From the third to the ninth centuries of our era, Egypt engendered a burst of creativity with lasting effects at home and in the wider world. This period, often called Late Antiquity, saw fundamental changes, notably the rise of monotheism, including the birth of Christian monasticism in the Egyptian deserts. For many centuries thereafter, monastic institutions played decisive roles in societies of Europe and the Near East. In 2003, Philip Sellew organized a symposium at the University of Minnesota entitled “Living for Eternity: the White Monastery and its Neighborhood,” to address the first flowering of monasticism, especially the role played by one major center, the White Monastery, under the guidance of its redoubtable abbot, St. Shenute. At the same time, the University mounted an exhibition illustrating the material culture of those centuries, both in and out of monasteries.

The material culture gives insight into the richness and complexity of the changing times. Three local institutions provided the objects on exhibit: the University of Minnesota, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts and Saint John’s University in Collegeville. These local resources do not evenly represent the crafts of the period, but they do allow us to see how differently the crafts developed and some reasons why they did so. In each case, sophisticated age-old traditions met new demands. Each craft contributed differently to establishing identities.

The objects fall into four categories: pottery, textiles, texts and coins. Fortunately, they range from unique and elaborate pieces owned by the Institute of Arts and Saint John’s to simpler, mass-produced objects from the University of Minnesota. A few later objects demonstrate continuing effects of these centuries. Photographs illustrating monastic accomplishments in architecture and painting formed a background in the exhibition that will be mentioned only briefly here. This essay began as a pamphlet introducing the material to a general audience. The text has expanded to relate each craft to the interests of the Symposium.
the beginning of the church calendar. Meanwhile, about 270, Antony withdrew into the desert to pursue ‘prayer and discipline’ (V 35). He became an inspiration for Christian asceticism, and for one form of monasticism, the eremitic or anchoritic, as glorified in the immensely influential biography written by his contemporary and friend, Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria. In succeeding centuries, Christianity extended its power into the Egyptian social structure while continuing to foster varying structures of monasticism. Pachomius (292–348) founded the first communities in the other major form of monasticism, coenobitic communities, with a formal head and a written Rule for behavior. Several of his foundations lay near ancient Panopolis, present day Akhmim, on the east bank of the Nile. An associate of Pachomius founded the White Monastery on the opposite bank. Its third abbot, Shenute, governed an extensive monastic federation. He remains a preeminent saint of the Coptic Orthodox Church, his name born by the present Patriarch.

Religious divisions multiplied, often contentiously. Paganism, or traditional religion, survived in various manifestations. Three clearly existed, although it can be difficult to identify them in specific situations. First, adherents of the traditional gods remained (e.g., Bowersock 1990, Russman 2009). Second, educated Christians and non-Christians both continued to read traditional texts and make use of traditional figures in their writing (Bowersock 1990, Cameron 2007, Frankfurter 2009). Third, for some religious change took the form of ‘selective absorption’ rather than ‘conversion’ (Frankfurter 1994 see n.39 below). Papyri attest to the presence of Manicheans, and the productivity of Gnostic thought (using that word loosely to cover the numerous papyri with non-canonical Christian writings as well as more strictly Gnostic texts). Both Athanasius and Shenute fought to suppress such variant views (on Shenute, see Moussa 2009). A lasting rift, however, developed within Christianity over the doctrine of the Trinity. In 451 the Council of Chalcedon adopted a formulation that many Christians in the East, including Egypt, rejected. The disagreement led to deep rupture, since the Emperors in Constantinople supported the Council’s decrees, as did many people in Egypt.

The Arab Conquest of 642 CE (22 AH) introduced another religion and language with slowly increasing effects. At first the Conquest brought a small number of immigrants who eagerly supported the existing beaurocracy and material culture, facilitating wide-reaching changes only in succeeding generations. Most of the objects in this exhibition come before the Fatimid Dynasty (969–1171), by which time the majority of people living in Egypt were probably Muslim, almost all spoke Arabic, and a distinctive new material culture was emerging.

Traditionally, scholars have divided the material culture of Late Roman Egypt between Greco-Roman and indigenous Coptic manifestations. Recent studies, on the other hand, argue that a decline of such distinctions placed all of Egypt firmly in the Eastern Roman world by the third century of our era. Forces including family backgrounds, contemporary education and religious adherence led inhabitants to form complex, overlapping, flexible identities. Artisans manipulated skills and modes of expression from a range of traditions to participate in these processes. Artisans and consumers of whatever ethnicity knew Pharaionic monuments and had absorbed Greek and Roman forms and motifs as part of their own culture.

Each of the four crafts represented in this exhibit played a different role in shaping identities, so changes in each followed a different trajectory. Pottery and textiles exhibited the strongest cultural unity and adherence to Hellenistic or Roman precedents. Coins, which followed distant dictates, and, especially, texts, which necessitated a choice of languages, reemphasized separate components in identity. A fifth craft, the wall painting in monastic contexts discussed by several scholars at the Symposium, followed still other paths, under active investigation (see pp. 16–17 below).

Potters showed long lasting fidelity to Roman practice in fine wares and lively inventiveness in others. Dining and other household uses of pottery did not generate major innovation until well after the Arab Conquest. Textile workers, on the other hand, introduced new materials and techniques to allow patrons more luxuriant display in clothing and some furnishings, display that drew mainly on traditional Hellenistic motifs, supplemented significantly by new Christian ones. Text making, especially book making, changed even more radically, serving the new needs of Christians, and particularly of monks. Finally, the Roman government changed the coinage to project Empire-wide values more clearly.
Urban workshops probably initiated the minor changes in pottery and the major changes in textile making. The changes that overtook book production also probably began in cities, but soon became dominated by monasteries (Brown 2006, Kotisfou 2007). Coinage was, of course, officially dictated. Coins, however, like the other products, circulated in secular and monastic communities alike. Production and consumption of some goods such as wall paintings or elegant clothing may have contributed to separating monastic and lay identities. Other goods involved more overlap in both production and consumption. The evidence is still unclear, but boundaries seem to have blurred.

In a Symposium paper offered as work in progress, Bentley Layton listed various activities inside the White Monastery as ways of tightening communal identity, a theme fully developed in a later article dealing with “world replacement and identity maintenance” (Layton 2003, 2007). At the same time, in her Symposium paper, Chrys Kotsifou emphasized the links between the new monastic community and the world outside. “Nowadays, it is widely accepted that monasteries were in constant interaction with surrounding communities, lay or monastic. Monasteries and villages were mutually dependent and could not have survived and thrived without their ongoing dealings” (2003). She noted that the monks of the White Monastery continued to practice and earn from their previous lay professions. Drawing on the works of Besa and Shnute, she cited examples of a variety of possible economic alliances between monks and lay communities, also discussed by Ivančica Schrunk (2009).

I. SUMMARY

A. Pottery

Of these crafts, pottery serves the greatest range of functions and employs the greatest range of techniques, shapes, and decoration. Since sherds are relatively indestructible and easy to find, excavations and most surface surveys have yielded a valid cross section of the varieties in use. The degree of Hellenistic or Roman assimilation or local inventiveness relates to the functions of the vessels. Tablewares underwent the most obvious changes and provide the most immediately recognizable pottery types, but most of the pottery in use was coarse ware, often locally made and changing more slowly. Among the coarse wares, water jars stand out with their dynamic indigenous decoration.

Fine tableware is the craft where Western Rome made its most immediate and long-lived impact on Egyptian life (McNally and Schrunk 2000). The advantages of glazing may at first have been balanced by its difficulties and strangeness. Several centuries elapsed before glazed wares appeared in significant quantities and drove earlier fine wares from the market, but only after several hundred years had passed.

By increasing connections to the east, the Conquest paved the way for that slow but ultimately radical change. Perhaps as soon as fifty years, perhaps a century, after the conquest, potters began putting glazes on the surface of their vessels. Examples early in the eighth century apparently represent an indigenous development, but by the end of the century eastern precedents made themselves felt. Technical and aesthetic change was greater than the more sudden change after the Roman Conquest. Artisans were combining slips and paints with glazes. Rejecting traditional painted designs, they applied splashes of several colors, an approach begun in T’ang China and imitated in the Near East before it appeared in Egypt.

Glazing has considerable advantages, both functional and aesthetic. Functionally, it seals the vessel walls against permeation by foodstuffs placed in them. Aesthetically, it seals the paints on the surfaces from damage during firing, making possible a greater range of colors. The advantages of glazing may at first have been balanced by its difficulties and strangeness. Several centuries elapsed before glazed wares appeared in significant quantities and drove earlier fine wares from the market.

The processes by which production of glazed ware in Egypt began remain debatable, but certainly they involved the traditional potters’ center of Aswan, among other sites (Ballet 2003, 2007). At the same time, in her Symposium paper, Chrysi Kotsifou emphasized the links between the new monastic community and the world outside. “Nowadays, it is widely accepted that monasteries were in constant interaction with surrounding communities, lay or monastic. Monasteries and villages were mutually dependent and could not have survived and thrived without their ongoing dealings” (2003). She noted that the monks of the White Monastery continued to practice and earn from their previous lay professions. Drawing on the works of Besa and Shnute, she cited examples of a variety of possible economic alliances between monks and lay communities, also discussed by Ivančica Schrunk (2009).
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1997, 49; Gempeler 1992, 48, 58; Rodziewicz 1976, 63). The glazes were applied to shapes already in use, presumably by artisans who had been producing the plain and painted wares. Only later did vessel shapes change to accommodate changes in diet and table manners.

Neither Christianity nor Islam per se prompted much change. Pottery only occasionally invoked religious identity. Darlene Brooks Hedstrom’s 2003 Symposium paper mentioned Christian motifs, including crosses and saints, on later Ayyubid and Mamluke vessels from the site of St. John the Little, expressing uncertainty as to where and for whom they were manufactured. One Christian activity did demand recognition: pilgrimage. Pilgrims acquired objects to carry blessing home. Schrunk mentions small containers for sacred oil or water (ampullae, an older form used for a new purpose) and figurines, both produced in great quantities at the major pilgrimage site of Abu Mina, and in smaller amounts at less prominent places (2009, 3).

It is clear, if at first surprising, that there was little difference between ceramic wares in and outside of excavated monasteries. Schrunk characterizes the assemblages from the Kellia as “urban and Mediterranean” (2009, 2; closer comparisons, 3). Brooks Hedstrom made a similar observation in her paper (2003). She concluded that the acquisition of expensive pottery by a monastery like that of St. John the Little raised issues about the relations between monasteries and cities to be addressed by further excavation. The fine wares found on monastic sites raise two issues: first, the relation between archaeological and literary information, and second, the meaning of asceticism as an ideal and a practice. Both issues apply also to other aspects of the material culture, and will be mentioned again.

Schrunk does report some peculiarities of the range of vessels used in monasteries in contrast to other settlements. The predilection for small and large bowls and the absence of plates at some monasteries may reflect the avoidance of meat and fish, and the methods of serving and eating described by Shenute and analyzed by Bentley Layton (Schrunk 2009, 6; Layton 2002). She nonetheless notes a discrepancy between the excavated material and Shenute’s text, which “gives the impression of a very limited selection and use of pottery” (2009, 1).

Already in 1994 Ewa Wipszycka had noted that excavations, especially at the Kellia, Esna, and Naqlun, were changing the picture of Egyptian monasticism derived from texts. Not only ceramics but also glassware, textiles and codices, together with roomy accommodations and colorful wall paintings, testify to a relatively comfortable existence, although life in the desert must always have been hard (Wipszycka 1994, 1998). She suggests that a new ideal emerged when rejection of the teachings of Origen led to gradual abandonment of “aggressiveness against the body” (1995, 76–77; 1998, 107). Both she and James Goehring see ideals of extreme asceticism contrasting with more temperate practice, but Goehring tends to see a continuing ascetic ideal underlying and sustaining various adaptations (e.g., Goehring 2003, 2007).15

In their Symposium papers, Brooks Hedstrom and Schrunk discuss the relationship between monks and lay people in production as well as consumption of pottery. Probably fine wares always came from the few specialized production sites that also supplied lay communities. Kilns have been found at some monastic sites and not in others, such as the Kellia. It has been suggested that pottery production, requiring group interaction, might be more suitable to coenobitic than eremitic establishments. Schrunk questions whether even coenobitic monks would have found it suitable. She suggests that archaeological evidence for workshops in or near monastery sites may be evidence for interaction with nearby laity. She cites evidence for a variety of cooperative economic arrangements between monasteries and their lay neighbors that would have strengthened the ties between them (2009, 5–7).

B. Textiles

Textile makers introduced technical changes later than potters and proceeded further faster. Around the third century of our era, new desire for exuberant adornment of persons and spaces led artisans to create colored patterns and figurative representations. Of all the crafts practiced during these centuries, figured textile making emerges as the one almost unanimously, if ambiguously, referred to today as “Coptic.” The word has some validity if we take it to identify a geographic area, since indeed something basically new and impressive occurred in Egypt.16 These innovations did not occur in isolation. Not all textiles found in Egyptian graves were necessarily made in Egypt, and adjacent areas of the eastern Mediterranean shared in the craft revolution or perhaps initiated it (Stauffer 1992, 24; Thomas 2007, esp. 149, 156), but Egypt’s place in the markets seems to indicate its preeminence. An extensive industry, probably located in many Egyptian cities, supplied local customers and a large export trade (Bagnall 1993, 82–83, 85–86; Stauffer 1992, 22–38; Wipszycka 1965, 1991).

Looms underwent some changes, but the dyers’ new arts were even more impressive. Since linen does not take natural dyes well, weavers combined colored wool with plain linen, usually through a tapestry weave. From a limited number of plant and animal sources dyers developed “manifold shades and sumptuous hues” of great durability (Rutkowskaya 1991b, 2215).17 They used the colored threads in various ways, most commonly to create figured bands and other accents, such as roundels, on cloaks and tunics. From the third century on the tunic became the common dress for men and women throughout the Empire. Decoration applied to it followed a layout formula that Maguire has called “architectural” (1999, 10–11).17 Its verticals and horizontals recognized the structure of the body underneath, which the formal Roman toga had negated.

Motifs remained primarily those of the Hellenistic Greek world. Values from pre-Greek Egypt survived in broad themes, such as vegetation, partying and an occasional motif, notably the ankh. Weavers also produced fine examples of Christian subject matter for both

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clothing and furnishings (see B2). Crosses, for instance, were woven into tunics, sometimes accompanying motifs from earlier religions. These combined allusions have been interpreted as indicating that the dancers had lost meaning, or, alternatively, that they could enhance the power of the whole assemblage (see pp. 9, 50 n. 35 below).

Simple weaving continued in homes. Urban workshops employing a range of specialized artisans produced the fine figured fabrics. Monasteries also produced cloth for their own use and for sale. They probably produced and consumed a more limited range of textiles than lay communities, although the evidence is ambiguous. Rebecca Krawiec and Eunice Maguire both discuss monks’ clothing. The former emphasizes documentary, the latter artisanic and archaeological evidence (Krawiec 2009a, Maguire 2009).

Shenute, Abbot of the White Monastery, had an elaborate cloak he greatly valued. Female monks had made it, and after its destruction they made a replacement, also fine but less to his liking (Krawiec 2002, 2009a, 2009b). Most monks’ clothing, however, although possibly complicated to wear, was probably of simple cloth. Monastic weavers could easily have made it. In her book and later essays, Krawiec points out that female monastics made the clothing for the inhabitants of the White Monastery, following the example of the earlier communities founded by Pachomius, while men engaged in “basketry,” i.e., hand weaving fibers and leather into ropes, mats and containers. Elsewhere, both basketry and cloth weaving were common occupations of male monks, and frequently involved production for sale (Wipszycka 1996, 341–343; see Kotsifou 2003 for sale of linen cloth at the White Monastery).

It seems unlikely, but not impossible, that monastic weavers produced the most elaborate textiles. Wipszycka noted that “delicate” cloth and fine boucle had appeared in excavations at Naqlun (1994; 1998, 105). Did the monks make it? Wipszycka suggests that the simple, repetitive activity of weaving may have been common in monasteries because it did not interfere with prayer and meditation (1996, 342; cf. Winlock and Crum’s reference to “occupations which leave the mind free,” cited by Schrunk 2009, 7). Stewart’s examples describe monks alternating weaving with prayer, either alone or in groups (2009, 4). Weaving usually required two people: a couple of female monastics cooperated in making Shenute’s fine cloak. Making fine tapestry embellishments required more specialists to prepare materials and produce finished products. We cannot exclude the possibility that monks trained as dyers and weavers might have continued to practice their craft after entering a monastery, perhaps working together to produce some goods for their churches and others for sale. City workshops, however, would have steadier reasons to assemble crews with interlocking skills.

A related question is how much of the finer products did monks consume? Both Krawiec (2009a) and Maguire (2009) note that representations of monastic figures often show them in elegant clothing. They suggest that the artists aim to idealize, perhaps representing...
The industry commanded respect from the Arab conquerors, who purchased its products for Mecca (see p. 48 n. 5 below). It continued long after the Arab conquest with little alteration, except an occasional Arabic inscription recognizing new consumers. Christian Egyptians continued to dominate textile making until the virtual disappearance of hand weaving in the last years of the twentieth century.

C. Texts

Written texts underwent the most basic and wide-ranging changes during Late Antiquity. Changes in language, subject matter, techniques of production and organization of production and distribution affected all texts, including letters, contracts, wills and other personal and public documents; but books exhibited the most dramatic results, brought about by an overarching alteration in their function.

Use of multiple languages continued, even increased. After Alexander the Great’s conquest, Greek had become the language of officials and most literate people. From the fourth century of our era, Coptic, that is, Egyptian written in the Greek alphabet with additional letters, began to rival Greek. This change shows the cultural assimilation, as the language handed down from Pharaonic times became more visible when it adopted a Greek format (cf. Bagnall 2007, pp. 6–7). Once interpreted as nationalism, the increase in Coptic writing was rather a response to religious change, particularly to the new need for texts among Christians. Writers used the Coptic language primarily for Christian (and Manichaean) texts, which also continued to be produced in Greek. In spite of the integration referred to above, large parts of the population were probably truly comfortable in only one language or the other (Wipszyczka considers the practical difficulties that might arise: 2007, 342.)

Coptic papyri have received much less attention than Greek, causing a serious imbalance in our knowledge of the period, firmly addressed although hardly remedied in recent years (cf. Emmel 2007).

From the late third century on, Latin acquired more importance, due to its role in government rather than in literature. It became the language of coin legends from 296 to 518 (see p. 13 below). Even for the majority who could not read them, the unfamiliar letters linked Latin with Imperial power. Official activities might require more familiarity. Dioskoros of Aphrodito, sixth century poet and lawyer, had “a basic command of Latin” relating to law (Beaucamp 2007, 282). Some Classical Latin texts, such Vergil, were also read more in the fourth and fifth centuries than earlier (Cribiore 2007, 60–61). The language probably never became widespread or popular since Egyptians, like others in the Eastern Empire, considered Greek superior. For most of the elite, “a veneer of Latin satisfied most of [their] needs” (Cribiore 2007, 60).

Greek continued as the official language of Egypt for about two generations after the Arab conquest. Then, in 706, the new rulers changed the language of official documents to Arabic, a process taking about ten years (Kadi 2010). Use of Arabic also spread through conversion or “Islamization,” which proceeded slowly. It “took off only after Arabs moved into the countryside, became involved in agriculture, and started to intermarry with the Copts” (Sijpesteijn 2007, 453), changes first attested in the eighth century, the century following the adoption of Arabic by officialdom. Religious change paved the way for cultural change. By the ninth or tenth centuries Christians were a minority, and the Fatimid period (909–1171 CE) saw decisive steps toward the Arabization of Christian culture. (On Islamization preceding Arabization generally, see Gervers and Bikhazi 1990.) During the eleventh and twelfth centuries the Christian church in Egypt began to use Arabic, first for records and then for services. The last hundred years have seen a revival of Coptic for liturgical use.

Proficiency in making papyrus and in training professional scribes goes back to the beginning of the Old Kingdom. The physical characteristics of texts changed radically in the Roman period, together with equal changes in function. During the first three centuries of our era the codex replaced the roll as the common format for books throughout the Empire. From about the fourth century on, parchment began to replace papyrus. Egypt’s important part in these changes is probably overemphasized by the survival of so many texts in its dry, stable atmosphere: note the predominance of Egyptian examples for the first centuries CE in the 2006 Sackler exhibition “In the Beginning: Bibles before the year 1000” (Brown 2006). Classical texts continued to be produced and studied, but selectively and in declining numbers (Cribiore 2007, 48–52).

It was once suggested that Christians in Egypt invented the codex as a cheap means of making scriptures widely available. Although that is not true, Christians clearly exploited the format, probably at first for purely practical reasons, copying texts in “unpretentious” form as “the essential handbooks or manuals of the Christian community” (Gamble 2006, 26). We do not know who produced or used the earliest codices with Christian content (Gamble 2006, 24). They were poorly executed and inaccurate. From the fourth century on, some codices became more skillfully made and decorated.

Kotsifou argues that monastic communities, both male and female, dominated the later, more professional production in Egypt (2007). She notes both the expense and relative rarity of books, and their wide dispersal, which caused much lending and exchanging. Surviving examples show both skilled scribal hands, and large-scale decoration based on the shape of the cross. Elaborate covers indicate a changing role for sacred texts: the “book as icon,” for display rather than reading (Kessler 2006; Kotsifou 2007, 64–65). Production of large, elaborate books began in the sixth century if not before. A notable example of the book as icon is a fourth to fifth century gospel book from the library of the Monastery of Apa...
Monasteries also became centers for composing and preserving texts. At the White Monastery, Shenute created some of the first important Coptic literature. His writings mention papyri the monastery possessed, and some papyrus fragments now in European libraries have been thought to come from the monastery of his time or slightly later. Orlandi dismisses these identifications, at the same time describing the importance of the collection:

It is sufficiently sure that in the White Monastery, under the care of Shenute, the ‘real’ Coptic literature was created, and many Greek works were translated. The works by Shenute testify to a very cultivated environment, where many people read and discussed important works of spirituality, of history, and of theology. All this presupposes the possession of many books, and a cultural activity around them, possibly a school not only elementary (this must have existed in any case) but of a high level (Orlandi 2002, 224).

It is noteworthy that Orlandi thinks of the books as resources for study, rather than for liturgical reading or display, probably following the emphasis in Shenute’s writing.

He argues that reliable information about specific contents of the Monastery’s library only begins in the eleventh century. Then, centuries after the Arab Conquest, the Monastery had a collection he estimates at about a thousand codices, more than double the size of contemporary western monastic libraries. The books had been obtained by purchase, gift and local production (2002, 225).

He lists text collections from other monastic libraries between the fourth and twelfth centuries. Numerous fourth to fifth century manuscripts came from Dishna. We know there was a monastery at that site, but not that it had a library. If the texts did come from the monastery, then its library “was very special, because of the mixture of Greek, Latin and Coptic texts, and of classic-pagan and Christian literature” (Orlandi 2002, 227). The later monastic libraries Orlandi lists consisted solely of Christian books, in Coptic or in Greek, indicating the development of a differently framed monastic identity, based strongly on belief and to some extent on language. That selection was a change. Through much of Late Antiquity, upper-class Egyptians like their peers all over the Empire of whatever religious persuasion knew at least some extent on language. That presupposition of many books, and a cultural activity around them, possibly a school not only elementary (this must have existed in any case) but of a high level (Orlandi 2002, 224).

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Monasteries continued their roles in both producing and disseminating books, as well as collecting them for study and ceremony. After the Conquest, some monasteries gradually atrophied, but others prospered to varying degrees through easier and harder times. One such was St. Antony’s (Gabra 2002). It is there that the Kacmarcik codex (C10) was probably produced, six centuries after the Conquest (see pp. 26–27 below). Written by a professional hand, it reflects the continuing linguistic complexities of Egyptian Christianity by its unusual combination of Greek, Arabic and Coptic.

D. Coins

Coins embody the public presence of Rome, displaying officially dictated images and texts. The mint at Alexandria followed a formula found throughout the Empire, i.e., obverses with images and inscriptions referring to specific emperors or members of their families and reverses with mintmarks and imagery evoking imperial values, often through deities, or personifications. (On the general effectiveness of Roman coins as conveyors of imperial authority or persuasive messages, see Wallace-Hadrill 1986.) From Augustus to the Fatimids, Alexandria’s output went through four phases, characterized by changes in language together with changes in image sources.

In the first phase, lasting almost three centuries after the Roman conquest, the Alexandrian mint preserved considerable independence. It had been the Ptolemaic mint, and like other mints in the Eastern Roman Empire, it continued to use the Greek language, issuing “Greek Imperials.” Many of these Alexandrian coins bore specifically Egyptian references on the reverses.

This independence ceased in the second phase, initiated when the emperor Diocletian reformatted Egyptian coinage in 296. (For the date and significance of the change see Metcalf 1987, 157–168.) Latin became the language of coin legends, which clearly marked them as representatives of a far away government. Obverses and reverses carry images found
throughout the Empire. Emperors and occasionally their relatives appear with diadems and other jewels. Reverses stress military power in ways absent from other Egyptian media.

Reverses reflect religious change discretely. After the conversion of Constantine (313), major deities cease to appear. While explicit paganism was reduced, explicit Christi-anity was slow to appear, perhaps mirroring popular resistance (RIC 7, 61–64; RIC 9, xli; Grierson 1992, 32). Crosses occur only infrequently on fourth century coins, sometimes as objects like the labarum held by the emperor.

Even personifications become less common. In the twenties of the fourth century, after Constantine had converted to Christianity, a coin of his mother Helena still has a per-sonification on its reverse: a woman holding a palm branch (D4, fig.40). After that, the pre-viously wide and often ambiguous range of female figures referring to Peace, Plenty, Concord, Fortune and the like almost completely disappear from the coinage, probably less from any religious distaste than from preference for more bellicose messages. The more aggressive Virtus survives on a very popular mid-century reverse, see D9 (fig. 43) below.

One traditionally pagan goddess, Victory, appears frequently throughout this period (Grierson 1999, 31–32). The numerous cases in figural arts of the time where traditional deities, particularly minor deities, appear together with Christian inscriptions or objects show how deeply rooted they were in visual imagination, how necessary as symbols if not as ob-jects of literal belief. Victory, just such a minor deity, continued her useful function as a mes-senger delivering the decisions of greater gods. Her acoutermets, a long robe and wings, were being adopted during these centuries for representations of angels, the divine messen-gers of the Bible.

Cumulatively, these changes created a gulf between coins and other imagery produced in Egypt. This distance had not existed earlier, when personifications, deities, and heroes were common parlance and images of violence balanced images of prosperity in various media. Of all the images on late Roman reverses, only Victory appears in other local crafts, such as rare but significant textiles (Thompson 1971, 47; Schrenk 1998, 347). Types were now dictated from afar, although Alexandria may have occasionally dissented (RIC 9, xxxiii, 296–297; see the entry for D10 below).

After Diocletian’s reform, Alexandria minted almost exclusively bronze coins, de-signed only for local circulation. Images remained clear and effective until the later Byzantine and early Arabic periods, when the level of skill did deteriorate.

These lively and well-made coins must have impressed their users, but it is hard to say how those users would have reacted to such a limited presentation of the benefits of empire stressing military motifs that directed aggression against other Romans rather than external foes. The fifth century saw a decline in use of military motifs by Roman mints (Grierson 1992, 23), but the mint of Alexandria closed around 425, so in Egypt the older coins re- mained in use (Noeske 1998).

In 518 the mint entered its third phase. At the beginning of the sixth century the Byzan-tine Emperor Anastasius I instituted another coin reform, so when the Alexandrian mint reopened under his successor, Justin I, it used Greek legends. It became more independent, adopting a unique system of denominations. It produced coins with the value of 12 nummi fairly regularly from Justin’s reign until the Arab conquest and probably thereafter. Imagery followed Constantinopolitan lead. The attitude to religious imagery had changed. A domi-nant motif was the cross on steps, also popular in Egyptian painting and weaving (see textile B2 and coin D15). This motif continued, perhaps reinterpreted, during the first generations of Arab rule. Finally, in the early eighth century, Byzantine Greek types were replaced by a specifically Islamic coinage, called Inspirational Coppers, on which images gave way to reli-gious phrases in Arabic. Byzantine coins remained in circulation, however, for some time thereafter.

The coiners would have been Egyptian, whether Greek or Coptic speaking. Arabs, in seventh century Egypt, were ruling military aristocrats who did not engage in physical labor, nor is it imaginable that any Arab from Arabia had the experience to produce even a facsimile of a coin. Not only physical la-bor, but the ordinary administration of the country, was left to Egyptians. (Domszewicz and Bates 2002, 96). In this instance as in others, the new Arab inhabitants’ earliest contribution to material culture was to support existing Egyptian crafts.

Coins circulated to monasteries as to other settlements. We know that monasteries played active roles in the overall economy, producing goods for sale, as well as for internal consumption. Wipszycza notes that the communities received gifts of money as well as com-modities, and that Shenute had the funds to employ outside laborers in the construction of his impressive church (1996). In her 2003 Symposium paper Kotsifou depicted the White Monastery as vigorously involved in acquiring and expending wealth. She cited its need to pay taxes, and at times to carry out charitable work, e.g., to purchase large quantities of food-stuffs for refugees or to pay ransoms for prisoners. Monks involved in these activities would therefore be as familiar as their lay counterparts with the images of authority and of the values that authority promoted.

Monastic Environments

Photographs created a background and partial context for the objects on exhibit. They showed architecture and painting from three monastic communities: Kellia in the north, the
White Monastery at Sohag and St. Antony in the Sinai. All well published, these images are not discussed here.29 Little was said in the Symposium about architecture, more about painting.

Builders in both monastic and lay communities continued the age-old Egyptian custom of using stone for religious structures, now mainly churches, and mud or baked brick for others. Most art historical and archaeological work has focused on churches and other stone buildings.

Grossmann’s recent review of the architecture of this period sees both religious and secular architecture as part of the larger Roman community, exhibiting greater indigenous characteristics in Upper Egypt (Grossmann 2007). His exception of monasteries because of their unusual asceticism needs reconsideration. Brooks Hedstrom has analyzed four categories of monastic habitation; three, reused temples or tombs and caves, “accord with the ideal of ascetic living,” while the fourth, purposely built, “is significantly more elaborate and reflective of urban living than what appears in the literary accounts” (Brooks Hedstrom 2007, 377, 387, echoing her findings concerning pottery; see pp. 6, 8–9 above for other instances of this discrepancy. See also Wipcycka 1995, 1998, 104).

The only paper in this symposium that considered physical evidence for architecture was the progress report on satellite imagery and other proposed tools, now overtaken by survey work as yet unpublished in detail (Brenningmeyer and McNally 2009). Bentley Layton drew on documentary evidence, mainly Shenute’s writings, to enumerate the buildings and architectural areas at the White Monastery, beginning a study of the ways the monastery established an alternate world for its inhabitants. He later published that enumeration together with analyses of groups and actions mentioned in the texts in order to reconstruct the “institutional order” of activities that would establish monastic identity (Layton 2007). As the Yale project now investigating the site publishes fuller maps of some areas, these activities may be located spatially, thereby showing how they would cause monks to interact with each other and their visitors from day to day (cf. Brenningmeyer and McNally 2009).

Recent work has publicized wall painting in monastic settings ranging from the hermitages of the Kellia to the churches of numerous coenobitic monasteries (and now a funerary chapel, Bolman et al. 2010). Two Symposium papers discuss painting in monastic churches. Innemée gives a clear overview of the daunting methodological issues involved in dating and conserving paintings, using examples from two monasteries: the Monastery of the Syrians in Wadi Natrun, and the Red Monastery near Sohag (Innenée 2009). His discussion of the difficulties of dating images and constructing a history brings out the originality and variety of these art works. Since his paper was written, much more information has accumulated at the two sites he mentions, at the White Monastery, and at other sites (e.g., Bolman 2001, Bolman et al. 2010). When fully published, his information will solve some of the problems he outlines. Bolman’s paper concentrates on the aesthetic power of one dramatic example, the Red Monastery (2006a). In another recent essay she vividly presents her view that painting in these monastic buildings promoted what she calls the “monks’ spiritual work” of ceaseless prayer and striving for transformation: “(It) is useful to consider that seeing itself was a dynamic and powerful act…” requiring particular types of imagery (2007, 425). Stewart also considers both the role of imagery in prayer, specifically in the cells of Kellia, juxtaposed to an ideal of “imageless prayer” (Stewart 2009, 9).

II. OBJECTS IN THE EXHIBITION

A. Pottery

The pottery in this exhibition came from excavations at Akhmim (Panopolis) conducted between 1978 and 1982 by the University of Minnesota. It is at present stored by the Department of Art History. Many of the pieces, those with numbers beginning 1.1, appeared in the habitation levels of two houses that had been occupied from roughly the seventh to the eleventh century. None comes from a totally unified, tightly stratified level. Much came from the make-up for successive floors. When a new floor was needed, loose earth was shoveled in over the existing floor and then topped by beaten earth or, less frequently, with tiles. The material in the make-up may be mixed in date, although clearly earlier than the floor above it. Some pottery comes from large scale dumping when these houses were finally abandoned and filled in so the area could be reused. Because of the amount and types of glazed ware, that dumping can be dated to the Fatimid period (the eleventh and twelfth centuries), although it can, of course, contain an admixture of earlier sherds. That dumping is distinguishable from the mixed debris on top, created by a twentieth century construction project. Sherds with numbers beginning 1.2 came from a different excavation area, with levels of industrial debris covered by major dumping (McNally and Schrunk 1993).

Fine or tablewares made in Aswan constituted most of the pottery exhibits. They consist of the Plain Red Slip wares made in imitation of North African products, of Painted White and Red Slip wares, and, finally, of glazed wares. They represent the four most common and varied types of this period: shallow bowls, deep bowls, beakers, and the less common jars. Two types of course ware were included, water jugs and amphorae.

Aswan Plain Red Slip Ware. (A1-A4)

All the examples here are bowls, the most common forms in late Antiquity. Plates, popular earlier, had almost completely disappeared. These broad names for types and their definitions follow Gempeler 1992, the most complete study of the pottery to date. (Subdivisions are now being revised by the team at his site, Elephantine.) The quality of this late
Plain Red Slip varies. A3 is well shaped and finished, like pieces from earlier centuries. A4 is more irregularly shaped and the slip, now eroded, was never of high quality.

Aswan Painted White Slip Ware (A5–A11)

This ware may be used for shallow bowls like those in plain red slip (A5, A6, figs. 5, 6). In the late sixth to seventh century potters introduced new shapes that appear only in painted ware, primarily on white but occasionally on red slip (white: A7, A8, A9; red A13, figs. 7, 8, 9, 12). Some are often referred to as "cups" (here as beakers), although they more probably served for condiments, and may reflect minor changes in diet. The height is equal to or slightly greater than the rim diameter. Some types flare out, others are almost straight, or curve slightly out and in again. These shapes are popular and long-lived, appearing at Elephantine in sixth century levels and at Fustat in much later ones (Gempeler 1992, 23; Scanlon 1991, 506).

A motif appearing frequently on these vessels is a double-arched sequence outlined in brown with red above and below the arches. It derives from the Greek cable ornament, cut in half so that the remnant sacrifices structural logic to a looser energy in keeping with its quick execution. This "in der Mitte halbierten Flechtband" appears on cups in the sixth century, on other shapes in the seventh (Gempeler 1992, 30).

Three pieces on exhibition (A7, A8 and A9, figs. 7, 8 and 9) display this sliced cable as part of the same overall formula. All have a brown rim stripe, broader light band, red band, space, brown sliced cable with red fill in every other loop, then a red band. This sequence appears again with slight variation on a painted red slip piece (A13, fig. 13).

Aswan Painted Red Slip Ware (A12–A15)

The examples consist of beakers similar to those made in Painted White Slip and of the jars. All of the pieces on exhibition come from disturbed loci. Two come, like A9 above, from the top level above the houses, which had been disturbed in the later twentieth century by excavation for a building. Two come from higher, mixed levels in another area, together with Mamluke glazed ware, but are probably earlier than that ware.

Glazed Ware (A16–A20)

Most or all of the early glazed ware at Akhmim has the typical Aswan fabric and could be called Aswan glazed ware. One of the sherds exhibited may belong to a plate, a relatively unusual shape at this period. The others probably all come from bowls with parallels in unglazed wares.

Coarse Ware: Water containers (A21–A24)

Water containers include both smaller vessels for carrying and larger ones for storing, sometimes differentiated as jugs and jars. They were probably locally made. None of the Akhmim fragments are complete enough to allow reconstruction of a whole shape, but they clearly belonged to large vessels with broad shoulders set off from full bodies.28

These water vessels carry vibrant decoration. From a slightly later period, there is evidence that such water dispensers stood on stone stands. Already in these centuries, the jars clearly established an imposing presence inside the house. In this respect they differ markedly from the wine containers described below.

It has been suggested that the painted decoration distracted attention from poor production. This reflects a common misconception. Studies of potters producing traditional fabrics today have shown that making coarse wares designed to fulfill specific functions can be at least as technically challenging and as time-consuming as making so-called fine ware. Throughout Egypt such shapes were made from similar clays with similarly bold decoration, but great local variation in detail. Potters used coarse clay into which they mixed vegetal material, probably often straw. When the pots were fired, the added material burned out, leaving holes in the fabric that can clearly be seen on the surfaces of the pots. They create a porous fabric that allows slow evaporation of the liquid. This process keeps the liquid cool. The damp surface created by evaporation also gives the painted decoration an added glow (Egloff 1977, 123).

Paint, white, brown or black, was applied to a light slip. With broad brush strokes, painters divided the vase into horizontal areas, filling them with simple patterns of bold dots, with animals and with geometric complexes. Artists in different places preferred different animals: the best examples from Akhmim show birds and a pig. The geometric complexes resemble some designs found in magic texts and may have had protective power (on the importance of magic, see 23 and 50 n. 39).

Coarse Ware: Amphorae (A25–A29)

Amphorae, vessels for storing wine, fish sauce and oil, differ markedly from vessels for water. Amphorae are utilitarian, with little or no decoration, because they were used for transport as well as for storage. Usually the exigencies of transportation ruled out much decoration apart from ridging and touches of paint. Elegance surrounding wine was restricted to the serving vessels, i.e., pitchers and cups, the latter probably and the former possibly made in glass as well as more expensive metal.

These amphorae are long, narrow vessels having small, easily plugged mouths and two handles at one end, rounded "toes" at the other. The basic shape had long been used to...
transport and store a variety of liquid foodstuffs. Amphorae were known in New Kingdom Egypt, but a new shape appeared in the Ptolemaic period and spawned a number of indigenous variations (Bagnall 1997, 45).

Bagnall has noted the apparent disappearance of beer, the age-old drink of ordinary Egyptians, in the fourth century, and the ubiquity of wine (1993, 32). People living in the area of the Nile Valley near Akhmim, often called Middle Egypt, generally consumed local wines, and did not often import amphorae from centers such as Aswan (Gempeler 1992, 55). The amphorae exhibited here, like most of the amphora fragments found in these excavations, are Middle Egyptian, but a few fragments of other types show that Akhmim also brought some wine from farther afield.

These examples belong to a large group, often called brown wine amphorae, specifically to a subtype, Late Roman Amphorae 7 (LRA 7) (Bavay et al. 2000, 59; see also Ballet 1991, 491; Ballet 1997, 45, 47), which includes Egloff types 173–177 (1977, 1, 115; Marquie 2007, 90; Lecuyot 2007, 200). They are made from Nile silt, often including mica, limestone or organic temper (Gascoigne 2007, 166). They are slender in proportion to their height, and marked by prominent ribs or ridges on the necks and bodies. Proportions, definition of parts and placement of ridges differ considerably, probably mainly reflecting the large number of production sites.32 So far, little has been done to define subtypes and link them to specific places of production, or specific time periods (Lecuyot 2007, 200; Marquie 2007, 90). Production began in the fourth and continued to about the tenth century, perhaps later.

The vessels in the exhibition were found reused in a post-conquest level.33 Since amphorae are well-made, strong-walled vessels, they are often reused in building and in other ways: see for instance the use of a neatly broken sherd for writing material (C6 below).34

B. Textiles

The two textiles featured here represent the two major functions of Coptic textiles. One decorated a garment and the other furnished a room. The former uses widely popular motifs that arose from Greek religion, and then acquired a range of meanings. The latter is a particularly elaborate example of the relatively small number of weavings with Christian themes.

The first is a medallion that probably once decorated a cloak or tunic (B1, Fig. 25).35 It is also possible, if less likely, that this medallion might have been the center of a cushion. Schrenk points out that iconography is not linked to function (Schrenk 1998, 344, 345).
criterion, this textile might be dated late, even after the Arab conquest, but stylistic dating of Coptic textiles is notoriously untrustworthy (Thomas 2007, 100).

By Late Antiquity, the imagery on this medallion probably transcended the boundaries of one practice or belief. Dancers form one of the most popular motifs in Egyptian textiles of the Late Roman and Early Islamic centuries. In these poses, they entered Egyptian art in the train of the wine god Dionysos. They revived a long-standing Egyptian interest, possibly intensified by continuing cult practice. In Christian and, later, Islamic circles they remained popular, perhaps simply as joyous figures, perhaps still with sacred overtones.

The Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt exalted Dionysos, whose popularity continued long after the rulers disappeared. Dionysiac mysteries were one of the most persistent forms of paganism, lasting well into the fourth and fifth centuries (Bowersock 1990, 41–53).

Dancing as entertainment, possibly with cultic overtones, had been a popular subject for Egyptian artists since the Old Kingdom, and Egyptian cult practice of later times may have affected the appearance and connotations of dancers on textiles. Renner-Volbach thinks that the prominently gesturing hands of many dancers reflect mime, perhaps in the mysteries of Osiris, and that the straight lines often edging faces may indicate pantomime masks (1982, 73 for references on cult; see also Stauffer 1992, 74–75). Bowersock suggests that such practices had a long life (1990, 57). This medallion has both the conspicuous hands and the straight lines bounding faces inside the outer circles of halos. Whatever their origin, such details might outlast specific ritual.

Egyptian weavers often show dancers by themselves, as here. Motifs with Dionysiac origins came to refer to the pleasures of food, drink, and celebration without any explicit religious application, but probably still with sacred connotations. The wine jugs and grape vines that frame the figures on this appliqué might indicate that the wine god inspires their dance, or both frame and center might simply celebrate the good life. Assuming that the large vines that frame the figures on this appliqué might indicate that the wine god inspires their dance, or both frame and center might simply celebrate the good life.

The jugs and vine scrolls could easily be re-interpreted in a Christian context. They occur, for instance, in carvings in the church of the White Monastery and on the painted walls of the Kellia (White Monastery, Török 2005; Kellia, Rassart-Debergh 1990), where they have taken on new meanings. Dancing, on the other hand, may have occurred in Christian worship, but seldom in explicitly Christian art. The combination of haloed dancers with framing vines strongly points toward Dionysian meaning, but does not guarantee it. Whether or not intended to assist a member of a specific cult, the medallion would evoke layers of sacred associations in contemporary viewers.

If, as is most probable, this medallion originally decorated a garment, it would have formed part of a system of figural decorations to create meaning or exercise power. When more complete garments survive, some display such Dionysiac motifs together with motifs of Christian origin, notably jeweled crosses. Such combinations have led some scholars to believe these subjects now reflected joie de vivre devoid of their original religious connotations. Stauffer, however, thinks later combinations remain sacred. She compares woven combinations with magical amulets in which elements of various religions come together to evince power. Monks would have grown up familiar with such compound meanings. Brakke’s Symposium paper notes the pervasiveness of magic in Egypt and emphasizes its relation to monastic life, now developed in his book (Brakke 2003, 2006).

The second textile (B2, in the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Figs. 28, 29, 30) introduces a Christian subject and may show how religious change introduced a new avenue for cultural transmission, where forms passed from Jerusalem through Egypt to Ireland (see p. 24 below). It was probably a curtain, perhaps for the sanctuary of a church, later reused to wrap a body for burial. It might also have been a wall hanging, but that usage would not account well for the pattern of damage analyzed by Lotus Stack (1983–86).

At the bottom is a stepped base of green embellished with nine small red squares. Above it crosses a with a tenon at the bottom. The vertical shaft is approximately twice as long as the horizontal arms. All four ends splay out. Ten rectangles decorate the long axis of the cross with six more on the short arms. Each rectangle is divided into two triangles of different colors. Four arcs between the shafts of the cross give the impression of a circle that continues underneath them. Each of the four arcs contains three fruits, some of which seem to be pomegranates. A small cross appears in each wedge between the arms and the cross arms. At the sides below the cross arms a sequence of three buds alternates with three flowers. Another bud appears above each arm.

This piece is unequivocally Christian, although details such as the wreath and the pomegranates carry meanings well established in pre-Christian art. The wreath connotes triumph in both Jewish and Roman tradition (Werner 1990, 109 n. 28). The fruits in the wreath make it fertile, assimilating the Cross to the Tree of Life (Werner 1990, 109 n. 18). The four small crosses might refer to the four “Living Creatures” accompanying the Second Coming of Christ in the Apocalypse (4, 6–8).

The tenon indicates that this tapestry depicts a free-standing cross that could fit into a stand. The bisected rectangles represent jewels. The inspiration might be a portable cross for use in processions or a grander monumental cross.

Crosses are favorite subjects in textiles and murals of Egyptian religious buildings roughly contemporary with this cross, especially in the wall paintings of monks’ cells at
Sakkara and the Kellia (on Sakkara, P. van Moorsel 1979; on Kellia, Rassaert-Debergh 1981, 1990). On garments, crosses may form small medallions, or larger substitutes for pectoral crosses: they usually have jewels, and often the four smaller crosses between their arms.\(^4\)

Painted crosses, also jeweled, often have tenons, and may appear with vegetation. The wreath occurs infrequently.

In both painting and weaving, most Egyptian crosses have four arms of even length or a slightly longer lower shaft. In its proportions and type of overlapping, i.e., the length of the shaft and the extension of all four arms beyond and in front of the wreath, the Minneapolis example stands apart.

Two scholars have linked this design to works outside Egypt. Publishing independently in the same year, Walter Horn and Martin Werner suggest that a similar weaving might have travelled north and inspired the Irish High Crosses, standing stone sculptures that begin around the ninth century (Horn 1990; Werner 1990). Horn and Werner look to different sources for the configuration. Walter Horn, noting earlier efforts to derive the Irish High Crosses from wooden prototypes, thinks that this textile represents a wooden cross that could be both displayed on a base and then lifted out for liturgical use (Horn 1990). Werner, noting that scholars have linked features of the Irish High Crosses to the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, argues that the textile represents the famous jeweled cross erected by Theodosius II on the rock of Golgotha (Theophanes A.M. 5920; Werner 1990; Stalley 1996, 9–10, Photo 6).\(^4\)

Both Horn and Werner note similarities to the native Egyptian tradition of the ankh and crux ansata, but prefer a different, more chronologically immediate and religiously compelling example. Both suggest that a similar textile might have traveled to Ireland (or, less probably, Ansatu, but prefer a different, more chronologically immediate and religiously compelling example). The argument draws attention first, to the geographic extent of the textile trade, and second, to the role textiles could have in transmitting ideas. Egyptian textiles were sought-to the cross at Golgotha.

The argument draws attention first, to the geographic extent of the textile trade, and second, to the role textiles could have in transmitting ideas. Egyptian textiles were sought-after luxuries, widely exported, although so far there is no archaeological or documentary proof that they reached Ireland or Scotland at this time. They were easy to transport, but unfortunately also highly perishable outside of the dry and stable climate of Egypt. Opinions differ as to the amount of contact between Ireland and Egypt. Egyptian goods more durable than textiles have been found in Ireland, and at least by 789, just before the production of the earliest High Crosses, some Coptic monks had lived and been buried there.\(^4\)

C. Texts

The exhibition included eight Late Antique texts, a medieval codex and modern bilingual texts. The Late Antique texts consist of six papyri, one ostrakon (text on potsherd) and

APPENDIX: TEXT


C5 follows the same naming formula. It preserves the name of Aurelios Theodoros of Oxyrhyncos. The dating formula combines a reference to the Roman consuls to specify the year with an Egyptian name for the month. The document was written the year after the consulship of Flavius Eudoxius and Flavius Dioscurus, and in the month of Hathyr, November-December.

Two of the documents include phrasing indicating that professional scribes wrote them, and on others the handwriting suggests professional skill. In one case (C9, figs. 31, 32, 33) the poor handwriting and misspellings betray a non-professional writer. Noordegraaf suggests that the writer was a monk (see p. 26 below), but this papyrus in no way represents the more professional writing also going on in monasteries (Wipuczka 1965, 1996, 343-344,
A small cross in front of the first word on the lists, together with the three-letter monogram XMF, may indicate that the contents have Christian significance. Noordegraf classifies lists of names in ancient sources either as lists of stages on a route or specific journey, or as lists of administrative centers. She considers whether these names might be a list of bishops or of places along a pilgrimage route, and dismisses both hypotheses. Certainly, not all were bishops. Some are major pilgrimage sites and some are along the routes a pilgrim might take, but others seem to lead away from any practical route.

A name number of the names are given unusual spellings; a few cannot be certainly identified. Noordegraf argues, therefore, that the writer had not traveled to these places. She thinks the “slightly sloping, rather large semi uncial hand… the careless style… and numerous mistakes in spelling indicate an uncultured writer of, possibly, the fifth century” (1938, 273). She concludes:

[The papyrus] was found probably at Akhmim, the ancient Panopolis. Since the 4th century monastic life had found a great many adherents all over Egypt…. Pilgrims who had traveled along the great road to Jerusalem sometimes visited the monasteries of Egypt…; and doubtless in this way the monks were informed about the road. It may be suggested that accounts of these journeys are reflected in the text of the papyrus, written down at any rate by a Christian (Noordegraf 1938, 310).

Several essays from this symposium make use of texts in which well-educated visitors recorded what they saw in Egyptian monasteries. This papyrus suggests how such visitors might in their turn have expanded the horizons of unlearned monks. It gives for the its prototype, the manuscript of Gabriel ad-Durunki, coincides with the date suggested for the completion of the major thirteenth century painting activities at the monastery recently conserved and splendidly published (Bolman ed. 2002). Paintings and manuscript productions of the same milieu. Gabriel’s book must have embodied a similar cultural richness, celebrating both the Coptic and the Greek heritage, and relating them to the Arabic in current use. A century later, its copy, the Kacmarcik codex, continued these relationships.

The codex contains the Greek texts of three Eucharistic liturgies used in the Coptic and other eastern churches: the Liturgy of St. Cyril (which the Greek Orthodox Church calls the Liturgy of St. Mark), the Liturgy of St. Basil and the Liturgy of St. Gregory. What we have is apparently only half of the original volume, which began with Coptic texts and their Arabic translations. The last page of that half survives, bound in front of the Greek texts when the Greek and Coptic sections were divided (Bolman 2005, 126; Samir 1978, 83). The languages reflect the ecclesiastic history. All three liturgies were composed in Greek between the fourth and sixth centuries. Egyptian Christians soon began using them in Coptic. By the time this volume was written Copts had been using Arabic for their liturgies for about two centuries and no longer normally used the Liturgy of St. Cyril.

Scribes continued to produce manuscripts that contained elegantly written and decorated Coptic religious texts accompanied by Arabic translations on the right (see Atalla 2000). Other manuscripts, today found mainly in the Libraries of the Greek Patriarchate in Alexandria and the Monastery of St. Catherine’s at Mt. Sinai, juxtaposed Greek and Arabic in same way, placing Greek on the left, and Arabic on the right. These bilinguals are commonly finely written and decorated. The Kaicmarcik codex does not rival its high quality, but is nonetheless a clearly professional work. The main scribe writes Greek texts using the Coptic form of the Greek alphabet in uncials of some elegance. He includes a table of Greek declensions, suggesting lack of familiarity with that language. The first two Liturgies have Arabic translations written in a smaller column on the right-hand of the same page with the Greek text. The codex demonstrates an unexpected and important use of Greek by Copts in the Middle Ages (Bolman 2005, 128-129). There are few directions for the behavior of celebrants, which might suggest that these works were used for scholars’ study rather than public use.
Recent analysis of the Greek orthography, however, indicates the opposite. The text “focuses merely on phonetics. Its intention was to provide priests, by then only used to reading Coptic, with a text for recitation …” (Budde 2006, 7). Questions remain: When would this be read aloud? For what audience? Graffiti and other sources attest to frequent foreign visitors at the Monastery of Saint Anthony, but not to Greeks in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Gabra 2002). The painting programs already mentioned nevertheless show continuing contact with Greek culture that may also have played a role here.

More clarifying comments have been added to the codex in an informal Coptic hand and in Arabic. The three series of annotations show the book evolved in response to needs, apparently by users of differing backgrounds. A climactic adaptation came around 1800. The original book came into the possession of a bishop who divided the Coptic from the Greek sections (Samir 1978a, 83-84, 90) The Greek part, i.e., the present Kacmarcik codex, was subsequently leant to a copyist. By this time, apparently the Coptic texts could still be used liturgically but the Greek could not. They nevertheless remained of value, as shown by the plan to make another copy. In the eighteenth century the Coptic Church was seeking “to reclaim and restore its Greek heritage” (Budde 2005 126–127).

Scholars have focused on the texts. Only Samir mentions the decoration. The artist used four colors: black, yellow, brown and red. Small interlaced knot patterns appear at the top of the first and last page of each quinion (e.g. Fig. 36). The decorations of the facing pages at the end of one quinion match those at the beginning of the next. Each pairing is unique.

L’élément essentiel est celui qui est en jaune, et qui pourrait avoir comme point du départ les lettres de l’alphabet (hypothèse dont je ne suis pas sûr). Le marron sert d’entrelacs au motif dessiné en jaune. Le rouge donne l’impression d’ensemble (ici, un arbre.) Quant au noir, il délimite les contours des trois autres couleurs (Samir 1978a, n. 11 pp.77–78).

On two pages a band of interlace runs under the upper decoration and slants down toward the text at either end (e.g., Fig. 35). Interlace is common in Coptic manuscripts, and extended bands of this shape recur, but so far no close parallels have been identified.

D. Coins 51

The sixteen coins in this exhibition range in date from the late third to the sixth or early seventh century and reflect the first three phases of minting (Greek, Latin and Byzantine) outlined above. Unfortunately, the University’s collections do not include examples of early Arabic coinage. Fifteen of the coins have clear Alexandrian mintmarks, and the sixteenth is less certain.52

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<td>Gloria Exercitus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D7</td>
<td>W 176, S 190</td>
<td>335–341</td>
<td>Constantine or son</td>
<td>2 soldiers flank</td>
<td>Gloria Exercitus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D8</td>
<td>W 111, S 118</td>
<td>341–346</td>
<td>Constans</td>
<td>Vows, wreath</td>
<td>No legend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D9</td>
<td>W 116, S 26</td>
<td>351–354</td>
<td>Constantius II, Caesar</td>
<td>Soldier, fallen horseman</td>
<td>Fel TEMP Reparatior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D10</td>
<td>W 133, S 122</td>
<td>364–367</td>
<td>Valens</td>
<td>Victory</td>
<td>Securitas Reipublicae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D11</td>
<td>W 200, S 155</td>
<td>364–375</td>
<td>Unreadable</td>
<td>Victory</td>
<td>Securitas Reipublicae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D12</td>
<td>W 201, S 163</td>
<td>367–375</td>
<td>Unreadable</td>
<td>Victory</td>
<td>Securitas Reipublicae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D13</td>
<td>W 158, S 91</td>
<td>375–392</td>
<td>Valentinian II</td>
<td>Victory</td>
<td>Salus Reipublicae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D14</td>
<td>W 158, S 166</td>
<td>382–392</td>
<td>Arcadius</td>
<td>Vows, wreath</td>
<td>No legend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D15</td>
<td>W 192, S 201</td>
<td>383–393</td>
<td>Unreadable</td>
<td>Victory</td>
<td>Salus Reipublicae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D16</td>
<td>W 252, S 200</td>
<td>578–582</td>
<td>Unreadable</td>
<td>Numbers flank cross above lines</td>
<td>No legend</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The earliest coins included here are two of the latest Greek imperials. Another third century coin shows the adoption of Latin. Eleven more fourth to fifth century coins have Latin inscriptions. The latest coin in the collection follows the Byzantine reform. Ten of the coins can be dated with some precision because the legends identify the portraits on the obverse. Legends on the remaining five obverses are partially or completely illegible, so those coins have been dated by the images on their reverse. Reverses usually remain in better condition than obverses, but give broader dates.

Obverses on all these coins except possibly D15 show heads or busts in profile facing right. The most striking change in the portraits is the replacement of the laurel wreath by the diadem, an increase in ceremony affecting imperial portraiture in all media. In coinage, the change occurs during the reign of Constantine’s son (RIC 8, 535). Sometimes single or double rows of pearls can be distinguished on these coins, but their generally poor condition makes it difficult to note more precise variations such as forms of ties or presence of rosettes.

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Most of the male busts were probably draped and cuirassed, but poor condition sometimes makes it impossible to be sure.

Reverses are clearer, and more telling. Two of the three Tetrarchic coins make reference to Jupiter or Zeus as the giver of power. On one coin his eagle appears holding a wreath of victory in its beak, and on the second he himself bestows victory on the Emperor (figs. 38, 39). The third Tetrarchic coin shows Tyche, the minor deity or personification of good fortune (fig. 37).

The earliest Constantinian coin in this collection shows his mother Helena and a female personification on the reverse (D4, see p. 42 below on the gender distinction); the second has a reverse with a camp gate under a star, the first example of the military emphasis that dominates rest of the century (D5, fig.41). Of the other coins of Constantine or his sons, two show soldiers flanking a trophy (D6, fig. 42; D7, fig.43), one celebrates anniversary wishes (D8, fig. 44), and the latest has the popular reverse with a striding Roman soldier striking a fallen horseman, labeled *Felix Temp Reparatio*, Happy days are here again (D9, fig. 45).

Coins of Valens and Valentinian, including some with illegible identifications, show Victory, first with wreath and palm, later dragging a captive (D10–D13, D15, figs. 46–49, 51), as well as another anniversary wish (D14, fig.50).

The 12 nummi coin that is the latest in this exhibition has a cross with two steps under it (D15, fig. 51). That formation only appears in this denomination during the reigns of Tiberius II (578–582) and Heraclius (610–641). Presumably these crosses, although simpler than the cross potent on steps introduced on the gold coinage of Tiberius II, also refer to the jeweled cross that stood on Golgotha (see p. 24 above). The obverse portrait of Heraclius, however, is frontal, while Fagerlie discerns a diadem on this coin indicating a profile (1982, 252, confirmed by her reexamination of the coin in March 2004). The coin must therefore date to the reign of Tiberius II. The mint mark also looks like his. If these resemblances are valid, the coin cannot be seventh century, and cannot represent either debased Byzantine or one of the early Arab coinages mentioned above.

Later Reflections

Display of the Minneapolis tapestry led to further emphasis on later manifestations of the cross with their combination of variety and tradition. Photographs showed painted crosses on walls from the seventh century at the Kellia and the thirteenth century at St. Antony’s. Each has characteristics in common with the Minneapolis cross. The Kellia cross has jewels, vegetation, and a tenon on the bottom (Kasser 1984, fig. 18). The St. Antony’s cross has flowered medallions in the place of jewels and stands on two steps (Bolman ed. 2002, fig. 4.4, and p.75).
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CATALOGUE

A. Pottery

Aswan Plain Red Slip Ware (see pp. 17–18 above)


Shallow bowl with sharp flange and rouletting on the rim. Rim diameter 8.5 cm; height 4 cm.
Comparison: Gempeler T 323 #7 on fig. 38, pp. 124–125, 5th–7th century.
From: One of the lowest habitation levels reached in the excavation, below a level with a Byzantine coin. About the time of the Arab Conquest.

A2. I.1.166.2.7966 (6 joining rim sherds).

Bowl rim, two sherds show beginning of carination 4.2 cm from rim. Rim diameter, 17.7 cm.
Comparison: Gempeler T 342a on fig. 42, pp. 100–101, 6th–7th centuries. A2 is larger and has no remaining decoration.
From: Lower habitation. A level higher than the level with the small bowl above, and containing a Byzantine coin. Both levels probably 7th century, maybe pre-conquest.

A3. I.1.179.1.8233 (rim and body sherd).

Shallow bowl. Rim diameter 42 cm. Broad rim upturned at edge, only slightly offset from body.
Comparison: Gempeler T 224a, fig. 15, # 13, p. 71, late 5th century and later. Same shape but A3 is a larger variant.
From: Early habitation level in a second house (house 2, room 6).

A4. I.1.138.4.6712 (3 rim to base sherds, 1 adjoining base sherd, 1 adjoining rim sherd, restored).

Bowl. Rim diameter 19.5 cm. Nearly straight sides to sharply offset rim.
Comparison: Gempeler T 228, #2 on fig. 18, p. 73, 5th–6th century. This piece is later. From the final habitation level in house 2, or a rubbish pit cut through it. Possibly Abbasid.

A5. I.1.179.1.1828.

Bowl rim. Rim diameter 51 cm.
Red/brown rim band, brown double wave pattern with red above and below waves, space, broken cable pattern with red in alternate arches. At beginning of carination, dark band.
Comparison: Not enough remains of this to indicate original angle; some resemblance to Pierart 1991, fig. 55, p. 183, 9th–10th century.
From: Early habitation level, house 2, room 6. Same level as #s. 3 and 6.

A6. I.1.179. 1.1241 (2 adjoining rim sherds).

Bowl rim. Diameter 51 cm, nearly flat, with slightly thickened rim. Similar to # 5, but grooves and execution of decoration differ. Beginning of carination at bottom of sherds.
Red/brown rim band, brown wave pattern with red inserts, space, sliced cable pattern with red inserts. Dark band on carination.
Comparison: As # 5.
From: Early habitation level in house 2, room 6. Same level as #s. 3 and 5.

A7. I.1.150.1.7044 (1 base-rim sherd, 4 adjoining rim sherds, restored).

Beaker. Rim diameter 9.7 cm, base diameter 4.5 cm, height 6.8 cm.
Dark brown rim stripe, broader light band, red band, space, brown sliced cable with red fill in every other loop, red band. (For shape and decoration: See p. 18 above.)
Comparison: Gempeler T 642b, # 17 on fig. 75, p.132, 7th–8th century.
From: Late habitation. Pit in room 5, same locus as #s. 11, 16, 17.

A8. I.1.151.5.7739 (rim sherd and adjoining body sherd).

Bowl rim with sliced cable decoration. Rim diameter 10.7 cm.
Brown rim band, space, red band, space, brown sliced cable with red in alternate arches, space, red band ( Décor as # 7, but straight body).
Comparison: Gempeler T 639b, #s 6–7 on fig. 75 p. 131-132 late 6th– 8/9th centuries.
From: Middle habitation level in house 1, room 2, containing two Abbasid coins.

A9. I.1.164. 2.7927 (4 adjoining rim sherds, 6 adjoining body sherds).

Large Beaker rim with sliced cable decoration. Rim diameter 13.2 cm.
Brown rim band, space, red band, space, brown sliced cable with red fill in every other arch, space, red band (as # 7).
Comparison: similar to Gempeler T 642b (as # 7 above), but larger, with slightly curving sides; Scanlon 1991, fig. 5, dated 9th–10th century.
From: Debris dumped on top of the habitation levels.

A10. I.1. 155.2.7252 (2 adjoining base sherds, 1 rim sherd, 1 body sherd adjoining base sherd).

Fig. 10.
A11. I.1.150.1.6793  (rim to base sherd, adjoining rim and base sherds). Fig. 11.
Shallow bowl with floral medallion. Rim diameter 11.5 cm; base diameter 5.3 cm; height 3.3 cm.
Red rim band, space, narrow brown band, red band, narrow brown band at bottom of interior wall. Interior decoration: red band on lower body; on floor, four profile lotuses inserted between arms of a cross made from two pairs of lines intersecting at right angles.
Comparison: Shape, Gempeler T371a #5 on fig. 56, p. 110, 6th–9th century.
Decoration: Gempeler T373a #14 on fig. 56, # 5 on pl. 31, p. 111, 7th–9/10th centuries.
From: Late habitation level, same locus as previous items.

Aswan Painted Red Slip Ware (see p. 16 above; fabric, n. 54)
A12. I.1. 90. 3.4975 (rim sherd). Fig. 12.
Beaker rim. Rim diameter 10 cm.
Straight body with ledge 3.3 cm below rim. Dark stripe on rim, unusual pattern probably crude sliced cable immediately below sharp ledge.
Comparison: Gempeler T640, #s. 11–14 on fig. 75, p. 132 6th –7/8th centuries (decoration on Elephantine examples is more elaborate).
From: Unstratified debris over houses (area disturbed by recent construction).

A13. I.1.124.5.6005 (rim and 2 adjoining body sherds). Fig. 13.
Beaker rim, body with sliced cable decoration. Rim diameter 12 cm.
Straight body with ledge 3.4 below rim. Red rim strip (mainly on inside), narrow brown band, broad red band, sharp ledge 3.5 cm below rim, brown sliced cable, red band.
Comparison: Similar shape to 12, decoration like A7–A9 above.
From: Unstratified debris over houses (area disturbed by recent construction).

A14. I.2. 40. 1.388 (rim sherd, 2 adjoining sherds). Fig. 14.
Jar with dotted decoration, rim diameter 12 cm.
Curved neck, small ridge at beginning of shoulder, deep indentation at widest part of shoulder. Brown rim band; alternating brown and white dots above and on indentation.
Comparison: Gempeler T 507a, # 7 on fig. 66, p.119 end 6–7th centuries. This piece is probably later.
From: An area of mixed dumping including Mamluke glazed ware.

A15. I.2. 38.4.16. Fig. 15.
Jar with dotted decoration, rim diameter 12 cm.
Curved neck, small ridge at beginning of shoulder, deep indentation at widest part of shoulder. Brown rim band; alternating brown and white dots above and on indentation.
Comparison: Similar to A14 above: may be from the same pot.
From: An area of mixed dumping including Mamluke glazed ware, near locus 40.

Glazed Ware (see p. 18 above; fabric, n. 54)
A16. I.1.150.1.6743. (rim sherd, from flat plate?). Fig. 16.
Rim diameter 30 cm, no thickening at edge.
Ochre (NBS 69, deep Orange Yellow); stripes over it of green (NBS 125–126, medium to dark olive green) and brown (NBS 59, dark brown).^56
Comparison: Shape like Gempeler T 270, # 16 on fig. 28, p. 85, 6th–8/9th centuries, earlier than this piece and unglazed.
From: Late habitation pit, as A7, A11, A17.

A17. I.1.150. 1.6749. (rim sherd). Fig. 17.
Rim diameter 31 cm. Broad rim (3.0 cm) slightly offset from body, slight thickening at edge, groove at offset.
Yellow streaks (NBS 99, s.g.Y), green dots (color as A16), brown wavering outline (color as A16) around some combination of white, green and yellow.
Comparison: Rim shape like Rodziewicz O 35, pl. 30, p. 59, which is Plain Red Slip, and earlier in date.
From: Late habitation pit, as #s. 7, 11 and 16.

A18. I.1.138.3.6661 (rim sherd). Fig. 18.
Rim diameter 40. Rim 3.5 cm wide, slightly set off from body with groove at offset, but rim, unlike A17, does not thicken at edge.
Colors and patterns as # 16. Hole pierced through rim.
survives. In style, the bird differs notably from those on A21.
From: Mixed debris, with the preceding three pieces.

**Amphorae** (see pp. 19-20 above)

A25–29. II. 61. Shoulders, bodies and toes  Fig. 24.
Ridged Wine Amphorae LRA 7
All rims and necks broken off. Angular shoulder: diameter at offset from body, 19.00 cm; body 32.00 cm long, tapering slightly inward; sharp offset, diameter 18.00 cm; from offset, inward slant, then gradual inward curve to broad toe. Distance of spike from lower offset to bottom of toe, 17.00 cm. Total preserved height (toe to uneven break before neck) about 52-53 cm.
Probably all once had a “narrow raised moulding at the edge” of the shoulder similar to that on the amphora in Williams and Tomber 2007, 645, here battered. Rings on shoulder and on the body in two groups, at the top and the bottom. Four prominent ridges on the spike.
Alluvial clay, 5YR to 7YR.
Comparisons: Ballet 1991, fig. 6 on p. 74; Ballet 1997, figs. on pp. 44, 47; Egloff 1997, 2, pl. 58; 5. Lecuyot 2007, 200, fig. 2.6 (partial; diameter 21 cm, height of whole estimated at about 70 cm. Williams and Tomber, 2007, 645-646, fig. 1,13, fig. 2, 4. “at least seventh century AD in date” 645.
From: Location described below, 50 n. 33.

**B. Textiles**

B1. Medallion.  (see pp. 20–23 above).  Figs. 25, 26, 27.57
Uneven, originally about 16.5 cm square. Background, undyed linen, patterns added in blue wool yarn. Colors have darkened, so the blue is almost black, and details are unclear. Several rents, but otherwise well preserved.58
Motifs: A double frame: outer, scallop with dots, inner, vines proceeding from corner. Center: two dancers facing right (fuller description pp. 20–21 above).
From: Provenience unknown

135.5 by 64.8 cm; no surviving selvages, so the original size is not known. Wool and linen, tapestry weave, polychrome.59 As in the previous example, figured elements...
are created by inserting dyed woolen threads. In this case, however, a rich variety of colors appears. Such polychromy may have been a later and certainly more expensive development. The woolen elements are very well preserved: the linen has many rents. No signs of stitching for an original use remain, but Lotus Stack identified this as a curtain, probably for a sanctuary, because signs of wear and of patching occur where such a curtain would have been pulled to one side.60
Motifs: Stepped base, cross with tenon and wreath above base and between rows of flowers and buds (fuller description, p. 23 above).
Comparison: None known.
From: Provenience unknown.

C. Texts

Late Antique Texts (see pp. 25–26 above) Pictures of C1 through C8 are on POC: Papyri and Ostraka Collection, Special Collections and Rare Books, University of Minnesota; http://special.lib.umn.edu/rare/papyri.phtml

C1. UMN-1381990.
Document on papyrus. 7.00 by 4.80 cm. Writing on one side.
Condition good, top and bottom right edges missing. Six lines preserved, two more, illegible, at bottom.
Quickly written, perhaps for an everyday business transaction (fragment of a declaration on oath?).
Dated to the reign of Caracalla because at the bottom fragments of each of his three names survive.
References: Von Scherling 1952; Papyrus fragment 18 POC.

C2. UMN-762403.
Document on papyrus 9.0 by 3.0 cm. Writing on one side only.
Condition good, right edge missing. 12 lines.
Portion of a letter from two brothers, discussed p. 25 above. At the bottom of the document, part survives of a formula indicating writing by a scribe for unlettered client.
Dated to the third century on the basis of handwriting.
Analysis written by Almira Poudrier.
Reference: Papyrus fragment 5 POC, with transcription of surviving text.
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Script indicates this is probably an official document although too little survives to allow better identification.
Dated to the 6th century on the basis of the handwriting.
Reference Papyrus 2, POC, with transcription of text.

C8. UMN-554183.
Papyrus. 6.5 by 19.5 cm. Writing on one side only.
Condition fair. Right and top edges complete, left and lower edge ragged.
Right part of 17 lines preserved.
Contains some interesting vocabulary, but has been judged too fragmentary for interpretation.
Dated 5th–6th century on the basis of handwriting.
Reference Papyrus 1, POC.

C9. UMN Bell 400.
Bell Papyrus. Figs. 31, 32, 33.
Papyrus 22.50 by 15.90 cm. Writing on both sides.
Poor condition: holes, and tear down center where folded. Text in two columns separated by undulating line.
Each column has a different number of lines of text.
Dated to fifth century and said to be from Akhmim, no evidence given (see p. 26 above).
In James Ford Bell Library, University of Minnesota.
Reference: Noordegraaf 1938.

C10. Bilingual Codex (Kacmarcik Codex). Figs. 34, 35, 36.
Paper. 149 leaves in quinions. Each leaf, 15.7 x 12.3 cm. Some missing, all cut down in nineteenth century, resulting in occasional loss of the last line of text. Condition of leaves varies, generally fair to good. At least four hands: main text in Greek written in fine Coptic uncials; Arabic translation, with Arabic annotations possibly in the same hand; Greek and Coptic annotations in different hands, Decorated initials. Interlaced decoration at tops of first and last pages of quinions.
Modern leather binding. Recently well conserved. Leaves numbered in pencil with Western numerals on recto upper right. Older Greek numbers on verso. Arabic notes on production and history added to pages at the front and back of the book. Provisional fourteenth century date from paleography (see n. 63).

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D. Coins (see pp. 28–30 above)

Each coin has a number assigned by the Weisman Museum of Art, and all but one have a number assigned in the catalogue of the Sarazyn collection. Both numbers are listed here, the former proceeded by W and the latter by S.
Coin D3 her, Weisman 2003.2.448, was transferred from the University of Minnesota department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies. The others come from the Bequest of Andrew J. Sarazan.
In legends, words are separated for convenience according to accepted practice, although they run together on the coins. Spaces on the coins are indicated by a dash.

Abbreviations

A. Greek.
- Dating: A symbol before date: “probably a modification of an ancient Egyptian hieroglyph” (Curtis 1969, xiv).
- Titles and names: A Autokrator (Emperor); K Caesar; G Gaius; M Marcus; OYA Valerianus; SEB (CEB) Sebastos (Augustus)

B. Latin:
- Titles: AVG Augustus, Augusta; C Caesar; DN Dominus Noster; F, FL Flavius, Flavia; N nobilissimus; P Pius (often PF Pius Felix)
- Mint marks: SM Sacra Moneta; AL or ALE Alexandria. At the end of the mint mark, the Greek letters A B G D continue to be used to indicate the officina (mint division: Alexandria had four).

References:

BMC 10, #2524; Curtis #1969; Milne #4821; Vogt 169-69.

Nike and Tyche had always been highly popular on Greek imperials; Tyche always shown with these attributes. Diocletian issued several versions.

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Billon Tetradrachm. Wt. 6.55 gm; diam. 20 mm. Condition fair.
Obv: Bust facing right, laureate, draped, cuirassed.
Rev. Woman standing facing left, left hand holding her garment and right hand holding a figure of Victory toward the emperor; FL HELENA–A VGVSTA (Flavia Helena Augusta).

Comparison: CONCORDIA MIL–ITUM. Mint mark illegible.

D4. W 71 (S 24) 325–326. Fig. 40.
Wt. 2.91 gm; diam. 20 mm. Condition good.
Obv. Female bust facing right, draped, double strand pearl necklace, double strand pearl headaddress; FL HELENA–AVGVSTA (Flavia Helena Augusta).
Rev. Woman standing facing left, left hand holding her garment and right hand holding a branch downward (see 52 n. 65); SECVRITAS–REI–PUBLICAE (Security of the Republic); in exergue SMAL[A].
Comparisons: RIC #146; RIC 7, p. 709 # 38 (the double row of pearls with this mint mark is a variant).

Constantine's mother Helena, called Augusta in 324, died in 328. Between 326 and 330 she appears on seven Alexandrian issues, always with this reverse legend, which is not used on the coins of other family members.

Coins of Constantine and his family discriminate between obverses appropriate to men and those appropriate to women, a distinction that disappears later, when this legend and one used for Constantine's wife, Fausta, Salus Reipublicae, reappear on coins of emperors and an empress. There is a similar change in the accompanying images. Reverses of both Helena and Fausta show female figures who do not appear on the coins of emperors and caesars.63

D5. W 62 (S 114) 326–33. Fig. 41.
Wt. 3.18 gm; diam. 20 mm. Condition fair to good.
Obv. Head facing right, laureate; CONSTAT–TVINVS AVG.
Rev. Camp gate with two towers; star above; PROVIDEN–TIAE AVGG (Foresight-edness of the Augusti); in the exergue SMAL[A].

This reverse legend, or PROVIDEN–TIAE CAESS, was used in Alexandria with portraits of all Constantinian males from 326–30. Accompanied by camp gate by two towers and star, it appears on coins of 13 mints from London to Antioch (LRBC I, pp. 31–32, 34).

Comparisons: LRBC I: #1402; RIC 7, pp.708–709.
D9. W 116 (S 26). 351–354. Fig. 45. 
Wt. 2.17 gm; Diam. 18 mm. Condition fair to poor.
Obv. Bust facing right, bare headed, draped; DN CONSTANTIVS NOB CAES (Our Lord Constantius, most noble Caesar).
Rev. Man in military dress with shield advances to right, spearing a fallen horseman who stretches one arm out behind him; FEL TEMP–REPARATIO (Happy Days are Here Again); in exergue, ALE Δ.
Comparisons. LRBC I, #2845.
This reverse legend was very popular from 346 to 361 with a variety of images (LRBC I, p. 41), including four versions of the “falling horseman” (LRBC I, pp. 41, II, p. 108; RIC 8, pp. 38–39). This is the third type, much the most popular, found at 15 mints (LRBC II, p.108). The advancing soldier has been identified as Virtus.

D10. W 133 (S 122). 354–367. Fig. 46.
Aes 3. Wt. 2.86 gm; Diam. 17 mm. Condition fair.
Obv. Bust facing right, diademed, draped (cuirassed?); DN VALEN–S PF AVG (Lord Valens, Pious and Happy Augustus).
Rev. Victory advancing to the left, holding wreath and palm; SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE (Security of the Republic), in exergue ALEΘ.
This legend, which in the Constantinian period only appears on coins of Helena together with Pax or Securitas, later appears on coins of three emperors together with images of Victory. It was a widespread form, appearing at 14 mints, but Pearce says that the Alexandrian mint tried to avoid it because it initially referred to “the unity of the Empire under western primacy” (RIC 9: p. 296).
Comparisons. LRBC I, #2863 (ALEΘ only); RIC 9 p. 298 # 3b

D11. W 200 (S 155). 364–375. Fig. 47.
Aes 3. Wt. 2.16 gm; Diam. 16 mm. Condition fair to poor.
Obv. Bust facing right, draped, (cuirassed?), double pearl diadem; Legend unreadable.
Rev. SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE (Security of the Republic); Victory advancing l, holding wreath and palm; in exergue ALEΘ.
This legend was used by Valentinian I, by Valens between 364 and 375, and by Gratian between 367 and 375.
Comparisons. LRBC II: 2858–2861, 2862–2864 (all from officina A); RIC 9: pp. 298–299.

D12. W 201 (S 163). 367–375. Fig. 48.
Aes 3. Wt. 1.68 gm; Diam. 14 mm. Condition fair to poor.
Obv. Bust facing right, probably diademed, no other details visible; legend unreadable.
Rev. Victory facing left, holding wreath (probably palm); SECVRITAS REIPVBLICAE (Security of the Republic); in exergue ALEΘ.
Comparisons. See D11.

D13. W 158 (S 91). 375–392. Fig. 49.
Aes IV. Wt. 0.88 gm; Diam. 14 mm. Condition fair.
Obv. Bust facing right, diademed, details unclear; DN V ALEN–TINIANVS PF A VG (Our Lord Valentinianus, Pious and Happy Augustus).
Rev. Victory moving left, trophy on shoulder, dragging captive by left hand; SALVS REI–PVBLiCAE (Health of the Republic); in exergue ALEΘ.
Comparisons: LRBC II: #2898.

D14. W 158 (S 166). 383–392. Fig. 50.
Aes IV. Wt. 0.88 gm; Diam. 13 mm. Condition fair.
Obv. Bust facing right, pearl diademed, draped; DN ARCAd –iVS PF A VG (Our Lord Arcadius, Pious and Happy Augustus).
Rev. VOT / x / MVLT / xx (V otis decennalibus multis vicennalibus ) 4 lines within wreath; in exergue ALEΘ.
This reverse with the cross above the mint mark can occur on Alexandrian coins of Valentinian ii, Theodosius i, or Arcadius.
Comparisons: LRBC II: #s 2901–2903; RIC 9, p. 303, # 20 (388–392).

D15. W 192 (S 201). 383–392. Fig. 51.
Aes 4. Wt. 1.09 gm; Diam. 13 mm. Condition fair.
Obv. Bust facing right, draped (no diadem visible); legend unreadable.
Rev. Victory moving left, trophy on shoulder, dragging captive by left hand; SALVS REI–PVBLiCAE (Health of the Republic); in exergue ALEΘ; in field, cross at right.
This reverse with the cross above the mint mark can occur on Alexandrian coins of Valentinian II, Theodosius I, or Arcadius.
Comparisons: LRBC II: #s 2901–2903; RIC 9, p. 303, # 20 (388–392).
12 nummi coin. Wt. 2.29 gm; Diam. 14 mm. Condition poor.
Obv : Bust facing right ?; legend illegible.
Rev: 1 (Greek notation for 10) and 8 (Greek notation for 2) flank a small cross above 2 lines, one slightly longer than the other; in exergue, ΑΛΕΞ.
Comparisons: Bellinger 1966, Tiberius II, 286, type 56 pl. LXV
On the denomination and iconography of this coin, see p. 30 above.
weaving would not in itself be a detriment. Rather than the degree to which the work itself "leaves the mind free." The greater attention required for tapestry tasking, so the suitability of a craft for monastics seems to correlate with the ease of stopping and starting again, silk, more detail can be created on a small scale, and so this production led to elaborate decorations including different and define "Hellenistic" and "Coptic" artistic activities in unproductive ways: Torp 1965. The common terms for the early glazed ware, "Coptic" and "Fayoumi" Rodziewicz 1997, Scanlon 1991, are notoriously misleading. In this publication, I have only distinguished pre-Fatimid and Fatimid, somewhat arbitrarily. In her 2003 symposium paper, Brocks Hedsmaden provided a useful discussion of the classification of early glazed ware with evidence from her work to that date at the Monastery of St. John the Little. She has withdrawn the paper because of her continuing work at the site, from which much may be expected. These are not necessarily opposing views, dealing as both do with the complexities of asceticism and various types of evidence (cf. e.g., Büchler 1980). Contrasting archaeology and texts, Wipicsyka refers to belief that the body is the main barrier to religious perfection. Goehring stresses the ideal of the desert, citing inconsistencies in the written record: see also Stewart 2009, 1–2. The word "Copt" was not used until the end of Late Antiquity, and never to divide one segment of Egyptians from another. It probably originates as the Arabic transliteration of the Greek Aegyptios, referring to Egyptians. Among the first uses are statements about textiles. In the centuries immediately following the Arab conquest Omyayad and Abbasid rulers ordered "qibi" or "qubaiti" textiles, i.e., Egyptian imports, for the Ke‰ in Madi‰a (Coptic) 1991, 257; see also Rutschowska 1990, 46. Probably some of the weavers spoke Coptic while others spoke Greek, and some were Christians while others may not have been. "Coptic" has come to have a range of partially contradictory meanings, and appears in this essay mainly to refer either to a language (see sections on texts, C) or to the Coptic Orthodox Church. See now Thomas 2007 on some uses of the word Coptic, and on the relation of Egyptian finds to the wider Byzantine world (cf. n.7 above). Torp's review of the books engaged by the "large exhibition of Coptic art held in Essen, Zurich, Vienna, and Paris in 1963 and 1964" indicates the serious disagreements at that time among scholars, many of them relating to efforts to differentiate and define "Hellenistic" and "Coptic" artistic activities in unproductive ways: Torp 1965. For brief summaries of the possible materials and techniques, see Rutschowska 1990, 24–32; 1991a, 1991b; Stauffer 1992, 45–48. A later and still more basic innovation was the introduction of silk weaving. In silk, more detail can be created on a small scale, and so this production led to elaborate decorations including extended narratives; on the development of silk industry, see Mutheusius 1997. Polychrome tapestry woven bands and other shapes already adorned the tunics of Tutankhamun and occur in other New Kingdom contexts, Stauffer 1992, 23–24, but they are rare and not arranged according to this later formula. On basketry, a ubiquitous craft in monasteries, see Wipicsyka 1996, 339, n. 3; 341. Three of the instances that Stewart describes (3–5) show St. Antony or later monks stopping their work to pray, then taking up the work again. In anachronistic terms, they are living in the moment rather than multitasking, so the suitability of a craft for monastics seems to correlate with the ease of stopping and starting again, rather than the degree to which the work itself "leaves the mind free." The greater attention required for tapestry weaving would not in itself be a detriment.
APPENDIX: TEXT

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33. Nine containers (five exhibited, three more in Minnesota and one in the Islamic Museum in Cairo) had been placed upside down in a row embedded in a level of about 10 cm of potsherds, (Ilocus 63, containing an Abbasid coin). Seven of them had been deliberately turned into long open tubes by having both toes and rims broken off: two retained toes. They were standing on a level (Ilocus 64) that contained a Byzantine coin. Neither of these coins suggests a date shortly after the sealed, burnished, base, which suggests that the coins are not much less well executed than “conversion” such a binary category [may be misleading]: Frankfurter 1994.

34. The nasal disks and the ornaments that might clarify their secondary use: McNally and Schrunk 1993, photographs p. 107, figs. 8-10 on 725.

35. Lent by the Kacmarcik Collection of Arc Arium, Saint John’s University, Collegeville, MN. We thank Columba Stewart OSB for graciously agreeing to lend two objects from this collection, and Mary Shaffer, then curator, for her capable and enthusiastic assistance at all phases of our work.

36. This medallion also has two figures, a maenad before a satyr, in the center. The pose and drapery of the maenad are typologically, not stylistically, similar to the Saint John’s maenad. The satyr differs.

37. Stauffer emphasizes the levels of meaning dancers may have: 1992, 68, 74-75.

38. Zanni mentions apocryphal and Gnostic references to dances of Christ with the apostles, and of the angels. She also lists the references to dancing in the Old Testament: 1997, 81-82. Non-canonical mentions may be added the youthful Virgin Mary’s dance when she enters the Temple: Protevangelium Jacobi 7.3. That reference accounts for a rare depiction of a specifically Christian dancer in what Thompson has called the “crouching” dancer pose on the Mary Silk in the Abegg Stiftung: McNally 2002; Thompson 1971, 52.

39. On several tunics dancers appear in one area of decoration, crosses in another: Renner-Volbach 1982, #38, inv. T 71, Color plate 5, dated early fourth century, which seems early for the cross (p.74); Thompson 1971, #36, Inv. 38.753 with a nude orans dancer above a jeweled pectoral cross, dated to the tenth century, p.

40. Longer curtains, not so elaborately decorated, appear in a number of contemporary images like the mosaic images of a palace in the church of San Apostile in Nuvanna in Ravenna, or in San Vitale, in the Empress Theodora approaching a curtained door identified by some as a part of a church, by others of a palace. On curtains and wall hangings see Schrenk 1998, 343. She mentions traces by which use can be determined, not found on this piece, but see pp. 23, 38 above. On the production and use of pieces with Christian themes, see Stauffer 1992, 34–35, 131. On possibility sanctuary use of such curtains, Friedman 1989, 214; Bollman 2006b; on reuse of textiles including hangings in burials, Schrenk 1998, 339–340 and fig. 1.

41. Werner 1990, 105, bases this interpretation on Coptic liturgy; cf. Stack’s interpretations of these and other elements, 1983: 86–100. Whatever their meaning, they are common in Coptic writings; see, for example, pp. 42 below.

42. E.g. medallions, Vatican Inv. T 73 and T 75, Renner-Volbach 1982, #58, 59, pl. 39; parallels for plain crosses in circles with small crosses cited p. 99; also small jeweled cross in circle with dots replacing crosses, Vatican Inv T 71 #38; pectoral cross, Thompson 1971, #36, Brooklyn Inv. 38.753, cited n. 19 above. Jewels are usually plain rectangles: On Brooklyn Inv. 41.798 they consist of two wedge-shaped color blocks like those on the Minneapolis cross, but much less well executed: Thompson 1971, #7, dated fifth to sixth century.

43. This cross stood from 420/21 to 620: Werner 1990 109 n. 18; cf. Frowlow 1948, 84–86 mentioning earlier and later crosses on Cogoltha, and the impact this particular cross had on culture. The 420–620 time span coincides with Stack’s dating of the textile: Stack 1983–86, 100. On coins, various numbers of steps appear, but two lines, whether representing steps or a single base on a hill, seem to be sufficient to make the allusion: Grierson 1968, 95–97.


45. Five papyri, the ostrakon, and the bide are now in Special Collections and Rare Books in the Emler L. Andersen Library. We thank the curator, Timothy Johnson, for allowing us to borrow these pieces, making them available for preliminary study and digital photography for the exhibition beside the originals. The sixth papyrus is in the James Ford Bell Library and was made available by that library’s then curator, Carol Urness, who allowed arrangements for photography.

46. In 1993 these texts were studied by a graduate seminar co-directed by Nita Krevans and a visiting expert, Jennifer Sheridan Moss. Moss oversaw conservation and placed the papyri in their present mounts. Some of the papyri were found too fragmentary for publication, others remain unstudied. Most of my information comes from the student papers and later work by Almira Poudrier and Nanette Goldman, which Goldman kindly allowed me to see in 2002. My comments are restricted to cross-cultural implications. 2009 update: Timothy Johnson has placed digital photographs of these and the other papyri in Special Collections and Rare Books on a website: http://special.lib.umn.edu/rare/papyri.html. Jennifer Carozza supplied the accompanying text.

47. Poudrier (see n. 46 above) cites Hagedorn (1976) who points out that when a Macedonian month name is used it is usually followed by the Egyptian name, which is not the case here.

48. This monogram can have various meanings, some of which are not Christian, such as γιος ἑρμήνευστος ('γιος ὑμῶν' in Oknomides 1974, 111, it is the combination of the names of a specific Christian saint, and not a mark of identity. In any case, the form of the document that led to the conclusion that the first letter here may refer to Christ, as in Ἰησοῦς Χριστός γένος, the cross, however, is an inconspicuous element, perhaps to mark where the lines should begin.

49. Generously lent by the Kacmarcik Collection of Arc Arium, Saint John’s University, Collegeville, MN. (see n. 35 above, also n. 63 below).

50. We thank Lyndel King, director of the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, for agreeing to let us borrow the coins (see following note), and Laura Muessig, Associate Registrar, for patiently and cheerfully facilitating study, photography and installation.

51. Its excavators at Khirbet Shema in Israel made this tentative attribution in records now in the Weisman Museum. The excavation publication refers to the coin only briefly: “There are two coins of Maximinianus from the years 285–305 CE. One is quite clear” (Meyers 1976, 155). Our coin is presumably the other. Thomas Kraal, associate director of that excavation, was a member of the Classics Department (now Classical and Near Eastern Studies) at Minnesota and was able to bring a small study collection back to the University. Krauel was also instrumental in Andrew John Sarzyan’s decision to leave a modest collection of antiquities to the Classics Department for teaching purposes. Proveniences are not known, but Sarzyan probably obtained much of his collection in Lebanon, and the government of Lebanon generously approved its consignment to the Weisman R. Weismann Museum of Art for teaching purposes. In 1982, students working under the direction of Joan Fagerlie produced a catalogue of the coin from which all such catalogues of student publication borde: Fagerlie 1982. Joan Fagerlie very kindly came to the Weisman Museum to look again at the coins at this text, saving me from a major error and confirming a detail I had been unable to see.

email: egypt@umn.edu
The “cross potent” is a cross with short lines perpendicular to the ends of its arms and upper shaft, lines probably linked in origin to the widening ends of the tapestry cross C1 and of many painted Egyptian crosses, but missing on these bronze reverses.

Most of the identifications here were made by Ivančica Dvoržak Schrunk. The painted fine wares have been studied by Anne Salisbury (1994). For terminology of wares, see pp. 4-5 above.

All the fine wares in this catalogue are similar in fabric: “Paste: Fine grained, hard (4–6 on the Mohs scale), dense. Color light red to pink, 10R 6/6 to 5YR 6/6. Inclusions: density 20–40%, fine to medium size. Red Slip, thick, even, smooth, polished, dark red (10R 5/6). White slip, thin (flakes), smooth, dull, cream color (7.5 YR 8/4).” Schrunk 1993, 78 [condensed].

Many of the ceramics in this catalogue are pieced together, each sherd having a separate number. Only one number, the lowest, is given here.

NBS–National Bureau of Standards.

This textile is mounted under glass and could not be closely examined. Arca Artium supplied the color identification; the dyestuff has not been identified. Analysis of excavated textiles has revealed that blue could come from woad, grown in Egypt, but more often from indigo brought either from India or from Nubia and farther south.

This textile was purchased for the Collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1983 from Arnold Herstand by the Centennial Fund: Ames Mott Butler Charitable Trust, Mr. and Mrs. John F. Donovan, Estate of Margaret B. Hawks, Eleanor Weld Reid. Being fragile, in the Exhibition it was represented by a same-size photograph provided by the Institute through the courtesy of the Curator of Textiles, Lotus Stack.

State of the textile, especially nature of the damage, oral information from Lotus Stack, September 2003. The dyes used have not been established. For sources discussing possibilities, see n.16 above.

All of these were at one time owned by the Dutch dealer von Scherling, and most were bought from him: C6, C7, C8 in 1933; C2 in 1937; C1, C3, C4, C5 around 1952, the year when they were listed in von Scherling’s bulletin (1952). The last purchase, in 1983, was C9, the paperys sheet Bell 400, owned by von Scherling when von Noordegraaf published it, but according to the Library’s records “probably” purchased from Frances Edwards, London.

From at least the New Kingdom on, Egyptians wrote on animal hide, i.e., parchment, leather and variants that can only be distinguished by expert testing: Leach 1995.

Purchased by Frank Kacmanirk from a New York dealer, conserved and rebound, brought to the attention of scholars and finally given to Arca Artium. What can be known or surmised about its origins and subsequent history comes from the volume itself, especially from two notes added around 1800 CE on pages at the beginning and end. Macomber cites these briefly, dating the manuscript to 1344/45 and sketching its later history. Samir presents a fuller discussion: 1978a, 76–90. Rejecting Macomber’s beginning and end. Macomber cites these briefly, dating the manuscript to 1344/45 and sketching its later history. Samir presents a fuller discussion: 1978a, 76–90. Rejecting Macomber’s beginning and end. Macomber cites these briefly, dating the manuscript to 1344/45 and sketching its later history.

State of the textile, especially nature of the damage, oral information from Lotus Stack, September 2003. The dyes used have not been established. For sources discussing possibilities, see n.16 above.

Lent by the Kacmanirk Collection of Arca Artium (see n. 35 above). Gift of Frank Kacmanirk, provenance unknown.

This textile is mounted under glass and could not be closely examined. Arca Artium supplied the color identification; the dyestuff has not been identified. Analysis of excavated textiles has revealed that blue could come from woad, grown in Egypt, but more often from indigo brought either from India or from Nubia and farther south.

2005 126–127. Samir presents a fuller discussion: 1978a, 76–90. Rejecting Macomber’s beginning and end. Macomber cites these briefly, dating the manuscript to 1344/45 and sketching its later history.


Kadi, Wadad. 2010. Lecture at the University of Minnesota, Nov. 2, 2010


ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

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