

Vincent W. J. van Gerven Oei

CORRIGENDA TO A ‘DANCE FOR A PRINCESS’

IN MY *EDITIO PRINCEPS* OF THE LEGENDS ON a painting in room 5 of the Southwest Annex of the Monastery on Kom H in Dongola (DBMNT 1364),¹ I translated the verbal root ἀραγ/ἀρακ as ‘to bear, to be pregnant.’ This now appears to me to be an error. A far more natural rendering of several phrases could be achieved by translating ἀραγ as ‘to dance’, cf. the Nobiin ἀραγ, ‘to dance’,² with the concomitant nominal formation ἀραγ-ε, ‘dance’. If my suggestion is accepted, the following legends should be amended:

B.

ΚΟΚΝΑ ΑΡΑΓΕΛ

The dance of purification.

G.

† ΑΡΑΚΕ ΜΑΡΙΑ

ΚΑ· ἈΡΑΓ[Α]

ΤΡΕ

Dance! Dance for Mary!

In **G**, ἀρακε in line 1 and τρε in line 3 are thus interpreted as 2nd/3rd singular imperatives in -ε, while in line 3 my earlier, erroneous translation of

¹ V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, ‘A dance for a princess: The legends on a painting in room 5 of the Southwest Annex of the Monastery on Kom H in Dongola’, *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 47 (2017), pp. 117–135.

² M. M. KHALIL, *Wörterbuch der nubischen Sprache (Fadidja/Mahas-Dialekt)*, Warsaw 1996, p. 21.

the verb τῑ as a causative can now be corrected to a proper applicative ‘to dance for’.³

Further, in the phrase αḡκκα [ε]λῑμα | ḡ[αḡ]ḡ in lines 1–2 of I, I initially interpreted αḡκκα as deriving from ḡḡḡ ‘seat’ followed by the accusative -κα. Developing insight into Old Nubian assimilation suggests that this is unlikely.⁴ A more fitting noun, at least from a phonological perspective, would be ḡḡḡ ‘mouth’.⁵ The precise interpretation of the phrase αḡκκα [ε]λῑμα ‘She takes/finds the mouth’ remains nevertheless unclear.

Overall, despite these various corrections, the general interpretation of the painting as connected to the birth of a royal heir is not affected. However, we can securely attribute a name to the type of dance that is depicted, namely a ‘dance of purification’.

Vincent W. J. van Gerven Oei

Independent scholar

Tirana

ALBANIA

e-mail: vincent@vangervenoiei.com

³ See V. W. J. VAN GERVEN OEI, *A Reference Grammar of Old Nubian* [= *Orientalia Lovanien-sia analecta* 299], Leuven 2021, § 7.2.3.1.

⁴ See *ibidem*, § 19.6.2.1.1.

⁵ G. M. BROWNE, *Old Nubian Dictionary* [= *Corpus scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 556, *Subsidia* 90], Leuven 1996, p. 4.