

AN ARABIC PAPYRUS RECORDING THE LINEAGE OF ʿAMR B. AL-ʿĀṢ

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Abstract. — Edition and study of P.Vindob. A.P. 01788, a papyrus fragment from third/ninth-century Egypt containing Arab genealogical information in the form of two lineages. At least one of these lineages belongs to ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. 43/664).

Keywords: ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, genealogy, historiography

This article edits and studies an Arabic papyrus currently kept at the papyrus collection of the Austrian National Library under the inventory number A.P. 01788.¹ It presents two Arab lineages, of which one belongs to ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ (d. AH 43/664 CE), a Companion of the prophet Muḥammad and highly successful general in the Muslim conquests of the first half of the first/seventh century who twice served the early caliphate as governor of Egypt (in ca. 19–25/640–645 and 38–43/658–664).² Because the papyrus is broken off at the top, only the fifth, sixth, and seventh pre-Islamic generations are preserved of the first lineage. They are identical to the corresponding generations in ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ’s lineage, the second lineage on the papyrus. It stands to reason that the first lineage is also ʿAmr’s,

¹ We would like to thank Bernhard Palme, director of the Papyrus Collection of the Austrian National Library, and Claudia Kreuzsaler, deputy director, for providing us with a high-quality digital image of the papyrus and giving permission to publish it. A short description and a digital image of the papyrus are available at the Austrian National Library’s digital catalogue at <http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/RZ00014019> (accessed February 6, 2020). Part of the research for this article was conducted for the project “Papyri of the Early Arab Period Online,” funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

² Michael Lecker’s “The Estates of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in Palestine: Notes on a New Negev Arabic Inscription,” *BSOAS* 52/1 (1989) 24–37 still presents the most useful overview of ʿAmr’s life and career. It may be useful to note that, in published papyri, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ also appears in documents dating from the period of his two tenures as governor of Egypt and in two second/eighth-century literary papyri. These are the documents *SB* 20.14443, *CPR* 30.16, and *P.Lond.Copt.* 1079 and the (fragments of) literary texts edited in N. Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri I: Historical Texts* (Chicago 1957) 80–99 and *III: Language and Literature* (Chicago 1972) 43–78.

but it may equally belong to a member of his extended family.³ The second lineage on the papyrus reaches the ninth (or tenth) pre-Islamic generation. Traces of writing just below the last preserved line suggest that the papyrus originally presented a longer lineage, perhaps reaching ‘Amr’s eighteenth or twenty-first ancestor, respectively Muḍar and ‘Adnān. According to classical genealogical works, Muḍar was the common ancestor of a large part of the so-called northern Arabian tribes. ‘Adnān was the common ancestor of all of these tribes.⁴ Although the papyrus contains no date, its palaeography points at a third/ninth-century date of composition – a period of intense debate over Arab genealogy.⁵ The papyrus has some interesting features. Before we proceed, let us first have a closer look at the papyrus itself.

P.Vindob. A.P. 01788 H × W = 7.7 × 13.8 cm Egypt, third/ninth century

P.Vindob. A.P. 01788 is a fragment of a light-brown sheet of papyrus broken off on the top, left, and bottom sides. An original cutting line has only been preserved on the right side, where a margin of ca. 2.5 cm has been left blank. The fragment’s six lines of text are written in black ink with a medium-sized pen perpendicular to the papyrus fibers. Together with the absence of writing on the back, the direction of the papyrus fibers vis-à-vis the writing suggests that the papyrus originally was a clean sheet.⁶ The papyrus displays two hands, each responsible for one of the papyrus’s lineages. This is most clearly visible in the shapes of the final *mīm* in *سأهم* and *بسم* in lines 2 and 3, that of the *šād* and *hā’* in *هصيص* in lines 2 and 5, and that of the final *rā’* of *عمرو* in lines 2, 4, and 5. Hand 1’s final *mīm*, in line 2, has a much rounder tail compared to the downward stroke of hand 2’s final *mīm* in line 3. In line 2, hand 1 places the oval

³ The first preserved ancestor in the first lineage is Sahm b. ‘Amr b. Huṣayṣ. For a useful overview of the offspring of this Sahm recorded by genealogists, see Ibn Ḥazm, *Jamharat ansāb al-‘Arab*, ed. ‘A.M. Hārūn (Cairo 1982) 163–165. See also the references cited in note 14.

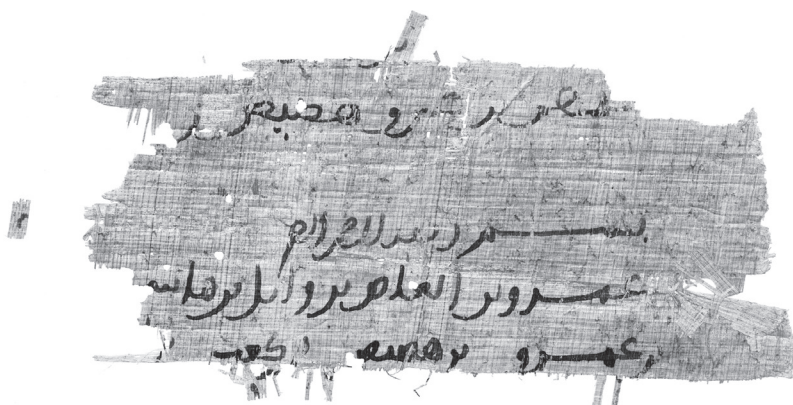
⁴ W. Caskel, “‘Adnān,” in P.J. Bearman et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, vol. 1 (Leiden 1960) 210 and H. Kindermann, “Rabī’a and Muḍar,” in P.J. Bearman et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition*, vol. 8 (Leiden 1995) 352–354.

⁵ P. Webb, *Imagining the Arabs: Arab Identity and the Rise of Islam* (Edinburgh 2016) 177–239.

⁶ E.M. Grob, *Documentary Arabic Private and Business Letters on Papyrus: Form and Function, Content and Context* (Berlin/New York 2010) 173; P.M. Sijpesteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official* (Oxford 2013) 220. For examples of texts written on clean sheets but not meant for dissemination, as our text probably was (see below), see the documents published in A.A. Shahin, “Schreibübung und Schriftübungszettel zwischen Theorie und Praxis,” in A. Kaplony, D. Potthast and C. Römer (eds.), *From Bāwīt to Marw: Documents from the Medieval Muslim World* (Leiden/Boston 2015) 95–113 and N. Vanthieghem, “Un exercice épistolaire arabe adressé au gouverneur Ġābir ibn al-‘Aṣ’at,” *APF* 60 (2014) 402–405.

part of the *ṣād* on the writing line, whereas, in line 5, hand 2 realizes this part of the letter in a more diagonal way. Hand 1's *hā'* (line 2) is rounder than hand 2's (line 5). Their final *rā'* differs in a similar way. The identical shapes of the *hā'* and *ṣād* in هاشلم and العاص in line 4 sets lines 3–6 off against lines 1–2. Further, characteristic of hand 2 is the way in which the final *alif* extends below the connecting stroke (line 4: العاص, هاشلم), that the *sīn* and *shīn* are always written with denticles (line 3: بسم; line 4: هاشلم), and the initial *kāf*'s horizontal elongation, with an extended base, an upper stroke that runs parallel to the base line and a rightward shaft at its top (line 5: كعب). *Linea dilatans/mashq* is attested in three places (line 3: بسم; lines 4 and 5: عمرو).⁷ Both hands sparingly use diacritical dots: هصيص in line 2 has two slanting dots under the *yā'*,⁸ and بسم in line 3 has a dot under the *bā'*.⁹ A space of ca. 2 cm separates lines 2 and 3.

[بن] بن [hand 1 ↓	1
[سأهم بن عمرو > بن< هصيص بن [كعب بن لؤى			2
<i>vacat</i>			
بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم		hand 2	3
عمرو بن العاص بن وائل بن هاشلم بن			4
بن عمرو بن هصيص بن كعب بن [لؤى			5
] . [6



P.Vindob. A.P. 01788. © Papyrus Collection, Austrian National Library.

⁷ See Grob (n. 6) 188.

⁸ See A. Grohmann, *From the World of Arabic Papyri* (Cairo 1952) 83.

⁹ See Grob (n. 6) 189.

1	hand 1	[] son of [son of]
2		[S]ahm son of ʿAmr <son of> Huṣayṣ son of [Kaʿb son of Luʿayy				
		<i>vacat</i>				
3	hand 2	In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.				
4		ʿAmr son of al-ʿĀṣ son of Wāʾil son of Hāshi[m son of				
5		son of ʿAmr son of Huṣayṣ son of Kaʿb son of [Luʿayy				
6		[] . [

1 بن is still visible in the first line. Lower traces of three or four characters can still be seen before and after بن.

2 Of the *sīn* of س[هم], one denticle and traces of a connecting stroke to another denticle are still perceptible after the lacuna. The scribe left out بن, “son of,” between the names ʿAmr and Huṣayṣ by mistake. The initial tip of the *bāʾ* of بن that follows the name Huṣayṣ is still visible on the small scrap now detached from the papyrus that is currently placed to the left of the papyrus. The reconstruction [كعب بن لؤى] has been made on the basis of line 5. Here and in line 5, we give the classical orthography of لؤى (also of وائل in line 4), i.e. with a *hamza*, because the papyrus does not give enough text to study the authors’ pronunciation of these names.¹⁰ Because the papyrus’s left side is missing, more generations may have originally followed the name Luʿayy.

3 الله has two short *lāms* and the *hāʾ* is reduced to a single oblique stroke with a round tail at the end resembling the curvature of a *nūn*. الرحمن الرحيم is written cursively.¹¹

4 The author of the second lineage spells the name of ʿAmr’s father, العاص, in its very common way without a *yāʾ* at the end.¹² It is noteworthy

¹⁰ See S. Hopkins, *Studies in the Grammar of Early Arabic, Based upon Papyri Datable to before 300 A.H./912 A.D.* (Oxford 1984) 19–32 (§§ 19–27) for the general orthography of (mainly non-literary) papyri and for references to papyri whose spelling seems to reflect a glottal stop.

¹¹ Cf. Grob (n. 6) 191–192.

¹² Grammatically speaking, the name is a definite and masculine active participle formed from the root ʿ-ṣ-y and means “the disobedient.” For the omission of the final *yāʾ* in such participles, see K. Vollers, *Volkssprache und Schriftsprache im alten Arabien* (Strasbourg 1906) 139–140 and W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 3rd ed., vol. 2 (Cambridge 1898) 371; for the case of *al-ʿāṣ* in particular, see also W. Fischer, *Grammatik des klassischen Arabisch* (Wiesbaden 1972) 31 (§ 56, Anm. 2). See also al-Nawawī’s short discussion in his *Tahdhīb al-asmāʾ waʾl-lughāt*, vol. 2 (Cairo n.d.) 30, where the author describes the defective spelling as a commonly accepted ungrammatical variant.

that, as far as modern editions of classical texts can tell us, some authors contemporary with our papyrus, such as al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892), preferred the name's more grammatical spelling, العاصي.¹³

– The *mīm* of هاشم is broken off. There are two possible ways to reconstruct the remainder of line 4. Most genealogists contemporary with our papyrus count two generations between ʿAmr's ancestors Hāshim and ʿAmr b. Huṣayṣ: Suʿayd and Sahm.¹⁴ The latter also appears in line 2 of our papyrus. Possibly confusing this lineage with another line from the Banū Sahm b. ʿAmr, a small number of historians, including the Egyptian Ibn Yūnus (d. 347/958), add another generation, Saʿd, between Suʿayd and Sahm.¹⁵ Because the original width of the papyrus is unknown, the broken-off part of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's lineage in line 4 can be reconstructed as both هاشم بن سعيد بن سهم and هاشم بن سعيد بن سهم. As to وائل, see the commentary to line 2 above.

5 Traces of the *bāʾ* and *nūn* of بن are still visible at the end of this line before the lacuna. Likewise, the upper traces of the *lām* of لؤي can still be seen above the lacuna.

6 Upper traces of one character are still perceptible below the name Kaʿb.

¹³ Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden 1866) 492. Greek documents confirm the use of both the names al-ʿĀṣ and al-ʿĀṣī in the first Islamic centuries. The former seems to have been much more common, however. See A. Kaplony, “On the Orthography and Pronunciation of Arabic Names and Terms in the Greek Petra, Nessana, Qurra, and Senouthios Letters (Sixth to Eighth Centuries CE),” *Mediterranean Language Review* 22 (2015) 13.

¹⁴ Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-ashraf*, ed. M. Ḥamīd Allāh et al., vol. 10 (Cairo 1379/1959 and Beirut 1417/1996) 276; W. Caskel and G. Strenziok, *Ġamharat an-nasab: Das genealogische Werk des Hišām ibn Muḥammad al-Kalbī*, vol. 1 (Leiden 1996) Pl. 25; Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-tabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. ʿA.M. ʿUmar, vol. 5 (Cairo 1421/2001) 47; al-Zubayr b. Bakkār, *Jamharat nasab Quraysh wa-akḥbāruḥā*, ed. ʿA. al-Jarrākh, vol. 2 (Beirut 2010) 98, 111–112; al-Zubayrī, *Kitāb nasab Quraysh*, ed. E. Lévi-Provençal (Cairo 1953) 408.

¹⁵ E.g., Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī, *Maʿrifat al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ʿĀ. al-ʿAzzāzī, vol. 3 (Riyadh 1998) 1720 (no. 1699) and vol. 4 (Riyadh 1998) 1987 (no. 2041), with n. 1 (copied in Ibn ʿAsākir, *Taʾrīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. ʿU. al-ʿAmrawī vol. 46 [Beirut 1417/1997] 115); al-Dhahabī, *Ṣiyar aʿlām al-nubalāʾ*, ed. Sh. al-ʿArnaʿūṭ et al., vol. 3 (Beirut 1401/1981) 79; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, ed. I. al-Zaybaq and ʿĀ. Murshid, vol. 2 (Beirut 1995) 393; Ibn Hubayra, *al-Ifṣāḥ ʿan maʿānī al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, ed. F.ʿA. Aḥmad, vol. 7 (Riyadh 1417/1996) 46; Ibn Yūnus, *Taʾrīkh Ibn Yūnus al-Ṣadaḥī*, ed. ʿA.F. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ, vol. 1 (Beirut 1421/2000) 374 (no. 1026), but cf. his lineage of ʿAmr's son ʿAbd Allāh, which lacks “b. Saʿd” (277 [no. 756]); al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī asmāʾ al-rijāl*, ed. B.ʿA. Maʿrūf, vol. 15 (Beirut 1403/1983) 357–358 (no. 3450).

Historical Interest in ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in the Abbasid Period

This interest in ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's lineage on an Egyptian papyrus is not surprising. Third/ninth- and fourth/tenth-century historiography shows that Egyptian Muslims held ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in higher esteem than their contemporaries elsewhere in the Muslim world did. In non-Egyptian genealogical works and biographical dictionaries, including texts on the virtues or excellences (*faḍāʾil*, *manāqib*) of Muḥammad's Companions, the historical image of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ largely rests on four themes. As expected, they give his lineage, firmly embedding him in the prophet's tribe of Quraysh. But in direct relation thereto, many such texts also remark that ʿAmr's mother was an enslaved war-captive, usually known as al-Nābigha ("Excellent one"),¹⁶ who had changed hands a couple of times before she came into the possession of al-ʿĀṣ b. Wāʾil, to whom she bore ʿAmr.¹⁷ This partial slave descent sometimes made ʿAmr an object of ridicule and, as he himself is said to have acknowledged, affected his social standing.¹⁸ These texts are also interested in ʿAmr's (late) conversion to Islam, which allegedly took place during an unsuccessful delegation organized by the at that time still non-Muslim Quraysh in order to capture followers of Muḥammad who had migrated to Ethiopia in order to escape persecution. The texts tell that, upon his return to the Ḥijāz, ʿAmr pledged allegiance to the prophet after the latter had forgiven his participation in anti-Islam activities.¹⁹ The texts, further, record the words with which Muḥammad praised him and how the prophet entrusted him with important tasks, such as fighting non-Muslim tribes at Dhāt al-Salāsīl in north-eastern Arabia and calling to Islam the rulers of Oman.²⁰ The last theme

¹⁶ Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *al-Istīʿāb fī maʾrifat al-aṣḥāb*, ed. ʿA.M. al-Bijāwī, vol. 3 (Beirut 1412/1996) 1184–1185 quotes ʿAmr as saying that his mother's actual name was Salmā bt. Ḥarmala. Muslim historiography exhibits confusion over the name of ʿAmr's mother. E.g., Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, ed. I.D. al-ʿUmarī (Baghdad 1387/1967) 26 calls her Salmā bt. al-Nābigha and al-Balādhurī (n. 14) 277 has al-Nābigha bt. Khuzayma.

¹⁷ Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī, *Maʾrifat al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ʿĀ. al-ʿAzzāzī, vol. 4 (Riyadh 1998) 1987; al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *al-Mustadrak ʿalā al-ṣaḥīḥayn*, ed. M.ʿA. ʿAṭā, vol. 3 (Beirut 2002) 512; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (n. 16) 1184–1185; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *al-Iṣāba fī tamyīz al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. ʿA. al-Turkī and ʿA.Ḥ. Yamāma, vol. 4 (Cairo 1429/2008) 537–538. See also Ibn ʿAsākir (n. 15) 110–111.

¹⁸ Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (n. 16) 1184–1185; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *al-ʿIqd al-farīd*, ed. M.M. Qumayha and ʿA. al-Tarḥīnī, vol. 2 (Beirut 1404/1983) 147 and vol. 5 (Beirut 1404/1983) 88; al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul waʾl-mulūk*, ed. M.J. de Goeje et al., vol. 1/6 (Leiden 1898) 2966 and 2972; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Taʾrīkh*, ed. M.Th. Houtsma, vol. 2 (Leiden 1883) 203.

¹⁹ Al-Zubayrī (n. 14) 410–411; copied in Ibn ʿAsākir (n. 15) 127–128 and Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (n. 17) 538–539.

²⁰ Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī (n. 17) 1989; al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī (n. 17) 512 and 515; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (n. 16) 1186–1187, 1191; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (n. 17) 539–540;

in these texts concerns the words ʿAmr spoke on his deathbed, including instructions on his burial, and his passing on ʿĪd al-fiṭr at the end of Ramaḍān.²¹

In these genealogical works and biographical dictionaries, ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's political feats go nearly unmentioned. By and large, it is political histories of Islam that treat in detail his leading role in the conquest of Palestine and Egypt, his foundation of Fuṣṭāṭ, his influence on the outcome of the First Civil War (36–41/656–661), and his two (or, according to some historians, three) tenures as governor of Egypt. Interestingly, whereas non-Egyptian histories of the Muslim empire composed in the third/ninth and fourth/tenth centuries, such as those of al-Balādhurī, Khalīfa b. Khayyāt, al-Yaʿqūbī, and al-Ṭabarī, do exactly that, contemporary Egyptian histories and *faḍāʾil* works preserve stories that firmly embed ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in Egypt's salvation history, giving him full credit for bringing Islam to Egypt.²² Perhaps the best known example is a teleological story on ʿAmr's visit to Alexandria before Islam. In its oldest known form, Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam presents it, in his *Futūḥ Miṣr*, as part of a larger story on how ʿAmr got acquainted with Egypt prior to the Muslim conquests. Al-Kindī's (d. 350/961) *Wulāt Miṣr* shows that the story also circulated independently.²³ It tells that ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ accidentally participated in a ball game during his visit to Alexandria. According to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's version (that of al-Kindī only differs in details), it was believed that whoever would catch the ball with his sleeve would rule over Alexandria. Much to the surprise of all participants, the ball fell in ʿAmr's sleeve.²⁴ Clearly, the story expresses a belief in the predestination of ʿAmr's rule over Egypt.

Another example comes from Ibn Yūnus's entry on ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ in his *Taʾrīkh al-Miṣriyyīn*, a biographical dictionary of noteworthy Egyptian Muslims. It relates how al-Muqawqis, the Chalcedonian patriarch in Alexandria and Egypt's de facto ruler at the time of the conquest, informed

Ibn Ḥanbal, *Kitāb faḍāʾil al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. W. ʿAbbās, vol. 2 (Mecca 1403/1983) 911–913; al-Nasāʾī, *Faḍāʾil al-ṣaḥāba*, ed. F. Ḥamāda (Cairo 1428/2007) 138–140 (nos. 195–196).

²¹ Abū Nuʿaym al-Iṣbahānī (n. 17) 1987–1989; al-Ḥakīm al-Naysābūrī (n. 17) 512–514; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (n. 16) 1189–1190; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (n. 17) 541.

²² This observation applies to Muslim literature. For Egyptian historical literature on ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ composed in Christian milieus, see J. den Heijer, “La conquête arabe vue par les historiens coptes,” in Ch. Décobert (ed.), *Valeur et distance: Identités et sociétés en Égypte* (Paris 2000) 232 and M.S.A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London/New York 2014), especially 19–25 but also 29–36.

²³ Al-Kindī, *al-Wulāt waʾl-quḍāt*, ed. Rh. Guest, *The Governors and Judges of Egypt* (Leiden 1912) 6–7.

²⁴ Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-akhbārūhā*, ed. C.C. Torrey (New Haven 1922) 55.

‘Amr about the sacrality of Mount Muqattam.²⁵ “There,” he said, “a people will be buried whom God resurrects on Resurrection Day while they are free of sins.” Ibn Yūnus’s second/eighth-century source, the Egyptian Ḥarmala b. ‘Imrān al-Tujībī (d. 160/776), tells that he found ‘Amr’s grave at that location,²⁶ thus expressing his high esteem of the conquest general and his reverence for Mount Muqattam’s hallowed ground. In a different version, preserved in Ibn al-Kindī’s (d. ca. 360/970) *Faḍā’il Miṣr*, al-Muqawqis tells ‘Amr that God planted a tree from Paradise on the Muqattam and that ‘Amr, following the advice of the caliph ‘Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (r. 13–23/634–644), turned that area into a Muslim cemetery.²⁷ Even more than Ibn Yūnus’s version, that of Ibn al-Kindī connects ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ with the Islamization of Egypt’s sacred landscape. Such foundational images of ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ, portrayed as the founding father of Islamic Egypt, continued to be cultivated long after the period under consideration here.²⁸

Whereas intellectual interest in ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ and his history in Abbasid-era Egypt is hence easily understood, there appear some interpretational difficulties with regard to our papyrus’s record of ‘Amr b. al-‘Āṣ’s lineage upon closer inspection. As was usual in contemporary Arabic documents,²⁹ the writer of the second lineage (lines 3–6) left no spaces between his words in lines 3 and 4. By contrast, spaces are visible after each preserved name in line 5, which are ancestors 6–9 (or 7–10, see commentary) in the lineage. On that line, the word *بن*, “son of,” does directly connect with the

²⁵ Many third/ninth-century and later Muslim texts from Egypt discuss the sacred character of Mount Muqattam. E.g., Ibn ‘Abd al-Ḥakam (n. 24) 156–158; Ibn al-Zayyāt, *al-Kawākib al-sayyāra fī tartīb al-ziyāra fī al-qarāfatayn al-ṣuḡhrā wa’l-kubrā* (Cairo 1325/1907) 18; pseudo-Ibn Zuhayra, *al-Faḍā’il al-bāhira fī maḥāsin Miṣr wa’l-Qāhira*, ed. M. al-Saqqā and K. al-Muhandis (Cairo 1969) 107–109; Ibn Zūlāq, *Faḍā’il Miṣr wa-akhbārūhā wa-khawāṣṣuhā*, ed. ‘A.M. ‘Umar (Cairo 1999) 94–97; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-a’shā fī ṣinā’at al-inshā*, vol. 3 (Cairo 1332/1914) 309–311; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-muḥādara fī ta’rīkh Miṣr wa’l-Qāhira*, ed. M.A. Ibrāhīm, vol. 1 (Cairo 1387/1967) 137–139. For Christian stories involving the Muqattam, see Mikhail (n. 22) 249–253.

²⁶ Ibn Yūnus (n. 15) 374–375 (no. 1026).

²⁷ Ibn al-Kindī, *Faḍā’il Miṣr*, ed. I.A. al-‘Adawī and ‘A.M. ‘Umar (Cairo 1391/1971) 64–65.

²⁸ For example, two sixth/twelfth- and seventh/thirteenth-century authors tell that ‘Amr burnt down Alexandria’s famous library. See ‘Abd al-Laṭīf al-Baghdādī, *al-Ifāda wa’l-i’tibār*, facsimile ed. and tr. K.H. Zand, *The Eastern Key* (London 1965) 129–130 (copied in al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā’iz wa’l-i’tibār fī dhikr al-khiṭaṭ wa’l-āthār*, ed. A.F. Sayyid, vol. 1 [London 2002] 432) and Ibn al-Qifṭī, *Ta’rīkh al-ḥukamā’*, ed. J. Lippert (Leipzig 1903) 354–356. From the sixth/twelfth century at the latest, ‘Amr played a prominent role in a story on the destruction of the miraculous mirror that stood on top of Alexandria’s lighthouse. See al-Ghamāṭī, *Tuḥfat al-albāb*, ed. G. Ferrand, *Journal asiatique* 207 (1925) 70–71; Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’ al-zuhūr fī waqā’i’ al-duḥūr*, ed. M. Muṣṭafā, *Die Chronik des Ibn Ijās*, vol. 1/1 (Wiesbaden/Stuttgart 1974) 106–107.

²⁹ Grob (n. 6) 177.

name that follows. This gives the impression that on line 5 the writer first wrote بن at least four times and reserved some space for the names, which he added at a later time. He left more space open than he eventually needed. This resulted in the empty spaces after the names preserved. Did he not know these names, forcing him to look them up? Current scholarship shows, indeed, that Abbasid genealogists increasingly disagreed over a lineage the further back they went in time.³⁰ The commentary to line 4 discusses such disagreement over ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ's lineage. The absence of an *isnād*, a chain of transmitters that endorsed the authenticity of information, after the *basmala* in line 3 (which indicates the beginning of a new section) suggests that our papyrus was not meant for dissemination.³¹ It most likely belongs to that corpus of poorly studied documents that people produced whilst pursuing a higher education, such as lecture notes made by students or exercises in epistolary formulae, or served as aide-memoires during teaching sessions.³² In its current fragmentary state of preservation, our papyrus may express the wish to accurately note ʿAmr's descent, but its exact character remains unknown.

³⁰ Z. Szombathy, "The *Nassābah*: Anthropological Fieldwork in Mediaeval Islam," *Islamic Culture* 73/3 (1999) 73; Webb (n. 5) 205–222.

³¹ Cf. W.M. Malczycki, "A Comparison of P.Utah.Ar. inv. 205 to the Canonical Hadith Collections: The Written Raw Material of Early Hadith Study," in S. Bouderbala, S. Denoix, and M. Malczycki (eds.), *New Frontiers of Arabic Papyrology: Arabic and Multilingual Texts from Early Islam* (Leiden 2017) 109.

³² For the use of writing in the transmission of knowledge during the first Islamic centuries and the use of aide-memoires in particular, see G. Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, tr. U. Vagelpohl, ed. J.E. Montgomery (London/New York 2006) chs. 1–3. For a papyrus with possible lecture notes, see W.M. Malczycki, "A Page from an Aspiring Muḥaddith's Personal Notes, Dated Mid-Late Third/Ninth Century (P.Utah, Ar. inv. 443v)," in A. Regourd (ed.), *Documents et histoire: Islam, VII^e–XVI^e siècle* (Geneva 2013) 241–261. See also n. 6 above.