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Chapter Author(s): Khaled Younes

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PART 1

A Question of Sources



New Governors Identified in Arabic Papyri

Khaled Younes

Historical accounts record ninety-eight governors who ruled Egypt successively under the caliphs of Medina, Damascus and Baghdad up to the time of Ibn ʿUtlūn who established an independent dynasty in 254AH/868CE.¹ The large number of appointments suggests a complicated administrative machinery in early Islamic Egypt. This is particularly evident when we compare the literary accounts with early documentary evidence. The narrative accounts describe that the caliph appointed the governor simultaneously over *al-ṣalāh wa-l-kharāj*, i.e. the religious management of the Muslim community and the financial administration of the province. In other words, he stood at the head of the administrative hierarchy. His residence was in Fustāṭ and his jurisdiction extended over the whole province. The governor (Ar. *wālī* or *amīr*; Gr. *symoulos*) was in charge of maintaining law and order and of leading the prayers on Fridays in the great mosque in Fustāṭ, a duty he was fulfilling in the absence of the caliph.² However, according to al-Kindī's *Book of the Governors*, 'Anbasa b. Ishāq (in office 238–242/852–856) was the last governor to lead the prayer in the great mosque personally.³ The governor was also directly responsible for the fiscal administration of the province. From late Umayyad times, however, a separate *ṣāhib al-kharāj* was appointed by the caliph.⁴ This separate fiscal administration inevitably weakened the position of the governor since an important part of the province's administration was removed from his control.⁵ Although the governor was again fulfilling both roles in the early

1 Stanley Lane-Poole, *History of Egypt in the Middle Ages* (London: Methuen, 1925), 24.

2 Hugh Kennedy, "Central Government and Provincial Élités in the Early 'Abbasid Caliphate," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 44 (1981): 28; Hugh Kennedy, "Egypt as a Province in the Islamic Caliphate," in *The Cambridge History of Egypt 1: Islamic Egypt 640–1517*, ed. Carl Petry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 65; Petra M. Sijpesteijn, "New Rule over Old Structures: Egypt after the Muslim Conquest," in *Regime Change in the Ancient Near East and Egypt: From Sargon of Agade to the Seljuks*, ed. Harriet Crawford (London: British Academy, 2007), 184; Clive Foss, "Egypt under Mu'āwīya, part 1: Flavius Papas and Upper Egypt," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 72 (2009): 2.

3 Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-wulāt wa-kitāb al-quḍāt*, ed. Rhuvon Guest as: *The Governors and Judges of Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1912), 202.

4 Kennedy, "Central Government," 33.

5 Kennedy, 35.

‘Abbasid period, in 141/759 the governor Muḥammad b. al-Ash‘ath (in office 141–142/759–760) refused to give a guarantee for the required sum of taxes that was to be sent to the caliphal administration in Baghdad. The caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 136–158/754–775) then appointed Nawfal b. al-Furāt (in office 141–143/758–761) in charge of the fiscal administration. Thereafter the financial affairs of the province were run by separate officials again.⁶ This, in turn, leads us to important questions about the division of authorities and duties between the two positions. Who was responsible for the actual management of the province and the appointment of officials at lower levels of the administration, the head of the treasury or the governor? Who was in charge of the security and stability of the province? We should bear in mind that, until the rise of the Tulunids, most of the rebellions and disturbances in the province were partly if not all tax-related. These questions can only be answered by comparing the available narrative sources with documentary evidence. This paper studies the authority of a number of persons attested in papyri whom the literary sources call financial directors. The discussed documents shed light on various aspects of the separation of power between the financial director and the governor. As we will see, some so-called financial directors may actually have been governors in practice.

The oldest and most reliable historian dealing with the administrative history of early Islamic Egypt is al-Kindī (d. 350/961), who listed all the governors of Egypt from the arrival of the Muslims in the province up to his own death date. Al-Kindī produced exact dates of appointment and dismissal, and also of entry and departure from Egypt for almost every single governor. He usually mentions whether the governor fulfilled both roles, i.e. including the fiscal administration, or was only appointed *‘alā al-ṣalāh*. Later historians such as al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/922), al-Jahshiyārī (d. 331/942), Ibn Taghrī Birdī (d. 874/1470) and al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) relied mainly on al-Kindī’s accounts, in addition to some other sources including archival materials. Nevertheless, considerable discrepancies in dates and names are recorded when comparing the various types of literary and documentary sources, especially in the Abbasid era. A large reservoir of documentary sources including papyri, but also weights and measures mention governors who lack from al-Kindī’s account. In what follows I shall present three papyri, which mention two such unknown governors: Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy (in office 181–182/797–798) and Muḥammad b. Sa‘īd (in office 152–157/769–773).

⁶ Kennedy, 33.

1 Letter Reporting on the Appointment of Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy

Fuṣṭāṭ 32 × 29 cm *P.Ryl.Arab* B II 10 recto
3rd Ramaḍān 181/ 29th October 797 Pl. 1

Dark brown papyrus which is getting darker at the bottom. The text is written in black ink with a medium-thick pen by a clear hand in 22 lines across the fibers. The letter is incomplete at the bottom where an unknown number of lines are missing. Similarly, the top left corner is lost resulting in a loss of three lines. There are also several holes and lacunae in different places of the papyrus which have caused damage to the text. The original cutting lines have been preserved on the right hand side and partially on the left hand side. The verso contains another letter written in a different hand.⁷ The papyrus sheet has been folded nine times horizontally, but there are no vertical folds perceptible. There are very few diacritical dots. The provenance of this papyrus is unknown, but I suggest it was written in Fuṣṭāṭ since it reports on the latest news in the city.

This letter was first published in *P.Ryl.Arab*. 1, pp. 3–5, without a photograph. Adolf Grohmann was able to eliminate some of the numerous mistakes of the editio princeps in his subsequent publication (*P.World*, pp. 171–173). After examining the original papyrus and with the aid of a photograph I was able to read much more of the letter and correct previous editions in a number of places.

1.1 Text

1. بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
2. []
3. [لم] يحدث قبـ[لنا]
4. الا كل [ما تـ]حب و[انى]
5. احببت اعلامك ذلك لـ[ما] ا[علم]
6. من سرورك به وموقعه منك
7. تقدم علينا والى ولا خبر عندك [بـ]
8. اليك (vac.) فاذا وقع عندنا خبر كتبت

⁷ *P.Ryl.Arab*. 1, pp. 221–222.

9. به اليك سريرا ان شا الله والقمح عندنا
10. ثمنية وبيات و[ن]صف والشعير ثلاثة ارادب
11. وان المز(ا)رعين عندنا قد وضعوا ايديهم[م]
12. في الزرع باسفل الارض
13. وان عمال الكور قد تسجلوا لهم وان ابن[ت]ى
14. قد دخلت على زوجها (vac.)
- (vac.)
15. وقد كنت كتبت الكتاب قبل ال[ي]وم لابعث به حتى [ق]د[م] علينا
16. ولاية حوى بن حوى على الصلاة والخراج (vac.)
17. وقد ولى بن فليح الزمام وال[خ]راج وابى عبيدة
18. بن عقبة بن نافع على الصع[ي]د والخراج وقد كتب حوى ساده (؟)
19. الى العمال باشخاصهم[م] والعرافين احببت اعلا[م]ك ذلك
20. لتكون منه على علم وانما قرت ولايته يوم الاحد
21. لثلاث خلون من رمضان ولم يكون عندنا بعد خب[ر] نكتب به
22. اليك وقد نقلت التواييت والدواوين ال[ل]ى

1.2 Diacritical Dots

(9 ان 13 ابنتى 14 زوحها 16 الصلاة 22 اليك؛ نملت

1.3 Translation

1. In the [name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful]
2. []
3. [Nothing] happened to [us]
4. except what pleases you and [I]
5. have thought it proper to inform you of this, because I know
6. your delight in it and the pleasure it gives you.
7. A new governor (*wālī*) has been appointed and I have no news to write
8. to you. (vac.) And if we get any news, I will write
9. it to you promptly, if God wills. Wheat here is
10. eight *waybas* and a half and the barley is three *irdabbs*.
11. And the peasants have put their hands

12. on the crops in Lower Egypt.
13. And the officials of the districts have registered for them. And my daughter
14. has cohabited with her husband. (vac.)
(vac.)
15. I (already) wrote this letter before today (with the intention) to send it, when we learned of
16. the appointment of Ḥuwayy ibn Ḥuwayy over prayer and finances. (vac.)
17. And he appointed Ibn Falīḥ over the control of the *dīwāns* (*al-zimām*) and the finances and Abī ‘Ubayda
18. ibn ‘Uqba ibn Nāfi‘ over Upper Egypt and the finances. And Ḥuwayy has written ...
19. to the officials and the tribal heads summoning them. I have thought it proper to inform you of this
20. that you might be aware of it. His appointment was only confirmed on Sunday
21. when three nights had passed of Ramaḍān. We have no more news after this to write
22. to you. And the *tawābīt* and the *dawāwīn* have been transferred [t]o

1.4 *Commentary*

1. Of the *basmala* only the *bāʿ* and *sīn* of *bism* are still visible at the top right corner.

2–4. Due to the top left corner being lost, only traces of letters and words can be read at the beginning of these three lines. The expression *lam yaḥduth qiba*[*lanā*] *illā kull* [*mā tu*]ḥ**ibb** is reconstructed on the basis of parallels.⁸

5–6. *aḥbabbtu iʿlāmuka dhālika li[mā] a*[*ʿlamu*] *min surūrika bihi wa-mawqiʿihi minka*. This formula is attested in exactly the same form in *P.Marchands* I 35.5–6; *P.Marchands* V/1 20.1–2, both third/ninth century and coming from the Fayyūm.

7. *taqadama ʿalaynā wālī*. For the title *wālī* in the papyri, see *qad jaʿalaka Allāh wāliyanā wa-l-wālī huwa li-raʿyatīhi*, Yusūf Rāḡib, “Lettres Arabes I,” *Annales Islamologiques* 14 (1978), 15–35, 5.4–5, (third/ninth century); *wālī Aṭrābulus*, *P.Khalili* I 6.11–12 (third/ninth century), but see also, Werner Diem, “Philologische zu den Khalili-Papyri I,” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 83 (1993), 39–81, 42.

8 Cf. Khaled Younes, “Joy and Sorrow in Early Muslim Egypt: Arabic Papyrus Letters: Text and Context” (PhD diss., Leiden University 2013), 8.4–5 (second/eighth century) and the commentary.

7–8. *wa-lā khabar ʿinda kitā[b]ī ilyayka*. A short space has been left blank after *ilyayka*. *Kitābī* is written with a long space between the *alif* and *bā*, while the *yā* returns horizontally backwards to cover the space.

8–9. *fa-idhā waqaʿa ʿindanā khabar katabtu bihi ilyayka sarʿan in shāʿa Allāh*. There is one ink spot under the *rā* of *sarʿan* that could be mistaken for diacritics.

9–10. *wa-l-qamḥ ʿindanā thamāniya waybāt wa-[n]isf wa-l-shaʿr thalātha arādibb*. In his edition Grohmann claims that the amounts of wheat and the barley given here indicate the fixed price of each commodity in the market. He goes even further by arguing that the numbers refer to *dirhams*, meaning a pretty low price. Grohmann therefore praises the letter for its “special interest for Egypt’s economy as well as for the history of Egypt’s administration”.⁹ A simpler and more realistic explanation in my view, however, is that the sender informs the addressee of what remains of wheat and barley using commodities they are both familiar with.

11–12. *wa-inna al-muz(ā)riʿin qad waḍaʿū aydiyahu[m] fī al-zarʿ bi-Asfal al-Ard*. The scribe left the medial *alif* of *al-muzārīʿin* out. The idiom *Asfal al-Ard* is used in both the narrative and documentary sources for Lower Egypt or the Delta. See Adolf Grohmann, *Studien zur historischen Geographie und Verwaltung des mittelalterlichen Ägypten* (Vienna: Rudolf M. Rohrer 1959), 25–26; Yūsuf Rāḡib, “Sauf-Conduits d’Égypte Omeyyade et Abbasside,” *Annales Islamologiques* 31 (1997): 148.

13. *wa-inna ʿummāl al-kuwar qad tasajjalū lahum*. The title *ʿāmil* (pl. *ʿummāl*) occurs frequently in papyri. From the early second/eighth century onwards the *ʿummāl* appear as the officials issuing tax receipts and safe conducts (Cf. Petra M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 14.22, second/eighth century and the commentary; Gladys Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases and Tax Receipts from Egypt*. Corpus Papyrorum Raineri XXI (Wien: Hollinek, 2001), 118). For *kūra* (pl. *kuwar*), see Grohmann, *Historischen Geographie*, 34. For the verb *tasajjala*, referring to fiscal register, see Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases*, 111–113; Geoffrey Khan, *Arabic Papyri: Selected Material from the Khalili Collection*, Studies in the Khalili Collection 1 (London/Oxford: Nour Foundation in association with Azimuth Editions, Oxford University Press, 1992), 61–65, esp. 64.

13–14. *wa-inna ibna[t]ī qad dakhalat ʿalā zawjihā*. Mixing private news with commercial and administrative affairs is common in letters from early Islamic

9 Adolf Grohmann, *From the World of Arabic Papyri* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif Press, 1952), 173.

Egypt. For similar expressions, cf. *wa-qad kuntu bi-l-Fustāt ḥattā qadima zawj bintī fadakhala ‘alayhā*, *Chrest.Khoury* I, 98 (second/eighth century). See also Younes, *Joy and Sorrow*, 38–39.

15. *wa-qad kuntu katabtu al-kitāb qabl al-[y]awm li-ab’ath bihi ḥattā [q]adi-[m]a ‘alaynā*. The construction *qad* + *kāna* followed by an imperfect should be translated as past perfect (Simon 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), § 239).

16. For *wilāyat Ḥuwayy ibn Ḥuwayy ‘alā al-ṣalāh wa-l-kharāj*, see the discussion below.

17–18. *wa-qad wallā Ibn Falīḥ al-zimām wa-l-[kh]arāj wa Abī ‘Ubayda ibn ‘Uqba ibn Nāfi‘ ‘alā al-ṣa’[ī]d wa-l-kharāj*. For the full identification of Ibn Falīḥ and Abū ‘Ubayda b. ‘Uqba b. Nāfi‘, see the discussion below.

18. I was not able to find a satisfactory reading for the last word in this line. I read two denticles, an *alif*, a *dāl* or *dhāl* and a *hā’* or *tā’ marbūṭa*. Margoliouth reads this word as *kitābahu* which does not fit the *rasm*.

18–19. *wa-qad kataba Ḥuwayy ... ilā al-‘ummāl bi-ishkhāshim wa-l-‘arrāfīn*. Margoliouth reads *wa-l-‘arrāfīn* as *min al-‘Irāqayn* meaning from the two Iraqs, i.e. Kūfa and Baṣra, which does not make sense. For the *‘arīf*, see Sobhi Bouderbala, “Ĝund Miṣr: Étude de l’Administration Militaire dans l’Égypte des Débuts de l’Islam 21/642–218/833” (PhD diss., Université de Paris 1-Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2008), 261–268.

19–20. *aḥbabbtu i’lā[m]uka dhālika li-takūna minhu ‘alā ‘ilm*. For similar expressions, see *aḥbabbtu i’lāmuka dhālika li-taqīfa ‘alayhi* in *P.Hamb.Arab.* II 1v5–6, (second/eighth century). See also above lines 5–6.

20–21. *wa-innamā qarrat wilāyatuhu yawm al-aḥad li-thalāth khalawna min Ramaḍān*. On dating formulae using a form of the verb *khalawna*, see Adolf Grohmann, *Arabische Chronologie: Arabische Papyruskunde* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 19–20. The ink is smudged in *yawm al-aḥad*.

21–22. *wa-lam yakūn ‘indanā ba’d khaba[r] naktubu bihi ilayka*. The long vowel is maintained in the jussive, *wa-lam yakūn*, where Classical Arabic requires a short vowel (Hopkins, *Grammar of Early Arabic*, § 81.a).

22. *wa-qad nuqilat al-tawābīt wa-l-dawāwīn i[lā]*. *Tābūt* (pl. *tawābīt*) is not a sort of police or bodyguard as Margoliouth put it, nor a water-wheel as Grohmann suggested, but a chest. Al-Kindī in two instances mentions that persons were appointed *‘alā al-tābūt*, “over the *tābūt*” as if it were an institution.¹⁰ Elsewhere, however, al-Kindī writes about a *tābūt*, “chest”, of the chief

¹⁰ al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 117–118.

qāḍī of Egypt in the central treasury in which the money for the orphans was stored in ca. 801 CE.¹¹ He also writes about a locked *tābūt* in the central treasury possibly related to pious foundations in ca. 841 CE.¹² Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam also mentions that ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb stored conquest treaties in a *tābūt*.¹³ There is no doubt that the administrative archives and central treasury made use of chests to store documents and money. The document’s administrative nature suggests these were chests containing documents or money in the archives or treasury. The unpublished papyrus *P.Cam.Michaelides* C 1096 refers to a similar chest. The document records a number of leather products taken from the *tābūt* in the years 261–262/875–876 to be delivered to a certain Abū Zakarīya. Transferring *dīwāns* is recorded in narrative sources to refer to the actual transfer of power from one governor/financial director to the other. The financial director Nawfal b. al-Furāt (in office 141–143/758–761) transferred the *dīwāns* to *dār al-raml* after the refusal of the governor Muḥammad b. al-Ash‘ath (in office 141–142/759–760) to give a guarantee for the required sum of taxes to the central administration.¹⁴

2 A Decree Issued in the Name of the *amīr* Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy¹⁵

Fayyūm¹⁶
182/797

4.7 × 11.3 cm

P.UCL Petrie Ars. inv. 60¹⁷
Pl. 2

Light brown papyrus written in black ink with a medium-thick pen across the fibers by a skilled and experienced hand. The papyrus was cut on the right and left hand sides resulting in a considerable loss of text. There are also small lacunae at the bottom that have caused damage to the text. The original cutting

11 al-Kindī, 405.

12 al-Kindī, 450.

13 ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbārūhā*, ed. Charles Torrey as: *The History of the Conquests of Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 1920), 89.

14 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 109.

15 This document is an early example of a decree. I would like to seize the opportunity to thank Naïm Vanthieghem for his comments and remarks on this document. For more about this genre of documents, see Vanthieghem’s forthcoming article “Le décret: genèse d’un genre documentaire au regard de nouveaux papyrus inédits.”

16 This papyrus with some other fragments came from W.F. Petrie’s excavations in the Fayyūm in the late 1880s and now kept at the department of Greek and Latin at the University College London.

17 I am grateful to Nikolaos Gonis for providing me with the image and for allowing me to work on and publish this papyrus.

lines have partially been preserved on the top and the bottom. At the top a margin of about eight centimeters has been left blank. The seal affixed at the foot of the document is impressed with unclear intaglio, presumably carrying the name of the executive, whose first name is missing at the top of the document.¹⁸ Diacritical dots are only visible on one character.

2.1 Text

1. [بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ]
2. [هَذَا كِتَابٌ مِنْ]
3. [ابن زُرارة عامل الأمير حوى بن حوى]
4. [اصلاحه الله على خراج كورة الفيوم]
5. [لتأويرينه السماك انى امرتك]
6. [من خدمة الباب]
7. [ومن يلزمهم ذلك من اهل القارى]
8. [سه والعادة الجارية على فن قرى]
9. [عليه كآبى هذا من]
10. [وليعلم سلا من امره]
11. [ولا يجعل على نفسه سبيلا ان شا الله وكتب فى]
12. [ربيع الاخر سنة ٤٠٢]

2.2 Diacritical Dots

(7) يلزمهم

2.3 Translation

1. [In the n]ame of God the Compassio[nate, the Mer]ciful.
2. [This is a le]tter [from]
3. [son of Zur]‘a, the executive (*‘āmil*) of the *amūr* Ḥuwayy ibn Ḥu[wayy,]

18 For more about seals see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, “Seals and Papyri from Early Islamic Egypt,”

4. There is not much space available at the beginning of this line to restore anything more than the blessing *aṣlahahu Allāh*. In the papyri from first–second/seventh–eighth centuries, the first mention of the caliph (*amīr al-muʿminīn*) or the governor (*amīr*) is always followed by this blessing. It also occurs frequently on weights. The caliph Yazīd II (r. 101–105/720–724) is said to have started this practice in 101/720. The last Umayyad financial director of Egypt, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (in office 132/750), was the first official of this rank to be given this blessing in documents and it remained in use for Abbasid governors until 176/792 after which it is no longer attested. See Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 1.4 (second/eighth century) and commentary; Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases*, 119. Other blessings are also given to *amīrs* in documents, such as, *ḥafīẓahu Allāh*, cf. *P.World*, pp. 132–134 (ca. 176–177/795); *CPR XXI* 4 (ca. 179–180/796) and *aṭāla Allāh baqāʿahu*, cf. Diem, “Einige frühe amtliche Urkunden,” nos. 6.4 (180/796) and 7.3 (168/784). See also Khan, *Arabic Papyri*, 138–140. Of *kūra* only the *kāf* and traces of the *wāw* are still preserved. Al-Fayyūm is reconstructed on the basis of the place of discovery.

5. *Al-sammāk* (pl. *samāmika*) is the Arabic transcription of the Greek *symmachos* (σύμμαχος), referring to an official involved in the collection of taxes. The title appears in Greek, Coptic and Arabic papyri (Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 14.5 (second/eighth century) and commentary). Tawrīnah is the Arabic form of the Greek and Coptic name *Taurinos* or *Taurine*. Cf. *P.Heid.Arab.* I app. F.

6. The *nūn* of *min* is still visible at the beginning of this line. A little stroke is attached at the top of the *dāl* of *khidma*. *Bāb* (pl. *abwāb*) is a technical fiscal term, referring to different categories of taxes (Jāsir Abū Šafiyya, *Bardiyyāt Qurra b. Sharīk al-Absī* (Riyadh: Markaz al-Malik Fayṣal li-l-Buḥūth wa-l-Dirāsāt al-Islamiyya, 2004), 94–96). The term also appears in the form of *abwāb al-māl* meaning different categories of money tax (Nabia Abbott, *The Qurrah Papyri from Aphrodito in the Oriental Institute. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation* 15 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1938), 4.14–15, 5.3–4, 19–21; Adolf Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri in the Egyptian Library*, vol. 3 (Cairo: Egyptian Library Press, 1938), 146.2; 158.8 and the commentary, all dated 91/710 and provenance is Aphroditō/Kawm Ishqūh).

7. *wa-ma]n yulzimuhum dhālika min ahl al-qu[rā]*. The *yāʾ* of *al-qurā* can be seen extending backwards at the end of this line. In the Islamic period *qarya* (Gr. χωρίον) had the technical sense of a fiscal unit, consisting of a settlement and the accompanying land (Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 2.8 (second/eighth century) and commentary). The expression *ahl al-qurā* often appears in administrative letters. Cf. *fa-innahu balaghanī anna baʿḍ ahl al-qurā*, *P.MuslimState* 10.4; *ahl al-qurā fī, wa-wakkil bi-qabḍihi afdal ahl al-qurā wa-*

ashaddahum, *P.MuslimState* 23.7, 16, all dated to the second/8nd century and coming from the Fayyūm.

8. At the beginning of this line a denticle and a *hā'* or a *tā' marbūṭa* can be detected. The idiom *al-āda al-jāriya* is unattested in the papyri, but the meaning can be inferred from later expressions such as, *al-rasm al-jārī* (Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases*, 113). Of *alā* only the *ʿayn* can be seen at the end of this line.

9–11. The expression *fa-man qur'ā* [*alayhi*] *kitābī hā* [*dhā min*] [*wa-l-ya*] *lam ... mīn amrihi* [*wa-lā yaj'al*] *alā naḥsihi sabīlan in shā'a* [*Allāh*] is restored on the basis of parallels. Cf. *P.Ryl.Arab.* I 17.7–9 (second–third/eighth–ninth centuries); *P.Cair.Arab.* III 171.5 (242–247/856–861, probably from al-Ushmūnayn); Carl H. Becker, “Arabische Papyri des Aphroditofundes,” *Zeitschrift der Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete* 20 (1907): 68–104, no. 4.12, 91/710, provenance is Aphroditō/Kawm Ishqūh.

10. The second word in this line is illegible. Only the final *lām-alif* is clear to me. Of *wa-l-ya lam* only the *ʿayn*, *lām* and *mīm* are preserved at the beginning of this line. Similarly, the *rā'* and *hā'* of *amrihi* are missing at the end.

11. The orthography *عل* is written for *ع* which is frequent in the early papyri (Hopkins, *Grammar of Early Arabic*, §55). For the expression *wa-kutiba* and other expressions to be used to signal the closure of letters, see Khan, *Arabic Papyri*, 194.

12. At the beginning of this line the *khā'* and *rā'* of *al-ākhīr* of Rabī' II can be detected. The date is given in Greek numerals.²⁰ Of the date only the two signs πβ or 82 are preserved, which surely indicates the year of 182 ([ρ]πβ).

2.5 *Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy (in Office third of Ramaḍān 181-Ramaḍān 182/28th October 797-November 798)*

The *amīr* mentioned in these two documents, Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy, is one of those governors unlisted and forgotten by medieval historians. Moreover, his name is always misrepresented by them, by copyists and even by modern scholars. Fortunately, the present documents and a number of weights affirm that Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy was designated as *amīr* and that he was appointed at the head of the religious management of the Muslim community and the financial administration of the province, i.e. *alā al-ṣalāh wa-l-kharāj*. Al-Kindī identifies him in two accounts in a general way as one of the notables (*ashraf*) of Egypt.²¹ Ibn Yūnus (d. 347/958) in his biographical dictionary mentions in a very laconic

20 Grohmann, *Egyptian Library*, 1:81.

21 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 389, 398–399.

style that Ḥuwayy came to Egypt as governor “*qadīma Miṣr wāliyan*” without specifying his function.²² Khalīfa b. Khayyāt (d. 240/854) misspelled his name as Ḥuwayy b. Juwayn, but he counted him among the governors of Egypt during the reign of Hārūn al-Rāshīd (r. 170–193/786–809), namely as the successor of ‘Ubayd Allāh b. al-Mahdī (in office Muḥarram-Ramaḍān 179/March–November 795 and Jumādā 11 180–Ramaḍān 181/August 798–October 797). Nevertheless, he did not mention whether he ruled Egypt after the first or the second term of ‘Ubayd Allāh b. al-Mahdī.²³ Centuries later, Ibn Duqmāq (d. 809/1406) misspelled his name as Khuwayy b. Ḥuwayy, when he mentioned a guardhouse named after him in Fustāt.²⁴ Fortunately, this guardhouse is precisely recorded in a deed of a lease of a shop on parchment dated 280/893. The editor of this document quotes Ibn Duqmāq and edits the name as Khuwayy b. Ḥuwayy.²⁵ On the photograph of the document, however, no dot can be detected above the *ḥā*. Strangely enough, Ibn Duqmāq also records a *funduq* named after Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy giving the name correctly.²⁶ Years later, al-Maqrīzī (d. 845/1442) mentions that Ḥuwayy was nominated as financial director of Egypt after ‘Ubayd Allāh b. al-Mahdī in the year 181/797.²⁷ Al-Maqrīzī also mentions that Ḥuwayy’s sons took over high positions in Egypt, a point to which I shall return.

Documentary sources including papyri and weights give us more accurate information regarding this official. Four coin weights affirm that Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy was designated as *amūr*.²⁸ But it is not clear whether the title refers to the financial director or to the governor appointed over *ṣalāh* only, since both of them were given the title of *amūr*.²⁹ Now let us turn from weights to papyri, which allow us to identify this official and his position further. Document 1 affirms unambiguously that Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy was appointed at the head of the administrative and financial hierarchy (*al-ṣalāh wa-l-kharāj*) and

22 Abū Sa’īd ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Aḥmad ibn Yūnus, *Tārīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Miṣrī*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2000), 2:71.

23 Abū ‘Amr Khalīfa b. Khayyāt ibn Khayyāt, *Tārīkh Khalīfa b. Khayyāt*, ed. Muṣṭafa N. Fawāz and Ḥikmat K. Fawāz (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1995), 307.

24 Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad ibn Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār li-wāsaṭat ‘aqd al-amaṣār* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Tujārī li-l-Ṭiba‘a wa-l-Tawzī‘ wa-l-Nashr, n.d.), 14.

25 Khan, *Arabic Papyri*, 13.3 and the commentary.

26 Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār*, 40.

27 Taqīyy al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā al-Kabīr*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ya‘lāwī (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1991), 2:708.

28 See above the commentary to document 2, line 3.

29 For this discussion, see Adolf Grohmann, *Protokolle [1:] Einleitung und Texte. Mit einer Schrifttafel und vier Abbildungen im Texte. [2:] Tafeln*, Corpus Papyrorum Raineri 3.1/2–3 (Wien: Burgverlag Ferdinand Zöllner, 1923–1924), 120; Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State*, 73–81.

that he appointed a certain Ibn Falīḥ in charge of all *dīwāns* (*al-zimām*) and the fiscal administration (*al-kharāj*) and a certain Abū ‘Ubayda b. ‘Uqba b. Nāfi‘ over Upper Egypt and the fiscal administration (*al-Ṣa‘īd wa-l-kharāj*). Narrative sources indicate that Egypt’s administration was divided into two main districts after the conquest, one for Upper Egypt or *al-Ṣa‘īd* and another one for Lower Egypt or *Aṣfal al-Arḍ*. At the head of each district stood an official, who was selected and appointed by the governor himself.³⁰ Papyrological evidence confirms this situation, indicating that the whole financial organization was divided in two, with separate *dīwāns* being established and a double set of clerks and officials appointed.³¹ This information solves the apparent paradox of repeating the office of fiscal supervisor in *al-zimām wa-l-kharāj* and in *al-Ṣa‘īd wa-l-kharāj*. *Kharāj* here does not refer to the *kharāj* of the entire province but to the fiscal office associated with each region; e.g. *al-Ṣa‘īd wa-l-kharāj* means Upper Egypt and its taxes. As for *al-zimām* (pl. *azimma*) it is an office of control and auditing. The Abbasid caliph al-Mahdī (r. 158–169/775–785) is said to have founded this office in 162/778–779, when the task of overseeing and controlling all the *dīwāns* of the administration became too much for a single person. It is suggested that every *dīwān* came to have a *zimām* attached to it by way of control and that responsibility of all the *azimma* might be held by one man, who had the general function of control over all the *dīwāns*.³² This latter office is definitely the one that Ibn Falīḥ was holding. As for the finance office included in the title *al-zimām wa-l-kharāj*, this could refer to the finances of Lower Egypt corresponding to the one of Upper Egypt which was held by Abū ‘Ubayda. In any case, Ibn Falīḥ was a subordinate to Ḥuwayy and answered directly to him as did Abū ‘Ubayda.

Ibn Falīḥ in our papyrus is probably the same person mentioned by Ibn Yūnus and Ibn Duqmāq under the name Muḥammad b. Sulaymān b. Falīḥ, whose house in Fustāṭ is well known in *khitaṭ* works as Dār ibn Falīḥ.³³ It is remarkable that Ibn Falīḥ got his house built in 181/797, the exact year he headed the treasury according to the papyrus edited above. As for Abū ‘Ubayda b. ‘Uqba b. Nāfi‘, Margoliouth identifies him as the son of the famous governor of Ifrīqiya ‘Uqba b. Nāfi‘ al-Fihri (in office 49–55/669–674 and 62/681). On the basis of this identification Grohmann dated the papyrus to the second half of the first century.³⁴ Margoliouth’s identification appears to be wrong. Abū

30 al-Kindi, *al-Wulāt*, 35, 106, 182, 192, 278.

31 Grohmann, *Egyptian Library*, 3:143; Grohmann, *Historischen Geographie*, 24.

32 A.A. Duri et al., “Dīwān,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill), 11:509.

33 Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr*, 119; Ibn Duqmāq, *al-Intiṣār*, 9; Ibn Yūnus, *Tārīkh*, 2:206.

34 Grohmann, *From the World*, 173.

‘Ubayda b. ‘Uqba b. Nāfi‘ is the son of ‘Uqba b. Nāfi‘ al-Ma‘āfirī (d. 197/812). Note that there is a gap of more than one hundred and thirty years between the former and the latter. Ibn Yūnus records ‘Uqba b. Nāfi‘ al-Ma‘āfirī in his dictionary as a theologian, who died in Alexandria in 197/812. He added that ‘Uqba’s offspring, residing in Fustāt, was highly honoured and ranked. Abū ‘Ubayda was definitely one of them.³⁵

In sum, document 2 confirms only that Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy held authority over the fiscal administration. Document 1 gives conclusive evidence that Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy was not merely a member of the elite of Fustāt or a financial director, as recorded by some chroniclers and document 2, but indeed a governor who was holding both the office of religious leadership and of financial directorship as some other narrative sources indicate.

While the nature of Ḥuwayy’s office might hereby be clarified, the length of it is still uncertain. The two documents edited above can help define his specific dates of appointment and dismissal. As shown above, the historian Khalifa b. Khayyāt enumerates Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy after ‘Ubayd Allāh b. al-Mahdī and this fact is corroborated by al-Maqrīzī, who affirms that Ḥuwayy succeeded ‘Ubayd Allāh b. al-Mahdī precisely in the year 181/797, albeit according to him as financial director only. ‘Ubayd Allāh b. al-Mahdī was dismissed on the third of Ramaḍān of the year 181/797 which fits perfectly with the date of Ḥuwayy’s appointment stated in Document 1, lines 20–21. Document 2 affirms that Ḥuwayy was in office in Rabī‘ II of the year 182/798 and presumably continued to be so until the appointment of al-Layth b. al-Faḍl (in office Shawwāl 182–Jumādā II 187/798–803), as recorded in Khalifa b. Khayyāt’s list.

Finally, a short biography for Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy and his family can now be formulated on the basis of the scattered accounts in chronicles and documentary sources. Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy apparently came from Iraq to Egypt as governor on Sunday the third of Ramaḍān of the year 181/797. He stayed in office for a short period, presumably one year. When he was dismissed, Ḥuwayy stayed in Egypt and remained a member of the élite of Fustāt (*ashraf miṣr*), but he held no more official position.³⁶ During his time in Egypt, Ḥuwayy was involved in various struggles with the judges and jurists of Egypt. First with the judge Muḥammad b. Masrūq (in office 177–184/793–800) who introduced very strict regulations concerning the appointment of witnesses in court determining that only a restricted number of persons could act as official witnesses. This decision was rejected by the élites including Ḥuwayy b. Ḥuwayy and as a conse-

35 Ibn Yūnus, *Tārīkh*, 1:349.

36 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 389.

quence Muḥammad b. Masrūq showed great harshness towards them all.³⁷ The second incident was with the judge al-ʿUmarī (in office 185–194/801–809), who refused Ḥuwayy’s testimony regarding the parentage of the people of al-Ḥaras to Ḥawtak, a clan of Quḍā’a,³⁸ due to a previous strife between Ḥuwayy and Ashhab b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (d. 204/820).³⁹ In the year 200/816 Ḥuwayy passed away leaving behind five sons. These all held high positions mainly in the police and army.⁴⁰ Aḥmad b. Ḥuwayy probably the eldest son of Ḥuwayy was appointed at the head of the police, i.e. *ṣāhib al-shurṭa*, by the governor ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-ʿAbbāsī (in office 189–190/805–806). The latter later dismissed him for no apparent reason.⁴¹ Ten years later Aḥmad held the same position under the second term of the governor al-Muṭṭalib b. ʿAbd Allāh (in office 199–200/814–815).⁴² In the year 196/811, Ibrāhīm b. Ḥuwayy was appointed over the cities of Banā, Sanhūr and Sandafā⁴³ during the fight between ʿAbbād b. Muḥammad b. Ḥayyān, deputy of the caliph al-Maʿmūn (r. 198–218/813–833), and Rabīʿa b. Qays, deputy of the caliph al-Amīn (r. 193–198/809–813).⁴⁴ Ibrāhīm was killed during this fight in a battle against a certain Yazīd b. al-Khaṭṭāb in Damraw.⁴⁵ Abū al-Karam b. Ḥuwayy was killed in Fuṣṭāṭ, because he was the governor’s deputy over it in 197/812.⁴⁶ Their fourth brother Muḥammad was also killed in Fuṣṭāṭ in the month of Muḥarram of the year 198/813.⁴⁷ Ṣāliḥ was probably the youngest of Ḥuwayy’s sons, owing to the report that he was born and brought up in Egypt.⁴⁸ Ṣāliḥ died in 245/859.⁴⁹ It may also be worth men-

37 al-Kindī, 389.

38 Abū al-Munzir Hishām b. Muḥammad b. al-Kalbī, *Nasb Maʿad wa-l-Yaman al-Kabīr*, ed. Nājī Ḥasan (Beirut: Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-ʿArabiyya, 1988), 714.

39 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 398.

40 al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 3:708.

41 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 142.

42 al-Kindī, 142, 154.

43 For Banā, Sanhūr and Sandafā, see Muhammad Ramzī, *al-Qāmūs al-jughhrāfi li-l-bilād al-miṣriyya min ʾahd qudamāʾ al-miṣriyyin ilā sanat 1945* (Cairo: al-Hayʾa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿamma li-l-Kitāb, 1994), part 2, 2:70–71, part 1, 287, part 1, 285; Sharaf al-Dīn Yahyā b. al-Maqqarr b. al-Jrʿān, *al-Tuḥfa al-saniyya bi-asmāʾ al-bilād al-miṣriyya*, ed. Bernhard Moritz (Cairo: Al-Maṭbaʿa al-Ahliyya, 1898), 73, 81; Shihāb al-Dīn Yāqūt b. Abd Allāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), 1:495, 3:268; Asʿd b. Mammātī b. Mammātī, *Kitāb qawānīn al-dawāwīn*, ed. ʿAzīz S. Aṭīya (Cairo: Maktabat Madbulī, 1991), 214, 144, 148.

44 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 149–150.

45 For Damraw al-Ḥammāra/al-Ḥammām, see Ramzī, *al-Qāmūs*, part 2, 2:19.

46 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 151.

47 al-Kindī, 151.

48 Ibn Yūnus, *Tārīkh*, 1:240.

49 Ibn Yūnus, 240.

tioning that Šāliḥ b. Ḥuwayy and his grandson Iṣḥāq b. Ibrāhīm (d. 320/932) were famous *ḥadīth* transmitters in Egypt.⁵⁰

3 Letter Mentioning the *amīr* Muḥammad b. Saʿīd

Provenance unknown
152–157/769–773

16 × 13 cm

P.CTYBR. inv. 2733
Pl. 3

Dark brown papyrus written in black ink with a medium-thick pen across the fibers. The papyrus is badly damaged and the top is missing resulting in a loss of at least three lines. The original cutting lines have partially been preserved on the other three sides. There are several lacunae in different places of the papyrus which have caused damage to the text. The ink has also faded in places obscuring the reading. The text is laid out in paragraphs. The verso is blank. An address may have been written at the top of the verso but is now lost. A few diacritical dots are visible.

3.1 Text

1.] -[مدى
2.] [بعافية [ا] الله اياكم
3. قد بعثت مع [] [محمد] [كتاب] [.] ساعة
4. ابى اسحق فان رايت على [] ان [] مع زكري
5.] [-ير الى] [حتى يقبل] []
6. واكتب الى بالذى يكون من رايبك فى كتاب
7. فان [ل] لقوا ابا اسحق غائبا فانى قد امرت زكري يد [فع] بها وكتابى
8. الى ابى عمرو القهرمان [ق] [ه]رمان الامير محمد [بن] سعيد
9. [واكتب] الى بعلم ما يصنع من ذلك وبعثت اليه مع ا []
10.] [ازواج قراطيس (vac.)

⁵⁰ al-Ḥāfiẓ b. Mākūla b. Mākūla, *al-Ikmāl fī rafʿ al-irtiyāb ʿan al-muʿtalaḥ wa-l-mukhtalaḥ fī al-asmāʾ wa-l-kunā wa-l-ansāb*, ed. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Y. al-Maʿamī (Cairo: Dār al-Kitāb al-Islāmī, 1993), 2:574–575.

- .11 وقد كتبت بطاقة ختمت عليها منزلة الاس سم (؟) فيه [ب] عطاءه
- .12 [فانظر] البطاقة ان هو دفعها الى ابى عمرو [فه] هذه البطاقة
- .13 [] المتاع واستوفاه من [ز] كرى
- .14 فقد [] كراه رضى الله عنا وعنك كـ [ل] الرضا برحمته
- .15 ابلغ [خا] صة نفسك وسهل وعمر منى ومن ابى كله السلم
- .16 كثيرا والسلم عليك ورحمت الله

3.2 Diacritical Dots

- (6 الذي؛ يكون؛ من 7 غاسا؛ كابي 8 سعيد 9 صنع 10 فراطيس 11 عليها؛ الابن 12)
الطاقة 13 استوفاه 14 عنك

3.3 Translation

1. [] ...
2. [] the safeguard of [G]od towards you.
3. I sent with [] Muḥamma[d] a letter of ...
4. Abū Ishāq. If you saw 'Alī [] that [] with Zikrī
5. [] ... to [] until he comes []
6. And write to me your opinion in a letter.
7. If they found Abū Ishāq absent, I ordered Zikrī to [deliv]er it and my letter
8. to Abū 'Amr the butler, the butler of the *amīr* Muḥammad [ibn] Sa'īd
9. [And write to me] what he did with it and I sent him with []
10. [] pairs of papyrus rolls (vac.)
11. And I have written a money order and I sealed it with the rank of ..., in which his subsistence (is recorded).
12. So look if he delivered this money order to Abū 'Amr, because this money order
13. [] this ware and he received it in full from Zikrī.
14. [] his tenancy. May God be utmost pleased with us and you through His mercy.
15. Convey to yourself, Sahl and 'Amr greetings from me and from Abū Kalla.
16. Peace be upon you and God's mercy.

3.4 *Commentary*

1–2. The beginning of this letter with the *basmala* and the introductory formula is missing. The remains of the second line, however, seem to be part of this opening section and the contents of the letter suggest that not more than three lines are lost at the top. *Bi-‘āfiyat [Al]lāh iyyākum*. This expression and variants of it often follow the announcement of receiving the addressee’s letter and becoming informed of the sender’s well-being. Cf. *balaghanī kitābuka fa-qara’tuhu wa-fahimtu mā dhakarta fihi min ‘āfiyat Allāh iyyākum fa-‘un’imat bi-dhālika surūrunā*, Jean David-Weill, “Papyrus Arabes du Louvre 11,” *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 14 (1971): 1–24, 11.6–7 (second/eighth century). The plural form used in *iyyākum* contrasts with the singular used in the rest of the letter.

3. Only traces of letters and words can be read in this line due to the fragmentary state of the top of the papyrus.

4. *Abī Ishāq fa-in ra’ayta ‘Alī*. The conditional using *in* is expected to be followed by *fa-* in the apodosis if it is a verbal sentence, expressing a desire, command or prohibition. *Ishāq* is written with a *scriptio defectiva* of medial *ā* as it is written in line 7 (Hopkins, *Grammar of Early Arabic*, § 10.b.i). For this name, see, Shams al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *al-Mushtabih fī al-rijāl*, edited by P. De Jong (Leiden: Brill, 1893), 241. For its attestations in the papyri, see Younes, *Joy and Sorrow*, 134.

5. Only a few letters can be read among the ink traces remaining on this line.

6. *wa-ktub ilayya bi-lladhī yakūnu min ra’yika fī kitāb*. This expression and variants of it occur frequently in letters to request the addressee’s opinion. See for example, *fa-a’limnī ra’yaka fihā*, Petra M. Sijpesteijn, “The Archival Mind in Early Islamic Egypt,” in *From al-Andalus to Khurasan: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World*, eds. Petra M. Sijpesteijn, et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 163–186, no. 1.5 (second/eighth century); *fa-ktub mā ra’yuka wa-anā ‘alā bay’ihā*, *P.Marchands* III 44.6 (third/ninth century); *a’limnī ra’yaka abqāka allāh*, Yūsūf Ragib, “Lettres Arabes 11,” *Annales Islamologiques* 16 (1980): 1–29, no. 16.5 (third/ninth century); *fa-‘arrifnī ra’yaka li-aqifa ‘alayhi in shā’a Allāh*, *P.Khalili* I 18.8 (third/ninth century). The two words *ilayya* and *bi-lladhī* are widely set apart.

7. *fa-in [l]aqū Abā Ishāq ghā’iban fa-innī qad amartu Zikrī yad[fa’u]hā wa-kitābī*. The personal pronoun in *yadfa’uhā* refers perhaps to the *biṭāqa* mentioned in lines 11 and 12. The word *yadfa’uhā* can also be read as *bi-daf’ihā*. For the use of the particle *qad* in the papyri, see Eva M. Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 138–139.

8. *ilā Abī ‘Amr al-qahramān qahra[m]ān al-amīr Muḥammad ibn Sa’īd. Ilā* is written with a long space between the *alif* and the *lām* while the *yā’* returns to

the right to cover the space as in line 6. *Al-qahramān* is a Persian title meaning the butler of the governor or the king.⁵¹ To the best of my knowledge, this is the first attestation of this title in papyri. For the occurrence of Muḥammad b. Saʿīd on weights, stamps and papyri, see Grohmann, *Protokolle*, 120; Adolf Grohmann, “Arabische Papyri aus den Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin,” *Der Islam* 22 (1934): 14.

9. Due to the crumbling of the fibers at the beginning and the end of this line, no continuous sense can be made of it.

10. For *qarātīs* (sing. *qirtās*), papyrus rolls, see Grohmann, *From the World*, 22–30; Adolf Grohmann, *Einführung und Chrestomathie zur arabischen Papyruskunde*, vol. 1, *Einführung* (Prague: Státní Pedagogické Nakladatelství, 1954), 68–71. A number preceding *azwāj qarātīs* is to be expected in the lacuna at the beginning of this line (Hopkins, *Grammar of Early Arabic*, § 84.g). A space has been left blank at the end of this line indicating the beginning of a new paragraph in the next line.

11–12. *Al-biṭāqa* or the money order is the subject of numerous papyri. These money orders were quite small, written on documents of very small size. Cf. Grohmann, *From the World*, 147. I was not able to find a satisfactory reading for the word after *manzila* in line 11. *ʿAtāʾuhu* is written without *hamza* (Hopkins, *Grammar of Early Arabic*, § 21). For the term *ʿaṭāʾ*, see Petra M. Sijpesteijn, “Army Economics: An Early Papyrus Letter Related to ‘Aṭāʾ Payments,” in *Studies in the Social and Economic History of the Medieval Middle East: Essays in Honour of Avram L. Udovitch*, edited by R. Margarati, A. Sabra, and P.M. Sijpesteijn (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 245–267.

13. Form x of the root *w-f-y* refers in legal documents and texts to the complete payment of a debt. Cf. *CPR* XXIV 7.10–11 (333/945), 8.7 (345/956), 19.14 (third/ninth century).

15. For the expression *abligh khāṣṣat nafsika al-salām*, see Grob, *Arabic Private*, 72–74; Younes, *Joy and Sorrow*, 214–215.

16. *wa-l-salām ʿalayka wa-rahmat Allāh*. *Al-salām* is written with a *scriptio defectiva* of the long *ā* (Hopkins, *Grammar of Early Arabic*, § 10.a) and *rahmat* is written with a *tāʾ ṭawīla* instead of a *tāʾ marbūṭa* in the *status constructus* (Hopkins, *Grammar of Early Arabic*, § 47.a).

51 J.T.P. de Bruijn, “Kahramān,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 4:444–445; Muḥammad b. Mukarram b. Manzūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh ʿA. al-Kabīr et al. (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, n.d.), 2:3764.

3.5 *Muḥammad b. Saʿīd (in Office 152–157/769–773)*

According to al-Kindī, Ibn Yūnus, al-Jahshiyārī and al-Maqrīzī, Muḥammad b. Saʿīd administrated the finances of Egypt for an uncertain period sometime between 142 and 157 (759–774).⁵² Al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1234) and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) record him as the successor of the governor Yazīd b. Ḥātim (in office 144–152/761–769) and delineate his term of activity for five years (152–157/769–773).⁵³ It is, however, striking that even very reliable Egyptian historians, such as al-Kindī and al-Maqrīzī, affirm that ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muʿāwiya was the direct successor of Yazīd b. Ḥātim. In his list of governors of Egypt, Von Zambaur noticed this discrepancy and suggested that ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Muʿāwiya was only a commander under the authority of Muḥammad b. Saʿīd.⁵⁴ In his attempt to solve the paradox of the names of the governors of Egypt given by al-Ṭabarī and al-Kindī for the years 152–162/769–778, Hugh Kennedy reached the following conclusion: “al-Ṭabarī was working from records which detailed those in charge of the financial administration, while the local tradition used by al-Kindī emphasizes the role of the *wālī* who supervised prayers and public order.”⁵⁵ However, the opposite seems to be the case with Muḥammad b. Saʿīd. Al-Kindī identifies Muḥammad b. Saʿīd as financial director, while al-Ṭabarī lists him among the governors. Al-Kindī refers to Muḥammad b. Saʿīd in three accounts. In two of them Muḥammad b. Saʿīd cannot be anything but the financial director of Egypt while the third account is a bit confusing. In what follows I would like to shed light on these accounts aiming to reconstruct a better understanding of Muḥammad b. Saʿīd’s responsibilities.

In the first account the chief of police, Muḥammad b. Muʿāwiya, under the governor Muḥammad b. al-Ashʿath (in office 141–143/758–760) insulted the previous governor Abū ʿAwn ʿAbd al-Malik b. Yazīd (in office 133–136/750–753 and 137–141/754–758) in the middle of the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ. He did so out of revenge because Abū ʿAwn had had Muḥammad b. Muʿāwiya beaten and reduced his subsistence from 200 to 120 dinars. The whole story occurred in

52 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 361–362; Ibn Yūnus, *Tārīkh*, 2:206; Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. ʿAbdūs al-Jahshiyārī, *Kitāb al-wūzarāʾ wa-l-kuttāb*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṣāwī (Baghdad: al-Maktaba al-ʿArabiya, 1938), 102; al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 5:674.

53 Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1969), 8:41; ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-tārīkh*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qāḍī (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1987), 5:202; Ismāʿīl b. ʿUmar b. Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh al-Turkī (Cairo: Dār Hajr, 1997), 13:425.

54 Eduard von Zambaur, *Manuel de Généalogie et de Chronologie pour l’Histoire de l’Islam* (Hannover: Orientbuchhandlung Heinz Lafaire, 1955), 25–28.

55 Kennedy, “Central Government,” 33, n. 46.

the presence of Muḥammad b. Saʿīd, the “financial director” (*ṣāhib al-kharāj*).⁵⁶ In the second account Muḥammad b. Saʿīd is also identified as the financial director of Egypt (*ʿalā kharāj miṣr*). The account starts when Muḥammad b. Saʿīd appointed a certain Ibn ʿUtba over Itrīb.⁵⁷ Ibn ʿUtba, however, behaved so aggressively and coarsely to the people of Itrīb that a certain Ibn Shajara al-Murādī, a soldier in the army of ʿAbd Allāh b. Ḥudayj, decided to get rid of him. One evening Ibn Shajara was waiting with drawn sword for Ibn ʿUtba to return from the office to his house. When he arrived, after sunset, Ibn Shajara attacked him. Ibn ʿUtba fell down and his helmet rolled to the side. Mistaking the rolling helmet for a severed head Ibn Shajara thought he had succeeded in cutting Ibn ʿUtba’s head off. Ibn Shajara hastily returned to the army quarters. A little while later Ibn ʿUtba was found unharmed. Muḥammad b. Saʿīd ordered to imprison all the people of Itrīb. The famous scholar al-Layth b. Saʿīd was also imprisoned but he received special treatment, presumably because of his status, and was released after one hour only. A report was sent to the caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 136–158/754–775) who ordered the chief judge of Egypt, Abū Khuzayma (in office 144–154/761–771), to remain in Muḥammad b. Saʿīd’s office waiting for the caliph’s instructions. The caliph’s letter arrived before the end of the week. Muḥammad kept it and waited for the judge to arrive in the afternoon. Once the judge entered the office Muḥammad b. Saʿīd gave him the letter and asked him to open it. The judge, however, refused insisting instead on opening it in court. When he went to the court he read the letter and ordered to free the prisoners and to kill Ibn ʿUtba. Apparently still desiring to punish the people of Itrīb and in defiance of the caliph’s interpretation, Muḥammad b. Saʿīd later on asked his retinue to suggest to him a strong man to be appointed over Itrīb in revenge for what its people did to Ibn ʿUtba.⁵⁸

In the third account Muḥammad b. Saʿīd appears more as a governor than as a financial director. The account records the census of the tribe of Qays after their arrival in Egypt.⁵⁹ We read: “we counted them (the people of Qays) under the rule (*fī wilāyat*) of Muḥammad b. Saʿīd and we found them all, young and old and all those who are grouped in their household, five thousand, give or take two hundred.”⁶⁰

56 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 109–110.

57 For Itrīb, see Ramzī, *al-Qāmūs al-jughhrāfi*, part 2, 118.

58 al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 365–366.

59 In 109/727, the Muslim authorities in Egypt, reinforced by the caliph’s support in Damascus, had decided to evacuate several hundred families belonging to the Arab tribe of Qays from Syria and settled them in rural areas in the eastern edge of the Delta for political and economic purposes. See al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt*, 76.

60 al-Kindī, 77.

In sum, the three accounts show Muḥammad b. Saʿīd as a powerful independent-minded governor dealing with administrative matters such as maintaining law and order and appointing officials throughout Egypt and dealing with financial matters. This in turn leads us to conclude that Muḥammad b. Saʿīd was not only a financial director as was noted by al-Kindī, Ibn Yūnus, and al-Maqrīzī later on, but also the governor of the province as was recorded by al-Ṭabarī, Ibn al-Athīr and Ibn Kathīr. This assumption can be strengthened by the large number of weights, stamps, a papyrus protocol dated 153/770 (*P.Berl.Arab.* 13003)⁶¹ and document 3.

From the various arguments set out above it can be concluded that Muḥammad b. Saʿīd was holding both offices, *al-ṣalāh wa-l-kharāj*, in the years 152–157/769–773 and that ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Mu‘āwiya (in office 152–155/769–772), his brother Muḥammad (in office 155/772) and Mūsā b. ‘Ulayy (in office 155–161/772–778) were only commanders under his authority and continued to be so under his successors. In the year 157/773 Muḥammad b. Saʿīd was dismissed from office and on Sunday the tenth of Jumādā II 158/775 he passed away.⁶²

4 Conclusion

The papyri edited in this paper are not alone in providing evidence for governors lacking in our narrative sources. The papyrus A.P. 00672 [= *PERF* 621] is a contract of lease issued by the financial official of the Fayyūm in the name of another unlisted governor ‘Umar b. Mihrān (in office 27 Ṣafar–24 Rabī‘ I 176/June–30 July 792) who held the governorship for a short term. He went unnoted among the officeholders of Egypt by the historians except for an anecdote mentioned by al-Jahshiyārī quoting a record by ‘Umar b. Mihrān himself.⁶³ Another precious official document (A.P. 1176 [= *PERF* 610]) and a papyrus protocol (*P.Berol.* 12815)⁶⁴ record the name of the governor Abū Ḍamra Muḥammad b. Sulaymān (in office 159–161/775–778) who does not appear in al-Kindī’s list either.⁶⁵

61 Grohmann, “Staatlichen Museen,” 13–14, no. 3.

62 al-Maqrīzī, *al-Muqaffā*, 5:674; Ibn Yūnus, *Tārīkh*, 2:206.

63 al-Jahshiyārī, *al-Wūzarā*, 171–174. See also Adolf Grohmann, “Aperçu de Papyrologie Arabe,” *Études de papyrologie* 1 (1932): 23–95, 50; Frantz-Murphy, *Arabic Agricultural Leases*, 168–172; Grohmann, *Protokolle*, 129–133; Grohmann, *From the World*, 116–118.

64 Grohmann, *Protokolle*, 118, no. 130.

65 Diem, “Einige frühe amtliche Urkunden,” 126–130; Grohmann, *Protokolle*, 130.

Al-Kindī was a highly esteemed historian not only because of his reliability, but also for his accuracy and trustworthiness owing to the fact that he based his work on oral traditions handed down to him through a series of transmitters together with the written records and the archival materials that were available to him.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, a number of governors dropped out of his list. It is remarkable that all those governors are from the Abbasid era, the period for which there is in general a considerable discrepancy in dates and names in al-Kindī's history when compared with documentary evidence or other later sources.⁶⁷ The present papyri are therefore of special interest as they form an important addition and check on contemporaneous historical records. In addition they produce valuable information about the history of the administration of Egypt under Arab rule and complete in the best possible way the data furnished by the historians.

Finally, these documents show not only that people in the countryside knew who the governors and financial directors were but also that authority was imposed by mentioning such governors and financial directors. Moreover, this article shows how papyri, although mostly found in the countryside, can offer very detailed information about the competence of governmental officials like governors and their subordinates in the capital. In order to fully understand the complex administrative apparatus of early Islamic Egypt, we should look into the history of the whole area where its authority was spreading, meaning mainly the Egyptian countryside where extensive correspondence with officials and locals had to be maintained for efficient management of the province.

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66 Wadād al-Qāḍī, "An Umayyad Papyrus in al-Kindī's Kitāb al-Quḍāt," *Der Islam* 84 (2008): 200–245.

67 Grohmann, *Protokolle*, 119–121; Kennedy, "Central Government," 33, n. 46.

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FIGURE 1.2
p. UCL Petrie Ars. inv. 60
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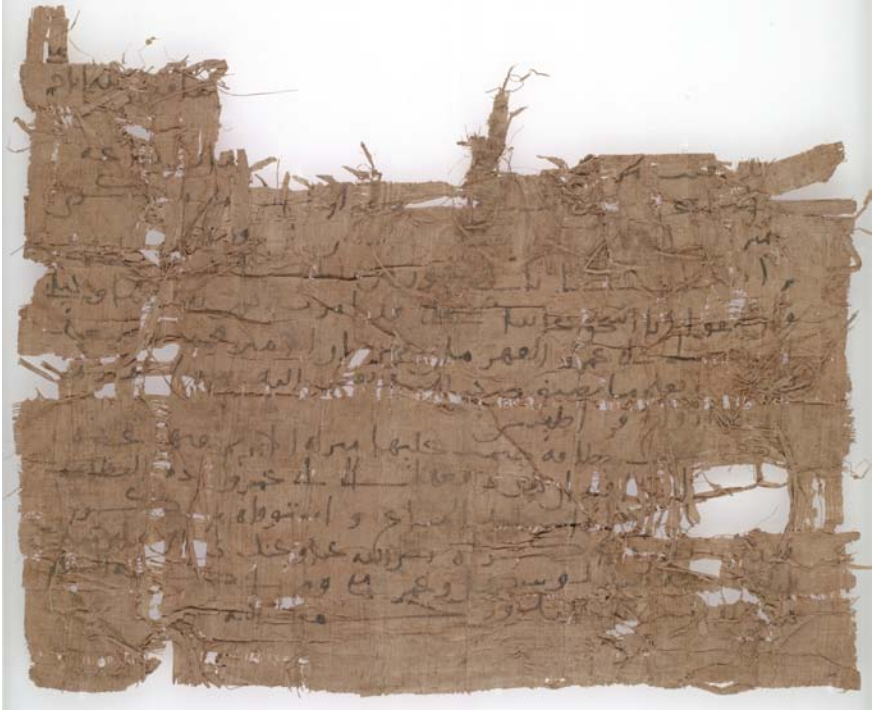


FIGURE 1.3 P.CTYBR. inv. 2733

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