FOUILLES FRANCO-ITALIENNES

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Tebtynis VII

Greek Ostraca from Tebtynis dated to the Ptolemaic and Roman Periods

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Introduction

In this edition only the Greek ostraca dated to the Ptolemaic and Roman periods are included.[1] During the fourteen seasons from 2005 until 2018 a total of 352 Greek ostraca were found. Almost two thirds of them, 214 ostraca, are published here.[2] The rest are too fragmentary for analysis or secure readings, or they preserve some letters or amounts or parts of names. Hopefully, they will be joined to other existing ostraca (already found in other seasons or in the future; see examples below), and it may facilitate a clearer interpretation.

The place of provenance of the ostraca published here is known (that is, Tebtynis), and their archaeological context (trench – section – layer) is certain. It was Jean Bingen in 1996 (Bingen 1996) who wrote an exceptional introduction concerning the ostraca of Mons Claudianus and the categories of ancient deposits there. He categorized the ancient deposits into primary, secondary or tertiary in nature, deliberate or accidental, in abandoned places or not, in rubbish tips or in a residential environment. In 2014 Taco T. Terpstra (Terpstra 2014) suggested a new way to consider the writing materials in Karanis, stating that "on well-excavated sites like Edfu, Narmouthis and Elephantine the balance [that is, concerning the number of papyri and ostraca] is tilted heavily in favor of ostraca." As for Tebtynis, certainly a categorisation of the ostraca based on the period of use and their general context might be indicative of when and for what purpose the people considered the ostraca the best or most suitable writing surfaces in that village. However, a secure percentage of the surviving ostraca so far cannot be established: Tebtynis is as yet not entirely excavated, and, apparently, many pieces of ostraca escaped the notice of the previous excavators (almost 60%; see below). Even if we base our results solely on the findings in the areas and sectors excavated by the present Mission, we cannot reach secure results concerning the use of ostraca and papyri and other writing surfaces, (1) because we cannot ascertain the exact amount of material which came from the same houses or areas during the previous excavations, (2) because

1. There are about thirty Greek ostraca dated to the Byzantine period and three Greek-Demotic ostraca (accounts) of the Greco-Roman period, which are going to be included in another edition.

2. In addition, in the present volume, ostracon **17** is the second object (SCA no 2) registered during the first season of excavations of the joint Mission of the Università degli Studi di Milano and IFAO in 1988. Furthermore, the left part of ostracon **1** was found in 1996 (before I became a member of the Mission) and the right part in 2008. I had seen the ostracon that was found in 1996 in my first season at Tebtynis in 2000, when I had to check the amphora notations and ostraca of the previous years. I wrote a draft transcription of that piece (obviously literary), but even though the handwriting and the text itself were attractive for immediate study and difficult to forget, I put it aside, because I decided not to take on the publication of the ostraca found before 1998. When the right part of the ostracon was found in 2008, I did not immediately recognize the connection between the two pieces. It was only in 2016, when suddenly I had the idea that the δω in the last line of the ostracon of 1998 may join the one I was publishing, found in 2008, at the point I was reading ποσει in the second-to-last line, so as to form the word Ποσειδων. Obviously, so far I have not identified another fragment of the same ostracon.

of the effect of the environment (salt, etc.), it seems that the ink on many pieces of ostraca has totally faded and now they appear as shards, and, (3) there is also a considerable number of ostraca from other excavated sections at Tebtynis under publication.

In spite of these limitations, we may make some observations concerning the distribution of ostraca, based on the place and layer of finding:[3]

1. Ancient deposits

a. Primary in nature:

Ostraca found in locations where they were used (either written or received and read). These results are based on Terpstra's valid points that written papyri, ostraca, etc, could be linked to a certain activity providing we can satisfy three "ifs" (Terpstra 2014, p. 93): "If there is a strong case for primary deposition of textual evidence, if the archaeological context can be shown to correspond with the time-period covered in the texts, and if the evidence strongly supports connecting the texts to the occupant of the house." In Tebtynis, so far, there are examples of randomly scattered refuse in open places, e.g., streets, alleys, or courtyards (outside the doors or gates of a house). However, these ostraca cannot be connected with any certainty to the nearby houses, since they could have been thrown away there by any person: 5 examples in open places; 2 examples in or outside the temple, 3 in front of the entrance of the thesaurus (**2.9%**).

b. Secondary in nature:

i. Deliberate refuse in middens and dumps for domestic use in various areas (open places, collapsed houses, etc.) within a neighbourhood or outside the village space: 18 examples (**5.2%**);

ii. Some ostraca (comparable to those found in residential areas) were found in the rubbish tips on the south-eastern side of the temple of Soknebtynis. These dumps consist of biofacts (botanical remains, animal bones, shells, etc.), human and animal excrement, and various broken (and rarely complete) artifacts (shards, pieces of worked stone and glass, leather, basketry, and cloth, etc.): 79 examples (**22.7%**).

c. Secondary or tertiary in nature:

Debris in the foundations of some buildings or in spaces which were reorganised for new constructions (walls, courtyards, street, floors). There is evidence that such material was usually taken from dumps: 19 examples (**5.5%**).

2. Rubbish excavated either legally or illegally (63.7%)

Even though one expects that this rubbish was not thrown far away from the trench or hole, this practice cannot always be taken for granted. As can be seen from some fragments which could be joined, the rubbish from the previous excavations or illegal diggings of the Egyptian farmers was not always thrown away in the same place:

7802-7 (1996) + B7001-72 (2008) (**1**);
B2801-11 (2016) + B2601-38 (2014) (**25**);
B4629-1 (2014) + B3204-1 (2010) (**147**).

3. In the percentages below we take into consideration the total number of the ostraca (that is, 352 ostraca) found in the seasons 2005–2018.

In any case, by joining broken ostraca which were found in this kind of rubbish we can create a network of where pieces were deposited, which could be helpful for joining other broken ostraca or papyri in the future. B4629-1 (2014) + B3204-1 (2010) (**147**) is an interesting case. The layer B4629 is dated to the end of the second and the beginning of first century B.C., and it is collapsed building material above a courtyard. The layer B3204 is dated to the end of the first century B.C. – beginning of the first century A.D., and it is a hole in the house B3200. The date assigned to the ostracon based on palaeographical analysis is the second half of the second century B.C. and the first half of the first century B.C. This is in accordance with the date assigned to B4629, but it is earlier than the date of the pottery assigned to B3204, which is now proved to be a disturbed layer. We can assume that in the layer of rubble of the second century B.C. in B4629 holes were made in a few places by the previous excavators or illegal digging and the material was thrown behind in holes made in the neighbouring building B3200.

The ostraca are treated as objects found in an archaeological site. The date assigned to the ostraca, which were not found in the layers of rubbish of the previous excavations (whether legal or illegal) and of the Egyptian farmers, was based either on the reference to a precise dating formula in the text (in very few examples) or on palaeographical grounds (in the majority of the cases). The fabric of the sherds was examined by Anna Południkiewicz wherever feasible to ensure accurate results. In most instances, the dating corresponds closely with that attributed to the pottery of the associated layer. This date also provides a *terminus ante quem* for the layer below that in which the ostraca were found or a *terminus post quem* for the layer above them. Since the ostraca were usually written as short-lived documents, one may assume that the layer in which they were unearthed, and the layers directly over and below belong to adjacent periods of time. However, it is remarkable that some ostraca and the layers in which they were found belong to completely different periods, possibly centuries apart:

32 is dated to A.D. 28, and it was found in the layer of the floor (secondary or tertiary deposit) of a room dated to the second century A.D., based on the archaeological evidence;

51 was found in the layer of a courtyard used for housing sheep, and in which the pottery is dated to the fourth century A.D. The ostracon is dated to A.D. 6., that is ca. 300 years earlier;

A3855-1 (2006) (inv. SCA 7759; fragmentary, not published in the present edition) is dated to A.D. 26, and was found in a building of the third century A.D. The building was situated in a big courtyard with ovens, and was destroyed at the end of the fourth century A.D. Most of the pottery of this layer is dated to the fourth century A.D., but there is also pottery of the first and the second century A.D;

157 is dated to the end of the second and early first century B.C. and was found in the layer of the floor of a house of the first century A.D.

The texts of the ostraca could contribute to the history of Tebtynis:

1. By grouping ostraca which are connected to a certain person or office, we can recognise the role of these persons in their economic and administrative environment. The best example of this grouping is the Akousilaos ostraca (see introduction of **15**–**41**), or the Papontos archive (see introduction of **42**–**45**). As for the former, we may assume that Akousilaos was one of the elders (πρεσβύτερος) or the secretary (γραμματεύς) of the farmers of the public land (δημόσιοι γεωργοί), or a τοπάρχης. As for the latter, three ostraca in the layer A17189 and one in the layer A17206 were found in a large pit of pottery sherds dated to the second century A.D. Since the name Papontos appears on all these ostraca one might assume that they were taken as rubbish from the same place or the same archive.

2. Prosopography of the persons related to the village, either staying in the village as permanent or temporary residents at the time the ostraca were written or staying in other places in Egypt and having connections (personal or business) with the permanent inhabitants of Tebtynis: see Prosopography (pp. 267–275).

However, an identification with persons known from other sources (papyri, ostraca, inscriptions, amphora inscriptions) in most cases is not certain: one probable example for identification could be Orseus son of Herodes, who is attested in **118**.

3. Connections (mainly administrative and economic) of Tebtynis with other sites (e.g., villages and cities):
Arsinoe (capital of the nome): **168**; **169** (second century A.D.?); **144** (mid-first century – mid-second century A.D.)
Areos kome: **78** (beginning of the third century A.D.).
Dikaiou: **209** (second half of the second century B.C.).
Hiera Nesos: **209** (second half of the second century B.C.).
Kaine **82** and **83** (mid-third century A.D.).
Kaminoi: **209** (second half of the second century B.C.).
Kerke(?): **54** (first century A.D.).
Kerkosis **48** (end of the second century B.C.).
Mochonapis **48** (end of the second century B.C.).
Psinteo: **209** (second half of the second century B.C.).
Ptolemais (Hormou or Nea?): **164**, **165**, **166**, **167** (first century A.D.?).
Ptolemais Hormou: **79** (second half of the first – second century A.D.).
Tebetnoi **209** (second half of the second century B.C.).
Theo[ ] (restored Theo[gonis]?): **209** (second half of the second century B.C.).

4. As far as the ostraca found in the open rubbish area east of the temple of Soknebtynis are concerned, the distribution of the documents is as follows: (a) almost 50% (15 of the 31 examples) of the accounts and itemized billing and lists (**136**, **137**, **142**, **144**), itemized billing (**145**, **149**, **150**, **151**, **152**, **153**, **156**), and itemized lists (**159**, **160**, **161**, **163**). (b) 60% (6 of the 10 examples) of the school exercises: **2**, **3**, **4**, **6**, 7, **9**. Moreover, the only literary piece comes from the same area: **1**. Although there are only various single examples of other types of ostraca (e.g., letters, receipts, Akousilaos group, etc.) found in the open area there, I do not think that we can draw any secure conclusion about the way such rubbish was deposited.

5. The literary ostraca, whatever limited space they offer for text, can provide pieces of indicative information concerning the people (either educated or pupils/students) who were interested in literature, and for some reason (not necessarily to practice writing as an exercise) were willing to write down some lines of prose or poetry on a sherd. In the present edition there are two examples. One provides new literary verses concerning Poseidon's activities, probably in the Iliad (**1**). The other provides the first lines of the Iliad and was written as part of another exercise practicing formulae of letter-writing (**11**).

6. All documents appear to have been written or preserved either for or by individuals or private associations. The majority were produced as part of personal activities, while only a small number (**78**, **79**, **81-89**, **209**(?), **211**(?), **212**(?)) were issued to fulfill financial or administrative obligations to the state.

The date assigned to the present ostraca, if it is not written on the ostracon, should be based on paleographical details. When, for instance, the backfilling around a foundation or the debris discarded in an open area is dated to the first/second century A.D., this can provide a *terminus ante quem* for the ostracon. Even if the handwriting seems to be of the Roman period, I considered it particularly important to provide the narrower time frame within a period, by referring to the closest examples of similar shapes of letters from other accurately dated documents. This may also affect the period to which the persons mentioned on the ostraca belong. If an ostracon is dated to the early first century A.D., and consequently, the person who is

recorded on the same ostracon belongs to the early first century A.D., it is reasonable to suppose that the same person was active for a longer period, and therefore, we may find them in another document, which will be published in the future, and which is dated earlier (e.g., at the end of the first century B.C.) or later (in the mid-first century A.D.).

Even though many ostraca were found in rubbish and not in a residential area, the fact that they were not kept as a group or an archive at that time indicates their temporary use. In addition to this difficulty, the nature of the texts themselves, which were usually written to record only limited information, makes any interpretation ambiguous, therefore, unsound. With so many scenarios possible, constructing a commentary that sheds further light and interest on the texts is a challenge. Therefore, in some cases it was worth exhausting every possibility while in others, details were deliberately left aside, when there was insufficient information to stimulate further discussion and point to where further research might be possible.

The danger that a photograph might be inferior to the original ostracon was already pointed out by H.C. Youtie in his article "Parerga Ostracologica" in *TAPA* 73 (1942), p. 83, n. 76. I have followed Youtie's advice, and all my transcriptions were based both on the original ostracon and the photograph (either conventional or infrared). In the present edition only the IR photographs were included at the end of the book, except for **207**, of which the photo is conventional, as the text was written in white chalk.

Furthermore, the study of the physical characteristics of the ostracon is important, because it can exhibit a scribe's habit. Certainly, a scribe would like to use the same shape or same quality of surface when he writes his ostraca or a set of ostraca. Moreover, it seems that some specific shapes of ostraca were chosen for certain types of documents, e.g., trapezoids for receipts for delivery of grain (**82** and **83**). This consideration could provide valuable insights in certain cases, as H.C. Youtie has proposed in his article "Critical Notes on Karanis Ostraca," in *Berytus* 8, 1944, p. 91.

In some cases, in the introduction or in the commentary, I reproduce a drawing of a letter, an abbreviation, a symbol or a word in order to show their specific form or shape. Just a simple reproduction with the standard unicode fonts would not make it clear. In addition, in two documents, **143** and **174**, which are full of symbols and abbreviations, the *app. crit.* is replaced by a drawing.

New dithyramb or tragedy? (1)

1

Fig. 1 | 9.3 × 5.4 cm | mid-2nd cent. B.C. or the second half of the 2nd cent. B.C.

Inv. SCA 4491 + 7837; excav. nos. 7802-7 + B7001-72.

Location: Kom Ushim SCA storehouse.

Archaeological context: layer 7802; season 1996 + B7001; season 2008. Open area on the eastern side of the wall of the Soknebtynis temple enclosure, used as a rubbish depository; see Gallazzi, "Discarica." Layers consisting of debris from excavations by Grenfell and Hunt and disturbed by the Egyptian farmers. For the excavated trench in 1996 see Rapport_IFAO_1997, p. 357, and for the excavated trench in 2008 see Rapport_IFAO_2009, p. 560.

Description: broken off on the left, and probably at the bottom. The two pieces seem to have been accidentally broken off by the previous excavators. It is probable that there are two more pieces, one preserving the upper left half and one preserving the lower left part and the bottom left of the complete ostracon. These pieces, however, are missing so far.

Text

	Col. I		Col. II
1	[ ] ̣ς ἐν κοίλαις ἀπο	1	ἔμολε δ’ ε . . .
2	[ ] ̣ σοθεν ἀναβρυ-	2	πετροκορυφ̣ο̣[± 2]
3	[ ] ̣ χθονὸς βοὰν πα-	3	πεδίοιο πολύ-
4	[ ]θ̣’ ἐμὲ̣ χειρὶ δοριδο̣-	4	κατευχθόνο̣[ιο?]
5	[ ]δ̣ον Ἀΐδαν βριαρ̣ὸν	5	βαρυβρομοκελ̣α̣-
6	[ ]γορον ὑπὸ γόνασι	6	τοκ̣λυτ̣ὸς Ποσει-
7	[θ]α̣ν̣ατοφόρον ἔχε̣ ρο̣-	7	δῶν
8	[ ]ε̣ι̣. Δίωκε, θ̣ῦνε διὰ̣		
9	[ ]τ̣ίβητον ἰ̣αχὰν πεμ-	8	/ ̣ Φα̣ῶ̣φι̣ ζ
10	[ ] ̣ε ταχὺ δ̣ὲ̣ περι		
11	[ ] ̣ε χερσὶν ελ̣ο̣ ̣		
12	[ ] φίλιον ἔρυμα		
13	[ο]ὐ̣δ̣’ ἐπὶ πολύ		
	?----------?		

Paleography

The letter ρ has below its circle a small horizontal stroke that functions as a pseudo-ligature, which, however, does not always reach the following letter. The letter κ has a long vertical, sometimes strongly curved (e.g., col. II 2). At the top edge of this vertical we may also find a decorative serif. Apart from the shape with the two arms of κ in col. I 1, we find a κ in the V-shape with an additional lower oblique arm in col. I 8. The cup of υ starts with a small (but clearly formed) angular hook. This feature can be seen in papyri from the mid-second century B.C. (cf. examples in Cavallo, Maehler, *Hellenistic Bookhands*, nos. 22, 26, 34 and 39), but its best examples can be found in the middle of the second century B.C.; cf. *P.Mich*. III 173 (169 B.C.); *P.Bad*. II 11 (150 B.C.?); *P.Diosk*. 5 (146 B.C.); *P.Köln* X 413 (142 B.C.). The horizontal of τ is a split stroke, without any decorative serif or hook at the left edge; also, such a shape can be dated from the second century B.C. onwards. The two legs of π are curved outwards. The base of β is slightly oblique. The left vertical of η is curved to the left in col. I 9.

Content

The text is not otherwise known in the ancient Greek literature. In col. I someone speaks, refers to himself in l. 4 (ἐμέ or με), and asks his listener to hold something (l. 7 ἔχε), to chase someone or something, and to rush between men fighting (?) in the front line (l. 8 δίωκε, θῦνε διὰ | [προμάχων?]), and to choose something (if we read in l. 11 ἐλ̣ο̣ῦ̣) (if we take these four verbs as imperative and not epic forms of the imperfect tense). It seems that some things are located in hollows, and from there is heard a roar of/from the earth (ll. 1–3). Something strong (l. 5) and deadly (l. 7) should be given, and at the same time an event takes place on trodden/rough ground (l. 9). Then something is done (or should be done) quickly (l. 10), and the speaker orders someone to take something in his hands. A fence made by friendly people, or considered friendly (l. 12), appears in the story. Something (the fence?) was not (or will not be) kept for a long time (l. 13).

In col. II, if we read the text as suggested above, it provides an intriguing phrase: ἔμολε δ’ ἔδρας πετροκορύφ̣ο̣[υς] (or, ἔδος πετροκόρυφ̣ο̣[ν]) πεδίοιο πολυκατευχθόνο̣[ιο] βαρυβρομοκελ̣α̣τοκ̣λ̣υτ̣ός Ποσειδῶν, the “renowned-loud-roaring-noisy” Poseidon came to “the rocky-peaked” dwelling place of the plain “of very very fine

soil/earth". New adjectives are coined by adding to the simple adjective (κλυτός and χθόνιος) various words with similar meaning (βαρυβρομοκελ̣ᾰτοκ̣λ̣υ̣τός) or similar intensified words (πολυκατ̣ευχθ̣όν̣ο̣[ιο]). The phrase starts with the verb ἔμολε and ends with the subject Ποσειδῶν. There is an accusative of place in the middle, with a sequence noun-adjective: e.g., ἕδος πετροκόρυφ̣ο̣[ν] of a πεδίοιο πολυκατ̣ευχθ̣όν̣ο̣[ιο]. The adjective attributed to the god Poseidon, βαρυβρομοκελ̣ᾰτοκ̣λ̣υ̣τός, precedes his name.

Possible attribution(s) of the text(s)

First and foremost, it is important to stress the fact that it is not certain if the texts of both columns are connected or are from different sources. The fact that col. II is narrower than col. I may be due to the shape of the ostracon which limited the available space on the right. The last preserved line of col. I has ο]ὐδ̣' ἐπὶ πολύ, while col. II starts with ἔμολε, which may or may not be construed together: in the former case the text runs as "not long after he (that is, Poseidon, who appears in the nominative below) came"; in the latter case some text is missing below col. I, l. 13.

There are some details which might turn our attention to a prologue-parodos or stasimon from the chorus of a tragedy: (1) The simple verbs, e.g., δίωκε, θ̣ῦνε, ἔμολε. (2) In the text we find epic Ionic genitives in -οιο (col. II, 3 πεδίοιο),[1] epic words (e.g., col. I, 9 αἶαν), and Doric forms (e.g., col. I, 3 βοάν). (3) Absence of participles and articles. (4) Although some epic formulas appear in hexameters (e.g., col. I, 8–9 θ̣ῦνε διὰ [προμάχων(?); col. I, 11 χερσὶν ἐλ̣ο̣ῦ̣/ἔλ̣ο̣ν̣), most of the text is not composed in hexameters: col. I, 7–8 θ]ᾰ̣ν̣ατοφόρον ἔχ̣ε̣ ρ̣ό̣[θον(?). (5) On the other hand, the text is not simply a piece of prose, but, based on the preserved part, we can recognize dochmiacs (with long syllables resolved or the shorts replaced by longs, and drag-in and drag-out or double drag replacements) and iambs.

It is obvious from II 6–7 that each line does not contain a single metrical unit. In addition, it cannot be said with certainty how the lines were arranged in the original text, and if there is a continuation between line 13 of the column I and line 1 of the column II.

Col. I

1	[?] .ς ἐν κοίλαις ἀπο	] .ς – – – ⏑ ⏓
2	[?] . σοθεν ἀναβρυ-	] . . ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
3	[?] .χθονὸς βοὰν πα-	] . ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏓
4	[?]θ̣' ἐμὲ χειρὶ δοριδο̣-	] ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
5	[?]δ̣ον Ἀΐδαν βριᾰ̣ρ̣ὸν	] ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
6	[?]χορον ὑπὸ γόνασι	] ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
7	[? θ]ᾰ̣ν̣ατοφόρον ἔχ̣ε̣ ρο̣-	] ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
8	[?]ει̣. δίωκε, θῦνε διὰ	] – ⏑ – ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
9	[?]τ̣ίβητον ἰαχὰν πεμ-	] ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ – – ⏒
10	[?] .ε ταχὺ δ̣ὲ περι	] ⏑ ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
11	[?] .ε χερσὶν ελ̣ο̣ .	] ⏑ – ⏑ ⏑ ⏒
12	[?] φ́ίλιον ἔρυμα	] ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏓
13	[? ο]ὐδ̣' ἐπὶ πολύ	] – ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑
	?---------?	

1. The epic forms of the genitives in -οιο are found in Aristophanes, but they are rare: see Aristophanes, *Equites* 1015–16 "φράζευ, Ἐρεχθεΐδη, λογίων ὁδόν, ἥν σοι Ἀπόλλων ἴαχεν ἐξ ἀδύτοιο διὰ τριπόδων ἐριτίμων; 1059 "ἔστι Πύλος πρὸ Πύλοιο—" τί τοῦτο λέγει, "πρὸ Πύλοιο"; *Vespae* 1518–1522 ἄγ', ὦ μεγαλώνυμα τέκνα τοῦ θαλασσίοιο, πηδᾶτε παρὰ ψάμαθον καὶ θῖν' ἁλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο, καρίδων ἀδελφοί; *Lyistrata* 775 ἐξ ἱεροῦ ναοῖο χελιδόνες; fragm. 9 καί κ' ἐπιθυμήσειε νέος νῆς ἀμφιπόλοιο.

Col. II

1	ἔμολε δ’ ἕδ̣ος	⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ -
2	πετροκόρυφο̣[ν?]	⏓ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ -
3	πεδίοιο πολυ-	⏑ ⏑ - ⏑ ⏑ ⏑
4	κατευχθόνο̣[ιο?]	⏑ - ⏑ [- ⏑] If κατευχθόνο̣[υ?] ⏑ - ⏑ [-]
5	βαρυβρομοκελ̣α̣-	⏑ ⏓ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑
6	τοκ̣λυ̣τὸς Ποσει-	⏓ ⏑ - ⏑ -
7	δῶν.	-

My best proposal is to provide the following colometry (if the beginning of the column is also the beginning of the verse):

ἔμολε δ’ ἕδ̣ος πετροκόρυφο̣[ν?]	⏑⏑⏑ ⏑- ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑-	2ia
πεδίοιο πολυκατευχθόνο̣[ιο?]	⏑⏑- ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑- ⏑-⏑ (if κατ̣ευ̣χθ̣όν̣ο̣[υ?] ⏑⏑- ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑- ⏑-)	2ia hypercat[2] or 2ia
βαρυβρομοκελ̣α̣τοκ̣λυ̣τὸς Ποσειδῶν.	⏑⏑⏑ ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑⏑- ⏑--	2ia hypercat

or (if the beginning of the column is the end of the verse, which started in the missing part of col. I).

... ἔμολε δ’ ἕδ̣ος	... ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑-	... ia
πετροκόρυφο̣[ν?] πεδίοιο πολυκατευχθόνο̣[ιο?]	⏑⏑⏑ ⏑- ⏑⏑- ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑- ⏑-⏑	3ia hypercat
or (if κατευχθόνο̣[υ?]	⏑⏑⏑ ⏑- ⏑⏑- ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑- ⏑-)	3ia
βαρυβρομοκελ̣α̣τοκ̣λυ̣τὸς Ποσειδῶν.	⏑⏑⏑ ⏑⏑⏑ ⏑⏑- ⏑--	2ia hypercat

The most striking characteristic of the text, as mentioned above, is the rare and newly-coined adjectives in col. II, and especially the two compounds with four elements: the words πολυκατευχθόνο̣[ιο] and βαρυβρομοκελ̣α̣τοκ̣λυ̣τός. The succession of compound adjectives can be found in magical texts (cf. e.g., *PGM* 4.181–184 (for Typhon) γνοφεντινάκτα, βρονταγωγέ, λαιλαπετέ, νυκταστράπτα, ψυχ<ρ>οθερμοφύσησε, πετρεντινάκτα, τειχοσεισμοποιέ, κοχλαζοκύμων, βυθοταραξοκίνησε), in Orphic hymns (cf. e.g., 17.1–5 Κλῦθι, Ποσείδαον γαιήοχε, κυανοχαῖτα, | ἵππιε, χαλκοτόρευτον ἔχων χείρεσσι τρίαιναν, | ὃς ναίεις πόντοιο βαθυστέρνοιο θέμεθλα, | ποντομέδων, ἁλίδουπε, βαρύκτυπε, ἐννοσίγαιε, | κυμοθαλής, χαριδῶτα, τετράορον ἅρμα διώκων), in ancient Greek tragedy and comedy (see Silk 1993, esp. p. 483, n. 20, with previous bibliographical references; cf. the word κολακοφωροκλείδης in Hesychius. s.v.), and in lyric poetry, and especially Bacchylides (with a traditional Homeric flavor of these compound adjectives) (see Silk 1993, p. 483, and Sigelman 2016, pp. 171–175); cf. also the pangrams (e.g. θηροζυγοκαμψιμέτωπος), a song of boatmen on the Nile in *P.Oxy*. III 425 (MP3 1927) (II-III A.D.) ναῦται βαθυκυματοδρόμοι, and in *Sel.Pap*. III 95 (MP³ 1932) (II-III A.D.), an anonymous lyric poem with words such as φιλογαλ[λ]οβραχειονοτυμπ[άνωι, μελ[ανο]-πτεροφαιολοσώματ[ον. In addition, cf. Cercidas (cf. *P.Oxy*. VIII 1082; II A.D.; MP³ 237) ῥυποκιβδοτόκωνα, κοινοκρατηροσκύφῳ, etc.). Finally, we may also consider the possibility of new dithyrambic poetry, such as that written by Timotheus of Miletus. Compound adjectives appear in his *Persae* and generally in the new dithyramb; cf. ὀξυπαραυδήτωι, μακραυχενόπλους, μελαμπεταλοχίτωνα, κατακυμοτακεῖς, μουσοπαλαιολύμας, λιγυμακροφώνων in *Persae* (*PMG* 791), ἐγκατακνακομιγές, σασαμοτυροπαγῆ, etc. in Philoxenus of Leucas (*PMG* 836), or βοτρυοκαρποτόκος and ἀστερομαρμαροφεγγής in an adespoton (*PMG* 927).

On the other hand, similar compound words are not found in the text of the first column. More specifically, the adjective θανατοφόρον in col. I is found only in Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1176 πάθη γοερὰ θανατοφόρα (lyr.). The adjectives beginning with δορι-, like the one beginning with δοριδ̣- on the Tebtynian text, which

2. For 2ia hypercat or 3ia hypercat see, e.g., Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1459; Aristophanes, *Aves* 234; *Lysistrata* 1296.

is not attested elsewhere, are usually found in the lyric parts of the tragedies of Aeschylus and Euripides, or in epigrams, or once in Pindar and Timotheus (lyric poetry). The same is true of the adjectives beginning with βαρυ- (see below for the attestations in Aeschylus). Compound adjectives were used by Aeschylus especially in the lyric parts to present a situation as emotionally taut; see Earp 1948, pp. 6–38; Matino 1998, pp. 117–123. In most cases the compounds are made from two elements, even though there are some examples with three: δυσοδοπαίπαλος "difficult and rugged," referring to a mountain road in *Eumenides* 387; δυσπαράβουλος, "hard to persuade" in *Supplices* 108; δυσπαράθελκτος, "hard to assuage" in *Supplices* 386; εὐπροσωποκοίτης, "lying so as to present a fair face", in *Choephori* 969; cf. also Aristophanes, *Ranae* 962f. referring to Aeschylus that Κύκνους ποιῶν καὶ Μέμνονας κωδωνοφαλαροπώλους; see LSJ s.vv.

The preserved sample of text is fragmentary and not extensive, but based on what survives, it would not seem likely that comedy (or paratragedy in a comic context) is probable, because the tone of the first column seems neither funny nor serious. No comic or humorous elements are clearly distinguishable that would allow us to speak of parody. In addition, the compounds in the second column are not so humorous. Therefore, we have to assume that either, 1) the left column preserves a text that might be tragedy and refers to an event from the Iliad, while the right column preserves part of a dithyrambic poem, where it is said that Poseidon after his intervention in the war, left the field to sit in his dwelling place, or, 2) the text in both columns is a dithyramb, with the passages in the two preserved columns being continuous or not. This text could have come from a dithyramb, which followed standard linguistic and stylistic habits and its plot was based on a certain known story. It cannot be said with any certainty whether this Tebtynian text in col. II was a copy of a possibly famous ancient author (whose work is now lost), or that it was a work written by someone, whose brilliance at coining words and ability to make puns in the Greek language (based, obviously, on the knowledge of the literature) is certainly remarkable.

Thus, if we accept the first possibility, only the first column is tragedy, and a first likely source can be the Aeschylean tragedy *Myrmidones*. For this tragedy see Schadewaldt 1936, esp. pp. 45–52; Taplin 1972; West 2000. At the beginning of the play, it seems that Achilles sits silent in his tent with a cloth covering his head, while the chorus (the Myrmidons) enters and addresses him first in anapaests, which leads on to a string of lyrics. The choral song may focus on the hard-pressed Achaeans (see Taplin 1972, p. 69). The surviving fragments preserve three vocatives. They want to know the reason for his reluctance to fight in the battle, they plead with him to help, they accuse him of treachery (cf. *Iliad* 16.200–207), but Achilles maintains a stony silence. The same happened later, when some heralds (Talthybios and Eurybates; see Taplin 1972, pp. 64–65; Antilochos and/or Odysseus?) come with an official summons to the battle, and with news about the battle; Achilles stays silent. Taplin (1972, p. 70) proposes that choral songs intervened between the attempts of these representatives, again without any response or reaction from Achilles. It is not certain precisely when Achilles broke his silence. Although in the Iliad, in 9.237–243 Odysseus records the feats of Hector, and in 9.346–350 Achilles, in response, expresses his opinion about the wall the Achaeans built, in the Aeschylean fragments of the *Myrmidons*, it seems that it was when Phoenix came to Achilles. Achilles seems to reply in respectful language, probably giving a negative response to the appeal of the Achaeans. However, how can this respectful language be aligned with the memorable breaking of Achilles' silence, as we know it from Aristophanes, *Frogs* 925–938, concerning "Aeschylus' bombastic martial neologisms, which Euripides claims are unintelligible" (thus, Taplin 1972, p. 59; and see also pp. 65 and 73, where he considers that "this is not incompatible with the wording of the fragment")? Then, Patroclus comes to Achilles, who knows that the Trojans are now closing in and setting fire to ships; cf. *Iliad* 16.62–63 ἀλλ' ὁπότ' ἂν δὴ | νῆας ἐμὰς ἀφίκηται ἀϋτή τε πτόλεμός τε. If we follow what we know from the Iliad (16.87), Achilles sends Patroclus into the battle instructing him to drive the enemy away from the ships without pursuing them further. Later, Antilochus brought the bad news about the fallen Patroclus, the body was brought in and the play ends with the laments (spoken or in lyric) of Achilles and the Myrmidons. In this setting the present fragment can be placed either, 1) when one of the emissaries from Agamemnon, first Odysseus, and then Phoenix (cf. *Iliad* 9.496–497; also

cf. Accius, fragm. 469) tried to mollify Achilles and persuade him to enter the battle. They may point out to him that the Achaeans are losing the war, the Trojans are closing in on the wall which was built to protect their ships, and they may also describe Hector's exploits. In this case the verbal forms in the imperative may be addressed to Achilles, but if they are perfect tense, they may refer to Hector; or 2) this is the choral song of the Myrmidons at the time they prepare to enter the battle led by Patroclus (cf. *Iliad* 16.218–220, 257–258, 268–270), or, 3) when the exploits of Patroclus before his death were described to Achilles (cf. *Iliad* 16.372, 394–418, 684–687).

Another possible source could be Aeschylus' tragedy *Cycnus*, of which the source was the Trojan Cycle (cf. *Cypria arg.* 10 (West) Ἀχιλλεὺς αὐτοὺς τρέπεται ἀνελὼν Κύκνον τὸν Ποσειδῶνος; Theocritus 16.49, that Cycnus was known because of the ancient poets who wrote about him). Fragments of this tragedy are not known, but we have Aristophanes' reference to it in *Ranae* 962ff., when he mentions that Aeschylus makes Κύκνους ποιῶν καὶ Μέμνονας κωδωνοφαλαροπώλους. Cycnus was the son of Poseidon (so the appearance of this god in the Tebtynian fragment could be explained), and he was one of the heroes who were killed although they were sons of gods; see Isocrates, *Helen* 52–53 τοσοῦτος δ' ἔρως ἐνέπεσεν τῶν πόνων καὶ τῆς στρατείας ἐκείνης, οὐ μόνον τοῖς Ἕλλησι καὶ τοῖς βαρβάροις, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς, ὥστ' οὐδὲ τοὺς ἐξ αὐτῶν γεγονότας ἀπέτρεψαν τῶν ἀγώνων τῶν περὶ Τροίαν, ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς μὲν προειδὼς τὴν Σαρπηδόνος εἱμαρμένην, Ἠὼς δὲ τὴν Μέμνονος, Ποσειδῶν δὲ τὴν Κύκνου, Θέτις δὲ τὴν Ἀχιλλέως, ὅμως αὐτοὺς συνεξώρμησαν καὶ συνεξέπεμψαν, ἡγούμενοι κάλλιον αὐτοῖς εἶναι τεθνάναι μαχομένοις περὶ τῆς Διὸς θυγατρὸς μᾶλλον ἢ ζῆν ἀπολειφθεῖσι τῶν περὶ ἐκείνης κινδύνων. He supported the Trojans and what we know concerning his achievements in the Trojan War is that he prevented the Greeks from disembarking from the ships (see Aristoteles *Rhetorica* I396b ὃς ἐκώλυσεν ἅπαντας ἀποβαίνειν ἄτρωτος ὤν), he killed 1000 Achaeans (Ovidius *Metamorphoses* 12.64–145, esp. 72), and he either killed Protesilaus (see Quintus Smyrnaeus 4.529) or he attacked the Greek camp treacherously. The men who were preoccupied with the burial of Protesilaus were caught unaware and fled in disorder. Then, the other Achaeans came to help them, together with Achilles, who killed Cycnus (Dictys Cretensis 2.12). Because he was invulnerable to spear and sword, Achilles strangled him (see Pindar, *Olympian* 2.82 Κύκνον τε θανάτῳ πόρεν; *Isthmian* 5.39–41 λέγε, τίνες Κύκνον, τίνες Ἕκτορα πέφνον, καὶ στράταρχον Αἰθιόπων ἄφοβον Μέμνονα χαλκοάραν; Ovidius *Metamorphoses* 12.64–145). Schadewaldt 1936, pp. 39–41, restores the story of Cycnos in the *Myrmidons* of Aeschylus, fragm. 132c, 15–19.

In col. I, 4 χειρὶ δοριδ̣- might be a phrase which refers to Achilles' hand which killed him or to Achilles' ash spear, which could only be lifted by him (see Shannon 1975). Cf. Ovidius' *Metamorphoses*, where reference is made to the spear of Achilles or to his strong hand (transl. by Papaioannou 2007, pp. 50–86; for Ovid's sources see p. 3), or perhaps to the arrival of the Greeks at Troia: 12.70–71: *nec Phryges exiguo quid* ***Achaica dextera*** *posset* | *sanguine senserunt* (nor was the bloodshed little that made the Phrygians fully realize how mighty the Greek hand was); 12.73–76: *iam curru instabat Achilles* | *totaque Peliacae sternebat* ***cuspidis ictu*** | *agmina;* ***perque acies*** *aut Cycnum aut Hectora quaerens* | *congreditur Cycno* (now Achilles was pressing on in his chariot and was laying down entire army ranks with the throw of his Pelian spear. And as he was searching through the battlelines for either Cycnus or Hector, he fell onto Cycnus). Achilles declares himself to Cycnus in 12.80–82: *'Quisquis es, o iuvenis' dixit, 'solamen habeto* | *mortis, ab Haemonio quod sis* ***iugulatus*** *Achille.'* | *aectenus Aeacides; vocem* ***gravis hasta*** *secuta est* ("Whoever you are, young man," he said, "let this console you for your death, that you were slain by Achilles of Thessaly." That much Aeacus' descendant spoke: his heavy spear followed his word). The battle: 12.83–85: *sed quamquam certa* ***nullus fuit error in hasta,*** | *nil tamen emissi profecit acumine ferri.* | *utque hebeti pectus tantummodo contudit ictu* (Yet, although there was no fault whatsoever in his well-aimed spear, the flying weapon nonetheless struck with its sharp point without success; and only shook his [Cycnus'] breast by a blunt stroke). 12.105–109…114: *num tamen exciderit ferrum considerat* ***hastae:*** | *haerebat lingo. 'manus* ***est mea debilis*** *ergo,* | *quasque' ait 'ante habuit* ***vires,*** *effudit in uno? nam certe valuit, vel cum Lyrnesia primum* | *moenia deieci… valuit mea dextra valetque* (And he inspected the point of his spear lest it had been dislodged: it was affixed on the wooden shaft. "So, is my hand so impotent,"

he said, "and the strength, which it had earlier, dissolved in this one instance? For certainly it was strong when I flattened first the walls of Lyrnesia… my right hand has been strong and remains strong"); 12.117–121: *loricamque simul subiectaque pectora rupit.* | *quo plangente* ***gravem*** *moribundo pectore* ***terram*** | *extrahit illud idem calido de vulnere* ***telum*** | *atque ait:* ***'haec manus est, haec, qua modo vicimus, hasta.*** | *utar in hoc isdem; sit in hoc, precor, exitus idem!'* ([A]nd he [Achilles] broke open his [Menoetes'] breastplate and his breast beneath. As his victim was dying after his breast was struck, he fell down upon the solid earth, he [Achilles] plucked out the spear from the hot wound and cried: "This is the hand, this is the spear with which I have just conquered. I likewise shall use it on this man; may the outcome be the same for him, I pray!").

As for the second possibility, that either only the second column or the entire text was part of a dithyramb, two crucial words appear in the text: ἔρυμα "fence" in col. I and "Poseidon" in col. II. These two details evoke *Iliad* 7.436–463: Poseidon appeals to Zeus because the Achaeans built a wall without due deference to him or to Apollo, who built with him the Trojan wall. Zeus replies that Poseidon should not be concerned, since he may sweep it all away into the sea when the war is over.[3] The ἔρυμα on our ostracon could be the fence that the Greeks built, when they arrived in Troy in order to keep the Trojans away from their ships.[4] This fence was named τεῖχος in the Iliad, but ἔρυμα in Thucydides 1.11.1 τὸ γὰρ ἔρυμα τῷ στρατοπέδῳ οὐκ ἂν ἐτειχίσαντο. Could this fence be friendly, φίλιον, to the Achaeans, but hostile (in that case we may restore οὐ] φίλιον?) to the Trojans? Poseidon is usually called γαιήοχος, ἐννοσίγαιος, εὐρυσθενής, κυανοχαίτης, "earth-moving," "earthshaker," "mighty," "dark-haired" respectively, in the Iliad, and βαρύκτυπος "deep sounding earth-shaker" in Hesiodus, *Theogonia* 818, or ἐρίκτυπος, "loud-sounding," in the lliad 456 and 930. The last two can find an echo in the first lines of col. I, in which a loud sound seems to come from below the ground. Then, a battle is described, and we may assume that this refers to an event in the *Iliad* in which Poseidon intervenes to urge the Achaeans into battle, or just leaves the battle.[5] Below I note in bold the words or phrases from the Iliad which may be comparable to the Tebtynian ostracon:

Col. II, 2 πετροκόρυφ̣ο̣[ν]?: *Iliad* 13.11–14 Poseidon appears sitting and watching human affairs during the war on the wooded **peak** of the island of Samothrace: καὶ γὰρ ὃ θαυμάζων ἧστο πτόλεμόν τε μάχην τε | ὑψοῦ **ἐπ' ἀκροτάτης κορυφῆς** Σάμου ὑλήεσσης | Θρηϊκίης· ἔνθεν γὰρ ἐφαίνετο πᾶσα μὲν Ἴδη, | φαίνετο δὲ Πριάμοιο πόλις καὶ νῆες Ἀχαιῶν. On the ostracon, however, the peak is not "wooded," but "rocky" and, certainly, Samothrace was not famous for its "very very fine soil/earth," which might mean land suitable for cultivation, since most of the island was too mountainous.

Col. I, 2 and 7 ἀναβρυ[and θ]ᾳ̣ατοφόρον ἔχ̣ε ρ̣ο̣[and Col. II 1-3: *Iliad* 13.43–65: Poseidon **rises from the sea** (ll. 43–44 ἀλλὰ Ποσειδάων γαιήοχος ἐννοσίγαιος | Ἀργείους ὄτρυνε **βαθείης ἐξ ἁλὸς ἐλθών**), and then he rouses the Achaeans disguised as Calchas, and he speaks to the two Ajaxes, asking them to stand fast against the Trojans who climbed over the fence (l. 50 οἳ μέγα τεῖχος ὑπερκατέβησαν ὁμίλῳ) and against Hector. He waved **his staff** over them and filled them with power and valor (ll. 59–60 ἦ καὶ **σκηπανίῳ** γαιήοχος ἐννοσίγαιος | ἀμφοτέρω κεκόπων πλῆσεν μένεος κρατεροῖο), and then **he flew away** from the camp of the Achaeans like a hawk ((ll. 62–65 αὐτὸς δ' ὥς τ' ἴρηξ ὠκύπτερος **ὦρτο πέτεσθαι**, | ὅς ῥά τ' ἀπ' αἰγίλιπος πέτρης περιμήκεος ἀρθεὶς | ὁρμήσῃ πεδίοιο διώκειν ὄρνεον ἄλλο, ὣς ἀπὸ τῶν ἅϊξε Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων).

Col. I, 4, 6 δοριδ̣ο̣[, ὑπὸ γόνασι, and the imperatives (see above): *Il.* 13.206–239: Poseidon went among the Achaeans, urged them into battle, and disguised as Troas, he asked Idomeneus, who was **famous for his prowess with a spear**, to join the fighting. Idomeneus had returned to the battle after he had taken care of

3. In the Iliad 12.17–35 it is said that after the war had finished, Apollo, Poseidon and Zeus destroyed the wall and ditch that the Achaeans had built.

4. Probably this fence is not the one made by Heracles as described in the Iliad 20.144–150. Poseidon led the gods to the stronghold of Heracles which was a mound that had been built by Athena to protect the hero from the Sea Beast when he had been at Troy a generation ago. Poseidon sits on the stronghold of Heracles (*Iliad* 145–150 τεῖχος ἐς ἀμφίχυτον Ἡρακλῆος θείοιο | ὑψηλόν).

5. Maitland (1999) discusses the appearance of Poseidon in the Homeric epics, and all his activities seem to take place on land; cf. also Chepel 2019, p. 232, concerning a reference to Poseidon's involvement with walls in Aristophanes' *Birds*.

a comrade, who was smitten **in the knee** with the sharp bronze weapon (ll. 210–212 Ἰδομενεὺς δ' ἄρα οἱ **δουρικλυτὸς** ἀντεβόλησεν ἐρχόμενος παρ' ἑταίρου, ὅ οἱ νέον ἐκ πολέμοιο ἦλθε **κατ' ἰγνύην** βεβλημένος ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ). Idomeneus, after telling Poseidon/Thoas that it might be a god who helps the Trojans, asked him **not to stop urging** and calling every man to stay in the fight (*Iliad* 228–230 ἀλλὰ Θόαν, καὶ γὰρ τὸ πάρος μενεδήϊος ἦσθα, | ὀτρύνεις δὲ καὶ ἄλλον ὅθι μεθιέντα ἴδηαι· | τὼ νῦν μήτ' ἀπόληγε κέλευέ τε φωτὶ ἑκάστῳ). Poseidon/Thoas asks Idomeneus again to don his armor and join the fighting (ll. 235–236 ἀλλ' ἄγε τεύχεα δεῦρο λαβὼν **ἴθι**· ταῦτα δ' ἅμα χρὴ | σπεύδειν).

Col. II, 5–7 βαρυβρομοκελ̣ά̣τοκ̣λ̣υ̣τός Ποσειδῶν: *Iliad* 14.135–152: Poseidon, in the guise of an old man, took Agamemnon by the arm and told him that, even without the help of Achilles, he can force the Trojans from the battlefield into their walled city. Then, he left, as **he shouted mightily** and **sped over the plain**, **in order to urge the Achaeans** into the battle (ll. 147–152 ὣς εἰπὼν **μέγ' ἄϋσεν ἐπεσσύμενος πεδίοιο**. | ὅσσόν τ' ἐννεάχιλοι ἐπίαχον ἢ δεκάχιλοι | ἀνέρες ἐν πολέμῳ ἔριδα ξυνάγοντες Ἄρηος, | τόσσην ἐκ στήθεσφιν ὄπα κρείων ἐνοσίχθων | ἧκεν· **Ἀχαιοῖσιν δὲ μέγα σθένος ἔμβαλ'** ἑκάστῳ | καρδίῃ, ἄληκτον πολεμίζειν ἠδὲ μάχεσθαι).

Col. I, 7 θ]ᾳ̣ν̣ατοφόρον ἔχ̣ε̣ ρ̣ο̣[: *Iliad* 14.384–387: Poseidon led the Achaeans into the battle with a flashing **sword**, ἦρχε δ' ἄρά σφι Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων | **δεινὸν ἄορ** τανύηκες ἔχων ἐν χειρὶ παχείῃ | εἴκελον ἀστεροπῇ· τῷ δ' οὐ θέμις ἐστὶ μιγῆναι | ἐν δαΐ λευγαλέῃ, ἀλλὰ δέος ἰσχάνει ἄνδρας.

On the other hand, if only the first column is part of a dithyrambic ode, and Poseidon, who appears in the second column is not directly connected to the story of the first column, one could propose many possibilities that could be placed in various settings within the Trojan context or other epic struggles: for example, Timotheus had written an ode on the madness of Ajax in Troy, Αἴας ἐμμανής (*PMG* 777). The plot is not known, but if the Tebtynian text comes from this dithyramb, Timotheus may present Ajax storming against and killing (δίωκε, θῦνε) with his deadly weapon (θανατοφόρον) a crowd of figures, which he thought were the Atreidae and Odysseus, but actually they were flocks of Trojan sheep and herds of cows. The φίλιον ἔρυμα could be considered the fence of the fold for livestock. Alternatively, if the verbs were imperatives, we may consider that the goddess Athena was affecting Ajax's vision and mind (Sophocles, *Ajax* 447–440) and thus inflicted madness on him, causing the hero to act with insanity.

Poseidon appears in a dithyramb (Adesp., *PMG* 929, (c)) preserved on a papyrus fragment of the Byzantine period: γᾶν δ'ἐτίναξε Ποσειδὰν χρυσεοδέοντι τριαίναι.

The archaeological context and the use of the ostracon

The ostracon was found in the open area on the eastern side of the temple of the crocodile god, in the rubbish disposal area, and in layers that were disturbed by the previous excavators. Therefore, not much can be said about its archaeological context except that after it was written and used, it was thrown away. It is impossible to say precisely how long the ostracon was kept before being discarded. The indication of the day and the month at the end in a literary ostracon may indicate that the scribe wanted to make clear the time of its copying or composition. In most cases literary ostraca were used in an educational environment, or as brief memoranda of an interesting text that someone remembered or copied; see Litinas 2002; Dreliossi, Litinas 2009–2011. Quotations from tragedy or comedy written on ostraca are rare, and the editors usually considered theses copies as school exercises: cf. MP³ 1498+1697 and 1575, an anthology of comedy, tragedy and prose (early second century B.C.? = C. Austin, *Comicorum Graecorum fragmenta in papyris reperta* (*CGFP*) 318 = R. Kassel, C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci* (*PCG*) VIII 1050); Euripides, *Electra* 388–389 and *Hecuba* 254–257 and Pseudo-Epicharmus (see C. Austin, *Comicorum Graecorum fragmenta in papyris reperta* (*CGFP*) 306 = R. Kassel, C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci* (*PCG*) VIII 1029–1031 = MP³ 1567; tragedy(?), a list of scenes from the Trojan and Theban cycles (?) (II A.D.; *O.Bodl.* II 2171; = *TrGF* II 732 = MP³ 1737); Aristophanes, *Nubes* 974–975 (*O.Bodl.* I 279, identified by Litinas 2002 = MP³ 148.01); Euripides, *Hippolytus*

616–624 (II B.C.; *WO* II 1147 = MP³ 396); Euripides, *Phoenissae* 105–118; 128–140 (II B.C.; *P.Lond.Lit*. 75; MP³ 416); Euripides, *Phoenissae* 3 (II–I B.C.; MP³ 1934); comedy of Philemon (?), see R. Kassel, C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci* (*PCG*) VIII 1047–1048 = C. Austin, *Comicorum Graecorum fragmenta in papyris reperta* (*CGFP*) 296b = MP³ 2721.1 (II A.D.). However, in such a case, because of the handwriting, the text on this ostracon functioned more probably as a teacher's original which had to be copied rather than a student's written school exercise.

Commentary

Col. I

1. Probably we should read ἐν κοίλαις; cf. Aristophanes, *Aves* 1098 χειμάζω δ' ἐν κοίλοις ἄντροις; Xenophon *Hellenica* 5.1.10 ἐν κοίλῳ χωρίῳ ἐνήδρευσεν. For the use of the preposition ἐν (local, abstract, adverbial and temporal) in Aeschylus see Matino 1998, pp. 81–85. It seems improbable to read ἐνκοίλαις, as a phonological mistake for ἐγκοίλοις ("hollow, sunken"). Alternatively we could read] ̣σεν κοίλαις, where σεν is the ending of a verb. The adjective κοῖλος, "hollow," is used by Homer mainly for ships. Furthermore, we may restore πέτρα]ι̣ς ἐν κοίλαις, "in hollow rocks;" cf. Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 23, Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 1081, Theocritus 9.16, etc.
ἀπο: either the preposition ἀπό or a form of a compound verb or noun beginning with ἀπο-. For the use of the preposition ἀπό in Aeschylus see Matino 1998, pp. 74–78.
2. Read either] ̣ς ὅθεν or] ̣σόθεν. From the uncertain letter only the end of the lower stroke is preserved. It can be a ϙ, ε or ο, especially, if we compare it with the ο of Ποσειδῶν in col. II 6–7. Thus, we may restore με]ϙσόθεν, "from the middle," or πρό]ϙσοθεν, "form afar," or βυ]ϙσόθεν, "from the bottom (of the sea), from the depths." The restoration βυ]ϙσόθεν could fit the context, especially if reference is made to Poseidon.
ἀναβρυ-: the verb ἀναβρυάζω ("neigh aloud, of horses;" see LSJ s.v.) and the verb ἀναβρυχάομαι ("roar aloud;" see LSJ s.v.) are the only words beginning with ἀναβρυ-. Alternatively, ἀναβλύ- is possible, if we assume a phonological interchange of λ and ρ. The intransitive verb ἀναβλύζω means the "gushing forth" (see LSJ s.v. 2) and the transitive ἀναβλύ(ζ)ω means "spout up," "spout out" (see LSJ s.v.); cf. also the later ἀναβρύω (= ἀναβλύω; see LSJ s.v.). Moreover, a word division ἀνὰ βρυ- does not make good sense. If the noun βοάν, which follows, could be taken as the object of the verb, both meanings, "spout up" and "roar around" are possible in a metaphorical sense.
3.] ̣χθονός: the first preserved letter seems to be ϙ (e.g. ἔνερθ]ϙ χθονός, "[from] below the earth"), or less probably ο̣ (e.g. ὑπ]ο̣ χθονός, "underground").
Read βοάν (accusative singular, Doric form of βοή, "loud cry, shout, roar of the sea) or βοᾶν (infinitive present tense of βοάω, -ῶ, "cry aloud, shout"). Because of the preceding genitive χθονός, one may understand "the shout of the earth," or the "shout from the earth;" for the latter cf. Homer, *Iliad* 16.635 ὣς τῶν ὄρνυτο δοῦπος ἀπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης, "so from them went up a clanging from the broad-wayed earth;" cf. Aeschylus, *Supplices* 583 ἔνθεν πᾶσα βοᾶι χθών; for the metaphor see Earp 1948, p. 124; see Smyth 1896, esp. p. 149 "melic anapaests show βοά, Aeschylus, *Persae* 936. In melic choral passages we find καλλιβόας, Sophocles, *Trachiniae* 640; ἀδυβόᾳ, Euripides, *Bacch*. 127; μειξοβόαν, Aeschylus, fragm. 355."
4.]θ̣' ἐμὲ χειρί: restore, e.g., ἔνθ' ἐμέ? For ἐμὲ χειρί cf. Homer, *Odyssea* 18.56–57 μή τις ἐπ' Ἰρῳ ἦρα φέρων ἐμὲ χειρὶ βαρείῃ πλήξῃ ἀτασθάλλων. Alternatively, a word division as]θε με χειρί; cf. Euripides, *Alcestis* 827–828 ἀλλ' ἔπειθέ με λέγων, or also other verbs such as οἴεσ]θέ με, ὄψεσ]θέ με, δέξασ]θέ με, etc.; cf. also Sophocles, *Ajax* 408–409 πᾶς δὲ στρατὸς δίπαλτος ἄν με χειρὶ φονεύοι. χειρί just followed by δορί cannot be construed; cf. Aeschylus fragm. 132c, 7–8 (*Myrm.*) Ἀχαιῶν χεῖρ' ἐφορμήσω δορί | [±3–4]ῶσαν ὀργῇ.

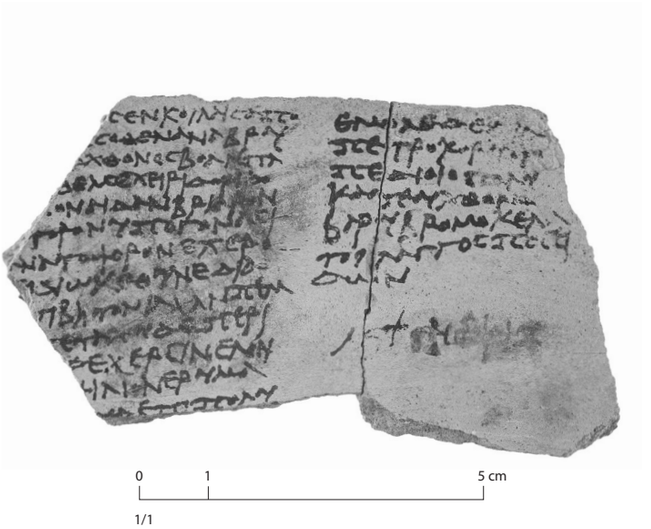


Fig. 1. Inv. SCA 4491 + 7837; excav. nos. 7802-7 + B7001-72.

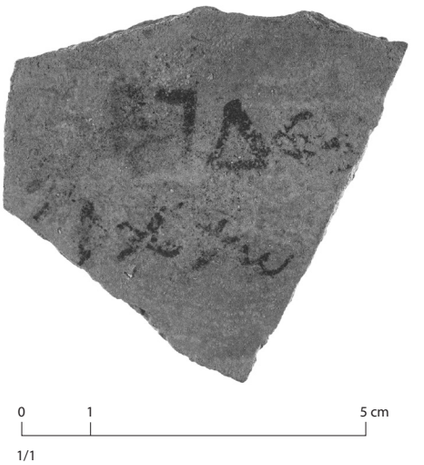


Fig. 2. Inv. SCA 9844; excav. no. B7814-2.



Fig. 3. Excav. no. A7710-2.

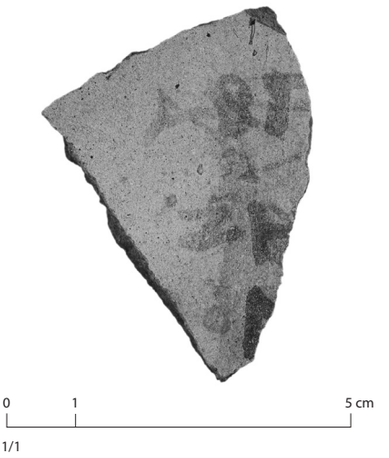


Fig. 4. Excav. no. B7217-6.



Fig. 5. Excav. no. B1133-3.

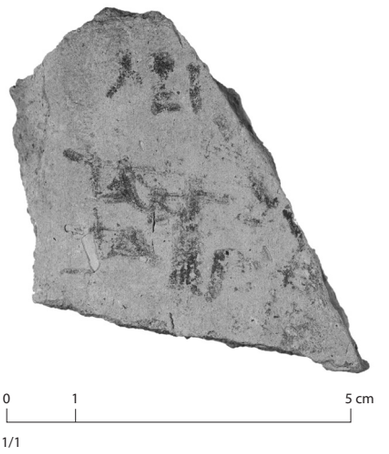


Fig. 6. Excav. no. A7801-34.

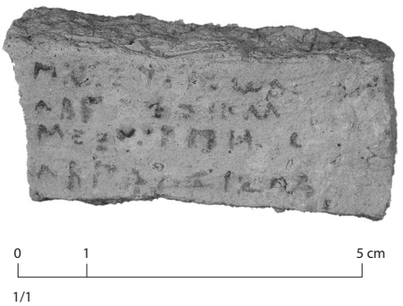


Fig. 7. Excav. no. A7801-83.



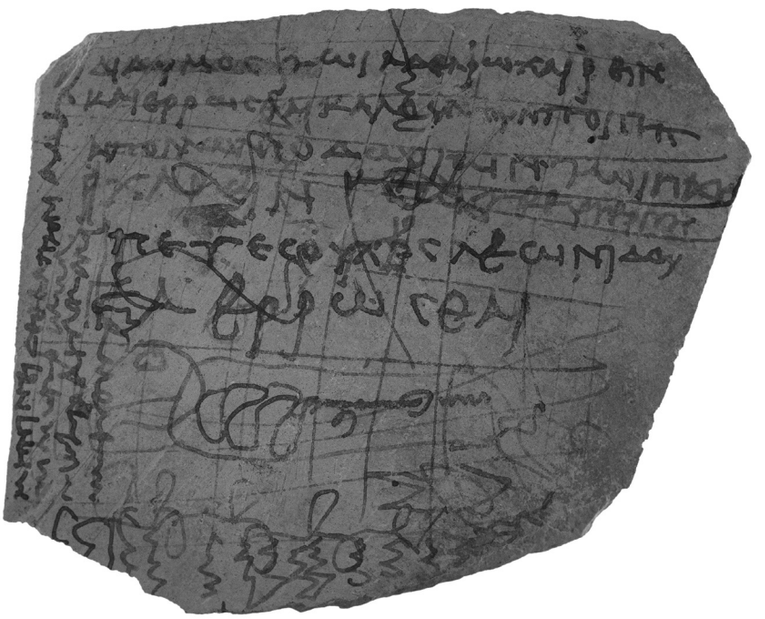
Fig. 8. Excav. no. B1112-1.



Fig. 9. Excav. no. B7201-15.



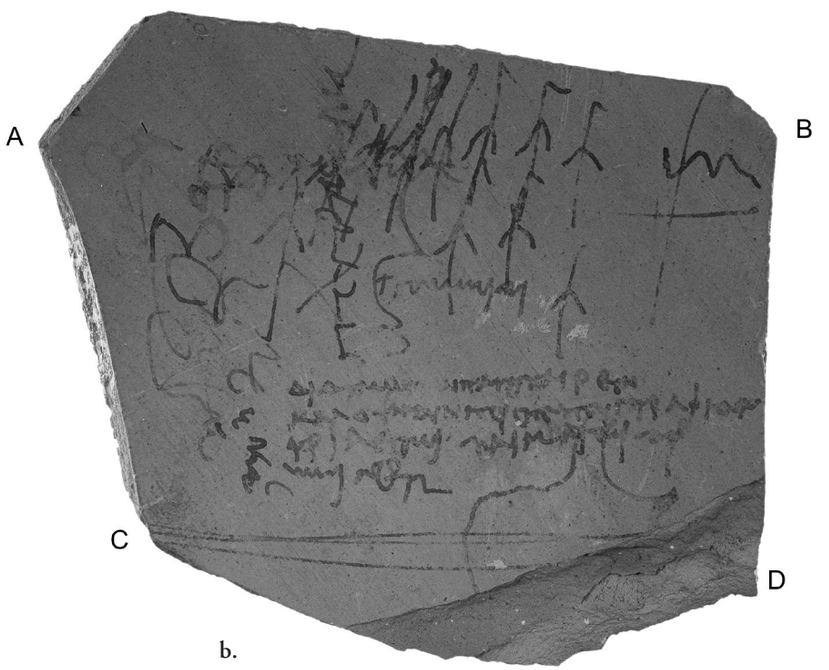
Fig. 10. Excav. no. B10129-1.



a.

0 1 5 cm

1/1



b.

0 1 5 cm

1/1

Fig. 11a-b. Inv. SCA 9276; excav. no. C3002-9.

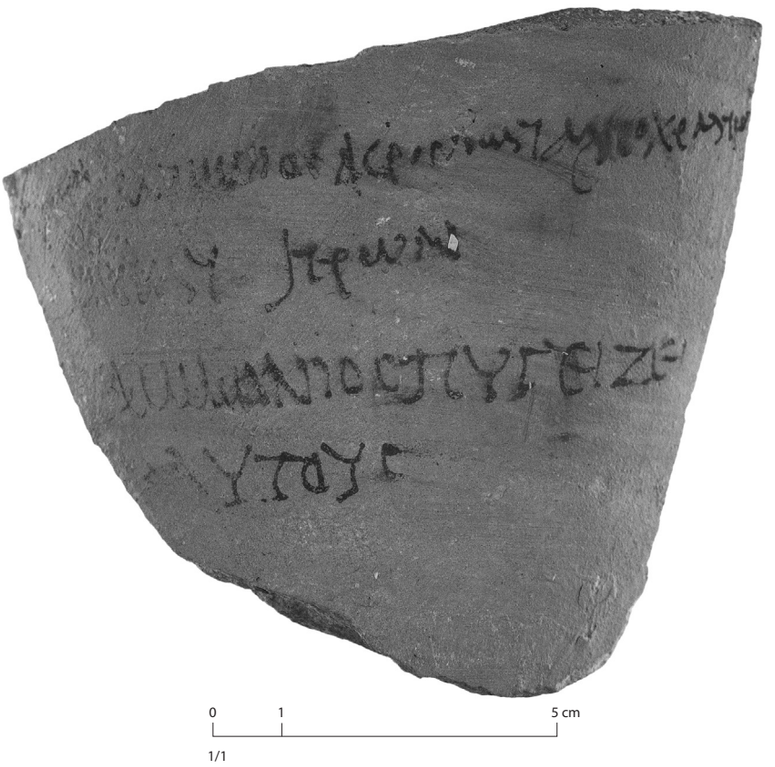


Fig. 12. Inv. SCA 7982; excav. no. B1101-56.



Fig. 13. Inv. SCA 8223; excav. no. B2201-126.