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**COPTIC DOCUMENTARY PAPYRI
AFTER THE ARAB CONQUEST**

ANY STUDENT OF COPTIC PAPYRI from the centuries following the Arab conquest is fated – sooner or later – to confront the great historical processes that changed the face of Egypt in this period. Beyond the minutiae of the papyrological evidence, he or she will be obliged to join the debate about the major issues raised by the epochal developments that tore the country away from the late-antique Hellenistic world. This historical awareness is duly reflected in a growing number of excellent publications by mostly young scholars about the Egyptian – Greek, Arabic and, of course, Coptic – documentary material from the post-conquest period.

Within the framework of the present report, it is impossible and perhaps even undesirable to review individual contributions in any detail.¹ Instead, I intend to focus, first, on the main scholarly trends and

¹ The bibliographical references offered in the footnotes are selective and by no means meant to be exhaustive. For fuller bibliographies, the reader is referred to the reports on Coptic documentary papyrology appearing in the proceedings of the four-yearly congresses organized by the International Association for Coptic Studies. The publication of the reports prepared for the congresses in Cairo (2008, by T. S. RICHTER) and Rome (2012, by A. DELATTRE) is forthcoming in the proceedings of the Rome congress, edited by A. CAMPLANI and Paola BUZI.

developments in the last decade. Then, I will critically address some of the traditional assumptions that still today weigh on the study of post-conquest Coptic. Thirdly and fourthly, I will try to characterize in a few words the two main periods that can be distinguished in the use of post-conquest documentary Coptic, spanning roughly the seventh to mid-ninth centuries and the mid-ninth to eleventh centuries, and reflect a bit on the historical problems posed by each of these two periods. In the end, I will briefly illustrate the situation of final Coptic by referring to the textual finds from the important monastic site of Naqlun (Nekloni) in the Fayyum.

MAJOR TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS

Perhaps the most influential single incentive for the study of Coptic papyri from early Islamic Egypt in the last decade did not come from within Coptology, but from the domain of Arabic papyrology. During a conference in Cairo in March 2002, the International Society of Arabic Papyrology (ISAP) was launched, an initiative of Petra Sijpesteijn and Lennart Sundelin. Right from the outset, the newly founded Society actively sought to engage Greek and Coptic papyrology in a multidisciplinary approach. As a multidisciplinary setup is indeed the only sensitive approach to the world of early-medieval Egypt, it was immediately highly successful. The biannual ISAP conferences are characterized by an important Coptological input.² When Petra Sijpesteijn subsequently became ordinary professor of Arabic in Leiden, her inaugural address, pronounced in April 2009, which naturally dealt primarily with Arabic, surprisingly ended in a passionate plea for the study of Coptic!³ The various

² Proceedings have so far been published of the meetings in Cairo (2002) and Granada (2004): Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN & L. SUNDELIN (eds.), *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt*, Leiden – Boston 2004; Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN et al. (eds.), *From al-Andalus to Kbu-rasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World* [= *Islamic History and Civilization* 66], Leiden – Boston 2007.

³ Regrettably missing from the printed version, Petra M. SIJPESTEIJN, *Why Arabic?/ Hoezo Arabisch?* [= *LUCIS Series 'Debates on Islam and Society'*], Leiden 2012.

research projects initiated by her, and which are now coming to fruition, bear the same multidisciplinary stamp.⁴

Simultaneously, the study of the Coptic language as a cultural value and its role within late-antique and early-medieval Egyptian society received important new impulses. Chris Reintges' challenging view of Coptic as a 'bilingual language variety', a literary idiom basically shaped after a Greek model, proved a far cry from the traditional image of Coptic as a simple survival of the spoken vernacular adapted to the need of native peasants, unable to read the Bible in Greek.⁵ The challenge was taken up, in particular, by Tonio Sebastian Richter and Ewa Zakrzewska, from different points of view and with different results, though both combining sociological and linguistic approaches.⁶ The debate on the cultural and sociolinguistic status of Coptic naturally also touched upon its final stages, which interest us here. As a result, the later phases of Coptic literacy received attention in a series of edited volumes, some of them bearing telling titles such as *From Hellenism to Islam* (2009) or *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt* (2010).⁷

⁴ Thus e.g. Marie LEGENDRE, *Pouvoir et territoire: l'administration islamique en Moyenne-Égypte pré-tulūnide (642–868)*, PhD diss. Leiden University 2013.

⁵ See Chr. REINTGES, 'Code-mixing strategies in Coptic Egyptian', *Lingua Aegyptia* 9 (2001), pp. 193–237; IDEM, 'Coptic Egyptian as a bilingual language variety', [in:] P. BÁDENAS DE LA PEÑA *et al.* (eds.), *Lenguas en contacto: el testimonio escrito [= Manuales y Anejos de 'Emerita'* 46], Madrid 2004, pp. 69–86.

⁶ T. S. RICHTER, 'Greek, Coptic and the 'language of the Hijra': the rise and decline of the Coptic language in late antique and medieval Egypt', [in:] Hannah M. COTTON *et al.* (eds.), *From Hellenism to Islam: Cultural and Linguistic Change in the Roman Near East*, Cambridge 2009, pp. 401–446; Ewa D. ZAKRZEWSKA, 'Why did Egyptians write Coptic? The rise of Coptic as a literary language', [in:] Ahmed MANSOUR (ed.), *Copts and Society: Documentary-Historical Studies [= Studies in Calligraphy and Writings* 15], Alexandria 2013, pp. 227–236; EADEM, "'A bilingual language variety" or the "language of the pharaohs"? Coptic from the perspective of contact linguistics', [in:] E. GROSSMAN & T. S. RICHTER (eds.), *Linguistic Borrowing into Coptic. Proceedings of the Conference Leipzig 2010*, Leipzig (forthcoming).

⁷ COTTON *et al.* (eds.), *From Hellenism to Islam* (cit. n. 6); Arietta PAPACONSTANTINOU (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt, from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, Farnham – Burlington 2010; see in addition: A. MULLEN & P. JAMES (eds.), *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds*, Cambridge 2012; GROSSMAN & RICHTER (eds.), *Linguistic Borrowing into Coptic* (cit. n. 6).

Finally, but perhaps most importantly, Coptic papyrology itself had its due share in the general revival of Coptic studies following the 1970s. For the period that concerns us here, the name of the late Sarah Clackson must be mentioned with honor. Apart from editing a whole range of seventh- and eighth-century documents from the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit, she did a lot to advance Coptic documentary papyrology as a discipline in its own right.⁸ After Sarah's death the interest for Bawit found an echo in the work of, among others, Alain Delattre, who also created the indispensable Brussels Database of Coptic documentary papyri.⁹ Although Anne Boud'hors is certainly not a *mere* papyrologist, her role in later Coptic papyrology, as a tutor and a guide, was and still is highly influential. To her and her students we now owe an ever richer picture of monastic life in Western Thebes, with in the centre the prolific eighth-century monk and scribe Frange.¹⁰

Long neglected, for reasons that will become obvious towards the end of this paper, the very last phase of the Coptic documentary tradition, in the tenth-eleventh centuries, also began to attract renewed attention. From the turn of the century onwards, Sebastian Richter started to work simultaneously on Late Coptic legal documents and on Copto-Arabic language contact, and he has undoubtedly become the leading expert in this domain.¹¹

⁸ See, in particular, Sarah J. CLACKSON, *Coptic and Greek Texts relating to the Hermopolite Monastery of Apa Apollo*, Oxford 2000, and EADEM, *It is our Father who Writes: Orders from the Monastery of Apollo at Bawit* [= *American Studies in Papyrology* 43], Cincinatti 2008. For a bibliography of Sarah Clackson, see Anne BOUD'HORS *et al.* (eds.), *Monastic Estates in Late Antique and Early Islamic Egypt: Ostraca, Papyri, and Essays in Memory of Sarah Clackson (P. Clackson)* [= *American Studies in Papyrology* 46], Cincinatti 2009, pp. xv–xvii.

⁹ A. DELATTRE, *Papyrus grecs et coptes du monastère d'apa Apollô de Baouît conservés aux Musées royaux d'Art et d'Histoire de Bruxelles*, Brussels 2007; the Brussels database: <http://dev.ulb.ac.be/bad/copte>.

¹⁰ Major publication: Anne BOUD'HORS & Chantal HEURTEL, *Les ostraca coptes de la TT 29. Autour du moine Frangé* [= *Études d'archéologie thébaine* 3], 2 vols., Brussels 2010.

¹¹ See, by way of example, T. S. RICHTER, *Rechtssemantik und forensische Rhetorik. Untersuchungen zu Wortschatz, Stil und Grammatik der Sprache koptischer Rechtsurkunden* [= *Kanobos* 3], Leipzig 2002 (2nd ed., Wiesbaden 2008), pp. 155–165; IDEM, 'Coptic', [in:] K. VERSTEEGH (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, vol. 1, Leiden – Boston 2006, pp. 495–501.

All these fairly recent and extremely hopeful developments, still leave room – in my opinion – for some critical reflections on a more conceptual level. Some of these have been proposed much earlier, for instance by Sarah Clackson in her seminal paper for the 2002 ISAP-conference in Cairo, over ten years ago.¹² I will return to some of the points raised by her in the next part of my paper.

HISTORICAL ISSUES AND HISTORICAL PITFALLS

The processes that are set in motion by the Islamic conquest of Egypt in the years between 639 and 652 are diverse, complex and very often difficult to grasp. Still today, however, much of our understanding of these developments – and in particular of the societal role of Coptic and its users – derives from handbook knowledge that rests upon a standard set of uncritical, partly anachronistic assumptions. Many of these handbook assumptions haunt even today the discussion of Coptic within late-antique and early-medieval Egypt. In order to clarify my argument, I take the liberty to adopt a somewhat polemical stance. In doing so, I fully realize that some of the views that I find fault with here will seem obsolete to most readers, but as they are part of a very cogent and long-lived set of conceptions (or rather misconceptions), I feel free to exaggerate a bit. Obviously, no persons are targeted, only ideas.

Twentieth-century authors, such as Jean Maspero, popularized a binary model of late-antique Egyptian society that consistently pitched ‘Copts’ against ‘Greeks’ according to dividing lines of ethnicity (native–alien), language (vernacular–foreign), social class (exploited–exploiters) and religious appurtenance (monophysite–melkite).¹³ Apart from having a

¹² Sarah J. CLACKSON, ‘Papyrology and the utilization of Coptic sources’, [in:] STJPE-STEIJN & SUNDELIN (eds.), *Papyrology* (cit. n. 2), pp. 21–44.

¹³ This is not to discredit Jean Maspero, who was a child of his time, but also a singularly gifted scholar. His posthumously published *Histoire des patriarches d’Alexandrie depuis la mort de l’empereur Anastase jusqu’à la réconciliation des églises jacobites (518–616)* [= *Bibliothèque*

certain consistency that strongly appealed to the nineteenth–twentieth century European mind, steeped in the great -isms of the period (nationalism, socialism, colonialism), this model found sympathetic echoes among the modern Copts.¹⁴ It seemed, moreover, to be confirmed by indigenous sources, in Coptic, such as the works of Shenoute, or in Arabic, such as the *History of the Patriarchs*. In particular the latter source was instrumental in creating a picture of the seventh century in which the Arab conquest meant liberty for the oppressed masses of the Copts, delivering them from the much resented occupation by a foreign power, the Greek Empire, an occupation that stood for economical exploitation and religious persecution.

Summarized in this way, most readers will readily acknowledge how much this model has grown obsolete during the last twenty or so years, thanks to the critical efforts of a whole series of scholars.¹⁵ Yet, at the same time, this model with all its hidden implications proves to be very influential till the present day. Rather than a mere scholarly model it has proven to be an extremely cogent mind-set that tends to shape our way of thinking unnoticingly. For my present purpose, it suffices to indicate briefly some of the ways in which this model is still operative in the study of post-conquest Egypt.

Already in 2002, Sarah Clackson convincingly argued against the anachronistic use of the terms Copts and Coptic. In particular, she proposed to retain the word Coptic for the language only.¹⁶ Still today, however, scholars writing about late-antique, early-medieval Egypt loosely

de l'École des hautes-études 237], Paris 1923, remains a standard reference in the field, in spite of the methodological flaws signalled here.

¹⁴ For its reception in modern Coptic identity discourse, see J. VAN DER VLIET, 'The Copts: "modern sons of the Pharaohs"?', *Church History and Religious Culture* 89 (2009), pp. 279–290.

¹⁵ Here, by way of example, the seminal contributions by Ewa WIPSYCKA, 'Le nationalisme a-t-il existé dans l'Égypte byzantine?', *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 22 (1992), pp. 83–128 (reprinted in EADEM, *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'antiquité tardive* [= *Studia Epemeridis 'Augustinianum'* 52], Rome 1996, pp. 9–61), and R. S. BAGNALL, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, Princeton 1993, deserve to be mentioned.

¹⁶ CLACKSON, 'Papyrology' (cit. n. 12), pp. 21–23, 39–41.

talk about ‘the Copts’, ‘the Coptic Church’, ‘Coptic Egypt’, and even ‘the Coptic period’. To put it strongly, in the seventh century there were *no* Copts. There were Egyptians, long Christianized, who used two distinct written codes, Greek and Coptic. These same Egyptians were deeply divided ecclesiastically. The official ‘Chalcedonian’ church had to compete with a strong ‘anti-Chalcedonian’ opposition, that was itself much divided, however. In addition to the Severan miaphysites, who had become organized in a separate church under the energetic patriarch Damian (578–607), in the last quarter of the sixth century, also the Gaianites and the Barsanuphians, for instance, had a hierarchy of their own.¹⁷

This brings me to a next point. Still today there is a notable tendency to link these confessional oppositions, which seem so overall important now, to language preferences. In other words, the allegedly majoritarian anti-Chalcedonians would have a preference for Coptic, the Chalcedonians for Greek. Yet there is to date no proof whatever from contemporaneous sources to support such an assumption. I seriously doubt that the emblematic patriarch Benjamin (626–665), the head of the Severan church at the time of the Arab conquest, ever in his life wrote a single word of Coptic. On the contrary, there is clear evidence that the official language of that same church remained Greek till well in the eighth century and probably even far later.¹⁸ And this holds *a fortiori* for its liturgical language.¹⁹ Our conception of the religious situation in and around the

¹⁷ Briefly on the church-historical background: Ewa WIPSZYCKA, ‘The institutional church’, [in:] R. S. BAGNALL (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, Cambridge 2007, pp. 331–349; J. VAN DER VLIET, ‘Pesynthios of Coptos/Qift (ca. 568–632) and the rise of the Egyptian miaphysite Church’, *Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies* 3–4 (2012), pp. 27–42.

¹⁸ Of which the surviving Festal Letters of the post-conquest period are the prime papyrological evidence; see for a fascinating recent contribution in the field, Ursula HAGEDORN & D. HAGEDORN, ‘Monothetisch interpretierte Väterzitate und eine Anleihe bei Johannes Chrysostomus in dem Kölner Osterfestbrief (P. Köln V 215)’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 178 (2011), pp. 143–157.

¹⁹ For the late – and never wholly completed – ‘Coptization’ of the Egyptian liturgy, see Anne BOUD’HORS, ‘Toujours honneur au grec? À propos d’un papyrus gréco-copte de la région thébaine’, [in:] PAPACONSTANTINOU (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience* (cit. n. 7), pp.

seventh century is strongly shaped by one single source, the Arabic *History of the Patriarchs*. Yet this source dates in its present form from the eleventh century and offers, for the episode of the Arab conquest, a classic case of ‘rewritten history’.²⁰

A tacit assumption underlying all this, is that the difference between the two written codes of Egypt in late antiquity, Greek and Coptic, can be conceived in terms of social, cultural or religious oppositions. As we still are inclined to think in terms of nation states whose very existence is linked to language as a primary identity marker, we find it difficult *not* to see variation in language use as the expression of conflicting identities. It is essential to realize, however, that the wealth of sociolinguistic studies devoted to the subject during the last twenty years or so has resulted in an entirely different understanding of multilingualism, underlining the importance of functional domains and societal roles. Yet, still today, Coptic is frequently pitched against Greek even by well-informed authors.²¹

Taking a somewhat different point of view, I am inclined to see Greek and Coptic within the cultural constellation of late-antique Egypt as Siamese twins rather than as markers of conflicting religious or national

179–188, and my remarks below. Greek remained the first liturgical language of (miaphysite) Nubia until the end of the Middle Ages.

²⁰ For the complicated redactional history of the Arabic *History of the Patriarchs*, see J. DEN HEIJER, *Mawhūb ibn Mansūr ibn Mufarrīg et l’historiographie copto-arabe. Étude sur la composition de l’Histoire des Patriarches d’Alexandrie* [= *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium* 513, *Subsidia* 83], Leuven 1989; for critical revisions of the traditional historiographic representation of the Arab conquest, see Arietta PAPAConstantinou, ‘Historiography, hagiography, and the making of the Coptic “Church of the Martyrs” in early Islamic Egypt’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 60 (2006), pp. 65–86, in part. 67–73; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, ‘The Arab conquest of Egypt and the beginning of Muslim rule’, [in:] Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World* (cit. n. 17), pp. 437–459; J. van der Vliet, ‘*Christus imperat*: an ignored Coptic dating formula’, [in:] Youhanna Nessim Youssef & Samuel Moawad (eds.), *From Old Cairo to the New World: Coptic Studies Presented to Gawdat Gabra on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday* [= *Colloquia Antiqua* 9], Leuven – Paris – Walpole, MA 2013, pp. 173–184.

²¹ Thus, e.g., in an otherwise important article, PAPAConstantinou, ‘Historiography, hagiography, and the making of the Coptic “Church of the Martyrs”’ (cit. n. 20), pp. 81–84.

identities. As soon as the shared culture of late-antique Egypt started to lose its hold, under the Abbasids, from the year 750 onwards, both halves of the twin couple started to wither and decline. A fine paper by Jennifer Cromwell, published in the 2010 volume on *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt*, nicely illustrates my point.²² One and the same eighth-century Theban scribe, Aristophanes, used two different scribal hands for writing Coptic and for writing Greek, often in a single document. So he was apparently aware of the distinction between both languages and carefully marked this in his written output. Yet it would be as ridiculous to split up Aristophanes into two conflicting personalities as it is dangerous to split up a Siamese twin.

Another corollary of the set of assumptions that underlies the traditional mind-set inherited from our handbooks is the obsessive fixation on *spoken* language that mars a whole series of recent publications. This obsession is somehow linked to the strongly prejudiced view of Coptic as a peasant's vernacular or a lower class jargon, and to a tendency to describe the distribution of Coptic *versus* Greek in terms of linguistic skills or – rather – the lack thereof. To put it clearly, any discussion of Greek and Coptic in the context of late-antique, early-medieval Egypt is a discussion about *written* codes. Written codes can serve a broad variety of purposes (such as social inclusion or social exclusion, showing status, learning or wealth, etc.), but they do not as a rule render spoken language.²³ As has been often observed, literary Coptic is to a large degree a constructed language.²⁴ The kind of Sahidic Coptic that is taught in our universities has quite likely never been spoken by anybody. Furthermore, written codes,

²² Jennifer CROMWELL, 'Aristophanes son of Johannes: an eighth century bilingual scribe? A study of graphic bilingualism', [in:] PAPAConstantinou (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience* (cit. n. 7), pp. 220–232.

²³ Cf. S. T. Richter, "'Spoken" Sahidic. Gleanings from non-literary texts', *Lingua Aegyptia* 14 (2006), pp. 311–323, at 311–312.

²⁴ Thus already, for instance, A. GARDINER, *Egypt of the Pharaohs: An Introduction*, Oxford 1961, p. 22; BAGNALL, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (cit. n. 15), pp. 238–240. In conformity with contemporaneous practice, it is better to use the term 'Egyptian', in distinction from written 'Coptic', to designate the spoken vernaculars, about which we know very little, however.

acquired through toilsome training, logically represent social capital, not a social handicap: Coptic is no less an elite language than Greek.²⁵

COPTIC IN ITS HEYDAY

There is actually no period in the history of the Coptic language that illustrates my last point better than the two centuries that immediately follow the Arab conquest. It is the period in which Coptic, that is Sahidic Coptic, came to be broadly used as a language for a full range of legal and documentary purposes, at least in some regions of Egypt. Coptic assumed roles reserved until then for Greek. Coptic documents became more numerous than ever and regionally often more numerous than Greek ones. Regions from which Coptic documents are particularly abundant are above all the Theban area as well as various sites in Middle Egypt, with the large monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit as a conspicuous centre.²⁶

The wealth of surviving Coptic documents from this period is not merely a matter of quantity, however, but also of quality. This is shown for instance by the sometimes quite impressive legal documents from eighth-century Jeme in Western Thebes, many of them assembled in *P. KRU*.²⁷ Among these, the child donations with their sophisticated narrative

²⁵ See, in particular, ZAKRZEWSKA, ‘Why did Egyptians write Coptic?’ (cit. n. 6), and EADEM, “A bilingual language variety” or the “language of the pharaohs?” (cit. n. 6).

²⁶ For a review, focussing on legal documents, see T. S. RICHTER, ‘Koptische Rechtsurkunden als Quelle der Rechtspraxis im byzantinischen und frühislamischen Ägypten’, Chr. GASTGEBER (ed.), *Quellen zur byzantinischen Rechtspraxis: Aspekte der Textüberlieferung, Paläographie und Diplomatik. Akten des internationalen Symposiums, Wien, 5.-7.11.2007* [= *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Denkschriften* 413; *Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung* 25], Vienna 2010, pp. 39–59, at 43–45. Compare also the statistics in G. SCHMELZ, *Kirchliche Amtsträger im spätantiken Ägypten nach den Aussagen der griechischen und koptischen Papyri und Ostraka* [= *Archiv für Papyrusforschung, Beiheft* 13], Munich – Leipzig 2002, pp. 15–17, concerning ecclesiastical documents.

²⁷ A selection of which is now available in English translation in Leslie S. B. MACCOULL (transl.), *Coptic Legal Documents: Law as Vernacular Text and Experience in Late Antique Egypt* [= *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 377; *Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* 32], Tempe, Arizona – Turnhout 2009.

strategies are perhaps the most intriguing products of a new Coptic *Urkundenwesen*.²⁸ More closely linked to the new Islamic administration of Egypt is the archive named after the early-eighth-century governor Qurra ibn Sharik (709–714).²⁹ It stems from the same minor administrative centre in Middle-Egypt, Aphrodito, that produced the famous archive of Dioscorus, with its early legal documents in Coptic. Whereas the Dioscorus archive was bilingual, Greek and Coptic, the one named after Qurra ibn Sharik was trilingual, Arabic joining Greek and Sahidic Coptic. In this respect it was not unique. In her contribution to the 2010 volume *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt*, Petra Sijpesteijn lists quite a number of multilingual dossiers and documents from several parts of Upper Egypt, including Nubia and the Fayyum, in which the amount of Coptic present varies, however.³⁰

Before we turn to the question, what this rise to prominence of documentary Coptic could mean or not mean historically, a few preliminary remarks are due. The first concerns the nature of the process; the second, the nature of the documents themselves.

First it should be observed that the ever broader diffusion of Coptic obeys a trend that originated already in the middle of the sixth century. As in particular the Dioscorus archive tends to show, Coptic had by this time come to be an acceptable medium, not only for private correspondence and monastic literature, but also for legal documents and notarial acts.³¹ The earliest Coptic notarial act, in fact, a lease contract from the

²⁸ See, in particular, T. S. RICHTER, 'What's in a story? Cultural narratology and Coptic child donation documents', *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 35 (2005), pp. 237–264; IDEM, "... auch wenn wir nicht an das Mass der seligen Anna heranreichten ...". Kinderschenkungen an ein oberägyptisches Kloster im 8. Jh. n. Chr. und ihr narrativer Horizont', [in:] H.-W. FISCHER-ELFERT & T. S. RICHTER (eds.), *Literatur und Religion im alten Ägypten. Ein Symposium zu Ehren von Elke Blumenthal* [= *Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Abhandlungen* 81/5], Leipzig – Stuttgart 2011, pp. 164–198.

²⁹ See T. S. RICHTER, 'Language choice in the Qurra dossier', [in:] PAPAConstantinou (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience* (cit. n. 7), pp. 189–220, who provides lists of the documents and full references to the earlier literature.

³⁰ Petra M. Sijpesteijn, 'Multilingual archives and documents in post-conquest Egypt', [in:] PAPAConstantinou (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience* (cit. n. 7), pp. 105–124, at 108–121.

³¹ See J.-L. Fournet, 'Sur les premiers documents juridiques coptes', [in:] Anne Bou-

Aphrodito archive of Dioscorus, is now believed to date from around 580–590.³² Episcopal correspondence, such as preserved in the so-called archive of Pesynthios of Coptos, from the early seventh century, shows local leaders of the Severan church at work in Sahidic Coptic.³³

This trend only became more general in the post-conquest period, by the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth centuries, when yet more functional domains appear to have become available for documentary Coptic. It was apparently a forceful trend, since the decision of the Muslim governor of Egypt, Abd Allah ibn Abd al-Malik, decreeing in the year 706 that only Arabic should be used in the country's central chancery, seems to have had no immediate effect.³⁴ All well considered, therefore, the booming of documentary Coptic after the Arab conquest should rather not be considered a result of the change of political regime brought about by the Arabs, but as the reflection of a strong, long-term tendency within Egyptian society itself, a tendency that had originated already far earlier.³⁵

My second observation concerns the form and the language of the post-conquest Coptic documents. As several scholars, in particular Sebastian Richter, have pointed out before me, administrative and legal documents remain for their formularies and their technical vocabulary dependent on models from late antiquity.³⁶ That is, even though Sahidic Coptic

D'HORS & C. LOUIS (eds.), *Études coptes XI. Treizième journée d'études (Marseille, 7–9 juin 2007)* [= *Cahiers de la Bibliothèque copte* 17], Paris 2010, pp. 125–137, with full references to the earlier discussions.

³² H. FÖRSTER, J.-L. FOURNET, T. S. RICHTER, 'Une misthōsis copte d'Aphrodité (P. London inv. 2849): le plus ancien acte notarié en copte?', *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 58 (2012), pp. 344–359.

³³ See Florence CALAMENT, Renate E. L. DEKKER, J. VAN DER VLIET (eds.), *Les archives de Pesynthios, évêque de Coptos (mort 632)*, vol. I: *Les papyrus du Louvre* [= *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*], Leuven – Paris (forthcoming).

³⁴ SIJPESTEIJN, 'Multilingual archives' (cit. n. 30), p. 106.

³⁵ For a sociolinguistic underpinning, see in particular ZAKRZEWSKA, "A bilingual language variety" or the "language of the pharaohs"?' (cit. n. 6).

³⁶ See in particular RICHTER, *Rechtssemantik* (cit. n. 11), and IDEM, 'Koptische Rechtsurkunden' (cit. n. 26).

has now become their first language, they adhere to the late-antique documentary tradition of Egypt that basically took shape in Greek.

Furthermore, a huge majority of these Coptic administrative and legal documents are strictly spoken bilingual. It is not merely that they show an extremely high number of Greek loanwords and calques. In many of them, standard clauses of a formulaic nature, but nevertheless essential for the validity of the document, such as dating and accounting formulae, are in Greek. This is the case not only in elaborate legal documents recording major transactions on papyrus, but also in mass produced texts on ostrakon, such as the Bawit way bills,³⁷ the orders of the type ‘it is our father who writes’, also from Bawit,³⁸ or the Theban tax receipts.³⁹ The model editions of these texts that we owe to Sarah Clackson and Anne Boud’hors, among others, duly – and correctly, in my view – bring out this fact by printing the Greek and the Coptic parts of the texts in different, Greek and Coptic, typeface.

The implication of my remarks is – I think – clear. Simplistic explanations will not work. In particular, explanations of the booming of post-conquest documentary Coptic in terms of a surge of nationalism or an opposition between Greeks and Copts, whether conceived ethnically, religiously or linguistically, do not hold. There is no rupture with the Greek tradition. Coptic and Greek documents equally perpetuate the world and the culture of late antiquity well into the Abbasid period.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, the role of Coptic *vis-à-vis* Greek and Arabic in all the smaller or bigger multilingual dossiers from the post-conquest period remains to be assessed in all detail. In any case, such an assessment should not be undertaken in terms of linguistic skills – or the lack thereof – but rather in terms of access to social capital. Jennifer Cromwell’s 2010 paper,

³⁷ ANNE BOUD’HORS, *Ostraca grecs et coptes des fouilles de Jean Maspero à Baouit: O. Bawit IFAO 1-67 et O. Nancy* [= *Bibliothèque d’études coptes* 17], Cairo 2004.

³⁸ CLACKSON, *It is Our Father who Writes* (cit. n. 8).

³⁹ CROMWELL, ‘Aristophanes son of Johannes’ (cit. n. 22).

⁴⁰ Cf. ARIETTA PAPACONSTANTINO, ‘“What remains behind”: Hellenism and Romanitas in Christian Egypt after the Arab conquest’, [in:] COTTON *et al.* (eds.), *From Hellenism to Islam* (cit. n. 6), pp. 447–466.

which was cited already, strongly suggests that a study of the rising Coptic *Urkundenwesen* in this period should be geared towards the identification of scribal centres, scribal traditions and even individual scribes.⁴¹ Predictably, such a study will guide us towards local elites and local centres of literacy, among which monasteries are due to occupy a prominent but by no means exclusive place.

Whether Coptic ever gave access to the centres of political power in Alexandria or Fustat remains to be seen. As far as we know now, the only place where Sahidic Coptic seems to have obtained the status of a chancery language, close to the centre of political power, is the eparchal court of Qasr Ibrim, the former capital of Nobadia, the northernmost province of the Christian kingdom of Makuria, well south of Egypt's frontier.⁴²

THE ERA OF PAPER: DEATH AND TRANSFIGURATION

The latest precisely dated Greek papyrus documents appear to belong to the very end of the eighth century.⁴³ After the year 800, the great tradition of documentary Greek seems to peter out quite quickly, at least in Egypt.⁴⁴ But did Coptic fare much better? Actually, also for Coptic, the

⁴¹ CROMWELL, 'Aristophanes son of Johannes' (cit. n. 22); see also EADEM, 'Coptic texts in the archive of Flavius Atias', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 184 (2013), pp. 280–288, in part. 287–288.

⁴² See SIJPESTEIJN, 'Multilingual archives' (cit. n. 30), pp. 115–116; for the office of eparch in Nobadia, see G. RUFFINI, *Medieval Nubia: A Social and Economic History*, Oxford 2012, in part. pp. 34–37; W. GODLEWSKI, 'A short essay on the history of Nobadia from Roman to Mamluk times', [in:] J. VAN DER VLIET, J. L. HAGEN (eds.), *Qasr Ibrim, between Egypt and Africa: Studies in Cultural Exchange (NINO Symposium, Leiden, 11–12 December 2009)*, Leiden 2013 [= *Egyptologische Uitgaven* 26], pp. 123–133.

⁴³ For the latest dated Greek document presently known, see F. MORELLI, *CPR* XXII 21, at pp. 5–6; and, for the broader picture, the same author in the present volume.

⁴⁴ This does not apply, of course, to literary and liturgical Greek, for which we may cite such important witnesses as the 10th–11th cent. *Miracles of Cosmas and Damian*, from the Esna–Edfu find, now in the British Library (J. VAN HÆLST, *Catalogue des papyrus littéraires juifs et chrétiens*, Paris 1976, no. 704), or the 13th cent. Scaliger Lectionary, from the Wadi

ninth century is a transitional period at best. Coptic legal documents become scarce: perhaps the latest substantial group of dated documents in the late-antique style are the sale documents from Bawit, from the middle of the ninth century, discussed most recently (in 2009) by the *Altmeister* Martin Krause in the memorial volume dedicated to Sarah Clackson.⁴⁵

As it appears, the ninth century announces a wholesale language shift, also beyond the documentary domain. Within the domain of liturgy, for instance, the never entirely completed ‘Coptization’ of the till then predominantly Greek liturgy of the Egyptian Church gained momentum.⁴⁶ As Ewa Zakrzewska aptly argued, Coptic was finally getting access to the highest available register in terms of status, that of the sacred.⁴⁷ A role that Bohairic would take over from Sahidic soon after the year 1000.⁴⁸ Still in the domain of liturgy, the monastic libraries that are the main sources of literary manuscripts in Coptic began to take their final shape. Within a few centuries, the cycle of copying these basically liturgical texts came to a halt. Which left us with the mass of ninth- to eleventh-century Sahidic and Bohairic codices from monasteries in – from north to south – the Wadi an-Natrun, Hamuli, Sohag, and Edfu that together constitute our principal source for so-called Coptic literature.⁴⁹ The literary her-

an-Natrun (VAN HAELST, *Catalogue*, no. 326; H. J. DE JONGE, ‘Joseph Scaliger’s Greek-Arabic lectionary [Leiden, U.L., MS. Or. 243 = Lectionary 6 of the Greek New Testament]’, *Quaerendo* 5 [1975], pp. 143–172).

⁴⁵ M. KRAUSE, ‘Die koptischen Kaufurkunden von Klosterzellen des Apollo-Klosters von Bawit aus abbasidischer Zeit’, [in:] BOUD’HORS *et al.* (eds.), *Monastic Estates* (cit. n. 8), pp. 159–169.

⁴⁶ For the late development of Coptic (Sahidic) hymnography, see BOUD’HORS, ‘Toujours honneur au grec?’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 180–181; Sahidic witnesses of the nowadays dominant Egyptian Anaphora of Saint Basilios start to occur sporadically from the 7th century onwards, but most manuscripts are much later, as are the Greek and Bohairic ones, see A. BUDDE, *Die ägyptische Basilios-Anaphora: Text – Kommentar – Geschichte* [= Jerusalem theologisches Forum 7], Münster 2004, pp. 45–47, 94–106, and 585–587.

⁴⁷ ZAKRZEWSKA, “A bilingual language variety” or the “language of the pharaohs?” (cit. n. 6).

⁴⁸ Cf. BUDDE, *Die ägyptische Basilios-Anaphora* (cit. n. 46), pp. 105–106.

⁴⁹ They make up Tito Orlandi’s ‘bibliological units’, for which see T. ORLANDI, *Coptic*

itage of Christian Egypt began to be translated massively into Arabic in or around the eleventh century.⁵⁰

Yet we do have documentary texts in Coptic after the ninth century. They comprise predominantly letters and administrative documents, but also a small number of usually quite modest legal documents (sales, contracts, receipts).⁵¹ But what is most striking in these tenth- and eleventh-century documents is their overwhelming *differentness*. In various ways they are much different from anything that was produced in the late-antique or early-Islamic periods. They look different, to begin with. They are usually written on paper, rarely on parchment, not on papyrus or ostrakon anymore. And they are written in a much different script, usually some variant of what is called the ‘late sloping uncial’: clear detached letters, without ligatures – a script that remained in use in Southern Egypt and Nubia until the end of the medieval period.⁵²

The language of these documents is usually Sahidic Coptic, but with lots of Middle-Egyptian interference in the vowel system (in particular swapping /o/ and /a/). Grammar is simplified, with case marking frequently lacking, the orthography is extremely unstable and the phraseology stereotypical. Besides, there is considerable lexical and phraseological innovation. In addition to many loanwords from Arabic, rare Egyptian or Graeco-Egyptian words occur, making in particular letters often hard to interpret. In order to decipher these documents, class-room knowledge

Texts Relating to the Virgin Mary: An Overview [= *Letteratura copta. Serie studi*], Rome 2008, in part. pp. 13–46.

⁵⁰ See the seminal essay by S. RUBENSON, ‘Translating the tradition: some remarks on the Arabization of the Patristic heritage in Egypt’, *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996), pp. 4–14.

⁵¹ For a recent discussion, see A. DELATTRE *et al.*, ‘Écrire en arabe et en copte. Le cas de deux lettres bilingues’, *Chronique d’Égypte* 87 (2012), pp. 170–188, at 186–187 (letters), 184, n. 31 (administrative documents), 184–187 (legal documents). For Late Coptic letters, see also T. S. RICHTER, ‘Coptic letters’, *Asiatische Studien / Études asiatiques* 62 (2008), pp. 736–770, at 752–753.

⁵² For the late sloping uncial, widely employed for liturgical manuscripts, both Greek and Coptic, see Anne BOUD’HORS, ‘L’unciale penchée en copte et sa survie jusqu’au xv^e siècle en Haute-Égypte’, [in:] F. DÉROCHE & F. RICHARD (eds.), *Scribes et manuscrits du Moyen-Orient*, Paris 1997, pp. 117–133.

of standard Sahidic does in many cases not suffice, even though the script is usually very clear.

What is more, as Sebastian Richter has pointed out for the legal documents, the poverty of the vocabulary is striking and the contact with the late-antique tradition is largely lost. Instead, a considerable input from the part of Arabic scribal practices can now be observed.⁵³ Besides, the functionality of documentary Coptic had become fairly limited. For anything that really mattered in important domains such as family law and landed property, Christians had recourse to Arabic.⁵⁴

This poverty in quality is matched by a poverty in quantity. Compared to the richness of the two-hundred years immediately following the Arab conquest, the number of known Coptic documents from the tenth–eleventh centuries is much more limited. Only letters make up a sizeable corpus.⁵⁵ Even the geographical distribution of the sources apparently changed, since the Theban area as a source of Coptic documents rapidly faded out after the eighth century. Instead the Fayyum rose to prominence,⁵⁶ while smaller clusters of documents punctuate the Nile Valley up to as far south as Qasr Ibrim. In the end of this paper, I will return to an increasingly important source of late Coptic documents in the Fayyum, the monastery of Dayr an-Naqlun, Coptic Nekloni.

In spite of all the preceding qualifications, this final phase of documentary Coptic has its particular interest and poses a number of problems of its own. I will limit myself to a couple of remarks only.

⁵³ For Arabic loanwords and formulae in legal documents, see in addition to RICHTER, 'Coptic' (cit. n. 11), IDEM, *Arabische Lehnworte und Formeln in koptischen Rechtsurkunden*, *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 31 (2001), pp. 75–89.

⁵⁴ See RICHTER, *Rechtssemantik* (cit. n. 11), pp. 156–164; IDEM, 'Koptische Rechtsurkunden' (cit. n. 26), p. 59; cf. DELATTRE *et al.*, 'Écrire en arabe et en copte' (cit. n. 51), pp. 184–186.

⁵⁵ DELATTRE *et al.*, 'Écrire en arabe et en copte' (cit. n. 51), pp. 186–187 (referring to a doctoral dissertation in the course of preparation by Vincent WALTER, Leipzig).

⁵⁶ The 9th–10th cent. documents from Dayr al-Hammam may mark a transitional stage; see now G. SCHMELZ, 'Das Archiv des Archimandriten Apa Georgios: Texte aus *P. Fay. Copt.* und *P. Lond. Copt.*', [in:] BOUD'HORS *et al.* (eds.), *Monastic Estates* (cit. n. 8), pp. 216–223. Earlier papyri from Naqlun, such as those published in *P. Naqlun* I and II, are predominantly in Greek.

First, it is inevitable to conclude that we are facing here a Coptic on the wane, with a much reduced functionality. Its decline after the middle of the ninth century confirms the diagnosis of written Coptic as a product of the late-antique world, a world dominated by Greek. Detached from its late-antique roots, documentary Sahidic drastically altered and failed to offer a viable option for the new urban elites of Fatimid Cairo, for whom Arabic represented access to wealth, status and learning.⁵⁷ If these new Christian elites favored a form of Coptic, it was Bohairic, a primarily liturgical language.⁵⁸

Secondly, one may wonder why Coptic was still used at all? The answer may be provided by contemporaneous literary sources that have recently been discussed by, in particular, Arietta Papaconstantinou and Jason Zaborowski. In about the tenth–eleventh century stylized complaints – ironically, preserved in Arabic only – start to appear that regret the loss of Coptic and oppose the adoption of Arabic in its stead.⁵⁹ These are not merely literary witnesses to a major language shift, but – much more importantly – the expression of a novel cultural phenomenon. Here, for the first time in the history of Coptic Egyptian, metalinguistic reflection is found, that is, reflection on one’s own choice of language. As Ewa Zakrzewska was the first to point out, metalinguistic reflection about the use of Coptic is conspicuously absent from earlier sources. Bilingual (Greek–Coptic) intellectuals like Shenoute (in the fifth century)

⁵⁷ These positive incentives for the Egyptian Christians’ choice for Arabic are correctly emphasized by RICHTER, ‘Greek, Coptic and the ‘language of the Hijra’’ (cit. n. 6), p. 434, and Arietta PAPACONSTANTINO, ‘Why did Coptic fail where Aramaic succeeded? Linguistic development in Egypt and the Near East after the Arab conquest’, [in:] MULLEN & JAMES (eds.), *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds* (cit. n. 7), pp. 58–76, at 76.

⁵⁸ This is confirmed by the medieval Coptic documents from the Cairo Genizah (my knowledge of which I owe to the generosity and expertise of Gideon BOHAK, Tel Aviv). Apart from a single late Sahidic letter (Cambridge University Library, T-S. K 24.10-10, presumably sent from the Fayyum), these are predominantly liturgical and magical texts in Bohairic.

⁵⁹ Arietta PAPACONSTANTINO, ‘“They shall speak the Arabic language and take pride in it”: reconsidering the fate of Coptic after the Arab conquest’, *Le Muséon* 120 (2007), pp. 273–299; J. R. ZABOROWSKI, ‘From Coptic to Arabic in medieval Egypt’, *Medieval Encounters* 14 (2008), pp. 14–40.

or Dioscorus of Aphrodito (in the sixth century) are silent about their choice of language.⁶⁰ The appearance of metalinguistic reflection from about the year 1000 signals an important new development: in opposition to Arabic, Coptic had become the marker of a distinctive religious identity, symbolizing adherence to Egypt's glorious Christian tradition.⁶¹ It had irreversibly become the sacred language that it still is today.

QUADRILINGUALISM IN THE MEDIEVAL FAYYUM?

In the last part of this paper, I would like to return to the documents in order to briefly illustrate the question of language use and linguistic domains in the final stages of documentary Coptic. In fact, the tenth- to eleventh-century papyrus and parchment documents from the monastery of Naqlun (Nekluni, Dayr al-Malak), in the Fayyum, afford us a fascinating glimpse of the various registers of language use in this particular region and period. Many such documents were discovered during the Polish excavations that take place on site since the late 1980s.⁶² A growing number of pieces kept in museum collections all over the world can now be added to these on the basis of internal criteria, making Naqlun a major source of Late Coptic documents.⁶³

⁶⁰ ZAKRZEWSKA, 'Why did Egyptians write Coptic?' (cit. n. 6), p. 95.

⁶¹ But note the important observation by ZAKRZEWSKA, "A bilingual language variety" or the "language of the pharaohs?" (cit. n. 6), who considers this metalinguistic reflection on the use of Coptic not an ineluctable corollary of language death, but rather part of a broader medieval trend.

⁶² Excavations of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw, directed by Włodzimierz Godlewski. For an overview of finds and sources as well as earlier literature, see the various contributions in T. DERDA (ed.), *Deir el-Naqlun in the Monastic Landscape of Egypt. Proceedings of the Conference, Warsaw, 17–18 June 2010*, Warsaw (forthcoming).

⁶³ The latest such addition was published by T. S. RICHTER & G. SCHMELZ, 'Der spätkoptische Arbeitsvertrag P. Heid. inv. kopt. 54r', *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 40 (2010), pp. 185–203. Hagiographical sources (published in a forthcoming Leiden dissertation by Clara

Not all documents from Naqlun are in Sahidic Coptic, however. Extremely important for understanding the position of Arabic in this then still predominantly Christian region are the large and impressive documents from the archive of the Banu Bifam, dated between AD 992 and 1029.⁶⁴ They record the sales transactions of a land-owning Christian family from a village in the near neighborhood of the monastery. As these are formal legal documents that must be valid in a court room, they are all entirely drawn up in Arabic. Yet, the onomastics of the Christian villagers appearing in these documents reveals something else as well. Certain peculiarities suggest that the language spoken on the village level may still have been some form of local Egyptian. That is, not Sahidic Coptic, but Fayyumi Egyptian, with its characteristic lambdacism (using /l/ instead of /r/).⁶⁵

Documentary Sahidic Coptic, on the other hand, was used until at the least the middle of the eleventh century in the administration of the monastery. An impressive witness of this is the account book, now partly kept in the British Library, the edition of which was planned by the late Sarah Clackson.⁶⁶ The account book, which can be dated to AD 1039–1040, contains numerous Arabic loanwords and Arabic names, but its script and first language are nonetheless Coptic. Sahidic Coptic is also

TEN HACKEN) show that the medieval monastery of Naqlun had churches dedicated both to Saint Gabriel *and* Saint Michael (cf. *ibidem*, p. 187, n. 10).

⁶⁴ Publication forthcoming by Chr. GAUBERT and J.-M. MOUTON. See, preliminarily, J.-M. MOUTON, 'Un village copte du Fayoum au XI^e siècle d'après la découverte d'un lot d'archives', *Académie des inscriptions & belles-lettres. Compte rendu des séances de l'année 2002, janvier-mars*, Paris 2002, pp. 447–458; Chr. GAUBERT & J.-M. MOUTON, 'Présentation des archives d'une famille copte du Fayoum à l'époque fatimide', [in:] M. IMMERZEEL & J. VAN DER VLIET (eds.), *Coptic Studies on the Threshold of a New Millennium. Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Coptic Studies, Leiden 27 August – 2 September 2000* [= *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 133], Leuven – Paris 2004, vol. 1, pp. 505–517.

⁶⁵ See GAUBERT & MOUTON, 'Présentation' (cit. n. 64), pp. 515–516; cf. MOUTON, 'Un village copte' (cit. n. 64), pp. 455–456.

⁶⁶ See J. VAN DER VLIET, 'Neklōni (al-Naqlūn) and the Coptic account book British Library Or. 13885', [in:] A. KAPLONY, Cornelia RÖMER, Petra SIJPESTEIJN (eds.), *Proceedings of the Fourth Conference of the International Society for Arabic Papyrology, Vienna, March 26–29, 2009*, forthcoming.

used in the various other lists, letters, receipts and contracts from the same general period that have been found during the excavation of the monastery.⁶⁷ Likewise, Sahidic Coptic is the language of the extensive legends that accompany the wall-paintings in the monastery church, which was entirely refurbished in the twenties and thirties of the eleventh century.⁶⁸ At the same time, however, Arabic is widely used not only for epistolary contacts with the outside world but also up to a degree for internal accounting purposes. Yet, the general impression one gets is that the monastic community deliberately stuck to Sahidic Coptic both for practical (bookkeeping) and representative purposes (inscriptions) in surroundings where otherwise Arabic had undoubtedly become the predominant written code.

In addition to these three languages, there is also an intruder: liturgical Bohairic, a language basically foreign to the Fayyum in this period. Nonetheless, unequivocal traces of Bohairic, which was rapidly becoming the main ecclesiastical language of the Egyptian miaphysite Church, have come to light during the excavations of the monastery. The best known example is a single leaf from a tenth or eleventh century handbook that contained, among other things, the Bohairic translation of the most important Greek biddings and responses from the Holy Mass.⁶⁹ But also scraps of Bohairic hymnography (unpublished) have been found in the central monastic complex, making liturgical Bohairic the fourth language attested on site, after Arabic, spoken Fayyumi Egyptian and written

⁶⁷ Part of the Late Coptic documentary texts have been published by the late Katarzyna URBANIAK-WALCZAK, 'Deir el-Naqlun: die koptischen Texte aus der Ermitage Nr. 25', *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 29 (1999), pp. 93–136; cf. EADEM, 'Naqlun, koptische Texte (Grabungskampagne 1989)', *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 23 (1993), pp. 157–162. Others are illustrated in various issues of the journal *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*.

⁶⁸ Publication by the present author is forthcoming. Preliminarily, see Katarzyna URBANIAK-WALCZAK, 'Drei Inschriften aus der Kirche des Erzengels Gabriel in Deir an-Naqlun im Faijum', *Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie copte* 32 (1993), pp. 160–169; W. GODLEWSKI, 'Les peintures de l'église de l'archange Gabriel à Naqlun', *Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie copte* 39 (2000), pp. 89–101; J. VAN DER VLIET, 'Reconstructing the landscape: epigraphic sources for the Christian Fayoum', [in:] GAWDAT GABRA (ed.), *Christianity and Monasticism in the Fayoum Oasis*, Cairo – New York 2005, pp. 79–89, at 83–85.

⁶⁹ Reedited as *P. Naqlun* II 20, where also the earlier literature is quoted.

Sahidic. Considering the slightly later sources that show how liturgical Bohairic was officially enforced at the expense of Sahidic,⁷⁰ it is entirely conceivable that the introduction of liturgical Bohairic – rather than Arabic – was the death knell of written Sahidic, precisely in those circles where one was most deeply attached to Coptic, the rural monasteries.

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⁷⁰ Quoted in BUDDÉ, *Die ägyptische Basilios-Anaphora* (cit. n. 46), p. 105, n. 60; see also H. BRAKMANN, 'Neue Funde und Forschungen zur Liturgie der Kopten (2000–2004)', [in:] Anne BOUD'HORS & Denyse VAILLANCOURT (eds.), *Huitième congrès international d'études coptes (Paris 2004)*, I: *Bilans et perspectives 2000–2004* [= *Cahiers de la Bibliothèque copte* 15], Paris 2006, pp. 127–149, at 141.