

Developments in Egypt’s early Islamic postal system (with an edition of *P.Khalili II 5*)*

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Abstract

The importance of documentary sources for the history of the official postal system (*barīd*) in the first century of Islam has long been acknowledged. In addition to a small number of documents from the eastern part of the Muslim Empire, Egyptian papyri from the 90s/710s and 130s/750s form the main documentary sources for modern studies on the postal system. These papyri belong to a distinct phase in Islamic history. Papyri from other, especially earlier, phases have largely been neglected. The present article addresses the history of Egypt’s official postal system from the Muslim conquest up to *c.* 132/750. It argues that the postal system gradually developed out of Byzantine practices and was shaped by innovations by Muslim rulers through which their involvement in the postal system’s administration gradually increased. The article ends with an edition of *P.Khalili II 5*, a papyrus document from 135/753 on the provisioning of postal stations.

Keywords: Postal system (*barīd*), Early Islamic history, Egypt, Administration, Papyri

It is well known that historical studies of the first two centuries of Islam depend on sources other than the literary works written in the second century AH/eighth century AD or later. This is all the more true for the *barīd*, the official postal system (often combined with an “intelligence service”). Information on the postal system before the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Wāthiq (227/842–232/847), who commissioned the writing of a book on “Routes and Realms” (Ibn Khurdādhbih’s famous *Kitāb al-masālik wa-’l-mamālik*, the first version of which was produced in *c.* 232/846–847), is largely based on information of

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which the historicity is uncertain. Fortunately, the first/seventh- and second/eighth-century Muslim postal system has left substantial documentary and epigraphic traces. Although some documents and inscriptions have been found in Syro-Palestine and as far east as Soghdia (modern Uzbekistan), the bulk of our documentary sources on the early Islamic postal system come from Egypt.¹ Whereas modern scholarly publications on the institution concentrate on (predominantly Arabic) documents from the Marwanid period and the first years of the Abbasid period, the Egyptian material is equally informative on the first decades after the Muslim conquest. Hence, it enables the development of the postal system to be traced throughout the first century of Muslim rule in Egypt.

In doing so, this article argues that Egypt's postal system developed out of Byzantine practices and that from its beginnings until 132/750 three distinct phases can be identified. These phases are nearly identical to the general periodization of early Islamic history and coincide with the caliphates of the Rightly-Guided caliphs (18/639–41/661), the Sufyanids and early Marwanids (41/661–90/710), and the later Marwanids (90/710–132/750). It will be shown that during these three phases the character of the postal system reflects the nature of Muslim rule at that time, and that changes in the system must be seen in the context of changes in empire-wide policies. The article ends with an edition of *P.Khalili* II 5, from 135/753, showing hitherto unknown practices regarding the administration and provisioning of postal stations during the first years of Abbasid rule.

Developments in Egypt's postal system

By c. 600 AD, the Byzantine imperial authorities charged local large landholding families or labour corporations with responsibility for the physical and financial maintenance of local sections of the imperial postal system.² This included providing animals to postal stations, contracting stablemen and accountants, and regulating the use of stations by third parties.³ This allocation of what was initially an official liturgy to private parties was the result of socio-political

- 1 A. Silverstein, "Documentary evidence for the early history of the *Barīd*", in P.M. Sijpesteijn and L. Sundelin (eds), *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 153–61 and Silverstein, *Postal Systems in the Pre-Modern Islamic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 58–9 and 71–3. For epigraphic traces, see the Umayyad milestones published in M. Sharon, *Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae* (7 vols, Leiden: Brill, 1997–2016), 1: 4–5, 2: 1–7, and 3: 94–108 and 220–1; V.A. Kračkovskaja, "Pamyatniki arabskogo piśma v srednej Azii i Zakavkaz'e do IX v.," *Ėpigrafiika Vostoka* 6, 1952, plate 16 (reproduced in A. Grohmann, *Arabische Paläographie*, vol. 2 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften; Graz: Böhlau, 1971), plate 15); and K. Cytryn-Silverman, "The fifth Mīl from Jerusalem: another Umayyad milestone from southern Bilād al-Shām", *Bulletin of SOAS* 70/3, 2007, 603–10. See also the inscription on the levelling of a mountain pass, dated 73/692: Sharon, *Corpus*, 1:103–6.
- 2 J. Gascou, "Les grands domaines, la cité et l'état en Égypte byzantine (recherches d'histoire agraire, fiscal et administrative)", *Travaux et Mémoires* 9, 1985, 53–9; A. Kolb, *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer im Römischen Reich* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 136, 194–5.
- 3 See the discussion in Kolb, *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer*, 136 and 195. See *SB* XVIII 14063 (*Oxyrhynchos/al-Bahnasā*, 556) for the use of "the machine of the stable of the *cursus velox*" by local monks.

changes, especially the increase of the authority of local magnates.⁴ This situation lasted until the end of Sasanian rule over Egypt (619–29). Not only have the main large landholding families disappeared from our sources or had their influence weakened by that time,⁵ but the administration of the postal system itself seems to have undergone some changes. Under Sasanian rule, the administration of the postal system in Upper Egypt was brought under the authority of a *sellarios* (a title used for officials of different ranks) probably in order to obtain and maintain firm control over the postal system and, hence, the primary means of communication. In *P.Oxy.* XVI 1862 and 1863, for instance, a *sellarios* named Rhemē appears as the principal official charged with the administration of a postal station in Pinarachthis, a locality just south of Memphis/Manf. This *sellarios* was subordinate to another Sasanian official bearing the same title who had his office in the Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm and held authority over probably both Arcadia and the Thebaid.⁶ Such administrative changes by the Sasanians firmly placed the administration of Egypt's postal system (back) in the administrative realm. Although we lack documentation on the postal system during the decade separating Sasanian and Muslim rule, the situation that we encounter in documents dating from the first two decades of Muslim rule over Egypt seems not to have differed much.

Continuity of existing practices characterized the initial phase of the development of the postal system under Muslim rule. By the time Muslims had conquered Egypt in the early 20s/640s, the maintenance and administration of postal stations ultimately fell under the responsibilities of the *dux*, at that time the highest administrative official outside Fuṣṭāṭ. He sent *entagia* for the payment of money, goods or animals destined for postal stations. The Greek document *P.Lond.* III 1081 (pp. 282–3), for example, mentions a dispute between an administrative official and an agricultural worker (*geōrgos*) on the estates of a bishop in the district of Hermopolis/Ushmūn. The *dux* is called *amiras* in this document, establishing its date as the last four decades of the first/seventh century.⁷ In *P.Lond.* III 1081, the agricultural worker writes that the *dux* had

- 4 P. Sarris, *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 149–76.
- 5 B. Palme, “The imperial presence: government and army”, in R.S. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 265; J. Banaji, *Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity: Gold, Labour, and Aristocratic Dominance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), especially 152–5 and 267.
- 6 C. Foss, “The *sellarioi* and other officers of Persian Egypt”, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 138, 2002, 169–72; P. Sānger, “The administration of Sasanian Egypt: new masters and Byzantine continuity”, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 51, 2011, 653–65.
- 7 The palaeography of *P.Lond.* III 1075 and 1081 points to the first/seventh century. With the exception of Muslim army officials in the 20s/640s and 30s/650s, the term *amiras* (and variants) is only used for the *dux* before the turn of the second/eighth century (P.M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 120); see also M.A.L. Legendre, “Hiérarchie administrative et formation de l'état islamique dans la campagne égyptienne pré-Ťülūnide”, in A. Nef and F. Ardizzone (eds), *Les dynamiques de l'Islamisation en Méditerranée centrale et en Sicile: Nouvelles propositions et découvertes récentes* (Rome and Bari: Edipuglia, 2014), 108 and, most recently,

sent to him a groom (*hippokomos*) with a letter ordering him to deliver three horses and two mules (*gaidaria*) at “the estate-controlled hamlet (*epoikion*) of my brother, the lord Germanos” (lines 4–5), where a postal station must have existed.⁸ Whereas such *entagia* stemmed from the bureau of the *dux*, the pagarch was responsible for the execution of the *dux*’s orders.⁹ Pagarchs delivered mounts at postal stations or ordered lower officials to do so.¹⁰ The system must have functioned well. *SB Kopt.* I 36 (Apollōnopolis Anō/Udfū), dating from 25–26/646, records that third parties could travel via the postal system and that it reached as far south as Oxyrhynchos/al-Bahnasā (line 158).¹¹

The Muslim authorities of the 20s/640s and 30s/650s are not recorded as having been involved in the organization of the postal system as much as their Sasanian predecessors had been.¹² Beside the introduction of the term *gaidarion* (from the Arabic *ghaydhār*, “mule”, in documents related to the administration of the postal system (among others),¹³ the influence of the arrival of the Muslims is primarily seen in their efforts to keep Babylon and Fuṣṭāṭ connected with the rest of the province via a postal station in Babylon. Dated to the mid-first/seventh century, the Greek document *CPR XXII 6* shows for the first time requisitions made in the district of Hermopolis/Ushmūn or Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm that are destined for Babylon’s postal and/or relay station (*allagē*). In contrast to the word *allagē*’s primary meaning of “relay station” in the context of the postal system,¹⁴ a reference to “sailors of the ships of Babylon’s *allagē*” (ναυτ(αίς) τ(ῶν) πλοί(ων) τ(ῆ) ἀλλαγ(ῆ) Βαβυλ(ῶνος)) in the contemporary document *P.Vind. Tand.* 31 (Memphis/Manf), line 6, might indicate that Babylon’s postal and/or relay station was also geared towards riverine traffic; but the exact meaning of

M.A.L. Legendre, “Neither Byzantine nor Islamic? The Duke of the Thebaid and the formation of the Umayyad state”, *Historical Research* 89, 2016, 12). Cf. the note in F. Morelli, “Duchi e emiri: Il gioco delle scatole cinesi in PSI XII 1266/P.Apoll. 9”, in A. Casanova, G. Messeri and R. Pintaudi (eds), *E si d’amici pieno: Omaggio di studiosi italiani a Guido Bastianini per il suo settantesimo compleanno* (2 vols, Florence: Gonnelli, 2016), 1: 267–82.

- 8 For another postal station in the district of Hermopolis/Ushmūn, see *CPR XXX 29*, discussion on page 256.
- 9 If *P.Lond.* III 1075 (pp. 281–2) and 1081 belong together, the former documents that the pagarch had to solve the dispute.
- 10 *P.Ross.Georg.* III 50 (Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm; 22/643), *CPR XXX 29* (Hermopolis/Ushmūn; c. 22/643).
- 11 For this reason, A. Noth (*The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source Critical Study*, tr. L.I. Conrad (Princeton, N.J., 1994 [orig. 1973]), 80–81) is overly critical of claims of the existence of a postal system in the mid-first/seventh century.
- 12 Medieval references to the administrative separation of Egypt into two independent provinces, with ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa’d b. Abī Sarḥ ruling Upper Egypt from the Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm and ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ ruling Lower Egypt from Fuṣṭāṭ, may attest that some of the Sasanians’ administrative changes lasted into the Muslim period. According to these reports, Egypt was unified under ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān. See Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbārūhā*, ed. C.C. Torrey (New Haven, 1922), 173–4; al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa-l-quḍāt*, ed. R. Guest (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1912), 11.
- 13 *CPR XXX 20*, commentary to line 5. For the introduction of other and mainly administrative terms shortly after the Muslim conquest, see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 69–71.
- 14 Kolb, *Transport und Nachrichtentransfer*, 213.

these words remains uncertain at present.¹⁵ The Muslim authorities' initial concentration on Babylon's connectedness compares well with other facets of their conquest policies of the 20s/640s and 30s/650s,¹⁶ especially their requisitioning of building material for Fuṣṭāṭ¹⁷ and their directing of tax money to Babylon.¹⁸ The Muslims' wish to maintain connections between their newly founded capital and the rest of the province may well explain the continued upkeep of postal stations elsewhere in Egypt.¹⁹

This situation lasted until *c.* 40/660. After the First Civil War of the late 30s/650s, the new caliph, Mu'āwīya b. Abī Sufyān (*r.* 41/661–60/680), actively sought to establish or increase his power by initiating reforms that centralized his administration in Damascus as well as that of his governors in the provincial capitals.²⁰ The Greek document *P.Mert.* II 100 (Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm), dated 18 Ramaḍān 49/20 October 669, shows that these reforms directly affected the postal system in Egypt, as they did in Syria and the East of the empire.²¹ With the arrival of Mu'āwīya's rule, then, in Egypt already in 38/658–659,²² the second phase in the early history of the postal system begins.

The above-mentioned document *P.Mert.* II 100 records requisitions made by Pettērios, pagarch of the Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm, to the inhabitants of the village of Stratōn. They should deliver salt and seasoning to an “overseer of the same stable” (line 2: ἐ[π]ι[κ]ε[μ]ι(ένω) τοῦ αὐτοῦ) στάβλου) who bears a partially lost but still unmistakably Arabic name. The stable is located in the village itself. The requisitions are considered part of the *dapanē*, a tax for the maintenance of officials, and are explicitly in accordance with an official communication of a fiscal assessment stemming from the bureau of the Arcadian *dux* Iordanēs (line 2: δ(τ') ἐ[π]ιστά(λματος) Ἰορδά(νου)).²³ Such official communications were introduced early in Mu'āwīya's caliphate and were part of the reforms

- 15 Cf. F. Morelli's doubts about the employment of sailors at an *allagē* in *CPR* XXII 6, commentary to line 3.
- 16 For an elaborate discussion of these policies, see J. Bruning, *The Rise of a Capital: Al-Fuṣṭāṭ and Its Hinterland, 18/639–132/750* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, forthcoming in 2018). See also Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 51.
- 17 *CPR* XXX (especially the discussion on pages 75–8), *P.Vind.Tand.* 31, *P.Got.* 29 (possibly Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm; mid-first/seventh century).
- 18 *SB* VIII 9749 (Herakleopolis/Ihnās; 21/642).
- 19 Cf. the passages in John of Nikiu, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu: Translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text*, tr. R.H. Charles (London and Oxford, 1916), 181–2 [§ 113.2] and Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 73, that tell that Egyptian notables helped the Muslim conquerors by repairing roads and constructing bridges.
- 20 C. Foss, “Mu'āwīya's state”, in J. Haldon (ed.), *Money, Power and Politics in Early Islamic Syria: A Review of Current Debates* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 75–96. Note that these reforms are best documented for the former Byzantine part of the Mu'āwīya's empire. For his and his governors' policies in the eastern provinces, see R.S. Humphreys, *Mu'āwīya ibn Abi Sufyan: From Arabia to Empire* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2006), 85–114.
- 21 Foss, “Mu'āwīya's state”, 81 and 83.
- 22 Al-Kindī, *al-Wūlāt wa-'l-quḍāt*, 31; Ibn Yūnus, *Ta'rīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Ṣadaḡī*, ed. 'A.F. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ (2 vols, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 2000), 1:374 [no. 1026].
- 23 For the interpretation of *epistalma*, see N. Gonis and F. Morelli, “A requisition for the ‘Commander of the Faithful’: *SPP* VIII 1082 revised”, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 132, 2000, 195, commentary to line 4.

he initiated.²⁴ *P.Mert.* II 100 is the oldest known document that shows the central administration in Fustāt, represented by the *dux* in Arcadia, to control the organization of a local postal station. Although Mamluk historians may not be correct in stating that Mu'āwiya was “the first person to establish the *barīd* in Islam”,²⁵ his efforts to centralize the administration placed the existing, official postal system firmly under Muslim control.²⁶

At the end of Sufyanid rule over Egypt and the beginning of that of the Marwanids, there is a significant change in the organization of the postal system. Documents belonging to the archive of Papas, pagarch of Apollōnopolis Anō/Udfū, and which have been dated to the end of the Sufyanid period refer for the first time to a *beredos*, “post-horse” (*P.Apoll.* 33 and 64), and a *beredarios*, “official courier” (*P.Apoll.* 27)²⁷ – terms related to the Arabic *barīd*.²⁸ The use of the term *beredarios* in pre-Islamic Egypt is recorded in a fourth-century document, but not in documents of later date.²⁹ From this, it follows that the *beredos* and *beredarios* were (re)introduced in Egypt’s postal system around the third quarter of the first/seventh century. These “new” elements in the postal system possibly had a Syrian origin, where the term *beredarios* is recorded as having been used on the eve of the Muslim conquests.³⁰ Interestingly, these changes seem to have predominantly affected the part of the administration that was headed by Muslim officials.³¹ Non-Muslim administrators continued to employ members of their staff, such as *symmachoi*, as messengers throughout the period.³² Continuity on the local level is also visible in the pagarch’s central role in the organization of the postal system and his authority over its use. According to *P.Apoll.* 64 and *CPR* IV 1 (Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm; prob.

24 Bruning, *The Rise of a Capital*, ch. 3.

25 See the discussion in Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 53–4.

26 Cf. C. Foss, “Egypt under Mu'āwiya: Part I: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt”, *Bulletin of SOAS* 72/1, 2009, 13–4.

27 For the date of these documents, see J. Gasco and K.A. Worp, “Problèmes de documentation apollinopolite”, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 49, 1982, 88–9.

28 On the relationship between the Arabic and Greek terminology, see A. Silverstein, “Etymologies and origins: a note of caution”, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 28/1, 2001, 92–4; Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 29–30 and 46 (with the references on p. 29, n. 136). Note that the papyrological record for *beredos* is limited to three documents: the two documents mentioned here and the Coptic *O.CrumVC* 49 (Memphis/Manf; second/eighth century). Other documents, such as *P.Lond.* IV 1347 and 1433–35 (Aphroditō/Ishqūh; dates range between 88/707 and 98/716), refer to the same type of horses with a phrase such as δρομικός ἀλλαγῆς, literally “horse of the relay station”.

29 See *CPR* XIV 33, introduction (correct the reference to *P.Oxy.* LIV 3758, line 120).

30 P.M. Sijpesteijn, “The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the beginning of Muslim rule”, in R.S. Bagnall (ed.), *Egypt in the Byzantine World: 300–700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 448. For the use of *beredarios* in Syria, see Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 38. For other terms that may have been introduced in Egypt from the Near East, see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 70.

31 Foss, “Egypt under Mu'āwiya: Part I”, 13.

32 On the duties of *symmachoi* in the Muslim period, see Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 131–2. For a diachronic discussion of the *symmachos*, see A. Jördens, “Die Ägyptische Symmachoi”, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 66, 1986, 105–18. For a discussion of the various staff that carried messages during the caliphate of Mu'āwiya b. Abī Sufyān, see Foss, “Egypt under Mu'āwiya: Part I”, 13.

first/seventh century), for example, a pagarch allows the use of post-horses by third parties.³³

Within a few decades of the introduction of the post-horse and official courier, the organization of Egypt's postal system drastically changed. Documents from the reign of the caliph al-Walīd (86/705–96/715) and his first successors testify to a starkly increased centralization as well as the Islamization of the postal system. These changes must be considered directly part of or a direct result of the well-known Marwanid reforms, which aimed to support and legitimize the rule of the Marwanids after the Second Civil War (64/683–73/692). The period of the later Marwanids, starting around the year 90/710, constitutes the third phase in the history of the early Islamic postal system.³⁴ From the 90s/710s, for instance, comes our first documentation of the *ṣāhib al-barīd*, “postal chief”, an official appointed next to the pagarch and directly subordinate to the governor. His main tasks seem to have been the management of the postal stations of the pagarchy in which he was stationed (probably delegated to the stables' superintendents, *archistablītai*³⁵) and the reporting on misbehaviour by local administrators.³⁶ Although few *aṣḥāb al-barīd* of this period are known by name, those who were Muslims.³⁷ Based on ties and loyalty created by a shared religious outlook and social environment, the introduction of this Muslim administrative element outside Fuṣṭāṭ aimed to increase the power of the central administration outside its headquarters. Indeed, *P.Lond.* IV 1347 (Aphroditō/Ishqūh), from 91/710, shows how administrative contact between a pagarch and a *ṣāhib al-barīd* went via the bureau of the governor in Fuṣṭāṭ. This administrative novelty fits well with other developments initiated by the Marwanids, in particular the (gradual) Islamization of administrative personnel and the public display of Muslim sovereignty via Islamic inscriptions on milestones set up along the empire's main roads.³⁸ This Islamizing policy also affected other personnel in the postal system. Beside a few uncertain names,³⁹ all

33 See also *P.Apoll.* 45, line 9 (with commentary).

34 The postal system in this period is better known; see Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 71–2 for a discussion.

35 Although attested in documents from the (probably early) first/seventh century (e.g. *P.Ant.* III 197 (Hermopolis/Ushmūn) and *P.Oxy.* XVI 1908 (Oxyrhynchos/al-Bahnasā)), the term *archistablītēs* is mostly found in documents from the Marwanid period. In the preceding century, the dominant term is *stablītēs*; see A. Kolb, “Der *Cursus Publicus* in Ägypten”, in B. Kramer et al. (eds), *Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Berlin, 13.–19.8.1995* (2 vols, Stuttgart and Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1997), 1: 539.

36 For a discussion of the *ṣāhib al-barīd*, see Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 71–4.

37 According to *P.Lond.* IV 1347 and *P.Cair.Arab.* III 153 (both from Aphroditō/Ishqūh and dated 91/710), one al-Qāsim b. Sayyār was *ṣāhib al-barīd* in the pagarchy of Antaiopolis-Appolōnopolis. One Qays b. ‘Ayyār is mentioned as an *epikeimenos* in the fragmentary context of goods and money related to a postal station in the same pagarchy in 98/716 (*P.Lond.* IV 1434, line 246); he may have been a successor of al-Qāsim b. Sayyār (cf. *P.Lond.* IV 1434, comm. to line 246).

38 Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 91–105, especially 102–5; Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 60–1; J.L. Bacharach, “Signs of sovereignty: the *Shahāda*, Qur’anic verses, and the coinage of ‘Abd al-Malik”, *Muqarnas* 27, 2010, 7–8.

39 *P.Lond.* IV 1383, address: Agōpa; *P.Lond.* IV 1416, line 51: Melee; *P.Lond.* IV 1433, line 194: Meeisa; *SB* XX 15100, line 15: Abū Thouma.

beredarioi mentioned in contemporary documents bear Muslim names. The majority of these *beredarioi* have no patronymic and some among them are only referred to with a *kunya*.⁴⁰ In agreement with the impression given in the literary sources, this probably indicates that most of these couriers were slaves or *mawālī*.⁴¹

Contemporary documents concerning the financing and maintenance of postal stations likewise testify to the highly centralized character of the later Marwanids' postal system in Egypt. These documents belong to the archive of Basileios, chief administrator of the Upper Egyptian pagarchy of Aphroditō/Ishqūh during the governorate of Qurra b. Sharīk (90/709–96/714). The bureau of the governor in Fuṣṭāṭ apportioned to each pagarchy an amount in coins to be spent on various specified items. For example, the above-mentioned *P.Lond.* IV 1347 records that Basileios's pagarchy had to contribute 10 1/2 *solidi*, meant for the purchase of fodder, bridles and items known as *pasmagandia* as well as a year's wages for an *archistablītēs* (2 *solidi*) and a groom (*hippokomos*; 1 1/2 *solidi*), to the maintenance of a postal station in Mounachthē, a village in the neighbouring pagarchy of Antaiopolis-Apollōnopolis.⁴² These expenses can, indeed, be found in the pagarchy's financial records.⁴³ That a postal station was not maintained by the pagarchy in which it was located may indicate that it was dependent on the central administration in Fuṣṭāṭ for its finances and supplies. Elsewhere, I have argued that a similar dependency existed between garrisons, irrespective of their location, and the bureau of the governor.⁴⁴ *CPR* XXII 43 (provenance unknown; 96/715 or 97/716) shows, however, that some pagarchies did finance their own postal stations.

Despite the governor's tight control over the postal stations, the allocation of a pagarchy's maintenance costs for a postal station among its various communities could differ. This shows that the responsibility to meet the governor's demands lay with the pagarchs and that the central administration was only indirectly involved at the local level. For example, *P.Lond.* IV 1433, dated 88/707, records that on Tybi 23 (8 Ṣafar/18 January) of that year one Rāshid or Rashīd collected various amounts of money in three villages and three *epoikia* in the pagarchy of Aphroditō/Ishqūh for the wages of an *archistablītēs* and the purchase of 3 arouras of trefoil for the postal station in Mounachthē. By contrast, *P.Lond.* IV 1434, from 98/716, records that each of five communities paid for

40 In addition to those listed in Y. Rāḡib, "Les esclaves publics aux premiers siècles de l'islam", in H. Bresc (ed.), *Figures de l'esclave au Moyen-Age et dans le monde moderne* (Paris and Montreal: L'Harmattan 1996), appendix 4: *P.Lond.* IV 1336, line 15: Abū 'Āmir; *P.Lond.* IV 1351, line 15, *P.Lond.* IV 1353, line 29, and *P.Ross.Georg.* IV 15, frag. 1 verso line 1: Sa'īd; *P.Lond.* IV 1433, lines 45 and 194: 'Abd al-Raḥmān; *P.Lond.* IV 1441, line 89: Ḥakīm; *P.Lond.* IV 1464: Muḡhayyir; *P.Ross.Georg.* IV 13, line 8: Rashīd. *Beredarioi* with patronymic: *P.Lond.* IV 1434, lines 17 and 26: Ma'bad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān and 'Ubayd b. Shu'ayb; *P.Lond.* IV 1441, lines 80 and 84: Yazīd b. Ka'b and Ṣakhr b. Muḡājir.

41 Rāḡib, "Les esclaves publics", 16–7; Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 67. Those *beredarioi* with patronymics are free men.

42 According to these records, Aphroditō/Ishqūh did not contribute to the maintenance of a postal station within its own borders, if it had one (cf. the introduction to *P.Lond.* IV 1347).

43 *P.Ross.Georg.* IV 25 (first decades of the second/eighth century).

44 Bruning, *The Rise of a Capital*, ch. 3.

the costs of specific items only, including the wages of an *archistablitēs* and a groom, on Pachōn 4 (2 Ramaḍān/29 April) of that year. It is important to note that these contributions were all in coins and that the actual items were not requisitioned. Once collected, the contributions were deducted from that year's tax quota, which the pagarchy needed to send to the central administration in Fuṣṭāṭ.⁴⁵

The pagarchy further bore the costs for the maintenance of those *beredarioi* who were within its borders. That these couriers received their wages at their destination is shown by documents such as *CPR* XIV 33 (Hermopolis/Ushmūn; late first/seventh or second/eighth century), a short receipt for the payment of 3 artabas of barley to the *beredarios* Sulaym. The unpredictable costs of the maintenance of such visitors, as well as their animals,⁴⁶ were included under the *dapanē* and then deducted from the tax quota.⁴⁷

It is a document from the early Abbasid period that gives information on how the postal stations themselves were administered and supplied in the mid-second/eighth century. Dating from 135/753, *P.Khalili* II 5 records the delivery of various types of fodder at specific postal stations; see the edition below. Documents from the early Abbasid period indicate that the transition from Umayyad to Abbasid rule caused no direct changes.⁴⁸ In Egypt, a corpus of six documents from Hermopolis/Ushmūn, spanning the period 127/745–141/759, testify to the unabated continuation of the governor's involvement in the affairs of local *aṣḥāb al-barīd* and his authority over the use of the facilities of postal stations and mounts (in addition to the continued use of Umayyad documentary formulae).⁴⁹ *P.Khalili* II 5 shows a similar measure of control over the postal system's organization and administration. Similarly, in the east of the Muslim empire, two documents attest to the continued existence under the early Abbasids of a supplementary tax for the maintenance of the postal system.⁵⁰ The later Marwanids'

45 See the money contributed by the *epoikion* Paunakis for "fodder for the animals of the postal station of Mounachthē" (line 80), which is recorded under the *logisima* (line 75) in *P.Lond.* IV 1414 (Aphroditō/Ishqūh; early second/eighth century). The payments in this fiscal category are deducted from the tax quota (see the discussions in *P.Lond.* IV, 125–6 and K. Morimoto, *The Fiscal Administration of Egypt in the Early Islamic Period* (Kyoto: Dohosha, 1981), 105–7). As to the payment of the personnel of the postal system, cf. Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 75–7.

46 *O.CrumVC* 49 (Memphis/Manf; second/eighth century).

47 *P.Lond.* IV 1441, lines 80, 84 and 89; *P.Lond.* IV 1443, lines 35, 48 and 56. The wages of *beredarioi* are also mentioned, but further not specified, in *P.Lond.* IV 1433, lines 45, 121, 143, 311, 350 and 368. All documents come from Aphroditō/Ishqūh and date from the first quarter of the second/eighth century.

48 Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 87.

49 Y. Rāḡib, "Lettres de service au maître de poste d'Ašmūn", *Archéologie islamique* 3, 1992, 5–16; W. Diem, "Three remarkable Arabic documents from the Heidelberg papyrus collection (first–third/seventh–ninth centuries)", in A. Kaplony, D. Potthast and C. Römer (eds), *From Bāwīt to Marw: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015), 13–8 (see also the discussion on the identity of the scribe on p. 15). Note that literary sources mention *aṣḥāb al-barīd* holding authority over the whole of Egypt as early as the caliphate of al-Manṣūr (136/754–158/775); see Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 67 and 73–4.

50 A Bactrian document from 129/747 (N. Sims-Williams, *Bactrian Documents from Northern Afghanistan* (3 vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 2007, 2012), 1:126–35 [doc. W]) mentions a tax called *barit*, which is probably a post-tax; see

organization of the postal system, the third phase in its history under Islam, endured into the first years of Abbasid rule. With few other documentary sources for the postal system under the early Abbasids being known,⁵¹ however, the effects of changes to the postal system introduced by the Abbasids during the first fifty years of their rule cannot yet be traced outside literary source material.⁵²

P.Khalili II 5

Accession no. PPS131
Plates, see *P.Khalili II*, 31

12 × 20 cm

Poss. Fustāt⁵³
Shawwāl 17, 135/April 26, 753

Light-brown papyrus. The original cutting line is preserved at the bottom of side 1/ the top of side 2. Text is missing on the left side and top of side 1 and the left and right sides, as well as the bottom of side 2. Side 1 is written in brownish ink perpendicular to the papyrus' fibres; side 2 is written along the fibres in two hands (cf. below) in black ink. Although doubtless contemporary, the scripts of both sides are not identical. Significant differences are visible in the realization of, e.g., the medial *kāf* in the word *sikka* (side 1, lines 4 and 6; side 2, line 6), the final *mīm* in *bi-sm* (side 1, line 1; side 2, line 1), the final *nūn* in the word *mīn* (side 1, line 4; side 2, especially lines 5 and 10), and the final *hā'* in the word *allāh* (side 1, line 1; side 2, line 1). A few diacritical dots are used on side 2.

Side 1 is a register documenting the time of the feeding of animals (*dawābb*) in at least two stations, those of al-Qaṣr and 'Ayn Shams. The register is not finished. Empty spaces after the words "day" and "month" (in lines 3 and 4), where one could specify the time of feeding, are left blank.

Side 2 is a "statement" (line 1: *dhikr*) of the amount of fodder delivered to at least one relay station, that of al-Qaṣr (line 6). In its present state of preservation, it consists of two sections, the first being an overview of fodder "for ten months" delivered to al-Qaṣr in the year 135/753 (line 2), the second being another overview that covers an entire year (line 8), probably the same as that of the first section, and possibly related to another station. The second statement is not

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- Silverstein, "Documentary evidence", 158–9. *P.Khurasan* 6, dated to c. 147/764–765, mentions a supplementary tax for the "expenses of animals (*dawābb*) of the *barīd*" and "travel provisions for the couriers (*burud*), messengers and their board" (lines 7–8).
- 51 Other, albeit somewhat later, documents from the early Abbasid period occasionally refer to postal stations, see *P.Philad.Arab.* 74 (sent from Hermopolis/Ushmūn; second/eighth or third/ninth century), A. Grohmann, "Neue Beiträge zur arabischen Papyrologie", *Anzeiger der phil.-hist. Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 85, 1948, no. 6 (provenance unknown; third/ninth century), and E. Herzberg, *Geschichte der Stadt Samarra* (Hamburg: Verlag von Eckardt & Messtorff, 1948), 272–3 [no. 4]. *P.Heid.Arab.* II 21 (provenance unknown; third/ninth century) refers to an anonymous *ṣāhib al-barīd*; costs for the private use of the postal system are mentioned in *P.Hamb.Arab.* I 13 (Hermopolis/Ushmūn; 294/906–7).
- 52 For a discussion of the early Abbasid period on the basis of literary sources, see Silverstein, *Postal Systems*, 59–84 and 87–9.
- 53 Many of the Egyptian documents from the Nasser D. Khalili Collection are likely to come from Fustāt, see *P.Khalili I*, 23–4. The toponyms referred to in *P.Khalili II 5* also suggest this provenance.

finished. Amounts of delivered fodder are not specified below the column headings. Line 12 contains the traces of new headings.

The first section contains seven columns. Column *a'* and line 5 of column *a* did not belong to the original statement and were added later. These additions are written in a hand which is different from that of the rest of the first section and seems identical with the hand of section 2. As such, (these parts of) lines 4 and 5 are set apart from the rest of the section. Beside palaeography, the organization of the statement also shows that we are dealing with additions. First, column *a* starts exactly below lines 1 and 2. This probably attests to the original size of the right margin and suggests that column *a'* was added at a later moment in that margin. Second, the phrase *lahā min* ("of which is/are of") in column *c*, line 5, is replaced by *wa-min* ("and of") in the succeeding columns on the same line. This indicates that column *c* was originally the first to state the amount of fodder. Again, column *a'* and line 5 of column *b*, which also contain such information, must have been added later. Therefore, the original document contained, after the opening lines 1 and 2, a column with names of relay stations (*a*), a column stating the number of animals in each station (*b*), and then columns stating the amounts of various types of fodder (*c* and further). The columns of the second section of side 2 are not written exactly below those of the first section.

Side 1

							↓
						بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم	[1
						الفسطاط والنحـ	[2
						vac.	[3
						علفت دواب سكة القصر من يوم	[4
						vac.	[5
						وعلفت سكة عين شمس يوم	[6

Side 2

								↔
								[1
								[2
								[3
								[4
								[5
								[6
								[7
								[8
								[9
								[10
								[11
								[12

Diacritical dots: 1. الرحيم, بسم.

Translation

Side 1

- 1 In the name of God, the merciful, the compas[sionate].
 2 Fuṣṭāṭ and al-..[
 3 []
 4 I fed the riding animals of the station of al-Qaṣr from day []
 5 []
 6 And I fed (the riding animals of) the station of ‘Ayn Shams, day [mon]th ...[]

Side 2

- 1 In name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Statement of what has
 been given of fod[der
 2 and trefoil for ten months of the year one hundred thirty-five, 13 days
 remaining of Shawwāl 135.
 3 *vac.*
 4 *a'* *a* *b* *c*
 4 *Qin]tārs* *Irdabbs*
 5 Of] stamped trefoil And given of trefoil Animals Of which are barley
 2,100
 6] 2,203 The station of al- 60 3,000
 Qaṣr
 4 *d* *e* *f*
 4 *Qintārs* *Faddāns* The [
 5 And of chaff And of trefoil ...
 6 2,400 [
 7 *vac.*
 8]. . . For twelve months
 9 *g* *h* *i* *j*
 9]. . . *Qintārs* *Qintārs* *Faddāns*
 10 And of bar]ley And of chaff And of stamped And of trefoil
 trefoil
 9 *k*
 9 *Irdabbs*
 10 ...
 11 *vac.*
 12 ...

Commentary

Side 1

2. *Wa-'l-..*[. The identity of this toponym remains unknown. Possible interpretations, such as al-Bujūm and al-Nakhāmūn in the eastern delta⁵⁴ or al-Buḥayra, in medieval times possibly the name of a town in the western

54 S. Timm, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten in arabischer Zeit* (6 vols, Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1984–92), 1:421–2 [s.v. “Al-Bugūm”] and 6:2461 [s.v. “Ṭaḥamūn”].

- delta,⁵⁵ are too remote from Fustāṭ and 'Ayn Shams to be considered likely candidates.
4. *Al-Qaṣr*. Judging from the mention of Fustāṭ and 'Ayn Shams in lines 2 and 6, this toponym is in all likelihood to be identified with Qaṣr al-Sham' (Babylon), the Byzantine fortress located just to the south of Fustāṭ. Al-Ya'qūbī (d. 292/905 or later) writes explicitly that Qaṣr al-Sham' was simply known as al-Qaṣr, "the Fortress".⁵⁶ This statement is confirmed by this toponym's use in historical sources.⁵⁷ That Qaṣr al-Sham' is meant may also be reflected in the 60 animals that are held in al-Qaṣr (line 5). Compared with a postal station in the pagarchy of Antaiopolis-Apollōnopolis, which counted 14 animals in 98/716,⁵⁸ al-Qaṣr surely was a large and, by implication, important station. Another reference to a place called al-Qaṣr, which does not seem to be located in the vicinity of either Fustāṭ or 'Ayn Shams, can be found in *P.Philad.Arab.* 54 (third/ninth–fourth/tenth century; the Arsinoitēs/Fayyūm or Hermopolis/Ushmūn).⁵⁹
 6. 'Ayn Shams. The Late Antique history of 'Ayn Shams (Heliopolis), located c. 18 kilometres north of Fustāṭ, is poorly understood.⁶⁰ The town appears very infrequently in documentary source material. By the time *P.Sijp.* 25 (Apollōnopolis Parva or Antaiopolis) was written, probably in 80/699 or 95/714, the town was still the capital of a pagarchy. It is not known if 'Ayn Shams kept this administrative centrality until the late-third/ninth century, when Muslim historians and geographers first mention a *kūra*, "district", of 'Ayn Shams.⁶¹ That *P.Khalili* II 5, the only Arabic papyrus known to mention 'Ayn Shams, refers to a postal station in the town probably indicates that it continued to be of local importance until the mid-second/eighth century. Third/ninth- and fourth/tenth-century geographers do not mention a postal station at 'Ayn Shams. The city seems not to have

55 Timm, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten*, 1:427–9 [s.v. "Al-Buḥēra"].

56 Al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, ed. T.G.J. Juynboll (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1861), 118.

57 W.B. Kubiak, *Al-Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1987), 50–51.

58 *P.Lond.* IV 1434, line 245.

59 The phrase *ṣāhib al-qaṣr* in *P.Cair.Arab.* VI 410–11 (third/ninth century; al-Ushmūn) and *P.Ryl.Arab.* I § VII 16 (date unknown; prob. Upper Egypt) must be taken literally ("lord of the fortress") and does not contain a toponym.

60 For an overview, see Timm, *Das christlich-koptische Ägypten*, 2:910–14 [s.v. "Ēn Šams"]. For the main points of interest in Classical Arabic sources, see J. Maspero and G. Wiet, *Materiaux pour servir à la géographie de l'Égypte* (Cairo: IFAO, 1919), 131–2.

61 Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 267 (similar information in al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt wa-'l-quḍāt*, 19); Ibn al-Faqīh, *Mukhtaṣar kitāb al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1885), 73–4; Ibn Khurdādhbih, *Kitāb al-masālik wa-'l-mamālik*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1889), 81–3; al-Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 125–7). Note that Yāqūt al-Rūmī (*Mu'jam al-buldān* (6 vols, Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1866–73), 4: 178) writes that 'Ayn Shams used to be the capital of the *kūra* of Itrīb. Al-Muqaddasī (*Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma'rifat al-aqālīm*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1877), 193–4) lists 'Ayn Shams among the principal towns in the *kūra* of Maqadūniyya, the capital of which was Fustāṭ. See also A. Grohmann, *Studien zur historischen Geographie und Verwaltung des frühmittelalterlichen Ägypten* (Vienna: Rudolf M. Rohrer, 1959), 8.

been a major stop on itineraries between Fuṣṭāṭ and the north and north-east.⁶²

Side 2

1. *Dhikr alladhī dufīʿa ilaynā min aʿl[āf]*. This title is written on the same line as the *basmala*. This is an unusual, but not unattested, practice in documents pre-dating the third/ninth century; see K.M. Younes, “Joy and sorrow in early Muslim Egypt: Arabic papyrus letters: text and content” (PhD dissertation, Leiden University, 2013), no. 1, commentary to line 1 (p. 88); see also E.M. Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 191–2 (and 191, n. 97 for exceptions) and *P.Vente*, 2:13 [§ 32].

The tale of the *ʿayn* in *dufīʿa* reaches to the bottom of line 2. Instead of *ilaynā*, the scribe first wrote *ilā* (“to”) and then corrected it into *ilaynā* by writing over the *alif maqsūra*. The reconstruction of the word *aʿl[āf]* is based on the assumption that, like side 1, the trefoil, barley and chaff listed on side 2 were used as *ʿalaf*, “fodder”. According to classical Arabic grammar, the use of *aʿlāf*, a “plural of paucity” (Ar. *jamʿ qilla*) of *ʿalaf*, indicates that the number of types of fodder in this document ranges between three and ten. See W. Wright, *Arabic Grammar* (2 vols, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1896–98), 1:234 [§ 307]; cf. S. Hopkins, *Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic: Based upon Papyri Datable to before 300 A.H./912 A.D.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 110 [§ 87.f].

2. *Khamas wa-thalāthīn wa-miʿa*. The word *thalāthīn* is written with a *scriptio defectiva* of the *ā*. See Hopkins, *Studies*, 9–10 [§ 9.c].
4. (col. aʿ) *Qanā[tīr]*. Hand 2.
5. (col. aʿ) *Min al-qurt al-madqūq*; (col. a) *wa-dufīʿa min al-qurt 2,100*. Hand 2.
6. ,βçγ[. The letter that follows the c consists of a separately written vertical and horizontal stroke. While it resembles a τ (“300”), this option is ruled out by the clearly legible c. Only tens, units, and fractions may follow c. The reading τ[(“1/300”), which is theoretically possible, seems unlikely in a description of an amount of trefoil. If the vertical stroke belongs to a letter now broken off, the reading ι (“10”) instead of γ should be considered.
6. *Sikkat al-Qaṣr*. See the commentary to line 4 of side 1 above.
- 8–12. Hand 2.
10. *Wa-min al-]shaʿīr*. The restoration of this entry is based on the beginnings of the entries in columns *h* to *j*. Another possible restoration would be *la-hā min al-]shaʿīr* (“of which are barley”), cf. column *c*.
12. The traces visible in this line are of letters underneath a piece of papyrus that should be removed.

62 Cf. the itineraries described in Ibn Khurdādhbih, *Kitāb al-masālik wa-ʿl-mamālik*, 79–81; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 130; Qudāma b. Jaʿfar, *Kitāb al-kharāj*, ed. M.H. al-Zubaydī (Baghdad: Dār al-Rashīd li-ʿl-Nashr, 1981), 119–21; and al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm*, 213–5 and 244–5.

Abbreviations

- CPR IV W. Till, *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri: Die koptischen Rechtsurkunden der Papyrussammlung der Oesterreichischen Nationalbibliothek* (Vienna: Adolf Holzhausens Nachfolger, 1958).
- CPR XIV G. Fantoni, *Griechische Texte X: Greek Papyri of the Byzantine Period* (Vienna: Verlag Brüder Hollinek, 1989).
- CPR XXII F. Morelli, *Griechische Texte XV: Documenti greci per la fiscalità e la amministrazione dell'Egitto arabo* (Vienna: Verlag Brüder Hollinek, 2001).
- CPR XXX F. Morelli, *L'archivio di Senouthios Anystes e testi conessi: Lettere e documenti per la costruzione di una capitale* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010).
- O.CrumVC W.E. Crum, *Varia Coptica* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1939).
- P.Ant. III J.W.B. Barns and H. Zilliacus, *The Antinoopolis Papyri* (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1967).
- P.Apoll. R. Rémondon, *Papyrus grecs d'Apollônôs Anô: Documents de fouilles de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire* (Cairo: IFAO, 1953).
- P.Cair.Arab. I–VI A. Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri in the Egyptian Library* (6 vols, Cairo: Egyptian Library Press, 1934–62).
- P.Got. H. Frisk, *Papyrus grecs de la Bibliothèque municipale de Gothenbourg* (Gothenburg: Elanders, 1929).
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- P.Lond. III F.G. Kenyon and H.I. Bell, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum* (Oxford: Horace Hart, 1907).
- P.Lond. IV H.I. Bell and W.E. Crum, *Greek Papyri in the British Museum: The Aphrodito Papyri* (Oxford: Horace Hart, 1910).

- P.Mert.* II B.R. Rees et al., *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Greek Papyri in the Collection of Wilfred Merton, F.S.A.* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis & Co., 1959).
- P.Oxy.* XVI B.P. Grenfell et al., *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, XVI (London: The Egypt Exploration Society, 1924).
- P.Oxy.* LIV R.A. Coles, H. Maehler and P.J. Parsons, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, LIV (London: The Egypt Exploration Society, 1987).
- P.Philad.Arab.* G. Levi della Vida, *Arabic Papyri in the University Museum in Philadelphia (Pennsylvania)* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1981).
- P.Ross.Georg.* III G. Zereteli and P. Jernstedt, *Papyri russischer und georgischer Sammlungen: spätrömische und byzantinische Texte* (Tiflis: Universitätslithographie, 1930).
- P.Ross.Georg.* IV P. Jernstedt, *Papyri russischer und georgischer Sammlungen: Die Kome-Aphrodito Papyri der Sammlung Lichačov* (Tiflis: Universitätslithographie, 1927).
- P.Ryl.Arab.* I D.S. Margoliouth, *Catalogue of Arabic Papyri in the John Rylands Library, Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1933).
- P.Sijp.* A.J.B. Sirks and K.A. Worp, *Papyri in Memory of P.J. Sijpesteijn (P.Sijp.)* (New Haven: American Society of Papyrologists, 2007).
- P.Vente* Y. Rāgib, *Actes de vente d'esclaves et d'animaux d'Égypte* (2 vols, Cairo: IFAO, 2002).
- P.Vind.Tand.* P.J. Sijpesteijn and K.A. Worp, *Fünfunddreissig Wiener Papyri* (Zutphen: Terra Publishing, 1976).
- SB I–XXVIII* F. Preisigke et al., *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten* (Strasbourg, Berlin, Wiesbaden: Walter de Gruyter, Harrassowitz, 1915–2013).
- SB Kopt.* I M.R.M. Hasitzka, *Koptisches Sammelbuch* (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1993).