptic, Greek and Arabic papyri and parchment manuscripts of Frederick William Green (1869–1949), Egyptologist and excavator, and Honorary Keeper of Antiquities at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge from 1908 to 1949. Green’s collection was acquired by Jack Martin Plumley (1910–1999), Egyptologist at Cambridge University, and donated to Cambridge University Library by his widow, Ursula Plumley, in 2000. No information concerning provenance is recorded for the manuscripts in the collection.2

The two pieces do not join, but contain parts of the same lines: ca. 8–11 letters are missing in between. Fr. 1 ↓ has a small written fragment of 3.9 × 0.3 cm that joins the left-hand side. The pieces attest ll. 182–189 across the fibres, while the side written along the fibres reads ll. 211–218. The upper margin extant in Fr. 1 ↓ and → indicates that the first line on each side of the two fragments was the first line of each side of the leaf. It is thus possible to calculate a total of 29 lines for the side written across the fibres. On the basis of the measurements taken in Fr. 1 ↓ (average letter height and interlinear space calculated at 0.35 cm and 0.4 cm respectively), the page should have had a writing space of ca. 21 cm in height. The upper margin, apparently fully preserved, measures 1.6 cm on the ↓ and 1.3 cm on the →; a right margin of ca. 1.5 cm at its narrowest point is calculable in Fr. 2 ↓.

Assuming that the lower margin in papyrus codices was generally broader than the upper one according to a ratio of 3:2 (E. G. Turner, The Typology of the Early Codex, 1977, 25), we may estimate a lower margin measuring ca. 2.4 cm on the ↓ and therefore a height of ca. 25 cm of the codex itself, provided that the upper margin is in fact entirely preserved. The width of the codex could not be shorter than 14 cm, which is the figure estimated by considering the breadth of the two pieces, a space of at least eight letters missing between Fr. 1 and 2 ↓ (calculated at ca. 3 cm) and a space of at least nine letters missing before the part preserved in Fr. 1 ↓ (ca. 3.5 cm). Such dimensions are likely to fit a codex belonging to Turner’s Group 4 (ca. 20 × 25 cm) or a subclass of Group 5 (ca. 18 × 25 cm) (Typology, 13–25).

The hand is informal, of medium size, and generally bilinear; it seems related to the sloping pointed majuscule described by G. Cavallo – H. Maehler, Greek Bookhands of the Early Byzantine Period (= GBEBP), 1987, 4; cf. in particular GBEBP 11a (second half 4th c., assigned), 15b (first half 5th c., assigned), 17a (= E. G. Turner, Greek Manuscripts of the Ancient World, 2nd ed., 1987, no. 42; 5th c., assigned) and 42b (late 6th c., assigned). Compared to these examples, however, the strokes in this hand are thinner, with no contrast between thick and thin lines; the space between letters is also wider. Letters do not carry any decorative feature and are mostly written separately, although some strokes occasionally join the following letter, especially the cross-bar of epsilon, the top of tau and gamma, and the right-hand side of alpha. Beta, theta, kappa and xi tend to be taller than other letters, while omicron is generally smaller, although some-

1 I am most grateful to the curator of the CUL Green papyri collection, Catherine Ansorge, for her kindness in allowing me access to the collection, and for permission to publish this piece. I am also grateful to Nikolaos Gonis for his helpful comments on drafts of this paper, and James Clackson for advice and encouragement. The photographs of the papyrus are reproduced by the kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

2 Sarah J. Clackson could identify the provenance from Deir el-Balayza for one of the items in the collection, CUL Green 88 (a Coptic fragment from a codex containing 1 Samuel), on the basis of other fragments of the same manuscript excavated at the local Monastery of Apollo and now housed in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (P. E. Kahle, Bala‘izah: Coptic Texts from Deir el Bala‘izah in Upper Egypt, 1954, 301–311); information taken from Sarah J. Clackson’s Report, 21/02/2001. Other manuscripts in the collection are connected with the Bawit Monastery of Apollo: these are CUL Green 1, 5, 6, published as P.Mon. Apollo 42, 56, 60; and CUL Green 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 86, published as P.Bawit Clackson 5 (= Green 2), 25 (= Green 3), 47 (= Green 4), 2 (= Green 7 side A), 3 (= Green 7 side B), 85 (= Green 8 side A), 10 (= Green 8 side B), 22 (= Green 86). See also S. J. Clackson, Coptic and Greek Texts Relating to the Hermopolite Monastery of Apa Apollo, 2000, 13.
times it is given an elongated oval shape, extending to the full height of the line. Notable letter forms are: *alpha* made in one movement, with an elongated loop; *epsilon* with an hook at the bottom; *theta* written with the cross-bar projecting to both sides; *kappa* with the obliques made in one stroke and detached from the vertical bar; *mu* with inwards curved sides, and with middle curve touching the baseline; narrow *sigma* with a hook at the bottom and a flat top extending towards the following letter; *upsilon* of the long-tailed shape and written in two strokes; *phi* with a well-rounded loop; *omega* with sides and mid-peak all at full height. *Rho* and *phi* project below the baseline. This type of informal style seems difficult to date with precision; further comparable hands are found in e.g. POxy. LVI 3858 (4th c., assigned), LXVI 4499 (3rd/4th c., assigned) and LXXII 4844 (4th c., assigned). I would tentatively attribute the papyrus a date in the fourth or fifth century; the later date seems particularly suggested by the shape of *kappa* (see GBEBP, 54).

The text carries a few lectional signs: apostrophe is consistently written to mark elision (186; 188; 212; 216), and paragraphi indicating change of speaker survive below 213, 214 and 215; these are quite short, and do not extend beyond the width of one letter. Change of speaker within the line is marked by a dicolon at 214, 215 and 217; at 217 the two dots are written above and below the *alpha* respectively, in a form rather resembling two blots of ink: this is due to the fact that the scribe did not leave a blank space for the sign as he did elsewhere. Adscript *iota* is not written (216 δι; 217 βουλη; 218 νοο).


The papyrus presents a variant at 183 not attested elsewhere in the manuscript tradition. It is also notable that at 185 it has the incorrect reading μυοντι offered by all manuscripts except for one of the *vetustiores*, indicating that the corruption had already taken place in antiquity. Another point of interest is at 216, where the reading in the papyrus confirms a modern emendation, while the rest of the manuscript tradition is unanimously corrupted. Besides these points, the text in the papyrus agrees with the good readings in manuscripts printed by modern editors.

References to variants in manuscripts given in the notes are primarily based on the edition by Coulon (1930), which reports readings from R (= Ravennas 429, 10th c.), V (= Venetus Marcianus 474, 11th/12th c.), A (= Parisinus Regius 2712, 13th/14th c.), M (= Ambrosianus L 39, early 14th c.), U (= Vaticanus Urbinas 141, 14th c.) and the Suda only, as these testimonies are not affected by later editorial activity, particularly on the part of Demetrius Triclinius. Additional information has been drawn from Sommerstein (2001) and Wilson (2007); the latter supplies readings from other manuscripts, including in particular cod. K (= Ambrosianus C 222 inf.), now dated to the twelfth century and thus considered among the *vetustiores* (see C. M. Mazzucchi, *Aevum* 77, 2003, 263–275; *Aevum* 78, 2004, 411–440), and cod. L (= Holkhamensis gr. 88), which reflects Triclinius’ editorial work (see N. G. Wilson, *CQ* 12, 1962, 32–47). The edition by Blydes (1886) has been consulted as well. I have also checked the facsimiles of codd. R and V. Restorations not discussed in the notes are supplied on account of compatibility with the text transmitted in all testimonies and accepted by editors.

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3 Besides this piece, other papyri transmitting *Platus* are: LDAB 369 (= POxy. XIII 1617; 5th c.; ll. 1–56 with scholia); 378 (= BKT IX 105 + 106 + P.Sippestein 1; 5th/6th c.; ll. 134–138, 140–144, 171–173, 289–293, 311–319, 326–330, 347–355); 379 (= P.Laur. IV 132, ZPE 27, 1977, p. 108 no. 2; 5th/6th c.; ll. 1135–1139); 381 (= P.Ant. III 180; 5th/6th c.; ll. 466–467, 476–477, 499–501, 510–511, 806–808, 842–845); 7180 (= POxy. LXVI 4519; 3rd c.; ll. 1–16 with marginal note); 7181 (= POxy. LXVI 4520; 5th c.; ll. 635–679, 698–738 with marginal notes); 7182 (= POxy. LXVI 4521; 2nd c.; ll. 687–705, 726–731, 957–970 with scholia); 9924 (= AJP 48, 2002, pp. 6–12; 2nd c.; ll. 466–845); 372062 (= POxy. LXXIX 5197; 3rd/4th c.; ll. 881–897).
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Fig. 1. Fr. 1 ↓ + Fr. 2 → (Cambridge University Library)

Fig. 2. Fr. 2 ↓ + Fr. 1 → (Cambridge University Library)
καὶ τῶν αγαθῶν καὶ τῶν κακῶν εὖ ἑσθ᾽ ὅτι καν τοις πολύς εκαστὸς 

μονὸς εἰς 

μόνον εἰς 

οὐδέποτε 

αὐτὸς εἰς
to the reading οὐδὲ εἷ attested in all manuscripts. Part of the omicron could be possibly identified in the trace below the apostrophe; an oblique line is then visible near to the break, which could be the left-hand side of upsilon. The restoration of the text transmitted seems thus acceptable, and would fit in the breadth of the lacuna.

189 εϲτι παντων: the word order in the papyrus conforms with the one read in V and A and printed by modern editors; R, M, U and K (the last one according to Holzinger, but not mentioned in the apparatuses consulted) have the two terms inverted instead, a banalisation reflecting the natural word order; see Holzinger, op. cit., 68–69.

211 οὐν: correctly with R², V, A, M and U, while R¹ reads οὐ.

δραϲαι: conforms with the reading in the rest of the manuscript tradition; Cobet and Meineke proposed the emendation δρᾶν ςύ.

212 ἦν: an upright stroke is visible immediately after the break, the top of which has a very short flat extension that joins the upper part of a following vertical line, which gently curves to the left. The traces are not completely incompatible with iota preceded by tau, conforming to the reading τιν’ attested in manuscripts; however, in this case the right-hand side of tau’s top-bar would be drastically short. At first glance, an omicron of the oblong shape seems a better interpretation (cf. e.g. those at 184, 211). No variant is reported at this point.

214 ξυνοιδε: restored exempli gratia; ξύνοιδε is the reading offered by V and M, generally chosen by modern editors, while ςύνοιδε is read in R, A and U, most probably a banalisation; cf. Koster, op. cit., 243–246.

216 καν: the papyrus has the reading found in R² (215–217 om. in R¹), K and L, printed in modern editions, while A, M and U read κεῖ and V has καί.

δη: the reading in the papyrus confirms the emendation δῇ proposed in the ed. Neobariana (1540; see Wilson, Aristophanea, 203) and normally accepted by editors, while R², V, A, M and U have δεῖ. See Holzinger, op. cit., 80–81 for discussion.

217 βουละเอ: autopsy of the facsimiles reveals that R² gives the reading βούλει, a banal mistake, while V reads βούλη without adscript iota. The variant is reported only in Blaydes’ apparatus, according to which, however, both R and V have βούλει, while the correct reading βούλῃ is found in A.

219 ην: the papyrus offers the reading attested in the manuscript tradition and printed by modern editors; Cobet emended it to έϲτ’.

Livia Tagliapietra, Cambridge University, Faculty of Classics, Sidgwick Avenue, Cambridge, CB3 9DA, UK
lt394@cam.ac.uk