

Introduction¹

I present here a previously unpublished papyrus housed in the Special Collections Library of Duke University. It was acquired by the Perkins Library at Duke University in 1987 by gift from William H. Willis. I shall use the siglum **U** to refer to P.Duk.inv. 797². **U** contains I Kingdoms 14:24-50 in Sahidic Coptic and constitutes an important addition to the manuscript tradition of Sahidic I Kingdoms³. Apart from **U**, the earliest extant manuscript of Sahidic I Kingdoms is **I**, which belongs to the fifth century and contains fragments of five verses (3:15; 12:4, 5, 10, 11); **F** belongs to the fourth or fifth century and contains only seven verses (29:3-9); manuscripts from the sixth and seventh centuries provide only slightly larger fragments of text⁴. Thus, **U** provides not only an early, possibly the earliest, witness (IV/V [?]), but also the largest sample of the early witnesses (portions of 27 verses) to Sahidic I Kingdoms. In addition, **U** contains I Kingdoms 14:32-49 for which **M** (892/893) is the only other textual witness⁵. Thus, **U** provides important new evidence for establishing the textual tradition of Sahidic I Kingdoms.

Description

U is a fragment of a single papyrus leaf that measures 28.5 x 9.7 cm and contains one column of text per side. At its widest section, **U** pre-

¹ Papyrological citations follow J. OATES et al., *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, <<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html>>, April, 2004. I am grateful to Melvin Peters, Joshua Sosin, and Lucas Van Rompay for constructive comments on various drafts of this paper.

² **U** is catalogued as **sa 77** in K. SCHÜSSLER, *Das sahidische Alte und Neue Testament*, Wiesbaden, 1995, vol. I, inst. 3, p. 75 (= SCHÜSSLER, *Das sahidische*).

³ When referencing the manuscripts of Sahidic I Kingdoms, I follow the sigla of J. DRESCHER, *The Coptic (Sahidic) Version of Kingdoms I, II (Samuel I, II)*, vol. I, Louvain, 1970, p. ix-xiii (= DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*). There is no Coptic manuscript tradition other than Sahidic for I Kingdoms (DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. xiv); however, there is an undeciphered Fayyûmic text of I Kingdoms housed in the Bodleian Library (*P.Bal.* vol. I, p. 274).

⁴ **D** (VI [?]); **J** (VI [?]); **K** (VI/VII); **S** (early VII [?]); with the exception of **E** (VII), which contains I Kingdoms 2:24-30; 3:6-9; 6:14-21; 14:3, 5, 7, 10, 11; 15:13, 15, 17, 19, 20.

⁵ **K** (VI/VII) begins at the end of I Kingdoms 14:49 where only traces of ink can be read for **U**.

serves ca. 22-23 characters per line, and an additional 13-14 characters can be restored per line on the basis of other textual witnesses. The original width of the text, then, was ca. 35-37 characters or ca. 12.3 cm plus the width of the margins. Assuming that both margins were ca. 1.2 cm, the original width of the papyrus would have measured ca. 14.7 cm. The recto carries 49 lines, and the text continues without a break onto the verso, which carries 51 lines. Thus, the papyrus is preserved in its approximate original height, though the upper and lower margins originally may have been larger⁶. The continuity of the text from recto to verso indicates that **U** is probably a page from an early codex, which originally measured ca. 29.5 x 14.7 cm⁷. In addition to the physically missing portions of the papyrus, some sections of the text near the edges of the papyrus are too mutilated to read. On the recto, the last 3-12 characters on the right side of lines 1-8, 15-20, 28, 30, 31, 37-39, and 43-46 are badly abraded. On the left side of the recto, the first 2-4 characters of lines 22, 28-36, and portions of 38-42 are similarly damaged. On the left side of the verso, the first one to two characters of lines 1-4, 6-12 and the first 5+ characters of lines 14 and 15 are damaged. The text on the right side of the verso is also badly abraded for 1-5 characters on lines 6, 7, 9-12, 17-24, 27, 28, 37.

U is written in dark brown ink on a medium to medium-light papyrus in a consistent and regular hand. The script, however, is relatively small and compact for the scribe managed to fit a vast 49/51 lines of text on 26.9 cm of papyrus⁸. The hand of **U** is angular and square, with 3-stroke **ⲙ**, angular-square **Ⲏ**, round **Ⲑ** and **ⲑ**, tall **ⲣ** and **ⲕ**, and round **Ⲓ**⁹. The text preserves neither paragraphoi nor colophons, and punctuation is limited, with raised points occurring only in r6, r7, and r20. The use of the supralinear stroke in **U** often differs from that in **M**¹⁰. Four times **U** omits a supralinear stroke that occurs in **M**¹¹, and fourteen times it adds

⁶ The recto preserves a lower margin of 1.0 cm and the verso preserves an upper margin of 0.6 cm; thus, not more than one cm should be added to the height of the papyrus.

⁷ I cannot calculate with any certainty the number of pages in the codex, because the number of characters per line (25-37) varies so widely.

⁸ The scribe of **M** used 3 full pages front and back for the same material (three times the amount).

⁹ Compare SCHÜSSLER, *Das sahidische*, sa 77.

¹⁰ In **M**, "... the supra-linear stroke is often omitted where one would expect to find it. On the other hand, it appears where it is not always easy to account for it..." (DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. xxviii, cf. xxix).

¹¹ r16 ⲕⲚⲟⲩⲟⲩⲣⲉⲧ **U**: ⲕⲚⲟⲩⲟⲩⲣⲧ **A M**; r20 ⲡⲉⲣⲉⲓⲉⲃⲓⲱ **U**: ⲡⲉⲃⲓⲱ̄ **M**: ⲡⲉⲃⲓⲱ **A**; r22 ⲉⲣⲟⲟϥ **U**: ⲉ̄ⲣⲟⲟϥ **A M**; v9 ⲧⲉⲧ̄ⲛⲛⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ **U**: ⲧⲉⲧ̄ⲛⲛⲁϣⲱⲡⲉ **M**.

one absent from **M**¹². Also, **U** sometimes extends the stroke to cover multiple letters entirely¹³.

Language

U is written in Sahidic Coptic with elements that are known from Lycopolitan¹⁴. Throughout **U** (r20, r32), the near demonstrative is written in the usual Lycopolitan form (πϵϵι-)¹⁵; an additional Lycopolitan form is that of πϵιϵινοβε for Sahidic πϵινοβε (v5)¹⁶. A similar orthography can be seen in a number of other early Sahidic texts, such as *P.Bodm XVI* (sa 7 [IV])¹⁷.

Date

Coptic manuscripts remain difficult to date paleographically¹⁸; nevertheless, a tentative date for **U** may be proposed¹⁹. A single column papyrus could suggest an early date, though late examples occur²⁰. The presence of Lycopolitan orthography could further suggest a fourth to fifth century date²¹. As noted above, the orthography is similar to that of *P.Bodm XVI* (sa 7 [IV]), which also may imply an early date. **U** is linked to the Bodmer papyri not only by orthography but also by paleography, especially to the hands of *P.Bodm III* (IV), *P.Bodm XVIII* (sa 14 [IV]), and *P.Bodm XXI* (sa 18 [IV/V]). In addition to the Bodmer

¹² r9 ρητḳ̄ A U: ρητḳ̄ M; ḿπαναϣ U: ḿπαναϣ A M; r11-12 ḿ / περβερωβ U: ḿπερβερωβ A M; r12 ρḿ U: ρḿ A M; r16 ḿβι U: ḿβι A M; r30 εḿνοβε U: εḿνοβε M; r42 ḿπχοεις U: ḿπχοεις M; r48 ερατḳ̄ U: ερατḳ̄ M; v4 ḿπḿḿḿ U: ḿπḿḿḿ M; ḿτετḿειμε U: ḿτετḿειμε M; v5 ḿπooḳ̄ U: ḿπooḳ̄ M; v9 ḿπḿḿḿ U: ḿπḿḿḿ M; v27 ḿπαβερωβ U: ḿπαβερωβ M; v37 ḿπερḳ̄μοḳ̄ U: ḿπερḳ̄μοḳ̄ M.

¹³ r10 ḿπερḳ̄ωτḿ U: ḿπερḳ̄ωτḿ M; v4, v6, v9, v33 πḿḿḿ U: πḿḿḿ A M.

¹⁴ ϣοḳ̄ορετ (r16) as the qualitative of ϣαḳ̄οḳ̄ is not listed in the dictionaries; nevertheless, for ϣοḳ̄ορετ, see R. KASSER, *Compléments au dictionnaire copte de Crum*, Cairo, 1964, p. 61.

¹⁵ R. KASSER, art. *Dialects*, in *The Coptic Encyclopedia* VIII, 1991, p. 92.

¹⁶ *P.Bal.* vol. I, p. 80.

¹⁷ For a description of the language, see R. KASSER, *Papyrus Bodmer XVI: Exode I-XV*, 21, Geneva, 1961, p. 10-14.

¹⁸ B. LAYTON, *Towards a New Coptic Paleography*, in *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Studies*, Rome, 1985, p. 149-158, esp. 152.

¹⁹ SCHÜSSLER suggests a tentative third century date (SCHÜSSLER, *Das sahidische*, sa 77).

²⁰ Still see *P.Bal.* vol. I, p. 269-278, but also see sa 509, a single column papyrus that LAYTON has dated to 8 Sept. 1005.

²¹ P. NAGEL, art. *Lycopolitan (or Lyco-diospolitan or Subakhmimic)*, in *The Coptic Encyclopedia* VIII, 1991, p. 153-154.

papyri, **U** resembles the hand of a number of other third to fifth century texts²². Among these early texts, the hand of *Canticum Canticorum* of *Hamburger Papyrus Bil. 1* (III/IV), though perhaps slightly more angular, is similar to **U**, with its compact and rectangular block letters²³. In addition, the hand of **sa 47** (III/IV), a fragment of Genesis from a cover of one of the Nag Hammadi codices and so firmly dated, is almost a perfect match of **U**²⁴. Therefore, **U** can tentatively be dated to the fourth or fifth century (IV/V [?]).

Textual Relationship

The use of ‘daughter versions’ of the Septuagint (LXX)²⁵, such as the Coptic, has been of particular utility for textual criticism²⁶. As early as 1945, L. DIEU argued that Sahidic I Kingdoms represents a form of the ‘old Greek text’, which is probably pre-recensional²⁷. Nevertheless, before any further attempts are made to clarify the textual relationship between Sahidic I Kingdoms and the traditions of the LXX, the textual tradition of Sahidic I Kingdoms must first be established²⁸.

Due to the amount of text they preserve, **A** and **M** are the two primary manuscripts for reconstructing the textual history of Sahidic I Kingdoms. **A** and **M** seem to represent the same translation of the LXX, though differences in the manuscripts occur “in nearly every verse.”²⁹

²² **sa 58div** (IV/V), **sa 70** (V), and **sa 515** (IV), *The Crosby-Schøyen Codex* (III/IV), and the fourth century Gospel of John published by H. THOMPSON as *The Gospel of St. John According to the Earliest Coptic Manuscript*, London, 1934.

²³ B.J. DIEBNER and R. KASSER, *Hamburger Papyrus Bil. 1: Die alttestamentlichen Texte des Papyrus Bilinguis 1 der Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg*, Geneva, 1989.

²⁴ *P.NagHamm. C2*. See also R. KASSER, *Fragments du livre biblique de la Genèse cachés dans la reliure d’un codex gnostique*, in *Le Muséon*, 85 (1972), p. 65-89. The few minor differences are: 1) the *epsilon* of **U** can take a more square and angular form, though this is not always the case; 2) the lower portion of the *upsilon* in **sa 47** usually forms a single line, while the *upsilon* in **U** opens into two lines early in the up-stroke.

²⁵ When referencing the LXX, I use A. RAHLFS, *Septuaginta*, Stuttgart, 1935.

²⁶ See S. JELICOE, *The Septuagint and Modern Study*, Oxford, 1968, p. 243-268, esp. 243. For an overview, see M. PETERS, *The Use of Coptic for Textual Criticism of the Septuagint*, in *La Septuaginta en la investigación contemporánea: V Congreso de la IOSCS*, Madrid, 1985, p. 55-66.

²⁷ L. DIEU, *Le texte copte-sahidique des livres de Samuel*, in *Le Muséon* 58 (1945), p. 445-452. DIEU laid the foundation for these conclusions nearly 25 years earlier in his *Les manuscrits grecs des livres de Samuel*, in *Le Muséon*, 34 (1921), p. 17-60, esp. 47-52.

²⁸ See the warning of T. ORLANDI, *Coptic Biblical and Ecclesiastical Literature*, in *The Future of Coptic Studies*, Leiden, 1978, p. 150.

²⁹ DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. xiv-xvii, esp. xiv.

To explain this situation, J.B. PAYNE argued that **A** represents an “Old Coptic” version, which was later revised into a “more Greek type of text” represented in **M**³⁰. Against this, J. DRESCHER argued that **A** and **M** “represent the same standard, official text,” in which both **A** and **M** underwent revision independent of one another³¹. DRESCHER further argued that **A** was more distantly removed from the parent text than **M**³². Thus, he used **M** as the base manuscript for his edition and relegated **A** to a manuscript of secondary importance³³. It is perhaps too early for such firm conclusions, since the data are yet too thin and systematic study of the LXX traditions of I Kingdoms is still anticipated in Göttingen’s Septuagint edition³⁴. Meanwhile, **U** provides previously lacking textual data that for now may shed some new light on the textual tradition of Sahidic I Kingdoms.

Though the texts show no agreement in error, a collation of textual variants for the section in which all three manuscripts are extant (I Kingdoms 14:24-32) suggests some conclusions about the relationship of **A**, **M**, and **U**³⁵. In these verses, **U** agrees with **A** against **M** in only one certain and one uncertain reading³⁶. Further, **U** disagrees with both **A** and **M** in only one uncertain reading³⁷. On the other hand, **U** frequently disagrees with **A**³⁸. Thus, in the vast majority of cases, **U** agrees with **M** against **A**. The close textual similarity of **M** to the

³⁰ J.B. PAYNE, *The Sahidic Coptic Text of 1 Samuel*, in *JBL* 72 (1953), p. 51-62, esp. 52-4. For a more comprehensive study, see J.B. PAYNE, *A Critical and Comparative Study of the Sahidic Coptic Texts of the First Book of Samuel* (unpublished dissertation; Princeton Theological Seminary), 1949.

³¹ DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. xvii-xx, esp. xvii.

³² DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. xx, xxv.

³³ In a monograph written in 1966 but not published until 1996, S. BROCK reached similar conclusions (S. BROCK, *The Recensions of the Septuagint Version of 1 Samuel*, Torino, 1996, 21-23).

³⁴ DRESCHER notes the ‘preliminary nature’ of his argument (DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. v).

³⁵ In the following discussion, only variants that are related to textual transmission are included.

³⁶ r9 ρητ̄ A U: ηρητ̄ M; r14 λρογωψρ ερξω A U (?): ηερξω M.

³⁷ r8 ητερβιχ ε[τε]ρταπρο U (?): ητερβιχ ερογν ετερταπρο A M.

³⁸ r3 δε U M: om. A; r4 τηρ̄ ηερarisτα U M: ηερarisτα A; r5 δε U M: om. A; r7 δε U M: τηρρ A; ηπερρωτ̄ M U: η̄π̄ρειμε A; r11 ρτηρ εβολ U M: ηρηρ A; r13 ηεβῑ M U (?): ρηπειω A; r13 ερωρ U M: ετ̄ταπρο A; r20 ογωημ εβολ ρ̄η̄ ηεειεβιω U: ογωημ εβολ ρ̄η̄ ηειεβῑ M: ηωημ ηεβῑ A; εηε U M: om. A; r22 ηαι U M: om. A; r23 εχ̄ U M: ριχ̄ A; r24 εβολ ρ̄η̄ ηαλλοφγλος η̄περοογ U M: η̄ηαλλοφγλος ρη ημα A; r25 δε U M: τηρρ A; r26-27 ηρηροε ηεσοογ M U: ηρηηεσοογ A; r27 αγω U M: ηη A; r27-28 η / [ε]ε U: ηεε M: om. A.

much earlier **U** suggests that **M** is less far removed from the parent text than **A** is, and thus **M** may represent a superior manuscript tradition³⁹.

An additional conclusion can be drawn from **U** and its relationship to the extant manuscripts. Though **U** predates **M** by approximately four to six centuries, the disagreements between the two manuscripts are surprisingly few. **U** and **M** differ in only seven certain readings and three uncertain readings⁴⁰. This seems to challenge DRESCHER's understanding of the textual transmission of Coptic biblical texts, which he assumed had involved continual revision and correction⁴¹. Though many texts may have undergone revision, **U** and **M** provide one example of a fairly stable transmission of a Coptic biblical text for 400-600 years, suggesting the need to develop a more nuanced account of the textual transmission of Coptic texts.

P.Duk.inv. 797 (U) **28.5 x 9.7 cm** **4/5th Century (?)**
<http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/records/797.html>

Square brackets indicate a physical break in the papyrus. Sub-linear dots indicate that traces of ink are visible but that nothing can be read securely, though a reconstruction can be conjectured based on parallel texts. A dot below a space indicates that nothing can be read on the papyrus and the additional witnesses disagree so that no reconstruction is possible. **Notes** supply a full description of the text and reconstructions. Since lines 38-51 on the verso bear only minor traces of ink, no reconstruction has been attempted there. The verse numbers of I Kingdoms, as found in RALPH's LXX, are listed in the right margin and are marked in the text with asterisks.

³⁹ The other early fragments of Sahidic I Kingdoms also agree with **M** against **A** (DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. xviii).

⁴⁰ r8 ⲛⲧⲉⲣⲃⲓⲭ ⲉⲧⲉⲓⲣⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ **U** (?): ⲛⲧⲉⲣⲃⲓⲭ ⲉ̀ⲑⲟⲩⲛ ⲉⲧⲉⲣⲧⲁⲡⲣⲟ **A M**; 9 ϩⲏⲧⲓ̅ **A U**: ⲛⲑⲏⲧⲓ **M**; r14 ⲁⲣⲟⲩⲱⲱⲣ ⲉⲣⲭⲱ **A U** (?): ⲛⲉⲣⲭⲱ **M**; r35 ⲙⲡⲉⲣⲙⲁⲥⲉ **U**: ⲙⲡⲉⲣⲣⲁⲥⲧⲉ **M**; v8 ⲉⲅⲟⲗ **U**: *om.* **M**; ⲡⲓⲏ[ⲗ **U** (?): *om.* **M**; 29-30 ⲁⲗⲱ] ⲛⲁⲓ ⲉⲣⲉⲟⲩⲁⲑⲟⲩ ⲉⲣⲟⲓ **U**: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲁⲗⲱ ⲛⲉⲓⲕⲟⲟⲩⲉ ⲉⲣⲉⲟⲩⲁⲑⲟⲩ ⲉⲭⲱⲓ **M**; v33 ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲧ **U**: ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲛⲁⲑⲉ ⲉⲅⲟⲗ **M**; v34 ⲛⲁⲑⲉ **U**: *om.* **M**; v35 ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁⲣⲉⲓⲣⲉ **U**: ⲁⲣⲉⲓⲣⲉ **M**. For other possible variants in r14, r27, r35, r37, v29-30, v30, v38-51, see **Notes**.

⁴¹ "The beginnings of the Coptic Version of the Bible, or at least the Old Testament, and its early development are somewhat obscure. Even after a standard text emerges we find that it is not held sacrosanct. Individual copyists, or scriptoria, persist in changing the text by introducing different readings" (DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. I, p. v-vi, cf. xviii-xix, but to the contrary cf. xxv).

Recto

- 1 [αγω σαογλ αq̄ραναω πλαος εq̄x]ω μμοc xε 14:24b
 [q̄czoγop̄t̄ n̄bi ō]εικ φα π̄ναγ
 [n̄prouze xe]x̄axe αγω πλαoc δε
- 4 [τηρq̄ m̄πεq̄τεπ οεικ *πκ]αz δε τηρq̄ νεq̄αριcτα (14:25)
 [*νε . . . ογμα n̄ωη]n̄ δε n̄f̄zμεq̄ n̄εβιω φροοπ m̄π 14:25
 [m̄το εβολ n̄tc]ωψε· *αγω [πλ]αoc αq̄τααq̄ 14:26
 [επμα n̄f̄zμεq̄ n̄]εβιω· νερε πλαoc δε μοροψε εq̄
- 8 [ψαχε εmn λαα]γ κτο n̄τεq̄βix ε[τε]q̄ταπ̄ρο x
 [ε πλαoc αq̄r̄z]οτε z̄ηt̄q̄ m̄παναω m̄pxοειc 14:27
 [*īwnaθan δε m̄πε]q̄cωt̄m̄ xε a πεq̄ειωt̄ ταρκε
 [πλαoc αγω īwna]θan αq̄coγt̄n̄ z̄τηq̄ εβολ m̄
- 12 [πεq̄βερωβ εt̄z̄n] τεq̄βix αq̄coπq̄ z̄m̄ πμογ[λ]z̄
 [νεβιω αq̄κτο n̄τε]q̄βix εzoγn̄ ερωq̄ a νεq̄β[α]λ
 [ναγ αγxωτε *ογα δε εβο]λ z̄m̄ πλαoc αq̄oγωψ[q̄ εq̄]xω 14:28
 [m̄mōc naq̄ xe z̄n̄ oγ]anaω πεκειωt̄ αq̄ταρκε πλ
- 16 [αoc εq̄xω m̄mōc] xε q̄czoγop̄et̄ n̄bi . p̄ωm̄ε
 [εt̄naoγem̄ οεικ] m̄ποoγ πλαoc δε [αq̄]cωψm̄ *αγω 14:29
 [īwnaθan αq̄ειm̄]ε πεxαq̄ xε παειωt̄ αq̄θ̄εm̄κε
 [. αναγ ε]θε n̄ta ναβαλ xω[τε εβολ] xε
- 20 [αιτεπ ογωnm̄ εβολ z̄]m̄ πεειεβιω· *εειε εne n̄ 14:30
 [τα πλαoc βε ογωm̄ z̄n̄ o]γωm̄ m̄ποoγ εβ[ολ] z̄n̄
 [. n̄neyxaxe] n̄a! n̄taq̄ze εροoγ τεnoγ
 [νερε τεπλγn̄ naαψaī] πε εx̄n̄ naλλo[φγ]λοc
- 24 [*αγω αq̄παταcce εβολ z̄n̄ naλλo]φγλοc m̄[πεzooγ] 14:31
 [εt̄m̄maγ z̄m̄ maχmac πλαoc Δ]ε αq̄zic[ε εmate *αγω] 14:32
 [πλαoc αq̄τααq̄ εn̄]ψωλ a πλαoc xi n̄z̄noze
 [n̄ecooγ m̄n̄ z̄ena]zooγ αγω z̄enk̄τηp̄ n̄
- 28 [εze αγωωωt̄ m̄mōo]γ z̄ix̄m̄ πκαz αγψ πλαoc 14:33
 [νεq̄oγωm̄ m̄n̄ νεq̄]c̄n̄oq̄ *αγταme σαογλ
 [Δē εγxω m̄mōc naq̄ xe α] πλαoc εp̄νωε επx̄
 [οειc αq̄oγem̄ αq̄ mn̄ πεq̄]c̄n̄oq̄ αγω πεxε
- 32 [σαογλ ναγ xe an̄i oγnoβ] n̄ωn̄ε επειεμα εβολ 14:34
 [z̄n̄ īθαειm̄ *πεxε σαογ]λ δε ναγ xe βωκ εβολ
 [z̄m̄ πλαoc n̄tet̄n̄xoōc] n̄aγ xε mare πογα πογα
 [m̄mωt̄n̄ εινε]ā m̄πεq̄mace αγω πε
- 36 [q̄csooγ n̄q̄ψaaat̄q̄ z̄i]x̄m̄ πīωne xe n̄net̄n̄
 [εp̄νωε επx̄oειc εt̄p̄et̄]noγem̄ αq̄ m̄n̄ πεq̄c̄n̄oq̄
 [αγω πλαoc τηρq̄ πογα] πογα αq̄εινε m̄πεt̄n̄

- [ΤΟΟΤϩ ΑΥΨΩΩΤ ΜΜΟΟΥ] ΜΠΜΑ ΕΤ[Μ]ΜΑΥ
 40 [*ΑΥΩ ΣΑΟΥΛ ΑΚΩΤ] ΜΠΜΑ ΕΤΜΜΑΥ ΝΟ[Υ]ΘΥΣΙΑ 14:35
 [ΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΜΠΧΟΕΙΣ ΠΑ]Ι ΠΕ ΠΕΘΥΣΙΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ
 [ΝΤΑ ΣΑΟΥΛ ΑΡΧΙΘΑΙ] ΝΚΟΤ̄ ΜΠΧΟΕΙΣ *ΑΥΩ 14:36
 [ΠΕΧΕ ΣΑΟΥΛ ΜΠΛΑΟ̄ ΧΕ ΜΑΡ]ΕΝΒΩΚ Ε̄ΧΝ ΝΑΛΛΟ
 44 [ΦΥΛΟ̄ ΝΤΕΥΩΗ ΝΤΕΝΖΑΡ]ΠΑΣΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΝΖΗΤΟΥ
 [ΨΑ ΠΝΑΥ ΝΖΤΟΟῩ ΝΤΕΝΤ]ΜΨΕΧ̄Π̄ ΟΥΡΩΜΕ
 [ΕΒΟΛ ΝΖΗΤΟΥ ΠΕΧΑ]Υ ΝΑϩ ΧΕ ΠΑΓΑΘΟΝ
 [ΤΗΡϩ ΑΡΙϩ ΝΑΖΡΑΚ ΠΕ]ΧΕ ΠΟΥ[ΗΗΒ] ΧΕ [ΜΑΡΕΝϯ]
 48 [ΜΠΕΝΟΥΟΙ ΕΠΕΙΜ]Α ΕΡΑΤ̄ Μ[ΠΝΟΥΤΕ ΝΤΝΧΝΟΥϩ]
 [*ΑΥΩ ΣΑΟΥΛ] ΑϩΧ̄ΝΕ ΠΝΟ[ΥΤΕ ΧΕ ΕΝΕ] 14:37

Apparatus

3 ΔΕ Μ: *om.* Α. 4 ΤΗΡ̄ ΝΕΦΑΡΙΣΤΑ Μ: ΝΕΦΑΡΙΣΤΑ Α. 5 ΔΕ Μ: *om.* Α. 7 ΔΕ Μ: ΤΗΡϩ Α. 8 ΝΤΕΥΩΙΧ Ε̄ΖΟΥΝ Α Μ. 9 ΖΗΤ̄ Α: ΝΖΗΤϩ Μ. 10 ΜΠΕΡΩΩΤ̄ Μ: ΜΠ̄ΓΕΙΜΕ Α. 11 ΖΤΗϩ ΕΒΟΛ Μ: ΝΖΤΗϩ Α. 13 ΝΕΒΙΩ Μ: ΖΜΠΕΒΙΩ Α; ΕΡΩϩ Μ: ΕΤ̄ΤΑΠΡΟ Α. 14 ΑϩΟΥΩϩ ΕϩΧΩ Α: ΝΕϩΧΩ Μ. 16 ϩ̄ΖΟΥΟΡΤ Α Μ. 20 ΟΥΩΗΜ ΕΒΟΛ Ζ̄Μ ΠΙΕΒΙΩ Μ: ΠΙΩΗΜ ΝΕΒΙΩ Α; ΕΙΕ Α Μ; ΕΝΕ Μ: *om.* Α. 21 ΒΕ Μ: *om.* Α. 22 ΝΑΙ Μ: *om.* Α. 23 Μ: ΖΙΧ̄Ν Α. 24 ΕΒΟΛ Ζ̄Ν ΝΑΛΛΟΦΥΛΟΣ ΜΠΕΖΟΥ Μ: ΝΝΑΛΛΟΦΥΛΟΣ ΖΜ ΠΜΑ Α. 25 ΔΕ Μ: ΤΗΡϩ Α. 26 Μ: ΠΛΑΟΣ ΤΗΡϩ Α. 26-27 ΝΖΝΟΖΕ ΝΕΣΟΟΥ Μ: ΝΖ̄ΝΕΣΟΟΥ Α. 27 ΑΥΩ Μ: ΜΝ Α; Ζ̄ΝΚΤΗΡ Α Μ. 27-28 ΝΕΖΕ Μ: *om.* Α. 32 ΕΠΕΙΜΑ Μ. 35 ΜΠΕΡΑΣΤΕ Μ. 44 ΝΤΕΝΖΑΡΠΑΖΕ Μ.

Translation⁴²

1 (14:24b) [and Saul adjured the people and sa]id, [“Accursed is the one (*or* man) who eats] food before the evening hour, [and thus I may reap vengeance on my ene]mies.” And so [none] of the people **4** [tasted food, but] all (the people of) the land were eating. (14:25) [And a grov]e of beehives of honey was in [front of the fi]eld. (14:26) And the people went to [the place of the beehives of h]oney; and the people came, **8** [and they spoke, but no] one put his hand to his mouth, [because the

⁴² An English translation is already available in J. DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. II, Louvain, 1970. Nevertheless, I have opted to include here my own translation. In this translation, I have anglicized all proper names. Further, I have employed the English plural when referring to the singular collective noun ΛΑΟΣ. Bold numbers are used to indicate the line number of U. Parentheses are used to indicate: 1) words not found in the Coptic but necessary for an English translation; 2) a more literal reading or explanation; 3) the corresponding section in the LXX. Square brackets indicate a physical break in the papyrus.

people fea]red the curse of the Lord. (14:27) [But Jonathan had not] heard that his father adjured [the people, and Jona]than stretched out the tip **12** [of his staff that was in] his hand; he dipped it in the honeycomb, [and he brought hi]s hand back to him, and his eyes [saw and penetrated. (14:28) And one from a]mong the people responded and said [to him, “In an] oath, your father adjured the **16** [people and said,] ‘Accursed is the man [who eats any food] today’.” And the people became faint. (14:29) And [Jonathan understo]od; he said, “My father has afflicted [the land. Look at the way] that my eyes penetrated, because **20** [I tasted a little o]f this honey. (14:30) [If the people had freely] eaten [the booty of their enemies today], (namely) these things which they just fell upon, [the blow would have been multiplied] against the foreigners.” **24** (14:31) [And (the people) smote some of the forei]gners that day [in Michmash. And the people] became very faint. (14:32) [And the people went to] the booty. And the people took flocks [of sheep with both ox]en and calves of **28** [oxen, and they slaughtered them] on the ground, and the people [were eating (the flesh) with its bl]ood. (14:33) Saul was informed [and was told that] the people had sinned against the [Lord (and that) they had eaten flesh with its] blood. And Saul said **32** [to them, “Bring a great] stone to this place [from Getthaim.” (14:34) Then, Saul sai]d to them, “Go through[out the people and say] to them, ‘Let each of you, one by one, [bring to this pla]ce his young animal and **36** [his sheep and slaughter it o]n this stone, because you [have sinned against the Lord by] eating flesh with its blood’.” [And all of the people, one] by one, brought what was [in their hand, and they slaughtered them] on that place. **40** (14:35) [And Saul built] on that place an alt[ar of the Lord, thi]s was the al[tar that Saul] began to build for the Lord. (14:36) [And Saul said to the people, “Let us] go against the foreign[ers **44** by night and se]ize from them [until the morning hour and not] leave a man [among them. And they sa]id to him, “Whatever is good, do it [in your eyes.” And the] priest said, “[Let us **48** hasten to this place] of [God so that to ask him.” (14:37) And Saul asked] Go[d, “...

Notes

- 2 The lacuna could accommodate either $\pi\rho\omega\mu\epsilon\ \epsilon\tau\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\mu$ (A) or $\pi\epsilon\tau\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon\gamma\epsilon\mu$ (M).
- 3 The lacuna could accommodate either $\epsilon\iota\chi\iota\kappa\upsilon\alpha\ \eta\eta\lambda\chi\alpha\chi\epsilon$ (A) or $\epsilon\iota\epsilon\chi\iota\kappa\upsilon\alpha\ \eta\eta\lambda\chi\alpha\chi\epsilon$ (M). Further, only the faintest traces of $\lambda\epsilon$ remain, and thus it is not certain that U agrees with M against A, which omits.

- 5 The lacuna could accommodate either **ΝΕΟΥΝ** (A) or **ΝΕΡΕ** (M).
- 6 The end of the line could accommodate either **ΕΖΟΥΝ** (A) or **ΕΖΡΑΙ** (M).
- 8 Though it conforms to available space, the reading **Ε[ΤΕ]ΥΤΑΠΡΟ** with the omission of **ΕΖΟΥΝ** is very uncertain.
- 10 In **U**, Jonathan is always written with trema on the *iota*: **ἸΩΝΑΘΑΝ**. This difference with **M** will not, henceforth, be noted.
- 13 Spacing suggests **ΝΕΒΙΩ** (M) against **ΖΜΠΕΒΙΩ** (A).
- 14 The reconstruction renders the line too long by as many as 5-6 characters.
- 15 The final **ΑΥΤΑΡΚΕ** of the line is completely illegible.
- 16 The lacuna could accommodate either **ΠΡΩΜΕ** (A) or **ΟΥΡΩΜΕ** (M).
- 19 The lacuna at the beginning of the line could accommodate either **ΠΛΑΟΣ** (A) or **ΠΚΑΖ** (M).
- 19 The text after **Χ** is highly uncertain.
- 20 Spacing and the \bar{m} in **Ζ \bar{m}** suggest **ΟΥΩΗΜ ΕΒΟΛ Ζ \bar{m} ΠΙΕΒΙΩ** (M) against **ΠΙΩΗΜ ΝΕΒΙΩ** (A).
- 21 Only spacing suggests the inclusion of **ΒΕ**, and thus it cannot be certain that **U** follows **M** against **A**, which omits.
- 22 The lacuna could accommodate either **ΝΩΟΛΕΣ** (A) or **ΝΕΩΩΛ** (M). Further, **ΝΑΙ** after the lacuna is very uncertain.
- 24 Though most of the text is absent, **U** seems to agree with **M** since the initial \bar{m} of **ΜΠΕΖΟΥ** is extant.
- 25 At the end of the line after the lacuna, there is ink for ca. two letters, which cannot be read.
- 26 Spacing suggests **M**, but **ΠΛΑΟΣ ΤΗΡΑ** (A) cannot be ruled out.
- 27 The line as restored is noticeably short ca. 6 characters and thus adds more difficulty to an already uncertain section of text.
- 27-28 **Ν** is clearly legible at the end of the line and seems to agree with **ΝΕΖΕ** (M) against **A**, which omits.
- 28 After **ΑΥΩΩΩΤ**, **A** is no longer extant. Thus, reconstructions are based solely on **M** and so are more provisional.
- 31 After **ΠΕΧΕ**, there is a segment of text measuring ca. 4-5 characters that does not have any trace of ink though the papyrus has room for the entire name **ΣΑΟΥΛ**.
- 35 DRESCHER notes that **ΕΙΝΕ ΕΠΕΡΜΑ ΜΠΕΡΑΩΤΕ** (M) is corrupt and suggests emending to **ΕΙΝΕ ΕΠΕΙΜΑ ΜΠΕΡΜΑΣΕ**, following the LXX: *προσαγαγεῖν ἐνταῦθα ἕκαστος τὸν μόσχον αὐτοῦ* (DRESCHER, *Coptic (Sahidic) Version*, vol. II, p. 31 n. 1). **U** now partially confirms DRESCHER's conjecture with **ΜΠΕΡΜΑΣΕ** having replaced **ΜΠΕΡΑΩΤΕ** (M). Perhaps, the lacuna in **U** should also be restored as **ΕΠΕΙΜΑ** against **ΕΠΕΡΜΑ** (M), following DRESCHER's conjecture.
- 37 The line as restored is noticeably long.
- 39-40 The mutilated nature of the text at this point makes all reconstructions conjectural at best.
- 45 This line is almost completely illegible except for **ΡΩΜΕ** and a few other individual letters.
- 48 Though one would expect the alternative form **ΠΕΕΙ** (**ΠΕΙΕΙ**) for the demonstrative pronoun in **U**, I have restored the lacuna as **ΕΠΕΙΜΑ** (similarly in r35, v2, v21, v32, and v35).
- 49 Ink for ca. 4-5 letters exists to the left of **ΠΝΟ**.

40	[. . .] []
	χ []
	̄ν νε . χ []
	βε . . . ω . . . ̄μ []
44	πμλ . . ψ []
	. . ρε ̄νφ []
	αγω αφ []
 ογ []
48	[.] εε []
	[.] . ε π []
50	[.] . ε []
	[.] . μπ []

Apparatus

5 πεινοβε M. 8 εβολ U: *om.* M; πη[λ U: *om.* M. 17 αφί M. 29 ναφ M. 29-30
 αγω] ναί εφεογζρογ εροί U: ναί αγω νεικοογε εφεογζρογ εχωί M. 30
 μπουγ̄ ̄νζρογ̄ M. 33 νογωτ ναζε εβολ M. 34 ναζε U: *om.* M. 35 αφειρε M.

Translation

1 [... “Am I to g]o against the fo[reigners and will you give them] into the hands of Israel?” [But the Lord did not answer him on that] day. (14:38) And Saul said [to them, “Bring to this place all] **4** the companies of Israel and know a[nd see] by whom this sin has occurred tod[ay]. (14:39) For (as) the Lord is living, he who] saved Israel, if he shows us [about Jonathan] my son, he will surely die.” [And no one] **8** from all the people of Israel spoke. (14:40) [And Saul said to all the men] of Israel, “You, yourselves, will [be in servitude], and I, myself, and also Jonathan, my [son, will be] in servitude.” And the people said [to Saul, “What is good in your eyes, do it.”] **12** (14:41) And Saul said, [“Lord, God of Israel,] why did you not speak today [to your servant? Is] the sin mine or Jonathan my son’s? [Lord, God] of Israel give a sign to us and if [you say thus, this is the way] **16** that it will be. Give a sign, Lord, [to your people, Israel.” And] the lot came upon Jonath[an and Saul; the people we]nt free. (14:42) Saul said, “Cast [a lot between me] and Jonathan, my [son, and the one] **20** upon whom the Lord will bring the lot, [he will die]. The people said to Saul, [“This thing should not be.”] But Saul com[pelled the people (and) they cast the lot] between him a[nd Jonathan], **24** his son. And the lot ca[me upon Jonathan. (14:43) And Saul said] to Jona[than, “Tell me what it is that you have done.”]

And Jonathan to[ld and said, “[I] dipped the tip of my staff (into) [a little honey, and I tasted] **28** it, and behold I will [die because of this.]” (14:44) And Saul said, “These are [the things that God will do and] these he may add to me [that surely you will die today.]” (14:45) And the people said to [Saul,] **32** “Will the one who [wrought this great salvation in] Israel die today? (As) the Lord is living, surely [it will not happen that a single hair on] his head will fall [to the ground, because it is the people of] God who did [this great sin.” And the people] **36** prayed to God [concerning Jonathan on that day,] and he did not die. (14:46) [And Saul went against the foreign]ers ...

Notes

- 8 Significant variants appear in this line. **εβολ** is used similarly elsewhere in the text (see r14, r20, r24, v8). Further, though **πιη**[possesses no supralinear stroke and the LXX lacks the word, the restoration of **πιηλ** seems only likely.
- 29 For **ναc** read **ναq** (**M**).
- 29-30 The significant variants of these lines are readily explained by comparison with the LXX: *καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Σαουλ τάδε ποιῆσαι μοι ὁ θεὸς καὶ τάδε προσεΐη ὅτι θανάτῳ ἀποθανῆ ἡ σήμερον*. **U** retains the formal structure of the LXX by retaining the parallel demonstrative pronouns (*τάδε, ναῖ*), which **M** has lost in translating the second Greek *τάδε* with *νεικοογε*. Nevertheless, the suggested reconstruction omits the indirect object of **ναααγ** and so differs from **M** (*ναῖ*) and the LXX (*μοι*).
- 30 Spacing does not allow for **ἡζοοῖ**, which **M** indicates.
- 33 The reconstruction lacks **ναζε** because the verb appears in line 34. Spacing further necessitates the lack of **εβολ**.
- 38-51 Throughout these lines, the text preserves little ink. A comparison of the diplomatic transcription and **M** suggests that **U** differs from **M** in that lines 40, 41, and 48 would be too short and line 47 would be too long⁴³.
- 43 The length of lines 47 and 48 could possibly be solved with a different break in the lines, but the double *epsilon* in line 48 would then be problematic.
- 49-51 Due to its mutilated nature for these lines, **U** could not be compared with the slight variants between **M** and **K** for I Kingdoms 14:49-50.

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Abstract — In this article, I present the previously unpublished P.Duk.inv. 797, which contains I Kingdoms 14:24-50 in Sahidic. Dated to the fourth or fifth century, this text provides important, early evidence for establishing the textual tradition of Sahidic I Kingdoms.