

## THE MONASTERIES OF THE FAYYŪM—*Concluded*

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The monastery of Ẓalamūn was a rival (perhaps a friendly one) of the monastery of Naḳlūn. It will be recalled that fourteen monks had left Naḳlūn to follow Samuel to Ẓalamūn. But the monks in all Egypt, especially those in the north, moved about rather freely. The loose organization of the Nitrian and the Wādī Ḥabīb communities as well as of those of the Fayyūm centered as much, if not more, around an outstanding personality as around any given monastery or locality. And so it would not be at all surprising if someday we should find that in the long history of these two monasteries, which seem to share honors for fame and antiquity, monks from Ẓalamūn found their way to Naḳlūn also. But the incident will probably center round a strong personality, and thus far I know of none from Naḳlūn who could match an Abba Isaac or an Abba Miṣāʾīl of Ẓalamūn.

The first documentary reference we have to the Naḳlūn monastery after the time of Samuel is the Oriental Institute document which led to this study. From it we have already seen that the monastery was the recipient of a fair-sized property located at Buljustūḳ and deeded to it as a gift by Tūsānah, daughter of Bisanti, in the year A.H. 336/A.D. 947. But this property is deeded jointly to two monasteries, that of Naḳlūn and that of Shallā. This raises the question of the relationship of these two monasteries. Was the monastery at Shallā administered from the Naḳlūn monastery, or was the revenue of the donated property simply to be divided between the two? That the monastery at Shallā was a smaller monastery may be inferred from its decline and complete disappearance within the next three centuries. It was located not far from Naḳlūn,<sup>86</sup> probably to the south and west and perhaps across the Baḥr al-Ḡharaḳ, since it lay in the valley of the Baḥr al-Tanabṭawaih and within view of the very mountain on which stood the monastery of Naḳlūn (see map). It was already abandoned in the time of ʿUṭhmān ibn al-Nāblusī.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>86</sup> Maḳrīzī, II, 505, or Abū Ṣāliḥ, p. 313.

<sup>87</sup> BIFAO, I, 31.

A second documentary reference to this monastery is found in a Coptic letter<sup>88</sup> written by a certain deacon, Macrobius, to another deacon, Macarius, who seems to have been left alone at Naqlūn. Macrobius sends him a donkey and begs him to come north and stay until they will have finished building; he is to bring with him some provisions and his *kabos* in which to sleep. The manuscript is on paper, undated, but since it contains the word *amār*, the letter probably belongs to the Arab period. Again, since the place is deserted except for Macrobius, and since (re?)building is anticipated if not in progress, the time may be the post-Ḥākim period of restoration, that is, the first part of the eleventh century (see below). The Bohairic tendencies of the text and the references to the north may also mean that Macrobius was writing from Nitria.

When Abū Ṣālih's account of the monastery of Naqlūn is compared with his account of the monastery of Ḳalamūn,<sup>89</sup> it is easy to see that the Naqlūn monastery, though of ancient fame and of proud tradition linking it with Joseph and Jacob, is but a poor second, in tangible assets, to the monastery of Ḳalamūn; for it has but two churches and one tower against the twelve churches and four towers of the monastery of Ḳalamūn. The two churches are those of Michael and Gabriel, the first within the wall, the second without, though having a wall of its own. No mention is made of revenues, property, or number of monks. Maḳrīzī's account<sup>90</sup> adds but little, though it mentions that the monastery was also known as the monastery of Gabriel and as the monastery of the "Beam" or "Log" (Dair al-Khashabah), and that a festival celebration at the monastery brought to it Christians from Madinat al-Fayyūm and other places. It was located then on a road leading to Madinat al-Fayyūm, though the road was in general very little used.

Another undated reference to the monastery of Naqlūn is to be found in the Ethiopic Synaxarium.<sup>91</sup> Since the compilation of this Synaxarium is placed between 1178 and 1425, this reference must be

<sup>88</sup> W. E. Crum, *Catalogue of the Coptic Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1905), p. 281, No. 590. The middle Egyptian manuscripts from the Fayyūm (pp. 237-314) are all undated, and from the *Catalogue* little but the general impression of monastic activity and correspondence is to be gained.

<sup>89</sup> Pp. 205-8.

<sup>90</sup> II, 505.

<sup>91</sup> Budge, II, 559.

placed in the period between Abū Ṣāliḥ and Maḳrīzī.<sup>92</sup> The reference is of further interest in that it states that the body of Abba ʿAkāweḥ is "at the present day" in the monastery of Naḳlūn. Abba ʿAkāweḥ is our Abba Kāw, who, as we have seen above, was martyred in the Diocletian persecutions and buried in his native city of Bimāy, where a church was erected to his name. When and why was the translation of his body to Naḳlūn accomplished? The reason can be guessed. Abba Kāw was *the famous native* monk of the Fayyūm, and the monastery of Naḳlūn was at that time *the* monastery of the Fayyūm; it would, therefore, be only natural that the body of the one should find its final resting place in the crypts of the other. As to when this happened, even a guess is difficult. In all probability it took place before Samuel's day, that is, roughly in the years between 300 and 660. It may have been the earlier part of the period, when the memory of Abba Kāw was still fresh, in which case it may have been soon after the foundation of the Naḳlūn monastery; again, it may have been late in the period, about the time when the translation of the Forty-nine Martyrs to Scetis took place, in which act the Fayyūm played a rival part.<sup>93</sup>

The monastery of Naḳlūn, like that of Ḳalamūn, is simply listed by ʿUṭhmān ibn al-Nāblusī among the thirteen Fayyūm monasteries. The next important account of the monastery of Naḳlūn we owe to Vansleb's observations,<sup>94</sup> made during a visit to it in 1672. So far as I know, he was the first westerner to discover an Arabic manuscript of the story of Aūr, and from it he drew his material concerning the origin of the church of the monastery. Vansleb found the monastery almost entirely ruined, but its two churches seem to have been still standing. Though he does not mention the church of Michael by name, it must have been the one to which he could not gain entrance because the monks (number not given) had their provisions stored in it. The church of Gabriel he describes as being very beautiful, all painted within with pictures of Bible stories, and having the nave supported by slender columns constructed of several stone drums each.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, I, pp. xv-xvi.

<sup>93</sup> Evelyn White, Pt. II, pp. 269-71.

<sup>94</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 274-77.

Neither Pococke nor Napoleon's *Description* nor Curzon mentions the monastery. Butler gives it only a passing mention, and 'Alī Pasha Mubārak repeats the accounts of Abū Šālīḥ and Maḳrīzī. Quatremère and Amélineau both take up the question of its geography but add nothing to its history. Here again it is Somers Clarke's account<sup>95</sup> that helps us to bring our survey up to date. The monastery is not listed as such; but in the list of churches in the bishopric of the Fayyūm and Gīzah there is a church of the monastery of the angel Gabriel (No. 18 in the list, named "Dêr el Malâk Ghabriâl"). The significance of the name appears from the following explanatory note supplied to Clarke by his informant:

The word Dêr is properly applied only to a place where a monastery or a convent exists, or has existed. A parish church is called a *kanêssah*, a corruption of the Greek word *ecclesia*. The place is not called a Dêr even if it counts among its ministers several monks. If, however, the church once belonged to a monastic institution it retains its monastic title. Thus Dêr el Abiaḍ and Dêr el Aḥmar have become parish churches long since, and are served by married priests. They do not contain one monk, but are yet called Dêr.<sup>96</sup>

Of the nine churches given for the Fayyūm this is the only one that has the title "Dêr." Thus, though now but a parish church, the church at Naḳlūn, like that at Ḳalamūn, has survived the ups and downs of the long centuries. Johann Georg is our latest informant on its present condition. He mentions it only as "Deir-el-Melak," but from what we have already learned from Clarke, this can be none other than "Dêr el Malâk Ghabriâl," that is, the church of Gabriel in the monastery of Naḳlūn. Brief as his account is, it is very interesting, and so we give it here in full:

Die Weiterfahrt ging zuerst durch reiche Felder und zuletzt durch volle Wüste. So erreichten wir Deir-el-Melak . . . , an dem von aussen gar nichts zu sehen ist. Die Kirche wirkt wie jedes andere Haus. Der Eintritt erfolgt durch einen Eselstall, der noch jetzt als solcher benutzt wird. Und so tritt man in eine hochinteressante Kirche, etwa aus dem VII. Jahrhundert. Vorzüglich sind da die Kapitelle, die noch ganz korinthisch wirken, sowohl im Schiff als im Haikal. Sehr schön ist ein Bücherpult, das wohl etwa aus dem XII. Jahrhundert stammt. Interessant ist die hölzerne Decke. Fast das Bemerkenswerteste ist ein Grabstein mit griechischer Inschrift, den wir aufrichten mussten, um ihn zu photographieren.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>95</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.

<sup>97</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

The tombstone is similar to others used by the early Christian Copts. In general appearance it is nearest to one now in the Cairo museum.<sup>98</sup> In both the inscription is written in the spaces formed by the intersection of the cross. The text is almost identical with that of Crum's No. 8698,<sup>99</sup> which is reproduced and deciphered by Kaufmann.<sup>100</sup> The inscription of the Naklūn tombstone has been deciphered by Professor Sprengling, with the assistance of Mr. Procope S. Costas, and reads as follows:

- (1) † KĒ ANA (2) ΠAYCON (3) THN YYXH  
 (4) TOY ΔΟΥΛΟΥ (5) COY XPIC (6) TOΔΩPOY €  
 (7) KOIMHΘH MH (8) NI ΦAPMOY (9) ΘI KĒ H IN.

The last H of line 7 seems to be corrected from an €; the N of line 8 is turned about thus W; final N of the abbreviation for indiction is not clear and well drawn and is followed by a semiornamental abbreviation.

The text in translation reads: "Christ Lord, grant rest to the soul of thy servant, Christodorus. He fell asleep on the 25th of the month of Pharmuthi, 8th indiction."

The very fact that the tombstone has been preserved all these long centuries may indicate that the Christodorus whom it commemorates was of some importance and renown in the locality if not in the monastery itself. Could it possibly be that he dates back to the days of Diocletian and Maximianus<sup>101</sup> and is therefore none other than the Christodorus who, together with Timothy and Theophilus, was associated with the mount of ẖalamūn, the three being known as the three saints of the desert (see above)? Obviously, the question cannot be answered as yet. Nevertheless, the inscription, despite its incompleteness as to name and date, stands as one more piece of tangible evidence of the antiquity of Naklūn.

We turn now to the general monastic situation in the Fayyūm after the Arab conquest. The number and the prosperity of the

<sup>98</sup> W. E. Crum, *Coptic Monuments* (Catalogue général des antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, IV [Cairo, 1902]), Pl. V, No. 8423.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, Pl. LIII.

<sup>100</sup> *Handbuch der altchristlichen Epigraphik* (Freiburg, 1917), p. 77, No. 75; cf. also p. 73.

<sup>101</sup> The "8th indiction" being taken as the eighth year of the first indiction, i.e., 297/98 +8 or 312 +8, which would be 304/5 or 319.

churches and of the monasteries reflected the condition of the Coptic church as a whole, and this, in its turn, was fundamentally influenced by the political and economic conditions of the country. Evelyn-White<sup>102</sup> has shown how these factors reacted on the external history of the monasteries of Nitria and Wādī Habīb. The monasteries of the Fayyūm appear to have followed, in general, the same periodic curve of vicissitude as those of Nitria and Wādī Habīb, without however reaching its high peaks, and descending to the lowest levels more gradually. While this holds true of the external history of the two groups, it is even more evident in the spiritual and purely ecclesiastical phases of monastic life.

We have no way of telling the sum total of churches and monasteries in the Fayyūm in the period immediately preceding the Arab conquest and the religious settlement of ʿUmar through ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAṣī. We do know that in the troublous time before the conquest many monasteries (and churches?) were abandoned. The alleged settlement of ʿUmar forbade not only the building of new monasteries and churches, but also the repair of ruined (and abandoned?) ones.<sup>103</sup> However, historical tradition seems here to have made ʿUmar sponsor of an intolerant attitude which had a later origin; for, apart from the fact that all provincial officials were Copts, considerable evidence exists to show that during the first century the official attitude was very liberal and that the Christians could build and restore churches with very little, if any, interference. What restrictions existed could usually be overcome by a payment of money.<sup>104</sup> The early exemption of the monks from the poll tax helped to attract large numbers to the existing monasteries,<sup>105</sup> and this, in turn, must have led to the repair of the old or the building of new ones. It is in these favorable conditions that one must see the explanation of the great number of churches and monasteries in the Fayyūm in later Umayyad times. Abū Ṣāliḥ states that there were thirty-five monasteries there,<sup>106</sup> and we know that in every province the number of churches greatly exceeded that of its monasteries.

<sup>102</sup> Pt. II, pp. 265–329.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (hereafter abbreviated *EI*), II, 992.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 992 f., and literature referred to there.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 993.

<sup>106</sup> Pp. 202–3 and 349; on p. 53, however, the number is given as 33.

As the monasteries grew in number, so their temporal wealth increased also. This consisted chiefly in large tracts of land, most of which had doubtless come from pious donations made by the Copts, while some of them represented the worldly possessions of the monks given over at the time of their entry into the monastic life. Towards the close of the Umayyad period we find the thirty-five monasteries of the Fayyūm, then under the capable administration of the provincial bishop, Abba Abraham (under the patriarchates of Theodore, 731-43, and Michael, 744-68),<sup>107</sup> owning cultivated lands on which a yearly tax of 500 dinars was levied.<sup>108</sup> The wealth of these monasteries was indeed such as to expose Abba Abraham to "friendly" extortion by the financial governor of Egypt, al-Ḳāsim (114-24?/732-42?);<sup>109</sup> for on one occasion al-Ḳāsim's declarations of love and friendship cost Abba Abraham 400 dinars, and the latter seems to have had no difficulty in paying them on the spot.<sup>110</sup>

The ecclesiasticism which colored Egyptian monasticism during this period flourished more in the Wādī Naṭrūn units than elsewhere, but it penetrated also into the Fayyūm monasteries. The first indirect bid for power on the part of the latter is perhaps to be seen in the attempt of the Fayyūm to have a share in the translation of the famous Forty-nine Martyrs, which seems to have taken place in the last decade of the patriarchate of Abba Benjamin I (622-66).<sup>111</sup> According to the story, Fayyūm weavers and monks attempted to steal the body of Dios and thus separate it from that of his father, but without success.<sup>112</sup>

It was not long, however, before ecclesiastical recognition came to the Fayyūm monasteries. No doubt this was in a large measure due to the influence of Samuel of Ḳalamūn (*ca.* 600-698), whose activity has been sketched above. The Fayyūm monasteries even began to play an important role in the election of the patriarchs. Hitherto the

<sup>107</sup> Dates as given in *PO*, V, 86, 88.

<sup>108</sup> *PO*, V, 94; Abū Ṣāliḥ, pp. 53, 203.

<sup>109</sup> *PO*, V, 92-105. Moslem writers make little or no mention of al-Ḳāsim, but the fact that he was financial governor of Egypt is evident from glass stamps and weights issued by him; cf. Stanley Lane-Poole, *A History of Egypt in the Middle Ages* (London, 1901), pp. 29, 48, and Flinders Petrie, *Glass Stamps and Weights* (London, 1926), pp. 3, 15-16.

<sup>110</sup> *PO*, V, 93-94.

<sup>111</sup> Dates as given in *PO*, I, 487.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Evelyn-White, Pt. II, pp. 269-70; *PO*, XI, 699-703; *Syn. Alex.*, I, 233-34.

Nitrian and the Wādī Habīb monasteries had led in supplying candidates for the patriarchate; in the person of John III (677–86), however, a monk from the monastery of Sailah in the Fayyūm was chosen.<sup>113</sup> Again, in the disputed patriarchal election of 744, it was Abba Abraham, the previously mentioned business-like bishop of the Fayyūm, who together with some northern bishops played a decisive role in the election of Abba Michael (744–68), a monk of the monastery of St. Macarius.<sup>114</sup>

We do not know to what extent the Fayyūm monasteries suffered, if at all, in the fatal flight of Marwān I to Egypt in A.D. 750, since it is difficult to tell how far into the Fayyūm Marwān and his routed army penetrated. He is reported to have been killed at Būšīr or Abū Šīr; but there are several places bearing this name, and the Arabic sources are confused and contradictory.<sup>115</sup> Ṭabarī just mentions Abū Šīr in Egypt,<sup>116</sup> al-Makīn<sup>117</sup> and Abū Šāliḥ<sup>118</sup> report him to have been killed at Būšīr Ḳūrīdus. Yāqūt, quoting Ibn Zaulāk, also places the death of Marwān in a Būšīr Ḳūrīdus, but quoting Kindī, he locates the event in a Būšīr in the district of Ushmūnain.<sup>119</sup> Ibn Taghrī-birdī places the death of Marwān in the Būšīr of al-Gīzah.<sup>120</sup> The *History of the Patriarchs*, however, does not mention a Būšīr, but places the last events of Marwān II at a place called Dāwatūn,<sup>121</sup> apparently situated near a Mount Abbah to the west of Cleopatra in Arsinoites.<sup>122</sup> Since the account clearly indicates that Marwān was killed somewhere to the west of the Nile and south of al-Gīzah,<sup>123</sup> the Arsinoites referred

<sup>113</sup> *PO*, V, 6–8; I, 342; Budge, I, 158; Abū Šāliḥ, p. 209.

<sup>114</sup> *PO*, V, 105–12.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Quatremère, *Mémoires*, I, 112–13; Amélineau, *Géog.*, pp. 10–11.

<sup>116</sup> *Annals*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje (Leyden, 1879–1901), III, 1, pp. 46, 49; cf. Ibn al-Athīr, *Kitāb al-kāmil fī al-tārīkh*, ed. by C. J. Tornberg (Leyden, 1867–76), V, 324, 326; Abū al-Fidā', *Annales Moslemici*, ed. by J. G. C. Adler (Hafniae, 1789–94), I, 486.

<sup>117</sup> *Historia Saracenica*, trans. by Thomas Erpenius (Leyden, 1625), p. 119.

<sup>118</sup> P. 257.

<sup>119</sup> *Dictionary*, I, 760; cf. Kindī, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. by R. Guest ("E. J. W. Gibb memorial series," Vol. XLX [Leyden and London, 1912]), p. 96; *EI*, III, 309; also J. Wellhausen, *The Arab Kingdom and Its Fall*, trans. by M. G. Weir (Calcutta, 1927), p. 549.

<sup>120</sup> *Al-nujūm al-zāhirah fī mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Ḳāhirah*, I (ed. by Juynboll and Matthes Leyden, 1851–55), 352.

<sup>121</sup> *PO*, V, 187.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186; cf. also p. 156.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 185–86.



to is no doubt the Arsinoite nome of the Fayyūm and not the second Arsinoite nome east of the Nile and reaching to Suez, where an Arsinoites-Cleopatra is to be found at the head of the Arabian Gulf.<sup>124</sup> We must therefore add a Cleopatra to the list of place-names in the Fayyūm, though just where this Cleopatra was located in the Fayyūm is not known, unless it be near Dāwatūn, which may be a misspelling or an Arabic version of Dafdanū (modern Difinnū), so that Būṣīr Dafdanū, a place situated a short distance south of the city of Fayyūm, may be the one meant. Modern scholars, however, doubt if this is the Būṣīr concerned and point to a Būṣīr Ḳūrīdus at the entrance of, but not in, the Fayyūm as the scene of Marwān's last hours.<sup>125</sup> Abū-Ṣāliḥ reports a church and a monastery of Abīrūn at this place,<sup>126</sup> and Ṭabarī tells us that Marwān was overtaken in a church in Būṣīr.<sup>127</sup> If Marwān and his soldiers did indeed reach Būṣīr Dafdanū, then the monasteries in the eastern Fayyūm must have felt his wrath; but if he stopped at Būṣīr Ḳūrīdus, which seems the more likely, then the Fayyūm monasteries, like those of Wādī Ḥabīb,<sup>128</sup> escaped the destruction that was the fate of all monasteries which lay on his route.<sup>129</sup>

The change from Umayyad to ʿAbbasid rule had no immediate effect on the conditions of the churches and monasteries of Egypt. Economic persecution and despoliation of churches<sup>130</sup> went hand in hand with freedom of worship and social visits, at times on a grand scale, to the monasteries.<sup>131</sup> Strained relations and periodic revolts were, under the circumstances, to be expected. Thus in 170/786 the governor ʿAlī ibn Sulaimān issued an edict to destroy all churches (and monasteries?) built since the Muslim conquest, an edict which was fortunately and wisely revoked by his successor on the advice of a body of Muslim jurists.<sup>132</sup> Building was resumed on a large scale in

<sup>124</sup> Cf. H. Gauthier, *Les nomes d'Égypte depuis Hérodote jusqu'à la conquête Arabe* (Mémoires présentés à l'Institut d'Égypte, t. XXV (1935), pp. 125–29 and 138–42.

<sup>125</sup> Amélineau, *Géog.*, p. 10; *BIFAO*, I, 65; Abū Ṣāliḥ, pp. xix and 257, note 2.

<sup>126</sup> P, 257.

<sup>127</sup> *Annals*, III, 1, p. 49.

<sup>128</sup> *PO*, V, 175, 183.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 162–63.

<sup>130</sup> *EI*, II, 992–94; *PO*, X, 363, 373–75, 512–15; Abū-Ṣāliḥ, p. 87.

<sup>131</sup> Abū-Ṣāliḥ, pp. xiv–xv.

<sup>132</sup> *EI*, II, 992; Kindī, *op. cit.*, pp. 131–32; Maḳrīzī, II, 493.

the patriarchates of Abba Mark III (799–819) and Abba James (819–30).<sup>133</sup> Still it was in this period that a number of revolts against heavy taxation took place. The earlier ones, in which Muslims and Christians alike took part, followed the civil war waged between Amīn and Maʿmūn. A purely Christian insurrection occurred in 214–15/829–30, when the Bashmūrītes of the middle Delta revolted contrary to the advice of their patriarch James as well as that of Patriarch Dionysius of Antioch who accompanied Maʿmūn on his visit to Egypt. The Bashmūrītes were severely defeated, large numbers were massacred, and many of the survivors were deported to Baghdad.<sup>134</sup> This, Maḳrīzī informs us, was the last Christian rebellion; for from that time on Muslims were in the majority in the villages.<sup>135</sup>

These general conditions are reflected in the contemporary history of the monasteries of Scetis. It was about 817 that the first Arab sack of these monasteries took place. This was followed by a period of restoration and enlargement under Abba James (who visited the monasteries of Upper Egypt and perhaps also those of the Fayyūm)<sup>136</sup> and Abba Joseph (830–49), so that during the patriarchate of Shenūte I (859–81) we find seven instead of four outstanding monasteries in the Wādī Habīb.<sup>137</sup>

That the conditions in the Delta and in Wādī Habīb will have had parallels in the Fayyūm seems natural to expect; yet actual materials on the monasteries of the Fayyūm are woefully lacking, and for the period under consideration we have nothing to point to except the situation in the monastery of Ḳalamūn at the time of its abbot Isaac and his famous disciple Miṣāʾīl, as sketched above. Nor is our information for the following period, that of the Ṭulūnids (254–92/868–905) and Iḳhshīdids (323–58/935–69), any fuller. On the one hand, Aḥmad ibn Ṭulūn did not hesitate to imprison Patriarch Michael III (881–909); on the other hand, Khumārawaih's visits to the Naṭrūn monasteries are indicative of cordial relations existing between the

<sup>133</sup> *EI*, II, 992; *PO*, X, 418–19, 460; Kindī, *op. cit.*, pp. 554–55.

<sup>134</sup> *EI*, II, 994; *PO*, X, 486–95.

<sup>135</sup> *EI*, II, 994; Maḳrīzī, II, 494.

<sup>136</sup> *PO*, X, 452–54.

<sup>137</sup> Evelyn-White, Pt. II, pp. 297–304; the dates of Shenūte I are according to Renau-dot, *Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum*, pp. 301, 319.

Tūlūnids and the church.<sup>138</sup> In the short interval between the two quasi-dependent dynasties the 'Abbasid caliph made a bid for peace and good will by declaring in 313/925 that the *jizyah* or head tax would not be imposed upon bishops, monks, and needy laymen.<sup>139</sup> The Ikhshīdids continued to favor the Christians and frequently attended their public ceremonies and celebrations.<sup>140</sup> The monasteries were coming more and more into the public eye, so that the ninth and tenth centuries saw several Muslim authors devoting their time to narrating the history of the monasteries and describing monastic life. Among these are Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, who wrote a *Book of the Monasteries*, and al-Shābushtī, who gave us a book of the same title.<sup>141</sup> Though al-Shābushtī's work is lost, it was used to good purpose by both Abū Ṣālīḥ and Maḳrīzī. But these authors give us no definite material on the Fayyūm monasteries during this prosperous period, and so we must for the present content ourselves with the one definite event recorded in our present Document III of 336/947, which deeded property to the two monasteries of Naḳlūn and Shallā.

With the Fāṭimids an era of prosperity set in for the churches and the monasteries,<sup>142</sup> marred only by the fanatical persecution of al-Ḥākim (386-411/996-1021), from which only the Wādī Ḥabīb monasteries seem to have escaped.<sup>143</sup> The churches and monasteries of the Fayyūm, however, fell victim to this persecution; for a Coptic note of A.D. 1014, left us by a certain Joseph, a deacon in the Fayyūm, states that he, Joseph, fled in great affliction to the monastery of Macarius, because al-Ḥākim had destroyed (?) the churches and monasteries of the Fayyūm, and because safety was to be found only in the monastery of Saint Macarius.<sup>144</sup>

The Ayyūbids (564-648/1169-1250) were not as generous or indulgent as their predecessors. They despoiled the church of part of its revenue, and though restoring some churches, they did not hesitate to destroy others which for some reason annoyed them. The crusades

<sup>138</sup> Evelyn-White, Pt. II, pp. 335-36; *EI*, II, 994 f.

<sup>139</sup> *EI*, II, 995.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 995.

<sup>141</sup> Abū Ṣālīḥ, p. xv.

<sup>142</sup> *EI*, II, 992, 995, and references given there; Abū Ṣālīḥ, pp. 15, 47, 89, *et passim*.

<sup>143</sup> Evelyn-White, Pt. II, pp. 343-45; *PO*, XI, 560-61; *EI*, II, 992, 995.

<sup>144</sup> Evelyn-White, Pt. II, p. 345.

made the situation of the church delicate and caused the ruin of many churches, especially in the Delta. It is from this period that the utter destruction of many Egyptian monasteries dates.<sup>145</sup> At the same time the spirit of Egyptian monasticism degenerated into determined ecclesiasticism, which gave rise to many dissensions. In keeping with this decline is the rise of Arabic Christian literature during this period; for this event is in itself an ironical testimony to the victory of Arabic and Islām over Coptic and Christianity. By the thirteenth century Arabic Christian literature was in a flourishing state, and it is at this time (*ca.* 1200) that Abū Ṣālih wrote his treatise and supplied us with valuable information on the monasteries of the Fayyūm.

Abū Ṣālih's account does not attempt to keep track of the thirty-five monasteries of the Umayyad period, neither is it exhaustive for his own period, though in making this statement it must be remembered that his work, as we now have it, is a clumsy abridgement of the original.<sup>146</sup> Be that as it may, Abū Ṣālih, in the account as we now have it, mentions but eight monasteries<sup>147</sup> as having existed in the Fayyūm during his time: (1) that of Naḳlūn, (2) that of Ḳalamūn, (3) that of St. Isaac of Difrī at al-Lāhūn with a church resembling that of Ḳalamūn, (4) the monastery of the Brothers at Sailah, whence John III was called to the patriarchate, and (5) the monastery of the Virgin, also at Sailah, (6) the monastery of the Cross at Fānū, and (7) the monastery of Theodore and (8) that of the Apostles, both at Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn. Since both Isaac of Difrī<sup>148</sup> and Theodore (who is perhaps none other than Theodore the General)<sup>149</sup> were martyred in the time of Diocletian, these monasteries named after them may have very early origins. The monastery of the Virgin was in all probability a Theotokos "duplicate"<sup>150</sup> of the monastery of the Brothers at Sailah.

<sup>145</sup> *ET*, II, 992, 996; *PO*, XI, 617; Abū Ṣālih, pp. 15, 94-97, 112, 174, 248, 253.

<sup>146</sup> Pp. xii f.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 205-10.

<sup>148</sup> Abū Ṣālih, p. 210.

<sup>149</sup> Budge, IV, 1133-38; also I, 219, 265. According to the Ethiopic *Synazarium*, Theodore was a native of Sabṭ in Upper Egypt; but according to Abū Ṣālih (p. 208) he was a native of the Fayyūm. For other saints named Theodore who might come into consideration see Strothmann, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

<sup>150</sup> The Theotokos "duplicates" appear to have arisen at the time of the Gaianite heresy in the first half of the 6th century to accommodate the Severian monks who had been ejected by the Julianists. They were dedicated to the Theotokos rather than to the Virgin as symbolizing the matter in dispute, the reality of the incarnation. Cf. Evelyn-White, Pt. II, pp. 232-35.

The monastery of the Apostles at Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn and that of the Cross in the district of Fānū are then the only ones of the eight that give no clue of the period of their origin. But we are probably not wrong in considering them as having been among the thirty-five monasteries mentioned for the Umayyad period.

Abū Ṣāliḥ's account is greatly supplemented by that of ʿUthmān ibn al-Nāblusī, given about half a century later (642/1245-46), which credits the Fayyūm with thirteen monasteries and twenty-five churches.<sup>151</sup> Since the intermediate period between Abū Ṣāliḥ and Nāblusī was not particularly conducive to the rise of new monasteries, the difference in the number of the monasteries reported by these authors can hardly be attributed to the appearance of new monasteries, but should rather be explained by the greater fullness of Nāblusī's account. Unfortunately I have no access to the Arabic text of Nāblusī and must work with what information I can gather from the description of Nāblusī's work as given by Ahmed Zéki<sup>152</sup> and by Georges Salmon.<sup>153</sup> From the information supplied by the latter I am able to list twelve monasteries and thirty-eight churches (seven of which are in ruins) instead of thirteen monasteries and twenty-five churches as mentioned by Ahmed Zéki. Five of these are listed by both Abū Ṣāliḥ and Nāblusī: the monasteries of Naḳlūn and Ḳalamūn, that of St. Isaac at al-Lāhūn, that of the Cross in the district of Fānū (called Dair Fānū by Nāblusī), and one of the two monasteries at Sailah (referred to simply as Dair Sailah, so that there is no way of telling definitely whether it is that of the Virgin or that of the Brothers, though the probability is in favor of the latter). One of the two Sailah monasteries listed by Abū Ṣāliḥ must therefore have passed out of existence; the two monasteries located by him in Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn had either disappeared, or they were more probably included then, as now, in the province of Banī Suwaif. The remaining seven of the twelve (or eight of the thirteen) of Nāblusī's list were likely in existence in Abū Ṣāliḥ's time, but were perhaps not considered by him of the same importance (and antiquity?) as the eight which he listed. These seven additional monasteries are the monasteries of

<sup>151</sup> Ahmed Zéki in Société Royale de Géographie d'Egypte, *Bulletin*, V, No. 5 (1899), pp. 277-78.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 253-95.

<sup>153</sup> *BIFAO*, I, 29-77.

Sidmant, Sinnūris, Dimūshiyyah and Bamūyah, each near a city or village of the same name, the unnamed monastery at Disyā (concerning which more will be said below), the monastery of al-ʿĀmil at al-ʿAdwah, and the monastery of Abba Shenūte in Minshāt Aulād ʿArafah. Thus the combined lists of Abū Ṣāliḥ and Nāblusī give fifteen different monasteries (sixteen if the thirteenth monastery credited to Nāblusī by Ahmed Zéki is not contained in Abū Ṣāliḥ's list). To these we must add the monastery referred to in our Document III, namely that of Shallā, which is not mentioned by Abū Ṣāliḥ, but is included by Nāblusī in a list of ruined and abandoned places<sup>154</sup> and was therefore probably in ruins already in the time of Abū Ṣāliḥ.

In the field of ecclesiastical influence and politics the Fayyūm produced during this period a somewhat prominent figure—the bishop Peter, who is four times mentioned by Abū Ṣāliḥ as having participated in the dedication of churches and monasteries in and near Fuṣṭāṭ-Miṣr. His first appearance is in 1183, when he is reported to have solemnly opened a monastery which had formerly belonged to the Nestorians but was now changing hands, because no Nestorians were left in Miṣr except one or two men.<sup>155</sup> The monastery was a good-sized one and prospered under the new ownership. The next year (1184) Peter and Gabriel, bishop of Miṣr, opened a restored church,<sup>156</sup> and on two other occasions (in 1186 and 1187) these two bishops were together present at similar functions.<sup>157</sup>

The thirteenth century found the church of Miṣr (Cairo) competing strenuously with that of Alexandria for ecclesiastical leadership, and the indications are that the Fayyūm co-operated with Miṣr. The church of the Fayyūm itself, however, was not free from internal rivalry if not dissension. Bishop Peter found it necessary to take severe measures, even to the point of expulsion from office, against no less a person than the future candidate for the patriarchate, David, son of Laḳlaḳ. In spite of much opposition, the Miṣr-Fayyūm forces won the election, and David of the Fayyūm, taking the name of Cyril

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>155</sup> Abū Ṣāliḥ, p. 135; cf. Renaudot, *op. cit.*, p. 553, for correction of the date A.D. 1181, as reported by Abū Ṣāliḥ, to 1183.

<sup>156</sup> Abū Ṣāliḥ, p. 127.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 92, 139.

III (1235–43), terminated the twenty year vacancy that had followed the death of John VI in 1216.<sup>158</sup> Cyril soon won the reputation of being a reforming and a grasping patriarch. His “reforms” brought gratifying though temporary victory to the church of Miṣr at the expense of the church of Alexandria and of the monasteries of Wādī Habīb.<sup>159</sup> To what extent, if at all, the Fayyūm shared in this victory we have no way of knowing.

With the coming of the Mamelukes the entire Coptic church faced an era of persecution and despoliation the like of which it had not before experienced, and as a result of this, as well as of the Black Death in 1348 and of famine in 1374, the fourteenth century saw the rapid and tragic decline of Egyptian monasteries, including those of Wādī Naṭrūn. These last, however, seem to have held out in the first half of the century and to have become once again the general refuge for those fleeing the persecutions of 1301 and 1321, which took place in the patriarchate of John VIII (1300–20) and John IX (1320–27).<sup>160</sup> There is no reason to believe that the churches and the monasteries of the Fayyūm escaped the persecuting fury of the Muslims in 721/1321, which resulted in the destruction of numerous churches and monasteries throughout Egypt.<sup>161</sup> Again, in 755/1354 churches were demolished, and a large part of the church revenue was confiscated.<sup>162</sup> Faced with humiliation, economic extortion, and even loss of life at the hands of a surly Muslim majority, the Christian minority continued to dwindle, many becoming Muslims, and the monasteries which escaped destruction, lacking new recruits, fell into ruins and were eventually abandoned.<sup>163</sup> The description given by Evelyn-White for the Nitrian monasteries will probably apply in general to the whole country. So far as the Fayyūm is concerned, indirect testimony regarding these conditions is found in Maḳrīzī’s account of the Fayyūm monasteries. Of the fifteen (or sixteen) different monasteries

<sup>158</sup> Renaudot, *op. cit.*, pp. 567–68, 576, 593.

<sup>159</sup> Evelyn-White, Pt. II, pp. 387–89.

<sup>160</sup> Renaudot, *op. cit.*, p. 604; Evelyn-White, Pt. II, pp. 393, 394, 400–402.

<sup>161</sup> Maḳrīzī, II, 512–17 (English translation by Evetts in Abū Ṣāliḥ, pp. 328–40, and French translation in Quatremère, *Mémoires*, II, 225–49); ‘Alī Pasha Mubārak, *Al-khiṭaṭ al-tauḥīkiyyah al-jadīdah li Miṣr al-Ḳāhīrah* . . . (Būlāq, 1304–6/1886–88), III, 98–101; VI, 74–79.

<sup>162</sup> *EI*, II, 992.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 992.

reported by Abū Šāliḥ and Nāblusī he mentions but three: those of Naqlūn, Ḳalamūn, and Sidmant. We have already mentioned the decline evidenced in the first two; with regard to the third we are told that it had lost much of its former estate and was then partly deserted. Further indirect testimony of the decline of Christianity and of the pathetic position of the Christians in the Fayyūm during Mameluke times and after is to be seen in the great obscurity of its bishops, if indeed the see was not mostly vacant from the time of John (about 1230) to that of Michael, who was visited by Vansleb in 1672, a period of nearly four and one-half centuries.<sup>164</sup> Vansleb's account states how the Christians of the city of Fayyūm had no church to worship in, but had to go to the near-by village of "Desie" (Disyā) for their services;<sup>165</sup> how the whole province had but a few churches, and these very poor; how fear and timidity were uppermost even with the bishop, who mistook the approach of Vansleb and his men for government soldiers intent on doing harm.<sup>166</sup> This situation may be considered as typical of the whole Ottoman period, which followed that of the Mamelukes. Two exceptions for the country as a whole may be mentioned, due, in part, to the personality of the then patriarch. Thus the patriarch Gabriel VII (1526-69) was in a position to give much of his time and means to rebuilding monasteries,<sup>167</sup> and a second period of building occurred in the patriarchate of John XVI (1676-1718).<sup>168</sup>

The *Etat*, a tax survey made in 777/1375, lists in the Fayyūm a Dair Abī Jaʿrān.<sup>169</sup> If this was merely a monastery, why was it the only one listed? If it was a village paying taxes, then the name would imply the existence of a monastery in the neighborhood. In either case we apparently have a new monastery to the credit of the Fayyūm, built after Nāblusī's time.

Other obscure monasteries in the Fayyūm or in near-by deserts are mentioned from time to time, chiefly by western visitors. Vansleb

<sup>164</sup> Baudrillart, *Dict.*, IV, 762.

<sup>165</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 253.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 259-61, 265.

<sup>167</sup> ʿAlī Pasha Mubārak, *op. cit.*, VI, 84.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, VI, 85.

<sup>169</sup> In ʿAbd al-Laṭīf, *Relation de l'Égypte*, trans. by S. de Sacy (Paris, 1810), p. 682; cf. also *BIFAO*, I, 73.



gives us two: "Deir Abulffe" (Dair Abū Lifah), located in the desert north of Lake Kārūn,<sup>170</sup> and "Deir il Azeb," half way between the city of Fayyūm and Naqlūn.<sup>171</sup> An "Azab" is shown on the map of the Arsinoite nome by Grenfell, Hunt, and Goodspeed.<sup>172</sup> This location accords, on the one hand, with that given by Vansleb and, on the other, with the location of the village of "el-Hazeb" mentioned in Napoleon's *Description*,<sup>173</sup> but not given in the list of towns and villages of this work.<sup>174</sup> That al-ʿAzab and "el-Hazeb" both refer to the same place is very likely indeed, for nothing would be easier than a confusion of the sounds of *alif*, *ʿain*, *ḥā*, and *hā* in transliterating Arabic from the spoken sounds. Furthermore, Dair al-ʿAzab must be identified with the "Deir-el-Azrab" mentioned by Johann Georg.<sup>175</sup> The latter speaks of two churches there, an older one which he places in the twelfth century, and a more recent one about one hundred and twenty years old. Clarke<sup>176</sup> mentions a church of the Virgin at al-ʿAzab in the district of Iṭṣā, but to which of the two churches of Dair al-ʿAzab the name belongs it is difficult to tell. If the monastery does indeed go back to the twelfth century, it was perhaps founded by Peter, the energetic bishop of the Fayyūm mentioned above, or perhaps somewhat later by the patriarch Cyril III (1235-43), who was formerly David, a priest of the Fayyūm. Pococke<sup>177</sup> remarks on the deserted condition of the monasteries in general, stating that they were inhabited by one or two married priests, but he does not speak of any of the better known monasteries, not even of that of Naqlūn

<sup>170</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 268; in G. Caton-Thompson and E. W. Gardner, *The Desert Fayum* (London, 1934), II, Pls. CIX-CX, the monastery is located, and on Pl. LXXXVI a photograph is given; in Vol. I, p. 81, the monastery is described thus: "The Deir, a Coptic hermitage, cut in the face of a bluff in the great Tertiary scarp was visited in 1926 by Mr. Starkey in our company who climbed up to the chambers. According to local bedouin the roofs in several places have collapsed within the past generation and crushed the rock-cut chambers. The Coptic inscriptions did not concern us, and we made no investigation of the place."

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 275.

<sup>172</sup> *The Tebtunis Papyri*, Pt. II (London, 1907), Pl. III; the place is also given on the map of the Survey of Egypt and listed in the *Index to Place Names* (Cairo, 1932), p. 12, as al-ʿAzab.

<sup>173</sup> VI, 207.

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 810-12.

<sup>175</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 19; Johann Georg is not accurate in reproducing Arabic names; if he gives Kalamūn as "Kalamunt," he may well have rendered al-ʿAzab as "el-Azrab."

<sup>176</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 205; cf. also Survey of Egypt, *Index to Place Names*, p. 12.

<sup>177</sup> *A Description of the East . . .* (London, 1743), I, 55-67, 176.

or Ẹalamŭn. He does, however, mention two monasteries in the northwestern region of the Fayyŭm. The first, called Dair Ẹarakat al-Mā<sup>2</sup>, "the monastery of the stirring of the waters,"<sup>178</sup> is north of Lake Ẹārŭn. He adds that the building seemed to him to be "some remains of antiquity, which might be converted into a monastery." Whether this monastery and Dair Abŭ Līfah are the same monastery with two different names, or two different monasteries in the same desert region north of that lake, is hard to tell. The second monastery reported by Pococke is a ruined one of unburnt bricks some two or three leagues south of Ẹaṣr Ẹārŭn.<sup>179</sup>

The *Description* mentions still another ruined monastery, that of Zakāwah, southeast of Madīnat al-Ẹharaḩ.<sup>180</sup> Finally, Flinders Petrie adds one more to our list, that of al-Ẹammām,<sup>181</sup> three miles north of al-Lāhŭn. "The Deir," he writes, "has been rebuilt a few centuries ago, but there are outlines of a much larger Deir showing on the ground. Outside the older Deir are rubbish-mounds. Here we found plenty of scraps of papyrus."<sup>182</sup> Clarke in his *Christian Antiquities* of 1912 does not mention this monastery, neither does Strothmann in 1932 in his *Die koptische Kirche in der Neuzeit*. Johann Georg lists it among the three small monasteries of the Fayyŭm visited by him in 1927-28, the trip to al-Ẹammām having been made in the latter year. The monastery was then completely in ruins ("alles ist verfallen") with only a woman and her family around. The church altar was locked up and the keys were at al-Lāhŭn, so that he did not get to see it. But his account, like that of Petrie, indicates the antiquity of the monastery, for he mentions a door ornament of about A.D. 500 and capitals of the sixth century and places the church in the first thousand years of our era.<sup>183</sup> If these datings are correct, then this monastery must be one of the thirty-five which were in existence in

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>180</sup> VI, 219; VII, 810.

<sup>181</sup> Spelled with *h* in *Description*, VII, 810, and on the map, but with *ḥ* in the *Index to Place Names*. The *Index* allocates the village of al-Ẹammām to Banī Suwaif and the monastery to the Fayyŭm.

<sup>182</sup> *Coptic Manuscripts brought from the Fayyŭm . . .* ed. by W. E. Crum (London, 1893), p. v. Other travelers and writers of the 19th century, e.g., Miss Platt (*Quarterly Review* [London], LXXVII), Curzon, and Butler, add nothing to our knowledge of the Fayyŭm monasteries.

<sup>183</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 18-20.

Umayyad times, though it is difficult to see why it was not mentioned by either Abū Ṣāliḥ or Nāblusī; for it can hardly have been a question of boundary line here, especially when Nāblusī does include the village of al-Ḥammām.<sup>184</sup> The three monasteries mentioned by Johann Georg, al-ʿAzab, al-Maḥpak (Naḥlūn), and al-Ḥammām, are monasteries without monks, but their churches are still in use according to him.<sup>185</sup> Only two of these three churches, that of Gabriel at Naḥlūn and that of the Virgin at al-ʿAzab, are even listed as churches in the list supplied to Clarke by the patriarch Cyril V (1874–1927), though Clarke warns us that he guarantees neither the completeness nor the accuracy of the list.<sup>186</sup>

Of Arab Muslim historians since the days of Maḥrīzī and Abū Ṣāliḥ, ʿAlī Paṣḥa Mubārak is the only one who has devoted considerable space to the churches and monasteries of Egypt. But his account, being for the most part a repetition, when not an abridgement, of these two, adds nothing important to our knowledge of the Fayyūm monasteries. He mentions nine monasteries of their combined lists: those of (1) Naḥlūn, (2) Ḳalamūn, (3) Sidmant, (4) the Cross at Fānū, (5) the Virgin and (6) the Brothers at Sailah, (7) Isaac at al-Lāhūn, (8) Theodore and (9) the Apostles; but unlike Abū Ṣāliḥ, who places the last two at Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn, ʿAlī Paṣḥa Mubārak places the monastery of Theodore at Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn and that of the Apostles in the city of Fayyūm.<sup>187</sup> A comparison of the two texts leads me to believe that ʿAlī Paṣḥa Mubārak has confused the churches of the city of Fayyūm with the churches and monasteries of Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn. He repeats, word for word, the account given by Abū Ṣāliḥ of the four churches of the city of the Fayyūm, but gives them right *after* his mention of the monastery of Theodore and *before* his listing of the churches of Macarius, Gabriel, and the Savior, and of the monastery of the Apostles, all four of which, according to Abū Ṣāliḥ's account, belong to Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn. A slight change in the arrangement of ʿAlī Paṣḥa Mubārak's text will give us an accurate reproduction (except for the omission of the church of St. John at Aflāḥ al-Zaitūn) of Abū Ṣāliḥ's account, to which ʿAlī Paṣḥa Mubārak himself specifically refers us.

<sup>184</sup> *BIFAO*, I, 38.

<sup>185</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 18–19.

<sup>186</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 199, 205; for the dates of Cyril see Strothmann, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

<sup>187</sup> *Op. cit.*, XIV, 89.

Further on, writing apparently from personal knowledge and of his own time, ʿAlī Pasha Mubārak does actually mention, as though belonging to the city of Fayyūm, a monastery of the Virgin together with a church "in the district of the Arabs which is about an hour's distance to the south (of the city), both being the remains of ancient places of worship."<sup>188</sup> From this account it would seem that the monastery credited to the city of Fayyūm is none other than the monastery mentioned by Nāblus<sup>189</sup> as lying north of Disyā and referred to by Vansleb as the church in the near-by village of Disyā to which the Christians in the city of Fayyūm came because there was no church in the city itself.<sup>190</sup> ʿAlī Pasha Mubārak's account thus helps us to name the monastery at Disyā as that of the Virgin. The name of the modern church at Disyā is given by Clarke<sup>191</sup> as that of "El Amīr Tadros," i.e., of Theodore the General.

Source materials for the inner life of the church of the Fayyūm and for the part which this bishopric played in the ecclesiastical life of the Coptic church at large are woefully lacking. Mediocrity and obscurity seem to have been its fate, but perhaps no more and no less than was the case with other provinces also. A century after Vansleb's visit we find a certain Joseph, a native of the Fayyūm and a monk of the monastery of St. Anthony, elected to the patriarchate as John XVIII (1770-96).<sup>192</sup> The Fayyūm bishopric seems to have been temporarily vacant before 1844,<sup>193</sup> but appears soon after to have received a bishop, one of twenty-three appointed by the patriarch Peter VII (1809-52).<sup>194</sup> A certain Abraham was bishop in 1897.<sup>195</sup> The name of the bishop at the time of Johann Georg's visit to the Fayyūm in 1927-28, and by him called archbishop, is not mentioned by this author, though he accompanied the author on a visit to Dair al-ʿAzab and Dair al-Maḥak (Naḥlūn).<sup>196</sup>

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, XIV, 91.

<sup>189</sup> *BIFAO*, I, 62.

<sup>190</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 253.

<sup>191</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>192</sup> ʿAlī Pasha Mubārak, VI, 85; Strothmann, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>193</sup> Strothmann, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>194</sup> ʿAlī Pasha Mubārak, VI, 86; cf. Strothmann, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>195</sup> Baudrillart, *Dict.*, IV, 762.

<sup>196</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

When and for what reason the Fayyūm and the Gīzah bishoprics were united, I do not know, but Clarke reports them united in 1912.<sup>197</sup> We also read that the bishop of the Fayyūm is one of the two members of the Jacobite Coptic hierarchy who do not have the title "metropolitan."<sup>198</sup> The situation seems to have been changed again recently, perhaps by the present patriarch John XIX (1928—); for Strothmann lists Gīzah and the Fayyūm as separate bishoprics, naming Isaac as bishop of the Fayyūm.<sup>199</sup> If this Isaac is indeed the bishop referred to by Johann Georg, and if the title archbishop was an official one, the separation of the two bishoprics and the adding of the dignity of a metropolitan must have come about before 1928, but certainly not much before, since Baudrillart in his *Dictionaire* (published 1930) lists them as still united.

The Fayyūm is thus apparently sharing in the mild revival stirring the Coptic church,<sup>200</sup> though to what extent is known only by few, perhaps only by the patriarch John and the bishop Isaac. At any rate, Ralph Bagnold,<sup>201</sup> one of the most recent travelers in the Fayyūm, is silent on the question—a silence perhaps expressing and typifying the deep indifference of the average modern traveler to such matters. Yet his brief description of the Fayyūm as a province with "walled gardens and villages that looked and smelt so different from anything in the Nile Valley" and resounding with "the queer sleepy music of its ancient wooden water-wheels, eternally lifting water from the canal," indicates why the Fayyūm is a land of interest alike to travelers and to scholars.

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<sup>197</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

<sup>198</sup> Baudrillart, *Dict.*, IV, 761.

<sup>199</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 159.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. Evelyn-White, Pt. II, p. 436; and Strothmann's work already referred to; further evidence of a Coptic awakening is to be seen in the recent formation of the *Association des amis des églises et de l'art Coptes*, whose first annual bulletin (for 1935) was published in Cairo in 1936.

<sup>201</sup> *Libyan Sands* (London, 1935), pp. 25-26.

