THE ḪURRAH PAPYRI FROM APHRODITO IN THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

By

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THE KURRAH PAPYRI
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ORIENTAL INSTITUTE
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AJSL American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures (Chicago etc., 1884——).


Ar. Kg. Wellhausen, Julius. The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall, tr. by Margaret Graham Weir ([Calcutta,] 1927).

Ar. Pal. Moritz, B. Arabic Palaeography (Cairo, 1905).

Ar. Papier Karabacek, Josef von. Das arabische Papier (Wien, 1887).

Beiträge Becker, Carl H. Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter dem Islam (Heft 1–2; Strassburg, 1902–3).


BIFAO Cairo. Institut francais d’archéologie orientale. Bulletin (Le Caire, 1901——).

CMH II The Cambridge Medieval History II (New York, 1913).


EI Encyclopaedia of Islam (Leyden, 1913——).


Flor. de Vogüé Florilegium ou recueil de travaux d’érudition dédiés à M. ... de Vogüé (Paris, 1909).
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**JEA**
Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (London, 1914—).

**JHS**
Journal of Hellenic Studies (London, 1880—).

**JOHN OF NIKIŪ**

**MIFAO**
Cairo. Institut français d'archéologie orientale. Mémoires (Le Caire, 1902—).

**MPER**

**NPAF I, II, etc.**

**PAF I, II, etc.**

**PERF**

**P. Lond. IV**

**PO**
Patrologia orientalis (Paris, 1907—).

**P. Ross.-Georg. IV**

**PSR**
Becker, Carl H. Papyri Schott-Reinhardt ...... I (Heidelberg, 1906).

**PSR I, II, etc.**
Individual papyri in the foregoing volume.

**Statthalter**
Wüstenfeld, H. F. Die Statthalter von Ägypten zur Zeit der Chalifen (Göttingen, 1875–76).

**ZA**
Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete (Leipzig, 1886—).

**ZDMG**
Deutsche morgenländische Gesellschaft. Zeitschrift (Leipzig, 1847—).

A.H. and A.D. indicate years of the Muslim and the Christian era respectively. Within the text proper double datings are commonly expressed merely by use of / between the year numbers; e.g., 1274/1857 means A.H. 1274, i.e. A.D. 1857.

The system of transliteration used is that of A. Brux (see Bibliography).
ABBREVIATIONS


Amélineau, E. La géographie de l'Égypte à l'époque copte (Paris, 1893).

Balādhūrī, Ahmad ibn Yahyā al-. Futūḥ al-buldān (Liber expugnationis regionum), ed. M. J. de Goeje (Lugduni Batavorum, 1866).


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Eutychius, patriarch of Alexandria. Nazm al-jauhar. Contextio gemmarum sive Eutychii ... annales ... interprete Edwardo Pocockio (Oxoniae, 1656).

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Horn, Paul. Grundriss der neupersischen Etymologie (Strassburg, 1893).


Hübelschmann, H. Persische Studien (Strassburg, 1895).


Ibn al-Mu῾kaṭṭah, see Severus, Ibn al-Mu῾kaṭṭah.


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I

INTRODUCTION

HISTORICAL SKETCH

The foundations for the modern study of papyrology began to be laid about the middle of the 18th century. Before that time the only papyrus documents existing in the western world were some Latin manuscripts of the 6th and 7th centuries and a considerable number of Latin legal documents from the 5th to the 10th century, the latter chiefly in Italy. ¹ In 1752 a library of charred papyrus rolls was discovered in Herculaneum; these were published four decades later in Naples. In the meantime a group of Egyptians had made a find of about fifty rolls in 1778, all but one of which were ignorantly burned, supposedly for their aromatic odor; the one remaining papyrus was published in 1788 and proved to be a list of laborers engaged in irrigation embankment work in a village of the Fayyûm in A.D. 191. ²

Then came a lull which lasted till 1820, when the Memphis find was added, consisting of documents of the 2d century B.C. Parts of these were published at Turin in 1826, at London in 1839, and at Leyden in 1843. Interest in papyri seems to have been by then actively aroused. Other finds followed, England being most fortunate in these.

But it was not till 1877 that the "age of papyrus" really began with the magnificent Arsinoë find, more generally known as the first Fayyûm find, which was followed by several other Fayyûm discoveries. In 1896/97 the Egypt Exploration Society, under B. P. Grenfell and A. S. Hunt, discovered at Bahnasā (Oxyrhynchus)

² These and the following statements on papyrology in general are based on Arthur S. Hunt's article on "Papyrology" in Encyc. Brit. XVII 243 and on Kenyon, Ancient Books and Modern Discoveries, pp. 43-52.
the greatest site so far for papyri. The next significant discovery was that of the Aphrodito papyri in 1902, with which we shall deal more fully below. Small scattered finds have continued. The papyri of the older finds, in hiding with the natives or in waiting in some European and, more recently, in some American museums and libraries, are more and more becoming available for publication. The first professorship of papyrology was established in 1908 at Oxford. Surveys of the whole field of papyrology are to be found from time to time in Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete, Bulletin papyrologique, and Journal of Egyptian Archaeology.

The contribution which papyrology is making to our knowledge of the past is immense, though as yet its significance has dawned mainly on the few who have labored painstakingly in that field. According to Kenyon, the papyri have ushered in an age comparable to that of the Renaissance, and he declares: "Fortunate indeed are those who have been privileged to see and take part in it."

The term "papyrology" technically includes the study of papyri of all languages; but owing to the great number of Greek papyri from the Greco-Roman period of Egyptian history, when Greek was the official language of Egypt, this term has been used chiefly with reference to them. Though literary and religious documents have not been wanting, the nonliterary far exceed the former and contribute richly to our knowledge of history, society, law, philology, and paleography.

After this brief historical survey of papyrology in general we shall now turn our attention to that branch of it which interests us most in this thesis—Arabic papyrology.

It is natural to expect the main steps in the progress of Arabic papyrology to follow closely those of papyrology in general; and this they do, though they start somewhat later and attract less attention. C. H. Becker and A. Grohmann have given a complete and detailed historical survey of Arabic papyrology up to the years 1906 and 1924 respectively. It is our purpose not to repeat all of the details here, but to give only a sketch that will serve as background for the discussion of the greatest find of Arabic papyri—the Küm Aphrodito papyri.

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3 FSR, pp. 1-6.
INTRODUCTION

Silvestre de Sacy was the first to draw attention to Arabic papyri, publishing two in the August number, 1825, of the *Journal des savans* under the title of "Mémoire sur quelques papyrus écrits en arabe et récemment découverts en Égypte." These two papyri, which were supposed to have been found at Memphis, proved to be passport letters of A.H. 133 and were written in cursive. Two years later de Sacy published in the *Journal asiatique* X (1827) two other Arabic papyri, one a passport similar to the first two and the other a letter to Usāmah ibn Zaid, whom Becker would identify as the governor Usāmah ibn Zaid al-Tanūkhī.  

Then followed half a century of silence until the Arsinoē or first Fayyūm discovery was made in 1877. Three Arabic pieces were acquired by O. Loth in 1879, while many were destroyed by fire in Cairo. In the meantime Josef von Karabacek had got wind of the find and readily interested Theodor Graf, a great businessman and collector of orientalia, in the acquisition of the find. By 1882 Graf had secured this magnificent treasure of about 10,000 pieces, written in six different languages and including over 3,000 Arabic pieces, for Vienna. The next decade was indeed an active and fruitful one in the history of Arabic papyrology. Through the magnificent generosity of Archduke Rainer, the patron of the Vienna academy of sciences, the bulk of this collection and of the second Fayyūm find of 1884, as well as pieces from the finds of 1886 and 1891 from Ashmūnain and Dīmah, were acquired for Vienna, where they formed the collection known as "Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer." Under the leadership of Karabacek work on their publication was immediately begun.

The variety, quantity, and speed of Karabacek's productions are amazing. In 1882 appeared *Der Papyrusfund von El-Faiyum*, which may have hastened Archduke Rainer's gift in 1884, which in turn led to the six volumes of the *Mitteilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer* in the period from 1886 to 1897. Among the products of Karabacek's labor of a dozen years was also the *Führer durch die Ausstellung*, which appeared in 1894. Yet as Becker rightly remarks: "So nützlich dieser Führer, so wichtig

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5 *PSR*, p. 2.
6 *Ibid*.
7 *CPR III*, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 3-5; in the Berlin collection 8 languages were represented (*ibid.*, p. 7).
die in ihm niedergelegten Resultate sind, Ersatz für eine Publikation bietet er nicht."

But Karabacek's labors did not cease with this. In 1899 we find him appointed director of the court library of Emperor Francis Joseph just two days before Archduke Rainer gave his papyrus collection as a birthday gift to the Emperor. Here we find him continuing his contributions till the time of his death in 1918.

But Vienna was not alone and unchallenged in the field. The Berlin museum also acquired some of the Fayyum papyri and made its contribution to Arabic papyrology through L. Abel's two installments of Arabische Urkunden in 1896 and 1900, which presented twenty-two public and private pieces ranging from A.H.143-458. During the next few years several Arabists, among whom were Margoliouth, Merx, Moritz, and Becker, gave us additional publications. Among these were the Aphroditto papyri, which we shall consider in the next section of this chapter.

An idea of the rapidity with which Arabic papyri were accumulated in large collections and of the size of some of these collections is gained from Grohmann's data on the collections in Berlin and Vienna. While in 1885 Vienna possessed but 4,000 pieces, in 1922 it could boast no less than 18,274. Unfortunately, publication has not kept pace with collection, and that for various general and a few particular reasons. Papyrologists are scarce, papyrology is a slow and exacting science, and it is an expensive science, demanding a large outlay and promising no financial returns. Arabic papyrology has shared and still shares these disadvantages, but they are not its worst enemies. It has suffered, and still suffers, from a lack of proper scholarly interest in Arabic texts. Loth, de Sacy, Wright, Merx, Moritz, and Caetani have primarily a paleographic objective for their Arabic publications; and Kenyon, Krall, Crum, and Bell touch on Arabic only in

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8 PSR, pp. 3 f.
10 Ibid. p. 13; for a frank estimate of Karabacek as a scholar see C. H. Becker in Der Islam X 233-38.
11 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 15.
12 Ibid. p. 10.
INTRODUCTION

connection with their Greek and Coptic pieces.\textsuperscript{13} It is workers like Becker and Grohmann that Arabic papyri need, nay challenge.

THE APHRODITO PAPYRI

These papyri are named after the ancient town of Aphroditó, the modern Kūm Ishkâw, which is situated in Upper Egypt, between the left bank of the Nile and the desert, some seven kilometers southwest of Tîmā.\textsuperscript{14} The town has seen many ups and downs in its recorded history—a romantic story of alternate achievements and failures. Settled first by the ancient Egyptians, under the patronage of the goddess Hathor, the place was renamed Aphroditó by the Greeks, who identified the Greek goddess Aphrodite with the Egyptian Hathor. Greek papyri of the Roman and Byzantine periods have yielded to patient scholars the broad outlines of its history. Its high rank as capital of the tenth nome of Upper Egypt in Roman times was lost when this nome was absorbed by the neighboring nome of Antaepolís, which must have occurred between A.D. 307 and 310, at which time the term "nome" for an administrative district was abandoned.\textsuperscript{15}

Just what official relations Aphroditó had with Antaepolís at that time is difficult to decide; yet it is natural to expect that the former metropolis would seek and avail itself of any possible privilege. And it did just that; for we find it claiming to have enjoyed the right of autopracia since the time of Emperor Leo I (A.D. 457-74).\textsuperscript{16} When Justinian in 538 officially recognized the institution of pagarchies, Aphroditó seems to have been left an autopract unit within the Antaepolític pagarchy.\textsuperscript{17} It is in this period that we find it jealously guarding its

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{14} Egypt. Service des antiquités, Annales III 85; cf. also ZA XX 68.
\textsuperscript{15} P. Lond. IV xiii. Hardy, The Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt, p. 55.
\textsuperscript{16} P. Lond. IV xiii. Gauthier, Les noms d'Égypte, p. 195, points out that the term "nome," however, continued to be used, though it no longer corresponded to anything real. Cf. also Rouillard, L'administration civile de l'Égypte byzantine, pp. 49-60, and Gelzer, Studien zur byzantinischen Verwaltung Ägyptens, p. 62.
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rights against the encroachments of Menas, the pagarch of Antaeopolis.\textsuperscript{18}

Greek papyri of the Byzantine period add no further information respecting the status of Aphroditò, but Greek and Arabic papyri of the early Arab period make up for this silence. In these we find Aphroditò again playing an important role, that of capital of an Arab administrative unit; and since it is generally conceded that the Arabs took over almost entirely the Byzantine system, Aphroditò must in later Byzantine times have risen once again to the position of capital of an independent "nome" of the same name. In fact, Bell's exhaustive study of this problem leaves little room for doubt on this question.\textsuperscript{19}

How long Aphroditò enjoyed this privilege in Arab times it is hard to tell. So far as we now know, it seems to have had another change of fortune, for we do not hear of it in the works of Arab geographers of the Middle Ages. In all probability it continued as a "nome" capital until these administrative units were abolished by the Arabs in A.D.1058.\textsuperscript{20} The eagerly awaited continuation of Toussoun's valuable work will doubtless throw further light on its history.

At the beginning of our century Kûm Ishkâw was an agricultural town of some 4,000 inhabitants, leading a peaceful and somewhat isolated existence, ignorant of and indifferent to its past history, to which it nevertheless held the key. In the spring of 1901 native villagers, digging on the edge of the Muslim cemetery, came upon a large papyrus heap. Ignorant of both the historical and the monetary value of papyri, they paid little heed at first to their precious find. But the brother of the village chief (\textsuperscript{\textit{umdah}}) knew its worth and took the greater part of what was found for himself, whereupon others helped themselves to the rest. Dealers were informed and came to purchase some. Apprised of what was going on, the government stepped in and tried to seize the papyri. But the enterprising villagers hid their treasures while the timid ones, to avoid trouble with the government, burned theirs. Those which had been kept in

\textsuperscript{18} Hardy, p. 55; \textit{P. Lond.} IV xii f., nn. 4 and 5.

\textsuperscript{19} \textit{JHS} XXVIII 100-6 and \textit{P. Lond.} IV xiii and xxi-xxiv.

\textsuperscript{20} Toussoun, \textit{La géographie de l'Égypte} I xiv.
hiding later found their way into the hands of dealers in Cairo, through whom they eventually reached various European countries and the United States.  

Since then Aphrodito has had a double resurrection, a material and an intellectual one; the former in the condition of its inhabitants, the latter in the minds of scholars scattered the world over. But the latter was not conceded it without a contest; for in the extremely difficult problem of the identification of old place-names with modern sites Aphrodito has been at least twice misidentified, first with Idfā (Edfa),22 and then with Aṭfīh.23 But thanks to the contents of the Aphrodito papyri and to the work of Bell and Crum on the Greek and Coptic ones respectively, Greek Aphrodito (Ἀφροδίτη) was paralleled with Coptic Jkow (Ἀφροδίτη), thus linking Greek Aphrodito to Arabic Ashkauh or Ishkūah (آشخوух), the modern Kūm Ishkaw (آشخووه).24

The Aphrodito papyri consist of Greek, Arabic, and Coptic official correspondence and tax registers, almost all of them from the time of the governorship of Kurrah ibn Sharīk (A.H.90-96/A.D. 709-14). The letters are of two main categories: letters from the governor to the administrator of the district of Ashkūah, written in separate Greek and Arabic parallels but not as literal translations or duplicates one of the other; and bilingual Arabic-Greek notifications of tax assessments to the inhabitants of the towns, villages, and religious settlements in the district.25 Individual tax registers and security documents, mostly in Coptic, are also found in the group.26 So far, the Greek letters are in the majority, though on account of their being, together with the Arabic, so widely scattered (some published, some yet unpublished), it is difficult to tell if we have as yet all the Greek-Arabic

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21 Egypt. Service des antiquités, Annales III 85 f.; cf. also ZA XX 68 f.
22 P. Lond. IV xi.
24 P. Lond. IV xi; Der Islam II 245 f.
25 JHS XXVIII 98 f. and P. Lond. IV xlii and n. 2. Several of the Arabic letters are in the Russian Lichacov collection; cf. P. Ross.-Georg. IV v. These, so far as we know, are still unpublished. A request for further information brought no results.
26 P. Lond. IV xlv1 f. and 468 f.
parallels. Again, it is difficult to tell to what extent these papyri represent the actual volume of correspondence between the central government and the district of Ashkauh, since not only Arabic parallels are missing, but also Greek parallels to some of the Arabic ones. Interesting in this connection is the fact that so far less than half a dozen pairs have been identified and these not positively.

The largest part of the Aphroditio papyri found its way to the British Museum, a goodly part to Heidelberg and to Strassburg, some to Russia, while not a small portion of the Arabic papyri was retained in Cairo. Within a decade of the discovery several important publications appeared: in 1905 B. Moritz' Arabic Palaeography, which included three, possibly five, of the Kurrah papyri (Pls. 100-5); in 1906 Becker's Papyri Schott-Reinhardt I, which included both the Heidelberg and the Strassburg Arabic and Arabic-Greek Kurrah documents; in 1907 Becker's "Arabische Papyri des Aphroditofundes," Zeitschrift für Assyriologie XX, which contributed mainly some Arabic pieces from the British Museum; in 1908 Bell's article "The Aphroditio Papyri," Journal of Hellenic Studies XXVIII, which was followed in 1910 by his publication of the Aphroditio Papyri, being volume IV of the "Greek Papyri in the British Museum"; and in 1911 Becker's "Neue arabische Papyri des Aphroditofundes," Der Islam II, which presented pieces from the Egyptian Library in Cairo and one from the Ottoman Museum in Constantinople. In the same volumeof Der Islam appeared the first two instalments of Bell's translation of the British Museum Greek Aphroditio papyri. 28

Thus the first decade of our century saw the awakening of considerable interest in Arabic papyri, in the texts themselves and in their historical significance. For although Karabacek had sought from the start to interpret his documents from a historical point of view and in so doing rendered a great service in spite of his method, it was not till Becker and Bell worked in co-operation, the one on the Arabic, the other on the Greek texts of the Aphroditio papyri, that these documents were made to yield abundant

27 ZA XX 94-102.

28 Der Islam II 269-83 and 372-84; others appeared ibid. III 132-40 and 369-73 and IV 87-96.
results for the history of Egypt under Arab rule. Then came a pause for Arabic papyrology which lasted well-nigh through the World War; it was broken in 1918 when Karabacek published another papyrus shortly before his death. Since then Grohmann has added numerous contributions, outstanding among them his extensive studies on Arabic papyrology and Arabic protocols contained in the "Corpus Papyrorum Raineri." III. Series Arabica, which was published at Vienna in 1924. Two years later Bell's "Two official letters of the Arab period" appeared, and his translation of the Aphrodito papyri was resumed. In 1927 came the publication in Tiflis of Die Kome-Aphrodito Papyri der Sammlung Lichačov by Peter Jernstedt, this being volume IV of the "Papyri russischer und georgischer Sammlungen" by Gregor Zereteli. Bell's letters and Jernstedt's papyri are Greek, but being Aphrodito Kurrah papyri, they are of great interest to us. In 1929, owing to Dr. Breasted's and Dr. Sprengling's appreciation of the significance of Arabic papyri for both Arabist and general historian, the Oriental Institute acquired the B. Moritz collection, in which are the five Kurrah papyri here presented. In 1931 the Institute acquired some seventy Arabic papyri through Professor Bonner of the University of Michigan. These papyri form at present the nucleus of a collection that promises to grow.

29 In addition to the publications already referred to see also Bell's "Two official letters of the Arab period," JEA XII 265-81, and Becker, "Papyrusstudien," ZA XXII 137-54, also his "Historische Studien über das Londoner Aphroditowerk," Der Islam II 359-71.

30 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 16.

31 Of more recent years Professor Grohmann's valuable contributions to Arabic papyrology have been too numerous to mention; one of these, his "Aperçu de papyrologie arabe" (1932) will be referred to later.

32 JEA XII 265-81.

33 Der Islam XVII 4-8.

34 On the University of Michigan collection of papyri see Aegyptus IV (1923) 38-40. Its present collection contains a fair number of Arabic papyri.
There is no question of the antiquity and prestige of writing among the Arabs. Their literature is full of the highest praise not only of writing, but of its chief tool—the pen. As an example we may quote the words of Abū Ḥafṣ ibn Burd al-Andalusī:  "How marvelous is the pen! It drinks darkness and utters light."

Baladhurī's account of the very limited spread of the art of writing among the Arabs of Muhammad's time has perhaps led to an unwarranted underestimation of the spread of writing among the Arabs in general. Moritz, among others, sees in the fact that Makkah was a commercial city and therefore needed writing and did use a variety of writing materials, and also in the fact that Muhammad himself had from five to ten secretaries, room for assuming a wider spread of the art of writing than was formerly conceded. In any case, Arabic schools of penmanship and large establishments with written records, commercial or political, are hardly to be expected before the establishment of the Umayyad dynasty; for though writing was known and may even be conceded to have been widely known, the use to which it was put were limited. But the Arab proved an adept at learning new uses as soon as his enlarged influence and outlook demanded them. As teachers he deliberately took his experienced neighbors, the Persians, the Syrians, and the Egyptians.

The need for drawing on the larger experiences of the neighbors arose fast enough. We find ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, when he was disturbed about properly dividing and recording the spoils of war and the returns of state among the faithful, seeking advice of his fellow Muslims on the question of devising a means to solve his problem, whereupon it was suggested to him that they copy the Persian and Syrian method of keeping a register (dīwān) of the troops. The advice was accepted and a committee of three was

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35 Şūlī, pp. 66-86; Ḳalḳashandī II 434-39.
36 Ḳalḳashandī II 436.
37 Baladhurī, pp. 471-74.
appointed to draw up a diwan of state pensions, which was done in Muharram, A.H. 20 (December 21, 640-January 19, 641).39 A popular etymology makes the Persian word diwan mean either "mad" or "devils." It is said that when Chosroes one day entered the bureau of his scribes and saw them count aloud to themselves he said they were diwanah, "mad," "crazy," and that the name was thenceforward applied to the bureau, the last syllable being sloughed off through constant use. Again it is said these writers were called diwan, "devils" or "satans," because of their expertness, intelligence, and knowledge.40

Thus a beginning was made, and though we have not the details of the succeeding development, we assume that the development proceeded through various stages toward that bureau differentiation which we find as early as the reign of Mu‘awiya, when there certainly was enough official correspondence to require a bureau of posts41 and a bureau of seals.42 A study of Mu‘awiya's imperial abilities together with those of his great viceroy in 'Irāq, Ziyād ibn Abīhi, makes it rather probable that the establishment of various bureaus goes back to Mu‘awiya's time; but even if one should hesitate to credit him with this, the reign of the next great Umayyad, ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (65-86/685-705), is certainly a landmark in this direction, although the full development of bureau differentiation had to await ‘Abbāsid times.43

Each province of the Empire had its own diwan. In the beginning each had been allowed to carry on its work in the language of the people or of the previous rulers. But ‘Abd al-Malik and his great viceroy, Ḥajjāj ibn Yūsuf, carried by the wave of Arabic nationalism, made Arabic the official imperial language. Thus in ‘Irāq, Ḥajjāj accomplished the change from Persian to Arabic in

39 Baladhurī, pp. 449 f.; Sūlī, pp. 187-91; Makrizī I 91 f.; Ibn Khaldūn I 202-5; according to Kalbī the year is A.H.15.
40 Cf. Sūlī, p. 188, and Makrizī I 91. Actually the Persian diwan has nothing to do with dev, "demon"; cf. Paul Horn, Grundriss der neupersischen Etymologie, p. 119 (No. 540), and H. Hübschmann, Persische Studien, p. 60 (No. 540).
41 Kalkashandī XIV 367 f.
42 Jahshiyārī, p. 21; Kremer (tr. Bukhsh), pp. 193 f. and 236; Ibn Khaldūn I 221.
43 Björkman, pp. 5 f.
A.H. 78, and at Damascus Greek yielded to Arabic in 81, the faithful Christian secretary Sergius making way for Sulaimān ibn Saʿd. In Egypt the change from the Greek and Coptic did not take place till the year 87, under the governorship of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Malik. It was impossible that such a change should be accomplished thoroughly in a short time, and in fact it was not, for throughout the Umayyad rule we find the non-Arabic languages persisting in all the three provinces mentioned, thus giving room for doubt as to the date of the intended change, some writers even placing the change of language in the diwān of Damascus in the reign of Hishām (105-25/724-43).

Becker, in handling this question of the change of language, suggested that the variation in the order of Greek and Arabic in the bilingual texts might indicate the order of transition from one language to the other, that is, Greek, Greek-Arabic, Arabic-Greek, Arabic. Karabacek's studies tended to fix the date A.H. 111-14 as the time of the use of Arabic alone. However, more recent scholars, with more papyrus material at their disposal, accept no such order or such date limit, but point to haphazard and irregular use of these languages side by side far into the 2d century after the Hijrah. Furthermore, the use of Arabic had started if not with, then soon after, the conquest, that is, about fifty years before the attempted general official change; for PERF, No. 558, the oldest Greek-Arabic papyrus yet known, is a receipt dated A.H. 22. Whatever the official language of a province and the nationality of the writers, the diwān and its officers played an important role.

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44 Ibid. p. 33; Balādhrū, pp. 300 f.; Ṣūlī, pp. 192 f.
45 Jahshiyārī, p. 35; Balādhrū, p. 193.
47 Makrizī I 98.
48 PSR, pp. 28 f.
49 PERF, Nos. 77-85; cf. PSR, p. 29.
50 Cf. P. Lond. IV 417 and Grohmann in Études de papyrologie I 77-79.
role in the imperial and provincial spheres, and the Arab was not slow to recognize that the sword and the pen are together the instruments of empire, the sword to win, the pen to organize and administer in order to reap the fruits. Secretaries and scribes were therefore generally chosen from the best class of people, the learned, broadminded, and just. Yet there were writers and writers; the responsible heads received as much as 300 dirhams a month under Ḥajjāj, while a minor scribe received but 10 dirhams. In fact, in the imperial chancellery the office of chief secretary (kāṭīb) of the Umayyads became, under the ‘Abbasids, the office of the ważīr (cf. p. 58); and in the provincial bureaus the chief secretaries must have held a similar position of responsibility and influence in their relationship to the governors.

The Egyptian central bureau, organized during the governorship of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd (ca. 24-36/645-57), was naturally and largely a take-over from the Byzantine administrative system. The papyri so far discovered, especially the Aphrodisio papyri, show many unmistakable marks of Byzantine practice. Not only were Greek and Coptic used, but even the method of dating by indictions of fifteen-year cycles was kept. Furthermore, the Copts were retained as secretaries and as such continued their method of bookkeeping and recording of state correspondence, and, when required, they freely stamped the latter with their Byzantine seals. With the reform of A.H.87 a change that had already begun was accelerated: Greek and Coptic, as mentioned above, made way for Arabic at Pustat and Babylon, though they held on in the districts; the solar induction year was adjusted to the Muslim lunar year; Arab scribes replaced Copts, but not entirely, for the latter, both

52 Ibn Khaldūn I 214.
53 Jahshiyārī, pp. 38 and 149; cf. Björkman, p. 4, n. 4.
54 Cf. Björkman, p. 6, and Zambaur, p. 6.
55 Severus, P.O.I 501. Kindī does not mention this fact. On the dates of ʿAbd Allāh ibn Saʿd see EI I 30 and Butler, pp. 469 f., nn. 2 and 3.
56 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 19 f.
57 PERF, Nos. 556, 559, 566, 571, 586, and 587.
58 Ibid. No. 593 and Karabacek's note on p. 150.
Christians and Muslim converts,\textsuperscript{59} are still represented; and Arab seals are more in evidence,\textsuperscript{60} while Byzantine protocols take on Arabic form, and Christian formulas yield to kur'\text{\textஞ}nic verses.\textsuperscript{61}

In the di\text{\textஞ\text{\textஞ}n}'s then the documents were drawn. The original was checked, sealed, and sent on its way, while an exact copy of it was made for the office records. Details with respect to these matters as well as to the stylistic form of official documents of the 1st century have been fully described by Grohmann.\textsuperscript{62} Becker's briefer description\textsuperscript{63} covers the Kurrah papyri. It is remarkable to what extent these accounts, based on information yielded by the papyri, fit in with what is recorded on stylistic form by way of tradition in the works of Arab historians.\textsuperscript{64}

The legal drawing and authentication of the document over, the papyrus was folded in one of the following methods illustrated below:\textsuperscript{65}

\textbf{Fig. 1.—Methods of folding and tying papyri}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{methods_of_folding_papyri.png}
\caption{Methods of folding and tying papyri}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{59} Our Nos. II and III; Tritton, chap. ii.
\textsuperscript{60} PERF, Nos. 572, 589, and 601; cf. also our pp. 27-30.
\textsuperscript{61} PERF, pp. 17 f.; CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 2, pp. c-c1; CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 87; P. Lond. IV xxxvii.
\textsuperscript{62} CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 17-88.
\textsuperscript{63} PSR, pp. 24-30.
\textsuperscript{64} Cf. Suli, pp. 36-40 and 225; Ibn Durust\text{\textஞ}yah, pp. 76 f.; Kalkashand\text{\textஞ} VI 327-33 and 383-91.
\textsuperscript{65} Reproduced from PERF, pp. 4 and 145.
According to Bell, and also to judge by the condition of our Kurrah papyri, Figure 1 b illustrates the roll form of most, if not all, of the letters of our documents. Some of these rolls, in their long period of precarious hiding, must have come under some heavy pressure which flattened them out, giving us numerous narrow, breadthwise strips such as are seen in our Nos. IV and V. The roll was then tied with a papyrus cord and the knot sealed somewhat as in Figure 1 h. On the outside were written the names of addresser and addressee, one on each side of the binding cord, and sometimes a notation was made of the subject treated. The roll was now ready for the "post."

The postal system (barid) of the Umayyads, adopted and adapted from the Byzantines and the Persians, was a combination of governmental postal system and secret service, as is illustrated in Ar. Pal. Plate 104 in the case of the postmaster Walid ibn 'Abbād; that is, among the duties of the postmaster (gābib al-barid) was that of acting as the "eyes and ears of the king." Specially authorized carriers, on mules, on horses, or on boats, brought the official mail to its destination. Extensive postal

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66 P. Lond. IV xli.
67 P. Lond. IV xlii; cf. our Nos. I and II; NPAF V; PSR II, XII, XIV, and XV.
68 Kalkashandi XIV 367 f. Not only the system but also the name barid appears to have been taken over; for barid is obviously merely the Arabicized form of the Latin veredus, Greek βερεδος, meaning "post horse"; cf. EI I 658. The origin of the Latin veredus and the Greek ἄρεδος is, however, another matter. These are possibly connected with Assyrian puridu, "courier"; cf. Paul Horn, op. cit. p. 29, note, and Gesenius, Handwörterbuch, p. 657. The attempts of Arab etymologists to derive barid from either the Arabic root be'rada or the Persian ba(u)rīdah dum, "with cropped tail," therefore probably reflect mere folk etymologies.
70 Der Islam II 258 f.; ZA XX 96.
71 If the derivation of barid from the Persian barīdah dum may be taken as witness to a common fact, the mules and horses must have been distinguished by docked or cut tails; cf. Kalkashandi XIV 367. Probably the couriers too carried some identification mark, though what it may have been is as yet unknown. In Mameluke times they were provided with an inscribed silver plaque or tablet (laub) hung round the neck by means of two bands ending in a yellow silk tassel. The plate itself was worn on the chest.
roads connected the different parts of the Empire, and in Egypt there were postal stations all along the Nile and across the Delta. Still there seems to have been no special haste in letter transportation. B. 1346 shows that over five weeks elapsed between date of issue and date of receipt; in the case of B. 1353, however, the time was but ten days. Since both came from Fustat to Ashkauh, the delay in the first case could have been occasioned either in Fustat or through a round-about postal trip. It is interesting to note in this connection that Ashkauh does not seem to have had its own postal station, for in B. 1347 it is called on to defray part of the cost of post horses stationed in a neighboring pagarchy. When the mail reached its destination, each roll was marked with date of receipt, name of courier, and purpose of communication. Thus labeled, it was pigeonholed to be preserved in good condition for reference.

WRITING MATERIALS

Most of the writing materials known to the ancient and medieval world were known also to the Arabs. Among those chiefly used by them may be mentioned stones, wood, metals, bones, ostraca, linen, silk, leather, parchment, papyrus, and paper. Grohmann has

under the clothes, but the tassel was worn on the back and was visible for ready identification of the courier; cf. Kalkashandi XIV 371. The use of a metal plate for couriers was current among the Mongol ilkhan's of Persia; cf. Howorth, History of the Mongols III 509. Their custom is believed to have been borrowed from the Chinese (ibid. I 271 f.). Professor Herrlee G. Creel has kindly supplied the following note on the use of identifying credentials in early China: "The use of identifying credentials of various sorts, sometimes made of metal, in very early China is well attested. The Ti Kuan section of the Chou Li (Shih San Ching Chu Su, Kiangshih ed. of 1815, Chou Li I5.13 b) says: 'All who travel through the empire must have credentials to secure free passage and assistance. Those who lack credentials, once they have been questioned, are not able to pass.' The Chou Li was edited not later than the Former Han Dynasty (221 B.C.-A.D.25); this passage may be much older."

72 P. Lond. IV 11 f.
73 P. Lond. IV xxiv f.
74 Ibid. p. 20.
75 Ibid. p. xlii. How paper documents of a later period were preserved and filed is described by Kalkashandi VI 363 f.
INTRODUCTION

dealt fully with these writing materials among the Arabs, citing numerous Arabic sources which prove that Arabic literature abounds in references to the papyrus plant, its different parts, and its rich and varied uses. Grohmann points out that while it is in itself not impossible that the papyrus plant grew or still grows in parts of Arabia, its presence there has to date not been proved. The Egyptians had early found some uses for every part of the plant: the bloom was used for garlands and shrine offerings; the root for utensils and fuel; the pith for food, both cooked and raw; the stem for boats, sails, cloth, cord, sandals, and for writing materials. The manufacture of papyrus for writing material was a slow but interesting process. This as well as the question of size, form, and quality of the finished product has engaged the minds of many scholars, among them Thompson, Kenyon, Lucas, Ibscher, and Grohmann. The first two draw chiefly on the natural histories of Theophrastus (4th-3d century B.C.) and Pliny (1st century B.C.); Lucas adds the results of experiments by himself and others; Ibscher states his observations made during many years of work on the papyri in Berlin; and Grohmann adds the results of microscopic investigations as well as the account of Abū al-‘Abbās al-Nabātī (13th century after Christ). Thompson, following Theophrastus, describes the papyrus plant as a reed growing in shallows of about three feet or less, its main horizontal root being as thick as a man's wrist and about fifteen feet in length. From this root smaller ones extended into the mud, while the stem of the plant rose to a height of about six

76 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 21-64.
77 Ibid. pp. 22-32.
78 Ibid. p. 25.
79 Herodotus ii. 37 f., 92, and 96; Encyc. Brit. XVII 246 f.
81 Ancient Books and Modern Discoveries, pp. 28-32.
82 Ancient Egyptian Materials and Industries, pp. 136-38.
84 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 35-51; Études de papyrologie I 30-32.
Lucas measured specimens of papyrus from the Sudan and found the stems varying from seven to ten feet in length. The stem, which is triangular in shape and tapers toward the flowering top, consists of a thin tough outer rind and an inner cellular pith. According to Pliny the stem was sliced into thin strips of the greatest possible width. These strips were laid side by side upon a table, and across them at right angles another series of similar strips was placed. After having been moistened with Nile water (which, when in a muddy state, was supposed to have the peculiar qualities of glue) they were pressed down and dried in the sun. Modern research, including microscopic examination of different samples of Arabic papyri, has shown that the method of cutting the strips for these papyri was not, as hitherto generally believed, by longitudinal section through the center of the stem peeled of its rind, but rather by tangential section, the stem of pith being apparently pressed against a long blade and rotated while the strip was being cut. Grohmann has pointed out that Pliny's account should probably be understood in this way. Microscopic examination has further revealed that no glue or paste was employed to cause the strips of papyrus pith to adhere one to another to form a sheet, but that this was effected by the inherent qualities of fresh pith under pressure. Paste was, however, used for sizing the sheets and also for pasting sheets end to end to form a roll. Modern experiments in the making of papyrus have shown that good papyrus sheets can be made also by slicing the pith longitudinally through the center, as Abū al-ʿAbbās al-Nabāṭī says it was done.
INTRODUCTION

Drawing on the classical and Arab sources as well as on modern research and experimentation, one may conceive the process of the manufacture of papyrus to have been somewhat as follows: The fresh stem was first cut into sections of a desired length—usually the desired height of a sheet. The rind was then peeled off and thin strips were cut either by rotating the entire length of each piece of stem against a sharp knife, or by slicing it longitudinally through the center. The thin strips were then laid vertically over a moist piece of cloth on a table and arranged so as to be parallel and slightly overlapping. Across these strips and at right angles to them were laid similar strips, again parallel and slightly overlapping. The two layers thus "woven" together were now covered with a thin absorbent cloth, hammered down, and pressed together. The fresh papyrus contained some natural adhesive matter sufficient to cause the strips to become welded together and form a homogeneous sheet. The sheet was finally dried in the sun, smoothed with pumice stone, and polished with ivory or a smooth shell. Defects sometimes occurred in the making through retention of moisture between the layers or through use of spongy strips which would cause ink to run; such flaws necessitated the remaking of a sheet.

In the under layer of a sheet of papyrus the fibers lay vertically, and this was the side of the sheet meant for writing. The top layer, in which the fibers lay horizontally, was used for writing only occasionally. These two sides of a papyrus sheet are called "recto" and "verso" respectively. It is well to note here that the rule of writing on recto in preference to verso held for the Arabs as well as for the Byzantines. Though the Arabs quite frequently wrote on both sides of the sheet, this was not considered proper. A new sheet was light-colored, almost white, being a pale yellow or a straw tint, which darkened with age to various shades of brown.

The size of sheets varied from 5 to 15 inches in width and from 9 to 19 inches in length, the larger sizes being the rarer

95 Cf. Grohmann in Études de papyrologie I 31.
96 Cf. CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 33 f.; Suli, p. 149.
and of better quality. These sheets were glued together, with the best sheets on the outer part of the roll. Usually twenty sheets formed a roll. Under the Byzantines the first or outer sheet (τριτόκολλον) bore the name of the official under whose jurisdiction the factory was as well as the date and place of manufacture. Usually this marked portion of the sheet was cut away, but Justinian forbade this in case of legal documents. The Arabs continued the use of protocols. Grohmann believes that the protocol texts indicate a state control of the manufacture of papyrus rather than a state monopoly.

Among the Romans and Greeks there were several standard varieties of papyrus manufactured. The best qualities were dignified with the names of the emperor Augustus and his wife Livia and called "Augusta" and "Livia" respectively. The finest qualities ran usually in the larger sizes and sold by measure or sheet, whereas coarser qualities were small and sometimes sold by weight. The various qualities of papyri were well recognized by the Arabs, to judge both by references to them and by the different grades of papyri found in any fair-sized collection.

It is generally conceded that Egypt was the home not only of the papyrus plant but also of the manufactured product, both in ancient and in medieval times. The manufacture was a state monopoly till the time of Alexander, but after that private manufacture with some state control seems to have been the practice, which continued to about the middle of the 10th century, when use and manufacture began to cease.

Though known to the Arabs of the Jāhiliyyah, papyrus did not become the main carrier of Arab thought and history till the rise of Islam, and until it was replaced by paper in the 9th-10th century.

98 Études de papyrologie I 32-35.
100 Cf. CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 46.
101 Ibid. pp. 22-32.
103 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 32; Études de papyrologie I 29 f.
it continued its important function of preserving records of world civilization by taking those of the youngest—Islam—under its frail but effective protection.

Always expensive, papyrus could have been used but rarely in Muhammad's time, notwithstanding the fact that Muslim tradition alleges that the angel Gabriel brought down portions of the Kur'ān written on papyrus. With the conquest of Egypt papyrus became more available and was eventually adopted by the caliphs for official use, and this for more than one good reason; for aside from its ready availability and convenient form it had the added advantage of betraying any tampering with the text once written, since an attempt to remove or change the writing results only in destroying, or at least marring, the writing material.

The diwan of 'Umar I in Madīnah very likely used leather and parchment, at least predominantly so, and perhaps some papyrus; the Egyptian diwan took over from the Byzantines the use of papyrus, and the Syrian used it freely if not exclusively. The Colt Expedition of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem recently found at Auja al-Ḥafīr a large number of papyri, among them five Arabic-Greek tax documents from the province of Gaza in southern Palestine dated 54 and 55/673-74 and 674-75. They thus fall within the last decade of Muʿawiyah's reign. In all probability, then, this first organizer of the Arab kingdom used papyrus for (all?) official purposes. Arabic sources state that his immediate successor, Ḥabīl ibn ʿAbd al-Malik (65-86/685-705), was the first caliph to use papyrus with Islamic formulae or phrases at the head of the first sheet or protocol, while hitherto papyrus with Christian formulae had been in use. The papyrus supply in the time of Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik (86-96/705-15), who is erroneously credited

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105 Kalkashandi II 476; cf. CPR III, Bd. I, Teil l, p. 27, and, for the practice of washing off writing in order to re-use the papyrus, Kenyon, p. 37.

106 Baladhurī, p. 465.

107 See Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement, 1936, pp. 216-20; American Journal of Archaeology XLI 149; JEA XXII 214.

108 Baladhurī, p. 240; Études de papyrologie I 32.
with the first official use of papyrus,\textsuperscript{109} seems to have been of the finest quality and plentiful, as the documents of his reign—among which are the Kurrah papyri—show no stint of material either in size of writing or in line-spacing and allowance for margins. But we find his second successor, Ūmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (91-101/717-20), urging his scribes to economy in this respect.\textsuperscript{110}

The ʿAbbāsid Mansūr (136-58/754-75) seriously considered disposing of his excessive papyrus stock at a nominal price. On second thought he changed his mind, not knowing but that Egyptian disturbances might any day cut off the court supply and force the scribes to use something to which they were not accustomed.\textsuperscript{111} And so papyrus continued to hold the first place in the ʿAbbāsid dīwān's of ʿIrāq until its first serious rival—paper—appeared some time after A.D.751.\textsuperscript{112} The first paper factory was established at Baghdād between the years 793 and 795.\textsuperscript{113} But the appearance of paper did not at once put a stop to the use of papyrus, for in ʿIrāq we find the two used side by side up to the end of the 10th century, the papyri however growing by that time fewer in number and coarser in quality.\textsuperscript{114} In Egypt papyrus naturally held its own better, and an Arabic writer of the 9th century could state that the papyrus of Egypt was at that time for the West what the paper of Samarkānd was for the East.\textsuperscript{115} But eventually even here—in the very home of papyrus—the overwhelming advantages of paper won out in the 10th century, though sporadic use

\textsuperscript{109} Jahshiyārī, p. 43; cf. also CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 28.
\textsuperscript{110} Jahshiyārī, pp. 48 f.; CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 28. However, this caliph was thrifty on general principles!
\textsuperscript{111} Jahshiyārī, p. 158; Grohmann, CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 29, has misread the last two sentences in the original, which are:

\begin{quote}
قد ع النطاقين استفاضارا على حالنا، هذه اللغة كتبت الفرس.
\end{quote}

"Let the papyri be while seeking to overcome their situation. And for this reason the Persians used to write on leather and parchment and to say: 'One does not write on anything that is not of our country.'"

\textsuperscript{112} Ar. Papier, pp. 22-28.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., pp. 33-35; cf. also Carter, p. 98; CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 30; McMurtrie, p. 27.
\textsuperscript{115} Ar. Papier, p. 13; Suyūṭī II 238 uses wirtās for both papyrus and paper.
of papyrus continued for some time. The latest definitely dated Arabic papyrus has the date of Dhū al-Ka‘dah 370/May-June 981; another papyrus, the date of which is partly lost, can be reasonably assigned to 480/1087.

Papyrus was always a comparatively expensive material; yet its use was not limited to governmental circles, unless perhaps in its finer qualities, which could not be afforded by many outside that circle. Papyrus collections usually contain commercial, literary, and private pieces, some of which are double and triple palimpsests, no doubt for reasons of economy. For the common man the price of papyrus must have been well-nigh prohibitive. This may explain in part the great value placed on stray pieces of papyrus, especially when they contained one of the names of Allāh or a Qur’ān verse, for this made them almost objects of veneration. Grohmann draws attention to the story of Abū Naṣr Bishr ibn al-Ḥārīth, who, having found in Baghdad a piece of papyrus on the ground with the word "Allāh" on it, picked it up and spent his last penny in buying rose water and musk, with which he perfumed his find. This man's sacrifice can be better understood when one reads in Kālḵashandī that "he who picks up from the ground a papyrus on which is written: 'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,' by way of honoring it so that it be not trodden under foot, God will cause him to enter paradise and will accept his intercession for twenty of his household, though all of them be worthy of hell-fire." Arabic literary sources are thus very complimentary to this useful article. It is interesting to note, however, by way of contrast, that with the victory of paper the once so highly praised material lost caste to such an extent that one had to apologize for its use, not

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116 Ar. Papier, pp. 10-15; cf. also Carter, p. 98; Maḵrizī I 91.
117 Margoliouth, APJRL, p. 181 (No. 63).
118 Ibid. pp. 115 f. (No. 10). Margoliouth dates No. 12 on p. 117 in the year 402; cf. his p. 229. This date is questionable, for ١٢٠٠ can be read also as "two and forty," a date hardly likely here, or as "two and forty and _ hundred."
119 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 33 and 51.
120 Ibid. p. 31.
121 Kālḵashandī VI 363.
only because it had been previously used, but simply because it was papyrus.122

THE PEN

The Arab scribes used then, as they did in the Middle Ages and in a measure still do today, a reed pen. The swamps of Lower Egypt and sections of Irāk and Persia produced a variety of reeds suitable for this purpose. Reeds of different lengths and thicknesses are used for different styles of writing, though it was, of course, not so much the thickness of the reed as the width and form of the pen point that was of prime importance.

It is sometimes difficult to tell from the early papyri themselves what type of pen point was used. The old Egyptians cut the end of a thin rush slantingly and frayed its fibres by bruising the cut end between the teeth, thus giving to the pen a brushlike appearance.123 The remarkably even strokes of the early Arabic papyri and the writing of all vertical strokes downward may point to the use of such a brushlike pen. But the use of such a pen is not conceded by all scholars.124 Schubart holds that a thin rush pen, shaped more like a modern nib but without a slit, was employed.125 It is possible by using such a tool to produce even strokes, though one would need to be frequently turning the pen, thus making pen-holding and pen-directing a very complicated matter. Official scribes could hardly be expected to continue the use of such a tool when a better one was at hand, namely the split reed pen, which had come into use in the 4th century when the Greek alphabet was adopted for writing the Egyptian language and which continued in use thereafter.126

Though the Arabs were familiar with the use of the reed pen and their early writers associated good quality in reeds and reed

122 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 33 f.; cf. also Carter, p. 99; McMurrrie, p. 29.
123 Lucas, p. 133.
124 Cf. CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 64, and Études de papyrologie I 32 and 39 f.
125 Einführung in die Papyruskunde, p. 43.
pens with Egypt, yet the date of their adoption of the split reed pen is not clear. They certainly became acquainted with it at the time of the conquest of Egypt, and there is every chance that they knew it and used it even before the rise of Islam, since it had been introduced in Egypt in the 4th century, was used in the Christian monasteries of Egypt, and through monks undoubtedly soon became known in the monasteries and Christian communities of Palestine, Syria, and 'Irāk, perhaps even in Najrān. But as yet definite data are not available. It seems safe, however, to assume that our Kurrah papyri were written with a split reed pen. Grohmann favors the view that most of the protocol texts also were written with split reed pens. Muslim ibn al-Walīd al-Anṣārī, a scribe and poet of Rashīd's and Ma'mūn's reigns, gives directions for making the split in the head of the pen. Ibrāhīm ibn al-'Abbās, another scribe of Ma'mūn's reign, likewise refers to this split.

Pen-sharpening is an art, and instruction in it from acknowledged masters was eagerly sought. In the time of Rashīd we find the Barmecide Ja'far ibn Yaḥyā writing to Muḥammad ibn al-Laith for instruction in penmanship and receiving the following reply: "Let your pen (kalam) be from Lower Egypt (babīrī), neither thick nor thin, somewhere between thinness and thickness, with a narrow bore; then sharpen it to an even point like the bill of a dove, slant its cavity (batn), and thin its two lips ...." Arab

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127 Muḥaddasī, p. 203.
128 Lucas, p. 134.
129 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 64, and Études de papyrologie I 32 and 40.
130 Ibn Khallikān I 23 and 25, n. 3; Kalkashandī II 446 and 448.
131 Şülü, p. 86. Other comparatively early references to either the split or the "teeth" of the pen are to be found in Şülü, pp. 72 and 88, and in Ibn Durūstūyāh, p. 93; cf. also Kalkashandī II 450 f.
132 Ṭabarī III 1038 and 1066.
133 Kalkashandī II 440.
134 Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi II 221. For Muḥammad ibn Labīth see Ṭabarī III 668 f.
authors\textsuperscript{135} tell us that the art of penmanship is all in the pen and that the art of cutting the point is the secret of the pen. The slit, the slant, and the width of the pen point are the three factors to be considered which together make pen-sharpening an intricate and a delicate art, prized and guarded by those who have mastered it. It is reported of several scribes and master-penmen that they cut off their pen points whenever they left the \textit{diwan}, so that none could see and copy them.\textsuperscript{136} It is evident that the slit in the reed pen serves the same purpose as the slit in our steel nibs does, namely that of flexibility and ready guidance by the hand. However, the slant of the writing point itself appears to be a later development.

\section*{THE INK}

The ink of our Kurrah papyri is mostly a deep black showing little signs of fading. Grohmann mentions a variety of colors found in his Arabic documents, deep black and reddish brown being the ones most frequently used in earlier times, whereas with the introduction of diacritical points and vowel signs and illuminations red, green, and blue also were employed, both usefully and aesthetically.\textsuperscript{137}

The main ingredient for the dark inks was lampblack. \textit{Kalḵashandī} gives an account of the ingredients and the manufacture of inks, both in powder and in solution, and indicates that there were several different processes and that some of these were kept secret.\textsuperscript{138} The following is one of his recipes, attributed by him to Ibn Muḵlah:\textsuperscript{139}

\begin{quote}
"The best ink is that which is made from lampblack of asphalt, and in this wise that there is taken of it 3 \textit{artāl}, well sifted and strained, and placed in a saucepan; to this there is added 3 times as much water, 1 \textit{ratl} honey, 15\end{quote}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{135} \textit{Ṣūlī}, pp. 86-89; Ibn Durustūyah, p. 93; \textit{Kalḵashandī II} 440-55.
\item \textsuperscript{136} \textit{Kalḵashandī II} 446 and 448.
\item \textsuperscript{137} \textit{CPR III}, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 65; Teil 2, p. xvi; cf. Teil 3, PIs. 27-28, 31-33, and 36 for reproductions in color.
\item \textsuperscript{138} \textit{Kalḵashandī II} 461-66.
\item \textsuperscript{139} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 465.
\end{itemize}
INTRODUCTION

darahim salt, 15 darahim powdered gum, and 10 darahim gallnuts. This should be stirred constantly over a slow fire till its body thickens and its consistency becomes like clay. Then it should be left in a vessel and taken when needed. There should be added to it some camphor for pleasant odor and some aloes to prevent flies from settling on it." In this form inks seem to have had good keeping qualities until needed, when small quantities were dissolved in water that was frequently perfumed.

Other kinds of lampblack were also used, and Karabacek mentions the use of ashes of slowly burnt papyrus. The ink on written documents was either allowed to dry by evaporation or else sprinkled with red sand which acted as a blotter.

THE SEAL

The time when seals were introduced among the Arabs is unknown. With ancient nations known to have used the seal centuries before the birth of Islam surrounding them, it is difficult to determine whence the borrowing came. It is not impossible that the loan was made several times in different localities, each independently of the other. Grohmann points out that the Arabic words tab and khatm may both have been borrowed from the ancient Egyptians. This may have occurred in the better days of the kingdoms of south Arabia. Arab accounts acknowledge Persian influence here in pre-Islamic days.

Closer to our period we find simultaneous Byzantine and Persian influences. The story that Muhammad decided to adopt the practice of sealing so that the Byzantine officials would honor his letter is repeated by a number of authors. His seal was alike treasured and used by his successors till it was accidentally

140 Ibid. pp. 465 f.
141 MFER IV 79; cf. CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 65, n. 1.
142 Kalkashandi II 468 f.
143 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 78.
144 Kalkashandi VI 353.
145 Baladhurî, p. 461; Sūlî, pp. 139 f.; Ibn Khaldûn I 220; Kalkashandi VI 353; cf. also CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 82 f.
dropped into a well by 'Uthmān. ^46 ^ But the use of the seal does not seem to have been regular and obligatory until more persons had begun to copy the Persian custom, ^47 ^ and until falsification of documents and figures had led that constructive Umayyad, Muṣāwiyah, to take over the system completely, to organize a bureau of seals, and to put a special officer in charge of it. ^48 ^

The seal was adopted for more than one reason and put to more than one use. In the first place it was equivalent to the signature of the writer and, in some cases, of the witnesses. ^49 ^ In official documents it served for authentication and legalization; for without it a document was incomplete and invalid. ^50 ^ The seal of the caliph, the state seal, was used to protect state interests, including the treasury, as the case of the counterfeiter Maʿan ibn Zāʾidah clearly reveals. ^51 ^ A saying is reported that to seal is to be safe (akhtim taslam). ^52 ^ Use of a seal lent prestige to its owner and honored the recipient. ^53 ^ Sealing was not limited to correspondence and documents, but was used with any precious or valuable object for protection in keeping and in transit. ^54 ^

Seals were mainly of two kinds, stamps and rings; the former were strung and hung around the neck or carried in a purse, the latter were worn on the finger. ^55 ^ Various metals and precious stones were favored for this purpose, ^56 ^ but there seems to have

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^46 ^ Șulî, p. 139; Ibn Khaldûn I 220; Kalkashandî VI 353 f.
^47 ^ Balâdhurî, p. 464.
^48 ^ Ṭabarî II 205 f.; Șulî, p. 143; Ibn Khaldûn I 221; Kalkashandî VI 355 reports an account which credits ʿUmar with the organization of the bureau, but his editor doubts this (cf. p. 357, n. 2).
^52 ^ Kalkashandî VI 353.
^53 ^ CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 84; Kalkashandî VI 353.
^55 ^ Ibid. pp. 78 and 82.
^56 ^ Ibid. p. 78.
been a prejudice against gold because, so we are told, of its free use by women, boys, and slaves. In fact, Muḥammad is said to have forbidden gold seals, exchanging his own for one of silver.\footnote{CPR III, Bd. I, Teil I, p. 78; cf. also Balādhurī, pp. 461 f.; Šū'il, p. 139; Kālḵashandī VI 353.}

In form seals seem to have had as much variety as in material, the circular, oval, and square being however the most frequent shapes.\footnote{CPR III, Bd. I, Teil I, p. 79; cf. PERF, Nos. 556, 589, 668, and 670, also Pl. XIV.} In size they varied little, the majority averaging one centimeter square or in diameter.

Clay and wax were used for sealing, the former much more commonly, in both the eastern and the western provinces.\footnote{CPR III, Bd. I, Teil I, p. 79.} The clay used was of the finest texture and varied in shade from reddish to dull brown.\footnote{PERF, Nos. 668, 670, and Plate XIV; our Nos. II and III; P. Lond. IV 432.} Frequently it was perfumed. The figures and legends on these seals are in some cases in intaglio, in others they are in relief.\footnote{CPR III, Bd. I, Teil I, p. 80.}

When we come to consider the clay seals found on Arabic papyri, we are faced with a variety of seal figures and legends. The former were in use both among the North and South Arab groups, while Muḥammad himself is said to have had a seal with either the figure of a lion or that of a human being.\footnote{Balādhurī, pp. 461 f.; CPR III, Bd. I, Teil I, pp. 82 f.} Nevertheless we find that when Muḥammad was important enough to use seals for diplomatic correspondence he preferred a legend, thereby setting the fashion for Muslim seals. The legends found on these seals fall into four main types.\footnote{CPR III, Bd. I, Teil I, pp. 80-82.} First there is the pious phrase or Kurʾān verse, for example bism Allāh, amnī bi-Allāh, or the longer la ilāh illā Allāh al-ḥakī al-mubīn, which is reported to have been the legend on Ḥasan’s seal.\footnote{Hammer-Purgstall, p. 8.}
13983, an Egyptian receipt dated 241/855, has this same legend stamped in small but clear Kufic on a well preserved clay seal. The second type of legend consists of a moral motto or maxim, examples of which have not yet been found on papyri, but Kalkashandî supplies many an example from the seals of the caliphs.\textsuperscript{166} The legend on Mu‘awiyah’s seal is given by this author as \textit{li-kull āmal thawāb}, "to each deed a reward"; that on ‘Uthmān’s as \textit{la-tašbiran-nā su la-tandamanna}, "be patient or suffer regret." The third type presented the name of the owner, as, for example, \textit{PERF}, Nos. 699 and 757; and the fourth was a combination of name of owner and pious formula, illustrated in \textit{PERF}, No. 577, "Rashīd trusts in God," and \textit{PERF}, No. 595, "‘Abd al-Wāḥid believes in God and trusts in Him."

We have already seen that Greek and Coptic secretaries continued to use their Byzantine seals, one of these appearing on paper as late as 329/941.\textsuperscript{167} In these one would expect the predominance of human and animal figures. But it is a little surprising that their use was adopted by Muslims also. Whereas in the East pious and moral maxims were used more and more, in Egypt, as late as ʿKurrah’s governorship, figures—though mostly of animals—still predominated.

Of the approximately fifty seals found on the Kurrah papyri, one belongs to \textit{PERF}, No. 593; three to \textit{PSR} III, IV, and XI; several to \textit{PSR} a-l;\textsuperscript{168} three to \textit{P. Ross.-Geogr.} IV, Nos. 2, 4, and 11; two to our Nos. II and III; four to \textit{NPAF} I, XII, XIII, and XIV; and at least twenty-eight to the British Museum Aphrodito papyri.\textsuperscript{169} Only two of these show human figures; one has two women(?) facing each other with arms uplifted, the other bears a figure that looks like a helmeted negro(?).\textsuperscript{170} A third has an Arabic legend which has not as yet been deciphered.\textsuperscript{171} The rest have an animal figure.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[166] VI 354 f.; cf. also Hammer-Purgstall, pp. 8-12.
\item[167] \textit{CPR} III, Bd. I; Teil 1, p. 80 (\textit{PERF}, No. 959).
\item[168] \textit{PSR}, pp. 24, 79, and 105 f.
\item[169] B. 1346, 1374, 1385, 1363, and 1492, the last consisting of twenty-four detached seals.
\item[170] \textit{P. Lond.} IV 432.
\item[171] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
in some cases alone, in others with a star either in front\textsuperscript{172} or above\textsuperscript{173} the creature.

There are very few definite and unchallenged suggestions as to what this animal figure really represents. Karabacek was the first to associate it with a wolf.\textsuperscript{174} Becker describes it as "eine aufrecht schreitende Gestalt mit Vogelfüssen und Sternen vor sich" and as "tierköpfig."\textsuperscript{175} Bell seems to accept tentatively the wolf idea.\textsuperscript{176} Jernstedt, however, asserts that the figure is not that of a wolf at all.\textsuperscript{177} On the basis of the specimen on our No. III (Fig. 2), which is almost identical with Jernstedt's,\textsuperscript{178} we are led to agree with him. But there our agreement ends. Jernstedt goes on to say that according to Professor Maximova it is an Asiatic composite animal, a panther with a griffin head.\textsuperscript{179} That it is a

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{seals.png}
\caption{Fig. 2.—Seals of Kurrah papyri: a, seal of P. Ross.-Georg. IV, No. 2; b, seal of our No. III. Scale, 6:1.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{172} B. 1346; P. Ross.-Georg. IV, No. 11 and pp. vii f. and 44.
\textsuperscript{173} B. 1363; P. Ross.-Georg. IV, Nos. 2 and 4 and pp. vii f., 9, and 17; our No. III.
\textsuperscript{174} PERR, No. 593.
\textsuperscript{175} PSR, pp. 24 f. and 106.
\textsuperscript{176} P. Lond. IV 19, 38, 47, 59, and 432.
\textsuperscript{177} P. Ross.-Georg. IV vii f.
\textsuperscript{178} The claws in P. Ross.-Georg. IV, Nos. 2 and 4, are clear; those in our No. III are visible in the forefeet only.
composite creature we concede, but hardly that it is a panther. It certainly has no griffin head, for there are no signs of an eagle beak; neither has it wings. The clawed feet and the tail make it possible that the body is meant to be that of a lion, but the height of the legs and the size and shape of the body, neck, and head remind one rather of a horse.

At first glance the representation of the seal of our No. III also suggests a horse, so far as the general body proportions and the pose of the animal are concerned. But the trace of the claws of the left front foot ends that idea. Of course, with its resemblance to the horse it may be that other fabled animal—the unicorn—but just where one would look for the characteristic horn projecting from the forehead the clay is broken off; and, besides, there are still the claws. A comparison with some South Arabic and ancient oriental seals led to no identification, though the possibilities for further comparisons with similar materials have by no means been exhausted. Were it possible to get all the Aphrodito papyri seals together, or at least good photographic reproductions of them, then some more definite and satisfactory results in this connection might be hoped for.

We come now to a more detailed treatment of the use of the seal on government documents. The seal affixed at the foot or end of a written document seems to have served the same purpose as a signature, that is, the user acknowledged the text as his and therefore genuine and legally binding. But a seal-signed document was also "sealed up," and this was done to guard the secret of its contents. Қaқшанді describes three ways in which this was done. Қaқшанді describes three ways in which this was done. One was to apply an adhesive, usually starch paste, to the head of the letter before rolling or folding it—a practice current in Egypt from antiquity to this day—and then to add the customary clay seal. This apparently left, through the open sides, the contents of the document open to the inquisitive eye, and even when the seal had been added it was easy enough to tamper with the contents. Such tampering with official correspondence is reported to have taken place in Mu'awiya's time, which led that practical ruler to the adoption of the second and more efficient method.

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180 VI 356-58; cf. CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 77 and 84.
181 Տաբարի II 205 f.; Ռուլ, p. 143; Ibn Khaldūn I 221; Қaқшанді VI 355 f.
of protection mentioned by Kalkashandī, that of khazm, which consisted in threading a cord through the folded or rolled letter, tying the cord, and then usually sealing the knot. Sometimes these outer clay seals were without any impressions. The third method was merely to tie a cord of papyrus round the roll and, in addition, usually to paste the ends down. When the outer seal was the only one applied, it performed the double function of authenticating and protecting the document. Documents were valid only when this seal was unbroken, hence the importance of the office of opener of seals. The fact that most of the Aphrodito papyri seals are alike—the few exceptions may belong to other than Kurrah's official letters—may point to the conclusion that the seal on the Kurrah papyri was Kurrah's own seal. But how then account for the different positions of the star? Could this have anything to do with whether the seal was an inner or an outer seal? Here again only further careful study of all the seals available can give the answer.

THE SCRIPT

Although the problem of the origin of the Arabic alphabet and of Arabic writing as well as that of the development and inter-relation of the more important early scripts are not themes within the scope of this thesis, it is necessary that mention be made here of some of the results of a study undertaken recently which deals particularly with these problems. These, in so far as they have a significant bearing on the script of the Kurrah papyri, may be briefly summarized as follows: The North Arabic alphabet developed directly from the Nabataean. By the end of the 7th century after Christ two major varieties of Arabic script had evolved and become established in the Hijāz and in Mesopotamia respectively. The course of development can be best and most easily seen from the accompanying diagram.

183 Ibid. p. 84.
184 Ibid. p. 77; cf. Kalkashandī VI 357.
185 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 83.
The essential difference between these two major types lies not so much in the actual shapes and forms of the individual letters as in the general appearance of the script as a whole. The Makkān-Madīnān is a lighter and more graceful script, with the "vertical" strokes long and slanting downward slightly to the left, while Kūfic-Baṣra is a heavier, straight, and comparatively stumpy script. The difference in the letter forms is that in the early Makkān-Madīnān the lower end of the alif turns to the right, while in the Kūfic-Baṣra the alif tends to be a plain and comparatively vertical stroke; and even this slight difference is not always consistently maintained. Usually the length of the vertical stroke of the lām and of the ʾāyn is, like that of the alif, shorter in the Kūfic-Baṣra than in the Makkān-Madīnān. Further, the direction of the vertical stroke of lām is in each type similar to that of alif in that type, that is, it slants downward slightly to the left in the Makkān-Madīnān and is straight in the Kūfic-Baṣra. Again, the difference between the monumental hand (used chiefly for inscriptions, coins, and Kurāns) and that of the manuscript hand (used for state, literary, and private purposes) is likewise at this period one of general appearance. Thus the former is clear-cut, stiff, and, by comparison, decidedly angular, while the latter is frequently smaller, not so clear-cut, and tends to be cursive and so to round out.

The script of the Kurrah papyri is both a proof and an illustration of these conclusions. Karabacek early recognized the Makkān features here referred to and accordingly named the script "Makkan." Becker accepted the name, though he pointed also to the fact that the script both resembled and differed from

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187 *WZKM* V 322-25; cf. also *PERP*, No. 592.
the supposedly later script, the so-called naskhī. Grohmann, leaving names apart, drew attention to the unmistakable unity of the script, particular characteristics due to the individuality of the writers notwithstanding. All three then recognized an essential underlying unity. But this unity must be limited in the sense that it is a unity of a comparatively cursive manuscript hand as against a generally angular, monumental script. This unity granted, the Kurrah papyri present us with two varieties of the manuscript hand. The Makkan variety is for example clearly seen in our No. II, in PSR III, and in Ar. Pal. Plate 104; the Kūfic in PSR V-VI and VIII. The majority of the remaining numbers can be best described as having a composite script, combining in its vertical strokes the perpendicularity of the Kūfic with the long, graceful strokes of the Makkan.

Both the Makkan and the Kūfic samples cited above are not as true to type as their corresponding monumental varieties used in Kur'ānic manuscripts. This is not surprising since, as secular documents, they could not be expected to receive the painstaking attention of the Kur'ānic copyist, who, among other things, considered it a pious virtue to keep his script true to type and up to the best standards. With the Kūfic and Makkan manuscript varieties in use and no special reason or care to keep them apart, it is but natural to expect a merging of the two, especially since the character forms are essentially the same. Hence the composite script was developed by the same scribes who wrote in one or the other or perhaps even in both types, as for instance the scribe Muslim, who used the Makkan in Ar. Pal. Plate 104 and the composite in our No. III and in PSR X. Under such conditions it is not surprising to find that the composite script was the one most widely used in these papyri and that, in the course of the next century, it gave up some of its features and acquired others, thus losing its original identity in the period which saw the appearance of some two dozen different "pens," with specific ones assigned to specific purposes.

Minor differences in the scripts found in the Kurrah papyri can be accounted for when one takes into consideration the many

188 FSR, pp. 25 f.
189 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 66.
190 Nādīm, Fihrist, pp. 6 f.
factors which influence the general appearance of handwriting. As Grohmann has pointed out, the width of the pen point, the thickness of the ink, and the kinds of material written on all play a part. Again, the nature of the manuscripts, whether they are official, commercial, or private documents, must be allowed for. Even the personality of the writer cannot be ignored. His previous training or lack of it, his age, the time at his disposal, and his psychological moods are all reflected in the script he produces.

Although Becker and Grohmann, especially the latter, have given us fairly detailed accounts of the Arabic scripts of their papyri, it will not be out of place to give similar details here of the script of the Oriental Institute Kurrah papyri.

The Kurrah papyri of the Oriental Institute are all written in a large, beautiful, and well executed hand. The strokes are firm and usually evenly inked; the heaviest writing is seen in No. II, the lightest in No. IV. Nos. I-III are very similar, being in a heavy hand, whereas Nos. IV and V are lighter, more rounded, and more fully pointed. Ar. Pal. Plate 106, which is dated A.H.112, that is, less than a decade later than our Kurrah papyri, shows certain resemblances to each of these two groups, but more so to the second group. Letter extension and spacing between letters, words, and lines are, as is usual in early papyri, very generous. The division of words at the ends of lines is haphazard, and frequently the spacing between separate letters or groups of letters takes little account of word unity. Pointing is used but sparingly in Nos. IV and V; I and II are entirely undotted. That is as we should expect; for though some dots were used even in pre-Islamic days, the present system of pointing was not as yet fully evolved. None of the Kurrah Aphrodito papyri have any vowel signs; for though such signs were used in some early Qur’āns, they do not appear in secular documents before

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192 PSR, pp. 25-27.
193 CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 65-75, and, for the script of the protocols, Teil 2, pp. xx-xxvii.
194 EI I 383 f.
the latter part of the 2d century after the Hijrah.

Alif. The alif in the Makkan and composite pieces measures from 1.4 cm. (in No. I 1) to 2.7 cm. (in I 8 and III 11). But in PSR V 6, a Kufic (?) type, it measures only 0.8 cm. Its perpendicular form, both with and without the turn to the right, is found in our No. I, while its slanting form, both with and without this bend, appears in No. III. In some instances the slanting stroke and the bend to the right have merged to form a small arc, as in No. IV. In all five documents joined alif, regardless of where it occurs in a word, is written from top downward, frequently making a clumsy connection with the preceding letter. The vertical strokes of tāʾ, kāf, lām, and lām-alif also share this peculiarity.

Bāʾ, tāʾ, thāʾ. These three letters are formed alike in each of the three positions. In some cases they show a tendency to curve up in the final position. Dotted bāʾ is seen in V 9 and 17; dotted tāʾ in IV 4 and 17, and dotted tāʾ or thāʾ in V 21 (see pp. 55 f.)

Jīm, hāʾ, khāʾ. The heads of these letters are formed alike in each of the three positions. Sometimes they start with a slight upper curve to the left and thus are liable to be confused with cain or qain. In our pieces they show a tendency to lose the upper curve, appearing more like a wedge. Hāʾ sometimes has a form peculiar to itself, "the hāʾ with a beam," which is illustrated in II 18 in the word al-mubarram. Jīm is dotted in V 9.

Dāl, dhāʾ, rāʾ, sāʾ. Becker's distinction of the first two as being above and the second two below the line holds only when these letters are connected with preceding ones; otherwise they are very much alike and easily confused, as in II 10 and 14. Dāl has a variety of sizes and in its final connected form is sometimes preceded by a long extended stroke, as in PSR II 28. At times its two parts are almost at a horizontal-vertical right angle, in which case it might be confused with kāf. More frequently it is an inclined right angle or an acute angle. Not only in the Aphrodito papyri, but in documents of different styles and dates dāl has numerous variations. In V 21 we may have a dotted sāʾ.

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196 EI I 384.
STn, shIn. The three "teeth" of these letters are frequently shown, in some cases not as marked as in others. Our pieces show no dots for the shIn. Other Aphrodito papyri, however, show three dots in a line, for example Ar. Pal. Plate 105, line 13. In still others shIn has a line over it, and this mark is sometimes used also for sin, as in I 11.198

Säd, däq. In the final form the first and second parts of these letters are closely joined together; depth and extension of the final curve vary, but the curve shows no tendency to turn upward to form a semicircle.

TA', gar. These letters are always distinguished from the preceding two by the stroke above, which is never omitted. The direction of this stroke varies from a left incline, as in Nos. I 4 and III 13, to a perpendicular, as in PSR III 78 and 82. While in our papyri the stroke appears to have been added to the loop, PSR II 33 clearly shows that some writers made the stroke first and joined the loop directly.

'Ain, ghain. In the initial and final unconnected positions these letters have the upper left curve; in some cases this is not so marked, as in No. II, in others it is decided and unmistakable, as in No. IV. In the medial and final connected forms they have the triangular head seen in all our pieces.

Fä' and kär. In initial and medial forms these two are alike, but they have distinct forms when alone or final, fä' being on the line while kär falls below it, grading off like nun. Kär usually has one dot above, as in IV 4, and fä' one below. In V 17, however, we seem to have an exception in the word kablaka, where kär appears with one dot below, the other dot visible apparently belonging to bär.

Kär. Our pieces show a considerable variety for this letter. Alone or final, the upper stroke varies from near vertical, as in III 10 and 13, to an almost horizontal position, as in II 2; it is frequently apt to be mistaken for a däl. Initial forms vary from hairpin form, as in I 14 and II 2, to an acute angle of about 45°, as in Nos. III-V.

Lám. This is the tallest letter. In III 7 it measures 3.3 cm. Final lám always extends below the line, with its foot curved to the left.

Män. The loop of initial and medial män is generally half

above, half below the line, meeting above, though sometimes the ends barely touch, as in IV 17. Initial mlm is occasionally found entirely below the line, as in IV 32. In final or separate mlm the loop is closed, with a tail stroke downward. The latter varies in length from a bare hint of a stroke, as in II 18, to the fair length frequently found in all the papyri, and in direction from a slight incline to the right, as in I 14, to a slight one to the left, as in II 7.

Nūn. This is a somewhat difficult letter, especially in its small final form where it is likely to be confused with rāʾ. Many times the only difference between these two is that of size, nūn being the larger. It is occasionally dotted in Nos. III–V, the dot being placed sometimes above the initial stroke and sometimes within the curve. In V 17 and 27 this letter is large and looks like an inclined semicircle.

Hāʾ. Little difficulty is experienced with this letter in any of its forms. Its final form was used then as now to represent feminine tāʾ (ḥāʾ al-tāʾ nāṭ). Wāw. This letter is usually small, with a marked head or loop.

Lām–alif. The form of this combination is almost uniformly ʾ, not only when it stands alone, but also when it is attached to another letter, as in I 13. It was always made in two downward strokes, the one for slanting alif with lower bend to the right, the other for oppositely slanting lām.

Yāʾ. Separate and final yāʾ frequently turn to the right, but final yāʾ is also seen in its modern form, as in IV 18, where at first glance it looks like nūn. When initial or medial, yāʾ is either not dotted at all, as in Nos. I–III, or it has two dots below, as in IV 28 and V 6 and 21. Becker has drawn attention to the loss this letter suffers in combination with lām, bāʾ, tāʾ, thāʾ, and šīn, so that jīʾ appears as ʾ. Our pieces show the same peculiarity, for example in ʾ in I 14, II 17, and elsewhere, and in ʾ in III 2, IV 17, and elsewhere.

FORM, STYLE, AND DICTION

The official documents are remarkable for their adherence to a definite form and usually also for their directness in style.

199 PSR, p. 27.
The religious formula over, the main subject of the document is usually introduced with a simple *ammā baʿda* "and now further."\(^{200}\) Having stated the object, frequently briefly and to the point, the document concludes, when addressed to a non-Muslim, with "peace be on those who follow the guidance,"\(^{202}\) followed by the name of the writer, that of the copyist, and by the date. Some documents, however, are neither brief nor direct. It seems that when a letter dealt with a routine matter, brevity and directness were employed; but in documents referring to gross neglect of duty or to its dire results on entire districts or perhaps the whole country, threats and repetitions and detailed instructions lengthened and complicated the letter.\(^{203}\) The diction is good classical Arabic, as Becker has already pointed out.\(^{204}\)

Two dissimilar attitudes and corresponding phraseologies meet us throughout these documents. The one is a strict and severe attitude expressed in the language of threats, censure, and well-nigh abuse;\(^{205}\) the other is a moral-religious attitude expressed in frank admonition and the use of pious phrases. A few examples of each will suffice here. For the first see IV 11 and 27-31 and compare also PSR I 5 f., NPAF III, and PSR III 48-62; for the second see II 15 and compare also PSR I 18-20, III 16-18, IV 2, and NPAF I 28-30. The phrase *in shā' a Allah* occurs eight times in the Kurrah papyri, and in PSR I 25 we have an example of how mechanically it was used. The first attitude reflects the Arab, especially the "classical" Arab, not long and not far removed from the desert. He is quick to call a spade a spade, unrestrained in his superlatives, both good and bad. The second reflects the same Arab, clothed with the cloak of Islam. As such he is not so essentially different from his non-Arab neighbors wearing the cloak

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200 For the grammar and usage of this phrase see Şüli, pp. 37 f., and Ibn Durüstüyah, pp. 76 f.
201 Cf. PSR X and XI; PAP IX.
203 Cf. PSR III and NPAF II.
204 PSR, p. 30.
205 Cf. Şüli, p. 227, for a few such phrases generally current in correspondence.
of Christianity, orthodox or otherwise. For both he and his neighbor, motivated by practical economic reasons, surrounded their deeds, consciously or unconsciously, with a moral and religious halo.
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE NO. 13757

Date: Rabī' I, A.H.90/January 18 - February 16, A.D.709. 
Description: Medium brown, very fine papyrus, the finest in the group, 35 by 20 cm. Slightly worm-eaten; right half much broken, but fortunately mostly between the lines. The entire document is preserved and consists of three pieces put together between lines 2-3 and 15-16. The small writing on verso has suffered more damage than the writing on recto.

TEXT
Recto

1 بـم الله الرحمن الرحـم
2 [من قرء بن شريك]
3 [إلى سامب اغتمؤم فان]
4 احمد الله الذي لا اله
5 [لا هؤ] ً
6 اما بعد {نآخر نظر الذي كأ

42
In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

From Kurrah ibn Sharik to the sahib of Ashkauh. I praise God, than whom there is no other God.

Now to proceed: Look up the balance due from the bishop of your district of the amount imposed on him by 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abd al-Malik and collect the first (amount) and rush it to me by my messenger and the messenger of the bishop; and do not delay any of that balance, be it little or much. Peace be with those who follow the guidance.

Written in the month of Rabī' I of the year ninety.

(Seal)
1. The “official mark” may be an ornament like those discussed by Grohmann in CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 77.

2. These may be official marks, as Margoliouth suggests in Flor. de Vogüé, p. 409.

NOTES

Recto

2. The restoration of this line is given on the grounds that the piece, externally and internally, belongs to the Kurrah group. Since Kurrah is said to have entered Fustát on the 13th of Rabî' I of A.H.90 (cf. Kindí, pp. 63 f., and Statthalter, l. Abt., p. 39), this document must be among the very first of his orders.

3. Moritz has supplied ملك. It is evident, however, that the extended stroke is that of the final bāʾ of مالك; for from what follows it is clear that the bishop is not the person addressed and that the addressee can be none other than the local governor or sâhib of Ashkauh. The governor at the time was in all probability Basil, who is mentioned as such in our No. III verso and in PSR I-III, XII, XIV-XV; PAF I-II; NPAF V.

7. For treatment of balances and arrears see below, pages 95 f.; for taxation of the clergy see page 98.

9. ʿAbd Allah ibn ʿAbd al-Malik is mentioned, aside from the protocols (cf. CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, pp. 24-36), in two other Arabic papyri, our No. V 2-3, 18-19, 27-28, and NPAF XII 3. In all three cases the reference is to the payment of taxes and to arrears dating back to the time of his governorship over Egypt.

11. ورسول is evidently an error for رسول. The sīn in this word is the only letter in the piece to have a diacritical mark—a stroke over it. On the use of this stroke cf. page 38 and n. 198, likewise PSR, p. 27.

13. For similar phraseology cf. PAF III 13-14.


16. The use of the word "month" (shahr) in the date is in keeping with the rules of dating, which require its use with the months Ramaḍān and Rabî’ I and II only; cf. Şülli, pp. 181 and 183.

Verso

1. The "official mark" may be an ornament like those discussed by Grohmann in CPR III, Bd. I, Teil 1, p. 77.

2. These may be official marks, as Margoliouth suggests in Flor. de Vogüé, p. 409.
Date: Muḥarram, A.H.91/November 9 - December 8, A.D.709.

Description: Medium brown, fine papyrus, 46 by 21.6 cm.

The beginning is broken off and missing; part of the upper left section is also lost; the right margin is clipped at the "fold," but the writing is not much affected. Otherwise the papyrus is in good condition though it consists of some seventeen strips readily put together.

Seal: Dark clay, partly broken off, with no writing, but with evidences of an animal figure. For a discussion of seals see pages 27-33.

TEXT

[...] 1 تَحَمَّد قِدْسِيٌّ مِنّ هَـ[ذا] [ن] 3 أَنْ يَلْيَ الْعَامَ كَامِنٍ
3 مَا سَتَى مِنْ فَقْرَةٍ [لَنَه] 4 بِكَوْنِ هَـذَا اِلْعَامَ إنْ شَاءَ[ن] 6 اللَّهُ عَـمَّاءٌ مَبارَكٌ، فَمَرِ اِلْحَـ[ص] 6 أَرْضًا بِالزَّرَاعَ وَحَضْـ [حنا؟] 7 عَـ[نَ] وَتَعَمَّدَ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ وَإِيْـ[ع] 8 عَـ[نَ] وَمَنْ يَتَّبِعُ فِيهِ أَمْرَكَ وَلَا تَتَكَّلَـ[ع] 9 ذَلِكَ الَّذِي مِنْ يَرْكَ مَـِهِ فَأَنْ 10 [ـ]، اِذَا زَرَعَ عُمْرَةَ 11 وَأَخْرَجَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي عَلَـى مِنْهَا 12 اِحْـيَ قَبْـ[ه] ذَلِكَ وَلَا 13 اِلْـمَوْمَكَ فِيـْهُ فَأَنْ 14 اَهْـلَ الْأَرْضِ رَاسُ اَمْرِهِمْ 15 بَعْدُ اَمْرِ اللَّهِ وَعُمَراَـهِمْ وَ 16 صَلاَـهُمْ 17 وَالسَـلَامُ عَلَى اَنْتَبِعَ الْهَـدِي 18 وَكِبْـلِ بَيْـلِ الْمَحْرَمِ 19 مِنْ سَهِـ اَحَدٌ وَتَسْمَـ

(Seal)
TRANSLATION

1 Praise (be) I The irrigation by the
2 Nile this year has been even with the best
3 irrigation ever. Therefore I hope that
4 this year will be, God
5 willing, a blessed year. Hence order the people of
6 your land to undertake cultivation and urge them zealously
7 and secure a contract from them to that effect. Then send out
8 for this purpose one who will carry out your or-
9 der concerning it, and do not entrust
10 this to such as will hinder you from (carrying) it (out). For
11 when the land is cultivated, it prospers,
12 God causing it to bring forth its due
13 yield. Satisfy me in this, and I will not
14 blame you in the matter. For cultivation
15 by the people of the land is their chief duty,
16 after their duty to God, and (constitutes) their prosperity and
17 their welfare.
18 Peace be with those who follow the guidance.
19 Written by Basil in Muḥarram
20 of the year one and ninety.

(Seal)

NOTES

2-3. The Nile rose to 16 cubits and 17 fingerbreadths, a
record which was exceeded both in the preceding and in the follow-
ing year; cf. Taghrībirdī I 246-51 and PSR, p. 16.
4-5. For the religious expressions and general pious tone
of the Kurrah papyri see pages 40 f.
6. It is interesting to note that here and in line 13, as
also in PSR I 17, the word زراع , formed in the measure of one of
the two verbal nouns of the third form of the regular triliteral
verb, is not used, as one would expect, in the sense of مزرعة , but
of زراعة . The Arabic dictionaries throw no light on the word.
However, the phrase قد غزوا من زراعتهم in PSR I 17 seems to be used
in the same sense as the phrase قد غزوا من الاحرة in NPAF II 15.
15. Bell's translation of the equivalent phrase in B. 1356
(Der Islam II 281) is "next after the service of God."
18. Here the Arabs have added a final ha\(^2\) to the name Basil, in which form it occurs also in B. 13756 (P. Lond. IV 48) and PSR XIV.

III

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE NO. 13756

Date: Șafar, A.H.91/December 9, A.D.709 - January 6, 710.

Description: Medium fine papyrus, light brown, the lightest in the group, 53.7 by 20 cm. The entire length of the piece is preserved, but it is considerably damaged by worms, especially line 14. Much of the right half is broken off and lost; the left side is likewise broken, but to a lesser degree.

Seal: Dark clay, in perfect condition, showing the figure of a four-footed animal with a star above its back. For a discussion of seals see pages 27-33.

TEXT

Recto

1 [بسَمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ]
  ﷺ [بِنِ شرِيكِ الْيَدِ]
  3 [صَاحِبُ][اِسْتَوَاهُ][فَأَيَّا][أَّمَّدَ]
  4 [اللَّهَ][لَكَ][لَا][الَّهِ][أَلَّلَهِ]
  5 [هُوَ][قَاتِلُ][بَنِ][بَنْهِ]
  6 [فَغَدَّ][خَرَبُ][عَلَى]
  7 [خَلَّاءٌ][مِنَ][أَهْلِ][كُورَتْ]
  8 [عَشَرَ][دِينَارُ][فَزْعُ]
  9 [فَغَدَّوْ][عَلَى][فَحْرِ]
  10 [فَإِذَا][جَاكَ][كَبْيِ][هَذَا]
  11 [وَقَامَ][الَّيْثَ][عَلَى]
  12 [أَخْبَرُني][فَا حَتَّبَ][هُ]
  13 [وَلَا][تَقَلَّنَّ][عَبْدَكَ]
  14 [وَلَا][إِنْ][بَيَانَهُ][غَيْرِ]
  15 [ذَيَّقُ][فَأَكْبَرَ][أَلَيْ]
  16 [وَأَلْلَّهُ][عَلَى][مِنَ][أَمْنَ]
  17 [لَهُو][وَكَبَ][مَسْلِمُ][بَنِ]
  18 [لَبِنَ][مَنْ][نَسْخُ][الْفَتْرَةُ]
In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

Kurrah ibn Sharīk to the sāhib of Ashkauh. I praise God, than whom there is no other God. Now, Ibshādah ibn Abnīlāh has informed me that there are owed to him by farmers of the people of your district and ten dinars, and he claims that they have denied him his right. When this my letter has reached you and he has established the proof of what he has told me, then secure (it) for him, and do not oppress your slave. But should his case prove other than that, then write me.

Peace be with those who follow the guidance. Written by Muslim ibn Labnān and copied by al-Ṣalt in Ṣafar of the year one and ninety.

From Kurrah ibn Sharīk to Basil regarding Ibshādah ibn Abnīlāh about his farmers(?)

(Seal)

(Seal)
NOTES

Recto

The theme and the style of this papyrus are very similar to those of PAF I and PSR X and XI, with which it bears interesting comparison.

5. The names here and in verso 2 are Coptic. For Ibsâdah as a personal name see APJRL, p. 96 (No. 9); for the same as a place-name cf. Amélineau, p. 376. For Abnîlah see APJL I, Nos. 54, 61, and 67.

7. Moritz had supplied the singular ناط, but it is clear from the context that the plural is needed. This word, both in the singular and in the plural form, occurs frequently in the papyri; cf. PAF I 6; II 13; VIII 3 and 6; NPAF VIII 5, 8, and 9; IX 5; X 4. In PAF I 6 Becker translates it as "die Eingeborenen," and in ZA XX 74 he warns against reading كبتي for it. Yâkût III 634 states that every land-dweller who is neither a shepherd nor a soldier is a نبتي. According to Lane, s.v. nabat, the term was used in 'Irâk also.

14. An alternative reading for ناط is ناط; this latter, however, is not found in any of the other Kurrah papyri.

18. Becker in Der Islam II 262 has, on the authority of Moritz, given the last name as "Lebnan" and holds that he was a Coptic convert to Islam. Labnan seems to have been a busy scribe, for he appears frequently in the documents as the original writer, usually with al-Ṣalt as copyist; cf. PSR X; PAF I; NPAF VIII and IX.

Verso

3. The Greek line is much broken; its contents are doubtless similar to those of lines 1-2. All three lines are faded.

IV

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE NO. 13758

Date: Missing, except for "Monday." In tone and, in part at least, in contents this papyrus is similar to B. 1338 and B. 1339 (P. Lond. IV 8-11), which are dated Thoth and Phaophi of the 8th indiction respectively, but there is not enough to consider it the parallel of either, unless we assume that the lost part completed the parallelism. If the word in line 1 is حساب,
"accounts," then this assumption may be justified and the piece dated within September or October 709, that is, Dhū al-Ka‘dah or Dhū al-Ḥijjah of A.H.90.

Description: Medium brown papyrus, 74.7 by 21.5 cm. The first part is lost; the rest is in very good condition, though consisting of at least six strips put together, namely at lines 2, 8, 22, 23, 27, and at the end. In several other places the piece seems to have been ready to fall apart before Moritz took good care of it. The writing throughout is clear and has suffered hardly any loss at all.

TEXT

\[
\begin{align*}
1 & \text{[د]} \\
2 & \text{[م]ن ارثك فوجدته} \\
3 & \text{في عليك مال عظيم} \\
4 & \text{وقام علمت الذي حضر} \\
5 & \text{من الزمن وانما تقدم} \\
6 & \text{على الان وعمري ان} \\
7 & \text{عاملا من عمال تأخر} \\
8 & \text{بعد الإجل الذي اجلته} \\
9 & \text{او تقدم على وقد ترك} \\
10 & \text{خلقه من المال شيا} \\
11 & \text{لا حق مقتله عليه} \\
12 & \text{ضمه فاذ جاك} \\
13 & \text{كنبي هذا فاجع ما على} \\
14 & \text{ارثك من الجزية والا} \\
15 & \text{بواب والفضول لم أقدم} \\
16 & \text{علي بمال ارثك وبالدين} \\
17 & \text{أمرتك ان تقدم اليه} \\
18 & \text{من اهل ارثك فعمرني} \\
19 & \text{لقد كنت اظن ان عملك} \\
20 & \text{هو امجح وخيرا مما ر} \\
21 & \text{ايت وقد فعلت ما لم} \\
22 & \text{فعل احد من العمال} \\
23 & \text{في تأخير الذي عليك [و] في} \\
24 & \text{عجزك في عملك وانه} \\
25 & \text{والله ما احد عدني}
\end{align*}
\]
from your land, and I have found it.

You still owe a large amount of revenue.

You well know what time it has come to be; so appear before me now. By my life, if any finance officer delays beyond the term which I appointed, or appears before me having left behind him aught of the revenue, truly, he is but a self-deceiving fool who has light regard for his life. So when there has come to you this my letter, collect what is due from your land of gold tax and imposts and extraordinary taxes. Then come to me with the revenue of your land, together with those whom I had ordered you to bring with you of the people of your land. Now, by my life, I really used to think your administration more successful and better than what I have seen. For you have indeed done what not one of the finance officers has done in the delaying of what is due from you and in the incompetence of your administration. For indeed, by God, there is in my service not one who has delayed this revenue without being disgraced. Let there be no withholding of what is with you. And beware
THE KURRAH PAPYRI IN THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE

of excuses, for I am not
of those who believe in excuses
or accept them. Peace
be with those who follow the guidance.
Written by Khalīfah on Monday.

NOTES

4-5. PSR I 5-6 has  Kardash  ❄️  ❄️ Other possible readings are  ❄️  ❄️ and  ❄️  ❄️

11-12. A similar threat appears also in the Greek papyrus B. 1334, translated by Bell in Der Islam II 270 f., where Basil is cautioned against giving, through neglect of duty, "ground for proceeding against your life." On the tone of language used in addressing officials see pages 40 f.

14-15. The translation given here is confirmed by Greek parallels, where Χρυσικά δημόσιμα, επίχρισι, and ἐκτροπορία are evidently used for jizyāh, abwāb, and ḥudūl respectively; cf. B. 1338 in P. Lond. IV 8-10 and Bell's remarks ibid. p. 168. Bell's translation of these terms in Der Islam II 272 is "gold public taxes," "imposts," and "extraordinary taxes." Becker (ibid. p. 250) accepts ḥudūb in the same sense in NPAF I 2.

25-27. That local governors were to be no less severe to their subordinates is seen in PSR III 52-56.

28-29. On the cardboard mounting of the original (though not visible on the photograph) Moritz has drawn attention to a use of the same phrase in Tabarī II 1004, lines 12 f.

33. This document and NPAF II, which has "Friday" and which Becker includes in the group of Kurrah papyri, are the only two pieces, to my knowledge, that are so indefinitely dated. The reason that in these documents the day only is mentioned may be that they are urgent admonitions meant to be dispatched at once by special messenger and delivered within a week so that results might be obtained with the least possible delay.

V

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE NO. 13759

Date: Lost, probably was A.H.90 or 91/A.D.709 or 710.
Description: Medium brown, fine papyrus, 87.5 by 20.5 cm.
Very poor, the worst of the group. The beginning and the left half along almost the entire length are broken off and missing. Lines 1-25 are made up of seven pieces carefully held together, whereas lines 26-33 consist of four separate strips, the text of which is so broken as to make it difficult to tell how many lines are lost between them.

TEXT

1ما قضى ر
2منذ كان بها [عبد الله]
3 بن عبد الملك [من الجزء؟]
4 أبوب المال و[الفصول]
5 في ذلك إذا الذي []
6 من الجزء و []
7 ثابت في ال []
8 لا خفا به []
9 جرى من ال []
10 الجزء فا [لذي؟]
11 من سماك اخو فير []
12 ومن صالح []
13 كتب ذلك []
14 فإذا جاك كتبه هذى [1]
15 فارسل إلي []
16 كل دينر دفعته []
17 أو من كان قبلك [لي]
18 كورك الي [عبد الله بن]
19 عبد الملك من [الجزء و]
20 الفصول والفراغات []
21 والموارد []
22 ذلك مما كتب [رب[بن]
23 ال [200] منذ كان بصر
24 إلى يو [م] ي هذى و [ذلك]
25 كتبت بينا [شبنا] إيا
26 [الفصول] الذي دفعت
27 إلى خزان عبد الله بن
28 عبد الملك []
TRANSLATION

1 What he received ....
2 since 'Abd Allāh
3 ibn 'Abd al-Malik was in it, of the gold tax and
4 the imposts and the extraordinary taxes
5 in that. If what ....
6 of the gold tax and ....
7 established in the ....
8 no secret in it ....
9 collected from the ....
10 the gold tax, for what ....
11 from Samāk, the brother of F r ....
12 and from Šāliḥ ....
13 letter for that ....
14 Therefore, when this present letter reaches you,
15 then send me ....
16 every dinar which you have paid ....
17 or he who was before you over
18 your district, to 'Abd Allāh ibn
19 'Abd al-Malik, of the gold tax and
20 the extraordinary taxes and the fines ....
21 and the mawārīth (?) (or mawāzīt?) ....
22 That is what has written .... r ibn
23 al- .... since he was in Egypt
24 to this my day. And that
25 is a clear document affirming
the extraordinary taxes which you paid
into the treasuries of ‘Abd Allāh ibn
‘Abd al-Malik . . . .
the finance officers. Then do not . . . .
one except . . . .
his letter and . . . .
Peace be to those who follow
the guidance. Written by . . . .
in . . . .

NOTES

Although the papyrus is in poor condition, still enough of the writing is preserved to give us a fair idea of the general purport of the letter. This seems to be an order to pay up tax arrears carried over from the time of ‘Abd Allāh’s administration and a demand for proof of the claim that the payments in question had been, in part or in whole, paid in ‘Abd Allāh’s time.

2. The name ‘Abd Allāh here and in line 18 was supplied not only on the strength of the content and historical sequence, but also on the evidence in line 27, where the first two letters of عد are unmistakable. The reference of biḥā is probably to Egypt.

11-12. The names یساح and سالح need no comment. That of the “brother” beginning with either a ڤل or a ڭغف has many possibilities, as a glance at any full list of Arabic names will show. Arabic names occurring in these papyri give no help, unless we wish to read ڤل. It is not clear why these three men are mentioned here; from their names it is evident that they are Arabs and therefore Muslims. They may have been Muslim taxpayers (see below, pp. 90-93) whose accounts are to be investigated. I think, however, that they are more likely to have been commissioners or inspectors of some kind who had either given information regarding the case or were being sent to do so (cf. P. Lond. IV xx).

21. Paleographically, the word in this line appears to be ڇاڞئث, there being two dots for ڇا and three dots over the ٿث. Read thus, its obvious translation is “inheritances.”
However, the context is too broken to allow this as a positive translation exclusive of any other; furthermore, the Kurrah papyri give no other reference to inheritances. We read in Kindī, p. 69, with reference to the replacement of Coptic local officials by Muslims in the reign of ʿUmar II, وَتَزَعُّتُ مَوَاذِيْتُ الْفِطْرَة وَتَسَلِّمُ السَّلَّمُونَ. Becker has emended mawāriṯ to mawāzīt (Der Islam II 363). It is possible that the word in this line may have been meant for mawāzīt, one of the three dots appearing over the head of thāʾ serving originally as dot for ṣāʾ. The scribe of the document was not very careful in the placement of the dots in general; for example, those for ṣāʾ in the word under consideration and in jizyah in line 6 are too low and too far to the right, while the dot for bāʾ in bi-miṣr in line 23 is too far to the left, being in fact placed under mīm. The reading mawāzīt (sing. māṣūt, Arabicized from μετοτέης, Der Islam II 363), "local village officials," could fit well into the context of the document. Furthermore, according to Becker's readings it occurs in this same form in NPAF III 28, while the singular māṣūt appears in PAF IX 3. 30 ff. There is no way of telling how many lines are really missing here. The final formula and the date alone usually occupy four to five lines. Since the document deals with arrears from ʿAbd Allāh's time, it was probably among the first of Kurrah's documents and so may be dated A.H.90 or, at the latest, 91.
BIOGRAPHY OF ĊURRAH IBN SHARIK, GOVERNOR OF EGYPT

Most of the sources of information for the Umayyads and their regime are from camps hostile to them. By far the greater number is from the hands of the orthodox traditionalists who flourished in the days of the 'Abbāsids and who were hostile either because they honestly differed from the principles espoused by the fallen regime or because, as was most frequently the case, they catered to the court opinion of the 'Abbāsids and to the prejudices of religious sects.1 Others are from Christians, such as Eutychius and Severus, in whose works we get to see the Umayyads through the eyes of some of their Christian subjects, both Melkite and Coptic; and hostile and resentful as these conquered non-Muslim subjects might be expected to be, yet they are hardly any more severe, if as severe, on the Umayyads as their fellow Muslims—the 'Abbāsids. But now we are fortunate enough, through the Kurrah Aphrodito papyri at our disposal, to hear a typical governor—Kurrah ibn Sharīk—speak for himself and, indirectly, also for his Umayyad masters.

Kurrah ibn Sharīk ibn Murthid ibn Ḥāzim ibn al-Ḥārith ibn Ḥabsh al-'Absī, a North Arab from the Syrian city of Ḫinnasrīn, was a practical man, active in the service of the Caliph Walīd (86-96/705-15).2 Until very recently it was unknown in what capacity he had served before his significant appointment to the difficult office of governor of Egypt. Becker rightly surmised: "Er muss sich jedenfalls schon vorher in verantwortungsericher

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1 Cf. Goldziher II, chaps. ii and iii.

And indeed he had held a responsible position in the imperial administration, for Björkman's researches have shown Kurrah to have been one of Walid's kātib's or state secretaries.  
Suyūṭī lists him as one of three kātib's. The significance of the office of kātib in Umayyad times is well brought out by a passage from al-Fakhrī, where Ibn al-Ṭikṭaka describes the pre-ʿAbbāsid caliphs as consulting with the most sagacious and wise of their courtiers and retainers, each of whom performed, in effect, the functions of a wazīr. He adds further that when the ʿAbbāsids came to the throne the laws of the wazīirate were fixed, and the officer in question was then called wazīr, having hitherto been designated kātib, "secretary," or mushīr, "counselor."

Such a secretary or counselor was Kurrah ibn Sharīk. One may well imagine the conquest-minded Walid as anxious to have Egypt both quiet and regular in her tribute, so that her weight of grain and gold might tell, and tell well, in the success of his imperial policy. But the internal conditions of the Egypt of his day promised the opposite results. Kurrah, the tried secretary-counselor, must rise to the occasion and save the situation. And the situation was serious. The 1st century of the Hijrah was a century of stress and strain; a century of painful adjustments on the part of the non-Muslim subject majority to the will of the Muslim Arab minority; a century of transition, of rising arrogant race consciousness, and of political and economic evolution that taxed the ingenuity of the successive pilots that charted the course of the Muslim ship of state.

The eschatological views of Muḥammad, which had colored in a measure the outlook of his first successors, had had their short day, and İslām was now busier trying to conquer this world than

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3 FSR, p. 15.
4 Beiträge zur Geschichte der Staatskanzlei im islamischen Ägypten, p. 57.
5 Huen al-muhādarah II 172.
6 Fakhri, p. 206. Nicholson, Literary History of the Arabs, pp. 256 f., especially in n. 2, points out that Arabic sources refer to Ziyād ibn Abīhi as the wazīr of Muʿāwiyyah, and Abū Bakr as the wazīr of Muḥammad, and that the word wazīr was used also in pre-Islamic poetry.
she was preparing to meet the day of judgment in the world to come. Would-be-dynasts made a bid for power, and the century saw the first two civil wars of Islam. With the final Marwanid-Umayyad victory the die was cast for continued imperialism; and imperial finance at first stood aghast, and then laughed, at the naive "communism" of early Islam. The non-Muslims, the imperial camel, had to yield more milk, and the Muslim had to learn to give as well as to receive. So on the back of the former was laid a heavier tax burden, and from the land of the latter was required a kharâj. Furthermore, Umayyad imperialism had become race conscious to a high degree. To be an Arab was the height of distinction, comparable only to that of being a Roman in the days of St. Paul. And so the second half of this century saw the minting of Arab currency, the adoption of Arabic as the official language, and the appearance of Arab civil officials, especially in the higher positions. Again, at the imperial court differences of policies were sharpened by interdynastic rivalries and colored by religious opinions. 'Abd al-Malik and his brother 'Abd al-'Azîz, both men of ability and both ambitious for their children, never lost sight of the question of succession. 'Abd al-'Azîz, the acknowledged heir, refused, on his brother's request, to set aside his claim in favor of his nephew Walîd, replying to his brother, "If you have a son, we have sons." According to him, his son al-'Ashbagh was worthy to be caliph. But death took both father and son within about six weeks of each other, thus enabling 'Abd al-Malik to have his heart's desire to see not one but two of his sons, Walîd and Sulaimân, in line for the succession. 7 But there was yet another son of 'Abd al-'Azîz to reckon with—'Umar. In spite of the high esteem that 'Abd al-Malik had for this young man whom he made his son-in-law and appointed governor of the Hijâz, it is evident that, personal affection aside, uncle and nephew did not exactly see alike, for 'Umar frowned on the deeds of Ḥajjâj ibn Yûsuf and inclined to the theological opposition at Madînah. 8 Walîd upheld the policies of Ḥajjâj against both brother

7 For details of this rivalry see Kindî, pp. 54 f.; Makrîzî I 210; Ibn Ṭaghribirdî I 193; Yaʕâkrî II 334 f.; Ibn al-Athîr IV 409 f.; Ṭabârî II 1164-71; on the death of al-'Ashbagh and 'Abd al-'Azîz see also Severus, Po V 52-54.

8 Cf. Ar. Kg., pp. 267 f.
Sulaimān and cousin ‘Umar,9 thus driving these two into the same camp. Sulaimān set aside his own sons and his brother and gave the throne to his cousin ‘Umar, who is known in history as pious ‘Umar II.10

Such were the times in which the lot of Kurrah ibn Sharīk was cast, first as Walīd’s kātīb, then as his governor of Egypt. As already intimated, the situation in Egypt at that time was extremely grave. For after the death of the governor ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, ‘Abd al-Malik had appointed his son ‘Abd Allāh as governor, and the latter’s rule was the severest and hardest that Egypt had yet experienced under the Arabs.11 The master hand of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz had, indeed, likewise lain heavily and firmly on the land of Egypt, but that of young ‘Abd Allāh promised to prove the necessary straw to break the camel’s back. His personal greediness for graft proved to be his own undoing. Furthermore, the maladministration of ‘Abd Allāh was cruelly intensified by the failure of nature. In A.H.86 the Nile failed to rise to its customary level, stopping at the low maximum of 13 cubits and 18 finger-breathths.12 This meant failure of crops, which in turn meant heavy speculation in the grain markets. Prices soared,13 famine and plague were doing their worst,14 but taxes were mercilessly demanded and even increased.15 Not even death released a man from them, for he remained unburied until his people or village paid the taxes for him.16 Desperate, the peasants deserted their holdings. But ‘Abd Allāh took severe measures against them. All fugitives and strangers who had settled in a locality within the past twenty years "were driven together, branded on hands and forehead and sent to places they knew not. Thus there was trouble

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9 Ibid. p. 257; Ibn Taḡrībirdī I 243.
10 Taḡarī II 1340-44; Yaḡūbī II 358-60; Ibn al-Athīr V 27-30; cf. also Arī. Kg., pp. 264-66.
11 Ibn Taḡrībirdī I 233.
12 Ibid. p. 237.
13 Ibid. p. 233; cf. also Kindī, p. 59, and FSR, p. 16.
14 Ibn Taḡrībirdī I 235.
15 Severus, PO V 55.
16 Ibid. p. 56.
Neither did the Coptic church escape his avarice. Throughout his administration his object seems to have been to humiliate its officials and to acquire their actual or supposed wealth, "so that many churches were ruined for that cause." But news of 'Abd Allāh's corruption and misappropriation of the state revenue reached his brother Walīd, who summoned him to Damascus in A.H. 88. But admonition was of no avail. Having returned to Egypt, he persisted in his dissipation till he was suddenly deposed and called home.

It was at such a crucial moment that Kurrah was appointed to the governorship of Egypt. Riding to office on an imperial tidal wave, he had to swim with the current, conscious at the same time of undercurrents which might at any moment draw him under; for his young royal master might at any time be induced to change his mind. To hold his own, Kurrah, like Ḥajjāj, had to show himself a positive imperial asset. He did this by supplying the sinews of empire—money—money for use in Islam's second wave of conquest and expansion induced by Walīd's imperial ambition and pride.

Kurrah was appointed governor of Egypt in Rabi' I, A.H. 90/January, A.D. 709. He traveled with two companions by post and arrived at Fustat unpretentiously and unexpectedly on the third or thirteenth of that month. His first action was to go to the governor's mosque and to offer prayer in the mīhrāb. Guards would have him move to some other spot, but he ordered them to summon their chief instead. Quickly one of the guards left and informed the chief of police, 'Abd al-A'lā, who, sensing that there was something in the wind, had a horse saddled and rode to the mosque, where he met Kurrah with a courteous greeting, only to be commanded to go and seal the government offices and the treasury. No longer in doubt that this is some high official, 'Abd al-A'lā sent out a feeler: "If you are in charge of the kharāj, this order is out of your sphere." Thereupon Kurrah asked him:

"To what tribe do you belong?"

"To Fahm," said 'Abd al-A'lā.

Ibid.; for a critical interpretation of this passage see Bell in P. Lond. IV xl and Becker in Der Islam II 368 f.

18 Severus, PO V 55.

19 Ibn Taghrībirdī I 233.
"You will never," replied Kurrah, "find a Fahmi [which word may also mean ‘a person endowed with intelligence or understanding’] but that he guards his highest temper and recognizes the truth." Shrewd ‘Abd al-‘Ala understood and saluted Kurrah as governor.20

We have reported this incident in detail because it reveals Kurrah’s personality and character. It shows him endowed with presence of mind, and to be shrewd, self-possessed, dignified, and able to command.

In his brief six years of office (13th Rabii I, 90 - 24th Rabii I, 96/January 30, 709 - December 7, 714),21 Kurrah accomplished the restoration of normal order in Egypt, a tax census,22 an increase of tax returns,23 the reclamation of waste lands for sugar plantation,24 and a building program (including the rebuilding of the mosque of ‘Amr).25 But beside his master Walid few seem to have appreciated his accomplishments, for the simple reason that Walid was the one to profit largely by them.

A Kharijite plot was soon afoot against Kurrah’s life. TaghrIbirdI,26 followed by Becker,27 gives the Azra‘iyyah group28 as the plotters; but Guest29 draws our attention to a marginal note to Kindi’s account, attributed to Ibn Yunus, an early Egyptian historian (d. 347/958),30 naming the Ibadiyyah as the real plotters.

[Footnotes]

21 Kindi, pp. 65 f.; for a discussion of Kurrah’s dates see PSR, pp. 17 f.
22 Kindi, p. 65.
23 Severus, PO V 64.
24 Kindi, p. 65; Ibn TaghrIbirdI I 244; PSR, p. 18.
25 Kindi, p. 65; Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, p. 131; Ibn TaghrIbirdI I 242 and 244; PSR, pp. 18 f.
26 I 242.
27 PSR, p. 19.
29 Kindi, p. 64, n. 1.
30 Ibn Khallikân II 94.
Known facts of the history of these two groups confirm neither account. The Azrakiyyah operated chiefly in 'Irāk and farther east and after the death of their latest acknowledged leader in 77/696 seem to have disappeared from history, while the Ibādiyyah first appeared in Arabia in the reign of Marwān II (127-32/744-50), whence they spread to all Muslim lands, forming a specially strong party in North Africa and there playing a disturbing part in the period of dynastic transition in the 8th century. Thus it was too late for the Azrakiyyah and too early for the Ibādiyyah to have instigated the plot. Kindī's text designates the plotters, who were of Alexandria, as the shurāt, a term meaning "the heretics or schismatics, commonly known by the name of khawārij." The plotters—about a hundred of them—were soon discovered, and all were put to death. Thus Kurrah early taught his enemies a lasting lesson.

The opposition party, if but for policy's sake, condemned him severely. In the oft reported statement of their leader 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Azīz all of Walīd's governors came in for their share of censure: "Al-Hajjāj in 'Irāk, al-Walīd in Syria, Kurrah ibn Sharīk in Egypt, 'Uthmān in Madīnah, and Khālid in Makkah—oh God, the world is full of oppression and violence; give deliverance to the people!" Though the authenticity of this statement may be doubted—something similar having been related with regard to Ziyād ibn Abī Ḥaitham under Muʿāwiyah, thus pointing to the fabrication in both cases by later anti-Umayyad traditionists and historians—it nevertheless serves as an index to the unpopularity of Kurrah. We read further in these same and in other sources that Kurrah was irreligious; that he defiled the mosque of 'Amr with drunken revelry and shamelessly alleged, "For them the day, for us the night"; that he was, in fact, evil through and through, "the

31 BI I 542; Shahrastānī, pp. 89-91.
32 BI I 3 f. and II 350 f.; Wellhausen, op. cit. pp. 52-55; Shahrastānī, pp. 100 f.
33 Lane, Arabic-English Lexicon IV 1546.
34 PSR, p. 17, and references given there.
36 Kindī, p. 65, n. 2; Ibn Taghribirdī I 242; PSR, p. 19; Statthalter, l. Abt., p. 40.
most wicked of God's creatures,"37 "a bad administrator, wicked and unjust, tyrannical, immoral, and profligate."38

So much for the Muslim verdict on Kurrah. Let us now see what the Coptic Christians have to say of him, taking Severus as our main informant. This writer, in the translation by B. Evetts, relates:

And Kurrah brought down great trials upon the friends of Abd Allah, both Christians and Muslims, and cast them into prisons where they remained for a year. And there was in his days a man of the orthodox faith, named John, a native of Damīrah, who had authority to command or forbid. But Kurrah caused trials among the churches and the monks, as shall be described.39

Then follows the story of the visit of Patriarch Alexander II to Kurrah to congratulate him on his appointment as governor; how the Patriarch was arrested and, in the course of the conversation with Kurrah, was told, "If thou must sell thine own flesh, thou must pay me three thousand dinars"; how five pots of gold were conveniently discovered by some hermit's sons; how four were handed to Alexander's steward and scribe, who hid them dishonestly; how news of the find reached Kurrah; and how Kurrah had the house and the church searched and the pots, the vessels of the church, and the gold and silver and cattle found in the patriarchal residence carried away.40 When, somewhat later, the rumor came out that the Patriarch was minting dinars in his house, a second search took place.

The people of the city of Alexandria with the town-clerk, by the command of Kurrah, .... seized the patriarch and his companions; and they threw him to the ground, and beat his companions, who were tortured till their blood flowed on the ground, and they almost died by the torture .....

And the Amir Kurrah was a great lover of money; and whenever an official died, he seized all his goods ....; and he even took away the endowments of the bishops. By these means he added a hundred thousand dinars to the established revenue of the country. And men began to flee from place to place with their wives and children, but no place would harbour them because of the troubles and the exaction of taxes; and his tyranny was greater than that of any of his predecessors.

37 Kindī, p. 64, n. 1.
38 Ibn Taghrībirdī I 242.
39 P0 V 57.
40 Ibid. pp. 58-60.
Then Kurrah appointed a man named Abd al- Aztz, of the city of Sakhs, who collected the fugitives from every place, and brought them back and bound them and punished them, and sent every one to his own place; and the people endured heavy trials. 41

Quite in contrast to the foregoing picture drawn by the Muslim and Christian writers referred to are the character traits of Kurrah revealed in the papyri. PSR III and NPAF I together give us a fine insight into Kurrah’s own attitude toward his office, his subordinate officials, and the people at large. Using these documents as a basis, and supplementing the information derived from them by details gleaned from other letters written by him, we see that Kurrah has throughout the attitude of a shepherd who feels responsible for his sheep (though not too much must be read into this, for after all sheep must give wool). It is this attitude that he is constantly seeking to develop in his officials. "If the people of the land suffer oppression and loss at the hands of those who are appointed to rule over them, then that is their ruin." 42 Again, office is a "trust and a religious duty," 43 and hence the officials are to see to the execution of orders in person and are not to delegate the responsibility to another. 44 The officials who will achieve improvement and show faithfulness will be rewarded not only by God, 45 but by Kurrah also, who will do good to them, extend his favors to them, and strengthen their position in office. 46 Those, however, who are found wanting will be rewarded accordingly 47—disgraced, 48 fined, 49 or even be in danger of their lives. 50 The higher officials are held responsible

41 Ibid. pp. 61 and 64.
42 PSR III 68-72.
43 Ibid. lines 63 f.
44 Ibid. ll. 72-74; cf. NPAF I 19-27 and our No. II 8-10.
45 NPAF I 28-30.
46 Ibid. ll. 4-6.
47 Ibid. ll. 8 f.
48 Ibid. ll. 14-16; cf. our No. IV 25-27.
49 NPAF III 1-3; cf. also PSR III 54-56.
50 Our No. IV 11 f.; cf. also our note to this passage on p. 52.
for the just conduct of their subordinates, and the subordinates, if caught oppressing the people, are to be punished severely. These are not mere generalities; they are statements made in connection with specific facts. Thus briefly the burden of PSR III is to hasten the shipment of grain to the central treasury, where it is needed for the army rations. Basil is to see that in the collection of the grain the "people of the land" are not coerced into paying more than their assessment and that not a single extra ardabb is taken from them; that trustworthy and acceptable local kabbāl's are employed, and that the standard and just measure is used. On the other hand, the people should not think that they can pay their taxes with poor grain; for the treasury officials are commanded to accept nothing but good grain. Furthermore, the collector-shipper must be held responsible for delivering the full amount to the treasury. PSR III and NPAF IV show the same concern and care for the people, though in these cases they are the "people of the city." Anticipating a grain famine in Fustāṭ and therefore a "corner" by speculators, Kurrah takes double measures to head it off, first by ordering the local officials to regulate the trade in grain, and then by temporarily suspending the custom duties at Fustāṭ.

Furthermore, Kurrah is interested not only in the general economic welfare and prosperity of the country; he is concerned with the administration of justice as well, and any individual may receive justice at his hand. This is amply illustrated in the many appeals that the documents refer to. For example, in PAF II Dāwud ibn Bada' has complained of the local official's (mazūt) conduct in forcing his way into his house and taking possession of it; Basil is ordered to settle these matters justly and to keep these officials from the people's houses. In PAF I and NPAF VIII Markus ibn Jarīj (George?) is appealing two cases of debt; in our No. III Ibbshādah ibn Abnīlah, and in NPAF IX Baktār (Victor) ibn Jamūl, are doing the same. In PSR X, which is addressed to Zakariyyā', sāhib of Upper Ashmūn, Yūhannās Shanūdah has a similar case. In each of these cases the local official is ordered to investigate the claim and, if it is substantiated, to secure just payment. On the other hand, Kurrah is to be informed if the claim

51 PSR III 57-62.
52 Ibid. 11. 48-56.
is false. In NPAF V Hishām ibn 'Umar is complaining that his fugitives are harbored in Basil's district; Basil is ordered to return them to Hishām and admonished not to expose himself to a similar charge in the future. In B. 1356 Basil himself is taken to task for not being more readily accessible to the representatives of the people with regard to tax affairs.53

In these documents, then, Kurrah speaks long enough and forcefully enough to cause us to question seriously the verdict of the Muslim and the Coptic sources regarding him. But this leaves us with the problem of explaining the divergence of judgment in our sources.

We have already noted (cf. pp. 62-65) some of the motives for Kurrah's unpopularity with the imperial opposition party at home and have also pointed out that he punished the Kharijite plotters with death. Severus tells us that Kurrah deposed many officials who were friends of his predecessor in office and confiscated the property of officials who died.54 The plotters and many of the deposed officials were Muslims, all with an ax to grind and all without question to be severely handled by a positive character like Kurrah. But how are we to account for the discontent of the general Muslim population? The answer is probably to be found in the imposition of the land tax (kharāj).55 It is supposed that Kurrah exacted this tax from the believers, degrading them, in their eyes, to the level of the unbelievers. That Kurrah introduced this tax on the Muslims is not sure; that he exacted it seems more certain.56 And in this one fact we see sufficient cause for Kurrah's unpopularity with the average Muslim.

As for the unfavorable verdict on the part of Christian authors, the following passage from Severus indicates likely reasons in addition to those mentioned above.

There was a man named John, an official, to whom God gave favour with the governors. So he went to Kurrah and said to him: "It is right that thou shouldst know that the taxes weigh heavily
upon the monks and bishops in every place. Here then is an easy
matter, for some of them are rich; while others have not the means
of nourishment; .... if therefore thou thinkest fit to set me over
their affairs, I will collect the taxes." So he set him over the
bishops and monks. And when Kurrah gave him authority, he said
to him: "There are among them some who do not believe in the faith
of the Coptic Christians, and yet will not pray with the Muslims.
What then thinkest thou that I should do to them?" The governor
answered: "Do to them according to the law of the Christians, and
take a double poll-tax from them."\(^{57}\)

Undoubtedly the repression and suppression of "heretical"
Christian minorities by the Coptic majority under the aegis of the
Muslim governor earned for the latter the hatred of all members of
the minority groups. Furthermore, the attempt to distinguish be­
tween the rich and the poor among the clerics was bound to lead
to cases of extortion; for with pots of gold conveniently dis­
covered by monks and hermits, how was Kurrah to know the poor
from the rich among them?

The common peasants, too, might well feel that they had a
grievance against Kurrah because of measures he had to adopt in
order to remedy conditions that resulted from the mismanagement
of his predecessor and from the failure of the Nile during the
latter's tenure of office. Severus reports the condition of those
who fled from their land to evade the high taxes.\(^{58}\) The Arabic
documents known to us refer to one fugitive case only, though the
Greek Aphroditto papyri have several references to fugitives and
fugitive commissioners who were to put a stop to the flight of the
peasants from the land.\(^{59}\) The commissioners were instructed to
do a thorough piece of work and to bring fugitives of long stand­
ing back to their lands, or assign them to new lands. According
to B. 1384, after issuance of the new regulations those who
sheltered fugitives were to be fined ten solidi; the fugitives
themselves were to be given forty lashes, fined five solidi, and
turned over to the governor; the local administrators and headmen
and the police of the place where a fugitive had found shelter
were also fined five solidi; anyone giving information regarding a
fugitive was to be paid a reward of two solidi, this amount to

\(^{57}\) PO V 62.

\(^{58}\) Ibid. p. 64.

\(^{59}\) Cf. B. 1332, 1333, 1343, and 1384 (P. Lond. IV 1-3, 14-
16, and 57-59), also P. Ross.-Georg. IV, Nos. 1 and 2.
be exacted from him who sheltered the fugitive. Considering the time and the country, such treatment of the fugitives and others concerned is, after all, not so severe. If P. Ross.-Georg. IV, No. 16, belongs in this context, torture with lime and vinegar was expressly forbidden because it left the tortured impaired in health and incapable of work. This prohibition of a specific and severe form of torture may imply connivance at, or even sanction of, other but milder forms. It may imply, in addition, an occasional occurrence of the prohibited form itself, but it cannot be made to imply a general policy of torture.  

Thus at last Kurrah appears, as it were, in person. We see in him an efficient statesman of the practical Umayyad regime. He had an essential and definite object before him—satisfactory finance based on good government. He set out to accomplish it thoroughly and with a minimum of injustice to the taxpayer. His increased returns were rather the result of good administration than of heavier taxation. In the words of Bell, who, through his great work on the Greek Aphroditto papyri, is in a position to judge, "his (Kurrah's) cruelty and impiety may well be an entire fiction.... It is possible .... that he came to be regarded by the Copts themselves as an oppressor, not because he was guilty of misgovernment, but because he so efficiently discharged the duties entrusted to him."  

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60 P. Lond. IV 57-59 and Der Islam II 379 f.
61 For the significance of the fugitive question on the state economics see pages 97 f. Kurrah's humane attitude is reflected also in the one tradition that is reported of him (Ibn TaghrThird I 244), according to which he is said to have held that it is not permissible to separate a married slave couple.
62 P. Lond. IV xxxvi.
IV

HISTORICAL STUDY AND
INTERPRETATION

BYZANTINE EGYPT

That the Arabs took over the Byzantine system of local government and taxation is the general verdict of historians and scholars dealing with Egypt under Arab rule. Like most generalized assertions, however, this statement needs to be modified in several important items. It is the purpose of this study to point out these particulars, namely those Byzantine factors which the Arabs discarded and those peculiarly Arab ones which they introduced; for it is in this double set of factors that Egypt under early Arab rule is to be distinguished from the periods before and after.

It is obvious that our first task is to know what the Byzantine system was. We are fortunate in the possession of a wealth of Greek papyri of the Byzantine period. These together with the works of Greek historians form the basis of all modern studies of that period. However, these source materials are by no means so complete and self-explanatory as to eliminate all uncertainties, and hence we find differences in the conclusions of such modern writers as Milne, Maspero, Gelzer, Rouillard, Bell, Hardy, and others.

For the period of Justinian's outstanding reign (527-65) Edict XIII is our most valuable single document reflecting the then existing administrative and economic conditions of Egypt. Setting aside the moot question of the date of this edict, whether it was 538/39 or a whole indiction later (553/54), \(^1\) it is evident that economic decay and economic reform were the cause and the

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\(^1\) Rouillard, pp. 15-24; Gelzer, pp. 21-28; cf. Hardy, pp. 17 f. and 31, who favors the date 538.
object of the edict respectively.\(^2\) Whereas in the history of any
country economics play an important part, in the history of Egypt
they have played the major role, and that especially during peri­
ods of foreign domination and occupation when the masters of the
land left nothing undone to make themselves the ultimate recipients
of the bountiful gifts of the Nile. The Roman-Byzantine period
was no exception to this rule. Milne remarks that "for the most
part, events in Egypt were too monotonously uninteresting for
historians of the Roman Empire to pay any attention to them.
Egypt supplied corn, not men, to Rome."\(^3\) And so long as this corn
came, the welfare of Egypt and the Egyptians troubled their Roman
masters but little. But should the corn fail to come, then inter­
est was immediately roused and action quickly taken. At the time
of Justinian's accession the "corn" of Egypt (using the term here
to include all of Egypt's taxes and revenues) was declining wo­
efully. Justinian, partial to ideas of absolutism, could have
attempted a colossal armed robbery, taking a chance on getting or
losing all. If successful, he would enjoy his corn cakes; but,
one eaten, that would be the end of them. Being also a states­
man and a good administrator, Justinian thought of a better plan
by which he hoped to be able both to eat and still to have his
cake. Egyptian civil and military administration must be reformed
and made to serve the economic end in view, and the Egyptians must
receive a degree of paternal care that would insure the continuance
of their immense contributions. The goose that was laying the
golden egg must be both guarded and cared for, if she was to con­
tinue her profitable activity. Her cackling, though annoying,
must not be taken too seriously. If Justinian's plans did not
endure, it is because he himself expected too much of this goose
at the same time that his keepers half starved her, stole her
eggs, and left the gates wide open for highway robbers.

According to Edict XIII, Justinian's reforms for Egypt em­
braced the following: (1) great decentralization in provincial
government by division of the diocese into five independent ter­
ritories; (2) union of military and civil powers; (3) maintenance
of a balance of power between local and provincial authorities
through a certain measure of control of both from Constantinople.

\(^2\) Rouillard, p. 163; cf. also Diehl in CMH II 37 f.
\(^3\) History of Egypt (1898), p. v.
For details of the Byzantine civil administration of Egypt during this period Rouillard's thesis has not been surpassed. He presents the whole of Egypt as divided into five provinces, at the head of each of which was a governor with civil and military powers. Three of these provinces ("Egypt" in the narrower sense, covering the western Delta and the city of Alexandria; Libya; and the Thebaid) were definitely duchies; the remaining two (Arcadia and Augustamnica) were in all probability likewise headed by dukes. With the exception of Arcadia and Libya, the duchies were in turn divided into two eparchies, each under a praeses, and these again divided into pagarchies, cities, villages, and large private estates. The administration of each of the five divisions was independent of the others and subject to the direction of the Prefect of the Praetorium of the Orient. The duke, whose military and civil powers in his province were very extensive, including control of finance, justice, and public works, was appointed by the emperor from among the nobility and received high titles and a handsome salary. In every sense he acted in a vice-regal capacity; yet counterchecks to his great power were not lacking, since both details of administration and the appointment of the subordinate officers of the duke were to be controlled by Constantinople. The subordinate officers appear in a civil capacity only. Thus the praeses is primarily a collector of taxes and a local judge for the eparchy, while the pagarch's functions are of a similar nature within his administrative unit.

The office of the pagarch interests us especially since most of our Arabic papyri are addressed to pagarchs. Though pagarchies are known to have existed prior to Justinian's edict, it is hard to fix the date of their origin, though the last part of the 5th

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4 Rouillard, p. 27.
5 Ibid. p. 33; cf. also Gelzer, p. 29.
6 Rouillard, p. 33.
7 Ibid. p. 40; Gelzer, p. 29.
8 Rouillard, pp. 34-39.
9 Ibid. p. 40.
10 Ibid. pp. 45 f.
11 Ibid. p. 52.
century is generally accepted as such, that being the time when increase of landlordism on the one hand and of autopragnia on the other pointed to the glaring need of a representative of the central government. The pagarchs, appointed directly by the emperor and subject to punishment and removal by him only, evidently answered the need of the hour.

It is not easy to decide what actually constituted the pagarchy as an administrative unit. Two much contested theories have been advanced. According to the one, sponsored by Bell and Maspero, the pagarchy corresponded to the ancient nome and comprised both the city and the villages in the district, thus giving the pagarch authority in both places; according to the other, accepted by Gelzer, the pagarchy corresponded to the earlier pagus, thus leaving the pagarch without powers in the city and restricting his authority to the surrounding villages only. Rouillard throws his weight on the side of the former, presenting, with reserve, the hypothesis that there is nothing inherently impossible in the existence of a municipal curia alongside a pagarch's authority, the one being a popular body, the other an imperial representative. And he adds that although the cities appear in Edict XIII to be directly subject to the duke, this need not imply, as Gelzer seems to conclude, the exclusion of all the phases of the pagarch's authority from the city.

When we turn to the judicial functions of the pagarch, we face a similar indefiniteness with regard to the extent of his jurisdiction; for though he possesses his own tribunal in the pagarchy, there appears also a "civic defensor," and the relationship between the two is obscure, giving room for the question: Is it that the pagarch's tribunal handled cases arising in the villages only, while the defensor administered justice in the city?

12 Ibid. pp. 50 f.
13 Ibid. p. 51.
14 Ibid. p. 54.
15 Ibid.
16 Ibid. pp. 55-60.
17 Ibid. p. 57.
18 Ibid. pp. 149-51.
In both these important functions, the financial and the judicial, the pagarch's powers were merely administrative, never legislative. He collected but did not assess the taxes; he administered the law in minor cases, subject to appeal to the duke's tribunal, and then he executed the sentences of that body when called upon to do so.\textsuperscript{19}

The judicial system illustrates Justinian's ideal of a strong provincial government, checked and controlled by Constantinople, the provincials having the right of appeal to the imperial court.\textsuperscript{20} To prevent too much litigation from reaching Constantinople, an intermediary tribunal between that of the duke and the imperial court was established and authorized to try cases involving values less than 500 solidi.\textsuperscript{21} Within the province the governor or duke had full charge of both civil and penal cases, especially when they involved the civil service and military personnel. His court was the court of appeal for all of the provincial subdivisions, and it is interesting to note the variety of cases that came to it, especially those of complaints against the pagarch and other civil officials.\textsuperscript{22}

Special military and ecclesiastic tribunals also existed, the latter exerting a great influence both because of their powers in their own clerical courts and through their acting in conjunction with the civil judges in some cases.\textsuperscript{23} Not only the patriarchal court but also the bishops' court was one of appeal.\textsuperscript{24}

In the financial administration Justinian's object was two-fold. The taxes must be secured, but no extortion or undue oppression was to be imposed on the people.\textsuperscript{25} His officers were to govern "paternally" and keep their "hands clean."\textsuperscript{26} To secure the first object a host of imperial, provincial, and local officers

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid. pp. 52 f. and 155.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid. p. 153.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid. p. 156; cf. Diehl in CMH II 39.
\textsuperscript{22} Rouillard, pp. 145 f. and 155.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid. p. 154.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid. p. 157.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid. p. 69.
\textsuperscript{26} Diehl in CMH II 38.
were set on the job with instructions to tolerate no tax evasion of any kind, even to the extent of using police and military force to aid in the collection. To insure the second, the assessment of taxes was highly centralized. The assessment itself was to be made in careful consideration of the ability of the taxpayer and of his land to pay it, and the quotas varied in different districts according to the nature of the soil and the product yielded, and also from year to year according to the rise of the Nile and irrigation facilities. Taking these factors into consideration, the imperial government, acting through the praetorian prefect and the annual imperial delegations, indicated not only the quota for each province and its subdivisions, but also stated the amount to be paid in kind and in specie. These assessments were made public in the autumn, each unit being informed of its quota in a series of notices from governor to praeses, to pagarch, to local officers. The final assessment on the individual taxpayer appears to have been left to the various city and village authorities, who must therefore have been held responsible for delivering the whole quota assigned to their unit.

There is considerable dispute over the question whether the assessments in specie comprised also a capitation or poll tax. That a poll tax existed in the early Arab period is clear (see pp. 94 f.). Since the Arabs had taken over the Byzantine system of taxation, the existence of a corresponding tax in the late Byzantine period is very likely. Besides, as Bell has shown, the term diagraphe, found in the tax receipts of the late Byzantine period, probably corresponds to the term diagraphon mentioned in papyri of the Arab period. This makes the existence of a capitation or poll tax more likely.

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27 Rouillard, pp. 86-100.
28 Ibid. pp. 82 f. and P. Lond. IV 170 f.
29 Milne, p. 152.
30 Rouillard, pp. 80-82.
32 P. Lond. IV 168.
33 Ibid. pp. 168 f.
tion tax in the late Byzantine period at least highly probable if not quite certain.

Though anxious not to introduce any new taxes, Justinian was nevertheless determined to secure all of the existing ones. The number and the variety of these bewilder the reader, who can thus well imagine the burden of their weight on the unfortunate taxpayer. Directly and indirectly the inhabitants were made to give, give, give to the state; give in gold, in produce, in service; give for existing (the poll tax), for possessing (land tax), for working (trade and professional taxes), for traveling, transporting, and importing (tolls and duty). Extraordinary taxes, including requisitions for public works, for the navy, and for the army were also levied, and personal service was required for dykes, canals, etc., and, on the part of the more well-to-do, for liturgies, which, at times, demanded also one’s private means, since frequently the expenses of the offices exceeded the salary paid, if paid at all. It is not surprising that the burden of taxation and of liturgies frequently drove men to the desperate measure of deserting their property to escape taxation.

All of Justinian’s good intentions could not put the fallen financial Humpty-Dumpty back on the wall. And the fault was not entirely with the King’s horses and the King’s men, but largely with the King himself. Justinian’s ambitious aims for both halves of his empire were incompatible with speedy, sound, and lasting financial reorganization, and his system woefully miscarried even in his own time. He needed more and more money for his conquests in the West and ruinous treaties in the East; more and more money for his orientally dazzling and sumptuous court; more and more money for his pretentious buildings; until, in his last years, instead of being paternal, he turned a deaf ear and a blind eye to the cries and misery of the people, introduced new dues,

34 Ibid. pp. 169 f. and Rouillard, p. 77.
35 Mitteis and Wilcken I 1, p. 221.
36 Rouillard, p. 69.
37 Gelzer, pp. 37-39; Rouillard, pp. 69-80 and 117-43; cf. Milne, pp. 151-70, for the late Roman practices which largely carried over to the Byzantine period.
38 In Roman times a charitable trust had been founded for the relief of victims of liturgies; cf. Milne, pp. 165 f.
tolerated exactions and extortions in high places, asking no ques-
tions so long as the money came into the treasury, until such a
pitch of financial tyranny was reached that a contemporary wrote
that "a foreign invasion seemed less formidable to the taxpayers
than the arrival of the officials of the fisc."³⁹

So far the political and economic situations have engaged
our attention. We will turn now to the social and religious con-
ditions which likewise played an important role in the decline of
Byzantium in general and in the loss of Egypt to the Arabs in par-
ticular. The degeneration and decline of the old Roman nobility,
the depression of the serf, and the rise of a powerful class of
native owners of large landholdings—the new nobility—are the
outstanding factors in the society of the late Byzantine empire.
In Egypt these factors are readily seen at work. Hardy's mono-
graph, The Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt, gives a vivid picture
of these social conditions. The history of the Apion family,⁴⁰
running unbroken from A.D.497-625, illustrates the establishment
of large hereditary estates, the proprietors of which, in this
case at least, took a hand in both the political and the religious
questions of the day. It was owing to the zeal of a member of
this family, Strategius III, that a sort of union was brought
about between the Syrian and the Coptic Monophysite churches in
A.D.616.⁴¹ Evidence of other large proprietors is not wanting.⁴²

In addition to these large private land owners there were
the large "public proprietors"—the state and the church. The
public lands of the state consisted of the imperial family's pri-
ivate estates and of such autopract communities as the village of
Aphrodito, which, by placing themselves under the imperial patron-
age, became, technically at least, part of the imperial domain.⁴³
The public lands of the church, acquired by pious donations, both
private and imperial, were even more extensive and very wealthy.⁴⁴

³⁹ Diehl in CMH II 42.
⁴⁰ Hardy, pp. 25-38; Gelzer, pp. 83-99.
⁴¹ Hardy, pp. 35 f.; Severus, PO I 480-83.
⁴² Hardy, pp. 39-43.
⁴³ Ibid. pp. 43 f.
⁴⁴ Ibid. pp. 44-47.
Large tracts of church lands were frequently rented on hereditary leases. Monasteries take a high rank among ecclesiastical proprietors, and of these the Monastery of Metanoia at Canopus near Alexandria was the richest, reaping from imperial grants assigned to it in near and distant parts of Egypt a rich harvest of taxes; for example, the village of Aphrodito alone sent in 5759 ardabb's of grain.

Toward the end of the 4th century, as governmental inefficiency and laxity prevailed, the large landowners or patrons gradually began to assume governmental functions by collecting the taxes of their coloni, and by A.D. 366 they were by law made responsible for this task. Their next step was to obtain the privilege of autopracia, the right to make payments directly to the central government. A futile attempt was made to limit and then to abolish the right of autopracia; by 429 it received partial recognition, and in the 6th century we find it as a thoroughly recognized institution. The privilege of autopracia was granted to large landowners, sometimes for the whole of their estates, sometimes for part of them only. It was but natural for all landowners to seek the privilege, and Gelzer makes all landowners autopracts, but Hardy thinks he goes too far in this.

Next, the privilege of autopracia was granted to certain villages. The basis on which these grants were made is not clear, unless one is to conjecture that for some reason or other the central government expected better results in each case than through the regular channels of tax collection. The most famous and illustrative case of autopract villages is our village of Aphrodito (see pp. 5-7).

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46 Ibid. pp. 46 f.
47 Ibid. pp. 50 f.; cf. also his pp. 22-24 and Rouillard, pp. 10-13, for the institution of patronage.
48 Gelzer, p. 89.
49 Ibid.
50 Hardy, p. 58.
51 Cf. for instance Hardy, pp. 22 f., for such reasons in connection with patronage.
52 Rouillard, pp. 13 f.
That the growth of a large land-owning class encouraged feudalistic tendencies is not surprising. The creation of the office of pagarch, who was frequently a local landowner, meant the partial abandonment of local self-government in favor of feudalism. Though individual ownership and free tenancy existed side by side in the 4th century, by the 5th century the entire peasant population (coloni) was bound to the land. The coloni fell into two distinct legal categories: the free coloni, who might settle where they wished but had to remain farmers, and the adscripticii (enapographoi), who were serfs or slaves of their masters. Like serfs in any period of history, these were eager for freedom and took their chances at desertion and flight, while landowners used both persuasion and force to bring them back and usually required surety for their stay and good conduct. When one considers the wide range of activities—political, economic, and social—engaged in by the landed nobility, one is indeed tempted to accept the existence of a feudalistic regime where each estate was practically a self-sufficient, self-directed feudal tributary state of the empire; but when one remembers the ever present officials of the imperial fisc and imperial army, both in and about such estates, one will readily agree to Hardy's conclusions that many features of the feudal and manorial system were present in Byzantine Egypt, but not in their full development.

Coming finally to the religious situation in Byzantine Egypt, we find that there too the situation was far from being peaceful. Although Justinian himself, thanks to the advice of Empress Theodora, abandoned his missionary aim and in a manner calmed the troubled religious waters, it turned out to be a surface calm only, while the undercurrents were gaining momentum. It would be a mistake to consider the religious question as purely a religious one.

53 Milne, p. 149.
54 Gelzer, pp. 64-69.
55 Ibid, pp. 70-72; Rouillard, pp. 10-12.
56 Gelzer, pp. 70 f.
57 Hardy, pp. 76 f.
58 Ibid, pp. 113-44.
59 Ibid, p. 79.
or even as primarily religious. Like all major questions, it had many sides. The Byzantine imperial Orthodox Church hurled its forces against the Egyptian Monophysite Church and vice versa, that is, three powerful human factors were at work simultaneously—the force of racial prejudice, the lure of liberty and self-government, and the existence of differences in religious dogma—each one of which was enough to cause serious trouble by itself under favorable conditions. Neither should we forget the economic factor which entered from time to time, for intolerance was accompanied by fines and confiscation of property, whereas favor brought with it fat appointments and generous grants.

Thus in every phase of the administration the road, even in Justinian's time, was leading to ruin. Under his successors conditions grew worse. Local officials did as they pleased while Constantinople vacillated. Anarchy and revolt broke out in different parts of Egypt under Tiberius II (A.D.578-82) and Phocas (602-10), the latter continuing to amass personal treasure while the empire was collapsing over his head and the heads of his self-seeking army and corrupt nobility. The energetic but spasmodic and short-lived efforts of Heraclius (609-42) gave only relative relief, for no sooner had the Phocas cloud been removed than a more ominous one appeared from the east, whence Persia's great king reached out powerful hands to grasp the Empire's choicest provinces—Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. Slowly but surely this cloud too rolled away, but not before it had done its share to flood the country with want and misery, with political anarchy and spiritual demoralization, making way for a greater deluge—the Arab conquest—in whose wake came at last a cloud with some silver lining.

THE ARAB CONQUEST OF EGYPT

AND

THE SETTLEMENT OF 'AMR IBN AL-‘ĀSĪ

'Amr ibn al-‘Āsī was an alert and shrewd man of action. It was he who not only conceived the idea of the Arab conquest of Egypt, but actually accomplished it. His political and military

60 Diehl in CMH II 42 f.
61 Milne, pp. 112-14.
qualities were early recognized by Muhammad, Abū Bakr, and ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb. Butler, who has presented so far the best English account of the Arab conquest of Egypt, sees in the conqueror a man who combined great power of brain and body with great enthusiasm and an iron will; who was devout and high principled, clever and accomplished, at once soldier, saint, adventurer, and poet; frank, heroic, and charming.

In pre-Islamic days ʿAmr had made a visit across the Delta to Alexandria. He was then but a small trader, and the wealth and luxury he saw in Alexandria caused him to marvel and wonder. The impression made on him proved lasting and alluring; for years afterward, as an experienced commander of Muslim troops eager for adventure, his mind turned to Egypt.

In a conference with ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb at Jab‘Iam in Syria, ʿAmr requested permission to advance on Egypt, because Egypt was a country at once rich and defenseless and hence its conquest would be of tremendous advantage to the Muslims. The reluctance of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb to give his permission, his half-hearted support at first of the entire enterprise, and his belated attempt to call it off before the expeditionary force reached al-ʿArīsh are reported by most Arabic sources. However, modern historians do not see alike with regard to the respective parts played by ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣī and the Caliph in initiating and following up the policy of the conquest of Egypt. Wellhausen and Becker are of the opinion that ʿAmr did not act contrary to ʿUmar’s wishes,

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63 Butler’s account has been fully supplemented by Caetani in his critical and detailed treatment of the conquest in Annali IV.
64 Butler, pp. 205 f.
65 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, pp. 53-55; Kindī, pp. 6-8. The details of this story may be questioned, but not so the fact of ʿAmr’s visit.
66 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, p. 56; Makrīzī I 288; Butler, pp. 194 f.
67 Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, pp. 56-58; Baladhurī, p. 212.
68 Skizzen und Vorarbeiten VI 93.
69 RI II 5.
and Butler believes 'Umar to have been anxious for the eventual conquest, but hesitant as to the opportune moment for undertaking it. Caetani, however, considers it highly probable that 'Amr acted on his own initiative in disregard of the Caliph's wishes.

The conquest began in Dhū al-Ḥijjah, A.H.18/December, A.D.639, with an army of some 3,500 strong. The march to al-Paramā (Pelusium) was unopposed; the city itself was besieged, and after about one month it was captured and the fortress razed. Bilbais seems to have been 'Amr's next objective, and in a month's time it too succumbed. Thence he marched to Umm Dunain, north of Babylon. Meanwhile Cyrus, the imperial patriarch and viceroy, and Theodore, the commander-in-chief of all the Byzantine forces in Egypt, were collecting their forces at Babylon. 'Amr spied out the situation. With his diminished band of warriors he could not hope to storm the fortress of Babylon. At the same time the fighting at Umm Dunain was dragging on indecisively. So 'Amr decided to make a dash for the Fayyūm with a part of his forces while awaiting the expected reinforcements. Having done all the damage he could in the Fayyūm during the limited time at his disposal, he recrossed the Nile and joined the new Arab forces at 'Ain Shams (Heliopolis). At last Theodore decided to take the offensive, but 'Amr's strategy of disposing two detachments in the rear of the enemy told, and the battle (Rajab, 19/July, 640) was his. Some of the Byzantines retreated to Babylon, others lost heart completely and fled down the river to Nikiū, an important fortified town which seems to have been situated on the Rosetta branch of the Nile northwest of Minūf. Their example was followed by the

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71 Annali IV 319-23.
72 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, p. 56; Kindī, p. 8; Baladhurī, p. 212; Butler, p. 195. Cf. Caetani, Annali IV xxxiv, for a brief chronology of the conquest.
73 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, p. 58; Kindī, p. 8; Baladhurī, p. 212; Butler, pp. 210-12.
74 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, p. 59; Kindī, p. 8.
75 Ibid.
forces in surrounding territories, and Nikiū became the objective of all. It was then no task to capture the undefended cities.\textsuperscript{77} ‘Amr now had to choose between following the road to Nikiū and thence to Alexandria or staying south and reducing the fortress of Babylon, and he wisely chose the latter. The siege of Babylon began in September, 640. The situation looked ominous for the Byzantines; yet there were some among them who wished to fight it out. But Cyrus held a secret council to consider negotiations with the Arabs, and ‘Amr was asked for his terms. These are said to have been given as follows: (1) Islām with brotherhood and equality; or (2) payment of tribute and protection with inferior status; or (3) war till death would decide between them. These terms are evidently too typical of a later period to be taken at face value here. Cyrus’ counterterms were: (1) payment of two dinars per man in ‘Amr’s army, 100 dinars for ‘Amr, and 1000 dinars for the Caliph; (2) evacuation of the country by the Arab army. In the three days’ truce for negotiations the Byzantine fight-to-death party took matters into its own hands and surprised the Arab army, but only to be defeated. Cyrus then accepted ‘Amr’s second alternative, that of tribute and protection with inferior status, subject to the Emperor’s ratification. But Heraclius refused to ratify the treaty and recalled Cyrus to Constantinople, where he was disgraced and sent into exile. At the same time Heraclius failed to send reinforcements to Egypt. His failure to ratify the treaty resulted in continuance of the siege and in resumption of hostilities. Then came the news of Heraclius’ death, which paralyzed the besieged and heartened the besiegers. The fortress however still held out, though only to surrender eventually on terms of safety of life. On Easter Monday, April 9, 641, the unfortunate army evacuated. Thus did Babylon pass into the hands of the Arabs.\textsuperscript{78} ‘Amr next marched on Nikiū, whose commander cowardly deserted and took flight to Alexandria. The garrison was thrown into a

\textsuperscript{77} Butler, pp. 230-37; cf. John of Nikiū, p. 181. On the location of Nikiū see Butler’s n. 1 on pp. 16 f.

\textsuperscript{78} On the siege and capture of Babylon see Butler, pp. 249-74 and 300; cf. also John of Nikiū, pp. 186 f.; Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, pp. 64-76; Mārkūzī I 163 f. and 290-93; Balādhurī, pp. 214 f.; Severus, FQ I 494.
panic, and the town fell without opposition on May 13, 641. The road to Alexandria was now clear. Theodore decided to make a last stand at Karyûn. Being at last awake to their danger, the Byzantine forces resisted the enemy for ten days, and though the battle appears to have been a draw, Karyûn was taken, and Theodore retreated to Alexandria, where he was followed by 'Amr. The latter soon realized that with his inferior numbers, with no fleet and no artillery, he was not yet ready for Alexandria. So he turned his attention to weakening other points and beating down resistance in the Delta. This did not prove so easy; he suffered many reverses and finally returned to Babylon. These events disprove the common beliefs that Egypt fell without striking a blow and that the Egyptians hailed the invaders as deliverers.

It is time to seek a satisfactory explanation of 'Amr's easy victories. This is to be found in the following factors, all at work simultaneously: (1) the weakness of the Byzantine Empire and the inaction of the despondent Heraclius; (2) the long-standing religious animosity between the Melkite and the Coptic churches and the great persecution of the Copts by Cyrus; (3) the lack of real patriotism on the part of the Byzantine forces, above all the cowardice and treachery of their leaders; (4) the incapacity of the Copts to offer any organized and effective resistance; (5) the moral strength of young and vigorous Islam in general and the leadership of 'Amr in particular.

Throughout his masterly work Butler strikes repeatedly, in different keys and with different accents, a triple motif: The Mukawkas of the Arab authorities is none other than the Cyrus of the Byzantines; this Cyrus was interested in the victory of the Chalcedonian Melkite church more than in the political fortunes of the Byzantine Empire, had a personal ax to grind, was a fence-

79 Butler, pp. 281-85; John of Nikû, p. 188.
81 Butler, pp. 290-98.
82 Cf. for instance the case of Kalâjî reported by John of Nikû, p. 183.
83 Butler, pp. 174-76, esp. 508-26; cf. Severus, Po i 491, note; also El III 712-15, article "al-Mukawkas."
sitter and in the end a traitor; the mass of the Copts had neither the desire nor the ability to be "uncovenanted allies" of the invaders, first of the Persians and then of the Arabs. Butler's conclusions as to the identity, motives, and character of Cyrus are not shared by Caetani, who believes the title "al-Muḫaukas" was borne by at least two other distinct persons, one the Greek military commander of Babylon and the other the Coptic bishop Menas of that same city. Again, Caetani does not see the patriarch Cyrus in the black colors in which Butler has painted him. In Caetani's opinion Cyrus was a practical man who, convinced of the futility of prolonging the struggle against the Arabs, concluded the Treaty of Alexandria which surrendered Egypt to the Arabs. Becker, like Butler, allows for the probability that Cyrus wished to establish an Egyptian primacy under Arab suzerainty. Furthermore, Caetani, though he considers the military incapacity of the Byzantines to have been the major cause of their defeat, nevertheless stresses the co-operation of the Copts and points specifically to the action of Menas, the Coptic bishop of Babylon already referred to, who, he claims, obtained an accord with the Arabs for the protection of the Copts.

Apart from Caetani, the identification of al-Muḫaukas with Cyrus now seems to be accepted generally. Cyrus, already a key figure without this identification, with it becomes the central figure in the Byzantine camp. He was appointed in 631 by Heraclius to the supreme religious and civil power in Egypt, with orders to

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84 Butler, pp. 213 and 305-7.
85 Ibid. pp. 76 and 81-85.
86 Ibid. pp. 298, 357, and 472.
87 Annali IV 342 and 180 f.; cf. EI III 714.
88 Annali IV 347.
89 EI II 6.
90 Annali IV 169 f.
91 Ibid. p. 341.
bring about the union of the church in that country. He took up his task with a relish that must have exceeded his master's anticipation and desire. To him the union of the church could mean nothing but extermination, if necessary, of the Coptic "heresy," and that could be done, if at all, only through severe persecution. The objective once fixed, Cyrus had really no choice of method; his method was the one used before and after him, and used by both church parties whenever either had the upper hand. It was not for the method but for the rigor and the time of its exercise that Cyrus is answerable. In the face of foreign invasion, when internal union should have been a main objective, disunion was increased. It is for this that history has condemned the religious policy of Cyrus and of his master Heraclius.

With the flight of Benjamin, the Coptic patriarch of Alexandria, on the arrival of Cyrus, most of the Copts were left practically like sheep without a shepherd. Their very pitiful condition, the repeated statements of the confused Arab records that the Copts aided the Muslims and the record of instances of the conversion of Copts to Islam, instances loudly bewailed and largely magnified by church historians, make it easy for one to slip into thinking that the Copts hailed the invaders as deliverers and aided them to achieve victory. However, their past experience and present misfortunes at the hands of Cyrus and 'Amr alike point in the opposite direction. The horrors of the Persian conquest were hardly forgotten. What the Copts wanted was not a change of masters, but deliverance from them. But being unable to deliver themselves because they were barred from military service, they had no choice at first but to be unwilling neutrals. As such they were suspected by, and at the mercy of, the Arabs as well as the Byzantines. In the "massacres" by the Arab army no distinction seems to have been drawn between "Roman" and Copt; in the negotia-

93 Butler, p. 137; Severus, PO I 489.
95 Cf. Severus, PO V 62 f.; Eutychius II 386.
96 Severus, PO I 490 f.; John of Nikiū, pp. 14 and 200.
97 E.g. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, pp. 71 and 73 f.
98 E.g. John of Nikiū, pp. 181 f. and 201.
tions between Cyrus and 'Amr their fate received no special attention, and in the hour of defeat no less than in the hour of victory the "Romans" gave vent to their wrath on the unfortunate Copts, for instance, when at the evacuation of Babylon the Byzantine commander had the hands of the Coptic prisoners cut off despite its being the Easter season when clemency might have been expected. We have already seen that the Copts, despairing of Byzantine protection, resisted, with whatever arms they could secure, the Arab troops in the Delta before 'Amr returned to Babylon.

In the meanwhile Empress Martina's peace party had come into power at Constantinople. Cyrus was reinstated and sent back to Alexandria, where by now a state of civil war existed between the Greens and the Blues. Cyrus was received with great joy and hastened on to Babylon to treat with 'Amr. Here, on November 8, 641, the second Treaty of Babylon, or, as it is also called, the Treaty of Alexandria, was signed. The question raised by Arab authorities as to whether Miṣr (i.e. Babylon), Alexandria, or even all of Egypt was taken by force or by capitulation on treaty terms, and what these terms were if by treaty, has arisen out of the confusion of events connected with both the capitulation of Babylon and the second Treaty of Babylon which involved the surrender of Alexandria, as well as with the second conquest of Alexandria by force of arms after its revolt under Manuel in 645, when, of course, no treaty was given. For an understanding of the settlement which 'Amr gave Egypt a study must

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99 Ibid. p. 187.
100 Butler, pp. 302-6; John of Nikiū, p. 191.
101 Butler, p. 305; John of Nikiū, p. 191.
105 Butler, pp. 322-27; cf. Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, pp. 82-90; Balādhurī, pp. 214-16; Maqrizi I 294 f.
be made of the two treaties of Babylon. The terms of the first we have already given. Those of the second have been listed by Butler, whom we follow, though never losing sight of the sources themselves. They were: (1) payment of a fixed tribute by all who came under the treaty; (2) an armistice of eleven months to end in September, 642; (3) maintenance by the Arabs of their position and cessation of all acts of hostility by the Byzantines; (4) departure by sea of the garrison of Alexandria and of all troops, with their possessions and treasures, but payment of a monthly tribute by Byzantine soldiers leaving by land as long as they were in Muslim territory; (5) no return of a Byzantine army to Alexandria and no attempt to recover Egypt; (6) desistance by the Muslims from seizing churches and from interfering with Christians; (7) concession to Jews to remain at Alexandria; (8) giving of hostages by the Byzantines, namely 150 military men and 50 civilians, pending the execution of the treaty. The Arabic authorities supplement the terms with some details. Thus the fixed tribute was to be an average of two dinars per head, excluding women and children and the poor. In addition to this there was to be a tribute in kind, to be collected from landowners and stored for the use of Muslims. There was also the obligation to give free food and lodging for three days to Muslim contingents on the march, as well as to provide each Muslim annually with a set of clothing. The treaty terms show that the Copts were assured of life, property, protection, and freedom of religion.

We have gone into the details of this treaty because, though at the time it was negotiated it did not cover all of Egypt, it eventually served as the model for future terms of capitulation, for many of the coast towns were yet to submit or be taken by force.

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107 Butler, ' whom we follow.
108 Baladhuri, p. 214 f. and 218; Ibn `Abd al-Ḥakam, p. 84. On the data given in later papyri cf. our pp. 94 f.
111 Baladhuri, p. 215.
112 Butler, pp. 348-57.
safety of life, possession of land, and payment of tribute—the "protected peoples" were subjected to various burdens, varying in different provinces and localities.

The year 642 saw the last of Byzantine rule in Egypt. The coast towns had been reduced, and the pathetic but dramatic evacuation of the Delta had been accomplished. The Arabs entered Alexandria in September 642. Cyrus, who had plotted and schemed, fought and persuaded, did not live to see this event, having died, we are told, of "excessive grief" on March 21, 642.

EARLY ARAB ADMINISTRATION

Arab administration of Egypt began with ‘Amr ibn al-‘As in supreme military and civil command. His rule, judged by the standards of his time, proves him to have been a good statesman. For war, pillage, and plunder he substituted as soon as possible order and safety and attended to the restoration of the land, using the existing government machinery he found at hand. His former distrust and harsh treatment of the Copts yielded to a more lenient policy in supposed remembrance of Muḥammad's commands. He recalled their patriarch, Benjamin, and set him in authority over them. In one thing only did he disappoint Egypt: there was no definite limit to the total tribute demands; and apparently this was the case in sections that had a treaty as well as in those that had none. It is probable, as Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam reports, that this had something to do with the revolt of Alexandria, though it could not have been its only reason. At any rate, we see that from the start finances began to play their

116 Ibid. pp. 152 f.
118 John of Nikiū, p. 200; Severus, PO I 495-97.
part under the Arabs as they had done under their predecessors. 'Amr wanted good returns both for himself and to satisfy the demands of his master. The situation could hardly have been expected to change in favor of the Copts during the administration of his successors, for the latter were becoming more acquainted with the tax possibilities of Egypt at the same time that their needs were becoming greater and their tastes more expensive. Add to this the fact that the Muslim population was constantly increasing both by new Arab settlements and by the conversion of some Copts, and it becomes clear that there was no way out of the difficulty except by increased taxation or, worse still, by exactions and confiscations. When these failed to supply all that was needed, a new source of revenue became necessary to balance the state budget. This was found in the Muslim landowners, who were thenceforward made to pay, as it were, the deficit by a land tax.

At this point it is proper to survey the system of Muslim state finances, especially as it applies to Egypt. So much has been written on this subject in general and with reference to Egypt in particular that a lengthy account here is not necessary. Our object is only to sum up the main steps in the development of the system during the 1st century of Islam.

The simple practice of early Islam of giving one-fifth of all booty of war to the state and dividing the rest among the troops worked just as long as booty was the main object sought. With permanent conquest the problem became more complicated. The general policy was to allow conquered land to remain with its former owners on fixed conditions of tribute and taxation, such land being considered state land (fai') and, according to later theory, leased to non-Muslims, since Muslims were supposed to form a military and not a land-owning class. However, such

122 Maqrīzī I 80 and 82; Beiträge, pp. 121-35.
123 Cf. Becker, Beiträge, pp. 81-112, and in Der Islam II 361-71; Bell, P. Lond. IV xvii-xlii, 81-87, and 166-77, and in Byzantinische Zeitschrift XXVIII 278-86; Tritton, pp. 197-228; Grohmann in Études de papyrologie I 57-90.
124 EI II 140 f.
125 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, p. 82; Balādhurī; pp. 214 and 447; Māwardī, pp. 121 f.; Ar. Kg. pp. 273 f.
regulations as may have existed to this effect were largely ig­
nored, in spite of the few recorded cases of early enforce­
ment. Since at first no Muslim was expected or required to
pay more than the pious poor tax (zakat or sadakah), all land
acquired by the Muslims spelled a considerable loss of revenue to
the state, that is, the collective Muslim community. As long as
there were more countries to conquer and more tribute to demand,
the evils of the early financial system did not make themselves
felt; but as settlement and administration followed upon conquests
and as conquests gradually decreased, the system of ‘Umar I—if one
may call it a system—failed to meet the situation, since in all
provinces of the Empire more and more land passed into the hands
of Muslims and was thus withdrawn from taxation except for payment
of the zakat. It was then that Ḥajjāj, realizing the inevitable
results of tax-exempt landlordism among the Muslims, extended the
land tax to their holdings. This raised a storm of opposition
against him, but, supported by Caliph ‘Abd al-Malik, he held his
ground on the question in his own province of ‘Irāk and thus opened
the way for its adoption later in other parts of the Empire. In
Egypt the introduction of this system was considered during the
governorship of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz but was abandoned. We do not
know definitely whether his successor ‘Abd Allāh introduced it,
but it must have been in force in Kurrah’s time, since ‘Umar II is
said to have condemned it. At the same time ‘Umar II worked
for a solution of the Muslim land-tax problem. Since the Muslims
based their opposition to the new measure on religious-political
grounds, claiming that taxing them for land like the unbelievers
degraded them to the level of non-Muslim subject peoples, ‘Umar II
soothed their politico-religious pride by agreeing that a Muslim

126 Ar. Kg. pp. 275 f.; Kremer (tr. Bukhsh) p. 125; Makrizī I 96.
129 Balādhurī, p. 368; Ar. Kg., pp. 279 f.; Makrizī I 77 f.
130 Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, p. 156; it is interesting to note here
that in the correspondence between ‘Abd al-Malik and ‘Abd al-‘Azīz
the word used is jizyah and not kharāj.
131 Makrizī I 77 f.; cf. Beiträge, p. 100.
should pay neither the poll tax nor the land tax. But in order to prevent a decrease in revenue, he argued that all of the kharāj land, that is, conquered land left in the hands of its owners on condition of tribute, belonged to the believers as a community, and that the kharāj or revenue derived from this land, though going to the state treasury, was eventually divided among the members of the community through the system of state pensions. Therefore, if individual Muslims acquire sections of this land without at the same time assuming the responsibility of its normal revenue yield, those particular individuals in reality rob the Muslim community of that revenue, for they gain a personal privilege at the expense of their fellow Muslims. Moreover, the non-Muslim holders of the land need the land in order to meet their tribute payments; to take it away from them without assuming the revenue responsibility is therefore an injustice to them also. He therefore decreed the following: (1) the sale of kharāj lands to Muslims (Arabs or mawāli) is to be prohibited from A.H.100 (A.D. 718) forward, but this prohibition is not to be retroactive; (2) on conversion to Islām a mawlā must yield up his land to the tributary community, but if he wishes he might lease it back for an amount presumably equivalent to the kharāj; (3) new converts may settle in the towns. 132 Thus did pious 'Umar II, with aims identical with those of Hajjāj, seek to guard the state revenue from land against ruinous diminution.

'Umar's plan failed. As Wellhausen has put it: "The principle of the inalienability of the tribute land could not be carried through, and the change of property was no more put a stop to than the change of faith." 133 So under his later successors the method of Hajjāj, namely that of imposing a land tax on all landowners alike, Muslim as well as non-Muslim, was reverted to, though with this difference, that a distinction was now drawn between jizyah and kharāj. Jizyah, it was said, rests on the persons and is a sign of their subjection; kharāj, however, rests on the land and does not degrade the person. Since the land tax was by far the more important, its payment by all Muslim landowners more than offset the loss of poll tax from converts to Islām. Thus a clever bit of legal finesse saved the exchequer from

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132 Ar. Kg., pp. 280 f.; cf. also P. Lond. IV 167 f.
133 Ar. Kg., p. 282.
inevitable ruin. But even these measures failed ultimately to solve the problems of Muslim state finances, and under the Abbāsids it became necessary to abolish even the state pensions, the pride and joy of early Islām.

The history of the words jizyah and kharāj is difficult but interesting. The traditional Muslim view traces the later distinction between jizyah and kharāj back to the time of Umar I. Wellhausen and Becker have, however, shown conclusively that at that early time the terms jizyah and kharāj were used synonymously in the sense of "tribute paid to the Muslims." The term jizyah is used in Sūrah 9:29 to mean the tribute of the subject people, paid as a sign of their subjugation and inferior status. In the Kurrah papyri it is used for the entire gold tax, which included both a land and a capitation tax. The term kharāj was obviously borrowed by the Arabs from the administrative language of their predecessors. Juynboll associates it with the Byzantines and derives it from the Greek χρηστολογία. More recently Henning has traced its origin to the Aramaic word hālāk, which in Old Persian became harāk and appears as harēg in a Manichean text of the 3d century of our era. According to him hālāk = Akkadian ilku and Neo-Babylonian ilki, which latter in Achaemenid times was equivalent to land tax ("Lehen, Lehensleistung > Lehensabgabe > Grundsteuer"). It appears, therefore, that the distinction between these two terms was in the early Arab period a geographic one. Both terms are used for the entire tribute of the subject people, jizyah gaining currency in the western and kharāj in the eastern provinces. This would account for the absence of the word kharāj in the Kurrah and other early Arabic papyri from Egypt. Early Arabic documents dealing with the eastern

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134 Ibid.
137 Orientella IV 291-93.
138 Tritton, p. 197. Cf. Grohmann in Études de papyrologie I 71, n. 1, for various instances of the interchangeability of these two terms.
139 A request for information with regard to the terms used in the Colt papyri has hitherto brought no reply. Since these came from southern Palestine, the probability is that they follow Egyptian usage and employ the word jizyah for gold tax or tribute.
provinces may some day confirm the use of *kharāj* in the general sense of tribute.

The regular money taxes (χρυσός καὶ ῥυμός) consisted of a land tax, a poll tax, and a trade tax, all payable in gold, the first being the most important. These taxes were very dependable; they were followed in importance by the regular corn tax, which varied with the crops. In addition to the regular gold and grain taxes there were several extraordinary taxes, raised regularly as needed, both in money and in kind. These were usually requisitions for provisions, for allowances to officials and Arab settlers, for provisions for workmen and sailors, for naval constructions, for public buildings, for transportation, in fact, for anything the administration needed. There was furthermore the tax to be paid in personal service, which service varied from minor temporary demands to important and responsible liturgies. It is very evident that these four main divisions of taxes—the regular gold taxes, the corn tax, the extraordinary requisitions, and the personal service tax—were indeed a hang-over from the Byzantine system, though they do not exhaust the taxes of either period.\(^{140}\)

When we come to consider the assessment and collection of taxes, the process seems identical with that of the late Byzantine times. The amount of the tax was fixed at headquarters, and the notification of the assessment was addressed to the people of the villages in the districts, a total sum in gold (the *jizyah*) and in kind (darībat al-ta‘ām) being mentioned.\(^{141}\) The collection was left to the local officers; as is seen in PSR III with respect to the grain tax. Thus the principles of collective assessment and local collection were in force. With regard to the poll tax—the *jizyah* in its later and narrower sense—there seems to be some doubt as to what extent the individual poll-tax payer was personally responsible for payment to the district treasury such as that of Aphrodito, where the tax registers show amounts against the name of each taxpayer. These same registers raise the question of rate and uniformity of the poll tax.\(^{142}\) They bear out neither

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\(^{140}\) On these various taxes cf. *P. Lond.* IV xxv f. and 167-74; *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* XXVIII 282-84; Tritton, pp. 197-211.

\(^{141}\) See PSR a-1.

\(^{142}\) *P. Lond.* IV 169 f. and 171 f.; Tritton, p. 198.
the general rate of two dinars per head, nor the rates of four, two, and one dinar supposed to have been taken from the rich, the middle class, and the poor respectively. Again, the registers list fractions of a man, and the rates vary from two to eight solidi. The totals also give an average of varying rates. From such data Bell is led to conclude that the poll tax was not an individual tax as presented by Becker, but a collective tax levied in a lump sum on the community, being a poll tax only in the sense that it was based on the number of taxable men in each community.

The yearly tax assessments were not made till the high level of the Nile had been ascertained. Tax notifications stating the full amount for the year followed soon after, but actual payments had to await the results of the harvest and were generally made in two instalments. The question is: Were they paid when due? B. 1420 records one instance of prompt payment, but even here it is only the grain tax that was paid, whereas the gold taxes were not paid till the second year after the indiction to which they belonged. The tax registers show frequent payments of various sizes credited to the same account, though they were made by different individuals whose relationship to the actual landowner is not always clear. Unfortunately, though the date of payment is stated, the part payment (Καταμήκης) on which they were to be applied is not indicated. Hence it is difficult to tell definitely to what extent local taxpayers' accounts were allowed to

143 Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, p. 82; Baladhuri, p. 215.
145 P. Lond. IV 172.
146 Tritton, p. 198.
147 Beiträge, p. 88.
148 P. Lond. IV 169 f.; cf. also Grohmann in Études de papyrologie I 69.
149 P. Lond. IV xxvii and n. 4.
150 Ibid. p. 232, n. 5.
151 Ibid. pp. 174 f.
152 Ibid. p. 87.
fall into arrears. However, we have indirect factors which should throw some light on the question. On the one hand, the entire machinery of the government was directed toward an efficient system of taxation, a system in which punctuality of payment was of prime importance. Instances are on record which show that in case of partial failure of crops or other natural calamities grain taxes were in part computed in money at a reduced rate rather than allowed to accumulate in large arrears. Only when even this computation worked an evident hardship were the taxes temporarily remitted. On the other hand, Kurrah’s letters to the šāhīb of Ashkauh abound in references to delays in making payments and to balances, but just at what point in the long road of tax collection this delay first began is again hard to tell, for it may have been the fault of the district officer himself or of any of his agents for the smaller administrative units within his kurrah or district. In a centralized system this officer would be held responsible for all delays, which again would make him frown on arrears under all circumstances even though he himself, to a certain extent, indulged in the forbidden practice. Under weak and corrupt governors this indulgence would assume larger proportions, allowing tax arrears to accumulate in large sums. Such seems to have been the case under Kurrah’s predecessor, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (see pp. 60 f.).

Taking all these facts into consideration, we may safely conclude that taxes in kind were paid promptly, whereas money taxes came more slowly but were hardly allowed to be more than a year overdue.

153 Cf. e.g. our No. I; PSR I and III; PAF III; NPAF III.
154 P. Lond. IV xxvi, n. 2, and 173 f.; Der Islam II 271.
155 P. Lond. IV xxxvi and 29.
156 Our Nos. I and IV; PSR I and III; PAF III; NPAF I and III.
157 NPAF III 6 f., where payment is more than two months overdue.
158 Our Nos. I and V; NPAF XII.
159 The seeming discrepancy of three years in PSR a-l, which are dated A.H.91 but are notifications of assessment for the year 88, is explained by the fact that the year of dating is the regular Muslim lunar year, while the fiscal year is a solar year; cf. PERF, No. 593 and Tritton, p. 200.
The total revenue, after deducting local expenditures, found its way either to the treasury in Alexandria or to that in Fustát. The Alexandrian portion seems to have been used chiefly for naval enterprises, which were conducted annually, at least during Kurrah's time. The portion sent to Fustát found its way eventually to Damascus, to Makkah, and to Madīnah. What proportion of the total was spent on local, provincial, and imperial purposes there is no way of telling. It must have varied according to the honesty of the local officers, the avarice of the governor, and the insistent demands of the caliph.

Here we must stop to consider the question of the fugitives (see also pp. 60 f., 64 f., and 68 f.) and that of the monks, for both are vitally connected with taxation and revenue. We have already stated that the land tax was the most important of the gold taxes, and the great bearing of land cultivation on the grain tax is self-evident. Therefore land economics and agricultural activities received by far the closest attention of the provincial government. The flight of the farmer to town is not a "modern" evil; it is as old as the oldest cities. There are times and conditions, however, which make this flight assume large proportions. Such was the case in Egypt in the 1st century of Islām. The civil war of Heraclius, the Persian conquest, and the religious persecutions of Cyrus had started a movement of the population within the land. Some people left the country, a goodly number going to Nubia, a coreligionist land; others found new settlements, and a few must have become habitual wanderers. At first the movement went unnoticed by the authorities, but in the course of the decades, with their famines and plagues, the population needed to be watched more carefully. In the meanwhile conversions to Islām increased, and Coptic mawālī were eager for the cities. Diminished in numbers, the remaining Christian Copts had to meet the heavy land tax, while their Muslim fellow landowners as yet went untaxed except for the tithe (zakāt or sadakah). This led many to desert their holdings. In the governorship of ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and of Kurrah ibn Sharīk these tendencies

160 ZA XXII 150 f.; PAP IX; PSR XXII; P. Lond. IV 174.
161 P. Lond. IV 1 f.; ZA XXII 139-46.
162 ZA XXII 141-44; cf. also Lane-Poole, pp. 21-23.
coincided with years of dearth, famine, and plague, which resulted in flight from the land on a larger scale than hitherto. The fugitives naturally hoped to escape taxation; but the administration would not be so easily defeated, in fact, it could not afford a defeat here, for that would have crippled the finances seriously. Hence the fugitive commission and the definite orders to trace every serf's movements and to get him back to the land, preferably to his former land, but if that could not be done, to assign him land elsewhere. Some of the fugitives were allowed to stay where they themselves had settled, but were made to bear their share of the taxes in the community they had adopted.

The question of the persecution of the monks and the limiting of their numbers is linked with that of the fugitives; for frequently the desperate fugitives sought protection under a monk's gown, since monks were not subject to the jizyah before the time of 'Abd al-'Azîz, when his son al-Asbagh laid a heavy hand on the churches and monasteries, causing the monks to pay a jizyah of one dinar per head, though it is not clear if this was specifically a poll tax or a general tribute. Religious persecution pure and simple is seldom met with in the 1st century of Islam. What the Arab wanted was "Geld, noch-mals Geld und immer wieder Geld." This naturally tempted some Christians to adopt the new faith, since at first its adoption released them from the taxes and gave them also other social and economic privileges as mawâli. Later, when Arabization as distinct from Islamization gained sway, so that Arab Christians were privileged above their fellow-Christians and Arabic was forbidden to non-Muslims while the Arabs themselves were not to learn another language, when furthermore the honored and influential civil

163 Ibn Taghrîbirdî I 233 and 235.
164 P. Lond. IV 2, n. 10; PSR, p. 40.
165 Severus, PO V 68.
166 Ibid. p. 51; Tritton, pp. 209 f. and 217 f.
167 Der Islam II 364 and 367. Tritton, pp. 127-35, shows that the persecution of Christians was mostly for financial reasons.
168 Balâdhurî, pp. 181-83; Tritton, p. 89.
169 Kremer (tr. Bukhsh) p. 118; fortunately this could not be strictly enforced and was abandoned.
service was gradually being closed to the Copts, these were additional factors to hasten the spread of the Muslim faith.

To control effectively these movements of the fugitives a rigid and expensive system of passports was introduced. Passports were hard to secure and cost five dinars. If lost or damaged, the passport could be replaced with another only by payment of another fee of five dinars. The country and the seaports were well policed. If a person was caught moving without a passport, imprisonment frequently resulted, heavy fines were inflicted, and harsh and cruel treatment was at times meted out. This rigid system naturally interfered with the business life also, for products rotted since they could not be moved to market, and merchants frequently suffered confiscation of their wares.

So far as the judicial organization is concerned, our papyri have as yet thrown little light on the system as a whole and on its relationship to the imperial government. The office of judge (kādī), according to the historian Kindī and the jurist Māwardī, is partly religious, partly civic, the latter including not only law but maintenance of order as well. Still, our papyri give us a glimpse into some civil cases of appeals where Muslims and Christians alike appealed to the governor (see pp. 66 ff.).

The papyri abundantly confirm the inference that the Arabs took over the Byzantine administrative units. Frequently the Greek terminology was used for units and for officers. Bell has given a full picture of the organization of Egypt as a province. The capital was changed from Alexandria to Fustāt (Babylon). From here the governor (Greek, symboulē, Arabic, amīr) directed the whole administration when he had charge also of the finances, otherwise his co-officer, the financial director, had most of the burden, since Arab administration concerned itself chiefly with finances. For financial and secretarial purposes the province was divided

170 Kindī, p. 69; cf. Der Islam II 363 f.
171 Ar. Pal. Pl. 106; PERF, Nos. 601-2; PSR, pp. 1 f. and 40; Der Islam II 369 f.; Severus, PO V 68-70, mentions as punishment a fine of 10 dinars, imprisonment, mutilation, and even death; cf. however our pages 68 f.
172 Severus, PO V 69.
173 P. Lond. IV xvii-xxv; cf. also Byzantinische Zeitschrift XXVIII 278 ff.
into Upper and Lower Egypt. From Severus we get the additional information that each of these two subdivisions was under a separate governor (wālī). At headquarters there were two separate registers kept for the two divisions, though the secretaries in charge of them, bearing the familiar Greek title of chartularios and the Arabic title kātib, collaborated on both of them.

Upper and Lower Egypt were again divided into eparchies, each under a "duke," whose functions, though not entirely clear, seem to have been predominantly financial. The eparchies were subdivided into pagarchies, which may have been coextensive in territory with the former nomes. Aphroditō it itself was such a pagarchy, with the city of Aphroditō as the capital. The Greek papyri refer to Aphroditō as a village (kōnē), but the Arabic papyri use the term madīnah and not kārīyah, showing that it was a good-sized city worthy to be the capital of a pagarchy or kūrah.

The pagarchies were in turn subdivided for tax collection into the city, the villages, and the monastic settlements, the city of Aphroditō forming a unit with no less than seven subdivisions. So far the similarity of the administrative units with those of the Byzantines is striking; but here we meet a significant difference, for we find that the "city" has no special privileges, but is as fully under the pagarch's control as any other unit in the pagarchy. We also find no traces of the institution of autopragia. The landlord class is still there and the pagarchs are usually of that class, but they are shorn of their powers and independence and appear to be closely supervised from headquarters.

To sum up: Arab Egypt of the 1st century retained Byzantine administrative units, Byzantine civil service, Byzantine taxes, and Byzantine motives and methods of taxation. It reintroduced

174 Severus, PO V 52; Der Islam II 361; P. Lond. IV xxv and 365.
175 Der Islam II 361; P. Lond. IV xxv; for the chartularii in Byzantine times see Hardy, pp. 94 f.
176 P. Lond. IV xix f.
177 ZA XX 70; PSR, p. 22, n. 6.
178 P. Lond. IV xiv-xvii.
179 P. Lond. IV xxii; Hardy, pp. 146 f.
the practice of strong centralization and carried it to its logical limits by abolishing the municipal curiales and the autopract communities, and by limiting the power of the large landowners. It introduced a new element into the religious situation by granting religious tolerance with one hand and handicapping the non-Muslims with economic and social drawbacks with the other, thus reducing them to the status of an inferior though specially "protected people" (ahl al-dhimmah). For the once privileged Greeks in Egypt it substituted the privileged Arabs. In the cultural and religious realms it made a good start toward replacing the Greek language and the Christian religion by the Arabic tongue and the faith of Islam.

Early Arab Egypt is both familiar and strange. The Coptic and the Arab historians have sketched for us the broad outlines of the government of this province of the Umayyad caliphs, and the Aphroditol Kurrah papyri have filled in the details. The picture is at once old and new. It is the old Byzantine painting, retouched here and there by the Arab painter. The new colors are discernible, but they blend into the picture; for Byzantines and Arabs alike had the same ready and pliable materials to work with—the comparatively refined and submissive Egyptians—and the same prize to obtain—fertile and wealthy Egypt. Fair and bounteous, tempting and unprotected, Egypt fell an easy prey to her conquerors, who husbanded her resources when they could only to revel in her forthcoming harvests.

\[180\] Cf. for instance Suyūṭī II 236 f.
ORIENTAL INSTITUTE PAPYRUS No. 13756. SCALE, 1:3
A

Oriental Institute Papyri: A, No. 13758; B, No. 13759. Scale, 1:5