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Arabic Papyri of the Reign of Ġa'far al-Mutawakkil 'alā-llāh (A. H. 232—47/A. D. 847—61)¹⁾

By Nabia Abbott-Chicago

The following papyri, now in the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago, were secured a few years ago by Professor SPRENGLING from Professor MEHEMET AGA-OGLU, who had purchased them from a dealer in Damascus. Their actual provenance is not known. They deal, however, with Syrian affairs, and it is probable that they were unearthed in Syria, in which case they would be among the very few papyri found outside of Egypt²⁾.

Historical Background

For the historical background of these documents we must go back to the month of Du-l-Ḥiġġa of A. H. 235/A. D. 850, when the Caliph al-Mutawakkil 'alā-llāh, executed the act of succession which divided the empire among his three sons, Muḥammad, az-Zubair, and Ibrāhīm, whom he designated as al-Muntaṣir Billāh, al-Mu'tazz Billāh, and al-Mu'ayyad Billāh

1) A preliminary report of these papyri was given before the American Oriental Society held at Cleveland, Ohio, April 1937.

2) Outside of a few fragments, the only papyri found in Palestine, are those recently discovered at 'Auġā' al-Ḥafir by the Colt Expedition of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. Besides an interesting group of Greek documents of the time of Justin II, the find consists of five Greek-Arabic tax documents of 54-55/675-76, and of three Arabic letters and a number of fragments. I was able, through the courtesy of Professor Casper J. Kraemer Jr. of New York University, to see some photographs of these. To judge by the script, these belong in the first three centuries of the Heġra. For reports of the find, see *AJSL*, LII (April, 1936) p. 202; LIII (January, 1937) p. 106; *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* No. 61 (February, 1936), pp. 24-25 and No. 62 (April, 1937) p. 33; *PEFQS* (1936) pp. 216-20.

respectively¹⁾. This act, while it provided first for the consecutive succession to the Caliphate of the three brothers in the order mentioned, also, in the interim, divided the empire among the three. To Muḥammad, the first in the line of succession, went the lion's share, while to Ibrāhīm, the last in the line of succession, went the least portion. According to some of our sources, he received only four of the six²⁾ Syrian provinces, namely; those of Damascus, Ḥimṣ, Jordan, and Palestine³⁾, according to others, either Jordan or Ḥimṣ was not included⁴⁾; and according to still others, his portion included, in addition to the three or four Syrian provinces, the territories of Aḍarbaigān and Armenia⁵⁾.

Of the three heirs apparent, Muḥammad was the only one considered old enough to take any active part, which he later⁶⁾ did, in the affairs of the empire. Ibrāhīm was still a youth (who had not as yet reached puberty), while al-Zubair was a child under three⁷⁾. Al-Mutawakkil therefore appointed agents to look after their interests and territories. It is at this

1) For this act and for the text of the document see Ṭabarī, *Annals* ed M. J. DE GOEJE, III, 1394-1402. Other accounts are to be found in Ya'qūbī Ibn al-Wādiḥ, *Historiae* ed. M. TH. HOUTSMA, II, 595; Ibn al-Aṭīr, *Chronicon* ed. C. J. TORNEBERG, VII, 32-33; Ibn Taġrī Birdī, *Annals* ed T. G. J. JUYNBOLL, I, 708; Ibn Ḥaldūn, *Kitāb al-'Ibar*, III, 275.

2) The other two were that of Qinnasrīn and of al-'Awāṣim to the north, which together with the Tuġūr or "frontier fortresses" of Syria (bordering on the Greek frontier), were held together, and included in Muḥammad's share, apparently for their strategic location.

3) Ṭabarī, III, 1395-96, 1399.

4) Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 33 leaves the Jordan province out, and Ibn Taġrī Birdī l. c. leaves that of Ḥimṣ out.

5) Ya'qūbī l. c., and Ibn Taġrī Birdī l. c.; on the other hand, Ṭabarī, III, 1395 gives these to al-Mu'tazz.

6) JOSEPH KARABAČEK, *Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer, Führer durch die Ausstellung* (hereafter referred to as *PERF*) (Wien, 1894) No. 763, is an official notification by Muḥammad al-Muntaṣir to al-'Abbās, of the latter's appointment to the governorship of Egypt in 242/856.

7) Ṭabarī, III, 1491, 1489; It is interesting to note that their minority at this time was used as a legal argument against the validity of the act. Muḥammad was only 13 since on his succession in 247/861 he was but 25, Ṭabarī, III, 1471.

point that the three documents here presented have their setting, dealing, as they do, with village surveys conducted still in al-Mutawakkil's time, and ordered by Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad who, in 241/855, was the Governor Agent for the Syrian territories allotted to Ibrāhīm. These three, therefore, are the major characters with whom we have to deal.

Despite all of al-Mutawakkil's precautions and effort to secure a peaceful succession, personal rivalries in the royal family, aggravated by court intrigues, not only defeated his purpose but also cost him his own life, and later brought the same disastrous end to all his three designated heirs.

The reign of al-Mutawakkil saw the rise of the Turkish guard and their leaders, first organized into a distinct body by al-Mu'taṣim¹), to political power and influence. While some of them were ready tools in al-Mutawakkil's hands against the Shī'ites whom he persecuted, others were equally ready to aid Muḥammad al-Muntaṣir against him. Their opportunity was not long in coming, for al-Muntaṣir, apparently, was not content to bide his time free of court intrigues. Al-Mutawakkil's suspicions and anger were soon roused. He, therefore, took every occasion to hurt and humiliate his son, "now abusing him, now forcing him to drink beyond his capacity, now ordering his ears to be boxed, and again threatening him with death"²). Towards the end of his reign, al-Mutawakkil showed public preference for al-Mu'tazz even to the extent of delegating him to lead the public prayers³), which affair added its fuel to the fire of jealousy already kindled for the two heirs apparent. Eventually al-Mutawakkil accused Muḥammad al-Muntaṣir of over-eagerness for the succession, hurling such epithets at him as

1) Cf. Al-Ġāhiz, *Maǧmū'at al-Rasā'il* (Cairo, 1932/1914). The second essay in this collection deals with the virtues or talents of the Turks, but see especially pp. 22, 37. Cf. also G. ZAWAN, *Ommayyads and Abbāsids*, tr. D. S. MARGOLIOUTH, Gibb Memorial Series, Vol. IV (1907) pp. 217-18; Kurd 'ALI, Muḥammad, *Ḥiṭat al-Šām I* (Damascus, 1925), p. 196-97.

2) Ṭabarī, III, 1457; Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 64.

3) Ibid., p. 1453.

al-Muntaṣir, "the expectant" and *al-musta'ǧil*, "the one in haste" (to succeed)¹). Finally in a drunken fit, he declared Muḥammad excluded from the succession¹). According to some he was even then plotting to have Muḥammad and his Turkish supporters, Waṣif and Buǧā al-Šaǧīr, "the Younger"²), and other outstanding Turks, murdered³). The situation thus grew beyond Muḥammad's endurance so that he, together with Waṣif and Buǧā quietly plotted and executed al-Mutawakkil's death in 247/861⁴).

Having thus put himself under obligation to the Turks, al-Muntaṣir became subject to their control as Caliph. His Wazīr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥaṣīb, fearing the reaction of al-Zubair and Ibrāhīm, persuaded Waṣif and Buǧā to bring influence to bear on al-Muntaṣir, so as to have him exclude the two heirs from the succession, in favor of his own son 'Abd al-Wahhāb⁵). This al-Muntaṣir did, by forcing his brothers to write and sign a 'voluntary' renunciation of their rights to the throne⁶). But al-Muntaṣir was not to enjoy for long the fruits of his actions. After a brief reign of six months he sickened and died, some say of a guilty conscience⁷), others of a poisoned wound⁸).

The two Buǧās, the Elder and the Younger, and Atāmiš, another Turkish general, together with Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥaṣīb, were now literally the "king-makers". Since their original

1) Ṭabarī III, 1457.

2) He is to be distinguished from Buǧā al-Kabīr, "the Elder", who came into prominence during the reign of al-Mu'taṣim, and whose influence, as we shall see presently, was still a power to reckon with.

3) Ibid., p. 1456.

4) Ibid., pp. 1457-61. For a brief account of the events leading to this, cf. Mas'ūdī, *Murūǧ ad-Dahab (Les Prairies d'or)*, ed. and tr. C. BARBIER DE MEYNIARD, Vol. VII, 265-74; Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 60-64; Ibn Taǧrī Birdī, I, 756-57; Ibn Ḥaldūn, III, 279-80.

5) Ṭabarī, III, 1485.

6) Ibid., pp. 1486-89.

7) Ibid., pp. 1497-98.

8) Ibid., pp. 1495-96. For brief accounts of al-Muntaṣir's reign, cf. Mas'ūdī, VII, 290-323; Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 69-76; Ibn Taǧrī Birdī, I, 759-62; Ibn Ḥaldūn, III, 282-83.

motives for the exclusion of al-Zubair and Ibrāhīm from the succession still held good, they brought about the succession of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Mu'tašim¹), who was therefore a nephew (and not, as some say, a brother) of al-Mutawakkil²). The title which they bestowed upon him was al-Musta'in. During his brief reign (248-51/862-66), the fates and fortunes of the two former crown princes went from bad to worse; not content with their exclusion, he first forced them to sell him their territories and properties, allowing them only a comparatively small annual revenue³). His next step was to throw the "princes into the tower". He had them both imprisoned and put in charge of their arch-enemy, Buġā aš-Šaġīr, whose Turks would have done away with them were it not for the intervention of Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥašīb⁴).

Al-Musta'in himself had no easy course before him. Rival factions caused his flight, together with his chief supporters, Wašīf and Buġā the Younger, to Baġdād⁵) where he was received by the governor, Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ṭāhir. When a party of Turkish generals failed to persuade him to return with them to the then capital, Sāmarrā, they decided to sponsor the cause of al-Mu'tazz and Ibrāhīm al-Mu'ayyad. They therefore released them from prison and took the oath of allegiance to al-Mu'tazz, and declared the succession for Ibrāhīm⁶). They thus gave the empire two rival 'Abbāsīd Caliphs, and created an immediate cause for a civil war which was to last for nearly two years and during which Baġdād suffered its second major siege, which lasted over a year⁷). The governor, seeing the hopelessness of the situation, deserted al-Musta'in, and in his peace negotiations agreed to acknowledge al-Mu'tazz as Caliph⁸). Al-Musta'in, thus

1) Ṭabarī, III, 1501.

2) Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 77.

3) Ṭabarī, III, 1507.

4) Ibid., pp. 1507-08.

5) Ibid., pp. 1535-40.

6) Ibid., pp. 1540-45; text of oath, pp. 1545-49.

7) For a brief narrative of this siege see REUBEN LEVY, *A Baghdad Chronicle* (Cambridge, 1929), pp. 108-14.

8) Ṭabarī, III, 1630.

betrayed, accepted these terms, abdicated the throne, and took the oath of allegiance to al-Mu'tazz¹).

The two brothers, Muḥammad al-Mu'tazz and Ibrāhīm al-Mu'ayyad, who in their common misfortunes had held together, now found their interests opposed. Al-Mu'tazz, suspicious of reported designs on the part of al-Mu'ayyad²), forced his renunciation to the succession and had him imprisoned. On receiving the news that the Turkish party was planning to rescue him, he (it is suspected) ordered his death, which seems to have been accomplished, either by freezing or by strangulation, on the 22nd Raġab 252 / 8. August 866³). Thus al-Mu'ayyad went the way of al-Mutawakkil and al-Muntašir. Meanwhile, the internal affairs of the empire were going from bad to worse. Al-Mu'tazz had not a single faithful minister about him; the Turks strenuously resented his inclination towards the Maġribīs and the Farġānīs (who were naturally opposed to the interests of the older and already established Turks) and made no bones about taking him to task for it⁴). To complicate the situation further, the treasury was empty, and the pay of the Turkish soldiers was in arrears, though members of the royal family, especially al-Mu'tazz's mother⁵), and the different ministers and generals⁶) had amassed great fortunes. A Turkish deputation demanding payment of arrears met with no success. Whereupon the Turks, Maġribīs and Farġānīs, whose pay must have been likewise in arrears, determined on the dethronement of the unfortunate Caliph⁷). This was rapidly

1) Ṭabarī, III, 1633-52. For shorter accounts of the preceding affairs see Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 76-77, 89-108, 112-13; Mas'ūdī, VII, 363-68; Ibn Taġrī Birdī, I, 767, 769; Ibn Ḥaldūn, III, 286-92.

2) Mas'ūdī, VII, 393.

3) Ṭabarī, III, 1668-69; Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 115-16; Mas'ūdī, VII, 393-94; Ibn Taġrī Birdī, I, 769-70.

4) Mas'ūdī, VII, 397.

5) Ibn Taġrī Birdī, II, 23; for great fortunes amassed by Queen Mothers, and by different officers of the period, cf. Ġ. ZAIDĀN, *Om-mayyads and Abbāsids*, pp. 229-31, 31-33.

6) Ṭabarī, III, 1706-07.

7) Ṭabarī, III, 1709. Ibn al-Aṭīr, VII, 132.

accomplished, and was climaxed, a few days later, by a horrible death; for they put the deposed Caliph to „systematic torture”¹⁾.

Thus, in the course of less than two decades (235-55/850-66), the major characters involved in al-Mutawakkil's plan for succession had been removed from the scene, removing also two of the major characters involved in our documents. The third, Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, though destined to a similar tragic fate had his major struggle yet ahead of him.

Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad ibn 'Ubaid Allāh Abū-l-Ḥasan ibn al-Mudabbir²⁾, to give him his full name, came from an Irāqian family of the tribe of Ḍabbah. According to Ibn Ḥallikān³⁾ he was a native of Dastumīsān, a large canton situated in southern Irāq between Wāsiṭ, Baṣra and al-Ahwāz⁴⁾. But according to Ibn 'Asākir⁵⁾, Aḥmad came from Sāmarrā. The possibilities are that the family seat was in Dastumīsān, but that some of its members, including Aḥmad, had travelled north in search of a career, for that was the heyday of the new capital city of Sāmarrā⁶⁾.

Aḥmad's father, Muḥammad, seems to have been a well-to-do man⁷⁾, but the family first came into prominence with

1) Ṭabarī, III, 1710-11; Ibn al-Aṭṭir, VII, 132. Ibn Taġrī Birdī, II, 24; Ibn Ḥaldūn, III, 296-97.

2) Ibn Ḥallikān (DE SLANE), IV, 388; Ibn 'Asākir, *at-Ta'rīḥ al-Kabīr* (Damascus, 1329/1914) II, 59; Yāqūt, *Biographical Dictionary of Learned Men*, ed. MARGOLIOUTH, IV, 77. Variations and inaccuracies of the word Mudabbir are met with, e. g. Ibn Ḥallikān l. c. has Madabbir, Al-Kindī, *Governors and Judges of Egypt*, ed. GUEST (London, 1912) p. 214, has Mudabbar; Ibn 'Asākir l. c. has Mudīr, while some of the Maqrīzī manuscripts had it as Mudayyin or Mudīn; cf. Maqrīzī, ed. GASTON WIET, *MIFAQ*, LIII (Caire, 1927) 149 ff.

3) *Biog. Dict.*, IV, 388.

4) *Ibid.* p. 393; Yāqūt, *Geog. Dict.*, ed. WÜSTENFELD, II, 574.

5) *Ta'rīḥ al-Kabīr*, II, 60.

6) Yāqūt, *Geog. Dict.*, III, 14-22; cf. REUBEN LEVY, *A Baghdad Chronicle*, pp. 100 ff.; *E. I. s. v.*, "Sāmarrā".

7) Cf. Ibn 'Abdūs al-Ġaḥṣiyārī, *Kitāb al-Wuzarā' wa-l-Kuttāb*, ed. HANS MẒIK (Leipzig, 1926), pp. 242-43.

the talents and activities of his sons, Ibrahim, Aḥmad, and Muḥammad, listed apparently in the order of their ages. All three, according to al-Nadīm, were accomplished poets and secretaries in the bureau of official correspondence¹⁾. We hear nothing more of Muḥammad despite the alternating fame and misfortunes of his two brothers. A fair idea of Ibrāhīm's literary activities is to be gained from the account we have of him by Abū-l-Faraġ al-Iṣbahānī²⁾, from which it also appears that he moved freely in the court circles of his day. Just when his secretarial and political career actually began, it is difficult to tell; it must certainly go back to the reign of al-Wāṭiq (227-32/842-47) if not to that of al-Mu'tasim (218-27/833-42) or even to that of al-Ma'mūn (198-218/813-33), since Aḥmad, his junior, was already, as we shall see, a young and minor scribe in the later years of Ma'mūn's reign. Ibrāhīm was, in the early years of al-Mutawakkil's reign, a full-fledged secretary much in favor with that sovereign³⁾. His subsequent political career, when he was not imprisoned, included the governorship of Baṣra, an office which he seems to have discharged effectively and benevolently⁴⁾; the governorship of al-Ṭuġūr al-Ġazariyyah or the Mesopotamian frontier fortresses⁵⁾; and the financial governorship of al-Ahwāz, where he was taken prisoner in 256/870 by al-Ḥabīb, leader in the Zang war⁶⁾. At the time of his death, in 279/892, he was in charge of the *dīwān al-ḍiyā'*⁷⁾.

1) *Fihrist*, ed. FLÜGEL, pp. 123, 166. A *mutarassal* was a secretary employed in the *dīwān al-rasā'il*; cf. Ibn Ḥallikān, III, 60, n. 3; W. BJÖRKMAN, *Beitr. zur Gesch. d. Staatskanzlei im islam. Ägypten* (Hamburg, 1928), pp. 5-7 and Index; Ibn al-Ṣairafī, *Qānūn Dīwān al-Rasā'il*, *BIFAQ*, XI (1913), pp. 65-67.

2) *Aġānī* (Bülāq), XIX, 114-27; cf. Mas'ūdī, VII, 160-64; cf. BJÖRKMAN, p. 8, for his prose works.

3) *Aġānī*, XIX, 114; *New Edition* (Cairo, 1927 ff.), I, 96-97.

4) *Ibid.*, XIX, 124; XX, 35. No dates are given for this governorship; it could therefore have taken place earlier in his career.

5) Yāqūt, *Geog. Dict.*, II, 669, IV, 656; *Aġānī*, XIX, 123.

6) Ṭabarī, III, 1837-38; He escaped the next year, *Ibid.*, p. 1843.

7) *Ibid.*, p. 2134.

With this for a family background, we turn our attention to Aḥmad ibn al-Mudabbir himself. The earliest reference we have to him is in an anecdote found in Ibn 'Abdūs¹). The story is related by Aḥmad's grandson, 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad, who claimed to have heard it from Aḥmad himself. It shows so clearly how the "child was the father of the man", that it deserves to be quoted in full²):

I heard my grandfather, Aḥmad b. al-Mudabbir, relate: I used to take charge of the relays³) in the land-tax bureau, but my soul was restive having failed to attain its ambition, and I was above applying myself to sordid gain. Then, when Ma'mūn went on his campaign to the Byzantine border, Ġa'far al-Ḥayyāṭ invited me to accompany him as his (private) secretary, and I accepted against the wishes of my father who did all he could to prevent me from going away. But I disobeyed him. Then, without my knowledge, he gave one of his brethren in whom he had confidence 5,000 dirhams and charged him: Keep this money with you unbeknown to everybody. Then, if he gets into difficulties or you see him in distress, offer it to him as a loan and advance it to him as you see fit according to his circumstances. Then one day, when I was at work with Ġa'far, the great 'Arīb⁴) entered; and I had blackened my eyelids with *kuhl*. She looked at me hard and long,—remember I was a mere youth—and then said to Ġa'far: Where did you get this bilious bird? Covered with shame and embarrassment, I arose and withdrew. 'Arīb left and Ġa'far called me and said: Now perhaps what this sharptongued woman said has grieved you. Then he ordered that I be given 10,000 dirhams, a sum such as I had never had all at once in my possession before. So I went out, senseless with joy, traded in my horse for another and bought

1) Op. cit., pp. 242-44.

2) The translation is largely that of Professor SPRENGLING.

3) *Maḡlis al-Uskudār*, cf. STEINGASS, *Persian-English Dictionary*, اسكدار.

4) Cf. *Ajānī* (New Cairo Edition), I, 306 for the vocalization of the name.

a mule for my manservant to ride after me on. A few days later, that friend to whom my father had entrusted the money met me and seeing the marks of prosperity on me, asked how I was getting on. I told him my story, and he told me about the money which my father had entrusted to him and said: There is now no reason why it should remain with me any longer. So he turned it over to me, and I thought myself in that camp even more splendid than al-Ma'mūn. That was the first money I acquired. Then God gave us what we now have. And the cause of it all was none other than that (snappy) word of 'Arīb¹).

The incident depicts for us an ambitious youth who was on the lookout for a favorable and an honorable opening, a capable and self-directed young man who, though fond of personal adornment and of display, was withal a little shy of the fair sex. These qualities are evident throughout his career, both as a man of letters and as a man of affairs.

Though we have repeated mention of Aḥmad as a poet, the *Fihrist*²) credits him with a *dīwān* of only 50 pages, and the *Ajānī* does not devote a special section to him, as it does to his brother Ibrāhīm. Snatches of his poetry are scattered through the sources³) and from these not much of an idea

1) Aḥmad came once more in contact with 'Arīb (on that same campaign?) cf. *Ajānī*, XVIII, 180; the account mentions only Ibn al-Mudabbir, but since he is also referred to as a "youth", Ibrāhīm can hardly be the one meant. 'Arīb was reported to have been the daughter of Ġa'far ibn Yaḥyā, the Barmecide. The adventures that befell her, both before and after the fall of the Barmecides, are too numerous to relate. She was a woman of many parts, but especially talented as a singer and composer of songs, for she won the unqualified approval of the great musician, Iṣḥāq al-Mauṣilī. Her court career as a singer, and her romantic episodes with Ibrāhīm Ibn al-Mudabbir are detailed in *Ajānī*, XVIII, 175-94, XIX, 114-24; at-Tanūḥī, *Ġāmi' at-Tawārīḫ*, ed. MARGOLIOUTH (Cairo, 1921), pp. 131-33, or the translation of this by MARGOLIOUTH, entitled *Table-Talk of a Mesopotamian Judge* (London, 1922), pp. 144-46.

2) pp. 123, 166.

3) E. g. Ibn 'Asākir, op. cit., pp. 60-61; Ibn aṭ-Ṭīqṭaqā, *al-Faḥrī*, ed. DÉRENBOURG (Paris, 1895), p. 341; *Ajānī*, V, 99; XIX, 123.

can be gained as to their merit. Ibrāhīm must have valued Aḥmad's poetic judgment and taste very highly, for he presented him with a collection of his own verse¹). More direct testimony to Aḥmad's high literary and artistic standards is afforded by an entertaining anecdote reported by Mas'ūdī²), who tells us that Aḥmad's boon companions had to qualify by being unsurpassed in their field of accomplishment, be it literature, music, games, arms, and so forth. It is no wonder then that his inner circle of friends narrowed itself down to seven persons. Besides his poetry, Aḥmad is credited with a prose work, *Kitāb al-Muġāliṣa wa al-Mudākirat* or the *Book of Assemblies and of Memoirs*³).

We have already seen the beginning of his professional and political career, when Ġa'far al-Ḥayyāt, accompanying al-Ma'mūn on his Roman campaign in 215/830⁴), took the youth, Aḥmad, with him. How long he remained in Ġa'far's service, there is no way of telling⁵). Our next source of information about him comes from another historical anecdote originating again with Aḥmad himself and preserved for us by Ibn aṭ-Ṭiqṭaqā⁶). Aḥmad, in it, gives a graphic description of his release from prison, together with two other secretaries, Sulaimān ibn Wahb⁷) and Aḥmad ibn Isrā'il⁸), on the occasion of the death of al-Wāṭiq and the accession of al-Mutawakkil in 232/847. Al-Wāṭiq had imprisoned the three in an effort to mulct them of large sums of money accumulated while in office—a practice generally followed by the Caliphs of the period⁹). The three must therefore have held high secretarial positions, to find themselves in such a predicament.

1) *Aġānī*, XIX, 123.

2) Op. cit., VIII, 13-18.

3) *Fihrist*, p. 123.

4) Ṭabarī, III, 1103.

5) Ġa'far's career in the years that followed took him to different parts of the empire. Cf. Ṭabarī, III, 1300, 1302-23, 1350, 1509.

6) *al-Faḥrī*, pp. 339-41.

7) Later became Wazir of al-Mu'tamid, cf. *al-Faḥrī*, p. 344.

8) Later became Wazir of al-Mu'tazz, cf. *al-Faḥrī*, pp. 334-35.

9) Cf. Zaidān op. cit., pp. 231-37, for a brief account of this policy of extortion and large fines.

We find Aḥmad, soon after, installed as al-Mutawakkil's secretary, playing this time the rôle of the accuser instead of the accused. This accusation was based on facts, as his fellow-secretary, Ibrāhīm b. al-'Abbās aṣ-Ṣūlī, whose subordinates were involved, himself acknowledged, when al-Mutawakkil faced him with Aḥmad's charges¹). The Ibn al-Mudabbir brothers, both Aḥmad and Ibrāhīm, were thus in al-Mutawakkil's favor, especially in the earlier years when his policy of rapid changes of Wazirs²), gave that official no opportunity to discredit them with the monarch. With the appointment of Ibn Ḥāqān first as secretary of state in 236/850-51³), and later as Wazir⁴), came a temporary fall of the two brothers⁵). Ibn Ḥāqān became displeased with Aḥmad in the execution of his office, and determined to discharge and disgrace him. Aḥmad getting wind of the plot, fled. Ibn Ḥāqān persuaded al-Mutawakkil that Aḥmad had taken large sums of money which he had deposited with his brother Ibrāhīm and so induced al-Mutawakkil to imprison Ibrāhīm. Just when this took place and how long his imprisonment lasted, is not reported⁶). It must, however, fall between 236-240 (850/51-854/55), since the brothers were once more in favor at the latter date. Ibrāhīm's subsequent career has been already sketched. Aḥmad's return to favor and rise to power must have been a rapid one, for when we meet him again in 240/854-55, he is already in charge of the *diwān ḥarāġ al-a'ẓam* or the central land-tax bureau together with seven others⁷), those of *aḍ-ḍiyā'* or fiefs, *an-naḥaqāt al-*

1) *Aġānī*, IX, 29, 34.

2) Cf. *al-Faḥrī*, p. 326.

3) Ṭabarī, III, 1407.

4) *al-Faḥrī*, pp. 236-37; cf. also *E. I.*, II, 394.

5) *Aġānī*, XIX, 115-16.

6) 'Arīb used her influence for his release, which was brought about by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Ṭāhir, *Ibid.*, pp. 116, 118.

7) Ya'qūbī, op. cit., II, 596, quoted also by Becken, in his *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens* (Straßburg, 1902/03), II, 142, where Becken however leaves out the *diwān al-Ṣadaqāt*, thus reducing the number of bureaus controlled by Aḥmad to seven.

hāṣṣah wa al-'ammah or individual and public allowances, *aṣ-ṣadaqāt* or alms, *al-mawālī* or clients, *al-ġilmān* or personal military retainers, *al-ġund* or army, and *aš-šākiriyyah* or personnel in palace-service¹).

Aḥmad's administration of his offices must have been not only efficient but also strict, since he was held in much fear by the secretaries and the subordinate officers. Had these the opportunity to discredit him, they would have probably done so. We find them, instead, resorting to a ruse in order to be rid of him. They therefore represented to al-Mutawakkil that the affairs of Damascus needed very much to be straightened out, and that no one was equal to the task except "he who administered the *dīwān al-ḥarāġ*", that is, Aḥmad ibn al-Mudabbir²). Al-Mutawakkil thereupon dispatched Aḥmad to Syria in 240/854-55 to straighten out the affairs of the "Provinces of Damascus and the Jordan," as the sources have it. I am unable to find mention of any official title given Aḥmad in connection with this appointment, but in all probability it must have been the financial governorship of Syria, covering its four *Ġunds* or provinces which, as we have already seen, formed Ibrāhīm al-Mu'ayyad's share of the division of al-Mutawakkil's empire. In support of this we have the evidence of our present documents, which specifically designate Aḥmad in 241/855-56 as the *'Āmil*, that is, governor, for the heir apparent, Ibrāhīm al-Mu'ayyad. And, considering Aḥmad's reputation and the comparatively small Syrian territory, it is not likely that he was put in charge of only two out of the four Syrian provinces.

1) Cf. BJÖRKMAN, op. cit. p. 6, note 1, for other instances of the holding of multiple offices; Yaḥyā ibn Ḥālid ibn Barmak controlled all the *dīwāns* except the *dīwān al-ḥātīm*, or that of the seal; Ibn 'Abdūs, op. cit., p. 212.

2) According to Muḥammad Kurd 'Alī, *Kitāb Ḥiṭat as-Sām V* (Damascus, 1927), p. 62, this incident is reported by Mas'ūdī; I am however unable to find it in the latter's *Tanbih* (BGA VIII) or in his *Murūġ al-Qahab*, though it is evident from Vol. VIII, 13 of the *Murūġ* that Mas'ūdī did have other information on Aḥmad in some of his other works. The incident in question is reported in the earlier work of Ya'qūbī, *History* II, 599; Mas'ūdī could very well have gotten it from Ya'qūbī.

In addition to his financial duties, Aḥmad was put in charge of the Mosques¹). When al-Mutawakkil determined to move his capital from Sāmarrā to Damascus in the latter part of 243 (early in 858)²) it was to Aḥmad that he wrote to make preparations for his coming³). Al-Mutawakkil found Damascus too cold and damp for his physical comfort, and the Turkish *mawālī* in 'Irāk too restless for his mental peace; so after a few months he returned to Sāmarrā⁴). Aḥmad, however, remained in his office till the death of al-Mutawakkil in 247/861.

When al-Muntaṣir became Caliph, he transferred Aḥmad to Egypt⁵), where his administration of the taxes, both old and new, was skilful and vigorous⁶). In the half a dozen years that followed he consolidated his position and surrounded himself with pomp and glory. He employed a liveried bodyguard of a hundred Turks, richly uniformed and outfitted, to be in constant personal attendance on him⁷). It is at this point that Aḥmad ibn Ṭulūn comes on the Egyptian stage, and from the very start of their first contact in 254/868, when Aḥmad first entered Egypt as the agent of his stepfather, Bāyakkāk, the two Aḥmads became determined antagonists, though for a while they remained outwardly friendly. The course of their long conflict has been detailed, for the most part, by BECKER⁸) and need not be repeated

1) Ibn 'Asākir, II, 60. Ibid., I, 214ff. gives a long list of the mosques of Damascus alone.

2) Ṭabarī, III, 1435, 1436. 3) Ya'qūbī, op. cit., II, 600.

4) Ṭabarī, III, 1436, Ya'qūbī, II, 601.

5) Ya'qūbī, II, 603; BECKER, op. cit., II, 143.

6) Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭat* (Būlāq, I, 103ff.; Yā'qūt, *Biog. Dict.*, II, 155; BECKER, op. cit., II, 143-47. Papyrus documents dealing with his early administration of Egypt are to be found in *PERF*, No. 777, KARABACEK, *Mittheilungen aus der Sammlung der Papyrus Erzherzog Rainer* (Wien, 1887) I, 98-99, and ABEL, *Ägyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen Museen zu Berlin, Arabische Urkunden* (Berlin, 1896) I, No. 6, p. 8.

7) Maqrīzī, I, 314-16.

8) Beiträge, II, 143-47, 153-61, 171-72. BECKER however did not have all the sources now available. Cf. also Maqrīzī, *Ḥiṭat*, I, 314-16, for most of the events.

here except for the high points, of which two at least are still obscure and confused in BECKER's account.

Bāyakhbāk, Aḥmad's step-father, was all powerful with al-Mu'tazz. It was his influence that brought about Ibn al-Mudabbir's first fall in Egypt, and occasioned his first imprisonment which lasted about three months¹). It is here that Mas'ūdī²) fills in a significant detail missing in the other accounts. According to him al-Mu'tazz is said to have ordered Ibn al-Mudabbir to Syria, though he does not say in what capacity. At any rate, and according to the same account, al-Muhtadī (255-56/869-70) appointed Ibn al-Mudabbir as finance director for Palestine. It would not be at all surprising to find that Ibn al-Mudabbir had in reality been appointed financial governor of all Syria, by al-Mu'tazz and was continued in that appointment by al-Muhtadī; for the financial directorship of the several Syrian provinces was not likely to be so separated, and further Ibn al-Mudabbir's earlier career and present calibre would justify this larger and more important appointment. The appointment, whatever its nature, did not last long, for al-Muhtadī restored Ibn al-Mudabbir to the financial governorship of Egypt, though this again lasted but three months. Bāyakhbāk, once more in power, succeeded for the second time in bringing about Ibn al-Mudabbir's dismissal, and Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn once more cast him into prison, where he remained for about ten months, until the succession of al-Mu'tamid (256-79/870-92) who ordered him released and restored to his office³).

But Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn was still watching his opportunity to be rid of his dangerous rival, and his plans were furthered by his Turkish friends and relatives who were among the most powerful at court. Their intrigue finally succeeded in inducing al-Mu'tamid to transfer Ibn al-Mudabbir from the financial governorship of Egypt to that of Syria. The order was issued towards the end of the year 257, and the first month of 258

1) Ya'qūbī, op. cit., II, 616.

2) Op. cit., VIII, 13.

3) Ya'qūbī, op. cit., II, 617-20.

saw Ibn al-Mudabbir once more in Syria¹). Thus after a four-year struggle Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn, having first repeatedly humiliated and twice imprisoned his rival, finally succeeded in removing him permanently from his office in Egypt.

Ibn al-Mudabbir's return to Syria was welcome to those who knew him well²); and this, his third administration of Syria, lasted, according to Ibn 'Asākir³) and Ibn Ḥallikān⁴), until 265, and according to Ibn Taġrī Birdī⁵), until 267. It is likely that these accounts have confused two separate incidents by condensing them into one. Both incidents, however, took place after Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn's successful rebellion of the year 264-65, when he succeeded in making himself undisputed master of both Egypt and Syria. The first of those incidents reports that Aḥmad took Ibn al-Mudabbir prisoner, but released him on payment of 600,000 dinars. Ibn Taġrī Birdī places this in 267, but we learn from Ibn 'Asākir, the much earlier source, that Ibn al-Mudabbir was imprisoned in 265. Ibn 'Asākir and Ibn Ḥallikān evidently take this to be Ibn al-Mudabbir's last imprisonment, which according to Ibn Taġrī Birdī it apparently was not. May we not infer then, from the accounts taken together, that, when in 265 Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn once more had it in his power to humiliate his old rival, he did so by imprisoning him, but released him on the welcome payment of 600,000 dinars, and restored him to his office? Certainly Ibn Sa'īd's account⁶) of Ibn al-Mudabbir's final imprisonment would point to such an inference. According to this, Ḥasan ibn Maḥlad, a well known partisan of the Ṭūlūnids, arrived at al-Fustāṭ and was received with great honor. He informed Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn that Ibn al-Mudabbir was, by correspondence, intriguing with al-Muwaffaq, the

1) Ya'qūbī, op. cit., II, 622-23.

2) Cf. Ibn 'Asākir, II, 62.

3) Ibid.

4) *Biog. Dict.*, IV, 388-89.

5) *Annals*, II, 44; cf. BECKER, *Beiträge*, pp. 171-72.

6) *Muġrib* (Cairo Ms.), quoted in BECKER, *Beiträge*, II, 172.

heir to the throne. It was then that Aḥmad decided on Ibn al-Mudabbir's final imprisonment. He sent to Damascus for him, and when he arrived he had him immediately imprisoned¹). At first Ibn al-Mudabbir had hopes of regaining his freedom by trying to reassure Aḥmad, but he was soon undeceived²). He remained Aḥmad's prisoner till his death (murder?) in either 270/883-84 or 271/884-85³). Thus ended the long rivalry of the two Aḥmads, and with it the career and life of Aḥmad ibn al-Mudabbir, the third and last major character of our present documents.

Economic Background

It will be remembered that the immediate cause for the appointment of Aḥmad ibn al-Mudabbir to the financial governorship of Syria in A. H. 240/A. D. 854-55 was the chaotic condition of the finances of that province, and the need to set its *ḥarāğ* (used here in its wider meaning to include also the *ğizyah* or poll-tax)⁴) in order. The Syrian territories were in general practice treated as *ḥarāğ* lands, not by the usual reason of conquest, but by *iğmā'* or consensus of opinion⁵). The *ḥarāğ* tax however was of two kinds, the proportional and the fixed⁶). The proportional *ḥarāğ* consisted of a proportion of the produce of the land, varying from one-fifth to one-half of the same. The fixed *ḥarāğ* on the other hand was a fixed rate per unit area or per tree, and payable either in kind, or in specie, or in both⁷). The Persians levied

1) Ibn 'Asākir, II, 61.

2) Ibid.; *Beiträge*, II, 172.

3) Ibn 'Asākir, II, 62; Ibn Ḥallikān, IV, 389. Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn died in 270 (Tağrī Birdī, II, 47, 51). Did Ibn al-Mudabbir really outlive him?

4) NICOLAS P. AGHNIDES, *Mohammedan Theories of Finance* (Columbia University Studies in Political Science, Vol. LXX) (New York, 1916), p. 377.

5) Ibid., p. 366. For early tax practices in Syria, cf. Abū Yūsuf, *Kitāb al-Ḥarāğ* (Būlāq, 1302/1884-85), pp. 22-24.

6) AGHNIDES, *ibid.*, p. 378.

7) Ibid., pp. 378-80; Māwardī, *Kitāb al-Aḥkām as-Sulṭāniyyah* (Cairo, 1298/1881), p. 141.

a proportional tax, but the Caliph 'Umar thought the fixed *ḥarāğ* more just, and levied it on the Sawād¹), which district became the model for all the *ḥarāğ* lands²). The 'Abbāsīd Caliph, Maṣṣūr reintroduced the proportional *ḥarāğ*, and thereafter it seems to have been permissible to levy either kind and to change if necessary from one kind to another according to the condition of the land³). It is clear from Documents I and II that the land in question was to be taxed in accordance with the terms of the fixed *ḥarāğ*, since both the area and the number of trees are mentioned. Document III, however, represents both types of *ḥarāğ*, for some of the entries are by unit of capacity measure.

Ibn al-Mudabbir is credited with a tax-levy that was just and in accordance with the tax-bearing capacity of the land⁴). According to al-Māwardī⁵), the three essential factors which determined the tax-bearing capacity of the land were: (1) the quality of the land by virtue of which the crop sown on it was rich or poor, large or small; (2) the kind of the crop, since different grains and fruits varied in their yield of profits, and (3) the method by which the land was irrigated. This last could be done in four ways: (a) artificial irrigation without the aid of instruments; (b) artificial irrigation with the aid of instruments; (c) natural irrigation by means of rain, snow, or dew (land thus watered was called '*adī*'); (d) natural irrigation by means of the humidity of the soil or by underground springs (land thus watered was called '*ba'l*'). Our documents specify all three factors, the lots being described for the most part as choice, the crops indicated as fruits, and the land with respect to irrigation classified as '*adī*' or rain-watered. We have here then interesting specimens of the

1) Māwardī, p. 167.

2) Ibid., p. 164; AGHNIDES, pp. 378-79.

3) Māwardī, p. 168.

4) Kurd 'Alī, V, 62, has, وحمل كل الارض ما تستحقه; Māwardī uses *تحمله* in the same sense; cf. also Abū Yūsuf, pp. 21, 49.

5) *Op. cit.*, pp. 142-43; AGHNIDES, pp. 381-82.

6) Māwardī, p. 142; AGHNIDES, p. 381. The method of irrigation affected the taxation of all lands; cf. Abū Yūsuf, pp. 29-32.

procedure followed in the execution of the land survey undertaken by Ibn al-Muddabir, prior to determining the new rate of the *ḥarāğ* to be levied on the land.

Furthermore, in two of our documents the number of the inhabitants of the village is reported as five—a number too small to represent the entire population of men, women, and children. In all probability these five unnamed men, Muslims or *ḍimmīs*, were either the land-owners themselves¹⁾, or else the village leaders who formed a sort of a council and represented the entire village in their dealings with the *ḥarāğ* or land-tax officers. Another, though less likely, possibility is that these villages were very small and were inhabited by *ḍimmīs*, of whom however there were only five adult males, who, being neither "youths" nor "old men", were therefore subject to the *ğizya* or poll-tax. Where a difference of financial status (which determines the rate of the poll-tax) existed, it was necessary to name each individual taxed; but where an entire group was of the same financial status—which was likely to be the case with these villagers—it was permissible to record only their total number, since they were taxable at the same rate²⁾.

Taken as a whole, from an economic standpoint, these documents are exceedingly interesting, in that, in addition to being a direct testimony to Ibn al-Mudabbir's just and energetic financial administration, they serve as even more worthwhile direct testimony to the conformity of economic "practices" of the third century Hiğra, with the economic "theories" recorded in later centuries.

The Geographical Background

The locations mentioned in these documents were all to be found in the *ğund* or province of Damascus. It is hardly possible to ascertain the exact boundaries of the different Syrian provinces. However, a workable idea of the northern and southern limits of the Damascus province is to be gained

1) Cf. Māwardī, p. 197; AGHNIDES, p. 491.

2) Māwardī, p. 197; AGHNIDES, p. 492.

from the fact that Qārā¹⁾ between Ṣadad and Nabq and Fīq²⁾ on the southeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, lay near if not on the northern and southern boundary line respectively. The *ğunds* were divided into several *kūras* or districts, whose boundary lines are extremely difficult to identify, since no Arabic geographer attempts to delineate them. However, the district with which these documents deal lay in a southwesterly direction between the city of Damascus and the sea of Galilee. The documents refer to it as *iqḷīm Ġabal al-Ġalīl. Ya'qūbī*³⁾ on the other hand lists it under the name *kūrat Ġabal al-Ġalīl*. That *iqḷīm*, a term generally used by the Arab geographers for large geographical regions, had also become interchangeable with *kūrā*, a much smaller unit, seems to be confirmed by Ibn al-Fağih's⁴⁾ (d. 290/903) practice of using them interchangeably. Ya'qūbī, the only one who refers definitely to Ġabal al-Ġalīl as a separate district, mentions also the *kūras* of al-Ḥaurān and al-Ġaulān in the

1) Ya'qūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, in *BGA* VII, p. 325.

2) *Ibid.*, p. 327, from which it follows that the actual boundary line lay below Fīq on the road to Ṭabariyya.

3) *BGA*, VII, 327. This district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl must not be confused with the mountains of Ġabal al-Ġalīl lying to the north between Ḥimş and Tripoli; cf. LE STRANGE, *Palestine under the Moslems* (London, 1890), pp. 77, 78, 79. DUSSAUD, *Topographie Historique de la Syrie Antique et Médiévale*, Paris, 1927, pp. 100, 141 suggests the possibility of an early Jewish colony, who settled, in the time of Pompey, in the Nuṣairiyya mountains, and gave it the name of Ġabal al-Ġalīl. A second possible explanation is to be found in the movements of the tribe of Banū 'Āmila, who in Ya'qūbī's day (*op. cit.*, p. 327) were already settled in the district of Galilee, but who later rebelled and migrated, in the period of the crusades, north to the region of Ḥimş, naming the mountains Ġabal 'Āmila, after those in Galilee; cf. GAUDEFROY-DEMOMBYNES, *La Syrie à l'Époque des Mamelouks*, Paris, 1923, p. 23. It is therefore likely that they likewise used the term Ġabal al-Ġalīl for this region. This would account for the confusion and apparent contradiction found in the Arab geographers for both Ġabal al-Ġalīl and Ġabal 'Āmila.

4) *Kitāb al-Buldān*, *BGA*, V, 105. Idrīsī some three hundred years later uses the term *iqḷīm* for agricultural districts within the jurisdiction of the city of Sidon; cf. LE STRANGE, pp. 346-47.

Damascus province. The western boundary line of these two *kūras*, which presumably adjoined that of Ġabal al-Ġalīl, must have gradually receded east in the later Middle Ages, for the villages surveyed in our documents and at that time located in the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl, appear in maps for later times in the districts of al-Ġaūlān and al-Ĥaurān. It is equally difficult to tell how far the northwestern boundary of Ġabal al-Ġalīl then extended. It would seem from Ya'qūbī's account that Ġabal 'Āmila, named after a tribe of the Banū 'Āmila, who inhabited the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl, was included in the district. Later the boundary line here must have shifted southward, for in al-Dimišqī's day (died 700/1300) the Ġabal 'Āmila is included in the district of Ṣafad to the south¹).

Turning our attention now to the specific localities surveyed according to our papyri, we have first the town, or village, of al-Ġibāb of Document I. The unpointed and unvocalized Arabic, الحباب, could of course be read with several different consonants as well as with several different vocalizations; however the only reading and vocalization that also points to a place in the Damascus province and in the neighborhood of the city of Ṣanamain²) to whose agricultural district the village belonged, is that of al-Ġibāb. The village itself is not mentioned by the early Arab geographers. Its location is nevertheless given by WETZSTEIN³) and by DUSSAUD⁴), and is further confirmed both in the Baedeker⁵), where it is placed 39 miles south of Damascus, on the Damascus-Ĥiġāz road, and by the recent British official list⁶), which gives it as 40 kilometers south of Damascus.

1) LE STRANGE, p. 75.

2) Yāqūt, *Geog. Dict.*, IV, 429; LE STRANGE, op. cit., pp. 530-31; DUSSAUD, op. cit., p. 327 and Map II.

3) *Reisebericht über Hauran und die Trachonen* (Berlin, 1860), Map, spelled, "Ġebāb". 4) Op. cit., p. 334 and Map II, a-l.

5) *Palestine and Syria* (Leipzig, 1906), p. 152 and Map between pp. 150-51.

6) *First List of Names in Syria*, Permanent Committee on Geographical names for British official use (London, 1927), p. 11, spelled "Jebāb".

The second village forming the object of the survey, is Qaraḥtā of Document II. Yāqūt¹) mentions a Qaraḥtā, a village of Damascus, that was a sort of a resort of the Umayyads. WETZSTEIN²) and DUSSAUD³) would place this Umayyad resort close to Damascus in a southeasterly direction; thus its locale would fall outside the limits of the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl. However we learn further from LITTMANN⁴) and DUSSAUD⁵) that there was a second Qaraḥtā located southwest of Damascus and therefore not to be confused with the first Qaraḥtā. That this is the Qaraḥtā of our papyrus is confirmed not only by its location, but by the second name it bears in the papyrus, namely Šibān, for the locality immediately north of this second Qaraḥtā as located by DUSSAUD, is marked by the same scholar as "Tell esh-Sheban". This fits in perfectly with the specifications in our document, namely, "a village called Qaraḥtā and Šibān, in the hills of the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl." Judging by DUSSAUD's maps and the scale there used, Qaraḥtā would be about 60 kilometers, roughly estimated, southwest of Damascus, and about 45 kilometers directly west of al-Ġibāb; for the three form roughly the points of a triangle that is almost isosceles and that is also a right-angled triangle, the shortest side of which represents the distance between Damascus and al-Ġibāb—a distance known, as we have seen, to be about 40 kilometers.

We have thus far been fortunate in the identification of the major district and villages concerned in our documents (since the place-names of Document III are lost in that papyrus). This, however, does not mean that all our geographical problems are solved. For in giving the boundaries of al-Ġibāb and Qaraḥtā, eight other villages were originally mentioned. Of these, three are lost in the papyrus text, and

1) *Geog. Dict.*, IV, 53; cf. LE STRANGE, p. 479.

2) Op. cit., Map.

3) Op. cit., p. 309 and Map IV.

4) *ZS* I (1923), p. 169, according to which Qaraḥtā is an Aramaic word meaning, "bare", or "barren".

5) *Ibid.*, pp. 386-87 and Map I, c-2; the reference is for the years A. D. 1101 and 1107.

of the remaining five some have, so far, defied either decipherment or identification. The problems of these villages will be referred to again in connection with each document in the hope that others can help with their solution. In the meantime, they are hardly important enough to hold up the publication of these unusual documents.

I

Oriental Institute No. A 11236

Date: A. H. 241 = A. D. 855-56.

General description: Fine light papyrus, 27,5 × 19 cm. The corners and most of the margins are lost, and there are several lacunae, especially in the lower half. The left half is much broken, about 6 cm. (3 for the script and 3 for the margin) being lost. The lower section is very threadbare.

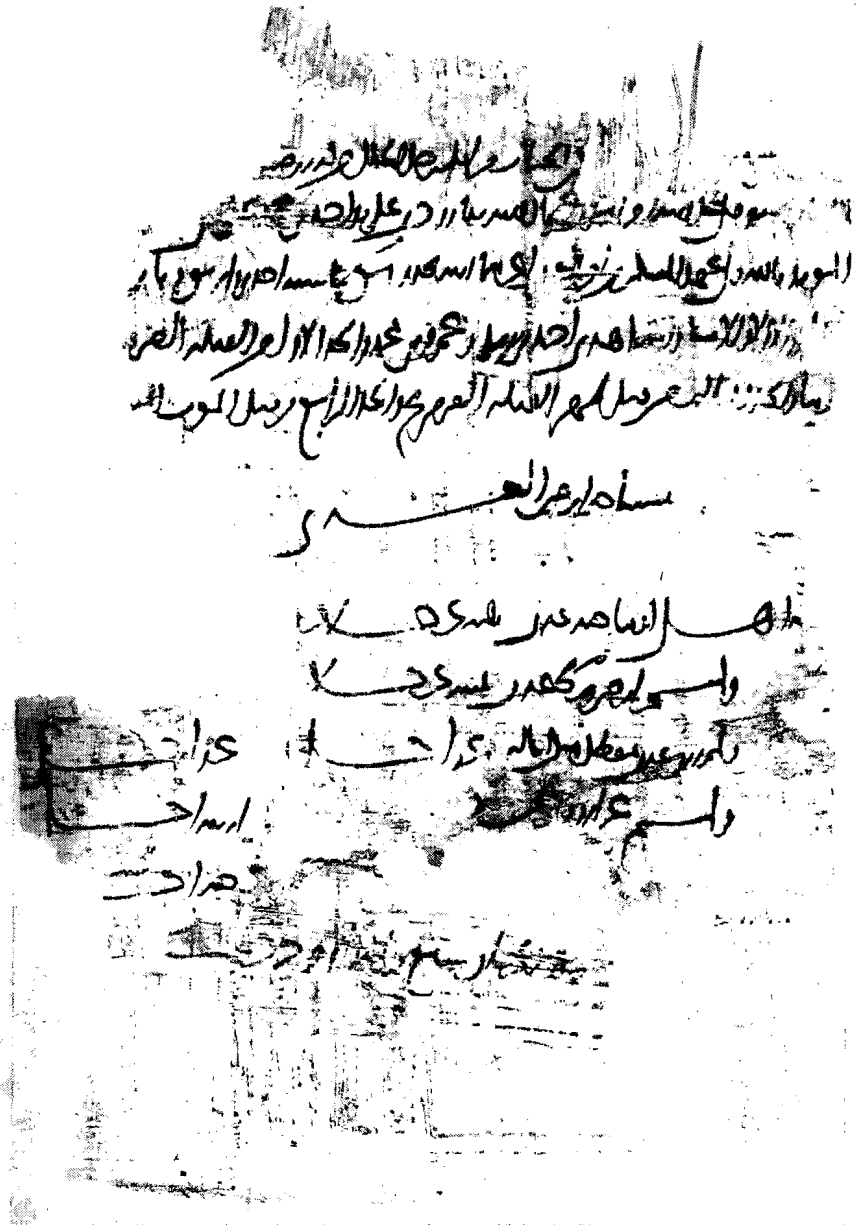
Script: This is of the difficult *qarmata*¹⁾ or shrunk and closely written type generally current in the governmental bureaus of the third and fourth centuries of the Hīġra. The letters lack uniformity, are ill-formed, abbreviated and much ligatured; diacritical points are wanting, except for a few rare instances, mainly in the captions on the reverse of the documents. All three documents are written in heavy black ink.

Recto²⁾

- ١ [بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم]
- ٢ [ذكر حال ينجع من مساحه قريه تدعى الجباب من اقليم جبل الجليل من كروم صنباين امر به عبد الله جعفر]
- ٣ [الامام اله]توكل على الله امير المؤمنين اطال الله بقاءه وجرى على يد احمد بن محمد عامل [الامير ابراهيم]

1) Cf. KARABAČEK, *Das Arabische Papier* (Wien, 1887), p. 6 and references there cited.

2) Square brackets inclose reconstructed text; pointed brackets inclose scribe's omissions; half brackets indicate illegibility or uncertain reading; cross-reference to the documents is by number and lines, e. g., I, 1-2.



Chicago, Or. Inst. Nr. 11236*

- ٤ المويد بالله ولي عهد المسلمين وامير المؤمنين اعزها الله بجند دمشق في سنة
احدى واربعين ومايت[ين]
- ٥ [والامر] لاميير الابنبا<ء> والشاهدين احمد بن يزيد وعمرو بن محمد والحد الاول
من القبله القرية
- ٦ [ار] ما والحد الثالث من قبل ظهر القبله القرية بريح والحد الرابع من قبل
المغرب القرية
- ٧ مساحه ارض عندي
- ٨ <و> اهل ارما خمسة عندي ثلثه عشر جلا في
- ٩ ولهم ارض وسط عندي ثمنه عشر جلا [في]
- ١٠ ولهم رزن عندي مقطل مكر بما<ء> له عشره اجل [في] عشره اجل [مايه جل
- ١١ ولهم غير ارزن عشره <في> اربعة اجل [اربعين جلا
- ١٢ [في] خمسة اجل
- ١٣ ذ[لك] يكن ثمان و سبع مايه جل ارض رزن

Notes: Line (2) The first part of the line is supplied from II, 2; the completion of *Ṣanamain* is supplied from the geographic location, the rest of the line from II, 3. (3) The words *ال امام ال* show very faintly through the remains of a thin strip of papyrus that had adhered over them. The last part of the line is supplied from II, 3. Note the long separate stroke that stands for the *hā'* of *قامه*; see also line 10 here and III, recto, where it occurs repeatedly. (4) Note the long stroke over the *šīn* of *دمشق*; the same stroke is to be seen on the *šīn* of *وسط* in line 9, the *šīn* of *المساح*, and the *šīn* of *شعيا* in II, 5-6. Though this stroke would be expected to occur over the *šīn* only so as to distinguish it from the *sīn*, papyri from the II-IV/VIII-X centuries, use the stroke indiscriminately for both letters; cf. BECKER, *Papyri Schott-Reinhardt* (Heidelberg, 1906), I, 27; GROHMANN, *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri, III Series Arabica* (Wien, 1924), I, 1, pp. 71-72. (5) The word *الامير* is ascertained by comparison with II, 5; note the spelling of *الابنبا* for *الابنبا*; cf. KASHĠARĪ, *Dīwān Lujāt at-Turk* (Constantinople, 1333-35), I, 60, line 16, where we have the same usage, the plural of *نصيب* being written as *انصباء* instead of *انصبة*. Note the use of *الشاهدين* instead of *الشاهدان*; the use of the oblique cases, where the nominative case is called for, is very common in these documents. (6) The first two letters of the line, *alif* and *dāl* or *rā'* (*dāl* or *zāy*) are supplied from the second

word in line eight below. The *bā'* of الرابع is dotted. (8) The multiplication process in lines 8-12 is ascertained by comparison with III, 6, 8-9, 12-13. (9) Note how the *fā'* of وسط is joined to the *ain* of the following word. (11) There is space here for the first اجل, which was either intentionally left out, being taken for granted, or was overlooked by the scribe. (13) The papyrus here is much mutilated and the ink, in parts, is very faint. The *rā'* and *zāy* of رزن look like *dāl* or *ḡāl*.

Verso

١ ذكر حال يجمع من مساحه [قرية تدعى الجباب من اقليم جبل الجليل
 ٢ فائق بن عبد الله بن هرون
 ٣
 ٤ محمد بن هرون

Translation

Recto

1. [In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.]
2. [Report of a statement of account of the total area of the village called al-Ġibāb, in the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl, belonging to the vineyards of Ṣanam]ain. Ordered by 'Abd Allāh Ġa'far,
3. [the Imām, al-]Mutawakkil 'ala-llāh, Commander of the Faithful—may God prolong his life. Issued by the order of Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, financial governor [for the Amīr Ibrāhīm]
4. al-Mū'ayyad Billāh, Crown Prince of the Muslims, and for the Commander of the Faithful—may God strengthen them—in the province of Damascus in the year one and forty and two hund[red].
5. [And (the execution of) the order (was delegated)] to the director of constructions. And the witnesses (are) Aḥmad ibn Yazīd, and 'Amr ibn Muḥammad. And the first boundary, to the south (is) the vill[age] . . . and the second boundary, to the east (is) the village]

6. [Ar]mā(?) and the third boundary, to the north, (is) the village Buraīġ and the fourth boundary, to the west, (is) the vill[age]]
7. Area of the rain-watered land.
8. [And] the people of Armā(?), five; rain-watered land, thirteen ḡalls into [.]
9. And they have choice rain-watered land, eighteen ḡalls [into]
10. And they have an elevated plain of rain-watered land, separate and irrigated by its (own) water, ten ḡalls [into] ten ḡalls—[one hundred ḡalls.]
11. And they have other elevated plain land, ten <into> four ḡalls—[forty ḡalls.]
12. [. into] five ḡalls [.]
13. [.] and that is (in all) eight and seven hundred ḡalls of elevated plain land.

Verso

1. [Report of a statement of account of the total area] of the village called al-Ġibāb in the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl.
2. Fā'iḡ ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn
3. ٢ ١
4. Muḥammad ibn Hārūn

Main Notes

Recto

Line 2. See the section on the geographical background for the principal place-names involved. The term حال, plural احوال, is used in a technical sense to mean "a statement of account"¹⁾. The word كروم is here translated *vineyards* because grapes are one of the staple products of the whole region or province of Damascus. Technically, however, the word *karm* كرم, is used for land where any kind of trees or vines are so

1) Cf. AGHENIDES, op. cit., p. 490; Māwardī, op. cit., p. 206.

closely planted as not to allow of the sowing of the land¹) in between.

Lines 3-4. See the section on the historical background for the personal names involved.

Line 5. Though the Umayyads were great builders, beginning with Mu'āwījah and al-Walid²), they do not seem to have had a regular bureau (*dīwān*) of buildings or constructions. It would seem from the use of the term *amīr al-abniya* (أمير الابنية) instead of that of *ṣāhib dīwān al-abniya* (صاحب ديران الابنية), that the 'Abbāsids, who increased and diversified the governmental bureaus, had established by this time a sub-bureau of constructions, a practice evidently followed by the provincial dynasties³). A *dīwān al-abniya*, however, is specifically mentioned for later 'Abbāsīd times⁴). It is easy to understand the expansion of the sub-bureau into a full and regular *dīwān*. The change perhaps occurred in the tenth or eleventh century, since we find a *dīwān al-'amā'ir* in the Fātimid (A. D. 969-1169) administration⁵), which itself was fashioned largely after that of the 'Abbāsīds.

It is not surprising to find that Ibn al-Mudabbir gave the order for the survey to the director of constructions⁶) since

1) AGENIDES, p. 379; Muḥīṭ al-Muḥīṭ I, 92; II, 1808.

2) Kurd 'Alī, op. cit., V, 264-65.

3) E. g. the Ayyūbids (A. D. 1169-1250) who had a similar bureau under the direction of a *šādd al-'amā'ir* or superintendent (literally something like "promoter") of constructions; cf. *Qalqašandī, Šubḥ al-A'šā'*, IV, 22.

4) Ibn al-Sā'ī, *Al-Ġāmi' al-Muḥtaṣar*, ed. M. JAWAD and PÈRE ANASTASE (Bagdad, 1934), pp. 4 (ض), 184.

5) *Qalqašandī*, III, 496 (cf. also p. 480); the *dīwān* in this instance seems to have been connected in function with the bureau of religious war (الجهاد) which among other things had charge of military and naval constructions including ship building.

6) The reign of al-Mutawakkil saw a great deal of building activity (cf. for instance Balādūrī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān* [Leyden, 1866], pp. 7, 47, 297-98), and he himself, we are told, had a mania for building which he satisfied at the expense of his subjects (REUBEN LEVY, *A Bagdad Chronicle*, Cambridge, 1929, p. 104). Aside from raising funds for these

this officer naturally would have several surveyors in his office¹) and their services would be the chief thing needed for the land-survey. The *dīwān al-ḥarāğ*, doubtless, had its own staff of surveyors²), but the scope of the survey, covering the entire province, must have called for the services of more than its regular staff.

Line 6. The first word of this line is clearly identical with the second word in Line (8), from which it is evident that it is a place-name. It must therefore be the eastern boundary of al-Ġibāb, and is to be read as either ادمآ or اروما³). I am unable to find either of these as a place name anywhere in the neighborhood of al-Ġibāb, though both are to be found in localities outside of Syria. Yāqūt⁴) mentions an 'Udmā' (أدمآ) between Ḥaibar and Diyār Ṭayy, and explains the word to mean a pool of water or a pond. It would therefore not be surprising to find a village so named in the neighborhood of al-Ġibāb. As for اروما, there are two possibilities. The first and more likely one is that we have here the Arabic place name, Armā'. Yāqūt⁵) lists a Bīr Armā three miles from Madina. We learn further from Butrus al-Bustānī⁶), that Armā' (أروماء) is used to indicate barren (and stony?) land without "root or branch." It is therefore easy to understand how some Arabian localities could get such a name, which place name then could have easily found its way, with

buildings the general trend was towards heavier and heavier taxation; thus we find the revenue of the Syrian provinces was more than doubled in the period 204-250/820-64 (LE STRANGE, op. cit., pp. 43-48).

1) Ibn al-Sā'ī, l. c.

2) *Qalqašandī*, V, 466, defines الماسح in „modern“ times, as „a surveyor of agricultural land“.

3) ادمآ and اروما, though possible paleographically, get us nowhere geographically.

4) *Geog. Dict.*, I, 169. Ṭabarī, *Annals*, I, 3459, II, 124, has ادمآ for both a man and a woman's name.

5) *Ibid.*, I, 430. PHILBY in his newspaper account of his recent visit to Šabwā mentions a "Wady Arma", near that city. The Arabic of this Armā however is عرما and not اروما or ادمآ, cf. LANDBERG, *Crítica Arabica*, No. V, 237-51, in the article on Šabwā.

6) *Muḥīṭ*, I, 19.

the Arab tribes of those regions, into Syria. The second possibility is in the name بارما, more frequently mentioned by Arab Geographers, though with varied vocalization¹). In this case Bārmā is very likely an Aramaic place-name and is a contracted form of Beth Armā²). It must have been familiar as a name to the Syrians, for Idrīsī informs us that one (the eastern?) of the gates of Damascus was called Bāb Bārmā³). If we do accept either اارما or اارما, there still remains the problem of the identification of the site, which must be looked for within ten kilometers east of the village of al-Ġibāb.

The peculiar way of expressing "north", literally "from the direction of the back of the south," is worthy of note.

For the name of the village which represents the northern boundary, we have what looks like برح, the last letter of which may be a *khā'*, if the stroke that in part overlaps the preceding letter be taken for the dot of *khā'*; or again the second last letter may be a *bā'*, if this same stroke be taken for the dot of the *bā'*. It is possible however that the stroke is not a dot in either case, but merely an accidental penstroke. Of all the possible readings بروج, Buraïğ (little tower) seems the most likely since it was, and still is, common in all Syria. The different localities however, especially in this region, were differentiated by a second name compounded with Buraïğ. DUSSAUD⁴) mentions two such compound names; the first is Ḥān al-Buraïğ which he identifies with Ḥān al-

1) Iṣṭahri, *BGA* I, 75 mentions the hill of Bārimmā (بارمًا) in 'Irāq; Ibn Ḥaukal, *BGA*, II, 110 (this work is not available to me); but see al-Muqaddasī, *BGA*, III, 135, where a Barimma is mentioned south of al-Qādisiyya in 'Irāq, having a ms. variant of بارمه, and where also a Dair Barimmah is mentioned north of Bagdād, between Nahrawān and al-Daskarat, with a ms. variant among others of بارما; cf. Idrīsī, *Geography*, I, 336; II, 142, 147, 154 (Vols. V & VI of *Recueil des Voyages et de Mémoires publié par La Société de Géographie*, Paris, 1836-40), where these place-names are vocalized in the French translation as Bārmā and Bāramā.

2) Cf. LITTMANN, in *ZS* I (1922), p. 171 for several examples of similar contractions of such compounds.

3) *Op. cit.*, I, 352.

4) *Op. cit.*, pp. 314-15.

Šiḥa', northwest of Damascus. The second is Buraïğ al-Fulūs, southwest of Damascus, on the main road that leads through Qunaiṭarah to Šafad. It is located northwest of al-Ġibāb and northeast of Qaraḥtā, but is too far out to be on the boundary line of either of the two village territories. In more modern times we find a Buraïğ in the Balkā¹), and another in the district of al-Ramlah²), both south of the locale of our documents. At the present time we have a Buraïğ some 50 kilometers south of Ḥimş³). It is therefore probable that a Buraïğ did exist at the time of our documents close enough to al-Ġibāb to form its northern boundary.

Line 7. See the section on the economic background for the term 'adī.

Line 8. One would expect to find the number of the inhabitants of al-Ġibāb, and not that of the inhabitants of Armā(?) to be mentioned here. In Document II 8 which corresponds to the present line, we have simply "the inhabitants of the village," and so have no way by which to determine if Armā(?) is actually meant or if it is a scribe's erroneous substitution for al-Ġibāb. See the section on economic background for the relationship of these five people to the rest of the inhabitants of the land.

The square unit generally used for land measure was the *ğarīb* (جريب), which equalled 3600 square cubits⁴), the actual area varying in accordance with the cubit measure used; and there seem to have been no less than seven different cubits in use in different parts and at different times⁵). It was however permissible to use in every district the local unit commonly accepted as the basis of the land measure⁶). This seems to have been the case here, the local land unit in use being the *ğall*, الجُل. This is defined by Butrus al-Bustānī as "a piece

1) EDWARD ROBINSON, *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petraea* (Boston, 1841), Vol. III, 173.

2) *Ibid.*, p. 120.

3) *First List of Names in Syria*, etc. p. 7.

4) Māwardī, p. 146; AGHNIDES, p. 395.

5) Māwardī, p. 146-47.

6) AGHNIDES, *op. cit.*, p. 395.

(or plot) of land of known limits and bounds . . . derived from the area on which a house is located and built" ¹). Just what constituted the size of an average house-lot in those days it is difficult to tell, though of course it could not have been very large. In shape, it was probably a square, that being the usual form of an oriental house, and also of units of area used as bases for land measures.

Line 9. *ارض وسط* here is used in the sense of good or choice land; compare LANE, *Arabic-English Lexicon* under *وسط*, where *مَرْعَى وَسَطًا* is translated as "choice pasturage."

Line 10. *رَزْن* seems to be an elevated plain self-sufficient in its water supply either by natural absorption or by water held or stores in a depression in the land ²). This fact of water sufficiency seems to be specially emphasized in the phrase *مَكْرَبَاءَ لَهُ*, "irrigated with its (own) water." Note the plurals *اجل* and also *ارزن* in the following line, both being a form of the "plural of paucity," used for the numbers three to ten inclusive ³), and preferable for these numbers, to other plural forms ⁴).

Line 13. In view of the object of the document as stated in line 2 of the text, the figures given in this line must represent the total area. Of the total 708 *galls*, 140 are accounted for in lines 10 and 11. The remaining 568 must therefore be accounted for in lines 8, 9 and 12. This is not an impossibility when compared with Document II where, out of a grand total of 822, lines 8 and 9 alone total 498 *galls*. If this figure be allowed in this document for lines 8 and 9, that would leave a round 70 *galls*, which would not be a wide guess for line 12.

Verso

Line 2. These signatures must be worked out by comparison with the corresponding signatures in Document II. The

1) Op. cit. I, 275.

2) Ibid., I, 776; II, 1296.

3) Cf. WRIGHT-DE GOEJE, *Arabic Grammar*, I, 209-10, 234.

4) Ibid., II, 234.

question is, do we have in the two documents taken together just two people, or three, four, five, or even six different people? There are several paleographic features which seem to indicate that one and the same person is represented by the first pair of corresponding signatures. These features are the size and incline of the script, the spacing of the letters and words, the formation of most of the letters, and the remarkable similarity of the first "bin" written in both instances as *بن*. On the other hand, other features, also paleographic—the different angle of inclination of the line, the formation of some of the letters, but especially of the first word representing the personal name in each case—seem to point to two instead of one and the same person. The first name in Document II, is clearly *فائق*, Fā'iq, but one would have, in the case of the present document, to accept a very short *alif*, with the unusual reversed "hook" at the top (as in *بَاءَ*, and *اعرهما* of lines 3 and 4, and in *فريتان*, II, between lines 9 and 10) in order to be able to read the first name here as *فائق*. Still, this reading is very probable considering the fact that the word occurs in a signature, and signatures are peculiarly subject to their writers' moods.

Yāqūt, in the reference under *Qaraḥtā* ¹) already cited, gives us a clue to the identity of the person(s) involved here. This clue is that there was a certain traditionist named Hārūn al-Qaraḥtāwī (of *Qaraḥtā*), who had a son, also a traditionist named 'Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn. 'Abd Allāh is said to have given his traditions on the direct authority of Muḥammad ibn Ṣaliḥ ibn Baiḥas, but was himself cited as an authority by his nephew, 'Abd al-Malik ibn Wuhaib ibn Hārūn. Muḥammad ibn Ṣaliḥ died in 210/825 ²), and since he was in part contemporary with 'Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn, the latter could easily have had a full grown son in 241/855-56—the year of our document. It seems then more than probable that the Fā'iq ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn of our document

1) Op. cit., IV, 53.

2) Yāqūt, op. cit., VI, 667; the reference Agāni, XI, 88 is wrong, the correct one is *Tagrī Birdī* I, 606.

is indeed that son. Furthermore, from Yāqūt's account Hārūn al-Qaraḥtāwī appears to belong to the Qaraḥtā of the Umayyads¹). While this is possible, it seems equally possible, if not more probable on the evidence of these documents, that he could have belonged to this second Qaraḥtā southwest of Damascus, but that he was assigned by Yāqūt to the Qaraḥtā of the Umayyads because the latter was better known.

Line 3. There is some possibility that the word we have here in both documents stands for either *بخطه* "with his own writing" or *بيده* "with his own hand," usually associated with signatures where it is desirable or essential to emphasize the fact that the signature was written out by the man himself. However, such words in other documents are comparatively legible, and one would expect them in this instance to be a little more legible than they are.

Another possibility is that the figures here drawn were perhaps meant to perform the function of a seal or of a highly individualized *ṭuḡrā*-like signature. There is hardly a possibility of their being the "seal" or *ṭuḡrā*-like signature of Fā'iḡ. They must, therefore, either belong with the signatures that follow, or else represent a new name in each case.

Line 4. With this pair of signatures we have about the same situation as with the pair of signatures in line 2 of both documents. The name in this document seems to be *محمد بن هرون* while that in Document II appears as *عمر بن هرون*. However, the fact that both documents deal with the same project, would lead one to expect the same set of officers. And the general appearance of the two signatures under consideration does point, if we allow for one's changes of mood, to the possibility of our having here one and the same signatory. From the writing alone, the preference would have to be given to *عمر*, since one could more readily allow a possible reading of *عمر* in the present document, than of *محمد*, in Document II. If 'Umar is indeed the name, who was he? The sources used do not mention any 'Umar ibn Hārūn. Was he a relative of Fā'iḡ? Possibly, since relatives frequently helped each other

1) Cf. section on Geographical Background above.

to office. On the other hand, Hārūn being such a common name, 'Umar and Fā'iḡ may have belonged to two unrelated families.

But we cannot dismiss the reading *محمد* so easily. According to Ṭabarī al-Muntaṣir seems to have appointed Muḥammad ibn 'Alī aṣ-Ṣūlī, known as Bard al-Ḥiyār, in charge of the *dīwān aḡ-dīyā'* for al-Mu'ayyad's territory (Syria). The office, however, was actually administered by Bard al-Ḥiyār's secretary-agent, Muḥammad ibn Hārūn al-Anbārī¹). The probability is that this is the same Muḥammad ibn Hārūn²) as the one in our document, and that he owed this later and more important appointment, in part at least, to his previous experience in al-Mu'ayyad's territory during the administration of Ibn al-Mudabbir³). Whether this Muḥammad ibn Hārūn al-Anbārī was related to Fā'iḡ ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn, tentatively identified as al-Qaraḥtāwī, is again difficult to say.

The next question that offers a problem is *what* were the duties of these officers. The best answer we can make is that one (which?) represents the man in immediate charge out on the actual fields measured, while the others (again which?) represent officers at general headquarters, such as recorders and registrars⁴).

1) Ṭabarī, III, 1499. For Bard al-Ḥiyār see also Aḡānī IX, 23, where both Bard al-Ḥiyār and Ibn Bard al-Ḥiyār are mentioned; the latter is mentioned again on pp. 32 and 33. From the variants given in Ṭabarī, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Ṣūlī was known by some as *Ibn Bard al-Ḥiyār*. He is not to be confused with Abū al-Faḡl al-'Abbās ibn 'Alī ibn Bard al-Ḥiyār aṣ-Ṣūlī; cf. Yāqūt, *Geog. Dict.*, VI (Index), pp. 340, 493.

2) Ibn al-Aṭīr, VI, 255, mentions a Muḥammad ibn Hārūn who was secretary to Ma'mūn in A. H. 205, or 43 years earlier than the year mentioned by Ṭabarī. It is possible, though hardly probable, that this is our man. If he is indeed our man, he must have been in his old age and, comparatively speaking, had fallen low in his secretarial career.

3) From Ṭabarī, III, 1499, it would seem that Bard al-Ḥiyār was murdered in A. H. 248, by his servant. From the variants given in the notes, however, it would seem that it was Muḥammad ibn Hārūn who was the one so murdered.

4) Māwardī, pp. 204-08; cf. AḡENIDES, pp. 494-99.

II

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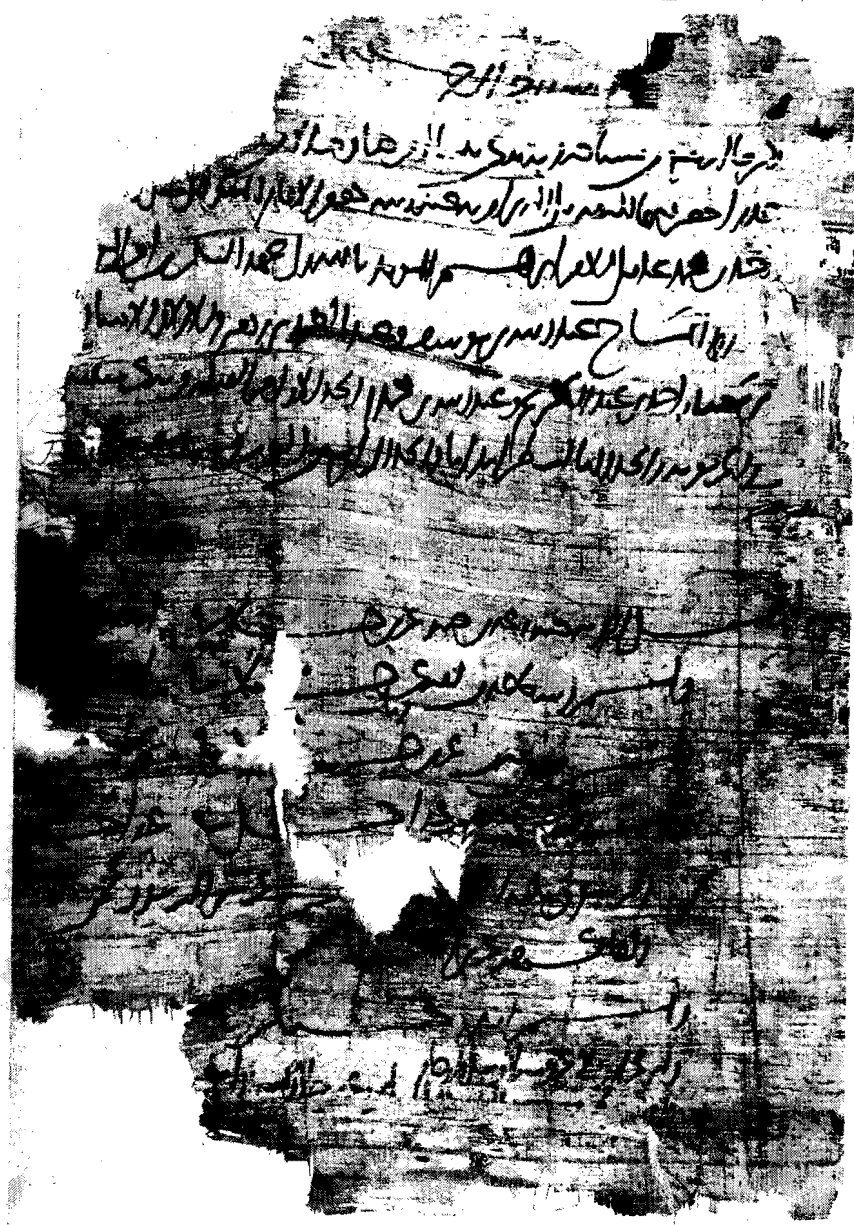
Date: The date itself, which formed the last part of line 4, is lost; but the document undoubtedly deals with the same project as that of Document I, and must therefore be dated as of the year A. H. 241 = A. D. 855-56.

General Description: Fine light papyrus, 27.5 × 19 cm. What is left of the document is in fairly good condition except for two lacunae in the lower half; both of the left-side corners, however, are lost, as is also a strip about 9 cm. wide (6 cm. for the script, 3 for the margin) along this entire length of the piece.

Script: Same as that of Document I.

Recto

- ١ بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
- ٢ ذكر حال يجمع من مساحه قريه تدعى بشبان وقرحتا بجبالا من [اقليم جبل الجليل من]
- ٣ غور اخضر قسما لبقه تل 'المدين' امر به عبد الله جعفر الامام المتوكل على [الله امير المومنين اطال الله بقاءه وجرى على يد]
- ٤ [ا]حمد بن محمد عامل الامير ابراهيم المويد بالله ولي عهد المسلمين وامير المو[منين اعزها الله بجند دمشق في سنه احدى واربعين ومايتين]
- ٥ لدا المساح عبد الله بن يوسف وعبد الصمد بن زهير والامر لاميير الابنبا] والشهود
- ٦ بن شعيا واحمد بن عبد الكريم وعبد الله بن محمد | الحد الاول من القبله قريه عين سس[م] والحد الثاني من الشرق
- ٧ والمرقبه والحد الثالث طرائف ابا والحد الرابع من الغرب قريه^١ وا^٢
- ٨ اهل القريه خمسة وعذى خمسة <و> عشرين جلا في اثنا عشر جلا [ثلاثيه جلا]
- ٩ ولهم <ارض> وسط عدى ثمنه عشر جلا في احد عشر جلا [مايه وثمانه وتسعين جلا]



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- ١٠ ولهم وزن عدى عشرين جلا في عشرة اجل [مايتين جل]
 ١١ ولهم ارض جيد عدى عشرة اجل في عشرة اجل [مايه جل]
 ١٢ الزيتون ثلثه اصلا—[ول] غرس الزيتون عشرين اصلا
 ١٣ الفاكه عشرين اصلا
 ١٤ ولهم اندا <ا> حد عشر في ج—[لين اثنين وعشرين جلا]
 ١٥ ولهم عرام وقلاع ومسلا ومصل واوضام
 ١٦ وانه يجمع ثلثه واربعين اصلا ثمننا [يه و] اثنين وعشرين جلا وثمانه ارايع

Notes: Line (1) Note the reversed off-print of the بسملة from Document III verso, line 1. (2) The last part of the line is supplied from verso, line 1. Note the rather surprising mistake in the use of the accusative بجالا instead of the genitive بجال. (3) The last part of the line is supplied from I, 3. (4) The last part of the line is supplied from I, 4. (5) The last part of the line is supplied from I, 5. The formation of the *dāl* in لدا is very curious and unlike any other in these documents. Cf. I, 4 for the long stroke over the *sīn* of المساح, and over the *šīn* of شعا of the following line. See note on I, 5 for the spelling of الابناء. (6) Note the horizontal stroke that precedes the naming of the boundaries. Note the contracted form of عين, the last two letters being merged together. Compare the medial *mīm* of سمس with the *mīm* of الامير in line 4, which though in reality an initial one is turned, by a false ligature, into a medial *mīm*, very much like the one under consideration here. (7) Note the peculiar formation of the *fā'* in طرائف. See main notes for suggested readings of the name of the last village. (8-12) cf. note on I, 8-12 for the multiplication process. (9) For the insertion of ارض here, cf. I, 9, and III, 4. The word, قريتان, written between lines 9 and 10, evidently belongs with line 9; note also the two ink spots between these two lines. (10) It is doubtful if the stroke (one of the two spots mentioned), above the *zāy* of وزن is meant for the dot of that letter; note also the unusually large *nūn* in this case. (12) Note the peculiar ligature in the word عشرين. (14) With the preceding word ending with an *alif* it is easy to see how the scribe overlooked the *alif* of احد. However, Professor SPRENGLING suggests the possibility that the scribe meant to write a contracted form احد عشر, or perhaps even احد عشر. This may in part explain the peculiar ligature between the *dāl* and the '*ain*. (16) The thin papyrus layer is peeled off from the first half of the line, and only few faint letters give hints of the reading of the words involved.



Verso

١ [ذكر حال يجمع من مساحه] قريه تدعى شبان وقرحتا بجبالا من اقليم جبل
الجليل
٢ فاتق بن عبد الله بن هرون
٣
٤ عمر بن هرون
٥ درمشق

Notes: Line (1) The first part of the line is supplied from recto line 2; note the effort at a more careful script. (2-4) For the reading of these lines, compare the main notes on I verso, lines 2-4.

Translation

Recto

1. In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate.
2. Report of a statement of account of the total area of the village called Šibān and Qaraḥtā in the hills [of the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl]
3. (The) green ravine, a section of the loamy (country) of Tell al-Madīn(?). Ordered by 'Abd Allāh Ġa'far, the Imām, al-Mutawakkil 'alā [Allāh, Commander of the Faithful, may God prolong his life. Issued by the order of
4. Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad, financial-governor for the Amīr Ibrāhīm al-Mu'ayyad Billāh Crown Prince of the Muslims, and for the Commander of the Faith[ful may God strengthen them—in the province of Damascus in the year one and forty and two hundred.]
5. At the tract (were) 'Abd Allāh ibn Yūsuf, and 'Abd al-Šamad ibn Zuhair; and the (execution of the) order (was delegated) to the director of constructions. [And the witnesses are]
6. ibn Ša'yā, and Aḥmad ibn 'Abd al-Karīm, and 'Abd Allāh ibn Muḥammad. The first boundary, to the south,

- (the) village 'Ain Sumsu[m, and the second boundary to the east,]
7. and the trail near by; and the third boundary, the edges of the reed (beds), and the fourth boundary, to the West, (the) village '??' and th[e]
 8. The people of the village, five; rain-watered land, twenty-five ḡalls into twelve ḡalls—[three-hundred ḡalls].
 9. And they have choice rain-watered land, eighteen ḡalls into eleven ḡalls—[one hundred and ninety-eight ḡalls].
 10. And they have a rain-watered elevated plain, twenty ḡalls into ten ḡalls—[two-hundred ḡalls].
 11. And they have good rain-watered land, ten ḡalls into ten ḡalls—[one hundred ḡalls].
 12. Olives, three tre[es]; olive shoots, twenty trees.
 13. Fruit, twenty trees.
 14. And they have dew-watered land, eleven into t[wo ḡalls — twenty-two ḡalls].
 15. And they have dung heaps, and knap-sacks, and a butter melting cauldron, and a sieve, and butcher's planks.
 16. And the total is forty-three trees, and eight hundred and twenty-two ḡalls, and eight (of these were) quarters (of ḡalls)?

Verso

1. [Written report concerning the total area] of the village called Šibān and Qaraḥtā in the hills of the district of Ġabal al-Ġalīl.
2. Fā'iḡ ibn 'Abd Allāh ibn Hārūn.
- 3.
4. 'Umar ibn Hārūn
5. Damascus—

Main Notes

Recto

Line 2. See the section on the Geographical background for the place-names involved.

Line 3. The Ġaur in this place is not to be confused with the Ġaur of the Jordan valley¹). The characterization of the district as hilly, and of the soil as loamy, fits very well with what is known of the general physical features of this region. It is difficult however to identify the particular *Tell* or hill mentioned here; for not only is the reading from the papyrus uncertain, but we have very few lists of place-names from this region, east of the Ḥūla lake, as compared with those from the more explored and much better known region west of the Ḥūla. The best we can get from the papyrus is الدس or الدس, each of which, as is readily seen, could be read in several ways. As a suggestion for a likely place-name we offer المدین, al-Madyan, since مَدِين, an old and well-known place-name, is found in the neighboring provinces, one being in the region between 'Akkā and Ṭabariyya²). Other readings, though less likely from a paleographic point of view, may be الدس or الدس, which again offer several possibilities, the more likely of which for the first is perhaps الدس or الدس; both, however, are place-names in other regions³). For the second we suggest الدين or الدين⁴), a place-name found to the north of the Ḥūla region, but too far north for our purpose.

Line 5. The paleography of the first word is peculiar, and the only possible reading of it is the comparatively rare preposition لدا, more usually لدى, and meaning here "at". The expression "at the tract," referring to the scene of action as distinguished from the head-quarters of the director of constructions, is suggestive here of the English idiom "on the ground."

Line 6. 'Ain Sumsum is located by DUSSAUD⁵) about nine kilometers south of Qaraḥtā. The limits of the actual land surveyed, however, must be about half-way between

1) Cf. LE STRANGE, pp. 30-32. KARL RITTER, *Die Erdkunde*, Palestina und Syrien, Teil 15 (Berlin, 1850-51), p. 232.

2) Yāqūt, IV, 451, 291.

3) *Ibid.*, IV, 516; p. 480 has "مَرَان, a place in Syria, close to Damascus."

4) Cf. DUSSAUD, pp. 43, 398, 2 Map I, c-1

5) *Op. cit.*, Map, I, c-2.

the two places, for that is about where one would expect the outlying lands of two villages to meet. And this, generally speaking, must hold true with respect to the other boundary limits in these documents.

Line 7. West of Qaraḥtā, we approach the District and the Lake of Ḥūla; and stretching for miles to the northeast of this lake, is the well-known region of the papyrus reed marshes¹). It is probable that the northern boundary of Qaraḥtā, here referred to as "the region of the reeds", was at that time the north-eastern limit of this "marsh of papyrus." There is also the interesting possibility, suggested by Professor SPRENGLING, that the papyrus of our document was locally manufactured from the reeds in this region²).

It is difficult to decipher definitely the name of the village which forms the western boundary. The letters could be read in a number of ways. Of those beginning with a *mīm* followed by a *šin* مشق, Mušaqqaq is the most probable. According to Yāqūt³), al-Mušaqqaq was the spring in northern Ḥiḡāz, from which Muḥammad's party secured water, while on their expedition to Tabūk. Another possibility is مشق, Mašqūq, a place name found in the Ġabal Druze, south of Ṣalḡad⁴). It is possible that in a region of streams and open pools, such as the Ḥūla district, either of these place-names was found to be appropriate and so put to use. It is possible, however, that the second letter is not a *šin* or *sīn*, but only an extended stroke of the *mīm*, and that the letters following are 'ain or

1) Cf. C. R. CONDER and H. H. KITCHENER, *The Survey of Western Palestine* (London, 1881 ff.) I, 195; the dimensions given for the marsh are 6 miles north-south, and 1½-2 east-west; ROBINSON, *op. cit.*, III, appendix p. 135; RITTER, *op. cit.* Teil 15, p. 235. LE STRANGE, p. 68-69; BAEDERER, *Palestine and Syria*, 1906, pp. 253-54. See also Yāqūt, III, 525, for the use of طرائف as a place name.

2) Cf. RITTER, Teil 15, p. 235, where it is interesting to note that not only the papyrus reed, but also the *kalamus* or pen reed (قلم) was to be found in this region; cf. also GROHMANN, *op. cit.*, Teil I, 24.

3) *Op. cit.*; IV, 542; the مشق of pages 541-42 would be another reading possibility.

4) DUSSAUD, *op. cit.*; Map II, 3 b.

gain, and perhaps even *ṣād* or *ḡād* though these latter are less likely. These would open up such possibilities as مقضيه, مفعلى, متصوره, معصب, all to be found in the neighboring regions¹). Finally there is just a possibility that the first letter is not a *mīm* but simply a *sīn* or *šīn*, which opens up such possibilities as سقيق, شقيب, شقمه, سقفيه, again all to be found in the regions of Damascus and Beirut, but especially the first just north of Qaraḡtā, and the second (قلعه الشقيب) a little further to the northwest²).

Line 12. The object here, as in Document III, 10, and verso 9, is to draw a distinction between full grown trees and young planted shoots.

Line 14. The reading of the second word is given as ادى (sing. ادى), in view of the fact that the region was 'adī land, that is, land watered by rain, snow or dew. Buṭrus al-Bustānī³) further informs us that according to some authorities ادى is the morning dew, as distinguished from that which falls in the early night and which is called السدى.

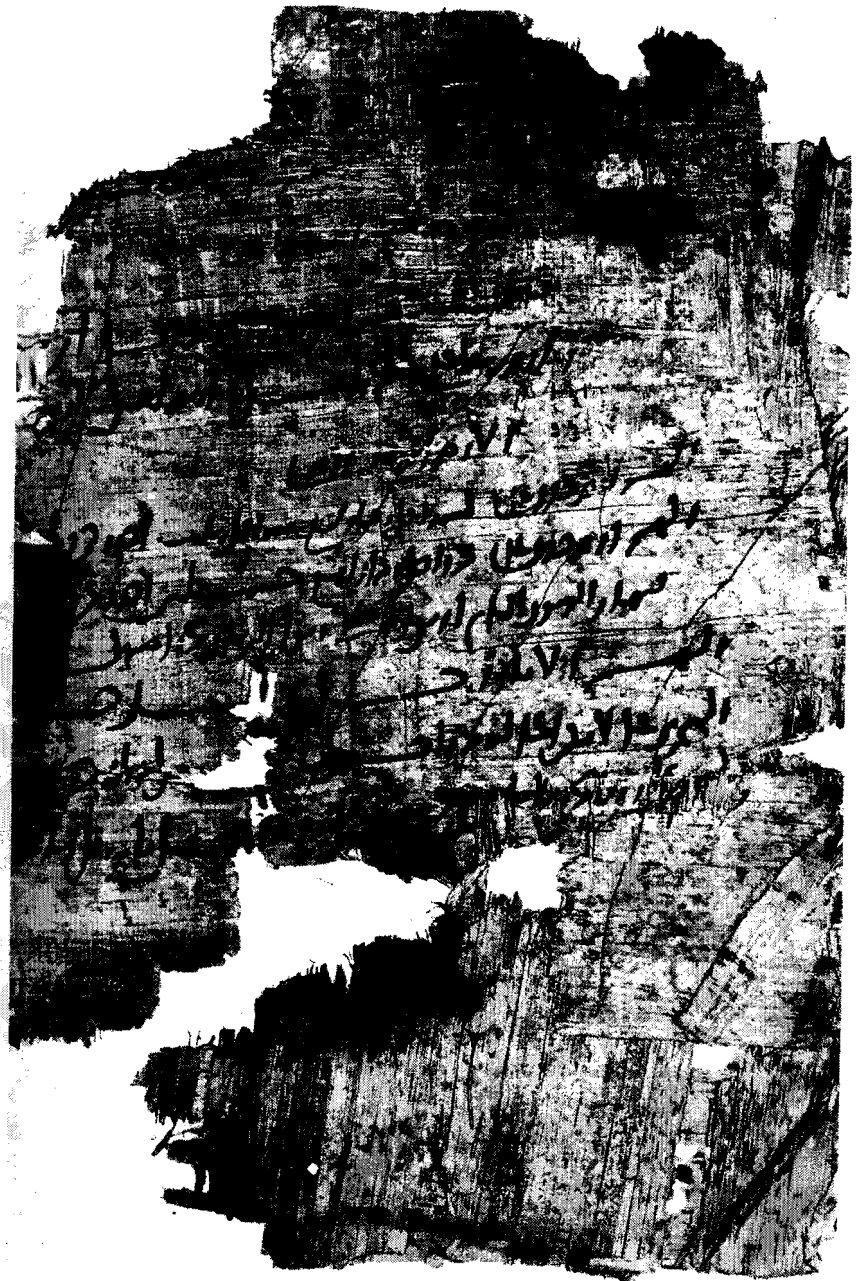
Line 15. This interesting list of village properties other than lands is omitted in the other documents. The second word may be read as عُرام, meaning, in general, the bark that falls off the trees (perhaps collected here in heaps for firewood?) or it may be read عَرَام, and considered as the plural of either عَرَم, a dam, or عَرَمَه, a quantity of corn or grain collected together (for treading and winnowing) or عَرْمَه, a place where sand is collected, or دَمَال, a dung heap called دَمَال, or عَرِيم, a water-pit or cistern.

Line 16. The total of the number of *ḡalls* as given in this line cannot be read other than 822, which is two *ḡalls* short of the totals as figured from lines 8-14. It is probable that the last two words of the line, ثمنه اربع, eight quarters, or in other words two wholes, are the two *ḡalls* that bring up the total to 822, and that these were so listed because they were

1) Dussaud, Index; and the *First List of Names in Syria*.

2) Ibid.; but see especially Dussaud, map I for the first two names.

3) Muḡit, II, 2057-58.



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either separate quarter *galls* or else were so located at odd points of the field as to make difficult their inclusion in any of the tracts previously mentioned. Other possibilities are that either the scribe made a mistake in his addition of the figures, or else in line 14, the second of the two multiplication factors was two and one-sixth ($2\frac{1}{6}$); cf. Document III, 3, 8, and notes. If either of these last two possibilities is to be accepted, then the phrase *ثمنه اربع* can only mean the village dwellings including perhaps the adjoining yards¹), the mention of which would be in keeping with the list of properties given in the preceding line. The dwellings themselves and the land on which they stand would not be taxable, but there seems to be a difference of opinion regarding the exemption of the surrounding or adjoining house yards²).

Verso

Lines 2.-4. For the reading of these lines, compare the main notes on I verso, lines 2-4.

Line 5. It is interesting to note the strong Syriac influence in this locality; for our scribe has certainly written *درمشق*, which is Arabicized from the common Syriac name for *دمشق*³).

III

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Date: The date section of the document is lost, but the document doubtless deals with the same project as the other two. It is difficult to tell, however, if the recto and verso of this papyrus represent one continuous report or if each represents a separate document.

General Description: Poor grade, light brown papyrus, 27,5 × 19 cm. In format and general condition of preservation, it is almost identical with Document II, the recto of

1) Mūhīt, I, 746.

2) AGHIDES, p. 388; Māwardī, p. 145.

3) R. P. SMITH, *Thesaurus Syriacus* (Oxford, 1879), I, col. 953, to which Professor SPRENGLING kindly drew my attention.

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which, was placed on the verso of the present document. As a result of either wet ink at the time of writing, or the dampness of the soil in which the papyri were preserved, this verso now shows the first few lines and traces of others, of the text of the recto of Document II, in an off-print which appears as "mirror" or reversed writing.

Script: The script of the verso of the present document is the same as that of Documents I and II, though there is a slight possibility that it may not be the hand of the same scribe (see note on verso, line 9). That of the recto, on the other hand, though somewhat of the same general type in its letter forms, is decidedly the work of a different scribe. The writing here is slightly heavier and more even, and the letters are more uniform and not given to false ligatures.

Recto	
..... اجل و	١
الارض ^١ الدور العدى	٢
..... ولهم ارض دور عدى عشره اجل في ستة اجل [ستين جلا	٣
[مسا]حه الارض الوسط العدى	٤
[ولهم] ارض وسط عدى ستة اجل وجزا رابع <في> خمسة اجل [ثلاثين وثلاثين جلا	٥
ولهم ارض وسط عدى عشره اجل في اربعة اجل اربعا [ين جلا]	٦
الارض الدور العدى	٧
ولهم ارض دور عدى ثمنيه اجل وجزا رابع في ستة اجل وسدس احد وخمسين جلا	٨
ولهم ارض اجدو ^١ عدى عشره اجل وجزا وابع في جلين احد وعشرين جلا	٩
١٠ فيها <م> ^١ الزيتون التام اربعين اصلا وتول الزيتون عشره اصول	
١١ ولهم الاقاوز جل في [جل] [جل]	
١٢ ولهم من عد لا يكن اعدله عشره اجل في عشره [اجل] مايه جل	
١٣ ولهم عشره ارزنا عشرين جلا في	
١٤ [ولهم] ثلثه عشر جلا في عشره اجل مايه جل وثائين	

Notes: Lines (1-4). Lines 1 and 2, and the greater part of lines 3 and 4, are extremely faint due partly to the peeling of the papyrus in some places, and partly to a thin over-layer of papyrus adhering to the (wet) script. Though these lines do not show any too well in the reproduction, the reading as here given from the papyrus itself, is fairly certain. (6) Note the short separate stroke that stands for the *tā'* (ع) in عشره, it occurs repeatedly in the following lines; cf. also I, 3, 10. (11) Space does not allow of any number-word after the في. Note the peculiar form of the initial *jīm* in the last word; it occurs also in the last جل of the following two lines. (13) It seems as if the scribe, realizing some mistake in here, left this line incomplete and started afresh in the next line. (14) Only traces of the *wāw* and the *mīm* of ولهم are to be seen. The papyrus layer in this first part of the line is not only broken but seems to have consisted originally of poorly patched pieces. Note the writing of ثلاثين for ثلثين or ثلثين.

Verso

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم	١
دن	٢
..... مائتين وعشرين لجزيه رفعه	٣
..... مائتين دن	٤
..... جزى	٥
..... ي ^١ مائتين دن	٦
..... مائتين وثمانه وعشرين دنًا	٧
٨ [عد]دد الشجر خمسة وعشرين اصلا	
٩ الزيتون ثلثه اصول غرس الزيتون عشرين اصلن	
١٠ عشرين اصلا	

Notes: Line (1) It is possible that we have here a highly ligatured Bismillāh as in Document II; cf. KARABAČEK, *PERF*, p. 259, for equally peculiar variations in the writing of this formula. (2) Only the lower part of the *dāl* still remains, and the reading دن is encouraged by the repeated occurrence of that word in the following lines. (5) Note the formation of the letter *zāy* in جزى; it looks here much like the final *tā'* in رفعه of line 3. (8) The *ain* of عدد is almost all lost, the two *dāls* however are clear. (9) Cf. this line with II, 12 with which it is identical in content and almost so in the script, the latter differing mainly in the formation of the letters *rā'* (or *zāy*) and final *nūn*. Note also the spelling اصلا instead of اصلن. (10) Note again the peculiar writing of اصلا; the *lām-alif* seems to have been added as an after thought.

Translation

Recto

1. *ġalls* and
2. rain-watered wide valley lands.
3. And they have rain-watered wide valley lands, ten *ġalls* into six *ġalls*—[sixty *ġalls*].
4. [Area of] the choice rain-watered lands.
5. And they have choice rain-watered lands, six-and one-quarter *ġalls* <into> five *ġalls*—tw[o and thirty *ġalls*].
6. And they have choice rain-watered lands, ten *ġalls* into four *ġalls*—for[ty *ġalls*].
7. Rain-watered wide valley lands.
8. And they have rain-watered wide valley lands, eight and one-quarter *ġalls* into six and one-sixth *ġalls*—fifty-one *ġalls*.
9. And they have rain-watered pasture lands ten and one-quarter *ġalls* into two *ġalls*—twenty-one *ġalls*.
10. in it?? And forty full-grown olive trees, and twenty young olive trees (or shoots).
11. And they have (of) high round sand-hills (one) *ġall* into (one) *ġall*—(one) [*ġa*]ll.
12. And they have a number of *ġalls* not to be counted for taxes, ten *ġalls* into ten [*ġa*]lls—one hundred *ġalls*.
13. And they have ten elevated terraces (?), twenty *ġalls* into - - - -
14. [And they have] thirteen *ġalls* into ten *ġalls*—one hundred and thirty *ġalls*.

Verso

1. In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,
2. *dan*
3. two-hundred and twenty of the produce of the ground, reported (for record).
4. two-hundred *dans*.
5. produce of the ground (land products).
6. two-hundred *dans*.

7. two-hundred and twenty-eight *dans*.
8. Number of trees, twenty-five stems (trees).
9. Olives, three trees, (young) olive shoots, twenty trees.
10. Fruit, twenty trees.

Main Notes

Recto

Line 2. دُر here is the plural of الدَّارَة, defined as “wide land between hills”¹⁾.

Line 5. We meet here, for the first time, with the use of fractions in these measurements. Since the multiplication, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 5 = 31\frac{1}{4}$, we would expect the product, as recorded in the papyrus to read as احدى وثلاثين وجزا رابع; what we do actually find in the papyrus, however, cannot be read other than the first part of the word اثنین, leading us to read the total as 32 *ġalls*. In line 8, where the actual multiplication results in $50\frac{7}{8}$, it is counted as 51 *ġalls*; and in line 9, where it results in $20\frac{1}{2}$ it is again counted as 21 *ġalls*. The practice therefore seems to have been to count *any* fractional part of the unit of measure as a whole, a practice that the cultivator must have deplored.

Line 9. The third word in the line can be read either حدو or حدف; the preference here is given to the first with the reading جدو, since the term “pasture land” is descriptive of the nature of the land. Possibilities growing out of the second reading are, حدق, enclosed garden land, جذف, حذف, حذق, حذف, all of which seem to imply something cut off and separate.

Line 10. The best reading for the first word is obviously فيها, but this, one would expect, would be followed by من, whereas what the papyrus shows can be best read as a wāw or rā'. Of course it may be that this letter, whatever it is, belongs with the first word, which then would have to be

1) Mūhīt, I, 695-96.

something other than *فيها*, though what, I am as yet unable to see or guess.

It is clear, however, that a distinction is drawn between full-grown olive trees and newly planted shoots, for *تول* must be here taken for the plural of *التلة*, though the more common plural seems to be *التلال*¹⁾. Generally associated with the palm-shoots, *التلة*, must have been, to judge from its use here, also associated with shoots of the olive tree.

Line 13. It seems as if the scribe realizing some mistake in here left this line incomplete and started afresh in the next line. There is also the possibility that the line is complete in itself (though it is difficult to explain why it is so crowded) consisting of just twenty *galls* of terrace lands. But in this case the last word, *ق*, is unnecessary. The total area of all the land recorded here is 455 *galls*.

Verso

Line 1. It is impossible to tell if the incomplete recto and verso of this papyrus represent one continuous document or two separate ones. The fact that the verso deals with proportional taxation, and the recto with the fixed tax, together with the difference in the scripts would seem to point to two separate documents. On the other hand, it is possible that the unit under survey consisted of lands some of which were subject to the proportional tax, and some to the fixed tax, thus calling for the services of both a produce distributor or measurer (*qassām*) and a land surveyor²⁾ (*massāh*). This in itself would account for the difference in the scripts, the recto being written by the scribe of the surveyor and the verso by that of the measurer. If the scribe of verso³⁾, which deals

1) Mühit, I, 176; cf. also p. 204 where as a parallel case, *تول*, is used both as a collective noun and as a plural of *التلة*.

2) Māwardī, op. cit., p. 145-146; AGHIDES, op. cit., pp. 395-96.

3) Cf. Introductory note on the script of this document, and footnote to III verso 9.

with the proportional tax is the same as the scribe of Documents I and II, both of which, as we have seen, deal with the fixed tax, then this would suggest that scribes were transferred, as needed, or for some other reason, from one project or type of work to another.

Line 2. The *دَن* is a large capacity measure, used for both grains and liquids.

Line 3. There is a possibility that the produce reported here is to be credited towards the *ġizya* or poll-tax. It seems more probable though that *جزية*, plural *جزى*, is to be interpreted here not in the usual sense of capitation, or poll-tax, but in its other meaning of "produce of the ground". For it is clear, what we have here is not an approved record of taxes paid or payable but only a preliminary report, *raf'* (*رفع*), that has yet to be checked, before it could be used as a basis for fixing the tax quota or ratio¹⁾.

Line 9. The use of the general term, *الشجر*, trees, instead of olive-trees, may mean we are dealing here, as in II, 13, with fruit trees.

Nachschrift

Die vorliegende Arbeit, für welche mit der Verfasserin, einer früheren Schülerin und Assistentin, jetzt Kollegin, der Unterzeichnete volle Verantwortlichkeit teilt, ist eigentlich eine *editio princeps* einer neuen Papyrusspezies. Daran ändern auch die neuen Colt Papyri nichts.

Nachdem nun hier in mustergültiger Weise eine erstmalige Lösung dieser reichlich schwierigen Schriftstücke geboten wird, steht zu hoffen, daß mehr derartiges ans Tageslicht kommen wird. Die hier veröffentlichten Exemplare scheinen nach der Frische ihrer Oberfläche und dem Abdruck der Tinte und Abzug eines Papyrusfilmes von einem Dokumenten auf das andere zu urteilen mitten aus einem größeren Aktenstoß hervorgegangen zu sein. In Damaskus gekauft und von der damaszenischen Provinz handelnd sind sie doch sicher aus Syrien hervorgegangen, sehr wahrscheinlich auf syrischen Papyrus geschrieben und ebenso wahrscheinlich auch in Syrien gefunden worden. Wo diese her sind, müssen mehr gewesen sein, hoffentlich auch noch sein. Wohin andere aus der Sammlung gekommen sein mögen, wo doch diese über Konstantinopel, Detroit und Ann Arbor, Michigan, nach Chicago verschlagen sind, ist freilich schwer zu sagen. Immerhin wäre Umschau in Beirut, Damaskus und Umgegend, und nach etwaigen Funden recht baldige öffentliche Mitteilung darüber, womöglich in der ZDMG, geraten.

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1) Cf. Māwardī, pp. 196, 205-06; AGHIDES, pp. 490 and note 497-98.