EGYPT AND THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN WORLD

During the period 500–1000 CE Egypt was successively part of the Byzantine, Sasanian, and Islamic empires. All kinds of events, developments, and processes occurred that would greatly affect its history and that of the eastern Mediterranean in general. This is the first volume to map Egypt's position in the Mediterranean during this period. Drawing on a wide range of disciplines, the individual chapters detail its connections with imperial and scholarly centers, its role in cross-regional trade networks, and its participation in Mediterranean and Near Eastern cultural developments, including their impact on its own literary and material production. With unparalleled detail, the book tracks the mechanisms and structures through which Egypt connected politically, economically, and culturally to the world surrounding it.

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From Constantinople to Baghdad, 500–1000 CE

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Notes on Transliteration, Names, and Dates

The transliteration of Arabic words and phrases follows the system used in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (IJMES).[1] In historical contexts Arabic personal and place names are transliterated according to their medieval forms, except for very common place names such as Alexandria (not al-Iskandariyya) or Damascus (not Dimashq). Depending on their historical contexts, Greek or Coptic place names are used alongside or in place of their Arabic counterparts. Modern place names are only mentioned when referring to the modern location, for example in reports on finding places or archaeological activities. If not otherwise specified, dates given in this volume are Common Era (CE) dates. If two dates are provided (e.g. 18/639), the first one is the year according to the Muslim Hijra calendar (AH) and the second is the CE date. For dates preceding the year 1 AH only the CE date is provided.

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[1] See www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-journal-of-middle-east-studies/information/author-resources/ijmes-translation-and-transliteration-guide.

Preface and Acknowledgments

This volume originates with the program *Provinces and Empires: Islamic Egypt in the Ancient World: Administrative Transformations, Pluralistic Society and Competing Memories*,[1] a collaboration between the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (UMR 8167 Orient et Méditerrannée), the Institut français d'archéologie orientale, New York University's Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, the University of Tunis, and Leiden University. Within the program three conferences were held in Cairo, New York, and Leiden between 2013 and 2015 entitled "Fustat: contrôle des territoires et réseaux d'autorité," "Multilingualism and Social Belonging in the Late Antique and Early Islamic Near East," and "Egypt Connected, 500–1000 CE" respectively. Together the program aimed to examine Egypt's transition from a Byzantine province centered on Constantinople to a province in the Islamic caliphate successively ruled from Medina, Damascus, and finally Baghdad, covering the period from around 500 to 1000 CE.

As a follow-up to this conference series, the editors of this volume, together with Sylvie Denoix, organized an interactive workshop at the Lorentz Center in Leiden in December 2016. This workshop, entitled "Egypt Incorporated: Economic, Political and Cultural Developments from Late Antiquity to Islam," further explored Egypt's integration in the Byzantine and Islamic empires and reassessed the extent to which the Muslim conquest of Egypt in the mid-seventh century created new networks and interactions, influenced interregional connectivity, and facilitated exchanges along new ways and according to new formations. Adopting a format that allowed for much discussion between its participants, the workshop explicitly aimed at producing a scholarly volume on this theme. The workshop has resulted in the current volume. It includes

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[1] See www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-journal-of-middle-east-studies/information/author-resources/ijmes-translation-and-transliteration-guide.

contributions of the workshop's participants as well as contributions by participants to one of the conferences of the *Provinces and Empires* series. The conversation between the authors of the different chapters has continued since the workshop took place and papers have been updated since then to include the latest scholarly publications in each discipline.

Map of Late Antique and Early Islamic Egypt

Introduction

Jelle Bruning, Janneke H. M. de Jong, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn

Herodotus' (fifth century BCE) famous assertion that Egyptians are the "opposite to other men in almost all matters" (2.83) has set the tone for analyses of Egypt ever since. On the one hand, Egypt's incomparably rich documentary record, preserved in the papyri and other material remains, has attracted extraordinary scholarly attention. On the other hand, Egypt's unusual geography and the specialized kinds of agricultural and social organization has given rise to it being seen as non-representative. Moreover, a scholarly view that tends to look from the imperial center outward sees Egypt on the margins, leading to a characterization of its historical developments – not always explicitly acknowledged – as at once exceptional and peripheral.

This volume explores Egypt's integration into interregional political structures, commercial networks, and cultural constellations between 500 and 1000 CE, roughly from the beginning of the Byzantine emperor Justinian's reign in 527 until the end of the Fatimid conquest of Egypt in 969. The volume's contributors study Egypt's role in interactions that crossed the Mediterranean and tied the Nile Valley and Delta to the Near East and beyond in the late antique and early Islamic periods. It also explores how Egypt functioned in the empires of Byzantine and Islamic rulers based in Constantinople, Medina, Damascus, and Baghdad, taking into account continuities and changes in administrative organization, economic activities, social arrangement, and cultural composition, both within the province and vis-à-vis these imperial centers.

The long period reviewed here is chosen purposefully. Prompted by the spectacular growth of the field of late antique and early medieval archaeology and material culture, historians of the economic and social history of the Mediterranean and Near East have convincingly argued that the political changes, economic developments, and cultural transformations that took place during this period cannot be fully understood without

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assessing their embeddedness in long-term historical processes.[1] Similarly, scholars have pointed out that focusing on the Roman, Persian, or Muslim rulers stands in the way of a fuller understanding of societal changes, as this ignores large parts of the population, especially more marginal non-elite groups and minorities.[2] Finally, scholars have turned from studying empires as the sum of edicts, people, and cultural practices originating from the capital and either rejected or accepted in the provinces, to emphasizing the constant interaction between the center (or multiple centers) and its hinterland.[3] Conferences and publications on Egypt have started to take into account recent scholarly works advocating a "long" late antiquity, focusing on how regional processes interacted with central developments and including population groups not belonging to the governing minority. Examining developments across the chronological limits of the Byzantine and Islamic empires and traversing the community boundaries and geographical divisions that these political hierarchies put in place in an integrated way, however, is rare. More typical is a single stand-alone chapter on pre-Islamic Egypt or Islamic Egypt in works on the Muslim or Roman period respectively.[4] This book, in contrast, brings together various disciplinary points of view, aiming to track the mechanisms and structures through which Egypt connected economically, politically, and culturally to the world surrounding it and taking into account the different population groups throughout.

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[1] Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) and Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, AD 300–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) are perhaps the best-known monographs in this respect.

[2] See esp. also Jack Tannous, *The Making of the Medieval Middle East: Religion, Society, and Simple Believers* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018).

[3] Annliese Nef and Mathieu Tillier, "Introduction: les voies de l'innovation dans un empire islamique polycentrique," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 1–19. Cf. Stefan Heidemann's research project "The Early Islamic Empire at Work: The View from the Regions towards the Center," which was funded by the European Research Council.

[4] See, e.g., Walter Kaegi, "Egypt under Roman Rule: The Legacy of Ancient Egypt" as well as Terry G. Wilfong, "The Non-Muslim Communities: The Christian Communities" and Norman A. Stillman, "The Non-Muslim Communities: The Jewish Community," all in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 34–61, 175–97, and 198–210 respectively; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Beginning of Muslim Rule," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 437–59. Elisabeth R. O'Connell (ed.), *Egypt in the First Millennium AD: Perspectives from New Fieldwork* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014) offers such a long-term approach from an archaeological perspective. Similarly, Federico Morelli, *I prezzi dei materiali e prodotti artigianali nei documenti tardoantichi del primo periodo arabo (IV ex.–VII d.C.)* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2019) studies developments in prizes of artisanal products from the Roman through the Islamic periods.

By not only focusing on long-term dynamics but also addressing regional interconnectedness, this volume also tries to rescue Egypt from its somewhat isolated position in current historical debates, especially among historians of Islamic history. To be sure, the last few decades have seen the publication of studies that greatly contribute to our understanding of, for example, Egypt's late antique and early Islamic military, fiscal and legal administration, economy, material culture, and literary production. These studies attest to the availability of a large variety of sources for the region's history, from archaeological material to documentary and literary texts in Arabic, Coptic, and Greek. But they often show little concern for Egypt's role and distinct-iveness in and beyond the Mediterranean. This volume, by contrast, approaches these sources as functions of a polycentric world of reciprocal relationships between Egypt and larger political, economic, and cultural configurations.[5] Focusing on Egypt's connections to and exchanges with the empires it formed a part of, as well as the regions or networks extending beyond such political boundaries, makes clear that the province should not be relegated to its own self-contained corner. Egypt fully participated in larger networks, often playing an important hinge function in connecting regions. Moreover, it participated in historical processes in the Byzantine and Islamic empires, the Mediterranean, and Near East, and should be studied within such larger currents, while conditions within Egypt can be used to shed light on developments in other regions.

This volume approaches Egypt's transregional connectedness from three perspectives. A first group of chapters studies Egypt's political and admin-istrative links across regional boundaries, such as imperial and provincial administration under the Byzantines and the circulation of Egyptian tax revenues beyond the province's borders, the establishment of Muslim rule and early Islamic diplomatic relations, the Umayyad caliphs' programmes of legal harmonization and the employment of client networks to establish the authority of Samarran elites under the ninth-century Tulunids. Bringing together a large variety of archaeological and other material, a second group of chapters maps Egypt's interregional economic connec-tions and the impact of changing geopolitics on commercial networks. The third and final group of chapters discusses Egypt's social and cultural connectedness, from its participation in transregional literary discourses to the impact of imperial policies and political changes on the use of Coptic and Greek in documentary production and administrative terminology. The following pages synthesize some of these chapters' main findings.

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[5] Nef and Tillier, "Introduction."

Political and Administrative Connections

Of prime importance for Egypt's integration into political and administrative configurations was the imperial authorities' capacity to exercise their rule in the province. Centralized military and hierarchical administrative infrastructures enabled imperial rulers to control the use of Egypt's vast resources and to counter successfully domestic attempts to monopolize some of the province's wealth. In the sixth and early seventh centuries, for example, militias maintained by large landholders with administrative responsibilities made it unnecessary for Byzantine imperial authorities to appoint garrisons in much of the Nile Delta and Valley to secure their control.[6] Nonetheless, the archaeological and papyrological sources studied by Stefanie Schmidt point to the existence of significant fortifications on the Egyptian–Nubian frontier around the First Cataract near Aswān to defend Egypt against Nubian and Blemmyan attacks. Tellingly, the highest military commander (and administrative official) in the Thebaid, the *dux et augustalis*, had been directly responsible to the emperor in Constantinople since Justinian (r. 527–65).[7] He supervised the recruitment of soldiers in and near Aswān and commissioned local building programs to make the area more accessible and easier to defend.[8]

Similarly, and like the Sasanians who briefly ruled over Egypt between 619 and 629,[9] the Muslim conquerors too relied on military presence in order to enforce and maintain their power in Egypt. Several recent studies have pointed to the militarized character of the first decades of Muslim rule, mainly in the form of the demilitarization of the Byzantine administration and supervision of the collection and transportation of tax revenues by Muslim garrisons.[10] Of central importance was the foundation of Fusṭāṭ. The establishment of this

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[6] James G. Keenan, "Egypt," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 14: *Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, AD 425–600*, ed. Averil Cameron, Bryan Ward-Perkins and Michael Whitby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 612–37, at 624; Constantin Zuckerman, *Du village à l'empire: autour du registre fiscal d'Aphroditô (525/526)* (Paris: De Boccard, 2004), 170–76.

[7] Bernhard Palme, "The Imperial Presence: Government and Army," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 244–70, at 248.

[8] *P.Münch.* 2 (trans. in Bezalel Porten et al., *The Elephantine Papyri in English: Three Millennia of Cross-Cultural Continuity and Change* [Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill, 1996], 477–79) shows the *dux*'s involvement in recruiting soldiers. For inscriptions commemorating (re)construction programs see Jacques van der Vliet, "Contested Frontiers: Southern Egypt and Northern Nubia, AD 300–1500: The Evidence of the Inscriptions," in *Christianity and Monasticism in Aswan and Nubia*, ed. Gawdat Gabra and Hany N. Takla (Cairo/New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2013), 63–77, at 71–72.

[9] Patrick Sänger, "The Administration of Sasanian Egypt: New Masters and Byzantine Continuity," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 51 (2011), 653–65, at 661–62.

[10] Jelle Bruning, *The Rise of a Capital: Al-Fusṭāṭ and Its Hinterland, 18/639–132/750* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018), 45–49, 111–12; Federico Morelli, *L'archivio di Senouthios Anystes e testi connessi: lettere*

town was part of the Muslims' general conquest tactics and had direct parallels in other towns initially founded as frontier outposts (such as Kūfa and Baṣra in Iraq and, somewhat later, Qayrawān in North Africa). From these garrison towns the Muslim authorities could expand their realm while keeping their soldiers safely secluded from the local population. The establishment of this new Islamic center in Fusṭāṭ involved a reuse and adjustment of Byzantine architecture. By assigning the city the status of capital, the new rulers also broke with the most recent principles of Byzantine political organization (albeit not necessarily with its practice), by which no Egyptian city was singled out as the province's capital. Peter Sheehan and Alison L. Gascoigne study how the Muslim conquerors partially dismantled the Byzantine fortress of Babylon (Qaṣr al-Shamʿ), around which Fusṭāṭ was built, in order to incorporate it into their ceremonial and administrative center around the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ. Contemporary papyrus documents also show how local administrators as far south as the Middle Egyptian town of Hermopolis/Ushmūn(ayn) sent workmen and building materials to Fusṭāṭ. These documents illustrate how the new provincial rulers mobilized local administrations in order to achieve their goals.[11] Such provincial projects can be seen as part of a larger, empire-wide infrastructure of conquest (both resulting from and facilitating further expansion). Matthew S. Gordon shows how, more than two centuries later, the Abbasid empire's military elite in Samarra in Iraq similarly exercised control over the key positions in Egypt's administration, effectively countered local rebellions, and ensured access to agricultural domains.

With political authority secured against foreign and domestic threats, imperial rulers successfully appropriated and redistributed much of Egypt's agricultural surplus. In fact, Peter Sarris argues that Justinian's ability to command the distribution of Egypt's tax revenues over vast distances, while locally regulating the use of gold in financial transactions, shows that Egypt was fully integrated into the Byzantine fiscal system. Sarris also notes that fiscal demands must not be seen as the main force that led to interregional integration. Egypt's huge agricultural productivity made it self-sustaining, which meant that the province was less dependent on the fiscal system than were other regions. Yaacov Lev similarly argues that the shipment of Egyptian grain to the mid-seventh-century Ḥijāz, at that time both the political and religious

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e documenti per la costruzione di una capitale (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 16–18; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Administering the Early Islamic Empire: Insights from the Papyri," in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria: A Review of Current Debates*, ed. John Haldon (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 57–74, at 65–67; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 64, 71–72, 82.

11 These documents have been published and discussed by Morelli in *L'archivio di Senouthios*.

heartland of the caliphate, is indicative of the early Islamic caliphs' ability to exploit Egypt's agricultural surplus and of their skill at using existing commercial infrastructures for their own ends. Equally, in their discussion of the mid-seventh-century relocation of the Nile entrance to Trajan's Canal (later renamed Canal of the Commander of the Faithful), Peter Sheehan and Alison L. Gascoigne show the early Islamic authorities' concern for maintaining the canal and Fusṭāṭ's connection with the Red Sea and beyond. These views fit the reports in the seventh-century *Chronicle* by John of Nikiu. This bishop, who wrote one of the earliest literary accounts on the Islamic conquest of Egypt, reports that indigenous conscripts reexcavated the canal because it had silted up. Muslim historiography links this early reexcavation to the transportation of grain supplies to the Ḥijāz.[12] Petra M. Sijpesteijn looks at papyrological evidence dating to the end of the seventh century that confirms that wheat was shipped through the Red Sea port at Clysma, presumably via Trajan's Canal.

Umayyad and Abbasid policies gradually centralized power in the hands of caliphs and their provincial representatives, but also led to localized forms of these policies' implementation. Well known are the large-scale reforms of caliphs belonging to the Marwanid branch of the Umayyad family, who ruled in Damascus between 684 and 750. Most of these reforms date to the first decades after the second Marwanid caliph, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 685–705), defeated the rival caliph ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr in 692. In Egypt the reforms included fiscal changes, increased administrative supervision, new (coercive) methods to secure tax payments, and patronage of Islam in the form of, amongst others, the building or renovation of mosques, the appointment of Muslim (rather than Christian) administrative personnel, and occasional anti-Christian policies.[13]

In this volume four contributions illustrate the local impact of and response to these and other Marwanid policies. Jennifer Cromwell studies the unprecedented use of Coptic for writing tax-demand notes from the late seventh century on. She notes that administrators did not use Coptic for this purpose before the reign of the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān and that the pagarchs who issued the documents can all be identified as Muslims. She argues that this use of Coptic must be seen in the light of the Marwanids' contemporary attempts to increase the

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[12] John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu: Translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text*, trans. Robert H. Charles (London/Oxford: Williams & Norgate, 1916), 195 [CXX.31]. For Muslim historiography see John P. Cooper, *The Medieval Nile: Route, Navigation, and Landscape in Islamic Egypt* (Cairo/New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2014), 95–99.

[13] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 91–111.

efficacy of the fiscal system. Similarly pointing at changes in administrative personnel, Janneke H. M. de Jong argues that the use of Greek declined simultaneously with the rise of Coptic in administrative circles. Likewise, Peter Sheehan and Alison L. Gascoigne show that a major development in Fusṭāṭ's townscape took place around this time. The late seventh-century archaeology of a church and possible patriarchal see confirms Muslim and non-Muslim historiography on the contemporary Muslim governor's intensified interaction with the Coptic patriarch, recently interpreted as a means to further Muslim rule over Egypt's predominantly anti-Chalcedonian population as part of centralization and Islamization policies.[14] Lastly, the first decades of the eighth century witnessed attempts at the homogenization of legal practices throughout the Umayyad caliphate – imperial intervention reminiscent of Justinian's legal policies (see below). Mathieu Tillier traces the development of Egypt's seventh- and eighth-century Muslim communities' gradual integration in an empire-wide legal tradition. Whereas the first generations of Muslims in Egypt had developed their own legal practice, his analysis of historical and legal sources demonstrates that Marwanid caliphs, notably ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (r. 717–20) and Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 724–43), successfully homogenized law in their realm by actively introducing a legal convention inspired by Medinan procedural law. Importantly, they did so after local administrators of justice (governors, *qāḍī*s) asked them for legal advice, which indicates that these administrators were receptive of and even actively sought such changes.[15]

Economic Connections

Regime change, notably the establishment of Sasanian and Muslim rule in the first half of the seventh century, and the implementation of new policies, such as those described above, had a limited effect on Egypt's

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[14] Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 39–44. See also Audrey Dridi, "Christians of Fustat in the First Three Centuries of Islam: The Making of a New Society," in *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Old Cairo*, ed. Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tanya Treptow (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2015), 33–40, at 39; and Joshua Mabra, *Princely Authority in the Early Marwānid State: The Life of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān (d. 86/705)* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2017), 141–53.

[15] See Frederick Naerebout's discussion on centrally organized attempts at homogenization being locally experienced as divergence: Frederick Naerebout, "Convergence and Divergence: One Empire, Many Cultures," in *Integration in Rome and in the Roman World: Proceedings of the Tenth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Lille, June 23–25, 2011)*, ed. Gerda de Kleijn and Stéphane Benoist (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2014), 263–81, at 276–77.

regional economic integration, which was based on transregional commercial networks connecting the Mediterranean with Africa, Arabia, and South Asia on the one hand and Persia, Central, and East Asia on the other. And while the Mediterranean's economy in the last century-and-a-half of Byzantine rule increasingly gained a more localized character and decreased in complexity, Egypt maintained its internal prosperity.[16] The archaeological material Joanita Vroom studies and the historical and papyrological material from Egypt discussed by Petra M. Sijpesteijn indicate that the establishment of Muslim rule in the Near East and much of North Africa had little effect on cross-Mediterranean trade networks involving Egypt. The establishment of the rule of the Rightly Guided caliphs in Egypt around 640 or, little more than a century later, that of the Abbasids, as Joanita Vroom shows, did not affect the production and distribution of Egyptian amphorae throughout the eastern Mediterranean. Likewise, Gideon Avni argues for the continued export of Palestinian products, especially oil, to Egypt when the Near East transitioned from Byzantine to Islamic rule. The establishment of a vast politically unified realm under Islam, in fact, may have contributed to increased economic activity and more complex commercial interaction centered on the eastern Mediterranean. It is only in the ninth century with the development of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean routes that significant shifts in trade activities can be observed, as Yaacov Lev and Petra M. Sijpesteijn argue.

Despite the economic centrality enjoyed by major cities such as Alexandria and Fusṭāṭ, these economic networks that connected Egypt to the wider Mediterranean basin reached deep into the province. In the sixth century, for instance, Egypt's integration in the Byzantine economy did not rest on urban mercantile activity but fully involved the province's rural areas. In fact, Peter Sarris argues that distinguishing between a rural and an urban economy in sixth-century Egypt disregards the high degree of intraregional economic integration. The economy of villages such as Aphrodito/Ishqūh and Jeme in southern Egypt, or that of large estates such as those owned by the Apion family around Oxyrhynchus/Bahnasā, was highly commercialized. The Apion estates generated such profits that the Apion family must be counted among the richest of their time. Sarris's

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[16] Bryan Ward-Perkins, "Specialized Production and Exchange," in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 14: *Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, AD 425–600*, ed. Averil Cameron, Bryan Ward-Perkins, and Michael Whitby (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 346–91, at 352–54; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "The Rise and Fall of Empires in the Islamic Mediterranean (600–1600 CE): Political Change, the Economy and Material Culture," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. Tamar Hodos (London/New York: Routledge, 2017), 652–68, at 654.

argument for intraregional economic integration confirms recently published ideas on the important role the peasantry played in the late antique economy at large.[17] In fact, Joanita Vroom's discussion of the distribution of Egyptian amphorae produced between the seventh and tenth centuries shows the existence of mercantile connections between workshops in the Nile Delta, Middle Egypt, and Aswān on the one hand and markets in Asia Minor, the Near East, North Africa, Crete, and Nubia on the other. Her analysis of ceramic material excavated in Fusṭāṭ in layers dated to the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods further indicates that, despite the presence of some non-Egyptian flasks and amphorae, Fusṭāṭ's ceramics market mostly drew on local production centers and does not show the interregional connectivity of contemporary workshops elsewhere in Egypt. In other words, the town seems to have formed a vibrant market for its Egyptian hinterland.[18]

Market forces as well as the policies and effective authority of imperial rulers shaped such connections.[19] The ceramics Joanita Vroom and Gideon Avni study in their contributions show, for example, that pottery workshops located in Egypt's wine-producing areas attracted seasonal migrant workers and that in Palestine there was enough demand for foreign products (notably wine, fish products, and natron) to attract Egyptian merchants.

Economic decline, on the other hand, in neighboring regions or areas further away affected Egypt directly as it participated in a well-connected commercial exchange network that, at times, can be rightly called "global." The waning power of the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad from the ninth century impacted Egypt's position in the caliphate in different ways. Matthew S. Gordon argues that the collapse of the Abbasids' authority enabled military elites in Samarra to create a foothold in Egypt and appropriate agricultural domains. Egyptian semi-independent dynasties such as the Tulunids and Ikhshidids benefited from the local power vacuum. Petra M. Sijpesteijn sees the rise in Egypt's economy as a stark contrast to that of Iraq. Commercial hubs on the Red Sea coast started to flourish and economic migrants from Iraq settled in Egypt.

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[17] Mark Whittow, "How Much Trade Was Local, Regional and Inter-Regional? A Comparative Perspective on the Late Antique Economy," in *Local Economies? Production and Exchange of Inland Regions in Late Antiquity*, ed. Luke Lavan (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2013), 133–65.

[18] See also Bruning, *The Rise of a Capital*, 60–67.

[19] For the existence of a late antique market economy see Jean-Michel Carrié, "Were Late Roman and Byzantine Economies Market Economies? A Comparative Look at Historiography," in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. Cécile Morrisson (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2012), 13–26.

Contributions to this volume also illustrate the impact of the policies of Byzantine emperors and Muslim caliphs on agriculture and trade in Egypt. We saw an example of how political authorities facilitated commerce by creating and maintaining infrastructures in the partial relocation and reexcavation of Trajan's Canal soon after the Muslim conquest. Peter Sarris provides a further example of the influence of regimes on agriculture and trade as well as Egypt's interregional economic ties. He writes that the creation of the legal institution of the adscripticiate in the sixth century gave Byzantine large landholders, such as the Apion family in Oxyrhynchus/Bahnasā, more control over their workforce. Gideon Avni, in addition, points to the indirect impact of the Umayyad caliphs' foundation of military settlements on the Palestinian coast on local economic ties with Egypt. Petra M. Sijpesteijn discusses how political events such as the deployment of armies and the appointment of officials, but also the movement of people, goods, and ideas as a result of pilgrimage, tourism, education, trade, and migration, affected local commercial production and material culture, further contributing to Egypt's integration into the caliphate.

But arguably more essential was the ordinary security of person and property that the Byzantine and early Islamic regimes provided. It created a level of (commercial) confidence that was needed to sustain local and (inter)regional economic exchange.[20] A well-known and central task was to ensure safe and honest trade at markets, for example. The official weights bearing the names of Umayyad and early Abbasid authorities, excavated in a commercial quarter of Fusṭāṭ, and an official's seal stamped on an amphora stopper found in Bawīṭ, to which Joanita Vroom refers, illustrate well the central authorities' (delegated) supervision of commerce at markets or checkpoints and their regulation of local prices. For this, Muslim authorities in the seventh and eighth centuries used the existing metrological tradition and, interestingly, did not attempt to homogenize metrology throughout their realm, as Eugenio Garosi argues. Like market supervision, upholding a legal system that secured one's rights was one of the activities with which regimes contributed to that essential level of confidence. Peter Sarris points at laws introduced by Justinian that made it more difficult to forge legal documents; and Mathieu Tillier discusses how Egyptian governors and qāḍīs who were unsure how to solve certain disputes could solicit legal advice from the caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz

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[20] Whittow, "How Much Trade Was Local, Regional and Inter-Regional?" 157–59; Jessica L. Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and their Business World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 164–77.

(r. 717–20). Likewise, eighth-century historians understood the terms of the *baqṭ*, discussed by Stefanie Schmidt and Sylvie Denoix, to regulate the rights of Egyptian traders in Nubia and Nubian traders in Egypt. A diplomatic letter from 758, which both Schmidt and Denoix discuss, shows the efforts of Egyptian authorities in Aswān as well as Fusṭāṭ to secure the well-being of Egyptian traders operating in Nubia and their support of merchants whose rights had been violated.

Social and Cultural Connections

Like its impact on some of these economic developments, the history of Egypt's political integration in the five centuries studied in this volume left an imprint on the region's cultural connections to the Mediterranean basin and the Near East. By the time Justinian became emperor, for example, law in Egypt was firmly embedded in that of the empire at large. Papyri dating from the last century-and-a-half of Byzantine rule over Egypt indicate that local jurists and notaries were familiar with imperial laws, and even had access to codes written at the center of the empire.[21] Importantly, papyri also show that many of these laws were practiced.[22] Although some Egyptians may have chosen to deal with legal matters in unofficial ways, Peter Sarris discusses papyri from sixth-century Oxyrhynchus/Bahnasā attesting, for instance, to the application of Justinian's newly introduced laws on the dating formula of legal documents and their being attached to papyrus protocols, and his law concerning fees for money-changing. Justinian's well-known changes in late antique legislation, Sarris argues, resulted in an empire-wide legal culture. Under Islam, too, caliphs successfully enforced legal and administrative changes in Egypt as elsewhere in their realm. As already noted above, they brought law among Egypt's Muslim communities in line with legal practices elsewhere in their empire. Mathieu Tillier dates the beginning of imperial intervention in law among Muslims in Egypt to the early eighth century, when the Muslim empire went through a period of immense political, religious, and cultural development, which is reflected, amongst others, in contemporary papyri with

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[21] Simon Corcoran, "After Krüger: Observations on Some Additional or Revised Justinian Code Headings and Subscripts," *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte: Romanistische Abteilung* 126/1 (2009), 423–39, esp. 424–32. See also the references in Simon Corcoran, "Anastasius, Justinian, and the Pagans: A Tale of Two Law Codes and a Papyrus," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 2/2 (2009), 183–208, at 184 n.3.

[22] Joëlle Beaucamp, "Byzantine Egypt and Imperial Law," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 271–87.

legal content.[23] Linguistic changes on fiscal documents and in papyrus protocols point at empire-wide administrative changes in personnel, scribal practice, and political representation, but also at local variations (see the contributions of Jennifer Cromwell, Janneke H. M. de Jong, Petra M. Sijpesteijn, and Eugenio Garosi).

Like the intensification of economic contact with the east of the Muslim empire from the mid-eighth century on, cultural connections between Egypt and that part of the Muslim world greatly intensified after the establishment of Abbasid rule in 750. Mathieu Tillier's systematic analysis of biographical encyclopaedias shows that before that date hardly any non-Egyptian jurists and very few foreign students visited Egypt to transmit or receive legal knowledge. By contrast, these sources record that scholars from the extremes of the Muslim empire, notable the legally very influential region of Khurasan in the East, started to visit Egypt seeking and transmitting legal knowledge in the second half of the eighth century. Similarly attesting to cultural influences of the East on an unprecedented scale, Eugenio Garosi's examination of Arabic loanwords in papyri, inscriptions, and on coins reveals that terms originating in Middle Persian, such as *kharāj* and *dānaq*, started to be used in Egypt after the Abbasid takeover. He connects the introduction of these words in an Egyptian context with contemporary changes in Arabic palaeography, fiscal formulary, letter openings, and use of signs found in Egyptian documents, each ascribed to the influence of Abbasid administrators arriving in the province from the East. Egypt's eastward cultural orientation from the second half of the eighth century also materialized in the changing form and decoration of pottery from the ninth century. Joanita Vroom argues that ninth- and tenth-century potters working in Fusṭāṭ imitated imports from Baṣra in Iraq and copied Chinese decoration styles. The relocation in Egypt of Iraqi artisans after the collapse of central Abbasid command in the second half of the ninth century also brought technical skills with them that had an impact on local architectural features, as Petra M. Sijpesteijn argues.

Such changing forms of cultural expression show how Egypt was integrated into empire-wide developments, but they also possessed regional characteristics, setting them apart from similar cultural exponents elsewhere in the Near East and North Africa. Two chapters in this volume, which concern local characteristics of literary productions of Egypt's Muslim and Christian communities, illustrate this most clearly. Jelle Bruning argues that the participation of Muslim intellectuals from Egypt

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[23] Mathieu Tillier, *L'invention du cadi: la justice des musulmans, des juifs et des chrétiens aux premiers siècles de l'islam* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2017), 50–77.

in an empire-wide discourse on geographical meaningfulness, what Zayde Antrim has called "discourse of place,"[24] found expression in localized *faḍāʾil* lore. His discussion unearths a literary theme, predominantly found in Egyptian literature from the eighth to the tenth centuries, that ascribes religious significance to the city of Alexandria. Looking at contemporary literature produced by Egyptian Christians, in Coptic and in Arabic, Maged S. A. Mikhail studies how these texts reflect developments both within and beyond their target audiences. Reviewing works of a historical, hagiographical, and apocalyptic nature, Mikhail argues that these texts are promising sources for studying local responses to empire-wide changes, the reception of pre-Islamic literature among Christian communities under Muslim rule, and this literature's connections with texts produced elsewhere in the Mediterranean basin.

Together, this book's chapters on Egypt's political and administrative, economic, social, and cultural connections to other regions also show that processes of integration are interdependent and cannot be fully understood through the prism of politics, law, literature, economy, or material culture alone. Each of these domains stands in a reciprocal relationship with the others. For example, political appointments or the despatch of imperial armies lead to a convergence of material, administrative, legal, and even literary practices. It is also clear from the diversity of sources that make their appearance in the book and that are often combined in contributions to provide a similar kind of integrated history. Written sources addressed in this book range from official literature produced at imperial capitals, to local writings of historical, religious, and even near-anecdotal nature, and to private records and seemingly ephemeral notes on papyrus and other materials, sometimes discarded on waste dumps in provincial areas. The archaeological sources this volume studies are as diverse as the remains of buildings, notably the Byzantine fortress of Babylon and Aswān's city walls, official inscriptions and other monumental epigraphy, but also various types of pottery for the transportation of luxury export products as well as locally produced foodstuffs made in Egypt or shipped to the province. The availability of this rich source material for a period that witnessed drastic political reconfigurations and cultural realignments allows us to see that throughout the 500 years covered in this book Egypt remained intimately involved in and connected to developments and events taking place elsewhere in the Byzantine and Muslim empires.

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[24] Zayde Antrim, *Routes and Realms: The Power of Place in the Early Islamic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

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Political and Administrative Connections

Egypt in the Age of Justinian: Connector or Disconnector?

Peter Sarris

Introduction: Egypt within the Empire

Until comparatively recently it was common for historians of the ancient and medieval periods to treat Egypt as a world unto itself which was only partially drawn into the broader political and cultural currents of the Mediterranean first by the "fiery genius of Alexander" (as Harold Idris Bell put it), and then by the imperial ambitions of Rome, which effectively treated it as a colony.[1] Even for much of its Roman history, it was claimed, Egypt stood apart in terms of language, culture, religion, and social and economic institutions, inheriting a particularist legacy that placed it at some remove from the mainstream of Greco-Roman culture, and which would be bequeathed in the Islamic period to the haughty patriarchs of the Coptic Church.[2] This approach has had a long afterlife: it sometimes reemerges, for example, in studies of the transition from Byzantine to Islamic rule, and there are still papyrologists who insist that Egyptian sources can tell us about little other than Egypt.

Insofar as such an approach has any validity for earlier periods of Greco-Roman history, it is completely unjustifiable with respect to Egypt in the age of Justinian (r. 527–65). For, by the early sixth century, Egypt formed a fiscally, economically, socially, culturally, and politically highly integrated region of the late Roman world, and in certain key respects constituted the powerhouse of the Mediterranean economy.[3] Especially from an economic perspective, studying the empire of Justinian without consideration of Egypt would be akin to studying motor-vehicle maintenance

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[1] H. I. Bell, "The Byzantine Servile State in Egypt," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 4 (1917), 86–106, at 105.

[2] See discussion in M. S. A. Mikhael, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014).

[3] P. Sarris, *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 10.

whilst choosing to ignore the existence of the car's engine. Over twenty-five years ago I argued (borrowing a concept from Jordanes) that we needed to find ways of making the history of Byzantine Egypt more Roman.[4] With the publication of studies such as Jairus Banaji's *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity* (2001), Chris Wickham's *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (2005), and Constantine Zuckerman's *Du village à l'empire* (2004), as well as Roger Bagnall's edited volume *Egypt in the Byzantine World* (2007) that point has arguably long since been reached, and Egypt now forms a natural and expected component of broader studies of the late antique world.[5] Indeed, it will be argued here that Egypt in the age of Justinian was more fully integrated into the Roman or Byzantine imperial system than it ever had been, or indeed ever would be thereafter. The early sixth century would effectively constitute the high water mark of the region's phase of Roman integration, although the forces of disintegration were already evident, and that is true even if we set aside the region's increasingly fractious religious history across the sixth and seventh centuries, which will not be addressed here, but which is in urgent need of reappraisal, less reliant than traditional accounts have been on the shrill and distorting testimony of the most hardline post-conquest Miaphysite sources.[6]

Imperial Integration

The process of integration, we should note, had been steady but unremitting, with the three centuries of Roman rule leading up to Justinian witnessing a number of key developments: in the third century, in Egypt as elsewhere, Roman citizenship had been extended to the entire free population, and city-based municipal government had been introduced and established beyond Alexandria in the Nile Valley;[7] in the fourth century the Ptolemaic land categories had been abolished,[8] and members of the upper echelons of the civic elites of Egypt were drawn into the

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[4] P. Sarris, "Egypt in the Age of Justinian," seminar paper delivered at the Oxford University "After Rome" seminar, May 1996.

[5] J. Banaji, *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity: Gold, Labour and Aristocratic Dominance*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007 [2001]); C. Zuckerman, *Du village à l'empire: autour du registre fiscal d'Aphroditô (525/526)* (Paris: De Boccard, 2004); C. Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); R. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[6] Professor Philip Booth of the University of Oxford is currently working on just such a study.

[7] A. K. Bowman and D. Rathbone, "Cities and Administration in Roman Egypt," *Journal of Roman Studies* 82 (1992), 107–27.

[8] J. Rowlandson, *Landowners and Tenants in Roman Egypt: The Social Relations of Agriculture in the Oxyrhynchite Nome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 27–69.

nascent aristocracy of service of the eastern Roman empire, with its new focus and capital at Constantinople.[9] With the adoption of Christianity and the increased use of the gold *solidus*, members of that same elite increasingly adopted both the faith and the currency of the Constantinian dynasty, thereby further facilitating both their political and socioeconomic integration into broader imperial structures. Finally, in the early sixth century, under Justin I (r. 518–27) and Justinian, the small denomination coinage of Egypt was reformed on lines parallel to those instituted by the emperor Anastasius (r. 491–518) in his reform of the copper coinage elsewhere in the eastern empire at the end of the fifth century.[10]

In terms of economic institutions, by Justinian's reign the only difference between Egypt and the rest of the empire was that the Egyptian copper coinage possessed a slightly different denominational structure to that found elsewhere. It would appear that the scale and intensity of monetization in the Egyptian economy was such that it was simply impossible to gather in and reissue the entire mass of the coinage already in circulation, and as a result aspects of the preexisting denominational structure had to be built upon and maintained. But with that peculiarity aside, the region was otherwise locked into the broader gold-based and *solidus*-fueled fiscal economy of the East Roman world, as is revealed, for example, by Justinian's Edict 11, dating from 559, which sought to regulate the process whereby bankers and money-changers (*zygostatai* and *chrysônes*) exchanged bags of small-denomination coin for the gold demanded by the state for purposes of taxation, and on which they had been levying a surcharge known as *obryza* at the expense of the state (which was not permitted) as opposed to at the expense of taxpayers (which had hitherto been allowed).[11] As Justinian declared from the imperial capital at Constantinople, "the gold currency of Egypt is to be reckoned for transactions as it is for that struck in this great city."[12] The gold currency, which was intimately associated with contemporary perceptions of imperial power, was to be treated as common to Alexandria, Egypt, and the Roman world at large. As has been noted elsewhere, Egyptians also made a fundamental contribution to the development of Byzantine intellectual and literary culture in its formative late antique phase, and in the reign of the emperor Anastasius, in particular, there is evidence for the existence in

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[9] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 177–83.

[10] Zuckerman, *Du village*, 65, 109–11; M. F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy, c.300–1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 475–77.

[11] *J.Edict* 11.   [12] *J.Edict* 11 c.1.

Constantinople of a well-connected literary salon made up of individuals of Egyptian origin.[13]

Where Egypt did, however, continue to stand apart from other regions of the East Roman world was in terms of its level of economic development, and the extent to which that development was self-sustaining, as opposed to being ultimately reliant on the fiscal structures of the Roman state. Central to the economic cohesion and significance of Egypt was, of course, the region's unique natural resources and, in particular, the Nile flood. The Nile inundation, combined with the irrigation systems, canals, and technological innovations that further facilitated agriculture beyond the Nile Valley, blessed Egypt with fecundity unrivaled in the Mediterranean world. As the anonymous fourth-century gazeteer of the empire, the *Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium*, declared, "the entire region of Egypt is crowned with a river which they call the Nile," which "waters the entire face of the land and effortlessly brings forth all sorts of produce – namely wheat, barley, vegetables and much wine."[14] Such fecundity facilitated high population levels, and, in particular, very high population density in the Nile Valley as well as in Alexandria and the Nile Delta.[15] It is likely that roughly one-quarter of the population of the eastern Roman empire in the age of Justinian lived in Egypt, of whom up to one-third may have lived in cities.[16] The extent to which Egypt was liberated from the uncertainties of dry farming also meant that members of the population were freer to engage in artisanal and other non-agricultural economic activities than they would have been elsewhere. Moreover, the ease and cheapness of communication by water along the Nile rendered practicable and supported a very high degree of interregional integration and correspondingly high degrees of specialization.[17] Indeed, it has been postulated that the "gross provincial product" of sixth-century Egypt may have amounted to a minimum of some 20 million *solidi*.[18]

In Egypt, even trade by land across quite long distances was clearly economically viable: there is evidence, for example, for the commercialized cultivation of olives as far inland as the Kharga and Dakhleh Oases in the Western Desert, commodities that were conveyed vast distances, but which

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[13] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 15–17.

[14] *Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium*, ed. J. Rougé (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1966), 166–68 (= c.34).

[15] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 10.   [16] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 10.

[17] P. Sarris, "The Early Byzantine Economy in Context: Aristocratic Property and Economic Growth Reconsidered," *Early Medieval Europe* 19 (2011), 255–84, at 262.

[18] Banaji, *Agrarian Change*, 65.

nevertheless evidently remained competitive in Egyptian markets.[19] The effectiveness of interregional economic integration within and beyond Egypt is also revealed by the fact that, in his lengthy Edict 13 of 538–39 on Alexandria and the Egyptian provinces, Justinian was able to command that tax revenues collected from the Mareotic region in the Nile Delta were to be hypothecated to support the empire's military and administrative personnel based at Paraetonium, some 290 km to the west of Alexandria, and stationed along the Libyan frontier.[20]

In the Justinianic period the fecundity of Egypt was primarily drawn upon by the state to oblige landowners to grow wheat on a vast scale, turning the region into the breadbasket of the empire. According to the same Edict 13 of Justinian, the imperial authorities shipped over 240 million kg of grain a year from Egypt to Constantinople, in what was known as the "happy shipment."[21] Constantine Zuckerman has argued that this would have been sufficient to feed some 750,000 people, which, consequently, he suggests, may have been the size of Constantinople's population at this time.[22] Such a population level, however, sounds too high, and we should note that both the fourth-century *Expositio Totius Mundi et Gentium* and the sixth-century historian Procopius concur that the imperially directed grain supply was also used to feed other cities in the east as well as the imperial army on campaign.[23] It is noteworthy, for example, that when, in 502–03, war broke out between the eastern Roman empire and Persia, necessitating a large-scale mobilization of military manpower, the food supply for the imperial field army in Syria was entrusted to an Egyptian landowner from Oxyrhynchus by the name of Flavius Apion – a member of the great Apion family whose private archive survives papyrologically – who directed supplies via Alexandria to Edessa.[24] In terms of money taxes, it was estimated by Jones that the region may have contributed some 100 *centenaria* of gold or over 720,000 *solidi*.[25] Hendy has suggested that this would have amounted to about three-eighths of the taxes in gold that accrued to the Praetorian Prefecture of the East in Justinian's reign.[26] Already in the fourth century, the author of the *Expositio* had felt able to declare that "no other province could subsist

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[19] R. Bagnall, "Evidence and Models for the Economy of Roman Egypt," in *The Ancient Economy: Evidence and Models*, ed. J. G. Manning and I. Morris (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), 187–206, at 196–97.

[20] *J.Edict* 13 c.18.   [21] *J.Edict* 13 c.8.   [22] Zuckerman, *Du village*, 194–212.

[23] *Expositio*, 172 (= c.36); Procopius, *Anecdota* 22.14–17.

[24] Procopius, *Wars* 1.8.5; Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 16–17.

[25] A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964), 463.

[26] Hendy, *Studies*, 172.

without divine Egypt,"[27] whilst, in his Edict 13, Justinian decreed that the proper collection of taxes in the region pertained "to the very cohesion of our state itself."[28]

Networks of Exchange

Egypt, therefore, was regarded as a major source of potential revenue in both coin and (especially) in kind, and this was its primary economic significance to the broader East Roman world. Critically, however, in terms of private economic activity, the extraordinary wealth and high population density of late antique Egypt meant that very substantial profits could be derived from internal, localized patterns of production and exchange, a phenomenon visible in both the archaeological and papyrological record, and this may have acted as a disincentive to any long-distance export trade, save for in the case of a small number of exceptionally high-value goods, or items in which Egypt possessed an effective monopoly, such as in the production of papyrus.[29] The author of the *Expositio*, for example, as we have seen, noted the abundance of viticulture in the region.[30] Yet the ceramic evidence reveals that Egypt seems to have exported comparatively little by way of wine, the main Egyptian amphora type (in which wine was transported) being found in only relatively small quantities along the sea-lanes leading to Constantinople and the Palestinian littoral.[31]

Many Egyptian amphorae probably traveled toward Constantinople with the grain shipment: Justinian's Edict 13, for example, mentions jars being exported from Alexandria and subject to tallage.[32] But Egyptian wines, in any case, were not regarded as being of particularly good quality. Rather, middling-quality Egyptian wines appear to have been produced, but produced en masse for a middling but mass Egyptian market. Likewise, Chris Wickham has noted how little penetration of Egyptian markets is discernible on the part of finewares made outside the region. Instead, locally produced finewares, produced in huge quantities in factory-like conditions for the local market of the Nile Valley, appear to have success-fully squeezed out African Red Slip Ware (the main late Roman fineware type) over the course of the fifth century.[33]

Both in terms of imports and exports, of course, finewares can only tell us so much about certain types of merchandise, and Egypt is recorded in the

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[27] *Expositio*, 172 (= c.36).   [28] *J.Edict* 13, proemium.
[29] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 11; Wickham, *Framing*, 259–69.   [30] *Expositio*, 168 (=c.34).
[31] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 12 and Vroom in this volume (Chapter 9).   [32] *J.Edict* 13 c.15.
[33] Wickham, *Framing*, 760.

literary sources as having furnished a market for goods ranging from Spanish olive oil, Gallic soap, and Rhodian wine to Arabian frankincense, African slaves, Ethiopian hippopotamus tusks, and pickled fish from Gaza. Likewise, in terms of exports, two fifth-century Alexandrian horoscopes record that ships left Egypt with mixed cargoes comprising small birds, papyrus, camels, high-quality textiles, objects of bronze, kitchen utensils, silver, and dried goods – few of which would be easily visible to the archaeological eye. Egyptian textiles, in particular, appear to have been highly regarded and were prized in the early medieval west.[34] So lucrative was the "retail sector" in sixth-century Alexandria that the Augustal Prefect Flavius Hephaestus is reported by Procopius to have decided to extend governmental control over aspects of it to help boost state coffers, in a characteristically Justinianic act of mercantilism also revealed at around the same time by the government's decision to assert control over the silk industry and other trades.[35]

Egypt also played an important role as an entrepôt and transit point for long-distance trade. Egypt in general, and Alexandria in particular, stood at the nexus of a series of interregional trade routes that traversed much of the known world. The *Life* of the seventh-century patriarch of Alexandria John the Almsgiver, written by Leontius of Neapolis around 641–42, describes merchant ships belonging to the patriarchate visiting not only Palestine, but also the Adriatic, Sicily, and Marseilles. In one episode a merchant vessel is recorded to have traveled as far as Britain, with which the empire certainly maintained economic contact up to Justinian's reign.[36] Nor were trading relations limited to the Mediterranean and the west. In the mid-sixth-century *Christian Topography* the Alexandrian merchant Cosmas wrote of how an acquaintance of his by the name of Sopatros had visited the island of Taprobane (assumed to be Sri Lanka), whilst the author of the *Expositio* commented on the large numbers of foreign merchants and commodities to be found in Alexandria itself.[37] Likewise, the *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini*, written around 560–70, describes ships from the Red Sea and possibly beyond (the whole region was known as "India") docking at the Red Sea port of

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[34] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 11–13.

[35] Procopius, *Anecdota* 26.36; C. Zuckerman, "Silk 'Made in Byzantium': A Study of Economic Policies of Emperor Justinian," in *Constructing the Seventh Century*, ed. Constantin Zuckerman, *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 323–50; R. Delmaire, *Largesses sacrées et res privata* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1989), 301–05.

[36] G. R. Monks, "The Church of Alexandria and the City's Economic Life in the Sixth Century," *Speculum* 28 (1953), 349–62, at 356; P. Sarris, *Empires of Faith: The Fall of Rome to the Rise of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 200–01.

[37] Cosmas Indicopleustes, *Christian Topography* 11.17–19: see W. Wolska-Conus, *La topographie chrétienne de Cosmas*, 3 vols. (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1968–73), 3:348–50; *Expositio*, 170 (=c.35).

Clysma.[38] Given the role played by Egypt in interregional trade – especially with the Red Sea and East Africa – it should come as little surprise that it should have been the first region of the empire to be struck by the bubonic plague in 541, which was first spotted, Procopius tells us, at the port town of Pelusium, having arrived, according to Evagrius, from Ethiopia, where the archaeology would suggest a major cataclysm befell Aksum at around this time.[39]

The role of "India" and "Indian" trade, however, should not be exaggerated. There is evidence that by Justinian's reign the Persians were already successfully squeezing the Romans out of Indian markets and diverting eastern trade up the Gulf; and within the Indian subcontinent itself, as Timothy Power has noted, contemporary processes of political fragmentation were not conducive to the forging of new economic links.[40] As a result, under Justin I and Justinian the imperial authorities would appear to have taken the decision to effectively outsource Red Sea and Indian Ocean trade to (typically Aksumite) middlemen, onto whose shoulders the imperial government may have been keen to offload the transactional risks associated with a diminishing volume of trade. Certainly, under Justinian we see little evidence of the sort of concerted investment in the infrastructure of Red Sea ports that one encounters under the Constantinian dynasty, and which archaeologists associate in particular with the reign of Constantius II (337–61).[41] Only under Islamic rule would Donald Whitcomb's "commercial crescent," embracing the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Persian Gulf, finally come of age.[42]

Although there is, therefore, good reason to think that the ceramic evidence may well overstate the lopsidedness of Egypt's "balance of trade" in the age of Justinian, it nevertheless conveys the important point that, in a way that was perhaps otherwise only true of late Roman Africa (which was also a net exporter of tax revenues), the self-sustaining

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[38] Antoninus Placentinus, *Itinerarium*: see C. Milani, *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini: un viaggio in terra Santa del 560–570 d. C.* (Rome: Università Cattolica, 1977), 216.

[39] P. Sarris, "The Justinianic Plague: Origins and Effects," *Continuity and Change* 17 (2002), 169–82; P. Sarris, "Climate and Disease," in *A Companion to the Global Early Middle Ages*, ed. E. Hermans (Amsterdam: ARC Humanities Press, 2020), 511–37; P. Sarris, "New Approaches to the 'Plague of Justinian'," *Past & Present* 254 (2022), 315–46.

[40] T. Power, *The Red Sea From Byzantium to the Caliphate* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2012), 200–01; J. Banaji, *Exploring the Economy of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 222–36.

[41] Power, *Red Sea*, 52–53.

[42] D. Whitcomb, "The Commercial Crescent: Red Sea Trade in Late Antiquity and Early Islam," paper presented to the Fifth Late Antique and Early Islam Workshop on Trade and Exchange in the Late Antique and Early Islamic Near East, London, November 14–16, 1996.

prosperity of Egypt attained such levels that, in marked contrast to other parts of the late Roman world as argued for by Chris Wickham, the fiscal demands of the Roman state appear to have played only a comparatively minor role in the economic integrity and prosperity of the region. As has been noted elsewhere, this is suggested by the fact that the fundamental realignment of Egypt's fiscal spine over the course of the seventh century (associated first with the cutting off of the grain supply to Constantinople and the Roman world to the north during the Roman–Persian wars of 603–30, then the diversion of Egyptian grain and taxes to Mecca, Medina, and the Arab-ruled territories to the east under the Umayyads, and ultimately the emergence of a fiscally much more freestanding early Islamic Egypt in the eighth century) seems to have had no discernible impact on levels of prosperity.[43]

Indeed (again, as has been noted elsewhere), in Egypt, the fading away of the fiscal demands of the Roman state may simply have served to open up new opportunities to landowners, as land that had hitherto been set aside to grow fiscally demanded cereals could instead be turned to still more lucrative cash crops such as flax. In Egypt, in short, the demands of the Roman state may have served to curtail economic development: there may have been a measure of "opportunity cost" to the production of so much grain for Constantinople, which the later development of the medieval Egyptian textile trade perhaps reveals.[44]

Urban and Rural Commercialization: Contrasting Perspectives

Even in the era of the Justinianic grain shipments to Constantinople, however, as seen earlier, a high degree of specialization of production and, importantly, of commercialization of production is evident not only in urban but also in rural contexts. Indeed, the high population density of Egypt in late antiquity was such that it probably rendered such a distinction between urban and rural unhelpful: the economic development of both the urban and rural sectors of the Egyptian economy was such that settlement hierarchies between cities (*poleis*) and villages (*kômai*) began to break down in the fifth and sixth centuries, a feature which some archaeologists and papyrologists have misread as signaling urban decline.[45] In fact, this phenomenon was probably a result of economic growth.

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[43] Sarris, "Early Byzantine Economy," 262.   [44] Sarris, "Early Byzantine Economy," 263.
[45] P. van Minnen, "The Other Cities in Later Roman Egypt," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. R. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 207–25.

Certainly, a high degree of occupational specialization and diversity is evident with respect to the village of Aphrodito in the sixth century: on the "productive" side of the economy, for example, we find artisans and textile workers alongside shepherds, tenant farmers, and agricultural wage laborers.[46] A similarly high degree of occupational specialization and economic complexity have also been identified with respect to the village of Jeme in the seventh and eighth centuries, where the evidence of *ostraka* has revealed the existence a lively market for credit and moneylending.[47]

Crucially, "market-oriented" specialized production and an engagement with specialized networks of presumably primarily local exchange are also evident with respect to the estates of the magnate households or aristocratic *oikoi*, which were an increasingly pronounced feature of the period from the fourth to sixth centuries, such as that of the Apion family around Oxyrhynchus, one of whose members we have already encountered. As Jairus Banaji and the present author have argued, the papyri that survive from the Apion family's private archive would appear to indicate a significant focus on commodified production with a view to securing cash incomes.[48] The main focus of the family's activities was clearly agricultural, but its agents also invested in and rented out urban property, dealt in credit, and had dealings with merchants such as those engaged in the textile trade for which Oxyrhynchus had long been a center.[49]

This vision of a highly commercialized Egyptian rural economy, embracing not only economically vibrant peasant communities but also economically integrated large estates has, of course, been challenged. The papyrologist Todd Hickey, for example, has argued (in a thought-provoking polemic) that the Apion family's estates and economic investments were rather less productive than has otherwise been supposed, and has done so by focusing on viticulture on the Apion estates, seeking to demonstrate that the family's estates were merely self-sufficient in wine and that their vineyards, as a result, generated no marketable surplus.[50] So, for example, Hickey has declared in his study of the Apion estates that "viticulture is the field on which must be fought the struggle over the economic character of the Apion estate."[51] It is, however, a battleground entirely of his own making, and in many respects it is

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[46] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 96–114.
[47] T. G. Wilfong, *Women of Jeme: Life in a Coptic Town in Late Antique Egypt* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2002).
[48] Banaji, *Agrarian Change*, 89–212; Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 29–95.
[49] Sarris, "Early Byzantine Economy," 264–71.
[50] T. M. Hickey, *Wine, Wealth, and the State in Late Antique Egypt: The House of Apion at Oxyrhynchus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012).
[51] Hickey, *Wine, Wealth, and the State*, 37.

a poorly chosen one. As Roberta Mazza has noted, Hickey's preoccupation with wine is perhaps rather unhelpful given that the Oxyrhynchite (where the Apion estates, as recorded in the papyri, were concentrated) was never really a wine-growing area, and accordingly it should not surprise us that viticulture was comparatively marginal to the life of the Apion household.[52] Moreover, across the Near East viticulture would appear to have entered a period of sustained crisis and decline from the mid-sixth century onward, conceivably as a result of labor shortages associated with the "Justinianic Plague."[53] This may be significant for Hickey's analysis, given that the extant documentary papyri pertaining to the Apion estates primarily date from this era of viticultural decline. Consequently, wine is unlikely to constitute the great "test case" that Hickey would have us believe. Moreover, Hickey's claim that wine is the only potential commodity discernible from the papyri detailing the Apion estates from which the family could possibly have made money is not sustainable. The cultivation of wheat, garden farming, fodder crops such as hay, and flax production were all potentially highly lucrative and are attested in the documentary sources.[54] The estate was also associated with sheep rearing, perhaps indicating an interest in the production of wool for the textile trade for which Oxyrhynchus was famed.[55] Production of hay, in particular, would appear to have been concentrated on sections of the directly managed portion of the Apion estates known as the *autourgia*.[56]

In seigneurial economies, hay-producing land and meadowland were often highly prized and landowners were accordingly keen to keep them under their own control.[57] In Byzantine tax regulations, for example, such lands were subject to a fiscal surcharge.[58] It should not surprise us, therefore, to find a concentration of hay-producing land on the centrally

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[52] R. Mazza, "Land and Power in Late Antiquity: The Egyptian Point of View," paper presented at the Third International Conference of the Research Network Imperium and Officium: *Land and Power in the Ancient and Post-Ancient World*, Vienna, 20–22 February, 2013 (unpublished).

[53] D. Fuks, G. Bar-Oz, Y. Tepper, et al.,"The Rise and Fall of Viticulture in the Late Antique Negev Highlands Reconstructed from Archaeobotanical and Ceramic Data," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 117/33 (2020), 19780–91. As a highly labor-intensive industry, wine production was extremely sensitive to such labor shortages. It may be significant, in this context, that *P. Oxy.* LV 3804 records the Apion estate having turned stretches of vineland into meadow (see lines 149–50 and line 162). For further evidence of labor shortages see Sarris, "New Approaches."

[54] See, e.g., *P. Oxy.* XVI 1913 lines 1–25 and 30–35; *P. Oxy.* XVI 1911 lines 116–24 and 175–91; *P. Oxy.* LV 3804 lines 196–212; *P. Oxy.* XVI 2033 (discussed in Sarris, "Early Byzantine Economy," 267–69). See also note 53 above.

[55] *P. Oxy.* XVI 1911.

[56] See Sarris, "Early Byzantine Economy," 268–69; *P. Oxy.* LV 3804; and *P. Oxy.* XVI 1911 and 1913.

[57] For bibliography see Sarris, "Early Byzantine Economy," 269 n. 63.

[58] J. Lefort (ed.), *Géométries du fisc byzantin* (Paris: Centre d'histoire et de civilization de Byzance, 1991), 112.

administered portion of the Apion estate. Exactly the same phenomenon is recorded in a sixth-century account of hay from the Arsinoite compiled by Reekmans.[59] In any pre-industrial economy hay and fodder crops are a vital commodity, as they provide the fuel for the beasts of burden and draught animals on which increased productivity often depends. Indeed, it is worth noting that in the later Middle Ages economic historians tend to regard the specialized production of fodder crops on demesne land as evidence for a growing commercialization of agriculture, as it avoids the need to engage in periodic crop rotation between cereal and fodder (such as Jane Rowlandson has identified for the Oxyrhynchite in earlier phases of its Roman history).[60] In sixth-century Egypt hay was so economically prized that it even served as a medium of exchange.[61]

Fodder crops were not, of course, the only produce associated with the directly managed portion of the estate recorded in the Apion estate documents: it is possible that they are particularly visible in the extant accounts of the overseers (*pronoêtai*) concerning estate-owned villages (*epoikia*) and associated landholdings (*ktêmata*) which the household largely rented out, and on which we are heavily reliant for our picture of life on the estates, because such fodder crops were probably in part being grown and supplied for the use of the rented landholdings and settlements that are the primary subject of these accounts. Passing references within them, however (as well as within the contracts, letters, and petitions that survive from the Apion archive), reveal orchards, vineyards, and even capital infrastructure such as oil mills and irrigational machinery all associated with the directly managed portion of the estate (and hence described with the adjective *geouchikos* – "pertaining to the landowner").[62]

There are indications that production targets on the centrally managed section of the estate were prioritized. The evidence of the overseers' work contracts would suggest, for example, that while estate employees such as the *pronoêtai* were permitted some flexibility with respect to the revenues collected from estate *ktêmata* and were, to a certain extent, permitted to fall into arrears, far less flexibility was permitted with respect to what would appear to have been the directly managed portion of the estate, such as that

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[59] T. Reekmans, *A Sixth-Century Account of Hay* (Brussels: Fondation Égyptologique Reine Elisabeth, 1962).
[60] Rowlandson, *Landowners and Tenants*, 20.   [61] Reekmans, *Account of Hay*, 10.
[62] See *P.Oxy.* XVI 1896; *P.Oxy.* XXVII 2478; *P.Oxy.* XXXVI 2279; *P.Wash.Univ.* II 102; and Reekmans, *Account of Hay*, 14 (discussed in Sarris, "Early Byzantine Economy," 266–68).

associated with the suburban estate (*proasteion*) described as "Outside the Gate" (*exô tês pûlês*).[63] Hence it should not surprise us that, according to one text, the *autourgia* was responsible for only 15 percent of arrears listed in the account.[64] A parallel prioritization of the revenues of *proasteia* owned by the Church is to be found in a Justinianic constitution.[65] It is interesting that in both the Apion papyri and the imperial legislation such properties are described as "outlying" (*exôtikoi/exôthen*), presumably because that is how such suburban estates were viewed from the perspective of and with relation to the estate administration based in the city (be it Oxyrhynchus or Constantinople).[66] Economically, however, they were clearly regarded as important.

Egyptian Large Estates in Context

Hickey's study has also questioned whether the large estates that have been the subject of research by Banaji and others really were large, and instead has proposed a "small estate model," based on some extremely complicated calculations of assumed ratios of arable to vineyard.[67] Much of the analysis proposed is, however, highly convoluted and, as we shall see, flies in the face of much more straightforward indications that the Apion family probably owned somewhere in the region of 30–40 percent of the land around the city of Oxyrhynchus in the mid-sixth century. Those indications, it should be noted, have been significantly strengthened by the recent publication of volume 84 of the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, which includes the largest body of documents relating to the archives of the Apion family to have been edited and appeared in print for almost a hundred years.[68]

The newly published texts tell us three things. First, the amount of fine numerical detail they furnish invalidates much of the high-level numerical analysis to which the Apion (and related) archives have recently been

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[63] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 50–56; *P.Oxy.* XVI 1913; and R. Mazza, *L'archivio degli Apioni: terra, lavoro, e proprietà senatoria nell'Egitto ardoantico* (Bari: Edipuglia, 2001), 84–88. The work contract of a doorkeeper employed at the *proasteion* has recently been published as *P.Oxy.* LXXXV 5521.

[64] *P.Oxy.* XVI 1918r.   [65] *J.Nov.* 120 c.1.

[66] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 51–54. See D. Miller and P. Sarris, *The Novels of Justinian: A Complete Annotated English Translation*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 2:783 n. 7.

[67] For a useful (though itself not entirely unproblematic) critique of Hickey's calculations see G. Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century: The Dynamics of Tax and Estate in Roman Egypt," *Journal of Late Antiquity* 9 (2016), 305–414.

[68] A. Benaissa et al. (eds.), *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Volume LXXXIV* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 2019); see *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5453–74.

subjected.[69] Second, and more significantly, the Apion estates would appear to have expanded earlier in the sixth century than has commonly been supposed, and to have remained more stable across that century than has sometimes been imagined.[70] We now have no basis on which to posit a major expansion of the estate in the second half of the sixth century, which had emerged as a working hypothesis for many (the present author included), and which has been particularly emphasized in the recent analysis proposed by Gilles Bransbourg.[71] The late sixth century, as we have seen, was associated with the arrival of the bubonic plague in Egypt, the labor shortages resultant from which are likely to have made conditions difficult for landowners.[72] That the period should have witnessed an era of attempted consolidation rather than aggressive expansion of estates should not, perhaps, thus occasion surprise.[73] Third, the extent of the private property of the Apion family would appear to have been considerably greater than some have recently supposed, with the amount of land owned by the family – setting aside land it was rendered administratively responsible for by the state – being perhaps roughly three to four times what Hickey has estimated. Let us take the most significant of these points in turn.

The recently published documents primarily belong to the top tier of the administration of the Apion household in Oxyrhynchus. In particular, they furnish precise details of the sums collected and handed over in both wheat and gold for the estate's tax obligations in the late sixth century.[74] These accounts of payments in money and in kind typically balance or leave only a relatively small surplus. There is, one should note, no evidence that these documents concern anything other than official tax payments to the government. The Apion family was responsible for the collection of taxes on its own properties and from neighboring communities for which it was made fiscally responsible by the state. The latter responsibility was by virtue of their holding the title of pagarch, which was commonly ascribed

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[69] This applies in particular to T. M. Hickey, "Aristocratic Landholding and the Economy," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. R. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 288–308; and Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century."

[70] See esp. *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5457 and 5466.

[71] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 85; Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century," 398.

[72] Sarris, "Climate and Disease." For legal evidence for the economic impact of plague see *J.Nov.* 120 c.6; *J.Nov.* 122; and *J.Edict* 9: sources either misconstrued or overlooked in the recent "revisionist" literature on the disease.

[73] For the consolidation of estate administration in response to the plague see Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 222–27.

[74] See *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5458, 5461, 5463, and 5464.

to Egyptian landowners at this time, as recorded in Justinian's legislation (the workings of this system of "fiscal shares" were the subject of Gascou's classic study of 1985 on relations between Egyptian large estates and the imperial government).[75] That the Apion household possessed such fiscal obligations is clear and has never been seriously challenged (unlike Gascou's model for how such obligations arose, and their broader social and economic ramifications).[76] The inference of the editors of these texts, one should note, that the accounts published in the volume also record the private income of the family, rests on no solid textual support whatsoever, and is simply an assumption. The subsequent claim made by the editors that these estates effectively furnished little or no net return can thus be safely set aside: these documents seem to provide details of the taxes collected, the costs deducted, and what was ultimately contributed.

The documents further confirm that a relatively clear administrative distinction was maintained between taxes in gold and kind collected from properties administered by estate stewards (*pronoêtai*) on the one hand and villages (*kômai*) on the other.[77] It would be logical to assume that the former were primarily taxes collected from properties that the estate actually owned: in the work contracts for estate stewards, for example (of which the new volume contains two additional specimens), lands placed under these stewards are described as "pertaining to" (*ta diapheronta*) the landowner or household.[78] By inference, the *kômai* were probably primarily villages placed under the administration of the household by way of pagarchic burden.[79]

It has long been known that the estate properties administered by the stewards were grouped into administrative units termed *prostasiai*. The newly published papyri record the names of a significant number of hitherto unattested *prostasiai*, and reveal that there were many more such administrative units as early as the 530s than hitherto realized.[80] Although the relevant documents are still relatively fragmentary, taken together they would suggest that the overall number of estate properties "seems to have remained relatively stable over the course of the last three quarters of the sixth century."[81] This would appear to be confirmed by the numerical

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[75] *J. Edict* 13 c.12; J. Gascou, "Les grands domaines, la cité, et l'étât en Égypte byzantine," *Travaux et Mémoires* 9 (1985), 1–90. See also Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 149–76.

[76] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 149–76.   [77] See, e.g., *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5454–56 and 5464.

[78] *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5473 and 5474 line 19.

[79] This distinction is broadly accepted by Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century," 378. See also Hickey, *Wine, Wealth and the State*, 50.

[80] *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5457.   [81] Benaissa et al. (eds.), *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 159.

details of the tax returns. A newly published document dating from 591/92 records the Apion estate "banker" (*trapezitês*) to have handed over around 13,454 *solidi* to the governor (*prases*) of Arcadia;[82] this is remarkably close to the 13,516 *solidi* recorded to have been received by the household from both villages (*kômai*) and stewards (*pronoêtai*) in around 587 recorded in *P.Oxy.* 5464.[83] The testimony of these two sources needs to be read alongside that of *P.Oxy.* 1918v., which records the estate to have handled a payment of just over 13,000 *solidi* around 542.[84] That figure now looks likely to have been a tax contribution – something all those working on this material have previously missed.[85] If so, the money taxes collected from the estate would appear to have been relatively stable over the period from 542 to the 590s, probably, once again, indicating a stabilization of the estate itself at this time.[86] In terms of the intensity of the Apion family's control of the local "fiscal machinery," we should note that in *P.Oxy.* 1909 (admittedly, of uncertain date) the money taxes for Oxyrhynchus and the neighboring territory of the city of Cynopolis were reckoned at some 24,500 *solidi*, which would have the household handling a remarkable 55 percent of the money taxes due.[87]

Now, nobody has ever suggested that the Apion family owned that much of the land around these cities. The proportion of revenues derived from estate and non-estate land in *P.Oxy.* 5464 is roughly two to one.[88] That would suggest that the Apion estate administrators (not the headmen of the *kômai*) directly oversaw about 37 percent of the area. Indeed, that figure derived from the evidence for taxation in coin ties in remarkably closely with the testimony of the "top-end" wheat accounts. If we take the other figures in the same newly edited *P.Oxy.* 5464, for example, the estate stewards are recorded to have contributed just under 109,000 *artaba*s of grain for the purposes of the *embolê*, the grain shipment to Alexandria and Constantinople. The villages or *kômai* contributed just under 53,500 *artaba*s. In a key part of his study that still seems to hold, Bransbourg has posited a rate of taxation around Oxyrhynchus in the sixth century of around 1.5 *artaba*s of fiscal grain per *aroura* of cultivated land.[89] On that basis, the Apion *pronoêtai* around 587 were overseeing just under 72,700

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[82] *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5465.   [83] *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5464.   [84] *P.Oxy.* XVI 1918v.
[85] See, e.g., J. Gascou, "Notes critiques sur quelques papyrus du Ve et VIe siècles," *Chronique d'Égypte* 47 (1972), 243–53.
[86] Note that none of these figures predate the advent of the Justinianic plague: see Sarris, "Climate and Disease."
[87] *P.Oxy.* XVI 1909.   [88] *P.Oxy.* LXXXIV 5464.
[89] Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century," 401.

arourai of land, which would be roughly one-third (strictly speaking, 32 percent) of the estimated cultivated area around Oxyrhynchus and Cynopolis, whilst being pagarchically responsible for a further 16 percent.[90] The figure for "ownership" becomes 36 percent if the figures for the estate stewards simply apply to the Oxyrhynchite alone (which they conceivably do). But on the basis of assuming the lower figure of one-third, the portion of the Apion estates associated with Oxyrhynchus and Cynopolis would thus have amounted to some 48,000 acres – a figure strikingly similar to the "guestimate" of 47,000 acres proposed in *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* almost twenty years ago.[91] Of course, the Apion household is also likely to have owned land elsewhere too, but somewhere in the region of 30–40 percent of the land around Oxyrhynchus in the private ownership of the Apion family is consistent with almost all of the evidence that we have.[92] Even if we assume, with Bransbourg, that about 10 percent of the revenues collected by the *pronoêtai* were, in fact, from lands the family did not strictly own, but may, instead, have been in the possession of estate dependents, the Apiones were, on the basis of the fiscal documents, still big players.[93] For, as a constitution of Anastasius preserved in the *Codex Iustinianus* makes clear, proportionality was a cornerstone of imperial law when it came to charges levied on landowners. As Anastasius declared: "Whenever the imposition of a public levy proceeds in accordance with an imperial command, each one of the landowners is to be subject to the levy in proportion to his acreage or the combined fiscal value of his estates."[94]

The tax payments made by the Apion household continue to provide our best evidence for the scale of the family's estates. Despite the limitations of the evidence, however, it is also worth pausing to consider some of the claims that have recently been made with respect to the possible levels of income that the family's properties may have generated. As already intimated, many of the figures presented by Bransbourg in his recent analysis of the Apion material require significant revision in the light of the newly published texts. But let us, just for the sake of argument, accept his estimates for the profitability of the Apion estates around Oxyrhynchus in the late sixth and early seventh centuries. On the figures Bransbourg

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[90] Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century," 346.   [91] See Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 85.
[92] For estates elsewhere see Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 85–86.
[93] Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century," 378. This would reduce the size of the estate in around 586–87 to 65,000 *arourai*: nevertheless, seemingly without realizing it, Bransbourg's figures are thus considerably closer to those found in Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 85 than Hickey's 18,000–22,000 *arourai* (see Hickey, *Wine and Wealth*, 153–55).
[94] *Codex Iustinianus* 10.27.2.8.

proposes, around the year 600 the Apion estates around Oxyrhynchus
furnished a net annual return of 7,650 *solidi*, which does not strike him as
terribly much.[95] But that figure does, in fact, sound rather more significant
when placed in its appropriate historical context: in his Novel 30 (dating
from 536), for example, Justinian recorded that the extensive crown estates
located in Cappadocia furnished the empress Theodora with an annual net
income of fifty pounds weight of gold, or 3,600 *solidi* – just half of what
Bransbourg has suggested the Apiones derived from their Oxyrhynchite
estates in about 600.[96] Likewise, as Zuckerman has noted, in the eighth
century the papacy derived a net rental income from its estates across the
entirety of Sicily and Calabria, where it is commonly agreed to have been
the dominant landowner at this time, of some 25,000 *solidi*.[97] Given the
much larger geographical area from which that sum was derived, it too
would make the estimated income of the Apiones even as posited by
Bransbourg seem much more significant. It is true (and the point has
often been made) that such figures pale into insignificance when compared
to the vast incomes attributed to western senatorial households in the fifth
century by the contemporary historian and man of letters Olympiodorus
of Thebes.[98] Such a comparison misses the crucial point, however, that
Olympiodorus was almost certainly making such figures up for rhetorical
effect. Fixation with Olympiodorus and his claims has arguably so mes-
merized historians that they have overlooked the rather more modest, but
still significant, levels of income actually recorded in the documentary and
legal sources. It is striking testimony to the wealth of the late antique
Egyptian elite, for example, that in his Novel 7 of 535 Justinian explicitly
refers to how individuals within the region were even in the habit of buying
up and selling entire monasteries, in explicit breach of imperial law.[99]

   Moreover, it must not be forgotten, of course, that power is not all about
ownership, and that – whether as "pagarchs" or otherwise – the social and
economic clout of the Apion family would have extended well beyond the
confines of the lands that they owned and would have become increasingly
entrenched over time. That clout would have reverberated locally, region-
ally, and super-regionally. The newly edited texts reveal, for example, that,
around Oxyrhynchus and Cynopolis alone, the family would have been
responsible for about 1.5 percent of the 8 million *artaba*s of wheat shipped
annually from Egypt to Constantinople in the age of Justinian, and on

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[95] Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century," 386.   [96] *J.Nov.* 30 c.7.
[97] C. Zuckerman, "Learning from the Enemy: More Studies in 'Dark Centuries' Byzantium,"
Millennium 2 (2005), 79–135, at 103.
[98] See, e.g., Bransbourg, "Capital in the Sixth Century," 385 n. 255.   [99] *J.Nov.* 7 c.11.

which the imperial capital depended.[100] This was an "*annona* route" on which serious careers could be, and were, built.

Egyptians within the Empire

One of the major roles of Egypt in the economy of the Roman empire in the age of Justinian, therefore, was as a source of income not only for the state, but also for members of the region's land-owning elite, who were then able to use the wealth they derived from their property portfolios to project themselves onto the main stage of political power in Constantinople. Once more, the Apion family presents the clearest example of this: by the reign of Justinian, members of the family can be seen to have held the highest imperial offices in the capital, where they maintained a residence, forged prestigious marriage alliances, and, as the papyri reveal, were still able to maintain contact with their estate managers back home, where junior members of the family appear to have represented its interests.[101] The wealth derived from Egypt could also be used to acquire property beyond it. Through this aristocratic connection, therefore, wealth generated in Egypt could find itself circulated through Constantinople to elsewhere. The electrical circuit of the sixth-century Egyptian economy might therefore have been a relatively closed one, but through the Constantinopolitan focus of the political ambitions of members of the Egyptian elite, as well as the fiscal efforts of the state, it nevertheless helped to charge the political economy of the empire as a whole. For, significantly, the Apion family were not alone in terms of the role they played in imperial politics: so, for example, of those Praetorian Prefects of the East who held office from the fourth to sixth centuries, and of whose origins we can be reasonably certain, one-quarter are known to have come from Egypt (a figure roughly in line with the proportion of Egyptians with the broader population of the eastern empire as a whole).[102]

Whether in Constantinople or at home, by the age of Justinian members of the Egyptian elite (and significant elements of sub-aristocratic society) also shared in the empire's legal as well as political culture, and this fact too is amply reflected in the documentary papyri. In the year 537, for example,

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[100] Benaissa et al. (eds.), *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, 158.
[101] The family history in Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 17–24 is now considerably outdated given the evidence of newly edited papyri, but still conveys a sense of the role played by members of the family at its height. For the role of junior members see *P.Oxy.* XVI 1911 and discussion in Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 74–75.
[102] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 10 and 14.

Justinian promulgated a law that thenceforth all contracts and legal documents were to be dated according to the regnal year of the current emperor.[103] As well as being a typically Justinianic act of self-glorification, this measure formed part of a sustained drive on the part of the imperial authorities to frustrate the activities of forgers by making legal documents and contracts easier to authenticate. In a related measure, just a few weeks earlier Justinian had issued a law ordaining that legal draftsmen (*tabelliones*) operating in Constantinople were only permitted to use papyri that preserved their official protocol marked with the name of the *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum* and date of manufacture.[104] It is evident from the papyrological record that the law concerning dating was put into effect in Egypt: the regnal dating formula is attested, for example, in documents from Oxyrhynchus by 539 and by 540 was in use in both the Hermopolite and Herakleopolite nomes (although it was by no means uniformly adopted).[105] A number of Egyptian papyri have also been found preserving the protocol as ordained by *J.Nov.* 44 (which the law only rendered mandatory in Constantinople).[106] Significantly, a number of these pre-date the Justinianic constitution, providing examples of the documentary practices current amongst those more scrupulous notaries or more careful contracting parties from whom Justinian drew inspiration for his law: for, the emperor declared, "we are aware that numerous forgeries have in the past been detected from such papyri, and are still being so."[107]

Further examples of imperial legislation reflected in the papyri are to be found in two late sixth-century laws. As already seen, around 559 Justinian had prohibited the levying of fees for money-changing (*obryza*) at the fiscal expense of the state.[108] An Oxyrhynchite papyrus dating from 580 records that thereafter the charge reverted to being one levied at the expense of the taxpayer.[109] Likewise, in a law probably issued in 575, the emperor Tiberius II wrote off all arrears in tax payments owed for the years up to 571, and reduced money taxes for four years from 575 to 579, whilst expressly excluding from the reduction taxes in kind (such as the shipment of grain from Egypt).[110] This remission is recorded to have been implemented in Egypt (correctly excluding taxes in kind).[111]

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[103] *J.Nov.* 47.   [104] *J.Nov.*44.
[105] D. Feissel, *Documents, droit et diplomatique dans l'empire romain tardif* (Paris: Centre d'histoire et de civilisation de Byzance, 2010), 510 nn. 31 and 33.
[106] J. Diethart, D. Feissel, and J. Gascou, "Les *prôtokolla* des papyrus byzantins du Ve au VIIe siècle: édition, prosopographie, diplomatique," *Tyche* 9 (1994), 9–40.
[107] See *J.Nov.* 44 c.2.   [108] *J.Edict* 11.   [109] *P.Oxy.* I 144.   [110] *J.Nov.* 163.
[111] *P.Oxy.* XVI 1907.

The shared legal culture attested in the papyri could also help to shape economic conditions at the literal "grassroots" of Egyptian society. Many of the contractual papyri that survive from the Oxyrhynchite large estates, for example, expressly describe the estates' workforce as including *enapographoi geôrgoi*, i.e. *coloni adscriptici* – agricultural workers bound by imperial law to remain on the estate and provide labor services to their employer (through whom they paid their public taxes). The institution of the adscripticiate was an empire-wide legal institution backed up by a raft of imperial laws which members of the Egyptian elite clearly took advantage of to intensify control over their own agricultural workforce.[112] In both the Oxyrhynchite and the empire at large, such *geôrgoi* were primarily understood to be wage laborers or employees rather than tenant farmers (a point effectively conceded by Hickey).[113]

This is significant, for it has sometimes been claimed that imperial law was progressively fading away as an operative system in Byzantine Egypt, with the courts being increasingly replaced with less official fora for dispute resolution at which locally established norms or customs largely held sway.[114] The two examples just cited should alert one to the dangers of embracing this approach too enthusiastically. It should be noted, for example, that diminishing the flow of litigants to court by encouraging arbitration and private dispute resolution was a primary aim of Justinian's legislation: if there was indeed more private dispute settlement later in the sixth century than earlier, it may well have been as a result of the widespread circulation and effective implementation of imperial law rather than the sidelining of the imperial legal system.[115] It should also be noted that both imperial courts and practicing lawyers continue to appear in the late sixth-century sources: a papyrus dating from 572, for example, records the presence in Oxyrhynchus of a certain Flavius Ioannes, who was a professional advocate (*scholastikos*) at the Arcadian Bar.[116] Perhaps still more strikingly, the editors of the Oxyrhynchus papyri have recently identified, edited, and published a sixth-century Greek paraphrase of Justinian's *Digest*, in which we see a contemporary teacher of the law (possibly from Oxyrhynchus) grappling precisely with the relationship

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[112] P. Sarris, "Aristocrats, Peasants and the State in the Later Roman Empire," in *Der wiederkehrende Leviathan: Staatlichkeit und Staatswerdung in Spätantike und Früher Neuzeit*, ed. P. Eich, S. Schmidt-Hofner, and C. Wieland (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2011), 375–92.

[113] Hickey, *Wine, Wealth, and the State*, 84–89.

[114] A. A. Schiller, "The Courts Are No More," *Studi Edoardo Volterra* 1 (1969), 469–502. For dispute settlement see esp. T. Gagos and P. van Minnen, *Settling a Dispute: Towards a Legal Anthropology of Late Antique Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

[115] See, e.g., *Codex Iustinianus* 2.55.4 and *J.Nov.* 82 c.11.   [116] *P.Oxy.* LXXXII 5340.

between law and custom, and expounding the principle that custom should only fill the void where no written law existed, or to help guide interpretation of legal ambiguities.[117]

Even in the context of the private resolution of disputes, moreover, imperial law was far from absent. The Aphrodito papyri reveal that the small-town lawyer and man-of-letters Dioscorus was reasonably well informed with respect to recent imperial legislation, and drew upon this knowledge when called upon to help resolve disputes. In 537, for example, Dioscorus drafted a contract of dispute resolution (*dialysis*) involving a near relative. The agreement (concerning a piece of disputed land) drew upon imperial legislation to shape both the structure and content of the document. The "private settlement" was thus informed at a fundamental level by imperial law.[118] At the same time, it may be significant that late sixth-century Egypt was also home to the important legal scholar Theodore of Hermopolis, who produced a detailed *Epitome* of Justinian's Novels, cross-referenced with the *Codex Iustinianus*, which appears to have been written with a view to the needs of both law students and legal practitioners. It is hard to conceive of how (or why) a society in which Roman law was ceasing to operate could or should have produced a jurist of such eminence.[119]

From Connection to Disconnection

It was suggested, at the outset of this chapter, that Egypt in the age of Justinian was more fully integrated into the broader political economy of the East Roman world than it either ever had been or ever again would be. So what were the forces of disintegration that were at work? First and foremost amongst these was clearly the faltering of the taxation system itself. In the 530s and 540s in particular, Justinian attempted to maximize the tax revenues he could squeeze out of his subjects, in order to overhaul the empire's military and administrative structure, fund warfare with Persia, and attempt to overcome the fiscal shock brought about by the impact of the bubonic plague.[120] There is some evidence that with respect

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[117] *P.Oxy.* LXXXV 5495.   [118] Gagos and van Minnen, *Settling a Dispute*, 27.
[119] K. E. Zachariae von Lingenthal (ed.), *Anekdota: Theodori Scholastici Breviarum Novellarum* (Leipzig: Barth, 1843). For the afterlife of Byzantine law in early Islamic Egypt see also A. Papaconstantinou, "'What Remains Behind': Hellenism and Romanitas in Christian Egypt after the Arab Conquest," in *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman Near East*, ed. H. Cotton, R. Hoyland, R. Price, and D. Wasserstein (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 447–66.
[120] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 200–27.

to Egypt he may initially have been relatively successful: studies by Zuckerman and Banaji, for example, have suggested that the amount of tax levied in gold by the imperial authorities on the Middle Egyptian village of Aphrodito may have "increased by a factor of almost three between 525 and 567."[121] Whatever the precise calculation, the total amount of tax levied clearly went up significantly.[122] The key problem for Justinian clearly arose, however, after the point of tax collection, when local landowners and aristocratic potentates charged with the duty to collect taxes from their neighbors had a tendency to then try to hold on to them and pocket the money taxes for themselves. Precisely this phenomenon is recorded in the documentary papyri with respect to the village of Aphrodito in the early sixth century, and it is also one of Justinian's main complaints in the preface to his lengthy Edict 13 on Egypt: it was this sequestration and purloining of tax revenues on the part of the locally powerful which, Justinian declared, threatened "the very cohesion of our state."[123]

As a result, it should not perhaps entirely surprise us that the impression from the sources is that, as the local power of the land-owning aristocracy became increasingly entrenched over the course of the later sixth century, the fiscal structures of the state, which served to circulate Egypt's wealth beyond the province, became progressively weaker. The seventh-century *Chronicle of John of Nikiu*, for example, would look back to an Egypt in the late sixth century where central imperial power was gradually receding from sight, leading to ever more destabilizing consequences. Thus the emperor Tiberius II (r. 578–82) is recorded to have been reliant for the governance of the region on the figure of a certain Aristomachus, himself the son of a former governor, who, prior to taking up office, had been notorious for the brutality of his private armed retinue.[124] Likewise, the reign of Maurice (582–602) witnessed two major revolts within Egypt. The first of these was caused by the emperor's attempted removal from office of members of a powerful Egyptian family, whilst, in the second, a certain Azarias, along with his private army composed of Ethiopian slaves, seized control of the imperial tax revenues.[125] Repeated bouts of the bubonic plague are also likely to have led to a further dislocation of fiscal structures, and a localization of social and economic relations in the context of an

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[121] Banaji, *Agrarian Change*, 59. [122] Zuckerman, *Du village*, 213–19.
[123] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 102–06; *J.Edict* 13, *proemium*.
[124] John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*, trans. R. H. Charles (London: Williams & Norgate, 1916), 151–53.
[125] John of Nikiu, *Chronicle*, 157–58 and 160.

economy which, as we have seen, already had an increasing tendency to feed off itself.[126]

As aristocratic power became increasingly entrenched on the ground, political connections between Constantinople and the sub-aristocratic strata of Egyptian society are also likely to have become increasingly frayed. Thus whereas earlier in the sixth century the citizens of Aphrodito had sought to ensure the fiscal and political autonomy of their settlement by sending two delegations to the imperial court in Constantinople, by the 560s their spokesman, Dioscorus, was obliged to fall back on seeking to mobilize different local aristocratic patronage networks against one another in a desperate attempt to achieve the same result.[127]

Conclusion: Making Egyptian History Roman

At the end of the day, however, we should remember that none of these phenomena revealed in the Egyptian sources was unique to Egypt: each of them formed part of a broader imperial story. Members of the late antique aristocracy of service in Egypt, for example, appear to have possessed an interest in ensuring the returns from their estates that was common to members of the same class across the empire as a whole, who also took advantage of the new economic conditions generated by the minting and ever wider dissemination of the *solidus* to press ahead with the commodification of estate production.[128] This phenomenon was observed, for example, in the late fourth century by St. Basil of Caesarea, in a homily in which he declared to his wealthy and well-connected congregation, "To what lengths will you not go for gold? Your grain becomes gold for you, your wine solidifies into gold, your wool is transformed into gold; every exchange, every thought, produces gold for you. Gold itself brings forth even more gold, multiplying itself through loans at interest."[129] By the early fifth century, the *Codex Theodosianus* suggests, it was common for great landowners to have merchants attached to their estates to market their produce.[130]

The intensification and then entrenchment of the power of the aristocracy at a local level over the course of the sixth century, and the propensity of its members to engage in tax evasion or the confiscation of tax revenues recorded in the Egyptian evidence, was again not unique to Egypt: rather, the issue was at the forefront of Justinian's provincial reforms across the

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[126] Zuckerman, *Du village*, 218; Sarris, "Climate and Disease."
[127] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 103–14.   [128] Banaji, *Agrarian Change*, 101–70.
[129] C. P. Schroeder, *St Basil the Great on Social Justice* (New York: St. Vladimir's Press, 2009), 65.
[130] *Codex Theodosianus* 13.6.1.

empire in the crucial years between 535 and 539, as he attempted to overhaul the East Roman state.[131] Even Dioscorus' decision to try to set the aristocrats and governors of the Thebaid against one another so as to protect the interests of his village, rather than lobby the emperor in the imperial capital, is likely to have been paralleled across the empire at this time, Justin II declaring, in 569, that henceforth the imperial court would receive no more petitions against the actions of governors, who were now to be appointed by local landowners.[132] Insofar as the legal sources would suggest that there were problems that were especially pronounced in Egypt, only two are clearly identified in Justinian's legislation: the extent of the alienation of ecclesiastical property in breach of imperial injunction;[133] and the siphoning off onto the black market of state-produced weapons meant for the imperial army.[134] In other words, even as the fiscal and administrative ties between Egypt and the rest of the empire loosened at the end of the late Roman period (perhaps anticipating the fiscally much more freestanding Egypt of the eighth and ninth centuries), the history of the region in the age of Justinian remained that of the empire at large.

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[131] Sarris, *Economy and Society*, 200–27. [132] *J.Nov.* 149. [133] *J.Nov.*7 c.11. [134] *J.Nov.* 85.

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At the Crossroads of Regional Settings: Egypt, 500–1000 CE

Yaacov Lev

Interlocked within two maritime and two terrestrial settings, Egypt's geopolitical position has been important for its historical development. This chapter focuses on internal developments in Egypt which, although related to its geopolitical position, were mostly influenced by the evolution of the Muslim polity. The discussion attempts to highlight Egypt's uniqueness as well as the province's integration within the broader political structure of the caliphate. While the question of integration can be approached from many different angles, my preference has been to focus on some *longue durée* trends that reflect both Egypt's geography and the changes related to the emergence of Islam and the consolidation of its power.

Seventh-Century Egypt: Population and Prosperity

To understand Egypt's economy under Islam better, it is necessary to examine the state of its wealth on the eve of the conquests. Although Egypt has been described as "the economic powerhouse" of the late antique Mediterranean world, it has proved difficult to provide a comprehensive picture of the country's demography and agriculture during the first half of the seventh century.[1] The impact of the Justinian plague (541–42 CE) and its subsequent recurrent outbreaks among Egypt's population have been interpreted very differently by scholars. Josiah C. Russell, for example, believes that Egypt's population in the seventh century was 2.6 million, while Walter E. Kaegi has estimated that by 600 the population of Egypt was 3 million. A much higher estimate is, however, offered by Jean Gascou, who argues that, in the 650s, the population of Upper Egypt alone was already 2 million.[2] Like modern

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[1] The phrase has been coined by Peter Sarris. See his *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 10.

[2] Russell estimates Egypt's population during the eighth–ninth centuries to be 2.2–2.6 million and estimates a drop to 1.5 million for the tenth–eleventh centuries. See J. C. Russell, "The Population of

scholars, medieval Arab authors differ in their assessments of Egypt's population, although they are on the whole more generous in their estimates. ʿUthmān b. Ṣāliḥ (761–834), for example, claims that, at the time of the Arab conquest, Egypt's population was 6 million.[3] ʿUmar b. Muḥammad al-Kindī (hereafter Ibn al-Kindī, *fl.* tenth century) and Ibn Zūlāq (919–98) write that the governor al-Walīd b. Rifāʿa (in office 727–35) conducted a census, involving 10,000 villages, which allowed the population to be calculated at 5 million.[4] This estimate, based upon Egypt's mid-eighth-century villages, is, however, questionable since much lower figures are cited in Mamluk historical and administrative writings which refer to the Fatimid period. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Wāṭwāṭ (1235–1318), for example, quotes al-Musabbiḥī (977–1029), who wrote that during the reign of al-Ḥākim (996–1029) Egypt was divided into sixty administrative districts (*kūra*), which contained 2,395 villages.[5] Although medieval demography and the reliability of cadastral surveys remain elusive,

Medieval Egypt," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 5 (1966), 69–82, at 73, 75; Walter E. Kaegi, "Egypt on the Eve of the Muslim Conquest," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 34–61, at 34; Jean Gascou, "Arabic Taxation in the Mid-Seventh Century Greek Papyri," in *Constructing the Seventh Century*, ed. Constantin Zuckerman, *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 671–79, at 674. For the 541–42 outbreak of the plague in Egypt see Michael G. Morony, "For Whom Does the Writer Write? The First Bubonic Plague Pandemic According to Syriac Sources," in *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750*, ed. Lester K. Little (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 59–86, at 72–73; Michael McCormick, "Toward a Molecular History of the Justinianic Plague," in *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750*, ed. Lester K. Little (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 290–312, at 303. Equally enigmatic is the demographic impact of the 743–44 plague. See Dionysios Stathakopoulos, "Crime and Punishment: The Plague in the Byzantine Empire, 541–749," in *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750*, ed. Lester K. Little (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 99–118, at 104–05.

3   For ʿUthmān b. Ṣāliḥ's reports embedded in the writings of the patriarch Saʿīd b. Baṭrīq (Eutychius of Alexandria, 935–40) see Michel Breydy, "La conquête arabe de l'Égypte," *Parole de l'Orient* 8 (1977–8), 379–97, at 390, 391. For Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's figures about Egypt's population at the time of the Arab conquest (6–8 million) see Wadād al-Qāḍī, "Population Census and Land Surveys under the Umayyads (41–132/661–750)," *Der Islam* 83 (2006), 341–417, at 349–52. For an extensive discussion of epidemics and demography in Byzantine and early Arab Egypt see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 44–5.

4   Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, ed. Ibrāhīm Aḥmad al-ʿAdawī and ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1971), 55; Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, MS Paris, BnF Arabe 4727, 206b/MS Dublin, Chester Beatty Library 4683, 27a–b.

5   Roger Maury, "Les kūras d'Égypte dans le *Mabāḥiǧ* de Waṭwāṭ," *Annales islamologiques* 22 (1986), 155–73, at 156, 165–66. Al-Maqrīzī quotes al-Musabbiḥī as saying that out of 2,359 villages 1,493 were in Lower Egypt: al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, 5 vols. (London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2002–03), 1:196. Actually, the figure of 1,493 villages in Lower Egypt is derived from the report of the Coptic administrator Būlus, who was in charge of taxation, and refers to the year 345/956–57. For a detailed account of Egypt's *kūra*s, quoted on the authority of al-Quḍāʿī (d. 1062), see al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:196–97, discussed by Maury, "Les kūras d'Égypte," 159–64.

one can argue that, for the conquerors coming from the deserts and semi-deserts of Arabia and the Middle East, Egypt was a country of plenty and could easily provide for them and their needs.

More significant than the figures cited by Ibn al-Kindī and Ibn Zūlāq is their perception of what constituted a good government that was instrumental for the preservation and perpetuation of Egypt's agricultural wealth. This concept, expressed by the term *ʿimāra*, was retroactively applied to the pharaonic period, which is described as having been marked by exceptionally high tax yields and the efficient maintenance of Egypt's irrigation infrastructure. The pharaohs are also described as distributing payments to widows and orphans and to victims of disasters. In another version of the *ʿimāra* concept, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, the Arab conqueror of Egypt, is portrayed as having asked Egypt's patriarch how to ensure the province's prosperity. The patriarch advised him to take good care of the irrigation canals and dams, to collect taxes according to accepted rules, and to abolish certain impositions levied on the peasantry.[6] Whatever the reality of the story, Muslim rulers showed ingenuity in creating and imposing new taxes and mobilizing resources to maintain their armies, navies, building activities, and the feeding the holy cities of Arabia.

The Red Sea and Arabia

Egypt's main agricultural asset was its surplus grain yield, which served its own population and especially the ruling powers in control of the province. In the sixth century some 160,000 metric tons were transported annually by a fleet of over 1,200 ships to feed the Byzantine capital, Constantinople. This system was gravely affected by the plague in 541 and its recurrent outbreaks, and came to an end in 618 because of the Persian conquest of Egypt.[7]

The Muslim rulers of Egypt were quick to make use of its agricultural surplus to feed their own hinterland. According to both Muslim and non-Muslim

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[6] Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, MS Paris, 205a–206b, 207a/MS Dublin, 16b, 26a–b; ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li-l-Kitāb, 2000), 86–87, 90–91 (relying on two Cairo manuscripts, preserved in the Dār al-Kutub and the Azhar Library); Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 55, 57. For this motive in late Mamluk historiography see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Landholding Patterns in Early Islamic Egypt," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9 (2009), 120–33, at 124 n. 20. The statement that Egypt's land was massively undercultivated and that the government should have invested in its *ʿimāra*, in order to increase the tax yield, is attributed to Aḥmad b. Mudabbir, the person in charge of Egypt's finances in the 860s. See al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:72. For other figures quoted on the authority of two financial administrators Ibn al-Ḥabḥāb (720s) and Aḥmad b. Mudabbir see al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:201.

[7] Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communication and Commerce, AD 300–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 104–05, 108–10.

literary sources the exploitation of Egypt's surplus grain began immediately after the conquest of the country and, at the request of the caliph ʿUmar I (r. 634–44), grain was shipped to Arabia to feed the populations of Mecca and Medina. Albrecht Noth has emphasized that Arabic accounts of the conquest of the Near East and its subsequent exploitation, including the demand for Egyptian grain, are governed by a tendency to portray the caliphs in Medina as in full control of events.[8] As important as Noth's general analysis is, the shipment of grain from Egypt to Arabia constitutes a special case. Both narrative sources and archaeological finds can be used to show that these transports indeed took place. Infrastructures were put in place to facilitate the export of the Egyptian wheat via the Red Sea to the Ḥijāz. This concerns first the harbour town of Qulzum (Clysma) at the tip of the Gulf of Suez and the canal that connected it to the Arabs' capital, Fusṭāṭ. The Coptic chronicler Bishop John of Nikiu (*fl.* second half of the seventh century) recounts that the Arabs used Coptic corvée labour to re-dig Trajan's Canal. Al-Maqrīzī (1364–1442), citing earlier sources, indicates that by the time of Muʿāwiya's rule (661–80) the shipment of Egyptian grain to Arabia had become an institutional practice that fell under the responsibility of Egypt's governor.[9] Remnants of the original stone harbor at the entrance to Trajan's Canal have been found beneath two churches in Old Cairo. The restored canal was 170 km long but only navigable at high-water levels. That the canal was operational is attested to by the correspondence of the governor Qurra b. Sharīk (in office 709–14). Modern reconstructions, on the other hand, show that the canal was suitable only for flat-bottomed vessels and not for sea-going ships, meaning that wheat and other products were repacked on sea-faring ships at the harbour of Qulzum. The canal probably functioned until 775, when it either fell into disuse or was deliberately blocked.[10]

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[8] For a critical approach to the *futūḥ* literature on the conquest of Egypt see Albrecht Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, trans. M. Bonner (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994), 182–84, 200.

[9] Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Yaʿlāwi, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1991), 2:410. According to al-Balādhurī (d. 892), ʿUmar I's order to ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ to ship supplies to the holy cities of Arabia was issued in 642: al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1968 [repr.]), 216.

[10] John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*, trans. R. H. Charles (London: Williams & Norgate, 1916), 195. The geography of the canal re-dug by the Arabs is vaguely alluded to in the sources. See Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, ed. Charles C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 163–64. For modern reconstruction of its course see Carol A. Redmount, "The Wadi Tumilat and the 'Canal of the Pharaohs'," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 54 (1995), 127–35, at 127, 135; Philip Mayerson, "The Port of Clysma (Suez) in Transition from Roman to Arab Rule," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 55 (1996), 119–26, at 125–26; John P. Cooper, "Egypt's Nile–Red Sea Canals: Chronology, Location, Seasonality and Function," in *Connected Hinterlands*, ed. Lucy Blue at al. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009), 195–209. For archaeological evidence for the Trajan and Arab canals

The re-digging of Trajan's Canal touches upon two issues: the effective functioning of a Muslim state and the shifting ebbs and flows of trade between South Asia and the Near East. The existence of an Umayyad state characterized by institutions and a legitimizing ideology has been argued for by several scholars.[11] The evidence for shipping grain to Arabia confirms the early Muslim state's capability to form policy and marshal resources. It is also in line with what is known about commercial activity in the Red Sea. After a period of decline, trade between India and the Near East was in full swing on the eve of the Arab conquest of the Near East and Egypt. Although shipping Egypt's wheat surplus to feed foreign capitals was not an Arab innovation, the shift of direction across the Red Sea to Arabia necessitated important adjustments and investments. Crucially, Egypt's new rulers could use existing maritime and commercial infrastructures to serve new needs.[12]

Besides re-digging Trajan's Canal the authorities made other investments to enable the transport of grain to Mecca and Medina. In 109/727, at the initiative of Egypt's governor, Ibn al-Ḥabḥāb, Qaysī Arabs were settled in the eastern Delta, apparently in depopulated administrative districts. They received money to buy camels to transport food to Qulzum, most likely grain for shipment to Arabia, which proved to be a lucrative business. They were also instructed to breed horses and, due to the rich local pasture, they had no expenses for fodder to feed their camels and horses. This migration was a success story that encouraged a further influx of Qaysī tribesmen to the area.[13]

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see Peter Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt: The Archaeology of Old Cairo and the Origins of the City* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), ch. 2.

[11] See Fred M. Donner's seminal 1986 study, "The Formation of the Islamic State," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106 (1986), 283–96. This is restated and updated in Fred M. Donner, "Introduction," in *The Articulation of Early Islamic State Structures*, ed. Fred M. Donner (Farnham: Ashgate Variorum, 2012), xiii–xliv. The notion that a strong state had already existed during the rule of Muʿāwiya has been recently put forward by Clive Foss ("Egypt under Muʿāwiya, Part I: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt" and "Part II: Middle Egypt, Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 72 [2009], 1–24, 259–78 esp. 276–77), while Petra M. Sijpesteijn has characterized the early Arab rulers of Egypt as "far from being naïfs ill equipped to tackle the governmental challenges confronting them" (Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 65). See, e.g., the adoption of the Byzantine postal system in Egypt and its gradual transformation to serve the needs of the new rulers of the country. See Jelle Bruning, "Developments in Egypt's Early Islamic Postal System (with an Edition of *P.Khalili* II 5)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 81 (2017), 25–40.

[12] Timothy Power, *The Red Sea from Byzantium to the Caliphate: AD 500–1000* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2012), 38–44; Cooper, "Egypt's Nile-Red Sea Canals"; Roberta Tomber, *Indo-Roman Trade: From Pots to Pepper* (London: Duckworth, 2008).

[13] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. Rhuvon Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 76–77; Yaacov Lev, "Coptic Rebellions and the Islamization of Medieval Egypt (8th–10th Century): Medieval and Modern Perceptions," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 39 (2012), 303–44, at 310–11.

Qulzum was an important thoroughfare for agricultural products traveling from Egypt via the Red Sea to Arabia, but the town itself depended on imports to feed its inhabitants. The ninth-century historian and geographer al-Yaʿqūbī described Qulzum as a large town with a diversified population that serviced the shipment of supplies to Arabia and conducted trade with Yemen. The geographer al-Muqaddasī writing in the tenth century noted Qulzum's barren environment and its dependence on external sources of food supply. Nonetheless flour and grain were brought to the town by camel and, at the peak of the shipments to Arabia, 3,000 camel-loads went through the town each week. Both al-Yaʿqūbī and al-Muqaddasī described Qulzum's merchants as affluent owners of opulent houses.[14]

An active long-distance trade across the Red Sea in which Egypt participated is confirmed by documentary and literary evidence. A few isolated reports indicate that large quantities of pepper and gifts from India reached Egypt during the first half of the eighth century. Tenth-century *faḍāʾil Miṣr* literature, describing the excellences or merits of Egypt, also depicts Egypt as the provider of Arabia and beyond. Egypt is described as the entrepôt (*furḍa*) of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, Ṣanʿāʾ, Aden, Shiḥr (on Arabia's Indian Ocean coast), and Oman as well as India, Ceylon, and China. The port that served this commerce was Qulzum and the products traded were aromatics, gems, and rare objects.[15] While focusing on Egypt as a Mediterranean country with a unique maritime outlet to the Arabian Peninsula and India, one must not forget Ayla (modern ʿAqaba, Jordan's port on the Gulf of ʿAqaba), which al-Muqaddisī describes as Palestine's Red Sea port and a supplier of Arabia.[16]

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[14] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān* (Cairo: n.p., 2004 [repr.]), 340; al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 195–96. For an extensive discussion of the town and its role see Tarek M. Muhammad, "Clysma in the Literary and Documentary Arab Sources," in *Arabia, Greece and Byzantium: Cultural Contacts in Ancient and Medieval Times*, ed. Abdulaziz al-Helabi et al. (Riyadh: King Saud University, 2012), 281–309. For Qulzum and ʿAydhāb in the Fatimid period see David Bramoullé, "Fatimids and the Red Sea," in *Navigated Spaces, Connected Places*, ed. Dionisius A. Agius et al. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2012), 127–36, at 128–30.

[15] Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 70; Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, MS Paris, 195b/MS Dublin, 13b. For Arabic sources on Egypt's trade with India in the pre-Fatimid period see Yaacov Lev, "A Mediterranean Encounter: The Fatimids and Europe, Tenth to Twelfth Centuries," in *Shipping, Trade and Crusade in the Medieval Mediterranean: Studies in Honour of John Pryor*, ed. Ruthy Gertwagen and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 131–57, at 143–45; and al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 7:275–76.

[16] Donald Whitcomb, "The Miṣr of Ayla: Settlement at al-ʿAqaba in the Early Islamic Period," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*, vol. 2: *Land Use and Settlement Patterns*, ed. G. R. D. King and Averil Cameron (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995), 150–77.

Over-sea connections between Egypt and Palestine to the Ḥijāzī coast were active and important, but sailing these routes posed many maritime challenges. The wind conditions that prevailed in the Red Sea divided the sea into northern and southern halves with Jār constituting the dividing point. Strong northerly winds (especially from June to September) made outbound sailing safer than inbound sailing. In addition, from October through April the storms could strike at random and sailing south of Jār was governed by the northeast monsoon. Reefs posed another danger and forced the captains to stick to daytime sailing. The shipping of grain and the transportation of pilgrims on the Red Sea was carried out by maneuverable ships adapted to coastal sailing.[17]

The relations between Muslim Egypt and Arabia extended beyond the shipment of grain; the most exquisite products of Egypt's textile industries were sent to Mecca on a yearly basis to adorn the Kaʿba sanctuary. On the one hand, these shipments were a testimony to Egypt's advanced textile industry, which was capable of producing high-quality unique fabrics. On the other hand, they reflect the processes that shaped Islam as a religion and civilization. This is especially true in the context of the architectural evolution of the Kaʿba and the institutionalization of the ḥajj as a religious duty. Al-Yaʿqūbī writes that Muʿāwiya was the first to cover the Kaʿba with silk cloth and install a corps of slave servants at the shrine.[18]

The Abbasids, who ruled the caliphate from Baghdad (750–1250), continued to be responsible for the annual pilgrimage. They also enhanced Egypt's role as the supplier of textiles for the Kaʿba. Al-Mahdī (r. 775–85) covered the Kaʿba with cloth made in Egypt and financed his restoration works in the mosques at Mecca and Medina with money sent from the province.[19] Patronage of the holy cities and their inhabitants was popular amongst Egypt's administrative elite as well. This trend is exemplified by the deeds of Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Mādharāʾī (868–956), who served the Tulunid rulers Abū al-Jaysh Khumārawayh and Abū Mūsā Hārūn as vizier. He derived a huge income from his extensive agricultural lands in Egypt. He used his wealth to finance twenty-two pilgrimages to the holy cities of Arabia. In addition he lavished money and gifts on their inhabitants, sending

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[17] John L. Meloy, *Imperial Power and Maritime Trade: Mecca and Cairo in the Later Middle Ages* (Chicago: Middle East Documentation Center on behalf of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies, University of Chicago, 2010), 51–62; Dionisios A. Agius, *Classic Ships of Islam: From Mesopotamia to the Indian Ocean* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 229–33, 317–18.

[18] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh al-Yaʿqūbī*, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1960), 2:238; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "An Early Umayyad Papyrus Invitation for the Ḥajj," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 73 (2014), 179–90; Agapius, *Kitāb al-ʿUnwān*, ed. Louis Cheikho (Paris: Poussielge, 1912), 350.

[19] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:238, 284, 395–96.

regular alms to thousands in both cities.[20] Conferring charities on the holy cities and securing political recognition (*da ʿwa*) from the rulers of Mecca and Medina was characteristic of the tenth-century Ikhshidid rulers of Egypt and their administrators.[21] Kāfūr (r. 966–68) and his vizier Faḍl b. al-Furāt (in office 921–1001) were both patrons of the holy cities. The vizier not only bought a house in close proximity to the Prophet's tomb-mosque for his own burial but also acquired a holy relic: three hairs of the Prophet's beard.[22]

Receiving political recognition from the local rulers of Mecca and Medina was a high priority for the Fatimids, who established their rule over Egypt in 969. It bolstered their overall legitimacy and was an asset in their political competition with the Abbasids. Like their predecessors, the Fatimid rulers harnessed the agricultural and industrial resources of Egypt to manifest and enhance their presence and involvement in Arabia by sending grain and expensive high-quality inscribed textiles (*ṭirāz*) for the Kaʿba sanctuary.[23] In 975 they sent to Mecca two large swaths of fabric bearing the name of the Fatimid ruler to be used as external cover of the Kaʿba (*kiswa*) and a sunshade (*shamsa*) and hangings (*satātīr*) to be used inside the shrine. These shipments of fabrics for the Kaʿba continued throughout the Fatimid period.[24] Within the evolving Islamic empire, with special attention given to Arabia and its holy cities, the Red Sea developed as a major thoroughfare for pilgrims, pious donations, state-imposed contributions, and commercial traffic. Within the interconnected triangle of economy, politics, and religion Egypt benefited, consequently giving its different rulers political leverage in Arabia.

Egypt and the Caliphate

While Muʿāwiya made a deal with ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ granting him the governorship of Egypt in exchange for his (military) support, in reality ʿAmr treated the province more as a personal source of income than

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[20] Al-Musabbiḥī in Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, "Nuṣūṣ ḍāʾiʿ min Akhbār Miṣr," *Annales islamologiques* 17 (1981), 1–54, at 9–10, 11. For a full biographical account see al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 6:234–47.

[21] Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 6:137; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab*, 33 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya/al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li-l-Kitāb, 1923–97), 28:55.

[22] Al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfī bi-l-wafayāt*, ed. Ramaḍān ʿAbd al-Tawwāb, vol. 12 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1979), 118–22, esp. 121.

[23] In 777 the caliph also made the pilgrimage to Arabia. See al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:238, 284, 395–96.

[24] Al-Maqrīzī, *Ittiʿāẓ al-ḥunafāʾ bi-akhbār al-aʾimma al-fāṭimiyyīn al-khulafāʾ*, ed. Jamāl al-Dīn al-Shayyāl, 3 vols. (Cairo: al-Majlis al-Aʿlā li-l-Shuʾūn al-Islāmiyya, 1967–73), 1:122, 225, 230; Ibn Muyassar, *Akhbār Miṣr*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid (Cairo: IFAO, 1981), 161–62; Heinz Halm, "al-Šamsa: Hängekronen als Herrschaftszeichen der Abbasiden und Fatimiden," in *Egypt and Syria in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk Eras*, vol. 1, ed. U. Vermeulen and D. De Smet (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 125–38.

a caliphal domain. Direct control over Egypt remained a source of concern for subsequent caliphs.

Egypt's wealth was one of its main attractions for the caliphs. The sources do not discuss systematically whether tax money was regularly sent from Egypt to Damascus or Baghdad. It is claimed that the governor, Maslama b. Mukhallad, who was appointed in 667, not only maintained the local military and civilian administrative apparatus, but also shipped grain to Arabia and transferred 600,000 dinars to the caliph, apparently on a yearly basis.[25] One later bit of information comes from a report that in 193/808–09 a shipment of taxes from Egypt destined for Baghdad was seized in Palestine. Moreover, judging from the Abbasid budget, Egypt's taxes were an important source of revenue for the caliphate.[26] During the reign of Hārūn al-Rashīd, however, southern Iraq is said to have yielded four times the revenues of Egypt.[27]

Under the Umayyads Egypt's fiscal income was also spent locally. Stipends were paid to the local Arab population and army. A whole array of state projects ranging from providing assistance to Arabia to equipping war fleets and supporting building projects locally and beyond were paid for by Egypt's income. The exploitation of Egypt began immediately after the conquest. The aforementioned Maslama b. Mukhallad made yearly payments to 40,000 people in Egypt who were also entitled to food allocations (arzāq). This number included troops and their families, of whom 4,000 received the highest remuneration of 200 dīnārs.[28] Under Qurra b. Sharīk's governorship at the beginning of the eighth century, local resources and the native workforce contributed to building projects in Fusṭāṭ (a granary), Damascus, and Jerusalem (palaces and mosques). The requisition orders issued by Qurra demonstrate the Umayyads' skill in amassing resources reflecting upon the rulers' administrative practices and economic mindset. The responsibility for the fleets and building projects, for example, was entrusted to Arab Muslim overseers while the allocation of specific sources of income covered the required materials, workforce, and money for each project. Although the organization of these building projects was at times ad hoc

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[25] Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, ed. ʿUmar, 90–91; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 2:410.

[26] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 146; Saleh Ahmad El-Eli, "A New Version of Ibn Muṭarrif's List of Revenues in the Early Times of Hārūn al-Rashīd," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 14 (1971), 303–10, at 304, 310.

[27] Hugh Kennedy, "The Decline and Fall of the First Muslim Empire," *Der Islam* 81 (2004), 3–31, at 12.

[28] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 102.

and ill-prepared, Qurra b. Sharīk's correspondence reveals how Egypt was fully integrated within the broader structure of the Umayyad state.[29]

Qurra b. Sharīk's governorship is also associated with a significant development in Egypt's agriculture that had long-lasting consequences: the introduction (or proliferation) of sugar-cane cultivation. The account by Abū ʿUmar Muḥammad b. Yusūf al-Kindī (897–961) indicates that it was the governor's private enterprise using dead-lands (*amwāt*) in the vicinity of Fusṭāṭ that lay at the basis of this rural development.[30] Whether Qurra b. Sharīk really introduced a new crop for private profit or expanded the cultivation of a crop that already existed in Egypt's agricultural cycle remains difficult to ascertain. The adverse social consequences of growing sugar cane are, however, alluded to in a report which refers to the 802 uprising in the Delta, which was sparked by a cadastral survey in relation to the cultivation of sugar cane.[31] The overall impact of cash crops such as sugar cane, flax, and cotton offered rich investors profitable returns, but the benefits for rural workers – although little researched – are less clear.

The 802 rebellion also highlights the apparent failure of both the Umayyads and Abbasids to rule Egypt properly. Although the province was clearly of the utmost importance for both dynasties, they failed to maintain a firm grip on Egypt and govern it peacefully for the mutual benefit of the local population and the central government. As was the case with many other provinces, Egypt slipped away from Umayyad control during the rebellion of Ibn Zubayr, and the reconquest of the province was only secured after heavy fighting and the execution of steadfast adversaries. The significance of reintegrating Egypt into the Umayyad domain is exemplified by the dispatch by sea from Egypt of about 3,000 troops to fight Ibn Zubayr in Mecca.[32] This fascinating report attests to the availability of considerable maritime resources on the Red Sea by the late 680s.

When examined within the broader perspective of Umayyad rule it becomes clear that Damascus misgoverned Egypt in two crucial ways: it

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[29] Marie Legendre, "Islamic Conquest, Territorial Reorganization and Empire Formation: A Study of Seventh-Century Movements of Population in the Light of Egyptian Papyri," in *The Long Seventh Century: Continuity and Discontinuity in an Age of Transition*, ed. Alessandro Gnasso et al. (Berne: Peter Lang, 2015), 235–49, at 237–38. For the range of foodstuffs and other products demanded under the requisition system see Frank R. Trombley, "Fiscal Documents from the Muslim Conquest of Egypt," *Revue des études byzantines* 71 (2013), 5–38, which relies on both literary sources and Greek papyri.

[30] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 65; Mohammed Ouerfelli, *Le sucre: production, commercialisation et usages dans la Méditerranée médiévale* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 25.

[31] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 140.

[32] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 41, 43–44, 45, 51, 311–12.

failed to formulate a tax policy acceptable to local Christian and Arab peasants; and it failed to maintain a loyal and reliable local military force.[33] Armies drafted in Syria had to be dispatched to Egypt to deal with uprisings and revolts as local troops were not sufficiently reliable or capable. Similarly, the *dīwān* system was adjusted four times, but to no avail.[34] As with Egypt's support for the Zubayrids, it can be argued that the cumulative effect of the failed Umayyad policies was powerfully demonstrated in 750 when support for the Abbasids in Egypt was widespread and the fleeing Umayyad caliph could not find any protection in the province.[35]

Abbasid rule (750–868) over Egypt, however, did not lead to any improvements in responsible governance. Again armies had to be regularly dispatched from Baghdad to quell rural rebellions (for example, in 830 and 832). In 832, as part of the overall military policy of the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim, several measures affected the Arab inhabitants of the province especially. The *dīwān* system was finally abolished, Arabs were struck off the military payroll, and Turkish troops were permanently stationed in Egypt. Not much later the last Arab governor of Egypt, ʿAnbasa b. Isḥāq (in office 853–57), was appointed.[36] From now on Egypt's local rulers would be Turkish generals, with far-reaching consequences for the way the province was run.

The Tulunid period in Egypt (868–905) was characterized by high tax revenues, the building of a new capital, the creation of a large army, and a high standard of gold coinage. It raises the question of how Egypt's economic prosperity during Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn's rule (868–84), and in the Tulunid period in general, should be explained. Did Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn expand Egypt's agriculture by bringing new lands under cultivation or did he tighten and centralize tax collection, making it possible to spend a vast income locally on domestic projects and to finance his wars in Syria?[37] The cultivation of flax and sugar cane as well as Egypt's flourishing textile

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[33] For rural rebellions see Lev, "Coptic Rebellions." For a Coptic rebellion in the Mediterranean town of Rashīd during the 740s see al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 3:306–07.

[34] Maged S. A. Mikhail, "Notes on Ahl al-Dīwān: The Arab-Egyptian Army of the Seventh through Ninth Centuries CE," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 128 (2008), 277–87. During the 740s the Umayyad army in Egypt was composed of troops mobilized in Syria. See al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 3:704. How the *dīwān* system worked and the problems it faced is discussed by Wadād al-Qāḍī, "A Documentary Report on Umayyad Stipends Registers (*Dīwān al-ʿAṭāʾ*) in Abū Zurʿaʾs *Tārīkh*," *Quaderni di Studi Arabi* 4 (2009), 7–44.

[35] For pro-Abbasid support in Egypt of the 740s see al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 94–95, 96–97; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 3:306, 4:423, which refers to Alexandria and Damietta.

[36] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 193, 202, 206.

[37] For Abbasid interests in Egypt and fiscal demands from Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn see al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 2:404. For taxing agriculture through direct taxation and the farming out of taxes see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Profit Following Responsibility: A Leaf from the Records of a Third/Ninth Century Tax Collecting Agent," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 31 (2001), 91–132.

industry are surely connected with the province's economic boom under Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn. Prior to the Tulunid period, Egypt's textile industries had supplied the annual shipment of the *kiswa* to Arabia, and both flax and textile became the hallmarks of Egypt's economic prosperity in the tenth to twelfth centuries, as attested to in the *faḍāʾil* literature and Geniza letters.[38] By the mid-tenth century Egypt's annual flax revenues were as high as 620,000 *dīnār*s, which was equal to the tax revenues of the towns of Ramla and Tiberias in Palestine and Damascus.[39] The Fayyūm depression south of Cairo developed into an important center for the growing and trading of flax as attested in the Geniza material. It indicates how valuable the cultivation of flax was for everyone involved in it: farmers, traders, and the regime. How much of this wealth was transferred by Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn to Baghdad remains a point of discussion.

When taking a broad view of Egypt's medieval economy which combines both agriculture and trade, one must take into account Jessica L. Goldberg's observation that, in the eleventh century, "Agricultural production determined business cycles, movements of credit and specie, and even how merchants valued each other's services." She furthermore states that "these activities created strong and intimate bonds between international merchants and local agriculturalists in the Islamic Mediterranean and injected coins directly into the countryside every year."[40] Flax was the major crop responsible for these bonds with twenty-two types of flax, named after regions of cultivation, mentioned in the documents of the Cairo Geniza. Abraham L. Udovitch has estimated that during the eleventh century 5,000–6,000 tons of flax were annually exported from Egypt.[41]

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[38] Gladys Frantz-Murphy, "A New Interpretation of the Economic History of Medieval Egypt: The Role of the Textile Industry, 254–567/868–1171," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 24 (1981), 274–97. For the role of the sugar-cane and sugar industries in the economic life of Tulunid–Fatimid Egypt see Ouerfelli, *Le sucre*, 68–77.

[39] Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, MS Dublin, f17b/ed. ʿUmar, 64.

[40] Jessica L. Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions in the Medieval Mediterranean: The Geniza Merchants and their Business World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 338.

[41] Abraham L. Udovitch, "Fatimid Cairo: Crossroads of World Trade: From Spain to India," in *L'Égypte fatimide: son art et son histoire*, ed. Marianne Barrucand (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1999), 681–93, at 687; Abraham L. Udovitch, "International Trade and the Medieval Egyptian Countryside," in *Agriculture in Egypt: From Pharaonic to Modern Times*, ed. A. K. Bowman and E. L. Rogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 267–85, at 271. For the processing of flax see Moshe Gil, "The Flax Trade in the Mediterranean in the Eleventh Century," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 63 (2004), 81–96, at 81–83. Philip Mayerson has speculated that the spread of flax reduced the availability of land and water for the growing of wheat and exposed Egypt to famines. See Philip Mayerson, "The Role of Flax in Roman and Fatimid Egypt," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 56 (1997), 201–9, at 201–07.

While the roots of Egypt's economic prosperity go back to the Tulunid period, the Abbasid overthrow of the dynasty in 905 obliterated (with the exception of the Tulunid Mosque) the urban build-up associated with the administrative center (al-Qaṭāʾiʿ) established by Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn and the Tulunid army. The return of direct Abbasid rule after the Tulunid interlude (905–35) brought no tangible advantages to Baghdad. In 920, for example, the caliphate had to launch another land and sea expedition to Egypt to defend the country against a Fatimid attempt at conquest. Baghdad's direct control over the province was, however, soon to be lost again. From 935 to 969 Egypt was ruled by another semi-independent Turkish dynasty, the Ikhshids. The Fatimid conquest of the country in 969 was at the same time a manifestation of the conquerors' growing strength and of the failing grip of a disintegrating Iskshidid dynasty, coupled with the weakness of the Abbasid caliphate under Buyid tutelage from 946 onwards. Egypt's ties with the lands of the Abbasid caliphate were not severed, but the Fatimid takeover signified a hallmark in Egypt's internal evolution.

Egypt and Muslim North Africa

Although Egypt and North Africa evolved into two distinctive religious, cultural, political, and socioeconomic regions, there were many personal and political links between the two. Egypt served as the springboard for raiding and conquering North Africa. This expansion was marked by Arab victories and setbacks. The first raid into Cyrenaica (Pentapolis) was launched by ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ and brought the Arab conquerors of Egypt into contact with the Lawāta Berbers, with whom an agreement stipulating a yearly payment of tribute was concluded. Even the great victory of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ, Egypt's governor on behalf of the caliph ʿUthmān, over the rebellious Byzantine governor Gregory (in 27/647–48), ended with no permanent foothold being established along the Libyan–Tunisian coastline.[42] Qayrawān was established only in 670 and then evacuated in 683 following the defeat of the Muslim armies in the region, but was subsequently reconquered and resettled in 688 and 694.

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[42] Vassilios Christides, *Byzantine Libya and the March of the Arabs towards the West of North Africa* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2000), 38–43; Walter E. Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion and Byzantine Collapse in North Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 120–21; Robert G. Hoyland, *In God's Path: The Arab Conquest and the Creation of an Islamic Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 79–81.

The raids into North Africa were motivated by the quest for plunder at both personal and state levels. Religious motives, on the other hand, do not seem to have played a major role. As has been pointed out by Kaegi, the formation of Islam and the concomitant conquest of Egypt provided the political framework for the raiding parties, but "no contemporary documentation exists to prove that any coherent conception of *jihād* had emerged by that time or [that] it was the dominant stimulant for the seventh-century Muslim conquest of North Africa."[43] The scale of the gains for those participating in the raiding is illustrated by the aforementioned 27/647–48 campaign in which a cavalry trooper supposedly received 3,000 *dīnār*s and an infantry soldier 1,000 *dīnār*s. These fabulous, perhaps exaggerated, sums stand in sharp contrast to the 31/651–52 incursion into Nubia (also commanded by ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ), which reached Dongola but reportedly yielded no booty. Although the advance of the Arabs was checked, the hostilities ended in an agreement that stipulated the delivery of a yearly tribute by the Nubians.[44] Islamic legal provisions suggest that raids into North Africa would also have enriched the state, which was entitled to part of the booty. War captives were another source of income as they could be exchanged for ransom or sold as slaves. Female slaves in particular were highly valued and fetched high prices in the Eastern slave markets.[45]

Another political tie between Egypt and North Africa was created by the occasional serving of Egypt's governors as rulers in North Africa. This practice continued intermittently throughout the whole span of Umayyad rule and the early Abbasid period (750s).[46] The political and administrative amalgamation of the two provinces proved instrumental for tapping Egypt's human resources to sustain state policies in Ifrīqiya. It meant that besides

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[43] See Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion*, 204. Kaegi's statement is fully supported by the sources. See, e.g., al-Mālikī, *Kitāb Riyāḍ al-nufūs*, ed. Bashīr al-Bakkūsh and Muḥammad al-ʿArūsī al-Maṭwī, 3 vols. (Beirut: n.p., n.d.), 1:14, 85, 93. Furthermore, recent scholarship into the Qurʾānic meaning of the term *jihād* reveals its variegated meaning, of which "holy war" is only one of many. See, e.g., Ella Landau-Tasseron, "Jihād," in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, gen. ed. J. D. McAuliffe, 6 vols. (Leiden/Boston/Cologne: Brill, 2001–06), 3:35–42.

[44] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 12. For other raids on the Berber tribes of Hawwāra and Libda see al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 32–33.

[45] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Ṣadafī*, ed. Fatḥī ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2000), 1:269. For the 27/647–48 raid see Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:273, 277, which refers to the participation of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's son in the raid, and 2:230; al-Mālikī, *Riyāḍ al-nufūs*, 1:20, 29, 38; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 4:573; Mohamed Talbi, *L'émirat aghlabide, 184–296/800–909: histoire politique* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1966), 32–35. For a broader discussion of these accounts see Elizabeth Savage, *A Gateway to Hell, a Gateway to Paradise: The North African Response to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997), 74–78.

[46] Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges*, 38, 102–03; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 3:699.

funding public works in Egypt, Egypt's wealth was used to build a state infrastructure in Ifrīqiya as well. During the reign of al-Walīd (705–15), for example, 1,000 Coptic families were sent to establish the arsenal in Tunis.[47] A most intriguing claim is reported by al-Maqrīzī, who writes that each year Egypt sent grain worth 100,000 *dīnār*s to sustain Ifrīqiya, a renowned grain-producing region. He also states that Ibrāhīm b. al-Aghlab, in his efforts to secure the governorship of the province, wrote to the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd that he would be satisfied with a cash transfer of only 40,000 *dīnār*s.[48] The account offers no clue as to the origin of the arrangement, and it is only the context that suggests that we should understand the word *maʿūna* as something that signifies grain (or food) aid.

The Mediterranean World

The Mediterranean is another region where Egypt's integration into the caliphate played out. The naval struggle between the caliphate and Byzantium in the Mediterranean during the seventh to eleventh centuries is well known and needs no elaboration here.[49] As papyri show, the Umayyad naval build-up imposed great hardship on the Coptic population of Egypt as sailors from Egypt joined the caliphal fleets of Syria and North Africa.[50] Umayyad naval activity is also alluded to in the literary sources. Ibn Yūnus (894–958), for example, employs terms such as *baḥr Miṣr wa-Shām* and *baḥr Ifrīqiya*, which can be understood as the fleets of Syria, Egypt, and Tunisia and the squadron (*marākib*) of Damietta. Naval command is also referred to by the use of the term *baḥr* and by the simple statement "he was appointed over the sea."[51] Coptic historiography describes the plight of the

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[47] Al-Raqīq al-Qayrawānī, *Taʾrīkh Ifrīqiya wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAzab (Cairo: Dār al-Firjānī li-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ, 1994), 35–37.

[48] See al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 1:109.

[49] John H. Pryor and Elizabeth M. Jeffreys, *The Age of the Dromon: Byzantine Navy ca 500–1204* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 7–76; Marek Jankowiak, "The First Arab Siege of Constantinople," in *Constructing the Seventh Century*, ed. Constantin Zuckerman, *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 237–320, offers a fresh interpretation of the naval events of the 670s. For a broader perspective on early Islam and the Mediterranean Sea see Christophe Picard, *La mer des califes: une histoire de la Méditerranée musulmane (VIIe–XIIe siècle)* (Paris: Seuil, 2015), chs. 1–3.

[50] For Umayyad naval build-up see Tarek M. Muhammad, "The Role of the Copts in the Islamic Navigation in the 7th and 8th Centuries," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 10 (2008), 1–31, at 4–5; Frank R. Trombley, "Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ and the Christians of Umayyad Egypt," in *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt*, ed. Petra M. Sijpesteijn and Lennart Sundelin (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 199–226.

[51] Khālid b. Thābit, for example, a member of the early Muslim community who participated in the conquest of Jerusalem, was appointed in 51/671 to be in command of *baḥr Miṣr*, meaning Egypt's

Copts who were forcibly drafted into naval service following the Byzantine naval raid on Damietta in 853. This seems to be related to the policies of the Abbasid caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 846–61) in reaction to the attack. The caliph decided to fortify Egypt's coastal towns and rebuild Egypt's navy.[52] Naval experience may have been an asset when appointments for the governorship of Egypt were made. For example, Ibrāhīm b. Kīghalagh (appointed 920; d. 921) served as governor of several towns on the Lebanese–Syrian coast before being appointed governor of Egypt. There is evidence of an active navy in Egypt by the 960s, which was engaged in raiding. Egypt's naval resources were vastly expanded under the Fatimids, and the Egyptian navy played a significant role in the wars of the Crusades.[53]

Besides this naval activity, maritime trade is poorly attested in early literary sources and is almost entirely invisible in the papyri. Egypt lies at the crossroads of Mediterranean and Indian Ocean commercial networks which continued to flourish throughout this period (see also above, "Arabia and the Red Sea"). While *faḍāʾil Miṣr* literature describes Egypt's Mediterranean trade as involving both the Muslim Mediterranean (North Africa, including Western Sahara [Sijilmāsa] and Syria) and the "Christian" lands (*bilād al-rūm*), Ibn al-Kindī clearly distinguishes between Byzantium (alluded to as Constantinople) and Western Europe (referred to as Rome, *rūmiyya*, and as *ifranjiyya*, the lands of the Franks). The goods imported from these regions included slaves, brocades, mastic gum, resin from the storax tree (*mayʿa*), saffron, corals, and amber. In Ibn Zūlāq's writings the role of Egypt is amplified, and he alludes to the country as a hub of true world trade. The role of the Mediterranean ports of Tinnīs, Damietta, and, especially, Alexandria is much emphasized and Upper Egypt is described as the entrepôt for trade with Africa (Beja and Ethiopia), Arabia, and Yemen.[54]

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fleet or on the Mediterranean coast, but his naval appointment must have been short as in 54/674 he was campaigning in North Africa. Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:135, 147–48, 198, 223, 229, 385, 2:194. For references to naval commanders see Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:62–63, 95, 353.

[52] *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church*, vol. 2/1, ed. and trans. Yassa ʿAbd al-Masīḥ and O. H. E. Burmester (Cairo: Société d'Archéologie Copte, 1943), 9–10 (Arabic), 131–34 (trans.); G. Levi della Vida, "A Papyrus Reference to the Damietta Raid of 853 AD," *Byzantion* 17 (1944–45), 212–21.

[53] Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 1:259. For the Abbasid naval efforts to stave off the Fatimid land and naval invasion of Egypt in 920 see al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 2:646–47. For mid-tenth-century naval activity in Egypt and the Fatimid navy see al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā*, 1:339–40; David Bramoullé, "Recruiting Crews in the Fatimid Navy (909–1171)," *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007), 4–31.

[54] Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 70–71; Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, MS Paris, 195b/MS Dublin, 13a. For the significance of amber, mastic gum, and corals in Egypt's Mediterranean trade see S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 6 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967–93), 1:47, 153 and 4:207–08.

After the Fatimid conquest of Egypt the country's participation in Indian Ocean and Mediterranean trade increased. During their North African phase the Fatimids developed a local interregional commercial system which connected Fatimid territories with southern Italy, with a special role for traders from Amalfi. The Fatimid conquest of Egypt opened up the Mediterranean ports of Egypt for the Amalfi traders and gave them access to goods of the Indian Ocean trade. What had initially begun as a local interregional system turned into a truly integrated Mediterranean trading system spanning both shores of the sea and introducing spices and rarities from India to Egypt and Europe. Fatimid interest in and knowledge of the Mediterranean is revealed through the recently discovered and extensively studied anonymous manuscript entitled *The Book of Curiosities of the Science and Marvels for the Eyes*, composed between 1020 and 1050.[55] The comparison between the *faḍāʾil Miṣr* literature and *The Book of Curiosities* shows that the Mediterranean was central to Egypt's trade network which was sustained by the Indian Ocean trade. The latter expanded during the eleventh century and is described by Mordechai Akiva Friedman in the following terms:

> The India trade was the backbone of the international economy in the Middle Ages in general and within the Islamic world in particular. More than anything else, it stimulated inter-territorial traffic, furthered the rise of a flourishing merchant class and created close and fruitful links between the countries of Islam and the Far East on the one hand and Europe on the other.[56]

A fresh light on the Indian Ocean trade is cast by the archaeological finds from the Red Sea port of Quṣayr al-Qadīm. The site, known as Myos Hormos, was occupied from the first to the early third centuries and reoccupied during the Islamic period between the mid-eleventh and late fifteenth centuries. In both periods it served the Indian Ocean trade, and during the Islamic period it also functioned as a departure point for pilgrims sailing to Mecca and shipment of grain to the Ḥijāz. Archaeological finds and textual evidence brought Marijke van der Veen and Jacob Morales to conclude that a shift occurred in the way spices were

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For the geographical aspects of the account see Georgette Cornu, *Atlas du monde arabo-islamique à l'époque classique IXe–Xe siècles*, vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1985), index.

[55] *An Eleventh-Century Egyptian Guide to the Universe: The Book of Curiosities*, ed. and trans. Yossef Rapoport and Emilie Savage-Smith (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

[56] S. D. Goitein and M. A. Friedman, *India Traders of the Middle Ages: Documents from the Cairo Geniza* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 3. See also the remarks of Goldberg on the importance of trade in local agricultural products.

used between the Roman and Islamic periods. In the Roman period only black pepper was widely used in the cuisine, while in the Islamic period a much broader range of spices was used and, consequently, spices were imported in larger quantities and became more widely used in both the Middle East and Europe.[57]

The Fatimids' rule in Egypt was instrumental in furthering the developments of a world trade system spanning Europe, Africa, Arabia, and South Asia in which Egypt played a central role. They built on developments already set in motion before their arrival, and those continued after their demise.

The Emergence of a Local Muslim Identity

As important as Egypt's geopolitical position was, its main transformation between 500 and 1000 was internal. By 1000 the Delta was more Islamized than Upper Egypt, although large and significant Muslim populations also lived in Bahnasā, Ushmūnayn, Ikhmīm, Qūṣ, and Aswān, to name just a few of the towns of the region. The main urban centers of Fusṭāṭ–Cairo and Alexandria were certainly Muslim cities, although they also housed Christian and Jewish populations. Islam was clearly the main political and institutional factor in the life of the country and Arabic was the language of the court, administration, and the urban population. Coptic, on the other hand, would eventually lose its position even among the rural population.

The question of how to view Egypt's/Egyptian religious identity is a vexed issue. Speaking about Byzantine Egypt, Bernhard Palme has posed the following questions: "Had a religiously defined identity emerged which competed with Roman political identity and facilitated, or even encouraged, Egypt's departure from the Byzantine Empire in 642? Did there exist a sense of 'We are Monophysite Egyptians' – and did such loyalties supersede the feeling 'We are Rhomaioi', paving the way for resistance to the empire?"[58] Palme rejects the notion that dogmatic differences facilitated the Arab conquest of Egypt and he warns against the projection of ninth- and tenth-century realities onto the time of the conquest. Palme's questions and views

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[57] See Marijke van der Veen and Jacob Morales, "The Roman and Islamic Spice Trade: New Archaeological Evidence," *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 167 (2015), 54–63. For the port in the Islamic period see Li Guo, *Commerce, Culture, and Community in a Red Sea Port in the Thirteenth Century: The Arabic Documents from Quseir* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

[58] Bernhard Palme, "Political Identity versus Religious Distinction? The Case of Egypt in the Later Roman Empire," in *Visions of Community in the Post-Roman World: The West, Byzantium and the Islamic World, 300–1100*, ed. Walter Pohl et al. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 81–98, esp. 82.

reflect an emerging scholarly consensus about the socioreligious and linguistic realities of late Byzantine and early Muslim Egypt.

Addressing these issues Jacques van der Vliet has written as follows: "To put it strongly, in the seventh century there were *no* Copts. There were Egyptians, long Christianized, who used two distinct written codes, Greek and Coptic. These same Egyptians were deeply divided ecclesiastically. The official 'Chalcedonian' church had to compete with strong 'anti-Chalcedonian' opposition that was itself much divided."[59]

Maged S. A. Mikhail discussed the complex religious scene in Egypt on the eve of the Arab conquest, arguing that the crystallization of Coptic identity took place during and in reaction to the first three centuries of Muslim rule.[60] It can be argued that, during this period of time, Egypt's Islamic identity also became solidified. These were parallel processes but the interaction between them, if any, remains vague.

Writing about Egypt's Islamic identity, Hussein Omar has ascertained that "an examination of the documentary and literary sources of the first–fourth/seventh–tenth centuries suggests that neither Arab Muslim nor Egyptian Christian identity in the medieval period was a clearly defined as has been claimed." He goes on to make an even more challenging assertion, that during the ninth century "an independent, local Egyptian Arab identity was developing, altogether distinct from a general Arab-Muslim identity. It was at once tied to the changing status of Christians in Egypt, as well as to older, pre-conquest ideas about this rich province and its inhabitants."[61]

Other scholars define Egypt's Islamic identity as embodied by the growth of schools of law. Jonathan E. Brockopp, for example, has argued that Egypt was the birthplace of the Mālikī and Shāfiʿī schools of law, and that it played a crucial role in the spread of both schools in North Africa. Mathieu Tillier has emphasized Egypt's unique Mālikī character (in contrast to Abbasid Iraq).[62] He has pointed at the competition between the imperial center, Baghdad, and Egypt in matters concerning the practicalities of the administration of justice. When a Ḥanafī *qāḍī* was appointed from Baghdad in 783, Egypt's jurists successfully defended a local tradition

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[59] Jacques van der Vliet, "Coptic Documentary Papyri after the Arab Conquest," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 43 (2013), 187–208, at 193.

[60] Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014), chs. 4–5.

[61] See Hussein Omar, "'The Crinkly-Haired People of the Black Earth': Examining Egyptian Identities in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ*," in *History and Identity in the Late Antique Near East*, ed. Philip Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 149–67, esp. 149, 151.

[62] See also Tillier's contribution to this volume (Chapter 5).

concerning the setting of pious endowments. At the same time Egypt should be considered a cradle for procedural–judicial innovations.[63]

Omar perceives Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn's rule in Egypt as a clash between foreign slave soldiers and the local Arab ruling elite, but his treatment of the period is shallow and the assertion about the development of a distinct Egyptian Arab identity conjectural and unsupported by the sources.[64] Omar sees Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Miṣr* as a key text that supports his arguments since it offers a positive depiction of the Copts bolstered by favourable utterances attributed to the Prophet about them. Certain elements of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's text appear also in the *faḍāʾil Miṣr* literature which I perceive as providing the best perspective on the topic under discussion. *Faḍāʾil Miṣr* literature depicts a multi-dimensional portrait of Egypt as a unique region and ancient land with a pre-Islamic history which had been imbued with Islamic credentials.[65] The earliest *faḍāʾil Miṣr* work is by Ibn al-Kindī, which begins with an attempt to define what a *faḍl* (merit, distinction) is. He states that a *faḍl* constitutes either *dīn* or *dunyā*, meaning that there is either religious merit or worldly/material merit involved. Actually, he presents *faḍl* as a fusion of both. His exposition continues with the inevitable attempt to present certain Qurʾānic passages as alluding to Egypt. At the heart of Ibn al-Kindī's discussion of Egypt's Islamic identity are, however, the Muslim people themselves who were associated with the country. Ibn al-Kindī commences with the Prophet's Companions, lists the most illustrious people of the indigenous class of jurists, scholars, ascetics, and caliphs born in Egypt, and lists caliphs and poets who visited Egypt during their lifetimes. Egypt's ancient history and the people associated with it are also enumerated, and the discussion that follows focuses on the merits of the land and is encapsulated by the expression "Egypt is the storehouse of the world," a view taken over by others as well.[66]

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[63] Jonathan E. Brockopp, "The Formation of Islamic Law: The Egyptian School (750–900)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 123–40, at 124, 134–35, 136–39; Mathieu Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis de Fusṭāṭ et les dynamiques regionals de l'innovation judiciare (750–833)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 214–42, at 227–29, 234–37; Mathieu Tillier, "Legal Knowledge and Local Practice under the Early Abbasids," in *History and Identity in the Late Antique Near East*, ed. Philip Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 187–204, esp. 199–200.

[64] Omar ignores the major source for the Tulunid period (al-Balawī's *Sīrat Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn*) and Zaky Muhammad Hassan's book *Les Tulunides*.

[65] For the impact of pharaonic history and monuments on Egypt's Islamic identity see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Building an Egyptian Identity," in *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook*, ed. Asad Q. Ahmed, Behnam Sadeghi, and Michael Bonner (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 85–105, with ample references to sources and literature. See also Jelle Bruning's contribution to this volume (Chapter 10).

[66] Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 51, 67. Ibn al-Kindī's format was adopted and elaborated upon by Ibn Zūlāq, who claims that the caliphs described Egypt as a "bread basket," and is enthusiastic about the

To conclude this section, one can accept the depiction of Egypt's medieval identity in the *faḍāʾil Miṣr* literature as a fusion of Islamic credentials and the excellence of the land, while preserving the memory of its ancient history. One must, however, be aware that this literature totally obliterates Egypt's Christian heritage which by the year 1000 was still viable. Furthermore, elements of Egypt's Christian heritage also became embedded in the medieval country's syncretic culture, embodied by the adoption of the Coptic calendar for agricultural and taxation purposes and the continued popularity of a whole range of Coptic festivals amongst all of Egypt's inhabitants. In this way some pharaonic customs that focused on the Nile, albeit largely diluted beyond recognition, continued to exist well into the nineteenth century.[67]

Conclusion

Egypt's history between 500 and 1000 offers a complex picture of interaction with broader political structures and local developments. A case in point are the Abbasid invasions of Egypt in 905 and in 920. It can be argued that those illustrate the ultimate incorporation of Egypt within the overall political and economic structure of the Abbasid caliphate, which invested vast resources to keep Egypt under its sway. The benefits for the caliphal center were, however, far from clear as the province continued to resist direct caliphal control. Egypt was, moreover, better off under the quasi-independent rule of the Tulunids and flourished under the Fatimids, most of the time. From the local point of view, political incorporation within a larger caliphal structure ruled from Baghdad was the less-preferred option. Egypt's most successful and enduring incorporation in transregional networks took place under the Fatimids and evolved around the Indian Ocean trade network.

However, when the discussion is shifted from political and economic aspects of Egypt's incorporation in, or devolution from, larger imperial political state structures, its Islamic identity clearly stands out. Egypt's identity

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agricultural riches of the Fayyūm and its ability to supply the country even when the annual rise of the Nile was below the desired 16 cubits. Egypt's remarkable textile industry, which was spread all over the country and produced high-quality and unique fabrics and garments, is described in detail and with admiration: Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, MS Paris, 197b–199a/MS Dublin, 15a–b, 17b–18a/ed. ʿUmar, 56–61.

[67] See, e.g., Huda Lutfi, "Coptic Festivals of the Nile: Aberration of the Past?" in *The Mamluks in Egyptian Politics and Society*, ed. Thomas Philipp and Ulrich Haarmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 254–83. Other references are provided in Jonathan P. Berkey, "Popular Culture under the Mamluks: A Historiographical Survey," *Mamluk Studies Review* 9 (2005), 133–46.

as a Sunnī country incorporated into Mālikī North Africa and Ḥanafī–Shāfiʿī Middle Eastern identity was so powerful and enduring that the long Fatimid rule proved to be inconsequential, leaving no Shīʿī imprint on the country. In Cairo, however, the Fatimid legacy is significant and visible and the Prophet's Birthday, a festival initiated by the Fatimids, became truly pan-Islamic, while its Fatimid roots have been either forgotten or ignored.[68]

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[68] For Sunnī learning in Fatimid Egypt and Mālikism in twelfth-century Fatimid Alexandria see Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, *La capitale de l'Égypte jusqu'à l'époque fatimide* (Beirut: Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, 1998), 580–88; Delia Cortese, "Voices of the Silent Majority: The Transmission of Sunnī Learning in Faṭimid Egypt," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 39 (2012), 345–67; Yaacov Lev, "Piety and Political Activism in Twelfth Century Egypt," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 31 (2006), 289–324, at 300–02. For the Fatimid legacy see Yaacov Lev, "The Uniqueness of the Fatimid State," *Der Islam* 96 (2019), 345–73, at 368–70.

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The Frontier Zone at the First Cataract before and at the Time of the Muslim Conquest (Fifth to Seventh Centuries)

Stefanie Schmidt

Introduction

A discussion of Egypt's incorporation into the larger structures of an emerging Muslim empire should also touch upon the question when Egypt, from north to south, was entirely under Muslim dominion in the seventh century.[1] Whereas the Muslim literary sources provide plenty of information about the conquest of the Nile Delta, and to some extent also that of Middle Egypt,[2] our knowledge of the situation at the southern *limes* of the Byzantine empire, the last bastion to fall to the Muslims, is still very incomplete. How effective was the border defense in this strategic area – against enemies from both the south and the north? Was the Byzantine empire indeed not able to defend this part against aggressors? But why then, according to literary sources, could the Muslims only take Aswān in 652, a decade after the conquest of northern Egypt?[3] This chapter is an attempt to shed more light on the defense situation at the First Cataract before and during the time of the Muslim

[1] All dates are given as CE if not stated otherwise.
[2] For a discussion of the literary sources see Phil Booth, "The Muslim Conquest of Egypt Reconsidered," in *Constructing the Seventh Century*, ed. Constantin Zuckerman, *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 639–70, who also challenged the traditional Muslim-based conquest narrative according to which Egypt was conquered in one single movement from north to south. He convincingly argued for a first Muslim approach from the south, perhaps from the Via Hadriana, toward the Fayyūm.
[3] Ibn Ḥawqal, *Configuration de la terre (Kitāb Ṣūrat al-arḍ)*, vol. 1, ed. Johannes H. Kramers and Gaston Wiet (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 1964), 49.

conquest,[4] with special focus on the archaeological evidence. In this regard, it will discuss Aswān's defensive capacities from the fifth to the seventh centuries, elaborate on the aggression faced from southern Nubia, and make suggestions for first signs of Muslim activity in Aswān.

Syene/Aswān as a Military Fortress?

Aswān and its adjacent island, Elephantine, lie close to the border with ancient Nubia in southern Egypt. The continued settlement of Syene/Aswān from the Old Kingdom to modern times provides valuable insight into more than 4,000 years of urban history.[5] However, the flip side of this is that almost the entire area of the ancient town (ca. 11–13 ha) is covered by modern habitation, impeding archaeological access to the area as a whole.[6] Since 2000 Syene/Aswān has been excavated by the joint Swiss–Egyptian mission of the Swiss Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Research on Ancient Egypt in Cairo and the Ministry of State for Antiquities in Syene/Old Aswān. Although a detailed map of ancient Aswān cannot yet be drawn, archaeological work allows retracing of the limits of the Pharaonic, Ptolemaic, Roman, and Islamic town (Figure 3.1).[7] Of special interest for this chapter is the town's fortification situation in the seventh century when, according to Ibn Ḥawqal, a writer of the tenth century, the invading army of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd (in office 645/46–56) conquered Aswān in 652.[8]

Since the 1990s the fortification situation of Syene/Aswān has been thoroughly investigated by the German Archaeological Institute Cairo and the Swiss Institute. Most recent studies show that Syene was fortified from the late

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[4] For the sake of simplicity I use the expression "Muslim conquest," although the conquest army consisted of a diversity of ethnic and religious groups, also containing Christians and Jews: see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Beginning of Muslim Rule," in *Egypt and the Byzantine World, 300–700 AD*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 437–59, at 439.

[5] In the southern part of the modern city lies Roman Syene (Coptic Souan), now covered by the al-Kōka and el-Shouna quarters: see Cornelius von Pilgrim et al., "The Town of Syene: Report on the 3rd and 4th Season in Aswān," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo* 62 (2006), 215–77, at 217.

[6] See Wolfgang Müller, "Syene (Ancient Aswān) in the First Millennium AD," in *Egypt in the First Millennium AD: Perspectives from the Fieldwork*, ed. Elisabeth R. O'Connell (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 59–69, at 62, where a higher figure of 12–13 ha was still assumed. However, as Wolfgang Müller informed me by email (November 19, 2016), a lower figure of ca. 11–12 ha is more likely for the size of Roman and late antique Syene. Higher estimations (ca. 185,300 m²) were assumed a decade ago, as can be found in the second preliminary report of the excavations: see von Pilgrim et al., "The Town of Syene" (2006), 219f.

[7] See esp. the publications of Cornelius von Pilgrim et al., "Report on the Joint Swiss-Egyptian Mission in Syene/Old Aswan" (hereafter "Swiss Report") from 2008/09 to 2018/19, published on the website of the institute at http://swissinst.ch/html/forschung_neu.html.

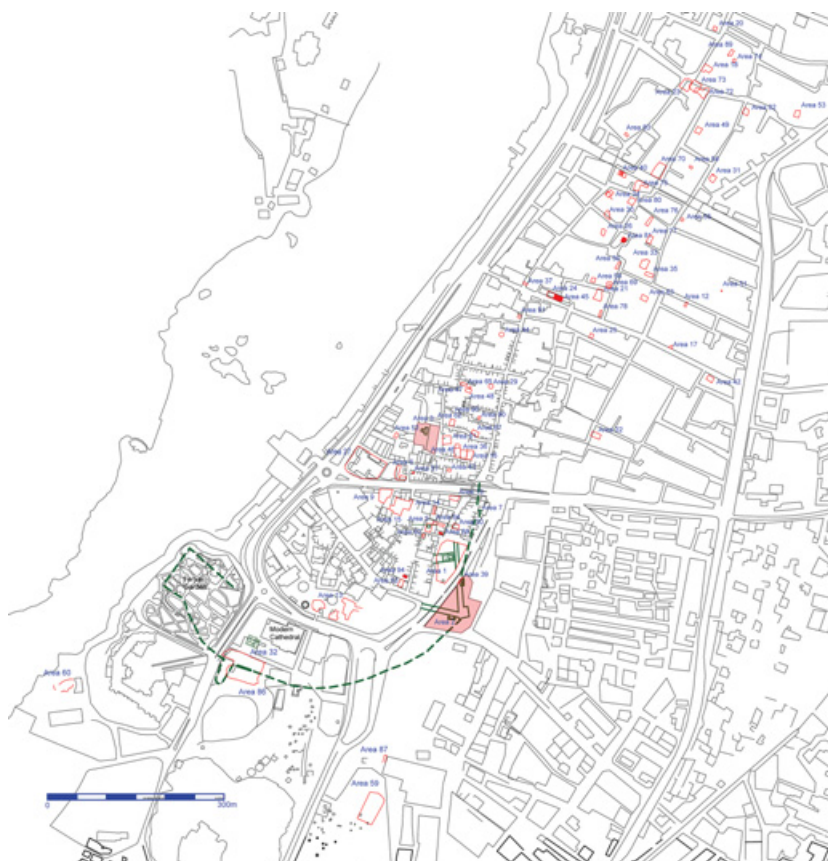[8] Ibn Ḥawqal, *Configuration de la terre*, 49.

Figure 3.1 Map of Aswān with areas excavated by the Swiss–Egyptian mission, taken from von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2018/19," fig. 1, p. 24. Courtesy and copyright by the Swiss Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Research on Ancient Egypt in Cairo.

period (722–332 BCE)[9] onward.[10] Though archaeologists were not able to trace its entire course, they found sections of a protective wall that dated back to pharaonic times in areas 1, 2, 15, 36, 46, 61/62, and perhaps 50.[11] While at

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[9] Chronology following Erik Hornung, Rolf Krauss, and David A. Warburton (eds.), *Ancient Egyptian Chronology* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2006), 494f.

[10] Von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2011/12," 3, 5–11.

[11] Von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2008/09," 11–15, 18–19 (area 46); von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2009/10," 17–18; Müller, "Syene," 62; Cornelius von Pilgrim et al., "The Town of Syene: Report on

that time it may have encircled the entire town, it is likely that in the Roman period only a smaller part of the growing city had been integrated into this fortified district.[12] This protected area is possibly mentioned in the papyri of the late Roman Patermouthis archive (493–613), which takes its name from a boatman and soldier of the regiment of Elephantine. The papyri, which are primarily concerned with private sales of real estate in Syene, locate some houses (also owned by soldiers) "in Syene in the southern part of the *phrourion*" (Gr., "fortress").[13] The exact location of this area is yet to be determined. However, archaeologists consider it possible that it was defined by remains of the late period wall close to the Ptolemaic temple of Isis.[14] The pharaonic wall may also have been the reason why Syene was called a "fortress" in Demotic and Aramaic papyri of the fifth century BCE, and at least a part of the town continued to be called so until late antiquity.[15]

The late period wall had been repaired and reinforced several times in the Ptolemaic, Roman, and early Islamic periods. This can best be reproduced in the vicinity of the temple of Isis in area 1 and the intersection of the eastern and southern sectors of the wall in area 2 (Figure 3.2). Archaeological surveys showed that a first significant reconstruction of the wall had been carried out in the late Ptolemaic period when a first casing was added.[16] The poor quality of this work soon necessitated repair measures, which were carried out in the

the 7th Season in Aswan," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo* 66 (2010), 179–224, at 198–99 (area 36); von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2011/12," 5–7; and von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2012/13," 5–6 (areas 1 and 2). In area 50 no traces of a wall were found, but the findings in area 46 open up the possibility that at an unknown time a former wall had been completely removed: see von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2008/09," 18.

[12] Von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2015/16," 21 with n. 50.

[13] Bezalel Porten et al., *The Elephantine Papyri in English* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), D21–D23, D40, D45–D46. For the archive of Flavius Patermouthis son of Menas, see TM Arch id: 37 (www.trismegistos.org).

[14] Müller, "Syene," 64. On the contrary, Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion: A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298–642 CE)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008), 71; Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, "New Light on the Patermouthis Archive from Excavations at Aswan: When Archaeology and Papyrology Meet," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 44 (2007), 179–209, at 193, considered it likely that the term *phrourion* referred to the entire town of Syene.

[15] A Demotic papyrus of 487 BCE mentions the "fortress of Syene" (Dem., *rs.t*), which was under the administration of "He of Tshetres" (Dem., *Pa-tꜣ-št-rsy*): see Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, C35, line 3 with n. 11. For the reading "He of Tshetres" and this position, which perhaps combined civil and military administrative duties over Upper Egypt, see Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, 311 n. 1. See also Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, B19, 7 (407 BCE), "troop commander in Syene, the fortress" (Aram., *bīrtā*). However, by that time "fortress" was not only used in a purely military sense, since people owned property in the fortress. In the private Aramaic loan in Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, B46, 2–3 (402 BCE), lines 2–3 the writer states, "I came to you in your house in Syene, the fortress," underlining the figurative meaning of "fortress" as it is unlikely that the addressee owned private property in a military camp.

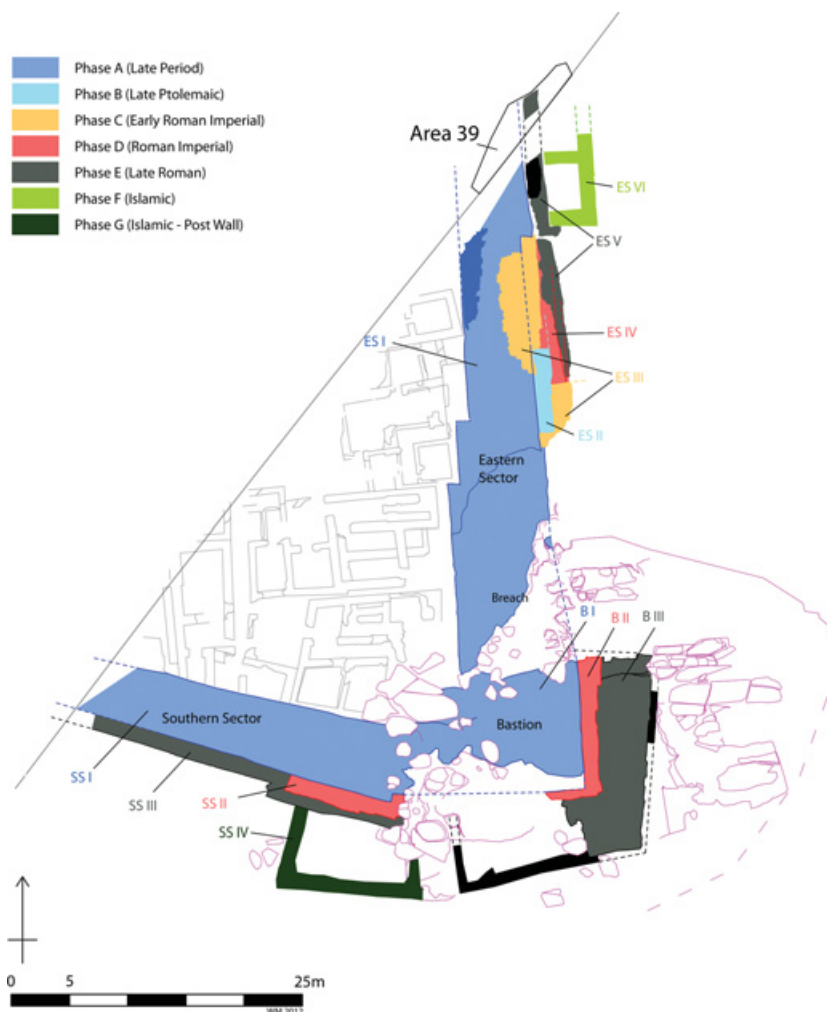[16] For this and the following see Von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss report 2011/12," 5–11.

Figure 3.2 Plan of area 2 with town wall and Roman city quarter, taken from von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2011/12," 26 fig. 4. Courtesy and copyright by the Swiss Institute for Architectural and Archaeological Research on Ancient Egypt in Cairo.

early Roman period. Pottery findings provide evidence that the third repair work, a mud-brick wall added to the Ptolemaic casing, was carried out in the third or fourth century. When the third/fourth-century wall was almost completely eroded, a rose granite rubble and a sandstone casing had been added. Moreover, in late Roman times the area was fortified by a bastion, "the

first element of active fortification of the town-wall," which covered a total area of at least 300 square metres.[17] In modern scholarship it is generally assumed that these measures were taken as a reaction against unrelenting attacks by nomad tribes from which the entire region suffered. Literary sources often identify these tribes with the Blemmyes whose aggressiveness made them synonymous with "barbarians" in the Nile Valley.[18] In research their rise is explained by the fading of Roman power at the Egyptian border, resulting in the withdrawal of the frontier to the First Cataract under Diocletian (298) and the weakening of the Meroitic kingdom in the fourth/fifth century.[19] Their permanent settlement in the Dodekaschoinos was, however, not likely before the second half of the fourth century.[20]

The most prominent cry for help against nomadic attacks is the petition of Bishop Appion of Syene to the emperors Theodosius II and Valentinian III (425–450).[21] It is transmitted through a copy of his request (*exemplum precum*)

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[17] Von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss report 2011/12," 10–11.

[18] For a good discussion of the Blemmyan evidence see Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, "Blemmyes, Noubades and the Eastern Desert in Late Antiquity: Reassessing the Written Sources," in *The History of the Peoples of the Eastern Desert*, ed. H. Barnard and K. Duistermaat (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2012), 239–47. First reports of Blemmyan attacks date from the reign of the emperor Probus (276–82), who is said to have liberated Coptos and probably Ptolemais from Blemmyan occupation: see HA, *Prob.* 17.1. Several literary sources report attacks throughout the Thebaid in the fourth century, for example the fragments of the *Life of Pachomius*, which also gives an account of their presence in the mountains close to Dendara in the first half of the fourth century: see *FHN* III 296. In late 373 they are said to have raided a monastery on the Sinai (for the text and problems with the authenticity of the story see Daniel Caner, *History and Hagiography from the Late Antique Sinai* [Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010], 141–71), and in 395 the town of Syene (see *FHN* III 307). At the end of the fourth century they seem to have controlled a part of Lower Nubia: Epiphanus of Salamis (see *FHN* III 305) says that Talmis (Kalabscha) and its neighborhood had been held by Blemmyes in 394. This was still the case around 423 when Olympiodorus visited the Blemmyes in Talmis (see *FHN* III 309). Blemmyan presence in Talmis is, moreover, attested by three inscriptions left by the Blemmyan kings Tamal (undated, *FHN* III 310), Isemne (undated, *FHN* III 311), and Kharamadoye (fifth century?, *FHN* III 300) in the temple of Mandulis. The triumphal inscription of the Nubian king Silko from before the middle of the fifth century (*FHN* III 317) states that he had fought the Blemmyans from Primis (Qaṣr Ibrīm) to Telēlis (Shellāl?), locating the Blemmyan sphere of influence close to the border with Egypt. Due to its proximity to the frontier, Syene must have been frequently threatened by attacks. At the beginning of the fifth century Palladius, *Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom*, ed. Robert T. Meyer (New York: Newman Press 1985), ch. 20, at 132 wrote that during his exile he was kept under guard at a place called Syene in the neighborhood of the Blemmyes or Ethiopians.

[19] Our knowledge about these tribal nomads is still very limited and mostly influenced by the "outer sources," as Jitse H. F. Dijkstra and Artur Obłuski demonstrated: see Dijkstra, "Blemmyes," 240; Artur Obłuski, *The Rise of Nobadia: Social Changes in Northern Nubia in Late Antiquity* (Warsaw: Taubenschlag, 2014), 34. For the end of the Meroitic kingdom see Obłuski, *Rise*, 39–59.

[20] Dijkstra, "Blemmyes," 242, who states, moreover, that only Procopius of Caesarea locates them in the Dodekaschoinos already at the end of the third century: see Procopius, *Wars* 1.19.27–37 (*FHN* III 328).

[21] *FHN* III 314 (= *SB* XX 14606) (425–450, Syene). For a comprehensive discussion see Klaas A. Worp and Denis Feissel, "La requête d'Appion, évêque de Syène, à Théodose II. P.Leid. Z. revisé," in *Documents, droit, diplomatique de l'Empire romain tardif*, ed. Denis Feissel (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2010), 339–61.

which was probably sent to the duke of the Thebaid (*comes et dux Thebaici limitis*).[22] Due to continued looting by Blemmyes and Annoubades, the bishop petitioned the emperors to protect his church's places/property (*topoi*) with soldiers stationed close to the city, and, further, to be entrusted with the command over these soldiers.[23] The petition has often been taken as an indication that Syene/Aswān was without fortification and/or military presence at the beginning of the fifth century. Peter Grossmann, for instance, based his interpretation and dating of a settlement on Elephantine as a military camp on this petition. He assumed that the emperor's reaction to the petition (which we do not know) consisted in the immediate deployment of further soldiers who were encamped in the newly built houses in the former Khnum temple courtyard on the island.[24] Horst Jaritz followed this interpretation, and stated: "Dort (Elephantine) blieben sie (soldiers) bis zum Eintritt ruhigerer Zeiten im 2. Viertel des 6. Jahrhunderts. Aufgrund dieser Verlagerung des Schwergewichts der Verteidigung des Raums Syene, Elephantine und Contra-Syene auf die Insel Elephantine, ist davon auszugehen, daß Syene damals noch nicht befestigt war."[25] Other scholars argued that although there were sufficient soldiers in the region, up until then they had no mandate to protect churches or their property.[26] It would in fact be odd if general defense measures had not included churches, but a legal order issued by the

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[22] Worp and Feissel, "La requête," 347 and 357. Matthias Gelzer, *Studien zur byzantinischen Verwaltung Ägyptens* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1909), 15–16 identified him with the *comes* Andreas; for Andreas see *PLRE* II, s.v. "Andreas 2."

[23] *FHN* III, p. 1140: "Since I find myself with my churches in the midst of those merciless barbarians, between the Blemmyes and the Annoubades, we suffer many attacks from them, coming upon us as if from nowhere, with no soldier to protect our places (*topoi*) … I prostrate myself and grovel at your divine and unsullied footprints so that you may deign to ordain that the holy churches [under my care] be defended by the troops (stationed) near us and that they obey me and be placed under my orders in all matters just as the troops stationed in the garrison of Philae, as it (10) is called." For the military presence in the region see Dijkstra, *Philae*, 29–32; James G. Keenan, "Evidence for the Byzantine Army in the Syene Papyri," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 27 (1990), 139–50.

[24] See Peter Grossman, *Elephantine II: Kirche und spätantike Hausanlagen im Chnumtempelhof. Beschreibung und typologische Untersuchung* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1980), 26–29. In the early or mid-fifth century a series of small equally shaped houses was built inside the courtyard of the former temple of Khnum. The method of exploiting the space – with almost no room for privacy – let the archaeologist assume that those houses were not private property, but had been built as a temporary encampment. The prevailing theory up to today is that this was a military camp similar to that built in the temple of Taposiris Magna, close to Alexandria: see Grossman, *Elephantine II*, 23 and fig. 2.

[25] Horst Jaritz, "Die Kirche des Heiligen Psoti," in *Mélanges Gamal Eddin Mokhtar*, vol. 2, ed. P. Posener-Kriéger (Cairo: IFAO, 1985), 1–19, at 16–17.

[26] Gelzer, *Verwaltung*, 11 states that soldiers had a mandate to protect the entire province, but not, for instance, estates of the church. See also Dijkstra, *Philae*, 52 and 58: "Bishop Appion took the initiative of appealing to the emperors to place his churches under military protection." The issue of the military presence in the region in the poorly documented beginning of the fourth century will be discussed in more detail in Stefanie Schmidt, *Die Wirtschaft Assuans zwischen byzantinischer und frühislamischer Zeit auf Basis von Papyri, Ostraka, Inschriften und der archäologischen Evidenz* (forthcoming).

emperor Anastasius (r. 491–518) indicates that in some circumstances churches may indeed have asked for additional protection by soldiers.[27] The novelty issued during his reign was that from that point onward communities or institutions had to supply the soldiers who had to protect them, so that the fiscus would not suffer from these exceptional circumstances. Bishop Appion may have asked for this kind of additional protection that was already practiced in Philae, as he mentioned.[28] A welcome pretext for his claim may have been the law on church asylum that Theodosius II extended in 431 so that the protected space a church had to provide for refugees did not only include the altar room, but also the entrances, smaller and bigger houses, gardens, baths, courtyards, and colonnades.[29] Appion's provocative parenthesis "As the churches in my care for this reason [the attacks] are humiliated and unable to defend even those who are fleeing for refuge to them" may refer to this additional challenge that in Appion's eyes justified further support from the state. Therefore, the petition does not say anything about the strength of troops stationed in Syene; it is rather a clever move of the bishop to instrumentalize his care for public welfare, and the refugees in particular, to extend his power and create a level playing field with the See of Philae.

A joining of forces between the military and ecclesiastical sectors that Appion mentioned for Philae can indeed be observed in the epigraphic evidence from that island. Several building inscriptions commemorate repair work to a wall involving the military commander of the Thebaid – the *dux* or *comes Thebaici limitis*[30] in the fifth century, the *dux et Augustalis* from approximately the middle of the sixth century[31] – local military officials (*praefecti legionis*) and the bishop of Philae.[32] The first datable example of these inscriptions stems from 449/50 or 464/5, the last from 577, which does not exclude earlier and later work measures.[33] The involvement of the

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[27] *CJ* 12.37.17 (Krueger).   [28] *FHN* III 314, 9–10.

[29] *Cod. Theod.* 9.45.4 (Pharr). Worp and Feissel, "Requête," 354–55 already assumed a connection to Theodosius' law. If the bishop refers to this law, the year 431 would be a *terminus post quem* for the petition.

[30] For this official see Bernhard Palme, "The Imperial Presence: Government and Army," in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 244–70, at 247. His earliest attestation is Fl. Sabinus Antiochus Damonicus (*PLRE* II) from inscriptions from Philae: see *I.Philae* II 194–95 (449–68).

[31] Palme, "Imperial Presence," 248.   [32] *I.Philae* II 194, 195, 216–26, and probably also 227–28.

[33] The earliest: *I.Philae* II 194 (449/50 or 464/5) with comm. line 11; see also Dijkstra, *Philae*, 57; Denis Feissel, "L'évêque, titres et fonctions d'après les inscriptions grecques jusqu'au VIIe siècle," in *Actes du XIe congrès international d'archéologie chrètienne: Lyon, Vienne, Grenoble, Genève et Aoste (21–28 Septembre 1986)*, vol. 1, ed. Noël Duval, Françoise Baritel, and Philippe Pergola (Rome: École française de Rome, 1989), 801–28, at 823 n. 101. Although the stone is labeled "Assouan, 27. VIII (19) 05" an origin in Philae may be more reasonable, since the mentioned Apa Daniel was bishop of this see: see Dijkstra, *Philae*, 57 and appendix 4, p. 360. The latest: *I.Philae* II 216 (577).

commander of the Thebaid indicates that this was no local initiative. Under the emperor(s) Theodosius II (and Valentinian III), an order was given to strengthen the imperial border troops and camps. In a *constitutio* issued in 443 to Nomus,[34] *magister officiorum* (and thus relevant for the entire eastern empire), the emperor ordered that all dukes had to give special care to the fortification of the borders "that are approached by the tribes against whom we must be especially on guard": soldiers had to be increased to their ordinary number, *castra* and river patrol boats to be repaired.[35] This defense program was preceded by other imperial orders to fortify city walls. At the end of the fourth century, for instance, all provincial governors were ordered to direct instructions to the municipal senates to build new walls or make old walls stronger.[36] Expenses were to be calculated beforehand and assessed on the land of each inhabitant in form of taxes.[37] The cited inscriptions bear witness that the border defense of Philae was also strengthened during the fifth and sixth centuries. Evidence of repair work to a fortification also comes from inscriptions from Syene, probably to be dated to the fifth/sixth century.[38] The wall, more specifically that part of the wall that stretches towards the desert/mountain[39] (*to meros touto tou teichous to epi to oros*), was repaired under the supervision of Fl. Onōphrios, ex-tribune, who was in charge of border affairs (*epikeimenos tō limitō*), a *praipositos* and a *princeps*.[40] A *praipositos* and a *princeps* were also in charge of having repaired a tower (*pyrgos*).[41] While in the first inscription the topographic marker *oros* renders it very likely that the stone comes from Syene,[42] the only evidence that the tower inscription comes from Syene lies in the registers of the Cairo Museum.[43] The third inscription

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[34] *PLRE* II Nomus 1.

[35] *Nov. Theod.* 24.1.1–5 (443) (Pharr). A progress report had to be made annually in January.

[36] *Cod. Theod.* 15.1.34 (396) (Pharr); see also 5.14.35 (395), 15.1.36 (397).

[37] *Cod. Theod.* 15.1.34 (396): "And the expense thereof shall, of course, be arranged in such a way that the tax assessment shall be apportioned according to the ability of each man. An estimate shall be made of the cost of the future work and in accordance therewith the land of the citizens shall be assessed, so that no more or less than necessity requires shall be demanded."

[38] M. Gustave Lefebvre, "Petits monuments du Musée du Caire," *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 28 (1928), 29–37, at 36 dated one of these inscriptions (reedited as André Bernand, *De Thèbes à Syéne* [Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989], no. 236) to the sixth century. He based his argument on the similarity in formula with inscriptions from Philae. However, in the meantime the Philae inscriptions could be dated between the middle of the fifth century and 577, which could also affect the dating of the three inscriptions attributed to Syene. For Bernand, *Thèbes*, no. 236 see, however, the following explanations.

[39] For *oros* = mountain/desert and not monastery in case of Syene see Dijkstra, "New Light," 193.

[40] Bernand, *Thèbes*, no. 237.   [41] Bernand, *Thèbes*, no. 235.

[42] A public wall of the *oros* appears in the papyri of the Patermouthis archive from Syene: see Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D47, line 28 (594); and Dijkstra, "New Light," 193.

[43] M. Gustave Lefebvre, "Égypte chrétienne," *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 10 (1910), 50–65, no. 816, intro: "Stèle destinée au Musée du Caire. C'est à Assouan que cette stele a été

allocated to Syene cannot be assigned to the town without reasonable doubt either.[44] It was published by Lefebvre as "petit monument" from among inscriptions of the Cairo Museum.[45] This time, repair work to a wall had been carried out under the *megaloprepestatos kai endoxotatos comes*, Fl. Constantinus Erythrius Damianus,[46] the *lamprotatos* tribune Theodosios, the *praipositos* Isakios, and the *primicerius*[47] Pateirēnē. Moreover, we read that it was carried out *dia tōn politeuom(enōn) Latōn kai Am[ō]niou epimeletou*.[48] No official mentioned in the inscription could yet be unequivocally identified.[49] It is, moreover, still unclear what function the *comes* had. The epithets *megaloprepestatos kai endoxotatos* render it likely that he was *comes domesticorum*;[50] whether he was also *comes Thebaici limitis* remains unclear, but he would probably have mentioned this.[51] Particularly puzzling is the passage on the *politeuomenoi*. The papyrological evidence shows that "Latōn" was a common abbreviation for *Latōn polis*.[52] What relations could *politeuomenoi* from Latopolis have with Syene? We may consider whether they had landed property there. A further, not unlikely, option is that the stone was simply

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découverte (dans le jardin public), le 5 juin 1909. Nul doute qu'elle n'y ait été transportée jadis de l'île de Philae." See, moreover, Bernand, *Thèbes*, no. 235, intro.

[44] Bernard, *Thèbes*, no. 236.

[45] Lefebvre, "Monuments," 34–36 gives the register number of the *Journal d'entrée* (no. 51973) and mentions that it was found in 1927 in the surroundings of the temple of Aswān.

[46] *PLRE* II (Fl. Constantinus Erythrius) Damianus 3, otherwise unattested.

[47] For the military *primicerius* see Wilhelm Enßlin, "Primicerius," in *Paulys Realenyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, Suppl. 8: *Achaios bis Valerius*, ed. Konrat Ziegler (Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller, 1956), 614–24, at 614–16.

[48] In his reedition of the text, Bernard, *Thèbes*, no. 236, p. 179 translated "par les soins des curiales Latōn et Ammonios, épimélète." This translation leaves open whether or not he understood Latōn as personal name.

[49] Suggestions had been put forward to identify Fl. Constantinus Erythrius Damianus with the *comes domesticorum* Fl. Erythrios of *P.Bour*. 19: see *PLRE* II Fl. Erythrius 3; likewise suggested by Roland Delmaire, "Les dignitaires laïcs au concile de Chalcédoine: notes sur la hiérarchie et les préséances au milieu du Ve siècle," *Byzantion* 54/1 (1984), 141–75, at 151. For *P.Bour* 19 see its reedition by Jean Gascou, "Une caution adressé au gouverneur militaire et préfet Augustal d'Égypte (réédition de P.Bour. 19)," *Chronique d'Égypte* 80 (2005), 251–69. However, Gascou, "Réédition," 254 n. 7 considered a match between the two individuals less likely since Fl. Constantinus Erythrius Damianus would have used 'Damianos' as a cognomen which could not be restored in *P.Bour*. 19. A *praipositos* called Isak(ios) is mentioned in M. Gustave Lefebvre, *Recueil des inscriptions grecques-chrétiénnes d'Égypte* (Cairo: IFAO, 1907), no. 468. Lefebvre located the inscription, with some doubts, to Hermonthis. Referring to the same inscription, W.-E. Crum, *Catalogue général des antiquitiés égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: Coptic Monuments* (Osnabrück: Otto Zeller, 1975), p. 120, no. 8561 and pl. XXVIII gives no provenance for this text, but lists the stone together with those coming primarily from Hermonthis.

[50] Bernhard Palme, "Flavius Epiphanius, *Comes Domesticorum*," *Eirene* 34 (1998), 104–16, at 116.

[51] Martindale (*PLRE* II Damianus 3) assumes he was a *comes Thebaici limitis*, but points out that the combination of *epitetha* would rather suggest a higher rank.

[52] *P.Apoll*. 15, 1 (675/76 or 660/61, unknown), 17, 6 (second half of the seventh century, unknown), 26, 2 (second half of the seventh century, unknown), 27, 3 (second half of the seventh century, unknown).

incorrectly registered in the Cairo Museum and its provenance should be Latopolis.[53] The question cannot be solved here, but this inscription, used in previous studies to date this section of the wall in Syene to the fifth/sixth century, should certainly be treated with caution.[54]

As a provisional conclusion we can say that fortification measures had been carried out in Syene from pharaonic to late Roman times. In the middle of the fifth century imperial efforts had been undertaken to strengthen the border regions of the empire. The (datable) building inscriptions from Philae show that this was implemented at the Egyptian frontier on a regular basis at least from the middle of the fifth century until 577. The bastion in Syene may have been part of this fortifying border program, as the town was likewise an integral part of the empire's border defense.

The *Limitanei* in Times of Peaceful Relations with Blemmyes and Noubades (Fifth to Sixth Centuries)

The middle of the fifth century was also the time when the Blemmyan supremacy in the Dodekaschoinos – and thus a major threat to the border area – came to a sudden end. The triumphal inscription of King Silko, probably to be dated to the first half of the fifth century, announced the victory of the Noubades over the Blemmyes living in the Dodekaschoinos.[55] It is likely that a letter found in Qaṣr Ibrīm, which mentions a Silko and has been dated to around 450, refers to this incident. In it, the Blemmyan King Phonen[56] writes to Abourni, king of the Noubades, asking him to withdraw his troops from their lands and get back to peaceful relations in which "we have my cattle with your cattle."[57] At the same time tensions between the Byzantine empire and its southern neighbors seem to have eased. The fifth-century historian Priscus of Panion (Thrace) reports about a peace treaty between the Blemmyes, the Noubades and the Byzantine empire that was signed probably in the years 452/3.[58] Negotiations had been led by a certain

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[53] In fact, there is a conformity in formula (*touto to meros tou teichous*) with inscriptions from Philae. However, a provenance from Philae would not explain why *politeuomenoi* of Latopolis were involved in repairing a wall in Philae.

[54] Jaritz, "Psoti," 17; von Pilgrim et al., "Swiss Report 2009/10," 5.

[55] *FHN* III 317. For the date see *FHN* III, p. 1148.

[56] King Phonen may be the *phylarchos* Phoinon of a Greek inscription from Talmis (*FHN* III 313 and the comm. on p. 1137).

[57] *FHN* III 319. Due to deviations from standard Greek the letter is, however, difficult to understand; see the commentary on pp. 1158 and 1164.

[58] *FHN* III 318; for the date see pp. 1157–8; for Priscus and his work see John Given, *The Fragmentary History of Priscus: Attila, the Huns and the Roman Empire, AD 430–476* (Merchantville, NJ:

Maximinus,[59] whom Priscus had accompanied before (probably in 449) on an imperial mission to Attila the Hun.[60] According to Priscus, the treaty with the Blemmyes and Noubades included the handing over of Roman captives without ransom, the returning of animals carried off, compensatory payments, and the sending of hostages from among the children of former rulers (*tyrannēsantes*) and chieftains (*hypotyrannoi*) to the Byzantines. The initial offer of the Blemmyes and Noubades to honor the agreement as long as Maximinus was in the Thebaid was rejected by the latter due to the shortness of this period and a duration of 100 years agreed upon. However, Maximinus died shortly after the agreement was signed and the Blemmyes and Noubades took back their hostages forcibly.

The story about a peace treaty may be supported by a Coptic letter found in Qaṣr Ibrīm and dated to the middle of the fifth century.[61] The letter was addressed by the tribune Viventius, "whom they have placed over all the soldiers who are in the Frontier (*limiton*) of Egypt"[62] to Tantani, the tribal chief (*phylarchos*)[63] of the nation of the Anouba.[64] It appears that Viventius' lord, the *comes domesticorum* and of the *dioikēsis* of the soldiers in Egypt (ⲡⲕⲟⲙⲉⲥ ⲇⲟⲙⲉⲥⲧⲓⲕⲱⲛ ⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲇⲓⲟⲓⲕⲏⲥⲓⲥ ⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲧⲟⲉⲓ ⲉⲧϩⲛ̄ ⲕⲏⲙⲉ),[65] had arrived in Syene and Philae in order to meet Tantani. But because of the great number of Huns, Ounokar[.]ẹṣ,[66] and other soldiers, the town could not accommodate them. The need for supplies for the troops and

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59 *PLRE* II Maximinus 11.

60 Wilhelm Enßlin, "Priscus 35," in *Paulys Realenyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, vol. 28.1: *Priscilla-Psalychiadai*, ed. Konrat Ziegler (Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller, 1957), 9–10 and *FHN* III, p. 1157. In another account, Jordanes, *Romana* 333 (*FHN* III 329) reports that Florus, *procurator* of Alexandria, was sent to expel the Noubades and Blemmyes from Byzantine territory.

61 For the date see the discussion in *FHN* III, p. 1170–71. It is, however, mainly based on the assumption that the nameless *comes domesticorum* was Maximinus and that the mentioned oath is indeed the peace treaty. A more in-depth discussion of the historical circumstances will take place in Schmidt, *Die Wirtschaft Assuans*.

62 *FHN* III 320, lines 2–3: ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲃⲓⲃⲉⲛⲧⲓⲟⲥ ⲡⲕⲁⲑⲟⲥⲓⲱⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲓⲃⲟⲩⲛⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁⲩⲟⲩⲟⲣϥ ⲉϫⲛ̄ⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲧⲟⲉⲓ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲉⲧϩⲙ̄ⲡⲗⲓⲙⲓⲧⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ: "I, Viventius, the devoted tribune, he whom they have placed over all the soldiers who are in the Frontier of Egypt" (trans. R. Holton Pierce).

63 For a discussion of the term that was attributed by Romans to chieftains of foreign, often allied, tribes see Philip Mayerson, "The Use of the Term *Phylarchus* in the Roman-Byzantine East," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 88 (1991), 291–95.

64 *FHN* III 320. A new edition of this letter is being prepared by Joost Hagen in his dissertation.

65 Could this be a shortened Coptic translation of the restored title *megaloprepestatos kai endoxotatos komes tōn kathosiōmenōn domestikōn kai tōn en tē Aigyptiakē dioikēsei stratiōtikōn tagmatōn* from *P.Bour.* 19 (484 or 499, Thebaid or Alexandria?)? See the restored text in Gascou, "Réédition," 257, lines 4–5.

66 For a tentative identification of these with "Hunnocarpi," or the variant "Hunnigardi," a mixture between Huns and Carpodaces, see *FHN* III, pp. 1169–70.

Evolution Publishing, 2014); Constantin Zuckerman, "L'Empire d'Orient et les Huns: notes sur Priscus," *Travaux et Mémoires* 12 (1994), 159–82.

other pressing matters caused the *comes* to return to the north, leaving the matter of taking an oath from Tantani to his delegate, the tribune.

Besides the letter's value for confirming a peace treaty between the Byzantine empire and Nobadia, it sheds further light on the border defense situation in the middle of the fifth century, a period for which we have almost no evidence for a military unit in Syene. While in around 400 the *Notitia Dignitatum orientis* records at least five locations for armed forces in the region of Syene/Elephantine/Philae,[67] there is no attestation of any until 493, when a *legio* of Syene, as it is called in unofficial style, is mentioned in the Patermouthis archive.[68] Whether or not this *legio* or *arithmos*[69] of Syene is to be connected with the unit mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (the *Milites Miliarenses*), has to remain unclear.[70] The letter of the tribune Viventius is an indication of a functioning border defense force, and the mentioning of Huns is certainly not controversial, since they would have reinforced the *limitanei* only temporarily.[71]

Later on, from the late fifth to the early seventh centuries, a *legio* of Syene is attested in the Patermouthis archive by around a hundred signatures of soldiers, who functioned as scribes and witnesses to private deeds of sales and property arrangements.[72] This blending of military and civil life can also be observed in other social scopes: soldiers of this *legio* owned private property in the region and appear to have had "part-time jobs" besides their military duties, as is the case with Patermouthis,

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[67] In the *ND or.* XXXI 35, 37 and 64–66 we find: *Milites Miliarenses, Syene*, the *Legio prima Maximiana, Filas*, the *Cohors prima felix Theodosiana, apud Elephantinem*, the *Cohors quinta Suentium*, (*Contra*) *Syene*, and the *Cohors sexta saginarum* in *Castris Lapidariorum*, which Valerie A. Maxfield, "The Deployment of the Roman *auxilia* in Upper Egypt and the Eastern Desert during the Principate," in *Kaiser, Heer und Gesellschaft in der Römischen Kaiserzeit: Gedenkschrift für Eric Birley*, ed. Géza Alföldy, Brian Dobson, and Werner Eck (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2000), 407–42, at 413 localized in the quarries southeast of Syene. For a discussion of the dating of the *ND* see Bernhard Palme, "Notitia Dignitatum," in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History, First Edition*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall, Kai Brodersen, Craige B. Champion, et al. (online), DOI: 10.1002/9781444338386. wbeah12165, print pages 4814–17; Constantin Zuckerman, "Comtes et ducs en Égypte autour de l'an 400 et la date de la *Notitia Dignitatum Orientis*," *Antiquité tardive* 6 (1998), 137–47.

[68] Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D20 (493, Syene).

[69] For the terms *arithmos/numerus* and the synonymous use of *legio* and *arithmos* in the documents of the Patermouthis archive see *P.Münch.*, p. 59; Keenan, "Evidence," 141 n. 9; Jean Gascou, "La garnison de Thèbes d'après O.IFAO inv. 12," *Cahier de recherches de l'Insitut de Papyrologie et d'Égyptologie de Lille* 8 (1986), 73–74.

[70] The former was assumed by A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire 284–602*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1964), 662.

[71] For Huns serving in the Byzantine army see *FHN* III, pp. 1169–70, with literature.

[72] For the soldiers in the archive see James G. Keenan, "The Army," in Bezalel Porten et al., *The Elephantine Papyri in English* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 398–402 and *passim*; Keenan, "Evidence," 146f. and 149–150, where he considered it likely that the *phrourion* of Syene maintained a record office that could be accessed by civilians.

soldier and boatman by trade, or Joseph (son of?) Viktor, physician and soldier.[73] Soldiers in Syene seem to have been deeply involved in the local community, as might be expected for garrison towns, with a blending of military and civil components in everyday life.[74] At the end of the sixth century the force level of this unit contained at least three *centuriae*, since three centurions are mentioned in a single document.[75] Depending on what we assume to be strength per unit, Syene may have had between 750 and 1,500 soldiers at that time.[76] Its last attestation is in a papyrus of 613, about five or six years before the conquest of Egypt by a Sasanian army (618/19).[77] What happened to the soldiers of Syene after this date is unclear. It is still a matter of dispute whether the Persians, who occupied Egypt from 618/19 to 629, came so far south and had contact with them.[78] This period of Sasanian occupation is still much underexplored in research. However, since it concerns the most recent time before the Muslim conquest, evidence of Sasanian traces in the region shall be discussed in a brief excursus.

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[73] *P.Münch.* 10, 6–7 (= Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D 43); *P.Münch.* 9, 106 (= Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D 40). For Aurelius Patermouthis, boatman, see *P.Münch.* 7, 10–11 + *P.Lond.* V 1860 (= Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D 36, 10–11); in 585 and 613 he is mentioned as Flavius Patermouthis, soldier of Elephantine: see *P.Lond.* V 1730, 6–7 (= Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D 41) and *P.Lond.* V 1737, 4–5, 28 (= Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D 52).

[74] This involvement was supported by central authorities as legal sources show: in *CJ* 11.60(59).3 (443) (Krueger), for instance, Theodosius II and Valentinian III confirm to soldiers of the *limitanei* the privilege of maintaining a piece of land at the border for their own use.

[75] *P.Lond.* V 1729, 48, 51–52 (= Porten et al., *Elephantine Papyri*, D37) (584); *P.Münch.* 9, 105 and 108–09 and the discussion of these sources in Keenan, "Evidence," 148, who considers up to five *centuriae* possible.

[76] Keenan, "Evidence," 148 assumes a strength of 500 men per unit for Syene and refers to *P.Lond.* V 1663 (549, Aphrodito) as a parallel. However, he also points out that the usual strength of a sixth-century *numerus* was much lower, about 250–300 men.

[77] *P.Lond.* V 1737, 23–24 (613). But see also *KSB* III 1388 (seventh/eighth century [?], Elephantine), an ostracon mentioning an *arithmos*.

[78] For a conquest chronology based on papyrological sources see Siegfried G. Richter, "Beobachtungen zur dritten persischen Eroberung und Besetzung Ägyptens in den Jahren 618/19 bis 629 n. Chr.," in *Ägypten-Münster: Kulturwissenschaftliche Studien zu Ägypten, dem Vorderen Orient und verwandten Gebieten*, ed. Anke I. Blöbaum, Jochem Kahl, and Simon Schweitzer (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 221–32, at 225f. and map at 232, who based his arguments on publications of Ruth Altheim-Stiehl, "Wurde Alexandria im Juni 619 n. Chr. durch die Perser erobert? Bemerkungen zur zeitlichen Bestimmung der sassanidischen Besetzung Ägyptens unter Chosrau II Parwe," *Tyche* 6 (1991), 3–16; Ruth Altheim-Stiehl, "Zur zeitlichen Bestimmung der sassanidischen Eroberung Ägyptens: Ein neuer *terminus ante quem* für Oxyrhynchus ist nachzutragen," in *ΜΟΥΣΙΚΟΣ ΑΝΗΡ: Festschrift für Max Wegner zum 90. Geburtstag*, ed. Oliver Brehm and Sascha Klie (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt, 1992), 5–8; Ruth Altheim-Stiehl, "The Sasanians in Egypt: Some Evidence of Historical Interest," *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie Copte* 31 (1992), 87–96. Richter proposes that the Persians could have reached Arsinoe after July 21, 618 (*BGU* III 725), Oxyrhynchus after July 5, 619 (*P.Iand.* III 49), but before January 12, 620 (*P.Oxy.* LVIII 3959), Hermopolis after April 15, 618 (*P.Strasb.* V 328), and Apollinopolis Magna after June 13, 618 (*P.Edfu* I 3) or after October 9, 622 (*P.Budge*).

Sasanians in Southern Egypt (Seventh Century)

In his study of Elephantine, Peter Grossmann opened up the possibility that damage to the court of the Khnum temple might have been caused by the Sasanians who invaded Egypt in the early 620s.[79] Although a thorough investigation of houses on the island could not confirm the picture of major combat activities, Pahlavi documents support a possible Sasanian presence or influence in the region of Syene.[80] First evidence comes from a fragmentary note which mentions the wife of a Persian, who is obviously on Elephantine island.[81] The second is a parchment archived in the University Library of Basel which contains a list of town names from Upper and Middle Egypt, each followed by a numeral.[82] The list starts with Elephantine as the southernmost town, followed by Herakleia (Herakleiopolis?),[83] which was possibly close to Oxyrhynchus,[84] and continues up the Nile until Maximianopolis.[85] It is noteworthy that some of the cities correspond to military posts mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum*. Elephantine, Lykopolis, Hermopolis, Diospolis, and Maximianopolis had military units which were under the authority of the duke of the Thebaid; the other cities on the list, Herakleia, Oxyrhynchus, Kynopolis, Theodosiopolis, Antinoe, and Kosson, were important administrative centers or lay on strategically important points of caravan routes.[86] The list is one of the yet-little-studied documents the Sasanian administration produced during its ten years of occupation of Egypt.[87] From the introductory phrase of the list, we learn that something

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[79] Grossmann, *Elephantine II*, 36.

[80] For the investigation of houses see Felix Arnold, *Elephantine XXX: Die Nachnutzung des Chnumtempelbezirks: Wohnbebauung der Spätantike und des Frühmittelalters* (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2003).

[81] Dieter Weber, with W. Brashear, *Berliner Papyri, Pergamente und Leinenfragmente in mittelpersischer Sprache* (London: SOAS, 2003), 181 (= Hansen no. 19 = P.Berol. 8849/8854).

[82] Dieter Weber, *Ostraca, Papyrus und Pergamente: Textband* (London: SOAS, 1992), 55, reedited in *P. Bas.* II 69 and Stefanie Schmidt, "P.Bas. II 69 and 70: A Look behind the Text," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 64/2 (2018), 324–42, at 325–30.

[83] Tentatively assumed by Richter, "Beobachtungen," 229 n. 47.

[84] See Richter, "Beobachtungen," 229 n. 47, referring to Stefan Timm, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit*, vol. 3 (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1985), 1105.

[85] *P.Bas.* II 69: "[1] the group of Shērag: from Elephantine 24 (men), [2] from Herakleia 21 (men), from Oxyrhynchus [3] 24 (men), from Kynon 7 (men), from Theodosiopolis [4] 10 (men), from Hermopolis 62 (men), from [5] Antinoe 6 (men), from Kosson 6 (men), [6] from Lykos (Lykopolis) 20 (men), from Diospolis [7] 2 (men), from Maxi(mian)opolis 1 (man)."

[86] *ND or.* XXXI; for a discussion of the cities' strategic impact see Richter, "Beobachtungen," 229ff.

[87] A huge part of the Pahlavi texts remains unedited. Dieter Weber, "Die persische Besetzung Ägyptens 619–629 n. Chr.: Fakten und Spekulationen," in *Ägypten und sein Umfeld in der Spätantike: Vom Regierungsantritt Diokletians 284/285 bis zur arabischen Eroberung des Vorderen Orients um 635–646. Akten der Tagung vom 7.–9.7.2011 in Münster*, ed. Frank Feder and

was raised by or for "the group/troop (*gwnd*)[88] of Shērag." Although no measuring unit specifies what exactly was provided by the towns, most scholars believe the document deals with the recruitment of men for the Sasanian army, thus also from Elephantine.[89] We do not know whether the conquerors set up a camp in the Syene region: what both texts – and perhaps a third one[90] – show, however, is that Sasanian influence extended at least as far as the southern borders of Egypt. If a *legio* of Syene or Elephantine was still present in the early 620s, we may assume it did not represent a major obstacle to the invaders.

Blemmyes and Noubades Penetrating the Border Region and Beyond (Sixth to Seventh Centuries)

By the seventh century relations between the Byzantine empire and the kingdom of Nobadia[91] must have become relatively stable. An extract from the story of the martyrdom of St. Arethas is often taken to illustrate that by the sixth century political relations between the Byzantine empire, the Blemmyes, and Noubades had normalized.[92] It transmits a letter by Justin I (r. 518–27) to Elesbas (Ella Asbeha?), king of Aksum, in which the emperor threatened to intervene with an army of Blemmyes (probably of the Eastern Desert) and Noubades if Elesbas himself did not act against the murderer of Ethiopian, Roman, and Persian Christians in the kingdom of the Himyarites (Yemen).

An interesting mix of a Blemmyan and Egyptian social milieus also appears in the so-called papyri from Gebelein (Pathyris, about 30 km south

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Angelika Lohwasser (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013), 221–46, at 222 gives an estimated figure of around 60 percent.

[88] David N. MacKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 38 gives "army, troop; group, gathering" for "gund" [*gwnd*].

[89] So, for instance, Weber, "Besetzung," 223; Richter, "Beobachtungen," 229; Ruth Altheim-Stiehl, "Egypt IV: Relations with Persia in the Sasanian Period," in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, vol. 8.3 (London: Encyclopaedia Iranica, 1998), 252–54, at 253. For problems with this interpretation see Schmidt, "*P.Bas*.II 69 and 70," 328–30.

[90] A third Pahlavi text from the collection of the A. S. Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow may also refer to Elephantine. It was published by A. G. Perikhanian, "Pekhleviyskie papirusy sobraniya GM II imeni A. S. Pushkina" [The Pahlavi papyri from the collection of A. S. Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts], *Vestnik drevnei istorii* 3 (1961), 78–93, no. 1, line 6 with comm. 6, 8–10 and no. 12. However, as D. Weber informed me by mail (July 25, 2017), he would rather read (mp) *tan-arzānīgīhā* instead of Elephantine.

[91] For the unification processes in the Dodekaschoinos that cumulated in the establishment of the kingdom of Nobadia see Obłuski, *Rise*, *passim* and table 1.

[92] *FHN* III 327.

of Thebes) which probably form an archive.[93] While the texts had previously been dated on palaeographic grounds to the late fifth or early sixth century, the identification of the scribe Dioskoros with the "scribe of the Blemmyan nation" Dioskoros from *SB* XVIII 13930 (sixth–seventh century, Latopolis) makes a later date more likely and suggests a provenance from the Pathyrite/Latopolite nomes.[94] The Greek–Coptic texts include a manumission of two children, acknowledgments of debt, and royal dispositions. Among the latter are two letters by Blemmyan kings who entrusted certain persons with the administration (*curatoria*) of an island called Temsir or Tanare. In one case a king states that if the Romans (non-Blemmyes living on the island?)[95] do not hand over *synētheia* (fees? a salary? customary dues?),[96] "the tribal chief (*phylarchos*) shall not be hindered, nor the sub-despot (*hypotyrannos*), from seizing the Romans until (they) pay the customary dues for my island."[97] Although the not yet finally verified finding circumstances of the documents encourage caution, we may assume that Blemmyes settled in the Nile Valley, perhaps between Gebelein and Latopolis, and levied *synētheia* on what was considered Blemmyan royal land.

The archaeological evidence strengthens the picture that in the seventh century at the latest Nubian cultural influence reached wide into the Thebaid. About 19 km south of Edfū, archaeologists investigated a fortified site known as Qalʿat al-Bābayn, which in architectural style resembles fortified enclosures from Nubia.[98] The pottery mix of

[93] *SPP* III² 129–34, with introduction at pp. xxv–xxxi, and *FHN* III 331–43. Whether they had been found in the area is uncertain: *FHN* III, pp. 1197–98 notes that a provenance from Gebelein can be verified only for two documents; *SPP* III² 119–238, xxv with n. 15 gives Gebelein as finding spot of all documents, with reference to Tormod Eide, Tomas Hägg, and Richard Holton Pierce, "Greek, Latin, and Coptic Sources for Nubian *History* (III): (6) The Blemmyan Documents from Gebelen," *Sudan Texts Bulletin* 6 (1984), 1–25.

[94] Klaas A. Worp, "BGU III 972 + P.Ross.Georg. V 41 Fr. iv, v," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 61 (1985), 93–96; for the identification of Dioskoros see also *FHN* III, p. 1199.

[95] For this interpretation see *FHN* III 336, n. 883.

[96] In *SPP* III² 118, 3 *synētheia* may have been a kind of official fee, in *SPP* III² 24A, however, a private compensation; see also *SPP* III² 1–118, xl and *P.Cair.Masp.* 1 67057, col. II, 10 (551–2? Antaiopolis).

[97] *SPP* III² 132 (= *FHN* III 336, 4–9, translation taken from there).

[98] Alison L. Gascoigne and Pamela J. Rose, "Fortification, Settlement and Ethnicity in Southern Egypt," in *Proceedings of the 6th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East: May 5th–10th 2009, "Sapienza"-Università di Roma*, vol. 3, ed. Paolo Matthiae, Frances Pinnock, Lorenzo Nigro, and Nicolò Marchetti (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 45–54; Andreas Effland, "Die befestigte Anlage Qal'at al-Babên nach Berichten früher Ägyptenreisender," in *Diener des Horus: Festschrift für Dieter Kurth zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Wolfgang Waitkus (Gladbeck: PeWe, 2008), 83–92, at 84 n. 3 provides the coordinates 24° 48' 39'' N and 32° 54' 51'' E. See, moreover, Peter Grossmann, "Qal'at al-Bâbayn," in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, vol. 7, ed. Aziz Suryal Atiya (New York: Macmillan, 1991), 2035; Peter Grossmann and Horst Jaritz, "Ein Besuch in der Festung

Nubian and Egyptian ware as well as textiles and footwear that is
comparable to specimens found in Qaṣr Ibrīm show abundant evidence
of Nubian influence.[99] With a proposed date between the mid-seventh
and the ninth centuries, the ceramics indicate a penetration of Nubian
culture in this region which continued into the Abbasid period.
A Nubian, in this case more specifically a Blemmyan element, near
Edfū is also attested by the papyrological evidence. In a seventh-
century papyrus from the Papas archive, Papas, pagarch of Edfū, is
asked to provide a boat for the collection of the taxes Blemmyes had to
pay for land and for grazing their sheep.[100] This omnipresence of
Nubians on Egyptian soil may indeed be an explanation why al-
Ṭabarī, citing Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 745/46), reported that the
Muslim army of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ fought against the Nubians of Egypt
(Ar., nūbat miṣr) when they conquered Egypt in 639–42.[101]

This picture of peaceful coexistence between the Byzantine empire and the
unified kingdom of Nobadia seems at first glance to be undermined by a recent
find in Ḥiṣn al-Bāb, the largest fortified enclosure at the border between Egypt
and Nubia.[102] The site lies about 1.5 km south of Philae and consists of two
fortresses, one of late Roman date, probably identical with the "camp of the
Moors" (kastron tōn maurōn) known from a (re-dated) mid-seventh-century
(or later) papyrus,[103] and the other, partly built upon the Roman camp, dating
to Abbasid times with a probable beginning in the early ninth century.[104] This
later structure may be identical with the fortress known by later medieval

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von Qalʾat al-Babēn in Oberägypten," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo* 30
(1974), 199–214, at 199.

[99] Gascoigne and Rose, "Fortification," 47, with n. 8; Alison L. Gascoigne and Pamela J. Rose, "The
Forts of Hisn al-Bab and the First Cataract Frontier from the 5th to 12th Centuries AD," *Sudan &
Nubia* 16 (2012), 88–95, at 93.

[100] *P.Apoll.* 15 (675/76 or 660/61, unknown).

[101] Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk* ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 16 vols. (Leipzig: Brill, 1879–1901),
vol. 5, ed. E. Prym, 2593; for a discussion see Jelle Bruning, *The Rise of the Capital: Al-Fusṭāṭ and its
Hinterland 18/639–132/750* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 94. For the two different narrative chains about
a campaign in Nubia and on Egyptian soil with Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb as a common source see Robin
Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie à l'époque médiévale: élaboration et transmission des savoirs
historiographiques," PhD thesis, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (2016), 36.

[102] Ḥiṣn al-Bāb has been excavated by the Austrian Archaeological Institute (Cairo branch) since 2011.
The project is funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) Project P24589-G21.

[103] *P.Haun.* II 26, discussed in Adam Łajtar, "ΤΟ ΚΑΣΤΡΟΝ ΤΩΝ ΜΑΥΡΩΝ ΤΟ ΠΛΗΣΙΟΝ ΦΙΛΩΝ:
Der dritte Adam über P. Haun. II 26," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 27 (1997), 43–54. The papyrus
was re-dated by Federico Morelli to the middle of the seventh century or later: see *CPR* XXII 56,
comm. 2, pp. 266–67.

[104] Pamela J. Rose, "Archery Equipment from Hisn al-Bab, Aswān (Egypt)," *Jahreshefte des
Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts in Wien* 87 (2018), 355–72, at 355–56; Gascoigne and
Rose, "Hisn-al-Bab"; Gascoigne and Rose, "Fortification," 46.

writers as al-Qaṣr, where commodities and slaves of the *baqṭ* agreement are said to have been exchanged.[105] While its closeness to the border makes it difficult to distinguish whether it stood on Nubian or Egyptian soil, its architecture shows clear features of Nubian tradition since it resembles fortified settlements from Lower Nubia such as Ikhmindi, Sabaqura, Shaykh Dawud, and Nagʿ al-Shayma, as well as Qalʿat al-Bābayn.[106]

The pottery from the interior of the fort consists mainly of locally manufactured wares (Aswān region) dated to the sixth and seventh centuries, but also includes Nubian forms not present in contemporary assemblages from Egypt.[107] The crops that were found at the site comprise plants such as pearl millet and sorghum, which are known, for instance, from Qaṣr Ibrīm.[108] Further evidence of Nubian cultural elements in the fort support assumptions that it formed part of the Egyptian–Nubian border defenses.[109]

During investigations of the earlier fort, archaeologists from the Austrian Archaeological Institute found evidence of major combat activity, probably dating to the early seventh century, which led to the abandonment of the fort.[110] In front of the gateway they discovered a deposit containing fragments of human bones with traumatic injuries mixed with archery equipment including a minimum of ninety-one arrows.[111] The study of the arrows showed high similarities in size and style with those from Meroitic and post-Meroitic tombs.[112] This suggests the presence of Nubian archers; however, the lack of significant "foreign" material in the fort leaves it unclear whom they fought.[113]

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[105] Al-Masʿūdī, *Les Prairies d'Or*, ed. C. Barbier de Meynard and P. De Courteille, 9 vols. (Paris: L'Imprimerie Impériale, 1861–77), 3:40; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, vol. 3.2, ed. M. Gaston Wiet (Cairo: IFAO, 1922), 252.

[106] Gascoigne and Rose, "Fortification," 46; Gascoigne and Rose, "Hisn al-Bab," 93.

[107] Gascoigne and Rose, "Hisn al-Bab," 92.   [108] Gascoigne and Rose, "Hisn al-Bab," 92.

[109] Rose, "Archery Equipment," 355, 369–70.   [110] Rose, "Archery Equipment," 355.

[111] Rose, "Archery Equipment," 355–56. The arrangement of bones mixed with the equipment gave rise to the assumption that these bodies had been put aside shortly after they had started to decompose, thus not long after the battle. Archaeologists surmise that bones were moved outside the earlier fort in order to clean it for further usage.

[112] Rose, "Archery Equipment," 359. For fletching the arrows to the nock, the "Mongolian" release was probably used, which explains the finding of protective thumb rings (archer's loose) in the deposit, also known from Nubian cemeteries (Rose, "Archery Equipment," 367).

[113] Besides equipment of Nubian origin, archaeologists found two other types of arrowheads inside the fort which represent smaller versions of bolt heads known from Qaṣr Ibrīm and Dura Europos: see S. James and J. H. Taylor, "Parts of Roman Artillery Projectiles from Qasr Ibrim, Egypt," *Saalburg-Jahrbuch* 47 (1994), 93–98, at 95f.; and S. James, *Excavations at Dura-Europos 1928–1937. Final Report 8: The Arms and Armour and Other Military Equipment* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2010), 219f. For this, see Rose, "Archery Equipment," 368–69.

No historical source reports a Byzantine–Nubian conflict for the early seventh century.[114] However, the numismatic evidence may perhaps push the chronological frame a bit further toward the middle of the seventh century. In the deposit of the bones and archery equipment, archaeologists found copper coins of Emperor Maurice (r. 582–602) as well as of the emperors Heraclius and Heraclius Constantine (Constantine III), which were dated by Christoph Noeske to 628/29 and 629/31.[115] The circulation period of these coins is not known to us. Significant changes to the image of the Alexandrian copper coins, which brought new coinage into circulation, took place in 632 when the Egyptian coins, contrary to the image of the copper coinage from Constantinople, added Caesar Heraclonas to the obverse.[116] However, we do not know whether troops stationed at the Byzantine–Nubian fort had access to these new coins.[117] A rough *terminus post quem* for the fort's cleaning would thus fall after the Sasanian occupation of Egypt. A possible threat scenario caused by Sasanian soldiers, whose verifiable influence, as shown earlier, reached at least as far as Elephantine, can thus probably be ruled out.

With regard to a potential threat scenario after this *terminus post quem* only one incidence is known that also affected the border region: the Muslim conquest of 639–42. In fact, little is known about the circumstances of territorial seizures in Upper Egypt, and thus when Muslims may have reached the First Cataract. The papyrological evidence provides only minor glimpses into the conquest chronology. While Apollonopolis Ano (Edfū), some 110 km north of Aswān, may still have been under Byzantine dominion in January/February 641,[118] a recently re-dated receipt from Lycopolis (Asyūṭ) shows a Muslim presence in the area of Asyūṭ by around

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[114] Continuous good relations between Romans and Nubians under the emperor Maurice are indicated by the account of John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*, trans. R. H. Charles (London: Williams & Norgate, 1916), ch. XCVII.14, who mentions that a rebellious uprising in Aikelah, a town in northern Egypt, was fought by an army of Alexandrian, Egyptian, and Nubian forces.

[115] I am much indebted to Pamela Rose for this information.

[116] Wolfgang Hahn, *Moneta Imperii Byzantini: Von Heraclius bis Leo III./Alleinregierung (610–720)* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981), 115. The Constantinople mint produced copper coinage with a joint depiction of Emperor Heraclius and his oldest son and co-Augustus Heraclius Constantine (Constantine III) from 613 and 639. The Caesar (632) and then co-Augustus (638) Heraclonas was added to the image of these copper coins only in October 639: see Hahn, *Moneta*, 104. For the coinage of the three rulers see Hahn, *Moneta*, 85–122 and plates, esp. pl. 12, no. 166.

[117] If we assume Nubians in the fort, they were not necessarily on the payroll of the Byzantine army. Money may have accrued to them primarily by trade.

[118] *SB* VI 8986 (Edfū); the date is discussed in Nikolaos Gonis, "SB VI 8986 and Heraclius' Sons," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 166 (2008), 199–202; Constantin Zuckerman, "On the Titles and Office of the Byzantine ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ," in *Mélanges Cécile Morrisson*, ed. Jean-Claude Cheynet, Vincent Déroche, and Denis Feissel (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et

20/640–41. In the receipt, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmays acknowledged having paid a sum of 3 *dīnār*s to Isodoros and his wife.[119] However, whether the payment resulted from a private credit relationship or a reimbursement of requisitions cannot be established, and thus any statement about the extent of the Muslim presence remain speculative.

First and hostile contacts between Arabs and Nubians are recorded for ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's first governorship (641–45). After the conquest of the Delta and the Fayyūm, Muslim historians writing in the ninth century and later report that ʿAmr moved southward in order to conquer the Ṣaʿīd (Upper Egypt). His attempt to conquer the Nubian kingdom resulted, however, in a tragic defeat.[120] According to the literary sources, tensions at the border continued until the governorship of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd (645/46–56), who after a second defeat negotiated a peace agreement with the Nubians in 652 known as *baqṭ*. In this year he is said also to have captured Aswān, Elephantine, and Philae.[121]

This *futūḥ* narrative is found, for instance, in the accounts of Ibn Saʿd (d. 845), Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (d. 871), al-Balādhurī (d. 892?), al-Yaʿqūbī (d. ca. 905), and al-Ṭabarī (838–923).[122] As Robin Seignobos makes plausible, this narrative may have had Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 745/46) as a common source.[123] The latter's information may have come at first hand, since his father is said to have had been among the captives taken during ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd's attack on Dongola.[124] However, Seignobos also demonstrates that there must have been

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Civilisation de Byzance, 2010), 865–90, at 867–71; and Bruning, *Capital*, 90, who recently proposed expanding the date until May 641.

[119] Mathieu Tillier and Naïm Vanthieghem, "Recording Debts in Sufyānid Fusṭāṭ: A Reexamination of the Procedures and Calendar in Use in the First/ Seventh Century," in *Geneses: A Comparative Study of the Historiographies of the Rise of Christianity, Rabbinic Judaism and Islam*, ed. John Tolan (London: Routledge, 2019), 148–88, no. 1.

[120] Al-Balādhurī, *The Origins of the Islamic State: Being a Translation from the Arabic Accompanied with Annotations, Geographic and Historic Notes of the Kitāb Futūḥ al-buldān*, trans. Philip Khūri Ḥitti (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1916), 379 (237); and al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh al-Yaʿqūbī*, ed. M. T. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1883), 2:179–80.

[121] Ibn Ḥawqal, *Configuration de la terre*, 49.

[122] Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar, 6 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 2001), 5: 69–70, 6:138–9 (cited after Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie," 35 n. 91); Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *The History of the Conquest of Egypt, North Africa and Spain known as the Futūḥ Miṣr of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam*, ed. Charles C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 169–70 and 188; al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb Futūḥ al-buldān*, 379 (237); al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:179–80; al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 5:2593.

[123] Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie," 32–36. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and al-Balādhurī, possibly also al-Yaʿqūbī, based their accounts on Ibn Saʿd. For Ibn Saʿd, Seignobos assumes the following chain: Ibn Saʿd ← Muḥammad b. ʿUmar [al-Waqidī] (d. 823) ← al-Walīd b. Kathīr (d. 768) ← Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 745) ← Abū al-Khayr [Marthad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazānī] (d. 708–9). For al-Ṭabarī, Seignobos observed the following: al-Ṭabarī ← ʿAlī b. Sahl [al-Ramlī al-Ḥarashī?] (d. 874) ← al-Walīd b. Muslim (d. 810) ← Ibn Lahīʿa (d. 790) ← Yazīd b. Ḥabīb (d. 745).

[124] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188, discussed in Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie," 37.

at least two chains based on Yazīd, which differed in content and vocabulary. While Ibn Saʿd, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, and al-Balādhurī define the Muslim invasions of Nubian territory as summer campaigns (ka-ṣawāʾif al-Rūm), al-Ṭabarī reports that ʿAmr's army fought against the Nubians of Egypt (Nūbat Miṣr), and thus on Egyptian territory.[125] Since both traditions seem to rely on the same source, no version can be favored – and indeed, both scenarios would be likely.

We might imagine that Ḥiṣn al-Bāb had fallen in the course of one of these early campaigns – which may, however, imply that the border region was taken by Muslims before ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd is said to have conquered Aswān, Elephantine, and Philae in 652.[126] In fact, according to a tradition reported by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and al-Maqrīzī, a first agreement between Nubians and Muslims had already been arranged in the course of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's first attempt to conquer Nubia.[127] What impact this may have had on Muslim–Nubian cross-border relations in the 640s can, however, not be determined on the basis of the written sources published to date. A final settlement of conflicts is only reported for 652 with the mutual agreement known as baqṭ. An Arabic papyrus from 758 refers to this baqṭ and shows that 100 years after its negotiation the partners could still rely on this mutual agreement.[128] The well-known letter was issued by the governor of Egypt, Mūsā b. Kaʿb (758–59), to the ṣāḥib[129] of Maqurra and Nubia. Mūsā reminds his addressee of outstanding deliveries and criticizes the poor quality of previous Nubian deliveries. Moreover, he urges the Nubian to guarantee freedom of trade across the border, to which they were bound by contract.[130] He refers to a case in which a merchant from Aswān had been seized and mistreated by Nubians, and calls upon the Nubian to stop this behavior. The baqṭ was thus not only a diplomatic framework for maintaining peaceful relations, it also provided the basis for continuous cross-border trade

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[125] See note 122. Muslim summer expeditions on Byzantine territory are known from al-Balādhurī's *Kitāb Futūḥ al-buldān*, 209, 232, 250–1 and 253. For Seignobos's argument see note 123.

[126] Ibn Ḥawqal, *Configuration de la terre*, 49.

[127] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 189; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 292, both discussed in Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie," 88–90.

[128] Martin Hinds and Hamdi Sakkout, "A Letter from the Governor of Egypt to the King of Nubia and Muqurra Concerning Egyptian–Nubian Relations in 141/758," in *Studia Arabica & Islamica: Festschrift for Ihsan Abbas on his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Wadād al-Qaḍī (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1981), 209–29 (= *P.HindsNubia* [November 24, 758, Qaṣr Ibrīm]).

[129] For the Arabic title ṣāḥib in Egyptian internal administration see Federico Morelli, "Consiglieri e comandanti: i titoli del governatore arabo d'Egitto symboulos e amîr," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 173 (2010), 158–66, at 163; and Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 103.

[130] Hinds and Sakkout, "Letter," 226–27, lines 5–23, esp. line 16.

between the countries in which Aswān had a strategic position.[131] The politically fostered trade created favorable conditions for business with the southern neighbor, which certainly also attracted new Arab settlers to the region. The first evidence of Muslim activity in Aswān comes, however, at the earliest from 691:[132] it is a funerary inscription which commemorates ʿAbbāsa, daughter of Jurayj, the first Muslima attested in epigraphic sources.[133] Although this is the first indication of a Muslim element penetrating the First Cataract, Leor Halevi and Jonathan Brockopp argue plausibly that both the funerary practice and the religious formulas on the stone show "a sense of communal identity" among the Muslims of Aswān, which must have begun in the previous years.[134]

Conclusion

The epigraphic and archaeological evidence clearly indicates that the border region was maintained and strengthened by regular fortification measures from at least the fifth to the beginning of the seventh centuries. The protective walls had been renovated on imperial order with the help of the duke, the local military, the councils, and in Philae also the clergy. The lack of evidence for a *legio* in Syene in the fifth century is still a question to

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[131] For a more detailed discussion see Stefanie Schmidt, "Economic Conditions for Merchants and Traders at the Border between Egypt and Nubia in Early Islamic Times," in *Living the End of Antiquity: Individual Histories from Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ed. Sabine R. Huebner, Eugenio Garosi, Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello, et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), 265–87.

[132] Some scholars have argued for a later date and believe that the epigrapher omitted "one hundred" in the date on the tombstone: see Robert G. Hoyland, "The Content and Context of Early Arabic Inscriptions," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 21 (1997), 77–102, at 87 n. 65; Yūsuf Rāġib, "Les pierres de souvenir: stèles du Caire de la conquête arabe à la chute des Fatimides," *Annales islamologiques* 35 (2001), 321–83, at 347 n.357; Frédéric Bauden, "Les stèles arabes du Musée du Cinquantenaire (Bruxelles)," in *Ultra Mare: mélanges de langue arabe et d'islamologie offerts à Aubert Martin*, ed. Frédéric Bauden (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 175–93, at 184 n. 1. This has been opposed by Leor Halevi, "The Paradox of Islamization: Tombstone Inscriptions, Qurʾānic Recitations, and the Problem of Religious Change," *History of Religions* 44/2 (2004), 120–52, at 125, with n. 8. Jonathan E. Brockopp, *Muhammad's Heirs: The Rise of Muslim Scholarly Communities, 622–950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 68 points out that there is yet no evidence for the omission of the numeral "one hundred" in papyri or in inscriptions. A verification of this assumption is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, the *ahl al-islām* formula that appears in ʿAbbāsa's stone is in fact more common in stelae of the ninth century: see the discussion in Stefanie Schmidt, "The Problem of the Origin of Tombstones from Aswan in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo," *Chronique d'Égypte* 96/2 (2021), 19–36, at 26 with n. 40 and table 3 and Schmidt, *Die Wirtschaft Assuans*.

[133] Hassan M. El-Hawary, "The Second Oldest Islamic Monument Known, Dated AH 71 (AD 691) from the Time of the Omayyad Calif ʿAbd-el-Malik ibn, Marwān," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 2 (1932), 289–93.

[134] Brockopp, *Muhammad's Heirs*, 65; Leor Halevi, *Muhammad's Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 65–67.

answer, but the existence of a tribune who was in charge of the *limitanei* in the middle of the fifth century shows a functioning border force.[135] The easing of tensions with the southern neighbor which started after a peace agreement, possibly arranged under Maximinus, lowered the immediate threat caused by pillaging nomads. By the sixth century we find Nubian culture permeating the Roman military forces. By the sixth/seventh century at the latest they settled in the Nile Valley as far as Edfū (Apollonopolis Ano) or even between Isnā (Latopolis) and Luxor. This picture of a peaceful coexistence between Nubians and Romans is not necessarily affected by recent findings at Ḥiṣn al-Bāb since the presence of Muslim troops at the border by the early 640s might open up the possibility that the Nubian border forces in fact warded off a Muslim attack. However, this theory can ultimately only be verified by the archaeological evidence. The fact that the fort was not reactivated after the battle may be indicative of a peace treaty that secured peaceful relations at this place. The first agreement between ʿAmr and the Nubians and finally the *baqṭ* of the year 652 that negotiated a long-lasting peace and whose regular good exchange may have taken place at Ḥiṣn al-Bāb could be regarded as such. Peaceful relations stimulated ongoing border trade that the archaeological and papyrological evidence – the letter of Mūsā b. Kaʿb to the Nubian king – confirms. Normalized relations and the prospect of capitalizing on the border trade business certainly have attracted new settlers in Aswān. The first possible evidence of an emerging Muslim community in Aswān is the tombstone of ʿAbbāsa, which reflects evolving Muslim connectors of social and religious belonging which may already have been established some time before this date.

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Abbreviations

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[135] *FHN* III 320, lines 2–3. The sending of additional auxiliaries including Huns was only temporary, probably for negotiating the peace treaty, since the towns were not prepared to host them.

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CHAPTER 4

Islamic Historiography on Early Muslim Relations with Nubia

Sylvie Denoix

Muslim and Orientalist historians alike have long presented the Islamic conquests as having happened very quickly. They depict them as a rapid expansion in which the old and declining Byzantine and Sasanian empires could not offer serious resistance to the brand-new Muslim armies. However, if the conquests of the central lands (Syria, Iraq, and Egypt) were swift, it took the Muslim armies considerably longer to conquer North Africa and the Iberian Peninsula. Similarly, it took centuries before the Muslims dominated Christian Nubia. The definitive conquest of the kingdom of Makuria was not made until 675/1276 by the Mamluk sultan Baybars. Despite this prolonged process of establishing their dominance over the region, medieval Muslim historians were reluctant to spell out the fact that the Muslim armies took centuries to be victorious. The problem for Muslims was not only that an undefeated country sullied their image as invincible conquerors, it also raised a legal problem concerning the lands that were neither conquered nor at war with the Muslim armies.

Several scholars have proposed reconstructions of historical events based on these (distorted) sources.[1] In the same way, Françoise Micheau in her *Les débuts de l'Islam: jalons pour une nouvelle histoire* argues that the

[1] Yūsuf Faḍl Ḥasan, *The Arabs and the Sudan: From the Seventh to the Early Sixteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967); Martin Hinds and Hamdi Sakkout, "A Letter from the Governor of Egypt to the King of Nubia and Muqurra Concerning Egyptian–Nubian Relations in 141/758," in *Studia Arabica et Islamica: Festschrift for Iḥsān Abbās on his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. W. al-Qāḍī (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1981), 209–29; Milka Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire: From Surrender to Coexistence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Robin Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie à l'époque médiévale: élaboration et transmission des savoirs historiographiques (641–ca. 1500)," PhD thesis, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (2016); Jay Spaulding, "Medieval Christian Nubia and the Islamic World: A Reconsideration of the Baqt Treaty," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 28/3 (1995), 577–94.

narratives of the *futūḥ* must be considered and analyzed as literary constructions.[2] For my part, I consider that, in the sources that we have at our disposal, the events are not related as they happened, but that it is the tradition which is cited, and the medieval authors themselves were aware of this. For instance, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (187–257/803–71) gives two accounts of the conquest of Egypt. One chapter quotes the tradition which says that Egypt was conquered by treaty ("Dhikr man qāla Miṣr futiḥat bi-ṣulḥ"),[3] with a relevant *isnād*, and another chapter quotes the tradition which says that Egypt was conquered by force ("Dhikr man qāla futiḥat Miṣr ʿanwatan"),[4] also with the relevant *isnād*. In this context, my aim is to try to understand how Islamic historiography portrays relations between Egypt and Nubia in the early Islamic period and what was at stake in the context of the different traditions that were produced about Muslim history. Reconsidering the specific vocabulary used in these sources and for describing Egyptian–Nubian relations,[5] I will argue that these historians – especially the later ones – have rewritten history to fit the image of an unstoppable Muslim conquest.

The Nubian–Egyptian Treaty: Historical and Documentary Sources

Since remote antiquity, Nubia has had relations – peaceful or conflictual – with Egypt.[6] After the rise of Islam, the kingdoms of Makuria and Alodia remained independent for almost six centuries. Northern Nubia only came under Muslim control under the Mamluks. Although there are plenty of Arabic sources that discuss the Nubians, the nature of Muslim–Nubian

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[2] Françoise Micheau, *Les débuts de l'Islam: jalons pour une nouvelle histoire* (Paris: Téraèdre, 2013), 141.

[3] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Kitāb futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbāruhā*, ed. C. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 84–88.

[4] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 89–90.

[5] Based on my previous research into the historical vocabulary of "peace." See Sylvie Denoix and Korshi Dosoo, "Les mots de la paix, réflexion lexicographique à partir de quelques dictionnaires français et anglaise," www.islam-medieval.cnrs.fr/MotsDeLaPaix/index.php/en/projects/textual-analysis/lexicographie-anglais-francais-2.

[6] Nubia has always been renowned for its wealth (gold and emeralds), which repeatedly led to military campaigns by states and groups in order to get hold of its resources. Nevertheless, this region was not always dominated, as is evidenced by the episode of the black pharaohs of the twenty-fifth dynasty who ruled over Nubia and Egypt as far as the Mediterranean, unifying them until the third intermediate period (1085–750 BCE) when Nubia again became independent from Egypt and developed the empire of Kush. After its disintegration in the third and fourth centuries CE, after the attacks by the Ethiopian kingdom of Aksum, the Meroitic kingdom was replaced by three states: Nobadia, between the Second and Third Cataracts; Makuria, whose capital is Dongola, between the Second and Fifth Cataracts; and Alodia, whose capital is Soba, between the Fifth and the Sixth Cataracts. See Charles Bonnet, *The Nubian Pharaohs* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2003).

relations, especially its political–military aspects, throughout this period remains unclear. Arabic sources are one-sided and more often outright distortive. Many of these texts are geographical descriptions of the lands and anthropological studies of people in these areas, but some of them relate the history of the region – obviously from the point of view of the Muslims. I have selected literary accounts or historical episodes that are often preserved in multiple Arabic sources, rather than specific works, for my discussion.

The So-Called Treaty of Miṣr

Chronologically, the first reference to the Nubians is in the problematic treaty of Miṣr,[7] which is quoted by a number of sources, most notably al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923).[8] The text seems to contain later interpolations which are difficult to disentangle from earlier historical information. This is clear when we try to understand who the Nubians were that the treaty talks about.

The treaty as quoted in Arabic sources assigns the name *al-nūb*, not *al-nūbiyyūn*, as we are in another layer of reality, to refer to Nubians who inhabited certain cities in Egypt, including Heliopolis. It states that "the Nūb(a)" were present in Egypt at the time of the Islamic conquest. This Nubian population present in Egypt obtains rights and undergoes restrictions in the treaty: "The Nūb will not settle among them [i.e., Egyptians]," and "those Byzantines and Nūb who enter into a *ṣulḥ* have the same rights and duties as they have [i.e., the Muslims]."[9] The treaty also mentions that these Egyptian Nubians helped ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ against the Byzantines in his conquest of Egypt. The historiographical tradition transmitted by al-Ṭabarī constitutes a form of pseudo-*futūḥ*. Seignobos, moreover, argued on the basis of this passage that "the idea of a Nubian intervention in the Muslim invasion of Egypt was already circulating among historiographers of the first centuries of Islam."[10] Due to the lack of sources, it is difficult to know whether these populations, called by a slightly different name, were of the same origin as the Nubians of Nubia. What did this ethnonym

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[7] On this treaty see Jean Gascou, "De Byzance à l'Islam: les impôts en Égypte après la conquête arabe," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26/1 (1983), 97–109; Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie."

[8] Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 5 vols. + supplement (Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901), 1:2588–89; Alfred J. Butler, *The Treaty of Misr in Ṭabarī* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913).

[9] It is difficult to assess to what extent this representation of a minority being treated differently from the conquered is a *topos* or not.

[10] Seignobos, "L'Égypte et la Nubie," 17.

cover? Christides assumes that the term Nūb refers to "a word which obviously refers to all Sudanese, Nubians as well as Beja-Blemmyes."[11]

More importantly for our discussion, the treaty in addition discusses conditions that apply to Nubians who live outside Egypt. As we know that the Muslims did not come to any agreement based on a conquest with those Nubians until much later, we can follow Seignobos in his conclusion that the following passage probably does not belong to the treaty's original text: "The Nūba who agreed [to the treaty] should provide so and so many heads [i.e., slaves] and so and so many horses on the condition that they will not loot or prevent from trading in both export and import."[12] In other versions the formulation of our sources itself confirms the unreliability of this tradition. See for example the report about the conditions of the treaty as quoted in the chapter concerning Nubia ("Dhikr al-Nūba") in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's account. Not only do his informants not know exactly the number of slaves who have to be delivered by the Nubians, he also states that it was related by "some elders" (wa yuqāl fīmā dhakara baʿḍ al-mashāʾikh).[13] This formulation with no precise informant suggests that the information given is merely based on hearsay.

If the part of the treaty concerning the relations between Muslims and Nubians in Nubia (i.e., outside Egypt), as preserved in literary sources, was added later, we must look elsewhere for information about the nature of Nubian–Egyptian relations. Fortunately, excavations led by J. Martin Plumley, carried out in 1972 at Qaṣr Ibrīm, provided a documentary source of great importance concerning this question from the beginning of the Abbasid period: a papyrus text preserving a diplomatic document that discusses Nubian–Egyptian relations a century later. How does this text present Muslim–Nubian relations?

Diplomacy and Trade: A Second/Eighth-Century Arabic Letter to the King of Nubia

Interestingly, this letter, edited and translated by Martin Hinds and Hamdi Sakkout, describes a very different kind of relationship between the Nubians and Muslims ruling Egypt than that offered by the treaty of Miṣr discussed above, one that fits the situation of continued Nubian independence or resistance to Muslim rule much better.[14] Written in sixty-nine lines of

[11] V. Christides, "Sudanese at the Time of the Arab Conquest of Egypt," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 75 (1983), 6–13.
[12] Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:2589.   [13] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 189, line 3.
[14] Hinds and Sakkout, "A Letter from the Governor of Egypt."

Arabic, this papyrus is the oldest extant diplomatic document (a letter between an Islamic authority and another political power) unearthed in the Muslim world. The letter was written in Rajab 141 (November 758) by the Abbasid governor of Egypt, Mūsā b. Kaʿb, to the Christian king (*ṣāḥib*) of Nubia.

In his letter Egypt's governor complains to the king of Nubia that the terms of the *baqṭ*, the agreement between the Nubians and Egyptians about the delivery of certain merchandise, were not being respected.[15] In line 19 the letter reads: "What you owe of the *baqṭ* about which a peace agreement was made with you."[16] Note that the noun *ṣulḥ* is not given, but instead a verb with the same root in the passive form: "a peace agreement was made with you" (*ṣūliḥtum*) is used.

How should we interpret this term *ṣūliḥtum* in this papyrus letter? This legal term is generally associated with *ṣulḥ* agreements. Levy-Rubin has described the process by which the peoples who surrendered to the Muslims obtained *amān*, the right to safety:

> Muslim sources describe a process analogous to that known from the pre-Islamic Near East: once a city surrendered, it received an *amān*. . . . The granting of an *amān* was usually accompanied by a document listing the conditions that were agreed upon in the *ṣulḥ* (peace agreement). . . . This was therefore a conditional surrender, which was often accompanied by a written document: *homologia, pakton/pactum, qyāma*, or *ktābā*, Arabic *kitāb, ʿahd, ʿaqd*.[17]

Should the term *ṣūliḥtum* be understood in the context of a treaty imposing conditions on a conquered population as described by Levy-Rubin above? It is clear that the Qaṣr Ibrīm letter serves a very different purpose. The conditions of the agreement (*baqṭ*) concluded between the Nubians and the Muslims as described in the letter point not so much to an agreement of conditional surrender, the rights that Muslims granted to conquered populations, as to a peace that was established within the framework of a reciprocal exchange.

This letter was issued during the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 136–58/754–75). The letter fits the beginning of the Abbasid period when the Muslim empire's relationship with Nubia regained importance and the *baqṭ* was revitalized. This is corroborated by a passage from al-Balādhurī's *Futūḥ al-buldān* where the caliph al-Mahdī (r. 158–69/775–85),

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[15] On the *baqṭ* see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Baqt," in *EI*[3], s.v.
[16] Hinds and Sakkout, "A Letter from the Governor of Egypt," 227.
[17] Levy-Rubin, *Non-Muslims in the Early Islamic Empire*, 36.

al-Manṣūr's successor, imposed obligations on the Nubians: "The Commander of the Faithful obliged the Nubians every year to provide 360 heads (captives) and a giraffe, in return for which they obtained wheat, vinegar, clothes, supplies or its equivalent value."[18] In both the letter and the literary accounts the *baqṭ* is presented as an exchange. The Arab sources, obviously, present the Muslims as demanding rather than agreeing to this mutual agreement: "The caliph has ordered (*amara*)," al-Balādhurī writes. When reading the narrative sources carefully, however, this contradiction is observable, as noted by Jay Spaulding in his reconsideration of the *baqṭ* treaty, and it is this contradiction that interests us here. It reflects the Arab historians' discomfort with a historical reality of Nubian–Muslim reciprocal relations and the ideal of Muslim military domination.[19] The implication is that while the Egyptians upheld their side of the agreement, the Nubians did not: they assaulted Muslim merchants in Nubia.

Interestingly, contemporaries, such as governor Mūsā b. Kaʿb, were also frustrated about their inability to impose their will on the Nubians, who behaved like an equal (or superior?) diplomatic partner. In lines 9–10 of the letter Mūsā quotes the Qurʾān to emphasize that in a reciprocal relationship both parties are obliged to stick to the agreement: "'. . . verily God knows what you do.' And He said 'Fulfil my compact and I shall fulfil your compact; so fear me.'"[20] The fact that the governor invokes the God of his religion shows his awareness of how limited his earthly power was.

> We have fulfilled for you that which we took upon ourselves for you in desisting from your blood and your property and you know your security in our land and your dwelling wherever you wished in it and the repairing of your merchants to us; no oppression or wrong comes to them from us; no one of you who is among us is attacked by us nor is he denied his right; no obstacle is placed between your merchants and what they want – [they are] safe and at ease wherever they go in our land.[21]

The purpose of this lengthy description is to demonstrate that the Muslims are living up to their part of the contract. As for the Nubians, according to the governor, they behaved quite to the contrary. He details how the Nubians detained, robbed, and tortured the Muslim traders who came to their lands and how they treated the messengers sent to them. The long

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[18] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. A. al-Ṭabbāʿ (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Maʿārif, 1987), 333.
[19] Reconsidering the *baqṭ* treaty, Jay Spaulding was the first to point out these contradictions. See his "Medieval Christian Nubia and the Islamic World."
[20] Hinds and Sakkout, "A Letter from the Governor of Egypt," 226.
[21] Hinds and Sakkout, "A Letter from the Governor of Egypt," 226.

passage and the multiple ways in which the governor tries to convince the Nubian king of his argument also points to the governor's frustration and inability to impose his will simply through force or threat. The governor has to negotiate with the Nubian king to get what he wants.

To recapitulate, in the Abbasid period, in an administrative document resulting from real interactions between the Muslims and Nubians, and not from the writing of the grand narrative, no mention is made of a *ṣulḥ*, an agreement which would have been signed between victor and vanquished in order to establish peaceful relations between the two. Instead, the author cites the *baqṭ*, a specific agreement between the Muslims and the Nubians, an exchange between two equivalent parties.

Nevertheless, later Arabic sources considered the agreement between the Nubians and Egyptians not as an amicable agreement between two equal partners with reciprocal obligations, but exactly as the kind of *ṣulḥ* agreement imposed on the losing party after a war of conquest. In fact, as argued in the previous section, that is exactly how later Arabic sources present the nature of a Nubian–Egyptian agreement from the beginning of Muslim rule in Egypt.

The *baqṭ*, on the other hand, as defined in the papyrus constituted a particular agreement between the Muslims and the Nubians, an exchange between two equivalent parties. Moreover, this document shows that the Nubians did not always respect their part of this contract. Mūsā's lament shows that, at the time this letter was written, the Nubians were not dominated by Muslims. Far from it: faced with non-compliance, the Egyptians had no other recourse than to send letters. This document provides a snapshot of the facts on the ground as of Rajab 141/ November 758. But what happened before that? How did Muslim historians relate the facts that led to this *baqṭ*?

Muslim Historiography: A Rewriting of History to the Advantage of Muslims

Several Muslim historians discuss Muslim attempts to conquer Nubia. They provide two kinds of historical narrative. One of these is the Egyptian tradition, preserved in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbāruhā*, transmitted from the Umayyad historian Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128/745–6) to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam via the respected authorities Ibn Lahīʿa (97–174/715–90) and al-Layth b. Saʿd (94–175/713–91). The Mamluk historian al-Maqrīzī (765–845/1364–1442) based his discussion of the conquest of Nubia in part on this tradition.

The second tradition may be called the "Oriental School of History."
This tradition is first found in the Syrian author al-Wāqidī (d. 207/823),
which is the source for a number of later historians, such as al-Balādhurī (d.
279/892), Ibn Khurdādhbih (d. ca. 300/912), al-Ṭabarī, al-Masʿūdī (d. 335/
956), and Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1233). Some of the informants of this oriental
tradition are Egyptians, particularly Ibn Abī Ḥabīb. The oriental tradition
characteristically belittles or erases the difficulties Muslims encountered
when they tried to conquer Nubia. In contrast, the Egyptian tradition is
closest to the facts, which is understandable as the historians who were
closest to the events geographically and chronologically are the Egyptians.
On the one hand, they lived in and wrote about the place from where the
conquest of Nubia was launched, Fusṭāṭ, and on the other hand, they are
the most ancient. As Spaulding writes:

> In the methodology accepted by historians, by contrast to that of
> Orientalism, a document is a primary source for the time and place at
> which it is written, while any claim it may make to convey information
> about earlier times must be subjected to critical scrutiny. Ordinarily a source
> produced shortly after an event will be granted greater credence than
> another source created many centuries later.[22]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam

Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam was an Egyptian historian, writing two centuries after
the conquest. He offers his story of Egypt's relationship with Nubia in
a chapter consisting of two pages, and I propose a very close reading of his
text in order to better understand this history. The chapter is short, but Ibn
ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's choice of the title "Dhikr al-Nūba" (chapter about the
Nubians),[23] omitting any reference to the conquest of Nubia, is unlike the
structure of the other titles in his work, which do feature conquests: "Dhikr
fatḥ Miṣr" (chapter about the conquest of Egypt), "Dhikr fatḥ al-Fayyūm"
(chapter about the conquest of the Fayyūm), "Dhikr fatḥ Barqa" (chapter
about the conquest of Barqa), "Dhikr fatḥ al-Andalus'"(chapter about the
conquest of al-Andalus), and so on.[24] The fact that this chapter is entitled

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[22] Spaulding, "Medieval Christian Nubia and the Islamic World."
[23] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188–89. In the introduction to his edition, pp. 5*–6*, Torrey
explains that some chapter titles stood in the wrong location in the manuscripts he used.
Throughout the edition, he indicates when he had to relocate these titles; e.g., p. 170, n. 3: "I
have transferred to this place the superscription wrongly inserted above." In the introduction Torrey
also indicates that those titles on which he did not comment probably are genuine.
[24] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 55, 169, 170, 204.

"Dhikr al-Nūba" is an initial clue that Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam did not consider the military engagements with Nubia to constitute a conquest. Let us examine now some passages in detail.

1   Presentation of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's Text

The first anecdote related to Muslim–Egyptian military engagement reports the following:

> ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd carried out a military raid (*ghazā*) against the black people, that is, the Nubians, as Yaḥyā b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Bukayr [d. 231/845] related to us, in the year thirty one [652 CE].[25]

The verb used by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam is "to raid" (*ghazā*) pointing at a situation not of conquest, but rather of isolated military attacks. The Egyptians executed a raid on the Nubians in this particular year. As there is no chain of transmitters (*isnād*), Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam seems to have received this information directly from Yaḥyā b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Bukayr, who is one of his main authorities.[26]

The second relevant passage is one in which Nubian aggression is reported:

> ʿAbd al-Malik b. Maslama related to us, Ibn Lahīʿa related to us from Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, saying: ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ was [caliph] ʿUthmān's governor of Egypt in the year thirty-one and the Nubians fought with him.[27]

While the previous passage mentioned ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd's raid on the Nubians, in this one the latter fight against him (*fa-qātalathu*). Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's informers all lived in Egypt in the second/eighth century. That is, Ibn Lahīʿa, a well-known traditionist,[28] whose informer is Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128/745), the son of a Nubian from Dongola, a freed slave, a *mawlā* of the Banū ʿĀmir captured in Nubia in 31/651, in the same year that the events reported took place. Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb was a traditionist.[29]

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[25] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188.

[26] Ibn Bukayr (d. 231/845) is one of the chief authorities named by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, as ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's family is composed of jurists (Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, p. 8* of Torrey's introduction).

[27] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188.

[28] On Ibn Lahīʿa see Raif Georges Khoury, "al-Layth Ibn Saʿd (94/713–175/791), grand maître et mécène de l'Égypte, vu à travers quelques documents islamiques anciens," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 40/3 (1981), 189–202; Mathieu Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis de Fusṭāṭ et les dynamiques régionales de l'innovation judiciaire (750–833)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 213–42, at 216–18.

[29] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Miṣrī*, ed. ʿA. F. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2000), 1:509–10.

Due to his origin, he had a closer relation to Nubia, making it possible that he preserved local traditions well. Born in 53/673 in Egypt and educated as a *faqīh* (jurist), Yazīd was "a seminal figure who began to organize Islamic law in Egypt on the basis of *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*"[30] and was the mentor of Ibn Lahīʿa.[31] The status of both the father, freed slave and *mawlā*, and the son shows, if it were necessary to demonstrate this, that *mawālī* could achieve important positions in this Muslim society.

Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's report goes even further. Not only were the Nubians not defeated, the Muslims suffered great losses due to the skill of the Nubian bowmen. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam reports:

> Ibn Lahīʿa said: al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd related to me, saying: "They fought most fiercely and Muʿāwiya b. Ḥudayj, Abū Shamir b. Abraha and Ḥaywīl b. Nāshira were [all] hit in the eye; so, on that day, they were dubbed 'the archers of the pupils.' ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd concluded a truce with them (*fa-hādanahum*) since he was not able to do anything against them."[32]

In fact, we see that not only were the Nubians not defeated by the Muslims, but that the heavy losses suffered by the Muslims because of the skill of the Nubian bowmen might explain why the Muslim commander, ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd, was obliged to conclude a truce with the Nubians. Here, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam raises a key point: ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd was endangered, and needed a truce.

The informant is Ibn Lahīʿa from al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd (d. 130/747), a transmitter and pupil of Ibn Abī Ḥabīb.[33] The conditions of the agreement are also preserved:

> Ibn Abī Ḥabīb said in his report that ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd made a truce between them (*ṣālaḥahum*) stating that they [the Muslims] would not make raids (*ghazā*) against them [the Nubians] and that the Nubians would not make raids (*ghazā*) against the Muslims. The Nubians would give every year to the Muslims a certain number of captives. And the Muslims would give a certain amount of wheat and lentils every year.[34]

Reading this, we understand that Muslims were not able to conquer Nubia, and had to stop the battle and call for a truce. The locution *ʿAbd Allāh ṣālaḥahum* can be understood in two different ways: either ʿAbd

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[30] Jonathan E. Brockopp, "The Formation of Islamic Law: The Egyptian School (750–900)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 123–40, at 130.

[31] See Mathieu Tiller's contribution in this volume (Chapter 5) for more details about Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb.

[32] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188.   [33] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:101.

[34] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188.

Allāh b. Saʿd proposed a *ṣulḥ* to the Nubians, or he asked for a truce because he was unable to win and sought to cease hostilities. The context suggests that the second interpretation is the right one. The Nubians had to provide captives, and they would get what they needed in exchange. There is no winner and no loser. Instead, it is an equal exchange. We should notice that neither the number of captives nor the amount of food is specified. The informant is Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, without any additional *isnād*.

When we take the four passages together we can reconstruct the situation under ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd as follows: The Nubians and Egyptians were involved in continuous military engagement with attacks back and forth (*ghazā*) whereby the Nubians were also regularly on the offensive. When it was clear that the Muslims were unable to conquer Nubia and were in fact suffering heavy losses they called for a truce. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam raises a key point: as ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd was endangered, he had to conclude a truce. As a jurist stemming from a family of jurists Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam was likely well aware of the legal stakes and might have referred to the hopeless situation ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd faced as making it legal for him to negotiate a truce. In this light the phrase *aṣlaḥahum ʿAbd Allāh* should be understood not that ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd proposed a *ṣulḥ* to the Nubians as the victorious party imposing terms, but rather that he asked for a truce because he was unable to win and sought to cease hostilities.[35] The *baqṭ* did not contain fixed terms that were stable and lasting. The Nubians had to give an undefined number of captives and in exchange they would get foodstuffs as needed. This points to an exchange of gifts rather than a peace treaty after a conclusive battle.

The following fragment is interesting because of its play on words using different terms to describe the agreements between the Nubians and Egyptians.

> Ibn Abī Ḥabīb said that there was between them and the Egyptians neither a contract (*ʿahd*) nor a pact (*mīthāq*) but rather a truce [ensuring] mutual security (*hudnat amān baʿḍunā min baʿḍ*).[36]

The difference between these terms is connected to the form and the degree of permanence. According to this passage, there was not a permanent agreement, with a written contract (*ʿahd*) or a treaty (*mīthāq*), but only

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[35] We will see that al-Balādhurī and al-Maqrīzī present another version of this account, which says that it was the Nubians who were asking for a truce.
[36] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188.

a truce (*hudna*), a temporary agreement to refrain from conflict and exchange goods on a yearly basis. Using the word "safety" (*amān*) is a play on words. On the one hand, it is the term that allows a *ḥarbī*, someone coming from *dār al-ḥarb* (lit., "the realm of war"), the regions that were not yet under Muslim rule, but would become so, to move safely within the realm of Islam. In these most ordinary contexts, this polysemous word means safety or security. On the other hand, it can mean "pact, treaty that concedes security."[37] In this citation it refers to a truce between the Muslims and the Nubians. Ibn Abī Ḥabīb, again, is the informer without any further *isnād*.

Another area in which Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam discusses Nubian–Muslim relations that reveals a development in their interactions is the acquisition of Nubian slaves. The first fragment reflects the legal debate between Ibn Lahīʿa and Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), who insisted it was not licit to enslave people subdued by treaty (as opposed to by force, *ʿanwatan*).

> Ibn al-Lahīʿa said that there is no harm in buying their slaves (*raqīq*) from them and from others. And Abū Ḥabīb Abū Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, whose name was Suwayd, was among them.[38]

Ibn al-Lahīʿa is quoted very often by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, and this sentence refers to a legal debate with Mālik b. Anas, his contemporary.[39] The fact that Ibn Lahīʿa considered it lawful for Nubians to be enslaved implies that he thought that the Nubians had been conquered by force.[40] As a jurist, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam knew perfectly well what the stakes were in the debate whether lands were conquered "by force" (*ʿanwatan*) or "by treaty" (*ṣulḥan*).[41] So, we can interpret the reference to an earlier jurist by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, writing three-quarters of a century later, as an indicator

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[37] A. de Biberstein Kazimiski, *Dictionnaire arabe–français* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 1860), 57 s.v. ʾ-m-n.

[38] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188.

[39] On the legal polemic between Mālik and al-Layth see Robert Brunschvig, "Polémiques médiévales autour du rite de Mālik," *al-Andalus* 15/2 (1950), 377–435.

[40] Conversely, he could simply mean that since the Nubians were still living outside the realm of Islam, because they had not been conquered at all, it was legitimate to acquire them as slaves. Because that is not a contested opinion, while we know of the debate between Ibn Lahīʿa and Malik, however, this seems less likely. See also Jelle Bruning, "Slave Trade Dynamics in Abbasid Egypt: The Papyrological Evidence," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 63 (2020), 682–742, at 686–87.

[41] Competing traditions as to whether lands were conquered by force or by treaty arose when the legal consequences concerning the fiscal status of land in relation to *ʿanwatan* or *ṣulḥan* conquest had crystallized: see Albrecht Noth, "Zum Verhältnis von kalifaler Zentralgewalt und Provinzen in umayyadischer Zeit: Die 'Ṣulḥ'-'ʿAnwa'-Traditionen für Ägypten und den Iraq," *Die Welt des Islams* 14 (1973), 150–62.

that there was a problem in interpreting the facts. How should one deal with a people if they have not been subdued by force?

Then the author gives the name of one of these captives: Abū Ḥabīb Abū Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb. We have already encountered him above as a transmitter of information on the Nubian–Egyptian relations. We learn more about him in the following account:

> Saʿīd b. ʿUfayr related to us: Ibn Lahīʿa related to us, saying: "I heard Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb say: 'My father was one of the captives (*sabī*) of Dongola, a freedman of the man of the Banū ʿĀmir from Medina, who was known as Sharīk b. Ṭufayl.' He said: 'An agreement was made (*ṣūliḥa*) with the Nubians,' as some Egyptian elders said, for three hundred and sixty heads per year. Four hundred heads per year is also claimed, three hundred and sixty heads as booty (*fayʾ*) of the Muslims and forty heads for the governor of the country. He said: 'Some elders believed that among them there were seventeen lactating mothers. Then, ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd left them.'"[42]

This narrative states that the jurist Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb said to Ibn Lahīʿa that one of the captives of war (*sabī* – again this term, not *raqīq*, "slave") from Dongola was his father and that he was a *mawlā*. Whether Abū Ḥabīb was a *mawlā* through association or through manumission remains undefined.[43] By contrast, in the statement attributed to Ibn al-Lahīʿa about the legitimacy of acquiring slaves from Nubia, Abū Ḥabīb's status has morphed from a *mawlā* into a slave. Perhaps Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam used this reference to Abū Ḥabīb *the slave* to make the issue of acquiring Nubian slaves (or slaves via Nubian traders) less loaded. After all, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's text makes a point of saying that the lawyer Ibn Lahīʿa's Nubian mentor was the son of a man captured or enslaved in a Muslim campaign into Nubia. All of this suggests that a serious justification of the practice of enslaving Nubians was needed. Further, we can observe that the noun *ṣulḥ* is not present and that it is a verb and that this verb in the passive form: *ṣūliḥa*, in order to insinuate that the Nubians had to accept this treaty as the agent of this verb in the passive form, refers to the Nūba, not the Muslims.

Then, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam includes one interesting anecdote that takes us from the vagaries of historiographical and legal debates about Nubian–Egyptian relations that are shaped by later concerns to a glimpse of an actual treaty.

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[42] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 188–89.
[43] On the polysemy of this term see Ulrike Mitter, "Origin and Development of the Islamic Patronate," in *Patronate and Patronage in Early and Classical Islam*, ed. Monique Bernards and John Nawas (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 70–74.

> It is said, among what one of the ancient elders (*mashāʾikh*) mentioned, that he inspected in some part of the archives in Fusṭāṭ and that he read it before they were burnt down. From it he memorized: We have made a truce (*ʿāhadnākum*) [stipulating] that you will supply each year three hundred and sixty heads. You will enter our country, passing by and not as a resident and we will enter your country similarly. If you kill a Muslim, then, the truce will be dissolved. It's up to you to return the fugitives and in the case you hide a slave (*ʿabd*) to the Muslims, then the truce will be dissolved; and you have to return the fugitives and those who take refuge with you among the people of the *dhimma*.[44]

The text quoted here is that of the document, addressing the Nubians as one of the parties. This means that this truce has been written on a document that an unidentified witness (*annahu*: Yazīd?) has seen and read in the bureaus of the Fusṭāṭ chancery. But, alas, it has been destroyed. In what condition was it? It is not said.

There is no noun to clarify the item seen and read ("he saw and read it": *naẓara … wa-qaraʾahu*). What was it? It seems likely to have been a document stating the reciprocal conditions of the truce because Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's source explicitly reports that it was found in an official archive.

At this point there is a stylistic rupture in the text of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam: suddenly Muslims are speaking in the direct form to the Nubians as if the contents of the document were quoted. And, for evidence, we have only the verbs to make a truce (*ʿāhadnākum*, "we made a truce with you") and to make a contract (*ʿāqadnākum*, "we made a contract with you"), and the noun *hudna* used in a negative grammatical form: "if you don't do this, the truce will not cover you." Moreover, the truce is here the subject, it is the one that is going to be dissolved: "The treaty will be dissolved." This implies that the other parties will not be obliged to respect it. And, for the first time, we find a mention of "the people of the *dhimma*."

Besides the unexpected format of the treaty in this anecdote, the reference to an unidentified source who is only described as "one of the elders" (*mashāʾikh*) indicates that we have entered a different level of reliability in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's account. This is confirmed by other formulations such as "they claimed" (*zaʿama*) and "this is their story" (*hādhihi qiṣṣatuhum*) in the following passage:

> He said: Other elders (*ghayr min al-mashāʾikh*) claimed that the Muslims had no customary obligation toward the Nubians (*lā sunna li-l-nūba ʿalā al-muslimīn*).

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[44] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 189.

In the first year when they [the Nubians] sent the *baqṭ*, they gave ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ forty heads. He refused to accept [the gift] from them and returned it to a prominent Copt called Nastaqūs, who organized this for them. He [Nastaqūs] sold that and bought some stuff for them. With this they argued that ʿAmr had sent them wheat and horses while they had been prevented from taking the wheat and horses. At first, they complained about this but then they were given [the wheat and horses]. This is their story.[45]

Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam here produces another narrative, coming from the milieu of the shaykhs. Instead of coming from other historians or traditionists, via an *isnād*, it comes from "some elders," probably because he mentions some legal issues and these shaykhs are supposed to give more weight to its arguments. As with the debate about the status of Nubians after the *baqṭ* was concluded and the legitimacy of enslaving them, this account is related to legal issues in the context of the agreement. The Muslims have "no customary obligation towards the Nubians," Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam writes. This points to the particular character of the *baqṭ*, and its uniqueness. A *ṣulḥ* with the same kind of conditions as those imposed by the *baqṭ* would after all have been illegal.

Here, for the first time, the term *baqṭ* is employed, and the story is about its first year. The date is not given, but the name of the ruler ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ is mentioned, although his involvement is unlikely. The purpose of mentioning this governor is to place these facts during the caliphate of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, a well-known figure, thus establishing all sorts of regulations in the framework of this conquest. This narrative mentions that the Nubians sent forty slaves to ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, and that he refused to accept them and sent them back. So, while these anecdotes are reported on the authority of a rather vague group of elders, the account of a particular agreement with mutual obligations between the Nubians and Egyptians, the details of which could change throughout the years, agrees with the reconstruction based on the papyrus that was presented above.

A new character is introduced here: a Copt named Nastaqūs. He is the man who has to lead the rejected slaves back to Nubia. It is a clue that the intermediaries between the Muslims and the Nubians were Copts, which is understandable insofar as the Nubians are Monophysites, and belong to the Coptic Church, whose patriarch is the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria.

2   Analysis of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's Text

Analyzing this chapter in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's history, we can observe a stratigraphy in the evolution of this information. This evolution as

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[45]   Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 189.

observed in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's text relates to historical episodes whose transmitters, and how they relate chronologically, can be compared. Nevertheless, this does not fit into the present study. So, at the beginning of his text:

(1)   The Muslims made raids (*ghazū*) in 31/652.
(2)   These events took place during the caliphate of ʿUthmān and the governorate of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd who was the chief of the Muslim army for this expedition, and the Nubians were not defeated. The date this part of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's chapter mentions is the same as that of the previous part: 31/652, but it comes from another source. The first one comes from Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and the second from Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, the well-known son of a Nubian captive who informed Ibn Lahīʿa, who informed ʿAbd al-Malik b. Maslama, from whom Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam obtained this information.
(3)   Then Ibn Lahīʿa is informed by al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd, the grandson of Ibn Abī Ḥabīb: as the Nubians were excellent bowmen, they put the Muslims in a difficult position, to the point where they needed to ask for a truce. ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd had to demand this truce, which Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam nevertheless presents as though ʿAbd Allāh were dominating the situation (*fa-hādanahum*).
(4)   This is the account of Ibn Abī Ḥabīb, and the *isnād* is limited to one person, who is a Nubian and a well-known *muḥaddith* (transmitter of traditions). The terms of this truce are an agreement of mutual non-aggression and an exchange, but although the items (captives for food) are specified, the quantities seem no longer to be known.
(5)   It is stated that the truce was oral, as there was neither contract (*ʿahd*) nor alliance (*mīthāq*). Here, again, Ibn Abī Ḥabīb is the transmitter.
(6)   Then Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam quotes Ibn Lahīʿa's legal question about whether it was licit for Muslims to enslave Nubians. Ibn Lahīʿa claims that it was allowed, possibly using the case of Abū Ḥabīb Abū Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb as a justification. The fact that the son of this captive became a well-known *muḥaddith* emboldens him to state that the enslavement of Nubians was permitted. Indeed, *walāʾ al-ʿitq*, patronage resulting from the emancipation of a slave, was an institution that, as Patricia Crone established, had the role of enabling freedmen to integrate into society.[46]

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[46] Patricia Crone, "Mawlā," in *EI²*, s.v.

(7) At that point of the narrative Yazīd, the son of Abū Ḥabīb, is supposed to have given the biography of his father who was, as we have seen, one of the captives captured in Nubia.

The number of captives that the Nubians had to give to the Muslims is, at this point of the account, known (360 or 400 heads per year). What the Nubians needed to pay is clearly specified, but what the Muslims had to give in exchange is not spelled out. It is as if only the Nubians owed something, a way of saying that they had to pay tribute, which implies that they had been defeated.

The evolution of the narrative continues:

(8) There is a written document in the Fusṭāṭ chancery, seen by an unnamed witness. Then, style and tone change: not only is the story told in direct address, but the tone becomes more threatening ("the truce will not cover you"). And, most importantly, for the first time we find the words *ahl al-dhimma*, "the people to whom the protection of the Muslims is given."[47]

(9) At last, the term *baqṭ* is employed. The date is given here as if it had occurred during the governorship of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, but we have seen above that it is unlikely to have been the case. This date is given to establish that the conquest of Nubia was achieved at the time of the first expansion of Islam.

We have two kinds of traditions. In paragraphs 1 to 7 there are transmitters from the Nubian milieu of Egypt: the father, one of the captives, freed as a *mawlā*, his son, Yazīd, and the grandson; these traditions are transmitted by Ibn Lahīʿa, and they present the difficulties of the Muslim army when confronted by the Nubian fighters. From paragraph 8 onward the transmitters are unnamed elders, and for the first time mention is made of a written treaty which is supposed to have been preserved in the chancery in Fusṭāṭ and had disappeared by the time the account was written down. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam does not yet use the term *baqṭ*. This term appears for the first time in paragraph 9.

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[47] This protection, as is well known, is an exchange within the framework of a relationship of domination: the Muslims will no longer commit acts of war against the conquered insofar as they will pay a specific tax, the *jizya*. In the sense of protecting a conquered minority in exchange for specific duties, notably fiscal, we find the term *dhimma* attested in a documentary source for the first time. It is a bilingual Greek–Arabic papyrus discovered in the archaeological excavations of Nessana in Palestine, and published by Robert Hoyland, who dates it to the end of the 60s/680s: Robert G. Hoyland, "The Earliest Attestation of the *Dhimma* of God and His Messenger and the Rediscovery of P.Nessana 77 (60s AH/680 CE)," in *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone*, ed. Behnam Sadeghi et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 51–71.

This evolution in the storytelling is probably a reflection of disparate accounts the author received from his various informants. Some things can be concluded nevertheless. First, the relation between Nubia and Egypt was not simply one of *dār al-islām* vs. *dār al-ḥarb* ("the realm of Islam" vs. "the realm of war"). Nubian territory had not, at this point, been conquered, either *ʿanwatan* or *bi-ṣulḥ*. The time in which Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam wrote is precisely at the period, namely the third/ninth century when al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820) spoke about a third category, the *dār al-ṣulḥ* or *dār al-ʿahd* (the "realm of truce/treaty").[48] This is a more appropriate evaluation of the relations between Nubia and Egypt. The *baqṭ* seems to have been a very particular arrangement with specific conditions that were not fixed and stable. What was transpiring at this juncture was an effort to devise a legal status for the lands and the peoples within Muslim society, when *dhimmī*s were beginning to be given the status of "protégés."

If Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's is the earliest version of this story that has come down to us, there are others, written later, in Iraq, under the Abbasid caliphate. Let us look at them to see the issues at work as they formulated their views on these events.

Al-Balādhurī

In his *Futūḥ al-buldān*, the Iraqi historian al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892 in Baghdad) presents four versions of the story of the treaty concluded between the Nubians and Egyptians, each with a different *isnād*.[49] The first two come from al-Wāqidī, who gave two versions with two distinct *isnād*s. The first report has the following *isnād*: Abū Khayr → Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb → al-Walīd b. Kathīr → Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Wāqidī → al-Balādhurī. The *khabar* goes as follows:

> He said: When the Muslims had conquered Miṣr, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ sent the mounted warriors to the villages that surrounded it in order to take control of it. He sent ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ al-Fihrī. Nāfiʿ was his half-brother by his mother. Their horsemen entered Nubian territory in a manner similar to that of summer expeditions against the Byzantines. The Muslims met heavy fighting from the side of the Nubians. They awaited them and shot arrows at them so much so that most of them were wounded. They pulled back with many wounds and wounded eyes. For this reason, they [the Nubians] were called "the eye-smiters." Things continued like this until the governorate of

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[48] Mehdi Berriah, "La guerre chez les Mamelouks: théorie, pratique et idéologie (1250–1374)," PhD thesis, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (2019), 16.

[49] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 331–35.

ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ, when they asked him for a *ṣulḥ* and an agreement. He agreed to this, not stipulating [the payment of] a poll-tax but stipulating a gift consisting of three hundred heads per year in return for which the Muslims would give them food commensurate with that.[50]

The text makes a number of contentious points. First, it portrays the encounter with the Nubians as the result of a chance excursion to graze the horses and says that it happened at the time of the conquest, under the first governorate of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ who dispatched his nephew ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ (d. 63/683) in 22/641. It is, however, difficult to imagine that he would have taken part in this expedition as, at that time, the outcome of the conquest of Egypt was too uncertain to risk going to war further south.[51] Furthermore, as we know, ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ had been charged with the conquest of North Africa. This account also disregards the fact that the Muslim army was very busy with the Byzantines, who had laid siege to Alexandria. The Muslims (only) reconquered it in 25/646.[52] In other words, it is very unlikely that the Muslims engaged in a large-scale attack on Nubia under the command of ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ.

Al-Balādhurī mentions that the Muslims' first attacks had caught them at a disadvantage. Then, during the governorate of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd, they launched further attacks. The Nubians "asked him [ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ] for a *ṣulḥ* and an agreement" (*fa-saʾalūhu al-ṣulḥ wa-l-muwādaʿa*). This so-called request is realized in the form of a barter between equal partners with the Nubians providing a "gift" (*hadiyya*) of 300 captives per year to the Muslims and the Muslims giving the Nubians food. In addition the Nubians would pay no poll tax (*ghayr jizya*). One can see an internal contradiction in al-Balāḍurī's account. On the one hand, the Muslims are at a military disadvantage; but on the other, the Nubians are said to be asking for an agreement, which contradicts the fact that the agreement in question is reciprocal, with each party paying its share, and that the Nubians are not subject to the poll tax. This contradiction means that, strictly speaking, there was no question of conquest *bi-ṣulḥ* (with an agreement of capitulation).

The next version is preceded by the following *isnād*: A shaykh belonging to Ḥimyar → Abī Qubayl Ḥuyayy b. Hāniʾ al-Maʿāfarī → ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith → Ibrāhīm b. Jaʿfar → al-Wāqidī → Muḥammad b. Saʿd → al-Balādhurī. The account is the following:

He said: I saw al-Nūba with my own eyes twice during the rule of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. I never saw a people more fierce at war than them. I saw one of

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[50] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 331.
[51] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt wa-kitab al-Quḍāt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 11.
[52] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 175–77.

them saying to a Muslim: "Where do you want me to hit you with my arrow?" If one of our youths would make a joke and point at a particular spot, he [the Nubian] would not miss it. They shot many arrows. One would hardly see any arrows on the ground [i.e., they rarely missed their targets, namely the Muslims]. One day, they went out against us, and they lined up facing us, and we wanted to launch one attack, fighting by the sword, but we could not prevail over them. They shot at us until they blinded us. There were 150 punctured eyes. We said: "There is no benefit offering a *ṣulḥ* to them. There is little bounty to gain from them and they do a lot of damage." So ʿAmr did not conclude an agreement with them (*lam yuṣāliḥhum ʿAmr*). He did not cease to quarrel with them until he was removed and ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd became governor and concluded a *ṣulḥ* with them (*fa-ṣālaḥahum*). Al-Wāqidī said: In Nubia, Muʿāwiya b. Ḥudayj al-Kindī lost his eye and became one-eyed.[53]

The *khabar* is supposedly transmitted directly from an Arab witness who reports in the first person singular (*shahidtu, raʾaytu*). He belonged to the tribe of Ḥimyar and passed on his information to someone from the tribe of al-Maʿāfir. Members of these two tribes had settled in Fusṭāṭ and were part of the *jund*. Based on the *isnād*, this is indeed the most direct account of these events. Another interesting point is that, according to this account, when the Muslims saw that they were being pressured, they decided that it was not in their interest (or in their power) to contract a *ṣulḥ*. As previously mentioned, a *ṣulḥ* is not a give-and-take kind of agreement, but a contract established within a relationship of domination and submission, and in this case, obviously, the Muslims weren't dominant enough to impose one.

The next version is transmitted via the following *isnād*: Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb → Ibn Lahīʿa → ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ → Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām → al-Balādhurī and contains the following account:

> He [i.e. Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb] said: There has been between us and the blacks neither contract (*ʿahd*) nor alliance (*mīthāq*), but rather a truce (*hudna*) which stipulates that we give them some wheat and lentils and that they give us slaves. And there is no harm in buying their slaves from them or from others.[54]

This tradition combines two anecdotes that also appeared in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and which were discussed above (nos. 4 and 6). Both al-Balādhurī and Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam report them on the authority of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb.

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[53] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 331–32. [54] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 332.

The final version starts with this *isnād*: al-Layth b. Saʿd[55] → ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṣāliḥ → Abū ʿUbayd → al-Balādhurī, and reports:

> The *ṣulḥ* between us and the Nubians stipulates that we do not attack them and that they do not attack us, and that they give us slaves and that we give them wheat commensurate with that. Would they sell their wives or children, I do not see anything wrong with buying [them]. The recension (*riwāya*) of Abū al-Buḥturī and others states that ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd concluded a *ṣulḥ* (*ṣālaḥa*) with the people of Nubia according to which they would give four hundred persons per year for which they would obtain wheat. Al-Mahdī, the Commander of the Faithful, obliged the Nubians [to deliver] every year three hundred and sixty persons and a giraffe for which they received wheat, wine, vinegar, clothes, and carpets or the equivalent of its value. They claimed recently that they are not obliged [to send] the *baqṭ* every year. They had been requested to do so during the caliphate of al-Mahdī and then appealed to him [saying that] this *baqṭ* consisted of slaves they took from their enemies, and that if they found none, they had taken them from among their children and had given this number. He [the caliph al-Mahdī] then ordered that the [amount of] one year's *baqṭ* be taken from them every three years. This petition was not found in the imperial archives, but in the *dīwān* of Miṣr [i.e., Fusṭāṭ].[56]

This tradition comes from the milieu of the Egyptian jurists, particularly al-Layth b. Saʿd, who was also, as we have seen, one of the transmitters within the *isnād*s of the *khabar*s transmitted by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam. This text is composite in that it includes information about the early Islamic period and then the Abbasid period. Its *isnād* only concerns the first period. He says that, at first, no one got the upper hand in the Muslim–Nubian conflict and there was an agreement for an exchange of slaves for food. In addition, according to another transmitter (Abū al-Buḥturī), it was during the governorate of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd that they reached the agreement, which is expressed by the use of the verb *ṣālaḥa*, not the substantive *ṣulḥ*. The use of the verb instead of the noun suggests that there was no formal treaty, but an agreement, perhaps oral. Here the number of "heads" is 400, in return for food.

It was under the Abbasid caliph al-Mahdī that the conditions were revised. Moreover, reference is made to a written document, kept in the office of the chancery (*dīwān*) of Fusṭāṭ. A witness said:

> I attended a council of the *amīr* ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir, then governor of Egypt. He said: "Are you ʿUthmān b. Ṣāliḥ, whom we contacted concerning

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the document (*kitāb*) of the *baqṭ* of Nubia?" I said, "Yes." . . . This meeting took place in Fusṭāṭ, Egypt, in the year two hundred and eleven [827 CE]. . . . ʿUthmān b. Ṣāliḥ then said: "The *amīr* then sent someone to the *dīwān* located behind the congregational mosque in Fusṭāṭ. He picked the document concerning the Nubia out and found it consistent with what I had said. It pleased him."[57]

These four traditions given by al-Balādhurī show that the different traditions represented by the four *isnād*s offer divergent narratives. The first one, which originated in an Abbasid milieu based on the *isnād*, seems to follow the grand imperial narrative.

Al-Maqrīzī

The third historian I want to discuss is the prolific Mamluk writer al-Maqrīzī in his *al-Mawāʿiz wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār.* The first chapter is a small one, entitled "Dhikr al-janādil wa-lamʿ min akhbār arḍ al-nūba" (About the cataracts and a glimpse of the tales about Nubian territory). In this chapter he transcribed al-Aswānī's *Kitāb Akhbār al-Nūba wa-l-Muḳurra wa-ʿAlwa wa-l-Buja wa-l-Nīl.* The Shīʿī al-Aswānī was sent to Nubia by the Fatimid vizier Jawhar al-Siqillī in order to convert the king of Nubia to Islam. He is therefore a direct witness of medieval Nubia. Unfortunately, his book has been lost and the only elements we have access to are the quotations from al-Maqrīzī. Al-Aswānī gives an account providing geographical information about Nubia. In the second chapter, "Dhikr al-baqṭ,"[58] al-Maqrīzī defines the *baqṭ* and tells the history of the relationship between the Nubians and the Muslims from the beginning. He writes:

> The first time this *baqṭ* was imposed (*taqarrara*) on the Nubians was under the governorate of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ when he sent ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ after the conquest of Egypt in the year twenty – others say the year twenty-one – with twenty thousand [warriors].[59]

Al-Maqrīzī's report compares well with the first account recorded in al-Balādhurī discussed above, while it also contains some new information. Al-Maqrīzī mentions that the *baqṭ* was imposed, which contradicts the view displayed in several other sources that the *baqṭ* was a mutual

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[57] Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 339.

[58] A translation can be found in U. Bourriant, *Maqrizi: description topographique et historique de l'Égypte*, vol. 1 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1895), 580–87.

[59] Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiz wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, 5 vols. (London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2002–03), 1: 542.

agreement. The date of 20 or 21 was also given by al-Balādhurī but, as stated above, that seems less likely considering the general political–military situation in Egypt at the time. Moreover, most other traditions say that the *baqṭ* was agreed under the governorate of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd in 31/652. Al-Maqrīzī continues his account, stating that ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd stayed for a while in Nubia until ʿAmr wrote to him to come back. Al-Maqrīzī does not mention whether any fighting occurred or not, and we might interpret the Arab general's return to Fusṭāṭ as a retreat in the face of the kind of heavy losses that were reported in other accounts at this early phase of Nubian–Egyptian engagement.

In the next part of his account al-Maqrīzī applies a very different tone. He claims that the Nubians broke the *ṣulḥ* that was in effect between them and ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd when ʿAmr died and that their raids against Upper Egypt became more frequent and devastating. ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd is said to have embarked on a second expedition when he was the governor of Egypt, under the caliphate of ʿUthmān in 31/652. This time, al-Maqrīzī writes, the tables had been turned.

> ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd besieged them fiercely in the town of Dongola and bombarded them with the catapults.[60] The Nubians had never seen it, and it brought their church down on top of them and this amazed them.[61]

Al-Maqrīzī wrote at a very different period than the previously discussed two historians. Under the Mamluks Egyptian–Nubian relations had definitely turned in favor of the Egyptians. Makuria was finally completely conquered by Sultan Baybars in 675/1276. Correspondingly, the description of the *baqṭ* in his account reflects these new relationships. The Nubian king is depicted as weak and completely at the mercy of a generous Muslim general. The Nubian king, Qalīdūrūth, overwhelmed by the violent Muslim siege, "asked for the *ṣulḥ,* displaying weakness and submissiveness."[62] The hierarchical relationship between the two men is continued in the account of their encounter in the palace: "ʿAbd Allāh met him, lifted him [to his throne] and brought him near to himself," and finally, when al-Maqrīzī writes that ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd, consistent with his image of a generous, superior general, "decided to have the *ṣulḥ* with him [i.e. the Nubian king]."[63] When al-Maqrīzī writes that the Nubians were so poor that they needed food, this is another display of Muslim generosity when faced with weak, vanquished

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[60] Catapults of that time were not yet as sophisticated as in the period of the Crusades, but they did exist. In his *sīrat al-nabī* Ibn Hishām mentioned the use of a catapult when the Muslims besieged Ṭāʾif. I thank Mehdi Berriah for this information.
[61] Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:542.   [62] Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:542.   [63] Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:542.

Nubians. In short, al-Maqrīzī's presentation of Nubian–Egyptian relations and the treaty that conditioned them differs markedly from that which was prevalent in the earlier sources, which emphasized the bilateral character of the treaty that came about at the instigation of and with input from both parties.

Al-Maqrīzī continues his account with the story of how the Muslims built a mosque in Dongola. It is unlikely that at a time when even within Egypt itself no mosques were built outside the capital and the major city of Alexandria, Muslim victors would have built a mosque in Dongola. This is another clue that this historian doesn't know the situation of seventh-century Nubia.

As we saw above, al-Balādhurī, al-Ṭabarī, and other historians at times confused the period of the Muslim conquest of Egypt, which involved some unsuccessful campaigns in Nubia and up to when the treaty was signed with the Egyptians in 22/642, and the period when the *baqṭ* was put into practice between the Nubians and ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd in 31/652, during the caliphate of ʿUthmān. Al-Maqrīzī similarly mixes these two stages in describing the relations between Egypt and Nubia, while his account is in addition influenced by the reality of Nubian–Mamluk relations.

In relation to another description in al-Maqrīzī's writing, namely the town of Fusṭāṭ, it is clear that he similarly confused two periods. In the case of Fusṭāṭ he mixed up the crises under the Fatimids and those occurring in his own time. He supposed that Fusṭāṭ had been ruined from the time of the caliph al-Mustanṣir bi-llāh (r. 427–87/1036–94) whereas, in reality, there had been a recovery between the two periods.[64] He was writing his *Khiṭaṭ* during the huge crises of the beginning of the fifteenth century, and assumed there had been a continuity from the crises of the eleventh century under the Abbasids. When one reads al-Maqrīzī it is impossible to understand that Fusṭāṭ had witnessed a revival from the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth centuries. As in his writing on Nubia, al-Maqrīzī applies the situation of his own period to the distant past. We should thus consider al-Maqrīzī's accounts critically in light of his historical methods.

Conclusion

The discussion of early Islamic Egyptian–Nubian relations looms large in our sources. The celebrity of the *baqṭ* suggests that the story was well known and uncontested. In fact, neither the exact date of its establishment

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[64] Sylvie Denoix, *Décrire le Caire: Fusṭāṭ-Miṣr d'après Ibn Duqmāq et Maqrīzī* (Cairo: IFAO, 1992), 53–54.

nor the type of agreement concluded was clear. Indeed, an examination of the vocabulary and rhetoric of different Arabic historical sources makes it clear that the writings of Arab historians do not reflect reality, but offer a flattering and distorted image of Muslim fighters. This account was neither static nor singularly defined in the period from the first engagement between Muslim and Nubian forces during the conquest of Egypt in the early seventh century and the definitive conquest of the kingdom of Makuria by Baybars in 675/1276. The historiographical record reflects this dynamic relationship, but not necessarily in a systematic, recognizable way

It is nevertheless possible, by comparing the different accounts and the historiographical reconstructions they represent, to make some observations concerning the historical arrangements between the Egyptians and Nubians in the earliest period. From historical and documentary evidence – more specifically, one unique papyrus letter from the early Abbasid period – it is clear that the *baqṭ* was initially concluded between Nubians and Muslim troops, as opposed to having been imposed by a victorious Muslim party on a defeated Nubian one. It was a reciprocal arrangement whereby Nubians delivered slaves to the Muslims in exchange for food, the exact amounts of which differed from year to year. After the Abbasid takeover a renewed interest seems to have arisen in the goods exchanged as part of the treaty or for some other reason, motivating a reevaluation and reenactment of the terms of the treaty. Hence Egypt's governor wrote to the Nubian king, as the papyrus letter from 141/756 shows.

Another major concern in the sources is legal in nature. Muslim jurists in second/eighth-century Egypt debated the legal status of this land. Historical developments in the relationship between Nubia and Egypt, in addition to other historical processes such as the development of Islamic law, had an impact on the way Nubian–Egyptian engagement is depicted in the historiographical record, but it is not always clear where and how such influence took place exactly.

It did not fit neatly into one of the categories of *dār al-islām*, *dār al-ḥarb*, or *dār al-ṣulḥ*, as the *baqṭ* was not the kind of agreement resulting from a relationship of domination with the people of conquered lands. Matters were further complicated because the treaty and reports about it used technical terms related to the root ṣ-l-ḥ which was also used for the *ṣulḥ* agreement, which did organize Muslim relations with subjected populations. The legal consequences for the legality of the agreement between the Nubians and the Muslims, along with the lawfulness of trading in Nubian slaves, were the main anxieties.

The accounts of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, al-Balādhurī, and al-Maqrīzī on Nubian–Egyptian relations, and especially the *baqṭ*, as discussed above, show the impact of these different historical developments that occurred between the time of the earliest engagement between the two powers and when the reports about them entered our historical sources. Later concerns impacted different reports in different ways. Most visible is the way the changed relationship between Nubia and Egypt after sultan Baybars conquered the kingdom of Makuria in 675/1276 affected the representation of Nubian–Egyptian relations in earlier times and the status and coming into existence of the *baqṭ* in the writings of Mamluk historian al-Maqrīzī. Indeed, only glimpses of "a contract generating mutual obligations,"[65] which is how we should indeed interpret the *baqṭ*, as I have argued above, are visible in the sources. The above-offered analysis of these reports provides a case study of Arabic medieval historiography and the forces that shaped it. At the same time, an analysis of our sources with such historiographical dynamics in mind also allows us to adjust some of our understandings of historical events such as the nature of the earliest exchanges between the Nubians and Egyptians.

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[65] F. Løkkegaard, "Baqṭ," in *EI²*, s.v.

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Local Tradition and Imperial Legal Policy under the Umayyads: The Evolution of the Early Egyptian School of Law

Mathieu Tillier

The community of Egyptian jurists is best known from the second half of the eighth century, under the first Abbasids onwards, when their interactions with other provinces increased. The community's most famous scholar, al-Layth b. Saʿd (d. 175/791), an early Abbasid jurist, maintained a correspondence with his alter ego in Medina, Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), with whom he debated legal doctrine. However, Egyptian jurists before 132/750 have been little studied.[1] Joseph Schacht maintains that Egypt did not develop any original school of law, and that its jurists followed the Medinan legal tradition. His conclusions, however, are not based on any in-depth study of the Egyptian milieu during the Umayyad period, but rather on the later writings of al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820).[2] Yet, as I have shown in a previous study, al-Layth b. Saʿd both proclaimed his respect for the Medinan legal school and supported an autonomous Egyptian legal tradition, based on the jurisprudence of Companions who had taken part in the conquest of the province.[3] This

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[1] See one of the few extant lists, established from al-Shīrāzī, in H. Motzki, "The Role of Non-Arab Converts in the Development of Early Islamic Law," *Islamic Law and Society* 6 (1999), 293–317, at 303.

[2] J. Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 9; J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982 [1964]), 35.

[3] M. Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis de Fusṭāṭ et les dynamiques régionales de l'innovation judiciaire (750–833)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 214–42, at 217–18. The term "school" is the usual translation of the Arabic *madhhab*. This term originally referred to the opinion or set of opinions that a jurist "followed." Etymologically, it belongs to the same semantic field of the normative

suggests that Egypt followed an original legal tradition during the Umayyad and the early Abbasid periods, a tradition that was challenged, then replaced, by other schools – most significantly those of Mālik, then al-Shāfiʿī, in the first half of the third/ninth century.

Our lack of knowledge of jurisprudence in Umayyad Egypt is partly due to historiographical reconstructions that took place during the Abbasid period. Perhaps because Egypt quickly adhered to "personal" schools of law related to the Medinan tradition (Mālikism and Shāfiʿism), most legal sources leave no room for Egyptian jurists before al-Layth b. Saʿd. We therefore ignore most early Egyptian legal doctrines and practices.[4] However, a close reading of a fourth/tenth-century text allows us to lift a corner of the veil that conceals the Umayyad history of the Egyptian legal milieu. The historian Ibn Yūnus al-Ṣadafī al-Miṣrī (d. 347/958) wrote a biographical work about the most important Egyptian figures of the early Islamic centuries. The book itself has disappeared, but many quotations preserved by later authors allowed ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Fatḥī ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ to propose a hypothetical reconstruction that is the main basis for the present study.[5] Moreover, Ibn Yūnus's contemporary Abū ʿUmar al-Kindī (d. ca. 350/961) wrote a history of Egyptian judges, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, opening a window onto Fusṭāṭ's legal and judicial circles.[6] To

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"path" as *sharīʿa*. The term came to designate the "path," the "trend" followed by a series of jurists, characterized by their adhesion to a common tradition in spite of their individual differences. The use of the expression "schools of law" to refer to pre-classical legal trends, as well as their regional nature, has been the subject of controversy over the past two decades, particularly involving Nimrod Hurvitz ("Schools of Law and Historical Context: Re-Examining the Formation of the Ḥanbalī Madhhab," *Islamic Law and Society* 7 [2000], 37–64), Wael Hallaq ("From Regional to Personal Schools of Law? A Reevaluation," *Islamic Law and Society* 8 [2001], 1–26), and Christopher Melchert ("Traditionist-Jurisprudents and the Framing of Islamic Law," *Islamic Law and Society* 8 [2001], 383–406, at 400). See also S. C. Judd, "al-Awzāʿī and Sufyān al-Thawrī: The Umayyad Madhhab?" in *The Islamic School of Law: Evolution, Devolution, and Progress*, ed. P. Bearman, R. Peters, and F. E. Vogel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 10–25, at 13, in which the author argues that some jurists' mobility makes it difficult to attach them to any region. My own conclusion is that regional trends indeed existed in the eighth century CE. See M. Tillier, *Les cadis d'Iraq et l'État abbasside (132/750–334/945)* (Damascus: Ifpo, 2009), 138–43.

4   J. E. Brockopp, one of the rare scholars who wrote about the formation of an Egyptian school, only devotes two pages to its history before 775 CE. He mainly highlights the role of Alexandria as a place of transmission of knowledge during the early period. See J. E. Brockopp, "The Formation of Islamic Law: The Egyptian School (750–900)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 123–40, at 130–31.

5   Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Miṣrī*, ed. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Fatḥī ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2000).

6   Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, in *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 299–476; French trans. M. Tillier in al-Kindī, *Histoire des cadis égyptiens* (Cairo: IFAO, 2012).

understand the peculiarities of Egyptian legal circles during the Umayyad period, I will first offer a preliminary study of the relationships between its local jurists and other regional normative systems within the Islamic empire. Second, I will argue that the evolution of the Egyptian "school" is intimately related to imperial Umayyad policy.

Egyptian Law under the Umayyads, between Theory and Practice

The Early Egyptian Legal Milieu

A few mentions of *fuqahāʾ* or *muftī*s by Ibn Yūnus attest to the existence of an early Islamic Egyptian legal milieu. Several characters who settled in Fusṭāṭ following the conquest reportedly transmitted *ḥadīth* from important Companions of the Prophet, such as ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Muʿādh b. Jabal, and Umm Salama.[7] According to Ibn Yūnus, the caliph ʿUmar ordered ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, the conqueror and first governor of the province, to move ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam closer to the mosque, so that he could teach the Qurʾān and *fiqh* there.[8] Qays b. al-Ḥārith al-Murādī, who arrived from Yemen during the conquest, similarly "learnt *fiqh* (*tafaqqaha*) so that he could give legal opinions in his time (*yuftī fī zamāni-hi*)."[9] It is unclear whether the term *fiqh* was actually used at that time. Qays b. al-Ḥārith's example suggests, however, that such people were recognized as the bearers of a special kind of knowledge that allowed them to provide some sort of legal or religious advice.

The Egyptian tradition, however, assigns a substantial role in the formation of a legal milieu to a particular Companion: ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir (d. 58/677–78). He is best known for having participated in the conquest of Egypt, and became its governor from 44/665 to 47/667, under the caliph Muʿāwiya.[10]

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[7] See the appendix at the end of the chapter.

[8] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:315. A close supporter of ʿAlī at the beginning of the *fitna*, Ibn Muljam (d. 40/661) turned against him along with other Khārijīs after the battle of Ṣiffīn, and murdered him in 40/661. On ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam see also al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Yaʿlāwī, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1991), 4:62–9; L. Veccia Vaglieri, "Ibn Muldjam," in *EI²*, s.v.

[9] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:401.

[10] Al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr wa-wulāti-hā*, in *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 6–298, at 36–38; Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:347; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara fī taʾrīkh Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 2 vols. (Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya/ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1967), 1:220. On ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir see also Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar, 11 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 2001), 5:261; Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1993), 531; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbāru-hā*, ed. C. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 294; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. ʿUmar b. Gharāma al-ʿAmrawī, 80 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 40:486; Ibn al-Athīr,

Ibn Yūnus considered ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir a leading expert in law and the author of a local recension of the Qurʾān, which remained authoritative in Egypt for some time, perhaps until around 76/695–96, when the governor ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān (in office 65–86/685–705) ordered a new codex to be compiled.[11] Among the early jurists that Ibn Yūnus identifies, ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir is the only one who supposedly reported directly from the Prophet, which may have given him a special authority. Indeed, al-Dhahabī later refers to him as "the Imām."[12] He apparently played an important role in training the second generation of Egyptian jurists. Among others, he taught Marthad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazanī (d. 90/709), who became a close advisor of the governor ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān at the turn of the second/eighth century, and issued "fatwas" during official hearings.[13] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr (d. 97 or 98/715–16 or 716–17), another early "jurist" identified by Ibn Yūnus, reportedly transmitted the knowledge of the same ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir.[14] According to al-Kindī, the *qāḍī* ʿĀbis b. Saʿīd (in office 60–68/679–80–687–88) also owed his legal training to ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir.[15] These few names reveal the existence, in the last quarter of the seventh century, of a small group of jurists surrounding the governor, rooted in the local community of Fusṭāṭ. They followed the legal expertise of ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir, one of the first governors serving the Sufyanid caliphate, whose knowledge and recension of the Qurʾān were authoritative.[16]

This Egyptian tradition continued into the second/eighth century. Ibn Yūnus's biographies of jurists are not detailed enough to precisely reconstruct the legal circles that developed from the first/seventh-century kernel.

Usd al-ghāba fī maʿrifat al-ṣaḥāba, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʿawwaḍ and ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd-al-Mawjūd, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, n.d.), 4:51; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd-al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʿawwaḍ, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1995), 4: 429. See R. G. Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa (97–174/715–790): Juge et grand maître de l'école égyptienne* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986), 96–97; Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām: qāmūs tarājim li-ashhar al-rijāl wa-l-nisāʾ min al-ʿarab wa-l-mustaʿribīn wa-l-mustashriqīn*, 12th ed., 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm li-l-Malāyīn, 1997), 4:240.

[11] Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 117–18. Cf. Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Juzʾ al-rābiʿ min Kitāb al-Intiṣār* (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kubrā al-Amīriyya, 1309 H), 72–73; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, 5 vols. (London: Muʾassasat al-Furqān li-l-Turāth al-Islāmī, 2002–3), 4/1:30–31; Ibn Ḥajar-al-ʿAsqalānī, *Rafʿ al-iṣr ʿan quḍāt Miṣr*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1998), 215.

[12] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:468; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾūṭ and Muḥammad Nuʿaym al-ʿAraqsūsī. 23 vols. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1413 H), 2:467. Cf. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 287–94.

[13] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:347, 468; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 4:285.

[14] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:298–99. On this character see Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 99.

[15] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 313.

[16] On ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir see M. Tillier, "Une tradition coranique égyptienne? Le codex de ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir al-Ǧuhanī," *Studia Islamica* 117 (2022), 38–63.

However, he provides some information about transmission of *ḥadīth*, following the trend of the biographical literature of his time. What *ḥadīth* was at the turn of the second/eighth century is also unclear, and such information is probably reconstructed from *isnād*s – the authenticity of which may be questioned. Even if one might suspect a later reconstitution of the *isnād*s as part of the process of creating formal *ḥadīth*s, they could only appear credible if they followed historically realistic lines of transmission. This suggests that these transmission channels may reflect some historical transfers of knowledge and contacts between Egyptian scholars. Taken as such, Ibn Yūnus's text shows that, until the first two decades of the eighth century CE, an Egyptian tradition mainly rooted in the teaching of the Companions who settled in Fusṭāṭ (ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, and his son ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr) and their Egyptian followers continued. This legal tradition, whose main representatives are ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr and Bakr b. Sawāda (d. 128/745–46),[17] reached its climax with al-Layth b. Saʿd, who appeared as the main representative of the Egyptian "school" of law in the second half of the second/eighth century (see Figure 5.1).

  Al-Layth b. Saʿd clearly refers to this milieu in his letter to Mālik, when he insists on the local origin of the legal traditions he upholds, arguing that they go back to the teaching of Companions who settled in Fusṭāṭ after the conquest.[18] This local legal current apparently grew weaker during the second half of the second/eighth century, when Mālik's teaching gradually replaced it.[19] Al-Layth b. Saʿd was probably one of the last defenders of this local Egyptian tradition. His legal doctrine continued to be distinguished from that of Mālik. In the early fourth/tenth century the Ḥanafī Egyptian jurist al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933) still regularly cited him in his book, *Mukhtaṣar ikhtilāf al-ʿulamāʾ* (*A Concise Treaty of Disagreements among Jurists*), alongside the main representatives of other early regional "schools," such as Ibn Abī Laylā (d. 148/765) and Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778) in Kūfa. In his opinion, al-Layth b. Saʿd still represented an important "school" – although it had disappeared by his time and non-Egyptian jurists did not bother to mention it.

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[17] See Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 91, 99.

[18] Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Maʿīn (riwāyat al-Dūrī)*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Nūr Sayf, 4 vols. (Mecca: Markaz al-Baḥth al-ʿIlmī wa-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1979), 4:487–90; al-Fasawī, *Kitāb al-Maʿrifa wa-l-taʾrīkh*, ed. Akram Ḍiyāʾ al-ʿUmarī, 3 vols. (n.p.: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1981), 1:689–90.

[19] I have shown in a previous study that in the early Abbasid period the *qāḍī*s of Fusṭāṭ followed procedures similar to those prescribed by Medinan jurists (Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis," 216).

Figure 5.1 Transmission of knowledge among Egyptian *fuqahāʾ*

Were Egyptian Jurists Isolated?

This local legal "school," mostly visible in the last quarter of the first/
seventh century and the early second/eighth, was progressively replaced
under the Abbasids by the personal schools of Mālik b. Anas, then of
al-Shāfiʿī (if we follow Schacht's classification). This suggests that,
sometime in the Marwanid period, external legal circles, especially
from Medina, to whose legal tradition Mālik belonged, influenced
Egypt. We need therefore to examine the integration of Egyptian
jurists in the legal effervescence that characterized other provinces
(especially the Ḥijāz, Iraq, and Syria) in the first half of the second/
eighth century.

1   A First Approach: Citations of Egyptian Jurists in Early Ninth-Century
Muṣannaf*s*

The best witnesses to this busy legal activity come from the first
collections of traditions sorted by legal categories. The *Muṣannaf*s of
ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 211/827) and Ibn Abī Shayba (d. 235/849)
offer an exceptional image of regional legal divergences during the
Umayyad period. These two ancient tradition collections report almost
systematically the opinions and sayings attributed to the early jurists of
Kūfa (such as Ibn Shubruma and Ibn Abī Laylā), Baṣra (such as Ibn
Sīrīn), Medina, Mecca, and Syria (Makḥūl). These books thus reveal
what their two authors, a Yemeni and an Iraqi, knew at the beginning
of the third/ninth century about legal disagreements in Marwanid
times. A systematic search for citations of Egyptian jurists identified
as such by Ibn Yūnus in both *Muṣannaf*s (see Table 5.1) allows us to
assess the degree to which the Egyptian legal school of the Umayyad
period was known outside Egypt a few decades later.[20]

Egyptian jurists	Citations in both *Muṣannaf*s
Marthad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazanī (d. 90/709)	12
Ḥabīb b. al-Shahīd al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (d. 109/727–28)	16
[Ḥibbān?] b. Abī Jabala al-Qurashī (d. 122/740)	1
Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128/745–46)	71
Bakr b. Sawāda b. Thumāma al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī (d. 128/745–46)	5
ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar Yasār (d. 129/746–47)	1
Saʿīd b. Abī Ayyūb al-Khuzāʿī (d. 162 or 166/778–79 or 782–83)	25
Ibrāhīm b. Nashīṭ b. Yūsuf al-Waʿlānī (d. ca. 163/779–80)	1
ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥakam al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī (d. 163/779–80)	2
Sulaymān b. Abī Dāʾūd al-Ḥamrāwī al-Miṣrī (d. 168/784–85)	1
ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (d. 174/790)	21
al-Layth b. Saʿd (d. 175/791)	2[21]
Total	158

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[20] The following assessment is based on a count in the electronic versions of both works in the database
al-Maktaba al-shāmila, version 3.48 (http://shamela.ws/). I added ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa to the list,
although he does not appear as a *faqīh* in Ibn Yūnus's work, for the sake of comparison. Ibn Lahīʿa
appears indeed to be one of the most important second/eighth-century Egyptian scholars.

[21] It is possible to add to this figure the four occurrences of the phrase *ʿan al-Layth*, although we cannot
ascertain that it refers to al-Layth b. Saʿd. At any rate, they do not introduce any opinion attributed
to the Egyptian master.

In most instances these Egyptian jurists appear in chains of transmitters, and their own legal opinions are not quoted. Their marginal presence in the two *Muṣannaf*s becomes evident when comparing these figures with citations of a few leading Iraqi, Syrian, and Medinan jurists of the same period:

Other jurists	Citations in both *Muṣannaf*s
Ibn Abī Laylā (Kūfa)	670
Ibn Sīrīn (Baṣra)	1530
Makḥūl (Damascus)	480
Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (Medina)	823
Total	3,503

These figures suggest that Egyptian jurists from the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods were barely known in Iraq and Arabia in the early third/ninth century. Even al-Layth b. Saʿd, although he is considered the most important Egyptian jurist of the early Abbasid period, is totally neglected by Ibn Abī Shayba, and he is not even mentioned by ʿAbd al-Razzāq. How can we interpret such ignorance of Egyptian legal tradition? The most likely answer is that these Egyptian jurists were only known locally, and had minimal interactions with jurists from other provinces. The major late eighth-century legal debates mainly involved Iraqis and Medinans. Syrian jurists were rapidly marginalized, but their opinions left important traces, mainly in the teaching of al-Awzāʿī (d. 157/774). As for the Egyptians, most Eastern jurists perhaps did not even know of them.

Such lack of mutual awareness between local and non-Egyptian scholarship is confirmed in Egypt's first *ḥadīth* works. In the earliest known Egyptian collection, the papyrus scroll of ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (d. 174/790) (probably early ninth century), almost all the transmitters who can be identified lived in Egypt.[22] The *Jāmiʿ* of Ibn Wahb (d. 197/812) may contradict this conclusion, for the author cites Iraqi and Medinan/Yemeni scholars from the Umayyad period.[23] It is worth remembering, however, that Ibn Wahb traveled to Medina, where he followed Mālik's

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[22] See the biographies of transmitters established by Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 90–117.

[23] As for Iraqi jurists, he cites, for example, Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (Ibn Wahb, *al-Jāmiʿ fī l-ḥadīth*, ed. Muṣṭafā Ḥasan Ḥusayn Muḥammad Abū l-Khayr, 2 vols. [Riyadh: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1996], 1:104, 177, 393, 414, 452, 532); al-Shaʿbī (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:170, 185, 186); Ibn Abī Laylā (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*,

teaching closely, before returning to Egypt.[24] Close attention to *isnād*s reveals furthermore that the Umayyad-period transmitters were not Egyptians. Egyptian transmitters only occur in the Abbasid period, which suggests that they learned these traditions from Eastern scholars with whom they interacted after the revolution.[25]

2   A Prosopographical Approach: Lists of Masters and Disciples

Other data provided by Ibn Yūnus point to the few interactions between Egyptians and other jurists. In his (reconstructed) volume dedicated to "foreigners" (*ghurabāʾ*) who spent time in Egypt, few scholars belonging to the Umayyad period are labeled *faqīh*. The main one is ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr (d. 93/711–12?), one of the "seven jurists" of Medina, who may have spent seven years in Fusṭāṭ.[26] However, Gregor Schoeler has doubts regarding the reliability of this information, which is also transmitted by al-Balādhurī.[27] Among the few others are a jurist from Ifrīqiya and the Khārijī Imām Abū l-Khaṭṭāb (d. 144/761), who stopped in Fusṭāṭ on his way to central Maghreb at the beginning of the Abbasid period.[28] However, the data provided by Ibn Yūnus are certainly incomplete, and we can assume that other legally trained "foreigners" traveled to Fusṭāṭ, notwithstanding the fact that Egyptian jurists may have traveled to other regions of the empire. It is therefore necessary to examine available biographical data for Egyptian jurists more carefully.

Ibn Yūnus gives short lists of teachers and disciples for each of these jurists. Later authors, such as al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) and al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), offer more exhaustive lists. These later lists raise an even more delicate problem of interpretation than that of Ibn Yūnus, as they were probably drawn up on the basis of a systematic census of names appearing in *isnād*s. They reflect above all the transmission channels of *ḥadīth*, and not the teaching of *fiqh* itself. Here again, we consider these lists as reflecting plausible interactions between scholars during the Umayyad period. In order to better

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1:174, 534). Cf. G. H. A. Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Ḥadīth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 44.

[24] J. David-Weill, "Ibn Wahb," in *EI²*, 3:987; Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 123.

[25] The transmission of Ibn Sīrīn's opinions goes several times via the Baṣran ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAwn (d. 151/768) (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:104, 177, 2:414); Ibn Wahb's knowledge of al-Shaʿbī comes either from anonymous transmitters (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:170, 186) or from the Kūfan scholar ʿĪsā b. Abī ʿĪsā (d. ca. 151/768: see al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf, 15 vols. [Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2003], 4: 179; Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:185).

[26] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:147.   [27] G. Schoeler, "ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr," in *EI²*, 10:983.

[28] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:109.

understand the image of such interactions, we have identified the masters and disciples of jurists categorized as such by Ibn Yūnus, adding to his short lists the data provided by al-Dhahabī and al-Suyūṭī, and have classified these masters and disciples by twenty-five-year increments according to the province with which they are most associated.[29] We consider here the number of teachers and disciples in absolute value: if the same master/disciple is repeated several times in the same period, we count these repetitions.

According to these sources, we should note first that hardly any Egyptian jurist who died before 725 had a master from the east of the empire (Graph 5.1). The only "masters" outside Egypt come from the Ḥijāz (i.e., here, Medina). These are more numerous than Egyptian masters, for the good reason that they were Companions of the Prophet, whom our Egyptian jurists probably met before they settled in Egypt. Up until that date, interactions with non-Egyptian disciples appear almost non-existent (Graph 5.2).

The data available regarding jurists active at the end of the Umayyad period suggest at first sight that there was a strong influx of Ḥijāzī masters (Graph 5.1). However, it should be noted that, among the twelve Ḥijāzī masters of jurists who died between 726 and 750, eleven taught a single person, Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, to whom we will return in more detail. With the exception of this jurist, the number of Egyptian masters remained much higher than those from other provinces. Similarly, these jurists'

Graph 5.1 Geographical origin of masters (death dates of Egyptian jurists)

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[29] The last period (801–16) has only fifteen years, however, and the corresponding parts of graphs 5.1 and 5.2 must therefore be corrected upward.

disciples were still predominantly Egyptians (Graph 5.2). Very few Ḥijāzīs and Iraqis seem to have studied with them. However, a significantly higher number of scholars associated with Ifrīqiya studied with them, probably before settling in this province of the Muslim West.

It was not until the generation of jurists who died in the last quarter of the second/eighth century that a shift occurred. A majority of masters belonging to this generation were still Egyptians; however, they were now closely competing with the Ḥijāzīs, a phenomenon that seems to have continued after 800 (Graph 5.1). These Egyptian jurists, active in the second half of the second/eighth century, transmitted the teaching they received from the great Ḥijāzī masters of the first half of the second/eighth century or the first two decades of the Abbasid period (Graph 5.3).

Graph 5.2 Geographical origin of students (death dates of Egyptian jurists)

Graph 5.3 Number of individual masters who transmitted to Egyptian jurists (death dates of the masters)

At the same time, the geographical origin of their disciples was diversifying, with an increasing number of scholars associated with the eastern part of the empire, particularly Khurasan. Nevertheless, the majority of these jurists' students were still Egyptians (Graph 5.2).

These prosopographical data thus also provide an image of a fairly closed Egyptian legal milieu during most of the Umayyad period. With the exception of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, Egyptian jurists of the period had almost no masters from outside their province and, with the exception of a few Ifrīqiyans, they trained only a very limited number of disciples, who then moved to other parts of the empire. Nevertheless, according to late prosopographical data, Ḥijāzī masters were not unknown in Egypt: Egyptian jurists active in the second half of the second/eighth century seem to have often studied with them (among others) when they were young, which had a strong impact on the diffusion of Medinan knowledge in Egypt during the early decades of the Abbasid period. However, these data should be taken with caution: the rise in authority of Medinan scholars in the early Abbasid era, in connection with the emergence of a proto-Mālikī school, might have led some Egyptians to claim that they had studied with Ḥijāzī masters whom they had never actually met, or encouraged the invention of *isnād*s going back to them.

Egyptian Legal Practices Compared to Other Regional Procedures

Examining the role of Fusṭāṭ's *qāḍī*s in transmitting *ḥadīth*, Gauthier Juynboll concludes that "the requirements for the office were not high," meaning that most had limited legal skills.[30] Moreover, Ibn Yūnus includes no Umayyad-era *qāḍī* from Fusṭāṭ on his list of qualified Egyptian *fuqahā'*. Expertise in *fiqh* was probably not the most important criterion in selecting Fusṭāṭ's judges. The latter usually belonged to the major Arab tribes of Fusṭāṭ, which suggests that their status as members of the ruling elite was regarded as the most important condition. On the other hand, twenty-two out of the thirty-seven Egyptian jurists that Ibn Yūnus identifies in his book were *mawālī* (more than 59 percent), and could not reasonably expect to be appointed as *qāḍī*s – their judicial careers were limited to the role of scribe.[31] This does not necessarily mean

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[30] Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, 83.
[31] M. Tillier, "Scribes et enquêteurs: note sur le personnel judiciaire en Égypte aux quatre premiers siècles de l'hégire," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54 (2011), 370–404, at 391–97.

that Fusṭāṭ's judges had no legal training, or that they were detached from the legal thought developed in their province. It is therefore necessary to consider how court procedure in Fusṭāṭ can be correlated with that in other provinces.

Procedural law was the subject of debates between Eastern jurists (especially Iraqi and Medinan ones) in the first half of the eighth century. A comparison between Egyptian and Eastern judicial practices may therefore represent a significant indicator of the legal integration of Egypt into the Umayyad empire. Information al-Kindī provides allows comparisons with major Middle Eastern cities.

Procedures in Fusṭāṭ	Medina	Baṣra	Kūfa	Damascus
The litigant who produces the higher number of witnesses wins the lawsuit[32] (69–83/688–89–702)	X[33]	X[34]		X[35]
The judge draws lots when litigants produce the same number of witnesses[36] (69–83/ 688–89–702)	X[37]			
Evidence based on one single witness + the claimant's oath[38] (115–20/733–38)	X[39]	X[40]		X[41]
The testimony of *ashrāf* is rejected[42] (115–20/733–38)				
A man who denied his divorced wife a compensatory gift cannot testify[43] (115–20/733–38)				

[32] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 318.

[33] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf ʿAbd al-Razzāq*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Aʿẓamī, 12 vols. (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1983), 8:279–80; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Ḥamad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Jumʿa and Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Luḥaydān, 16 vols. (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2004), 7:411; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 11 vols. (Cairo: Idārat al-Ṭibāʿa al-Munīriyya, 1352 H), 9:438.

[34] Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:359; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, 3 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿāda, 1947–50), 1:304; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:438.

[35] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:280–81; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:438.

[36] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 318.

[37] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:279–80; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:411.

[38] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 344–45.

[39] Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 1:113, 118, 140, 3:87. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:404.

[40] Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 1:331, 340, 2:12. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:404.

[41] Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 22:210–12, 62:230.

[42] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 345–46.   [43] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 344.

(cont.)

Procedures in Fusṭāṭ	Medina	Baṣra	Kūfa	Damascus
The testimony of children is accepted in case of injury[44] (120–27/738–45)	X[45]	X[46]	X[47]	
The testimony of a litigant's brother is accepted[48] (120–27/738–45)	X[49]	X[50]	X[51]	No[52]
A Christian may testify against a Christian, a Jew against a Jew[53] (120–27/738–45)	X[54]		X[55]	

Except for two cases of witness disqualification that seem specific to Egypt, without any equivalent in other provinces, the same basic rules regarding testimony, and probably oaths as well, were simultaneously implemented in other parts of the empire. According to Table 5.3, judicial practices in Fusṭāṭ came closest to Medinan standards. An archaic procedure of judging in favor of the litigant who produced the higher number of witnesses was also accepted in Damascus and Baṣra. After Medina, Fusṭāṭ shared several particular rules with Baṣra and, to a lesser extent, with judges in Kūfa toward the end of the Umayyad period.

[44] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 351.   [45] Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:420–21.

[46] Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:334; al-Ṭaḥāwī and al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Mukhtaṣar ikhtilāf al-ʿulamāʾ*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Nadhīr Aḥmad, 5 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyya, 1995), 3:337.

[47] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:349–50; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:335; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 2:270, 308, 313; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:420–21; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *al-Ṭuruq al-ḥukmiyya fī l-siyāsat al-sharʿiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Faqī (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 1953), 171.

[48] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 351.

[49] Mecca followed the same rule. See ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:343–44; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:477–78; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 1:169, 2:252.

[50] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:343–44; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:477–78.

[51] Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 2:252.

[52] It is said that the Syrian scholar al-Awzāʿī refused this procedure: al-Ṭaḥāwī and al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Mukhtaṣar ikhtilāf al-ʿulamāʾ*, 3:372.

[53] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 351.

[54] In Medina, al-Zuhrī appears sometimes as favorable, sometimes hostile to the testimony of non-Muslims. See ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:357; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:694.

[55] Traditions also depict al-Shaʿbī as holding contradictory opinions. See ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:357; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:693, 694; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 2:415. However, it seems that scholars of the first half of the eighth century (both in Iraq and the Ḥijāz), whether or not they accepted transconfessionnal testimony, all allowed the testimony of non-Muslims for or against members of their own religious community: ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:356–59; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:692–96. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:410; Schacht, *Origins*, 210.

These indications raise a question regarding our previous conclusions about Fusṭāṭ's isolation from the rest of the empire. Judicial practices in Umayyad Fusṭāṭ match those of other provinces. It is yet to be determined how such similarities came about. Are these parallel developments unrelated to each other, from a common background dating back to the early decades of Islam and for which we have virtually no information? Alternatively, can we argue that these judicial practices developed simultaneously, due to other types of interaction between provinces?

Several clues suggest that Egyptian judicial practices resulted from interactions with other provincial traditions.[56] A procedure called *al-yamīn maʿa al-shāhid* (evidence constituted of a single witness plus the claimant's oath) was used in Fusṭāṭ during the last decade of Umayyad rule. In his letter to Mālik b. Anas, al-Layth b. Saʿd rejected this procedure, arguing that it had a Medinan origin, while Egypt had its own tradition, inherited from the Companions who settled in Fusṭāṭ.[57] A passage from al-Kindī confirms that the emerging authority of Medinan practice was not accepted in Fusṭāṭ without assessing its relevance to local traditions. In the early Abbasid period the *qāḍī* ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa reported that the Medinan jurist Ibn al-Shihāb Zuhrī (d. 124/742) accepted the testimony of a single witness, provided that he also transmitted the statement of a second (absent) witness. According to Ibn Lahīʿa, this opinion was consistent with the practice of most Umayyad period Egyptian *qāḍī*s.[58] Ibn Lahīʿa had heard it from the Egyptian traditionist Yazīd b. Abī Habīb (d. 128/745–46), which suggests that al-Zuhrī's opinions were known in Egypt during the Umayyad period. However, it remains unclear whether the practice of Egyptian *qāḍī*s matched al-Zuhrī's views because they regarded him as authoritative or for other reasons. Ibn Lahīʿa declares that he

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[56] See, e.g., al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 350–51.

[57] Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, *Taʾrīkh*, 4:491; al-Fasawī, *Kitāb al-Maʿrifa wa-l-taʾrīkh*, 1:691; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Iʿlām al-muwaqqiʿīn ʿan rabb al-ʿālamīn*, 5 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1991), 3:71. Melchert believes that this procedure appeared in Baṣra, and that its Medinan origin is but a rear projection (Christopher Melchert, "The History of the Judicial Oath in Islamic Law," in *Oralité et lien social au Moyen Âge [Occident, Byzance, Islam]: parole donnée, foi jurée, serment*, ed. Marie-France Auzépy and Guillaume Saint-Guillain [Paris: ACHCByz, 2008], 309–28, at 325). However, he does not take into account reports claiming that early Medinan *qāḍī*s had recourse to this procedure.

[58] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 346.

agrees with al-Zuhrī, not through blind adherence to his views, but according to his own personal reflection (*raʾy*): he claims thereby the doctrinal independence of Egyptian jurists. The harmony between Egyptian practices and Medinan theory seems therefore to have been partly reconstructed – or at least rationalized – during the early Abbasid period, when Egyptian scholars such as al-Layth b. Saʿd and Ibn Lahīʿa began to compare Egyptian customs with the doctrines of the major legal centers whose influence was growing throughout the empire. The similarity of practices between Egypt and Medina during the Umayyad period were not seen as the voluntary adoption of foreign doctrines, but rather as a happy coincidence.

Egypt's Integration into an Imperial Legal Framework

The picture up to this point is of a fairly isolated Umayyad Egypt in terms of interactions between jurists. However, similarities between Egyptian judicial practices and those of other provinces, especially the Ḥijāz, offer a contrasting view. Egyptian jurists, anxious to preserve their local traditions, later considered this harmony a happy coincidence. But can we believe in coincidences? If interactions between Umayyad jurists fail to explain such parallel practices, should we not consider other protagonists?

Al-Layth b. Saʿd's letter to Mālik b. Anas offers a clue, namely that imperial policy may be responsible for such common judicial practices. Al-Layth considers Caliph ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (r. 99–101/717–20) as the promoter of double testimony instead of "archaic" types of evidence that had existed in Egypt, such as isolated testimony or a higher number of witnesses.[59] In the context of his controversy with Mālik, al-Layth's insistence on the role of ʿUmar II is part of his argumentative strategy, which consists of appealing to an authority that Mālik himself acknowledges. It must therefore be taken with a grain of salt. Nevertheless, one cannot overlook the possibility that Umayyad rulers played an important role in rationalizing legal procedures, and more broadly in the development of Egyptian law.

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[59] Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, *Taʾrīkh*, 4:491; al-Fasawī, *Kitāb al-Maʿrifa wa-l-taʾrīkh*, 1:691–92; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Iʿlām al-muwaqqiʿīn*, 3:71–72.

Official Instructions

Legal and narrative sources highlight the importance of political relation-
ships between Egypt and the capital of the empire during the Umayyad
period. Since the reign of ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr (r. 63–73/683–92) and
that of his rival and successor, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 65–86/685–
705), caliphs sent legal instructions and judicial rescripts to provincial
*qāḍī*s, governors, and other officials.[60]

   In Egypt, correspondence between caliphs and governors is mostly
known from the reigns of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Hishām b. ʿAbd al-
Malik (r. 105–25/724–43), who reportedly sent instructions to the *qāḍī*s of
Fusṭāṭ, directly or through the provincial governor. As in other cities of
the empire, *qāḍī*s and governors were sometimes caught off guard by legal
cases brought to court, and therefore solicited the caliph's instructions,
who then enacted general rules and prescribed the implementation of
specific procedures.[61] Al-Kindī recounts, for example, a marital dispute
brought before the *qāḍī* ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. Khudhāmir (in office 100–
05/719–24), in which the latter ignored both the legal rule and the
procedure that he should follow:

> Ibn Qudayd reported from Aḥmad b. ʿAmr b. al-Sarḥ, from Ibn Wahb,
> from ʿAbd al-Aʿlā b. Saʿīd al-Jayshānī, from Muḥammad b. ʿIkrima al-
> Nahrī:
>   The latter married a woman. The day of the consummation of the
> marriage, she was wearing a long coat (*milḥafa*). He undressed her and
> suddenly noticed a leprosy scar on her lower thigh.
>   "Put your coat back on!" he ordered.
>   He spoke to ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. Khudhāmir, who wrote to ʿUmar
> b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz on his behalf. The latter replied: "Let him take an oath
> before God, in the mosque, that he did not touch her after seeing [the scar].
> And let her brothers swear that they were unaware of her illness before they
> gave her in marriage. If they take the oath, assign a quarter of the dowry
> (*ṣadāq*) to the wife."[62]

Such rescripts contributed to disseminating caliphal law in Fusṭāṭ, in the
sense of legal rulings decided by the caliph, whatever the sources on which

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[60] See M. Tillier, "Califes, émirs et cadis: le droit califal et l'articulation de l'autorité judiciaire à
l'époque umayyade," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 63 (2014), 147–90, at 161–65, 172–75.

[61] See Tillier, "Califes, émirs et cadis." Ibn Saʿd and al-Balādhurī's biographies of ʿUmar II report
dozens of caliphal rescripts sent to different governors of the empire regarding legal and procedural
rules. See esp. Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, 7:350, 357, 365, 366, 370, 371, 374, 381; al-
Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār and Riyāḍ Ziriklī, 13 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1996),
8:138, 148, 150, 155–58, 162, 163, 165, 166, 184, 189, 195.

[62] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 338–39.

his decisions were based. Although Egyptian *qāḍī*s usually relied on provincial legal traditions, they periodically sought caliphal instructions, which helped integrate their judicial practices into an empire-wide legal framework.

Imperial Legal Policy

According to the sources, a turning point for the integration of Egyptian law into an imperial legal framework occurred around 720 CE, during the reign of ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. His legal edicts and judicial rescripts are among the best known that Umayyad caliphs sent, probably because of his prestige and authority among later Egyptians. Although other caliphs sent similar edicts to the provinces, ʿUmar II seems to have distinguished himself through his legal policy. His interest in prophetic traditions is well known, and he is remembered for the impetus he gave to the collection of *ḥadīth*, a task he apparently entrusted to the Medinan scholars Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad b. ʿAmr b. Ḥazm and al-Zuhrī.[63] Furthermore, he seems to have dispatched jurists to several provinces.

In Egypt, Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb is the most emblematic of these "imperial" jurists. Ibn Yūnus considers him the first Egyptian scholar who set aside older apocalyptic narratives (*malāḥim* and *fitan*) in favour of traditions regarding the "lawful and the unlawful" (*al-kalām fī l-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām wa-masāʾili-himā*), and who promoted ʿilm (*aẓhara l-ʿilm*) in Egypt, perhaps in the sense of legal knowledge. He was more than a simple traditionist, as modern historians usually categorize him; he was also a jurist, and ʿUmar II appointed him as "*muftī*" in Fusṭāṭ, alongside two other scholars.[64] According to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, he continued to report to the caliph, and once even asked the caliph for instructions regarding music played during weddings.[65] He held an official hearing (*majlis*) during which he

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[63] Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, 34; H. Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000), 7, 19, 28.

[64] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:509; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 6:32; al-Suyūṭī, *Husn al-muḥādara*, 1:299. See also Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 114–16. It is noteworthy that Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb is supposed to have transmitted *ḥadīth* from the Medinan scholar Nāfiʿ, whom, according to Ibn Ḥajar, ʿUmar II sent to Egypt in order to teach *sunan* to the Egyptians. However, Juynboll doubts the authenticity of this report, as well as the historicity of this Successor, whose appearance as the "common link" in many *isnād*s could be a late rear projection: G. H. A. Juynboll, "Nāfiʿ," in *EI²*, 7:878.

[65] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrat ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz*, ed. Aḥmad ʿUbayd (n.p.: Maktabat Wahba, n. d.), 106.

answered legal questions brought by other scholars of Fusṭāṭ.[66] Furthermore, ʿUmar II apparently appointed ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. Khudhāmir as *qāḍī* of Fusṭāṭ, breaking with the usual selection of provincial *qāḍī*s by local governors. According to al-Kindī, this Egyptian jurist had been part of a delegation sent to the previous caliph, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 96–99/715–17), and was then spotted by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.[67]

ʿUmar II thus distinguished himself by his personal handling of Egyptian legal affairs, in selecting a *qāḍī* and appointing a *muftī* who both shared his vision of Islamic law. Why did he appeal in Egypt to Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb? I would suggest that he intended to incorporate Fusṭāṭ into the imperial legal milieu that was increasingly important in the Eastern provinces, and from which Egypt was still isolated. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's interest in law is well known, and Arabic historiography presents him as surrounded by jurists when he was governor of Medina.[68] In all likelihood the caliph was attracted to the Medinan legal tradition, to the point that he later appears as a major authority in the *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Mālik b. Anas.[69] Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb himself seems to have been one of the few Egyptian jurists trained in "foreign" legal thinking, especially that of the Ḥijāz. Among his masters, Ibn Yūnus mentions the Medinan scholars Sālim b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 107/725)[70] and ʿIkrima (d. 105/723–24), who probably visited Egypt,[71] and the Meccan jurist ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114–15/732–33).[72] Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb's official appointment as *muftī* in Fusṭāṭ therefore appears to have been the deliberate introduction of a new legal tradition in Egypt, mostly inspired by Medinan law.

Other evidence suggests that ʿUmar II's policy reached North Africa, a newly conquered area, where he encouraged the development of a legal tradition in line with that of the imperial center. Ḥabīb b. al-Shāhid al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (d. 109/727–28), a scholar of Egyptian background, was part of a delegation sent to ʿUmar II, and thereafter became a famous *faqīh*, as authoritative in Tripoli as Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb was in Fusṭāṭ.[73]

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[66] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 364.

[67] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 338; Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:291.

[68] See P. M. Cobb, "ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz," in *EI²*, 10:886.

[69] A. Borrut, "Entre tradition et histoire: genèse et diffusion de l'image de ʿUmar II," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 58 (2005), 329–78, at 363.

[70] About Sālim b. ʿAbd Allah b. ʿUmar, who was close to Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik, see al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 3:71.

[71] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:149. See J. Schacht, "ʿIkrima," in *EI²*, 3:1109.

[72] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:509. About ʿAṭāʾ, see J. Schacht, "ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ," in *EI²*, 1:730.

[73] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:106; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 7:57.

The same caliph is supposed to have sent "ten Successors" to Ifrīqiya to disseminate Islamic law, among them the Egyptian jurists Juʿthul b. Hāʿān al-Ruʿaynī (d. 115/733), Ḥibbān b. Abī Jabala al-Qurashī (d. 122/740), and Bakr b. Sawāda b. Thumāma al-Judhāmī (d. 128/745–46).[74] It is difficult to know whether North Africa was the subject of a specific policy, or whether data have been preserved for this part of the empire while disappearing for others. In any case, it seems that Egypt played a significant role in shaping such policy, perhaps because of its geographical position, which made it the gateway to North Africa, or because of its cultural influence on Ifrīqiya.[75]

Did the caliph intend to harmonize – or even unify – Islamic law on an imperial scale? If so, his short reign did not give him enough time to achieve his reform. It is also worth asking why ʿUmar II in particular tried to implement such a policy. The case of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb may offer a clue: according to later sources, this scholar retrospectively embodied a shift in Egyptian attitudes from apocalyptic expectations to legal concerns. Antoine Borrut has highlighted evidence that ʿUmar II ascended to the throne in a context of high messianic expectations, that is, on the eve of the hundredth anniversary of the *hijra*. The establishment of God's kingdom on earth by a rightly guided sovereign was seen as a necessary prerequisite for the apocalypse and the Last Judgment. However, in 99/717, the failure of the siege of Constantinople had called into question the caliphate's ability to impose its sovereignty over the whole world.[76] This external failure could have caused a change in strategy. ʿUmar II now intended to assert himself as *mahdī* through his internal political agenda and, in particular, by the establishment of justice within the empire – which included not only his famous measures to redress the *maẓālim* (injustices) of his predecessors, but also his legal policy.[77] At the same time, the failure to take Constantinople led Muslims to postpone their

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[74] Ibn al-Abbār, *al-Takmila li-Kitāb al-Ṣila*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām al-Harrās, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 1:176–77; Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:70–71, 89, 103. Ibn Yūnus also mentions the Dimashqī scholar Ismāʿīl b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Muhājir (d. 131/748–49), whom ʿUmar II sent to Ifrīqiya "to judge according to the Book of God and the *sunna* of His prophet, and to teach them (*yufaqqihu-hum*) the religion": Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:37.

[75] See H. Djaït, "L'Afrique arabe au VIIIᵉ siècle (86–184 H./705–800)," *Annales: Histoire, sciences sociales* 28/3 (1973), 601–21, at 611.

[76] See A. Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir: l'espace syrien sous les derniers Omeyyades et les premiers Abbassides (v. 72–193/692–809)* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011), 272, 296.

[77] In addition to the above, ʿUmar II is also remembered for introducing new regulations regarding *dhimmī*s. See Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir*, 303.

apocalyptic expectations. No systematic legal system had been needed for administering a world that they believed was soon to disappear. Postponing the apocalypse to a later period, however, required long-term social restructuring in accordance with divine will. If this analysis is correct, the reign of ʿUmar II thus represents a pivotal period, and his legal policy may reflect a more general change in the understanding of Islamic history, as Muslims rethought their eschatological expectations to give more space to daily rules governing this world.

At any rate, ʿUmar II's policy had a considerable impact on the Egyptian legal milieu. Al-Layth b. Saʿd, the most famous local jurist in the second half of the second/eighth century, was Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb's designated heir. In 128/745, when Marwān II sent a new governor, al-Ḥawthara b. Suhayl al-Bāhilī, to restore order after a period of unrest, he commanded the elite of Fusṭāṭ to appoint a legal advisor who would "guide him (*yusaddida-hu*) about legal cases (*fī l-qaḍāʾ*) and correct his opinions (*yuṣawwiba-hu fī l-naẓar*)," for the new governor was a rough "Bedouin." Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb and ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith (d. 148/765), the other major Egyptian jurist of the time (who apparently visited Medina),[78] agreed on their common student, al-Layth b. Saʿd, who thereby began his eminent career.[79]

During the early Abbasid period the doctrine of Medinan jurists, as transmitted by Ibn Abī Ḥabīb, was still a major reference in Fusṭāṭ.[80] Ibn Abī Ḥabīb had trained the *qāḍī* in office during the 760s, Abū Khuzayma Ibrāhīm b. Yazīd, who had the honor of opening his *fatwā* sessions.[81] His successor, the famous ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿā (in office 154–65/771–72–780), had frequently visited Ibn Abī Ḥabīb in his youth, and the latter reportedly predicted his accession to the office of *qāḍī*.[82] As a child, the *qāḍī* al-Mufaḍḍal b. Faḍāla (in office 168–69/785–86 then 174–77/790–93) had likewise been encouraged by the Egyptian master when he had asked him a question about a procedural rule.[83] Until the 780s, when the Abbasids

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[78] About ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith, *mawlā* of the Anṣār, see Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:370–71; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 45:455; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nunbalāʾ*, 6:349–53; al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 5:76. According to al-Kindī, he was part of the Egyptian delegation that went to swear allegiance to the caliph Yazīd III in 126/744; at the beginning of the Abbasid era he was part of governor Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlī's entourage: al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 84, 105.

[79] Al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 89.   [80] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 346.

[81] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 364.   [82] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 370.

[83] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 377. Cf. Ibn Ḥajar, *Rafʿ al-iṣr*, 437.

tried to impose Ḥanafī or Mālikī jurists as judges in Fusṭāṭ, most *qāḍī*s claimed to belong to Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb's tradition one way or another. Although the latter has been so far regarded primarily as a traditionist who introduced *ḥadīth* in Egypt, he was also – and perhaps more than anything else – a political tool used to bring Egyptian law in line with the Medinan tradition. The appointment of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb as Egypt's official jurist reveals the promotion of a new generation of "imperial" jurists, and marks the formation of a "mixed" Egyptian school, halfway between local traditions and Medinan interpretations.

Medinan influence on the Egyptian scholarly milieu was reinforced in the second half of the eighth century, partly in connection with Abbasid legal policy. Eager to base their legitimacy on the promotion of a legal system, the first Abbasid caliphs first turned to Medinan jurists, among whom they recruited several *qāḍī*s, before turning more resolutely to the Iraqi scholarly milieu.[84] The growing prestige of Mālik b. Anas, who attracted disciples from all over the *dār al-islām*, also played a major role in spreading his knowledge on an imperial scale. By the dawn of the ninth century Egyptian law had mainly become proto-Mālikī, before al-Shāfiʿī's followers took over.

Conclusion

During the second half of the first/seventh century a juristic milieu emerged in Fusṭāṭ, based on the teaching of the Companions and, among them, the governor ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir. This legal tradition is little known. Because of incompatibilities between this "school" and the basic principles of classical *fiqh*, its influence on the development of Islamic law was either minimal or erased from the collective memory. It was later relegated to the dustbin of history on the pretext that it dealt only with eschatological expectations. Although this view may exaggerate historical reality, the belief in the imminence of the world's end and the Last Judgment may have led the first generations of Egyptian scholars to emphasize this issue rather than rules governing the social organization of a community that was destined to disappear soon.

In the first half of the second/eighth century, under the Marwanids, Egyptian jurists still appeared relatively isolated from the intense legal discussions that were now taking place in other parts of the Middle

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[84] Tillier, *Les cadis d'Iraq et l'État abbasside*, 148–57.

East. When presenting the opinions of the main Umayyad legal circles, early Abbasid sources only give a very marginal place to Egyptian jurists, whose interactions with "foreigners" were apparently limited. Such relative isolation is, at the current state of research, difficult to explain. Could one argue that scholars' circulation in search of religious knowledge (*ṭalab al-ʿilm*) was at that time more limited than is often thought? Should we rather consider the characteristics of Fusṭāṭ's population? Mainly inhabited by Yemeni tribes originating from the south of the Arabian Peninsula, the Egyptian capital had not sheltered a large number of major Companions after its foundation, which perhaps did not make it an attractive destination for Eastern scholars. For their part, Yemeni scholars in Egypt, who had developed a distinctive culture characterized by high eschatological expectations, might have been less sensitive to religious knowledge as it was developing further east. We may finally hypothesize that population flows related to the ongoing conquests also played a role in this phenomenon. While men of Arabia, Syria, and Iraq were involved together in expeditions against territories to the north (Byzantium) and east of the *dār al-islām*, Egyptians were more likely to participate in the conquest of western territories. This may explain the existence of strong interactions among scholars originating from the former territories and the relative isolation of Egyptians. All these hypotheses remain so far speculative.

However, judicial practices reveal that legal interactions actually existed between Egypt and the rest of the empire. Procedures implemented in Fusṭāṭ and elsewhere were quite similar, Medina being closest in comparison. Egyptian law was primarily integrated into the rest of the Umayyad empire through institutions. ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz played a leading role in this process by offering an official position to Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, a local jurist from Fusṭāṭ also trained in Medinan law. By introducing elements of Medinan legal culture into Egyptian law, Ibn Abī Ḥabīb laid the foundations for a "reformed" Egyptian school, influenced by the legal tradition of Medina, in which the major Egyptian jurists of the next generation trained. This school seems therefore to have resulted from a policy of legal harmonization within the Umayyad empire. It survived into the second half of the eighth century – when its main representative, al-Layth b. Saʿd, was still discussing the relationships between local Egyptian tradition and Medinan law – before giving way to the Mālikī and Shāfiʿī schools, both inherited from Medinan legal culture.

A P P E N D I X

Table 5.1 *List of Egyptian* fuqahāʾ *who died before 200/816, mentioned as such by Ibn Yūnus*[85]

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
Qays b. al-Ḥārith al-Murādī	?	1:401–02	ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644) (Medinan)	Suwayd b. Qays b. Thaʿlaba (Egyptian)[86] **Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian)
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam al-Murādī al-Tadʾulī	44/664–65	1:314–15	Muʿādh b. Jabal (d. 18/639?) (Medinan)	
Abū Qays al-Sahmī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Thābit (*mawlā*)	54/674	1:523–24	ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/663) (Egyptian) Umm Salama (d. 59/678–79?) (Medinan)	**ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr al-Miṣrī** (Egyptian) **ʿUrwa b. Abī Qays** (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)
ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir al-Juhanī (gov.)	58/677–78	1:345–47	Prophet	ʿAbd Allāh b. Mālik al-Jayshānī (Egyptian)[87] ʿAbd al-Malik b. Malīl al-Salīḥī (Egyptian)[88] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿĀmir al-Hamdānī (Egyptian?) Kathīr b. Qulayb al-Ṣadafī (Egyptian)[89] Abū Qabīl al-Maʿāfirī (Yemen, then Egypt)[90] Jubayr b. Nufayr (Ḥimṣ) Abū ʿUshshāna Ḥayy b. Yuʾmin (Egyptian)

[85] This list is based on all the entries in which someone is said to be *faqīh* (or *min [al-]fuqahāʾ*), *muftī*, or to have been trained in *fiqh* (*tafaqqaha*). Other scholars who may also have been trained in *fiqh* but are not described as such by Ibn Yūnus are not listed here. Names of jurists recorded in this list are in **bold**.

[86] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:259.   [87] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:295.
[88] Ibn Ḥibbān, *al-Thiqāt*, ed. Sharaf al-Dīn Aḥmad, 9 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1975), 5:122.
[89] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:406.   [90] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:298.

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
				Abū Qabīl Ḥayy b. Hāniʾ al-Maʿāfirī (Egyptian) Baʿja al-Juhanī (Ḥijāz) [Abū] Saʿīd al-Maqburī (Medinan) ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (Egyptian) Abū l-Khayr Marthad al-Yazanī (Egyptian)[91]
Nāʿim b. Ujayl al-Hamdānī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	80/699–700	1:491	ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (d. 35/656) (Medinan) ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) (Medina–Kūfa) Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687–88) (Ḥijāz) Kaʿb b. ʿAdī (d. ?) (Ḥīra; came to Egypt)[92] Abū Hurayra (d. 58/678?) (Medinan) ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian)[93]	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz al-Aʿraj (Medinan origin; came to Alexandria)[94] **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)[95] al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd (Egyptian)[96] ʿUbayd Allāh b. al-Mughīra (Egyptian) Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (Egyptian)
Abū ʿAlqama al-Fārisī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	? (became a *qāḍī* of Ifrīqiya)	1:523	ʿUthmān (d. 35/656) (Medinan) Ibn Masʿūd (d. 32/652–53) (Kūfī) Abū Hurayra (d. 58/678?) (Medinan) Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (d. 64/684?) (Medinan)[97]	Yaʿlā b. ʿAṭāʾ (d. 120/738) (Wāsiṭī, originally from Ṭāʾif)[98] Sharāḥīl b. Yazīd al-Maʿāfirī (d. af. 120/738) (Egyptian)[99] Ṣāliḥ b. Abī Maryam (d. ca. 100/718–19) (Baṣrī)

[91] The last seven names are cited by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:523.
[92] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:229.
[93] The last name is given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:885.
[94] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:126; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:345.
[95] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:101; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:257. See Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 110.
[96] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:334; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:276.
[97] These four names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:193.
[98] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:342.
[99] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:229; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:274.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
				Abū l-Zubayr al-Makkī (d. 128/745–46) (Meccan) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād (d. 156/772–73) (Ifrīqī)[100]
Abū l-Najīb Ẓalīm al-ʿĀmirī	88/707	1:248	Ibn ʿUmar (d. 73/693) (Medinan) Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (d. 64/684?) (Medinan)[101]	**Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian)[102]
Marthad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazanī	90/708–09	1:467	Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (d. 52/672?) (came to Egypt)[103] Abū Baṣra al-Ghifārī (d. ?) (settled in Egypt)[104] Zayd b. Thābit (d. bt. 42/662–63 and 56/675–76) (Medinan) ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/663) (Egyptian) ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) **ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir** (d. 58/677–78) (Egyptian)	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Shimāsa (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa (Egyptian) ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar (Egyptian) ʿAyyāsh b. ʿAbbās al-Qitbānī (Egyptian)[105]
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr al-Miṣrī al-Muʾadhdhin (*mawlā*)	97 or 98/715–17	1:298–99	**ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir** (d. 58/677–78) (Egyptian) Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian)	**Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian) Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (Egyptian) ʿAbd Allāh b. Hubayra (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)

[100] The last three names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:193.
[101] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:1034.   [102] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:1034.
[103] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 2:406.
[104] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 282; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:243.
[105] The last four names are added by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:1004.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
ʿAmr b. al-Walīd b. ʿAbada al-Qurashī al-Sahmī (*mawlā*)	103/721–22	1:378	Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) Qays b. Saʿd b. ʿUbāda (d. 60/680?) (Egyptian)[106] Anas b. Mālik (d. 91–93/709–11?) (Baṣran)[107]	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)
ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Khudhāmir al-Ṣanʿānī	After 105/723–24	1:290–91		Mūsā b. Ayyūb al-Ghāfiqī (Egyptian)[108] Ghawth b. Sulaymān (Egyptian)[109]
Ḥabīb b. al-Shahīd al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	109/727–28	1:106	ʿUmar II (d. 101/720) Ḥanash [b. ʿAbd Allāh] al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 100/718–19) (Damascus–Egypt–Ifrīqiya)[110]	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa (Egyptian) Sālim b. Ghaylān (Egyptian) Sulaymān b. Abī Wahb (?)
Juʿthul b. Hāʿān al-Ruʿaynī	115/733–34	1:88–89	ʿAbd Allāh b. Mālik al-Jayshānī (d. 77/696–97) (Egyptian)	**Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian) ʿUbayd Allāh b. Zaḥr al-Ifrīqī (Ifrīqī) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād b. Anʿum (Ifrīqī)
Ḥibbān b. Abī Jabala al-Qurashī (*mawlā*)	122/739–40	1:103	ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/663) (Egyptian) Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687–88) (Ḥijāz)[111]	ʿUbayd Allāh b. Zaḥr (Ifrīqī) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād b. Anʿum (Ifrīqī) Abū Shayba ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣadafī (Egyptian)[112]

[106] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:133.   [107] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:133.
[108] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:487; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:278.
[109] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 356ff. See other references in al-Kindī, *Histoire des cadis égyptiens*, 116.
[110] These two names are provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:25.
[111] These three names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:393.
[112] These three names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:393.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (*mawlā*)	128/745–46	1:509	Sālim [b. ʿAbd Allāh] (d. 106/724–25?) (Medinan) Nāfiʿ (d. 117/735?) (Medinan) ʿIkrima (d. 105/723–24?) (Medinan; came to Egypt) ʿAṭāʾ [b. Abī Rabāḥ] (d. 114/732?) (Meccan) ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ḥārith b. Jazʾ (d. 86/705?) (Egyptian) Abū l-Ṭufayl [al-Laythī] (d. 107/725–26?) (Meccan) Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥunayn (d. af. 100/718–19) (Medinan) Saʿīd b. Abī Hind (d. ca. 105/724) (Ḥijāz) ʿIrāk b. Mālik (d. bt. 101/720 and 105/723) (Medinan) ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (d. 114/732–33?) (Egyptian)[113]	ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian) **al-Layth [b. Saʿd]** (Egyptian) **Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ** (Egyptian) **Saʿīd b. Abī Ayyūb** (Egyptian) Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb (Egyptian) Ibn Isḥāq (Medina–Egypt–Iraq)[114]
Bakr b. Sawāda b. Thumāma al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī	128/745–46	1:70–71	Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) Qays b. Saʿd b. ʿUbāda (d. 60/680?) (Egyptian)[115] Sahl b. Saʿd al-Sāʿidī (d. 91/709–10?) (Egyptian)[116]	ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian) **ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith** (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa (Egyptian) **al-Layth [b. Saʿd]** (Egyptian)

[113] The last five names are added by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:562.
[114] The last four names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:562.
[115] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:403; al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 22.
[116] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:207.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (d. 105/723–24) (Medinan) Abū Sālim al-Jayshānī (d. b. 80/699–700) (Egyptian) ʿAṭāʾ b. Yasār (d. 103/721–22?) (Medinan)[117]	
ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar Yasār (*mawlā*)[118]	129/746–47	1:263	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Waʿla (d. ?) (Egyptian)[119]	**ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith** (Egyptian) **al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)
Saʿīd b. Rabīʿa b. Ḥubaysh b. ʿUrfuṭa al-Ṣadafī	? (*qāḍī* under the caliph Hishām)	1:205		
Ḥassān b. ʿAtāhiya b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥassān b. ʿAtāhiya al-Kindī al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (gov.)[120]	133/750–51	1:115	ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114–15/732–33) (Meccan)	
ʿUmar b. al-Sāʾib b. Abī Rāshid al-Zuhrī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	134/751–52	1:365	al-Qāsim b. Qazmān (?) a son of ʿAmr b. Umayya al-Ḍamrī (?)[121]	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian) Bakr b. Muḍar (Egyptian)[122] ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian)
Khālid b. Yazīd al-Jumaḥī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	139/756–57	1:150–51		al-Mufaḍḍal b. Faḍāla (Egyptian)[123]
ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith b. Yaʿqūb b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī (*mawlā*)	148/765	1:370–71	Abū Yūnus *mawlā* of Abū Hurayra (d. 123/740–41) (Egyptian)	Mālik b. Anas (Medinan) **al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)

[117] The last three names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:378.
[118] Al-Dhahabī relates that he was head of the arsenal where warships were built: al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:442.
[119] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:297; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:260.
[120] See also his biography in al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 85–86; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, 3:273–76.
[121] These two names are provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:711.
[122] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:73; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:346.
[123] Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, 3:784.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Ibn Abī Mulayka (d. 117/735) (Meccan)	ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian)
			Abū ʿAshāna al-Maʿāfirī (d. 118/736) (Egyptian)	Bakr b. Muḍar (Egyptian)
			Qatāda (d. 117/735?) (Baṣrī)	**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)[125]
			ʿAmr b. Dīnār (d. 127/744) (Meccan)[124]	
Ziyād b. Abī Ḥumra Kaysān al-Lakhmī (*mawlā*)	bef. 150/767	1:193		**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)
				ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb (Egyptian)
Sālim b. Ghaylān al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	151 or 153/768–70	1:198	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian)	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)
			al-Walīd b. Qays al-Tujībī (d. 131/748–49) (Egyptian)	**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)
			Darrāj Abū l-Samḥ (d. 126/743–44) (Egyptian)[126]	**Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ** (Egyptian)[127]
ʿUmar b. Mālik al-Sharʿabī al-Maʿāfirī al-Miṣrī	?	1:367	ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar (d. 136/753–54?) (Egyptian)[128]	**Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ** (Egyptian)
			Khālid b. Abī ʿImrān (d. 129/746–47?) (Ifrīqī)[129]	Ḍimām b. Ismāʿīl (Egyptian)[131]
			Yazīd b. [ʿAbd Allāh b.] al-Hād (d. 139/756–57) (Medinan)	ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian)
			Ṣafwān b. Abī Sālim (?)[130]	Mughīra b. al-Ḥasan (Egyptian?)
				ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb (Egyptian)[132]

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[124] This list is provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:937.

[125] This list is provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:937.

[126] The last two names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:870.

[127] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:870.

[128] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:333; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:299.

[129] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:72; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 2:299. See Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 113.

[130] The last two names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:166.

[131] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:244; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:280.

[132] The last three names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:166.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ al-Tujībī	158/774–75	1:143	Rabīʿa b. Yazīd al-Qaṣīr (d. 123/740–41) (Damascene; died in Ifrīqiya) ʿUqba b. Muslim (d. ca. 120/738) (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian) Sulaym b. Jubayr (d. 123/740–41) (Egyptian)[133]	Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt) Abū Wahb (?) Abū ʿĀṣim (?) Al-Muqriʾ (?) ʿAbd Allāh b. Yaḥyā al-Burullusī (Egyptian)[134]
Saʿīd b. Abī Ayyūb al-Khuzāʿī (*mawlā*)	162/778–79 or 166/782–83	1:203–04	Zuhra b. Maʿbad (d. 135/752–53?) (Alexandrian) ʿUqayl [b. Khālid] al-Aylī (d. 144/761–62?) (Ayla?–Egypt) ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Maymūn (d. 143/760–61) (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa al-Kindī (d. 134/751–52?) (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian) Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian)[135]	Ibn Jurayj (Meccan) Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Muqriʾ (Baṣra–Mecca) Rawḥ b. Ṣalāḥ (Egyptian)[136]
Ibrāhīm b. Nashīṭ b. Yūsuf al-Waʿlānī (*mawlā*)	ca. 163/779–80	1:30	Nāfiʿ (d. 117/735?) (Medinan) al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) (Medinan)	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)

[133] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:44.
[134] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:44.
[135] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:373.
[136] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:373.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian)[137]	Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt)[138] Rishdīn b. Saʿd (Egyptian)[139] **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)
ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥakam al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	163/779–80	1:337–38	Muḥammad b. Zayd b. al-Muhājir b. Qunfudh (d. ?) (Medinan) Mūsā b. ʿUqba (d. 141/758–59) (Medinan)[140] ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿUmar (d. 147/764–65) (Medinan) Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Anṣārī (d. 143/760–61?) (Medinan) Yūnus [b. Yazīd] al-Aylī (d. 152/769?) (Ayla–Egypt)[141] Ibn Jurayj (d. 150/767) (Meccan)[142]	**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Saʿīd b. Abī Maryam (Egyptian)[143] Isḥāq b. al-Furāt (Egyptian) al-Layth b. ʿĀṣim al-Qitbānī (Egyptian)[144]
Sulaymān b. Abī Dāʾūd al-Ḥamrāwī al-Miṣrī al-Afṭas	168/784–85	1:219		Ibn al-Qāsim (Egyptian)[145] Idrīs b. Yaḥyā (Egyptian)[146]
ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Musayyib b. Jābir al-Fārisī (*mawlā*)	170/786–87	1:286		**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Yaḥyā b. Bukayr (Egyptian)
Saʿd b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd al-Maʿāfirī al-Iskandarānī	173/789–90	1:201	Mūsā b. ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (d. 163/779–80) (Egyptian, gov.)[147]	Ibn al-Qāsim (Egyptian) **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Ismāʿīl b. Bukayr (?)

[137] This list is provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:302.
[138] Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 7:372; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Mashāhīr ʿulamāʾ al-amṣār*, 227.
[139] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:178; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:283.
[140] "Mūsā b. ʿUḳba," in *EI²*, 7:643.   [141] See Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:261.
[142] The last three names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:453.
[143] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:204; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:346.
[144] The last two names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:453.
[145] J. Schacht, "Ibn al-Ḳāsim," in *EI²*, 3:840.   [146] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 10:165.
[147] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:488; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 7:411.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb (d. 168/784–85?) (Egyptian)[148] Abū Maʿshar al-Sindī (d. 170/787) (Medinan)[149]	Khālid b. Nizār (Ayla)[150]
al-Layth b. Saʿd (al-Imām) (*mawlā*)[151]	175/791–92	1:418–19		
ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ al-Maʿāfirī al-Labwānī (*mawlā*)	196/811–12	1:349	ʿAbd al-Muʾmin b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Hubayra al-Sabāʾī (d. ?) (Egyptian)[152] Rabīʿa b. Abī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān [al-Raʾy] (d. 136/753–54?) (Medinan)[153]	**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)

[148] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:506; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:294.
[149] The last name is added by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:624.
[150] The last two names are provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:624.
[151] The list of his masters and disciples is too long to be included in this table. Al-Dhahabī cites the following masters: ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114–15/732–33) (Meccan); Nāfiʿ (d. 117/735?) (Medinan); Ibn Abī Mulayka (d. 117/735) (Meccan); Saʿīd al-Muqriʾ, Abū l-Zubayr [Muḥammad b. Muslim] (d. 128/745–46) (Meccan); al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) (Medinan); Mishraḥ b. Hāʿān (d. ca. 120/738) (Egyptian); Abū Qabīl al-Maʿāfirī [Ḥayy b. Hāniʾ] (d. 128/745–46) (Yemen, then Egypt); **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian); Bukayr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ashajj (d. 127/744–45?) (Medina, then Egypt); Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa [al-Kindī] (d. 134/751–52?) (Egyptian); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Qāsim (d. 126/743–44) (Medinan); Darrāj Abū l-Samḥ (d. 126/743–44) (Egyptian); al-Ḥārith b. Yaʿqūb [al-Anṣārī] (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian); ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar (d. 136/753–54?) (Egyptian); ʿUqayl b. Khālid (d. 144/761–62?) (Ayla?–Egypt); Ayyūb b. Mūsā (d. 133/750–51) (Meccan); **Bakr b. Sawāda** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian); al-Julāḥ Abū Kathīr (d. 120/738) (Egyptian); al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd al-Ḥaḍramī (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian); **Khālid b. Yazīd** (d. 139/756–57) (Egyptian); Khayr b. Nuʿaym (d. 137/754–55) (Egyptian); Ṣafwān b. Salīm (d. 124/741–42) (Medinan); Abū l-Zanād [ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḏakwān] (d. 131/748–49?) (Medinan); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Qatāda (d. 117/735?) (Baṣran); Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Ḥibbān (d. 121/739) (Medinan); Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd [al-Anṣārī] (d. 143/760–61?) (Medinan); Yazīd b. [ʿAbd Allāh b.] al-Hād (d. 139/756–57) (Medinan); Muḥammad b. ʿAjlān (d. 148/765–56) (Medinan).
His main disciples are: Muḥammad b. ʿAjlān (Medinan); Ibn Lahīʿa (Egyptian); Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt); **Ibn Wahb** (Egyptian); Shabāba [b. Sawwār] (al-Madāʾin); Ḥujayn b. al-Muthannā (Yemen, then Baghdad); Saʿīd b. Abī Maryam (Egyptian); Ādam b. Abī Iyās (Marw–Baghdad–ʿAsqalān); Aḥmad b. Yūnus; **Shuʿayb b. al-Layth** (Egyptian); Yaḥyā b. Bukayr (Egyptian); Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Laythī (Cordoba); Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Tamīmī al-Khurāsānī (Khurasan–Ḥijāz–Iraq–Syria–Egypt); Abū l-Jahm al-ʿAlāʾ al-Bāhilī (Baghdadī); Qutayba b. Saʿīd (Balkh); Muḥammad b. Rumḥ (Egyptian); Yazīd b. Mawhab al-Ramlī (Ramla); Kāmil b. Ṭalḥa (Baṣra–Baghdad); ʿĪsā b. Ḥammād (Egyptian): al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 4:710.
[152] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:328.   [153] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 6:89.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Khālid b. Yazīd (d. 139/756–57) (Egyptian)	
ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb b. Muslim al-Qurashī (*mawlā*)[154]	197/812–13	1:289		
Shuʿayb b. al-Layth b. Saʿd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Fahmī (*mawlā*)	199/814–15	1:236	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (d. 175/791–92) (Egyptian) Mūsā b. ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (d. 163/779–80) (Egyptian, gov.)	ʿAbd al-Malik b. Shuʿayb (Egyptian)[155] Yūnus b. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā (Egyptian)[156] al-Rabīʿ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (Egyptian)[157] Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (Egyptian)[158]
al-Ḥakam b. Ṣāliḥ al-Miṣrī	201/816–17	1:135		Abū Yaḥyā al-Waqār (Egyptian)[159]

NB: Unless another reference is given, death dates and regional identifications rely on the information provided by al-Dhahabī in *Taʾrīkh al-islām*.

[154] Al-Dhahabī cites the following masters: Yūnus b. Yazīd (d. 159/775–76) (Ayla); Ibn Jurayj (d. 150/767) (Meccan); Ḥayy b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʿāfirī (d.?) (Egyptian?); Ḥanẓala b. Abī Sufyān (d. 151/768) (Meccan); **ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith** (d. 148/765–66) (Egyptian); Usāma b. Zayd al-Laythī (d. 153/770) (Medinan); ʿUmar b. Muḥammad al-ʿUmarī (d. 150/767–68) (Medina–ʿAsqalān); ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Jaʿfar (d. 153/770) (Medinan); Abū Ṣakhr Ḥamīd b. Ziyād (d.?) (Egyptian); ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿĀmir al-Aslamī (d. 150/767–68?) (Medinan); Mūsā b. ʿAlī [al-Lakhmī] (d. 163/779–80) (Egyptian); **al-Layth [b. Saʿd]** (d. 175/791–92) (Egyptian); Mālik [b. Anas] (d. 179/795) (Medinan). His main disciples are : **al-Layth b. Saʿd** (d. 175/791–92) (Egyptian); Aṣbagh b. al-Faraj (Egyptian); Abū Ṣāliḥ; Aḥmad b. Ṣāliḥ (Egyptian); Ḥarmala [b. Yaḥyā] (Egyptian); al-Ḥārith b. Miskīn (Egyptian); Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb al-Maqābirī (Baghdādī); Baḥr b. Naṣr al-Khawlānī (Egyptian); al-Rabīʿ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (Egyptian); Yūnus b. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā (Egyptian); Abū Ṭāhir b. al-Sarḥ (Egyptian); ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Rumḥ (Egyptian); ʿAlī b. Khashram (Khurasan); ʿAmr b. Sawwād (Egyptian); ʿĪsā b. Mathrūd (Egyptian); Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (Egyptian); Hārūn b. Saʿīd al-Aylī (Egyptian); ʿAbd al-Malik b. Shuʿayb b. al-Layth (Egyptian); ʿĪsā b. Aḥmad al-ʿAsqalānī (Baghdad–Balkh); Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Tustarī (Egyptian); Ibrāhīm b. Munqidh al-Khawlānī (Egyptian); Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd al-Qayrawānī (Ifrīqī); Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Wahb (Egyptian): al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 4:143.
[155] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:325; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:308.
[156] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:505; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:309.
[157] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:170; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:348.
[158] F. Rosenthal, "Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam," in *EI²*, 3:696.
[159] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:187; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:448.

Table 5.2 *Foreign* fuqahāʾ *dead before 200/816 who visited Egypt or settled there, mentioned by Ibn Yūnus*

Name	Date of death	Origin	Reference in Ibn Yūnus
ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām	93/711–12	Medina (stayed seven years in Egypt)	2:147
Muḥammad b. Aws al-Anṣārī	?	? (became admiral of the Ifrīqī fleet in 93/711–12)	2:194
ʿUrwa b. Abī Qays, *mawlā* of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ	ca. 110/728–29 (classified as foreigner; however, son of Egyptian Abū Qays al-Sahmī)		2:147
Makḥūl al-Shāmī	ca. 118/736	Freed slave, perhaps of Egyptian or Persian origin. He settled in Syria.	2:236
Khālid b. Abī ʿImrān al-Tujībī al-Tūnisī	125/742–43 or 129/746–47	Ifrīqiya (*faqīh* of the *ahl al-Maghrib*)	2:72–73
Ismāʿīl b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī l-Muhājir	131/748–49	Damascus; sent to al-Qayrawān by ʿUmar II	2:37
ʿAbd al-Aʿlā b. al-Samḥ b. ʿUbayd b. Ḥarmala, Abū l-Khaṭṭāb al-Maʿāfirī	144/761–62	(Khārijī *faqīh*, then Ibadi; he proclaimed a caliphate in the Maghreb)	2:109
Ṭulayb/ʿAbd Allāh b. Kāmil al-Lakhmī	173/789–90	al-Andalus (lived some time in Alexandria)	2:106
al-Hudhayl b. Muslim al-Tamīmī	189/804–5		2:247
Ziyād b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād "Ziyād Shabṭūn"	193/808–09 or 199/814–15	al-Andalus (introduced Mālikism in this province)	2:86–87

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Local Tradition and Imperial Legal Policy under the Umayyads: The Evolution of the Early Egyptian School of Law

Mathieu Tillier

The community of Egyptian jurists is best known from the second half of the eighth century, under the first Abbasids onwards, when their interactions with other provinces increased. The community's most famous scholar, al-Layth b. Saʿd (d. 175/791), an early Abbasid jurist, maintained a correspondence with his alter ego in Medina, Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), with whom he debated legal doctrine. However, Egyptian jurists before 132/750 have been little studied.[1] Joseph Schacht maintains that Egypt did not develop any original school of law, and that its jurists followed the Medinan legal tradition. His conclusions, however, are not based on any in-depth study of the Egyptian milieu during the Umayyad period, but rather on the later writings of al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/820).[2] Yet, as I have shown in a previous study, al-Layth b. Saʿd both proclaimed his respect for the Medinan legal school and supported an autonomous Egyptian legal tradition, based on the jurisprudence of Companions who had taken part in the conquest of the province.[3] This

[1] See one of the few extant lists, established from al-Shīrāzī, in H. Motzki, "The Role of Non-Arab Converts in the Development of Early Islamic Law," *Islamic Law and Society* 6 (1999), 293–317, at 303.
[2] J. Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), 9; J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982 [1964]), 35.
[3] M. Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis de Fusṭāṭ et les dynamiques régionales de l'innovation judiciaire (750–833)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 214–42, at 217–18. The term "school" is the usual translation of the Arabic *madhhab*. This term originally referred to the opinion or set of opinions that a jurist "followed." Etymologically, it belongs to the same semantic field of the normative

suggests that Egypt followed an original legal tradition during the Umayyad and the early Abbasid periods, a tradition that was challenged, then replaced, by other schools – most significantly those of Mālik, then al-Shāfiʿī, in the first half of the third/ninth century.

Our lack of knowledge of jurisprudence in Umayyad Egypt is partly due to historiographical reconstructions that took place during the Abbasid period. Perhaps because Egypt quickly adhered to "personal" schools of law related to the Medinan tradition (Mālikism and Shāfiʿism), most legal sources leave no room for Egyptian jurists before al-Layth b. Saʿd. We therefore ignore most early Egyptian legal doctrines and practices.[4] However, a close reading of a fourth/tenth-century text allows us to lift a corner of the veil that conceals the Umayyad history of the Egyptian legal milieu. The historian Ibn Yūnus al-Ṣadafī al-Miṣrī (d. 347/958) wrote a biographical work about the most important Egyptian figures of the early Islamic centuries. The book itself has disappeared, but many quotations preserved by later authors allowed ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Fathī ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ to propose a hypothetical reconstruction that is the main basis for the present study.[5] Moreover, Ibn Yūnus's contemporary Abū ʿUmar al-Kindī (d. ca. 350/961) wrote a history of Egyptian judges, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, opening a window onto Fusṭāṭ's legal and judicial circles.[6] To

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"path" as *sharīʿa*. The term came to designate the "path," the "trend" followed by a series of jurists, characterized by their adhesion to a common tradition in spite of their individual differences. The use of the expression "schools of law" to refer to pre-classical legal trends, as well as their regional nature, has been the subject of controversy over the past two decades, particularly involving Nimrod Hurvitz ("Schools of Law and Historical Context: Re-Examining the Formation of the Ḥanbalī Madhhab," *Islamic Law and Society* 7 [2000], 37–64), Wael Hallaq ("From Regional to Personal Schools of Law? A Reevaluation," *Islamic Law and Society* 8 [2001], 1–26), and Christopher Melchert ("Traditionist-Jurisprudents and the Framing of Islamic Law," *Islamic Law and Society* 8 [2001], 383–406, at 400). See also S. C. Judd, "al-Awzāʿī and Sufyān al-Thawrī: The Umayyad Madhhab?" in *The Islamic School of Law: Evolution, Devolution, and Progress*, ed. P. Bearman, R. Peters, and F. E. Vogel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 10–25, at 13, in which the author argues that some jurists' mobility makes it difficult to attach them to any region. My own conclusion is that regional trends indeed existed in the eighth century CE. See M. Tillier, *Les cadis d'Iraq et l'État abbasside (132/750–334/945)* (Damascus: Ifpo, 2009), 138–43.

[4]   J. E. Brockopp, one of the rare scholars who wrote about the formation of an Egyptian school, only devotes two pages to its history before 775 CE. He mainly highlights the role of Alexandria as a place of transmission of knowledge during the early period. See J. E. Brockopp, "The Formation of Islamic Law: The Egyptian School (750–900)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 123–40, at 130–31.

[5]   Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Miṣrī*, ed. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Fathī ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2000).

[6]   Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, in *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 299–476; French trans. M. Tillier in al-Kindī, *Histoire des cadis égyptiens* (Cairo: IFAO, 2012).

understand the peculiarities of Egyptian legal circles during the Umayyad period, I will first offer a preliminary study of the relationships between its local jurists and other regional normative systems within the Islamic empire. Second, I will argue that the evolution of the Egyptian "school" is intimately related to imperial Umayyad policy.

Egyptian Law under the Umayyads, between Theory and Practice

The Early Egyptian Legal Milieu

A few mentions of *fuqahā*ʾ or *muftī*s by Ibn Yūnus attest to the existence of an early Islamic Egyptian legal milieu. Several characters who settled in Fusṭāṭ following the conquest reportedly transmitted *ḥadīth* from important Companions of the Prophet, such as ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, Muʿādh b. Jabal, and Umm Salama.[7] According to Ibn Yūnus, the caliph ʿUmar ordered ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, the conqueror and first governor of the province, to move ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam closer to the mosque, so that he could teach the Qurʾān and *fiqh* there.[8] Qays b. al-Ḥārith al-Murādī, who arrived from Yemen during the conquest, similarly "learnt *fiqh* (*tafaqqaha*) so that he could give legal opinions in his time (*yuftī fī zamāni-hi*)."[9] It is unclear whether the term *fiqh* was actually used at that time. Qays b. al-Ḥārith's example suggests, however, that such people were recognized as the bearers of a special kind of knowledge that allowed them to provide some sort of legal or religious advice.

The Egyptian tradition, however, assigns a substantial role in the formation of a legal milieu to a particular Companion: ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir (d. 58/677–78). He is best known for having participated in the conquest of Egypt, and became its governor from 44/665 to 47/667, under the caliph Muʿāwiya.[10]

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[7] See the appendix at the end of the chapter.

[8] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:315. A close supporter of ʿAlī at the beginning of the *fitna*, Ibn Muljam (d. 40/661) turned against him along with other Khārijīs after the battle of Ṣiffīn, and murdered him in 40/661. On ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam see also al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Yaʿlāwī, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1991), 4:62–9; L. Veccia Vaglieri, "Ibn Muldjam," in *EI*², s.v.

[9] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:401.

[10] Al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr wa-wulāti-hā*, in *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 6–298, at 36–38; Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:347; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara fī taʾrīkh Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Abū l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 2 vols. (Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya/ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1967), 1:220. On ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir see also Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar, 11 vols. (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 2001), 5:261; Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1993), 531; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbāru-hā*, ed. C. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 294; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. ʿUmar b. Gharāma al-ʿAmrawī, 80 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 40:486; Ibn al-Athīr,

Ibn Yūnus considered ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir a leading expert in law and the author of a local recension of the Qurʾān, which remained authoritative in Egypt for some time, perhaps until around 76/695–96, when the governor ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān (in office 65–86/685–705) ordered a new codex to be compiled.[11] Among the early jurists that Ibn Yūnus identifies, ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir is the only one who supposedly reported directly from the Prophet, which may have given him a special authority. Indeed, al-Dhahabī later refers to him as "the Imām."[12] He apparently played an important role in training the second generation of Egyptian jurists. Among others, he taught Marthad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazanī (d. 90/709), who became a close advisor of the governor ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān at the turn of the second/eighth century, and issued "fatwas" during official hearings.[13] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr (d. 97 or 98/715–16 or 716–17), another early "jurist" identified by Ibn Yūnus, reportedly transmitted the knowledge of the same ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir.[14] According to al-Kindī, the *qāḍī* ʿĀbis b. Saʿīd (in office 60–68/679–80–687–88) also owed his legal training to ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir.[15] These few names reveal the existence, in the last quarter of the seventh century, of a small group of jurists surrounding the governor, rooted in the local community of Fusṭāṭ. They followed the legal expertise of ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir, one of the first governors serving the Sufyanid caliphate, whose knowledge and recension of the Qurʾān were authoritative.[16]

This Egyptian tradition continued into the second/eighth century. Ibn Yūnus's biographies of jurists are not detailed enough to precisely reconstruct the legal circles that developed from the first/seventh-century kernel.

Usd al-ghāba fī maʿrifat al-ṣaḥāba, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʿawwaḍ and ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd-al-Mawjūd, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, n.d.), 4:51; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd-al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʿawwaḍ, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1995), 4: 429. See R. G. Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa (97–174/715–790): Juge et grand maître de l'école égyptienne* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986), 96–97; Khayr al-Dīn al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām: qāmūs tarājim li-ashhar al-rijāl wa-l-nisāʾ min al-ʿarab wa-l-mustaʿribīn wa-l-mustashriqīn*, 12th ed., 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm li-l-Malāyīn, 1997), 4:240.

[11] Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 117–18. Cf. Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Juzʾ al-rābiʿ min Kitāb al-Intiṣār* (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kubrā al-Amīriyya, 1309 H), 72–73; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, 5 vols. (London: Muʾassasat al-Furqān li-l-Turāth al-Islāmī, 2002–3), 4/1:130–31; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Rafʿ al-iṣr ʿan quḍāt Miṣr*, ed. ʿAlī Muḥammad ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1998), 215.

[12] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:468; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnaʾūṭ and Muḥammad Nuʿaym al-ʿAraqsūsī. 23 vols. (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1413 H), 2:467. Cf. Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 287–94.

[13] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:347, 468; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 4:285.

[14] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:298–99. On this character see Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 99.

[15] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 313.

[16] On ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir see M. Tillier, "Une tradition coranique égyptienne? Le codex de ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir al-Ǧuhanī," *Studia Islamica* 117 (2022), 38–63.

However, he provides some information about transmission of *ḥadīth*, following the trend of the biographical literature of his time. What *ḥadīth* was at the turn of the second/eighth century is also unclear, and such information is probably reconstructed from *isnād*s – the authenticity of which may be questioned. Even if one might suspect a later reconstitution of the *isnād*s as part of the process of creating formal *ḥadīth*s, they could only appear credible if they followed historically realistic lines of transmission. This suggests that these transmission channels may reflect some historical transfers of knowledge and contacts between Egyptian scholars. Taken as such, Ibn Yūnus's text shows that, until the first two decades of the eighth century CE, an Egyptian tradition mainly rooted in the teaching of the Companions who settled in Fusṭāṭ (ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, and his son ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr) and their Egyptian followers continued. This legal tradition, whose main representatives are ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr and Bakr b. Sawāda (d. 128/745–46),[17] reached its climax with al-Layth b. Saʿd, who appeared as the main representative of the Egyptian "school" of law in the second half of the second/eighth century (see Figure 5.1).

Al-Layth b. Saʿd clearly refers to this milieu in his letter to Mālik, when he insists on the local origin of the legal traditions he upholds, arguing that they go back to the teaching of Companions who settled in Fusṭāṭ after the conquest.[18] This local legal current apparently grew weaker during the second half of the second/eighth century, when Mālik's teaching gradually replaced it.[19] Al-Layth b. Saʿd was probably one of the last defenders of this local Egyptian tradition. His legal doctrine continued to be distinguished from that of Mālik. In the early fourth/tenth century the Ḥanafī Egyptian jurist al-Ṭaḥāwī (d. 321/933) still regularly cited him in his book, *Mukhtaṣar ikhtilāf al-ʿulamāʾ* (*A Concise Treaty of Disagreements among Jurists*), alongside the main representatives of other early regional "schools," such as Ibn Abī Laylā (d. 148/765) and Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778) in Kūfa. In his opinion, al-Layth b. Saʿd still represented an important "school" – although it had disappeared by his time and non-Egyptian jurists did not bother to mention it.

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[17] See Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 91, 99.
[18] Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Maʿīn (riwāyat al-Dūrī)*, ed. Aḥmad Muḥammad Nūr Sayf, 4 vols. (Mecca: Markaz al-Baḥth al-ʿIlmī wa-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1979), 4:487–90; al-Fasawī, *Kitāb al-Maʿrifa wa-l-taʾrīkh*, ed. Akram Ḍiyāʾ al-ʿUmarī, 3 vols. (n.p.: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1981), 1:689–90.
[19] I have shown in a previous study that in the early Abbasid period the *qāḍī*s of Fusṭāṭ followed procedures similar to those prescribed by Medinan jurists (Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis," 216).

Figure 5.1 Transmission of knowledge among Egyptian *fuqahāʾ*

Were Egyptian Jurists Isolated?

This local legal "school," mostly visible in the last quarter of the first/seventh century and the early second/eighth, was progressively replaced under the Abbasids by the personal schools of Mālik b. Anas, then of al-Shāfiʿī (if we follow Schacht's classification). This suggests that, sometime in the Marwanid period, external legal circles, especially from Medina, to whose legal tradition Mālik belonged, influenced Egypt. We need therefore to examine the integration of Egyptian jurists in the legal effervescence that characterized other provinces (especially the Ḥijāz, Iraq, and Syria) in the first half of the second/eighth century.

1 A First Approach: Citations of Egyptian Jurists in Early Ninth-Century *Muṣannaf*s

The best witnesses to this busy legal activity come from the first collections of traditions sorted by legal categories. The *Muṣannaf*s of ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 211/827) and Ibn Abī Shayba (d. 235/849) offer an exceptional image of regional legal divergences during the Umayyad period. These two ancient tradition collections report almost systematically the opinions and sayings attributed to the early jurists of Kūfa (such as Ibn Shubruma and Ibn Abī Laylā), Baṣra (such as Ibn Sīrīn), Medina, Mecca, and Syria (Makḥūl). These books thus reveal what their two authors, a Yemeni and an Iraqi, knew at the beginning of the third/ninth century about legal disagreements in Marwanid times. A systematic search for citations of Egyptian jurists identified as such by Ibn Yūnus in both *Muṣannaf*s (see Table 5.1) allows us to assess the degree to which the Egyptian legal school of the Umayyad period was known outside Egypt a few decades later.[20]

Egyptian jurists	Citations in both *Muṣannaf*s
Marthad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazanī (d. 90/709)	12
Ḥabīb b. al-Shahīd al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (d. 109/727–28)	16
[Ḥibbān?] b. Abī Jabala al-Qurashī (d. 122/740)	1
Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128/745–46)	71
Bakr b. Sawāda b. Thumāma al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī (d. 128/745–46)	5
ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar Yasār (d. 129/746–47)	1
Saʿīd b. Abī Ayyūb al-Khuzāʿī (d. 162 or 166/778–79 or 782–83)	25
Ibrāhīm b. Nashīṭ b. Yūsuf al-Waʿlānī (d. ca. 163/779–80)	1
ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥakam al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī (d. 163/779–80)	2
Sulaymān b. Abī Dāʾūd al-Ḥamrāwī al-Miṣrī (d. 168/784–85)	1
ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (d. 174/790)	21
al-Layth b. Saʿd (d. 175/791)	2[21]
Total	158

[20] The following assessment is based on a count in the electronic versions of both works in the database *al-Maktaba al-shāmila*, version 3.48 (http://shamela.ws/). I added ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa to the list, although he does not appear as a *faqīh* in Ibn Yūnus's work, for the sake of comparison. Ibn Lahīʿa appears indeed to be one of the most important second/eighth-century Egyptian scholars.

[21] It is possible to add to this figure the four occurrences of the phrase *ʿan al-Layth*, although we cannot ascertain that it refers to al-Layth b. Saʿd. At any rate, they do not introduce any opinion attributed to the Egyptian master.

In most instances these Egyptian jurists appear in chains of transmitters, and their own legal opinions are not quoted. Their marginal presence in the two *Muṣannaf*s becomes evident when comparing these figures with citations of a few leading Iraqi, Syrian, and Medinan jurists of the same period:

Other jurists	Citations in both *Muṣannaf*s
Ibn Abī Laylā (Kūfa)	670
Ibn Sīrīn (Baṣra)	1530
Makḥūl (Damascus)	480
Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (Medina)	823
Total	**3,503**

These figures suggest that Egyptian jurists from the Umayyad and early Abbasid periods were barely known in Iraq and Arabia in the early third/ ninth century. Even al-Layth b. Saʿd, although he is considered the most important Egyptian jurist of the early Abbasid period, is totally neglected by Ibn Abī Shayba, and he is not even mentioned by ʿAbd al-Razzāq. How can we interpret such ignorance of Egyptian legal tradition? The most likely answer is that these Egyptian jurists were only known locally, and had minimal interactions with jurists from other provinces. The major late eighth-century legal debates mainly involved Iraqis and Medinans. Syrian jurists were rapidly marginalized, but their opinions left important traces, mainly in the teaching of al-Awzāʿī (d. 157/774). As for the Egyptians, most Eastern jurists perhaps did not even know of them.

Such lack of mutual awareness between local and non-Egyptian scholarship is confirmed in Egypt's first *ḥadīth* works. In the earliest known Egyptian collection, the papyrus scroll of ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (d. 174/790) (probably early ninth century), almost all the transmitters who can be identified lived in Egypt.[22] The *Jāmiʿ* of Ibn Wahb (d. 197/812) may contradict this conclusion, for the author cites Iraqi and Medinan/ Yemeni scholars from the Umayyad period.[23] It is worth remembering, however, that Ibn Wahb traveled to Medina, where he followed Mālik's

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[22] See the biographies of transmitters established by Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 90–117.

[23] As for Iraqi jurists, he cites, for example, Muḥammad b. Sīrīn (Ibn Wahb, *al-Jāmiʿ fī l-ḥadīth*, ed. Muṣṭafā Ḥasan Ḥusayn Muḥammad Abū l-Khayr, 2 vols. [Riyadh: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1996], 1:104, 177, 393, 414, 452, 532); al-Shaʿbī (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:170, 185, 186); Ibn Abī Laylā (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*,

teaching closely, before returning to Egypt.[24] Close attention to *isnād*s reveals furthermore that the Umayyad-period transmitters were not Egyptians. Egyptian transmitters only occur in the Abbasid period, which suggests that they learned these traditions from Eastern scholars with whom they interacted after the revolution.[25]

2   A Prosopographical Approach: Lists of Masters and Disciples

Other data provided by Ibn Yūnus point to the few interactions between Egyptians and other jurists. In his (reconstructed) volume dedicated to "foreigners" (*ghurabāʾ*) who spent time in Egypt, few scholars belonging to the Umayyad period are labeled *faqīh*. The main one is ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr (d. 93/711–12?), one of the "seven jurists" of Medina, who may have spent seven years in Fusṭāṭ.[26] However, Gregor Schoeler has doubts regarding the reliability of this information, which is also transmitted by al-Balādhurī.[27] Among the few others are a jurist from Ifrīqiya and the Khārijī Imām Abū l-Khaṭṭāb (d. 144/761), who stopped in Fusṭāṭ on his way to central Maghreb at the beginning of the Abbasid period.[28] However, the data provided by Ibn Yūnus are certainly incomplete, and we can assume that other legally trained "foreigners" traveled to Fusṭāṭ, notwithstanding the fact that Egyptian jurists may have traveled to other regions of the empire. It is therefore necessary to examine available biographical data for Egyptian jurists more carefully.

Ibn Yūnus gives short lists of teachers and disciples for each of these jurists. Later authors, such as al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1348) and al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), offer more exhaustive lists. These later lists raise an even more delicate problem of interpretation than that of Ibn Yūnus, as they were probably drawn up on the basis of a systematic census of names appearing in *isnād*s. They reflect above all the transmission channels of *ḥadīth*, and not the teaching of *fiqh* itself. Here again, we consider these lists as reflecting plausible interactions between scholars during the Umayyad period. In order to better

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1:174, 534). Cf. G. H. A. Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Ḥadīth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 44.

[24] J. David-Weill, "Ibn Wahb," in *EI²*, 3:987; Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 123.

[25] The transmission of Ibn Sīrīn's opinions goes several times via the Baṣran ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAwn (d. 151/768) (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:104, 177, 2:414); Ibn Wahb's knowledge of al-Shaʿbī comes either from anonymous transmitters (Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:170, 186) or from the Kūfan scholar ʿĪsā b. Abī ʿĪsā (d. ca. 151/768: see al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf, 15 vols. [Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2003], 4: 179; Ibn Wahb, *Jāmiʿ*, 1:185).

[26] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:147.   [27] G. Schoeler, "ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr," in *EI²*, 10:983.

[28] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:109.

understand the image of such interactions, we have identified the masters and disciples of jurists categorized as such by Ibn Yūnus, adding to his short lists the data provided by al-Dhahabī and al-Suyūṭī, and have classified these masters and disciples by twenty-five-year increments according to the province with which they are most associated.[29] We consider here the number of teachers and disciples in absolute value: if the same master/disciple is repeated several times in the same period, we count these repetitions.

According to these sources, we should note first that hardly any Egyptian jurist who died before 725 had a master from the east of the empire (Graph 5.1). The only "masters" outside Egypt come from the Ḥijāz (i.e., here, Medina). These are more numerous than Egyptian masters, for the good reason that they were Companions of the Prophet, whom our Egyptian jurists probably met before they settled in Egypt. Up until that date, interactions with non-Egyptian disciples appear almost non-existent (Graph 5.2).

The data available regarding jurists active at the end of the Umayyad period suggest at first sight that there was a strong influx of Ḥijāzī masters (Graph 5.1). However, it should be noted that, among the twelve Ḥijāzī masters of jurists who died between 726 and 750, eleven taught a single person, Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, to whom we will return in more detail. With the exception of this jurist, the number of Egyptian masters remained much higher than those from other provinces. Similarly, these jurists'

Graph 5.1 Geographical origin of masters (death dates of Egyptian jurists)

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[29] The last period (801–16) has only fifteen years, however, and the corresponding parts of graphs 5.1 and 5.2 must therefore be corrected upward.

disciples were still predominantly Egyptians (Graph 5.2). Very few Ḥijāzīs and Iraqis seem to have studied with them. However, a significantly higher number of scholars associated with Ifrīqiya studied with them, probably before settling in this province of the Muslim West.

It was not until the generation of jurists who died in the last quarter of the second/eighth century that a shift occurred. A majority of masters belonging to this generation were still Egyptians; however, they were now closely competing with the Ḥijāzīs, a phenomenon that seems to have continued after 800 (Graph 5.1). These Egyptian jurists, active in the second half of the second/eighth century, transmitted the teaching they received from the great Ḥijāzī masters of the first half of the second/ eighth century or the first two decades of the Abbasid period (Graph 5.3).

Graph 5.2 Geographical origin of students (death dates of Egyptian jurists)

Graph 5.3 Number of individual masters who transmitted to Egyptian jurists (death dates of the masters)

At the same time, the geographical origin of their disciples was diversifying, with an increasing number of scholars associated with the eastern part of the empire, particularly Khurasan. Nevertheless, the majority of these jurists' students were still Egyptians (Graph 5.2).

These prosopographical data thus also provide an image of a fairly closed Egyptian legal milieu during most of the Umayyad period. With the exception of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, Egyptian jurists of the period had almost no masters from outside their province and, with the exception of a few Ifrīqiyans, they trained only a very limited number of disciples, who then moved to other parts of the empire. Nevertheless, according to late prosopographical data, Ḥijāzī masters were not unknown in Egypt: Egyptian jurists active in the second half of the second/eighth century seem to have often studied with them (among others) when they were young, which had a strong impact on the diffusion of Medinan knowledge in Egypt during the early decades of the Abbasid period. However, these data should be taken with caution: the rise in authority of Medinan scholars in the early Abbasid era, in connection with the emergence of a proto-Mālikī school, might have led some Egyptians to claim that they had studied with Ḥijāzī masters whom they had never actually met, or encouraged the invention of isnāds going back to them.

Egyptian Legal Practices Compared to Other Regional Procedures

Examining the role of Fusṭāṭ's qāḍīs in transmitting ḥadīth, Gauthier Juynboll concludes that "the requirements for the office were not high," meaning that most had limited legal skills.[30] Moreover, Ibn Yūnus includes no Umayyad-era qāḍī from Fusṭāṭ on his list of qualified Egyptian fuqahāʾ. Expertise in fiqh was probably not the most important criterion in selecting Fusṭāṭ's judges. The latter usually belonged to the major Arab tribes of Fusṭāṭ, which suggests that their status as members of the ruling elite was regarded as the most important condition. On the other hand, twenty-two out of the thirty-seven Egyptian jurists that Ibn Yūnus identifies in his book were mawālī (more than 59 percent), and could not reasonably expect to be appointed as qāḍīs – their judicial careers were limited to the role of scribe.[31] This does not necessarily mean

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[30] Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, 83.
[31] M. Tillier, "Scribes et enquêteurs: note sur le personnel judiciaire en Égypte aux quatre premiers siècles de l'hégire," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54 (2011), 370–404, at 391–97.

that Fusṭāṭ's judges had no legal training, or that they were detached from the legal thought developed in their province. It is therefore necessary to consider how court procedure in Fusṭāṭ can be correlated with that in other provinces.

Procedural law was the subject of debates between Eastern jurists (especially Iraqi and Medinan ones) in the first half of the eighth century. A comparison between Egyptian and Eastern judicial practices may therefore represent a significant indicator of the legal integration of Egypt into the Umayyad empire. Information al-Kindī provides allows comparisons with major Middle Eastern cities.

Procedures in Fusṭāṭ	Medina	Baṣra	Kūfa	Damascus
The litigant who produces the higher number of witnesses wins the lawsuit[32] (69–83/688–89–702)	X[33]	X[34]		X[35]
The judge draws lots when litigants produce the same number of witnesses[36] (69–83/ 688–89–702)	X[37]			
Evidence based on one single witness + the claimant's oath[38] (115–20/733–38)	X[39]	X[40]		X[41]
The testimony of *ashrāf* is rejected[42] (115–20/733–38)				
A man who denied his divorced wife a compensatory gift cannot testify[43] (115–20/733–38)				

[32] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 318.

[33] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf ʿAbd al-Razzāq*, ed. Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Aʿẓamī, 12 vols. (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1983), 8:279–80; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, ed. Ḥamad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Jumʿa and Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Luḥaydān, 16 vols. (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2004), 7:411; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 11 vols. (Cairo: Idārat al-Ṭibāʿa al-Munīriyya, 1352 H), 9:438.

[34] Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:359; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī, 3 vols. (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿāda, 1947–50), 1:304; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:438.

[35] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:280–81; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:438.

[36] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 318.

[37] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:279–80; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:411.

[38] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 344–45.

[39] Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 1:113, 118, 140, 3:87. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:404.

[40] Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 1:331, 340, 2:12. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:404.

[41] Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 22:210–12, 62:230.

[42] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 345–46.   [43] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 344.

(cont.)

Procedures in Fusṭāṭ	Medina	Baṣra	Kūfa	Damascus
The testimony of children is accepted in case of injury[44] (120–27/738–45)	X[45]	X[46]	X[47]	
The testimony of a litigant's brother is accepted[48] (120–27/738–45)	X[49]	X[50]	X[51]	No[52]
A Christian may testify against a Christian, a Jew against a Jew[53] (120–27/738–45)	X[54]		X[55]	

Except for two cases of witness disqualification that seem specific to Egypt, without any equivalent in other provinces, the same basic rules regarding testimony, and probably oaths as well, were simultaneously implemented in other parts of the empire. According to Table 5.3, judicial practices in Fusṭāṭ came closest to Medinan standards. An archaic procedure of judging in favor of the litigant who produced the higher number of witnesses was also accepted in Damascus and Baṣra. After Medina, Fusṭāṭ shared several particular rules with Baṣra and, to a lesser extent, with judges in Kūfa toward the end of the Umayyad period.

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[44] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 351. [45] Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:420–21.

[46] Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:334; al-Ṭaḥāwī and al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Mukhtaṣar ikhtilāf al-ʿulamāʾ*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Nadhīr Aḥmad, 5 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Bashāʾir al-Islāmiyya, 1995), 3:337.

[47] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:349–50; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:335; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 2:270, 308, 313; Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:420–21; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *al-Ṭuruq al-ḥukmiyya fī l-siyāsat al-sharʿiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥāmid al-Faqī (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 1953), 171.

[48] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 351.

[49] Mecca followed the same rule. See ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:343–44; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:477–78; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 1:169, 2:252.

[50] ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:343–44; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:477–78.

[51] Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 2:252.

[52] It is said that the Syrian scholar al-Awzāʿī refused this procedure: al-Ṭaḥāwī and al-Jaṣṣāṣ, *Mukhtaṣar ikhtilāf al-ʿulamāʾ*, 3:372.

[53] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 351.

[54] In Medina, al-Zuhrī appears sometimes as favorable, sometimes hostile to the testimony of non-Muslims. See ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:357; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:694.

[55] Traditions also depict al-Shaʿbī as holding contradictory opinions. See ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:357; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:693, 694; Wakīʿ, *Akhbār al-quḍāt*, 2:415. However, it seems that scholars of the first half of the eighth century (both in Iraq and the Ḥijāz), whether or not they accepted transconfessionnal testimony, all allowed the testimony of non-Muslims for or against members of their own religious community: ʿAbd al-Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī, *Muṣannaf*, 8:356–59; Ibn Abī Shayba, *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:692–96. Cf. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Muḥallā*, 9:410; Schacht, *Origins*, 210.

These indications raise a question regarding our previous conclusions about Fusṭāṭ's isolation from the rest of the empire. Judicial practices in Umayyad Fusṭāṭ match those of other provinces. It is yet to be determined how such similarities came about. Are these parallel developments unrelated to each other, from a common background dating back to the early decades of Islam and for which we have virtually no information? Alternatively, can we argue that these judicial practices developed simultaneously, due to other types of interaction between provinces?

Several clues suggest that Egyptian judicial practices resulted from interactions with other provincial traditions.[56] A procedure called *al-yamīn maʿa al-shāhid* (evidence constituted of a single witness plus the claimant's oath) was used in Fusṭāṭ during the last decade of Umayyad rule. In his letter to Mālik b. Anas, al-Layth b. Saʿd rejected this procedure, arguing that it had a Medinan origin, while Egypt had its own tradition, inherited from the Companions who settled in Fusṭāṭ.[57] A passage from al-Kindī confirms that the emerging authority of Medinan practice was not accepted in Fusṭāṭ without assessing its relevance to local traditions. In the early Abbasid period the *qāḍī* ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa reported that the Medinan jurist Ibn al-Shihāb Zuhrī (d. 124/742) accepted the testimony of a single witness, provided that he also transmitted the statement of a second (absent) witness. According to Ibn Lahīʿa, this opinion was consistent with the practice of most Umayyad period Egyptian *qāḍī*s.[58] Ibn Lahīʿa had heard it from the Egyptian traditionist Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128/745–46), which suggests that al-Zuhrī's opinions were known in Egypt during the Umayyad period. However, it remains unclear whether the practice of Egyptian *qāḍī*s matched al-Zuhrī's views because they regarded him as authoritative or for other reasons. Ibn Lahīʿa declares that he

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[56] See, e.g., al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 350–51.

[57] Yaḥyā b. Maʿīn, *Taʾrīkh*, 4:491; al-Fasawī, *Kitāb al-Maʿrifa wa-l-taʾrīkh*, 1:691; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Iʿlām al-muwaqqiʿīn ʿan rabb al-ʿālamīn*, 5 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1991), 3:71. Melchert believes that this procedure appeared in Baṣra, and that its Medinan origin is but a rear projection (Christopher Melchert, "The History of the Judicial Oath in Islamic Law," in *Oralité et lien social au Moyen Âge [Occident, Byzance, Islam]: parole donnée, foi jurée, serment*, ed. Marie-France Auzépy and Guillaume Saint-Guillain [Paris: ACHCByz, 2008], 309–28, at 325). However, he does not take into account reports claiming that early Medinan *qāḍī*s had recourse to this procedure.

[58] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 346.

agrees with al-Zuhrī, not through blind adherence to his views, but according to his own personal reflection (ra'y): he claims thereby the doctrinal independence of Egyptian jurists. The harmony between Egyptian practices and Medinan theory seems therefore to have been partly reconstructed – or at least rationalized – during the early Abbasid period, when Egyptian scholars such as al-Layth b. Saʿd and Ibn Lahīʿa began to compare Egyptian customs with the doctrines of the major legal centers whose influence was growing throughout the empire. The similarity of practices between Egypt and Medina during the Umayyad period were not seen as the voluntary adoption of foreign doctrines, but rather as a happy coincidence.

Egypt's Integration into an Imperial Legal Framework

The picture up to this point is of a fairly isolated Umayyad Egypt in terms of interactions between jurists. However, similarities between Egyptian judicial practices and those of other provinces, especially the Ḥijāz, offer a contrasting view. Egyptian jurists, anxious to preserve their local traditions, later considered this harmony a happy coincidence. But can we believe in coincidences? If interactions between Umayyad jurists fail to explain such parallel practices, should we not consider other protagonists?

Al-Layth b. Saʿd's letter to Mālik b. Anas offers a clue, namely that imperial policy may be responsible for such common judicial practices. Al-Layth considers Caliph ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (r. 99–101/717–20) as the promoter of double testimony instead of "archaic" types of evidence that had existed in Egypt, such as isolated testimony or a higher number of witnesses.[59] In the context of his controversy with Mālik, al-Layth's insistence on the role of ʿUmar II is part of his argumentative strategy, which consists of appealing to an authority that Mālik himself acknowledges. It must therefore be taken with a grain of salt. Nevertheless, one cannot overlook the possibility that Umayyad rulers played an important role in rationalizing legal procedures, and more broadly in the development of Egyptian law.

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[59] Yahyā b. Maʿīn, Taʾrīkh, 4:491; al-Fasawī, Kitāb al-Maʿrifa wa-l-taʾrīkh, 1:691–92; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, Iʿlām al-muwaqqiʿīn, 3:71–72.

Official Instructions

Legal and narrative sources highlight the importance of political relationships between Egypt and the capital of the empire during the Umayyad period. Since the reign of ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr (r. 63–73/683–92) and that of his rival and successor, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (r. 65–86/685–705), caliphs sent legal instructions and judicial rescripts to provincial *qāḍī*s, governors, and other officials.[60]

In Egypt, correspondence between caliphs and governors is mostly known from the reigns of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 105–25/724–43), who reportedly sent instructions to the *qāḍī*s of Fusṭāṭ, directly or through the provincial governor. As in other cities of the empire, *qāḍī*s and governors were sometimes caught off guard by legal cases brought to court, and therefore solicited the caliph's instructions, who then enacted general rules and prescribed the implementation of specific procedures.[61] Al-Kindī recounts, for example, a marital dispute brought before the *qāḍī* ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. Khudhāmir (in office 100–05/719–24), in which the latter ignored both the legal rule and the procedure that he should follow:

> Ibn Qudayd reported from Aḥmad b. ʿAmr b. al-Sarḥ, from Ibn Wahb, from ʿAbd al-Aʿlā b. Saʿīd al-Jayshānī, from Muḥammad b. ʿIkrima al-Nahrī:
>
> The latter married a woman. The day of the consummation of the marriage, she was wearing a long coat (*milḥafa*). He undressed her and suddenly noticed a leprosy scar on her lower thigh.
>
> "Put your coat back on!" he ordered.
>
> He spoke to ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. Khudhāmir, who wrote to ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz on his behalf. The latter replied: "Let him take an oath before God, in the mosque, that he did not touch her after seeing [the scar]. And let her brothers swear that they were unaware of her illness before they gave her in marriage. If they take the oath, assign a quarter of the dowry (*ṣadāq*) to the wife."[62]

Such rescripts contributed to disseminating caliphal law in Fusṭāṭ, in the sense of legal rulings decided by the caliph, whatever the sources on which

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[60] See M. Tillier, "Califes, émirs et cadis: le droit califal et l'articulation de l'autorité judiciaire à l'époque umayyade," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 63 (2014), 147–90, at 161–65, 172–75.

[61] See Tillier, "Califes, émirs et cadis." Ibn Saʿd and al-Balādhurī's biographies of ʿUmar II report dozens of caliphal rescripts sent to different governors of the empire regarding legal and procedural rules. See esp. Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, 7:350, 357, 365, 366, 370, 371, 374, 381; al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashrāf*, ed. Suhayl Zakkār and Riyāḍ Ziriklī, 13 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1996), 8:138, 148, 150, 155–58, 162, 163, 165, 166, 184, 189, 195.

[62] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 338–39.

his decisions were based. Although Egyptian *qāḍī*s usually relied on provincial legal traditions, they periodically sought caliphal instructions, which helped integrate their judicial practices into an empire-wide legal framework.

Imperial Legal Policy

According to the sources, a turning point for the integration of Egyptian law into an imperial legal framework occurred around 720 CE, during the reign of ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. His legal edicts and judicial rescripts are among the best known that Umayyad caliphs sent, probably because of his prestige and authority among later Egyptians. Although other caliphs sent similar edicts to the provinces, ʿUmar II seems to have distinguished himself through his legal policy. His interest in prophetic traditions is well known, and he is remembered for the impetus he gave to the collection of *ḥadīth*, a task he apparently entrusted to the Medinan scholars Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad b. ʿAmr b. Ḥazm and al-Zuhrī.[63] Furthermore, he seems to have dispatched jurists to several provinces.

In Egypt, Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb is the most emblematic of these "imperial" jurists. Ibn Yūnus considers him the first Egyptian scholar who set aside older apocalyptic narratives (*malāḥim* and *fitan*) in favour of traditions regarding the "lawful and the unlawful" (*al-kalām fī l-ḥalāl wa-l-ḥarām wa-masāʾili-himā*), and who promoted ʿilm (*aẓhara l-ʿilm*) in Egypt, perhaps in the sense of legal knowledge. He was more than a simple traditionist, as modern historians usually categorize him; he was also a jurist, and ʿUmar II appointed him as "*muftī*" in Fusṭāṭ, alongside two other scholars.[64] According to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, he continued to report to the caliph, and once even asked the caliph for instructions regarding music played during weddings.[65] He held an official hearing (*majlis*) during which he

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[63] Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, 34; H. Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam: The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000), 7, 19, 28.

[64] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:509; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 6:32; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥādara*, 1:299. See also Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 114–16. It is noteworthy that Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb is supposed to have transmitted *ḥadīth* from the Medinan scholar Nāfiʿ, whom, according to Ibn Ḥajar, ʿUmar II sent to Egypt in order to teach *sunan* to the Egyptians. However, Juynboll doubts the authenticity of this report, as well as the historicity of this Successor, whose appearance as the "common link" in many *isnād*s could be a late rear projection: G. H. A. Juynboll, "Nāfiʿ," in *EI²*, 7:878.

[65] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrat ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz*, ed. Aḥmad ʿUbayd (n.p.: Maktabat Wahba, n. d.), 106.

answered legal questions brought by other scholars of Fusṭāṭ.[66] Furthermore, ʿUmar II apparently appointed ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. Khudhāmir as *qāḍī* of Fusṭāṭ, breaking with the usual selection of provincial *qāḍī*s by local governors. According to al-Kindī, this Egyptian jurist had been part of a delegation sent to the previous caliph, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 96–99/715–17), and was then spotted by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.[67]

ʿUmar II thus distinguished himself by his personal handling of Egyptian legal affairs, in selecting a *qāḍī* and appointing a *muftī* who both shared his vision of Islamic law. Why did he appeal in Egypt to Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb? I would suggest that he intended to incorporate Fusṭāṭ into the imperial legal milieu that was increasingly important in the Eastern provinces, and from which Egypt was still isolated. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's interest in law is well known, and Arabic historiography presents him as surrounded by jurists when he was governor of Medina.[68] In all likelihood the caliph was attracted to the Medinan legal tradition, to the point that he later appears as a major authority in the *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Mālik b. Anas.[69] Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb himself seems to have been one of the few Egyptian jurists trained in "foreign" legal thinking, especially that of the Ḥijāz. Among his masters, Ibn Yūnus mentions the Medinan scholars Sālim b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 107/725)[70] and ʿIkrima (d. 105/723–24), who probably visited Egypt,[71] and the Meccan jurist ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114–15/732–33).[72] Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb's official appointment as *muftī* in Fusṭāṭ therefore appears to have been the deliberate introduction of a new legal tradition in Egypt, mostly inspired by Medinan law.

Other evidence suggests that ʿUmar II's policy reached North Africa, a newly conquered area, where he encouraged the development of a legal tradition in line with that of the imperial center. Ḥabīb b. al-Shāhid al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (d. 109/727–28), a scholar of Egyptian background, was part of a delegation sent to ʿUmar II, and thereafter became a famous *faqīh*, as authoritative in Tripoli as Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb was in Fusṭāṭ.[73]

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[66] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 364.
[67] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 338; Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:291.
[68] See P. M. Cobb, "ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz," in *EI²*, 10:886.
[69] A. Borrut, "Entre tradition et histoire: genèse et diffusion de l'image de ʿUmar II," *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 58 (2005), 329–78, at 363.
[70] About Sālim b. ʿAbd Allah b. ʿUmar, who was close to Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik, see al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 3:71.
[71] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:149. See J. Schacht, "ʿIkrima," in *EI²*, 3:1109.
[72] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:509. About ʿAṭāʾ, see J. Schacht, "ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ," in *EI²*, 1:730.
[73] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:106; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 7:57.

The same caliph is supposed to have sent "ten Successors" to Ifrīqiya to disseminate Islamic law, among them the Egyptian jurists Juʿthul b. Hāʿān al-Ruʿaynī (d. 115/733), Ḥibbān b. Abī Jabala al-Qurashī (d. 122/740), and Bakr b. Sawāda b. Thumāma al-Judhāmī (d. 128/745–46).[74] It is difficult to know whether North Africa was the subject of a specific policy, or whether data have been preserved for this part of the empire while disappearing for others. In any case, it seems that Egypt played a significant role in shaping such policy, perhaps because of its geographical position, which made it the gateway to North Africa, or because of its cultural influence on Ifrīqiya.[75]

Did the caliph intend to harmonize – or even unify – Islamic law on an imperial scale? If so, his short reign did not give him enough time to achieve his reform. It is also worth asking why ʿUmar II in particular tried to implement such a policy. The case of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb may offer a clue: according to later sources, this scholar retrospectively embodied a shift in Egyptian attitudes from apocalyptic expectations to legal concerns. Antoine Borrut has highlighted evidence that ʿUmar II ascended to the throne in a context of high messianic expectations, that is, on the eve of the hundredth anniversary of the *hijra*. The establishment of God's kingdom on earth by a rightly guided sovereign was seen as a necessary prerequisite for the apocalypse and the Last Judgment. However, in 99/717, the failure of the siege of Constantinople had called into question the caliphate's ability to impose its sovereignty over the whole world.[76] This external failure could have caused a change in strategy. ʿUmar II now intended to assert himself as *mahdī* through his internal political agenda and, in particular, by the establishment of justice within the empire – which included not only his famous measures to redress the *maẓālim* (injustices) of his predecessors, but also his legal policy.[77] At the same time, the failure to take Constantinople led Muslims to postpone their

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[74] Ibn al-Abbār, *al-Takmila li-Kitāb al-Ṣila*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām al-Harrās, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995), 1:176–77; Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:70–71, 89, 103. Ibn Yūnus also mentions the Dimashqī scholar Ismāʿīl b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Muhājir (d. 131/748–49), whom ʿUmar II sent to Ifrīqiya "to judge according to the Book of God and the *sunna* of His prophet, and to teach them (*yufaqqihuhum*) the religion": Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:37.

[75] See H. Djaït, "L'Afrique arabe au VIIIe siècle (86–184 H./705–800)," *Annales: Histoire, sciences sociales* 28/3 (1973), 601–21, at 611.

[76] See A. Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir: l'espace syrien sous les derniers Omeyyades et les premiers Abbassides (v. 72–193/692–809)* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011), 272, 296.

[77] In addition to the above, ʿUmar II is also remembered for introducing new regulations regarding *dhimmī*s. See Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir*, 303.

apocalyptic expectations. No systematic legal system had been needed for administering a world that they believed was soon to disappear. Postponing the apocalypse to a later period, however, required long-term social restructuring in accordance with divine will. If this analysis is correct, the reign of ʿUmar II thus represents a pivotal period, and his legal policy may reflect a more general change in the understanding of Islamic history, as Muslims rethought their eschatological expectations to give more space to daily rules governing this world.

At any rate, ʿUmar II's policy had a considerable impact on the Egyptian legal milieu. Al-Layth b. Saʿd, the most famous local jurist in the second half of the second/eighth century, was Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb's designated heir. In 128/745, when Marwān II sent a new governor, al-Ḥawthara b. Suhayl al-Bāhilī, to restore order after a period of unrest, he commanded the elite of Fusṭāṭ to appoint a legal advisor who would "guide him (*yusaddida-hu*) about legal cases (*fī l-qaḍāʾ*) and correct his opinions (*yuṣawwiba-hu fī l-naẓar*)," for the new governor was a rough "Bedouin." Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb and ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith (d. 148/765), the other major Egyptian jurist of the time (who apparently visited Medina),[78] agreed on their common student, al-Layth b. Saʿd, who thereby began his eminent career.[79]

During the early Abbasid period the doctrine of Medinan jurists, as transmitted by Ibn Abī Ḥabīb, was still a major reference in Fusṭāṭ.[80] Ibn Abī Ḥabīb had trained the *qāḍī* in office during the 760s, Abū Khuzayma Ibrāhīm b. Yazīd, who had the honor of opening his *fatwā* sessions.[81] His successor, the famous ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿā (in office 154–65/771–72–780), had frequently visited Ibn Abī Ḥabīb in his youth, and the latter reportedly predicted his accession to the office of *qāḍī*.[82] As a child, the *qāḍī* al-Mufaḍḍal b. Faḍāla (in office 168–69/785–86 then 174–77/790–93) had likewise been encouraged by the Egyptian master when he had asked him a question about a procedural rule.[83] Until the 780s, when the Abbasids

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[78] About ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith, *mawlā* of the Anṣār, see Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:370–71; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 45:455; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nunbalāʾ*, 6:349–53; al-Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 5:76. According to al-Kindī, he was part of the Egyptian delegation that went to swear allegiance to the caliph Yazīd III in 126/744; at the beginning of the Abbasid era he was part of governor Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlī's entourage: al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 84, 105.

[79] Al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 89.   [80] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 346.

[81] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 364.   [82] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 370.

[83] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 377. Cf. Ibn Ḥajar, *Rafʿ al-iṣr*, 437.

tried to impose Ḥanafī or Mālikī jurists as judges in Fusṭāṭ, most *qāḍī*s claimed to belong to Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb's tradition one way or another. Although the latter has been so far regarded primarily as a traditionist who introduced *ḥadīth* in Egypt, he was also – and perhaps more than anything else – a political tool used to bring Egyptian law in line with the Medinan tradition. The appointment of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb as Egypt's official jurist reveals the promotion of a new generation of "imperial" jurists, and marks the formation of a "mixed" Egyptian school, halfway between local traditions and Medinan interpretations.

Medinan influence on the Egyptian scholarly milieu was reinforced in the second half of the eighth century, partly in connection with Abbasid legal policy. Eager to base their legitimacy on the promotion of a legal system, the first Abbasid caliphs first turned to Medinan jurists, among whom they recruited several *qāḍī*s, before turning more resolutely to the Iraqi scholarly milieu.[84] The growing prestige of Mālik b. Anas, who attracted disciples from all over the *dār al-islām*, also played a major role in spreading his knowledge on an imperial scale. By the dawn of the ninth century Egyptian law had mainly become proto-Mālikī, before al-Shāfiʿī's followers took over.

Conclusion

During the second half of the first/seventh century a juristic milieu emerged in Fusṭāṭ, based on the teaching of the Companions and, among them, the governor ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir. This legal tradition is little known. Because of incompatibilities between this "school" and the basic principles of classical *fiqh*, its influence on the development of Islamic law was either minimal or erased from the collective memory. It was later relegated to the dustbin of history on the pretext that it dealt only with eschatological expectations. Although this view may exaggerate historical reality, the belief in the imminence of the world's end and the Last Judgment may have led the first generations of Egyptian scholars to emphasize this issue rather than rules governing the social organization of a community that was destined to disappear soon.

In the first half of the second/eighth century, under the Marwanids, Egyptian jurists still appeared relatively isolated from the intense legal discussions that were now taking place in other parts of the Middle

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[84] Tillier, *Les cadis d'Iraq et l'État abbasside*, 148–57.

East. When presenting the opinions of the main Umayyad legal circles, early Abbasid sources only give a very marginal place to Egyptian jurists, whose interactions with "foreigners" were apparently limited. Such relative isolation is, at the current state of research, difficult to explain. Could one argue that scholars' circulation in search of religious knowledge (*ṭalab al-ʿilm*) was at that time more limited than is often thought? Should we rather consider the characteristics of Fusṭāṭ's population? Mainly inhabited by Yemeni tribes originating from the south of the Arabian Peninsula, the Egyptian capital had not sheltered a large number of major Companions after its foundation, which perhaps did not make it an attractive destination for Eastern scholars. For their part, Yemeni scholars in Egypt, who had developed a distinctive culture characterized by high eschatological expectations, might have been less sensitive to religious knowledge as it was developing further east. We may finally hypothesize that population flows related to the ongoing conquests also played a role in this phenomenon. While men of Arabia, Syria, and Iraq were involved together in expeditions against territories to the north (Byzantium) and east of the *dār al-islām*, Egyptians were more likely to participate in the conquest of western territories. This may explain the existence of strong interactions among scholars originating from the former territories and the relative isolation of Egyptians. All these hypotheses remain so far speculative.

However, judicial practices reveal that legal interactions actually existed between Egypt and the rest of the empire. Procedures implemented in Fusṭāṭ and elsewhere were quite similar, Medina being closest in comparison. Egyptian law was primarily integrated into the rest of the Umayyad empire through institutions. ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz played a leading role in this process by offering an official position to Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb, a local jurist from Fusṭāṭ also trained in Medinan law. By introducing elements of Medinan legal culture into Egyptian law, Ibn Abī Ḥabīb laid the foundations for a "reformed" Egyptian school, influenced by the legal tradition of Medina, in which the major Egyptian jurists of the next generation trained. This school seems therefore to have resulted from a policy of legal harmonization within the Umayyad empire. It survived into the second half of the eighth century – when its main representative, al-Layth b. Saʿd, was still discussing the relationships between local Egyptian tradition and Medinan law – before giving way to the Mālikī and Shāfiʿī schools, both inherited from Medinan legal culture.

APPENDIX

Table 5.1 *List of Egyptian* fuqahāʾ *who died before 200/816, mentioned as such by Ibn Yūnus*[85]

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
Qays b. al-Ḥārith al-Murādī	?	1:401–02	ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644) (Medinan)	Suwayd b. Qays b. Thaʿlaba (Egyptian)[86] **Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian)
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muljam al-Murādī al-Tadʾulī	44/664–65	1:314–15	Muʿādh b. Jabal (d. 18/639?) (Medinan)	
Abū Qays al-Sahmī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Thābit (*mawlā*)	54/674	1:523–24	ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/663) (Egyptian) Umm Salama (d. 59/678–79?) (Medinan)	**ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr al-Miṣrī** (Egyptian) **ʿUrwa b. Abī Qays** (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)
ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir al-Juhanī (gov.)	58/677–78	1:345–47	Prophet	ʿAbd Allāh b. Mālik al-Jayshānī (Egyptian)[87] ʿAbd al-Malik b. Malīl al-Salīḥī (Egyptian)[88] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿĀmir al-Hamdānī (Egyptian?) Kathīr b. Qulayb al-Ṣadafī (Egyptian)[89] Abū Qabīl al-Maʿāfirī (Yemen, then Egypt)[90] Jubayr b. Nufayr (Ḥimṣ) Abū ʿUshshāna Ḥayy b. Yuʾmin (Egyptian)

[85] This list is based on all the entries in which someone is said to be *faqīh* (or *min* [*al-*]*fuqahāʾ*), *muftī*, or to have been trained in *fiqh* (*tafaqqaha*). Other scholars who may also have been trained in *fiqh* but are not described as such by Ibn Yūnus are not listed here. Names of jurists recorded in this list are in **bold**.

[86] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:259.   [87] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:295.

[88] Ibn Ḥibbān, *al-Thiqāt*, ed. Sharaf al-Dīn Aḥmad, 9 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1975), 5:122.

[89] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:406.   [90] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:298.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
				Abū Qabīl Ḥayy b. Hāniʾ al-Maʿāfirī (Egyptian)
				Baʿja al-Juhanī (Ḥijāz)
				[Abū] Saʿīd al-Maqburī (Medinan)
				ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (Egyptian)
				Abū l-Khayr Marthad al-Yazanī (Egyptian)[91]
Nāʿim b. Ujayl al-Hamdānī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	80/699–700	1:491	ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (d. 35/656) (Medinan)	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz al-Aʿraj (Medinan origin; came to Alexandria)[94]
			ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661) (Medina–Kūfa)	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)[95]
			Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687–88) (Ḥijāz)	al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd (Egyptian)[96]
			Kaʿb b. ʿAdī (d. ?) (Ḥīra; came to Egypt)[92]	ʿUbayd Allāh b. al-Mughīra (Egyptian)
			Abū Hurayra (d. 58/678?) (Medinan)	Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (Egyptian)
			ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian)[93]	
Abū ʿAlqama al-Fārisī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	? (became a *qāḍī* of Ifrīqiya)	1:523	ʿUthmān (d. 35/656) (Medinan)	Yaʿlā b. ʿAṭāʾ (d. 120/738) (Wāsiṭī, originally from Ṭāʾif)[98]
			Ibn Masʿūd (d. 32/652–53) (Kūfī)	Sharāḥīl b. Yazīd al-Maʿāfirī (d. af. 120/738) (Egyptian)[99]
			Abū Hurayra (d. 58/678?) (Medinan)	Ṣāliḥ b. Abī Maryam (d. ca. 100/718–19) (Baṣrī)
			Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (d. 64/684?) (Medinan)[97]	

[91] The last seven names are cited by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:523.
[92] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:229.
[93] The last name is given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:885.
[94] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:126; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:345.
[95] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:101; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:257. See Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 110.
[96] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:334; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:276.
[97] These four names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:193.
[98] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:342.
[99] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:229; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:274.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
				Abū l-Zubayr al-Makkī (d. 128/745–46) (Meccan) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād (d. 156/772–73) (Ifrīqī)[100]
Abū l-Najīb Ẓalim al-ʿĀmirī	88/707	1:248	Ibn ʿUmar (d. 73/693) (Medinan) Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (d. 64/684?) (Medinan)[101]	**Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian)[102]
Marthad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazanī	90/708–09	1:467	Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī (d. 52/672?) (came to Egypt)[103] Abū Baṣra al-Ghifārī (d. ?) (settled in Egypt)[104] Zayd b. Thābit (d. bt. 42/662–63 and 56/675–76) (Medinan) ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/663) (Egyptian) ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) **ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir** (d. 58/677–78) (Egyptian)	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Shimāsa (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa (Egyptian) ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar (Egyptian) ʿAyyāsh b. ʿAbbās al-Qitbānī (Egyptian)[105]
ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Jubayr al-Miṣrī al-Muʾadhdhin (*mawlā*)	97 or 98/715–17	1:298–99	**ʿUqba b. ʿĀmir** (d. 58/677–78) (Egyptian) Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian)	**Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian) Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (Egyptian) ʿAbd Allāh b. Hubayra (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)

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[100] The last three names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:193.
[101] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:1034.   [102] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:1034.
[103] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 2:406.
[104] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 282; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:243.
[105] The last four names are added by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 2:1004.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
ʿAmr b. al-Walīd b. ʿAbada al-Qurashī al-Sahmī (*mawlā*)	103/721–22	1:378	Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) Qays b. Saʿd b. ʿUbāda (d. 60/680?) (Egyptian)[106] Anas b. Mālik (d. 91–93/709–11?) (Baṣran)[107]	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian)
ʿAbd Allāh b. Yazīd b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Khudhāmir al-Ṣanʿānī	After 105/723–24	1:290–91		Mūsā b. Ayyūb al-Ghāfiqī (Egyptian)[108] Ghawth b. Sulaymān (Egyptian)[109]
Ḥabīb b. al-Shahīd al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	109/727–28	1:106	ʿUmar II (d. 101/720) Ḥanash [b. ʿAbd Allāh] al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 100/718–19) (Damascus–Egypt–Ifrīqiya)[110]	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa (Egyptian) Sālim b. Ghaylān (Egyptian) Sulaymān b. Abī Wahb (?)
Juʿthul b. Hāʿān al-Ruʿaynī	115/733–34	1:88–89	ʿAbd Allāh b. Mālik al-Jayshānī (d. 77/696–97) (Egyptian)	**Bakr b. Sawāda** (Egyptian) ʿUbayd Allāh b. Zaḥr al-Ifrīqī (Ifrīqī) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād b. Anʿum (Ifrīqī)
Ḥibbān b. Abī Jabala al-Qurashī (*mawlā*)	122/739–40	1:103	ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/663) (Egyptian) Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687–88) (Ḥijāz)[111]	ʿUbayd Allāh b. Zaḥr (Ifrīqī) ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād b. Anʿum (Ifrīqī) Abū Shayba ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣadafī (Egyptian)[112]

[106] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:133.   [107] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:133.
[108] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:487; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:278.
[109] Al-Kindī, *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, 356ff. See other references in al-Kindī, *Histoire des cadis égyptiens*, 116.
[110] These two names are provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:25.
[111] These three names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:393.
[112] These three names occur in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:393.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (*mawlā*)	128/745–46	1:509	Sālim [b. ʿAbd Allāh] (d. 106/724–25?) (Medinan) Nāfiʿ (d. 117/735?) (Medinan) ʿIkrima (d. 105/723–24?) (Medinan; came to Egypt) ʿAṭāʾ [b. Abī Rabāḥ] (d. 114/732?) (Meccan) ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ḥārith b. Jazʾ (d. 86/705?) (Egyptian) Abū l-Ṭufayl [al-Laythī] (d. 107/725–26?) (Meccan) Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥunayn (d. af. 100/718–19) (Medinan) Saʿīd b. Abī Hind (d. ca. 105/724) (Ḥijāz) ʿIrāk b. Mālik (d. bt. 101/720 and 105/723) (Medinan) ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (d. 114/732–33?) (Egyptian)[113]	ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian) **al-Layth [b. Saʿd]** (Egyptian) **Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ** (Egyptian) **Saʿīd b. Abī Ayyūb** (Egyptian) Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb (Egyptian) Ibn Isḥāq (Medina–Egypt–Iraq)[114]
Bakr b. Sawāda b. Thumāma al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī	128/745–46	1:70–71	Ibn ʿAmr (d. 65/684–85?) (Egyptian) Qays b. Saʿd b. ʿUbāda (d. 60/680?) (Egyptian)[115] Sahl b. Saʿd al-Sāʿidī (d. 91/709–10?) (Egyptian)[116]	ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian) **ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith** (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa (Egyptian) **al-Layth [b. Saʿd]** (Egyptian)

[113] The last five names are added by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:562.
[114] The last four names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:562.
[115] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:403; al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 22.
[116] Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:207.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Saʿīd b. al-Musayyib (d. 105/723–24) (Medinan) Abū Sālim al-Jayshānī (d. b. 80/699–700) (Egyptian) ʿAṭāʾ b. Yasār (d. 103/721–22?) (Medinan)[117]	
ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar Yasār (*mawlā*)[118]	129/746–47	1:263	ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Waʿla (d. ?) (Egyptian)[119]	**ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith** (Egyptian) **al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)
Saʿīd b. Rabīʿa b. Ḥubaysh b. ʿUrfuṭa al-Ṣadafī	? (*qāḍī* under the caliph Hishām)	1:205		
Ḥassān b. ʿAtāhiya b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ḥassān b. ʿAtāhiya al-Kindī al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (gov.)[120]	133/750–51	1:115	ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114–15/732–33) (Meccan)	
ʿUmar b. al-Sāʾib b. Abī Rāshid al-Zuhrī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	134/751–52	1:365	al-Qāsim b. Qazmān (?) a son of ʿAmr b. Umayya al-Ḍamrī (?)[121]	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian) Bakr b. Muḍar (Egyptian)[122] ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian)
Khālid b. Yazīd al-Jumaḥī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	139/756–57	1:150–51		al-Mufaḍḍal b. Faḍāla (Egyptian)[123]
ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith b. Yaʿqūb b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Anṣārī (*mawlā*)	148/765	1:370–71	Abū Yūnus *mawlā* of Abū Hurayra (d. 123/740–41) (Egyptian)	Mālik b. Anas (Medinan) **al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)

[117] The last three names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:378.
[118] Al-Dhahabī relates that he was head of the arsenal where warships were built: al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:442.
[119] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:297; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:260.
[120] See also his biography in al-Kindī, *Taʾrīkh Miṣr*, 85–86; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, 3:273–76.
[121] These two names are provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:711.
[122] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:73; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:346.
[123] Al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, 3:784.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Ibn Abī Mulayka (d. 117/735) (Meccan) Abū ʿAshāna al-Maʿāfirī (d. 118/736) (Egyptian) Qatāda (d. 117/735?) (Baṣrī) ʿAmr b. Dīnār (d. 127/744) (Meccan)[124]	ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian) Bakr b. Muḍar (Egyptian) **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)[125]
Ziyād b. Abī Ḥumra Kaysān al-Lakhmī (*mawlā*)	bef. 150/767	1:193		**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian) **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)
Sālim b. Ghaylān al-Tujībī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	151 or 153/768–70	1:198	**Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian) al-Walīd b. Qays al-Tujībī (d. 131/748–49) (Egyptian) Darrāj Abū l-Samḥ (d. 126/743–44) (Egyptian)[126]	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian) **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) **Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ** (Egyptian)[127]
ʿUmar b. Mālik al-Sharʿabī al-Maʿāfirī al-Miṣrī	?	1:367	ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar (d. 136/753–54?) (Egyptian)[128] Khālid b. Abī ʿImrān (d. 129/746–47?) (Ifrīqī)[129] Yazīd b. [ʿAbd Allāh b.] al-Hād (d. 139/756–57) (Medinan) Ṣafwān b. Abī Sālim (?)[130]	**Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ** (Egyptian) Ḍimām b. Ismāʿīl (Egyptian)[131] ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (Egyptian) Mughīra b. al-Ḥasan (Egyptian?) **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)[132]

[124] This list is provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:937.
[125] This list is provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:937.
[126] The last two names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:870.
[127] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 3:870.
[128] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:333; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:299.
[129] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:72; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 2:299. See Khoury, *ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Lahīʿa*, 113.
[130] The last two names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:166.
[131] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:244; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:280.
[132] The last three names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:166.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
Ḥaywa b. Shurayḥ al-Tujībī	158/774–75	1:143	Rabīʿa b. Yazīd al-Qaṣīr (d. 123/740–41) (Damascene; died in Ifrīqiya) ʿUqba b. Muslim (d. ca. 120/738) (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian) Sulaym b. Jubayr (d. 123/740–41) (Egyptian)[133]	Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt) Abū Wahb (?) Abū ʿĀṣim (?) Al-Muqriʾ (?) ʿAbd Allāh b. Yaḥyā al-Burullusī (Egyptian)[134]
Saʿīd b. Abī Ayyūb al-Khuzāʿī (*mawlā*)	162/778–79 or 166/782–83	1:203–04	Zuhra b. Maʿbad (d. 135/752–53?) (Alexandrian) ʿUqayl [b. Khālid] al-Aylī (d. 144/761–62?) (Ayla?–Egypt) ʿAbd al-Raḥīm b. Maymūn (d. 143/760–61) (Egyptian) Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa al-Kindī (d. 134/751–52?) (Egyptian) **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian) Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian)[135]	Ibn Jurayj (Meccan) Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt) **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Muqriʾ (Baṣra–Mecca) Rawḥ b. Ṣalāḥ (Egyptian)[136]
Ibrāhīm b. Nashīṭ b. Yūsuf al-Waʿlānī (*mawlā*)	ca. 163/779–80	1:30	Nāfiʿ (d. 117/735?) (Medinan) al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) (Medinan)	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (Egyptian)

[133] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:44.
[134] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:44.
[135] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:373.
[136] This list occurs in al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:373.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Kaʿb b. ʿAlqama (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian)[137]	Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt)[138] Rishdīn b. Saʿd (Egyptian)[139] **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)
ʿUthmān b. al-Ḥakam al-Judhāmī al-Miṣrī (*mawlā*)	163/779–80	1:337–38	Muḥammad b. Zayd b. al-Muhājir b. Qunfudh (d. ?) (Medinan) Mūsā b. ʿUqba (d. 141/758–59) (Medinan)[140] ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿUmar (d. 147/764–65) (Medinan) Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Anṣārī (d. 143/760–61?) (Medinan) Yūnus [b. Yazīd] al-Aylī (d. 152/769?) (Ayla–Egypt)[141] Ibn Jurayj (d. 150/767) (Meccan)[142]	**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Saʿīd b. Abī Maryam (Egyptian)[143] Isḥāq b. al-Furāt (Egyptian) al-Layth b. ʿĀṣim al-Qitbānī (Egyptian)[144]
Sulaymān b. Abī Dāʾūd al-Ḥamrāwī al-Miṣrī al-Afṭas	168/784–85	1:219		Ibn al-Qāsim (Egyptian)[145] Idrīs b. Yaḥyā (Egyptian)[146]
ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Musayyib b. Jābir al-Fārisī (*mawlā*)	170/786–87	1:286		**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Yaḥyā b. Bukayr (Egyptian)
Saʿd b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd al-Maʿāfirī al-Iskandarānī	173/789–90	1:201	Mūsā b. ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (d. 163/779–80) (Egyptian, gov.)[147]	Ibn al-Qāsim (Egyptian) **ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian) Ismāʿīl b. Bukayr (?)

[137] This list is provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:302.
[138] Ibn Saʿd, *al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, 7:372; Ibn Ḥibbān, *Mashāhīr ʿulamāʾ al-amṣār*, 227.
[139] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:178; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:283.
[140] "Mūsā b. ʿUḳba," in *EI²*, 7:643.   [141] See Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:261.
[142] The last three names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:453.
[143] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:204; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:346.
[144] The last two names are given by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:453.
[145] J. Schacht, "Ibn al-Ḳāsim," in *EI²*, 3:840.   [146] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 10:165.
[147] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:488; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 7:411.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb (d. 168/784–85?) (Egyptian)[148] Abū Maʿshar al-Sindī (d. 170/787) (Medinan)[149]	Khālid b. Nizār (Ayla)[150]
al-Layth b. Saʿd (al-Imām) (*mawlā*)[151]	175/791–92	1:418–19		
ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ al-Maʿāfirī al-Labwānī (*mawlā*)	196/811–12	1:349	ʿAbd al-Muʾmin b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Hubayra al-Sabāʾī (d. ?) (Egyptian)[152] Rabīʿa b. Abī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān [al-Raʾy] (d. 136/753–54?) (Medinan)[153]	**ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb** (Egyptian)

[148] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:506; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:294.
[149] The last name is added by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:624.
[150] The last two names are provided by al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, 4:624.
[151] The list of his masters and disciples is too long to be included in this table. Al-Dhahabī cites the following masters: ʿAṭāʾ b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. 114–15/732–33) (Meccan); Nāfiʿ (d. 117/735?) (Medinan); Ibn Abī Mulayka (d. 117/735) (Meccan); Saʿīd al-Muqriʾ, Abū l-Zubayr [Muḥammad b. Muslim] (d. 128/745–46) (Meccan); al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742) (Medinan); Mishraḥ b. Hāʿān (d. ca. 120/738) (Egyptian); Abū Qabīl al-Maʿāfirī [Ḥayy b. Hāniʾ] (d. 128/745–46) (Yemen, then Egypt); **Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian); Bukayr b. ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Ashajj (d. 127/744–45?) (Medina, then Egypt); Jaʿfar b. Rabīʿa [al-Kindī] (d. 134/751–52?) (Egyptian); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Qāsim (d. 126/743–44) (Medinan); Darrāj Abū l-Samḥ (d. 126/743–44) (Egyptian); al-Ḥārith b. Yaʿqūb [al-Anṣārī] (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian); ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar (d. 136/753–54?) (Egyptian); ʿUqayl b. Khālid (d. 144/761–62?) (Ayla?–Egypt); Ayyūb b. Mūsā (d. 133/750–51) (Meccan); **Bakr b. Sawāda** (d. 128/745–46) (Egyptian); al-Julāḥ Abū Kathīr (d. 120/738) (Egyptian); al-Ḥārith b. Yazīd al-Ḥaḍramī (d. 130/747–48) (Egyptian); **Khālid b. Yazīd** (d. 139/756–57) (Egyptian); Khayr b. Nuʿaym (d. 137/754–55) (Egyptian); Ṣafwān b. Salīm (d. 124/741–42) (Medinan); Abū l-Zanād [ʿAbd Allāh b. Dakwān] (d. 131/748–49?) (Medinan); ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, Qatāda (d. 117/735?) (Baṣran); Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā b. Ḥibbān (d. 121/739) (Medinan); Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd [al-Anṣārī] (d. 143/760–61?) (Medinan); Yazīd b. [ʿAbd Allāh b.] al-Hād (d. 139/756–57) (Medinan); Muḥammad b. ʿAjlān (d. 148/765–56) (Medinan).
His main disciples are: Muḥammad b. ʿAjlān (Medinan); Ibn Lahīʿa (Egyptian); Ibn al-Mubārak (from Marw; visited Egypt); **Ibn Wahb** (Egyptian); Shabāba [b. Sawwār] (al-Madāʾin); Ḥujayn b. al-Muthannā (Yemen, then Baghdad); Saʿīd b. Abī Maryam (Egyptian); Ādam b. Abī Iyās (Marw–Baghdad–ʿAsqalān); Aḥmad b. Yūnus; **Shuʿayb b. al-Layth** (Egyptian); Yaḥyā b. Bukayr (Egyptian); Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Laythī (Cordoba); Yaḥyā b. Yaḥyā al-Tamīmī al-Khurāsānī (Khurasan–Ḥijāz–Iraq–Syria–Egypt); Abū l-Jahm al-ʿAlāʾ al-Bāhilī (Baghdadī); Qutayba b. Saʿīd (Balkh); Muḥammad b. Rumḥ (Egyptian); Yazīd b. Mawhab al-Ramlī (Ramla); Kāmil b. Ṭalḥa (Baṣra–Baghdad); ʿĪsā b. Ḥammād (Egyptian): al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 4:710.
[152] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:328.   [153] Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 6:89.

Table 5.1 *(cont.)*

Name	Date of death	Reference in Ibn Yūnus	Learned from	Taught to
			Khālid b. Yazīd (d. 139/756–57) (Egyptian)	
ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb b. Muslim al-Qurashī (*mawlā*)[154]	197/812–13	1:289		
Shuʿayb b. al-Layth b. Saʿd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Fahmī (*mawlā*)	199/814–15	1:236	**al-Layth b. Saʿd** (d. 175/791–92) (Egyptian) Mūsā b. ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ (d. 163/779–80) (Egyptian, gov.)	ʿAbd al-Malik b. Shuʿayb (Egyptian)[155] Yūnus b. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā (Egyptian)[156] al-Rabīʿ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (Egyptian)[157] Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (Egyptian)[158]
al-Ḥakam b. Ṣāliḥ al-Miṣrī	201/816–17	1:135		Abū Yaḥyā al-Waqār (Egyptian)[159]

NB: Unless another reference is given, death dates and regional identifications rely on the information provided by al-Dhahabī in *Taʾrīkh al-islām*.

[154] Al-Dhahabī cites the following masters: Yūnus b. Yazīd (d. 159/775–76) (Ayla); Ibn Jurayj (d. 150/767) (Meccan); Ḥayy b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Maʿāfirī (d.?) (Egyptian?); Ḥanẓala b. Abī Sufyān (d. 151/768) (Meccan); **ʿAmr b. al-Ḥārith** (d. 148/765–66) (Egyptian); Usāma b. Zayd al-Laythī (d. 153/770) (Medinan); ʿUmar b. Muḥammad al-ʿUmarī (d. 150/767–68) (Medina–ʿAsqalān); ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd b. Jaʿfar (d. 153/770) (Medinan); Abū Ṣakhr Ḥamīd b. Ziyād (d.?) (Egyptian); ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿĀmir al-Aslamī (d. 150/767–68?) (Medinan); Mūsā b. ʿAlī [al-Lakhmī] (d. 163/779–80) (Egyptian); **al-Layth [b. Saʿd]** (d. 175/791–92) (Egyptian); Mālik [b. Anas] (d. 179/795) (Medinan).
His main disciples are : **al-Layth b. Saʿd** (d. 175/791–92) (Egyptian); Aṣbagh b. al-Faraj (Egyptian); Abū Ṣāliḥ; Aḥmad b. Ṣāliḥ (Egyptian); Ḥarmala [b. Yaḥyā] (Egyptian); al-Ḥārith b. Miskīn (Egyptian); Yaḥyā b. Ayyūb al-Maqābirī (Baghdādī); Baḥr b. Naṣr al-Khawlānī (Egyptian); al-Rabīʿ b. Sulaymān al-Murādī (Egyptian); Yūnus b. ʿAbd al-Aʿlā (Egyptian); Abū Ṭāhir b. al-Sarḥ (Egyptian); ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad b. Rumḥ (Egyptian); ʿAlī b. Khashram (Khurasan); ʿAmr b. Sawwād (Egyptian); ʿĪsā b. Mathrūd (Egyptian); Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (Egyptian); Hārūn b. Saʿīd al-Aylī (Egyptian); ʿAbd al-Malik b. Shuʿayb b. al-Layth (Egyptian); ʿĪsā b. Aḥmad al-ʿAsqalānī (Baghdad–Balkh); Aḥmad b. ʿĪsā al-Tustarī (Egyptian); Ibrāhīm b. Munqidh al-Khawlānī (Egyptian); Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd al-Qayrawānī (Ifrīqī); Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Wahb (Egyptian): al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, 4:1143.
[155] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:325; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:308.
[156] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:505; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:309.
[157] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:170; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:348.
[158] F. Rosenthal, "Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam," in *EI²*, 3:696.
[159] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:187; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara*, 1:448.

Table 5.2 *Foreign* fuqahāʾ *dead before 200/816 who visited Egypt or settled there, mentioned by Ibn Yūnus*

Name	Date of death	Origin	Reference in Ibn Yūnus
ʿUrwa b. al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām	93/711–12	Medina (stayed seven years in Egypt)	2:147
Muḥammad b. Aws al-Anṣārī	?	? (became admiral of the Ifrīqī fleet in 93/711–12)	2:194
ʿUrwa b. Abī Qays, *mawlā* of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ	ca. 110/728–29 (classified as foreigner; however, son of Egyptian Abū Qays al-Sahmī)		2:147
Makḥūl al-Shāmī	ca. 118/736	Freed slave, perhaps of Egyptian or Persian origin. He settled in Syria.	2:236
Khālid b. Abī ʿImrān al-Tujībī al-Tūnisī	125/742–43 or 129/746–47	Ifrīqiya (*faqīh* of the *ahl al-Maghrib*)	2:72–73
Ismāʿīl b. ʿUbayd Allāh b. Abī l-Muhājir	131/748–49	Damascus; sent to al-Qayrawān by ʿUmar II	2:37
ʿAbd al-Aʿlā b. al-Samḥ b. ʿUbayd b. Ḥarmala, Abū l-Khaṭṭāb al-Maʿāfirī	144/761–62	(Khārijī *faqīh*, then Ibadi; he proclaimed a caliphate in the Maghreb)	2:109
Ṭulayb/ʿAbd Allāh b. Kāmil al-Lakhmī	173/789–90	al-Andalus (lived some time in Alexandria)	2:106
al-Hudhayl b. Muslim al-Tamīmī	189/804–5		2:247
Ziyād b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Ziyād "Ziyād Shabṭūn"	193/808–09 or 199/814–15	al-Andalus (introduced Mālikism in this province)	2:86–87

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Ibn Ṭūlūn's Pacification Campaign: Sedition, Authority, and Empire in Abbasid Egypt

Matthew S. Gordon

Developments in third/ninth-century Egypt relate to the wider history of the Abbasid imperial realm in a number of ways. These had to do, in one sense or another, with the fraying of the Arab Islamic empire, governed, at this point, by the Abbasid house.[1] This chapter considers one such development: the turn to control over Egypt by the Turkic–Central Asian military command in Samarra. My argument is that, at a moment in which the Abbasid state was struggling to sustain its hold over a once far-flung but now shrinking domain, it ceded authority over Egypt to those same military/political circles. Egypt, in this scenario, was a key interest of the Samarran commanders and in defense of which they devoted considerable energy and resources. It was a matter of consolidating authority over the province's considerable public wealth, to be sure, but the sources point to apparent private interests – specifically, landholdings – on the part of the commanders as well.

A full treatment of the topic cannot be provided here.[2] I will focus rather on what I take to be the culmination of that same effort at consolidation: a campaign of political repression carried out across Egypt by Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn, the Abbasid resident governor of Egypt (254–70/868–84) and founder of a short-lived dynastic state, that of the Tulunids (254–92/868–905). To describe the campaign, the term "pacification" seems appropriate. It conveys the notion of "a return to peace," in this case the effort by an imperial state – the Abbasid caliphate – to subdue an unruly province, and in which a reliance on systematic violence went hand in hand with an

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[1] See Michael Bonner, "The Waning of Empire, 861–945," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World, Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase F. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 305–59; and Hugh Kennedy, "The Decline and Fall of the First Muslim Empire," *Der Islam* 81/1 (2004), 3–30.

[2] This chapter draws on a larger study which is in preparation. This author's biography of Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn, Matthew S. Gordon, *Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn: Governor of Abbasid Egypt, 868–884* (London: Oneworld Academic, 2021), appeared after the completion of this chapter.

appeal to hearts and minds.[3] The reliance on violence involved not simply the dispatch of armed forces, but ritual acts of intimidation intended to project authority and frighten off opponents, and with the principal aim of imposing a rigorous tax regime. As for the appeal to hearts and minds, in the case of Ibn Ṭūlūn and his peers, this involved a turn to religion. It took two forms: the imposition of new religious policies; and conduct intended to signal a commitment to Islamic principles.

A first step is to consider Ibn Ṭūlūn's appointment to Egypt in 254/868, set against the backdrop of the emergence in Samarra of the Turkic–Central Asian command. The discussion then turns to the campaign of pacification itself. The campaign involved six episodes, each in its way an instance of insurrection or political challenge to which Ibn Ṭūlūn reacted forcefully. One outcome, as argued below, was a strengthening of ties between the new governor and the local imperial military establishment, represented, again, in the main, by Turkic and Central Asian forces. But here the main concern is the turn by Ibn Ṭūlūn and his colleagues to violence – in its actual and symbolic forms alike – and religion. These served as the instruments by which the Samarran military sought to sustain its hold over the Nile Valley.

The chapter draws, alongside secondary scholarship, mainly on three fourth/tenth-century Arabic sources. These represent a significant portion of extant early Arabic-Egyptian historiography.[4] The two likely earliest biographies of the governor are *Sīrat Ibn Ṭūlūn* by Ibn al-Dāya (d. ca. 330–40/941–51), preserved only in later form in the seventh/thirteenth work *al-Mughrib fī ḥulā al-Maghrib*, of Ibn Saʿīd al-Andalusī (d. 685/1286),[5] and *Sīrat Āl Ṭūlūn* by ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Balawī (*fl.* second half of the fourth/tenth century).[6] Of the latter work, it seems only the first section survives, the extended biography (*Sīra*) of Ibn Ṭūlūn himself.[7] The third

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[3] For two summary treatments of the phenomenon see Mai Elliot, "The Terrible Violence of 'Pacification'," *New York Times*, January 18, 2018, www.nytimes.com/2018/01/18/opinion/violence-pacification-vietnam-war.html; and Jean-François Klein, "'Pacification,' an Imperial Process," in *The EHNE Digital Encyclopedia*, https://ehne.fr/en/article/europe-europeans-and-world/governing-populations-colonies/pacification-imperial-process.

[4] A companion volume to Hugh Kennedy (ed.), *The Historiography of Islamic Egypt (c. 950–1800)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), which would examine the scholarly production of pre-fourth/tenth-century Egypt, is in order.

[5] Ibn Saʿīd al-Andalusī, *al-Mughrib fī ḥulā al-Maghrib*, vol. 1, ed. Z. M. Ḥasan (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Fuʾād al-Awwal, 1953).

[6] Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī gave his edition of this work the title *Sīrat Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn* in defiance of work's title *Sīrat Āl Ṭūlūn* mentioned in his manuscript. See ʿAbdallāh b. Muḥammad al-Balawī, *Sīrat Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn*, ed. Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī (Damascus: Maṭbaʿat al-Taraqqī, 1939), 13.

[7] For a useful assessment of the two biographies see Michael Bonner, "Ibn Ṭūlūn's Jihad: The Damascus Assembly of 269/883," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 130/4 (2010), 573–605, at

source, *Kitāb Tasmiyat Wulāt Miṣr* of Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Kindī (d. 350/961), known generally as *The Book of Governors*, is a chronicle of Egyptian governors to the mid-fourth/tenth century.[8] I also rely, though to a lesser extent, on the third/ninth-century chronicle of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Yaʿqūbī (*fl.* late third/ninth century),[9] and, occasionally, later and often derivative Arabic written works. My approach is to extract information from the three main sources as it pertains to the events treated below. I will not address, except in passing, the question of the narrative strategy adopted by each of the three authors. A separate study would show, I believe, a parting of opinion between al-Balawī and al-Kindī, the former author determined to assign best motives to Ibn Ṭūlūn whereas al-Kindī held, it seems, a less benign view of the new governor, the Turkic–Samarran circles from which he emerged, and the impact of their presence in Egypt.

A full discussion would use these texts alongside the kinds of documents read by the late nineteenth/early twentieth-century Austrian historian and papyrologist Joseph von Karabacek, in his 1887 study.[10] His arguments were subsequently used by Carl H. Becker in an equally close discussion that appeared in 1902.[11] These are nearly the only modern studies of the Turkic–Central Asian presence in Egypt of which I am aware. The two studies remain useful in part for their close if problematic use of papyrus documents. But neither scholar had access to the works of al-Kindī and al-Balawī – the editions of which appeared respectively in 1912 and 1939 – and

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578–80. Given that we only possess a later version of Ibn al-Dāya's text, the relationship of the two biographies is a conundrum, as is the use of both texts by later, mainly Egyptian, authors.

[8] Al-Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. Rhuvon Guest (London/Leiden: Luzon/Brill, 1912). On (what little we know of) al-Kindī see Mathieu Tillier, *Histoire des cadis égyptiens* (Cairo: IFAO, 2012), 2–4, and, on the work itself, Guest's dated but still rich introduction to al-Kindī, *Governors*, 1–54, esp. 10–12. On the titles of the two works see the respective editors' comments: Kurd ʿAlī, in al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 13, and Guest, in al-Kindī, *Governors*, 10. A fully annotated English translation of al-Kindī's book is in preparation by the present author and Mathieu Tillier.

[9] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *al-Taʾrīkh*, ed. M. T. Houtsma as *Ibn Wādhih qui dicitur al-Jaʿqūbī Historiae*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1883); trans. in *The Works of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Yaʿqūbī: An English Translation*, ed. and trans. Matthew S. Gordon et al., 3 vols. (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018).

[10] Joseph von Karabacek, "Erstes Urkundliches Auftreten von Türken," in *Mittheilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer*, ed. J. von Karabacek, 6 vols. (Vienna: K. K. Hof und Staatsdruckerei, 1886–97), 1:93–108. A new edition and translation of the documents used by von Karabacek is very much in order. I wish to thank Claudia Kreuzsaler, Lucian Reinfandt, and Khaled Younes for their help with my preliminary questions.

[11] Carl H. Becker, *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter der Islam* (Strasburg: Karl J. Trübner, 1902), 136–48. See also Michael Collins Dunn, "The Struggle for ʿAbbasid Egypt," PhD thesis, Georgetown University (1975), 47–105; and Hugh Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province in the Islamic Caliphate, 641–868," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 62–85, at 80–85.

thus each was unaware of much of the detail I consider below, although they did have access to the first editions of Ibn Taghrī Birdī's *al-Nujūm al-zāhira* (published in 1855 and 1861) and al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ* (published in 1270/1853) alongside other Arabic texts and, again, documents.[12] A number of new documents of relevance here have been published in the many decades since.[13]

What follows, then, is a study of imperial political history: Ibn Ṭūlūn, in his official capacity as resident governor, served on behalf of the Abbasid state in Iraq but, as the following discussion makes clear, with a significant twist. The *amīr*, as the sources know him, governed Egypt for sixteen years, from his arrival in Ramaḍān 254/868 to his premature death in Dhū al-Qaʿda 270/884. It was at an early point in his tenure that he set out in pursuit of an ambitious agenda, a turn that caught the imperial center by surprise. Combining the principal political, fiscal, and security offices of the province, Ibn Ṭūlūn took Egypt's landed and commercial wealth in hand. His achievements included the creation of a dynastic polity into which he incorporated, albeit uneasily, Syria and the Islamic–Byzantine frontier districts; the establishment of an administrative center at al-Qaṭāʾiʿ, site of the well-known mosque, barracks, and a new hospital; the organization of an Egypt-centered bureaucracy; and a dynamic economy reliant on agrarian production, mining, trans-regional commerce, and manufacturing, in which flax production may have played a significant part. His untimely death thus brought short a highly visible and, in the eyes of his many detractors, controversial career.[14]

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[12] More recent editions of the two named works are cited in notes 16 and 58 below.

[13] See, e.g., Gladys Frantz-Murphy (ed.), *Arabic Agricultural Leases and Tax Receipts from Egypt (148–427 AH/765–1035 AD – Arabic Texts)* (Vienna: Brüder Hollinek, 2001); Lucian Reinfandt and Naïm Vanthieghem, "Les archives fiscales de Mīnā, fils de Damarqūra, un contribuable Copte du IXe siècle," in *Mélanges Jean Gascou: textes et études papyrologiques (P.Gascou)*, ed. Jean-Luc Fournet and Arietta Papaconstantinou, *Travaux et Mémoires* 19 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilization de Byzance, 2016), 351–70; and Mathieu Tillier and Naïm Vanthieghem, "Un registre carcéral de la Fusṭāṭ abbasside," *Islamic Law and Society* 25 (2018), 1–40.

[14] Recent scholarship on Ibn Ṭūlūn's reign includes Thierry Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt from Ibn Ṭūlūn to Kāfūr, 868–969," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 86–119; Bonner, "Waning"; Bonner, "Ibn Ṭūlūn's Jihād"; Matthew S. Gordon, "Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn," in *EI³*, s.v.; Mathieu Tillier, "L'étoile, la chaîne et le jugement: essai d'interprétation d'un élément de décor dans la mosquée d'Ibn Ṭūlūn," *Der Islam* 92/2 (2015), 332–66; Mathieu Tillier, "Dans les prisons d'Ibn Ṭūlūn," in *Savants, amants, poètes et fous: séances offertes à Katia Zakharia*, ed. Catherine Pinon (Beirut/Damascus: Presses de l'Ifpo, 2019), 233–51; and Luke Treadwell, "The Numismatic Evidence for the Reign of Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn," *al-ʿUsur al-Wusta* 25 (2017), 14–40. On, specifically, Ibn Ṭūlūn's relations with the Abbasid imperial center see Matthew S. Gordon, "Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn and the Politics of Deference," in *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone*, ed. Behnam Sadeghi et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 229–56.

 That Ibn Ṭūlūn held greater sway over Egypt than any imperial representative before him in the Islamic period is hardly in question. But to mark the turn too sharply risks obscuring the context in which Ibn Ṭūlūn took office, not to speak of broader trends that connect Egypt's history with that of the wider Abbasid realm.[15] The pacification campaign is a case in point. As shown below, it represented a final chapter in a long history of imperial intervention in Egypt, dating, in a broad sense, to the first years of the third/ninth century and, closer in time, to specific efforts by fellow Turkic and Central Asian office holders in Fusṭāṭ prior to his arrival. These previous efforts likely help explain his success in the sense that they "softened up" sources of local opposition, not least in the sense of decimating much of Egypt's rural leadership. While the question remains open as to when Ibn Ṭūlūn set out in pursuit of autonomous authority, it seems fair to consider that the successful outcome of the pacification campaign provided him not only with the opportunity, but, indeed, with the *idea* of doing so. The point here, however, is that Ibn Ṭūlūn very likely took office with quite a different and certainly more limited mandate in hand, to assure a grip on Egypt by the Samarran military command.

The Samarran Military Presence in Egypt

Ibn al-Dāya and al-Balawī, like al-Yaʿqūbī, agree that Ibn Ṭūlūn was appointed twice to the office of resident governor. The first instance, in 254/868, followed the appointment, by the Abbasid caliph al-Muʿtazz (r. 252–55/866–69), of Bāyakbāk (?), a ranking member of the Samarran command, as viceregent of Egypt.[16] Bāyakbāk, to whom Ibn Ṭūlūn had

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[15] This is to take issue, for example, with Dunn's comment that "Ṭūlūnid Egypt is a new creation . . . it does not belong, really, to the ʿAbbāsid age" ("The Struggle," 103).

[16] The names of many of the Samarran "Turks" as they appear in modern editions are uncertain. Bāyakbāk, for example, appears as Bākbāk in various sources, including the unique edition of al-Balawī's text. Confusion surrounding the names appears in the editor's note in Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira*, ed. M. Ḥ. Shams al-Dīn, 16 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1413/1992), 3:6 n. 1, in which he conflates the identity of two of the commanders, Yārjūkh (?) and Amājūr (?). As for "Turk" (Ar., *Turk*, pl. *Atrāk*) and "Turkish" (Ar., [*al-*]*Turkī*), in reference to a number of the Samarran soldiers, it was likely used as a term of convenience and, often, disparagement. The effect was to gloss over a variety of regional and social origins on the part of the soldiers themselves. Put differently, "Turk" effectively imposed a cultural uniformity upon these individuals and their descendants. The Samarran "Turkish" military, as a collective body ("community"), included successive generations of soldiers, administrators, and freebooters produced, typically, with concubine mothers also of a variety of origins. For one discussion on the reception of the "Turks" in third/ninth-century Iraq see Matthew S. Gordon, "The Samarran Turkish Community in the *Taʾrīkh* of al-Ṭabarī," in *al-Ṭabarī: A Medieval Muslim Historian and his Work*, ed. Hugh Kennedy (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2008), 237–62.

been recommended, dispatched the young officer as his *khalīfa* (deputy), that is, resident governor.[17] Bāyakbāk fell victim the next year (256/869) to the violence in Samarra that swept up four caliphs, senior officers, and untold numbers of troops and civilians.[18] His successor, Yārjūkh (?), a fellow commander, not only confirmed the original appointment but also expanded Ibn Ṭūlūn's writ by attaching Alexandria to his charge.[19] Yārjūkh appears to have retained responsibility over Egypt to his death, from unstated causes, in 257–58/871–72.[20]

   The back-to-back appointments are details embedded in well-worked narrative accounts. They sit well, however, with many other references in Egyptian and Iraqi sources regarding the extent and effect of networking in Samarra's barracks and reception halls. The references to Ibn Ṭūlūn's two appointments point to the highly relational character of Abbasid political culture into which the Turkic and Central Asian commanders were drawn. In the case of Bāyakbāk, Zaky Hassan, author of a now dated full-length history of the Ṭūlūnids, cites al-ʿAynī (d. 855/1451), and thus a later Egyptian source, in identifying him as Ibn Ṭūlūn's stepfather.[21] The reference is uncertain: the two early biographies make no such claim. Al-ʿAynī likely pulled the reference from the *Munqaṭaʿa* of Ibn Ẓāfir al-Azdī (d. 613/1216), a much later work.[22]

   The sources are more helpful regarding relations between Yārjūkh and Ibn Ṭūlūn. At an early point in the latter's career, according to several references, Yārjūkh arranged the young officer's marriage to his daughter (unnamed), and, subsequent to Ibn Ṭūlūn's arrival in Egypt, performed several further political favors on his behalf, including the reappointment.[23] Yārjūkh's brief

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[17] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:615–16. This is to distinguish, in other words, the persons appointed as viceregents (over sectors of the empire that often incorporated more than a single province), but who typically opted to remain in the capital, from the persons that they appointed in turn to carry out duties on the ground. Kennedy ("Egypt as a Province," 82) refers to the viceregents as "super governors."

[18] See Matthew S. Gordon, *The Breaking of a Thousand Swords: A History of the Turkish Military of Samarra* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001), 83–104.

[19] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 45, 46; al-Kindī, *Governors*, 216; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:621.

[20] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 45, 46 and 153–54; Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul waʾl-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 5 vols. + suppls. (Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901), 3: 1873 ("died"); and al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:624 ("killed").

[21] Zaky Hassan, *Les Ṭūlūnides: étude de l'Égypte musulmane à la fin du IXe siècle, 868–905* (Paris: Établissements Busson, 1933), 28, 33.

[22] Ibn Ẓāfir al-Azdī, *Akhbār al-duwal al-munqaṭaʿa*, ed. ʿI. M. al-Hazāyima et al. (Irbid: Dār al-Kindī, 1999), 122.

[23] Ibn al-Dāya in Ibn Saʿīd, *al-Mughrib*, 84 and al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 35, 45–46, 153. In two initial comments (*Sīra*, 35, 45–46) al-Balawī refers to Yārjūkh marrying her to Ibn Ṭūlūn. He identifies her as the daughter of a distinguished "royal" courtesan and mother of two of Ibn Ṭūlūn's children, al-ʿAbbās and Fāṭima. For this reason, I read the third reference (*Sīra*, 153), that Yārjūkh married her to Mūsā b. Bughā, a second-generation Samarran commander and scion of a leading military house, as an

tenure coincided with the ascendance of a new caliph, al-Muʿtamid (r. 256–79/870–92), with whom Ibn Ṭūlūn would later have much interaction. Yārjūkh, as just noted, soon disappeared. Al-Ṭabarī reports that his funeral was attended by the caliph himself, an indication of the deceased commander's standing.[24] Ibn Ṭūlūn was by this point firmly entrenched. In a gesture appropriate to the dutiful client, he repaid his political debt by relocating Yārjūkh's kinfolk to Egypt, providing them with income and property (one reference to private holdings on the part of the Samarran military).[25]

These details speak to the abiding interest in Egypt of the Samarran military command. I will leave off comment on the apparent origins of the Samarran commanders, that is, as members of the so-called Abbasid slave military, a topic much in need of new discussion.[26] But one point regarding their putative social origins: each of the Samarran commanders was a beneficiary of the same patterns of networking and clientage that Bāyakbāk and Yārjūkh extended thereafter to Ibn Ṭūlūn. Each, in time-honored fashion, accumulated a set of political and economic interests, including lands/estates, appointments, elite social contacts, including those with members of the Abbasid house, and authority over rank-and-file units.[27] Of these interests, again, Egypt took on special significance. I see, as further indication, the references, including those contained in the documentary record, to estates (*ḍayʿa*, pl. *ḍiyāʿ*) owned and/or controlled in the province by a number of the commanders and other Samarran elite persons and families.[28]

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error, either on the author's part or that of a copyist. Ibn Taghrī Birdī, a later author, names Yārjūkh's daughter as Khātūn, which, in light of several other questionable claims in the enclosing passage, was probably a guess on his part (Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, 3:6).

[24] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 153; al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 3:1873; and al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:624 (honoured in Egypt).

[25] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 153–54.

[26] On one view of the Abbasid "slave military" see Patricia Crone, *Slaves on Horses: The Evolution of the Islamic Polity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); and Daniel Pipes, *Slave Soldiers and Islam: The Genesis of a Military System* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981). This author's study, *The Breaking of a Thousand Swords* (2001), adopted a different approach in accounting for the social and political history of the Samarran "Turkish" forces *tout court*. Central ideas of the book, particularly regarding the origins and slave standing of these forces, have been challenged usefully by Étienne de la Vaissière, *Samarcande et Samarra: élites d'Asie centrale dans l'empire abbasside* (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, 2007). On unfreedom/slavery in the early and medieval Islamic period, two valuable recent studies are Kurt Franz, "Slavery in Islam: Legal Norms and Social Practice," in *Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1000–1500 CE)*, ed. Reuven Amitai and Christoph Cluse (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 51–141, esp. 110–20, and Dahlia E. Gubara, "Revisiting Race and Slavery through ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's *ʿAjaʾib al-athar*," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 38/2 (2018), 230–45.

[27] See Matthew S. Gordon, "The Turkish Officers of Samarra: Revenue and the Exercise of Authority," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 42/4 (1999), 466–93.

[28] On these holdings see Gladys Frantz-Murphy, "A New Interpretation of the Economic History of Medieval Egypt: The Role of the Textile Industry," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 24/2 (1981), 274–97, at 282–85; Kosei Morimoto, "Land Tenure in Egypt during the Early

Following von Karabacek, perhaps, modern historians seem to take this turn in Egypt's history – the shaping of the "Turkish presence" – for granted. It remains, however, to be discussed anew. A useful point of departure is the following passage from al-Balawī, a reference underplayed in secondary scholarship, in which he sets Ibn Ṭūlūn's appointment in context.

> Each time that one of [the Turkic–Central Asian commanders in Samarra] came to the attention of the caliphs, and word of his achievements spread, the caliphs pressed him into service as a defender of their interests. Significant provincial posts outside the capital were assigned to him and the caliphs dispatched deputies[29] to serve him. The revenue of each province would be sent him directly, and his name announced from its pulpits.[30]

The passage describes three developments: the delegation of provincial administration to ranking members of the Samarran command; the provision of authority over state monies (*māl*); and the public expression of allegiance in the form of the Friday-prayer declaration of names and titles. But one can adjust the wording: if the text sees the caliphs as having initiated these decisions, this had to do with the prestige of the office – how delegation of authority *ought* to have worked – and not, I suggest, the actual power politics of Samarra in this period. At work, in other words, was the authority wielded by the commanders themselves. And, given the strong likelihood that al-Balawī is speaking mainly of Egypt in reference to "significant provincial posts," then it seems right to see his comment as pointing to the Samarran commanders as having assumed de facto decision making over (and in) the province.

Al-Balawī then provides a list of individuals to whom Abbasid caliphs, beginning with Hārūn al-Rashīd (r. 170–93/786–809), assigned the Nile Valley and its hinterlands. It seems doubtful that he meant the list to be complete: the text reads more as a summary comment on the shift to the Turkic–Central Asian command in the administrative history of the province. To fill out the list one can turn to references to Samarran military men elsewhere in the two biographies and al-Kindī's *Governors*, as well as

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Islamic Period," *Orient* 11 (1975), 109–53, at 130–31; and Chris Wickham, "The Power of Property: Land Tenure in Fāṭimid Egypt," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 62/1 (2019), 67–107, at 72. One further example: Ibn Ṭūlūn refers to the personal holdings that his house either controlled (*iqṭāʿī*) or purchased (*ibtiyāʿī*) (al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 340–41). I have yet to find a good explanation of the latter term, if, in fact, it had a formal meaning.

[29] Again, what I am calling "resident" officials. The phrase uses *khalīfa*: *istakhlafū la-hu ʿalayhā al-khulafāʾ*.

[30] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 32–33.

later sources. On this basis the extent of the Samarran military presence in Egypt emerges even more clearly.[31]

Al-Balawī's approximate list ends with Bāyakbāk and his appointment of Ibn Ṭūlūn. Al-Kindī, for his part, has Ibn Ṭūlūn take office on behalf of al-Muʿtazz without mention of Bāyakbāk. He indicates that, upon taking office, Ibn Ṭūlūn chose a certain Būlghā (?) to head the *shurṭa* before then replacing him with one Būzān (?) al-Turkī, who, in turn, delegated duties to one Muḥammad b. Isbandiyār.[32] As for Ibn Ṭūlūn's immediate successors, going in reverse chronological order, they were Azjūr (?) al-Turkī, Aḥmad b. Muzāhim b. Khāqān, Muzāhim b. Khāqān, and Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh al-Turkī, all of similar Samarran background. The first of the three individuals, however, were probably of notable, free Central Asian origin; the origins of Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh, whose tenure in Egypt exceeded ten years, are obscure.[33]

Read together, the two sources suggest the extent of the Turkic–Central Asian presence in Egypt. At work was not simply the assumption of office by Samarran military viceregents and their deputies, but also the manner in which these men followed up by tapping the ranks of the Samarran officer corps to fill out the local administration.[34] On hand is a series of indications that allows one, in approximate fashion, to track how and when the Samarran command first arrived in the province, and the effort on their part to assure a lasting presence on the ground. This involves turning back the clock some decades to the early part of the third/ninth century. I rely, for this brief and partial survey, mostly on al-Kindī.

The first appearance in Egypt of the Turkic–Central Asian military came on the heels of the Fourth *Fitna* (193–204/809–19), thus during the reign of al-Maʾmūn (198–218/813–33). It is from this point, as Kennedy has indicated, that the practice of viceregency came into play. So too an equally

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[31] See Dunn, "The Struggle," 90–105; and Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 83–85. It bears stressing, however, that a list derived from al-Kindī would itself fall short, which has partly to do with the problem of demarcating administrative responsibilities from one office (and office holder) to the next: Ibn Ṭūlūn, in fusing the key administrative offices of Egypt, stands apart from his predecessors in the extent to which he extended the practice. On this topic see Khaled Younes, "New Governors Identified in Arabic Papyri," in *Authority and Control in the Countryside: From Antiquity to Islam in the Mediterranean and Near East (6th–10th Century)*, ed. Alain Delattre, Marie Legendre, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 13–40.

[32] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 212. His father, Isbandiyār, served earlier in the Egyptian administration (al-Kindī, *Governors*, 193).

[33] On the free "Turkish" families of Samarra see Gordon, *Thousand Swords*, 157–60.

[34] On Badr al-Kabīr, or "Abū al-Najm," as he appears in papyrus documents, a Ṭūlūnid freedman of Byzantine origin, see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Profit Following Responsibility: A Leaf from the Records of a Third/Ninth Century Tax-Collecting Agent," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 31 (2001), 91–132.

significant pattern, the control of Egypt's political and military affairs by non-Egyptians.[35] Years would follow before the first appointments of Turkic commanders – Samarra was only founded in 221–23/836–38, with the emergence of the Turkic command gradually thereafter – but these developments bear mention in that they set the stage.[36] The Fourth *Fitna*, a long, terrible, civil conflict, had ended with al-Maʾmūn atop the Abbasid throne but very much in need of sustained political, ideological, and military support in restoring a fragmented empire.[37] He relied mainly on the prestige of his office and on actors who had assured his triumph over al-Amīn and the latter's Baghdadi forces. Al-Maʾmūn's main support came from the Ṭāhirid family and his younger brother, Abū Isḥāq Muḥammad (al-Muʿtaṣim), to whom the new caliph likely assigned command of the newly established Turkic–Central Asian forces.[38]

Lower Egypt, as a result of the civil war, had fractured into two ill-defined sectors, one governed by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Jarawī and his son, ʿAlī b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the other by Sarī b. al-Ḥakam and his offspring. To reunite the province and return it to the imperial fold, al-Maʾmūn first dispatched ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir; the latter, turning largely, it seems, to negotiation, overcame each of the two main parties in turn. The ensuing calm was short-lived,[39] and, with the occurrence of new unrest, more repressive measures were brought to bear. This followed the departure of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir in 212/827 and the appointment, two years later, of Abū Isḥāq Muḥammad as the new viceregent.

Al-Kindī makes clear the extent to which both Ibn Ṭāhir and Abū Isḥāq relied initially on commanders of Iranian–Khurasani background.[40] So, for example, referring to the appointment of Abū Isḥāq to replace ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir, al-Kindī has the Abbasid prince appoint a certain Ṣāliḥ b. Shīrzād to head the tax bureau (*kharāj*).[41] In response to the latter's harsh

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[35] Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 82–83.

[36] On the foundation of the Abbasid city see Alastair Northedge, *The Historical Topography of Samarra* (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 2005), 98–99.

[37] See Michael Cooperson, *al-Maʾmun* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005), 39–79.

[38] See Gordon, *Thousand Swords*, 15–46; and Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2004), 147–61.

[39] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 180–84; and see, for a useful summary, Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 81–82.

[40] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 183–84: reference to two commanders as "officers of non-Arab extraction (*quwwād al-ʿajam*) from the Khurasani military," and a member of the Sāmānid family, Ilyās b. Asad, as ʿAbd Allāh's appointee over Alexandria.

[41] On the likely designation of the term in the later third/ninth century see Marie Legendre, "Landowners, Caliphs and State Policy over Landholdings in the Egyptian Countryside," in *Authority and Control in the Countryside: From Antiquity to Islam in the Mediterranean and Near East (6th–10th Century)*, ed. Alain Delattre, Marie Legendre, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 392–419, at 409–10.

policies – "he oppressed the populace with an ever greater tax burden" (*fa-ẓalama al-nās wa-zāda ʿalayhim fī kharājihim*) – the people of Lower Egypt (*asfal al-arḍ*) rose in arms. The fighting raged, as it had so often in earlier decades, across the Ḥawf and Delta.[42] The killing in 214/830 of Abū Isḥāq's first resident governor, ʿUmayr b. al-Walīd, and the rout of his replacement, the long-time Baghdadi–Abnāwī strongman ʿĪsā b. Yazīd al-Julūdī, evidently convinced the new viceregent to march in person to Egypt.

This marked the first appearance of Samarra's Turkic–Central Asian forces in Egypt. Al-Kindī, our principal source, sees Abū Isḥāq's campaign as having been deliberate and destructive.[43] Commanding four thousand Turks (*Atrāk*), Abū Isḥāq overwhelmed opponents in the field and, at one point, ordered the arrest of two Arab chiefs, ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥulays (Qays) and ʿAbd al-Salām b. Abī al-Māḍī (Yaman). Placing them initially on display (*aqāmahumā li'l-nās*) in Fusṭāṭ, Abū Isḥāq then ordered them beheaded and their bodies gibbeted in Jīza. While the grim details cannot be checked, al-Kindī does provide lines of comment by a local poet, Muʿallā al-Ṭāʾī, on viewing al-Ḥulaysī's remains. Sardonic and partisan – the two rebel leaders, the poet seems to say, ought to have known better than to cross Abū Isḥāq – the verse bespeaks an instance of ritual state violence.[44] Compounding the effort to cow Egypt's populace, Abū Isḥāq departed with a number of captives in hand. Al-Kindī refers to the harsh measures visited upon the prisoners, presumably as public show (*fī ḍurrin wa-jahdin shadīdin*).[45]

One can only speculate as to the first impression of Egypt left on the Turkic–Central Asian forces, apart from the obvious sense that local resentment of imperial policies ran deep and, perhaps, that local administrators were unequal to the task of effecting lasting "peace."[46] New unrest in the Ḥawf occurred shortly thereafter, followed by a much wider uprising of Arabs and Copts alike in Lower Egypt, all within a year or so of Abū Isḥāq's departure, "his Turks" in tow.[47] Al-Kindī describes misconduct on

[42] For one summary of the context and sequence of these revolts see Maged S. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 118–27.

[43] The sources say little of the type of warfare conducted by these forces, but the indications are that imperial troops were mounted.

[44] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 188–89. On al-Kindī's reliance on verse, a rich subject, see Guest's introduction to al-Kindī, *Governors*, 39–42; and Tillier, *Histoire*, 12–14.

[45] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 189. On the possible integration of the prisoners into the Samarran armed forces see Gordon, *Thousand Swords*, 37–40.

[46] An educated guess is that Ibn Ṭūlūn's father, an early member of the Samarran Turkic military, took part in the campaign. On Ṭūlūn's enslavement and recruitment see the passing comments in al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 33 and Ibn al-Dāya in Ibn Saʿīd, *al-Mughrib*, 73–74.

[47] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 189.

the part of local officials (*sūʾ sīrat al-ʿummāl*) as the trigger. The new uprising was met, if one accepts al-Kindī's assessment, with an even harsher imperial response.

   Leading the response was Ḥaydar b. Kāwūs al-Ṣughdī, the (in)famous al-Afshīn (d. 224/839); his subsequent prominence in Samarra is well attested in the sources.[48] Al-Afshīn had arrived in Egypt earlier before marching to Barqa, a coastal city well west of Alexandria. Back in Egypt, he conducted what reads like a war of attrition across the Delta, each field victory accompanied by rituals of captivity and execution. The effort culminated in an assault on Alexandria and new executions, particularly of members of the Banū Mudlij, a prominent Arab populace in the Delta, and, it appears, chief instigators of the uprising. The campaign was followed by the dramatic appearance of al-Maʾmūn in 217/832. Over seven weeks the caliph ranged over Lower Egypt, at one point ordering a harsh reprisal against the Copts of al-Bashrūd, and the execution of an Arab tribal head, Ibn ʿUbaydus al-Fihrī. He is also reported to have punished his governor, ʿĪsā b. Manṣūr, for the misconduct of lower officials.[49] For a short period Egypt experienced an uneasy calm. It is worth noting that the imperial crackdown was apparently indiscriminate, falling on Coptic Christian and Arab Muslim tribal villages alike – that is, the two main rural populations of Egypt.

   To govern Egypt, al-Maʾmūn and, following his death in 218/833, al-Muʿtaṣim, relied on key supporters in Baghdad. Again, many of these individuals were of Iranian, Central Asian, and Turkic background, as al-Kindī indicates in various passing comments.[50] The roster included at least one member of the emergent Turkic–Central Asian command in Samarra, Ashinās al-Turkī (d. 230/844): that same circle was now gaining access to the highest ranks of imperial politics. Several reports place Ashinās in Egypt with al-Maʾmūn prior to his affiliation with Abū Isḥāq al-Muʿtaṣim.[51] The latter's decision to tap him as viceregent followed in 219/834. Ashinās, following a decade-long tenure, was replaced by Ītākh al-Turkī, a second of al-Muʿtaṣim's longstanding commanders. Ītākh held office for five years before his disgrace under al-Mutawakkil in 235/849. Al-Kindī refers to the

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[48] See Matthew S. Gordon, "Afshīn," in *EI³*, s.v. and the detailed discussion in de la Vaissière, *Samarcande* (see his index), who brings together the evidence regarding al-Afshīn's Turkic origins and the complex web of relations joining Central Asian elite culture to the Turkic steppe.

[49] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 189–92; and see Dunn, "The Struggle," 78–86.

[50] Al-Kindī, *Governors*: al-Afshīn as "al-Sughdī" (189); Bistām from Bukhara (192, 193), Rashīd al-Turkī (192); Isbandiyār (193), and so on.

[51] See Gordon, *Thousand Swords*, 17. See also, again, the reference to Rashīd al-Turkī (al-Kindī, *Governors*, 192).

confiscation of Ītākh's properties (*amwāl*) in Egypt, yet another reference to the private holdings of the Samarran brass.[52]

Appointments to Egypt, in sum, turned on shifts in Samarran politics. Thus al-Mutawakkil's choice as viceregent of his son and heir, Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad, the future al-Muntaṣir (r. 247–48/861–62), and the latter's appointment of successive resident governors who appear not to have had connection with the Turkic–Central Asian command. The list included a member of a prominent Abnawī family, Isḥāq b. Yaḥyā b. Muʿādh, and ʿAnbasa b. Isḥāq al-Ḍabbī, described by al-Kindī as the last Arab governor of Egypt. In the same passage he also has him as the last resident governor to lead the Friday prayer in person, a point to which I return below.[53] But such political shifts were relative. In what seems like a curious choice, given the confrontation between Ītākh al-Turkī and al-Mutawakkil, al-Muntaṣir appointed, in 242/856, Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh al-Turkī to succeed ʿAnbasa b. Isḥāq as resident governor. Ibn ʿAbdallāh, described by al-Ṭabarī as previously a close associate of Ītākh in Samarra, would hold office for a decade.[54]

The absence of further information on Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh's background and career is unfortunate: it was during his tenure (Rajab 242/856 to Rabīʿa al-Awwāl 253/867) that the presence in Egypt of the Turkic–Central Asian military appears to have expanded quickly. It was also in the final days of his tenure that Ibn Ṭūlūn made his appearance (254/868). Detailed comments are thus in order. These have to do with two closely related developments: the so-called anarchy in Samarra, during which elements of the Samarran command mounted their well-known challenge to the authority of the Abbasid court; and, again, the escalation of the Turkic–Central Asian presence in Egypt.

The situation likely unfolded as follows. First, on the violence in Samarra, it resulted not only in the rise and disappearance of a succession of Abbasid office holders, but further decline in the standing of the office itself.[55] The turmoil spilled over, perhaps inevitably, into the provinces. In Syria, ever the venue for proxy conflict, local forces struggled with imperial appointees, many of Samarran military background, as well as freebooters, many also from Samarra. The province appears to have been

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[52] On Ītākh's acquisition, career, and death see the many references in Gordon, *Thousand Swords*.

[53] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 202.

[54] Al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 3:1351 and 1373, refers to him with the *nisba* "al-Ḥulwānī."

[55] In addition to Gordon, *Thousand Swords*, 83–104 and Kennedy, *Prophet*, 169–73, see the careful if now dated discussion in M. Shamsuddin Miah, *The Reign of al-Mutawakkil* (Dacca: Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1969), 67–74.

rendered nearly unmanageable.[56] In Egypt, as seen throughout this discussion, central authority also came into question, both in the Delta and Upper Egypt. Countering the unrest appears to have consumed the greater part of Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh's term in office. But all indications are that, in organizing the response, Ibn ʿAbdallāh and his Samarran allies also took the opportunity to accelerate their presence in Egypt. It was a matter of meeting the threat to imperial order but, to no less an extent, seizing the moment to tighten control over the province and thus enhance access to its fiscal and human resources.

This provides, in turn, an explanation for Ibn Ṭūlūn's appointment: he arrived in Egypt, in effect, to reinforce the Samarran military presence in the province. Thus, the onset of his tenure did not mark a break in Egypt's Abbasid history, but rather continuity, that is, of that same initiative by elements of the Samarran military. It follows, as suggested by many of the references provided here, that Ibn Ṭūlūn, newly appointed, had at his disposal in Fusṭāṭ a cohort of Turkic–Central Asian commanders and, it appears, cavalry units also of Samarran origin (although the sources – Ibn al-Dāya, al-Balawī, and al-Kindī – make only passing mention of the composition of the rank and file).

Ibn Ṭūlūn's Campaign and the Place of Violence

The new resident governor took up his mandate with great energy. It took time, but, by 262/875 – so, roughly seven years into his tenure – he and these same forces overcame the last of his (and the empire's) challengers. The different episodes are difficult to render clearly. Ibn Ṭūlūn's antagonists are obscure and the sources provide comparatively few details regarding their grievances, the composition of their followings, and the scale of their activity. On the question of composition, all but one of the incidents took place in rural districts, so the likelihood is that the main participants were peasants, tribesmen, slaves, and freedmen, Coptic and Muslim alike. They were led, in at least four cases, by charismatic figures wielding religious claims. The main spark, however, appears to have been economic – an effort to reverse the extraction of taxes and other wealth, as well as labor – although the sources do not speak consistently in these terms.

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[56] On Ibn Ṭūlūn's campaigns in Syria see Matthew S. Gordon, "Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn and the Campaigns into Syria," in *In the House of Understanding: Histories in Memory of Kamal S. Salibi*, ed. Abdul Rahim Abu Husayn, Tarif Khalidi, and Suleiman A. Mourad (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 2017), 523–48.

There are six episodes to account for in which Ibn Ṭūlūn confronted anti-imperial forces. He played only a minor part in the first such episode; again, the highest-ranking imperial official at that point was Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh. The rebellion marked a significant turn in Egypt's relations with the empire: a province-wide uprising in which, it seems, a discernible element of the Egyptian populace took part. In this case, references in Coptic sources complement the information provided in the Arabic texts, especially al-Kindī.[57] Given its impact, it bears detailed discussion. An assessment of its chief ingredients – I will set aside a full narrative – also provides useful context for the five subsequent episodes over which Ibn Ṭūlūn took on a presiding role.

First, there is its extent: according to al-Kindī's pointed account, the uprising erupted initially in the hinterland of Alexandria, in the first months of 252/866, then spread quickly across the Delta. Initiated by an Arab tribal chief, Jābir b. al-Walīd al-Mudlijī, and confined at first to his tribesmen and their clients,[58] the rebellion grew with successive routs of imperial forces. These attracted notice, including that of rural strongmen, among them a certain Jurayj (George) al-Naṣrānī. The latter's *nisba* would seem indicative of participation by the local Coptic populace, and, indeed, previous large-scale tax revolts in the Delta had seen just such alliances, including an uprising in 203/819 that brought together the Banū Mudlij and local Coptic elements.[59] And, in a much better-known event centered in the Bashmūr district of the eastern Delta in 216/831, Muslim and Coptic elements joined forces in what both Arabic and Coptic sources indicate was an angry response to the imposition of oppressive new taxes.[60]

A second ingredient was the participation of a prominent ʿAlid figure, ʿAbdallāh b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad or, as he was known, Ibn al-Arqaṭ. Al-Kindī has Ibn al-Arqaṭ throw his lot in at a secondary stage in the rebellion, at which point he was taken in hand by Abū Ḥarmala al-Nūbī, another of the rural strongmen.[61] Ibn al-Arqaṭ went on to lead "a large number of rural folk (*al-aʿrāb*) and prominent followers (*wujūh aṣḥāb*)" assigned to

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[57] See Dunn, "The Struggle," 97–105; and Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 84–85.

[58] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 205–08 (*jamʿ kathīr min Banī Mudlij al-ṣulbiya wa'l-mawālī* – p. 205). The term *ṣulbī* seems obscure, perhaps the reason that Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiz wa'l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa'l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, 1st ed., 5 vols. (London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1424/2003), 4/1:385, chose to drop it. I read it here, following E. W. Lane, *Arabic–English Lexicon*, 8 vols. (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1984), 2:1712, as reference to the distinction between "full" tribesmen (Lane: "of their loins") and clients.

[59] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 170; and see Mikhail, *Islamic Egypt*, 124.

[60] See Dunn, "The Struggle," 3, 50, 80–86; and Mikhail, *Islamic Egypt*, 125.

[61] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 206.

him by Abū Ḥarmala.[62] His appearance is a further indication of an ad hoc alliance: al-Kindī, in describing the eventual collapse of the uprising, has imperial forces picking off the rebel elements in piecemeal fashion as if to make the same point. As for Ibn al-Arqaṭ, al-Kindī provides a careful reference: a full lineage and details on the significance of his part in the rebellion. This is to show that, by his participation, the ʿAlid lent a potent ideological ingredient to the rebellion that its secular leadership knew to exploit.

It is difficult to account for the ʿAlid presence at this point in Egypt's history – that is, their number, the reason(s) for their residence in the province, and, of immediate interest, the nature of their local following, although the references that follow clearly imply a prominent status. The references, from al-Kindī and al-Balawī, point to a discernible presence. They nearly all have to do either with ʿAlids leading anti-imperial activity – that is, heading up local resistance – or repressive measures visited upon them by imperial agents. Ibn al-Arqaṭ stands as one example of ʿAlid participation in local sedition, and further such examples are treated below. As for instances of repression, in 236/850 al-Mutawakkil and his viceregent (and heir), al-Muntaṣir, ordered "the ouster of the Ṭālibids";[63] in 247/861 al-Muntasir, working with Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh, imposed a series of restrictions on the ʿAlids;[64] and, in two further incidents, in 250/864 and 255/869, Ibn ʿAbdallāh again expelled "men from the Talibids" (*rijāl min al-Ṭālibiyyīn*) to Iraq.[65] Al-Yaʿqūbī, in reference to Ibn Ṭūlūn, has him send a group of Talibids from Egypt to Medina in 258/872.[66]

The visible presence in Fusṭāṭ of Turkic–Central Asian officers, and the Samarran units under their command, is a third feature of the 252/868 rebellion. The longstanding governor – Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh – is identified by his *nisba* as a Turk, to which can be added, as noted above, the references to his association with Ītākh al-Turkī. It fell to Ibn ʿAbdallāh to coordinate the fight against Jābir b. al-Walīd and Ibn al-Arqaṭ. Further indications include the reference to a "large force of Turks," led by a certain

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[62] What exactly this entailed is unclear: Abū Ḥarmala, the text says, "deputized" (or "armed"?) him (*qawwadahu*) and "assigned him" (*wa-ḍamma ilayhi*) these same fighters.

[63] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 198. The text has subsidies and clothing distributed (by gender) to these individuals, and their subsequent departure, after leaving Egypt, from Iraq to Medina.

[64] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 204. The first of the set of measures appears to have been a restriction or ban on owning property, but, as Guest indicates in al-Kindī, *Governors*, 204 nn. 1 and 2, he had to reconstruct the passage on the basis of al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭaṭ*.

[65] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 204–05. The second date seems off in that, by this date, Ibn Ṭūlūn was in office.

[66] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:623.

Muḥammad b. ʿAbdallāh al-Dabarānī, and sent by Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh into the Delta, apparently in response to the appearance of Ibn al-Arqaṭ. One understands this force to have been on hand in Fusṭāṭ for some unstated period. Shortly thereafter, so al-Kindī relates, Ibn ʿAbdallāh followed with another force led by "a Turk named Ghulbāk" (?) (*rajul min al-Turk yuqāl la-hu Gh-l-b-k*).[67] A certain Saltaq (?) al-Turkī appears as well (although the references may be to the same individual), specifically in fighting elements of Ibn al-Walīd's following.[68] It has him defeating the rebels then banishing them from the area.

Then, in reference to an apparent reinforcement of the imperial presence in Egypt, al-Kindī has Muzāḥim b. Khāqān – a second-generation member of a prominent Samarran family of free Turkic–Central Asian origin[69] – arriving from Iraq with a large force (*jaysh kathīr*).[70] Ibn Khāqān briefly replaced Ibn ʿAbdallāh as governor. From this point in their respective accounts, al-Kindī and al-Balawī refer, usually in passing, to a series of Turkic–Central Asian military men, among them Muḥammad b. Isbandiyār, Būlghiyā (?), Būzān (?) al-Turkī, Mūsā b. Ṭūnīq (?) Ibn Azdād (?) Ṭughlugh (?), Buhm b. al-Ḥusayn, Ṭukhshī b. Balbard (?), and, notably, Azjūr al-Turkī.[71] Most took part in military operations from this point into at least the first part of Ibn Ṭūlūn's tenure, and most held key offices in local administration, whether as head of the *shurṭa* or, in the case of Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh, Azjūr, and, finally, Ibn Ṭūlūn, as governor.

One cannot check the individual references, but a near monopoly of authority on the part of Samarran military and political personnel seems clear. The references to Azjūr by al-Kindī and Ibn Taghrī Birdī are particularly useful – if, in the latter case, problematic.[72] Azjūr, as possibly a member of another of the prominent free Turkic families, headed the *shurṭa* twice in 253–54/867–68 before assuming the office of governor for a brief period in 254/868.[73] He was then replaced by Ibn Ṭūlūn. But al-Kindī indicates that Azjūr wielded sweeping influence (*wa-Azjūr al-āmir wa'l-nāhī*) even when replaced over the *shurṭa* by Ibn Isbandiyār; the reference has him, at one point, imposing new rules governing local religious rites in Fusṭāṭ, as seen below.[74]

[67] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 206. [68] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 207–08.
[69] On this family see Matthew S. Gordon, "The Khāqānid Families of the Early ʿAbbasid Period," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121/2 (2001), 236–55, esp. 237–41.
[70] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 207. [71] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 62–72; and al-Kindī, *Governors*, 206–12.
[72] Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Nujūm*, 2:409. The author, given to providing information on the Samarran period that does not occur in earlier works, is to be read carefully.
[73] See Gordon, *Thousand Swords*, 158. [74] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 210–11.

Al-Kindī, with this reference, may have a wider point, which is that the commanders acted collectively. They constituted, one might say, a regime. Thus, for example, Azjūr's decision making continued in and out of office, and, if there is anything to al-Kindī's precise dating, Yazīd b. ʿAbdāllah remained active in Egypt for well over a year following the end of his ten-year spell as governor, leaving the province only in Shawwāl, 255/869, thus a full year after Ibn Ṭūlūn's arrival.[75] Al-Kindī's first mention of Ibn Ṭūlūn occurs here, that is, in the section on the very brief tenure as governor of Muzāhim b. Khāqān. The reference is vague. It has an unnamed brother of Ibn Khāqān take charge of Ibn al-Arqaṭ following the latter's surrender. When the ʿAlid leader escapes, the same brother chases him down and has him jailed in Egypt. Only in Ṣafar 255/868–69 is Ibn al-Arqaṭ finally sent to Iraq with a letter from Ibn Ṭūlūn, presumably announcing the delivery of the prisoner and the victory itself.[76] One notes again that Ibn al-Arqaṭ was only the latest in a long series of ʿAlids/Talibids exiled from Egypt in this period: the picture is of a particular sectarian community denuded of its (male) elders, to whom some discernible element of the populace looked to for guidance. As for Ibn Ṭūlūn, the indication is that he arrived at the tail end of the one insurrection and, with his dispatch of the ʿAlid leader, attended to a remaining administrative task. Ibn Ṭūlūn, in other words, newly appointed, was taking up where his predecessors left off.

The reliance on violence was a fourth ingredient. This had to do with the mobilization of fighting men, the wielding of arms, the provision of salaries, supplies, and reinforcements, and so on. But it had also to do with the acts of symbolic or ritual violence that marked the course of the imperial campaign and its eventual triumph.[77] I have referred already to the clashes between imperial forces from Fusṭāṭ and their opponents. The latter, one can only assume, were irregular forces, organized, armed, and led by a local leadership on an ad hoc basis in contrast with that of the imperial units against which they fought. The modern term is asymmetric warfare: organized state forces seeking to grind down determined popular insurgency. Al-Kindī refers occasionally to the cost, in dead and wounded, to both sides in the conflict. Thus, for example, he has Ibn al-Arqaṭ's followers killing twenty of Ghulbāk's men

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[75] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 208.   [76] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 208.

[77] For a discussion of the longer backdrop to such violence in the early Islamic period see Andrew Marsham, "Public Execution in the Umayyad Period: Early Islamic Punitive Practice and its Late Antique Context," *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies* 11 (2017), 101–36; and, on the later Saljuq period, Christian Lange, *Justice, Punishment and the Medieval Muslim Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), esp. 61–98.

in 252/866, and, in a counterthrust, imperial units slaughtering many of the ʿAlid leader's men.[78]

Al-Kindī's account suggests, as well, that the fighting also took a toll on the local non-combatant population, not to speak of the village landscape itself. In reference to the fighting conducted by al-Dabarānī and the Turkish force under his command, he has the imperial units burn the village of Sandafā and assault its populace (*fa-nazala Sandafā wa-ḍarabahā bi'l-nār wa-nahaba ahlahā*).[79] And, again, joined to the fighting and pillage were the acts of ritual violence. The same account has al-Dabarānī twice sending the heads of local opponents to Fusṭāṭ. The assumption is that these "trophies" were placed in public view. The commander also saw to the display of captured rebels; on the second occasion, this on the defeat and capture of Abū Ḥarmala, al-Dabarānī entered Fusṭāṭ in person with the rebel leader and a large number of his men in tow.[80] Once again, although the details cannot be checked, the impression is clear of a concerted and, for the Egyptian populace, wrenching campaign of pacification. It was activity altogether reminiscent of that carried out earlier by Abū Isḥāq al-Muʿtaṣim and al-Afshīn, and thus a consistent element of an imperial repertoire directed at a provincial populace.

The four ingredients just described appear as well, in different combinations, in the five subsequent episodes presided over by Ibn Ṭūlūn.[81] Again, the new governor's success in bringing an imperial-style order to the province overlapped with his subsequent bid for autonomous rule. The focus here remains on the episodes themselves. The first of the five events likely sprang directly from Jābir b. al-Walīd's revolt: one might think of Ibn Ṭūlūn as charged with dousing its last embers. It too involved the activity of an ʿAlid leader, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ṭabāṭabā – known otherwise by the curious nickname Bughā al-Aṣghar (?).[82] He is said to have appeared initially in the territory between Barqa and Alexandria in 255/868 before moving into Upper Egypt (al-Ṣaʿīd). Ibn Ṭūlūn dispatched units against him headed by Buhm b. al-Ḥusayn, the first of several references to the commander. Buhm scattered Ibn Ṭabāṭabā's forces and returned to

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[78] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 206–07.   [79] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 207.
[80] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 206–07.
[81] See Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 92–94, for one brief description.
[82] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 212, and see Guest's n. 1 on variations of the *laqab* in other sources. Al-Balawī records it as "Bughā al-Kabīr." Two prominent Samarran commanders – Bughā al-Kabīr (d. 248/ 862) and Bughā al-Ṣaghīr (d. 254/868) – bore the same name. The sources offer no explanation for the nickname.

Fusṭāṭ, with the rebel's head. If the two sources leave off on the details, they apparently saw it necessary to refer to the act of ritual violence.[83]

A second uprising occurred shortly thereafter, in 256/869, according to al-Balawī. Al-Kindī, for his part, has it beginning in 253/867 but taking on greater impact in 255/868 with an attack by the insurgents on Isnā, a market town along the Nile in Upper Egypt. Led by Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad, known otherwise as Ibn al-Ṣūfī, a direct descendant of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, thus an ʿAlid as well, the revolt endured in an ebb-and-flow fashion. In a first encounter, Ibn al-Ṣūfī routed imperial units then added insult, in a likely tit-for-tat gesture, by torturing its commander, a certain Ibn Yazdād (?). He then placed his remains on display. Ibn Ṭūlūn followed with a second force led by Buhm b. al-Ḥusayn.[84] Buhm defeated Ibn al-Ṣūfī near the town of Ikhmīm, killing many of his men, though without capturing the ʿAlid leader himself (Ibn al-Ṣūfī would soon reappear). Al-Balawī describes Buhm's return to Fusṭāṭ in helpful detail. Ibn Ṭūlūn, in a public ceremony, presented the commander with an honorary robe, several fine horses, and a belt of burnished gold.[85] The reference points to an effort by Ibn Ṭūlūn, a relative newcomer to the province, to consolidate ties to the local military command, another instance, in other words, of the politics of networking within the Samarran military. The use of golden belts suggests a diffused but still symbolically potent Central Asian practice.[86] Further such ceremonies were to come.

Ibn Ṭūlūn then faced a third and more difficult opponent: Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-ʿUmarī. It is difficult to know what to make of al-ʿUmarī. Timothy Power's reference to him as a "freebooter" seems apt given the two descriptions that survive of his brief career in Egypt.[87] Al-Balawī, in the shorter account, says nothing of al-ʿUmarī's background, indicating only that he came to prominence when word spread of attacks on Muslims by the Beja, the indigenous, partially Christianized people resident along the Red Sea in Upper Egypt.[88] Al-ʿUmarī is said to have become incensed on hearing of these assaults. He organized forces, attacked the Beja, and, after defeating them, established a local presence, drawing on his success and pious standing. It is at this point that Ibn al-Ṣūfī reappeared: his remaining forces clashed with those of al-ʿUmarī. Ibn al-Ṣūfī was then chased off by

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[83] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 62; al-Kindī, *Governors*, 212.
[84] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 63; al-Kindī, *Governors*, 213; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:618.   [85] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 63.
[86] See de la Vaissière, *Samarcande*, 70; and Gordon, *Thousand Swords*, 24 and 175.
[87] Timothy Power, *The Red Sea from Byzantium to the Caliphate, AD 500–1000* (Cairo: University of Cairo Press, 2012), 146.
[88] On the Beja see P. M. Holt, "Bedja," in *EI²*, s.v.

Tulunid forces under Buhm b. al-Ḥusayn, and, in Mecca, was arrested and dispatched to Ibn Ṭūlūn. The latter jailed him in Fusṭāṭ, but only after displaying the prisoner in public, a gesture of humiliation to which Ibn Ṭūlūn would turn frequently over his tenure. (Ibn Ṭūlūn later released Ibn al-Ṣūfī in what al-Balawī describes as a charitable act. The former ʿAlid rebel retired to Medina, where he died at some point thereafter).[89]

Al-ʿUmarī's activity takes on greater detail in al-Maqrīzī's longer and rather different account.[90] It has al-ʿUmarī claiming Medinan origin, specifically descent from the second of the Prophet's successors, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. It goes on to describe al-ʿUmarī's (undated) arrival in Egypt to study with prominent Muslim scholars in Fusṭāṭ. Following a brief sojourn with the Aghlabid court in al-Qayrawān, he returned to Egypt, scholarly reputation in hand. These religious bona fides served him, one supposes, much as claims to ʿAlid lineage served Ibn al-Ṣūfī and, before him, Ibn Ṭabāṭabā and Ibn al-Arqaṭ, that is, in winning over a local following. This seems to be al-Maqrīzī's point. All four claimants, on these grounds, appear to have found receptive audiences in newly Islamized districts of Egypt.

Al-ʿUmarī, al-Maqrīzī tells us, then made his way to Upper Egypt, this after learning of the wealth produced by its gold and emerald mines. These mines had long played a key part in the economic history of Upper Egypt and the Red Sea.[91] The account has him assembling a labor force of slaves – most of Nubian background – with which he established an enclave in the region of Aswān. Al-Maqrīzī again speaks to al-ʿUmarī's religious standing as a source of legitimization. His supporters, to whom he provided arms and horses, were almost certainly Arab tribesmen, many of whom were likely first-generation migrants to the area. All of this activity, in turn, disrupted local political conditions, specifically those related to the long-standing frontier with the Nubian kingdom of Maqurra. (Al-ʿUmarī's turn to enslaved labor and, especially, his apparent effort to cut in on gold production, seems like a reasonable explanation for the worried reaction.)

Al-ʿUmarī's adventure ended unhappily. Following a bid to negotiate with Ibn Ṭūlūn, al-ʿUmarī was attacked by two of his freedmen, who then presented his head to Ibn Ṭūlūn in a show of transferred loyalty. Ibn Ṭūlūn turned once again to public ceremony: he invited rural leaders to identify the head as that of al-ʿUmarī before turning on the two assassins. The

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[89] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 65–66.
[90] Taqī al-Dīn al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Muqaffā al-kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Yaʿlāwī, 8 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1991), 4:403–15.
[91] See Power, *The Red Sea*, 17 (and index).

passage has him decry their decision – "this was the last thing that I and God wished to happen" – before ordering their execution and the public display of their bodies. He then attended to the washing and proper burial of al-ʿUmarī's head.[92] Ibn Ṭūlūn's indignation seems cynical; after all, the killing removed a difficult opponent from the field. It also freed him to deal with two remaining challenges.

There was, first, a certain Abū Rūḥ, described as a follower of Ibn al-Ṣūfī (*min baqāyā aṣḥāb Ibn al-Ṣūfī*), active outside Alexandria. Al-Balawī's detailed account is useful on at least two counts: it points to the rural areas of Egypt as the main venue of unrest, and provides further reference to Ibn Ṭūlūn's evolving relations with his military command. Abū Rūḥ, according to al-Balawī, was a (wayward) son of the Egyptian countryside (*saʿīd*, *rīf*), well acquainted with its local byways and their best use in waging (asymmetrical) warfare. Responding to his activity and that of his large following (*ṭāʾifa kabīra*), Ibn Ṭūlūn sent a force under Yalbaq (?) al-Ṭarsūsī, described as one of Ibn Ṭūlūn's companions from his time serving on the northern Syrian frontier. Abū Rūḥ, having drawn the imperial units into rutted and unfamiliar ground, routed them; the passage, in a rare direct reference, indicates that the imperial units were mounted.[93]

Ibn Ṭūlūn, forced to rethink his tactics, sent a new force, under Ibn Jayghawayh (?), to cut off access between the Fayyūm – the area of Abū Rūḥ's main activity – and the other oases to the south and west, and a second force under Shuʿba b. Kharkām (?), another of the Samarran officers. It fell to Shuʿba to attack Abū Rūḥ head on. He did so, scattering the rebel's forces and taking a number of captives, whom he promptly sent to Ibn Ṭūlūn. The text has Abū Rūḥ, taking advantage of an error on Ibn Jayghawayh's part, escaping capture. Ibn Ṭūlūn reacted by admonishing Ibn Jayghawayh, the only suggestion in these reports of strains between the governor and his military. Ibn Ṭūlūn then ordered the execution and public display of two of Abū Rūḥ's supporters.[94]

The fifth and final challenge arose in Barqa. Yārjūkh had assigned Barqa to Ibn Ṭūlūn upon the latter's reappointment in 257/870. Al-Balawī, referring to it as containing a citadel, says only that the local populace rose against Muḥammad b. Furūkh (?) al-Farghanī, the Abbasid governor. They expelled him from the city and secured its gates. Ibn Ṭūlūn responded with considerable force. He is said to have sent four armies, along with a fleet and siege equipment. Leading these forces were

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[92] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 67; al-Maqrīzī, *Muqaffā*, 4:415.   [93] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 68–69.
[94] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 67–70.

Abū al-Aswad al-Ghiṭrīf, Yazbak (?) al-Farghānī, Luʾluʾ – a freedman and up-and-coming member of Ibn Ṭūlūn's inner circle – and the same Shuʿba b. Kharkām. Ibn Ṭūlūn initially ordered restraint. The effort to negotiate a settlement failed, however, when the rebels attacked Tulunid forces, killing Abū al-Aswad, Ibn Ṭūlūn's lead commander. Luʾluʾ, taking charge, counterattacked and overcame the rebellion, ordering a number of its leaders executed, and their bodies placed on display.[95]

To honor his commanders, Ibn Ṭūlūn organized a noisy public reception, much like that staged earlier for Buhm b. al-Ḥusayn. The description has Luʾluʾ present a number of prisoners to Ibn Ṭūlūn for inspection, following which the governor gifted his longtime client with a robe and two finely crafted belts. Luʾluʾ, in all his finery, processed through Fusṭāṭ, his prisoners in tow. The victory, if the Egyptian sources are to be trusted, settled the question of Ibn Ṭūlūn's authority. Al-Balawī reports that the Egyptian people now viewed Ibn Ṭūlūn with newfound dread (*fa-sakanat rahbat Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn fī ṣudūr al-nās*).[96] The governor, for his part, would proceed with his ongoing efforts at consolidating hold over the province.

The Uneasy Turn to Religion

An appeal to hearts and minds – the second component of Ibn Ṭūlūn's campaign – was, as shown already, on display on both sides of the confrontation between the imperial forces at Fusṭāṭ and their mostly rural opponents. This is not the place to take up the abiding question of religion's part in the shaping of early Islamic political culture, nor the even wider question of the reliance of Middle Eastern imperial courts, over the sweep of time, upon the institutions, doctrines, and ritual systems of formal religious traditions.[97] The aim here is simply to consider an example of religion's utility as ideological support, whether for formal state policies, which goes as well to the part played by religious establishments in (uneasy) alliance with dynastic courts, or for the activity of opposition and anti-imperial movements, such as those on display in third/ninth-century Egypt.

Religion, again, worked on both sides of the confrontation. Nearly all of the popular uprisings featured religiously charismatic figures, in most cases

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[95] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 70–72.   [96] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 72.
[97] For extended discussions see Aziz al-Azmeh, *Muslim Kingship: Power and the Sacred in Muslim, Christian and Pagan Polities* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1997); Matthew P. Canepa, *The Two Eyes of the Earth: Art and Ritual of Kingship between Rome and Sasanian Iran* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); and Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004).

claimants to ʿAlid lineage, including Ibn al-Arqaṭ and Ibn al-Ṣūfī. The different movements took on an apparent sectarian thrust as well, although it is difficult to sort out clearly. Al-Kindī and al-Balawī offer no direct indication that these figures, apart from an apparent self-identification as ʿAlids, directed an overtly Shīʿī appeal to their followers, as in the case, for example, of the rural folk assigned to Ibn al-Arqaṭ by Abū Ḥarmala. We have little sense as to how Ibn al-Arqaṭ framed his pitch or how it might have worked in such a context, that is, a rural, newly Islamized, and highly politicized setting. This is not to say that a formal sectarian appeal was absent, only that relevant information is scarce at best. Al-Kindī provides only bare scraps; so, for example, he refers, in the section on the tenure of Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh, to a brief exchange with an unidentified soldier. The latter, facing corporal punishment, pleaded with the governor: "I beg you, in the name of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn, show mercy!" The governor did not, and, in fact, laid on further punishment, but here the point is that language appropriate to Shīʿī affiliation was in the air.[98]

Ibn ʿAbdallāh's treatment of the soldier points to another element at work in the consolidation, by Samarran military circles, of local authority. All manner of evidence indicates the presence in Egypt, certainly by the second half of the third/ninth century, of a Sunnī religious establishment, one in constant if uneasy interaction with the local imperial administration in Fusṭāṭ.[99] Again, setting aside a full discussion, the suggestion here is that, in attempting to establish itself in Egypt in a more concerted fashion, the Samarran military regime engaged in an ongoing ideological contest. The activity of, say, Ibn al-Arqaṭ, and his part in mounting a significant challenge to Abbasid authority in the province, suggests as much. For imperial agents – the Samarra-based officers, in this case – there was little option but to respond in kind. This provides, in turn, a useful way in which to understand a set of religiously charged measures that, according to al-Kindī, were carried out by members of the Samarran military regime in Egypt, and, to extend the argument further, Ibn Ṭūlūn's own concerted effort at projecting a religiously charged authority, this in the context of his efforts at state building.

Regarding the various measures, al-Kindī provides fairly terse references that modern scholarship has largely passed over. These indicate that the

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[98] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 203.
[99] See, e.g., Tillier, *Histoire*, a study and translation of al-Kindī's *Akhbār quḍāt Miṣr*, for ample indications of a well-established judicial system and its interaction with the local imperial administration. On the dynamics of these relations see Kosei Morimoto, *The Fiscal Administration of Egypt in the Early Islamic Period* (Kyoto: Dohosha, 1981), 163–65.

measures were carried out in Fusṭāṭ itself, precisely at the point of the ongoing efforts to subdue the various rural uprisings. This is to suggest, once again, an effort by the Samarran military officials to reinforce their activity in the field, against mostly ʿAlid-led movements, with (what was perceived as) appropriate gestures in the administrative center. So, again, we have Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh's encounter with the one soldier in which, in response to the latter's public utterance of a Shīʿī-inflected phrase, the governor reacts with fury; the passage has word then reaching al-Mutawakkil, a caliph whose anti-ʿAlid policies are well documented, who orders the soldier sent to Iraq, presumably to be subjected to yet further duress.[100] Further examples concern steps taken by Azjūr, in his capacity as head of the *shurṭa*, in 253–54/867–68, to limit public activity by women and, specifically, female mourners; regulate study and prayer sessions in the Friday mosque; ban a series of funeral acts, such as the rending of clothing; and bring a stop to a longstanding practice of enunciating aloud the *bismillah* in formal Friday sessions.[101]

The last of these measures, if, in fact, it was rooted in public practice for as long as is stated here, must have raised eyebrows. Al-Kindī says that Azjūr ordered the *imām* of the Friday mosque, al-Ḥasan b. al-Rabīʿ – this in Rajab 253/July 867, so a year prior to Ibn Ṭūlūn's arrival – to abandon the practice.[102] It seems fair to suppose that the measure sat badly with the religious establishment in Fusṭāṭ: the suggestion seems to be that Azjūr, in the view of the *ʿulamāʾ*, overstepped the boundaries of his office. I see it as a reference to an uneasy but necessary working relationship between the two power circles in Fusṭāṭ, the Samarran military regime and the Sunnī religious authorities. For the military men it was a matter of striking a balance. They needed the backing of the Sunnī hierarchy represented here by Ibn al-Rabīʿ and, more importantly, the chief *qāḍī*, Bakkār b. Qutayba, who was named to the office by al-Mutawakkil in 246/860.[103] But success at consolidation required the Samarran officers to insist on their own fiat even when and where it ran into disagreement on the part of the *ʿulamāʾ*.

The same balancing act, I suggest, informed Ibn Ṭūlūn's careful and insistent turn to religion throughout his tenure. One thinks, among many

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[100] On al-Mutawakkil and the ʿAlids see Miah, *Mutawakkil*, 88–95; and Najam Haider, *Shīʿī Islam: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 95.

[101] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 210–11; and, citing al-Kindī directly, al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭāṭ*, 4:32, 370.

[102] Al-Kindī, *Governors*, 210; and al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭāṭ*, 4:32, 370. The two passages in the latter work are among the few mentions of Ibn al-Rabīʿ that I have found: he appears to have been a secondary member of the local Sunnī establishment.

[103] See Mathieu Tillier, *Vies des cadis de Miṣr (237/851–366/976): extrait du* Rafʿ al-iṣr ʿan quḍāt Miṣr *d'Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī* (Cairo: IFAO, 2002), 53–71.

indications, of the new mosque in al-Qaṭāʾiʿ; Ibn Ṭūlūn's very public use of the building throughout his tenure; and, perhaps most dramatically, the so-called Damascus Assembly of 269/883.[104] These were among many public gestures of piety, devotion, and religious principle on the new governor's part.[105] It was during the Damascus Assembly, to use Bonner's phrase, that the challenge of sustaining relations with the Sunnī establishment in Fusṭāṭ came especially clear.

The event occurred in the context of Ibn Ṭūlūn's long rivalry with Abū Aḥmad al-Muwaffaq, in his capacity as regent (ca. 256–78/870–891), and involved, on Ibn Ṭūlūn's part, a document of censure against his rival. A high-stakes political gamble by the governor, its success turned in good part on his ability to win support from the religious scholars assembled in the Syrian city's principal mosque, among them a delegation of ten Egyptians. The gamble fell short with Bakkār b. Qutayba's refusal to lend full backing to the initiative. His ambiguous stand speaks directly to the difficult relations between the two power circles in Fusṭāṭ. Bakkār agreed to condemn al-Muwaffaq, but held back from approving the regent's deposition and Ibn Ṭūlūn's (doubtlessly controversial) call for *jihād* against the Abbasid regent. His position is hard to make out, but it appears that he adopted a narrow, legalistic definition of al-Muwaffaq's alleged misdeeds. It was a far narrower position, in other words, than Ibn Ṭūlūn could accept. Quick as ever to punish, the governor ordered Bakkār's arrest and imprisonment.[106] It was a reluctant decision: Ibn Ṭūlūn, in his final days, reached out to the stubborn jurist in a gesture of conciliation, only to be rebuffed. Bakkār's final comment to Ibn Ṭūlūn's messenger, Nasīm, a well-placed member of the Tulunid household, was that God would have the final say in determining the justice of his treatment. Ibn Ṭūlūn is said to have wept on hearing the response.[107]

Conclusion

The indications are that Ibn Ṭūlūn's campaign closed an extended and grim chapter in Egypt's history as an Abbasid province: the sources record little if any rural unrest through the subsequent years of the governor's tenure and that of his heirs, notably Abū al-Jaysh Khumārawayh (in office 270–82/884–96). As Maged S. A. Mikhail, Kosei Morimoto, and Chris

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[104] See Bonner, "Ibn Ṭūlūn's Jihad."   [105] See Gordon, *Ahmad ibn Tulun*, esp. 126–30.
[106] Bonner, "Ibn Ṭūlūn's Jihad," 592–93, 598–99; and Gordon, *Ahmad ibn Tulun*, 68–69, 72–73, 94.
[107] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 331–33.

Wickham have showed, in separate studies, Egypt's history as an Abbasid province witnessed a long series of tax revolts.[108] These varied in size, composition, and impact, but were joined by a common refusal, by significant elements of the Egyptian populace, to accept the fiscal and political dictates emanating from Iraq through Fusṭāṭ.[109] The effort, on Ibn Ṭūlūn's part and that of his immediate predecessors, notably Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh and Azjūr al-Turkī, stands, therefore, as a significant turn in the long history of Egypt's difficult integration into the Arab Islamic empire.

The argument here is that Ibn Ṭūlūn was charged with, and succeeded in, achieving the central aim of powerful circles within the Samarran military: authority over the fiscal and human wealth of Egypt. The sources point to a terrible toll exacted on the Egyptian populace in the process. If we cannot check each reference against independent sources, the many accounts provided by the early Egyptian Arabic texts of the capture, exile, and/or execution of provincial elites – ʿAlids, Arab tribal heads, and village strongmen – points to a decimation of local leadership, especially in Lower Egypt. The result was a much-diminished ability on the part of the Egyptian rural populace to respond effectively to the fiscal and labor demands made upon it by the now-emergent Tulunid administration. Ibn Ṭūlūn, following on the efforts of his colleagues, had carried out his immediate mandate, an effort that allowed for closer relations with the local Samarran officer corps in Fusṭāṭ, and to which the new governor devoted much care.

Ibn Ṭūlūn's extended tenure in office happened next: a turn little anticipated, in all likelihood, by either the Abbasid court or the Samarran military command. He set out with new initiatives, including the crucial step of gaining authority over Egypt's treasuries. This was *the* critical feature of the governor's turn to autonomous rule: his ability to dictate the manner and timing by which Egyptian revenue made its way to the imperial center, meaning, of course, that he retained for his own purposes far more of that revenue than had been true of his predecessors.[110] This had an impact on the caliphate, in the sense of

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[108] Mikhail, *Islamic Egypt*, 118–27; Morimoto, *Fiscal Administration*, 145–72; and Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 139–44.

[109] My view of the later third/ninth-century uprisings as tax revolts differs from that of Morimoto, *Fiscal Administration*, 172. Mikhail, *Islamic Egypt*, 126–27, points also to the significant demographic shifts of third/ninth-century Egypt that underlay the later revolts.

[110] See Treadwell, "Numismatic Evidence," for one set of helpful comments on Ibn Ṭūlūn's management of Egypt's revenue. I owe a debt of gratitude to Luke Treadwell and Michael Bates for their

a reduced flow of Egyptian wealth to its treasuries, but also upon the Samarran military, reliant as it was upon state coffers to assure the payment of salaries to its rank and file.[111]

This chapter began with a brief allusion to the idea of "pacification," a term adopted in modern parlance, particularly in reference to modern colonial empires of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It seems no less useful in describing, however, the efforts by, say, Classical Rome over successive periods or the Arab Islamic empire following the first/seventh-century conquests, to impose law and order upon subject provinces and their inhabitants. It was a process: first, the turn to military force – the kind of violence carried out by Abbasid forces in Egypt on the heels of the Fourth *Fitna* in the early third/ninth century and for decades thereafter – followed by the imposition of imperial governance (the use of political, fiscal, religious, and legal policies, and the offices that supported them). It is thus a wholly appropriate term to describe Ibn Ṭūlūn's campaign against opponents of Abbasid rule in third/ninth-century Egypt.[112]

Further questions, of course, remain. There is the need to reconsider the emergence of the original Turkic–Central Asian military command – initially in Baghdad, then in Samarra. Here two such questions arise: in what sense was the Samarran military an enslaved or dependent force? And how might we treat solidarity within its ranks, that is, the manner in which the newly fashioned "slave military" forged its networks of loyalty, depend-ence, service, and identity? This would lead to consideration of the rise to influence on the part of the Samarran command, a process that likely joined imperial support (appointment to high offices and so on) and the subsequent initiative on the part of the Turkic–Central Asian commanders to act on their new standing. This would lead, in turn, to a more detailed assessment of the topic treated here, the exercise by elements of the Samarran command of authority over Egypt.

Ibn Ṭūlūn's pursuit of a new dynastic polity and the reaction on the part of the Abbasid center in Iraq concern, as well, a likely significant turn in Egypt's economic history. The main outcome of the extended campaign to

insights, in private communication over these past years, regarding the Tulunid numismatic evidence.

[111]   See Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London: Routledge, 2001), 128–31, 141–42.

[112]   For one recent discussion see Michele Campopiano, "Land Tenure, Land Tax and Social Conflictuality in Iraq from the Late Sasanian to the Early Islamic Period (Fifth to Ninth Centuries CE)," in *Authority and Control in the Countryside: From Antiquity to Islam in the Mediterranean and Near East (6th–10th Century)*, ed. Alain Delattre, Marie Legendre, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 464–99.

impose an imperial-style order on the province, led finally by Ibn Ṭūlūn, was sustained access to the fiscal and private wealth – the rents, taxes, tolls and other revenue – of Egypt. This is to see the considerable wealth of the Tulunid polity as, in good measure, the fruit of the brutal response to anti-imperial activity on the part of the Egyptian populace and its local leadership.[113]

It seems clear, on the basis of the documentary record, albeit for select regions of Egypt, that the Samarran command was assured the presence of a functioning fiscal system and its personnel.[114] But al-Kindī's references to the twin causes of insurrection on the part of the Egyptian populace – the weight of the tax regime and the conduct of officials charged with forcing it upon them – need further discussion. What impact did the imposition of Samarran military rule have upon Egypt's fiscal affairs? The question was explored by von Karabacek and Becker, and, more recently and somewhat more directly, by Michael Dunn. It turns, in good measure, on sorting out more clearly the reforms carried out by the *ṣāḥib al-kharāj* under Yazīd b. ʿAbdallāh and then Ibn Ṭūlūn, the notorious Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Mudabbir (in office 247–58/861–72). The sources make much of his ostensible reform program but, again, questions remain.[115] So, for example, the references to his tenure say little of his relations with the Samarran command: on whose behalf did he carry out these reforms? Are they best understood as the corollary to the military and political successes in Egypt of the Samarran military? If so, how then to explain Ibn Ṭūlūn's decision, very early in his tenure, to turn against Ibn al-Mudabbir?[116]

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[113] For Ibn Ṭūlūn's own putative claims as to the extent of his legacy to his heir, Abū al-Jaysh Khumārawayh, see al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 340–41. See also the passing references in Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 98, 104.

[114] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 115.

[115] See Becker, *Beiträge*, 141, 142–48; Dunn, "The Struggle," 100–01; von Karabacek, "Auftreten," 98–99; and Morimoto, *Fiscal Administration*, 169, 172, 180, 191–95.

[116] Al-Balawī, *Sīra*, 43–46, 59–60.

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Economic Connections

Between Ramla and Fusṭāṭ: Archaeological Evidence for Egyptian Contacts with Early Islamic Palestine (Eighth–Eleventh Centuries)

Gideon Avni

Introduction

The swift Arab conquest of Palestine, Syria, and Egypt, between 633 and 643 CE, triggered long-term processes of change in the region, among them the introduction of new settlement structures, architectural concepts, and patterns of commercial exchange. A gradual transformation in types of pottery, glass, and metal vessels has been observed, including the development of new types and technologies. The archaeological record indicates that large regions in the Near East benefited from the establishment of the new Muslim empire, which was also expressed in the intensification of commercial contacts, particularly between Egypt, Palestine, and Syria.[1]

This chapter addresses the intensified connectivity between Palestine and Egypt after the Arab conquests on two main levels. First, artifacts are presented as indicators of commercial contacts and of the movement of people. Numerous excavations in modern Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, and Syria have yielded artifacts manufactured in Egypt or presenting Egyptian influences in style and production, such as pottery, glass and metal vessels, jewelry, and textiles. The import of goods from Palestine to Egypt is distinguishable through specific finds, for example of Palestinian amphorae in Egyptian sites. Such finds of Egyptian artifacts in Palestine and vice versa raise the question of whether they reflect commercial activities or the movement of people between regions for other reasons,

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[1] See, e.g., the summary in Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 759–69. For detailed surveys of Egypt and Palestine in the Early Islamic period see Petra. M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); and Gideon Avni, *The Byzantine–Islamic Transition: An Archaeological Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

such as settlement or migration. Second, Ramla and Fusṭāṭ will serve as a case study. These two cities experienced a parallel development as they were established *ex nihilo* by the new Islamic regime. The connections between the two cities, as expressed in similarities in the urban concept and building materials used, and in well-dated commercial contacts, provide an excellent case to present Egyptian–Palestinian contacts between the early eighth and eleventh centuries.

Artifacts as Indicators of Commercial Contacts and Migrations

The presence of Egyptian artifacts and their wide distribution, both in the main cities along the Palestinian coast and in villages in the countryside, emphasizes the intensiveness of commercial contacts throughout the early Islamic period, and particularly in the tenth and eleventh centuries.[2] This connectivity has been addressed by several studies focusing on the distribution of pottery vessels in the eastern Mediterranean.[3] Egyptian artifacts included finds of storage jars, decorated and glazed ware, and simple coarse ware, and by occasional finds of luxury products such as jewelry, metalware, and textiles.

The trade between Palestine and Egypt was conducted both as sea-trade along the coast and on overland routes via north Sinai. The wide distribution of Egyptian artifacts benefited from the efficient early Islamic road system in Palestine, which formed a section of the larger network of roads between Egypt, Arabia, and Syria.[4]

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[2] See Alan Walmsley, "Production, Exchange and Regional Trade in the Islamic East Mediterranean: Old Structures, New Systems?" in *The Long Eighth Century*, ed. Inge L. Hensen and Chris Wickham (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 290–99.

[3] For Jordan see Pamela M. Watson, "Ceramic Evidence for Egyptian Links with Northern Jordan in the 6th–8th Centuries AD," in *Trade, Contact, and the Movements of Peoples in the Eastern Mediterranean: Studies in Honor of J. Basil Hennessy*, ed. Stephen Bourke and Jean Paul Descoeudres (Sydney: Meditarch, 1995), 303–24. For early Islamic Palestine see Itamar Taxel and Alexander Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware in Early Islamic Palestine: Between Commerce and Migration," *al-Masāq* 23 (2011), 77–97. For patterns of distribution of pottery vessels in the eastern Mediterranean see Dominique Pieri, "Regional and Interregional Exchanges in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Early Byzantine Period: The Evidence of the Amphorae," in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. Cécile Morrison (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2012), 27–50; John Haldon, "Commerce and Exchange in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries: Regional Trade and the Movement of Goods," in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. Cécile Morrison (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2012), 99–121; Joanita Vroom, "Byzantine Sea Trade in Ceramics: Some Case Studies in the Eastern Mediterranean," in *Trade in Byzantium: Papers from the Third International Byzantine Studies Symposium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Nevra Necipoglu (Istanbul: Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, 2016), 157–77.

[4] Adam J. Silverstein, *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Amikam Elad, "The Southern Golan in the Early Muslim Period: The Significance of Two Newly Discovered Milestones of ʿAbd al-Malik," *Der Islam* 76 (1999), 33–88.

Egyptian vessels were found in the main cities of Ascalon,[5] Ramla,[6] and Caesarea,[7] and in smaller quantities in Tiberias.[8] The pottery assemblages from Ramla included, besides the common household types – bowls, cups, cooking vessels, jugs, storage jars, and oil lamps – all of local manufacture,[9] a relatively large variety of imported types, many of them from Egypt.[10] Particularly evident were the Coptic (Lead) Glazed Ware and the Fayyumi Ware,[11] and the Fusṭāṭ Fatimid Sgraffito, found mainly in Ascalon.[12] Coptic Glazed Ware was particularly frequent in in Ascalon, Ramla, and Caesarea.[13] This type was first identified by Rodziewicz at the excavation at Kom el-Dikka, Alexandria, representing the earliest attempt at lead glazing in Egypt.[14] Lusterware of Egyptian origin is also well represented in Ascalon in levels of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.[15] Imitations of Chinese porcelain that were probably manufactured in Fusṭāṭ have been found in considerable quantities in Ascalon and Ramla.[16] Glazed ware of Egyptian origin was also found in villages in the Palestinian countryside, but was less common there than in the large coastal cities.[17] Yet even in small sites such as Yavneh Yam, a number of imported Egyptian wares have been found.[18]

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[5] Tracy Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8: The Islamic and Crusader Periods* (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2019), 249–50.

[6] Katia Cytryn-Silverman, "The Ceramic Evidence," in *Ramla: Final Report on the Excavations North of the White Mosque*, ed. Oren Gutfeld (Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, 2010), 97–212; Oren Tal and Itamar Taxel, *Ramla (South): An Early Islamic Industrial Site and Remains of Previous Periods* (Tel Aviv: Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, 2008), 125–65.

[7] Yael Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima: The Late Periods (700–1291)* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008).

[8] David Stacey, *Excavations at Tiberias 1973–1974: The Early Islamic Period* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004), 105.

[9] For examples of typical assemblages see Cytryn-Silverman, "The Ceramic Evidence"; and Tal and Taxel, *Ramla (South)*, 125–65.

[10] See for example Hagit Torgë, "Ramla, David Razi'el Boulevard," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot: Excavation and Surveys in Israel* 125 (2013), www.hadashot-esi.org.il/Report_Detail_Eng.aspx?id=5386&mag_id=120. See also Joanita Vroom's contribution to this volume (Chapter 9).

[11] Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8*, 261–64, 358–61. For the origin and technology of Coptic Glazed Ware see Carmen Ting and Itamar Taxel, "Indigeneity and Innovation of Early Islamic Glazed Technology: The Case of Coptic Glazed Ware," *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 12/27 (2020), https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-019-01007-y.

[12] Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8*, 362.

[13] Cytryn-Silverman, "The Ceramic Evidence"; Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*.

[14] Mieczyslaw Rodziewicz, "La céramique émaillée copte de Kom el-Dikka," *Études et Travaux* 10 (1978), 337–34. For this type in Tiberias see Stacey, *Tiberias,* 104–09, figs. 5.17–5.19, color pl. 1:1–4.

[15] Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8*, 368–79.

[16] Itamar Taxel, "Luxury and Common Wares: Socio-Economic Aspects of the Distribution of Glazed Pottery in Early Islamic Palestine," *Levant* 46/1 (2014), 118–39; Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8*; Tasha Vorderstrasse, "Chinese Ceramics," in Tracy Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8: The Islamic and Crusader Periods* (University Park, PA: Eisenbrauns, 2019), 506–12.

[17] See Taxel, "Luxury and Common Wares," text and table 1.

[18] Taxel, "Luxury and Common Wares," 131–32 and table 2.

In addition to pottery vessels, clay and glass stamps and seals found their way from Egypt to Palestine, and these were found even in remote sites such as a farmstead in the western Negev Highlands.[19] Another clear indication of the connections with Egypt is the name "Egypt" or "Egyptian" that appears on a number of common Palestinian artifacts. For example, a fragment of a ninth-century locally produced mold-made jug found in Caesarea bears a short inscription in Arabic of which one word is preserved: *al-Miṣrī*, "Egyptian."[20]

It seems that the volume of imported Egyptian pottery vessels in the early Islamic period, and particularly from the ninth century onwards, significantly exceeded that of the Byzantine period. This is shown, for example, in Ascalon, where the Byzantine levels provided only few Egyptian imports,[21] while in the early Islamic levels abundant finds of Egyptian origin were unearthed.[22] In conjunction with the increased imports, the finds in Fusṭāṭ of common Glazed Ware that was produced in Palestine (probably in the area of Ramla) provides more evidence for the connectivity between southern Palestine and Egypt and for the export of goods from Palestine to Egypt.[23]

The Egyptian pottery types found in Palestine were classified by Taxel and Fantalkin into two major groups: bag-shaped jars and amphorae, which represent large-scale commercial activities; and a unique type of coarse ware that may indicate the presence of Egyptian migrants in Palestine. Bag-shaped amphorae, of which the Red Brown Ovoid Amphora (RBOA) type was found in a number of excavated sites in Palestine, probably contained fish sauce produced in northern Egypt and exported to Palestine.[24] The excavations of a shipwreck from the eighth–ninth century at the Tantura anchorage north of Caesarea, for example, revealed many RBOA amphorae, in which the remains of fish bones were identified. It seems that this ship transported amphorae with fish sauce from the production areas on the Egyptian coast to destinations on the Palestinian coast.[25] The wide distribution of the RBOA in Palestine, both

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[19] Mordechai Haiman, "An Early Islamic Period Farm at Nahal Mitnan in the Negev Highlands," *ʿAtiqot* 26 (1995), 1–13; Ayala Lester, "A Glass Weight from the Time of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Yazid," *ʿAtiqot* 10 (1990), 125–26.

[20] M. Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae (CIAP)*, vol. 2: *B–C* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 295. See also Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," 97.

[21] Barbara L. Johnson, *Ashkelon 2: Imported Pottery of the Roman and Late Roman Periods* (Winona Lake, ID: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 82–99.

[22] Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8*, 271–301.   [23] Hoffman, *Ashkelon 8*, 265.

[24] Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," 80–82.

[25] Ofra Barkai and Yaacov Kahanov, "The Tantura F Shipwreck: Hull Repans and Finds. Final Report," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 45 (2016), 6–28; Ofra Barkai,

in the main cities and at rural sites in the central hill country, the Negev Highlands, and coastal plain,[26] suggests that the merchandise provided in the amphorae, although probably expensive, was in high demand. This is another indication that the product transported in RBOA was fish sauce, which was a very popular item in the local diet. These amphorae may, however, also have contained other products shipped from Egypt to Palestine, such as the natron from Wadi Natrun, which was an essential item in the Palestinian glass industries.[27]

One type of pottery of undoubted Egyptian provenance that prevailed in Palestine is the Egyptian Coarse Ware Basins (ECWB), handmade vessels produced from Nilotic alluvium. These were found mainly in Caesarea and Jaffa, in contexts of the late eighth to tenth–eleventh centuries.[28] The finds of this coarse ware in Palestine have been interpreted as an indication of the presence of Egyptian soldiers and merchants in the *ribāṭāt* and the coastal cities of Palestine.[29] The distribution of this ware may indeed indicate that the actual presence of Egyptians in Palestine (as opposed to Egyptian products, which were found throughout the province) was mainly restricted to the big cities and the military outposts.[30]

An indication of another group of Egyptians who were present in early Islamic Palestine is provided by textual evidence. The Aphrodito papyri, a seventh–eighth-century archive of documents found in the village of Kom Ishkaw in Middle Egypt, mention local workers sent to Jerusalem for the construction of a mosque and the palace of the *amīr al-muʾminīn*.[31] This "palace" in Jerusalem probably refers to the large structures south of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf. However, as there were no significant amounts of Egyptian artifacts found in the excavations in this area, it seems that the presence of workers was short-lived and sporadic.

Yaacov Kahanov, and Miriam Avissar, "The Tantura F Shipwreck: The Ceramic Material," *Levant* 42 (2010), 89–91.

[26] Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," 82–87 and fig. 1.

[27] Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," 82; and see the discussion below.

[28] Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," 91–93.

[29] Taxel and Faltalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," 95–97.

[30] Itamar Taxel, "Migration to and within Palestine in the Early Islamic Period: Two Archaeological Paradigms," in *Migration and Migrant Identities in the Near East from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, ed. Justin Yoo, Andrea Zerbini, and Caroline Barron (Abingdon/New York: Routledge 2018), 222–43 and map 11/1.

[31] Harold Idris Bell, "Translations of the Greek Aphrodito Papyri in the British Museum," *Der Islam* 2 (1911), 372–84, at 383 (no. 1403), 3 (1912), 132–40, at 137 (no. 1414), 4 (1913), 87–96, at 93 (no. 1453). See also Amikam Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship: Holy Places, Ceremonies, Pilgrimages* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 26, 36–39.

The two main products that were traditionally exchanged between Egypt and Palestine are olive oil and wine. The export of wine from Palestine to Egypt via north Sinai is well attested in the Byzantine period. Finds of Palestinian storage jars of LRA 4 type were abundant both in Egypt, particularly in the area of Alexandria,[32] and in north Sinai – at Ostrakine and Pelusium, constituting up to 70 percent of the amphorae at the site.[33]

However, the continuity of wine export from Egypt to Palestine or vice versa in the early Islamic period, as suggested by some scholars,[34] does not seem to hold water. As recent studies have shown, the decline in wine production in Palestine occurred perhaps by the second half of the sixth century,[35] and restricted large-scale international commercial activities. It seems that after the seventh century Palestinian wine was used mainly for local consumption and not for export. The large-scale production of wine for export, which provided the basis of the flourishing agricultural economy of southern Palestine, and particularly the areas around Ascalon, Gaza, and the Negev Highlands, seems to have declined as the industrial estates were abandoned in the second half of the sixth century.[36] Consequently, in the seventh century there was a sharp drop in the number of Palestinian amphorae in Egypt.[37] Nevertheless, the production of wine continued in the early Islamic period on a local level, both in Palestine and

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[32] Delphine Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes: production, typologie, contenu et diffusion (IIIe siècle avant J.-C.–IXe siècle après J.-C.)* (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2011), 221.

[33] Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 225–27. On the finds of amphorae in north Sinai see Paul Arthur and Eliezer Oren, "The North Sinai Survey and the Evidence of Transport Amphorae for Roman and Byzantine Trading Patterns," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 11 (1998), 193–212; Sarit Oked, "Patterns of the Transport Amphorae at Ostrakine during the 6th and 7th Centuries," *ARAM* 8 (1996), 165–75.

[34] See, e.g., Sean. A. Kingsley, *A Sixth-Century AD Shipwreck off the Carmel Coast, Israel: Dor D and the Holy Land Wine Trade* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2002), 77–84; Dominique Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental à l'époque byzantine (Ve–VIIe siècles): le témoignage des amphores en Gaule* (Beirut: Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche-Orient, 2005), 127.

[35] On the decline of wine production in the Negev see Guy Bar-Oz, Lior Weissbrod, Tali Erickson-Gini, et al., "Ancient Trash Mounds Unravel Urban Collapse a Century before the End of Byzantine Hegemony in the Southern Levant," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (2019), www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1900233116; Daniel Fuks, Oren Ackermann, Avner Ayalon, et al., "Dust Clouds, Climate Change and Coins: Consiliences of Palaeoclimate and Economy in the Late Antique Southern Levant," *Levant* (2017), http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00758914.2017.1379181; Yotam Tepper, Naomi Porat, and Guy Bar Oz, "Sustainable Farming in the Roman-Byzantine Period: Dating an Advanced Agriculture System near the Site of Shivta, Negev Desert, Israel," *Journal of Arid Environments* (2020), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaridenv.2020.104134; Daniel Fuks, Guy Bar-Oz, Yotam Tepper, et al., "The Rise and Fall of Viticulture in the Late Antique Negev Highlands Reconstructed from Archaeobotanical and Ceramic Data," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science USA* 117 (2020), 19780–91, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1922200117.

[36] See, e.g., Yigal Israel and Talli Erickson Ginni, "Remains from the Hellenistic through the Byzantine Period at the 'Third Mile Estate,' Ashqelon," ʿAtiqot 74 (2013), 165–213.

[37] This is particularly shown in the small amount of LRA 4 amphorae in Bawīṭ: see Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 236–37.

in Egypt,[38] with early Islamic wine presses found even in the Muslim palace complex of Khirbet al-Mafjar near Jericho.[39]

Oil, however, was exported from Palestine to Egypt using Palestinian amphorae, as indicated by a ninth-century Egyptian papyrus which praised the Palestinian oil consumed in Egypt.[40] This oil was probably exported in containers manufactured in Palestine, as indicated by the finds of Palestinian storage jars in several sites in Egypt.[41] Beside the typical LRA 5 and LRA 6 amphorae, the finding of Palestinian storage jars of the Nabi Samwil type in Egyptian sites indicates that these jars, produced in the Jerusalem area, were used as containers to deliver goods, probably oil, to Egypt.[42] The large-scale use of olive oil in Egypt is supported by literary sources, and it seems that the supply from Palestine was essential to meet the Egyptian demand for olive oil.[43] A number of studies have argued for the continuity of large-scale oil production in Palestine, citing the wide distribution of oil presses in villages throughout the Palestinian and Jordanian countryside and showing that oil was continuously produced there in Byzantine and early Islamic times.[44] It seems that the production of oil for export even increased following the Arab conquest, with Egypt and Iraq being the primary destinations for Palestinian oil. This industry continued throughout the early Islamic period and up to the eleventh century.[45]

In addition to pottery vessels, commercial contacts between Egypt and Palestine can be traced through the industry and trade of glass. The Roman

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[38] Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 236–39. On the wine production in early Islamic Egypt see Nicole Hansen, "Sunshine Wine on the Nile," in *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, ed. Alexander T. Schubert and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 291–304.

[39] Donald Whitcomb and Hamdan Taha, "Khirbet al-Mafjar and its Place in the Archaeological Heritage of Palestine," *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology and Heritage Studies* 1 (2013), 54–65. For the increase in wine production in Egypt following the Arab conquest see Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*. See also Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "The Rise and Fall of Empires in the Islamic Mediterranean (600–1600 CE): Political Change, the Economy and Material Culture," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. T. Hodos (London: Routledge, 2017), 652–68, at 656.

[40] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Making the Private Public: A Delivery of Palestinian Oil in Third/Ninth Century Egypt," *Studia Orientalia Electronica* 2 (2014), 74–91.

[41] Sijpesteijn, "Making the Private Public," 79.

[42] Alison L. Gascoigne and Gillian Pyke, "Nebi Samwil-Type Jars in Medieval Egypt: Characterisation of an Imported Ceramic Vessel," in *Under the Potter's Tree: Studies Presented to Janine Bourriau on the Occasion of Her 70th Birthday*, ed. David Aston et al. (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 427–31.

[43] Sijpesteijn, "Making the Private Public," 79–80.

[44] Yitshak Magen, "Oil Production in the Land of Israel in the Early Islamic Period," in *Judea and Samaria: Researches and Discoveries*, ed. Yitshak Magen (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2008), 257–343; Itamar Taxel, "The Olive Oil Economy of Byzantine and Early Islamic Palestine: Some Critical Notes," *Liber Annuus* 63 (2013), 361–94.

[45] Moshe Gil, *A History of Palestine 634–1099* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 236–37.

and Byzantine glass industries in Palestine involved natron as one of the main resources in the production process. Palestinian glassmakers imported natron from the sources at Wadi Natrun in northern Egypt.[46] The glass was primarily produced in big furnaces that melted sand and natron into large slabs weighing a few tons each. These slabs were broken into chunks that were distributed to glass-production workshops. The export of Egyptian raw material for the Palestinian glass industry intensified in the seventh century, and the transportation of Egyptian natron to Palestine continued until the late eighth century.[47] Besides the exchange in raw material, it seems that luxurious glass vessels of Egyptian origin were traded at the centers of Islamic rule in Palestine, as shown in the discovery of several unique glass luster-painted vessels in Ramla.[48] Indeed, the detailed study of glass-production centers in Palestine shows that glass was exported from Egypt to Palestine and vice versa throughout this period.

A technological change in the production process of glass occurred in the second half of the eighth century, when plant ash replaced natron as the main component in glass production. This innovation led to a sharp decline in the export of Egyptian natron to Palestine and affected the patterns of production in the eastern Mediterranean.[49] The circumstances of this change are not entirely clear, yet it was not caused by a disruption in the commercial contacts between Egypt and Palestine, as other goods continued to travel between the two regions. It seems that the change from natron to plant ash was the result of internal technological innovation and the introduction of a new method in the production of glass. The use of plant ash gradually increased throughout the Near East, including Egypt, one of the main sources of natron. As the rich assemblages of glass in the excavations at Ramla show, plant ash was extensively used in Palestine from the ninth century onward.[50]

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[46] Ian C. Freestone, Yael Gorin-Rosen, and Michael J. Hughes, "Primary Glass from Israel and the Production of Glass in Late Antiquity and the Early Islamic Period," in *La route du verre: ateliers primaires et secondaires du second millenaire av. J.-C. au Moyen Age*, ed. M.-D. Nenna (Lyons: Maison de l'Orient, 2000), 65–83.

[47] Matt Phelps, Ian C. Freestone, Yael Gorin-Rosen, and Bernard Gratuze, "Natron Glass Production and Supply in Late Antique and Early Medieval Near East: The Effect of the Byzantine-Islamic Transition," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 75 (2016), 57–71.

[48] Yael Gorin-Rosen, "Glass Vessels from the Ramla Excavations," *Qadmoniot* 135 (2008), 45–51 (Hebrew).

[49] Phelps et al., "Natron Glass."

[50] Matt Phelps, "Glass Supply and Trade in Early Islamic Ramla: An Investigation of the Plant Ash Glass," in *Things that Travelled: Mediterranean Glass in the First Millennium CE*, ed. Daniela Rosenow, Matt Phelps, Andrew Meek, and Ian Freestone (London: UCL Press, 2018), 236–82.

A considerable number of jewelry hoards found in Jerusalem, Ramla, Caesarea, and Tiberias further show contacts between Palestine and Egypt. These resemble jewelry types from Fusṭāṭ, which were found in excavations and are described in the Geniza documents. In Palestine, jewelry was mostly found in hoards hidden in residential buildings. They included bracelets, anklets, armlets, necklaces, earrings, and pendants, and were fabricated using gold, silver, and precious stones. The finds, most of them dating to the second half of the eleventh century, may have been imported from Egypt as luxury items.[51]

Another artifact found in considerable quantities, both in Palestine and in Egypt, are the so-called Coptic dolls – figurines made of bone, which resemble children's toys. These were found mainly in Ramla, Caesarea, and Jerusalem, but also in smaller sites in the countryside. In Egypt they are known from Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria, and in sites in Upper Egypt.[52] Similar objects were found at Sīrāf in the Persian Gulf and in southern Anatolia.[53] Their origin is somewhat obscure. They may have descended from local prototypes of the Hellenistic and Roman periods, have been introduced from the Arabian Peninsula by the Arab conquerors, or formed the last stage in Parthian–Sasanian figurines which were imported to Palestine and Egypt from Persia after connections between the former Sasanian and Byzantine provinces intensified in the wake of the Arab conquest.[54] Whatever the origins of the bone figurines, their presence in large numbers in both Palestine and in Egypt provides additional evidence for the close commercial connections between the regions.[55]

Finally, the production of textiles provides another aspect of the connectivity between Palestine and Egypt.[56] The increased production of

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[51] Ayala Lester, "From Fustat to Palestine: Identifying Fatimid Jewelry Using the Genizah Documents from the Ben Ezra Synagogue," in *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Old Cairo*, ed. Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tanya Treptow (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2015), 69–76. See also Avni, *Byzantine–Islamic Transition*, 323–24 for a discussion of context and significance of the Palestinian hoards.

[52] Ariel Shatil, "Bone Figurines from the Early Islamic Period: The So Called 'Coptic Dolls' from Palestine and Egypt," in *Close to the Bone: Current Studies in Bone Technologies*, ed. Selena Vitezović (Belgrade: Institute of Archaeology, 2016), 296–314; Elzbieta Rodziewicz, *Fustat I: Bone Carvings from Fustat-Istabl ʿAntar* (Cairo: IFAO, 2012); Elzbieta Rodziewicz, *Bone and Ivory Carvings from Alexandria: French Excavations 1992–2004* (Cairo: IFAO, 2007).

[53] See the distribution map in Shatil, "Bone Figurines," 298–300.

[54] Shatil, "Bone Figurines," 307–10.

[55] Of interest is a doll found in Jerusalem with clear stylistic connections to the ones produced in Fusṭāṭ. Perhaps it was brought to Jerusalem by a merchant or traveler from Fusṭāṭ. See Shatil, "Bone Figurines," 311.

[56] Orit Shamir, "Cotton Textiles from the Byzantine Period to the Medieval Period in Ancient Palestine," *Revue d'ethnoécologie* 15 (2019), http://journals.openedition.org/ethnoecologie/4176, DOI:10.4000/ethnoecologie.4176.

cotton, first in Egypt and then in Palestine, is reflected in the historical sources and archaeological findings.[57] Al-Muqaddasī's description of Palestine in the tenth century specifies several regions in which cotton fields prevail, among them Ramla and the Hula Valley. It seems that the economic transformation in Palestine was an integral part of the wider network of industrial economies in the Near East, and it was particularly connected to and affected by the Egyptian market.[58] The commercial connections of the cotton trade between Palestine and Egypt is reflected in a number of documents from the Cairo Geniza that mention the Palestinian cotton that was traded in Egypt.

A rare piece of evidence for the Christian pilgrimage traffic between Egypt and Palestine was found in a rescue excavation at the monastery of John the Baptist in Qaṣr al-Yahūd, a pilgrimage site on the Jordan River east of Jericho. A mass grave from the early Islamic period was revealed at the site, which was probably related to the treatment of sick pilgrims by the nearby monastery, as most of the skeletons found contained evidence of tuberculosis and leprosy. Along with the human remains hundreds of textile fragments dated to the ninth century were discovered in the grave. The anthropological context of the deceased, their burial practices and offerings, together with the finds of textiles, show a strong Egyptian and Nubian affiliation.[59] Among the roughly 250 textile pieces analyzed, 170 were made of linen and 77 of cotton. The technique and style of decorated cloths point to an Egyptian origin. A carbon dating of several textiles provided range of dates between 787 and 877 CE.[60]

To summarize, the archaeological record indicates that, despite fluctuations in specific products and items, in general there was an increased

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[57] Anna Kelley, "By Land or by Sea: Tracing the Adoption of Cotton in the Economies of the Mediterranean," in *Transmitting and Circulating the Late Antique and Byzantine Worlds*, ed. Mirela Ivanova and Hugh Jeffery (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 274–98.

[58] See Daniel Sperber, "Objects of Trade between Palestine and Egypt in Roman Times," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 19 (1976), 113–47 for the commercial connections between Palestine and Egypt in the Roman period; see Gladys Frantz-Murphy, "A New Interpretation of the Economic History of Medieval Egypt: The Role of the Textile Industry, 254–567/868–1171," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 24 (1981), 274–97 for the impact of flax industry on the Egyptian economy; and Maya Shatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World* (Leiden: Brill, 1994) for the major role of textiles industries in the division of labor.

[59] Orit Shamir, "Byzantine and Early Islamic Textiles Excavated in Israel," *Textile History* 32 (2001), 93–105; Orit Shamir, "Egyptian and Nubian Textiles from Qasr al-Yahud, 9th Century CE," in *Textiles, Tools and Techniques of the 1st Millennium AD from Egypt and Neighbouring Countries*, ed. Antoine De Moor, Cacillia Fluck, and Petra Linscheid (Tielt: Lanoo, 2015), 48–59.

[60] Orit Shamir and Aliza Baginski, "Medieval Mediterranean Textiles, Basketry and Cordage Newly Excavated in Israel," in *Towns and Material Culture in the Medieval Middle East*, ed. Yaacov Lev (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 135–57, at 152.

importation of pottery, glass, jewelry, and other items and products from Egypt to Palestine. The highest concentration of artifacts was found in Ramla and the coastal towns of Ascalon and Caesarea, emphasizing the large-scale commercial contacts between Palestine and Egypt. Along with the exchange of goods, the movement of people between the two countries is evidenced by the finds of Egyptian coarse ware in several Palestinian sites and some anthropological evidence. It seems that the exchange of goods, such as olive oil, fish sauce, glass vessels, and textiles, was intensified by the new opportunities and market demands created by the Arab conquest and the opening of the borders between East and West.[61] The exchange of goods between Egypt and Palestine seems to have increased following the Fatimid conquest of Egypt. Many artifacts in the Palestinian coastal cities were dated to the tenth and eleventh centuries, and the rate of commercial maritime contacts between the two regions increased with the development of new trade networks, which were reflected both in the archaeological findings and in the Geniza documents.[62]

Ramla and Fusṭāṭ: Urban Innovations in Palestine and Egypt

A comparison between two major cities, Fusṭāṭ in Egypt and Ramla in Palestine, offers a good opportunity to establish how Egypt and Palestine were interconnected in the early Islamic period. The foundation of Fusṭāṭ, immediately after the conquest, as one of the first *amṣār*, and its massive development and expansion between the mid-seventh and mid-eleventh centuries, had a great impact on the Egyptian urban landscape and beyond. Ramla, which was established eighty years later, around 715–17, and flourished until the mid-eleventh century, was one of the main urban centers in Palestine, and its material culture, as exposed in excavations, indicates a number of contacts with Fusṭāṭ.

The two cities seem to share similar characteristics, as described by the tenth-century historian al-Muqaddasī. He describes Fusṭāṭ thus:

> A metropolis in every sense of the word. . . . It has superseded Baghdad, and is the glory of Islam, and the marketplace of all mankind. Among the capitals there is none more populous than it, and it abounds in noble and learned men. . . . Its baths are the peak of perfection, its bazaars splendid and

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[61] See Sijpesteijn, "The Rise and Fall of Empires."

[62] Shlomo Dov Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab Worlds as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, vol. 4: *Daily Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

handsome. Nowhere in the realm of Islam is there a mosque more crowded
than here. . . . Their buildings are four stories or five. . . . I have heard it said
that about two hundred people live in one building.[63]

His description of Ramla, although more modest, reveals similar aspects of
an urban landscape:

It is a delight and [a] well-built city. The water is good to drink and flows
freely; fruits are abundant, and of every possible kind. It is situated in the
midst of fertile rural areas, splendid cities, holy places and pleasant villages.
Trade here is profitable, and the means of livelihood easy. There is not in
Islam a more splendid mosque than that here, no more delicious or excellent
than its white bread. . . . It possesses elegant hostelries and pleasant baths . . .
spacious houses, fine mosques, and broad streets.[64]

Archaeological excavations in Fusṭāṭ and Ramla allow for a closer compari-
son of their urban layout and architectural characteristics. Fusṭāṭ was
extensively excavated in the early twentieth century. Ali Bey Bahgat, the
assistant director of the Museum of Arab Art in Cairo, conducted large-
scale excavations at the site between 1912 and 1924, with the primary
purpose of collecting artifacts for the museum.[65] These were not carefully
designed archaeological excavations, yet their main contribution was to
expose large areas of ancient Fusṭāṭ, which enabled a good reconstruction
of the city's streets and urban layout.[66] The first modern excavations in
Fusṭāṭ were conducted between 1964 and 1980 by George Scanlon on
behalf of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE). They provided
a comprehensive view of the stratigraphy and the chronological develop-
ment of streets and houses, emphasizing some of the city's unique features,
such as the extensive installation of underground cesspits and water
cisterns.[67] Additional excavations were conducted in the 1980s and 1990s
by a Japanese team from Waseda University and by Roland-Pierre Gayraud
from the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, who also studied the

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[63] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrifat al-aqālīm*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill,
1906), 197–200; trans. Basil A. Collins as *al-Muqaddasi: The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the
Regions* (Reading: Garnet, 1994).

[64] Al-Muqaddasi, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, 164.

[65] Tanya Treptow, "A History of Excavations at Fustat," in *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians
and Jews in Old Cairo*, ed. Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tanya Treptow (Chicago: Oriental Institute of
the University of Chicago, 2015), 99–110.

[66] Bahgat's unexpected death in the course of excavations stopped this venture. For a partial report of
the excavations see Ali Bey Bahgat and Albert Gabriel, *Fouilles d'al Fustat* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1921).

[67] Treptow, "History of Excavations," 105–06 and references for Scanlon's preliminary and final
reports. For a detailed analysis of the history and archaeology of Fusṭāṭ see Wladislaw Kubiak, *Al-
Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press,
1987).

aqueducts of Fusṭāṭ.[68] Between 2000 and 2006 Peter Sheehan of ARCE conducted a continuous archaeological monitoring in Old Cairo, including the construction and rehabilitation of the Cairo groundwater system.[69]

The pattern of research in Ramla has been substantially different from that in Fusṭāṭ. Early studies of the site focused on the architectural analysis of its only standing ancient monuments, the White Mosque and the "Arches Pool," without any archaeological excavations taking place.[70] Several probes were conducted in the 1950s and 1960s around the White Mosque and in the western outskirts of the modern town, but only preliminary accounts published.[71] Consequently, the reconstruction of early Islamic Ramla was based mainly on historical sources.[72] This unpromising situation changed dramatically in the early 1990s, when, following accelerated development in modern Ramla, scores of rescue excavations were conducted throughout and around the town on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Hebrew University. These revealed fragmentary remains of the hitherto invisible early Islamic city and provided substantial archaeological data for the reconstruction of its topographical layout and chronological sequence. Large-scale excavations were carried out to the north, west, and south of modern Ramla, and around the White Mosque, exposing the area of the early Islamic city. In addition, the course of the early Islamic aqueduct leading water to the city from the springs at Tel Gezer was traced and examined.[73] The revolutionary change in the archaeological exploration of Ramla is well represented by the number of excavations conducted in the last decades: only six between 1949 and 1990, and around 310 between 1990 and

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[68] Roland-Pierre Gayraud, *Fustat II: fouilles d'Istabl ʿAntar* (Cairo: IFAO, 2017); Roland-Pierre Gayraud, "The Medieval Aqueducts of Fustat," *Egyptian Archaeology* 19 (2001), 6–8.

[69] Peter Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt: The Archaeology of Old Cairo and the Origins of the City* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010).

[70] Charles Clermont-Ganneau, *Archaeological Researches in Palestine during the Years 1873–1874*, vol. 2 (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1896), 127–30; Melchior de Vogüé, "La citerne de Ramleh et le trace des arcs brises," *Mémoires de L'académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 39 (1912), 163–80.

[71] Jacob Kaplan, "Excavations at the White Mosque in Ramla," *ʿAtiqot* 2 (1956), 106–15; Meir Ben Dov, "Umayyad and Mamluk Remnants of Public Buildings in Ramla," *Qadmoniot* 66–67 (1984), 82–85 (Hebrew); Miriam Rosen-Ayalon, "The First Mosaic Discovered in Ramla," *Israel Exploration Journal* 26 (1976), 104–19; Miriam Rosen-Ayalon, "The First Century of Ramla," *Arabica* 43 (1996), 250–63.

[72] See, e.g., Nimrod Luz, "The Construction of an Islamic City in Palestine: The Case of Umayyad al-Ramla," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 7/1 (1996), 27–55; Shimon Gat, "The City of Ramla in the Middle Ages," PhD thesis, Bar Ilan University (2003) (Hebrew).

[73] Yehiel Zelinger and Oren Shmueli, "The Aqueduct of the Heretic's Daughter: Remains of the Early Arab Aqueduct to Ramla," in *In Quest of Ancient Settlements and Landscapes: Archaeological Studies in Honor of Ram Gophna*, ed. Edwin C. M. van den Brink and Eli Yannai (Tel Aviv: Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, 2002), 279–89; Amir Gorzalczany, "An Umayyad Aqueduct to Ramla and Other Finds near Kibbutz Naʿan," *ʿAtiqot* 68 (2011), 193–220.

2019, some of them extending over large areas and exposing continuous sequences of habitation.[74]

The plethora of excavations in Fusṭāṭ and Ramla described above enables a detailed comparison between the cities, showing Egyptian influences on Palestine in various aspects of material culture. The urban development of Fusṭāṭ was summarized by Wladyslaw Kubiak and Sylvie Denoix, based on the results of excavations and on historical textual sources.[75] Unlike other cities established by the Arabs after the conquest, which showed preplanned, grid-formed cities, Fusṭāṭ presents a unique pattern of winding narrow streets, bordering large residential complexes. This unparalleled urban plan was probably the outcome of the primary division of land between the more than thirty Arab tribes that participated in the conquest of Egypt. The establishment of about thirty-five separate independent quarters, each inhabited by a single tribe with up to 350 people, created an urban pattern of separate enclosures with open areas in between them. These camps or tribal zones (*khiṭṭa*s), which later developed into the quarters of Fusṭāṭ, extended over around 600–800 ha, covering an area of approximately 5–6 × 2 km.[76] This unique structure of the newly established city was created as the tribes participating in the conquest kept their tribal identities.[77] It was perhaps also based on earlier Arabian traditions of urbanism.[78]

With the growth of the population and the expansion of urban areas, the primary enclosures were widened, bordered, and connected by winding streets and alleys.[79] The early dwellings within them consisted of a conglomeration of tents and huts made of reeds and clay. According to the results of excavations, permanent buildings were constructed at later stages, when Fusṭāṭ developed into a crowded city. The city's population in its early stages consisted only of members of the Arab tribes. Yet, as early as the middle of the seventh century, Fusṭāṭ was opened up for non-Muslims

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[74] See Avni, *Byzantine–Islamic Transition*, 161–88; and Gideon Avni, "Excavations in Ramla 1990–2018: Reconstructing the Early Islamic City," in *Ramla: City of Muslim Palestine, 715–1917*, ed. Denys Pringle (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2021), 31–63 for an updated summary of excavations.

[75] Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*; Sylvie Denoix, *Décrire le Caire: Fusṭāṭ-Miṣr d'après Ibn Duqmāq et Maqrīzī: l'histoire d'un partie de la ville du Caire d'après deux historiens égyptiens des XIVe–XVe* (Cairo: IFAO, 1992).

[76] Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, 71.

[77] This was suggested by Kubiak in his graphic reconstruction of the early urban structure of Fusṭāṭ. See Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, 68, fig. 2; also Denoix, *Décrire le Caire*, 73–80.

[78] As suggested by Donald Whitcomb, "An Urban Structure for the Early Islamic City: An Archaeological Hypothesis," in *Cities in the Pre-Modern Islamic World: The Urban Impact of Religion, State and Society*, ed. Amira K. Bennison and Alison L. Gascoigne (London: Routledge, 2007), 15–26.

[79] Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, 59–75.

to settle in.[80] As a result of large-scale internal migration from Egyptian villages in the hinterland to the newly created city as well as waves of settlement associated with the incoming Arab troops, the population of Fusṭāṭ increased several times within its first decades. By the time of Muʿāwiya it is said to have contained some 40,000 inhabitants.[81] The open spaces between the tribal zones (*khiṭṭa*s) were rapidly occupied and filled with new buildings. The growth of the city accelerated following the seventh century, and according to some sources it had reached the incredible number of around 500,000 by the late tenth century.[82]

Archaeological excavations traced the process of Fusṭāṭ's construction and expansion, revealing a stratigraphy of later buildings covering earlier ones. The buildings presented in the archaeological reports reflect mainly the urban landscape of the tenth century, with few areas showing the remains of earlier buildings.[83] This picture is very similar to the one in Ramla, where only scant remains from its early stages were unearthed (see below). Still, it is possible to reconstruct some features of Fusṭāṭ's earliest domestic architecture. The first buildings date to the second half of the seventh century, although only small segments of these have been preserved. The houses were constructed mainly of mud bricks, available from the banks of the Nile, but red burnt bricks, lime mortar, gypsum, and various kinds of stones were also used as building materials. Kubiak suggested that the intensive use of cesspits, which were found near the houses, was an innovation brought from Arabia, in contrast to the Hellenistic tradition of a central sewerage system.[84] A typical feature in the houses of Fusṭāṭ is the construction of high buildings, perhaps following the architectural tradition of South Arabia.[85] These were very prominent in the later stages of the city's development.[86]

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[80] See Audri Dridi, "Christian and Jewish Communities in Fusṭāṭ: Non-Muslim Topography and Legal Controversies in the Pre-Fatimid Period," in *The Late Antique World of Early Islam: Muslims among Jews and Christians in the East Mediterranean*, ed. Robert G. Hoyland (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2015), 107–32; and Audri Dridi, "Christians of Fustat in the First Three Centuries of Islam: The Making of a New Society," in *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Old Cairo*, ed. Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tanya Treptow (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2015), 33–42. I thank Petra M. Sijpesteijn for these references. See also Peter Sheehan and Alison L. Gascoigne's contribution to this volume (Chapter 14).

[81] Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, 79.

[82] See the different estimations in Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, 83. According to al-Muqaddasī, Fusṭāṭ in these times was even larger than Baghdad, the capital of Iraq: al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, 199.

[83] See esp. the reports by Scanlon and Kubiak, as mentioned in Treptow, "History of Excavations," 105–06.

[84] Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, 125–26.   [85] See Whitcomb, "An Urban Structure."

[86] Donald Whitcomb, "Fustat to Cairo: An Essay on 'Old Cairo'," in *A Cosmopolitan City: Muslims, Christians and Jews in Old Cairo*, ed. Tasha Vorderstrasse and Tanya Treptow (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2015), 93–98.

One of the most prominent features exposed in Fusṭāṭ are the streets of the early Islamic city. Kubiak defined two types of streets: major thoroughfares that led from the outlying quarters to the central ones, and local alleys that provided access to the buildings inside each section. The careful excavation and detailed stratigraphic analysis of excavated streets show that their primary layout had been established by the end of the seventh or early eighth century. Similarly, the level of the streets was raised with the development and changes in the nearby buildings. The streets were usually narrow, up to 3 m wide, while the main arteries were wider (up to 6 m).[87]

Historical sources mention more than 140 houses, 40 mosques, and many baths, palaces, and other public buildings in Fusṭāṭ during its peak of urban expansion in the tenth century. Although the beginning of architectural development in the city is assigned to the reign of Muʿāwiya, construction was intensified in the times of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān, ʿAbd al-Malik's brother, who sponsored the building of houses, palaces, and public streets, and conducted the rebuilding of the Mosque of ʿAmr. The most prominent building in the city was the palace of ʿAbd al-Azīz, built in 686–87 west of the Mosque of ʿAmr, and known as the Gilded Palace (al-dār al-mudhahhaba). Yet it seems that the development of the palace complex and the main congregational mosque was only the result of a second stage in the development of Fusṭāṭ, as in the very beginning each quarter (khiṭṭa) had its own mosque and administrative center.[88] Only later, when Umayyad policy aimed to level tribal differences and unite the quarters of the city into a single urban entity, was the Mosque of ʿAmr transformed from a local-quarter mosque into the main congregational mosque of the city. Al-Muqaddasī described the splendor of the mosque and its mosaics as outshining those in the Great Mosque of Damascus.[89] It is interesting to note that the large-scale constructions in Fusṭāṭ were conducted only a few years before Sulaymān decided to establish Ramla, in around 715. It seems that ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz set the tone for the splendid constructions of other caliphs and local rulers in Fusṭāṭ and elsewhere.

As in Fusṭāṭ, the foundation of Ramla set the tone for a new concept in the urban architecture of Palestine. The establishment of the city as the capital of jund Filasṭīn and its rapid development had a great impact on

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[87] Kubiak, Al-Fustat, 113; for a typical excavated street see, e.g., Wladislaw Kubiak and George T. Scanlon, "Fustat Expedition: Preliminary Report, 1966," Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt 10 (1967), 11–25, at 13, and plan 5; Wladislaw Kubiak and George T. Scanlon, "Fustat Expedition: Preliminary Report, 1971: Part II," Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt 17 (1978), 77–96, at 77–79.

[88] Kubiak, Al-Fustat, 129.   [89] Al-Muqaddasī, Aḥsan al-taqāsīm, 199.

central and southern Palestine. While most cities in the region were based on Hellenistic and Roman prototypes, early Islamic Ramla was founded *ex nihilo*, in an area surrounded by villages and farmsteads that formed the hinterland of Byzantine Diospolis (Lod/Ludd). The new city was built around its main congregational mosque, the White Mosque, and its urban street pattern was oriented according to the layout of the mosque.

Excavations in Ramla were hampered by a very poor state of preservation of architectural features, and could not reveal many architectural remains of the early Islamic city, due to the massive looting of stones following the decline of the city in the eleventh century. In many excavated sections of Ramla only the foundation trenches of walls indicated the layout of ancient buildings. Except for its two impressive standing monuments, the White Mosque in the city center and the "Arches Pool" in its northern section, all other public buildings of early Islamic Ramla have disappeared. Nevertheless, the intensive excavations revealed an exceptionally large number of industrial installations and water cisterns embedded within the residential areas. These were better preserved as they were dug into the ground, paved with stones, and coated with plaster.

Historical sources mention four major buildings that were erected at the foundation of Ramla: the palace (*dār al-ʿimāra*), the "House of the Dyers" (*dār al-ṣabbāghīn*), the congregational mosque (which was completed only at the time of the caliph Hishām (r. 724–43), and the main aqueduct leading to the city.[90] Unfortunately, the archaeological findings provide only partial evidence of these early large-scale constructions. The earliest standing remains are related to the White Mosque, suggesting that the first mosque was constructed in the first half of the eighth century, and was probably damaged by the 749 earthquake.[91] This mosque follows the typical plan that is also found in the Umayyad mosques in Damascus, Tiberias, and Jerusalem.[92] It is formed by a square compound measuring 93 × 84 m facing north–south with a slight deviation to the east. The central courtyard was surrounded by porticos and a rectangular prayer hall facing the southern *qibla* wall. Three large cisterns were installed under the courtyard.

Besides its main monuments, archaeological finds throughout Ramla are consistent in dating the zenith of its urban growth to the tenth and early eleventh centuries, much like of the high point of Fusṭāṭ. Between the eighth and tenth centuries the urban limits expanded, forming a well-planned city

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[90] See Luz, "Umayyad Ramla."

[91] Miriam Rosen-Ayalon, "The White Mosque of Ramla: Retracing Its History," *Israel Exploration Journal* 56 (2006), 67–83.

[92] Katia Cytryn-Silverman, "The Umayyad Mosque of Tiberias," *Muqarnas* 26 (2009), 37–61.

with many affluent and spacious residential areas. Ramla became the largest city in Palestine despite the political turmoil and the fact that it was besieged time and again by foreign powers – the Ikhshidids, Fatimids, and Qarmatians – and by local Bedouin raids. It seems that these events had little effect on the physical shape of Ramla and did not stall its constant urban growth.

The common reconstruction of Ramla's urban layout based on historical textual sources presents a square or rectangular city surrounded by a wall and containing four main gates and four secondary gates.[93] This schematic grid plan was much clarified by the contribution of data from archaeological excavations. The city was indeed constructed on a grid plan, but was not predesigned as an exact square or rectangle.[94] The White Mosque and its immediate surroundings formed the urban core of early Islamic Ramla, and the size of the city extended in the tenth century to cover an area of about 3 × 3.5 km.[95]

Archaeological findings provided abundant data on the residential quarters around the White Mosque, especially to its south and west.[96] These were composed of large buildings which faced a network of intersecting streets and formed a unified plan of spacious houses with central courtyards surrounded by rooms and halls, like the ones in Fusṭāṭ. An uninterrupted sequence of buildings was exposed south of the White Mosque, containing five construction phases from the eighth century to the second half of the eleventh. All buildings showed similar architectural plans: large square or rectangular compounds with each unit containing rooms arranged around an inner courtyard. This large excavated area (ca. 5,000 m²) yielded remains of a complex urban network composed of dwellings – some of them luxurious – industrial installations, and an elaborate system of cisterns and water channels. The elegance of private residences was attested by the accidental discovery of three sections of decorated mosaic floors southeast of the mosque, among them an early example of a *miḥrāb*.[97] This

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[93] Luz, "Umayyad Ramla," fig. 3; Donald Whitcomb, "Islam and the Socio-Cultural Transition of Palestine: Early Islamic Period (638–1099 CE)," in *The Archaeology of Society in the Holy Land*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (London: Leicester University Press, 1995), 488–501, at 492, and fig. 3; Andrew D. Petersen, *The Towns of Palestine under Muslim Rule, AD 600–1600* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005), 100–02.

[94] See Avni, *Byzantine–Islamic Transition*, 161–70.   [95] Avni, *Byzantine–Islamic Transition*, 182.

[96] Gideon Avni and Oren Gutfeld, "Ramla," in *New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Ayelet Lewinson-Gilboa, and Joseph Aviram, 5 vols. (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993–2008), 5:2007–10.

[97] Rosen-Ayalon, "The First Mosaic"; Rina Avner, "Mosaic Pavements from the Excavations South of the White Mosque," *Qadmoniot* 135 (2008), 21–25 (Hebrew).

area was abandoned following the earthquakes of 1033 and 1068, never to be settled again.

It seems then that the urban development and expansion of Ramla followed that in Fusṭāṭ. It showed similar-shaped buildings with an equivalent chronological development and containing an abundance of artifacts of Egyptian origin. The involvement of the Egyptian government in Ramla was also in evidence in public constructions. An interesting insight into the construction of roads and bridges leading to the growing and expanding city was obtained with the serendipitous find of a monumental inscription on a marble plaque. It mentions the construction of a bridge by Muḥammad b. Ṭughj Abū Bakr al-Ikhshīd, who was appointed governor of Egypt in 935. According to the inscription the governor executed the construction of the bridge at the order of the caliph (*amīr al-muʾminīn*) in 942–45.[98]

Looking at Fusṭāṭ and Ramla from the aspect of the long-term connection between Egypt and Palestine, it is interesting to compare the tenth- and eleventh-century urban layout and domestic architecture as revealed in the archaeological excavations with the description of houses in the writings of Julian of Ascalon, an architect who lived in this southern coastal city of Palestine around the middle of the sixth century. In his *Laws and Customs of Palestine* Julian provided one of the most detailed references for the domestic components of Byzantine Ascalon.[99] Julian's information on the physical aspects of the city relates to daily life, residential buildings, industry and commerce, urban services, and infrastructure. The houses of sixth-century Ascalon are described either as single-story family homes or multi-story (up to three or four stories high) apartment houses, which the tenth-century houses discovered in Ramla and Fusṭāṭ resemble. The streets were usually lined with shops, located on the ground floor of residential buildings. Commercial activities were extended into the public thoroughfares, and local legislation was required to control this penetration into public domains, also reflecting the situation in eighth-century Ramla and Fusṭāṭ.

Thus, it seems that urban construction in both cities was influenced by several pre-Islamic traditions: houses were designed in accordance with the

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[98] Amir Gorzalczany, "Ramla, Taʿavura Junction, Final Report," *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 121 (2009), www.hadashot-esi.org.il.

[99] Joseph Geiger, "Julian of Ascalon," *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 112 (1992), 31–43. See also Tracy Hoffman, "Ascalon on the Levantine Coast," in *Changing Social Identity with the Spread of Islam*, ed. Donald Whitcomb (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2004), 25–50.

traditional Mediterranean concept of the central courtyard house, which prevailed in Syria and Palestine for many centuries, and was reflected in the writings of Julian of Ascalon. In Fusṭāṭ, however, many buildings were designed according to the layout of nearby streets and there is no uniformity in their plan. It seems that local architects had the freedom to incorporate several stylistic patterns in their domestic architecture.[100]

The archaeological findings of buildings and their contents in Fusṭāṭ and Ramla can also be compared with the descriptions of the later Cairo Geniza documents, which provide abundant information on many aspects of Fusṭāṭ's urban society.[101] Three types of houses were defined by Goitein based on the textual evidence,[102] and these can be applied to structures discovered in the excavations: The "Family House," which is the most common residential building mentioned in the Geniza documents, is remarkably similar to many houses discovered at Fusṭāṭ and Ramla. It contained a single structure or compound belonging to one family and included a network of rooms flanking a central courtyard. The "Bazaar House" combined commercial and residential functions, housing stores or commercial spaces on the ground floor and living apartments on the upper floors. This type was identified in several complex buildings excavated in Fusṭāṭ.[103] The "Apartment House" is the largest type, consisting of a large building, three or four stories high.[104]

Water Supply

The supply of drinking water to the growing population was a crucial issue for urban vitality and expansion, and both Ramla and Fusṭāṭ present solutions based on similar water-management technologies. Fusṭāṭ, despite its proximity to the Nile, suffered from a constant lack of clean drinking water. In order to increase the water supply to the city, a number of canals

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[100] The excavations in Fusṭāṭ provide examples of typical residential complexes: see Bahgat and Gabriel, *Fouilles*, Maison VI and Groupe I. See note 35 above for the Scanlon excavations.

[101] The detailed studies of Goitein and Gil on the Geniza documents reflect many aspects of daily life in Fusṭāṭ, including information on the houses, their layout, and maintenance: see Shlomo D. Goitein, "Urban Housing in Fatimid and Ayyubid Times," *Studia Islamica* 47 (1978), 5–23; Goitein, *Daily Life*, 47–150; Moshe Gil, "Maintenance, Building Operations, and Repairs in the Houses of the Qodesh in Fustat: A Geniza Study," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 14 (1971), 136–95.

[102] Goitein, "Urban Housing," 11–13.

[103] Bahgat and Gabriel, *Fouilles*, Maison VI and Groupe I; Hoffman, "Ascalon," 44 and fig. 2.11

[104] The archaeological evidence for this type is questionable, as no finds of upper floors were discovered in Fusṭāṭ. One large house in (Maison II) might be related to this type: Hoffman, "Ascalon," 47–8 and fig. 2.13.

and aqueducts were constructed, leading water directly from the Nile during its zenith, and from other sources in the outskirts of the city into open reservoirs and pools within Fusṭāṭ.[105] In Ramla the problems of permanent water supply were indicated by al-Muqaddasī, who stated that "the wells [of Ramla] are deep and salty, and the rainwater is held in closed cisterns; hence the poor go thirsty and strangers are helpless and at a loss at what to do. In the baths a fee must be paid so the attendants will turn the water wheels."[106]

To deal with the water shortage, hundreds of cisterns were installed within the residential areas of both Fusṭāṭ and Ramla, designed to conduct rainwater into the buildings via a sophisticated network of pipes. The cisterns were dug into the ground, paved with stone constructions, and carefully plastered, storing the collected rainwater from nearby roofs. The excavations at Ramla unearthed a ramified system of cisterns and small water channels within the city, and many clay pipes that drained rainwater into the numerous private cisterns in the courtyards of houses. In addition, the construction of aqueducts, designed to lead water from far-away permanent water sources, was essential in the two cities. Indeed, sophisticated water-conveying systems were created to improve the inadequate water supply. The main aqueduct to Ramla supplied water from the Gezer springs, located around 12 km to the southeast of the city.[107] The aqueducts of Fusṭāṭ conveyed drinking water into the city from Birkat al-Ḥabash, a large water source to the south of Fusṭāṭ, with several aqueducts. These were unearthed in the excavations at Isṭabl ʿAntar, in the southern end of the city.[108]

Urban Zoning and Ethnic Composition: The Creation of Multicultural Cities

The parallel urban development of Fusṭāṭ and Ramla, and the fact that they were open to non-Muslims to settle, provided the framework for the creation of multicultural urban societies with similar characteristics. Christian and Jewish communities in both cities lived amongst the Muslim population, with no physical segregation between the residential areas of people from different faiths. Christians of the Coptic, other

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[105] Amalia Levanoni, "Water Supply in Medieval Middle Eastern Cities: The Case of Cairo," *al-Masāq* 20 (2010), 179–205; Gayraud, "Aqueducts of Fustat."

[106] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, 165.

[107] Zelinger and Shmueli, "Aqueduct of the Heretic's Daughter."

[108] Gayraud, "Aqueducts of Fustat."

Miaphysite, and Melkite communities, together with a Jewish community, settled in Fusṭāṭ shortly after the conquest, where they constructed their own churches and synagogues. The Coptic community seems to have settled outside the areas allocated to the Arab tribes.[109] The first church in Fusṭāṭ was constructed between 667 and 682.[110] With the expansion of Fusṭāṭ, churches were constructed in neighborhoods with Christian majorities, for example in the previous fortress of Babylon and near Birkat al-Ḥabash on the outskirts of the city.[111] In 737 the Muslim authorities gave permission for a new church within the city to serve the growing number of Christians in the city. Another church, dedicated to St. Mary, which included a monastic compound, was constructed in central Fusṭāṭ. It was demolished in 786 at the orders of ʿAlī b. Sulaymān but was immediately reconstructed. The proliferation of new churches in Fusṭāṭ and the reconstruction of old ones present clear evidence of the affluence of the local Christian community and the tolerance of the Muslim authorities.[112]

It seems that the pattern of Christian–Muslim cohabitation in Fusṭāṭ was very similar to that in Ramla, where Christians, Jews, and Muslims lived together in the same neighborhoods. Indeed, no archaeological evidence of ethnic segregation in the living quarters of Ramla was found. Still, the preeminent position of the Muslim community is indicated by references in historical sources to its numerous governors, judges, and government officials and administrators.[113] Yet the city also contained large Christian and Jewish communities. Christians from Lod–Diospolis were settled in Ramla at its foundation and, as in Fusṭāṭ, established their own churches.[114] Later sources name at least two churches in the city – an "upper" and a "lower" church[115] – and a number of Christian theologians were associated with Ramla.[116] Nevertheless, occasional confrontations between Christians and Muslims occurred, resulting in the destruction of churches. For example, the church of St. Cyriacus and the church of St. Cosmas were damaged in the tenth century – but were rapidly reconstructed.[117] Several architectural fragments with Christian symbols

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[109] As described by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam: see Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, 79–80.
[110] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 86–92.   [111] Dridi, "Christians of Fustat."
[112] Dridi, "Christians of Fustat," 39–40.   [113] Gil, *History of Palestine*, [425]–[435].
[114] Luz, "Umayyad Ramla," 54.
[115] Sidney H. Griffith, "The Arabic Account of ʿAbd al-Masīḥ an-Naǧrānī al-Ghassānī," *Le Muséon* 63 (1985), 331–74, at 357–58; Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Corpus*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993–2009), 2:195–96.
[116] Sidney H. Griffith, "Stephen of Ramla and the Christian Kerygma in Arabic 9th Century Palestine," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 36 (1985), 23–45.
[117] Pringle, *Churches of the Crusader Kingdom*, 2:196.

unearthed in the excavations hint at their provenance in Christian churches, but none of these was found *in situ*. Burial inscriptions provide additional evidence of Christians in Ramla, such as the one dated to 943, which mentions a Christian citizen named Jabour.[118]

The Jewish community of Ramla is well attested by the Geniza documents, with letters describing commercial activities of local Jews and their connection with the Jewish community of Fusṭāṭ.[119] The Geniza letters mention at least three synagogues, and a document from 1039 describes the religious festival of Purim attended by several hundred people – Jews and Karaites. Other letters mention the selling of oil, soap, cloths, linen, and other commodities by Jewish merchants from Fusṭāṭ. The relationship between Jews and Muslims in Ramla can also be traced in several Geniza documents. For example, a letter from 1035 describes a complaint about a certain Ayyūb, probably a Muslim, who built a small house adjacent to one of the synagogues of Ramla and grew vegetables in an open plot which was the synagogue's property.[120]

It seems then that the urban zoning in Ramla was not defined by the religious affiliation of the local population. Members of all religious communities lived side by side, sharing the same neighborhoods. As in Fusṭāṭ, occasional acts of vandalism by Muslims causing damage to Christian churches were quickly repaired at the order of the local government.

Commercial exchange between the communities of Fusṭāṭ and Ramla is illustrated by the Geniza documents. Jewish traders who operated between Ramla and Fusṭāṭ have already been mentioned. Other textual sources found in Palestine confirm the existence of commercial activities, including merchants who traveled between Ramla and Fusṭāṭ. The discovery of the epitaph of an Egyptian cloth merchant who was entombed in Ramla on July 18, 918[121] offers an example of these connections. The local commercial prosperity was also expressed in the mint of Ramla, probably established shortly after the foundation of the city, which was the largest in the country. The coins, labeled "Ramla Filasṭīn," were widely circulated in Palestine and in neighboring regions. The central role of Ramla as a commercial center in Palestine

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[118] Moshe Sharon, "Passover or Easter? A Study of an Arabic Inscription from Ramla," *Arabic and Islamic Studies* 2 (1978), 31–47.

[119] Gil, *History of Palestine*, 173 [283]. It was suggested that the Ramla Jewish community was even larger than the one in Jerusalem.

[120] Gil, *History of Palestine*, 174–75.

[121] Amir Gorzalczany, "Ramla (South), Preliminary Report," *Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 121 (2009), www.hadashot-esi.org.il.

is attested by a unique hoard of gold coins found in the city, containing 376 coins of a wide geographical distribution, from the Maghreb to Iran (but with no coins from the mint in Ramla itself). The coins, minted between 761 and 979, were probably the property of a local money-changer.[122]

Decline and Collapse

The ends of the periods of grandeur in Ramla and Fusṭāṭ show similar characteristics: both suffered massive decline in the second half of the eleventh century, perhaps in conjunction with the years of severe drought and the plague of the 1060s. Fusṭāṭ contracted by two-thirds, and Ramla was almost completely deserted during these years, only to be reconstructed as a small city in the post-Crusader periods.

Archaeological evidence from Ramla shows very clearly that the city collapsed in the second half of the eleventh century. The White Mosque compound was deserted and residential areas throughout the city were abandoned. It seems that the city's decline was associated both with the deterioration of political stability, exemplified by the increased Bedouin raids into Ramla,[123] and the effects of two earthquakes, on December 5, 1033 and March 18, 1068. While the first caused considerable damage, albeit not mass destruction, the impact of the 1068 earthquake on Ramla was devastating. Following this earthquake, which leveled most of the city's buildings, the southern and western sections of Ramla were deserted and not resettled until modern times. It seems that the city contracted dramatically, yet it was not totally abandoned, and a few sections were still inhabited during the Crusader conquest in 1099.[124]

Fusṭāṭ declined dramatically in the second half of the eleventh century, probably as a direct result of the severe droughts of 1065–72, leading to the abandonment of large sections of the city. The focus of urban vitality shifted to Cairo, while Fusṭāṭ lost its major position among the cities of Egypt.[125]

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[122] Shalom Levy and H. W. Mitchell, "A Hoard of Gold Dinars from Ramlah," *Israel Numismatic Journal* 3 (1965–66), 37–52.

[123] See Gil, *History of Palestine*, 344–45.

[124] Michael Ehrlich, "The Frankish Impact on the Urban Landscape of Medieval Palestine," in *Towns and Material Culture in the Medieval Near East*, ed. Yaacov Lev (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 41–52.

[125] See Ronnie Ellenblum, *The Collapse of Eastern Mediterranean: Climate Change and the Decline of the East* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 147–58; Leigh Chipman, Gideon Avni, and Ronnie Ellenblum, "Collapse, Affluence and Collapse Again: Opposing Climatic Effects in Egypt during the Very Long Reign of al-Mustanṣir (1036–94)," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 36/2 (2021), 199–215.

Conclusion: Egypt and Palestine in the Early Islamic Period

The evidence of material culture shows that the commercial, political, and cultural connections between Egypt and Palestine intensified throughout the early Islamic period. Commercial goods traveled between these countries via land and sea routes, as the artifacts of Egyptian origin in Palestinian sites, and vice versa, testify. The exchange of goods included the transportation of Palestinian oil to Egypt, and the presence of Egyptian soldiers in Palestine.

The parallel development of Ramla and Fusṭāṭ illustrates the intensification of connections between Palestine and Egypt. The comparison between the two cities shows common aspects in their urban history: both were initiated and constructed *ex nihilo*, near a Byzantine-period settlement (Babylon in Egypt and Lod–Diospolis in Palestine). The construction of a new city under Arab rule was conducted along with a clear policy of separating the new Islamic presence from the old and still-existing Christian population, although Christians and Jews soon formed part of the urban fabric of the new cities. Both cities went through a rapid urban expansion between the eighth and tenth centuries, with massive construction of new residential areas, the one in Fusṭāṭ introducing high buildings of four stories and more. The wealth of both cities is expressed in the lavish material finds and in the extensive evidence of commercial and industrial activities.

The gap of around eighty years between the establishment of the two cities – Fusṭāṭ immediately following the Arab conquest in 641 and Ramla in about 715 – seems to be one of the reasons for the difference in their urban layout: Fusṭāṭ was established as a consequence of the division of properties among the Arab tribes participating in the conquest, while Ramla was initiated under a consolidated Islamic administration. Both Fusṭāṭ and Ramla were designed as administrative capitals of respectively the *jund Miṣr* and the *jund Filasṭīn*. The construction of a congregational mosque, adjacent to the palace and the commercial and industrial centers, all designed within a preplanned urban grid system, dictated the urban landscape and the location and shape of the residential quarters.

The growth and expansion of Ramla during this period seems to relate to the economic and commercial expansion of Egypt as a major economic force in the eastern Mediterranean. The intensification of the flax and textile industries typified the growing commercial activities between Ramla and Egypt.[126] This is well attested in the Geniza documents, as well as in the

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[126] Shimon Gat, "A Thriving Muslim City: The Economy of Ramla in the Middle Ages," *Cathedra* 123 (2007), 39–66 (Hebrew).

large amounts of imported artifacts originating in Egypt that were found in the excavations in Ramla. It seems also that Ramla and Fusṭāṭ maintained a similar distribution pattern of labor – the most widespread industry was textiles, which in Fusṭāṭ employed about 20 percent of the potential labor force.[127] Although there are no exact numbers for Ramla it seems that the proportion was the same as in Fusṭāṭ.

One of the most significant aspects in the parallel development of Ramla and Fusṭāṭ was that both cities included significant segments of non-Muslim populations, mainly Christians and Jews, creating a multicultural urban society. However, the existence of churches and synagogues within the Muslim zones triggered occasional tension between the communities.

To conclude, the study of interconnections between Palestine and Egypt in the early Islamic period has wider implications concerning the shifting boundaries and connectivity between late antiquity and early Islam in the eastern Mediterranean. While in the Byzantine period the connections of Palestine were oriented very much westward, to Byzantium and the Mediterranean basin, the early Islamic period marked a shift toward Egypt, with the development of new mutual interests and connections between the two regions.

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[127] Maya Shatzmiller, "Economic Performance and Economic Growth in the Early Islamic World," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54 (2011), 231–84; Moshe Gil, "The Flax Trade in the Mediterranean in the Eleventh Century AD as Seen in Merchants' Letters from the Cairo Geniza," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 63 (2004), 81–96.

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CHAPTER 8

Egypt's Connections in the Early Caliphate: Political, Economic, and Cultural

Petra M. Sijpesteijn

Egypt's position in the caliphate has generally been considered either as loosely tributary, with its governors running the province more or less as a personal possession, granting the caliph a share of the province's riches, as it pleased them, or as the outer rim of a radial system extending from the caliph's capital and through which caliphal power was exercised by means of administrative control and military force. In this model – which looks from the center outwards – Egypt is located at the decision-making periphery of the Muslim empire, the recipient of directives and consumer of developments initiated at the imperial capital (first located in Medina, then Damascus, and finally Baghdad), where the sneezes that precipitated all of the caliphate's colds occurred.

This chapter takes a different view. By examining Egypt's relationship to the imperial center between the Arab conquest and the establishment of the Fatimid caliphate in Cairo in 969 CE, and the complex, ambiguous, and shifting processes of interdependency, caliphal ambition, and local self-assertion as they appear in the sources, I will argue that at all times Egypt's centrality to the caliphate was a two-way relationship, in which Egypt occupied a key place in caliphal strategic thinking, and in which Egyptians saw themselves as intrinsic to the Muslim imperial project. The Arab conquest in the mid-seventh century did not diminish the province's dominant economic, political, military, and cultural roles,[1] but within the newly established Muslim empire, Egypt's organization and orientation nevertheless did change significantly as it served new masters according to new rules.

[1] The starting point for thinking about the relation between the caliphal capital and its dependencies is Annliese Nef and Mathieu Tillier's publication on polycentrism in the medieval Muslim empire: Annliese Nef and Mathieu Tillier, "Introduction: les voies de l'innovation dans un empire Islamique polycentrique," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 1–20.

Egypt's integration into the caliphate was a complex amalgam of perception and fact, ambition and practicability, fixed policy and opportunistic adaptation, shaped by pressures both from the top down and from the bottom up. This chapter looks at how this ongoing dialogue between local and central players and pressures it gave rise to were managed. It examines the political and economic connections that wrapped Egypt firmly into the early Muslim empire, but also points out the variabilities in these connections that resulted from local and transregional happenstance. My intention here is less to disentangle the many strands of this relationship, assuming that were even possible, than to show the density of the tangle and the intensity of the relationship it speaks to. The focus is on Egypt, using documentary material to trace the character and degree of the caliphate's presence in the province along with local and centrally composed histories, to examine how Egypt's relationship to the caliphate was envisaged, operationalized, and experienced both in the province and the caliphal center.

Managing Egypt: The Caliph's Perspective

ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's invasion of Egypt in 639 CE is remembered in the Arabic sources in an anecdote that points at once to the crucial importance and the dangers involved in attempting to control Egypt, especially for imperial rulers. In his pre-Islamic life a trader who had been active in Egypt, ʿAmr knew first hand of its phenomenal wealth. As he stood at the borders with his invading army, an envoy arrived from Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13–23/634–44) with a letter. Anticipating what the letter contained, ʿAmr put it aside and pushed on. Once inside Egyptian territory, he opened the letter and read the caliph's message. "If you read this letter before you have entered Egypt, then return with your troops." ʿAmr asked his companions where they were. When he heard that they were already on Egyptian soil, he cheerfully continued his triumphant conquest.[2]

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[2] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt wa-kitāb al-quḍāt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 8; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Kitāb Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbārihā*, ed. Charles C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 57; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1866), 212. Al-Yaʿqūbī has ʿUmar give away the contents of his future letter, telling ʿAmr: "I will send a letter after you ordering you to return if you have not yet entered Egypt and to continue if you are already in Egypt" (al-Yaʿqūbī *Taʾrīkh*, ed. M. T. Houtsma, 2 vols. [Leiden: Brill, 1883], 2:166). In a slightly different version of the story ʿUmar gives ʿAmr permission to invade Egypt, or even orders him to go (al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-muluk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 16 vols. [Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901], 1:2581), but tells him that if he does send him a letter it will contain the order to return if he is not yet in Egypt but to continue his campaign if he has already entered the country. When ʿUmar gets cold feet about the

ʿUmar voices his disquiet over ʿAmr's invasion with the warning that Egypt is "full of Byzantine soldiers." But the real source of his wariness is easy to see, and the anecdote enacts a central tension in the dynamic of Egypt's government: such a rich land has the potential to confer significant power on whomever governs it, and requires therefore to be closely controlled; on the other hand, such power is not so easily contained. Hence both ʿAmr's subterfuge and the caliph's guarded acceptance of it. It alerts us too to the subtle and slippery maneuverings that can go hand in hand with formal obedience and unbroken loyalty.

Indeed, ʿUmar went on to appoint ʿAmr as Egypt's first governor (in office 20–25/641–45). His successor ʿUthmān (r. 25–35/645–56), in an attempt to gain more direct control over the province, dismissed ʿAmr, replacing him with his own milk-brother Ibn Abī Sarḥ (in office 25–35/645–56), a loyal servant who assiduously pursued the caliph's centralizing policy, provoking a backlash that cost ʿUthmān his life and Ibn Abī Sarḥ his political career,[3] a demonstration of how delicate and dangerous negotiating a balance could be. The next caliph, ʿAlī (r. 35–40/656–61), also appointed governors closely related to him, whose loyalty was beyond dispute, indicating the importance of the province, the challenge of ensuring it was reliably controlled,[4] and its desirability as a post. Indeed, several of Egypt's governors went on or were in line to become Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs themselves.[5]

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invasion and sends ʿAmr the letter, ʿAmr does not open it until he is in Egypt (Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 56). This anecdote confirms also ʿAmr's reputation as shrewd (M. G. Keshk, "ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ," in *EI²*, s.v.).

[3] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 10–19; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 59–61; Martin Hinds, "The Murder of the Caliph ʿUthman," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3 (1972), 450–69.

[4] See esp. the appointment in 37/657 of one of ʿAlī's closest associates, Mālik al-Ashtar, who died, however, while entering the country at Clysma (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 24). Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr (in office 37–38/657–58), son of the first caliph, was a similar symbolic and close appointment (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 26–31).

[5] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān (in office 65–86/685–705) was the designated successor of the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 65–86/685–705) but died before he could take the throne. Abū Isḥāq (in office 213–18/828–33) would succeed al-Maʾmūn (r. 189–218/813–33) as the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (r. 218–27/833–42) (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 185–93). Muḥammad al-Muntaṣir bi-llāh was made responsible for all Abbasid lands west of al-ʿArīsh including Egypt from 235/849 to 242/856 before he became caliph in 247/861 (Adolf Grohmann, *From the World of Arabic Papyri* [Cairo: Maʾaref Press, 1952], 119; al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 198–202). In 301/913–14 the caliph al-Muqtadir (r. 295–320/908–32) gave his son, the future caliph al-Rāḍī (r. 322–29/934–40), the provinces of North Africa and Egypt as an appanage (Thierry Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt from Ibn Ṭūlūn to Kāfūr, 868–969," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], 86–119, at 110). Jaʿfar al-Mufawwaḍ had been appointed apanagist of Egypt and, after that, governor of the western half of the empire as the first heir apparent to his father, the caliph al-Muʿtamid (r. 256–79/870–92), but was sidelined at his father's death (Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 105). Jaʿfar's name appears on several *ṭirāz* fragments together with those of

   In the internal power struggles that shook the early Islamic empire, control over Egypt, with its wealth and strategic position, was crucial for the success of claimants of power. During his governorship of Syria, Muʿāwiya (in office 18–41/639–61) had kept a close watch on Egypt, moving in with his army to arrest and kill the insurgents who had been responsible for his family member ʿUthmān's death, something that ʿAlī was unwilling to do.[6] ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ secured the province for the caliph Muʿāwiya (r. 40–60/661–80) when the *wujūh* of Egypt started to side with Muʿāwiya in his power struggle with the caliph ʿAlī. That ʿAmr did so on condition of obtaining Egypt's governorship rather than that of any other province suggests the interest that the province held for leading Muslims. When the caliph Marwān I (r. 64–65/684) sought to wrest control from the supporters of Ibn al-Zubayr (d. 73/692), he started in Egypt, personally leading an army and temporarily settling in the country in 65/684.[7] A contemporary papyrus confirms the presence of mobile armies with the caliph in Egypt.[8] In 72/691 Marwān's son ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (d. 85/704), whom he had appointed governor in Egypt, supported his brother and the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 65–86/685–705) in the continuing fight against Ibn al-Zubayr in Mecca by sending a fleet with 3,000 men.[9] Some twenty years later Marwān II (r. 127–32/744–50) also dispatched an army to the province, knowing the risks he faced if he lost this critical territory.[10]

   The pattern of caliphal political–military involvement to ensure access to Egypt's wealth was maintained under the Abbasids. Governors continued to be appointed from Baghdad and were often immediate family members of the caliph, in keeping with the Abbasid policy of choosing close relatives to run provinces located near (and, apparently, dear to) the capital.[11] The first Abbasid governor, Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlī (in office 133/750–51 and 136–37/753–55), was

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the caliph and Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad (e.g., Étienne Combe, Jean Sauvaget, and Gaston Wiet [eds.], *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie Arabe*, 18 vols. [Cairo: IFAO, 1931–91], vol. 2, nos. 731, 737). Jaʿfar's appointment in 258/872 is commemorated on a rare unpublished medallion mentioning the caliph al-Muʿtamid together with a depiction of a horse rider on one side and an elephant flanked with the name "al-Mufawwad" on the reverse (Robert E. Darley-Doran, "Yādgār," in *EI*[2] s.v.). In these latter cases local control, i.e., the governorship of Egypt, was in hands of others.

[6] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 19–20.

[7] Hugh Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province in the Islamic Caliphate, 641–868," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*: vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 62–85, at 70–71.

[8] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics: An Early Papyrus Letter Related to ʿAṭāʾ Payments," in *Histories of the Middle East Studies in Middle Eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A. L. Udovitch*, ed. Margariti Eleni Roxani, Adam Sabra, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 245–68.

[9] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 51.   [10] Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 75.

[11] Tayeb El-Hibri, "The Empire in Iraq, 763–861," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World: Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase F. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 269–304, at 275.

the uncle of the first two Abbasid caliphs. He had played a crucial role in the success of the Abbasid takeover and was entrusted with the important task of securing Egypt for the new dynasty.[12] Al-Manṣūr (r. 136–58/754–75), alert to the crucial advantage control over Egypt gave rulers, appointed a close ally, Yazīd b. Ḥātim (in office 144–52/762–69), as governor. In this way he hoped to prevent the province falling into the hands of the ʿAlids, whose challenge to his power was a central concern of the caliph.[13] In an attempt to regain control of the caliphate at the expense of his brother and de facto ruler of the caliphate al-Muwaffaq (d. 278/891), the caliph al-Muʿtamid (r. 255–56/869–70) fled Baghdad in 269/882 with the aim of establishing himself at Fusṭāṭ. His brother's troops, however, intercepted him as Egypt's governor, Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn (in office 254–70/868–84), waited in vain in Damascus, hoping to bring the caliph triumphantly to Egypt.[14] This is a good example of how Egypt's participation in caliphal politics worked, both from the capital toward the province and vice versa. The caliph looked upon Egypt as an important powerbase that could even function as an alternative capital to Baghdad, while Egypt's ambitious governor's greatest dream was to reorganize the caliphate with Egypt at the center.

   Political and financial control were typically closely linked. The caliph al-Mahdī (r. 158–69/775–85), wanting to increase his hold over the province, appointed Mūsā b. Muṣʿab (in office 167–68/784–85) as governor, with both political and financial responsibilities, thereby depriving local families of a crucial instrument of influence. Mūsā had been explicitly ordered to extract more taxes from the province, which he reportedly did by confiscating huge sums from the fiscal agents in the country and by increasing the tax rates and categories.[15] As financial director, a position mostly filled by a member of one of the local Arab families, Mūsā was free to send more of the fiscal income on to the caliphal capital. His loyalty to the caliph is expressed in his title "agent of the Commander of the Faithful over the fiscal administration of Miṣr and all its districts" (ʿāmil amīr al-muʾminīn ʿalā kharāj miṣr wa-jamīʿ aʿmālihā), which appears on a draft of a receipt and safe conduct dated 168/784.[16] It is

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[12] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 97–101; Adolf Grohmann and Hugh Kennedy, "Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAlī," in *EI²*, s.v.
[13] Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 77.
[14] Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 101. Later, Muḥammad b. Tughj al-Ikhshīd (in office 323–34/935–46) cherished the same desire to establish the caliphate in Egypt. He asked the caliph al-Muttaqī (r. 329–33/940–44) to join him in Egypt. Earlier he had already toyed with the idea of submitting to Fatimid suzerainty. See Jere L. Bacharach, "Muḥammad b. Ṭughdj b. Djuff b. Yiltakīn b. Fūrān b. Fūrī b. Khāḳān, Abū Bakr, al-Ikhshīd," in *EI²* s.v.
[15] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 125.
[16] Werner Diem, "Einige frühe amtliche Urkunden aus der Sammlung Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer (Wien)," *Le Muséon* 97 (1984), 109–58, no. 7.

a unique instance of the relationship between caliph and governor being expressed in such close terms. Egyptian revenues continued to disappoint, however. Caliphs regularly had to send representatives with an accompanying army to recover taxes from those unwilling to pay, sometimes at the request of the governor, but more often to replace the apparently inefficient administrator.[17] Sometimes they used different, more subtle, means. In 176/ 792 al-Rashīd (r. 170–93/786–809) sent a secret envoy to check on the administration of another governor called Mūsā, son of ʿĪsā, and, presumably already suspecting his reliability, to replace him.[18] The caliph al-Maʾmūn (r. 189–218/813–33) also reached for the military solution. He sent two armies in a vain attempt to reimpose caliphal control over the province after civil war with his brother had plunged Egypt into a state of continuous factional warfare.[19] Only in 211/826 was al-Maʾmūn's general, ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir (d. 230/844), finally able to introduce centralizing administrative measures, bringing Egypt closer in line with the rest of the empire. In the changed administrative structure Egypt was administered as part of the western half of the caliphate by a governor located in Baghdad/Samarra. Again reflecting Egypt's importance, the absentee governor in charge of the western half of the caliphate was often the heir apparent.[20] Al-Maʾmūn made his brother, Abū Isḥāq, responsible for Egypt; Abū Isḥāq would in due course succeed him as the caliph al-Muʿtaṣim (r. 218–27/833–42).[21] Al-Maʾmūn visited Egypt in 217/ 832, an event that left a material trace in the entry that was forced into the large pyramid at Jīza at the caliph's order.[22] In other ways too Ibn Ṭāhir's centralizing measures are traceable in the material record.[23] Papyri confirm the practice described by historical sources of assigning the management, maintenance, and taxation of lands for multi-year periods in Fusṭāṭ.[24] Such

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[17] E.g., al-Layth b. al-Faḍl (in office 182–87/798–803) (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 139–41). A large army of Turkish troops was dispatched under Muẓāhim b. Khāqān to help the governor Yazīd b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Turkī (in office 242–53/856–67) put down an ʿAlid revolt after which Muẓāhim became governor himself (in office 253–54/867–68) (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 206–11).

[18] ʿUmar b. Mihrān's report is recorded in the chronicles (al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-Wuzarāʾ wa-l-kuttāb*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Ismaʿīl al-Ṣāwī [Cairo: Maṭbaʿat ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Aḥmad Ḥanafī, 1357/1938], 171–74; al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 3:626–28) and a papyrus confirms that ʿUmar replaced Mūsā as governor (Grohmann, *World*, 116).

[19] Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 80–81. [20] See above, note 5.

[21] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 185–93.

[22] Michael Cooperson, "al-Maʾmūn, the Pyramids and the Hieroglyphs," in *ʿAbbasid Studies II: Occasional Papers of the School of ʿAbbasid Studies*, ed. John Abdallah Nawas (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 165–90.

[23] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Delegation of Judicial Power in Abbasid Egypt," in *Legal Documents as Sources for the History of Muslim Societies: Studies in Honour of Rudolph Peters*, ed. Maaike van Berkel, Léon Buskens, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 61–84.

[24] Adolf Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri in the Egyptian Library*, vol. 2: *Legal Texts* (Cairo: Egyptian Library, 1936), no. 41.

renting out of state lands was facilitated by civil servants (*ʿummāl*, sing. *ʿāmil*), who carried the title "client of the caliph" (*mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn*), as had already become the common attribute of Egypt's governors and financial directors (*ṣāḥib al-kharāj*) since the late eighth century.[25]

Appointing a powerful member of the caliphal family could, however, also backfire. ʿAbd al-Malik tried hard to undo the arrangements made by his father Marwān whereby his brother and governor of Egypt ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz would succeed him on the throne. After ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz died in 86/705 ʿAbd al-Malik installed his own son ʿAbd Allāh (in office 86–90/705–09) as governor with the order to wipe out ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's network in the province. He thereby hoped to prevent any of the latter's descendants using Egypt as a base from which to seize control of the caliphate.[26]

All during this period another competitor for Egypt's wealth and the power that came with it were the members of the *jund*.[27] The important Arab families who had led the conquest of Egypt had continued to try to assert control over how the province's resources were managed and who would be in charge of them, dismissing or killing governors who were not to their liking.[28] The *jund*'s power was decisively reduced with ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir's administrative reforms.[29] From then on Egypt was governed as part of a larger district by an official stationed in Baghdad. In a papyrus dating to 242/856 al-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd Allāh receives responsibility over "Egypt, Barqa and Alexandria" from al-Muntaṣir, the future caliph (r. 247–08/861–62) who had gained control over all the Abbasid lands west of al-ʿArīsh.[30] A document dating to the early tenth century mentions an agent of the caliph al-Muktafī (r. 289–95/902–08) as being responsible for the taxes of Egypt, Barqa and the

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[25] The first governor attested in the papyri as bearing the title *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* is al-Layth b. al-Faḍl (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 139–41; *P.Ryl.Arab.* I IX 6 = *P.Ryl.Arab.* II 4 = *CPR* XXI 5). See also these other examples from the papyri: the governor or *ṣāḥib al-kharāj* and his agent both bear the title *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* (*P.Cair.Arab.* II 79, dating to 801–30, provenance Ushmūnayn; *P.Philad.Arab.* 8, ninth century); *ṣāḥib al-kharāj* Abū al-Wazīr Aḥmad b. Khālid (in office 226/841) (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 449; *CPR* XXII 43 [without the title *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn*], 44, both dated 226/841, provenance of both is Ushmūnayn); governor or *ṣāḥib al-kharāj* Abū ʿAbbās Saʿīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (Adolf Grohmann, "Einige bemerkenswerte Urkunden aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer an der Nationalbibliothek zu Wien," *Archiv Orientální* 18 [1950], 80–119, no. 8, dated 223/838, provenance Ushmūnayn; *P.Steuerquittungen* 4, provenance Ushmūnayn; *CPR* XXI 46, provenance Anṣinā, both dated 227/842). Perhaps he also appears as the writer of a receipt dated 226/840–41 from Ushmūnayn (*CPR* XXI 43).

[26] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "An Early Umayyad Papyrus Invitation for the Hajj," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 73 (2014), 179–90. See note 5 above for other examples of governors becoming caliphs.

[27] Sobhi Bouderbala, "Ǧund Miṣr: étude de l'administration militaire dans l'Égypte des débuts de l'Islam 21/642–218/833," PhD thesis, Université de Paris 1 – Panthéon Sorbonne (2008).

[28] Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 70.   [29] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 113.

[30] Grohmann, *World*, 119.

Ḥijāz.[31] In Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn's rise to power a significant event was his obtaining responsibility over Alexandria and Barqa in 257/870 after having wrested control from the finance minister Ibn al-Mudabbir (in office 247–57/861–70).[32] Governors and other local officials continued to be appointed in Baghdad/Samarra, but these were now more closely related to the Perso-Turkic military of the capital. The caliph's new Perso-Turkic military representatives in the province would soon employ the wealth, whose management had been temporarily assigned to them, to assert their autonomy. At the same time Egypt's *qāḍī*s continued to be appointed directly by the caliph. Only after concluding an agreement with the caliph was Egypt's governor Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn (in office 270–82/884–96) given the right to appoint judges and administrators as an extension of his directorship over prayers and taxes.[33] From 933 onward a similar structure to the two-layered governorship was put in place with a *qāḍī* appointed by the caliph in Baghdad delegating to a representative in Cairo.[34]

At the beginning of the third/ninth century the governor al-Sarī b. al-Ḥakam (in office 200–01/816; 201–05/817–20) had made use of the chaos at the caliphal capital created by the civil war between al-Amīn (r. 193/809) and al-Maʾmūn to appoint his sons to succeed him as governors of Egypt.[35] Although governors had often appointed their brothers and sons to lucrative jobs in or subject to the province, such as the governorship of Ifrīqiya or the directorate of finances or police, no governor had managed to set up a family dynasty before. ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir's taking of control for al-Maʾmūn was only an interlude of direct Abbasid control. In 254/868 Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn was sent to Egypt together with a financial agent to manage the province for the Turkish military Bāyakbāk, who remained in Baghdad.[36] Only from 257/870 was Ibn Ṭūlūn responsible for the finances of the province, and it is then that he is said to have been "independent" of the caliph. As discussed by Matthew Gordon in this volume (Chapter 6),

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[31] *ʿĀmil al-imām al-Muktafī bi-llāh amīr al-muʾminīn ʿalā l-ṣalāt wa-l-kharāj wa-l-maʾūna wa-mā yajrī majrāhā yakūnu miṣr wa-l-iskandariyya wa-aswān wa-l-maʿādin wa-barqa wa-l-ḥijāz* (P.Berl.Arab. I 9, dating to 901–08).

[32] Matthew Gordon, "Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn and the Politics of Deference," in *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone*, ed. Behnam Sadeghi, Asad Q. Ahmed, Adam J. Silverstein, and Robert G. Hoyland (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 229–56, at 248–49.

[33] Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 105.

[34] Mathieu Tillier, *Vies des cadis de Miṣr 237/851–366/976* (Cairo: IFAO, 2002), 23–25.

[35] Al-Kindī writes that al-Sarī's appointment happened at the "agreement of the *jund*" (*Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 161). Al-Sarī was succeeded by his sons Abū al-Naṣr (in office 205/820) and ʿUbayd Allāh (in office 206–10/821–25). See Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 97.

[36] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 212–13; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa al-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, 5 vols. (London: al-Furqān, 2002–03), 1:319; Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 91.

the chaos at the caliphal capital allowed Ibn Ṭūlūn to expand his power in Egypt. Conversely, it is clear that Ibn Ṭūlūn and his son Khumārawayh continued to operate as representatives of the caliphate in Samarra and, in many respects, took the caliphal center into account in their decision making.[37] They used the title *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn*, sent money to the caliph, and surrounded themselves with caliphal allusions.[38] They continued to mention the caliph's name on coins struck in Egypt. *Qāḍī*s continued to be appointed by the caliph.[39] Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn even responded to al-Muwaffaq's request for "money, *ṭirāz*, slaves and horses" to support the latter's war against the Zanj in 261/874.[40] The inadequacy of Ibn Ṭūlūn's response, however, was the reason that al-Muwaffaq sent an army to try and remove him. Although this was unsuccessful, when the occasion allowed caliphal armies were sent again to reconquer Egypt for the Abbasids, retaking control in 292/905. Tellingly, as a result of the Abbasid takeover more of the fiscal income from Egypt was forwarded to Baghdad, leaving local troops with no pay![41]

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[37] Gordon, "Politics of Deference"; Matthew Gordon, *Ahmad ibn Tulun: Governor of Abbasid Egypt, 868–884* (London: Oneworld, 2021), 100–07. This seems a more convincing interpretation of the Tulunids' behavior vis-à-vis the caliph than a situation in which "the more independent a center is, the more need it paradoxically has for legitimization which in theory can only come from the caliphate" (Nef and Tillier, "Voies," 10).

[38] In agricultural leases and decrees preserved on papyrus: Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* in *CPR* XXI 66, dating to 870–82; Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* in *P.Cair. Arab.* III 173, dating to 884–96. On coins, weights, and *ṭirāz* fragments the title is also used (Gordon, "Politics of Deference"). For *ṭirāz* fragments see, e.g., Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn*: Combe, Sauvaget, and Wiet (eds.), *Répertoire*, vol. 2, no. 731, dated 272/885–86; no. 757, dated 278/891–92; no. 774, dated 280/893–94; no. 785, dated 282/895–96; Hārūn b. Khumārawayh *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn*: Combe, Sauvaget, and Wiet (eds.), *Répertoire*, vol. 3, nos. 813 and 815, both dated 287/900). But for the subtle political games played in the *ṭirāz* by the Tulunids see Diana Ng, "Journey to the West: The Kelsey Mulḥam in the Context of the Political Usage of Ṭirāz by the ʿAbbāsids and the Ṭūlūnids," *Bulletin* 14 (2002–03), 63–81, at 70–73. Also, in the foundational inscription of his mosque Ibn Ṭūlūn described himself as *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* (Adolf Grohmann, "Die Bauinschrift der Moschee des Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn (265/879)," in *Studies in Islamic Art and Architecture: In Honour of Professor K. A. C. Creswell*, ed. Charles Geddes [Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1965], 84–94, nos. 1, 2, 4, all dating to 265/878–79). The mosque's minaret is of course a strong expression of cultural dependency on Samarra (Matthew Gordon, "Ibn Ṭūlūn, al-Qaṭāʾiʿ and the Legacy of Samarra," in *Hundert Jahre Grabungen in Samarra*, ed. Julia Gonnella [Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2014], 63–77). See also Gordon, *Ahmad ibn Tulun*, ch. 4, "City and ceremony." Khumārawayh appears with the title *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* in an inscription dated 270/883–84 found in Palestine (Moshe Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae (CIAP)* [Leiden: Brill, 1997], no. 8). I would like to thank Abdullah AlHatlani for pointing me to this reference.

[39] Ibn Ṭūlūn never rejected or replaced a *qāḍī*, and appointments by his successors were also coordinated with the caliph (Tillier, *Vies*, 21–22). For coins see Oleg Grabar, *The Coinage of the Ṭūlūnids* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1957).

[40] Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 95.   [41] Bianquis, "Autonomous Egypt," 109.

Egypt's Strategic Position

Without offering a complete overview of the relationship between Egypt's governors and the caliph's court over the entire period under review, the examples presented above indicate clearly the caliphs' continuous concern with maintaining direct control over Egypt. Although no legislation existed in the Islamic empire comparable to the prohibition set on Roman senators against visiting Egypt, access to the province and its opportunities was clearly of the utmost importance to the caliphs and was reserved to the ruler's most loyal and trustworthy *intimi*. Egypt connected the Mediterranean with the commercial routes that extended via the Red Sea into the Indian Ocean. At the same time, its position on the thoroughfare to North Africa gave it a strategic importance that could not be ignored.[42]

The close relationship between Egypt and the areas further to the west is expressed in military and political terms. The conquest of North Africa was for practical and political reasons undertaken from Egypt. Early Muslim settlers in Egypt, such as ʿUqba b. Nāfiʿ (d. 63/682) and Mūsā b. Nuṣayr (d. 97/715), led the armies that eventually subdued the Maghreb and al-Andalus.[43] Equally, it was impossible to organize a campaign in North Africa without the support and active involvement of the Egyptian governor. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was able to dismiss the appointee of his brother, the caliph ʿAbd al-Malik, over the army sent to conquer the Maghreb and to appoint his own general because any Syrian army on campaign in North Africa would have to pass through Egypt.[44] It was also under ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's governorship that an Egyptian fleet led by ʿAṭāʾ b. Rāfiʿ (d. 85/704) set off from Ifrīqiya to Sicily (or Sardinia) in 703–04.[45] Egyptian contributions reinforced the fleet that supported the conquest of al-Andalus.[46]

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[42] See Jean-Claude Garcin, "Pour un recours à l'histoire de l'espace vécu dans l'étude de l'Égypte Arabe," *Annales: économies, sociétés, civilisations* 35 (1980), 436–51.

[43] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Yūnus*, ed. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ F. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, 2 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1421/2000), 1:349–51, 2:241.

[44] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 52–53.

[45] Ibn Yūnus calls ʿAṭāʾ b. Rāfiʿ *walī al-baḥr li-ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Marwān* (*Taʾrīkh*, 1:344). Several years later the Egyptian governor Qurra b. Sharīk enquired about the Egyptian soldiers in this campaign who died, returned to Egypt, or remained in Ifrīqiya (*P.Lond.* IV 1350, dated 710, provenance Ishqūh).

[46] ʿAbd Allāh b. Mūsā b. Nuṣayr (d. 102/720) was governor of Ifrīqiya after his father left for al-Andalus in 93/711 until his removal in 97/715. ʿAbd Allāh had headed the attack on the islands of Mallorca and Minorca in 89/707 (Carl Heinrich Becker, "Papyrusstudien," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete* 22 [1908], 137–54, at 148–49). He appears as responsible for the province's fleet in a papyrus asking for contributions for the ships and sailors from Ishqūh dated 95/713 (*SB* XVIII 13218 = Harold I. Bell, "The Berlin Kurrah Papyrus," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 5 [1913], 189–91; and Becker, "Papyrusstudien," 148–49).

Egypt also made regular contributions to the fleet stationed in Ifrīqiya.[47] The Egyptian governor Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath (in office 141–42/759–60) sent an army against the Khawārij in Ifrīqiya. The 20,000 troops that the next governor Ḥumayd b. Qaḥṭaba (in office 143–44/761–62) allegedly brought with him seem to have been employed in the same struggle.[48]

Barqa, also known as Cyrenaica or Pentapolis, the region immediately bordering Egypt on its western border, had effectively been governed from Egypt as a fifth eparchy under the Byzantines, a situation which continued under Muslim rule.[49] Egypt's administrative influence extended even further toward the west. Egyptian governors and other high administrators would regularly be appointed over Ifrīqiya, with its capital at Carthage.[50] In short, Egypt was the gateway to lands further west while Egyptian governmental influence incorporated neighboring areas on its western border.

What percentage of Egypt's resources was actually conveyed to the caliphal capital first in Medina and then in Damascus and Baghdad remains a point of discussion. That caliphs were prepared to pay the high price of sending armies to secure the flow of income from Egypt suggests it was in any case worth their while. Whenever they were able to, moreover, caliphs introduced administrative reforms aimed at getting a firmer grip on Egypt's fiscal income.[51] At the same time Egypt's rulers also developed political–military and infrastructural initiatives independently of the caliph which they financed from the province's income.

Literary sources emphasize the great financial contributions that Egypt made to the caliphate's treasury. Although these have an obvious centralized bias, papyri confirm that revenue in coin and kind was collected for the caliphs. Papyri recording wheat shipments that left Egypt via Clysma to the Red Sea seemingly confirm literary reports that Egypt sent food to the

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[47] *P.Lond.* IV 1438, dated 704–05; 1443; 1451, dated 701–02 or 716–17; 1452; 1457, dated 706–09; 1565 and 1566, dated 705–15, provenance of all is Ishqūh; *SB* XVIII 13218 (= Bell, "Berlin" = Becker, "Papyrusstudien," 148–49), dated 95/713, provenance Ishqūh.

[48] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 108–10; Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 77.

[49] See above, notes 30–32.

[50] See, e.g., the governor Bishr who moved to Ifrīqiya in 721 and the financial governor (*ṣāḥib al-kharāj*) ʿUbayd Allāh b. al-Ḥabḥāb who was appointed to Ifrīqiya in 117/734. Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath moved to Ifrīqiya in 142/760 after his governorship of Egypt. The governor Yazīd b. Ḥātim (in office 144–52/762–69) and his brother Rawḥ would also become important players in Ifrīqiya (Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 77).

[51] See the discussion about the legal status of Egypt's land in Gladys Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases and Tax Receipts from Egypt, 148–427 AH/765–1035 AD* (Vienna: Hollinek, 2001), 25–31. To facilitate the raising of income the caliph al-Rashīd accepted Maḥfūẓ b. Sulaymān's offer of a *ḍamān* for all of Egypt's taxes. In 187/803 Maḥfūẓ was appointed financial director (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 140–41). For further examples see Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 78–79.

Ḥijāz at the time of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb to relieve a famine there, but these date to the last quarter of the seventh century.[52] Moreover, these Egyptian wheat shipments via Clysma could also have been intended for Muslim garrisons on the Red Sea coast, for example in Ayla. From the Umayyad period papyri mention that contributions – money and goods – should be sent to the caliph, suggesting that they were actually destined for Damascus.[53] This in contrast to all sorts of contributions collected for the *amīr al-muʾminīn*, which indicate rather deliveries in a general sense to the Muslim administration, some of which did not even leave Egypt. This is even clearer in a group of early eighth-century Coptic and Greek papyri found at Deir al-Balāʾizah, which originated in the monastery and a local financial office, which mention the "maintenance taxes for the believers" (*dapanē elmoumenin*; *diagraphē elmoumenin*).[54] The reference that these contributions were intended for the *amīr al-muʾminīn*, "the Commander of the Faithful" – in other words, the caliph – whether used figuratively or not, does, however, indicate an obvious link to the caliphate.[55] Similarly, officials of the *amīr al-muʾminīn* who visited remote villages in Egypt to

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[52] *CPR* XXII 22, dated 158–59/774–76; 43, dated 715–16; 44, dating to the eighth century, provenance of all is unknown; *P.Lond.* IV 1335, dating to 709, provenance Ishqūh. See Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 76–77. The Qaysīs settled in the Delta in 109/727 made a living transporting food to the harbor of Clysma (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 76).

[53] See *ḥaqq amīr al-muʾminīn aṣlaḥahu wa-ḥafaẓahu allāh tastaʿjal bi-ḥaml al-māl ilayhi* (*P.Heid.Arab.* I 17, dating to 709–14, provenance Ishqūh); *fa-innī urīdu an arsila bihā* (i.e., *qumuṣ*) *ilā amīr al-muʾminīn* in Carl Heinrich Becker, "Arabische Papyri des Aphroditofundes," *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete* 20 (1907), 68–104, no. 5, dated 90/709; *kamisia . . . tou amiralmoumnin* in *P.Lond.* IV 1352, dated 710, provenance of both is Ishqūh.

[54] *P.Bal.* 187, 287, 290. Esther Garel equals this tax with the *dapanē tou amiralmoumnin* of contemporary Greek papyri. Cf. Esther Garel, "Lettre concernant l'envoi d'un papyrus iatro-magique et une réquisition de laine de mouton (P.Vindob. Inv. K 55)," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 18 (2016), 45–55, at 50. I would like to thank Eline Scheerlinck for pointing me to these references. "Taxes for the believers" compares well with the common expression in Greek papyri for deliveries, taxes, and other contributions for the *muhājirūn* (Gr. *mōagaritoi*), i.e., the Arab rulers (e.g., *CPR* XXII 22.2, dated 158–59/774–76; *CPR* XXII 44.8, dating to the eighth century) as opposed to the narrower meaning of Arab soldiers (e.g. *CPR* XXII 50.15, dating to the eighth century).

[55] See, e.g., the many materials demanded for the building of the *dār amīr al-muʾminīn* (Gr., *aulē tou amiralmoumnin*) in Fusṭāṭ (*P.Lond.* IV 1433.33, 289, 379, 418, 448, 507 dated 706–07; 1361, dated 710; 1362; 1378, both dating to 711, provenance of all is Ishqūh; *CPR* XXII 45, eighth century), Jerusalem (*P.Lond.* IV 1403.5, dated 709–14; 1414.24, 76; 1433.30, 286), and Damascus (*P.Lond.* IV 1342, dating to 709, provenance Ishqūh). For the caliph's palaces see also Federico Morelli, "Legname, palazzi e moschee: P.Vindob. G 31 e il contributo dell'Egitto alla prima architettura Islamica," *Tyche* 13 (1999), 165–90. Payments in kind (wax for torches, *P.Lond.* IV 1433.67, 131, dated 706–07, provenance Ishqūh) and coin described as *ḥaqq amīr al-muʾminīn* (Gr., *dikaion amiralmoumnin*) (*P.Heid. Arab.* I 1; *P.Lond.* IV 1349.20, both dated 91/710; 1380, dated 711, provenance of all is Ishqūh) or more generally obligations for the *amīr al-muʾminīn* (*dapanē*: Nikolaos Gonis and Federico Morelli, "A Requisition Order for the 'Commander of the Faithful': SPP VIII 1082 Revisited," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 132 [2000], 193–95, dating to 687–88 or 702–03, provenance Herakleiopolis; *CPR* XIX 28, eighth century, provenance Fayyūm; "jobs," *ergasias epitagēs*, P.

collect contributions should probably also be considered as representatives of the local Muslim authorities in Fusṭāṭ rather than having been directly sent from and for the caliph's court.

In some cases, however, the references to officials from the caliph seem to indicate a more direct link, especially during the Umayyad period when the caliph's court was located close to Egypt and interactions between the two provinces were frequent and direct.[56] Official delegations, the so-called *wafd*, in which the governor and other prominent Egyptian Muslims participated, regularly visited the caliph's court in Damascus, but also in Baghdad. Governors and *qāḍī*s also obtained instructions by letter from the caliph or consulted the ruler in writing about political, fiscal, social, and religious matters. Representatives of the non-Muslim communities in Egypt also showed up at the caliph's court with questions or requests for intercession in local disagreements.[57] In a papyrus letter dating to 789–90 a messenger is said to have arrived from the caliph.[58] A petition by a group of Egyptian workmen to the caliph al-Muʿtazz (r. 252–55/866–69) is preserved on papyrus.[59]

Lond. IV 1433. 29, 285, dated 706–07, provenance Ishqūh) are also attested. A special category is the *xenion tou amiralmoumnin*, which seems to cover the maintenance costs of the administration's officials (*P.Lond.* IV 1433. 20, 95, 149, 196, dated 706–07, provenance Ishqūh. Cf. *hypourgoi tou amiralmoumnin*, *Chr.Wilck.* 24, dated 698–713; *dapanē hypourgos tou amiralmoumnin*, *P.Lond.* IV 1434.189, dated 714–16; 1435.69, dated 96/715–16, provenance of all is Ishqūh). The inheritance of a deceased woman without heirs from al-Uqṣur is given to the *amīr al-muʾminīn* (*fa-a∙ṭū mālahā li-amīr al-muʾminīn*) (Boris Liebrenz, "Eine frühe Arabische Quittung aus Oberägypten," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und Verwandte Gebiete* 56 [2010], 294–314, dating to 730–70). Even the "four Saracens of the *amīr al-muʾminīn* (*tou amiras tōn pistōn*)" who arrived in Edfū with the order to purchase different goods to the utmost chagrin of its pagarch seem to have been on a local mission (*P.Apoll.* 37). Similarly, the representatives who come to collect requisitions from Ishqūh (*P.Lond.* IV 1508.15; 1509.2, 5; 1510.3) and Edfū (*P.Apoll.* 2 for governor ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Malik; *P. Apoll.* 3) or with special messages (*P.Lond.* IV 1441.53, 90; 1457.24; 1464) represent Fusṭāṭ.

56 The Syrian officials (*ʿummāl al-Shām*) who appear in a seventh-century Arabic papyrus probably came to Egypt with the Syrian army (Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics").

57 See the many references to the *wafd* and letters exchanged between governors and caliphs in al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*: the caliph sends instructions to Egypt's governors concerning fiscal, political, and religious matters. This is also reported in papyri, e.g., a letter dating to 176–77/794 in which a decision concerning Egypt's taxation taken at the caliph's court is mentioned (Grohmann, *World*, 132; cf. the discussion in Frantz-Murphy, *Leases*, 170–71). For the *wafd* see Yaacov Lev, *The Administration of Justice in Medieval Egypt: From the 7th to the 12th Century* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 17–18; and Mathieu Tillier, "Représenter la province auprès du pouvoir impérial: les délégations (*wufūd*) égyptiennes aux trois premiers siècles de l'Islam," *Arabica* 67 (2020), 125–99. In 107/725 governor al-Ḥurr (in office 105–08/724–27) visited the caliph Hishām to consult him about the fiscal status of land that became exposed when the Nile bank moved (al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 74). For different Egyptian Christian delegations at the caliph's court see *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria*, vol. 3: *Agathon to Michael I (766)*, ed. and trans. B. Evetts, *Patrologia Orientalis* 5 (1910), 1–215. See Mathieu Tillier's contribution in this volume (Chapter 5) about *qāḍī*s consulting the caliphs.

58 *P.PalauRib.Arab.* 2, provenance Fayyūm.   59 Grohmann, *World*, 121; *P.Cair.Arab.* III 172.

In addition, subsidies in the form of food and materials, as well as the maintenance costs for workmen and sailors, had to be provided for the fleet, which was referred to as the "caliph's ships" (*sufun amīr al-muʾminīn*) or "ships of the Egyptians' army" (*sufun jaysh ahl miṣr*).[60] Although the Egyptians initiated their own maritime raids into Nubia and North Africa, the Egyptian fleet also participated in the annual naval campaigns executed under the auspices of the Umayyad caliph from Syria and participated in attacks organized from Ifrīqiya.[61] Three thousand Egyptian troops joined those of the caliph in combating ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr in Mecca in 73/692.[62] Finally, the Umayyad caliphs demanded contributions in kind and manpower for some of their ambitious building projects, such as al-Aqṣā Mosque in Jerusalem and the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, as well as numerous local administrative buildings.[63]

As discussed above, the early Abbasid period introduced measures that thoroughly changed the administrative and fiscal governmental arrangements in Egypt, creating more centralized structures with direct reference to the caliph. A papyrus found in Samarra mentions amounts of taxes in gold dinars sent yearly from Egypt in 221–78/836–92.[64] A papyrus from Egypt might be

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[60] Alain Delattre and Naïm Vanthieghem, "Un entagion bilingue du gouverneur ʿAbd Al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān trouvé à Antinoé," *Chronique d'Egypte* 88 (2013), 363–71, dating to 694; Becker, "Papyrusstudien," dated 94/713–14; *P.Heid.Arab.* I 22, dating to 709–14, provenance of all is Anṣinā. Other papyri attest deliveries of materials, manpower – sailors and workmen – and payments for the arsenals in Rosetta (*P.Lond.* IV 1414, 1449), Alexandria (*P.Lond.* IV 1392, 1353, 1433), Clysma, Damietta (*P.Lond.* IV 1354, 1449; Joseph von Karabacek, *Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer: Führer durch die Ausstellung* [Vienna: Selbstverlag der Sammlung, 1894], no. 614, dated 168/784–85, provenance Ihnās) and Fusṭāṭ (*P.Lond.* IV 1433) offered by villages, monasteries, and other administrative units without making reference to the caliph (*P.Apoll.* 3; *P.Lond.* IV 1433, dated 88/706–07, provenance Ishqūh). *Sufun jaysh ahl miṣr* appears in Diem, "Frühe," no. 1 dated 79/698, provenance Fayyūm.

[61] Pseudo-Sebeos mentions that "great ships arrived at Chalcedon from Alexandria" joining Muʿāwiya's attack on Constantinople (Ps.-Sebeos, *The Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*, trans. Robert W. Thomson [Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999], 145). Cf. Aḥmad Mukhtār ʿAbbādī and al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sālim, *Taʾrīkh al-baḥriyya al-Islāmiyya fī Miṣr wa-l-Shām* (Beirut: Dār al-Nahḍa al-ʿArabiyya, 1981), 28. The *cursus* (Gr., *kourson*; Ar., *baʿth*), the annual naval attacks on the Byzantine empire, were probably centrally coordinated (*P.Lond.* IV 1349 and the related *P.Heid.Arab.* I 1, both dated 91/710, provenance of both is Ishqūh). Egyptian sailors joined the Umayyad fleet in Syria, called Anatolē in the Greek papyri (*P.Lond.* IV 1451, dated 701–02 or 716–17; 1433, dated 706–07; 1355, dated 710; 1374, dated 711; 1434, dated 714–16; 1435, dated 715–16, provenance of all is Ishqūh; *CPR* XXII 44, eighth century). Cf. Aly M. Fahmy, *Muslim Sea-Power in the Eastern Mediterranean from the Seventh to the Tenth Century* (Cairo: National Publication and Print House, 1950), 87–94.

[62] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 51.

[63] E.g., *P.Lond.* IV 1433, dated 706–07; 1334, 1397, 1411, all dated 709; 1368, dated 710; 1403, dated 709–14, provenance of all is Ishqūh. See notes 55 and 60 above.

[64] For a discussion of this material see Lucian Reinfandt, "Administrative Papyri from the Abbasid Court in Samarra (AD 836–892): A First Report," in *Actes du 26e Congrès International de Papyrologie*, ed. Paul Schubert (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2012), 639–45, at 641. He is preparing an

related to the other side of the process: it tells that someone commits to the delivery without defect or deficiency the large amount of 1,700 coins (?), mentioning also the name of Khumārawayh, son and successor of Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn.[65] From the Abbasid period are also preserved pieces of the *kiswa*, the textile covering of the Kaʿba in Mecca that was forwarded yearly by Egypt at the order of the caliph in Baghdad, as the embroidery on the *kiswa* records.[66] Throughout the Abbasid period papyri witness the caliphs' direct involvement in Egypt's fiscal administration. The governor ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Musayyab (in office 176–77/793) writes in a papyrus letter that the caliph has confirmed his appointment over Egypt and decided what taxes are to be imposed on the province.[67] A survey preserved on papyrus is executed at the order of the caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 232–47/847–61).[68]

The Local and the Central

Egypt's integration into the early Muslim empire was not only imposed from the center by force and direct intervention, but was also achieved by indirect means. Against the forces tempting local governors into divergent stances were those driving a commonality of interests. Besides the shipments to the caliphal centers, resources were spent locally, but these too were the result of Egypt's participation in caliphal policies. Such participation took both actual and symbolic forms. Contributions to the caliph's military endeavors took place literally when Egypt's fleet, men, or materials participated in a campaign or were sent to the capital. Campaigns undertaken by the Egyptian governor to Nubia or into North Africa were, however, also presented as being a part of the caliph's military activities even if there had, in fact, been no strategic coordination.[69]

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edition of these pieces. For an image and description of the papyrus see Ernst Herzfeld, *Die Ausgrabungen von Samarra VI: Geschichte der Stadt Samarra* (Hamburg: Verlag von Eckardt & Messtorff, 1948), 271–72, table 25. In line 8 it is possible to read: *min māl miṣr yawm al-thulathāʾ li-laylatayn khaliyā* (Herzfeld read *al-ramaḍān* where I read, following Reinfandt's interpretation, *min māl miṣr*).

[65] Khumārawayh calls himself also *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* (*P.Cair.Arab.* III 173, dating to 884–96).

[66] E.g., mentioning al-Mahdī: Combe, Sauvaget, and Wiet (eds.), *Répertoire*, vol. 1, no. 44, dated 159/775–76; al-Rashīd: no. 80, dated 191/806–07; al-Maʾmūn: no. 146, dated 206/821–22; al-Muqtadir: vol. 3, no. 1039, dated 309/921–22.

[67] "The *amīr* . . . writes us confirming what was decided in the presence of the commander of the faithful, may God prolong his life, concerning Egypt's taxes (*jazāya*) and their spoils (*mā li-afyāʾihim*)": Grohmann, *World*, 132–34. Cf. the discussion in Frantz-Murphy, *Leases*, 170–71.

[68] "ʿAmara bihi ʿAbd Allāh Jaʿfar al-imām al-Mutawakkil ʿalā Allāh amīr al-muʾminīn" (Nabia Abbott, "Arabic Papyri from the Reign of Jaʿfar al-Mutawakkil ʿala-llāh [AH 232–47/AD 847–61]," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 92 [1938], 88–135).

[69] See above, notes 43–48.

These initiatives taking place in Egypt compare well with administrative innovations and reforms. There too implementation took place at the instigation of the governor but in conjunction with caliphate-wide policy and resulting in empire-wide convergence.[70] A certain administrative uniformity across the empire had been the result of the conquerors' common background, projected across the empire's new territories in accordance with the integrative logic of the Islamic imperial project, which did not see the need for administrative or legal exceptions in any regions apart from Arabia. Different fiscal categories on land were based on the established conditions of conquest, but these were the same across the whole empire.[71] This is contrary to the situation in the Roman empire, for example, where Egypt had enjoyed exceptional agricultural fiscal categories (see the contribution by Peter Sarris in this volume [Chapter 1]). The multilingual administration that characterized the early Muslim empire continued local practice; Arabic was simply added to the mix.[72] Certain documentary practices and formulae that are attested in Arabic documents from al-Andalus to Khurasan also point to shared administrative practices across the empire first introduced by the conquerors when they established their rule and subsequently adjusted through empire-wide administrative reforms.[73] Finally, a common administrative organizational vocabulary used in sources from the eastern to the western part of the caliphate is indicative of a similarly shared administrative culture.[74]

Administrative reforms initiated at the center of the empire, especially those implemented under Muʿāwiya (r. 40–60/661–80) and the four first Marwanid caliphs (64–96/684–715), as well as Abbasid caliphs such as al-Manṣūr and al-Maʾmūn, were also executed in Egypt. The coin reforms which saw their final stage under ʿAbd al-Malik's rule were equally implemented in Egypt.[75] The

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[70] Rather than considering the reigns of ʿAbd al-Malik and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz not "as part of the same administrative evolution" (Joshua Mabra, *Princely Authority in the Early Marwānid State: The Life of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Ibn Marwān* [Piscataway: Gorgias, 2017], 97). Marie Legendre, "Landowners, Caliphs and State Policy over Landholdings in the Egyptian Countryside: Theory and Practice," in *Authority and Control in the Countryside: From Antiquity to Islam in the Mediterranean and Near East (6th–10th Century)*, ed. Alain Delattre, Marie Legendre, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 392–419, at 402–04.

[71] Albrecht Noth, "Zum Verhältnis von kalifer Zentralgewalt und Provinzen in umayyadischer Zeit: Die Ṣulḥ-ʿAnwa Traditionen für Ägypten und den Iraq," *Die Welt des Islams* 14 (1973), 150–62.

[72] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "A Multilingual Policy: The Early Islamic Empire and its Many Languages of Governance," in *Navigating Language in the Early Islamic World*, ed. Alison Vacca and Antoine Borrut (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming).

[73] Geoffrey Khan, "The Pre-Islamic Background of Muslim Legal Formularies," *ARAM* 6 (1984), 193–224.

[74] See, e.g., the use of technical terms referring to administrative units such as *iqlīm* and *kūra* which occur on seals, coins, in documents, and in literary sources from all corners of the empire.

[75] See also the attestation of Muḥammad on coins and in protocols copying Ibn al-Zubayr's coins (Patricia Crone and Martin Hinds, *God's Caliph: Religious Authority in the First Centuries of Islam*

standardization of the design of *dirham*s and *dīnār*s under al-Maʾmūn and al-Muʿtaṣim was also applied in Egypt, which was not the case in North Africa, for example.[76] The centralizing and Islamizing reforms of the administration, which led to the replacement of indigenous Christian and Jewish administrators by Arab Muslims around 700, are observed in onomastic evidence, but also in the increased use of Arabic.[77] As a result of the same centralizing measures, Coptic rose to become an administrative language, as Jennifer Cromwell argues in this volume (Chapter 11). At the end of the seventh century literary reports and papyri testify to caliphal measures introduced to increase the fiscal income by closer supervision and the registering of dues. Land surveys and censuses were initiated to record properties and populations for more efficient taxation.[78] The traces of these centrally initiated fiscal–administrative innovations can be found in the papyri.[79]

A linguistically more direct way in which a connection with the center was realized through common administrative patterns was the papyrus protocols and the *ṭirāz*. The right to produce papyrus and *ṭirāz* was a privilege restricted to the ruling authorities in the same way that minting coins was.[80] Protocol sheets appear at the beginning of a papyrus roll and name the caliph and governor under whose auspices the writing material is produced.[81] Similarly,

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[Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986], 25–26; *pace* Mabra, *Princely Authority*, 101–02). For early coins from Egypt see Jere L. Bacharach and Henry A. Awad, "Rare Early Egyptian Islamic Coins and Coin Weights: The Awad Collection," *Journal of the American Research Center in Cairo* 18 (1981), 51–56; Stefan Heidemann, "Weights and Measures from Byzantium and Islam," in *Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition, 7th–9th Century*, ed. Brandie Ratliff and Helen C. Evans (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2012), 144–47; and Clive Foss, "Arab-Byzantine Coins: Money as Cultural Continuity," in *Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition, 7th–9th Century*, ed. Brandie Ratliff and Helen C. Evans (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2012), 136–43. *Pace* Mabra, *Princely Authority*, 109–13.

76 Tayeb El-Hibri, "Coinage Reform under the ʿAbbâsid Caliph al-Maʾmûn," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 36 (1993), 58–83; Michael L. Bates, "Who Was Named on Abbasid Coins? What Did It Mean?" in *Iranian Numismatic Studies: A Volume in Honor of Stephen Album*, ed. Mostafa Faghfoury (Lancaster, PA: Classical Numismatic Group, 2017), 89–99.

77 ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz replaced Greek by Arabic–Greek protocols. See *CPR* III 1–11 (Mabra, *Princely Authority*, 97; Sijpesteijn, "Multilingual Policy.").

78 See the report of a land survey executed under ʿUbayd Allāh b. al-Ḥabḥāb (Nabia Abbott, "A New Papyrus and a Review of the Administration of ʿUbaid Allāh b. al-Ḥabḥāb," in *Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of Hamilton A. R. Gibb*, ed. George Makdisi [Leiden: Brill, 1965], 21–35).

79 See the Coptic decree from the pagarch Rāshid b. Khālid demanding the recording of people and trees for taxation purposes (Esther Garel, "Une demande de recensement du pagarque Rāšid b. Ḫālid: *CPR* IV 1 revisité," *Chronique d'Égypte* 93 [2018], 187–99). See also the papyrus that mentions that an agricultural survey was executed at the order of al-Mutawakkil, discussed above (Abbott, "al-Mutawakkil").

80 Gaston Wiet, "Review Ernst Kühnel, The Textile Museum: Catalogue of Dated Tiraz Fabrics in Syria," *Revue d'art oriental et d'archéologie* 30 (1953), 342–44, at 343.

81 W. Matt Malczycki, "The Papyrus Industry in the Early Islamic Era," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54 (2011), 185–202.

ṭirāz produced in state factories mentioned the name of the caliph and the date and place of its production.[82] Except for some short periods, such as under the Umayyad governors ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and ʿAbd Allāh and Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn, papyrus protocols and *ṭirāz* dutifully mention the name of the caliph with his title *amīr al-muʾminīn* next to Egypt's governor (*al-amīr*) until the Fatimid takeover of Egypt.[83] *Ṭirāz* even mentioned other central caliphal officials, such as the caliph's *wazīr*s, dropping the name and leaving just the title at times, such as under the caliphates of al-Muttaqī (r. 329–33/940–44) and al-Muṭīʿ (r. 334–63/946–74), when it became difficult for those in Egypt to keep up with the constantly changing officials in the capital.[84]

As mentioned above, the title "client of the Commander of the Faithful" (*mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn*) was an honorific used by civil servants in the Abbasid period attested from the end of the eighth century and especially current in the ninth. However metaphorical this title was, it announced a very present and outspoken connection with the caliph. This is also true for references to events taking place at the caliph's court in papyrus letters in Egypt. Both in private and more official contexts letter writers show an interest in court politics. They report on the deaths of caliphs, discuss caliphal appointments, and pray for the caliph's well-being.[85] A *ṭirāz* fragment points to how closely events at court were followed from the province. In 197/812, at the height of the civil war between al-Amīn and al-Maʾmūn, when the former was besieged in Baghdad by his brother, a piece of *ṭirāz* was produced in Tinnīs. It reflects the uncertainty that Egypt's governors felt about the outcome of this struggle. The fabric bears the inscription "ordered by al-Sarī son of ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz son of the *wazīr* al-Jarawī at the command of Faḍl son of Sahl, the one of

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[82] Yedida Stillmann and Paula Sanders, "Ṭirāz," in *EI*², s.v.

[83] A number of protocols covering the period discussed in this chapter can be found in *CPR* III. For protocols produced during the governorship of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Malik which do not mention the caliph see Mabra, *Princely Authority*, 98, 101 n.51. For *ṭirāz* mentioning caliphs see Combe, Sauvaget and Wiet (eds.), *Répertoire*, vol. 1, nos. 44, 45, 78, 87. After the marriage between Khumārawayh b. Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn's daughter, Qaṭr al-Nadā, to the caliph al-Muʿtaḍid the caliph's name reappeared on Egyptian *ṭirāz* (Stillmann and Sanders, "Ṭirāz").

[84] Wiet, "Review," 343.

[85] In a third/ninth-century letter the sender mentions that he heard about the death of the caliph and asks to be informed about "the army and whomever the people swear an oath of allegiance to . . . as well as any news that reaches you from Damascus (al-Shām) or Fusṭāṭ" (Yūsuf Rāġib, "Lettres arabes II," *Annales Islamologiques* 16 [1980], 1–29, no. 13). A letter starts with greetings to governor al-Ḥurr and caliph Hishām followed by eulogies (*P.Sorrow* 21). Any mention of the caliph in a letter is followed by well-wishing for him, but in some documents the prayers are more specific. A letter of condolence to a female relative of the caliph contains a wish for long life of the caliph (*P.Vind.Arab.* II 33, tenth century). On a piece of *ṭirāz* preserved from Egypt blessings on and happiness for the caliph al-Muqtadir are asked for (Grohmann, *World*, 261 and pl. VIIb).

the two commands, and Ṭāhir son of al-Ḥusayn in the year 197."[86]
Without declaring outright support for one or the other brother as caliph,
Egypt's governors signaled their allegiance to al-Maʾmūn by placing them-
selves at the service of his *wazīr* and general.[87] However, another piece of
Egyptian *ṭirāz* that mentions only al-Amīn dates from the same year.[88] The
reference in a second/eighth-century Coptic letter from the Fayyūm to
some piece of writing "written by a man of al-Walīd, Commander of the
Faithful," which has the capacity to cure ill people, cannot be interpreted as
a material connection between the caliph's court and the Fayyūm oasis. It
does, however, indicate that Egyptians freely invoked the caliph's name
and authority in local contexts.[89]

Caliphal Investments in Egypt

The Umayyad caliphs were involved, or invoked, in a very real and direct
manner in the daily business of running the province. Qurra b. Sharīk
wrote to Basilios, pagarch in Middle Egypt, that the caliph was not pleased
with the fiscal arrears that he had accumulated.[90] Caliphs instructed
governors about building projects in the province. Qurra b. Sharīk rebuilt
the mosque in Fusṭāṭ at the caliph's orders.[91] The Abbasid caliphs also
directly involved themselves in local affairs in Egypt beyond the fiscal. In
lower Ushmūn a milestone dated 193/808–09 mentions that it was pro-
duced at the order of the caliph al-Rashīd.[92] An inscription allegedly
decorating the door that led from the ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ Mosque to the police
station recorded the station's construction at the order of al-Maʾmūn in
213/828–29.[93] The caliph al-Mutawakkil became involved in the Byzantine
attacks on the Delta towns of Damietta and Tinnīs, sending instructions,
as is reported in a papyrus letter dating to 240/855 that reports on the
horrors of the attacks.[94] After the Byzantine raids the caliph allegedly
ordered that the defense works of Damietta should be reinforced.[95]
A direct influence was also exercised during the period of the *miḥna*,

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[86] Combe, Sauvaget, and Wiet (eds.), *Répertoire*, vol. 1, no. 94.   [87] Wiet, "Review," 343–44.

[88] Ernst Kühnel, "Tirāzstoffe der Abbasiden," *Der Islam* 14 (1925), 82–88, at 83.

[89] Garel, "Lettre concernant."   [90] *P.Lond.* IV 1338, dated 709, provenance Ishqūh.

[91] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 63–66.

[92] Combe, Sauvaget, and Wiet (eds.), *Répertoire*, vol. 1, no. 86, with emendations in subsequent
   volumes.

[93] Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:187–88.

[94] G. Levi della Vida, "A Papyrus Reference to the Damietta Raid of 853," *Byzantion* 17 (1944), 212–22,
   provenance Fayyūm.

[95] Al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt*, 202.

when *qāḍī* Muḥammad b. Abī al-Layth (appointed in office 226/841) was instructed to implement caliphal policies in Egypt.[96]

Egypt's fecundity attracted royal investors. A contract dating to 699 or 700 arranges for the transport of wine from the caliph's vineyards in the Fayyūm.[97] An orchard of the caliph's (*pōmarion tou amiralmoumin*) in Ishqūh is mentioned in another Greek papyrus dating to 714–16.[98] There are several land leases and receipts for taxes paid for lands belonging to the *sayyida* in Ushmūnayn and Ihnās dating from the mid-ninth century.[99] The title *sayyida* was reserved for the mother of the Abbasid caliph. Exactly who the "dear lady" (*al-sayyida al-karīma*) was who received a letter of condolence at the death of another *sayyida* together with good wishes for the caliph and what her business was in Egypt remains unclear, but that she was related to the caliph is without doubt.[100] Another *sayyida*'s properties in Egypt must have been substantial, as her agent is referred to by a term used for fiscal administrative officials (*ʿāmil al-sayyida umm amīr al-muʾminīn*).[101] A son of the (by then) deceased caliph al-Muntaṣir (r. 247/861–62) possessed an estate (*ḍayʿa*) in Ushmūnayn in 258/872.[102] Lands belonging to an unnamed son of the caliph al-Mutawakkil were leased in 273/886–87.[103] Another prince and heir apparent, al-Muʿtazz (r. 252–55/866–69), also possessed lands in Egypt, which seem to have been managed through local government offices.[104] Other members of the Abbasid court also held properties in Egypt. Wāḍiḥ, identified as *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn*, was a well-known courtier of the caliphs al-Manṣūr and al-Mahdī (r. 158–69/775–85). He rented 50 *faddān* of land for 50 *dīnār*s in a lease contract dated between 177 and 178 (793 and 794).[105] Three agents responsible for the estates in Egypt of the chamberlain Waṣīf rented out some of his properties in 249/863–64.[106] The estate of

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[96] Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province," 84.   [97] *CPR* VIII 82, provenance Fayyūm.

[98] *P.Lond.* IV 1434.33. Cf. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 110.

[99] *CPR* XXI 9, dated 238/852, provenance Ihnās; *P.Harrauer* 61, dated 253/867, provenance Ushmūnayn. See Legendre, "Landowners," 412.

[100] *P.Vind.Arab.* II 33, tenth century, provenance unknown.   [101] *P.Ryl.Arab.* I II 1.

[102] Legendre, "Landowners," 412.

[103] "Diyāʿ walad amīr al-muʾminīn aʿazzahumā allāh" (CPR XXI 22, provenance Ṭūkh).

[104] Grohmann, *World*, 121.

[105] Diem, "Frühe," no. 4. See Diem's discussion of the different identities of Wāḍiḥ in the literary sources (Diem, "Frühe," 125).

[106] "Hādhā kitāb min Muḥammad wa-ʿAlī wa-al-Ḥusayn mawālī al-amīr Waṣīf mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn qibal (ed. za-qibalī) al-amīr aʿazzahu allāh fī diyāʿihi bi-miṣr" (Joseph von Karabacek, "Erstes urkundliches Auftreten von Türken," *Mitteilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer* 11 [1897], 86–108, at 108).

Amājūr (d. 264/877–78), *amīr al-silāḥ* in Baghdad until his appointment as governor of Syria in 256/870, is listed in an account dated 253/867.[107] From the third/ninth century onward tax-farming was introduced in Egypt, bringing vast estates into the hands of Turko-Persian military elites close to the caliph's court.[108] To what extent personal financial investment in the province influenced caliphal policy toward Egypt or governors' relations with the caliph's court is, however, not known.

A Supra-Regional Commercial Network

Continuous and close interaction between Egypt and the caliphal center was not only the result of political–military strategies aimed at controlling Egypt's strategic location on the conquest route to North Africa and its wealth. Nor were the fiscal income from the province and family financial links the only economic reasons that motivated caliphs to keep a close eye on the province. Egypt's participation in an international supra-regional commercial network extending from the Mediterranean, Africa, and Arabia to South Asia tied it to remote areas in the empire. Through this network and the goods, people, and ideas that moved across it, Egypt partook in empire-wide cultural, material, technical, scientific, social, and other trends. Simultaneously, political events, such as the deployment of armies, distribution of officials, exchange of gifts, and diplomatic envoys, also resulted in spreading practices and knowledge across the empire.

Others have already shown the caliphs' commitment to fostering trade within the borders of their empire, as well as their preparedness to wage wars to protect commercial activity.[109] While there seem to have been no campaigns specifically for these reasons in Egypt's case, the military was an important tool for effecting central control.

Armies and, to a lesser degree, officials dispatched from the center to Egypt constituted significant economic forces. They traveled with entourages of family members, artisans, traders, and anyone else offering services that the troops needed. Moving from one end of the empire to another,

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[107] *P.Harrauer* 61, dated 253/867, provenance Ushmūnayn. Cf. Legendre, "Landowners," 412. The estates (*ḍiyāʿ*) of al-Mutawakkil's *wazīr* Fatḥ b. Khāqān are mentioned in an Arabic papyrus letter that describes Fatḥ as Egypt's governor (*amīr*), a post he held in 242–47/856–61. It cannot be ruled out that the *wazīr* obtained the estates only after arriving in Egypt: *P.Cair.Arab.* III 171, provenance Ushmūnayn. Cf. Legendre, "Landowners," 412.

[108] Legendre, "Landowners," 411–13.

[109] Peter von Sivers, "Taxes and Trade in the ʿAbbāsid Thughūr, 750–961/133–351," *Journal of the Social and Economic History of the Orient* 25 (1981), 71–99, at 93.

they brought along their objects, customs, habits, and taste. As customers, with regular stipends to spend, their material, culinary, and cultural preferences shifted local production patterns.[110] The army's pattern of procurement also affected Egypt's economy. The emphasis on deliveries in kind to the Arab troops, both in larger amounts and in more diverse goods than the Byzantines were accustomed to demanding, required new organizational and financial structures.[111]

Commercial networks connected Egypt to neighboring regions as well as more remotely located areas even beyond the borders of the caliphate. The volume of trade and intensity of exchange coincided with Egypt's integration into a transregional commercial system extending from South Asia to the Mediterranean, which varied with political and economic developments in the region and beyond. At two periods this is especially clear: the late sixth to the early eighth centuries, including the Arab conquest of Egypt; and the ninth and tenth centuries, when political and economic developments at the core of the Abbasid caliphate directly affected Egypt's position, at the same time that economic changes in the Mediterranean were also making themselves felt.

Trade in the Mediterranean, especially in "exotic" luxury goods such as red garnets, amethysts, and cowrie shells from Sri Lanka and India, as well as the exchange of ceramics and their contents from around the Mediterranean, had diminished by the end of the sixth century.[112] The disruption of the commercial trade in exotic luxury goods can be observed in the disappearance of such goods from grave finds in southwestern Europe. While some of the changes might be explained by a shift in aesthetic preferences and moral values, the disappearance of production and trade centers in the Mediterranean and on transregional trade routes indicates that there was clearly a drop in commercial exchange.[113]

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[110] Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2001), 87–88.

[111] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 74.

[112] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "The Rise and Fall of Empires in the Islamic Mediterranean (600–1600 CE): Political Change, the Economy and Material Culture," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. Tamar Hodos (London/New York: Routledge, 2017), 652–68; Mark Whittow, "How Much Trade Was Local, Regional and Inter-Regional?" in *Local Economies? Production and Exchange of Inland Regions in Late Antiquity*, ed. Luke Lavan (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 131–65, at 139–44.

[113] Red garnets mined in Sri Lanka and India, which were hugely popular in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East from the fifth to late seventh centuries and traded via Indian Ocean and Mediterranean trade routes, started to be replaced by black garnets from Bohemia on the European continent, but recent red garnet finds in England suggest that trade to the Anglo-Saxon world via the North Sea continued. Different aspects of the garnet trade are treated in Alexandra Hilgner, Susanne Greif, and Dieter Quast (eds.), *Gemstones in the First Millennium AD: Mines, Trade and Symbolism*

Mediterranean pottery workshops scaled back production or disappeared entirely, and the famous Roman harbor towns on the Egyptian Red Sea coast dwindled into desuetude.[114]

With the establishment of Arab rule in the eastern Mediterranean, however, some areas of local commercial activity flourished. Palestinian wine and olive production surged in the seventh century, with indications that some of that production was destined for Egypt.[115] Indeed, Egyptian commercial activity aimed at the Mediterranean trade never disappeared entirely.[116] A continued, albeit diminished, demand for luxury goods within Egypt and in western Europe was met by locally produced Egyptian glass, metalwork, and ceramics.[117] Umayyad investments in markets and roads facilitated trade, but it is not clear how systematic this was and whether this occurred further away from the caliphal capital.[118] Archaeological and documentary finds, moreover, show that the bulk of commercial activity did not generally extend beyond local economic zones. Egyptian coins are not found much further west than southern Palestine, while Syrian coins are not often found in Egypt at all.[119] Amphorae produced in Egypt and Palestine are found in their largest concentrations

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(Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2017), esp. in the section "Mines and Trade."

[114] For the pottery workshops see Joanita Vroom in this volume (Chapter 9), and for the Red Sea towns see Tim Power, *The Red Sea from Byzantium to the Caliphate: AD 500–1000* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2012).

[115] Delphine Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes: production, typologie, contenu et diffusion, IIIe siècle avant J.-C.–IXe siècle après J.-C.* (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2011); Gideon Avni, *The Byzantine–Islamic Transition in Palestine: An Archaeological Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Gideon Avni in this volume (Chapter 7).

[116] Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Travel and Trade on the River," in *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt*, ed. Petra M. Sijpesteijn and Lennart Sundelin (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 115–52. See also the Umayyad coins that were found in southern France and Germany which point at a continuing functioning trade route in the eastern Mediterranean extending through the Aegean and Italy: Marc Parvérie, "Corpus des monnaies arabo-musulmanes des VIIe et IXe siècles découvertes dans le sud de la France," *Omni* 7 (2013), 79–100; Marc Parvérie, "Une voie d'importation méditerranéenne pour les dinars de Narbonnaise?" *Omni* 8 (2014), 228–33. I would like to thank Arianna D'Ottone for pointing these references out to me.

[117] Sijpesteijn, "Rise and Fall."

[118] The investments in road works in the Levant around the Umayyad capital, Damascus, are well documented in the inscriptions at roads and milestones dating to ʿAbd al-Malik's reign. See also the mosaic inscriptions on the entrance gate of an Umayyad market in Baysān (Elias Khamis, "Two Wall Mosaic Inscriptions from the Umayyad Market Place in Bet Shean/Baysān," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 64 [2001], 159–76). Cf. Fanny Bessard, "Politics and Economics of the Early Caliphate," in *Routledge Handbook on Early Islam*, ed. Herbert Berg (London: Routledge, 2019), 194–209; Fanny Bessard, *Caliphs and Merchants: Cities and Economies of Power in the Near East (700–950)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[119] Umayyad coins: Foss, "Arab-Byzantine Coins," 137; Arianna D'Ottone Rambach, "Arabic Glasses (Coin Weights, Jetons and Vessel Stamps) from Umayyad Syria," in *Coinage and History in the Seventh Century Near East 5: Proceedings of the 15th Seventh Century Syrian Numismatic Round Table*

in the eastern Mediterranean.[120] Papyri show that the Egyptian slave trade did not extend significantly toward the east.[121] A seventh-century commercial letter, on the other hand, found at Bahnasā, points to rather sophisticated trade in luxury goods with Ifrīqiya, involving letters of credits worth dozens of *dīnār*s.[122]

Thus, while products and people continued to move widely across the caliphate and beyond, the total volume and intensity of commercial exchanges had diminished compared to the late Roman period. The decrease of long-distance trade activity in the Mediterranean in the seventh and eighth centuries was due partially to a diminished demand in western Europe, but was also a result of the collapse of production centers at the far end of transregional trade networks in South Asia.[123]

In the ninth century the documentary and archaeological record shows that Egypt's role in transregional economic activity had changed fundamentally. The flourishing Baghdadi court culture had set the tone for material and cultural production across the caliphate. The common style of decoration on ceramics, which were locally produced with their own material forms but as conscious references to the capital's style, has been called an Abbasid koine. It was also popular in Egypt.[124] With the deteriorating political and economic conditions in Iraq, trade routes started to shift. Circumventing Iraqi harbors and towns, commercial goods from Asia were transported to the Mediterranean over land via the roads and routes forming the so-called Silk Road through Central Asia or using itineraries via the Red Sea. As a result, harbors on the Egyptian Red Sea coast flourished again, albeit at different locations than their Roman

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Held at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge on 17th and 18th September 2016, ed. Tony Goodwin (London: Archetype Publications, 2017), 175–95.

[120] See Joanita Vroom in this volume (Chapter 9).

[121] Jelle Bruning, "Slave Trade Dynamics in Abbasid Egypt: The Papyrological Evidence," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 63 (2020), 682–742.

[122] Yūsuf Rāġib, "La plus ancienne lettre arabe de marchand," in *Documents de l'Islam médiéval: nouvelles perspectives de recherche*, ed. Yūsuf Rāġib (Cairo: IFAO, 1991), 1–9.

[123] Power, *Red Sea*.

[124] Yasemin Bagci, "Coloured Ceramics of the Caliphs: A New Look at the Abbasid Pottery Finds from the Old Gözlükule Excavations at Tarsus," PhD thesis, Leiden University (2017), 25–26, 126; Jodi Magness, "Late Roman and Early Islamic Pottery from Middle Egypt and Some Palestinian Connections," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 13 (2000), 812–17, at 815–16; Itamar Taxel, Ayala Lester, and Uzi 'Ad, "Two Rare Early Abbasid Paint-Decorated Ceramic Bowls from El-Khirba/Nes Ziyyona, Israel," *Muqarnas* 35 (2018), 273–80, at 277. For the economic and social integration of the caliphate in the ninth and tenth centuries see also Chase F. Robinson, "Conclusion: From Formative to Classical Islam," in *The New Cambridge History of Islam*, vol. 1: *The Formation of the Islamic World: Sixth to Eleventh Centuries*, ed. Chase F. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 683–95.

predecessors. Coin finds on the Italian coasts indicate that commercial contacts with Egypt started to take off. A rise in Mediterranean commercial traffic is also indicated by other archaeological finds, mainly ceramics, as discussed by Joanita Vroom in this volume (Chapter 9). Within the Mediterranean a distinct reorientation took place as the western half – al-Andalus and the Maghreb, but including Sicily and the rest of Italy – flourished. As Egypt benefited from the shifted trade routes, Iraqi emigrants in search of economic opportunities and stability started to flock to the province. This movement of people, with their ideas, customs, and objects, from East to West is visible in Egyptian material culture, scribal practice, and social behavior.[125]

Conclusion: Egypt's Economy and Its Integration in the Caliphate

Throughout the period discussed Egypt was an integral and crucial part of the Islamic caliphate. The caliph was an immanent presence in Egypt, as references in the documentary record indicate. Delegations and shipments to and from the caliph's court arrived at regular intervals. The use of the title *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* or references to the caliph's possessions in Egypt, and news about him and his family members, carry not only a symbolic and ideological charge, but are real indications of the participation of the province and its population in the caliphate. Egypt was important to the caliphate for its strategic position between the capital and the western part of the empire, its place in the middle of a commercial web spanning the Mediterranean, Africa, Arabia, and Asia, and its wealth based on commerce and agriculture. The caliph appointed governors and other provincial officials. The Greek titles found on Greek and Coptic papyri from the seventh and eighth centuries point to a special association: the governor was called *symboulos*, meaning "council member," and the

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[125] Stucco decorations in the Ibn Ṭūlūn Mosque and in the monastery of the Syrians in the Wadi Natrun show a striking resemblance to those in Samarra, which has been explained as the work of immigrant Iraqi workmen (Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Visible Identities: In Search of Egypt's Jews in Early Islamic Egypt," in *Israel in Egypt: The Land of Egypt as Concept and Reality for Jews in Antiquity and the Early Medieval Period*, ed. Alison Salvesen, Sarah Pearce, and Miriam Frenkel [Leiden: Brill, 2020], 424–40). From the Tulunid period Egypt abandoned its idiosyncratic practice of using glass weights for many different goods (Heidemann, "Weights and Measures"). For the introduction of Eastern scribal practices in Egypt see Legendre, "Landowners," 409; Khan, "Muslim Legal Formularies." Elsewhere I have argued that the influx of Iraqi immigrants was one of the factors that motivated Egyptians to start using religious and ethnic group identity indicators at this time (Sijpesteijn, "Visible Identities").

caliph *prōtosymboulos*, "first council member," indicating shared membership of a fixed and unified hierarchy, based on commonality and consultation. Administrative reforms were implemented by the caliph's governors in Egypt according to his orders. That Egypt was thoroughly bound to the caliphal center is also clear from coinciding political developments: problems at the caliph's court in Medina, Damascus, or Baghdad had an immediate impact in the province, as when enemies attacked, revolts broke out, or militias competed for control.

To what extent was Egypt's role in the caliphate different from that of other provinces? The political relationships between Egypt and the Medinan caliphate, the Umayyad caliphs based (generally) in Damascus, and the Abbasids in Baghdad were for logistical reasons different. Geographical distance and communication via a network of roads and sea routes were, however, not the only criteria in determining the degree of control the caliphal court was able to exercise over the province. A similar interest in controlling Egypt for its wealth and strategic value spurred the Abbasid caliphs, as it had their predecessors, to continue paying close attention and making heavy investments. Even during the period under the Tulunids when Egypt is supposed to have operated largely independently from the caliph, monetary and military contributions were sent to the center, while a marriage alliance was concluded at the highest level. Conversely, all through this period governors and the local *jund* also competed with the center over access to resources, at times very successfully. Interaction took place via personal visits, either as part of regular delegations or dealing with ad hoc issues, correspondence, and military campaigns. Egyptian Christians equally participated in the networks tying Egypt into the caliphal political, economic, and intellectual center.

Other processes also played a role. Coinciding with the development of the Islamic legal infrastructure, *qāḍī*s, who had been chosen by governors from amongst the leading local Arab families in the Umayyad period, started to be appointed on a more regular basis by Abbasid caliphs from amongst legal specialists. The appointment of *qāḍī*s also, because of the geographical, and thereby religious–political, background they represented, was also a powerful political tool, especially in the early Abbasid empire when issues of legitimization were especially urgent.[126] Fiscal–administrative developments were closely integrated with legal debates and caliphal politics. The desire to formalize and make practices uniform

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[126] Mathieu Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis de Fusṭāṭ et les dynamiques régionales de l'innovation judiciaire (750–833)," *Annales islamologiques* 45 (2011), 214–42, at 219.

across the caliphate while reforming to increase fiscal income affected the degree of Egypt's integration as well.[127]

The degree to which Egypt was incorporated into the caliphate in terms of administrative, financial, and political structures was obviously not stable, but varied across this period. With the coming to power of the Abbasids, for example, closer connections, such as the use of the title *mawlā amīr al-muʾminīn* for civil servants, had been introduced. From the Abbasid caliphal center other measures also increased interaction with the province. Al-Manṣūr, who also synchronized the Egyptian calendar with the central one, reintroduced the Umayyad practice of sending written instructions to the *qāḍī*s of Fusṭāṭ (see also Mathieu Tillier's contribution to this volume [Chapter 5]).[128] The switch at the end of the eighth century to appointing predominantly Iraqi *qāḍī*s instead of Egyptian ones had an impact on local legal practice.[129] Another stage was reached in al-Maʾmūn's caliphate. His general ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭāhir established firm caliphal control over the province, which was expressed through its integration in administrative centralized structures. Al-Maʾmūn's revolutionary measures to make precious metal coins (*dirham*s and *dīnār*s) across the empire of uniform design and weight were also implemented in Egypt, as opposed to other provinces further west. From the point of view of Abbasid family politics, the fact that the practice of appointing relatives of the ruling family to governorships closely located to the capital included Egypt also points to its status at the core of the empire.

In other ways Egypt maintained its own character. Egypt was part of the "gold coin zone" as opposed to the eastern "silver coin zone," which coincided with former Sasanian lands. Egypt is the only province that continued the Roman practice, otherwise unique in the Islamic empire, of using glass coin weights. Only in the Tulunid period was the Egyptian idiosyncrasy of having weights made of glass for all sorts of food products, in addition to glass coin weights, abolished.[130] Legal innovations, such as the installation of a chamber of professional witnesses (*ʿudūl*), spread from Egypt to the rest of the caliphate.[131]

Egypt's integration in the early caliphate and the convergence of its administrative, legal, social, and material cultural practices with those elsewhere in the empire was the result of three processes. The first was policy, as caliphs strove to assert their control over the province with a suite of centralizing measures. The second was the interests of Egypt's rulers, for

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[127] Legendre, "Landowners."   [128] Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis," 226–27.
[129] Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis," 226–31.   [130] Heidemann, "Weights and Measures."
[131] Tillier, "Les 'premiers' cadis," 234–37.

whom participation in the caliphal system brought many advantages, even as they chafed at some of its centralizing tendencies.[132] In presenting their actions as being in the name of, or at the order of, the caliph, governors, and their officials on the one hand answered the caliphal call for loyalty and on the other leveraged the integrationist sentiments of their subjects to shore up their own authority. The third is the integrationist agenda of Egypt's other inhabitants, as exchanges of people, ideas, and goods, resulting from the deployment of armies and the appointment of officials, as well as commercial activities, pilgrimage, science, and adventure, created a shared cultural zone across the caliphate in which Egyptians felt themselves to be active members.

With the permanent breakdown of central Abbasid rule in the ninth century and the economic misère in Iraq, political control from Baghdad diminished, but Egypt continued to be a fixed part of the caliphate. The decline in commercial traffic via the Gulf and Iraq helped develop the Red Sea as an alternative trade route between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. Centrally located in the Mediterranean, Egypt also benefited from the revival of Europe and Byzantium. As Egypt again became integrated into a global commercial network, the province's flourishing economy and political stability attracted (economic) immigrants from the eastern part of the Muslim empire. Interestingly, influence in the form of architecture, material culture, and scribal practice from the caliphal center and its provinces further east increased as formal political control decreased.

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[132] See also Alon Dar's forthcoming study on revolts in Umayyad Egypt as a tool to force negotiation rather than an attempt to leave the political structure of the caliphate: Alon Dar, "Governors, Caliphs, and Provincial Elites in Umayyad Egypt: A Case-Study of One 'Rebellion' (91/709–710)," *al-ʿUṣūr al-wusṭā: The Journal of Middle East Medievalists* (forthcoming).

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Trading Activities in the Eastern Mediterranean through Ceramics between Late Antiquity and Fatimid Times (Seventh–Tenth/Eleventh Centuries)

Joanita Vroom

Introduction

Two major questions are crucial for understanding the historical development(s) of Egypt after antiquity. The first one is: How was Egypt embedded in larger structures and developments in the eastern Mediterranean from late Roman times onward? The second one is: How did Egypt operate within these larger networks? In order to address these questions from an archaeological perspective, I set out to take a new look at aspects of the material culture in Egypt during the late antique and early Islamic periods, using a bottom-up perspective. More precisely, it is my intention to discuss both the production and the regional distribution of some of the most widely used pottery types in Egypt from around the seventh to the tenth/eleventh centuries, as well as the medium- and long-distance movements of these ceramic products in the eastern Mediterranean and beyond. I have chosen to focus on pottery because it is omnipresent on most sites (particularly Byzantine ones) and because it is a very mobile product, and highly indicative of distribution patterns in the Mediterranean.[1]

[1] As a pottery specialist I have worked at a wide range of archaeological projects in various parts of the eastern Mediterranean, though not in Egypt myself. I am therefore relying on the excellent research of some of my colleagues, and I would like to mention here, in particular, Dominique Pieri, Pascale Ballet, Christine Vogt, Jean-Christophe Treglia, Lucy Vallauri, and Roland-Pierre Gayraud. For a good overview of the history of pottery research in Roman and Byzantine Egypt see P. Ballet, "État des recherches sur la production et la consummation des céramiques 'communes' dans l'Égypte

Specifically in the wide-ranging context of the subjects raised by the other contributors in the present volume it seems valuable not only to discuss the current ceramic studies by archaeologists working in Egypt in recent years, but especially to draw the Egyptian pottery repertoire into a larger Mediterranean perspective. With this aim I will first present a survey of the state of knowledge about the manufacture of certain widespread ceramic products in Egypt during the period under study, and second discuss the circulation of these Egyptian products in the eastern Mediterranean and beyond. The emphasis will therefore be mainly on the production of the most dominant amphora types and table wares from northern and Middle Egypt, and not so much on the less widespread sub-regional or micro-regional types.

For Egyptian pottery production during the late antique and early Islamic periods, three important clay groups have been distinguished by archaeologists up to now (Figure 9.1).[2] Moving from northern to southern Egypt, we may distinguish vessels made of calcareous fabrics from the Delta, vessels made of silt fabrics from the Nile Valley, and vessels made of kaolinitic fabrics from Aswān.[3] Pottery production was evidently an important industrial activity in Egypt (including on monastic sites).[4] On the route from Alexandria to Cairo (east of Lake Mareotis) one can observe immense pottery kiln floors, with diameters of up to 10 m.[5] Furthermore, late Roman waste heaps at Sheikh

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romaine et byzantine," in *LRCW 5: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. D. Dixneuf, 2 vols. (Alexandria: Institut d'Études Alexandrines 2017), 2: 807–30.

[2] By "late antique" or "late Roman" I mean pottery finds from around the mid-third to the sixth centuries, and by "early Byzantine" ceramics from around the seventh to the ninth centuries: see J. Vroom, *After Antiquity: Ceramics and Society in the Aegean from the 7th to the 20th Centuries A. C. A Case Study from Boeotia, Central Greece* (Leiden: Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, 2003), 27–28 for the technological reasons behind this pottery chronology in the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean.

[3] P. Ballet, "Artisanat de la céramique dans l'Égypte romaine tardive et byzantine," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 2 (1991), 129–44, at 141–43; P. Ballet, "Potiers et poteries de l'Égypte chrétienne," *Dossiers d'archéologie* 226 (1997), 42–49, at 45.

[4] The recovery of cylindrical kilns on monastic sites could indicate the firing of local ceramic products (perhaps for monastic purposes) within the walls (*intro-muros*) of some Egyptian monasteries, such as the monastery of Saint Hatre ("St. Simeon")/Dayr Anba Hadra near Aswān, on the west bank of the Nile: see the excavation reports by U. Monneret de Villard, *Il monastero di S. Simeone presso Aswân*, vol. 1: *Descrizione archeologica* (Milan: Tipografia e libreria pontificia arcevescovile s. Giuseppe, 1927), 74–75; U. Monneret de Villard, *Description générale du monastère de St. Siméon à Aswan* (Milan: Tipografia e libreria pontificia arcevescovile s. Giuseppe, 1927), 24, room XXXIII; and further remarks by P. Grossmann, *Christliche Architektur in Ägypten* (Leiden/Boston/Cologne: Brill, 2002), 90–91, 562–65; and M.-A. El Dorry, "Wine Production in Medieval Egypt: The Case of the Coptic Church," in *Studies in Coptic Culture: Transmission and Interaction*, ed. M. Ayad (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2016), 55–64, at 57 n.31. I would like to thank R. E. L. Dekker for these last references.

[5] S. Marchand and A. Marangou (eds.), *Amphores d'Égypte de la basse époque à l'époque arabe*, 2 vols. (Cairo: IFAO, 2007).
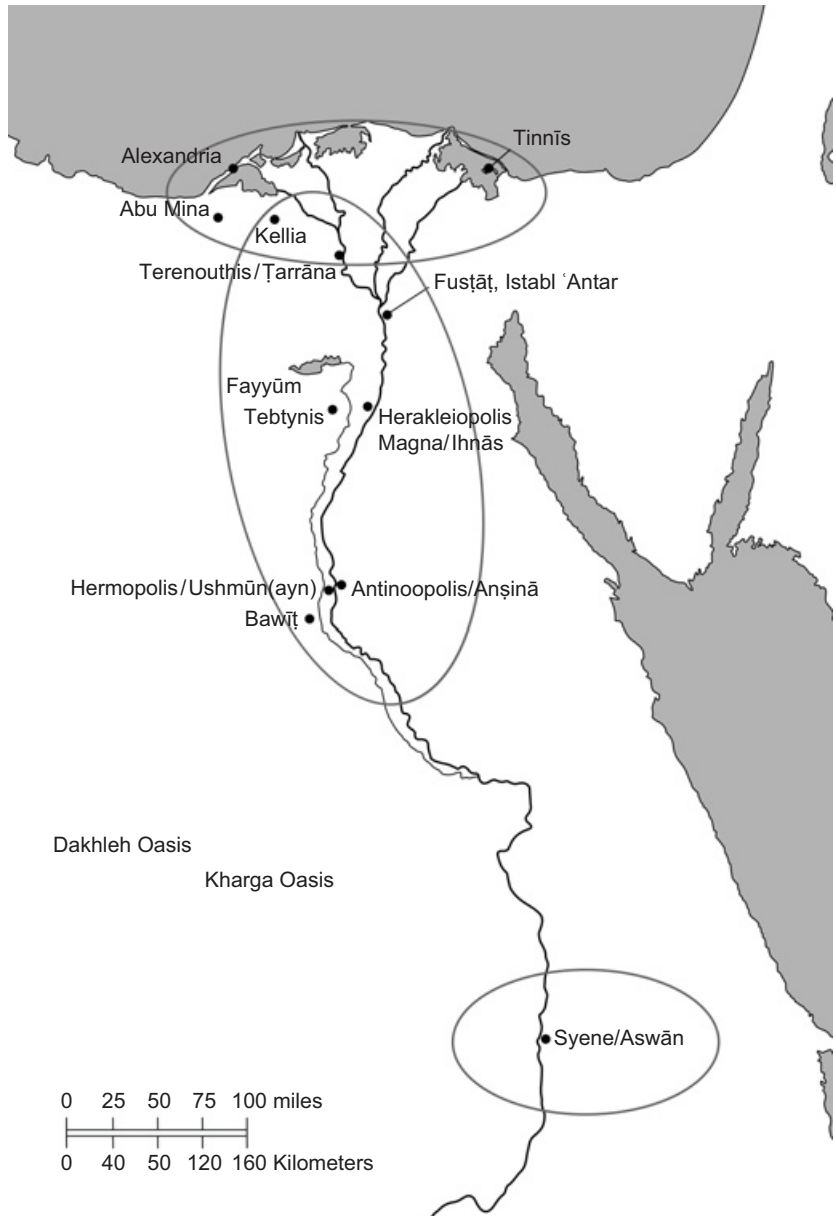
Figure 9.1 Map of Egypt with the most important production zones of late antique–
early Islamic ceramics.

Ibada (Antinoopolis), some of which rise up to 30 m and are composed of a huge quantity of local amphorae (including Egyptian imitations of the Late Roman Amphora 1), clearly show the immense scale in both size and productivity of the manufacturing sites in Egypt.[6]

Amphorae were, of course, the most important form of "trade-packaging for all kind of goods" in the ancient world, and as such they were widely exchanged.[7] The best-known examples of pottery distributed all over the Mediterranean in late antiquity are undoubtedly the Late Roman Amphora series and the Red Slip Ware products from production areas in North Africa, Cyprus, and Asia Minor; these are the most frequently mentioned in publications.[8] The Egyptian pottery types from the

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[6] Egyptian imitations of the LRA 1 were made in large quantities in Uyun Musa, Kellia, Bawīṭ, and Saqqara. Egypt imported up to 700 substantial amounts of LRA 1 from Cyprus, but recent surveys have identified Egyptian production of these LRA 1 variants (generally dated to the first half of the seventh century) in a calcite clay in the Delta and an alluvial clay in the middle Nile Valley: see Ballet, "Potiers et poteries," 47; P. Ballet, "De l'Égypte byzantine à l'islam: approches céramologiques," *Archéologie islamique* 10 (2000), 29–54, fig. 9; P. Ballet and D. Dixneuf, "Ateliers d'amphores de la chôra égyptienne aux époques romaine et byzantine," in *Transport Amphorae and Trade in the Eastern Mediterranean: Acts of the International Colloquium at the Danish Institute at Athens, September 26–29, 2002*, ed. J. Eiring and J. Lund (Athens: Danish Institute, 2004), 67–72; C. Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 759–60; D. Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes: production, typologie, contenu et diffusion (IIIe siècle avant J.-C.–IXe siècle après J.-C.)* (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2011); D. Pieri, "Les centres de production d'amphores en Méditerranée orientale durant l'antiquité tardive," in *LRCW 2: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. M. Bonifay and J.-C. Tréglia (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2007), 611–25, at 615 fig. 15; D. Pieri, "Regional and Interregional Exchanges in the Eastern Mediterranean during the Early Byzantine Period," in *Trade and Markets in Byzantium*, ed. C. Morrisson (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2012), 27–49, at fig. 2.14.

[7] P. Gouin, "Ancient Oriental Dairy Techniques Derived from Archaeological Evidence," *Food and Foodways* 7 (1997), 157–88.

[8] See, in general, J. W. Hayes, *Late Roman Pottery: A Catalogue of Roman Fine Wares* (London: British School at Rome, 1972), 323–86, 408–10; J. Poblome, *Sagalassos Red Slip Ware: Typology and Chronology* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999); D. Cottica, "Late Roman Imported and Locally Produced Pottery from Hierapolis (Pamukkale, Turkey): Preliminary Evidence," *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta* 36 (2000), 49–56; S. Ladstätter and R. Sauer, "Late Roman C-Ware und lokale spätantike Feinware aus Ephesos," in *Spätantike und mittelalterliche Keramik aus Ephesos*, ed. F. Krinzinger (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2005), 143–201; M. Bonifay, "Observations sur la diffusion des céramiques africaines en Méditerranée orientale durant l'antiquité tardive," in *Mélanges Jean-Pierre Sodini*, ed. F. Baratte, V. Déroche, C. Jolivet-Lévy, and B. Pitharakis, *Travaux et Mémoires* 15 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2005), 565–81, at 577–81; M. Bonifay, "Observations sur la typologie des amphores africaines de l'antiquité tardive," in *LRCW I: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. J. M. Gurt i Esparraguera, J. Buxeda i Garrigós, and M. A. Cau Ontiveros (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2005), 451–71; H. Meyza, *Nea Paphos V: Cypriot Red Slip Ware. Studies on a Late Roman Levantine Fine Ware* (Warsaw: Zakład archeologii śródziemnomorskiej, 2007); F. Kenkel, "The Cypriot Red Slip Ware and Its Derivatives from Pednelissos in Pisidia," in *Çanak: Late Antique and Medieval Pottery and Tiles in Mediterranean Archaeological Contexts*, ed. B. Böhlendorf-Arslan, A. O. Uysal, and J. Witte-Orr (Istanbul: Ege Yayınları, 2007), 131–46; M. Jackson, M. Zelle, L. Vandeput, and V. Köse,

seventh to the tenth/eleventh centuries discussed in this chapter will be perhaps somewhat lesser known, but they are essential for our understanding of trade activities in the Mediterranean after antiquity.[9]

Transport containers (such as amphorae) are indeed good indicators of short-, medium-, and long-distance commercial activities in Mediterranean trade after the seventh century. Their distribution outlines the regions that produced or imported the transported commodities. For the period under study, the archaeological evidence suggests a systematic amphora trade system, both within Egypt and beyond a wider area, over land by camels and donkeys, as well as over sea by ships, transporting wine, oil, and other goods between North Africa and the Near East.

The Late Roman Amphora 7 from Egypt

In Figure 9.2 we may distinguish some examples of the best-known ceramic product from Middle Egypt, the so-called Late Roman Amphora 7 (LRA 7), which is also known as Egloff types 173–77 (from the excavations in Kellia) or the Late Roman Hermopolitan B.[10]

"Primary Evidence for Late Roman D Ware Production in Southern Asia Minor: A Challenge to 'Cypriot Red Slip Ware'," *Anatolian Studies* 62 (2012), 89–114; J. Vroom, *Byzantine to Modern Pottery in the Aegean: An Introduction and Field Guide*, 2nd rev. ed. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 32–39; S. Costa, P. Reynolds, and J. Vroom, "Pottery, Roman and Post-Roman," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity*, ed. O. Nicholson, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 2:1217–20; and P. Reynolds and J. Vroom, "Amphorae," in *The Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity*, ed. O. Nicholson, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 2:65–66.

9 Vroom, *After Antiquity*; see also A. Walmsley, "Production, Exchange and Regional Trade in the Islamic East Mediterranean: Old Structures, New Systems?" in *The Long Eighth Century: Production, Distribution and Demand*, ed. I. L. Hansen and C. Wickham (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 265–343; A. Walmsley, *Early Islamic Syria: An Archaeological Assessment* (London: Duckworth, 2007); M. McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, AD 300–900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); M. Mundell Mango, "Byzantine Trade: Local, Regional, Interregional and International," in *Byzantine Trade, 4th–12th Centuries*, ed. M. Mundell Mango (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 3–14; G. Avni, *The Byzantine–Islamic Transition in Palestine: An Archaeological Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 11–39, 290–94.

10 J. A. Riley, "The Pottery from Cisterns 1977.1, 1977.2 and 1977.3," in *Excavations at Carthage Conducted by the University of Michigan*, ed. J. H. Humphrey, 7 vols. (Tunis: Cérès; Ann Arbor: Kelsey Museum; New Delhi: Thomsons Press, 1976–82), 6:85–124, at 121 (LRA 7); M. Egloff, *Kellia: la poterie copte. Quatre siècles d'artisanat et d'échanges en Basse-Égypte*, 2 vols. (Geneva: Georg, 1977), 114–15, pl. 58–59 (types 173–77); A. J. Spencer and D. M. Bailey, *British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt: Ashmunein (1981)* (London: British Museum, 1982) (Late Roman Hermopolitan B); D. M. Bailey, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein V: Pottery, Lamps and Glass of the Late Roman and Early Arab Periods* (London: British Museum Press, 1998), 129–32 (type B); D. Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental à l'époque byzantine (Ve–VIIe siècles): le témoignage des amphores en Gaule* (Beirut: IFPO, 2005), fig. 86; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes* (Amphores Égyptiennes 7). This amphora type is also called "class 52B" in D. P. S. Peacock and D. F. Williams, *Amphorae and the Roman Economy: An Introductory Guide* (London: Longman, 1986), 204–05.
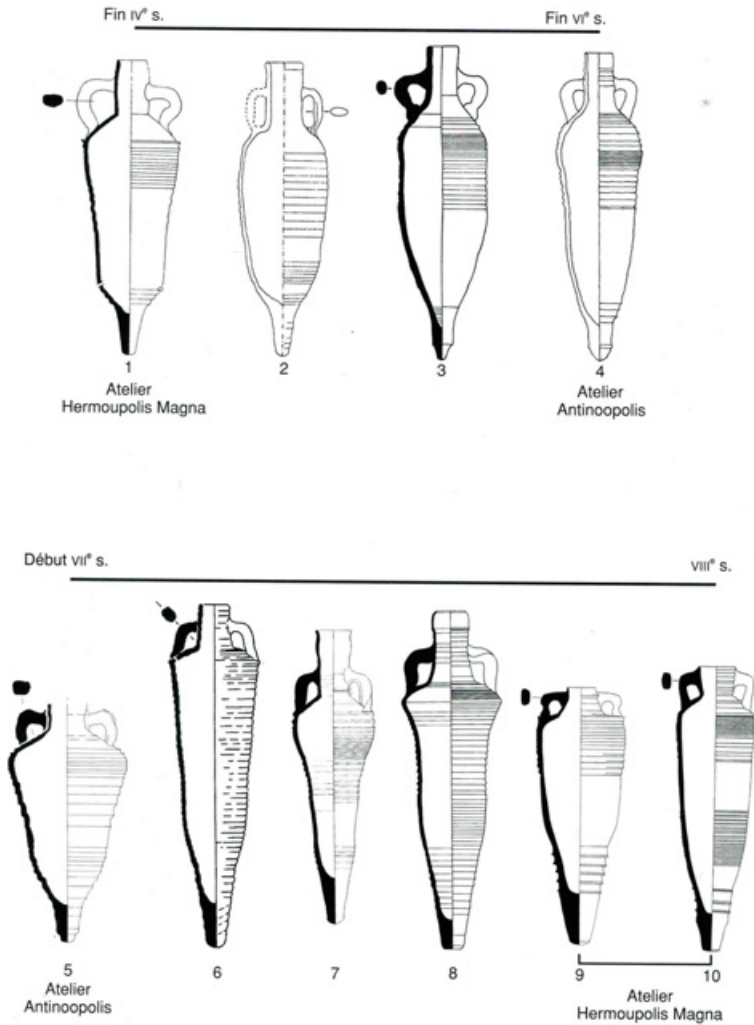
Figure 9.2 Shapes of Late Roman Amphora 7 (LRA 7) from Egypt.

Whatever its names, it concerns here a small to medium-sized container with two roughly made loop- or strap-handles and a carrot-shaped body tapering to a solid spike. Made of a brown micaceous Nile silt fabric, this amphora type was produced between the fifth and tenth/eleventh

centuries.[11] Its major workshops were located in Middle Egypt, between the modern cities of Minya and Asyūṭ, although there were many more local workshops as well.[12]

The LRA 7 shows a typological diversity in shapes and dimensions, and Christine Vogt and Dominique Pieri were among the first to standardize this amphora type.[13] Their chronological analysis of the different LRA 7 shapes ranges from jars with tall narrow necks and rounded shoulders to containers with short squat necks and square shoulders. Apparently, examples with rounded shoulders were replaced in the eighth century by those with angular shoulders and exaggerated ribbing (Figure 9.2).[14]

This amphora type was mostly used for the transport and storage of wine.[15] Middle Egypt in particular (around the Fayyūm) was known for its wine production, as well as Edfū and Aswān, the last being an important trade center (for gold, spices, textiles, precious stones, and slaves) and a strategic military point between the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and

[11] C. Vogt, "Les céramiques ommeyyades et abbassides d'Istabl 'Antar-Fustat: tradition méditeranéennes et influences orientales," in *La céramique médiévale en Méditerranée: Actes du VIe congrès d'l'AIECM2, 13–18 novembre 1995, Aix-en-Provence*, ed. G. Démians d'Archimbaud (Aix-en-Provence: Narration Éd., 1997), 243–60, at 258.

[12] E.g., J.-Y. Empereur and M. Picon, "Les regions de production d'amphores imperials en Méditerranée orientale," in *Amphores romaines et histoire économique: dix ans de recherche, Actes du colloque de Sienne (22–24 mai 1986)*, ed. M. Lenoir, D. Manacorda, and C. Panella (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1989), 223–48, at 244–45; P. Ballet, F. Mahmoud, M. Vichy, and M. Picon, "Artisanat de la céramique dans l'Égypte romaine tardive et byzantine: prospections d'ateliers de potiers de Minia à Assouan," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 2 (1991), 129–43, at 134–39; C. Vogt, P. Gouin, G. Bourgeois, et al., "Notes on Some of the Abbasid Amphorae of Istabl 'Antar-Fustat (Egypt)," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 326 (2002), 65–80, at 69; Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, 129–32; P. Ballet, "De l'empire romain à la conquête arabe: les productions céramiques égyptiennes," in *La céramique médiévale en Méditerranée: Actes du VIe congrès d'l'AIECM2, 13–18 novembre 1995, Aix-en-Provence*, ed. G. Démians d'Archimbaud (Aix-en-Provence: Narration Éd., 1997), 53–61; D. Dixneuf, "Les amphores égyptiennes et importees découvertes à Tell el-Makhzan dans le Nord-Sinaï (IVe–VIIe siècle apr. J.-C.)," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 539–46; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 157–63.

[13] Vogt, "Les céramiques," 258; Vogt et al., "Notes," 67; Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, fig. 86; see also Bailey, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein*, 129; and R.-P. Gayraud, "La transition céramique en Egypte, VIIe–IXe siècles," in *Actes du VIIe congrès international sur la céramique médiévale en Méditerrannée, Thessaloniki, 11–16 octobre 1999*, ed. C. Bakirtzis (Athens: Édition de la Caisse des Recettes Archéologiques, 2003), 558–62, at 558.

[14] Vogt, "Les céramiques," 258.

[15] Bailey, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein*; see also R.-P. Gayraud and J.-C. Treglia, "La céramique d'une maison omeyyade de Fustât-Istabl 'Antar (le Caire, Égypte): vaissles de table, céramiques communes et culinare, jarres de stockage et amphores de la pièce P5 (première moitié du VIIIe s.)," in *Actas do X Congresso internacional a cerâmica medieval no mediterrâneo: Silves 22 a 27 outobro '12*, ed. M. J. Gonçalves and S. Gómez-Martinez (Silves: Câmara Municipal de Siles/Mértola, 2015), 51–55, fig. 1 no. 1 and fig. 4 nos. 1–3 for the recovery of LRA 7 (dated to the mid-eighth century) in an Umayyad context at Istabl ʿAntar/Fusṭāṭ containing pitch with grape seeds in the interior base. According to Egloff (*Kellia*), five amphorae of the LRA 7 type also contained salted fish.

Nubia.[16] Papyri indicate that wine amphorae were produced by seasonal potters in independent workshops near areas of wine preparation and cultivation; ostraca reveal further information about the transport of wine, mentioning the shipper's name and the amount of wine transported.[17] The volume capacity of the LRA 7 could, for instance, vary from 3.65/5 to 9 l.[18]

Several examples of LRA 7 that were excavated had sealed stoppers with stamps on top, were coated with resin on the interior, or had holes drilled through the neck after firing.[19] It has been suggested by some scholars that this is a fermentation hole for the escape of fermentation gases, although others assume that the hole was used to verify the quality of the contents using a pipette or hollow reed before sale to the client.[20]

The shape and thick walls of the LRA 7 allowed these wine containers to be easily stored and stacked, side by side, during transport over medium and long distances by ship or along caravan routes in the pack-saddles of animals (such as camels or donkeys).[21] This is shown by a small molded ceramic statue of a camel transporting Egyptian amphorae with carrot-shaped bodies and spikes.[22] Furthermore, ostraca mention wine trade via donkeys in late Roman Alexandria (Kom el-Dikka).[23] Even in Abbasid times, the distribution and consumption of agricultural products (such as wine) was continuing as usual.[24] We may recognize the continuity of the

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[16] S. Bacot, "Le vin à Edfou," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 713–25; on the strategic position of Aswān see Stefanie Schmidt's contribution in this volume (Chapter 3).

[17] E.g., H. Cockle, "Pottery Manufacture in Roman Egypt: A New Papyrus," *Journal of Roman Studies* 71 (1981), 87–97, at 90–93; A. Boud'hors and S. Bacot, "Langue et littérature," *Dossiers d'archéologie* 226 (1997), 50–59, at 54–56; Vogt et al., "Notes," 69; Éric Delpont and Denis A. Canal (eds.), *L'Art copte en Égypte: 2000 ans de christianisme* (Paris: Institut du monde arabe/Gallimard, 2000), 196–97 nos. 221–23 including seventh/eighth-century ostraca from Bawīṭ and Edfū mentioning the quantities and transportation of amphorae with camels.

[18] E.g., Vogt et al., "Notes," 68; A. Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks: Ceramics and Life in the Old Monastery of Baramūs in the Wādī al-Natrūn, Egypt (4th–9th c.)," PhD thesis, Leiden University (2012), 191, with further literature.

[19] Vogt et al., "Notes," 67.

[20] Vogt et al., "Notes," 68–69; Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," 191.

[21] A neck fragment of LRA 7 was, for instance, found on the surface along the Via Hadriana, near Antinoopolis: see J. Marchand, "The Ceramics of the Via Hadriana," in *Antinoupolis II: Scavi e materiali*, ed. R. Pintaudi (Florence: Istituto papirologico "G. Vitelli," 2014), 376–78, at 377.

[22] Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, 128 fig. 82 (from the museum in Alexandria), recognizes these Egyptian amphorae as the bitronconical ones; see also Delpont and Canal (eds.), *L'Art copte*, 196 no. 220 for another small ceramic statue of a camel from the Louvre Museum in Paris.

[23] See, e.g., A. Łukaszewicz, "Textual Research and the Life of the Amphorae: Some Evidence from Late Roman Alexandria," in *LRCW 3: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archeology and Archaeometry*, ed. S. Menchelli, S. Santoro, M. Pasquinucci, and G. Guiducci (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), 941–43, at 941–42, who refers to these ostraca.

[24] S. Marchand and A. Marangou, "Conclusion," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 751–63, at 761–62.

main agricultural resources with the location of the manufacturing centers of ceramic containers in this period, in connection with excavated examples of LRA 7 of Umayyad and Abbasid times on the Isṭabl ʿAntar plateau in Fusṭāṭ.[25]

To date, LRA 7 has been found in abundance, and all over Egypt. It is clear that this amphora type was present at most Egyptian sites, from Alexandria in the north to Aswān in the south.[26] But what about the distribution of LRA 7 in the eastern Mediterranean? Is it also possible to catch a glimpse of any export patterns?

According to Christine Vogt, this wine container was exported to North Africa (Carthage, Benghazi), to Crete (Eleutherna, Gortyna), to Constantinople, to Cyprus, and to the Near East.[27] Although Caesarea Maritima and Tell Keisan (both situated in modern Israel) are also shown on her map, LRA 7 was actually recovered on many more sites in the Near East, such as Beirut, Jerusalem, Pella, and Jerash.[28]

Let us continue with LRA 7 finds on the southwestern coast of Turkey. Figure 9.3 shows the late antique amphora percentages from the eastern part of the city of Limyra in Lycia.[29] Imported LRA 7 fragments may be distinguished in this figure, accounting for 11 percent of the total amphora finds (see pie chart in Figure 9.3), which indicate contacts with Middle Egypt in this period of time. In addition, a more complete example of the carrot-shaped LRA 7 appears to have been recovered in the same region, in a seventh-century deposit at Sagalassos in Pamphylia, north of Antalya.[30]

Apparently, the LRA 7 even traveled beyond the eastern Mediterranean. On a map of western find spots of Egyptian amphorae (ranging in date between the first and the seventh centuries) we may notice find spots from Carthage in the south to various sites in Britain in northwestern Europe.[31]

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[25] Vogt et al., "Notes," fig. 2; Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, fig. 82; R.-P. Gayraud, "Quand l'amphore fait le mur . . .," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 721–25; R.-P. Gayraud and L. Vallauri, *Fustat II. Fouilles d'Istabl ʿAntar: céramiques d'ensembles des IXe et Xe siècles* (Cairo: IFAO, 2017).

[26] See www.amphoralex.org/chron_amphorique/chronamphora.php.

[27] See her drawn map of the LRA 7 trade in the eastern Mediterranean in Vogt et al., "Notes," fig. 1.

[28] A. Uscatescu, "Report on the Levant Pottery (5th–9th century AD)," in *Actes du VIIe congrès international sur la céramique médiévale en Méditerrannée, Thessaloniki, 11–16 octobre 1999*, ed. C. Bakirtzis (Athens: Édition de la Caisse des Recettes Archéologiques, 2003), 546–49, at fig. 1.

[29] J. Vroom, "Limyra in Lycia: Byzantine/Umayyad Pottery Finds from Excavations in the Eastern Part of the City," in *Céramiques antiques en Lycie (VIIe s. a.C.–VIIe s. p.C.): les produits et les marches*, ed. S. Lemaître (Bordeaux: Ausonius Éditions, 2007), 261–92, at fig. 2.7.

[30] J. Poblome, P. Bes, and P. Degryse, "The Decline and Fall of Sagalassos: A Ceramic Perspective," *Rei Cretariae Romanae Fautorum Acta* 39 (2004), 1–6, at fig. 3b.

[31] R. Tomber and D. Williams, "Egyptian Amphorae in Britain and the Western Provinces," *Britannia* 31 (2000), 41–54, at fig. 3.
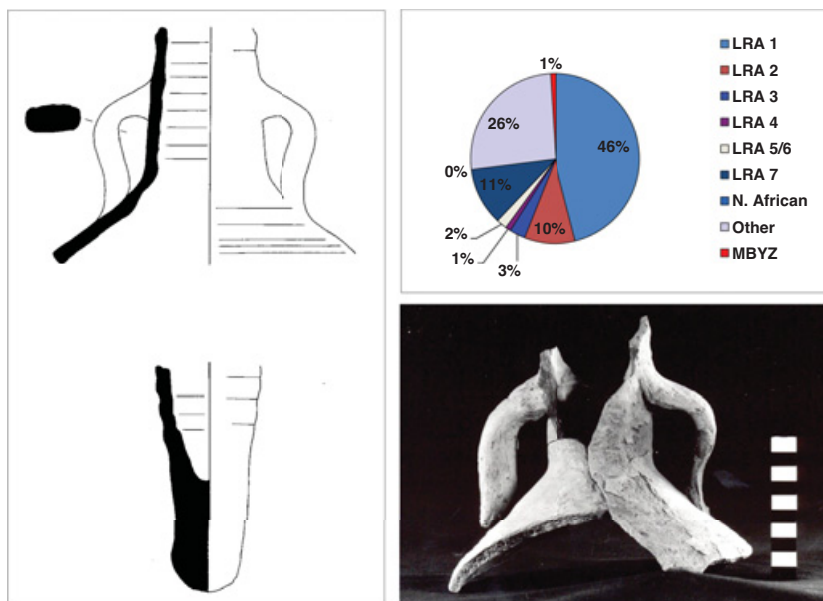
Figure 9.3 LRA 7 fragments from Egypt and pie chart showing the total amount of amphorae, found in the city of Limyra, southwestern Turkey

It is, by the way, only at Carthage that counted quantities appear to exceed 2 percent of the total (especially in the late sixth century), because normally at most of these other sites the numbers of Egyptian amphorae were relatively small.

In fact, only two amphora sherds have been recovered so far from archaeological contexts in Britain: one body sherd found at Poundbury in Dorset, and a rim fragment at York.[32] Bearing this in mind, it is necessary to pay attention to three nearly complete late Egyptian amphorae to be said to have been found in Britain, although all three lack excavation details prior to museum acquisition. The three vessels come from museum collections in Towcester in Northamptonshire, in London, and in Old Sarum in Wiltshire.[33] However, there is as yet no conclusive evidence that they arrived in Britain in the late antique period. In addition, some excavated and published examples of LRA 7 have been recovered in

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[32] Tomber and Williams, "Egyptian Amphorae," fig. 4 no. 1. According to them (49), a body sherd of ERSW A from Egypt was also recovered in a fourth-century context at excavations in London.

[33] Tomber and Williams, "Egyptian Amphorae," fig. 4 nos. 2–4.
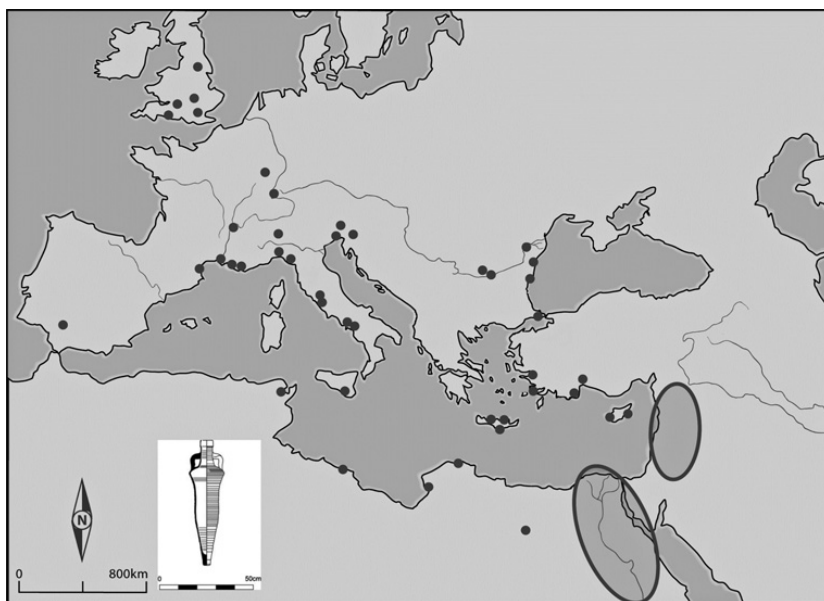
Figure 9.4 Distribution map of LRA 7 from Egypt.

southern France: in particular, in Arles, in Marseilles, and in the Gulf of Fos.[34]

In short, LRA 7 is frequently found in northern Egypt, but occurs in smaller quantities in North Africa (Carthage, Benghazi), Nubia, and the Near East, as well as in Turkey (not only in Limyra and Sagalassos, but also in Ephesus and Constantinople), the Black Sea region, Greece, the Balkans (Pannonia), Italy (Rome, Classe), southern France (Marseilles, Arles) and even in Britain (Figure 9.4).[35] The find spots concern mostly coastal sites,

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[34] Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, pl. 48; see also F. Laubenheimer, "Amphores égyptiennes en Gaule," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 651–55, at figs. 1–4.

[35] E.g., W. Y. Adams, *Ceramic Industries of Medieval Nubia* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1986), 565, 567–68, fig. 315 nos. 3–3a (common in Nubia between 300 and 850); M. O. Rousset, S. Marchand, D. Laisney, and S. Robert, "Tebtynis 1998: travaux dans le secteur nord," *Annales islamologiques* 33 (1999), 185–262, at 242 nos. 136–42 (Tebtynis); A. L. Gascoigne, "Amphorae from Old Cairo: A Preliminary Note," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/1 (2007), 161–73, at figs. 12–13 (Cairo); A. Marangou and S. Marchand, "Conteneurs importés et égyptiens de Tebtynis (Fayoum) de la deuxième moitié du IVe siècle av. J.-C. au Xe siècle apr. J.-C. (1994–2002)," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/1 (2007), 239–94, at figs. 161–65 (Tebtynis); S. Marchand, "Les amphores égyptiennes et importées de la basse époque à l'époque arabe: Abou Rawash (1995–2004)," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/1 (2007), 175–88, at 179 (Abou Rawash); S. Marchand and D. Dixneuf, "Amphores et conteneurs égyptiens et importés du VIIe siècle apr. J.-C.: sondages récents de Baouît (2003–2004),"

or sites near a river, showing the importance of maritime trade for the distribution of these amphorae through ships. In this trade network the harbor of Alexandria could have served as an important transit port for the distribution of these containers and their contents.[36]

The Bag-Shaped Amphora from Egypt

From LRA 7 it is essential to move to another typical Egyptian product, which can be dated from the second half of the sixth to the tenth/eleventh centuries.[37] This is the so-called bag-shaped amphora or Egyptian counterpart of the Late

Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne 8/1 (2007), 309–43, at 312–15 (Bawīt); Dixneuf, "Amphores égyptiennes," 540 (Tell el-Makhzan); G. Rizzo, "Le importazioni romane ed ostiensi di amfore egizie tra il I e il VII secolo d.C.," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 657–66, at fig. 6 (Ostia); A. Marangou, "Importation d'amphores égyptiennes dans le bassin égéen," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 669–74, at 671 and figs. 1–2 (Olympia, Constantinople/Istanbul, Bodrum, Crete); A. Marangou, "Quelques amphores égyptiennes des époques ptolémaïque et romaine á Chypre," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 675–79, at fig. 2 (Cyprus); S. Marquié and J.-C. Sourisseau, "Les amphores égyptiennes d'époques hellenistique et romaine," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 681–93, at fig. 5 (Kition, Cyprus); E. Raptou, "Les amphores orientales d'un bâtiment religieux de Yeroskipou (Paphos)," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/2 (2007), 695–703, at fig. 3 (Yeroskipou, Cyprus); A. Martin, "The Pottery from a Late-Antique Settlement at Schedia (Western Delta, Egypt)," in *LRCW 3: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. S. Menchelli, S. Santoro, M. Pasquinucci, and G. Guiducci (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), 945–49, at 946 (Schedia); A. Konstantinidou, "Aspects of Everyday Life in a Monastic Settlement: Amphorae and Cooking Wares (4th–7th c.) from the Old Monastery of Baramus in the Wadi Natrun (Egypt): A First Glance," in *LRCW 3: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. S. Menchelli, S. Santoro, M. Pasquinucci, and G. Guiducci (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2010), 951–61, at 952 figs. 6–7; Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," 190–96, figs. 3.61–3.63 (Wadi Natrun) with further literature on find spots in Egypt. Cf. R.-P. Gayraud and J.-C. Treglia, "Amphores, céramiques culinaires et céramiques communes omeyyades d'un niveau d'incendie à Fustat-Istabl 'Antar (Le Caire, Égypte)," in *LRCW 4: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. N. Poulou-Papadimitriou, E. Nodarou, and V. Kilikoglou (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2014), 365–75, at 366, mentioning Beirut, Gortys, and Nicopolis (in Greece), and see also a distribution map of this amphora type in Egypt from Le Centre Alexandrin d'Étude des Amphores: www.amphoralex.org/amphores/cartes/map7_AE5-6_distri.htm, as well as University of Southampton, *Roman Amphorae: A Digital Resource* [dataset], York: Archaeology Data Service [distributor], (2014), https://doi.org/10.5284/1028192, for this particular amphora type: http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/amphora_ahrb_2005/details.cfm?id=243&CFID=fc9708bb-b105-4b01-badb-35c3b63b4737&CFTOKEN=0.

[36] E.g., M. Rodziewicz, *Alexandrie I: la céramique romaine tardive d'Alexandrie* (Warsaw: PWN-Éditions scientifiques de Pologne, 1976); M. Rodziewicz, "Egyptian Glazed Pottery of the Eighth to Ninth Centuries," *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 25 (1983), 73–75; M. Rodziewicz, *Alexandrie III: les habitations romaines tardives d'Alexandrie à la lumière des fouilles polonaises à Kom el-Dikka* (Warsaw: PWN-Édition scientifiques de Pologne, 1984); M. Mundell Mango, "The Byzantine Maritime Trade with the East (4th–7th Centuries)," *ARAM* 8 (1996), 139–63; Mundell Mango, "Byzantine Trade," 12; Avni, *Byzantine–Islamic Transition*, 290.

[37] P. Ballet, "Un atelier d'amphores Late Roman Amphora 5/6 à Kôm Abou Billou (Térénouthis)," *Chroniques d'Égypte* 69/138 (1994), 353–65; P. Ballet, "Un atelier d'amphores Late Roman Amphora 5/6 à pate alluviale dans le Delta occidental: Kôm Abou Billou (Térénouthis)," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/1 (2007), 157–60; Vogt, "Les céramiques," 258.
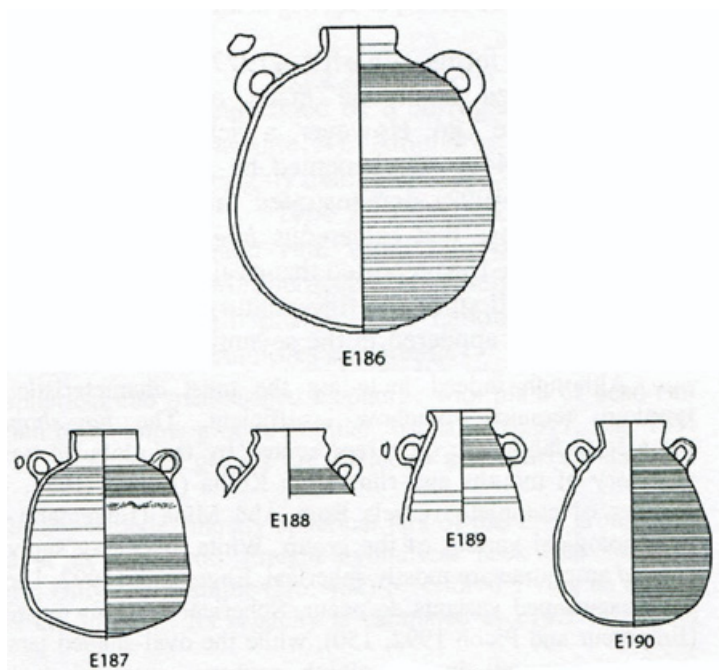
Figure 9.5 Shapes of bag-shaped amphorae from Egypt.

Roman Amphora 5/6 from Palestine (Figure 9.5).[38] Although there is morpho-
logical variety of this amphora type, the shape is in essence a broad-bellied
spherical or oval-shaped body with a rounded base, a short neck, and two ring
handles on the shoulder.[39] A fabric and shape distinction of this amphora type
was made by Michel Egloff for the Kellia series, which was found in a deposit
dated to the Umayyad period (650–730). Five different types were discerned by
him: the first example (type 186) was made of a calcareous fabric, the other four
(types 187–90) were made of a Nile silt fabric (Figure 9.5).[40]

[38] This amphora type is sometimes also known as Abu Mina amphorae or Red-Brown Ovoid
Amphorae (RBOA): see I. Taxel and A. Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware in Early Islamic
Palestine: Between Commerce and Migration," *al-Masāq* 23/2 (2011), 77–97, at 79. Recently,
Dixneuf (*Amphores égyptiennes*, 142–53) named this amphora type Egyptian Amphora 5/6.

[39] See, in general, J. Engemann, "À propos des amphores d'Abou Mina," *Cahiers de la céramique
égyptienne* 3 (1992), 153–59, at fig. 10a; Ballet, "Potiers et poteries," fig. 4.

[40] Egloff, *Kellia*, 117–18, types 186–90; Vogt, "Les céramiques," 257–58; P. Ballet, "La céramique," in
Kellia 2: L'ermitage copte QR 195. La céramique, les inscriptions, les décors, ed. P. Ballet, N. Bosson, and
M. Rassart-Debergh (Cairo: IFAO, 2003), 1–207, at 141–48 nos. 113–27; Gayraud, "La transition

In fact, the first type was mostly produced in the workshops of the pilgrimage centre of Abu Mina (in northwest Egypt) and in the region of the Lake Mareotis.[41] The other types were manufactured in the Delta (the only known kiln site is situated in Kum Abu Billu [ancient Terenouthis/Ṭarrāna]) until at least the tenth century.[42] The distribution of these amphora types in Egypt was more concentrated in the northern regions.[43]

Egyptian bag-shaped amphorae have been recovered at numerous sites in the Near East, including Beirut, Caesarea, Ramla, Jaffa, Horvat Zikhrin, Tell Tanninim, Ashdod, Jerash, Umm al-Walid, and Pella.[44] The widespread presence of bag-shaped amphorae in this part of the Mediterranean points to a boom in the Egyptian wine industry (which was at that time in competition with the Palestine wines). The volume capacity for both types of Egyptian bag-shaped amphorae is estimated between 8.5 and 23.6 l.[45]

céramique," fig. 3; for a more recent basic typology of these amphorae see also Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, 114–27.

[41] Egloff, *Kellia*, 117; Engemann, "À propos des amphores d'Abou Mina," 155–57; J.-Y. Empereur and M. Picon, "The Production of Aegean Amphorae: Field and Laboratory Studies," in *New Aspects of Archaeological Science in Greece*, ed. R. E. Jones and H. W. Catling (Athens: British School at Athens, 1988), 33–38, at 33–34; J.-Y. Empereur and M. Picon, "La reconnaissance des productions des ateliers céramiques: l'exemple de la Maréotide," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 3 (1992), 145–52, at 145–47, 150–51; Ballet, "La céramique," 142; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 144–45. Apparently there was another seventh/eighth-century workshop producing these amphorae in a calcareous fabric at Uyun Musa: see P. Ballet, "Uyûn Mûsâ et sa production d'amphores byzantines ou proto-islamiques," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 8/1 (2007), 621–26, at 622–23, figs. 3–4; Ballet and Dixneuf, "Ateliers d'amphores," 70–71.

[42] Ballet, "Late Roman Amphora 5/6 à Kôm Abou Billou"; Ballet, "De l'Égypte byzantine à l'islam," 31–37; Ballet, "Late Roman Amphora 5/6 à pate alluviale"; Ballet and Dixneuf, "Ateliers d'amphores," 70; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 145.

[43] In general, Ballet, "Late Roman Amphora 5/6 à pate alluviale," figs. 1–5; see also Gascoigne, "Amphorae from Old Cairo," figs. 2–3, 14–17 (Cairo); Marangou and Marchand, "Conteneurs importés," fig. 160 (Tebtynis); Marchand, "Les amphores égyptiennes," 179 (Abou Rawash); Marchand and Dixneuf, "Amphores et conteneurs," 316–18 (Bawīṭ); Dixneuf, "Amphores égyptiennes," 540 (Tell el-Makhzan); Konstantinidou, "Aspects of Everyday Life," 952, fig. 8; Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," 197–217, figs. 3.64–3.70 (Wadi Natrun) with further literature on find spots in Egypt. See also a distribution map of this amphora type in Egypt from Le Centre Alexandrin d'Étude des Amphores: www.amphoralex.org /amphores/cartes/map7_AE5-6_distri.htm.

[44] E.g., P. M. Watson, "Ceramic Evidence for Egyptian Links with Northern Jordan in the 6th–8th Centuries AD," in *Trade, Contact, and the Movement of Peoples in the Eastern Mediterranean: Studies in Honour of J. Basil Hennessy*, ed. S. Bourke and J.-P. Descoeudres (Sydney: Meditarch, 1995), 303–20, at figs. 8–9; Uscatescu, "Report on the Levant Pottery," figs. 1 and 3; Y. D. Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima, the Late Periods (700–1291 CE)* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008), 33, 80–81; K. Cytryn-Silverman, "The Ceramic Evidence," in *Ramla: Final Report on the Excavations North of the White Mosque*, ed. O. Gutfeld (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem/Institute of Archaeology, 2010), 97–212, at 101; O. Barkai, Y. Kahanov, and M. Avissar, "The Tantura F Shipwreck," *Levant* 42/1 (2010), 88–101, at 91; Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," figs. 1–2.

[45] Marchand and Marangoum (eds.), *Amphores d'Égypte*; Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," 199. See also University of Southampton, *Roman Amphorae: A Digital Resource* [dataset], York: Archaeology Data Service [distributor] (2014), https://doi.org/10.5284/1028192, and, for this particular amphora

Wine is suggested for the calcareous group. The discussion concerning the contents of the other group is more complicated: the major commodity is assumed to have been wine, but on occasions other items were also transported, such as wheat, water, or natron.[46]

Egyptian ovoid- or bag-shaped amphorae were also recovered at the 15-m Tantura F shipwreck in the Dor/Tantura Lagoon (30 km south of Haifa, in modern Israel).[47] The pottery assemblage (of ca. thirty vessels from Egypt, including two small jugs, eight LRA 2/13 imitations, and at least twenty bag-shaped amphorae) was dated by the excavators between the mid-seventh and the end of the eighth centuries.[48] It included ovoid-shaped amphorae made of Nile Delta silt, which had resinous linings and contained a residue of small fishbones. The Egyptian bag-shaped amphorae may therefore have contained a fish product or *garum* (fermented fish sauce) as well.[49] In fact, textual evidence provided by ostraca and papyri on the fishing industry and archaeozoological studies on sixth- and seventh-century contexts (for example, at the monastery of Bawīṭ) show facilities for the production by monastic communities of fish sauce (*garum*) or of salted fish (*salsamenta*) and the reuse of wine amphorae for storing pickled fish from the Nile or the Red Sea.[50]

type, http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/amphora_ahrb_2005/details.cfm?id=267&CFID=fc9708bb-b105-4b01-badb-35c3b63b4737&CFTOKEN=0.

[46] For this discussion see F. Bonnet, "Aspects de l'organisation alimentaire aux Kellia," in *Le site monastique copte des Kellia: sources historiques et explorations archéologiques. Actes du colloque de Genève, 13–15 août 1984*, ed. P. Bridel (Geneva: Mission suisse d'archéologie copte de l'Université de Genève, 1986), 55–71, at 62–63; P. Bridel (ed.), *Le site monastique copte des Kellia: sources historiques et explorations archéologiques. Actes du colloque de Genève, 13–15 août 1984* (Geneva: Mission suisse d'archéologie copte de l'Université de Genève, 1986), 84; P. Ballet and M. Picon, "Recherches préliminaires sur les origines de la céramique des Kellia (Égypte): importations et productions égyptiennes," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 1 (1987), 17–48, at 34; Bailey, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein*, 136; Ballet and Dixneuf, "Ateliers d'amphores," 70; Ballet, "Late Roman Amphora 5/6 à pate alluviale," 159.

[47] O. Barkai and Y. Kahanov, "The Tantura F Shipwreck, Israel," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 36/1 (2007), 21–31; Barkai et al., "The Tantura F Shipwreck."

[48] Barkai et al., "The Tantura F Shipwreck," fig. 3.

[49] Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, 125; Dixneuf, *Amphores égyptiennes*, 208–09; Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," 366; see also University of Southampton, *Roman Amphorae: A Digital Resource* [dataset], York: Archaeology Data Service [distributor] (2014), https://doi.org/10.5284/1028192, and, for this particular amphora type, http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/amphora_ahrb_2005/details.cfm?id=267&CFID=fc9708bb-b105-4b01-badb-35c3b63b4737&CFTOKEN=0.

[50] E.g, W. van Neer and D. Depraetere, "Pickled Fish from the Egyptian Nile: Osteological Evidence from a Byzantine (Coptic) Context at Shanhûr," *Revue de paléobiologie* 10 (2005), 159–70; W. van Neer et al., "Salted Fish Products from the Coptic Monastery at Bawit, Egypt: Evidence from the Bones and Texts," in *The Role of Fish in Ancient Time*, ed. H. Hüster Plogmann (Rahden: Leidorf, 2007), 147–59; W. van Neer, A. Ervynck, and P. Monsieur, "Fish Bones and Amphorae: Evidence for the Production and Consumption of Salted Fish Products outside the Mediterranean Region," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 23 (2010), 161–95, at table 4.

A commercial link surely existed between southern Turkey and Egypt via Cyprus based on the amphorae found in Cilicia, in Lycia, and in the cargoes of ships that sank on the maritime routes between these regions. Six complete Egyptian bag-shaped amphorae were found by fishermen off the shores at Anamur and brought to Taşucu Museum.[51] More sherds (from the Kum Abu Billu workshops) were recorded at excavations in Tarsus and Anemurium, in addition to some complete vessels (of unknown context) held in museum collections at Içel, Silifke, and Alanya.[52] Furthermore, excavations at Limyra in Lycia (further west) yielded rim fragments of an Egyptian bag-shaped amphora from Abu Mina.[53]

Egyptian Wares Exported to the Near East and Beyond

Apparently, culinary ceramics in Nile silt fabrics also traveled from Egypt to the Near East. Apart from the fact that there are some general similarities in shape between coarse wares from Egypt and from the Levant, certain Egyptian Coarse Ware vessels were also recovered on Near Eastern sites. Excavations in Jaffa, Ramla, and Yavneh Yam, for instance, yielded handmade Egyptian Coarse Ware Basin fragments in early Islamic contexts.[54] According to the excavators, the latter fragments could imply the presence of immigrants from Egypt (merchants or soldiers), bringing their own household crockery for reasons of diet or of different cooking methods.[55]

Amphorae of different origins from between the fifth and seventh centuries have been found in Beirut. Beirut has yielded nearly all the major amphora types associated with the eastern Mediterranean, such as imports of LRA 7 and the bag-shaped amphorae from Egypt (Figure 9.6).[56] Four distinct regions clearly exported provisions to Beirut as a favored trading partner – Cilicia, Cyprus, Palestine, and the Black Sea – but the site also maintained ties with the Aegean, Asia Minor, and Egypt.

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[51] A. K. Şenol, "Cilician Commercial Relations with Egypt due to the New Evidence of Amphora Finds," in *Olba XVI*, ed. S. Durugönül, M. Durukan, and G. Brands (Mersin: Mersin University Publications of the Research Center of Cilician Archaeology, 2008), 109–31.

[52] Şenol, "Cilician Commercial Relations," fig. 10.   [53] Vroom, "Limyra in Lycia," fig. 2.7.

[54] Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," figs. 3–4.

[55] Taxel and Fantalkin, "Egyptian Coarse Ware," 90–97. This was not a new phenomenon, as is shown in the case of cooking pots from Phokaia (western Turkey) which were distributed over long distances in the Mediterranean: see J. Vroom, "Ceramics," in *The Archaeology of Byzantine Anatolia: From the End of Late Antiquity until the Coming of the Turks*, ed. P. Niewöhner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 176–93, at figs. 13.6 and 13.7.

[56] Pieri, "Regional and Interregional Exchanges," fig. 2.7.
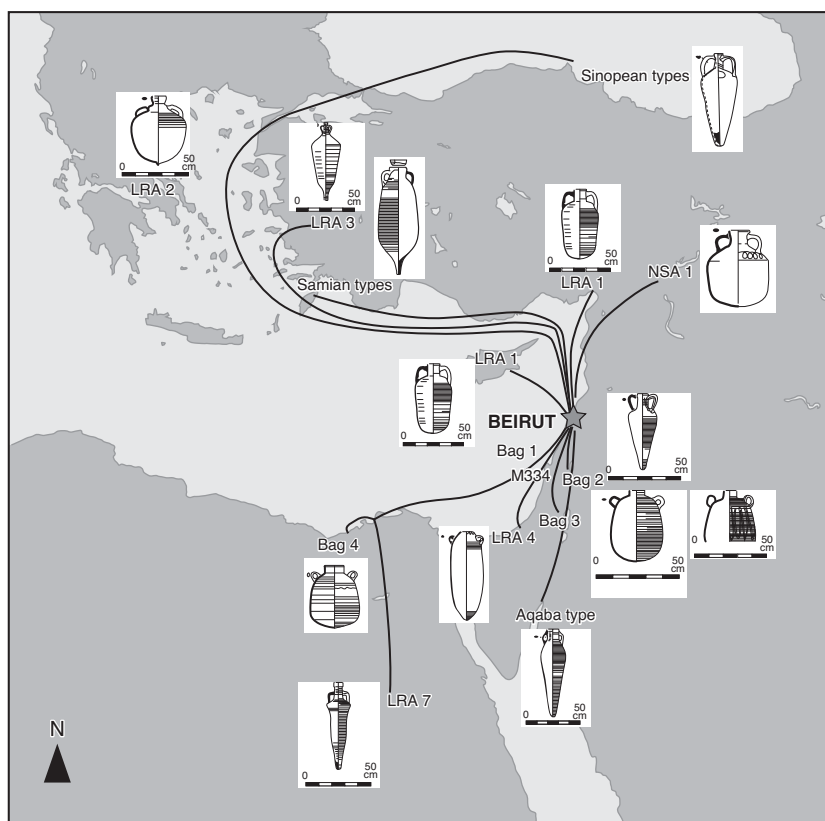
Figure 9.6 Distribution map of imported amphorae to Beirut in late antiquity, ca.
fifth–seventh centuries.

A ceramic overview of Beirut in the Umayyad period (ca. 700–50) shows
imported ceramics from Egypt, including dishes of Egyptian Red Slip
Ware (ERSW) from Aswān;[57] LRA 7 from the lower Nile;[58] bag-shaped
amphorae from northeastern Egypt;[59] and finally, an Egloff 167 amphora,
an imitation of the so-called Aegean LRA 2/13 amphora.[60] Further west,

[57] P. Reynolds, *Hispania and the Roman Mediterranean, AD 100–700: Ceramics and Trade* (London:
    Duckworth, 2010), fig. 27a; see also, in general, P. Reynolds, "Pottery and the Economy in 8th
    Century Beirut: An Umayyad Assemblage from the Roman Imperial Baths (BEY 045)," in *Actes du
    VIIe congrès international sur la céramique médiévale en Méditerranée Thessaloniki, 11–16 octobre 1999*,
    ed. C. Bakirtzis (Athens: Édition de la Caisse des Recettes Archéologiques, 2003), 725–34.
[58] Reynolds, *Hispania*, fig. 27d.   [59] Reynolds, *Hispania*, fig. 27f.
[60] Reynolds, *Hispania*, fig. 27g.
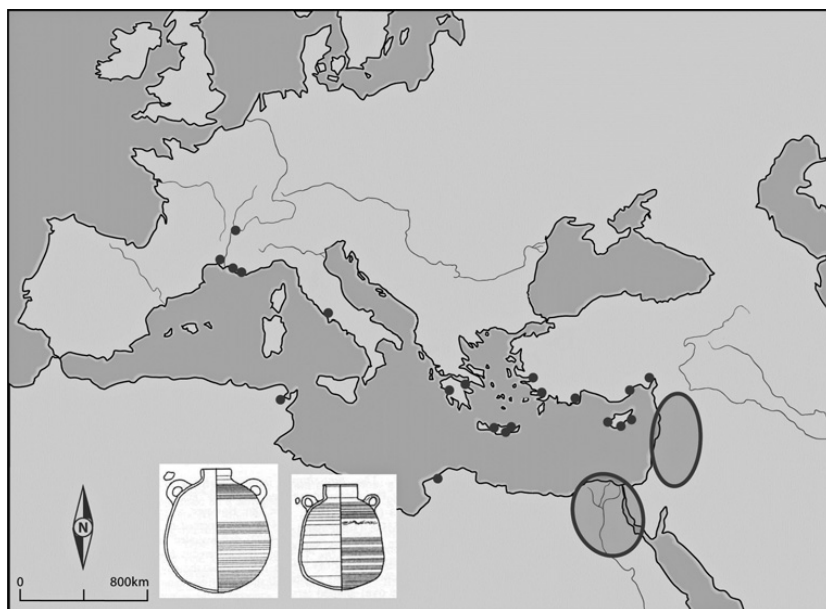
Figure 9.7 Distribution map of bag-shaped amphorae from Egypt.

a similar composition was excavated in Kourion in Cyprus including Egyptian Red Slip Ware dishes and bag-shaped amphorae from Egypt.[61]

Bag-shaped amphorae were recovered in concentrated regions in northern Egypt and in the Near East, as well as at various (mostly coastal) sites in North Africa, Cyprus, Turkey, Greece and Crete, Italy, and southern France (Figure 9.7). We thus see, for the distribution of this Egyptian container, an emphasis on the eastern Mediterranean. According to Dominique Pieri, a distinct diminution in the volume of trade accompanied the political change that was brought about by the Muslim conquest of the region.[62] While other regions reduced production, only Egypt, Palestine, and Jordan continued to engage according to the previous Byzantine organizational model in manufacturing and circulating their products.

Apart from bag-shaped amphorae, small ceramic vessels were also produced at the shrine of St. Menas at Abu Mina (Figure 9.8). These are the so-called Menas flasks, which can be dated between the fifth and seventh centuries, and

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[61] J. W. Hayes, "Pottery," in *Kourion: Excavations in the Episcopal Precinct*, ed. A. H. S. Megaw (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2007), 425–75, at fig. 14.19.
[62] Pieri, "Regional and Interregional Exchanges," 32.

Figure 9.8 Left: Menas flask from RMO, Leiden; right: distribution map of Menas flasks in France.

which contained sanctified oil and water collected by pilgrims.[63] These small containers were widely distributed: from the west coast of Britain (Meols and Runcorn) to Samarkand in Central Asia, including sites in Egypt, North Africa, Palestine, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, the Balkans, southern and northeastern

[63] Ballet, "Potiers et poteries," 46; J. Marchand, "Recherches sur les phénomènes de transition en Égypte copto-byzantine à l'Égypte islamique: la culture matérielle," PhD thesis, University of Poitiers (2016); see also Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," 227–32 for more examples of flasks, which could have been used for containing a sanctified substance.
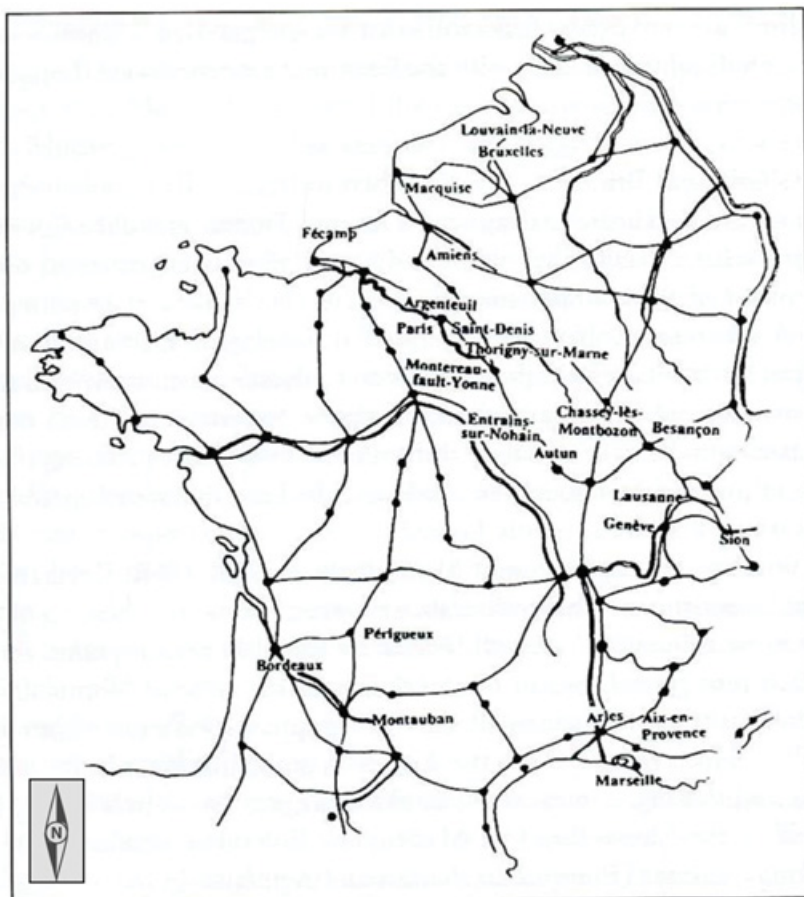
Figure 9.8 (Cont.)

Italy (Veneto and Friuli regions), Apulia (Ugento, Otranto), and France. In fact, a map of France shows ancient roads and sites where Menas flasks have been located.[64] The diffusion of these souvenirs to places outside the Mediterranean is often assumed to be evidence of long-distance pilgrimage, but can of course also reflect other features of contact, including travel, trade, and elite gift exchange.

[64] G.-R. Delahaye, "La diffusion des ampoules de Saint Ménas en Gaule," *Le Monde Copte* 27–28 (1997), 155–65, at fig. 12.

Ceramic assemblages found in shipwrecks may give us further indications about (bulk) trade along maritime routes between Egypt, the Near East, Cyprus, and southern Turkey from the early Islamic period onward. The Tantura F shipwreck found offshore near Dor (Israel), for instance, contains a cargo of mid-seventh- to eighth-century Egyptian pottery (mostly amphorae and jugs), which seems proof that these commodities were taken by sea from Egypt (through the transit port of Alexandria?) to Palestine.[65] Of particular interest is also the combination of Egyptian table wares and amphorae found at Near Eastern sites, which suggests that these wares traveled together on ships in the eastern Mediterranean, probably as extra cargo in combination with lighter goods such as spices, textiles, or glass objects.[66]

Table Wares from Egypt

The most important series of late Roman table wares are the so-called Red Slip Wares, with a glossy or matt red slip on the surface. They are the descendants of the Roman red-gloss wares, known as *terra sigillata*.[67] Imports of Red Slip Wares from Tunisia (ARS), Cyprus (CRS), and western Turkey (PRS) took place in Egypt between the late fourth and early seventh centuries, but another type of Red Slip Ware was also produced in Egypt, especially in the Aswān region (often abbreviated to ERSW) (Figure 9.9). The Aswān kilns produced large quantities of pottery over a long period of time, ranging from Ptolemaic and Roman to medieval times (as late as the tenth century).[68] Their products

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[65] For more shipwrecks with pottery finds in the eastern Mediterranean see also J. Vroom, "Byzantine Sea Trade in Ceramics: Some Case Studies in the Eastern Mediterranean (ca. Seventh–Fourteenth Centuries)," in *Trade in Byzantium: Papers from the Third International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium*, ed. P. Magdalino and N. Necipoğlu (Istanbul: Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, 2016), 157–77.

[66] For this phenomenon see Vroom, "Byzantine Sea Trade," 157–58.

[67] Costa, Reynolds, and Vroom, "Pottery."

[68] E.g., H. E. Winlock and W. E. Crum, *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes*, vol. 2: *The Archaeological Material* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Arts, 1926), 85–87, pl. 31–32; Rodziewicz, "Egyptian Glazed Pottery," 73–74; M. Rodziewicz, "Field Notes from Elephantine on the Early Aswan Pink Clay Pottery," *Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne* 3 (1992), 104–07; M. Rodziewicz, *Elephantine 27: Early Roman Industries on Elephantine* (Mainz am Rhein: Von Zabern, 2005); W. Kubiak, "Roman-Type Pottery in Medieval Egypt," in *Coptic and Nubian Pottery*, ed. W. Godlewski, 2 vols. (Warsaw: National Museum in Warsaw, 1990), 1:71–82; W. Kubiak and G. T. Scanlon, *Fustat Expedition Final Report*, vol. 2: *Fustat-C* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1986), 35–39; R. G. Gempeler, *Elephantine 10: Die Keramik römischer bis frührabischer Zeit* (Mainz am Rhein: Von Zabern, 1992); Vogt, "Les céramiques," 245–50, pl. 2–5; Bailey, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein*, 8–38; Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," 66. See also, for recent finds of Aswān products, J. Wininger, "Ein geschlossenes Keramikensemble aus einem um 650 AD verstürzten Haus," in *LRCW 5: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. D. Dixneuf (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2017), 975–95; L. Peloschek and D. Katzjäger, "Archaeological and Mineralogical
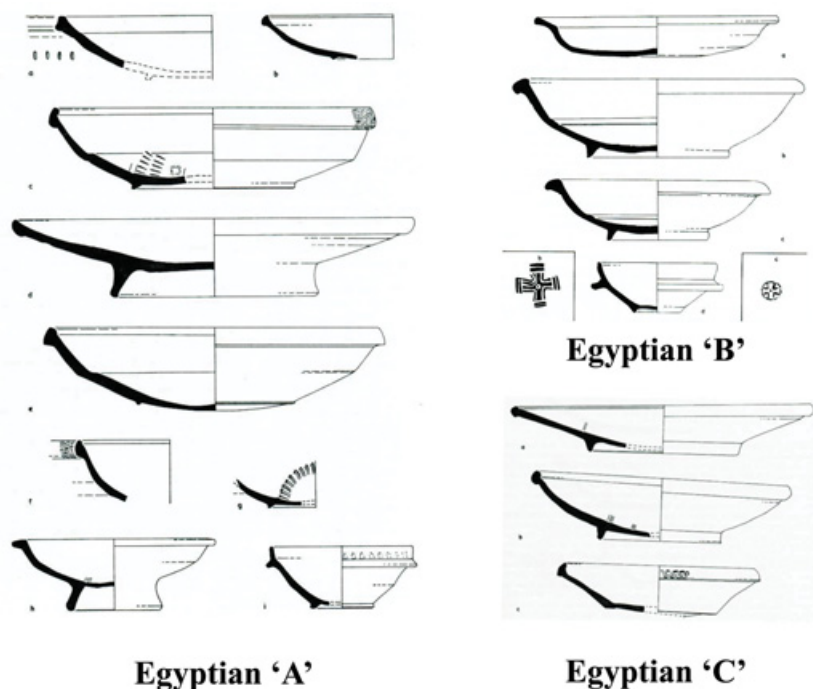
Figure 9.9 Shapes of Egyptian Red Slip Ware A, B, and C.

were covered with either a red or a white slip. John Hayes classified this table ware as Egyptian A/Coptic Red Slip Ware in kaolin fabrics, and its local imitations as Egyptian B and Egyptian C-type series in alluvial fabrics (Figure 9.9).[69] Shapes mainly include bowls, dishes, and cups, copying the Red Slip Ware ones from Tunisia (often with a knobbed or everted rim), and a few closed forms such as jugs.

The Egyptian Red Slip Ware dishes often occur on various sites in the Near East in combination with fragments of Egyptian amphorae. Both

Profile of Aswan Pink Clay-Pottery from Late Antique Elephantine (Upper Egypt)," in *LRCW 5: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. D. Dixneuf (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2017), 997–1009.

[69] Hayes, *Late Roman Pottery*, figs. 85, 88, 89. His Egyptian A was later divided into Aswan Red Slip Ware/Group O and Aswan White Slip Ware/Group W, and his Egyptian B is also known as Egyptian Red Slip H, Group K, or Nile Fabric Red Slip Ware: see Rodziewicz, *Alexandrie I*, 54–60 pl. 23–31 for Group O, 61–62 pl. 32–33 for Group W, and 50–53 figs. 17–22 for Group K; Bailey, *Excavations at El-Ashmunein*, 38 for Egyptian Red Slip H (Hermopolitan); Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," 65–90 figs. 3.13–3.23 and 90–97 figs. 3.24–3.25.

types of pottery (and especially the later products of the seventh–eighth centuries) appear, in particular, in excavations in northern Jordan and in Palestine: ranging from Caesarea Maritima and Ascalon in the west and Pella, Jerash, and Bosra in the east.[70]

Egyptian imports were, for instance, found in Caesarea Maritima in modern Israel in two strata, the first being of the late seventh to mid-eighth centuries (stratum VIIIa) and the other one of the mid-eighth to mid-ninth century (stratum VII). We may recognize here Egyptian Red Slip Ware bowls in combination with bag-shaped amphorae.[71] Similar ERSW bowls were recovered in Umayyad and Abbasid contexts at Tiberias, Yoqne'am, and Ramla (beneath a floor related to the first occupation layer).[72] Furthermore, the Egyptian bag-shaped jars were found in well-stratified Umayyad levels at various sites in Jordan, such as Pella, Jerash, and Amman.[73]

Locally made table wares could be richly painted with a decoration in black outlines and red details in Egypt, in both open and closed shapes (such as dishes, bowls, and jugs of ERSW A, made in Aswān, and painted with abstract and floral motifs).[74] The painted decoration was applied on cooking wares and utilitarian wares as well, such as basins and large storage jars (sometimes up to 50 cm high).[75] One group, found in the monastic settlement of Kellia, has a common decoration of wavy lines, dots, plants, birds, and fishes. Because of their motifs and find contexts, these vessels were sometimes also known as Coptic Painted Ware.[76] This is a general term covering Egyptian vessels

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[70] Watson, "Ceramic Evidence," 305 figs. 1–2; Uscatescu, "Report on the Levant Pottery," fig. 1.

[71] Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 29 and 59 ("111. Egyptian Red Slipped Bowls"), 33 and 80–81 ("814. Micaceous Bag Shaped Jar" and "215. Coarse Ware Bag Shaped Jar"), 34, 55–59 and pl. VIII.2 ("125. Islamic Red Slipped Bowl").

[72] D. A. Stacey, *Excavations in Tiberias, 1973–1974: The Early Islamic Periods* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004), 89; Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 29 with further literature; see also, for similar finds of ERSW and bag-shaped amphorae north of the White Mosque in Ramla, Cytryn-Silverman, "The Ceramic Evidence," 101 pl. 9.2 no. 5, 9.14 no. 1, 9.15 no. 4, 9.20 no. 1, 9.21 no. 1 ("Closed vessels ware 3") and 109 pl. 9.5 nos. 13–15, 9.10 nos. 5, 7, 9.13 no. 4, and 9.23 no. 6 ("Egyptian Fine Ware"). In addition, imports of glass from Egypt were recovered at Ramla: see Y. Gorin-Rosen, "Glass Vessels from the Ramla Excavations," *Qadmoniot* 135 (2008), 45–51 (in Hebrew); Y. Gorin-Rosen, "The Islamic Glass Vessels," in *Ramla: Final Report on the Excavations North of the White Mosque*, ed. O. Gutfeld (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem/Institute of Archaeology, 2010), 213–64.

[73] Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 33, 80–81 ("814. Micaceous Bag Shaped Jar" and "815. Coarse Ware Bag Shaped Small Jar") with further literature.

[74] Rodziewcz, *Alexandrie I*, 61–62 (Group W); Ballet, "Potiers et Poteries," 43–45.

[75] Ballet, "Potiers et Poteries," 43–45; Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," figs. 3.26–3.28, 3.40, and 3.42–3.44.

[76] Egloff, *Kellia*, 121–23, 125–28, 145–48, pl. 45, 62–70, 73–80, 84–85.

Figure 9.10 Distribution and shapes of various painted wares in the eastern Mediterranean.

manufactured between the fifth and ninth centuries and painted in bichrome or polychrome decoration on slipped or unslipped surfaces, although there is much variety in this group and its typology is complex.[77]

The painted pottery from Egypt shows many parallels in decoration style with contemporary painted wares from other parts of the Mediterranean, including Crete and the Greek mainland, the Balkans, the southern coast of Turkey, Cyprus, Syria, Palestine, and Jordan (Figure 9.10).[78] These similar-looking vessels were often decorated with geometric, floral, and fitiformophic designs of stylistic birds and fishes in a red/brown slip. Apparently, a certain uniformity (*koinè*) in decoration techniques was achieved in the eastern Mediterranean in the same period,

[77] Watson, "Ceramic Evidence," 311 figs. 5–6, showing examples found at Pella, Jerash, and Khirbat al-Karak.

[78] J. Vroom, "From One Coast to Another: Early Medieval Ceramics in the Southern Adriatic Region," in *From One Sea to Another: Trading Places in the European and Mediterranean Early Middle Ages, Proceedings of the International Conference Comacchio, 27th–29th March 2009*, ed. S. Gelichi and R. Hodges (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 337–52, at fig. 15.

although these painted wares were manufactured in various unrelated workshops in different fabrics and shapes.

Ceramic Finds from Isṭabl ʿAntar

On the plateau of Isṭabl ʿAntar, south of Cairo, recent excavations (by the French Archaeological Institute in Cairo) revealed the southern residential quarters of Fusṭāṭ during the Rashidun and Umayyad caliphates, which can be dated between around 641 and 750.[79] This newly founded capital developed after the Muslim conquest from a garrison camp into an economic and commercial center consisting of dwellings constructed of mud brick. The excavated layers (including the last destruction layer) yielded pottery in combination with Arabic ostraca, numerous coin finds,[80] glass seals and glass weights,[81] showing the names of the Umayyad caliphs as well as of the first Abbasid caliphs and thus providing an absolute chronology for the excavated ceramics (Figure 9.11).[82] Hence, the site is a unique case study against which one can distinguish the gradual changes in the pottery repertoire from late antiquity to later times.

In fact, in well-dated Umayyad contexts on the Isṭabl ʿAntar plateau we may notice Egyptian amphorae, such as the LRA 7, the bag-shaped amphora, and the so-called Egloff 167, a local variant of a LRA 2/13 amphora.[83] The amphorae appear to have been found together with a glass token or seal of a financial magistrate stamped in Arabic with the name al-Qāsim b. ʿUbayd Allāh (in

[79] The excavated zone is situated east of the Roman fortress of Babylon, on the east bank of the Nile. According to the French archaeologists (Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," 365, fig. 1 no. 1; Gayraud and Treglia, "La céramique," 51), the area was founded *ex nihilo* by the Arab conquerors around 641, and totally destroyed by fire in 750 by the last Umayyad caliph, Marwān II (r. 744–50).

[80] Many of these coins were struck after the monetary reform of caliph ʿAbd al-Malik (r. 685–705) in 697: see Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," 365; R.-P. Gayraud, J.-C. Treglia, and L. Vallauri, "Assemblages de céramiques égyptiennes et témoins de production, dates par les fouilles d'Istabl ʿAntar (IXe–Xe s.)," in *Actas del VIII Congreso Internacional de Cerámica Medieval en el Mediterráneo, Ciudad real-Almagro del 27 de febrero al 3 de marzo de 2006*, ed. J. Zozaya, M. Retuerce, M. Á. Hervás, and A. de Juan (Ciudad Real: Asociación Española de Arqueología Medieval, 2009), 171–92, at 172.

[81] See S. Heidemann, "Weights and Measures from Byzantium and Islam," in *Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition, 7th–9th century*, ed. H. C. Evans and B. Ratliff (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2012), 144–47, at 144–46 for the use of glass weights or other glass tokens in Egypt until at least the Mamluk period (1250–1517).

[82] Vogt, "Les céramiques"; Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," fig. 1; see also Gayraud and Treglia, "La céramique," 51–52, figs. 1–6 for similar finds in an Umayyad house of the first half of the eighth century at Isṭabl ʿAntar.

[83] Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," figs. 2–4; see also Vogt, "Les céramiques," pl. 6–12; and Gayraud, "La transition céramique," figs. 1–12.
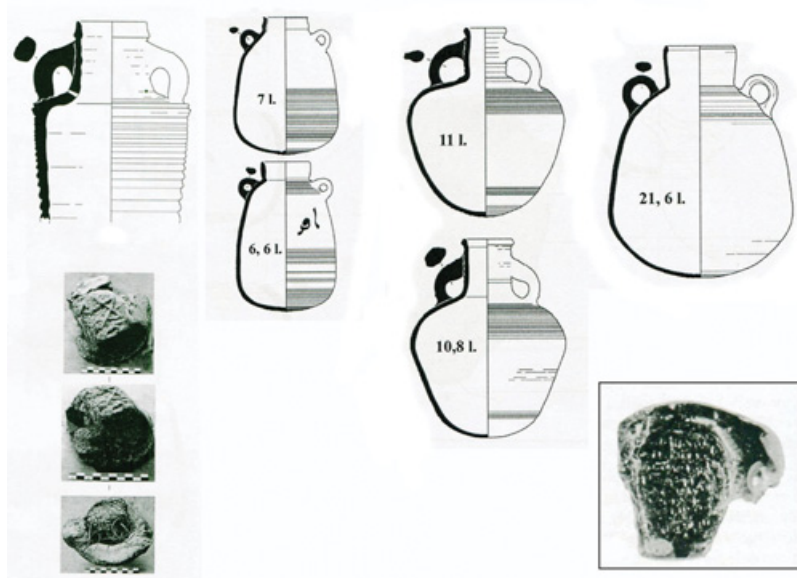
Figure 9.11 Isṭabl ʿAntar/Fusṭāṭ: shapes of amphorae from an Umayyad context, in combination with images of a stamped amphora stopper (left below) and a glass seal with Arabic inscription referring to al-Qāsim (right below).

office 734–42),[84] as well as with an LRA 7 stopper stamped with a five-pointed star surrounded by four small crescents – a motif that seems to derive from Sasanian iconographical tradition in Persia/Iran (Figure 9.11).[85] One of the Egyptian bag-shaped amphorae shows an Arabic *dipinto* of three letters, which the excavators interpreted as a numerical value for capacity (Figure 9.11).[86] In

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[84] Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," 365 fig. 1 no. 2; Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," 172.

[85] Marchand and Dixneuf, "Amphores et conteneurs," 343 fig. 51. Similar-looking images of a five-pointed star surrounded by four small crescents like the one on this amphora stopper can be found on Sasanian seals and coins: see G. Khan, *Arabic Documents from Early Islamic Khurasan* (London: Nour Foundation, 2007), 86–88, 12.2.1. According to him, this astral imagery is a continuation by the early Umayyad rulers of a Sasanian iconographical tradition. Apparently, the practice was introduced in Egypt by the appointment there of Iranian administrators, bearing Persian names, during Abbasid times: see also P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Islam," in *Egypt: Faith after the Pharaohs*, ed. C. Fluck, G. Helmecke, and E. R. O'Connell (London: British Museum, 2015), 36–41, at 40, who mentions the use of star-shaped signatory signs at the bottom of administrative and legal documents in Egypt at this time.

[86] Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," 366 fig. 2 no. 2. According to S. Denoix (pers. comm.), the Arabic *dipinto* on this amphora could mean "he ordered" (*amara*). I would like to thank her for this suggestion.

short, all these artifacts suggest commercial and administrative activities in this excavated zone, such as the continuity of stamps and of *dipinti* as labels on wine containers.

Furthermore, we can distinguish in these Umayyad contexts imported ceramic products, such as a small (mid-seventh-century) *unguentarium* (a pilgrim's flask for sanctified oil or water, probably from southern Turkey)[87] and bag-shaped amphorae from Beth Shean (in Palestine/modern Israel).[88] The latter have a large volume capacity of 21.6 l, which is two or three times more than the Egyptian amphorae (which range between 6.6 and 11 l).[89] Rabbinic texts note that the Palestinian bag-shaped amphorae primarily contained wine, although oil, dry figs, and fish sauce (*garum*) are also mentioned.[90]

The pottery assemblages from Iṣṭabl ʿAntar indicate that the regional production, distribution, and consumption of wine amphorae remained dominant in comparison to imports during the Umayyad period at Fusṭāṭ. This continuation is also attested by the locally made table wares (ERSW A) and utilitarian wares recovered in these Umayyad contexts, revealing cooking pots, casseroles, pans, basins, and storage jars in alluvial fabrics with shapes and painted motifs showing the perpetuation of a late antique ceramic tradition.[91]

The material shown in Figure 9.12, however, comes from waste pits discovered by the French team on the Iṣṭabl ʿAntar plateau. These feature, for instance, the ninth-century waste dump of a production workshop for bottles of the Abbasid period, including wasters of "sphero-conical" containers with thickened rims and narrow necks (probably to avoid the contents spilling out).[92] The presence of this waste dump shows for the

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[87] See, in general, Vroom, *Byzantine to Modern Pottery*, 46–47 for these *unguentaria*, which could originate from a (still unknown) production center on the south coast of Turkey.

[88] Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," 367 fig. 2 no. 5. Apparently, Egypt became an important consumer of industrial and agricultural products (including olive oil) from Palestine and Jordan in the eighth and ninth centuries: see Walmsley, "Production"; Avni, *Byzantine–Islamic Transition*, 291–92; and P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Making the Private Public: A Delivery of Palestinian Oil in Third/Ninth-Century Egypt," *Studia Orientalia Electronica* 2 (2014), 74–91.

[89] Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," 367 and fig. 4.   [90] Pieri, *Le commerce du vin oriental*, 125.

[91] Gayraud and Treglia, "Amphores," figs. 5–6; Gayraud and Treglia, "La céramique," figs. 2–3, 5–6; R.-P. Gayraud and J.-C. Treglia, "La céramique culinaire des niveaux omeyyades d'Istabl ʿAntar-Fustat (642–750 apr. J.-C.)," in *LRCW 5: Late Roman Coarse Wares, Cooking Wares and Amphorae in the Mediterranean. Archaeology and Archaeometry*, ed. D. Dixneuf, 2 vols. (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2017), 2:931–45.

[92] Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," figs. 1, 2 nos. 1–2 and fig. 7 nos. 7–8, who mention that more examples of this ninth-century prototype of "sphero-conical" containers were recovered in North Africa (Raqqada, Tahert) and southern France (Ruscino). For a detailed overview see also Gayraud and Vallauri, *Fustat II*, 39–46.
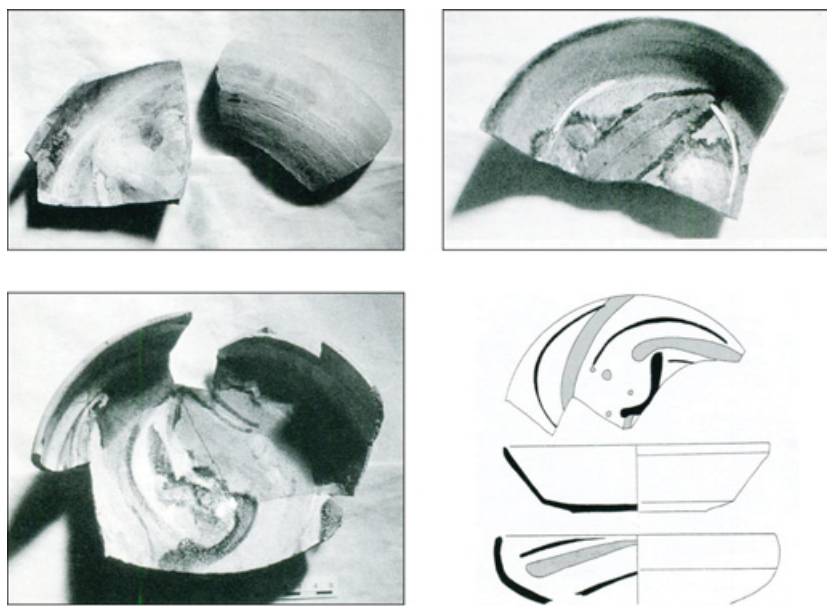
Figure 9.12 Isṭabl ʿAntar/Fusṭāṭ: shapes of Abbasid glazed and painted table wares.

first time the existence of a local early Islamic pottery workshop on the site.[93]

It has been suggested that the function of these small vessels (with a volume of ca. 38 cl.) was that of a beer jar, a container for mercury and perfume.[94] Substantial numbers of these vessels (outside Egypt) came to light in a commercial zone in Tiberias, in a bath-house in Hammat Gader, at Khirbat al-Mafjar, in contexts north of the White Mosque at Ramla, and in late seventh- to late ninth-century layers within the city walls of Caesarea Maritima.[95] Because of these urban contexts its function was more likely,

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[93] Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," fig. 2 no. 1. See also K. Duistermaat and N. C. F. Groot, "A New Ethnoarchaeological Documentation Project at the Fustat Pottery Workshops, Egypt," *Leiden Journal of Pottery Studies* 24 (2008), 181–86 for the documentation of recent traditional pottery workshops at Fusṭāṭ.

[94] E.g., R. Ettinghausen, "The Use of Sphero-Conical Vessels in the Muslim East," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 24/3 (1965), 218–29; A. Ghouchani and C. Adle, "A Sphero-Conical Vessel as Fuqqaa, or a Gourd for 'Beer'," *Muqarnas* 9 (1992), 72–92, at 78.

[95] Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 31, 72, and pl. V nos. 2–3 ("516. Sphero-Conical Container") and 39, 160–61 ("824. Sphero-Conical Containers"), ranging in date from the mid-seventh to mid-eighth century (stratum VIIIa) and mid-eighth to late ninth century (stratum VII); Cytryn-Silverman,

according to Yael Arnon, "to be a container for precious liquids, such as perfumes, medicines or mercury for the gold industry."[96]

Apart from the sphero-conical vessels, the waste pits of this pottery workshop at Fusṭāṭ yielded amphorae, culinary dishes, and other ceramics, which in fabric and shape follow the previous Byzantine tradition of the Aswān products, including fragments made of a kaolinitic fabric from Aswān but now decorated with painted and glazed motifs in a geometric style.[97]

The painted table ware from the waste pits on the Isṭabl ʿAntar plateau frequently includes bowls with a slip and a red/brown and black painted decoration on the exterior surface. Their carinated shapes, deriving from the Egyptian Red Slip Ware repertoire, continued at Fusṭāṭ at least to the tenth century.[98] Similar painted bowls were also found in eighth- and ninth-century layers in Israel, in Yoqne'am and in Caesarea Maritima, showing diagonal lines, waves, and dots in red/brown, white, and black comparable to the Fusṭāṭ examples – and as such the continuation of a local/regional tradition.[99] In fact, excavations at Alexandria (Kom el-Dikka) and Fusṭāṭ (Isṭabl ʿAntar) revealed that these bowls extended into the ninth and even into the tenth centuries. They were therefore made until the Umayyad and Abbasid periods (ca. ninth–early tenth centuries) without any significant changes in shape. It is suggested that the clay from Aswān was transported to Fusṭāṭ, where it was used by local potters for the making of vessels that were identical to those made in the Aswān workshops.[100]

In other painted examples from waste pits on the Isṭabl ʿAntar plateau we see the appearance of the use of lead glaze in Egypt at the beginning of the ninth century (Figure 9.12).[101] Glazed wares in Egypt were initially produced

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"The Ceramic Evidence," 116–17, pl. 9.5 no. 21, 9.9 no. 9, 9.12 no. 5, 9.13 no. 6, and photos 9.22–9.23 ("Sphero-conical vessels/grenades") with further literature.

[96] Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 31.   [97] Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," fig. 2.

[98] Gayraud, "La transition céramique," figs. 7–9; Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," fig. 2 no. 4, fig. 3 no. 3. See also Rousset et al., "Tebtynis 1998," 195–200, figs. 14–22 for the recovery of Egyptian products (amphorae and table wares) at Tebtynis in ninth- and tenth-century contexts.

[99] Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 34, 99–100, pl. VIII no. 3 ("126. Red/Brown and Black Decorated Painted Bowls") with further literature.

[100] Apparently, after the seventh century the clay from Aswān was even transported to workshops at Fusṭāṭ for the making of identical-looking vessels to those from Aswān: see Vogt, "Les céramiques," 244–45; R.-P. Gayraud, "La réapparition des céramiques à glaçure en Égypte," in *L'apport de l'Égypte à l'histoire des techniques*, ed. B. Mathieu, D. Meeks, and M. Wissa (Cairo: IFAO, 2006), 101–16, at 108.

[101] Rodziewicz, *Alexandrie I*; Rodziewicz, "Egyptian Glazed Pottery"; G. T. Scanlon, "Moulded Early Lead Glazed Wares from Fustat: Imported or Indigenous?" in *In Quest of an Islamic Humanism: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Memory of Mohamed al-Nowaihi*, ed. A. H. Green (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1984), 65–96; G. T. Scanlon, "Ceramics of the Late Coptic period," in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya, 8 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1991), 2:504–511, at 504; G. T. Scanlon, "Slip-Painted Early Lead-Glazed Ware from Fustat: A Dilemma of Nomenclature,"

by potters who were well trained in the manufacture of Egyptian Red and White Slip Ware and who preferred painting as the foremost mode of decoration.[102] The first glazed examples were made of the Aswān fabric, while the shapes did not differ from Aswan Red Slip Ware (Figure 9.12). We can therefore distinguish dishes in this so-called Coptic Glazed Ware (CGW) with curved bodies, rounded flat bases, and straight (slightly in-sloping) rims.[103] The painted decoration consists of curved stripes and streaks in green, yellow, and brown, resembling, in the use of colored glazes, imported glazed Sancai ("three color") Wares of the Tang dynasty (618–906) from China.[104] Imported Chinese high-fired ceramics of great quality set production standards against which potters in Iraq and Egypt could not only measure themselves but also incorporate new features (such as painted Arabic inscriptions).[105] Apart from Aswān another production center seems to have been Fusṭāṭ, judging by the find of unglazed wasters; but large amounts of this first glazed ware were also recovered at Alexandria.[106] Outside Egypt, more examples of this Egyptian glazed table ware production were found in Aqaba, Pella, Beirut, Tiberias, Yoqne'am, and Caesarea Maritima (in Islamic occupation levels, of ca. late eighth–early ninth-century dating).[107]

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in *Colloque international d'archéologie islamique, IFAO, Le Caire, 3–7 février 1993*, ed. R.-P. Gayraud (Cairo: IFAO, 1998), 21–53; Gayraud, "Réapparition," 105–06.

[102] Rodziewicz, *Alexandrie I*, 338; Gayraud, "La transition céramique," figs. 10–12; Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," fig. 3 nos. 4–8.

[103] Gayraud, "La transition céramique," figs. 10–12; see also Scanlon, "Slip-Painted"; and C. Ting and I. Taxel, "Indigeneity and Innovation of Early Islamic Glaze Technology: The Case of the Coptic Glazed Ware," *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 12/27 (2020), 1–19, who postulate with the help of petrographical and microscopical techniques that twenty CGW samples from various sites in Israel originate from Aswān.

[104] For more Egyptian examples of this glazed pottery type see, e.g., Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," fig. 3.33 nos. 260–62 (Baramus).

[105] Chinese glazed ceramics, such as Sancai and Changsha Wares, began to be exported on a substantial scale to various sites in the Persian Gulf and in Near East (e.g., Fusṭāṭ, Samarra, Sīrāf, Hormuz, and Sohar) during the Tang dynasty, and local copies were made immediately afterwards: see J. Carswell, E. A. Maser, and J. McClure Mudge, *Blue and White: Chinese Porcelain and Its Impact on the Western World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); J. Rawson, M. Tite, and M. J. Hughes, "The Export of Tang Sancai Wares: Some Recent Research," *Transactions of the Oriental Ceramic Society* 52 (1987), 39–61; N. Wood and S. Priestman, "New Light on Chinese Tang Dynasty and Iraqi Blue and White in the Ninth Century: The Material from Siraf, Iran," *Bulletin of Chinese Ceramic Art and Archaeology* 7 (2016), 47–60. See also T. Mikami, "Chinese Ceramics from Medieval Sites in Egypt," in *Cultural and Economic Relations between East and West: Sea Routes*, ed. T. Mikasa (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988), 8–44, at 10, mentioning that eighth/ninth-century Chinese Sancai Ware, Changsha Ware, Monochrome Green Glazed Ware, Yue Ware, southern Chinese Blue-Green Glazed Ware, and ninth/tenth-century northern Chinese Glazed White Wares were found at Fusṭāṭ.

[106] Rodziewicz, *Alexandrie I*, 336–45; Rodziewicz, "Egyptian Glazed Pottery."

[107] D. Whitcomb, "Coptic Glazed Ceramics from the Excavations at Aqaba, Jordan," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 26 (1989), 167–82, at 182, who introduced the term Coptic Glazed
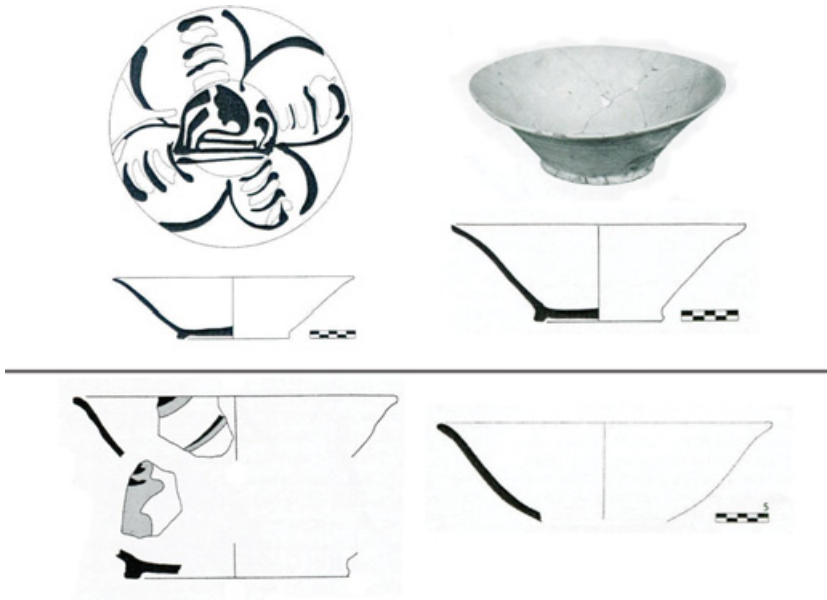
Figure 9.13 Istabl ʿAntar/Fustāt: shapes of Abbasid glazed and painted table wares, including a bowl with a painted Kufic calligraphic motif in green and brown.

The use of these first Egyptian glazed products, made of an Aswān fabric, was short-lived at Fustāt. Toward the end of the ninth century we may notice on the Istabl ʿAntar plateau the appearance of the more classic types of Islamic glazed wares, made of different fabrics and with different shapes and decoration techniques (Figure 9.13).[108] The shapes started to "orientalize" and resembled glazed painted vessels, which were common in Abbasid Iraq, Syria, and Iran.[109] This implies influences between Egypt and these regions in this period of time.

Contacts with China are also evident in the ceramic repertoire of Fustāt. We can distinguish conical bowls with straight flaring bodies and low ring bases covered with an opaque white glaze (made by the addition of tin oxide), which seem to imitate the Chinese glazed wares

Ware; Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 35, 108–13, pl. X nos. 1–2 ("221. Coptic Glazed Bowls") with further literature; Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," 180; Gayraud and Vallauri, *Fustat II*.

[108] Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," fig. 7.

[109] See, in general, O. Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands: The al-Sabah Collection* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004), 167–81 with further literature.

produced in the Jiangxi province (which started to be mass produced for export by Arab ships in the ninth century).[110] A painted decoration can be further applied over the opaque white glaze in abstract floral and Arabic calligraphic motifs in polychrome colors, such as green, brown, or yellow (Figure 9.13, above).[111] A second "orientalizing phase" in the Fusṭāṭ repertoire shows slightly hemispherical bowls with everted rims, often also decorated with painted techniques in combination with a white tin glaze, which were influenced by imported ceramics from Baṣra in Iraq (Figure 9.13, below).[112]

A later waste pit on the Isṭabl ʿAntar plateau, which can be dated to the first half of the tenth century, reveals locally made table wares of the Fatimid period that were decorated with polychrome glazes (Figure 9.14).[113] This excavated context presents a clearly different repertoire with new shapes, such as hemispherical bowls with convex bodies, footrings, and everted flattened rims, which were now covered all over with a glaze. The painted decoration in brown, yellow, and green is also different, showing spots or blurred stripes that are occasionally sprayed around a triangular motif. This type of glazed pottery is sometimes erroneously known as Fayyum Ware or Fayyumi Ware, but this seems incorrect as these non-homogeneous ceramics were not manufactured in the Fayyūm area but rather at Fusṭāṭ (where wasters were found) and at other sites (e.g., Palermo).[114] Thus far, examples

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[110] Konstantinidou, "Pots for Monks," fig. 3.33 no. 263 shows another example of this Egyptian glazed table ware found at Baramus. For the distribution of Chinese wares in this period see J. N. Miksic and G. Geok Yian, "Spheres of Ceramic Exchange in Southeast Asia, Ninth to Sixteenth Centuries CE," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. T. Hodos (London/New York: Routledge, 2017), 808–31, at 814–19 and esp. table 8.7.1, showing important shipwrecks in Southeast Asia between the ninth and fourteenth centuries. Among these is the ninth-century Belitung shipwreck between China and Java, which contained large storage jars for spices from Huangdong and at least 60,000 smaller ceramic vessels from Changsha in Hunan province.

[111] For these Egyptian painted examples from Fusṭāṭ see also M. van Raemdonck (ed.), *In harmonie: Kunst uit de Islamitische wereld in het Jubelparkmuseum* (Tielt: Uitgeverij Lannoo, 2015), 202, IS.F.1161, IS.F.1489, IS.F.5463, and IS.F.1299 (the last two with painted Arabic calligraphy).

[112] Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," fig. 7 nos. 9–10, fig. 10 nos. 9–10.

[113] Gayraud et al., "Assemblages," fig. 8 nos. 19–21 and fig. 10 nos.19–20. Apart from table wares, the pit also contained locally made unglazed plain wares, kitchen utensils, and a late version of the bag-shaped amphora.

[114] Kubiak and Scanlon, *Fustat Expedition Final Report*; G. T. Scanlon, "Fayyumi Pottery: A Long-Lived Misnomer in Egyptian Islamic Ceramics. Type I," *Bulletin de la Société d'Archéologie d'Alexandrie* 45 (1993), 295–330; R.-P. Gayraud, "Les céramiques égyptiennes à glaçure, IXe–XIIe siècles," in *La céramique médiévale en Méditerranée: Actes du VIe congrès de l'AIECM2, 13–18 novembre 1995, Aix-en-Provence*, ed. G. Démians d'Archimbaud (Aix-en-Provence: Narration Éd., 1997), 261–70, at 266–68, figs. 9–10; A. R. Abdel Tawwab, "The So-Called 'Debris of Fustat'," in *Colloque international d'archéologie islamique, IFAO, Le Caire, 3–7 février 1993*, ed. R.-P. Gayraud (Cairo: IFAO, 1998), 55–60; Watson, *Ceramics from Islamic Lands*, 53; Gayraud and Vallauri, *Fustat II*. See also, for Palermo, V. Sacco, "Ceramica con decorazione a *splash* da Palermo (fine X–prima metá XI secolo)."
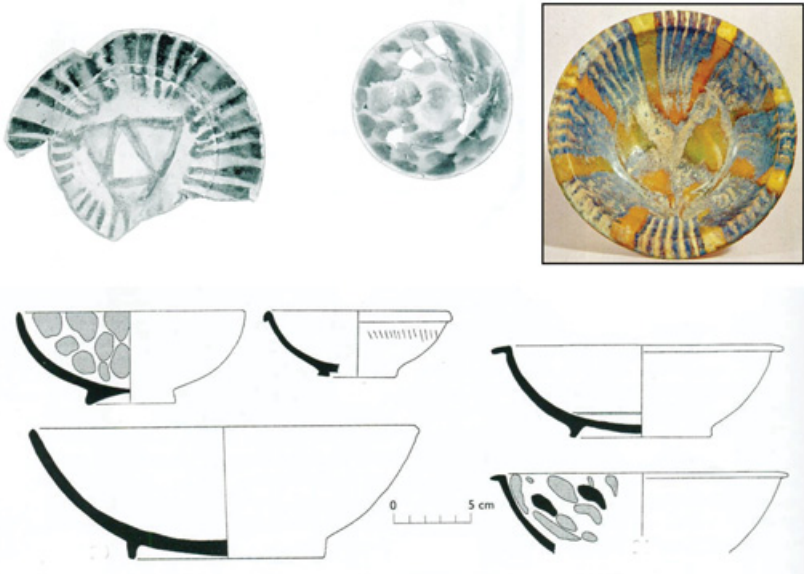
Figure 9.14　Isṭabl ʿAntar/Fusṭāṭ: shapes of Fatimid glazed and painted "Fayyum Ware" bowls and dishes.

have been found at various Egyptian sites (e.g., Cairo, Alexandria, Abu Mina, Tebtynis, and Fayyūm), as well as in Nubia, Syria, Jordan (Aqaba), Israel (Caesarea, Tiberias, Ramla), Beirut, and in a tenth-century shipwreck in France.[115]

We find these Fatimid splashed painted wares also as *bacini* (decorative elements) built into the walls of contemporary Greek and Italian churches: the most well-known Egyptian Fayyum Ware *bacini* are those in San Piero à Grado in Pisa (last quarter tenth–eleventh century), in Torre Civica de Pavia (eleventh century), and in the bell-tower of the abbey of Pomposa, near Ferrara (first half of the eleventh

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in *XIth Congress AIECM3 on Medieval and Modern Period Mediterranean Ceramics Proceedings/XI. AIECM3 Uluslararası orta çağ ve modern Akdeniz dünyası seramik kongresi bildirileri, 19–24 October/ekim 2015 Antalya*, ed. F. Yenişehirlioğlu, 2 vols. (Ankara: VEKAM, 2018), 2: 433–37, at 435–36.

[115] E.g., D. Whitcomb, "A Fatimid Residence at Aqaba, Jordan," *Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan* 32 (1988), 207–23, at fig. 7i–j (found in the "Fatimid Residence"); Stacey, *Excavations in Tiberias*, 121, from a stratum dated 980–1033; Arnon, *Caesarea Maritima*, 42, 234–38, pl. XXI.2 ("243. Colour Splash Glazed and *Fayyumi* Style Ware") and 47 ("262. Colour Splashed Glazed with or without Sgraffito Decoration" and *Fayyumi* Style Ware") with further literature; Cytryn-Silverman, "The Ceramic Evidence," 120 pl. 9.8 nos. 20–22 and 9.13 no. 15 ("Fayyumi Ware").

century), where we find some additional fragments in the monastery's collection.[116] In addition, two fragments of tenth/eleventh-century Egyptian "Fayyum Ware" were recovered at recent excavations in Jesolo, near Venice, in northern Italy.[117]

Finally, it is my intention to draw attention to a map and overview of Islamic table wares that were found at various Byzantine sites in the eastern Mediterranean (Figure 9.15 and Table 9.1). By Islamic table wares I mean pottery finds from Fatimid to Mamluk times, ranging from the tenth/eleventh to the fourteenth centuries.[118] Among the finds circulating in the Aegean we may notice, for instance, some Fatimid lusterware vessels (made of fritware with luster-painted motifs) and fragments of the so-called Fayyum Ware from Fusṭāṭ, which so far have been recovered at excavations in Constantinople, Thessaloniki, Athens, and Corinth.[119] We can distinguish amid the Egyptian imports a lusterware *bacino* embedded in a wall of the Byzantine church Ayioi Theodoroi in Athens, as well as a Fayyum Ware fragment from excavations in Thessaloniki (Figure 9.15).[120] These finds show that in the Fatimid period Egypt was developing new ceramic products with different decoration techniques (including the luxurious luster-painted fritwares) that traveled to Byzantium and to the expanding Italian city-states in the north.

[116] H. Philon, *Early Islamic Ceramics: Ninth to Late Twelfth Centuries* (Athens/London: Islamic Art Publications, 1980), 48–49, figs. 95–97, pl. III.A; see also G. Berti and T. Mannoni, "Pisa: A Seafaring Republic Trading Relations with Islamic Countries in the Light of Ceramic Testimonies (2nd Half of 10th to Middle 13th Century) with a Report on Mineralogical Analyses by Tiziano Mannoni," in *Colloque international d'archéologie islamique, IFAO, Le Caire, 3–7 février 1993*, ed. R.-P. Gayraud (Cairo: IFAO, 1998), 301–17, at 308.

[117] S. Gelichi, C. Negrelli, M. Ferri, et al., "Importare, produrre e consumare nella laguna di Venezia dal IV al XII secolo: Anfore, vetri e ceramiche," in *Adriatico altomedievale (VI–XI secolo): Scambi, porti, produzioni*, ed. S. Gelichi and C. Negrelli (Venice: Edizioni Ca'Foscari, 2017), 23–114, at 97 fig. 52 nos. 1–2; see also F. Saccardo, "Chiesa di San Lorenzo di Castello," in *Ritrovare restaurando: Rinvenimenti e scoperte a Venezia e in Laguna* (Venice: Soprintendenza per i beni ambientali e architettonici di Venezia, 2000), 53–55, at 54–55, nos. 57–59 for more examples of tenth–eleventh-century Islamic glazed table wares found at Chiesa di San Lorenzo di Castello in Venice.

[118] G. Fehervari, *The Islamic Pottery, Barlow Collection* (London: Faber & Faber, 1973), 40; Philon, *Early Islamic Ceramics*, 24.

[119] J. Vroom, "Production and Exchange of Ceramics in the Byzantine Mediterranean (ca. 7th–14th c.)," in *Feeding the Byzantine City: The Archaeology of Consumption in the Eastern Mediterranean (ca. 500–1500)*, ed. J. Vroom (forthcoming). For Fatimid ceramics in general see A. Contadini, *Fatimid Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London: V&A Publications, 1998), 71–89.

[120] *BYZANTIO & ΑΡΑΒΕΣ/Byzantium & the Arabs* (Thessaloniki: Museio Byzantinu Politismu, 2011), 94 (no. 39).
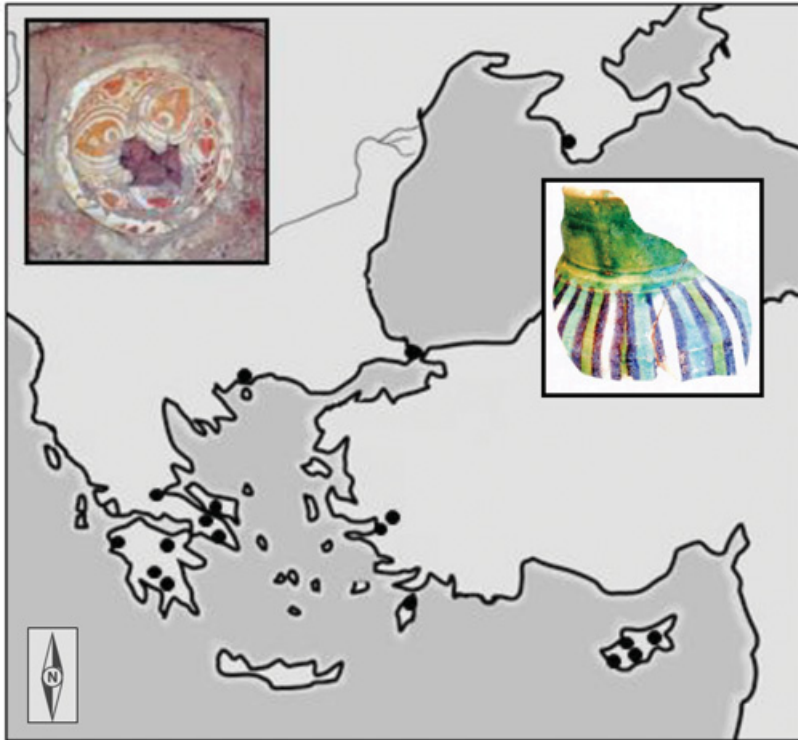
Figure 9.15 Distribution map of imported Islamic table wares on Byzantine sites in
the eastern Mediterranean.

Conclusion

The archaeological evidence discussed in this chapter clearly indicates that
from late antiquity onward (thus the immediate period after the seventh
century) at least two geographic areas of ceramic exchange did continue to
function in the eastern Mediterranean: one of these was mainly centered on
the Aegean and the Black Sea, and the other on the Near East and Egypt.
The latter provides ample proof of the wider popularity of several ceramic
products manufactured in Egypt (Figure 9.16); these were most likely
valued because they were deemed to be of good quality (in the case of
table wares) or because they were specifically suited as containers trans-
porting specific products (in the case of amphorae and Menas flasks). On
the other hand, Egyptian wares did not seem to have been traded much

Table 9.1 *Finds list of imported Islamic table wares on Byzantine sites in the eastern Mediterranean mentioned in this chapter*

Sites	Date	Provenance	Table wares
Constantinople, Great Palace	Ca. late 11th–late 12th c.	Syria (Raqqa), Iran?	Monochrome glazed fritware + with carved motifs (e.g. Kufic script)
Constantinople, Hippodrome	Ca.11th–12th c.	Egypt	fritware, lusterware (Fatimid)
Constantinople, Saraçhane	Ca. mid–late 12th c.	Syria, Iran?	Monochrome glazed fritware with incised and carved motifs, Laqabi Ware
Constantinople, Myrelaion	Ca. 1175–1225	Iran	Minaï Ware
Constantinople, Sultanahmet	Ca. late 11th–late 12th c.	Iran? Syria?	Monochrome glazed fritware with incised motifs
Thessaloniki	Ca. 12th c.	Egypt	Fritware with painted motifs (Fayyumi Ware)
Cherson	Ca. 12th–13th c.	Syria	Monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise)
Chalkis	?	?	Fritware (worn out)
Thebes	Ca.13th–14th c.	Spain (Granada?)	Monochrome green-glazed Stamped Ware (Late Almohad–Nasrid)
Athens, Ag. Theodoroi	Ca. 11th c.	Egypt	Lusterware (Fatimid)
Athens, Agora	Ca. 11th–12th c	Egypt	Lusterware (Fatimid), fritware with painted motifs
Glarentza Castle	Ca. 14th c.	Egypt?	Fritware with carved motifs and Arabic inscription
Laconia Survey	Ca.12th c.	Iran?	Monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise)
Sparta, near Roman Stoa	Ca. late 13th–early 14th c.	Syria?	Monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise)
Glazou, Mani Taxiarchis church	Ca. 11th c.	Egypt	Fritware with painted motifs (Fayyumi Ware)

Table 9.1 (*cont.*)

Sites	Date	Provenance	Table wares
Vamavaka, Mani Ag. Theodoros church	Ca. 11th c.	North Africa (Tunisia)	Green and Brown Painted Ware (Aghlabid)
Corinth	Ca. 9th–10th c.	Iraq (Baṣra)	Monochrome and polychrome lusterwares (Abbasid)
Corinth, e.g. Panayia Field	Ca. 10th–11th c.	North Africa (Tunisia)	Green and Brown Painted Ware (Aghlabid)
Corinth	Ca. 12th–13th c.	Egypt (Fustāt), Syria?	Lusterware (Fatimid), fritware with incised motifs, painted ware
Ephesus, Türbe	Ca. 12th–13th c., 13th–14th c.	Syria (Raqqa)	Underglaze painted fritware (black), underglaze painted fritware (black and blue), monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise)
Anaia/Kadıkalesi	Ca. 12th–13th c.	Syria (Raqqa)	Underglaze painted fritware (black), underglaze painted fritware (black and blue), monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise) with carved motifs
Rhodes	Ca 14th c.	Syria	Monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise)
Crete, Heraklion	Ca. 9th–10th c.	Syria?	Glazed "Kerbschnitt" Ware
Cyprus, Nicosia	Ca. 14th c.	Syria	Underglaze painted fritware
Cyprus, Nicosia (Palaion Demarcheion)	Ca. 2nd half 12th c.	Syria	Monochrome glazed fritware, + with incised and carved motifs, underglaze painted fritware, Lebanese sgraffito
Cyprus, Paphos area (Kouklia, Leptos Walls)	Ca. late 11th–late 12th c.	Syria	Monochrome glazed fritware, + with incised and carved motifs, imitation lusterware (clay)
Cyprus, Ayia Moni Monastery	Ca. late 11th–late 12th c.	Syria	Monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise), + with incised motifs, monochrome glazed ware (clay)
Cyprus, Troodos	Ca. 12th–13th c., 13th–14th c.	Syria (Raqqa, Damascus)	Monochrome glazed fritware (turquoise), + with carved motifs, lusterware (Mamluk)

Figure 9.16 Distribution map of various wares exported from Egypt.

beyond this regional eastern Mediterranean network, and for instance the number of Egyptian amphorae reaching western European sites and harbors appears never to have been large.

All in all, the archaeological evidence strongly supports the view that economic contacts between Egypt and the Near East continued more or less uninterrupted in the period before and after the Muslim conquest in the 630s. This is shown, for instance, by the presence in the late seventh and eighth centuries of ERSW A bowls, LRA 7 and bag-shaped amphorae at various sites in Palestine and Jordan, and vice versa by LRA 5/6 amphorae importing oil from Palestine at Egyptian sites in the same period. The imports from Egypt to Palestinian and Jordanian regions may even have slightly increased after the Umayyad conquest, as imports from other parts in the Mediterranean, (formerly) belonging to the Byzantine empire, decreased. A uniformity (*koinè*) in painted decoration styles, which clearly developed in the eastern Mediterranean during the seventh and eighth centuries, is perhaps proof of the direct influence of ceramic imports from Egypt on local wares.

It is clear that Egypt had a very long tradition of manufacture and distribution of ceramic types (amphorae, table wares, Menas flasks), frequently in the vicinity of wine-producing areas. These types were generally made in huge quantities at large-scale manufacturing sites, but varied in form per region and over time. Quite often monastic sites played a vital role not only in the production of staple goods (such as wine and fish sauce) but also in the production of the ceramic containers to transport these commodities (such as LRA 7, bag-shaped amphorae).

The archaeological proof of the survival of earlier pottery shapes and decoration techniques known from monastic production centers in Egypt (such as Aswān) after the Muslim conquest is one of the most important results from recent excavations on the Iṣṭabl ʿAntar plateau. Apparently, the Muslim conquest of Egypt had little impact on the existing and well-functioning agricultural and industrial system. Excavated layers and waste pits show that ceramics from Aswān clearly remained dominant at Fusṭāṭ, the new capital of Egypt under Muslim rule, until the ninth–tenth centuries. In addition, the evidence indicates a continuation of existing mechanisms of trade control here by the use of labels (*dipinti*, stamped stoppers) in combination with glass seals and weights. This suggests that the Umayyad dwellings on the Iṣṭabl ʿAntar plateau functioned as commercial and administrative units (including perhaps even a customs house, possibly controlled either by Persian administrators or by administrators imitating Persian cultural patterns, as one stamped stopper with a Sasanian star-shaped motif may suggest).

Locally produced glazed table wares were introduced in Egypt shortly after 800, probably following "orientalizing" fashions deriving from Abbasid Iraq, and even from China. These new products continued to be produced alongside older pottery types in the same Aswān fabrics. The ninth-century contexts on the Iṣṭabl ʿAntar plateau prove to be a splendid case study of the ceramic developments in Egypt, as they clearly reveal the gradual acquisition of various glaze and decoration techniques as well as of ceramic know-how in general from the East, until a completely new era started in the tenth–eleventh centuries with the circulation of quite different Egyptian ceramic products in the Mediterranean during the Fatimid regime and its active trade involvement.

The political, administrative, and social changes in Egypt during Abbasid (eighth–ninth centuries) and Fatimid (tenth–eleventh centuries) times went not only hand in hand with a shift of commercial contacts with distant destinations in the East (China), but also with the start of changes in the local ceramic repertoire (such as the first "pan-Islamic" opaque white glazed wares,

new shapes in unglazed plain wares and cooking utensils, and a steady diminution in the use of amphorae). The long-distance contacts with India and China intensified via the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf during Abbasid times, and later via the Red Sea during the Fatimid period.[121] There was a simultaneous intensification of pottery trade between Palestine and Egypt, as is shown by the increased presence of Egyptian table wares and amphorae at several Near Eastern sites (such as Caesarea Maritima, Tiberias, and Ramla).[122]

In short, the archaeological evidence clearly suggests that Egypt continued to play a pivotal role in the large regional exchange networks, although its position changed over time. It surely benefited from its central location as an important industrial and commercial hub for the Mediterranean ceramic trade to the east, with its unique maritime opening in the south to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, from the ninth century onward connecting Byzantium and the rising Italian city-states with the Islamic world and the Far East.[123]

Nevertheless, it now seems certain that it will be quite rewarding to look in more detail to continuity and change, as well as to influences and processes of acculturation in the ceramic repertoires of Egypt, Palestine, and Baghdad during Abbasid and Fatimid times. This would substantially enhance the arguments for explaining changes not only in types and shapes of glazed and unglazed table wares, but also in the use of transport containers and cooking utensils (and hence contributing to the interpretation of changes in eating and drinking habits).

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[121] P. M. Sijpesteijn, "The Rise and Fall of Empires in the Islamic Mediterranean (600–1600 CE): Political Change, the Economy and Material Culture," in *The Routledge Handbook of Archaeology and Globalization*, ed. T. Hodos (London/New York: Routledge, 2017), 652–68; for earlier Indian Ocean trade in Roman times see R. Tomber, *Indo-Roman Trade: From Pots to Pepper* (London: Duckworth, 2008). For the nature of Arab rule in North Africa (Ifrīqiya) within the Mediterranean from an archaeological perspective see C. Fenwick, "From Africa to Ifrīqiya: Settlement and Society in Early Medieval North Africa (650–800)," *al-Masāq* 25/1 (2013), 9–33.

[122] Avni, *Byzantine–Islamic Transition*, 294.

[123] See S. D. Goitein and M. A. Friedman, *India Traders of the Middle Ages: Documents from the Cairo Geniza "India Book"* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2007) and Sijpesteijn, "The Rise and Fall of Empires" for the circulation of other goods within Egypt's Mediterranean and Indian Ocean trade.

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Social and Cultural Connections

The Destruction of Alexandria: Religious Imagery and Local Identity in Early Islamic Egypt

Jelle Bruning

Introduction

In a passage charged with symbolism, the third/ninth-century Egyptian historian Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (d. 257/871) records a vision of the city of Alexandria that was popular in his time. According to his unnamed source, "Alexandria was built in three-hundred years, was inhabited for three-hundred years and was destroyed (*khuribat*) in three-hundred years."[1] The definiteness or completeness captured in the symbolic use of the number 3 and its multiples as well as the passage's clear birth–maturation–death scheme reveals that the story was meant to indicate that Alexandria's history had come to an end.[2] The significance of this somewhat striking vision remains unarticulated. However, its presence in historical, geographical, and religious literature from the East as well as the west of the Islamicate world, from the third/ninth through the early eleventh/sixteenth centuries, shows that it enjoyed widespread and enduring popularity.[3] For reasons explored in this chapter, this mini-overview of

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[1] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbāruhā*, ed. C. C. Torrey (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922), 42.

[2] A. Schimmel, *The Mystery of Numbers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 58–85; *EQ*, "Numbers and Enumeration," s.v.

[3] The story is found with early fourth/tenth-century geographers from the East: Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadhānī (writing ca. 289–90/902–03), *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. M. J de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1885), 70; Ibn Khurdādhbih (d. 300/911), *al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1889), 160 (paraphrase; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiz wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. A. F. Sayyid, 5 vols. [London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2002–03], 1:398 gives a full version of the story on the authority of Ibn Khurdādhbih). In the West: the largely unknown author Isḥāq b. al-Ḥasan/al-Ḥusayn al-Khāzinī/al-Munajjim (prob. *fl.* fourth/tenth century), *Ākām al-murjān fī dhikr al-madāʾin al-mashhūra fī kull makān*, ed. F. Saʿd (Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1408/1988), 85; Abū ʿUbayd al-Bakrī (d. 487/1094), *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik*, ed. A. P. van Leeuwen and A. Ferré, 2 vols. (Tunis: al-Dār al-ʿArabiyya li-l-Kitāb/al-Muʾassasa al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Tarjama wa-l-Taḥqīq wa-l-Dirāsāt "Bayt al-Ḥikma," 1992), 2:643 [no. 1074]. Unsurprisingly, it is fully part of fourth/tenth-century *faḍāʾil* lore about Egypt: Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, ed. I. A. al-ʿAdawī and ʿA. M. ʿUmar (Cairo: Maktabat Wahba, 1391/1971), 48; Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr wa-akhbāruhā wa-khawāṣṣuhā*, ed. ʿA. M. ʿUmar (Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li-l-Kitāb, n.d.), 61,

Alexandria's history, hereafter called the "Three Times Three-Hundred Story," possessed actuality for over six centuries.

Recent scholarly works on the literary manifestation of early Islamic discourses about sacred geography have developed approaches that allow for meaningful interpretations of the significance of such enigmatic texts as the Three Times Three-Hundred Story. Studies concerned with al-Andalus, Damascus, Fez, and towns in Persia show an increased scholarly interest in intellectual endeavors, mainly the sacralization of elements in local geography, to legitimize regionalized religious identities conceived of as firmly embedded in the Muslim community, the *umma*.[4] Through Zayde Antrim's conceptual framework of "discourse of place"[5] we are now able to appreciate literature, including texts of a seemingly dubious historicity, as inter- and intra-community arguments for the legitimacy of layered senses of belonging. Thus, these recently adopted scholarly approaches grasp the dynamics of, and intellectual strategies for, the various degrees of geographical sacralization in the context of Islam's regional diversity.

The literary treatment of Alexandria is a very interesting case in this regard – and not only because of the paucity of explicit historical information about the city in sources from the first four centuries of Islam.[6] Egyptian identity and the Islamization of elements of Egypt's landscape (such as the pyramids, the

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62. Some centuries later the Baghdadi Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 595/1200) refers to the story in his world history: *al-Muntaẓam fī taʾrīkh al-mulūk wa-l-umam*, ed. Muḥammad and Muṣṭafā ʿA. ʿAṭā, 18 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1415/1995), 1:135. In the Mamluk period and a little thereafter, Egyptian authors of historical works copied the story from these third/ninth- and fourth/tenth-century sources: al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:398 (copies Ibn Khurdādhbih), 403 and 439 (copies Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and Ibn al-Kindī respectively); al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥāḍara fī taʾrīkh Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, ed. M. A. F. Ibrāhīm, 2 vols. (Cairo: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyya, 1387/1967), 1:86 (copies Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam); Ibn Duqmāq, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār li-wāsiṭat ʿiqd al-amṣār*, ed. K. Vollers, vols. 4–6 (Cairo: Imprimerie nationale, 1893), 5:122 (partially copies Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam).

4 E.g., A. E. Elinson, *Looking Back at al-Andalus: The Poetics of Loss and Nostalgia in Medieval Arabic and Hebrew Literature* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009), 117–50; N. Khalek, *Damascus after the Muslim Conquest: Text and Image in Early Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 135–74; A. Azad, *Sacred Landscape in Medieval Afghanistan: Revisiting the Faḍāʾil-i Balkh* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); R. Sanseverino, *Fès et sainteté: de la fondation à l'avènement du protectorat (808–1912)* (Rabat: Centre Jacques-Berque, 2014); M. Hanaoka, *Authority and Identity in Medieval Islamic Historiography: Persian Histories from the Peripheries* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016); and D. Talmon-Heller, *Sacred Place and Sacred Time in the Medieval Islamic Middle East: A Historical Perspective* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020). See also A. Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir: l'espace syrien sous les derniers Omeyyades et les premiers Abbassides (v. 72–193/692–809)* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011), 167–228.

5 Z. Antrim, *Routes and Realms: The Power of Place in the Early Islamic World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 33–60 (for a description of "discourse of place" see esp. 1–4).

6 C. Picard, "Alexandrie et le commerce de la Méditerranée médiévale: le contexte historiographique," in *Alexandrie médiévale 4*, ed. C. Décobert, J.-Y. Empereur, and C. Picard (Alexandria: Centre d'Études Alexandrines, 2011), 15–36, at 18–19.

Pharos, or the Nile) have been studied extensively.[7] In Muslim literature from the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries, Alexandria is the Egyptian city that is given the most religious significance.[8] Although this significance is at present predominantly known from occasional references to Alexandria's religious virtues (*faḍāʾil*),[9] a considerable number of historical, geographical, and religious works implicitly or explicitly argue for its religious meaningfulness.[10] When viewed through the lens of the above-mentioned "discourse of place," the literary strategies adopted in these works in order to argue for Alexandria's sacredness show how their authors engaged with the empire-wide dynamics surrounding claims of geo-religious centrality and connectivity, thus legitimizing a hybrid Egyptian–Muslim identity, which argued for Egypt's unique character alongside wholesale belonging to, if not importance for, the *umma*.

Such literary strategies and their social contexts are the topic of this chapter. In what follows, we will study these strategies and definitions of geographical sanctity by concentrating on the theme of destruction in early Islamic literature about Alexandria. This theme can be found in texts discussing Alexandria in the past, present, and future. We start with the past.

The Past: Arguing for Divine Endorsement

In Muslim narratives of Alexandria's foundation in the ancient past, the city's building and destruction take a prominent place. These topics can be

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[7] On early Egyptian Muslim identity see F. M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998), 224–26; see also P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Building an Egyptian Identity," in *The Islamic Scholarly Tradition: Studies in History, Law, and Thought in Honor of Professor Michael Allan Cook*, ed. A. Q. Ahmed, B. Sadeghi, and M. Bonner (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 85–105; and H. Omar, "'The Crinkly-Haired People of the Black Earth': Examining Egyptian Identities in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ*," in *History and Identity in the Late Antique Near East*, ed. P. Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 149–67. On the Islamization of Egypt's landscape see, e.g., U. Haarmann, "Regional Sentiment in Medieval Islamic Egypt," *Bulletin of SOAS* 43/1 (1980), 55–66; C. Lange, *Paradise and Hell in Islamic Traditions* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 247 and 253; M. S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 241–53; F. de Polignac, "al-Iskandariyya: œil du monde et frontière de l'inconnu," *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'École française de Rome* 96 (1984), 425–39; M. Smith, "Pyramids in the Medieval Islamic Landscape: Perceptions and Narratives," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 43 (2007), 1–14.

[8] Cf. P. Wheatley, *The Places where Men Pray Together: Cities in Islamic Lands, Seventh through the Tenth Centuries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 197.

[9] M. J. Kister, "Sanctity Joint and Divided: On Holy Places in the Islamic Tradition," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 20 (1996), 18–65, at 43–44; O. Livne-Kafri, "Jerusalem in Early Islam: The Eschatological Aspect," *Arabica* 53/3 (2006), 382–403, at 394–95.

[10] F. de Polignac studied religious images of Alexandria in such literature, but his two most important publications on this topic ("al-Iskandariyya" and "L'imaginaire arabe et le mythe de la fondation légitime," *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 46/4 [1987], 55–63) seem to have been largely neglected in later publications concerned with Alexandria's early Islamic history.

found in a number of works, among them one predominantly known both as *Kitāb al-ʿAjāʾib* and *Akhbār al-zamān*. The authorship of this text remains uncertain, and confusion over its author existed already in medieval times. Manuscript copies of the work as well as citations of it in books mostly dating from the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods are mainly attributed to two authors: al-Masʿūdī (d. 345/956) and the little-known Ibrāhīm b. Waṣīf Shāh. The latter most likely lived in the second half of the fourth/tenth or first half of the fifth/eleventh century and, like al-Masʿūdī, may have spent considerable time in Egypt.[11] In addition to confusion over the text's author, edited manuscripts and citations exhibit (sometimes considerable) textual differences. Interestingly, the text itself explicitly states that it circulated in different forms among "historians" (*ahl/aṣḥāb al-taʾrīkh*).[12] Considering the textual variation in manuscripts and citations and, further, the different versions of anecdotes relevant to the present discussion indicated therein, we must be dealing with a popular and living historiographical tradition. According to this tradition, Alexandria had been built and destroyed on two different occasions.

The anecdotes in al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh portray Alexandria's history as that of a succession of cities in the same location. This history starts with one Miṣrāyim, a great-grandson of Nūḥ and the first to rule Egypt after the Flood. He is said to have built the city of Raqūda "at the site of Alexandria."[13] The book considers Raqūda to be either Alexandria itself or its implicit predecessor.[14] The foundation of Alexandria proper is not

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[11] On the text's authorship see A. Ferré, "Un mystérieux auteur: Ibrāhīm b. Waṣīf Šāh," *Annales islamologiques* 25 (1991), 139–51; U. Sezgin, "al-Masʿūdī, Ibrāhīm b. Waṣīfšāh und das *Kitāb al-ʿAǧāʾib*," *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 8 (1993), 1–70; and U. Sezgin, "Pharaonische Wunderwerke bei Ibn Waṣīf aṣ-Ṣābiʾ und al-Masʿūdī: Einige Reminiszenzen an Ägyptens vergangene Grösse und an Meisterwerke der Alexandrinischen Gelehrten in arabischen Texten des 10. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.," part 1, *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 9 (1994), 233–43. Following Sezgin ("Pharaonische Wunderwerke," part 1, 231–32), I will refer to the text and author as "al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh." In ʿA. al-Ṣāwī's edition the text is attributed to al-Masʿūdī; an abbreviated (*mukhtaṣar*) version of the text, edited by S. K. Ḥasan, is attributed to Ibn Waṣīf Shāh. When referring to these editions in the footnotes, I maintain the attributions.

[12] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, ed. ʿA. al-Ṣāwī (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat ʿA. A. Ḥanafī, 1357/1938), 205, 207; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab*, ed. M. Qumayḥa et al., 33 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1424/2004), 15:87; Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār*, 5:123; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:396, 397.

[13] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 153–54; Ibn Waṣīf Shāh, *Mukhtaṣar ʿajāʾib al-dunyā*, ed. S. K. Ḥasan (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1421/2001), 114; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:393 and 425. See also Murtaḍā b. al-ʿAfīf, *L'Égypte de Murtadi fils du Gaphiphe*, trans. P. Vattier, intro. and ann. G. Wiet (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1953 [1666]), 119.

[14] Raqūda is, of course, the name by which Alexandria is known in Coptic (Rakoti; Gr., Rhakotis). In an unrelated story about a people called al-Kūka, Raqūda is equated with Alexandria: see al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 68 (copied with different wording in al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:393).

mentioned. The building of Alexandria's lighthouse in the heart of Raqūda is ascribed to Miṣrāyim himself,[15] and two rulers after him (one of whom is Shaddāt b. ʿAdīm, i.e. Shaddād b. ʿĀd,[16] see below) are mentioned as having built "in Alexandria" but not as having founded the city itself.[17] This city is referred to as "the first Alexandria" (*al-Iskandariyya al-ūlā*), and is said to have largely been destroyed by an army coming from "the land of the Franks" during the reign of Ṣā b. al-Shādd, the tenth Egyptian ruler after Miṣrāyim.[18] Later in the book, a number of anecdotes recount the rebuilding of Alexandria during Queen Ḥūriyā bt. Ṭūṭīs's rule over Egypt in the first generation after the prophet Ibrāhīm. The text refers to this rebuilt city as "the second Alexandria" (*al-Iskandariyya al-thāniya*).[19]

It is tempting to see literary connections with the Alexander tradition here. A second foundation of Alexandria compares well with the two accounts of Alexandria's foundation by Alexander the Great in the Syriac *Alexander Romance* as well as the North African or Andalusian *Leyenda* and Alexander's initial conquest and later "foundation" of the city in the Ethiopic romance.[20] However much such connections exist, what sets al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh and related texts apart from these Alexander romances is that Alexandria's foundation and destruction history is strongly Islamized. Instead of referring to a Frankish invasion, one of the anecdotes tells that the initial city of Alexandria had been ruined "since the ʿĀdites (*al-ʿādiyya*) had left."[21] In his version of this anecdote the Egyptian scholar Murtaḍā b. al-ʿAfīf (d. 634/1237–38)[22] adds that this is so "because the city had been founded by Shaddād b. ʿĀd."[23] In Islamic

[15] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 154; Ibn Waṣīf Shāh, *Mukhtaṣar ʿajāʾib al-dunyā*, 114; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:393–94. See also the version in Murtaḍā b. al-ʿAfīf, *L'Égypte de Murtadi fils du Gaphiphe*, 119.

[16] M. Cook, "Pharaonic History in Medieval Egypt," *Studia Islamica* 57 (1983), 67–103, at 94. Al-Maqrīzī (*Khiṭaṭ*, 1:373) writes that "Shaddād b. ʿĀd" is the name used by the common people (*al-ʿāmma*).

[17] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 166 and 180.

[18] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 184; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 15:73; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:394.

[19] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 205; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 15:85; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:396. Note that al-Nuwayrī has "the third Alexandria" (*al-Iskandariyya al-thālitha*).

[20] Syriac: E. A. W. Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great, Being the Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Callisthenes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1889), 41–43 and 70; *Leyenda*: E. García Gómez, *Un texto árabe occidental de la Leyenda de Alejandro* (Madrid: Instituto de Valencia de Don Juan, 1929), 20 and 56; Ethiopic: E. A. W. Budge, *The Life and Exploits of Alexander the Great* (London: C. J. Clay & Sons, 1896), 38 and 71. On the treatment of Alexandria in the Ethiopic romance see also S. Asirvatham, "The *Alexander Romance* Tradition from Egypt to Ethiopia," in *Alexander in Africa*, ed. P. R. Bosman (Pretoria: V & R Printing Works, 2014), 109–27, at 116–17. With "a second 'Makṣâmâ,' that is to say, 'Alexandria'" in the Ethiopic romance (Budge, *Life and Exploits*, 171) a different city seems to be meant (cf. Budge, *Life and Exploits*, 181).

[21] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 206.

[22] On him see Y. Rāġib, "L'auteur de *L'Égypte de Murtadi fils du Gaphiphe*," *Arabica* 21/2 (1974), 203–09.

[23] Murtaḍā b. al-ʿAfīf, *L'Égypte de Murtadi*, 141–42; see also al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:396.

tradition the ʿĀdites, better known as the Banū ʿĀd, are an ancient tribe or people punished by God for rejecting the messengers He sent to them.[24] The references in al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh and related texts to this people are closely connected to the exegesis of Q. 89:6–8, concerning God's punishment of the Banū ʿĀd for making a replica of *Iram Dhāt al-ʿImād* by which they sought to create Heaven on Earth.[25] Classical exegetical works record an exegesis of these verses, transmitted by mostly Egyptian scholars, that identifies this replica with (a predecessor of) Alexandria,[26] thus weaving Qurʾānic history into the narrative of Alexandria's past. By doing so, these exegetes as well as the literary tradition represented by al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh ascribe religiously significant past events to the city and create a relationship between God and Alexandria.

Although in a less explicit manner, a similar strategy is visible in stories surrounding the "second Alexandria." A Syrian usurper reportedly built this city for Ḥūriyā bt. Ṭūṭīs, a queen known for her piety and wisdom,[27] with the aim of taking Egypt from her. The various versions of the story of the building of the "second Alexandria," one of which can partially be found in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's third/ninth-century *Futūḥ Miṣr*,[28] differ widely in the sources.[29] It is important to note, however, that, reminiscent of the Three Times Three-Hundred Story, al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh concludes his treatment of Alexandria's ancient past by stating that after Queen Ḥūriyā's death and burial in the usurper's city "[a] group of priests and scholars lived in this city together with an army that protected her [corpse]. Thus, that city was and remained inhabited (ʿumirat) until Bukht Naṣṣar destroyed her (akhrabahā)."[30] Despite the presence of

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[24] On ʿĀd see *EI²* and *EQ,* "'Ād," s.v.

[25] For good discussions of *Iram Dhāt al-ʿImād* see J. E. Bencheikh, "Iram ou la clameur de Dieu: le mythe et le verset," *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 58/4 (1990), 70–81, at 69–74; and P. Neuenkirchen, "Biblical Elements in Koran 89, 6–8 and its Exegeses: A New Interpretation of 'Iram of the Pillars'," *Arabica* 60/6 (2013), 651–700.

[26] Neuenkirchen, "Biblical Elements," 665.   [27] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 203.

[28] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 42–43.

[29] Some versions are a long continuous text (Murtaḍā b. al-ʿAfīf, *L'Égypte de Murtadi*, 138–59 [which includes other stories] and to some extent Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār*, 5:122–23), while others are presented as a series of individual anecdotes (al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 203–05, 205–07, 207–11; al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 15:85, 86–87, 87–89; and al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:394–96, 396–97, 397–98). The versions in al-Bakrī's *al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik* (2:582–84 [§§ 966–70]) and Yāqūt al-Rūmī's *Muʿjam al-buldān* (6 vols. [Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1866–73], 1:185) deviate from what seem to be more popular variants of the account; Yāqūt's has little in common with the other variants beyond the protagonists and will not be considered here.

[30] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 211; see also al-Nuwayrī, *Nihāyat al-arab*, 15:89 and Murtaḍā b. al-ʿAfīf, *L'Égypte de Murtadi*, 158–59. As in late antique Coptic literature, Bukht Naṣṣar/Nebuchadnezzar is the archetypal force of disruption in al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh, and has little in common with the Qurʾānic and biblical king: see U. Sezgin, "Pharaonische Wunderwerke," part

a pious queen's tomb, a city built for unholy reasons could not have a more fortunate fate than its predecessor.

Al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh does not discuss Muslim Alexandria. We need to turn to stories about Alexander the Great's foundation of Alexandria in texts that are related to the Alexander tradition in order to study the theme of a destruction of Muslim Alexandria. This theme can almost only be found in Muslim texts.[31] Apart from a short tradition in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Miṣr*,[32] Alexandria's foundation and destruction is first elaborately treated in al-Masʿūdī's account of the foundation of the city in his *Murūj al-dhahab*.[33] Probably taking his information from Egyptian sources,[34] al-Masʿūdī tells how Alexander the Great orders his workmen to start on the foundation after he has rung a bell that is connected to a rope. This rope delimits the circumference of the future city. When a raven sets the bell in motion before the astrologically determined time and the workmen start laying the city's foundations, Alexander interprets the situation as a bad omen and piously exclaims: "I wanted a thing to happen, but God the Supreme wanted it differently; God forbids unless it is His will. I wished an eternal city, but God the Lofty One wills its quick perdition and destruction (*surʿat fanāʾihā wa-kharābihā*) and a confusion of kings

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5, *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften* 16 (2004–5), 149–223, at 182–83; and P. F. Venticinque, "What's in a Name? Greek, Egyptian and Biblical Traditions in the *Cambyses Romance*," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 43 (2006), 139–58.

[31] The destruction theme can be found in two Hebrew recensions of Pseudo-Callisthenes composed in the sixth/twelfth and seventh/thirteenth centuries. In unequal measures these Hebrew texts are based on a now lost Arabic translation of the I² recension of the mid-fourth/tenth-century *Historia de Preliis Alexandri Magni* by the Neapolitan archpriest Leo (W. J. van Bekkum, *A Hebrew Alexander Romance According to MS London, Jews' College No. 145* [Leuven: Peeters, 1992], 27–30). In contrast to *Historia de Preliis*, which describes the foundation of Alexandria in one sentence (H.-J. Bergmeister [ed.], *Die* Historia de Preliis Alexandri Magni *(Der lateinische Alexanderroman des Mittelalters): Synoptische Edition der Rezensionen des Leo Archipresbyter und der interpolierten Fassungen J¹, J², J³ (Buch I und II)* [Meisenheim am Glan: Anton Hain, 1975], 50–51), the Hebrew translations contain a more elaborate account. According to one (the other is very similar), when birds disrupted the planned foundation of Alexandria, Alexander "considered it as a sign of the destruction [Heb. *ḥurban*] of the city and he told the workers to stop and leave the work. The priests and sages of Egypt assembled with him and said to him: 'Do not worry because of these birds; this signifies that many cities will live on her.' Alexander was comforted and he ordered the workers to return to their work" (van Bekkum, *MS London, Jews' College*, 59, 61 [MS p. 12]; for this passage in the other manuscript see W. J. van Bekkum, *A Hebrew Alexander Romance According to MS Héb. 671.5 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale* [Groningen: Styx Publications, 1994], 25, 27 [folio 247a]). The addition seems to stem from these texts' shared Arabic *Vorlage*.

[32] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 40.

[33] In addition to al-Masʿūdī's account also see Yāqūt al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-buldān* 1:184 (col. 1) and Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār*, 5:121 (middle of the page).

[34] See the references to "Egyptians and Alexandrians" in al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa-maʿādin al-jawhar*, ed. and trans. C. Barbier de Meynard, 9 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1861–77), 2:431.

ruling over it!"[35] Al-Masʿūdī has the city's destruction starting soon after
its foundation. Alexander interprets nocturnal attacks by sea monsters
(which also appear in al-Masʿūdī/Ibn Waṣīf Shāh's stories on the
"second Alexandria"[36]) on what has been built by day as "the beginning
of the destruction (*kharāb*) of its [i.e., Alexandria's] buildings and the
realization of the Creator's will."[37] The motif of birds (and that of sea
monsters) disrupting the planned course of the city's foundation can be
found in other recensions of Pseudo-Callisthenes.[38] In these recensions,
the story of the disruption made by birds is always interpreted as a sign
of Alexandria's future prosperity. In her study of al-Masʿūdī's founda-
tion account, Faustina Doufikar-Aerts rightly comes to the conclusion
that al-Masʿūdī "is deliberately stressing unfavorable signs."[39] But what
do these signs point at?

   According to al-Masʿūdī's account, the destruction Alexander expects
would not be the city's first. In the area where Alexander plans to build
Alexandria, he finds the remnants of a magnificent building. On a huge
column that still stands he finds an inscription of which the beginning
reads:

> I am Shaddād b. ʿĀd b. Shaddād b. ʿĀd.[40] I have strengthened with my own
> hands this land and I have cut out the largest column from towering
> mountains. I have built *Iram Dhāt al-ʿImād* of which no equal has been
> created in the lands. I wished to build here [a city] like *Iram* so that I might
> bring to it every person of brave character and noble nature.[41]

According to their *isnād*s, traditions concerning Shaddād b. ʿĀd's inscrip-
tion at the site of the future Alexandria had already circulated during

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[35] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 2:424–25 (copied in al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:404–06). The translation is
   largely F. C. W. Doufikar-Aerts's ("A Legacy of the *Alexander Romance* in Arab Writings: Al-
   Iskandar, Founder of Alexandria," in *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. J. Tatum [Baltimore/
   London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994], 323–43, at 325).

[36] Al-Masʿūdī, *Akhbār al-zamān*, 206.   [37] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 2:425.

[38] It is a *topos* in Islamic foundation myths: see F. Mermier, "Les fondation mythiques de Sanaa et
   d'Aden," *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 67 (1993), 131–39, at 133. For a biblical
   parallel to this story and the use of talismanic statues for the protection against sea monsters see
   S. Kuehn, *The Dragon in Medieval East Christian and Islamic Art* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011), 22–23.

[39] Doufikar-Aerts, "A Legacy of the *Alexander Romance*," 324–29. Cf. de Polignac, "L'imaginaire
   arabe," 57–59 and F. de Polignac, "Cosmocrator: l'Islam et la légende antique du souverain
   universel," in *The Problematics of Power: Eastern and Western Representations of Alexander the
   Great*, ed. M. Bridges and J. C. Bürgel (Berlin: Peter Lang, 1996), 149–64, at 153–56. See also note
   31 above.

[40] Al-Maqrīzī (*Khiṭaṭ*, 1:404), who copies this passage from *Murūj al-dhahab*, only has "Shaddād
   b. ʿĀd."

[41] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 2:421. The translation is largely Doufikar-Aerts's ("A Legacy of the
   Alexander Romance," 325–26).

the second half of the second/eighth century.[42] Although the presence of a ruined building built by a mighty emperor has parallels in Pseudo-Callisthenes,[43] and an ancient inscription can often be found in foundation accounts of other cities,[44] the reference to Shaddād b. ʿĀd, again, evokes the Egyptian exegesis of Q. 89:6–8 and thus links the city of Alexandria to divine revelation. In fact, it is at this point that the anecdotes about the "first" and "second" Alexandria and al-Masʿūdī's foundation account converge and show their religious implications.

References to Alexandria's destroyed predecessors create a connection between (the existence of) Muslim Alexandria and divine will. The inscription Alexander finds makes clear that the destruction of Shaddād b. ʿĀd's imitation of *Iram Dhāt al-ʿImād* at the site of future Alexandria was part of God's punishment.[45] Whereas the cities of non-Muslim rulers (such as the Syrian usurper and Shaddād b. ʿĀd) are eventually destroyed, Alexander the Great succeeds in building a city irrespective of his negative expectations. The theme of a pagan's failed building project succeeded by a successful project at the hands of someone who explicitly subjects himself to and executes God's will, preferably an ancient Islamic hero (cf. Alexander the Great's identification with the Qurʾānic semi-prophet Dhū al-Qarnayn[46]), is common to Islamic foundation stories. It indicates a change in a city's religious character and argues for its divinely endorsed existence.[47] In other words, anecdotes on the destruction of Alexandria's predecessors and the continued existence of Muslim Alexandria gives the city, in von Grunebaum's words, an "Islamic genealogy," that is, a solid and purposeful place in Muslim history.[48]

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[42] See the traditions in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 41 and 43, whose *isnād*s go back to the Egyptian ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (d. 174/790) and the Medinan Hishām b. Saʿd al-Madanī (d. 159/775–76 or 160/776–77) respectively.

[43] Doufikar-Aerts, "A Legacy of the *Alexander Romance*," 326–27.

[44] Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 46.

[45] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 2:421–22. See also *EI²*, "Iram," s.v.

[46] On Alexander the Great in Islam see Doufikar-Aerts, "A Legacy of the *Alexander Romance*," 329–30; F. de Polignac, "L'image d'Alexandre dans la littérature arabe: l'orient face à l'hellénisme?" *Arabica* 29/3 (1982), 296–306, at 303–04.

[47] S. O'Meara, "The Foundation Legend of Fez and Other Islamic Cities in Light of the Life of the Prophet," in *Cities in the Pre-Modern Islamic World: The Urban Impact of Religion, State and Society*, ed. A. K. Bennison and A. L. Gascoigne (London/New York: Routledge, 2007), 27–41, at 28–31. See Antrim, *Routes and Realms*, 158 n. 49 for criticism of O'Meara's thesis, which nonetheless fits my analysis of anecdotes on Alexandria's foundation. Very explicit, in this regard, is a story preserved by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (*Futūḥ Miṣr*, 40) according to which Alexander the Great demolished all buildings previously constructed in Alexandria except for a mosque built by the prophet Sulaymān, which he repaired. According to this story, Alexander maintained and repaired the (sole) Islamic element in the city.

[48] G. E. von Grunebaum, "The Sacred Character of Islamic Cities," in *Mélanges Taha Hussein: offerts par ses amis et ses disciples à l'occasion de son 70ième anniversaire*, ed. A. Badawi (Cairo: Dar al-Maaref,

The Present: A City Impossible to Restore

In addition to the city's ancient history, the theme of Alexandria's destruction can be found in literature on the city's present as well. This is not surprising in light of changes in Alexandria's cityscape in the late antique and early Islamic periods to which the city's Muslim population were direct or indirect witnesses. Within the circuit of the ancient city wall, for example, large areas were abandoned by the time Muslims came to rule the city.[49] When Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam wrote his history of Egypt, habitation was concentrated in three separately walled areas.[50] The ancient city wall itself may have suffered considerable damage during the Muslims' second conquest of the city in 25/646,[51] and it was replaced by a wall that surrounded a much reduced area only in the third/ninth century.[52] In addition, archaeological excavations show that graves of a first/seventh- to third/ninth-century Muslim cemetery in the center of Alexandria were dug within the ruins of a public bath and auditoria dating from the Byzantine period.[53] As early as the late first/seventh century, valuable parts of such ruins (predominantly columns and their capitals) are recorded as having been reused, sometimes far beyond Egypt's borders.[54] Muslim authors,

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1962), 25–37, at 25–27. See also de Polignac, "L'imaginaire arabe," esp. 60–61; and F. de Polignac, "Alexandre maître des seuils et des passages: de la légende antique au mythe arabe," in *Alexandre le Grand dans les littératures occidentales et proche-orientales: Actes du Colloque de Paris, 27–29 novembre 1999*, ed. L. Harf-Lancner, C. Kappler, and F. Suard (Paris: Centre des Sciences de la Littérature de l'Université Paris X-Nanterre, 1999), 215–25, esp. 223.

[49] M. Rodziewicz, "Transformation of Ancient Alexandria into a Medieval City," in *Colloque international d'archéologie islamique: IFAO, le Caire, 3–7 février 1993*, ed. R.-P. Gayraud (Cairo: IFAO, 1998), 369–86, at 372.

[50] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 42 (copied in al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:403).

[51] Some sources claim that the wall was destroyed during the conquest (e.g., Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 175–76; al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M. J. de Goeje [Leiden: Brill, 1866], 221; *History of the Patriarchs*, ed. and trans. B. Evetts, *Patrologia Orientalis* 1/2, 1/4, 5/1, 10/5 [1947–59], 2:494 [229]; Agapius, *Historia Universalis*, ed. L. Cheikho [Beirut: E typographeo catholico, 1912], 345). The wall still existed after the conquest, according to other sources (e.g., Arculf's travelogue in Adomnan, *Arculfs Bericht über die heiligen Stätten*, trans. P. Mickley in *Arculf: eines Pilgers Reise nach dem heiligen Lande (um 670)*, 2 vols. [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1917], 2:42 or the *History of the Patriarchs*, 3:159 [413]).

[52] C. Benech, "Recherches sur le tracé des murailles antiques d'Alexandrie," in *Alexandrina 3*, ed. J.-Y. Empereur (Cairo: IFAO, 2009), 401–45, esp. 414–18.

[53] See E. Promińska, *Investigations on the Population of Muslim Alexandria* (Warsaw: PWN/Éditions scientifiques de Pologne, 1972), 47–49 for a detailed history of the Muslim cemeteries on Kom el-Dikka. See also G. Majcherek, "The Late Roman Auditoria of Alexandria: An Archaeological Overview," in *Alexandria: Auditoria of Kom el-Dikka and Late Antique Education*, ed. T. Derda, T. Markiewicz, and E. Wipszycka (Warsaw: Faculty of Law and Administration of Warsaw University 2007), 11–50, esp. 37–38.

[54] See Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 133–34 (copied from Ibn Yūnus in Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq wa-dhikr faḍlihā wa-tasmiyat man ḥallahā min al-amāthil aw ijtāz bi-nawāḥīhā min wāridīhā wa-ahlihā*, ed. ʿU. b. G. al-ʿAmrawī, 80 vols. [Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1415–21/1995–2000],

further, record that earthquakes severely damaged buildings in Alexandria, especially the city's lighthouse.[55] So, even though Alexandria still possessed enough of its classical grandeur to support the production of marvelous descriptions of the city's architecture and street plan,[56] "Alexandria the Great" (as some authors called the city[57]) also provided enough material for literature with diametrically opposed content.

Muslim authors of the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries record religious explanations for the existence of ruins in Alexandria. Al-Masʿūdī, for example, tellingly states that "the inhabitants of Alexandria relate on the authority of their ancestors that they had seen with their own eyes a distance between the lighthouse and the sea which approximately equaled the current distance between the city and the lighthouse and [that] seawater submerged the area in little time."[58] This statement must be understood in the context of the above-mentioned story of King Miṣrāyim's building of the lighthouse in the center of the city. Some scholars considered the fact that the lighthouse stood on an island a direct witness to Islam's salvation history. In agreement with the story on Miṣrāyim's lighthouse, the mid-fourth/tenth-century Ibn al-Kindī, for instance, writes that "religious scholars relate that the lighthouse used to be located in the heart of the city until the sea took possession of it and the lighthouse came to be surrounded by the sea."[59] Interestingly, he adds that "buildings and foundations can be seen in the sea

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33:417 [no. 3657]) for the reuse of Alexandrian columns in Fusṭāṭ under the Umayyads; see J. McKenzie, *The Architecture of Alexandria and Egypt, 300 BC–AD 700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 8 for the reuse of columns during the building of Samarra; for the reuse of architectural material in Alexandria itself see McKenzie, *The Architecture of Alexandria*, 8 and B. Tkaczow, *Topography of Ancient Alexandria (An Archaeological Map)* (Warsaw: Zakład Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej, Polskiej Akadmii Nauk, 1993), 58–59 [§ 7]. Whether these spolia had more than material value remains to be studied: cf. D. Behrens-Abouseif, "Between Quarry and Magic: The Selective Approach to Spolia in the Islamic Monuments of Egypt," in *Dalmatia and the Mediterranean: Portable Archaeology and the Poetics of Influence*, ed. A. Payne (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2014), 402–25.

[55] M. A. Taher, "Les séismes à Alexandrie et la destruction du phare," in *Alexandrie médiévale 1*, ed. C. Décobert and J.-Y. Empereur (Cairo: IFAO, 1998), 51–64, at 51–56; D. Behrens-Abouseif, "The Islamic History of the Lighthouse of Alexandria," *Muqarnas* 23 (2006), 1–14, esp. 3 and 9.

[56] Such descriptions of Alexandria in Muslim literature are best discussed in S. K. Hamarneh, "The Ancient Monuments of Alexandria According to Accounts by Medieval Arab Authors (IX–XV Century)," *Folia Orientalia* 13 (1971), 77–110; de Polignac, "*al-Iskandariyya*"; and J. S. McKenzie, "The Place in Late Antique Alexandria 'Where Alchemists and Scholars Sit (. . .) was like Stairs'," in *Alexandria: Auditoria of Kom el-Dikka and Late Antique Education*, ed. T. Derda, T. Markiewicz, and E. Wipszycka (Warsaw: Faculty of Law and Administration of Warsaw University 2007), 53–83, esp. 79–82.

[57] E.g., Ibn Rustah, *Kitāb al-Aʿlāq al-nafīsa*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1891), 338; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. T. G. J. Juynboll (Leiden: Brill, 1861), 127; Yāqūt al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1:183.

[58] Al-Masʿūdī, *al-Tanbīh wa-l-ishrāf*, ed. M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1894), 48.

[59] Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 51. See also Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 63.

as witnesses to [the coming of] Resurrection Day."[60] In all likelihood, the origin of such ideas must be sought in a considerable subsidence during much of the first millennium CE, causing buildings along the coast and especially in the city's northeast to be covered by seawater.[61] What interests us here is that such conditions stimulated the development of notions of Alexandria's religious role in history.[62]

These notions claimed that Alexandria was to fulfill a predestined role. The inevitability of this role finds forceful expression in a small corpus of anecdotes centered around ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān, governor of Egypt between 65/685 and 86/705. The history of these anecdotes can be traced to the late second/eighth century at the earliest. An anecdote, preserved in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Miṣr*, that has the same protagonists and structure and deals with Alexandria (although not with the city's destruction) has an *isnād* whose oldest identifiable transmitter is ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (d. 174/790).[63] An anecdote about ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān and Alexandria's ruinous state, however, first appears in a fourth/tenth-century text.[64] These anecdotes seem to be strongly tied to a widespread image of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān in historical literature.

By and large, Muslim historiographers concentrate on this governor's building, renovation, and irrigation projects.[65] If we are to believe Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and al-Kindī, he purchased, developed, and donated to members of the Muslim nobility much urban property in Fusṭāṭ. Among his major projects were the total rebuilding of Fusṭāṭ's congregational mosque and the

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[60] Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 51. Cf. two traditions recorded by Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād (d. 228/843), one of which tells that, during one of the portents of the Hour, "the sea will withdraw from the lighthouse about a *barīd* or two *barīd*s, then Dhū al-Qarnayn's treasures will appear" (*Kitāb al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, ed. M. b. M. b. S. al-Shawrī [Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1423/2002], 351 [no. 1310, add. 1]); for the other see 354 [no. 1312, add. 4.4]) and a tradition preserved in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (43) which tells that at Alexandria "a treasure lays hidden in the sea at [a depth of] twelve *dhirāʿ*; only Muḥammad's community (*umma*) will be able to extract it."

[61] McKenzie, *The Architecture of Alexandria*, 10–12. See Rodziewicz, "Transformation of Ancient Alexandria," 374 for the reuse of building blocks that had been covered by seawater in late antiquity.

[62] In this context see A. Akasoy, "Islamic Attitudes to Disasters in the Middle Ages: A Comparison of Earthquakes and Plagues," *Medieval History Journal* 10/1–2 (2007), 387–410, esp. 393–96.

[63] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 74–75. ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa reportedly heard the anecdote from one Bakr b. ʿAmr al-Khawlānī. This figure is only known from Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's text (*Futūḥ Miṣr*, 4, 5, and 74), where he is presented in *isnād*s as a contemporary of Bakr b. Sawāda (d. 128/745–46), Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128/745–46), and ʿAbd Allāh b. Hubayra al-Sabāʾī (d. 126/743–44). He might be identical with Bakr b. ʿAmr al-Maʿāfirī (d. between 140/757 and 158/775), one of Ibn Lahīʿa's teachers (e.g., al-Dhahabī, *Siyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, gen. ed. S. al-Arnaʾūṭ, 24 vols. [Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla, 1417/1996], 6:203 [no. 95].).

[64] Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍāʾil Miṣr*, 48 (copied with divergences in al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:439).

[65] W. B. Kubiak, "ʿAbd al-ʿAziz ibn Marwan and the Early Islamic Building Activity and Urbanism in Egypt," *Africana Bulletin* 42 (1994), 7–19.

building of a large palace (*al-dār al-mudhahhaba*, "the Gilded Palace") in the heart of the city.[66] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān's projects were not limited to Fusṭāṭ. According to Saʿīd b. Baṭrīq (d. 328/940), ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān spent a million *dīnār*s on the building or developing of Ḥulwān, his residential town just south of Fusṭāṭ.[67] The governor also had building projects in Alexandria. Al-Dhahabī (d. 748/1347) writes that in 77/696–97 ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān "ordered Alexandria's fortress (*ḥiṣn*) to be rebuilt, for it lay in ruins (*wa-kāna mahdūman*) since ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ had conquered the city."[68] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān's interest in renovating Alexandria is also known from other sources. Capturing well the scope of the governor's building activities, a passage in the *History of the Patriarchs* is particularly interesting because it takes its information from the *History of the Church*. This now lost Coptic history was composed by one George the Archdeacon, a companion and secretary of the Coptic patriarch Simon I (in office 70–81/689–700) and, therefore, a contemporary of the described events.[69] It reads:

> The governor loved building. He built Ḥulwān and constructed reservoirs there. He did the same in Fusṭāṭ. There, he built compounds (*dūr*), inns (*qayāsir*) and public baths. [He built as well] in every town along the river from Fusṭāṭ to Alexandria. He ordered the Alexandrian Canal to be dredged from the city's north near the pool of Naqīṭā[70] and milestones to be set up along it as far as Alexandria. So he also did in the city itself. He restored the streets after they had fallen into ruins. He made use of men like Pharaoh did in his time.[71]

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[66] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 131; al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-Wulāt wa-Kitāb al-Quḍāt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 48–49, 51.

[67] Saʿīd b. Baṭrīq (= Eutychius), *Annales*, ed. L. Cheikho, 2 vols. (Beirut: E typographeo catholico, 1906–09), 2:40. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān reportedly ordered the Coptic patriarch and bishops to build churches and residences there (*History of the Patriarchs*, 3:24 [278], 42 [296]; Saʿīd b. Baṭrīq, *Annales*, 2:41).

[68] Al-Dhahabī, *Taʾrīkh al-islām*, ed. ʿA. ʿA. Tadmurī, 52 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1990/1410–2000/1421), 5:335. This statement is difficult to combine with information on the use of the fortress by early governors in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Miṣr* (130; copied in al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:451). The fortress was the governor's residence and office while he was in Alexandria. See J. Bruning, *The Rise of a Capital: Al-Fusṭāṭ and Its Hinterland, 18/639–132/750* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2018), 29–36, 49–55.

[69] J. den Heijer, *Mawhūb Ibn Manṣūr Ibn Mufarriǧ et l'historiographie copto-arabe: étude sur la composition de "l'Histoire des Patriarchs d'Alexandrie"* (Leuven: Peeters, 1989), 143; *History of the Patriarchs*, 3:90–91 [344–45].

[70] See J. P. Cooper, *The Medieval Nile: Route, Navigation, and Landscape in Islamic Egypt* (Cairo/New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2014), 56.

[71] *History of the Patriarchs*, 3:42–43 [296–97]. See P. E. Kahle, "Zur Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Alexandria," *Der Islam* 12 (1922), 29–83, at 46 n.2 for the reading *amyāʾ*, "gardens," instead of *amyāl*, "milestones." Other manuscripts state that ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān developed land (*ādur*) and inns in Fusṭāṭ, and built *funduq*s and erected milestones along the Alexandrian Canal. I thank J. den Heijer for showing me the different readings in the manuscripts.

Whereas historical literature concentrates on ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān's building and renovation projects, the anecdotes that claim the inevitability of Alexandria's role in salvation history emphasize the irreversibility of the city's destruction. Although the anecdotes are not identical, and not always explicit, they all show the governor's interest in restoring the city's former glory.[72] In most versions the governor asks one or more Alexandrian elders about the number of the city's inhabitants and/or the ruins in the city's various quarters (aṭrāf). The answer he receives always points at the vanity of his intention to rebuild the city. Although relatively late, a version preserved by Yāqūt al-Rūmī is a particularly instructive example because of its very explicit wording:

> It is told that when ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam became governor of Egypt and was informed about Alexandria's state, he called the city's elders (mashāʾikh) and said: "I wish to restore Alexandria (uḥibbu an uʿīda bināʾ al-Iskandariyya) to its former state. Help me, and I will give you money and men." They answered: "Wait for us, O governor, so that we can look into it." They left and agreed to dig up an old coffin from which they took a human skull. They brought it on a calf to the city. [ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz] ordered the skull to be broken. A molar tooth was removed which was found to weigh twenty riṭls, even though it was old and partially decayed. They said: "We will be able to restore the city's buildings (ʿimāra) when we are given such men!" Then [ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz] remained quiet.[73]

Anecdotes such as this one sharply contrast the governor's image as an effective builder and primarily claim that Alexandria's restoration is beyond human ability and must not be sought after. Some versions include the Three Times Three-Hundred Story, emphasizing that it took even someone like Alexander the Great three hundred years to build the city.[74] Thus, ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān is explicitly not the "new Alexander" that some Christian and Muslim rulers claimed to be or are portrayed as having

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[72] Other anecdotes that partially overlap or have different protagonists (mainly ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz) can also be found. E.g., Ibn Zūlāq, Faḍāʾil Miṣr, 63; al-Bakrī, al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik, 2:639–40 [no. 1068] and 642 [no. 1073]; al-Maqrīzī, Khiṭaṭ, 1:433–34; al-Ḥimyarī, Rawḍ al-miʿṭār, in Hamarneh, "The Ancient Monuments of Alexandria," 101. Al-Masʿūdī, Akhbār al-zamān, 176 contains an anecdote on ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān and his search for "a ruined city in the western desert"; al-Masʿūdī, Murūj al-dhahab, 2:414–17 (copied in al-Bakrī, al-Masālik wa-l-mamālik, 1:521–22 [§ 876]) has a story about the governor's interest in digging up a treasure that appears to be protected by magic swords and eventually comes to life.

[73] Yāqūt al-Rūmī, Muʿjam al-buldān, 1:186 (copied in Zakariyyā b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Qazwīnī, Āthār al-bilād wa-akhbār al-ʿibād [Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1960], 146–47).

[74] Ibn al-Kindī, Faḍāʾil Miṣr, 48 (copied with divergences in al-Maqrīzī, Khiṭaṭ, 1:439). See also Ps.-Ibn Ẓuhayra, al-Faḍāʾil al-bāhira fī maḥāsin Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira, ed. M. al-Saqqā and K. al-Muhandis (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1969), 59.

been.[75] In the anecdotes, the Umayyad governor has become a literary figure. The many successful building and renovation programs of the historical governor that are in the back of the minds of the anecdotes' audience help emphasize the inevitability of Alexandria's destruction.

The Future: Apocalyptic Expectations

It is to traditions concerned with events heralding the apocalypse that we must turn in order to understand the predestination expressed in anecdotes about ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān's alleged aspirations to restore Alexandria. The majority of these apocalyptic traditions are recorded in Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād's (d. 228/843) *Kitāb al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*,[76] which has a whole chapter devoted to "What is told about Alexandria as well as regions and battle zones in Egypt with regard to the departure of Byzantines." Although the *isnād*s that accompany Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād's traditions cannot be trusted prima facie,[77] the majority suggest that these traditions circulated among Egyptian scholars. A small group of traditions on Alexandria's role in apocalyptic events were reportedly transmitted by or among scholars from Ḥimṣ.[78]

According to many of these traditions, an invasion of enemies of Islam awaits the city.[79] These enemies are envisioned to be Byzantines and

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[75] For examples from Islamic milieus see Borrut, *Entre mémoire et pouvoir*, esp. 265–71 and the bibliography referred to in 271 n.170; for a Christian "new Alexander" from the early Islamic period see, e.g., G. J. Reinink, "Heraclius, the New Alexander: Apocalyptic Prophecies during the Reign of Heraclius," in *The Reign of Heraclius (610–641): Crisis and Confrontation*, ed. G. J. Reinink and B. H. Stolte (Leuven: Peeters, 2002), 81–94.

[76] On the date of the composition of this work see J. Aguadé, "Messianismus zur Zeit der frühen Abbasiden: Das Kitāb al-Fitan des Nuʿaim ibn Ḥammād," PhD thesis, Eberhard-Karls-Universität (1979), 43–44.

[77] M. Cook, "Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions," *Princeton Papers in Near Eastern Studies* 1 (1992), 23–47.

[78] A short apocalyptic chronicle of probably Ḥimṣī provenance and dated to the late 160s/780s (M. Cook, "An Early Islamic Apocalyptic Chronicle," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 52/1 [1993], 25–29, at 28), for example, prophesies that "among the signs of the appearance of the Dajjāl is an eastern wind, neither hot nor cold, that will destroy the idol of Alexandria" (among other things); see D. Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002), 350. For other traditions with a Ḥimṣī *isnād* on Alexandria see Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād, *al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, 183 [no. 748], 185 [no. 755] = 187 [no. 762], 309–10 [no. 1191], and 354 [no. 1312, add. 4.6]. Note that Ibn Yūnus (*Taʾrīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Miṣrī*, ed. ʿA. F. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, 2 vols. [Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2000], 2:50–51 [no. 122]) reports that the Ḥimṣī scholar Tubayʿ b. ʿĀmir al-Kalāʿī (d. 101/719–20) settled in Alexandria and spread apocalyptic messages there.

[79] For the general image of Egypt in Muslim apocalyptic literature, largely based on Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād's collection of traditions, see S. Bashear, "Apocalyptic and Other Materials on Early Muslim–Byzantine Wars: A Review of Arabic Sources," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (3rd ser.) 1/2 (1991), 173–207, at 183; and Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, 80–84.

particularly "the people of the west" (*ahl al-maghrib*), who will arrive in huge numbers and will wreak great havoc in the city.[80] The idea of Islam's subjection by people from the west, possibly based on Daniel 8:5, is widely attested in Muslim apocalyptic lore as well as in non-Muslim apocalypses from before and after the coming of Islam.[81] In Muslim apocalyptic tradition concerning Alexandria, Muslims are believed to fight these enemies in one or two apocalyptic battles (*malāḥim*). The city's (initial) battle is expected to be the first of a series of battles, eventually leading to the conquest of Constantinople, after which the Dajjāl will appear.[82] This may well be a refinement of the widespread idea in Muslim apocalyptic literature that Egypt would be the first region to be destroyed in the advent of the apocalypse.[83] Indeed, the idea that Alexandria would be the arena of events leading to the apocalypse enjoyed considerable popularity, and can also be found in non-Muslim texts.[84] As to when this invasion by enemies would take place, there is no unanimity in the traditions. Egyptian coloring may be visible in traditions that date the apocalyptic battle to a period when "Alexandria will be headed by someone stupid (*aḥmaq*) from

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[80] Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād, *al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, 184 [no. 753]: "When the people of the west go out, the Byzantines will come in the direction of the west. On their way, they [the people from the west] will destroy (*tukhribu*) Alexandria, Egypt, and the coast of Syria." See also 351 [no. 1310], 352 [no. 1312 = ʿUthmān b. Saʿīd al-Dānī, *al-Sunan al-wārida fī al-fitan wa-ghawāʾilihā wa-l-sāʿa wa-ashrāṭihā*, ed. M. Ḥ. M. Ḥ. I. al-Shāfiʿī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1418/1997), 163 [no. 480]], and 353 [no. 1312, add. 4.4].

[81] A messianic western "king of peace" features prominently in the pre-Islamic Egyptian *Apocalypse of Elijah*: see *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. J. H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co, Inc., 1983–85), 1:740–41. According to the third/ninth- or fourth/tenth-century *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, "a nation will burst forth from the west (*maghrib*) and oppose the king of Babylon of Egypt," but this is a minor apocalyptic event in the text: see A. Périer, "Lettre de Pisuntios, évêque de Qeft, à ses fidèles," *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 19 (1914), 79–92, 302–23, 445–46, at 307. A second/eighth- or third/ninth-century recension of an Arabic Sibylline prophecy claims that the "Lion Cub" (i.e., the Last Roman Emperor) will come out of the west at the end of times (see E. Y. Ebied and M. J. L. Young, "An Unrecorded Arabic Version of a Sibylline Prophecy," *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 43 [1977], 297–307, at 300, 302) while a possibly fifth/eleventh- or sixth/twelfth-century recension, stemming from a Coptic milieu, prophesies the coming of "a king from the west (*gharb*)" who will rule over Egypt (see E. Y. Ebied and M. J. L. Young, "A Newly-Discovered Version of the Arabic Sibylline Prophecy," *Oriens Christianus* 60 [1976], 84–94, at 86). For the rise of the Antichrist in the west in medieval European apocalyptic thought see R. E. Lerner, "Antichrists and Antichrist in Joachim of Fiore," *Speculum* 60/3 (1985), 553–70.

[82] E.g., Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād, *al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, 309–10 [no. 1191]: "The first battle (*malhama*), according to Daniel's saying, will take place in Alexandria." See also Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:117 [no. 306] and the variants recorded in al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-awsaṭ*, ed. M. al-Ṭaḥḥān, 10 vols. (Cairo: Dār al-Haramayn, 1995), 8:110 [no. 8121]; and Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 12:444–45 [no. 1269].

[83] Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, 80.

[84] E.g., the above-mentioned Sibylline oracle in Ebied and Young, "A Newly-Discovered Version," 88 and the *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Peter* in A. Mingana, *Woodbrooke Studies*, 7 vols. (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1927–34), 3:281.

Quraysh" who will defect to the Byzantines,[85] a notion probably reflecting anti-Quraysh sentiments among the well-represented South Arabians in Egypt.[86] Anti-Umayyad variants of this type of traditions also exist.[87] Yet other traditions hold the familiar opinion that this battle will take place during the expected reign of Tiberius son of Justinian.[88] This Tiberius is most likely the Last Roman Emperor of Christian apocalyptic tradition (who is expected to bring the entire world under Christian rule) and can be found Islamized in the later Umayyad period.[89]

Historical sources record that specific events during a period of severe political instability and social unrest that had Egypt in its grasp from the death of Hārūn al-Rashīd in 193/809 until 210/825 were seen as a realization of such apocalyptic prophecies.[90] What started in 194/810 as a very local rebellion against Muḥammad al-Amīn's first governor over Egypt in two towns in the eastern Nile Delta developed within five years into large-scale anarchy. By 199/815 al-Maʾmūn's governor over Egypt controlled Fusṭāṭ and probably much of Upper Egypt, while various groups rebelled and, with varying success, claimed independence in the Nile Delta. In Alexandria the city's two major tribes, Lakhm and Mudlij, continuously rejected the governor's rule and for short periods controlled the city and its environs.[91] In the same year, enmity arose between Egypt's governor and the prominent Alexandrian Banū Ḥudayj family after one of theirs, ʿUmar b. Mallāl, was discharged soon after his appointment as head of the city's administration. To complicate matters, a very large group of Andalusian exiles landed in

[85] Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād, *al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, 353 [no. 1312, add. 3]. See also 351–52 [no. 1311], 353 [no. 1312, add. 4], 354 [no. 1312, add. 4.5]; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 12:444 [no. 1269].

[86] W. Madelung, "Apocalyptic Prophecies in Ḥimṣ in the Umayyad Age," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 31/2 (1986), 141–85, at 148–56; Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, 181. For the predominantly South Arabian presence in Egypt see J.-C. Vadet, "L'acculturation' des sud-arabiques de Fusṭāṭ au lendemain de la conquête arabe," *Bulletin d'études orientales* 22 (1969), 7–14.

[87] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:117 [no. 306]; al-Ṭabarānī, *al-Muʿjam al-awsaṭ*, 8:110 [no. 8121]; Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 12:445 [no. 1269]. See also Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, 70–71.

[88] Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād, *al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, 326 [no. 1228], 351 [no. 1310, add. 2], 353 [no. 1312, add. 2].

[89] Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, 79–80; M. Cook, "The Heraclian Dynasty in Muslim Eschatology," *al-Qanṭara* 13 (1992), 3–23, which discusses the Egyptian traditions in detail at 5–6. See also Cook, "Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions," 30–32. R. G. Hoyland (*Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* [Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997], 333–34) dates the reference to Tiberius son of Justinian to the period of Sulaymān's attempt to conquer Constantinople in 95–97/715–17.

[90] For a general outline of the period under consideration see H. Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province in the Islamic Caliphate, 641–886," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. C. F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 62–85, at 80–82.

[91] Al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa al-Quḍāt*, 153; *History of the Patriarchs*, 4:428, 430; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, ed. M. T. Houtsma, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1883), 2:541–42.

Alexandria around that year, seeking to sell the booty of their raids.[92] A year later Ibn Mallāl took control of Alexandria by force and ousted the Andalusians from the city. With the support of Lakhm and a group called al-Ṣūfiyya, the Andalusians then attacked Ibn Mallāl and, in Dhū al-Qaʿda 200/June 816, killed him, together with four of his family members.[93]

Muslim and Christian sources agree that after the killing of Ibn Mallāl the situation deteriorated severely. The tribe of Lakhm immediately turned against their Andalusian allies and fighting broke out. The *History of the Patriarchs* informs us that Alexandrian citizens sided with the Lakhmīs and that the Andalusians reacted by raging through the city and killing all the men they encountered, irrespective of religious orientation.[94] Al-Yaʿqūbī (d. 292/905 or later) writes that the Andalusians prevented Alexandrian citizens from entering their houses "so that they abandoned their homes and property."[95] Further, the Andalusians burnt each place where they found one of their own to have been killed. Having set fire to the Church of the Savior, "the conflagration spread so far that it consumed far-away buildings."[96] By Dhū al-Ḥijja/July of that year the Andalusians had forcefully conquered the city. Al-Kindī writes that, after the appointment of one ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Ṣūfi as the Andalusians' chief, "corruption, killing and plunder took proportions unheard of."[97] Chaos was complete when a little later the last major social group in the city, the tribe of Mudlij, also engaged in fighting the Andalusians, lost, and were expelled from the city together with Lakhm.[98]

It is in the context of these events that prophecies of Alexandria's destruction surface in the literature. The almost empire-wide political and social instability during and following the Fourth Civil War had fueled apocalyptic sentiments.[99] Based on biblical millenarian calculations, the approach of the year 200 AH further increased messianic expectations.[100] As we saw, it was in this year that the violence in Alexandria reached its peak. Hence, the arrival of the Andalusians was interpreted by some as the arrival of the apocalyptic "people of the west" and, therefore, as nothing

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[92] *History of the Patriarchs*, 4:428; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:541–42; al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa-l-Quḍāt*, 152–53.

[93] *History of the Patriarchs*, 4:430; al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa-l-Quḍāt*, 157–58, 161–62.

[94] *History of the Patriarchs*, 4:431–32.   [95] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:542.

[96] *History of the Patriarchs*, 4:431–32. In a different recension of the *History of the Patriarchs*, the fire "could be seen from a large distance."

[97] Al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa-l-Quḍāt*, 163–64; see also al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:542.

[98] Al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa-l-Quḍāt*, 164; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:542.

[99] H. Yücesoy, *Messianic Beliefs and Imperial Politics in Medieval Islam: The ʿAbbāsid Caliphate in the Early Ninth Century* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2009), 71–80.

[100] D. Cook, "The Year 200/815–16 and the Events Surrounding it," in *Apocalyptic Time*, ed. A. I. Baumgarten (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2000), 41–67; Yücesoy, *Messianic Beliefs*, 50–58.

less than one of the portents of the Hour.[101] For example, al-Kindī sees a direct connection between the Andalusians' violent occupation of the city and a prophecy that reportedly circulated in the first half of the third/ninth century among Alexandrian scholars. This prophecy foretells "the destruction (*kharāb*) of Alexandria and its surrounding area" by a group consisting of Muslims and non-Muslims arriving in "forty," i.e., a multitude, of ships.[102] Particularly interesting is a passage in the *History of the Patriarchs*, based on a source from 252/865–66,[103] stating that a monk from the Enaton monastery prophesied to the Alexandrians, allegedly just before the arrival of the Andalusians, that "a nation will come from the west and will destroy (*tuhliku*) without mercy this people and this city, and plunder all that it contains."[104] This passage is one of the few indications that such apocalyptic sentiments concerning Alexandria also existed, at least around the year 200/815–16, among Egypt's Christian community.

Al-Kindī and the source of the *History of the Patriarchs* saw prophecies on Alexandria's unfortunate fate as being fulfilled by the arrival of the Andalusians. It stands to reason that similar expectations are the basis of the above-discussed anecdotes on ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān and the city's preordained destruction. This destruction, according to al-Masʿūdī already foreseen by Alexander the Great, was considered the result of the role the city was destined to play in sacred history.

Conclusion

The literary theme of Alexandria's accomplished, current, or expected destruction discussed on the preceding pages assigned to the city a place

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[101] In addition to what follows, see also the apocalyptic traditions recorded by Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād prophesying the arrival of Andalusians. These may well be *vaticinia ex eventu* showing the impact of the Andalusians' occupation of Alexandria on apocalyptic lore. See J. Aguadé, "Algunos hadices sobre la ocupacion de Alejandria por un grupo de hispano-musulmanes," *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas* 12 (1976), 159–80, with the discussion in Cook, "Eschatology and the Dating of Traditions," 26–29 and J. Aguadé's short response in "La figura escatológica del Sufyānī en el *Kitāb al-Fitan* de Ibn Ḥammād," in *Legendaria medievalia: En honor de Concepción Castillo*, ed. R. G. Khoury, J. P. Monferrer-Sala, and M. J. Viguera Molins (Cordova: Ediciones El Almendro, 2011), 351–76, at 358–60.

[102] Al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa-l-Quḍāt*, 164, with the *isnād*: ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. al-Sāriḥ (unknown)—ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī al-Khaṭṭāb (unknown)—his father, Hāniʾ b. al-Mutawakkil (Alexandrian; d. 242/856) and Muḥammad b. Khallād (Alexandrian; d. 231/845)—Ḍimām b. Ismāʿīl (d. 185/801 in Alexandria)—Abū Qabīl Ḥuyayy b. Hāniʾ al-Maʿāfirī (d. 128/745). Note that al-Yaʿqūbī numbers the Andalusians' ships at 4,000 (*Taʾrīkh*, 2:542). On the symbolic use of the number 40 and its multiples to designate great multitude see L. I. Conrad, "Abraha and Muḥammad: Some Observations apropos of Chronology and Literary *Topoi* in the Early Arabic Historical Tradition," *Bulletin of SOAS* 50/2 (1987), 225–40, at 230–32.

[103] Den Heijer, *Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr*, 147. [104] *History of the Patriarchs*, 4:428–29.

in Islam's sacred geography. Seen in the context of Zayde Antrim's "discourse of place," notions of Alexandria's destruction legitimized a localized sense of belonging to the *umma* at large and therefore contributed to the development or bolstering of a hybrid Egyptian–Muslim identity. The theme adds to other literary definitions of Egypt's place in Islam and, in contrast to texts that stress Egypt's unique character,[105] belongs to a set of ideas that argue for Egypt's universal religious meaningfulness.[106] Unsurprisingly, most of the texts discussed above are of Egyptian provenance. Alexandria's religious image, however, also found an audience beyond Egypt's borders. The widespread attestation of the Three Times Three-Hundred Story shows this most clearly. But statements ascribed to non-Egyptian scholars promoting the practice of *jihād* or *ribāṭ* in Alexandria, whether or not stimulated by apocalyptic sentiments, equally testify to the reception or development of (a) religious image(s) of the city outside Egypt's main Islamic centers.[107]

When this religious image of the city started to develop in Muslim circles remains uncertain,[108] but it had matured by the third/ninth century, for by that time ideas about Alexandria's role in sacred history are recorded to have received independent attention. For instance, the fourth/tenth-century Ibn Yūnus consulted a book entitled *Kitāb Fatḥ al-Iskandariyya* ascribed to the well-known Medinan historian Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Wāqidī (d. 207/822).[109]

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[105] Sijpesteijn, "Building an Egyptian Identity."

[106] K. Öhrnberg, "Māriya al-Qibṭiyya Unveiled," *Studia Orientalia* 55/14 (1984), 295–304, at 297–303.

[107] The best-known example is probably the surprisingly early statement that "Alexandria is the best of your littorals (*sawāḥil*) for *ribāṭ*," put into the mouth of the Medinan scholar ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Hurmuz (d. 117/735–36): see al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, 223 (cf. Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, 36:31–32). Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadhānī records a similar statement ascribed to the Prophet (*al-Buldān*, 69 [repeated in Yāqūt al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1:183]). In an apocalyptic context, a Ḥimṣī tradition recorded by Nuʿaym b. Ḥammād (*al-Fitan wa-l-malāḥim*, 354 [no. 1312, add. 4.6]; copied in Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār*, 5:117) has Kaʿb al-Aḥbār exclaim, "I hope I do not die before I witness the battle day of Alexandria (*yawm al-Iskandariyya*)," by which Alexandria's main *malḥama* is meant.

[108] The idea that Alexandria would eventually be destroyed is as old as the city itself. It can be found in *The Potter's Oracle*, a text stemming from nativist circles and composed in reaction to the transfer of Egypt's main sanctuary from Memphis to Alexandria in the fourth century BCE: see, e.g., D. Gieseler Greenbaum, *The Daimon in Hellenistic Astrology: Origins and Influence* (Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2015), 84–85; and V. K. Robbins, *The Invention of Christian Discourse*, vol. 1 (Langton Long Blanford: Deo Publishing, 2009), 385–91. The full destruction of Alexandria occasionally appears in other pre-Islamic literature, such as in an early fourth-century epigram ascribed to Palladas of Alexandria: see K. W. Wilkinson, *New Epigrams of Palladas: A Fragmentary Papyrus Codex (P.CtYBR inv. 4000)* (Durham, NC: American Society for Papyrologists, 2012), 154–56.

[109] Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh*, 1:278–79 [no. 758]. In all likelihood, al-Wāqidī's *Kitāb Fatḥ al-Iskandariyya* is not (in part) identical with Ps.-al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb Futūḥ Miṣr wa-l-Iskandariyya* (ed. H. A. Hamaker [Leiden: S. & J. Luchtmans, 1825]), which is erroneously ascribed to him. For the latter book's late

Traditions circulated by scholars such as the Harranian ʿAmr b. Khālid al-Tamīmī (d. 229/843–44) and his son ʿAbd al-Salām (*fl.* second half of the third/ninth century), or Maṭrūḥ b. Muḥammad b. Shākir al-Quḍāʿī (d. 273/886) – the latter two lived in Alexandria – reportedly concentrated on the city's religious virtues.[110] The oldest known book devoted to this subject, a *Kitāb Faḍāʾil al-Iskandariyya*, is ascribed to a fourth/tenth-century scholar named Ibn al-Ṣabbāgh.[111] These examples, as well as the texts studied above, make clear that by the third/ninth century Alexandria had become a *lieu de mémoire* strongly associated with significant events in sacred history.

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[110] medieval date and context see C. Décobert, "La prise de Maryût par les Arabes: conquête et conversion religieuse," in *Alexandrie médiévale 3*, ed. J.-Y. Empereur and C. Décobert (Cairo: IFAO, 2008), 145–70, esp. 146–50.

[110] Al-Dhahabī, *Mīzān al-iʿtidāl fī naqd al-rijāl*, ed. ʿA. M. al-Bijāwī, 4 vols. (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifa, 1382/1963), 2:618 [no. 5059] and 4:126 [no. 8584]; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Lisān al-mīzān*, ed. ʿA. Abū Ghadda, 10 vols. (Beirut: Maktab al-Maṭbūʿāt al-Islāmiyya, 1423/2002), 5:177 [no. 4767] and 8:84 [no. 7780].

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Scribal Networks, Taxation, and the Role of Coptic in Marwanid Egypt

Jennifer Cromwell

Introduction

After the Arab conquest of 639–42 CE Egypt became part of the burgeoning Islamic empire. Over the course of the seventh and eighth centuries a series of measures was introduced by the new rulers. They established a *dīwān* in Egypt's new capital, Fusṭāṭ, a postal service, a system of *corvées* targeted toward equipping the navy and providing labor for major construction projects, and a new religious poll tax payable by all adult non-Muslim men. This period is characterized by increasing Arabization (the use of Arabic) and Islamization (the appointment of Muslim officials throughout the country, replacing local officials).[1] The wealth of the surviving textual sources from Egypt – in Arabic (the language of the new rulers), Greek (the administrative and legal language of the previous regime, as well as that of a considerable number of the population), and Coptic (the indigenous language) – is unrivaled and allows us to examine language use in the country after the conquest in a way that is not possible for other provinces in the empire.

Arabic was used from the outset, even if in a limited way, as the bilingual Greek–Arabic *SB* VI 9576, dated April 25, 643, demonstrates.[2] Greek continued to be used, albeit in a more reduced capacity to before the conquest (as Janneke H. M. de Jong's contribution to the current volume

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[1] As introductions to these processes see P. M. Sijpesteijn, "The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Beginning of Muslim Rule," in *Egypt and the Byzantine World, 300–700 AD*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 437–59; and P. M. Sijpesteijn, "New Rule over Old Structures: Egypt after the Muslim Conquest," in *Regime Change in the Ancient Near East and Egypt, from Sargo of Agade to Saddam Hussein*, ed. H. Crawford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 183–200.

[2] All papyrological sigla conform with the *Checklist of Editions* (papyri.info/docs/checklist). In addition, *P.Akoris* refers to the texts edited by J. Jarry in Paleological Association of Japan/Egyptian Committee, *Akoris: Report of the Excavations at Akoris in Middle Egypt, 1981–1992* (Kyoto: Koyo Shobo, 1995).

[Chapter 12] demonstrates). Alongside this decreasing use of Greek, the post-conquest period is especially notable for the role of Coptic, in particular during the Marwanid era. This period saw the first use of Coptic for administrative purposes, that is, not only for personal means (whether in a domestic context, for personal communication, or for legal documents). The use of Coptic within the country's bureaucratic framework is not a natural progression of its development in other private domains, but instead an innovative practice that began after the conquest.[3] This situation was not, however, one of the Copticization of the administration, in terms either of scale of language use or of personnel. Nevertheless, the Egyptian language was used in a way not pursued by previous regimes, as a means of ensuring the dissemination – and ideally the success – of new measures at a local level. The aim of this chapter is to examine how Coptic was developed and used for such purposes, and to propose reasons why this was the case. Ultimately, I argue that Coptic provides a rare opportunity to view how indigenous languages were used as vehicles for the implementation of the new rulers' policies. However, it is more difficult to determine whether we can extrapolate from this particular case to speak of imperial language policies or if we only see responses at a local level.[4]

In order to address these objectives, it is necessary to first scrutinize the available sources. As such, what follows begins with an analysis of the relevant Coptic texts, with particular focus on tax demands (both their linguistic and palaeographic features). From this philological survey, how and when this new practice came about will be examined, as well as how the knowledge to produce such texts was disseminated. Finally, I explore why Coptic was used for these purposes and how the type of documents and when they appear are best understood in the context of broader empire-wide events.

A Trilingual Environment

As stated, Arabic was used in Egypt immediately after the conquest, alongside Greek, the language of the previous administration. The first datable Coptic document after the conquest is *SB Kopt.* I 242, a collective

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[3] On the development of Coptic in the sixth century, which marked a particular period of expansion in its use, see J.-L. Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic: Egyptian Versus Greek in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

[4] See further J. Cromwell, "Language Policy and the Administrative Framework of Early Islamic Egypt," in *(Re)Constructing Ancient Egyptian Society: Challenging Assumptions, Exploring Approaches*, ed. K. Cooney, D. Candelora, and N. Ben-Marzouk (London: Routledge, 2022), 219–32.

agreement between guilds of Edfū and its pagarch, Liberios, concerning the imposition of black pepper upon them. The document is dated Paope 27, indiction year 8, and the oath is sworn by the great governor (Greek σύμβουλος, the equivalent of *amīr* in the Arabic papyri) ʿAbd Allāh (ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲗⲁⲥ ⲡⲛⲟϭ ⲛ̄ⲥⲩⲙⲃⲟⲩⲗⲟⲥ). It can thus be dated absolutely to October 24, 649. While a legal document, not an administrative text, *SB Kopt*. I 242 is notable for several reasons: Coptic was chosen to write this agreement, between a senior official and principal guilds in the town, and it is the first mention of an Arab governor in a Coptic document. The main part of the document is written in an unligatured majuscule hand, a very "Coptic" hand, with no resemblance to contemporary Greek documents of a similar kind.

By the end of the seventh century Coptic started to be used in a new context, for the writing of tax demands (*entagia*), issued in the name of the pagarch to individual taxpayers (with one exception, as noted below).[5] These Coptic texts belong to a larger body of *entagia*, which appear from as early as 687/88[6] until the early Abbasid period – the precise dates of many *entagia* are lost and dating generally is compounded by the problem of dating Arab pagarchs, so it is not possible to produce a precise chronology of the texts. The Coptic texts are quite standardized and, while Coptic is used for the main body of the texts, they are framed by Greek formulae that are linguistically and visually demarcated from the Coptic components. As such, they could be referred to as bilingual Coptic–Greek texts. However, despite their mixed-language composition, I will refer to them only as Coptic *entagia*, in order not to confuse their language use with the bilingual Arabic–Greek *entagia*, in which the same text is written entirely in Arabic and then entirely in Greek.

As Alain Delattre and Naïm Vanthieghem have most recently discussed in their commentary to *P. Gascou* 28, there is a clear distinction in the use of the different languages.[7] Only Arabic–Greek *entagia* were issued in the name of the governor to the collective inhabitants of each locality; Coptic

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[5] In Coptic texts, *entagion* (ⲉⲛⲧⲁⲅⲓⲟⲛ) is used for tax receipts, notably in the Theban receipts of the 710s and early 720s, not for the demands themselves. However, as *entagia* is the term used in the scholarly discourse, I use it as such here.

[6] *SB* XXVI 16797, issued by Flavius Mena in Herakleiopolis, may be as early as 687/88, although the later 702/03 date cannot be discounted. Its date cannot be later, i.e., 717/18, as at this time only Arab pagarchs are expected. For Flavius Mena see N. Gonis and F. Morelli, "A Requisition for the 'Commander of the Faithful': SPP VIII 1082 Revisited," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 132 (2000), 193–95, at 194.

[7] See also A. Delattre, N. Vanthieghem, and R. Pintaudi, "Un *entagion* bilingue du governeur ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān trouvé à Antinoe," *Chronique d'Égypte* 88 (2013), 363–71, at 366.

was never used at this level, only from the pagarch to individuals.[8] Delattre and Vanthieghem also note a general geographic trend in language use, with Coptic typically being from Middle and Upper Egypt and Greek from the Fayyūm. In terms of Coptic *entagia*, there are no attestations from the Fayyūm region. However, Greek *entagia* were also issued in the Nile Valley, at Antinoopolis, by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān[9] and later by Māzin b. Jabala;[10] Herakleiopolis, under different pagarchs (Paulos son of *NN*,[11] Rāshid b. Khālid, Nājid b. Muslim[12]); Aphrodito, issued by Qurra b. Sharīk;[13] and Balaʾizah.[14] In addition, *P.Apoll.* 1 is a Greek writing exercise in which formulae common to *entagia* are practiced. It should be stressed that there are no Coptic *entagia* from Herakleiopolis and Aphrodito. Also of note is that there are no Greek *entagia* from Hermopolis; given that it was the seat of its own pagarchy, one would expect more Greek and Arabic examples. This lack may, however, be the result of the current state of affairs in the study of Hermopolis and its texts in the seventh and eighth centuries, and Greek *entagia* may yet await discovery.[15]

The language distribution of these texts is not therefore clear, and it is perhaps dangerous to draw strong conclusions in this respect. Even at Jeme (western Thebes), an Egyptian village with almost exclusively Coptic documentation, including two Coptic *entagia*, Greek was sometimes used to write tax receipts. However, the important point remains that

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[8] The only known example of a bilingual Arabic–Coptic *entagion*, *P.Clackson* 45, is dated after the Abbasid conquest, to December 753, and so reflects a later development. See the discussion by P. M. Sijpesteijn and S. J. Clackson, "A Mid-Eighth-Century Trilingual Tax Demand-Note Related to the Monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawīṭ," in *Monastic Estates in Late Antique and Early Islamic Egypt: Ostraca, Papyri, and Essays in Memory of Sarah Clackson*, ed. A. Boud'hors, J. Clackson, C. Louis, and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Cincinnati: American Society of Papyrologists, 2009), 102–19. This bilingual *entagion* is later than the earliest attested Arabic *entagion* for an individual Christian taxpayer, *P.Cair.Arab.* III 169 (752). Harold Bell's comment concerning a Greek requisitioning order, that "being addressed by a Copt to Copts" it "had no need to use Arabic," oversimplifies the nature of language use in the first century of Islamic rule: H. I. Bell, "A Requisitioning Order for Taxes in Kind," *Aegyptus* 32 (1951), 307–12, at 311.

[9] *P.Gascou* 27b.

[10] N. Gonis and G. Schenke, "Two *Entagia* from Cambridge," *Chronique d'Égypte* 88 (2013), 372–78, at 372–75.

[11] *SB* XX 14682 (=*Stud.Pal.* VIII 1182).

[12] Respectively, *CPR* XIX 26 (Rāshid) and *CPR* XXII 8–10 and *SB* XVI 12857 (Nājid b. Muslim).

[13] See the list in T. S. Richter, "Language Choice in the Qurra Dossier," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 189–219, at 201.

[14] *P.Bal.* 130 (=*SB* XXVIII 17257), 181, 182. See N. Gonis, "Arabs, Monks, and Taxes: Notes on Documents from Deir el-Balaʾizah," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 148 (2004), 213–24.

[15] Texts from Hermopolis are scattered over numerous collections, with those in Manchester (John Rylands Library), London (British Library), and Vienna (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek) being of particular note. Much of this material still needs to be edited and translated.

with these tax demands Coptic was used for the first time at a local level, as part of the administrative apparatus, as a means for the rulers to communicate directly with the indigenous, non-Muslim population.

Coptic *Entagia*

The process whereby taxes were calculated by the central government has long been established.[16] The governor wrote *entagia* to each pagarch stating the amount owed by each district in the pagarchy. This sum was divided among the eligible taxpayers, at which point individual *entagia* were issued. As already stated, Coptic was only used for demands issued to individual taxpayers, the exception being *P. Gascou* 28, which was issued to the inhabitants of Hermopolis collectively (this text is also distinct for being the only one not concerned with taxes, but with naval duty, and so may represent a slightly different practice). Apart from *SB Kopt*. IV 1781 and 1782, both of which were issued by Apakyre to taxpayers in Akoris, the Coptic *entagia* were issued by Arab pagarchs.[17] The key details of all known Coptic *entagia* are collected in the appendix to this chapter.

As stated in the previous section, Coptic *entagia* are framed by Greek formulae written in a different script, rendering these sections linguistically and palaeographically distinct from the main Coptic text. Before moving on to broader questions concerning the development of Coptic *entagia* and the dissemination of the scribal practices required to produce them, this section provides a detailed overview of their key features.[18]

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[16] Key examples of such early studies are L. Casson, "Tax-Collection Problems in Early Arab Egypt," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 69 (1938), 274–91, esp. 275; and H. I. Bell, "The Arabic Bilingual Entagion," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 89 (1945), 531–42.

[17] The best-attested official among the Coptic tax demands, Atias son of Goedos, seems to have been an Arab (in which case his name is to be rendered ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd), an identification that may be supported by the title *amīr* in *CPR* VIII 72.2: Ἀτίας ἀμιρᾶ. For the Arabic rendering see H. I. Bell, "Two Official Letters of the Arab Period," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 12 (1926), 265–81, at 267 (based on Joseph von Karabacek's identification of the name with ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd), which has received general consensus in later studies, most recently P. M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 119. For other *entagia* issued by Christian pagarchs see note 4 concerning Flavius Mena and Gonis and Morelli, "A Requisition for the 'Commander of the Faithfull'," 194.

[18] Images of many of the *entagia* discussed are available either online or in print: *CPR* II 123, *CPR* IV 3–6 (online catalogue of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek); *P. Gascou* 28 (in print); *P. Mich. inv.* 3383 (L. Berkes, "Griechisch und Koptisch in der Verwaltung des früharabischen Ägypten: Ein neues ἐντάγιον," in *Byzanz und das Abendland II: Studia Byzantino-Occidentalia*, ed. E. Juhász [Budapest: Eötvös-József-Collegium, 2014], 189–94 at 192; also online via APIS); *P. Mon. Apollo* 28–30 (in print); R. 11 Copt. 5 no. 8 (Gonis and Schenke, "Two *Entagia*," 376); *SB Kopt*. IV 1781–82 (in the plates accompanying their original publication in *P. Akoris*).

Coptic *entagia* were not standardized forms that simply needed to have specific details – the taxpayer's name and amount of tax paid – filled in at a later date, as appears to have been the practice in the early Abbasid Fayyūm.[19] While the inclusion of minor details is sporadic, such as further identification of the taxpayers by occupation,[20] even *entagia* issued from the same office show variation in formulae. For example, taking the texts issued by Atias son of Goedos, different formulae are employed for the notification of the tax quota:

CPR IV 3.2: ⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ϩⲁ ⲡ̄ⲕⲁⲛⲁ(ⲣⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ) ⲛⲏ ⲓ̈ⲛⲇ(ⲓⲕⲧⲓ́ⲱⲛⲟⲥ)[21] ⲛⲟⲩϩⲗⲟⲕ(ⲟⲧⲧⲓⲛⲟⲥ) ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲧⲣⲓⲙⲏⲥⲉⲛ ⲥⲛⲁⲩ "One *holokottinos* and two *tremises* are due from you for your poll tax (*andrismos*) of the 8th indiction year."

   CPR IV 4.2–5: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛ[ⲉ] ⲛ[ⲧ?]ⲁⲥⲧⲟϩⲟⲕ [ⲉⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲅⲧⲁⲁⲩ . . .] . . . ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ [. . ⲥ]ⲛⲁⲩ ⲛ̄ⲁⲣⲓⲑⲙⲓⲛ ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲟⲩⲡⲁϣ ⲧⲣⲓⲙⲏⲥⲓⲛ "These are what are due from you [to pay . . .] . . . namely two counted [*holokottinoi*] and half a *tremis*."

   CPR IV 6.2: ⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ⲛⲥⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲧⲣⲓⲙⲏⲥⲓⲛ ϩⲁ ⲡⲉⲕⲇⲓ[ⲁ]ⲅⲣ(ⲁⲫⲟⲛ) ⲛ̄ⲡⲕⲁⲛⲱ(ⲛ) ⲛⲁ ⲓ̈ⲛⲇ(ⲓⲕⲧⲓ́ⲱⲛⲟⲥ) "Two *tremises* are due from you for your poll tax (*diagraphon*) for the assessment of the 1st indiction year."

   SB Kopt. IV 1783.3: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ ⲛϣⲁⲥⲧⲁϩ[ⲟⲕ ⲙⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲅⲧⲁⲁⲩ . . .] "These are what are due [from you to pay . . .]"

   SB Kopt. IV 1785.3–4: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ [ⲛⲧⲁⲥⲧⲁ]ϩⲟⲧⲏⲩⲧⲛ ⲉⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲉⲧⲛⲉⲧⲁⲁⲩ . . . "These are what are due from you (pl.) to pay . . . "

The main formulaic change is between the construction ⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ϩⲁ and ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ ⲛⲧⲁⲥⲧⲟϩⲟⲕ/ⲛϣⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ⲙⲙⲟⲟⲩ,[22] but the above examples show considerable levels of variation in word order. Although none of these texts contains an absolute date (and no dates are preserved in *SB Kopt*. IV 1783 and 1785), based on the broader context of the Atias dossier they date to 696–703 or possibly 703–11.[23] Within this date range, *CPR* IV 3 and 4 were written in the same year, but not by the same scribe – the formulae and palaeography of the two texts (letter formation and ligaturing patterns) are

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[19] *Stud.Pal*. VIII 1199 and 1200 (both dated 759 and from the office of the Arsinoite pagarch Yaḥyā b. Hilāl) contain a series of four and three *entagia*, respectively, each group written on the same piece of papyrus that was not cut into individual texts, and which provide space for the later addition of the salient details. See N. Gonis, "Reconsidering Some Fiscal Documents from Early Islamic Egypt III," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 169 (2009), 197–208, at 198.

[20] In *P.Ryl.Copt*. 118 Severos is identified as a goldsmith, while Zacharias in *CPR* IV 3 is a fruit buyer.

[21] For the writing of the indiction date (as well as other features of these *entagia*) as Greek see J. Cromwell, "Coptic Texts in the Archive of Flavius Atias," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 184 (2013), 280–88, at 284–87. The issue of biscriptality (the use of two different scripts by the same individual for different purposes) is discussed further below.

[22] It is possible that all the Atias texts employed ⲛϣⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ, as the alternative is reconstructed in lacuna in both *CPR* IV 4.2 and *SB Kopt*. IV 1785. However, the relative I perfect is standard in the rest of the Coptic texts.

[23] Cromwell, "Coptic Texts," 283–84 discusses the issues of the date of these *entagia*.

too different to assign them to the same individual. Similar variation is found throughout the other individual dossiers, of Rāshid b. Khālid and Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.[24] It appears that a number of scribes were involved, who brought their own individual influences to the *entagia* that they wrote. Such variation was most likely possible because no set form had been determined for this new Coptic text type.[25]

However, in spite of the lack of a set formula to which all *entagia* had to conform, several features are held in common across the entire group that serve to bind them together: the *bismillah* (σὺν θεῷ); the address (*NN* υἱὸς *NN* ⲡϥⲥϩⲁⲓ ⲛ*NN* ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ*NN*); administrative practice (e.g., the recording of the amount of tax due in both Coptic and Greek[26]); and the use of two scripts for writing the Coptic and Greek components of the texts. Therefore, while particulars in detail and points of style and formulae occur, they do so within a common framework.

The *bismillah* only occurs as σὺν θεῷ in Coptic *entagia*, and never ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ θεοῦ, which occurs in many of the Greek *entagia*.[27] The distinction in use between the two does not appear to be a chronological one: the *entagia* issued by Qurra b. Sharīk to Aphrodito postdate the Atias texts but only use ἐν ἐνόματι τοῦ θεοῦ. The use of σὺν θεῷ may be a development from the late seventh century, which was adopted wholesale in the newly produced Coptic texts but took longer to become standard in Greek texts. It was clearly a part of the standard training of professional administrative scribes in the eighth century, as a number of practice pieces attest, notably *SB* XVIII 13247 (ca. 750) and *P.Rain.Unterricht* 93v (date uncertain, perhaps late seventh century).[28] There is a high level of

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24 Due to the fragmentary nature of many of the *entagia*, it is difficult to quantify the level of formulaic variation, and the lack of accessible images for many of them means that their palaeography cannot be compared. In terms of formulae, the difficulty faced by original editors in identifying some *entagia* also means that some of the traces may not be correctly read. For example, the initial formula of *P.Ryl.Copt.* 378, part of Yazīd's dossier, is read as ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ ⲧⲁⲧⲛ ϩⲛⲏⲛⲙⲟ . . . . ⲁⲩ, from which no meaning can be derived. Reexamination of the original – in light of the vast increase in our knowledge of *entagia* since its publication in 1909 – may instead identify among the traces constructions that are attested elsewhere.

25 The Jeme tax receipts show an interesting evolution in form over the approximately two decades in which they were issued. Only a small number of scribes were responsible for the receipts, which can broadly be divided into two groups, one dated ca. 710–26, after which there is a clear break in terms of formulae and palaeography. Between 726 and 730 the receipts are remarkable for their homogeneity in form. This development is discussed in J. Cromwell, *Recording Village Life: A Coptic Scribe in Early Islamic Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), ch. 4.

26 On this point see Cromwell, "Coptic Texts," 286. I will not discuss it further here.

27 The appearance of both in *entagia* was noted in R. Rémondon, "Ordre de paiement d'époque arabe pour l'impôt de capitation," *Aegyptus* 32 (1952), 257–64, at 259.

28 These examples stand in marked contrast to *P.Apoll.* 1, an exercise in writing *entagia* in the name of an *amīr* Οὐοειθ, possibly a rendering of Ḥuwayth or ʿUwaydh, that only employs ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ

consistency in the writing of σὺν θεῷ, with a large initial *sigma* ligatured to the next two letters and a superlinear *theta*, which points to a shared scribal practice.[29]

Two aspects of the opening address are of note: the combination of Greek and Coptic, and the construction ⲡϥⲥϩⲁⲓ. In almost all of the Coptic *entagia*, Greek is used for the name of the official, after which there is a change to Coptic.[30] This language shift is witnessed in the use of υἱός rather than ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ and the palaeography, which employs Greek letter forms that are markedly different to their Coptic counterparts. Following from σὺν θεῷ (and frequently ending with a Greek résumé of the amount of tax), the *entagia* are framed in Greek, although all the content is Coptic. It is possible that this use of Greek is purely a graphic element, with υἱός used as a symbol for "son of" (it is written in a highly formulaic and abbreviated manner in which *upsilon* and *iota* are ligatured together and a superlinear dot suffices for *omicron*) that was not actually vocalized as Greek, but as ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ (as later Coptic evidence suggests).[31] However, how universal such an understanding was is difficult to determine, especially in a large town such as Hermopolis, where most of the Coptic *entagia* were drawn up, with a higher number of Greek speakers and writers than in, for example, Jeme.

The construction ⲡϥⲥϩⲁⲓ, an unetymological writing of ⲡⲉ ⲉϥⲥϩⲁⲓ (the copula + circumstantial I present), is a distinctively Middle Egyptian construction, as has been demonstrated by Alain Delattre and Sebastian

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θεοῦ. In *SB* III 7240 Atias/ʿAṭiyya confirms a *sigillion* (letter of protection) issued from his predecessor: Οὐοειθ τοῦ ποτὲ διοικήσαντος τὴν ἄνω χώραν "Ḥuwayth/ʿUwaydh, formerly administrator of the Upper Land." Concerning the official's name, the original editor, Bell, noted that he might be an Arab official and chose to transcribe the name as "Ghuwaith (?)" (Bell, "Two Official Letters," 274). M. Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The Duke of the Thebaid and the Formation of the Umayyad State," *Historical Research* 89 (2016), 3–18, at 11 n. 50 suggests Ḥuwayth as a more satisfactory reading of the name, based on tenth-century literary attestations. The alternative interpretation, ʿUwaydh, is based on attestations from Nessana: *P.Ness.* III 56.5 (Arabic script) and 57.3, 77.16, and 81.1–2 (Greek script), as brought to my attention by Jelle Bruning, whom I thank for this suggestion. Regardless of how the name is resolved, the presence of Οὐοειθ in *P.Apoll.* 1 should date the text to 688–89, not the earlier proposed date, 658–59.

[29] Online and published images of the *entagia* (see note 18) can be compared with the exercises involving σὺν θεῷ. Images of the two exercises are also available online: *P.Rain.Unterricht* 93v on the catalogue of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek and *SB* XVIII 13247 on the Berliner Papyrusdatenbank (BerlPap) of the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

[30] Apart from ⲁⲡⲁⲕⲩⲣⲏ in *SB Kopt.* IV 1781 (whose name may be written as Greek, as a variant of Ἀπάκυρος, or Coptic), there is only one example in which the official's name is written in Coptic: ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān in *P.Mon.Apollo* 28 (ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲗⲗⲁ ⲡϣⲉⲛ ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲣⲙⲁⲛ).

[31] The occurrence of ⲙⲩἱός suggests that the scribe understands rather ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ and has assimilated the function morpheme ⲛ to ⲙ, as correct before ⲡ. I would like to thank Sebastian Richter (Berlin) for this information.

Richter.[32] Its use in *P.Bal.* 130 Appendix A, from Jeme, is therefore exceptional. Aristophanes son of Johannes, the scribe of this *entagion*, is the only Theban scribe to whom this form can certainly be attributed. He also used it, albeit incorrectly when trying to adapt it for multiple individuals, in several other texts that he wrote that are connected with taxation. How do we account for his use of this grammatical construction, which is distinctly non-Theban?

Together with this non-local form, Aristophanes also introduced new palaeographic practices into western Thebes, from the mid-720s. In brief, this comprised the adoption of a more cursive script and the use of a separate script for writing Greek-language sections of documents, that is, not simply Greek loanwords or phrases within the Coptic text, but distinct sections written entirely in Greek.[33] As well as a change in overall appearance, the two scripts also employ different letter forms (as noted above), among which *beta*, *lambda*, *mu*, *pi*, and *upsilon* serve as diagnostic letters, as their forms differ significantly. In brief, in Greek *beta* is written in its minuscule form, *lambda* has a long left limb that descends below the line of writing, *mu* also has a descending initial vertical stroke that typically ends in a tick, *pi* is almost an *omega* with a horizontal stroke, and *upsilon* is in its minuscule form.[34] Both scripts have more in common with texts produced elsewhere in Egypt than they do with the writing of their predecessors in Jeme and elsewhere in western Thebes.[35]

As will be argued below, the only way to account for the simultaneous dispersal of region-specific grammatical constructions and the geographic spread of new palaeographic features is the existence of scribal networks

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[32] A. Delattre, "La formule épistolaire copte 'c'est votre serviteur qui ose écrire à son Seigneur'," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 51 (2005), 105–11; T. S. Richter, "The Pattern ⲡⲉⲧⲥⲱⲧⲙ 'the One Who Hears' in Coptic Documentary Texts," in *Labor Omnia Uicit Improbus: Miscellanea in Honorem Ariel Shisha-Halevy*, ed. N. Bosson, A. Boud'hors, and S. H. Aufrère (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 315–30.

[33] For this feature of Aristophanes's texts see J. Cromwell, "Aristophanes Son of Johannes: An Eighth-Century Bilingual Scribe? A Study of Graphic Bilingualism," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 221–32, and Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*. *P.CLT* 3 contains a non-standard use of Greek by Aristophanes: the bottom of the letter includes a list of three men with descriptions of their main physical characteristics. This section is rendered visually distinct from the rest of the letter by its switch to Aristophanes's Greek script – the change is great enough that one does not have to be able to read the words to recognize that they are written differently. An image is available both in print (*P.CLT* pl. V) and via the Metropolitan Museum of Art's online catalogue (inv. 24.2.6).

[34] The table in Cromwell, "Aristophanes Son of Johannes," 227 compares these letters.

[35] A particularly striking similarity is witnessed between the works of Aristophanes and the scribe Theodore from Aphrodito (for a list of his texts see Richter, "Language Choice," 213–14), whose texts predate those of Aristophanes by fifteen years. For a preliminary comparison of the two men see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, ch. 6.

and the transmission of scribal practices throughout Egypt. In this respect, it is important to note what is meant here by scribal networks. Scribes most immediately operated within their own communities, forming their local networks comprising individuals with whom they were personally acquainted. They were also part of additional networks that extended beyond communal boundaries. While some networks would have involved individuals known to them, others were based on different criteria – in terms of the documents and scribes in question here, these networks were based on administrative practices and literacy. Within this second category of networks, it was not necessary for all members to know each other, or even to recognize the existence of such a network or community.[36] Rather, our identification of networks allows us to examine where knowledge came from and how it arose, including under what circumstances the individuals involved acquired the skills and technical expertise required to produce the documents in question. It is not necessary to know the identity of the scribes who wrote these texts (and such information is not always available, as is the case with the *entagia* under analysis here). The documents themselves become the text community and are identifiable based on common ways of using language and in how they act in relation to knowledge.[37] As such, these scribal networks – or text communities – do not need to be tied to strict chronologic or geographic boundaries.[38] Rather, they bring together documents exhibiting common features and allow us to ask broader questions of knowledge exchange across physical communities.

A Question of Transmission

It is one thing to describe these phenomena – the development of new text types in Coptic, new scripts, biscriptality, and grammatical forms – but it is an entirely different matter to explain how they were disseminated throughout Egypt. In terms of tracing palaeographic changes, two methodological problems currently hinder analysis of the situation. The first is a question of access to the original manuscripts. In order to undertake any

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[36] As stressed by M. Stenroos, "From Scribal Repertoire to Text Community: The Challenge of Variable Writing Systems," in *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*, ed. J. Cromwell and E. Grossman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 20–40, at 34.

[37] On text communities see Stenroos, "From Scribal Repertoire to Text Community," 34–37.

[38] For example, it is highly unlikely that the scribes Theodore and Aristophanes son of Johannes mentioned in note 35 were acquainted with one another, or that Aristophanes had seen any document produced by the older scribe.

form of palaeographic examination, consultation of the papyri themselves is of paramount importance, but only a small number of the relevant texts have been published or are available online.[39] In addition, other seventh- and eighth-century Coptic texts await full editions as well as study, in particular the texts from Hermopolis and the Coptic component of the archive of Papas of Edfū.[40]

The second issue is the nature of palaeographic analysis itself. Not only is Coptic palaeography, especially of non-literary material, an under-studied field, there has been no development of digital tools to examine handwriting.[41] It is not therefore possible to tackle rigorously several questions connected to the dissemination of handwriting styles: How similar do the products of different scribes need to be in order to identify shared scribal practices? And conversely, how can the works of an individual scribe be distinguished from those of multiple scribes trained in the same style? As H. I. Bell noted, in his introduction to *P.Lond.* IV,[42] distinguishing between the texts of different scribes working in the same place (here Aphrodito) is no easy task:

> No doubt several clerks are represented in the collection; but the general type of hand is so similar from letter to letter, and the slight dissimilarity between certain of the documents so easily accounted for by differences of pen, of ink, and of the speed at which they were written, that it is

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[39] See note 18 for the availability of images of the *entagia* under discussion here. This issue of access is especially true of the Aphrodito and Jeme texts in the British Library, examples of which are mentioned throughout this chapter. These texts constitute datable eighth-century corpora of known provenance that provide considerable amounts of comparative material, but examination of extra-textual features (e.g., palaeography, non-textual marks) currently needs to be done in person or on the basis of purchased digital images.

[40] See note 15 for details of the Hermopolis texts. The papyri from the archive of Papas, which are held by the Institut français d'archéologie orientale (IFAO) in Cairo, are currently being studied and prepared for publication by a team led by Alain Delattre and Anne Boud'hors. Pending their publication, L. S. B. MacCoull, "The Coptic Papyri from Apollonos Ano," in *Proceedings of the XVIII International Congress of Papyrology, Athens 25–31 May 1986*, ed. B. Mandilaras, 2 vols. (Athens: Greek Papyrological Society, 1988), 2:141–60 remains the main introduction to the Coptic texts. However, see now A. Boud'hors, "Situating the Figure of Papas, Pagarch of Edfu at the End of the Seventh Century: The Contribution of the Coptic Documents," in *Living the End of Antiquity: Individual Histories from Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ed. S. R. Huebner, E. Garosi, I. Marthot-Santaniello, et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 63–71 for an indication of what the Coptic texts have to offer. The Greek texts from the archive were published in 1953, in *P.Apoll.*

[41] Current endeavors, such as the Ancient Lives Project, based on the Oxyrhynchus corpus, focus on recognition of ancient text as an aid for decipherment, rather than on study of the script itself. In this respect, more work has been undertaken on the Hebrew Geniza texts: see L. Wolf et al., "Automatic Paleographic Exploration of Genizah Manuscripts," in *Kodikologie und Paläographie im Digitalen Zeitalter 2*, ed. F. Fischer, C. Fritze, and G. Vogeler (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2011), 157–79.

[42] H. I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum: Catalogue, with Texts*, vol. 4: *The Aphrodito Papyri, with an appendix of Coptic papyri by W. E. Crum* (London: British Museum, 1910), xli–xlii.

exceedingly difficult to distinguish various hands, and it has been thought wiser not to make the attempt.

In discussing the Aphrodito Coptic texts, Bell notes the similarity with the later Jeme legal documents.[43]

In addition to these methodological problems, tracing the dissemination of scribal practices requires solid dates for the material. The Aphrodito *entagia*, all of which are written in Greek, were issued by Qurra b. Sharīk and date to 709–10.[44] At Aphrodito itself, Coptic was used instead to record the responses of the local authorities to the demands of the central government. Within this corpus, the scribe Theodore stands out with a dossier of twenty-four documents.[45] His texts date to the end of the governorship of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Malik and the beginning of that of Qurra. More precisely, every text that preserves a date is from 708 to 709 and concerns official matters: guarantees concerning sailors for naval duty and workmen for projects in Egypt and beyond; taxes, including requisitions of money for construction materials; and fugitives. Theodore was heavily involved in the writing of documents from a local level to the central administration (the δημόσιος λόγος), which he wrote in contemporary scripts, exhibiting the same practice of biscriptality seen in the *entagia*. The best example of this, in terms of the quantity of text in each script, is *P.Lond.* IV 1518, which concerns fugitives. This Coptic document contains a list of the names and numbers of the fugitives recovered, organized in family groups and totaling twenty-two individuals (men, women, and children). Rather than being written in Coptic, the language of the main body of the text, Theodore switches language and script, writing in the quadrilinear Greek script described above.

Another fixed chronological point is *P.Bal.* 130 Appendix A, an *entagion* written in January 724 to the taxpayer Daniel son of Pachom from Jeme, which is dated by means of the *hijra*. While the document is not signed by the scribe who wrote it, as is the case with all *entagia*, it can confidently be attributed to Aristophanes son of Johannes, the best-attested scribe from Jeme.[46] This year falls within an approximately fifteen-year period in which large numbers of tax receipts were being written in the village, although this is the only such tax demand. Aristophanes himself wrote receipts between 727 and 730, and the production of the receipts across the

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[43] Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, xlvi.
[44] *P.Lond.* IV 1407, 1409; *SB* I 5638, 5644–54. The outlier is the Arabic–Greek *entagion SB* XVIII 13218, which dates to November 713.
[45] See note 35 above.   [46] For whom see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*.

whole period was regulated by a small number of scribes (in addition to Aristophanes, Psate son of Pisrael and Johannes son of Lazarus wrote the largest number of texts).[47] Aristophanes, as has already been discussed, introduced new linguistic and palaeographic features to the Theban region, ushering in new scribal practices, the introduction of which seems to be closely connected with the administration of taxes (based on similarities with contemporary administrative documents).[48]

Beyond these two corpora, dating becomes more problematic, although date ranges can be assigned to many texts. Where dates can be assigned, they are based on what is known about the issuing pagarch. Of these officials, most is known about Atias son of Goedos, and his Coptic *entagia* date to the 690s and 710s, perhaps as early as 688 in the case of *CPR* IV 6 (although a 703 date is more likely).[49] The career of the official Rāshid b. Khālid is documented over several papyri, through which it is known that he served as pagarch of both Herakleiopolis and Hermopolis. His attested period in office in Herakleiopolis covers the years 718–23, after which he may have been promoted to the larger city, Hermopolis, where he is attested until 731. However, as Gesa Schenke has pointed out, it cannot be excluded that his movement was in the other direction, in which case his Hermopolite texts are earlier, between 709 and 716.[50] For this reason, both date ranges are provided in the appendix below. What is at least certain is that his *entagia* date broadly to the 710s or 720s.

Unfortunately, the documents of the other officials who served as pagarch of Hermpolis and issued *entagia*, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān,[51] Shabīb b. Sahm, Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and Yazīd b. Saʿīd, do not contain absolute dates – it is impossible to place them in relative chronology, let alone to assign dates to them. However, even without this information it is possible to observe broad geographic trends. The earliest documents that exhibit the new scribal practices occur first in

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[47] A. Delattre and J.-L. Fournet, "Le dossier des reçus de taxe thébains et la fiscalité en Égypte au début du VIIIe siècle," in *Coptica Argentoratensia: textes et documents de la troisième université d'été en papyrologie copte (Strasbourg, 18–25 juillet 2010)*, ed. A. Boud'hors, A. Delattre, C. Louis, and T. S. Richter (Paris: De Boccard, 2014), 209–39 collects the data for all known Theban tax receipts published by this date. Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, ch. 4 discusses the development of tax recording at Jeme.

[48] For more on these new practices see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, chs. 4 and 6.

[49] See most recently the discussion to *P.Gascou* 28.

[50] G. Schenke, "Rashid ibn Chaled and the Return of Overpayments," *Chronique d'Égypte* 89 (2014), 202–09, at 204. Nikolaos Gonis is currently preparing a study on Rāshid.

[51] As he issued an *entagion* to the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawīṭ, he must postdate 705 (the year from which monks were no longer exempt from paying the poll tax), but nothing more precise can be stated.

the Hermopolite region, from the 690s/700s. The relevant Coptic material from Aphrodito (a small town at best) appears a few years later, while Theban texts containing the new practices occur first in 724 with Aristophanes. While this movement is from north to south, this is not to say that the transmission of this style was geographically based – the progression also reflects the size and administrative importance of the sites in question. Without securely dated contemporary material from Edfū or Aswān, or from the Fayyūm before the Abbasid period, the precise nature of the progress of new scribal networks cannot be conclusively determined.

That western Thebes should be the final outpost in this network is not a surprise, in terms of its size and location. By the same logic, the importance and size of Hermopolis (and neighboring Antinoopolis) provide the environment within which bilingual scribes could produce Coptic counterparts of Greek administrative texts. Suggestions can be made concerning the methods by which these new styles spread throughout the network just outlined. The consistencies exhibited from Hermopolis to Jeme make it unlikely that scribes passively copied the style of documents issued by the administration in the late seventh and eighth centuries. Instead, the homogeneity must be by design and intentionally disseminated, in order to bring uniformity to the bureaucratic system. Two possibilities seem likely: scribes traveled as part of the retinue of Arab officials and trained local scribes; or local scribes were sent to a regional center to receive training therein. The first option is perhaps the most pragmatic and efficient dissemination method.

The Late Seventh- and Early Eighth-Century Context

After the conquest, Egypt's new rulers exercised direct supervision over the country's administration. Petra M. Sijpesteijn has previously highlighted the fact that the volume of state paperwork increased after the conquest, both in terms of the number of Greek documents and in the use of Arabic.[52] The *entagia*, in Arabic, Greek, and Coptic, constitute just one small part of this bureaucratic output – indeed, they constitute only a small part of the body of paperwork concerning taxation and other impositions. Some issues therefore remain to be tackled: the use of Coptic for other

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[52] P. M. Sijpesteijn, "The Archival Mind in Early Islamic Egypt: Two Arabic Papyri," in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World*, ed. P. M. Sijpesteijn and L. Sundelin (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 163–87; P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Landholding Patterns in Early Islamic Egypt," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9 (2009), 120–33, at 122.

documentation types; the rise of paperwork as part of empire-wide reforms; and why Coptic in particular was employed for a few decades in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.

  Concerning taxation, Coptic was used to write a range of document types in addition to the *entagia*: registers, receipts, letters, and legal documents, which record different stages of the administrative process,[53] deal with issues arising from tax payment or non-payment, and include material from secular and monastic communities.[54] Of these text types, some are numerous while only a single example of other types are known. By far the most numerous category is tax receipts. Over 500 receipts from Jeme alone have been published, with more awaiting publication (the majority are in Coptic, but a small number were written entirely in Greek).[55] The date of this group spans two decades, the 710s and 720s, and no receipt can be certainly dated after 730. In contrast to Thebes, Coptic receipts from other sites are fewer in number and typically have unsecure provenance and dates.[56] In addition to the *entagia* and the receipts, a small piece of papyrus from the village bears an instalment schedule for payment of the poll tax. This document belongs to the same individual for whom the *entagion P.Bal.* 130 Appendix A was

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[53] Here, I will focus only on documents that provide evidence for the administration of the poll tax, rather than on incidental detail regarding taxation. It should be noted, though, that private documents (e.g., letters and legal texts) provide valuable evidence for how people dealt with their payments and the measures they were forced to take. In *P.KRU* 57 Mena son of Psaia from the Coptite nome acknowledges receipt from Joseph son of Petros in western Thebes of one and one-third *holokottinoi* (in exchange for some land), which he states explicitly that he will use for his taxes: "ⲛⲁⲓ ⲁⲓⲛⲟⲭⲟⲩ ⲉⲛⲁⲧⲓⲙⲟⲥⲓⲟⲛ (δημόσιον)" (lines 6–7).

[54] I will not here focus on taxation of monks. See, e.g., the "It is the Father who writes" texts from the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawīṭ written to the brethren of the poll tax (always here *andrismos*) for how that community organized tax collection: *P.BawitClackson* 1, 3–5, 7–9, 11, 14, 25 (no. 6 is now *P.LouvreBawit* 9); *P.KölnÄgypt.* II 18, 20. The texts were written as a result of non-standard circumstances, such as the payment of taxes in kind, waiving tax liability (including paying further taxes from what was initially levied), or delaying the notification of tax assessment. Except in such situations, it can be assumed that the brethren distributed taxes among the members of the monastery in the same way as villages distributed taxes among its inhabitants.

[55] The most recent editions include *P.Stras.Copt.* 27–66; seven receipts in A. Delattre and N. Vanthieghem, "Sept reçus de taxe thébains du VIIIe siècle," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 16 (2014), 89–102; eight receipts in Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, appendix II; five receipts in J. Cromwell, "Five Tax Receipts from Djeme in the Collection of Columbia University," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 54 (2017), 143–55. Nikolaos Gonis is currently preparing for publication a group of receipts from collections across Europe, and I am editing the receipts in the Kelsey Museum, University of Michigan, which were discussed in T. G. Wilfong, "New Texts in Familiar Hands: Unpublished Michigan Coptic Ostraca by Known Scribes," in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium*, ed. M. Immerzeel and J. van der Vliet (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 545–52.

[56] For example, the group of receipts published in J. Cromwell, "New Texts from Early Islamic Egypt: A Bilingual Taxation Archive," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 201 (2017), 232–52, which may be Hermopolite in origin.

written: Daniel son of Pachom. It records his payment plan, in the first payment period of the year, between the end of January and mid-April of a seventh indiction year, that is, the same year for which the tax demand was issued. Both documents were acquired at the same time by the British Museum, together with other financial papers concerning Daniel, showing that he kept quite meticulous records of his own affairs.[57]

Tax registers in Coptic are uncommon. Among the body of such documents from Aphrodito, there are a number of bilingual registers in which the names of the taxpayers are written in Greek and the subscriptions of the officials in Coptic (*P.Lond.* IV 1552–63, although only the Greek survives of 1557 and 1558 and their identification as bilingual registers by their editor is questionable). *P.Lond.* IV 1552 preserves the names of forty taxpayers together with the amount of tax for which they are liable. The following subscriptions stress that no individual taxpayer is to be burdened beyond what they can pay – the wealthiest inhabitants pay a larger share: "we have not burdened anybody beyond his means, nor have we relieved any wealthy person."[58]

From Aphrodito guarantee documents were produced concerning tax fugitives: *P.Lond.* IV 1518–28, although the fragmentary nature of some of the texts means that the status of the individuals involved is not always clear. *P.Lond.* IV 1518 concerns six families who had fled north from Aphrodito (Psoi/Ptolemais) where they were found and returned by the Arab official ʿAbd Allāh b. Shurayḥ, referred to as a "Saracen" (ⲥⲁⲣⲁⲕⲉ(ⲛⲟⲥ)/Σαρακηνός). As two of the families comprised only women and children, the poll tax itself may not have been the cause of their flight, unless the sons of each were old enough to be liable for it.[59] The village officials guarantee that they will ensure that the fugitives remain in Aphrodito and that they will deliver them

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[57] See further J. Cromwell, "Managing a Year's Taxes: Tax Demands and Tax Payments in 724 CE," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 60/1 (2014), 229–39.

[58] ⲙⲡⲉⲛⲟⲩⲱϩ ⲗⲁⲁⲩ ⲉϫⲛ ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲧⲉⲃϭⲟⲙ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲛⲉⲛⲕ[ⲟⲩϥⲓⲍⲉ] ⲛⲟⲩⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉϥⲉⲩⲡⲱⲣⲉ (*P.Lond.* IV 1552.24–25); cf. with varying phraseology *P.Lond.* IV 1553.5–6, 15, 23–24, 29, v18–19, v35, 1554.30–31, 1555.39–40, 1559.v13–14, 1560.24–25, 1561.4–5, 14–15. The pepper monopoly agreement, from Edfū (discussed at the beginning of this chapter), contains a similar clause: ⲉⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩϫⲉ ⲁϫⲛ ⲗⲁⲁⲩ ⲛϩⲏⲕⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲗⲁⲁⲩ ⲛⲥⲙⲟⲧ ⲛⲧⲛϯ-ⲧⲉⲩⲧⲓⲙⲏ ⲡⲣⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲙⲙⲟⲛ ⲛⲁⲧⲁⲣⲟϥ ⲡⲣⲟⲥ ⲧⲉⲩⲡⲟⲣⲓⲁ ⲙⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲡⲟⲩⲁ "we shall not impose upon any poor person, in any circumstance, and we shall pay their price according to what each one of us will receive, according to the ability of each person" (*SB Kopt.* I 242.17–20).

[59] *P.Lond.Copt.* I 1079 A and B are parallel acknowledgments in which the village headmen swear that they have assessed every liable man in their village, from the age of fourteen. The document is certainly post-conquest, as the headman swears by ʿAmr (b. al-ʿĀṣ), but it is not explicitly stated that the assessment is for the poll tax, and it could be for other impositions, e.g., forced labor. On this see A. Papaconstantinou, "Administering the Early Islamic Empire: Insights from the Papyri," in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria. A Review of Current Debates*, ed. J. Haldon (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 57–74, at 61–62.

to the authorities when requested. Should they fail to provide the fugitives, they will be subject to a fine, but no punishments – beyond detention – are recorded for the fugitives.

An agreement between seventeen men in Jeme, *P.CLT* 6, principally concerns a different imposition, the *cursus* (or naval duty), although it also makes provision for "any duty at all" issued by the central administration.[60] The signatories agree that any imposition should not fall upon any one person, but rather that they will bear any burden together. Should any of them contravene this agreement, he will be subject to excommunication (the standard religious punishment included in Coptic legal documents), although no financial penalty is stated.

Outside the realm of administrative documents (registers, receipts, legal agreements), letters provide glimpses into other aspects of the taxation process. In some cases they can be included in the category of Coptic texts used for official (rather than private) purposes. The Arab official Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān[61] writes to Theodore from Titkooh, informing him of the appointment of an official, Serene, to oversee tax collection. While arrears, or other payment issues, are not mentioned, difficulties connected with the process are clear in the strong terms with which Ibrāhīm ends the letter: "If you seek to break anything in it, I will send one who will extract it from your bones."[62] Here, the use of Coptic is from the top (an Arab official) down. In *P.Ryl.Copt.* 321, Prashe, presumably a village headman, writes in Coptic to an unnamed *amīr* (perhaps the pagarch) also about problems concerning tax payment. The details are not always clear, although Prashe's distress is apparent – in an earlier incident he and other men had been arrested and placed in irons because of (unspecified) problems. Prashe also seems to refer to fugitives he will arrest, if they are caught, and send south to

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[60] The text's original editor, Arthur Schiller, understood this document as an agreement between the entire village, but it is more likely that it is between the named signatories only, as first suggested by W. H. Worrell and H. C. Youtie, "Review of *Ten Coptic Legal Texts* by A. Arthur Schiller," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 52/4 (1932), 377–80, at 379.

[61] Presumably a pagarch, based on the content of the letter, but he is not known from elsewhere. He is not included in the list of Arab names in Coptic documents collected in M. Legendre, "Perméabilité linguistique et anthroponymique entre copte et arabe: l'exemple de comptes en caractères coptes du Fayoum fatimide," in *Coptica Argentoratensia: textes et documents de la troisième université d'été de papyrologie copte (Strasbourg, 18–25 juillet 2010)*, ed. A. Boud'hors, A. Delattre, C. Louis, and T. S. Richter (Paris: De Boccard, 2014), 326–440, as the address of this letter, in which his name occurs, was not read by the original editor. For the address see A. Delattre, "Le monastère de Baouît et l'administration arabe," in *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, ed. A. T. Schubert and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 43–49, at 47. The correction is also noted in *P.LouvreBawit* p. 166.

[62] *P.Mich.Copt.* 15.5–7: ⲉⲕϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ ⲟⲩϭⲟⲧⲡϥ ⲉⲗⲁⲁⲩ ϩⲓϣⲱϥ ϣⲁⲓⲧⲛⲛⲟⲟⲩ ⲡⲉⲧⲉϥϣⲁϥⲉⲛⲧϥ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ ⲛⲉⲕⲕⲉⲉⲥ.

the *amīr*. While such letters are few in number, it is clear that Coptic was used by local Arab officials to manage various situations.

Coptic was, therefore, used for administering taxation from the level of the pagarch to individual villagers. As already stated, this practice should be understood within the context of the increase in paperwork witnessed in the century after the conquest. But how far did this phenomenon of using autochthonous languages extend beyond Egypt? This question is not an easy one to tackle, as no other province of the early Muslim empire has produced a comparable volume of written evidence. ʿAbd al-Malik is the caliph accredited with introducing major reforms, including the professional-ization of the army, administrative changes, monetary reform, and increased systematization in the taxing of subject populations.[63] While the third quarter of the seventh century was already witness to infrastructural changes in Egypt,[64] it may not be a coincidence that all of the Coptic texts mentioned above that concern taxation postdate ʿAbd al-Malik's rise to power.

During the first decades of the eighth century, the new Muslim state incurred considerable expenses. As Petra M. Sijpesteijn has described it, Egypt was "a well-stocked way station," providing resources for further Arab conquests.[65] West of Egypt, these conquests included western North Africa (711–16) and the Iberian Peninsula (705–15), while in the east these same years saw the conquest of Sind and central Asia.[66] An Arabic letter dating more or less to this period attests to the direct cost to Egypt of the army, namely, the payment of the military stipend (ʿaṭāʾ).[67] Major build-ing works took place at the Dome of the Rock under ʿAbd al-Malik,[68] and the Great Mosque of Damascus under al-Walīd I (to name but two major projects). The latter is reported to have cost between 600,000 and 1,000,000 *dīnār*s, including a daily expenditure of 6,000 *dīnār*s to feed

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[63] For an overview of these changes see C. Robinson, *ʿAbd al-Malik* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005), 66–80.

[64] F. Donner, "The Formation of the Islamic State," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106/2 (1986), 283–96 and R. G. Hoyland, "New Documentary Texts and the Early Islamic State," *Bulletin of SOAS* 69 (2006), 395–416 both discuss the framework established before ʿAbd al-Malik. For Egypt under Muʿāwiya see esp. C. Foss, "Egypt under Muʿāwiya. Part I: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt," *Bulletin of SOAS* 72/1 (2009), 1–24 and C. Foss, "Egypt under Muʿāwiya. Part II: Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria," *Bulletin of SOAS* 72/2 (2009), 259–78. Earlier still, Sijpesteijn, "The Arab Conquest of Egypt," 447 discusses the infrastructural projects of ʿAmr in the years following the conquest.

[65] Sijpesteijn, "New Rule over Old Structures," 185.

[66] For the Marwanid armies and the payment of the military at this time see the relevant sections in H. Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London: Routledge, 2001).

[67] P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics: An Early Papyrus Letter Related to ʿAṭāʾ Payments," in *Histories of the Middle East: Studies in Middle Eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A. L. Udovitch*, ed. R. E. Margariti, A. Sabra, and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 245–67.

[68] Robinson, *ʿAbd al-Malik*, 2–9.

the workers.[69] Al-Walīd I was also responsible for further public works, including land reclamation and well-digging.[70]

Such large expenses required strong centralization and control over the levying and collection of expenses. On one hand, the increased administrative output in Egypt would attest to this, at least at face value. Yet the letters from the governor Qurra b. Sharīk to Basileios, the pagarch of Aphrodito, attest to the problems of tax collection in the Nile Valley and the constant state of arrears of such payments.[71] The Coptic letters cited above are further evidence of this situation. The tax receipts from Jeme also show that taxes were rarely collected for the year in which they were requested, especially from 727 to 730. During these years, receipts were issued either for the taxes of the previous year or for two years previously, whereas earlier receipts were issued both in the same year and for the taxes of the previous year.[72] One important question then is what volume of the taxes actually left Egypt.

Furthermore, following ʿUmar II's fiscal rescript, the central Islamic treasury took a blow. Known and praised for his piety,[73] ʿUmar II (r. 717–20) decreed that converts to Islam (*mawālī*) were no longer to be subject to the poll tax: "Whosoever accepts al-Islam, whether Christian or Jew or Magian, of those who are now subject to the *jizya* and who joins himself to the body of the Muslims . . . shall enjoy all the privileges of the Muslims."[74] If ʿUmar II's policy toward recent converts was observed (and observed equally throughout the provinces), and depending on the subsequent rate of conversion, the result would have been a significant reduction in revenue from taxation (the taxes payable by Muslims being considerably less than those payable by non-Muslims). One response to this loss of capital may have been to make changes to the administration and collection of taxes

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[69] F. B. Flood, *The Great Mosque of Damascus: Studies on the Makings of an Umayyad Visual Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2–3.

[70] K. Y. Blankinship, *The End of the Jihād State: The Reign of Hishām Ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 82, drawing largely upon al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 5 vols. + supplement (Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901), 2:1195–96 (wells and fountains), 1271 (mosque building), and 1272–73 (in praise of his building activities).

[71] As Papaconstantinou, "Administering the Early Islamic Empire," 71 notes, the Aphrodito archive remains under-studied but holds great potential for understanding the provincial and local administration under al-Walīd I.

[72] During these years, the principal taxation scribe was Aristophanes son of Johannes (discussed above), but Cyriacus son of Petros also issued receipts. However, Cyriacus's receipts are always for two years previously – his task was to collect especially late taxes: see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, ch. 4.

[73] H. Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province in the Islamic Caliphate, 641–868," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. C. F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 62–85, at 73, provides a concise overview of his pious measures and policies of increasing Islamization.

[74] Translation from H. A. R. Gibb, "The Fiscal Rescript of ʿUmar II," *Arabica* 2 (1955), 1–16, at 3. ʿUmar II's policy is also recorded in al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:1367.

down the Nile Valley. Such a response could account for why the majority of our relevant Coptic documentation, in particular *entagia* and receipts, postdates ʿUmar II's reign.

Can the increased use of Coptic be viewed as a direct result of these state-level activities and policies, from military campaigns, to building and public works, to a decrease in taxation income? The local response in Egypt to these different situations may well have been increased use of the Egyptian language in order to maximize bureaucratic control over the towns and villages down the length of the Nile. If there had been no need to increase efficiency and extend the presence of central authority to smaller, predominantly monolingual Egyptian communities throughout the Nile Valley, why use Coptic at all and not simply continue in Greek and Arabic? It is difficult to view the chronological framework of the development and use of Coptic in the administrative sphere, on the one hand, and the increased state expenses and need for control, on the other, as purely coincidental. This is not to say that all provinces of the Muslim state would use local languages in this manner,[75] or that there should even be a uniform system of taxation at this time.[76] However, the evidence does point to the existence of this use of indigenous languages within the administrative framework of Egypt.

It is not possible to determine whether Egypt is representative of the situation throughout the empire, and it may instead be that each governor reacted to specific conditions within his own province. Nevertheless, the rich textual sources from Egypt provide the best chance to examine potential language policies, which here manifested in innovations in document types and forms. The resulting integration of Coptic into the taxation system of Egypt was a developing and evolving process, from the end of the seventh century. The date of the existing material points to the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik as the impetus for its increased use at a local level, that is, from the level of the pagarchy to that of the village. This use of Coptic in Egypt's administration must be viewed within the broader context of increasing imperial centralization and the need for revenue, as dictated by events happening beyond Egypt's borders.

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[75] The Greek Nessana *entagia* (*P.Ness*. III 60–67) predate the Coptic *entagia* (the latest possible date is 689) and reflect older practices; on language use in this province see R. Stroumsa, "Greek and Arabic in Nessane," in *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, ed. P. M. Sijpesteijn and A. T. Schubert (Leiden: Brill. 2014), 143–57. Written sources are lacking for how the poll tax was managed in Palestine after the reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik.

[76] The situation in al-Jazīra suggests a lack of systematization in how taxes/tribute were exacted in northern Mesopotamia in the pre-Marwanid period, as discussed by C. Robinson, *Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest: The Transformation of Northern Mesopotamia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 44–49. It was not until the Abbasid period that more rapacious and efficient taxation practices were introduced.

Appendix

Details of Coptic/Coptic–Greek Entagia

Text	Issuing official	Taxpayer	Requisition	Year	Provenance
P.Mon. Apollo 28	ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲗⲗⲁ ⲡϣⲉⲛ ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲣⲙⲁⲛ)	Pamoun s. Paulos		—	Bawīṭ
SB Kopt. IV 1781	Apakyre (Ἀπάκυρος / ⲁⲡⲁ ⲕⲩⲣⲏ)	Elias s. Leontios		—	Akoris
SB Kopt. IV 1782	Apakyre	Elias s. Leontios		—	Akoris
CPR IV 3	Atias s. Goedos/ ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd (Ἀτίας υἱὸς Γοεδος)	Zacharias s. Johannes	Poll tax (*andrismos*)	696/711	Hermopolis
CPR IV 4	Atias s. Goedos	*NN*		696/711	Hermopolis
CPR IV 6	Atias s. Goedos	Sabile s. Shenoute	Poll tax (*diagraphon*)	688/703	
SB Kopt. IV 1783	Atias s. Goedos	*NN*		690s–710s	Akoris
SB Kopt. IV 1785	Atias s. Goedos	*NN*		690s–710s	
P.Gascou 28	[Atias] s. Goedos	Inhabitants of Hermopolis	Two sailors and *dapane* for two months	695	Hermopolis
R. 11 Copt. 5 no. 8[77]	ʿImrān[78] b. Ab[…] (Ἐμρραν υἱὸς Ἀβ[…])	Gennadios (?) s. *NN*	—	729/730	Unprovenanced[79]
BKU III 339	Rāshid b. Khālid	Pamin s. Tsipous		724–31[80]	Hermopolis

[77] Gonis and Schenke, "Two *Entagia*," 376–78.

[78] It is possible that the name is to be read Ἐμρραν, rather than ⲉⲙⲣⲁⲛ in the *ed. princ.* (i.e., with two ⲣ, as well as rendering the opening address as Greek, not Coptic).

[79] The editors note that the provenance is probably Upper Egypt (another item in the same frame bears a Christian invocation of the type common in Upper Egypt), although they suggest Antinoopolis as a possibility, based on the provenance of the other *entagia* that they publish in the same collection in the Wren Library, Trinity College Cambridge: see Gonis and Schenke, "Two *Entagia*," 372. The editors note that a small fragment attached to the foot of the *entagion* "does not seem to be part of the same document." This is indeed the case as the small piece bears the beginning of two lines from the beginning of a legal document: ⲉⲡⲓ ⲧⲱ […] | ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲁⲣ[…]. It is quite possible that this piece belongs instead to the invocation formula mounted in the same frame, as these two lines, which introduce the local official and then the first part of the document, would immediately follow the invocation.

[80] See the above discussion concerning Rāshid's dates, and the possibility that his Hermopolite *entagia* instead date earlier, to 709–16.

(cont.)

Text	Issuing official	Taxpayer	Requisition	Year	Provenance
	(Ῥαζιδ υἱὸς Χαλεδ)				
BKU III 417	Rāshid b. Khālid	Stephanos			s. Phoibammon
	724–31	Hermopolite?			
CPR IV 5	Rāshid b. Khālid	*NN*			s. Phoibammon
	724–31	Hermopolite?			
CPR II 123	Rāshid b. Khālid	*NN*	—	724–31	Hermopolite
SB Kopt. IV 1784	Shabīb b. Sahm (Σεπιπ υἱὸς Σααμ)	*NN* s. Theodore		—	Hermopolis
P.Bal. 130 App. A	Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh (Σαὰλ υἱὸς Ἀβδέλλα)	Daniel s. Pachom		724	Jeme
P.Bal. 130 App. B	Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh	*NN*		724	Jeme
P.Mich. inv. 3383[81]	S[. . .] (Σζ[. . .])	*NN*		—	Hermopolis?
BKU III 418	Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (Ἰεζιδ υἱὸς Ἀβδεραμαν)	George s. Stephanos		—	
P.Ryl.Copt. 117	Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān	Severos s. Bane		—	Hermopolis
P.Ryl.Copt. 378	Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān	Athanasios s. George		—	Great Mjew
P.Ryl.Copt. 118	Yazīd b. Saʿīd (Ἰεζιδ υἱὸς Σεειδ)	Severos s. Bane		—	Hermopolis
P.Ryl.Copt. 119	*NN* b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ([. . . υἱὸς Ἀβδε]ραμαν)	Victor s. Claudios		—	Thinis
BKU III 340[82]	*NN*	Victor s. *NN*	Poll tax; 1 *s.*	—	
P.Bal. 131	*NN*	*NN*		—	Balaʾizah
P.Bal. 402	*NN*	*NN*		—	Balaʾizah
P.Mon. Apollo 29	*NN*	Phinouke s. Apollo		—	Bawīṭ
P.Mon. Apollo 30	*NN*	Apollo s. George		—	Bawīṭ

[81] Berkes, "Griechisch und Koptisch in der Verwaltung des früharabischen Ägypten."

[82] For corrections to the text, including identification of the taxpayer, see N. Gonis and G. Schenke, "*BKU* III 340: An Unusual *Entagion*," *Chronique d'Égypte* 86 (2011), 383–85.

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Scribal Networks, Taxation, and the Role of Coptic in Marwanid Egypt

Jennifer Cromwell

Introduction

After the Arab conquest of 639–42 CE Egypt became part of the burgeoning Islamic empire. Over the course of the seventh and eighth centuries a series of measures was introduced by the new rulers. They established a *dīwān* in Egypt's new capital, Fusṭāṭ, a postal service, a system of *corvées* targeted toward equipping the navy and providing labor for major construction projects, and a new religious poll tax payable by all adult non-Muslim men. This period is characterized by increasing Arabization (the use of Arabic) and Islamization (the appointment of Muslim officials throughout the country, replacing local officials).[1] The wealth of the surviving textual sources from Egypt – in Arabic (the language of the new rulers), Greek (the administrative and legal language of the previous regime, as well as that of a considerable number of the population), and Coptic (the indigenous language) – is unrivaled and allows us to examine language use in the country after the conquest in a way that is not possible for other provinces in the empire.

Arabic was used from the outset, even if in a limited way, as the bilingual Greek–Arabic *SB* VI 9576, dated April 25, 643, demonstrates.[2] Greek continued to be used, albeit in a more reduced capacity to before the conquest (as Janneke H. M. de Jong's contribution to the current volume

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[1] As introductions to these processes see P. M. Sijpesteijn, "The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Beginning of Muslim Rule," in *Egypt and the Byzantine World, 300–700 AD*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 437–59; and P. M. Sijpesteijn, "New Rule over Old Structures: Egypt after the Muslim Conquest," in *Regime Change in the Ancient Near East and Egypt, from Sargo of Agade to Saddam Hussein*, ed. H. Crawford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 183–200.

[2] All papyrological sigla conform with the *Checklist of Editions* (papyri.info/docs/checklist). In addition, *P.Akoris* refers to the texts edited by J. Jarry in Paleological Association of Japan/Egyptian Committee, *Akoris: Report of the Excavations at Akoris in Middle Egypt, 1981–1992* (Kyoto: Koyo Shobo, 1995).

[Chapter 12] demonstrates). Alongside this decreasing use of Greek, the post-conquest period is especially notable for the role of Coptic, in particular during the Marwanid era. This period saw the first use of Coptic for administrative purposes, that is, not only for personal means (whether in a domestic context, for personal communication, or for legal documents). The use of Coptic within the country's bureaucratic framework is not a natural progression of its development in other private domains, but instead an innovative practice that began after the conquest.[3] This situation was not, however, one of the Copticization of the administration, in terms either of scale of language use or of personnel. Nevertheless, the Egyptian language was used in a way not pursued by previous regimes, as a means of ensuring the dissemination – and ideally the success – of new measures at a local level. The aim of this chapter is to examine how Coptic was developed and used for such purposes, and to propose reasons why this was the case. Ultimately, I argue that Coptic provides a rare opportunity to view how indigenous languages were used as vehicles for the implementation of the new rulers' policies. However, it is more difficult to determine whether we can extrapolate from this particular case to speak of imperial language policies or if we only see responses at a local level.[4]

In order to address these objectives, it is necessary to first scrutinize the available sources. As such, what follows begins with an analysis of the relevant Coptic texts, with particular focus on tax demands (both their linguistic and palaeographic features). From this philological survey, how and when this new practice came about will be examined, as well as how the knowledge to produce such texts was disseminated. Finally, I explore why Coptic was used for these purposes and how the type of documents and when they appear are best understood in the context of broader empire-wide events.

A Trilingual Environment

As stated, Arabic was used in Egypt immediately after the conquest, alongside Greek, the language of the previous administration. The first datable Coptic document after the conquest is *SB Kopt.* I 242, a collective

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[3] On the development of Coptic in the sixth century, which marked a particular period of expansion in its use, see J.-L. Fournet, *The Rise of Coptic: Egyptian Versus Greek in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

[4] See further J. Cromwell, "Language Policy and the Administrative Framework of Early Islamic Egypt," in *(Re)Constructing Ancient Egyptian Society: Challenging Assumptions, Exploring Approaches*, ed. K. Cooney, D. Candelora, and N. Ben-Marzouk (London: Routledge, 2022), 219–32.

agreement between guilds of Edfū and its pagarch, Liberios, concerning the imposition of black pepper upon them. The document is dated Paope 27, indiction year 8, and the oath is sworn by the great governor (Greek σύμβουλος, the equivalent of *amīr* in the Arabic papyri) ʿAbd Allāh (ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲗⲁⲥ ⲡⲛⲟϭ ⲛ̄ⲥⲩⲙⲃⲟⲩⲗⲟⲥ). It can thus be dated absolutely to October 24, 649. While a legal document, not an administrative text, *SB Kopt.* I 242 is notable for several reasons: Coptic was chosen to write this agreement, between a senior official and principal guilds in the town, and it is the first mention of an Arab governor in a Coptic document. The main part of the document is written in an unligatured majuscule hand, a very "Coptic" hand, with no resemblance to contemporary Greek documents of a similar kind.

By the end of the seventh century Coptic started to be used in a new context, for the writing of tax demands (*entagia*), issued in the name of the pagarch to individual taxpayers (with one exception, as noted below).[5] These Coptic texts belong to a larger body of *entagia*, which appear from as early as 687/88[6] until the early Abbasid period – the precise dates of many *entagia* are lost and dating generally is compounded by the problem of dating Arab pagarchs, so it is not possible to produce a precise chronology of the texts. The Coptic texts are quite standardized and, while Coptic is used for the main body of the texts, they are framed by Greek formulae that are linguistically and visually demarcated from the Coptic components. As such, they could be referred to as bilingual Coptic–Greek texts. However, despite their mixed-language composition, I will refer to them only as Coptic *entagia*, in order not to confuse their language use with the bilingual Arabic–Greek *entagia*, in which the same text is written entirely in Arabic and then entirely in Greek.

As Alain Delattre and Naïm Vanthieghem have most recently discussed in their commentary to *P.Gascou* 28, there is a clear distinction in the use of the different languages.[7] Only Arabic–Greek *entagia* were issued in the name of the governor to the collective inhabitants of each locality; Coptic

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[5] In Coptic texts, *entagion* (ⲉⲛⲧⲁⲅⲓⲟⲛ) is used for tax receipts, notably in the Theban receipts of the 710s and early 720s, not for the demands themselves. However, as *entagia* is the term used in the scholarly discourse, I use it as such here.

[6] *SB* XXVI 16797, issued by Flavius Mena in Herakleiopolis, may be as early as 687/88, although the later 702/03 date cannot be discounted. Its date cannot be later, i.e., 717/18, as at this time only Arab pagarchs are expected. For Flavius Mena see N. Gonis and F. Morelli, "A Requisition for the 'Commander of the Faithful': SPP VIII 1082 Revisited," *Zeitschrift für Papyologie und Epigraphik* 132 (2000), 193–95, at 194.

[7] See also A. Delattre, N. Vanthieghem, and R. Pintaudi, "Un *entagion* bilingue du governeur ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān trouvé à Antinoe," *Chronique d'Égypte* 88 (2013), 363–71, at 366.

was never used at this level, only from the pagarch to individuals.[8] Delattre and Vanthieghem also note a general geographic trend in language use, with Coptic typically being from Middle and Upper Egypt and Greek from the Fayyūm. In terms of Coptic *entagia*, there are no attestations from the Fayyūm region. However, Greek *entagia* were also issued in the Nile Valley, at Antinoopolis, by ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān[9] and later by Māzin b. Jabala;[10] Herakleiopolis, under different pagarchs (Paulos son of *NN*,[11] Rāshid b. Khālid, Nājid b. Muslim[12]); Aphrodito, issued by Qurra b. Sharīk;[13] and Balaʾizah.[14] In addition, *P.Apoll.* 1 is a Greek writing exercise in which formulae common to *entagia* are practiced. It should be stressed that there are no Coptic *entagia* from Herakleiopolis and Aphrodito. Also of note is that there are no Greek *entagia* from Hermopolis; given that it was the seat of its own pagarchy, one would expect more Greek and Arabic examples. This lack may, however, be the result of the current state of affairs in the study of Hermopolis and its texts in the seventh and eighth centuries, and Greek *entagia* may yet await discovery.[15]

The language distribution of these texts is not therefore clear, and it is perhaps dangerous to draw strong conclusions in this respect. Even at Jeme (western Thebes), an Egyptian village with almost exclusively Coptic documentation, including two Coptic *entagia*, Greek was sometimes used to write tax receipts. However, the important point remains that

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[8] The only known example of a bilingual Arabic–Coptic *entagion*, *P.Clackson* 45, is dated after the Abbasid conquest, to December 753, and so reflects a later development. See the discussion by P. M. Sijpesteijn and S. J. Clackson, "A Mid-Eighth-Century Trilingual Tax Demand-Note Related to the Monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawīṭ," in *Monastic Estates in Late Antique and Early Islamic Egypt: Ostraca, Papyri, and Essays in Memory of Sarah Clackson*, ed. A. Boudʾhors, J. Clackson, C. Louis, and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Cincinnati: American Society of Papyrologists, 2009), 102–19. This bilingual *entagion* is later than the earliest attested Arabic *entagion* for an individual Christian taxpayer, *P.Cair.Arab.* III 169 (752). Harold Bell's comment concerning a Greek requisitioning order, that "being addressed by a Copt to Copts" it "had no need to use Arabic," oversimplifies the nature of language use in the first century of Islamic rule: H. I. Bell, "A Requisitioning Order for Taxes in Kind," *Aegyptus* 32 (1951), 307–12, at 311.

[9] *P.Gascou* 27b.

[10] N. Gonis and G. Schenke, "Two *Entagia* from Cambridge," *Chronique d'Égypte* 88 (2013), 372–78, at 372–75.

[11] *SB* XX 14682 (=*Stud.Pal.* VIII 1182).

[12] Respectively, *CPR* XIX 26 (Rāshid) and *CPR* XXII 8–10 and *SB* XVI 12857 (Nājid b. Muslim).

[13] See the list in T. S. Richter, "Language Choice in the Qurra Dossier," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 189–219, at 201.

[14] *P.Bal.* 130 (=*SB* XXVIII 17257), 181, 182. See N. Gonis, "Arabs, Monks, and Taxes: Notes on Documents from Deir el-Balaʾizah," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 148 (2004), 213–24.

[15] Texts from Hermopolis are scattered over numerous collections, with those in Manchester (John Rylands Library), London (British Library), and Vienna (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek) being of particular note. Much of this material still needs to be edited and translated.

with these tax demands Coptic was used for the first time at a local level, as part of the administrative apparatus, as a means for the rulers to communicate directly with the indigenous, non-Muslim population.

Coptic *Entagia*

The process whereby taxes were calculated by the central government has long been established.[16] The governor wrote *entagia* to each pagarch stating the amount owed by each district in the pagarchy. This sum was divided among the eligible taxpayers, at which point individual *entagia* were issued. As already stated, Coptic was only used for demands issued to individual taxpayers, the exception being *P. Gascou* 28, which was issued to the inhabitants of Hermopolis collectively (this text is also distinct for being the only one not concerned with taxes, but with naval duty, and so may represent a slightly different practice). Apart from *SB Kopt.* IV 1781 and 1782, both of which were issued by Apakyre to taxpayers in Akoris, the Coptic *entagia* were issued by Arab pagarchs.[17] The key details of all known Coptic *entagia* are collected in the appendix to this chapter.

As stated in the previous section, Coptic *entagia* are framed by Greek formulae written in a different script, rendering these sections linguistically and palaeographically distinct from the main Coptic text. Before moving on to broader questions concerning the development of Coptic *entagia* and the dissemination of the scribal practices required to produce them, this section provides a detailed overview of their key features.[18]

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[16] Key examples of such early studies are L. Casson, "Tax-Collection Problems in Early Arab Egypt," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 69 (1938), 274–91, esp. 275; and H. I. Bell, "The Arabic Bilingual Entagion," *Proceedings of the American Philological Society* 89 (1945), 531–42.

[17] The best-attested official among the Coptic tax demands, Atias son of Goedos, seems to have been an Arab (in which case his name is to be rendered ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd), an identification that may be supported by the title *amīr* in *CPR* VIII 72.2: Ἀτίας ἀμιρᾶ. For the Arabic rendering see H. I. Bell, "Two Official Letters of the Arab Period," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 12 (1926), 265–81, at 267 (based on Joseph von Karabacek's identification of the name with ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd), which has received general consensus in later studies, most recently P. M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 119. For other *entagia* issued by Christian pagarchs see note 4 concerning Flavius Mena and Gonis and Morelli, "A Requisition for the 'Commander of the Faithful'," 194.

[18] Images of many of the *entagia* discussed are available either online or in print: *CPR* II 123, *CPR* IV 3–6 (online catalogue of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek); *P. Gascou* 28 (in print); *P.Mich.inv.* 3383 (L. Berkes, "Griechisch und Koptisch in der Verwaltung des früharabischen Ägypten: Ein neues ἐντάγιον," in *Byzanz und das Abendland II: Studia Byzantino-Occidentalia*, ed. E. Juhász [Budapest: Eötvös-József-Collegium, 2014], 189–94 at 192; also online via APIS); *P.Mon.Apollo* 28–30 (in print); R. 11 Copt. 5 no. 8 (Gonis and Schenke, "Two *Entagia*," 376); *SB Kopt.* IV 1781–82 (in the plates accompanying their original publication in *P.Akoris*).

Coptic *entagia* were not standardized forms that simply needed to have specific details – the taxpayer's name and amount of tax paid – filled in at a later date, as appears to have been the practice in the early Abbasid Fayyūm.[19] While the inclusion of minor details is sporadic, such as further identification of the taxpayers by occupation,[20] even *entagia* issued from the same office show variation in formulae. For example, taking the texts issued by Atias son of Goedos, different formulae are employed for the notification of the tax quota:

> *CPR* IV 3.2: ⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ϩⲁ ⲡ̄ⲕⲁⲛⲁ(ⲣⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ) ⲛⲏ ⲓ̀ⲛⲇ(ⲓⲕⲧⲓⲱⲛⲟⲥ)[21] ⲛⲟⲩϩⲗⲟⲕ(ⲟⲧⲧⲓⲛⲟⲥ) ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲧⲣⲓⲙⲏⲥⲉⲛ ⲥⲛⲁⲩ "One *holokottinos* and two *tremises* are due from you for your poll tax (*andrismos*) of the 8th indiction year."
> *CPR* IV 4.2–5: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛ[ⲉ] ⲛ[ⲧ?]ⲁⲥⲧⲟϩⲟⲕ [ⲉⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲅⲧⲁⲁⲩ . . .] . . . ⲉⲧⲉⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ [. . ⲥ]ⲛⲁⲩ ⲛ̄ⲁⲣⲓⲑⲙⲓⲛ ⲙ̄ⲛ ⲟⲩⲡⲁϣ ⲧⲣⲓⲙⲏⲥⲓⲛ "These are what are due from you [to pay . . .] . . . namely two counted [*holokottinoi*] and half a *tremis*."
> *CPR* IV 6.2: ⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ⲛⲥⲛⲁⲩ ⲛⲧⲣⲓⲙⲏⲥⲓⲛ ϩⲁ ⲡⲉⲕⲇⲓ[ⲁ]ⲅⲣ(ⲁⲫⲟⲛ) ⲛ̄ⲡⲕⲁⲛⲱ(ⲛ) ⲛⲁ ⲓ̀ⲛⲇ(ⲓⲕⲧⲓⲱⲛⲟⲥ) "Two *tremises* are due from you for your poll tax (*diagraphon*) for the assessment of the 1st indiction year."
> *SB Kopt.* IV 1783.3: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ ⲛϣⲁⲥⲧⲁϩ[ⲟⲕ ⲙⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲅⲧⲁⲁⲩ . . .] "These are what are due [from you to pay . . .]"
> *SB Kopt.* IV 1785.3–4: ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ [ⲛⲧⲁⲥⲧⲁ]ϩⲟⲧⲏⲩⲧⲛ ⲉⲙⲟⲟⲩ ⲛⲧⲉⲧⲛⲉⲧⲁⲁⲩ . . . "These are what are due from you (pl.) to pay . . . "

The main formulaic change is between the construction ⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ϩⲁ and ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ ⲛⲧⲁⲥⲧⲟϩⲟⲕ/ⲛϣⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ ⲙⲙⲟⲟⲩ,[22] but the above examples show considerable levels of variation in word order. Although none of these texts contains an absolute date (and no dates are preserved in *SB Kopt.* IV 1783 and 1785), based on the broader context of the Atias dossier they date to 696–703 or possibly 703–11.[23] Within this date range, *CPR* IV 3 and 4 were written in the same year, but not by the same scribe – the formulae and palaeography of the two texts (letter formation and ligaturing patterns) are

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[19] *Stud.Pal.* VIII 1199 and 1200 (both dated 759 and from the office of the Arsinoite pagarch Yaḥyā b. Hilāl) contain a series of four and three *entagia*, respectively, each group written on the same piece of papyrus that was not cut into individual texts, and which provide space for the later addition of the salient details. See N. Gonis, "Reconsidering Some Fiscal Documents from Early Islamic Egypt III," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 169 (2009), 197–208, at 198.

[20] In *P.Ryl.Copt.* 118 Severos is identified as a goldsmith, while Zacharias in *CPR* IV 3 is a fruit buyer.

[21] For the writing of the indiction date (as well as other features of these *entagia*) as Greek see J. Cromwell, "Coptic Texts in the Archive of Flavius Atias," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 184 (2013), 280–88, at 284–87. The issue of biscriptality (the use of two different scripts by the same individual for different purposes) is discussed further below.

[22] It is possible that all the Atias texts employed ⲛϣⲁⲥⲧⲁϩⲟⲕ, as the alternative is reconstructed in lacuna in both *CPR* IV 4.2 and *SB Kopt.* IV 1785. However, the relative I perfect is standard in the rest of the Coptic texts.

[23] Cromwell, "Coptic Texts," 283–84 discusses the issues of the date of these *entagia*.

too different to assign them to the same individual. Similar variation is found throughout the other individual dossiers, of Rāshid b. Khālid and Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān.[24] It appears that a number of scribes were involved, who brought their own individual influences to the *entagia* that they wrote. Such variation was most likely possible because no set form had been determined for this new Coptic text type.[25]

However, in spite of the lack of a set formula to which all *entagia* had to conform, several features are held in common across the entire group that serve to bind them together: the *bismillah* (σὺν θεῷ); the address (*NN* υἱὸς *NN* ⲡϧⲥϩⲁⲓ ⲛ*NN* ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ ⲛ*NN*); administrative practice (e.g., the recording of the amount of tax due in both Coptic and Greek[26]); and the use of two scripts for writing the Coptic and Greek components of the texts. Therefore, while particulars in detail and points of style and formulae occur, they do so within a common framework.

The *bismillah* only occurs as σὺν θεῷ in Coptic *entagia*, and never ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ θεοῦ, which occurs in many of the Greek *entagia*.[27] The distinction in use between the two does not appear to be a chronological one: the *entagia* issued by Qurra b. Sharīk to Aphrodito postdate the Atias texts but only use ἐν ἐνόματι τοῦ θεοῦ. The use of σὺν θεῷ may be a development from the late seventh century, which was adopted wholesale in the newly produced Coptic texts but took longer to become standard in Greek texts. It was clearly a part of the standard training of professional administrative scribes in the eighth century, as a number of practice pieces attest, notably *SB* XVIII 13247 (ca. 750) and *P.Rain.Unterricht* 93v (date uncertain, perhaps late seventh century).[28] There is a high level of

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[24] Due to the fragmentary nature of many of the *entagia*, it is difficult to quantify the level of formulaic variation, and the lack of accessible images for many of them means that their palaeography cannot be compared. In terms of formulae, the difficulty faced by original editors in identifying some *entagia* also means that some of the traces may not be correctly read. For example, the initial formula of *P.Ryl.Copt.* 378, part of Yazīd's dossier, is read as ⲛⲁⲓ ⲛⲉ ⲧ|ⲁⲧⲛ ⲉⲛⲏⲛⲙⲟ . . . . ⲁⲩ, from which no meaning can be derived. Reexamination of the original – in light of the vast increase in our knowledge of *entagia* since its publication in 1909 – may instead identify among the traces constructions that are attested elsewhere.

[25] The Jeme tax receipts show an interesting evolution in form over the approximately two decades in which they were issued. Only a small number of scribes were responsible for the receipts, which can broadly be divided into two groups, one dated ca. 710–26, after which there is a clear break in terms of formulae and palaeography. Between 726 and 730 the receipts are remarkable for their homogeneity in form. This development is discussed in J. Cromwell, *Recording Village Life: A Coptic Scribe in Early Islamic Egypt* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017), ch. 4.

[26] On this point see Cromwell, "Coptic Texts," 286. I will not discuss it further here.

[27] The appearance of both in *entagia* was noted in R. Rémondon, "Ordre de paiement d'époque arabe pour l'impôt de capitation," *Aegyptus* 32 (1952), 257–64, at 259.

[28] These examples stand in marked contrast to *P.Apoll.* 1, an exercise in writing *entagia* in the name of an *amīr* Ⲟⲩⲟⲉⲓⲑ, possibly a rendering of Ḥuwayth or ʿUwayd, that only employs ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ

consistency in the writing of σὺν θεῷ, with a large initial *sigma* ligatured to the next two letters and a superlinear *theta*, which points to a shared scribal practice.[29]

Two aspects of the opening address are of note: the combination of Greek and Coptic, and the construction ⲡϥϭⲁⲓ. In almost all of the Coptic *entagia*, Greek is used for the name of the official, after which there is a change to Coptic.[30] This language shift is witnessed in the use of υἱός rather than ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ and the palaeography, which employs Greek letter forms that are markedly different to their Coptic counterparts. Following from σὺν θεῷ (and frequently ending with a Greek résumé of the amount of tax), the *entagia* are framed in Greek, although all the content is Coptic. It is possible that this use of Greek is purely a graphic element, with υἱός used as a symbol for "son of" (it is written in a highly formulaic and abbreviated manner in which *upsilon* and *iota* are ligatured together and a superlinear dot suffices for *omicron*) that was not actually vocalized as Greek, but as ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ (as later Coptic evidence suggests).[31] However, how universal such an understanding was is difficult to determine, especially in a large town such as Hermopolis, where most of the Coptic *entagia* were drawn up, with a higher number of Greek speakers and writers than in, for example, Jeme.

The construction ⲡϥϭⲁⲓ, an unetymological writing of ⲡⲉ ⲉϥϭⲁⲓ (the copula + circumstantial I present), is a distinctively Middle Egyptian construction, as has been demonstrated by Alain Delattre and Sebastian

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θεοῦ. In *SB* III 7240 Atias/ʿAṭiyya confirms a *sigillion* (letter of protection) issued from his predecessor: Οὐοειθ τοῦ ποτὲ διοικήσαντος τὴν ἄνω χώραν "Ḥuwayth/ʿUwaydh, formerly administrator of the Upper Land." Concerning the official's name, the original editor, Bell, noted that he might be an Arab official and chose to transcribe the name as "Ghuwaith (?)" (Bell, "Two Official Letters," 274). M. Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The Duke of the Thebaid and the Formation of the Umayyad State," *Historical Research* 89 (2016), 3–18, at 11 n. 50 suggests Ḥuwayth as a more satisfactory reading of the name, based on tenth-century literary attestations. The alternative interpretation, ʿUwaydh, is based on attestations from Nessana: *P.Ness.* III 56.5 (Arabic script) and 57.3, 77.16, and 81.1–2 (Greek script), as brought to my attention by Jelle Bruning, whom I thank for this suggestion. Regardless of how the name is resolved, the presence of Οὐοειθ in *P.Apoll.* 1 should date the text to 688–89, not the earlier proposed date, 658–59.

[29] Online and published images of the *entagia* (see note 18) can be compared with the exercises involving σὺν θεῷ. Images of the two exercises are also available online: *P.Rain.Unterricht* 93v on the catalogue of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek and *SB* XVIII 13247 on the Berliner Papyrusdatenbank (BerlPap) of the Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

[30] Apart from ⲁⲡⲁⲕⲩⲣⲏ in *SB Kopt.* IV 1781 (whose name may be written as Greek, as a variant of Ἀπάκυρος, or Coptic), there is only one example in which the official's name is written in Coptic: ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān in *P.Mon.Apollo* 28 (ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲗⲗⲁ ⲡϣⲉⲛ ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲣⲙⲁⲛ).

[31] The occurrence of ⲙⲩἱός suggests that the scribe understands rather ⲡϣⲏⲣⲉ and has assimilated the function morpheme ⲛ to ⲙ, as correct before ⲡ. I would like to thank Sebastian Richter (Berlin) for this information.

Richter.[32] Its use in *P.Bal.* 130 Appendix A, from Jeme, is therefore exceptional. Aristophanes son of Johannes, the scribe of this *entagion*, is the only Theban scribe to whom this form can certainly be attributed. He also used it, albeit incorrectly when trying to adapt it for multiple individuals, in several other texts that he wrote that are connected with taxation. How do we account for his use of this grammatical construction, which is distinctly non-Theban?

Together with this non-local form, Aristophanes also introduced new palaeographic practices into western Thebes, from the mid-720s. In brief, this comprised the adoption of a more cursive script and the use of a separate script for writing Greek-language sections of documents, that is, not simply Greek loanwords or phrases within the Coptic text, but distinct sections written entirely in Greek.[33] As well as a change in overall appearance, the two scripts also employ different letter forms (as noted above), among which *beta*, *lambda*, *mu*, *pi*, and *upsilon* serve as diagnostic letters, as their forms differ significantly. In brief, in Greek *beta* is written in its minuscule form, *lambda* has a long left limb that descends below the line of writing, *mu* also has a descending initial vertical stroke that typically ends in a tick, *pi* is almost an *omega* with a horizontal stroke, and *upsilon* is in its minuscule form.[34] Both scripts have more in common with texts produced elsewhere in Egypt than they do with the writing of their predecessors in Jeme and elsewhere in western Thebes.[35]

As will be argued below, the only way to account for the simultaneous dispersal of region-specific grammatical constructions and the geographic spread of new palaeographic features is the existence of scribal networks

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[32] A. Delattre, "La formule épistolaire copte 'c'est votre serviteur qui ose écrire à son Seigneur'," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 51 (2005), 105–11; T. S. Richter, "The Pattern ⲡⲉⲧⲥⲱⲧⲙ 'the One Who Hears' in Coptic Documentary Texts," in *Labor Omnia Uicit Improbus: Miscellanea in Honorem Ariel Shisha-Halevy*, ed. N. Bosson, A. Boud'hors, and S. H. Aufrère (Leuven: Peeters, 2017), 315–30.

[33] For this feature of Aristophanes's texts see J. Cromwell, "Aristophanes Son of Johannes: An Eighth-Century Bilingual Scribe? A Study of Graphic Bilingualism," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 221–32, and Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*. *P.CLT* 3 contains a non-standard use of Greek by Aristophanes: the bottom of the letter includes a list of three men with descriptions of their main physical characteristics. This section is rendered visually distinct from the rest of the letter by its switch to Aristophanes's Greek script – the change is great enough that one does not have to be able to read the words to recognize that they are written differently. An image is available both in print (*P.CLT* pl. V) and via the Metropolitan Museum of Art's online catalogue (inv. 24.2.6).

[34] The table in Cromwell, "Aristophanes Son of Johannes," 227 compares these letters.

[35] A particularly striking similarity is witnessed between the works of Aristophanes and the scribe Theodore from Aphrodito (for a list of his texts see Richter, "Language Choice," 213–14), whose texts predate those of Aristophanes by fifteen years. For a preliminary comparison of the two men see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, ch. 6.

and the transmission of scribal practices throughout Egypt. In this respect, it is important to note what is meant here by scribal networks. Scribes most immediately operated within their own communities, forming their local networks comprising individuals with whom they were personally acquainted. They were also part of additional networks that extended beyond communal boundaries. While some networks would have involved individuals known to them, others were based on different criteria – in terms of the documents and scribes in question here, these networks were based on administrative practices and literacy. Within this second category of networks, it was not necessary for all members to know each other, or even to recognize the existence of such a network or community.[36] Rather, our identification of networks allows us to examine where knowledge came from and how it arose, including under what circumstances the individuals involved acquired the skills and technical expertise required to produce the documents in question. It is not necessary to know the identity of the scribes who wrote these texts (and such information is not always available, as is the case with the *entagia* under analysis here). The documents themselves become the text community and are identifiable based on common ways of using language and in how they act in relation to knowledge.[37] As such, these scribal networks – or text communities – do not need to be tied to strict chronologic or geographic boundaries.[38] Rather, they bring together documents exhibiting common features and allow us to ask broader questions of knowledge exchange across physical communities.

A Question of Transmission

It is one thing to describe these phenomena – the development of new text types in Coptic, new scripts, biscriptality, and grammatical forms – but it is an entirely different matter to explain how they were disseminated throughout Egypt. In terms of tracing palaeographic changes, two methodological problems currently hinder analysis of the situation. The first is a question of access to the original manuscripts. In order to undertake any

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[36] As stressed by M. Stenroos, "From Scribal Repertoire to Text Community: The Challenge of Variable Writing Systems," in *Scribal Repertoires in Egypt from the New Kingdom to the Early Islamic Period*, ed. J. Cromwell and E. Grossman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 20–40, at 34.

[37] On text communities see Stenroos, "From Scribal Repertoire to Text Community," 34–37.

[38] For example, it is highly unlikely that the scribes Theodore and Aristophanes son of Johannes mentioned in note 35 were acquainted with one another, or that Aristophanes had seen any document produced by the older scribe.

form of palaeographic examination, consultation of the papyri themselves is of paramount importance, but only a small number of the relevant texts have been published or are available online.[39] In addition, other seventh- and eighth-century Coptic texts await full editions as well as study, in particular the texts from Hermopolis and the Coptic component of the archive of Papas of Edfū.[40]

The second issue is the nature of palaeographic analysis itself. Not only is Coptic palaeography, especially of non-literary material, an under-studied field, there has been no development of digital tools to examine handwriting.[41] It is not therefore possible to tackle rigorously several questions connected to the dissemination of handwriting styles: How similar do the products of different scribes need to be in order to identify shared scribal practices? And conversely, how can the works of an individual scribe be distinguished from those of multiple scribes trained in the same style? As H. I. Bell noted, in his introduction to *P.Lond.* IV,[42] distinguishing between the texts of different scribes working in the same place (here Aphrodito) is no easy task:

> No doubt several clerks are represented in the collection; but the general type of hand is so similar from letter to letter, and the slight dissimilarity between certain of the documents so easily accounted for by differences of pen, of ink, and of the speed at which they were written, that it is

[39] See note 18 for the availability of images of the *entagia* under discussion here. This issue of access is especially true of the Aphrodito and Jeme texts in the British Library, examples of which are mentioned throughout this chapter. These texts constitute datable eighth-century corpora of known provenance that provide considerable amounts of comparative material, but examination of extra-textual features (e.g., palaeography, non-textual marks) currently needs to be done in person or on the basis of purchased digital images.

[40] See note 15 for details of the Hermopolis texts. The papyri from the archive of Papas, which are held by the Institut français d'archéologie orientale (IFAO) in Cairo, are currently being studied and prepared for publication by a team led by Alain Delattre and Anne Boud'hors. Pending their publication, L. S. B. MacCoull, "The Coptic Papyri from Apollonos Ano," in *Proceedings of the XVIII International Congress of Papyrology, Athens 25–31 May 1986*, ed. B. Mandilaras, 2 vols. (Athens: Greek Papyrological Society, 1988), 2:141–60 remains the main introduction to the Coptic texts. However, see now A. Boud'hors, "Situating the Figure of Papas, Pagarch of Edfu at the End of the Seventh Century: The Contribution of the Coptic Documents," in *Living the End of Antiquity: Individual Histories from Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ed. S. R. Huebner, E. Garosi, I. Marthot-Santaniello, et al. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 63–71 for an indication of what the Coptic texts have to offer. The Greek texts from the archive were published in 1953, in *P.Apoll.*

[41] Current endeavors, such as the Ancient Lives Project, based on the Oxyrhynchus corpus, focus on recognition of ancient text as an aid for decipherment, rather than on study of the script itself. In this respect, more work has been undertaken on the Hebrew Geniza texts: see L. Wolf et al., "Automatic Paleographic Exploration of Genizah Manuscripts," in *Kodikologie und Paläographie im Digitalen Zeitalter 2*, ed. F. Fischer, C. Fritze, and G. Vogeler (Norderstedt: Books on Demand, 2011), 157–79.

[42] H. I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum: Catalogue, with Texts*, vol. 4: *The Aphrodito Papyri, with an appendix of Coptic papyri by W. E. Crum* (London: British Museum, 1910), xli–xlii.

exceedingly difficult to distinguish various hands, and it has been thought wiser not to make the attempt.

In discussing the Aphrodito Coptic texts, Bell notes the similarity with the later Jeme legal documents.[43]

In addition to these methodological problems, tracing the dissemination of scribal practices requires solid dates for the material. The Aphrodito *entagia*, all of which are written in Greek, were issued by Qurra b. Sharīk and date to 709–10.[44] At Aphrodito itself, Coptic was used instead to record the responses of the local authorities to the demands of the central government. Within this corpus, the scribe Theodore stands out with a dossier of twenty-four documents.[45] His texts date to the end of the governorship of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Malik and the beginning of that of Qurra. More precisely, every text that preserves a date is from 708 to 709 and concerns official matters: guarantees concerning sailors for naval duty and workmen for projects in Egypt and beyond; taxes, including requisitions of money for construction materials; and fugitives. Theodore was heavily involved in the writing of documents from a local level to the central administration (the δημόσιος λόγος), which he wrote in contemporary scripts, exhibiting the same practice of biscriptality seen in the *entagia*. The best example of this, in terms of the quantity of text in each script, is *P.Lond.* IV 1518, which concerns fugitives. This Coptic document contains a list of the names and numbers of the fugitives recovered, organized in family groups and totaling twenty-two individuals (men, women, and children). Rather than being written in Coptic, the language of the main body of the text, Theodore switches language and script, writing in the quadrilinear Greek script described above.

Another fixed chronological point is *P.Bal.* 130 Appendix A, an *entagion* written in January 724 to the taxpayer Daniel son of Pachom from Jeme, which is dated by means of the *hijra*. While the document is not signed by the scribe who wrote it, as is the case with all *entagia*, it can confidently be attributed to Aristophanes son of Johannes, the best-attested scribe from Jeme.[46] This year falls within an approximately fifteen-year period in which large numbers of tax receipts were being written in the village, although this is the only such tax demand. Aristophanes himself wrote receipts between 727 and 730, and the production of the receipts across the

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[43] Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, xlvi.
[44] *P.Lond.* IV 1407, 1409; *SB* I 5638, 5644–54. The outlier is the Arabic–Greek *entagion SB* XVIII 13218, which dates to November 713.
[45] See note 35 above.   [46] For whom see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*.

whole period was regulated by a small number of scribes (in addition to Aristophanes, Psate son of Pisrael and Johannes son of Lazarus wrote the largest number of texts).[47] Aristophanes, as has already been discussed, introduced new linguistic and palaeographic features to the Theban region, ushering in new scribal practices, the introduction of which seems to be closely connected with the administration of taxes (based on similarities with contemporary administrative documents).[48]

Beyond these two corpora, dating becomes more problematic, although date ranges can be assigned to many texts. Where dates can be assigned, they are based on what is known about the issuing pagarch. Of these officials, most is known about Atias son of Goedos, and his Coptic *entagia* date to the 690s and 710s, perhaps as early as 688 in the case of *CPR* IV 6 (although a 703 date is more likely).[49] The career of the official Rāshid b. Khālid is documented over several papyri, through which it is known that he served as pagarch of both Herakleiopolis and Hermopolis. His attested period in office in Herakleiopolis covers the years 718–23, after which he may have been promoted to the larger city, Hermopolis, where he is attested until 731. However, as Gesa Schenke has pointed out, it cannot be excluded that his movement was in the other direction, in which case his Hermopolite texts are earlier, between 709 and 716.[50] For this reason, both date ranges are provided in the appendix below. What is at least certain is that his *entagia* date broadly to the 710s or 720s.

Unfortunately, the documents of the other officials who served as pagarch of Hermpolis and issued *entagia*, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān,[51] Shabīb b. Sahm, Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, and Yazīd b. Saʿīd, do not contain absolute dates – it is impossible to place them in relative chronology, let alone to assign dates to them. However, even without this information it is possible to observe broad geographic trends. The earliest documents that exhibit the new scribal practices occur first in

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[47] A. Delattre and J.-L. Fournet, "Le dossier des reçus de taxe thébains et la fiscalité en Égypte au début du VIIIe siècle," in *Coptica Argentoratensia: textes et documents de la troisième université d'été en papyrologie copte (Strasbourg, 18–25 juillet 2010)*, ed. A. Boud'hors, A. Delattre, C. Louis, and T. S. Richter (Paris: De Boccard, 2014), 209–39 collects the data for all known Theban tax receipts published by this date. Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, ch. 4 discusses the development of tax recording at Jeme.

[48] For more on these new practices see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, chs. 4 and 6.

[49] See most recently the discussion to *P.Gascou* 28.

[50] G. Schenke, "Rashid ibn Chaled and the Return of Overpayments," *Chronique d'Égypte* 89 (2014), 202–09, at 204. Nikolaos Gonis is currently preparing a study on Rāshid.

[51] As he issued an *entagion* to the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawīṭ, he must postdate 705 (the year from which monks were no longer exempt from paying the poll tax), but nothing more precise can be stated.

the Hermopolite region, from the 690s/700s. The relevant Coptic material from Aphrodito (a small town at best) appears a few years later, while Theban texts containing the new practices occur first in 724 with Aristophanes. While this movement is from north to south, this is not to say that the transmission of this style was geographically based – the progression also reflects the size and administrative importance of the sites in question. Without securely dated contemporary material from Edfū or Aswān, or from the Fayyūm before the Abbasid period, the precise nature of the progress of new scribal networks cannot be conclusively determined.

That western Thebes should be the final outpost in this network is not a surprise, in terms of its size and location. By the same logic, the importance and size of Hermopolis (and neighboring Antinoopolis) provide the environment within which bilingual scribes could produce Coptic counterparts of Greek administrative texts. Suggestions can be made concerning the methods by which these new styles spread throughout the network just outlined. The consistencies exhibited from Hermopolis to Jeme make it unlikely that scribes passively copied the style of documents issued by the administration in the late seventh and eighth centuries. Instead, the homogeneity must be by design and intentionally disseminated, in order to bring uniformity to the bureaucratic system. Two possibilities seem likely: scribes traveled as part of the retinue of Arab officials and trained local scribes; or local scribes were sent to a regional center to receive training therein. The first option is perhaps the most pragmatic and efficient dissemination method.

The Late Seventh- and Early Eighth-Century Context

After the conquest, Egypt's new rulers exercised direct supervision over the country's administration. Petra M. Sijpesteijn has previously highlighted the fact that the volume of state paperwork increased after the conquest, both in terms of the number of Greek documents and in the use of Arabic.[52] The *entagia*, in Arabic, Greek, and Coptic, constitute just one small part of this bureaucratic output – indeed, they constitute only a small part of the body of paperwork concerning taxation and other impositions. Some issues therefore remain to be tackled: the use of Coptic for other

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[52] P. M. Sijpesteijn, "The Archival Mind in Early Islamic Egypt: Two Arabic Papyri," in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World*, ed. P. M. Sijpesteijn and L. Sundelin (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 163–87; P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Landholding Patterns in Early Islamic Egypt," *Journal of Agrarian Change* 9 (2009), 120–33, at 122.

documentation types; the rise of paperwork as part of empire-wide reforms; and why Coptic in particular was employed for a few decades in the late seventh and early eighth centuries.

Concerning taxation, Coptic was used to write a range of document types in addition to the *entagia*: registers, receipts, letters, and legal documents, which record different stages of the administrative process,[53] deal with issues arising from tax payment or non-payment, and include material from secular and monastic communities.[54] Of these text types, some are numerous while only a single example of other types are known. By far the most numerous category is tax receipts. Over 500 receipts from Jeme alone have been published, with more awaiting publication (the majority are in Coptic, but a small number were written entirely in Greek).[55] The date of this group spans two decades, the 710s and 720s, and no receipt can be certainly dated after 730. In contrast to Thebes, Coptic receipts from other sites are fewer in number and typically have unsecure provenance and dates.[56] In addition to the *entagia* and the receipts, a small piece of papyrus from the village bears an instalment schedule for payment of the poll tax. This document belongs to the same individual for whom the *entagion P.Bal.* 130 Appendix A was

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[53] Here, I will focus only on documents that provide evidence for the administration of the poll tax, rather than on incidental detail regarding taxation. It should be noted, though, that private documents (e.g., letters and legal texts) provide valuable evidence for how people dealt with their payments and the measures they were forced to take. In *P.KRU* 57 Mena son of Psaia from the Coptite nome acknowledges receipt from Joseph son of Petros in western Thebes of one and one-third *holokottinoi* (in exchange for some land), which he states explicitly that he will use for his taxes: "ⲛⲁⲓ ⲁⲓⲛⲟⲭⲟⲩ ⲉⲛⲁⲧⲓⲙⲟⲥⲓⲟⲛ (δημόσιον)" (lines 6–7).

[54] I will not here focus on taxation of monks. See, e.g., the "It is the Father who writes" texts from the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawīṭ written to the brethren of the poll tax (always here *andrismos*) for how that community organized tax collection: *P.BawitClackson* 1, 3–5, 7–9, 11, 14, 25 (no. 6 is now *P.LouvreBawit* 9); *P.KölnÄgypt.* II 18, 20. The texts were written as a result of non-standard circumstances, such as the payment of taxes in kind, waiving tax liability (including paying further taxes from what was initially levied), or delaying the notification of tax assessment. Except in such situations, it can be assumed that the brethren distributed taxes among the members of the monastery in the same way as villages distributed taxes among its inhabitants.

[55] The most recent editions include *P.Stras.Copt.* 27–66; seven receipts in A. Delattre and N. Vanthieghem, "Sept reçus de taxe thébains du VIIIe siècle," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 16 (2014), 89–102; eight receipts in Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, appendix II; five receipts in J. Cromwell, "Five Tax Receipts from Djeme in the Collection of Columbia University," *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 54 (2017), 143–55. Nikolaos Gonis is currently preparing for publication a group of receipts from collections across Europe, and I am editing the receipts in the Kelsey Museum, University of Michigan, which were discussed in T. G. Wilfong, "New Texts in Familiar Hands: Unpublished Michigan Coptic Ostraca by Known Scribes," in *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium*, ed. M. Immerzeel and J. van der Vliet (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 545–52.

[56] For example, the group of receipts published in J. Cromwell, "New Texts from Early Islamic Egypt: A Bilingual Taxation Archive," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 201 (2017), 232–52, which may be Hermopolite in origin.

written: Daniel son of Pachom. It records his payment plan, in the first payment period of the year, between the end of January and mid-April of a seventh indiction year, that is, the same year for which the tax demand was issued. Both documents were acquired at the same time by the British Museum, together with other financial papers concerning Daniel, showing that he kept quite meticulous records of his own affairs.[57]

Tax registers in Coptic are uncommon. Among the body of such documents from Aphrodito, there are a number of bilingual registers in which the names of the taxpayers are written in Greek and the subscriptions of the officials in Coptic (*P.Lond.* IV 1552–63, although only the Greek survives of 1557 and 1558 and their identification as bilingual registers by their editor is questionable). *P.Lond.* IV 1552 preserves the names of forty taxpayers together with the amount of tax for which they are liable. The following subscriptions stress that no individual taxpayer is to be burdened beyond what they can pay – the wealthiest inhabitants pay a larger share: "we have not burdened anybody beyond his means, nor have we relieved any wealthy person."[58]

From Aphrodito guarantee documents were produced concerning tax fugitives: *P.Lond.* IV 1518–28, although the fragmentary nature of some of the texts means that the status of the individuals involved is not always clear. *P.Lond.* IV 1518 concerns six families who had fled north from Aphrodito (Psoi/Ptolemais) where they were found and returned by the Arab official ʿAbd Allāh b. Shurayḥ, referred to as a "Saracen" (ⲥⲁⲣⲁⲕⲉ(ⲛⲟⲥ)/Σαρακηνός). As two of the families comprised only women and children, the poll tax itself may not have been the cause of their flight, unless the sons of each were old enough to be liable for it.[59] The village officials guarantee that they will ensure that the fugitives remain in Aphrodito and that they will deliver them

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[57] See further J. Cromwell, "Managing a Year's Taxes: Tax Demands and Tax Payments in 724 CE," *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 60/1 (2014), 229–39.

[58] ⲙⲡⲉⲛⲟⲩⲱⲣ ⲗⲁⲁⲩ ⲉϫⲛ ⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲡⲁⲣⲁ ⲧⲉⲃϭⲟⲙ ⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲛⲉⲛⲕ[ⲟⲩϥⲓⲍⲉ] ⲛⲟⲩⲣⲱⲙⲉ ⲉϥⲉⲩⲡⲱⲣⲉ (*P.Lond.* IV 1552.24–25); cf. with varying phraseology *P.Lond.* IV 1553.5–6, 15, 23–24, 29, v18–19, v35, 1554.30–31, 1555.39–40, 1559.v13–14, 1560.24–25, 1561.4–5, 14–15. The pepper monopoly agreement, from Edfū (discussed at the beginning of this chapter), contains a similar clause: ⲉⲛⲉⲛⲛⲟⲩϫⲉ ⲁϫⲛ ⲗⲁⲁⲩ ⲛϩⲏⲕⲉ ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲗⲁⲁⲩ ⲛⲥⲙⲟⲧ ⲛⲧⲛϯ-ⲧⲉⲩⲧⲓⲙⲏ ⲡⲣⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲧⲉⲣⲉⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲙⲙⲟⲛ ⲛⲁⲧⲁϩⲟϥ ⲡⲣⲟⲥ ⲧⲉⲩⲡⲟⲣⲓⲁ ⲙⲡⲟⲩⲁ ⲡⲟⲩⲁ "we shall not impose upon any poor person, in any circumstance, and we shall pay their price according to what each one of us will receive, according to the ability of each person" (*SB Kopt.* I 242.17–20).

[59] *P.Lond.Copt.* I 1079 A and B are parallel acknowledgments in which the village headmen swear that they have assessed every liable man in their village, from the age of fourteen. The document is certainly post-conquest, as the headman swears by ʿAmr (b. al-ʿĀṣ), but it is not explicitly stated that the assessment is for the poll tax, and it could be for other impositions, e.g., forced labor. On this see A. Papaconstantinou, "Administering the Early Islamic Empire: Insights from the Papyri," in *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria. A Review of Current Debates*, ed. J. Haldon (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 57–74, at 61–62.

to the authorities when requested. Should they fail to provide the fugitives, they will be subject to a fine, but no punishments – beyond detention – are recorded for the fugitives.

An agreement between seventeen men in Jeme, *P.CLT* 6, principally concerns a different imposition, the *cursus* (or naval duty), although it also makes provision for "any duty at all" issued by the central administration.[60] The signatories agree that any imposition should not fall upon any one person, but rather that they will bear any burden together. Should any of them contravene this agreement, he will be subject to excommunication (the standard religious punishment included in Coptic legal documents), although no financial penalty is stated.

Outside the realm of administrative documents (registers, receipts, legal agreements), letters provide glimpses into other aspects of the taxation process. In some cases they can be included in the category of Coptic texts used for official (rather than private) purposes. The Arab official Ibrāhīm b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān[61] writes to Theodore from Titkooh, informing him of the appointment of an official, Serene, to oversee tax collection. While arrears, or other payment issues, are not mentioned, difficulties connected with the process are clear in the strong terms with which Ibrāhīm ends the letter: "If you seek to break anything in it, I will send one who will extract it from your bones."[62] Here, the use of Coptic is from the top (an Arab official) down. In *P.Ryl.Copt.* 321, Prashe, presumably a village headman, writes in Coptic to an unnamed *amīr* (perhaps the pagarch) also about problems concerning tax payment. The details are not always clear, although Prashe's distress is apparent – in an earlier incident he and other men had been arrested and placed in irons because of (unspecified) problems. Prashe also seems to refer to fugitives he will arrest, if they are caught, and send south to

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[60] The text's original editor, Arthur Schiller, understood this document as an agreement between the entire village, but it is more likely that it is between the named signatories only, as first suggested by W. H. Worrell and H. C. Youtie, "Review of *Ten Coptic Legal Texts* by A. Arthur Schiller," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 52/4 (1932), 377–80, at 379.

[61] Presumably a pagarch, based on the content of the letter, but he is not known from elsewhere. He is not included in the list of Arab names in Coptic documents collected in M. Legendre, "Perméabilité linguistique et anthroponymique entre copte et arabe: l'exemple de comptes en caractères coptes du Fayoum fatimide," in *Coptica Argentoratensia: textes et documents de la troisième université d'été de papyrologie copte (Strasbourg, 18–25 juillet 2010)*, ed. A. Boud'hors, A. Delattre, C. Louis, and T. S. Richter (Paris: De Boccard, 2014), 326–440, as the address of this letter, in which his name occurs, was not read by the original editor. For the address see A. Delattre, "Le monastère de Baouît et l'administration arabe," in *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, ed. A. T. Schubert and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 43–49, at 47. The correction is also noted in *P.LouvreBawit* p. 166.

[62] *P.Mich.Copt.* 15.5–7: ⲉⲕϣⲓⲛⲉ ⲛⲥⲁ ⲟⲩϭⲟⲙϯ ⲉⲗⲁⲁⲩ ϩⲓⲱⲱϥ ϣⲁⲓⲧⲛⲛⲟⲟⲩ ⲡⲉⲧⲉϣⲁϥⲉⲛⲧϥ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲛ ⲛⲉⲕⲕⲉⲉⲥ.

the *amīr*. While such letters are few in number, it is clear that Coptic was used by local Arab officials to manage various situations.

Coptic was, therefore, used for administering taxation from the level of the pagarch to individual villagers. As already stated, this practice should be understood within the context of the increase in paperwork witnessed in the century after the conquest. But how far did this phenomenon of using autochthonous languages extend beyond Egypt? This question is not an easy one to tackle, as no other province of the early Muslim empire has produced a comparable volume of written evidence. ʿAbd al-Malik is the caliph accredited with introducing major reforms, including the professionalization of the army, administrative changes, monetary reform, and increased systematization in the taxing of subject populations.[63] While the third quarter of the seventh century was already witness to infrastructural changes in Egypt,[64] it may not be a coincidence that all of the Coptic texts mentioned above that concern taxation postdate ʿAbd al-Malik's rise to power.

During the first decades of the eighth century, the new Muslim state incurred considerable expenses. As Petra M. Sijpesteijn has described it, Egypt was "a well-stocked way station," providing resources for further Arab conquests.[65] West of Egypt, these conquests included western North Africa (711–16) and the Iberian Peninsula (705–15), while in the east these same years saw the conquest of Sind and central Asia.[66] An Arabic letter dating more or less to this period attests to the direct cost to Egypt of the army, namely, the payment of the military stipend (ʿaṭāʾ).[67] Major building works took place at the Dome of the Rock under ʿAbd al-Malik,[68] and the Great Mosque of Damascus under al-Walīd I (to name but two major projects). The latter is reported to have cost between 600,000 and 1,000,000 *dīnār*s, including a daily expenditure of 6,000 *dīnār*s to feed

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[63] For an overview of these changes see C. Robinson, *ʿAbd al-Malik* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005), 66–80.

[64] F. Donner, "The Formation of the Islamic State," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106/2 (1986), 283–96 and R. G. Hoyland, "New Documentary Texts and the Early Islamic State," *Bulletin of SOAS* 69 (2006), 395–416 both discuss the framework established before ʿAbd al-Malik. For Egypt under Muʿāwiya see esp. C. Foss, "Egypt under Muʿāwiya. Part I: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt," *Bulletin of SOAS* 72/1 (2009), 1–24 and C. Foss, "Egypt under Muʿāwiya. Part II: Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria," *Bulletin of SOAS* 72/2 (2009), 259–78. Earlier still, Sijpesteijn, "The Arab Conquest of Egypt," 447 discusses the infrastructural projects of ʿAmr in the years following the conquest.

[65] Sijpesteijn, "New Rule over Old Structures," 185.

[66] For the Marwanid armies and the payment of the military at this time see the relevant sections in H. Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London: Routledge, 2001).

[67] P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics: An Early Papyrus Letter Related to ʿAṭāʾ Payments," in *Histories of the Middle East: Studies in Middle Eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A. L. Udovitch*, ed. R. E. Margariti, A. Sabra, and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 245–67.

[68] Robinson, *ʿAbd al-Malik*, 2–9.

the workers.[69] Al-Walīd I was also responsible for further public works, including land reclamation and well-digging.[70]

Such large expenses required strong centralization and control over the levying and collection of expenses. On one hand, the increased administrative output in Egypt would attest to this, at least at face value. Yet the letters from the governor Qurra b. Sharīk to Basileios, the pagarch of Aphrodito, attest to the problems of tax collection in the Nile Valley and the constant state of arrears of such payments.[71] The Coptic letters cited above are further evidence of this situation. The tax receipts from Jeme also show that taxes were rarely collected for the year in which they were requested, especially from 727 to 730. During these years, receipts were issued either for the taxes of the previous year or for two years previously, whereas earlier receipts were issued both in the same year and for the taxes of the previous year.[72] One important question then is what volume of the taxes actually left Egypt.

Furthermore, following ʿUmar II's fiscal rescript, the central Islamic treasury took a blow. Known and praised for his piety,[73] ʿUmar II (r. 717–20) decreed that converts to Islam (*mawālī*) were no longer to be subject to the poll tax: "Whosoever accepts al-Islam, whether Christian or Jew or Magian, of those who are now subject to the *jizya* and who joins himself to the body of the Muslims . . . shall enjoy all the privileges of the Muslims."[74] If ʿUmar II's policy toward recent converts was observed (and observed equally throughout the provinces), and depending on the subsequent rate of conversion, the result would have been a significant reduction in revenue from taxation (the taxes payable by Muslims being considerably less than those payable by non-Muslims). One response to this loss of capital may have been to make changes to the administration and collection of taxes

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[69] F. B. Flood, *The Great Mosque of Damascus: Studies on the Makings of an Umayyad Visual Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 2–3.

[70] K. Y. Blankinship, *The End of the Jihād State: The Reign of Hishām Ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and the Collapse of the Umayyads* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 82, drawing largely upon al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje et al., 5 vols. + supplement (Leiden: Brill, 1879–1901), 2:1195–96 (wells and fountains), 1271 (mosque building), and 1272–73 (in praise of his building activities).

[71] As Papaconstantinou, "Administering the Early Islamic Empire," 71 notes, the Aphrodito archive remains under-studied but holds great potential for understanding the provincial and local administration under al-Walīd I.

[72] During these years, the principal taxation scribe was Aristophanes son of Johannes (discussed above), but Cyriacus son of Petros also issued receipts. However, Cyriacus's receipts are always for two years previously – his task was to collect especially late taxes: see Cromwell, *Recording Village Life*, ch. 4.

[73] H. Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province in the Islamic Caliphate, 641–868," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. C. F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 62–85, at 73, provides a concise overview of his pious measures and policies of increasing Islamization.

[74] Translation from H. A. R. Gibb, "The Fiscal Rescript of ʿUmar II," *Arabica* 2 (1955), 1–16, at 3. ʿUmar II's policy is also recorded in al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, 2:1367.

down the Nile Valley. Such a response could account for why the majority
of our relevant Coptic documentation, in particular *entagia* and receipts,
postdates ʿUmar II's reign.

  Can the increased use of Coptic be viewed as a direct result of these state-
level activities and policies, from military campaigns, to building and public
works, to a decrease in taxation income? The local response in Egypt to these
different situations may well have been increased use of the Egyptian
language in order to maximize bureaucratic control over the towns and
villages down the length of the Nile. If there had been no need to increase
efficiency and extend the presence of central authority to smaller, predom-
inantly monolingual Egyptian communities throughout the Nile Valley,
why use Coptic at all and not simply continue in Greek and Arabic? It is
difficult to view the chronological framework of the development and use of
Coptic in the administrative sphere, on the one hand, and the increased state
expenses and need for control, on the other, as purely coincidental. This is
not to say that all provinces of the Muslim state would use local languages in
this manner,[75] or that there should even be a uniform system of taxation at
this time.[76] However, the evidence does point to the existence of this use of
indigenous languages within the administrative framework of Egypt.

  It is not possible to determine whether Egypt is representative of the situation
throughout the empire, and it may instead be that each governor reacted to
specific conditions within his own province. Nevertheless, the rich textual
sources from Egypt provide the best chance to examine potential language
policies, which here manifested in innovations in document types and forms.
The resulting integration of Coptic into the taxation system of Egypt was
a developing and evolving process, from the end of the seventh century. The
date of the existing material points to the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik as the impetus
for its increased use at a local level, that is, from the level of the pagarchy to that
of the village. This use of Coptic in Egypt's administration must be viewed
within the broader context of increasing imperial centralization and the need
for revenue, as dictated by events happening beyond Egypt's borders.

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[75] The Greek Nessana *entagia* (*P.Ness*. III 60–67) predate the Coptic *entagia* (the latest possible date is
689) and reflect older practices; on language use in this province see R. Stroumsa, "Greek and Arabic
in Nessane," in *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, ed. P. M. Sijpesteijn and
A. T. Schubert (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 143–57. Written sources are lacking for how the poll tax was
managed in Palestine after the reforms of ʿAbd al-Malik.

[76] The situation in al-Jazīra suggests a lack of systematization in how taxes/tribute were exacted in
northern Mesopotamia in the pre-Marwanid period, as discussed by C. Robinson, *Empire and Elites
after the Muslim Conquest: The Transformation of Northern Mesopotamia* (Cambridge: Cambridge
University Press, 2000), 44–49. It was not until the Abbasid period that more rapacious and efficient
taxation practices were introduced.

Appendix

Details of Coptic/Coptic–Greek Entagia

Text	Issuing official	Taxpayer	Requisition	Year	Provenance
P.Mon. Apollo 28	ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲗⲗⲁ ⲡϣⲉⲛ ⲁⲃⲇⲉⲣⲙⲁⲛ)	Pamoun s. Paulos		—	Bawīṭ
SB Kopt. IV 1781	Apakyre (Ἀπάκυρος / ⲁⲡⲁ ⲕⲩⲣⲏ)	Elias s. Leontios		—	Akoris
SB Kopt. IV 1782	Apakyre	Elias s. Leontios		—	Akoris
CPR IV 3	Atias s. Goedos/ ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd (Ἀτίας υἱὸς Γοεδος)	Zacharias s. Johannes	Poll tax (*andrismos*)	696/711	Hermopolis
CPR IV 4	Atias s. Goedos	*NN*		696/711	Hermopolis
CPR IV 6	Atias s. Goedos	Sabile s. Shenoute	Poll tax (*diagraphon*)	688/703	
SB Kopt. IV 1783	Atias s. Goedos	*NN*		690s–710s	Akoris
SB Kopt. IV 1785	Atias s. Goedos	*NN*		690s–710s	
P.Gascou 28	[Atias] s. Goedos	Inhabitants of Hermopolis	Two sailors and *dapane* for two months	695	Hermopolis
R. 11 Copt. 5 no. 8[77]	ʿImrān[78] b. Ab[. . .] (Ἐμρραν υἱὸς Ἀβ[. . .])	Gennadios (?) s. *NN*	—	729/730	Unprovenanced[79]
BKU III 339	Rāshid b. Khālid	Pamin s. Tsipous		724–31[80]	Hermopolis

[77] Gonis and Schenke, "Two *Entagia*," 376–78.

[78] It is possible that the name is to be read Ἐμρραν, rather than ⲉⲙⲣⲁⲛ in the *ed. princ.* (i.e., with two ⲣ, as well as rendering the opening address as Greek, not Coptic).

[79] The editors note that the provenance is probably Upper Egypt (another item in the same frame bears a Christian invocation of the type common in Upper Egypt), although they suggest Antinoopolis as a possibility, based on the provenance of the other *entagia* that they publish in the same collection in the Wren Library, Trinity College Cambridge: see Gonis and Schenke, "Two *Entagia*," 372. The editors note that a small fragment attached to the foot of the *entagion* "does not seem to be part of the same document." This is indeed the case as the small piece bears the beginning of two lines from the beginning of a legal document: ⲉⲡⲓ ⲧⲱ [. . .] | ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲁⲣ[. . .]. It is quite possible that this piece belongs instead to the invocation formula mounted in the same frame, as these two lines, which introduce the local official and then the first part of the document, would immediately follow the invocation.

[80] See the above discussion concerning Rāshid's dates, and the possibility that his Hermopolite *entagia* instead date earlier, to 709–16.

(cont.)

Text	Issuing official	Taxpayer	Requisition	Year	Provenance
	(Ῥαζιδ υἱὸς Χαλεδ)				
BKU III 417	Rāshid b. Khālid	Stephanos			s. Phoibammon
	724–31	Hermopolite?			
CPR IV 5	Rāshid b. Khālid	*NN*			s. Phoibammon
	724–31	Hermopolite?			
CPR II 123	Rāshid b. Khālid	*NN*	—	724–31	Hermopolite
SB Kopt. IV 1784	Shabīb b. Sahm (Σεπιπ υἱὸς Σααμ)	*NN* s. Theodore		—	Hermopolis
P.Bal. 130 App. A	Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh (Σαὰλ υἱὸς Ἀβδέλλα)	Daniel s. Pachom		724	Jeme
P.Bal. 130 App. B	Sahl b. ʿAbd Allāh	*NN*		724	Jeme
P.Mich. inv. 3383[81]	S[. . .] (Σζ[. . .])	*NN*		—	Hermopolis?
BKU III 418	Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (Ἰεζιδ υἱὸς Ἀβδεραμαν)	George s. Stephanos		—	
P.Ryl.Copt. 117	Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān	Severos s. Bane		—	Hermopolis
P.Ryl.Copt. 378	Yazīd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān	Athanasios s. George		—	Great Mjew
P.Ryl.Copt. 118	Yazīd b. Saʿīd (Ἰεζιδ υἱὸς Σεειδ)	Severos s. Bane		—	Hermopolis
P.Ryl.Copt. 119	*NN* b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ([. . . υἱὸς Ἀβδε]ραμαν)	Victor s. Claudios		—	Thinis
BKU III 340[82]	*NN*	Victor s. *NN*	Poll tax; 1 *s.*	—	
P.Bal. 131	*NN*	*NN*		—	Balaʾizah
P.Bal. 402	*NN*	*NN*		—	Balaʾizah
P.Mon. Apollo 29	*NN*	Phinouke s. Apollo		—	Bawīṭ
P.Mon. Apollo 30	*NN*	Apollo s. George		—	Bawīṭ

[81] Berkes, "Griechisch und Koptisch in der Verwaltung des früharabischen Ägypten."
[82] For corrections to the text, including identification of the taxpayer, see N. Gonis and G. Schenke, "*BKU* III 340: An Unusual *Entagion*," *Chronique d'Égypte* 86 (2011), 383–85.

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A Changing Position of Greek? Greek Papyri in the Documentary Culture of Early Islamic Egypt

Janneke H. M. de Jong

For more than a millennium (ca. 330 BCE–eighth century CE) the Greek language was an important communicative tool in Egypt, both in written and in spoken form, leaving a firm imprint on Egypt's documentary landscape. Beyond its communicative capacity, the Greek language in Egypt was important for its symbolic value. This is especially clear in its use in expressing power and social relations. As the language employed by the ruling power, Greek could symbolize the political order, which it did in Egypt under the Ptolemaic, Roman, and Byzantine regimes. Greek can also be considered as an identity marker, which helped to define borders between different social groups. The ability to read and write Greek was strongly connected to one's social position and the concomitant opportunities for education. The significance of Greek in Egypt under Ptolemaic, Roman, and Byzantine rule is therefore clear. At the same time, it should be considered that it is generally agreed that the majority of Egypt's inhabitants did not speak, write, and read Greek, but rather continued to use Egyptian.[1]

[1] See Mark Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies* (Brussels: Fondation égyptologique de reine Élisabeth, 1997), 32–36 for the developments of various scripts used to write the spoken Egyptian language under Greek, Roman, and Byzantine rule; Kathelijn Vandorpe, "Archives and Dossiers," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 216–55, at 240–42, with graph on bilingual archives. On the dominance of Greek for administrative reasons and ultimately at the cost of Demotic see also Uri Yiftach-Firanko, "Law in Graeco-Roman Egypt: Hellenization, Fusion, Romanization," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 541–60, at 557.

The establishment of an Arabic-speaking regime in Egypt after the Islamic conquest (640 CE) not only resulted in a new power balance, but also affected linguistic relations. I have previously discussed the decrease of Greek in the eighth century.[2] In the present contribution I will examine whether and how the Islamic conquest affected the position of Greek in Egypt in the seventh century CE. In order to do so, a quantification of the dated material will be offered with a discussion of methodological issues, of the way in which the Arab presence is reflected in Greek papyri, and of the relation of Greek to other languages encountered in Greek documents in the period in question. The decreasing use of Greek in papyri from early Islamic Egypt may be considered as one of the sociocultural changes in Egypt resulting from political rupture. It is my aim to throw light on the process(es) by which Greek largely disappeared from Egypt's written landscape. Understanding how and why the use of Greek decreased after the Greco-Roman–Byzantine period may also raise awareness about the particular position of Greek (which is often taken for granted) in Egypt during these periods.[3] In more general terms, the decreasing use of Greek may serve as an individual case study that may have general value for processes of language shifts.

Language Shift as Cultural Change

The concept of cultural change offers a framework for the study of societal changes. Modifications of culture can be triggered by various factors, such as innovation, discovery, or contact with other societies. As one of the most obvious manifestations of culture, language change offers an interesting window into processes of cultural change.[4] This can take various forms. One form of language change is internal: the evolution of a specific

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[2] J. H. M. de Jong and A. Delattre, "Greek as a Minority Language," in *The Late Antique History of Early Islam: Muslims among Christians and Jews in the East Mediterranean*, ed. R. G. Hoyland (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2015), 37–62.

[3] The majority of published papyri are written in Greek. Nevertheless, it has been observed that this dominance of Greek papyri may be skewed, not only as a result of scholarly bias, but also of a bias in documentary source production and preservation, where the higher (in terms of wealth and power) groups of society usually dominated the lower ones. For bias in preservation of papyri see, e.g., Roger S. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History* (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), 15; Roger S. Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Bernhard Palme, "The Range of Documentary Texts: Types and Categories," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 358–94, at 358–59.

[4] Robert Wuthnow, "Cultural Change and Social Theory," in *Social Change and Modernity*, ed. Hans Haferkamp and Neil J. Smelser (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 256–64, discusses two theories explaining cultural change: adaptation theory and class legitimation theory.

language. A different process is that of "language shift," the replacement of a language by another language under the influence of contact with an external language community.[5] The process by which particular languages are replaced by foreign languages can take different forms and occur at different paces, according to the specific circumstances. In some cases only the vocabulary may be affected, whereas in others a language may disappear and be replaced by another one. How and why choices for using "old" or "new" languages are made depends on a complex interplay of various factors, such as power relations, linguistic policies, the size of a language community, group cohesiveness, and pragmatism. Usually changes in language use are long-term processes, in which the perceived profitability of a language is a key factor determining whether to continue to use it or to adopt another language. For a language to disappear completely, it takes a decision by living speakers of the language not to pass their language on to the new generation. In such a situation the language's position becomes fragile: it is no longer considered profitable by its users. As language is a personal attribute, giving up one language in favor of another means choosing a new attribute of the self. Conversely, if a minority continues to use its language within an otherwise changing or changed language landscape, this may have a practical explanation (for instance, if contact with others is not so frequent and/or a community is isolated), but it may also be taken to be significant for self-expression.

After the Islamic conquest there was continuity in the use of Greek in types of documents that were also used in the pre-Islamic period; however, changes in the position of Greek in Egypt's papyrological landscape can also be observed. An important development in the early Islamic period is the increasing presence in writing of two other languages, Coptic and Arabic. These languages increasingly contested the primary documentary place of Greek, until Greek finally became obsolete, except in specific contexts. This was a gradual development, however, as Greek continued to be used in documentary texts for some two centuries after the Islamic conquest. In what follows I will discuss the use of Greek in papyri from Egypt in the half-century or so after the Islamic conquest within the framework of the changed power balance, which resulted in a new political, social, and cultural reality. I will argue that

See also Lodi Nauta (ed.), *Language and Cultural Change: Aspects of the Study and Use of Language in the Later Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Leuven/Paris/Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2006).

[5] Nicholas Ostler, "Language Maintenance, Shift and Endangerment," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*, ed. Rajend Mesthrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 315–34 (as a general framework of change); John Wendel and Patrick Heinrich, "A Framework for Language Endangerment Dynamics: The Effects of Contact and Social Change on Language Ecologies and Language Diversity," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 218 (2012), 145–66 (framework for kinds of shifts).

the decreasing use of Greek can be explained in terms of decreased profitability of writing Greek, resulting from the new political balance, which also affected Egypt's population in social and cultural respects. Before the Islamic conquest the position of Greek was uncontested, as it was incorporated in the Byzantine imperial administration. This changed with the Islamic conquest, although initially the most obvious change was the appearance of Arabic in Egypt's documentary landscape. Only in the longer term, when the Islamic empire was more firmly taking shape, was Egypt incorporated into new political, social, and cultural milieu. In this new order, provincial administrations started to Arabize,[6] with the decreasing use of Greek in Egypt's documentary landscape as one of the most obvious cultural effects. The focus of my contribution is limited, as Egypt is only one province and papyri as a source type are hardly found in other provinces. As such, the results of this case study are limited geographically, chronologically, and to a specific source type. At the same time, as part of a bigger world, the particular case of Egypt may have more general implications for language shift as a historical development and can be considered within the framework of the early Islamic empire, where developments such as Arabization of the administration can be observed.[7]

Greek in Egypt

In the aftermath of Alexander the Great's passage through Egypt during his military expedition against the Persians, Greek rulers, soldiers, and settlers gained a politically dominant position in Egypt.[8] As a consequence, from

[6] Arabization can be defined as the process of increased use of Arab cultural elements by non-Arab people. One of its most obvious manifestations can be found in the adoption of the Arabic language, which was reinforced by the linguistic policy of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān. The term may also imply the increasing appearance of Arab personal names in provincial administration. Furthermore, Arabization is connected to Islamization, which is a distinct process implying adherence to the religion of Islam. For the terms Arabization and Islamization, and their complex relationship, see Gerald R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661–750* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000); Christian Décobert, "Sur l'arabisation et l'islamisation de l'Égypte médiévale," in *Itinéraires d'Égypte: Mélanges offerts au père Maurice Martin*, ed. Christian Décobert (Cairo: IFAO, 1992), 273–300.

[7] See, e.g., Michael Morony, "Iran in the Early Islamic Period," in *The Oxford Handbook of Iranian History*, ed. Touraj Daryaee (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 208–26. Nevertheless, the degree and spread of the Arabic language varied over time and region. See, e.g., Hugh Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2007), 12–14, 199 (on Arabic in Iran: although Arabic spread in a major part of the Islamic empire, and was implemented as the language of the early Islamic administration, it was not always pervasive). See also Ahmed Y. al-Hassan (ed.), *The Different Aspects of Islamic Culture: Science and Technology in Islam* (Paris: UNESCO, 2001), 59.

[8] Greek was already spoken and written in Egypt several centuries before the great influx under and after Alexander the Great's campaign: a Greek community resided in Naukratis, and

the last decades of the fourth century BCE Greek, the language of this dominant minority, became the language of the administration and of the elites, with a notable effect on Egypt's documentary landscape. The use and status of Greek in Egypt should, however, be considered in a wider historical perspective: Greek was important as the language of the central royal administration, and of Greek-speaking immigrants, who were limited in number and initially might have seemed to constitute a closed group.[9] Egyptians involved in the administration also learned Greek, resulting in a bilingual (Greek and Egyptian) society, even if the exact nature of this bilingualism cannot be established. Although the use of Greek in writing documents became dominant in Egypt, scholars have pointed out that a major part of the population probably continued to speak Egyptian.[10]

With time, contacts between the immigrant and indigenous groups intensified, resulting in processes of cultural exchange. In political and social relations, however, Greek became a marker of power and of privileged social

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evidence of this community has been preserved in inscriptions from the sixth century BCE. See Astrid Möller, *Naukratis: Trade in Archaic Greece* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Myrto Malouta, "Naucratis," *Oxford Handbooks Online* (July 9, 2015), www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935390.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935390-e-114.

[9] For the interaction and exchange between the immigrant Greeks and local population see, e.g., Willy Clarysse and Dorothy J. Thompson, *Counting the People in Hellenistic Egypt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Christelle Fischer-Bovet, *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt: Armies of the Ancient World* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014). On Ptolemaic Egypt in general see Günther Hölbl, *Geschichte des Ptolemäerreiches: Politik, Ideologie und religiöse Kultur von Alexander dem Grossen bis zur römischen Eroberung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994).

[10] Alan K. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 157–64; Depauw, *Demotic Studies*; Tonio S. Richter, "Language Choice in the Qurra Dossier," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 189–220. However, several factors have resulted in Greek getting more attention than other languages in Egypt. One is the survival and rediscovery of hundreds of thousands Greek documents. Although the number of published papyri clearly shows the predominance of Greek documentation, it is difficult to establish to what degree this reflected the reality of language use. Nevertheless, it is clear that Greek was predominantly used for Egypt's administration under Greek, Roman, and Byzantine rule. Another factor is the (Western) scholarly interest in and familiarity with Greco-Roman antiquity, resulting in a higher number of scholars studying Greek documentation than Egyptian documentation. See F. Morelli, *CPR* XXII, introduction. The use of Latin in papyrus documents is restricted to Roman contexts. The continued use of Greek as the language of administration and elite was pragmatic, but may also be seen as an indication of the Romans' admiration for Greek culture. See Jean-Luc Fournet, "The Multilingual Environment of Late Antique Egypt: Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Persian Documentation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 418–51.

position.[11] This resulted in the adoption of the Greek language by non-Greek speakers who aimed for upward social mobility. Greek thus can be viewed as an attribute designating political and social status, just as specific dress or other social conventions would do.[12] This function of Greek was retained for approximately ten centuries, as its prominence in documentary uses demonstrates.[13] However, this situation changed in the centuries after the Islamic conquest. Under the new regime Greek continued to be used in written documentation, but its prominence was contested by Coptic and Arabic. Considering Greek as an attribute of identity, how does the decreasing prominence of the position of Greek in Egypt reflect political, social, and cultural developments? This complex question cannot be discussed in detail in this contribution, nor does the evidence allow for an easy reconstruction of the how and why of the decrease of Greek, for reasons that are set out below. Nevertheless, it is possible to sketch some broader tendencies in the shift of power relations in the "global imperial system" of which Egypt was part. These resulted in shifting power relations within Egypt itself, which also affected society and culture, hence affecting the role of Greek in practical usage and, beyond that, its symbolic or ideological implications.

Looking at Greek as a sociopolitical attribute is helpful in explaining and understanding the process of its disappearance from the Egyptian linguistic landscape, in relation to developments concerning the Egyptian languages (Demotic and Coptic) and Arabic. One was not born speaking – let alone writing – Greek, but learned or was taught to do so. Whether or how this happened depended on one's personal circumstances, such as social and/or political context, which defined one's needs and possibilities. Nevertheless,

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[11] Dorothy J. Thompson, "The Multilingual Environment of Persian and Ptolemaic Egypt: Egyptian, Aramaic, and Greek Documentation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 395–417, at 396.

[12] For language as an attribute see Anna Duszak and Urszula Okulska, "Age and Language Studies," in *Language, Culture and the Dynamics of Age*, ed. Anna Duszak and Urszula Okulska (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 3–25. For the notion of language as a choice see S. Torallas Tovar, "Linguistic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt," in *The Multilinguistic Experience in Egypt*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 17–46.

[13] The documentary uses did change, as new document types were introduced in different periods and as existing documentary types developed (such as letters). There was continuity in the use of Greek in administrative and legal documents throughout the periods, as the Romans maintained the use of Greek as an administrative language: see, e.g., Mark Depauw, "Language Use, Literacy, and Bilingualism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 493–506, at 500–01. However, the rise of Coptic, both in quantity and in quality/types of documents, hints at a changing perception of social relations in which the local vernacular may have become more important than Greek. See Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*.

at all times it is difficult to describe the degree of knowledge and use of Greek in Egypt in general terms. Undoubtedly, knowledge of Greek ranged on a scale from complete absence to fluency, both oral and written, depending on an individual's social background and education.[14] Apart from people born in Greek-speaking families or social environments and for whom Greek would be the first language, acquiring knowledge of Greek depended on individual choices, necessities, and opportunities. Statistical data on the size of language communities in antiquity are lacking; Greek dominates as a papyrological language, but that does not mean that it was also the language dominating in the daily lives of (most) people. It is, therefore, impossible to establish exact numbers or percentages of members of the Greek language community by themselves, but also in comparison to participants of different language communities. Yet, even if the use of Greek was restricted to an unquantifiable community of users, the documentary record offers a window for its use in writing.[15] The question to be pursued further here is how the Islamic conquest affected the use and function of Greek in Egypt in the seventh century.

Quantifying Greek in Egypt's Papyrological Landscape in the Seventh Century

When taking a quantifying approach, it is necessary to be aware of what looking at numbers may say. [16] As the data for antiquity are so incomplete, a quantitative or statistical approach to ancient data should always be adopted with caution.[17] Quantification, on the other hand, allows for comparison within a known dataset: if one wants to know whether a word is "common" or "rare," for instance, it makes sense to know how often it is attested, in which period(s), region(s), and context(s), and in comparison to other words. Even if this can be established, it remains clear that results from quantification should not be taken as reflecting historical

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[14] Torallas Tovar, "Linguistic Identity," 30; Penelope Fewster, "Bilingualism in Roman Egypt," in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text*, ed. James N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 220–76, at 237.

[15] The question whether and how Greek functioned as a spoken language is not pursued here.

[16] Abbreviations of papyri are given according to the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets*: http://papyri.info/docs/checklist.

[17] In the last few years scholars have increasingly paid attention to quantifying papyrological data. This urge for quantification may well reflect the modern use of statistics in all kinds of societal issues and the belief (adopted from the exact sciences) that "to measure is to know." Using graphs and tables may be helpful for presenting the data as known at present, as long one is aware of what they do not tell and that new finds may lead to different pictures.

reality. A related question concerns to what degree papyri are representative within Egypt, but also within wider historical consideration. Their preservation and discovery is often a matter of hazard, and all finds are in a way coincidental snapshots from the past.[18] This does not imply that information provided by papyri always defies generalizations. If it is compared to what is known from other periods and places, papyri may well appear to demonstrate that Egypt was less exceptional than is sometimes assumed.[19] The challenge is, therefore, to find a balance between accidence and pattern, and to establish whether we see commonalities or exceptions.

With these caveats in mind, a quantification of the papyrological record for the seventh century will be explored in order to attempt to establish the impact of the Islamic conquest on Egypt's papyrological landscape. Thanks to online databases, edited papyri are easily available and searchable on the basis of specific criteria, such as a specific date or a date by century. By searching for papyri dated to a specific year, I have collected a dataset of 235 documents dated more or less precisely to one year for the period 640–700 CE. This is roughly 10 percent of some 2,000–2,500 or so documents that are dated in a more global way, i.e., to one or more century.[20] As these "globally dated" documents are less helpful for establishing chronological patterns, they are left out of consideration here.[21] To put these numbers in a wider perspective, I have also compared the numbers of papyri resulting from a per-year search for the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries,[22] and zoomed in on these by grouping them into twenty-year clusters.[23]

A first note is that these results reflect a quantitative search only, in order to get an overall impression. Table 12.2 shows that the number of dated papyri decreases from the sixth to the eighth centuries. Zooming in on

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[18] Palme, "The Range of Documentary Texts," 358–61.   [19] Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*.

[20] See Appendix, Graph 12.1 for the number of globally dated papyri and Graph 12.2 for the number of papyri per twenty years. "Dated papyri" are attributed to one year (sometimes with an alternative year due to the indiction). The Patermouthis archive is left out, as this is dated ca. 643–700 CE and gives too wide a timespan. For the same reason, documents from the Senouthios and Papas archives have been left out if their date was too unclear. However, texts belonging to these archives have been included if they were dated to a specific year.

[21] The purpose is to address these at another occasion, so that they can serve as a *comparandum*. A *HGV* search for "Jahrhundert 7" results in 3,235 hits. A *PN* search for documents after 600 CE and before 700 CE "strict" results in 2,522 hits. A search via *Trismegistos* for papyrus texts between 600 and 700 CE results in 2,142 hits. (These database searches were performed on January 12, 2018.) However, the results provided by such a "century search" in the databases is not very precise and may contain quite a few doubles.

[22] Appendix, Table 12.1.   [23] Appendix, Table 12.2.

these numbers in Table 12.2, by grouping them into twenty-year clusters, that general impression, created by Table 12.1, is confirmed. Although "lumpiness" in the data should be heeded (as is visible in the timespan 701–20, in which years many papyri from the archive of Aphrodito are dated[24]), in addition to which many of the papyri are left out of consideration (as they are only globally dated), it is tempting to see a shift in the number of dated papyri around the mid-seventh century, with the numbers steadily dropping in the eighth century. With the same caution, it may also be noted that, in the second half of the eighth century especially, quite a few years have resulted in 0 papyri. Of course it should also be underlined that these overviews only cover the present state of the evidence.

Turning to the dataset under examination, some general observations will be made to start with. In a geographical respect, unsurprisingly most seventh-century papyri come from Middle and Upper Egypt, with the exception of the papyri from Nessana in the Negev desert.[25] In this settlement some 200 papyri, dated from the early sixth to the late seventh centuries, have been found in local churches, offering a great opportunity for comparison to Egyptian finds.[26] In Egypt itself, the Arsinoite, Herakleopolite, and Hermopolite nomes and the Theban region are the main areas where the papyri come from. The anomaly here, in comparison with find patterns from previous times, is the near absence of Greek documents from Oxyrhynchus, that is so well attested (or perhaps it could be said that, in relative terms, it is overrepresented) in earlier centuries.[27] According to Revel Coles, this absence of Greek papyri

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[24] For the term "lumpiness" see Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*. [25] Appendix, Graph 12.3.

[26] *P.Ness.* I–III; Dan Urman (ed.), *Nessana: Excavations and Studies* (Beer Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2004); Philip Mayerson, *The Ancient Agricultural Regime of Nessana and the Central Negeb* (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, 1961); Jean Gascou, "The Papyrology of the Near East," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 473–94.

[27] A search in the *HGV* for papyri from Oxyrhynchus resulted in some 350 Greek texts that can be dated to a year in the sixth century and some 320 Greek texts that are dated "globally" in the sixth century (or later). For the seventh century, some 100 Greek texts can be dated exactly to a year in the first half of the seventh century. Some 40 texts are dated globally to the seventh century. One text from Oxyrhynchus, which may be written in Greek or Coptic, is dated to the ninth century (*P.Oxy.* LXXV 5071, Greek or Coptic, with Arabic on the verso). However, it may well be that post-conquest Greek documents from Oxyrhynchus are still to be published or identified as such: see Revel Coles, "Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts," in *Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts*, ed. Alan K. Bowman, Revel A. Coles, Nikolaos Gonis, Dirk Obbink, and Peter Parsons (London: Egypt Exploration Society for the Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2007), 3–16, at 14 n.2, mentioning that Nikolaos Gonis has identified a few such documents in the Oxyrhynchus collection. A search in the *APD* for papyri from Bahnasā results in thirty-one Arabic papyri. Five of these are globally dated between 632 and 823 CE, fifteen are dated between the ninth and twelfth century, and eleven are dated to the thirteenth century.

might result from the Islamic destruction of Oxyrhynchus/Bahnasā, which he hypothesizes to have taken place in the 640s. A different interpretation is proposed by Lincoln Blumell, who speculates that the change in Oxyrhynchus's Greek papyrological "output" could be ascribed to the source preservation (the youngest papyri ending up on top of the rubbish heaps would be the least protected and the first to perish), assuming, based on archaeological indications, that there was continuation in settlement between the seventh and the ninth centuries. Archaeology furthermore seems to confirm the place's occupation as an Arab Islamic settlement from the ninth century onward.[28]

Another aspect of the dated papyri is that quite a few dossiers or archives have been identified.[29] If one text in a collection of texts is securely dated, it becomes possible to also date (approximately) the other related texts. These dossiers diverge widely in date, size, and character. There are private dossiers, such as that of Philemon and Thekla, dated from the 620s to the 640s and comprising only a handful of documents preserving private business, such as their marriage contract and the sale of a house. On the other hand, there are collections of papers that were kept by administrators/officials. A famous examples is the archive of Senouthios, *anystes*, published as *CPR* XXX by Federico Morelli. The thirty-two documents edited in this volume are all dated to 643–44 and show how the Arab conquest had an immediate impact at the local level. Other archives show a much wider chronological range, such as that of the pagarch Papas, edited as *P.Apollonopolis Ano* by Rémondon. Dated to the second half of the seventh century, some fifty years lay between its earliest and latest texts.[30]

Apart from their different chronological range, these archives differ in the way in which they came into the hands of scholars or the way in which they were published (e.g., separated by language rather than as a collection of texts belonging together). The find circumstances of the Senouthios archive are unknown, as the papyri were bought in several lots together

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[28] Coles, "Oxyrhynchus," 14–15; Lincoln Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2012), 295–300; Géza Fehérvári, "The Kuwaiti Excavations, 1985–1987," in *Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts*, ed. Alan K. Bowman, Revel A. Coles, Nikolaos Gonis, Dirk Obbink, and Peter J. Parsons (London: Egypt Exploration Society for the Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2007), 109–28; Salah Saiyour and Jonathan M. Bloom, "Paper Fragments," in *The Kuwait Excavations at Bahnasā/ Oxyrhynchus (1985–1987): Final Report*, ed. Géza Fehérvári, Albert H. Pincis, and Huda Zahem (Kuwait: Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, 2006), 150–56.

[29] Appendix, Table 12.3 lists those discussed here.

[30] Anne Boud'hors, Alain Delattre, Lajos Berkes, et al., "Un nouveau départ pour les archives de Papas: papyrus coptes et grecs de la jarre d'Edfou," *Bulletin de l'Institute français d'archéologie orientale* 117 (2017), 87–124.

with numerous other documents. When they entered the Viennese collection (and others) they were not yet identified as belonging together, as appears from their inventory numbers. Federico Morelli has succeeded in identifying many texts as belonging to this archive.[31] The papers belonging to the archive of Papas, the pagarch of Apollonopolis Ano, present a different case. They were found together in a sebakh-covered jar, where they seem to have been placed in order. This suggests that they were collected at some point for some reason by someone, perhaps Papas himself, or a member of the pacharchy office staff. Only the Greek texts were published by Rémondon. It is not surprising that the publication of the Coptic texts belonging to the same archive adds a new dimension to the archive as a whole, as well as to the Greek published texts.[32]

Such archives are important, as, even when archaeological context is lacking, they provide a context for the individual texts and often reveal more connections, hierarchies, etc. than individual documents can. At the same time, for quantification of texts, they may cause what Bagnall calls "lumpiness": there is no even dispersion of data, but due to a plethora of factors (such as archival habits, documentary range, coincidence, and scholarly focus) concentrations may be found for places and times.[33]

The language in the archives or in the isolated documents of the seventh century is mainly Greek, although they often contain some documents in or in relation to Coptic.[34] Arabic is only very seldom encountered in general, and seems to be absent from the Greek(–Coptic) archives. This applies, for instance, to the archive of Senouthios, which at present contains mostly Greek papyri. However, Morelli refers to the existence of some Coptic documents belonging to the archive.[35] A difference from the archive from Aphrodito,[36] which is dated to the late seventh–early eighth centuries, is that no Arabic documents were found in the

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[31] *CPR* XXX, introduction, 1–9.   [32] Boud'hors et al., "Un nouveau départ."

[33] See Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*. Absence of similar evidence for other times and places cannot be taken as support of either the exceptional or common nature of the finds. Caution is expressed: see, e.g., Morelli, *CPR* XXX; Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*, 38–9, discussing the typicality of Zenon.

[34] This goes for the archives just listed. See texts belonging to the archives and their linguistic composition, which can be easily found in Trismegistos Archives: *TM ArchID* 190 (Philemon and Thekla, 4 texts [1 Coptic, 3 Greek]); *TM ArchID* 418 (Senouthios archive, 45 texts [1 Coptic (*CPR* XXX 1), 44 Greek]); *TM ArchID* 117 (Papas archive, 118 texts [so far 117 Greek and 1 Coptic (= *P. Apoll.* 91), but cf. Boud'hor, et al., "Un nouveau départ"]).

[35] Morelli, *CPR* XXX, introduction, 40–43, discussing both published and unpublished texts. E.g., *CPR* IV 16 (published) and an unpublished letter to "religious people": *P. Vindob.* K 4712.

[36] Many of the Greek and Coptic papyri belonging to this archive were published in *P. Lond.* IV and *P. Ross. Georg.* IV. For an overview of publications of papyri from this archive see Richter, "Language Choice," 219–20.

Senouthios archive, whereas a considerable number of the documents in the Aphrodito archive are written in Arabic. Can this absence of Arabic in the Senouthios dossier be ascribed to the differing character of the archive, the scattered state in which it came into the Viennese collection, due to which eventual Arabic writings became scattered and went unrecognized, or how does it reflect the reality of language use in different periods? That the Arabs corresponded by means of writing with the former Byzantine administrators immediately after the conquest is beyond doubt, as is demonstrated by two bilingual Greek–Arabic papyri dated to 643 CE.[37] The sociocultural background of the parties involved in these documents (that is, to whom the documentation was relevant) most probably defined which language was used.

Sometimes Arabic presence is found indirectly, in Greek official correspondence.[38] In a letter sent to Athanasius, the pagarch of Apollonopolis, his colleague Plato states that he had received a "threatening letter" from the *amīr*, about workmen who had to be sent.[39] However, we do not have Plato's archive, so the original threatening letter from the *amīr* himself has not been preserved (or is yet to be found), and it remains an open question how and at what point on the communication line between an Arabic-speaking *amīr* and Greek- and/or Coptic-speaking pagarch the translation from one language into the other was made.[40] Tonio Sebastian Richter pointed to the presence of a Greek notary in the Arab-speaking officials' entourage in the early eighth century, whereas there is also evidence for an Arabic notary who worked

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[37] *SB* VI 9576 and *SB* XX 14443. These documents belong to the group *TM ArchID* 572 (pagarchs of the Herakleopolites; fourteen other texts are Greek). See also Yūsuf Rāġib, "Un papyrus arabe de l'an 22 de l'Hégire," in *Histoire, archéologies et littératures du monde musulman: mélanges en l'honneur d'André Raymond*, ed. Ghislaine Alleaume, Sylvie Denoix, and Michel Tuchscherer (Cairo: IFAO, 2009), 363–72.

[38] See Morelli in *CPR* XXX, pp. 41–42. Communications by Arabs would be in Greek, as perhaps *P. Vindob.G.* 56038 conveys. *CPR* XXII 1 refers to an order of an *amīr*, references to *epistalma*, for example, in *SB* XXVI 16358 and the unedited 39878 reference is made to "threatening letters" of a duke and an *amīr*. Furthermore, he states that the Arabs did not consider Greek in Egypt as "the language of the enemy." The situation at the time of the conquest was different than at the end of the seventh century – more pragmatic, less ideological. Morelli: "Il greco era, almeno, una lingua già in qualche modo familiar, più accessibile del copto, e più universalmente utilizzabile, poiché conosciuta in tutti i territori dell'impero bizantino passati sotto il controllo degli arabi" (*CPR* XXX, p. 42).

[39] *P. Apoll.* 38, 3: ἀπειλιτικ[ὰ] [γ]ράμματα ἐδεξάμην ("I have received such a threatening letter"); the letter probably came from the *amīr*, who is referred to in the previous second line: τοῦ πανευφήμου ἀμιρᾶ. The verso says that the addressee was the pagarch of Apollonopolis Ano, and that Plato was the sender.

[40] Other letters by the *amīr* have been preserved in the Papas archive, written in Greek: *P. Apoll.* 1 (which has been identified as a writing exercise), *P. Apoll.* 8. That messages were also conveyed orally, perhaps accompanied by letter in order to register that the order had been delivered, may be understood from *P. Apoll.* 3, 1: ἐπειδ[ὴ ὁ παρὼν γραμ]ματηφό[ρος ὁ Μ]ωαγαρίτης εἶπεν ("Since the present letter-carrier, *môagarites*, has said . . . ").

for the pagarch, whose administrative lingua franca was Greek.[41] Letters by Arabic/Islamic officials themselves have also been preserved, such as the circular letter by the *dux* Jordanes, which was copied in Greek in *P.Apoll.* 9.[42]

It has been observed that, in the early years after the conquest, no one knew how the power balance would evolve. An Islamic state was still under construction,[43] although the first contours of a hierarchical organization of the occupation forces may have been visible in the military command structure: ʿAmr was operating under caliphal order, and *amīr*s functioned as representatives, so with some form of authority over Arab military units. These *amīr*s appear ordering requisitions for their troops in several documents dated to the years immediately or soon after the conquest. These documents are evidence of communication between the Arab newcomers and the local authorities. In one of these, the *amīr* Kaeis, who is described as *amīr* of Herakleiopolis, issues a receipt for taxes paid in money to the inhabitants of a village. This use of *amīr* with respect to Herakleiopolis could suggest that it was a well-defined permanent and local position. But another document rather points at the incidental presence of troops on the move during the period when the whole of Egypt was in a process of being secured.[44] Hence, the nature of their presence and their contacts with the local population can be evaluated as ad hoc.[45]

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[41] Richter, "Language Choice," 211–13. In this article Richter focuses on the late seventh–early eighth-century archive from Aphrodito. Greek texts referring to an *arabikos notarios* (Arabic notary) are *P.Lond.* IV 1434, 229 (in the staff of the pagarch) and *P.Lond.* IV 1447, 140, 190 (in the staff of the governor). Referring to a *graikos notarios* (Greek notary) in the staff of the pagarch are *P.Lond.* IV 1434, 301, 311 and *P.Lond.* IV 1435, 56. Whereas it is highly likely that these linguistic qualifications indicate the language the scribes were writing, it is less easy to draw conclusions about their use of spoken and written language. Nevertheless, it is clear that, on the provincial and pagarchy levels, scribes working in Arabic and Greek were employed. This situation is certainly conceivable for the seventh century as well.

[42] The question is whether this Greek letter was translated from an Arabic original, and if so, when and by whom. It may have been done at the provincial headquarters, where two versions, an Arabic one and a Greek one, were created at the same time and sent out together. This may also have been the practice in the early eighth century, as it has been proposed that the Arabic letters by the governor Qurra b. Sharīk had Greek counterparts. However, attempts to identify Arabic with Greek letters have not been successful: see Richter, "Language Choice." For the seventh century, official letters found so far all have been transmitted in Greek. See, e.g., *P.Apoll.* 9, discussed by Marie Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The Duke of the Thebaid and the Formation of the Umayyad State," *Historical Research* 89/243 (2016), 3–18, at 11.

[43] Fred Donner, "The Formation of the Islamic State," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106/2 (1986), 283–96, has argued that the expanding Islamic empire achieved the characteristics of a state under the Umayyads; for the question how Islamic, and specifically Umayyad, imperial history was shaped from hindsight see Jaako Hämeen-Anttila, "The Umayyad State – an Empire?" in *Imperien und Reiche in der Weltgeschichte: Epochenübergreifende und globalhistorische Vergleiche*, ed. Michael Gehler and Robert Rollinger (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 537–57.

[44] *SB* VI 9577.

[45] Several documents, dated to 643–44 CE, mention an Abdella *amīr* as addressing the pagarchs of the Herakleopolites: *SB* VI 9576, 9597; and *SB* VIII 9751. See Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim*

These invading Muslims took over Egypt while maintaining its administrative layout, as they had no fully developed administrative apparatus of their own. By the turn of the seventh–eighth centuries, however, things had changed. Islamic state institutions had been founded in Egypt and other conquered territories, and several generations had been born in a province of the Islamic empire.[46] Moreover, in the eighth century we encounter more officials with Arabic names and adhering to the Arabic cultural sphere on the pagarchy level, as the studies of Petra Sijpesteijn and Marie Legendre have demonstrated, marking an intensified step toward Arabization and Islamization of Egypt's governmental system in the eighth century.[47] Sijpesteijn has candidly sketched how immediately after the conquest the Arab rulers continued the Byzantine administrative system, although it was unmistakably clear that the new rulers were no longer based in Constantinople. In the "fifty-year about-turn" the Islamic state itself had been developing, its imperial ambitions also penetrated the provinces.[48] Greek, Coptic, and Arabic papyri demonstrate that Egypt was increasingly incorporated into the Islamic empire. Along with the appearance of Islamic officials in the lower administrative levels and increased control over freedom of movement and taxation, the implementation of the Arabic language in official administration may also be considered part of the imperial Arabic Islamic policy at the beginning of the eighth century.[49] Although the exact intention and motivation of this decision is open to interpretation, but likely had a practical and symbolic side to it, the consequence for the Greek language in Egypt was a clear loss of purpose. With the Byzantine (that is, Greek–Roman) oriented administrators having been defeated, driven out of Egypt, or having become part of the new administration, with the official registers being translated into Arabic, which was now an imperial language, and with a major community of Coptic users, it seems (with hindsight) clear that the Greek language had served its time in Egypt.[50]

State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Official (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Jørgen B. Simonsen, *Studies in the Genesis and Development of the Early Caliphal Taxation System* (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1988), 81–84.

[46] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*; Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic?"

[47] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*; Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic?"

[48] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 91–111.

[49] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*; Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 113–16. Wadād al-Qāḍī, "The Names of Estates in State Registers before and after the Arabization of the *Dīwāns*," in *Umayyad Legacies: Medieval Memories from Syria to Spain*, ed. Antoine Borrut and Paul M. Cobb (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 255–80.

[50] Two other factors that may well have fostered the loss of prominence of Greek, which are not considered in depth here, but which should be mentioned, are religious tensions between Byzantine Orthodox Christianity and the Coptic Church, and the influx of Arabic Islamic immigrants and

Greek and Other Languages in the Corpus

The following step is to discuss the position of Greek in relation with other languages in the dataset. [51] Most documents (some 83 percent) are written in Greek only, containing various types of documents.[52] However, there are also some examples of documents (forty texts, 17 percent) using a different language as well: these seem to be the most relevant documents in a discussion of the position of Greek in relation to other languages. I will briefly consider which languages these are, what information was conveyed by these, and try to assess why this other language was used.

In sixteen documents, Latin is attested as transcription of a Greek formula. The majority of these are constituted by agreements, such as contracts, following a standard layout with an invocation formula, the name and titles of the person to whom the document is addressed, and the name and titles of the person making the agreement. Then a form of the word *homologô* (agree, concede) is followed by a declaration that something was sold, leased, received, or similar. The documents are subscribed by witnesses and the name of the notary.[53] The notary used a different script to conclude the document. His subscription was not only a personal signature, but it also authorized the document. The use of subscriptions in a different script is also well known in Coptic legal documents from Thebes, dating from the late sixth to the late seventh centuries. However, in these texts a transcription was not made in Latin script, but in Greek, which functioned to authenticate the text. In Coptic documents several other Greek elements (the invocation and date) mark their official character. Anne Boud'hors has explained this use of "fossilized" elements to authenticate a document.[54]

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their interaction (and intermarriage) with Egyptians. Nevertheless, the use of Greek in documents continued for at least another century.

[51] In this contribution I use the label "bilingual" in a very loose sense: the use of two languages was the criterion for this qualification in the dataset. Closer consideration of the exact relation between the two languages used in the document shows that this "bilinguality" may take different forms in different documents.

[52] E.g., contracts, receipts, petitions, letters, lists, administrative orders. See the dataset.

[53] E.g., *SB* 12717: (27) † Ἀνο[ῦπ Π]ἐ[τ]ρου ἔγραψα (28) ὑπὲρ αὐτ(οῦ) ἀγραμμ(ά)τ(ου) ὄντος †. (29) † † di em\†/u Anup sum\†/ δ(ι') ἐμοῦ (30) Ἀνοῦπ συμβ(ο)λ(αιογράφου) (καὶ) (31) νομικ(οῦ) ("I, Anoup, son of Petros have signed on his behalf because he is illiterate. *Through me, Anup (sumbolaiographos).* Through me, Anup (*sumbolaiographos*) and *nomikos*").

[54] Anne Boud'hors, "Toujours honneur au grec? À propos d'un papyrus gréco-copte de la région thébaine," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the ʿAbbāsids*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 179–88. Chronologically, the Coptic documents postdate the Greek documents and cover a bigger timespan. They also are more restricted geographically, as they are from the Theban region. The Greek legal subscriptions are found on documents from the Arsinoites, Oxyrhynchites, and Herakleopolites. If, in spite of these differences, the use of another script or language with which to subscribe a legal document is conceded, the next

Only a few documents in the dataset are marked as bilingual Coptic–
Greek. Coptic has been inserted in a couple of otherwise Greek documents
in a topographical designation. In *CPR* XXX 1 (from the Senouthios
archive) this happens a couple of times, for example: (line 28) ἐποικ(ί)ου
Τϣαροϩς; (line 36) Πιαϩ Ενοθ; (line 45) Πευρεϩ; (line 64) (m1) ἐποικ(ί)ου
Νείλου (m2) ⲕⲟⲩϥⲓⲍⲉ ⲛⲡⲁⲙⲉⲣⲟ(ⲥ) ⲛⲁⲩ (m1) ε φθ κονίας αρτάβαι ριθ
καβαλλίνης μόια ριθ.[55] In lines 36 and 45 of the same document, one
Coptic letter is inserted, the *hori*, to indicate aspiration. In line 64,
however, a remark has been inserted by a second hand, probably
a different scribe from *manus* 1. The phrase is a request, but, as Morelli
remarks in the commentary to the line, enigmatic in terms of who wrote it
and what exactly the request meant. What do these Coptic insertions imply
for the literacy of the scribes? It is difficult to generalize on the basis on four
insertions in a document of over 100 lines in Greek. Nevertheless, it
corroborates the assumption that Greek was especially employed in fiscal
and administrative documents, while in some cases the people who drafted
these clearly also knew how to write Coptic.[56] Comparative use for the
practice of spelling place names and personal names with Coptic characters
can be found in various registers attested in the later archive of Aphrodito.
The insertion of a phrase in Coptic in line 64 was done in a different hand.
One possibility is that a local headman checked this part of the document,
written in Greek according to the administrative conventions, and added
his remark, writing in the language he would use on a daily basis. Parallels
for Coptic insertions in Greek registers in what seems to be the same hand
unfortunately only appear in undated documents.[57] This use of Greek and
Coptic is interesting, even if it is difficult to account for the exact implica-
tions of these labels.[58] This may reinforce the assumption that the scribe
was "writing Greek, but thinking Coptic," and may also illustrate the
fluidity of the linguistic reality in this period.

Lastly, Greek is sometimes found in combination with Arabic. The two
earliest bilingual Arabic–Greek documents, preserving a Greek and Arabic

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question that arises is whether this Greek practice could in some way have influenced the Coptic
practice. A clear connection cannot be proved, as the distance in time and space are too big.

[55] *CPR* XXX 1. Translation line 64: "lighten me of these?" 59,500 (bricks?) 119 artabas of chalk, 119
artabas of horse dung.

[56] See Richter, "Language Choice"; Fournet, "The Multilingual Environment"; Jennifer Cromwell's
contribution to this volume (Chapter 11).

[57] A Coptic note is also added in the "Greek" fiscal document *P. Würzb. inv.* 37v.

[58] Although this concerns an earlier period and context: see Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (ed.), *Languages
and Cultures of Eastern Christianity: Greek* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 65–66, on the fluidity of these
terms in late antique Egypt (commenting on the Greek–Coptic archive of Dioscoros).

receipt for requisitions delivered to Arab troops by inhabitants of Herakleiopolis, have already been referred to.[59] One might expect a similar receipt in the contemporary Senouthios archive, where there are numerous references to the Muslims' interference in taxation. If they ordered, as *CPR* XXII 1 attests, the levy of a poll tax, it might be expected that they would also issue receipts to the eventual taxpayer. Thus, is the absence of Arabic from the Senouthios archive real or a product of the preservation situation? A different bilingual Arabic–Greek document type is found in Nessana, outside Egypt: *entagia* (demand orders to pay taxes).[60] Their formulaic character may suggest that *entagia* hint at some kind of instituted tax system. In the earliest bilingual Greek–Arabic receipts, there are no clues that the delivery of goods is systemic rather than an ad hoc demand.[61]

A question about these bilingual documents is where they originated. For the *entagion*, Bell has argued that this type of document was used by the central Byzantine administration, with variations for the exact layout of the document per province. The Arabs may have adopted this form and adapted it to something of their own;[62] in other words, the Arabic text could be considered an *interpretatio Arabica* of its Greek counterpart. The structural outline is the same, as is the general message conveyed. The details, however, varied, and each text is written according to its own cultural conventions.[63]

Yet another combination of Arabic and Greek is encountered in some other documents dated toward the end of the seventh century.[64] For instance, in cases of the *bismillah*, where Greek literally translates the Arabic, so at first sight there seems to be little Greek about it. The *bismillah* was the Islamic religious invocation, written on the *protokollon* (the first page) of a roll.[65] As a structural part of a document, the invocation was probably taken over from the Byzantines, transposed in Islamic Arabic and (from Arabic translated into) Greek. In this case, it also served as a symbol

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[59] *SB* VI 9576 is a bilingual receipt (Herakleiopolites, 643); *SB* XX 14443 is a Greek receipt, with an Arab seal (Hermopolites, 643). A later receipt is *SB* XVIII 13771 (Herakleiopolis, 677 or 707).

[60] Harold I. Bell, "The Arabic Bilingual Entagion," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 89/3 (1945), 531–42. *Entagia* are also found in the archive from Aphrodito, dated some decades later.

[61] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 110–12.   [62] Bell, "The Arabic Bilingual Entagion," 531.

[63] For the observation that "own cultural conventions" were adhered to, as exemplified by *SB* VI 9576 (643), see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 67–68.

[64] For instance, the protocols published in *P.Lond*. IV 1462. See also Grohmann, *CPR* III and Adolf Grohmann, "Zum Papyrusprotokoll in früharabischer Zeit," *Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 9 (1960), 1–19.

[65] Grohmann in *CPR* III.

of the one and only (religious) authority, which confirmed the religious legitimization of the political situation.[66]

Otherwise, Arabic is absent from this Greek corpus and the question is whether this is coincidental or significant. To begin with this second qualification, it can be stated that an "imperial" documentary culture of the new rulers was probably developing on the go.[67] Arabic and Greek were used in separate settings as long as the groups of speakers were still in some ways separate. On the other hand, absence of Arabic documents may be coincidental, as a result of bias in finds and scholarly focus. First, as the bilingual receipts have shown, Arabic was used in documents immediately after the conquest. Second, there is no reason to assume that the separation was absolute. It is inevitable that from the beginning there was contact between the conquerors/rulers and the local population (through their representatives), as the rulers depended on that population for their subsistence. The pagarchs seem to have had a crucial role in this. The fact that both languages, Greek and Arabic, were used in the Herakleopolite receipts was on the one hand pragmatic (both parties would be able to read the text), but it may also have functioned politically and symbolically, as a statement of the transaction and the status quo.

Apart from these parallel uses of Greek and Arabic, two more phenomena may be hinted at. The first is the introduction of Arabic words or of new words (Greek words, unattested in pre-Islamic Greek papyri) relating to Arabic matters in Greek documents.[68] The second relates to a later development, that of providing summaries of the text in the other language. In eighth-century Egypt this practice is especially known from the archive of Basileios again, where at the top of the Arabic documents a one-line summary in Greek was given. It also occurs the other way round, with an Arabic summary given to a Greek text. Such bilingual "tagging" may be compared to the practice of the Ptolemaic period, in which Demotic documents were docketed in Greek. Rachel Mairs has shown how this facilitated the understanding of a text by readers of different linguistic

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[66] Richter, "Language Choice," 208.

[67] Of course, there already existed pre-Islamic documentary traditions, which continued after the emergence of Islam. See, e.g., Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*. However, existence of a centralized or "imperial" Islamic documentary culture in the seventh century cannot be deduced from the Egyptian documentary evidence. This situation is hardly surprising, if the observations on the development of the Islamic state and/or empire are taken into account.

[68] One could think of administrative terms such as *symboulos* (Gr., governor), *amīr*, *amīr al-muʾminīn*, but also of words as *gaidarin* (Ar., donkey), *maszert* (Ar., cable, rope). Examples of new terms appearing in Greek papyri from early Islamic Egypt are given by Richter, "Language Choice," 209–11; and Sijpesteijn *Shaping a Muslim State*, 67–74.

backgrounds.[69] The purpose of Arabic–Greek summaries in eighth-century documents may indeed have been to offer someone not literate in the language in which the document was written, or not able or in a position to read through the whole document, a quick view of its contents. This bilingual tagging at least hints at contact between users of different languages.

The Disappearance of Greek

If anything, this survey has made clear that Greek was still used in official and administrative documents in the seventh century: in this sense the position of Greek in the seventh century was still solid. Yet, a decline in numbers (Tables 12.1 and 12.2) may be related to the political events of the mid-seventh century and may be explained with a change in the status of other languages. Greek had been the language of the administration and the higher social groups in Egypt, and the advent of the Arabs/Muslims implied a rearrangement of the political and social order, including their (documentary) culture. As Egyptian remained the spoken language of a large part of Egypt's population, by the late Byzantine period Coptic had developed into a proper documentary language, in which different types of documents were written. This does not mean that it should be considered as a threat to Greek in the late Byzantine period, yet it seems that along with the rise of Coptic there was a decline in Greek, until it finally disappeared from the documentary radar somewhere in the late eighth or early ninth century. How did this work?

The disappearance of languages (deaths or suicides), as well as births of languages appear more often in history, so we might address this question by taking a comparative perspective.[70] Two examples may be illuminative. In Egypt there is the case of Demotic, which gradually disappeared as a written language. Explanations for this are the exclusivity of the group of Demotic writers, who were confined to traditional Egyptian (religious) institutions, the difficulty of the demotic script, the preference for using Greek as the administrative language by Greek and Roman administrators,

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[69] Rachel Mairs, "Bilingual 'Tagging' of Financial Accounts in Demotic and Greek," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 139 (2012), 37–44.

[70] S. G. Thomason, *Language Contact: An Introduction* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001); M. van Uytfanghe, *Rome, Romania, Germania: Recente inzichten in de genese van het Europa der talen* (Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, 2000).

and the competition from Christianity, which further marginalized trad-
itional Egyptian religion, including its writing practices.[71] Another, more
recent and different, example may be the use of Latin by scholars in
universities. Latin was used as an academic lingua franca, shared by those
who had enjoyed the highest education, to share their ideas and discoveries
in a language devoid of political affiliation. When education became
accessible to more people, the need for Latin declined. This is reflected
in present-day international academic communities, where various lan-
guages are admitted and used, as it is presumed that scholars will be able to
communicate in them, or at least to understand them. Which language is
used may be decided by the organizers of a congress, the editorial board of
a journal, or the scholar, who will take into account the audience to be
reached (some languages have a wider range than others). It may be
concluded that Latin has lost its position as an academic lingua franca.
These examples demonstrate how the use of a language declined as the
group of users came – for various reasons, such as political and sociocul-
tural developments – under pressure.

Was Greek under pressure, because its users were under pressure? The
rise in Coptic documentation in late antiquity may be one clue that this
might have been the case. Considering the wider development of Coptic
and Greek, Jennifer Cromwell puts forward a strong case that Coptic was
increasingly used from the seventh century onward, whereas in the seventh
century Greek still had priority.[72] It may well be that this increased use of
Coptic in documents is correlated to the disappearance of Greek in the
eighth century, and that both developments resulted from administrative
reforms by the Islamic rulers. Cromwell argues that their aim was to
increase efficiency in maximizing tax revenues. Using the language of the
taxable population would indeed be a means to achieve that goal.
However, this also highlights the limited practicality of Greek (that is, in
relation to Coptic, which was more easily understandable to a substantial

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[71] That there was no Roman policy against using Demotic, but that it became less appealing for use in
contracts, as the authorities required Greek summaries, is argued by Brian P. Muhs, "The
Grapheion and the Disappearance of Demotic Contracts in Early Roman Tebtynis and
Soknopaiou Nesos," in *Tebtynis und Soknopaiou Nesos: Leben im römerzeitlichen Fajum*, ed.
Sandra L. Lippert and Maren Schentule it (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 93–104. That the
Romans did not recognize Demotic as an official language and insisted on the use of Greek in
oracular practices has been argued by Pauline Ripat, "The Language of Oracular Inquiry in Roman
Egypt," *Phoenix* 60 (2006), 204–28. The Egyptian cult of Isis continued until the fifth century CE:
see Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion: A Regional Study of Religious
Transformation (298–642 CE)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008).
[72] Jennifer Cromwell, Chapter 11 in this volume.

part of the population), leading to another observation as to why Greek was under pressure.

As a ten-century-old imperial and elite language, Greek undoubtedly came under pressure after the arrival of the Muslims who took over the power positions and, moreover, brought their own culture and language. Privileges and rights would no longer be given by the Greek-speaking Byzantine court, but by Arab-speaking Muslims. Hence, the status of Greek as prestige language diminished.[73] A reason for the abandonment of Greek may be that knowing Greek was no longer a passport to better social opportunities.[74] Initially, this may have resulted in Coptic gaining more prominence and taking over the place of Greek.[75] Later, however, when Arabic was moving toward becoming the language of the majority, more conscious decisions were made to shift from the minority's language and to learn another one, if that was perceived to be more beneficial. This would happen not only for practical reasons, but also because people may have felt that using the Arabic language would better their chances of social inclusion.

Conclusion

After having been a language of power and prestige in Egypt for more than a millennium, this status of Greek came to an end in the aftermath of the Islamic conquest. The overview of dated Greek texts

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[73] Here again, the question to what degree Greek was or continued to be spoken can only be tentative. The quantitative–qualitative analysis of the corpus of dated Greek papyri hints at restricted use in writing, which seems to confirm Morelli's speculative question that Greek increasingly became the language of administration: see *CPR* XXII, introduction. Also, one would expect that a language that was still spoken might have continued to be used as long as the language community was large enough. Even if the size of such a community of Greek speakers cannot be established, the fact that Coptic survived and flourished, whereas Greek disappeared (or remained in fossilized form) demonstrates that the Greek-speaking (or using) community was too small to sustain itself in the longer term.

[74] Learning a language in order to have better opportunities may be exemplified by a modern case: recently, a Dutch pilot study teaching English to toddlers was carried out at a number of primary schools. Arguments substantiating this innovative educational project were not only scientific studies showing that language acquisition at such a young age will result in excellent mastering of a second language (besides the mother language), but also that children who learn to speak English as soon as possible will have better economic prospects. English as an important language in Dutch society: www.engelsvoorbengels.nl/. Bilingual primary schooling: www.epnuffic.nl/primair-onderwijs/talenonderwijs/tweetalig-primair-onderwijs-tpo/tpo-scholen and www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2014/01/08/eerste-basisscholen-van-start-met-tweetalig-onderwijs.

[75] See Cromwell, Chapter 11 in this volume, which discusses the rising use of Coptic in new documentary contexts.

of the seventh century gives some clues as to when the change in the position of Greek began; it seems to have declined from the mid-seventh century onward. Even if there was continuity in the use of Greek, the numbers of dated texts in general seem to have dropped and the contexts of use became more restricted, certainly in relation to the growing numbers of documents in Coptic and Arabic. Coptic was rising as a competitor for Greek in all kinds of daily documents – for pragmatic reasons, and also reflecting the new social reality. The other contestant is Arabic, which entered the written papyrological landscape soon after the conquest. As can be expected, Arabic gradually appeared in more and diverse contexts, as a cultural reflection of political and sociocultural (including demographic) developments. After more than a millennium Greek lost its prominent position and virtually disappeared from Egypt's documentary landscape. From a cultural point of view, the position of Greek in papyrological documentation still seems strong in the seventh century, but the external factor of political dominance by Arabs/Muslims changed the situation. As a result of political and social developments, from the early eighth century onward Egypt started to become linguistically incorporated into the Islamic empire, further marginalizing Greek, until it virtually faded away in Egypt.[76] The process by which Coptic gave way to Arabic would take longer, but the arrival of Arabic would ultimately transform Egypt's linguistic landscape.

Appendix

A first note is that these results reflect a quantitative search only, in order to get an overall impression. Graph 12.1 shows that the number of dated papyri decreases from the sixth to the eighth centuries. Zooming in on these numbers, by grouping them into twenty-year batches, the general impression created by Graph 12.2 is confirmed. Although "lumpiness" in the data should be heeded (as is visible in the timespan 701–20, when many papyri from the archive of Aphrodito are dated), as well as the fact that a major part of the papyri have been left out of consideration (as they are

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[76] Greek was not wholly done away with, though, as appears from the fiscal documents encountered in the eighth century. Furthermore, Greek lived on in the authenticating parts of Coptic documents and the numerical system of the Muslims. See Arietta Papaconstantinou, "They Shall Speak the Arabic Language and Take Pride of It: Reconsidering the Fate of Coptic after the Arab Conquest," *Le Muséon* 120 (2007), 273–99; de Jong and Delattre, "Greek as a Minority Language."

Centuary	Greek	Coptic
VI	2997	779
VII	3181	3894
VIII	437	3718

Graph 12.1 Globally dated papyri.

Graph 12.2 Dated papyri per twenty years.

Table 12.1 *Numbers of dated texts in the* HGV
per century, 500–800 CE

Year range	Number of texts in *HGV*
500–99	1,354
600–99	798 (235 dated between 640 and 699)
700–99	387

Table 12.2 *Numbers of dated texts in the* HGV *per twenty years*

Year range	Number of texts in *HGV*	Years with 0 papyri
500–20	163	
521–40	298	
541–60	336	
561–80	304	
581–600	250	
601–20	294	
621–40	172	
641–60	182	
661–80	74	664, 679
681–700	64	691, 692, 696
701–20	243 NB: Aphrodito archive	712
721–40	69	731, 736, 737, 738, 739
741–60	38	745, 746, 754, 755, 757
761–80	21	768, 769, 772, 773, 774, 777, 778
781–800	4	782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 797, 798, 799, 800

only globally dated), it is tempting to see a shift in the number of dated papyri around the mid-seventh century, the numbers steadily dropping in the eighth. With the same caution, it may also be noted that, especially in the second half of the eighth century, quite a few years have resulted in 0 papyri. Of course it should also be underlined that these overviews only cover the present state of the evidence.

Table 12.3 *Overview of the archives from the seventh century that are discussed above*

Who/what	Where	Date	Number of documents
Philemon and Thekla	Apollonopolis/ Oxyrhynchus	620–40	4 (3 Greek, 1 Coptic)
Senouthios	Hermopolis	643/4	45 (44 Greek, 1 Coptic)
Papas	Apollonopolis	650–700	112 (Greek, but also Coptic)
Nessana	Nessana (Palestina)	VI–VII	Some 200 (Greek, Arabic)

Graph 12.3 Provenance of texts dated 640–700.

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APD = The Arabic Papyrology Database:
   www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/apd/project.jsp
HGV = Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens:
   http://aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de/
PN = Papyri Info:
   http://papyri.info/
Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets:
   http://papyri.info/docs/checklist

TM = *Trismegistos*:
  www.trismegistos.org

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A Changing Position of Greek? Greek Papyri in the Documentary Culture of Early Islamic Egypt

Janneke H. M. de Jong

For more than a millennium (ca. 330 BCE–eighth century CE) the Greek language was an important communicative tool in Egypt, both in written and in spoken form, leaving a firm imprint on Egypt's documentary landscape. Beyond its communicative capacity, the Greek language in Egypt was important for its symbolic value. This is especially clear in its use in expressing power and social relations. As the language employed by the ruling power, Greek could symbolize the political order, which it did in Egypt under the Ptolemaic, Roman, and Byzantine regimes. Greek can also be considered as an identity marker, which helped to define borders between different social groups. The ability to read and write Greek was strongly connected to one's social position and the concomitant opportunities for education. The significance of Greek in Egypt under Ptolemaic, Roman, and Byzantine rule is therefore clear. At the same time, it should be considered that it is generally agreed that the majority of Egypt's inhabitants did not speak, write, and read Greek, but rather continued to use Egyptian.[1]

[1] See Mark Depauw, *A Companion to Demotic Studies* (Brussels: Fondation égyptologique de reine Élisabeth, 1997), 32–36 for the developments of various scripts used to write the spoken Egyptian language under Greek, Roman, and Byzantine rule; Kathelijn Vandorpe, "Archives and Dossiers," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 216–55, at 240–42, with graph on bilingual archives. On the dominance of Greek for administrative reasons and ultimately at the cost of Demotic see also Uri Yiftach-Firanko, "Law in Graeco-Roman Egypt: Hellenization, Fusion, Romanization," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 541–60, at 557.

The establishment of an Arabic-speaking regime in Egypt after the Islamic conquest (640 CE) not only resulted in a new power balance, but also affected linguistic relations. I have previously discussed the decrease of Greek in the eighth century.[2] In the present contribution I will examine whether and how the Islamic conquest affected the position of Greek in Egypt in the seventh century CE. In order to do so, a quantification of the dated material will be offered with a discussion of methodological issues, of the way in which the Arab presence is reflected in Greek papyri, and of the relation of Greek to other languages encountered in Greek documents in the period in question. The decreasing use of Greek in papyri from early Islamic Egypt may be considered as one of the sociocultural changes in Egypt resulting from political rupture. It is my aim to throw light on the process(es) by which Greek largely disappeared from Egypt's written landscape. Understanding how and why the use of Greek decreased after the Greco-Roman–Byzantine period may also raise awareness about the particular position of Greek (which is often taken for granted) in Egypt during these periods.[3] In more general terms, the decreasing use of Greek may serve as an individual case study that may have general value for processes of language shifts.

Language Shift as Cultural Change

The concept of cultural change offers a framework for the study of societal changes. Modifications of culture can be triggered by various factors, such as innovation, discovery, or contact with other societies. As one of the most obvious manifestations of culture, language change offers an interesting window into processes of cultural change.[4] This can take various forms. One form of language change is internal: the evolution of a specific

[2] J. H. M. de Jong and A. Delattre, "Greek as a Minority Language," in *The Late Antique History of Early Islam: Muslims among Christians and Jews in the East Mediterranean*, ed. R. G. Hoyland (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2015), 37–62.

[3] The majority of published papyri are written in Greek. Nevertheless, it has been observed that this dominance of Greek papyri may be skewed, not only as a result of scholarly bias, but also of a bias in documentary source production and preservation, where the higher (in terms of wealth and power) groups of society usually dominated the lower ones. For bias in preservation of papyri see, e.g., Roger S. Bagnall, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History* (London/New York: Routledge, 1995), 15; Roger S. Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Bernhard Palme, "The Range of Documentary Texts: Types and Categories," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 358–94, at 358–59.

[4] Robert Wuthnow, "Cultural Change and Social Theory," in *Social Change and Modernity*, ed. Hans Haferkamp and Neil J. Smelser (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 256–64, discusses two theories explaining cultural change: adaptation theory and class legitimation theory.

language. A different process is that of "language shift," the replacement of a language by another language under the influence of contact with an external language community.[5] The process by which particular languages are replaced by foreign languages can take different forms and occur at different paces, according to the specific circumstances. In some cases only the vocabulary may be affected, whereas in others a language may disappear and be replaced by another one. How and why choices for using "old" or "new" languages are made depends on a complex interplay of various factors, such as power relations, linguistic policies, the size of a language community, group cohesiveness, and pragmatism. Usually changes in language use are long-term processes, in which the perceived profitability of a language is a key factor determining whether to continue to use it or to adopt another language. For a language to disappear completely, it takes a decision by living speakers of the language not to pass their language on to the new generation. In such a situation the language's position becomes fragile: it is no longer considered profitable by its users. As language is a personal attribute, giving up one language in favor of another means choosing a new attribute of the self. Conversely, if a minority continues to use its language within an otherwise changing or changed language landscape, this may have a practical explanation (for instance, if contact with others is not so frequent and/or a community is isolated), but it may also be taken to be significant for self-expression.

After the Islamic conquest there was continuity in the use of Greek in types of documents that were also used in the pre-Islamic period; however, changes in the position of Greek in Egypt's papyrological landscape can also be observed. An important development in the early Islamic period is the increasing presence in writing of two other languages, Coptic and Arabic. These languages increasingly contested the primary documentary place of Greek, until Greek finally became obsolete, except in specific contexts. This was a gradual development, however, as Greek continued to be used in documentary texts for some two centuries after the Islamic conquest. In what follows I will discuss the use of Greek in papyri from Egypt in the half-century or so after the Islamic conquest within the framework of the changed power balance, which resulted in a new political, social, and cultural reality. I will argue that

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See also Lodi Nauta (ed.), *Language and Cultural Change: Aspects of the Study and Use of Language in the Later Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Leuven/Paris/Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2006).

[5] Nicholas Ostler, "Language Maintenance, Shift and Endangerment," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Sociolinguistics*, ed. Rajend Mesthrie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 315–34 (as a general framework of change); John Wendel and Patrick Heinrich, "A Framework for Language Endangerment Dynamics: The Effects of Contact and Social Change on Language Ecologies and Language Diversity," *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 218 (2012), 145–66 (framework for kinds of shifts).

the decreasing use of Greek can be explained in terms of decreased profitability of writing Greek, resulting from the new political balance, which also affected Egypt's population in social and cultural respects. Before the Islamic conquest the position of Greek was uncontested, as it was incorporated in the Byzantine imperial administration. This changed with the Islamic conquest, although initially the most obvious change was the appearance of Arabic in Egypt's documentary landscape. Only in the longer term, when the Islamic empire was more firmly taking shape, was Egypt incorporated into new political, social, and cultural milieu. In this new order, provincial administrations started to Arabize,[6] with the decreasing use of Greek in Egypt's documentary landscape as one of the most obvious cultural effects. The focus of my contribution is limited, as Egypt is only one province and papyri as a source type are hardly found in other provinces. As such, the results of this case study are limited geographically, chronologically, and to a specific source type. At the same time, as part of a bigger world, the particular case of Egypt may have more general implications for language shift as a historical development and can be considered within the framework of the early Islamic empire, where developments such as Arabization of the administration can be observed.[7]

Greek in Egypt

In the aftermath of Alexander the Great's passage through Egypt during his military expedition against the Persians, Greek rulers, soldiers, and settlers gained a politically dominant position in Egypt.[8] As a consequence, from

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[6] Arabization can be defined as the process of increased use of Arab cultural elements by non-Arab people. One of its most obvious manifestations can be found in the adoption of the Arabic language, which was reinforced by the linguistic policy of ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān. The term may also imply the increasing appearance of Arab personal names in provincial administration. Furthermore, Arabization is connected to Islamization, which is a distinct process implying adherence to the religion of Islam. For the terms Arabization and Islamization, and their complex relationship, see Gerald R. Hawting, *The First Dynasty of Islam: The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661–750* (London/New York: Routledge, 2000); Christian Décobert, "Sur l'arabisation et l'islamisation de l'Égypte médiévale," in *Itinéraires d'Égypte: Mélanges offerts au père Maurice Martin*, ed. Christian Décobert (Cairo: IFAO, 1992), 273–300.

[7] See, e.g., Michael Morony, "Iran in the Early Islamic Period," in *The Oxford Handbook of Iranian History*, ed. Touraj Daryaee (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 208–26. Nevertheless, the degree and spread of the Arabic language varied over time and region. See, e.g., Hugh Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2007), 12–14, 199 (on Arabic in Iran: although Arabic spread in a major part of the Islamic empire, and was implemented as the language of the early Islamic administration, it was not always pervasive). See also Ahmed Y. al-Hassan (ed.), *The Different Aspects of Islamic Culture: Science and Technology in Islam* (Paris: UNESCO, 2001), 59.

[8] Greek was already spoken and written in Egypt several centuries before the great influx under and after Alexander the Great's campaign: a Greek community resided in Naukratis, and

the last decades of the fourth century BCE Greek, the language of this dominant minority, became the language of the administration and of the elites, with a notable effect on Egypt's documentary landscape. The use and status of Greek in Egypt should, however, be considered in a wider historical perspective: Greek was important as the language of the central royal administration, and of Greek-speaking immigrants, who were limited in number and initially might have seemed to constitute a closed group.[9] Egyptians involved in the administration also learned Greek, resulting in a bilingual (Greek and Egyptian) society, even if the exact nature of this bilingualism cannot be established. Although the use of Greek in writing documents became dominant in Egypt, scholars have pointed out that a major part of the population probably continued to speak Egyptian.[10]

With time, contacts between the immigrant and indigenous groups intensified, resulting in processes of cultural exchange. In political and social relations, however, Greek became a marker of power and of privileged social

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evidence of this community has been preserved in inscriptions from the sixth century BCE. See Astrid Möller, *Naukratis: Trade in Archaic Greece* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Myrto Malouta, "Naucratis," *Oxford Handbooks Online* (July 9, 2015), www .oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935390.001.0001/oxfordhb-97801999353 90-e-114.

[9] For the interaction and exchange between the immigrant Greeks and local population see, e.g., Willy Clarysse and Dorothy J. Thompson, *Counting the People in Hellenistic Egypt*, 2 vols. (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Christelle Fischer-Bovet, *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt: Armies of the Ancient World* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014). On Ptolemaic Egypt in general see Günther Hölbl, *Geschichte des Ptolemäerreiches: Politik, Ideologie und religiöse Kultur von Alexander dem Grossen bis zur römischen Eroberung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1994).

[10] Alan K. Bowman, *Egypt after the Pharaohs* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 157–64; Depauw, *Demotic Studies*; Tonio S. Richter, "Language Choice in the Qurra Dossier," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 189–220. However, several factors have resulted in Greek getting more attention than other languages in Egypt. One is the survival and rediscovery of hundreds of thousands Greek documents. Although the number of published papyri clearly shows the predominance of Greek documentation, it is difficult to establish to what degree this reflected the reality of language use. Nevertheless, it is clear that Greek was predominantly used for Egypt's administration under Greek, Roman, and Byzantine rule. Another factor is the (Western) scholarly interest in and familiarity with Greco-Roman antiquity, resulting in a higher number of scholars studying Greek documentation than Egyptian documentation. See F. Morelli, *CPR* XXII, introduction. The use of Latin in papyrus documents is restricted to Roman contexts. The continued use of Greek as the language of administration and elite was pragmatic, but may also be seen as an indication of the Romans' admiration for Greek culture. See Jean-Luc Fournet, "The Multilingual Environment of Late Antique Egypt: Greek, Latin, Coptic, and Persian Documentation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 418–51.

position.[11] This resulted in the adoption of the Greek language by non-Greek speakers who aimed for upward social mobility. Greek thus can be viewed as an attribute designating political and social status, just as specific dress or other social conventions would do.[12] This function of Greek was retained for approximately ten centuries, as its prominence in documentary uses demonstrates.[13] However, this situation changed in the centuries after the Islamic conquest. Under the new regime Greek continued to be used in written documentation, but its prominence was contested by Coptic and Arabic. Considering Greek as an attribute of identity, how does the decreasing prominence of the position of Greek in Egypt reflect political, social, and cultural developments? This complex question cannot be discussed in detail in this contribution, nor does the evidence allow for an easy reconstruction of the how and why of the decrease of Greek, for reasons that are set out below. Nevertheless, it is possible to sketch some broader tendencies in the shift of power relations in the "global imperial system" of which Egypt was part. These resulted in shifting power relations within Egypt itself, which also affected society and culture, hence affecting the role of Greek in practical usage and, beyond that, its symbolic or ideological implications.

Looking at Greek as a sociopolitical attribute is helpful in explaining and understanding the process of its disappearance from the Egyptian linguistic landscape, in relation to developments concerning the Egyptian languages (Demotic and Coptic) and Arabic. One was not born speaking – let alone writing – Greek, but learned or was taught to do so. Whether or how this happened depended on one's personal circumstances, such as social and/or political context, which defined one's needs and possibilities. Nevertheless,

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[11] Dorothy J. Thompson, "The Multilingual Environment of Persian and Ptolemaic Egypt: Egyptian, Aramaic, and Greek Documentation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 395–417, at 396.

[12] For language as an attribute see Anna Duszak and Urszula Okulska, "Age and Language Studies," in *Language, Culture and the Dynamics of Age*, ed. Anna Duszak and Urszula Okulska (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 3–25. For the notion of language as a choice see S. Torallas Tovar, "Linguistic Identity in Graeco-Roman Egypt," in *The Multilinguistic Experience in Egypt*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Farnham/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 17–46.

[13] The documentary uses did change, as new document types were introduced in different periods and as existing documentary types developed (such as letters). There was continuity in the use of Greek in administrative and legal documents throughout the periods, as the Romans maintained the use of Greek as an administrative language: see, e.g., Mark Depauw, "Language Use, Literacy, and Bilingualism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, ed. C. Riggs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 493–506, at 500–01. However, the rise of Coptic, both in quantity and in quality/types of documents, hints at a changing perception of social relations in which the local vernacular may have become more important than Greek. See Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*.

at all times it is difficult to describe the degree of knowledge and use of Greek in Egypt in general terms. Undoubtedly, knowledge of Greek ranged on a scale from complete absence to fluency, both oral and written, depending on an individual's social background and education.[14] Apart from people born in Greek-speaking families or social environments and for whom Greek would be the first language, acquiring knowledge of Greek depended on individual choices, necessities, and opportunities. Statistical data on the size of language communities in antiquity are lacking; Greek dominates as a papyrological language, but that does not mean that it was also the language dominating in the daily lives of (most) people. It is, therefore, impossible to establish exact numbers or percentages of members of the Greek language community by themselves, but also in comparison to participants of different language communities. Yet, even if the use of Greek was restricted to an unquantifiable community of users, the documentary record offers a window for its use in writing.[15] The question to be pursued further here is how the Islamic conquest affected the use and function of Greek in Egypt in the seventh century.

Quantifying Greek in Egypt's Papyrological Landscape in the Seventh Century

When taking a quantifying approach, it is necessary to be aware of what looking at numbers may say. [16] As the data for antiquity are so incomplete, a quantitative or statistical approach to ancient data should always be adopted with caution.[17] Quantification, on the other hand, allows for comparison within a known dataset: if one wants to know whether a word is "common" or "rare," for instance, it makes sense to know how often it is attested, in which period(s), region(s), and context(s), and in comparison to other words. Even if this can be established, it remains clear that results from quantification should not be taken as reflecting historical

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[14] Torallas Tovar, "Linguistic Identity," 30; Penelope Fewster, "Bilingualism in Roman Egypt," in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society: Language Contact and the Written Text*, ed. James N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 220–76, at 237.

[15] The question whether and how Greek functioned as a spoken language is not pursued here.

[16] Abbreviations of papyri are given according to the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets*: http://papyri.info/docs/checklist.

[17] In the last few years scholars have increasingly paid attention to quantifying papyrological data. This urge for quantification may well reflect the modern use of statistics in all kinds of societal issues and the belief (adopted from the exact sciences) that "to measure is to know." Using graphs and tables may be helpful for presenting the data as known at present, as long one is aware of what they do not tell and that new finds may lead to different pictures.

reality. A related question concerns to what degree papyri are representative within Egypt, but also within wider historical consideration. Their preservation and discovery is often a matter of hazard, and all finds are in a way coincidental snapshots from the past.[18] This does not imply that information provided by papyri always defies generalizations. If it is compared to what is known from other periods and places, papyri may well appear to demonstrate that Egypt was less exceptional than is sometimes assumed.[19] The challenge is, therefore, to find a balance between accidence and pattern, and to establish whether we see commonalities or exceptions.

With these caveats in mind, a quantification of the papyrological record for the seventh century will be explored in order to attempt to establish the impact of the Islamic conquest on Egypt's papyrological landscape. Thanks to online databases, edited papyri are easily available and searchable on the basis of specific criteria, such as a specific date or a date by century. By searching for papyri dated to a specific year, I have collected a dataset of 235 documents dated more or less precisely to one year for the period 640–700 CE. This is roughly 10 percent of some 2,000–2,500 or so documents that are dated in a more global way, i.e., to one or more century.[20] As these "globally dated" documents are less helpful for establishing chronological patterns, they are left out of consideration here.[21] To put these numbers in a wider perspective, I have also compared the numbers of papyri resulting from a per-year search for the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries,[22] and zoomed in on these by grouping them into twenty-year clusters.[23]

A first note is that these results reflect a quantitative search only, in order to get an overall impression. Table 12.2 shows that the number of dated papyri decreases from the sixth to the eighth centuries. Zooming in on

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[18] Palme, "The Range of Documentary Texts," 358–61.   [19] Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*.

[20] See Appendix, Graph 12.1 for the number of globally dated papyri and Graph 12.2 for the number of papyri per twenty years. "Dated papyri" are attributed to one year (sometimes with an alternative year due to the indiction). The Patermouthis archive is left out, as this is dated ca. 643–700 CE and gives too wide a timespan. For the same reason, documents from the Senouthios and Papas archives have been left out if their date was too unclear. However, texts belonging to these archives have been included if they were dated to a specific year.

[21] The purpose is to address these at another occasion, so that they can serve as a *comparandum*. A *HGV* search for "Jahrhundert 7" results in 3,235 hits. A *PN* search for documents after 600 CE and before 700 CE "strict" results in 2,522 hits. A search via *Trismegistos* for papyrus texts between 600 and 700 CE results in 2,142 hits. (These database searches were performed on January 12, 2018.) However, the results provided by such a "century search" in the databases is not very precise and may contain quite a few doubles.

[22] Appendix, Table 12.1.   [23] Appendix, Table 12.2.

these numbers in Table 12.2, by grouping them into twenty-year clusters, that general impression, created by Table 12.1, is confirmed. Although "lumpiness" in the data should be heeded (as is visible in the timespan 701–20, in which years many papyri from the archive of Aphrodito are dated[24]), in addition to which many of the papyri are left out of consideration (as they are only globally dated), it is tempting to see a shift in the number of dated papyri around the mid-seventh century, with the numbers steadily dropping in the eighth century. With the same caution, it may also be noted that, in the second half of the eighth century especially, quite a few years have resulted in 0 papyri. Of course it should also be underlined that these overviews only cover the present state of the evidence.

Turning to the dataset under examination, some general observations will be made to start with. In a geographical respect, unsurprisingly most seventh-century papyri come from Middle and Upper Egypt, with the exception of the papyri from Nessana in the Negev desert.[25] In this settlement some 200 papyri, dated from the early sixth to the late seventh centuries, have been found in local churches, offering a great opportunity for comparison to Egyptian finds.[26] In Egypt itself, the Arsinoite, Herakleopolite, and Hermopolite nomes and the Theban region are the main areas where the papyri come from. The anomaly here, in comparison with find patterns from previous times, is the near absence of Greek documents from Oxyrhynchus, that is so well attested (or perhaps it could be said that, in relative terms, it is overrepresented) in earlier centuries.[27] According to Revel Coles, this absence of Greek papyri

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[24] For the term "lumpiness" see Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*.   [25] Appendix, Graph 12.3.

[26] *P.Ness.* I–III; Dan Urman (ed.), *Nessana: Excavations and Studies* (Beer Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2004); Philip Mayerson, *The Ancient Agricultural Regime of Nessana and the Central Negeb* (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, 1961); Jean Gascou, "The Papyrology of the Near East," in *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. Roger S. Bagnall (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 473–94.

[27] A search in the *HGV* for papyri from Oxyrhynchus resulted in some 350 Greek texts that can be dated to a year in the sixth century and some 320 Greek texts that are dated "globally" in the sixth century (or later). For the seventh century, some 100 Greek texts can be dated exactly to a year in the first half of the seventh century. Some 40 texts are dated globally to the seventh century. One text from Oxyrhynchus, which may be written in Greek or Coptic, is dated to the ninth century (*P.Oxy.* LXXV 5071, Greek or Coptic, with Arabic on the verso). However, it may well be that post-conquest Greek documents from Oxyrhynchus are still to be published or identified as such: see Revel Coles, "Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts," in *Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts*, ed. Alan K. Bowman, Revel A. Coles, Nikolaos Gonis, Dirk Obbink, and Peter Parsons (London: Egypt Exploration Society for the Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2007), 3–16, at 14 n.2, mentioning that Nikolaos Gonis has identified a few such documents in the Oxyrhynchus collection. A search in the *APD* for papyri from Bahnasā results in thirty-one Arabic papyri. Five of these are globally dated between 632 and 823 CE, fifteen are dated between the ninth and twelfth century, and eleven are dated to the thirteenth century.

might result from the Islamic destruction of Oxyrhynchus/Bahnasā, which he hypothesizes to have taken place in the 640s. A different interpretation is proposed by Lincoln Blumell, who speculates that the change in Oxyrhynchus's Greek papyrological "output" could be ascribed to the source preservation (the youngest papyri ending up on top of the rubbish heaps would be the least protected and the first to perish), assuming, based on archaeological indications, that there was continuation in settlement between the seventh and the ninth centuries. Archaeology furthermore seems to confirm the place's occupation as an Arab Islamic settlement from the ninth century onward.[28]

Another aspect of the dated papyri is that quite a few dossiers or archives have been identified.[29] If one text in a collection of texts is securely dated, it becomes possible to also date (approximately) the other related texts. These dossiers diverge widely in date, size, and character. There are private dossiers, such as that of Philemon and Thekla, dated from the 620s to the 640s and comprising only a handful of documents preserving private business, such as their marriage contract and the sale of a house. On the other hand, there are collections of papers that were kept by administrators/officials. A famous examples is the archive of Senouthios, *anystes*, published as *CPR* XXX by Federico Morelli. The thirty-two documents edited in this volume are all dated to 643–44 and show how the Arab conquest had an immediate impact at the local level. Other archives show a much wider chronological range, such as that of the pagarch Papas, edited as *P.Apollonopolis Ano* by Rémondon. Dated to the second half of the seventh century, some fifty years lay between its earliest and latest texts.[30]

Apart from their different chronological range, these archives differ in the way in which they came into the hands of scholars or the way in which they were published (e.g., separated by language rather than as a collection of texts belonging together). The find circumstances of the Senouthios archive are unknown, as the papyri were bought in several lots together

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[28] Coles, "Oxyrhynchus," 14–15; Lincoln Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2012), 295–300; Géza Fehérvári, "The Kuwaiti Excavations, 1985–1987," in *Oxyrhynchus: A City and its Texts*, ed. Alan K. Bowman, Revel A. Coles, Nikolaos Gonis, Dirk Obbink, and Peter J. Parsons (London: Egypt Exploration Society for the Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2007), 109–28; Salah Saiyour and Jonathan M. Bloom, "Paper Fragments," in *The Kuwait Excavations at Bahnasā/ Oxyrhynchus (1985–1987): Final Report*, ed. Géza Fehérvári, Albert H. Pincis, and Huda Zahem (Kuwait: Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences, 2006), 150–56.

[29] Appendix, Table 12.3 lists those discussed here.

[30] Anne Boud'hors, Alain Delattre, Lajos Berkes, et al., "Un nouveau départ pour les archives de Papas: papyrus coptes et grecs de la jarre d'Edfou," *Bulletin de l'Institute français d'archéologie orientale* 117 (2017), 87–124.

with numerous other documents. When they entered the Viennese collection (and others) they were not yet identified as belonging together, as appears from their inventory numbers. Federico Morelli has succeeded in identifying many texts as belonging to this archive.[31] The papers belonging to the archive of Papas, the pagarch of Apollonopolis Ano, present a different case. They were found together in a sebakh-covered jar, where they seem to have been placed in order. This suggests that they were collected at some point for some reason by someone, perhaps Papas himself, or a member of the pacharchy office staff. Only the Greek texts were published by Rémondon. It is not surprising that the publication of the Coptic texts belonging to the same archive adds a new dimension to the archive as a whole, as well as to the Greek published texts.[32]

Such archives are important, as, even when archaeological context is lacking, they provide a context for the individual texts and often reveal more connections, hierarchies, etc. than individual documents can. At the same time, for quantification of texts, they may cause what Bagnall calls "lumpiness": there is no even dispersion of data, but due to a plethora of factors (such as archival habits, documentary range, coincidence, and scholarly focus) concentrations may be found for places and times.[33]

The language in the archives or in the isolated documents of the seventh century is mainly Greek, although they often contain some documents in or in relation to Coptic.[34] Arabic is only very seldom encountered in general, and seems to be absent from the Greek(–Coptic) archives. This applies, for instance, to the archive of Senouthios, which at present contains mostly Greek papyri. However, Morelli refers to the existence of some Coptic documents belonging to the archive.[35] A difference from the archive from Aphrodito,[36] which is dated to the late seventh–early eighth centuries, is that no Arabic documents were found in the

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[31] *CPR* XXX, introduction, 1–9.   [32] Boud'hors et al., "Un nouveau départ."

[33] See Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*. Absence of similar evidence for other times and places cannot be taken as support of either the exceptional or common nature of the finds. Caution is expressed: see, e.g., Morelli, *CPR* XXX; Bagnall, *Everyday Writing*, 38–9, discussing the typicality of Zenon.

[34] This goes for the archives just listed. See texts belonging to the archives and their linguistic composition, which can be easily found in Trismegistos Archives: *TM ArchID* 190 (Philemon and Thekla, 4 texts [1 Coptic, 3 Greek]); *TM ArchID* 418 (Senouthios archive, 45 texts [1 Coptic (*CPR* XXX 1), 44 Greek]); *TM ArchID* 117 (Papas archive, 118 texts [so far 117 Greek and 1 Coptic (= *P. Apoll.* 91), but cf. Boud'hor, et al., "Un nouveau départ"]).

[35] Morelli, *CPR* XXX, introduction, 40–43, discussing both published and unpublished texts. E.g., *CPR* IV 16 (published) and an unpublished letter to "religious people": *P. Vindob.* K 4712.

[36] Many of the Greek and Coptic papyri belonging to this archive were published in *P. Lond.* IV and *P. Ross. Georg.* IV. For an overview of publications of papyri from this archive see Richter, "Language Choice," 219–20.

Senouthios archive, whereas a considerable number of the documents in the Aphrodito archive are written in Arabic. Can this absence of Arabic in the Senouthios dossier be ascribed to the differing character of the archive, the scattered state in which it came into the Viennese collection, due to which eventual Arabic writings became scattered and went unrecognized, or how does it reflect the reality of language use in different periods? That the Arabs corresponded by means of writing with the former Byzantine administrators immediately after the conquest is beyond doubt, as is demonstrated by two bilingual Greek–Arabic papyri dated to 643 CE.[37] The sociocultural background of the parties involved in these documents (that is, to whom the documentation was relevant) most probably defined which language was used.

Sometimes Arabic presence is found indirectly, in Greek official correspondence.[38] In a letter sent to Athanasius, the pagarch of Apollonopolis, his colleague Plato states that he had received a "threatening letter" from the *amīr*, about workmen who had to be sent.[39] However, we do not have Plato's archive, so the original threatening letter from the *amīr* himself has not been preserved (or is yet to be found), and it remains an open question how and at what point on the communication line between an Arabic-speaking *amīr* and Greek- and/or Coptic-speaking pagarch the translation from one language into the other was made.[40] Tonio Sebastian Richter pointed to the presence of a Greek notary in the Arab-speaking officials' entourage in the early eighth century, whereas there is also evidence for an Arabic notary who worked

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[37] *SB* VI 9576 and *SB* XX 14443. These documents belong to the group *TM ArchID* 572 (pagarchs of the Herakleopolites; fourteen other texts are Greek). See also Yūsuf Rāġib, "Un papyrus arabe de l'an 22 de l'Hégire," in *Histoire, archéologies et littératures du monde musulman: mélanges en l'honneur d'André Raymond*, ed. Ghislaine Alleaume, Sylvie Denoix, and Michel Tuchscherer (Cairo: IFAO, 2009), 363–72.

[38] See Morelli in *CPR* XXX, pp. 41–42. Communications by Arabs would be in Greek, as perhaps *P. Vindob.G.* 56038 conveys. *CPR* XXII 1 refers to an order of an *amīr*, references to *epistalma*, for example, in *SB* XXVI 16358 and the unedited 39878 reference is made to "threatening letters" of a duke and an *amīr*. Furthermore, he states that the Arabs did not consider Greek in Egypt as "the language of the enemy." The situation at the time of the conquest was different than at the end of the seventh century – more pragmatic, less ideological. Morelli: "Il greco era, almeno, una lingua già in qualche modo familiar, più accessibile del copto, e più universalmente utilizzabile, poiché conosciuta in tutti i territori dell'impero bizantino passati sotto il controllo degli arabi" (*CPR* XXX, p. 42).

[39] *P.Apoll.* 38, 3: ἀπειλιτικ[ὰ] [γ]ράμματα ἐδεξάμην ("I have received such a threatening letter"); the letter probably came from the *amīr*, who is referred to in the previous second line: τοῦ πανευφήμου ἀμιρᾶ. The verso says that the addressee was the pagarch of Apollonopolis Ano, and that Plato was the sender.

[40] Other letters by the *amīr* have been preserved in the Papas archive, written in Greek: *P.Apoll.* 1 (which has been identified as a writing exercise), *P.Apoll.* 8. That messages were also conveyed orally, perhaps accompanied by letter in order to register that the order had been delivered, may be understood from *P.Apoll.* 3, 1: ἐπειδ[ὴ ὁ παρὼν γραμ]ματηφό[ρος ὁ Μ]ωαγαρίτης εἶπεν ("Since the present letter-carrier, *môagarites*, has said . . . ").

for the pagarch, whose administrative lingua franca was Greek.[41] Letters by Arabic/Islamic officials themselves have also been preserved, such as the circular letter by the *dux* Jordanes, which was copied in Greek in *P.Apoll.* 9.[42]

It has been observed that, in the early years after the conquest, no one knew how the power balance would evolve. An Islamic state was still under construction,[43] although the first contours of a hierarchical organization of the occupation forces may have been visible in the military command structure: ʿAmr was operating under caliphal order, and *amīr*s functioned as representatives, so with some form of authority over Arab military units. These *amīr*s appear ordering requisitions for their troops in several documents dated to the years immediately or soon after the conquest. These documents are evidence of communication between the Arab newcomers and the local authorities. In one of these, the *amīr* Kaeis, who is described as *amīr* of Herakleiopolis, issues a receipt for taxes paid in money to the inhabitants of a village. This use of *amīr* with respect to Herakleiopolis could suggest that it was a well-defined permanent and local position. But another document rather points at the incidental presence of troops on the move during the period when the whole of Egypt was in a process of being secured.[44] Hence, the nature of their presence and their contacts with the local population can be evaluated as ad hoc.[45]

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[41] Richter, "Language Choice," 211–13. In this article Richter focuses on the late seventh–early eighth-century archive from Aphrodito. Greek texts referring to an *arabikos notarios* (Arabic notary) are *P.Lond.* IV 1434, 229 (in the staff of the pagarch) and *P.Lond.* IV 1447, 140, 190 (in the staff of the governor). Referring to a *graikos notarios* (Greek notary) in the staff of the pagarch are *P.Lond.* IV 1434, 301, 311 and *P.Lond.* IV 1435, 56. Whereas it is highly likely that these linguistic qualifications indicate the language the scribes were writing, it is less easy to draw conclusions about their use of spoken and written language. Nevertheless, it is clear that, on the provincial and pagarchy levels, scribes working in Arabic and Greek were employed. This situation is certainly conceivable for the seventh century as well.

[42] The question is whether this Greek letter was translated from an Arabic original, and if so, when and by whom. It may have been done at the provincial headquarters, where two versions, an Arabic one and a Greek one, were created at the same time and sent out together. This may also have been the practice in the early eighth century, as it has been proposed that the Arabic letters by the governor Qurra b. Sharīk had Greek counterparts. However, attempts to identify Arabic with Greek letters have not been successful: see Richter, "Language Choice." For the seventh century, official letters found so far all have been transmitted in Greek. See, e.g., *P.Apoll.* 9, discussed by Marie Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The Duke of the Thebaid and the Formation of the Umayyad State," *Historical Research* 89/243 (2016), 3–18, at 11.

[43] Fred Donner, "The Formation of the Islamic State," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106/2 (1986), 283–96, has argued that the expanding Islamic empire achieved the characteristics of a state under the Umayyads; for the question how Islamic, and specifically Umayyad, imperial history was shaped from hindsight see Jaako Hämeen-Anttila, "The Umayyad State – an Empire?" in *Imperien und Reiche in der Weltgeschichte: Epochenübergreifende und globalhistorische Vergleiche*, ed. Michael Gehler and Robert Rollinger (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014), 537–57.

[44] *SB* VI 9577.

[45] Several documents, dated to 643–44 CE, mention an Abdella *amīr* as addressing the pagarchs of the Herakleopolites: *SB* VI 9576, 9597; and *SB* VIII 9751. See Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim*

These invading Muslims took over Egypt while maintaining its administrative layout, as they had no fully developed administrative apparatus of their own. By the turn of the seventh–eighth centuries, however, things had changed. Islamic state institutions had been founded in Egypt and other conquered territories, and several generations had been born in a province of the Islamic empire.[46] Moreover, in the eighth century we encounter more officials with Arabic names and adhering to the Arabic cultural sphere on the pagarchy level, as the studies of Petra Sijpesteijn and Marie Legendre have demonstrated, marking an intensified step toward Arabization and Islamization of Egypt's governmental system in the eighth century.[47] Sijpesteijn has candidly sketched how immediately after the conquest the Arab rulers continued the Byzantine administrative system, although it was unmistakably clear that the new rulers were no longer based in Constantinople. In the "fifty-year about-turn" the Islamic state itself had been developing, its imperial ambitions also penetrated the provinces.[48] Greek, Coptic, and Arabic papyri demonstrate that Egypt was increasingly incorporated into the Islamic empire. Along with the appearance of Islamic officials in the lower administrative levels and increased control over freedom of movement and taxation, the implementation of the Arabic language in official administration may also be considered part of the imperial Arabic Islamic policy at the beginning of the eighth century.[49] Although the exact intention and motivation of this decision is open to interpretation, but likely had a practical and symbolic side to it, the consequence for the Greek language in Egypt was a clear loss of purpose. With the Byzantine (that is, Greek–Roman) oriented administrators having been defeated, driven out of Egypt, or having become part of the new administration, with the official registers being translated into Arabic, which was now an imperial language, and with a major community of Coptic users, it seems (with hindsight) clear that the Greek language had served its time in Egypt.[50]

State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Official (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Jørgen B. Simonsen, Studies in the Genesis and Development of the Early Caliphal Taxation System (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1988), 81–84.

[46] Sijpesteijn, Shaping a Muslim State; Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic?"

[47] Sijpesteijn, Shaping a Muslim State; Legendre, "Neither Byzantine nor Islamic?"

[48] Sijpesteijn, Shaping a Muslim State, 91–111.

[49] Sijpesteijn, Shaping a Muslim State; Maged S. A. Mikhail, From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest (London/New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 113–16. Wadād al-Qāḍī, "The Names of Estates in State Registers before and after the Arabization of the Dīwāns," in Umayyad Legacies: Medieval Memories from Syria to Spain, ed. Antoine Borrut and Paul M. Cobb (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 255–80.

[50] Two other factors that may well have fostered the loss of prominence of Greek, which are not considered in depth here, but which should be mentioned, are religious tensions between Byzantine Orthodox Christianity and the Coptic Church, and the influx of Arabic Islamic immigrants and

Greek and Other Languages in the Corpus

The following step is to discuss the position of Greek in relation with other languages in the dataset. [51] Most documents (some 83 percent) are written in Greek only, containing various types of documents.[52] However, there are also some examples of documents (forty texts, 17 percent) using a different language as well: these seem to be the most relevant documents in a discussion of the position of Greek in relation to other languages. I will briefly consider which languages these are, what information was conveyed by these, and try to assess why this other language was used.

In sixteen documents, Latin is attested as transcription of a Greek formula. The majority of these are constituted by agreements, such as contracts, following a standard layout with an invocation formula, the name and titles of the person to whom the document is addressed, and the name and titles of the person making the agreement. Then a form of the word *homologô* (agree, concede) is followed by a declaration that something was sold, leased, received, or similar. The documents are subscribed by witnesses and the name of the notary.[53] The notary used a different script to conclude the document. His subscription was not only a personal signature, but it also authorized the document. The use of subscriptions in a different script is also well known in Coptic legal documents from Thebes, dating from the late sixth to the late seventh centuries. However, in these texts a transcription was not made in Latin script, but in Greek, which functioned to authenticate the text. In Coptic documents several other Greek elements (the invocation and date) mark their official character. Anne Boud'hors has explained this use of "fossilized" elements to authenticate a document.[54]

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their interaction (and intermarriage) with Egyptians. Nevertheless, the use of Greek in documents continued for at least another century.

[51] In this contribution I use the label "bilingual" in a very loose sense: the use of two languages was the criterion for this qualification in the dataset. Closer consideration of the exact relation between the two languages used in the document shows that this "bilinguality" may take different forms in different documents.

[52] E.g., contracts, receipts, petitions, letters, lists, administrative orders. See the dataset.

[53] E.g., *SB* 12717: (27) † Ἀνο[ῦπ Π]ἐ[τ]ρου ἔγραψα (28) ὑπὲρ αὐτ(οῦ) ἀγραμμ(ά)τ(ου) ὄντος †. (29) † † di em\†/u Anup sum\†/ δ(ι᾿) ἐμοῦ (30) Ἀνοῦπ συμβ(ο)λ(αιογράφου) (καὶ) (31) νομικ(οῦ) ("I, Anoup, son of Petros have signed on his behalf because he is illiterate. *Through me, Anup (sumbolaiographos).* Through me, Anup (*sumbolaiographos*) and *nomikos*").

[54] Anne Boud'hors, "Toujours honneur au grec? À propos d'un papyrus gréco-copte de la région thébaine," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the ʿAbbāsids*, ed. Arietta Papaconstantinou (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 179–88. Chronologically, the Coptic documents postdate the Greek documents and cover a bigger timespan. They also are more restricted geographically, as they are from the Theban region. The Greek legal subscriptions are found on documents from the Arsinoites, Oxyrhynchites, and Herakleopolites. If, in spite of these differences, the use of another script or language with which to subscribe a legal document is conceded, the next

Only a few documents in the dataset are marked as bilingual Coptic–Greek. Coptic has been inserted in a couple of otherwise Greek documents in a topographical designation. In *CPR* XXX 1 (from the Senouthios archive) this happens a couple of times, for example: (line 28) ἐποικ(ί)ου Τϣαρο⳽; (line 36) Πιαϩ Ενοθ; (line 45) Πευρεϩ; (line 64) (m1) ἐποικ(ί)ου Νείλου (m2) ⲕⲟⲩϥⲓⲍⲉ ⲛⲡⲁⲙⲉⲣⲟ(ⲥ) ⲛⲁⲩ (m1) ε φθ κονίας αρτάβαι ριθ καβαλλίνης μόια ριθ.[55] In lines 36 and 45 of the same document, one Coptic letter is inserted, the *hori*, to indicate aspiration. In line 64, however, a remark has been inserted by a second hand, probably a different scribe from *manus* 1. The phrase is a request, but, as Morelli remarks in the commentary to the line, enigmatic in terms of who wrote it and what exactly the request meant. What do these Coptic insertions imply for the literacy of the scribes? It is difficult to generalize on the basis on four insertions in a document of over 100 lines in Greek. Nevertheless, it corroborates the assumption that Greek was especially employed in fiscal and administrative documents, while in some cases the people who drafted these clearly also knew how to write Coptic.[56] Comparative use for the practice of spelling place names and personal names with Coptic characters can be found in various registers attested in the later archive of Aphrodito. The insertion of a phrase in Coptic in line 64 was done in a different hand. One possibility is that a local headman checked this part of the document, written in Greek according to the administrative conventions, and added his remark, writing in the language he would use on a daily basis. Parallels for Coptic insertions in Greek registers in what seems to be the same hand unfortunately only appear in undated documents.[57] This use of Greek and Coptic is interesting, even if it is difficult to account for the exact implications of these labels.[58] This may reinforce the assumption that the scribe was "writing Greek, but thinking Coptic," and may also illustrate the fluidity of the linguistic reality in this period.

Lastly, Greek is sometimes found in combination with Arabic. The two earliest bilingual Arabic–Greek documents, preserving a Greek and Arabic

question that arises is whether this Greek practice could in some way have influenced the Coptic practice. A clear connection cannot be proved, as the distance in time and space are too big.

[55] *CPR* XXX 1. Translation line 64: "lighten me of these?" 59,500 (bricks?) 119 artabas of chalk, 119 artabas of horse dung.

[56] See Richter, "Language Choice"; Fournet, "The Multilingual Environment"; Jennifer Cromwell's contribution to this volume (Chapter 11).

[57] A Coptic note is also added in the "Greek" fiscal document *P. Würzb. inv.* 37v.

[58] Although this concerns an earlier period and context: see Scott Fitzgerald Johnson (ed.), *Languages and Cultures of Eastern Christianity: Greek* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 65–66, on the fluidity of these terms in late antique Egypt (commenting on the Greek–Coptic archive of Dioscoros).

receipt for requisitions delivered to Arab troops by inhabitants of Herakleiopolis, have already been referred to.[59] One might expect a similar receipt in the contemporary Senouthios archive, where there are numerous references to the Muslims' interference in taxation. If they ordered, as *CPR* XXII 1 attests, the levy of a poll tax, it might be expected that they would also issue receipts to the eventual taxpayer. Thus, is the absence of Arabic from the Senouthios archive real or a product of the preservation situation? A different bilingual Arabic–Greek document type is found in Nessana, outside Egypt: *entagia* (demand orders to pay taxes).[60] Their formulaic character may suggest that *entagia* hint at some kind of instituted tax system. In the earliest bilingual Greek–Arabic receipts, there are no clues that the delivery of goods is systemic rather than an ad hoc demand.[61]

A question about these bilingual documents is where they originated. For the *entagion*, Bell has argued that this type of document was used by the central Byzantine administration, with variations for the exact layout of the document per province. The Arabs may have adopted this form and adapted it to something of their own;[62] in other words, the Arabic text could be considered an *interpretatio Arabica* of its Greek counterpart. The structural outline is the same, as is the general message conveyed. The details, however, varied, and each text is written according to its own cultural conventions.[63]

Yet another combination of Arabic and Greek is encountered in some other documents dated toward the end of the seventh century.[64] For instance, in cases of the *bismillah*, where Greek literally translates the Arabic, so at first sight there seems to be little Greek about it. The *bismillah* was the Islamic religious invocation, written on the *protokollon* (the first page) of a roll.[65] As a structural part of a document, the invocation was probably taken over from the Byzantines, transposed in Islamic Arabic and (from Arabic translated into) Greek. In this case, it also served as a symbol

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[59] *SB* VI 9576 is a bilingual receipt (Herakleiopolites, 643); *SB* XX 14443 is a Greek receipt, with an Arab seal (Hermopolites, 643). A later receipt is *SB* XVIII 13771 (Herakleiopolis, 677 or 707).

[60] Harold I. Bell, "The Arabic Bilingual Entagion," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 89/3 (1945), 531–42. *Entagia* are also found in the archive from Aphrodito, dated some decades later.

[61] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 110–12.   [62] Bell, "The Arabic Bilingual Entagion," 531.

[63] For the observation that "own cultural conventions" were adhered to, as exemplified by *SB* VI 9576 (643), see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 67–68.

[64] For instance, the protocols published in *P.Lond.* IV 1462. See also Grohmann, *CPR* III and Adolf Grohmann, "Zum Papyrusprotokoll in früharabischer Zeit," *Jahrbuch der österreichischen byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 9 (1960), 1–19.

[65] Grohmann in *CPR* III.

of the one and only (religious) authority, which confirmed the religious legitimization of the political situation.[66]

Otherwise, Arabic is absent from this Greek corpus and the question is whether this is coincidental or significant. To begin with this second qualification, it can be stated that an "imperial" documentary culture of the new rulers was probably developing on the go.[67] Arabic and Greek were used in separate settings as long as the groups of speakers were still in some ways separate. On the other hand, absence of Arabic documents may be coincidental, as a result of bias in finds and scholarly focus. First, as the bilingual receipts have shown, Arabic was used in documents immediately after the conquest. Second, there is no reason to assume that the separation was absolute. It is inevitable that from the beginning there was contact between the conquerors/rulers and the local population (through their representatives), as the rulers depended on that population for their subsistence. The pagarchs seem to have had a crucial role in this. The fact that both languages, Greek and Arabic, were used in the Herakleopolite receipts was on the one hand pragmatic (both parties would be able to read the text), but it may also have functioned politically and symbolically, as a statement of the transaction and the status quo.

Apart from these parallel uses of Greek and Arabic, two more phenomena may be hinted at. The first is the introduction of Arabic words or of new words (Greek words, unattested in pre-Islamic Greek papyri) relating to Arabic matters in Greek documents.[68] The second relates to a later development, that of providing summaries of the text in the other language. In eighth-century Egypt this practice is especially known from the archive of Basileios again, where at the top of the Arabic documents a one-line summary in Greek was given. It also occurs the other way round, with an Arabic summary given to a Greek text. Such bilingual "tagging" may be compared to the practice of the Ptolemaic period, in which Demotic documents were docketed in Greek. Rachel Mairs has shown how this facilitated the understanding of a text by readers of different linguistic

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[66] Richter, "Language Choice," 208.

[67] Of course, there already existed pre-Islamic documentary traditions, which continued after the emergence of Islam. See, e.g., Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*. However, existence of a centralized or "imperial" Islamic documentary culture in the seventh century cannot be deduced from the Egyptian documentary evidence. This situation is hardly surprising, if the observations on the development of the Islamic state and/or empire are taken into account.

[68] One could think of administrative terms such as *symboulos* (Gr., governor), *amīr, amīr al-muʾminīn*, but also of words as *gaidarin* (Ar., donkey), *maszert* (Ar., cable, rope). Examples of new terms appearing in Greek papyri from early Islamic Egypt are given by Richter, "Language Choice," 209–11; and Sijpesteijn *Shaping a Muslim State*, 67–74.

backgrounds.[69] The purpose of Arabic–Greek summaries in eighth-century documents may indeed have been to offer someone not literate in the language in which the document was written, or not able or in a position to read through the whole document, a quick view of its contents. This bilingual tagging at least hints at contact between users of different languages.

The Disappearance of Greek

If anything, this survey has made clear that Greek was still used in official and administrative documents in the seventh century: in this sense the position of Greek in the seventh century was still solid. Yet, a decline in numbers (Tables 12.1 and 12.2) may be related to the political events of the mid-seventh century and may be explained with a change in the status of other languages. Greek had been the language of the administration and the higher social groups in Egypt, and the advent of the Arabs/Muslims implied a rearrangement of the political and social order, including their (documentary) culture. As Egyptian remained the spoken language of a large part of Egypt's population, by the late Byzantine period Coptic had developed into a proper documentary language, in which different types of documents were written. This does not mean that it should be considered as a threat to Greek in the late Byzantine period, yet it seems that along with the rise of Coptic there was a decline in Greek, until it finally disappeared from the documentary radar somewhere in the late eighth or early ninth century. How did this work?

The disappearance of languages (deaths or suicides), as well as births of languages appear more often in history, so we might address this question by taking a comparative perspective.[70] Two examples may be illuminative. In Egypt there is the case of Demotic, which gradually disappeared as a written language. Explanations for this are the exclusivity of the group of Demotic writers, who were confined to traditional Egyptian (religious) institutions, the difficulty of the demotic script, the preference for using Greek as the administrative language by Greek and Roman administrators,

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[69] Rachel Mairs, "Bilingual 'Tagging' of Financial Accounts in Demotic and Greek," *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 139 (2012), 37–44.

[70] S. G. Thomason, *Language Contact: An Introduction* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001); M. van Uytfanghe, *Rome, Romania, Germania: Recente inzichten in de genese van het Europa der talen* (Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten, 2000).

and the competition from Christianity, which further marginalized trad-
itional Egyptian religion, including its writing practices.[71] Another, more
recent and different, example may be the use of Latin by scholars in
universities. Latin was used as an academic lingua franca, shared by those
who had enjoyed the highest education, to share their ideas and discoveries
in a language devoid of political affiliation. When education became
accessible to more people, the need for Latin declined. This is reflected
in present-day international academic communities, where various lan-
guages are admitted and used, as it is presumed that scholars will be able to
communicate in them, or at least to understand them. Which language is
used may be decided by the organizers of a congress, the editorial board of
a journal, or the scholar, who will take into account the audience to be
reached (some languages have a wider range than others). It may be
concluded that Latin has lost its position as an academic lingua franca.
These examples demonstrate how the use of a language declined as the
group of users came – for various reasons, such as political and sociocul-
tural developments – under pressure.

  Was Greek under pressure, because its users were under pressure? The
rise in Coptic documentation in late antiquity may be one clue that this
might have been the case. Considering the wider development of Coptic
and Greek, Jennifer Cromwell puts forward a strong case that Coptic was
increasingly used from the seventh century onward, whereas in the seventh
century Greek still had priority.[72] It may well be that this increased use of
Coptic in documents is correlated to the disappearance of Greek in the
eighth century, and that both developments resulted from administrative
reforms by the Islamic rulers. Cromwell argues that their aim was to
increase efficiency in maximizing tax revenues. Using the language of the
taxable population would indeed be a means to achieve that goal.
However, this also highlights the limited practicality of Greek (that is, in
relation to Coptic, which was more easily understandable to a substantial

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[71] That there was no Roman policy against using Demotic, but that it became less appealing for use in
contracts, as the authorities required Greek summaries, is argued by Brian P. Muhs, "The
Grapheion and the Disappearance of Demotic Contracts in Early Roman Tebtynis and
Soknopaiou Nesos," in *Tebtynis und Soknopaiou Nesos: Leben im römerzeitlichen Fajum*, ed.
Sandra L. Lippert and Maren Schentule it (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005), 93–104. That the
Romans did not recognize Demotic as an official language and insisted on the use of Greek in
oracular practices has been argued by Pauline Ripat, "The Language of Oracular Inquiry in Roman
Egypt," *Phoenix* 60 (2006), 204–28. The Egyptian cult of Isis continued until the fifth century CE:
see Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion: A Regional Study of Religious
Transformation (298–642 CE)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2008).
[72] Jennifer Cromwell, Chapter 11 in this volume.

part of the population), leading to another observation as to why Greek was under pressure.

As a ten-century-old imperial and elite language, Greek undoubtedly came under pressure after the arrival of the Muslims who took over the power positions and, moreover, brought their own culture and language. Privileges and rights would no longer be given by the Greek-speaking Byzantine court, but by Arab-speaking Muslims. Hence, the status of Greek as prestige language diminished.[73] A reason for the abandonment of Greek may be that knowing Greek was no longer a passport to better social opportunities.[74] Initially, this may have resulted in Coptic gaining more prominence and taking over the place of Greek.[75] Later, however, when Arabic was moving toward becoming the language of the majority, more conscious decisions were made to shift from the minority's language and to learn another one, if that was perceived to be more beneficial. This would happen not only for practical reasons, but also because people may have felt that using the Arabic language would better their chances of social inclusion.

Conclusion

After having been a language of power and prestige in Egypt for more than a millennium, this status of Greek came to an end in the aftermath of the Islamic conquest. The overview of dated Greek texts

[73] Here again, the question to what degree Greek was or continued to be spoken can only be tentative. The quantitative–qualitative analysis of the corpus of dated Greek papyri hints at restricted use in writing, which seems to confirm Morelli's speculative question that Greek increasingly became the language of administration: see *CPR* XXII, introduction. Also, one would expect that a language that was still spoken might have continued to be used as long as the language community was large enough. Even if the size of such a community of Greek speakers cannot be established, the fact that Coptic survived and flourished, whereas Greek disappeared (or remained in fossilized form) demonstrates that the Greek-speaking (or using) community was too small to sustain itself in the longer term.

[74] Learning a language in order to have better opportunities may be exemplified by a modern case: recently, a Dutch pilot study teaching English to toddlers was carried out at a number of primary schools. Arguments substantiating this innovative educational project were not only scientific studies showing that language acquisition at such a young age will result in excellent mastering of a second language (besides the mother language), but also that children who learn to speak English as soon as possible will have better economic prospects. English as an important language in Dutch society: www.engelsvoorbengels.nl/. Bilingual primary schooling: www.epnuffic.nl/primair-onderwijs/talenonderwijs/tweetalig-primair-onderwijs-tpo/tpo-scholen and www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2014/01/08/eerste-basisscholen-van-start-met-tweetalig-onderwijs.

[75] See Cromwell, Chapter 11 in this volume, which discusses the rising use of Coptic in new documentary contexts.

of the seventh century gives some clues as to when the change in the position of Greek began; it seems to have declined from the mid-seventh century onward. Even if there was continuity in the use of Greek, the numbers of dated texts in general seem to have dropped and the contexts of use became more restricted, certainly in relation to the growing numbers of documents in Coptic and Arabic. Coptic was rising as a competitor for Greek in all kinds of daily documents – for pragmatic reasons, and also reflecting the new social reality. The other contestant is Arabic, which entered the written papyrological landscape soon after the conquest. As can be expected, Arabic gradually appeared in more and diverse contexts, as a cultural reflection of political and sociocultural (including demographic) developments. After more than a millennium Greek lost its prominent position and virtually disappeared from Egypt's documentary landscape. From a cultural point of view, the position of Greek in papyrological documentation still seems strong in the seventh century, but the external factor of political dominance by Arabs/Muslims changed the situation. As a result of political and social developments, from the early eighth century onward Egypt started to become linguistically incorporated into the Islamic empire, further marginalizing Greek, until it virtually faded away in Egypt.[76] The process by which Coptic gave way to Arabic would take longer, but the arrival of Arabic would ultimately transform Egypt's linguistic landscape.

Appendix

A first note is that these results reflect a quantitative search only, in order to get an overall impression. Graph 12.1 shows that the number of dated papyri decreases from the sixth to the eighth centuries. Zooming in on these numbers, by grouping them into twenty-year batches, the general impression created by Graph 12.2 is confirmed. Although "lumpiness" in the data should be heeded (as is visible in the timespan 701–20, when many papyri from the archive of Aphrodito are dated), as well as the fact that a major part of the papyri have been left out of consideration (as they are

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[76] Greek was not wholly done away with, though, as appears from the fiscal documents encountered in the eighth century. Furthermore, Greek lived on in the authenticating parts of Coptic documents and the numerical system of the Muslims. See Arietta Papaconstantinou, "They Shall Speak the Arabic Language and Take Pride of It: Reconsidering the Fate of Coptic after the Arab Conquest," *Le Muséon* 120 (2007), 273–99; de Jong and Delattre, "Greek as a Minority Language."

Centuary	Greek	Coptic
VI	2997	779
VII	3181	3894
VIII	437	3718

Graph 12.1 Globally dated papyri.

Graph 12.2 Dated papyri per twenty years.

Table 12.1 *Numbers of dated texts in the* HGV
per century, 500–800 CE

Year range	Number of texts in *HGV*
500–99	1,354
600–99	798 (235 dated between 640 and 699)
700–99	387

Table 12.2 *Numbers of dated texts in the* HGV *per twenty years*

Year range	Number of texts in *HGV*	Years with 0 papyri
500–20	163	
521–40	298	
541–60	336	
561–80	304	
581–600	250	
601–20	294	
621–40	172	
641–60	182	
661–80	74	664, 679
681–700	64	691, 692, 696
701–20	243 NB: Aphrodito archive	712
721–40	69	731, 736, 737, 738, 739
741–60	38	745, 746, 754, 755, 757
761–80	21	768, 769, 772, 773, 774, 777, 778
781-800	4	782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 797, 798, 799, 800

only globally dated), it is tempting to see a shift in the number of dated papyri around the mid-seventh century, the numbers steadily dropping in the eighth. With the same caution, it may also be noted that, especially in the second half of the eighth century, quite a few years have resulted in 0 papyri. Of course it should also be underlined that these overviews only cover the present state of the evidence.

Table 12.3 *Overview of the archives from the seventh century that are discussed above*

Who/what	Where	Date	Number of documents
Philemon and Thekla	Apollonopolis/ Oxyrhynchus	620–40	4 (3 Greek, 1 Coptic)
Senouthios	Hermopolis	643/4	45 (44 Greek, 1 Coptic)
Papas	Apollonopolis	650–700	112 (Greek, but also Coptic)
Nessana	Nessana (Palestina)	VI–VII	Some 200 (Greek, Arabic)

Graph 12.3 Provenance of texts dated 640–700.

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   www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/apd/project.jsp
HGV = Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens:
   http://aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de/
PN = Papyri Info:
   http://papyri.info/
Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets:
   http://papyri.info/docs/checklist

TM = *Trismegistos*:
  www.trismegistos.org

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Regional Diversity in the Use of Administrative Loanwords in Early Islamic Arabic Documentary Sources (632–800 CE): A Preliminary Survey

Eugenio Garosi

Introduction

When the Arab armies conquered a territory of more than 13 million square miles extending between the Atlantic Ocean and present-day Afghanistan, they paved the way for the formation of new webs of transregional interaction. One of the most manifest traces of substratal cultural influences on the formation of the early Islamic imperial polity are the lexical borrowings that characterize Arabic documentary sources.[1] These loanwords and foreign words[2] not only reveal aspects of the historical development of Arabic but are also indicative of the wider formative environment of scribal practices in the early caliphate.

This study surveys the loan vocabulary in Arabic documentary evidence as an indicator of the social geography of the early Islamic empire.[3] The question of intentionality or, in other words, the extent to which the use of loanwords in Arabic documents mirrors a conscious employment of

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[1] Signs of the early development of an Arab Muslim identity are for instance the use of Arabic and of the Muslim era and calendar, and the collective denominations of *muhājirūn* (emigrants) (see I. Lindstedt, "*Muhājirūn* as a Name for the First/Seventh Century Muslims," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 74 [2015], 67–73) and *muʾminūn* (believers) (see F. Donner, "From Believers to Muslims: Confessional Self-Identity in the Early Islamic Community," *al-Abhath* 50–51 [2002–03], 9–53, at 10–11), and ritual practices such as the *ḥajj* pilgrimage.

[2] A loanword can be defined as a word that is transferred from a language (donor language) to another (receiving language). Loanwords *lato sensu* further distinguish themselves in (1) "foreign words," i.e., words that due to their spelling and pronunciation are perceived as foreign in the receiving language (e.g., Ger. *Palais*) and (2) assimilated loanwords (e.g., Eng. *clerk*); see H. Stammerjohann (ed.), *Handbuch der Linguistik: Allgemeine und angewandte Sprachwissenschaft* (Munich: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1977), 250–51.

[3] For the application of the notion of "empire" to the early Islamic caliphate see most recently the contributions in H.-L. Hagemann and S. Heidemann (eds.), *Transregional and Regional Elites: Connecting the Early Islamic Empire* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2020).

foreign technical terminology will, however, remain beyond the scope of this contribution.[4]

Loanwords in Documentary Arabic

The loan vocabulary[5] in the Arabic language is a theme whose vastness exponentially exceeds the limits of this study. In this contribution, only technical terminology heavily featured in administrative documents will be considered.[6] At this stage, I am preparing a list of such terms. The results discussed in this chapter are a work in progress. The corpus under examination covers 756 Arabic papyrus, parchment, and paper documents, 606 from Egypt (ca. 80 percent), 115 from Syria (ca. 15 percent), and 36 from Central Asia (ca. 5 percent),[7] 848 Arabic inscriptions and graffiti from different regions but most heavily concentrated in Syria (243 = ca. 29 percent) and the Arabian Peninsula (348 = ca. 41 percent),[8] a selected corpus of 1,684 Arabic glass and metal seals, weights, and stamps (mostly from Egypt) and around 550 types and subtypes of Arab Byzantine, Arab Sasanian, and reformed coins[9] fairly evenly

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[4] Medieval authors of Arabic lexicography were not unaware of the existence of foreign vocabulary in Arabic, and even developed methods to recognize and explain them. Independently of the fact that the etymologies provided by those later lexicographers are not always accurate, the learned considerations of medieval scholars can hardly account for the perceptions and purpose of imperial officials in the early days of the Islamic empire.

[5] General criteria for recognizing loanwords in Arabic are terms having a corresponding verbal root but not being used in the Arabic sense of the root (e.g., *kharāj*), having more than three radicals (e.g., *dirham*), or exhibiting unusual morphological types (e.g., the *fāʿal* form), different possible vocalizations (e.g. *khātam* and *khātim*), and phenomena of consonant shift (e.g., Aramaic <s> into Arabic <s>). For a more detailed discussion on the topic see S. Fraenkel, *Aramäische Fremdwörter im Arabischen* (Leiden: Brill, 1886), xi–xvii; A. Spitaler, "Materialien zur Erklärung von Fremdwörtern im Arabischen durch retrograde Ableitung," in *Corolla Linguistica: Festschrift Ferdinand Sommer zum 80. Geburtstag am 4. Mai 1955 dargebracht von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen*, ed. H. Krahe (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1955), 211–20, at 211–13; and A. Schall, "Geschichte des arabischen Wortschatzes: Lehn- und Fremdwörter im klassischen Arabischen," in *Grundriß der arabischen Philologie*, vol. 1, ed. W. Fischer (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1982), 143–53.

[6] Everyday commodities (e.g., *mandīl* < Lat. *mantele* in *P.MuslimState* 27, 6), plant names (e.g., *qurṭ* < Gr. *chortos* in *P.Cair.Arab.* 231, 4), names of localities (e.g., Fusṭāṭ < Gr. *to fossaton*/Lat. *fossatum* in *P. Heid.Arab.* I 2, 19), personal names (e.g., al-Iṣbahbadh < MP *spāhbed* in *P.Khurasan* 5, 3), professions (e.g., *bayṭār* < Gr. *ippiatros* in *P.L.Bat.* XXXIII 65, 17) etc. are not discussed in this contribution.

[7] Estimates on Arabic papyri and related sources have been compiled with the help of the *Arabic Papyrology Database* (www.apd.gwi.uni-muenchen.de:8080/apd/project.jsp). I owe special thanks to the *APD* research team for keeping me updated on their progress and making internal data available to me. Loanwords occurring in coeval non-Arabic documents have only been discussed in the case of transcriptions of Arabic terms (e.g. Gr. *masgida* = Ar. *masjid* < Aram. *masgidā*). Following the model of Fraenkel's seminal work, the entries are sorted according to ambit of pertinence.

[8] Estimates on Arabic epigraphy are mainly based on the data provided in the *Thesaurus d'Épigraphie Islamique* (www.epigraphie-islamique.org/epi/login.html).

[9] Estimates on early Islamic numismatics are mainly based on S. Album, *Checklist of Islamic Coins*, 3rd ed. (Santa Rosa: Stephen Album Rare Coins, 2011).

distributed over the early Islamic empire. For the purpose of this chapter, lexical borrowings have been organized according to region of attestation and repartitioned into semantic domains. As the overwhelming majority of early Islamic documentary sources stem from Egypt, I first survey loanwords only attested in that region and then proceed to discuss terms featured in documents from Egypt as well as other regions. Finally, I will zoom in on loanwords attested exclusively outside Egypt. The second part of the chapter will piece together the results based on regional and transregional patterns (or a lack thereof) in the use of loanwords.

Loanwords only Attested in Arabic Documents from Egypt (640–800 CE)

Fiscal Administration

balad (town, country)[10] (possibly also used as an administrative unit)[11] < Gr.[12] *palation*/Lat. *palatium*, literally "palace."[13] The term occurs in three Arabic papyri over the surveyed timespan.[14] *Balad* appears multiple times in the Qurʾān[15] as well, and is probably a pre-Islamic loan.

maks (custom dues)[16] < Aram. *maksā* (toll, tribute, levy);[17] attested in two papyri.[18]

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[10] See P. M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 144–45.

[11] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 144–45.

[12] Donor languages are represented by the following abbreviations:
  Aram. = Aramaic
  CPA = Christian Palestinian Aramaic
  Elam. = Elamite
  JPA = Jewish Palestinian Aramaic
  JBA = Jewish Babylonian Aramaic
  Copt. = Coptic
  Gr. = Greek
  Lat. = Latin
  Syr. = Syriac.

[13] T. Nöldeke in Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 28; K. Vollers, "Beiträge zur Kenntniss der lebenden arabischen Sprache in Aegypten," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 41 (1887), 365–402, 50 (1896), 607–57, and 51 (1897), 291–326 and 343–64, at 312; A. Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qurʾān* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1938), 82–83; Schall, "Lehn- und Fremdwörter," 147; and A. I. Hebbo, *Die Fremdwörter in der arabischen Prophetenbiographie des Ibn Hischām (gest. 218/834)* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1984), 50.

[14] *P.MuslimState* 36, 6 (Fayyūm; 730–43); *CPR* XVI 7 (unknown provenance/Egypt; seventh–eighth century); and *P.HindsNubia*, 12, 16 and 28 (Qaṣr Ibrīm; 758).

[15] E.g., in Q. 2:126, 7:57, 7:58, 14:35, 16:7 etc.; cf. also *balda* (region, land) in Q. 25:49, 27:91, etc.

[16] On *maks* see P. Forand, "Notes on ʿUšr and Maks," *Arabica* 13 (1966), 137–41.

[17] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 283.

[18] *P.Heid.Arab*. I 2, 24 and *P.BeckerNPAF* 4 (= *P.BeckerPAF* 7, left part), 2 and 5 (= *P.Cair.Arab.* 147, 3 and 6) (both from Ishqūh; both dated 710).

ṣadaqa (lit., "alms")[19] < Aram. *ṣədaqtā*[20] (sincerity, alms)[21] denotes an alms tax to be levied from Muslims in a handful of mid-eighth-century papyri.[22]

sijill (register or, simply, document)[23] < Gr. *sigillon*/Lat. *sigillum*.[24] The term *sigillion* is attested in Greek and Coptic documents as a denomination for a "safe-conduct."[25] The use of *sijill* in the same context is attested through literary evidence and has been signaled in two unedited eighth-century Arabic papyri.[26]

ṭabl ([tax] instalment, register)[27] < Gr. *tablon*/Lat. *tabula*[28] occurs several times in the surveyed corpus.[29]

ūsiya (a land enjoying privileged fiscal conditions)[30] < Gr. *ousia*.[31] The term is encountered quite often only in papyri from ninth-century

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[19] For an extensive discussion of the terms in the early Islamic fiscal context see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 181–99.

[20] S. Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis in Antiquis Arabum Carminibus et in Corano Peregrinis* (Leiden: Brill, 1880), 20; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 194; and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 184 and n.376; cf. M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (hereafter *DJPA*) (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1992), 952; M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods* (hereafter *DJBA*) (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002), 458; and M. Sokoloff, *A Syriac Lexicon: A Translation from the Latin: Correction, Expansion, and Update of C. Brockelmann's Lexicon Syriacum* (hereafter *SL*) (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 348.

[21] Sokoloff, *DJPA*, 952; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 458 and Sokoloff, *SL*, 348.

[22] *P.MuslimState* 8 (Fayyūm; 730–43), 9, 21, 30, and 31, and *P.Cair.Arab.* 197 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 765 or 766), 5. See also the unpublished P.Heid.inv.Arab. 28. For other documents possibly related to the same institution see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 188–89.

[23] The only Qurʾānic passage (Q. 21:104) in which *sijill* occurs may suggest that the term originally denoted a book-scroll in Arabic: see "Sidjill," in *EI²*, s.v.

[24] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 251–52; T. Nöldeke, *Neue Beiträge zur semitischen Sprachwissenschaft* (Strasburg: Trübner, 1910), 27–28; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 163–64. Cf. S. Daris, *Il Lessico Latino nel Greco d'Egitto* (Barcelona: Papyrologica Castroctaviana, 1971), 104. *Sijill* occurs in the sense of "register" for example in *P.Khalili* I 2, 6, 7, 12, 13, and 15 (Dalāṣ; eighth century).

[25] Y. Rāġib, "Sauf-conduits d'Égypte omeyyade et abbaside," *Annales islamologiques* 31 (1997), 143–68, at 146 and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 311–12.

[26] Ms Copt. b 7 (1) and Ms Copt. b e 35 (2)/Bodleian Library. P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Coptic and Arabic Papyri from Deir al-Balāʾizah," in *Actes du 26e Congrès International de Papyrologie*, ed. P. Schubert (Geneva: Droz, 2012), 707–13, at 708–09. See also N. Vanthieghem's remarks in "Le plus ancien sauf-conduit arabe," *Der Islam* 91 (2014), 266–71, at 267–68 n. 7.

[27] For a useful synoptic overview of the different positions and debates on the meaning of *ṭabl* see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 281–83.

[28] A. Grohmann, "Griechische und lateinische Verwaltungstermini im arabischen Ägypten," *Chronique d'Égypte* 13–14 (1932), 275–84, at 277. Cf. Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 111.

[29] Seventeen attestations in fifteen documents. The earliest datable attestations are *P.MuslimState* 2, 9; *P.MuslimState* 3, 7; *P.MuslimState* 13, 10; *P.MuslimState* 20, 16; *P.MuslimState* 23, 14; *P.MuslimState* 36, 6 (all from the Fayyūm; all datable to 730–43).

[30] A. von Kremer, *Beiträge zur arabischen Lexikographie* (Vienna: C. Gerolds Sohn, 1883), 12 [190].

[31] Grohmann, "Verwaltungstermini," 281–82. Cf. *CPR* VIII 82 (= *SB* VI 9460) (Fayyūm; 699/700). For caliphal estates in Egypt see M. Legendre, "Landowners, Caliphs and State Policy over Landholdings in the Egyptian Countryside: Theory and Practice," in *Authority and Control in the*

Egypt and later as a definition for an estate or domain. Grohmann reports an occurrence in an eighth-century papyrus housed in Berlin possibly referring to a caliphal estate.[32]

zakāt[33] < Aram. *zākūṯā*[34] (merit)[35] is used interchangeably with *ṣadaqa* in a single document.[36]

Institutions and Officials

dīwān (official register, office)[37] < MP *dēwān* (archive, collected writings), possibly through Syr. *dīwān* (book, treasury, chancery).[38] This term is only attested in an early Abbasid papyrus within the researched timespan.[39]

duks[40] < Gr. *doux*/Lat. *dux*[41] not attested in any Arabic document published so far. A few years ago, however, Sijpesteijn remarked on the occurrence of the term in an (unpublished) official Arabic papyrus from the eighth century.[42]

furāniq (courier) < JBA *parwanqā* < MP *parwānag* (guide)[43] is attested in mid-eighth-century papyri from Egypt.[44]

Countryside: From Antiquity to Islam in the Mediterranean and Near East (6th–10th Century), ed. A. Delattre, M. Legendre, and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden/New York: Brill, 2019), 392–419.

[32] P.Berl.inv.Arab. 15014²/3; Grohmann, "Verwaltungstermini," 281.

[33] On the ending *-āt* see C. Brockelmann, "Semitische Reimwortbildungen," *Zeitschrift für Semitistik und verwandte Gebiete* 5 (1927), 6–38, at 14.

[34] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 23; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 153; Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 184.

[35] Sokoloff, *DJPA*, 176; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 412–13.

[36] *P.MuslimState* 8 (Fayyūm; 730–43), 11, 12, 16, and 18.

[37] On the *dīwān* and on other documents related to this institution see P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Army Economics: An Early Papyrus Letter Related to ʿAṭāʾ Payments," in *Histories of the Middle East: Studies in Middle Eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A. L. Udovitch*, ed. R. E. Margariti, A. Sabra, and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011), 245–67, at 252–65.

[38] A. Asbaghi, *Persische Lehnwörter im Arabischen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1988), 130; C. A. Ciancaglini, *Iranian Loanwords in Syriac* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 2008), 151; and Sokoloff, *SL*, 294.

[39] *P.Berl.Arab.* I 2, 4 (Fayyūm; 761).

[40] On this office see A. Grohmann, "Der Beamtenstab der arabischen Finanzverwaltung in Ägypten in früharabischen Zeit," in *Studien zur Papyrologie und Wirtschaftsgeschichte: Friedrich Oertel zum achtzigsten Geburtstag gewidmet*, ed. H. Braunert (Bonn: Habelt, 1964), 120–34, at 123–24; and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 86–87.

[41] Grohmann, "Verwaltungstermini," 279–80.

[42] MS. Copt. d. 23/Bodleian Library; reported in Sijpesteijn, "Deir al-Balāʾizah," 710 and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 119.

[43] Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 273–74; Asbaghi, *Lehnwörter*, 206; A. Silverstein, *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 20; cf. Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 929; and Ciancaglini, *Loanwords*, 237–38.

[44] *P.DiemRemarkableDocuments* 2r, 5 (Ushmūnayn; 751); *P.RagibLettresdeService* 2 (= *P.MargoliouthSelectPapyri* 2 = *P.Ryl.Arab.* I IV 2), 5 (Ushmūnayn; 751); *P.RagibLettresdeService* 3 (= *P.Ryl. Arab.* I IV 1), 5 (Ushmūnayn; 751); *P.RagibLettresdeService* 4 (= *P.MargoliouthSelectPapyri* 3 = *P.Ryl.Arab.*

qusṭāl/jusṭāl[45] < probably Gr. *augoustalis*/Lat. *augustalis*.[46] Two other etymologies from Greek have also been hypothesized, < Gr. *kouaistor*/Lat. *quaestor*[47] and Gr. *zygotatēs*[48] (mint ward) respectively.

simmāk (an official assisting and supervising the tax collection)[49] < Gr. *symmachos*. In Arabic documents the term features only in a few eighth-century papyri from the Fayyūm.[50]

Infrastructure[51]

bury (granary) < Gr. *horrion* (also *horeion/hōreion*)/Lat. *horreum*[52] most notably occurs in the Basileios archive to indicate the barns of the provincial capital, Fusṭāṭ.[53]

I IV 4), 6 (Ushmūnayn; 752); *P.Ryl.Arab.* II 6 (= *P.MargoliouthSelectPapyri* 1 = *P.Ryl.Arab.* I IV 3 = *P. RagibLettresdeService* 1), 5 (Ushmūnayn; 745).

[45] *P.Cair.Arab.* 149 (= *P.BeckerNPAF* 3), 27 (*jusṭāl*) (Ishqūh; 709–14); *P.GrohmannQorra-Brief* 6 (*qusṭāl*) (Fayyūm; 709). A third attestation in *P.World*, p. 130, 3 (Ishqūh; 709–10) has been emended by W. Diem: see *P.DiemAfrodito*, p. 261, 2.

[46] Kaplony in T. S. Richter, "Language Choice in the Qurra-Dossier," in *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt: From the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, ed. A. Papaconstantinou (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 189–220, at 209. Cf. Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 31–32. For this office see F. Preisigke, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Papyrusurkunden*, 3 vols. (Berlin: Selbstverlag der Erben, 1925–31), 3:204.

[47] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 187 who postulates a transmission through the Aramaic; J. von Karabacek, "Der Mokaukis von Aegypten," *Mitteilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer* 1 (1886), 1–11, at 6–7; and Grohmann, "Verwaltungstermini," 276–77.

[48] C. H. Becker, "Neue arabische Papyri des Aphroditofundes," *Der Islam* 2 (1911), 245–68, at 255; G. Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases and Tax-Receipts from Egypt 148–427 AH/765–1035 AD* (Vienna: Brüder Hollinek, 2001), 121; and M. Kameya, "From Qusṭāl to Jahbadh: An Aspect of Transition on the Egyptian Tax-Collecting System," in *New Frontiers of Arabic Papyrology: Arabic and Multilingual Texts from Early Islam*, ed. S. Bouderbala, S. Denoix, and M. Malczycki (Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2017), 141–60, at 142–46.

[49] On this office see Grohmann, "Beamtenstab," 123; and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 130–32. Cf. Preisigke, *WGP*, 3:166.

[50] *P.MuslimState* 14, 5; *P.MuslimState* 15, 5, 11, and 13; and *P.MuslimState* 24, 2, 6, and v, 1 (all datable to Fayyūm; 730–43).

[51] Various loanwords denominating both edifices (e.g., *isṭabl* < Gr. *stablon* and *sūq* < Aram. *sūqā* in *P.L.Bat.* XXXIII 65, 4, and 7 [Fusṭāṭ; eighth century]) and architectonic elements (e.g., *bāb* < Aram. *bābā* in *P.BeckerPAF* 10 [= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 9], 3 [Ishqūh; 709], and *qanṭara* < Lat. *cantherius* [?] in *RCEA* I 8, 1 [Fusṭāṭ; 688]) are encountered in early Islamic Arabic documents. Here I have discussed only terms that feature prominently in official administrative documents.

[52] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 136; Grohmann, "Verwaltungstermini," 277. Cf. Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 80.

[53] *P.BeckerPAF* 10 (= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 9), 2 and 4 (Ishqūh; 709); *P.Christ.Musl.* 1 (= *P.Cair.Arab.* 286 = *P. BeckerPAF* 16), 3 (Ishqūh; 706); *P.Heid.Arab.* I 3, 8, 34, 77, and 79 (Ishqūh; 710); *P.Heid.Arab.* I 13, 4 (Ishqūh; 709–14); *P.MuslimState* 23, 20 (Fayyūm; 730–43).

sijn (prison) < Gr. *signon*/Lat. *signum* (insignia)[54] is encountered in two eighth-century papyri.[55]

Coinage

ṭābiʿ (seal)[56] < Aram. *ṭabʿā* (stamp)[57] rather than being the *fāʿil* form of the verb *ṭ-b-ʿ*, to impress, to stamp – often used for the minting of seals and weights.[58]

Metrology[59]

*kayl al-***dīmūs** (a measure of unspecified value) < Gr. *metron* **dēmosion**,[60] appears in two Arabic papyri from the Basileios archive.[61]

faddān (a square measure for lots of land) < Aram. *paddānā*,[62] frequently attested in documents from early Islamic Egypt.[63]

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[54] Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 181–82; cf. A. A. Bevan, "Some Contributions to Arabic Lexicography," in *A Volume of Oriental Studies Presented to Edward G. Browne on his 60th Birthday (7 February 1922)*, ed. T. W. Arnold and R. A. Nicholson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), 51–93, at 71. Surprisingly, the term is not included in Jeffery's list despite its occurrence in Sura 12. On the semantic development of *signon/signum* into Arabic *sijn* see J. Niehoff-Panagiotidis, "Lat. *signum* > σίγνον > Arab. *sign*," in *Romania Arabica: Festschrift Reinhold Kontzi zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. J. Lüdtke (Tübingen: Narr, 1996), 1–19, who points out that in late antiquity the term *signa* came denote the inner segment of a military camp (where the *signa* were kept). The latter was often used as an improvised prison, hence the transfer of meaning.

[55] *P.MuslimState* 19, 7 (Fayyūm; 730–43) and *P.Khalili* I 14, 11 (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century).

[56] *P.MuslimState* 8, 19 (Fayyūm; 730–43).

[57] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 192–94. Cf. Sokoloff, *DJPA*, 220 and Sokoloff, *SL*, 144.

[58] N. Amitai-Preiss, "Umayyad Vocabulary on Administrative Objects from Palestine," in *3rd Simone Assemani Symposium on Islamic Coins*, ed. B. Callegher and A. D'Ottone (Trieste: EUT, 2012), 280–87, at 281–82.

[59] I have not included in this section the papyrological *hapax legomenon satl* (supposedly a variant of the standard *sayṭl* < JPA *siṭlā* < Gr. *sitla*/Lat. *situla*) which has been proven to be a ghost term: see M. Tillier and N. Vanthieghem, "Recording Debts in Sufyānid Fusṭāṭ: A Reexamination of the Procedures and Calendar in Use in the First/Seventh Century," in *Geneses: A Comparative Study of the Historiographies of the Rise of Christianity, Rabbinic Judaism, and Islam*, ed. V. Tolan (London: Routledge, 2019), 148–88, at 168 and 171–72.

[60] C. H. Becker, *Papyri Schott-Reinhardt I* (Heidelberg: Carl Winters, 1906), 31; Grohmann, "Verwaltungstermini," 276; C. Kreuzsaler, *Griechische Papyrusurkunden kleineren Formats: Neuedition* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), xxxii.

[61] *P.BeckerPAF* 10 (= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 9), 6 (Ishqūh; 709); *P.Heid.Arab.* I 3, 42 (Ishqūh; 710).

[62] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 129; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 888 and Sokoloff, *SL*, 1157. For the value of the measure see A. Grohmann, *Einführung und Chrestomathie zur arabischen Papyruskunde*, vol. 1: *Einführung* (Prague: Státní Pedagogické Nakladalství, 1954), 178–80; and W. Hinz, *Islamische Masse und Gewichte umgerechnet ins metrische System* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 65.

[63] Twenty-five attestations in eleven documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.SijpesteijnTravel* 13 (Fayyūm; 735).

irdabb (a dry measure for grains)[64] < Gr. *artabē*[65] though an originally Persian measure.[66] The use of the measure remained virtually confined to Egypt.[67]

kayl (measure) < Aram. *kaylā*,[68] attested in various papyri and weights from Egypt from the eighth century onward.[69] Of much more frequent occurrence on weights and stamps are its derivatives *mikyāl* and *mikyala*.

kharrūba (lit., "kernel of the carob") < Ar. *kharrūb*, tree fruit < Aram. *krūḇā*[70] denotes a small weight unit[71] often used on early Islamic glass weights.[72]

mithqāl (a unit of weight corresponding to a gold *dīnār* = 4.25 g)[73] < Aram. *maṯqālā*,[74] and is attested only once in Arabic papyri of the seventh–eighth centuries.[75] Far more frequent are the occurrences on coeval glass weights.[76] The term also occurs in the Qurʾān.[77]

qanqal (a measure of unclear value)[78] < Gr. *kagkellon* though an originally Persian measure.[79] The term is only attested in a single Arabic papyrus.[80]

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[64] For the value of the *irdabb* see Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 39–40.

[65] Grohmann, *Einführung*, 156 and "Makāyil," in *EI²*, s.v. (p. 117b).

[66] R. Schmidt, "'Méconnaissance' altiranischen Sprachgutes im Griechischen," *Glotta* 49 (1971), 95–110, at 100–02. Alternatively, an Egyptian origin of the term has also been hypothesized: see Vollers, "Beiträge," 653; and Ciancaglini, *Loanwords*, 116 and references there.

[67] Some fifty attestations in twenty documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.DelattreEntagion* 9 (Anṣinā; 694).

[68] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 204; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 252.

[69] On vessel stamps *kayl* only occurs as a part of a quotation from Q. 25:181: see, e.g., *EAG* I 53, 4; *EIGS* 192 (both of unknown provenance/Egypt; both datable to 754–75), 4 and *UAT* 293–94 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 750/51 or 753–55), 4.

[70] I. Löw, *Aramäische Pflanzennamen* (Leipzig: Wilhelm Engelmann, 1881), 176 n.132; Fraenkel, *Lehnwörter*, 141.

[71] For the value of this unit see G. C. Miles and F. R. Matson, *Early Arabic Glass Weights and Stamps: With a Study of the Manufacture of Eighth-Century Egyptian Glass Weights and Stamps* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1948), 9; Grohmann, *Einführung*, 147; and Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 14.

[72] E.g. in *BM* 4, 5 (737; unknown provenance/Egypt); *CAM* 25 and *CAM* II (*BM*) 7, 6 (both datable to 720–34; unknown provenance/Egypt).

[73] Grohmann, *Einführung*, 140–43; Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 1–2.

[74] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 202; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 258.

[75] *CPR* XXI 3 (= *P.Cair.Arab.* 77), 4 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 794).

[76] E.g., in *EAG* I 12, 4 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 717–20); *GWVS* 2, 4 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 725–34); *UAT* 67, 4 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 720–34).

[77] Q. 4:40, 10:61, 21:47, 31:16, 34:3 and 22, and 99:7 and 8.

[78] On the subject see P. Mayerson, "The κάγκελλον Artab Measure Equals Five Modii Xysti?" *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 40 (2003), 179–85, at 179–80. For the limits of Mayerson's reconstruction of the measure's value see Kreuzsaler, *Papyrusurkunden*, xxxii n.39.

[79] Becker, *Schott-Reinhardt I*, 31; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 305; Kreuzsaler, *Papyrusurkunden*, xxxi. Cf. T. Nöldeke, *Geschichte der Perser und Araber zur Zeit der Sassaniden aus der Chronik des Tabaris* (Leiden: Brill, 1879), 221 n.2. The common etymology of kankellon from Latin cancellus (gate) (on which see, e.g., Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 208; Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 48 and Mayerson, "Artab Measure," 179) should be considered incorrect.

[80] *P.Heid.Arab.* I 3, 44 and 46 (Ishqūh; 710).

qinṭār (centner = 100 *raṭl*s)[81] < Aram. *qynṭrʾ* < Gr. *kentēnarion*/Lat. *centenarium*[82] is attested in several eighth-century Arabic papyri.[83] The measure is referred to both in pre-Islamic poetry[84] and in the Qurʾān,[85] suggesting an early borrowing.[86]

qisṭ[87] < Aram. *qīsṭā*[88] < Gr. *xestēs*/Lat. *sextarius*.[89] The term is documented in Arabic papyri[90] and weights[91] from Egypt as a measure for liquids from the end of the seventh century.

qulla (jar, a measure of capacity corresponding to ca. 120 *raṭl*s)[92] < Aram. *qulləṯā*[93] (< Gr. *kalathos*?). The world is only mentioned in three eighth-century papyri.[94]

tillīs (lit., "sack,"[95] a measure of capacity) < Syr. *tlīsā* < Gr. *thyllis*[96] occurs in a single papyrus of the examined corpus.[97]

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[81] Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 24–27.

[82] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 203; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 1014. Cf. S. Krauss, *Griechische und lateinische Lehnwörter im Talmud, Midrasch und Targum*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Calvary, 1898–99), 2:553; and Sokoloff, *DJPA*, 491 (s.v. Targum Neofiti). See also Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 53–54.

[83] Ten attestations in five documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.Christ.Musl.* 7 (Fayyūm; 743 or 744), 8.

[84] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 13.　　[85] Q. 3:14, 75 and 4:20.

[86] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 13; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 203; and Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 243–44.

[87] Not to be confused with the homologous Arabic word for justice, on whose etymology see Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 206; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 237–38; and Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 296.

[88] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 205; Grohmann, *Einführung*, 167. Cf. Krauss, *Lehnwörter*, 2:535; Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 77–78. A direct derivation from Greek or through the mediation of Coptic was hypothesized by T. Vorderstrasse, "Terms for Vessels in Arabic and Coptic Documentary Texts and their Archaeological and Ethnographic Correlates," in *Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World*, ed. A. T. Schubert and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2015), 195–234, at 209.

[89] The term *qisṭās* (balance), occurring in Q. 17:35 and 26:182, is possibly a parallel form preserving the original ending of the source term. See Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 238–39. I would like to thank Andreas Kaplony for bringing the term to my attention.

[90] *P.DelattreEntagion* 9 and 10 (twice) (Anṣinā; 694); *P.VanthieghemMiel* 1, 4 (Fusṭāṭ; 761); *P.VanthieghemMiel* 2, 4 (Fusṭāṭ; 765); *P.VanthieghemMiel* 3, 5, and 9 (Fusṭāṭ; 772); *P.World*, p. 141a, 4 (Madīnat al-Fayyūm; 776).

[91] E.g., in *CAM* 3, 3 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 709–14); *CAM* 8–9, 4 and *CAM* 10–11, 3 (both of unknown provenance/Egypt; both datable to 714–17 or 720–21).

[92] Grohmann, *Einführung*, 171.

[93] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 170. Vorderstrasse, "Terms," 211 postulates a loan from the Coptic root *kelōl*.

[94] *P.MuslimState* 28v, 1 (Fayyūm; 730–43); *P.MuslimState* 29, 11 (Fayyūm; 730–43); and *P.Khalili* I 7, 5 (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century).

[95] Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 51–52.

[96] R. Payne Smith, *Thesaurus Syriacus*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879–1901), 4448; Sokoloff, *SL*, 1649. M. J. de Goeje (ed.), *Liber expugnationis regionum, auctore Imámo Ahmed ibn Jahja ibn Djabir al-Beladsori: quem e codice Leidensi et codice Musei Brittannici* (Leiden: Brill, 1866), 19 (glossary); and R. Dozy, *Supplément aux dictionnaires arabes*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1881), 2:150 derive *tillīs* from Lat. *trilicium*. Doubts about this etymology had already been raised by Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 197–98.

[97] *P.Prag.Arab.* 55, 1 (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century).

Military and Navy

jaysh (military) < Aram. *gaysā* (troop, band).[98] The term is most notably encountered in papyrus documents pertaining to dispositions concerning the troops deployed in the naval raids against Byzantium from the late seventh century.[99]

jund (army) < JBA *gwndʾ* < MP *gund*.[100] The meaning of *jund* as a military "district" and a sub-province of Umayyad Syria are unattested in pre-800 Arabic documents, in which the term occurs only in the general sense of "troops."[101]

naubaj (ship's carpenter) < Gr. *naupēgos* is attested in a single Arabic papyrus excavated in Egypt.[102]

nūtī (*nautī*?)[103] (sailor) < Gr. *nautēs*[104] occurs frequently in conscription orders.[105]

qādis (a type of ship) < Syr. *qadsā* < Gr. *kados* (vessel, basin)[106] is attested twice in the papyri.[107]

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[98] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 238. De Lagarde, however, holds the Aramaic term as a loanword from the Bactrian: see P. de Lagarde, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1866), 28.

[99] Eight attestations in seven documents. The earliest attestation is *P.DelattreEntagion*, 1 and 7 (Anṣinā; 694).

[100] The word is in turn of Parthian origin: see D. N. McKenzie, *A Concise Pahlavi Dictionary* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 38. See also Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 13; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 238–39; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 104–05; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 79–80; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 269; and J. Cheung, "On the Middle-Iranian Borrowings in Qurʾānic (and Pre-Islamic) Arabic," in *Arabic in Context: Celebrating 400 Years of Arabic at Leiden University*, ed. A. al-Jallad (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 317–36, at 323. The term is discussed in more detail in Schmidt's contribution to the present volume (Chapter 3).

[101] *Chrest.Khoury* I 90 (= *P.World*, p. 124 = *P.Heid.Arab.* I 1), 8 and 24 (Ishqūh; 710); *P.Cair.Arab.* 150 (= *P.BeckerNPAF* 7 = *P.BeckerPAF* 12), 6; *P.Heid.Arab.* I 3, 14 (Ishqūh; 710), *P.World*, p. 126 (= *P.Cair. Arab.* 148 = *P.BeckerNPAF* 2), 4 and 22 (Ishqūh; 708–10).

[102] *P.BeckerPAF* 8 (= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 7), 5 (Ishqūh; 709). Another possible occurrence is *P.Cair. Arab.* 152 (= *P.BeckerNPAF* 10), 4 (Ishqūh; 709); see the emendation to the text in W. Diem, "Philologisches zu den arabischen Aphrodito-Papyri," *Der Islam* 61 (1984), 251–75, at 258.

[103] A. Kaplony, "The Orthography and Pronunciation of Arabic Names and Terms in the Greek Petra, Nessana, Qurra and Senouthios Letters (Sixth to Eighth Centuries CE)," *Mediterranean Language Review* 22 (2015), 1–81, at 72.

[104] See Krauss, *Lehnwörter*, 2:355.

[105] Ten attestations in seven documents. The earliest attestation is *P.DelattreEntagion*, 1 and 7 (Anṣinā; 694).

[106] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 219; Sokoloff, *SL*, 1319.

[107] *P.BeckerPAF* 8 (= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 7), 1 (Ishqūh; 709); and *P.BeckerPAF* 9 (= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 8), 6 (Ishqūh; 709).

safina (ship) < Aram. *sp̄īntā* < MP *apsān*[108] features in several Arabic papyri.[109] The term occurs in the Qurʾān as well.[110]

Loanwords Attested in Documents from Egypt and Other Regions
(640–800)

Fiscal Administration

jizya (*jizyat al-raʾs*: money tax, poll tax; *jizyat al-arḍ*: land tax)[111] < JBA *gzītā* (capitation).[112] In Arabic *stricto sensu* papyrological evidence the term is attested only in fiscal documents from Egypt.[113] *Jizya*, however, appears in the Bactrian documents of the Bēk family archive[114] and possibly features on the marginal legend of the rare trilingual coins of the governor of Khurasan, Yazīd b. al-Muhallab, from 703/704.[115] The term *jizya* furthermore occurs once in Q. 9:29.[116]

kharāj (finances, tax in money, or land tax)[117] < JBA *kragā* (poll tax) or MP *harag* ultimately derives from Akkadian.[118] The word is used in two

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[108] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 216–17 (cf. 292); Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 171–72; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 190–91; and Asbaghi, *Lehnwörter*, 162.

[109] Seventeen attestations in twelve documents. The earliest dated attestation is in *P. GrohmannMuhadara* II, p. 12r, 7 (Ihnās; 643).

[110] Q. 18:71, 79 and 29:15.

[111] For the early Islamic use of *jizya* and the different taxes it describes see M. Legendre and K. Younes, "The Use of Terms Ǧizya and Ḫarāǧ in the First 200 Years of Hiǧra in Egypt," www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/research/research-projects/humanities/formation-of-islam-topics#, 1b; and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 173–74.

[112] Nöldeke, *Sassaniden*, 241 n.1; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 283; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 101–02; C. E. Bosworth, "Abū ʿAbdallāh al-Khwārazmī on the Technical Terms of the Secretary's Art: Contribution to the Administrative History of Mediaeval Islam," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 12 (1969), 113–64, at 131–32; Sokoloff, *DJPA*, 275; Sokoloff, *SL*, 225.

[113] Some seventy attestations in forty-eight documents. The earliest dated attestation are *P.Heid.Arab.* I a–l, 5 (Ishqūh; all dated 709/710).

[114] *BD* II W, 7 (Rōb; seventh–eighth century). The identification with a Muslim tax is suggested by the fact that the term (*gezito*) occurs together with *barito*, also a rendering of an Arabic technical term (*barīd*, "post").

[115] *NASC*, pp. 108–10v, margin.

[116] Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 101, however, suggests that the technical language of Q. 9:29 points toward an interpolation.

[117] For the early Islamic acceptance of *kharāj* see Legendre and Younes, "Ǧizya and Ḫarāǧ," 2b; and Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 177 and 190–93; Cf. Frantz-Murphy, *Agricultural Leases*, 141–42.

[118] Nöldeke, *Sassaniden*, 241 n.1; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 283; G. Khan, *Arabic Documents from Early Islamic Khurāsān* (London: Nour Foundation, 2007), 43–44; Asbaghi, *Lehnwörter*, 105; G. Khan, *Arabic Documents from Early Islamic Khurāsān* (Berlin: Freie Universität Berlin, 2014), 24; Cf. N. Abbott, *The Ḳurrah Papyri from Aphrodito in the Oriental Institute* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), 93; and Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 599. "Kharādj," in *EI*², s.v. (p. 1030b) derives *kharāj* from Greek *chōregia*, "military."

instances in the Qurʾān in the general sense of "tribute" or "reward,"[119] while a more technical connotation of the term is first attested in late eighth-century documents from Khurasan and Egypt (in this chronological order).[120]

kūra (provincial district) < Aram. *kōrā* or directly < Gr. *chōra* (region).[121] Attestations of the term cover a large spectrum of regions including papyrus documents from Egypt,[122] Syria,[123] and Khurasan[124], and lead seals from Syria.[125]

māzūt (village headman) < Gr. *meizoteros/meizōn*.[126] The office had been documented in the Byzantine period and continued with the Muslim takeover.[127] To my knowledge, the only attestation of the term outside Egypt[128] in the early Islamic empire is ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Hāshim's Greek inscription in Hammat Gader.[129]

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[119] The term does not appear among the loanwords listed by Jeffery. In the Qurʾān *kharāj* occurs in Q. 23:72 and 18:94 (*kharj*).

[120] The first dated occurrence in Khurasan is *P.Khurasan* 1, 5, and 6 (Rōb; 764), in Egypt *P.David-WeillLouvre* 16, 9 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 773). This fact has been interpreted as an indicator that the institution of the *kharāj* originated in the eastern administrative tradition and was introduced in the rest of the Islamic empire as a corollary of the pervasive Iranian cultural influence that accompanied the Abbasid revolution. See, e.g., Khan, *Khurāsān* (2014), 25; Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 177; cf. L. Reinfandt, "Empireness in Arabic Letter Formulae," in *Official Epistolography and the Language(s) of Power: Proceedings of the First International Conference of the Research Network "Imperium & Officium"*, ed. S. Procházka, L. Reinfandt, and S. Tost (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenshaften, 2015), 281–92, at 286–89.

[121] G. W. Freytag, *Lexicon Arabico-Latinum*, 4 vols. (Halle: C. A. Schwetschke & Sohn, 1830–37), 4: 70; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 326–27. Cf. A. Schall, *Studien über griechische Fremdwörter im Syrischen* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1960), 184; and Sokoloff, *SL*, 612. Grohmann's postulated South Arabian derivation (A. Grohmann, *Studien zur historischen Geographie und Verwaltung des mittelalterlichen Ägypten* [Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenshaften, 1959], 34) seems unlikely.

[122] Some eighty attestations in fifty-two documents. The earliest datable attestation is *Chrest.Khoury* I 48 (= *P.TillierDebts* 1), 4 (Asyūṭ; 640/641?).

[123] *P.Mird* 19, 3 (Khirbat al-Mird; seventh century); *P.Mird* 95, 5 (Khirbat al-Mird; eighth century); *P.Ness.* 60 (Nessana; 674); *P.Ness.* 61r, 3 (Nessana; 675); *P.Ness.* 62, 3 (Nessana; 675).

[124] *P.Khurasan* 1, 3 (Rōb; 764).

[125] *APS* 12 ov, 2 (Bulunyās; eighth century); *APS* 16 (field), 2 (provenance unknown; 771/2) *ICWS* 10 ov, 2 (Ascalon; eighth century?); *ICWS* 11 ov, 2 (ʿAmwās; eighth century?); N. Amitai-Preiss, "A Poll Tax Seal of Tiberias," in *Hammath Tiberias II: Late Synagogues*, ed. Moshe Dotham (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2000), 104–05, at 104. ov, 2 (Tiberias; seventh–eighth century).

[126] Grohmann, "Verwaltungstermini," 280–81; Richter "Language Choice," 209.

[127] Grohmann, "Beamtenstab," 129–31; Frantz-Murphy, *Agricultural Leases*, 118; Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 144. Cf. Preisigke, *WGP*, 3:133.

[128] *P.BeckerPAF* 2, 6, and 12 (Ishqūh; 710); *P.BeckerPAF* 9 (= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 8), 3 (Ishqūh; 709); *P.Cair. Arab.* 149 (= *P.BeckerNPAF* 3), 28 (Ishqūh; 709–14); *P.Cair.Arab.* 158 (Ishqūh; 710); *P.David-WeillLouvre* 16, 9 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 773).

[129] For this reading see L. di Segni, "The Greek Inscriptions of Hammat Gader," in *The Roman Baths of Hammat Gader: Final Report*, ed. Y. Hirschfeld (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1997), 185–266, at 239–40.

qarya (village, the fiscal unit of a village with its surroundings)[130] < probably Aram. *qiryǝṯā* (but the term has a long history in different Semitic languages).[131] *Qarya* often occurs in the Qurʾān,[132] suggesting an early loan and occurs frequently in papyri from Egypt[133] and Syria.[134]

rizq (*ruzq*?[135] allowance, sustenance for the Muslim garrisons) < JBA, Syr. *rōziqā*[136] (daily ration, stipendium) < MP *rōzig* (daily bread).[137] Both the word and the denominative verbal root frequently appear in the Qurʾān with a religious connotation,[138] which suggests an early borrowing. The use of *rizq* in a more technical sense is first attested in Arabic and Greek[139] papyri from Syria[140] and Egypt.[141] Conversely, the archetypal Middle Persian appears to have retained its original meaning as early Islamic Pahlavi documents employ it in the sense of a "daily ration" rather than as a denomination for an institutionalized tax.[142]

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[130] Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 144.

[131] H. Zimmern, *Akkadische Fremdwörter als Beweis für Babylonischen Kultureinfluss* (Leipzig: Edelmann, 1915), 9; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 236; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 292.

[132] Fifty-seven attestations: see, e.g., Q. 2:58, 4:72, 6:123, 7:88, 9:92.

[133] Sixty attestations in thirty-two documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.Heid.Arab.* I 4, 10 (Ishqūh; 709/710).

[134] *P.HoylandDhimma* 2, 22 (Nessana; 681–90); *P.Mird* 19, 3 (Khirbat al-Mird; seventh century).

[135] Kaplony, "Orthography," 10.

[136] Ciancaglini, *Loanwords*, 255; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 1063; Sokoloff, *SL*, 1445.

[137] F. Rückert, "Bemerkungen zu Mohl's Ausgabe des Firdusi, Band I," *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgeländischen Gesellschaft* 10 (1856), 127–282, at 279; de Lagarde, *Abhandlungen*, 81 (210); T. Nöldeke, "Kalilag und Damnag: Alte syrische Uebersetzung des indischen Fürstenspiegels by Gustav Bickell and Theodor Benfey," review of *Kalilag und Damnag*, ed. G. Bickel and T. Benfey, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgeländischen Gesellschaft* 30 (1876), 752–72, at 768–69; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 142–43; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 140–41; Asbaghi, *Lehnwörter*, 135; Kaplony, "Orthography," 10; and Cheung, "Borrowings," 326.

[138] About 120 attestations: see, e.g., Q. 2:20, 7:32, and 20:131.

[139] For the occurrence and connotation of *rhouzikon* (= Ar., *rizq*) in early Islamic Greek papyri see P. Mayerson, "'Ρουζικον' and 'Ρογα' in the Post-Conquest Papyri," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 100 (1994), 126–28; and P. Mayerson, "An Additional Note on Ρουζικον (Ar. *Rizq*)," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 107 (1995), 279–81.

[140] *P.Ness.* 60, 5 (Nessana; 674); *P.Ness.* 61r, 6 (Nessana; 675); *P.Ness.* 62, 6 (675; Nessana); *P.Ness.* 69 (Nessana; 680/1); *P.Ness.* 93 (Nessana; late seventh century), 2, 3, 6, 13, 14, 17, 24, 36, and 38.

[141] Twenty-three attestations in eighteen documents (including Greek materials). The earliest (surely) dated attestation is *P.GascouQurra* (= *Chrest.Khoury* I 92 = *P.RagibQurra* 1), 9 (Fayyūm; 709).

[142] D. Weber, *Berliner Pahlavi-Dokumente: Zeugnisse spätsassanidischer Brief- und Rechtskultur aus frühislamischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008), xxix–xxxi. Cf. the Bactrian document *BD* I al, 6 (Rōb?; 459–84?) concerning a monthly allowance (*rōsigo*) for the "Heftalites and the Persians"; on the date of the document see F. C. de Blois and N. Sims-Williams, *Studies in the Chronology of the Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan with Contributions by Harry Falk and Dieter Weber* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2019), 66–67.

barīd ("post," "messenger," "post station," and a distance measure) < Gr. *beredos*/Lat. *veredus* (postal horse). The origin of the word has been the subject of some debate. Among other proposed etymologies the most accredited are those that would derive the term from Middle Persian *buride-ye dum* (dock tailed) and from Akkadian *puridu* (courier) and *beru*, respectively.[143] Whatever the case may be, the word seems quite an ancient loan and appears not to have been borrowed via Aramaic.[144] There is some literary evidence for knowledge of the *barīd* in the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula.[145] The term (*brdn*) is in fact attested in a late South Arabian monumental inscription dated 548.[146] The *barīd* is widely referenced in early Islamic sources, occurring in Egyptian papyri[147] as well as in the Mount Mūgh and Bēk family archives across Sogdian,[148] Arabic,[149] and Bactrian[150] documents. Furthermore, *barīd* is attested in two Abbasid milestones from northern Arabia.[151] In early Islamic Greek papyri the term occurs exclusively with the meaning of "letter carrier," and is rendered in a number of spellings including *bered*,[152] *berēd*, *berid*, *bereda*, and the abbreviated form *ber^d*.[153] Implicitly accepting the Latin/Greek derivation of the term, editions of Greek papyri invariantly interpret the word as an abbreviation of *bered(arios)*. To the best of the author's

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[143] For a survey of the debate and of the different possible etymologies see M. Ullmann, *Zur Geschichte des Wortes Barīd "Post"* (Munich: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1997), 5–14; and A. Silverstein, "Etymologies and Origins: A Note of Caution," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 81 (2001), 92–94. On documentary sources related to the *barīd* see J. Bruning, "Developments in Egypt's Early Islamic Postal System (with an Edition of *P.Khalili* II 5)," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 81 (2018), 25–40.

[144] See Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 283.   [145] Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 47–48.

[146] *CIH* 541, 48 (Maʾrib).

[147] Nineteen attestations in seven documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.Cair.Arab.* 153, 7 (= *P.BeckerNPAF* 6), 4 (Ishqūh; 710).

[148] Mugh Б 15, 10? (Zarafshān; before 722); see P. Lurje, "Khamir and Other Arabic Words in Sogdian Texts," in *Islamisation de l'Asie Central: Processus locaux d'islamisation du VIIe au XIe siècle*, ed. É. de la Vaissière (Paris: Association pour l'Avancement des Études Iraniennes, 2008), 29–57, at 44–45 (19).

[149] *P.Kratchkovski* 13 (Zarafshān; 717–19) and *P.Khurasan* 6 (Rōb; late eighth century), 7, 8, 12, and 13.

[150] *BD* I W, 7, 8, 6', and 7' (Rōb; 747); see de Blois and Sims-Williams, *Chronology*, 131.

[151] S. b. A. al-Rashid, "A New ʿAbbāsīd Milestone from al-Rabaḏa in Saudi Arabia," *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 3 (1992), 138–43, at 138, 3 (al-Rabada; late eighth century); and A. b. ʿUmar al-Zaylaʿi, "Les inscriptions arabo-islamiques sur pierre," in *Routes d'Arabie: archéologie et histoire du Royaume d'Arabie Saoudite*, ed. A. I. al-Gahbban et al. (Paris: Somogy, 2010), 486–87, at 487, 7 (785/86).

[152] On the original pronunciation of the Arabic term see Kaplony, "Orthography," 19.

[153] See, e.g., *P.Lond.* IV 1434, 17 (*ber^d*), 26, 44 (*bere^d*), 256 (*beri^d*) (Ishqūh; 716).

knowledge, the spellings *beredos* and *beredarios* are unaccounted for in Greek papyri before the Islamic conquest.[154] This, combined with the fact that there is not a single instance in which the word *beredarios* is written *in pleno*, suggests that the form *bered* (and its variations) may just be a transliteration of the Arabic term. It may be added that all the letter carriers labeled *bered*(*arios*?) in early Islamic Greek papyri invariably carry Arabic names, further hinting at the predominantly Arab dimension of the *barīd*.[155]

kātib (scribe or secretary employed in the Muslim administration). The original Arabic meaning of the root *k-t-b*, "to write," is "to bind together,"[156] while the additional semantic aspect of "writing" is derived from the Aramaic cultural milieu. Scribes of official documents are usually identified by the clause *wa-kataba* followed by the scribe's name rather than by title: "N.N. has written it."[157] As a title, *kātib* occurs in the analyzed corpora in papyri from both Egypt[158] and Syria[159], and in one of the earliest dated Arabic graffiti from the Ḥijāz.[160] The use of the term *kātib* in the technical meaning of (professional) scribe dates back to the pre-Islamic period. The fifth/sixth-century Old Arabic inscription of Umm al-Jimāl (Jordan), in particular, mentions one "ʿUlayh s. of ʿUbaydah, secretary (*kātib*) of the cohort Augusta Secunda Philadelphiana".[161] Both *kātib* and the verbal root *k-t-b* furthermore occur several times in the Qurʾān.[162]

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[154] I would like to thank Jelle Bruning for pointing out to me that the term *oueredarios* features in a papyrus from fourth-century Oxyrhynchus (*P.Oxy.* LIV 3758, 120).

[155] See G. Fantoni, *Greek Papyri of the Byzantine Period: Corpus Papyrorum Raineri XIV (Griechische Texte X)* (Vienna: Hollinek, 1989), 74.

[156] E. W. Lane, *An Arabic–English Lexicon Derived from the Best and Most Copious Eastern Sources*, 8 vols. (London: Williams & Norgate, 1863–93), 2590a.

[157] The same or similar clauses are common in graffiti and official inscriptions as-well: as indicative examples see *CIAP* III p.162 no. 2, 3 (graffito) (ʿEin Zureib; eighth century?) and *RCEA* I 8 (official inscription) (Fusṭāṭ; 688).

[158] Eighteen attestations in eleven documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.Cair.Arab.* 150 (= *P.BeckerNPAF* 7 = *P.BeckerPAF* 12), 18 (Ishqūh; 709).

[159] *P.Mird* 25, 10 (Khirbat al-Mird; eighth century).

[160] F. Imbert, "Califes, princes et poètes dans les graffiti du début de l'Islam," *Romano-Arabica* 15 (2015), 59–78, at 65–66, 2 (Taymāʾ; 656/7).

[161] The reading of the inscription, however, is not unanimous. The version cited here is based on Bellamy's revision of Littman's first 1929 edition. For the comparison between the two readings and the discussion of the inscription's date see J. A. Bellamy, "Two Pre-Islamic Arabic Inscriptions Revised: Jabal Ramm and Umm al-Jimal," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 108 (1988), 369–78, at 372–77.

[162] *Kātib* is attested in Q. 2:282 (three times), 2:283, 21:94, and 82:11. As a verb *k-t-b* occurs fifty-one times, e.g., in Q. 2:79.

The impression of an early loan is finally corroborated by an attestation of the verb in a Sabaean inscription.[163]

kitāb (a piece of writing [epigraphy included],[164] letter, official writ) is possibly not built from the root *k-t-b* but directly borrowed from Aramaic *ktābā*.[165] A most common term to refer to a wide spectrum of writings, *kitāb* is very frequently attested in papyrus and parchment documents from Egypt,[166] Syria,[167] and Central Asia.[168] In addition, the term occurs in the coeval epigraphical record in the Ḥijāz,[169] Syria,[170] and Iraq.[171] The word recurs very often in the Qurʾān as well.[172]

Infrastructure

masjid (mosque) < Aram. *masgdā* (place of worship).[173] The numerous occurrences of the term in the Qurʾān[174] suggest that its use in Arabic had in all probability crystalized before the Islamic period. The Greek transliteration of the word, *masgida*, also occurs in requisition orders from early Islamic Egypt.[175] In addition to papyri from Egypt, the term is encountered in numerous building inscriptions from Syria[176] and the Ḥijāz.[177]

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[163] I. Gajda and C. Robin, "L'inscription du Wādī ʿAbadān," *Raydān* 6 (1994), 113–37.

[164] E.g., *RCEA* I 6 (provenance unknown/Egypt; 652). For a discussion of the inscription's provenance see Schmidt's contribution in this volume (Chapter 3).

[165] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 249; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 248–49; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 311; R. E. Brünnow and A. Fischer, *Klassisch-arabische Chrestomathie aus Prosaschriftstellern* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008), 93.

[166] Some 170 attestations in over 130 documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.DiemGouverneur* 3 (Ushmūnayn; 684/85).

[167] Fourteen attestations in seven documents. The earliest datable attestation is *P.HoylandDhimma* 1, 13 (Nessana; 681–90).

[168] Sixteen attestations in sixteen documents. The earliest datable attestation is *P.Khurasan* 25, 2 (Rōb; 762).

[169] E.g., in *RCEA* I 38 (Medina; 752/53).

[170] E.g., in Y. D. Nevo, "Towards a Prehistory of Islam," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 17 (1994), 101–41, at 122, 3 (Negev desert; eighth century).

[171] *HA*, p. 213, 11 (Ḥafnat al-Abyaḍ; 683/4).   [172] Attested some 261 times, e.g., in Q. 2:2.

[173] T. Nöldeke, "Arabs (Ancient)," in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings, John Alexander Selbie, and Louis H. Gray, 13 vols. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1908–26), 1:666–67; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 163 and 263–64.

[174] Attested twenty-eight times, e.g., Q. 2:114, 144, 149.

[175] Thirty-five attestations in fifteen documents. The earliest attestation is *P.Lond.* IV 1441, 99 (Ishqūh; 706).

[176] E.g. in *RCEA* I 18, 1, and 2 (Damascus; 706).

[177] *RCEA* I 46 (Medina; 781/82). It should be stressed, however, that many of these inscriptions (including the cited example) are only known through literary reports.

qaṣr (castle, citadel) < CPA *qsrʾ* < Gr. *kastron*/Lat. *castrum*[178] often attested in pre-Islamic poetry[179] and in the Qurʾān.[180] The term is encountered in Arabic papyri from Egypt[181] and in the parchments of the Bēk family archive.[182] Additionally, *qaṣr* is attested in two eighth-century inscriptions from Syria and Ifrīqiya, respectively.[183]

Coinage

dīnār (the standard gold coin of ca. 4.25 g after ʿAbd al-Malik's reform in 696/697)[184] < Aram. *dīnārā* < Gr. *dēnarios*/Lat. *denarius*.[185] The term occurs in pre-Islamic poetry[186] as well as in the Qurʾān[187] and was used as a personal name by early Islamic times.[188] Furthermore, two fifth-century Sabaean documents[189] bear witness to the circulation of the term in the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula. In the papyrological record, the term is attested from the 640s in documents from both Syria[190] and Egypt[191], where – as in Byzantine times – gold currency remained the workhorse of the Muslim administration. Furthermore, the term is found on virtually every gold *dīnār* of the "standing caliph" (692/93–696) and reformed (after 696/97) type. Reformed gold coinage was minted in Syria, al-Andalus, and Ifrīqiya in Umayyad times and in Iraq and Egypt[192] under the Abbasids. Moreover, the minting of *dīnār*s continued in Spain under the independent Umayyad emirate.

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[178] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 14; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 234; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 240; Schall, "Lehn- und Fremdwörter," 147. Cf. M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Christian Palestinian Aramaic* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 378.

[179] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 14.   [180] Q. 7:74, 22:45, 25:10, and 77:32.

[181] *P.LiebrenzQuittung* 2, 16, and 17 (Luxor; eighth century) and *P.RagibSauf-conduits* 3, 4 (Luxor; *ante* 734).

[182] Nine attestations in nine documents. The earliest attestation is *P.Khurasan* 11, 4 (Rōb; 771).

[183] *WG*, p. 72, 1 (Qaṣr al-Muwaqqar; 720–24) and *IM*, pl. 3a and 3b, 5 (Munastīr; 797/8).

[184] Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 1–2. Cf. the metrological analysis of early Islamic *dīnār* weights from Egypt in G. C. Miles, "On the Varieties and Accuracy of 8th Century Arab Coin Weights," *Eretz-Israel* 7 (1963), 78–87, at 79–82.

[185] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 13; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 191–92; Krauss, *Lehnwörter*, 2:207–08; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 133–34.

[186] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 13; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 192.   [187] Q. 3:75.

[188] See e.g. *AI* 60 (Z72), 1 (Ṭāʾif; seventh century).

[189] X.BSB 62, 2 (Nashshān?; 480); X.BSB 145, 2, 3, and 5 (Nashshān?; fifth century).

[190] *P.Ness.* 56, 2 and 3 (Nessana; 686/87); *P.Ness.* 64, 4 (twice), 20, and 21 (Sykomazon; 676); *P.Ness.* 65, 2 and 17 (twice) (Nessana; 676).

[191] Attested some 220 times in ca. 90 documents. The first datable attestation is *Chrest.Khoury* I 48 (= *P. TillierDebts* 1), 6 (Asyūṭ; 640/41?).

[192] Starting with ʿAlī b. Sulaymān's governorate (in office 786–87).

dirham (the standard silver coin of 297 g = 7/10 of a *dīnār* after ʿAbd al-Malik's reform in 698/99)[193] < MP *drahm* < Gr. *drachmē*. Unlike in the Levant, the monetary (and administrative) system of the eastern provinces continued to rely heavily on silver coinage as it had done under the Sasanians. Understandably, references to the *dirham* are more frequent in the Khurasani documents.[194] Yet mentions of the term (although very sparse) are to be found in the coeval papyri from both Egypt[195] and Syria.[196] On coins, the word appears in all standard post-reform silver issues (from 698/99) which in early Islamic times were minted in virtually every province of the Islamic empire in over thirty mints. Like *dīnār*, *dirham* is attested both in the Qurʾān [197] and pre-Islamic poems,[198] which hints at an early borrowing.[199]

fals < Syr. *falsā* < Gr. *follis*/Lat. *follis*.[200] The term occurs only rarely in the papyri and never outside Egypt.[201] On coins, however, *fals* represents the standard denomination for reformed copper coinage and is found on coins (and coin-weights) spreading from Spain to Afghanistan.

khātam (seal) and the denominative root **kh-t-m**[202] < Aram. *ḥātmā* (seal) though the root is attested in different Semitic languages.[203] In the surveyed corpus, *khātam* occurs in a papyrus[204] and in various metal seals from Syria[205] and glass stamps from Egypt.[206] The

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[193] Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 2. On the metrology of the (rare) early Islamic *dirham* weights from Egypt see Miles, "Varieties," 82–83.

[194] Forty-three attestations in twenty-six documents. The earliest attestation is *P.Khurasan* 31, 2 (Rōb; 763).

[195] Fifteen attestation in eight documents. The earliest datable attestation is *P.Khalili* I 1 (Bahnasā; early eighth century).

[196] *P.Mird* 36, 3, 4, and 5 (Khirbat al-Mird; eighth century); *P.Mird* 83v, 1 (Khirbat al-Mird; eighth century).

[197] Q. 12:20.   [198] Spitaler, "Materialien," 216.

[199] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 13; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 191; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 129–30; Spitaler, "Materialien," 216; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 117–18.

[200] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 192. On the late antique Byzantine *follis* see K. Maresch, *Nomisma und Nomismatia: Beiträge zur Geldgeschichte Ägyptens im 6. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1994), 44.

[201] *P.David-WeillLouvre* 12–13 (eighth century; Madīnat al-Fāris); *P.TillierFustat* Annexe, 1 and 10 (eighth century; Fusṭāṭ).

[202] The regular Arabic form *khātim* is secondarily developed from the root.

[203] T. Nöldeke, *Mandäische Grammatik* (Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhausens, 1875), 112; Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 17; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 252; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 120–21; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 98–99.

[204] *P.Clackson* 45, 7 (unknown origin/Egypt; 753).

[205] *ICWS* 10 ov, 1 (Ascalon; eighth century?); *ICWS* 11 ov, 1 (ʿAmwās; eighth century?); Amitai-Preiss, "A Poll-Tax Seal," 104 ov, 1 (Tiberias; seventh/eighth century); *SA* 2, 1 (provenance unknown/Syria; eighth century?).

[206] See e.g. *EIGS* 318–19, 1 and *UAT* 576, 1 (both of unknown provenance/Egypt; both datable to 781–84 or 790–91). In addition, the verbal root is also attested in the parchments from Khurasan: see, e.g., *P.Khurasan* 25, 12 (Rōb; 762).

borrowing appears to be quite ancient as the term is attested in the Qurʾān[207] and in pre-Islamic poetry.[208]

Metrology

dānaq (1/6 of a *dirham* weight)[209] < JBA, Syr. *dānqā* < Gr. *danakē* < Elam. *da-na-kash*[210] is frequently encountered in Arabic documents from early Islamic Khurasan.[211] In addition, *dānaq* occurs in two eighth-century papyri from Egypt[212] and one from Syria.[213]

iqnīz ("small cup" [a measure of unknown value usually used for liquids and particularly for wine]) < Gr. *knidion*.[214] The measure is attested in two papyri from Egypt and Syria.[215]

qīrāṭ (carat, 1/24 of a *dīnār* weight)[216] < Aram. *qīrāṭā* < Gr. *keration*/Lat. *ceratium* (1/24 of the gold *solidus*).[217] Outside Egypt[218] the term occurs in a papyrus from Khirbat al-Mird[219] and on weights[220] from Syria.

raṭl (pound)[221] < Aram. *rṭlʾ* < Gr. *litron*.[222] Mentions of the *raṭl* are relatively few in the papyri from Egypt[223] and Syria.[224] Far

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[207] Q. 33:40.   [208] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 17; Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, 121.

[209] For the value of the *dānaq* see Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 11.

[210] W. Eilers, "Akkad. kaspum 'Silber, Geld' und Sinnverwandtes," *Die Welt des Orients* 2 (1957), 322–37, at 332–33; Grohmann, *Einführung*, 145–46; Asbaghi, *Lehnwörter*, 117.

[211] Twenty-seven attestations in sixteen documents. The earliest dated occurrence is *P.Khurasan* 3, 7, 9, and 10 (Rōb; 765).

[212] *P.Prag.Arab. Beilage* VII 3 and 5 (four times) (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century); *P.HanafiCairoCopenhagen* 1, 11 (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century).

[213] *P.Mird* 36, 2, and 3 (Khirbat al-Mird; eighth century).   [214] Grohmann, *Einführung*, 170.

[215] *P.KarabacekBemerkungenMerx* (= *P.MerxDocuments*, p. 55), 9 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 685–705); *P.Mird* 41, 1 (Khirbat al-Mird; eighth century).

[216] For a detailed reconstruction of a *qīrāṭ*'s value on the basis of Egyptian glass coin weights see Miles, "Varieties," 83–87. For the difference between the Islamic *qīrāṭ* and the Roman carat see esp. Miles, "Varieties," 86. Cf. Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 27.

[217] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 200; Grohmann, *Einführung*, 146–47.

[218] Ten attestations in seven documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.StoetzerSteuerquittungen* 2 (Ihnās; 707), 14.

[219] *P.Mird* 36, 1 (Khirbat al-Mird; eighth century).

[220] *ICWS* 6 ov, 4; *ICWS* 7 ov, 2; *SA* 3, 3 (provenance unknown/Syria; all undated/eighth century?).

[221] For the value of the *raṭl* see Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 27–33.

[222] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 202; Krauss *Lehnwörter*, 2:578–79; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 142–43. Cf. Sokoloff, *SL*, 1461.

[223] *P.BeckerPAF* 9 (= *P.Heid.Arab.* I 8), 3, 4, and 5 (Ishqūh; 709); *P.Berl.Arab.* II 50, 5, and 6 (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century); *P.DiemFrüheUrkunden* 11, 8 (Fayyūm; 698); *P.HanafiBusinessLetter* 2 (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century); *P.HanafiCairoCopenhagen* 1, 2 (unknown provenance/Egypt; eighth century).

[224] *P.Mird* 35, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 11, and 14 (Khirbat al-Mird; first half of the eighth century). Also attested in a glass weight: see Richard Ettinghausen, "An Umaiyad Pound Weight," *Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 2 (1939), 73–76, at 73, 6 (provenance unknown/Syria?; 743/44).

more plentiful are the attestations on standard weights from Egypt.[225]

ūqiya (ounce, 1/12 of a *raṭl*)[226] < Aram. *ʾwqyʾ* < Gr. *ougkia*/Lat. *uncia*.[227] The term is attested only once in the Arabic papyrological record[228] but occurs multiple times in coeval glass and metal weights from Egypt[229] and (possibly) Syria.[230]

Loanwords Only Attested Outside Egypt (640–800 CE)

Fiscal Administration

iqlīm (a preeminently Syrian subdivision of the *kūra*) < Syr. *qlīmā* < Gr. *klima*.[231] The term is only attested in Arabic papyri[232] and seals from Syria.[233]

Institutions and Officials

sīr (the title used to refer to a local ruler in a document from early Abbasid Khurasan)[234] is a rendering of the Bactrian title *sēr* found on various Bactrian documents and Hunnic coinage.[235]

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[225] E.g., *CAM* I 2, 4 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 709–14); *EAG* II, 9 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 740/41); *GWVS* 5, 4 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 725–34).

[226] Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 34–35; cf. Grohmann, *Einführung*, 147–49.

[227] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 201–02; Vollers, "Beiträge," 312; Krauss, *Lehnwörter*, 2:22; Hebbo, *Fremdwörter*, 40. Cf. Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 80–81.

[228] *P.MuslimState* 23, 37 (Fayyūm; 730–43).

[229] E.g., in *CAM* II (*BM*) 24, 3–4 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 749/50); *EAG* I 25 ov, 6 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 742–46) and *EIGS* 11, 3 (unknown provenance/Egypt; 714–17 or 720/21).

[230] G. C. Miles, "A Byzantine Weight Validated by al-Walīd," *Numismatic Notes and Monographs* 87 (1939), 1–11, at 4, margin (unknown provenance/possibly Syria; original weight; fifth–sixth century/validation: 705–15).

[231] Schall, "Lehn- und Fremdwörter," 148. Cf. Schall, *Studien*, 77; Sokoloff, *SL*, 1371.

[232] *P.Ness.* 60, 3 (Nessana; 674); *P.Ness.* 61r, 3 (Nessana; 675); *P.Ness.* 62, 4 (Nessana; 675) and *P.Ness.* 67, 2 (Nessana; 689).

[233] *APS* 12 ov, 1 (Bulunyās; eighth century?); *APS* 16 (field), 1 (provenance unknown; 771/72) *ICWS* 10 rv, 1 (Ascalon; eighth century?) *ICWS* 11 rv, 1 (ʿAmwās; eighth century?).

[234] *P.Khurasan* 25, 3 (Rōb; 762).

[235] R. Göbl, *Dokumente zur Geschichte der Iranischen Hunnen in Baktrien und Indien*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967), 165–66 (nos. 241–43); *BD* I W, 10, Y, 11 (Rōb; seventh century?) (cf. R, 18 and S, 3, 6, and 11); and Khan, *Khurāsān* (2007), 16–17.

Metrology

jarīb (a measure of capacity = 7 *qafīz*es) < MP *grīw*, possibly transmitted via Aram. *grībā*[236] is only attested once in a parchment document from Central Asia.[237]

mīl (mile, milestone) < Aram. *mīlā* < Gr. *milion*/Lat. *milium* never appears in the early Islamic papyrus and parchment documents and only occurs on the coeval milestones discovered in Syria,[238] Arabia,[239] and al-Kurj.[240] The term is attested in pre-Islamic poetry.[241]

mudy (a measure of capacity) < Aram. *mōḏī* < Gr. *modion*/Lat. *modius*.[242] The term is only attested in papyri from Syria,[243] in which it is used to measure large quantities of agricultural goods.[244]

qafīz (a measure of capacity)[245] < JBA, Syr. *qp̄īzā* (= Gr. *kapetis*)< MP *kawīz*[246] is only attested in a single parchment from Khurasan.[247]

Imperial Center and Periphery: Interplay of Regional vs. Transregional Loanwords

The use of technical loanwords in early Islamic documents reflects the development of the Muslim administrative machinery, in which impulses toward a transregional shared vocabulary collided with the persistence of pre-Islamic regionalisms. Semantically, the only lexical borrowings surveyed in the previous pages that offer ground for comparison across more than one region fall into three main domains: metrology, administrative institutions, and currency.

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[236] De Lagarde, *Abhandlungen*, 29; Asbaghi, *Lehnwörter*, 85. Cf. Nöldeke, *Sassaniden*, 242 n.2.

[237] *P.Khurasan* 24, 10 (Rōb; 771).

[238] Seventeen attestations in seven inscriptions. The earliest dated attestation is *CIAP* III, p. 221, no. 2 (Fīq; 704).

[239] Al-Rashid, "A New ʿAbbāsid Milestone," 138, 2 (al-Rabada; late eighth century); S. b. A. al-Rashid, *Darb Zubaydah: The Pilgrim Road from Kufa to Mecca* (Riyadh: Riyadh University Libraries, 1980), 229 no. 1, 1–2; al-Zaylaʿi, "Les inscriptions," 487, 7 (Darb Zubayda; both datable to 775–85).

[240] V. A. Kračkovskaja, "Pamjatniki arabskogo pis'ma v Srjednjej Azii i Zakavkaz'je do IX v," *Epigrafika Vostoka* 6 (1952), 46–100, at 89, 3 (Tbilisi (?); eighth century).

[241] Fraenkel, *De Vocabulis*, 13; Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 282–83; Vollers, "Beiträge," 317.

[242] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 206–07. Cf. Daris, *Lessico Latino*, 74.

[243] Seventeen attestations in ten documents. The earliest dated attestation is *P.Ness.* 60, 7 and 17 (Nessana; 674).

[244] For the values of a *mudy* in the early Islamic period see Grohmann, *Einführung*, 156.

[245] For the value see Hinz, *Masse und Gewichte*, 48–50. Cf. Grohmann, *Einführung*, 161.

[246] Fraenkel, *Fremdwörter*, 207; Asbaghi, *Lehnwörter*, 220; Sokoloff, *DJBA*, 1032.

[247] *P.Khurasan* 24, 6 (twice), 7, 8, 9, and 10 (Rōb; 771).

Metrology is beyond doubt the ambit that reveals the highest degree of regionalisms in the employment of borrowed technical terms. At an early stage the Muslim conquerors modeled their administrative terminology to mirror the preexisting metrological conventions of single provinces. Fiscal revenues in goods are accordingly calculated in *irdabb*s (Egypt), *mudy*s (Syria), and *qafiz*es (Khurasan), depending on preexisting practices. The employment of some of these loanwords at this stage is preeminently confined to a single region/province such as in the case of *irdabb* for Egypt. Others are found across more regions sharing similar cultural backgrounds.[248] The regional fragmentation and the lack of attestations in pre-Islamic evidence concur in conveying the impression that the majority of such terms passed into Arabic after the conquest, though categorical statements ought to be avoided. In general, metrological loanwords indicate the conquerors' pragmatic approach to a lack of appropriate technical terminology for the logistical needs of the administration of a major empire. Concomitantly, they bear witness to the unwillingness or impossibility of the central administration to substitute a centuries-old system of regional metrological nomenclatures with a unitary one.

In many respects, the use of loanwords pertaining to currency follows opposite trends compared to strictly metrological terms. Coinage-related loan vocabulary in documentary Arabic is from the outset consistent throughout the empire and, more importantly, can differ markedly from the coeval regional denominations in the indigenous languages. The use of the "Arabic" terms is furthermore completely irrespective of cultural and linguistic boundaries. The originally Latin, Aramaic-coloured Arabic *fals*, for instance, is used on coins minted in Latin-writing North Africa, the same in Greek- and Coptic-writing Egypt and Middle Persian- and Bactrian-writing Khurasan. Accounting for this homogeneity are multiple factors. Loaned definitions for currency notably differ from their metrological counterparts in that the former are documented in Arabic even in non-technical contexts[249] before the rise of Islam. The Arabs' familiarity with these terms doubtlessly smoothed their use in the early Islamic administrative machinery. Not to be undervalued, however, is the ideological significance of the introduction of an Islamic currency and of the dramatic

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[248] The *raṭl*, for instance, is employed in Syria and Egypt, both areas of Byzantine administrative tradition, but not in the former Sasanian domains.

[249] The case of *dīnār* is particularly emblematic since the term had come to be used as a personal name by the time of the Muslim conquest.

circumstances of its genesis.[250] The ambitious enterprise of ʿAbd al-
Malik and his administration was first and foremost a symbolic assertion
in the face of the challenges posed by internal[251] rebellions and by the
external threat of aggressive Byzantine policy[252] to the very survival of
the Umayyad caliphate. The reliance on native (if borrowed) termin-
ology for the new institutionalized coinage issued by dozens of mints is
but a facet of the claim of cultural hegemony and self-awareness that
animated the reform in the first place.[253]

The lines are more blurred when it comes to strictly administrative
terminology. In this respect, ambivalent trends are in evidence.
Institutions such as *barīd* and *kūra*, referred to in all main corpora of
administrative sources, are clear indicators of transregionally implemented
technical terminology. Arabic tax denomination is also consistent as the
transregional use of *rizq*, *jizya*, and *kharāj* signals institutional continuity
between distant regional contexts such as Egypt and Khurasan passing
through Syria.[254] The loan of a significant portion of this vocabulary harks
back to pre-Islamic times. Based on indirect evidence, however, the loan of

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[250] On the development and ideological significance of an Arab Muslim iconography in numismatics
see S. Heidemann, "The Evolving Representation of the Early Islamic Empire and its Religion on
Coin Imagery," in *The Qurʾān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qurʾānic
Milieu*, ed. A. Neuwirth, N. Sinai, and M. Marx (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009), 149–95; and
J. Bacharach, "Signs of Sovereignty: The 'Shahāda,' Quraʾanic Verses, and the Coinage of ʿAbd al-
Malik," *Muqarnas* 27 (2010), 1–30.

[251] The first inclusion of Islamic mottoes was actually a propagandistic maneuver by the Zubayrid and
Khārijite rebels during the Second Civil War (680–92), later appropriated and expanded on by the
victorious Marwanid faction. On Zubayrid coinage see C. Foss, "ʿAbdallah ibn al-Zubayr and his
Coinage," *Journal of the Oriental Numismatic Society* 216 (2013), 11–17. On Khārijite coinage see
C. Foss, "The Kharijites and Their Coinage," *Oriental Numismatic Society Newsletter* 171 (2002),
24–34; and A. Geiser, "What do We Learn about the Early Khārijites and Ibāḍiyya from their
Coins?" *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 130 (2010), 167–87, at 172–80.

[252] On the political tensions playing in the background of ʿAbd al-Malik's reform see, e.g., A. Kaplony,
Konstantinopel und Damaskus: Gesandtschaften und Verträge zwischen Kaisern und Kalifen, 639–750
(Berlin: Klaus Schwarz, 1996), 141–60; for the numismatic aspect in particular see L. Treadwell,
"Byzantium and Islam in the Late 7th Century AD: A 'Numismatic War of Images'?" in *Arab-
Byzantine Coins and History: Papers Presented at the Seventh Century Syrian Numismatic Round
Table Held at Corpus Christi College, Oxford on 10th and 11th September 2011*, ed. T. Goodwin
(London: Archetype, 2012), 145–55.

[253] For about a decade after the fall of the Levant to the Arabs, Muslim rule in Syria had relied on
imported Byzantine copper coinage; on this theme see S. Heidemann, "The Merger of Two
Currency Zones in Early Islam: The Byzantine and Sasanian Impact on the Circulation in
Former Byzantine Syria and Northern Mesopotamia," *Iran* 36 (1998), 95–112, at 97–98.
A metrological analysis has shown, furthermore, that Arab imitative coinage (ca. 638–60) closely
followed the weight standards of the coeval Byzantine official series. This was first discovered by
H. Pottier, I. Schulz, and W. Schulze, "Pseudo-Byzantine Coinage in Syria under Arab Rule (638–
c.670): Classification and Dating," *Revue numismatique belgique* 154 (2008), 87–155.

[254] Consistency in terminology does, of course, not automatically imply homogeneity of institutions.
There is in fact little evidence to prove that the *kūra* mentioned in the parchments from Khurasan is

isolated terms (e.g., *kūra*) can tentatively be dated to after the Muslim conquest and in some other instances (e.g., *rizq* in the seventh century and *kharāj* in the late eighth) the conquest seemingly marks a semantic development toward a more technical meaning. Conversely, more pronounced regional differences characterize the use of technical loanwords to designate territorial units (e.g., *iqlīm*) and offices at lower tiers of the provincial administrations. The Arabic denominations for lower provincial officials, such as *simmāk* and *māzūt*, for instance, seem to be "circumstantial" lexical borrowings bound to the geo-administrative context of former Byzantine Egypt. The use of *sīr* in the Arabic parchments of the Bēk family archive shows a similar instance from the Eastern cultural substratum. Such borrowings probably occurred only after the rise of the Islamic empire[255] as their use seemingly responded to ad hoc local administrative needs. This seems confirmed by the lack of an Aramaic intermediary donor term for most of these terms.

The peculiarities of the use of loanwords in documentary Arabic further offers glimpses into the quality of the cultural influences exerted by the imperial centers of Umayyad Damascus and Abbasid Baghdad on provincial scribal practices. Over 60 percent of the technical loanwords in Arabic documents from Egypt are either borrowed from or through an Aramaic dialect rather than from the substratal Greek and Coptic administrative jargon. The prominent role of Aramaic dialects as donor languages to Arabic is not per se indicative of influences stemming from the Umayyad authority centered in Syria. Contacts between Aramaic and Arabic speakers go back to the pre-Islamic period, and Aramaic–Arabic bilingualism was a widespread phenomenon.[256] More direct evidence of the reach of the imperial administration into the provinces is provided by the use of the term *kūra*. Some light on the loan history (or the implementation) of this word is shed by a terminological comparison between the bilingual

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compatible with the homonymous administrative units mentioned in Egypt or that the *gezito* of the early Islamic Bactrian documents is analogous to the *jizya* levied in coeval Syria.

[255] See Schall, "Lehn- und Fremdwörter," 148–49.

[256] J. Retsö, "Aramaic/Syriac Loanwords," in *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, ed. K. Versteegh, 4 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2006–09), 1:178–82, at 178; R. G. Hoyland, "Language and Identity: The Twin Histories of Arabic and Aramaic," *Scripta Classica Israelica* 23 (2004), 183–99, at 189–90; E. A. Knauf, "Arabo-Aramaic and ʿArabiyya: From Ancient Arabic to Early Standard Arabic, 200 CE–600 CE," in *The Qurʾān in Context: Historical and Literary Investigations into the Qurʾānic Milieu*, ed. A. Neuwirth, N. Sinai, and M. Marx (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2009), 197–254, at 245–47. Cf. J. Fück, *ʿArabīya: Untersuchungen zur arabischen Sprach- und Stilgeschichte* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1950), 46. See also the expanding corpus of so-called Nabateo-Arabic graffiti, *inter alia* L. Nehmé, "Aramaic or Arabic? The Nabateo Arabic Script and the Language of the Inscriptions Written in this Script," in *Arabic in Context: Celebrating 400 Years of Arabic at Leiden University*, ed. A. al-Jallad (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 75–98.

(Arabic–Greek) documents and dossiers from Syria and Egypt. In the documentation from Egypt, the administrative unit defined in Arabic as *kūra* corresponds in Geek to either *pagarchia* (pagarchy) or *dioikēsis* (the latter term being mainly attested in documents from Aphrodito/ Ishqūh).[257] In the seventh-century bilingual requisition orders from the Syrian town Nessana, on the contrary, the Greek and Arabic terminology mirror each other, using *chōra* and *kūra*, respectively.[258] The Arabic term (or at least its technical meaning) seems therefore to have been modeled on the administrative terminology current in Syria at the time of the conquest. This case bears witness to the implementation of a term grounded in the Syrian administrative tradition in the whole empire, without direct connections to the local administrative (or even linguistic) backgrounds.

The Arabic spelling of originally Greek metrological terms (e.g. *raṭl*, *qinṭār*, etc.) indicates that they were borrowed through Aramaic rather than directly from Greek. A possible explanation for this is that the Arabs introduced in Egypt terminology rooted in the Syrian administrative idiolect.[259] There are further hints at "Syrian" influences in the ambit of the administrative reorganization of the early Islamic empire that emerge from Greek documents. With the Islamic conquest *chōrion* comes to substitute the usage of *kōmē* and *epoikion* as the technical term for the administrative unit of the "village."[260] This technical meaning of the term is attested in pre-Islamic sources from Syria and appears in Egyptian papyri only after the Islamic conquest.[261] The use of the originally Aramaic word *gonachion* (blanket, < Aram. *gūnkhā*) in Greek fiscal documents from Egypt in the early Islamic period similarly suggests an influence from Syrian administrative terminology.[262] It has also been

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[257] For an indicative example cf., e.g., *P.Lond.* IV 1334, 2 (Greek) (Ishqūh; 709) and *P.Qurra* 3r, 7 (Arabic) (Ishqūh; 709/10), both addressed by the governor Qurra b. Sharīk (in office 709–15) to Basileios pagarch of Aphrodito, and *CPR* XIX 27, 2 (Greek) (Fayyūm; 730–43) and *P.MuslimState* 2, 6 (Arabic) (Fayyūm; 730–43), both produced in the chancery of the pagarch of the Fayyūm Nājid b. Muslim.

[258] For an indicative example cf., e.g., *P.Ness.* 60 (Nessana; 674), 3 (Arabic), and 10 (Greek), from which it was borrowed possibly via the Syriac *qlimā*; see, e.g., *P.Ness.* 61r, 3 (Arabic) and 1, 10 (Greek) (Nessana; 675).

[259] There is of course no conclusive argument to prove that such terms were not borrowed long before the Arab conquest.

[260] F. Morelli, *Documenti greci per la fiscalità e la amministrazione dell'Egitto arabo*, 2 vols. (Vienna: Hollinek, 2001), 22–23; Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 70 and references there.

[261] J. Gascou, "Arabic Taxation in the Mid-Seventh-Century Greek Papyri," in *Constructing the Seventh Century*, ed. C. Zuckerman, *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (Paris: Assocation des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 671–77, at 672.

[262] On this subject see F. Morelli, "*Gonachia e kaunakai* nei papiri con due documenti inediti (P. Vindob. G 1620 e P.Vindob. G 18884) e uno riedito (P.Brook. 25)," *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 32 (2002), 55–81, at 76–77.

hypothesized that the papyrological neologism *symboulos*, the title carried by provincial governors of early Islamic Egypt, might have been "imported" by the Muslims from coeval Syria.[263] This strongly suggests that an otherwise impalpable class of Umayyad imperial officials, trained in contact with the Syro-Aramaic cultural milieu, acted as agents of standardization of (Arabic) clerical practices across the empire.[264] Lexical evidence resonates with both archaeological findings and anecdotal accounts. In particular, scribal exercises on marble slabs indicate that clerks were trained to produce administrative correspondence and accounting in both Greek and Arabic in official *scriptoria* attached to several Umayyad establishments across Syria-Palestine.[265] From literary sources we can further surmise that Hellenized Syro-Aramean experts were part of the mobile entourage of Marwanid high officials. This is best exemplified by the career of the Edessine tax official and entrepreneur Athanasios br. Gumōyē, whom ʿAbd al-Malik assigned as chief secretary to his brother ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz when the latter became governor of Egypt.[266]

From the late eighth and early ninth centuries, Arabic documents register an increase in loanwords stemming from an Eastern cultural substratum. Like *kharāj*, measures of Persian origin first attested in the Arabic documents from Khurasan, such as the *dānaq* and the *qafīz*, surface in papyrological evidence from Egypt and Syria[267] together with technical

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[263] F. Morelli, "Consiglieri e comandanti: I titoli del governatore arabo d'Egitto symboulos e amîr," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 173 (2010), 158–66.

[264] Even the use of diacritical dots shows significant affinities across different regions and corpora. On this subject see A. Kaplony, "What are those Few Dots for? Thoughts on the Orthography of the Qurra Papyri (709–710), the Khurāsān Parchments (755–777) and the Inscription of the Jerusalem Dome of the Rock (692)," *Arabica* 55 (2008), 91–112, at 95–101.

[265] D. C. Baramki, "Arab Culture and Architecture of the Umayyad Period: A Comparative Study with Special Reference to the Results of the Excavations of Hisham's Palace," PhD thesis, University of London (1953), 105–17 and 151 (mostly republished as *CIAP* VI 58–78); M. Schwabe, "Khirbat Mafjar: Greek Inscribed Fragments," *Quarterly of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine* 12 (1946), 20–30 (Khirbat al-Mafjar); D. Schlumberger, *Qasr al-Heir el Gharbi* (Paris: Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1986), 28, ii–iii (Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī); O. Grabar, R. Holod, J. Knustad, and W. Trousdale, *City in the Desert: Qasr al-Hayr East*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 1:191–92 (Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī); R. G. Hoyland, "Khanāṣira and Andarīn (Northern Syria) in the Umayyad Period and a New Arabic Tax Document," in *Power, Patronage, and Memory in Early Islam: Perspectives on Umayyad Elites*, ed. A. George and A. Marsham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 133–46, at 137–41 (Andarīn); M. Ritter, *Der umayyadische Palast des 8. Jahrhunderts in Ḥirbat al-Minya am See von Tiberias: Bau und Baudekor* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2017), 49 (Khirbat al-Minya); Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 232 n.8 (Bālis).

[266] On Athanasios see M. Debié, "Christians in the Service of the Caliph: Through the Looking Glass of Communal Identities," in *Christians and Others in the Umayyad State*, ed. A. Borrut and F. Donner (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2016), 53–71.

[267] Both *dānaq* and *qafīz* occur in several ninth-century papyri, none of which, however, carries an absolute date: see, e.g., *P.Cair.Arab.* 420, 4 (unknown origin/Egypt; eighth/ninth centuries) for the

terms originating from an Iranian administrative tradition (e.g., *daftar* [register] < MP *daftar*, and *jahbadh* [cashier] < MP *gāhbad*). These terminological novelties can be linked to the rise of a new class of Iranian administrators favored by the Abbasid revolution.[268] The change in the cultural and ethnic composition of the provincial elite reverberated in a wider array of Arabic scribal practices in the western regions of the empire. In particular, palaeographic features of Arabic papyri from ninth-century Egypt onward display a tendency toward cursiveness, which bears a close resemblance to late Sasanian and early Islamic Pahlavi documentary scripts.[269] This strongly suggests that the employment of Iranian administrators familiar with Pahlavi scribal conventions was conducive to wider developments of Arabic scribal practices in the western provinces of the empire.[270] Significantly, cursive features appear in Arabic documents from late eighth-century Khurasan, generations ahead of papyri from Egypt.[271] Administrative texts from the Khurasan corpus further show phraseology, such as the use of the *addā* clause ("he has delivered") in tax receipts, which became standard in their counterparts from Egypt only decades later.[272] Other ninth-century modifications of the formulaic structure characteristic of seventh- and eighth-century Arabic letters such as the removal of the address from the main body of the letter and the disappearance of the

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former and *P. World*, p. 168 (= *P. GrohmannWirtsch.* 2) r, 8 (unknown origin/Egypt; ninth century) for the latter.

[268] See, most recently, P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Delegation of Judicial Power in Abbasid Egypt," in *Legal Documents as Sources for the History of Muslim Societies*, ed. M. van Berkel, L. Buskens, and P. M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2017), 61–84; P. M. Sijpesteijn, "Establishing Local Elite Authority in Egypt through Arbitration and Mediation," in *Transregional and Regional Elites: Connecting the Early Islamic Empire*, ed. H. Hagemann and S. Heidemann (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2020), 387–406, esp. at 399–404.

[269] For seventh- and eighth-century Pahlavi documentary hands see esp. D. Weber, "New Arguments for Dating the Documents from the 'Pahlavi Archive'," *Bulletin of the Asia Institute* 19 (2008), 215–22, at 215–16.

[270] For a survey of the Iranian influences on Abbasid Arabic documentary culture see G. Khan, "Remarks on the Historical Background and Development of the Early Arabic Documentary Formulae," in *Documentary Letters from the Middle East: The Evidence in Greek, Coptic, South Arabian, Pehlevi, and Arabic (1st–15th c CE)*, ed. E. M. Grob and A. Kaplony (Berne: Lang, 2008), 885–906, at 888–89 and 896–97; E. M. Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010), 42; Reinfandt, "Empireness," 286–88; and M. Rustow, *The Lost Archive: Traces of a Caliphate in a Cairo Synagogue* (Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2020), esp. 161–66.

[271] For Iranian scribal influences on ninth-century Arabic papyri see G. Khan, "The Development of Early Arabic Documentary Script," in *Writings and Writing from Another World and Another Era (Festschrift J. J. Witkam)*, ed. R. M. Kerr and T. Milo (Cambridge: Archetype, 2013), 229–47, at 234–45.

[272] Khan, "The Development," 231–32.

doxology and transition from the epistolary prescript can possibly be traced back to contemporary Abbasid court ceremonial.[273]

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to connect the terminological features of seventh- and eighth-century Arabic documents to early Islamic imperial policies. The pool of loanwords shining through these documents reflects the progressive reelaboration of the pre-Islamic Arabic tradition into an Arab Muslim imperial culture. In the formation of a new "imperial Arabic," lexical borrowings responded first and foremost to practical needs and mostly clustered in technical jargon. While different administrative traditions incorporated into the early Islamic empire left their mark on documentary Arabic, only those terminological items associated with the central imperial administration became integral parts of the bureaucratic language superseding regional boundaries.

The administrative language defined by Umayyad officials bore the distinctive marks of a Syria-centric, conjecturally Aramaic component. Conversely, the reliance of the early Abbasid imperial center on Iranian administrative personnel resulted in a Persianization of Arabic documents' structural and terminological features. On a general level, the responsiveness of seventh- and eighth-century official Arabic to the cultural background of its practitioners gives us a measure of the degree of centralization of scribal training and practices in the early Islamic empire.

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Abbreviations

Editions of Greek papyri are quoted according to the abbreviations of J. F. Oates et al., *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, 5th ed. (*Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists*, Suppl. 9). Oxford: Oxbow, 2001. The up-to-date electronic version is accessible at http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist_papyri.html. Editions of Arabic papyri are quoted according to the abbreviations of P. M. Sijpesteijn, J. F. Oates, and A. Kaplony, "Checklist of Arabic Papyri," *Bulletin of the American Society of*

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[273] Khan, "Documentary Formulae," 895.

Papyrologists 42 (2005), 127–66. The up-to-date electronic version is accessible at www.naher-osten.uni-muenchen.de/forschung/papyrologie/apb/index.html. In addition, the following abbreviations have been used for catalogues and other overviews:

AI   Adolf Grohmann. *Arabic Inscriptions: Expedition Philby-Ryckmans-Lippens en Arabie*, vol. 2.1. Louvain: Publications Universitaires, Inst. Orientaliste, 1962.

APS   Venetia Porter. *Arabic and Persian Seals and Amulets in the British Museum*. London: British Museum Press, 2011.

BD I   Nicholas Sims-Williams. *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan*, vol. 1: *Legal and Economic Documents*. London: Nour Foundation, 2000.

BM   Stanley Lane Poole. *Catalogue of Arabic Glass Weights in the British Museum*. London: Longmans & Co., 1891.

CAM I   George C. Miles. *Contributions to Arabic Metrology*, vol. 1: *Early Arabic Glass Weights and Measure Stamps Acquired by the American Numismatic Society 1951–1956*. New York: American Numismatic Society, 1958.

CAM II   George C. Miles. *Contributions to Arabic Metrology*, vol. 2: *Early Arabic Glass Weights and Measure Stamps in the Benaki Museum, Athens, and the Peter Ruthven Collection, Ann Arbor*. New York: American Numismatic Society, 1963.

CIAP I   Moshe Sharon. *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae*, vol. 1. Leiden/New York/Cologne: Brill, 1997.

CIAP III   Moshe Sharon. *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae*, vol. 3. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2004.

CIAP VI   Moshe Sharon. *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae*, vol. 6. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2016.

CIH   *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum: Pars Quarta, Inscriptiones Himyariticas et Sabaeas Continens*. 3 vols., Paris: E. Republicae Typographeo, 1889–1931.

EAG I   George C. Miles and Frederick R. Matson. *Early Arabic Glass Weights and Stamps: With a Study of the Manufacture of Eighth-Century Egyptian Glass Weights and Stamps*. New York: American Numismatic Society, 1948.

EAG II   George C. Miles. *Early Arabic Glass Weights and Stamps*: *A Supplement*. New York: American Numismatic Society, 1951.

GWVS   Katharina Eldada. "Glass Weights and Vessel Stamps." In *Fustat Finds: Beads, Coins, Medical Instruments, Textiles and other Artifacts from the Awad Collection*, ed. Jere L. Bacharach, 112–66. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2004.

HA   ʿIzz al-Dīn al-ṣamduq. "Ḥajar Ḥafnat al-Abyaḍ." *Sumer* 11 (1955): 213–17.

ICWS   Nitzan Amitai-Preiss. "Islamic Lead Coins, Weights, and Seals in the Israel Museum." *Israel Museum Studies in Archeology* 6 (2007): 13–20.

IM   Slimane M. Zbiss. *Inscriptions de Monastir: Corpus des Inscriptions Arabes de Tunisie, 2ème partie*. Tunis: La Presse, 1960.

NASC   John Walker. "Some New Arab-Sassanian Coins." *The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society* 12 (1952): 106–10.

RCEA I   Étienne Combe et al. (eds.). *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe: Tome premier*. Cairo: Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1931.

SA   Nitzan Amitai-Preiss and Yoav Farhi. "A Small Assemblage of Lead Sealings." *Israel Numismatic Journal* 17 (2009–10): 233–37.

UAT   Paul Balog. *Umayyad, ʿAbbāsid and Ṭūlūnid Glass Weights and Vessel Stamps*. New York: American Numismatic Society, 1976.

X.BSB   Peter Stein. *Die altsüdarabischen Minuskelinschriften auf Holzstäbchen aus der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München*. 2 vols., Tübingen: Wasmuth, 2010.

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Babylon/Qaṣr al-Shamʿ: Continuity and Change at the Heart of the New Metropolis of Fusṭāṭ

Peter Sheehan and Alison L. Gascoigne

Al-Fustāt is a metropolis in every sense of the word.

al-Muqaddasī[1]

Introduction

The Roman fortress of Babylon, Qaṣr al-Shamʿ or Qaṣr al-Rūm in medieval sources, and now known as Miṣr al-Qadīma or Old Cairo, is a logical place to begin in "setting the scene," chronologically and topographically, for the foundation of the early Islamic *miṣr* of Fusṭāṭ. However, the fortress represents much more than merely an exotic historical backdrop to later events, and it is the aim of this chapter to explore some aspects of the central role it played in the foundation and subsequent development of Fusṭāṭ following the Muslim conquest of Egypt in 641 CE. In particular, we will argue that archaeological evidence for the original size of the fortress and the layout of its buildings and streets shows how these explicitly dictated the form of the *centre-ville* of Fusṭāṭ. The northern half of the fortress with its large, high-status buildings was integrated into the elite areas at the core of the new city, arranged around an administrative and ceremonial space created by the Friday mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀs and the governor's residence. We will also demonstrate that much of the space for the central quarters of the new city was only made available by a major rerouting of the Red Sea Canal, and that archaeological evidence from the Church of Abū Sarga indicates the significant part played by the Christian population in the overall urban project. The scope and scale of the works undertaken to create and organize this new urban space required a substantial timescale after the conquest, and much of the *centre-ville* of Fusṭāṭ appears to have taken shape in the last

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[1] Al-Muqaddasī, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions: A Translation of Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm fī Maʿrifat al-Aqālīm*, trans. Basil A. Collins (Reading: Garnet Publishing, 1994), 166.

quarter of the seventh century and the first quarter of the eighth, at a time when control of Egypt was crucial to the powerbase of the Umayyad caliphate.

Fusṭāṭ subsequently experienced several major cycles of decline and revival that are both known from historical sources and present in the archaeological record. Archaeological evidence from Old Cairo and the plateau of Isṭabl ʿAntar some 2.5 km to the southeast suggests that the destruction and subsequent abandonment associated with the Abbasid invasion of Egypt in 750 appears to have particularly affected the southern part of the city.[2] Kubiak has suggested that later descriptions of the supposed "burning of Fusṭāṭ" in 1168 had been conflated with eyewitness accounts of these earlier events, including that of John the Deacon during the Abbasid conquest in 750:

> Meanwhile we saw flames ascending from al-Fusṭāṭ, and we were informed that Marwān had set fire to the store houses of provisions and cotton and straw and to the surplus of barley. . . . And the caliph caused Miṣr to be set on fire from the south to the north until it reached the Great Mosque of the Muslims.[3]

No clear trace has yet been noted of the elite buildings of this early Umayyad *centre-ville*, which, with the exception of the great congregational mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, seems never to have fully recovered from this initial destruction and repeated subsequent robbing-out of its ruins for building material. There is, however, a wealth of archaeological evidence from Old Cairo to show that the continued importance of the mosque and the churches of the early Christian quarter of Fusṭāṭ contributed to a major urban revival of the area under Fatimid rule in the first half of the eleventh century, when Egypt was the center of another Islamic empire. Further decline, destruction, and abandonment took place in the economic and social unrest of the last third of the eleventh century, but the area saw another major period of rebuilding in the first half of the thirteenth century associated with the construction of the Baḥrī Mamluk citadel on the island of Rawḍa facing Babylon. At each of these periods of revival a number of

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[2] Roland-Pierre Gayraud, "Fostat: évolution d'une capitale arabe du VIIe au XIIe siècle d'après les fouilles d'Istabl ʿAntar," in *Colloque international d'archéologie islamique*, ed. Roland-Pierre Gayraud (Cairo: IFAO, 1998), 435–60. A number of locations in Old Cairo were investigated between 2000 and 2006, as part of the archaeological monitoring of a large-scale groundwater-lowering project: see Peter D. Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt: The Archaeology of Old Cairo and the Origins of the City* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2015).
[3] Władysław B. Kubiak, "The Burning of Misr al-Fustat in 1168: A Reconsideration of Historical Evidence," *Africana Bulletin* 25 (1976), 51–64, at 63.

key factors – a new and strong administration, the influx of different groups of settlers or refugees into the city, new or revived industries of textiles and ceramics – shaped the growth and development of the urban space around the fortress and other enduring elements of the physical and cultural landscape. The entire area was also subject to other forms of urban change that might be termed "self-organizing," and that took place throughout cycles of decline and of revival. Our main focus will therefore be on continuity and survival, and in particular on the influence of aspects of the pre-Islamic topography, "the persistent 'shadow' of the ancient," in creating an inherited landscape that shaped the subsequent form of the city.[4] It is important, however, not to lose sight of the elements of change. After nearly a thousand years of direct involvement within the Greco-Roman world the new capital once more aligned Egypt away from the Mediterranean and toward the lands to the east, both intellectually and culturally as well as by means of physical connections by land and the Red Sea Canal. Cultural and political change were major factors in the growth of the new city, but the strong physical and topographical influence of this inherited landscape nuances the still widely held view of Fusṭāṭ as a "quintessentially Islamic" city,[5] one that ensures that the earliest phases of Fusṭāṭ continue to be of interest in the scholarly debate over the form of "the Islamic City."[6]

This is hardly surprising, for the quantity and diversity of detailed historical sources for the topography of Fusṭāṭ represent a rich trove of materials for research into the urban space and its streets, buildings, and toponyms. The range of relevant primary and secondary sources, both in terms of chronology and subject matter, includes Greek and Arabic papyri with topographic or urban references; travelers' accounts and early Islamic-era historical compendia; the Geniza documents from the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Old Cairo, a rich and often precisely dated source particularly from the period between 1002 and 1266; the detailed "historical topographies" of the fifteenth-century

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[4] Gian Pietro Brogiolo and Bryan Ward-Perkins (eds.), *The Idea and the Ideal of the Town between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), inside front cover.

[5] George T. Scanlon, "Review of J. Aldridge, Cairo: Biography of a City, 1969," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 3/2 (1972), 233–37, at 233: "The remote antecedent history of a *venue* contributes but little to the history of a major city founded long afterwards within its geographical area. . . . The 'tent-city' represented a totally new dispensation . . . which imposed new politics, new social orientations, new patronage. To consider cities such as Fustat-Cairo and Baghdad, to name but the two most important of the *villes crées* of the first two centuries of the Hijrah, as other than quintessentially Islamic is wrong-headed and ultimately confusing."

[6] See Amira K. Bennison, "Introduction," in *Cities in the Pre-Modern Islamic World: The Urban Impact of State, Society and Religion*, ed. Amira K. Bennison and Alison L. Gascoigne (London: Routledge, 2007), 1–12 for a summary of debates around the "Islamic City."

writers Ibn Duqmāq and al-Maqrīzī; and from the seventeenth century onward maps and then later historical photographs that documented the cultural landscape before much of it was transformed, destroyed, or obscured by the urban explosion of Greater Cairo that has taken place from the latter part of the twentieth century onward.

Previous attempts to mine these rich historical sources to recreate the changing topography of the city have been hindered by the lack of a clear archaeological basemap on which to overlay the information provided by the sources, and by uncertainty concerning the extent to which urban components endured or disappeared as the city was transformed during the various cycles of decline and revival.[7] A number of important archaeological and topographical observations made in the first years of the twentieth century by various savants were considered in Kubiak's valuable 1987 review of evidence for the foundation and early development of the city; this work also included a critical overview of the historical sources and archaeological evidence from the work of Kubiak himself and Scanlon in the 1960s and 1970s.[8] Since then the work of the Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale under Roland Gayraud at Isṭabl ʿAntar from the mid-1980s, and archaeological monitoring during the USAID-funded groundwater-lowering project in Old Cairo from 2000 to 2006, has provided information on two quite different zones of the metropolis.[9] We will focus on the latter, the area at the heart of the city, to consider archaeological and historical evidence from Babylon for the organization of space and the expression of power in relation to key aspects of the foundation of Fusṭāṭ. The archaeology of Old Cairo provides a series of key fixed points in the landscape that allow us to begin the process of orientating and overlaying the topographical information in the sources, finally creating the opportunity envisaged by Goitein to coordinate this information with the "rich topographic material dispersed in the Geniza documents and . . . medieval literary sources."[10] Armed with the basic tools of "wayfinding" – edges, pathways, nodes, and landmarks – we can now

[7] Paul Casanova, *Essai de reconstitution topographique de la ville d'Al Foustat ou Misr* (Cairo: IFAO, 1919); Ugo Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia di Qasr esh-Sham," *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie d'Égypte* 12 (1924), 205–32 and 13 (1924), 73–94; Sylvie Denoix, *Décrire le Caire: Fusṭāṭ-Miṣr d'après Ibn Duqmāq et Maqrīzī* (Cairo: IFAO, 1992).

[8] Władysław B. Kubiak, *al-Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1987).

[9] Gayraud, "Fostat"; Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*; additional evidence was provided by Japanese-led excavations close to the Mosque of ʿAmr, but the impact of this work has been limited by their Japanese-language publication: Kiyohiko Sakurai and Mutsuo Kawatoko, *Excavations of al-Fustat 1978–1985* (Tokyo: Waseda University Press, 1992).

[10] Shelomo D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: An Abridgement in One Volume*, rev. and ed. Jacob Lassner (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press, 1999), 47.

begin to create a "mental map" of downtown Fusṭāṭ and attempt to navigate our way around the city.[11] The early Islamic period represents only one phase of a complex site-formation process taking place in Old Cairo over more than two-and-a-half thousand years, and the foundation of Fusṭāṭ can be both illuminated and obscured by evidence from previous and subsequent phases. A great deal of new archaeological evidence now exists for pre-Islamic Old Cairo: its foundation in the mid-first millennium BCE; the construction of an impressive stone harbor by Trajan incorporating a new entrance to the Red Sea Canal around 112 CE; and the later construction by Diocletian around 300 CE of the fortress of Babylon to guard this important strategic location.[12] Two significant things worth noting are that there is as yet no archaeological evidence for a pre-Islamic (late Roman/Byzantine) town outside its walls, nor for the presence of churches inside them before the Muslim conquest.

Archaeological work in Old Cairo allowed several conclusions to be drawn regarding the original size and layout of the Roman fortress that have important implications for our image of the early Islamic city (Figure 14.1). Understanding the actual size of the fortress is significant in highlighting the existence of Roman buildings in its northern half that had entirely disappeared above ground by the time Old Cairo assumed its present limits during the Ottoman period. This new data emphasizes the key relationship of the fortress to the core of the early Islamic city, itself now represented only by the frequently remodeled Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, supporting the tradition recorded by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam in the ninth century that the first mosque in Fusṭāṭ was located in close proximity to one of the gates of the fortress in the location of the Arab siege encampment.[13] Of the five land gates indicated by our understanding of the plan of the fortress we know of three that are named in the Arabic medieval sources:[14] Bāb al-Shamʿ, Bāb al-Ḥadīd (which accounts of the conquest suggest was the gate at the bridgehead on the western side of the fortress leading across the Nile via Rawḍa island), and Bāb al-Rayḥān. It is therefore worth noting that within the fort, the building nearest to the Mosque of ʿAmr and to the proposed gate shown in Figure 14.1 is the Coptic Church of the Virgin, also known as Qaṣriyyat al-Rayḥān. The earliest record of this name dates from 1675, and the church was extensively rebuilt in the eighteenth century, but other sources and archaeological evidence noted during its recent

[11] Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960), 2–8.
[12] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*.   [13] Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia," 82.
[14] Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia," 81–90.

Figure 14.1 Plan showing the real size and layout of the Roman fortress of Babylon (1), and its relationship to the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (2), with the northern part of the fortress now largely below ground shown in grey. Other numbered featured are the Rawḍa Nilometer (3); the area of Fusṭāṭ excavated by Bahgat and Gabriel in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (4); and the Ayyubid-era wall (5). Remaining urban features outside the fortress walls are modern.

demolition and rebuilding suggest that it dated back to at least the ninth century.[15] The etymology of the Arabic epithet for the church, often translated as "the pot of basil," may well be worth revisiting.

We also know enough of the fortress plan to appreciate the extent to which key elements of its topography – its layout in two parallel enclosures on either side of the canal; the central colonnaded streets (with the *via praetoria* in the axial eastern enclosure?) of each of these leading to twin gates in the north wall; two more gates at either end of the main east-west street (the *via principalis*) bisecting the fortress and leading to a bridge

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[15] Charalambia Coquin, *Les édifices chrétiens du Vieux-Caire*, vol. 1: *Bibliographie et topographie historiques* (Cairo: IFAO, 1974), 139; Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 139.

across the Nile to Jīza and Memphis via the island of Rawḍa and its shipyards; riverside installations such as the harbor and warehouses – all influenced the foundation and later development of Fusṭāṭ. Parallels with other sites in Egypt, later medieval references, and archaeological work carried out by Monneret de Villard in 1921 suggest that the now vanished Roman buildings in the northern half of the fortress may have included large, high-status buildings such as the *principia*, the *praetorium*, an imperial palace with baths and perhaps even the *horrea* for the storage of grain that are mentioned in papyri.[16] These buildings were likely to have been readily incorporated into the new core of the city, but they also shared its fate of destruction, abandonment, and despoilment at the end of the Umayyad period and subsequently.

This indirect evidence from pre-Islamic periods is helpful in considering the layout and appearance of the early Islamic *centre-ville* of Fusṭāṭ, for which direct evidence is low for a number of reasons, not least the fact that it is generally at least 4 m below modern ground level in Old Cairo and therefore, since the 1970s, 2 m below the groundwater level. Our understanding is further complicated by the fact that the end of the military function of the fortress produced an axial shift in the nature of the archaeology of Old Cairo, which changes from large, stone Roman buildings to a host of separate and often unrelated vertical sequences and methods of construction. Finds of material culture – primarily pottery – provide some indications of change, as well as indirectly evidencing the political and economic circumstances that produced them. Material culture provides a different emphasis to that of written history, and it is worth noting that the pottery assemblage from Old Cairo actually remains in very broad terms homogeneous from the time of the construction of the fortress at the beginning of the fourth century until the ninth century.[17]

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[16] Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia," 210; Alexander von Kienlin, "Der Palast im spätrömischen Kastell von Nag el-Hagar," in *Bericht über die 44. Tagung für Ausgrabungswissenschaft und Bauforschung vom 24. bis 28. Mai 2006 in Breslau*, ed. Dorothée Sack et al. (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt Verlag, 2008), 118–28; Frank R. Trombley, "'Amr b. al-ʿAs's Refurbishment of Trajan's Canal," in *Connected Hinterlands: Proceedings of Red Sea Project IV Held at the University of Southampton, September 2008*, ed. Lucy Blue, John Cooper, Ross Thomas, and Julian Whitewright (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2009), 99–110, at 106; Kubiak, *al-Fustat*, 162 n. 97; Steven E. Sidebotham, "Preliminary Report on the 1990–1991 Seasons of Fieldwork at ʿAbu Shaʾar (Red Sea Coast)," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 31 (1994), 159–68; Michael Mackensen, "The Tetrarchic Fort at Nag el-Hagar in the Province of Thebaïs: Preliminary Report (2005–8)," *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 22 (2009), 286–312.

[17] See Joanita Vroom in this volume (Chapter 9) for an overview of ceramic developments in Egypt during the late antique to early Islamic periods.

The Foundation of Fusṭāṭ: Early Islamic Archaeology in Old Cairo

Archaeological evidence of early Islamic-era occupation was encountered in almost every location in Old Cairo where it was possible to make stratigraphic observations. In terms of material culture, the first indication of a post-conquest date appears to be the reduction and eventual disappearance of particular Mediterranean transport amphorae, perhaps around the end of the seventh century. Subsequent changes include alterations to the form and fabric of common Egyptian amphora types; alterations to the forms and finish of certain Aswān wares; and, slightly later still, the appearance of the earliest of the new "Islamic" or "medieval" wares – marl water jars and certain early glazed vessels. Like other aspects of life in Fusṭāṭ, the transition from the late Roman to the early Islamic ceramic corpus is therefore a gradual one involving changes to multiple wares.

The various locations in Old Cairo with evidence of early Islamic activity show that the earliest post-conquest phase was characterized both by new construction and by the extensive adaptation of elements of the Roman fortress.[18] It is likely that the first reuse of those parts of the fortress now incorporated into churches (principally al-Muʿallaqa, the "Hanging Church," built over the south gate of the fortress, and the Greek Orthodox Church of Mar Girgis, built over the northern round riverside tower) dates to this period too. In any case, the major changes to the organization of space in the city that we shall discuss shortly indicate that by the end of the seventh century the military function of the fortress had ceased, and this may perhaps be related to damage incurred during the actual conquest as much as being a consequence of the new urban layout. Another point worth noting again is the extensive evidence in the archaeological record for the "ruptures chronologiques" that have been such a feature of the development of the city, with a major phase of abandonment dated to the mid-eighth century and another of reconstruction in the late tenth century noted in a number of different locations that can be associated with the Abbasid conquest and the beginning of Fatimid rule, respectively.[19]

The recent work has also helped to clarify the course of the Nile at Cairo in the early Islamic period. The discovery in several locations of the stepped stone riverside wall of the Trajanic harbor makes it clear that the stepped embankment or *maʿārij* referred to in several medieval Arabic sources was in fact a surviving feature of the Roman waterfront that continued

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[18] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 79–96.   [19] Denoix, *Décrire le Caire*, 52.

northward some way beyond the fortress.[20] Consequently, we can infer that the course of the early Islamic Nile (now more or less the line of the modern Metro) appears to have remained largely unchanged, perhaps even as late as the eleventh century.

The position of the Nile is important in showing that a number of coordinated steps must have been associated with the creation of a new urban center immediately to the north of the former fortress, namely:

- the construction of a huge stone wall blocking the entrance to the canal from the Nile between the two round riverside towers;[21]
- the cutting of a relatively short section forming a new entrance to the canal further to the north in the area of the modern city around the Mosque of Sayyida Zaynab;
- the definitive filling in of the old course within and north of the fortress;
- the dismantling of the northern walls beyond the line of the main east–west street, the *via principalis*, in the fortress;[22]
- the division of the newly created space and the construction of new buildings.

There is archaeological evidence for almost all of these activities, and even a reference preserved by al-Maqrīzī that may refer to a building program on land between the Mosque of ʿAmr and the fortress created by the filling in of the canal during the governorship of ʿAbd al-Azīz b. Marwān (685–705), in an area that took its name – Sūq al-Maʿārij – from the stepped Roman river wall that defined its western edge.[23]

The location and nature of some or all of these activities in relation to the Roman fortress and the canal support the view that the name of the city is derived from the Greek *fossaton*, with this term used either simply in the sense of military encampment or, more intriguingly, given its extension to the whole city, in reference to the major earthworks of excavation and backfilling that took place at its inception to revive and reroute the canal supplying Arabia with Egypt's grain.[24] As with all previous episodes in the life of the canal, the scale of the undertaking and the labor required soon ensured its entry into folklore and historical accounts. It is worth noting,

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[20] Kubiak, *al-Fustat*, 166 n. 49; Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 42–49.

[21] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, fig. 31, pl. 23.   [22] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 71.

[23] Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia," 88.

[24] Tim C. Power and Peter D. Sheehan, "Babylon-Fustat," in *The Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, Wiley-Blackwell, www.encyclopediaancienthistory.com; Peter D. Sheehan, "Cairo," in *Egypt: Faith after the Pharaohs*, ed. Cäcilia Fluck, Gisela Helmecke, and Elisabeth O'Connell (London: British Museum Press, 2015), 142–49, at 145.

however, that the traditions associating it with ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ do not appear until the ninth century, and that in the early Islamic Aphrodito papyri it is still referred to as the Canal of Trajan.[25]

Urban Layout, the Mosque of ʿAmr, the Foundation of Churches, and the Place of the Copts in the New City

Other major public works accompanied the division of the land within the fortress and the disappearance of its military aspect. There is strong circumstantial and some archaeological evidence to suggest that the northern half of the fortress, probably the location of the most important Roman buildings mentioned above, was annexed to form part of both the administrative nucleus and the area of residence for the new elite. The dismantling of large parts of the northern circuit of the walls would have provided a considerable quantity of ready-made building material for the new city.[26] Geniza documents indicate that this central area, the Khiṭṭat Ahl al-Rāya (quarter of the "People of the Flag"), "comprised a part of the Fortress of the Greeks and extended northeastward to the newly founded mosque of ʿAmr."[27] This was the area associated with the siege encampment and the capture of Babylon, and was clearly distinct in function and the composition of its inhabitants from the tribal plots (*khiṭṭa*s) assigned at the conquest. Al-Maqrīzī's account of the city indicates the central place of the mosque in the *centre-ville* of Fusṭāṭ, noting that "this *khiṭṭa* surrounds the great mosque on all sides."[28]

We have already noted the information recorded by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam in the ninth century that the first mosque in Fusṭāṭ was located in close proximity to Bāb al-Rayḥān, one of the gates of the fortress, and we have suggested that this can be identified as the northwest gate, the one in closest proximity to the siege encampment.[29] Leaving aside legends of the primitive early Mosque of ʿAmr that appear to belong to the later historicization of the Muslim conquests, there are a number of textual and archaeological indications to show that this mosque, either as first constructed or as

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[25] Trombley, "Refurbishment," 99–100.   [26] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 87.

[27] Shelomo D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, vol. 4: *Daily Life* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 13.

[28] Jamel Akbar, "Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns," *Muqarnas* 6 (1989), 22–32, at 28.

[29] *Contra* Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia," and Kubiak, *al-Fustat*, 170 n. 72, neither of whom knew about this northwest gate; both instead identified Bāb al-Rayḥān as the Hanging Church gate.

expanded more than once during the Umayyad period, was a building of some sophistication in both construction and layout that drew on the wider regional traditions of late antique art and architecture.[30] It is interesting to note the perhaps apocryphal story related by Ibn Muyassar, writing in the thirteenth century, that a convert to Islam, the nephew of al-Muqawqas, the famous Melkite patriarch associated with the fall of Babylon at the time of the Muslim conquest, contributed to the design of the building.[31] The existence of the materials and skills available for such a project is indicated by contemporary papyrus references to building supplies and the transport of skilled craftsmen from Egypt to work on al-Aqṣā Mosque in Jerusalem.[32] Furthermore, the considerable quantities in which building materials were required led to the requisitioning of supplies including bricks, mortar, lime, and dung, as well as skilled labor, from other parts of the country, as attested in a collection of Greek papyri from the Hermopolite nome of the 640s.[33] Creswell believed that the addition of minarets to the Mosque of ʿAmr in 673 was based on those in the Great Mosque of Damascus, itself built within the preexisting Roman *temenos* enclosure, while the ornamental woodwork preserved in the southern wall (dated however by Creswell to an expansion of the mosque in 827) is reminiscent of similar works in other great constructions of the Umayyad period, al-Aqṣā Mosque and the Dome of the Rock. Likewise, the mosaics from the latter and from the Great Mosque of Damascus recall al-Muqaddasī's description of those still visible in the Mosque of ʿAmr during his visit in 985.[34]

Primary and secondary sources also support the view provided by its relationship in plan to the fortress, that the location and layout of the main congregational mosque of the city was fixed from the beginning in relation to two of the main axial streets leading north from the Roman fortress, the existing one leading through the northwest gate (possibly Bāb al-Rayḥān) and the other created by the filling-in of the canal that led to the Church of Abū Sarga (see below). This conclusion is supported by the remarkable statement of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa in his pithy description of the mosque, around

[30] Eustace K. Corbett, "The History of the Mosque of Amr at Old Cairo," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 22/4 (1890), 759–800, at 765–70.

[31] Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo: An Introduction* (Leiden/New York: Brill, 1989), 47.

[32] Keppel A. C. Creswell, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*, rev. and suppl. James W. Allan (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1989), 43, 73.

[33] Federico Morelli, *L'Archivio di Senouthios Anystes e Testi Connessi: Lettere e Documenti per la Construzione di una Capitale* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2010).

[34] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 304–14; Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture*, 47.

1340: "The mosque of Amr b. al-As is a noble mosque, highly venerated and widely celebrated. The Friday service is held in it, *and the road runs right through it from east to west.*"[35] This striking statement appears hitherto to have received little attention, and, given the variance in the orientation of the cardinal points in the medieval sources, it is the presence of the street within the mosque itself rather than the direction that is most significant. It is clear from the account of Ibn Duqmāq, for example, that for him the orientation of the long axis of the fortress is east–west, presumably based on the view that north (*baḥrī*) should be considered as the direction of the Nile. According to this orientation, therefore, a street described as running through the mosque from east to west would actually be following the direction of the streets that run northeastward from the Roman fortress toward the mosque.[36] It is also worth noting that the plan of the mosque enlarged in 827 CE, as reconstructed by Creswell, has the arcades on three sides of the central *saḥn* or courtyard running in this southwest to northeast direction, parallel to the *qibla* wall of the sanctuary.[37]

The mosque was central to the life of the city, providing a place of assembly on what was probably an existing terminal of one of the routes leading northward from the fortress. It also fulfilled an important social and economic function as the location for the urban treasury (the *bayt al-māl*, a domed chamber resting on ten columns, built in 99/717–18),[38] and a place for legal judgments, consultation with notaries and muftis, study, and learning.[39]

References in the Geniza documents to a number of semi-public buildings and other landmarks are particularly valuable in reconstructing the changing topography of the city, as many of these do not appear in the accounts of the later Muslim medieval topographers. The landmarks include some – apparently structures of intense commercial or industrial activity – that were clearly pre-Islamic survivals. These older toponyms include the *dār al-mānak* – dealing in flax and spices – mentioned in a document of 996 CE as located near the customs house or *ṣināʿa* and apparently a continuation of the pre-Fatimid Market of the Greeks; a large

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[35] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥla (The Travels of Ibn Battuta)*, ed. Tim Mackintosh-Smith (London: Picador, 2002), 16 (our emphasis).

[36] Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia," 82–90.

[37] Keppel A. C. Creswell, "Jami' ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAs (plan)," https://archnet.org/sites/1511/media_con tents/37878.

[38] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 127; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 80. Note that these works offer (slightly) different dates.

[39] Just as churches and synagogues did for their communities: Goitein, *Daily Life*, 31–32. See Tillier, this volume (Chapter 5), for an account of the early Egyptian judicial system.

open space called the Qalūs flax market in front of one of the northern gates of the fortress that may have been named after a Greek inscription (*kalos*, meaning "welcome") over the gate.[40] In relation to the location of these markets it is interesting to note al-Muqaddasī's comment in his description of the mosque that "the markets are all around it. ... This district is the most flourishing in Misr."[41]

As with the mosque, references by Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, al-Kindī, and Ibn Duqmāq to the lavish palaces of the Umayyad governors in the Khiṭṭat Ahl al-Rāya have been confirmed in recent years by primary sources in the form of Arabic, Coptic, and Greek papyri relating to the requisition of materials for these buildings:

> Qurra b. Sharīk, the governor, to Basilios, the pagarch of *kome* Aphroditō. We have issued an assessment for provisions on account of the roofing of the buildings of the palace that is being built at the order of the Commander of the Faithful along the inner harbour at Phossaton ... send the needed provisions to Babylon on account of the said palace.[42]

Although there is no specific mention of the *dār al-ʿimāra* known from the *amṣār* of early Islam, its presence, again perhaps in several iterations, seems to be confirmed by these primary sources, while its original location may be indicated by medieval references to the presence of al-Ṭarīq (the Road) between the original Mosque of ʿAmr and his house. The term appears to suggest a significant route, and this description may be interpreted as an existing Roman road, running north from the northwest gate of the fortress with the mosque and the *dār al-ʿimāra* arranged either side.[43] Archaeological evidence indicates that these roads issuing forth from the Roman fortress were colonnaded and composed of a thick layer of crushed limestone, this latter material probably giving the name to the *darb al-ḥajar*, the other main road (the *via praetoria*?) leading northward from the fortress via the northeast gate toward the site of the later Citadel of Cairo (and the location of other pre-Islamic elements of the landscape).[44] In any case, the absence of any mention of these palaces or a *dār al-ʿimāra* in the Geniza documents indicates that these were features of the Umayyad city that did not survive the events of 750 and subsequent despoliation. The existing riverside port facilities, and the presence of an established customs point and emporium at this strategic

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[40] Monneret de Villard, "Ricerche sulla Topografia," 82; Goitein, *Daily Life*, 27, 29.
[41] Al-Muqaddasī, *The Best Divisions*, 168.
[42] *P.Ross.Georg.* IV 7, dated September 20, 709, translated in Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Egypt," in *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*, ed. Scott F. Johnson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 195–224, at 204.
[43] Kubiak, *al-Fustat*, 72.   [44] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 51, 53, 62.

location at the head of the Nile Valley and crossing point for east–west land routes, were crucial to the choice of Fusṭāṭ as administrative seat, commercial and financial center, and imperial powerbase. Early papyri suggest that this importance was intensified by the new or continued presence of shipbuilding yards, probably on the island of Rawḍa in midstream.[45] The stepped quayside of the Roman riverfront revealed in several places during archaeological work in Old Cairo remained in use until the Fatimid era, divided into different areas for different commodities and ships from Upper and Lower Egypt.[46] Al-Kindī, writing in the tenth century, underlines the central position of the new metropolis in this trade: "all the cities of Egypt were reached by vessels which carried food, property and implements to Fustat."[47]

To the south of the *via principalis*, recent work in the Church of Abū Sarga has provided direct archaeological evidence for the construction of the principal Christian institution of the new city and thus for another element of the demographics involved in the organization of its space. Remains of this first phase of the church show it to have been a large colonnaded basilica with marble floors and evidence of painted plaster.[48] In Coptic sources, the first mention of the church relates to events in 690 during the life of the patriarch Isaac. From the governorship of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān (685–705) onward, church histories show that the involvement of the governor and a location in Fusṭāṭ/Miṣr were both required elements for the election of each new patriarch.[49] According to these sources, the Church of Abū Sarga was one of the three locations where patriarchs of the Coptic Church were elected until the late tenth century.[50]

The subsequent constructional sequence of the church suggests that both it and the city were further sanctified by the burial of its patriarchs. Like most of the churches of Old Cairo, Abū Sarga was entirely rebuilt in the Fatimid period, and there are indications from other churches that this rebuilding followed their destruction and a long period of abandonment associated with the Abbasid conquest of 750.[51] The provision within the rebuilt church of an array of vaulted subterranean tombs and a crypt or

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[45] Clive Foss, "Egypt under Muʿāwiya, Part I: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt," *Bulletin of SOAS* 72 (2009), 1–24, at 9.
[46] Kubiak, *al-Fustat*, 118; Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 86.
[47] In Aly M. Fahmy, *Muslim Sea Power in the Eastern Mediterranean from the Seventh to the Tenth Century A.D.* (Cairo: Tipograpfia Don Bosco, 1950), 41.
[48] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 88–92.
[49] Mark N. Swanson, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt (641–1517)* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010), 10.
[50] Coquin, *Bibliographie et topographie*, 98.
[51] Sheehan, *Babylon of Egypt*, 92–96; Coquin, *Bibliographie et topographie*, 18.

tomb chapel, and the ecclesiastical finds from these tombs (a bronze processional cross and silver signet ring), may reflect the patriarchal associations of the original church, a faint echo of which reached Alfred Butler in the 1880s, when he wrote that "beneath this landing and the chapel floor are said to lie the remains of some ancient patriarch, though there is no record of his name."[52] The location of the façade of Abū Sarga along the central line of the old canal, which now formed one of the main streets leading to the administrative center of the new city, indicates that it formed part of an urban layout that reflected a close and complex relationship between the Coptic Church and the new rulers. The Geniza documents mention intense commercial and industrial activity in the Ṣaffayn (the Two Rows or the Colonnade), apparently another colonnaded street that is described as leading directly to Abū Sarga.[53] This street is not mentioned in our sources after the Fatimid era, suggesting that it was one of those elements that went out of use during or following the changes to the urban space that occurred during the latter part of the eleventh century.

The subsequent history of the two "zones" of the former fortress north and south of the *via principalis* appears to support the idea that this street marked a formal division of territory between the Egyptian Christian population and new groups in the city. No premodern churches survive in the northern part of the Roman fortress, where the high-status buildings annexed for the use of the new elite seem to have been systematically robbed out and dismantled, first during the destruction in 750 and again following the final abandonment of large areas of the city in the 1070s.[54] In contrast, although the southern zone appears to have shared in the destruction of 750, the churches that were rebuilt there in the Fatimid period (and the Jewish quarter that was probably established at the same time) continued to be used and protected by the communities they served.

Self-Organizing Aspects of Fusṭāṭ: Industrial Activity

The elements we have focused on so far – the reuse of the high-status structures of the fortress; the formation of a new ceremonial and governmental center beyond its north wall; the digging and filling-in of stretches of the canal; the foundation of a new patriarchal church – must all have

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[52] Alfred J. Butler, *The Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1884), 186.
[53] Shelomo D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, vol. 1: *Economic Foundations* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), 194; Goitein, *Daily Life*, 28–29.
[54] Kubiak, "The Burning of Miṣr al-Fustat."

been to a significant extent organized by those exercising power in the city, whether the new Muslim ruling elite or the preexisting Christian one. Other aspects of the archaeology of Old Cairo can be interpreted as "self-organizing" – subject to some control by the authorities but not deliberately conceived and planned by them. The development of industrial installations along the waterfront, probably during the later Fatimid period, may be one such example.

Some of the earliest archaeological evidence for pottery production in Fusṭāṭ is found in the southern round tower of the Roman fortress.[55] One room of the tower contains a large updraught kiln associated with the manufacture of polychrome-glazed wares. The type in question appears in the archaeological record probably in the early tenth century, and continued to be manufactured until the mid-twelfth century or a little later. The kiln itself is built over a large dump of ceramic material, primarily of ninth- and tenth-century date, which was apparently laid down deliberately to form a firm foundation and itself contained evidence of industrial activity, including metalworking. Another similar kiln abuts the great wall that was built to block the entrance to the canal, and it is tempting to see in these two features the development of an industrial zone on new ground created by the gradual westward shift of the river. The relative proximity of these kilns to the high-status religious and domestic complexes in the core of the former fort is notable. Goitein suggests that by the early Fatimid period the urban landscape of the former fortress was characterized by residential "islands" surrounded by bazaars and stores. This was clearly a transitional process, related to the status of buildings as *kharāb*, a term frequently encountered both in the Geniza texts and the works of medieval topographers, that describes buildings falling into disuse and abandonment that clearly contributed to the dynamics of urban change. One letter neatly sums up the process: "People who had been living in their properties give them up. When you sell the house, they will convert it into a workshop (*maʿmal*)."[56]

Conclusion

Our new understanding of the size and layout of the Roman fortress radically alters our perception of the organization of space in Fusṭāṭ, not just in terms of the survival of earlier elements, but also in the degree of

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[55] Peter D. Sheehan, "Accessing the Archaeology of Old Cairo," *Bulletin of the American Research Center in Egypt* 200 (2012), 34–9.
[56] Goitein, *Daily Life*, 15.

planning and coordination behind the changes that were needed to incorporate these into the core of the new city. This seems far removed from images of a camp city growing haphazardly into a metropolis. The rerouting of the canal appears to have been an integral part of these works, and the evidence from Abū Sarga contextualizes the central place of the Coptic Church in this urban scheme and provides a date in the years around the beginning of the eighth century. Many of the developments in Fusṭāṭ outlined above took place in the aftermath of the Second Civil War, at a time when many aspects of governance were being centralized.[57] This consolidation of power may provide the context that helps us to understand more clearly the nature and chronology of these complex and interrelated events of urban design and construction and the timescale needed to achieve them.

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[57] Hugh N. Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East from the 6th to the 11th Century*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Routledge 2016), 85.

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Utilizing Non-Muslim Literary Sources for the Study of Egypt, 500–1000 CE

Maged S. A. Mikhail

The quantity of "non-Muslim" sources available for the study of Egypt during the period under consideration is increasingly coming into sharper focus, in large part due to the publication of several important surveys and literature guides over the past two decades. Most prominent among these are Robert Hoyland's *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It*, James Howard-Johnston's *Witnesses to a World Crisis*, the initial volumes of *Christian–Muslim Relations*, and a host of articles by Harald Suermann, Tito Orlandi, Jos van Lent, and Adel Sidarus.[1] Moreover, the plenary papers and bibliographies circulated at the quadrennial Coptic congresses, which are published in the congresses' proceedings, are vital in exploring the breadth of available sources and keeping abreast of developments and publications across a wide range of disciplines focusing at least in part on (Christian) Egypt.[2] (The Jewish

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[1] Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997); James Howard-Johnston, *Witnesses to a World Crisis: Historians and Histories of the Middle East in the Seventh Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Adel Y. Sidarus, "La littérature copte à la première époque arabe (VIIe–XIe siècles)," in *Études coptes 15: dix-septième journée d'étude (Lisbonne, 18–20 juin 2015)*, ed. A. Boud'hors and C. Louis, *Cahiers de la bibliothèque copte* 22 (Paris: Éditions de Boccard, 2016), 193–221; Adel Y. Sidarus, "From Coptic to Arabic in the Christian Literature of Egypt (7th–11th centuries)," *Coptica* 12 (2013), 35–56; Harald Suermann, "Notes concernant l'Apocalypse copte de Daniel et la chute des Omayyades," *Parole de l'Orient* 11 (1983), 329–48; Harald Suermann, "Koptische Texte zur arabischen Eroberung Ägyptens und der Umayyadenherrschaft," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 4 (2002), 167–86; Harald Suermann, "Orientalische Christen und der Islam: Christliche Texte aus der Zeit von 632–750," *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 67 (1983), 120–36; Jos van Lent, *Koptische apocalypsen uit de tijd na de Arabische verovering van Egypte* (Leiden: Oosters Genootschap in Nederland, 2001); Jos van Lent, "The Nineteen Muslim Kings in Coptic Apocalypses," *Parole de l'Orient* 25 (2000), 643–93. In addition, see the entries of these authors in the first two volumes of David Thomas et al. (eds.), *Christian–Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vols. 1–5 (Leiden: Brill, 2009–13). See also Maged S. A. Mikhail, "An Orientation to the Sources and Study of Early Islamic Egypt (641–868 CE)," *History Compass* 8/8 (2010), 929–50; and Tito Orlandi's massive, but searchable, Coptic Bibliography, www.cmcl.it, though it is only accessible via subscription.

[2] The congresses are sponsored by the International Association for Coptic Studies, www.cmcl.it/~iacs/; the recent proceedings have been published by Peeters. The last four congresses in particular

community in Egypt is scantly documented in the literary and documentary sources of the period studied here.[3]) Several interdependent dynamics, however, hamper the integration of non-Islamic texts into much of current scholarship. Most notable is the persistent lack of critical editions and reliable translations for the bulk of this corpus, and the perception of non-Islamic sources as the domain of a distinct bevy of specialists.[4] These difficulties are compounded by the current disciplinary boundaries, which remain far more rigid among scholars studying premodern Egypt than among those focused on the early modern or modern eras.[5]

Fundamentally, however, the most significant hurdle remains the question of whether or not a scholar who is not studying the Copts or, more broadly, Christianity in the East, should bother to read this literature. Herein lies one of the goals of this chapter, which is to argue for an affirmative answer to that question. I should hasten to note that this remains a mutual problem; most scholars of the "Arab" Middle East have but a marginal acquaintance with Christian sources, and many who focus on Coptic history do not venture beyond al-Maqrīzī's *Dhikr Qibṭ Miṣr* (*History of the Copts*) – both, I believe, are in error.[6] In no small part, the greater integration of Egypt into the study of the Mediterranean begins by contesting the prevailing disciplinary boundaries and the structural fragmentation in scholarship on that region.

The conviction for the necessity to read through the available sources irrespective of communal affiliation or genre developed along with my

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(2016, 2012, 2008, and 2004) have embraced a more inclusive definition of what may be included within the purview of Coptic Studies, which allows for greater coverage of the era under consideration here.

[3] See Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "Visible Identities: In Search of Egypt's Jews in Early Islamic Egypt," in *Israel in Egypt: The Land of Egypt as Concept and Reality for Jews in Antiquity and the Early Medieval Period*, ed. Alison Salvesen, Sarah Pearce, and Miriam Frenkel (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 424–40, which attempts to recover some evidence based on numismatic evidence.

[4] In general, whether one reads Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Miṣr* or the *History of the Patriarchs*, a vital first step is to become acquainted with the extant historiographic literature. While the textual and historiographic issues involved are quite different, it is, nonetheless, the case that reading the *History of the Patriarchs* (*HP*) at face value is as problematic as reading *Futūḥ Miṣr* as a transcription of seventh-century events.

[5] Although not the focus here, papyrological and archaeological sources pertaining to this period need their own in-depth surveys. The starting points are the checklists and ever-evolving databases. The most integrated of these is Papyri.info, http://papyri.info/, which is cross-referenced with several other databases, including the *Arabic Papyrology Database*, www.naher-osten.lmu.de/apd, the *Brussels Coptic Database*, http://dev.ulb.ac.be/philo/bad/copte/, and *Trismegistos* www.trismegistos.org/. In addition, see also *Organa Papyrologica*, www.organapapyrologica.net/content/start.xml.

[6] For al-Maqrīzī's *Dhikr Qibṭ Miṣr* see vol. 4 of his *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa-l-āthār*, ed. Ayman Fuʾād Sayyid, 5 vols. (London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2002–04). An English translation of that section based on the older Būlāq edition is in S. C. Malan (trans.), *A Short History of the Copts and their Church* (London: D. Nutt, 1873).

research. In an article on the Arab army in Egypt, glosses from the *History of the Patriarchs* (hereafter *HP*) brought the sporadic evidence for the *ahl al-dīwān* in Islamic sources into greater symmetry and cohesion.[7] Conversely, in a chapter on the very Christian topic of the history of Lent, I argue that the dominant historiography over the past fifty years is profoundly flawed due to the fact that patristic scholars and liturgists have failed to read Christian Arabic sources, which directly inform the current historiography, within their historical context.[8] Read from that vantage point, the historicity of the second-century post-Epiphany Lent frequently described by Arabic Christian authors, which inspired and remains fundamental to the dominant historiography, is no longer tenable. I argue that medieval Christian authors were far less concerned with the historicity of that presumed practice than in employing it to rebuff a specific polemic leveled at them by their Jewish and Muslim interlocutors. Implicit in many texts, that polemic is hitherto detailed only in writings penned clear across the Mediterranean, in al-Andalus, by the tenth-century Islamic scholar Ibn Ḥazm. Ultimately, it is the interconnectedness of the sources themselves – and that of the Mediterranean basin more broadly – that undermines academic attempts to segregate them.

My intentions here are not bibliographic per se, though the initial notes to this chapter and those clustered around subheadings should be helpful on that front. Rather, the goal is to map out new approaches to Egyptian Christian sources, which may facilitate integrating them with other texts and studies focused on Egypt and the Mediterranean world at large. Interspersed are various suggestions as to where and how researchers might better probe these sources. Methodologically, what follows stresses the virtues of a contrapuntal reading of texts, and the utility of scrutinizing multiple recensions of a work whenever possible.

Terminology

To begin with, however, it would be prudent to consider the parameters of our designations. Certainly, the category of "non-Islamic" and its counter-part, "Islamic," have become normative because they are functional.

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[7] Maged S. A. Mikhail, "Notes on the *Ahl al-Dīwān*: The Arab-Egyptian Army of the Seventh through Ninth Centuries CE," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 128/2 (2008), 273–84.

[8] Maged S. A. Mikhail, *The Legacy of Demetrius of Alexandria (189–232): The Form and Function of Hagiography in Late Antique and Islamic Egypt* (London/New York: Routledge, 2017), ch. 9; Maged S. A. Mikhail, "The Evolution of Lent in Alexandria and the Alleged Reforms of Patriarch Demetrius," in *Copts in Context: Negotiating Identity, Tradition and Modernity*, ed. Nelly van Doorn-Harder (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2017), 169–80, 252–58.

Nonetheless, there is a natural subordination that occurs whenever a category is defined by what it is not; hence, framing a discussion of "non-Islamic" sources for the study of "Islamic" Egypt, may seem irrelevant to the uninitiated, or of secondary importance to the scholar, rendering the task of reading and utilizing such sources akin to "extra credit." Intrinsically, the primacy of any source is predicated upon a scholar's topic and research questions, not the text per se. Moreover, the current nomenclature fails to reflect the permeability of the sources, and the dominance of Christians in all but the political sphere in Egypt for much of the period under consideration. Conversely, it implicitly reinforces the mythology that would have early Muslims constituting an insular community, uninfluenced by the societies they settled among.

While I prefer positive designations – "Christian" or "Jewish" sources for the study of Egypt – my intentions here are not to argue for new labels or for the eradication of the existing ones. Rather, they seek the modest goal of emphasizing the need to be both cognizant and wary of the hierarchical, segregationist schemes imposed on the sources by scholarly designations, and the subtle manner these labels influence how researchers frame their questions and pursue their research agendas. Moreover, as is repeatedly demonstrated below, I wish to stress the permeability of our sources and categories, arguing that it is this intrinsic porousness that allows us to find valuable historical and cultural evidence for a wide range of topics even where one might least expect it.

Historical Texts

For the era under discussion, only a handful of sources were drafted with the explicit aim of recording history, as opposed to the myriad that may be utilized in writing it. Currently, academics find themselves at an interesting juncture. They have access to all the major chronicles for the period at hand; yet they must rely on unsatisfactory recensions of those texts, while being haunted by the fact that critical editions looming on the horizon may alter some, perhaps many, of their current conclusions. More encouraging, the anticipated editions will provide new opportunities for research and will position scholarship on firmer ground.

The one chronicle for which we need not wait for a reliable edition is the *Naẓm al-jawhar* (*String of Pearls*) of Saʿīd b. Baṭrīq, or Eutychius, the tenth-century pro-Chalcedonian (Melkite) patriarch of Alexandria (d. 940). Louis Cheikho had published the Antiochene recension of this history nearly a century ago, while Michael Breydy edited the older

Alexandrian version and published a separate commentary on that recension in the mid-1980s.[9] Notably, the later Antiochene recension reflects a polemical program, and presents the whole Melkite community in the East as a more cohesive confession than is documented in the older Alexandrian text.[10]

Another important source in this cohort is the *Chronicle* of John, patriarchal deputy and late seventh-century bishop of Nikiu. In all, Phil Booth's reading of this *Chronicle* has already shed much light on various obscure developments in the early and mid-seventh century.[11] Still, a great deal about this source and that historical juncture will be revisited by scholars with the anticipated publication of Booth's critical edition and translation of that source. Significantly, he is able to draw upon Ethiopic manuscripts not utilized in Zotenberg's 1883 publication, ultimately providing a far more reliable textual base for this exceptional chronicle. Nonetheless, regrettably, the new edition will not account for the vexing lacuna for the pivotal years 610–39, which is replicated in all the manuscripts hitherto identified.[12]

In all, I will limit my comments here regarding the *History of the Patriarchs* (*Siyar al-abāʾ al-baṭārika* or *Siyar al-bayʿa al-muqaddasa*), which is discussed at length by Johannes den Heijer, though I will share a few observations based on my work on the biography of Patriarch Demetrius in that composition. One of the earliest historical texts for this period (500–1000 CE) is the anti-Chalcedonian *Histories of the Church* [*of Alexandria*], which was largely based on Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*.[13] This late fifth-century Greek composition only

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[9] Eutychius of Alexandria, *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini annales (Tārīkh)*, ed. L. Cheikho, B. C. de Vaux, and H. Zayat (Beirut/Paris: Secretariat du Corpus SCO, 1905–09; repr. Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1954); Michael Breydy, *Das Annalenwerk des Eutychios von Alexandrien* (Leuven: Peeters, 1985); see also Michael Breydy, *Études sur Saʿid ibn Batriq et ses sources* (Leuven: Peeters, 1983).

[10] Sidney H. Griffith, "Apologetics and Historiography in the Annals of Eutychius of Alexandria: Christian Self-Definition in the World of Islam," in *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage*, ed. Rifaat Ebied and Herman Teule (Leuven/Paris: Peeters, 2004), 65–89; Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, Text IV.

[11] Phil Booth, "The Last Years of Cyrus, Patriarch of Alexandria (†642)," in *Mélanges Jean Gascou*, ed. J.-L. Fournet and A. Papaconstantinou, *Travaux et Mémoires* 19 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2016), 509–58; Phil Booth, "The Muslim Conquest of Egypt Reconsidered," in *Constructing the Seventh Century*, ed. C. Zuckerman, *Travaux et Mémoires* 17 (Paris: Association des Amis du Centre d'Histoire et Civilisation de Byzance, 2013), 639–70; Phil Booth, "Shades of Blues and Greens in the *Chronicle* of John of Nikiou," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 104 (2011), 555–601.

[12] John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu: Translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text*, trans. R. H. Charles (Oxford: Williams & Norgate, 1916), chs. 116–20.

[13] Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, Text III. On the Coptic translation of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* and its relationship to the *HP* see W. E. Crum, "Eusebius and Coptic Church Histories," *Proceedings*

survives in Coptic fragments, and, as den Heijer has demonstrated, the *Histories* was one of the sources woven into the fabric of some of the earliest biographies in the late eleventh century *HP*.[14] Still, hitherto the Arabic passages in the *HP* that may rely upon the *Histories*, and may facilitate a reconstruction of that text, have not been delineated. As I discuss at greater length in my study of Demetrius' hagiography, one such portion likely underpins the second half of Demetrius's lengthy biography in the *HP*, which appears to be much older than the first half, and clearly circulated as an independent composition prior to the eleventh century.[15]

As might be expected, that section reflects a revised and augmented recension of Eusebius' *History* and may be comfortably situated within a late fifth-century context, particularly due to its vehement anti-Origenist bent. Doubtless, there needs to be a dedicated research project specifically focused on outlining the possible contours of the *Histories* within the extant *HP*, but even at this early stage it is possible to note that Mawhūb b. Manṣūr did not have access to a fifth-century recension of the *Histories*. A brief passage in the midst of the extant text interjects Sabians and the Muʿtazila into the narrative;[16] this constitutes a dissonant note that resonates best within a mid- to late ninth-century context when both groups attracted attention throughout the caliphate. It is also possible to deduce that the underlying text circulated in multiple copies (perhaps recensions). Mawhūb had utilized an incomplete manuscript that introduced a veiled error into the primitive recension of the *HP*, which was corrected in the "vulgate" recensions.[17] Notably, the mistake may be only detected if one compares that passage with Eusebius' *History*, or, as is likely to have been the case with the later editors of the *HP*, had access to a complete manuscript of the work Mawhūb had relied upon. This highlights one of the current difficulties in

of the Society of Biblical Archaeology 24 (1902), 68–84; Johannes den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansur ibn Mufarriǧ et l'historiographie Copto-Arabe: étude sur la composition de l'Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie* (Leuven: Peeters, 1989); Johannes den Heijer, "À propos de la traduction copte de l'Histoire Ecclésiastique d'Eusèbe de Césarée: nouvelles observations sur les parties perdues," in *Actes du IVe Congrès d'Études Coptes, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1988*, ed. M. Rassart-Debergh and J. Ries, 2 vols. (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 2:173–81; Tito Orlandi, "The Coptic Ecclesiastical History: A Survey," in *The World of Early Egyptian Christianity: Language, Literature, and Social Context. Essays in Honor of David W. Johnson*, ed. J. E. Goehring and J. A. Timbie (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 3–24.

[14] See den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansur*, sec. 2.4, 2.5 and ch. 5.

[15] Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, ch. 7.

[16] On the Sabians and the Muʿtazila see Sarah Stroumsa, *Maimonides in his World: Portrait of a Mediterranean Thinker* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), ch. 4; and Michael Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), ch. 9.

[17] Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, see part two of Text III.

working with the *HP*, which will hopefully be alleviated by the project led by den Heijer, which aims to provide a new edition of that fundamental work.[18] Here, for this specific passage, it is the later "vulgate" recensions that have preserved the most complete version of the text.[19]

Turning to the first half of Demetrius' biography, which presents an augmented Arabic translation of the Sahidic Coptic *Encomium on Demetrius*, as opposed to earlier scholarship, I have argued that the *Encomium* is a late work that likely circulated in the ninth or early tenth century.[20] Significantly, this section reveals something of the literary interconnectedness of the Mediterranean basin. The most popular account in Demetrius' hagiography is the Miracle of Coals, in which Demetrius and his wife stood in the midst of the congregation carrying blazing coals in their garments, which miraculously did not burn, thus proving their virginity and endorsing the subsequent narrative that details their chaste, or spiritual, marriage. All of these details conform to a specific *topos* in which a celibate ascetic is scandalously thought to have married and fathered children; at some point it becomes necessary to reveal the true nature of his way of life; he endures a self-administered ordeal by fire or coals, and subsequently the saintly figure divulges the true nature of his relationship to his presumed wife and children. The details of Demetrius' account closely conform to this motif. Even the attempt to account for presumed offspring is referenced in the *Encomium*, though in a corrupt Coptic sentence that E. A. W. Budge discarded from his translation, and Mawhūb (presumably) had altogether omitted from the Arabic text of the *HP*.[21] Nonetheless, this identification positions Demetrius' ordeal and spiritual marriage as examples of the above-cited *topos*, and clusters it with the early seventh-century Greek *Life of John the Almsgiver*, the pro-Chalcedonian patriarch of Alexandria, which retains the same *topos*. Additionally, this allows for both accounts to be linked across the Mediterranean to the Latin writings of Gregory, the late sixth-century bishop of Tours, who provides the earliest attestations for this trope.[22]

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[18] See the *International Copto-Arabic Historiography Project* (ICAHP), https://uclouvain.be/en/node/12446, which is spearheaded by Prof. J. den Heijer.

[19] On the recensions see den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansur*. For the later recensions see Perrine Pilette, "L'Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie: une nouvelle évaluation de la configuration du texte en recensions," *Muséon* 126/3–4 (2013), 419–50.

[20] The encomium is in E. A. W. Budge (ed. and trans.), *Coptic Martyrdoms in the Dialect of Upper Egypt I* (London: British Museum, 1914), Copt. 137–56, Eng. trans. 390–408; a new translation of that text and a lengthy discussion of its dating are in Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, ch. 4 and Text II.

[21] Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, 34–35, 47 n.17.

[22] A. J. Festugière (ed. and trans.), *Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre* (Paris: Geuthner, 1974); Elizabeth Dawes and Norman H. Baynes, trans., *Three Byzantine Saints* (Crestwood, NY: Saint Vladimir's Seminary, 1977), 50.24; Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, 33–35, 46–7 nn. 9–10.

My study of the biography of Demetrius has led me to a deeper appreciation for the complexity of Mawhūb's work and his role. If anything, his now-standard description as the editor of the *HP* seems somewhat lacking, particularly where the first two quires of patriarchal biographies are concerned. His editorial hand is certainly evident throughout the whole composition, but I would argue that on a certain level Mawhūb viewed his primary task as something of an archivist of traditions, one who sought to collate and preserve the literary artifacts of the past without the bias or selection of an editor proper. Although imperfect, Mawhūb accomplished that task by intentionally including divergent – even mutually exclusive – traditions, in his recension of the *HP*. "Another recension (*nuskha*) states," or the like, peppers various sections of the primitive recension, particularly in the early biographies. The opening sentence in Demetrius' *sīra* provides a vivid example of this aspect of Mawhūb's project: "When Patriarch Julian was reposed – though another recension [maintains] – that the angel came to him on the night before his passing."[23] Clearly, these glosses enshrine diametrically opposing traditions. The first annotation is congruent with the Sahidic Coptic evidence, though it would be eliminated in the vulgate recensions of the *HP*, which only retain the second gloss; and hence, by default, that tradition has come to constitute the master narrative from roughly the mid-thirteenth century until today. The multi-talented Mawhūb was many things – a historian, editor, archivist, even a hagiographer. It is to that genre that we now turn.

Hagiography

In comparison with early martyrdoms and monastic *Lives*, post-sixth-century Egyptian hagiography remains poorly utilized, though well catalogued.[24] Until recently, the focus has been on identifying and categorizing these texts rather than mining them for historical, linguistic, or

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[23] Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, Text III.

[24] For Greek manuscripts, the Pinakes database, http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/, which is cross-listed with the numbers and entries from the *Bibliotheca hagiographica graeca*, is incredibly handy. For non-Greek manuscripts see Juan Nadal Cañellas, Stefano Virgulin, and Giovanni Guaita (eds.), *Enciclopedia dei santi: Le chiese orientali*, 2 vols. (Rome: Città nuova, 1998–2000); Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, 5 vols. (Rome: Città del Vaticano, 1944–53); P. Peeters (ed.), *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Orientalis*, Subsidia Hagiographica 10 (Brussels: Society of Bollandists, 1910; repr. 1954); Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Hagiography in Coptic," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography*, vol. 1: *Periods and Places*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), 323–43; Arietta Papaconstantinou, "The Cult of Saints: A Haven of Continuity in a Changing World?" in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. R. S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 350–67.

cultural data. The problem is compounded by the fact that Coptic texts have remained on the outskirts of hagiographic studies, seldom occupying more than a few footnotes or a couple of pages in the works of Peter Brown, Virginia Burrus, and other scholars concerned with the genre as a whole. Certainly, later (especially post-Arab conquest) Coptic *Lives* are not blameless in this dynamic. That literature can be difficult to penetrate, and challenges even an industrious scholar. In that light, the Coptic *Life of* [*Patriarch*] *Isaac*, which serves as the basis for his *sīra* (biography) in the Arabic *HP*, is a notable exception.[25] In a previous study I noted that the *Life* documents an important late seventh-century shift in the dynamics between the nascent Islamic government and the Coptic hierarchy.[26] (This newfound interest in confessional hierarchies is discernible throughout the caliphate at that juncture.) Moreover, the *Life of Isaac* is refreshingly ingrained within its historical context; prominent Christians and Muslims are identified by name, and the *Life* clearly reflects a society in flux.

Nonetheless, it would be misleading to present such a rich and multi-faceted text as typical of the Coptic hagiography one encounters for this era – regrettably, it is not. If anything, the texts at our disposal tend to be singularly focused on their saintly subject, are brimming with hagiographic *topoi* (which, nonetheless, do provide tangible links across communities and geographies), and are usually divorced from their historical environment. This last aspect is due to several factors. In some cases, heavy reliance on earlier texts is to blame. This may be observed in the eighth-century Coptic *Life of Samuel of Kalamon* (Qalamūn),[27] some portions of which are so dependent on the sixth-century *Life of Daniel of Scetis* that a literal reading of one passage in Samuel's biography would have us believe that Justinian was still the ruling emperor in the mid-seventh century (when the historical Samuel lived).[28] A similar dynamic and set of challenges may be discerned in the cycles of the eighth and ninth centuries, which largely

[25] E. Porcher (ed. and trans.), *Vie d'Isaac, Patriarche d'Alexandrie de 686 à 689*, Patrologia Orientalis 9.3 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1914; repr. Turnhout: Brepols, 1974); David N. Bell (trans.), *The Life of Isaac of Alexandria and The Martyrdom of Saint Macrobius* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1988).

[26] Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 29, 40–44.

[27] The Coptic text is in Anthony Alcock (ed. and trans.), *Life of Samuel of Kalamon* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1983); the Arabic recension is in Anthony Alcock (ed. and trans.), "The Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn," *Muséon* 109 (1996), 321–45 and 111 (1998), 377–404.

[28] See Alcock (ed. and trans.), *Life of Samuel of Kalamon*, par. 9 (p. 83); the Coptic recensions of the *Life of Daniel of Scetis* in Tim Vivian (ed.), *Witness to Holiness: Abba Daniel of Scetis* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2008), 115–16.

reproduced earlier texts, though we still need to better understand how these cycles were constructed, and their utility and circulation.[29] Reliance on earlier texts, the formulaic nature of later *Lives*, and the abundance of *topoi* all obstruct the attempt to read Coptic hagiography as a reflection of its time and place.

The extant *Life of John Khame* at once provides another vantage point onto the difficulties involved as well as the potential for this genre.[30] John died in the mid-ninth century, but his *Life* can now be securely dated to two distinct phases of composition in the tenth century.[31] This was a pivotal juncture in Egypt's history; it witnessed a dramatic increase in Arabization, the drafting of the earliest Coptic–Arabic writings, and the rise of Fatimid rule.[32] Regrettably, however, as with the bulk of Coptic hagiography written under Islamic rule, the *Life of John Khame* has nothing to say about the rulers of Egypt or their religion. This is particularly striking (and frustrating) given that the text was written 300 years after the conquest. One would expect to find some trace of Arab rule or Islam's cultural influence in the text. Herein lies another difficulty in approaching this literature: it is oblivious, or resistant – depending on one's perspective – to its historical environment.

Despite the multiplicity of difficulties, however, this genre demands much greater scholarly engagement. There are three problems and approaches that I wish to highlight here. The first is the realization that much of the frustration with this genre is largely self-induced. Typically, scholars arrive at the door of Coptic hagiography after postulating research

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[29] On the cycles see Papaconstantinou, "Hagiography in Coptic"; Tito Orlandi, "Coptic Literature," in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, ed. B. Pearson and J. E. Goehring (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 51–81; Tito Orlandi, "The Future of Studies in Coptic Biblical and Ecclesiastical Literature," in *The Future of Coptic Studies*, ed. R. M. Wilson (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 143–63.

[30] M. H. Davis (ed. and trans.), *The Life of Abba John Khamé*, Patrologia Orientalis 14 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1919; repr. Turnhout: Brepols, 1973); Maged S. A. Mikhail, "A Lost Chapter in the History of Wadi al-Natrun (Scetis): The Coptic *Lives* and Monastery of Abba John Khame," *Muséon* 127/1–2 (2014), 149–85. An earlier text that demonstrates the same lack of references to Arabs and Islam is Patriarch Benjamin's *On Cana of Galilee*, which repeatedly references the end of Byzantine rule and persecution without ever mentioning the Arab conquest: Maged S. A. Mikhail, *On Cana of Galilee: A Sermon by the Coptic Patriarch Benjamin I. A Revised Expanded Edition* (Los Angeles: ACTS Press, 2019).

[31] Mikhail, "A Lost Chapter," 156–58.

[32] Various aspects of this period are addressed at length in Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*; Mark N. Swanson, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt 641–1517* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010); Hugh Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province in the Islamic Caliphate, 641–868," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 62–85; Terry G. Wilfong, "The Non-Muslim Communities: Christian Communities," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt*, vol. 1: *Islamic Egypt, 640–1517*, ed. Carl F. Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 175–97.

questions based on other bodies of literature. Then, for the sake of diligence, they read through hagiographic texts only to be disappointed by the lack of relevant information. All the same, significant historical data can still be gleaned even from such a hostile interrogation of Coptic sources.

I have arrived at this realization the hard way. I distinctly recall my initial appraisal of the *Life of John Khame*, which could not have been more damning or less charitable. It struck me as a mere collage of hagiographic tropes, and very common ones at that. Initially it proved useless to my attempts to document the influence of Islamic rule on the Copts. Years later I revisited that text, and quickly discovered that the problem was largely of my own devising. By listening to what the text had to offer, rather than obsessing over what it lacked, the *Life of John Khame* proved to be quite illuminating: small clues unraveled a rather fascinating and convoluted history of composition; it unearthed long-forgotten tensions among the monasteries of Wadi al-Natrun (Scetis), which can now be traced in other contemporary sources;[33] it retains a rare description of the ritual by which a woman took monastic vows; the passage detailing John's marriage facilitated the redating of the *Encomium on Demetrius*; and the *Life*'s depiction of spiritual (chaste) marriage firmly positions it within the Egyptian recensions of that motif, which depict the husband, rather than the wife, as the partner seeking that type of ascetic life.[34] This pattern may be traced in Egyptian sources as far back as the fourth-century traditions pertaining to Abba Amoun. And along with the *Life of John the Almsgiver*, the *Encomium on Demetrius*, and the biography of the Coptic patriarch Mina II (956–74), the *Life of John Khame* would well serve a scholar interested in studying the spiritual marriage motif across Carolingian, Byzantine, and Egyptian sources.

The text also yielded a rather intriguing, albeit implicit, commentary on its tenth-century environment. A key passage is a biblically inspired trope that introduces a saint's name, proceeds to interpret it, and then underscores its prophetic meaning through a form of alliteration. The oldest attestation for this motif is Genesis 17:5: "No longer shall your name be Abram [exalted ancestor], but your name shall be Abraham [ancestor of a multitude]; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations."[35] In hagiographic texts this ubiquitous trope is documented across the centuries in various

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[33] See the discussion of the Arabic recensions of the *Life of Bishoi* in T. Vivian and M. S. A. Mikhail (eds.), *The Life of Bishoi* (Cairo/New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2022), 13, 16–17.

[34] Mikhail, *Legacy of Demetrius*, ch. 4.

[35] The trope is also attested in Luke 1:13 and Matthew 1:21–23.

regions and languages from Latin to Syriac and Arabic. It appears in the first recension of the *Life of John Khame*, written around 930, in this manner: "You will be called John Khame so that you may complete the whole will of the Lord." Read in Coptic, however, or even considered in Greek or Syriac, the sentence seems odd and fails to conform to the well-established trope. That is, until the name and sentence are considered in Arabic. Reading "Khame" as "Kāmil" restores the (perhaps intentionally) corrupted *topos*: "You will be called John *al-Kāmil* [the perfect] so that you may perfect (*li-tukammil*) the will of the Lord."[36] Here, in a text lacking a single reference to Islam, Arabization, or Arabic words, we are nonetheless provided with indisputable evidence for the presence of the Arabic language within the monasteries of Scetis (Wadi al-Natrun). This raises several questions: should post-conquest Coptic literature be considered a purist genre, which intentionally excised references to the Arabic language and Muslims? The above-referenced *Life of Isaac* constitutes a major exception, though if we were to classify that composition as a patriarchal biography rather than hagiography, even that anomaly would be eliminated. Certainly, the historical grounding of that *Life* is found in the passages detailing Isaac's interactions with Islamic officials, not those focused on his saintly qualities per se. Second, how can we interpret this intriguing evidence for Arabization? Minimally, this provides indisputable proof of a monk (though likely a community) in the 930s who was thinking in Arabic but writing in Coptic. Less conservatively, this phenomenon may be pushed back to the second quarter of the ninth century, when the historical "John the Perfect," Yuḥannā al-Kāmil, flourished.

Other texts provide equally significant, though, again, indirect cultural and historical evidence that suggests new opportunities for investigation. Two passages in the *Life of Bishoi* (Paisios) demonstrate how hagiography served a latent catechetical function that reflects its historical environment. While St. Bishoi lived in the early fifth century, his biography may not have been drafted until the seventh or eighth, and it circulated throughout the East in several languages and recensions. All the recensions of that *vita* retain an account in which a "simple" monk from Bishoi's monastery – his disposition is repeatedly emphasized – denied Christ because of a conversation he had with a Jewish merchant on the way to the city.[37] Significantly, in the Greek recension the merchant challenges the identification of Jesus as the awaited Messiah, while in the Semitic recensions – that is, the Syriac, Arabic, and

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[36] Mikhail, "A Lost Chapter," 171–74.
[37] Recensions of the *Life of Bishoi* in Vivian and Mikhail (eds.), *The Life of Bishoi*; that passage is identified as paragraphs 53b–57.

Ethiopic versions read by Christians living under Islamic rule – the words placed on the lips of the Jewish merchant would be far more coherent if they were attributed to a Muslim. There the merchant, clearly echoing *Sūrat al-nisāʾ* (Q. 4:157),[38] states: "You Christians say that the Christ was crucified, but it was another who resembled him." The simple monk agreed with that statement, and, immediately, the Semitic accounts continue, "When the brother proclaimed this, the grace of holy baptism was snatched away from him on account of that single naïve utterance." This narrative has several prominent features, including the use of a proxy Jewish figure in place of a Muslim interlocutor, and documenting an Islamic assertion that Eastern Christians had to routinely contend with.[39] Here, the hagiographer puts forward a modest but effective response: only a very simple (*sadhij*) individual would believe that Jesus was not really crucified. He then proceeds to demonstrate the radical spiritual repercussions for such a remark, even if it were unintentional and naïve.

Another passage in the *Life of Bishoi* focuses on the doctrine of the Trinity, which Muslims and Jews equally criticized.[40] That pericope, and the ensuing defense of the doctrine, is found in all recensions of the *Life*. Nonetheless, the Semitic recensions deviate by grafting a rather lengthy apology for the doctrine of the Trinity, which draws upon various analogies and cites a host of Old and New Testament passages. These apologetic elements in the *Life of Bishoi* provide colorful vignettes onto the socioreligious dynamics of the societies in which it circulated. Significantly, here it was not the study of the *Life* as such, but reading it in its various recensions, that proved most illuminating.

Another approach to Coptic hagiographic literature finds its inspiration in scholarship on the early Islamic historical tradition, particularly the work of Albrecht Noth and Chase Robinson.[41] Noth's insistence on identifying literary *topoi*, and reading past them, would serve the researcher well, whether reading ninth-century Islamic conquest narratives or later Coptic hagiography. The problem at the moment, however, is that we are

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[38] Q. 4:157, in turn, echoes passages from the Gnostic *Apocalypse of Peter* and the *Second Treatise of Seth*. On the relation to the *Apoc.Pet.* see Todd Lawson, *The Crucifixion and the Qur'an: A Study in the History of Muslim Thought* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), 13.

[39] On the genre and its various features see Sidney H. Griffith, *Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[40] Recensions of the *Life of Bishoi* in Vivian and Mikhail (eds.), *The Life of Bishoi*; that passage is identified as paragraphs 41–43.

[41] Albrecht Noth, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, 2nd rev. ed. with L. I. Conrad (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994); Chase F. Robinson, *Empire and Elites after the Muslim Conquest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

much better equipped to identify *topoi* in the former than in the latter – that is, aside from blatantly obvious motifs (e.g., the saint's fingers lighting up during prayer). To that end, I have added a compound entry, Topoi and Tropes, to the index of my study of Demetrius. I have encountered a variation of this entry in only one other publication. It is my hope that those who research this literature pay closer attention to these motifs, and index them clearly. Over time, and in aggregate, this would enable scholars to better identify and interpret the form and function of these tropes, and to ascertain what is original, historical, or unique within a given text.

An additional strategy is suggested by the work of Chase Robinson, who emphasizes reading the Islamic historical tradition as a reflection of the environment of its composition. In other words, here the focus is on the social function of the trope rather than its historicity. Several leading scholars, including Arietta Papaconstantinou, Stephen Davis, and Mark Swanson, had already read Coptic hagiography from that vantage point with a high degree of sophistication.[42] Nonetheless, while the existing research illuminates the motives behind the composition of various texts and the vested interest a particular monastic community or shrine had in promoting a specific saintly figure, Robinson's model would challenge us to press further and consider the larger socioreligious and cultural fabric that produced these sacred biographies, and which favored certain tropes over others.

To conclude the discussion of hagiography, it is important to stress the permeability of our sources and categories. On that front, the eighth-century *Life of Matthew the Poor*, one of three Coptic saints by that name, strains the rigidity of the current ideological boundaries between history, hagiography, and apocalypse. Matthew was first commemorated in a Sahidic Coptic *Encomium* that was soon adapted into a *Life* proper. Portions of both texts survive in Coptic, and the *Life* is attested in a complete, though rather late and much embellished, Arabic recension. Together, the *Encomium* and the *Life* provide the basis for all that is known about the historical figure.[43] They also inform us about his monastery, and,

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[42] See, e.g., the contributions of these scholars in Arietta Papaconstantinou (ed.), *Writing "True Stories": Historians and Hagiographers in the Late Antique and Medieval Near East* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010); also Papaconstantinou, "Hagiography in Coptic"; Papaconstantinou, "The Cult of Saints."

[43] Everything about St. Matthew in the *HP* and the *Synaxarium* may be traced back to the *Encomium* or the *Life*. See C. F. Seybold (ed.), *Severus ibn al-Muqaffaʾ: Alexandrinische Patriarchengeschichte von S. Marcus bis Michael I (61–767), nach der ältesten 1266 geschriebenen Hamburger Handschrift im arabischen Urtextherausgegeben* (Hamburg: L. Gräfe, 1912), 148 (primitive recension); René Basset (ed. and trans.), *Le Synaxaire arabe-jacobite (rédaction copte)*, Patrologia Orientalis 1, 3, 16, 17, 20 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1905–29), 322.

in a circuitous manner, about devotional and pilgrimage practices in Upper Egypt. Yet these texts are certainly hagiographic, saturated with the miraculous and the enigmatic. Along these lines, the end of the *Life* documents the monk's final words, a last revelation before death, itself a common hagiographic motif.[44] Abba Matthew informed his monastic children of his approaching departure, and then continues:

> May the Lord keep you . . . protect you and save you from the hands of unbelievers.[45] For after my death, great afflictions will come upon mortal beings.[46] Multitudes among the children of Christians will renounce their holy faith, and will join the unbelievers in their creed,[47] and they will mix with them in their heresy, and pray in their language.[48]

Certainly, the last sentence of this paragraph will leave a familiar ring in the ears of anyone who has read the *Apocalypse of Samuel* and the various later apocalypses that echo the same concerns regarding the expansion of Islam and the loss of the Coptic language and identity.[49] Similar anxieties were echoed throughout the Mediterranean basin and find unmistakable parallels in the writings of Paul Albar of Cordova. It is to apocryphal texts that we now turn.

Apocalyptic Sermons

No previous generation of scholars has paid attention to the study of Copto-Arabic apocalyptic literature as much as our own.[50] And thanks

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[44] See James Goehring, "Abraham of Farshut's Dying Words: Reflections on a Literary Motif in the Ascetic Literature of Early Christian Egypt," *Coptica* 8 (2009), 21–39. The apocalyptic *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius* (below), follows in that same motif.

[45] Coptic *hethnos*/Gr. *éthnos* (nation, people; gentiles; pagans; non-Christians). Here, "unbelievers" almost certainly refers to Muslims.

[46] Literally, "the children of men."

[47] Coptic/Gr. *nomos* (law), which may be sacred or secular (Lampe 920a–922a). Here, *nomos* likely reflects the Arabic term *madhhab*.

[48] *Life of Matthew the Poor*, in E. Amélineau (ed. and trans.), *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne aux IVe, Ve, VIe, et VIIe siècles*, 2 vols. (Paris: É Leroux, 1888–95), 2:707–36, at 735; see Tim Vivian and M. S. A. Mikhail, *Life of Matthew the Poor* (forthcoming). This new publication will distinguish between the *Encomium* and the *Life*, which Amélineau unknowingly collated as a single text, and will fill in several lacuna in his edition.

[49] *Pseudo-Samuel* (*Apocalpyse of Samuel*): J. Ziadeh, "L'Apocalypse de Samuel, Supérieur de Deir-el-Qalamoun," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 20 (1915–17), 374–403, at 379, 380, 381, 384, 388. See the discussions in Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 70–72, 91–101, 267–68; A. Papaconstantinou, "'They Shall Speak the Arabic Language and Take Pride in it': Reconsidering the Fate of Coptic after the Arab Conquest," *Muséon* 120 (2007), 273–99; J. R. Zaborowski, "Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt: The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn," *Oriens Christianus* 87 (2003), 100–15.

[50] A new era commenced with Paul J. Alexander's "Medieval Apocalypses as Historical Sources," *American Historical Review* 73/4 (1968), 997–1018. For the texts discussed here see the entries in

to the work of various scholars, including Paul J. Alexander, Otto Meinardus, Francisco Javier Martinez, and, most notably, Jos van Lent, our reading of this genre has reached an unprecedented degree of sophistication.[51] Potentially, these apocalyptic sources can (and, I would argue, do) provide popular, or at least non-official, sociohistorical commentaries (and critiques) that augment the normative literature, which is largely authored by urban elites. Apocalyptic texts provide a voice, albeit often a repetitive and convoluted one, but nonetheless a voice of opposition that reflects hopes and anxieties seldom documented in documentary, literary, or material evidence.[52] Yet the larger academic community, and even those focused on Coptic Studies, often overlook this literature. The lack of accessible, reliable editions, and translations for the bulk of this dossier undoubtedly contributes to its marginalization. In that regard, Bernd Witte's two-volume edition of the *Apocalypse of Athanasius* is to be lauded and emulated.[53]

Among scholars, it is taken for granted that the anonymous authors of apocalyptic tracts place contemporary and past events within a metanarrative that culminates with the Second Coming of Christ.[54] Still, the apocalypses that circulated in the East under Islamic rule are not the mad, ecstatic ramblings of would-be prophets, reveling in the

Thomas et al. (eds.), *Christian–Muslim Relations*, 1:182–85 (*Pseudo-Shenoute*), 274–80 (*Pseudo-Athanasius*), 163–71 (*Pseudo-Methodius*); 2:266–274 (*Pseudo-Pisentius*), 742–52 (*Pseudo-Samuel*).

[51] F. J. Martinez, "The King of Rūm and the King of Ethiopia in Medieval Apocalyptic Texts from Egypt," in *Studia Koptyjskie: Prace na Trzeci Miedzynarodowy Kongres Studiow Koptyjskich, Warzawa, 20–25 sierpnia 1984 rok*, ed. Wlodzimierza Godlewskiego (Warsaw: PWN, 1990), 247–59; F. J. Martinez, "Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius," PhD thesis, Catholic University of America (1985); Harald Suermann, "Koptische Arabische Apokalypsen," in *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage*, ed. Rifaat Ebied and Herman Teule (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), 25–44; van Lent, "Nineteen Muslim Kings."

[52] As with other sources, we should not undervalue what historical information can be gleaned from these texts, once we read past the *topoi*. Some reflect major political shifts within the caliphate, while others document developments within the Coptic community, as with the changing liturgical role of the Coptic deacon, which is evident if we carefully follow two specific passages in the various recensions of *Pseudo-Athanasius*. See Maged S. A. Mikhail, "The Deacon as Concelebrant and Liturgical Witness in the Coptic Rite," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 61/3–4 (2016), 101–23. There was a problem with the publication of this article: see the revised, expanded version that should have been published at https://fullerton.academia.edu/MagedSAMikhail.

[53] Bernd Witte (ed. and trans.), *Die Sünden der Priester und Mönche: Koptische Eschatologie des 8. Jahrhunderts nach Kodex M 602 pp. 104–154 (ps. Athanasius) der Pierpont Morgan Library* (Altenberge: Oros Verlag, 2002); this supersedes the earlier edition by Martinez in "Eastern Christian Apocalyptic."

[54] E.g., in the *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, past and what may be current events are all recorded in the future tense: Augustin Périer (ed. and trans.), "Lettre de Pisuntios, évèque de Qeft, à ses fidèles," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 19 (1914), 79–92, 302–23, and 445–46, at 302–04, 306; L. S. B. MacCoull, "The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Pesyntheus: Coptic Protest under Islamic Rule," *Coptic Church Review* 9 (1988), 17–22; also *Pseudo-Samuel*, 378–79.

destruction and violence that would ultimately bring about an end to humanity; rather, they are the manifestation of very human traits: the need to infuse suffering with meaning and hope. Coptic apocalypses in particular emphasize the Last Judgment in which the faithful will be exonerated, while oppressors and evil-doers are punished.[55] In times of sociopolitical upheaval this literature assured the oppressed of their ultimate vindication, and consoled them with the promise that their triumph is close at hand. Eschatological hopes – as opposed to apocalyptic anxiety – are prominent in much of this literature.

As a subset of a global genre, Coptic apocalypses reflect normative as well as distinctive features. They are heavily indebted to the usual biblical touchstones such as Daniel 7 and Ezekiel 38–39. Moreover, the intertextual quality of the literature is evident in its adoption of several motifs from older exemplars, particularly the Syrian *Pseudo-Methodius*.[56] The Egyptian texts adopted *Pseudo-Methodius*'s rationalization for the Islamic conquests,[57] its identification of the kingdom of the Arabs – rather than that of the Romans – as the Fourth Kingdom described in the book of Daniel, and the eschatological reading of Psalm 68.

Yet the corpus also demonstrates distinctive features. Egyptian apocalypses are often homiletic in nature; strikingly, even pastoral on occasion.[58] There is stress not just on the end of time, but on the manner in which the faithful should conduct themselves in those last days. This is one of the reasons I believe that, despite the attempts to gain legitimacy by attributing these texts to hallowed monastic figures, the bulk of this literature actually targeted and was circulated among an urban lay audience.[59]

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[55] The theme is particularly strong in *Pseudo-Samuel*, 391; *Pseudo-Shenoute I*, in Emile Amélineau (ed. and trans.), *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne aux IVe, Ve, VIe et VIIe siècles*, 2 vols. (Paris: Leroux, 1888–95), 1:345–48; the *Vision* (338–49) is part of the Arabic *Life of Shenoute* (289–478).

[56] G. J. Reinink (ed.), *Die Syrische Apokalypse des Pseudo-Methodius* (Leuven: Peeters, 1993); Benjamin Garstad (ed. and trans.), *"Apocalypse" of Pseudo-Methodius: An Alexandrian World Chronicle* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). A Coptic translation of this text circulated in Egypt during the eighth century.

[57] See the discussion in Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 2.

[58] *Pseudo-Athanasius*, I and II; *Pseudo-Samuel*, 376–77, 385–87, 392; *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, 80–87.

[59] Some may have been pilgrims: see Janet Timbie, "A Liturgical Procession in the Desert of Apa Shenoute," in *Pilgrimage and Holy Space in Late Antique Egypt*, ed. David Frankfurter (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 415–41. In general, even a text that seems to focus certain passages on monks, such as *Pseudo-Samuel*, takes it for granted – even encourages – its dissemination among parish churches. See *Pseudo-Samuel*, 387, which advocates the dissemination of the text in churches; *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, 315, heaps blessings on patrons who would commission the copying of the *Letter* and its dissemination, and further instructs that it should be read out loud in the congregations.

Another feature is a concerted effort to account for the biblical material
on the subject. For instance, the *Apocalypse of Samuel* and the *Letter of
Pseudo-Pisentius* closely adhere to the sequence of events described in the
book of Revelation, down to the return of Enoch and Elijah, their martyr-
dom, and eventual resurrection – events that are entirely absent from
Syriac *Pseudo-Methodius* (though they were later introduced into the
Greek recension).[60] A final characteristic element hinges on the interpret-
ation of Psalm 68:31: "Cush will submit herself to God." *Pseudo-Methodius*
was the first to interject this passage and the kingdom of Ethiopia into the
events leading to the Second Coming.[61] Subsequently, Coptic sources,
particularly *Pseudo-Athanasius*, the *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, *Pseudo-
Samuel*, and *Pseudo-Shenoute*, further developed and emphasized
Ethiopia's role in the Last Days.[62] Previous scholarship had noted this
tendency and summarily dismissed it as an attempt by Coptic authors to
privilege their coreligionists. Nonetheless, this likely reflects historical
regional tensions, not religious ideology per se.[63] Elsewhere, I have dis-
cussed the delicate religiopolitical interplay among the Islamic government
in Egypt, the Coptic hierarchy, and the Christian kingdom of Ethiopia,
which depended on the Copts for its metropolitan – the Abūn.[64] The stress
on Ethiopia reflects regional dynamics in which the region figured prom-
inently in the minds of all Egyptians: the Copts who would often discreetly
remind Islamic officials that their patriarch's jurisdiction extended to the
neighboring kingdom of Ethiopia; Islamic officials who sought to enforce
their understanding of the *baqt* treaty, frequently through the intervention
of the Coptic patriarch; and the average Egyptian who took Ethiopia's
threats to divert the flow of the Nile very seriously.[65] Later, Ethiopia would
figure prominently among the crusaders in the form of the Pester John
legends, precisely because of this last aspect.

A key step in deciphering Copto-Arabic apocalyptic texts – along with
analogous texts in the East – is to unpack their view of society. Assured

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[60] *Pseudo-Shenoute I*, 341–45; *Pseudo-Samuel*, 391; *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, 313–15.
[61] A Coptic translation of which circulated in Egypt during the eighth century.
[62] This aspect is emphasized to varying degrees in these texts, but the *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius* in
     particular is elaborate (pp. 310–12). See also van Lent, "Nineteen Muslim Kings."
[63] As Jelle Bruning kindly reminded me, Ethiopia's role in apocalyptic texts is another manifestation of
     this general anxiety: see David Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 2002).
     Another aspect pertaining to early historical encounters and literary depictions among Arabs and
     Ethiopians is explored by Suliman Bashear in his *Arabs and Others in Early Islam* (Princeton: Darwin
     Press, 1997), esp. chs. 4 and 5.
[64] Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 194–203.
[65] See Martinez, "The King of Rūm"; Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 241–49.

anonymity, apocalyptic authors spoke freely to the members of their own community. This fundamental characteristic is often overlooked.[66] Written by and for the faithful, these narratives delineate three factions and engage in three divergent discourses. The government, largely presented as consisting of agents of turmoil and oppression, constitutes one faction. Another is the community of faith, which is oppressed – the intended audience.[67] The third is an amalgam of what may be designated as the community of the "lapsed," which includes those deemed religiously or socially deviant. Apostates are the first to be noted among the religiously deviant; such individuals are condemned and relegated to a conceptual limbo, not being directly categorized as Christians or Muslims.[68] Another constituency among the lapsed consists of individuals who outwardly seem to reside at the very core of the community of faith; these are derelict monks, clerics, and bishops who have lost their religious compass. These individuals receive the harshest and most searing criticism in this literature.[69] Social deviants constitute a third bloc among the lapsed. Such individuals have not converted to Islam, but their "sins," as they are described in the literature,[70] result from abandoning the Coptic language, adopting Arab customs, and aligning their fortunes with political elites; these individuals relinquished what apocalyptic authors deem crucial markers of the community of faith.[71] Notably, that faction is not accused of theological errors or heresy; religion here is as much about social behavior (arguably, even more so) than it is about confessional belief.

Each of these three factions – the Islamic government, the oppressed faithful, and the heterogeneous community of the lapsed – is, in turn, addressed via a distinct discourse. Comments aimed at the political establishment tend to be shrouded in apocalyptic motifs and ambiguity, though their "burdensome yoke" is often stressed.[72] That discourse emphasizes the unfolding of an irreversible eschatological sequence that culminates with the Second Coming and the Final Judgment. Conversely, the intra-communal discourse directed at the lapsed is often direct. The "sins" of

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[66] It must be remembered that the embellishments and ramblings that clutter our historical reading of these texts were often central to the intended audience, many of whom read or attentively listened to every detail.

[67] See note 59 above.

[68] *Pseudo-Athanasius*, IX.6–7; *Pseudo-Samuel*, 389; *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, 81, 82, 308.

[69] *Pseudo-Samuel*, 381, 383; but *Pseudo-Athanasius*, in particular, is pervasive and unrelenting in its censure of clergy and monks: see e.g. III, IV, VII.1–6, VIII, XI, XII.

[70] Especially in *Pseudo-Samuel*, 379, 384, 388.

[71] The pet peeve of *Pseudo-Samuel*, 379, 381, 384, 388.

[72] *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, 303–07; *Pseudo-Shenoute I*, 341; *Pseudo-Athanasius*, IX.3–6.

the lapsed community – religious and social deviancy – are described as inherently evil, and ultimately damning. Finally, there is the voice of the author exhorting his own – the community of the faithful. Here, again, the tone is less allegorical, though it remains eschatological. The author quotes or alludes to biblical passages that stress perseverance,[73] the vindication of the righteous, and assures the reader that the Final Judgment – which, in these texts, is not to be feared but welcomed – is at hand. The underlying message of these texts is not to brace for a mechanical or inevitable march toward Armageddon, but a promise of hope and vindication – a promise that current suffering has meaning, an end, and a reward.

As to potential strategies for future research, I offer three suggestions. In a study of the Arab conquest of Egypt I approached the apocalyptic genre from the perspective of Memory Studies.[74] There I argued that several of these texts present something of a latent, positive memory of Byzantine rule. Although I do not wish to focus on that approach here for the sake of brevity, there still remains much work to be done before exhausting that methodological approach.

The emphasis on language in many of these apocalyptic texts guides us to another potential strategy: the comparative study of Egypt and Islamic Spain. An obvious point of contrast here is the ideological perception of language, where the attitudes expressed in *Pseudo-Samuel* find unmistakable parallels in the ninth-century writings of Paul Albar of Cordova.[75] Potentially, much may be learned from scrutinizing the form and content of socioreligious institutions and dynamics in al-Andalus and Egypt. Not only are these "medieval" Mediterranean societies, but in both we have a hegemonic Arab Muslim minority setting the pace of public life and discourse for significant Christian and Jewish populations. Beyond the immediate issues of language and identity, such as Arabization and religious conversion relating to *muwallad*s and Mozarabs, a whole slew of topics may be potentially explored, including perceptions of the other, and

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[73] E.g., *Pseudo-Samuel*, 389; *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, 303, both citing Matthew 10:22, 24:13. See also *Pseudo-Shenoute I*, 347–48.

[74] Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 30–36.

[75] Kenneth B. Wolf, "Paul Alvarus," in *Christian–Muslim Relations*, ed. Thomas et al. 1:645–48; Carleton M. Sage, *Paul Albar of Córdoba: Studies on his Life and Writings* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1943; repr. 2013); Göran Larsson, *Ibn García's Shuʿubiyya Letter: Ethnic and Theological Tensions in Medieval al-Andalus* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), ch. 1; Janina M. Safran, *Defining Boundaries in al-Andalus: Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Islamic Iberia* (Ithaca/ London: Cornell University Press, 2013), ch. 2; Jerrilynn D. Dodds, Maria Rosa Menocal, and Abigail Krasner Balbale, *The Arts of Intimacy: Christians, Jews, and Muslims in the Making of Castilian Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 81.

the emergence and function of regional dialects in Castile culture vis-à-vis the rise of Middle Arabic in the Middle East.[76]

Finally, there is something to be said for reading and interpreting these texts as intended; that is, as true prophecies uttered by historical, saintly figures. Almost like devout Sufis, scholars have been so concerned with uncovering the deeper, hidden meaning of these texts (*al-bāṭin*) that they have overlooked the obvious (*al-ẓāhir*). Nonetheless, a brief encounter provided me with an opportunity to see first-hand the function and powerful effects of the literal reading of this genre. Some years ago a friend, a Copt, approached me in haste and with great enthusiasm, grasping a worn-out Arabic pamphlet. As it turns out, it contained the "Prophecy of anba Ṣamūʾīl al-Muʿtarif," that is, *Pseudo-Samuel.* Knowing that I dabble in history, he proceeded to tell me about the great prophecy that came about before the Arab conquest by no less a figure than the famous one-eyed saint, Samuel the Confessor, who is commemorated at every Eucharistic liturgy and midnight *psalmudi* among the Copts. It was a prophecy, he said, that explains all of Coptic history since the rise of Islam. He was so taken by the text that he had made copies and distributed them to members of an adult meeting at his parish, where the whole group read it, and was amazed and comforted by it. They had all read the text as intended: as a prophecy uttered before the rise of Islam by a famous saint.[77]

After reading the "prophecy," the Arab conquest, the demographic decline of the Christian community, the loss of the Coptic language, and the divine aura that continues to surround the liturgical use of the Coptic language – all made perfect sense to the group. I could see that for my friend the prophecy was liberating, even cathartic. For him, the narrative of conquest and decline that has come to summarize Coptic history among the laity was foretold. This proved that those events were not caused by

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[76] Liesbeth Zack and Arie Schippers (eds.), *Middle Arabic and Mixed Arabic: Diachrony and Synchrony* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

[77] Among the Copts, the reading of the text as a true "prophecy" is somewhat common, due to two publications: Yusuf Habib, *Kitāb al-Anbā Ṣamūʾīl al-muʿtarif wa-adyirat al-Fayyūm* (Cairo: n.p., 1970), which includes a chapter entitled "Nubuwwa wa-ʿiẓa li-l-qiddīs anbā Ṣamūʾīl" (A prophecy and sermon by St. anbā Samuel), http://st-takla.org/books/youssef-habib/samuel/prophecy.html; and Simʿān al-Antunī (monk), *Tanabuʾat al-anbā Ṣamūʾīl al-muʿtarif bi dayrahu al-ʿāmir bi-jabal al-qalāmūn* (*The Prophecies of anba Samuel the Confessor from his Inhabited Monastery in the Mountain of Qalamun*) (Shubrā, Cairo: Maktabat ʿAzmī, 1988). The second contains the whole prophecy and has circulated in print and online: https://magmwr.blogspot.com/2012/06/blog-post_23.html; it has been reposted on several Arabic Facebook pages. For his part, the late Bishop Yuʾannis had dated the tract to the tenth century. See his *Taʾrīkh al-kanīsa al-qibṭiyya baʿd majmaʿ khalqīduniya* (*The History of the Coptic Church after the Council of Chalcedon*) (Staten Island: Archangel Michael and St. Mina Coptic Orthodox Church, 1989), 50.

happenstance,[78] or by some negligence or shortcoming on behalf of the Church or community. Rather, those developments were part of the mysterious but, all the same, purposeful unfolding of the Divine Will. (As *Pseudo-Samuel* would have it: "The wisdom of God is incomprehensible to humans, and no one can comprehend the deeds of the Creator.")[79] Doubtless, many Copts have shared those sentiments as they read or heard apocalyptic tracts over the past millennium. It is perhaps in this light that we may best appreciate the complexity and function of this enigmatic genre, which exhorted readers to persevere in the face of adversity with the assurance of eternal reward and ultimate vindication. It provided comfort by positioning the chaotic present as an essential prerequisite for the sovereign God's unfolding cosmic drama, and it interprets the past by grafting it onto that same eschatological narrative. Unabashedly apocalyptic, these tracts are, nonetheless, as concerned with presenting a specific version of history as with mapping out the future. Moreover, the apocalyptic narrative frees the community from any culpability in its own demise, assuring its members that they are innocent of the factors that led to their marginalization.

Back to my Coptic friend; after discussing his reading of the text, he then asked me if I had ever heard of this remarkable prophecy. At that point, I had the unenviable task of sharing with him how academics read and date that tract. Initially at least, he was completely unconvinced by my reasoning: academics had to be wrong, he argued. After all, the Prophecy of Samuel is genuine – for everything it prophesied had come true.

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Pinakes http://pinakes.irht.cnrs.fr/
The Arabic Papyrology Database www.naher-osten.lmu.de/apd
Trismegistos www.trismegistos.org/

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[78] Divine control and providence in spite of worldly chaos and injustices is a theme stressed in this literature, e.g., *Letter of Pseudo-Pisentius*, 304.
[79] *Pseudo-Samuel*, 376.

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