The Pachomian Monastic Library at the Chester Beatty Library and the Bibliothèque Bodmer

by James M. Robinson

The first Christian monastic order was founded in Upper Egypt by Pachomius early in the Fourth Century. What was left of its library was buried in the Seventh Century, to judge by the date of the latest material produced (ac. 1494, item 6 in the Inventory of Pachomian letters, a small papyrus roll containing an archival copy of Horsiesios' Letter 3 in Sahidic). It was discovered late in 1952 in Upper Egypt near Dhusna, and hence is referred to locally as the Dhusna Papers, though it has been known to scholars up to the present primarily as the Bodmer Papyri. This nomenclature has obscured the fact that much of the material is scattered among some seven other repositories, of which the Chester Beatty Library is the most important. I would like to lay this fascinating story before you by describing first the Pachomian Monastery Library, then the Discovery and Marketing of the Library, then the Acquisition by Sir Chester Beatty and Martin Bodmer, followed by an Inventory of the approximate contents of the Library. To the Endnotes is appended a Postscript describing how the basic facts about the discovery and marketing of the library were established.

1. The Pachomian Monastery Library

Right after the conversion of the Roman Empire Pachomius founded the first monastic order of Christianity. It would be anachronistic to make inferences about its library from medieval monastic libraries. But something can be inferred from the Pachomian Order's own legends and rules.

The First Greek Life of Pachomius 63 gives some information about how books were viewed in the Pachomian Order:

'He [Pachomius] also used to teach the brothers not to give heed to the splendor and the beauty of this world in things like good food, clothing, a cell, or a book outwardly pleasing to the eye.'

The First Greek Life of Pachomius 59 gives some impression of a Pachomian Library:

'No one would do anything in the house without permission from those in charge, not even visit a brother in his cell. In each house, the housemaster or the second keeps all the surplus clothings locked in a cell until the brothers need them to wash and put on again those they are using. The books, which were in an alcove, were also under the care of these two. The brothers have no money, still less anything of gold; some of them died having never known such things. Only those entrusted with a ministry used money; and when they returned to the monastery they kept nothing with themselves for a single day and gave everything to the steward until they might go out again. And all that government is written in detail in the book of the stewards.'

What is here referred to as the book of the stewards is apparently the extant Precepts* where a rather massive literacy program is envisaged and occasional references to books and to the Library occur (Precepts 139, 140, 82, 100, 101):

'Whoever enters the monastery uninstructed shall be taught first what he must observe; and when, so taught, he has consented to it all, they shall give him twenty psalms or two of the Apostle's epistles, or some other part of the Scripture. And if he is illiterate, he shall go at the first, third, and sixth hours to someone who can teach and has been appointed for him. He shall stand before him and learn very studiously with all gratitude. Then the fundamentals of a syllable, the verbs, and nouns shall be written for him, and even if he does not want to, he shall be compelled to read.'

'There shall be no one whatever in the monastery who does not learn to read and does not memorize something of the Scriptures. [One should learn by heart] at least the New Testament and the Psalter.'

'No one shall have in his own possession little tweezers for removing thorns he may have stepped on. Only the housemaster and the second shall have them, and they shall hang in the alcove in which books are placed.'

'No one shall leave his book unfastened when he goes to the synaxis or to the refectory.'
'Every day at evening, the second shall bring the books from the alcove and shut them in their case.'

Official letters of Pachomius in Coptic were translated into Greek and then in 404 C.E. translated by Jerome into Latin. Only the Latin translation has survived, copied down through the centuries for the edification of European monks. The Coptic and Greek letters have not been seen since — until, at the same time, from the same dealer, and (with but one exception) at the same repositories as the Dishna Papers, they suddenly reappeared. The inference seems inescapable that they were part of the same discovery.

As a matter of fact, the site of the discovery near the foot of the Jabal Abû Manâ' was in full view of the headquarters monastery of the Pachomian Order, at the foot of the cliff to which funeral processions moved from the monastery, itself not above the inundation level, to bury their dead on higher ground, according to their records, and apparently to secrete their Library or Archives as well. High up in the Wâdî Shaykh 'Aţî there is an overhang cut by a prehistoric torrent that is everywhere inscribed in scrawling red paint with the graffiti of pious monks.

The holdings of the Chester Beatty Library that come from the jar at the foot of the cliff, and even before that from the little alcove in the Pachomian monastery where the tweezers were kept, give a direct impression of the primitiveness of some of the books that made up the Library.

The eight leaves of ac. 1390 (Inventory item 23) begin with a school-boy’s Greek exercises in solid geometry that rendered the rest of the quire of little financial value, the kind of material a Pachomian monastery might be able to afford. On the empty pages a few chapters of the Gospel of John in Coptic were written in a non-literary, cursive hand, beginning in the middle of a sentence. This may be explainable as the place where the mutilated text being copied had begun. Or perhaps ac. 1390 was one in a series of cheap writing materials, the only one to have survived, onto which the complete Gospel was copied. The preceding (lost) writing surface on which the Gospel was being copied would have ended in the middle of a verse, which would explain why the text that has survived begins there, just where the other happened to break off. Thus ac. 1390 may give some insight into the limitations of the monastic effort to build its collection.

A similar impression of primitiveness may be conveyed by the largely uninscribed ac. 1499 (Inventory item 25) containing a Greek grammar and a Graeco-Latin lexicon for deciphering Pauline epistles. One of the uninscribed quires of this codex has leaves not yet cut apart at the growing edge, like French paperback books used to be. This not only reflects the fact that this codex was never completed, but also documents how unusual its construction had been. For the standard way to make a quire for a papyrus codex was to cut a roll into a stack of sheets and fold the stack down the middle, a procedure that produced no growing edges that needed to be cut apart. The very fact that this codex was not fully inscribed has left this aberration in the manufacturing procedure intact. The codex was apparently produced outside the main tradition of book manufacture, or in any case made use of a technique that did not gain general acceptance.

Another experiment at economy is ac. 2554 (Inventory item 28), a largely uninscribed and unbound folded stack of sheets constructed by pasting face to face two used rolls and cutting them into the sheets of a quire, on whose unbound leaves administrative records had begun to be inscribed, with the result that such a makeshift quire, left still largely uninscribed, would provide writing material that would not have been expensive at all.

It may be no coincidence that much of the material of the highest quality in the collection is older than the Pachomian Order itself, suggesting that it entered the Library as gifts from outside, perhaps contributed by prosperous persons entering the Order. This might be the most obvious way to explain non-Christian texts in a monastic library, such as the Homeric and Menander material. But some such explanation is also needed for such excellent early Greek New Testament texts as P. Bodmer II (P 66, the Gospel of John, Inventory item 3), and P. Bodmer XIV-XV (P 75, the Gospels of Luke and John, Inventory item 8), where one might even think of Athanasius living in hiding with the Order while in exile as the source of such gifts.

The bulk of Christian codices date from the first century of the Pachomian Order’s existence, namely the early Fourth to the early Fifth Century, and often present the competence of a trained scriptorium, though without adornment. But there is no specific indication that they came from a single scriptorium or that such a scriptorium belonged to the Order.

Some texts in the collection, such as some of the archival copies of letters from Pachomian Abbots, again suggest, in the primitiveness of the material employed, that the usual standards of a scriptorium were lacking. Ac. 1486, an archival copy of a Coptic letter from the Pachomian Abbot Theodore (item 4 in the Inventory of Pachomian letters), was written in the Fifth or Sixth Century on a long thin irregular skin, obviously the leg of an animal that could not be used to produce leaves for a codex. Chester Beatty Ms. W. 145 (item 3 in the Inventory of Pachomian letters) makes a similar impression. It is a Fourth Century copy of a letter of Pachomius.

The presence of relatively unskilled products alongside of relatively professional codices may indicate a plurality of places of origin, and perhaps a contrast between what was produced within the Order and what came from outside.
If discipline relaxed and the demand for reading material waned with the passage of time, as the center of Coptic learning shifted downstream to the White Monastery of Shenouda at Sohag, such a Pachomian collection could have become more a geniza than an active library. The identity of increasingly fragmentary items in the collection would be lost from sight, especially in the case of the old non-Coptic material, if one may assume that the Greek House did not retain its original vigor at Fāw Qiblī, once the Order had a monastery near Alexandria where Greek-speaking monks would be more at home. It would have been enough that the remains represented the venerated relics of the beginnings of the Order, worthy to be included along with copies of official letters of the early Abbots (about the only thing they continued to copy), in a jar no doubt intended to rescue for posterity the surviving symbols of continuity with the Order’s legendary past.

This is illustrated in another way by the fate of the excellent early third-century copy of the Gospel of Luke and John (P 75, Inventory item 8) in the Bibliothèque Bodmer (P. Bodmer XIV-XV), from whose cover new and still unpublished fragments of John have recently been recovered: This very valuable old codex was rebound in late antiquity, by pasting fragmentary leaves of the quire together as cartonnage to thicken the leather cover, and by sewing the binding thongs through the inner margin of the quire so near the writing that the codex could not be opened wide enough to be actually read. One is inclined to think that the codex had become a relic, the Library a Museum, or, in view of the copies of official Pachomian letters, an Archive.

Except for the copies of official Pachomian letters, datings as late as the Fifth Century are not strongly represented. For it is usually mentioned by editors in the spectrum of Fourth or Fifth Century. In the course of the Fifth Century the source of supply seems to have been drying up, or new production was being attracted to the White Monastery. But when one turns to the archival copies of letters of Pachomian Abbots, the situation is the reverse. Whereas the earliest material is by the nature of the case no earlier than the Fourth Century, only one text (item 3 in the Inventory of Pachomian letters) has been dated simply to the Fourth Century, and one number (1) to the Fourth or Fifth Century. One (number 5) is dated simply to the Fifth Century, and two (numbers 8 and 9) to the Fifth or Sixth Century. Three (numbers 2, 4 and 7) are dated simply to the Sixth Century, and one (number 6) to the Seventh Century. Thus it is clear that the letters of the Pachomian Abbots continued being copied much later than did the literary texts themselves, and represent the clearest indication of the narrowly limited interest of those responsible for the preservation of the Library or Archive in its latest period and hence presumably for its ultimate burial.

Perhaps these relics were buried for safe keeping in the period of decline following the imposition of Chalcedonian orthodoxy on the traditionally Monophysite order, as the dating of the latest material in the Seventh Century might suggest.

2. The Discovery and Marketing of the Library

The discovery of the Dishna Papers was made by Hasan Muhammad al-Sammān and Muhammad Khālid al-Azzūzī, both of whom come from Abū Manā‘ Bahrī. This hamlet is on the right bank of the Nile in the area of Upper Egypt where it flows from east to west, and hence literally on the north bank. Abū Manā‘ lies some 4 km from the river’s edge, near the foot of the cliff Jabal Abū Manā‘. which is 12 km east of the cliff Jabal al-Tārif where the Nag Hammadi Codices were discovered. It is 5 km northeast and in full view of Fāw ‘Qibli’, ancient Pabau (Greek), Pbow or Pbow (Sahidic), or Phbow (Bohairic), the site of the headquarters of the Pachomian Monastic Order. Put in more modern terms, the site is 5.5 km northwest of Dīshnā, the larger town at the river with a railroad station, which thus played the role of regional center in this discovery corresponding to that of the town of the Nag Hammadi in the case of the Dishna Papers. This whole region, which thus played the role of regional center in this discovery corresponding to that of the town of the Nag Hammadi Codices, much as does Abū Manā‘, itself is 10 km east of Hamrah Dūm, the hamlet that controls the site of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi Codices, much as does Abū Manā‘, itself is 10 km east of Hamrah Dūm, the hamlet that controls the site of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi Codices.

Hasan and Muhammad were digging for sabakh (fertilizer) some 300 meters out from the foot of the cliff Jabal Abū Manā‘ at al-Qurnah (‘the corner’), when Hasan uncovered a large earthen jar containing the books. He broke the jar with his mattock, leaving the sherds where they fell. Some fragmentary parts of the find were burnt on the spot, and others were given away to passersby, who incidentally terrified Hasan with the mythic idea that they were books of monsters. Yet he carried the bulk of the discovery home in his jallābiyyah, the typical peasant ground-length robe.

Muhammad took for his part a wooden plank variously interpreted as a book cover, a mirror, or a catalogue of the library’s contents.

Hasan lived in his wife’s family home, presided over by her father Umār al-‘Abbādī. Her brother, ‘Abd al-‘Āl, trafficked in the books, unsuccessfully at first, since they could not even be bartered for sugar. Some leaves of a large papyrus book were crushed up and used as fuel to light their water pipe; parchment burnt like an oil lamp. (Rural electrification reached the hamlet only in 1980.)

‘Abd al-‘Āl worked in the Dīshnā jewelry shop of the goldsmith Subhī Qustandī Dimyān, to whom he sold a book. Subhī showed it to the Dīshnā priest ‘al-
Qummu's Manqaryus, who was related to the priestly family of al-Qaṣr through whose hands Nag Hammadi material had passed, to inquire if it were equally valuable. 'Al-Qummu's' Manqaryus told him it was worthless, hoping thus to be able to acquire it himself. But Subhi's son Jirjis taught at the same Coptic parochial school at Dishná as did a member of the priestly al-Qaṣr family, Rāghib Andarawus 'al-Qisṣ' 'Abd al-Sayyid, who had sold Nag Hammadi Codex III to the Coptic Museum in Cairo for £250. Jirjis showed his father's book at the Coptic Museum, where it was confiscated and he threatened with jail, until a powerful friend persuaded the Museum to return his book and press no charges. Jirjis sold the book to Zaki Ghāli, an antiquities dealer in Luxor, for a price said to be £400.

'Abd al-Raḥīm Abū al-Ḥājj, 'Umar's nephew, was a village barber going from house to house to ply his trade, as well as a sharecropper working fields belonging to a Dishná goldsmith, Riyād Jirjis Fām. Riyād began dirt poor, the son of a peasant who eked out a living making baskets from reeds taken from the edge of the Nile, but scrounged his way up to the role of the ruthless strong-man of Dishná. When he heard of the discovery, he took another goldsmith with him, Mūsā Fikrī Ash'īyah, and went to the house of 'Abd al-Raḥīm in Abū Manā'. The latter was afraid of the accompanying stranger and refused to deal with them, but on a subsequent visit when Mūsā Fikrī was not present sold Riyād three or four books.

'Al-Qummu's' Manqaryus became involved with Riyād's acquisitions, along with Mūsā Fikrī and another goldsmith, Shafiq Ghubriyāl. They thus created some kind of partnership, the priest providing a semi-educated assessment, ecclesiastical connections, and a haven free of police searches, whereas the goldsmiths no doubt provided the capital and Riyād also the entrepreneurship.

Accompanied by his son Nushr, Riyād returned to Abū Manā' and went directly to the house of 'Umar al-'Abbādā, where he bought out the rest of what the family held. He was able to leave the hamlet with the loot thanks only to the armed escort of 'Umar's sons as far as the paved highway. He went straight to the home of 'Al-Qummu's' Manqaryus, where he counted out to him 'thirty-three books.' Though this figure recurs repeatedly in the telling of the story, it is not clear whether it is meant to include the books Riyād had already acquired, and whether it included material usually distinguished from the 'books,' namely ten small rolls the size of one's finger, three or four large rolls some 25 cm or more high, and a few triangular-shaped leaves some 15 cm high. In spite of such ambiguities, the figure does tend to indicate roughly the extent of the discovery, perhaps some three times that of the thirteen Nag Hammadi Codices.

Muhammad, irritated at having been excluded from the sales and profits, had reported the discovery to the police, who had found concrete evidence with Maṣrī 'Abd al-Maṣīḥ Nūh, the person who acquired the wooden board from Muhammad. He implicated the others. Charges were not brought against the priest, but Riyād and Mūsā Fikrī were charged. And, by a case of mistaken identity, Shafiq Muhārīb was charged instead of Shafiq Ghubriyāl. Also charged were Hasan and the brother of 'Abd al-Āl, as well as Abū al-Wafā Ahmad Ismāʿīl, who had acquired a triangular parchment leaf. By a combination of threats and bribes Riyād prevented them from testifying against him in their effort to exonerate themselves. His defense lawyer, Hilmī Bandārī, argued unsuccessfully before Judge Rabā' Tawfīq that the possession of antiquities was not illegal, that they were ignorant of what they had acquired, and that there was no incriminating evidence. All eight were sentenced to a year in jail. Engaging as their attorney Ahmad 'Ali Allūbā 'Pasha,' a Conservative Party politician from Cairo, Riyād appealed the case at the Court of Appeals in Qina. Six were acquitted, but two were sentenced to six months in jail; Maṣrī's sentence was suspended and only Hasan served time.

During this trying time 'al-Qummu's' Manqaryus was concerned that his house might be searched. For the books were being kept in his home, no doubt on the assumption that a police search of a priest's home was less likely than of a goldsmith's home. The box in which they were kept was hidden at times under the floor, no doubt the dirt floor of the patio, at times behind rafters in the ceiling. But as the pressure mounted, he secreted them in a cupboard built under his divan, and asked his neighbor, Saʿīd Diyarūs Habashū, if he could sun the divan in his patio, where there was more sun than in his own, to free it of fleas. When he recuperated the divan, he found the best book missing. Saʿīd Diyarūs denies having taken it, saying he was unaware of the divan's contents, otherwise he would have taken them all. Riyād traced the book to Fāris, a tailor of Dishnā, who is reported to have paid £30 for it and then to have sold it for £700 to Phocion J. Tano, the distinguished Cypriote antiquities dealer of Cairo who had acquired most of the Nag Hammadi Codices, where Riyād later saw it.

Riyād retrieved the rest of the material from 'Al-Qummu's' Manqaryus, apparently except for a few fragments. For Distinguished Professor Emeritus 'Azīz Suryāl 'Atiyah of the University of Utah has reported that the priest's son 'al-Qummu's' Tānyūs showed him a fragment at his home in the fashionable Cairo suburb Maadi. And Saʿīd Diyarūs has reported that a Spanish priest obtained some material about 1966 from the priest's son 'al-Qummu's' Tānyūs. The parish diary of the Franciscan Church adjoining the Sugar Factory near Nag Hammadi records that a José O'Calleghan Martinus of Barcelona (and the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome) with passport number 95912 came 'to look for papers' on 14-20 xi 64 and for
a second visit beginning 1 ii 65. The widow of 'al-Qummus' Manqaryūs thought there were fragments in the home when I interviewed her on 18 xii 76, but she could not find them.

Riyād was under virtual house arrest. For he was not permitted to go as far as Cairo, but was limited in his movements to Upper Egypt, the region from Luxor to Sohag, for trips up to ten hours, and then only with police permission. So he turned to a lifelong friend, Fathallāh Dā'[d, who had gone on pilgrimage to Jerusalem with him in 1945 (as their almost identical tattoos validate), to take books to Cairo to market.

Though Fathallāh Dā'[d was instructed to report to 'al-Qummus' Manqaryūs, Mūsā Fikrī and Shafīq Ghubriyāl a lower price than he actually received, so that their proportion of the profit would be correspondingly less, he actually told them the truth. Having his own profit thus appreciably reduced, Riyād plotted revenge to recuperate his loss. He hired members of the Abū Bahbūh family to break into Fathallāh Dā'[d's house and kidnap a son to be held for the equivalent ransom. In the dark of night they by mistake took a daughter, Sūsū. Rather than paying the ransom, Fathallāh Dā'[d appealed by telegram to President Nasser. Within a week police sent from Cairo secured the release of Sūsū unharmed. Riyād himself seeks to put a good (or less bad) light on the incident by maintaining that the Abū Bahbūh family was planning to kill Fathallāh Dā'[d for their own reasons, but Riyād had talked them out of that unprofitable venture in favor of a slightly less (?) inhumane and in any case more profitable procedure.

Riyād then made friends with the two police guards posted at his home, plying them with alcohol on Saturday evenings until they were in a drunken stupor in time for him to catch the midnight train to Cairo. There he would take a few books at a time to Tano's home, receiving profits he has reported to be in the thousands of pounds, and return Sunday night in time to get into his home under the cover of darkness before dawn Monday. The death of Riyād's son Wasfi, the main repositories of the materials in Geneva, Dublin and Cologne. The time frame of the discovery (1952) and that of the arrival of the material in Europe (P. Bodmer I, Inventory items 1-2, was published in 1954, and the bulk was acquired in 1955-56), given the trying circumstances, is what one might expect. And the site of the discovery, initially stated by the publications of the Bodmer Papyri either to be unknown or to be variously and vaguely located somewhere between Panopolis (Achmim near Sohag) and Thebes (Luxor), has finally been conceded to agree with our investigations in the most recent of these publications. This identification of the site has subsequently been located also in the Registry of Accessions of the Chester Beatty Library, on a typed slip of paper appended at ac. 1390, apparently written by Tano himself, to judge by the English:

'Small village DESHNA just after NAGHI HAMADI about 2 hours before LUXOR by train. Probably from the Library of a Monastery. Found in a Jar in a cemetery.'

3. The Acquisitions by Sir Chester Beatty and Martin Bodmer

Sir Chester Beatty and Martin Bodmer were the most distinguished bibliophiles in the period just before and after World War II. It is hence understandable that both felt a sense of competitiveness, as well as a sense of camaraderie in the rarified atmosphere of their shared hobby. This relationship was only intensified by the fact that both were long-standing customers of Tano.

Tano kept his collection in part in Cyprus, as he was able to get it out of Egypt. He spent summers in the family home at Nicosia, where he could correspond freely about his business affairs and ship antiquities and receive payment without difficulty. Tano was even from time to time on the continent. Sir Chester had known Tano personally during the winters he had spent in the 'Blue House' at Giza near Cairo, and when Sir Chester came to prefer Nice for his winters the personal contacts continued there. This relationship outside of Egypt was not only convenient from the point of view of customs and payments, but was also diplomatically advantageous, as is reflected in a comment of Beatty in a letter of 21 March 1958 concerning ac. 2554 (Inventory item 28): 'We can

This identification of the Dishna Papers with the Bodmer Papyri has then been variously confirmed. The contents as described by the peasants fit quite well the Bodmer Papyri, including such details as the balled-up condition of P. Bodmer XXII = Mississippi Coptic Codex II (Inventory item 13) stuck in the bottom of a piriform jar. The same dealer Tano, who according to Riyād had funded a clandestine excavation of the site, has also been identified as their source by the main repositories of the materials in Geneva, Dublin and Cologne. The time frame of the discovery (1952) and that of the arrival of the material in Europe (P. Bodmer I, Inventory items 1-2, was published in 1954, and the bulk was acquired in 1955-56), given the trying circumstances, is what one might expect. And the site of the discovery, initially stated by the publications of the Bodmer Papyri either to be unknown or to be variously and vaguely located somewhere between Panopolis (Achmim near Sohag) and Thebes (Luxor), has finally been conceded to agree with our investigations in the most recent of these publications. This identification of the site has subsequently been located also in the Registry of Accessions of the Chester Beatty Library, on a typed slip of paper appended at ac. 1390, apparently written by Tano himself, to judge by the English:

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honestly say it was bought in Europe; we need not say where or when.'

Sir Chester had in fact been acquiring papyri and other antiquities from Tano for many years. The following may illustrate this relationship just prior to the acquisitions with which we are concerned: On 8 September 1947 he paid Tano £24 for four leaves from a codex, care of the Ottoman Bank, Famagusta, Cyprus. On 16 April 1948 Tano sent him four wooden tablets through the good offices of his brother-in-law, William Acker, an officer in the RAF. In 1950 Beatty ordered on approval Coptic materials offered by Tano for £235. That same year Tano wrote Sir Chester from New York not to involve his American-based nephew Frank J. Tano in any transactions, but to remit directly to the Ottoman or Barclay Banks of Famagusta, Cyprus. On 12 September 1951 Tano wrote Beatty’s secretary John Marsh in London:

‘I asked to [sic] a friend in Paris to forward threw [sic] you for Mr. Chester Beatty a collection of Coptic parchments [sic]. Please wen [sic] you receive them, kindly forward the parcel to Mr. Chester Beatty’s address.’

On 25 March 1954 Beatty’s secretary John Wooderson recorded in a memorandum:

‘Mr. A. Chester Beatty asked John Wooderson to see Mr. Tano and find out if he had any Coptic writing or vellum or pages of papyri in Greek; and if so, what they would cost, and if they could be examined in London... Mr. Tano said he had no stock in Cairo or Cyprus at present but that he would write later if he found anything interesting.’

But by this time Martin Bodmer had established a business relationship with Tano that seemed even more efficient. Bodmer had visited Egypt as early as 1950, when he approached Tano to secure manuscripts for his library. Father L. Doutreleau, S.J., one of the editors of the series Sources Chrétienes in Lyon, was at the time stationed in Cairo, and had described Bodmer’s acquisition procedure. For Doutreleau had an arrangement with Bodmer to provide him with an expert assessment of manuscripts Tano showed Doutreleau for this purpose. Sometimes Tano gave him direct contact with a peasant who owned manuscripts, whom Doutreleau knew only as ‘the Bey of papyrus,’ but who may well have been Riyad Tano referred to the Dishna Papers as ‘Nag Hammadi Two,’ to designate the region of Egypt from which they came that would be more readily recognizable to foreigners and that would incidentally suggest a value comparable to that famous discovery. Tano exported to Cyprus material at times through the diplomatic pouch, at times through a friend who worked at the customs office in Alexandria. From Cyprus he went to Geneva in September 1955. It was at that time that P. Bodmer II (the Gospel of John, Inventory item 3) and III (the Gospel of John and Genesis I:1-4:2, Inventory item 4) reached Geneva.

Bodmer himself was in Cairo at the end of January 1956, returning from a trip to Indonesia as a diplomat for the International Red Cross. On 8 October 1956 Gilles Quispel was told by Ludwig Keimer, an Austrian in Cairo who was close to Doutreleau and Tano, that at the beginning of February 1956 Bodmer had bought from Tano P. Bodmer XIV-XV (the Gospels of Luke and John, Inventory item 8) and much of XXV-IV-XXVI (Menander, Inventory item 5). These codices reached Geneva shortly thereafter. Bodmer’s secretary, Odile Bongard, visited Tano in Cairo in March 1956. A rather steady stream of acquisitions during the subsequent months was interrupted by the Suez Crisis in October 1956, though a shipment did arrive that month. Efforts by Mlle Bongard to complete the acquisitions were only successful to a limited extent. She was able to sift through Tano’s residue of fragments and find a few belonging to P. Bodmer II (the Gospel of John, Inventory item 3). Also Tano showed Doutreleau several leaves of Menander (Inventory item 5) in 1958. They were then deposited at the Tunisian Embassy in Cairo for export, but the shipment was delayed several years by a breaking of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Tunisia. When the shipment finally reached Geneva, part of it was missing.

On 2 April 1956 Sir Chester wrote his librarian James Vere Stewart Wilkinson from Nice that he had seen Tano and ‘got some very interesting things from him.’ In a letter of 5 April 1956 to Wilfred Merton, his papyrological consultant in Dublin, Sir Chester was more specific about the ‘very interesting things’ he had acquired, distinguishing the following items clearly enough for us to identify them, in the light of later information:

‘The two books with the original bindings are very interesting. One seems to be complete [ac. 1389, Inventory item 12] and the other was never finished. About half of the papyrus pages are blank [ac. 1499, Inventory item 25].’

A third item was described as follows:

‘It was evidently a scroll which was cut in pieces to make it appear like a book. It must have been pretty long, because it is quite thick — it must be 2’’ at least — and the page is just the size of the section of a scroll. They just bend over, and I looked at a good many of the pages and they separate naturally, so I do not anticipate much trouble in having the proper experts separate them.’ [Ac. 2554, Inventory item 31.]

Sir Chester added: ‘I will, of course, deliver them at once to the British Museum when I arrive.’ On 15 April 1956 Wilkinson replied urging him to invite the leading authority on book bindings, Berthe van Regemorter, to come from Belgium to examine the bindings before the books were disassembled and the leaves glassed, a proposal with which he readily agreed. Mlle Van Regemorter had recently been at the Bibliothèque Bodmer to examine the book bindings
there, and had sent Beatty a report concerning her findings. The ensuing discussion illustrates the way in which Bodmer and Sir Chester became involved in friendly competition for Tano's wares. For in a letter to Merton of 21 May 1956 Sir Chester commented:

'You have seen the memorandum that Miss Van Regemorter did on Bodmer's library. Apparently he got some good things from Tano. It was quite an important purchase, and I imagine it was the Gospel of St. John that he bought. I do not think he is making a general collection of papyri, but I think he bought a few very important things from Tano.'

In a letter the same day to Wilkinson Sir Chester conceded the loss to Bodmer but immediately began thinking of future acquisitions he might make from Tano:

'He indicated to me that he had an important deal on with Bodmer. I imagine it is in connection with that Gospels. Anyhow, I hope we will get some other things, and I wrote to him about early wooden bindings. I imagine Bodmer is not going in for those, and he [Tano] may be able to clean up the market and get something fine there.'

In a letter of 24 April 1956 to Merton, Sir Chester described his business procedure with Tano:

'You see, with the deal I had with 'X' [Tano], I pay so much for the whole lot, and if I do not want to buy the whole lot I pay another sum. I pay £800 if I take them all, but if I do not take the whole lot I pay £200, but I can pay this in sterling. In other words, the price was 10,000 Swiss francs, which is a little over £800, and it is done on the normal exchange basis. Then I have the right to pay in sterling. Of course, it is a good deal like buying a pig in a poke, because he does not know too much about them and I know nothing. They look old and they smell old, and I imagine they are old. That is the opinion of a real expert.'

All this tends to suggest that Sir Chester acquired the residue of what had been offered to Bodmer in Swiss Francs, items that presumably were not considered 'world literature,' as Bodmer defined the scope of his collection, but rather were the kind of artifacts, such as book bindings, that interested Sir Chester. The paradoxical outcome of this selectivity procedure is that Bodmer tended to acquire items that entered the Pachomian Monastery Library from outside, such as Homer, Menander, and the Greek Gospels, whereas Sir Chester tended to acquire the material more directly related to the Pachomian Order, such as the more primitively produced items and the bulk of copies of the official letters of Pachomian Abbots, precisely what was needed to identify the discovery as the Archives of the Pachomian Monastic Order.

Sir Chester lacked the expertise provided to Bodmer in Cairo by Father Doutreleau, but was dependent on expertise he received once he had taken an option to buy and had directed the material to the British Museum. In a letter of 21 May 1956 to Merton, Sir Chester wrote how he planned to reach a decision as to whether to exercise his option:

'My idea is, soon after I arrive, to take the big papyrus which is cut apart [ac. 2554, Inventory item 28] and in that parcel there are two lots of loose leaves — one is supposed to be agnostic [?] — and have them identified at the British Museum. I will not do anything beyond identification, because I do not want to be forced to take the lot, in case the other two are of no value.

... If she [Mlle Van Regemorter] can come over we will take the other two books [ac. 1389, Inventory item 12, and ac. 1499. Inventory item 25] to [I.E.S.] Edwards and [T.C.] Skeat at the British Museum [so] she can study the bindings. In the meantime, we will have the option [for: opinion?] about the first lot.'

On 7 January 1957 Beatty wrote from Nice to Merton of a second potential acquisition:

'I received a letter from Bodmer's secretary [Mlle Bongard] who had just come from Cairo, as he had sent her to go through all the fragments that Tano had in the hope of finding a few little fragments which had been overlooked of the St. John's Gospel, and she managed to find a few fragments. She told me that she had certain things which Tano wanted me to have, and she told me the price was 4,000 Swiss francs, and I asked her if she would leave them with me, as I wanted to get a little information on them, and I would probably take them. There are 8 items, of which 6 are papyrus, and one, curiously enough, a perfect mass of small fragments. In fact, they fill a small plastic box of about 4" long by 3 1/2" wide by 2" deep. Then there is a roll on vellum of some sermon which is quite early [ac. 1486, item 4 in the Inventory of Pachomian letters]... So when Lady Powerscourt went back, I sent samples of the find, with the exception of one item, to Edwards.'

On 16 December 1956 Sir Chester had written to Edwards a letter following up his shipment of samples:

'I should be very pleased if you would get the proper advice and find out if they are of any value. I do not know what to make of these fragments. One lot they say is from the same roll as the Greek papyrus we have of the time of Diocletian [ac. 2554, Inventory item 28], and there are two big lots of fragments which are still here and I will get to you later.'

On 21 January 1957 Edwards wrote Wilkinson that 'the latest Coptic documents... seem to me to be too fragmentary to be very promising.'

There was a third acquisition in 1958, again mediated through Mlle Bongard of the Bibliothèque Bodmer. On 18 December 1957 Tano wrote to Sir Chester in Nice:

'I wrote to Miss Odile Bongard to forward you some papyrus which completes some you bought
before. Also if she received a lot of parchments in Coptic. In case she did, please their price send it if possible in Cyprus pounds.'

On 19 April 1958 Bodmer wrote Sir Chester: 'The package from Tan to is also ready to be delivered to you!' The package seems to be an item distinct from the papyrus completing previous acquisitions, and presumably contained the 'lot of parchments in Coptic.'

Miss McGillighan of the staff of Sir Chester's library had written him on 10 April 1958: 'I will be very pleased to go to Geneva and collect the papyrus from Mademoiselle Bongard, as you suggest. I had planned to leave Paris for Dublin on May the 18th and so it would be on May the 19th that I would go to the Bodmer Library and collect the papyrus.'

On 23 May 1958 Miss McGillighan wrote Beatty: 'I collected the package which contains some ligamentary leather bindings and 17 vellum folios with some fragments, one with a miniature, several with spiral ornamentation and several with coloured initials. They are in fairly good condition and Dr. Hayes thinks that the writing may be Greek. but I would opt for Coptic.'

The papyrus that complemented previous acquisitions may well belong to the Dishna Papers, in that, for example, further fragments were added to ac. 1390 (Inventory item 23) even after it had been conserved between glass panes at the British Museum and sent on to Dublin, necessitating a return of the material from Dublin to London for a reconservation. But the vellum folios can be identified no doubt as ac. 1933, manuscript 820, an item apparently no longer belonging to the Dishna Papers.

If thus the competition and assistance in acquiring the Dishna Papers by Sir Chester and Bodmer seems to have reached its conclusion in 1958, the personal relations between the two friends continued until near Sir Chester's death. Indeed on 17 October 1963 Bodmer wrote him a bold letter proposing they unite the two collections under a single foundation, while leaving them at the two separate repositories. Sir Chester responded on 20 November 1963 politely declining the offer. In a previous letter of 29 October 1963 to Dr. Hayes concerning Bodmer's proposal Sir Chester had commented: 'I do think we might work in very close co-operation with him, and it might be well for you to go down and see the Bodmer Library sometime. We could possibly loan them items and they might loan us items, as we supplement each other extremely well...'

A striking instance of such a supplementing of each other's holdings is the Pachomian Monastery Library Archives, which were brought together in a small cupboard shared with tweezers for thorns at Fāw Qibli at the headquarters monastery in Upper Egypt, then some three centuries later were buried at the foot of the Jabal Abū Manā' for safekeeping for over a millennium, then late in 1952 were discovered by Hasan Muhammad al-Sammān of Abū Manā' 'Bahri,' were acquired by the strong man of Dishnā Riyād Jirjis Fām and then sold by him bit by bit to Phocion J. Tan, who sold the bulk of the material in the years around 1956 to Martin Bodmer and Sir Chester Beatty. A joint exhibit of the Archives of the Pachomian Monastic Library would be a fascinating instance of such close co-operation as Sir Chester had in mind.

4. Inventory

The contents of the discovery, including the quite fragmentary items and those listed only with hesitation, are as follows (they are Greek papyrus codices, unless otherwise indicated):

4. Gospel of John and Genesis 1:1 — 4:2 in Bohairic = P. Bodmer III.
6. Nativity of Mary = Apocalypse of James (Proterevangelium of James): Apocryphal Correspondence of Paul with the Corinthians; Odes of Solomon 11; the Epistle of Jude; Melito of Sardis On the Passover; a fragment of a liturgical hymn: the Apology of Phileas; Psalms 33-34: 1 and 2 Peter = P. Bodmer V; X; XI; VII; XIII; XII; XX (+ a fragment from the Chester Beatty Library, ac. 2555); IX; VIII.
7. Proverbs in Proto-Sahidic on parchment = P. Bodmer VI.
9. Exodus 1:1 — 15:21 in Sahidic on parchment = P. Bodmer XVI. (P. Bodmer XVII is generally agreed not to come from the same discovery.)
10. Deuteronomy 1:1 — 10:7 in Sahidic = P. Bodmer XVIII.
13. Jeremiah 40:3 — 52:34; Lamentations; Epistle of Jeremy; Baruch 1:1 — 5:5, all in Sahidic on
parchment. = P. Bodmer XXII + Mississippi Coptic Codex II.
15. Psalms 17 — 118 = P. Bodmer XXIV.
16. Thucydides; Suzanna; Daniel; Moral Exhortations = P. Bodmer XXVII, XLV, XLVI, XLVII.
17. A satyr play on the confrontation of Heracles and Atlas, a papyrus roll. = P. Bodmer XXVIII.
18. Codex Visionum = P. Bodmer XXXIX — XXXVIII. (For P. Bodmer XXXIX see the inventory and Atlas. An apapyrus roll. = P. Bodmer XLI.
19. Song of Songs in Sahidic on parchment = P. Bodmer XL.
21. Fragments of the Illiad from a papyrus roll = P. Bodmer XLVIII.
22. Fragments of the Odyssey from a papyrus roll = P. Bodmer XLIX.
25. A Greek grammar; a Graeco-Latin lexicon on Romans. 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians = Chester Beatty ac. 1499.
27. Psalms 31:8 — 11; 26:1 — 6, 8 — 14; 2:1 — 8 = Chester Beatty ac. 1501 = P. Chester Beatty XIV = Rahlfs 2150.
28. Tax receipts of 339-47 A.D. from Panopolis (Achmim) in a largely uninscribed and unbound quire constructed from two papyrus rolls with correspondence of the Strategus of the Panopolitan nome of 298-300 A.D. = P. Beatty Panopolitanus = Chester Beatty ac. 2554.
30. Scholia to the Odyssey 1 from a papyrus roll = P. Rob. inv. 32 + P. Colon. inv. 906.
31. Achilles Tatios from a papyrus roll = P. Rob. inv. 35 + P. Colon. inv. 901.
32. Odyssey 3 — 4 from a papyrus roll = P. Rob. inv. 43 + P. Colon. inv. 902.
33. A piece of ethnography or a philosophical treatise from a papyrus roll = P. Rob. inv. 37 + P. Colon. inv. 903.
34. Cicero, in Catinum; Psalmus Responsorius; Greek liturgical text: Alcestis, all in Latin except the Greek liturgical text. = Codex Miscellani = P. Barcinonenses inv. 149-61 + P. Duke inv. L 1 [ex P. Rob. inv. 201].

The total quantity of material would involve what remains of some 27 books. They consist of 9 Greek classical papyrus rolls (numbers 1, 2, 17, 23, 24, 32-35) and 28 codices (numbers 3-16, 18-22, 25-31, 36, 37). The codices may be subdivided as follows: 21 are on papyrus (numbers 3-6, 8, 10, 12, 14-16, 18, 20, 22, 25-31, 36, 37), 5 on parchment (numbers 7, 9, 11, 13, 19), and of 1 the Bibliothèque Bodmer has not divulged the material (number 22). 10 are in Greek (numbers 3, 5, 6, 8, 15, 16, 18, 28-30), 2 in Greek and Latin (numbers 27, 36), and 1 in Greek and Subachmimic (number 25). 15 are in Coptic (numbers 4, 7, 9-14, 19-22, 26, 31, 37), of which 10 are in Sahidic (numbers 9-14, 19, 26, 31, 37), 1 in Bohairic (number 4), 1 in Proto-Sahidic (number 7), 1 in Subachmimic (number 20), and of 1 the Bibliothèque Bodmer has not divulged the dialect (number 22). 2 are non-Christian (numbers 5, 30), 21 Christian (numbers 3, 4, 6-15, 18-21, 26, 28, 29, 31, 37) and 4 partly each (numbers 16, 25, 27, 36). 11 contain something from the Old Testament (numbers 7, 9, 10, 12-16, 19, 28, 29) and 6 something from the New Testament (numbers 3, 8, 11, 21, 25, 37) and 3 something from each (numbers 4, 6, 31).

A distinctive part of this discovery consists of archival copies of official letters of Abbots of the Pachomian Monastic Order:

1. Pachomius' Letter 11b in Sahidic, a small parchment roll. = P. Bodmer XXXIX.
2. Pachomius' Letters 9a, 9b, 10, 11b from a papyrus codex in Sahidic = Chester Beatty Glass Container No. 54 = ac. 2556.
5. A second copy of Theodore's Letter 2, a small parchment roll in rotuli format in an unidentified private German collection. published by Martin Krause.

Notes:

1 One of these codices, originally acquired by the University of Mississippi and named Mississippi Coptic Codex I (The Crosby Codex) has recently been acquired by Martin Schoyen, distinguished Norwegian bibliophile, and has


8 Tito Orlandi, A. de Vogüé, Hans Quecke and James Goehring, *Pachomiana Coptica*, in the press. The dating is from an early draft of the typescript by de Vogüé.


14 Orlandi, ‘Nuovi Testi Copti Paccomiani,’ p.241, cited Guglielmo Cavallo for a dating to the Seventh Century. Quecke, ‘Eine Handvoll pachomianischer Texte,’ p.222: ‘The hand is a very artificial uncial, which one would like to place considerably later’ [than a Sixth Century dating, see the preceding note].

15 Already Hans Quecke has recognized the non-accidental nature of the five Pachomian texts acquired by the Chester Beatty Library. ‘Eine Handvoll pachomianischer Texte,’ p. 221: ‘It is to be suspected that the five pieces belong together, and thus, as it were, present a ‘hoard’ of Pachomian material. The five Pachomian pieces can indeed hardly have come together accidentally in the Chester Beatty Library.’ And Tito Orlandi, ‘Nuovi Testi Copti Pacomiani,’ p.241, considers the material to come from ‘the library of a Pachomian monastery.’

16 For a legend about such upheavals see K.H. Kuhn, *A Panegyric on Apollo Archimandrite of the Monastery of Isaac by Stephen Bishop of Herculeopolis Magna* (Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Orientalium 394-95; Scriptores Coptici 39-40; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1978).

17 It was this identification of the remains of this codex as part of the Dishna Papers that lead to the decision to publish it through the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity: *The Chester Beatty Codex Ac 1390: Mathematical School Exercises in Greek and John 10:7-13:38 in Subachmimic,* edited by William Brashear, Wolf-Peter Funk, James M. Robinson and Richard Smith (Chester Beatty Monographs No. 13; Leuven and Paris: Peeters, 1990 [1991]).

18 A.J. Wilson, *The Life and Times of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty* (London: Cadogan Publications Ltd., 1985), presents an informed biography, including however all too few brief discussions of the bibliophile dimension of Beatty’s activity.


Postscript

It has taken more than a generation to establish the provenience of the Bodmer papyri, the approximate extent of their contents beyond the holdings of the Bibliothèque Bodmer, and the details of their discovery and marketing. The course of this development can be traced as follows:

Victor Martin, *Papyrus Bodmer I, IIiade, chants 5 et 6* (Bibliotheca Bodmeriana 3; Cologny-Geneva: Bibliothèque Bodmer, 1954), p. 21. listed Panopolis (Achmim) as the provenience on the basis of the land register on the recto of the rolls. Yet Martin recognized that once the land register was no longer in use, the rolls could have been moved anywhere, in which connection he referred to Eric C. Turner, ‘Roman Oxyrhynchus,’ *Journal of Egyptian Archeology* 38 (1952) 78-93, where material from other nomes is reported to have been found at Oxyrhynchus. See also Turner, ‘Recto and Verso,’ *JEA* 40 (1954) 102-06. On 25 December 1958 Martin wrote to William H. Willis: ‘That they were found in Achmim, though probable, is by no means certain.’ Willis, ‘The New Collections of Papyri at the University of Mississippi,’ *Proceedings of the IX International Congress of Papyrology* (Oslo: Norwegian Universities Press, 1961), p. 383, n. 1, who quotes Martin, took the comment to apply to the Bodmer Papyri in general.

But one may contrast Rodolphe Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer III, Évangile de Jean et Genèse I-IV, 2 en bohairique* (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 177-178. Scriptores Coptici 25-26; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1958). 177.iii: ‘... without the exact provenience having been revealed thus far. One said that all the pieces had been found together in Upper Egypt, and that it had to do with a private library. We do not know anything more.’ Similarly Martin, *Papyrus Bodmer IV, Ménandre: Le Dyxcolos* (Cologny-Geneva: Bibliothèque Bodmer, 1958 [1959]), p. 7, listed the place of discovery as ‘unknown.’ But Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XVI, Exode I-IX, 21 en sahidique* (Cologny-Geneva: Bibliothèque Bodmer, 1961), p. 7, reported that ‘we can admit, as a possibility if not probability, that these texts were copied between Achmim and Thebes, and, by preference, in the neighbourhood of the latter site. The importance of Thebes is due to the Proto-Sahidic (previously called Proto-Theban) dialect Kasser identified in *Papyrus Bodmer VI, Livre des Proverbes* (Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium 194-95, Scriptores Coptici 27-28; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1960), an association made explicit by Michael Testuz. *Papyrus Bodmer VII-IX, VII: L’Épipiste de Jude; VIII: Les deux Épitres de PIERRE; IX: Les Psaumes 33 et 34* (Cologny-Geneva: Bibliothèque Bodmer, 1959, p. 32, who hence supported Thebes as the place of origin of P. Bodmer VII-IX.

Then Kasser, *Papyrus Bodmer XXVIII, Esaié XLVII, I — LXVI, 24 en sahidique* (Cologny-Geneva: Bibliothèque Bodmer, 1965), p. 7, n. 1, stated: ‘Various indications, internal or external, would tend to orient our research a bit north of Thebes.’ But the internal evidence, the dialects, is so variegated (Sahidic, Bohairic, Paleo-Sahidic, Subachmimic) as to make them a conflicting and hence unreliable indication of the site of the discovery.

Kasser’s remark in *Papyrus Bodmer XXI, Josué VI, 16-25, VII, 6 — XI, 23, XXII, 1 — 2, 19 — XXIII, 7, 15 — XXIV, 23 en sahidique* (Cologny-Geneva: Bibliothèque Bodmer, 1963, p. 7, n. 1 might have seemed preferable: ‘Of course an admission of uncertainty is worth more than the affirmation of a “certainty” based on false information.’

The source of the external information was not identified by Kasser, but by Olivier Reverdin in his Preface, ‘Les Genevois et Ménandre,’ to *Ménandre, La Samienne,* translated into French and adapted from the Greek by André Hurst, as presented on the French-language Swiss radio on 15 March 1975, published as a pamphlet in 1975, p. 1: ‘For a long time one had only quite vague indications about their provenience. Shortly before his death, however, the antiquities dealer who had sold them lifted the secret. He revealed that these papyri came from a village near Nag Hammadi... It is to Mr. Rodolphe Kasser, Professor of Coptic Language and Literature at the Faculty of Letters of Geneva, and editor of a large part of these papyri in the series *Papyrus Bodmer,* that he made his confession.’

Then, with the resumption of publication of the monograph series, Kasser and Guglielmo Cavallo, *Papyrus Bodmer XXIX, Vision de Dorothéos* (Cologny-Geneva: Foundation Martin Bodmer, 1984), p. 100, n. 2, reported: ‘Various converging indications (among them the dialects of the Coptic texts) make very plausible the localization of this discovery in Upper Egypt, a bit to the east of Nag Hammadi.’

In the context of his 1984 statement Kasser referred explicitly to my having announced inappropriately in the *Bulletin* of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, 7.1 (March 1980), pp. 6-7, the discovery of the identity of the Bodmer Papyri with the Dishna Papers. On receipt of that Bulletin he had requested further information, and on 23 June 1980 I obliged by mailing him a current draft of the relevant section of a book I had begun on the topic. Thus before announcing his final decision as to the provenience of the Bodmer Papyri (which agrees with the outcome of my investigations), he had access to my published and unpublished material reporting basically the same facts as found in the present essay, though no public acknowledgement is made to this effect.

Kasser has maintained that my investigations were based on no more than village 'rumor' rendered irrelevant by the passing of 25 years. Though this criticism is to be dismissed as simply not accurate, it does serve to indicate that it would be relevant to publish the sources of the information presented above in Section 2 on the Discovery and Marketing of the Library.

My own investigation began as part of my efforts to track down the discoverers and middlemen of the Nag Hammadi codices. Jean Dorese had referred to a priest he thought he had seen the Nag Hammadi codices. Abūnā Dā‘ūd, whom I found after church on 20 November 1974 at the Deir al-Malāk where he had officiated, near al-Qaṣr not far from Nag Hammadi. Another priest there, to whom I introduced me, mentioned that the discovered codices had been for a time in the possession of a Dishnā priest named Manqārīṣ and his son Tānyūs. I added this secondarily to my essay 'On the Codicology of the Nag Hammadi Codices.' Les textes de Nag Hammadi: Colloque du centre d'Histoire des Religions (Strasbourg, 23-25 October 1974)., ed. by Jacques-É. Menard (Nag Hammadi Studies VII; Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1975), p. 16, on the assumption that it had to do with the Nag Hammadi codices.

It was in the process of following up this lead that I interviewed the Inspector for Agriculture of the Dishnā Governorate, Ishāq Ayyūb Ishāq, who told me about what he referred to as the Dishnā Papers. He gave me on 12 September 1975 the name of an antiquities dealer in Alexandria, Tawfīq Sa‘d, who, he said, had acquired some of them. On 30 December 1975, his son, a jeweler in Alexandria, Emīl Tawfīq Sa‘d, showed me pictures of antiquities his deceased father had sold. He even let me borrow the three pictures that had to do with manuscripts, which were soon identified as leaves of P. Bodmer XXIV (with the help of Albert Pietersma) and XL (with the help of Marvin W. Meyer and Hans Quecke).

I interviewed, repeatedly and year after year (in the Dishnā area alone: 18-21 November 1974; 11-13 January, 10-18 September, 25 November — 20 December 1975; 30 November — 6 December, 18-30 December 1976; 5-24 January 1978; 3-11 January, 15-20 December 1980), with authorization to publish, details of the acquisition process in Cairo, together with memorandum he wrote in Cairo at the time and photographs taken in Cairo of materials he examined there for Bodmer that later became Bodmer Papyri. Kasser's repudiation of Father Doutreleau (whom he has never met) as too senile to be taken seriously is valid neither in terms of his age nor in terms of his detailed, intelligent letters and the earlier records he has supplied. I called to Kasser's attention a doctorate honoris causa Father Doutreleau had recently received from the University of Cologne. When I visited Father Doutreleau at the offices of Sources chrétiennes at Lyon on 26 May 1992, he took satisfaction in pointing out a second honorary doctorate framed and hung on his wall. Confirmation has even belatedly come, as I searched secondary literature in this regard, from Kasser him-
self. In ‘Fragments du livre biblique de la Genèse cachés dans la reliure d’un codex gnostique,’ Le Muséon 85 (1972) 80, he reported: ‘I have serious reason to believe that they [the Bodmer Papyri] were found, like the Gnostic codices mentioned above, in a place near Nag Hammadi.’ In ‘Les dialectes coptes,’ Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’archéologie orientale 73 (1973) 81, he sharpened the identification: ‘A bit to the east (north-east) of Nag Hammadi.’ However it is quite inaccurate to describe (‘Status quaestionis 1988 sulla presunta origine dei cosiddetti Papiir Bodmer,’ p. 192 and n. 7) my identification of the site as an ‘echo’ of his vague allusions to a site to the east of Nag Hammadi (the earliest of which he cites being his essay ‘Le dialecte protosaidique de Thèbes,’ Archiv für Papyrologieforschung 28 [1982] 77, n. 2). For I turned to secondary literature concerning the provenience of the Bodmer Papyri only after I had discovered that they were the same manuscript discovery that in Upper Egypt is known as the Dishnà papers.

Kasser reported (‘Status quaestionis 1988 sulla presunta origine dei cosiddetti Papiir Bodmer,’ p. 192) that Tano gave “‘Dabba’ or ‘Debbà’ (al-Dabba, 5 km to the east, slightly north-east, of Nag Ham-

madi)” as the location. This village is too near the Nile to have preserved manuscripts intact over the years, in view of the annual inundations flooding this area prior to the construction of the High Dam. But it is the first railroad station upstream from Nag Hammadi, recommended in the 1914 English-language Baedeker as the station from which to visit the cliff area. It would be a more convenient point of departure for Abù Maná’ than would be Dishnà (and for the Jabal al-Tárif than would be Nag Hammadi), if one planned to go by foot or donkey, but would have been replaced by Dishnà (or Nag Hammadi) once a taxi came in question (al-

Dabba lacks a taxi stand). It was in fact the first name used to locate the Nag Hammadi codices (by the Abbot Étienne Drioto-n, General Director of the Department of Antiquities, in a letter of 13 February 1948 to Jean Doresse, reporting on an interview with the same Tano, and referring to ‘the discovery of Dabba’). Tano liked to associate the Dishnà Papers with the Nag Hammadi codices for financial reasons. But since the main middlemen trafficking in the Dishnà Papers were located at Dishnà, that has become the local designation.

Kasser reported (‘Status quaestionis 1988 sulla presunta origine dei cosiddetti Papiir Bodmer,’ p. 192 and n. 6) having waited in publishing his own view about the location of the discovery until Bodmer’s secretary [Odile Bongard] revealed her view (‘a few months ago’). When it turned out to disagree with that of Kasser, the documentation I had entrusted to him may have strengthened his hand in resisting her conclusion. For I was, in response to his query, able to clarify for him that the Dishnà to which I had referred was, in spite of the divergent French spelling, located in the area conformable to his rather than Mlle Bongard’s view of the provenience. She had ‘affirmed in all certainty’ (p. 193) that the site of the discovery was near a village named Mina or Minia in the Asyût region. Kasser was not able to identify there a village with any such name (p. 193, n. 12), and hence rejected her view. The only way that she has then been able to reconcile her information with Kasser’s alternative is (according to Kasser) to the effect that the Asyût region may have been the provenience only of P. Bodmer XVII, which is generally recognized to derive from a different discovery than that of the bulk of the Bodmer Papyri. In fact the local Copts of the Dishnà region offer the popular etymology to the effect that Abû Maná’ derives from the name of the Coptic saint, Mina, which may help to explain the garbled report by Mlle Bongard.

Kasser’s own view (‘Status quaestionis 1988 sulla presunta origine dei cosiddetti Papiir Bodmer,’ pp. 191-192) is based on information given to him by Tano 19 years after the discovery. Kasser had previously maintained (Papyrus Bodmer VI. Livre des Proverbes, 1960, p. viii. n. 1) that such information was irrelevant: ‘One knows the little credence one can give to the reports of antiquities dealers when they cannot be confirmed by any archeological investigation.’ Kasser’s revised position that his interview with Tano was an exception to the usual unreliability of dealers in antiquities, in view of a special ‘friendship’ with Tano and the fact that Tano’s death was immin-ent, needs to be taken cum grano salis. I interviewed Tano about the Nag Hammadi codices the same day (20 December 1971, when Kasser and I were both together in Cairo at a work session of the Technical Sub-Committee of the International Committee for the Nag Hammadi Codices and staying in the same hotel, the Garden City House). Tano seemed quite aggressive in spirit and in good health for a person his age. He died 9 February 1972. Dealers in antiquities assure all of us of special bonds of friendship (‘You are my brother!’), which one should not take too seriously. But as a matter of fact over the years Tano was telling the truth regarding the provenience with a remarkable degree of consistency to persons he trusted. Since he funded a clandestine excavation of the site of the discovery directed by Riyàd Girgis Fám, Tano apparently had the correct information.

In his article on the Bodmer Papyri in The Coptic Encyclopaedia (New York: MacMillan, etc., 1991) 8. 48-53, esp. p. 49, Kasser has summarized his criticism of my results:

‘Thus, there are nineteen codices if one considers only the reliable information gathered by the Bodmer Foundation at the time the Bodmer papyri came to be included in the library. There are some scholars who, on the basis of much later research (some thirty years after the presumed date of discovery of the Bodmer papyri), think that they can also include in the Bodmer
papyri various other famous manuscripts such as the P. Palau-Ribes from Barcelona (the Gospels of Mark, Luke, and John in Sahidic Coptic, edited by H. Quecke), and, above all, various letters of Pachomius, one of which is preserved in the Bodmer Foundation but with nothing to indicate that it might be part of the Bodmer papyri. Their suggestion is that the actual library of the famous Monastery of Saint Pachomius at Faw al-Qiblî has been rediscovered. This hypothesis is certainly very tempting, but the reliable information referred to above tends to weaken rather than strengthen it.

Actually, information originally available to the Bibliothèque Bodmer seems to have been lost from sight. On 26 July 1956 Father Doutreleau had written to Victor Martin: 'It is quite certain that this find of some thirty codices (in the region of Nag Hammadi) like the Gnostic papyri) cannot remain the act of a single individual.' If Kasser can identify only 19 at the Bibliothèque Bodmer, where does he assume the others are to be found? Apparently he was simply unaware of some of the 'reliable information gathered by the Bodmer Foundation at the time the Bodmer papyri came to be included in the library.' such as the correspondence of which Doutreleau gave me a copy.

The total quantity of material would involve what remains of some 35 books (plus the 9 copies of letters of Pachomian Abbots). They consist of 10 Greek classical papyrus rolls (numbers 1, 2, 17, 21, 22, 30-33) and 26 codices (numbers 3-16, 18-20, 23-29, 34, 35). The codices may be subdivided as follows: 21 are on papyrus (numbers 3-6, 10, 12, 14-16, 18, 20, 23-29, 34, 35), and 5 on parchment (numbers 7, 9, 11, 13, 19). 10 are in Greek (numbers 3, 5, 6, 8, 15, 16, 18, 26-28). 2 are in Greek and Latin (numbers 25, 34), and 1 in Greek and Subachmimic Lyceopolitan (number 23). 13 are in Coptic (numbers 4, 7, 9-14, 19, 20, 24, 29, 35), of which 10 are in Sahidic (numbers 9-14, 19, 24, 29, 35), 1 in Bohairic (number 4), 1 in Proto-Sahidic (number 7), and 1 in Subachmimic Lyceopolitan (number 20). 2 are non-Christian (numbers 5, 28), 20 Christian (numbers 3, 4, 6-15, 18-20, 24, 26, 27, 29, 35), and 4 partly each (numbers 16, 23, 25, 34). 11 contain something from the Old Testament (numbers 7, 9, 10, 12-16, 19, 26, 27), 5 something from the New Testament (numbers 3, 8, 11, 23, 35), and 3 something from each (numbers 4, 6, 29).

It is quite arbitrary to limit one's information about the provenience and the contents of the discovery to that of the Bibliothèque Bodmer. The amount of fragments in one repository that belong to codices in another link the materials in Barcelona, Cologne, Dublin and Mississippi just as firmly with the materials in the Bibliothèque Bodmer as does Kasser's comment (p. 49) that 'not a single shred belonging to the Gnostic library [of Nag Hammadi] has been found among the Bodmer papyri and vice versa' effectively serve to indicate that we have to do with two quite distinct discoveries. The reasoning is the same, and hence consistent conclusions should be drawn in both cases.

Actually, Kasser's list of 19 items does include two not represented in the Bibliothèque Bodmer (items 29 and 34), precisely because Bodmer acquired fragments of material in Barcelona and Mississippi and was kind enough to turn them over to the repository that held the bulk of the codex. Since Sir Chester acquired fragments from Tano belonging to codices acquired by Bodmer, it would be reasonable to assume other acquisitions by Sir Chester acquired at the same time from Tano should, at least as a working hypothesis, be considered part of the same discovery. This assumption has been confirmed by a note from Tano in the Book of Accessions in the Chester Beatty Library identifying one item (ac. 1390) as coming from Dishnâ, with the conjecture that it was 'from the Library of a Monastery.' When Bodmer's assistant Mlle Bongard was later permitted to sort through Tano's fragments for vestiges of Bodmer's acquisitions, it was a matter of course that Bodmer made available to Sir Chester those that he did not identify as belonging to his acquisitions, just as he gave to Barcelona and Mississippi fragments of their acquisitions he had unknowingly acquired.

Father Doutreleau emphasized to me on my visit with him in Lyon on 26 May 1992 that Martin Bodmer and Mlle Bongard knew hardly anything about the discovery and middlemen, and that the little they knew they had learned from him. Kasser's 'reliable information' is thus a second-hand version of the information I received first-hand from Doutreleau and the Copts who had been directly involved.

To discredit such research as 'some thirty years after the presumed date of the discovery' is neither accurate nor relevant. The discovery in 1952 preceded by 22 years my investigations which began in 1974, which compares not too unfavorably with the 19 years that elapsed before Tano confided in Kasser information about the provenience that Kasser took at face value. Since my research included interviews with the principals, made use of the notes Father Doutreleau made at the time of the acquisitions, and has been confirmed by written records where available, it is hard to see how the presentation by Kasser, based on none of these sources, has a higher claim to be accurate. It is not as if he had retraced my steps and come to different conclusions; he has simply used the authority implicit in his status as an editor of the material at the Bibliothèque Bodmer to assert his view to be correct, as if he did not have to give the reasons for his claims.

In the case of P. Palau Ribes 181-183, it was put in last place in my Inventory, as being least certain. Hans Quecke had expressed skepticism to me in view of the considerably better condition of this codex compared to that of the Bodmer papyri. Kasser may hence be right that it is from a different provenience. But his
negative conclusion is reached without considering the information I received from the parish diary of the Franciscan Church near Dishná, to the effect that José O’Callaghan, who acquired the materials for the Palau Ribes collection, was actively searching in 1964-65 ‘for papers’ in the Dishná region, and from Sa’íd Diryás of some material from the local Dishná priest. When I wrote O’Callaghan to inquire if he had secured any Nag Hammadi material (which was my interest at the time), he replied that he had not, though he might have secured something from the same provenience as the Bodmer papyri. Of course O’Callaghan may have had something other than P. Palau Ribes 181-183 in mind. And of course these reports can be discredited, if one can establish reasons to do so. However they should not simply be dismissed out of hand, but rather should be investigated as to whether there may be some truth in them. Kasser was apparently unaware of them.

To postulate an independent discovery of the archival copies of letters from Abbots of the Pachomian Monastery Order, which then by pure coincidence passed through the same canals to reach the same European repositories as those which obtained Dishná Papers at about the same time, is of course theoretically possible, but hardly probable. After all, the Coptic and Greek Pachomian letters had been completely unattested for 1500 years. Riyād’s report that Tano told him that the small rolls the size of a finger, among the manuscripts Riyād had for sale, were letters, seems to confirm the converse probability that the Pachomian materials belong with the Dishná Papers Riyād was trafficking.

Part of the difficulty in carrying on such a discussion is that Kasser’s opinion is based on undocumented claims. He maintains that ‘the reliable information referred to above tends to weaken rather than strengthen’ the view that one has to do with the archival remains of a Pachomian monastic library. But he does not provide that information for consideration. Michel Testuz, *Papyrus Bodmer VII-IX* (Cologny-Geneva: Bibliothèque Bodmer, 1959), p. 9, speculated: ‘The content of this anthology shows that the book was produced by Christians of Egypt, probably on the order of a well-to-do member of their community, who intended it for his own library.’ Such pure speculation is not ‘reliable information’; if there is such, it should be made public.


Three unpublished items included in these earlier publications were not mentioned by Rodolphe Kasser in his article on the Bodmer Papyri in *The Coptic Encyclopaedia*, and for lack of confirming evidence, have also been omitted from the present Inventory:

- *P. Bodmer XLII, ‘2 Corinthians in Coptic (dialect and material unknown).’* Wolf-Peter Funk has determined that it is in Sahidic on parchment. There may be some unstated reason to assume it is not part of the Dishná discovery. Hence one may await further information or its publication.
- *P. Bodmer XLIII, ‘an Apocryphon in Coptic (identity, dialect and material unknown).’* Kasser mentioned at a meeting on the Apocryphal Acts in Lausanne on 16 May 1992 that this is only a fragment of no significance. Though there was no further elucidation, it may be omitted pending further information or its publication.
- *P. Bodmer XLIV, ‘Daniel in Bohairic.’* Wolf-Peter Funk has determined that it is in Classical Bohairic on parchment, to be dated from the 10th to the 12th Centuries. Hence it presumably does not come from the Dishná discovery.

*P. Bodmer I, from the *Iliad*, the verso of *P. Bodmer L*, as well as the Homeric fragments *P. Bodmer XLVIII* and *XLIX, are also not mentioned by Kasser, no doubt because of the original ascription to a provenience at Panopolis (Achmím), in view of the fact that the land register on the recto comes from there. But that does not determine where the roll was later kept and reused. Furthermore, this did not originally deter Kasser from considering *P. Bodmer I* as belonging to the same discovery as the bulk of the Bodmer Papyri. For once he had edited in 1960 *Bodmer Papyrus VI*, in the Proto-Sahidic dialect that he at that time localized in Thebes and hence called Proto-Theban, he simply merged this Theban orientation with the Achmím orientation in 1965 into the compromise ‘between Achmím and Thebes, and, by preference, in the neighbourhood of the latter site’ (see above). This location proved to be more or less correct, a location that he at that time conceded could have included material from Achmím. No further information has been subsequently reported as having emerged to associate the provenience of *P. Bodmer I* with a different discovery. Hence Kasser’s original inclusion of it in the same discovery is here retained.