AL-FUSTAT AT

Its Foundation and Early Urban Development

Władysław B. Kubiak
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Wladyslaw B. Kubiak

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Publisher’s Note
In the transliterated Arabic, the hamza is indicated by an apostrophe (‘), the ‘ayn by a reversed apostrophe (‘). Following our current standard practice, long vowels and emphatic consonants are not marked.
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Foreword

Certain Islamic cities instantly lend themselves to visual memory, topographical recall, or the experience of an ambience within them, no matter their modern carapace. Isfahan and Cordova, Samarra and Seville, Damascus and Istanbul are possible of appreciation in any or all of the above terms. In a more discrete historical sense one can read of Timurid Samarqand, Nasrid Granada, Mughal Delhi and suffer the shock of recognition. Something of comparable sensation has been accorded Cairo up until World War II when its Fatimid-cum-Mamluk structure and essence had not been sacrificed to political dicta, population explosion and the awesome catalyst of reinforced concrete.

Other famed cities we must “resurrect” from libraries for they have been, in Yeats’ instructive phrase, “changed, changed utterly”. Baghdad springs to mind immediately. Professor Lassner has strained and pulled, sieved and sifted, posited and planned and yet we are no closer to the “feel” of this fabled center of a pulsing civilization than we were when Professor Creswell put before us the pure module of the Round City of al-Mansur. (The plain pity here is that though Baghdad is given as the main locus of *A Thousand and One Nights*, it is well-known that it is thirteenth century Cairo which is being topographically evoked.)

However, not a few of the aforementioned cities were such before the dispensation of Islam subsumed them in a different destiny. What of the purely Islamic City, or rather of those camp-capitals from which major urban entities evolved? We all know the names: Kufa, Basra, Fustat, Wasit, Qayrawan; all founded within the first century of the Hijra. Can we imagine them in their original contours and subsequent growth; can we conjure the tenor of life within them, the tone of the spiritual expression guiding them, or the thrust of their context within the burgeoning *dar al-Islam*? Texts help but they emphasize the pious and the political and deny us the *choisisme* of daily living. Archaeology should serve us better, but the civilization itself has precious little interest in such a pursuit, and, until quite recently, the non-Muslim excavator has chosen to emphasize other periods and other places. What has been yielded is either too minimal or too captious (in the “experts” reading of the evidence) to be taken as a microcosm of a more faceted whole. And really, with all those texts, necrologies, chronicles, coins, glass weights, commenda, scribal notes, legal documents, buildings yet *in situ* and others whose *loci* can be established, the other-than-archaeologically-arrived-at evidence of sheer living through more than thirteen centuries of historical prominence—can archaeology tell us much more?
Generally, not really: the Islamic archaeologist dots the i's and crosses the t's, as it were, of those texts and histories, those sundry objects, that mass of epigraphical and numismatic data; but then, surprising and smashingly, yes, yes: the paintings at Kasr al-Hair, the floor mosaics at Khirbet al-Mafjir, the stucco at Madinat al-Zahra, the breadth of vista at Samarra, that bourgeois aqueduct in Fustat and the incidence of Chinese ceramics there proving a millenium of trade, the mosque at Siraf extend our knowledge along a hundred lines of interpenetrating cause and effect, interest and beauty ... things and ideas not quite posited before the spade hit the encumbering dust.

Thus it is important to know that the author of the present volume initiated his interest in the subject of Fustat as a working archaeologist, one at once hopeful and humble. Each season afforded a clearer picture of the great entrepôt in the double (but not necessarily continuous) floruit of the Tulunid and Fatimid epochs. The architectural and artifactual evidence broadened our artistic, economic and even social understanding of the city and from the accumulated mounds above the ruins of these epochs we even deepened our already “pre-set” knowledge of the Mamluk era. But what of the early, the true Fustat, the key to the conquest of Egypt and North Africa?

There was stratigraphic evidence in plenty, such that we could, for instance, date the revival of glazing in Egypt to about A.D. 700. There was ample evidence of a building mode — baked brick laid in mud mortar — though no single building of the period could be proven. There was the superb lustred goblet made for the Abbasid governor, Abd al-Samad b. Ali in A.D. 778 which proved that the technique was Egyptian in origin, as Lane and Lamm had surmised. We even uncovered a strange double-roomed underground chamber (serdab), indisputably pre-Tulunid and an anomaly in the domestic architecture of Egypt. Yet, however elated these discoveries made the archaeologist, they did not in sum give us a hint of a microcosm of the misr founded by ‘Amr b. al-‘As.

Bahgat’s pioneer work was methodologically unsound, in that he reported no stratigraphy or locus for any of his major finds. Casanova’s Reconstitution was naturally a scholarly gift but it proved an albatross when used to pin-point particular sites if for no other reason than that no revealed street was as straight as he posited them all to be. Neither the sources nor the finds allowed for extrapolation. At this point Professor Kubiak decided to re-examine the sources. The results of this painstaking re-marshalling of the evidence (as he admits there is really nothing positively new in the source material) is a much more clearly focussed Fustat in the first century of its existence than we have had heretofore or we are likely to get from any future archaeology.

The descriptions and arguments need not be detailed or countered here; suffice it to point to three aspects of Professor Kubiak’s research which merit the strictest attention, particularly by those historians interested in the problems of the ansar and the transformational mechanics of the pre-Islamic into the Islamic. We get here for the first time a concise and yet richer picture of the area (which was to become Fustat) in its Roman and Byzantine setting. This is very important for it placed both geographical and politically economic limitations on the
conquering army, limitations which were ignored, if ever, at peril to the nascent community.

Secondly, we are given the "growth pattern" both topographically and toponymically, which together corrects and/or adumbrates the received concepts to be gleaned from Casanova and the authors of the articles on Fustat in both editions of the *Encyclopedia of Islam*. Here, most particularly, the author shows his mastery of the sources and his manner of "reading" them: e.g., Abd al-Hakam got his information from the oldest inhabitants and was himself a citizen of the quarter; Ibn Quda'i at key moments was simply *not there* though his surmises became scripture to the likes of Ibn Duqmaq and al-Maqrizi. Along these lines, it is now our belief that Kubiak's Plans 1 and 4 supersede the analogous ones in Casanova.

Finally, Kubiak provides a most convincing evolutionary pattern for the society of the first century. In essence, we have a site where the military considerations are paramount; these in turn are replaced by tribal considerations, and towards the end of the century these latter are so generally, but never totally, watered down that one can speak of the simple citizen of Fustat. One can almost see the sons of those unruly tribal soldiers who had gone to Madinah to complain to the Caliph Uthman and then acquiesced in his assassination going to Damascus as citizen-spokesmen for the city of Fustat before Muawiyah and Abd al-Malik. This is transformational history at its most provocatively suggestive.

Now we have a frame, a setting, a focus within and against which other historians and art historians and urbanists may use subsequent data or re-think available data. We cannot derive from Professor Kubiak's work a beautiful, not even a pleasing, city. Not very much grace of living abounded before the advent of Ibn Tulun, but the contours and lines of development seem certain by A.D. 750. Very soon the bustle of living will have grown into the surge of prominence, such a prominence evinced by the successor city al-Qahira so that according to Ibn Khaldun no man can be counted educated or fortunate who has not seen it.*

GEORGE T. SCANLON  
Director, Fustat Expedition,  
American Research Center in Egypt  
Professor, Islamic Art and Archeology,  
The American University in Cairo

* There is very little difference between the present volume and the published version of Professor Kubiak's *habilitation* research: *Al Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Warsaw: 1982). The author obviously did not in the interval have access to Goitein's fourth volume of *Mediterranean Society* or Garcin's recent exegesis on the *limes* of medieval Cairo. In the latter he will find not a few compliments to his suppositions about soldier-tribal and emigrant-tribal settlement in the *khittahs*. 
Introduction

There has always been a marked misconception in modern historical writings, as well as in more popular notions concerning the past, of the urban agglomeration of Cairo. Of its various components, Cairo proper, al-Qahira of the Arabs, has been regarded as its nucleus, the most important part and an independent entity; accordingly, the history of the Egyptian capital invariably commences in A.D. 969, the date of the Fatimid founding. All that happened before that date has been classified as a sort of prehistory of Cairo. Even more illogically, the older urban settlements in the region have been regarded as suburbs of Cairo, a view which reverses historical reality.

The reasons for these erroneous conceptions are complex. In part they spring from the situation which existed in the later Middle Ages and modern times, when al-Fustat, or Misr as it was then called, the real nucleus of the agglomeration, and its west-bank suburb al-Djiza, declined and lost importance with respect to Cairo and its new suburbs, such as al-Bulaq. The administrative separation of the agglomeration’s components also contributed to the misconception, and there were also linguistic reasons: the name of Cairo is derived from al-Qahira, which was an official toponym given to the Caliphal residential quarters of the Fatimids. As such, however, it was in disuse when these quarters were integrated with the rest of the agglomeration and became ordinary city districts. However, al-Qahira was the name adapted in all European languages as a designation for the whole metropolis. This misunderstanding of historical reality has led to the absurd name ‘Old Cairo,’ (Vieux Caire, etc.), a common European appellation of Misr al-Fustat. Only the sound linguistic instinct of the common people was never misled. For a native dweller of the metropolis it was always Misr (or Masr as it is pronounced in the Egyptian dialect). It seems that even in very early times, Misr was the common name for the whole agglomeration, al-Fustat being an official designation used in everyday speech only when it was necessary to distinguish quarters of the former Arab camp-town from other districts.

Similar usage applied to the later foundations: al-‘Askar, al-Qata‘li, and al-Qahira. Their particular names were used only as long as they remained separated from the common urban organism. When they integrated into it they became parts of Misr.

This popular usage, regardless of the official or semi-official distinctions expressed in scholarly treatises, reflected historical reality. The metropolitan urban area, although its individual parts may have been designated to serve
special prearranged purposes, was a single unit which functioned and developed only through its interrelationships. Separation of one part or another, even if intended and regarded as necessary by the ruling classes, could not and would not be permanent. Such was the pattern which marked the development of the capital from its very foundation.

Al-Fustat was founded in the year A.D. 642 (A.H. 21) as the seat of a military garrison for Arab troops in the conquered country of Egypt as well as a base for future campaigns against the enemy. It sprang up around the Roman-Byzantine fortified town of Babylon, which was preserved intact within the larger entity. Both elements, in spite of their ethnic, religious, economic, and even architectural differences, soon merged into one inseparable urban organism.

The meaning of its quasi-official name, al-Fustat, is somewhat obscure. The popular etymology, worked out by the medieval Arabic writers from a common noun *fustat*, meaning tent—in this case 'Amr's tent, which was allegedly left standing when the army moved to Alexandria—seems artificial. A much more likely derivation is from the Latin-Greek *fossaton* (fosse), the etymology proposed by Butler and to a certain degree confirmed by the early papyri. Probably this was a pre-Arab local toponym.

Whether the city was already also called Misr in its earliest period we do not know, although it seems likely, since this appellation as an Arabic name for Egypt is known from pre-Islamic times as well as from the Qur'an, as recently shown by Grohmann. As a designation for the capital, it appears for the first time in John of Nikiu, but it was certainly current in the ninth century when al-Baladhuri and Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam composed their works.

The process of founding satellite cities as seats of government, which became one of the characteristic features of Islamic urbanization, commenced very early. In fact, the foundation of Hulwan by ‘Abd al-‘Aziz shortly after the year A.D. 689-670 A.H. 70 was the first such venture in Islam, although so far hardly noted by modern scholars. Whatever the reason for its foundation, which allegedly was the desire to escape from an epidemic which had infected al-Fustat, Hulwan bore all the characteristics of such a city. The fact that it did not survive its founder and was not incorporated into the parent urban organism should be ascribed to geographical conditions and, in particular, to the distance between the two (which amounted to about twenty kilometres). Nevertheless, the intention seems clear, though the whole problem deserves scholarly attention.

In A.D. 750 another satellite town, al-‘Askar, this time to the north and immediately adjacent to the parent urban area, was founded by the ‘Abbasid army which took over the country from the Umayyads. The greater part of al-Fustat must have been at that time in ruins since it had been burnt by the retreating Umayyads. The vitality of the old city was so strong, however, that it was immediately resurrected and the new administrative and military capital, rather than dominating, was soon absorbed by it. A little later al-‘Askar was nothing but the name of a quarter within the urban agglomeration.

Roughly the same happened to another satellite town founded in A.D. 870 by Ahmad ibn Tulun. Situated in the neighbourhood of the former district with the
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centre on the northeastern border of al-Fustat, it covered one square mile. Apparently well planned with the famous mosque in the middle and a vast palatial complex extending almost to the slopes of the Citadel hill on the eastern side, it was divided into lots or fiefs; hence its name al-Qata'i'. As the administrative capital of the Tulunids and a garrison for their troops, it did not survive the dynasty as a separate urban settlement, and what was not destroyed by the Caliph's army in A.D. 905 merged with al-Fustat.

Unlike its predecessors, the last of the medieval urban creations in the area, al-Qahira, had an unexpected career. In plan it was essentially no different from that of al-Qata'i' except that it was better protected by a strong defensive wall. This wall, unknown or rather undeveloped in earlier garrison towns, can be attributed to three factors; first to a custom which prevailed in Ifriqiya, the home of the Fatimids; and second, by the rank of the would-be occupants, the imams and caliphs, whose earthly splendour had to match their dynastic aspirations. But probably the third reason was the most important—the country was in imminent danger of a Qarmation invasion. The new residence had to be protected and, what was even more important, designed to defend al-Fustat, through whose quarters, as rightly asserted by al-Muqaddasi, led the only way to al-Qahira. Yet, in essence, it was not functionally different from earlier satellite towns. Like them it was conceived to house the government and garrison the army, and in the beginning civilians were not even allowed to live there. The copious evidence in the contemporary sources leaves no room for doubt as to the primary functions of the Fatimid capital. In the first century of its existence this artificial character was maintained; consequently it lacked many of the basic economic and social functions of a city, and it cannot be regarded as an autonomous urban organism, but rather as a specialized, one could say parasitic, suburb which could only live in close symbiosis with the former metropolis.

The situation radically changed only after the great drought and plague which lasted from about 1066 to A.D. 1072. This disaster, the "great calamity" as it was called by medieval authors, which destroyed two thirds of al-Fustat, marked a turning point in the history of Cairo. Because of the influx of thousands of settlers from the depopulated quarters of Fustat and Misr, the urban development of Cairo greatly accelerated and this, in the course of time, brought about the reversal of the respective positions of the two areas within the agglomeration, and led to the misconceptions referred to above. Misconceptions about the early history of the Egyptian metropolis, however, are evidently much more numerous. They concern such fundamental problems as demography, social structure and architectural origins, not to mention more detailed points related to historical topography. Still, to present all the erroneous views here and argue each would be tedious and unnecessary.

The first century of the town's history has been presented according to the author's views of a dynamic process of constant change. The physical form of the town underwent continuous transformation and developed in direct relation to the evolution of the underlying socio-economic and conceptual basis. Not all the phenomena can as yet be appreciated and correctly interpreted, since most of the
basic questions related to the history of material culture and socio-economic structure in Islam have been until recently neglected by modern scholarship, and early Islamic Egypt has been neglected even more than other regions. Certainly, conclusions could have been worked out here by adopting known facts from other better-studied urban centres with comparable structure and environment; however, whenever possible, discussion has been kept within the frame of the facts recorded in our source material.
Abbreviations
of
Publications Referenced in the Text

Annali
al-Aqalim
Al-Muqaddasi, Ahsan at-Taqasim fi ma'rifat al-Aqalim (Descrip- tion imperii Moslemici), ed. M.J. de Goeje, BGA III, Leyden 1876.
BGA
Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum.
BIE
Bulletin de l'Institut égyptien.
BSGE
Bulletin de la Société (royale) de géographie d'Egypte.
al-Buldan
Churches
Churches
EI(1), EI(2)
Encyclopaedia of Islam, First ed.; Second ed.
Fouilles
Aly Bahgat Bey et Albert Gabriel, Fouilles d'al-Foustat, Paris 1921.
"Foundation"
"Fustat Expedition 1966"
"Fustat Expedition 1968"
Futuh
Futuh al-Buldan


Djalal ad-Din as-Suyuti, *Husn a/-Muhadira ft Akhbar Misr wa al-Qahira*, Misr 1299 (1883).


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Abbreviations

*Städtegründungen*  

*Subh*  

*"Topographie"*  

*Wulat; Qudat*  
1. The Source Material

The wealth of written sources for the medieval history of Egypt is certainly exceptional in the Islamic world. Local histories and chronicles, various encyclopaedias, collections of biographies and other scholarly treatises, especially in the later Middle Ages, shed abundant light on practically every aspect of human activity. Most of these works produced by the Muslim scholars reflect historical reality as viewed by a more enlightened stratum of Egyptian Islamic society, but at the same time they give us material which was common knowledge at that time, as well as inside and official information.

Other versions of the facts and events, different points of view and separate historical material are presented by the works that came from the non-Islamic Egyptian milieu, and particularly from Christian sources. These additional historical sources provide a valuable means for checking and supplementing more current traditions. To these must be added substantial sections in most of the important works on history and geography produced in other countries, in which Egypt is treated in considerable detail, as befitted a country which played such a prominent role in the economic and political life of the Islamic world. The authors of these “external” works normally view Egyptian affairs from a different perspective and often represent other spheres of interest. They may also have used sources other than those found in Egyptian works, and this allows us to verify some details.

The standard narrative sources for the medieval period in Egypt are supplemented by a unique group of historical documents which were practically unknown in other Islamic countries—that is, rich collections of papyri and documents on paper.

Documents

Collections of original records, both official and private, are estimated to contain about sixty thousand documents, many of them extremely valuable, especially for economic and social history. Of this number about sixteen thousand are on papyrus, most of them in Arabic, but a number of early ones also in Greek or Coptic, or bilingual. About ten thousand belong to the famous group of Arab-Jewish manuscripts called the Geniza Documents. These, however, postdate the period we are interested in by at least two centuries and as such can only be used
as ancillary material. Much of this source material on Egyptian history mentions al-Fustat. However, as far as the city itself is concerned—its development, quarters, buildings (particularly non-religious ones), streets and public services—the information is disappointingly meagre, imprecise and unreliable, especially for the early period with which we are concerned. Therefore, for our study, the body of documents is smaller than one would expect, although it provides occasional information not to be found elsewhere. Unfortunately, there are at present almost insurmountable difficulties in using this material, difficulties which will continue certainly for many years to come. The greater part of these documents have not been published or even catalogued, and those which have are dispersed over hundreds of volumes of periodicals and rare publications, most of which are unindexed.

**Narrative Sources**

Of about a dozen medieval works which are of real significance for our study, Kitab Futuh Misr wa'l-Maghrib (Book of the Conquest of Egypt and the Maghreb) by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam (born c. A.D. 805 died A.D. 871) is the oldest and certainly the most important for the earliest period of the town. Its chapters on the foundation of al-Fustat and its topography and history appear to have served as the model for a whole series of subsequent treatises of this kind. Unfortunately, all these works prior to the well known fifteenth century compendia of Ibn Duqmaq and al-Maqrizi, Kitab al-Khitat of al-Kindi (+A.D. 961), Kitab al-Mukhtar of al-Quda'i (+1062 or A.D. 1065), Kitab al-Naqi fi'l-Khitat of al-Djawwani (written after A.D. 1174/75) and Kitab Iqaz al-Mutaghaffil by Ibn Mutawwadj (+A.D. 1330) are lost, and are known to us only from later quotations and excerpts.

'Ib'n ar-Rahman ibn 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abd al-Hakam came from an important family of al-Fustat, and his father was a distinguished scholar-theologian of the Malikite rite, also learned in history. He was held in high esteem throughout the Middle Ages as the true father of Egyptian-Arab history, though his importance in modern times suffered somewhat from the severe criticism of Charles C. Torrey, a twentieth-century editor of his work. However, from the excursus on Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's career included in the Introduction to a later edition of the text, it appears that during the twenty odd years which separate Torrey's two publications, he learned to appreciate the value of the work, and in the later one he only formally maintains his unfavourable earlier criticism. In recent years a group of Egyptian historians did justice to Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam by publishing a volume of studies devoted to various aspects of his work, but the unnecessarily apologetic tone of some parts of this collection interferes with its historical criticism and objectivity.

The exceptional value of the *Futuh Misr* is undeniable and needs no apology, although the modern historian must bear in mind the shortcomings which were common in this period. He must also keep in mind that its primary intention was
not to transmit knowledge of bygone facts and events to posterity or to apothesize the warriors of the first generation of the Islamic conquerors, but to give a plausible historical explanation for a number of obscure juridico-religious traditions concerning the conquest of Egypt and North Africa.

An interesting problem is raised by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's sources. For most of his historical or juridico-religious information he indicates his source in the form of an isnad, (list or 'chain' of successive transmitters), which was the normal usage of the time. This form implies an oral tradition, but we should assume that at least a part of his material came to him in written form, although there is no definite proof of it. There is however strong indirect evidence that there existed in Egypt from the first half of the eighth century a strong written historical tradition. The authors of some of these alleged historical works, whose names we often encounter in the isnads of the Futuh Misr, are Yazid Ibn Abi Habib (died A.D. 745), 'Ubaid Allah ibn Abi Dja'far (died A.D. 752), Ibn Lahi'a (died A.D. 790), al-Laith ibn Sa'd (died A.D. 791), Yahya ibn Ayyub al-Ghafiqi (died A.D. 780), and Yahya ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Bukair (died A.D. 846). But it should be noted that with the exception of the last whom our author probably encountered personally and could draw from directly, only Yahya ibn Ayyub is named as a direct source, which could indicate the use of his written collection of traditions. Information from the others mentioned above is normally received through such authorities as 'Uthman ibn Salih 'Abd al-Malik ibn Maslama, Abu al-Aswad an-Nadr, Yahya ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Bukair and others, who were direct informants (rawis) of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam. Al-Laith ibn Sa'd and Ibn Lahi'a appear only a few times as direct informants and Yazid ibn Abi Habib or 'Ubaid Allah ibn Abi Dja'far never do, though they appear very often in the chains of isnads. But there is also a difficulty with Yahya ibn Ayyub: most of the information coming from him is cited with double authority, his own and that of Khalid ibn Humayd (died A.D. 786), whom we do not know as a historical writer. Since we do not know of any instance of a written historical work with a double authorship, we should assume that the information from both was transmitted orally or in writing by a later rawi whose name was omitted; that is, unless we take for granted the existence of a written account by Khalid ibn Humaid, which was to a large degree similar to the alleged work of Yahya ibn Ayyub.

All these observations make the theory of an extensive use of the written material by our author rather difficult to accept. But on the other hand, there is no reason to doubt a well founded hypothesis of the existence of historiography in Egypt before Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, and if such works existed, the author of the Futuh Misr must have been acquainted with them. However, according to the usage of the time, he probably relied on oral tradition whenever it was possible. During this period there was no sharp distinction between the historical tradition and the religious; the usage of the latter could be accepted, and an oral tradition with a complete isnad of rawis was considered more sound (sahih) than a written one, which could be incomplete and easily falsified. In any case, out of the more than forty rawis from whom Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam drew his information directly
(i.e., those whose names he gives at the beginning of the isnads) only a few were not his contemporaries and fewer still were authors of historical works. From these observations we conclude that the Futuh Misr was composed mainly from the oral tradition. When written material was used, it was checked carefully whenever possible against the oral information and presented in the hadith (attributable tradition) form accepted by the contemporary public.

The examination and analysis of the historical material in Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam and its transmitters (rawis) is important not only for determining the reliability of this important source, but also for the early intellectual history of Islamic Egypt. Unfortunately, this examination and analysis has not been done. The scholars best equipped for this task, namely the editors of Futuh Misr’s text, strangely enough did not deal with this subject. ‘Amir touches on it only very briefly and superficially17 and C. C. Torrey refers the reader to the account of the authorities in al-Kindi’s al-Wulat and al-Qudat by R. Guest.18 Though quite excellent, Guest’s account is only partially relevant and even a summary examination of both works shows that they largely draw from different sources.

This problem cannot be entirely disposed of, but it is only marginally pertinent to our study, because most of the strictly topographical and archaeological material given by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam is quoted without reference to any authority. It comes, so to speak, directly from the author. Only when this information is mixed with information he considers to be of religious or juridical value, especially when it concerns some distinguished historical personality or one of the Sahaba or Tabi‘um, is the authority given in the usual form of the isnad (with some exceptions, however).

Most of the topographical and archaeological information is limited to the first sixty or seventy years after the conquest, with only an occasional reference to the situation when Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam was writing. It is, then, roughly parallel to the chronology of the historical events. Therefore, one should assume that the sources were basically the same for both types of information. However, the topographical and archaeological material, presumably regarded as more secular in nature, was not considered worthy of the same careful attention as the semi-religious historical tradition. The author therefore thought it unnecessary to sanction this ‘inferior’ sort of information by a meticulous record of the accepted authorities. In addition to this, we can take for granted that Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam included in his discussion of early al-Fustat, its famous buildings, tribal quarters, etc., some informal or unauthorized information based on current local tradition. This, as unendorsed by any accepted authority, could evidently not be presented in a hadith-like manner. Even if the author could have produced names of some informants, we can be fairly certain that no ordinary person would have been accepted by a scholarly public as an authority for any scientific fact. It was much better to put it vaguely and informally: “yuqalu” (“it has been said,” “they say”), as is frequently the case.

There is some evidence in the text that Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam collected his information carefully and verified it. Normally he is very definite and affirmative about related facts and gives them as if they were contemporary common
knowledge, which may very well have been the case. We can be fairly confident that about the middle of the ninth century, when Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam committed his information to writing, local memory concerning primitive khittas (areas for settlement allotted to various groups—generally tribal groups—in the early days of al-Fustat; later simply 'quarter') buildings and the like was still alive and reasonably accurate. At that time some of the old buildings in a more or less modified form were certainly still standing, most thoroughfares followed their early courses and the town quarters had basically the same names and borders. Also, many descendants of the original settlers were still in the town and must have been aware of their history. Possibly Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's family itself was descended from original inhabitants of al-Fustat and was especially well versed in its history and traditions.19

As for the Futuh Misr's text, there are several partial editions. The best complete edition is doubtless that of C. C. Torrey, which appeared in 1920 and was based on the British Museum twelfth-century manuscript and three others from European collections. Very carefully prepared and including an introduction, index and very useful dictionary, it provides an excellent working instrument.

In 1961 another edition appeared by 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Amir,20 based on a manuscript from the Istanbul Fatih Collection dated A.D. 1136/37 (A.H. 531) and unknown to Torrey. The edition, although carelessly printed and without an index, gives us access to the earliest manuscript known so far.21

Before we discuss the topographical works of Ibn Duqmaq and al-Maqrizi, which will be of major importance to this study, a brief discussion of the secondary sources is in order. Of the long list of historical and geographical works written between the ninth and fourteenth centuries, in which al-Fustat and matters related to its history have been referred to in a more or less detailed way, only very few deserve our attention here. Most of the others either repeat the information known to us from better—that is to say, more reliable or older—works, or do not refer to the period we are interested in at all.

A small amount of original information is found in two other ninth-century works. One of them is a well known account of the Arab conquests by al-Baladhuri; the other, equally popular and reliable, is the geography of al-Ya'qubi. Although the latter was written in Egypt, both accounts refer to the country from a more detached viewpoint, treating it as a part of the Caliphate and not as the centre of attention as Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam does. This partly explains why there are few details, topographical or otherwise, in their works. Nevertheless, their general remarks still provide useful information on the early town and its people.

For al-Baladhuri's work the edition of al-Munadjidjidi22 was used. It is slightly better and is based on a collection of manuscript material larger than the well known standard edition by de Goeje.23 Existing translations of this work, by P. Hitti and F. Murgotten,24 and by O. Rescher,25 were inaccessible to this author. For al-Ya'qubi's Geography the edition of de Goeje26 and G. Wiet's translation27 were used.
The work of al-Baladhuri (written about A.D. 869) follows the use of hadith, well established in his time, in the presentation of the historical material. For each piece of information he gives a chain of informants with which we are able to check the sources or compare the data with parallel material transmitted by other authors, especially by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam and, to a lesser degree, al-Kindi. On the whole, the three authors draw largely from the same sources, the Egyptian historical tradition. This fact, while perfectly understandable for the two Egyptian writers, is somewhat strange with al-Baladhuri, who composed his works in Baghdad and belonged to the Iraqi school of history. It is not known whether he even visited Egypt. His study might easily have been written while he was studying in Damascus. It is more likely, however, that he had durable links with the country, as his grandfather had been employed in the administration there.

It is interesting to note that his main sources of information for the Egyptian campaign and related matters were either Ibn Lahi‘a or al-Laith ibn Sa‘d, both alleged authors of early historical works. Since al-Baladhuri could not possibly have known Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam’s Futuh Misr, which he never mentions, it is possible that he somehow had access to written material by these other authors.

Al-Ya‘qubi’s presentation of his material differs from that of al-Baladhuri in every respect. In both his works, the Geography and the History (of which the latter is of less value for our study), he discarded the isnads and presented his material as a narrative without naming his sources. Since Egypt was the country in which he spent much of his life and wrote his works, he certainly drew from the local written tradition as well, supplementing it with oral information and personal observation.

Next on our list are two important historical works of al-Kindi: Kitab Tasmiya Wuлат Misr, often called Kitab al-Wulat or Kitab al-Umara for short, which is a history of the governors of Egypt from the Arab conquest up to the decline of the Ikhshid rule (c. A.D. 640-961), and Kitab al-Qudat, which is a history of the judges of Egypt up to the year A.D. 860. Both works were published in one volume by Rhuvon Guest, the text of al-Qudat being supplemented with appendices which bring the text up to the beginning of the eleventh century.

The author of these works, Abu ‘Umar Muhammed ibn Yusuf ibn Ya‘qub al-Kindi al-Tudjibi al-Misri (A.D. 897-961), was a native Egyptian, as is evident from his nisbas (surnames), and belonged to the South Arab tribe of Tudjib which had been prominent at al-Fustat since its foundation. His many-sided historical activity (unfortunately the majority of his books are lost) makes him the outstanding figure in Islamic Egyptian historiography of his time, especially since all his attention was focused on his native country.

The nature of the historical information that we can draw from both works is manifold. Although they were intended as chronicles for the chiefs of political and judiciary authorities, and the author was very careful to keep closely to his subject, the works naturally also referred to various facts of a military, administrative, social and economic nature. There is not much direct information on the physical aspect of the city of al-Fustat: our author evidently kept it for his
specialized treatise on the *khitat*. Luckily for us, al-Fustat is often the main theatre of the events he is describing; therefore, incidental references valuable for the study of its topography are also included. Perhaps more important are numerous allusions revealing various aspects of the social structure of the early city as well as the main subject of the work, which gives detailed information on its political background.

The next early medieval historical work composed in Egypt is the *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church*. Though mistakenly ascribed to a single author, Sawirus (Severus) ibn al-Muqaffa’, the bishop of al-Ashmunein, in reality it was composed by various scribes whose names and dates are in many cases known to us. As for the bishop Sawirus, it is assumed that about the middle of the tenth century he translated earlier biographies written usually in Coptic, but sometimes in Greek, into Arabic and edited them. From the note by the copyist Yuhanna ibn Sa'id ibn Yahya ibn Mina, known as Ibn al-Qulzumi, which was inserted at the end of the biography of Cyril II, it would rather appear that it was he who edited (probably shortly after A.D. 1128) the earlier part of the *History* up to the eleventh century. Of course this does not exclude the role of Sawirus, although Yuhanna’s statement indicates that the problem of the authorship of this document should be reexamined.

The primary concern of the biographies is, of course, ecclesiastical history, but at the same time they give abundant information on the social, political and economic situation of the country. Some parts of the *History* are less valuable than others, which is understandable in a composite work which is dependent on the varying abilities of its multiple authors. For the early Islamic period it is uniquely valuable, as the biographies are quite often eyewitness accounts, an advantage which the contemporary Muslim sources do not possess.

For the study of al-Fustat, the *History* gives us considerable important information often not found elsewhere. The biographies for the first centuries of Islam, however, give relatively more information about Alexandria, as this city was the Patriarchal See. But the growing influence of the Arab capital, the interference of the central authorities in the affairs of the Christian community, and the simultaneous involvement of an influential Coptic secretarial class in the central administration of the province, changed this situation long before the See had been transferred to the capital. Closer relations of the Alexandrian Patriarchate with the seat of government could not but be reflected in the *History*, where, especially from the last decades of the seventh century, al-Fustat is frequently mentioned.

The first part of the text, up to the year A.D. 849, was edited and published with an English translation by B. Evetts in *Patr. Or*. A better edition of the text up to the year A.D. 767, based on the older manuscript from Hamburg, was published by C. F. Seybold. Evett’s edition has been supplemented by the Société d’Archéologie Copte in Cairo, which published other parts of the text based on various manuscripts, together with an English translation. So far, the biographies of the patriarchs have been published only up to the thirteenth century.
Another author belonging to the Egyptian Christian milieu was a certain Abu Salih, the author of an interesting book on the churches and monasteries of Egypt (Kitab Kana' is wa-Adyira Misr), edited from a unique copy in Paris by B. T. A. Evetts and translated by the same scholar. The author was an Armenian who settled in Egypt and somehow became associated with the Coptic creed, but of whose life nothing more is known except that he completed his work in the beginning of the thirteenth century (the last date mentioned in his work is A.D. 1208), when he must have already reached a considerable age.\(^{38}\)

The most valuable information in this work is probably based on the author's personal observations, which, however, chronologically exceed the scope of the present study. Of significance for us, therefore, are only those parts where the author draws from older sources. These are not very numerous and most of them have survived in a more or less complete form elsewhere. But there are a few quotations from a very important and lost work of al-Kindi entitled Kitab al-Khitat, which bear directly on our subject. They give us interesting details about some of the city's quarters, its original settlers and so on, which are not recorded elsewhere.

In most cases, when referring to events which were not contemporary, Abu Salih names his sources. Sometimes, however, his information remains unattributed. In such cases, especially when we cannot find parallels in the known texts, we can infer that they also come from al-Kindi, unless our author used other books of whose existence or contents we are still ignorant. Some local oral tradition may also have been used, but it will, of course, always remain untraceable. Examples of facts which cannot be paralleled elsewhere are the information he gives about the zariba built by the Arabs at the time of the siege of Babylon, or about the red banner which gave its name to the later quarter of al-Hamra, or al-Qarafa.

Important, although practically never used by students of the Egyptian capital's historical topography, is the famous geographical dictionary by Yaqut al-Hamawi. The work, completed and published in Halab in March A.D. 1224,\(^{39}\) contains abundant material from Egypt, which at least in part was collected during the author's visit there in A.D. 1215. The material relevant to our study is contained in two large articles, "al-Fustat" and "Misr," and in a number of small entries devoted to the better-known topographical units in the town.\(^{40}\) But on the whole, the author of this work provides little information which is unknown to us from other sources, especially from al-Maqrizi. However, since Yaqut's work is more than two centuries earlier than al-Khitat, it gives us a valuable means of checking the latter. For topographical details he used the works of al-Quda'i extensively and to a lesser degree that of al-Djawwani. For the early period and details of the conquest he used the works of Abu 'Umar al-Kindi (possibly including his Kitab al-Khitat and Kitab Mawali Ahl Misr) and the Futuh Misr of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, although he does not mention this work by name. Most likely the quotations referred to as coming from such authorities as Ibn Lahi'a, al-Laith ibn Sa'd, and Yazid ibn Abi Habib, were taken from Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam and not directly from their works.\(^{41}\) However, certain details, such as the names
of four high-ranking officers of 'Amr's army who were appointed to supervise the
distribution of lands at the foundation of al-Fustat, which are given by Yaqut but do not occur in Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, would indicate that the former had at his
disposal a fuller account of events, probably that of al-Quda'i. But on the whole,
in his relation of the conquest and the foundation of al-Fustat, Yaqut follows Ibn
'Abd al-Hakam's narrative, though presenting it in a more systematic manner
(which is characteristic of his work).

With the exception of the Futuh Misr of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, whose
significance for our study far outweighs that of all other written works, the largest
amount of information is provided by the latest group of historical sources. As a
rule, the information is fuller and more detailed here than in earlier authors and
covers a wider range; at the same time, it is more methodically and logically
arranged. This fact is seemingly paradoxical, since the historical material for this
period available to later authors could not have been better or more extensive
than that which their predecessors had at their disposal. On the contrary, time
effaced a good deal of it. This paradox can be resolved in light of the
extraordinary development of Islamic historiography and the encyclopaedic
sciences in the later Middle Ages. The methods of collecting material and
subsequently presenting it in a written form were perfected, the fields and scope of
interest of particular scholars multiplied and expanded, and their scientific
horizons widened. But these processes, advantageous as they doubtless were,
often contained implicit dangers, especially in cases where a scholar dealt with
facts and situations distant in time or space. Since there was a marked tendency to
rationalize obscure points within the particular subjects covered, even though the
supporting data lacked consistency, were insufficient or even unavailable, scholars
were introducing their own theories and speculations. Occasionally they were
right, as in the famous sociological generalisations of Ibn Khaldun, but more
often the speculations were baseless, irrational, dictated by prejudice, or simply
lacked a scientific basis. Of course, these deficiencies were not restricted to late
medieval works. They characterized the medieval mind in general, but in this later
period they seem more pronounced.

In the historical material useful for our study—i.e., that concerning the early
city's physical form and in particular its topography—these drawbacks are not
easily noticed. Non-controversial facts are usually presented with apparent
objectivity, conforming to the best judgment of authors, and only with rigorous
criticism and minute examination and comparison against other available sources
does their inconsistency appear. Examples of such cases, which unfortunately
have been accepted at face value by modern scholarship, are discussed in
subsequent pages; and such cases are fairly common, even among our best
authorities.

Of the numerous historical and encyclopaedic works composed in the late
medieval period in Egypt (and almost every one gives a more or less detailed
account of al-Fustat), two have a very special place in our source material. These
are al-Intisar of Ibn Duqmaq and al-Khitat of al-Maqrizi. None of the others
deserves close attention, except perhaps al-Qalqashandi's Subh al-A'sha, which
gives some new and significant information. For the early period these later sources contain either abridged repetitions of such sources as at-Tabari, al-Baladhuri, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, al-Kindi, et al. (as in the case of the famous chronicles of Ibn Dawadari, Ibn Taghri Birdi, and Ibn Iyas), or, as in Husn al-Muhadara of as-Suyuti, utilize material already collected by al-Maqrizi. There is also practically nothing of value, except for some marginal notes, in the voluminous work of Ibn Sa'id, though it is a useful source of information on later periods and on literary history.

Sarim ad-Din Ibrahim Ibn Muhammad Ibn Aydumar al-Ala'i Ibn Duqmaq, an author of several historical works on Egypt, was also known as a jurist (a subject on which he also wrote). But for posterity and especially for modern scholarship, his fame was primarily established by his historical and topographical study entitled al-Intisar li Wasitat 'Iqd al-Amsar. Of the entire work of ten volumes only the fourth and fifth parts are still extant.

The whole of the fourth part is devoted to al-Fustat, its topography and monuments. The single preserved manuscript is evidently the author's autograph, (a view opposed by Casanova). The handwriting supports this opinion, but more conclusive is the evidence that the manuscript is incomplete. On many pages of the text, places have been left blank, evidently with the intention of filling them in with details, dates, etc., which were not available to the author as he was writing. Since one would not expect an unfinished work to be given to a copyist, we can be reasonably certain that it is indeed the autograph, or at least a working copy. This may also explain why al-Maqrizi did not quote it among his sources, rather than, as Casanova suggests, that it was because Ibn Duqmaq literally copied large parts of Ibn Mutawwadj's work which al-Maqrizi had in the original. The work being unfinished and unpublished at the time of the author's death in the year A.D. 1400 (A.H. 809), it was simply not available to al-Maqrizi when he composed his chief opus (in spite of his being for a time Ibn Duqmaq's pupil). This question is important because it directly concerns the material essential for our study. However, we will leave it for the moment and discuss it together with al-Khitat.

Since only a part of the whole study has been preserved, we cannot evaluate it as a whole. Apparent gaps and deficiencies in historical interpretation were perhaps made up for in other volumes, but there is no way of knowing. From the volume that we have, the study appears to be a rather dry, unimaginative enumeration of facts and reminds one more of a concise topographical dictionary than a vivid historical narrative (such as that of al-Maqrizi). This is perhaps due to the juristic mind of an author trained in legal traditions. But this characteristic, although somewhat dull, inspires confidence in the work in spite of its lack of references to the sources used—and these are few indeed. For information concerning the early period, al-Quda'i, al-Kindi and Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam are practically the only authorities mentioned. For later facts Ibn al-Mutawwadj is most frequently quoted. A few other authors, such as Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi, Ibn Yunus, and 'Ala' ad-Din Ibn Nablusi, are also occasionally named, but the amount of information ascribed directly to them is negligible,
The bulk of the material is related without any indication of authority. Some of it can, nevertheless, be traced to earlier sources which either have been preserved in their original form or are known to us from quotations in later works. In all such cases where it is possible to compare texts, the reliability of Ibn Duqmaq is apparent, which makes his negligence in naming the sources even more inexplicable. Since the most important topographical works on al-Fustat, (namely al-Khitat of al-Kindi, al-Khitat of al-Quda'i and an-Naqat of Ibn al-Mutawwadji), are lost, we do not know to what extent the fourth part of al-Intisar depended on them—probably even more than al-Maqrizi's al-Khitat, which focused on al-Qahira rather than on al-Fustat. The context proves, however, that Ibn Duqmaq did not copy them slavishly, as Casanova suggests. He theorizes that al-Intisar depended almost totally on Ibn al-Mutawwadji, and whenever possible tried to improve a piece of information. Evidently, with a preconceived form of the study in mind, Ibn Duqmaq cut out unnecessary, inconsistent or untrustworthy details, supplemented his work with vital facts, dates, etc., and through his personal research made efforts to bring the history of the elements of the town's topography up to his own times.

Material useful for the study of the earliest period of al-Fustat is mostly contained in two early sections; that is to say, in the introduction relating the foundation of the town, and in the chapter on famous houses. Unfortunately, two cards of the manuscript are missing from the latter chapter, which may account for the lack of information on some important houses mentioned by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam. But on the other hand, we have here some information not to be found in other known sources. Additional early material is scattered throughout almost all the other chapters, especially those which describe different kinds of streets, famous places, hills, lakes, mosques and baths. However, since the primary task of the author was to describe the city in his own times, he neglected to discuss, for example, the quarters which were already abandoned and monuments and places unrelated to contemporary topography, although there are exceptions to this general rule. Apart from this there is a complete lack of any precise sense of geographical orientation in his work, but this is a common defect of all medieval source material. Dimensions, distances, and directions in reference to permanent landmarks are almost never mentioned, and this makes it extremely difficult or even impossible to locate most of the topographical elements to which Ibn Duqmaq refers.

Taqi ad-Din 'Ali al-Maqrizi is certainly the best known of all Egyptian medieval historians and one whose fame has spread far beyond the professional circles of orientalists and oriental scholars. His Kitab al-Mawa'iz wa'l-I'tibar bi-Dhikr al-Khitat wa'l-Athar, usually referred to simply as al-Khitat, is especially renowned and serves as the main reference work for the historical topography of Cairo and other Egyptian towns as well as for the country's institutions, social history, etc. The work is too well known to describe it in detail here. The third part of it is devoted to al-Fustat and its suburb-cities, al-'Askar and al-Qata'i. In addition to historical and topographical information it includes a summary of al-Kindi's history of governors from the Arab conquest to the foundation of al-
Qahira. The information on the early urban agglomeration of al-Fustat is not restricted, however, to this particular section. Much more is to be found in the geographical part, where the Nile, its bridge, the Canal and hills are treated; as well as in the sections on provincial towns, and especially in the section on al-Qahira and its history, famous monuments and surroundings. This is where we find information on al-Djiza, al-Qarafa, the Island of the Shipyard and Birkat al-Habash, important mosques, the general environs and many other details essential for our subject.

The sources that al-Maqrizi used approximate those of Ibn Duqmaq. Both authors had access to the most important earlier works, which provided them with basic material. It seems, however, that each of them was looking for different things in the same sources. Ibn Duqmaq collected details about buildings and streets, and very little else was within the scope of his interest; on the other hand, al-Maqrizi was more interested in the town as a whole: its physical setting, territorial development, evolution and even social and hygienic conditions. For this material he utilized the accounts of al-Muqaddasi, Ibn Ridwan and Ibn Sa'id, which his older contemporaries had ignored. And here we return to the question of the relationship between al-Khitat and al-Intisar. Analyzing al-Fustat material in both works, one cannot help feeling that al-Maqrizi was well aware of the contents and form of his master's study, although he did not use it as his source. This might be due to the fact we pointed out above, that it was incomplete and unpublished when al-Maqrizi wrote his main opus. One could also say (if it is possible to use such an expression with regard to the medieval method of scholarship) that he tried not to plagiarize his teacher's unpublished work, either out of loyalty or perhaps because of his high self-esteem and conviction that he too could create something original on the same subject (which in fact he did).57

We have no means of proving our point without contemporary evidence, which we lack; but examination of the main part of al-Khitat, the one dealing with al-Qahira, seems to support it. The composition, arrangement of material and selection of subjects almost slavishly follow that of Ibn Duqmaq in his presentation of al-Fustat material in al-Intisar, only the style is more vivid and the narration and details more interesting—but this is due to the differences of scholarly temperament in the two men. They also differ in the treatment of sources: al-Maqrizi is usually very careful to acknowledge authorship of quotations while Ibn Duqmaq, as stated above, largely neglected to do so.

For whatever reasons, al-Maqrizi did not limit himself in his narrative to the bare facts collected in earlier sources. He devoted considerable space to his own historical reconstructions, which were based on personal observations and probably also on oral information. But this tendency to attempt to give a full explanation for obscure historical phenomena led to the frequent use of his imagination. In this respect, mutatis mutandis, we can compare him with Ibn Khaldun, though in a much more limited sense, in that he was restricted to the concrete subject of the topography and historical phenomena of one city. In a way, he had the mind of a modern man, but unfortunately lacked modern historical methodology and criticism.
In this respect his speculations and reconstructions, interesting as they might be, are often inconsistent with his own facts and are dangerous to follow without thorough checking against all available information. One of the best examples of this is his reconstruction of the course of the Nile within the town’s boundaries at the time of the Arab conquest. But still, such material should not be rejected a priori since it may be based on authentic and partially trustworthy historical tradition which is not preserved elsewhere. Still, the main value of his work for the study of the early periods rests with the meticulous transmission of information from sources which are long since lost and would otherwise have been totally inaccessible to modern science. Usually he quoted from them verbatim, and this can be verified in the instances where a given work has been preserved in its original form. Occasionally, however, he abridged the original text or replaced difficult or archaic words and expressions with more current ones. Only rarely did he evaluate or discuss the cited piece of information, though sometimes according to the usage of his times, he brought up two or more opposing views on one question. The author or title of a quoted source is normally given, although now and then he neglected to do so, even for long quotations, as for instance for an abridged account on the Tulunids taken from al-Kindi. Other instances of carelessness, such as frequent citations from al-Quda’i using Ibn al-Mutawwadj as an intermediary for the original work, can be found. But on the whole, as we said, we can praise his care and exactitude.

The last work we must mention is the famous manual of secretarial composition known as Subh al-A’sha fi Sin'a al-Insha by Shihab ad-Din ‘Ali ibn Ahmad al-Qalqashandi (died in A.D. 1418). A description of al-Fustat is included in the second Excursus on Al-Masalik wa’l-Mamalik. Comparatively short, it nevertheless includes some original information which supplements our other sources and allows for verification, especially of citations from al-Quda’i, al-Qalqashandi’s main source of information on early al-Fustat.

Archaeological Sources

From the standpoint of archaeological research the site of al-Fustat was perhaps luckier than most other Egyptian mediaeval towns. For a long time it was a sad rule that whenever medieval remains overlay ancient sites and stood in the way of archaeologists looking for pharaonic remains they were recklessly removed with no record at all. With al-Fustat, this was not the case. The site did not promise to yield anything ancient and consequently was left alone. But because of its proximity to the capital and its suburb, Old Cairo, it has served since the abandonment of most of its quarters in the late eleventh century as a source of valuable building material, then as an enormous dump, as the location of industrial installations which were disagreeable in an urban environment, and for squatters. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it became an inexhaustible source of sibakh, a precious agricultural fertilizer, and at the same time, with the growing interest in objects of Islamic art, the domain of treasure
hunters. In practice, the activities of treasure hunters, sabbakhin, and extractors of building materials were often combined. This large-scale exploitation not only did inestimable damage to the actual remains of the medieval city but also disturbed the stratigraphy and destroyed the archaeological context, so that much of the historical evidence is totally lost or beyond reconstruction. With this state of affairs, the large-scale systematic work commenced in 1912 by the Museum of Arab Art and directed by ‘Ali Bahgat could not but be welcomed. He organized the sabbakhin, put them under the supervision of specially appointed guards, and through their industry unearthed an important portion of the town (about twelve hectares), and made a number of large soundings in different parts of the site. As the result of twelve years of excavation, thousands of objects, some of them of considerable value, were saved for the Museum, and a report was published. His method of excavation obviously did not allow for precise chronological differentiation of architectural remains, nor did it permit the dating of objects by archaeological methods. Therefore, for the present study it can only be used tentatively, as a source of comparative material which must be interpreted on the basis of subsequent scientific research.

Baghat’s excavation ended around 1924. In subsequent decades many other, although much smaller, excavations were undertaken in various parts of the site, but few have been published and their results are therefore mostly unknown. In most cases, however, the unearthed portions of the town remain uncovered and are open for examination, and can serve as comparative material.

For a new large-scale scientific excavation, the site of al-Fustat had to wait another forty years. Excavation began in 1964 as a kind of emergency project to investigate areas destined by Cairo’s town planners for modern construction. The work was carried out by a large scientific staff with modern equipment, trained archaeological workmen brought in from Upper Egypt, and the cooperation of various experts. So far, about three hectares (in two sectors) of the town have been uncovered.

During the 1960s and 1970s archaeological research was also undertaken by various missions of the Egyptian Antiquities Department, in the course of which a considerable area was cleared and investigated by means of soundings.

One of the archaeological characteristics of the eastern part of al-Fustat, at least in the sections so far investigated, is that, wherever possible, foundation walls were laid directly on bedrock. This applies both to the earliest buildings as well as to others which were subsequently built in the same place. This practice, in addition to the disturbance of the archaeological stratification and context by generations of diggers mentioned above, accounts for the scarcity of remains datable to the first century of the Islamic era. Nevertheless, meticulous investigation of the rare undisturbed and stratified portions of the preserved fills, particularly of streets and under pavements within houses, led to the discovery of layers datable to the early period of the town’s existence. Also, certain fragments of the sewage system and even some remains of actual houses could be dated back to Umayyad times. The results of this scientifically conducted excavation are derived from only a small part of the site, but given their similarity to other
portions of the town previously excavated, they can safely be applied to all of them; that is to say, to almost twenty hectares of urban area. Such a considerable portion of the town certainly allows for valid generalizations.

Archaeological material from the western part of the town inclusive of its pre-Islamic nucleus, the fortress of Babylon or Qasr ash-Sham', has a different character. Here the occupation was practically uninterrupted throughout the medieval period and modern times, and this has made any systematic archaeological research impracticable. The only extensive works conducted so far were recent excavations undertaken within and around the Mosque of 'Amr on the occasion of its last reconstruction. These results, of utmost importance for Islamic archaeology, are unfortunately unpublished and the material inaccessible. The same applies to other occasional works within this quarter or to random excavations. Thus, the only archaeological information for Old Cairo comes from the author's own observations.

The material on Qasr ash-Sham' is a little better. Although no scientific archaeological excavations were ever conducted in this quarter, some random work has been done and described, and, what is more important, the preserved architectural monuments have been investigated and recorded.
2. The Geography of the Site

The area of old al-Fustat has undergone considerable transformation in the more than thirteen centuries since the town's establishment. The changes differed in character and so did their causes and their chronology. Not all of them can be scientifically defined and proven today. However, a reconstruction of the main physiological features of the area from the period of the Arab conquest is desirable, because the relief and physical conditions of the area in which the town was founded influenced its subsequent development in a fundamental way (as is the case with every urban agglomeration). Obviously, in studies of this kind the present state of the site in question must be accepted as the starting point. In general, the historical sources only rarely provide information which is applicable for topographical purposes. This is also true in our case and therefore these sources are of secondary value. The more useful archaeological data are unfortunately very fragmentary; moreover, in the majority of cases they are chronologically uncertain. In addition, they are restricted to a relatively small part of the whole area in which we are interested; namely, to the area which has been scientifically investigated. That is why the basic information comes from geographical works, some geological studies, and cartographic data, as well as from the author's own observations made in the field between 1964 and 1978.

The area of the town proper is situated on the eastern bank of the Nile, just outside the Delta, whose southern border it defines. On the west bank the suburb of al-Djiza (Gizeh) with its adjoining plain and the islands in the Nile are more like a continuation of the Delta in a southerly direction.

The 31° N. latitude runs through the town. The approximate distance from the Mediterranean in a straight line is no more than 175 kilometres. It is enough, however, to intercept a considerable portion of the rain from the north. The long-term average rainfall is slightly less than thirty millimetres annually. Rain falls only during the winter months and normally there are only seven rainy days a year.

The temperature in January averages about 12° C and in July a little below 28° C. Because of the wide range of temperatures within twenty-four hours, both the night cold in winter and the heat in summer are sometimes strongly felt. But the low temperatures in winter usually do not last very long, while the summer heat is mitigated by relatively cold nights and refreshing northern winds. In the spring hot southern winds, the so-called khamsins, often turn into sand-storms and are very trying. However, on the whole the climate is fairly regular, the
weather stable, and catastrophes such as hurricanes, so frequent in other regions, are exceptional. Until the High Dam was built, a more immediate source of unexpected disaster was the Nile and its annual flood. Although the fluctuation of the water level was fairly regular (with its minimum in the spring, beginning to rise about the twentieth of June, and its maximum at the end of September, with the normal fluctuation in the water level of between 6 and 7.5 metres) it departed occasionally from this norm: either the flood did not reach a level which would adequately irrigate the fields and ensure sufficient crops, or there were excessive floods, submerging the country under water and causing destruction within the town as well. However, the damage caused by these floods, no matter how destructive, cannot be compared with that resulting from a low Nile and the subsequent bad crops. The situation was particularly severe when there were two or more years of low Niles (a not uncommon phenomenon), since food reserves were soon exhausted and famine spread throughout the country. In the big cities these conditions were usually accompanied by epidemics and unrest, resulting in political and economic chaos with far-reaching, long-term effects.

Although climatic factors and the Nile, coupled with the activity of man, had the greatest influence on the environment and resulted in most of the changes in the physiography of the area, one should not disregard tectonic movements, which were of some significance as well. Earthquakes, though not as frequent in this area as in other regions of the Mediterranean Basin, took place occasionally and resulted in considerable damage. Unfortunately, we have scant information about them and not all have been noted by the sources. Information for the early Islamic period particularly is lacking. However, on the basis of later data, we can assume that earthquakes seriously affecting the town occurred at least once a century.

The area relevant to our study is enclosed between the Nile and the steep scarps of al-Muqattam overlooking the town on its eastern side. The northern boundary can be delimited by a hypothetical line drawn between the westernmost spur of al-Muqattam, which in later times was occupied by the Citadel, and the Nile somewhere near the present-day Midan Sayyida Zaynab. To the south the area of the town reached the depression of Birkat al-Habash, which is equivalent to the plain belonging today to al-Basatin village and extending up to al-Ma'adi.

The greater part of the territory was occupied by a rocky plateau of varying height, which in the period under discussion was most probably barren and covered with loose blocks of stone, the residue of erosion. Only a relatively narrow belt close to the Nile was alluvial plain and could be used for cultivation. These two parts were clearly distinguished in medieval times, and according to their main physiographic features had different names. The one near the Nile was called 'Amal Asfal, and the other 'Amal Fauq, designations which can be translated approximately as “the Lowland” and “the Highland,” respectively. These two areas housed the main part of the town of al-Fustat proper. There were suburbs situated outside this area, which, although they were directly connected with al-Fustat and inseparable components of the urban agglomeration, were also geographically distinctive regions, and as such they will
be discussed later. Another reason for this distinction is that the main physical features of the suburbs underwent far less significant transformation in the course of time than the area of al-Fustat proper.

'Amal Asfal

This narrow strip of lowland directly bordering on the Nile actually constitutes part of the valley floor which continues to the south for thousands of kilometres between the barren eastern desert and the river, and gradually expands into the broad plains of the eastern Delta in the north. The valley floor within the town varied considerably in width. Generally speaking, it was much wider in the north than in the south, where the plateau forming its eastern border was higher and descended steeply to the Nile. With the exception of some higher hills, in the north the plateau descended very gently towards the plain and was more distant from the river. But on the whole, some thirteen centuries ago the lowland was considerably less extensive than it is now, the Nile having receded several hundred metres to the west since that time. Also, its aspect differed from the present in many respects. First of all it was considerably lower than now and therefore far more sharply contrasted with the adjacent highland. Its rise and the resulting levelling of the town's contours was due to a twofold action of nature and man. The first is a phenomenon common to the whole floor of the Nile Valley, especially its lower sections, and results from the gradual sedimentation of alluvia. As the whole valley floor is rising, the river bed is also rising at a rate comparable with the elevation of the river banks by sedimentation and so, consequently, is the water level. According to our estimates, the valley in the neighbourhood of Cairo rose between one and one and a half metres during the last thirteen centuries. In the city itself, though, the rise in ground level through human action was much more important. This process, common to almost all ancient settlements, is the result of the accumulation of occupational layers, and these piled up especially fast in low and wet places near the Nile because of more intensive commercial and industrial activity. Observation in various places, mainly in the central part of 'Amal Asfal, indicates that the ground has risen between two and eight metres since Byzantine times, due in part to alluvial sedimentation, especially in originally lower places. The rise in ground level also resulted in the widening of the area of 'Amal Asfal as it encroached on the lower parts of the rocky edge of 'Amal Fauq. It goes without saying that the accumulation of occupational deposits and alluvia resulted in the disappearance of minor natural and artificial undulations of the ground. This process of levelling of the uneven earth surface is well-known both to archaeologists and geologists. Thus, what is nowadays almost a flat area might not have been so thirteen centuries earlier. Unfortunately, without special research, soundings, excavation and stratigraphic examination, one cannot precisely determine the original state of the area. Moreover, within 'Amal Asfal it would be almost impossible to carry out extensive archaeological research, since the area has been densely settled in modern times. Nevertheless,
incidental observations and references in the medieval sources provide a number of useful indications. On the whole it appears that the area was comparatively level, although not devoid of some depressions and elevations. It was also quite low as compared with 'Amal Fauq. It has been suggested that this lowland was regularly flooded by the annual flood of the Nile, but this does not seem likely. Probably most of the area was just above the reach of the normal flood. Additionally it may have been protected by an artificially constructed embankment.7

There were a number of small ponds there such as Birkat Shata, Birkat Rumays, and others whose names have not been preserved, that probably dried up when the level of the Nile was low, and one large lake at the northern outskirts of the town, known later as Birkat Qarun. During the flood some places were marshy. These muddy depressions and ponds were evidently remnants of the river's meanderings which long ago had been separated from the main current. In the course of time they tended to disappear and today there is no trace of them. Likewise, the remains of the old navigation canal known earlier under the name of Amnis Trajanus, the most which once protected Babylon, and a canal in the southern part of 'Amal Asfal which used to drain water from Birkat al-Habash, have all disappeared. This canal, known from later medieval sources as Khalidj Bani Wa'ill, in all probability also predated the conquest.

On the other hand, there is no written evidence of the existence of natural or artificial elevations. Three of them are indicated by archaeological observations, however incomplete and incidental they may be. The existence of some others, such as low tells which were the remains of pre- or early-historical settlements, are probable but cannot be proved, and they would have been totally absorbed in the increasing layers of river mud and town debris.

One elevation was the original site of the Mosque of 'Amr. It would certainly be logical to assume that the mosque of the principal town quarter was built on an eminence high enough to be safe from the flood. That it was really so can be inferred from observations of the mosque's environs. The elevation was based on a hump of solid bedrock, long in shape but not exceeding three hundred metres in length. It was probably a geological formation similar to Kaum al-Djarih (Kom al-Garih), which still exists, although much disfigured by recent earthworks. But the elevation on which the Mosque of 'Amr was built was considerably lower, not more than three or at most four metres above the surrounding plain.

Babylon was probably built on an analogous low elevation with a slight depression in the northeastern part. However, it is not known for certain if the base of this elevation is also formed of bedrock. The foundations of the powerful and heavy ramparts would be more solid and resistant if set on solid rock instead of soft alluvia impregnated with water, and such a bedding may have been the reason for the choice of this particular location for erecting the fortress. Be that as it may, it seems certain that on the eve of the Arabs' settlement in the area the ground level inside the fortress was considerably higher than that outside. Setting aside speculation about unproven geological formations, this could have
been caused by uninterrupted occupation within the enclosure for several centuries prior to the conquest, which inevitably resulted in the accumulation of several metres of occupational debris. As the area outside the fortress was subject to much less intensive occupation, the accumulation was slower there, although some extra growth must be allowed for the sedimentation of Nile deposits. The evaluation of the levels in absolute terms is very difficult; however, it seems reasonable to assume that the difference in level amounted to three metres, a very rough estimate.

Physical conditions in the region of 'Amal Asfal (although not perfect because of soil humidity), and its location in proximity to the Nile and along the main lines of communication, made it the most favourable area for settlement. This area was certainly further improved during the early periods of the Arab occupation; many of its natural depressions were filled in and the area rapidly rose and was protected against the annual flood. This process not only increased the area available for settlement, but also resulted in a more intensive occupation; the area eventually became the most densely populated, filthy, and unhealthy quarter of al-Fustat, whose hygienic conditions were deplored even in the Middle Ages. This was, however, a later development, with which we are not concerned here.

'Amal Fauq

This vast area includes all the rocky plateau east of the Nile valley and west of the Muqattam cliffs. In theory there should be excluded from this area some low spots located in several places between the rocky uplands. In fact, the denomination, which implies that the area was considerably more elevated in comparison to 'Amal Asfal, should not be taken literally, as the area includes several depressions, old wadis or natural cavities, whose level were no higher than the valley itself. The whole area can be divided into a number of sub-regions, such as: 1) the vast area bordering 'Amal Asfal from the east and consisting of two high hills and undulating rocky ground slightly higher to the east and cut through by broad low-lying valleys; 2) the upland of al-Qarafa as-Sughra, almost flat nowadays, stretching east of the former; and 3) the wide massif of al-Qarafa al-Kubra immediately south of it.

The first sub-region, which in early medieval times accounted for as much as about two-thirds of the densely built-up urban area on the east bank, is today additionally divided into two parts by a modern highway known as Shari' Salah Salim. The road runs almost perpendicularly from the Nile, passes Kaum al-Djarir on its north, continues to the point where the wall of Salah ad-Din meets the aqueduct of Sultan an-Nasir, then proceeds in a northeasterly direction along the wall towards the Citadel; which it encircles on the east side. Although the division of this area by the road is totally artificial, it is convenient for the sake of description. This sub-region was simply referred to as al-Kharab in later medieval works, a denomination which we can adopt as well in the absence of anything better.
The Northern Area of al-Kharab

The reconstruction of the original physical features of this large area, which at the time of the town's foundation constituted its whole northeastern part (about one-fourth of the territory taken for the settlement), is a most difficult problem. It was probably never totally abandoned, because of its relative proximity to Fatimid Cairo; furthermore, parts of it (such as the so-called site of Tilul Zaynhum) were for centuries used by inhabitants of the nearby quarters as a convenient dumping ground for waste. Accumulation of rubbish and refuse from the city resulted in the formation of huge hills comparable to those called Qat' al-Mar'a situated north of the Citadel, or to the Montes Testacei in Rome.

The highest of these hills once reached the height of seventy-one metres above sea level, but recently the region underwent considerable change and levelling and was gradually occupied by public parks and modern buildings. This, of course, completely erased any possible remains of the older contours. The region extending farther south underwent even more drastic transformation. Part of it, the quarter called Sayyida Nafisa, adjacent to the cemetery of the same name, had been levelled and built over as early as the first quarter of this century. Then, in the 1950s and early 1960s, a large area of some fifteen hectares, situated at the bifurcation of Shari' Salah Salem and the Aqueduct of an-Nasir, was levelled and built over with blocks of low-cost flats. This new district is called Abu as-Su'ud. Thus, all this area, once cut by one of the most important and stable arteries of the medieval town (the Suq al-A'zam, connecting the Mosque of Ibn Tulun and the urban district surrounding it with the Mosque of 'Amr), is completely unavailable for systematic examination, and the details of its original contours are beyond reconstruction. Recently even the rubble heaps and ruins in the vicinity of the interesting architectural complex discovered in the 1930s, and mistakenly considered to be the remnants of al-'Askar, which are located between the Mosque of Abu as-Su'ud and Shari' Salim Zarifa, have been built over.21 The same has happened to the large area directly north of Shari' Salah Salim, east of the archaeological concession of the American Research Center in Egypt (ARCE) called Fustat B.22

One can only presume that the whole area to the north was once a big lowland bay, probably a plain slightly oriented towards the Nile and enclosing most of the area between the only two natural elevations appearing in this area—namely, the Kaum al-Djarih and Djabal Yashkur—and from the east limited by the elevations of the northern part of the Smaller Qarafa. The eastern edge of this area, in the place where the Aqueduct meets Salah ad-Din's wall twenty-one hundred metres from the bank of the Nile, is as much as thirty-three metres above sea level, a difference of eight metres in relation to the level of the present roads close to the Nile. On the north west, beyond Djabal Yashkur, the area is lower and is a continuation geographically of the Delta, which lies between the Nile and the already non-existent Khalidj and extends over the region of the large lakes once called Birkat Qarun and Birkat al-Fil, which have now disappeared. The area now comprises parts of the districts of Sayyida Zainab and
38 GEOGRAPHY OF THE SITE

(to the east) al-Manshiya.

In ancient times the whole area was dominated by Djabal Yashkur, an eminence already mentioned, where in A.D. 879, Ahmad ibn Tulun built his famous mosque. This rocky hill, geologically the western prolongation of the Muqattam spur on which the Citadel was built in the Ayyubid period, overlooked the plain and the Nile (which at the time of the conquest flowed close to the foot of the hill). Its western slope must have descended to the valley fairly steeply; the difference in level between the summit of the Djabal and the floor of the valley was in the range of forty to fifty metres, and it must have been a conspicuous landmark in the city's landscape.

The Southern Area of al-Kharab

The east central part of the old town extends today south of Shari' Salah Salim for about one and a half kilometres up to the new road connecting Old Cairo with Imam al-Laith and ‘Ain as-Sira.2J This part of the town has been much less affected by modern town planning and therefore, at least in theory, its original physiography can be reconstructed better, despite the extensive quarrying of building stone in many parts of the area in the past. With the exception of its western fringes on the border of Old Cairo and recent building along Shari' Salah Salim, the area is still uninhabited and presents the vista of a vast field of waste, heaps of debris, ruins and the huge cavities of former quarries, extending for almost three hundred hectares. The only major contemporary feature affecting the area in the northern part of this region (between the above-mentioned highway and the depression and the excavations of the old quarries near ‘Ain as-Sira and Batn al-Baqara) is a huge garbage dump. This dump is more than ten metres thick and covers an area of more than ten hectares, filling up the cavities left by the old quarries and natural depressions, but also obscuring still-unexplored areas of ruins. Between the rubbish dump and the mosque of Abu as-Su’ud there are now a number of new constructions erected in recent years, and several hectares have been levelled and prepared for a project of low-cost housing. Several streets have been laid out and other general preparations made.24 South of this are areas excavated by the Department of Antiquities.25

In the last ten years the area on the southern slope of Kaum al-Djarîh has been greatly affected as well. This is the only natural eminence in this part of the old town, reaching a height of over forty metres above sea level. Large masses of rock have been removed from both sides of the road leading from the north eastern corner of the old Jewish cemetery to the west. These rocky massifs must have been in some places over five metres high, which indicates that Kaum al-Djarîh extended much farther south and south west than it does now. The levelling of the ground and erecting of new buildings here and there can be observed all along the border in the built-over districts of Old Cairo. For the moment, building here is still sporadic, but one can expect that it will increase once the more advantageous areas are filled up. Unfortunately, the spontaneous
activity of the population has so far seldom been successfully restrained by administrative sanctions and the protest of archaeological authorities, and now it is seconded by more official actions.

Roughly half-way between Kaum al-Djarih and the rocky plateau where the ruins of the part of the town unearthed by 'Ali Bahgat26 (the area was then called Halqum al-Djamal) are located, is a long natural valley which once probably opened onto the Nile somewhere in the vicinity of Qasr ash-Sham'. It seems probable that in the bottom of this valley the Amnis Trajanus was once dug out.27

The valley extends to the north east and ends about two and a half kilometres from the Nile in a depression at the foot of the elevation known as Tilul 'Ain as-Sira. Before the High Dam was built, the valley was for the most part of the year dry, but is now swamp; small ponds and some vegetation appear, destroying vestiges of the medieval city. It is not possible today to determine if the valley spread farther to the north east. Big quarries north of the 'Ain as-Sira hills, which were still used until recent times and which also cut Salah ad-Din's wall at this point, and the modern rubbish dump mentioned above disfigured irreversibly this part of the old town.

The outline of the borders of the valley, even where it can still be distinguished in the terrain, disappeared under the heaps of rubble which amassed there in the late Middle Ages. However, it seems that its western part took on the form of a wide sunken basin. In its lowest part, near the old Jewish cemetery, there were until recently three ponds, largely due to water seepage from the Nile. It is significant that the valley was used in the latter part of the tenth century for building an aqueduct-pipeline, which was discovered in the area of the ARCE excavation.28 Its continuation has been located, about one kilometre farther to the north east, by a team from the Egyptian Antiquities Department.29 At the same time, this discovery proves the inclination of the valley in a north easterly direction. This, of course, allows for a conclusion that the depression is natural and not the product of contemporary stone quarrying like many other depressions in the area of the old town. Simultaneously, it provides evidence that the territory of 'Amal Faqiq was not a uniform rocky plateau rising towards the slopes of al-Muqattam but had very pronounced natural contours. The differences in level of up to twenty metres were by no means exceptional, adding to the variety of the town but also causing additional technical problems for the architects.

East of the lowest part of the depression discussed above is a series of elevations ranging in height from fifteen to twenty metres, the aforementioned Tilul 'Ain as-Sira. These are the highest hills in this east-central part of the town, even higher than the Smaller Qarafa situated farther to the east (today a big necropolis and a residential district named after the well known Imam ash-Shafi'i's mausoleum). In their present state it is not easy to determine to what extent the hills are natural formations and to what extent they were formed by layers of the rubbish dump of a late medieval date. The fact that some of the artificial hills were of considerable height was proved by the ARCE excavations in 1971.30 A hill ten metres high was dug up and the whole of it down to the very foot was formed of layers of rubbish amassed in the period from the twelfth to the
fifteenth century. In the case of Tilul 'Ain as-Sira this seems only partly true. The solid rock visible in the lower parts of the exposed profile is quite thick and indicates that differences of ten metres in level in the bedrock were not rare in that part of town. This is even truer in the south eastern part of the hills, where, between the deserted quarry and the mausoleum of Ibn Tabataba, there is a depression in the rocky ground which is occupied by a lake and a hot mineral spring after which the whole district gets its name, 'Ain as-Sira. West of that region the hilly area and the gentle slope of Great Qarafa is now covered with excavations of old quarries. These are continued a few hundred metres farther west by analogous stone pits in Batn al-Baqara, which stretches almost to the wall of Salah ad-Din. The old quarries disturbed the original relief of the surface in the south eastern part of the area of al-Kharab considerably. The unexploited parts of the rock allow one, however, to reconstruct approximately the original appearance of the ground surface here. It was a rocky plateau dropping steeply in some places, and in others sloping gently towards the north and north west from an average height of thirty metres above sea level below the ridge of al-Qarafa al-Kubra down to about eighteen to twenty metres in the depression of 'Ain as-Sira, and in the valley north west of 'Ain as-Sira rising again to a height of forty metres above sea level on the Kaum al-Djarih summit. In general, the area was naturally rugged, both as the result of erosion and tectonic movement and from the activity of man, who drew the stone he needed from the most easily exploited places. As urban development progressed, however, the activity of man had an opposite effect and led to a levelling of the area. All the small depressions were quickly filled in with organic and inorganic sediments. Sediments do not settle as easily on elevations, especially if the basement soil is laid on bed-rock. They are constantly removed by man and wind or washed away by occasional rains, and very often such places show bare rock even after many years of sedimentation.

Kaum al-Djarih, mentioned above, was a large rocky massif dropping steeply towards the alluvial valley on the north west, while its other slopes were long and gentle. Considering the fact that the urban area situated below rose, and assuming that the top of the hill remained the same or was even slightly levelled to make it more suitable for building, we can assume that at the time of the town's foundation it dominated the neighboring valley by as much as twenty-five metres, and was a prominent land-mark in the northern part of town. The only other nearby elevation was Djabal Yashkur, more than one and a half kilometres due north.

Al-Qarafa al-Kubra

The steeply sloping western part, which descends to the Nile valley south of the present day Misr al-Qadima, is usually called Istable 'Antar after a huge unexplored ruin there. In the later Middle Ages it was called ar-Rasad after al-Hakim's astronomical observatory which was erected there, and still earlier it was known as ash-Sharaf or al-Djurf. On the map in the Description de l'Egypte it is
designated "Hauteurs de St. George." The eastern part, crossed by Ibn Tulun's aqueduct, is normally called Qanatir Ibn Tulun. Finally, the central part is called Sab'a Banat because of a group of middle-Fatimid mausoleums preserved there. Some other names, derived chiefly from quarries operating until recent times and still occasionally used, have only limited local application.

The massif of al-Qarafa al-Kubra, as mentioned above, descends steeply to the flats of the Nile Valley, which it dominates by about thirty metres. Since the valley is considerably broader now than in the early Islamic period, it is evident that the slope at the time of the Arab settlement was much closer to the river. It was also steeper and more prominent, as the valley was lower at that time. The situation in the south was similar, where the slope is also steep and conspicuously dominates the depression of al-Basatin (once filled during the high Nile by the waters of Birkat al-Habash).

The situation is different in the east. The massif descends very gently in the direction of al-Muqattam, where at its lowest point Ibn Tulun built his aqueduct (the present elevation is thirty-one metres above sea level there). Farther on, the ground rises once more, to end at the al-Muqattam cliffs beyond the cemeteries of at-Tunsi and the village of al-Basatin.

The parts just described, and in particular the centre of the plateau, did not undergo serious transformation during the last thirteen centuries except for some changes in elevation and a progressive levelling. The contour of these quarters was more pronounced formerly than it is now. Some ruggedness has disappeared and a large amount of debris has accumulated, especially in sunken places; but on the whole the physical aspect of the region has remained the same. The northern confines of al-Qarafa al-Kubra, in the neighbourhood of the present-day highway going from Old Cairo to al-Imam ash-Shafi'i quarter, referred to above, have been more disfigured. Today almost the whole slope for more than two kilometres between Kaum (Korn) Ghurab and al-Imam al-Laith cemetery is honeycombed with the enormous cavities of disused quarries (some of them more than twenty metres deep and sharply cut), which make access from the north difficult. But observation of sections of these rocky walls and remains of the original surface, in some places still visible from the road, allow us to conclude that here again the transition from the low ground in the north to the upland of al-Qarafa al-Kubra was originally gradual and, although in some places the terrain rose quite steeply, it was everywhere fit for building.

Summing up, one can conclude that the area occupied in the early Arab period by the town and its suburban settlements was very diversified in its natural contours, soils and the level of the water table. Apart from the high rocky plateaus and hilltops, which were completely barren and dry, there was the humid alluvial plain, with rich vegetation and marshy depressions as well as cavities with natural hot springs which may have fed some halophytes. The surface of the rock was strewn with calcareous rubble and larger blocks, the effects of erosion, similar to the top of al-Muqattam today. In the depressions the soil was mostly alluvial mud and in dry wadis was probably composed of sand and gravel.
As differences in elevation only exceptionally exceeded twenty metres, there was no serious difficulty in delimiting town quarters and tracing out the street network within the town. About a quarter of the total area lies close to the Nile; namely, ‘Amal Asfal. Mostly low and within the reach of the Nile flood, it included some valleys which were below the level of the high Nile and which were periodically filled by ground water, especially in years of high Niles. The margins of this area were marked out by a few higher elevations which dominated the neighbourhood. From the east, the natural boundary of the town was formed by elevations occupied in the course of the centuries by the vast necropolis of al-Qarafa as-Saghira. They were sparsely inhabited. Farther to the east the sheer slopes of al-Muqattam provided a natural defensive wall. Although the slopes have been exploited throughout the ages as a source of stone, which has altered their appearance, they must always have been very inhospitable and inaccessible. Only a small area on the northern side opened out onto the Delta plain, and when the lakes in this region dried up it was completely open to attack or could be used for transport. Also easily accessible was the narrow southern passage up the Nile Valley.

**East Bank Environs**

Except for the barren area of al-Muqattam, the massif to the east of the urban site (with its quasi-horizontal terraces and steps at different altitudes and a maximum height of 210 metres above sea level), the area to the north and south is flat, fertile alluvial plain.

Immediately south of the town site, overlooked by the heights of the present-day al-Qarafa al-Kubra, there was a large hollow depression called in the Arab sources Birkat al-Habash. Slightly sunken in the middle, its floor today is about nineteen metres above sea level and at the time of the conquest must have been about two metres lower. Being much below the highest point of the Nile flood, it was annually submerged, forming an extensive, shallow lake. In winter and early summer, when the water subsided, the area was one of the most fertile ones in the neighborhood of al-Fustat. The depression extends for about five kilometres along the Nile up to present-day al-Ma'adi and covers about a thousand hectares. The gentle slopes bordering on it on the east and north east were covered with orchards and semi-rural dwellings and there were probably other villages farther south.

South of this depression the Nile valley again narrows but with a few wider bays of agricultural land, such as the one near Tura and another near Hulwan. The latter bay, although some twenty kilometres distant, was still within easy reach of the capital and could be regarded as belonging to its orbit. Here for the first time in Islamic history a satellite residence town, Hulwan, was founded by ‘Abd al-'Aziz, thus starting a custom which was to be repeated countless times by later rulers in various regions of the Islamic world.
To the north of the capital, flat agricultural lands were practically unlimited. The urban territory merged there into the vast expanses of the eastern Delta without any sharp dividing line. Resort homes, orchards and fields belonging to the city dwellers, if not from the very founding, certainly from a fairly early date, were mixed with typical rural estates, and these in addition to numerous villages or small towns must have occupied the eastern border of the Delta outside the reach of the annual flood or on some natural or artificial elevations within the flood plain. One of the most important of these was Umm Dunain, identified with the Byzantine stronghold of Tandunias, a place commemorated by the battle between the armies of 'Amr and the Byzantines. It was situated about three kilometres north of al-Fustat, probably in the neighbourhood of the present-day Midan Bab al-Hadid, on the Nile, which at that time flowed some two kilometres east of its present course at this point.

Another very important agricultural region north east of al-Fustat was 'Ain Shams, ancient Heiopolis. Conveniently linked with the capital by an old canal as well as by the Khalidj Amir al-Mu'minin, which was restored in the second year of Arab domination, it certainly supplied a great proportion of the city's agricultural products.

On the whole, these regions to the north (except for obvious changes resulting from intensive occupation in the last hundred years) have not changed their physical appearance. The immense plains remained the same; only water courses were altered.

Attempts to reconstruct the physiography of the area under discussion would not be complete without considering the course of the Nile within the town. The river, no doubt the most important of all natural factors influencing the life of the town and its development, also played a significant role in its geography, and all changes in the course of the river were reflected in town planning activities.

The course of the Nile within the urban area of al-Fustat has undergone considerable change since the foundation of the town. This is certain and can be proven without difficulty from the written sources. The result of these changes was a gradual withdrawal of the river to the west. Their extent and chronology, however, are somewhat obscure, as the sources often disagree on particular details; moreover, they do not always coincide with data drawn from a study of the historical geography of the area.

The main source of information for the history of the Nile in Islamic times has been al-Khitat, whose author, al-Maqrizi, is the only known historical writer who tried to give a full account of changes in the river's course. The most significant passage on the subject reads: “At the time of the conquest of Misr all lands from Manshat al-Mahrani to Birkat al-Habash, along and from the bank of the Nile at Mawrada al-Haifa, the place opposite al-Djami' al-Djadid, to Suq al-Ma'aridj and what is in this direction down to the places opposite al-Mashhad ar-
Ra’s, which is called ... today Zayn al-‘Abidin—all this was the river. And nothing was between the Fortress, al-Djamî and what was in front of them to al-Hamra ad-Dunya, to which belongs now Khitt Qanatir ad-Siba’, and between Djazirat Misr, which is known today as ar-Roda, but water of the Nile.”36 This statement, supplemented with a few details also mostly drawn from al-Maqrizi’s work, has been accepted by modern scholarship and is the basis of today’s views on the medieval course of the Nile within the town.37

The source of al-Maqrizi’s account was most probably fragmentary and not very reliable information taken from earlier authors, as well as a vernacular tradition evidently still very much alive in his time. Both must have been quite imprecise chronologically and topographically, and require considerable analysis to make proper use of them. Obviously the author could not resist the temptation of devising a comprehensive theory on the subject, and to achieve this objective he combined the data mentioned above with his own views, which were based among other things on the correct observation of the Nile sediments within the town.38 Unfortunately, when formulating his own opinions he overlooked, or even intentionally omitted, facts known to him which would contradict his theory. The same mistake was made by those modern scholars who took his words too literally. Consequently, many modern reconstructions are open to criticism and revision, especially those which were published in the form of plans.39 However, since we are concerned here with the earliest period of Arab domination, only a fragmentary discussion is possible.

As a starting point let us examine the evidence for the position of the river bank in the central quarter of the town. There is a generally accepted opinion that the Mosque of ‘Amr was erected on the bank of the Nile. The source of this questionable assumption is among others al-Maqrizi’s account.40 However, analysis of the information provided by the earliest sources, Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam and Al-Kindi, does not support this opinion. On the contrary, the early sources seem to imply that the Mosque stood a considerable distance from the river. The earliest tradition related by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam says that the mosque was surrounded with gardens and vineyards.41 The word hauz used in this context implies that the mosque was surrounded by them on all sides, including the Nile side, and this in turn requires a certain distance. There is also other, more convincing evidence. At the time of the land allotment to the Arab settlers, when the town was established, there was enough space between the Mosque of ‘Amr and the river both for an old ablution place, al-Midat, and for a road which seems to have been the most important transport route in al-Fustat (which implies a certain width), as well as for houses.42 First of all there was the Dar as-Silsila, a residence which ‘Amr built for the Banu Sahm when they came to al-Fustat.43 Also in the direction of the Nile Kharidja ibn Hudhafa built a house for himself, most probably facing onto the road mentioned above. He was an official of high rank, the deputy governor of Egypt for military affairs and security, and we can easily imagine that as such he was allotted a considerably larger portion of land. This is also supported by the fact that his son received a substantial amount of money (ten thousand dinars) for his house from the later governor of Egypt ‘Abd
The Nile

al-'Aziz ibn Marwan.45

The house of Kharidja was probably included in the famous palace called Dar al-Mudhahhaba (the Gilded House), which 'Abd al-'Aziz built there in the year A.D. 686/87 (A.H. 67). It stood at the Suq al-Hammam west of the Mosque of 'Amr. The palace became an official residence of the Marwanid branch of the Umayyads in Egypt and must have been an imposing architectural complex. Its popular name, al-Madina (The City), by which it was known in contemporary sources,46 gives certain indications as to its size. But even the palace complex did not take all the ground between the mosque and the Nile. Enough was left over for the same ruler to enlarge the mosque on all sides.47

A comparable picture results from a study of the topography of the area around the mosque. As this will be discussed in detail later, let us only mention here that at the time of the conquest the Nile flowed close to the western side of Babylon, whose walls and huge drum towers protected the harbour and boat bridge located at the River Gate.48 Another fixed point farther north is provided by the monastic complex known today as Abu as-Sayfayn. The first reference to one of the churches belonging now to the monastery, the church of Saint Mary, comes only from about the year A.D. 786/87 (A.H. 170), when it was destroyed by the order of the governor, 'Ali ibn Sulayman al-'Abbasi,49 but the context of the reference gives the impression that this church had been built in the first or second generation after the Prophet, that is to say not later than the end of the seventh century. Therefore we can ascribe with all confidence the foundation of the adjoining church of Abu Shenuda and probably also that of Saint Mercurios to the pre-Islamic period. They stood then on the bank of the Nile, which later receded from them.50

If we accept this as the state of affairs at the time of the foundation of al-Fustat, we can draw a straight line between these two pre-Islamic structures and the line would give us the hypothetical eastern bank of the river. If this reasoning is correct, the original mosque would have been erected not less than 350 metres from the river bank. This distance, compared with that of about one kilometre in al-Maqrizi's time, may account for his insistence on the proximity (relative, one can say) of the Mosque of 'Amr to the Nile at the time of the conquest.

The church of Abu Mina provides another fixed point which allows one to trace the eastern bank of the Nile farther north; that is, in the area of the later quarter of al-Hamra al-Wusta. This church was rebuilt several times and its foundations were still preserved in the nineteenth century51 and served as a basis for its reconstruction; therefore, we can fix its position within the town's topography with precision.

The first mention of the church of Abu Mina dates from the year A.D. 735 (A.H. 117), when the governor al-Walid ar-Rifa'a gave the Christians permission to build it.52 This resulted in serious disturbances in the city and the fighting, allegedly under a Yamani immigrant, al-Wuhayb, took quite a violent turn.53 This contradicts to some degree Abu Salih's54 and al-Maqrizi's assertion55 that the church was restored (uhdithat), since normally only the building of entirely new churches caused violent protests by the Muslim public, while restorations were
usually tolerated. This, however, is of little consequence for our purpose here, since even if the church did not date to pre-Islamic times it fixes the course of the Nile for the very early period. Incidentally, there was an ancient tomb in the territory of the shrine in Abu Salih's times, in the place where the eucharistic bread was baked. If in this context the word 'ancient' means pre-Islamic, we can push the dates back a few hundred years. Anyway, there is no reason to draw the line of the river bank in this region as far east as the shrine of Zain al-'Abidin, which is precisely what al-Maqrizi and his modern followers did. Zain al-'Abidin, built in the ninth century, is situated roughly three hundred metres east of Abu Mina, and admitting for the sake of argument that al-Maqrizi was right, it would mean that this land was exposed by the receding river in less than a hundred years. This does not tally with at least three facts. First, the area of al-Hamra was well settled before this church was built (or rebuilt) in A.D. 735, which would hardly be possible if this area were freshly reclaimed. Second, we know from another example from roughly the same period that the new land exposed by the receding river was regarded as state property and was at the disposal of the Caliph. Third, it is hardly possible that not only the permission but also the land to build the church would be given to the Christians at the same time. The only known instance of such an occurrence concerns 'Amr's order and land outside the urban area.

The distance between Abu as-Sayfayn and Abu Mina is about one and a half kilometres. Unfortunately, there is no landmark which would allow us to fix precisely the shoreline in between; but since no natural obstacles are present, we can be reasonably certain that it was a roughly straight line. Today's street of Abu as-Sayfayn and its continuation to the north, called Shari' ad-Diyur, in all probability mark approximately the Nile bank in the first century of the Hidjra.

The changes in the course of the Nile north of Abu Mina were much more important, but they are also more difficult to establish. Two points only can be fixed with a reasonable degree of precision. These are the position of al-Maks-Umm Dunayn, a settlement on the river bank, which can be located in the neighbourhood of the present-day Midan Bab al-Hadid thanks to Salah ad-Din's wall and some information from written sources, and al-Qantara of 'Abd al-'Aziz on the Canal. Al-Qantara was certainly not far from the mouth of the Canal, near the late thirteenth century Qanatir as-Siba', nor was it far west of the present-day Mosque of Sayyida Zaynab. Taking into account the location of these two points, we can establish the most likely conjectural eastern shoreline of the Nile. It would have to run north north-east from Abu Mina to the point where Shari' an-Nasriyya once reached the Canal, and then along this street and almost northward by al-Luk, roughly along the modern street of Muhammed Bey Farid and 'Imad ad-Din to Bab al-Hadid. Of course, in the flat, low terrain beyond Djabal Yashkur, where no natural elevations were present, even considerable deviations in the allegedly straight shoreline were possible, and local changes over the centuries are likely.

The course of the Nile underwent relatively fewer changes south of Babylon. In most places the border of the area was composed of natural escarpments up to
thirty metres above the floor of the valley, which were an efficient barrier against the flood waters and prevented them from interfering drastically with the shoreline. The tendency of the river to recede in a westerly direction, predominant in the early Middle Ages, could be observed already in the time of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz,

but in the southern quarters of the urban area it was restricted to a gain of only about three hundred, exceptionally four hundred, metres of new land. The Nile receded this much in the region of al-Wa’il, west of the plateau of al-Qarafa al-Kubra. More important modifications may have occurred in the region of Birkat al-Habash, but since the area was very low and inundated by the flood waters every year, they could hardly have been of much duration. On the whole, the river bank and generally the course of the Nile was determined here by the relief of the eastern side of the valley. The heights of Tura to the south of the Birkat al-Habash basin and ash-Sharaf north of it prevented any major deviations of the river to the east, and since the depression of Birkat al-Habash (whose north-south length is only about five kilometres) is not large enough to allow the formation of any permanent meanders, the river’s course must have been relatively stable here and approximately straight, notwithstanding ephemeral local changes.

A permanent feature in the Nile’s topography which influenced its course to a considerable degree was al-Djazira (the Island), the predecessor of the present day ar-Roda (or ar-Rauda in classical Arabic), as it has been called since the twelfth century. It was situated in the middle of the river, roughly in the same place as today; that is, opposite Babylon and the central quarters of al-Fustat. It has been suggested, however, that at the time of the conquest it extended farther south and was shorter on its northern side. Although probable, this assumption is nevertheless unprovable since no irrefutable evidence can be found to support it. A possible indication might be sought in the history of the Nilometer which is located there. The first one was built by Usama ibn Zayd in the year A.D. 715 (A.H. 97) and was later destroyed by a flood and replaced in A.D. 861/62 by another one which still stands and functions today. The southern end of al-Djazira was the most likely place to install the first Nilometer, as was also the case with the later one, and its destruction may mean a change in the island’s length. On the other hand, the survival of the present Nilometer for eleven centuries indicates the remarkable stability of the island’s contours at the south end.

The extension of al-Djazira and its shore to the north were probably less stable. What we know about the history of al-Djazira in later times suggests this too. But the assumption advocated by Rhuvon Guest that it was much shorter at the time of the foundation of al-Fustat is contradicted by an interesting reference given by al-Maqrizi and taken from Kitab al-Mawali, the lost work of al-Kindi. It says that al-Djazira could be seen from Dar al-Fil, the residence of a certain Abu Ghanim, mawla of Maslama ibn Mukhallad and for a time wali of the said al-Djazira under ‘Abd al-‘Aziz. Considering the respective positions of al-Djazira
and Birkat Qarun, on whose shore the residence was located, it is clear that it certainly could not be seen from there unless it extended northward almost as far as it does today. Since, however, the eastern bank of the Nile in the northern part of the urban area deviated from its present course by at least one kilometre, it is also likely that the northern end of al-Djazira curved considerably to the east.

The Western Channel of the Nile

According to tradition the main stream of the Nile in the early Islamic period was on the eastern side of al-Djazira, contrary to the present state, but it seems also that both branches were of roughly equal width even if the western one was shallower and tended to dry up at low Nile. Judging from the distance from the walls of Babylon to the Nilometer, the width of the eastern branch was about 350 metres, and such must have been the western one; today they are eighty and six hundred metres, respectively.

About the al-Djiza branch of the Nile even less information has been preserved. We can only be certain that it ran much farther to the east. Probably as much as the river-bed lost in the east, it gained in the west. We have some general information proving this process; for instance, that concerning the church of Saint Peter, which once stood on the very edge of the river with its foundations in the water, but which later disappeared, washed away together with the ground it stood on. But the exact shoreline is beyond reconstruction. Still more complicated was the situation to the north, where as late as the twelfth century the village of al-Bulaq (which since early Mamluk times has served as the main port for Cairo and was linked with it by road) was located on the western bank.

This shifting of the bed of the Nile westwards already appears in the early Islamic period. It is possible that such tendencies existed even earlier, and founding a large populous town such as al-Fustat in this area only aggravated these tendencies. The existence of an extremely busy port on the eastern bank not only protected the shoreline from the flow of the river, but may even have prompted the shift of the main current of the river westwards as well. Hundreds of anchored ships and boats, the building of even rudimentary embankments and quays for mooring, loading and unloading goods, and the accumulation of layers of port debris near the shore, which made the river shallower, certainly affected the river current, and consequently the sedimentation of mud. Another factor, even more important, no doubt, was the dumping into the river of the town's rubbish, both ordinary litter and all types of inorganic refuse as well as industrial byproducts in large quantities from the production of ceramics, glass, and building materials. This process of polluting the shore takes place in all periods and in all towns where the river or the sea provide a handy dump, even if it is actively opposed by efficient municipal authorities, and in al-Fustat such authorities were obviously not very active. We know that the disorder and poor sanitary conditions irritated even the contemporary authors. The accounts of al-Muqaddasi and Ibn Ridwan both deal with this matter, and the latter one
expressly deplores the practice. Naturally, running water was an effective purifying agent, but only for light organic materials. All heavier inorganic particles settled at the river's edge and in the course of time rose together with the river mud and formed a new bank. This process (certainly unintentional and combined with natural forces) may be regarded as advantageous for the city, for it resulted in a significant growth of the habitable area. The process seems to have begun very early in the Islamic period, as we know that there was already construction going on west of Qasr ash-Sham in the time of 'Abd al-'Aziz and Bishr ibn Marwan; that is, before the end of the first century of al-Hidjrà.²²

The first important change in the course of the river, which uncovered a vast area adjacent to al-Fustat, took place just before A.D. 725, under the rule of the governor al-Hur ibn Yusuf. The area exposed was between the fortress and the bridge, and a covered market (al-qaysariya) was built there in A.D. 726 by order of the Caliph Hisham.²³ Ground was also gained in the area south of the bridge, between the lands of the Banu Wa'il and the Nile. It was distributed among the people.²⁴ The process continued for over two centuries and eventually resulted in the complete silting up of the eastern arm of the Nile between al-Fustat and ar-Roda in A.D. 947, so that the channelled had to be cleaned in order to provide water for the inhabitants.²⁵ But this does not concern us here.

The Western Bank

The west-bank suburb al-Djiza and its environs were located on a vast alluvial plain extending to the west for about eight kilometres to the hills of al-Mina and the borders of the desert in the neighbourhood of the Pyramids. Broad plains extend for a considerable distance in both directions, north and south, making it the largest agricultural area in the vicinity of the capital. Its geomorphology, except for changes caused by human industry and the action of the Nile, remains generally the same today as it was when the suburb was founded. The ground level, of course, has risen several metres as a result of the sedimentation of the Nile mud, and probably the network of canals for irrigation and drainage has been modified and augmented.

The whole region, since time immemorial, must have been one of the richest and most populous in the country. At the time of the conquest, Memphis, situated some fifteen kilometres south of al-Djiza, must still have been a considerable town, and several smaller ones have also been recorded, as well as a number of villages. But al-Djiza soon became dominant and overshadowed the others. Abu Salih speaks of thirty churches and a large number of monasteries in the region, which bear witness to the density of population and its well-being.²⁶

The area of al-Djiza, thanks to its advantageous location just across the river from the main city quarters, and the ease of communication either by water or the bridge to al-Djazira and Babylon, made it the most important rural district on which the new town depended for its food supply and agricultural raw materials, and as such largely contributed to its future development. In turn, the capital provided a convenient market for the district's products.
3. The Pre-Islamic Settlements

The undeniable advantages of the site on which the Arab capital was founded were particularly significant for the new masters of Egypt, but they were also well known and appreciated by their predecessors. The whole region on the border between Upper and Lower Egypt shows evidence of intensive town settlement from ancient times, and al-Fustat was in a way a continuation of the process under altered political conditions. The ancient settlements do not concern us here, but the problem of urban centres in this area in the period directly preceding the establishment of the Arab encampment, their location, character, and territorial extent deserve more meticulous study. This is important not only for purely historical reasons, but also because the previous settlements must have had a great influence on the structure and topography of the Arab town.

This question has been examined previously by such scholars as Butler,2 Herz,3 Caetani,4 Reitemeyer5 and others,6 but because the sources do not agree on the subject, their conclusions are not unanimous. One fact is, however, unquestionable: the existence of the Byzantine fortress situated on the Nile, close to the central district of al-Fustat. This fortress was preserved more or less untouched throughout the Middle Ages and its remnants have survived to the present as a quarter in Old Cairo, sometimes obscurely called Qasr ash-Sham’.7 Many attempts were made even in the Middle Ages to explain the name, which must have been used by the Arabs quite early, but a satisfactory answer has not yet been found.a Judging from references to it in the work of at-Mas’udi, Kitab at-Tanbih, already by the middle of the tenth century the name was generally used when referring to the fortress.9 There are indications that it was also current much earlier, although evidence for this is not conclusive.10

Qasr ash-Sham’ is generally held to be identical with the Babylon often mentioned by the early Islamic historical tradition as the main stronghold which resisted the Arabs in the district of the future al-Fustat. The topography of the site and the analysis of the earlier source material leave little doubt of this.

In Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam’s work the fortress invested by the Arabs, and the focal point of his lengthy narrative of the siege, was usually called simply al-qasr or al-hisn (castle, fortress) without a more precise reference. Babylon is expressly mentioned only a few times,11 but it seems that in reusing the older tradition of the conquest the author had no doubt that Babylon, al-qasr and al-hisn were three different names for the same stronghold. In one case, after quoting al-Laith ibn Sa’d’s information that the fortress called Babylon was built by the Persians, he
even clearly states that it is the fortress (al-hisn) which exists in Fustat Misr today. In another place the statement is almost equally explicit: "'Amr laid siege to the fortress (al-qasr) which was then called Babylon (Babilyun)." As the authorities for this information Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam quotes 'Ubayd Allah ibn Abi Dja'far, Ayyad ibn 'Abbas and other informants quoting 'Uthman ibn Salih on the authority of Ibn Lahi'a. Thus, it seems certain that at the turn of the seventh century there was a common opinion in al-Fustat that the fortified quarter existing in the town's centre, generally known as al-qasr or al-hisn, was identical with the old Babylon. The awareness of this fact can also be observed later when that district was generally called Qasr ash-Sham. The best evidence for it is the above quotation of al-Mas'udi, who calls the fortress Qasr ash-Sham' Babilun. That point of view was preserved throughout the Middle Ages and appears both in Abu Salih's work and in that of the usually well informed and scrupulous Yaqut. It was only al-Quda'i's information which resulted in al-Maqrizi's doubts. Al-Quda'i refers to the remnants of a stone castle situated outside the town of al-Fustat, on the edge of the elevation called ash-Sharaf, as Qasr Babilyun. On the strength of this statement al-Maqrizi declared that, contrary to what Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam said in his book, Qasr ash-Sham' and Qasr Bab al-Yun could not be the same thing because the former is located inside al-Fustat and the latter outside.

The problem of the identity of Babylon and Qasr ash-Sham has been broadly dealt with by M. Herz. In discussion with P. Casanova, who denied the identity of the two strongholds, he convincingly proved his point. We will not go back to the arguments of Herz, since the evidence of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, based on information going back to the first generation of Arab settlers, leaves no room for doubt. Still, there is another problem to be solved, namely, whether apart from the Babylon fortress there existed any other town in the area of al-Fustat at the time of the conquest. Most scholars dealing with the problem believe that there was. The opinion is on one hand based on the testimony of the ancient writers, who indicate quite explicitly the existence of a large town in the neighbourhood of the later al-Fustat and, on the other hand, on the late Arab authors such as Ibn Duqmaq and al-Maqrizi. However, the ancient information is not necessarily applicable to the period of the conquest, and the references in the late medieval sources usually cannot be traced to any reliable origin. In fact, they depend on some obscure local legends. Of all early traditions, it is only al-Baladhuri who calls Babylon, to which he gives the name al-Yuna (without the first component, which he must have considered a common noun, bab or gate), a town. However, from the text it cannot be inferred that the expression "Town al-Yuna" refers to the same fortress or another settlement outside it.

The evidence of John of Nikiu had been considered as the strongest proof for the existence of the pre-Arab town in the area of the later al-Fustat until this hypothesis was successfully questioned by Else Reitemeyer. Even if we reject her proposals of the amelioration of the Ethiopic text, one cannot disagree with the supposition that the name Misr (Mesr) was introduced into the Ethiopic text by the Arab translator in the period when it was already generally used for denoting
the agglomeration of al-Fustat. Anachronisms of this type are not rare. We come across them also in the Arabic texts: for instance, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam states in one passage of his work that al-Muqauqis, on hearing about the Arab invasion of Egypt, went to al-Fustat. What our author had in mind as al-Fustat was no doubt the place which was called this in his time—not in al-Muqauqis’. Similarly, al-Baladhuri says that when 'Amr arrived in Egypt accompanied by his army the inhabitants of al-Fustat entrenched themselves with a moat. In reality, there is not one mention of the existence of a town (Babylon or any other) as opposed to the fortress Babylon in the text of John of Nikiu. The same conclusion can be drawn on the basis of a careful analysis of the early Arab sources. A similar observation was made by L. Caetani, according to whom the existence of any town outside the walls of Babylon was improbable.

The information passed on by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, which is the most substantial and reliable of all, since it was taken directly from the early indigenous historical tradition, leaves no room for doubt that it concerns the fortress Babylon and some mythical town outside its walls. The same can be maintained about the two references in al-Ya'qubi and al-Baladhuri. That Babylon (Alyuna) was called a town (madina) by the latter author may mean that he wishes to stress its urban character and not that he has made a mistake through lack of information about the African part of the campaigns, as Reitemeyer implies.

Within its walls—with its numerous churches, its civilian Coptic population (mentioned by the sources), its granaries and markets, and the harbour at the River Gate—Babylon must have had a very distinct urban character. The Arabs must have been well aware of that too. Therefore we should rather seek an explanation for why the early sources, both Muslim-Arab and Christian, firmly ascribe a military function to it, which is implied by terms like al-hisn and al-qasr, and why it was referred to as a town only a few times.

In order to solve this problem we shall try to reconstruct what Babylon was like at the time of the conquest. The information on the subject in the written sources is insufficient and ambiguous. Under the circumstances we have to look to archaeological material, for its analysis may help us to reach some conclusion. It may also help us answer the basic question of whether there had existed any other town apart from the fortress Babylon in the area of al-Fustat. Unfortunately, in spite of a large number of excavations carried out within the fortress at different times, especially during the construction work, the data are generally inaccurate or simply uncertain, mainly because of the lack of reliable records. Field-work was usually carried on without any scientific archaeological supervision; no reports were published.

In fact, there are only a few works of scientific value on our subject. They are S. Toy's 1937 analysis of the fragments of military architecture which have survived; the study undertaken a little later by U. Monneret de Villard; and most important, the pioneering research of A. Butler, which was carried out at the time when the contemporary construction and the destructive activity of man had not as yet erased the remnants of the original defences surrounding the town on the east and north. It is thanks to Butler that we possess the complete plan of
the fortifications of Babylon.38 Completed by the studies of Toy and by the pieces of more recent information, it enables us to draw at least approximate conclusions essential for our argument.

Butler's plan shows the extension of the defensive walls, bastions and other fortifications as it was possible to reconstruct them in the middle of the nineteenth century: it represents undoubtedly the last phase of construction. On the basis of certain wall remnants outside the enclosure, it can be presumed that at some earlier period its shape was more regular and that the walls stretched at least 180 metres farther to the north east. The latter observation is supported by Mahmud Ahmad. He states that his personal investigations, carried out in 1925, showed that the distance between the Mosque of 'Amr and the fortress did not exceed one hundred metres.39 This implies that the fragments of the Roman defensive wall were found at that distance from the Mosque. Since the regular Byzantine wall enclosing the fortress from the north (which was still well preserved in Butler's time) was about 720 metres from the mosque, it seems that the fragments observed by Butler and the remains found by Mahmud Ahmed one hundred metres from the mosque belonged to the same northern wall of a bigger fortress of an earlier date. The fortress extended farther not only in a northerly direction but presumably also almost 120 metres to the west. As there can be little doubt that the original enclosure was rectangular in shape, there must have been a right-angle corner there. Of course, it would mean that at this early date the Nile flowed more to the west, possibly not far from its present course. At some unknown date, but prior to the reign of Trajan, to whom many fragments of the existing western line of fortifications were dated, the Nile moved to the east, destroying the hypothetical western corner. If this hypothesis is correct, it would explain the peculiar shape and perhaps the orientation of the fortress as recorded by Butler.40

When Trajan rebuilt the fortress41 and erected the new oblique western wall alongside the Nile, it was reinforced with two huge drum towers built inside the enclosure. In later times they flanked the River Gate and perhaps helped to anchor the bridge of boats which connected the fortress with al-Djazira and the other bank of the Nile. These puzzling constructions, to the best of our knowledge unique in the whole of Roman military architecture, and especially their situation and intervening distance (which exceeds fifteen metres) can only be explained by another hypothesis: that they originally defended the entrance of the Canal. It seems reasonable that Trajan, the author of the reconstruction of Babylon and the renewal of the Canal which for centuries preserved his name, combined both ventures. Claudius Ptolemy, who wrote not very long after the time of Trajan, says that the Canal crossed Babylon,42 which seems to support this theory. The architectural analysis of the drum towers corroborates this to a certain extent too. Their internal construction, based on the system of radial, spoke-like walls, which according to Toy made the whole construction extremely resistant,43 seems to have been intended to withstand water pressure rather than the attack of siege-engines, which would probably not be used on the side by the river and would hardly be expected from inside the town. Admitting that at a certain period the Canal crossed Babylon (not a mythical open city but a real and well documented
walled fortress town) one comes immediately to the question of whether it still existed at this location at the time of the Arab siege. At this point we shall not enter into lengthy arguments, because this problem will be discussed while dealing with Khalidj Amir al-Mu'minin. Suffice it to state here that no written source at our disposal gives grounds for such an assumption. Evidently, in such a small town as Babylon, where land must have been very valuable, the disused and silted-up Canal would have been filled in and the area used for construction. Also the towers, completely reconstructed in the fourth or fifth century, had been adapted to other needs and the old mouth of the Canal sealed with a wall and provided with a strong gate known in later Arabic sources as the Bab al-Hadid.

The problem of the northern wall of the original larger enclosure of Babylon is more difficult. Was it really, as Mahmud Ahmad seems to believe, only 100 metres from the site of the future Mosque of 'Amr at the time of the conquest? Or was the city's northern part cut away already in pre-Islamic times? In the latter case the northern wall, with two bastions at the corners, of the secondary phase recorded by Butler would have been the one the Arabs had met at the siege. On the contrary, if Mahmud Ahmad is right, that wall would have to have been built in Arab times.

Unfortunately, conclusive archaeological material is lacking, though Butler seems to have believed that all the walls which he recorded were approximately of the same period and certainly were constructed (or rather reconstructed) by the Byzantines. But by this time this secondary northern wall was almost totally destroyed and he had little chance to study it. Pococke, two hundred years earlier, had a much better opportunity. The wall was still preserved and provided with a gate, not unlike the southern one which still exists. Pococke's description does not imply any difference between particular walls, and it appears that they all were those of Nikopolis, that is, Byzantine.

All this argues against Mahmud Ahmad's assumption and tallies with the general historical situation. It is unlikely that the Arabs would have allowed the Copts to erect a new defensive wall, a major military feature, in their quarter. Repairs, even total reconstructions, were permitted, but new building of not only religious but also military constructions was strongly resented by the populace. Consequently, Butler's wall had to be Byzantine, and the other one farther north, earlier still.

Apart from this it is also improbable that the Arab camp, in particular its vital part, the headquarters of the commander-in-chief (which all early traditions concerning the conquest invariably locate in the spot where later the mosque was built), could have been situated so close to the walls of the enemy stronghold; that is, within the reach not only of missiles from heavy siege engines but also of ordinary bows and arrows.

In view of the above considerations we can be reasonably sure that the walls reconstructed by Butler, whatever their original date, were basically the same as those which protected Babylon against the Arabs during the siege, that their essential layout remained unchanged throughout the Middle Ages, and that the remains discovered one hundred metres from the mosque belonged to older
defences which were already out of use by the time of the conquest.

The surrounding wall, built of burned bricks was about 2.70 metres thick and twelve metres high from the ground to the walk at the top. The protecting parapet with crenellation would increase the height to about fourteen metres. The wall was strengthened by towers rectangular in shape and rounded into a semicircle at the outer end. They protruded about fourteen metres from the wall, affording considerable protection to the curtain wall in between. We see on Butler’s plan ten such towers protecting al-qasr on the southern, northern and eastern sides. There were originally at least two more on the northern side, which flanked the gate. Possibly there were others, but no traces of them survived in Butler’s time. There were no protruding towers on the western side: this wall, washed by the Nile, did not require extra protection. But as we have already said, inside the wall there were two extremely strong drum towers flanking both sides of the water gate. Built of stone blocks with bands of three regularly spaced layers of brick, they presented an impressive military feature. The walls of the drum towers, like those of the curtain wall, were 2.70 metres thick at the base and about one and a half metres thick at the top. The height of the towers was over sixteen metres without parapet and crenellation. They were four metres higher than the curtain walls. Opposite the western gate there was probably a boat bridge linking the fortress with the island in the middle of the Nile and with the western bank in the area known as al-Djiza. On the eastern end the bridge was protected by the fortress of Babylon, in particular by its two drum towers, and the other end was also protected by a fort. The island in the middle was walled too, both forts belonging to the formidable system of Babylon’s fortifications. On both sides of the bridge, protected by the walls of the fortress and the towers, there was a harbour. Part of it probably extended as far as the southern gate. The southern gate, designed originally as a land gate, had been subsequently adapted as a water gate. The Nile was brought directly to its sill and part of its outside walk was turned into a quay.

Another gate analogous to the southern one existed probably also in the eastern wall. The whole structure was additionally protected by a ditch. The ditch, evidently not cared for during peacetime and filled up with rubble, had been cleared on news of the Arabs’ raid. It is possible that a part of an ancient bed of the Amnis Trajanus had been used for the ditch.

From the archaeological facts outlined above, it is clear that the external appearance of Babylon was that of an extremely strong fortress and its rather modest internal area (not exceeding five hectares) rather suggests the name ‘fortress’ or ‘castle’ than ‘city’. In reality, however, it was a medium-size fortified town and not a purely military settlement.

Its area, and the number of religious buildings, which at this time amounted to some ten or more churches and monasteries, suggests a fairly important civil population of several thousand souls. In addition to this there certainly was a permanent garrison there, probably stationed in the rampart bastions and drum towers, the latter very likely serving at the same time as a sort of keep. Twelve bastions (or more) with an inside lodging space of about 260 square metres each,
distributed between three floors, and two drum towers with lodging space on three floors of about 850 square metres each, provided at least 4800 square metres of lodging space and could have contained a fairly large garrison, perhaps a thousand men, which in case of emergency could easily have been doubled.

Was there another town outside the walls of Babylon-Qasr ash-Sham? As we have shown above, the sources give nothing positive in this respect. On the contrary, the mention of the ditch being dug around the fortress, several times repeated by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, and the total lack of information in the early sources concerning this mythical city indicate the opposite. L. Caetani, who probably examined the historical material more carefully than most of the other scholars dealing with the Arab conquest, came to the same negative conclusion. For us an important additional argument against the theory of an extra muros town is of an archaeological nature: the remains of a larger enclosure point to some sort of crisis in the settlement at an earlier date. Since the size of the enclosure was certainly proportional to the number of inhabitants, the need to reduce it would mean that there were not enough people to dwell in it. And this was precisely the case with Babylon. Its past reduction does not tally with a large city outside the walls during the Arab siege. The remains recorded by Butler in the nineteenth century and Mahmud Ahmad some fifty years later must have been fairly well preserved thirteen centuries earlier; that is, at the time of the conquest. If they were not rebuilt to accommodate inhabitants of an unprotected city, it is because such a city did not exist.

On the other hand, we know, however, that there were many monasteries in the open country around Babylon and we can assume that there were also some farms. The low alluvial land, especially immediately north of the fortress, was fertile and cultivated. We know this from the well known tradition concerning the land owned by Qaysaba ibn Kulthum, which he granted for the future Mosque of ‘Amr and which was occupied by gardens and vineyards. Another tradition puts the original site of the Mosque of ‘Amr in the garden ar-Rihan. If there were cultivated lands, there were probably also country houses, if not actual villages nearby. Some of them may have been destroyed during the fighting but some others very likely survived. In fact, we seem to have an indication of this. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, quoting a very ancient tradition, says that ‘Amr ibn al-‘As allotted to the Caliph ‘Umar a house (dar) near the Mosque al-Djami. It is significant that the tradition does not say that it was a khitta but a house, which may mean that it was actually standing there at the time of the conquest. There are some other places in the text of Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam where there are references to houses being allotted to some individuals and not khittas, as is normally the case; unless the expression is due to imprecise language and dar is substituted for khitta, which seems rather unlikely, the meaning would be just that.

Our arguments, we must stress here, concern the immediate vicinity of the fortress in the area on which the future city of al-Fustat would be built; certainly, a little farther away there were other settlements, villages or even towns. The existence of a rather important town, a main centre of a rich agricultural district, Heliopolis,—‘Ain Shams, is known for certain. It is not possible to advance any
theories as to its real size but it may be supposed that its favorable geographical and economic position would account for a population equal to or greater than that of Babylon, whose position depended mostly on fiscal administration, commerce and military strength.

Somewhere not far away there was also Tandunias—a town and a castle commonly identified with the Arab Umm Dunain and al-Maks of later times—and certainly al-Djiza across the Nile, not counting nearby settlements up-river.

Almost all modern historians maintain that apart from those settlements there was another large fortress on the top of the plateau to the south of Babylon, which is generally identified with the one referred to by Strabo. Quite naturally both fortresses were often confused. As we know, the confusion dates from the time of al-Quda'i and al-Maqrizi and certainly was helped by the fact that on top of the plateau there still exists a monastery called Dair Babilyun. Futhermore, there are also ruins of a large construction known locally as Istabl ' Antar, the Stables of ' Antar (undated and still unexplored), which were often taken for the remnants of this upper Babylon.

The evidence, except for that of Strabo, is by no means conclusive and even his cannot be used to prove reality some six hundred years later. The answer should be looked for in the archaeological record. Nevertheless, it may be assumed with confidence that in some place like the Sharaf eminence, commanding a view of a very large portion of the Nile Valley, there was a military establishment; a fort or at least a fortified watchtower, one in a chain of fortifications such as the forts at al-Djiza and on the Nile Island, of which Babylon was the central point. We could expect another post like that on the top of al-Muqattam. The Arabic sources record one such ruined stronghold called al-Qusayr, the Small Castle, which was somewhere on the summit of al-Muqattam plateau. It should probably be distinguished from a group of Melkite monasteries situated on the top of the mountain ridge above Tura south of al-Fustat and also called al-Qusayr. In a strategic place such as the mountainous ridge where the Ayyubid Citadel stands today, there might have been a fort too, but it is unlikely that there was another large castrum with a numerous garrison and civilian population near Babylon. The water supply would be inadequate and what could be done with the power of Rome—to supply permanently 150 prisoners of war to operate the hydraulic machinery—clearly could not be afforded by the Byzantines of Heraclius' time.
4. The Foundation and a Town in the Making

The Selection of the Site

It is difficult both to determine an exact date for the founding of al-Fustat and to present the chronology of other historical events in the period of the conquest. As we have seen, the tradition quoted by the most prominent Arab historians is not reliable and is frequently contradictory, and often goes no further back than authorities belonging to a generation which did not witness the conquest with its own eyes. This is true even of the material written down by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, which can be acknowledged as the most ancient information referring to the foundation of the town. Three isnads recorded by this author (two of them using al-Layth ibn Sa'd as an intermediate, and the third using Ibn Lah'a) originate from Yazid ibn Abi Habib. We learn from the information in question that 'Amr intended to settle the Arab occupation army in abandoned houses in Alexandria but was opposed by the Caliph 'Umar on the grounds that he did not want to be separated from his army by water; consequently 'Amr and his men came back to al-Fustat. The information is very interesting and plausible except for some details; moreover it precisely fixes the moment when al-Fustat was chosen as the seat of the main Arab garrison in Egypt after Alexandria had been evacuated by the Byzantine forces and occupied by the Arabs.

This does not mean, however, that some of the original elements of the town had not already been planned and founded earlier, in the time of the investment of Babylon and the peace negotiations with the Copts and Cyrus. The legend of the dove's nest made on top of 'Amr's tent—which caused it to be left behind near Babylon when the army set out for Alexandria with all the other equipment, and gave rise to the popular etymology for the town's name, al-Fustat (the Tent)—can be regarded as a symbolic confirmation of this assumption. Another tradition seems to indicate an earlier Arab settlement in the area of the future metropolis; namely, the tradition according to which the grounds of the later Mosque of 'Amr had been the property of one Abu 'Abd ar-Rahman Qaysaba ibn Kulthum, unmistakably an Arab. Following this line of reason, it can be assumed that in the process of founding the town, the act of laying out the mosque, or mosques, preceded the division of land between individuals and not vice versa. If this hypothesis is correct, we would find here an indication that Qaysaba had been
The Selection of the Site

given this land previous to the town's founding; that is, probably during the siege.

The question of an exact date for the earliest Arab settlements is of minor significance, though we can accept as logical and indubitable the information which says that the official choice of the area near Babylon for the main camp—the capital of the Arabs in Egypt—took place after the decisive event of the whole campaign; that is, after the fall of Alexandria, which finally decided the fate of the country.

At this stage another question arises, the significance of which lies beyond the scope of the local history of Islamic Egypt: who really was the author of the decision concerning the choice of the place? Was it 'Amr, whom we have to regard in this case as an advocate of Egypt's interests (Arab Egypt, of course, but nonetheless already a province whose interests were only partially convergent with those of al-Madina) rather than as an uncompromising representative of the central government and the Caliph residing in al-Hidjaz.

It can be postulated that 'Amr, as commander-in-chief in Egypt, and his advisers were better acquainted with the complex geo-political conditions in the conquered country and could better appreciate the strategic qualities of a place, and it was they who should have made the ultimate decision. On the other hand, everything indicates that the Caliph, at least as long as it was 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, kept the armies operating in distant countries under firm restraint, maintained constant communication with them and was informed in detail on every matter. With regard to the army in Egypt, this was easier as it operated in a neighbouring country which a good courier using relay camels could in an emergency reach in less than a week and perhaps even faster. We can thus assume that 'Umar was sufficiently acquainted with Egypt's geo-political situation and that the country was already well known to the Makkans before the time of the conquest. The site of the later al-Fustat had to be passed by every merchant traveling from Arabia to Egypt whether he was going to the capital or to centres in the south. Only the eastern Delta could be reached without passing through this area.

Another reason which may have made the Caliph reserve for himself the decision about the conquered country and the army there was his (and presumably his advisers') lack of confidence in the famous commander. This attitude is clearly manifest in all their relations during the conquest. It seems certain, however, that it was not a lack of confidence in the commander's military and organisational abilities or the service he had rendered in the field to strengthen the young Arab State and to extend its frontiers. Certainly they also esteemed his uncommon intelligence, ingenuity, persuasive ability and ready tongue (so much appreciated by the Arabs), but it seems that the Caliph and his closest circle in the theocratic oligarchy were afraid of 'Amr's self-reliance and policy making being used to his own advantage and the satisfaction of his personal ambitions rather than in the interests of the Arab Islamic State. For these reasons the control they exercised over 'Amr can be compared only with the situation in Syria a few years earlier, where the main dramatis personae were Khalid ibn al-Walid and Abu 'Ubayda. Although, unlike Khalid, 'Amr was not deprived of his post as chief commander
(probably because of his superior diplomatic skills), the Caliph appointed at his side az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam, who commanded forces much more numerous than those of 'Amr. Among the first conquerors was 'Abd Allah, the son of the Caliph 'Umar (which is attested by a reference in Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam), and 'Amr was also soon joined by Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. These commanders, close to the Caliph and his representatives, undoubtedly played an important part in the decision on the site of the new capital. There can be little doubt, however, that the ultimate choice, or at least the acceptance of suggestions from Egypt, was made in al-Madina without taking the opinion of 'Amr into account. For his own personal, long-term and perhaps unorthodox plans, he saw a much greater advantage in settling in Alexandria, although it would have been fatal from the point of view of purely Arab, Hidjazi, policy.

We shall discuss further the geo-political position of Babylon, but before we do, let us come back once more to the alleged justification for 'Umar's decision—that no great water should separate the military base in a conquered country from the Arab hinterland. It was the basic condition to assure the conquered province the necessary reserves and a retreat route for the army if necessary. Controlling the mighty 'Amr was a secondary, but still important, reason. Indeed, from al-Fustat the army could reach al-Madina in one month and would not be obstructed by the Nile flood and the canal network, as would have been the case with Alexandria.

The advantageous position of al-Fustat at the junction of the Delta and the Nile Valley proper, that is, of Upper and Lower Egypt at the beginning of a route leading to both these regions, had been known and appreciated long before the Arabs. It was made use of by the pharaohs who founded Memphis there. It was appreciated by the Persians, who allegedly were the first builders of the Babylon fortress, and by the Romans and their successors, the Byzantines. Of the Macedonians and Greeks, however, nothing is known, but they were so oriented towards the sea that perhaps they overlooked the advantages of this place, or else Memphis was sufficient for their ends. For the Arabs it had one additional advantage of inestimable value: here was an ingeniously constructed floating bridge which assured safe passage across the Nile at every season of the year and which enabled them at the same time to control navigation on the river. There was also the entrance to the Canal, which the Caliph and his advisers intended to use to assure a cheap and reliable source of grain to be shipped to ever-hungry Arabia. Only 'Amr, as tradition has it, was reluctant to see the Canal reconstructed, allegedly because he had Egypt's interests in mind. But even apart from the Canal, it was the place through which the only route from the East to Egypt and farther on to the west led. Even going from Syria to Alexandria one had to cross al-Fustat (we leave out the sea route which the Arabs had yet to exploit). A much shorter route along the sea coast through Farama, Tinnis, Damietta and Mahalla al-Kubra was uncertain and necessitated so many crossings that even much later the route via Cairo was preferred. The same is true of a parallel route across the Delta through Djardjir, Tanis, Sakha and al-Kiryaun.
Considering the problems with the selection of al-Fustat and above all contrasting them with the arguments against Alexandria, we must remember one other thing. The Arab elite, despite all its arrogance and pride, indubitably saw the cultural superiority of the conquered and also saw the dangers to which a handful of Arab warriors would be exposed in the heart of the local population. It was not so much a real danger of a military nature, which they knew how to deal with, but the risk of losing their own personality and individuality. It was the apprehension of the destructive influence on the warrior of the wealth, comfort and enervating sybarism of the local populace which would result from the symbiosis of the conqueror and conquered in a cohabited city. We do not know to what extent these fears were consciously weighed and in what measure they resulted subconsciously from the piety and puritanism of the early Muslim followers of the Prophet, but they were a reality.

Analogously, the foundation of the first camp in al-Iraq next to an ancient urban centre presumably resulted from more than military considerations. The same is true of the camp in al-Djabiya in Syria, the only one that did not develop as a town, probably because of the entirely different policy of al-Mu'awiya. Ultimately all of these reasons played their part in choosing al-Fustat and not Alexandria. Moreover, the superiority of al-Fustat over other early Arab centres lay in that it also included a Coptic town. This was very advantageous for the Arabs, because this town had the economic basis necessary for the conquerors, and above all it had great stores of grain and an administrative centre; on the other hand, it was not big enough to overcome the Arab population or threaten it culturally.

The Settlers

Our theory that the decision concerning the foundation of a permanent military base in Egypt and even the ultimate choice of its location was made in al-Madina does not mean that the warrior-settlers were not free to plan and organize it internally. Certainly they must have had some idea of what such a camp or camp-town should be like. They had a certain knowledge of urban settlements, partially inherited from their own tradition and experience in Arabia, partially borrowed from more civilized neighbors with which they were acquainted through old and new contacts, either peaceful or military. They also had to consider the local geographical environment in which the camp was to be set up as well as the social and ethnic conditions within the army, which were more complicated and difficult to resolve. The military and religious merits of various groups and individuals, their social position as determined by birth, wealth, number and many other factors whose significance we may not be able to grasp had to be taken into account. All of these factors could have had some bearing on the size, location and disposition of the parcels and allotments of land for settlement, and eventually on the form of the future city.

Some of the important factors which shaped its formation will have to be
discussed in a more detailed way; in the meantime, however, since the camp-town at the time of its foundation, as well as the army which manned it, was divided into units based on tribal membership and organisation, it is advisable to list the most important tribal groups. Another reason is that tribesmen migrating from different regions of Arabia and its borderlands were bringing their hereditary and largely dissimilar cultural traditions with them to their new home.

The most prominent group of would-be settlers was a collective body known under the name of Ahl ar-Rayya\(^1\) (the People of the Banner), who made up the central, commanding squad of the army and probably ‘Amr’s guards. They consisted of a number of clans, of which the leading one was Quraysh, the prophet’s own countrymen of North Arab descent, which had been established for several generations in Makka. Almost as prominent were the Ansar, Muhammad’s supporters and the principal rivals of the former group. They were composed of two South Arab tribes, the Banu Aws and the Khazradj, and were agriculturalists from al-Madina. In addition to these, the Ahl ar-Rayya also included groups from such North Arab tribes as the Ghifar and Djarish, branches of the Kinana, the Thaqi\(^{f}\) (who had settled in the oasis of Ta’if before the advent of Islam), the ‘Abs, the Tamim and some others, as well as South Arab tribesmen from Aslam, Djuhayna, Kalb, Bali, a mixed group known as al-‘Utaqa, who were highwaymen before Islam, and some individuals with the status of mawalis (‘clients’; non-Arab converts to Islam).

The tribal groups listed among the Ahl ar-Rayya could not have been numerous since the whole body did not exceed four hundred or at most five hundred men. Larger clans, such as the Bali or al-‘Utaqa, in addition to what they held with the Ahl ar-Rayya, were given parcels for settlement in other parts of the site.

The badawis of North Arab stock were comparatively few at this time. Our sources mention only two branches of the powerful Qaisites, namely the ‘Adawan and the Fahm, which included a subdivision called Kinana Fahm, and a contingent of the Hudhayl.\(^9\)

Much more numerous were South Arab settlers. It appears that groups from almost all the principal tribes were represented at the foundation. In alphabetical order they were as follows:\(^20\) Al-Az\(d\) with their sub-tribes; ‘Akk, of whom the most numerous were the Ghafiq, whose contingent in the original army was allegedly 3,500 men strong; then the Banu Bahar, Banu Bahar ibn Sawada, Ghanth, Salaman, and Tharad. Azdites whose homes were in the borderland of Yemen were usually regarded as a branch of the Lakhmids. Another branch of the Lakhm was the Djudham, of whom the Banu Wa’il formed the most important group.

Himyar, the famous Yemenite tribe with a glorious history, are next on our list. Their largest sub-tribe was al-Ma’afir, whose numerous clans such as the Djayshan, Mauhib and Banu al-Qarafa\(^21\) were also given separate khittas. Other Himyarites in al-Fustat were the Banu Kula’ and the Ru’ayn.

Of the Kinda tribe who, except for their role in southern Arabia, organized the only kingdom before Islam in the central part of the Peninsula, the most
The Settlers

numerous were the Tudjib. The Tudjib proper and their clans such as the Kinana, Banu Sa'd, Ayda'an ibn Sa'd, as-Sulaf and Zumayla are mentioned among those who formed independent *khittas*. In addition there were some Kinda clans from as-Sadif.

Of the Lakhm family, whose more distant cousins are listed above as important in the city, there must also have been the Lakhm proper. With their sub-tribe, the Rashida, which in turn was divided into the Riya and the Banu Yashkur, they formed several *khittas*.

To the tribal group al-Quda'ah, which some genealogists derive from the Himyarites, belonged the Bali, already mentioned above, the Tanukh, Khawlan, Djuhayna and Mahra.

Several *khittas* were allotted to the Madhhidj with their branch the Murad, who in turn were divided into such clans as the Silhim, Wa'an, Ghutayf and al-'Abs.

Other Yemenite clans in al-Fustat were the Yahsub, Saba', as-Sakasik, al-Ash'ariyun, and probably some others whose names have not been recorded or are transmitted without a clear genealogy. A few of them, such as the al-Akhlul, al-Albu', A'yan, Dju'aliyun, al-Qabad, ar-Radjiba, Shudja'a, Yafi', Yarfa and so on, may also have been present at the foundation.

Not all the first settlers were Arabs, however. We have a record of two groups of Byzantines called ar-Rumi, most probably remnants of the Byzantine army, perhaps of Syrian origin, who embraced Islam and apparently joined the army at Caesarea, where 'Amr formed his expeditionary force for the Egyptian campaign. According to current custom which required that the army be composed of kin groups, they were divided into two groups: the Banu al-Azraq and the Banu Yanna (though they were not related as the term *banu* implies) and settled near the Nile on the northern outskirts of al-Fustat. If we are to believe al-Maqrizi, they were comparatively numerous. For the Yanna he gives a figure of one hundred and for al-Azraq, four hundred men. The Yanna, according to this author, settled not very far from the centre, in the quarter of al-Hamra al-Wusta next to the Banu Hudhayl.

Besides ar-Rumi there was also an important contingent of converted Jews called the Banu Rubil who numbered as many as a thousand men. Their origin is obscure, but we may be certain that they were not bedouins.

Another alien contingent were the Persians. There were not many of them, and some of them came from as-Sana'a, where they had once belonged to the Sasanian garrison. They settled in the north, not far from Babylon on the plain near the Banu Wa'il.

We also hear of al-Habash, the Ethiopians or perhaps Nubians who settled on al-Djiza bank of the Nile. It seems that from the very beginning some Egyptians settled among the conquerors. They were allotted land next to the Himyar and al-Ma'afir on ash-Sharaf plateau. Perhaps they were Coptic auxiliaries who chose to remain with the army.

The above list gives a clear idea of how diversified the population of al-Fustat was from the very beginning. But even this does not include the whole population
and all its strata. Mention is made only of those who as free men enjoyed the
rights of quasi-citizens. Numerous, and doubtless of extremely varied origin, were
slaves and dependents. We should also bear in mind that each year's campaign
brought new countries and other ethnic groups into the orbit of al-Islam and
consequently increased the potential for new immigrants of different stocks and
cultures.

Though the Arabs remained for a long time the leading force both politically
and culturally, they certainly submitted to the influence of a new urban
environment and their more cultured subjects. The ongoing process of
acculturation cannot be denied. But it was a long-lasting and complex
phenomenon which was more strongly felt by succeeding generations. In the
initial formative period, hereditary customs and ancestral usages, combined
together with new but also indigenous norms introduced by the Muslim religion,
were the chief factors which contributed to the building of the urban community
and the town's subsequent structure. Therefore, a glimpse of the conditions in
Arabia on the eve of the conquest would not be out of place, especially as there
has long been a tendency in modern historiography, particularly in general works,
to present Arabia as a sort of social and cultural whole and the Arabs as a uniform
bedouin nation of sheer barbarism with no native cultural tradition and no
aspirations to a more civilized way of life. In reality, at the advent of Islam,
Arabia was socially, economically and culturally diversified in every respect.
Large peripheral regions such as al-Yaman, Hadramaut, 'Oman and Musqat, as
well as the borderland of Syria and al-'Iraq, had been since ancient times centres
of a developed rural and urban civilization in continuous contact with the outside
world, and with their own well developed economic and cultural life. Also,
Makka at that time was ripe for revolutionary social and cultural change because
of the economic situation which resulted from rapidly developing commerce and
wealth accumulated in the course of this economic activity. New ideas were
imported together with foreign goods. Many admonitions in the Qur'an against
immorality, luxury, even architecture, and many allusions in the Sunna, clearly
indicate that at the beginning of the seventh century, the Qurayshites, for
example, had ceased to be a primitive tribe like their ancestors.

Also Yathrib al-Madina, although it could not be compared with Makka,
was not without sedentary cultural traditions and even included a substantial
group of inhabitants (one of the Jewish tribes) who were engaged in crafts.30
Besides those mentioned above, other regions of Arabia also had centres of
sedentary life and were acquainted with urban settlements: for example, the
mountainous regions of 'Asir, with an ancient tradition of settled rural life similar
to that of al-Yaman; Nadjaran, an interesting though not sufficiently studied centre
of early Christianity; and the Yamana. Taking this into account, we can hardly
maintain that the victorious Arab armies consisted mainly of 'primitive'
bedouins.31 Anyway, this was not the case in the Egyptian djund, even if we take
for granted that a considerable proportion of South Arabians were not sedentary
people.
Notwithstanding diverse cultural traditions and some experience with town life, it is improbable that at this early date the Arabs founding al-Fustat had any clear idea of town planning or understood it in a precise, preconceived and practicable way, as the Romans had. Even if they had, some of the usual ideas or plans would have been impractical, considering the internal structure of the army and the character of its most important element, the Arabs.

Aside from the obligations that the Prophet imposed on the Arab nation, the army was a semi-voluntary association of tribal groups bound together by certain common interests, aspirations and beliefs and, probably more important, a growing solidarity aroused through confrontation with alien peoples. At the same time, however, each group was very careful not to lose its individuality, to keep some degree of freedom within the community and to achieve its particular ends, which were not necessarily in agreement with those of their fellows. For all these reasons, and not only because it was foreign to the Arab tradition, it would have been unimaginable to set up an Arab camp-town on the regular lines of a typical Roman camp or garrison-town, with straight streets and a checkerboard pattern implying order and discipline, and with ramparts and gates, not only to defend it, but also to emphasize the sharp division between town (or camp) and the surrounding countryside.

In an Arab camp everything must have been much more loose and flexible, probably not unlike the situation in the army itself, including its internal discipline. This lack of discipline was not felt on the battlefield, as it was compensated for by personal courage, an extremely well developed sense of honour, and an esprit de corps within the group and vis-à-vis a common enemy. But it must have been strongly felt in the course of the camp's foundation and its subsequent day-to-day life. In this respect, it was very characteristic at the founding of al-Fustat to settle some of the tribal groups such as the Hamdan, Dhu Asbah, Nafi', al-Hadjr and others on the al-Djiza bank of the Nile against the orders not only of the army commander, but the Caliph as well. Also, other facts recorded by early sources point to similar flexibility within the community. For instance, the tribe of al-Ma'afir abandoned its khitta because the people could not endure the insects, and moved to another place. Non-Arab detachments such as the Banu Rubil and Banu Azraq had to settle themselves far away from the rest of the army to avoid clashes with the Arabs.

A considerable degree of freedom still does not mean complete anarchy; no army commander would tolerate that. Al-Fustat was primarily a garrison-town established along military lines, and its first function was to guard the recently conquered country. The military character of the settlement necessarily imposed a certain degree of order on the settlers. Whether on the march or on the battlefield the army was organized according to fixed rules, probably based on a long tradition; analogous rules must have applied in camp. As the army was composed of the centre, vanguard, rearguards and two wings and particular tribal detachments had more or less fixed places in these divisions, so also during...
military operations particular groups must have had at least roughly predetermined places for camping in relation to the commander's quarters and other detachments. Similarly, in an ordinary bedouin camp, custom usually dictates that one clan should encamp to the right of the chief's tent, another in front of it, etc., whereas the exact position could vary in accordance with the configuration and physical conditions of the site, if not to the actual liking of the clan's head. Likewise in a military camp such general rules also existed, and were probably equally flexible. We find in *al-Khitat* evidence that similar rules were also in force in the army of 'Amr. To explain why the tribes of Wa'il, al-Qabad, Riya, Rashida and the division of Persians settled in the region south of Babylon, on the eminence of ar-Rasad and in the surrounding area, al-Maqrizi says that since they formed the vanguard of the army, they had already camped in this place before the conquest.35 According to Abu Salih, who takes his information from al-Kindi's lost work on the *khittas*, similar reasons determined the occupation on the other, i.e., northern, extremity of al-Fustat in the place called al-Qantara in the district of al-Hamra.36 In that place there were settled non-Arab tribes which formed a rearguard of the army and who had also camped there during the siege. It should be remembered, however, that Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam gives entirely different reasons for the settling of Roman and Jewish contingents in this particular area.37

But the foundation of a permanent base in a conquered country was a much more complicated matter. Moreover, it was the fourth one (after al-Basra, al-Kufa and al-Djabiya) since the Islamic expansion began; therefore the ruling bodies of the Arabs must have known that it really meant the foundation of the new capital of the province, not just a camp; and they were aware of various problems that this created. Equally important was that the settlers, or at least some of them, were conscious that they were going to own a particular piece of land which might be their home for generations, not merely an overnight or short-term camp-site. Moreover, the area for a permanent base certainly had to be much larger than that for an ordinary, temporary camp of an equally numerous army, and the lots taken by individuals or various tribal groups had to be fairly large in order to house families, dependents, and animals and to provide for the growth of the population and the territorial expansion of the households and clans.

Fortunately, the area of the future Egyptian capital was large enough and would have been sufficient for a bigger army than 'Amr's; but, as usual, the value of land was not equal. The settlers knew this quite well, as most of them had already stayed there for several months during the siege of Babylon, and certainly many of them had by then acquired a clear idea of where they would like to settle if it became necessary. Therefore the division of the land, the mere process of distributing it to individuals and to tribal groups or even the endorsement of holdings already annexed, must have been a difficult and delicate operation which resulted in much jealousy, dissatisfaction and inter-tribal conflict. This is confirmed by al-Quda'i, who clearly refers to conflicting claims when he tells about the commission appointed by 'Amr from among the distinguished and
Division of Land

trusted officers of the army, which acted as an arbiter between tribes and was in charge of the distribution of land. His version, however, is somewhat inconsistent. The author first tells about the scramble for land, which suggests that the people themselves took possession of the land; then he maintains that the appointed officers decided on the settlements of the tribes. The process was probably twofold but, as a rule, the people themselves made their own choice. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, our earliest authority for the event, also implies as much, but he does not mention either arbiters or any kind of a ‘scramble’.

Rhuvon Guest, who first examined this question in detail, is also of the opinion that the role of ‘Amr and his lieutenants was very limited. He concludes from al-Quda’i that “the steps taken suggest adjustment between conflicting claims rather than active direction and control.” Guest’s theory, however, is that most of the land of the future city had already been appropriated at the time of the siege and that the occupation of these areas was continuous in the interval between the siege and the foundation of the permanent camp, adherents having been left behind in the owner’s absence. For Guest, “the foundation of Fustat probably did not mean much more than the making permanent of the camp already on the site.”

The evidence to support this theory is very scanty. In reality it amounts to the apocryphal story of ‘Amr’s tent and to the lodging of Qaysaba ibn Kulthum at-Tudjibi in the garden where later the Mosque of ‘Amr was built. The latter story seems more likely. It is possible that many men in ‘Amr’s army, especially those who, like Qaysaba, had considerable property and a large household, did not care to take it with them on the risky campaign against Alexandria and therefore preferred to leave it behind in al-Fustat, under the protection of the Arab garrison stationed in Babylon and where it would be easier to evacuate in case of defeat. It is unlikely that there were many dwellings like Qaysaba’s, however, and quite improbable that they could have been dispersed over the enormous area of the future camp-city. Furthermore, for purely military reasons the camp of the Arab forces during the siege of Babylon could not have covered a very large area. It had to block the Roman forces in the fortress and therefore must have been concentrated not far from the enemy’s defence lines, probably near the fossatum, the moat, just outside the reach of the Byzantine arrows and engines of war, and behind a zariba which protected it from surprise attack. If the investment was close enough—and it seems that such was the case—the zariba would have formed a semicircle around the fortress and have been about one and a half kilometres long. The actual camp behind it could not have been more than a couple of hundred metres broad (probably wider at the extremes of the semicircle, north and south of the fortress on the Nile, and much less in the middle). If part of the camp had remained in place when the bulk of the army moved away to besiege Alexandria, it could not have been important. At most it constituted the nucleus of the later central quarter of the capital, and this would not much affect any future ‘scramble’ for land. Nevertheless, we can be reasonably certain that the encampment positions of the tribal contingents during the siege had a considerable bearing on the location of their allotments at the foundation some
months later, irrespective of whether they were precisely the same or had only to follow the general direction relative to other lots.

Be that as it may, the rules and directives imposed on the settlers could not have been too strict, and certainly a wide margin was left for individual initiative and decision. Therefore, the general commotion must have been great and occasions for arbitration and the intervention of 'Amr and his "commission" not lacking. Although custom and other factors which we have spoken about above helped to avoid complete anarchy, and although the tribes were theoretically free to choose their places, there certainly were many limitations, and a lot of pressure must have been exerted to secure the interests of the privileged.

We know that in spite of the formal equality in Muslim society, it inherited from its Arabian social background a strong aristocratic structure, which became even more differentiated in early Islam for religious reasons and, during the early wars, through merit won on the battlefield. It is true that in 'Amr's army most of the people privileged either by birth or by their position in the theocracy belonged to the Ahl ar-Raya, a multi-tribal division to which (except for the al-Ansar and Quraysh) probably belonged most of the distinguished Sahaba, who must have also formed the body of 'Amr's councillors and principal officers. This simplified the matter of settlement, since the Ahl ar-Raya ipso facto took the central and most favourable location at the foundation. There the command quarters and the Diwan were established, the main mosque was later erected and the markets outside Babylon soon organized. But, as among the Ahl ar-Raya, there were a number of common warriors from various tribes of no special distinction who together with their noble comrades-in-arms took residence in this advantageous place; also, there were al-ashraf (nobly born) people in other divisions of the army, who might have demanded parcels in proximity to the Diwan, for not only was it convenient but it also automatically assured a higher rank in the community. We do not know how far the concessions to such a people went, but certainly not all claims could be satisfied. In succeeding years we often hear about a great deal of movement within the central quarter, which proves that the demand for residence there persisted.

The distance from the central quarter, the Khitta Ahl al-Raya as it was called, determined to a large degree the value of land taken up at the foundation. But other determinants were also at play. An important one was the commercial value of land, and this depended on whether it was agricultural land, fertile or less fertile, or simply a piece of barren desert. The agricultural value of land usually coincided with its proximity to a source of drinking water—whether it was the Nile, which must have been the most valued, or some other source. But on the other hand, it was known that some low ground near the Nile was marshy, unhealthy and not safe because of periodic inundation. Certain natural features could also have been of some significance. For instance, it was also important whether the ground was even, rocky or sandy, whether building material such as clay or mud was handy, etc. And of course, the proximity of other groups could have played an important role too—it was better to be close to friends than to enemies. All these, and certainly many other factors unknown to us, were kept in
mind by potential settlers when determining whether a lot was valuable or not, whether it was considered good or bad. We are left entirely to our imagination to visualize the process, first of decision making, then of appropriation, and finally of the actual settlement on the available lots—all the discussions, quarrels, persuasion and pressure. Stronger and more influential groups would induce less important ones to leave better lots; some would try force and others bribery; still others, their influence with the commanders. No doubt there were also some exchanges and adjustments. We hear of them even later, possibly after years of residence.

One wonders if, except for the Ahl ar-Raya, there were any principles which would give some tribes the priority of choice, apart from the customary right of former occupation, in the settlement of areas in al-Djiza, those south of Babylon, and possibly at al-Qantara, but with our present knowledge it is impossible to trace any others. It was recently asserted that the South Arabian tribal groups which constituted the majority of the conquering army were particularly disfavoured in their allotments, for they received them on the outskirts of the settled area. It is true that many South Arab tribal groups were obliged to settle in the desert, far away from the Nile and the Diwan, but if we consider that there were over fifty groups to be settled, of which about three-quarters were South Arab, it becomes clear that many of them simply had to take external and distant khittas. On the other hand, some of them, for instance the Bali, Ghafiq, Tujjib, Wa'lan, Lakhm, and Khawlan, took central ones. The disadvantage of being far away from the river and from the headquarters could have been partially compensated for by the larger area of the khitta. The outlying areas were for a long time much less congested and therefore the tribal lots could be much larger there. The external location of a khitta does not necessarily mean discrimination or indicate the unfavourable position of its inhabitants. The best example to the contrary was already given when we referred to al-Ma'afir, a powerful and well esteemed (notwithstanding their South Arabian origin) tribe which originally settled near 'Amr's quarters and later moved to the outskirts of the desert. Their place was taken by no less than the Quraysh tribe.

As we have said, although certain factors could influence the size of khittas, they were, as a rule, of approximately the same order. All of this was probably not consciously intended by the founders, but resulted naturally from the numerical strength of various military groups. There is every reason to believe that the original divisions of the camp-capital corresponded with the division of the army into military units. As was the custom of the time, most of the army units were formed of members of a single clan or tribe. The same was true of 'Amr's army; however, there were some exceptions, such as the one already mentioned above, the Ahl ar-Raya, which was a division composed of various tribal groups. But there was more than one such multi-tribal khitta; for instance, al-Lafif and az-Zahir, apparently also resulting from the existence of other multi-tribal units in the army. But some other khittas, although predominantly settled by people of one tribe, occasionally included smaller groups of one or more tribes. This occurrence was probably
more common than it appears from the historical tradition which maintains that the Arabs were generally adverse to close combinations of different tribes. Such a situation appears from the information of al-Kindi, who tells of many Quda'a clans among other tribes. Seeing this confusing situation, Yazid's governor, Bishr ibn Safwan, separated them. The information denotes evidently only the formal rearrangement of registers in the Diwan, not the actual resettlement of people; nevertheless, it illustrates to some degree the social reality of earlier times.

From the description of the Ahl ar-Raya, which for obvious reasons was much more detailed, it is apparent that smaller clans or tribal detachments were combined in order to make divisions of a certain size, probably with a roughly predetermined number of fighting men. On the other hand, it appears from the list of *khittas* in the works of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam and later historians such as Ibn Duqmaq, al-Qalqashandi and al-Maqrizi, that whenever a tribal group was too numerous, it was divided into two or more units, which certainly reflects the situation in the army. From what has been said above it seems reasonable to conclude that all the basic units of the army were approximately equal in number.

**Organisation of the Camp-Town**

The military structure was scrupulously kept at the founding of the permanent camp so that the army units automatically became territorial and a little later administrative units in the newly founded city. It is not difficult to see the reasons for this arrangement. The founders wanted to preserve, as much as possible, the military character of the settlement and to make it easy to control and mobilize if the need arose. Furthermore, such an organisation would reduce tribal individuality, make the domination of the stronger tribes over the weaker ones more difficult, and lead to the progressive integration of the community, which doubtlessly must have been the intention of the governing circles. And the military organisation was certainly very careful at the crucial moment of dividing the land.

An approximately equal number of men in the army units implies *khittas* of roughly equal size. In practice there certainly were considerable differences owing to differences in land values and the privileged status of certain groups.

At the beginning, however, this had no bearing on the form of the camp-town, since the reserve land was plentiful and intervening areas of unoccupied land between the *khittas* were certainly large. We have no direct information pertaining to the general topography of the primitive camp-city, either to the internal disposition of the *khittas* or to their interrelations within the whole settlement, nor can much be inferred from the scanty data gleaned from the archaeological and written sources. The only subject dealt with in considerable detail in the written sources was the *khittas* themselves, their location, growth, the people who owned them, etc. But even this information is topographically imprecise and, more important, generally refers to a slightly later period.
There can be little doubt, however, that this earliest phase of city life had enormous impact on al-Fustat's later development and on the form of the future urban organism; therefore, however imperfectly, it must be dealt with in spite of its difficulties.

The area where the khittas were distributed was very vast, probably not much smaller than in later times, when the population was much larger. From the northern confines beyond Djabal Yashkur to Birkat al-Habash, it must have measured almost five kilometres and near the river as much as six; and from the Nile to the east, it must have been one to two kilometres wide. In this area of roughly six hundred to eight hundred hectares, about thirty-five units of no more than 300-350 men each were settled. Such a group of adult men should, when settled, include the same number of families and households. On the average, there were probably fewer, as clans with several adult men tended to stay together and usually made one large patriarchal household of several tents or huts set up close to one another, which in later times could become one large house.

These considerations help us to visualize al-Fustat at its point of origin as a conglomerate of thirty or forty tribal (or multi-tribal) settlements of several hundred tents and huts made of reeds and clay, set more or less closely together and separated by vast expanses of uninhabited land. As these original settlements could not have covered more than three or four hectares each, it is clear that at first the free land greatly exceeded the built-up areas, the latter being merely islands of population on largely vacant land. The natural features of the area, and particularly its morphology, conditioned the settlement much more in the first, formative period than later, when the urban environment restricted their influence. Therefore, it is advisable to discuss separately both parts of the camp area: the low, western part and the eastern plateau.

The western part, the alluvial plain descending to the Nile, was undoubtedly used before the conquest as agricultural land. In some places there were groups of trees; in many others, small lakes and ponds, probably overgrown with reeds, rush and papyrus. Most of them dried up in the spring and early summer, but filled with water during the flood. Farms which certainly existed here had probably been expropriated, and farm houses, if they existed and survived the siege, incorporated into the Arabic settlement. However, some churches and monasteries which predated the conquest had been spared and about them we find occasional written information.

This stretch of low land was much narrower at the time of the conquest than it is today and on the whole did not exceed four or five hundred metres, but the population was from the start most numerous here. As the ground tended to be marshy and muddy, especially during the high Nile, the actual khittas must have been located in places slightly more elevated than the rest. Such elevations, either natural or artificial, existed, although they probably did not fully protect houses from the inundation, especially in the earliest period when the natural process of accumulation had not yet raised the level of the city. Perhaps a dike was built or the so-called Djisr al-'Adjuz—an ancient dike used chiefly for communication during the flood—was still present, although we have no information on it in the
city. Communication between these low-lying *khittas* and the central quarter and among themselves was assured by two parallel roads. One was on the bank of the Nile which had not been assigned to anybody in order to assure free access to the river for watering animals and drawing drinking water. The second road is conjectural. There was a track between the Mosque of 'Amr and his house, called at-Tariq (the Road) which, if extended to the south, would have met the north gate of Babylon. Extended to the north, it would have reached the hypothetical site of the later Bab as-Safa on the western slope of Kaum al-Djarah, and continued in a north north-east direction to pass between Djabal Yashkur and Birkat Qarun and, a little farther on, to cross the Canal. As there certainly existed in pre-Islamic times a road connecting Babylon with the eastern Delta, probably via Tandunias (Umm Dunain, if its identification with later al-Maks is correct) such would have been its logical route, along the eastern edge of the valley, just outside the reach of the high Nile, but not yet on the inconveniently rough ridge of the plateau. The appellation at-Tariq is doubtlessly significant too, and could hardly have been used to denote an ordinary lane.

No less important were other tracks used by the tribal settlements to reach the Nile. These would hypothetically run by the shortest route, in straight lines if possible, from the *khittas* to the river, and consequently cross the roads discussed above at right angles. In practice this was never so. Many obstacles intervened and disturbed the straight course of the footpaths and the regularity of the network. But in any case, an ideal checkerboard pattern was adhered to in this area more than in any other part of the camp-town. These tracks or roads, which had been primarily intended for the external communication of *khittas* and could serve people from more than one *khitta*, were evidently drawn mainly in the *fada's*, the intertribal "no-man's land."

Internally the *khittas* allegedly presented at the foundation a fairly uniform aspect: agglomerations of temporary shelters with a place for common prayer and, possibly, houses for the tribal elders in the centre. Mosques and other permanent buildings for communal life were erected after a year or two at the earliest, and probably not before more solid and comfortable individual houses had been constructed.

Within *khittas* there were enclosures for animals, probably both collective (owned by the whole clan) and individual (to keep favored horses). Small lots of fertile land in the neighborhood of these dwellings were taken for cultivation and bigger portions of the intertribal areas were soon turned into gardens such as those which we occasionally hear of in written accounts.

A certain regularity in the plan of roads and settlements, which could be expected in 'Amal Asfal, was probably almost nonexistent in 'Amal Fauq. Practically unlimited space and the diversified relief of the plateau—the *gebel*, as it is still called today by the local population—with its uneven surface, hills and deep *wadis* and depressions, alternating with relatively flat uplands, made settlement, if not more difficult, certainly more complex and diversified. More often than not it was necessary to free the land acquired of loose rocks and rubble in order to be able to set up tents or huts, enclosures for livestock, etc. The tracks
for external traffic were more irregular. The ones which assured communication with the Nile had to follow the natural relief of the terrain and avoid natural obstacles as well as other settlements. Driving animals for daily watering across other settlements would be difficult and inconvenience their inhabitants; therefore, the tracks from farther khittas had to detour around the nearer ones, winding and changing direction like the streets in an oriental city. There were two main directions for these roads: one generally west, leading to the Nile; and the other, determined by the position of the khitta, leading to the headquarters, the Diwan and Babylon, where initially most of the economic life of the city was concentrated. These approximately radial roads led out from the centre. Other tracks led to al-Musalla, the common place of worship, where in the early period the faithful gathered for solemn prayers, holidays and to hear official announcements.

The main problem for the inhabitants of these eastern khittas was a water supply. Probably there were some wells there and during the high Nile seepage water collected in some depressions. This water, however, especially from the wells far from the Nile, was not suitable for drinking, as it had an unpleasant, calcic, slightly acrid taste. But it could be used for various household purposes, for irrigation and, in an emergency, to water cattle. Ordinary drinking water had to be carried from the river and it is natural, then, that people wanted to settle as near to the river as possible.

The internal disposition of living quarters in the inland khittas must have been at first as simple as in the others, only perhaps slightly more diversified because of the relief of the gebel. Individual features, here as elsewhere, were to manifest themselves visibly only later, when the sense of stability and growing well-being took effect and caused the people to seek more permanent and comfortable abodes. Local influences, different cultural traditions, and for many settlers the heritage of thousands of years of sedentary life, were soon to show themselves plainly in the process of town-building. The unifying influence of the austere first days of Islam and of the military way of life during the campaigns was to lose its grip on the settlers when they began to enjoy the fruits of their victory. Still, keeping in mind the lack of strict rules governing the organization of the camp-town, we cannot exclude some differences in the initial planning of particular khittas. It would be inconceivable that settlements of people coming from such dissimilar natural and cultural backgrounds, such as al-Hira near the 'Iraqi border and the mountainous regions of Yemen, would be arranged in exactly the same way.

The specific historical situation at the time when the camp was founded, its original function and, what is certainly more significant, the peculiar and diverse sociocultural and ethnic structure of each group of settlers, all contributed to the apparent planlessness of the original camp-town. It was more a loose conglomerate of tribal settlements than a prearranged uniform organism. And this original disposition determined the later development and the subsequent town-plan.
The situation in the field of architecture was entirely different. Humble abodes—huts and tents—had been erected only as temporary shelter. These in turn were probably replaced by simple but more permanent houses which, a little later, were superseded by more ambitious structures. The primitive habitations did not, of course, obstruct the natural process of architectural development, since they could have been dismantled and the space used again and again. Whereas the layout of established town quarters would have furnished obstacles for any intended replanning, architecture here could develop and change freely.

This should not imply that the Arabs themselves became builders or craftsmen. It is often said that they did not contribute anything to the art or industry of the conquered countries, and this is to a great extent true, but not because they had no taste for material goods and the arts, or no traditions in this respect. The cause was entirely due to the social order. The Arabs, regardless of what their occupation had been in their native land, came to their new homeland as conquerors and warriors and they remained so for several generations. They became the ruling class and as such were not engaged in any sort of productive work. They were primarily soldiers of an occupation army, and their main function was to hold for the Caliph the country in which they were stationed, and to insure its fiscal exploitation for themselves and, theoretically, the whole Islamic community. To facilitate the collection of taxes, they maintained order, and they could be administrators as well. In addition, they performed certain executive, administrative, religious and judicial functions within the community for which they received annuities in specie and in kind. Many of them accumulated considerable wealth from their share of the booty during the campaigns, and this booty must have been fairly considerable since non-Arab warriors, who in most cases were not registered in the Diwan and therefore not entitled to an allowance, found it profitable enough to enlist in the army just for a share of the booty from the campaigns. Military expeditions using al-Fustat as their base continued for many years, and not only resulted in a flow of new riches but reinforced the conviction that the knightly profession was as noble as it was profitable.

All this freed the Arab settlers from the necessity of exercising any profession. Possibly they would even have regarded it as dishonorable, with the exception perhaps of herding cattle and this possibly not beyond the first generation. Other professions, if not forbidden, were frowned upon. Even the mercantile profession, although sanctioned by the Prophet and his Companions, was not favored.62

Therefore, we can be certain that it was not the Arabs who built the city of al-Fustat, at least not after erecting their first, temporary shelters in the camp-town. Possibly, as a gesture of piety, they would have lent a hand in the construction of their mosques. Otherwise they left the task of building to their Coptic subjects and to rare skilled slaves and dependents.

The simplicity of the first Islamic dwellings in al-Fustat was due, in our opinion, not to a lack of architectural ambition or a deficiency in the building trades and traditions, but rather to historical circumstances. The settlers, one can imagine, were told that this place would be their permanent base and a place of respite between campaigns; so they took their lots and made for themselves, as
quickly as possible, habitations probably only slightly better and more comfortable than those in an ordinary temporary camp. This was an immediate necessity for themselves, their families, and for the safety of their property and animals. All the rest could wait. The needs and means to meet the first building requirements were more or less similar everywhere; so probably the first constructions were alike, although some *khittas* may have contained more tents or shelters of skins and others more reed and mud huts, while still others may have utilized stone rubble or palm trees. The settlers probably were not selective with their materials; there was no room for style in this primitive, *ad hoc* architecture, although we can assume that a bedouin from central Arabia would construct his temporary abode in a different way than a Yamani city-dweller or a Syrian-Byzantine professional soldier.

Later on, when the settlers built more ambitious and permanent houses, stylistic differences in architecture should have become more apparent. On the other hand, since the Arabs did not build those houses themselves, they largely had to make use of local Coptic masons who, understandably, would employ techniques and a style of architecture proper to their own country, and this would to a considerable degree level out most differences. It was only a lucky person who owned a slave of foreign descent with the skill to build a house for his master. But, on the whole, permanent houses must have conformed, for the first generation at least, to the traditional domestic architecture of Egypt, with its extensive use of mud brick, simple forms, frequent employment of barrel vaults constructed without centering to cover rectangular rooms, etc.
5. Demographic Evolution

The founding of the permanent camp, the focus of which was the division of land between tribal groups and their settlement, stimulated a population influx lasting, with varying intensity, for centuries and periodically changing in composition. The earliest stages of this process are worth a closer look, as they directly influenced the town's development in its early years.

Not all of the original occupying force participated in the division of land at al-Fustat. Egypt was not yet completely pacified and smaller military actions were still going on. These required the presence of numerous military detachments as well as garrisons in the more prominent towns. Warriors with the army in the field were eligible for allotments only after having completed their duties or upon being replaced by other warriors.

One such detachment, which remained behind the main forces in Alexandria and only appeared later to claim its lots, has been mentioned in later sources, most probably based on al-Quda'i. It must have been quite a large unit, for it was given a separate khitta in al-Fustat, known as Khitta Ahl az-Zahir.1 Another khitta, called Lafif,2 must have been formed for similar reasons.

Creating separate new quarters for fighting men who were in the field at the time of the general land division was something exceptional. That is evidently why information about it has been preserved. In general, there was no necessity for forming new khittas because the warriors, having completed their service, supposedly settled down together with their kinsmen within their tribal parcels.

Thus, al-Fustat became the encampment for the bulk of the Arab army and its permanent military base for future operations. There still remains the problem of garrison troops in the chief provincial towns, which in a barely secured country were doubtless a military necessity. But, were they allotted land there as in al-Fustat and permanently settled, or rather were all the troops stationed in al-Fustat and only from this base sent to provincial garrisons and periodically replaced?

The first possibility, we think, should be excluded at least for the earliest period. The existing historical evidence, particularly with reference to the garrison of Alexandria, the most important and best documented one, points to the latter solution.

The garrison of Alexandria was, as a rule, stationed in ribats (seaside castles or possibly towers belonging to the system of city walls) and was replaced every half year.3 At the same time, however, the Arab fighting men were allowed to take
possession there of houses deserted by their Byzantine owners. Although the appropriation of houses looks like a preamble to settlement, it was not regarded as such but as a share of the war booty. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, on the authority of Yazid ibn Abi Habib, is positive about this and furthermore states that there were no khittas in Alexandria, except one given to Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwam. Therefore, the houses regarded as spoils of war, which were due every warrior, did not preclude a share in the land division in al-Fustat. The khitta allotted to a warrior in al-Fustat and his share of the booty were surely treated in quite a different way, though they both comprised his reward and enlarged his personal fortune. In the eyes of his contemporaries, the booty was a warrior’s due, a sort of bonus which he deserved as a reward from Allah for taking part in a successful campaign, while the allotted khitta reflected the notion of duty springing from membership in the djund. The role of the djund was strictly defined and in Egypt al-Fustat was chosen as its seat. Khittas were allotted to house the army and enable its members to carry out their military and administrative tasks in the conquered country. It seems that a warrior could neither resign a khitta nor refuse to accept it. Khittas were not only indispensable for the establishment of a military base, but they also constituted the national seat for all the Arabs in Egypt, and this was no doubt taken into consideration.

Obviously, such an interpretation of the notion of the khitta is not expressly stated in the sources, but it has been implied by historical facts. The sources mention, however, concrete cases of warriors who were assigned both a khitta in al-Fustat and a house in some other town. Among many warriors who took possession of houses or parts of houses in Alexandria, Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam quotes four names of army leaders: ‘Ibada ibn as-Samit, Mu‘awiya ibn Hudaydj, ‘Abd Allah ibn Abi Sarh and Abu Dharr al-Ghifari. From the same source we know that they also possessed khittas in al-Fustat.

The first phase, that is, the settling down of the entire expeditionary force, was quickly accomplished. Long expeditions from Egypt at this time are not mentioned. The expedition to Nubia and ‘Amr’s raid on Libya took place only after the city had been founded; therefore, the contingents that took part in these actions already had their lots in al-Fustat.

The official settlement of the tribal groups was doubtless accompanied from the very beginning by an influx of population from Arabia and Syria. It must have been a long process, and although direct evidence is rather scarce, quite important numerically too, especially in the early years of al-Fustat. The immigration of the military settlers’ families was certainly augmented by that of more distant relatives attracted by news of riches in the newly conquered province, which tempted them to share the profits of their kinsmen.

It was a custom in the first period of the wars of conquest that the Arab armies, the so-called djund, formed troops of armed warriors accompanied by trains of families: women, old men and children, who brought all their possessions with them, similar to nomadic migrations. Thus the process of settlement during the town’s foundation should have embraced the whole population of a particular tribal group. A similar situation may have obtained for ‘Amr’s expedition, but no
sources are available to support or disprove this hypothesis. The only evidence concerns the already mentioned Qaysaba ibn Kulthum, who apparently brought fifty slaves with him. This testimony is not, however, conclusive as it does not mention family, but only slaves, and besides, is probably exaggerated. Certain conclusions can be drawn rather from the composition of the army. Considering that the majority of it consisted of sedentary or semi-sedentary tribes; that part of it (the Persians and most probably the Byzantines) were professional soldiers; and, moreover, that some part of it was recruited in Caesarea for the immediate purposes of the military expedition, it seems that the army, or at least the first contingent which served as a reconnoitering vanguard, was more similar to a regular army of the Byzantine or Persian type than to a traditional bedouin band. Thus, it would not have been so overloaded with soldiers' families and their possessions. Also, all the sources agree on the lack of a conscious objective for the expedition against Egypt, and this should not be disregarded. In such a situation, the influx of families would have started after the news of the first victories had spread, and would have become a mass migration only after the decision to settle the army in al-Fustat became known. This non-military wave of settlement, though in essence intended to bring the warriors and their families together, far exceeded strict family groupings. The extent of this immigration should be viewed in terms of the oriental social norms of those times: when several men from the same clan, after having succeeded in war and enriched themselves with booty and the regularly paid pensions, remained in one of the 'amsar, they were usually joined by their whole clan. The clan shared in the chivalric fame of its sons, as well as in their material well-being. The richer and more numerous the clan was, the greater the prestige enjoyed by its members. It was the family community that counted, and this must be kept in mind when discussing the process of settlement or in any demographic considerations.8

The immigration of new Arab settlers did not stop in the following years. In fact, it continued with varying intensity throughout the whole Umayyad dynasty. Entire tribal groups were being resettled, like the Bali, related to 'Amr, which was moved by the Caliph 'Umar's order from Syria, and joined the Bali who fought in the ranks of the Ahl ar-Rayy. 'Amr placed them very close to the central khitta, a little north of it.9 It was also in the time of 'Amr that the clan of Sahm came to al-Fustat. We know that they were new settlers because according to Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam they did not take part in the conquest. They were settled west of the mosque.10 In the time of the Caliph 'Uthman a large tribal group known as the Hadramaut arrived to join its few kinsmen.11 They settled together far in the desert and thus founded one of the largest and most stable quarters of the town.

A little later, in A.D. 673 (A.H. 53), Ziyad ibn Abi Sufyan transferred 130 families of Azdites from Basra to al-Fustat.12 They settled in the Khitta Ahl az-Zahir. The same governor transferred to Egypt many other clans as well.13

Such migrations must have taken place on numerous occasions, though only a few of them have been mentioned in the sources. This may partly account for the fact that the later authors often mention the names of tribes not mentioned by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam; for instance: al-Akhul, al-Albu'; A'yan, Djayshan,14
Dju'aliyin, al-Qabad, ar-Radjiba, ar-Rahba, and Riya. Sometimes names may have been omitted by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam as insignificant or may have stood for branches of larger tribes. But certainly some must have arrived after the town had been founded, and that is why they are not mentioned by our earliest source.

Political events, changes in government, etc. also provided frequent opportunities for new settlement. For example, 'Amr, when reappointed by al-Mu'awiyah, arrived with a large Syrian army. A little later many Kharidjites came from Makka with Ibn Djahdam when he was appointed governor of Egypt by the anticaliph 'Abd Allah ibn az-Zubayr, and shortly thereafter 'Abd al-'Aziz, accompanied by a Syrian army, arrived to fight him. In the year A.D. 745 (A.H. 128) al-Hawthara, appointed governor by Marwan II, marched to al-Fustat with a Syrian army of seven thousand, which later refused to return home. Certainly there were similar movements, many of whose participants declined to leave the hospitable metropolis.

Apart from the influx of larger groups, there were individual settlers who came to Egypt for various reasons and settled in al-Fustat. The information concerning them is obviously scarce and naturally deals with individuals of some importance, but it confirms the phenomenon.

The increase in the Arab population resulting from this process of continuous migration and, no doubt, from a considerable birthrate, though partly offset by losses during military expeditions and unrest within the country, must have been quite significant. Already in the time of al-Mu'awiyah (A.D. 661-680), i.e., the period of the second generation of Arab settlers in Egypt, the number of people registered in the Diwan amounted to forty thousand, three times as many as at the town's foundation. This figure does not, however, give an exact idea of the true size of the Arab population, as the number of people admitted to registration was limited. In reality the number of Arabs fit for military service was larger; and besides, the Diwan did not take into account most of the clients, non-military immigrants, et al., even if they were full-blooded Arabs. The statement that twenty thousand men of al-Ma'afir tribe alone were employed at the digging of al-Khandaq in A.D. 684, although apparently exaggerated, gives an idea of the tremendous increase in the tribal population.

Though the increase in the Arab population was considerable, it did not equal the increase in the population of foreign stock. The Arabs, who were predominantly military settlers and thus not occupied with other trades, needed a great number of servants, tradesmen, craftsmen, builders, water-carriers, haulers and drivers, as well as an army of clerks to deal with financial administration, taxation, the collection of grain, and similar matters. Thus the supply of manpower from Babylon and from the small district inhabited by the "Egyptian tribes," located on ash-Sharaf plateau, must very soon have proved insufficient. The restrictions on the settlement of non-Muslims evidently imposed at the town's founding soon ceased to be observed. These restrictions must have been relaxed, at the latest, during the long and tolerant rule of the governor Maslama ibn Mukhallad.
In addition to the native quarter on ash-Sharaf, the Coptic population in the beginning settled mostly outside the Arab districts, on the edge of town and in the suburbs. A significant piece of evidence is given by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, who mentions that the first church built at al-Fustat was outside al-Qantara. When the Believers objected to the governor that the building was illegal, he answered, "Verily it is not in your camp, but outside your grounds"; and they went silent.

The Christian community grew rapidly and their households must have appeared quite early in that part of the city which was mainly Arab; first in the neighbourhood of churches and monasteries, possibly on ecclesiastical land, and in the free intertribal lands, and later probably also among the Arab population in property acquired by purchase. Although the legal status of this population and their landholdings cannot be clearly defined, the process of settlement and the expansion of the Christian population in the city is reasonably well confirmed by evidence of the reconstruction of old decrepit churches and the erection of new ones. The growing Christian community obviously required a greater number of more conveniently located places to worship than were available.

We have already mentioned the new church beyond al-Qantara on the outskirts of the city. Others were erected more centrally, which proves that the peaceful expansion of the Christian population was not restricted to the suburbs. Thus, about the year A.D. 737 in al-Hamra al-Wusta, the church of Saint Menas was built anew because the Christian population, which comprised many notables in this quarter, became so numerous that the governor, al-Walid ibn Rifa'a, gave permission for it. This resulted in considerable turmoil during which many Muslims were killed.

Another church was constructed even more centrally in al-Hamra ad-Dunia, a quarter immediately adjacent to the Khitta Ahl ar-Rayya. The church dedicated to Saint Mary was built in the monastery complex next to the church of Abu Shenuda which evidently was inadequate for the Copts in this part of the city. The church was demolished by order of 'Ali ibn Suleyman in the year A.D. 786, but was rebuilt by the permission of Musa ibn 'Isa a year or two later. The latter decision was taken on the grounds of an interesting ruling by two eminent theologians and traditionalists, al-Laith ibn Sa'd and 'Abd Allah ibn Lahi'a, who declared that since al-Fustat's churches were built in the time of the Sahaba and Tabi'un and benefitted the community, they might be rebuilt. In plain language it meant that contemporary Muslims should not be more strict on religious matters than the immediate followers of the Prophet. But the ruling at the same time also implies that a number of churches were built in al-Fustat at the time of the first and second generations of Arab conquerors.

Reconstruction of old, ruined churches and the building of new ones speaks not only for the numerical strength of the Christian population but also for their affluence and position within the community. They were long indispensable for various administrative jobs and were prominent in economic life. Therefore, the normal attitude of the Arab authorities towards the Christians was one of tolerance, protection and cooperation. Stricter measures were exceptional and usually caused by the apparent or suspected disloyalty of the Copts. But even
then, they did not affect the group as a whole.

Even Christian sources, normally very sensitive to any sign of oppression and quick to hurl invectives at unfriendly Arab officials, rarely give evidence of true discrimination. Harsh measures were almost exclusively related to fiscal matters and although they sometimes resulted in loudly lamented cases of apostasy, they can hardly be regarded as discriminatory.

The mass influx of the Coptic population into al-Fustat in accordance with the needs of the city and its ruling class collided, however, with the general policy of the Arabs, which was based on Byzantine administrative practices, in which free migration from one place to another was restricted. In particular, it was forbidden to leave rural communities, a phenomenon which resulted from increasing fiscal oppression and which took place on a large scale, threatening the productivity of the land and resulting in severe administrative and police sanctions. The example of al-Fustat seems, however, to indicate that rural emigration could not be halted. Among the population who settled there legally (in accordance with the administrative and tax regulations which required them to pay taxes in the place where they originally lived), there were no doubt many refugees from the countryside who found shelter in the confusion of a big town. It was also easier to find the protection of some Arab or Coptic notable there. All in all, it seems improbable that the entire Egyptian population of thousands of people who settled in the town during the first few decades of its existence did so legally, especially as permission to leave one's native residence was not willingly issued.

The increase in population in al-Fustat and changes in its ethnic structure were also due in part to the constant import of slaves. Frequent military expeditions in the Mediterranean area provided the market with a great number of white slaves. In addition, the Nubian tribute supplied four hundred head per year, and the developing trade with the south brought considerable numbers of black slaves. That the slave trade played such an important role can also be inferred from the fact that the first market in al-Fustat was, according to the traditions, the slave market. It was offered to the inhabitants of al-Fustat by the Caliph ‘Umar shortly after the town had been established.

The great number of slaves bought every year or obtained during military expeditions as the spoils of war made up a considerable proportion of the population at that time. It would be risky to put forth any quantitative estimates, but the supposition that the slaves equalled in number the Arab settlers in the early period might not be far from the truth.

Keeping all this in mind, we have to assume that in the first few decades after the establishment of the town, the population increased several times. The process must have been very rapid as, according to the oldest tradition, under the rule of the Caliph ‘Uthman, only fifteen years after the town's founding at the latest, the vast free spaces between khittas were being occupied. By the time of the Caliph al-Mu‘awiya and especially during the long and peaceful rule of his Egyptian governor Maslama ibn Muhallad, there were no more free territories in the central district of the town. By the end of the century, under the rule of ‘Abd al-
Malik's brother 'Abd al-'Aziz, we observe a real crisis, which is manifested in numerous purchase and exchange transactions concerning the more favorably located lots. Of course, this density had not yet been reached in the less attractive districts. But in the second part of the rule of the Umayyad dynasty, this congestion was characteristic of the whole town. This is indirectly attested by the transfer to Egypt of a few thousand Qaysites of the North Arabian tribe which had supported the Umayyad dynasty in its struggle for power. This action was prompted by 'Ubayd Allah ibn al-Habhab, an omnipotent tax collector under several governors, who was looking for supporters to counterbalance the unfriendly, predominantly South Arab inhabitants of al-Fustat. He obtained permission for the transfer from the Caliph Hisham, but only on condition that they did not settle in al-Fustat. Although this information does not indicate for certain that the city was overpopulated, it suggests that Hisham knew that there was not sufficient land in al-Fustat to settle such a large group of people. Dispersing them among the South Arab population would automatically result in turmoil and political crisis in the town. Consequently, the Qaysites were settled in the eastern Delta.

The number of Arab warriors registered in the Diwan, as mentioned above, amounted to forty thousand under al-Mu'awiya, and it seems that it remained at that level. A greater number was not possible with the decreasing state revenues, which were further reduced by the growing expenditures of the royal courts, both in Damascus and locally. The latter, especially under the rule of 'Abd al-'Aziz, tried to equal that of the Caliph. The number of Arabs, however, was constantly increasing, if not through immigration, which distinctly slackened in the time of the Umayyads, then as a result of the considerable birthrate, which was over 2.5 percent annually. If we assume that in about A.D. 670 approximately thirty thousand out of the total of forty thousand Ahl-ad-Diwan actually lived in al-Fustat, then by about A.D. 750 that is, fifty years later at the same birthrate, there should have been at least a hundred thousand of them. The real number must have been smaller because of war losses and significant emigration to the newly acquired west, but it certainly greatly exceeded the original figure. There was, however, no change in the Diwan, which was thus constantly under pressure. As far as we know, the only increase was ordered by the Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, who wanted to increase his popularity in order to carry out his far-reaching reforms. In the year A.D. 718 (A.H. 100) he added five thousand names to the list. This increase was cancelled by his successor, Yazid ibn 'Abd al-Malik, immediately after he came to the throne in A.D. 720.

The round, and therefore artificial figure, by which 'Umar II increased the list of the Ahl ad-Diwan and his successor's decision to return to the previous one clearly shows that by about A.D. 720 the Register no longer reflected the real strength of the Arab colony. In practice, the procedure must have been such that one of the sons (but only one) succeeded his father in the Diwan, and only if there were vacancies could more than one son be registered. Probably the figures for each tribe, which once reflected the actual number of its members, became fixed quotas in later periods.
All the facts and considerations discussed above lead us to the same conclusion about the great increase in the original population of the town, which in the short period of three to four generations, that is, from the camp’s establishment to the period preceding the fall of the Umayyad dynasty one hundred years later, reached the strikingly large number of several hundred thousand inhabitants. This maximum was probably not exceeded until the late tenth century when the whole urban agglomeration together with the newly founded suburb, al-Qahira, was stimulated by exceptionally favorable political and socio-economic conditions and reached an even greater population. In the early period, however, the country, being heavily exploited in favor of more privileged Syria (or al-'Iraq in later times), could not in all likelihood afford to maintain and feed a more populous capital.

An additional factor regulating the excessive growth of the population was the periodic deficiency in the seasonal Nile flood. The occasional low Niles limited the area of cultivation and resulted in smaller crops, higher prices, and often famine. There was less damage to crops by exceptionally high Niles, but the inundation of usually dry lands could harm the country in other ways and just as painfully.

It was the poor, non-Arab population that suffered most by such disasters. But famine was often accompanied by epidemics affecting all the population, and these occurred frequently. However, analysis of the demographic situation in medieval Egypt at the periods of relative political stability shows that these misfortunes usually did not affect the average population size. In conjunction with other economic factors, they played a regulating role, mitigating the high rate of reproduction. More lasting effects were felt when death, famine and plague combined with political disturbances and, of course, when they assumed catastrophic dimensions. In any case, nothing stopped the growth of the Arab population. Allowing for only a minimal increase in the number of men from thirty to fifty thousand over three generations from the time of al-Mu'awiya, and assuming that the average family consisted of four persons (which is rather low, taking into account that the population was on the whole well-off) we arrive at a total of over two hundred thousand. But one has to add to the Arabs—the so-called Ahl ad-Diwan—a large number of slaves, mawali, and the Coptic population. It would be difficult to give a numerical figure, but these groups must have been quite considerable too.

In discussing the original khittas, we mentioned the non-Arab contingents in 'Amr's army who settled in al-Fustat. These were Persians; Jews converted to Islam; and Byzantines, mostly from Syria. Presumably those settlers brought their kinsmen who also settled down in this rich, developing town. The immigration from Syria must have been considerable, since under the Umayyad Caliphs close contacts between the two provinces were maintained. This population, partly related to the Arab military aristocracy, probably became integrated much more easily than others (with the status of mawali) into the Arab population. The same category embraced the Berbers, who had been coming not only as slaves, but also as free settlers since the first expedition to the west. The traces of this settlement survived for many centuries in the town's toponymy. One
of the main markets in the central district of the town was called Suq Barbār.\textsuperscript{50}

There are also traces of Ethiopian settlement in al-Fustat, which formed a separate \textit{khitta} in al-Djiza.\textsuperscript{51} Their origin is not clear and the sources give no explanation for their presence. Perhaps they were originally in the Byzantine army, or they could be the remnants of the old Abyssinian army that survived the Persian occupation of al-Yaman and later joined the Arabs, as did their former enemies.

The Nubians must also have been very numerous in al-Fustat. There were many captives taken in the Nubian expeditions and the greater part of the four hundred slaves supplied every year from Nubia as tribute\textsuperscript{57} must also have stayed in the town. Apart from this, there were Nubian slaves brought in by the traders. Many entered the class of \textit{mawali} and some of them achieved high positions in contemporary society, as can be seen from the example of Yazid ibn Abī Habīb, one of the first Arab-Egyptian historians and learned scholars of the traditions.\textsuperscript{53}

There was one more ethno-religious group in the population which we have not examined, but which played an outstanding role in the history of Egyptian towns, both in antiquity and the Middle Ages. This was the Jewish community; unfortunately, for the period in question, material referring to this community and its place in the developing metropolis is very limited.\textsuperscript{54}

There had certainly been a Jewish community established in Babylon since ancient times.\textsuperscript{54} The synagogue of the Palestinians preserved there from pre-Islamic times proves this.\textsuperscript{56} Outside the walls of Babylon there was another synagogue called al-Massasa.\textsuperscript{57} But as to the Jewish community within al-Fustat itself, the only evidence seems to be the decision of Qādi Khayr ibn Nuʿaym, made sometime during the years A.D. 738-745 (A.H. 120-127) to receive the testimony of Jews in cases against Jews.\textsuperscript{58} It seems improbable that the Qādi intervened in matters concerning the population living in Babylon, and thus this reference may concern some group living in al-Fustat. A more reliable piece of information comes from the later period, though it may refer to the period in which we are interested. It is stated that Ahmad ibn Tulun, when building his famous Maidān somewhere at the foot of the Citadel, ordered the graves of the Jews and Christians located there dug up.\textsuperscript{59} The distance between this place and Babylon is too great to suppose that the cemetery belonged to the Jewish community living there. Probably already by that time, the Jews from Babylon used the cemetery somewhere to the east of al-Qaraṣa al-Kubra, in the neighbourhood of Birkat al-Habash.\textsuperscript{60}

The existence of the old synagogue Dammuḥ in al-Djiza, which allegedly existed already in Roman times, and which was admired throughout the Middle Ages,\textsuperscript{61} speaks for the existence of some Jewish colony in that district too. Although the sources point out the existence of Jewish communities both in al-Fustat and in its autonomous districts, Babylon and al-Djiza, the references are insufficient to allow us to advance any theories as to their character and strength. General historical data seem to indicate, however, that until about the tenth century, the main centre of the Jewish community in Egypt was Alexandria, and not al-Fustat, and that their number could not have exceeded a few thousand families there.
6. Territorial Evolution

The growth of the population of al-Fustat and the parallel evolution of its form—its architecture, street network, markets, harbors, and other facilities had a vital bearing on the territorial development of the town as a whole and of its quarters. This camp-like settlement rapidly became a large, densely built-up urban centre with all the basic functions of a town. Simultaneously, the activity of man considerably modified the general environment.

There appears to have been no radical change in the town’s borders when one compares those reconstructed from the time of the foundation with those from the period of its fullest development a century later, at the end of the Caliphate of Hisham. The real expansion took place internally, with the increasing density of the quarters and the expansion into open inter-khitta spaces. Since, however, we are now on much firmer ground when seeking to determine the city’s borders, it seems advisable to review some relevant points.

The southern limits of the town’s territory allegedly remained unchanged, but the settlements situated on the border of the urban area, such as Tura, Birkat al-Habash and possibly some villages, had certainly grown and were more closely tied to the town. The built-up districts extended farthest to the south in the area along the river. The quarters of the Lakhm and their branch, the Rashida, apparently reached the plain of Birkat al-Habash and merged with semi-rural suburbs.

On the southeast, the densely built-up area could only have covered a part of the plateau east of ash-Sharaf, though scattered settlements undoubtedly reached the plain beyond and extended to the farther side of the broad, shallow valley where Ibn Tulun later built his famous aqueduct. But probably this whole region was already at the foundation regarded as belonging to the camp-site.

The reconstruction of the northern limits of the town is a little more complicated. Medieval sources on the subject contradict one another and sometimes disagree on obvious facts. Conclusive evidence would be the position of al-Khandaq—the ditch which was dug there in the year A.D. 684 (A.H. 65), ordered by ‘Abd ar-Rahman ibn ‘Utba Ibn Djahdam, the governor of the Makkan anticaliph ‘Abd Allah Ibn az-Zubayr, in anticipation of an imminent attack by the Umayyad Marwan Ibn al-Hakam. It was completed within one month. Allegedly thirty thousand men took part in this work, apparently mainly corvée labor, but also members of the Arab Ahl ad-Diwan. The number of men employed, given in contemporary verse, does not seem exaggerated; nevertheless,
it indicates the tempo and importance of the undertaking. The rapid progress of
the work must have made an impression on its contemporaries. This is reflected in
the narrative of al-Quda'i, our main source of information on this venture.⁵

The ditch, as can be deduced from our sources, was composed of two parts: one, which was certainly more important as it was attacked directly by Marwan's
army, protected the city from the north; the other, on the eastern edge of the town,
evidently served an auxiliary function. Marwan's base was in 'Ain Shams;⁶ therefore, all action should have been expected from the north; however, it was
evidently recollected that during 'Amr's campaign, one detachment of the army
was able to cross the mountains and unexpectedly attack the enemy from the
rear.⁷ This must also have been the reason for building defences on the side of
town seemingly impenetrable because of the al-Muqattam cliffs. Paradoxically,
all our direct information concerns this eastern ditch, and the main northern one
has to be reconstructed from indirect remarks.⁸

The only logical place to dig the northern ditch was north of Djabal Yashkur,
somewhere between the cliffs of the future Ayyubid citadel and the Nile. The
distance between these two points at that time would not have exceeded two
kilometres and the ground was for the most part soft, in some places swampy,
especially since the ditch was dug in August and the first part of September⁹ when
the Nile was at its highest level. It also had to cross al-Khalidj and possibly the
large lake al-Fil. Lower parts of it would have been filled with water, adding
considerably to its defensive value. It was also provided with gates. On the whole,
work on the northern side must have been comparatively easy and rapid, unlike
the eastern side, which posed serious technical problems and required a great deal
of manpower. The terrain of the eastern cemeteries where this latter ditch was dug
was very uneven and must have been crossed by numerous deep wadis: the work
here practically amounted to cutting through solid rock.

This eastern part of al-Khandaq also had to begin from al-Muqattam spur,
that is, the future Citadel, and continue in the area of the cemeteries to Birkat al-
Habash in the south, covering a distance of about five kilometres. Its terminus at
Birkat al-Habash means that the southern edge of the city was left unprotected,
although we have to take into account that the digging took place at high Nile
when the Birkat was really a lake filled with water and as such could provide a
certain measure of protection.

The course of the ditch in the cemeteries can be approximately traced. It was
still apparent in the later Middle Ages just east of the Mausoleum of ash-Shafi'i
and to the west of the Mosque al-Kini and the tomb of Dhu an-Nun.¹⁰ Evidently
in the rocky plateau it had a better chance of remaining unburied for a longer time
than in the low alluvial areas to the north.¹¹ If we accept the view that the ditch
was dug on the north side of Djabal Yashkur, the northern limit of the town is
therefore determined. Farther in this direction would have extended only the
riverside khittas, forming parts of the northernmost suburbs of al-Hamra al-
Quswa; Djabal Yashkur would have remained within the limits of the town.

Al-Maqrizi maintains that this part of al-Hamra had already been
depopulated and had turned into desert when the 'Abbasids came to power.¹² We
do not know on what evidence he based this statement. Probably he thought that if al-'Askar, the 'Abbasid military camp, had been founded there in A.D. 750, the area had to have been uninhabited. This information is susceptible to doubt first because of the use of the word "desert" itself. The area of al-'Askar is marshy lowland between the Nile on one side and al-Khalidj on the other; moreover, it is close to the large lake of Birkat Qarun, in the vicinity of which there were the famous gardens of the Banu Miskin and Birkat al-Fil. Land so located could not have turned into desert, even if it had been deserted by people. At any rate, any habitations would not have been an obstacle to the founding of al-'Askar, since Marwan had burned the city before he retreated to the west bank before the advancing 'Abbasid army.14

The statement of al-Maqrizi is also disproved by information in other sources. For example, Abu Salih locates the Coptic monastery of Saint Mary somewhere in this area.15 He says that it bordered on the settlements of the Banu Azraq and Banu Rubil. On Birkat Qarun there was located Dar al-Fil, the residence of one of the mawali of Maslama ibn Mukhallad, from which one could see al-Djazira.16 Hence the information of al-Maqrizi must be rejected as unconfirmed by the evidence of earlier sources. Moreover, this fertile and well watered land was only three kilometres from the centre of the town and, more important and adding considerably to the value of the land, the Canal connecting the Nile with the Red Sea began here. It is highly improbable that such an attractive district could have been deserted when other quarters were developing rapidly and land for new buildings was in great demand.

Al-Maqrizi's information that Djabal Yashkur had been deserted for a long time when Ahmed ibn Tulun founded al-Qata'i' there is not confirmed either. At least it was considered as within the town's limits in the year A.D. 737, when it was mentioned in relation to some horse races. The information transmitted by al-Kindi17 may, however, indicate that it was not entirely built over, since the races required space for a large hippodrome. Farther on, in the direction of the Ayyubid Citadel, there were cemeteries: Christian, Jewish and probably also Muslim. These mark the limits of the urban area to the northeast.18

Least clear are the eastern borders of the city from the side of al-Muqattam and the old burial grounds. The extensive open spaces in this direction, although inconveniently far from the Nile, offered the greatest possibility for the town's expansion. Many tribes which settled on the eastern edge of the camp-site spread out to the desert. We know, for instance, of al-Ma'afir, a very numerous tribe, which together with its clans and branches settled farthest to the southeast in the region of the later aqueduct, which was sometime called al-Ma'afir.19

The khittas of the Djuhayna and Saba' adjacent to al-Ma'afir, included land on the border of the desert20 and certainly extended farther into it. Farther on to the north, there were the khittas of the Tudjib, al-Sadif, Madhhidj and Hadramaut, who had settled there in the time of 'Uthman; and the khittas of the Ghafiq and Lakhm, stretching to the very foot of Djabal Yashkur.21

Even where the location of the khittas can be defined, it is still impossible to fix their actual extension to the east. It is probable, however, that even then, as in
A little later, in A.D. 736 Qadi Tawba ibn Nimr restrained tribal prerogatives in a different way, subordinating to his office the administration of ahbas, (pious foundations) previously administered by the “people”, that is, by the tribes.\(^{30}\) We do not know to what extent these decisions were a conscious effort by the government to restrain the separatist tendencies of the tribal quarters, but they undoubtedly had that effect. The same trend is demonstrated by the fact that some of the ‘arifs or walis (supervisors) appointed over certain tribes did not belong to those tribes.\(^{31}\) We can only assume that this was one of the ways in which the policy of the central government rather than the wishes of the tribal groups was realized. The regulation issued by Maslama ibn Mukhallad ordering a uniform time for prayers in the whole city had the same effect.\(^{32}\) Previously the time for prayers differed slightly in each quarter.

To complete the picture, one more act of the central government should be noted, though at first it appears that its intention was to strengthen the tribal structure of society in al-Fustat. Its real effect was, however, opposite and very similar to that of the above-mentioned regulations. In the years A.D. 719-720 (A.H. 101-102) the governor Bishr ibn Safwan ordered the Quda’a group to remove the Mahra from the Kinda’s census, the Tanukh from al-Azd, the Ka’b ibn Udayy from the Quraysh, the Djuhayna from the Ahl ar-Rayya, and the Khusayn from the Lakhm.\(^{33}\) Though this regulation implies the existence of heterogeneous quarters, the fact of a formal division in the registers of the Diwan of all clans living together shows the progressive disintegration of the earlier cohesion and integrity of the town’s quarters.\(^{34}\)

This progressive disintegration was certainly paralleled to the loosening of inter-tribal ties, which were being replaced by more evolved forms of social organization. Again, this was neither a rapid process, nor a phenomenon occurring uniformly throughout the town. It certainly evolved throughout the whole Umayyad period and continued over succeeding dynasties.\(^{35}\) This process must have resulted in changes in the quasi-administrative system of the town. As there was no administration \textit{stricto sensu}, neither central for the town nor for the particular quarters, it seems that certain basic functions were performed by ‘arifs appointed in the early period to administer the pensions of the tribes composing the djund. They maintained the lists of the djund’s members, which, when submitted to the Diwan, formed the basis for warriors’ stipends and allowances in kind; related the lists to current events; administered suitable amounts of ‘atā (alms); cared for orphans; etc. At the same time the ‘arifs were, in a sense mediators between the governor and his main administrative institutions; that is, the Diwan and Bait al-Mal on one hand, and the tribes on the other. Perhaps they performed additionally some other functions about which the sources give no information. The institution of ‘arifs, as described above, does not seem to have survived for long; they were probably replaced by the walis of the tribes. The point to be noted here is that an official, whether called ‘arif or wali, was attached to a particular group which in that period was a sort of administrative division. This much may be inferred from our sources, though direct information in this respect is lacking.\(^{36}\) As long as the group as a whole lived in one district, the
supervision of the official extended *ipso facto* also over the district itself; but as soon as groups began to mix, this was less feasible. The process of disintegration of tribal quarters must have been one of the factors that brought about the decline of the function of tribal *′arifs* and *walis*. At the beginning, when the movement of people to districts belonging to other tribes was a rare occurrence, chiefly caused by inheritance and endowment of property, the same system probably obtained as in the case of the *dhimmis* (protected non-Muslims), who were subject to fiscal administration in their place of birth, even if they had changed their place of residence. We can imagine that likewise an Arab collected his stipend together with the rest of his tribe, regardless of his place of residence, and together with his kinsmen appeared at the military assembly place if need arose. With the advancing and inevitable dispersion of the tribes, adherence to a tribe tended to become even more formal and, from an administrative and military point of view, more fictitious than real. We do not know what system replaced the traditional one. Whatever it was, it probably had not been introduced before the ‗Abbasid period, when allowances ceased to be granted and military service took on a different character.

These questions will be pursued in more detail when we examine particular districts of al-Fustat, their topographical characteristics, location and position within the city organism.

It is clear from the preceding sections of this study that the city consisted of two basic parts: one with a predominantly Arab population, divided into tribal lots and internally organized according to tribal principles; and a second wherein alien ethnic and religious communities constituted significant minorities or even prevailed. These districts were subject to different laws, and tribal organisation, if any, had only a limited and short-lived local application.

The core of the city, that is, the Arab sector with its prevailing tribal territorial organisation, was neither entirely consistent nor purely Arab, or even purely Muslim. In the Arab households there were always a considerable number of slaves of various racial backgrounds, and groups of *mawali* associated with the tribesmen by bonds of patronage. Both these classes, although of foreign descent, were absorbed into the tribal social system and as such constituted integral components of it. They contributed in some degree to transitional trends within the tribal community, but in essence did not change the tribal pattern. Much more at variance with the pattern were multi-tribal districts. Because of their importance within the urban organism, we shall discuss them later in more detail.

At the zenith of Umayyad rule, under ‗Abd al-‘Aziz, when the town may be regarded as fully developed, the tribal quarters accounted for about half of the territory of the urban area; and if we exclude the left-bank districts and the suburban "garden cities", for as much as eighty percent of al-Fustat proper. To be more precise, they included almost all the high ground some distance from the Nile, and near the river the lowland south of Babylon. Only rather insignificant portions of this vast area of some eight hundred hectares were taken up by multi-tribal or non-Arab quarters, such as Khittas al-Lafif and az-Zahir in the north and
small Persian and Egyptian quarters in the south.

There probably were at that time no more than about twenty large quarters, each of them covering an average area of some twenty to forty hectares. The largest of all, al-Qarafa, covering as much as three hundred hectares, although it too presumably originated as a tribal settlement, does not conform to the general rule and will be treated separately.

Most of the smaller quarters which existed at the foundation disappeared during the intervening formative period, absorbed by stronger ones or becoming part of multi-tribal units. However, it seems that at least some of the smaller tribal groups preserved their integrity.

Larger tribal quarters which became the more durable elements of the town's topography were as follows, in geographical order from north and west: Yashkur, Fahm, al-Azd, Lakhm, Ghafiq, Hadramaut, Mahra, as-Sadif, Tudjib, al-Kula'a, Ghutayf, Saba' Murad, Wa'il, Khawlan, al-Ma'afir, Rashida, Himyar, and Yahsub. There was also another Lakhmid quarter on the southern fringes of the city. Of the smaller tribes who retained independent quarters for at least four generations were the Tanukh, Silhim, Ru'ayn, Wa'ilan, Yafi', al-Sulaf, Djuhayna and possibly some others.

The tribal quarters cannot be treated individually, for lack of detailed information. Except for their approximate location in relation to each other and to rare topographical points, there is little to relate. On the whole, the difficulties in the topography and location of particular districts commonly grows as the distance from the Nile and the central quarter increases. In most cases, the location of particular khittas can be established only in relation to other ones whose positions are equally uncertain. Given certain fixed points and the general geography of the site, an attempt has been made here to establish a simplified and tentative plan, which in our opinion is the best means to show the approximate location of the khittas. For most of them, the information of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam has been used. As not only minor deviations, interpolations of quarters and local irregularities in their shapes, but even their general outlines are beyond reconstruction, in most cases the locations of the quarters indicated on the plan suggests their general direction with regard to the main points of orientation such as the Nile, Babylon, Yashkur, ar-Rasad, al-Muqattam, and so on, rather than their actual situation in absolute terms.

Another problem is the dimensions of the tribal khittas. Here we are on somewhat firmer ground since the total surface area of the town is known and, with an estimation of the number of quarters, we can arrive at an average approximation by simple division. Thus they would be about thirty-five or forty hectares in size, and this coincides with the figure arrived at by independent means for the central khitta of ar-Raya.
7. The Main City Districts

*The District of Ahl ar-Raya*

This central quarter of the Arab town had from its very foundation a special position in the urban organism. At first a settlement of the army's commanders, staff officers and distinguished warriors who served with 'Amr under the same banner, it soon developed into the seat of the government of the province, the principal offices, and the main place of worship and became the preferred location for aristocratic residences. It also gained economic dominance with its harbour and rich markets, which soon took over much of the commerce of old Babylon. At the same time, it became the town's communication centre where all main thoroughfares met. Nor should its cultural role be neglected. From the beginning as-Sahaba—the Companions of the Prophet—and their followers resided here. It was they who were the source of religious tradition and who fostered the intellectual activity of the courts of the governors and qadis which, along with the Mosque of 'Amr were the main centres of learning.

The special position of the quarter as the urban centre of the whole agglomeration was maintained throughout the Umayyad period and, in reality, despite the repeated transfer of political and military power to successively built satellite towns, up to the eleventh century. The quarter was from the beginning a multi-tribal community and in the course of time became even more ethnically diversified. A constant influx of new settlers, especially those of the upper class connected with the ruling house and who formed the entourage of the highest officials; the movement of armies and military expeditions; commercial relations, and doubtlessly many other factors contributed not only to the growing heterogeneity of the population, but also (in a limited sense) to its cosmopolitan and aristocratic character. All this led to important social changes, in particular to the loosening of old tribal bonds, which were gradually replaced by more universal notions of class solidarity, political consciousness, religious factionalism, and perhaps even a feeling of local patriotism. Parallel to this were more egotistic concepts, where self-interest regulated social *mores* and the family in a narrow sense became the basic unit. Family welfare, more than of the tribe as a whole, now motivated human actions.

These were basically the same processes which inevitably were to take place in the whole city (as we attempted to prove above). But because of the specific character of the quarter in question, they occurred here much earlier than within
groups more homogeneous and less open to external influences.

A summary of the ethnic composition of the quarter's population as it was at the foundation has already been presented. It should be added here that, thanks to its prominent position in the city, we know many of its citizens of the first few generations by name. Analysis of this interesting material would be out of place in this study, but there are at least two facts which must be considered. One is that among the aristocratic Muslim settlers in this district, there were a number of individuals of non-Arab descent such as two Wardans (a mawla of 'Amr ibn al-'As6 and a mawla of Ibn Abi Sarh) who probably were Armenians; Djabr8 and Ya'qub,9 the Copts; Mariya, a Coptic concubine of 'Abd al-Aziz;10 as-Simt, a Persian;11 Djudju, the muezzin,12 evidently a Negro, and others. Another fact which provides additional grounds for our characterization of the quarter as "cosmopolitan" is that a considerable amount of property there was owned by the imperial aristocracy, which never lived permanently in Egypt. From the early days, such notables of the innermost circle of the Caliph 'Umar's entourage as az-Zubayr13 or Sa'ad ibn Abi Waqqas14 owned houses there and in later times some Caliphs and princes of the ruling Umayyad dynasty: e.g., al-Mu'awiya,15 his sons16 and daughter ar-Ramla,17 Marwan ibn al-Hakam,18 'Abd al-'Aziz,19 his sons al-Asbagh20 and 'Abd Allah,21 al-Walid,22 and Hisham.23 As a rule they not only owned hereditary state property, but constantly acquired new land.

The location of this quarter can be comparatively well defined, owing to more abundant information in the sources as compared to other districts and because some well known points of orientation have survived. One of them is the Mosque of 'Amr. It is true that in the course of time it has been substantially enlarged, but the oldest nucleus of the mosque can certainly be placed near its east corner.24 As was the practice at that period, the mosque was presumably erected in the centre of the quarter. On the south, the quarter extended to the very walls of the fortress of Babylon and probably stretched out a little beyond the east corner,25 on which the very large house of 'Abd Allah ibn Abi Sarh presumably abutted.26 Even for this quarter, about which we know the most, precise information on the subject practically ends at that.

On its west side, the khitta undoubtedly extended to the Nile, but the line of the east bank of the river at that period cannot be exactly reconstructed. It is obvious that it could not have been farther to the east than the western walls of Babylon and the church of Abu Shenuda.27 On the north side the area of the Khitta Ahl ar-Rayya presumably extended also as far as the place of the church of Abu Shenuda beyond which lies the area of al-Hamra. As for the north eastern and eastern limits of this quarter, the sources are silent. However, as the Mosque of 'Amr is about 230 metres north of Babylon and was not less than three hundred metres from the Nile, and since there is little doubt that the mosque was located in the centre of the quarter, it seems reasonable to assume that it was equally distant from its other limits. If this hypothesis is correct, the area of the quarter would extend some five to six hundred metres in either direction and would therefore cover an area of about twenty-five to thirty hectares. This would allow enough space for about five hundred houses among which there must have been at least a
hundred spacious, rich residences and several palaces, not counting other constructions. From what we know about buildings in this quarter, houses, palaces, qaysariyas, etc., and its streets and bazaars, this estimation of the area seems reasonable.

**Dimensions and Other Characteristics of the Tribal Districts**

Other quarters whose locations and dimensions can be established with some precision are al-Wa'il and ar-Rashida. Both were located on the low land to the south of Babylon. Khitta al-Wa'il was a short distance from the fortress and extended between the Nile and the eminence of ash-Sharaf and ar-Rashida farther south, at one point entering between al-Wa'il and the Persians who settled on low ground. But here again, as the only fixed landmarks are the walls of Babylon and the ridge of ash-Sharaf, and since neither the exact course of the Nile nor the southern extension of each *khitta* is known, their boundaries can only be roughly established. At any rate, the north-south length of each of them could not have exceeded one kilometre and the east-west width four or at most five hundred metres. This would make the maximum area of any of them some forty to fifty hectares and, in reality, they were probably even smaller. Thus, in these cases, the average figures given above are confirmed. We should keep in mind that in certain instances, such estimates could be largely misleading and the actual area of some *khittas* radically at variance with the average.

The internal organization of the tribal quarters, their quasi-administration, internal plan and similar characteristics evidently conformed to the same general pattern, notwithstanding significant differences in the origin and way of life of their founders. In spite of largely dissimilar tribal traditions, the conditions of life within the same urban settings undoubtedly levelled their differences. This does not imply uniformity, of course; there were too many factors—social, economic, geographical, possibly even cultural and those related to the character of the group as a whole—which promoted considerable individuality. And the resulting changes, which we have already discussed, could not have been simultaneous and harmonious. Nevertheless, the common environment forced a gradual levelling of distinguishing traits, especially those which resulted from an inherited way of life.

Insufficient source material does not allow us to order chronologically the whole process of transformation discussed above. There is enough evidence, however, to indicate that by the mid-ninth century, the transition was more or less complete. The changes involving profound conversion of the city at a social level, or perhaps resulting from it, could not have been rapid ones. Therefore, we can safely assume that, as we said above, they were already well under way in Umayyad times, especially under the later Caliphs.

In summation, the evolution, as reconstructed above, appears to have occurred in three main phases. First there was the initial phase of settlement when the structure of the army played the predominant role in the division and formation of particular quarters. This influenced and regulated the whole process
during the foundation and for the next few years. The second phase, which we chose to call the tribal phase, was dominant in early Umayyad times and applied to most of the city's quarters. During this time, structural links with the original army divisions were no longer felt and probably ceased to have a practical application in the town's organization, except at an emotional level. Tribal separatism was a dominant force in urban life. Conflicting interests among particular tribes and between the tribes, the administration, and the urban community as a whole, in addition to the weakening solidarity within kin groups which is so characteristic of sedentary societies, must have brought about some social instability and encouraged the process of tribal disintegration which was dominant in the third phase. Of course, this process was not equally strong or simultaneous everywhere. It was naturally more advanced and complex in ethnically diverse quarters.

The Quarters of al-Latif and az-Zahir

There were in the Arab part of town two other atypical khittas which were organized on a multi-tribal basis.

The khitta of al-Latif was probably not very large and was located near the town's centre, extending in a northeasterly direction. Its inhabitants consisted of groups of people from tribes and clans of al-Azd, al-Hadjar, Ghassan, Shudja'a, Djudham, Lakhm, al-Wahaf and Tanukh. Although all of them were of South Arabian stock, they were united more by bonds of esprit de corps developed in the course of fighting the enemy rather than by kinship. The fate of this khitta is unknown, and we are even ignorant as to whether the people of which it was composed were registered in the Diwan together on a separate list or with their own tribes. Besides, it has been mentioned only by later sources, which may mean that it did not survive as a city unit into the time of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, who fails to mention it.

Khitta az-Zahir was organized along roughly similar lines. The people who founded it were, in the Djahiliya period, probably a group of outcasts from various tribes who banded together as professional robbers. Taken prisoner on Muhammad's orders, they were subsequently freed and since that time had been called al-'Utaqa (Freedmen). They took part in the Egyptian campaign, but at al-Fustat they were late for the division of land, having remained in Alexandria on military duty. This has been given as a reason for their allotment after other tribes, that is, fi az-Zahir. Of this khitta not much is known. It seems that it was rather large and situated to the northeast, far from the centre. But at least its existence is confirmed as late as the beginning of the ninth century, having been mentioned in a deed concerning the Mosque of 'Abd Allah.

It would be interesting to compare the evolution of these quarters with other mono- and multi-tribal units; unfortunately, lack of material does not allow any valid conclusions. It can only be suggested that since they were assigned for one
sole reason—as quarters for a detachment of the army, regardless of tribal adherence—they were less diversified than the Ahl ar-Rayā. They must have been much more closely knit communities, resembling in this respect homogeneous groups, and as such organized more like mono-tribal units and similarly not easily adaptable to socio-cultural and quasi-administrative evolution.

**Al-Hamra**

According to medieval authors, this very large district, situated in the north-western area of al-Fustat, consisted of three parts: al-Hamra ad-Dunia or al-Ula, directly adjoining Ahl ar-Rayā on the north; then al-Hamra al-Wusta; and al-Hamra al-Quswa, extending to the northern borders of the town. Structurally it occupied, together with the suburb of al-Djiza, the middle position between the Arab tribal quarters and the units of heterogeneous population such as the suburb of Birkat al-Habash or the *khitta* Ahl ar-Rayā. Along with the latter, this district is one of the most important for the study of internal evolution. The causes of this evolution, however, are not entirely comparable, as both *khittas* had their own, largely dissimilar, internal social structure. One, as we have pointed out, was essentially an aristocratic quarter with numerous additional functions, while the other was a common residential district. Both, however, had an ethnically composite population. In this respect al-Hamra was even more complex, as it was settled not only by numerous groups of Arabs of various descent but also by whole bodies of non-Arab *mawali*, and very soon included an important community of Egyptian Christians.

**Al-Hamra ad-Dunia**

In the preceding chapter we have already briefly discussed particular groups of settlers. Here we are more concerned with their topographical distribution and collective role in the formation of an integrated urban community. As far as the Arabs of al-Hamra ad-Dunia were concerned, it seems that in the majority of cases the groups settled in this district were not very numerous, but some of them had a certain status. This can be inferred from the fact that they settled in close proximity to the central district, which implies that their social position was privileged. One such group was the al-Quda’a, the Bali tribe related to ʿAmr through his mother. They settled immediately north of the Ahl ar-Rayā and their settlements are usually listed at the head of the Arab quarters which formed the first Hamra or al-Hamra ad-Dunia. The Bali were followed by other South Arab clans such as the Banu Bahar, Banu Bahar ibn Sawada and Tharad, all three factions of al-Azd. Al-Maqrīzī and al-Qalqashandī, who evidently used another source than Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, on whose evidence the list presented above has been compiled, also place the Fahm tribe in this quarter. According to imprecise information from Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, this tribe was farther to the north, which is more likely.
In addition to the Arab clans, there settled also in this region a group of *mawali* of non-Arab descent that Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam calls al-Hamra and places between the Banu Bahar and a group of the Banu Salaman, which indicates that they occupied the northern part of this quarter. As he explains farther on in his work, they were called this because they were originally Byzantines, ar-Rum; but since he lists only three groups of them—the Banu al-Azraq, Banu Yanna and Banu Rubil—and since we know that all of them settled farther north in al-Hamra al-Wusta and Al-Quswa, there must have been still another one.

Our sources do not give any information as to whether, except for the Arabs and al-Hamra, there were in this quarter other minority groups. Since an important complex of Christian sacral buildings associated with the church of Abu Shenuda (and possibly also a monastery) was situated on its southwestern border, it is likely that some Copts lived there in the vicinity of the sanctuaries.

This quarter, settled by the groups noted above, extended north of ar-Raya, starting from the neighbourhood of the Abu Shenuda church and the famous Suq Wardan, and evidently stretched for a considerable distance. Unfortunately, we do not know how far, nor can the width be established precisely. From the approximate location of other *khittas* occupying more inland areas, it can be deduced that the quarter was not very broad and probably did not extend much beyond the lowlands of the Nile Valley.

*Al-Hamra al-Wusta*

Al-Hamra al-Wusta, Middle Hamra, was the next part of this district. It was probably called this because it occupied the intermediate position between the two others. Its population consisted of several Arab clans, an important group of *mawali* of Syro-Byzantine descent called the Banu Yanna, and numerous Copts, many of whom belonged to the prominent and influential class of secretaries.

Most of the Arabs belonged to five tribes, although there must have been many other later immigrants as well. The tribes were the Banu 'Adawan, Kinana Fahm and Fahm, all belonging to the North Arabian tribes of Qays. The Fahm also included the Banu Shababa, probably a fairly numerous group, who had a mosque of their own with a minaret. The clans of the Qays occupied the central part of the quarter and probably settled near one other. The Banu Yanna must have taken an area in the north, not far from the Canal of Amir al-Mu'minin and al-Qatara, which was built over it. In the south, near their brothers who lived in al-Hamra ad-Dunia, the South Arab Banu Hudhayl who were Muradites and the Banu Salaman, a branch of an important tribe of Azd, settled. There is no direct information concerning the location of the Copts. They were probably dispersed, but it is also logical to assume that they resided near their churches, one of which was Abu Mina, a church rebuilt in the year A.D.735 (A.H.117). Geographically this quarter, like the preceding one, probably did not extend much beyond the lowlands of the valley. Anyway, we know from Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam that at least two of the Arab tribes, the Banu Salaman and the Kinana, reached the Nile, and
his location of al-Azd and the Banu Yashkur would exclude the quarter's extension too far inland. There is no indication as to the southern limits of this quarter where it met ad-Dunia. It is known that the Banu Kinana, who must have had their settlements somewhere towards its centre, reached Zuqaq Turmus, which was opposite the church of Abu Mina. It is also known that al-Hamra al-Wusta was sometimes called al-Qantara, which indicates its proximity to this bridge and the Canal. Therefore, we can deduce that it stretched approximately as far south from Abu Mina as it did to the north, that is, some seven to eight hundred metres in each direction.

Al-Hamra al-Quswa

The limits of this quarter are even more difficult to establish than those of the two preceding ones. Two points, however, seem certain and they result from the combined information of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam and Abu Salih. One makes it clear that it extended far beyond the Canal and the borders of the primitive camp-town, and the second says that it stretched farther inland than the other Hamras. The original settlers were two alien groups of mawali, the Banu al-Azraq and the Banu Rubil, and an important branch of the South Arabian tribe of Lakhm, the Banu Yashkur. The latter must have been very numerous, judging by the extensive area taken for the settlement. It included the hill which took its name from them and was called Djabal Yashkur, and the plain below: north of the hill down to al-Khandaq, west of it in the neighbourhood of Birkat Qarun and the area to the south extending as far as the markets in the vicinity of the town centre. These Yashkurite quarters, in particular the hill and its direct environs designated by the topographical name of Djabal Yashkur, although regarded by some authors as a part of al-Hamra (for a time perhaps an official notion), were in reality more like a separate quarter. The actual situation is reflected in the writings of other, especially later, authors.

Al-Hamra al-Quswa in a narrower sense, that is, without the possessions of the Banu Yashkur, must also have been inhabited by a numerous Coptic minority, in addition to the groups of mawali mentioned above. Permission to build a church (the first new church built in the city), given by Maslama ibn Mukhallad to the Copts, provides definite proof of this. Apart from this church, there must have been several other ones there, though only one, whose name is not given, can be ascribed with reasonable certainty to pre-Islamic or very early Islamic times. But in later sources we find mention of at least thirteen churches and one monastery in the area of al-Hamra al-Quswa, some of which must already have existed in the first century of the Hijra.

For the study of the historical topography of the early town, the list of particular ethnic groups presented above is not of great significance. We do not know the size of particular tribal settlements, and it is not possible to locate them exactly on the map because in most cases we cannot relate their position to fixed topographical points. Moreover, they also intermingled here, as elsewhere, with
each other and their respective territories crisscrossed. This list is useful, however, as an illustration of the complex ethnic structure of this large quarter in which, apart from both the North and South Arab tribes and the Copts, we find people of non-Arab origin: Byzantines, Jews, and Persians, who in the period under discussion had already undergone the process of Arabization. For so mixed a population to create one community and a common quarter like al-Hamra, a tremendous change must have been necessary not only in the formerly homogeneous structure of the tribal khittas, but also in the consciousness of their dwellers.

We do not know exactly when this integration took place—if one can use the term integration, which does not quite correspond with the reality of those times. Some indication is provided in the work of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, who relates facts from the period of the first sixty or seventy years after the conquest and only rarely mentions later events. He speaks of the quarters inhabited by different Arab groups as separate units or khittas and, with only one exception, he clearly distinguishes them from the area of al-Hamra, by which he means quarters inhabited by non-Arabs. For instance, he treats as a separate khitta the possessions of the Banu Bahar, saying that beyond them al-Hamra began and that behind al-Hamra was the land of the Banu Salaman, Fahm, and Kinana Fahm, behind which al-Hamra extended again to al-Qantara. But somewhere farther, by the gardens of Huwayy in al-Hamra, there was the khitta of 'Ali ibn Rabbah al-Lakhmi, the only Arab khitta that the author places in this quarter.

Although not entirely satisfactory, the data presented in the sources cited above suggest that the process of integration had already begun in the period dealt with by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam; that is, before the end of the first century after the Hijra. At this time the larger territorial units settled by the Arabs were still treated as subdivisions of the quarter of al-Hamra. In this early period the integration of some of the Arab population into the framework of the large and ethnically heterogeneous quarter seems to be confirmed by an incident that is known from this same work. Relating the story of a copy of the Koran which 'Abd al-'Aziz ordered made instead of the one sent by al-Hadjdjad, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam says that an inhabitant of al-Hamra discovered an error in the copy. There can be little doubt that such an expert on the Koran must have been either an Arab or have originated from a family in which the process of Arabization was very advanced. A similar conclusion can be drawn from events concerning the construction (or reconstruction) of the church of Abu Mina in al-Hamra discussed above. It would not have occasioned such agitation (which ended in bloodshed) had it not taken place in a quarter inhabited, at least partially, by Muslims.

The above data indicate that in the Umayyad period the integration process leading to the disappearance of tribal subquarters in this large city district, al-Hamra, was already in full swing. This is confirmed by later sources which all, without exception (and very likely based on material not much more recent than that used by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam), regard the possessions of the tribes mentioned above as subdivisions of the main quarter of al-Hamra.
Another district, this time on the southern border of the city, which was really more of a suburb than an urban quarter, was Birkat al-Habash (the Lake of the Ethiopians); the name has been variously explained, but there can be little doubt that it was derived from a settlement of the Ethiopians in the area.

The natural features of the region, similar to those of al-Djiza and Farther Hamra, predetermined its character. It was a semi-rural district composed of gardens with numerous villas and summer pavilions of the rich, where they came for rest and relaxation from the city's bustle. In the beginning it was mainly a Christian quarter, probably not exclusively well-to-do, but also accommodating numerous members of the lower class who lived there and worked in the city. Many churches, whose existence is attested in later times but which doubtless were largely erected before the conquest or in the early Islamic period, bear witness to this population and imply considerable heterogeneity. Together with the Muslims, who evidently were also of diverse ethnic backgrounds, and possibly other non-Arabs, they formed a district of mixed population, similar to the other suburbs we have already discussed and developing along approximately the same lines. However, the percentage of temporary inhabitants who were living here only in certain seasons was supposedly larger.

From a topographical standpoint, we can visualize the quarter as a long strip of land stretching for some three kilometres from the area near the Nile to the edge of the eastern plateau, sloping slightly in a southerly direction and commanding a view of the depression. Originally it must have covered a fairly narrow strip; but in the early eighth century, when the governor Qurra ibn Sharik drained the area and reclaimed some of its marshy ground for cultivation, the area settled probably widened, although even then its lowest parts were still completely submerged at high Nile. It is then that the depression filled with water to make a real lake, and many people normally living in town came here to relax along its shores.

This probably extensive suburb on the western bank of the Nile was, in many respects, comparable to certain districts in the town proper. It was particularly similar to al-Hamra in its internal structure and urban evolution, especially to its outlying part, al-Hamra al-Quswa, which it resembled even in natural setting. Both were semi-rural areas with many gardens, abundant water and a relatively low population density.

As we have already seen, al-Djiza at the foundation was also divided into tribal lots. There were altogether nine *khittas*, eight of them occupied by Arab clans and one by Ethiopians. The clans were obviously rather small and together probably did not exceed in numerical strength a single average tribal group on the other bank; that is, some four to five hundred men. This certainly was one of the
main reasons why a special fort was built there to protect them. The general geographical conditions on the west bank were quite different from most of the territory east of the Nile. Since it was a vast, fertile plain, practically limitless and open to territorial expansion, the \textit{khittas}, from the beginning, must have been much larger and probably expanded more rapidly. The only factor which might have restricted expansion would have been the property rights exercised by the original owners of the land. This point is completely obscure in our sources, but since the later Arab settlers were already there during the war\textsuperscript{69} it can be assumed that there was some compulsory expropriation of land. Besides, there might have been Greek property in al-Djiza which had been abandoned by its owners. Be that as it may, it seems certain that in the semi-rural area of al-Djiza, individual lots for settlement must have been comparatively larger than elsewhere.

This semi-rural character was maintained for some time in spite of the growth of the settled population.\textsuperscript{70} But even then its relative density must have been considerably less than in al-Fustat proper, and largely determined by the natural conditions of the site: the low ground of al-Djiza was for the most part inundated during the high Nile. Therefore, settlement was restricted to the higher places. Of these at least some had certainly been left in the hands of the indigenous Coptic population and some were probably owned by Jews who had been there for many generations. Numerous churches, monasteries\textsuperscript{71} and a very large, ancient synagogue\textsuperscript{12} attest to this population.

The coexistence of various ethnic and religious communities at al-Djiza dated from the foundation and continued for centuries. Similarly, as in other quarters, the heterogeneous character of the population strongly contributed to the progressive assimilation of its various elements and at the same time to a loosening of hereditary ethnic bonds within particular groups. This was hastened by a considerable movement of population; for the inhabitants of the congested quarters on the other bank of the Nile, al-Djiza from a comparatively early date became a popular summer resort. Although al-Djiza was less suitable in this respect than Birkat al-Habash, nevertheless, many well-to-do people owned gardens and pleasure houses there.\textsuperscript{73} Conversely, the inhabitants of al-Djiza often held property in other parts of the city.\textsuperscript{14} There must have been a constant movement of people across the Nile and occasional changes of residence. The bridge of boats connecting both banks since pre-Islamic times facilitated this movement.

All our information seems to point to an advanced state of social integration in this district at a comparatively early date. Small clans which had settled there and which from the very beginning were exposed to external influences evidently could not resist this natural process.

\textit{The Island of the Shipyard}

To the west of al-Fustat proper there was an island separated from the city by the main stream of the Nile. On this island was an urban district, very individual in character and dissimilar in many respects from other quarters of the city. In early
medieval times the island was commonly known as Djazirat as-Sina’a (the Island of the Shipyard), Djazirat Mısır or simply al-Djazira, although in the Umayyad period other names seem also to have been used, such as Djazirat al-Nuzhat or Djazirat al-Buhat.75

The present-day successor of the Island of the Shipyard, ar-Roda (or ar-Rauda in classical Arabic), as it has been called since the twelfth century, is a fairly large island about two and a half kilometres long. It was certainly also quite large in this early period, but there are few references to its important transformations in the late Middle Ages, and estimates of its exact extent and relationship to Babylon are rather uncertain. Guest's assumption that al-Djazira extended farther south at the time of the conquest76 is probable, but unprovable. Less likely is his theory that it was much shorter.

According to a rather late tradition, the island had been a Byzantine stronghold encircled by walls and towers.77 The tradition is not explicitly confirmed by our earlier sources, but Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam's narrative of the escape of al-Muqawqis and other Christian notables and commanders from Babylon to the island78 seems to indicate this was so. Furthermore, the boat bridge across the Nile which was constructed here certainly required defences to maintain its strategic value.

The military character of the island under the Byzantines partially explains its exceptional status after the conquest. It must have been regarded as state property and as such constituted a separate unit within the urban agglomeration. It had its own administration with a special official at the head, called either sahib al-Djazira or wali al-Djazira.79 Its land was not divided into khittas nor distributed otherwise, although in Umayyad times we hear of private Arab property there. In particular, members of the ruling family probably held important real estate there.80 Its main function, however, was to house the military establishments vital for the state's security and warfare, such as the harbour for the warships, garrison quarters, shipyards81 and other civil establishments necessary for the administration and order of the province and the city, for example, the Nilometer,82 several prisons,83 barracks and the headquarters of the fire guards and the emergency labour force.84

The staff of these establishments and probably of some others, doubtless predominantly Christian, must have constituted an important part of the permanent inhabitants of the island. Very likely there were many other descendants of the former population, such as owners of gardens, workmen, merchants, and sailors, who had residences there. Also, some clergy must have resided near the churches, at least two of which probably existed there since pre-Islamic times.85 On the whole, however, it seems that the island was rather sparsely populated and that only a small part of it was built up in an urban residential manner. From occasional hints in the sources, there emerges a picture of a rather park-like landscape with many trees, pleasure houses, and handsome villas, to whose leisure value the encircling waters of the Nile added greatly. Its very convenient location, the proximity of the most populous quarters of the city and the exceptional natural qualities of the island must soon have made a large
part of it a sort of aristocratic resort where only a lucky few possessed property. To have real estate on the island must have been very desirable, and the Muslims soon became the majority here; but for a long time it remained an important center of Coptic population as well.\textsuperscript{86}

In addition to being a military centre and leisure resort, the island played a significant role in the economic life of the town. Gardens produced fruits and vegetables, trees yielded timber for building and some firewood, and the Nile may have provided the livelihood of fishermen. There were also commercial establishments there, partially owned by the Caliphs;\textsuperscript{87} but the main industry was certainly shipbuilding with its associated crafts, not all of which was military in character. On the whole, it seems that the island, predominantly a military stronghold in Byzantine times, was developing socially and economically into a regular town district. Indirect evidence for this may be the total abandonment of the Byzantine defences. Although already partially destroyed by 'Amr ibn al-'As, the defences had certainly been maintained and garrisoned in the early days of Arab rule.\textsuperscript{88} But soon they disappeared, possibly dismantled or destroyed by the Nile, and were completely forgotten. Operation of the shipyard, the harbour for the warships and the necessary barracks for the crews must have given the island a different air as well as a special administrative status; but by the end of the Umayyad period, its basic functions were not drastically different from those of other quarters of the city.

\textit{Qasr ash-Sham'-Babylon}

Investigating the early history of various districts, one invariably comes to the amazing phenomenon of Babylon. An alien body in the city's flesh, it retained its individuality and apparently its administrative separation for centuries, in spite of historical circumstances which should have induced if not justified opposite action by the authorities.\textsuperscript{89} Its high walls and bastions, surrounded by the Muslim town on three sides over which it proudly towered, inevitably must have looked like a symbol of past Christian might.\textsuperscript{90} It is true that at least in the earliest period there was a standing Arab garrison posted there,\textsuperscript{91} but certainly the Muslim population must have felt that the inhabitants of Babylon were in a far better position in case of an enemy attack. How was it that almost in the middle of the Muslim central quarter, which from the very beginning had suffered from a lack of unoccupied land, a large district with an alien population who, in the eyes of the Muslim majority, were devoid of legal rights, was tolerated? Why was no attempt made by the Muslims to dislodge them? Muslims do appear there in later times, but they were probably native converts. But before the conversion of the Christians gained momentum, which did not affect a tightly knit community like Babylon before the tenth century, there was not even a single mosque there.\textsuperscript{92} And for a long time, we hear of no Arab property within the walls.

Thus, the population was composed predominantly of Copts, although the presence of Melkite churches and a monastery, attested by later sources,\textsuperscript{93} indicate
there was also a Greek Orthodox minority. There was also a small Jewish community associated with a synagogue of ancient date.94

Numerous churches and two or three important monasteries attest to a large clergy and monastic community within the walls. But probably the most important and influential group of inhabitants was the secretarial caste, which was primarily occupied with the administration of taxes in specie and in kind and with the collection, storage and supervision of stocks, current correspondence, public works, etc. All this complicated bureaucratic machinery, which the Arabs in the beginning knew very little about and only gradually learned, was left entirely in the experienced hands of Coptic officials. And since the central administration was moved from Alexandria to al-Fustat, this group must have increased considerably. Quite soon, whether it was because Babylon became too small to house all these officials or because they were more comfortable in more spacious residences elsewhere, they began to move out into surrounding districts. There can be, however, little question that many remained, perhaps feeling safer behind its walls and in the midst of their own coherent community.

Besides the members of the central administration at all levels and its auxiliary employees, there must have been in Babylon the usual urban population engaged in various professions: handicrafts, commerce and services. They provided the surrounding Arab city with the necessary infrastructure and very soon expanded into other quarters, although close links were maintained not only with their Coptic kin but with the Arabs and their clients as well. Many of them certainly visited Babylon daily for various reasons and this contributed to the process of its integration with the rest of the town. For, in spite of its marked autonomy and the separation emphasized by its walls, it indubitably formed a part of one city.

Administratively, Babylon could not be regarded as a single unit. Each of its main communities—Coptic-Yacobite, Greek Orthodox and Jewish—were under their own jurisdictions. It is not entirely clear what was the role of the Arab official, the sahib al-Qasr, appointed for the first time when the bulk of the army moved off to invest Alexandria,95 and probably maintained also in later times. Certainly, it was primarily a military post. The commander of the garrison had no administrative power over the civil population, so is not unlikely that the sahib al-Qasr was charged with maintaining order in public places among the civilian population and that he supervised the civil guards, tasks which later were taken over by commanders of the central shurta for the whole town. They, on behalf of the governors, probably supervised the conduct of the population in public; their duties in ‘Abbasid times were taken by muhtasib. On the other hand, it is unlikely that Arab officials interfered with the economic life of alien communities unless it had a bearing on the fiscal interests of the state. Of course, conflicts with Muslims were tried by the qadi.

The equally important question of Babylon’s physical aspect is even more difficult to answer. There is virtually no evidence regarding the internal arrangement of the quarter, its plan and architecture. Perhaps a plausible reconstruction could be worked out on the basis of analogous material from other
contemporary Egyptian Coptic sites, but this would be a purely theoretical undertaking.\footnote{96} We can be reasonably certain of a few points, however. Certainly in the first centuries of Arab rule, the quarter remained much the same as when it had been an independent Byzantine Coptic town: with its comparatively tall domestic architecture of two or three storeys, built of mud brick; narrow, relatively straight streets with main thoroughfares leading to the gates and crossing at right angles; and more ambitious public buildings, both religious and civil, built of baked brick or small, hewn blocks of stone but not particularly distinguishable from private residences because of their later Muslim counterparts, presenting to the street undecorated facades whose plain walls greatly contrasted with the usually rich interiors.

Besides the ordinary houses and a few more ambitious residences of local aristocrats and rich clergy, a considerable portion of the space available was covered with sacred constructions: churches and monasteries. There were also granaries, and we can also extrapolate state-owned textile factories and some administrative buildings. Baths, fairly popular since Roman times, were, because of the danger of fire, mostly built outside the walls. We know of two such establishments outside Babylon, apparently of pre-Islamic date.\footnote{97}

The role of this quarter within the whole urban complex, regardless of its individuality, must have been enormous as a model of the urban way of life for the half-nomad original population of al-Fustat. It provided ready examples of houses and other architectural forms. What is possibly even more important, the population of Babylon, which survived intact and was not dispersed or alienated from its traditional social milieu (as were smaller social units that settled in predominantly Muslim quarters), served as a powerful force in transmitting the local civilization and cultural tradition.

The Necropolis

Although the necropolis at this early date was not yet a proper city quarter, it was undoubtedly an important element in al-Fustat’s topography and played an important part in its development. The questions of its location, extent, division, and territorial evolution, and even its name (al-Qarafa), appear to be easy ones in light of its subsequent fame and frequent mention in sources, but for the early periods information is rather obscure and uncertain.

Later sources, most of them drawing from al-Quda’i, call the necropolis al-Qarafa and derive the name from the alleged \textit{khitta} of the Banu Qarafa, a clan of the important Yemenite tribe of al-Ma’afir.\footnote{98} There is, however, evidence which makes it difficult to accept this statement at face value. First of all, neither Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam nor other sources, which derive their early information from al-Quda’i’s work, mention this clan among the original settlers. One exception is Abu Salih, who probably quotes al-Kindi’s lost work on the \textit{khittas}.\footnote{99} But even he does not seem certain and gives an alternate explanation of the name Qarafa.\footnote{100} Also al-Maqrizi quotes a different opinion,\footnote{101} and this suggests that there was no general agreement on the origin of the name.
Be that as it may, it is certainly improbable that the whole enormous area designated in later times as al-Qarafa could have been at the town's foundation the *khitta* of a single and certainly not very important clan, and it is even more improbable that there were two different *khittas* of this tribe, namely the Smaller and Greater Qarafa, as al-Maqrizi states.\(^{102}\)

If such were indeed the origin of the name, it must at first have been applied to a much smaller area, most probably the seat of al-Ma'afir, and only gradually have been applied to the whole necropolis. At any rate, it seems most unlikely that al-Qarafa was used as a collective name for the various parts of the Muslim burial grounds of al-Fustat before the tenth century. The first authors who used it with that meaning were al-Muqaddasi\(^{103}\) and Ibn Hauqal,\(^{104}\) in referring to the Djami' built there by the Fatimid princes. It is significant, in our opinion, that this name does not occur at all in the earliest Egyptian sources, including Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's and al-Kindi's *Kitab al-Wulat wa'l-Qudat*.\(^{105}\)

Later sources ascribe the name of al-Qarafa to two different areas. One of them was a vast area between the slopes of al-Muqattam and al-Fustat proper, extending from the Citadel hill south for about two and a half or three kilometres, and the second was located on the plateau east of ar-Rasad and north-east of Birkat al-Habash in the neighborhood of Ibn Tulun's aqueduct. The latter part was called al-Qarafa al-Kubra or al-Kabira, that is, Greater Qarafa; and the former part, north and south of the mausoleum of Imam ash-Shafi'i, was called al-Qarafa as Sughra or as-Saghira, that is, Lesser Qarafa.\(^{106}\) Also in early times, if we are to believe the tradition transmitted by al-Maqrizi,\(^{107}\) there were two burial grounds for al-Fustat: one between the Mosque of al-Fath and the foot of al-Muqattam, which evidently gave rise to al-Qarafa as-Sughra; and the other between Musalla Khawlan and Khitta al-Ma'afir, which formed the nucleus of al-Qarafa al-Kubra. Unfortunately, we cannot precisely locate either of these places.\(^{108}\)

From our incomplete evidence, it appears that the Arabs in the early period were on the whole not very particular about where they buried their dead; but in al-Fustat the custom prevailed of carrying them outside the settled area,\(^ {109}\) which was contrary to the usage in al-Kufa, for instance, where tribes had their burial grounds within their *khittas*.\(^ {110}\)

A long narrative related by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam,\(^ {111}\) which implies a belief in the very special significance of al-Muqattam in this respect, and the sanctity of this mountain, was doubtless fabricated in later times to give it the spiritual sanction of ancestral choice as a place for burials. But the tradition was not baseless, since the place had long been revered by the local populace. The tradition about numerous Christian shrines in the area of the later al-Qarafa, which were destroyed in the war of conquest,\(^ {112}\) clearly indicates this. All this suggests that for the pious, the preferable burial place was as near the sacred mountain as possible. But ordinary tribesman probably had their burial grounds nearer to their *khittas*.

Each tribe evidently had a separate cemetery. These tribal burial grounds, which are confirmed for the fourteenth/fifteenth century,\(^ {113}\) must have originated at a time when the tribal social structure was still strong in the town; that is, before
the end of the Umayyad period. The location of particular tribal burial grounds is no longer possible, with the probable exception of the Qurayshite. Al-Maqrizi, speaking about Mashhad as-Sayyida Kulthum, informs us that it was among the tombs of the Quraysh.114 This Mashhad, built in Fatimid times, still exists. Similarly, the extension of the cemeteries in the early period cannot be determined. They certainly gained new territory in later times, as can be proved in the case of al-Qarafa al-Kubra where, already in the Fatimid period, the burials were made on new ground to the west, formerly part of the tribal territories. But since the area where the burials took place was very extensive, completely barren and located far from drinking water, making it unsuitable for settlement, there was no reason to control its use strictly. We can therefore be fairly certain that the whole slope under the ridge of al-Muqattam and outside the settled area, if not actually used for graveyards, was regarded as suitable terrain for a necropolis. The geographical situation seems to indicate that there was no sharp distinction between the two main burial grounds which later became al-Qarafa al-Kubra and al-Sughra. Like the settlements which covered the area from Djabal Yashkur to Birkat al-Habash without interruption, the cemeteries more or less bordered them continuously from the east. This enormous main necropolis, sanctified by the burials of numerous distinguished companions of the Prophet,115 was doubtlessly restricted to Muslims. Christian and Jewish burial grounds were less conveniently located.116 We hear in later times of Christian and Jewish graves under the Citadel hill,117 which would be outside the northern extremity of the Muslim necropolis, and east of Birkat al-Habash,118 which was on the southern one. And certainly other graveyards were on the al-Djiza side of the Nile.

We have no information at all whether there already existed at this early period the custom of people living in the cemetery, as was common in later times. The tradition about the Qarafa tribe may indicate this much, and theoretically some poor people may have had their abodes there, but it is unlikely that there were many. On the whole, its aspect must have been much different from what it became later on, when it was populous and busy with trade and commerce, full of conspicuous mausoleums, sumptuous private graveyards and religious monuments. In early times graves were barely distinguishable from the barren soil, and only here and there a solitary tribal musalla (place of prayer) with a standing mihrab (indicator of the direction of Makka) or a modest mosque indicated the purpose of the place and attenuated slightly its desolation.
8. The Minor Topographical Elements

A certain instability in the quarters' limits, their irregular shapes, the growing inconsistency between the old divisions of the city and the evolving socio-ethnic reality of Umayyad times made, in certain cases, original denominations of quarters obsolete. As we have seen, this was the case with the tribal khittas in the Hamras. It seems that the same was also true for the central quarter: the designation Khitta Ahl ar-Raya also fell out of use rather early; also Khitta al-Latif. On the other hand, the predominantly mono-tribal quarters had a much better chance of retaining their old names for longer periods. Many of them survived until the collapse of the city in the later part of the eleventh century, and such names as al-Wa'il and ar-Rashida were still known in Mamluk times. But parallel to the evolution of a somewhat inadequate toponymy and the actual topographical division into large quarters, smaller units were distinguished by their own particular names, which became lasting elements in the city's toponymy.

These smaller topographical units, evolving somewhat chaotically but conforming to the changing social reality, were probably more convenient partitions of the town than the old divisions with names derived from the blood relationship of the inhabitants, which were slowly losing relevance. Not only original large tribal khittas but also their internal divisions into sub-khittas by clan and those into large patriarchal family dwellings tended to lose their traditional consistency and were gradually replaced by multi-family streets and single housing units, which became basic urban elements.

Sometimes a more important street, especially a commercial one, together with the area immediately adjacent became sort of territorial entities in the town's topography, with the notion that they were wider than the street per se; that is, they included the public footway on either side and the houses along it. Their names were understood in a twofold manner: in the precise narrow sense of such-and-such a street, and with the wider meaning of a sort of sub-quarter; for instance, the famous suqs: Suq Wardan, Suq al-Hammam, and Suq Barbar.

Also other topographical names sometimes gained significance and were applied to minor city districts. For instance, al-Mauqif, a place frequently referred to, was originally probably some sort of cattle market and resting-place for animals on a hill to the northeast, near the desert. The locale and its name became so well known that it finally denoted the whole neighbouring district. Another example was al-Qantara, the bridge built by 'Abd al-'Aziz on the Khalidj...
MINOR TOPOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS

in al-Hamra al-Quswa, whose name became synonymous for the nearby quarter.

The next area, Hayz al-Wazz (Goose Territory), originally an empty place in al-Hamra ad-Dunia near the Nile, also gave its name to one of the streets as well as to the whole sub-quarter. Certainly, many other local names became current in the city and were applied to smaller or larger districts. A considerable number of such topographical names were recorded in historical sources, although few can be confidently related to the urban context of Umayyad times and even fewer located with any degree of precision.

One very interesting group of names is that derived from certain trades, evidently concentrated in a particular place and applied to neighbouring town districts. This phenomenon, common in later times, had its roots in the Umayyad period. It marked the commencement of far-reaching socio-economic evolution within the city. Many topographical references of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam centre on such terms as an-Nahhasun (Copper-smiths), al-Hadjdjamun (Cuppers), as-Sarradjun (Saddlers), al-Ma'asir (Oil Mills), Ashab as-Zayt (Oil-Sellers), Ashab al-Hinna (Henna Makers), and Ashab at-Tibn (Straw Merchants). Such names, employed with a clear topographical notion, usually to enable one to locate an early residence, mostly refer rather to the author's contemporary situation and not to the preceding period. But some are used with reference to earlier events; for example, the mention of Sarradjun about the year A.D. 785. Therefore, we seem to be justified in the assumption that in later Umayyad times such names were already used as toponyms.

It is obvious that each town abounds in various topographical partitions, some of them strictly delimited by custom or administrative action, some imprecise and only approximately related to certain landmarks. This latter type was also very common in al-Fustat. Of significance and in current use were (in addition to those already discussed) natural elements of the landscape such as hills, lakes, parts of the river bank with particular names, valleys, etc., (some of these have been noted in the chapter on physiography). Other landmarks were commonly known: conspicuous buildings, especially mosques, qaysariyas, and famous residences. All these and evidently many other topographical elements, although their names were not necessarily applied to larger sections of the capital, were conveniently used as distinguishing marks in the urban environment. We can imagine that in such an enormous agglomeration, current topographical denominations, together with quasi-official quarter names, considerably facilitated everyday orientation. But certainly, as in other developed urban organisms, the principal units became streets understood in the broad sense, that is, not as mere tracks to allow movement of pedestrians and pack and mounted animals, but including the adjacent buildings.

The Streets

We have already discussed the origin of al-Fustat's streets and now we shall deal with some of the types of streets in the developed city, as they appear in light of our sources.
The streets were of two main kinds: thoroughfares to allow through traffic within the city, and local alleys to allow movement inside the quarters and access to individual houses located within them. Not many thoroughfares were arteries crossing the city from one end to another, and probably none was arranged in a straight line like main streets in a classical city. Most of them were partial thoroughfares, communicating with one another and thus allowing a continuous passage through the city. An important artery was called a *khitt* or *tariq*, but a local thoroughfare could also be called a *darb*, *zuqaq*, or *suq*, if the latter was commercial in character. The name *shari’*, common in later times, was not used much in the Umayyad period, and when used, it was rather with the meaning of an inside passage. In addition to these, a street mounting a hill could be called an *’aqaba* and streets covered either by vaults or flat roofs were called *saqifa*. Still unclear is the function of the word *khaukha*, a term sometimes used to refer to a sort of passageway or perhaps a corridor inside a building complex. Small squares, mostly irregular in shape, which archaeological evidence indicates were situated at the junction of several streets, were called *rahabat*. Larger spaces not built up were called *fadas*; and places for halting animals, *munakhs*. Individual streets were designated by particular names, most often derived from personal names of important property owners there. The majority of these early designations comes to us, however, from the succeeding period. Therefore, although there is little doubt that many of them originated much earlier, only a few of them can actually be proven to date from Umayyad times. Those which can be attributed with certainty are the famous Suq Wardan and Suq Barbar, located north of the Mosque of ‘Amr, and Suq al-Hammam, west of it. Zuqaq al-Qanadil, in later times a celebrated market of luxury goods which ran from the main mosque to Suq Barbar, was called at the time Zuqaq al-Ashraf because of the aristocratic dwelling there. The information about al-Fustat’s streets, including their names, preserved in the written sources concerns only the western, lower part of the city and in particular its central quarter. On the other hand, archaeological research has brought to light data regarding the high ground in the eastern districts. Obviously, in order to arrive at a more or less complete picture, we have to combine both kinds of evidence and build a hypothesis. However, not all the streets so far excavated can actually be proven to have existed as far back as the Umayyad period. But since we can be reasonably certain that streets were one of the most permanent elements of a medieval town, and some of them have been dated to that period with certainty, we can accept the recorded network and main features as approximating the reality of the early town, even if the greater part of the archaeological material is without a firm chronology. The streets uncovered and studied up to now were usually rather narrow. The width never exceeded five or at most six metres. The average width ranged from two to three metres and sometimes was hardly more than a metre. Wider parts of streets, such as those five to six metres wide, were usually at junctions or intersections of two or more streets and formed small squares, probably identical with those called *rahabat*. A very interesting example of such a *rahaba*, where seven different
streets and alleys met, was uncovered near the mosque of Abu as-Su‘ud in 1966.19

The public streets examined so far had evidently never been paved. However, it is possible that some of them were paved by private undertaking. The name of a street preserved in the work of Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, namely Darb al-Balat (the Street of Paving-Slabs),20 may indicate this. In most parts of the excavated area their surface was the natural bedrock on which the city was founded. This surface, originally covered with rubble, rocks and blocks of stone, as the barren summit of al-Muqattam is even today, was sometimes, even at this fairly early date, cleared and levelled slightly to make construction easier and foot and mounted traffic more comfortable.21 But it was never artificially smoothed. Evidently no attempt was made to radically improve the natural unevenness of the rocky surfaces of streets; it seems that wherever possible streets followed the natural relief of the bedrock. For instance, wherever there was a shallow wadi, the direction of which did not contradict the intended direction of the street, it was followed. No street which was traced in the soft alluvial soil of the low-lying districts has yet been investigated. Therefore, we do not know how such a footing was treated; but we can only assume that, being naturally more even than the rock surface, it was left unimproved and many generations of passers-by pressed it down into a harder surface.

The natural soil of the streets was very soon covered up with all sorts of urban byproducts: dirt, dust, rubble and rubbish thrown from houses, all of which were compacted by daily traffic to form a new surface. This natural process continued as long as the city remained occupied, and in a way, it improved the primitive rocky surface of the plateau or, near the Nile, made the muddy soil even and hard. Sometimes we observe in the fill of streets a thin layer of clean, finely crushed yellow rock, evidently brought from nearby excavations for wells, sewage pits, or a canal, which were hewn in bedrock. Layers of such crushed rock, evenly spread, made a good surface for a street—a sort of macadam. This practice, though fairly common, was probably rather spontaneous and incidental and therefore never general. But even without it or any other artificial improvement, in a sunny and dry climate like Egypt’s the hard and even, though unpaved, surface of the streets made fairly good foot-walks.22

No effort evidently was made to return the streets to their original state; that is, to clean them down to bedrock again. Contrary to ‘Ali Bahgat, who maintained that many streets excavated by him were nothing but bare bedrock,23 modern excavations have not revealed any streets where fill was not present, except, of course, in sites disturbed in later times. But we cannot exclude that in some places, especially on summits of natural elevations, no fill ever accumulated, or perhaps it was washed away by occasional torrential rains or swept away by wind.

Streets, once established and fixed by bordering buildings, rarely changed their courses. Instances where the major modifications of a street’s course could be proven by archaeological evidence are rare. Even those which were destined only for local traffic, such as dead-end streets leading to a particular house or group of houses, were usually left unmodified throughout the whole period of the
The Streets

The recent excavation in the central part of the town gives only a few examples of such changes; for instance, cases of incorporation of an earlier passage into a house.24 In another example, a part of a small triangular place was probably incorporated into an adjacent building unit as an open air courtyard.25 The written sources show a similar stability and durability of the streets, or at least their names, in the western part of al-Fustat. Some famous streets can be proven to have existed from the early days of the city for seven or eight hundred years.

There seems to be little doubt that the origin of the town's street network is to be sought in the various pathways of the primitive camp-town.26 Since outside the nuclei of the quarters (which were identical with the original tribal settlements) the logical place to look for new building sites was along these paths,27 and they were soon fixed by bordering houses, their function and definite course became established and through usage and a kind of communal sanction acquired a public character. This process applied in the first place to thoroughfares for inter-quarter communication and all city communication. More flexible, at least in the tribal period, would have been local streets within the quarter's limits. Common ownership of land by the kin groups could lead in particular cases to incorporation of some semi-public tracks into individual houses or allow other changes and modifications.

The utmost irregularity in the pattern of the street network obviously did not exclude the presence of a number of arteries comparable to the high-streets of medieval European towns, which bear a distinctive mark of continuity. Two or possibly three such streets can be tentatively distinguished on A. Gabriel's plan and three in the area of the ARCE concession.28 It is interesting to note that one of the latter was lined in the tenth century with a pipe aqueduct; another one was allegedly identified with Darb al-Ma'asir, a possible road for funerary processions.29

The direction of these thoroughfares, with the exception of the last one (street No. 13 on the ARCE Fustat Expedition plans),30 indicate that they led from the outlying quarters to the central ones—khitta Ahl ar-Rayya and Qasr ash-Sham31—where they joined the main east-west artery which crossed the Nile on the boat bridge, continued over another boat bridge to al-Djiza and joined the network of streets and roads on the western bank.

The bridge, to which we have already referred several times, was constructed at some undetermined time before the Arab conquest. Destroyed during the siege of Babylon, it had to be rebuilt and maintained by the local population as stipulated in the treaty.31 Apparently it functioned throughout the early Caliphite period into the Umayyad period, only to be burned by Marwan in his flight before the advancing 'Abbasid army.32 But shortly thereafter it must have been rebuilt, since we hear of it several times afterwards.33 It was evidently made of large boats chained together and covered with a wooden deck, similar to one constructed in Baghdad.34

This main east-west artery intersected the principal highways going in a north-south direction roughly parallel to the Nile. In fact, there were two such highways already existing at the founding.35 One of them, closer to the Nile, was
called Khitt al-A'zam; another one, running from the northern gate of Qasr ash-Sham' to the Mosque of 'Amr and on to the north, was known as at-Tariq. Unfortunately, the exact course of both of these arteries is beyond reconstruction, although there are references in the sources. The eastern artery, at-Tariq, presumably followed a comparatively straight course along the heights of 'Amal Fauq to the neighbourhood of Masjdjid 'Abd Allah and farther north, stopping somewhere at the foot of al-Kabsh on the Khalidj (Canal) Amir-al-Muminin. Its last section was possibly on the old causeway between the lakes of al-Fil and al-Qarun, which in later times was known as Djisr al-A'zam. Having reached the Khalidj, at-Tariq either crossed it on the bridge, the famous al-Qantara built by 'Abd al-'Aziz in the month of Safar 69 (August-September, A.D. 688) to continued across the northernmost end of al-Hamra al-Quswa, or followed the course of the Khalidj in the direction of 'Ayn Shams. The position of al-Qantara can be reasonably well established, owing to the known topography of the region and numerous references in the sources which speak of its remains, which could still be distinguished in the late twelfth century or later. Anyway, the purpose of this bridge must have been to serve some important circulatory artery, although it is not known whether it was actually at-Tariq or perhaps al-Khitt al-A'zam which crossed the Khalidj on it.

The western thoroughfare, al-Khitt al-A'zam, owing to the topographical evolution of the Nile shores, the distribution of new lands there, and the construction of residences overlooking the Nile, of which the most extensive was the vice-regal palace, Dar al-Mudhahhaba, must have considerably changed its course, which originally ran in a relatively straight line along the river. It is possible that this road also crossed the Khalidj on one of the bridges built by 'Abd al-'Aziz and continued to the north in the direction of Umm Dunayn, following the same track as at-Tariq al-Maqsam, recorded some four or five centuries later.

There is no record concerning these arteries south of Qasr ash-Sham'. Near the river the situation was obviously similar to the one north of the fortress. Its bank, at the foundation, must have been left free for common use and therefore was not granted to any particular tribe. But since from early Umayyad times the Nile had begun to recede and its shores were in growing demand for building, the rulers made gifts of parcels of the newly reclaimed land to their distinguished partisans or took them for their own constructions. The result was that only some sections of the river bank remained communal property with free access to the river. For this reason, the significance of the river bank for north-south traffic declined and the main communication tracks, which had run here, had to run more inland, losing at the same time their previous direct continuity. Nevertheless, the street along the Nile must have preserved its role as one of the principal arteries. Furthermore, it certainly connected with the road to Upper Egypt, which in the early Islamic period still made some use of the ancient dike, the so-called Djisr al-'Adjuz.

As for the continuation of at-Tariq, evidently the width of 'Amal Asfal in the southern part of the city (about four hundred metres on the average) would have
allowed another north-south artery there. Thus, we may postulate a southern continuation of at-Tariq; and if such were the case, it most likely crossed Babylon and continued as the street which in later times became as-Suq al-Kabir.47

The Harbour

A general topography of the city must include the location of its harbour. There is no question that Nile traffic was always very heavy. Practically all transportation to Upper Egypt and certainly the greater proportion in the Delta was by boat, and al-Fustat had become almost from the beginning the main port in Egypt for this traffic. Through this port came the bulk of the food-stuffs for the town markets; the surplus of the country's grain to be measured and taxed, stored or reshipped, was delivered here. Through this port came raw materials for the city's industries and factories; fuel for home use, industrial production and numerous baths; fodder for animals; probably a greater part of the building material; and hundreds of other articles, as well as exotic merchandise from the Nilotic countries and from Arabia, East Africa, India, and the Far East (which, although not very important yet at this time, must still have been considerable and constantly growing).48 With no artificial port facilities such as specially built piers or basins which normally allow a greater number of ships to be moored in a limited space, the port had to extend for a considerable distance along the river bank. Its busiest area was certainly opposite the main commercial quarters of the city; that is, near the Mosque of 'Amr and Babylon.

The nucleus of the port of al-Fustat was doubtless the old pre-Islamic mooring place along the western wall of Babylon, on both sides of the Bab al-Hadid. Protected by this wall and additionally by the two drum towers flanking the gate, it was safe and easily controlled, and merchandise could be conveniently carried in and out of the town by the nearby gate. The river bank in this place was reinforced by an artificially made embankment, in the form of at least seven steps,49 probably made of stone, which allowed mooring at different levels according to the changing water level. In addition to this main harbour, there was also a quay at the southern gate to which access was assured by a moat.50 These old port facilities did not extend more than a couple of hundred metres and although sufficient for a small town like Babylon, they were by no means adequate for the needs of a large city of several hundred thousand people.

The development of the harbour paralleled that of the town and was evidently as spontaneous as the latter. It is unlikely that there were any preconceived plans in this respect. At the founding, the river bank was left free of settlement to allow for traffic, the watering of animals, and drawing water; it could conveniently be used for mooring ships as well. But free access to the Nile was hindered in some places by non-Arab property and buildings tolerated by the conquerors on the strength of the capitulation treaty. These were mainly churches and monasteries which stood on the bank, such as the churches of Abu Shenuda, Abu Mina51 and probably others. To these, some Arab residences overlooking the
Nile were added in the next decades. The most important one was a large palatial complex built by Ḥād al-ʿAzīz west of the Mosque of Ḥārūn. It appears from this that moorings could not have been continuous. There were other factors, apart from topographical ones, to cause the port's division. For instance, the repeated use of certain places for anchorage, at first spontaneous, turned fairly soon into a customary practice which gave rise to a more or less permanent division of the harbour; ships from some localities moored in one place, and not in any other, and certain commodities had to be unloaded in definite places. This theory finds some confirmation in our sources. Thus, for instance, a part of the river bank was called Marīs, which is the Coptic name for the southern part of Upper Egypt. This suggests the customary mooring of boats from that part of the country here. The principal grain port was opposite Babylon, where the grain was stored in the state granaries for distribution among the ḏiūnūs as well as for shipment to al-Hīdi." Fuel was unloaded near the area called Birkat Ramūs, where the main market for combustible material was located.

The division of the harbour into sections destined for particular kinds of boats, special commodities, or according to various other criteria, facilitated the control of passengers and goods as well as the exacting of tolls (called al-maṣīs)—an important prerogative of the administration. There could have been special posts established to accomplish these tasks, like al-Maks in the Fatimid period, but certainly control at unloading and loading places would have been more effective.

The city's main port—that is, the one which was located on the eastern bank of the Nile—was additionally divided into two parts by the floating bridge which crossed the river opposite Babylon. It certainly had to be periodically unchained to let ships through, but since crossing it doubtlessly demanded extra time, effort and perhaps a fee, it would be logical to assume that on the whole, ships and boats from the Delta moored on the north side of the bridge and those from Upper Egypt, on the south side.

This main harbour on the east bank must have extended for a considerable distance in both directions, north and south, from the old mooring opposite Babylon. Very likely there were also secondary moorings for local supplies all along the shores of al-Fustat, as well as in al-Dījāzī, and on al-Dījāzī, where the port for warships was located. Boats could unload also on the shores of al-Khalīdī, but this never attained the same economic prominence as the chief, central port.

*Khalīdī Amir al-Muʿīminīn*

Our review of the topography would not be complete without discussing the canal which the historical writings call Khalīdī Amir al-Muʿīminīn or simply Khalīdī Misrī. This important waterway connecting al-Fustat with Qulzūm, i.e., the Nile, and consequently the Mediterranean Sea with the Red Sea, was the successor of older canals which had gone out of use by the time of the conquest.
Khalidj Amir al-Mu'minin

and the first Arab endeavour in the domain of public works of major significance. Although of relatively short duration, since by the Caliphate of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz it had already begun to silt up and cease to be navigable, it remained a permanent element in the topography of the northern outskirts of the town.

The renewal of the old canal which connected the Nile Valley with the Red Sea, in the context of the socio-economic and political conditions of mid-seventh century Egypt, was contrary to the country's well-being. It facilitated the drainage of its resources, to the detriment of the best interests of the population, both the nation and its new ruling class. In the case of al-Fustat, however, it played a stimulating role, contributing to its more rapid development. The very placement of its mouth in the newly founded city determined the location of important storage places and loading facilities together with a considerable work force to operate them and to supervise the influx of grain collected throughout the country, which was all channelled through here. It stimulated the development of the harbour, of industry (particularly that of shipbuilding), and the various services necessary for the transit traffic. All this had to be paid for, which meant that a considerable part of the surplus grain collected in the country and brought to al-Fustat was not dispatched to al-Hidjaz but remained in the capital to be consumed locally. The significance of the Khalidj for the early development of the town is thus obvious and need not be dwelt on here. We are concerned rather with its exact location within the city, as it is an important determinant of the topography.

The analysis of Babylon has shown that in Roman times the main part of the Khalidj's predecessor crossed the fortified city to flow farther to the north and northeast through areas which later became integral parts of the Arab city. But it is improbable that it still occupied this entire area at the time of the conquest. There is nothing in the topography to indicate it, although it is possible that a small section of it could have been adapted as a moat to protect Babylon. It is also probable that the no longer navigable Trajanic Canal was still used to irrigate the eastern Delta, together with the rich agricultural region of 'Ain Shams-Matariya. If this were the case—and such a canal must have existed—the Arabs would only have had to enlarge it and make it navigable, and not change its course. And the course was indubitably the same as that of al-Khalidj al-Misri recorded in the nineteenth century. The only point on which we are ignorant is the situation of its entrance and initial section—the point of major concern in reconstructing the topography of al-Fustat.

In Byzantine times when the old Amnis Trajanus had long ago ceased to function within the town of Babylon, it would have been pointless to maintain it in the surrounding neighbourhood unless it served some economic purpose, unlikely in this very narrow and naturally wet alluvial area. The mouth was cut in some more convenient place, nearer to the irrigated area; for instance, at Tandunias-Umm Dunayn, later al-Maks, which has usually been located somewhere near the late medieval Azbakiya Lake and Bab al-Hadid district. But for the Arabs, it would have been of considerable significance to have the entrance of such an important waterway near their headquarters. The place where it actually
commenced, not far west of the present-day Midan (Maydan) Sayyida Zaynab (where there was a puzzling curve in its course), was certainly convenient and did not present any technical problems, since from here it could be directed almost straight to the north north-east, which was the desired direction, and across the low, flat area where digging required a minimum of labour. Of course, the location of the entrance and its uppermost bed is approximate and conjectured from its later recorded course. We assume that the bed of the Khalidj, once excavated, was in future never changed. It was only extended: first, straight to the west in order to follow the receding stream of the Nile; and in much later times, when the waters of the Nile completely disappeared from the area and al-Djazira merged with the eastern bank, there was no option except to dig across it to the main stream (al-Djiza branch) or to extend it farther south, which is what actually happened.

Although the upper course of the Khalidj is conjectural, its location in the northernmost part of the city, in the district of al-Hamra al-Quswa and the area of Djabal Yashkur and al-Kabsh, is proven by numerous early traditions preserved in later accounts, especially by the indefatigable al-Quda'i. The information of Abu Salih is also very significant; he evidently refers to al-Qantara on the Khalidj built by 'Abd al-’Aziz, which in his time was still visible on both its banks near the road leading to the quarter of az-Zuhri, where there was an important Armenian church. The remains were near a new bridge, according to our author built by Djauhar, commander of the Fatimid army. This information proves that, at least in the area of al-Qantara bridge, the course of the canal had not been changed.

Thus, the location of the entrance of the canal in the northern outskirts of the city can be regarded as proven. Nevertheless, a theoretical question arises: why did ’Amr not excavate its ancient bed which, starting from Babylon, crossed the whole area of the early Arab settlement? For the city, and especially for supplying water to quarters relatively distant from the Nile, it would have been of inestimable value. From the technical standpoint, it would have been easy in such an enormous enterprise to devote a little more time and labour and extend it a few kilometres more. In our opinion the answer lies in the settlement itself. In the year A.D. 644 (A.H. 23), when the Khalidj was decided upon, the Arabs had already been settled there for two or three years, property had been divided, many permanent houses erected, and perhaps some parcels cultivated. The unavoidable resettlement of many groups and the damage to property were evidently considered a severe obstacle; a more convenient location was al-Hamra, in the neighbourhood of the settlements of non-Arabs, who were easier to manipulate.
9. Architecture

The foundation of the town, a complex phenomenon in which its predetermined basic functions and practical matters concerning the settlement of people constituted focal points, obviously included the commencement of its architecture. We do not know what the architecture was like in the beginning—whether erected constructions were of reed or mud; or whether they were still nomad tents; or a combination, which is most likely. We have already discussed briefly the possible architectural traditions of the settlers and their potential abilities in this field. Now we shall attempt to reconstruct the actual architectural features of the town.

In fact, there is no valid evidence at all for the architecture of the earliest period. We cannot even be sure whether there actually were any tents in the camp. The only reference to 'Amr's tent—that is, to his fustat—was obviously fabricated in later times to give a plausible explanation and Arabic etymology to the otherwise obscure name of the city. Equally groundless probably is a reference to Qaysaba's tent. Thus, everything previously written on this subject must be regarded as conjecture, though probably justified in light of the general knowledge of bedouin camps, the first Arab armies, and other camp-cities such as Basra and Kufa; but in the particular case of al-Fustat, no more than that. Fortunately, it is only for this very initial stage of the city's development that we lack evidence. The first pieces of concrete information on the architecture can be dated as early as the Caliph 'Umar's lifetime, i.e., before November, A.D. 644 and refer to the first generation of permanent constructions. Though the transmitted traditions are very vague, still they give us some basis for our reflections. One of them tells about the building of a fortress in al-Djiza to protect the Arab clans which had settled there; the second speaks of a ghurfa which Khardja ibn Hudhafa erected in his house; and several others refer to the Mosque of 'Amr.

The history of the mosque involves important problems exceeding the scope of a discussion of architectural form; therefore, it will be treated separately. Suffice it to say here that, according to traditions which can be traced back to the time of 'Amr, it was an extremely simple structure: low, without an inner court, and measuring fifty by thirty cubits (roughly twenty-nine by seventeen metres).

The mosque was free-standing and surrounded by open space; a passage some four metres wide on the eastern side and probably larger on the other sides. It was entered by six entrances, two on each side with the exception of the qibla side. Since it could not be spanned by single beams, it was been supposed that
palm trunks were used as columns to support beams of split palm trunks and a thatching of palm leaves and mud.

Of the fortress all we know from the eighth century tradition preserved by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam is that it was built by order of the Caliph ‘Umar, and that building started in the year A.D. 642 (A.H. 21) and completed the following year. The relevant passage furthermore implies that it was still standing in ‘Abd al-Hakam’s day; that is, more than two hundred years later. Considering known facts, we must conclude that the fortress was erected not only to protect al-Djiza, but to provide shelter for the Arab settlers there in case of need. They were not very many at that time, at most several hundred, but with families and households that would mean at least two thousand people. It is obvious that to shelter such a great number of people, an enclosure of considerable size would have been required, although any hypothesis concerning this or its architectural form would be groundless. Nevertheless, since we know, for example, that such an enormous enterprise as clearing and making navigable the old Amnis Trajanus took only six months, the building of the fortress might have taken as much as a whole year, especially since an unlimited amount of ready building material, dressed stone, was available in the nearby region of the Pyramids or at Memphis; we may be certain that this was quite an important venture. And the architectural form probably conformed to local Egyptian-Byzantine tradition rather than to pure Arab ideas, which means that it must have been built in the form of a castrum.

Even less can be inferred from the information about Kharidja’s ghurfa, except that it marked the beginning of erecting houses with more than one floor. A ghurfa probably meant at that time a sort of chamber situated higher than the roof of the house, probably with a kind of loggia to assure ventilation and with openings rather high in the walls. We may consider it the predecessor of what was later usually called a manzara. The story of Kharidja’s ghurfa rests on a tradition probably not later than the seventh century. Transmitted on the authority of Yazid ibn Abi Habib, who had it from “old men,” it typically illustrates the Caliph ‘Umar’s incessant interference in the affairs of Muslim communities, even distant ones, and his concern for the simplicity of their mores and the equality of the believers. Although many such stories were preserved by early writers with obvious edifying intentions, they cannot be dismissed as a source of concrete information, since doubtless at the base of most of them were real facts. The tradition in question tells that ‘Umar, on hearing complaints that Kharidja built a ghurfa which overlooked the houses of his neighbours and threatened their privacy, ordered ‘Amr to check on this and, if so, to destroy it. Whatever his reason for this action, it does not seem to have been the protection of a neighbour’s privacy. The pronounced relief of the site of al-Fustat made it unavoidable that some houses overlooked others; and besides, others must have been erected directly under the walls of Babylon, which dominated them by many metres, giving ample opportunity to look onto roofs and courtyards from the walk above. We know, for instance, that the residence of such a noble personage as ‘Abd Allah ibn Sa’id ibn Abi Sarh, ‘Amr’s successor as governor, was built directly against the walls of Babylon. Therefore, a more likely reason for the Caliph’s
order would have been—as in the case of 'Amr's minbar in the Mosque—to prevent one Muslim from taking a higher place over others, which would be humiliating to them.

Written source material concerning the earliest period gives little information from which the general character of the architecture can be inferred. It gives practically no basis for a chronology of it in the first two decades of its development. Many houses mentioned by our main authorities on that subject, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam and Ibn Duqmaq, may have been erected in the first or the tenth or the fifteenth year. Certainly the tribal mosques and tribal community buildings were erected very early. Allegedly, each tribe had a mosque and a mahras. The function of the latter is not clear, but probably it was connected with military duties. Possibly it was a sort of guard house for those tribesmen who were on active duty. There were also assembly houses called madjlis, and it is possible that public baths were built too. But domestic architecture certainly developed first. There can be little doubt that houses built by the Sahaba and prominent members of the community, of which we hear, were permanent abodes erected with some measure of planning and care. A few of them, which distinguished themselves from the others in size and architectural form, were recorded as qars and were built in the first decades. Some had private baths and special apartments such as a madjlis, khaukha or manzara.

The real development of architecture is, however, connected with the Caliphate of Mu'awiya. Aristocratic tendencies, to some extent restricted earlier by the puritanical spirit of 'Umar and many of the Sahaba, gained the upper hand during the reign of 'Uthman and his governors and triumphed under the Umayyads.

Personal ambition, the growing wealth of the upper class, and progressive urbanization naturally expressed itself in architecture. High officials, the local aristocracy and members of the ruling family often became dissatisfied with the parcels they obtained at the foundation, which were too small for sumptuous residences. So by various means they enlarged their lots and acquired new property. Many apparently spent much of their wealth on building, and doubtless their example affected and stimulated other classes.

Of more than 140 houses, about forty mosques, and a number of baths, palaces and other buildings mentioned by our main sources, a great many were built in the time of al-Mu'awiya and even before. But certainly the heyday of Umayyad architecture in al-Fustat began with the long, peaceful and prosperous vice-regal reign of the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik's brother, 'Abd al-'Aziz. He was apparently a lover of architecture and sponsored the building of numerous monumental constructions: houses, palaces, qaysariyas, bridges, and fountains. He was also the initiator of a complete rebuilding of the Mosque of 'Amr, and last but not least, founded and embellished with splendid monuments Hulwan, his new capital. If we consider the three great early Umayyad patrons of architecture—'Abd al-'Aziz, his brother 'Abd al-Malik, and his nephew al-Walid—the first perhaps should be honoured as the true father of Islamic architecture.
Once awakened, the passion for architecture did not die. After ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, the patronage of building in al-Fustat became fashionable with governors and Caliphs alike, though the latter were looking for profitable investments rather than the prestige acquired by building.

To reconstruct the main characteristics of Egyptian architecture as it developed in the Umayyad period, one is at a disadvantage as compared to the situation at the same time in Syria, where many actual monuments—mosques, desert castles, palaces, houses, even whole towns—have been preserved. In Egypt no Islamic monument which can be ascribed to this period has survived. Scanty archaeological remains and fragmentary information in written sources, although definitely attesting to an unmistakably early development and remarkable achievements, give little ground for stylistic analysis and detailed considerations. A few facts can be deduced, however. One was the abundance of skilled local labour. This can be taken as proven, since we know that Coptic builders and artisans were employed in major Umayyad works in Syria, Palestine, al-Madina and Ifriqiya. Furthermore, architectural monuments outside Egypt, as in Mushatta, show clear Coptic influence. Obviously, even if we allow for enforced conscription, we may be certain that there would have been no export of skilled labour were it in short supply locally. From this, Coptic influence on the style of architecture and its decoration can be accepted a priori. Here we can, however, distinguish one substantial departure. The domestic architecture of the Copts had been entirely of mud and mud pisé or, more commonly, unbaked mud bricks; stone and baked brick were reserved for sacred buildings, military constructions and other monumental uses. In al-Fustat, on the other hand, excavation in a quarter of the town which from the beginning had an unmistakable residential character shows that even in the oldest strata a remarkable diversity of building materials was used. In addition to mud bricks, which were frequently employed in this period, and mud mortar, red burned bricks, lime mortar, gypsum and various kinds of stone were also used. Similar evidence is obtained from the written accounts. Several times, columns are mentioned, once a stone facade of a house; one house was called Dar al-Hinniya (the House of the Arch), which presupposes the use of baked brick, since stone arches in domestic architecture are unlikely. From papyri we learn of the shipment of palm trunks for building the Caliph’s palace.

Employment of new materials suggests new trends in architecture which, although executed by local builders, must already have exhibited some specifically “Islamic” traits in this early period.

Social customs, family structure, the segregation of the sexes, all much more pronounced in urban society than within traditional nomad groups, doubtless influenced the evolution of domestic architecture in the same way as the requirements of the Islamic religion influenced the evolution of the architectural form of the mosque. But at the same time, external influences, especially from Syria, the home of the ruling dynasty, as well as ancestral Arabia, must have been strongly felt. This is suggested by the sewage system in use at al-Fustat from the earliest period. To collect waste from latrines, cesspools were dug or cut in the
bedrock under the houses, a system common in South Arabia from ancient
times, and apparently introduced from there. Hellenistic custom had been to
build a central sewage system, and this was never done at al-Fustat.

Eastern models in plan and decoration, predominant in later times, were not
yet imitated, at least not directly. Still, the explanation given by Ibn Duqmaq for
the name Masdjid Qurun, the Mosque of Horns, was that its columns were in the
shape of horns; but this may indicate the use of bullheaded Persian capitals
taken from one of the Persian forts which may have survived in the
neighbourhood. This would be more likely than to imagine ancient Egyptian
anthropomorphic pillars with horns being employed in the mosque. Nevertheless,
even if we admit the information at face value, notwithstanding its late date and
slightly confused chronology, it would be difficult to accept this as proof of any
strong Persian influence.

Domestic architecture doubtless conformed to the pattern of a house with
central courtyard, deeply rooted in the Mediterranean area, and which we know
from numerous examples at such Umayyad settlements as 'Andjar in Lebanon
and Qasr al-Hayr ash-Sharqi in the Palmyrene district, which demonstrate their
provenance in the urban milieu; and at Djebel Says, where examples of free­
standing villas are extant. But since we know that the traditions in domestic
architecture which contributed to its final shape were multiple, we can be certain
that houses did not conform to only one pattern. Domiciles with an eccentric
courtyard, possibly closely related to the Hijazi architectural tradition, may not
have been uncommon, as well as houses without any courtyard at all. Recent
excavations at al-Fustat have uncovered such a house, whose original
construction could be dated as far back as the Umayyad period. The house, built
of mud brick laid in mud mortar, fronted directly on a street and apparently had
no backyard either. Thus, the rooms inside had to be entered directly from the
street or through small antechambers. The whole unit, a regular rectangle,
measured twenty-nine by twelve metres and consisted of eighteen rooms and three
antechambers. The extreme simplicity of its internal plan suggests a monastic
complex more than a typical middle-class domestic unit, and unless it was
destined to house shops or artisans' workshops, it bespeaks a considerable
difference in the standard of living between the upper and lower social strata, the
house in question being an example of lower-class housing.

Fragments of early foundation walls, usually of mud brick or burnt brick laid
on mud mortar, predating Tulunid-Fatimid remains recorded at al-Fustat,
indicate that as early as the Umayyad period irregularly outlined building lots
determined to a large degree the ground plans of particular houses. There is no
archaeological evidence that architects adhered to the principle of designing
houses according to a predetermined plan. The most logical rectangular ground
plan of a house was scrapped wherever the irregularity of the street network and
the shape of the lot demanded it. This certainly indicates that lots for building
were, on the whole, scarce. Probably only in the quarters where the street network
was nearer to an ideal checkerboard pattern and in the suburbs, where land was
more abundant, could house plans be regular. And certainly the very rich could
Individual tastes to a large degree also determined architectural forms, and there is extensive evidence of this. Some used columns to embellish their houses; for instance, ‘Abd al-A’la ibn Abi ‘Urnra, who even had columns brought from the ruins of Alexandria. Others built within their houses mosques, baths and special apartments such as the khaukha, the furdja (a place for recreation), and the madjlis (a sort of loggia over the entrance which made it possible to see and hear passers-by on the street below). In some houses there were wells and basins, probably with fountains, some of them lined with marble. We hear also of cupolas and arches. It seems that at first there was even no aversion to ancient sculptures. In the private bath of Zubban, the son of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz, there was an extraordinary statue of a woman, later destroyed on order of the Caliph Yazid.

One or two other examples of free-standing statues are known. But the most extraordinary house mentioned was built by a certain ‘Umar ibn ‘Ali, grandson of one of the original settlers. Besides a khaukha to permit entry at will, and a bath, there was in the middle of his house a round room, evidently of great height, since nothing was built over it; and the whole house was surrounded with marble columns, probably arranged as a sort of portico. A little later a large mosque known as the Mosque Qurun was added to the house, with a furdja for sitting between the two. The walls of this house were more than two builder’s cubits (about one and a half metres) thick, and it was further enlarged in later times.

We do not know whether at this time buildings several storeys tall existed. This is possible, since such were probably part of the older architectural tradition of South Arabia. Houses three and four storeys high were also known in Egypt in pre-Islamic times; for instance, in Aswan-Syene and certainly in Alexandria. But for Umayyad al-Fustat, there is no evidence of this, although there is no evidence to the contrary. Anyway, single-storey architecture would doubtless have been predominant only for a few years after the founding.

The usual form was a house of two storeys. It must have been so common that where an upper floor was not built, it was noted, as in the case of the Dar ar-Raml, whose ground floor was built on order of Mu‘awiyah for his son Yazid and an upper storey added only some forty or fifty years later by the famous finance minister, ‘Ubayd Allah ibn al-Habhab.

The function of a structure also contributed to the diversity of architectural forms. Obviously, as houses varied with respect to their size, height, decoration, and material, depending largely on the social status and the means of the owners, so did other buildings. Some houses, even if they were not classified as castles or palaces, must have been sumptuous and vast residences, especially those owned by the local aristocracy or built for or by members of the Umayyad clan. Some were erected on large lots acquired by purchase, donation or exchange with several original owners. Records of such deals are frequent. We hear also of houses with entrances from different streets, which also implies a considerable size. It is remarkable that this feature, fairly common in later times and confirmed by archaeological discoveries, originated as early as the first century of the Islamic
era. Housing units were sometimes combined into larger complexes inhabited by several families from one clan. For instance, one such complex, consisting of about ten houses, belonged to ‘Anaza of the Rabi’a tribe.44

Apart from houses, we hear of several examples of a type of residence called a qasr.45 The word is normally applied to a military or semi-military building which would be equivalent to both ‘castle’ and ‘fortress’. Taking as a basis the lexical value of the word, a hypothesis has recently been advanced with respect to the Qasr of ‘Abd Allah, the son of ‘Amr ibn al-‘As: that this was a building similar to the Qasr at-Tuba, the Umayyad princely castle in the Trans-Jordan desert.46 In fact, these qasrs were probably a kind of keep within the house, possibly strengthened by corner towers.

Domestic architecture was certainly dominant in the city and in general determined its appearance. Even at that time, houses must have been architecturally oriented towards the interior. To the street they showed bare and windowless walls with the only distinguishing feature being the entrance and probably a madjlis over the entrance. Thus, streets must have been much alike, with the exception of commercial ones, where shops and workshops of artisans were oriented towards the exterior and displayed all manner of goods to passers-by and customers.

A clearly similar external appearance was displayed by other kinds of buildings, of which the most common since the earliest period was without doubt the mosque. At first unpretentious constructions in size and appearance, and not unlike the first Mosque of ‘Amr, they later became more sophisticated. From the time of Maslama ibn Mukhallad, nearly all of them were provided with minarets,47 and subsequently the palm trunks which originally supported the roofs were replaced by marble columns.48 The roofs were mostly flat, but a few mosques were distinguished by domes.49 One of these domes was black, which may indicate the use of black granite or basalt. It is not known whether the sahn (court-yard) was a common feature of small mosques, as in later times. Probably it was rather in the form of a forecourt than a porticoed sahn, though evidence for this is lacking. The mosques were evidently quite numerous. In each khitta there was at least one dating back to the foundation. In subsequent decades many more were built, so that even smaller clans had at least one; for example, the Banu Shababa clan was small, but had two famous mosques.50 Many others were founded by individuals either as part of their houses or as independent buildings. Quite a few were also erected in the cemeteries.

Of other buildings, the most conspicuous and characteristic for the period were qaysariyas. Their architectural form, like their name, was probably borrowed from Byzantine roofed markets. As far as we can judge, they were built in the shape of a long basilica-like structure with rows of smaller compartments for merchandise and trade lining both sides of the interior. Four such qaysariyas for different types of merchandise were erected by ‘Abd al-‘Aziz.51 Some forty years later the Caliph Hisham built another one.52 But they were certainly not the only ones in existence in Umayyad times and they must have been fairly characteristic constructions of the period.
Other public buildings with distinctive architecture were baths. Some of them were specified as Roman in style, with large halls, which presupposes that there was another type, a smaller building like that built next to the house of 'Amr and called Hammam al-Far (the Bath of the Mouse). Distinct architectural features were also displayed in buildings such as granaries, guard houses, prisons and probably some industrial establishments: mills, bakeries, oil mills and special markets for selling slaves, which were not listed among the qaysariyas. Undoubtedly there already existed at that time special buildings for foreign merchants and their goods, like the khan or caravanseries known from later times. A model of such an early khan may be an enigmatic building at Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi in Syria. One wonders whether 'Abd al-'Aziz's Dar al-Adyaf (the Guest House) was not built along these lines.

On the other hand, it is doubtful that administrative buildings, diwans, displayed any special characteristics. The main Diwan of the Djund was originally an ordinary house called Dar an-Nahas adapted for this purpose. The same was probably the case with Dar ad-Darb, the mint installed in the already mentioned Dar ar-Raml. In contrast with this, the treasury of the community was very characteristic of early Islamic architecture—a small, domed construction built on columns.

The most conspicuous building in the city was the palace of 'Abd al-'Aziz, built in the year A.D. 686 or A.D. 687, west of the Mosque of 'Amr. Evidently Dar al-Bayda, the residence erected a few years earlier by his father Marwan ibn al-Hakam, was regarded as inadequate for his rank.

The palace known as Dar al-Mudhahhaba, the Gilded House, evidently because of a lofty gilded dome which dominated it, must have been a vast complex overlooking the Nile. The name al-Madina (the City), given to it at the time, bears witness to its size. In fact, the geography of this part of the city allows for an estimation of its area in the range of four or five hectares, certainly including palatial gardens. Unfortunately, nothing is known of its architecture, except that it consisted of a ground floor and at least one upper storey.

A little more can be inferred from scanty remarks concerning the later creation of 'Abd al-'Aziz, his new capital Hulwan. It was famous for the glass pavilions he constructed there, an artificial lake fed by water brought to it through an aqueduct from a distant source, a mosque, a Nilometer, churches, etc.

Mention should be made here of numerous churches and some monasteries which, although not Arab creations, were part of the town's architectural landscape and may have influenced Islamic buildings. At that time, Christian sacred architecture must have been in keeping with local tradition, with occasional elements belonging to a more universal eastern Mediterranean heritage. The majority of these buildings, as we know from numerous remains studied at different sites throughout the country, were mostly simple and modest in size, but with rather lavish interior decoration. Constructions were kept within a rectangle, with the frequent use of columns both as supports and to divide the inner space, but probably not without more complicated features; for example, a tri-lobed apse known from a monastery in Schag, domes, vaults and arches, and colonnaded
courtyards in front.

There is one anomaly to be discussed which is related, to a certain degree, to the architecture of the city, but has other important implications. It concerns the congregational mosque, al-djami', and the official residence of the governors, the seat of the government, the dar al-imara. It has usually been maintained that the first act at the founding of an Arab town was to build the dar al-imara and al-djami'; but careful examination of our source material shows that at al-Fustat such was not the case. There was no special residence for the seat of government until the 'Abbasid period, when for the first time a dar al-imara was built at al-'Askar. Before this—a curious fact noted by al-Qalqashandi—each governor resided in his private house. Two such houses, however, one known as Dar al-Filfil, built by Qays ibn Sa'ad, the governor of 'Ali ibn Abd Talib about the year A.D. 656 and another called Dar ar-Raml, built about the year A.D. 665 by al-Mu'awiya, were given by their builders to governors of the country and became state property; but neither was built with such an intention, and apart from that, only some governors, if any at all, resided there.

Al-djami', the first place of common worship in the camp town and probably the same one used during the siege of Babylon, was al-Musalla, originally built on Yahnum, (probably to be identified with the Citadel hill of the present day). Al-Musalla was transferred several years later to another place, nearer to the settlements and the Nile. Its exact location cannot be determined today, though the elevation in the neighbourhood of Djabal Yashkur is most likely. Architecturally, the first as well as the second Musalla was, as in other towns, just an open-air square possibly surrounded by a simple fence or a ditch, and the only requirement was that it be big enough to hold the whole community.

Different facts appear when we examine the evidence concerning al-djami'. Contrary to the universal opinion that from the very beginning the mosque erected by 'Amr was congregational and designed to serve the whole community, it becomes clear that this was not the case for quite a considerable time. It was erected, exactly like all the other mosques in the camp-town, as the mosque for a particular quarter; that is, the Khitta Ahl ar-Raya. If nothing else, its recorded dimensions, fifty by thirty cubits, are a good indication of this. Allowing some space for the supports of the roof, it could not have covered more than 480 square metres, which could never have held a congregation of twelve thousand men, which was probably the size of the army, especially as the Muslim rite requires more space for prayer than that of other religions. The minimum space required for one praying man is about two-thirds of a square metre. Thus, the primitive Mosque of 'Amr could have held at most seven hundred men, which would have been sufficient only for the needs of one city quarter, allowing for expansion. Apart from this, in the records referring to early events, it was normally called masdjid and not al-djami'. But we have other, more definite evidence to support our point: the title Akhbar Masdjid Ahl ar-Raya (The History of the Mosque of Ahl ar-Raya) which al-Kindi gave to his special study devoted to the history of this mosque, and this is a strong argument against the Mosque of 'Amr having been founded as a congregational mosque.
Notes to Pages 19-21

Notes

Fuller bibliographical data are to be found in the "Abbreviations of Publications Referenced in the Text" at the beginning of this volume.

Chapter I. The Source Material


3. Enumeration of these works is to be found in al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, pp. 4 ff. Al-Maqrizi (ibid) mentions another author of a similar work, namely Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Barakat an-Nahawi, whom he claims to have been al-Quda'i's pupil and chronologically associated with al-Afdal Shahinshah ibn Amir al-Djuyushi. Therefore, he must have been born not later than in the fourth decade of the eleventh century and active in the second half. But no details of this work are given. It is interesting to note that Yaqut, Mu'jam al-Buldan III, p. 899, quoting from al-Djawwani says that he was known as Ibn an-Nahawi—a strange coincidence since no possible family relationship could have existed between the two scholars, al-Djawwani being a noble sherif of the 'Alid family with a known pedigree (cf. Khitat II, p. 14).


7. A penetrating and suggestive study concerning this aspect of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's work is given in R. Brunshwig, "Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam et la conquete de l'Afrique du Nord par les Arabes - Etude Critique," AIEO 6 (1942-57), pp. 108-155, passim. The author's conclusions are based on an analysis of the North African section of al-Futuh, in the light of the juridical tradition of the time, and although they expose Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's true intentions and generally impugn his objectivity, certainly do not undermine the historical value of the work. Brunshwig only warns against taking it at face value. It may be added that the sections concerning Egypt, and especially its conquest and subsequent events as well as the topographical information, are doubtlessly more reliable. The memory of the related facts in Egypt and particularly at al-Fustat, where Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam must have daily met
descendants of the actual participants in these events, must still have been strong, which would make manipulation of the data difficult. This applies to a still larger degree to the time of his principal authorities. For Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, cf. also A. Gateau, "Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam et les sources relatives à la conquête de l’Afrique du Nord et de l’Espagne," Revue Tunisien 25 (1936), pp. 57 ff., 29 (1937), pp. 61 ff., 33 and 34 (1938), pp. 37 ff.; and F. Rosenthal’s article in EI (2), and the introduction to ‘Abd al-Mun‘im ‘Amir’s edition of the Futuh, Cairo n.d. (1961).

8. Torrey, Futuh, Introd. p. 3 feels certain of that.


10. Cf. Guest, introd. to al-Kindi, Wulat, pp. 34-35 where there are further references.

11. As-Suyuti, Husn, I, p. 163.

12. Guest, op. cit. pp. 31-32. It is worth mentioning that Ibn Lahi'a, who is one of the main authorities of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam in the historical tradition whose reliability was contested by traditionalists such as al-Bukhari, Ibn Sa‘ad and the others, has been recently rehabilitated by J.C. Vadet (Bull. Et. Or. 22, pp. 10 ff.). He thinks that the low opinion of him by the traditionalists was influenced by the old antagonism of the North Arabs to the more cultured South Arabs, and Ibn Lahi'a was of the South Arab tribe of Ghafiq, prominent at the conquest of Egypt. Regardless of whether Ibn Lahi'a’s predilections to a legendary past only "bercent un peu la nostalgie de vieilles races" (Vadet, op. cit., p. 10) or demonstrate his true interest in the history of the country he lived in, it is obvious that they could not but have antagonized traditionalist zealots. On the other hand, the examination of the Islamic historical tradition transmitted by him and the comparison of it with the material transmitted by al-Laith ibn Sa‘ad, for instance, (which is considered very trustworthy), does not show any inferiority as far as we can judge without the possibility of checking it against other sources.


19. Cf. for instance our author’s father, ‘Abd Allah (born in A.D. 768 or 772, died A.D. 830), a notable jurist and writer of legal books, whom we know also as a rawi who supplied his son with a number of historical traditions, especially referring to ‘Amr ibn al-‘As.


21. This edition includes only the historical part of the work. The section on judges and traditionalists has been omitted.


26. “Al-Buldan,” BGA VII.
57. An assumption recently advanced by D.M. Dunlop, *Arab Civilization to A.D. 1500*, pp. 131 ff. that *Khitat* is not an original work of al-Maqrizi, but that he adopted it from a manuscript of al-Awhadi, remains so far unproven.

58. As in *Intisar*, he gives accounts of different kinds of streets: *harat, durub, aziqqa, khukh, rahab, aswaq*, etc.; monuments such as houses, mosques, *gaysariyas, funduqs, madrasas*, baths, *zawiyas* and so on and other places such as hills, lakes and the like. A few other items to be found in one work and not the other are evidently due to individual features of both quarters.

59. *Khitat* I, pp. 343 ff. It was used by P. Casanova and his followers as a base for tracing it on a plan of medieval al-Fustat; see “Reconstruction,” PI. I; cf. also infra, pp. 47 ff. Another example of his self-contradictory theories on the causes of decay in al-Fustat may be quoted; see W.B. Kubiak, “The Burning of Misr al-Fustat in 1168,” *Africana Bulletin* 25 (1976, appeared 1978), pp. 52 ff.


62. Al-Qalqashandi, *Subh III*, pp. 325-336 to which is added a section on al-Fustat’s cathedral mosques, ibid., pp. 337-343.


67. Only the results of Hasan al-Hawary’s work has been published in this article, “Une maison de l’époque Toulimide,” *BIE* 15 (1932/33), pp. 79 cf.


69. So far only a short report on the house unearthed in the central part of the site has been published; see Djamal Mahriz, *Manazil al-Fustat Kama Takshif ‘anha Khafair al-Fustat*, Abhath an-Nadwa ad-Dawliya (Millenary Vol. I), Cairo, 1970, pp. 323 ff.

Chapter 2. The Geography of the Site

1. Clerget, *Le Caire*, Vol. I, p.59, gives the following list of years in the medieval period when earthquakes occurred: A.D. 796, 801, 827, 856, 859, 934, 955, 1015, 1033, 1068, 1110, 1191, 1195, 1202, 1204, 1211, 1256, 1259, 1263, 1302, 1324, 1424, and 1442. Taking for granted that not all were recorded and that Clerget overlooked some, the average seems much higher than what we calculated; many of them, however, did not damage al-Fustat at all.

2. The best plan available is the "Map of Cairo" showing Mohammedan Monuments, sheet 2, published by the Survey of Egypt 1950; also in the sleeve of K.A.C. Creswell, *Architecture of Egypt*, Vol. II, Oxford 1959. This plan does not include the southern part of the site. For the whole area, Sheet 81/630 of "Egypt 1:25000," 2nd ed. of the 1930 map published by the Survey of Egypt, 1945 has been used. Older maps, such as the "Map of the Country around Cairo" by C.B. Talbot, revised in 1901, or the one published by Casanova, "Reconstitution," pl. 1, were also found to be useful. For the outlying areas, Sheet 80/60 of "Egypt 1:1,000,000," Normal Series, ed. of 1925 by Maslahat al-Misaha al-Misriya was used.

3. It is not known when these designations were used for the first time. They do not appear in our earliest sources, but there are indications that they were known to al-Quda'i, from whose work al-Maqrizi probably adopted them. But the distinction between these two geographical areas must have been expressed in the nomenclature much earlier. Al-Muqaddasi, in al-Aqalim, for instance, distinguished asfāl and faqū—two parts of the town's territory, and in speaking of two cathedral mosques, in the city, namely the Mosque of 'Amr and that of Ibn Tulun, calls them al-faqūani and as-suflani, respectively, al-Aqalim, p.199. The designations, although somewhat anachronistic for the period of the conquest, are convenient and reflect geographical reality.

4. Recent calculations give 0.09 metres of sediment during a century; see J. Rzoska (Ed.), *The Nile*, Hague 1976, p.160. Formerly the estimates were slightly higher.

5. For instance, the threshold of the southern gate of Babylon is today five to six metres below the present street level.


7. Protection against the flood may have been assured by the dike called Djisr al-‘Adjud or Ha‘it al-‘Adjud, well known from the medieval sources, which ran along the river bank to allow communication during the high Nile. In many places in Upper Egypt, it was still preserved in the late Middle Ages and is traceable even today; cf. Nassiri-Khosrau, op. cit., p.118, *Ibn Djubayr (The Travels of Ibn Jubair)*, trad. R.J.C. Broadhurst, London 1952, p.51; Abu Salih, *Churches*, fol. 19a, and transl. pp.59 f., n. 4; Yaqut, *Mu‘djam al-Buldan*, s.v., cf. G. Wiet, "Les Communication en Egypte au Moyen Age," *L’Egypte Contemporaine* XXIV, Jan, 1933, p.254.

8. It was in the southern part of the town; cf. al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* II, 161; Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* 1V, 54 f.

9. It was west of Suq Wardan, just north west of the Mosque of 'Amr; see Yaqut, *Mu‘djam al-Buldan* s.v. al-Khadaq, cf. id. al-Mushtarak; O. Toussun, op. cit., p.196;

10. For one the house of the Banu Djumah was built on, see Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.108; for another, evidently near the former one, to which water flowed from the first ablution place of the Mosque of ‘Amr, see Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* IV, p.14. The latter author mentions another pond called Birkat Shu'aybiya in his time, *Intisar* IV, p.55.


12. For instance, the house built by 'Umayr Ibn Wahb ibn 'Umayr in the time of al-Mu'awiya was located on a former swamp, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.108.

13. Claudius Ptolemaeus, *Geogr.* IV, cap. V, informs us that the Canal flowed across the city of Babylon. ‘At the time of the Arab conquest its mouth was certainly farther south (see infra, pp.193 ff.), but its bed was probably still recognizable in the terrain.


16. This is also indicated by the level of the foundation walls predating the enlargement of the Mosque by 'Abd Allah ibn Tahir in A.D. 827, which were revealed in 1971 during the reconstruction work conducted under the supervision of Mr. ‘Abd ar-Rahman ‘Abd at-Tawwab, the former Director of the Egyptian Antiquities Department. These excavations, of the utmost importance for Islamic archaeology, remain, so far, unpublished. Especially significant is the contrast in levels between these remains (evidently not later than the eighth century) and some remains four to five metres lower of an early Arab bath examined by Dr. G.T. Scanlon and the author in 1964, about 150 metres south east of the southern corner of the mosque in a deep excavation for the foundation of a proposed hospital. The excavation is still there, but the bath has disappeared, either covered up by debris or dismantled by the local populace. Of course, these remarks, which are based on rough estimations, cannot be regarded as scientifically conclusive, yet combined with other observations, they support our opinion.

17. It may be noted that in the course of this levelling a Mamluk pottery kiln was destroyed, the only one known from this area. Fortunately, unlike many other remains, it has been published; cf. Aly Bahgat, "Les fouilles de Foustat, Decouvert d'un four de potier arabe du XIVe siècle," *BIE* V, Sr., Vol. VIII (1914).

18. The present minute archaeological research carried out by the German Archaeological Institute in the churches of Qasr ash-Sham' will hopefully throw more light on this problem. Our conclusions, drawn from the observation of the floor levels of Coptic churches such as Saint Barbara, Saint Michael and especially Saint George and its Crypt, and from comparison with levels outside the Fortress (for instance, the sill of the Roman Gate, near the southern drum tower at the entrance to the Coptic Museum, can only be tentative. In the absence of stratigraphic evidence, only detailed survey and levelling of a particular construction can give satisfactory historical results.


20. Al-Kharab, which means 'the ruins', was applied to the whole enormous portion of
the town which was depopulated and totally abandoned in the later part of the eleventh century as the immediate result of disastrous famine, epidemics and political disturbances which occurred during the reign of the Fatimid Caliph al-Mustansir in the years A.D. 1066-72. For references and further details, see W.B. Kubiak, "The Burning of Misr al-Fustat in 1168," *Africana Bulletin* 25 (1976 publ. 1978), pp.58 f.

21. Published by Hasan Hawary, "Une maison de l'époque toulounide," *BIE* 15 (1932/33), p.79 ff. In the same area an early Fatimid bath with a unique mural painting was discovered.


23. This road, called Shari 'Ain as-Sira, was built in 1978 and follows the course of the former macadamized road called Shari 'Kitchener.

24. Part of this area has been examined by trial excavations of behalf of the Antiquities Department directed by Mr. Fahmi 'Abd al-'Alam. Scores of trial trenches in an area measuring about 290 by 300 metres and divided into squares often by ten metres were made. The results are not yet published. It may be of interest to note that it was discovered that this rocky area had been evenly "hewn down" to a depth of two to three metres prior to Mamluk times.

25. Directed by Mr. 'Abd ar-Rahman 'Abd at-Tawwab. In this area the continuation of the pipe-aqueduct referred to below, p.40, was discovered.

26. See Bahgat's *Fouilles*, passim.

27. See below, pp.66 f.


29. Referred to above, p.38 and note 1.


31. It is best viewed from the photograph in Bahgat, *Fouilles*, Pl. V, lower picture; (also in *Album* ed. separately by the Musee de l'Art Arabe, Cairo 1928).


34. The memory of breaking down and moving these blocks survived in the town for centuries. Information on it has been preserved in Nassiri-Khosrau, *Safer Name*, ed. and transl. by Ch. Schefer, Paris. 1881, p.146.


37. See for example the works of Clerget, *Le Caire* I, pp.24 ff.; Jomier, *E.L.* (2), s.v. al-Fustat; Shafi'i, *al-'Imara*, pp. 347 and 363. Even the most critical of recent scholars, K. Becker, who dealt with the history of Cairo and Egypt in general in his exhaustive article in *EI* (1) s.v. Cairo, did not attempt to revise al-Maqrizi's information.


39. The best known is the one published by P. Casanova, "Reconstitution," Pl. I, afterwards accepted with few changes by Bahgat, *Fouilles*, Fig. 2, p.2, and recently by Shafi'i, *al-'Imara*, fig. 198.


41. *Futuh*, p.92.
42. Ibid., p.104.
43. Ibid., p.108.
44. Ibid., p.104.
45. Loc. cit.
47. Ibid., p.51.
48. It is well attested by the early tradition transmitted by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam (*Futuh*, p.64) and al-Maqrizi (*Khitat*, I, p.286). Also Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam seems to confirm it by saying that the ships taken to join al-Muqawqis by the commander of Babylon and his followers were "moored against (mulasiqa) the Fortress." Against the wall overlooking the Nile near the Water Gate, which al-Muqawqis used some time earlier to escape from the Fortress, there was not enough room for ships to be moored and, furthermore, it was far too dangerous to disembark there. Only extreme circumstances, perhaps the desire to keep it a secret from his own followers, which our text seems to imply, or a prearranged agreement with 'Amr, could justify its use by al-Muqawqis. See Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.64 f.
53. Ibid., p.78.
54. *Churches*, fol. 29 b.
57. Such an assumption agrees with Butler's opinion, *Churches* I, p.73; who supposed that the church was originally erected in the fourth century A.D. According to the same author also the new Armenian church which stood nearby was built on very ancient foundations (op. cit. I, p.47, n. 1).
68. An interesting account of such an occurrence comes from an eyewitness in the year A.D. 750, the author of the biography of the Patriarch Michael who accompanied him
when he fled from a prison on the Island of the Shipyard and crossed to al-Djiza on foot. This must have been at low Nile, that is on the first of the month of Misri (July 25th). See Hist. Patr. ed. Seybold, p.194.

69. Abu Salih, Churches, fol. 59 b, f. The same thing happened to the Church of the Angel Michael at al-Khayzarianiya near al-Djiza, ibid. fol. 60 a.


71. Apud al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, pp.339 f., 365 f. That the phenomenon of littering the river banks could have far reaching effects on the shape of the shoreline and navigability was a fact well known in later times and other places too. Al-Djabarti relates the effects of littering the harbour of Bulaq in the eighteenth century; French translation III, p.159 ff.


73. Al-Kindi, Wulat, p.74.


75. Al Maqrizi, Khitat I, p. 343.

76. Churches, fol. 59 a - 68 b. On fol. 65 a, he says there were fifty monasteries in this province at the foot of the Western Desert, which were destroyed by the Berbers. In the Index I., Trans., p.349 s.v. "Al-Jiza, Province of," Evetts gives a number of fifty churches and fifty monasteries.

Chapter 3. The Pre-Islamic Settlements

1. cf. infra, p.91 f.


5. Reitemeyer, Städtegründungen, pp.95 ff.


7. The most probable explanation is that the word sham' represents here a corrupted form of Khemi and means 'Egyptian'; cf. C. Becker's art. in EI (1), s.v. Cairo.

8. For instance al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p.287; but Yaqut, Mu'djam al-Buldan, s.v. Qasr ash-Sham' admits that he does not know why it was called this.


10. In the biography of the Patriarch Khael who occupied the See from A.D. 881 to 899, Qasr ash-Sham' is mentioned several times (Hist. Patr., ed. Soc. Arch. Copte II, pt. II, pp.73, 76 text, 108 f., 112 transl.). Since this biography was actually written about the year A.D. 1050, we cannot be sure if the toponymic material from old notes which must have served as the basis for this narrative, was brought up to date by the scribe or not.

11. Namely Futuh, pp.34, 61, 63, 64, 280. Once the stronghold is referred to as Qasr ar-Rum, p.110—a common designation in later authors.

12. Futuh, p.34.

15. Churches, fols. 21 a, 23 b.
16. Mu'djam al-Buldan s.v. Qasr ash-Sham
20. For references see supra, p. 60, notes 1-5.
21. Intisar, IV, p. 3.
22. Khitat I, p. 288. Both authors give Ibn Sa'id as the source of their information.
26. Städtegründungen, pp. 98 ff. The author rightly rejects the 'corrections' of Zottenberg, who, trying to overcome the difficulties of the historical interpretation of the text, in two places where it refers to 'Amr's army in the Fortress (qasr) of Babylon, erased the word qasr and thereby obtained two different territorial units: 'the Town Babylon' (in Ethiopic originally Qasr Babylon), and 'the Fortress Babylon' (in the original also Qasr Babylon). Obviously such arbitrary conjectures are not acceptable, but equally unacceptable is Reitemeyer's attempt to construe an Ethiopian preposition and thus instead of 'in' to read 'before' (op. cit. p. 89). One must recognize that the chronological sequence of events as related by John of Nikiu in the original was different from that in the Ethiopian version of his chronicle.
27. Cf; also Zottenberg, op. cit., p. 560, n. 3 and p. 562 n. 1, op. cit., p. 96.
32. Futuh al-Buldan, p. 249.
37. The results were published in his Churches, esp. vol. I, Chapter on "The Ancient Roman Fortress of Babylon," pp. 155 ff.
39. Mahmud Ahmad, *The Mosque of 'Amr*, Cairo 1939, p.3. Unfortunately the author gives no details of his archaeological work, nor has a report on its progress been published.
40. Cf. Pl. 2.
42. *Geog.* IV, cap V.
44. Loukianoff, op. cit., p.287 and Pl. I places it outside the walls of the fortress, alongside their southern and eastern sides and calls it Fossa Trajani. He also quotes the significant evidence of Gregory of Tours who in the year A.D. 591 saw twelve granaries between the Nile and the Canal (loc. cit.). No doubt these granaries were located within the walls of the Coptic town and not outside.
46. These dates, and the reign of Theodosius in particular, are usually suggested, cf. Toy, op. cit., p.63.
47. Loukianoff suggests that the old church of saint George on the second and third floors of the northern tower already existed in Byzantine times (op. cit., p.291).
48. Butler's erroneous identification of the Bab al-Hadid with the South Gate was rectified by Herz, *Der Islam* 8, p.5, n. 2.
49. See above, p.65.
51. The description is based on Toy, op. cit. passim: Loukianoff, op. cit., fig. 2 and Butler, loc. cit.
53. This must have been re-excavated at the eve of the Arab Conquest, cf. Vita de Senuti, E. Amelineau, "Fragments coptes pour servir a l'histoire de la conquete d'Egypte," *Journal Asiatique* 1888, II, p.405. The same is suggested by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.59.
54. This is also the supposition of Loukianoff, expressed in his plan, op. cit., Pl. 1 and p.287.
56. See n. 2 on p.70.
60. *Futuh*, p.92.
63. See supra p.58, infra pp.163 f.
Chapter 4. The Foundation and a Town in the Making

1. The question was primarily dealt with by R. Guest, "Foundation," pp.51 ff.; cf. also Caetani, Annali IV, pp.541 ff.; Reitemayer, Städtegründungen, pp.100 ff.


3. Futuh, p.91.

4. Most modern historians regard this tradition as unauthentic on the grounds that a similar story is given as the reason for the founding of al-Basra and al-Kufa on the Arabian side of the river and not across it. On the face of the matter, it looks quite suspicious that the traditions regarding al-Amsar in al-'Iraq, transmitted by al-Baladhuri (Futuh al-Buldan, p.338) and at-Tabari (Annales, ed. de Goeje, V, pp.2360 and 2483), are given in the same way as Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's for al-Fustat. But this may reflect the common policy of the Caliph 'Umar vis-à-vis all expedition corps and all conquered countries in the first period of expansion. It certainly was not a trifling matter to have main military bases in conquered countries threatened with isolation from the Arabian mainland by flood. The lesson of the Battle of the Bridge, which ended in disaster because retreat was cut off by the river, was certainly still remembered in al-Madina. On this question cf. also Lane-Poole, History, p.15 and Reitemeyer, Städtegründungen, p.30.

5. Contrary to most Arab medieval authors who believed that Alexandria was taken by assault, contemporary scholars unanimously agree (mainly on the evidence of John of Nikiu), that Alexandria had been evacuated by Byzantine forces, according to the treaty concluded by the patriarch Cyrus and 'Amr. The houses referred to would thus have been voluntarily abandoned and not requisitioned. This is also the meaning of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's information.

6. It is also the opinion of Guest, "Foundation," p.56 who assumes that the foundation was to some extent a gradual process.

7. The first author who conveyed this popular legend was Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.91. He heard it from his father and from his father's contemporary, Sa'id ibn Ufayr. Both lived at the turn of the second century after the Hidjra; thus the legend seems to be of relatively late date.

9. The distance between al-Madina and the place where al-Fustat was built is about 1000 kilometres, which in theory a ‘good’ she-camel could cover in three days. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.304, also says that an envoy covered a distance roughly four times as great from Ifriqiya to al-Madina in twenty days. The envoy was either ‘Uqba ibn Nafi’ or ‘Abd Allah ibn az-Zubayr.

10. About the commercial relations of al-Hidjaz with Egypt before its conquest, there are well known traditions about ‘Amr’s journey with a group of Qurayshites to Egypt in the period of the Djahiliya, see Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.53 ff. The same author, op. cit. p.164 also speaks of Egyptian ships going to al-Hidjaz before Islam. It may be of interest that in Makka, there was a ‘Dar Misr;’ a building probably serving as a storehouse for Egyptian merchandise. This strongly suggests a close relationship with and traditional knowledge of this country, cf. M.J. Kister, “Some Reports Concerning Mecca from Jahiliyya to Islam,” *JESHO* XV, 1972, p.77. Cf. also the tradition that ‘Umar himself visited Egypt, as-Suyuti, *Husn*, ed. Abu al-Fadl (1976), I pp.222 f.

12. Ibid., p.93, 265, etc.
13. Ibid., p.93.
14. See supra, p.75.
15. Cf. p.75 supra.
18. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.116 f.; Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* IV, p.3; al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.296; al-Qalqashandi, *Subh* III, p.327; cf. Caetani, *Annali* IV, pp.584, 588 f. The approximate location of the settlements of the tribal groups listed below can be seen best on Plan 3. It should be remembered, however, that the precise location of many *khittas* is frequently vague, if not entirely lost. Authors are usually imprecise, directions misleading, and most points of orientation or landmarks have disappeared. Besides, the locations usually differ with various authors. The meticulously established topography of the *khittas*, according to the information drawn from al-Maqrizi and Ibn Duqmaq by Guest, “Foundation,” both the plan of e Fustat and the text, pp.64 ff., can only be used very tentatively. Thanks to information from Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam not available to Guest, and some details from Abu Salih and Yaqut, which evidently escaped Guest’s attention, his topography of the *khittas* can be corrected and the list greatly enlarged. This is, however, beyond the scope of the present study, especially since the locations would still be tentative and the boundaries of *khittas* imprecise. The present author has chosen to give only general indications of the topography and to follow Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, our earliest source, cf. Plan 3.
19. For these groups see Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.116 f.


25. Loc. cit.


30. The social and economic factors underlying the formation of the primitive Islamic state have been thoroughly studied by M. Watts in his historical-sociological works. Especially see his *Islam and the Integration of Society*, London 1961, passim.


34. Ibid., p.129. Ibn Duqmaq repeats the same thing. *Intisar* IV, p.126.

35. Al-Maqrizi, I, p.298.

36. *Churches*, fols.29 a f.


38. The members of this body were Mu'awiya ibn Hudaydj of the Tudjib, Sharik ibn Sumayy of the Ghutayfa branch of the Murad, 'Amr ibn Qahzam of the Khulmin and Hayawil ibn Nashira of al-Ma'afir (the name of the last one from Wustenfeld's edition of Yaqu't's *Geographical Dictionary* III, p.896, comes in the form of Djabra'il which is evidently a misreading by the editor. The reading Hayawil is confirmed by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.188; cf. Torrey's Glossary, *Futuh*, p.37. The list is to be found in Yaqu't (loc. cit., and in almost all later works). See for instance, al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.297, who is the only one to mention al-Quda'i as the source of this information. Cf. also as-Suyuti, *Husn al-Muhadara*, I, p.78; al-Qalqashandi, *Subh* III, p.326, etc.

39. *Futuh*, pp.98 ff. (chapter on *khittas*). It is not surprising that facts casting an unfavourable light on the conquerors are not found in *Futuh*, see supra p.4.


41. Loc. cit.

42. It appears for the first time in Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam on the authority of his father and Sa'id ibn 'Ufayr, *Futuh*, p.91.

43. We know of the story of Qaysaba from two independent versions: one transmitted by Yaqu't, *Mu'djam al-Buldan* III, p.896, which contains a misreading, *djabbana* (cemetery) for *djinan* (garden); and a more correct version found in Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar*, p.62. This version, on authority of Laith ibn Sa'd, was probably borrowed from al-Quda'i. The second version, which is much more detailed gives al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* II, p.246, on the authority of Hubayra Ibn Abyad and a sheykh of the Tudjib; it was evidently taken from al Kindi's lost
treatise on Masjid Ahl ar-Raya (Djami” ‘Amr). The essence of this narrative is that Qaysaba, who came from Syria with fifty slaves, thirty horses, and a hundred pack animals, when he later moved with the army to Alexandria, left this property in his camp at the site of al-Fustat. When the army returned, the piece of land where he had left his property was regarded as his possession.


45. See P1.3.


48. As the khitta of Lafi and az-Zahir. See al-Maqrizi, Khitat 1, pp. 296 f.; Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, pp.3 f.; Yaqui, Mu’djam al-Buldan, s.v. az-Zahir.

49. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam tells of several such instances (Futuh, pp.116 ff.). Also al-Ma’afir were dispersed (nakkitalatur), ibid., p.126.

50. R. Guest, op. cit., p.58.

51. Al-Wulat, pp.70 f. He tells that Safwan withdrew the Mahra from among the Kinda, the Tanukh from al-Azd, the clan of Ka’b ibn Udayy from among the Quraysh, the Djuhayna from the Ahl ar-Raya, and the Khusayn from the Lakhm. Some sort of similar symbiosis, this time of the Arabs with the non-Arabs, appears in Ibn Duqmaq’s information that al-Habash, the Ethiopians, were registered in the Diwan together with the tribe of al-Azd (Intasar IV, p.126). Unfortunately nothing is known about this strange foreign regiment in ‘Amr’s army, neither their origin nor their relation with the tribe of al-Azd.

52. For instance, the Lakhm formed two or three different khittas. Cf. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, pp.118 f., 128.

53. We leave out of these considerations al-Djiza on the other side of the Nile where land was practically unlimited.

54. Almost all the sources (Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, pp.56, 62; al-Kindi, Wulat, pp.8 f.; al-Baladhuri, Futuh al-Buldan, pp.249 ff.; Abu Salih, Churches, fol. 21b; Yaqut, Mu’djam al-Buldan III, p. 893-894, etc.) give the total number of ‘Amr’s forces in Egypt as 15,500 men, of which 3,500 he brought with him when he first entered the country, and 12,000 were sent as reinforcements during the campaign under the trusted companion of the Prophet, az-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwam, probably in several detachments. If we take into account the losses which must have been rather heavy, not only on the battlefield, but also from the plague (about three thousand men), and garrison forces left in Alexandria (five hundred men) and in other parts of the country, we arrive at a number of about 10,000-11,000 men present at the foundation. The khittas, listed by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam and later authors, amounted to more than fifty on both sides of the Nile, but certainly some of them were subdivisions of the original ones. In reality, on the right bank of the Nile there were from thirty to forty units.

55. The exact number of churches and monasteries is impossible to reconstruct. For the end of the twelfth century Abu Salih lists thirty-seven churches and five monasteries in the area of al-Fustat (roughly from Birkat al-Habash in the south to the northern confines of the city, excluding Babylon). Of these churches certainly some were built under the domination of Islam, in spite of religious restrictions, but others had been destroyed and never rebuilt. Considering this impressive number, one should, however, bear in mind that several Coptic churches have often been built in one place and formed architectural complexes, similarly the monasteries. Ibn Duqmaq lists fourteen churches and two
monasteries at the end of the fourteenth century outside Qasr ash-Sham' (Intisar, IV, pp. 107 ff.). R. Guest names six churches which, in his opinion, stood on the bank of the Nile before the foundation of al-Fustat, and he thinks that "there were very likely others, but the names do not appear to be recorded," "Foundation," p. 62. On the site, see al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p. 286.


57. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p. 96. The information is supplemented by al-Maqrizi who quotes from the early narrative of Abu Sa'id Sulaf al-Himyari (Khitat II, p. 247) that the Mosque of 'Amr was surrounded by at-Tariq on all sides.

58. For the gates of Babylonia, see U. Monneret de Villard, BS GE, 12, Chapter V, pp. 81 ff. and Plan, p. 90.

59. For the identification of the site of Bab as-Safa, see Casanova, "Reconstitution," pp. 56 ff.

60. That at-Tariq really continued for a considerable distance through the camp-site in a northerly direction is proven by other references to this road in Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam. He refers to it in speaking about a new khita of 'Uqba ibn 'Amir given to him by the Caliph al-Mu'awiya (Futuh, p. 100) and when he describes the possessions of the Lakhm (ibid., p. 119). The inference is that it ran somewhere in the direction of the Mosque of 'Abd Allah, built some sixty-seven years later. It has been suggested by Casanova, "Reconstitution," p. 59, that the Mosque of 'Abd Allah was built in the neighbourhood of Kaum al-Djarid.

61. For instance, the garden of ar-Rayhan where 'Amr ibn al-'As was first stationed (Baladhuri, Futuh al-Buldan, p. 249); the gardens of Ibn Kaysan, where the shipyards were later transferred to from Djazirat as-Sina'a (al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p. 343); the garden of Hawi, somewhere near the mouth of the Khalidj (Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p. 118) etc.

62. As evidence for this attitude, we quote a passage from Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam which refers to the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz. Upon hearing from Musa ibn Wardan that he was a merchant, he said, "A merchant is a sinner and sinners go to hell," Futuh, p. 142-143.

63. We can add to this hypothesis that the settlers, at least a large number of them, had very little time to arrange their dwellings and for building as, only a few months after the founding, 'Amr took a large body of the djund for a campaign in Barka and Tripolitania. Tripoli was taken by the Arabs in A.D. 642-643 (A.H. 22), cf. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p. 171; Baladhuri, Futuh al-Buldan, p. 266. There can be little doubt that the army set on the march in the winter of A.D. 642-643, that is, no more than two or three months after being stationed at al-Fustat. Also other regiments were certainly busy with the pacification of the more remote regions of Egypt.

64. We know very little about the domestic architecture of Christian Egypt. All the excavations and research so far have concentrated on monastic and sacred buildings. Domestic complexes encountered in the course of excavation of Pharaonic sites were never well recorded and studied. In the last few decades, a great deal of new information has been obtained from Nubian sites. These, however, are not purely Coptic and are only influenced by Egyptian models, and thus can be used but tentatively. On the whole, it appears that there were in Christian Egypt two main architectural trends: one, more popular, inspired by local tradition, and the other closely related to the Hellenistic Mediterranean milieu. Both made their imprint upon nascent Islamic architecture, although apparently the influence of local tradition was stronger in the early period and the other, combined with Iranian influence, had considerable effect much later.
Chapter 5. Demographic Evolution


2. From the explanation given by al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.297-98, and Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* IV, pp.3-4, it appears that the comradeship resulting from a joint expedition against Byzantine ships which appeared in Alexandria, made them demand a separate *khitta* from 'Amr. This is probable. One can also theorize, however, that these were their first allotments, and not that they had obtained them jointly with their kin tribes and only afterwards separated from them to live with their comrades. Among the eight tribal groups which made up this group according to al-Lafif, as many as four, al-Hidjr, Ghassan, Djudham and al-Wahaf, had, according to our sources, no separate *khittas* in al-Fustat.

3. *Futuh*, p.130
7. See above p.92.

8. Caetani, *Annali* IV, pp. 551 f., trying to estimate the population of the camp-town, applied a modern formula for a family unit: 1 + 1 + 2, that is (warrior) husband + wife + 2 children. It is, however, unlikely that this over-simplification can be applied to a society constructed on very different lines from our own.

10. Ibid., p.108.
11. Ibid., p.123.


16. Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar*, p. 4; al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.298. R. Guest, op. cit., p.66, is of the opinion that the name has possibly been corrupted.

21. Ibid., p.41.
22. Ibid., p.42.
23. Ibid., p.83.
continued also in the eighth century. For instance, Wuhayb al-Yahsubi, who took up arms against the government in the year A.D. 835 (A.H. 117), probably came from al-Yaman shortly before, where he had lived in one of the towns (al-Kindi, *Wulat*, p.77).

25. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.102. This figure concerns the whole Egyptian Diwan, that is, theoretically, all the Arabs. It seems, however, that the inclusion of women and children in the list was not observed in practice, and in any case, it did not apply to persons outside the nobility.

26. We have no direct proof of that for the time of al-Mu'awiya, but its occurrence some forty years later when 'Umar II, seeking support for his reforms and to enhance his popularity, increased the number of men registered in the Diwan by five thousand, speaks eloquently in favour of this assumption; cf. al-Kindi, *Wulat*, p.68.


30. Ibid., p.132. Another indication that the Christians in this early period settled outside the Arab town is the allotment of a *qit'a* beyond al-Qantara to the Christian church by order of 'Amr (Ibid., p.136).

31. We hear, for instance, that the Christians purchased a garden in the quarter of al-Hamra, near the church of Saint Menas about the year A.D. 725. See Abu Salih, fol 30 a.


33. It should be remembered that this happened less than ten years after the Coptic uprising in the Hauf ash-Sharqi and the relations between both communities must still have been strained.


35. See A. Grohmaan, *Eg. Lib.* III, pp.137-38; pap. Inv. 137, which summons Girgi ibn Longin, a native of a village in the *qura* of Ashmun residing in al-Fustat to pay his poll and papyrus taxes for the year A.D. 113. Cf. also J. Bell, *Pap. Lond.* IV, p.XV.

36. Perhaps a certain indication of a privileged status for the Christian population in al-Fustat is suggested by Yaqut's *Mu'jjam al-Buldan* III, pp.896 ff., according to which the fine for a slave captured in al-Fustat was ten dirhems, and for one captured outside it, forty. Possibly there was also a difference in the treatment of the Christian fugitives captured in the capital and in other places.

37. 'Umar gave the house offered to him by 'Amr for it. It was located near the mosque and known as Dar ar-Birka, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.91.

38. Ibid., p.128

39. See the first part of the chapter on *khittas* in Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.98-161, passim.


42. Charles Pellat, *JESHO* XIV, 1971, who on the basis of early works of genealogists and biographers for the generation of the Prophet's companions, using a very elaborate process, calculated that the birth-rate was about 2.5 per cent, not counting children born to concubines and those who died in infancy (and were therefore not recorded). As an average age for his calculation Pellat hypothetically takes forty years, pp.107 ff., especially 134.


44. Ibid., p.70.
45. The material presented: figures, estimations, conclusions drawn from the territorial development of the town, which will be examined below, and the alleged density of population per hectare of the urban territory as well as a priori conclusions resulting from the generally favourable conditions of the country's economy in the Umayyad period, which the space available does not allow us to discuss, speaks eloquently against Ashtor's recent thesis that "urbanization was much less conspicuous in Egypt than in Iraq" and consequently that "Fostat, the new capital did not reach 100,000 inhabitants" (Soc. Econ. History, p.92). Arguing the former point is beyond the scope of the present study, but we would draw the reader's attention to M. Lombard's opinion (see his L'Islam dans sa première grandeur, Paris, 1971, p.135), formulated on the basis of papyri, that the process of ruralization had slowed down and then stopped by the end of the Byzantine period. This evidently implies progressive urbanization. But we feel compelled on the strength of overwhelming evidence, to disagree with the second statement, apparently borrowed from Clerget, Le Caire I, p.239.

46. M. Lombard's estimation for this period is 500,000 inhabitants for the whole agglomeration (op. cit., pp.26 and 138). Of this number al-Qahira would not at that time have held more than ten percent. This estimate, which the present writer is inclined to agree with, although seemingly exaggerated, is substantiated by reliable evidence, both archaeological and historical. Cf. for instance al-Muqaddasi's opinion that at the time of his visit, the Egyptian capital was larger than Baghdad (al-Aqalim, p.199).

47. The first plague, it seems, the Arabs encountered during the struggle for Egypt, but since they lost during the whole two year campaign not much more than three thousand men, i.e. about twenty percent of the army, the epidemic was not too severe. We hear next of a famine in 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'ad's time (about A.O. 645), but it was particularly severe in Upper Egypt because the people fled from there to the Delta. Hist. Patr., Patr. Or. I, p.503. In turn, Byzantine sources tell of a plague in the years A.D. 52 and 53 which also affected Rome, cf. Caetani, Chron. I, p.540. In the years A.D. 688-689 (A.H. 70), the plague caused 'Abd al-'Aziz to flee al-Fustat. It was, it seems, one of the main reasons for his settling in Hulwan, al-Kindi, Wulat p.49. Around the year A.D. 707 (A.H. 88 or 89), there was dearth and famine in Egypt which affected even the Arabs, who blamed it on the unpopular governor 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abd al-Malik, al-Kindi, Wulat, p.59; Qudat, p.327. In A.D. 714 an epidemic killed the governor Qurra ibn Sharik and all his family, cf. G. Wiet, Hist., p.51. A more serious plague (for it was described by the chronicler as 'violent') broke out ten years later, forcing the new governor Muhammad, the brother of the Caliph Hisham to flee, al-Kindi, p.72; and in the same year as the seizure of Egypt by the 'Abbasids, and in following years, one hears of bad crops and rising prices, which as usual brought about a violent epidemic, Hist. Patr., Patr. Or. V, p.97. The consequences of this latter one affected the following period. Ashtor op. cit., p.92 mentions plagues in the years A.D. 686, 689-90, 704, and 751.

48. One could argue that a greater percentage of the Arab population lived outside al-Fustat than we admit here. We must be aware of the fact, however, that at this time there was still no mass rural Arab settlement. It is true that the first groups of rural settlers appear before the end of the period, but they were brought into Egypt from Syria with their own Diwan, see above and al-Kindi, op. cit. pp.76-77. In provincial town garrisons, the Arab Ahl ad-Diwan was small (except for Alexandria where in some periods, e.g. in the years A.D. 663-664 (A.H. 44), it included more than ten thousand, al-Kindi, op. cit., p.36). Even in towns on the sea-coast, the garrisons consisted of mawali and, as a rule, only the commander was an Arab. Interesting information on the subject is given by al-Kindi, op. cit., p.70; who mentions the Byzantine attack on Tinnis about A.D. 730; he says that Ibn
Ahmad ibn Maslama together with all his mawali were killed there. It seems that provincial garrisons three or four generations after the conquest held little attraction for the Arabs, in comparison with city life in the capital or on profitable razzias.

49. Additional information concerning these two latter categories of the population of al-Fustat can be quoted which convey an idea of their size. Both concern the governorate of Hafs ibn al-Walid, probably in the years A.D. 742-745 (A.H. 124-127). The Christian chronicler says that because of persecutions launched by Hafs, 24,900 Copts embraced Islam in al-Fustat and the surrounding region, Hist. Patr., Patr. Or. V, p.117. The other says that the newly elected Caliph Yazid ibn al-Walid II ordered Hafs to recruit an army of thirty thousand men, which Hafs did by recruiting mawali and the mysterious "al-Muqamisa," al-Kindi, op. cit., p.84.

50. The name is derived from the Berbers, clients of Ka'ab in Dinna. The Berbers used to come to him and his son in al-Fustat because Ka'ab was a relative of one Khalid ibn Sinnan, who was regarded as a prophet sent to these people. Ka'ab himself was allegedly appointed qadi of al-Fustat, a post which he refused to accept, al-Kindi, Qudat, p.305; cf. al-Quda'i, apud Yaqut, Mu'tjam, al-Buldan, n.v. Suq Barbar. See also Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, pp.11, 229 f.

51. Al Habash. The name Habash was in early Islamic times occasionally used also to denote the Nubians, as the explanation of the name Birkat al-Habash preserved in the History of the Patriarchs would indicate, Patr. Or. V, p.144 f.

52. The number 360 was stipulated in the famous treaty 'al-Baqt' concluded with them by 'Amr ibn al-'As. An additional forty were a gift to the governor of Egypt, allegedly in exchange for supplies such as wheat and horses, see Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.189. To this from the time of 'Ubayd Allah ibn al-Habhab (i.e., about the third decade of the eighth century) should be added three hundred Bedja virgins supplied yearly according to conditions imposed upon the Bedja people by this official (ibid.). The peaceful relations which for centuries prevailed between Nubia and Egypt would indicate that the Nubians met these demands, which was certainly not the case with the Bedja people, who were often at war with the Muslims.

53. Yazid ibn Abi Habib was born in A.D. 673 and died in A.D. 746. His father was a slave taken captive in the Dongola expedition of A.D. 652 and a mawla of the Madiac from the Banu 'Amir. Yazid had been manumitted when he was a grown man. See R. Guest, Introduction to al-Kindi, Wulat and Qudat, pp.34 f.; cf. ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, p.188.


57. It was in later times in Darb al-Karama (from which the quarter took its name), see Ibn Duqmaq, Initiat IV, p.198; al-Maqrizi, Khilat II, p.471. Al-Maqrizi (loc. cit.) informs us that it was built in the year 315 of the Alexandrian Era, that is, 621 years before al-Islam. It was renovated in the time of the Caliph 'Umar.

58. Al-Kindi, Qudat, p.351.


60. Abu Salih, Churches, fol. 43b.

Chapter 6. Territorial Evolution

1. This process began to be noticeable in the time of the Caliph 'Uthman; see Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.128.

2. It is to be inferred from Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.128. From al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p.296, it appears that Khitta Rashida extended in the neighbourhood of Athar an-Nabi, a locality well known even today, 1200 metres south of Qasr ash-Sham'. Other branches of the Lakhm were settled still farther south, as there was a tribe al-Qabad not mentioned by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam. Cf. al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p.298 and Guest, “Foundation,” p.66 and Plan.


8. From Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam who mentions it twice in connection with the northern khittas, Djabal Yashkur and al-'Askar, we can deduce that he thought that al-Khandaq was situated somewhere in that northerly direction. See Futuh, pp.118 and 120. Al-Quda'i in his narrative says that the Syrians, i.e. Marwan's army buried their dead between al-Khandaq and Muniat al-Asbagh (Khitat II, p.458). The latter was probably located somewhere not far north of the future al-Qahira, therefore the reference can only be interpreted as meaning its northern course. Cf. Khitat II, p.136. Abu Salih is slightly more explicit in this respect; he says that al-Khandaq was at the foot of Djabal al-Kabsh (Churches, fol. 32 b). Al-Kabsh, well known from the citadel built there by as-Salih Ayyub, was the north-west side of Djabal Yashkur, which once overlooked the Nile and the mouth of the Canal. From his narrative, it seems that it was beyond al-Qantara (loc. cit.).


11. Al-Khandaq was later re-excavated several times during emergencies, cf. al-Maqrizi, Khitat, loc. cit.; al-Kindi, Wulat, pp. 149, 179, but it does not seem that it was maintained to serve as a permanent defensive line.


14. A dramatic description of the fire by an eyewitness, John, the scribe of the Patriarch Michael, is given in Hist. Patr., Patr. Or. V, pp.167 ff. One may note, however, that al-Kindi mentioned only the burning of the Marwanid residence Dar al-Mudhahhaba and the bridge across the Nile. See Wulat, p.95.

15. Churches, fol. 32b.

16. Al-Maqrizi, Khitat II, p.161 after al-Kindi's lost work Kitab al-Mawali. In the same district 'Abd al-'Aziz built his Sab' Saqayat-seven water wheels or irrigation wells, which, in later times, gave their name to the whole quarter. Cf. Salmon, “Topographie,” pp.41 ff. One may assume that al-'Askar, at least partially, was founded on new land left by the receding Nile. (For the process, see above pp.47 ff). At any rate, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's
information, *Futuh*, p. 118, indicates that it occupied rather a narrow strip of land along the Nile, i.e. west of Djabal Yashkur and probably beyond it.

17. *Wulat*, p. 80. Also al-Maqrizi's older contemporary Ibn Duqmaq disproves his statement by saying that Ibn Tulun, before he had built al-Qatā'ī', destroyed many buildings there. See *Intisar* IV, p. 121.


19. Al-Maqrizi expressly stated that it was built in al-Ma'afir, see *Khitat* I, p. 136, but the same author quoting al-Quda'i, *Khitat* II, p. 456, says that Qanatir Ibn Tulun were beyond (bi-zahir) al-Ma'afir. At any rate, there was a tribe, namely al-Ash'ariyun, whose settlements extended east of the Aqueduct. See al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* II, p. 458, quoting al-Djawwani.


21. Ibid., pp. 121 ff., cf. Caetani, *Annali* IV, pp. 585 ff. who, however, draws his topographical details mainly from later sources and the elaboration of R. Guest in his "Foundation."

22. One should remember that the urban expansion to the north, beyond Djabal Yashkur on the low land along the Nile and the Khalidj in the direction of the future al-Qahira, was hindered by the annual flood. As late as the eleventh century, when Nasir-i-Khosrow visited Egypt, the area between al-Fustat and al-Qahira during the high Nile was under water. See *Safer Name*, ed. and transl. by Ch. Schefer, text p. 45, transl. p. 136.

23. If we correlate economic conditions with the demography, we should expect a decrease in population in the early 'Abbasid period. The economic decline was particularly noticeable in Egypt before the Tulunid Dynasty came to power, cf. C.H. Becker, *Der wirtschaftliche Niedergang vor Begin der Tulunidenherrschaft*, Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter dem Islam, Heft II, Strassburg, 1903, pp. 136 ff.

24. See above, p. 54.


26. A modern, 'up-to-date' history of the early Caliphate still remains to be written. For necessary details, especially concerning the political aspect, see J. Wellhausen, *Das arabischen Reich und sein Sturz*, Berlin, 1902.


28. As for instance. Khitta Saba\(\) (see Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp. 126 f.), one of the *khittas* of the Lakhm, who were mixed with the Djudham (ibid., p. 119); part of their *khitta* belonged to the Hidjr and Ha\(\) (loc. cit.); *Khitta al-Ma'afir* (ibid., p. 126), etc.


30. Ibid., p. 436.
31. As p. ex. Ibn Djabr, the Copt who was an envoy of al-Muqawqis to the Prophet, was appointed wali of Ghifar (Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.109), and his brother Ya‘qub was wali of the Fahr (Ibn Duqaq, Intisar IV, p.6) it seems, however, that the rule was to appoint over the tribes, trusted men from those same tribes, though for other official functions people from certain tribes, such as the Hadramaut or Azd, were preferred. At any rate, such was the instruction of al-Mu‘awiya to Maslama ibn Mukhallad (ibid., p.125). In later times, for important functions such as the direction of the Diwan, officials were sometimes brought from Syria. Cf. the case of Ibn Ya‘ibu’ al-Fazari from Hims, who was appointed director of the Diwan by ‘Abd Allah ibn ‘Abdal-Malik; see al-Kindi, Wuлат, p.59.

32. Al-Kindi, Wuлат, pp.38 f.

33. Ibid., pp.70 f.

34. We assume, of course, that the reform was a purely formal affair and that recompiling the common list of the Diwan did not lead to the resettlement of people.

35. For a long time this process did not mean that people lost their awareness of descent from a given tribe. Nisbas referring to tribal names commonly appear among the upper classes of society throughout the early part of the Middle Ages. Written works of that time and, especially epigraphic material such as tomb stelae, bear witness to this (cf. Et. Combe and others, Repertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe, vol. 1-16, Cairo 1931-1955). A nisba derived from the name of an Arab tribe was evidence of noble descent, as a lengthy lineage had once been, and as such was highly valued. Of course, such a nisba sometimes only outwardly attested to genealogy, and in fact, it may have referred only to the name of the district of residence since tribal names in the urban topography of al-Fustat and other places survived in some cases to the later Middle Ages.

36. The function of ‘arifs is attested in a general way for al-Fustat by the testimony of al-Ya‘qub, al-Buldan p.331, and in particular cases of some personalities by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, pp.120, 123, 130. Probably the same official or his assistant is involved in his narrative about the registering of tribal population in the time of al-Mu‘awiya (ibid., p.102). Some extra information is given by al-Kindi, Qudat, p.324, and later sources, but it seems that the last concrete information does not refer to a period later than the time of ‘Abd al-‘Aziz. Mentions of Wa/is occur parallel to this, but they seem to extend over a longer period. Anyway, it seems unquestionable that there must have existed some kind of authority of the amir over the tribes which, after all, were constituent groups of the djund. A wali’s primary function was military, as the ‘arifs function was financial. The function of the arif, however, became even less necessary over time as fewer and fewer Arabs living in al-Fustat received stipends and the number of those registered in the Diwan was constant (al-Kindi, Wuлат, pp.68/70). On the other hand, walis remained as commanders of particular groups of the djund. The djund took on the character of a levy en masse which was the duty of every Muslim according to law, although this law was practically never observed. Under later Umayyads, occasional enrollment was practiced, executed mainly among the mawalis. No doubt this led to important changes in the function of a wali or even to the abolishment of the post in its original sense.

37. Evidence for the existence of this system survived in the papyri. See Grohman, P. Eg. Lib. III, p.138, f.; cf. I. Bell, P. Lond. IV, p.XV.

38. This is a traditional view of the mawalis' status. Certain information from the sources implies that the system was more complicated and that they had at least partially, an administrative organization independent of that of the Arabs. From the information drawn from al-Kindi’s Kitab al-Mawali, transmitted by al-Maqrizi, Khitat II, p.161, we learn that under the governorate of Maslama ibn Mukhallad, they had (at their head?) an official
called a shari'a. Al-Kindi, *Wulat*, p.51, also says that a certain *mawla* of Tudjib, 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Bahrma, who played a prominent role in fighting the Fatimid 'Abd Allah ibn az-Zubayr, was appointed *'arif* of *mawali* Tudjib.


40. This list is even more tentative than that of more important quarters and was compiled mainly *ex silenio* from later sources.

41. See Plan 3. Keeping in mind the deficiency of precise topographical data, only the general tendency of the territorial expansion of particular *khittas* can be shown. The plan largely disagrees with that of R. Guest, "Foundation." Cf. also Caetani, *Annali*, pp.583 ff.

Chapter 7. The Main City Districts

1. See above, p.82 f.


3. Al-Ya'qubi, *al-Buldan*, p.331 states that 'Amr ibn al-As established markets around his mosque. Also some grain was stored there since papyri, besides Babylon, also mention Fossaton (cf. Grohman, *P. Eg. Lib.* IV, pp. 243 ff. Doubtless in that quarter Dar ar-Rizq, mentioned by al-Baladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan*, p. 252, was located where supplies to be distributed among the *djund* were kept.

4. A turning point in the town's role was marked by the terrible famines and epidemics of A.D. 1066-1072, see W. Kubiak, "The Fire of Misr al-Fustat in 1168," *Africana Bulletin* 25 (1976), pp.58 f. for further references.


7. Ibid., p.119.

8. Ibid., p.109.


11. Ibid., p.98.

12. Ibid., p.104.

13. Ibid., p.114.


15. Ibid., p.100.


17. Loc. cit.

Notes to Pages 96-100

21. Ibid., p.98.
22. Ibid., p.137.
24. See for instance Ahmad Mahmud, op. cit., fig.1.
25. On the eastern side of Babylon were the possessions of the Banu ‘Amir, who were probably counted among the Ahl ar-Raya. See Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p. 125.
26. Ibid., p.114.
29. Ibid., p.128.
31. They were together fighting against Byzantine ships which landed in Alexandria (loc. cit., see also al-Qalqashandi, *Subh III*, pp.327 f.).
34. See above, pp.81 ff.
37. See above, n.2; cf. Guest, “Foundation,” p.69.
40. See p.150, n.1.
42. In later sources this name appears in a corrupted form as Nabih, which apparently resulted from a copyist’s error in writing diacritical points. We take Guest’s amendment (“Foundation,” p.69, n.1) which is, by the way, also substantiated by Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.129.
43. See Abu Salih, *Churches*, fol.29 b.
45. Loc. cit.
46. Al-Kindi, *Wulat*, p.77, Abu Salih, *Churches*, fols. 29 b, f. An interesting indication in this respect is provided by information of Abu Salih (loc. cit.) about the purchase of property by the Christians about the time when this church was built. The property included a garden with two *saqiyas* and a number of houses, doubtless for the Christians to live in. The context of this information indicates that these properties were located in the neighbourhood of Abu Mina church.
47. *Futuh*, pp.116 and 118.


50. Ibid., fol.29 b.

51. It must be deduced from the information about the first church, which was built in al-Fustat in the year A.D. 667/668 (A.H. 47). Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.136 states that it was beyond al-Qantara and outside the Muslim camp. Abu Salih, *Churches*, fol.23b. gives additional information that the quarter where this church was built was called Harat ar-Rum, which was another name for al-Hamra, and that it was (in his time) located between al-Fustat and Cairo.

52. *Churches*, fol.32 b.


54. For instance, Sa'id al-Qass in the *qasida* quoted by al-Kindi, *Wulat*, p.254 says that Kitta Yashkur was on the Djabal al-Gharbi.

55. See above, p.158, n.2

56. We learn about it from the order of 'Amr ibn al-'As to give a *qit'a*, that is a piece of land, to the church which was beyond al-Qantara. This happened at the time when Wardan, 'Amr's *mawla*, was serving as *wali*. This was probably in the second governorate of 'Amr, i.e. A.D. 663-675 (A.H. 38-43).

57. This would be the Church of az-Zuhri (Abu Salih, *Churches*, fols. 5 a-f.; al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* II, p.512) which was destroyed during the disorder under an-Nasir; another church which existed in the time of Ibn Duqmaq (*Intisar* IV, p.107); the Church of Istable al-Fil (Abu Salih, ibid., fols. 6 b-f.); nearby was another church long in ruins (loc. cit.); Kanisat ar-Rum near al-Qantara (ibid., fol. 52 a); Church of St. John the Baptist (Ibid., fol. 25) and another church nearby, not far from Birkat Qarun, made from an older *matbakh* (ibid., fols. 25 b, 26 a); the latter two, however, probably dated from the eleventh and twelfth century; the Church of St. George, called al-Hamra (ibid., fols. 23 b-24 a, cf. Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* IV, p.108); of Gabriel in Harat ar-Rum (loc. cit.); Church of Lady Mary near al-Qantara and the Church of Apa Cosmas (*Hist. Pair.*, ed. Soc. Arch. Copt. II, Pt. III, p.219 transl., p.344); two other churches, one of which was called Kanisat al-Banat, were near as-Sab' Saqayat (al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.512). According to the same author (loc. cit.) near the Church of az-Zuhri mentioned above, between as-Sab' Saqayat and Qantarat as-Sadd, there were a number of other churches. Of course some of the churches listed may have been mentioned in different sources, but nevertheless, their number is impressive.

58. See above, pp.84 f.


60. Ibid., p.118.

61. Ibid., p.117 f.

62. The main source of the information on *khittas*, from which the majority of the later authors liberally drew, was al-Quda'i, who must have had access to all the older traditions. Less popular was al-Kindi's treatise on *Khitas*. For the information in question, see Abu Salih, *Churches*, fols. 32 a, b; al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.297; al-Qalqashandi, *Subh* III, p.329, etc. The process referred to in this paragraph, as well as on the previous pages, is illustrative of the more general historical phenomenon evident in all Arab camp-towns newly founded in the conquered countries, namely the disappearance of the tribal way of life. This was also

63. For its geomorphological features see above, the chapter on the physiography, p.49. The lake, and consequently the quarter, was also known as Birkat al-Ma'afir, and Birkat al-Himyar from the quarters of these tribes who settled not far away, and also Birkat istabl Qurra from his stables, stores of sugar cane and possibly a sugar factory, and Birkat istabl Qamish, see al-Maqrizi, Khiyat II, p.152. Some authors, curiously enough, place the lake between al-Fustat and Cairo, i.e. north of the city, cf. Lane-Poole, History, p.140 and Plan, p.202; also Evetts, trans. of Abu Salih, Churches, p.16, n.4.

64. Ibn Yunus in his History written before A.D. 957-958 (A.H. 347), apud al-Maqrizi, Khiyat II, p.152; derives the name from a certain Qatada ibn Habashi as-Sadafi who took part in the conquest and had a garden south of it. There is another explanation in the Hist. Patr. Or. V, pp.144 ff., where it is associated with the army of the Nubian king Ciriakus who invaded Egypt and camped on its shores in A.D. 747-748 (A.H. 130). Evetts in Abu Salih, Churches, (Transl.) p.16, n.4, is of the opinion that the name was earlier than the Conquest and that it was an Arabic translation of the Coptic Ethaush.

65. From Abu Salih's somewhat confusing account, Churches, vol.1 b, 39a-42b, it appears that in the area of al-Habash, from the Nile at Dair at-Tin to the slopes of al-Muqattam, there were seven churches and three monasteries of the Yacobites, Melkites and Nestorians. From other records such as Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, pp.107 ff.; al-Maqrizi, Khiyat II, p.517, 617; Hist. of the Patriarchs, Ed. Soc. Arch. Copte III, Pt. I, p.397, it may be deduced that there were two or three more, but perhaps not all of them of such an early date. For instance, Hist. Patr. (Ed. Soc. Arch. Copte II, Pt. II, pp.109 and 111 text; 163 and 167 transl.), implies that a church of the Angel Michael was built between Birkat al-Habash and the Bani Wa'il at the beginning of the rule of al-Hakim. The author does not specify whether it was an entirely new church or the reconstruction of an old one, as was normally the case. Here too were the Jewish and Samaritan cemeteries, perhaps from an early date, see Abu Salih, fol.44a and al-Maqrizi, Khiyat II, p.460.


67. The whole list is given by al-Maqrizi, Khiyat I, p.206 quoting al-Quda'i. The same information is given in Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, p.126, but without acknowledgment of his source. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, pp.128 f., gives a much shorter version of the list. Cf. also, Caetani, Annali IV, pp.596 ff.

68. Loc. cit.

69. This is clear from the quoted narrative above from al-Quda'i. Cf. also Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, loc. cit.

70. As-Suyuti, Husn I, p.81, however, maintains that (similar to al-Fustat proper) the population increase and intensive construction in al-Djiza resulted in joining its khittas into one built-up area.

71. There were at least eight churches and monasteries in al-Djiza and its immediate neighborhood, see Hist. Patr. Patr. Or. V, pp.18 f., 195; Abu Salih, Churches, fol.59a ff. Four of them, the Church of St. Peter, that of the Angel Michael, the Monastery of St. Mercurius and that of an-Nahya, are actually proven to have existed in the period with which we are concerned.

73. For instance, 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Marwan owned a garden there (Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.114); a certain Yahya ibn Hanzala had a muniya there (al-Kindi, Wulat, p.62). This is confirmed a little later by Ibn Rosteh, "Kitab al-A'laq an-Nafisa," BGA VII, Leyden 1892, p.116 stating that "on the other bank of the river there was the town of al-Djiza where the inhabitants of the capital owned farms, gardens, and pleasure villas."

74. A certain Ibn Abraha, whose khirta was in al-Djiza, inherited property in Suq al-Hammam in the main part of the city, see Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.113.


76. "Foundation," p.61; cf. Caetani, Annali IV, p.550. One should, however, bear in mind that its southern end remained unchanged since A.D. 861, when the new Nilometer was built. Since there has been no change in this area during the last eleven hundred years, there is no reason to suppose that it radically changed during the preceding two hundred. The only indication comes from the fact: that the first Nilometer, that which was built by Usama ibn Zayd in the year A.D. 715 (A.H. 97) was subsequently destroyed by the Nile waters (cf. al-Maqrizi, Khitat I; p.58). The damage done to the al-Djazira itself may not have been great.


78. Futuh, p.64.


80. For instance, the property of Djinan 'Umayr, see Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.103. There is an error in the text and al-Djiza was substituted for al-Djazira. The context leaves no room for doubt. Al-Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik and his brother 'Abd Allah had property there too. See Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, pp.137, 239.

81. According to al-Kindi, apud al-Maqrizi, Khitat II, p.178, the shipyards (al-sina'a) were built in the year A.D. 674 (A.H. 54). Before that the Arabs had military shipyards only in Alexandria and, since the years A.D. 668-669 (A.H. 49) in 'Akka, Baladhuri, Futuh, al-Buldan, p.140.

82. In A.D. 750 there were four prisons on al-Djazira Hist. Patr., ed. Seybold, p.194.

83. At the time of 'Abd al-'Aziz there was a corps of five hundred men on al-Djazira for fighting fires and other emergencies. See Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, ed. Futuh, p.103.

84. There is clear evidence that Djazira Nuzhat was inhabited, based on the description of the Umayyad army's retreat from the victorious 'Abbasid commander, written by an eyewitness to these events, John, scribe of the Patriarch Michael, who states, "the younger son of Marwan set fire to an-Nuzhat. After his departure its inhabitants, extinguished it." Hist. Patr., Patr. Or. V, p.184.

85. We hear of three churches and possibly one monastery on al-Djazira. One church was opposite the Mosque of the Nilometer and according to Ibn Duqmqaq, Intisar IV, pp.115 ff., was called Ibn Laqlaq. It is probable that it was the same church which was destroyed by Malik as-Salih in the years A.D. 1240-1241 (A.H. 638) during the construction of his fortress, see al-Maqrizi, Khitat II, p.507. Another Church of St. Michael the Elect was destroyed in A.D. 1101 when al-Afdal laid out his pleasure gardens (Hist. Patr., ed. Soc. Arch. Copte III Pt. I, pp.9 f.) Also a Coptic monastery which was called Dayr ash-Sham'a was on al-Djazira. Abu Salih, Churches, fol.33b mentions a priest from a church of the Island of Misr. It may mean that there was another church there, unless the mention refers to the Church of Ibn Laqlaq. A.J. Butler in the note on this information (Churches, Transl.,...
p.112, n.2) states that the Island of Misr was not identical with ar-Rauda, but was situated not far north of it, probably the present-day Zamalek. The identity of the Djazirat Misr with ar-Rauda (Roda) is attested by the passage cited above from Hist. Patr., as well as by other authors.

86. For instance, a great part of the anti-Christian riots in the year A.D. 735 (A.H. 117) took place on al-Djazira, which evidently would not have happened if there had been no Christians there, see al-Kindi, Wulat, pp.77 f. The Christians were also employed as forced labour in the shipyard. This was the case with the Patriarch Agathon who occupied the See from A.D. 665 to 681, see Hist. Patr., Patr. Or. X, pp.372 f. Even as late as the eleventh century we hear that the Church of St. Michael on al-Djazira was the preferred residence of the Patriarch Cyril and that the bishop of Misr was elected there (Hist. Patr., ed. Soc. Arch. Copte II, Pt. III, p.220 text, 346 transl.). This is a clear indication that up to that late period there was a flourishing Christian community there.

87. The information of Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.137, seems to imply that the Caliph al-Walid ibn ‘Abd al-Malik owned some shops there (al-hawanit), in addition to other properties.

88. According to al-Qalqashandi, Subh III, p.335, Ahmad ibn Tulun only restored old Roman walls and towers, the remains of the ancient fortress which, if we were to believe Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, p.109, were destroyed by ‘Amr ibn al-‘As.

89. Historical tradition concerning the Arab conquest of Babylon leaves little doubt that it was, at least partially, taken by storm (see Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, pp.58 ff.; al-Baladhuri, Futuh al-Buldan, pp.250 ff.; cf. Lane-Poole, History, pp.3 ff.). The fact, dwelt on at great length by the Muslim historians, should have had, according to the usage of the times, grave legal and practical consequences. In theory, it would mean that the community living there was deprived of all rights and privileges enjoyed by people who submitted to the Arab rule by treaty. Also later events, in particular frequent Coptic revolts, although not directly involving the population of Qasr ash-Sham', would have given the Muslims a pretext for strong reprisals against them, were they so inclined.

90. According to Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.114, it was ‘Amr’s decision to leave al-Qasr alone and not to distribute its land and the property of the inhabitants among his followers. This met with the Caliph’s approval, but not without some opposition from the Egyptian djund.

91. This is proven by incidental information of Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.63, who says that ‘Abd Allah, the son of ‘Amr ibn al-‘As was heard to deliver one of his hadiths when he belonged to the garrison of the Babylon fortress.

92. Except in the Arab garrison barracks which were probably in some of the rampart bastions. In the town proper, the first mosque was erected in the times of al-Hakim.

93. Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, p.108, mentions the Melkite churches of Saint Mary, Saint Sidrus, Saint Tadrus and the monastery of Saint George. However, in the period in question the orthodox community was probably without proper churches. After the conquest all orthodox churches were annexed by the Jacobites. Only after the Melkite patriarchate was reconstituted in Alexandria in the years A.D. 725-726 (A.H. 107) did the situation change, but most of the churches were not returned until the early ninth century (cf. Hist. Patr., ed. Seybold; al-Maqrizi, Khitat II, p.493).

94. It was also called the Synagogue of the ‘Iraqiyin. The growing Jewish community acquired another synagogue in A.D. 882, the former Melkite church sold by the Patriarch Michael, cf. Goitein, Med. Soc. I, p.18.
95. We know about him because 'Amr's tent was left under his care. See Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.91.

96. So far only one small town has been excavated as an urban entity, Edfu. Unfortunately the results have never been adequately published, cf. Edfu *Les fouilles franco-polonaises*, T. II, ed. K. Michalowski, Cairo 1938. Perhaps modern excavations of the Kilia urban complex in the western Delta, currently under way, will give us a better insight into the structure and functioning of a typical Coptic town of medium size.

97. One of them was a great bath in the eastern part of the town which was apparently annexed by the Arabs and operated by more than seventy attendants, see Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* IV, pp.106 ff. Another one, so far unrecorded, was noted in 1964 by G.T. Scanlon and this writer in a deep excavation for the foundation of a hospital, about half-way between Qasr ash-Sham and the Mosque of 'Amr. Important remains of a bath with large and small basins and traces of hypocausta, constructed in a building technique typical of the late Roman-Byzantine period, fix fairly firmly its approximate date and purpose.


100. *Churches*, fol. 42 a. This author associates the name with the Greek work grafeus, "copyist."

101. *Khitat* II, p.444. He says that according to some people, Qarafa was the name of a woman who was the mother of 'Azafir and Djahid, the sons of Sayf ibn Wa'l ibn al-Djayzi.


103. *Al-Aqalim*, p.199, n.f.

104. *Kitab al-Masalik wa al-Mamalik* (Quadr geographicorum auctore Ibn Haukal) ed. J.H. Koemers, Leyden 1938, p.147. In addition, Ibn Haukal (loc. cit.) gives significant information that (in his time) al-Qarafa was settled by the Yemenite tribes.

105. It seems that for them the name al-Muqattam was equivalent with the later al-Qarafa; see *Futuh*, p.176; *Wulat*, p.91. In one case Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, ibid., p.235, gives a more precise designation: Maqbara al-Muqattam, and al-Kindi mentions Maqbara Misr (*Wulat*, p.135).


107. Ibid., p.444.

108. Casanova's location, see "Reconstitution," Plan I, is completely wrong. He places Masdjid al-Fath in al-Qarafa al-Kubra and Musalla Khawan in the middle of the town, west of Imam ash-Shaffi, which is contrary to the location of al-Maqrizi, Casanova's principal authority who places the former one next to Masdjid al-Andalus, in the eastern part of al-Qarafa al-Sughra (*Khitat* II, p.447) and the latter near Masdjid Um'm 'Abbas in the Khitta al-Ma'aafir, west of the graves which extended north east of Birkat al-Habash and east of Qanatir Ibn Tulun (ibid., pp.444 ff.).

109. However, burials within settlements also occurred, for instance Muhammad ibn Bakr as-Siddiq was buried in Masdjid az-Zuman (Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.121), though this may be explained by unrest following his execution. There is some confusion concerning the burial of Abu Basra al-Ghifar. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam relates that he was buried in the cemetery of al-Muqattam where also some other Sahaba were interred, evidently near the tomb of 'Amr ibn al-'As (*Futuh*, p.253). On the other hand al-Harawi,
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Kitab az-Ziyarat (Guide des Lieux de Pelerinage I, text II, Traduction anotée par J. Sourdél-Thomine) Damas 1953, p.3, transl., p.92, informs us that his tomb is near Birkat ar-Ramis or Rumays.


112. Abu Salih, Churches, fol.42 a.


115. For instance, ‘Amr ibn al-‘As was buried on the slopes of al-Muqattam, near the road to al-Hijaz and the pass, and in the same al-Muqattam cemetery there were buried five other Sahaba, see Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.253.

116. However, in the narrative of Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam about al-Muqattam (Futuh, p.157) we find that the Christians also had a place for their burials assigned to them by ‘Amr in the area between them (i.e., their quarter) and (Muslim) cemeteries. This suggests that it was near the settled area, west of the Islamic necropolis. Evidently the concession was made on the strength of the capitulation treaty, possibly to replace some other land taken by the Arabs. This Christian cemetery did not survive for more than a few generations, as we do not hear in later times of any burial grounds between al-Qarafa and Qasr ash-Sham’.

117. They were destroyed by Ibn Tulun when he was building his Maydan, see al-Kindi, Wulat, p.215, cf. Ibn Taghribirdi, an-Nudjum az-Zahira III, p.15.

118. Al-Maqrizi, Khitat II, p.460; Abu Salih, Churches, fols. 43 b f. The latter author also places in this district the graves of the Samaritans and says that the Melkites buried their dead in their churches as well as on the eminence of al-Muqattam, near al-Qusayr.

Chapter 8. The Minor Topographical Elements

1. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.120, where he explains that it originally belonged to the daughter of Maslama ibn Mukhallad and that she gave it to the Moslems, cf. Ibid., pp.121, 133.


4. To these would belong such places as az-Zamamira, Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.64; Qalus, (ibid., p.132), both near the walls of Babylon; al-Wahawiha in khitta Bali (ibid., p.136); Djayshan, Yaqu, Mu’djam al-Buldan, s.v.; al-Madjla’iz in the neighbourhood of Djabal Yashkur (Abu Salih, Churches, fol. 32 b); some places on the river bank, see below, p.190.


6. Ibid., p.244.

7. For more detailed discussion on this subject, see W.B. Kubiak, “The Streets of Medieval Fustat,” in Proceedings of the International Round Table on Cairo City Planning,


9. Ibid., p.119.

10. Ibid., pp.119 f., 129; for the meaning of these names see Casanova, "Reconstitution," p.XXXII.


12. Ibid., p.120; for the meaning, see Casanova, loc. cit.

13. A list of such *jada’s* is given in Guest, "Foundation," p.77 f.; one such *munakh* is mentioned by Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar IV*, p.34; another by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.98.

14. To this category of presumably early streets belong: Darb Huwayy and Darb Huwayy al-Bahri (Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.120), Zuaq Ibn Rufa’a (ibid., p.118), Zuaq Bani 'Abs (ibid., p.126), Zuaq Wardan (ibid., p.119) Saqifa Ibn Yanna (ibid., p.129), 'Aqaba Mahra (ibid., p.119), 'Aqaba Tanukh (ibid., p.129), Suwayqa al-'Utaqa (ibid., p.120), etc.


17. From stratigraphic analysis of many street fills performed in recent years it appears that the oldest strata preserved intact in the majority of cases can be dated as early as the first century after the Hijra. Direct dating material consisted of coins of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, of Byzantine-Arab bilingual types, the Arab pre-Reform types, etc. In other instances where clear dating material was lacking in the deepest strata, they too could be dated relatively by overlying layers and/or comparative methods to approximately the same period. For details cf. *Fustat Expedition Preliminary Reports* by G.T. Scanlon, some in collaboration with the present writer (see supra, p.25, n.1).


21. This arduous work was still remembered in the eleventh century when Nasir-i-Khosraw visited al-Fustat, see Safer Name, ed. and transl. Ch. Schefer, Paris 1881, p.49 text, 146 transl.


23. *Fouilles*, p.34.


26. See above, pp.105 f. A quite different theory was proposed by Caetani, *Annali IV*, p.552, who is of the opinion that al-Fustat's streets originated from the *fadas* (inter-tribal free lands which in the beginning separated particular khittat). According to this scholar,
these originally quite extensive empty areas were built up as the population grew and shrank until they became narrow paths equivalent to the future streets.

27. This is the natural tendency of expansion in all towns or isolated quarters: first buildings are constructed along existing roads or tracks, and only later when there is no more space available in the immediate vicinity are more distant parcels taken for building.

28. See Plans 4 and 5.


34. For the tenth century, the number of thirty boats for each part of the bridge is given, see Ibn Hawqal, *al-Masalik wa al-Mamalik*, p.146, which implies an approximately equal width for both channels of the Nile. The situation in the seventh and eighth centuries, when the eastern channel was much wider than the western one, must have been different and the number of boats unequal, although they probably amounted to roughly the same number of sixty boats. The resemblance between the bridge of al-Fustat and that of Baghdad was noted by Ibn Rosteh, *Kitab al-Alak an-Nafisa*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, *GBA* VII, Leyden 1896, p.116.

35. See above, p.101.


41. Al-Kindi, *Wulat*, p.49; The location of the Palace Amir al-Mu'minin on the Nile is confirmed by papyri, *P. Lond.* IV, 1362, 1378.

42. As attested by al-Quda'i, *apud* al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* II, p.146, 'Abd al-'Aziz also built another bridge on the canal.


44. Allusion to this space is found in Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.98. It is plainly confirmed, ibid., p.132.


47. Ibn Duqmäq, *Inisar* IV, p.32 cf. Casanova, "Reconstitution," pp.7 f. and croq. 4. He does not seem to have reconstructed its course correctly, however.
48. Very significant information in this respect is given by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam in his narrative about the pepper (for the considerable sum of twenty thousand dinars) which Wardan ar-Rumi sent to the Caliph al-Walid who needed it for the Byzantine Emperor, *Futuh*, p.99. This alone bears witness to the significant volume of this commerce. One should bear in mind that twenty thousand dinars represented almost eighty-five kilograms of pure gold.

49. Called al-Ma‘aridj. According to Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* IV, p.35 and al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.342 who as authority for this information gives al-Quda'i, they were behind Qaysariya Hisham which implies that the steps were anterior to the Qaysariya. cf. Casanova, “Reconstitution,” pp.235 and croq. 64, however, gives it an erroneous location between the Monastery of Abu Sayfayn and al-Djami‘.

50. This is proved by S. Toy's investigation, see supra, p.70.


53. As it appears from evidence in papyri, there were several such granaries, but evidently not all in Babylon because the name al-Fustat (Fossaton) is mentioned. See Grohman, *P. Eg. Lib.* IV, pp.243 ff. Some granaries were also in the northern part of the town, viz. in al-Hamra al-Wusta near the Mosque al-Qurun where the grain for the *djund* was stored, Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar* IV, p.11 f.


55. M. Lombard assumes, as expressed in his diagram, *L'Islande dans sa premiere grandeur*, Paris 1971, p.137, fig. 14, that there were three ports in the agglomeration of approximately equal importance: that of Babylon, al-Fustat proper and al-Djazira. In light of our sources, it does not seem possible that in the Umayyad period, the port of Babylon could have been separated from that of al-Fustat since both were part of the same socioeconomic organism, and the port in al-Djazira, except for the very important military harbour, could have had only a very limited role.

56. The former name recorded as early as Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam's work (f. inst. *Futuh*, p.162) was evidently a sort of official denomination. Khalid Misri was the more popular current name. As such it was used by al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* II, pp.139 ff.

57. In the early tradition going back to Muhammad ibn 'Abd ar-Rahman, probably belonging to the generation of the Tabi‘un, information is preserved that the Canal was navigable and that ships were travelling it to al-Hijaz shortly before the Arab conquest of Egypt, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.164.

58. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.164 f. According to al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.71, it was used until the year A.D. 766-767 (A.H. 150) when it was filled up by order of al-Mansur.

59. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.162 ff. gives a very interesting and enlightening chapter on the origins of the Canal where Egyptian interests as opposed to the supreme *raison d'état* were set forth.

60. For the tenth century we have evidence of it in al-Muqaddasi, *Aqolim*, p.200.


62. It must have happened not long after the years A.D. 946-947 (A.H. 336) when the eastern channel had to be, for the first time, dug out. See al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* I, p.343. Precisely such a situation is described by Ibn Djubair in the year A.D. 1182 when he visited
the city, see Rihla, ed. W. Wright - M.J. de Goeje, Leyden 1907, p.54. cf. Yaqut, Mu'djam al-Buldan, s.v. Fam al-Khalidj.


64. Abu Salih, Churches, fol. 24 a, was probably mistaken dating the new bridge to the time of Djawhar al-Mu'izzi since from an account of al-Quda'i, apud al-Maqrizi, Khitat II, p.145, it appears that a century later the old bridge with the foundation inscription whose text he gives, was still standing.

65. The stability of the Canal's course is also confirmed by Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, p.120 who speaks of additions to the old bridge by Tekin in the years A.D. 929-930 (A.H. 318) and al-Ikhsid in A.D. 943 (A.H. 331). The last modifications were made in the time of al-'Aziz, i.e., well after the time of Djawhar. cf. also J. de Somogyi. The Nile - Red Sea Canal, Isl. Culture 43 (1970) pp.569.

Chapter 9. Architecture

1. In this respect a tradition may be quoted which says that "the Arabs did not put up a tent, not being acquainted with the use of tents," Abu Salih, Churches, fol.21b.

2. The story is given by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.91, on the authority of his father and Sa'id ibn Ufayr and repeated by almost all later historians.


4. Ibid., p.247.

5. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture (A Short Account), 1958, p.11.

6. Futuh, pp.128 f. According to Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, pp.126 f., it was erected in Khitta Yafi', near the mosque of the Banu Hamdan.

7. If we are to believe Ibn Duqmaq, loc. cit., the fortress after it had fallen into ruins was reconstructed by Ahmad ibn Tulun and then again in the year A.H. 305 or 307 by Kafur al-Ikhsididi.

8. This was allegedly the intention of the Caliph 'Umar when he ordered 'Amr to build it. See Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, loc. cit.; however, the main military reason must have been the protection of the bridge across the Nile. The garrison established there of which al-Ya'qubi speaks, al-Buldan, p.331, leaves no room for doubt in this respect.


11. Ibid., p.110.

12. Ibid., p.92.


14. This name, some centuries later, was used interchangeably with ribat which was a fort and the seat of a semi-monastic garrison on the coast to fight infidels. See on this meaning, Description de l'Afrique Septentrionale par Abou-Obeid el-Bekri, ed. par MacGuckin de Slane, re-ed., Paris 1965, p.84 text, 171 transl. For the same cf. Guest, "Foundation," pp.79 f., who also established a useful list of these buildings. In light of the above, it appears that Wiet's translation of the term as 'caravanserai' is wrong, cf. Ya'kubi, Les Pays (transl.), Cairo, 1937, p.184.


17. See Abu Salih, Churches, fols. 52 b, f.; al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p.209.


22. Ibid., p.112.

23. Ibid., p.110. This was the famous residence of 'Abd Allah ibn Sa'd ibn Abi Sarh, built when he was raiding al-Ifriqiya. Also the house of Shurahbil was probably equipped with an arch, ibid., p.109.

24. P. Lond. IV, Nos. 1362, 1378.

25. This information is borrowed from B. Davidson, Old Africa Rediscovered, Polish transl., Warsaw 1961, p.135. Unfortunately, the present writer for lack of proper references was unable to verify it.


31. It can be best viewed from Street Plans 4 and 5, cf. opinion of Caetani, Annali, IV, pp.552 ff.

32. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, Futuh, p.134. They evidently supported the roof over the great basin for his private bath. Many more columns and marbles from the town were brought to al-Fustat to embellish its mosques. See Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, p.127; al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p.206, who quotes al-Quda'i.

33. Al-Kindi, Qudat, p.351.


37. Evidently the Caliph's order was not rigorously executed since two or three of them survived until late medieval times, viz. the sphinx, al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p.122, II, p.177, etc.; Abu Murra; Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, pp.39, 105. The woman's statue referred to by al-Harawi, op. cit., p.40 text, 96 transl., is possibly identical with one of the two preceding ones; and the statue of a rider and a camel (Ibn Duqmaq, Intisar IV, p.35; al-Maqrizi, Khitat I, p.344) might be apocryphal.

42. Al-Mu‘awiyah for his daughter Ramla, for instance, acquired considerable property (ibid., p.101) or ‘Abd al-‘Aziz for Ibn Rummana (ibid., p.103), etc.
43. Ibid., p.109.
44. Ibid., p.116.
45. For instance, Qasr Fahd (ibid., p.127), Qasr Djabr (ibid., p.109), Qasr Wardan (ibid., p.98), Qasr Mariya built by ‘Abd al-‘Aziz for his Greek concubine (ibid., p.112), etc.
48. Ibid., p.132.
49. For instance, Masdjid of Mahra, ibid., p.118, or the one on Suq Wardan, loc. cit.
50. Ibid., p.120.
58. Ibn ‘Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.131. The author in his relation uses the plural form, *Buyut al-mal*, which certainly indicates that there were more than two such treasuries. But al-Kindi, *Wulat*, p.49, mentions only one.
64. *Subh* III, p.331.
66. See supra, p.209, n.7.
68. It also looked on Birkat al-Fil, Birkat Qarun and one could see the Nile as well, al-Maqrizi, *Khitat* II, p.108. The only eminence which commanded a view of all these places
was Djabal Yashkur. The first Musalla was transferred there by 'Abd Allah ibn Abi Sa'd ibn Sarh.


72. The same appears from the tradition ascribed to al-Laith ibn Sa'd who said “there was no other mosque for Ahl ar-Raya,” *apud* Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar IV*, p.61. One may quote another indication in this respect: the Mosque of 'Amr was not the first mosque erected in the camp-town which, theoretically, should have been the case were it from the very beginning intended to become *al-djami*'. The first mosque was erected opposite the Bab ar-Rihan, that is, the southern gate of Babylon in the area known as al-Qalus, Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, p.132.

73. Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam, *Futuh*, pp.131 f. gives the oldest list of these works. More details, however, are found in later sources such as Ibn Duqmaq, *Intisar IV*, pp.61 ff., al-Maqrizi, *Khitat II*, pp.246 ff.

74. Al-Aqalim, p.199.
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Plan 2. General Situation of al-Fustat
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