

Lucian Reinfandt

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Lucian Reinfandt

**ARABIC PAPYROLOGY
AND EARLY ISLAMIC EGYPT***

THE ORGANISERS of the 27th International Congress of Papyrology are to be praised for their initiative in inviting a contribution devoted to Arabic papyrology. It is much more than mere recognition of the fact that Arabic papyrologists are, and have always been, a member of the family: it is proof of the growing awareness that an additional language group, with significant documentary material, can contribute to a better understanding of the cultural and social processes of the early Islamic period, a crucial era of pre-modern history. Moreover it is an area of interdisciplinary research, because from the early Islamic period in Egypt comes documentary material in Greek, Coptic, and Arabic. These three sub-disciplines of papyrology need to cooperate if each is to fully understand its own material and be of the most benefit for the other two. Indeed, a field such as the study of early Islam can induce a whole discipline to reconsider general standards of research because it involves such questions as research methodology and the positioning of the discipline within the broader

* This is a slightly enlarged version of my paper read at the 27th International Congress of Papyrology in Warsaw. I am grateful to Andreas KAPLONY, Lea MÜLLER-FUNK, and Petra SIJPESTEIJN who have all read a draft and gave important comments and suggestions. Any mistakes, however, are my sole responsibility.

framework of the humanities. In other words: What do we want to find out? How do we propose to find it out? And what is our purpose for doing what we are doing? The following focuses upon the history of Arabic papyrology, including the self-conception of this sub-discipline, its main achievements in the past, and its major aims for the near future.

1. A BRIEF LOOK BACK ON THE DISCIPLINE

Arabic Studies have only recently reclaimed papyrology after a long neglect during the 20th century. This requires some explanation, since Arabists played a prominent role in the genesis of academic papyrology in the 19th century. Greek papyrology came to life earlier than Arabic papyrology by a series of spectacular events beginning in 1752 with the first discovery of papyri in Herculaneum by Paderni and others, and continuing in 1788 with the first edition of a papyrus from Egypt by Schow and in 1826–27 with the first integrated series of editions of Greek papyri by Peyron.¹ However, not until 1824 were the first two Arabic papyri found in the vicinity of Saqqara. They were published the following year by the French Orientalist Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838).² Half a century later, in the late 1870s and the 1880s, the Austrian Arabist Josef Karabacek (1845–1918) continued the history of Arabic papyri with his engagement in the major finds from the Fayyum.³ Both de Sacy and Karabacek instinctively understood the value of these enigmat-

¹ J. G. KEENAN, 'The history of the discipline', [in:] R. S. BAGNALL (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, Oxford et al. 2009, pp. 59–78, at pp. 59–60; D. SIDER, 'The special case of Herculaneum', *ibidem*, pp. 303–319, at pp. 305–306; P. VAN MINNEN, 'A Dutch opinion of Amedeo Peyron', *Aegyptus* 76 (1996), pp. 157–165 at p. 157.

² S. DE SACY, 'Mémoire sur quelques papyrus écrits en arabe et récemment découverts en Égypte', *Journal des Savants* (août 1825), pp. 462–473; reprinted in: *Mémoires de l'Institut Royal de France. Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres* 9 (1831), pp. 66–85. Cf. A. GROHMANN, 'Aperçu de papyrologie arabe,' *Études de papyrologie* 1 (1932), pp. 23–95, at p. 24; R. G. KHOURY, 'Papyruskunde', [in:] W. FISCHER (ed.), *Grundriß der arabischen Philologie. I. Sprachwissenschaft*, Wiesbaden 1982, pp. 251–270, at p. 252; A. D'OTTONE, 'Papirologia araba', *Atene e Roma* 3–4 (2008), pp. 144–156, at pp. 148–149; P. M. SIJPESTEIJN, 'Arabic papyrology and Islamic Egypt', [in:] BAGNALL (ed.), *Oxford Handbook* (cit. n. 1), pp. 452–472.

³ Helene LOEBENSTEIN, 'Vom "Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer" zur Papyrussammlung der

ic documents, and both had the vision to make them fruitful for disciplinary discourse, though not without some resistance from colleagues in their own field.⁴ In the early 20th century, a second generation of Arabic papyrologists continued the work, including Adolf Grohmann (1887–1977), Carl Heinrich Becker (1876–1933), and the untimely deceased Karl Hofmeier (1892–1915).⁵ Both Grohmann and Becker were trained in Classics and Semitics but showed considerable interest in Ancient History and Egyptology. Both were gifted philologists (Becker possibly even more than Grohmann), and both were deeply committed to editorial work and, perhaps most important, had a strong awareness of the need for an interdisciplinary approach and a global view of papyrology. Their work enabled an historian like Leone Caetani (1869–1935) to productively integrate the results of papyrological research into his monumental proto-synthesis of the emergence of Islam.⁶

Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. 100 Jahre Sammeln, Bewahren, Edieren', [in:] Österreichische Nationalbibliothek (ed.), *Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer (P. Rainer Cent.). Festschrift zum 100-jährigen Bestehen der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek*, 2 vols., Wien 1983, pp. 3–39, at pp. 3–8.

⁴ L. REINFANDT, 'La collection des tissus arabes de la bibliothèque nationale d'Autriche. Fond, arrière-plan, situation actuelle', [in:] F. HANDLEY, A. REGOURD & L. REINFANDT, *Catalogue raisonné des textiles de la Bibliothèque nationale d'Autriche portant la cote A.L. (Arabisch Leinwand)* [= *Mitteilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer*], Berlin – New York, forthcoming.

⁵ For Grohmann, cf. L. REINFANDT, 'The political papyrologist: Adolf Grohmann (1887–1977)', [in:] V. KLEMM & N. AL-SHA'AR (eds), *Sources and Approaches across Disciplines in Near Eastern Studies. Proceedings of the 24th Congress Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Leipzig 2008* [= *OLA* 215], Leuven 2013, pp. 251–269; for Becker, cf. H. RITTER, 'Carl Heinrich Becker als Orientalist,' *Der Islam* 24 (1937), pp. 175–185 and Cornelia ESSNER & G. WINKELHANE, 'Carl Heinrich Becker (1876–1933). Orientalist und Kulturpolitiker,' *Die Welt des Islams* 28 (1988), pp. 154–177; for Hofmeier, cf. A. GROHMANN, *Einführung und Chrestomathie zur arabischen Papyruskunde* [= *Monografie Archivu Orientalního* 13], Prague 1955 at pp. 57–58 and LOEBENSTEIN, 'Vom "Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer"' (cit. n. 3), p. 29. K. HOFMEIER, under the auspices of his father-in-law J. Karabacek, started a long-term edition project of Viennese Arabic papyri related to taxes and leases of state land. This project was never completed due to Hofmeier's early death in the First World War. It produced only one publication, 'Beiträge zur arabischen Papyrusforschung,' *Der Islam* 4 (1913), at pp. 97–120. Cf. also C. H. BECKER, 'Zu Hofmeier's Papyrusstudien,' *ibidem*, pp. 313–314.

⁶ L. CAETANI, *Annali dell'Islam*, 10 vols., Milan and Rome 1906–26 (reprint New York: Olms 1972).

In 1930, in a series of public lectures held before the Société de Géographie du Caire, Adolf Grohmann expressed the optimistic outlook that papyri would become indispensable for research on Islamic history.⁷ But these promising beginnings had no long-term impact; the new discipline of Arabic papyrology could not hold its ground. The plant that had sprouted in the late 19th and early 20th centuries quickly withered away.

How could this happen? One answer is surely to be found in Arabic and Islamic Studies themselves. During the second half of the 20th century papyri lost their appeal in these disciplines and became relegated to individual researchers. An unparalleled rich heritage of literary codices eclipsed the time consuming work with the terse documentary papyri. Also perhaps the texts did not live up to the expectations that had been placed on them during the euphoric beginnings of papyrology in the late 19th century? Moreover, a series of linguistic, cultural, and narrative turns during the 20th century challenged the general value of documentary sources, while social sciences, area studies, and the critique of Orientalism also played their part in making pre-modern, let alone early Islamic, subjects fields within the discipline. No systematic curriculum taught students Arabic papyrology, while Arab, and especially Egyptian, papyrologists preferred Greek over the Arabic documents as more prestigious and perhaps less precarious concerning religion. Arabic papyrologists in the real sense of the word were therefore rare phenomena, and both their isolation and their sense of responsibility made them reluctant to look for disciples, the few successful cases being the exception rather than the rule.⁸

⁷ GROHMANN, 'Aperçu de papyrologie arabe' (cit. n. 2), p. 24.

⁸ The following teacher-student relationships had happy consequences for papyrology but were all based on unconventional circumstances and developed rather accidentally: J. Karabacek and K. Hofmeier; A. Grohmann and K. Jahn; N. Abbott and G. Frantz-Murphy; A. Dietrich and M. Gronke; J. David-Weill and Y. Rāḡib; W. Diem and M. Thung. See also the rather unusual 'papyrological' relationship between Cl. Cahen and Y. Rāḡib (Y. RĀḠĪB, 'Papyrologue malgré moi,' *Arabica* 43 [1996], pp. 206–210, at p. 207). K. JAHN produced an edition of 19 Arabic letters on papyrus as a dissertation under the auspices of A. Grohmann in Prague and published it in *Archiv Orientální* 9 (1937), pp. 153–200 ('Vom frühislamischen Briefwesen. Studien zur islamischen Epistolographie der ersten drei Jahrhunderte der Hiġra auf Grund der arabischen Papyri'), but did not continue with papyrology, instead becoming a specialist in Central Asian Studies instead. Cf. G. LEVI DELLA VIDA's many corrections of

Accordingly, Arabic papyrology had not an easy stand within Arabic and Islamic Studies, and even less so within the general papyrological community. But this cannot be the only explanation, because Demotists and Coptologists had similar problems inside Egyptology but eventually managed to achieve recognition in papyrology. There must have been something else. Some hint might be found in the roster of Arabists who attended the 26 papyrological congresses since 1930. The total is no small number, but it is largely comprised of a select few regular attendees.⁹ Some were among those rare bridge builders trained in both Arabic and Greek; others were involved in diplomatics and juridical papyrology and were, or had been, in close contact with the legal historians of their time, still others combined papyrological research with broad historical interdisciplinary approaches. However, several eminent figures of Arabic papyrology and related fields, such as Geniza studies, never attended, while others, most worrying perhaps, came only once and never again.¹⁰

What was going on? Arabic papyrologists were of course welcome and certainly enjoyed their participation. The Naples congress in 1983 and the Cairo congress in 1989 even provided panels on Arabic and Semitic papy-

Jahn's readings and his severe but compassionate criticism of the dissertation ('Perhaps other young students, too, will gladly accept a warning from an older fellow-student against the temptation to embark upon a difficult enterprise without the equipment of a serious preliminary training.') in G. LEVI DELLA VIDA, 'Remarks on a recent edition of Arabic papyrus letters', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 64 (1944), pp. 127-137, at pp. 127-129.

⁹ Leiden 1931 (A. Grohmann); Munich 1933 (Grohmann); Oxford 1937 (Grohmann; L.A. Mayer); Vienna 1955 (Grohmann); Milan 1965 (Grohmann); New York 1980 (G. Frantz-Murphy); Naples 1983 (Frantz-Murphy; A. Hanafi; A.M. Magued); Athens 1986 (Hanafi); Cairo 1989 (Hanafi; S. Moghaweri; A.A. ash-Shami; A.F. Sayyid); Berlin 1995 (Hanafi); Florence 1998 (Hanafi); Vienna 2001 (Frantz-Murphy; Hanafi; Moghaweri; P. M. Sijpesteijn); Helsinki 2004 (Hanafi; Sijpesteijn); Ann Arbor 2007 (Frantz-Murphy; Sijpesteijn; E. Grob; Hanafi; M. Morony; L. Reinfandt; M. Shatzmiller); Geneva 2010 (Reinfandt; Sijpesteijn; S. Bouderalba; J. Bruning; A. Kaplony; M. Legendre; J. Thomann; Kh. Younes; A. Zomeño). Cf. *PapCongr.* II; *PapCongr.* III; *PapCongr.* v; *PapCongr.* VIII; *PapCongr.* XI; *PapCongr.* XVI; *PapCongr.* XVII; *PapCongr.* XVIII; *PapCongr.* XIX; *PapCongr.* XXI; *PapCongr.* XXII; *PapCongr.* 2007; *PapCongr.* XXIV; *PapCongr.* XXV; *PapCongr.* XXVI.

¹⁰ H. Loebenstein (Oxford 1974); R.G. Khoury (Naples 1983); A.M. Magued (Naples 1983); A.A. ash-Shami (Cairo 1989); A.F. Sayyid (Cairo 1989). Cf. *PapCongr.* XVI; *PapCongr.* XVII; *PapCongr.* XIX.

rology, and this was repeated at Ann Arbor in 2007, at Geneva in 2010, and at Warsaw in 2013.¹¹ But Arabists never overcame the sense of being marginal within the papyrological community: the congresses were beneficial but not essential for them. Such disturbing evidence seems to be indicative of a deeper problem within the other papyrological disciplines. Is there some kind of estrangement between Classical Philology and Ancient History on the one hand, and Near and Middle Eastern Studies on the other? Until at least the recent past a Cold War between these fields was fostered by underlying identity constructs in which the former tended to reaffirm the ‘own’ in their studies (Classical Antiquity), while the latter aimed at explicating the ‘other’ (the Orient). Such underlying constructs had separated studies of Classical Antiquity from those of the Ancient Near East and may still play some role in studies of Late Antiquity and even of Byzantium, which are conceived as occidental, Eurocentric cultures brought to an end by the Arab conquests of the 7th century AD.

Academic studies that, unconsciously perhaps, tend to mingle their research of long-past cultures with modern identities also tend to see Greek, Latin, and Coptic papyri as parts of their own cultural hemisphere (into which even Demotic papyri can find their place as something eventually absorbed by Hellenism) in contrast to Arabic and other Near Eastern material. A historian should not ask the question of ‘what might have been if’ but sometimes is tempted to think about how welcome Arabic papyri would be for modern papyrology had the Arabs remained Christian (as they partly were in the 6th century AD) and politically a part of the Byzantine Empire. Papyrologists have always considered the Arabic material as a part of the discipline,¹² but the integration of Arabic (and

¹¹ *PapCongr.* xvii, pp. 1395–1414; *PapCongr.* xix, pp. 493–533; 21–200 (Arabic part). At the congresses of Ann Arbor 2007 and Geneva 2010, the papers on Arabic Papyrology were read in separate panels but published in the proceedings among the other contributions in alphabetical order; cf. *PapCongr.* xxv and *PapCongr.* xxvi.

¹² Orsolina MONTEVECCHI, *La papirologia*, Torino 1972, p. 7; R. S. BAGNALL, *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History*, London 1995, p. 22. *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* (cit. n. 1) contains an own chapter devoted to Arabic Papyrology. See also the programmatic remarks at IDEM, ‘Introduction’, pp. xvii–xxi. In 2010 the papyrus collection and the papyrus museum of the Austrian National Library in Vienna offered a special exhibition on epistolography (‘Briefe aus dem Wüstensand’) that included Arabic papyri and became

other Semitic languages) into papyrology may often have been more lip service due to such underlying cultural reservations. But papyrology, technical and matter-of-fact as it is, should be better able than many other disciplines to cast off such blinkers, the reward of which would be the release of an unprecedented transdisciplinary potential.

2. ACHIEVEMENTS

The change could not come at a better time. Arabic papyrologists have very recently begun to institutionalise themselves into a discipline. The key stone was the founding of an *International Society for (not of) Arabic Papyrology* (ISAP) in 2001 which has since held conferences in Cairo in 2002, in Granada in 2004, in Alexandria in 2006, in Vienna in 2009, and in Tunis in 2012, while another one will take place in Munich in 2014.¹³ It regards its mission as the encouragement of cooperation between papyrologists and historians, and between Arabists and all those working with documents from the Islamic period in languages other than Arabic,

a part in the official catalogue; cf. L. REINFANDT, 'Arabisches Briefwesen', [in:] Claudia KREUZSALER, B. PALME & A. ZDIARSKY (eds), *Stimmen aus dem Wüstensand. Briefkultur im griechisch-römischen Ägypten* [= *Nilus* 17], Wien 2010, pp. 116–178. There was, on the other hand, the controversy between scholars of Coptic and Greek papyrology in 1936 as to whether even Coptic was part of Papyrology; cf. M. CHOAT, 'Was Coptic a part of papyrology? Crum, Bell, and "Worrel's complaint" in 1936', *CdE* 88 (2013), pp. 161–181. Mario Capasso devotes an own chapter on 'Le altre papirologie' (chapter 3) in his *Introduzione alla papirologia* but opens the first chapter ('La papirologia: definizione e ambiti geografici e cronologici') with Medea NORSÀ's classical definition in paraphrasing: 'La papirologia è la scienza che sostanzialmente decifra e studia i testi greci e latini pervenuti su papiro, su legno, su frammenti di ceramica e, in senso più lato, su pergamena' (emphasis in original); cf. M. CAPASSO, *Introduzione alla papirologia: dalla pianta di papiro all'informativa papirologica*, Bologna, p. 13.

¹³ The proceedings of the first two conferences have been published as Petra M. Sijpesteijn & L. Sundelin (eds), *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt* [= *Islamic History and Civilization* 55], Leiden – Boston 2004, and P. M. Sijpesteijn, L. Sundelin, Sofia, Torallas Tovar & Amalia Zomeño (eds), *From al-Andalus to Khurasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World* [= *Islamic History and Civilization* 66], Leiden – Boston 2007. The proceedings of the conferences in Alexandria in 2006 and Vienna in 2009 are in press, while the proceedings of the conference in Tunis in 2012 are in preparation.

such as Greek, Coptic, Syriac, Middle Persian, and Hebrew.¹⁴ Moreover, Arabic papyrology has been given a face and a voice (as well as active hands) by the recent appointments of two leading promoters of Arabic Papyrology, Petra M. Sijpesteijn and Andreas Kaplony, to prestigious chairs of Arabic Studies in Leiden (2008) and Munich (2011). Finally, an infrastructure of electronic resource tools has been created that enables Arabists to achieve the standards common in other papyrological disciplines. These tools include an *Arabic Papyrology Database* (APD) that makes accessible fully lemmatised texts of all published Arabic documents from the 7th up to the early 16th centuries AD and covering the whole region from Spain on the west to Central Asia on the east. It serves not merely as an online text collection, but allows for specific search operations, thereby enhancing, though not supplanting, work with conventional printed editions. Systematic collection of variant readings and corrections makes the APD the long-desired authoritative *Berichtigungsliste*.¹⁵

Cooperation with other papyrological online tools and the exchange of data are spreading Arabist knowledge to other disciplines. It is now possible to search in the *Arabic Papyrology Database* for Greek and Coptic terms in the Arabic papyri, and to systematically compare formulaic patterns among the different languages of the region. Cooperation has been established between the APD and the *Trismegistos* portal (for metadata) and the *Papyrological Navigator* (for full texts).¹⁶ Similar interfaces are also in the making with the *Analytical Database of Early and Classical Arabic Poetry*,¹⁷ the *Princeton Geniza Project Database* (with texts in Judaeo-

¹⁴ <<<http://www.naher-osten.uni-muenchen.de/isap/index.html>>> [accessed 15 March 2014].

¹⁵ <<<http://www.ori.uzh.ch/apd>>> [accessed 15 March 2014]. As of this writing, 1,611 of an estimated 2,500 texts have been entered into the database, two-thirds of the published total. The completion of the database is projected for 2016, the work being funded by the Andrew W. Mellon foundation since 2010; cf. <<http://www.mellon.org/news_publications/annual-reports-essays/presidents-reports/2010/?searchterm=Arabic%20Papyrology%20Database>> [accessed 18 March 2014].

¹⁶ <<<http://www.trismegistos.org>>>; <<<http://papyri.info>>> [both accessed 15 March 2014].

¹⁷ <<http://www.academia.edu/1714468/Analytical_Database_of_Early_and_Classical_Arabic_Poetry>> [accessed 24 July 2013].

Arabic),¹⁸ the online *Arabic Etymological Dictionary* from Oslo,¹⁹ and the *Corpus Coranicum Database* from Berlin.²⁰ Cooperation of this kind is urgent and helps to improve communication between the disciplines to fully exploit the benefice of the texts, because, as Peter van Minnen has pinpointed very rightly, ‘most papyrologists ... have become aware of the fact that they can ignore the parallel documentation in languages other than their own only at their peril’.²¹

The training of students is offered by the online introductory tool *Arabic Papyrology School* (APS) and the online advanced seminar, the *Arabic Papyrology Webclass* (APW), provided jointly by the universities of Zurich and Munich.²² Moreover the German Archaeological Institute sponsors Egyptian students interested in Arabic papyrology, and in 2010, under the initiative of Cornelia Römer, organised international winter schools in Alexandria and Cairo in 2010.²³ Also an international summer school of Arabic papyrology was organised by her in 2007 in Vienna.²⁴ New editions are collected and referenced in the *Checklist of Arabic Documents*, while new titles related to Arabic papyrological research are compiled in the *Full Arabic Papyrology Bibliography of Editions and Research* and institutions catalogued in the *List of Major Collections Holding Arabic Documents*.²⁵

¹⁸ <<<http://gravitas.princeton.edu/tg/tt/index.php>>> [accessed 15 March 2014].

¹⁹ <<<http://www.esf.org/coordinating-research/exploratory-workshops/workshops-list/workshops-detail.html?ew=12442>>> [accessed 24 July 2013].

²⁰ <<<http://corpuscoranicum.de/>>> [accessed 15 March 2014].

²¹ P. VAN MINNEN, ‘The future of papyrology,’ [in:] BAGNALL (ed.), *Handbook of Papyrology* (cit. n. 1), pp. 644–660, at pp. 657; 659.

²² <<<http://www.ori.uzh.ch/aps>>>; <<www.naher-osten.lmu.de/apw>> [both accessed 24 March 2014].

²³ <<<http://www.dainst.org/de/profile/cornelia-r%C3%B6mer?ft=all>>> [accessed 8 March 2014].

²⁴ <<<http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=vx&list=H-Mideast-Medieval&month=0612&week=a&msg=A9B8L9WtD0Hk6BdeBebRQQ&user=&p>>> [accessed 20 March 2014].

²⁵ <<http://www.naher-osten.lmu.de/isap/isap_checklist>>; <<http://www.naher-osten.lmu.de/forschung/forsch_papyri/apb>>; <<<http://www.naher-osten.lmu.de/isap/collections>>> [all accessed 15 March 2014].

3. SELF-CONCEPTIONS

The question of what Arabic papyrology should see as its main tasks is a controversial one. Basically it is easier to determine where Arabic papyrology begins than where it ends. When defined with regard to material, it deals with everything written with ink on non-durable material (although there may be some overlap with epigraphy).²⁶ Less clear are its boundaries with related disciplines like codicology and diplomatics, and these boundaries become more ambiguous with the younger material, also in regards of geography. Chronologically, Arabic papyrology begins with the year 643 AD/22 AH and the two oldest Arabic papyri so far known, written during the final phase of the Muslim conquest of Egypt.²⁷ The other end of the timeline is conventionally set at the year 1517 AD, when Egypt became a province of the Ottoman Empire and a new culture of documentary production and preservation, partly in languages other than Arabic, became prevalent.²⁸ But these are largely artificial chronological limits, and there are sometimes reasons not to take them as fixed. This is especially true regarding the younger material, which quite often displays continuities with Arabic documentary culture and serves as important reference material for older Arabic documents on papyrus and paper. Moreover, the exclusion of languages other than Arabic is not as obvious as it may seem at first glance, and it is with good reason that most Arabic papyrologists are trained Islamicists with knowledge of the other major languages of Islamic civilisation. The *Lebenswelt* of pre-modern chancery scribes was more multilingual than modern academic curricula take into

²⁶ BAGNALL, 'Introduction', [in:] IDEM, *Oxford Handbook* (cit. n. 12), p. xvii.

²⁷ SIJPESTEIJN, 'Arabic papyrology' (cit. n. 2), p. 453; Y. RĀĠĪB, 'Les plus anciens papyrus arabes', *Annales Islamologiques* 30 (1996), pp. 1-19; IDEM, 'Un papyrus arabe de l'an 22 de l'hégire', [in:] G. ALLEAUME, S. DENOIX & M. TUCHSCHERER (eds), *Histoire, archéologies, littératures du monde musulman. Mélanges en l'honneur d'André Raymond* [= *Bibliothèque d'étude* 148], Le Caire 2009, pp. 363-372; IDEM, 'Les premiers documents arabes de l'ère musulmane', [in:] C. ZUCKERMAN (ed.), *Constructing the Seventh Century* [= *Travaux et mémoires* 17], Paris 2013, pp. 679-729.

²⁸ *Checklist of Arabic Documents* (as in n. 25 above), section 'Boundaries and Expected Expansion'.

account, and especially younger documents often contain combinations of Arabic and Persian, or Arabic and Ottoman, on one and the same sheet.²⁹ Academic specialisation and compartmentalisation is disadvantageous for the study of Arabic documents, and the neglect of parallel languages may inhibit a proper understanding of the Islamic documentary tradition, as it has in other fields of papyrology.³⁰

Inclusion of younger Arabic material into the papyrological canon broadens papyrological studies in time and space. Not only is the papyrological ‘millennium and a half’³¹ thereby expanded by another millennium, but the regional focus shifts from Egypt to the Levant, to Spain, Sahel Africa, and Central Asia. Large finds of Arabic material outside Egypt with a non-Egyptian background suggest a proliferation of documents that must have been similar to those of Antiquity but not within the purview of those papyrological disciplines strictly concerned with Antiquity.³² The question is not whether, but under what circumstances,

²⁹ See for example Arabic petitions from 19th century Palestine that have phrases in Ottoman embedded throughout the text; cf. Y. BEN-BASSAT, *Petitioning the Sultan: Protests and Justice in Late Ottoman Palestine, 1865–1908*, London – New York 2013, p. 57.

³⁰ Cf. the implacable attitude expressed by H. MAEHLER, ‘Die Zukunft der griechischen Papyrologie’, *PapCongr.* xxvi, pp. 451–455, at p. 452 regarding studies on documents from the Ptolemaic period that do not sufficiently take into account the multilingual social situation. About the detrimental consequences of compartmentalisation for the understanding of early Islamic Egypt cf. Sarah J. CLACKSON, ‘Papyrology and the utilization of Coptic sources’, [in:] Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN & L. SUNDELIN (eds), *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt* [= *Islamic History and Civilization* 55], Leiden – Boston 2004, pp. 21–43, at pp. 29–30.

³¹ Cf. VAN MINNEN, ‘The future of papyrology’ (cit. n. 21), p. 645.

³² Examples are M. GRONKE, *Arabische und persische Privaturkunden des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts aus Ardabil (Aserbeidschan)* [= *Islamkundliche Untersuchungen* 72], Berlin 1982 (12th–13th century AD Azerbaijan); EADEM, ‘The Arabic Yārkand Documents’, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 49 (1986), pp. 454–507 (western China, 1080–1135 AD); W. HOENERBACH, *Spanisch-islamische Urkunden aus der Zeit der Nasriden und Moriscos* [= *Bonner Orientalistische Studien 15* / *University of California Publications. Near Eastern Studies* 3], Bonn 1965 (13th–15th century AD Andalusia); M. ‘A JĀZIM, ‘Un nouveau corpus documentaire d’époque rasūlide: les actes des waqf de Ta‘izz,’ *Chroniques du manuscrit au Yémen* 10 (2010), pp. 1–5 (13th–15th century AD Yemen); J. JOHNS, *Arabic Administration in Norman Sicily. The royal diwān* [= *Cambridge Studies in Islamic Civilization*], Cambridge 2002 (Sicily, 12th cen-

papyrology is willing to accept a broadening of its horizons. This broadening would be a reminder that papyrology is above all a method and not necessarily bound to a region or an era. It is the approach to the material, and not the material itself, which distinguishes papyrology from other disciplines, particularly codicology and diplomatics.

This is evident when it comes to paper documents from the 10th century AD onwards, which tend to be more elaborately written and better preserved than older papyrus texts. They accordingly invite textual examination more readily than earlier papyri material, which is considerably dependent on physical appearance and find context. For many of the papers (and parchments) contemporary with European archives and in historical archives and libraries around the Mediterranean, archaeological contexts are irrelevant.³³ But integral concepts of an Islamic (instead of an Arabic) papyrology, when based on an anthropological rather than a textual definition of what is a ‘document’, can still make sense from a papyrological point of view. Understood in this way, the difference between papyrology and diplomatics lies not so much in the texts studied

tury AD); D. LITTLE, *A Catalogue of the Islamic Documents from al-Haram aš-Šarīf in Jerusalem* [= *Beiruter Texte und Studien* 29], Beirut 1984 (Jerusalem, 1390–1394 AD); J.-M. MOUTON, D. SOURDEL & J. SOURDEL-THOMINE, *Mariage et séparation à Damas au Moyen Âge. Un corpus de 62 documents juridiques inédits entre 337/948 et 698/1299* [= *Documents relatifs à l'histoire des croisades* 21], Paris 2013 (Damascus, 948–1299 AD); and the 40,000 sheets from Quranic codices plus other documents found in the Grand Mosque of Sanaa; cf. Y. RĀĠIB, ‘Les plus anciens papyrus arabes’, *Annales Islamologiques* 30 (1996), pp. 1–19, at p. 2. The proceedings of the 2nd Congress of the *International Society for Arabic Papyrology* (in Granada, 2004) are significantly entitled *From al-Andalus to Khurasan* (cit. n. 13).

³³ F. BAUDEN, ‘Mamluk era documentary studies: the state of the art’, *Mamlūk Studies Review* 9 (2005), pp. 15–60, at pp. 27–56 gives a detailed overview of the respective institutions and their holdings. A revision of this article currently in progress will be published as a chapter of Bauden’s forthcoming book under the title *Mamlūk Historical Sources and how to Exploit them (Manuscripts and Documents)*. The archival, non-archaeological context is also what papyrologist Yūsuf RĀĠIB has in mind when he recommends Arabic documents on paper from the Saint Catherine’s Monastery on Mount Sinai for Arabic diplomatics instead of Arabic papyrology; cf. RĀĠIB, ‘Quelques trésors méconnus de l’Égyptisches Museum’, [in:] V. M. LEPPER (ed.), *Forschung der Papyrussammlung. Eine Festgabe für das Neue Museum* [= *Ägyptische und Orientalische Papyri und Handschriften des Ägyptischen Museums und Papyrussammlung Berlin* 1], Berlin 2002, pp. 455–480, at p. 460.

as in the method by which they are read.³⁴ The distinction between codicology and papyrology is clear when a literary text has a documentary value – that is, when its context of preservation is informative beyond the actual written text. If in addition the text is fragmentary or otherwise incomplete, it especially forms part of the papyrological canon, whether it is on papyrus, paper, or parchment, and whether or not it is a single leaf (or even a group of consecutive pages) from a former codex. Papyrology brings its structural strengths into play when dealing with documents that are deprived of their archival context (which perhaps can be reconstructed by the papyrologist), or documents that are of a fragmentary condition or of an *Alltagscharakter*. In short, everything that is informative not on the basis of the written text alone but also on the physical appearance of the document and the conditions of its preservation are within the domain of papyrology. Not unlike forensic pathologists who can understand much out of little, papyrologists can reconstruct the human past from texts that defy general understanding.

Broad definitions of Arabic papyrology are conceptualised on a vertical, or diachronic, timeline. Their advantage is an enhanced interconnectedness with thematic discourses within Arabic and Islamic Studies (and as such recommendable especially for young scholars in the field). Their disadvantage is arbitrariness, however, and a possible indifference on the part of other papyrological disciplines. Arabic papyrology should be aware of its responsibility towards papyrology as such and place special attention on more synchronous, or horizontal, approaches that appeal to a common interest in Late Antiquity and the genesis of Islam through the disciplines. This is most likely achieved by a focus on Egypt

³⁴ L. REINFANDT, 'Mamlūk Documentary Studies', [in:] S. CONERMANN (ed.) *Ubi sumus? Quo vademus? Mamluk Studies – State of the Art*, Göttingen 2013, pp. 285–309, at p. 288. The term 'Islamic papyrology' was coined by Gladys FRANTZ-MURPHY in 1985 ('Arabic papyrology and Middle Eastern Studies', *Middle East Studies Association Bulletin* 19 [1985], pp. 34–48, at p. 34). Donald LITTLE even proposed, though with some intentional irony, a 'Mamluk' papyrology ('The use of documents for the study of Mamluk History,' *Mamlūk Studies Review* 1 [1997], pp. 1–13, at p. 5). An argument for more orthodox definitions of what distinguishes papyrology from diplomatics, based on the material studied, is BAUDEN, 'Mamluk era documentary studies' (cit. n. 33), pp. 15–16.

(and her immediate neighbours) during the first centuries of Muslim rule, while an archaeological provenance should be a decisive criterion for the choice of texts. This is not an objection to the vertical paradigm but a sense of proportion from a papyrological perspective. It is an argument not of substance but of expediency. Arabists may feel like outsiders when the discussion is about Pharaonic affairs, but the same may be true of papyrologists attending debates about documents from 16th century AD Andalusia or Central Asia.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In papyrology the publication of editions of new texts is of course a priority, and the choice of material for publication is an important indicator of the discipline's current topics of interest. The aforementioned considerations of what should be the primary focus of Arabic papyrology in terms of region and period seem to be followed by present scholarly output. The interval between the congress in Warsaw in 2013 and the earlier congress in Geneva in 2010 may serve as an example: out of a total of 55 Arabic text editions (as monographs or articles) that appeared during those three years, 36 were devoted to the papyrological core area and another nine related to Egypt and Syria during the 12th to 16th centuries AD.³⁵ Thus almost three-quarters of current publication of text editions have been devoted to the core area.

The following compilation of publications that have appeared since 2010 is not primarily a comprehensive overview of what has been achieved during the past few years, but intended to demonstrate the degree of activity in the discipline, which is reflected in an uninterrupted interest in text editions as well as in the philological expertise available for such an undertaking. Some editions of texts from the first three centuries of Muslim rule – the ‘papyrus era’ – are in monographic form and are devoted to such matters as the chancery of a local pagarch and private

³⁵ The publications are all listed in the *Checklist* and in the *Full Bibliography*; cf. n. 25 above.

letters dealing with private and family matters.³⁶ Others are collected editions of Arabic papers from Egypt datable to the 10th century and later. Some of these documents have been found during recent archaeological excavations,³⁷ while others are in papyrus collections.³⁸

There also have been a considerable number of articles published during the past four years discussing documentary texts on papyrus that deal with such diverse subjects as judicial and fiscal affairs, legal transactions, personal communication, charitable acts, and writing exercises.³⁹ A large

³⁶ P. MuslimState = Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN, *Shaping a Muslim state. The World of a mid-eighth-century Egyptian official* [= *Oxford Studies in Byzantium*], Oxford 2013 (39 documents on papyrus, 8th century); Kh. M. YOUNES, *Joy and Sorrow in Early Muslim Egypt. Arabic Papyrus Letters, Text and Content*, Diss. Leiden 2013 (43 documents on papyrus, 7th–9th century).

³⁷ J.-M. MOUTON, 'La documentation papyrologique', [in:] IDEM (ed.), *Sadr, une forteresse de Saladin au Sinaï. Histoire et archéologie* [= *Mémoires de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 43], 2 vols., Paris 2010, at I, pp. 135–150; II, pl. 234–241 (8 documents, 12th century). On the opportunities and limits of an interplay of archaeology and papyrology, cf. R. S. BAGNALL, 'Archaeology and Papyrology', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 1 (1988), pp. 197–202.

³⁸ CPR xxxii = W. DIEM, *Arabische Briefe aus dem 10.–16. Jahrhundert* (18 documents); P. Heid. Arab. III = W. DIEM, *Arabische Briefe auf Papier aus der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung*, Heidelberg 2013 (52 documents, 9th–15th century).

³⁹ W. DIEM, 'Philologisches zu arabischen Dokumenten der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 101 (2011), pp. 75–140 (3 documents, 9th century); IDEM, 'Ein arabischer Kontoauszug in Briefform aus dem 9. Jahrhundert n. Chr. (Pap. Berlin P. 15128)', [in:] Verena M. LEPPER (ed.), *Forschung in der Papyrussammlung. Eine Festgabe für das Neue Museum*, Berlin 2012, pp. 411–423 (1 document, 9th century); Alia HANAFI, 'An Arabic will written on a ship', *PapCongr.* xxv, pp. 299–306 (1 document, 8th century); B. LIEBRENTZ, 'Eine frühe arabische Quittung aus Oberägypten', *APF* 56 (2010), pp. 294–314 (1 document, 7th–8th century); U. MARZOLPH, 'From Mecca to Mashhad: the narrative of an illustrated Shi'i pilgrimage scroll from the Qajar period', *Muqarnas* 31 (2014), pp. 207–242 (papyrus, 9th century, Egypt); Y. RAĞIB, 'Une lettre familiale rédigée en 102/721', *Annales Islamologiques* 45 (2011), pp. 273–284 (1 document); L. REINFANDT, 'Die Sorgen des Weingutbesitzers: der Wiener Papyrus P. Vind. inv. A. P. 11378', [in:] U. MARZOLPH (ed.), *Orientalistische Studien zu Sprache und Literatur: Festgabe zum 65. Geburtstag von Werner Diem*, Wiesbaden 2011, pp. 203–216 (1 document, 9th–10th century); A. A. SHAHIN, 'Höfliche Bitte an einen Bekannten um Bezahlung eines Geldbetrags', *APF* 59 (2013), pp. 176–183 (1 document, 9th century); Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN, 'Army economics: an early papyrus letter related to 'Atā' payments', [in:] R. E. MARGARITI, A. SABRA & EADEM (eds), *Histories of the Middle East: Studies in Middle Eastern Society, Economy and Law in Honor of A. L. Udovitch*, Leiden – Boston 2011, pp. 245–267 (1 document, 7th–8th century); EADEM, 'An early Umayyad papyrus invitation for the ḥajj', *Journal of*

number of documentary texts on paper have been published that are from Egypt and have an archaeological context.⁴⁰ A very promising trend is emerging in the form of joint editions of bilingual Greek-Arabic and Coptic-Arabic texts on papyrus or paper from Egypt.⁴¹ Other articles contain editions of Arabic papers that have been found in Syria, or are of

Near Eastern Studies 73 (2014), pp. 179–190; EADEM, ‘Une nouvelle lettre de Qurra b. Šarik: P. Sorb. inv. 2345’, *Annales Islamologiques* 45 (2011), 257–268 (1 document, 8th century); EADEM, ‘Taking care of the weak: an Arabic papyrus from the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam’, *P. Pintaudi* 70 (1 document, 9th century); EADEM, ‘An Arabic land lease from Ṭuṭūn’, *P. Bagnall* 53 (1 document, 9th century); EADEM, ‘Making the private public: a delivery of palestinian oil in third/ninth century Egypt’, *Studia Orientalia Electronica* 2 (2014), pp. 74–91 (1 document); M. TILLIER, ‘Deux papyrus judiciaires de Fuṣṭāṭ (11^e/VIII^e siècle)’, *CdÉ* 89 (2014), pp. 412–445 (2 documents, second half of 8th century); N. VANTHIEGHEM, ‘Un reçu pour l’impôt foncier ou pour la capitation. Édition de P. Stras. inv. G 2554’, *Aegyptus* 90 (2010), pp. 143–146 (1 document, 8th century); IDEM, ‘Le plus ancien sauf-conduit arabe’, *Der Islam* 91 (2014), pp. 266–271 (1 document, 717 CE); IDEM, ‘Un exercice épistolaire arabe adressé au gouverneur Ġābir ibn al-Aš‘at’, *APF* 60 (2014), pp. 402–405 (1 document, 811/812 CE); IDEM, ‘Contrats de location arabes. 11’, *CdÉ* 89 (2014), pp. 210–215 (2 documents, 860s CE, Hermopolite and 9th century, Egypt); IDEM, ‘Les archives des marchands d’étoffes du Fayoum revisitées 1. Un nouveau *dīkr ḥaqq* du marchand Abū Hurayra’, *APF* 60 (2014), pp. 406–412 (1 document, 864–878 CE); IDEM, ‘Les archives d’un maquignon d’Égypte médiévale’, *Anal. Pap.* 26 (2014), pp. 291–315 (9 documents, 2nd half of 9th century).

⁴⁰ W. DIEM, ‘Zwischen hohem Stil und Vulgarismus. Ein Brief aus dem Ägypten des 10.–11. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.’, [in:] J. DEN HEIJER, P. LA SPISA & L. TUERLINCKX (eds), *Études présentées à Jacques GrandHenry à l’occasion de son 70^e anniversaire*, Louvain-la-Neuve 2012, pp. 155–188. (1 document); G. KHAN, ‘The Medieval Arabic documents from Qaṣr Ibrīm’, [in:] J. VAN DER VLIET & J. L. HAGEN (eds), *Qaṣr Ibrim between Egypt and Africa: Studies in Cultural Exchange*, Leuven 2013, pp. 145–156 (1 document, 12th century, Nubia); N. VANTHIEGHEM, ‘Un contrat de location d’une maison en arabe (P. Brux. inv. E. 8449)’, *CdÉ* 88 (2013), pp. 188–197 (1 document, 10th century).

⁴¹ L. BERKES & Kh. M. YOUNES, ‘A trilingual scribe from Abbasid Egypt? A note on CPR xxii 17’, *APF* 58 (2012), pp. 97–100 (1 document, 8th century); A. DELATTRE, B. LIEBREZ, T. S. RICHTER & N. VANTHIEGHEM, ‘Écrire en arabe et en copte. Le cas de deux lettres bilingues’, *CdÉ* 87 (2012), pp. 170–188 (1 document on papyrus, 9th century; 1 document on paper, 11th century); A. DELATTRE, R. PINTAUDI & N. VANTHIEGHEM, ‘Un entagion bilingue du gouverneur ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ibn Marwān trouvé à Antinoé’, *CdÉ* 88 (2013), pp. 363–371 (1 document, 7th century); A. DELATTRE & N. VANTHIEGHEM, ‘Un symbole de Nicée-Constantinople en copte au verso d’un protocole arabe: édition de P. Stras. inv. Kopt. 221 + 224’, *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013), pp. 239–252 (1 document, 8th/9th century).

Syrian provenience, and have an archaeological context.⁴² There has been a renewed interest in literary and para-literary texts on papyrus and papers, and texts have been published that deal with religious knowledge as well as magic or the sciences.⁴³ Increased attention has been given during recent years to the Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic papers from the Cairo Geniza.⁴⁴ More thematically oriented monographs have appeared with

⁴² J.-M. MOUTON, D. SOURDEL & Janine SOURDEL-THOMINE, 'Une attaque de Damas par les Qarmates au x^e siècle d'après la lettre d'un marchand', *APF* 56 (2010), pp. 64–76 (1 document, 10th century).

⁴³ W. M. MALCZYCKI, 'Instructions for Islamic prayer from the second century AH/eighth century CE', *BSAC* 49 (2012), pp. 41–54 (1 document, papyrus, Egypt); IDEM, 'A page from an aspiring Muhaddit's (P. Utah, Ar. inv. 443v)', [in:] A. REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire. Islam, VII^e–XVI^e s. Actes des journées d'études Musée du Louvre, ÉPHÉ, mai 2008*, Genève 2013, pp. 247–267 (1 document, papyrus, Egypt); Arianna D'OTTONE, 'A far eastern type of print technique for Islamic amulets from the Mediterranean: An unpublished example', *Scripta* 6 (2013), pp. 67–74 (1 document, 10th–12th century); J. THOMANN, 'P. Stras. ar. inv. 266: le dernier horoscope sur papyrus – le premier horoscope en arabe', *PapCongr.* xxvi, pp. 747–750 (1 document, papyrus, 9th century, Egypt); IDEM, 'An Arabic ephemeris for the year 954/955 CE and the geographical latitude of al-Bahnasā/Oxyrhynchus (P. Stras. inv. ar. 446)', *Aegyptus* 33 (2013), pp. 385–396 (1 document, paper, 10th century, Egypt); IDEM, 'An Arabic ephemeris for the year 1026/1027 CE in the Vienna Papyrus Collection', [in:] G. KATSIAMPOURA (ed.), *Scientific Cosmopolitanism and Local Cultures: Religions, Ideologies, Societies. Proceedings of the 5th International Conference of the European Society for the History of Science*, Athens 2014, pp. 54–60 (1 document, paper, 11th century, Egypt).

⁴⁴ W. DIEM & L. EDZARD, 'Ein unhöflicher Brief und liebliche Verse. Ein Genizadokument des 11.–12. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. aus der Heidelberger Papyrussammlung', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 161 (2011), pp. 276–304 (1 document); G. KHAN, 'A petition to the Fatimid caliph al-Āmir from the Cairo Genizah concerning an inheritance', [in:] MARZOLPH (ed.) *Festgabe Diem* (cit. n. 39), pp. 175–186 (1 document, 12th century); F. NIESSEN, 'Two Samaritan Bible translations from the Cairo Genizah', *ibidem*, pp. 187–202. (2 documents, 10th–14th century); A. REGOURD, 'Arabic documents from the Cairo Geniza in the David Kaufmann Collection in the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest', *Journal of Islamic Manuscripts* 3 (2012), pp. 1–19 (1 document, 11th–12th century); IDEM, 'Ġāhiziana. Addition à l'essai d'inventaire de l'œuvre ġāhizienne: *le Kitāb al-fityān* retrouvé?', *Arabica* 60 (2013), pp. 106–130 (1 document, 11th–12th century); M. RUSTOW, 'A petition to a woman at the Fatimid court (413–414 AH/1022–23 CE)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 73 (2010), pp. 1–27 (1 document). See also now C. PERRY, *The Daily Life of Slavery and the Global Reach of Slavery in Medieval Egypt, 969–1250 CE*, Diss. Emory University 2014; O. ZINGER, *Women, Gender and Law: Marital Disputes According to Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, Diss. Princeton 2014.

editions of texts from various dossiers from Egypt.⁴⁵ Publication of the remaining two volumes of texts from the famous archives of textile merchants from the Fayyum has recently been announced again.⁴⁶ In addition to that, the publication of seven texts from Samarra, from the vicinity of the caliphal court of the Abbasids, is underway (see n. 64 below).

Other recent monographs and articles contain editions of documentary texts on paper from Egypt or Syria (10th century and later) that do not have archaeological contexts but are kept in archives on Mount Sinai or in Istanbul,⁴⁷ or at least have an archival background.⁴⁸ Some newly-

⁴⁵ CH. GAUBERT & J.-M. MOUTON, *Hommes et villages du Fayyom au Moyen Âge dans la documentation papyrologique (x^e-XI^e siècles)* I, Genève 2014 [= *Hautes études orientales* 52. *Collection antiquité* 8] (documents on paper, 10th century, Egypt); P. *Quseir Arab.* II = A. KAPLONY, *Fünfundzwanzig arabische Geschäftsdokumente aus dem Rotmeer-Hafen al-Quseyr al-Qadim (7./13. Jh.)* [= *Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts* 78], Leiden 2014 (documents on paper); P. *Quseir Arab.* III = A. REGOURD, *Documents administratives et commerciales de Quseyr al-Qadim* (in press) (documents on paper, 13th century). Moreover, Petra SIJPESTEIJN is currently preparing a monograph on patronage that will contain editions of relevant papyri from the first four centuries of Muslim rule.

⁴⁶ Y. RĀĠIB, *Marchands d'étoffes du Fayyom au III^e/IX^e siècle d'après leurs archives (actes et lettres)*, vols. IV and V/2 [= *Annales Islamologiques Supplément*], Le Caire (in preparation, several dozens of documents on papyrus, 9th century); cf. IDEM, 'Quelques trésors méconnus' (cit. n. 33), p. 458.

⁴⁷ P. St. Catherine II = D. S. RICHARDS, *Mamluk Administrative Documents from St Catherine's Monastery*, Leuven 2011 (18 documents on paper, 13th–16th century AD); P. *Marriage-Separation* (cit. n. 32) (62 documents on paper).

⁴⁸ F. BAUDEN, "‘Lam baqā yū ʾarīḍkum.’ Analyse linguistique de trois lettres rédigées par un marchand au Caire en 819/1416–820/1417", [in:] DEN HEIJER, LA SPISA & TUERLINCKX (eds), *Études GrandHenry* (cit. n. 40), pp. 1–37 (3 documents on paper); L. DAAÏF, 'Un document juridique mamelouk. Se porter garant de la comparution d'un tiers', *Annales islamologiques* 47 (2013), pp. 425–444 (1 document on paper, 1339 CE, Faiyum); J. LOISEAU, 'Les attestations de *waqf* de l'émir Qarāqugā al-Hasanī: documents et histoire urbaine dans l'Égypte mamelouke', [in:] REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 219–246; J.-M. MOUTON, D. SOURDEL & Janine SOURDEL-THOMINE, 'A propos de la "pauvreté" à Damas à l'époque ayyoubide: deux documents inédits', *APF* 57 (2011), pp. 99–108 (2 documents on paper, 12th–13th century, Syria); C. MÜLLER, 'Osmanische Gerichtsurkunden des 16. Jahrhunderts aus der ägyptischen Provinz', [in:] LEPPER (ed.), *Fg. Neue Museum* (cit. n. 33), pp. 435–453 (1 document on paper); D. S. RICHARDS, 'Three (twelfth-century?) iuarantees issued for the monks of St Catherine's Monastery in Sinai', [in:] C. MÜLLER & M. ROILAND-ROUABAH (eds), *Les non-dits du nom: Onomastique et documents en terres d'Islam*, Beirut 2013, pp. 15–27 (3 documents on paper).

published documents found in Egypt have archaeological contexts and serve as important reference material but clearly do not belong to the papyrological core period.⁴⁹ Some other recent editions of documents do not belong to the papyrological core because they are either too young in age⁵⁰ or originated from peripheral areas such as Spain (the ‘Herculaneum’ of Arabic papyrology),⁵¹ Sicily,⁵² or Persia⁵³ but nevertheless are

⁴⁹ R. PETERS, *Wathā’iq madīnat al-Qaṣr fī al-Wāḥāt ad-Dākhila maṣḍaran li-tā rīkh Miṣr fī al-‘aṣr al-‘Uṭbmānī / The Documents of the Town of al-Qaṣr in the Dakbla Oasis as a Source for the History of Egypt in the Ottoman period*, Cairo: Dar al-Wathā’iq al-Qawmiyya 2011 (163 documents on paper, 16th–19th century).

⁵⁰ M. TAMCKE, A. MANUKYAN & Ch. MAUDER (eds), *Die arabischen Briefe aus der Zeit der Herrnhuter Präsenz in Ägypten 1770–1783*, Würzburg 2012 (documents on paper); A. D’OTTONE, ‘Le “Lettere arabiche” di Simone Assemani alla Bibliotheca del Museo Correr di Venezia: regesto’, *Quaderni per la storia dell’Università di Padova* 46 (2013), pp. 105–122 (1 document on paper, 19th century, Egypt); J. A. ‘UMRĀN, ‘Wathā’iq al-ḥazīna al-‘āmira al-‘irsāliyya fī an-niṣf at-tānī min al-qarn at-tānī ‘aṣar al-ḥiḡrī / at-tāmin ‘aṣar al-milādī’ [Documents of the treasury sent to the Ottoman sultan in the second half of the twelfth century H./ eighteenth century AD], *Annales islamologiques* 47 (2013), pp. 519–564 (1 document on paper, 1741–1767 CE, Egypt).

⁵¹ H. BRESCH & Y. RĀĠIB, *Le sultan mérinide Abū l-Ḥasan ‘Alī et Jacques III de Majorque : du traité de paix au pacte secret*, Le Caire 2011 (1 document on paper, 14th century); P. BURESI & H. EL AALLAOUI, *Governing the Empire: Provincial Administration in the Almohad Caliphate (1224–1269). Critical Edition, Translation, and Study of Manuscript 4752 of the Ḥasaniya Library in Rabat*, Leiden – Boston 2013; P. MARQUÉS = A. Ch. DAMAJ, & J. A. GARCÍA LUJÁN, *Documentos árabes granadinos del archivo del Marqués de Corvera (1399–1495)*, Huéscar 2012 (27 documents on paper and parchment from Spain); F. BAUDEN, ‘Due trattati di pace conclusi nel dodicesimo secolo tra i Banū Ġāniya, signori delle isole Baleari, e il comune di Genova’, [in:] N. MARTÍNEZ DE CASTILLA (ed.), *Documentos y manuscritos árabes del Occidente musulmán medieval*, Madrid 2010, 33–86 (2 documents on parchment, 12th century); P. BURESI, ‘Les plaintes de l’archevêque: chronique des premiers échanges épistolaires entre Pise et le gouverneur almohade de Tunis 1182’, *ibidem*, pp. 87–120 (2 documents on paper); IDEM, ‘Les documents arabes et latins échangés entre Pise et l’Empire almohade en 596–598/1200–1202: la chancellerie au coeur des relations diplomatiques’, [in:] A. REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire. Islam, VII^e–XVI^e s.*, Genève 2013, pp. 21–52 (documents on paper).

⁵² J. GRAND’HENRY, ‘Un contrat arabe d’échange de la propriété de tours d’irrigation dans la région de Palerme (Sicile) en 526 h/1131’, *Folia Orientalia* 49 (2012 = *Studia Andreae Zaborski dedicata*), pp. 203–217 (1 document on paper from Sicily).

⁵³ M. GRONKE, *Arabische und persische Urkunden der Mongolenzeit*, 4 vols. [= *Documenta iranica et islamica* 3], Wiesbaden (in preparation).

also important reference material and open up new paths of scholarship within papyrology.

Corrections and updates of older editions are urgently needed in Arabic papyrology, and it would be desirable to see this work more evenly distributed among papyrologists than has hitherto been the case.⁵⁴ Especially pressing because of the increase in knowledge during the past half-century is an updated edition of Adolf Grohmann's enormous oeuvre. This task has been taken over by Werner Diem who, in a series of articles of stunning philological precision, has brought Grohmann's editions of material from Prague, Giessen, Jerusalem, Cairo, and Vienna up to a new standard.⁵⁵ Another desideratum is the re-edition of the similarly important yet unsatisfactorily presented material of David Samuel Margoliouth's *P. Ryl. Arab.* 1 from the 1930s.⁵⁶

In addition to the publication of new texts and the revision of old editions, an important task of Arabic papyrology is the description of collections holding Arabic papyri and papers and the announcement and description of new corpora found in the course of archaeological excavations. This has been done for the abundant Spanish archives,⁵⁷ for the

⁵⁴ W. DIEM, review of *P. St. Catherine* II (cit. n. 47), *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 108 (2013), pp. 194–197; IDEM, *CPR* xxxii (cit. n. 38), *passim*; Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN, 'Locating Arabic papyrology: fiscal politics in medieval Egypt as a test-case for setting disciplinary boundaries and standards', *BASP* 51 (2014), pp. 217–228 being a review article of *P. Steuerquittungen*.

⁵⁵ W. DIEM, 'Zwischen hohem Stil und Vulgarismus. Ein Brief aus dem Ägypten des 10.–11. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.', [in:] DEN HEIJER, LA SPISA & TUERLINCKX (eds), *Études GrandHenry* (cit. n. 40), pp. 155–188; IDEM, 'Philologisches zu arabischen Dokumenten. I: Dokumente aus Sammlungen in Prag, Giessen und Jerusalem', *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik* 55 (2012), p. 543; IDEM, 'Philologisches zu arabischen Dokumenten. II: Dokumente aus der Sammlung der Egyptian Library in Kairo', *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik* 56 (2012), pp. 27–78; IDEM, 'Philologisches zu arabischen Dokumenten der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek in Wien', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 101 (2011), pp. 75–140; IDEM, 'Philologisches zu arabischen Steuerquittungen aus Ägypten (8.–11. Jahrhundert)', *ibidem* 96 (2006), pp. 55–111.

⁵⁶ D. S. MARGOLIOUTH, *Catalogue of Arabic Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester*, Manchester 1933.

⁵⁷ J. I. PÉREZ ALCALDE, 'Notas sobre documentos árabes de la Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid', [in:] MARTÍNEZ DE CASTILLA (ed.), *Documentos y manuscritos árabes* (cit. n. 51),

Yemeni archives,⁵⁸ and for North-American⁵⁹ and European⁶⁰ collections. Moreover, text corpora found in the course of archaeological campaigns in Egypt⁶¹ and Central Asia⁶² as well as on the Egyptian Red Sea coast⁶³ and in Iraq⁶⁴ have been made public or were re-publicised.

The cataloguing and digitisation of papyrus collections have increased rapidly in recent years, the latest developments of which can be followed in the *List of Major Collections Holding Arabic Documents*.⁶⁵ It would be helpful to broaden the list with Middle Eastern papyrus collections, especially from the Gulf. Papyrus collections should think about ways of increasing access to unpublished papyri, especially for those scholars who are not within easy reach of the material. There are gifted scholars in

pp. 315–334; C. ÁLVAREZ DE MORALES, ‘La geografía documental arábigo granadina’, *ibidem*, pp. 205–223.

⁵⁸ JĀZIM, ‘Un nouveau corpus’ (cit. n. 32), *passim*.

⁵⁹ Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN, ‘North American papyrus collections revisited’, *Al-Bardiyyat* 1 (2010), pp. 5–18.

⁶⁰ Cf. the paper ‘Les papyrus arabes de Strasbourg’ read by Naïm VANTHIEGHEM at the 27th International Congress of Papyrology in Warsaw 2013.

⁶¹ Cf. the paper ‘Un aperçu des papiers arabes fatimides du monastère de Naqlun au Fayyoun’ read *ibid.* by Christian GAUBERT.

⁶² G. KHAN, *Arabic Documents from Early Islamic Khurasan* [= *Einstein Lectures in Islamic Studies* 3], Berlin 2014; IDEM, ‘The development of early Arabic documentary script’, [in:] N. DE LANGE & J. OLSZOWY-SCHLANGER (eds), *Manuscrits hébreux et arabes: mélanges en l’honneur de Colette Sirat* [= *Bibliologia* 38], Turnhout 2014, pp. 279–293; IDEM, ‘Documents arabes du début de l’Islam, récemment découverts dans le Khorassan’, [in:] REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 183–204; IDEM, ‘The Khurasan corpus of Arabic documents’, [in:] T. BERNHEIMER & A. SILVERSTEIN (eds), *Late Antiquity: Eastern Perspectives*, Exeter 2012, pp. 71–86.

⁶³ A. KAPLONY, ‘The interplay of different kinds of commercial documents at the Red Sea Port al-Quşayr al-Qadīm (13th c. CE)’, [in:] L. EDZARD & S. GUTH (eds), *Verbal Festivity in Arabic and Other Semitic Languages*, Wiesbaden 2010, pp. 94–115; A. REGOURD, ‘Arabic language documents on paper’, [in:] D. PEACOCK & L. BLUE (eds), *Myos Hormos – Quşayr al-Qadīm. Roman and Islamic Ports on the Red Sea 11: Finds from the Excavations 1999–2003*, Oxford 2011, pp. 339–344.

⁶⁴ L. REINFANDT, ‘Administrative papyri from the Abbasid court in Samarra (AD 836–892): A first report’, *PapCongr.* xxvi, pp. 639–646.

⁶⁵ Cf. n. 25 above.

Arabic countries who lack access to collections (and books), and electronic resources have the potential to solve this problem. The Vienna collection is undertaking a long-term project of digitising large numbers of documents in Arabic, Coptic, and Greek from the time after the Muslim conquest and thus making them accessible through the internet.⁶⁶

A number of research topics have been given special emphasis in the papyrological community and no doubt will continue to be of special interest during the next few years. The social history of the core area, Egypt and Syria, during the core period of Arabic papyrology, the first centuries of Islam, is stated as a major research objective in the statutes of the *International Society for Arabic Papyrology*.⁶⁷ A number of recent studies have dealt with textile trade, papyrus industries, fiscal administration, applied law, topography, medicine and public health, and aspects of ethnic and religious identity.⁶⁸ Research on early Muslim societies

⁶⁶ <<http://www.onb.ac.at/ev/collections/papyrus/papyrus_researchhold.htm>> [accessed 18 March 2014].

⁶⁷ <<http://www.naher-osten.uni-muenchen.de/isap/isap_statutes/index.html>> [accessed 15 March 2014].

⁶⁸ M. A. 'ABD AL-LAṬĪF, 'al-Iskandariyya fī daw' waṭā'iq al-bardī al-'arabī ḥilāl al-qarn 1–3 h./7–9 m.' [Alexandria in the light of Arabic documents on papyrus from the 1st–3rd/7th–9th centuries], *Bulletin of Ain-Shams University Center of Papyrological Studies and Inscriptions* 28 (2011), pp. 237–258; IDEM, *al-Mudun wa-l-qurā al-miṣriyya fī al-bardiyyāt al-'arabiyya. Dirāsa 'atariyya wa-ḥaḍariyya* [Les villes et les villages égyptiens dans les papyrus arabes : recherches sur le patrimoine et la civilisation] [= *Textes arabes et études islamiques* 48], Le Caire 2012 together with N. VANTHIEGHEM, 'La toponymie arabe: à propos d'un ouvrage récent', *Chronique d'Égypte* 89 (2014), pp. 216–223; G. FRANTZ-MURPHY, 'Identity and security in the Mediterranean world ca. AD 640 – ca. 1517', *PapCongr.* xxv, pp. 253–264; S. HĀNĪ, *al-A'šāb wa-n-nabātāt at-ṭayyiba wa-l-ṭirīya min ḥilāl awrāq warāq al-bardī wa-l-kāgīd fī l-'aṣr al-islāmī*, Diss. Ḥelwān (Egypt) 2010; M. 'A JĀZIM, 'Un manuscrit administratif et fiscal du Yémen rassoulide: l'Irtifā' al-dawla al-mu'ayyadiyya', [in:] REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 163–182; KAPLONY, 'Interplay' (cit. n. 62); W. M. MALCZYCKI, 'The papyrus industry in the early Islamic era', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 54 (2011), pp. 185–202; C. MÜLLER, *Der Kadi und seine Zeugen. Studie der mamlukischen Ḥaram-Dokumente aus Jerusalem*, Wiesbaden 2013; L. REINFANDT, 'Crime and punishment in early Islamic Egypt (AD 642–969): The Arabic papyrological evidence', *PapCongr.* xxv, pp. 633–640; IDEM, 'Law and order in einer frühen islamischen Gesellschaft? Strafverfolgung in Ägypten und Palästina nach der arabischen Eroberung (7.–9. Jahrhundert)', [in:] R. ROLLINGER, B. GUFLER, M. LANG & I. MADREITER (eds), *Interkulturelle Begegnungen in*

involves questions concerning the formation of Islam and the continuities from the pre-Islamic era. The prophet and the Quran can be understood from a late antique perspective, with Islam itself a later development. Papyrus texts in different languages mirror this historical interface, which is therefore best understood by a common effort of Arabic, Coptic, and Greek papyrology.⁶⁹ The Leiden Study Group project titled *The Formation of Islam: The View from Below* (2009–2014) approaches the subject in an interdisciplinary manner and from a trilingual Greek-Coptic-Arabic perspective, using documents in all three languages equally.⁷⁰ Another research project in progress, *Imperium and Officium: Comparative Studies in Ancient Bureaucracy and Officialdom* (2009–2015), is examining modes of imperial administration in Antiquity on the basis of documentary sources. One part of the project is specifically devoted to Arabic official letters on papyrus (642–969 AD).⁷¹

der Alten Welt. Vorderasien, Hellas, Ägypten und die vielfältigen Ebenen des Kontakts, Wiesbaden 2010, pp. 655–683; IDEM, 'Bewaffneter Raub und Kreuzigung im frühen Islam', [in:] R. ROLLINGER, M. LANG & H. BARTA (eds), *Strafe und Strafrecht in den antiken Welten, unter Berücksichtigung von Todesstrafe, Hinrichtung und peinlicher Befragung*, Wiesbaden 2012, pp. 249–259; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, s.v. 'Baqt'; 'Akhmim'; 'Barabra', [in:] G. KRÄMER, D. MATRINGE, J. NAWAS & E. ROWSON (eds), *Encyclopaedia of Islam THREE*, Brill Online, Leiden 2000–2014, F. R. TROMBLEY, 'Fiscal documents from the Muslim conquest of Egypt: Military supplies and administrative documents, ca. 639–644', *Revue des études byzantines* 71 (2013), pp. 5–38; IDEM, 'From Kastron to Qaṣr: Nessana between Byzantium and the Umayyad Caliphate ca. 602–689. Demographic and microeconomic aspects of Palaestina III in interregional perspective', [in:] E. B. AITKEN & J. M. FOSSEY (eds), *The Levant: Crossroads of Late Antiquity. History, Religion and Archaeology*, Leiden 2014, pp. 182–224; Kh. M. YOUNES, 'Textile trade between the Fayyūm and Fustāt in the 111rd/1Xth century according to the Banū 'Abd al-Mu'min Archive', [in:] REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 319–342. Soon to appear are two PhD Theses, by Marie LEGENDRE and Jelle BRUNING, about the formation an Islamic society in Egypt.

⁶⁹ Petra M. Sijpesteijn, 'Multilingual archives and documents in post-conquest Egypt', [in:] Arietta PAPAConstantinou (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, Burlington 2010, pp. 105–124; DELATTRE, LIEBRENTZ, RICHTER & VANTHIEGHEM, 'Écrire en arabe' (cit. n. 41), pp. 170–188.

⁷⁰ <<<http://hum.leiden.edu/lias/formation-of-islam>>>, funded by the *European Research Council* [accessed 15 March 2014].

⁷¹ <<<http://imperiumofficium.univie.ac.at>>>, funded by the *Austrian Science Fund* [accessed 15 March 2014].

The many multilingual papyri from the early Muslim period should help us understand how Egyptian society became Arabic and Islamic. A large number of the Coptic papyri from the Apa Apollo Monasterion (Dayr al-Balā'iza) have Arabic texts on their reverse sides, which indicates that the Coptic texts were products of secondary use. Though the Coptic texts were published by Paul Kahle many years ago (*P. Bal.*), an edition of the Arabic texts has not yet been undertaken but would be a valuable enterprise because these texts put the sources of the Coptic texts – the monks and their monastery – into the context of their Arabic environment.⁷² The publication of other bilingual Arabic-Coptic papyri has begun clarifying the relationship of the Copts to Islam.⁷³ The pragmatics of language use and multilingualism in official contexts have been studied on the basis of the trilingual archive of the pagarch Basilius of Aphrodito⁷⁴ and of texts written by Coptic scribes in 8th century Thebes.⁷⁵ The Sydney-based research project *Knowledge Transfer and Administrative Professionalism in a Pre-Typographic Society: Observing the Scribe at Work in Roman and Early Islamic Egypt* is investigating the idiosyncrasies of Greek, Coptic, and Arabic scribal practice as displayed in the documents. The aim of the project is to collect evidence of what the ethnic and social

⁷² Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN, 'Coptic and Arabic papyri from Deir al-Balā'izah', *PapCongr.* xxvi, pp. 707–714.

⁷³ BERKES & YOUNES, 'A trilingual scribe' (cit. n. 41), pp. 97–100; L. BERKES, 'Schreibübungen mit einem Psalm-Zitat: Neues aus der Verwaltung des Fayums im 8. Jh.', *ZPE* 188 (2014), pp. 241–244; DELATTRE, LIEBRENZ, RICHTER & VANTHIEGHEM, 'Écrire en arabe' (cit. n. 41), pp. 170–188; P. M. SIJPESTEIJN, 'A mid-eighth-century trilingual tax demand related to the Monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit', *P. Clackson* 45–46 (pp. 102–119).

⁷⁴ T. S. RICHTER, 'Language choice in the Qurra papyri', [in:] PAPAConstantinou (ed.), *Multilingual Experience in Egypt* (cit. n. 69), pp. 189–219.

⁷⁵ Jennifer CROMWELL, 'Palaeography, scribal practice, and chronological issues in Coptic Documentary texts', *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 46 (2010), pp. 1–16; EADEM, 'Variation and specificity in Christian invocation formulae from Thebes', *ZPE* 174 (2010), pp. 151–155; EADEM, 'The family of Germanos', [in:] M. AYAD (ed.) *Coptic Culture: Past, Present, and Future*, Stevanage 2012, pp. 131–142; EADEM, 'Following in father's footsteps: The question of father-son training in eighth century Thebes', *PapCongr.* xxvi, pp. 149–157; EADEM, 'Managing a year's taxes: tax demands and tax payments in 724 CE', *APF* 60 (2014), pp. 229–239.

backgrounds of scribes were in hopes of understanding the larger social processes in the Roman and early Islamic periods.⁷⁶ The regular conferences of the *International Society for Arabic Papyrology* bring together scholars from all Greek, Coptic and Arabic papyrology.⁷⁷

Also, both genre related aspects of epistolography and diplomatics, such as the formulary and the specific language of documents, and the practical aspects of documentary cultures have recently attracted particular scholarly attention.⁷⁸ The Paris-based *Islamic Law Materialized*

⁷⁶ Funded by the Australian Research Council (ARC); cf. <<http://scribalpractice.com>> [accessed 17 March 2014].

⁷⁷ The proceedings of the 4th conference held in 2009 in Vienna have eight contributions, four of which are about Coptic texts (Hans FÖRSTER; Florence CALAMENT & Anne BOUD'HORS; Alain DELATTRE; Jacques VAN DER VLIET) and four of which concern Arabic texts (Werner DIEM; Ayman SHAHIN; Wadad AL-QADI; Johannes THOMANN). All of them deal mainly with Egypt up to the 9th century AD. Cf. A. KAPLONY & D. POTTHAST (eds), *From Naqlun to Marw: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World. Proceedings of the 4th Conference of the International Society for Arabic Papyrology, Vienna, March 26–29, 2009* [= *Islamic History and Civilization*], Leiden 2014.

⁷⁸ F. BAUDEN, 'Lam baqa yu' ariḍkum.' Analyse linguistique de trois lettres rédigées par un marchand au Caire en 819/1416–820/1417, DEN HEIJER, LA SPISA & TUERLINCKX (eds), *Études Grand'Henry* (cit. n. 40), pp. 1–37; P. BURESI, 'Les plaintes de l'archevêque: chronique des premiers échanges épistolaires entre Pise et le gouverneur almohade de Tunis 1182', [in:] MARTÍNEZ DE CASTILLA (ed.), *Documentos y manuscritos árabes* (cit. n. 51), pp. 87–120; E. M. GROB, 'Information packaging in Arabic private and business letters (8th to 13th c. CE): Templates, slots and a cascade of reduction and rearrangement', *PapCongr.* xxv, pp. 277–290; IDEM, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context*, Berlin – New York 2010; IDEM, 'A catalogue of dating criteria for undated arabic papyri with "cursive" features', [in:] REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 123–143; C. MÜLLER, 'Écrire pour établir la preuve orale en Islam: la pratique d'un tribunal à Jérusalem au XIV^e siècle', [in:] A. SAITO & Y. NAKAMURA (eds), *Les outils de la pensée: étude historique et comparative des 'textes'*, Paris 2010, pp. 63–97; A. REGOURD, 'Qu'est-ce qu'un document?', [in:] IDEM (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 9–20; REINFANDT, 'Arabisches Briefwesen' (cit. n. 12), pp. 116–178; K. SCHAEFER, 'Medieval Arabic block printing: state of the field', [in:] G. ROPER (ed.), *Historical Aspects of Printing and Publishing in Languages of the Middle East*, Leiden 2013, pp. 1–16; IDEM, 'Medieval Arabic block printing and Arabic historiography', [in:] REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 269–285; P. M. SIJPESTEIJN, 'Seals and papyri from early Islamic Egypt', [in:] I. REGULSKI, K. DUISTERMAAT & P. VERKINDEREN (eds), *Seals and Sealing Practices in the Near East: Developments in Administration and Magic from Prehistory to the Islamic Period*, Leuven et al. 2012, pp. 163–174; R. VESELÝ, 'Die richterlichen Beglaubigungsmittel. Ein Bei-

project (2009–2013) studied the structure and phraseology of a broad corpus of published and unpublished Arabic legal documents on papyrus and paper from all parts of the pre-modern Islamic World, while in the IFAO a database has been created of the fiscal terminology in Greek, Coptic and Arabic documents. General features and regional variations of documents as well as mutual borrowings and influences were analysed, through which for the first time a glimpse was gained into how Islamic law was applied in practice.⁷⁹ The dynamics of archiving processes came into the focus through questions of how and why documents were stored in pre-modern Islamic societies (and thus were preserved for posterity); while, in comparison to Medieval Europe, there are less documents preserved from the Middle East from before 1500 AD, there is reliable evidence that archives existed at least from Umayyad times and probably earlier.⁸⁰ But

trag zur Diplomatie arabischer Gerichtsurkunden: 3. “Imdā’”, [in:] MARZOLPH (ed.) *Festgabe Diem* (cit. n. 39), pp. 251–261.

⁷⁹ Funded by the European Research Council (ERC); cf. <<<http://www.ilm-project.net>>> [accessed 17 March 2014]. For the situation until 2009, cf. SIJPESTEIJN, ‘Arabic papyrology’ (cit. n. 2), pp. 460–461.

⁸⁰ S. BUCKING, ‘Recovery and loss: Archaeological perspectives on papyri from Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine Egypt’, *Public Archaeology* 5 (2006), pp. 151–166; M. L. M. VAN BERKEL, s.v. ‘Archives and chanceries: Pre-1500, in Arabic,’ [in:] *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE* (cit. n. 68), <<http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/archives-and-chanceries-pre-1500-in-arabic-COM_24390>> [accessed 27 March 2014]; IDEM, ‘Reconstructing archival practices in Abbasid Baghdad’, *Journal of Abbasid Studies* 1 (2014), pp. 7–22; A. MEIER, s.v. ‘Archives and chanceries: Arab World’, *ibidem*, <<http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/archives-and-chanceries-arab-world-COM_23848>> [accessed 27 March 2014]; F. BAUDEN, ‘Du destin des archives en Islam. Analyse des données et éléments de réponse’, [in:] D. AIGLE & S. PÉQUIGNOT, *La Correspondance entre souverains, princes et cités-états. Approches croisées entre l’Orient musulman, l’Occident et Byzance (XIII^e–début XVI^e siècle)*, Turnhout 2013, pp. 27–49; T. EL-LEITHY, ‘Living documents, dying archives: Towards a historical anthropology of medieval Arabic archives’, *Al-Qanṭara* 32 (2011), pp. 389–434; C. MÜLLER, ‘The Ḥaram al-Sharīf collection of Arabic legal documents in Jerusalem: A Mamlūk court archive?’, *ibidem*, pp. 435–459; REGOURD, ‘Qu’est-ce qu’un document?’ (cit. n. 78), pp. 9–20; E. SHEIKH AL-HOKAMAE, ‘La vision religieuse des Safavides, la conservation des archives pré-safavides et l’altération des documents’, [in:] REGOURD (ed.), *Documents et histoire* (cit. n. 43), pp. 145–162; T. VORDERSTRASSE, ‘Reconstructing houses and archives in Islamic Egypt’, *ibidem*, pp. 287–318; Amalia ZOMEÑO, ‘From private collections to archives: How Christians kept Arabic legal documents in Granada’, *Al-Qanṭara* 32 (2011), pp. 461–479.

what is still needed is a reliable handbook on diplomatics based on documents on both papyri and papers.⁸¹

A field that has been neglected in recent years by Arabic papyrologists, despite the extraordinary potential the papyri have in this area, is linguistics. Perhaps the authoritative 1984 grammar of Arabic by Simon Hopkins based on the texts of the papyri has intimidated the community, or at least created the illusion that no further work in this area can be done. But that is a misconception, because important texts relevant to the study of grammar have been published since 1984. Moreover, notwithstanding the many modifications to the texts proposed by the grammar itself, during the past few years corrections and updated readings of many of the texts that formed the basis of the grammar have been published.⁸² The preparation of a dictionary of Arabic based on the documentary texts is now underway as a by-product of the *Arabic Papyrology Database*. It is generally expected that the electronic infrastructures of the several papyrological disciplines, especially when linked, will help encourage more linguistic analyses of the texts of the Arabic papyri.

In the meantime, the first steps have been made in the reconstruction of the history and development of pre-Islamic Arabic on the basis of documentary sources in Greek and Semitic languages other than Arabic. Arabic textual evidence of the pre-Islamic era is very scarce: nothing has survived even of the once abundant writings in Arabic in Nabataean script on papyri and parchment.⁸³ The Greek papyri found in Petra, fortunately written in a vocalised script, attest to a living spoken Arabic in the 6th

⁸¹ GROHMANN, *Einführung und Chrestomathie* (cit. n. 5), p. 107. The idea of a joint project was announced, however, by Frédéric BAUDEN at the international conference *Mamluk Cairo. A Crossroad for Embassies* held in Liège, 6–8 September 2012. Cf. <<http://www.islam.ucl.ac.be/f3.htm>> [accessed 5 March 2014].

⁸² S. HOPKINS, *Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic, Based Upon Papyri Datable to Before 300 AH/912 AD*, Oxford 1984. For the state of research until 2009, cf. STJPESTEIJN, 'Arabic papyrology' (cit. n. 2), pp. 459–460.

⁸³ R. HOYLAND, 'Mount Nebo, Jabal Ramm, and the status of Christian Palestinian Aramaic and Old Arabic in Late Roman Palestine and Arabia', [in:] M. C. A. MACDONALD, *The Development of Arabic as a Written Language: Papers from the Special Session of the Seminar for Arabian Studies Held on July 24, 2009* [= *Supplement to the Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* 40], Oxford 2010, pp. 29–46, at p. 35.

century AD; and parallel Semitic languages give additional information about this otherwise badly documented (with the exception of inscriptions) stage of the Arabic language.⁸⁴ Even more relevant for Arabic papyrology perhaps, and in a wider sense for papyrology as a whole, is research on historical Arabic and its social implications just before the emergence of Islam in the 6th and 7th centuries AD. The names of persons and places in the Greek dossiers from pre-Islamic Nessana and from the early Islamic archives of Senouthios in Hermopolis, Atias in Edfu, and Basileios in Aphrodito illustrate historical pronunciation and orthography.⁸⁵ The so-called Middle Arabic is abundantly represented by the Judaeo-Arabic documents of the Cairo Geniza, which offer a key to the living use of Arabic in a historical context because the documents are written in Hebrew characters which tend to preserve peculiarities of the pronunciation of Arabic that are not recorded by the proper Arabic script.⁸⁶

The Quran is quoted in Arabic papyri, papers and parchments. Not only have entire chapters been preserved on single leaves and codices of presumably early date, but also single verses are found in large numbers in Arabic documentary texts from the earliest times on.⁸⁷ The latter are

⁸⁴ A. M. AL-JALLAD, O. AL-GHUL & R. W. DANIEL, 'The Arabic toponyms and oikonyms in *P. Petra* 17', *P. Petra* 11, pp. 23–49; A. M. AL-JALLAD, *Ancient Levantine Arabic: A Reconstruction based on the Earliest Sources and the Modern Dialects* (forthcoming).

⁸⁵ A. Kaplony is currently preparing a study on the Greek orthography and the pronunciation of sixth and seventh century Arabic on the basis of Greek documentary evidence such as *P. Ness.*, *CPR* xxx, *P. Apoll.*, and *P. Lond.* iv as well as Middle Arabic texts; cf. <<http://www.naher-osten.uni-muenchen.de/personen/professoren/andreas_kaplony/kaplony_forschung/index.html>> [accessed 17 March 2014].

⁸⁶ J. BLAU, *A Handbook of Early Middle Arabic*, Jerusalem 2002; Esther-Miriam WAGNER, *Linguistic Variety of Judaeo-Arabic in Letters from the Cairo Geniza*, Leiden 2010.

⁸⁷ N. ABBOTT, *The Rise of the North Arabic Script and its Qur'anic Development, with a Full Description of the Qur'an Manuscripts in the Oriental Institute* [= *The University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications* 1]. Chicago 1939; F. DÉROCHE, *Manuel de codicologie des manuscrits en écriture arabe*, Paris 2000; G. LEVI DELLA VIDA, *Frammenti coranici in carattere cufico nella Biblioteca Vaticana (Codici Vaticani Arabi 1605 e 1606)* [= *Studi e Testi* 132], Città del Vaticano 1947; Helene LOEBENSTEIN, *Koranfragmente auf Pergament aus der Papyrussammlung der Oesterreichischen Nationalbibliothek* [= *Mitteilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der Oesterreichischen Nationalbibliothek* N.S. 14], Wien 1982; Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN, 'Ein Buch und sein Wiederhall. Zum Gebrauch des Korans im 7.–10. Jahrhundert in Ägypten', [in:] A. LANGE

valuable because they illustrate how the Quranic text was used in everyday matters and in documentary formulary and scribal practice during the first centuries of Islam. They also inform us about historical variations (and conformities) in the wording and orthography of the verses, which may have been either variants or personal preferences. The presently-recognised canonical text of the Quran is devoid of a transparent philological basis due to the lack of a critical edition based on the earliest textual witnesses. Arabic papyrus texts thus are an important source for the reconstruction, or confirmation, of the Quranic Urtext. The *Corpus Coranicum* project at the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, which is exploring the history of the Quranic text, is currently working with Arabic papyrologists to study Quranic citations in papyrus legal deeds and letters as well as on amulets, and doing radiocarbon-dating of Arabic papyri and parchments on a rational basis of samples.⁸⁸ But also literature is gaining more attention, after having been neglected during the past decades despite the large numbers of Arabic papyri that contain texts of a non-documentary, literary nature.⁸⁹ In the Muslim world itself the literary more than the documentary texts are of most interest. Increased attention for literary Arabic papyri would open papyrology to scholars from Arab countries who have a much better command of literary motifs and intertextual quotations than do their Western colleagues.

♣ B. PALME (eds), *Kinder Abrahams. Die Bibel in Judentum, Christentum und Islam* [= *Nilus* 21], Wien 2014, pp. 47–59; 119–123.

⁸⁸ The participating scholars are Ursula Bsees, Eva Mira Youssef-Grob, Andreas Kaplony, Daniel Potthast, and Leonora Sonogo. For the *Corpus Coranicum* project, cf. O. LEAMAN, 'The Corpus Coranicum project and the issue of novelty,' *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 15 (2013), pp. 142–148 and <<http://koran.bbaw.de>> [accessed 17 March 2014].

⁸⁹ An earlier interest in Arabic literary papyri was largely limited to Nabia ABBOTT, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, 3 vols. [= *The University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications* 75–77], Chicago 1957–1972; G. LEVI DELLA VIDA, *Arabic Papyri in the University Museum in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)*, Rome 1981 [= *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei* 378. *Memorie Cl. di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filologiche Serie VIII* 25, 1]; R. G. KHOURY, *Wabb b. Munabbih Antiqui* 1], Wiesbaden 1972; IDEM, *Abd Allāh Ibn Labī'a (97–174/ 715–790): juge et grand maître de l'école égyptienne. Avec édition critique de l'unique rouleau de papyrus arabe conservé à Heidelberg* [= *Codices Arabici Antiqui* 4], Wiesbaden 1986. Among Arabic papyrologists, Ursula BSEES and Matt MALCZYCKI in particular are concentrating upon literary papyri. For the situation until 2009, cf. SIJPESTEIJN, 'Arabic papyrology' (cit. n. 2), pp. 456–457.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Arabic papyrology has ambiguous boundaries regarding the kinds of documents and their material, provenance, and time of production with which it deals. This is part of the discipline's internal dynamics in a diachronic, or vertical timeline. On the other hand, the discipline should be careful not to become lost in an arbitrariness that may appear productive *prima facie* but ultimately leads to isolation from neighbouring papyrologies. Not every text should be a 'document', and not every writ should be a 'papyrus'. Quite the contrary, the common denominator of all papyrologies is the archaeological provenance of texts. Arabic papyrology must be alert to the interdisciplinary potential of a horizontal, or synchronic, approach that encourages thematic overlap with other papyrological disciplines. Scholarly output in Arabic papyrology in recent years has indeed followed this trend and has mainly concentrated upon the papyrological core-area of Egypt and Syria during the first centuries of Islam. Arabic papyrology should keep in mind that the more remote a documentary group or thematic subject is from papyrological core-areas, the higher is the risk of the field's isolation (this applies to all papyrologies). This should not preclude work along the thematic fringes but heighten the sense of responsibility towards the discipline.

During the 26th International Congress at Geneva in 2010, criticism was raised against the type of papyrology that militantly maintains disciplinary independence and that regards its *raison d'être* as the production of new editions.⁹⁰ The situation in Arabic papyrology is different, though, because an exceptionally large number of documents are waiting to be discovered in the collections, and the number of published editions is far below that of other papyrological disciplines. Also, self-identity is something that has to be achieved, and it should be a long-term goal of Arabic papyrology to emancipate itself from specialised safe areas on papyro-

⁹⁰ MAEHLER, 'Die Zukunft der griechischen Papyrologie', (cit. n. 30), p. 451; against VAN MINNEN, 'The future of papyrology' (cit. n. 21).

logical congresses and ally itself with the theme-oriented papyrologists of other languages. But the general caveat against a the-more-the-better approach holds true for Arabic papyrology as well, and it is a debatable point whether the effort of text editions is justified in face of the little role they may currently play in Arabic and Islamic Studies. On the other hand, text editions are central for any research on early Islam, social history, and book culture, and it is to be hoped that this will be appropriately recognised in the future.

So what is to be done? I see two medium-term solutions. The first is to bolster interdisciplinary research in the papyrological core-area, early Islam, on the synchronic time line. The second is an increased readiness to participate in methodological discourses about what is a document and what is a text, in order to make Arabic papyrology attractive to Arabic and Islamic Studies as well as to neighbouring disciplines from cultural and literary studies along the diachronic timeline. However, the edition of new texts should remain the discipline's main priority. This is necessary due to the small number of Arabic papyri thus far published and is the best way for Arabic papyrology to firmly establish itself as a member in good standing of the papyrological family. New editions have even enjoyed a certain renaissance of recognition in Western Arabic and Islamic Studies during the past years, once more becoming fashionable. And for contemporary Middle Easterners Arabic papyri have the additional value of being part of the home culture. In this respect, text editions have the potential of reducing political distance.

Lucian Reinfandt

Institut für Orientalistik
Universität Wien
Spitalgasse 2/4
A-1090 Wien
AUSTRIA

e-mail: lucian.reinfandt@univie.ac.at