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Egyptian Christians Implicating Chalcedonians in the Arab Takeover of Egypt/The Arabic Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn[*]

There are very few primary sources that help explain the roles Egyptian Christians played in the Arab takeover of Egypt (641). Scholars have had to extrapolate forward from trends leading up to the mid-seventh century, and backward from much later sources, usually written in Arabic – a language not indigenous to Egypt at the time of the conquests. In looking at Egyptian Christians prior to the 640s, scholars have drawn most of their guidance from a perceived singularity and solidarity within the Egyptian church. Therefore, the question of Egyptian Christian involvement in the Arab conquests has mostly been framed in terms of Coptic nationalism: whether such an allegiance motivated "Copts" to actively or passively reject Byzantine governance when offered the opportunity by invading Arabs. An historiography of the problem in modern Western sources would begin – as John Moorehead indicates[1] – with Gibbon's view that rejection of the Council of Chalcedon and the ensuing state persecution had galvanized "the mass of the Egyptian or Coptic nation."[2] As Gibbon interpreted it:

> [t]he conflict of zeal and persecution rekindled some sparks of their national spirit. They abjured, with a foreign heresy, the manners and language of the Greeks: every Melchite, in their eyes, was a stranger, every Jacobite a citizen ... the natives renounced all allegiance to the emperor; and his orders, at a distance from Alexandria, were obeyed only under the pressure of military force. ... The pusillanimous temper of the Egyptians could only hope for a change of masters...[3]

1 John Moorehead, "The Monophysite Response to the Arab Invasions," *Byzantion* 51 (1981): 579-591.

2 Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, v. 5, ed. J. B. Bury (London: Methuen, 1898), 162.

3 Ibid.

As others have shown,[4] this theory has gained footing in much of the scholarly literature on the Arab conquest by filling the vacuum of primary sources and accomodating the prior stereotypes about Egypt in the Roman world.[5] Since the 1960s some scholars have found firmer ground in Alfred Butler's *Arab Conquest of Egypt* (1902), and especially A. H. M. Jones' article on nationalism and heresy, for fostering a new theory nourished by a few more sources and much more scepticism about the univocality of Egyptians and their alleged treason against the empire. This view, expressed by Jones, admits

> that the Egyptian church almost throughout its history maintained a remarkable solidarity, tenaciously supporting the doctrines of … the patriarchs of Alexandria … provided, of course, that these patriarchs were canonically elected and upheld the doctrines of their predecessors.[6]

But at the same time, this view recognizes that in the sources there "is no hint of any anti-imperial movement, much less any rebellion, during the period of close on two centuries that elapsed between the Council of Chalcedon and the Arab Conquest."[7]

This paper reinforces Jones' thesis by introducing the Arabic *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn* to the discussion of how Egyptian Christians reacted to the Arab conquest. The *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn* clearly rejects key Chalcedonian leaders, and even implicates them in the Arab conquest, yet it still espouses the ideal of Roman suzerainty in its eschatology. Even though the Arabic *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn* idealizes the Coptic language and mourns its disuse, it does not refer to the Egyptian Christians as "Copts," nor does it call them a "nation" *(al-'ummatu)*. And, although its narrator – Samuel of Qalamūn – comes to be celebrated by the whole Coptic Orthodox Church, he is (at least initially) representative of a localized group that splintered from the monastery of St. Makarius in Scetis, around the time of the conquest.

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4 A. H. M. Jones, "Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?" *Journal of Theological Studies* 10 (1959): 280-298. See n. 1, p. 280. Ramsay MacMullen, "Nationalism in Roman Egypt," *Aegyptus* 44 (1964): 179-199. John Moorehead, *op. cit.*, p. 580, note 4. W. H. C Frend, "Nationalism as a Factor in Anti-Chalcedonian Feeling in Egypt," in *Studies in Church History*, ed. Stuart Mews 18 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982): 21-38. See p. 23. Ewa Wipszycka, "Le nationalisme a-t-il existé dans l'Égypte byzantine?" *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 22 (1992): 83-128. She gives the title "l'interprétation nationaliste" to the widespread view of Egyptian history in terms of "la haine entre Grecs et Coptes." (83). She despairs that (even in the '90s) the "réaction aux thèses soutenues dans l'article polémique" of A. H. M. Jones, "a été pratiquement nulle." (83, 4; *cf.* 88 also).

5 For e.g., see Evagrius Scholasticus *Ecc Hist* 8.2 for his comments (written in the late sixth century) on the Alexandrian proclivity for mob, seditious behavior. For earlier characterization, see Cassius Dio LI.17.

6 A. H. M. Jones, "Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?", p. 289.

7 Ibid., p. 288.

The sources for Samuel of Qalamūn show that, up to the conquest and beyond, Egyptians themselves were divided along the lines of dispute over Chalcedon. From our best evidence it seems obvious that Egyptians did not react in any coordinated or unified way to the conquests. It is regional peculiarities and ambivalence toward the authorities, not anachronistic theories of nationalism, that should be the bases for understanding seventh-century Egyptian Christianity.

Samuel the Transitional Figure

The legacy of the Coptic saint, Ṣamawīl of Qalamūn (c. 597-695), is preserved in two texts: a Coptic *Life of Samuel* and an Arabic *Apocalypse of Samuel*, both written after the Arab conquest of Egypt.[8] The literature surrounding Samuel portrays him as a hero of non-Chalcedonian orthodoxy and a prophet foretelling the Arab invasion and decline in the use of Coptic language.[9] In these roles, Samuel stands at the crossroads of the Arab conquest, and his life would be a valuable window into the period – if we could reconstruct the historical Samuel. Unfortunately, the *Life* is strangely silent about the Arab conquest, while the *Apocalypse* purports to be a disciple's account of Samuel's prophecy to the monks at Qalamūn, and as such, it tells us almost nothing historically grounded about Samuel himself. Nonetheless, when taken in conjunction, the earlier Coptic *Life* and the later Arabic *Apocalypse* give us a bioscopic view of the conquests; there is undeniable continuity between the two texts, and the differences of outlook and attitude in the texts reflect a single community's adjustment to the transition from Byzantine to Arab governance.

There is still much to be done with the *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, and the several other Egyptian Christian Arabic apocalypses, in terms of locating their historical and literary contexts (many of these MSS are not yet

8 The *Life* exists in three editions (Coptic [Sahidic], Ethiopic, and Arabic). **Life**: Anthony Alcock, ed. and trans., *The Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaac the Presbyter*. Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1983. **LifeEth**: F. M. Esteves Pereira, ed. and trans., *Vida do Abba Samuel do mosteiro do Kalamon*. Lisbon, 1894. **LifeAr**: Anthony Alcock, "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn I," *Le Muséon* 109 (1996): 321-345, and Anthony Alcock, "The Arabic Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn II," *Le Muséon* 111 (1998): 377-404. The *Apocalypse* (**ASQ**) edited by J. Ziadeh, ed. and trans., "L'Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur de deir-el-Qalamoun," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 20 (1915-1917): 374-404.
9 See René Basset, ed., "Le Synaxaire arabe jacobite (Rédaction copte), II," *PO* 3 (1909): 245-545. Esp. pp. 405-408 (the 8th of Kihak) gives a synopsis of Samuel's life that is faithful to the *Life*, and it states in regards to the *Apocalypse*: "And this father spoke many exhortations [mawā'iẓan] and treatises [maqālāt] and prophesied [tanabba'a] about the coming of this nation, which is the muhājarīn." (p. 408).

available in critical editions).[10] Jos van Lent's forthcoming dissertation on Egyptian Christian apocalypses in the Arabic milieu promises to address many of the interrelated historical problems of the texts, as well as offer some critical translations.[11] That comparative work should clear the way for some truly synthetic studies that reconstruct the history between all the texts. It is still not clear when *The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn* (*ASQ*) was written.[12] Yet, at least it is clear that the text preserves a particular monastic community's collective memory that depicts the Chalcedonian controversy, on the eve of the Arab Conquest, with their champion Samuel at center stage.

The Break With Scetis: The Coptic Life of Samuel

The Coptic *Life of Samuel of Kalamun* (*Life*) may have been written as late as the early ninth century, certainly to reinforce the non-Chalcedonian identity of the monks of Qalamūn (in southern Fayyum). According to the text, Isaac the Presbyter narrated the *Life* on Samuel's feast day, four generations after Samuel:

> our holy fathers, heard from their fathers who were before them, and they heard from their fathers, who were the disciples of that great one, Apa Samuel.[13]

10 See Francisco Javier Martinez, "The King of Rūm and the King of Ethiopia in Medieval Apocalyptic Texts from Egypt," in *Coptic Studies: Acts of the Third International Congress of Coptic Studies, Warsaw, 20-25 August, 1984*, ed. W. Godlewski (Warsaw: 1990): 247-259. Martinez identifies several manuscripts that warrant attention. A helpful description of such sources is in Robert G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997), see esp. ch. 8, 257-335.

11 See J. van Lent, "Les apocalypses coptes de l'époque arabe. Quelques réflexions," in *Études coptes 5, Sixième journée d'études, Limoges 18-20 juin 1993, Septième journée d'études, Neuchâtel, 18-20 mai 1995, Cahiers de la bibliothèque copte 10*, ed. M. Rassart-Debergh. (Paris and Louvain, 1998): 181-195. Also, Jos van Lent, "An Unedited Copto-Arabic Apocalypse of Shenute from the Fourteenth Century: Prophecy and History," in *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit: Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses Münster, 20.-26. Juli 1996*, v. 2 (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 1999): 155-168. And, Jos van Lent, "The Nineteen Muslim Kings in Coptic Apocalypses," *Parole de l'Orient* 25 (2000): 643-693.

12 Martinez claims that the *ASQ*, "dated by Nau at the beginning of the eighth century, must have been written much later, for it deals with problems which only develop later on, and it betrays most clearly the influence, not only of PA [ps.-Athanasius], but also of PM [ps.-Methodius]." In Francisco Javier Martinez, "Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo Athanasius" (Ph. D. diss., The Catholic University of America, 1985), p. 267. For Nau's dating, see F. Nau, "Note sur l'Apocalypse de Samuel," *Revue de l'Orient Chrétien* 20 (1915-1917): 405-407. p. 405.

13 In *Life*, numbers refer to paragraphs, and Alcock's trans. page numbers. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are from Alcock. *Life*, 1, p. 74. For dating, see Alcock, *Life*, ix; see also vii for his hesitation in dating the MS to *c.* 893.

The time lapse between his death and the writing would have given time and occasion for Samuel's biography to be neatly codified. The *Life* is a religious explanation of the success of their monastic community, which they saw as resting on the orthodox (non-Chalcedonian) faith of their founder Samuel, upon their faithfulness to his instructions, and upon the aid of angels. While scholarship has rightfully focused on Scetis,[14] the *Life of Samuel* wants to draw our attention south to Qalamūn, where Samuel's community carried the tradition after being expelled from Scetis by the Chalcedonian "heretics."

According to the *Life*, Samuel was chosen by God to become an ascetic leader. From childhood under his Christian philanthropic parents, Samuel leads a life surrounded by angels and prophecies attesting to his chosenness for an enduring role in Egypt. The *Life* states that when his father tried to persuade Samuel to marry, an angel appeared and explained that

> Samuel will become a monk and a great one in the sight of God. The memory of his monkhood will remain for generations to come [ⲱⲁⲛⲅⲉⲛⲉⲁ ⲉⲧⲛⲏⲩ]. The Lord God will bless him and he will have holy children and there will be holy anchorites [ⲛⲁⲛⲁⲭⲟⲣⲓⲧⲏⲥ ⲉⲩⲁⲁⲃ (sic)] among them, faithful in the sight of God, and there will be good shepherds [ⲛⲣⲉϥⲙⲟⲟⲛⲉ ⲕⲁⲗⲟⲥ] and hegumens [�ⲩⲕⲟⲩⲙⲉⲛⲟⲥ] among them.[15]

Typical of monastic hagiographies, the *Life* compares Samuel with St. Antony more than once, even stating that his ⲡⲟⲗⲏⲧⲓⲁ was "equal [ⲱⲏⲱ ⲙⲛ] to those of the great Antony,"[16] implying that his impact would carry a similar weight. Near the end of the *Life* an angel (commonplace throughout the text) hailed Samuel as a "judge [ⲁⲅⲱⲛⲟⲑⲉⲧⲏⲥ] and father of the monks."[17] The angel blessed him for having "built the tent of Abraham" and for having "laid down [his] life for [his] brothers." The angel further assured him that he would receive the inheritance of the ancient Israelite patriarchs, and that he would meet the saints whom he imitated (ⲧⲙ̄ⲧⲱⲛ [ⲧⲟⲛⲧⲛ]): Basil, Gregory, Severus, Antony, Macarius, Pachomius, and Shenute.[18]

The text means to establish these last four, in particular, as Samuel's spiritual forebears with whom he forms the next link in the chain of succession. In the

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14 Van Cauwenbergh summarizes Samuel of Qalamūn (in connection with Scetis) at length, and discusses the monasteries of Qalamūn, without the benefit of an edition of the *ASQ*. See Paul van Cauwenbergh, *Étude sur les moines d'Égypte depuis le concile de Chalcédoine (451) jusqu'à l'invasion arabe (640)* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1914), 88-128. See also Meinardus for a description of the modern monastery of St. Samuel of Qalamūn: Otto Meinardus, *Christian Egypt: Ancient and Modern* (Cairo: Cahiers d'histoire égyptienne, 1965), ch. XXII, pp. 337-340. One important study of the Fayyum, and Samuel's place in Qalamūn is Nabia Abbott, *The Monasteries of the Fayyūm* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937).

15 *Life*, 3, p. 76.

16 *Life*, 1, p. 75. See also *Life*, 5, p. 78; 13, p. 87; 37, p. 111; and 41, p. 115.

17 *Life*, 41, p. 114.

18 *Life*, 41, pp. 114,5.

later Arabic *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, Samuel specifies the four saints with distinctively Egyptian statuses:

> The Great Antony *[al-'aẓīm]*, Apa Makarius, Abba Pachomius *['anbā]*, and Apa Shenoudah; those who by their prayers the land of Egypt was settled *[tasta'maru]*; those ones who set down for us the Canons and required them *['awjabūhā]* for the monks.[19]

The monastic figures are not only saints he emulates; there is also a geographical connection. Samuel's ascetic upbringing began on the way to Scetis and in the church of Apa Makarius. While in the abode of Makarian monasticism, Samuel is met by the Chalcedonian Patriarch, Cyrus "the lawless one [ⲡⲁⲣⲁⲛⲟⲙⲟⲥ]," also known as the Chaukianos (ⲭⲁⲩⲕⲓⲁⲛⲟⲥ).[20] He is the famous Cyrus al-Muqawqas (r. c. 631-641) whom Butler identified as being both civil governor and Chalcedonian patriarch of Egypt under Heraclius (r. c. 610-641).[21] According to the *Life*, Cyrus was the enemy of orthodox (non-Chalcedonian) Christianity who came to issue "the Tome of Leo" among the monks and "elders" of Egypt.[22] In this context, the *Life* shows how Samuel preserves the "authentic" – non-Chalcedonian – lineage of the Egyptian monks by resisting the Chalcedonian heretics and ultimately leaving the Makarian monastery to refound the tradition in the Fayyum.

The *Life* recognizes the influence of the monks and elders of the Makarian monastery, in shaping the religious character of all of Egypt. Scetis is singled out as a center of Egyptian Christianity. Therefore, Cyrus al-Muqawqas sent

> a cruel *magistrianus* into the holy mountain of Scetis, his feet hastening to shed blood. He gave him the polluted Tome of Chalcedon [ⲡⲧⲟⲙⲟⲥ ⲉⲧϫⲁϩⲙ̄ ⲛ̄ⲭⲁⲗⲭⲏⲇⲱⲛ] and told him, saying, "Let all the elders of Scetis [ⲙⲁⲣⲉⲛⲉϩⲗⲗⲟ ⲇⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲟⲩ ⲛ̄ϣⲓ̈ⲏⲧ] subscribe to this Tome [ϩⲩⲡⲟⲕⲣⲁⲫⲉ ⲉⲡⲉⲓ̈ⲧⲟⲙⲟⲥ] from the smallest to the greatest, because it was on those elders [ⲛⲉϩⲗⲗⲟ ⲉ̄ⲧⲙ̄ⲙⲁⲩ] that the entire country of Egypt [ⲭⲱⲣⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ ⲛ̄ⲕⲏⲙⲉ] depended."[23]

When what the text calls the "Tome"[24] is presented to the monks at Scetis,

19 References to the *ASQ* generally follow MS BN AR 150: the source of Ziadeh's edition. Numbers refer to the MS foliation (included in Ziadeh's ed.) and line numbers, unless otherwise specified. Translations are my own. *ASQ*, 26ᵛ, l. 22-27ʳ, l. 3. I acknowledge with gratitude the Vatican Library and the Bibliothèque nationale for supplying MS facsimiles of the MSS of the ASQ used in this study.

20 *Life*, 7, p. 79.

21 cf. Alfred J. Butler, *The Arab Conquest of Egypt and the Last Thirty Years of the Roman Dominion*, 2d. ed. Ed. P. M. Fraser (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), Appendix C "On the Identity of 'Al Muḳauḳas'", p. 508ff.

22 *Life*, 7, p. 79: ⲙⲛ̄ⲛ̄ⲥⲁⲛⲁⲓ̈ ⲁⲡⲭⲁⲩⲕⲓ̈ⲁⲛⲟⲥ ϩⲙⲟⲟⲥ ϩⲓ̈ⲭⲙⲡⲑⲣⲟⲛⲟⲥ ⲁⲩ† ⲛⲁϥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲭϩ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉⲛⲁⲩⲙⲱϭⲓⲟⲛ ⲗⲟⲓ̈ⲡⲟⲛ ⲛ̄ⲧⲉⲣⲉϥϩⲙⲟⲟⲥ ϩⲓ̈ⲙⲡⲉⲑⲣⲟⲛⲟⲥ ϩⲛⲟⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲧⲩⲣⲁⲛⲟⲥ ⲁϥⲧⲱϭⲉ ⲉ̄ⲃⲟⲗ ⲙ̄ⲡⲧⲟⲙⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲗⲉⲱⲛ. (Alcock, p. 6, l. 11-13).

23 *Life*, 7, p. 80. My trans. emends Alcock's omission of "... elders *of Scetis* subscribe ...". Alcock's Coptic ed.: p. 6, l. 14-18; and MS Mor. 578, p.ⲕ, l. 4b.

24 Undoubtedly "Tome" is a calque used in many non-Chalcedonian polemics for any Chalce-

they remain silent, fueling the wrath of the *magistrianus*, until Samuel confronts him. In a showdown reminiscent of Apa Longinus,[25] Samuel tears up the "Tome," rejects the Council of Chalcedon, and "any archbishop" other than the non-Chalcedonian "Apa Benjamin."[26] The *magistrianus* had him flogged, suspended, affixed to stakes, and with further flogging they dislodged his eye; finally, they threw "him off the mountain of Scetis."[27]

This act symbolizes the rift – still present in the seventh century – between Egyptian adherents of Chalcedon and Egyptian non-Chalcedonians. The narrator strongly infers that those remaining in Scetis did capitulate to Cyrus al-Muqawqas' demand that they subscribe to the "Tome." Immediately after Samuel's expulsion, the text states: "As to what happened then in Scetis, we shall be silent [ⲦⲚⲚⲀⲔⲀⲢⲰⲚ]."[28] The much later redaction of the *Arabic History of the Patriarchs* also indicates that monks of Scetis had converted to Chalcedonian faith. It records that *after* the conquest, the non-Chalcedonian Patriarch Benjamin worked "night and day in the restoration *[fī iʿādati]* of the members of the church *[aʿḍāʾi l-bīʿati]* who became separated in the days of Heraclius," and that he "began building the monasteries of Wadi Habīb [= Scetis]."[29]

But before the post-conquest reconversions to non-Chalcedonian orthodoxy, the *Life* immediately transports the monastic heritage from Scetis to Qalamūn. This exodus had divine sanction through an angel, who commanded Samuel to "go south to the province of the Fayyum." The angel also announced that Samuel's defiance at Scetis had earned him "one crown" for fighting for "the faith of [his] fathers [ⲦⲠⲒⲤⲦⲒⲤ ⲚⲚⲈⲔⲈⲒⲞⲦⲈ]."[30] This connection with the fathers

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donian decree. Probably not refering to the Tome of Leo (d. 474), here it apparently refers to either the *monergism* or *monothelite* compromises of Heraclius.

25 For an account of non-Chalcedonian monks of the Enaton taking the "Tome" to the tombs of their holy fathers for a decision, see Tito Orlandi, ed., *Vite dei Monaci Phif e Longino* (Milan: Cisalpino-Golliardica, 1975), paragraphs 30-37. Also trans. in Tim Vivian, trans., "Humility and Resistance in Late Antique Egypt: The Life of Longinus," *Coptic Church Review* 20 (1999): 2-30. Another account of the confrontation with Longinus is in David W. Johnson, ed., "A Panegyric on Macarius Bishop of Takôw," *CSCO* 415 and 416 (Louvain, 1980), chapter IX.

26 *Life*, 7, p. 80.

27 *Life*, 7, p. 81.

28 *Life*, 8, p. 81. See Hugh G. Evelyn White, *The Monasteries of the Wadi ʾn Natrun, Part II: The History of the Monasteries of Nitria and of Scetis* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1932), p. 256, where he sees this passage as evidence that "[m]ost of the monks ... must have submitted to the Melkite." It is notable that this comment about 'remaining silent' does not appear in the later Arabic translation of the *Life* (was the translator erasing differences between Egyptians?), *LifeAr*, pp. 334, 335.

29 B. Evetts, ed., *The History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria*, vol. 1, parts 1 and 2, *PO* 1 (1907); vol. 1, part 3, *PO* 5 (1910). My trans. from Evetts' ed., p. 236 (= *PO* 1, p. 500)

30 *Life*, 8, p. 82.

and a sense of divine purpose pervade the rest of the *Life* as he eventually becomes established in Qalamūn. All that time Samuel endures repeated encounters with Cyrus al-Muqawqas and raiding Berbers, until his death. In each of his many near-death experiences he was ministered to by angels who often encouraged him with more than mere immediate solutions. Samuel and his monks at Qalamūn were promised a central role in Egypt. In a typical instance, after praying for guidance on Mt. Takinash, a voice promised him that "I shall give this land as an inheritance [ΠΕΪΚΑϨ ΕΥΚ̄ΛΗΡΟΝΟΜΕΪ<Α>] to you and your children who shall come after you for a glory beyond that of the saints."[31]

Samuel's monastery at Qalamūn is portrayed as a nexus between the "authentic" Egyptian monastic tradition, orthodox (non-Chalcedonian) Christianity, and the people of Egypt. His church even becomes an *axis mundi* which the Virgin Mary claims is her "dwelling-place, where [she] shall live forever, because [she has] loved it." In her appearance to Samuel, she states:

> from this time forward I shall establish for myself a dwelling-place [ΜΑΝϢϢΠΕ] in this mountain and I shall dwell in it with Samuel, the servant of my Son. As for these blessings, which I had in the city of David, Bethlehem, I shall cause them to happen in this place, since I have decided to dwell here with Samuel because of his purity, and I shall remain with him forever.[32]

In the later Arabic *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn*, the relationship between the Virgin Mary and his monastery is embellished with more promises and warnings that she would report the monks' behavior to her "beloved Son."[33] By the latter part of the *Life*, her special relationship with the monastery marks the transfer of foundational Egyptian asceticism from Scetis to Qalamūn. The *Life* establishes Qalamūn, for its community, as a new wellspring of Egyptian Christianity.

The Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn

As for the *Apocalypse of Samuel of Qalamūn* (ASQ), it draws its authority from the local tradition established in the Coptic *Life*. Thematically, and even in some literary terms, there is a strong continuity between the two texts. In summary fashion it recounts the pre-conquest milieu of persecution by the

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31 *Life*, 12, p. 87. See also 13, p. 87, where an angel states, "Instead of the consolation of children after the flesh God will grant you righteous elders."

32 *Life*, 25, p. 100.

33 *ASQ*, 27ʳ, l. 11. The Virgin Mary's special connection with Samuel is developed for a whole page of *ASQ*.

Chalcedonians. It then proceeds with a long sermon, ostensibly given by
Samuel, warning his disciples of the dangers of assimilating to the so-called
nation of the Arab Hijrah.[34] Its final section is his apocalyptic prophecy of the
restoration of Roman suzerainty and expulsion of the Arab Hijrah from Egypt,
and finally the great battle with an Anti-Christ. Throughout, the text sustains
a commitment to the injunctions *(waṣāyā)* of their non-Chalcedonian ascetical
fathers who were listed in the *Life.*

Because the text has been hard to date, scholars have struggled to use the
ASQ as a source for the history of the conquest.[35] The *Life* itself, according to
its frame story, should be from the early ninth century, though remarks in the
text may betray an even earlier date when Cyrus al-Muqawqas was still alive
(d. 642). After an encounter with Cyrus, the *Life* states that Cyrus had not
"been up to the mountain to this day."[36] Even though Hoyland sees this as
evidence for a pre- or mid-conquest composition of the text (*i.e.,* during
Cyrus' lifetime), there is still no way to reckon such a dating with the *Life*'s
frame story, which states that it was recorded four generations later. The
temptation to posit a pre-conquest dating of the *Life* is that it would explain
why there are no explicit references to the conquest (an issue I treat below).
Yet it is certain that the Arabic *ASQ* came later than the *Life.* The two are
complimentary texts springing from the same monastic tradition. In terms of
their orientation to the conquest, the earlier *Life* can be seen as a trajectory
forward in time, concerned with establishing their orthodoxy against the Chal-
cedonians, whereas the later *ASQ* is a trajectory backward explaining the
conquest *ex eventu*, concerned with preserving an established tradition against
apathy under an oppressive government. In terms of history, the *ASQ* reveals

34 Crone and Cook refer to the *ASQ* text on p. 9, note 59 (endnote printed on p. 161). See
    Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge:
    Cambridge University Press, 1977).

35 See Leslie MacCoull's use of the text as a source for the waning use of the Coptic language:
    Leslie S. B. MacCoull, "Three Cultures under Arab Rule: The Fate of Coptic," *Bulletin de la
    Société d'Archéologie Copte* 27 (1985): 61-70. See p. 66. See also John Moorehead, *The Roman
    Empire Divided: 400-700* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2001), p. 245, where his provisional
    dating of *ASQ* is drawn from MacCoull's misreading of Martinez (see my footnote 12). Sim.,
    see L. S. B. MacCoull, "The Strange Death of Coptic Culture," *Coptic Church Review* 10
    (1989): 35-45; p. 41 (same misreading). See also John 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 (1998): 219-227. Iskander dates it to the
    time of al-Ḥākim or thereafter – an argument van Lent rejects; see "Nineteen Muslim Kings,"
    op. cit., 664, 5.

36 *Life*, 10, p. 84. Hoyland considers this evidence "that Samuel died about the time of the Arab
    conquest of Egypt," and that the *Life* was compiled around that time. See Robert G. Hoyland,
    *Seeing Islam as Others Saw it: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian
    Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997), p. 286, n. 86.

little about the conquest. But it does preserve an interpretation of the events that gained widespread acceptance – as is evident from over ten MSS extant today, including one in Karshuni. Its interpretation of the events directly implicates the Chalcedonians in the Arab takeover of Egypt.

The narrative of the *ASQ* is set among the same disciples of Samuel who are mentioned in the Coptic *Life*. Samuel dictates his instructions and prophecies to Bishop Gregorious of Qays, who was first introduced in the *Life* as one being afflicted with a "great pain [ογνοσ ν̄τιτκας]" because of his greed. Samuel healed him and inspired him to become very charitable.[37] The *ASQ* names him first as being "present *[ḥaḍara]* for this account; he had attended his visit *[ḥaḍara li-ziyāratihi]* although recovering *[wa 'in yabra']* from his sickness – I mean the bishop."[38] Apa Apollo, who is mentioned in the *Life* as Samuel's successor,[39] records the revelation which was "a secret *[sirrun]* between [Samuel] and the bishop Apa Gregorious."[40] His secret was that, immediately following the conquest, there would be a respite for Christians that would seduce many into thinking the Arabs were blessed by God.

The *ASQ* depicts its setting as a time when the Arab reign "over the land of Egypt" was still tolerable[41] and, in fact, "benefaction had increased *[yakthurū al-'an'ām]* upon the Christian people." The "monastic brothers" prompted Samuel to explain whether the reign of the so-called Arab Hijrah "would persist over the land of Egypt for a long time *[zamānan ṭawīlan]* or not." Samuel counseled them not to "suppose *[la taẓunnū]* that this nation is noble *[karīmatun]* before God, since He delivered *[sallama]* this land over to their

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37 *Life*, 27, pp. 101,2: "at that moment when he embraced the saint, the pain stopped in him [απτιτκας λο ν̄2ητч̄], and he felt the cure [αчαϊ<c>θανε μ̄πταλσο] which had worked within him."

38 (See my note 19 for ref. to *ASQ*). *ASQ*, 20[r], l. 7, 8. A notable variant – BN AR 4785 – seems to be unaware of the *Life*'s depiction of Bp. Gregory as being afflicted, as it states, "though he is recovering from his sickness – I mean Fr. Apa Samuel." f. 76[r], l. 1, 2. Strangely, Alcock does not seem to make that connection between the *Life* and the *ASQ* either, in Anthony Alcock, "Samū'īl of Qalamūn, Saint," in *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. Aziz S. Atiya, vol. 7, 2092-2093 (New York: Macmillan, 1991). See 2093a., where he describes Gregory as "an ill-tempered prelate whom Samū'īl had cured of an illness *according to Ziadeh*." (emph. added).

39 *Life*, 20-32, pp. 102-106 *passim.*; Samuel appoints Apollo over the monastery, *Life*, 35, p. 109 and 43, p. 116.

40 *ASQ*, 30[r], l. 5-6.

41 Either "small *[qalīl]*" in general (BN AR 150, f. 20[r], l. 11; VAT AR 158, f. 112[v], l. 12), or the impact had "receded *[fātū qalīlan]*" (BN AR 4785, f. 76[r], l. 7 [*fātū* here could easily be a copyist's misreading of *kānū*]), or it had only ruled a "short time *[qalīl marrati]*" (BN AR 36, f. 73[r], l. 4), or they were "few in number *[qalīlān fī l-'addati]*" (BN AR 205, f. 136[v], l. 14). BN AR 6147 also claims "their numbers were small" (*kānū qalīl 'adaduhum*), and it states that "hardships" (*al-'at'āb*) increased on the Christians (in place of "benefaction"): BN AR 6147 f. 20[v], l. 10, 11.

hands." He cautions them that "no one knows the ... passing of the times except [the Creator] alone."[42] Then Samuel launches into a similarly theological explication of why God brought about the conquest.

Samuel's account traces a line of Chalcedonian persecution extending back from the Arab conquest to the Chalcedonian Council itself. This series of persecutions is seen as the bridge linking the events of pre-conquest Egypt to the new problems faced under the Arabs. Samuel summarily recounts

> the many iniquities *[al-shurūr]* which the heretics *[al-harāṭiqatu]* inflicted on the Orthodox in the time of Father Dioscorus and up to now, and the many injustices *[al-shurūri]* which they also did with our Father Dioscorus, having exiled him to the distant peninsula *[al-jazā'ir]*. [f. 20ᵛ] And Proterius sat upon his throne while he was alive. This Proterius foisted many iniquities *[al-shurūra]* upon the Christians. He was driving out the bishops, killing the Orthodox, and destroying the monasteries. And as for Juvenal, the one with the false monk's hood *[dhū al-'askīmi l-zūri]*,[43] I will be silent about him, and I am unable to speak about and describe his evil acts which he performed in Jerusalem,[44] and his murder of the Orthodox. And also the one – whose action of this barbarous sort – is unworthy of our mentioning his name: Cyrus al-Muqawqas, that filth *[al-tamthi]*![45] Through his action, this one greatly oppressed *[ḍayyaqa]* the Orthodox.[46]

Samuel explains that once Cyrus al-Muqawqas sought to have Apa Benjamin stoned, all of this persecution culminated in God sending the Arabs, who were not interested in their doctrine. The *ASQ* states,

> God heard the request of his pure ones screaming to him, and He sent to them this people *[al-'ummata]* which demands gold, not doctrine–according to their [pure ones'?] request.[47]

The distinction the *ASQ* draws between the religious persecution of the Byzantine empire and the taxation of the Arabs is a guiding insight for understanding a way non-Chalcedonians interpreted their relationship with the Chalce-

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42   All preceding quotes from *ASQ, f.* 20ʳ, up to l. 19.

43   As Nau suggests, the Arabic here *(awqiyālīnūs)* is probably a corruption of *Juvenal.* See Nau, "Note sur l'Apocalypse," *op. cit.*, p. 405. But there are discrepancies in the manuscripts that cast doubt on the copyists' knowledge of Juvenal or any other historical figure to whom it refers. See BN AR 150 *f.* 20ᵛ, l. 3; VAT AR 158 *f.* 113ʳ, l. 10; for *awqāyanūs*, see BN AR 4785 *f.* 76ᵛ, l. 14; for *afwinūs*, see BN AR 6147 *f.* 21ʳ, l. 10; for *awfimānūs* see MING SYR 232 *f.* 83ʳ, l. 12; for *anāliyūs*, see BN AR 36 *f.* 74ʳ, l. 3. The *Letter of Pisentius* appears in the same MS BN AR 6147, immediately following our *ASQ*; *Pisentius* presents a similar heresiography that names "Lucanius" as the possessor of the false monk's hood: "... like Leo the great false hypocrite *[al-munāfiqu l-kathīru]* and Lucanius *[lūqāniyru]* possessor of the false monk's hood *[dhī al-'askīmi l-zūri]* and the infidel *[al-jāhil]* Arius and Lucius *[lūjiyūs]* and Hermogenes ..." *f.* 40ᵛ-41ʳ.

44   BN AR 36 embellishes on Jerusalem, including the phrase "the holy house *[bayti l-maqdis]*", *f.* 74ʳ. All the other MSS read "city of Jerusalem," except BN AR 205 (*f.* 137ʳ, l. 15).

45   Lit., "menstrual discharge." *f.* 20ᵛ, l. 7.

46   Ending in *ASQ*, 20ᵛ, l. 8.

47   *ASQ*, 20ᵛ, l. 11-13.

donians. The phrase "demands gold, not doctrine" is a rhyme – *taṭallabu al-dhahab, lā al-madhhab*. As such it was apparently refined into a stock phrase (before 14th century VAT AR 158; and 1606 [BN AR 150]), since it does not appear in this stylized form in (at least) three of the manuscripts.[48] And, it is borrowed (without rhyme) in two MSS of the later composite text, the *Apocalypse of Shenute*, which also claims that God sent the Arab fiscal oppression in exchange for religious oppression of the Chalcedonians.[49]

Explaining the Arab invasion as God's retribution is not unique to the *ASQ*. The best contemporary source for the conquest of Egypt – John of Nikiou – interprets the Arab success as God's punishment of the Chalcedonians, particularly Cyrus al-Muqawqas:

> God ... avenged those who had been wronged: ... He delivered them into the hands of the Ishmaelites. And the Moslem thereupon took the field and conquered all the land of Egypt.[50]

In fact, variations of this explanation were common among Christians throughout the conquered lands, on both sides of the Chalcedonian divide.[51] What is remarkable about the *ASQ* is its combination of such an explicit indictment of the Chalcedonians with the ideal of the King of Rome.

While the audience of the *ASQ* has Qalamūn and its tradition as its local point of reference, the text's eschatology widens its lens to include the King of Ethiopia, and especially the King of Rome, as Christian heroes. The faith of the monks of Qalamūn is fixed on Egypt for reasons of spiritual heritage, but not for any apparent ethnic nationalist motives. The measure of Christian commitment in the *ASQ* is faithfulness to the *waṣīyah*,[52] "counsel," or "in-

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48 BN AR 36, 74[r], l. 9, 10: *al-māl, lā 'īmān*. BN AR 4785, 77[r], l. 11, 12: *al-dhahab*. MING SYR 232, 83[v], l. 10: *al-dhahab, li'anna al-dhahab ḥasab ṭalabatihim*. Some MSS from Cairo are still unavailable to me.

49 See van Lent, "An Unedited Copto-Arabic", *op. cit.*, p. 157, 8, note 19. He cites BN AR 6147, *f.* 62[r], l. 12-13. It is the same in CAIRO FRANCISCAN 324, *f.* 118[r], l. 12-14. The suggestion of a Coptic *Vorlage* of ⲀⲀⲦ and ⲀⲎⲦ is interesting, though if true, the variations between mss. are still unexplained. It should be noted that *madhhab* is a common term for "faith" or "religious group" in Christian Arabic.

50 R. H. Charles, trans., *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiou* (Oxford: Text and Translation Society, 1916), CXVI.13, p. 186.

51 See Alan M. Guenther, "The Christian Experience and Interpretation of the Early Muslim Conquest and Rule," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 10 (1999): 363-378. The Syriac *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius* is an especially early and widely translated text (used by Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians) that blames the conquest on the sins of Christians: "it is not because God loves them that He allows them to enter into the kingdom of the Christians, but because of the iniquity and the sin that is being wrought by the Christians ..." In, Martinez, *op. cit.*, p. 140 (PM ch. XI).

52 *waṣīyah* is the term used to translate the Greek ἐντολή in John 15:10: "If you keep my *commandments*, you will remain in my love ...".

struction," of the forefathers: specifically, the four monastic Fathers mentioned in the *Life* and *ASQ*.

The organizing theme of the *ASQ* is that bad consequences follow whenever Christians depart from the *waṣīyah* – including canons *(qānūn)* and teachings *(taʿlīm)* – of the four spiritual Fathers (named earlier), transmitted through Samuel. Whenever Christians imitate *(tashabbaha)* the ways of the Arab Hijrah, they veer from the *waṣīyah*. Therefore "God will become angered *[yaghḍabu]* against them because they will have abandoned *[kharajū]* the Canons *[qawānīn]* of the church and the instruction *[taʿlīm]* of our spiritual Fathers."[53] All other specific moral failures mentioned in the *ASQ* stem from a failure to keep the *waṣīyah*. Even the text's many references to the loss of Coptic language are most clearly in connection with spiritual instruction *(waṣīyah)*, and not ex-plicitly connected with ethnic pride or ethnic solidarity.

The *ASQ* shows alarm several times over the disuse and forgetting of the Coptic language.[54] It describes the loss in emotional, emphatic terms calling Coptic the "beautiful language." When he describes the abandonment of Coptic, Samuel warns his disciples that their hearts will feel deep pain.[55] But for all the attachment to the aesthetics of the language, the comments are always coupled with the messages for which Coptic serves as a vehicle. When Samuel first introduces the disuse of Coptic he phrases it this way: "They will abandon *[yatrukū]* the beautiful Coptic language by which the Holy Spirit spoke many times from the mouths of our spiritual Fathers *[ʾabāʾinā l-rūḥāniyyīn]*."[56] Because of their forgetting *(nasū)* Coptic, the Christians will not understand *(lā yafhamū)* the recitations in church.[57] Forgetting Coptic means that "many books of the church" and martyrologies "will fall into disuse *[tabṭulu]*," or even when they are read, "many people will not know what is read, because they do not know the language ... and no [one] preaches because they have forgotten the language *[la yūʿzuhu (sic) liʾannahum nasū al-lughata]*."[58]

Forgetting Coptic means losing their religious identity, not an ethnically-defined identity. For the *ASQ* warns that if they begin "speaking Arabic" they will not "know at all that they are Christians."[59] When the text warns that "Christians will abandon their beautiful language *[lughatahum al-ḥilwata]* and be proud of the Arabic language," it is still in conjunction with the Christian content that is lost in language change: "that these ones will abandon

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53   *ASQ*, 23ᵛ, l. 16-18.
54   *ASQ*, 22ʳ, l. 6-18; 22ᵛ, l. 15-20; 23ʳ, l. 5-10. See my footnote 35.
55   *ASQ*, 22ʳ, l. 5,6.
56   Ibid., l. 6-8.
57   Ibid., l. 12,13
58   *ASQ*, 22ᵛ, l. 3-8, 11.
59   *ASQ*, 22ᵛ, l. 18,19. ḥattā ʾannahum lā yaʿrifū al-battata ʾannahum naṣārā.

the names of the saints *[asmā'a l-qiddīsīn]* and name their children with strange names *[al-asmā'a l-gharībati].*"[60] It is worth noting here that the *ASQ* never refers to its audience as "Copts" or even a "nation" *(al-'ummatu)* at all, reserving that term for the Arab Hijrah, and the other conquered groups of the Mediterranean. The text usually calls its audience simply "the Christians," and less frequently "the Orthodox." When it does refer to Egypt, it uses the phrase "land of Egypt."

The *ASQ* seems to identify a diversity of peoples and tongues as "Christians," not limiting the term "Christian" to exclusively "Coptic" or "Egyptian" ethnic identity. In a section describing the scope of the Arab conquests, the *ASQ* lists several nations with which the Arab Hijrah will mix *[yakhtaliṭu bihim]*, including Hebrews, Greeks, Edessans, Chaldeans, and others.[61] Immediately following this list, the text makes comments that seem to apply to Christians among the various conquered nations:

> Their reign will spread, and remain a short time in peace with the Christians *[bi-salāmatin ma'a l-naṣārā]*. But after that the Christians will envy them in their practices *[yaḥsuduhum al-naṣārā 'alā a'mālihim]*, and will eat and drink with them, and play like them, and be merry and be sexually promiscuous *[yazinūna]* like them.[62]

Likewise, within Egypt those who capitulate by replacing Coptic with Arabic are still identified as "Christians." At one point the text condemns "the Christians who speak Arabic *[al-naṣārā alladhīna yatakallimūna bi l-lughati l-'arabiyati]*," for "reviling *[yashtimūhum]*" and "mocking *[yastahiz'ū bihim]*" their Christian "brothers *[ikhwatuhum]*" of southern Egypt, who still "know the Coptic language and speak it."[63]

The alarm over the loss of Coptic is resistance to religious conversion, not evidence of a lingering Coptic nationalism that had, at an earlier point, led to a rejection of Byzantine rule. A. H. M. Jones has dismissed the argument that the Egyptian reliance on the Coptic language is evidence that the non-Chalcedonians rejected Chalcedon and the empire out of nationalist motives.[64] The *ASQ*'s references to the loss of Coptic certainly signal a provincialism, or regionalism, that reflects the local colors of Christians in Qalamūn, and Egypt in general. But this provincialism does not appear to be so narrow or rigid as to support the dream of an autonomous Egyptian polity. Miriam Lichtheim's analysis of the function of the Coptic language in Egyptian Christian identity and church formation can be applied to the evidence of the *ASQ*:

60   *ASQ*, 23ʳ, l. 5-8.
61   *ASQ*, 21ʳ, l. 11-13.
62   *ASQ*, 21ʳ, l. 14-16.
63   *ASQ*, 22ᵛ, l. 17- f. 23ʳ, l. 1.
64   Jones, "Heresy and Nationalism", *op. cit.* 287.

To sum up, schismatic behavior in Syria and Egypt ... did not entail a rejection of Greek language and culture; and at no time were orthodoxy and heterodoxy divided along linguistic lines. What the language factor truly means is that the creation of Coptic and Syriac literatures, antedating the schisms, made possible the growth of schismatic churches and their independent existence.[65]

With the *ASQ* there is still no hint that Coptic is the only Christian language,[66] especially in light of the apocalypse's eschatological scheme in which the King of Rome and the King of Ethiopia are expected to be led by the archangel Michael to "arise and take back the captive *[al-sabī]*" from the Arabs and establish Christian welfare and peace in Egypt.[67] The chief worry in regards to losing Coptic is that the Christian literature was written in Coptic, and apparently had not yet been translated.[68] Perhaps the monks of Qalamūn were a pocket of resistance to that translation which did finally begin in the tenth century. In other words, the references to Coptic in the *ASQ* are in response to a circumstance wholly different from what was at stake in the contest with the Chalcedonians prior to the conquest. The adoption of Arabic and forgetting of Coptic posed a threat to Egyptian Christian identity that does not compare with a pre-conquest Egyptian Christian abandoning Coptic for another Christian language, such as Greek.

Conclusions

With all the strong arguments put forth by Jones and his followers against the nationalist interpretation of the conquest of Egypt, there is still more evidence to consider and reconsider. Ewa Wipszycka still doubted in the 90s whether she could change the opinion of her readers on this issue, since Jones' article had not, even then, aroused an adequate reaction.[69] The *ASQ* seems to confirm

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65 Miriam Lichtheim, "Autonomy Versus Unity in the Christian East," in *The Transformation of the Roman World: Gibbon's Problem after Two Centuries*, ed. Lynn White, Jr. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966): 119-146. p. 141.

66 But Coptic is clearly *the* Christian language of its audience.

67 *ASQ*, 29^r, l. 7, 8. Two important variants that identify the King of Rome as also being the King of the Greeks: BN AR 36, 85^r, l. 5, "*maliku l-yūnāniyīn ... sabī al-sha'b*," and BN AR 6147, 36^v, l. 6-8, "*maliku l-yūnāniyīn, 'ay maliku l-rūm*."

68 *ASQ*, 25^r-25^v. Here the author warns his listeners not to "entrust Christians speaking in Arabic about these subjects," and that there will be those who will "venture to change the holy Canons and the pure instructions *[ta'līm]* of our Fathers." Does this refer to the translation of the Canons and other lit.? See references in footnote 35. Ironically the *ASQ* survives only in Arabic.

69 Wipszycka, "Le nationalisme," *op. cit.*, p. 88. "En somme, l'interprétation nationaliste de l'histoire de l'Egypte byzantine semble tellement inébranlable qu'on peut se demander s'il vaut la peine de l'attaquer. Si l'article de A. H. M. Jones mentionné ci-dessus (note 2) n'a

that Egyptian non-Chalcedonian resistance to the Chalcedonians was not a nationalist movement in disguise. When the Coptic *Life* and the Arabic *Apocalypse* are considered in tandem, a picture emerges of a localized Christian tradition that still holds – at most – an allegiance to Rome, and – at least – an attitude that subsumes political life to their religious tradition – and not the opposite.

The resistance in the Coptic *Life* is a localized, religious tradition that grew out of opposition to, and from, specific Chalcedonian authorities under Heraclius. The *Life* promises a prominent religious role for Samuel and his particular monastery at Qalamūn in guiding the *spiritual* life of Egypt. Yet, though Samuel holds a prominant place in the Coptic Synaxary, he is not mentioned in the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*. There are indications that the monks of Qalamūn who drafted the *Life* and the *ASQ* were insulated and isolated. John of Nikiou's convoluted account of the conquest mentions at one point that, at least at first, Arab troops were unable to push into the Fayyum.[70] Could it be that the oral tradition informing the Coptic *Life* did not recognize the Arabs for who they were, and so confused them at times with the Berbers mentioned so frequently (hence, the *Life*'s apparent silence in regard to the Arab conquest)? At any rate, it is important to ask when was there a choice and what were the options for the locals in the face of the Arab conquest. The Coptic *Life* and the Arabic *ASQ* show no evidence that their audience had any substantial options in reacting to the raiding Berbers or the conquest.[71] Even their eschatological ideal is deliverance by a king from outside Egypt, without a hint of a political or military role for the Christians of Egypt.

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suscité de réactions d'aucune sorte, comment puis-je avoir l'espoir, moi, de changer les opinions de mes lecteurs?"

70 In regards to the Fayyum being a local stronghold of Orthodoxy, see *ASQ* 22^v, l. 13*f*. According to the text, knowledge of Coptic will decline even there to the extent that they will not understand it and fall out of practicing the readings, despite the fact that the "Coptic language is beautiful in their mouths." (l. 15) See R. H. Charles, ed. and trans., *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu* (Oxford: William and Norgate, 1916), CXI.8 (p. 179); later they captured Fayyum, CXII.12 (p. 180).

71 See *Life*, 14-24, pp. 87-100. In these accounts, the local Egyptians reacted to the raiding Berbers by fleeing, staying morally tenacious when captured, and receiving angelic intervention. See especially paragraph 17, where the *Life* depicts the Berbers as pillagers who take male prisoners. It describes Samuel being taken captive to the Berbers' land [ⲉⲧⲉⲩⲭⲱⲣⲁ] and sold into slavery. In connection with the Egyptian context, note how in paragraph 17 Samuel is a type of Joseph (son of Jacob). Samuel also serves as a type of Moses at other points in the text.