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PART 1

AL-FUSṬĀṬ AND ALEXANDRIA
CHAPTER 1

THE ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
ALEXANDRIA AND AL-FUSTĀṬ

When the Arab armies entered Egyptian territory in 18/639, Alexandria was the capital of the eparchy of Aegyptus, which approximately covered the area of the western Nile delta.¹ Although the eparchal capitals enjoyed in theory equal hierarchical status, Alexandria was in practice a primus inter pares. Besides the fact that Alexandria was Egypt’s main economic centre, the city housed Egypt’s most powerful administrative and religious official: the Melkite patriarch. The patriarch’s authority had drastically increased since the reign of the Byzantine emperor Justinian (r. A.D. 527-65).² After the end of the Sasanid occupation in 7/629, Egypt’s Melkite patriarch Cyrus (al-Muqawqis; in office 10/631-c. 21/641) held exceptionally much power and is recorded to have had civil and military authority over all eparchies.³ Being located in Alexandria, the administration of the patriarch placed the city at the centre of the administration of Egypt’s four eparchies.


The sources explored in this chapter show that the establishment of Arab rule over Alexandria in the early-20s/640s brought along significant changes in the city’s social and administrative structures. The new rulers created strong social and administrative ties between the administrations in Alexandria and in al-Fustāṭ. This chapter uncovers a chronology along which the administrative relationship between these two cities developed. Three stages come to the fore: (1)
the establishment of social and administrative ties between Alexandria and al-Fusṭāṭ, especially on a military level, in the wake of the conquest, (2) the active strengthening of the city’s ties with the top of the province’s administration under the early-Sufyanids, and (3) al-Fusṭāṭ’s gradual attainment of natural dominion over Alexandria in the course of the second/eighth century. This chronology is not particular to the early-Arab history of Alexandria; we will encounter it again when discussing al-Fusṭāṭ’s relationship with other areas, especially in chapters 3 and 4. As we will see on the following pages, the basis for the initial stage was laid before the Arabs had conquered Alexandria.

1. The establishment of Arab rule over Alexandria and the foundation of al-Fusṭāṭ

According to Arabic historical tradition, al-Fusṭāṭ was founded after the Arabs had conquered Alexandria. Allegedly, the caliph ʿUmar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb ordered the Arabs to return to their camp near Qaṣr aṣ-Šamʾ after their successful conquest of the city and that, contrary to ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ’s wish, they should not make Alexandria Egypt’s Arab capital. The caliph is said to have disliked a situation in which the Nile separates the Arabs from al-Madīna.⁸ A. Noth has convincingly argued that this tradition largely consists of literary motifs.⁹ It is, for this reason, a dubious source for the foundation of al-Fusṭāṭ and, hence, for the origins of the early relationship between al-Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria. The following reappraisal of the conquest of Alexandria shows that the Arabs’ conquest administration at Qaṣr aṣ-Šamʾ (that is, prior to the surrender of Alexandria) greatly influenced the future relationship between al-Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria.

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⁹ A. Noth (with L.I. Conrad), The early Arabic historical tradition: a source-critical study, tr. M. Bonner, Princeton, N.J.: The Darwin Press, 1994, pp. 19-20. Nonetheless, that the caliph wanted close contact between the provincial and imperial capital is perhaps visible in the importance of the ḥalīṯ amīr al-muʾminīn (Gr. Potamos Traianos), which connected Qaṣr aṣ-Šamʾ via the Red Sea with the Arabian Peninsula, for the Arabs’ choice to maintain their centre near Qaṣr aṣ-Šamʾ. See P. Sheehan, Babylon of Egypt: the archaeology of old Cairo and the origins of the city, Cairo: American University of Cairo Press, 2010, pp. 51-2.
Arab armies conquered Alexandria in late-20/641 or 21/642. The conquest was not a sudden event. Doubtlessly with knowledge of Alexandria’s position in Egypt, the Arabs engaged in occasional raids on Egyptian territory and the conclusion of agreements (involving the Arab leaders and the Byzantine authorities in Alexandria) a little less than a decade prior to their siege of the city in 20/641. The first small campaigns directed against ‘Egypt and Alexandria’ mentioned in our source material were launched during Abū Bakr’s caliphate (11/632-13/634), probably in 12/633. Military successes are not reported. An Arabic tradition on the final authority of ʿUlayy b. Rabāḥ al-Laḥmī (d. 114/732-3 or 115/733-4) states that Abū Bakr sent one Ḥāṭib b. Abī Balta’a to Cyrus (al-Muqawqis) and that this Ḥāṭib concluded treaties with various towns in the (eastern) Nile delta. It is well possible that the conclusion of such treaties was these campaigns’ main aim. But the treaties may as well be related to a temporary defensive policy adopted by the emperor Heraclius, after the Arabs’

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10 Arabs inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula and Syro-Palestine were familiar with Alexandria prior to the start of the conquest. The vita of John the Almsgiver tells us that ‘Saracens’ fled to Alexandria at the arrival of the Sasanid armies in A.D. 618-9. See W.E. Kaegi, “Egypt on the eve of the Muslim conquest”, CHE, I, p. 56. The Khuzistan Chronicle mentions someone from north-east Arabia who witnessed (and helped) the Sasanids conquer Alexandria in A.D. 619. See Nöldeke, “Die von Guidi herausgegebene syrische Chronik”, p. 25 (with Robinson, “The conquest of Khūzistān”, p. 32). For the date of the Sasanid conquest of Alexandria, see R. Altheim-Stiehl, “Würde Alexandreia im Juni 619 n. Chr. durch die Perser erobert?”, Tyche 6 (1994), pp. 14-5. An anecdote that has ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ visit the city prior to the Arab conquest, preserved in some Arabic sources, also refers to such contact between Alexandria and the Arabian Peninsula. See Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 54 (copied in al-Maqrīzī, Ḥiṣāṣ, I, p. 82). Some medieval Muslim scholars claim that the Qur’ānic verse ‘Iram with columns, of which no equal has been created in the lands’ (Q. 89:7-8) refers to Alexandria. See the overview in Yāqūt ar-Rūmī, Muʿǧam al-buldān, 6 vols, Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1866-73, I, pp. 155-7.


13 Ibn ’Abd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 53. See also Hoyland, Seeing Islam, p. 579.

14 Hoyland, Seeing Islam, p. 579.
numerous military successes, meant to to save part of the tax revenues of the besieged areas and allowing the emperor to send reinforcements.\textsuperscript{15}

A number of medieval Arab historians claim that the Arabs conquered Alexandria in 16/637-8.\textsuperscript{16} Instead of an actual conquest, this date refers to the conclusion of a treaty between Cyrus and ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ to which we find references in a Byzantine source tradition. This treaty reportedly stipulated that the Arabs would not invade Egypt in return for the payment of a tribute. Non-compliance to the agreement from the side of the Byzantines after three years is said to have caused the Arabs to invade Egypt.\textsuperscript{17} There is no unanimity among the Byzantine sources on the date of this agreement.\textsuperscript{18} The three-year interval between the conclusion of the agreement and the Arab invasion matches the years 16/637-8 and late-18/639, the latter being the traditional date of the start of the Arabs’ conquest of Egypt in the Arabic source tradition and in John of Nikiu’s \textit{Chronicle}, composed in the second half of the first/seventh century.\textsuperscript{19} “The conquest of 16/637-8” represents some medieval historians’ interpretation of the treaty as proof for the subjugation of Egypt and, subsequently, as a conquest.

The Byzantines’ refusal to pay tribute, at last, led the Arabs to try to forcefully subdue the country to their rule. They took the eastern Nile delta and the fortress Qaṣr aš-Šam‘ (Babylon) at the apex of the Nile delta between the end of


\textsuperscript{17} Hoyland, \textit{Seeing Islam}, pp. 574-90. Nicephorus (\textit{Nikephoros}, pp. 71-3 [§ 23]) adds that Cyrus had the plan to offer one of the Byzantine emperor’s daughters to ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ in marriage so that he would have himself baptised and to create a tight relationship between the Byzantine royal family and the Arabs. Sayf b. ‘Umar (in at-Ṭabarī, \textit{Taʾrīḥ}, I, p. 2594) reports that Egypt was actually in Arab hands (cf. Ibn ‘Asākir, \textit{Taʾrīḥ}, XVI, p. 265).

\textsuperscript{18} Theophanes Confessor (\textit{Chronicle}, p. 470; but cf. Donner, \textit{Islamic conquests}, pp. 124-6) connects it to the campaigns during Abū Bakr’s caliphate and dates it to as early as 12/633. His account confuses the early campaigns with the treaty between Cyrus and ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ.

18/639 and the spring of 19/640 before they proceeded to Alexandria via Naqyüṣ (Nikious) and al-Kiryawn (Chaireou) in the western Nile delta. The conquest of Alexandria itself took place in the course of 20/641 and, as we shall see below, 21/642. There is no unanimity on the length of the siege of Alexandria; we hear of three, six, or fourteen months. Medieval historiographical sources do not give an exact date for the city’s surrender. The dates they propose range between the years 20/640-1 and 23/643-4. Based on al-Maqrīzī’s claim that the city surrendered nine months and five days after the death of Heraclius, A. Butler argued in 1902 that Alexandria surrendered on Ḍū al-Qa‘da 28, 20/November 8, 641. On the basis of a careful reading of John of Nikiu’s Chronicle, J. Howard-Johnston recently proposed to date the surrender of Alexandria to Ḍū al-Hiǧǧa 21/November 642. The following examination of documentary sources shows that, in support of Howard-Johnston’s dating, Alexandria’s surrender is most likely to have occurred in the course of 21/642.

The Greek document CPR XXIII 35, sent from Alexandria and dated to Šawwāl 28/October 10 or Ḍū al-Qa‘da 29/November 9, 20/641, presents a terminus post quem for Alexandria’s surrender to the Arabs. The consular formula at the beginning of this document gives the latest known reference to the Byzantine


22 Butler, The Arab conquest, p. 541. For the date of Heraclius’ death, see Butler, The Arab conquest, p. 300.

23 J. Howard-Johnston, Witnesses to a world crisis: historians and histories of the Middle East in the seventh century, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, esp. p. 469, but cf. p. 188 where he has the eleven-month armistice end in Šawwāl 22/September 643.
royal family as the ruling authorities in the city.\(^{24}\) There is, further, reference to the arrival of the Arabs near Alexandria in two funerary inscriptions from al-Munā (Kellia), a monastic site located west of the Nile delta between Wādī an-Naṭrūn and lake Maryūṭ (Mareotis) at a distance of 50 to 60 kilometers from Alexandria. These inscriptions are dated Tybi 19, A.M. 381 (Ṣawwāl 20, 44/January 14, 665) and add with much precision that this date corresponds to the twenty-fourth year and third month of Arab rule over the site.\(^{25}\) In other words, the inscriptions tell us that the Arabs established their rule over al-Munā in c. Ẓū al-Ḥiǧgā 20/November 641.\(^{26}\)

The inscriptions give valuable insight in the time and locale of Arab military activity during the conquest of Lower Egypt, especially because the conquest of Egyptian territory south of lake Maryūṭ hardly finds discussion in our source material. That of al-Munā itself goes unmentioned. Medieval chronicles report that, after the surrender of Alexandria, the Arab armies withdrew to Qaṣr aš-Šamʿ or proceeded east to towns in the Nile delta that had not yet been taken. Al-Maqrīzī claims that a large group of monks from Wādī an-Naṭrūn met ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in at-Ṭarrānā, also known as Tarnūṭ (Therenoutis), in the western Nile delta, on his way back from Alexandria.\(^{27}\) Medieval historiography shows considerably more interest in the conquest of what lies to the west of Alexandria, Barqa (Cyrenaica) and Anṭābulus (Pentapolis), unanimously dated after Alexandria’s surrender. Dates for the conquest of these areas range between mid-21/642 and mid-22/643,\(^ {28}\) suggesting a possible connection with the conquest of al-Munā. For

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\(^{26}\) Pace Luisier, “Les années”, pp. 221-2, who sees the inscriptions as confirmations of Butler’s date for the surrender of Alexandria.


the following reason, however, the establishment of Arab rule over al-Munā is best understood as not having occurred while Arab armies travelled to Barqa but as part of the events that led to the siege of Alexandria.

Whereas most traditions on the conquest of Alexandria focus on the Arabs’ camping to the east of the city, Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam preserves an interesting account on the transference of Arab armies ‘from the direction of the lake’ (Ar. min nāḥiyat al-buḥayra) to a town named al-Maqs located west of the city. Such Arab military activity at the city’s west is supported by an account that states that the Arabs entered the city after its surrender near the so-called ‘Church of Gold’. This church most likely stood on mount Serapeion in the city’s south-west corner. Since Alexandria’s defence system reportedly forced the Arab armies to camp at a considerable distance from the city, it is unlikely that the transference of part of the Arab army to the west of Alexandria took place north of lake Maryūṭ. By travelling south of the lake, the Arab army virtually passed through al-Munā. The fact that the Arabs were able to cross the area south of the lake most likely indicates that they already controlled that area or that they established their rule there while traversing it. Therefore, the funerary inscriptions from al-Munā may well refer to a situation prior to the Arab victory over the Byzantine army in Alexandria. As such, they would postulate Ẓū al-Ḥīǧga 20/November 641 as another terminus post quem for the surrender of Alexandria.

That the conquest of Alexandria had not yet come to an end in Ẓū al-Ḥīǧga 20/November 641 or even in early-21/642 finds confirmation in a number of documentary sources from Upper Egypt. Al-Balāḏurī and Qudāma b. Ġafar report

29 Butler, The Arab conquest, pp. 293-5.
32 John of Nikiu, Chronicle, p. 189 [CXIX.4]. A rare tradition on the authority of ʿUṯmān b. Ṣāliḥ (d. 219/834) also refers to the Byzantines’ efforts to keep the Arabs away from Alexandria. It reports that Byzantine soldiers left the city each day to fight the Arab armies camped in the city’s hinterland. See M. Breydy, “La conquête arabe de l’Égypte: un fragment du traditionniste ʿUṯman ibn Ṣaliḥ (144-219 A.H. = 761-834 A.D.) identifié dans les Annales d’Eutychios d’Alexandrie”, Parole de l’orient 8 (1977-8), p. 392
that ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ appointed Ḥāriqa b. Ḥuḍāfa as his deputy in Qaṣr aš-Šam when he campaigned in the direction of Alexandria.  

This Ḥāriqa b. Ḥuḍāfa had the authority to establish the tax quota according to the tax receipt SB VIII 9749 (Ihnās), datable between Ṣafar 18/January 26 and Rabīʿ I 18/February 24, 21/642.  

Indeed, this normally was a task falling under the responsibility of the governor. Other documents record ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in Ḥāriqa b. Ḥuḍāfa’s place from about a year later. Together with that of the funerary inscriptions from al-Munā, our interpretation of these documentary sources disagrees with the date Butler proposed for Alexandria’s surrender. A firm date for the conquest cannot be given, but the possibility that the surrender took place in the course of 21/642 cannot not be excluded.

The date of the conquest of Alexandria adds considerably to our understanding of the foundation of al-Fustāṭ. The discussion above shows that the Arabs’ conquest administration at Qaṣr aš-Šam had developed close (fiscal) connections with the conquered territories even before the surrender of Alexandria. In contrast to the medieval explanation of why the Arabs maintained their camp and why the camp came to be the Arab capital, the existence of close fiscal-administrative ties between Qaṣr aš-Šam and its hinterland during the conquest of Alexandria, clearly visible in the just-discussed documents from Upper Egypt, must have been an important reason for the Arabs to leave Alexandria for Qaṣr aš-Šam.


34 In another, but undated, document (A. Grohmann, “The value of Arabic papyri for the study of the history of mediaeval Egypt”, Proceedings of the Royal Society of Historical Studies 1 (1952), pp. 52-3 [Ihnās; mid-first/seventh c.]), Ḥāriqa b. Ḥuḍāfa orders the delivery of wheat to a group of soldiers stationed in the pagarchy of Ihnās.

35 Morimoto, The fiscal administration, pp. 93-4. See also P.Lond. IV, p. xxvii.

36 SB XX 14443 (Ihnās; 11.2.22/9.1.643); CPR XXX 16 (al-Ušmūn; early-20s/640s). See also P.Lond.Copt. 1079 (al-Ušmūn; 21/641-25/645 or 38/658-43/664) with the discussion on p. 104 below.
2. Connecting Alexandria to al-Fustāṭ

Although not all of Egypt had been brought under Arab rule by the time the Arabs succeeded in conquering Alexandria (beside areas in the Nile delta, the southernmost part of the Thebaid awaited the establishment of Arab control in the following months or even years), the Arab authorities took measures to firmly establish their hegemony. They addressed this most directly by transforming to a permanent settlement the camp that they had set up during the conquest near Qaṣr aṣ-Šam‘, from then on known as al-Fustāṭ. The settlement was not formed ad hoc but rather in accordance with the main urban form prevalent among the Arabs outside the Arabian Peninsula at that time: the miṣr. The early townscape of al-Fustāṭ, therefore, shared elements with other early-Arab miṣrs such as al-Baṣra and al-Kūfa. Medieval sources refer, indeed, to a carefully thought-out planning of al-Fustāṭ and to a relation between the residence areas of the various tribes and the central administration. A corpus of administrative documents from the pagarchy of al-Ušmūn (Hermopolis), dating from the first half of the 20s/640s, contains official orders for the dispatchment of building materials to Qaṣr aṣ-Šam‘ which were probably intended for the building of urban structures in the new town adjacent to the fortress. As such, these documents confirm the role of the authorities in the actual building of al-Fustāṭ.

Central to the new settlement was a congregational mosque which ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ erected approximately 230 meters north of the Byzantine fortress. Entirely in accordance with prevalent ideas on the morphology of a miṣr, ‘Amr’s mosque was surrounded by a single plot of land (Ar. ḥiṭṭa), belonging to ‘the people of the banner’ (Ar. ahl ar-rāya), where members of the nobility of various tribes had their

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40 *CPR* XXX (see esp. the discussion on pp. 75-8).
residences. In this part of al-Fuṣṭāt, ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ owned his residence (Ar. dār), located to the east of the mosque. Al-Fuṣṭāt further consisted of plots of land mostly allotted to individual tribes. These ǧīṭṭas were directly related to the administration of al-Fuṣṭāt’s Arab populace. One’s residence on a particular ǧīṭṭa defined, for example, one’s place in the military pay registers. During ‘Amr’s governorate and that of his two successors ‘Abd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ (in office 25/645-35/655) and Muḥammad b. Abī Ḥuḍayfa (in office 35/655-36/656), al-Fuṣṭāt had no special office for Egypt’s governor (Ar. dār al-imāra). It is highly likely that these first three governors held office in their own houses, located in the just-mentioned ǧīṭṭa of ‘the people of the banner’. A centrally-located mosque founded near an existing town or fortress and an élite quarter around the mosque including the residences and offices of the provincial governors are some of the features of al-Fuṣṭāt’s townscape which it shared with such miṣr as al-Baṣra and al-Kūfa.

Although medieval references to Arab settlement in Alexandria are few and far between, the information that can be found, primarily in Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam’s Futūḥ Miṣr wa-ḥābruhā, indicates that early-Arab settlement in Alexandria compares well with that in miṣr such as al-Fuṣṭāt. As we shall see shortly, the Arabs set up a religious and administrative infrastructure in Alexandria that facilitated the establishment and maintenance of Arab hegemony over the city soon, if not immediately, after they conquered the city. By erecting a mosque and locating the residences of the provincial governor and Arab notables in its vicinity, they gave Alexandria a new, Arab administrative, religious, and social centre.

42 On the ǧīṭṭa of the ahl ar-rāya, see Kubiak, Al-Fustat, pp. 95-7 and Wheatley, Places where men pray together, p. 265.
45 For ‘Abd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ’s dār, located near Ḍaṣr aš-Šam, see Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 110.
The Arab authorities chose to locate this centre in the heart of the city. Despite the archaeologically attested presence of vacant areas within the city walls at the time of the Arab conquest, medieval sources do not report any interest from the side of the Arabs in these parts of Alexandria. On the contrary: the sources make most explicit that plots of land (Ar. sg. ḥīṭṭa) were not allotted to Arab individuals or tribes (allegedly with the sole exception of a plot of land given to az-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām) but that Arabs wishing to settle in Alexandria were directed to take residence in houses or on urban estates abandoned in the course of the conquest (units our sources designate by the term aḥāʾid). One medieval tradition reports that ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ allowed Arab tribesmen to claim a dwelling by planting a spear in it – a practice that is said to have resulted in the cohabitation of members of various tribes in one compound, contrasting the mostly uni-tribal ḥīṭṭas of al-Fusṭāṭ. Another report tells that the Arab authorities distributed (Ar. ashama) immovable property that had been deserted during the conquest among Arab warriors as a form of booty, but reports claiming that this was not the case also exist. It is nonetheless clear that, similar to Arab settlement in other existing cities captured during the conquest, the Arab authorities were mostly interested in the inhabited and, in Alexandria’s case, the western part of the city.

49 In the glossary to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (Futūḥ, p. 29*), C.C. Torrey writes that aḥāʾid is the plural of ḥiḥāda, which could mean ‘waste land brought into a state of cultivation’, ‘confiscated land’, or ‘an ownerless land grant’ (Lane, Lexicon, I/1, p. 30c). Modern research has not been able to interpret this term adequately; cf. Wheatly, Places where men pray together, p. 298: ‘it is not at all clear precisely how an īkḥādhah differed from a kḥīṭṭah’. Pace U. A. Tadmuri, “Ṭuġūr bilād aš-Šām”, in M. A. al-Baḥrīt (ed.), The Fourth International Conference on the History of Bilād al-Šām during the Umayyad Period: proceedings of the third symposium, 2-7 Rabī‘ I 1408 A.H./24-29 October 1987, Arabic section, I, Amman: University of Jordan, 1989, p. 316.
51 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 178.
52 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, pp. 82 and 84.
54 For the inhabited part of Alexandria in late-Antiquity and the early-Middle Ages, see Behrens-Abouseif, “Topographie d’Alexandrie”, p. 124.
In this part of Alexandria, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ built a mosque (Ar. masǧid), subsequently named after him, soon after the Arab army had taken control over the city.\(^5\) This mosque was located on a hill, called Kawm Waʿla or Kawm an-Naḍūra by late-medieval and early-modern sources,\(^6\) in the north-west corner of the city (see map 2).\(^7\) The environs of the hill are known to have housed buildings associated with the city’s Byzantine nobility and administration: the Melkite church of St Theonas (a former patriarchal see) and a building said to have been built by Cyrus (al-Muqawqis) prior to the Arab conquest.\(^8\) The possibility that the hill’s surrounding morphology influenced the Arabs’ choice of the location of their mosque cannot be excluded. The site itself – the top of a hill and looking out over the western as well as eastern harbour, (what remained visible of) the Heptastadium,\(^9\) and the western part of the city – certainly was a prominent one. There is no doubt that ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ’s mosque became Alexandria’s congregational

\(^5\) The date of the building of the mosque is not known. It occurred prior to the Byzantine reconquest of the city in 25/645-6, at the end of which ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ is said to have built a second mosque, the so-called ‘Mosque of Mercy’ (Ar. masǧid ar-raḥma; see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 176).


\(^8\) For the Church of St Theonas, see e.g. Haas, *Topography and conflict*, p. 269 and Tkaczow, *Topography*, pp. 58-9 [no. 7]. The Mamluk historian Ḥālīl b. Ṣāḥīḥ az-Zāḥiri (d. 872/1468) writes that patriarch Cyrus ordered the building of what was called in az-Zāhirī’s time the dār as-sulṭān. This building remained in continuous use until az-Zāhirī’s days (Kitāb zubdat Kašf al-mamālik wa-bayūn at-ṭurāq wa-l-masālik, ed. P. Ravaisse, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1894, p. 40). Other sources indicate that the Mamluk dār as-sulṭān was located near the Western Mosque, which stood in the north-western part of the city (on the site of the Church of St Theonas), close to the western harbour and Kawm Wa’la on which the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ was located (Behrens-Abouseif, “Topographie d’Alexandrie”, p. 119). Indeed, the dār as-sulṭān stood close to the shore (az-Zāḥiri, *Zubdat Kašf*, p. 40), just as houses in the vicinity of the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 130).

mosque (Ar. ǧāmiʿ) and, therefore, formed the religious heart of the Muslim community there. Clearly resembling the townscape of the miṣr, the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in Alexandria occupied a central position in respect of the settlement of Arab notables in the city. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam gives the following, telling information on the occupation of urban property in the mosque’s vicinity:

‘After its conquest, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ went to Alexandria together with ʿUbāda b. aṣ-Ṣāmit until they reached the top of the hill [Ar. al-kawm] on which the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ is located. Then Muʿāwiya b. Ḥudayyaq said: “We should take up a residence”. So, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ occupied the fortress [Ar. qaṣr] that was to become ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbī Sarḥ’s property. He donated it to him when the latter was appointed governor over the country. Abū Ḍarr al-Ḥifārī took a house that stood west of the prayer court [Ar. muṣallâ] near to the Mosque of ʿAmr, near the coast line; it has been destroyed. And Muʿāwiya b. Ḥudayyaq occupied the area of his house which is on this hill [Ar. fawqa hāḍā at-tall]. ʿUbāda b. aṣ-Ṣāmit built a house which he did not leave until he departed from Alexandria.’

The hill on which ʿAmr’s mosque is mentioned to be located is doubtlessly that which later sources call Kawm Waʿla or Kawm an-Nāḍūra. The passage directly connects three buildings to this location of the mosque: a fortress owned by ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ which later became property of ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ and two houses, one owned by Abū Ḍarr al-Ḥifārī and the other by Muʿāwiya b. Ḥudayyaq. All these persons belonged to Egypt’s new Arab nobility and are known to have also owned a plot of land in al-Fusṭāṭ or to have been closely related to the Arab

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administration there. All buildings mentioned in the passage stood in close proximity to Alexandria’s main mosque. Of the two houses, the location vis-à-vis the mosque is most explicitly given. The house of Mu‘āwiya b. Ḣudayŷ stood atop the same hill, i.e. close to the mosque. That of Abū Ḥarr al-Ǧifārī was located near a prayer court which, in its turn, stood close to the mosque. The passage implies that also ʿUbāda b. aṣ-Ṣāmit owned urban property in the mosque’s vicinity, but a location is not given. In the same area, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ occupied a fortress. That ʿAmr donated the fortress to his successor as governor over Egypt gives the strong impression that governors on visit in Alexandria used the fortress as a residence and office. It further shows the existence of a direct connection between the area and the top of Egypt’s administration in al- Fuṣṭāṭ. The situation which Ibn ʿAbd al- Ḥakam describes – a mosque with the settlement of Arab notables around it – is strikingly reminiscent of the urban morphology of the miṣrs founded in the same period. Indeed, our medieval sources’ statement that Alexandria differed from al- Fuṣṭāṭ because it had so-called ahāʿid instead of hiṭtas implies that Arab settlement in the city actually resembled settlements as al- Fuṣṭāṭ on other points. This is not entirely surprising; the Arabs are known to have implemented a miṣr-like morphology on existing townscapes elsewhere.

As for Alexandria, an important effect of such settlement of Arab notables in close proximity to the city’s main mosque doubtlessly was that it gave the city a strong religious, administrative as well as social centre that was directly related to the Arab authorities, also those in al- Fuṣṭāṭ. The site’s centrality is, indeed, hinted at in an appendix to a tradition transmitted on the final authority of Šufayy b. Māṭi’ al-Asbaḥī (d. 105/723-4). He states that ‘[the tribe of] al-Maʿāfir’s point of

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62 For Abū Ḥarr al-Ǧifārī’s hiṭṭa in al- Fuṣṭāṭ, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 109; for that of ʿUbāda b. aṣ-Ṣāmit, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 104. Mu‘āwiya b. Ḣudayŷ is only known to have owned urban property in Alexandria (cf. al-Kindī, al- Wulā wa-l- quḍā, pp. 18-9), but his connections, as well as that of his offspring, with the central administration are well known (see H. Kennedy, “Central government and provincial élites in the early ʿAbbāsid caliphate”, BSOAS 44/1 (1981), p. 36).
64 For the 10s/630s and 20s/640s, this is especially known for Ḥims; see al-Balāḏūrī, Futūḥ, p. 131 and D. Whitcomb, “Amṣār in Syria: Syrian cities after the conquest”, Aram 6 (1994), esp. p. 16. For the succeeding period, see Wheatly, Places where men pray together, p. 266.
assembly [Ar. *mawqif*] was located at the foot of the hill’. A later traditionist adds that Šufayy ‘means [the hill] in Alexandria’. Although neither traditionist specifies which of Alexandria’s two hills is meant, tribes such as al-Ma‘āfir chose to assemble close to the Arab heart of the city certainly is most probable. With the Arabs being the central authorities in the city, such a social, administrative, and religious centre gave the Arabs a visible place in Alexandria’s society. It may well have added to their local prestige and, hence, contributed to their power there. As such, the creation of a centre of Arab presence was part of a series of changes instituted by the Arabs to establish their control over the city. Among the more prominent changes in the city were also the establishment of an Arab garrison and the demilitarization of the local administration. As I shall point out in what follows, these changes in Alexandria’s existing military and administrative apparatus also closely tied the city to the authorities in al-Fustāṭ.

3. Connecting Alexandria to al-Fustāṭ 2: the creation of a military loyalty network

It were members of Alexandria’s Byzantine nobility as well as soldiers who left behind those houses which Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam mentions, in the passage translated above, to have been inhabited by Arabs around ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ’s mosque. Whereas these notables (Ar. *ahl al-quwwa*) chose to leave the city because of their strong identification with the Byzantine empire, Alexandria’s Byzantine garrison was

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66 See the references given in note 56 above.
forced to leave after the Arabs conquered Alexandria.\footnote{John of Nikiu (Chronicle, pp. 193-4 [CXX.17-21]) presents the forced departure of the Byzantine garrison as one of the stipulations of the Alexandrian peace treaty. According to Ibn `Abd al-Ḥakam (Futūḥ, p. 72) and al-Balāḏurī (Futūḥ, p. 221), `Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ ousted the Byzantine soldiers.} In its stead, the Arab authorities appointed a garrison that entirely consisted of Arab soldiers. This garrison was organized in tribal groups each headed by an `arīf. Whereas the actual soldiery found accommodation in houses or on estates abandoned during the conquest,\footnote{Ibn `Abd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, pp. 130-1; cf. al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ, p. 222.} these `arīfs took residence in towers of the city wall (which the Arabs had not destroyed during their siege of the city\footnote{Although some sources claim their destruction during the conquest (e.g. Ibn `Abd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, pp. 175-6; al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ, p. 221; History of the patriarchs, II, p. 494 [229]; Agapius, Historia universalis, p. 345), the city wall and nearby fortresses are mentioned in the itinerary of the pilgrim Arculf who visited the city around 50/670 (Adomnan, Arculfs Bericht über die heiligen Stätten, tr. P. Mickley, Arculf: eines Pilgers Reise nach dem heiligen Lande (um 670), 2 vols, Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1917 [Das Land der Bibel 2/2], II, 42). The History of the patriarchs (III, p. 159 [413]) mentions the city wall for the year 133/750. See also Labib, "Al-Islandariyya", p. 132b.} or fortresses in Alexandria’s vicinity.\footnote{Ibn `Abd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 130; J. Maspero, Organisation militaire de l’Égypte byzantine, Paris: Champion, 1912, p. 38.} The so-called garrison is, therefore, likely to have been located at several places throughout the city. Although of uncertain historicity, anecdotes circulating in Alexandria in the eighth/fourteenth century confirm the scattered nature of early-Arab settlement in the city.\footnote{An-Nuwayrī bases his information on anecdotes that circulated in his time among the inhabitants of the relevant Alexandrian quarters (II, pp. 135-6: ‘the progeny of these tribes are still today, in the year 775 [1373-4], known as "the tribes"; there are anecdotes [Ar. aḥbār] about them’), its historicity remains uncertain. Indeed, Ibn Yūnus does not mention a single person belonging to the tribes listed by an-Nuwayrī among the early settlers in Alexandria (he mentions people from Guhayna (Ṭarīḥ, I, pp. 141 [no. 364], 131 [no. 336], 200 [no. 529], and 521 [no. 1433]), Qurayš (I, pp. 275 [no. 749], 383 [no. 1047]), Ḥawlān (I, p. 317 [no. 849]), Mahra (I, p. 160 [no. 434]), and al-Maʿāfir (I, p. 305 [no. 822])). Nonetheless, an-Nuwayrī may be right in locating the various tribes throughout the city.} The administration of this newly-appointed garrison was headed by the garrison commander, the amīr.\footnote{With the source material available, it is yet uncertain whether intermediate hierarchical levels existed between the `arīfs and the garrison commander. That intermediate levels existed in the early-Umayyad period may be inferred from Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Sufyān’s answer to the complaint of a garrison commander concerning the low number of soldiers stationed in the city: ‘I gave you `Abd Allāh b. Muṭṭ,}
see in more detail below, the office of the *amīr* took over the military responsibilities of the existing administration. The creation of an Arab garrison, headed by an Arab *amīr*, was part of the Arabs’ initial efforts at maintaining their control over the city. In order to understand the effects, and extent, of the introduction of an Arab military element in the city, we begin with a study of the garrison itself before we turn to the top of its administration.

3.1. Alexandria’s Arab garrison and the Byzantine capture of 24/645-25/646

Initially, ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ allegedly appointed a garrison of 1,000 men, headed by one ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥuḍāfa b. Qays, when he returned to the Arab camp near Qaṣr aš-Šam or pursued Byzantine troops seeking refuge in the Nile delta. Among this initial garrison’s soldiers are likely to have been groups of the tribes of al-Azd and Fahm. Al-Maqrīzī writes that these groups returned from Alexandria to the Arab camp near Qaṣr aš-Šam after the land surrounding the latter fortress had been allotted among the tribes already present. That ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ immediately stationed a garrison in the city may well have been more a matter of early-Arab policy than one of tactics. There are clear similarities with policies concerning the conquered territories in Syro-Palestine where, in al-Balāḏurī’s words, ‘each time the Muslims conquered a city on or near the coast they stationed [Ar. *rattabū*] there as many Muslims as was needed’. By the end of the caliphate of ‘Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb (r. 13/634-23/644), the Palestinian coastline had a sound system of fortifications. But Alexandria’s garrison initially was of limited defensive quality, even though it was considerably enlarged after the conquest turmoil had settled. Two almost identical reports, on the authority of Yazīd b. Abī Ḥabīb (d. 128/745-6) and ‘Abd Allāh b. Hubayra (d. 126/743-4), are preserved in our source material and inform


77 Al-Balāḏurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 128.

us about the size of the garrison. One has it that ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ selected a fourth of his companions in al-Fuṣṭāt for the garrison in Alexandria and had them replaced after six months by a winter army (Ar. šāṭiya) that was stationed near the coast.79

The other tells that ʿAmr stationed a fourth of the Arab army in Alexandria, another fourth on the littoral, and the remaining half with him in al-Fuṣṭāt. Only the garrison stationed in Alexandria was replaced by another group of soldiers after six months.80 With the Egyptian army said to have numbered approximately 15,000 men at the end of the conquest,81 ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ’s garrison in Alexandria must have counted c. 3,750 soldiers and possibly a similar number of soldiers were stationed on the Mediterranean shore. The caliph is said to have sent each year a group of Medinese warriors to reinforce the Alexandrian garrison.82 The actual number of soldiers stationed in Alexandria in the first years after 21/642 must, when we accept these numbers, have been a bit higher. Compared to even the lowest estimates of the size of Alexandria’s population at that time (100,000 inhabitants),83 the Alexandrian garrison was a small one. Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam records that the Arab authorities were reluctant to station a large number of soldiers in the city and preserves caliphal orders to keep the city’s garrison small.84

The death of ʿUmar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb in 23/644 not only resulted in empire-wide unclarity as to caliphal succession, it stopped the Medinese troops being sent to Alexandria and made the city more vulnerable than it already was. One source writes that information about the city’s poor defense reached the Byzantine emperor.85 Taking advantage of the situation, the emperor dispatched a fleet under the command of a general named Manuel and captured the city in 24/645.86

80 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 130.
81 See the discussion and references in Stratos, Byzantium, II, pp. 107 and 213-4.
85 Al-Balāḏūrī, Futūḥ, p. 221.
With the limited size of the Alexandrian garrison in mind, it is little surprising that Manuel was able to take the city and kill most of the Arab soldiers. But the Byzantines not only took advantage of Alexandria’s poor military state. As we will see shortly in more detail, the city still housed a considerable group of Byzantine notables who continued to hold influential posts after the Arab conquest. Medieval historiographical sources write that these notables, together with (chief) inhabitants of a number of surrounding villages, sided with the Byzantine forces during the fighting. The Arab authorities not only set up an inadequate defense system, they also had failed to gain the loyalty of a powerful group in Alexandria’s society.

The Byzantine authorities may well have tried to influence this loyalty. Copper coins from the reign of, and depicting, Constans II (r. 20-1/641-48/668) widely circulated in Egypt and possibly continued to be struck in Alexandria after the Arab take-over of 21/642. Some numismatists argue that the Byzantine authorities considered Arab rule temporary and used such coins to propagandize their rule. Others hold that these coins were struck when the Byzantines controlled the city.

Whatever the case, a number of medieval sources confirm that not everyone shared the conviction of main-stream Arab historiography that the Arabs ruled Alexandria between 21/642 and 24/645. Some even give the impression that within the Byzantine empire Alexandria was not seen as lost to (284-646 n.Chr.)”, in M. Krause (ed.), Ägypten in spätantik-christlicher Zeit: Einführung in die koptische Kultur, Wiesbaden: Dr Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 1998, p. 55.

91 Domaszewicz & Bates, “Copper coinage of Egypt”, pp. 94-5.
the Arabs. Sources from the Byzantine realm that draw on Theophiles of Edessa’s history neglect the Arab conquest of Alexandria of 21/642 and mention neither fighting nor the conclusion of treaties between 16/637-8 and 24/645. They end Byzantine rule over the city with ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ’s ousting of Manuel in the first year of ʿUṯmān b. ʿAffān’s caliphate (23/644-35/655).92 Similar information can be found outside the Byzantine historical tradition.93 The History of the patriarchs, in a passage ultimately going back to a Coptic source composed seventy years after the conquest,94 places the capture of Qaṣr aš-Šam’ in A.M. 357 (19-20/640-1) but dates the fall of Alexandria to three years later, to A.M. 360 (22-3/643-4).95 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam preserves an account, transmitted on the final authority of the renowned historian al-Layṯ b. Sa’d (d. 175/791), which presents the period 21/642-25/645 as one of uninterrupted struggle for power over the city. Reacting upon this account, ʿAbd Allāh b. Lahīʿa (d. 174/790) identified its latter part as the conquest of 25/645.96 In a similar vein, al-Yaʿqūbī writes that ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ ‘continued to fight its [i.e. Alexandria’s] inhabitants for three years and conquered the city in the year 23 [644-5].’97 Whereas the historicity of such reports remains uncertain, recent scholarship confirms that in the early-20s/640s neither the Arabs nor the Byzantines held full control over the province and argues for a joint Arab-Byzantine government on the basis of a hypothetical restauration of a lacuna in a Greek document from the Fayyūm.98 All in all, the Byzantine authorities seem not to have fully lost their influence over the city after the Arab conquest of 21/642.


93 In addition to what follows, see John of Nikiu, Chronicle, p. 183 [CXV.1], who writes that ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ ‘spent twelve years [but corrected by R.H. Charles into ‘months’] in warring against the Christians of Northern Egypt’. H. Zotenberg suggests to read ‘two years’ instead of twelve (see John of Nikiu, Chronique de Jean, évêque de Nikiou, ed. & tr. H. Zotenberg, Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1883, p. 441, n. 2).


95 History of the patriarchs, II, pp. 493-4 [229-30].

96 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 80 (lines 10-7).


That local loyalty could easily shift to, or stay with, the Byzantines is little surprising.99

But despite much loyalty towards them, the Byzantines were not able to maintain power over Alexandria. Interestingly, a modern interpretation of book XIV of the Oracula Sibyllina, dated to c. 50/670 at the latest,100 argues that by the mid-20s/640s there also was considerable support for the Arab cause among the city’s population.101 Similarly, Arabic historical tradition mentions an Arab named Ibn Bassāma who allegedly helped ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ’s army entering the city,102 but this may be a topos of futūḥ literature.103 With heavy military machinery at his disposal104 and with possibly more violence than three years before,105 ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ succeeded to drive away Manuel and to reconquer Alexandria in 25/646.

Probably a result of the Byzantines’ successful, albeit temporary, capture of Alexandria and the help they received from local notables, the city witnessed changes in its military organisation that furthered the Arabs’ grip over the city. Increased concern for Alexandria’s protection is visible in the caliph ‘Uṭmān b.

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ʿAffān’s imperial policy to make garrisons permanent (not necessarily stopping the rotation of groups of soldiers) and their stipends to be distributed on a regular basis. This policy was implemented in Alexandria after the reconquest of 25/646. Further, the Arab authorities increased the number of soldiers stationed in the city. The actual size of the garrison in the first years after 25/646 is unknown. But the garrison had drastically increased twenty years later. One report has it that during the governorate of ʿUtba b. Abī Sufyān (in office 43/664-44/665) the total number of soldiers stationed in the city was approximately 27,000. Another tells that they numbered 16,000 and that they could rely on a garrison of 4,000 stationed at ar-Ramla (Nikopolis), similar to what had been the case in Antiquity. That the first Sufyanid garrison commander is said to have complained that, despite these high numbers of soldiers, the city was still inadequately protected surely illustrates the Arab authorities’ awareness of the measure of military presence that was needed to protect Alexandria. This garrison not only served to protect Alexandria itself, but other places in the Nile delta as well. Alexandria’s important role in the creation of a war fleet in the late-20s/640s at the initiative of Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān, then governor of Syria, further militarized the city. Governors in al-Fuṣṭāṭ appointed a special official to direct the navy in Alexandria (the so-called šāhib al-bahr). Many documents from the first/seventh and early-second/eighth century record the considerable effort that went in the

106 Al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ, p. 223; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 192. For this policy in other parts of the empire, see e.g. al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ, pp. 126-7, 128, 142-3 (?), 147.
107 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 192. See also al-Kindī, al-Wulā wa-l-quḍā, p. 36.
112 Bouderbala, Ġund Miṣr, pp. 277-91.
maintenance of Alexandria’s docks and garrison.\textsuperscript{113} Even though part of the Alexandria’s fleet was transferred to al-Ǧazīra, opposite al-Fusṭāṭ, in 54/673-4 after a severe Byzantine attack on the coastal town of al-Burullus (Parallos),\textsuperscript{114} Alexandria remained an important naval centre until the mid-second/eighth century.\textsuperscript{115}

Through the abolishment of the Byzantine garrison and the appointment of an Arab garrison after the conquest of 21/642, the Arabs established military precedence over the city. The changes in Alexandria’s military organisation after 25/646 meant to remove, or at best annihilate, a Byzantine power base that remained among the city’s populace after the departure of the Byzantine soldiers and to protect the city against future attacks. Thus, the Arabs deliberately altered existing social, administrative, and military structures in order to promote their position in the city. This is even more visible at the top of Alexandria’s military administration, to which we turn in the following section. We will see that the Arabs created a thoroughly Arab military network with direct ties to the authorities in al-Fusṭāṭ.

3.2. Changes at the top of Alexandria’s civil and military administration

Prior to the Arab conquest, Alexandria’s administration was headed by a dux et augustalis who enjoyed the highest civil as well as military authority.\textsuperscript{116} The last such administrator, one Theodore, left the city for Cyprus at the end of the eleven-month armistice in 21/642 together with the Byzantine garrison.\textsuperscript{117} Unlike many aspects of the existing Egyptian administration, the Arabs did not keep this office unchanged. In a demilitarized form, they left it in the hands of the Alexandrian nobility. Military powers went to an Arab. In this way they Arabized the city’s

\textsuperscript{115} For Alexandria as a naval centre, see Kahle, “Zur Geschichte”, esp. pp. 32-7; Fahmy, Naval organisation, pp. 27-30.
\textsuperscript{117} John of Nikiu, Chronicle, p. 200 [CXX.72].
military apparatus. As a result, two administrators simultaneously headed Alexandria’s administration.

The first of these two high administrators in Alexandria was the *augustalis* (Gr. αὐγονυστάλιος),\(^{118}\) the remainder of the Byzantine office of *dux et augustalis*. Besides references to a civil governor of the city in medieval literary sources, the *augustalis* is mentioned in at least two documents: *SB XX* 15101 (prob. Išqūh; 88/707) and *P.Lond. IV* 1392 (Išqūh; 92/711).\(^{119}\) In the latter document we read his name: Theodore, apparently a Christian and possibly an offspring of the Byzantine Alexandrian nobility as his epithet ‘the Chalcedonian’ in literary sources reveals.\(^{120}\) Despite our limited source material on the *augustalis* (collected in appendix 1), it is safe to hypothesize that the office existed from the end of the Arab conquest until the first two decades of the second/eighth century. After having gained power over the city in 21/642, the Arabs kept (from c. 21/642-3 onwards) one John of Damietta as ‘prefect of the city of Alexandria’.\(^{121}\) He had already been appointed by the last Byzantine *dux et augustalis*.\(^{122}\) There are no indications that John of Damietta had military powers. The *augustalis*’ office remained in existence until at least the 90s/710s, when it appears for the last time in our sources. In subsequent years, the office gradually Arabized. Still in the mid-second/eighth century


\(^{119}\) Possible other but uncertain documentary references to the Alexandrian *augustalis* are found in *O.Crum* 320 (Theban area; poss. first/seventh c. [both before and after the Arab conquest]), *O.CrumVC* 86 (Theban area; first/seventh or second/eighth century) and *SB Kopt.* I 25 (Theban area; date unknown). In *O.CrumVC* 86, *augustalis* may also be a personal name; see *O.CrumVC* 86, note 2.

\(^{120}\) A Theodore appears a number of times at the head of the Alexandrian administration in literary sources; see appendix 1. A Theodore the Chalcedonian is found for the years 40/661-57/677 and 85/704-96/714. During the papacy of Simon I (in office 67/686-81/700), a Theodore also headed Alexandria’s civic administration. Whether they are the same person remains unclear. For studies of these Theodores, see Kahle, “Zur Geschichte”, p. 30, n. 5; Grohmann, *Studien*, p. 31a, n. 3; A. Grohmann, “Der Beamtenstab der arabischen Finanzverwaltung in Ägypten in frühislamischer Zeit”, in H. Braunert (ed.), *Studien zur Papyrologie und antiken Wirtschaftsgeschichte: Friedrich Oertel zum 80. Geburtstag gewidmet*, Bonn: Habelt, 1964, p. 122.

\(^{121}\) John of Nikiu, *Chronicle*, p. 200 [CXXI.4-5].

\(^{122}\) John of Nikiu, *Chronicle*, p. 200 [CXXI.5]; John of Nikiu, *Chronique*, , pp. 464-5. Before John of Damietta and after the last *dux et augustalis* Theodore, an army officer named Menas conducted the city’s fiscal affairs. He was disposed by ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ soon after John took up his position in Alexandria. See also *PLRE*, III/A, 705 [s.v. ’Ioannes 251’], III/B, 881-2 [s.v. ‘Menes 41’], and 1280-2 [s.v. ‘Theodorus 166’].
Alexandria’s civil administration is found separate from its military administration.123 But at that time, it was no longer in the hands of the city’s old Byzantine nobility. We will treat this in more detail below.

The *augustalis* stood in direct contact with the Egyptian governor seated in al-Fustāṭ. The *vita* of patriarch Isaac (in office 67/686-70/689), composed only a generation after the events it describes,124 writes that the governor ’Abd al-‘Azīz b. Marwān (in office 65/685-86/705) ordered the Alexandrian *augustalis* to send him the patriarch so that he could have the latter executed for contacting an enemy of the empire.125 Furthermore, the two above-mentioned documents mention goods to be sent to the *augustalis*. As the governor in al-Fustāṭ gave orders for writing the documents, he clearly was involved in the *augustalis’* affairs.126 The *augustalis* is once recorded to have been directly responsible to the caliph. As something of an anomaly, a passage in the *History of the patriarchs* and a Coptic synaxary relates that one *augustalis* paid the caliph Yazīd b. Mu‘āwiya (r. 60/680-64/683) much money for a document stating that ‘the governor of Egypt had no jurisdiction over him’ in Alexandria and surrounding districts. This enabled him to keep for himself as much tax money as he wanted.127 The passage illustrates the governor’s otherwise direct control over the *augustalis’* office.

In the above-mentioned documents SB XX 15101 and *P.Lond.* IV 1392, the *augustalis* appears as the central official in the organisation of the yearly naval expedition against the Byzantine empire (Gr. sg. κοῦρον). The documents report about torches (Gr. φακλίων) and butter (Gr. βούτυρον), destined for the warships, to be sent to the *augustalis*.128 The involvement of a non-Arab official in the upper levels of the military administration in Alexandria was not strange. Literary

123 See appendix I.
126 SB XX 15101 does not mention its sender but the editors think, in light of the letter’s contents, that its sender must also be the governor (see also F. Morelli, “P.Berol. inv. 25041 e le fiaccole dell’emiro dei credenti”, *ZPE* 115 (1997), p. 199).
128 See also the commentary in Morelli, “P.Berol. inv. 25041”, pp. 198-9.
sources mention such involvement as early as the papacy of Agathon (in office 40/661-57/677).\textsuperscript{129} Despite his involvement in the organisation of a military expedition, the \textit{augustalis} had no military powers as the \textit{dux et augustalis} had had before the Arab conquests. Military powers in Alexandria lay in the hands of a second high administrative official.

This second official was the \textit{amīr}, ‘commander’, of Alexandria.\textsuperscript{130} He stood at the head of the Arab garrison of the city and at times headed the Egyptian fleet participating in the naval expeditions against the Byzantine empire.\textsuperscript{131} He always was an Arab (see appendix 1). While Alexandria’s \textit{augustalis} lost military authority right after the Arab conquest of 21/642, an Arab \textit{amīr} was appointed to Alexandria immediately following the conquest. As already mentioned, ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ appointed ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥuḍāfa b. Qays as his deputy over the Arab garrison of the city after the first conquest of Alexandria in 21/642.\textsuperscript{132} Historiographical sources report that the Arab governor seated in al-Fustāṭ usually appointed the \textit{amīr} as his deputy in Alexandria.\textsuperscript{133} The \textit{amīr} of Alexandria was, therefore, directly subordinate to the highest administrative official in the country. Only in exceptional situations (such as the Byzantine siege of Alexandria in 24/645\textsuperscript{134} or the turbulent last years of the Umayyad caliphate\textsuperscript{135}), caliphs themselves appointed the \textit{amīr}. The ties that were thus created between the provincial rulers and the top of the military in Alexandria were at times strengthened through personal relationships between both parties. ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥuḍāfa b. Qays was a Sahmī just as ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ;\textsuperscript{136} the \textit{amīr} Ġanāb b. Marṭad reportedly was a close

\begin{footnotes}
\item[129] \textit{History of the patriarchs}, III, p. 5 [259].
\item[130] For documentary evidence of the title, see J. David-Weill \textit{et al.}, “Papyrus arabes du Louvre III”, \textit{JESHO} 21/2 (1978), no. 25 (unknown provenance; second/eighth c.), lines 2-3: \textit{amīr al-Iskandariyya}.
\item[131] Bouderbala, Ğund Miṣr, pp. 277-90.
\item[132] Al-Balāḏurī, \textit{Futūḥ}, p. 221.
\item[135] Ibn Yūnūs, \textit{Ta’rīḥ}, I, p. 385 [1051]; see also \textit{History of the patriarchs}, III, pp. 67 [321], 70-1 [324-5].
\item[136] Al-Balāḏurī, \textit{Futūḥ}, p. 221 (for ‘Abd Allāh’s lineage); al-Kindī, \textit{al-Wulā wa-l-quḍā}, p. 6 (for ‘Amr’s lineage). Probably not a coincidence, Alexandria’s ‘chief of the fleet’ (Ar. \textit{wālī al-bahr}) in 23/643, \textit{i.e.} during ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ’s first governorate, also was a relative of his. See Bouderbala, Ğund Miṣr, pp. 279-80.
\end{footnotes}
friend of the governor Ḥabīb b. Zayd b. Marwān. Reminiscent of the above-mentioned *augustalis* who paid the caliph for independence from the governor in al-Fustāṭ, close relationships are recorded to have existed between the *amīr* and the caliph Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān (r. 41/660-60/680). Ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥakam gives the alleged text of a private correspondence between the *amīr* ‘Alqama b. Yazīd (who headed the garrison in the period 43/664-44/665) and Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān in which ‘Alqama writes that the caliph appointed him as his deputy. Dionysios of Tell-Maḥrē records that Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān gave orders to an Alexandrian *amīr* without the involvement of Egypt’s governor. It is evident and of minor importance for the present discussion that the *amīr* enjoyed considerable social status. His close relationship with the provincial government or even the caliphate stood at the centre of his office.

The creation of the office of the Alexandrian *amīr* and the demilitarization of the old office of *dux et augustalis* aimed at securing the loyalty of those who were able to enforce power, *i.e.* the military. In order to do so, the Arab authorities divided the top of Alexandria’s administration in two. Leaving civil affairs in the hands of local non-Arab notables, the Arabs deprived the old office of *dux et augustalis* of all military powers, making it just *augustalis*, as soon as the they conquered the city. Indeed, the caliph ‘Umar b. al-Ḥaṭṭāb is reported to have ordered the Alexandrian commanders not to trust a Byzantine over the garrison. In place of a *dux*, the Arabs created the office of *amīr* who headed an Arab garrison. Via the *amīrs*’ close relationship with the governors seating in al-Fustāṭ or sometimes even the caliphs, the Arab rulers secured the loyalty of the military in

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139 Dionysios of Tell-Maḥrē (Palmer, *The seventh century*, p. 173 [$§$ 93]).
140 See also David-Weill *et al.*, “Papyrus arabes”, no. 25 (unknown provenance; second/eighth c.) for people seeking justice from the Alexandrian *amīr* in case a qāḍī pronounced unjust justice.
Alexandria. In Upper Egypt, similar changes occurred in the administration. In the decades before the Arab conquest, documents still refer to the office of dux et augustalis.\footnote{E.g. P.Prag I 64 (Fayyūm; 15/636), line 6–7: a dux et augustalis of the eparchy of Arcadia; P.Amh. II 151 (al-Uşmūn; A.D. 610–19 or, less likely, 7/629–20/641 [see N. Gonis, “Two Hermopolite leases of the reign of Heraclius”, ZPE 145 (2003), p. 205]): a dux et augustalis of ‘the two Thebaids’.} The use of terminology differed in Upper Egypt from that in Alexandria. After the Arab conquest, the title augustalis disappears from our source material on the administration of Upper Egypt. Instead of a dux et augustalis, documents related to the administration of Upper Egypt show a new office: that of the dux. Similar to the augustalis in Alexandria, the Upper Egyptian dux no longer held military authority after the Arab conquest.\footnote{Grohmann, “Der Beamtestab”, p. 123.} As we will see in more detail in chapter 3, amīrs were appointed beside the local civil administrations. Irrespective of terminology, then, changes in Alexandria’s administration were not characteristic of the Arabs’ treatment of the city. They were province-wide.

4. Strengthening al-Fusṭāṭ’s control over Alexandria around 40/660: gubernatorial presence

We saw above that the creation of an Arab centre and the appointment of an Arab over the city’s military administration created direct ties between Alexandria and the top of the administration in al-Fusṭāṭ. The early-Umayyad period saw a strengthening of these ties. This is most clearly visible in the building of a dār al-imāra in Alexandria during the governorate of ʿUtba b. Abī Sufyān (in office 43/664–44/665), i.e. the early years of Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān’s caliphate (41/661–60/680),\footnote{Al-Kindī, al-Wulā wa-l-quḍā, p. 36.} in order to house governors on a visit in the city.

As I noted above, the first three Arab governors over Egypt, seated in al-Fusṭāṭ, held office in their own residences. The location of the gubernatorial seat in al-Fusṭāṭ, as well as that in other cities, changed soon after Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān became caliph. Despite earlier attempts to create one office for future Egyptian governors during the governorate of Qays b. Sa’d (in office for about five months in 37/657),\footnote{Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, Futūḥ, p. 98.} Muʿāwiya designated a building called dār ar-raml, located in
the ḥiṭṭa of ‘the people of the banner’,\textsuperscript{147} to serve as al-Fusṭāṭ’s dār al-imāra.\textsuperscript{148} Changes in the official seat of the top of the provincial government were empire-wide. Muʿāwiya himself had an office of the former Byzantine governor in Damascus converted to a dār al-imāra. This office was located on the qibla side of the court in front of the Church of St John, which the local Muslim community at that time used as their congregational mosque.\textsuperscript{149} The location of this seat of provincial government mirrored the position of Muḥammad’s house in al-Madīna vis-à-vis al-Madīna’s mosque.\textsuperscript{150} As such, locating the caliph’s residence in line with prophetic precedence aimed at establishing a link between Muʿāwiya’s caliphate and an early-Islamic ideal and, thus, aimed at legitimizing Muʿāwiya’s rule.\textsuperscript{151} In 45/665, Muʿāwiya’s governor in al-_BUSRA, Ziyād b. Abīhi, relocated the town’s dār al-imāra to the qibla side of al-_BUSRA’s congregational mosque.\textsuperscript{152} In the early-50s/670s, the same Ziyād b. Abīhi, now also governor of al-KUFA, rebuilt this town’s mosque and attached to it the local dār al-imāra (which seems to have faced the qibla from the start).\textsuperscript{153} The dār al-imāra in Alexandria was built in the same empire-wide wave of architectural reforms that occurred soon after Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān came to power.\textsuperscript{154} We will see in what follows that it was directly related to his coming to power.

\textsuperscript{147} See Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam’s ‘Account of who was given land [Ar. iḥṭatṭa] around the Mosque of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ’ in his Futūh, pp. 100-1.
\textsuperscript{151} Wheatley, Places where men pray together, p. 229.
\textsuperscript{152} Whitcomb, “The miṣr of Ayla”, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{154} Although the building of a dār al-imāra in Jerusalem to the qibla side of the Temple Mount during Muʿāwiya’s reign has been suggested (Hoyland, Seeing Islam, pp. 222-3), archaeology has not yet confirmed this (see J. Johns, “Archaeology and the history of early Islam: the first seventy years”, JESH 46/4 (2003), p. 423, n. 20).
The accession of Muʿāwiya to the caliphal throne in 41/661 gave impetus to a renewed relationship between the top of Egypt’s administration in al-Fustāṭ and the military and civil administration of Alexandria. From approximately that date onwards, Egyptian governors are found to have visited Alexandria on a regular basis. One possible, if historical, precedent for this practice may be found in a (late) report telling that the patriarch and governor Cyrus (al-Muqawqis), prior to the Arab conquest, ‘spent some parts of the year in Alexandria, some parts in the city of Manf [Memphis], and some in Qaṣr aṣ-Ṣam’.155 Another possible precedent we have already encountered in Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam’s passage, translated above, telling that ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ and, after him, ‘Abd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ possessed urban property in Alexandria. A passage preserved by al-Balāḏurī confirms, albeit implicitly, that ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ visited Alexandria during his first governorate.156 But all in all, there is an almost total lack of evidence for governors spending time in Alexandria in the period between the end of the conquest in 21/642 and the Umayyads’ coming to power in 41/661. With the exception of ‘Amr b. al-ʿĀṣ’s visit implied in al-Balāḏurī, the first governor said to have visited Alexandria in our present source material is ʿUtba b. Abī Sufyān (in 44/665).157 Not a coincidence, this very ʿUtba b. Abī Sufyān, brother of the new caliph,158 built Alexandria’s dār al-imāra. As we will see shortly, the construction of the building and the first visit of a governor went hand in hand. An overview of references to governors visiting the city in medieval sources (appendix 1) shows that we are dealing with an Umayyad practice. Only one governor, Maṣūr b. Yazīd (in office 162/779), is known to have visited the city after the Abbasid revolution.159 This practice came and went with the Umayyad dynasty.

155 Al-Maṣʿūdī, Murūǧ, II, p. 412. Cyrus is called ‘king of Egypt’ (Ar. malik Miṣr), thus setting the anecdote before the Arab conquest. See also Ibn Taḡrī Birdī, an-Nuğüm az-zāḥira, I, p. 60. Cf. al-Maqrīzī, Iſṭaṣ, II, p. 4.
156 Al-Balāḏurī, Futūḥ, p. 222. See also appendix 1.
159 Al-Kindī, al-Wulā wa-l-quḍā, p. 121.
Reasons why governors visited Alexandria are hard to come by. Governors certainly kept all governmental powers. The third/ninth-century historian Ḥalīfa b. Ḥayyāt gives an interesting list on the basis of which there is room to develop some thoughts about the relationship between the governor and the top of the military administration in Alexandria. He writes that in the year 73/692-3 ‘Kurayb b. Abraha descended [Ar. habaṭa] to Alexandria’, that in the year 74/693-4 ‘ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān descended to Alexandria’, and that in the year 75/694-5 ‘Ǧanāb b. Marṭad descended to Alexandria’. The historian gives no other information on governors visiting Alexandria or other persons travelling to Alexandria. The phrasing of these passages is strikingly similar. And as the three years are consecutive, the list gives the impression that the three persons succeeded each other, that is to say, that the well-known governor ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān (in office 65/685-86/705) took Kurayb b. Abraha’s place and that Ġanāb b. Marṭad took ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz’s place. We have no information on Ġanāb b. Marṭad’s role in Alexandria. But one medieval historian reports that Kurayb b. Abraha was appointed head of the garrison. If we are right to conclude that these men replaced their predecessor, the logical conclusion is that the governor ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān took from Kurayb b. Abraha his role as garrison commander. In that case, governors visiting Alexandria temporarily took over the duties of the top of the city’s military administration. This, however, was not the only reason for governors to visit Alexandria.

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161 Al-Kindī, al-Wulā wa-l-quaḍā, p. 36; Ibn ʿAsākir, Taʾrīḫ, XXXVIII, p. 268.

162 Ḥalīfa b. Ḥayyāt, Taʾrīḫ, I, pp. 343, 345, 347.

A highly interesting passage in the *History of the patriarchs*, based on a Coptic source from the mid-Umayyad period, tells us that governors customarily visited the city at the beginning of their governorate: ‘in the first year of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān’s governorate, he went to Alexandria, according to the custom of those who were appointed governors, to receive its taxes.’ Indeed, many governors known to have visited Alexandria did so at the beginning of their governorate, although some visited the city more than once. The passage continues with a description of the governor’s arrival at the city and gives the impression that the arrival was one of ceremony. It tells that the governor was publicly entertained by the city’s non-Arab notables, including the Coptic patriarch. As such, the ceremony publicly displayed his authority over the city’s notables and, hence, the entire city of Alexandria. A display of power over the patriarch may even have aimed at proclaiming authority over all of Egypt.

The passage from the *History of the patriarchs* indicates how the governor publicly displayed his power over the civic administration of the city: he publicly collected the city’s taxes. By doing so, he demanded the loyalty of the local Byzantine nobility that headed this administration. The governor’s visit also entailed his taking control over Alexandria’s military administration. His heading the city’s garrison demanded the loyalty of a body of government that was thoroughly Arab. A governor’s visit to Alexandria seems, therefore, simultaneously to have aimed at establishing, maintaining, or reasserting his power over the Byzantine as well as Arab segments of Alexandria’s administration. The visits’ symbolism indicates that, regardless of the foundation of al-Fusṭāṭ, Alexandria continued to enjoy a powerful and central position in Egypt well into the Umayyad period.

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165 *History of the patriarchs*, III, p. 13 [267].
166 See appendix 1.
167 *History of the patriarchs*, III, pp. 13-5 [267-9].
The gubernatorial visits were introduced by the Sufyanids. They must, therefore, be counted among those early-Umayyad innovations that tried to establish and legitimize Umayyad rule such as their taking firm control of the qaṣaṣ, their introduction of new coinages and administrative structures, or the proclamation and legitimization of their rule in papyrus protocols and monumental inscriptions. As such, it is an early example of the itinerancy of rulers, best known from Marwanid Syro-Palestine but also practiced by Muʿāwiya b. Abī Sufyān and meant to establish authority in relatively remote areas. The (re)building of gubernatorial offices served the same purpose. In Alexandria's case, the city's dār al-imāra was located in an ‘old’ (Ar. qadīm) and presumably Byzantine fortress (Ar. ḥiṣn). Thus, the dār al-imāra not only facilitated a governor’s visit but even visualized his power over the city’s ruling nobility: it was now an Arab governor who resided in a building that used to be associated with Byzantine rule over the city. In short, by not residing in al-Fusṭāṭ but in Alexandria a governor aimed to subdue the powerful city of Alexandria to his administration in al-Fusṭāṭ.

5. Concluding remarks
Socio-political changes in the course of the first half of the second/eighth century altered this administrative relationship between al-Fusṭāṭ and Alexandria and reduced the need for governors to visit the city. With the arrival of the Marwanids
in mid-65/late-684 and their centralization programmes, \(^\text{175}\) al-Fustat increased its control over the civic administration of Alexandria. This is particularly visible in the gradual Arabization of Egypt’s administration, affecting Alexandria from around 80/700 at the latest, and the creation of administrative offices in Alexandria that were directly connected with the central administration in al-Fustat. As such, the first half of the second/eighth century formed a last stage in the relationship between al-Fustat and Alexandria before 132/750.

Traces of the Arabization of Alexandria’s civic administration are first seen around the turn of the second/eighth century. *P.Lond.* IV 1412 (Išqūh; 80/699-86/705) lists part of the pagarchy of Išqūh’s taxes of the fourteenth indication year 81-2/700-1. Although we saw above that the *augustalis’s* office is still attested in documents from the 90s/710s, line 279 of *P.Lond.* IV 1412 states that the pagarchy transferred tax money to an Arab named al-Ḥāriṯ b. ‘Abs who at that time headed the treasury in Alexandria and, therefore, was involved in the city’s civil administration. By the time of the Abbasid revolution, one Ibrāhīm al-Māḥikī/al-Mawṣilī is mentioned to have been Alexandria’s civil administrator. \(^\text{176}\) His name and *nisba* suggest that he was an Arab or a convert to Islam. His title *arḥun*, designating in his time an elevated social status, \(^\text{177}\) shows that in the mid-second/eighth century the top of the city’s administration was taken over by members of the local Arab or Muslim nobility and was no longer in the hands of non-Arab notables. \(^\text{178}\) After him, indeed, members of other influential local Arab families are recorded to have headed Alexandria’s administration. \(^\text{179}\) The reduction of the authority of the city’s non-Arab nobility in the first half of the

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\(^{175}\) There is much literature on the Marwanid innovations. For overviews, see C.F. Robinson, ‘*Abd al-Malik*, Oxford: OneWorld, 2005, pp. 66-80; Sijpesteijn, “New rule”, pp. 195-7; *idem.*, *Shaping a Muslim state*, pp. 91-111.

\(^{176}\) *History of the patriarchs*, III, p. 130 [384]. See also appendix 1, n. 34.


\(^{178}\) *Non-Arabs* are still attested as working in Alexandria’s fiscal administration in the third/ninth century, see *History of the patriarchs*, IV, p. 449 [563].

\(^{179}\) Our sources give no information on the head of the civil or military administration for the period 132/750-195/811. But in 195/811 and 198/813, Alexandria was administered by Bahlūl al-Laḥmī and Ḥudayy b. ‘Abd al-Wāḥid respectively. See al-Kindī, *al-Wulā wa-l-qudā*, pp. 153.
second/eighth century compares well with the contemporary increase of the central administration’s power over the Coptic patriarchate\textsuperscript{180} and with the Arabization of pagarchs and duces in Upper Egypt.\textsuperscript{181}

These changes in the identity of Alexandria’s administrative personnel coincided with the appearance of administrative offices in Alexandria that were closely connected to the administration in al-Fustāṯ. Around the turn of the second/eighth century appears Alexandria’s first known qāḍī, Marṭād b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Yazānī (d. 90/708-9), holding office during the governorate of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān. We will revisit him in chapter 4. At approximately the same time mention medieval historiographical sources for the first time a qāṣṣ in Alexandria: al-Ǧulāḥ al-Qurašī (d. 120/737-8), a Byzantine client of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān or one of his sons and appointed over Alexandria’s qasḥ during the caliphate of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (99/717-101/720).\textsuperscript{182} Further, Egypt’s first ṣāḥib al-ḥarāq, Usāma b. Zayd (in office 96/714-99/717 and 102/720-104/722-3), is recorded to have held office in Alexandria during both his tenures.\textsuperscript{183}

The close connections between these officials and the central administration in al-Fustāṯ together with the officials’ Arab ethnicity must greatly have reduced the raison d’être of the gubernatorial visits discussed above. The visits were no longer needed to publicly display Arab rule over the city. Indeed, when the Abbasids came to power in 132/750 and neglected Alexandria as a naval base,\textsuperscript{184}

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\textsuperscript{180} Décobert, _Le mendiant et le combattant_, pp. 86-7; Sijpesteijn, “New rule”, p. 196.
\textsuperscript{183} History of the patriarchs, III, pp. 67 [321], 70-1 [324-5] writes that Usāma b. Zayd held office in Alexandria before he died on a forced journey to al-Fustāṯ, i.e. during his second tenure. For the identity of the ‘governor’ (Ar. wālī) Usāma mentioned there, see Grohmann, _Geographie und Verwaltung_, p. 31. Ibn Ǧūnūs (cited in al-Maqrīzī, _Ḥiṭaṭ_, I, pp. 290-1; idem., _al-Muqaffā_, II, p. 38 [no. 710]; and Ibn ʿAsākir, _Ṭarīḫ_, VIII, p. 84 [no. 597]) implies that Usāma b. Zayd held office in Alexandria during the caliphate of al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik (86/105-96/115), i.e. during his first tenure as ṣāḥib al-ḥarāq.
\textsuperscript{184} The participation of an Alexandrian fleet in assaults on Byzantine territory is not recorded after a planned but failed attempt to raid Cyprus in 127-8/745-6 (Theophanes Confessor, _Chronicle_, p. 466 [anno mundi 6238]; Nicephorus, _Nikephoros_, p. 141 [§ 68]). It is in 136/754 that we hear for the last time in the second/eighth century of a fleet being prepared in Alexandria. But this time it was destined for
the custom was entirely abolished.\textsuperscript{185} Administratively speaking, al-Fuṣṭāṭ now dominated Alexandria. These changes in the administrative relationship between al-Fuṣṭāṭ and Alexandria in the course of the first half of the second/eighth century were part of a larger development. They mark al-Fuṣṭāṭ’s maturation as Egypt’s capital. In the chapters that follow, we will see that al-Fuṣṭāṭ’s position in Egypt on other levels developed along the same chronology.

\textsuperscript{185} See p. 53 above.