

## Problem 4. Coptic (20 marks)

Coptic is the ancestral language of the Copts and the last descendant of Ancient Egyptian. It was used as a spoken language until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but now is only used as the liturgical (religious) language of the Coptic Orthodox Church. However, the earliest Coptic writings date to before Christianisation.

Below are some phrases in Coptic along with their English translations. Note that **ē** and **ō** are vowels. **š** = *sh* in *ship*, **c** = *ch* in *chip*.



<b>hentbnooue nte petneiōt</b>	<i>some beasts of your father</i>
<b>pmētoua nanaš</b>	<i>the eleven oaths</i>
<b>pma nneuhiome</b>	<i>the place of their women</i>
<b>tape noutbnē</b>	<i>the head of a beast</i>
<b>hentme nte oueiōt</b>	<i>some villages of a father</i>
<b>paftoou nson</b>	<i>my four brothers</i>
<b>nesanauš</b>	<i>her oaths</i>
<b>petnoeik snau</b>	<i>your two loaves of bread</i>
<b>tmaau mpeftbnē snau</b>	<i>the mother of his two beasts</i>
<b>ouhome nte teshime nmentme</b>	<i>a cup of the woman of our villages</i>
<b>napēue ntasōne</b>	<i>the heads of my sister</i>
<b>thafleele mpefson snau</b>	<i>the lizard of his two brothers</i>
<b>ouhōb nte tesmaau</b>	<i>a thing of her mother</i>
<b>ouoeik nte premao</b>	<i>a loaf of bread of the rich man</i>
<b>netbnooue nttie nshime</b>	<i>the beasts of the five women</i>
<b>nehbēue nouhafleele nte praše</b>	<i>the things of a joyful lizard</i>

**Q 4.1** Translate into English:

1. **peftoou mma**
2. **praše mpeutbnē**
3. **phōb nteshome**
4. **henanauš nte tamētoua nsōne**

**Q 4.2** Translate into Coptic:

5. *the oath of some things of your thing*
6. *the villages of his five mothers*
7. *the cup of a sister of my two lizards*
8. *some women of their joyful place*

**Q 4.3** Explain your solution.

**Problem 4. Coptic Answers**

4.1	1. <i>the four places</i>	3. <i>the thing of her cup</i>
	2. <i>the joy of their beast</i>	4. <i>some oaths of my eleven sisters</i>
4.2	5. <b>panaš n+henhbēue nte + petnhōb [3]</b>	7. <b>thome n+ousōne nte + tahafleele snau [3]</b>
	6. <b>netme n+teftie + mmaau [3]</b>	8. <b>henhiome nte + peuma m+praše [3]</b>

**Q 4.1** Max 8. 2p if correct; 1p with one mistake (e.g. wrong number / possessor, misattributed adjective, etc).

**Q 4.2** Max 12. 1p per region separated by +. If two correct sections are misordered, award 1/2p.

**Q 4.3** Max 27. 14p for nominal morphology, 7p for possessive constructions, and 6p for numeral constructions.

## Problem 4. Coptic Explanations

### 1. Possession:

- Possessed **nte** Possessor if Possessed is indefinite
- Possessed **n**—Possessor if Possessed is definite

### 2. Numerals:

- 2 Xs = X **snau**;
- $k$  Xs =  $k$  **n**—X for  $k = \{4; 5; 11\}$ ;
- All nouns are treated as singular when they appear with a numeral.

### 3. Nominal morphology:

- Plurals are irregular, every noun has a gender (masc / fem) that is usually unpredictable;
- Indefinite: singular = **ou-**, plural = **hen-**;
- Definite: masc.sg. = **p-**, fem.sg. = **t-**, plural = **n-**;
- Possession: *my* = **-a-**, *his* = **-ef-**, *her* = **-es-**, *our* = **-en-**, *your* = **-etn-**, *their* = **-eu-**;
- Insert **-e-** between definite prefix and root if the root begins with a consonant cluster.

### 4. **n** > **m** before labials (**p**, **m**, also **b**).

#### References and further reading:

- Lambdin, T.O. (1983). *An Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*. Macon: Mercer University Press. Reintges.
- Hanns, C. (2004). *Coptic Egyptian (Sahidic Dialect): a Learner's Grammar*. Cologne: Rüdiger Köppe.