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THE NINETEEN MUSLIM KINGS IN COPTIC APOCALYPSES

BY
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION¹

Despite the renewed interest in Coptic Arabic apocalypses in recent years, major gaps in our knowledge of these texts continue to exist. Most apocalypses still cannot be dated with any certainty, nor do we know much about the relationships between them. Unfortunately, this observation applies even to such well-known texts as the *Letter of Pisentius*, the *Apocalypse of Samuel*, and the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*. The problem of dating is all the more serious as this kind of text is generally considered an important indicator for the hopes and fears of the Copts in specific periods under Muslim rule². After all, what is the historical value of a text, if the period to which it pertains is unknown? In that respect, it is surprising to note that so little comparative research has been conducted, since it could add considerably to the internal information of a text, which is often insufficient. The comparison of texts enables the scholar to establish relative dates of composition and, above all, to distinguish between historical reference and literary motif. To the best of my knowledge, the only example of this approach

1) Frequent abbreviations:

ApocAth III = the *Apocalypse of Athanasius III*, in general; cf. GRAF *GCAL* I (1944) 277-278 (§70.3).

ApocAth III (Sah.) = the Sahidic *Apocalypse of Athanasius III* = F.J. MARTINEZ, ed./tr., *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius* (Ph.D. thesis, Catholic University of America, Washington DC, 1985) 247-617.

ApocAth III (Ar.) = the Arabic *Apocalypse of Athanasius III* = *idem*.

ApocSam = the *Apocalypse of Samuel* = J. ZIADEH, ed./tr., «L'Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur de Deir-el-Qalamoun», *ROC* 20 (1915-1917) 374-404.

ApocShen II = the *Apocalypse of Shenute II*, unedited; MSS Par. ar. 6147, ff. 61-87 (*abuq*ṣā, ff. 63^f-89^f) and MS Muski 324, ff. 116^f-143^f (*abuqt*ī, ff. 236^f-264^f).

CSCO = Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium.

LetPis = the *Letter of Pisentius* = A. PÉRIER, ed./tr., «Lettre de Pisuntios, évêque de Qeft, à ses fidèles», *ROC* 19 (1914) 79-92, 302-323, 445-446.

14th Vision = the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, in general.

14th Vision (Boh.) = the Coptic *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, J. BARDELLI, ed., *Daniel Copto-Memphitice* (Pisa, 1849) 104-112.

14th Vision (Arab.) = the Arabic *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*, C.H. BECKER, ed./tr., «Das Reich der Ismaeliten im koptischen Danielbuch», *Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, philologische-historische Klasse, 1915, Heft 1* (Göttingen, 1916) 5-57, here 10-29.

2) For recent attempts to use Coptic apocalypses to reconstruct how the Copts perceived certain historical events and processes, see C. DÉCOBERT, «Sur l'arabisation et l'islamisation de l'Égypte médiévale», in C. DÉCOBERT, ed., *Itinéraires d'Égypte: Mélanges offerts au père Maurice Martin s.j.* (Cairo, 1992) 273-300; J. ISKANDER, «Islamization in Medieval Egypt: The Copto-Arabic "Apocalypse of Samuel" as a Source for the Social and Religious History of Medieval Copts», *Medieval Encounters* 4,3 (1998) 219-227.

in the study of Coptic Arabic apocalypses is an article by F.J. Martinez that compares these works on the basis of a single prominent motif, the King of Rum and the King of Ethiopia³.

Another motif that may inform us on the historical development of the Coptic apocalyptic tradition, and increase our knowledge of the individual texts, is that of the nineteen Muslim kings. The motif is commonly known as the main component of the so-called *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel*. Another version, however, is contained in the unedited early-Mamluk *Apocalypse of Shenute II* and, if one knows what to look for, one may find even more traces – albeit bits and pieces – in other texts.

The present article first describes the prophecy of the nineteen Muslim kings that is included in the *Apocalypse of Shenute II*. Subsequently, its contents are compared with the relevant passages in the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* and yet another Coptic Arabic apocalyptic text, the *Apocalypse of Samuel*. The main purpose of this comparison is to find out whether these texts are related to each other, and if so how, and to establish their chronological order. By way of conclusion, some remarks are made on the position of the nineteen Muslim kings within the Coptic apocalyptic tradition. The appendix offers an edition and annotated translation of section 4 of the *Apocalypse of Shenute II*, which contains the prophecy in question, on the basis of MS Par. ar. 6147 and MS Muski 324.

A. SECTION 4 OF THE APOCALYPSE OF SHENUTE II

A.1. INTRODUCTION

The text under consideration here has been studied by G. Troupeau and me⁴. I call it the *Apocalypse of Shenute II* (ApocShen II) in order to distinguish it from another Shenutean historical apocalypse preserved in Arabic (ApocShen I), which is contained in the Arabic version of Besa's *Life of Shenute*⁵. The apocalypse exists in MS Par. ar. 6147 and MS Muski 324⁶.

3) J. F. MARTINEZ, «The King of Rûm and the King of Ethiopia in Medieval Apocalyptic texts from Egypt», in W. GODLEWSKI, ed., *Coptic Studies* (Warsaw, 1990) 247-259.

4) G. TROUPEAU, «De quelques apocalypses conservées dans des manuscrits arabes de Paris», *ParOr* 18 (1993) 75-87; J. VAN LENT, «An Unedited Copto-Arabic Apocalypse of Shenute from the Fourteenth Century: Prophecy and History», *Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses, Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients* (Wiesbaden, forthcoming).

5) E. AMÉLINEAU, ed./tr., *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne aux*

Both manuscripts date from the nineteenth century, but the text was obviously composed much earlier, somewhere in the fourteenth century AD⁷. Its most striking characteristic is that its author copied literally long passages from older apocalypses that he simply placed one after the other. In this way, he used large parts of the *Apocalypse of Samuel* (ApocSam) and the *Letter of Pistentius* (LetPis)⁸, as well as a composition that bears a close relation to the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* (14th Vision). This composition provided the basis for what Troupeau calls section 4 of the apocalypse⁹, which is the main focus of the present article.

Studying this particular section as a separate entity is justifiable, because it can be clearly distinguished from the neighbouring sections in both style and subject matter. Thus section 3 deals with the decline of an unspecified monastery, while section 5 corresponds to a passage in LetPis¹⁰. Their narrative style, which is characterised by lengthy phrases, is in sharp contrast to the economical language of section 4.

A.2. ANALYSIS

Section 4 takes the form of a prophecy by Shenute, the famous abbot of the White Monastery near Aḥmīm (ca. AD 350-465), about a number of Muslim kings. To be sure, this is actually a series of so-called *vaticinia ex eventu*, which merely appear to be prophecies, as in reality they are for the most part descriptions of past events put into the mouth of Shenute by the anonymous author of the text. One of the main purposes of such *vaticinia ex eventu* was to gain the reader's confidence that the real prophecies further on in the text were genuine. They also served to honour the seer by portraying him as a prophet of things that had actually happened.

The starting-point for the analysis of section 4 is MS Par. ar. 6147,

IV^e et V^e siècles, I, Monuments publiés par les membres de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire 4 (Paris, 188) 289-478 (Life of Shenute), here 338-351 (apocalyptic passage); see XLVIII-LIX for an introduction into the latter. ApocShen I is preserved also in Ethiopic; see G. COLIN, ed./tr., *La Version éthiopienne de la vie de Schenoudi*. CSCO 444-445 / *Scriptores Aethiopici* 75-76 (Leuven, 1982), here 444, 17-27 (ed.) and 445, 11-18 (tr.).

6) See Appendix A. The articles mentioned in n. 4 are based only on MS Par. ar. 6147.

7) TROUPEAU, «De quelques apocalypses», 83; VAN LENT, «Unedited Copto-Arabic Apocalypse», section 4 (Date of Composition).

8) TROUPEAU, «De quelques apocalypses», 80-81.

9) *Ibid.*, 80.

10) LetPis, 303, l. 9-305, l. 1 (ed.); 446, l. 21-28 and 316, l. 1-317, l. 3 (tr.).

which generally offers better readings than MS. Muski 324 does¹¹. The full text and translation of both manuscripts are found in the appendix. A summary of the contents follows:

Verses 1-5: Introduction

1-4: Shenute's prophecy of an evil king

An evil king of the *ḥunafā'* (i.e., the Muslims) will rise, whose name has the numerical value 375. Numerous houses, monasteries, fortresses, and caves, 7601 in all, will be destroyed. Out of misery, many people will renounce the True Faith.

5: The monks question Shenute

The monks who have been listening to Shenute become very sad. They ask him how many years this nation to which the evil king belongs will rule the world.

Verses 6-44: Shenute's prophecy of nineteen Muslim kings

6-8: Description of the nation of the *ḥunafā'*

The kingdom of these people will remain 730 years¹². It will love gold and silver; it will eat and drink and crush the rest with its feet. It will ruin the kingdom of Byzantium, of Persia, and of al-^cAlān (?).

9-11: Identification of this nation

'This will be the first kingdom among the sons of Hagar, who will be the first Ishmaelites among the sons of Hagar¹³. (There will be nineteen kings who will be very powerful in the beginning of their kingdom'. Subsequently, MS Par. ar. 6147 specifies twenty (!) kings, and MS Muski 324 twenty-one (!). Both versions start with the prophet Muḥammad, and continue with a succession of rulers up to and including a king named Muḥammad b. Hārūn.

11) See throughout the Appendix.

12) If we take these to be Hijra years, we get AD 1330. This may well approach the original date of composition of ApocShen II as a whole; the apocalypse may have been reworked at some point after the death of sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalā'ūn in AD 1341. See VAN LENT, «Unedited Copto-Arabic Apocalypse», section 4 (Date of Composition).

13) The meaning of this sentence is not entirely clear; much of its vagueness may be due to its being translated literally from Coptic; see Appendix, B.4. If my translation is correct, it would mean that «Ishmaelites», which like «sons of Hagar» is a common designation for «Arabs» – after their supposed ancestor Ishmael, son of Abraham and Hagar – would here have the highly unusual notion of «Muslims»; hence the title of the present article.

12: Description of the first ten kings¹⁴

‘The kingdom associated (lit. ‘co-operating’) with the first man who will be a leader over them, the reign of these will be 84 years’¹⁵.

13-44: Description of the eleventh to nineteenth kings¹⁶

13-15: The eleventh king	=	Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz
16-18: The twelfth king	=	ʿUmar b. ʿAbd Allāh
19-20: The thirteenth king	=	al-Walīd b. Zayd
21-24: The fourteenth king	=	Zayd b. Marwān
25-28: The fifteenth king	=	ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad
29-30: The sixteenth king	=	Abū ʿl-ʿAbbās Ğāfar
31-35: The seventeenth king	=	al-Mahdī b. Muḥammad
36-37: The eighteenth king	=	Hārūn b. al-Mahdī
38-44: The nineteenth king	=	Muḥammad b. Hārūn

Verses 45-46: End

45-46: Shenute’s prophecy of yet another evil king

After 362 Hijra years¹⁷, a harsh king will rise. Gold will increase, while food becomes scarcer; the king will impose high taxes upon the people.

It will be clear from this summary that section 4 consists of three parts. Shenute’s prophecy of nineteen Muslim kings (§§6-44), which concerns us here, is enclosed by two other predictions (§§1-4 and §§45-46 resp.) that ap-

14) Actually, this verse does not explicitly mention ten kings. Likewise, in the following verses, the first king, the second, etc., are mentioned, but not the eleventh king, the twelfth, etc. The position of each king in the total of nineteen can be inferred from §25: «After him (the fourth king), a hard youth... will rise... this will be the fifth king after the first ten».

15) This ‘first man’ of course is Muḥammad. It is not clear why 84 years are mentioned here. They may refer to the period of time between Muḥammad’s death in AD 631 and the ascension to the throne of Caliph Sulaymān in AD 715. In Hijra years, however, which the author apparently preferred to use (§6, §45), there is a difference between the two of 87 years (AH 10 and AH 97 resp.).

16) Again, I have no satisfying answer to why these descriptions start with the 11th king. Maybe for some reason the author attached great value to the reign of Sulaymān (r. AD 715-717). Did he interpret this caliph’s unsuccessful attempts to capture Constantinople as the beginning of Arab decline, which would end in the fall of the Arab kingdom? Or did the author think that the first ten kings needed no further description, as they were already heralded by the prophet Daniel in his vision of four world empires (Dan. 7:1-28), unlike the 11th to the 19th king? For the relation of the prophecy to Daniel’s vision, see below.

17) As in the case of the 84 years in §12, I am not sure about the exact reason for the reference to 362 AH. No king ascended to the Egyptian throne in that year. Yet, in Ramadān 362/June 973, the Fatimid Caliph al-Muʿizz, whose reign began in AH 341, renamed his headquarters «Al-Qāhira» (hence Cairo); the city had been founded in AH 359, Egypt conquered in AH 358. In all, §§45-46 may refer to the Fatimid dynasty in general.

pear to have an altogether distinct purpose and origin. These can be examined better in the light of ApocShen II as a whole, so I shall ignore them in the ensuing discussion¹⁸.

The key to the understanding of the core prophecy is offered in verse seven, where it is stated that the nation of which Shenute informs his monks 'will eat and drink and crush the rest with its feet'. This obviously is a citation from the Old Testament *Book of Daniel*, chapter seven, verse seven, which connects the ensuing succession of kings with the Prophet Daniel's fourth beast coming up from the sea¹⁹, that is, with the fourth kingdom that is to rule the world²⁰. Instead of the ten kings that this kingdom usually includes²¹, our text mentions nineteen, an elaboration that is identical to the one found in 14th Vision, another Coptic Arabic apocalypse, to be discussed below (B.1). According to the Danielic scheme of world empires, the fourth one is the last to rule the world, before the eschatological age begins. Consequently, if the fourteenth century author of ApocShen II were the original composer of the prophecy, one would expect him to have depicted the kingdom of the nineteen Muslim kings accordingly as the last on earth²². Yet, what about the prophecy of one more evil king in verse 45? What about all these other kings of later periods, who, as it turns out, are mentioned in other sections of ApocShen?²³ There is only one explanation for this contradiction. The author of ApocShen II took the prophecy of the nineteen Muslim kings from an earlier source, without adapting it to the overall

18) Shenute's first prophecy of an evil king provides, together with the monks' interruption (§5), the narrative introduction to the prophecy of nineteen kings. The final prediction, presumably dealing with a Fatimid king or the Fatimid dynasty in its entirety (see n. 17), merely serves as a transition to the remaining sections of the apocalypse, which discuss later periods of Egyptian history.

19) *Dan. 7:7*: «After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast... it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns». (The citations from the Bible that are found in the present article are in the King James Version).

20) *Dan. 7:23*: «Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth».

21) *Dan. 7:24*: «and the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise...»; cf. *Dan. 7:7*.

22) Christian authors usually interpreted Daniel's four world empires as those of the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans resp. The first author to have depicted the Arabs as the fourth beast was the 7th c. Armenian chronicler Sebeos; see F. MACLER, tr., *Histoire d'Héraclius par l'évêque Sebêos* (Paris, 1904) 104-105 (section XXXII). The first instance of this kind in the Coptic apocalyptic tradition is found in ApocAth III, §IX.2. This work dates from AD 715-720.

23) The *vaticinia ex eventu* of ApocShen II as a whole extend over the period of Ayyubid and Mamluk rule of Egypt, up to and including the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalā'ūn; see VAN LENT, «Unedited Copto-Arabic Apocalypses», *passim*.

structure and story line of his apocalypse. This argument is all the more plausible considering that he copied literally large parts of ApocSam and LetPis in much the same way²⁴.

A.3. HISTORICAL SETTING

A.3.a. Date of Composition

When was the prophecy of the nineteen kings originally composed, if it is not in the fourteenth century? Because the nineteenth and last king mentioned is Muḥammad b. Hārūn (§§38-44), his reign seems the most likely setting. This Muḥammad b. Hārūn is none other than Caliph Muḥammad al-Amin (son of Hārūn al-Rašid), whom scholars usually refer to as Caliph al-Amin and who reigned from AD 809 to 813. Considering the confusion that resulted from the war between this Abbasid caliph and his brother and successor al-Ma'mūn (r. AD 813-833)²⁵, it is not hard to imagine people engaging in apocalyptic speculations or writing apocalyptic prophecies during these years.

Underneath this early-ninth century layer, however, a still earlier one may lie hidden. The most important indication for this is that the text shows clear traces of manipulation, notably in the enumeration of kings found in verse 11²⁶:

Ms. Par. ar. 6147 = A:	MS Muski 324 = B:	Accepted Chronology:
1. Māmādiyūs	1. Mamadios	1. Muḥammad
2. Abū Bakr	2. Abū Bakr	2. Abū Bakr
3. ʿUmar	3. ʿUmar	3. ʿUmar
4. ʿUṭmān	4. ʿUṭmān	4. ʿUṭmān
5. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib	5. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib	5. (ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib)
6. Muʿāwiya	6. Muʿāwiya	6. Muʿāwiya
7. Marwān b. Hāšim	7. Marwān b. Hāšim	7. Yazīd b. Muʿāwiya
8. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān	8. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Madāwun	8. (Muʿāwiya II b. Yazīd)
9. al-Walīd	9. al-Walīd	9. Marwān b. al-Ḥakam
10. Zayd b. ʿAbd al-Malik	10. Zayd b. ʿAbd al-Malik	10. ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān

24) See n. 8 above.

25) The meaning of the prophecy of the nineteen Muslim kings will be discussed in more detail in section D below.

26) The reader may note that the contents of the following lists of kings differ from the order of kings given in §§13-44 of section 4 (cf. the summary above).

11. Hāšim b. ʿAbd al-Malik	11. Solomon	11. al-Walid b. ʿAbd al-Malik
12. Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz	12. Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAziz	12. Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik
13. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz	13. ʿUmar b. Hārūn	13. ʿUmar II b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz
14. al-Walid b. Zayd	14. al-Walid b. Zayd	14. Yazid II b. ʿAbd al-Malik
15. Zayd b. Marwān	15. Zayd b. Hārūn	15. Hišām b. ʿAbd al-Malik
16. ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad	16. Zayd b. Marwān	16. al-Walid II b. Yazid II
17. Abū ʿUṭmān b. Muḥammad	17. ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad	17. Yazid III b. al-Walid I
18. al-Mahdi b. Ğaʿfar	18. Abū ʿI-ʿAbbās b. Muḥammad	18. Ibrāhīm b. al-Walid I
19. Hārūn b. al-Mahdi	19. al-Mahdi b. Ğaʿfar	19. Marwān II b. Muḥammad
20. Muḥammad b. Hārūn	20. Hārūn al-Mahdi	20. Abū ʿI-ʿAbbās al-Saffāḥ, ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad
	21. Muḥammad b. Hārūn	21. al-Manṣūr, Abū Ğaʿfar ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad
		22. al-Mahdi, Abū ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad
		23. al-Hādi
		24. Hārūn al-Rašid, Hārūn b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh
		25. al-Amīn, Muḥammad

The above table demonstrates the presence of numerous shortcomings. Some are evidently due to scribal errors, causing the various discrepancies between the Parisian and Muski version²⁷, others may result from the igno-

27) Like the misspelling of names; e.g., *MS Muski 324*: Hāšim (7) for Hāšim and Madāwun (8) for Marwān. In all, *MS Par.ar.6147* appears to be more correct than *MS Muski 324*, or at least more consistent. Note that in the latter the name of Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAziz has been split in two (11-12). Evidently, the copyist got tangled up somehow in his rendering the name Sulaymān in Coptic; see the edition of this MS in the appendix.

rance or carelessness of one of the subsequent authors of the prophecy²⁸. It is no use pointing to all these unintended anomalies – they can be easily extracted from the table – yet one of them is so confusing that it deserves some elaboration. Table I shows that in verse 11 *MS Par. ar. 6147* and *MS Muski 324* enumerate twenty and twenty-one kings respectively; in the previous verse, however, they both state that the number of kings forming the first kingdom will be only nineteen. This original number is resumed in the ensuing description of the eleventh to the nineteenth king (§§13-44), which in its turn, however, differs from the Parisian king-list contained in verse 11 (Table I, left column) in that all kings have moved back one place. Thus the former considers Sulayma,n b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz as the eleventh king in succession, whereas the latter puts him in the twelfth position, and so on²⁹.

Some departures from the commonly accepted order of caliphs cannot be dismissed as the result of mere mistakes. This is true especially with regard to the Umayyad rulers who reigned from Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik until the first Abbasid caliph, Abū l-ʿAbbās al-Saffāh. A comparison between the columns of Table I shows that the manuscripts refer only to a few of these caliphs³⁰, and in the wrong order. This misrepresentation evidently was not due to the author’s lack of historical knowledge. For in that case one would expect him to be equally badly informed on the identity and succession of the remaining rulers, to wit, those from Muḥammad to ʿAbd al-Malik, and the early Abbasids; these, however, he enumerates only at the cost of relatively minor mistakes³¹. Conversely, we can probably infer that what we have here is the result of deliberate manipulation or re-working of an earlier composition. By leaving out some rulers and adding new ones, the one responsible for this stretched out an existing prophecy to fit his own time, which, as argued above, must have been the reign of Caliph Muḥammad al-Amin.

28) E.g., defective *kunya* and *nasab* names; e.g., *MS Par. ar. 6147*: Sulayma,n b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (12) for Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik and Abū ʿUṭmān b. Muḥammad (17) for Abū ʿĀfar ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad. Of course, it is impossible to establish beyond doubt whether a particular anomaly is caused by the mistake on the part of a copyist or an author; or for that matter to establish whether or not it was intended.

29) Cf. n. 26 above.

30) It is not only the less important kings who have been left out. Note, for example, the omission of Marwa,n II, the last Umayyad ruler.

31) As to these two clusters, the omission of Muʿāwiya II (r. 683) and al-Hādī comes as no surprise, as both reigned only for a short period of time. The former caliph is also left out in many other historical sources.

The argument that the prophecy actually predates al-Amīn's reign, though it marks an important stage in its development, is supported by the fact that, as the reader may note in the translation (§§38-44), no reference is made to the fraternal strife with al-Ma'mūn, by far the most crucial event of that period. At the same time, as will be demonstrated, there is nothing in the description of the nineteenth king, apart from his name, that connects him exclusively to Caliph al-Amīn.

Establishing the exact date of this *Vorlage* is a difficult task. The descriptions of the tenth to the nineteenth king are of little help. In accordance with the best of apocalyptic traditions, they are cursory, stylised³², and full of stock literary motifs³³, and therefore hard to pin down to particular caliphs. Nor can we infer the date of this earlier prophecy from the names of the rulers, as these were obviously either added or adapted as part of the early ninth-century reworking³⁴.

A more reasonable indication, however, is the number of kings enumerated. It is difficult to find a better explanation why Caliph al-Amīn was referred to as the last of nineteen kings other than that this succession of nineteen was the remnant of an earlier tradition. After all, historical sources generally consider him the twenty-fifth legitimate Muslim ruler starting with the Prophet Muḥammad (cf. Table I, rightmost column). This means that if the identity of the last or nineteenth king can be established, the approximate *terminus post quem* of the tradition is also known. The true identity of this king depends on the system of calculation. The Prophet Muḥammad was sometimes omitted from the lists, as were, for instance, ʿAlī and Muʿāwīya II. Therefore one should allow for a margin of a few rulers. Of all the candidates, however, Marwān II (r. AD 744-750) stands out for several reasons. First, with no caliphs left out and Muḥammad included, Marwān was the

32) Note the last phrase of each description; many are composed in a similar vein; cf. MS Par. ar. 6147, §18: «There will be trouble in his days for all of mankind»; §28: «There will be no security in his days to the entire kingdom of Egypt», etc.

33) Thus kings rule for an unrealistically long period of time, and reigns are either extremely good or extremely bad, yet truly meaningful details are hardly given: the good king feeds the hungry and clothes the naked (§17), the evil one does much wrong and destroys many places (§34), etc.

34) The reader is free to try to recognise kings in the various descriptions. Various scholarly attempts have been made with regard to the almost identical portrayals of kings in 14th Vision. See the literature mentioned in section C.1 below. Unfortunately, it is often difficult in the case of apocalyptic literature to distinguish between historical reference and literary motif. In this respect, the passages of 14th Vision and ApocSam discussed below are an excellent example.

nineteenth Arab ruler in succession. Second, for what it is worth, of all the Umayyad and early Abbasid caliphs, he is the one who fits the description of the nineteenth king best. For instance, verses 38 and 40, which mention the king's partly Byzantine descent, may refer to Marwān supposedly having had a non-Arab mother³⁵. Incidentally, no such tradition exists about al-Amin. Third, there were many serious troubles during Marwān's reign that could have spurred apocalyptic production, especially the Abbasid uprising, which eventually led to his downfall and that of the Umayyad dynasty in the East. This hypothesis admittedly raises all kinds of new questions that are hard to answer, such as to what extent the descriptions of the other kings fit Marwān's predecessors³⁶. But then again, the same goes of course for any alternative.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the prophecy of the nineteen Muslim kings as found in the fourteenth century ApocShen II was composed during the reign of Caliph al-Amin. This work in its turn is a reworking of an earlier Danielic tradition whose exact nature and date of composition is not certain. Yet, several arguments support the period of transition between the Umayyad and the Abbasid dynasty, that is, about AD 740-775.

A.3.b. Origin

Several references to Egypt and its inhabitants (§§22, 28, 43) suggest that the prophecy was written or re-written by an Egyptian³⁷. At the same time, there is no demonstrable connection to ApocShen I and ApocAth III, the only two Coptic apocalypses of the Arabic period that are arguably older. The former consists largely of an elaborate Antichrist legend, while the latter is mainly concerned with direct exhortation of the faithful. Both elements are not present in the prophecy of the nineteen kings as it has come down to us.

35) O. MEINARDUS, «A Commentary on the XIVth Vision of Daniel», *OCP* 32 (1966) 394-449, here 435. Yet, there were more Umayyad and early Abbasid caliphs who had non-Arab mothers. Yazid III had a slave-mother who supposedly descended from the last Sassanid king Yazdagird, while Al-Manšūr was born of a Berber mother. *Ibid.*, 435-436. For additional arguments, see the literature mentioned in section C.1.

36) *Ibid.* In addition – to return to the problem of counting – the omission of ʿAlī and Muʿāwiya II would make Marwān II only the 17th king, and al-Manšūr (r. AD 754-775) the 19th. Thus the theory put forward tentatively above may explode as easily as it was constructed. It is just that the original tradition may have held all kinds of omissions and additions, which, unfortunately, will never be discovered.

37) Its incorporation into the clearly Coptic ApocShen II may at best be considered circumstantial evidence.

There is, however, plenty of reference material to our prophecy from outside Egypt³⁸. The *Bahšira Legend*³⁹, the *Apocalypse of Ezra*⁴⁰, the *Horoscope of Stephen of Alexandria*⁴¹, the *Secrets of Rabbi Simon ben Yoḥai*⁴², and a Jewish Persian *Vision of Daniel*⁴³, to name a few, also contain descriptions of the rise and fall of dynasties and individual kings, whose allusive and symbolic style is quite similar to that of the prophecy concerned⁴⁴. What is more, some of these apocalypses, or at least parts of them, also date back to the late-Umayyad or early-Abbasid period⁴⁵. Although, at first glance, none of these texts had a direct influence on the prophecy of the nineteen Muslim kings, they clearly belong to the same apocalyptic tradition, and some of them may indeed have inspired our Egyptian author. On the other hand, it is even conceivable that the prophecy was composed originally in Syria or the surrounding area and was only adapted to the Egyptian situation during the reign of Caliph al-Amīn, which brings to mind the strong influence of the Syriac *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* on the Coptic apocalyptic tradition⁴⁶. Unfortunately, the matter remains unsolved, until more text material is revealed.

38) The most comprehensive guide to Near Eastern apocalypses of the early Arabic period is R. HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 13 (Princeton, 1997) 257-335.

39) R. GOTTHEIL, ed./tr., «A Christian Bahira Legend», *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 13 (1898) 189-242; 14 (1899) 203-268; 15 (1900) 56-102; 17 (1903) 125-166; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 270-276.

40) Cf., e.g., J.B. CHABOT, «L'apocalypse d'Esdras touchant le royaume des arabes», *Revue sémitique* 2 (1894) 242-250, 333-346; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 276-278.

41) H. USENER, ed., «De Stephano Alexandrino commentario», *Kleine Schriften* 3 (Leipzig, 1914) 247-322; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 304-305.

42) E.g., B. LEWIS, part. tr., «An apocalyptic Vision of Islamic History», *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 13 (1950) 308-330; A. ABEL, «L'apocalypse de Bahira et la notion islamique du Mahdi», *Annuaire de l'institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales* 3 (1935) 1-12; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 308-312.

43) E.g., J. DARMESTETER, part. ed./tr., «L'apocalypse persane de Daniel», in *Mélanges (Léon) Renier*, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études 73 (Paris, 1887) 405-420; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 328-330.

44) Note the metaphorical use of beasts and numbers. Some similarities are puzzling. For example, just like *MS Muski* 324, Stephen of Alexandria's *Horoscope* enumerates 21 Muslim kings, albeit from Muḥammad to al-Mahdi.

45) Cf. Becker's remarks in relation to 14th Vision in «Reich der Ismaeliten», 54-57.

46) MARTINEZ, «King of Rûm». Still, it is likely that the oldest version of the prophecy originated in Egypt itself, since it influenced, presumably in a direct way, two other Coptic apocalypses, 14th Vision and ApocSam (cf. C.3 below), whereas no direct foreign offshoot is known.

B. OTHER COPTIC ARABIC APOCALYPSES

The motif of the nineteen Muslim kings can also be found in the *Fourteenth Vision of Daniel* and, partly, in the *Apocalypse of Samuel*. The present section aims to analyse the relations between these two Coptic Arabic apocalypses and section 4 of ApocShen II examined above, and, consequently, to provide new evidence on their dates of composition.

B.1. THE FOURTEENTH VISION OF DANIEL

This apocalyptic work, which is preserved in both Bohairic and Arabic⁴⁷, contains a review of history after the model provided by chapter seven of the *Book of Daniel*. It first recounts the Prophet Daniel's vision of the four beasts (*Dan. 7:2-8*), in which the last beast, the one with the iron teeth, receives nineteen horns instead of the usual ten. Next, an angel of God appears in order to explain the meaning of this vision. The four beasts represent the kingdom of the Persians, the Romans, the Hellenes, and the Ishmaelites respectively, while the nineteen horns symbolise nineteen Ishmaelite kings. What follows is a description of the tenth to nineteenth kings. The last of these, Sarapidos (σαραπισος in the Coptic version), is defeated and killed by another Ishmaelite king, named Pitourgos (πιτουργος, 'the Turk'). In the end, so we read, a Byzantine emperor will free Egypt from the Ishmaelite yoke, after whose rule the final events known from traditional Christian eschatology run their course.

Several authors have ventured to identify the fourth empire, which, given the name 'Ishmaelites', is clearly one of the Arabic dynasties. The earliest attempt was made by F. Macler, who decided in favour of the Fatimids⁴⁸. According to C.H. Becker, however, the text deals with the rule of the Umayyads and their fall⁴⁹. O. Meinardus initially combined these two arguments by concluding that 14th Vision constitutes a mid-twelfth-century Fatimid reworking of an early-Abbasid apocalypse⁵⁰; in this, he has been followed by H. Suermann⁵¹. In a later article, Meinardus has changed his opinion, arguing that the text was composed entirely at the end of the

47) For editions, see n. 1 above.

48) F. MACLER, «Les apocalypses apocryphes de Daniel», *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 33 (1896) 163-176.

49) BECKER, «Reich der Ismaeliten», 29-34.

50) MEINARDUS, «Commentary», 397.

51) H. SUERMANN, «Notes concernant l'apocalypse copte de Daniel et la chute des Omayyades», *ParOr* 11 (1983) 329-348, here 331-340.

Fatimid period⁵².

Recently, R. Hoyland has expressed serious scepticism about these exact interpretations of the text, on the grounds that the descriptions of the kings are 'so cursory and obscure that it is impossible to be sure who, if anyone historical, is intended'⁵³. His view certainly is attractive, had it not been for the evidence from ApocShen II shedding new light on the matter. As may be clear from the above, 14th Vision and section 4 of ApocShen II have many points in common with regard to their structure and general contents. Both are reliant on Daniel's canonical vision of four world empires, but mention nineteen kings instead of the current ten; the fourth beast is not explained as the Roman empire, as it usually is⁵⁴, but is taken as a reference to the Ishmaelites. In addition, they both give descriptions of only part of the succession of rulers, to wit, ApocShen II from the eleventh to the nineteenth, and 14th Vision starting with the tenth. But, as the following table reveals, there are more similarities, which are printed in italics:

ApocShen II (MS Par. ar. 6147):	14 th Vision (Bohairic) ⁵⁵ :
	(24) The tenth king who will be from them will be like a prophet; the number of his name is 399; he will do justice, he will give bread to the hungry, clothes to the naked, and he will free those who are slaves; his mercy will spread over the entire earth, and justice unto the

52) O. MEINARDUS, «New Evidence on the XIVth Vision of Daniel from the History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church», *OCP* 34 (1968) 281-309. His new evidence, however, which consists of the biographer of the Alexandrian patriarchs Mark III (r. AD 1166-1189) and John VI (r. AD 1189-1216) citing the prophecy of the nineteen kings and applying it to the Fatimids, provides no more than a *terminus ante quem*. Cf. n. 83 below.

53) HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 290.

54) See n. 22 above.

55) The following is my own translation of part of J. Bardelli's edition of the Bohairic Coptic text; see BARDELLI, ed., *Daniel*, 104-112. The other editions of the Bohairic text are by C.G. WOIDE, ed./tr., *Appendix ad editionem novi testamenti graeci, cum dissertatione de versione biblicorum aegyptiaca*, sectio III (Oxford, 1799) 141-148 (tr. in Latin) and H. TATTAM, ed./tr., *Prophetiae majores in dialecto linguae aegyptiacae memphitica seu coptica* II (Oxford, 1852) 386-405 (tr. in Latin). For the Arabic text, see BECKER, ed./tr., «Reich des Ismaeliten», 10-29.

In my opinion, a translation from the Bohairic Coptic version here is preferable to one from the Arabic text, because it may give a better idea of the lost original version of the parallel verses in ApocShen II, which was also composed in Coptic; cf. Appendix. B.4. For a discussion of the original language of 14th Vision, see my forthcoming dissertation.

(13) The first among them, that is, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, will remain for 27 years.

(14) *He will commit terrible crimes, and burn many books* owing to his hypocrisy; he will oppress the Christian scribes, and hate the people.

(15) *God will be patient with him, until he finishes his reign.*

(16) The second, his name is ʿUmar b. ʿAbd Allāh, will rule 22 years.

(17) *He will perform good deeds, and there will be great security in his days and ease; he will feed the hungry and clothe the naked.*

(18) *There will be trouble in his days for all of mankind.*

(19) The third, his name is al-Walid b. Zayd, *his reign will be nine years;*

(20) *in his days, great fantasies and deceitful teachings will appear.*

(21) The fourth, Zayd b. Marwān, his reign will be 30 years.

height of heaven.

(25) The eleventh king who will be from them *will do injustice on the entire earth; he will destroy the ancient things made by hand.*

(26) *He will oppress those who are on the earth, so that you will not be able to find anyone who buys or sells, while they all sigh for 42 months; if the God of heaven is patient with him, his reign will last forty months.*

(27) The twelfth king who will be from them, his reign will be strong, in accordance with the judgements of his mouth.

(28) *He will do varied things on the earth* in his reign, until they wonder about what he is doing.

(29) *There will be many wars in his reign* in the end of time; a king will trouble the entire kingdom of the sons of Ishmael for 147 years.

(30) And in the 110th year of his reign, there will be a war between him and the Ethiopians.

(31) The sons of Ishmael will rule over them, until they go to the city of the kingdom, which is Souban (СОУБАН).

(32) They will send out to them asking for peace; they will give them much silver and gold; the Ethiopians will be paying them tribute.

(33) The thirteenth king who will be from them, there will be no mercy in him at all, or fear before him; *his reign will last only a few days.*

(34) The fourteenth king who will be from them will take much gold and

(22) He will perform great miracles on the earth, his control over the earth will create security and justice, and the people of Egypt will be given rest.

(23) There will be a dearth in his days, and he will give food to all the people about whom he will hear that they are hungry.

(24) He will build towns, and at the end he will find rest and die, because a war will break out against him in the regions of Byzantium.

(25) After him, a hard youth, who is harder than iron, will rise, named 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad; this will be the fifth king after the first ten, and his reign will be 27 years.

(26) His soul will be hard like the fire in his (life) hereafter. He will triumph with his sword like iron, and his sword will be strong against Byzantium, while his right hand will be against Nubia.

(27) There will be great misfortunes in his days, a dearth of wheat and wine, terrible derision, and terrible anxiety, and there will be sighing on the earth.

(28) There will be no security in his days to the entire kingdom of Egypt.

silver and he will rule on the earth with justice.

(35) He will assemble war in Egypt, and the Egyptians will rest from their troubles and their sighs.

(36) The Ethiopians will not surrender to him at all, and they will not pay him tribute; there will be war in the land of the Romans in those days.

(37) The Ethiopians will be engaged in war with the regions of the south; they will pillage all the villages and towns of Egypt, until they reach the city that Cleopatra built in Upper Egypt (ΦΜΑΡΗΣ), which is Šmoun (ΣΜΟΥΝ).

(38) After these things, the king of Syria will hear (it); he will be afraid in the end, because the war will have drawn near to him.

(39) And in the end, he will consolidate his reign; it will stand well.

(40) After these things, a youth will rise from the sons of Ishmael, who is the fifteenth king who will be from them.

(41) He will be hard in his soul like iron; he will stretch out his sword unto the Romans, his right hand upon the Ethiopians; he will be of two faces and two tongues.

(42) In the days of his reign, there will be serious trouble on the entire earth; his talking will be hard like fire.

(43) The Ethiopians will bring him gifts, gold, silver, and pearls, and he will impose his labour on everyone.

(44) He will take captive many lands, and he will oppress them; they will not be sated with bread all the days of his reign; there will be no peace in the days

(29) The sixth will be Abū 'l-Abbās Ġa'far, and his reign will be 35 years.

(30) His reign will be good, *without any war. His time (will mean) security. One will move voluntarily in his days, and his days will pass in safety.*

(31) The seventh king will be al-Mahdi b. Muḥammad;

(32) *a terrible war will break out against him, between him and the king's house, and one of them will kill him.*

(33) The gold will not be shown by him, while his work is in progress.

(34) He will do much wrong in his days. *He will gather much gold and silver from the heads, gather the riches, and destroy many.*

(35) There will be no comfort in his days.

(36) The eighth king, his name is Hārūn b. al-Mahdī, will have great happiness in his days; he will remain king for 19 years.

(37) *Yet, a terrible war will break out against him from among the Arabs, and there will be no warding off in his days.*

(38) *The ninth king will be a man born of two kinds, the one from the Ishmae-*

of his reign, and there will be much pillaging in his days.

(45) The sixteenth king who will be from them, *there will be no war during his reign, nor will he wage war with anybody else.*

(46) *He will be given a long and peaceful time, and his reign will stand firm.*

(47) The seventeenth king who will be from them, *there will be a war between him and his race; this is the one whose name will make the number 666.*

(48) One from his race will rise, and he will wage war with him; he will chase him into Egypt with the riches of his kingdom.

(49) And he will abandon his race with his army. *He will throw the riches into the streets and the paths,*

(50) *descending into Egypt with his riches, and he will go southward (PHC), wishing to go to Souban, the city of the Ethiopians, with the remainder of the riches.*

(51) *And one of his race will kill him in the regions of Upper Egypt; he will carry off the remainder of the riches.*

(52) The eighteenth king who will be from them in the beginning of his reign (?), and he will commit terrible crimes for 1260 days.

(53) *And there will be a war against him in the western parts; he will gain victory to the day of his death.*

(54) Afterwards, a youth will rise from them, who is his son, who is the

in the text favour an altogether later period⁵⁶, the second view appears to be the most plausible.

Leaving aside the question of precisely when the latest recension of 14th Vision was produced⁵⁷, I wish to call attention to Suermann's reconstruction of the late-Umayyad or early-Abbasid version of it⁵⁸. The most significant parts of 14th Vision that Suermann attributes to the second redaction are 1) all references to the Nubians (§§30-32, 36-37, 41, 43, and 50) and 2) the verses dealing with the nineteenth king, Sarapidos, and his enemy Pitourgos (§§54-75). Interestingly, a comparison to the new evidence from ApocShen II lends substantial support to Suermann's conclusions. His view on the nineteenth king now appears to be partly incorrect, as several verses pertaining to this king, mainly in the first part (§§54-64), are present also in ApocShen II and therefore are likely to be original. On the other hand, it does indeed appear that most verses concerning Sarapidos were added in a later period – notably those that narrate the king's clash with Pitourgos. Moreover, Suermann's argument that the references to Nubian invasions of Egypt belong to the later reworking, since they are unlikely to have taken place as early as the Umayyad period⁵⁹, is confirmed by their absence from ApocShen II⁶⁰.

56) Note the reference to four distinct Nubian invasions (for which see below), the treatment of Syria and Egypt as two separate kingdoms (esp. §38 and §55), and the slayer of the 19th king being called «the Turk» (§65 ff.).

57) There is a lot in favour of the early-Ayyubid period, in which case the fourth beast refers to the Fatimids and Pitourgos to Šalāḥ al-Din or the Ayyubids in general. I shall deal with 14th Vision in more detail in my forthcoming dissertation on Coptic apocalypses of the Arabic period.

58) SUERMANN, «Notes», 332-341.

59) *Ibid.*, 340. King Cyriacus' invasion of Egypt narrated in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, which is discussed extensively by BECKER («Reich der Ismaeliten», 35-52) is probably legendary. For the passage in question, see B.T.A. EVETTS, «History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria (III)», *PO* 5 (Paris, 1910) 3-215, here 144-145; cf. J. DEN HEIJER, «The Influence of the History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria on the History of the Churches and Monasteries of Egypt by Abū l-Makārim (and Abū Šāliḥ)», *ParOr* 19 (1994) 415-439 here 435-436.

60) With the exception of §41, which has a parallel in §26 of section 4 of ApocShen II. When referring to the black kingdom(s) neighbouring Egypt, and the inhabitants, Arabic sources seem to witness a random use of Nubia (النوبة) and Ethiopia (الحبيشة; cf. Boh. ⲉⲟⲱⲩ, «Ethiopian»). It may be significant, however, that section 4 of ApocShen has the former term, whereas 14th Vision contains the latter. Could it be that a gradual shift in the use of terminology took place in the course of the Fatimid period, as the power of the Nubians waned, and that of the «real» Ethiopians increased? If so, this would only support Suermann's argument for two distinct recensions of 14th Vision. On the use of both terms, see G. VANTINI, *Oriental Sources Concerning Nubia* (Heidelberg and Warsaw, 1975) ix-x.

B.2. THE APOCALYPSE OF SAMUEL OF QALAMŪN

The *Apocalypse of Samuel* has received considerable attention from scholars notably because of its lively descriptions of the decay of the Coptic language, and, to a lesser extent, the Copts' conversion to Islam⁶¹. As we still know so little about how and when the distinct, yet related, processes of arabisation and islamisation in Egypt took place, it is all the more frustrating that the text yields so little additional information on its date of composition. F. Nau and G. Graf both date the apocalypse to the eighth century⁶². However, this is probably too early, since, to judge from other source material, the Copts' adoption of the Arabic language and their conversion to Islam gained momentum only from the later part of the ninth century onwards⁶³. Therefore it is more likely that ApocSam was composed at least one or two centuries later⁶⁴.

In a recent article, J. Iskander has argued that the *terminus post quem* for the composition of ApocSam must be the beginning of the eleventh century⁶⁵. His opinion is based on the representation in ApocSam of the last Arab king, which would point directly to the Fatimid ruler al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh (r. AD 996-1021)⁶⁶:

The last king who will rise from al-hijra⁶⁷, his name will be the name of a

61) The Arabic text is edited and translated into French by ZIADEH, ed./tr., «L'Apocalypse de Samuel». On this apocalypse, see, e.g., F. NAU, «Note sur l'apocalypse de Samuel», *ROC* 20 (1915-1917) 405-407; GRAF *GCAL* I (1944) 280-282; MARTINEZ, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic, passim*; «The King of Rûm», *passim*; DECOBERT, «Sur l'arabisation et islamisation», 287-300; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 285-287; ISKANDER, «Islamization».

62) F. NAU, «Note», 405 (beginning of the 8th c.); G. GRAF, *Geschichte* I, 282 (later part of the 8th c.).

63) On the arabization of Egypt, see L.S.B. MACCOULL, «Three Cultures under Arabic Rule: The Fate of Coptic», *Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie copte* 27 (1985) 61-70; «The Strange Death of Coptic Culture», *Coptic Church Review* 10 (1989) 35-45; S. RUBINSON, «Translating the Tradition: Some Remarks on the Arabization of the Patristic Heritage in Egypt», *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996) 4-14; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 287. On islamization, see I.M. LAPIDUS, «The Conversion of Egypt to Islam», *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972) 248-262; S.I. GELLENS, «Egypt, Islamization of», *Coptic Encyclopaedia* (New York, 1991) 936-942.

64) Cf. MARTINEZ, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic*, 267 and 282, n. 53 (second part of the 9th c.); DECOBERT, «Sur l'arabisation et l'islamisation», 287 (first part of the 9th c.); HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 287 (10th c. or later).

65) ISKANDER, «Islamization».

66) ApocSam, 389, l. 19 – 390, l. 7. The translation is my own.

67) On the use of this term in ApocSam to designate the Arabs, see HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 287, n. 89. Another option is to read *al-hağara*, «the Hagarenes»; cf. ISKANDER, «Islamization», 222.

prophet⁶⁸, and the number of his name will be 666. He who has a heart, take note! He will be born of two nations, and the earth will tremble in the days of his reign. His clothes will have the colour of gold. He will be heroic in his soul, and he will send a man to death for a dinar. There will be no rest in his days; there will be no life⁶⁹ in his face. He will be forgotten of (?) the fear of God, and he will not remember him. He will not apply the laws of his father, for he is *ismāʿīlī* (اسماعيلي), or the orientation of his mother, for she is European. He will be a lover of wine and a shedder of blood. Many are the troubles that the people will receive in his days, and he will kill many people by surprise. There will be great distress upon the people in those days. They will be awaiting the mercy of God due to the great number of consecutive afflictions that will be upon them on the part of the sons of Ishmael.

Indeed, Al-Ḥākīm was the son of a Christian woman, and his was a turbulent reign in many respects⁷⁰. Yet, Iskander's main argument is that the term *ismāʿīlī*, which is used to designate the last king's father, must refer to the Ismāʿīliyya branch of the Shia. Because the Fatimids were the only Ismāʿīliyya dynasty that ever ruled Egypt, this would mean that the father and the last king himself were Fatimid. Furthermore, although Iskander explores also the possibility that *ismāʿīlī* may simply mean 'Arab', by analogy with the term Banū Ismāʿīl, 'Sons of Ishmael/Ishmaelites', he discards it immediately on the grounds that he does not encounter this use anywhere else in the Christian Arabic literature of the Middle Ages⁷¹.

Iskander deserves praise for having offered an alternative approach to a thorny problem. Yet, his interesting argument does not stand the test of new evidence. First, contrary to his findings, the word *ismāʿīlī* is attested in cases where it can refer only to Arabs, or Muslims, in general rather than to Ismāʿīlis. Although a brief examination of Coptic Arabic apocalypses re-

68) اسم نبي, *ism nabī*, which appears to be the oldest variant; cf., e.g., MS Par. ar. 205 (AD 1344?), f. 147^v and MS Vat. ar. 158 (AD 1357), f. 124^v. MS Par. ar. 150 (AD 1606), the main source for Ziadeh's edition of ApocSam, has also this reading, though Ziadeh edits لسمرييني, Lasmarini; cf. ZIADEH, «L'Apocalypse de Samuel», 389 (ed.), 402 (tr.). For variant readings, see my forthcoming dissertation.

69) حياة, according to MS Par. ar. 150, 28^v; yet, several other MSS read حياء, «shame». Cf. also 14th Vision (Arab), §58: وله وجه لا يتحزى, «he has a face that is not moved with shame». Although Ziadeh renders the حياة in MS Par. ar. 150 faithfully, he translates «pudeur», without adding an explanatory note; cf. ZIADEH, «L'Apocalypse de Samuel», 390 (ed.), 403 (tr.). For variant readings, which all support the reading of حياء, «shame», see my forthcoming dissertation.

70) For an introduction into al-Ḥākīm's rule, see M. CANARD, «al-Ḥākīm bi-Amr Allāh», *Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition* III (Leiden and London, 1971) 76-82.

71) ISKANDER, «Islamization», 221-222.

vealed only a few occurrences, namely, in ApocShen II⁷², thorough research of a wider range of Christian Arabic texts will almost certainly yield more examples. Moreover, several apocalyptic texts that are preserved in the Coptic language witness the use of $\text{N}\text{I}\text{C}\text{M}\text{A}\text{H}\text{L}\text{I}\text{T}\text{H}\text{C}$, 'Ishmaelites'⁷³, and it is likely that *ismā'īlī*, or its definite plural *al-ismā'īliyyūn*, is a literal translation from the Coptic.

To identify the last Arab king with al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh raises yet another, more serious problem. The above passage from ApocSam bears a close resemblance to the prophecy of the nineteenth king in ApocShen II and 14th Vision cited earlier. The parallels (in italics) are clearly visible in the following triptych⁷⁴:

ApocShen II (<i>Par. ar.</i> 6147):	14 th Vision (Boh.):	ApocSam:
(38) <i>The ninth king will be a man born of two kinds, the one from the Ishmaelites, and the other from the Byzantines. His name will be Muḥammad b. Hārūn, and his reign will be 21 years.</i>	(54) Afterwards, a youth will rise from them, who is his son, who is the nineteenth king who will be from them; <i>for he will be born of two races, his father is from the sons of Ishmael, his mother is Roman.</i>	The last king who will rise from al-hijra, his name will be the name of a prophet, <i>and the number of his name will be 666.</i> He who has a heart, take note! <i>He will be born of two nations, and the earth will tremble in the days of his reign.</i>
(39) <i>The whole earth will tremble before him. He will be heroic in his words and his power; he will fight the people for one dirham, and the people will have no rest in his days.</i>	(55) There will be war in Egypt and Syria for 21 months.	His clothes will have the colour of gold. <i>He will be heroic in his soul, and he will send a man to death for a dinar. There will be no rest in his days; there will be no life in his face.</i>
(40) <i>He will forget God, and he will forget his</i>	(56) For their swords will fall down among themselves in war. <i>That king is the one whose name makes the number 666, and he is called by three</i>	<i>He will be forgotten of</i>

72) ApocShen II, *Par. ar.* 6147, f. 67^r, f. 74^v (cf. §9 of my edition in the appendix), and f. 81^v; these are all Coptic folio numbers, unlike the ones used by Troupeau; see Appendix A.1. For the highly unusual notion of «Muslims», see n. 13 above.

73) Cf. ApocAth III, §IX.8 and Macarius' prophecy contained in the *Virtues of St. Macarius*; see E. AMÉLINEAU, ed./tr., *Annales du Musée Guimet* 25, *Histoire des monastères de la Basse-Égypte* (Paris, 1894) 172.

74) Iskander was apparently unaware of the existence of ApocShen II. He did, however, note the similarities between ApocSam and 14th Vision; «Islamization», 223-224.

<p><i>father and his mother. He will not remember them, his father being Ishmaelite, his mother Byzantine.</i></p> <p>(41) <i>He will be a lover of intoxicants and wine.</i></p> <p>(42) <i>At the end, he will shed much blood, and he will kill those who will eat with him at his table.</i></p> <p>(43) <i>He will gather for himself thousands and thousands and ten thousands and ten thousands. He will control the gold of Egypt, Arabia, and the islands.</i></p> <p>(44) <i>After that, he will survey the land in qassaba's.</i></p>	<p>names, which are Mametios, Halle, and Sarapidos.</p> <p>(57) <i>For he will reign while he is (still) a small youth, and he will commit terrible crimes; he will command all the Jews, who are in every place, to return to Jerus-alem; the whole earth will tremble in the days of his reign, until they sell a man for one coin.</i></p> <p>(58) <i>A shameless face which is his (?), and he will forget the fear of God.</i></p> <p>(59) <i>He will not remember the law of Ishmael, his father, or his mother, for she is Roman; he will be arrogant and a drunkard at every hour.</i></p> <p>(60) <i>He will kill a multitude, while they eat with him at the table, by potions of magic drugs; there will be great devastation in those days.</i></p>	<p><i>(?) the fear of God, and he will not remember him. He will not apply the laws of his father, for he is Ishmaelite, or the orientation of his mother, for she is European. He will be a lover of wine and a shedder of blood. Many are the troubles that the people will receive in his days, and he will kill many people by surprise. There will be great distress upon the people in those days. They will be awaiting the mercy of God due to the great number of consecutive afflictions that will be (visited) upon them on the part of the sons of Ishmael.</i></p>
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Table III.

It may be clear from the above that one should take care in attempting to establish the identity of the last king in ApocSam on the basis of its description, as the nearly-identical descriptions in the two other texts were used to portray several distinct caliphs. The lost prototype perhaps portrayed Marwān II (A.3.a) and was then reused in ApocShen II to refer to the Abbasid caliph al-Amīn (*idem*) and in 14th Vision as a reference to the last Fatimid ruler al-^cĀḍid (A.3.b; n. 83 below). Whether or not these caliphs

were thus realistically portrayed appeared not to matter. The last king mentioned in ApocSam could likewise be anybody, and consequently, its description is useless for establishing the date of composition of the text.

It is indeed conceivable that, as Iskander asserts, the king intended was Caliph al-Ḥākīm bi-Amr Allāh. The Copts, like all other subjects, suffered so many hardships during his reign that it must not have been difficult for them to envisage him in the role of an apocalyptic king. If this was the case, then the author of ApocSam did not provide his own description of this caliph, but incorporated the prophecy of the nineteenth Ishmaelite king known at least as early as the reign of Caliph al-Amīn, which he thought characterised al-Ḥākīm well⁷⁵. But then again, the same argument can be used in favour of virtually any Muslim ruler. What is more, there is a good chance that the description of the last Arab king is not a *vaticinium ex eventu* at all, but a genuine prophecy without any reference to past or present rulers.

All things considered, given the limited historical value of the passage on the last king for the dating of ApocSam, it still is better in this respect to let oneself be guided by other elements in the texts. ApocSam's account of the decay of the Coptic language, the state of the Coptic Orthodox Church, and conversion to Islam, suggest that it may have been produced in its final form at any time between about the second part of the ninth century and the time of copying of its earliest extant version⁷⁶. As to the passage itself, whichever caliph the reader prefers to read in it, the bottom line is that its constituent parts, which originally, in the eighth century, may have served to portray a real caliph, had become *topoi* by the time ApocSam was composed.

B.3. RELATION OF THE TEXTS

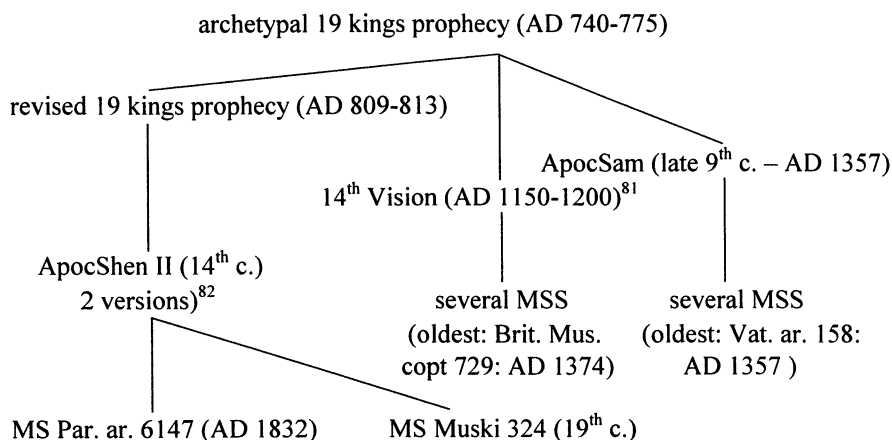
Considering the passages on the nineteenth or last Arab king (table III), the three apocalypses concerned do not appear to have influenced each other in either direction. Some motifs are shared only by ApocSam and 14th Vision⁷⁷, while others occur in the latter and ApocShen, but not in ApocSam⁷⁸;

75) This may explain why in the passage in question, *ismāʿīlī* is used to designate «Arab», whereas in the rest of ApocSam, the Arabs are referred to as *aʿrāb* or *al-hiğra*: the passage on the last Arab king simply had a different origin; *ibid.*, 222 and n. 67 above.

76) The oldest datable manuscript containing ApocSam is MS Vat. ar. 158 preserved in the Vatican Library. It was copied in AD 1357.

77) E.g., the numerical value of the king's name being 666 and the king having a lifeless/shameless face.

likewise, ApocShen and ApocSam contain phrases that are not present in 14th Vision⁷⁹. Given the available evidence, there is thus only one explanation for the close resemblance between the texts, namely, that the prophecies derive from a common archetype. This archetype, which may have been either written or orally transmitted, probably dates from the period AD 740-775. The relationship of the texts and manuscripts may be represented as follows⁸⁰:



CONCLUDING REMARKS: THE TRADITION OF THE NINETEEN MUSLIM KINGS

So far, the tradition of the nineteen Muslim kings has been viewed merely as an instrument to establish the relations between the unedited ApocShen II and two other apocalypses, 14th Vision and ApocSam. In the following, the opposite happens, in that the textual evidence is used to evaluate the historical development and the nature of the tradition concerned.

Although from the outset inspired by the *Book of Daniel*, the nineteen Muslim kings underwent a change from historical reference into fixed literary motif. Despite the many ambiguous allusions and stock apocalyptic

78) E.g., the 21 months/years and the king's killing of people who eat with him at his table. For the latter motif, cf. also LetPis, 307, l. 20-21 (ed.), 318, l. 40 (tr.).

79) E.g., the king's heroism and his being a lover of wine and a shedder of blood.

80) The stemma does not account for any intermediary links.

81) See n. 57 above.

82) See n. 12 above.

topoi, which seriously hamper the identification of individual characters and events, there can be no doubt that the lost original prophecy of the nineteen kings was aimed, at least in general, at giving a review of real history. My contention is that it pertains to the rule of the Umayyad dynasty, and that it was written in response to its fall and the simultaneous rise to power of the Abbasids. The nineteen kings are a reference to the first nineteen caliphs starting with, or following, the Prophet Mḥammad (A.3.a.).

Later, this prophecy *ex eventu*, which either existed in textual form or constituted an oral tradition, was reworked and expanded several times in order to fit changed political situations. The textual evidence indicates that this happened at least twice, once during the reign of the Abbasid caliph al-Amīn (A.3.a), another time in the early Ayyubid period (B.1)⁸³. Meanwhile, another, more radical development was taking place. Some authors chose to incorporate specific elements of the nineteen kings prophecy into compositions of their own, rather than to maintain the general structure and contents of the former. A case in point is the description of the nineteenth king being included in ApocSam (B.2), possibly not in order to refer to a real king, but to form a genuine prophecy. Another trace of this development is found in the unedited *Apocalypse of Athanasius II* (ApocAth II), composed in the Fatimid period⁸⁴. Like section 4 of ApocShen II and 14th Vision, the text states that nineteen Muslim kings will rule Egypt, yet only the reigns of the eighteenth and nineteenth kings are described, and in entirely different terms⁸⁵. Moreover, Caliph al-Mustaṣṣir (r. AD 1036-1094) and his successor al-Mustaḥlī (AD 1094-1101)⁸⁶, who are clearly meant here, would never hold

83) An indication of how the prophecy was interpreted by then is found in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, which identifies the 19 kings from the Sons of Ishmael as the Fatimids, from the five Hidden Imams up to and including the last Fatimid caliph, al-ʿĀḍid. See A. KHATER and O.H.E. KHS-BURMESTER, ed./tr., *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church Known as the History of the Holy Church, by Sawirus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ bishop of al-Āsmūnīn* III, ii, Publications de la Société d'Archéologie Copte. Textes et Documents 12 (Cairo, 1970) 99-100; MEINARDUS, «New Evidence». This use of the term «the Sons of Ishmael» to refer to the successors of the Imām Ismāʿīl, i.e., the Ismāʿīlīs, calls to mind Iskander's hypothesis regarding the last Arab king in ApocSam, which is outlined in B.2 above.

84) See GRAF, *Geschichte* I, 277 (§70.2). The oldest MSS that contain this text are the 13th c. *MS Sin. ar.* 495 (448), ff. 212^r-219^r (*abuq*ⲉⲁ, ff. 209^r-216^r) and *MS Vat. ar.* 158, ff. 209^r-216^r from AD 1357. More than ten years ago, Martinez stated that he was preparing an edition of ApocAth II, but no such thing has appeared yet; cf. MARTINEZ, «King of Rūm», 247. For a translation and analysis, see my forthcoming dissertation.

85) *MS Sin. ar.* 495 (448), ff. 212^r-219^r, here 215^r-216^r.

86) The passage on al-Mustaṣṣir is largely taken up by an interesting description of the rule of the Armenian vizier Badr al-Ġamālī. In what appears to be the last *vaticinium* ex

these positions in any sensible enumeration of kings⁸⁷. In brief, these examples from ApocSam and ApocAth II illustrate that all the ties the tradition once had with history had been severed in the course of time.

The tradition of the nineteen Muslim kings represents a form of apocalyptic writing that is altogether distinct from the dominant type of Coptic apocalypse, and whose origin, as argued above (section A.3.b), may be traced back to Syria or the surrounding area⁸⁸. Most Coptic apocalypses are largely paraenetic⁸⁹. Admonitions and exhortations occupy an important place; the *vaticinia ex eventu* and the prophecies of the end merely serve to bring home their core message, that is, that the Copts should remain faithful to their traditional values and ways, and not give up hope in the face of Arabic dominion or the hardships of everyday life. The earliest example of this type, which certainly antedates the genesis of the motif of the nineteen Muslim kings, is ApocAth III; it had a strong influence on both the structure and imagery of such famous Coptic apocalypses as ApocSam and LetPis⁹⁰. This homiletic aspect, on the other hand, is virtually lacking in those apocalypses that center on the prophecy of the nineteen Kings. These and similar apocalyptic texts from Egypt, such as ApocAth II and the *Testament of Our Lord*⁹¹ which are rather late, consist mainly of the description of a succession of kings that precedes and at the same time announces the end of time.

This observation leads to another important issue: what were the reasons behind the composition of the latter type of apocalypse? 14th Vision may well serve as a guideline for discussion. Some scholars writing on this text merely echo the conventional view on the functions of apocalyptic literature, arguing that it was a means to both exhort and console the Copts⁹², just like ApocAth III and the other typically Coptic apocalypses. Its histori-

eventu of ApocAth II, reference is made to the struggle for power between al-Mustaʿli and his brother Niẓār.

87) E.g., according to the enumeration in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* mentioned in note 83, al-Mustanʿir and al-Mustaʿli are the 13th and the 14th king respectively.

88) See also Martínez's remarks on the foreign origin of 14th Vision; *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic*, 263 and «The King of Rûm», 257.

89) *Idem*; HOYLAND, *Seeing Islam*, 279; J. VAN LENT, «Les apocalypses coptes de l'époque arabe: quelques réflexions», in M. RASSART-DEBERGH, ed., *Études Coptes V. Sixième journée d'études, Limoges 18-20 juin 1993, Septième journée d'études, Neuchâtel 18-20 mai 1995*, Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte 10 (Paris and Leuven, 1998) 181-195, here 189-190.

90) As to the imagery, see MARTÍNEZ, «King of Rûm», 249, n. 5 and 250, n. 12.

91) J. ZIADÉ, ed./tr., «Un Testament de Notre-Seigneur concernant les invasions des Mongols», *ROC* 21 (1918-1919) 264-273, 433-444. This text dates from the 14th c. AD.

92) MEINARDUS, «Commentary», 395; SUERMANN, «Notes», 348.

cal setting would then, according to Suermann⁹³, be the so-called Coptic revolts of the eighth century AD, which then typifies 14th Vision as an essentially anti-Muslim piece of writing⁹⁴. Yet, there is not much internal evidence to support these traditional views. It is true that 14th Vision predicts that the end of time with all its blessings will follow shortly after the fall of the fourth empire. Admonitions and exhortations, however, are conspicuous by their absence. And was the fourth empire actually considered to be so evil? Its kings are not evil by definition – some are bad, but others are good. Over all, the text is so stereotyped, so streamlined, and so lacking in any edge of dramatic expectancy, that one can hardly believe that the author of 14th Vision really thought of the end as imminent. Finally, there is hardly any mention of the oppression of Copts, the destruction of churches, or conversion to Islam – let alone of Coptic revolts. It is rather unlikely that these elements were left out on purpose in order not to antagonize the Muslim overlords; other texts are quite explicit in this respect.

So we should look for reasonable alternatives. Like other historical apocalypses, 14th Vision and similar prophecies express a strong desire for order, and interest in the structure and meaning of history. They are perhaps best understood, however, in the light of what Martinez casually refers to as «the almost playful task... to provide symbolic clues for the identification of every king»⁹⁵. This would class them to a certain extent with other examples of folklore which have many of the characteristics of fairy tales, such as the lives of saints and the *Thousand and One Nights*. These were certainly intended to entertain as much as to edify.

It would be fruitful, in conclusion, if students of Coptic Arabic apocalypses also showed more interest in the nature of the intended audience of the texts. At the same time, they should be more aware that these texts are not by definition anti-Muslim or anti-Arabic. They may be pro-Coptic, but that is something essentially different. To give an indication, apocalypses like ApocSam and LetPis are doubtless addressed to a mixed rural and monastic audience, given their emphasis on topics such as the misbehaviour of the clergy and the monks, and the damaging effect of the land-tax or *ḥarāḡ*

93) *Ibid.*, 348.

94) In his second article on 14th Vision, Meinardus identifies the fourth beast with the Fatimids. Consequently, he deems the descriptions in the text so negative, that he wonders if the traditional positive evaluation of the life of the Christians under the Fatimids should not be corrected. Cf. MEINARDUS, «New Evidence», 309.

95) MARTINEZ, *Eastern Christian Apocalyptic*, 264.

on the lives of Coptic farmers. The Ayyubid 14th Vision, however, a reworking of an age-old prophecy, fits more in the socio-economic and cultural environment of the city, which also saw the flowering of the Coptic Renaissance, when Copts were seeking to assemble and contemplate, often with a scholarly eye, their written cultural heritage. Many literary works of this age were intended not so much for Copts in the Egyptian countryside or monasteries, as for the Coptic urban upper- and middle classes, which to a large extent co-operated and associated with the Muslims.

APPENDIX: SECTION 4 OF APOCSHEN II:
TEXT & TRANSLATION⁹⁶

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPTS⁹⁷

A.1. *Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ar. 6147 = Par.ar.6147*

This manuscript is described by G. Troupeau⁹⁸.

‘1) f. 1-20. Entretien de Notre-Seigneur avec ses disciples sur le mont Sinaï ...

2) f. 20^v-38^v. Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur du monastère de Qalamûn ...

3) f. 39-56^v. Pisentius, évêque de Qift. Épître à ses fidèles ...

4) f. 57-60^v. Saint Jean Chrysostome. Homélie sur l’affliction...

5) f. 61-87. Apocalypse de saint Šenute.

6) f. 87^v-100. Traité anonyme de théologie, intitulé: *Kitāb Sirr at-tālūt fī ḥidmat al-Kahanūt...* XIX^e s. (1832). – Copie anonyme, exécutée sur un manuscrit provenant de Dayr as-Suryān, et achevée en 1548 des Martyrs (f. 87). – Écriture orientale (Égypte). – Titres rubriqués. Papier occidental. – 100 fol. (f. 100^v laissé en blanc). Folioté en chiffres coptes. – 185×125 mm. – 15 lignes à la page. – Surface écrite 150×105 mm. – Feuilletés reliés sur onglets. – Demi-reliure occidentale, dos parchemin blanc’.

In describing the contents of the manuscript, Troupeau follows the modern Western numeration. I prefer the Coptic (*abuqtī*) folio numbers; these are clearly visible in the top left corner of the page. Thus ApocShen II is found on ff. 63^r-89^r. Section 4 occupies ff. 74^r-76^v, which corresponds to Troupeau’s ff. 72^r-74^v. The script is in a fairly clear *nashī*. Ff. 74^r and 75^v are difficult to read, probably due to humidity.

A.2. *Cairo (Muski), Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, 324 = Muski 324*

W.F. Macomber gives the following information⁹⁹:

96) I wish to thank Dr. W.F. STOETZER and Dr. J. VAN DER VLIET for their valuable suggestions and advice about linguistic matters.

97) From here the references all point to some subdivision of the Appendix (e.g., B.1.a.1) or to the manuscripts (e.g. §1), unless stated otherwise.

98) TROUPEAU, *CMAC* II (1974) 87-88.

99) W.F. MACOMBER, *Catalogue of the Christian Arabic Manuscripts of the Franciscan*

‘324 – 22.0×17.3 cms, 14 lines, 164 ff., 19th c.

- 1) Ff. 1a-30b: Story of the Prophet Jeremiah...
- 2) Ff. 31a-73b: Story of the biblical patriarch Joseph, ‘King of Egypt’...
- 3) Ff. 74a-94b: Story of Job the Just...
- 4) Ff. 95a-115b: Homily of John Chrysostom on the Passion of Christ, delivered in the presence of Emperors Arcadius and Honorius...
- 5) Ff. 116a-143a: Prophecies of Anbā Šanūdah...
- 6) Ff. 144a-164b: Homily [maymar] of Anbā Pisentius [Bisantā’ūs]...’.

Like *MS Par. ar. 6147*, the Muski manuscript has Coptic numbers in the top left corner of the folios that differ from the modern Western ones. The latter were used by Macomber. Again, I prefer the Coptic numeration: ApocShen II occupies ff. 236^r-264^f (versus ff. 116a-43a according to Macomber’s catalogue); section 4 is found on ff. 251^r-254^f (versus ff. 130^f-133^f). The script is a clear *nashī* with strong North African influences, written on occidental paper. There are a few notations in the margin¹⁰⁰.

B. LANGUAGE OF SECTION 4

ApocShen II is written in Middle Arabic, the mixed language of texts in which Classical, Neo-Arabic, and pseudo-correct elements alternate¹⁰¹. The most salient features of this language that occur in section 4 of ApocShen II are pointed out below.

Center of Christian Arabic Studies, Muski, Studia Orientalia Christiana 33 (Jerusalem, 1984) 67-68.

100) As to section 4, these marginal additions are all Arabic numerals underneath the Arabic سنة, ‘year’. See the notes to the translation.

101) J. BLAU, *The Emergence and Linguistic Background of Judaeo-Arabic: A Study of the Origins of Middle Arabic* (second enlarged edition; Jerusalem, 1981) 215. Many features of Middle Arabic are described by J. BLAU, *A Grammar of Christian Arabic Based Mainly on South-Palestinian Texts from the First Millennium*, CSCO 267, 276, and 279/Subsidia 27-29 (Louvain, 1966-1967). Cf. Kh. SAMIR, «La tradition arabe chrétienne: État de la question, problèmes et besions», in SAMIR, *Actes I* (1982) 19-120, here 103-131. For the Middle Arabic used by Copts, see, e.g., S. KUSSAIM, «Contribution à l’étude du moyen arabe des Coptes», in *Le Muséon* 80 (1967) 153-209; 81 (1968) 5-77; F. JARITZ, *Die arabischen Quellen zum heiligen Menas*, Abhandlungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Kairo, Islamische Reihe 7 (Heidelberg, 1993) 63-82; U. ZANETTI, «La Vie de Saint-Jean higoumène de Scété au VII^e siècle», *AB* 114 (1996) 273-405, here 391-403.

B.1. ORTHOGRAPHY AND PHONOLOGY

B.1.a. MS Par. ar. 6147 = *siglum A*.

1) ث written as ت (e.g. §1: تلتمايه), except in the case of عثمان (§11); ذ written as د (e.g., §4: هدا);

2) س usually written a *šadda*-like mark¹⁰² above which a short oblique stroke resembling a *fatha* (see also B.1.a.5; e.g., §1: in جنسنا); maybe, this is a case of *ihmāl*, i.e., when an undotted (*muhmal*) letter is marked;

3) a ‘two-eyed *hā*’ written above the v-shaped medial from *hā*’ when the latter is followed by م (e.g., §3: in ايامهم)¹⁰³;

4) *damma* and *Kasra* strokes omitted;

5) arbitrary use of an oblique stroke resembling a *fatha* the meaning of which is not clear; occasionally this stroke appears where a *fatha* is possible (e.g., §1: عَدَد); in many other cases, however, it can not be interpreted as such (e.g., §2: قَصُور);

6) the final *yā*’ dotted, even when final *-ā* is intended (e.g., §5: علي);

7) *tā*’ *marbūṭa* frequently written without dots (e.g., §3: الامانه المستقيمه); sometimes, ت is used (instead of ة) to mark the feminine ending *-a* of an *idāfa* (e.g., §8: مملكة الروم); in popular speech, this ending is pronounced as *-at*: *mamlakat ar-rūm*, ‘the kingdom of Byzantium’;

8) *madda* (e.g., §24: الاخر) and *sukūn* (e.g., §1: سلطنة) omitted; no *šadda*, except in the case of الله (e.g., §11: عبد الله);

9) *hamza* omitted, with the exception of the unsupported *hamza* at the end of a word, which is often written (e.g., §6: هولاء); the *wāw*, the *alif*, and the *yā*’ without dots that may support the *hamza* are usually noted (e.g., §5: سالناه); the *alif* in *min-aḡli*, however, is sometimes omitted: من أجل منجل instead of من أجل رئيس (§12) instead of رئيس. The *yā*’ is always written with two dots (e.g., §1: مايه); cf. B.1.a.6;

10) syntactic periods marked with a superscript dot.

102) Alternatively, this mark is described as two superscript dots that are joined together (the two dots above the *tā*’ and below the *yā*’ are clearly separate from one another); the photographs and copies that I have at my disposal do not permit a decision as to their nature.

103) The computer program that I use can produce neither the two-eyed *hā*’ in an isolated form nor the v-shaped *hā*’.

B.1.b. MS Muski 324 = siglum B.

- 1) written as ت (e.g., §1: تلتمايه); ذ written as د (e.g., §4: هدا);
- 2) س usually written with a *šadda*-like mark¹⁰⁴ above which a short oblique stroke resembling a *fatha* (see also B.1.b.5; e.g., §1: in لجنسنا); as in MS A, this may be a case of *ihmāl*.
- 3) a two-eyed *hā'* written above the v-shaped medial form *hā'* when the latter is followed by م (e.g., §3: in ايامهم)¹⁰⁵;
- 4) *ḍamma* and *kasra* strokes omitted;
- 5) arbitrary use of an oblique stroke resembling a *fatha* the meaning of which is not clear; occasionally this stroke appears where a *fatha* is possible (e.g., §1: عدد); in other cases, however, it can not be interpreted as such (e.g., §1: واحده);
- 6) the final *yā'* dotted, even when final *-ā* is intended (e.g., §5: علي); there is only one exception: يكسى (§17);
- 7) *tā' marbūta* frequently written without dots (e.g., §3: الامانه المستقيم);
- 8) *madda* (e.g., §24: الاخر) and *sukūn* (e.g., §1: سلطنة) omitted;
- 9) arbitrary use of a mark resembling a *šadda*¹⁰⁶ above which a *fatha*-like stroke (see B.1.b.2 and 5); the meaning of this combination is not clear (cf., e.g., §1: جدا; §3: والديابح; §11: والسادس; §27: استهزا); only seldom is it written where the use of both *šadda* and *fatha* is justifiable (e.g., §1: ان);
- 10) *hamza* usually omitted; sometimes, however, the combination mentioned under B.1.b.9 is found where one expects ء (e.g., §12: هولا; §27: استهزا)¹⁰⁷; in هولاي (e.g., §6), the *hamza* is replaced by ي; the *wāw*, the *alif*, and the *yā'* without dots that may support the *hamza* are usually noted (e.g., §5: سالناه); the *alif* in *min-aġli*, however, is sometimes omitted: منجل instead of من أجل (e.g., §3 where one finds both forms), as is the *yā'* in *ra'īs*: ريس (§12) instead of رئيس. The *yā'* is always written with two dots (e.g., §1: مايه); cf. B. 1.B.6.;
- 11) accusative case ending *-an* written without the doubled *fatha* (e.g.,

104) See n. 102 above.

105) See n. 103 above.

106) See n. 102 above.

107) In these cases, the combination ء is actually found on the same level as the preceding letters (like the isolated ء); unfortunately, the computer program that I use can not produce this effect.

§1: مخالفًا); sometimes, however, the combination mentioned under B.1.b.9 is found where one expects " (e.g., §1: جدا¹⁰⁸);

12) syntactic periods marked with a red dot (the division into periods is not always parallel to that of MS A);

13) miscellanies: §2: هناداة for هنادات; §6: فابتدي for فابتدأ; §15: يتانا for يتأني; §11: ماماديوس/محمد (MS Par.ar.6147) and سليمان are rendered in Coptic (MAMΔAIOC and COXOMON resp.).

B.2. MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX

1) 'war', construed as masculine; (e.g., MS A. §32: يكون حرب); likewise, يد, 'hand'; (MS A. §26: يده اليمنى يقوم عظيم);

2) use of the short form of the 3rd. m. pl. without *nūn* (y...ū) for indicative (e.g., MSS A/B. §2: يهدموا);

3) the ending *-an* of the accusative m. sg. occasionally omitted (e.g., MS A. §34: ويجمع ذهب كثير); cf. Also B.2.8;

4) lack of agreement between verb and subject (e.g., MS A. §3: والديابيح يطلوا; MS B. §3: والديابيح والقرايين يطل); cf. Also B.2.1;

5) lack of agreement between relative pronoun and its antecedent (e.g., MS A. §46: الغرايم الذي; MS B. §3: الشده الذي);

6) lack of agreement between noun and adjective (e.g., MS B. §1: رجل مخالفًا); cf. Also B.2.1;

7) true predicative use of the verb forms يكون/تكون ('to exist'), obviously to indicate the future state (e.g., MS A. §23: ويكون غلا في ايامه); often, the subject of the clause is in the accusative; cf. B.2.8;

8) the accusative case expressing the subject of a verbal clause (e.g., MS A. §18: وتعبًا يكون); (e.g., MS B. §25: ويبعده يقوم صيبا); cf. B.2.7;

9) the negative ليس *laysa*, not inflected and always followed by يكون/تكون (e.g., MS A. §28: وليس تكون سلامه); MS B. §28: وليس يكون سلامه); for the use of يكون/تكون, cf. B.2.7.

B.3. VOCABULARY

Note the following Arabic words and their uses:

108) Cf. The preceding note.

- 1) هنادات/ة (MSS A/B. §2). pl. of هنادة, 'monastery' (< Coptic ρΗΕΝΕΕΤΕ);
- 2) كورت/ه (MSS A/B. §2, 3) and the plural كور (MS B. §14), 'land(s)' (< Geek χώρα);
- 3) الامانة (MSS A/B. §3), 'the faith';
- 4) من بعد (MSS A/B. §11), 'starting from' (ΙCΞΕΝ; cf. F.7);
- 5) مملكة (e.g., MSS A/B. §12), 'reign' (cf. F.9).

B.4. TRACES OF A COPTIC SUBSTRATUM

As argued in the main text (B.3.a), most part of section 4 (§§ 6-44) reaches back to at least the early-ninth century AD¹⁰⁹. Given this early date, it is likely that it was originally written in Coptic rather than in Arabic. Unfortunately, the manuscripts do not give enough information to decide whether the fourteenth century author of ApocShen II himself was the translator, or whether he merely copied an Arabic text that had already been translated from Coptic. The following examples may suffice to illustrate the Coptic substratum¹¹⁰:

- 1) The 3rd m. pl. of the active verb form is used to express the passive; cf. MSS A/B §2: يهدموا '...will be destroyed' instead of 'they will destroy...';
- 2) several nominal phrases that are odd in Arabic to say the least may be explained by combinations of ΕΤΕ, ΝΑΙ, and ΝΕ in the Coptic *Vorlage*; cf. MS A § 13: الذي هو هذا, a translation of the Coptic ΕΤΕ ΦΑΙ ΠΕ, 'i.e., that is'. See also F.8 and F.11.
- 3) as in Coptic, the ordinal numbers in section 4 receive the definite article and precede the noun to which they belong: the noun is in the singular form, and is indefinite; cf. MSS A/B. §25: الخامس ملك (= ΠΙΜΑΧΤΟΥ ΝΟΥΡΟ), 'the fifth king'.
- 4) MS A. §40: ولا يجعل لهم ذكر, 'he will not remember them', a calque of a Coptic expression using ΕΡΤΕΜΕΥΙ; cf. Also B.3.1 (هنادة < ρΗΕΝΕΕΤΕ).

109) It is not clear when the remaining verses (§§ 1-5 and §§ 45-46) were written. They may have been composed by the 14th c. Author of ApocShen II. Cf. the main text of the present article, n. 19.

110) Other examples are given in the notes to the translation.

C. METHOD OF TEXT EDITION

In the following edition, the texts of *MS Par.ar.6147* and *MS Muski 324* are edited and translated in parallel columns. Of these two manuscripts, which represent one and the same version, the former generally offers better readings than the latter. Nevertheless, it is useful to publish a joint edition of both texts, if only because so little Middle Arabic textual material is available for further study. In addition, this method provides an insight into what the two copyists did with the text, how errors or differences in interpretation occurred in the course of their work. A fine illustration is found in §11, where *MS Par.ar.6147* offers a list of twenty kings, whereas *MS Muski 324* enumerates twenty-one rulers¹¹¹.

Aiming to draw a detailed picture of the manuscript tradition, we shall also retain the morphology, the syntax, and much of the orthography of the two manuscripts¹¹². One may argue that such a method produces the text of the copyist rather than that of the author. Yet, the former actually exists, whereas, in this particular case, the latter does not. Furthermore, although both manuscripts are very late, dating back to the nineteenth century, their language includes many elements that J. Blau describes as typical of the Middle Arabic of the first millennium. It even shows several traces of a Coptic *Vorlage*. The alternative method is to modernize the text, for instance its spelling, in order to simplify it for the modern reader, but this would incur the loss of valuable information on the historical evolution of the Arabic language.

Still, some features that are found in the manuscripts are left out. These are:

- the *šadda*-like mark and the short oblique stroke above the س (cf. B.1.a.2 and B.1.b.2);
- the two-eyed *hā'* that is sometimes written above the v-shaped medial form *hā'* when the latter is followed by م (cf. B.1.a.3 and B.1.b.3)¹¹³;
- the oblique stroke resembling a *fatha*; its use is not clear (cf. B.1.a.5 and B.1.b.5);

111) See the main text of this article, B.3.a. The parallel edition of both texts is also motivated by the fact that only two MSS are known so far. If there were more MSS, the choice of one of them would be a practical necessity.

112) Including the defects that may be the result of copyist mistakes, such as the rendering of مملكة instead of مملكته (e.g., MS B. §19).

113) My computer program can produce neither this mark nor the ones above the س.

- the combination of the *šadda*-like mark and the stroke resembling a *fatha* that occurs in MS B; again, its meaning is not clear (see B.1.b.9)¹¹⁴;
- the superscript dots that mark syntactical periods (cf. B.1.a.10 and B.1.b.12).

The endnotes to the translation deal mainly with some textual and linguistic problems. The larger historical and literary issues raised by the text are discussed in the main text of this article.

Sigla:

- A *MS Par.ar.6147*
- B *MS Muski 324*
- () To indicate additions by the editor
- // Page number of the manuscripts (*abuḡī* foliation)
- | Divider of lines
- : Division marker, occurring in *MS Par.ar.6147* as a cluster of three dots.

The division of the text and its translation into chapters and verses is not found in the manuscripts, but added for ease of reference. The English translation renders the Arabic text in a literal way, in order to expose the Coptic substratum.

114) Yet, when this combination occurs in الله . 'God', it is rendered with a *šadda* in the edition.

D. TEXT

B = MS Muski 324:	A = MS Par.ar.6147:
(1) /1.1, 251 ^r / يا اولادي ان في عام واحد في سلطنه واحده يقوم ملك من الحنفا رجل مخالفا جدا يبغض لجنسنا وعدد اسمه تلتمايه وخمسه وسبعين	(1) /1.13, 74 ^r / بالحقيقة يا اولادي ان في عام واحد في سلطنة واحد من الحنفا مخالف جدًا مبغضًا لجنسنا وعدد اسمه تلتمايه خمسه وسبعين
(2) وفي ايامه يهدموا سبعة الف وستمايه وواحد دياره وهنادات وقصور ومغائر وقصور لاهل كورة مصر	(2) وفي /74 ^v / ايامه يهدموا سبعة الاف وستمايه وواحد دياره وهنادات وقصور ومغائر لاهل كورت مصر
(3) وينكروا الامانه المستقيمه منجل الشده الذي تلحق البشر في ايامهم والديبايح والقرايين يبطل في ايامهم من اجل تجديفهم (4) وهذا هو احد من مايه وخمسين ملك يملكون فيها ويكون رديا بخلاف الذي يكون الويل الويل لكورة مصر في ايامهم يا اولادي	(3) وينكروا الامانه المستقيمه من اجل الشده التي تلحق البشر في ايامهم والديبايح والقرايين يبطلوا في ايامهم منجل تجديفهم (4) وهذا هو واحد من مايه وخمسين ملك يملكوا فيها ويكون رديًا بخلاف الذي يموت الويل الويل لكورت مصر في ايامهم يا اولادي
(5) وان نحن لما سمعنا هذه القوال من ابونا النبي انبا شنوده فبكينا جدا وسالناه قايلين يا ابونا هذه الامه التي اعلمتنا من اجلها كم تكمل سنه علي العالم	(5) واما نحن لما سمعنا هذه الاقوال من ابينا النبي شنوده فبكينا جدًا وسالناه قايلين يا ابونا هذه الامه التي اعلمتنا منجلها كم سنه تملك علي العالم
(6) فاما هو فابتدي ان يعلمنا قايلًا انه قبل شي يا اولادي /251 ^v / مملكة هولاء الناس سبعمايه وتلتون سنه	(6) فاما هو فابتدا ان يعلمنا قايلًا انه قبل كل شيء يا اولادي مملكة هولاء الناس سبعمايه وتلتين سنه
(7) بل هي امه تحب الفضه امه تاكل وتشرب وتدوس البقيه بارجلها ويلبس حرير	(7) بل هي امه تحب الذهب والفضه امه تاكل وتشرب وتدوس البقيه بارجلها وتلبس كل يوم كالعرايس
(8) وتشتد مملكتهم وتفسد مملكة الروم والقلات	(8) وتشتد مملكتهم وتفسد مملكت الروم والفرس والعلان

<p>(9) وتلك المملكة الاولى في بني هاجر الدين هم الاسماعليه الاولين في بني هاجر (10) تسعة عشر ملك يكونوا عظمين جدا في بدو مملكتهم (11) ومن بعد الملك الاول الذي هولاي اسمائهم اول mamadios والثاني ابو بكر والثالث عمر والرابع عثمان والخامس علي ابن ابي طالب والسادس معاويه السابع مروان ابن هاسم الثامن عبد الملك ابن مداون التاسع الوليد العاشر زيد ابن عبد الملك الحادي عشر solomon الثاني عشر ابن عبد العزيز الثالث عشر عمر ابن هارون الرابع عشر الوليد ابن زيد الخامس عشر زيد ابن هارون السادس 252^f/ عشر زيد ابن مروان السابع عشر عبد الله ابن محمد الثامن عشر ابو العباس ابن محمد التاسع عشر المهدي ابن جعفر العشرون هرون المهدي الحادي والعشرون محمد ابن هرون</p> <p>(12) المملكة المشتركة مع الرجل الاول الذي هو ريس عليهم مملكة هولاي اربعة وثمانين سنة وبعد الحنفا الذي هم هولاي</p> <p>(13) الاول فيهم سليمان ابن عبد العزيز يقيم سبعة وعشرين سنة </p> <p>(14) ويصنع شرور عظيمه ويحرق كور كثيره من اجل نفاقه يضطهد كتاب المسيحيين ويغض الناس </p> <p>(15) والله يتانا عليه حتي تكمل مملكته</p> <p>(16) والثاني اسمه عمر ابن عبد الله يملك</p>	<p>(9) وتلك المملكة الاولى في بني هاجر الدين هم الاسماعليه الاولين في بني هاجر (10) تسعة عشر ملك يكونوا عظيمين جدا في بدو مملكتهم 75^f/ (11) ومن بعد الملك الاول الذي هولاء اسمائهم: ماماديوس والثاني ابو بكر والثالث عمر والرابع عثمان والخامس علي ابن ابي طالب والسادس معاويه والسابع مروان ابن هاشم الثامن عبد الملك ابن مروان التاسع الوليد العاشر زيد ابن عبد الملك الحادي عشر هاشم ابن عبد الملك الثاني عشر سليمان ابن عبد العزيز الثالث عشر عمر ابن عبد العزيز الرابع عشر الوليد ابن زيد الخامس عشر زيد ابن مروان السادس عشر عبد الله ابن محمد السابع عشر ابو عثمان ابن محمد الثامن عشر المهدي ابن جعفر التاسع عشر هارون ابن المهدي العشرين محمد ابن هارون:</p> <p>(12) المملكة المشتركة مع الرجل الاول الذي هو ريس عليهم ومملكة هولاء اربعة وثمانين سنة: وبعد الخلفا الذي هم هولاء:</p> <p>(13) الاول فيهم الذي هو هدا سليمان ابن عبد العزيز يقيم سبعة وعشرين سنة</p> <p>(14) ويصنع شرور عظيمه ويحرق كتب كثير من اجل نفاقه ويضطهد الكتاب المسيحيين ويغض الناس</p> <p>(15) والله يتاني عليه حتي يكمل مملكته 75^v/</p> <p>(16) والثاني اسمه عمر ابن عبد الله يملك</p>
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<p>اتنين وعشرون سنه (17) ويصنع اعمالا جيده وسلامه عظيمه تكون في ايامه وسهوله يطعم الجياع ويكسي العراه /252^v/ (18) وتعبا يكون لجميع البشر:</p>	<p>اتنين وعشرين سنه (17) ويصنع اعمال جيده وسلامه عظيمه تكون في ايامه وسهوله: يطعم الجياع ويكسي العراه (18) وتعباً يكون في ايام مملكته لجميع البشر:</p>
<p>(19) التالت اسمه الوليد ابن زيد مملكه تسع سنين (20) يظهر في ايامه فناطس عظيمه ومقالات كادبه:</p>	<p>(19) والتالت اسمه الوليد ابن زيد مملكته تسع سنين (20) يظهر في ايامه فناطس عظيمه ومقالات كادبه:</p>
<p>(21) الرابع اسمه زيد ابن مروان مملكته ثلاثين سنه (22) ويصنع علي الارض عجائب عظيمه ويكون عمله في الارض سلامه وعدل وتريح ارض مصر</p>	<p>(21) الرابع زيد ابن مروان مملكته تكون ثلاثين سنه (22) ويصنع عجائب عظيمه علي الارض ويكون حكمه في الارض سلامه وعدل وتريح اهل مصر</p>
<p>(23) غلا عظيم في ايامه ويعطي طعاما لكل الناس الذي يسمع عنهم انهم جياع (24) ويبي مدن وفي الاخر يموت لان حرب يقوم عليه من نواحي الروم</p>	<p>(23) ويكون غلا في ايامه ويعطي طعاماً لكل الناس الدين يسمع عنهم انهم جياع (24) ويبي مدن وفي الاخر يستريح ويموت لان حرب يقوم عليه في نواحي الروم :</p>
<p>(25) وبعده يقوم صبياً اصعب من الحديد يسما عبد الله ابن محمد هو الخامس ملك بعد العشره الاوله مملكه سبعة وعشرون سنه</p>	<p>(25) وبعده يقوم صبياً صعباً اصعب من الحديد يسما عبد الله ابن محمد هذا هو الخامس ملك من بعد العشره الاولي ومملكته سبعة وعشرين سنه </p>
<p>(26) وتكون نفسه صعبه مثل النار في اخرته ويقلب سيفه علي الروم ويده اليمنه علي النوبه</p>	<p>(26) وتكون نفسه صعبه مثل النار في اخرته ويغلب بسيفه مثل الحديد ويقوي سيفه علي الروم ويده اليمني /76^t/ علي النوبه</p>
<p>(27) وشدايد عظيمه تكون في ايامه وغلا في القمح والخمر واستهزا عظيم وقلق عظيم</p>	<p>(27) وشدايد عظيمه تكون في ايامه وغلا في القمح والخمر واستهزا عظيم وقلق</p>

<p>وتنهذ عظيم يكون علي /253^ا/ الارض (28) وليس يكون سلامه في ايامه لجميع مملكة مصر</p> <p>(29) السادس ابو العباس ابن جعفر مملكته خمسه وتلاتين سنه</p> <p>(30) وتكون مملكته جيده بغير حرب وزمان سلامه ويصير في ايامه بالقطع وتجوز ايامه سالمه</p> <p>(31) سابع ملك المهدي ابن محمد</p> <p>(32) يكون حرب يقوم عليه بينه وبين ابنة الملك وواحد منهم يقتله</p> <p>(33) والذهب لا يظهره وعمله يصير</p> <p>(34) ويصنع ظلماً كثير في ايامه ويجمع دهبا كثير وفضه من الرووسا والشعوب ويجمع الاموال ويفسد اماكن كثيره</p> <p>(35) وليس يكون رخا في ايامه</p> <p>(36) التامن ملك اسمه هارون ابن المهدي يكون له فرح عظيم في ايامه يقيم تسعة عشر سنه ملك</p> <p>(37) لكن يقوم عليه حرباً عظيماً من الغرب وليس يكون ردا في ايامه</p> <p>(38) التاسع يكون رجل مولود من جنسين /253^ب/ الواحد اسماعيل والاخر من الروم واسمه محمد ابن هرون مملكته احدي وعشرين سنه</p> <p>(39) والارض كلها تضطرب من قدامه وهو بطلاً في اقواله وقوته يحارب الناس علي درهم واحد لا يكون للبشر راحه في</p>	<p>عظيم وتنهذ يكون علي الارض (28) وليس تكون سلامه في ايامه لجميع مملكه مصر :</p> <p>(29) السادس ابو العباس جعفر ومملكته خمسه وتلاتين سنه</p> <p>(30) يكون مملكه جيده بغير حرب وزمانه سلامه ويسير في ايامه بالتطوع وتجوز ايامه سالمه:</p> <p>(31) السابع ملك المهدي ابن محمد</p> <p>(32) يكون حرب عظيم يقوم عليه بينه وبين بيت الملك وواحد منهم يقتله</p> <p>(33) والذهب لا يظهره وعمله بسير </p> <p>(34) ويصنع ظلماً كثير في ايامه ويجمع ذهب كثير وفضه من الرووساء ويجمع الاموال ويفسد اماكن كثير</p> <p>(35) ليس يكون رخاء في ايامه:</p> <p>(36) التامن ملك اسمه هرون ابن المهدي يكون له فرح عظيم في ايامه يقيم تسعة عشر سنه ملك</p> <p>(37) لكن يقوم عليه حرباً عظيماً من الغرب وليس يكون ردا في ايامه:</p> <p>(38) التاسع ملك يكون رجل مولود من جنسين الواحد من الاسماعيليين والاخر من الروم واسمه محمد ابن هرون /76^ب/ ومملكته احدي وعشرين سنه</p> <p>(39) والارض كلها تضطرب قدامه وهو بطلاً في اقواله وقوته يحارب الناس علي درهم واحد ولا يكون للبشر راحه في</p>
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ايامه	ايامه
(40) وينسا الله وابوه وامه وامه ولا يجعل	(40) وينسي الله وينسي ابوه وامه ولا
لهم ذكرا ابوه اسماعيل وامه روميه	يجعل لهم ذكر ابوه اسماعيلي وامه روميه
(41) ويكون خليل السكر والخمر	(41) ويكون خليل السكر والخمر
(42) وفي الاخر يسفك دما كثير ويقتل	(42) وفي الاخر يسفك دما كثيرا ويقتل
الدين ياكلون معه علي مايدته	الدين ياكلوا معه علي مايدته
(43) ويجمع اليه الوف الوف وربوات	(43) ويجمع اليه الوف الوف وربوات
ربوات ويتسلط بدهب مصر والاوريا	ربوات يتسلط علي دهب مصر وارايبا
والجزائر	والجزائر
(44) وبعد هذا يقيس الارض بالقصب	(44) وبعد هذا يقيس الارض بالقصب :
(45) ومن بعد هذا كمال التمانيه اتنين	(45) من بعد كمال تلتمايه اتنين وستين
وستين للهجره يقوم ملك صعب	للهجره يقوم ملك صعب
(46) الذهب يكثر والقماح يقل ويتقل نيره	(46) الذهب يكثر والقماح يقل وتقل
علي الارض كلها من اجل القرايم السدي	التمره علي الارض كلها من اجل الغرايم
يطالب الناس بها والموجودين في ذلك	السدي يطالب الناس بهم والموجودين في
254/ الزمان	ذلك الزمان

E. TRANSLATION

B = *MS Muski 324*:

(1) /251^r, l.1/ 'O my children, in a certain year in a certain sultanate, a king will rise from among the *ḥunafā'*, a very opposing man, who will be hateful to our kind, and the number of his name is 375.

(2) In his days, 7601 houses, monasteries, fortresses, caves, and palaces belonging to the people of the land Egypt will be destroyed².

(3) They will renounce the True Faith owing to the trouble that will descend upon mankind in their days. The offerings and the sacrifices will be invalid in their days owing to their blasphemy³.

(4) This will be one out of 150 kings who will rule in it, and he will be evil unlike the one who is⁴. Woe, woe to the land of Egypt in their days, o my children!

(5) And we, when we had heard these words from our father, the prophet Abba Shenute, we cried a lot, and we asked him: 'O abūnā, this nation about which you have informed us, how many years will it complete in the world?'

(6) As for him, he began to inform us: 'Before anything, o my children, /251^v/ the kingdom of these people will be 370 years.

(7) Besides, it will be a nation that

A = *MS Par.ar.6147*:

(1) /74^r, l.13/ 'Truly, o my children, in a certain year in the sultanate of one of the *ḥunafā'* who will be very opposing and hateful to our kind, and the number of his name is 375¹,

(2) and in /74^v/ his days, 7601 houses, monasteries, fortresses, and caves belonging to the people of the land of Egypt will be destroyed².

(3) They will renounce the True Faith owing to the misery that will descend upon mankind in their days. The offerings and the sacrifices will be invalid in their days owing to their blasphemy³.

(4) This will be one out of 150 kings who will rule in it. He will be evil unlike the one who dies⁴. Woe, woe to the land of Egypt in their days, o my children!

(5) As for us, when we had heard these words from our father, the prophet Shenute, we cried a lot, and we asked him: 'O abūnā, this nation about which you have informed us, how many years will it rule over the world?'

(6) As for him, he began to inform us: 'First of all, o my children, the kingdom of these people will be 730 years.

(7) Besides, it will be a nation that

loves silver, a nation that will eat and drink and crush the rest with its feet⁵, and wears silk.

(8) Their kingdom will be strong, and it will ruin the kingdom of Byzantium and of al-Qalāt⁶.

(9) This will be the first kingdom among the sons of Hagar, who will be the first Ishmaelites among the sons of Hagar.

(10) (There will be) nineteen kings who will be very powerful in the beginning of their kingdom,

(11) and starting from⁷ the first king, these are their names⁸: first Mamadios, the second Abū Bakr, the third ʿUmar, the fourth ʿUṭmān, the fifth ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, the sixth Muʿāwiya, the seventh Marwān b. Hāšim, the eighth ʿAbd al-Malik b. Madāwun, the ninth al-Walīd, the tenth Zayd b. ʿAbd al-Malik, the eleventh Solomon, the twelfth Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the thirteenth ʿUmar b. Hārūn, the fourteenth al-Walīd b. Zayd, the fifteenth Zayd b. Hārūn, the six-/252^r/teenth Zayd b. Marwān, the seventeenth ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad, the eighteenth Abū ʿl-ʿAbbās b. Muḥammad, the nineteenth al-Mahdī b. Ġaʿfar, the twentieth Hārūn al-Mahdī, the twenty-first Muḥammad b. Hārūn.

(12) The kingdom associated (lit. 'co-operating') with the first man,

loves gold and silver, a nation that will eat and drink and crush the rest with its feet⁵, and dresses each day like brides.

(8) Their kingdom will be strong, and it will ruin the kingdom of Byzantium, of Persia, and of al-ʿAlān⁶.

(9) This will be the first kingdom among the sons of Hagar, who will be the first Ishmaelites among the sons of Hagar.

(10) (There will be) nineteen kings who will be very powerful in the beginning of their kingdom /75^r/,

(11) and starting from⁷ the first king, these are their names⁸: Māmādiyūs, the second Abū Bakr, the third ʿUmar, the fourth ʿUṭmān, the fifth ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, the sixth Muʿāwiya, the seventh Marwān b. Hāšim, the eighth ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān, the ninth al-Walīd, the tenth Zayd b. ʿAbd al-Malik, the eleventh Hāšim b. ʿAbd al-Malik, the twelfth Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the thirteenth ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, the fourteenth al-Walīd b. Zayd, the fifteenth Zayd b. Marwān, the sixteenth ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad, the seventeenth Abū ʿUṭmān b. Muḥammad, the eighteenth al-Mahdī b. Ġaʿfar, the nineteenth Hārūn b. al-Mahdī, the twentieth Muḥammad b. Hārūn:

(12) The kingdom associated (lit. 'co-operating') with the first man

who will be a leader over them, the reign⁹ of these will be 84 years, and after the *ḥunafā'*, they will be these¹⁰:

(13) The first among them, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, will remain for 27 years.

(14) He will commit terrible crimes, and burn many villages¹¹ owing to his hypocrisy. He will oppress the scribes of the Christians, and he will hate the people;

(15) God will be patient with him, until his reign comes to a close.

(16) The second, his name is ʿUmar b. ʿAbd Allāh, will rule 22 years.

(17) He will perform good deeds, and there will be great security in his days and ease; he will feed the hungry¹² and clothe the naked. /252^v/

(18) There will be trouble for all of mankind.

(19) The third, his name is al-Walid b. Zayd, his reign¹³ will be nine¹⁴ years;

(20) in his days, great fantasies¹⁵ and deceitful teachings will appear.

(21) The fourth, his name is Zayd b. Marwān, his reign will be 30¹⁶ years.

(22) He will perform great miracles on the earth, his activity upon the earth will create security and justice, and the land of Egypt will

who will be a leader over them, the reign⁹ of these will be 84 years: and after the caliphs, they will be these¹⁰:

(13) The first among them, that is^{10a}, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, will remain for 27 years.

(14) He will commit terrible crimes, and burn many books owing to his hypocrisy; he will oppress the Christian scribes, and hate the people.

(15) God will be patient with him, until he finishes his reign. /75^v/

(16) The second, his name is ʿUmar b. ʿAbd Allāh^{11a}, will rule 22 years.

(17) He will perform good deeds, and there will be great security in his days and ease: he will feed the hungry and clothe the naked.

(18) There will be trouble in his days for all of mankind:

(19) The third, his name is al-Walid b. Zayd, his reign will be nine years;

(20) in his days, great fantasies¹⁵ and deceitful teachings will appear:

(21) The fourth, Zayd b. Marwān, his reign will be 30 years.

(22) He will perform great miracles on the earth, his control over the earth will create security and justice, and the people of Egypt

be given rest¹⁷.

(23) There will be a dearth in his days, and he will give food to all the people about whom he will hear that they are hungry.

(24) He will build towns, and at the end he will die, because a war will break out against him from the regions of Byzantium.

(25) After him, a youth harder than iron will rise, named ^cAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad; he will be the fifth king¹⁸ after the first ten; his reign¹⁹ will be 27²⁰ years.

(26) His soul will be hard like the fire in his (life) hereafter. He will turn his sword against Byzantium and his right hand against Nubia.

(27) There will be great misfortunes in his days, a dearth of wheat and wine, terrible derision, and terrible anxiety, and there will be great sighing on /253^f/ the earth.

(28) There will be no security in his days to the entire kingdom of Egypt.

(29) The sixth, Abū 'l-^cAbbās b. Ġa^cfar, his reign will be 25²¹ years.

(30) His reign will be good, without any war, but a time of security, and it will definitely happen in his days, and his days will pass²² in safety²³.

will be given rest¹⁷.

(23) There will be a dearth in his days, and he will give food to all the people about whom he will hear that they are hungry.

(24) He will build towns, and at the end he will find rest and die, because a war will break out against him in the regions of Byzantium:

(25) After him, a hard youth, who is harder than iron, will rise, named ^cAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad; this will be the fifth king¹⁸ after the first ten, and his reign will be 27 years.

(26) His soul will be hard like the fire in his (life) hereafter. He will triumph with his sword like iron, and his sword will be strong against Byzantium, while his right hand /76^f/ will be against Nubia.

(27) There will be great misfortunes in his days, a dearth of wheat and wine, terrible derision, and terrible anxiety, and there will be sighing on the earth.

(28) There will be no security in his days to the entire kingdom of Egypt:

(29) The sixth will be Abū 'l-^cAbbās Ġa^cfar, and his reign will be 35 years.

(30) His reign^{21a} will be good, without any war. His time (will mean) security. One will move voluntarily in his days, and his days will pass in safety²³:

(31) (The) seventh king will be al-Mahdī b. Muḥammad;

(32) a war will break out against him, between him and the king's sons²⁴, and one of them will kill him.

(33) The gold will not be shown by him, while his action takes place²⁵.

(34) He will do much wrong in his days. He will gather much gold and silver from the heads and the peoples, gather the riches, and destroy many places.

(35) There will be no comfort in his days.

(36) The eighth king, his name is Hārūn b. al-Mahdī, will have great happiness in his days; he will remain king for 19²⁶ years.

(37) Yet, a terrible war will break out against him from the west, and there will be no evil²⁷ in his days.

(38) The ninth will be a man born of two kinds, /253^v/ the one Ishmael and the other from the Byzantines. His name will be Muḥammad b. Hārūn, whose reign will be 21 years.

(39) The whole earth will tremble before him. He will be heroic in his words and his power; he will fight the people for one dirham; the people will have no rest in his days.

(40) He will forget God and his father and his mother²⁸. He will not

(31) The seventh king will be al-Mahdī b. Muḥammad;

(32) a terrible war will break out against him, between him and the king's house, and one of them will kill him.

(33) The gold will not be shown by him, while his work is in progress²⁵.

(34) He will do much wrong in his days. He will gather much gold and silver from the heads, gather the riches, and destroy many places.

(35) There will be no comfort in his days:

(36) The eighth king, his name is Hārūn b. al-Mahdī, will have great happiness in his days; he will remain king for 19 years.

(37) Yet, a terrible war will break out against him from among the Arabs^{27a}, and there will be no warding off^{27b} in his days:

(38) The ninth king will be a man born of two kinds, the one from the Ishmaelites^{27c} and the other from the Byzantines. His name will be Muḥammad b. Hārūn, /76^v/ and his reign will be 21 years.

(39) The whole earth will tremble before him. He will be heroic in his words and his power; he will fight the people for one dirham, and the people will have no rest in his days.

(40) He will forget God, and he will forget his father and his

<p>remember them²⁹, his father being Ishmaelite³⁰, his mother Byzantine.</p> <p>(41) He will be a lover of intoxicants and wine.</p> <p>(42) At the end, he will shed much blood, and he will kill those who will eat with him at his table.</p> <p>(43) He will gather for himself³¹ thousands and thousands and ten thousands and ten thousands. He will control the gold of Egypt, the wadis³², and the islands.</p> <p>(44) After that, he will survey the land in <i>qaṣaba</i>³³.</p> <p>(45) After this completion of 362³⁴ years of the Hiġra, a hard king will rise.</p> <p>(46) Gold will increase, while the wheat becomes scarcer, and his yoke will weigh heavily on the whole earth, because of the fines³⁵ that he will levy on the people and those present in that /254^r/ time’.</p>	<p>mother. He will not remember them²⁹, his father being Ishmaelite³⁰, his mother Byzantine.</p> <p>(41) He will be a lover of intoxicants and wine.</p> <p>(42) At the end, he will shed much blood, and he will kill those who will eat with him at his table.</p> <p>(43) He will gather for himself³¹ thousands and thousands and ten thousands and ten thousands. He will control the gold of Egypt, Arabia, and the islands.</p> <p>(44) After that, he will survey the land in <i>qaṣaba</i>³³.</p> <p>(45) After (the) completion of 362 years of the Hiġra, a hard king will rise.</p> <p>(46) Gold will increase, while wheat becomes scarcer, and fruit will become scarcer on the whole earth, because of the fines that he will levy on the people and those present in that time’.</p>
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F. NOTES TO THE TRANSLATION

1) The author or a copyist appeared to have lost track of this sentence. Cf. B.

2) Lit. ‘they will destroy 7601...’ The Arabic may reflect the lack of real passive conjugations in Coptic. Instead, the passive is expressed by using the 3rd m. pl. of the active form. Cf. A. MALLON, *Grammaire copte* (4th ed., revised by M. Malinine; Beirut, 1956), §276; W.C. TILL, *Koptische Dialektgrammatik* (2nd ed.; Munich, 1961), § 279.

3) Read with A.

4) I.e., the evil king’s predecessor? Or maybe this phrase refers to the king who ruled at the time when the original text, or one of its later versions, was composed.

5) Cf. *Dan.* 7:7.

6) I do not know which people or country is meant; obviously, this word created a problem also for the copyists, judging from the different renderings in A and B.

7) Of course, *من بعد* generally means ‘after’, but translating thus would not make sense, as the enumeration that follows begins with Muḥammad, the first Muslim ‘king’. Therefore, I think that *من بعد* is a literal translation of the Coptic *ⲙⲛⲉⲃⲁ*, which denotes both ‘after’ and ‘starting from’.

8) *الذي هولاء/هولاي اسمائهم*, 'these are their names'; I suspect that this odd passage may be explained by some expression in the Coptic *Vorlage* using a combination of *ete*, *nai*, and *ne*, but I do not know in which way precisely. Cf. F.10.

9) Generally, *مملكة* means 'kingdom'; in this particular text, however, the word appears to have been used to translate the Coptic *metouro*, which can mean both 'kingdom' and 'reign', depending on the context. *Passim*.

10) *الذي هم هولاء/هولاي*, 'they will be these'. Cf. F.8.

10a) *الذي هو هذا*, a literal translation of the Coptic *ete fai pe*, 'i.e., that is'.

11) *A* has 'books', which goes better with the harassment of scribes mentioned in the same verse.

11a) I have treated *اسمه عمر ابن عبد الله* in apposition to *والثاني* for two reasons: first, because of the occurrence of *الذي هو هذا*, 'that is' (see n. 11) in §13 (MS A), which may be implicit here; second, because of the lack of any conjunction (like *و*) after these two word groups. Alternatively, one may read: 'The second, his name will be 'Umar b. 'Abd Allāh; he will rule 22 years'. See also §§10 (MS B), 19, 21, 29 (MS B), and 36.

12) Read with *A*.

13) Read with *A*.

14) The copyist added 'nine years' in the margin.

15) Ultimately, from the Greek *fantasi/a*.

16) The copyist added 'three years' in the margin.

17) The reading of this last phrase is uncertain.

18) *الخامس ملك* mirrors the Coptic *pimaHTou nouro*, in which the ordinal number receives the definite article and precedes the noun; the noun is in the singular form, and is indefinite. Cf. MALLON, *Grammaire copte*, §183; TILL, *Koptische Dialektgrammatik*, §171.

19) Read with *A*.

20) The copyist added '28 years' in the margin.

21) The copyist added '35 years' in the margin.

21a) Read with *B*.

22) Read with *A*.

23) The passage on this king appears to be corrupt, which makes the translation only tentative. Cf. 14th Vision (Arab), §46: *ويعطي زمانا كبيرا سلاميا وتقوم مملكته باستقامة*: 'he will be given a long and secure time, and his reign will be righteous' (according to *MS BM copt 729*, f. 246a) and 14th Vision (Copt) *senat naF nouniST nshou nHirhnikon ouoH teFmetouro naoHi erats Cen ouswouten*, 'he will be given a long and peaceful time, and his kingdom will stand firm'. Becker's reading of *اسلاميا*, 'islamische' instead of *سلاميا*, 'peaceful' is not supported by either *MS BM copt 729* or any other MS that contains 14th Vision; cf. BECKER, 'Reich der Ismaeliten', 21 and 27.

24) *ابنة abna*, may be an Egyptian colloquial word for *ابناء abnā*; cf. *امضتك imḏitak*, 'your signature' < *امضاء imḏā*.

25) *A* and *B* offer a different text for this passage, but both are problematic. Unfortunately, there is no corresponding passage in 14th Vision that may help to explain its meaning.

26) The copyist has added '109 years' in the margin.

27) *رديا*. Cf. *A*.

27a) *العرب*, cf. *B*: *الغرب*, 'the west'; 14th Vision (Arab), §53: *المغرب*, 'the west'; and 14th Vision (Copt), §53: *nisa etsapement*, 'the western parts'.

27b) I.e., 'resistance, opposition' (< *رد*). Cf. 14th Vision, §53: 'he will gain victory to the day of his death'.

27c) Cf. F.36.

28) *امه وامه*; dittography of *امه*, 'his mother'.

29) *ولا يجعلهم ذكر*; probably, a literal translation of a Coptic expression using *erpe#meui*. One would expect the Arabic *ولا يذكرهم*.

30) J. Iskander argues that *اسماعيلي* in a corresponding passage in ApocSam refers to the

Ismā'īliyya Branch of the Šī'ā, instead of denoting 'Ishmaelite', i.e., 'Arab'. Cf. ISKANDER, 'Islamization', 221-222 and the main text of the present article, section C.2.

31) The addition إليه is odd, but may reflect the Coptic (ethical dative) ^{eroF}.

32) الأوديا may be an incorrect form of الأودية, 'wadis'. *A* has ارابيا, 'Arabia', (< Greek Arabi/α). Was the copyist of *B* unfamiliar with this loanword and therefore introduce a work that looks somewhat like it?

33) *A qaṣaba* (قصبه) is a linear measure (Eg. = 3.55 m.), which was predominantly used for surveying. Cf. LetPis, 303, l.3: ويمسح الأرض بالقصبه.

34) Read with *A*; or is الثمانيه اثنين وستين, lit. 'the eight sixty-two', a misspelling of the Middle Arabic الثمنمايه اثنين وستين '(the) 862'?

35) Read with *A*.

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