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## **Episcopal networks and authority in late antique Egypt : bishops of the Theban region at work**

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### **Citation**

Dekker, R. E. L. (2017, November 7). *Episcopal networks and authority in late antique Egypt : bishops of the Theban region at work*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/58727>

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Date: 2017-11-07

## Chapter 2: The Theban region

### INTRODUCTION

In her recent book *The Alexandrian Church: People and Institutions* Ewa Wipszycka wrote that the network of bishoprics “coincided as a rule with administrative divisions” and that there were seventy-five dioceses in Egypt in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. Episcopal sees were usually established in district capitals, but some of them were created in localities that did not have civic status, for instance towns in the feebly urbanized frontier areas of the western and eastern Delta, and Philae in the southern frontier region of Egypt.<sup>263</sup>

The rise of the Theodosian hierarchy alongside the official Chalcedonian church led to the creation of two distinct networks of bishoprics. Peter IV allegedly ordained over eighty bishops in total, for practically all the dioceses in Egypt, whereas most sees were surely not vacant.<sup>264</sup> Some bishops were prevented by state authorities from going to their dioceses and lived in monastic centers in the area of Alexandria or the western Delta, and it is unclear how many of their colleagues got the chance to actually take up their office.<sup>265</sup> Local officials and the Chalcedonian bishops still in place may have tried to prevent them from getting started.

Once a Theodosian bishop finally established his residence in the diocese that he was appointed to, he had to create a new ecclesiastical apparatus, to get a following, to find ways to interact with local civil officials, and to avoid conflicts with his Chalcedonian counterpart. Wipszycka proposed the hypothesis that the dioceses were divided between Chalcedonian bishops, whose jurisdiction extended to the cities and probably part of the countryside, and Theodosian prelates, who lived in monasteries and supervised villages or parts of villages only.<sup>266</sup> It is true that both Abraham and Pesynthius resided in monasteries and that most localities mentioned in their documents were rural, but Pesynthius’ supervision was not restricted to villages and monasteries only, and his authority extended beyond the diocese of Koptos (§4.5.3). Unfortunately, the networks of the two hierarchies cannot be compared, since the available documentary and non-documentary sources do not explicitly record contemporary Chalcedonian bishops in the Theban region.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>263</sup> Wipszycka 2015, 108. For Philae, see Dijkstra 2008, 55-56, 63. The Greek term for “diocese” is “*paroikia*”; cf. Lampe 1961, 1042a (D.1); Feissel 1989, 812. It is not attested in Coptic documentary texts.

<sup>264</sup> Introduction; Wipszycka 2007, 344 and 2015, 123, 141.

<sup>265</sup> Wipszycka 2007, 344 and 2015, 122-23.

<sup>266</sup> Wipszycka 2009a, 33 n. 20; cf. idem 2007, 344-45 and 2015, 142.

<sup>267</sup> The Greek *Life of John the Almsgiver* by Leontius of Neapolis mentions Bishop Troilus, who was at Alexandria (610s); ed. Gelzer 1893, 57 (ch. 27); transl. Dawes and Baynes 1948, 237. Another Greek biography of John the Almsgiver lists Gregory of Rhinocourou (ca. 615); comm./ ed. Delehaye 1927, 15, 23 (ch. 9).

The network of Theodosian bishoprics did not coincide with the administrative divisions, for the districts of Hermonthis and Koptos comprised two dioceses each, namely the dioceses of Hermonthis and Thebes/Ape, and Koptos and Qus respectively (Map 1). The sees of Hermonthis and Koptos already existed in 325 and the see of Thebes was created before 339,<sup>268</sup> whereas a bishop of Qus (Diocletianopolis) is first attested in 553: in that year, (the Chalcedonian) Bishop Elias attended the second ecumenical council of Constantinople.<sup>269</sup>

This chapter examines the organization of state, army and church in the Theban region in the period when Abraham and Pesynthius were in office. The first section focusses on the division of the Theban region into districts, the topography of each district and the presence of civil and military officials. The second one aims to determine the size of the Theodosian dioceses of Hermonthis, Thebes/Ape, Koptos and Qus by identifying the localities that fell under the jurisdiction of Abraham, Anthony, Pesynthius and Pisrael respectively. The final section discusses the likely division between Theodosians and Chalcedonians in the region.

## §2.1 THE DISTRICTS

The Theban region was part of the province of the Thebaid, which extended from Antinoopolis (Ansina) in Middle Egypt to Syene (Aswan) in the southern frontier region, and was governed by the duke of the Thebaid (*dux et augustalis Thebaidis*), who resided in Antinoopolis. Since Justinian's administrative reform of 539, he was the highest civil and military official and judge in the province and headed a single office for both administrative domains.<sup>270</sup> The duke commanded the *limitanei*, the soldiers stationed permanently in garrisons (*castra*).<sup>271</sup> His responsibilities included the maintenance of public order in the cities, assistance to tax collectors in case of reluctant tax payers, and above all the annual collection and transport of grain (the *annona civica* or *embole*) to Alexandria in September, from where it was shipped to Byzantium.<sup>272</sup> Only two dukes in office during the episcopates of Abraham and Pesynthius are known by name, namely Gabriel (June 13, 581 or 596)<sup>273</sup> and

<sup>268</sup> Munier 1943, 2, 9-10; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 160; vol. 5, 2141, vol. 6, 2905.

<sup>269</sup> Chrysos 1966, 112; cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 5, 2173; Van der Vliet 2012, 28. On the name Diocletianopolis, see also Fournet 2002, 198 and 2002, 54. For the council, see Grillmeier and Hainthaler 1995, 438-62.

<sup>270</sup> *Edict* 13.23: ed. Schoell and Kroll 1895, 792; trans. Blume 1920-1952d, 20. For the unpublished English translation and annotation of the *Justinian Code* by F. H. Blume, see §1.3.3.G, n. 126. On the date of the edict, see Rémondon 1955. On the office of duke and augustal of the Thebaid, see Rouillard 1928, 33-34, 36-47; Steinwenter 1967, 7; Förster 2002, 210; Zuckerman 2004, 147-50; Palme 2007, 246, 250; Dijkstra 2008, 32.

<sup>271</sup> Palme 2007, 247; cf. Steinwenter 1967, 6.

<sup>272</sup> *Edict* XIII.24-26: ed. Schoell and Kroll 1895, 792; transl. Blume and Kearly (date unknown), 20-23; cf. Rouillard 1928, 39, 124, 126-27; Rémondon 1955, 120-21.

<sup>273</sup> Lefebvre 1907, no. 562, re-edited by Gasco 1994, 331-32 (Upper Egypt, Pauni 19, fourteenth indiction). For the provenance and date, see Gasco 1994, 325-29; cf. Maspero 1910, 109.

Flavius Ammonius (June 6, 594).<sup>274</sup> Dukes do not appear in the episcopal documents, but a “*meizoteros* of the duke” does appear in a letter about a delivery of white wine and salted fish.<sup>275</sup> *Meizoteroi* were involved in the collection of the *embole*,<sup>276</sup> and issued receipts of payment of the land tax in money,<sup>277</sup> while being assisted by tax collectors.<sup>278</sup> Some of them were addressed as “Lords”.<sup>279</sup> The “*meizoteros* of the duke” perhaps was a high-ranked military commander, whose troops were mobilized to protect the shipment of taxes.<sup>280</sup>

On a lower level, the Theban region belonged the eparchy of the Upper Thebaid, which comprised the southern part of the Thebaid, and had its capital at Ptolemais (Psoi, at present Ibsay), ca. 40 km south of Panopolis (present Akhmim).<sup>281</sup> It was governed by a *praeses*, a civil official subordinate to the duke, who is called a “magistrate” or “ruler” in Greek papyri.<sup>282</sup> Ptolemais does not appear in Datasets 1-4, and the “magistrates” (*archontes*) in episcopal documents were urban officials rather than a *praeses* (§2.1.1-2).<sup>283</sup>

The Theban region comprised four districts or “*nomes*”. Arranged from south to north along the Qena bend, they were the districts of Hermonthis, Koptos, Qena and Huw. Roads in the Western Desert, such as the Luxor-Farshut Road and the Alamat Tal Road, which started north of modern Qurna in Western Thebes, connected the districts of Hermonthis and Huw.<sup>284</sup>

### §2.1.1 District of Hermonthis

The Hermonthite district comprised Tbebe in the south and at least Timamen in the north. Crum identified Tbebe with modern al-Dababiya, on the east bank of the Nile ca. 30 km north of Esna, and Stefan Timm located Timamen (Damamin) on the east bank at al-Mufarragiya, 9

<sup>274</sup> *I.Philae* 2 224: ed. Bernand 1969 (= Lefebvre 1907, no. 596; Philae, Epep 12, twelfth indiction).

<sup>275</sup> *P.Pisentius* 33. *P.Pisentius* 58 refers to deliveries to be sent to “the place of the *meizoteros*”.

<sup>276</sup> *P.Oxy.* 16 2018, ll. 1-2 (Oxyrhynchus); *P.Oxy.* 16 2021, ll. 1, 4 (Oxyrhynchus); cf. Hickey 2012, 110, n. 86. *O.Medin.Habu Copt.* 150 does not mention the *embole*, but upon Peter’s request for wheat Kyra replies that she will ask him to send the camel, in order that she can load it with wheat for him, when the *meizoteros* leaves.

<sup>277</sup> *P.Lond.Copt.* I 1051 (Hermopolite district). For the land tax (*chrysikon*), see Förster 2002, 887.

<sup>278</sup> *P.Lond.Copt.* I 1160 (provenance unknown), where the tax collectors are called *boethos*; cf. Förster 2002, 139.

<sup>279</sup> *P.Lond.Copt.* I 1160: Lord Sarapion; *P.Rainer Cent.* 159 (Arsinoite nome): Lord Theodore; *P.MoscowCopt.* 3 (Hermopolite nome): Lord George.

<sup>280</sup> Hickey 2012, 110: “The *meizoteros* might be a commander whose soldiers (*buccellarii*) are protecting the shipment; otherwise, he is likely to be a village headman”, 118. A *meizoteros* and soldiers appear together in *P.Laur.* V 198 (Hermopolite nome); cf. Derda and Wipszycka 1994, 42, n. 57, where the title “*meizoteros*” is translated with “foreman”. Rouillard (1928, 69) describes the *meizoteros* as a kind of steward employed by a private person, or a functionary subordinate to another official. According to Crum (*P.Ryl.Copt.* 178, n. 3), Steinwenter (1967, 41) and Förster (2002, 509), *lashane* (ΛΑΦΑΝΕ) is the Coptic equivalent of *meizoteros*, but *P.KRU* 10 indicates that the *meizoteros* was the equivalent of the *dioiketes*; cf. Cromwell 2013, 220.

<sup>281</sup> George of Cyprus, *Descriptio orbis Romani*; ed. Gelzer 1890, 39; cf. Timm 1984-1922, vol. 4, 1140-47.

<sup>282</sup> Rouillard 1928, 34, 48 (“*archon*”, “*hegemon*”), and 47-52 on the office of *praeses* in general.

<sup>283</sup> Ἀρχων: Förster 2002, 112-13; cf. Rouillard 1928, 65, n. 4.

<sup>284</sup> For the Luxor-Farshut desert road, see Darnell and Darnell 2002, 105, fig. 8.1.

km south of Qus, on account of a nearby locality called Hod Damamil.<sup>285</sup> For various reasons, however, the identification with al-Mufarragiya is unsatisfactory. Firstly, Timamen belonged to the district of Hermonthis,<sup>286</sup> and a natural boundary between the districts of Hermonthis and Koptos on the east bank could be at modern Khozam, where the strip of arable land is the narrowest (Map 1). Timamen is expected south of that boundary, but al-Mufarragiya lies north of it. Secondly, Frederik Ludvig Norden locates Damamin opposite al-Qurna, south of a small group of islands, where crocodiles attacked his boat, and a little north of Medinet Habu and Karnak.<sup>287</sup> Thirdly, the Sahidic *Encomium* on Bishop Pesynthius mentions a ferry-place at Timamen, relatively close to the Church of Tsenti, where the bishop officiated and which is located in the area between modern Naqada and Qamula.<sup>288</sup> This ferry-place could have been south of Qamula and west of a group of islands in the bend of the Nile, perhaps at the modern village of al-Ashi on the east bank. Finally, Bishop Abraham went to Timamen with a group of clergyman, but the villagers threw the clergymen in the canal, destroyed a book on canon law and shouted at the bishop (§2.3.1, 6.4.B). Abraham did not just encounter disrespect from some trouble makers, but the open hostility of an entire village that reacted as if he had come to establish his authority at Timamen, although it probably fell under the jurisdiction of a bishop of Thebes. If Abraham was engaged in a missionary activity, Timamen must have been relatively close to Western Thebes, for if the location were at al-Mufarragiya, it would have been much easier for Bishop Pesynthius or a bishop of Qus or Ape to go there. These observations suggest a more southern location. Al-Qurna, opposite Karnak, lies too far south, but a location between Khozam and Karnak, such as al-Ashi, seems plausible.

The district capital Hermonthis (Armant), Jeme (Medinet Habu), Western Thebes and Terkot (al-Razeqat) were located on the west bank of the Nile, whereas Petemout (Medamud), Thebes (Diospolis Megale, Ape, Ne, Luxor/Karnak), Timamen, and Toout (Tud) lay on the east bank. Patoubasten, Piohe, Pshamer and Ramau still need to be localized.<sup>289</sup> It is likely that the Tabennese mentioned in Theban documents does not refer to the location of the famous Pachomian monastery in the district of Huw, but to a locality in the Hermonthite

<sup>285</sup> Winlock and Crum 1926, 105; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 2, 505-07 (Timamen), vol. 6, 2555-56 (Tbebe). Ait-Kaci, Boud'hors and Heurtel (2010, 5-6, fig. 1) locate Timamen south of Pshenhor, that is at al-Mufarragiya.

<sup>286</sup> *Brit.Mus.Copt.* I, pl. 73 (EA 26209, l. 4).

<sup>287</sup> Norden 1755, 162, pl. 98.

<sup>288</sup> Sahidic *Encomium* on Bishop Pesynthius, S, Budge 1913, fol. 76a. For the Church of Tsenti, see §3.1.2.

<sup>289</sup> Winlock and Crum 1926, 106 (Ne/Thebes); Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 133-35 (Ape), 153-82 (Hermonthis), vol. 3, 1012-34 (Jeme), vol. 4, 1503-05 (Petemout), 1762-63 (Ne); 1856-58 (Patoubasten), 1941-42 (Piohe), 2054-56 (Pshamer); vol. 5, 2195-96 (Ramau), vol. 6, 2590-91 (Terkot), 2862-65 (Tud), vol. 6, 2904-19 (Luxor); Wilfong 2002, 2, fig. 1 (map of Western Thebes); Moawad 2010, 93-94 (Petemout). The Arabic version of the *Encomium* (A, O'Leary 1930, fol. 103b) states that Bishop Pesynthius' father came from Pshamer.

district, since it is often associated with toponyms in this district. Perhaps, it can be identified with modern Tafnis al-Matanah on the west bank between Toout and Esna.<sup>290</sup>

The location of Ape has been much debated. It lay in the Hermonthite district and was called a “city” with a *castrum*, a description that fits with the city of Thebes (Luxor), where a Roman *castrum* existed around the ancient temple of Amun.<sup>291</sup> The existence of Bishop Anthony of Ape implies that it was also an episcopal see and must correspond to the see of Thebes (§2.2.2). Nevertheless, Crum distinguished Ape from Pape (modern Luxor), which appears as an episcopal see in medieval lists, and proposed an identification with the town of Jeme (Medinet Habu) on the west bank, although it was not a city.<sup>292</sup> Timm is also inclined to localize Ape on the west bank, but does not exclude the possibility that it was a settlement on the east bank preceding modern Luxor.<sup>293</sup> Finally, L. Aït-Kaci, Anne Boud’hors and Chantal Heurtel proposed the hypothesis that it extended on both river banks: the town, a *castrum* and the administrative center were situated on the east bank in the area of Karnak and Luxor, whereas the Monastery of St Papnouthius “in the mountain of Ape” possibly stood on the west bank.<sup>294</sup> The implicit argument for locating the monastery on the west bank is that most monasteries in the Hermonthite and Koptite districts lay on the west bank. In my view, however, the diocese of Ape comprised the east bank only, whereas the diocese of Hermonthis was limited to the west bank, and the Monastery of St Papnouthius could well have been located on the east bank, like the Monastery of St Macarius (cf. §3.2.7).

Like Ape, Ne is usually equated with Thebes and more specifically with Luxor,<sup>295</sup> but Katelijn Vandorpe and Richard Burchfield proposed to identify it with the temple complex at Karnak.<sup>296</sup> Vandorpe observed that Karnak used to be the main religious center on the east bank, that it was called *N(i)w.t-Imn* or the “City of Amun” in the New Kingdom and Diospolis Megale or the “City of Zeus” in the Greco-Roman period, and that the name Ne was derived from the abridged form *N(i)w.t*.<sup>297</sup> Since the proposed identification of Ne with Karnak is purely based on etymology, and not confirmed by epigraphical evidence, I prefer to take Thebes, which comprises both Luxor and Karnak, as its general location.

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<sup>290</sup> *P.Mon.Epiph.* 163, n. 8; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 6, 2443-44; Burchfield, *Networks of the Theban Desert*, 173 n. 150, 283-85. Tabennese is associated with Jeme and Toout (*P.Mon.Epiph.* 163), and with Thone and Timamen (*O.Mon.Epiph.* 519, 526).

<sup>291</sup> Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 134-35; Wilfong 2002, 8. On the *castrum* of Luxor, see Grossmann 1991a, 465-67.

<sup>292</sup> Winlock and Crum 1926, 105-06. Previously (in *O.Crum*, p. xvi), Crum identified Ape with Luxor.

<sup>293</sup> Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 133-36, and vol. 6, 2907, 2910.

<sup>294</sup> Aït, Boud’hors and Heurtel 2010, 6-8; *O.Frangé*, p. 24.

<sup>295</sup> *O.Mon.Epiph.* 151, n. 3; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 4, 1762-63; Wilfong 2002, 8 n. 28.

<sup>296</sup> Vandorpe 1995, 211; Burchfield, *Networks of the Theban Desert*, 168, 262-63. In modern Arabic dialect “Karnak” means “fortified town”, which recalls the term *castrum*; cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1225.

<sup>297</sup> Vandorpe 1995, 211-18. The Biblical name for Thebes is No-Amon (Nahum 3:8) or No (Ezechiel 30:14, 16).

The administration of the district of Hermonthis was the responsibility of the pagarch appointed to that city by the emperor, but this office is first attested in Coptic deeds from the eighth century only.<sup>298</sup> Instead, Bishop Abraham referred to a magistrate (*archon*), to whom Menas would have to pay a fine, if he did not comply with the outcome of adjudication.<sup>299</sup> The same functionary is perhaps called “*comes*” in a letter to Bishop Pesynthius (§7.5.2). Other officials at Hermonthis attested in the episcopal documents are a councilor (*politeumenos*), a public defender (*ekdikos*) and a notary, who acted as witnesses in Abraham’s testament,<sup>300</sup> and a lawyer (*nomikos*), whom Bishop Pesynthius had to summon (§7.5.2). If the Greek archive of Theopemptos and Zacharias originates from Hermonthis, their documents record officials at Hermonthis during the Persian period. Theopemptos and Zacharias were tax collectors (*apaitetai*) from May 624 to at least August 626, and received orders to deliver barley from the financial administrators (*dioiketes*) Augustus or Theon. The beneficiaries were the donkey driver of the public bath house<sup>301</sup> and Persian officials (*sellarion*) and cavalry (*kaballarion*).<sup>302</sup>

In ca. 620 *lashanes* were active at Jeme, Toout and Ne/Thebes.<sup>303</sup> That Strategius identified himself as “the *lashane* of Ne” is remarkable: *lashanes* usually were town or village headmen, whereas Thebes had urban status, and it is even more surprising that a Byzantine official adopted the ancient name of this city. He did so during the Persian period, when a Persian commander established his headquarters at Ne.<sup>304</sup> If Strategius was cooperative with Persian authorities, he could be the Lord Strategius who sent jars (filled with wine, oil or water), like Lord Liberius, to a Persian called Astragatour, judging from a Greek account by the latter’s secretary Cosmas.<sup>305</sup> This account and another one on the recto of the same

<sup>298</sup> Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 172-73. For the office of *pagarch*, see Rouillard 1928, 52-62; Steinwenter 1967, 8-10; Wilfong 2002, 7-8.

<sup>299</sup> *O.Crum* 43, l. 7: ΠΑΡΧΩΝ. See also *O.Crum* 282.

<sup>300</sup> *P.Lond.* I 77, ll. 84-89. Peter’s title is lost, but since he drew up Bishop Abraham’s testament, he must have been a notary. For the public defender, see §1.3.3.G. On the various offices in the urban administration, see Rouillard 1928, 62-67. The councillor of *P.Lond.* I 77 is accidentally omitted in Worp 1999, 127-29.

<sup>301</sup> Hickey 2014, with an edition of *O.Ashm. D.O.* 810. Foss (2002, 172) preferred the province of Arcadia as the place of provenance, but Hickey (2014, 45) argues that various ostraca from the archive were purchased at Armant (Hermonthis), and that the chronological formula *O.Ashm. D.O.* 810 points to an origin in the Thebaid. Nikolaos Gonis is reediting the pieces from the archive at Oxford.

<sup>302</sup> *O.Bodl.* 2 2125-27 (April 2-9, 626), 3231 (April 15, 626). For the dates, see Hickey 2014, 49. In Pahlavi any high-ranking Persian officer was called a *salar* (ΣΕΛΛΑΡΙΟΣ, ΣΕΛΛΑΡΙΗΣ); cf. Foss 2002, 169; Sängner 2011, 659-60 and 665, on the various Persian officials at different administrative levels.

<sup>303</sup> *P.Mon.Epiph.* 163: Shenoute of Jeme, Victor of Toout (Dataset 1); *O.Mon.Epiph.* 151: Strategius of Ne (Datasets 1, 4).

<sup>304</sup> *O.Mon.Epiph.* 324, n. 2. “The Persian at Ne” is likely to have been among the *sellarioi* who received barley from Theopemptos and Zacharias. According to Maspero (1912, 145), was no longer a city.

<sup>305</sup> *P.CtYBR* inv. 72, verso, ll. 1-2, 5: ed. Kruit and Worp 2002, 47, 52-53. A similar, possibly Persian name is “[...]astrepheal” in *P.Mon.Epiph.* 517. This text also lists Lord Aspar, who wrote to Bishop Abraham, signing as



papyrus supposedly came from Edfu, since the papyrus was purchased there, and since Lord Liberius is tentatively identified with the Liberius who was pagarch of Edfu in 649.<sup>306</sup> If Strategius of Ne/Thebes is indeed mentioned in both accounts, the one on the recto could represent a list of contributions by the leading officials of cities in the Upper Thebaid, and Astragatour was a Persian official at a provincial level.<sup>307</sup> Strategius reappears in two Coptic documents that report foreign marauders, but his role in the events remains unclear.<sup>308</sup>

As for the organization of the Byzantine army, an important but early source is the *Notitia Dignitatum*, a register of civil and military offices of the Byzantine empire that was composed before Justinian's military reform. It records Vandal cavalry at "Nee"/Thebes (*ala VIII Vandilorum*) and legions at Thebes (*legio III Diocletiana*) and Hermonthis (*legio II Valentiniana*).<sup>309</sup> In the 620s, Thebes/Ape was still a military base, considering the mention of a lieutenant (*vicarius*) at Ape, the deputy of the commander (*primicerius*) at the *castrum* of Ape, who was in turn subordinate to the duke of the Thebaid.<sup>310</sup> Earlier and later documents reveal the presence of a second lieutenant, who was appointed to Hermonthis, but may have dwelled at the *castrum* of Toout (Qasr Tud), opposite Hermonthis.<sup>311</sup> Coptic documents reveal that lieutenants made arrests, sent wagons for the transport of goods, or were requested to act as arbiters.<sup>312</sup> A third military official was the *actuarius*, who was responsible for the payment of the soldiers, but also collected payments. Bishop Abraham warned the priest Papas that he should not go to the *actuarius* or any other financial official to wreck a case.<sup>313</sup>

There was no garrison at Jeme, but it was nevertheless called "the *castrum* of Jeme" or "*castrum* Memnonion", apparently on account of the massive walls of the mortuary temple of

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Lord Asper, son of Lord Toabethe (*O.Brit.Mus.Copt.* II 34). On the unclear origin of his name (Gothic or Alan?), see *P.Mon.Epiph.* 517, n. 2; Kortenbeutel 1939, 183 and n. 5.

<sup>306</sup> *P.CtYBR* inv. 72, recto, ll. 7, 10; ed. Kruit and Worp 2002, 47-51, the commentary to l. 10. Pagarch Liberius also occurs in *SBKopt.* I 242 (dated 649) and perhaps in *P.Apollo* 61; cf. Gasco and Worp 1982, 84.

<sup>307</sup> Assuming that the officials are listed from north to south, there may have been a Lord [...]erios at Hermonthis or Esna and a Lord Aristius at Aswan (*P.CtYBR* inv. 72, recto, ll. 8-9, 11).

<sup>308</sup> *P.Pisentius* 1, on the arrest of possibly Syrian brigands ("the Atsoor") by the *lashanes* of Pallas; *P.CrumST* 178, on a "barbarian" and brigands who illused a man in the mountain of Ape for money; cf. §8.4.D.1.

<sup>309</sup> *Notitia Dignitatum*, § 28, l. 25 and 31, ll. 38-39; ed. Seeck 1876, 59, 64; cf. Worp 1994a, 463 (where the original composition is dated to the late fourth century), 469 (map of military units).

<sup>310</sup> *P.Mon.Epiph.* 460 (Dataset 4). The *primicerius* in *O.Brit.Mus.Copt.* II 16 was identified by Delattre 2002, 332. On the office of lieutenant, see Steinwenter 1967, 7. Wilfong (2002, 8) suggests that the *castrum* of Ape was probably abandoned by 630.

<sup>311</sup> *P.Münch.* I 14, ll. 17: Kallinikos (February 15, 594), *O.CrumST* 183: Lord John, pagarch and lieutenant (early Arab period, considering the mention of an *amir* in l. 6); cf. Maspero 1912, 146; Steinwenter 1976, 7. On the *castrum* of Toout (Qasr Tud), see Timm 1984-92, vol. 6, 2862-63.

<sup>312</sup> *O.Crum* 209 (on the lieutenant Paul, perhaps the future commander of *O.Brit.Mus.Copt.* II 31); *O.Mon.Epiph.* 156 and n. 3; *P.Mon.Epiph.* 458 and 460.

<sup>313</sup> *O.Crum* 79. On the *actuarius*, see Maspero 1912, 105; Winlock and Crum 1926, 174; Jones 1964, 674; Cervenka-Ehrenstrasser and Diethart 1996, 63-66; Kazhdan 1991, 50.

Ramesses III that surrounded it.<sup>314</sup> However, a contact of the priest Moses of the hermitage of TT 29 stayed at a military outpost “in the mountain” (of Jeme; cf. §3.2.2).<sup>315</sup> He probably wrote to Moses in ca. 620, for his question whether Epiphanius had already sent letters to Toout, recalls the petition of April 620, in which the Jemeans asked Epiphanius to contact the *lashane* of Toout for the sake of prisoners at Jeme, Toout and Tabennese (§3.2.1). These events happened at the beginning of the Persian conquest of Egypt, but it is unclear why they were placed in custody and by whom: by the Persians or the *lashanes* of the respective towns?

*Lashanes* held people in custody, such as family members of persons who still had to pay taxes or a debt. People in prison complained that they were neglected: they were hung backwards by their hands, polluted themselves, could not cover themselves, were dying from hunger and felt abandoned by the debtors, for whom they gave their lives.<sup>316</sup> Having lost their patience, two women sent a letter demanding two men (their husbands?) to send food and pay their debts, or else the women would come north together with six soldiers and hand the men over to them, in order to force them to pay.<sup>317</sup> A fragmentary letter that is probably addressed to Bishop Pesynthius reports the arrest of several individuals and also mentions Epiphanius in relation to a prison.<sup>318</sup> Interestingly, this letter also refers to an agent of the Empress. Given the likely dating of the letter in ca. 620, the Empress must have been Martina, Heraclius’ second wife (613-641). The mention of her agent suggests that she owned property in the Theban region, and that he was responsible for its administration.<sup>319</sup>

### §2.1.2 District of Koptos

The district of Koptos started north of Timamen in the south and still included Pallas (Ballas) in the north. The district capital Koptos (Justinianopolis, Qift), the city of Qus, Pshenhor (Shanhur), Temraut and Trekatan lay on the east bank of the Nile, whereas Pallas, Tohe

<sup>314</sup> Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1014-18; Steinwenter 1967, 7; Wilfong 2002, 8 and n. 29. Łajtar (1997, 44-45) observed that in Coptic documents the term *castrum* often refers to quasi-urban settlements enclosed by the massive walls of a pharaonic temple.

<sup>315</sup> *O.Frangé* 774. The editors translate **ⲛⲥⲁⲭⲟ ⲙⲁⲧⲟⲓ** (ll. 25-26) as “maîtres-soldats”, but add that the expression is obscure. **ⲥⲁⲭⲟ** can be translated as “great scribe” or “official”; cf. Crum 1939, 384a. However, **ⲛⲥⲁⲭⲟ ⲙⲁⲧⲟⲓ** is preceded by the phrase “I am staying in ...”, which introduces a location rather than persons.

<sup>316</sup> *O.Mon.Epiph.* 176, 177. For *lashanes* making arrests, see *O.Crum* 61 (Dataset 3); *P.Pisentius* 1 (Dataset 4).

<sup>317</sup> *O.Mon.Epiph.* 177.

<sup>318</sup> *P.Mon.Epiph.* 466 (Datasets 1, 4).

<sup>319</sup> On Empress Martina, see Martindale 1992, 837-38. Crum in *P.Mon.Epiph.* 466, n. 8 considers Theodora (d. 548) with hesitation. Greek documents from the Thebaid, and especially from the Antaiopolite district, record private property of members of the imperial family (*domus divina*) in the Thebaid in the fifth and sixth centuries, but later records are scarce; cf. Azzarello 2012, 5, 44.

(Tukh) and the Monastery of Apa Samuel of Phel (Dayr al-Gizaz) lay on the west bank.<sup>320</sup> Kratos, Papa, Pampane, Pmilis, Ptene and Tabiou were probably situated on the west bank as well, and Bishop Pesynthius' residence and the Monastery of the Cross supposedly stood in the area between Naqada and Qamula.<sup>321</sup> Phanemoun, Sarf, Tse and Zoile are still to be located.<sup>322</sup>

Information about the administration of the Koptite district during the early seventh century is fragmentary and often implicit, particularly on a district level. The pagarchy is only mentioned in a bilingual Greek-Arabic register from Aphrodito as an indication where Trakan (Trekatan?) was situated.<sup>323</sup> Certain magistrates of Koptos appear in a letter addressed to Bishop Pesynthius, but their title is lost.<sup>324</sup> Urban magistrates are attested, though not explicitly in relation to Koptos.<sup>325</sup> Urban officials included a head physician, who is tentatively linked to Koptos for prosopographical reasons,<sup>326</sup> and the lawyer Theopemptos, who worked at Qus (Diocletianopolis) in March 603.<sup>327</sup>

Various documents relating to Bishop Pesynthius mention financial administrators (*dioiketes*) in the region of Koptos or Qus,<sup>328</sup> whereas an indirectly relevant text features the estate managers (*pronoetes*) Patche, Gideon and Paham.<sup>329</sup> *Lashanes* are recorded for Pallas, Pmilis, Pshenhor, Trekatan and Zoile.<sup>330</sup> There was a local tax office at Trekatan, considering

<sup>320</sup> *P.Mon.Epiph.* 433, n. 13 (Temraut), 468, n. 4 (Trekatan); cf. Winlock and Crum 1926, 111, 117, 123; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 306-07 (Pallas), vol. 5, 2140-54 (Koptos), 2173-80 (Qus), 2292-94 (Pshenhor), vol. 6, 2845-46 (Trekatan); vol. 6, 2724-26 (Tohe); Fournet 2000, 201 and 2002, 56-58 (Justinianopolis); Kuhn and Van der Vliet 2010, 83, n. 3 (Trekatan); Verreth 2013 (localities in the Coptite nome attested in the Graeco-Roman period); Eissa 2015, 4 (Pshenhor, "in the Koptite nome"). On the identification of the Monastery of Apa Samuel with Dayr al-Gizaz, see Doresse 1989, 153-63. Soldati (in Gariboldi 2009, 351) localizes Temraut in the Pathyrite district, the area of modern Gebelein, but the mention of Temraut together with the fields of Qus (*P.Pisentius* 5) points to a location in the Koptite district. See also Dataset 2.xlsx, spreadsheet "Localities".

<sup>321</sup> Worp 1994a, 465, 469 (Papa, Pampane); Van der Vliet 2013, 266 (Kratos); Van der Vliet 2014, 258 (Pmilis); Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1406-07 (Ptene); vol. 4, 1822-24 (Pampane, Papa), 1984-85 (Pmilis); vol. 6, 2452 (Tabiou); cf. Winlock and Crum 1926, 114-15, 117. On the monasteries, see §3.1.2.

<sup>322</sup> Winlock and Crum 1926, 119, 121; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1205-06 (Itsa), vol. 4, 1914-15 (Phanemoun), vol. 5, 3208 (Sarf); vol. 6, 3000 (Zoile).

<sup>323</sup> *P.Lond.* IV 1460, l. 172; cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 5, 2149.

<sup>324</sup> *P.Mon.Epiph.* 152, n. 1, where Crum suggests: "Perhaps [λαϝνηγ]". If the magistrates were *lashanes*, the title must have been abbreviated, as is demonstrated in the reconstruction in §7.5.1, n. 89.

<sup>325</sup> *P.Pisentius* 9, l. 7: **παρχων**.

<sup>326</sup> *P.Pisentius* 24. The link with Koptos is discussed in §7.5.1. For the office of head physician (**ἀρχιατρός**), see Rouillard 1928, 64; Förster 2002, 105-06.

<sup>327</sup> *P.Rein.* II 107: for the date, see §3.1.2, n. 65. Theopemptos' abbreviated title could stand for νομικ(ός), "lawyer", or νομικ(άριος), "legal advisor", but the second option is rare and less likely in a notarial setting; cf. Fournet 1997, 170. In Coptic the abbreviation **νομικ(oc)** is common as well; cf. Förster 2002, 545.

<sup>328</sup> *P.Pisentius* 3, 21; *dioiketai* associated with Bishop Pisrael of Qus: *P.Pisentius* 8, *O.Mon.Epiph.* 150. On the *dioiketes*, see Steinwenter 1976, 19-25, 34-37; Förster 2002, 201-02.

<sup>329</sup> O.Bâle Lg Ae BfJ 31d: ed. Heurtel 2013, 81-83. On the *pronoetes*, see Steinwenter 1967, 34-36; Förster 2002, 683; Schmelz 2002, 34; Azzarello 2012, 9-11.

<sup>330</sup> *P.Pisentius* 1, 15; O.APM inv. 3871: ed. Van der Vliet 2014, 257-58; *P.Pisentius* 5, *P.Mon.Epiph.* 129, verso; *P.Pisentius* 37; *P.Pisentius* 50.

the fact that Hello, a monk or clergymen, required camels to bring grain for the tax to Trekatan.<sup>331</sup> Abraham of Trekatan is listed as a person of authority and a reliable witness to what happened at Pshenhor, where cattle was stolen at night several times (§7.3.3).<sup>332</sup> He was possibly involved in the tax administration as an estate manager. In another letter relating to the same problem he is mentioned as a witness (without his place name) together with Gideon, Papa, Georgios and Lord Christodote from Esna.<sup>333</sup> Gideon could well be the estate manager and colleague of Patche, who was active in the area of Pshenhor (§7.3.4). If this identification is correct, all witnesses listed in the second letter possibly were estate managers or at least notables on a local level. It is unlikely that Abraham was a financial administrator, for the first letter refers to multiple such officials, and if they were recommended as witnesses, the sender would have provided more names. In addition, financial administrators were supposedly active on a district level.<sup>334</sup>

Most information concerning the army in this district predates the period under study, but it is briefly discussed, in order to show how prominent the military presence in the Koptite district used to be, and how little we know about it in later times. The *Notitia Dignitatum* records a legion (*legio I Valentiniana*) and Egyptian archers on horseback at Koptos, and heavily armed cavalry (*ala I Iouia catafractariorum*) at Pampane, which lay somewhere west of Koptos.<sup>335</sup> The army was well represented at Koptos, since the city used to be a major portal to desert routes to the Red Sea, particularly the Myos Hormos-Koptos road and the Wadi Hammamat, between Koptos and the coastal city of Quseir (Leukos Limen). However, in the late sixth and seventh centuries the mines and the coastal city of Berenike were abandoned.<sup>336</sup> Greek orders from this period mention “the troops of Koptos”<sup>337</sup> and “the private soldiers” from Koptos,<sup>338</sup> whereas two different *actuarii* appear in two Coptic letters, from the seventh and eighth century respectively.<sup>339</sup> Pahlavi documents do not record military installations at Koptos or Qus, but this does not necessarily imply that there were none.<sup>340</sup>

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<sup>331</sup> *O.Alexandria* 28373: ed. Kuhn and Van der Vliet 2010, 82-83.

<sup>332</sup> *P.Pisentius* 3, ll. 61-62.

<sup>333</sup> *P.Pisentius* 4, ll. 71-72.

<sup>334</sup> Azzarello 2012, 13-14.

<sup>335</sup> *Notitia Dignitatum*, §31, ll. 26, 36, 52: ed. Seeck 1876, 64-65. For the location of Pampane, see Worp 1994a, 465-66, 469 (map).

<sup>336</sup> Fournet 2000, 199-200; Sidebotham 2001, 131-32, 279-82.

<sup>337</sup> *SB* 6 9613, l. 9 (Edfu, sixth/ seventh century), featuring Theodore, son of George. He reappears in similar Greek orders edited by Fournet and Gascou (1998, 186-91), which date to the sixth/ seventh century.

<sup>338</sup> *Buccellarii* in *SB* 20 14559-64 (Aphrodito; sixth century), ed. *princeps* Gascou and Worp 1990, 223, 235-40.

<sup>339</sup> Early seventh century: Paris, Louvre, R49 + Phil.16402.7, in Crum's *Notebook 84* (Dataset 4); eighth century: *P.CrumST* 352 (= *P.Schutzbrief* 71), a letter of protection issued by Bishop Menas of Koptos.

<sup>340</sup> Altheim-Stiehl 1991a, 1940.

A Coptic contract from Jeme records a *stolarch* of Qus and Koptos, an official who was in charge of river traffic and levied taxes on ships sailing through the Koptite district.<sup>341</sup>

### §2.1.3 *District of Qena*

Dendera (Nikentore) on the west bank of the Nile was the antique district capital, but in late antiquity Qena (then called Maximianopolis or Kainepolis) on the east bank became more prominent, since it was another portal to desert routes to the Red Sea and to the quarries at Mons Claudianus and Mons Porphyrites.<sup>342</sup> For practical reasons, the military troops at Qena not only comprised Egyptian archers on horseback, but also a unit of camel riders (*ala III dromedariorum*), whereas the unit at Dendera consisted of Egyptian archers on horseback only.<sup>343</sup> This probably changed in the mid-sixth century, when the quarries were abandoned, but the available Greek and Coptic documents hardly provide specific information about the later civil and military organisation. The presence of a Persian military installation at Qena indicates that this city remained important at least from a strategic point of view.<sup>344</sup>

Both Dendera and Qena were episcopal sees already in the early fourth century.<sup>345</sup>

### §2.1.4 *District of Huw*

The district of Huw included the district capital Huw (Diospolis Parva) and Farshut (Tbercot) on the west bank, and Chenoboskion (Sheneset, Qasr wa'l-Sayyad), Pbow (Faw) and Tabennese, where the Pachomian monastery stood, on the east bank. Pgog and Tmonchonsis (Tmoushons) still need to be located.<sup>346</sup>

The *Notitia Dignitatum* records a Frankish cohort (*cohors VII Francorum*) and Egyptian archers on horseback at Huw, and cavalry (*ala Neptunia*) at Chenoboscion.<sup>347</sup> Little is known about Huw and Chenoboscion in later times, but Huw was one of the locations where a Persian military unit was stationed in the 620s.<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> *O.Med.Habu Copt.* 82 and p. 17. For this official, see Till 1955, 151-52; Bacot and Heurtel 2000, 32-34.

<sup>342</sup> Timm 1984-1992, vol. 2, 543-48 (Dendera), vol. 4, 1624-27 and vol. 5, 2157-59 (Maximianopolis/ Qena); Fournet 2000, 198 and 2002, 54 (Maximianopolis/ Qena); Sidebotham 2001, 130-31. For a discussion of Coptic hagiographic texts and the Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium* on Dendera, see Moawad 2010.

<sup>343</sup> *Notitia Dignitatum*, §31, ll. 25, 29, 48: ed. Seeck 1876, 64-65; cf. Worp 1994a, 666, 649 (map).

<sup>344</sup> Altheim-Stiehl 1991a, 1940. *O.CrumST* 250 features a magistrate (*archon*) of Kainepolis, that is, Qena.

<sup>345</sup> Munier 1943, 2; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 2, 544 and vol. 4, 1625.

<sup>346</sup> Timm 1984-1992, vol. 2, 945-46 (Farshut), 947-57 (Pbow), vol. 3, 1120-25 (Huw, Pgog), vol. 5, 2113-18 (Chenoboscion), vol. 6, 2438-51 (Tabennese), 2717-20 (Tmoushons).

<sup>347</sup> *Notitia Dignitatum*, §31, ll. 27, 47, 67: ed. Seeck 1876, 64-66; cf. Worp 1994a, 649 (map).

<sup>348</sup> Altheim-Stiehl 1991a, 1940.

Huw was already an episcopal see in 325 and is stated to have belonged to the district of Ptolemais at the time.<sup>349</sup> The Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium* lists Bishop Abraham of Huw as a colleague of the bishops Pesynthius of Koptos and Pesynthius of Hermonthis, but since the existence of the latter in the 620s is contested, the mention of Abraham of Huw is regarded with caution as well (§3.1.12).

## §2.2 THE THEODOSIAN DIOCESES

Now that the administrative units of the Theban region have been discussed, we will take a look at the four ecclesiastical units recorded by Theban documents, to wit the Theodosian dioceses of Hermonthis, Ape, Koptos and Qus. The following section discusses the localities that fell under the jurisdiction of Abraham, Anthony, Pesynthius or Pisrael, and aims to establish the size of their dioceses. To start with, various aspects need to be considered.

The dioceses of Hermonthis and Koptos were smaller than the districts to which they belonged, since the districts traditionally comprised two dioceses each. In ca. 600 the Theodosian dioceses would have been even smaller, for they probably had to compete with an established Chalcedonian hierarchy and were still in development. The dioceses of both factions are best imagined as areas with fluid boundaries that could expand or shrink, depending on the patriarch's decision to appoint bishops to vacant sees or to reorganize dioceses, the success of bishops to establish and expand their authority, and the religious loyalties of the faithful. Bishops had to respect the territories of their colleagues and were not allowed to interfere in other dioceses than their own without the patriarch's permission. If a bishop acted without permission, not only he but also those consecrated by him ran the risk of being deposed.<sup>350</sup>

As for the internal organization of the dioceses, the Theodosian hierarchy is regarded as a network that connected bishops with specific churches, chapels and monasteries through the clergymen appointed to these places of worship. This section focuses on localities, and the reconstruction of the ecclesiastical apparatuses is postponed to §5.4 and §7.4.

### §2.2.1 *The diocese of Hermonthis*

The Nile formed a natural boundary between the diocese of Hermonthis on the west bank, and that of Thebes/Ape on the east bank, and Bishop Abraham's jurisdiction was limited to the west bank. The center of his diocese was not the city of Hermonthis, but his residence at the

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<sup>349</sup> Munier 1943, 2; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1120-21.

<sup>350</sup> *Apostolic Canon 35*: ed. Funk 1905, vol. 1, 574-75; cf. Schmelz 2002, 69.

Monastery of St Phoibammon, from where he fulfilled his episcopal duties, and from where his authority spread, first in Western Thebes and later at Hermonthis (§3.1.1; Pls 1-2).

The first recorded contact between the Monastery of St Phoibammon and the town of Jeme is a Coptic deed predating 600, in which the *lashane* Papnoute and the clergymen of Jeme acknowledge the right of the monks to choose their superior (§3.1.1). Bishop Abraham is not explicitly mentioned, but he benefitted from the deed, for he became the first abbot of the monastery. The clergymen of Jeme listed in the deed were priests and deacons associated with the Church of the Apostles, the Church of St Victor and the Church of the Virgin Mary, and the archpriest Jeremiah, who must have officiated in the principal church of the town, considering his title.<sup>351</sup> In the seventh century, the principal church was the Parochial Church of Jeme.<sup>352</sup> Other churches, chapels or monasteries in the area of Jeme in this period were dedicated to the saints Cyriacus,<sup>353</sup> Daniel,<sup>354</sup> Michael,<sup>355</sup> Theodore,<sup>356</sup> Ananias, George, Leontius, Mark the Evangelist (at Qurnat Murraï), Menas and Phaustus (cf. §5.4.5).

U. Hölscher, who excavated Medinet Habu, discovered four churches in and around the mortuary temple of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, where Jeme once was. The five-aisled basilica in the second courtyard of the mortuary temple was presumably built in the fifth century, and the three-aisled basilica outside the main gate of the temple complex (the so-called Small Church) was built among the remains of a Roman bath house at the end of the sixth century.<sup>357</sup> These two churches certainly existed during Abraham's episcopate. No dating has been proposed for the second church within the temple complex, at the Small Temple near the eastern gate (the church with murals depicting the life of St Menas), and a funerary chapel at the mortuary temple of Ay and Horemheb north of the northern gate.<sup>358</sup>

The church in the second courtyard is likely to have been the principal church of the town, considering its size and central location. Hölscher and Terry G. Wilfong identified it as

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<sup>351</sup> *P.KRU* 105, ll. 27-38. The Church of the Virgin reappears in *P.KRU* 75, l. 142. A Church of the Twelve Apostles is mentioned in *O.Saint-Marc* 6 and perhaps in 27, 40, 128. The clergymen are discussed in §5.4.1.

<sup>352</sup> *P.Saint-Marc* 18, ll. 4-5: ΤΑΘΟΛΙΚΗ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΜΧΗΜΕ (letter ascribed to the priest Mark; ca. 600-630); *P.KRU* 75, ll. 140-41: John, archpriest of the Parochial Church of Jeme (after 630); *O.Crum* 292; cf. Winlock and Crum 1926, 116; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1019-20. On the parochial churches, where masses were held regularly, see Wipszycka 1994, 202-03 and 2015, 108-09, 115, 307, 335-36; Schmelz 2002, 35.

<sup>353</sup> *O.Brit.Mus.Copt.* II 16, following the correction proposed by Delattre 2002, 332; cf. Winlock and Crum 1926, 116; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1021-22.

<sup>354</sup> *O.Brit.Mus.Copt.* II 16, following the correction proposed by Delattre 2002, 332. Not attested elsewhere.

<sup>355</sup> *Brit.Mus.Copt.* II 7 (§5.4.2).

<sup>356</sup> *O.Brit.Mus.Copt.* II 16; cf. Winlock and Crum 1926, 117.

<sup>357</sup> Hölscher 1954, 51-56, fig. 57-59, pls 45-46; Wilfong 2002, 12-13, Fig. 2, 1 and 9; Grossmann 2002, 454-57, fig. 72-73; cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1025-26; Wipszycka 2015, 338-39, fig. 4.

<sup>358</sup> Hölscher 1954, 56-57, fig. 60, pl. 2; Wilfong 2002, 12-13, Fig. 2, nos 7 and 5 respectively; cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1026, where the Menas murals are erroneously located in the church on the site of the Roman bath house (the Small Church) instead of in the church in the Ptolemaic temple.

the Holy Church of Jeme, but the Parochial Church is another possibility.<sup>359</sup> Since both churches appear in various Coptic documents from the period 720-760, they must have been two distinct buildings, for if the Parochial Church was renamed “Holy Church”, the new name would have replaced the old one.<sup>360</sup> The association of an archpriest with the Parochial Church before 600 is not a reliable indication for later times, for in the first half of the eighth century, archpriests were active at no less than three churches: the Parochial Church, the Holy Church of Jeme and the Church of St Isidore at Dayr al-Medina.<sup>361</sup> Within a few decades, each of these churches apparently became prominent enough to have multiple priests and an archpriest to head them. To come to the point, it is plausible, but impossible to confirm, that the church in the second courtyard was the Parochial Church, where the archpriest Jeremiah worked before 600.

The Holy Church was located at “the *castrum* of Jeme”, within or near the enclosure wall of the temple complex. If Timm is correct in identifying the Holy Church with the Church of the Holy (Virgin) Mary, which already existed before 600, the latter may have been one of the smaller churches at Medinet Habu, perhaps even the Small Church, which was built at the end of the sixth century.<sup>362</sup> According to an eighth-century Coptic deed, the Church of St Cyriacus, which existed in Abraham’s time, was located at the *castrum* as well.<sup>363</sup>

The Church of Apa Menas, which appears in relation to Bishop Abraham and was also called “Holy *Topos* of Apa Mena”, should not be identified with the church with the Menas murals, since the former was located “in the mountain of Jeme”. In addition, the murals in the latter were financed by a woman called Elizabeth, who presumably lived in the early eighth century.<sup>364</sup> It is unknown whether the church was already in use for a long time.

Bishop Abraham’s contact with the city of Hermonthis, the nominal see of his diocese, is first attested by his Greek testament (610s). His witnesses included three urban magistrates and clergymen associated with the Holy Church of Hermonthis, namely the archpriest Dioscorus, the priest Joseph and a deacon called Paul.<sup>365</sup> Dioscorus features in other episcopal documents as well (§5.3.9), whereas the Holy Church reappears in Greek orders relating to

<sup>359</sup> Wilfong 2002, 12, Fig. 2, no. 1; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1020, where the second option is suggested.

<sup>360</sup> For relevant documents, see Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1019-21; cf. Winlock and Crum 1926, 116.

<sup>361</sup> *P.KRU* 9, ll. 107-09: Stephen, archpriest of the Holy Church of the Saint Apa Isidore (715 or 730; cf. Heurtel 2004, 83 and inscription no. 29 = *SBKopt.* I 468); *P.KRU* 66, l. 72 + 76, l. 81: Zacharias, archpriest of the Holy Church of the *castrum* of Jeme (before 722; cf. Cromwell 2013, 220); *P.KRU* 60, ll. 21-22: Moses, archpriest of the Parochial Church (ca. 730-750; cf. Till 1962, 26).

<sup>362</sup> *P.KRU* 3, l. 72: the holy Church of the *castrum* of Jeme; cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1020-21.

<sup>363</sup> *P.KRU* 37, l. 15-16: the Church of St Cyriacus “at this very *castrum*”; cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1021-22.

<sup>364</sup> *O.Crum* 45 (Dataset 3); *P.KRU* 75, l. 137 (after 630); cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 3, 1022. See also Wilfong 2002, 12, 47-68 on Elizabeth from Jeme, among others, and 95 - 99 on the murals financed by Elizabeth.

<sup>365</sup> *P.London* I 77, ll. 80-87.



the archive of Theopemptos and Zacharias, which probably came from Hermonthis.<sup>366</sup> Other churches that were explicitly linked to the city of Hermonthis were the Holy *Topos* of the Forty Martyrs and St Theodorus, where the woodwork was done in October 627,<sup>367</sup> a Holy *Topos* of the Twelve Apostles, and a *Topos* of St Michael.<sup>368</sup>

Archaeological remains of churches at Hermonthis are hardly preserved. A large, five-aisled basilica, one of the largest Christian buildings in Egypt (46 x 36.5 m), was still visible in the time of the Napoleonic expedition, but no longer exists. On the basis of older ground plans Grossmann suggested that it could have been built in the first half of the fifth century.<sup>369</sup> In view of its size, it must have been the principal church of Hermonthis, probably even the Holy Church, in which case the large basilica was the Theodosian cathedral in the 610s.

Churches at Patoubasten, Piohe, Pkoh, The, Thone and Tmenke certainly fell under Bishop Abraham's jurisdiction, as did various monastic communities in Western Thebes and in the desert west of Hermonthis, such as the *Laura* of St Phoibammon, Dayr al-Saqiah, Dayr al-Miseikra, Dayr al-Nasara and Dayr al-Matmar.<sup>370</sup> Chantal Heurtel and Anne Boud'hors proposed to locate the dwelling of Apa Terane at Dayr al-Nasara (§3.2.6), and a Monastery of Pesynthius at Dayr al-Miseikra. Both localities appear in letters addressed to the priest Moses, a member of the Theodosian network in ca. 615-620 (§3.2.2).<sup>371</sup>

### §2.2.2 *The diocese of Ape*

The diocese of Ape was located on the east bank of the Nile and comprised the city of Ape (Thebes/Luxor), Karnak, Petemout and Timamen (§2.1.1). The first recorded Theodosian bishop was Anthony (§3.1.9). No churches are known for the seventh century, but eighth-century Coptic documents record a Holy *Topos* of St Stephen in the city of Ape, a Monastery of St Sergus at the *castrum* of Ape and a Monastery of Paphnuthius in the desert of Ape.<sup>372</sup>

There were at least five churches at Luxor Temple: east of the alley of sphinxes and in front of the monumental entrance gate or pylon (outside the temple), and below the mosque of Abu al-Haggag, south of the southwest corner of the court built by Ramesses II, and

<sup>366</sup> *O.Bodl.* II 2136, l. 3; *O.Bodl.* II 2487, l. 2; cf. Hickey 2014, 47, n. 11.

<sup>367</sup> *P.Pisentius* 49 + *P.CrumST* 46, l. 10 (Hathor 4, first indiction); transcr. Crum, *Notebook* 84, 53. 627 is a more likely date than 612 or 642, considering the association of this contract with Pesynthius' episcopal documents.

<sup>368</sup> Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 170-71. The Church of the Holy Virgin (listed on p. 168, on the basis of *P.KRU* 105 and 75) was in fact the one at Jeme and should not be equated with the Holy Church of Hermonthis.

<sup>369</sup> *Description de l'Égypte*, vol. I, re-edited by Sidhom 1988, 15-16, 409-39, Pl. 97; Timm 1984-1992, vol. 1, 173-74; Grossmann 2002, 458-59, fig. 74; Grossmann 2007, 14-17; Wipszycka 2015, 338, fig. 3.

<sup>370</sup> For the villages, see §5.4.3 and 5.4.5; for the *Laura* of St Phoibammon §3.1.1. For the monasteries, see Mond and Myers 1937, pls I-2 (maps); Boutros and Décobert 2000, 86-87; Grossmann 2007, 6-14, with a map.

<sup>371</sup> *O.Frangé*, p. 26. The Monastery of Pesynthius was named after an early bishop of Hermonthis; cf. §3.2.1.

<sup>372</sup> Timm 1984-1992, 134.

southwest to the previous church (inside the temple).<sup>373</sup> The one near the court of Ramesses II appears to be the oldest and is known as the find spot of the “silver treasure of Luxor”, a group of liturgical objects discovered between the baptistery of the church and the wall south of the Ramesses II’s court. Since one of the silver plates bears a Greek inscription mentioning a bishop called Abraham, the find is often linked to Abraham of Hermonthis and the church is placed in the early seventh century.<sup>374</sup> However, Ape/Luxor did not belong to the diocese of Hermonthis, but had its own bishop, and the other persons mentioned on this plate, the benefactress Eulogia, the priest Praepositus and Gregory, do not appear in the network of Abraham of Hermonthis. The same holds for a second plate, offered to Bishop Besammon by (the late) Theonikas through the mediation of the same priest Praepositus and the care of Isidore, son of Apa Mikros.<sup>375</sup> It cannot be established when Abraham and Besammon were in office as bishops of Thebes, nor is a dating of the church proposed on the basis of its architecture. Nevertheless, it is likely that the plates were produced in the sixth century, and that the church to which they were donated was an episcopal church.<sup>376</sup>

Little can be said about the other churches. The one below the mosque has not been examined. The church in front of the entrance gate was built at the end of the sixth century, judging from the plasterwork.<sup>377</sup> Peter Grossmann placed the construction of the other two churches in the 620s.<sup>378</sup> He argued that the one east of the sphinx alley was burnt, supposedly during the Persian conquest of Egypt, and that the southernmost church was built during the Persian period, since the Byzantine troops, which previously occupied the *castrum*, did not need multiple churches. Another factor that could have played a role is the likely presence of separate churches for Chalcedonians and Theodosians at the *castrum* (§2.3.2).

There were at least three churches at Karnak: one in the temple of Khonsu, the second one in the small temple of Amenhotep II between the ninth and eighth pylon, and the largest one in the festival temple of Thutmoses III (*Akh-Menou*). The latter certainly belonged to a Theodosian community, for Severus of Antioch was depicted on one of the columns.<sup>379</sup> It was

<sup>373</sup> Grossmann 2002, 488-454, figs 68-72. The church north of the entrance gate and those southwest of the court are visible on the plan of the *castrum* in Grossmann 1991a, 467.

<sup>374</sup> Grossmann 2002, 452-53, fig. 68. On the Luxor treasure, see Bénazeth 2001, 375-90; cf. Krause 1971, 109-111 and idem 1994; Wipszycka 2015, 374-75; Fluck 2010, 215. For the plate, probably an incense holder (*SB* 3 6009), see Bénazeth 2001, 381-84; Cuvigny 2004, 195-98 (edition and elaborate commentary).

<sup>375</sup> *SB* 3 6010; cf. Bénazeth 2001, 377-78; Cuvigny 2004, 198.

<sup>376</sup> Cf. Bénazeth 2001, 384, for the datings proposed by J. Strzygowski (fifth/sixth century), J. Maspero (sixth century) and H. Messiha (fourth century, but reused in the sixth century).

<sup>377</sup> Grossmann 2002, 448-50, fig. 70.

<sup>378</sup> Grossmann 2002, 452, 454, figs 69, 71.

<sup>379</sup> Munier and Pillet 1929, 61-74. For the image of Severus of Antioch, see fig. 1 and pp. 72. Coquin (1972, 177-78) reports two Greek inscriptions at the temple of Khonsu and an oratory at the temple of Opet.

a monastic community that linked its tradition to Shenoute and Besa, the archimandrites of the so-called White Monastery at Sohag, and was headed by local archimandrites, judging from a Greek inscription inside the sanctuary, in which they are listed.<sup>380</sup> One of them, or a later archimandrite, appears in letters addressed to members of the Theodosian network (§3.2.7).

At Petemout a church with a baptismal font was built on the causeway to the ancient temple of Montu, supposedly in the early seventh century, and another one in the temple.<sup>381</sup>

### §2.2.3 *The diocese of Koptos and “the eparchy of Qus”*

The boundary between the dioceses of Koptos and Qus is not clear-cut, since the episcopal sees were both located on the east bank. The Wadi Hammamat, which started south of Koptos and ran eastward, could have formed a possible natural boundary on the east bank.

Pesynthius resided in a monastery on the west bank between Naqada and Qamula (§3.1.2), and the entire west bank from Pallas in the north to Qamula in the south appears to have been his area of jurisdiction. It also comprised Tohe, the Monastery of the Cross, the Monastery of Apa Samuel of Phel and probably Kratos, Papa, Pampane and Pmilis.<sup>382</sup> Pesynthius’ authority on the east bank extended to the city of Koptos, Pshenhor, the nearby Monastery of St Macarius, Trekatan and “the eparchy of Qus”, where a scandal happened, about which Pesynthius wanted to be informed (§7.4.3).<sup>383</sup> Since the term “eparchy” appears in an ecclesiastical context, it probably refers to the diocese of Qus as a vacant see, and Bishop Pesynthius could have acted as its administrator, until Pisrael became bishop of Qus in ca. 620 (§3.1.8).<sup>384</sup> If this was indeed the case, Pesynthius was in the same position as the fourteenth-century bishops Athanasius of Qus and Mark of Qift, who were administrators of the sees of Hermonthis and Dendera respectively. In this capacity, Athanasius and Mark were the “deputies” (*diadochos*, *na’ib*) of the patriarch of Alexandria.<sup>385</sup> According to the Upper Egyptian version of the Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium*, patriarchal vicars in Pesynthius’ days were the Constantine of Asyut and Shenoute of Antinoopolis (§3.1.3, 3.1.7), but Pesynthius does

<sup>380</sup> Ed. Coquin 1972, 173-76; cf. Munier and Pillet 1929, 86-87.

<sup>381</sup> Grossmann 2002, 446-47, Fig. 66-67.

<sup>382</sup> See §2.1.2. Boutros and Décobert (2000, 90, n. 51) identify Dayr Ishaq with the monastery near Tohe that is mentioned in *P.Pisentius* 32.2, and argue that it was founded in the early seventh century, in Pesynthius’ days.

<sup>383</sup> *P.Pisentius* 19. For Trekatan see §7.5.1, and for the other localities, see §7.4.2-3.

<sup>384</sup> The term “eparchy” usually refers to the province of an empire, but it could also indicate the sphere of jurisdiction of a metropolitan or that of the apostles; see Lampe 1961, 511A, under 1.

<sup>385</sup> The commendatory letter for Bishop Timothy of Pachoras, sections C-D: ed. Plumley 1975, 15 and 21 (Coptic version, where Mark is incorrectly linked to the see of Hermonthis in C), 32-33 and 36 (Arabic version); cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 5, 2147-48, 2176. On Athanasius of Qus, see Youssef 2010.

not appear in this role in the hagiographic tradition. Nevertheless, his involvement in the eparchy of Qus suggests that the patriarch authorized him to do so.

Few late antique churches in the diocese of Koptos are known by name. A fragmentary papyrus lists a Church of St Sansno at Pallas and a Church of St Onnophrius, where Bishop Pesynthius probably delivered his homily on St Onnophrius (§8.3.2).<sup>386</sup> The Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium* is the first to mention a church at Koptos, which was dedicated to the hermit saint Peter the Elder and housed the remains of several hermit saints from the Koptite west bank.<sup>387</sup>

The ruins of a large basilica with a baptistery were found west of the temples of Min and Isis at Koptos. According to Peter Grossmann, the baptistery was constructed in the sixth century, and the church in the fifth century at the earliest.<sup>388</sup> It cannot be established whether this building was in use by Theodosian or Chalcedonian clergymen.

#### §2.2.4 *The diocese of Qus*

From ca. 620 onward, Bishop Pisrael's diocese included at least the city of Qus and the Chapel of St John at Phello (§7.4.3). It would have been logical if all the localities south of Qus were assigned to Pisrael's area of jurisdiction, including Pshenhor and the Monastery of St Macarius, which apparently fell under Bishop Pesynthius' jurisdiction. Unfortunately, Pisrael's dossier is too small for establishing the actual size of his diocese.

So far, the remains of two churches at Qus have been recorded. One stood near the temple of Haroeris and Heket and was probably built in the early middle ages. For the other church, near the tomb of Shaykh Ali Daqiq al-Abd, no date has been proposed.<sup>389</sup>

#### §2.3 THE LIKELY DIVISION BETWEEN THEODOSIANS AND CHALCEDONIANS

If it is true that Peter IV consecrated bishops for practically every Egyptian diocese, at least in number, there possibly were Theodosian prelates for the Theban dioceses already during his patriarchate (576-578). Abraham of Hermonthis and Pesynthius of Koptos were ordained in ca. 590 and 599 by Patriarch Damian, whereas Anthony of Ape and Pisrael of Qus first appear in ca. 620 (§3.1.8-9). This section presents the possible predecessors of Abraham, Pesynthius, Anthony and Pisrael, and discusses the likely distribution of Theodosians and Chalcedonians in the Hermonthite district in the late sixth/early seventh centuries. Although Theban

<sup>386</sup> *P. CrumST* 156. It is linked to the homily in *Crum* 1915-1917, 40-41; cf. Boutros and Décobert 2000, 90.

<sup>387</sup> Basset 1909, 300 (Hub of Tukh), 302 (Paul of Danfiq), 498 (Samuel of Gabal Banhadab); cf. Timm 1982-1992, vol. 5, 2148. To my knowledge, there are no earlier, Coptic sources on these hermits.

<sup>388</sup> Reinach 1910 [1988], 25-27, the map opposite 58, pl. 5-6; Weill 1911, 131-34; Grossmann 1991e, with a ground plan (see also the corrective note in Grossmann 2002, 146, n. 148).

<sup>389</sup> Grossmann 2002, 446, Fig. 65 (the church near the temple) and n. 186 (the church near the tomb).

documents do not explicitly record Chalcedonians, the presence of multiple churches with baptisteries and the likely isolation of the hermit Cyriacus from the Theodosian network seem to indicate the presence of distinct religious communities.

### §2.3.1 Possible predecessors of the Theodosian bishops

It is likely that Abraham of Hermonthis is listed as the fourteenth bishop in the Greek Moir Bryce diptych (*SB* III 6087, ca. 665) in the British Museum, and that Andrew, the thirteenth bishop was his predecessor.<sup>390</sup> The diptych lists the patriarchs of Alexandria acknowledged by the Theodosian church, from St Mark to Agathon (665-681), and the bishops of a particular diocese. Since the diptych was purchased at Luxor, it is assumed to originate from the Theban region. It cannot relate to the dioceses of Qus or Ape, for neither Pisrael, nor Anthony appear among the deceased. A connection with Pesynthius of Koptos is also dismissed, for he died in 632, whereas the Bishop Pesynthius, in whose days the diptych was corrected, was in office in the time of Patriarch Agathon. Consequently, the bishops in the diptych have been identified as incumbents of the see of Hermonthis.

Abraham's appearance in a continuous list of names may seem contradictory to my statement that he was organizing a relatively new Theodosian diocese (General introduction). However, just as the diptych and the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria* present Peter IV as the direct successor of Theodosius I and ignore Theodore,<sup>391</sup> Abraham – or whoever was the first Theodosian bishop of Hermonthis – was directly linked to an earlier tradition.

The *Encomium* states that the clergymen of Koptos brought Pesynthius to Patriarch Damian,<sup>392</sup> which implies that there were Theodosian clergymen in the diocese already. The direct predecessor of Pesynthius could have been Bishop Timothy of Koptos, who is known from a notice on Samuel of Gabal Banhadab in the Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium*. According to this late liturgical source, Timothy ordained Samuel priest and appointed him as abbot of a monastic community, which became known as the Monastery of Apa Samuel of Phel and is identified with Dayr al-Gizaz (§3.1.2).<sup>393</sup> The Arabic *Life of Andrew* indicates that Samuel headed the monastery, when Andrew became a monk there,<sup>394</sup> and the Arabic version of the *Encomium* adds that Andrew was in contact with Bishop Pesynthius, when the latter stayed in

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<sup>390</sup> *SB* III 6087, l. 55-56: ed. Crum 1908, 262, 265; Winlock and Crum 1926, 135.

<sup>391</sup> *SB* III 6087, l. 30-31; *History of the Patriarchs*: Evetts 1907, 469.

<sup>392</sup> *Q*, fols 21-22 = *S*, Budge 1913, fol. 28b.

<sup>393</sup> Basset 1909, 497 (notice for or 21 Kihak); cf. Timm 1984-1992, vol. 5, 2141.

<sup>394</sup> Bibliothèque nationale, arabe 4882, fols 1-14v (unpublished): summarized in Di Bitonto Kasser 1989, 168-70.

Western Thebes in the Persian period.<sup>395</sup> If the chronological connections based on the Arabic sources are historically correct, Timothy was bishop not long before Pesynthius and he must have been ordained between 576 (by Peter IV) and 599 (before Damian ordained Pesynthius).

The bishops Ezekiel and Serenianus, who were members of the Theodosian network in ca. 615-620, are likely to have been the predecessors of Anthony of Ape and Pisrael of Qus respectively (§3.1.4-5). There was no Theodosian bishop of Ape, when Abraham went to Timamen and faced the hostility of its inhabitants.<sup>396</sup> He would not have tried to establish his authority there, if there was already a Theodosian colleague at Ape, since his interference would have been an infringement upon the latter's jurisdiction and could have provoked a conflict with that bishop and sanctions imposed by the patriarch. Instead, it was Abraham who threatened with sanctions, if his correspondent – apparently a local official – did not send the villagers to him, which implies that Abraham did have some authority over Timamen. Just as Pesynthius seems to have been administrator of “the eparchy of Qus” temporarily, Abraham was perhaps authorized to act as the administrator of the vacant see of Ape by the patriarch. Unfortunately, Abraham's letter does not explicitly state why he came to Timamen, but he probably did so, before Ezekiel (or Serenianus) became bishop of Ape in ca. 615.

### §2.3.2 *Multiple churches, different religious factions*

The Theodosian and Chalcedonian dioceses were administratively distinct units, but their networks could have overlapped topographically, if they had separate cultic buildings in the same localities. As we observed above, there were multiple churches at Jeme/Medinet Habu, Ape/Luxor and Karnak, and the one in the festival temple of Thutmoses III at Karnak was certainly in Theodosian hands, judging from an image of Severus of Antioch (§2.2.1-2).

At Luxor, there were two church buildings with baptismal fonts at about one hundred meters distance from each other, namely the one southwest of the court of Ramesses II, where the silverware was found, and the church outside the entrance gate (§2.2.2). The first one is the oldest of the two, and the second one was built at the end of the sixth century, the very period when the Theodosian hierarchy started to organize itself under Patriarch Damian.<sup>397</sup> The building of a second church with a baptismal font indicates that its intended users did not wish to be baptized in the earlier church, since they belonged to a different religious faction,

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<sup>395</sup> A. O'Leary 1930, fol. 201a.

<sup>396</sup> O.Berlin, P.12491: ed. Krause 1956, vol. 2, 271-76 (= Dataset 3, no. 76).

<sup>397</sup> Grossmann 2002, 448, 452.

and apparently doubted the validity of baptisms by the clergymen of the earlier church.<sup>398</sup> It is plausible that Theodosians built the church just outside the *castrum*, and that the one within the *castrum* – the church where the silverware was found – was in Chalcedonian hands.

At Medinet Habu the situation is less clear than at Luxor, since no mention is made of baptisteries, but there was a parallel: a large fifth-century church stood within the temple, also called the “*castrum* of Jeme”, and a later church was built outside the main gate of the temple at the end of the sixth century (§2.2.1).<sup>399</sup> It cannot be verified whether the location in or outside the *castrum* coincided with a religious division, but since many churches at Jeme were associated with Abraham (§5.4.5), it appears that Jeme was mainly Theodosian in his days.

### §2.3.3 *The hermit Cyriacus of TT 65-66*

Epiphanius, the leader of the *Topos* of Epiphanius, and the priest Moses of the hermitage at TT 29 lived on the hill of Shaykh Abd al-Qurna and were both active in the well-documented Theodosian network of the Theban region (§3.2.1-2). It is remarkable that Cyriacus, the hermit at TT 65-66, dwelled between Epiphanius and Moses in ca. 620, but does not have a demonstrable link with any member of the Theodosian network. Instead, he corresponded with the *lashane* Strategius of Ne, a contemporary of Pesynthius, who did not have a direct link with the Theodosian network either (§2.1.1, 7.5.2).<sup>400</sup> Cyriacus’ apparent isolation from his neighbors suggests that he could have been Chalcedonian, or at least non-Theodosian. A Greek-Coptic glossary of found at TT 65 lists catechetical terms, including “unconfused” and “unchanging”,<sup>401</sup> which recall the Chalcedonian creed that proclaims the two natures of Christ, “unconfusedly and unchangeably”.<sup>402</sup> It must be added that a different Greek word for “unchanging” is used in the creed, and that the other term is not exclusively Chalcedonian.<sup>403</sup> Be that as it may, if there were Chalcedonian hermits living on that hill, this would explain why a Coptic version of Damian’s synodical letter to Jacob Baradaeus was copied on a wall in Epiphanius’ dwelling: it was a clear theological statement, and the monks could cite the patriarch during theological discussions, if necessary (General introduction, §3.2.3).

<sup>398</sup> Wipszycka 2015, 123: “The rapidity of the growth of a Monophysite hierarchy parallel to the Chalcedonian one proves that Monophysites were coming to believe that the rites of the Chalcedonian Church were not valid. People persuaded themselves that they were living without baptism and the Eucharist, and therefore going towards inevitable eternal damnation”.

<sup>399</sup> Grossmann 2002, 455, 457. According to Hölscher (1954, 54), the “baptismal font” in the central nave of the church in the second courtyard was in fact a basin used on the day of Epiphany for the renewal of baptism.

<sup>400</sup> *O.Mon.Epiph.* 151.

<sup>401</sup> O.TT 65.1, ll. 3, 5: **ΤΟ ΑΣΥΓΧΗ[ΤΟ]Ν** (ἀσύγχυτον) = **ΠΑΤΤΩΣ, Ο ΑΝΑΛΛΟΙΩΤΟΣ** (ἀναλλοίωτος) = **ΠΑΤΩΙΒΕ**: ed. Hasznos 2013, 37-41; cf. Lampe 1961, 249b (C.2), 110b (1); not in Förster 2002.

<sup>402</sup> Denzinger, Hünemann and Hoping 2010, 131 (§302): ἐν δύο φύσεσιν ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως.

<sup>403</sup> Lampe 1961, 250a (C.1, C. 4).

## CONCLUSION

Unlike what was stated by previous scholarship, the network of bishoprics did not coincide with the administrative divisions of the Theban region, for there were seven sees, divided over four districts. Instead, there was a correlation between bishoprics and military units: in the early fourth century, the sees of Hermonthis, Thebes, Koptos, Dendera, Qena and Huw were created in localities that were often associated with legions (Hermonthis, Thebes, Koptos), Vandal cavalry (Thebes), a Frankish cohort (Huw), Egyptian archers on horseback (Koptos, Dendera, Qena, Huw), or camel riders (Qena). In the early seventh century, there were still Byzantine military officials or Persian military installations at Hermonthis, Thebes/Ape, Koptos, Qena and Huw. The diocese of Qus, which is first attested in 553, was probably created relatively late and roughly corresponded with the military unit at Pampane.

Greek and Coptic documents record four Theodosian dioceses, namely those of Hermonthis and Thebes/Ape in the Hermonthite district, and Koptos and Qus in the Koptite district. The topographical survey of these districts is an important preparation for the analysis of the topographical sub-networks of the Theodosian bishops (§4.5.2-4). Likewise, the discussion of state authorities attested for the Theban region helps to place civil and military officials in the networks of Abraham and Pesynthius in a spatial setting (§5.5, 7.5), and to analyze the social ties between the bishops and these social groups (§5.6.3-4, 7.6.3-4).

The Nile formed a natural boundary between the diocese of Hermonthis, which lay on the west bank, and the diocese of Thebes/Ape, located in the area of modern Luxor on the east bank. This division suggests that not Abraham of Hermonthis, but a bishop of Thebes/Ape is mentioned in an inscription on a silver plate that was found with other liturgical silverware near a church at the Luxor temple. This is also likely, since none of the people mentioned on this plate (and on a second one) appear in the documents of the bishop of Hermonthis.

Abraham resided at the Monastery of St Phoibammon, instead of in the city of Hermonthis, and under normal circumstances, his area of jurisdiction would have been limited to the west bank. Nevertheless, he and some of clergymen went to Timamen, a village on the east bank, and was violently opposed by the villagers, as if he had come to establish his authority over them. His warning that he would impose sanctions, if a local official did not act, suggests that he had some authority over the village and that there was no Theodosian bishop of Thebes/Ape at the time. Perhaps, Abraham temporarily acted as the administrator of the vacant see, until the ordination of Ezekiel (?) in ca. 615.

Likewise, Pesynthius lived in a monastery on the west bank, between modern Naqada and Qamula, and appears to have been bishop and administrator of a vacant see, namely “the



eparchy of Qus”, before Pisrael of Qus made his first appearance in ca. 620. Even after Pisrael’s ordination, the dioceses of Koptos and Qus are hard to distinguish on a map, since both cities were located on the east bank and there is no clear natural boundary between them. On the east bank the desert route that started a little south of Koptos and ran eastward through the Wadi Hammamat to the coastal city of Quseir may have served as a natural boundary, but it seems as if the entire west bank was under Pesynthius’ authority.

The church in the festival temple of Thutmoses III at Karnak certainly belonged to a Theodosian community, as the image of Severus of Antioch on a column indicates. Although the Theban documents do not explicitly mention Chalcedonians, it is likely that the two religious factions coexisted at Jeme/Medinet Habu, Ape/Luxor and Karnak, judging from the presence of multiple churches. At Luxor there were even two churches with baptismal fonts at about one hundred meters distance from each other: one within the temple walls and a later building just outside the gate. Since the later church was supposedly built at the end of the sixth century, the period when the Theodosians started to organize themselves, it is plausible that this church belonged to Theodosians, and that the earlier church, where the silverware was found, was in Chalcedonian hands. A final interesting point is the impression that the hermit Cyriacus of TT 65-66, a contemporary of Epiphanius and Moses, was isolated from the Theodosian network and may have been Chalcedonian, or at least non-Theodosian.