Sabine R. Huebner, Eugenio Garosi, Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello, Matthias Müller, Stefanie Schmidt, Matthias Stern

Introduction: Individual Histories From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt

1 The setting

With the capture of the city of Alexandria, the cultural center of the classical world, the advancing armies of the Islamic expansion crushed the last resistance to their conquest of Egypt. In 642, nearly seven hundred years after the region had become part of the Roman Empire, it fell once again to a foreign power. However, we know little about the institutional and organizational changes the new rulers imposed once they had the chance to. Scholars agree that a considerable portion of what had been "Byzantine Egypt" survived the first decades of Muslim rule, but the extent of administrative, social, and economic change at this crucial transition period from ancient to early medieval history remains the subject of debate and continues to intrigue scholars.[1] Indeed, one could hardly expect several hundred years of (virtually) continuous Christian-Byzantine domination to fade without leaving substantial traces behind. And while switching colors on political maps is easily done, it is harder to grasp what this entailed for the local population, their daily lives, and their perceptions of one another and of their masters. How "Byzantine" was "early Islamic" Egypt still? How "Egyptian" or, if one prefers, "Coptic" was it?

The international conference *Living the End of Antiquity: Individual Histories from Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, which took place in May 2017 at the University of Basel, gathered established and early-career scholars alike to discuss change and continuity from late antique to early Islamic Egypt through individual experiences – delving into political-administrative, economic, religious, and (other) social dynamics to explore phenomena of stability and disruption during the transition from the classical to the postclassical world. The conference formed part of the interdisciplinary three-year research project "Change and Continuities from a Christian to a Muslim Society – Egyptian Society and Economy in the 6th to 8th Centuries" directed by Sabine R. Huebner and funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation from 2016 to 2018.

As questions about change and continuity demand multilayered and nuanced answers, focusing on individual histories allowed the conference participants to capture patterns as well as to highlight what was particular. While such a close-up view

1 For contributions to the debate on change and continuities, see i.a. Berkes (2017); Bruning (2017); Delattre/Vanthieghem (2016); Mikhail (2014); Sijpesteijn (2013); Legendre (2013); Delattre/Pintaudi/Vanthieghem (2013); Papaconstantinou (2010); Foss (2009); Gonis (2009; 2004a; 2004b; 2003; 2001); Morelli (2001); Gascou (1983).

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110683554-004

inevitably simplifies the issues at hand, it also presents opportunities to explore the roles of agency and contingency for phenomena of change. Given the complexity of the topic, not all questions could be posed or addressed at the conference. However, the joint discussion of individual perceptions of change demonstrated that there was not one uniform Byzantine society that perceived change uniformly: common taxpayers, for instance, may have noticed politico-administrative change only when it affected the amount of tax they owed or the procedures for gathering it. Provincial power brokers, in contrast, may have faced more immediate repercussions from the conquest as they were closer to the political center. Change and continuity manifest themselves differently in different milieus, and not every region will have experienced the same phenomena: a merchant in Bubastis in the Nile Delta may, for example, have been confronted with change earlier than a tenant in the Thebaid, the southern part of Egypt. Touching upon numerous aspects of change in Egyptian society between the sixth and the eighth centuries, this volume does not aim to provide a systematic survey of the transition from Byzantine to early Arab society. Instead, it offers a mosaic of micro-narratives while at the same time embracing the potential of overarching themes, shared sources, and intertwined methodologies. The individual profiles traced in the various contributions highlight first and foremost the circumstantial character of change and continuity. By discussing synchronous phenomena of stability and disruption, the various contributions illustrate the shortcomings of holistic interpretative models.

One result of these considerations is our approach to terminology. Since each discipline has developed its own connecting ideas and technical language, the varied terminological choices taken by contributors reflect the inclusive approach of our volume. Instead of implementing a unifying parlance, we acknowledge that a label's stringency does not only depend on the inherent quality of the phenomenon or concept it applies to, but also on the extrinsic relations it unveils: "Roman" and "Byzantine," "Arab" and "Muslim" rule, "state" and "empire": each term in these binomials is used apparently interchangeably by different authors in the context of this volume, yet each opens up a different web of references and does not overlap completely with its opposite pendant. We do not view terminological eclecticism as a symptom of inconsistency, but rather embrace it as a means of accentuating different facets of complex phenomena. The multiplicity of scholarly approaches represented in this volume demonstrates not only the complexity of the field but also the opportunities for new scholars from different branches of the humanities to engage with the permeable boundaries between late antiquity and early Islam.

This introduction cannot and does not seek to discuss every aspect of change and continuity from the Byzantine to the early Islamic period. Nevertheless, a short review of illustrative discussions in the field may prove useful to readers who have thus far been unfamiliar with either Byzantine or Islamic Egypt (or both) and with what these fields of study have to offer.

2 Chronology and geography

At the heart of this book is the problem of transition, which naturally invites us to rethink conventional epochal boundaries. We refrain, however, from attempting to answer the elusive question of when and how antiquity in Egypt came to a close. Instead, this volume utilizes the question of the end of antiquity as a stimulus to problematize the value of established chronological boundaries based on epochal political events. While working with an orientative chronological framework stretching from the reign of Justinian I (527–565) to the end of the eighth century, our volume does not envisage a single timespan as binding or exclusively authoritative. Quite on the contrary, we recognize the ancillary value of earlier and later experiences in addressing the long shift from a Byzantine to a Muslim society. Both **Nicoletta De Troia** and **Roger Bagnall** examine archaeological and documentary evidence reaching back as far as the third and fourth centuries as they seek to address long-term trends of change in Egyptian society. And at the other end of our timeframe, **Alon Dar** and **Stefanie Schmidt** discuss accounts by Christian and Muslim historians and geographers from the ninth, tenth, and even later centuries which are key sources on antecedent macro-historical developments that documentary and archaeological sources merely hint at.

Although preceding the period of interest of the present volume, the ecumenical church council at Chalcedon (situated directly opposite Constantinople on the southern shore of the Sea of Marmara) in 451 was nevertheless a decisive landmark. During the council, the trial of the Alexandrian archbishop Dioscorus led to his deposition and exile. This in turn resulted in religious turmoil in Alexandria. The main factor, however, that led to a schism between the Eastern churches was the Chalcedonian definition of the nature of Christ: that within Christ a human and a divine nature existed independently. In opposition, the Alexandrian dogma considered both natures inseparable (hence they are called *miaphysites* or, as was common in earlier years, *monophysites*). From this date on, Christians in Egypt would be faced with the question as to whether they adhered to the Creed of Chalcedon (as championed chiefly by the Byzantine emperors, hence the derogative designation *melkite*), or not.

Our main period of interest starts with the reign of Justinian (527–565), who introduced fiscal, monetary, and administrative reforms in Egypt with his Edict XIII issued in 539. During his regency, religious disorders are recorded in Alexandria for the year 536. Justinian was followed by the emperors Justin II (565–574) and Tiberius II Constantine (574–582), whose reigns did not affect Egypt in the same way. Alexandrian revolts are reported again from the reign of Tiberius' successor Maurice (582–602). Emperor Phocas (602–610) was supported by the Egyptians but faced civic troubles against him starting from 608. Nicetas, Heraclius' cousin, came to power after bloody combat near Alexandria in late 609. The reign of Heraclius (610–641) ensued. Its latter part was marked by religious tensions over monothelitism and was interrupted in Egypt by the Sasanian occupation during the years 619–629.

In the years 639 – 642, the Arab armies led by ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ conquered Egypt, and the brief reconquest of Alexandria by Byzantine troops in 645 – 646 only deferred the inevitable. Dissatisfaction with the policies of the caliph ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (644 – 656) of the Umayyad clan erupted in uprisings in different provinces of the Islamic Empire including Egypt, and it was an Egyptian rebel party that reportedly murdered the caliph in Medina in 656. ʿUthmān's assassination prompted the election of ʿAlī as the new caliph and the subsequent rebellion of Muʿāwiya, governor of Greater Syria and a relative of ʿUthmān's. In 659, a re-appointed ʿAmr gained Egypt for Muʿāwiya's side and expelled the governor installed by ʿAlī. During the renewed dynastic crisis triggered by the death of both caliph Yazīd I b. Muʿāwiya (683) and his infant son Muʿāwiya II, the contender to the caliphate ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr was able to assume control over the province. Shortly thereafter, however, troops sent by the newly elected Marwān I re-asserted Umayyad authority in the region.

While the new rulers initially retained the existing administration and thus also Greek and Coptic as its working languages (see Section 9 of this chapter below), Arabic became the official language for all state affairs and coinage in 705 – although Greek and especially Coptic maintained a key role in the bureaucratic apparatus for decades and centuries thereafter respectively. The imposition of taxes resulted in a series of tax revolts by the Egyptian population in the 720s. During the years 727 – 737, Arab populations from Syria were relocated into Egypt. The year 750 witnessed the capture and execution in Egypt of the fleeing Marwān II, the last ruler of the Umayyad dynasty based in Damascus, and the subsequent establishment of the Abbasid dynasty based in Baghdad.

Compared with the surveyed timeline, the geographical boundaries of Egypt seem easier to define. This volume's many portrayals of individuals operating in interregional networks bear testament, however, to Egypt's political, economic, and cultural integration in the Mediterranean basin and beyond. Egypt as a crossroads for trade between East and West is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea in the North and by the deserts east and west of the Nile Valley. The Nile did not only offer fertile land through its annual summer floods carrying water and silt onto its floodplain; it also provided efficient transport facilities from South to North connecting inner Africa with the Mediterranean world. The total population of Egypt probably remained relatively stable during the transition period. Egypt's population at the end of the Byzantine period in the sixth and seventh century is estimated at about 2.5 million people.[2]

While substantial agriculture was limited to the floodplains along the Nile, the Fayum, and the other oases in the Western Desert, the desert plains were equally important for Egypt's economy. The Eastern Desert held great raw material reserves in gold, precious gems, red porphyry and grey granite, marbles and other stones. The

2 Charanis (1967). O'Sullivan (2006) 76 argues for a higher population count at the end of Byzantine rule.

Western Desert offered alum, the Wadi al-Natrun natron used in glassmaking. Moreover, the Nile Valley cliffs were also used for quarrying sandstone and limestone, and Aswan in the South was famous for its red granite.

The scope of some contributions embraces Egypt as a whole (**Roger Bagnall, Matthias Stern**) and some draw fruitful comparisons with contemporary sources from Syria, Mesopotamia, Central Asia, and even North Africa (**Alon Dar, Eugenio Garosi, Lucian Reinfandt**). The majority of chapters, however, offer local but vivid glimpses into a specific topic. The peripheral situation of the oases in the Western Desert occupies **Nicoletta De Troia**, **James Keenan** zones in on Antinoopolis, the capital of the Thebaid, and **Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello** and **Lucian Reinfandt** focus on individuals from the nearby city of Hermopolis. Further south, the best documented village in this transition period, Aphrodito, provides the scenery of **Loreleï Vanderheyden**'s portrait and the Theban region offers material for three contributions (**Arietta Papaconstantinou, Jennifer Cromwell, Matthias Müller**). **Anne Boud'hors** sheds light on the city of Edfu, and **Stefanie Schmidt** and to some extent also **Judith Evans Grubbs** reflect on Egypt's southern border and relationships with Nubia.

3 Prospects and limitations of the evidence

The well-known wealth of Egypt regarding textual sources is again impressive for the period that spans this volume. Giving figures for the number of texts documenting this specific period is, however, a delicate operation. First, not all published texts have already been entered into online databases to make them easily accessible, although the efforts of the teams behind online resources such as papyri.info and trismegistos.org are immense and continue to make scholars' lives considerably easier. Although the figures given below are therefore not exact, they may be taken as an indicator of the order of magnitude we are looking at. According to a search on papyri.info about 9,000 Greek documentary texts can be dated strictly to the period between 500 – 800 CE. The Coptic sources (mostly ostraca but also including papyri) are less numerous, with a little more than 700 texts. The recent interest in documentary papyrology in Coptic studies will certainly contribute to reducing this discrepancy over the coming decades, and the same can be said for the young discipline of Arabic papyrology, which in total numbers only about 760 edited texts dateable before 800.

Assigning texts to archives is a key element in gaining a better understanding of their content and exploiting their interconnectedness. Of more than 500 papyrological archives listed in the relevant section of trismegistos.org, about 75 belong to the period from the sixth to eighth centuries. One third of these contain fewer than ten texts, while only a dozen contain more than 50 documents. The quantity of texts cannot, of course, be the sole criterion to be taken into account, as illustrated by the two largest archives of ostraca: the Abu Mina archive (TM Arch ID 506) contains about

1,000 similar harvest receipts and the almost 200 texts forming the so-called Etmoulon archive (TM Arch ID 507; lit. "to the mill") all record the transport of grain to a mill. At the opposite end of the scale, small archives like those of Apa Antinus (TM Arch ID 457), Demetrius (TM Arch ID 309), or Philemon and Thecla (TM Arch ID 190) provide additional information supplementing the picture gained from the main archives most often referred to: those of the Apiones (TM Arch ID 15) and Dioscorus of Aphrodito (TM Arch ID 72) for the sixth century and those of Senuthius (TM Arch ID 418), Papas (TM Arch ID 170), and Basileios (TM Arch ID 124) for the post-conquest period. Further studies on these archives are already yielding fruitful results, as shown by the contributions of **Roger Bagnall, Anne Boud'hors, Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello, Matthias Müller, Lucian Reinfandt,** and **Loreleï Vanderheyden**, and more can be expected, not least from the present project.[3]

The prominent focus of the majority of this volume's contributors on textual evidence offers the opportunity for attentive reflection on the "mediality" and the transmission of written sources. Besides papyri, other materials served ancient societies as text substrates – pieces of broken pottery (ostraca), for instance, or wooden tablets were used for immediate purposes and were not expected to endure for decades or centuries. If endurability was intended, parchment or stone was used, depending on the type of text; parchment was used less widely in Egypt than across the rest of the Byzantine world.

Inscriptions intended for public display are not, however, of great significance for this volume. A certain individual perspective was expressed by visitors' graffiti of the kind that can be seen in many temples, for instance in the Isis temple in Aswan[4], but no contribution to this book covers this aspect. Tombstones can also be seen, to some extent, as witnesses to change: inscriptions on tombstones are indicative of cultural and societal change since they provide information about social stratigraphy. The first Muslim tombstone from the Islamic period found in Egypt is that of a certain ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Khayr al-Ḥajrī, who died in 652.[5] While this tombstone's origin is uncertain, the second oldest, one of a Muslim convert called ʿAbbāsa, daughter of Jurayj (Arab. "little George"), is known to originate from Aswan.[6] Although it does not bear yet the characteristic religious formula common in later periods, its profession of faith "she died … confessing that" and the reference to the "people of Islam" are indicative of social changes and may even attest the presence of a "religious expert" in this part of Upper Egypt at the end of the seventh century.[7] Due to their highly formulaic character, however, tombstones reveal personal

3 As part of the SNSF project "Change and Continuities from a Christian to a Muslim Society – Egyptian Society and Economy in the 6th to 8th Centuries," contributions to the relevant section of trismegistos.org are in preparation for several archives of the studied period.
4 Dijkstra (2012).
5 El-Hawary (1930) 332, but also Schmidt (forthcoming).
6 El-Hawary (1932) 290 – 291.
7 Brockopp (2017) 66.

perspectives only to a limited extent and consequently are not a significant part of this volume.

Texts, whether of a documentary or a literary nature, are not unbiased vehicles of information; they are rather shaped by the interests of their issuers and reflect the cultural context of their production. Documents *stricto sensu* are not free individual creations but exist within established frameworks of formulaic, graphic, and even aesthetic norms.

Roger Bagnall reflects on the material from which we write social and economic history and especially on family archives as the key element from which narratives can be drawn. He recalls the characteristics of the earlier Roman period with Oxyrhynchos as an inescapable model for urban society, while documentation on rural settlements prominently comes from five villages in the Fayum. From the sixth century, however, the textual evidence is vastly dominated by the Apiones archive from Oxyrhynchos and the Dioscorus archive from Aphrodito (for which see **Loreleï Vanderheyden**). The thorny issue of redactional processes is discussed most clearly in **James Keenan**'s analysis of the so-called will of Flavius Phoibammon which unravels multiple layers of authorship and compilation. The text presents itself as having been dictated by the testator. Phoibammon's oral utterances are found mediated and diluted in the mold of the technical language and the formulaic framework prescribed by the Byzantine scribal tradition. The compiler Dioscorus' lexical choices and adaptations of the document's formal structure further reveal yet another layer of authorship.

In her look at the archive of Papas, pagarch of Edfu around 670, **Anne Boud'hors** shows that Coptic was not only used for private business and in ecclesiastical and monastic milieus. Like Bagnall, Boud'hors highlights the difficulty of classifying documents as either official or private. It is clear that language is not a useful criterion here: Greek is used, for example, for leases and accounts that pertain to the private business of Papas as a wealthy landowner, while Coptic is used not only in letters from lower ranking officials and individuals, but also in orders from "above" and from colleagues of equal status. This is supported by **Jennifer Cromwell**'s paper, which focuses on an individual named Psate, son of Pisrael, attested as a village scribe in Jeme for the period from 713/4 until 726, who wrote in both Coptic and Greek. The texts that can be connected to him deal with monastic issues or are tax receipts or private legal documents.

New types of transcultural professional bureaucrats gradually filled the ranks of the Islamic administration, and one of them is exemplified by the case of Petosiris, a Copt found serving as an Arabic scribe in the Islamic tax administration and corresponding with Arab officials as equals in an Arabic letter from eighth-century Hermopolis. The rise of a class of transcultural professional bureaucrats with multilingual expertise was instrumental to the progressive implementation of Arabic as the sole language of the imperial administration over the course of the eighth century, as **Lucian Reinfandt** points out in his chapter. Concomitantly, the employment of specialized clerks probably undermined – as Reinfandt argues – the influence and

social capital of the non-Arabicized landholding magnates that had acted as intermediaries between the Arab-Muslim ruling class and the local populations in Egypt and elsewhere in the first decades after the Arab conquest.

At the other end of the spectrum, the serial nature of formal features of documentary texts provides indicators of wider shifts in socio-cultural relations. Thus they can be utilized to trace broader developments in cultural trends and patterns of social behavior. The formulae used by the Arab-Muslim Yazīd b. Aslam in his letter to his Coptic colleague Petosiris in the eighth-century Hermopolite indicate that he considered the addressee as socially equal. Conversely, the formulae utilized in the Arabic letter sent by the governor of Egypt Mūsā b. Kaʿb to the Christian ruler of Nubia entail a claim of cultural alterity, as **Eugenio Garosi** points out in his contribution to this volume. In general, in the early Islamic period Arab-Muslim officials utilized not only a distinctive set of Arabic formulae in their correspondence, but also a distinctive layout that functioned as a social identifier compared to those used by the non-Muslim officials serving under their authority.

Stefanie Schmidt and **Judith Evans Grubbs** stress in their respective chapters that documentary and literary evidence demonstrates that transregional commercial exchange of goods and slaves across the borderland with Nubia continued throughout the Byzantine and early Islamic periods. A comparative analysis of the epistolary social behavior of Muslim officials towards regional elites in Egypt provided by **Eugenio Garosi** further evidences a common set of communicative strategies with the proportionally underrepresented documents from Syria, North Africa, and Central Asia.

Analyzing documentary evidence in tandem with literary sources furthermore provides a broader context for imperial policies seen at play in Egypt. The resentment towards the culturally "defensive" military settlement policy Muslim sources attribute to ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb in Egypt, for instance, finds parallels in accounts pertaining to Mesopotamia and Greater Syria, as **Alon Dar** stresses in his chapter. Similarly, **Lucian Reinfandt**'s case study on the emergence of cultural brokers in early Islamic Egypt is complemented by literary accounts of individuals operating in similar capacities in other provinces of the early Islamic Empire.

4 Politics and administration

The question as to when a Muslim state came into being has been frequently engaged with in recent years, and the Egyptian papyri have, again, been at the forefront of this debate.[8] The idea that Byzantine Egypt gradually evolved into early Islamic Egypt and was integrated into an Islamic empire is to some extent misleading;

8 For a comprehensive account of these discussions, see recently Legendre (2016) 3–6 with the relevant literature.

there is good reason to assume that an "Islamic empire" into which Egypt could be integrated did not yet exist when Egypt fell to the Islamic conquest. Egypt's early Islamic period is not so much a story of adaptation to Arab imperial customs as the history of one of the (many) places where an Islamic empire was formed, as illustrated by **Alon Dar, Eugenio Garosi,** and **Lucian Reinfandt**.

For particular regions, however, turning the question around may yield interesting results. To what degree did the comparatively bureaucratic and socially hierarchized Byzantine Egypt influence the emergence of an Islamic empire and its set of legal institutions? One evident phenomenon concerns the administration of the country, and at this point, two aspects of Egyptian "provincial" administration, the role of the *duces* and that of the pagarchs, may serve as an introduction to the problems and prospects of research on this topic. In 539, nearly exactly a century before the Muslim armies reached Egypt, Emperor Justinian had issued his Edict XIII, through which he had abolished the position of the Augustalian prefect to whom the entire Egyptian diocese would have been subject.[9] Instead, the provinces Aegyptus (I and II), the Thebaid (Inferior and Superior), and probably also Augustamnica (I and II) were now each controlled by a *dux et Augustalis* who held civilian and military authority once again in one hand and to whom a civilian *praeses* was subordinated. The province of Arcadia remained undivided and was subject only to a *praeses*, although there is evidence that the *dux* of the Thebaid held authority over Arcadia at least temporarily as well.[10] Responsible to the *dux* were the pagarchs, the leading officials of the approximately ten subdivisions (*civitates* or, to use a more traditional term, *nomoi*) within each province. This basic structure appears to have transformed well into the early Islamic period, albeit with a *dux et Augustalis Arcadiae* appearing as early as 636, during the short episode of renewed Byzantine reign (629 – 639) between the Persian and Islamic occupations.[11]

This last point illustrates an important problem when it comes to administrative change from Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: some phenomena that were once viewed as clear evidence for such change have in recent decades been exposed as, in fact, innovations from the late Byzantine period, perhaps provoked by or even falling within the short intermezzo of the Persian occupation (619 – 629). It is most regrettable, in this regard, that we lack sufficient evidence from this brief period to discern exactly what was going on.[12] The *duces* are one instance of potential Persian or Byzantine rearrangements, but one layer below, at the level of the individual cities and their hinterlands, the pagarchs are another. At some point during the Persian occupation or after the Byzantine reconquest, the pagarchs of the Fayum ceased to bear the title "pagarch of Arsinoe and Theodosiopolis" and were styled only as "pagarch of Arsinoe," even though the "Theodosiopolite nome" continued to feature in other con-

9 On this and the following, see Palme (2013a) with further literature.
10 Morelli (2008).
11 Palme (2013b); Palme (2013c).
12 For a good discussion of what can be said so far for this period, see Sänger (2011).

texts. The precise moment from which the pagarchs became so dominant that the term for their official authority, *pagarchia*, turned into a territorialized rendering of the entire nome is also unclear – the phenomenon is found immediately after the conquest, but not beforehand. Whether these changes were innovative or simply acknowledged already well-established administrative practice is, however, something that the fragile documentation of the mid-seventh century does not allow us to discern. In any case, these examples illustrate our lack of knowledge of this crucial period of late antique history, a difficulty further compounded by the problem that administrative history has, to some extent, to build on different types of documents from the Byzantine and early Islamic periods, as discussed by **Roger Bagnall, Anne Bourd'hors,** and **Matthias Stern**. New documents emerging from this period will refine our understanding in the future.

We would give much to have the papers of Byzantine governors or pagarchs at this time. From later on, we have the archive of Papas (second half of the seventh century), which is explored in depth by **Anne Boud'hors**, and that of of Basileios and Qurra (from the early eighth century), which have contributed much to what we know about early Islamic administration and particularly about how the various administrative layers interacted with one another.[13] One genuine innovation of the new rulers concerns the administrative layer immediately above the old Byzantine provinces: above the *duces* now ranked the *symboulos* (Arab. *wālī*), who held absolute civil and military authority and was directly appointed by the caliph.[14] The *symboulos* was installed by the end of the 640s and took up residence not in the traditional center of political power in Egypt, Alexandria, but in Fusṭāṭ (Old Cairo), which rapidly grew into its new role as the capital of the country.[15] And while requisitions of all sorts of goods for supplying the army had not been unprecedented in Byzantine Egypt, the frequency and regularity with which they appear to have been conducted in the early Islamic period certainly was.[16] The *amīrs* ("commanders") who frequently appear in this context were also an innovation in Egypt, albeit this time clearly drawn from a preexisting structure of the Arab military administration; their precise role, however, is still debated.[17] Under the *symboulos* and amid the amirs, the *duces*

13 See Foss (2009) for a discussion of the Papas archive and Papaconstantinou (2015) for insights into the Basileios archive with regard to the subject of this conference.

14 Despite being frequently referred to as *wālī* in Arabic literary sources, Muslim governors of Egypt invariably bear the title of office of *amīr* in seventh- and eighth-century Arabic papyrus documents, coinage, and inscriptions. On other officials labelled "amirs" in early Islamic Greek and Coptic documents, see *infra*.

15 However, some scholars (e.g., Power [2012] 96) have suggested that the Arab government also acknowledged the "conceptual duality" of Egypt, dividing it into Fusṭāṭ with the Nile Delta (Hawf) and Upper Egypt (Saʿīd). On the early history of al-Fusṭāṭ, see now Bruning (2018). Alexandria was seen as too vulnerable to Byzantine naval attacks, a fear that proved true when Byzantine briefly recaptured and held the city in 645–646.

16 Legendre (2015) 237–238.

17 Morelli (2010).

now lost their military authority, although security forces were still at their disposal, as is visible in the numerous documents concerned with the capture and redistribution of fugitives, the *duces*' competence to organize statute labor (*corvée*), and their authority to levy taxes.

However, the *duces* were still the superiors of the various pagarchs in their provinces. **Anne Boud'hors**'s contribution highlights the at times uncomfortable situation the pagarch Papas may have found himself in, caught between village communities and the demands of his superiors. At the beginning of the eighth century, however, in the archive of Basileios, pagarch and *dioikētēs* ("administrator"), the *symboulos* Qurra interacts directly with local authorities.[18] This development seems to be in line with the rise of the *epikeimenos* (lit. "president") and the *ʿāmil* (lit. "agent"). Originally a kind of envoys of the *symboulos* in the countryside, these men increasingly drew many tasks under their authority that originally had been in the purview of the *dux* and the pagarch, and these latter titles disappeared: the *dux* at the beginning of the eighth century (the last one attested is ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd, who held office until 703 or 712) and the pagarch around the mid-eighth century.[19]

5 Social hierarchies

This brief institutional overview leads us directly to those who kept the machinery of this system running. It has been frequently highlighted that in the politico-administrative system outlined above, the main figures of political power in early Islamic Egypt were Muslims from the start. The Islamic army, through its amirs, was an occupying force, and the absolute authority in the country, the *symboulos*, was directly appointed by the caliph. At the next lower level, the *duces* and pagarchs that we know of were, as far as we can tell, still Christians in the first decades of Muslim rule, and their social backgrounds point more or less to the same milieus that their Byzantine predecessors came from: a generally local landholding elite bearing high honors, or on their way thereto, through distinct bureaucratic service. Around the turn to the eighth century, however, two prominent individuals appear to start a tradition of Muslim outsiders occupying these positions: Flavius Atias, son of Goedos (or ʿAṭiyya b. Juʿayd in Arabic), pagarch and later *dux*, and Nājid b. Muslim, successively pagarch of two different pagarchies, not long before the rise of the *epikeimenoi*.[20] As **Matthias Stern** argues, however, the careers of (at least some) Byzantine pagarchs may well not have been all that different from the careers of ʿAṭiyya and Nājid; whether this is a sign of continuity or of two coinciding but distinct patterns

---

18 On this particular relation, see Papaconstantinou (2015).
19 Legendre (2016) 14–16.
20 For a brilliant study of Nājid, however, within a much larger context that may serve as an overall introduction to these decades, see Sijpesteijn (2013).

is elusive. In any case, the traditional notion of the pagarchs as a generally insubordinate local elite should be reconsidered. Generally, historians today are more nuanced in characterizing the relationships between the Byzantine provincial aristocracy and the imperial center than they were maybe two generations ago, when the state of affairs in late Byzantine Egypt seemed to be one of permanent turmoil and of disintegrating public authority in the province.

Coming from another direction, **Alon Dar** discusses the general prohibition on obtaining landed estates in the Egyptian countryside which applied to the Muslim administrative and military elite in the early decades after the Arab conquest. The second caliph, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, is credited with having prohibited the distribution of conquered land among the Arab fighting forces. Literary accounts suggest that ʿUmar's policies engendered dissatisfaction not only among the Arab soldiers but also on the part of some of his senior advisors. Ultimately, ʿUmar stood firm in his resolve, as is corroborated by the absence of documentary evidence for Muslim landowning in Egypt prior to the mid-eighth century. In the long run, **Alon Dar** argues, the decision to leave conquered lands in the hands of the local population was instrumental to ensuring stable and perpetual tax revenues and preventing the cultural assimilation of the Arab minority. It was also a fundamental step in the transformation of tribally organized, nomadic troops into a permanent professional army and a smart move, which forestalled the rise of a landowning Muslim aristocracy with local powerbases.

Other contributions focus on the men at lower levels – "levels" that are naturally deeply intertwined. **James Keenan**'s contribution presents a thriving provincial capital to us, together with a representative of the highly educated literary elite that kept the administrative machinery running: Dioscorus of Aphrodito, who worked for some years as a notary in Antinoopolis. Beforehand, Dioscorus had been an important village administrator, and **Loreleï Vanderheyden**'s contribution expands this picture by presenting the various roles that Dioscorus' father Apollos played in the village of Aphrodito. We see, again, a vibrant community which contrasts starkly with the apocalyptic images that Dioscorus' petitions paint of the Byzantine village and its relation to superior authorities. The strong links of an urban middle class to the countryside around their respective cities are also very evident in the small new archive from Hermopolis presented by **Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello**. Some mechanisms through which these locals adapted to the new cultural and political conditions presented by Arab rule are highlighted by **Lucian Reinfandt,** whose study on "Arabicized" multicultural local bureaucrats may raise the question to what degree the increasing numbers of the "Arab-Muslim" elites were swelled by such individuals from within local communities rather than by outsiders alone. **Eugenio Garosi** pursues a similar argument, although dealing with different material, in his analysis of formal and formulaic aspects of the early Islamic evidence, and demonstrates how lower-level administrative staff themselves were trying to bridge the gap to their rulers, as it were, by translating Arab-Muslim concepts into a context familiar to the local Coptic population. Finally, **Judith Evans Grubbs** explores in her contribution

what papyri transmit about members of the lowest social hierarchical level – slaves. Due to the scarce evidence of only four slave sale contracts dating from between the fifth and seventh centuries a fully comprehensive study on slavery and possible changes from the Byzantine to the Islamic period is difficult to conduct. However, although we have no personal testimony from a slave, sources like for instance testaments regulating manumission, the laws of Justinian concerning child slavery, or *paramonē* contracts, offer individual narratives told by or about people held in slavery or slave-like conditions. This "micro-historical" approach illustrates how permeable the borders between free and unfree status may have been in late antiquity. The threshold of entering slavery or slave-like working conditions was often very low depending on individual socio-economic conditions. In early Islamic times we see some changes in the supply of the slave market. From the middle of the seventh century onwards, the *baqṭ*, an agreement between Muslim Egypt and Nubia, determined a yearly influx of at least 300 slaves from Nubia to Egypt. The impact of this growth for the labor market can, however, not be determined since it is unclear whether these slaves remained in Egypt or were brought to other parts of the Islamic Empire.

6 Law and legal practice

Tracing the development of distinctive Muslim legal practices is rightly considered one of the thorniest issues of the transition from Byzantine to Islamic rule in Egypt. On the one hand, Muslim historical sources maintain that the early caliphs designated experts responsible for passing judgments (Arab. *quḍāt*, sing. *qāḍī* "judge") in the conquered provinces, implying that a system of Islamic jurisprudence was a cornerstone of the early Muslim community since its inception.[21] At the other end of the spectrum, tangible documentary evidence for Muslim courts are not mentioned in the papyri from Egypt until the ninth and tenth centuries.[22] The earliest surviving manuscript evidence for jurisprudential *œuvres* similarly lacks traces of a class of legal scholars in Egypt prior to the late eighth/early ninth century.[23]

Conversely, seventh- and eighth-century documentary evidence offers only sparse glimpses of the formative process of Islamic legal practices. *Juridical* documents (mostly acknowledgments of debts) in Arabic appear within the Muslim minority community as early as the seventh century.[24] Unique among these is the bilin-

21 For the first *qāḍī* of Fusṭāṭ, Sulaym b. ʿItr al-Tujībī (in office from 40/660-661 to 60/679-680), mentioned by historiographic sources, cf. Tillier (2012) 59. The first *qāḍī* mentioned in documentary sources is probably in *P.HindsNubia* (Qaṣr Ibrīm; 758) r, 46. It is noteworthy that the *qāḍī* mentioned there issues a verdict that pertains to the affairs of a non-Muslim country.

22 E. g. *P.GrohmannUrkunden* 7 (Ushmūn/Hermopolis; IX); *Chrest.Khoury* I 78, 82, and 83 (all from Ushmūn/Hermopolis; IX–X).

23 Brockopp (2011) and *id*. (2017).

24 See the list of documents in Tillier/Vanthieghem (2019) 148–149.

gual Arabic/Greek *P.Ness*. 56, which records a settlement between a Christian and a Muslim. The presence of two separate lists of (respectively Muslim and Christian) witnesses and the different legal formularies of the Greek and the Arabic versions possibly hint at parallel but separate Muslim and Christian legal communities in seventh-century Syria. It has been suggested that members of the earliest Muslim community operated within the traditional body of norms based on common practice referred to as *sunna*[25] and mentioned in several seventh-century Arabic legal documents. Both the reading of the term and its interpretation, however, are matters of debate.[26] In parallel, documentary evidence suggests that early converts continued to adhere to pre-Islamic legal practices.[27]

More generally, the formulaic and terminological features of Arabic legal documents from early Islamic Egypt and Syria differ markedly from their coeval Greek and Coptic counterparts. Arabic legal formularies display formal and terminological affinities to a conceptually "Semitic" legal culture which has its strongest examples in Hebrew and Aramaic but also features in Sabaic and Nabatean legal documents.[28]

At the outset of the eighth century, the first evidence for the involvement of Muslim authorities in *judicial* issues emerges. A handful of missives by the governor Qurra b. Sharīk (in office 709 – 714) to Basileios, pagarch of Aphrodito, pertain to the adjudication of disputes brought to the governor's attention by the local population. Such letters contain detailed instructions regarding the collection of evidence and the reaching of a verdict.[29] While the plaintiffs are Christian villagers and most of the correspondence between Qurra and Basileios is in Greek, all the letters of legal relevance in the dossier are redacted in Arabic. Further, the language of the missives echoes procedures and terminology of Qur'anic ascendancy.[30] This signalizes not only a centralization of the judicial apparatus at the provincial level, but also a transition from Byzantine procedures towards legal practices with an Islamic coloring. Corroborative evidence hints at a broader context. Some of the phraseology and technical terminology of Qurra's letters of judicial character find parallels in a fragmentary papyrus missive[31] dated to approximately one generation earlier. The letter was possibly addressed by the governor ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿUtba al-Fihrī or his successor in office ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān to a pagarch of Ushmūn.[32] Finally, the same

25 Bruning (2015), particularly 366 – 374.

26 The Arabic morpheme *snh* can stand both for *sunna* "practice, normative precedent" and *sana* "year." On the pros and contras of each reading, see Bruning (2015) and Shaddel (2018) and Tillier/Vanthieghem (2019) respectively.

27 See, e.g., the eighth-century Coptic rent contract on O.Louvre AF 12678 published by Richter (2012) and involving at least one but possibly two Muslim converts.

28 Khan (1994a) 364 – 368; *id*. (1994b); and *id*. (2008). Cf. Crone/Silverstein (2010).

29 Tillier (2013a) 28 – 29 and *id*. (2013b) 145 – 146.

30 Tillier (2013a) 26 – 28 and *id*. (2013b) 143 – 145. Cf. Donner (2011) 86.

31 *P.DiemGouverneur* (Ushmūn/Hermopolis?; 684 – 685).

32 Diem (1983).

judicial technical terminology occurs in a coeval papyrus from the Syrian town of Khirbat al-Mird.[33]

One distinctive feature of Islamic legal practice manifests itself early on during Muslim rule in Egypt: discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims in the application of taxation law. The papyri of the early seventh century reveal that a tax called *diagraphon* or *andrismos* was levied among non-Muslim subjects. The majority of scholars perceive this tax as religiously motivated and thus as one of the rare examples of distinctively Islamic innovation seen at an early stage.[34] Fiscal distinctions between Muslims and non-Muslims are also perceptible in the area of trade (**Stefanie Schmidt**). Islamic legal sources drafted outside of Egypt describe different tax rates to be applied to merchandise depending on the merchant's religion and relationship to Islam. Those who lived outside the Muslim empire, for instance, had to pay the full 10 % tax (*ʿushr*) *ad valorem* when they traded in a Muslim country. *Dhimmī*[35] merchants, non-Muslims who lived in a Muslim ruled country, paid half the *ʿushr*, except when trading in wine or pork, which was liable to the full amount.[36]

7 Religion

According to a tradition first recorded by Eusebius of Caesarea in the early fourth century, it was Mark the Evangelist who launched a missionary journey to the city of Alexandria and founded a Christian community there. The recently published *Historia Episcopatus Alexandriae*, a medieval Ethiopian version of a Greek composition from the late fourth century, builds upon this tradition.[37] Since neither *Acts*[38] nor Clement of Alexandria nor Origenes mention anything at all about Mark visiting Egypt, the story may be an entirely fabricated one from the early fourth century, a time when the Alexandrian church was competing with Rome, Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Antioch for supreme status and authority and therefore might have seen claiming apostolic foundation as rather expedient.

While Alexandria was the seat of a Christian community from around the middle of the first century, Christianity seems to have taken hold in the Egyptian hinterland only in the first half of the third century. During the Decian and Valerian persecutions in the 250s, many Alexandrian clerics were deported to the Libyan desert or to Upper Egypt, and these persecutions probably had the unintended effect of

33 *P.Mird* 31 (Khirbat al-Mird; VII/VIII).
34 Sijpesteijn (2007); Morelli (2001), but cf. also Papaconstantinou (2010).
35 Cahen (2012).
36 Yaḥyā b. Ādam (Shemesh) nos. 39, 121, 219, 213, 214–216, 221–222, and 639. Abū Yūsuf (Fagnan) p. 187–188 and 204–213; Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām (Nyazee) nos. 1655–1692.
37 Euseb. Hist.Eccl. 2.16; Bausi/Camplani (2017) *HepA* §§ 1–5.
38 Acts 18.24–28.

spreading Christianity further.[39] Only from the late third century and increasingly into the fourth century do we find growing evidence in the papyri of Christian names, Christian forms of greeting, *nomina sacra,* and indications of ranks within the Christian community such as catechumen, baptized person, or member of the clergy.

In his recent *Early Christian Books in Egypt,* Roger Bagnall estimates the proportion of Christians in the entire population of Egypt at the start of the tenure of the Alexandrian bishop Demetrius (189 – 232) at a mere one in a thousand. Despite steady growth during Demetrius' episcopate, Bagnall argues that Christians comprised only one percent of the entire population by Demetrius' death in 232 and merely two percent by around the middle of the century.[40] Then a rapid expansion of Christianity occurred. Mark Depauw and Willy Clarysse, expanding Roger Bagnall's study from 1982, have recently argued that up to 15 – 20 % of the Egyptian population were Christians by 300 and that Egypt was home to a largely Christian society at the end of the fourth century.[41]

The major theological controversies dominating literary accounts of Christian Egypt between the fourth and eighth centuries and culminating in the formation of the miaphysite Coptic Church receive little or no mention in the papyri.[42] The reasons for this lie to some extent in the nature of the source material; text types such as purchase agreements, tax lists, or inventories do not generally deal with the finer points of theology. In addition, most of the sources we have at our disposal were produced in Middle and Upper Egypt – areas that were far from the channels of theological and intellectual exchange centering on Alexandria, where papyrological sources have not survived due to the climate.[43] Ewa Wipszycka has argued that Chalcedonian ecclesiastical structures and monasteries could have existed mainly in Egypt's administrative centers, which were more immediately connected to Byzantine central authority, while their influence might not have pervaded rural areas in the same way, allowing for the spread of the miaphysite church in the countryside from the reign of Justinian I on.[44] A Chalcedonian resurgence in the early seventh century was apparently mainly due to charismatic ecclesiastical leadership.[45] Heraclius' reconquest of Egypt after the period of Persian dominion gave further prominence to

39 See Huebner (2019) chapters 1 and 2 for the spread of Christianity in Egypt and a discussion of a Christian community in the Fayum in the first half of the third century CE.

40 Bagnall (1982) 105 – 124; Wipszycka (1986); Bagnall (1987); Wipszycka (1988); Bagnall (1993) 279 n. 113; Bagnall (2009) 20. Also see Hopkins (1998).

41 Depauw/Clarysse (2013); for a critical discussion, cf. Frankfurter (2014). Frankfurter in his recent study (2018) focuses on holy men (or rather local prophets) and their appeal to a populace in perpetual crisis.

42 Frend (1972); Davis (2008).

43 Cf. Schmelz (2002) 319.

44 Wipszycka (2007) 345 – 346. Seeing that we do not possess plenty of source material related to church matters from these centers of administration, our perception might be additionally biased.

45 Mikhail (2014) 55 – 56.

the Chalcedonian faction and saw the appointment of a Chalcedonian patriarch in Alexandria.[46] The Arab conquest apparently reversed the situation again, and the miaphysite party gained even more prominence.[47]

Recent years have seen studies devoted to many aspects of monastic life. The economy of Egyptian monasteries has been studied by Ewa Wipszycka, providing an indispensable basis for all further work.[48] Historical aspects of the church as displayed by the evidence of documentary texts have been at the center of Georg Schmelz' book,[49] while Renate Dekker has recently examined the networks of Theban clerics in the seventh century. **Loreleï Vanderheyden**'s contribution to this volume offers a glimpse into who the founders of small monasteries in the countryside could have been. There were various styles of monastic life in Egypt: besides anchorites and coenobitic monasteries, many places also had congregations of anchorites living close or even next to each other in their *laura*, i. e., more independent dwelling places. The Western Theban area is a prime example for all of these: in addition to the coenobitic Monastery of St. Phoibammon at Dayr el-Bahri[50] and the Monastery of Paul at Dayr el-Bakhit,[51] the *laura*-style "Monastery" of Epiphanius[52] and many individual anchorite dwellings were all sited in an area of just a few square kilometers.[53] While the monks of these monasteries definitely were miaphysites, there may also have been a monastery of monks devoted to the Chalcedonian creed: the Dayr al-Rūmī in the Valley of the Queens in Western Thebes, as **Matthias Müller** discusses in his contribution.

Compared to the detail and density of information provided by ninth- and tenth-century literary accounts, contemporary evidence for Islamic practices in the eighth and especially the seventh centuries is notoriously scant. The ubiquitous religious invocations in seventh-century papyri, inscriptions, and coins issued by the Arab authorities in different languages and the titles "God's Servant" (Arab. *ʿabd allāh*) and "Commander of the Believers" (Arab. *amīr al-muʾminīn*) claimed by the Umayyad caliphs reveal that religion was a crucial source of political legitimation and social charisma. Similar religious figures of speech did not exclude other monotheistic believers *per se,* as they did not feature specifically Islamic content. But the awareness of a new religious community that was at least to some degree distinct from the other Abrahamic creeds can be inferred from documentary sources from Egypt and elsewhere.

46 Kaegi (1998).
47 Mikhail (2014); Sijpesteijn (2013) 56 – 58.
48 Wipszycka (2009); *id.* (2011).
49 Schmelz (2002).
50 Godlewski (1986); O'Connell (2007) 254 – 259.
51 Beckh (2016); Hodak (2016).
52 Winlock/Crum (1926).
53 See, e. g., Boud'hors/Heurtel (2010); Hasznos (2013); Underwood/Behlmer (2016); Müller (2017).

In papyri and in inscriptions in Greek and Syriac, the offspring of conquerors are referred to as *moagaritai*/*mhaggrayē*, a derivative of Arabic *muhājirūn*[54] "emigrants." In turn, the scant seventh-century Arabic documents use the new collective name of *muʾminūn,* "believers," to refer to adherents of the incipient religious community led by a "Commander of the Believers."[55] Furthermore, even the earliest extant specimens of Arabic writing are dated according to the Muslim calendar and era. Greek, Coptic, and Syriac papyri and inscriptions refer to the new era as "the year of the Arabs" or "Saracens" or as the "year of the rule of the Arabs," further suggesting the perception (and self-perception) of the conquerors as a distinctive community.

Modern research into the beginnings of Islam has struggled to explain the virtually total lack of references to the charismatic figure of the Prophet Muḥammad in the documentary record prior to the years of the second Muslim civil war (680 – 692). To explain this conspicuous absence, more skeptical scholars have denied that a historical charismatic figure by the name of Muḥammad even existed and proposed that he was, rather, an invention of later centuries.[56] A less radical approach is supported by coinage minted in Iraq and Iran by governors siding with Ibn al-Zubayr's rebellion on which Muḥammad was proclaimed the "Messenger of God." The clearest testament to the effectiveness of this move is the decision by the now victorious Umayyads to assimilate this tactic and triumphantly proclaim Muḥammad's role as prophet on aniconic coinage, in bilingual papyrus protocols, and in the mosaic inscriptions of the Dome of the Rock (691 – 692). It may be added that seventh-century Christian accounts ascribe Muḥammad a leading role in the early Muslim community despite the silence of coeval Arabic sources on this point.[57]

A need for stricter articulation of the boundaries of Islam perceived by broad strata of society is visible from an early stage in Egypt. The Muslim profession of faith that appears on the tombstone of one ʿAbbāsa bt. Jurayj in Aswan as early as 690 – 691 is not only the earliest attestation of a version of the Muslim *shahāda* (the Muslim "testimony" of faith) in the Arabic language, but also the first declaration of the Islamic creed which has been found outside an official context. At the same time, ʿAbbāsa's tombstone illustrates the still-fluid boundaries of Islam: this

54 See in particular Lindstedt (2015). On the meaning of the root *h-j-r*, see Crone (1994).

55 See Donner (2002 – 2003), who holds that the first Believers movement could include Christians and Jews sharing common notions of righteousness and piety.

56 Luxemberg (2000), Nevo/Koren (2003), and Popp (2010) for instance all defend the view that *muḥammad*, "blessed," is nothing more than an anthropomorphized epithet that originally referred to Jesus.

57 See for instance the annotation dated 637 on a Gospel manuscript registering an incursion of the "Arabs of Muhammad" (Hoyland [1997] 116 – 117 and Penn [2015] 22 – 24) or the passage of the Armenian history attributed to the bishop Sebeos (*floruit* ca. 660s) in which the author reports that Muhammad established the basic dietary and ethical norms of the early Muslim community (Hoyland [1997] 131).

version of the profession of faith notably diverges in wording and composition from the official "vulgate(s)" of the Dome of the Rock and Arab-Sasanian coinage.[58]

More generally, the Egyptian evidence attests to a rising interest by men of knowledge for crafting and transmitting narratives of an Islamic past. A possibly seventh-century Arabic fragment on papyrus containing a list of Qur'anic prophets,[59] for instance, compliments another specimen from the Syrian town of Khirbat al-Mird that preserves a list of participants in the battle at Badr.[60] More elaborate examples of incipient literary narratives of an Islamic past appear at the end of the eighth century, as attested by papyrus fragments of the lost *History of the Caliphs* by Ibn Isḥāq[61] and of the Prophet Muḥammad's campaigns.[62]

The papyri also shed some light on the rituals and dues associated with the practice of Islam in early Islamic Egypt. In a fragmentary Arabic letter paleographically assigned to the seventh century, a tradesman mentions to his business partner his garment for the *Ḥajj*, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. The centrality of the pilgrimage in its duality as both a spiritual and a social collective ritual is further highlighted in a letter by the Umayyad prince Sahl b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān to the deputy governor ʿUqba b. Muslim al-Tujibī[63] in which the addressee is instructed to join the caliph's caravan to the Holy City. The letter by the pagarch of the Fayum Nājid b. Muslim instructing his subordinate ʿAbd Allāh b. Asʿad on collecting the *zakāt* and *ṣadaqa*[64] from Muslim villagers[65] implies an institutionalization of the Qur'anic command concerning the alms tax.

Widespread conversion from Christianity to Islam did not take place immediately after the Arab conquest of Egypt.[66] Even though religious conversion has been recognized as probably the most important factor lending momentum to change, its timing is still a matter of debate. Two waves of mass conversion have been suggested for the early eighth and above all the fourteenth centuries that resulted in Coptic Christians constituting merely – as today – a tenth of the total population of Egypt.[67]

---

58 Bacharach/Anwar (2012).
59 *P.Mil.Vogl.* 1 (Egypt; VIII). The mention of the prophet Shuʿayb alongside the pan-Abrahamic figures of Ilyās (= Elias), Nūḥ (=Noah), and Ibrahīm (=Abraham) indicates a Qur'anic referential dimension.
60 *P.Mird.* 71 (Khirbat al-Mird; early VIII).
61 *P.AbbottLiteraryPapyri* 6 (Egypt; late VIII). Cf., however, the critical remarks on its authorship by Brockopp (2017).
62 *P.AbbottLiteraryPapyri* 5 (Egypt; late VIII).
63 *P.SijpesteijnInvitation* (Egypt; 705–717).
64 For the seemingly interchangeable use of the terms *zakāt* and *ṣadaqa* in early Islamic papyri, see Sijpesteijn (2013) 181–189 and cf. *ibid.* n. 365.
65 *P.MuslimState* 8 (Fayum; ca. 730–750).
66 Sijpesteijn (2013) 165–172 and 193–195.
67 Wiet (1913–1936); Perlmann (1942); Little (1976); O'Sullivan (2006); Werthmuller (2010) 75–102; but see also El-Leithy (2004), who argues for a decisive conversion wave only in the fourteenth century triggered by a census and tax reform that promised converts exemption from the poll tax (Dennett [1988]; El-Leithy [2004]). Conversion from Christianity to Islam happened considerably faster in

8 Economy

Egypt was of vital importance for the Byzantine Empire due to its exports of grain and other essential commodities as well as its function as a trade hub with the East, with trade relations stretching as far as India. In decline theories like the long endorsed "Pirenne thesis," the Arab conquest of the Levant and Northern Africa in the seventh century brought about a collapse of this complex economic system of Mediterranean countries.[68] While scholarship, in particular due to seminal studies in Islamic archaeology and Greek and Arabic papyrology, has accumulate convincing evidence against this model,[69] it remains largely unclear how the conquest affected the conquered countries in economic terms. Since economic performance is to a large extent rooted in local sources, traditions, and industry, a study of the micro-level of a country's economy is indispensable before any valuable conclusions about the economic impact of the Arab conquest can be drawn for a Mediterranean, or even global, economy.

Kharga Oasis provides a good example for change before the Arab conquest. **Nicoletta De Troia** surveys the archaeological evidence for signs of human life in the oases in the Western Desert throughout the Byzantine and early Islamic period in tandem with literary accounts. The archaeological record contracts after the fifth century with forts and churches in the area falling into disuse, possibly as a consequence of nomadic incursions. Yet reports by Arab geographers of the ninth and tenth centuries indicate that life at Kharga continued into the Islamic period and that the oasis maintained and indeed considerably extended its role as a borderland integrated into commercial trans-Saharan trade routes.

A sound economy and unimpeded trade were crucial for the new rulers and required favorable conditions for the production and distribution of goods and tight organization of financial and economic activity. **Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello** highlights the main characteristics of the dozen texts forming the sixth-century archive of Silbanos, a soldier from Hermopolis, and his sons. While Silbanos' activities as a soldier are not documented, his family business can partially be reconstructed from a disagreement with his sister over a lease contract with one of his sons, Petros, as landlord, and from a sale contract copying a model used by Georgios, another son of Silbanos'. This archive provides a glimpse of what could be a middle-class family business, with Petros writing a receipt and account on behalf of his so-called "illiterate father," who was in fact more of a "slow writer" – someone who could clumsily write his name but preferred to delegate this tiresome activity. Silbanos and Georgios

---

other parts of the empire, such as Iran, where the major wave of conversions occurred in the early eighth century (Bulliet [1979] 31; El-Leithy [2004] 21–22).

68 Hodges/Whitehouse (1983).

69 E.g., Bessard (2013); Sijpesteijn (2013); *id.* (2007); Papaconstantinou (2010); Gonis (2009); *id.* (2004a-b); *id.* (2003); *id.* (2001); Walmsley (2000); Morelli (2001); Gascou (1983).

invested money in sales of wine and wheat for future deliveries, landholdings, and money loans in Hermopolis and several neighboring villages. Silbanos' archive thus serves as evidence for middle-class investments in various lucrative activities in order to secure continuing prosperity for the next generation.

Archaeological findings of Egyptian pottery sherds in Nubia show that the large-scale exchange that took place in the Byzantine period was still at a high level in the eighth and ninth centuries. As **Stefanie Schmidt** sets out in her chapter in this volume, continuous cross-border trade was indeed favored and secured by the Muslim administration, as is demonstrated by an Arabic letter from 758. In this letter, the Muslim governor of Egypt accuses the Nubian king of not respecting the terms of the *baqṭ*, a diplomatic agreement between Egypt and Nubia to exchange commodities and slaves, and of violating the regulations pertaining to the free and unimpeded commercial border trade carried out by merchants. By securing protection for merchants, the state provided favorable conditions for cross-border trade and thus also boosted its own income, with the stimulation of trade impacting favorably on revenue from customs and trade taxes. The *baqṭ* and the legal background to commercial exchanges certainly benefited local industry and dependent economic actors, but they were also a suitable means of generating state revenue.

Arietta Papaconstantinou discusses patronage and the binding system of personal commitment by credit taking as another form of dependency. Particularly in letters by women, this dependency is clearly expressed and seems to be indicative of helpless female "voices of the seventh century." Adhering to socially expected gender roles and using certain gendered vocabulary, this female behavior is more indicative of patriarchal structures in communities than of poverty. When economic distress strikes suddenly, women turn to men, often to members of the church, to seek financial help. The portrayal of hardship in these documents is intensified by a certain form of literary genre rhetoric, but also by the women taking on the socially expected weak role in which they are not entitled to act without male protection.

Anne Boud'hors's contribution focuses on the archive of Papas, the pagarch of modern Edfu, and explores the integration of former Byzantine elites into the new regime and its fiscal system. Both the Greek and the as-yet unpublished Coptic papyri shed light on the extent to which these elites were involved in tax collection, forced acquisitions, and requisitions for the Muslim army.

Tax receipts do not only show how Muslims took over former methods of state financing. These documents can, moreover, also testify to how the officials who wrote the receipts adjusted gradually to the new conditions. Using the example of the village of Jeme, **Jennifer Cromwell** shows that technical knowledge – including the names of different taxes, the differences in Greek and Coptic formulae, and abbreviation conventions – had to be learned by the scribes. At the beginning of the eighth century, a new generation of scribes can be recognized who were well versed in the new scribal practices and are thus indicative of the formation of a well-functioning fiscal organization.

Matthias Müller's contribution discusses small-scale local business activities of a man living in the eighth century who either became a monk later in his life or deposited his documents inside a monastery. The sums and activities fit neatly into the picture generally gained from sources of that time.[70]

9 Language, literature, and education

The majority of the country's inhabitants spoke Coptic, the latest form the Egyptian language, but, being illiterate, most of them never wrote anything themselves. In the Byzantine period, Coptic was used in writing by the church to reach out to the native Egyptian flock. In addition, Coptic served as the natural form of communication in private correspondence. Greek, on the other hand, had been the primary language of the administrative and legal realm (supplemented by Latin only to a very limited extent) and of the Alexandrian clergy; it was increasingly supplanted by Coptic and Arabic after the Islamic conquest. Finally, Arabic was initially used only by the new ruling elite. Not unexpectedly, each foreign ruling group introduced superstratal, politically hegemonic cultural identifiers in Egypt and in the process also created a complex socio-linguistic framework. Few interactions between distinctive linguo-cultural milieus are more clearly feasible than the practice of bi- and multilingualism and/or multigraphism, as some of this volume's papers show.

Although the conquest of Alexander the Great had established Greek as the dominant language of the administration, Greek never completely supplanted Egyptian. **Loreleï Vanderheyden** discusses the question of the acquisition of literacy and writing proficiency in Greek and Coptic by analyzing the documents pertaining to the village headman and estate administrator Apollos in sixth-century Aphrodito. Apollos' Coptic handwriting indicates a higher degree of proficiency in Coptic than in Greek. Conversely, his use of Greek is principally circumscribed to recurring technical terms and betrays his limited mastery of Greek syntax. In this regard, Apollos is probably representative of the majority of local elites in the Byzantine-Egyptian countryside.

Language choice is unquestionably one of the more readily accessible indicators of cultural trends. Even so, the use of either Greek or Coptic is not an unambiguous marker of either ethnicity or status, given the deep intertwinement of both cultural spheres. **Anne Boud'hors**'s analysis of new documents from the archive of Papas, pagarch of Edfu, shows a striking absence of Arabic, for instance. Furthermore, the use of Greek and Coptic by individuals belonging to Papas' familiar and professional social networks alike does not reveal a clear functional or status-related pattern.

---

70 Papaconstantinou (2016).

Greek retained a key role in Egypt's administration throughout the Byzantine period and even in the first century after the Islamic conquest. The use of Arabic in official chanceries during the early decades of Muslim rule over Egypt was essentially superimposed over the use of Greek and – at a lower administrative level – Coptic. This situation of "social trilingualism"[71] in the provincial administration offered an avenue for forms of cultural interference that were not strictly linguistic. Arab-Muslim officials signaled their social standing by transposing a version of the distinctively Arabic epistolary prescript into their Greek and Coptic correspondence with Christian subordinates. At the other end of the spectrum, Byzantine-Egyptian value systems found an echo in the social behavior of the Arab-Muslim ruling class *vis-à-vis* its subjects throughout the seventh and early eighth centuries. **Eugenio Garosi** provides a comparative analysis of the lexical, formulaic, and visual features of Muslim officials' missives addressed to Christian officials. These reveal a mitigation of distinctive Arab-Muslim cultural identifiers in the shift from Arabic to Greek and Coptic and a propensity towards culturally ambiguous parameters of epistolary politesse and inclusively monotheistic figures of speech.

Overall, the scions of Arab conquerors were confronted with a culturally self-aware local elite. The fear of cultural assimilation of the tiny, if militarily hegemonic, minority of conquerors was one of the motors behind the army policies implemented by the Muslims in Egypt in the early decades after the conquest. As **Alon Dar** describes in his contribution, Muslim tradition ascribes to ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb the controversial decision to prohibit Arab "fighting men" from possessing land and to instruct them to settle in the garrison city (Arab. *miṣr*) of al-Fusṭāṭ, thus hindering them from becoming scattered throughout the countryside and acculturated to the ways of the native population.

Finally, implementing centralizing administrative reforms over the course of the eighth century was an important catalyst for acculturating the Byzantine-Egyptian population. **Jennifer Cromwell**'s chapter elucidates how the scribe Psate's increasing involvement in documents pertaining to taxation in his later career in early eighth-century Jeme is reflected in his shift from Coptic to Greek signatures and modification of his Greek script's features. As far as written media are concerned, language and script choices do not depend on decisions made instinctively, but rather reflect broader cultural trends. For tax receipts, Psate introduced a variant of the Greek script that shows affinities with documentary hands from other regions of Egypt. This development alerts us to a change in scribal training and suggests that the central administration had become more involved in (or had gained more influence over) the training of local administrators and the collection of taxes. It also prefigures more closely regulated scribal practices in the decades that were to come.

Lucian Reinfandt presents us a representative of this subsequent generation, which saw the rise of a class of native Egyptian professional bureaucrats who

71 Richter (2010) 215.

acted as bi- and trilingual scribes for their Arab-Muslim superiors. The expertise of these specialized clerks transcended mastery of multiple languages and scripts *stricto sensu* and included the adoption of cultural traits like Arabic names, mastery of Arabic scribal conventions, and conversion to Islam. These allowed them to cross cultural boundaries and act as bridges between different value systems. The ambiguous cultural profile of these individuals not only made them valuable resources for their Arab-Muslim superiors both within and outside the administration, but also represented a pathway towards higher social standing, legal security, and economic benefits. Conversely, the appropriation of elite cultural identifiers weakened these transcultural bureaucrats' ties with their (conjecturally Coptic) native cultural milieus, which resulted in stronger dependency on the rulers. Gradually, this class of professional clerks was instrumental in reforming the mechanics of Egypt's administrative hierarchy, prompting the gradual replacement of local non-Arabicized elites more loosely integrated in the Arab-Muslim imperial system.

Acknowledgments

It gives us great pleasure to acknowledge the individuals and institutions without whose considerable support the conference and this publication would not have been possible. First, we thank everyone involved in the conference which took place in Basel from 16 to 18 May 2017, in particular the various funders of the event: we are grateful to the Swiss National Science Foundation, the Max Geldner Foundation, and the Freie Akademische Gesellschaft Basel for their generous financial support. In addition, we thank everyone involved in the organization of the conference, especially Florence Anliker, Ricarda Berthold, Marie Besso, Dario Giacometti, Monika Henzen, Victoria Landau, Denis Rakazovic, and Audric Wannaz.

We also want to thank sincerely our contributors for submitting their chapters in a timely manner and for their patience during the editing and production process. We are especially grateful to our student assistants at the Institute of Ancient History Dario Giacometti, Eleonora Kacl, Victoria Landau, Florian Setz, and Audric Wannaz for helping with the practical aspects of the editing process, for locating various books for us, and for copy-editing and proofreading the proceedings. We thank Sarah Swift for language-checking several chapters of the manuscript and Philippa Jevons for providing us with the indices.

Finally, we thank the editors for including this volume in their series and the staff at De Gruyter for seeing it swiftly through the production process.

Basel, August 2018

Sabine R. Huebner, Eugenio Garosi,
Isabelle Marthot-Santaniello, Matthias Müller,
Stefanie Schmidt, Matthias Stern

Bibliography

Bagnall (1982): Roger S. Bagnall, “Religious conversion and onomastic change in early Byzantine Egypt”, in: *Bulletin of the American Association of Papyrologists* 19, 105 – 124.

Bagnall (1987): Roger S. Bagnall, “Conversion and onomastics. A reply”, in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 69, 243 – 250.

Bagnall (1993): Roger S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, Princeton, NJ.

Bagnall (2009): Roger S. Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt*, Oxford and Princeton, NJ.

Bacharach/Anwar (2012): Jere Bacharach and Sherif Anwar, “Early versions of the shahāda. A tombstone from Aswan of 71 A.H., the Dome of the Rock, and contemporary coinage”, in: *Der Islam* 89, 60 – 69.

Bausi/Camplani (2017): Alessandro Bausi and Alberto Camplani, “The *History of the Episcopate of Alexandria (HEpA): Editio minor* of the fragments preserved in the *Aksumite Collection* and in the *Codex Veronensis* LX (58)”, in: *Adamantius* 22, 249 – 302.

Beckh (2016): Thomas Beckh, “Monks, magicians, archaeologists. New results on Coptic settlement development in Dra’ Abu el-Naga North, Western Thebes”, in: Paola Buzi, Alberto Camplani, and Federico Contardi (eds.), *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th–22nd, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th–19th, 2008* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 247), Leuven, Paris, and Bristol, 739 – 748.

Berkes (2017): Lajos Berkes, *Dorfverwaltung und Dorfgemeinschaft in Ägypten von Diokletian zu den Abbasiden* (Philippika 104), Wiesbaden.

Bessard (2013): Fanny Bessard, “The urban economy in southern inland Greater Syria from the seventh century to the end of the Umayyads”, in: Luke Lavan (ed.*), Local Economies? Production and Exchange of Inland Regions in Late Antiquity*, Leiden, 377 – 421.

Brockopp (2011): Jonathan E. Brockopp, “The formation of Islamic law. The Egyptian school (750 – 900)”, in: *Annales Islamologiques* 45, 123 – 140.

Brockopp (2017): Jonathan E. Brockopp, *Muhammad’s Heirs. The Rise of Muslim Scholarly Communities, 622 – 950*, Cambridge.

Boud’hors/Heurtel (2010): Anne Boud’hors and Chantal Heurtel, *Les ostraca coptes de la TT 29. Autour du moine Frangé* (Études d’Archéologie Thébaine 3), Brussels.

Bruning (2015): Jelle Bruning, “A legal Sunna in *Dhikr Ḥaqq*s from Sufyanid Egypt”, in: *Islamic Law and Society* 22, 352 – 374.

Bruning (2018): Jelle Bruning, *The Rise of a Capital. Al-Fusṭāṭ and Its Hinterland, 18/639 – 132/750* (Islamic History and Civilization 153), Leiden.

Bulliet (1979): Richard W. Bulliet, “Conversion to Islam and the emergence of a Muslim society in Iran”, in: Nehemiah Levtzion (ed.), *Conversion to Islam*, New York, 30 – 51.

Cahen (2012): Claude Cahen, “D̲himma”, in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*². http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573 – 3912_islam_SIM_1823 (last accessed 31 July 2018).

Charanis (1967): Peter Charanis, “Observations on the demography of the Byzantine Empire”, in: *Proceedings of the XIIIth International Congress of Byzantine Studies*, Oxford, 1 – 19.

Cromwell (2017): Jennifer A. Cromwell, *Recording Village Life. A Coptic Scribe in Early Islamic Egypt* (New Texts from Ancient Cultures), Ann Arbor.

Crone (1994): Patricia Crone, “The first-century concept of *hiǧra*”, in: *Arabica* 41, 352 – 387.

Crone/Silverstein (2010): Patricia Crone and Adam Silverstein, “The ancient Near East and Islam. The case of lot-casting”, in: *Journal of Semitic Studies* 55, 423 – 450.

Davis (2008): Stephen J. Davis, *Coptic Christology in Practise. Incarnation and Divine Participation in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt* (Oxford Early Christian Studies), Oxford.

Dekker (2018): Renate Dekker, *Episcopal Networks and Authority in Late Antique Egypt. Bishops of the Theban Region at Work* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 264), Leuven, Paris, and Bristol.
Delattre/Pintaudi/Vanthieghem (2013): Alain Delattre, Rosario Pintaudi, and Naïm Vanthieghem, "Un entagion bilingue du gouverneur ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān trouvé à Antinoé", in: *Chronique d'Égypte* 88, 363 – 371.
Delattre/Vanthieghem (2016): Alain Delattre and Naïm Vanthieghem, "Un ensemble archivistique trilingue à Strasbourg. Un protocole et deux ordres de réquisition de la fin du VIIe siècle", in: Jean-Luc Fournet and Arietta Papaconstantinou (eds.), *Mélanges Jean Gascou. Textes et études papyrologiques (P.Gascou)* (Travaux et mémoires 20/1), Paris, 109 – 131.
Dennett (1950): Daniel C. Dennett, *Conversion and the Poll Tax in Early Islam*, Cambridge, MA.
Depauw/Clarysse (2013): Mark Depauw and Willy Clarysse, "How Christian was fourth-century Egypt? Onomastic perspectives on conversion", in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 67, 407 – 435.
Diem (1983): Werner Diem, "Der Gouverneur an den Pagarchen. Ein verkannter arabischer Papyrus vom Jahre 65 der Hiğra" (= *P.DiemGouverneur*), in: *Der Islam* 60, 104 – 111.
Dijkstra (2012): Jitse H. F. Dijkstra, *Syene. I: The Figural and Textual Graffiti from the Temple of Isis at Aswan* (Beiträge zur ägyptischen Bauforschung und Altertumskunde 18), Darmstadt.
Donner (2002 – 2003): Fred M. Donner, "From Believers to Muslims. Confessional self-identity in the early Islamic community", in: *Al-Abhath* 50 – 51, 9 – 53.
Donner (2011): Fred M. Donner, "Qur'ânicization of religio-political discourse in the Umayyad period", in: *Revue du monde musulman et de la Méditerranée* 129, 79 – 92.
Frankfurter (2014): David Frankfurter, "Onomastic statistics and the Christianization of Egypt. A response to Depauw and Clarysse", in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 68, 284 – 289.
Frankfurter (2018): David Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt. Syncretism and Local Worlds in Late Antiquity* (Martin Classical Lectures), Princeton.
Frend (1972): William H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement. Chapters in the History of the Church in the Fifth and Sixth Centuries,* Cambridge.
Gascou (1983): Jean Gascou, "De Byzance a l'Islam. Les impôts en Égypte après la conquête arabe", in: *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 26, 97 – 109.
Godlewski (1986): Włodzimierz Godlewski, *Le Monastère de St Phoibammon* (Deir el-Bahari V), Warsaw.
Gonis (2001): Nikolaos Gonis, "Reconsidering some fiscal documents from early Islamic Egypt", in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 137, 225 – 228.
Gonis (2003): Nikolaos Gonis, "Five tax receipts from early Islamic Egypt", in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 143, 149 – 157.
Gonis (2004a): Nikolaos Gonis, "Arabs, monks and taxes. Notes on documents from Deir el-Bala'izah", in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 148, 213 – 224.
Gonis (2004b): Nikolaos Gonis, "Reconsidering some fiscal documents from early Islamic Egypt II", in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 150, 187 – 193.
Gonis (2009): Nikolaos Gonis, "Reconsidering some fiscal documents from early Islamic Egypt III", in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 169, 197 – 208.
El-Hawary (1930): Hassan Mohammed El-Hawary, "The most ancient Islamic monument known dated A.H. 31 (A.D. 652) from the time of the third Calif ʿUthman", in: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 62.2, 321 – 333.
El-Hawary (1932): Hassan Mohammed El-Hawary, "The second oldest Islamic monument known, dated AH 71 (691), from the time of Omayyad Calif ʿAbd-el-Malik ibn Marwan", in: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2, 289 – 293.
Hasznos (2013): Andrea Hasznos, *Coptic Texts from the "Monastery of Cyriacus" (TT 65)* I, with an introduction by Tamás A. Bács (Studia Aegyptiaca XX), Budapest.
Hodak (2016): Suzana Hodak, "The ostraca of Deir el-Bachit and the Anatolios-Zacharias archive", in: Paola Buzi, Alberto Camplani, and Federico Contardi (eds.), *Coptic Society, Literature and*

Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th–22nd, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th–19th, 2008 (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 247), Leuven, Paris, and Bristol, 723 – 738.

Hodges/Whitehouse (1983): Richard Hodges and David Whitehouse, *Mohammed, Charlemagne and the Origins of Europe. Archaeology and the Pirenne Thesis*, Ithaca, NY.

Hopkins (1998): Keith Hopkins, “Christian number and its implications”, in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, 185 – 226.

Huebner (2019): Sabine R. Huebner, *Papyri and the Social World of the New Testament,* Cambridge.

Kaegi (1998): Walter E. Kaegi, *Heraclius, Emperor of Byzantium*, Cambridge.

Khan (1994a): Geoffrey Khan, “An Arabic legal document from the Umayyad period” (= *P.KhanLegalDocument*), in: *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society 3rd Series* 4, 357 – 368.

Khan (1994b): Geoffrey Khan, “The pre-Islamic background of Muslim legal formularies”, in: *Aram periodical* 6, 173–224.

Khan (2008): Geoffrey Khan, “Remarks on the historical background and development of the early Arabic documentary formulae”, in: Eva M. Grob and Andreas Kaplony (eds.), *Documentary Letters from the Middle East. The Evidence in Greek, Coptic, South Arabian, Pehlevi, and Arabic (1st–15th CE)* (Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques LXII/3), Bern *et al*., 885–906.

Legendre (2016): Marie Legendre, “Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The duke of the Thebaid and the formation of the Umayyad state”, in: *Historical Research* 89, no. 243, 3 – 18. DOI: 10.1111/1468 – 2281.12113

el-Leithy (2004): Tamer el-Leithy, *Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo, 1293 – 1524 A.D.*, Ph.D. diss., Princeton.

Lindstedt (2015): Ilkka Lindstedt, “Muhājirūn as a name for the first/seventh century Muslims”, in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 74, 67–73.

Little (1976): Donald P. Little, “Coptic conversion to Islam under the Baḥrī Mamlūks, 692 – 755/1293 – 1354”, in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 39, 552 – 569.

Luijendijk (2008): AnneMarie Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord. Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri,* Cambridge, MA.

Luxenberg (2000): Christoph Luxenberg, *Die syro-aramäische Lesart des Koran. Ein Beitrag zur Entschlüsselung der Koransprache*, Berlin.

Mikhail (2014): Maged Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt. Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (Library of Middle East History 45), London.

Morelli (2001): Federico Morelli, *Documenti greci per la fiscalità e la amministrazione dell’Egitto arabo* (= *CPR* XXII), Vienna.

Morelli (2008): Federico Morelli, “Zwischen Poesie und Geschichte. Die ‘flagornerie’ des Dioskoros und der dreifache Dux Athanasios”, in: Jean-Luc Fournet and Caroline Magdelaine (eds.), *Les archives de Dioscore d’Aphrodité cent ans après leur découverte. Histoire et culture dans l’Égypte Byzantine. Actes du colloque de Strasbourg (8 – 10 décembre 2005)* (Collections de l’Université Marc Bloch – Strasbourg; Études d’archéologie et d’histoire ancienne), Paris, 223 – 245.

Morelli (2010): Federico Morelli, “Consiglieri e comandanti. I titoli del governatore arabo d’Egitto symboulos e amîr”, in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 173, 158 – 166.

Müller (2017): Matthias Müller, “Coptic ostraca in the tombs of the South Asasif necropolis,” in: Elena Pischikova (ed.), *Tombs of the South Asasif Necropolis. New Discoveries and Research 2012 – 14*, Cairo, 281 – 312.

Nevo/Koren (2003): Yehuda Nevo and Judith Koren, *Crossroads to Islam. The Origins of the Arab Religion and the Arab State*, New York.

O'Connell (2007): Elisabeth R. O'Connell, "Transforming monumental landscapes in late antique Egypt. Monastic dwellings in legal documents from Western Thebes", in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 15, 239 – 273.
O'Sullivan (2006): Shaun O'Sullivan, "Coptic conversion and the Islamization of Egypt", in: *Mamluk Studies Review* 10.2, 65 – 79.
Palme (2013a): Bernhard Palme, "Staat und Gesellschaft des spätantiken Ägypten im Spiegel der Papyri", in: *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 43, 95 – 133.
Palme (2013b): Bernhard Palme, "Arcadia, Egypt", in: Roger S. Bagnall et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ancient History* II, Chichester, 622 – 624.
Palme (2013c): Bernhard Palme, "Administration, late antique Egypt", in: Roger S. Bagnall *et al.* (eds.)*, Encyclopedia of Ancient History* I, Chichester, 82 – 85.
Papaconstantinou (2010): Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Administering the early Islamic Empire. Insights from the papyri", in: John Haldon (ed.), *Money, Power, and Politics in Early Islamic Syria. A Review of Current Debates*, Farnham, 57–74.
Papaconstantinou (2015): Arietta Papaconstantinou, "The rhetoric of power and the voice of reason. Tensions between central and local in the correspondence of Qurra ibn Sharīk", in: Stephan Procházka, Lucian Reinfandt, and Sven Tost (eds.), *Official Epistolography and the Language(s) of Power. Proceedings of the First International Conference of the Research Network "Imperium & Officium: Comparative Studies in Ancient Bureaucracy and Officialdom," University of Vienna, 10–12 November 2010* (Papyrologica Vindobonensia 8)*,* Vienna, 267–281.
Papaconstantinou (2016): Arietta Papaconstantinou, "Credit, debt and dependence in early Islamic Egypt", in: Jean-Luc Fournet and Arietta Papaconstantinou (eds.), *Mélanges Jean Gascou. Textes et études papyrologiques (P.Gascou)* (Travaux et Mémoires 20/1), Paris, 613 – 642.
Perlmann (1942): Moshe Perlmann, "Notes on anti-Christian propaganda in the Mamlūk Empire", in: *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 10, 843 – 861.
Popp (2010): Volker Popp, "Die frühe Islamgeschichte nach inschriftlichen und numismatischen Zeugnissen", in: Karl-Heinz Ohlig and Gerd-Rüdiger Puin (eds.), *Die dunklen Anfänge. Neue Forschungen zur Entstehung und frühen Geschichte des Islam*, Berlin, 16 – 123.
Richter (2010): Tonio Sebastian Richter, "Language choice in the Qurra dossier", in: Arietta Papaconstantinou (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the 'Abbāsids*, Burlington, 189–220.
Sänger (2011): Patrick Sänger, "The administration of Sasanian Egypt. New masters and Byzantine continuity", in: *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 51, 653 – 665.
Schmelz (2002): Georg Schmelz, *Kirchliche Amtsträger im spätantiken Ägypten nach den Aussagen der griechischen und koptischen Papyri und Ostraka* (Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete, Beihefte 13), München and Leipzig.
Schmidt (forthcoming): Stefanie Schmidt, "The Frontier Zone at the First Cataract before and at the time of the Muslim conquest (5th to 7th centuries)", in: Jelle Bruning, Jannike de Jong, and Petra M. Sijpesteijn, (eds.), *Incorporating Egypt. From Constantinople to Baghdad, 500 – 1000 CE*, Cambridge.
Shaddel (2018): Mehdi Shaddel, "'The year according to the reckoning of the Believers': Papyrus Louvre inv. J. David-Weill 20 and the origins of the *hijrī* era", in: *Der Islam* 95, 291 – 311.
Sijpesteijn (2007): Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "New rule over old structures. Egypt after the Muslim rule", in: Roger S. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, Cambridge, 437–459.
Sijpesteijn (2013): Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State. The World of a Mid-Eighth Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford Studies in Byzantium), Oxford.
Tillier (2012): Mathieu Tillier, *al-Kindī, Histoire des cadis égyptiens*. Présenté, traduit et annoté par Mathieu Tillier, Cairo.

Tillier (2013a): Mathieu Tillier, "Du pagarque au cadi. Ruptures et continuités dans l'administration judiciaire de la Haute-Égypte (Ier–IIIe/VIIe–IXe siècle)", in : *Médiévales* 64, 19 – 36.

Tillier (2013b): Mathieu Tillier, "Dispensing justice in a minority context. The judicial administration of Upper Egypt under Muslim rule in the early eighth century", in: Robert G. Hoyland (ed.), *The Late Antique World of Early Islam. Muslims among Jews and Christians in the East Mediterranean*, Princeton, 133 – 156.

Tillier/Vanthieghem (2019): 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: John Tolan (ed.), *Geneses: A Comparative Study of the Historiographies of the Rise of Christianity, Rabbinic Judaism, and Islam*, London, 148 – 188.

Underwood/Behlmer (2016): Matthew Underwood and Heike Behlmer, "Coptic documents from the tomb of Meri, Theban Tomb No. 95", in: Paola Buzi, Alberto Camplani, and Federico Contardi (eds.), *Coptic Society, Literature and Religion from Late Antiquity to Modern Times. Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Rome, September 17th–22nd, 2012, and Plenary Reports of the Ninth International Congress of Coptic Studies, Cairo, September 15th–19th, 2008* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 247), Leuven, Paris, and Bristol, 779 – 793.

Walmsley (2000): Alan Walmsley, "Production, exchange and regional trade in the Islamic east Mediterranean. Old structures, new system?", in: Inge L. Hansen and Chris Wickham (eds.), *The Long Eighth Century. The Transformation of the Roman World*, Leiden, 265 – 343.

Werthmuller (2010): Kurt J. Werthmuller, *Coptic Identity and Ayyubid Politics in Egypt, 1218 – 1250*, Cairo, New York.

Wiet (1913 – 1936): Gaston Wiet, "Ḳibṭ", in: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*^{1}. http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2214 – 871X_ei1_COM_0138 (last accessed 23 May 2019).

Winlock/Crum (1926): Herbert E. Winlock and Walter E. Crum. *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes I. The Archaeological Material; The Literary Material* (The Metropolitan Museum Egyptian Expedition), New York.

Wipszycka (1986): Ewa Wipszycka, "La valeur de l'onomastique pour l'histoire de la christianisation de l'Égypte. À propos d'une étude de R. S. Bagnall", in: *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 62, 173 – 181.

Wipszycka (1988): Ewa Wipszycka, "La christianisation de l'Égypte aux IVe–VIe siècles. Aspects sociaux et ethniques", in: *Aegyptus* 68, 117 – 165 [reprinted in: E. Wipszycka 1996, *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'antiquité tardive* (Studia Ephemeridis "Augustinianum" 52), Rome, 63 – 106].

Wipszycka (2007): Ewa Wipszycka, "The institutional church", in: Roger S. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, Cambridge, 331–349.

Wipszycka (2009): Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe–VIIIe siècles)*, Warschau.

Wipszycka (2011): Ewa Wipszycka, "Resources and economic activities of the Egyptian monastic communities (4th–8th century)", in: *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 41, 159 – 264.