

Archellites

Coptic Poem

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The text reproduced below is taken from H. Junker *Koptische Poesie*.¹ It is a late non-standard Sahidic text that, I hope, will be helpful to those in the early stages of studying Coptic. There is a good deal of repetition in the text, which makes it relatively easy for beginners to read. The non-standard forms are 'translated' into Sahidic in the notes. I have tried as far as possible to translate the repeated phrases and sentences in the same way.

Many Coptic poems were probably not meant to be spoken but sung or chanted and, as with *Archellites*, were provided with abbreviated instructions as to how this was to be done. The abbreviated instructions listed below seem to mean that the stanzas should be performed using the tune, presumably well-known, of a hymn that began with the words in the instruction, 'tune instructions' (Melodienvermerk).

In addition to the poem the Archellites 'dossier' includes a Coptic life, published by James Drescher *Three Coptic Legends* (1947) pp. 14ff., said in the proemium of the text to have been written Eusebius the historian. There is also a Syriac tradition about Archellites, but I am not familiar with it.

The Coptic legend is that Archellites was of 'a good root' (ΟΥΝΟΥΝΕ ΕΝΑΝΟΥΣ), the son of a city eparch. His mother, Synklêtikê, made sure that he was properly instructed in Christian belief. At the age of 12 he was sent to Athens for a good education: 'later, when you are a good philosopher, return to me in peace' (Μῆν̄ςως ἐκψανφιλοσοφεί κਾਲως, νγκτοκ ον ψαροι ρνογειρηνη). But this did not happen. The boy allowed himself to be guided by God 'from place to place and from city to city, country to country, fatherland to fatherland until God brought him to the monastery of Romanus' (ΕΒΟΛ ρΝΟΥΜΑ ΕΥΜΑ ΑΥΩ ΕΒΟΛ ρΝΟΥΠΟΛΙΣ

¹ Published in two volumes of *Oriens Christianus* 6 (1906) pp. 319-411 and 7 (1907) pp. 136-253. Text and translation in vol. 7 pp. 161ff.

ΕΥΠΟΛΙΣ, ΖΝΟΥΧΩΡΑ ΕΥΧΩΡΑ, ΖΝΟΥΠΑΤΡΙΣ ΕΚΕΠΑΤΡΙΣ ΨΑΝΤΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ Ν̄Τ̄
ΕΧ̄Μ̄ΠΜΟΝΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΝΑΠΑ ΖΡΩΜΑΝΟΣ). Synklêtikê says that the search for her son has brought her to Palestine (stanza 14).

It is at this point that the poem begins. The divisions of 8 lines each used here are those of Junker. I take these stanzas ² to be double quatrains, also known as octaves. Some but not all lines have ten syllables. There seem to be three or four stressed syllables in a line. The lines are either self-contained of sense or joined to each other only by the grammatical structure known as the Conjunctive; in the first stanza there are examples of this in lines 3, 5, 6 and 8. It is to be understood as 'and' or 'so that'. The influence of Bohairic can be seen in the *nomen sacrum* δ̄c̄ in place of x̄c̄ and the Conjunctive forms τ̄εκ- and τ̄εϙ- in place of n̄κ- and n̄ϙ-. The most common verbal prefix conjugations in the text are ψ̄αρ̄ε/μ̄ερε, which Crum (CD 583a) describes as 'aorist'.³

The text seems to have been something like a libretto, in this case of an oratorio, performed by a number of people, perhaps three or four, on the feast day of the saint (Tôbe 13). It represents the most poignant episode in the saint's career and, in that sense, is the most appropriate for a dramatic performance. The skill of the writer is displayed in the use of repetition and 'double entendre': in double stanza 7 the near-repetition of the lines τ̄αβ̄ωκ τ̄απαράκαλι μ̄μοϙ/αρηγ̄ ψ̄αρεπεϙνα τ̄αζ̄οι and τ̄αβ̄ωκ τ̄απαράκαλι μ̄μοϙ/αρηγ̄ ψ̄αρεουχαί τ̄αζ̄οι and the effortless transition from the physical pain of the unknown stranger to the emotional distress of Synklêtikê.

The following is a list of some of the annotations used throughout the poem/hymn. They are discussed by Junker *Or. Chr.* 6 pp. 340ff.

1 : †ΝΑΖΙΣΕ ΑΝ

3 : ΑΠΡΗ/ΑΛΛΟΣ

4: ΠΑΙΩ

2 German regularly uses the Classical Greek term Strophe, borrowed from French in the 17th cent. English often uses the Italian term 'stanza', which coincidentally corresponds more or less to the term *hwt* in Late Egyptian verse. Quatrain specifically refers '4 lines' (German 'Vierzeiler')

3 The positive form ψ̄αρ̄ε has probably developed from the earlier particle that usually points to the inevitable consequence of a previous statement/action. The negative μ̄ερε has developed from the Late Egyptian negative particle *bw* and negates statements or actions without reference to time and is similar to the English 'one does not do that' or German 'man tut sowas nicht'. The Coptic aorist does not have much to do with the Classical Greek aorist, a largely narrative tense that is similar to the English Past Simple.

5 : ΠΔΙΑΚ/

6 : ΣΩΨΤ

7 : †ΝΑΖΙ

8 : ΚΔΙΣΕΤΠΕ / ΑΛΛΟΣ

10: ΠΔΙ/

11: ΨΟΜΤ ΕΖΩϞ

12: ΑΛΛ/

14/15: ΠΑΛΛΟΣ

17: †ΝΑΖΙΣΕ /ΑΛΛΟΣ

20: ...ΝΟΥΤΕ

21: ...ΡΟΜΠΕ

22: ΨΟΜΤ ΕΖΩϞ

The standard Sahidic spelling is given after each double stanza, numbered by line.

1. The prior of the monastery speaks.

ΑΥΩΝ ΝΑϞ ΝΤΕΤΝΗΤϞ ΕΖΟΥΝ
ΤΑΖΟϞ ΕΡΑΤϞ ἸΠΑΜΤΟ ΕΒΟΛ
ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΠΕϞΖΟ ΧΕΟΥΕΒΟΛΤΩΝΠΕ
ΠΕΧΑϞ ΕΒΙΠΕΠΡΟΕΣΤΟϞ
ΤΑΤΙ ΧΩϞ ΜΠΕΣΧΗΜΑ ΝΝΑΓΓΕΛΟϞ
ΤΑΚΩ ΜΜΟϞ ΖΜΠΜΩΝΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ
ΟΥΝΖΝΤΑΛΛΟ ΝΑΨΩΠΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΤΟΟΤϞ
ΝΤΕΡΩΜΕ ΝΙΜ ΧΩ ΜΠΕϞΤΑΙΟ

Open to him and bring him in
Stand him before me
That I may see his face, where he is from,⁴
Said the prior,
And put on him the habit of the angels
And let him into the monastery.
Cures will happen because of him
And everyone will speak his praises.

1. ΝΤΕΤΝΗΤϞ

4. ΝἸ

5. † ΕΧΩϞ

2. Archellites speaks to the prior.

†ΠΑΡΑΚΑΛΕΙ ΜΜΟϞ ΠΑΙΩΤ
ΠΕΠΡΟΕΣΤΟϞ ΕΠΙΜΟΝΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ
ΕΚΕΛΑΤ ΕΜΟΝΑΧΟϞ ΖΑΖΤΗΚ
ΤΑΩ ΖΑΘΑΙΒϞ ΕΝΕΚΨΑΝΗ
ΜΠΕΡΝΟΧΤ ΕΒΟΛ ΠΑΧΟΕΙϞ ΕΙΩΤ
ΧΕΝΤΟϞ ΚΝΑΤΙΛΟΓΟϞ ΖΑΠΑΣΝΟϞ
ΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΝΤΠΕΠΕ ΠΑΒΟΗΘΟϞ
ΕΡΕΠΑΡΟΟΥΨ ΝΗΧ ΕΡΟϞ

I beg you, my father
Prior of this monastery
That you will make me a monk with you
That I may remain under the protection of your prayers
Do not reject me, my lord father.
For you will give an account of my blood,
The God of heaven, my helper,
Care of me lies with Him

4 I imagine that he is referring to the social background. Pale skin and fine features would probably point to the sheltered upbringing of the well-to-do. In the *Apophthegmata Patrum* Apa Macarius was doubtful of the ability of the two 'Romans Brothers' to cope with the harsh life of the desert cf. Benedicta Ward *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* (1975) p. 134

3, 4 and 5. Synklêtikê laments the absence of her son

ΟΥΟΙ ΑΝΟΚ ΑΙΧΟΟΥΚ ΕΣΖΑΙ
ΕΙΕ ΟΥΠΕ ΠΕΚΖΗΥ ΝΤΟΚ
ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΜΜΕΡΙΤ
ΠΑΠΡΑΝ ΕΚΖΟΥΛΒ ΖΙΤΑΠΑΠΡΟ
ΦΑΙΣΟΛΣΑ ΕΜΗΝΕ ΕΙΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΚΖΟ
ΝΕΝΚΑ ΜΠΕΚΙΩΤ ΡΩΦΕΡΟΙ ΝΕΜΑΚ
ΟΥΝΟΒΠΕ ΠΑΕΜΚΑΖ ΕΖΗΤ

Woe is me ! I sent you for an education⁵
Now then, what use is it to you⁶
Archellites, my beloved son,
The one of the name that is sweet in my my mouth ?
I will be comforted daily when I see your face
The property of your father will be enough for us both
My heartache is great

6. ΜΜΗΝΕ

7. ΡΩΦΕ ΕΡΟΙ

ΕΡΨΑΝΟΥΡΩΜΕ ΒΩΚ ΕΠΨΕΜΟ
ΤΕΦΕΡΟΥΡΟΜΠΕ ΨΑΚΤΟΦ ΕΠΕΦΗΙ
ΑΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΒΩΚ ΕΤΑΝΣΗΦ
ΕΙΣΟΥΜΗΝΨΕ ΝΖΟΥΥ ΕΠΙΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΚΖΟ
ΕΨΩΠΕ ΤΕΚΟΝΑΖ ΠΑΩΗΡΕ
ΕΡΕΠΩΣ ΝΑΣΤΟΚ ΕΧΩΙ
ΕΨΩΠΕ ΟΝ ΑΚΚΑΨΜΑ ΕΖΡΑΙ
ΜΑΡΕΠΩΣ ΕΡΟΥΝΑ ΝΕΜΑΚ

If someone goes abroad
And spends a year, he returns home.
Archellites went to school.
It is a long time since I have seen his face
If you are alive. my son,
The Lord will return you to me.
If you have laid down your body,
May the Lord have mercy on you.

1. ΨΜΜΟ (-ΕΜ- for -ΜΜ- also in the pronouns)

3. ΑΝΖΗΒΕ

4. ΜΠΙΝΑΥ

5. ΟΝΖ

†ΕΡΖΗΒΕ ΝΑΚ ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΜΜΕΡΙΤ
ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΕΤΙΜΕ ΜΜΟΦ
ΠΑΠΡΑΝ ΕΚΖΟΥΛΒ ΖΙΤΑΠΑΠΡΟ
ΕΜΗΝΤΑΙ ΕΜΑΥ ΝΣΑΒΛΛΑΦ
ΝΑΣΝΗΥ ΜΕΝ ΝΕΤΣΟΟΥΝ ΕΜΟΙ
ΜΑΡΟΥΕΡΖΥΒΕ ΝΣΕΛΥΠΗ ΝΕΜΑΙ
ΕΧΜΠΜΟΥ ΜΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΜΜΕΡΙΤ

I mourn for you, my beloved son
Archellites. the one I love,
The one of the name that is sweet in my mouth,
Apart from whom I have no-one.
My brothers, those who know me,
Let them mourn and grieve with me
Over the death of my beloved son.

5 Lit. 'to write'

6 This translates the restoration by Junker *Or. Chr.* 7 p.161. I imagine that it is a standard lament of disappointed parents: 'I spend all this money giving you a good education, and what have you done with it ?' She then moves swiftly on to how glad she will be when he comes back home. I think the sheer frustration she is feeling is very well expressed in these terse lines

ΜΠΙΕΙΜΕ ΕΠΝΕΤΑΦΩΠΕ ΜΜΟΦ

I do not know what has happened to him

4. ΜΜΝΤΑΙ

There are probably four pages missing here, in which Synklêtikê probably talks about the inn she has opened for travellers and from one whom she has heard about the sick man mentioned in the next stanza.

6. Archellites' mother hears the following conversation of travellers passing through about a sick man.

ΖΑΜΟΙ ΕΝΕ ΝΤΑΠΑΙΕΦΒΩΚ
ΕΠΙΜΟΝΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΕΑΠΑ ΖΡΩΜΑΝΟΣ
ΦΑΠΠΤΟΥΑΑΒ ΧΕΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ
ΤΕΦΠΑΡΑΚΑΛΙ ΜΜΟΦ
ΤΕΦΦΛΗΛ ΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΕΖΡΑΙ ΕΧΩΦ
ΦΑΡΕΠΟΥΧΑΙ ΤΑΖΟΦ
ΧΕΕΡΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΝΤΠΕ
ΦΟΟΠ ΝΕΜΑΦ

Would that this one had been able to go
To the monastery of Apa Romanus
To the one called Archellites
That he might call upon him
To pray to God for him,
He would have been cured,
For the God of heaven
Is with him.

2. ΝΑΠΑ

7. Synklêtikê speaks to the travellers.

†ΣΟΠΣ ΕΜΩΤΗ ΝΑΙΟΤΕ ΕΤΟΥΑΑΒ
ΤΑΜΟΚ ΕΠΜΑ ΕΡΕΠΙΡΩΜΕ ΕΝΖΗΤΦ
ΤΑΒΩΚ ΤΑΠΑΡΑΚΑΛΙ ΜΜΟΦ
ΑΡΗΥ ΦΑΡΕΠΕΦΝΑ ΤΑΖΟΙ
ΜΟΝ ΕΡΕΟΥΦΩΝΕ ΖΙΠΑΣΑΝΖΟΥΝ
ΕΙΣΟΥΜΗΝΦΕ ΝΖΟΟΥ ΜΠΙΕΙΜΕ ΕΠΕΦΤΩΦ
ΤΑΒΩΚ ΤΑΠΑΡΑΚΑΛΙ ΜΜΟΦ
ΑΡΗΥ ΦΑΡΕΟΥΧΑΙ ΤΑΖΟΙ

I beg you, my holy fathers.
Tell me of the place where this man is
That I might go and call upon him.
Perhaps he will be merciful to me,
For there has been a sickness in my inside
The condition of which I have for some time not
understood.
That I might go and call upon him.
Perhaps I will be cured.

8. The travellers reply

ΤΕΣΖΙΜΕ ΕΝΤΟ ΟΥΣΚΕΟΣ ΕΒΩϞ
ΜΕΡΕΨΒΩΚ ΕΠΜΑ ΕΤΗΜΑΥ
ΖΑΖ ΖΕΛΗΡΙΟΝ⁷ ΖΙΤΕΖΙΗ
line missing
ΑΥΩ ΠΙΠΕΤΟΥΛΑΒ ΧΕΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ
ΜΕΦΝΑΥ ΕΠΖΟ ΝΣΖΙΜΕ ΕΝΕΖ

Woman, you , a weak vessel,⁸
You will not be able to go to that place.
There are many brigands on the way
line missing
And the saint called Archellites
Will never see the face of a woman

9 and 10. Synklêtikê speaks to the archbishop

ΨΛΗΛ ΕΧΩΙ ΠΑΡΧΗΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ
ΤΑΒΩΚ ΨΑΤΕΖΡΩΜΑΝΙΑ
ΜΟΝ ΛΙΣΩΤΗ ΕΤΒΕΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ
ΧΑΦΕΡΟΥΝΟΒ ΕΤΕΛΙΟΣ
ΤΑΒΩΚ ΤΕΡΜΩΝΑΧΗ ΖΑΖΤΗϞ
ΤΕΠΑΡΑΨΕ ΧΩΚ ΕΒΟΛ
ΠΑΙΩΤ ΠΑΡΧΗΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ
ΜΟ ΝΑΧΡΗΜΑ ΤΕΚΚΑΥ ΖΑΖΤΗΚ

Pray for me, archbishop,
That I may go to Romania,⁹
For I have heard about Archellites
That he has become a great man of perfection.¹⁰
That I may go and become a monk with him
And my joy be complete.
My father archbishop,
Take my wealth and keep it with you

ΜΟΝ ΑΖΕΝΡΩΜΕ ΕΡΜΗΤΡΕ ΝΑΙ
ΧΕΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΑΨΕΡΕ ΟΝΑΖ
ΕΙΨΑΝΒΩΚ ΤΑΚΤΟΙ ΤΑΕΙ
ΨΑΙΤΙ ΝΟΥΜΕΡΟΣ ΕΤΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ
ΕΙΨΑΝΒΩΚ ΟΝ ΝΤΑΒΩ ΖΑΖΤΗϞ
ΤΑΑΥ ΕΝΖΗΚΕ ΜΕ ΟΡΦΑΝΟΣ

For men have borne witness to me
That Archellites my son is alive.
If I go and come back,¹¹
I will give a part to the church.
But if I go and stay with him,
Give my money to the poor and orphans

6 MN

7 Junker understands the word as ληστήριον 'brigands'.

8 Allusion to 1 Peter 3,7

9 A name sometimes used of what we now call the Byzantine Empire

10 For the associations of τελιος with the monastic life G. W. H. Lampe *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961) p. 1380.
sense.

11 One of these verbs is not required by the sense but probably by the rhythm.

11 and 12. Synklêtikê arrives at the monastery and speaks to the son she is unable to see

ΤΚΑΛΛΖΗ ΝΤΑΣΒΙ ΖΑΡΟΚ
ΑΥΩ ΝΕΚΙΒΕ ΝΑΙ ΕΤΑΧΙ ΜΜΟΥ
ΕΤΟΥ ΝΕ ΝΑΙ ΕΥΨΙΝΕ ΝΣΩΚ
ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΑΜΕΡΙΤ
ΤΙΤΑΡΚΟ¹² ΜΜΟΚ ΕΝΕΖΙΣΕ
ΕΤΑΠΕΧ̄Σ ΨΟΠΟΥ ΖΑΡΟΝ
ΕΨΩΠ ΜΕΚΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΚΖΟ
ΤΕΠΑΡΑΨΕ ΧΩΚ ΕΒΟΛ

The womb that carried you
And the breasts that you took,
They now seek you,
Archellites, my beloved.
I entreat you by the pains
That Christ received for us,
To come out that I may see your face
And that my joy may be complete

1. ΝΤΑΣΒΙ

ΒΩΚ ΛΧΙΣ ΕΑΡΧΙΑΛΤΙΤΗΣ
ΧΕΤΕΚΜΑΛΥ ΤΕΣΑΖΕΡΑΤΣ ΕΡΟΚ
ΝΤΑΙΕΙ ΨΑΡΟΚ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΚΖΟ
ΕΙΨΑΝΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ ΜΑΡΙΜΟΥ
ΛΜΟΥ ΕΒΟΛ ΠΑΜΕΡΙΤ
ΤΕΚΤΙ ΝΟΥΣΟΛΧΑ ΕΤΑΨΥΧΗ
ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΚΖΟ
ΤΕΠΑΖΗΤ ΕΜΤΟΝ ΕΜΟΚ

Go and tell Archellites:
'Your mother is waiting for you.
I have come to you to see your face
If I see you, let me die.
Come out, my beloved,
And comfort my soul,
That I may see your face
And my heart be at rest

6. ΣΟΛΧΑ

13. Archellites replies

ΛΙΣΜΙΝΕ ΝΟΥΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ¹³ ΜΕ ΠΝΟΥΤΕ
ΜΙΝΨΠΑΡΑΒΑ ΜΜΟΣ
ΧΕΜΙΗΡΣΑΒΟΛ ΕΠΙΡΟ
ΜΙΝΑΥ ΕΠΖΟ ΝΣΖΙΜΕ ΨΑΕΝΕΖ
ΕΨΩΠΕ ΨΑΡΒΩ ΜΠΙΜΑ
Ω ΤΑΜΑΥ ΚΩΘΗΝΗΤΕ ΝΗ
ΕΨΩΠΕ ΨΑΡΒΩΚ ΕΠΟΥΗ
ΕΡΕΠ̄Σ ΧΙΜΟΕΙΤ ΝΕ

I have made a covenant with God.
I am not able to violate it,
For I may not come beyond the gate
Or ever see a woman's face.
If you remain here,
My mother, build a monastery for yourself.
If you go home,
The Lord will guide you.

12 For τάρκο followed by the conditional particle and ψαρπ/μερε the cf. W. E. Crum *Coptic Dictionary* (1939) 580b for examples from other texts. See also stanza 19.

13 The same phrase is used in the text of vow made on becoming a monk in the works of Shenoute cf. J. Leipoldt *Schenute von Atripe* (1903) p. 196

2. ΜΕΙΩ-

3. ΜΕΙΡ-

6. ΚΕΤΟΥΖΕΝΕΕΤΕ

14 and 15. Synklêtikê

ΛΙΚΩ ΝΤΕΖΡΩΜΑΝΙΑ ΝCΩΙ

ΛΙΕΙ ΝΕCΤΩ ΕΤΠΑΛΛΗCΤΗΝΗ

ΧΙΟΥΩΨ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΚΖΟ

ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗC ΠΑΨΗΡΕ ΜΜΕΡΙΤ

ΠΕΝΕΖΟΙΜΕ ΝΘΑΛΑCΣΑ

ΝΤΑΙΠΛΕΑ ΝΖΗΤΟΥ ΨΖΙCΕ ΝΑΙ

ΝΘΕ ΜΠΙΨΑΧΕ ΝΤΑΚΤΑΥΟΨ

ΧΕΜΙΝΑΥ ΕΠΖΟ ΝCΖΙΜΕ ΨΑΕΝΕΖ

I have left Byzantium

I have come to the borders of Palestine

Because I want to see your face,

Archellites, my beloved son.

The waves of the sea

On which I sailed have not given me as much pain

As the words you have spoken:

'I will never see a woman's face.'

3. ΧΕΙΟΥΨΩΨ

5 ΜΠΕ-

ΑΧΙC ΕΠΑΨΗΡΕ ΠΑΜΕΡΙΤ

ΧΙC ΝΕΚΙΒΕ ΝΕΤΑΥCΑΝΟΥΨΚ

CΕΑΖΕΡΑΤΟΥ ΕΡΟΚ

ΕΥΕΠΙΘΥΜΙ ΝΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ

ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗC ΠΑΜΕΡΙΤ

ΑΜΟΥ ΕΒΟΛ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ

ΤΑΑCΠΑΖΕ ΜΜΟΚ

ΤΕΠΑΡΑΨΕ ΧΨΚ ΕΒΟΛ

Tell my beloved son:

'Here are the breasts that fed you,

They are waiting for you,

Wanting¹⁴ to see you,

Archellites my beloved son.

Come out that I may see you

And embrace you

And my joy be complete.'

16 and 17. Archellites (to an unspecified person in the monastery)

ΒΨΚ ΑΧΙC ΕΤCΥΝΚΛΗΤΙΚΗ ΤΑΜΑΑΥ

ΧΕΛΙCΜΙΝΕ ΝΟΥΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ ΜΕ ΠΝΟΥΤΕ

ΝΤΠΕ

ΑΝΟΚ ΜΙΝΨΠΑΡΑΒΑ ΜΜΟC

ΝΑΝΟΥC ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΠΟΥΖΟ

Go, tell Synklêtikê my mother:

'I have made a covenant with the God of heaven

I am unable to violate it.

It good that I will see your face

14 Pronoun switching: here 'they' but in double quatrain 18 'she'

ΖΝΤΜΝΤΕΡΟ ΝΕΠΗΥΕ
ΤΑΤΙΛΟΓΟΣ ΖΑΝΕΝΤΑΙΑΑΥ

In the kingdom of heaven
And give an account of what I have done.'

ΒΩΚ ΕΝΓΨΑΧΕ ΜΕ ΤΑΜΑΑΥ
ΧΕΤΩΟΥΝ ΤΕΒΩΚ ΕΤΟΥΠΑΤΡΙΣ
ΜΟΝ ΛΙΤΙΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΝΤΠΕ
ΝΝΙΝΑΥ ΕΠΖΟ ΝΣΖΙΜΕ ΨΑΕΝΕΖ
ΜΙΗΨΠΑΡΑΒΑ ΤΙΔΙΑΘΗΚΗ
ΤΑΙ ΝΤΑΙΣΜΗΝΤΣ ΜΕ ΠΝΟΥΤΕ
ΜΗΠΟ ΝΚΩΩΝΤ ΕΡΟΙ
ΝΚΝΟΧΤ ΣΑΒΟΛ ΕΜΟΦ

Go and speak with my mother:
'Arise and go home,
For I have made a promise to God
That I will never see the face of a woman
I am not able to violate the covenant,
This one that I have made with God,
Lest He be angry with me
And cast me from Him.'

6 -CMHTC

18 Synklêtikê

ΒΩΚ ΝΕΚΨΑΧΕ ΜΕ ΠΑΨΗΡΕ
ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΕΪΜΕ ΜΟΦ
ΧΕΛΝΟΚΠΕ ΤΣΥΝΚΛΗΤΙΚΗ ΤΕΚΜΑΑΥ
ΕΤΑΙΕΙ ΕΜΠΙΜΑ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ
ΕΙΣ ΝΕΚΙΒΕ ΝΑΙ ΕΤΑΚΧΙ ΜΜΟΟΥ
ΤΚΑΛΑΖΥ ΕΤΑΣΤΩΟΥΝ ΖΑΡΟΚ
ΣΕΑΖΕΡΑΤΣ ΕΠΒΟΛ ΕΠΙΡΟ
ΕΣΟΥΨΩ ΕΨΑΧΕ ΝΕΜΑΚ

Go and speak with my son,
Archellites, whom I love:
'It is I, Synklêtikê your mother,
Who have come to this place to see you.
Here are the breasts that you took,
The womb that carried you,
She is waiting outside at the gate,
Wishing to speak with you.'

19. Archellites

ΛΙΤΑΡΚΟ Ω ΤΑΜΑΑΥ
ΕΠΡΑΝ ΕΠΩ̄C̄ ΕΝΕΒΟΜ
ΕΨΩΠΕ ΨΑΡΤΙΖΙΣΕ ΝΑΙ
ΤΑΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΠΟΥΖΟ
ΛΙΤΙΛΟΓΟΣ ΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΝΤΠΕ
ΧΕΜΙΝΑΥ ΕΠΖΟ ΕΝΣΖΙΜΕ ΨΑΕΝΕΖ
ΜΙΗΨΠΑΡΑΒΑ ΜΜΟΣ
ΤΕΠΑΝΟΥΤΕ ΝΟΧΤ ΕΒΟΛ

I beg you my mother,
By the name of the Lord of Hosts,
Not to distress me
To come out and see your face.
I have promised the God of heaven
That I will never see the face of a woman.
I will not violate it
That my God cast me away.

20. Synklêtikê

ΑΙΤΑΡΚΟΚ ΕΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΝΤΠΕ
ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΜΜΕΡΙΤ
ΨΕΝΕΖΤΗΚ ΖΑΡΟΙ
ΑΜΟΥ ΕΒΟΛ ΝΑΙ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ
ΑΡΙΠΜΕΥΕ Ο ΠΑΩΗΡΕ
ΝΝΕΖΙΣΕ ΝΤΑΨΟΠΟΥ ΝΕΜΑΚ
ΕΚΑΛΗ ΕΧΝΝΑΒΙΧ
ΕΙΤΙ ΕΚΙΒΕ ΕΖΟΥΝ ΕΡΩΚ

I beg you by the God of heaven,
Archellites my beloved son,
Have pity on me.
Come out to me that I may see you.
Remember, my son,
The tribulations I endured with you
You lying in my hands,
I giving my breast to your mouth

5. ω

21-24. Archellites promises to let his mother in but dies before she can see him. This is her lament.

ΣΖΙΜΕ ΝΙΜ ΕΤΑΥΧΠΕΩΗΡΕ
ΣΩΟΥΑΖ ΝΤΕΤΝΡΙΜΕ ΝΕΜΑΙ
ΧΟΥΩΗΡΕ ΝΟΥΩΤ ΑΙΧΠΟΦ
ΑΝΟΚ ΠΕΝΤΑΙΜΠΕΦΜΟΥ ΝΑΦ
†ΟΥΩΨ ΟΥΣΟΠ ΕΨΑΙΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ
ΜΠΑΡΑ ΝΕΧΡΗΜΑ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΜΠΚΟΣΜΟΣ
Π̄Ω̄Σ ΠΕ ΠΑΒΟΗΘΟΣ
ΕΡΕΠΑΡΟΟΥΨ ΝΗΧ ΕΡΟΦ

Every woman who has borne a child,
Gather and weep with me
Because a single child I bore,
I who brought his death to him.
I wish once to see you¹⁶
More than all the wealth of the world.
The Lord is my helper,
And care of me lies with Him.

ΝΕΣΖΙΜΕ ΕΝΤΑΥΧΠΕΩΗΡΕ
ΣΩΟΥΑΖ ΝΤΕΤΝΡΙΜΙ ΝΕΜΑΙ
ΧΕΟΥΩΗΡΕ ΝΟΥΩΤ ΑΙΧΠΟΦ
ΑΝΟΚ ΠΕΝΤΑΙΜΠΕΦΜΟΥ ΝΑΦ
ΑΙΧΟΟΥΚ ΕΛΘΝΝΕΟΣ
ΜΕΝ ΒΕΡΕΤΟΣ ΧΕΚΑΝΟΙ ΕΣΖΑΙ
ΑΚΚΑ ΝΑΙ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΝΣΩΚ
ΑΚΒΩΚ ΑΚΕΡΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ

Women who have borne children,
Gather and weep with me,
For a single child have I borne,
I who brought his death to him,
I sent you to Athens
And Beirut to learn how to write
You left all these things behind you
You went and became a monk.

ΑΙΣΕΚΠΙΝΟΒ ΝΠΕΛΑΓΟΣ
ΧΙΝΕΤΠΟΛΙΣ ΖΡΩΜΗ ΑΙΕΙ ΨΑΡΟΚ
ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΝΟΥΩΤ
ΠΟΥΟΕΙΝ ΕΦΖΙΝΑΒΑΛ
ΑΝΟΚ ΑΙΝΝΑΙ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΕΧΩΙ

I have crossed the great sea
From the city of Rome I have come to you,
Archellites, my only son,
The light in my eyes.
I have brought all this on myself,

Ω ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ

ΑΖΡΟΙ ΑΝΟΚ [..5 syllables ?..]¹⁵

ΑΙΝΠΕΚΜΟΥ ΝΑΚ

My son Archellites.

What is with me, [Synklêtikê],

I have brought your death to you.

ΒΙΑΤΚ ΕΖΡΑΙ ΤΕΚΝΑΥ ΕΠΑΖΟ

ΑΡΧΕΛΛΙΤΗΣ ΠΑΩΗΡΕ ΜΜΕΡΙΤ

ΑΝΟΚΠΕ ΤΣΥΝΚΛΗΤΙΚΗ ΤΕΚΜΑΑΥ

Ν̄ΤΑΙΕΙ ΕΠΙΜΑ ΤΑΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ

Lift up your eyes to see my face,

Archellites my beloved son.

It is I Synklêtikê your mother.

I have come here to see you.

15 Perhaps ΤΣΥΝΚΛΗΤΙΚΗ ?

16 The pronoun switching ('to him' to 'you') indicates that she is talking about and to her son, a sign perhaps of mental anguish. The grammatical construction, as it stands, is strange: **†ΟΥΩΩ ΟΥΣΟΠ ΕΩΑΙΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ** 'I wish once I see you'. I am unable to find any example of a parallel construction in Crum 500a, unless perhaps it is intended as a variant of the **†ΑΡΚΟ** construction mentioned in note 8. I wonder if the text might be emended to **†ΟΥΩΩ ΟΥΣΟΠ ΕΩΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΚ** 'I wish once to be able to see you.'