

CONTENTS

List of Illustrations ix

Introduction	1
 PART I. ARAB PROTECTOR ELITES, 1000–1200	
1 Protection, Tax Collection, and Rural Elites, 960–1070	25
2 The Rural Arabs of the Twelfth Century: <i>ʿUrbān</i> and <i>Beduini</i>	47
 PART II. ARAB VILLAGE CLANS, 1200–1450	
3 Village Clans in the Fayyum, 1245	73
4 The Village Clans of the Palestinian Highlands	92
5 Administrative Categories and Self-Identity	112
 PART III. MARKERS OF ARAB IDENTITY	
6 Arab Speech, Arab Dress, and Handmade Wares	139
7 Popular Epics and Arab Identity	166

viii CONTENTS

PART IV. VILLAGE CLANS AND RURAL REVOLTS

8	The Syrian Blood Feuds of Qays and Yaman	193
9	The Great Arab Rebellions, 1250–1350	214
10	Arab Ruling Families in the Egyptian Provinces, 1350–1517	233
	Conclusion	253

Acknowledgments 259

Notes 263

Bibliography 313

Index 343

Introduction

OVER THE COURSE of the later Middle Ages, from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, the villagers of Egypt, Palestine, and Greater Syria turned Arab. This does not mean they began to speak Arabic, a linguistic change that had mostly taken place already by the end of the ninth century, three centuries after the Arab Conquest. Rather, men and women of Middle Eastern villages came to see themselves as members of village clans and as descendants of tribal migrations from the Arabian Peninsula. They adopted manners of speech and dress they considered distinctly Arab, told each other epic stories about the great Arab heroes of pre-Islamic and early Islamic Arabia, and began eating with a new type of pottery utensils. They revolted against the government and the tax collectors under the banner of Arab solidarity, and they fought neighboring villagers in the name of multi-clan tribal confederacies such as Qays and Yaman. This was a transformation not limited to rural elites or to marginal areas on the edge of the desert. In Upper and Lower Egypt, in Palestine, Transjordan, and the Beqaa, Muslim villagers invariably came to view themselves as members of clans and confederacies that harked back to the Arabian Peninsula and to the dawn of the Islam. This formation of Arab village clans throughout Egypt and Greater Syria was the most important development in the history of the Middle Eastern countryside in the Islamic period, and the process left its mark on what we recognize as Arab and Bedouin cultures and identities today.

The shift toward Arab village clans began by the late tenth or early eleventh century and took about two centuries to complete. Our first evidence of this change comes from villages of southern Fayyum in Middle Egypt, where documents dated 1015 to 1070 show the swift rise of new village elites who carried Arab clan names and acted as official protectors of Christian Coptic villages and monasteries. This local phenomenon in the Fayyum coincided with the sudden emergence of Arab dynasties in cities of the Jazīra, Palestine, and Greater Syria,

most of them lasting until the 1060s. This early phase of Arab village elites and Arab dynasties ended with the major economic and agricultural crisis of the late eleventh century, which led to mass desertion of village sites in the 1060s and 1070s.

During the twelfth century, Arab identities took root further down village societies, with Arab village clans coalescing around the nuclei of the Arab elites who emerged in the eleventh century. The most visible expression of this filtering down of Arab identities is the appearance of the term *‘urbān*, a novel and nonclassical derivative of the name *‘arab*. The *‘urbān* was the collective name for the armed elements of the now widespread Arab village clans, and they became the dominant force in the Egyptian countryside during the late Fatimid period. In twelfth-century Palestine, held at that time by the crusader Latin Kingdom, we do not find *‘urbān* but rather a new class of poor and mobile Muslim peasantry called *beduini*. From 1150 onward, Latin charters refer to the recruitment of *beduini* for work on rural estates, and they even provide a detailed account of a named clan of these *beduini* inhabiting a village near Nablus.

By the end of the twelfth century, following the demise of both the Fatimid empire and the Latin Kingdom, Arab clans had been formed in most villages of Egypt, Palestine, and Greater Syria. This is borne out by fiscal, administrative, and legal sources from the Ayyubid (1187–1250) and Mamluk (1250–1517) eras. In al-Nābulusī’s cadastral survey of the Fayyum, composed in the 1240s, nearly all villages and hamlets were identified with either an Arab or a Berber clan, usually one clan per village. A set of documents from the Islamic court of Jerusalem dated to the first decade of the fourteenth century similarly shows Arab clans inhabiting all the Muslim-majority Palestinian villages represented in the sample. In both Ayyubid Fayyum and Mamluk Palestine, the village clans were led by a new class of headmen, who acted as co-guarantors for the payment of the collective land-tax and were responsible for law and order in their own villages and in the surrounding area. Beyond these two well-documented examples, further evidence of the spread of Arab village clans comes from a series of genealogical treatises composed by Mamluk-era bureaucrats, who mapped clans and tribal confederacies throughout the agricultural regions of Egypt and Greater Syria, with the authors explicitly identifying Arab clansmen as sedentary villagers. In fact, from the thirteenth century onward, whenever administrative and legal sources allow us to zoom in on a Muslim-majority village with any level of detail, we find it inhabited by an Arab clan.

Arab village clans were not merely administrative rubrics imposed from above. Rather, these identities were enthusiastically endorsed by members of village

communities. Biographical dictionaries from the twelfth century onward contain dozens of notices for rural scholars who boasted of Arab lineages. Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Qalqashandī, the well-known Mamluk bureaucrat who was born in 1355 in the village of Qalqashanda (present-day Qarqashanda) in al-Qalyūbiyya, proudly recounts that his native village was solely inhabited by the Banū Badr clan of the Fazāra confederacy. The autobiography composed by the jurist and theologian Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqāʿī, born 1406, states that the inhabitants of his native village of Khirbat Rūḥā in the Beqaa belonged to the Banū Ḥasan clan and claimed descent from the Prophet's Companion Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ.

The localized village clans formed wider territorial confederacies, and these became a vehicle for political and military mobilization. Throughout the Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk eras, confederacies of village clans were part of provincial administration and were expected to contribute a set number of cavalry for royal campaigns. These tribal confederacies then came to be the backbone of a series of major Arab uprisings in Upper Egypt, beginning with the rebellion of the Sharīf Ḥiṣn al-Dīn Ibn Tha'lab in the 1250s and culminating with al-Aḥḍab's rebellion of the 1350s. Multivillage confederacies could also be used for the violent resolution of disputes among the peasantry. In fourteenth-century Syria and Transjordan, rural people, partly nomadic but mostly sedentary, organized themselves into Qays and Yaman coalitions that regularly fought each other over land and resources. By the end of the fourteenth century, the Qays and Yaman came to ally themselves with opposing factions of the Mamluk ruling elite.

Late medieval Arab identity was expressed by a novel set of cultural markers: Arab speech, Arab dress, and Arab historical memory. From the twelfth century onward, Arab speech was identified by the /g/ vocalization of the letter *qāf*, a feature still retained in many dialects known today as "Bedouin." This distinctive vocalization is not attested as a distinctive marker of Arab identity in the Umayyad or Abbasid periods, and the cultural significance attached to it from the twelfth century onward coincided with the spread of the Arab village clans. Another novel cultural marker was Arab headgear; from the twelfth century onward, one dressed like an Arab by tucking the loose ends of the turban under the beard or chin or drawing them over the face and mouth as *lithām* face-veil. This manner of tying the turban under one's chin was uniformly used to identify Arab types in book illustrations of this period. Finally, Arab history and Arab values found their expression in the new genre of popular epics (*siyar*), most famously those of 'Antar, Banū Hilāl and Dhāt al-Himma. The earliest of the genre, *Sīrat 'Antar*, is first attested in twelfth-century Iraq, but it became extremely popular in Ayyubid and Mamluk Egypt and Syria, carried by popular storytellers who frequented

both town and village. It is in this period that the heroic deeds of these Arab pre-Islamic or early Islamic heroes became a staple of village culture, so much so that the Mamluk bureaucrat al-Qalqashandī drew on his intimate knowledge of the ‘Antar epic to augment the status of his own village clan. Like the cultural significance attached to the Arab pronunciation of *qāf* and to the Arab headgear, popular epics dealing with Arab history appeared around the twelfth century as means of expressing and consolidating the new Arab identities of peasant communities.

The depth of the transformation of Middle Eastern villages is tangibly demonstrated by the material remains found in archaeological excavations and surveys. Starting from the 1100s, handmade geometrically painted wares appeared in great numbers in villages of Greater Syria and Palestine. This process accelerated in the thirteenth century, so that distinctly decorated handmade wares dominate nearly all village assemblages of Greater Syria and Palestine in the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods, and they became the main tableware of villagers for the rest of the Middle Ages. These handmade wares, known as HMGP, unexpectedly supplanted a long tradition of fine-bodied, wheel-thrown wares found in the same villages throughout the early Islamic and pre-Islamic periods. This shift in pottery went under the radar of the narrative sources and is known to us only from the archaeological record of excavations in Greater Syria. Archaeology of Mamluk-era village sites in Egypt is practically nonexistent, but extensive finds of brittle and coarse wares from Mamluk Cairo suggest the possibility of similar ceramic shifts in the Egyptian countryside. Given the absence of any textual reference, we do not know that Syrian HMGP wares were viewed as “Arab.” Nonetheless, the dramatic shift in rural pottery in Greater Syria is concrete evidence of the break between the earlier Islamic centuries and the late medieval period. The material culture of village societies was fundamentally transformed in the space of a couple of centuries, precisely coinciding with formation of Arab village clans.

The shift to Arab village clans in late medieval Egypt and Syria was driven by two main factors. First, following mass rural conversions to Islam in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Muslim villagers adopted Arab identity and the prestige associated with it to enhance their social status. A wide range of documentary, narrative, and material evidence shows that the agricultural countryside of Egypt and Syria remained mostly Christian—and non-Arab—at least until 1000 CE. Coptic names dominate in the abundant papyri that have come to us from Abbasid and early Fatimid Middle Egypt, and churches and monasteries were still very common in the countryside of tenth-century Palestine. Muslims became a majority in the Egyptian countryside only by the end of the twelfth century, as

shown by quantitative analysis of demographic datasets from the time of the Arab Conquest up to the middle of the nineteenth century.¹ Greater Syria witnessed similar processes of Islamization following the defeat of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1187. Claiming Arab lineage was a byproduct of this momentous rural conversion to Islam. As Tamer el-Leithy has shown for late medieval Egypt, new Coptic converts were subject to suspicion by existing Muslim elites and were therefore forced to erase the traces of their conversion.² For peasants of Egypt and Syria, a claim to Arab lineage concealed the recent Christian past of their communities and replaced it with the merits accorded to the Arabs by the Islamic tradition: the nation of the Prophet and the native speakers of the language of revelation.

Peasants also used claims to Arab lineage as means of distinguishing themselves from the urban-based Turkic military elites who dominated Egypt and Syria since the middle of the thirteenth century. By 1260, following their victory over the Mongol army in ‘Ayn Jalut in Palestine, the *mamlūk* military corps unified Egypt and Syria under the reign of Sultan Baybars, the founder the Mamluk sultanate. The ruling elite of the Mamluk sultanate was mostly composed of former military slaves recruited in Central Asia and the Caucasus, and contemporary Arab authors called the regime the “Dynasty of the Turks.” Fifteenth-century observers, both European and local, reported that the Arabs of the countryside saw themselves as superior in lineage and in Islam to the Turkish-speaking elites of former military slaves who ruled over them. They also reported that this sense of Arab superiority mobilized and justified the earlier major rural rebellions that rocked Upper Egypt between 1250 and 1350. Peasant use of Arab lineage as a claim for status was therefore not restricted to the new converts, but it possessed currency long after the rural landscape has been comprehensively Islamized.

The second major reason for the spread of village clans was the twelfth-century introduction of the *iqṭāʿ* landholding regime, which transformed the peasantry from landowners into tenants. In earlier Islamic centuries, private ownership of land was common, as is attested by many preserved Egyptian land-sale documents up to the middle of the eleventh century.³ By the beginning of the twelfth century, however, more and more land fell under the *iqṭāʿ* regime, whereby the state asserted ownership over arable land and then awarded military officers rights to collect taxes from the villages assigned to them, rights known as *iqṭāʿ* grants. The use of *iqṭāʿ* grants in Egypt and Syria began under the later Fatimids but was then extended and systematized by Saladin, and it became the hallmark feature of the political economy of the Ayyubid and Mamluk sultanates, at least until the end of the fourteenth century. With the consolidation of the *iqṭāʿ* system, the peasantry

of Egypt and Syria were transformed into tenants, known as *fallāḥūn*, who cultivated state-owned lands under collective leases. The collective annual leases were contracted by groups of headmen, who acted as co-guarantors for the cultivation of the land and the payment of taxation.⁴ In response to this dramatic change of the landholding regime, peasants formed pervasive clan structures, coalescing around the village headmen and ensuring that access to tenancy rights was open only to members of the community. Deprived of any long-term right over the arable lands they were cultivating, and always at risk of being uprooted at the end of their leases, peasants came to be defined not by the land they cultivated but by the lineage to which they belonged.

Thus, like the term *fallāḥ* itself, Arab village clans were born out of the *iqṭāʿ* regime. The *fallāḥūn* and the Arab village clans were two facets of the same social and legal framework of landless tenancy. The term *fallāḥ* indicated the fiscal status of all tenant cultivators who were due to pay land-tax. It appears in administrative and fiscal contexts and refers to the collective of cultivators in a given village under the leadership of headmen, whether Muslim or Christian, Arab or non-Arab. The term indicated submission and the burden of taxation. But once a Muslim *fallāḥ* rode a horse, carried arms and dressed like an Arab, he became part of the *ʿurbān*; conversely, captive Arab rebels were identified as *fallāḥūn* of individual holders of *iqṭāʿ*. The *ʿurbān* are regularly presented as the champions and defenders of the *fallāḥūn*, and the two groups are often mentioned together. Not every *fallāḥ* was a member of the armed *ʿurbān*, but any Muslim *fallāḥ* could become one. And practically all grain-producing Muslim *fallāḥ* cultivators appear to have turned Arab, through the clans formed around their village headmen and through their claims to Arab lineage. Being a *fallāḥ* was at this time devoid of cultural significance; the near absence of representations of *fallāḥūn* in late medieval Arabic literature is remarkable, and the term is also missing from medieval European accounts. In late medieval literary representations, the *fallāḥ* was overshadowed by his Arab identity, empowered by clan-based social organization and by the cultural currency of Arab-ness.

The pervasive formation of Arab village clans was a result of the major religious, economic, and political changes that took place around the twelfth century: mass rural conversion, domination by Turkic military elites, and the consolidation of the *iqṭāʿ* landholding regime. It is unlikely, on other hand, that the omnipresence of Arab village clans in Egypt and Syria was down to the settling down of nomadic tribal groups. A full-scale population replacement, by which nomadic groups pushed out the existing non-Arab and mostly Christian peasantry, is neither plausible nor backed by sufficient textual and material evidence. Admittedly, there

are narrative reports of mass movements of tribal groups during the tenth and eleventh centuries, and there is archaeological evidence for settlement expansion in Egypt and Syria during the thirteenth century. But most village sites throughout Egypt and Greater Syria remained in the same locations as they had been in previous centuries, and village names have also remained largely unchanged. Only a minority of villages took on names of the Arab clans who inhabited them, and that usually occurred only by the fourteenth century. Moreover, the preliminary results of pioneering ancient DNA analysis have yet to pick up any significant changes in the ethnic composition of Egypt and Syria in the medieval period.⁵ Rather, the assumption that Arab village clans emerged from the migration and settling down of nomads is based on a dogmatic association of tribes and clans with nomadic societies, as well as on the stories villagers were telling about themselves. As peasant communities reordered themselves as Arab clans, a memory of migration became a constituent component of their identity; claims to Arab lineage required an origin story of settlement on the site of the current village.⁶

A Feudal Economy

The society of the late medieval Middle East was agrarian, and its economy was primarily based on the extraction of surplus from subsistence cultivators. In that, it was one variant of a world system of feudal economies that characterized medieval societies from Britain to China, as recently described by Chris Wickham.⁷ Moreover, the consolidation of the *iqṭāʿ* landholding regime in the twelfth century meant a shift away from the centralized state taxation that characterized the Abbasid empire in the earlier Islamic centuries. The central conflict that permeated rural society in late medieval Egypt and Syria revolved around the extraction of agricultural surplus by lords—i.e., officers of the military ruling elite—who were awarded the rights to collect taxes and rents from the villages assigned to them. As in all feudal economies, lords needed to justify their rights to take that surplus through moral and legal claims that presupposed some form of shared values with the peasantry, and this always required some collaboration from local village elites. A feudal economy, in the sense ascribed to it by Wickham, serves here the fundamental analytical framework for explaining the rise of Arab village clans in late medieval Egypt and Syria.

This broad model needs to be adjusted to the specific historical and geographical conditions of the Middle East. Under the *iqṭāʿ* regime, *military* officers were assigned rights of tax collection from villages, but they did not reside locally and

were not usually involved in the provision of justice and public order in the countryside. As a result, villagers were required to develop their own modes of internal political organization and customary legal systems to regulate most aspects of communal life. Moreover, the loose control of lords over the villages assigned to them, compounded with the relative scarcity of water in Middle Eastern contexts, meant that rural groups constantly competed for limited resources. While this was true elsewhere, and nowhere were peasants ever free of internal conflict,⁸ the relative absence of direct intervention by either state or lords led to structural and endemic violence among Egyptian and Syrian cultivators, as reported by nearly all late medieval observers.

Village clans emerged in this context of vertical struggle against extraction by lords, as well as horizontal competition against other rural groups, both sedentary and nomadic. Clans provided internal political organization in the absence of state presence, protection against other rural groups, and a platform for resistance against taxation. Village clans are known from extensive ethnographic fieldwork from Morocco to the Arabian Peninsula.⁹ A particularly rich example comes from ethnographic studies of the peasantry of modern Yemen, where most of the settled villagers self-identify as members of village clans and regional tribal confederacies. In Yemen, the village clan involves protection of shared territory, mobilization of labor for communal projects, and adherence to shared mechanisms of conflict resolution and to a set of cultural values. Village clans are bound together by cooperative activities, proximity, and selective kinship, which assimilates daily life relations into affective bonds. There is ample evidence that Yemen has been dominated by such tribal structures for over a millennium. The idiom of common descent fulfills essential social functions among the settled peasantry and is not a remnant of some distant migration.¹⁰

Ayyubid and Mamluk clans and tribal confederacies were also administrative categories, borne out of the interaction of state and rural societies and in response to the need of lords for local collaboration. In Morton Fried's conceptualization, tribal confederacies—"secondary tribes"—emerge as tools of provincial administration and control but often transmute into a nexus of resistance.¹¹ This is especially true of regional, multi-clan confederacies, which are often a product of contact with state power.¹² In a well-documented study of Ottoman Transjordan in the late nineteenth century, Nora Barakat demonstrated that the officially appointed headmen actively employed and maintained the tribe as a power field through which to contest taxation and resource distribution; it was through their position that the tribe became a foundational category of rural administration.¹³ In the Ayyubid and Mamluk contexts, the key figures in this process were the

village headmen appointed by local *iqṭāʿ* holders and the leaders of the territorial confederacies who were routinely selected by the state bureaucracy. Clans and tribes were thus embedded in the administration of the countryside. As in other historical contexts, late medieval Egypt and Syria territorial confederacies were bound with the Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk states, whether as provincial troops, tax-collecting elites, or the platforms for armed uprisings.

Becoming Arab combines Fried's model of bureaucratic tribes with Frederik Barth's social constructionist approach, where awareness of common ancestry is a consequence of shared interests, not their cause. In this model, genealogy belongs to a derivative category of "cultural stuff"—together with language, food, and dress—developed in order to maintain the boundaries of the group against outsiders.¹⁴ As ethnography demonstrated, village clan genealogies were not a record of actual historical events: "A society that appears to be constrained by the past . . . is in fact generating the very genealogy through which it explains the present."¹⁵ This approach has been widely applied to modern Middle Eastern kinship groups, where genealogy is malleable and routinely manipulated.¹⁶ In Islamic societies, Arab ancestry has a special value, and a claim for Arab ancestry is a common mechanism of integration by many ethnic groups in the contemporary Islamic world, from Africa to Southeast Asia.¹⁷

Historians of medieval Islam have extended this insight into a critical reading of genealogical literature. In his *Roots of Arabic Genealogy*, Zoltán Szombathy argued that the genealogical tradition was a product of the early Islamic period and served as a skeleton onto which all later manufactured family pedigrees could easily be attached.¹⁸ In *Imagining the Arabs*, Peter Webb contended that books of genealogy, such as the foundational genealogical text by Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 204/819), were vehicles to produce an Arab collective identity among the urban elites of the Abbasid empire. According to Webb, these genealogical texts imagined a pre-Islamic Arab ethnic nation that had never existed.¹⁹ Webb's analysis is focused on literary texts and offers a top-down model of ethnogenesis. *Becoming Arab*, on the other hand, examines the elaboration of an Arab identity at the village level—from the bottom up—when groups of peasants were not creating a new ethnic group but rather negotiating their way into an existing one.

The clearest example of the power of Arabic genealogical science to generate new identities is that of the Berbers of Islamic North Africa. As pointed out by Ramzi Rouighi in his *Inventing the Berbers*, "No one was a Berber in northwest Africa before the seventh century."²⁰ It was only after the Arab-Muslim conquest that Arabic authors imposed the category Berber to collectively describe the culturally and linguistically diverse populations that the conquerors found in North

Africa. This was, without doubt, an external imposition of a collective identity on a population that did not have one before the conquest. However, it was then quickly adopted by these subordinate groups as a mark of pride and distinction, and attached to claims of lineage. Genealogical chains that traced the origins of the Berbers to the Ḥimyarī Arabs of Yemen emerged within two centuries of the conquest.²¹ Thus, the genealogical literature was not a record of any real migration from Yemen to North Africa, but rather a tool to cement the creation of a new Berber identity within a shared world of Islamic values.

In the late medieval Middle East, village clans chose lineage claims that most suited local conditions and social hierarchies—claims that made sense to them and which were constructed out of the building blocks of historical memory. As expected, many villagers opted to claim descent from the Prophetic line, and the more successful acquired the status of *ashrāf*. Others had to settle for less venerable lineages, from those of Companions of the Prophet or simply those of well-known pre-Islamic Arab tribes. The hierarchical relations between rural groups were projected back onto a pre-Islamic or early Islamic past and were usually expressed through chains of patronage that went back to the formative days of Islam. In western and Upper Egypt, on the other hand, some rural groups chose to claim Berber lineage. There is no evidence that any of these groups spoke a Berber language, but they may have opted for a Berber identity because of the prestige North African Berber groups acquired under Fatimid rule in the tenth and eleventh centuries. In Syria, non-Arabic speakers attached themselves to non-Arab Kurdish and Turcoman genealogies, even if some Turkish-speaking groups could also claim Arab descent. Boris James's study of Kurdish groups during the Mamluk period parallels many of the findings of *Becoming Arab*: Kurdish clansmen were sedentary cultivators yet were also seen as rebellious and prone to infighting; Kurdish tribal organization was reinforced by state bureaucracy; and the Kurdish genealogical tree evolved to reflect a set of group identities and social hierarchies.²²

Becoming Arab proceeds from the framework of a feudal economy based on the extraction of surplus from subsistence cultivators, combined here with social constructionist and bureaucratic models of clan and tribe formation. The insights of Barth and Fried allow us to imagine the appointment of headmen as embedding the village clans in state administration, thus creating a nucleus for internal political organization and a platform for resistance. The solidarity of the village clan was reinforced by an appeal to common ancestry and by the adoption of shared cultural markers of dialect, dress, material culture, and popular epics. Muslim, Arabic-speaking villagers developed lineage claims and cultural markers

that drew on broader Islamic tradition and distant pre-Islamic and early Islamic history, using the language of Islam to cement internal cohesion, compete against rival rural groups over limited resources, enhance their social status, and resist taxation.

The Desert and the Sown

In focusing on the extraction of agricultural surplus, *Becoming Arab* departs from previous scholarship on the history of Arab rural groups in late medieval Egypt and Greater Syria, where the main analytical framework is that of conflict between sedentary villagers and nomadic groups. Moreover, current scholarship's use of the term Bedouin, which in the modern period primarily designates tent-dwelling communities, imputes the Arab clansmen with a nomadic identity that is not present in the medieval sources. It relies on a dichotomy of *badw* and *ḥaḍar* adapted from Ibn Khaldūn (d. 1405), as refracted through articulations of Bedouin identity in the colonial and modern periods. When historians did acknowledge the spread of Arab clans throughout the late medieval countryside, this phenomenon is usually explained through the prism of opposition between farmers and nomads.

The prevailing assumption in modern scholarship is that Arab clans were pastoralists who migrated from the Arabian Peninsula and were distinct from the local peasants of Egypt and Greater Syria. In an influential article, Jean-Claude Garcin explained the evident mass peasant participation in Arab uprisings as a temporary alliance of two distinct groups, the politically active Bedouin and the docile and passive farmers.²³ Stuart Borsch explained the increased visibility of Arab groups in the fifteenth century through nomadic usurpation of good agricultural land.²⁴ Sarah Büssow-Schmitz's monograph on the "Bedouin" of the Mamluks in fourteenth-century Egypt offers a comprehensive survey of the narrative sources and devotes much space to the variety of economic activities of Arab groups.²⁵ The evident prevalence of Arab farmers is still explained away through a recent settlement of nomads who adapted a "semi-sedentary" lifestyle.²⁶ Usāma Jumayl's study of the economic activities of Arab tribes in Mamluk Egypt demonstrates that the Arabs of late medieval Egypt lived in settled communities integral to a wider economy and society, specifically highlighting their engagement in agriculture. This conclusion notwithstanding, Jumayl still asserts that the Arab tribes were a distinct ethnic group and argues that the Arabs had become acculturated to sedentary life and gradually lost their disdain for agricultural labor.²⁷ An alternative view of acculturation, offered by Frank Stewart in his

broad survey of premodern Arab tribes, is that village communities adapted the social organization and cultural values of the surrounding, politically dominant nomads. In Stewart's interpretation Arab identity is no longer biologically determined, but it still arose from an interaction between the desert and the sown.²⁸

This emphasis on the conflict between nomads and villagers is compounded by the obfuscation of terminology. When historians writing in European languages discuss the Arab clans and tribes of late medieval Egypt and Syria, they invariably choose to speak of the subjects of their inquiry as "Bedouin," even though the term *badw* is only irregularly used in late medieval Arabic narrative and documentary sources.²⁹ In these medieval sources, the *badw* rarely appear on their own; rather, they are often coupled with *ḥaḍar* (or *ḥaḍira*), or sometimes with the *fallāḥūn* tenants, to form an idiomatic compound designating the entire population of a certain region. Individual *badw* men and women are common in love poetry or romantic tales, less so in chronicles. When a person was named al-Badawī, as in the case of the famous thirteenth-century Sufi saint of the delta town of Tanta, it was a way of highlighting his outsider status and cultural identity, not to indicate he was a nomad. And in Arabic documentary sources the term *badw* is almost entirely absent.

When using the term Bedouin to describe the rural Arabs of the medieval Middle East, modern historians evoke Ibn Khaldūn's dichotomy of *badw* and *ḥaḍar* to project a conflict between the desert and the sown as their main framework of analysis. Ibn Khaldūn's cyclical philosophy of history assumes an eternal struggle between the *badw*, who possess a strong group solidarity produced by life in the harsh conditions of the desert, and the *ḥaḍar*, the urban elites accustomed to a life of luxury. Yet Ibn Khaldūn himself used the term *badw* in ways that go beyond the modern sense of Bedouin as tent-dwelling nomads. At the beginning of the *Muqaddima*, he defines the *badw* as all rural people who live either by tilling the land or by animal husbandry. This is reflected in recent translations of Ibn Khaldūn, where *bādiya* is rendered as "rural" while *ḥaḍāra* is rendered as areas under state control.³⁰ For Ibn Khaldūn, the peasants were part of the *badw*, not of the *ḥaḍar*. This was also true of the Ayyubid tax collector al-Nābulusī, for whom the *badw-ḥaḍar* dichotomy captured not the competition between the desert and the sown, but the distinction between grain-producing rural communities and the orchardists, merchants, and officials of market villages and towns.³¹

Moreover, Ibn Khaldūn eschewed a biological, ethnic definition of Arab identity and was perceptively aware of the malleability of genealogy, which he viewed as reflecting claims to status and as a means of cementing group solidarity.³² He

emphasized dynamic elements of identity, where subjugated or weak groups imitate the elites in dress, language, and social custom to acquire higher social status.³³ His attitude to the Banū Hilāl epic shows his appreciation for the social power of myths: the historian Ibn Khaldūn denies the events described in the epic, but as a social observer he comments on the importance of the epic for creating a collective identity and group solidarity among the Banū Hilāl. Moreover, Ibn Khaldūn argues that the Arabs of his own time have turned non-Arab (*al-ʿarab al-mustaʿjama*) as they lost the purity of the Arabic language.³⁴ Nor were they the descendants of the Arabs who took part in the original conquests, as the descendants of these tribes all but disappeared.³⁵ Many of them lived the life of sedentary farmers, such as the Berber tribes in the western delta,³⁶ the Banū Hilāl and Banū Kilāb in Upper Egypt,³⁷ and the mercantile Banū Jaʿfar between Qūṣ and Aswan.³⁸ Ibn Khaldūn perceived a lack of continuity between pre-Islamic Arabs and the Arabs of his own time—in genealogy, language, and lifestyle. This Khaldunian rupture between the Arabs of his own time and the Arabs of old undermines any ethnic definition of Arab identity or its simple association with pastoralism.

The distinction between mobile Bedouin and sedentary *fallāḥūn* is not a medieval distinction—it is not found in Ibn Khaldūn or in the medieval documentary and narrative sources. Rather, it is a product of Ottoman and colonial administrative practices. As shown by Nora Barakat, Ottoman administration created a bifurcation between the inhabitants of villages (*ahālī*), as in the province of Nablus in Palestine, and the “tent-dwelling” clans of the Balqa in Transjordan, who were also called *ʿarab* and invariably belonged to a clan (*ʿāshira*). As we know from Ottoman court records, the tent dwellers of the Balqa cultivated land as well as livestock, moving seasonally to the lower lands of the Jordan Valley. In court, the Balqa clansmen were not identified by their village of residence, only by their tribal unit. This dichotomy between sedentary village *ahālī* and the tent-dwelling Arab clansmen was a late Ottoman administrative practice connected with attempts to force “unruly” tent dwellers to settle down.³⁹ It built on a longer Ottoman tradition, probably, of distinguishing settled village communities from ethnically defined communities of Arabs, Kurds, and Turcomans, as already evidenced in the sixteenth-century cadastral surveys of Greater Syria.⁴⁰

The Ottoman distinctions between sedentary villagers and mobile “Arabs” must have reflected some realities on the ground. Nonetheless, these Ottoman distinctions are not known to us from medieval, pre-Ottoman administrations. There is no evidence that Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk bureaucrats formally divided the rural population into the categories of peasants and nomads, even if some commented that only a minority of Arabs had a nomadic lifestyle. We

also have no evidence that such distinctions between nomads and peasants were as significant to Arab rural groups as they are today. The same was true of medieval Kurdistan. As Boris James recently argued, the modern caste-like distinction between a tribal armed Kurdish elite (*‘ashiret*) and a subject nontribal Kurdish peasantry (*guran*), as known from modern ethnography, is not found in medieval narrative sources. James concluded that medieval peasants were not excluded from membership in Kurdish tribes.⁴¹

While the Ottomans distinguished Arab clansmen from the rest of the rural population, the full elaboration of a “Bedouin” identity is the product of colonial and nationalist practices, as European explorers and ethnographers insisted on describing the Bedouin as a race of foreign conquerors, separate and isolated from the settled peasantry.⁴² In the racial classifications that dominated nineteenth-century social sciences, the Bedouin were not just another race, but a unique race singled out for their avoidance of any intermarriage with other groups, and therefore of pure lineage. This over-racialization of the Bedouin led to intense interest in collecting “Bedouin” skulls and, in the twentieth century, in collecting “Bedouin” blood.⁴³ Another colonial legacy is the view of the Bedouin as the “barbarians at the gate” and the destroyers of agriculture. In her study of French scientific knowledge produced during the colonial era, Diana K. Davis demonstrated the way French authors consistently depicted nomadic societies as destructive races opposed to state power and civilization.⁴⁴ Colonial administrators, followed by postcolonial nation-states, drew on Ibn Khaldūn to develop a view of the Bedouin as remnants of pre-Islamic ignorance and a threat to progress and modernity.⁴⁵ It is important that our historical inquiry of the Arab rural groups is free from such racialized assumptions. The Arab clans at the heart of this book were not a biological race, nor were they inherently opposed to economic prosperity.

Ultimately, this book is about sedentary villagers, not nomads. There were certainly nomadic Arab groups in late medieval Egypt and Syria, and the leadership of the nomadic Arab tribes of the Syrian desert has already received a good amount of scholarly attention.⁴⁶ But the countryside of late medieval Egypt and Syria was dotted with several thousand village communities of cultivators—surely the majority of the population and the mainstay of the economy—whose history has yet to be told. As elsewhere in the medieval world, these villages relied for their subsistence on a mixed economy of cereals and livestock, including herds of small cattle, poultry, riding animals for transport, and oxen for ploughing. A few groups practiced semi-sedentary cultivation with seasonal migration, but this was the case only in a few marginal environments. We need to resist the temptation to see a nomad hiding behind every sheep, or even a camel. The documentary

and administrative records emanating from these village communities revolve around their relations with state bureaucrats and military lords and show little trace of interaction with mobile communities of pastoralists. The dichotomy of the desert and the sown, the Bedouin and the *fallāḥ*, is not only a misleading projection of modern identities, but it fails to capture the key features of the available historical evidence.

Centering Documentary and Material Sources

A fresh history of the Arabs of the late medieval Middle East requires a novel approach to the historical sources at our disposal. Previous scholarship relied almost exclusively on Mamluk-era chronicles written in Cairo and Damascus; among these chroniclers, al-Maqrīzī in particular stands out for his interest in the Arab tribes, and his narrative of the rebellions and insubordination of Egyptian Arabs against the Mamluk state is so rich and unique as to overshadow all other sources.⁴⁷ Yet, ultimately, for all his brilliance, al-Maqrīzī was a member of the Cairene urban elite writing for other members of this elite, removed in space and often in time from the rural societies that he described.⁴⁸ The same is also true of the rich accounts of late medieval European pilgrims, who passed through rural landscapes but only encountered the menacing armed elements of rural societies, without direct experience of village life. Al-Maqrīzī, the European travelers, and other chroniclers are indispensable, but they should come at the end of the conversation, after the sources that offer a truly rural perspective have taken center stage.

Becoming Arab moves from the bottom up, and therefore foregrounds documentary, administrative, and material sources that more closely emanate from the countryside. First in importance are the documents found in rural contexts. Even if state archives were lost, the documentary trail at our disposal is very rich.⁴⁹ For Islamic Egypt we have thousands of extant documents, of which hundreds have been published. They contain dozens of references to Arab groups, either as the object of state administration and policing, or as expressions of self-identity. A major portion of the relevant documents comes from sites of eleventh-century Fayyumi villages abandoned in the environmental and political crisis of 1068–74.⁵⁰ These are complemented by a sparser trail of Egyptian rural documents in the following centuries and occasional rural correspondence of Jewish merchants represented in the Cairo Geniza. A second major documentary corpus is that of the Monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai. It contains over a thousand decrees, petitions, and legal documents from the late Fatimid, Ayyubid, and Mamluk

periods. Most of the edited documents deal with the triangular relations between the monks of St. Catherine, state authorities in Cairo (or their local representatives), and local armed groups, mostly Arab clansmen.⁵¹ For Palestine, the crusader charters preserved by the Hospitaller Order of St. John contain a surprising number of references to people called *beduini*. For the fourteenth century, the Haram al-Sharif collection from the *qāḍī* court of Jerusalem consists of about a thousand deeds, including a subset of twenty-seven documents, all dating from the 1300s, concerned with villages endowed for the benefit of the Haram al-Sharif in Jerusalem or the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron.⁵²

We also have at our disposal a wide range of administrative, genealogical, and literary texts that deal with the Arabs of the Egyptian and Syrian countryside, some of them composed in the countryside or by men with rural roots. This corpus is utilized here much more than in earlier scholarship. It includes fiscal registers such as al-Nābulusī's thirteenth-century *Villages of the Fayyum* and the genealogical treatises of the bureaucrats al-Ḥamdānī, al-'Umarī (d. 749/1349) and al-Qalqashandī. Biographical dictionaries are a huge mine of information concerning men born in the countryside and their careers and families. Those produced by provincial men, such as *al-Ṭālī' al-Sa'īd* by al-Udḡwī (d. 748/1347) or the chronicle of Ibn Ḥijjī (d. 816/1413), hold particular interest. Works of philology sometimes talk about "Arab" pronunciation, and the illustrations of the *maqāmāt* show representations of "Arab" men identified by their attire. The earliest manuscripts of *Sīrat 'Antar*, dating to the fifteenth century, are our best evidence of the dissemination and popular reception of epic narratives of Arab origins.

Beyond texts, *Becoming Arab* also seeks to integrate extensive fieldwork conducted in Ayyubid and Mamluk rural sites of Greater Syria with significant progress taking place since the 1990s in Palestine-Israel, Jordan, and Syria (up to the civil war).⁵³ The most extensive excavations of Mamluk-era villages were undertaken in Jordan, with work led by Bethany Walker at Tall Hisban allowing reconstruction of local architecture and material culture. The mixed economy of these village communities is now far better understood, aided by archaeobotanical analysis for the crops grown and bone analysis for animal husbandry. The increase in the number of excavations also led to a refinement of ceramic chronology.⁵⁴ Most relevant to the topic of this book, the sudden visibility of hand-made geometrically painted wares in Ayyubid and Mamluk village contexts was brought to the attention of historians by Jeremy Johns in the 1990s.⁵⁵ The rural landscape has changed in other ways, too: dozens of abandoned sites were reoccupied by repurposing the existing ruins, while Christian monuments were transformed into Islamic shrines. While the archaeological record is far from

complete and many results remain unpublished, excavations have already shown us a rural society that was turned upside down within a couple of centuries. The material culture tells a narrative of dynamic transformation that is completely missing from the chronicles and is therefore not reflected in current historiography of the late medieval countryside.

Terminology: Arab and ‘Urbān, Clans and Tribes

As noted above, the term *badw* is rare in Arabic documentary and narrative sources concerning the late medieval countryside. Rather than *badw*, the term most often used to designate late medieval Arabs is ‘urbān, a neologism current from the twelfth century onward. The coining of a new term reflected the new meanings of Arab identity in this period. It was derived from the collective name ‘*arab*, but its use emphasized the evident difference between the Arabs of old and the present ones. As such, the term ‘urbān parallels the neologism *turkmān* (Turcoman), derived from the name *turk* around the same time and first attested in Anatolia.⁵⁶ Initially, the ‘urbān were the Arab provincial troops in the service of the late Fatimids and the Ayyubids. In Mamluk Egypt, from the thirteenth century onward, the meaning of the term extended to include all Arab armed groups, especially Arab rebels against the Mamluk state. In Mamluk Syria, the officially mandated ‘urbān were distinct from the ‘*ashīr* (sometimes ‘*ashā’ir* or ‘*ushrān*), a term that indicated armed villagers who were not considered part of the provincial troops. The term ‘urbān is also commonly used in the Arab popular epics, denoting the collective might of the Arab tribes. These semantic distinctions are germane to the arguments of this book, and the use of the terms ‘urbān and ‘*ushrān* will be indicated throughout.

While the term ‘urbān implied military power and political independence, the term ‘*arab* was used to indicate cultural and ethnic identity. Thus, village clans were ‘*arab* while the armed men they contributed to the state auxiliary forces were ‘urbān. Cultural identity was ‘*arab*, whether Arab dress (*libās al-‘arab*), Arab poetry (*‘alā ṭarīq al-‘arab*), or distinctive Arab pronunciation (*qāf al-‘Arab*). Such cultural identity could also be expressed by the term *badawī*, which in the context of dress and speech appears to be interchangeable with ‘*arabī*. Occasionally, the meanings of this ‘*arab* identity are spelled out. For al-Qalqashandī, for example, the ‘*arab* were defined by their eloquent Arabic speech and by a lineage that went back to Arabian Peninsula. His genealogical treatise also included a section on the lore of the Battle Days of the Arabs in pre-Islamic times, the *ayyām al-‘arab*, incorporating historical memory as part of Arab identity.⁵⁷ The word

‘arab will be routinely translated in this book as “Arab” or “Arabs,” since the modern sense of Arab identity carries similar cultural, linguistic, and genealogical connotations.

The terms *‘arab* and *‘urbān* encompassed both sedentary and mobile groups. When medieval authors wished to single out Arab nomadic groups, they referred to *bādiyat al-‘arab*, translated here as “the Arabs of the steppe,” or utilized the Qur’anic term *‘arāb*. Ibn Taymiyya, for example, explains that the *‘arāb* are the steppe people among the Arabs, distinguished from sedentary or settled Arabs.⁵⁸ The terms *‘arāb* and the singular *‘arābī* are also relatively rare in late medieval documents and chronicles. In literature, the *‘arābī* is the stock character for Arab cultural stereotypes: a source of deep wisdom and hospitality and a simple-minded object of ridicule. As with *‘urbān*, I will consistently indicate the use of the term *‘arāb* and its derivatives.

The use of the term *badw*, with its complicated relationship to the modern Bedouin, will be indicated in transliteration alongside the translation as “Bedouin.” As noted above, the Arabic *badw* is relatively rare in Arabic documentary sources and in the Arabic chronicles of the period. On the other hand, the term *beduini* appears quite often in medieval Latin accounts of the Middle East. Specifically, it is the term used by twelfth-century crusader-era Latin charters to refer to rural Arab clansmen employed as agricultural labor (see chapter 2). In Latin travel accounts and chronicles, the term *beduini* also appears quite often alongside the collective “Arabs,” indicating that for the European authors—unlike for the indigenous Arabic ones—the two terms were indeed interchangeable. In discussing Latin sources, the *beduini* will be regularly translated as “Bedouin,” since it seems that European authors intended to convey an image of a nomadic people and way of life. I will also use the term in reference to modern dialects that are conventionally named “Bedouin” by sociolinguists, and to other aspects of modern Bedouin identity.

Modern historians, my own earlier work included, also tend to add the labels “tribesmen” and “tribal” to their discussion of the Arabs of the medieval Middle East. But we must acknowledge that these are potentially misleading categories. The use of the category of “tribesmen” evokes associations of unlimited autonomy, cohesion, and primordial identity—qualities that late medieval peasants aspired to but did not necessarily possess. Current anthropological literature largely avoids the term tribe because of its association with social evolutionary theories and with European colonialism. In the context of early modern European expansion, the concept of tribe was used to describe “earlier” forms of human development and peoples considered “inferior” and therefore suitable as subjects

of colonial domination. David Sneath has further argued that even in the medieval context of the Mongol empire, tribal units were merely administrative categories and that the term *tribe* distorts our understanding of Mongol society.⁵⁹ Pace Sneath, the term “tribe” should be banished from historical scholarship altogether.⁶⁰ But, as Najwa Adra argues in the context of Yemeni ethnography, avoidance of the term “tribe” has its own pitfalls, since members of rural communities do speak about themselves as members of clans and tribes.⁶¹ Similarly, the villagers of late medieval Egypt and Greater Syria used the idiom of descent as a form of social organization and cultural capital and employed a range of terms to express these social realities. One should be careful not to superimpose modern articulations of tribal identities, but it would be disingenuous to avoid the vocabulary of clan and tribe altogether.

It is therefore astute to closely examine the terminology used by medieval Arabic chroniclers, who employ the Qur’anic term *qabila*—the closest term to the English “tribe”—to refer to large provincial confederacies, such as that of Sinbis and Lawātha, or the notional confederacies of Qays and Yaman. The narrative sources also use the collective *qabā’il al-‘urbān*, “the tribes of the Arabs,” when they wanted to highlight the segmentation of Arab society. Most of the time, however, late medieval narrative and documentary sources flatten out the distinctions between tribes, clans, subclans, and all levels of descent groups. The kinship terms *baṭn* and *fakhidh* are the most common, and they are indiscriminately used both for village clans and for groupings of several village clans. Most commonly, social units of common descent are not placed in any hierarchical order and are simply called Banū X (Sons of X). When a group is called “the Sons of,” it is a generic designation that could mean any social group below the level of a territorial confederacy.

In light of the nomenclature of the medieval Arabic sources, I use here the term “clan” to describe the lineage-based social organization of Arab village communities, in which a cluster of households claimed descent from a common ancestor and assumed collective tenancy leases. Following the nomenclature of the administrative texts of the period, I use the term “clan” for individual village communities as well as for claims of common descent that united several adjacent villages; it broadly corresponds to the Arabic terms *baṭn* and *fakhidh*. The village clan, in the sense used in this book, is different from the elite Arab and Berber families or “houses” that assumed leadership roles in provincial administration, especially in the fifteenth century. The terms “ruling families,” “elite families,” and “houses” broadly correspond to the Arabic terms *awlād* and *bayt*. The ruling families discussed in this book usually held positions of

leadership over regional or provincial coalitions of clansmen; these broader coalitions are called here “confederacies.” The term “lineage” is used here to indicate a claim of ancestry and descent, equivalent to the Arabic *nasab* (so the term “lineage” is not used to indicate a kinship unit). I will reserve the term “tribe” to translations of the Arabic classical *qabila* and its plural forms.

Chapter Outline

Becoming Arab proceeds chronologically from the Fatimid era to the Mamluk era, and from the documentary to the narrative. Part I, consisting of two chapters, examines the emergence of Arab village elites and ‘urbān armed groups under the Fatimids and the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Chapter 1 deals with the emergence of Arab village protectors in eleventh-century Fayyum against the backdrop of the rise of Arab dynasties in Syria and Palestine. Chapter 2 tracks the emergence of ‘urbān provincial troops in Egypt and Sinai in the twelfth century, alongside the appearance of the *beduini* mobile peasantry in Crusader Palestine. Part II presents the documentary and administrative evidence for the proliferation of Arab village clans in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Chapter 3 is focused on the Arab villages of al-Nābulusī’s thirteenth-century Fayyum, followed by chapter 4 on the Arab villages of fourteenth-century Palestine. Chapter 5 considers the genealogical treatises composed by Mamluk administrators as well as the Arab identities expressed in Mamluk-era biographical dictionaries and autobiographies.

The second half of *Becoming Arab* is devoted to cultural and political manifestations of Arab clan identities. Part III looks at the historical development of Arab cultural makers. Chapter 6 is devoted to the emergence of distinctive Arab pronunciation and Arab dress, as well as the shift to handmade wares in Syrian and Palestinian villages. Chapter 7 focuses on the growing popularity of the Arab popular epics as reflected in narrative and literary sources from the twelfth century onward. Part IV then takes up the Arab village clans as historical actors. Chapter 8 highlights the salience of Qays and Yaman alliances during the fourteenth century and their increasing importance in the politics of Mamluk Syria. Chapter 9 shifts the discussion to Egypt and goes back to the thirteenth century. It offers a reinterpretation of the major Arab uprisings in Upper Egypt during the first century of Mamluk rule, from 1250 to the 1350s. Chapter 10 takes up the narrative of Egyptian Arab clans into the fifteenth century, when the provincial authority and tax collection were delegated to leading Arab houses, causing a rift between these elites and the peasantry.

This book covers five centuries of the history of the countryside of Egypt and Greater Syria, from the beginning of the eleventh century up to the early sixteenth century. Caveats are unavoidable. Dictated by the availability of sources, the geographical focus of this book is the agricultural provinces of Egypt and Palestine, with some excursions into Transjordan, the Hawran, and the Beqaa. Syria north of Damascus receives little attention, and neither do the mountain villages of present-day Lebanon, which have fortunately been the subject of a superb study by Wissam Halawi.⁶² Halawi's work also sheds light on the emergence of rural customary law in the Druze context. It is likely that rural customary laws played an important role in the political and ideological cohesion of Arab village clans in Egypt and other parts of Greater Syria, but the evidence is limited, and a sustained examination of Islamic legal sources was not feasible during the preparation of this monograph.⁶³ Finally, this book ends with the Ottoman conquest of Egypt and Syria in 1517, which represented a major watershed both in terms of fiscal administration and in terms of rural identities. The trajectory of the Arab village clans under Ottoman rule and into the modern period goes beyond the scope of this book, but key features of Ottoman-era transformations are discussed in the book's conclusion.

At its heart, this book tells the story of the late medieval Middle Eastern peasantry, the story of the social group that constituted an overwhelming majority of the population. Unlike previous histories of the Middle East that focused on cities or on nomads, this book views the villagers of Egypt and Syria as proactive agents who interacted with economic, political, and cultural changes in inventive, dynamic, and sometimes ruthless ways. Their voices, this book hopes to show, were much more nuanced than that of the victim of oppression or of the Spartacus-type rebel. The rural Islam that emerged in this late medieval period was very much their own creation, a product of conversion and amalgamation of Muslim and non-Muslim traditions that had roots in pre-Islamic periods. This was a dialectical process of distinguishing rural Muslims from non-Muslims by setting cultural boundaries of dress, speech, and material culture.

This is a book about medieval history, and it should be read as such, with academic and temporal detachment. Nonetheless, most readers will inevitably make comparisons with Arab and Bedouin identities that are familiar to them from their own experience. These modern Arab and Bedouin identities, like the village clans of late medieval Islam, are ideological constructions. Tribes and clans are not primordial; in the Middle Eastern societies studied here, they come and go in response to interactions with bureaucratic states and to the needs of rural communities. The current constructions of the Bedouin and their place within

the wider Arab nation are especially elusive, and this book may help decipher some of the pre-history of the modern Bedouin. It unequivocally argues for upholding the rights of modern Bedouin communities over the lands they inhabit and cultivate. But, moving beyond those who see themselves today as Bedouin, this book seeks to offer a fresh historical perspective on what it means to be Arab: on the space Arabs (and those who claim Arab lineage) occupy within the wider Muslim world, on the fraught relationship between the people of the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabs of the surrounding lands, and on the centrality of Islam within the modern constructions of Arab national identities.

INDEX

- Abbasids, 3, 4, 27, 32, 39, 42, 121, 144,
158–59, 166, 167, 173–74, 193; Arab
identity of, 9, 45, 113; land tax of, 7,
87; literature of, 177–78, 182, 186, 188;
in Palestine, 42–43; philology under,
143, 172
- ‘Abd al-Wahhāb ibn Nawbakht, 177
- ‘Abd al-Wahhāb, Abū Muḥammad
(jurist), 152
- Abou el-Hajj, Amal, 92
- Abū al-Dīn Ramaḍān, 28–30, 33–34
- Abū al-Khayr b. Qashshāsh, 25, 28, 32
- Abū al-Makārim, 84
- Abū al-Rūḥ ‘Īsā Sharaf al-Dīn, 92
- Abū Ḥayyān (d. 1344), 145, 149, 288n28
- Abū Ksā, 78
- Abū Qurqāṣ, 79
- Abū Rakwa, 35–36, 49
- Abū Zayd (of the *Maqāmāt* by al-Ḥarīrī),
151–53
- Abu’l-Magd, Zeynab, 256
- Adhri’āt, 122, 133, 202, 208
- ‘Adnān, 110, 120, 131; in *Sīrat ‘Antar*, 180,
183–84, 188, 193
- Adorno, Anselme, 210, 242, 245
- Adra, Najwa, 19
- advance sales, 33
- Ahmad of Niğde, 173
- ‘Ā’idh (of the Judhām), 51, 55–59, 67, 185;
official role of, 58–59, 223, 241–42,
308n51; as provincial elite, 234–35,
239–242, 244, 250–52; in royal
campaigns, 243
- ‘Ajjul (south of Nablus), 107
- ‘Ajlūn, 121, 207–8, 255
- Akhṣāṣ al-Ḥallāq, 77, 88, 156
- Āl ‘Abdūn, 36
- Āl ‘Alī, of the Āl Faḍl, 200
- Āl Faḍl, 126, 163, 194, 199–201, 211, 264n38;
in Barqūq-Minṭāsh civil war, 202, 204
- Āl Jarrāḥ, 27, 35, 41–45, 49, 199
- Āl Mirā, 194, 200–201, 207, 211, 299n33; in
Barqūq-Minṭāsh civil war, 202, 204
- Āl Rabī’a, 120–21
- al-‘Abdarī, 59
- al-‘Āḍid (Fatimid Caliph), 55
- al-‘Ādil (Sultan), 83, 114, 199
- al-Aḥḍab, 3, 214, 216, 226–32, 236, 237, 239,
256; descendants of, 233, 237–38
- al-Āmir (Fatimid Caliph), 154
- al-Andalus (or Spain), 56, 90, 125, 145, 152
- al-Anṭākī, Yaḥyā, 41, 49, 55
- al-Arish, 58
- al-Asadī, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad, 210,
235–36; on Arabs and Peasants in Egypt,
246–49, 251
- al-‘Asalī, Kāmil, 93
- al-Ashmūnayn, 35, 37, 53, 78–79, 89, 102,
116, 127, 131, 222, 229, 236–37; village
names in, 284n67
- al-Aṣma’iyyāt*, 172
- al-Atfīḥiyya, 127, 225, 227
- al-‘Azīz (Caliph), 37
- al-Azkā, Jamāl al-Dīn, 78–79, 102, 222–23
- al-Badawī, Aḥmad, 12, 154
- al-Badawī, Miqdām ibn Shammās, 305n64
- al-Bahnasā, 116, 130, 237
- al-Bahnasāwiyya, 81, 127, 227, 229, 233, 237
- Albert of Aachen, 60
- al-Biqā’ī, Burhān al-Dīn, 3, 113, 206;
autobiography of, 133–35
- al-Buḥayra, 27–28, 36–37, 118, 174, 220,
222–24, 227, 230, 236, 242–44, 251–52
- al-Bulqīnī, Ḥaḥṣ Sirāj al-Dīn, 125
- al-Busāṭī, ‘Alam al-Dīn, 128–29
- al-Daqahliyya, 53, 127, 129, 244–45

- al-Dārī (or al-Tamīmī, clan), 109, 121, 129, 144, 207, 144
 al-Dayr (near Nablus), 133
 al-Dhahabī, 53, 171, 173
 Aleppo, 38, 39, 42, 45, 114, 122, 130, 134, 144, 149, 173, 199, 217, 223; names of villages near, 281n85
 Alexandria, 28, 36–37, 127, 146, 149, 155, 219, 220, 223, 244, 245–46
 al-Fahmīn, 127
 al-Fāqūs, 132
 al-Faramā, 41
 al-Gharbiyya, 50, 52, 82, 148, 224, 230, 232, 236, 242, 243–45, 252
 al-Ghāzī (clan), 99, 103
 al-Ḥaditha (Iraq), 144
 al-Ḥāfiẓ (Fatimid caliph), 50, 55
 al-Ḥākim (Fatimid caliph), 36, 55; *Sira* of, 294n53
 al-Hamdānī (d. 334/945), 42, 112–13
 al-Ḥamdānī, Badr al-Dīn, 16, 114–20, 121, 123–24, 126–27, 218, 237
 al-Harawī (d. 1215), 107
 al-Ḥarīrī, Abū al-Ḥasan (d. 645/1247–48), 65, 132
 al-Ḥawf, 118
 al-Ḥayy al-Kabīr and al-Ḥayy al-Ṣaghīr, 115–16
 al-Ibshīhī (d. after 850/1446), 186
 al-Idrīsī, al-Sharīf, 50
 al-Isnawī (d. 772/1370), 148
 al-Jawbarī, 169
 al-Jawharī (d. ca. 1010), 125
 al-Jawwānī, Muḥammad b. Asʿad (d. 588/1192), 114
 al-Jazīrī, 155, 174, 244
 al-Jurf (near Edfu), 130
 al-Juwaylī, 243–44, 248
 al-Khābūr, 40
 al-Khaḍarmawtī, Nūr al-Dīn, 132
 al-Lajjūn, 122
 Alleaume, Ghislaine, 256
 allowances (*rizaq*), 78, 84
 al-Maʿarra, 122
 al-Maghrāwī, Shihāb al-Dīn, 128–29
 al-Makhzūmī, 52
 al-Malik al-Ashraf, 113
 al-Malik al-Kāmil, 58, 73, 82
 al-Malik al-Qāhir, 150
 al-Malik al-Ṣāliḥ Ayyub, 73, 219
 al-Manhā Canal, 217
 al-Manzala, 245
 al-Maqdisī, Naṣr (jurist), 144
 al-Maqrīzī, 36–37, 41, 49, 51, 114, 115, 142, 147, 155, 170, 197–98, 216–18, 236, 237, 238, 250; on Arab genealogy, 15, 113, 220; on Arab rebellions, 219–21, 225, 226–230; on lineage claims, 109; on Qays and Yaman, 196
 al-Minūfiyya, 127, 132, 232, 236, 243–44, 256
 al-Mizza, 203, 209
 Almoravid, 151
 alms tax (*zakāt*), 77, 223
 al-Muʿayyad Shaykh (Sultan), 234, 308n51
 al-Muʿizz Aybak (Sultan), 214, 219–20
 al-Muqaddasī (geographer), 42
 al-Muqaddasī, ʿIyāʾ al-Dīn (1173–1245), 65–66
 al-Murtāḥiyya, 127
 al-Musabbihī, 35, 36, 42
 al-Muʿtadiyya, 53
 al-Nābulusī, Abū ʿUthmān, 2, 16, 74–79, 81–87, 89–90, 110–11, 116, 119, 221; on *badw*, 12, 76; on Copts, 85, 90; on *fallāḥs*, 77, 156; on headmen, 78; on reclamation of land, 88; sent to the Fayyum, 73–74; on ʿurbān, 80–82
 al-Nashāʾī, Kamāl al-Dīn, 125, 132
 al-Nāṣir Aḥmad, 150, 198
 al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, 120, 150, 155, 157, 199, 221, 227, 305n64
 al-Nawawī, Sharaf al-Dīn, 132
 al-Nuwayrī, 219–20, 224–25; lineage of, 130; on genealogy, 114; on taxation of olives, 95
al-qāf al-maʿqūda. See pronunciation
 al-Qalqashandī, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad, 50, 110, 156, 205, 209, 236–37, 241–44; biography of, 175–76; and definition of Arabs, 17, 125; genealogical writings of, 16, 113, 115, 118, 123–28; *Nihāyat al-arab fī maʿrifat ansāb al-ʿarab*, 123, 175, 178; on purpose of genealogy, 124–25; *Qalāʾid al-jumān*, 123–24, 176–77; and Sīrat ʿAntar, 4, 171, 175–79, 188; on his village, 3, 184
 al-Qalyūbiyya, 3, 123, 175–76, 185, 243
 al-Qarāfī (jurist), 152
 al-Qaryatayn, 122
 al-Qibāb (near Damietta), 132

- al-Qubarā', 76, 88
 al-Raḥba, 122, 199
 al-Rashīd, 127
 al-Rastaq, 116
 al-Rūyānī, 'Abd al-Wāḥid
 (d. 502/1108–9), 143
 al-Ṣadr, Fort of (Qal'at al-Guindi), 57–58
 al-Ṣafadī (d. 764/1363), 108, 129, 133, 145, 171
 al-Sakhāwī, 147–48, 243–44
 al-Ṣāliḥ Isma'īl (Sultan), 198
 al-Ṣāliḥiyya, 202
 al-Sha'rā', 122
 al-Sha'rānī, 256
 al-Sharqiyya, 50, 55, 82, 117, 132, 134, 175,
 222, 224–25, 227, 230, 232, 235, 243, 248,
 249–51; Arab *iqṭā'* in, 234, 241–42; Arab
 governors of, 240–42, 250–52; Bedouin
 nature of, 241; 'urbān of, 223, 240
 al-Sharqiyya Canal (in the Fayyum), 80
 al-Sīrafī (grammarian), 145
 al-Ṣubāḥiyyīn (or al-Ṣabāḥiyyīn), 95–96,
 99, 101, 106, 110
 al-Subkī, Tāj al-Dīn, 170, 201
 al-Subkī, Taqī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Kāfī b. 'Alī, 132
 al-Suwaydā', 196, 207
 al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn, 148
 al-Taḥāwī, Abū Qāsim, 231
 al-Tūr, 54–56, 58, 67, 239, 240–42
 al-Udfūwī (d. 748/1347), 16, 130–32
 al-'Umarī, Ibn Faḍl Allāh, 197; genealogical
 treatise of, 16, 113, 115, 119–123, 126, 199,
 206, 198; on his lineage, 120; on popular
 epics, 173, 177; on sedentary Arabs,
 121–23, 128, 136, 197, 223
 al-Washm, 199
 al-Ya'qūbī (d. ca. 292/905), 42–43
 al-Yarmūk, 122
 al-Zabadānī, 198, 203
 al-Zāfir (caliph), 50
 al-Zarqā', 200
 al-Zubayrī, Taqī al-Dīn, 129
 Amalric, viscount of Nablus, 61–62, 64
amān (safe-conduct), 208, 231
Amir al-'Arab, 114, 194, 199, 201, 211; in
 Egypt, 243
 Anatolia, 17, 54, 129, 172–73, 189–90, 200
 'Anqā, the amir of the Āl Mīrā, 202–3
 Anṣār, 122, 132, 197
 appointment decrees, 40, 51, 197, 200,
 205–6, 210–11, 224, 300n40
 'Aqaba, 51, 223, 240; 'Aqaba Tupperware, 159
 Āqūsh al-Rūmī, 224
 Arab dynasties (in Greater Syria and Iraq),
 1–2, 20, 25, 27, 39–42, 44–46
a'rāb, 18, 28, 154, 197, 207; as category of
 Arabs, 125; in *Sīrat 'Antar*, 187
 'Arabān, 40, 271n24
 Arabian Peninsula, 1, 17, 22, 45, 54, 110, 136,
 140; dialect of, 141–42, 149–50;
 ethnography of, 8; migration from, 11,
 40, 45, 125, 139, 142, 254; pottery of, 140,
 160, 165; pre-Islamic (see Jāhiliyya)
 Arabic language: adoption of, 1, 150; and
 Arabic literature, 6, 167, 186; eloquence
 in, 13, 17, 125–26, 143–44, 146; and
 middle Arabic, 167, 172; in Shāfi'ī
 law, 129
 arable land, 5, 6, 30–32, 34, 74, 77–79, 85,
 87–88, 90, 229, 253
 Arad, 101
 'Arak, 194, 215, 226–28
arbāb al-adrāk (road protectors), 230, 242,
 247, 304n42
 archaeology, 4, 7, 16, 43, 58, 107–8, 140, 158,
 160–62, 165
 Armant, 131
 artisans (or craftsmen), 45, 66, 85, 106, 167,
 179–80; poll-tax on, 225
 'aṣabiyya (solidarity), 12–13, 184, 195
 Ascalon, 130
 Ash'ar, 42
 'ashīr, 13–14, 17, 118, 193–99, 205–12, 246; in
 Barqūq-Mintāsh civil war, 202–4; in
 Egypt, 132, 251; in *Sīrat 'Antar*, 186–87
ashrāf (descendants of the Prophet), 10, 82,
 113, 124, 131, 155, 157, 165, 216–18, 249;
 and Ṭālibid, 113. See also *naqīb al-ashrāf*
 'Āshūr, Sa'īd 'Abd al-Fattāḥ, 214
 Askur, 115–16
 Aswan, 13, 35, 49, 113, 115, 131–32, 229,
 237–38
 Asyut, 116, 219, 227–30, 237
 Aṭfīḥ, 51, 115
 'Athlith, 121
 autobiographies, 3, 20, 113, 128, 133–35, 169,
 175–76, 190, 206
 auxiliary forces, 17, 47–48, 51–52, 64, 74,
 81–82, 89–90, 104, 139, 150, 154, 157, 186,
 194, 197–99, 211, 215, 221
 Awlād 'Alī, 240–41

- Awlād Īsā (of the 'Ā'idh), 234, 239, 243, 248, 250–51
 Awlād 'Umar (of the Hawwāra), 233, 237
 Aydamur al-Qashshāsh, 224
 'Ayn 'Arīk, 99, 104–6
 'Ayn Yabrūd, 96, 99–101, 103, 105, 108–9, 255
ayyām al-'arab, 17, 178, 182
'ayyārūn (urban militia), 41–42
 Azd, 121
 'Azīza, daughter of Ḥudayj, 25, 27, 30, 32, 45

 Baalbek, 203
 Babūya, 131
badawī, 12, 17, 131, 144, 155, 225, 230, 305n64; poetry, 172, 212
bādiya (pl., *bawādī*), 12, 145, 241; *ahl al-bādiya*, 131, 247; as collective name for Arabs, 31, 35, 38, 45, 52, 55; *bādiyat al-'arab*, 18; *bādiya ḥāḍira*, 40; in *Sīrat 'Antar*, 187
 Badr al-Jamālī, 49
 Badr ibn Sallām, 236
badw, 12, 17–18, 76, 187, 247, 254; in Ibn Khaldūn, 11–12. *See also* Bedouin
 Baghdad, 40, 141, 144, 147, 149, 152, 154, 167, 169, 188, 199, 230
 Baḥrayn (Bahrain), 144, 149, 282n9
 bailiff (*mushidd*), 209, 224
 Bāja, 76, 79, 81, 84
 Baldwin I, 66
 Baldwin III, 65–66
 Baldwin IV, 60–62
 Bāligh b. Yūsuf, 198
 Baliyy, 37, 51, 194
 Balqa, 13, 121, 134, 194, 200, 202, 207, 211
 Bamawayh, 79, 84
 Banū 'Abbās, 96, 99, 102–3, 109, 272n38; in the Fayyum, 34
 Banū 'Abs: near Nablus, 133; in *Sīrat 'Antar*, 133, 176, 178, 180, 184, 186–87, 189; in Upper Egypt, 115
 Banū 'Adī, 115, 118
 Banū 'Ajlān, 75–76, 80–82
 Banū al-Ghazāwī (or al-Maghrāwī), 208
 Banū al-Ḥārith, 41, 99, 103
 Banū 'Alī: in the Beqaa, 134; in Upper Egypt, 115, 127
 Banū al-Yasār, 147

 Banū 'Āmir: in the Fayyum, 25, 28, 30, 34, 75, 81; in the Nile delta, 132; in Palestine, 60, 96–97, 99–101, 103, 109; in Ṣarkhad, 121; in *Sīrat 'Antar*, 184, 189
 Banū Asad Khuzayma, 133
 Banū 'Awna, 163, 244; origin myth of, 173–74
 Banū Badr, 3, 123, 156, 176–77, 184
 Banū Baghdād, 174, 256, 309n69
 Banū Bakr b. Wā'il, 121
 Banū Buḥtur, 51, 281n85
 Banū Daraqa, 197
 Banū Fahm: in Mecca, 145; in Upper Egypt, 116
 Banū Ghāḍira (of Banū Asad), 133
 Banū Gharīb, 233, 237
 Banū Ghassān, 121–22, 180; Circassians claim to, 204
 Banū Ḥabīb, 40
 Banū Ḥāfiẓ, 209
 Banū Ḥamdān (Ḥamdānids), 39, 41, 44, 107
 Banū Ḥanīfa, 51
 Banū Ḥanẓala, 34
 Banū Ḥarām, 117
 Banū Ḥasan, 3, 113, 134–35
 Banū Ḥatīm, 75, 80, 85
 Banū Hilāl: in al-Buḥayra, 309n69; in Hawran, 195–97, 207, 264n38; invasion of North Africa, 25, 38, 142; in Upper Egypt, 13, 35, 37, 127, 194, 227–28
 Banū Humām, 197
 Banū Ja'far (or Ja'āfira), 13, 49, 75, 89, 121, 216–17, 222, 302n5. *See also* Ibn Tha'lab
 Banū Jiyād (of the Banū Rabī'a), 131
 Banū Ka'b, 75, 87–88
 Banū Kalb, 25, 34, 42, 44–45, 49, 122, 229
 Banū Kanz, 49, 131, 194, 238
 Banū Khālīd, 121
 Banū Kilāb: in the Fayyum and upper Egypt, 13, 35–36, 38, 75, 80–82, 127, 130, 283n31; in northern Syria, 39, 40, 42, 122, 126, 173, 177, 281n85
 Banū Mahdī, 194, 200, 211
 Banū Makhzūm, 51, 118, 285n81
 Banū Marwān, 173
 Banū Māzin, 176, 184
 Banū Midrās, 39
 Banū Mudlij, 28, 115, 125, 132, 301n95
 Banū Mundhir b. Mā' al-Samā', 122

- Banū Nizār, 127
 Banū Numayr, 40, 196
 Banū Qarqar. *See* Benekarkas
 Banū Qaysar, 75–76, 80, 88
 Banū Qurra, 27, 35–38, 41–43, 49, 53, 75, 122
 Banū Rabīʿa: in Damascus, 208, 286n107;
 in the Fayyum, 28–30, 33–35, 43, 81; in
 Iraq, 180; in the Jazīra, 40, 122, in
 Palestine, 99, 101, 196; in Transjordan,
 196; in Upper Egypt, 127, 131, 285n81. *See*
 also Āl Rabīʿa
 Banū Raf, 53
 Banū Saʿd (of the Judhām), 50, 53, 117–18, 126
 Banū Saʿd b. Bakr, 133
 Banū Saʿd, in Palestine, 64, 103, 108
 Banū Šāliḥ, 55
 Banū Sālim, 99, 103, 115
 Banū Samālūs, 75, 82
 Banū Shaybān, 51
 Banū Sinbis, 19, 37–38, 50–53, 118, 220,
 303n27
 Banū Sulaym, 37, 146, 149, 155, 223
 Banū Sulaymān: in the Fayyum, 75; in
 Sinai, 58, 242
 Banū Taghlib, 39, 121–22, 133, 144
 Banū Ṭalḥa, 50, 51, 53
 Banū Tamīm, 121, 129, 143–44, 153, 285n81;
 Arabic of, 143; in the *maqāmāt*, 153. *See*
 also Tamīm al-Dārī
 Banū Tanūkh, 51, 122, 285n81
 Banū Ṭayy, 35, 41, 51, 121, 198, 242
 Banū Thaʿlaba, 51, 82, 118–19, 176, 223
 Banū Thimāl, 40, 115
 Banū ʿUmar (or Āl ʿUmar), 120, 121; of the
 Hawwāra, 239, 251
 Banū Umayya, 122. *See also* Umayyads
 Banū Wāʾil, 126, 243
 Banū Zarʿa, 75–76, 80
 Banū Zayd, 121, 207, 255
 Banū Zubayr, 115–16, 129
 Banū Zurayq, 50, 53
 Banyas, 60
 Baʿqūbā, 202
 Barakat, Nora, 8, 13
 Barhamtūsh, 117
 Barmakid, 121
 Barqā Banī ʿImrān, 127
 Barqa, 36–37, 146, 175, 236, 306n6
 Barqaʿīd, 40
 Barqūq (Sultan), 200, 233, 236
 Barqūq-Mintāsh civil war, 194, 201–9, 211,
 234
 Barsbāy, 189
 Barth, Frederik, 9–10, 139
 Basra, 199
baṭn, 19, 63, 118, 134
 Baṭṭāl-name. *See* Sīrat Dhāt al-Himma
 Baybars al-Manṣūrī, 219, 224
 Baybars, 5, 104, 115, 221, 223, 236. *See also*
 Sīrat Baybars
 Bayn al-Qaṣrayn, 169–70
 Bayt ʿAynūn, 99, 102–3, 109–11
 Bayt Jibrīn, 42–43
 Bayt Nāṣif, 99, 102
 Bayt Rīmā, 99, 106, 255
 Bayt ʿUllā, 99, 102
 Bayt ʿUniya (Beitunia), 94–96, 99, 101,
 104–8, 110
bāzin, 163
 beans, 33, 34, 78
 Bedouin dialect, 3, 18, 139, 141–43, 144,
 147–49, 254; Bedouinization of
 dialects, 141–42, 149–50; in Upper
 Egypt, 141–42, 148
 Bedouin: “Bedouin century,” 25, 39, 45 (*see*
 also Arab dynasties); cemeteries, 107;
 dress, 154–55; in historiography, 11–15,
 214–15, 226–27; in Latin sources, 60–64,
 66, 68, 89, 102; modern identities of, 11,
 18, 21–22, 254, 256–57; in al-Sharqiyya,
 241. *See also* *beduini*, *badw*
beduini, 2, 16, 18, 20, 47–48, 59–61, 64–68,
 101, 163, 198, 260
 Beit Hanun, 107
 Belvoir, 65
 Benekarkas or Benicarguas (probably
 Banū Karkas), 48, 61–65, 67–68, 101
 Beqaa, 1, 3, 21, 113, 130, 133–34, 193, 197,
 203–6, 209–11
 Berbers, 2, 9–10, 13, 19, 25, 27–28, 36, 39, 43,
 48–50, 53, 125, 127, 146, 212–13, 221,
 233–36, 239, 241, 243, 251; accent, 146,
 149; under the Fatimids, 35, 38; in the
 Fayyum, 73–75, 81, 84, 89; in Sīrat Banī
 Hilāl, 172. *See also* Hawwāra
 Bertrando de Mignanelli, 201–2, 204
 Bertrandon de la Brocquière, 155, 210, 242
 Bethlegel (Bayt Lijja), 106
 Bethlehem, 208–9
 Bethsuric (Bayt Sūrīk), 66

- Biba, 115–16
 Bilbays, 28, 134, 175, 220
 Binay, Sarah, 186
 biographical dictionaries, 3, 16, 20, 28, 42, 53, 68, 112–15, 128–33, 135, 144, 147, 198, 233, 243
 Birkat al-Fawāṭiḥ, 127
 black Africans, 67, 144; in *maqāmāt* illustrations, 154; in popular epics, 167, 183, 185; as troops, 35, 42, 50, 54
 Black Death, 194, 196, 198, 201, 206, 213–14, 216, 221, 226–27, 234–35, 250, 252–53
 Black Sea, 238
 blood feuds, 82, 193, 195–99, 206, 210–12, 215; and conflict resolution, 8, 184–85; in *Sirat 'Antar*, 184–85
 blood money, 93, 101, 124–25, 195–96, 204, 210
 Bondioli, Lorenzo, 31–32
Book of Curiosities, 36
 Borsch, Stuart, 11, 306n4
 bow and arrows. *See* weapons
 bowls, 159, 161, 164
 Brett, Michael, 172
 Buljusūq, 31–32, 53, 84–85, 88, 266n19
būq wa-'alam (Trumpet and Flag, title), 118; kettle-drum (*kūs*) and flag, 217
 Burchard of Mt. Zion, 101, 154
 Būrīn, 64, 291n114
 Burj al-Aḥmar, 162
 Busāṭ (in al-Daqahliyya), 128–29, 309n69
 Būsh, 115
busht, 150
 Buṣrā, 122, 208
 Büssow-Schmitz, Sarah, 11, 226
 Buyids, 27, 39–41, 44
 Byzantines, 41, 43, 108; in popular epics, 166, 173
 cadastral surveys, 2, 13, 93, 116, 127, 221, 235, 237–38, 241, 255. *See also* Ottoman
 camels, 38, 60, 77, 82, 121, 126, 128–29, 131, 143, 150, 163, 200, 207, 220, 223, 275n9; as booty, 225, 229, 238, 299n17; lost, 104, 200; in the *maqāmāt*, 152–54; royal, 150; milk of, 163; for transport, 38, 208, 223, 309n62
 cattle, 35, 40, 45, 50, 59, 116, 128, 169, 200, 220, 224, 229; as booty, 229–30; cows, 38, 53, 129. *See also* livestock, oxen, water buffalos
 cemeteries (rural), 43, 94, 107, 270n97
 Central Asia, 5, 54, 125
 chancery, 119, 125, 128, 222
 Chraïbi, Aboubakr, 183
 Christians, 1, 16, 28, 30, 34, 43, 49, 55, 79, 85, 111, 182, 219, 248; ancestry of, 5, 94, 110, 254; anti-Christian policies, 36; as artisans and traders, 84–85, 94, 106; and conversion to Islam, 90–91; dialect of, 141, 149; headmen, 97; under Latin rule, 59–60, 66, 68, 106; renegades, 246; share of population, 4, 6, 26, 32–33, 42–43, 69, 74, 83–85, 101, 106, 107; and shrines shared with Muslims, 108; *suriani* (oriental Christians), 66; as tax collectors, 27, 32, 39, 249; villages with Christian majority, 26, 79, 81, 83–85, 93, 104–6, 109. *See also* churches, Copts, monasteries
 churches, 4, 32–33, 43, 55, 101, 107, 210, 272n45; in the Fayyum, 73–74, 83–85
 Circassians, 204
 clothes. *See* dress
 colonial, 11, 13–14, 18–19, 256–57
 colors (of clothes): red, 152–54, 157, 164, 289n50, 290n79; green, 155, 157, 165; black, 224
 communal dining, 140, 161, 165
 Companions of the Prophet, 3, 10, 109, 111, 129, 134
 Connelly, Bridget, 166
 conversion to Islam, 4–6, 21, 33, 44, 55, 90, 93, 111, 113, 249, 253–54; erasing memory of, 5, 90–91, 94, 109, 111, 150, 254; narrative of, 169, 190; in popular epics, 182–83, 189–90; and poll tax, 86; suspicion of, 5, 91
 co-optation (of Arab elites), 50, 194, 205, 209, 211–13, 215, 220, 231–33, 236, 240–41, 246–47, 251
 Copts, 1, 4–5, 33; anti-Copt treatise, 90; Coptic calendar, 33–34; Coptic letters of protection, 28; Coptic names of villages, 127, 131; as dependents of Arab clans, 36, 81; disappearance of Coptic peasantry, 85–86; as majority in Egypt, 33–34, 53, 83–86; martyrdom of, 90; as tax officials, 28, 30–31, 36, 52; as village elites, 26, 28, 30–32, 36. *See also* Christians, *History of the Patriarchs*

- corvée labor, 59
cotton, 105, 155
Crusades. *See* Franks, Latin charters, Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem
customary law, 8, 21
- Dalāṣ, 50
dalil, 30, 32, 36, 39, 87
ḍamān (tax guarantee or tax farming), 26, 31, 52, 86, 95, 272n30
Damanhūr, 134, 236
Damdiṭ, 117
Damietta, 82, 132
Damriṭ, 132
Damūya (Damūh), 28, 84, 89
darak, 52, 95, 222, 231. *See also arbāb al-adrāk*
Darmā', 50, 53
Dārūm (Daron, Deir al-Balah), 37, 60
Davis, Diana K., 14
Dayr al-Jummayza, 115, 117
Delaville Le Roulx, Joseph, 61, 63
Dharwat Sarabām (modern Dayrūt), 127, 215–17, 219–220
diet, 9, 76, 107, 161, 163–65
Dimayra, 53
diyār (tribal territories), 8, 37, 64, 115–16, 118, 121, 186, 199, 200–201, 208, 217, 301n95
Djiba (Geva), 101
DNA analysis, 7
Döger (Turcoman clan), 97, 99
dress, 1, 3, 6, 9–10, 13, 17, 126, 139–40, 144, 146–47, 150–57, 164–65, 185, 224, 226, 254; change of, 140, 150, 185, 219; official uniform, 140, 154–55; of peasants, 150, 156, 224, 290n95
Druze, 21, 206
Dumūshiyya, 81
Dūrā, 99, 101, 105, 196
- Ein Gedi, 108
elephant ear cooking pots, 161
el-Leithy, Tamer, 5, 91
Ellenblum, Ronnie, 45, 64, 106, 269n95
endowments (*waqf*), 73, 86, 97, 113, 124, 171, 234, 236, 272n30; of the shrines in Jerusalem and Hebron, 16, 92–93, 95–96, 99, 102, 104–5, 108, 111
entry fees (for official positions), 233, 239, 244
- Esau, 102, 154
Esna, 130, 132
Ethiopia, 183
ethnogenesis, 9
Euphrates, 40, 199, 263n9
European pilgrims and travellers (medieval), 5–6, 15, 18, 48, 59–60, 68, 89, 101–2, 154–55, 205, 233, 241–42, 245–46, 250
- Fabri, Felix, 208, 245
Faḍl b. ʿĪsā, 121
Faḥl (Transjordan), 107
fakhidh, 19, 76, 118
Fakhr al-Dīn ʿUthmān al-ustādār, 87–88
fallāḥ, 42, 51, 77, 79, 99, 105, 131, 156, 202–3, 209, 210, 224–26, 228–30, 247, 249–50; distinction from Bedouin, 13, 15, 215, 225, 230, 256; in European sources, 60; in literature, 186, 256; as tenant, 6, 12, 74, 87. *See also* tenants
far' (branch of a clan), 76
Fāris al-Dīn Aqṭāy, 219
Fāriskūr, 245
Fayyum, 1–2, 15, 20, 25–32, 34–39, 43–45, 53, 73–91, 94, 97, 103–5, 108, 110, 115–17, 119, 123, 135, 198, 220–21, 248–49, 250, 253. *See also* al-Nābulusī
Fazāra, 3, 176–77, 184, 189
fences (of villages), 123, 206, 208
Feudalism, 7, 10, 59, 69
Florence, 156
fodder, 78, 108, 226
Franks, 51, 62, 65, 82, 107, 109, 119, 162, 219. *See also* Latin Kingdom
Franz, Kurt, 39
Frescobaldi, Leonardo di, 242, 303n29, 309n63
Fried, Morton, 8–10
fruits, 58, 104–5, 278n16
- Gabes, 38, 223
Galilee, 97, 158, 160–62, 256
Garcin, Jean-Claude, 11, 194, 215, 227
Gaza, 60, 98, 104, 107, 121–22, 197, 219, 242
genealogical literature: in Abbasid period, 9–10, 113; by Mamluk bureaucrats, 2, 16, 112–28, 173, 175–78; purpose of, 124–25; social function of, 9, 12, 90, 134, 212, 254; territorial focus of, 112, 114, 120

- genealogical tree, 10, 53, 93, 109–10, 114,
118–19, 122, 125, 132, 134, 136, 163, 217
- genealogy: in popular epics, 180, 184;
professional genealogists, 114, 118, 121,
132; on tombstone, 217; genealogical
worldview, 251
- Geniza, 15, 36, 38, 45, 47, 49, 106, 190
- ghafāra* or *ghifāra* (protection payment),
36, 242
- Gharandal, 159
- Ghaṭafān (in *Sirat ‘Antar*), 174–76, 188
- Ghāziya (present-day Ghaziyeh), 97, 99,
278n8
- Ghillebert de Lannoy, 245
- Ghumāra, 125
- Ghuta, 41, 202, 206, 209
- Giza, 36, 53, 132, 220, 225, 279n36
- Goudie, Kenneth, 133–34
- governors (*wālī, mutawallī al-ḥarb*), 35,
37–38, 50, 54–58, 67, 78–79, 87–88, 102,
131, 194–99, 201–2, 205–8, 210–11, 215–16,
219, 222–24, 226, 228, 231–32, 234,
237–38, 240, 247, 301n95; appointment
of Arab leaders as, 209, 240–41, 250;
entry fees for appointment as, 236
- grains (or cereals), 14, 33–34, 36, 40–41,
50–51, 54, 73, 79, 86, 93–96, 104–5, 194,
202, 207–8, 216–17, 221, 228–29, 231,
238–39, 267n36, 278m13; barley, 33, 40,
85, 95, 108, 163, 308n51; in *Sirat ‘Antar*,
186; social identity of grain cultivators,
6, 12, 76–77, 85, 111, 241, 245; wheat, 33,
40, 53, 85, 144, 147, 186, 217
- grammarians, 143–45
- granaries, 50, 214
- grapes (or raisins), 105
- groupings of peasants, 94, 97, 99–100
- guarantors, 81, 100, 240, 248; for tax
payment and peacekeeping, 2, 6, 31,
93–96, 102–3. See also *ḍamān*
- Guelfs and Ghibellines, 220, 245
- ḥaḍar*, 11–12, 76, 81, 143, 146–47, 247
- Hajal al-‘Ā’idhī, 58
- Halawi, Wissam 21
- Halbā of Judhām, 119, 126, 172
- Halḥūl, 96, 99, 102–3, 105
- Hama, 122, 130, 179, 199, 210
- Ḥanafīs, 129, 133, 177
- Ḥanbalīs, 65, 129, 274n81
- handmade geometrically painted wares
(HMGP), 4, 16, 140–41, 157–65, 188, 198,
254; in Arabian Peninsula, 140, 160, 165;
cost of production of, 162; in Egypt,
164–65; explanations for shift to, 161–64;
regional characteristics, 163
- Haram al-Sharif documents, 16, 92, 96–97,
102–6, 109–10, 195, 200, 206
- Ḥarrān, 39
- Ḥasan ibn Mar’ī, 244, 251
- Ḥasan (Sultan), 226
- Ḥassān b. Jarrāḥ, 42
- Hawran, 21, 49, 51, 65, 101, 132–33, 144, 154,
160, 169, 171–72, 188, 194, 196–97, 200,
202, 205–8, 211–12, 255, 271n6
- Hawwāra: and Arab identity, 146, 149; in
the Fayyum, 75, 84, 89; and iqtā’,
238–39; migration to Upper Egypt, 236;
and Sufism, 239; in Upper Egypt,
233–39, 243, 248–51, 256; west of
Alexandria, 146, 149, 223
- Ḥayṣa Bayṣa (Abū al-Fawāris al-Tamīmī),
144, 147, 149, 154
- Hazz al-Quhūf*, 256, 288n39
- headgear, 3–4, 150–57, 164, 168, 188, 254.
See also dress, *lithām*
- headmen, 2, 6, 9–10; of Christian villages,
104–6, 109; in Iran, 110; in Latin
Kingdom, 60, 97; as leaders of peasant
groupings, 99–100, 253; in Mamluk
Egypt, 78–79, 117–18, 128, 131, 205, 216,
221–24, 230, 250; in Mamluk Palestine,
93–103, 108, 110–11, 206, 209–10; as a
novel institution, 77, 97–98; under the
Ottomans, 8, 255; in Syria, 302n115; in
the *Villages of the Fayyum*, 74, 77–79, 81,
87, 89–90
- Heath, Peter, 167, 179, 183–84, 187
- Hebron, 16, 43, 92–93, 96–98, 101, 104–6,
109, 111, 121–22, 129, 196–97, 207, 211
- Herzog, Thomas, 167–68, 184
- highway robbery, 60, 201, 207, 224, 229,
242, 304n47
- Hijaz, 51, 131, 133, 149, 160, 180, 200
- ḥimāya*, 27, 35, 40–41, 44. See also *khafāra*
- Ḥimyar, 10, 132, 285n81
- ḥirāsa*, 40
- Hirschler, Konrad, 167–68, 171
- Ḥisbān (present-day Hisban), 16, 107, 133,
161, 200

- ḥiṣṣa* (share of village lands), 100
History of the Patriarchs, 48–50, 52, 82, 218
Homs, 119, 121–22, 199, 203, 210
honey, 186, 246, 297n119
Horbat Ma'on, 108
horsemen (riders), 48, 52, 74, 81–83, 89, 203, 205, 219–221, 223, 239, 243, 290n83; levy of, 74, 80–82, 89, 221
horses, 41, 127, 152, 200, 210, 223, 226, 228, 242; ban on riding, 215, 222, 224–26, 230–32; as booty, 220, 225, 229–30, 238; in popular epics, 174, 176, 178, 186; pure bred, 144, 200
hospitality dues, 76–77, 110, 231, 250
Hospitaller Order of St. John, 16, 48, 61, 65–68, 97, 101
Ḥudhayfa b. Badr, 176–78
Ḥulwān (present-day Helwan), 116, 156
- Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, 169
Ibn al-'Adīm (d. 660/1262), 49, 114, 281n85, 144, 149
Ibn al-'Adīm, Jamāl al-Dīn (d. 787/1385), 130
Ibn al-'Arabī, 145, 149
Ibn al-Athīr, 110, 294n59
Ibn al-Bārīzī, 130
Ibn al-Dawādārī, 59, 147, 174–75, 188, 223–24
Ibn al-Faramāwī, 56
Ibn al-Ḥājj (d. 737/1336), 170, 226
Ibn al-Ḥanash, 203–4, 209
Ibn al-Jāmūs, 203
Ibn al-Jī'ān, 127, 238, 241
Ibn al-Kalbī (d. 204/819), 9, 49, 113
Ibn al-Muqarrab, Muwaffaq al-Dīn 'Alī, 144
Ibn al-Qalānisī, 41, 51
Ibn al-Qifī, 114
Ibn al-Ṣā'igh, Abū al-Mu'ayyad, 169
Ibn al-Sha'ār, al-Mubārak b. al-Bakr, 144
Ibn al-Ṭuwayr, 52
Ibn Arslān (or Raslān), Shihāb al-Dīn, 133
Ibn Baqar, 251–52, 283n27
Ibn Duqmāq, 127, 227, 230–31, 237
Ibn Faql Allāh al-'Umarī. *See* al-'Umarī
Ibn Ḥabīb, 133
Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1449), 109, 129–30, 133
Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī (d. 974/1566), 148
- Ibn Ḥawqal, 28, 33, 36, 38, 40–41, 49
Ibn Ḥijjī, Shihāb al-Dīn, 16, 133, 154, 206–7, 209
Ibn Hilāl al-Dawla, 203–4
Ibn Humām, Kamāl, 177–78
Ibn Iyās, 230, 243, 251
Ibn Jinnī, 143
Ibn Jubayr, 97
Ibn Kathīr, 171, 196
Ibn Khaldūn: on Arabic language, 142, 145–47, 149; on Arabs of Syria, 200; on Arabs of Upper Egypt, 126–27, 216, 227, 231, 236; on Circassian lineage, 204; on definition of Arabness, 125; dichotomy of *badw* and *ḥaḍar*, 11–12, 14; on dress, 155; *Muqaddima* of, 12; on popular epics, 13, 171–73, 177, 189, 212; on pre-Islamic Arabs, 176
Ibn Mammātī, 116, 127
Ibn Nāzīr al-Jaysh, 206
Ibn Qādī Shuhba, 133, 197, 203
Ibn Rajab, 171
Ibn Rif'a, 148
Ibn Rushd (d. 1198), 152
Ibn Ruzzīq, 50, 120
Ibn Sa'īd (d. 1286), 154
Ibn Ṣaṣrā, 200, 202–4, 206–7, 212
Ibn Shukr al-Shaybī, 53
Ibn Taghrī Birdī, 49, 249
Ibn Taymiyya, Taqī al-Dīn, 18, 289n54; on popular epics, 170–72; on Qays and Yaman, 195–96, 204, 210, 212
Ibn Tha'lab, Fakhr al-Dīn Isma'īl, 127, 216–18, 221
Ibn Tha'lab, Ḥiṣn al-Dīn, 3, 214–16, 218–20, 250
Ibn Thaqāla, 208
Ibn Ṭūlūn, 206
Ibwān, 52–53
'*idād* (levy on livestock), 187, 200, 223
Idhnā, 99, 101, 105, 196
Igarashi, Daisuke, 245
Ihrīt, 30, 84
Ikhhīm, 37, 219
Ilkhanid, 196, 699
iltizām, 236
iqṭā', 5–7, 197, 208, 221, 253, 256; of Arab clans or leaders, 36–37, 42–43, 47, 50–53, 55, 67, 118, 120, 124, 194, 198–99, 201, 208, 210, 217, 222–23, 231, 233–35, 237–38,

iqṭā' (continued)

241–43, 244, 247–48; under the Buyids, 41; decline of, 232, 234–35, 253; under the Fatimids, 26–27, 32, 36–38, 42–44, 50–52, 55, 69, 118; hereditary among the Arabs, 223; *iqṭā' al-ʾrṭidād*, 52; in Mamluk Palestine, 93, 111; non-Arab *iqṭā'* holders, 9, 51, 53, 205–6, 213, 215, 224, 226, 228–29, 232, 234, 236, 241, 249–50; in *Villages of the Fayyum*, 73–74, 76, 78–79, 83, 86–88, 90
Iraq, 3, 27, 40–41, 44, 110, 113, 120, 123; emergence of popular epics in, 166, 168, 169, 188, 254; illustrations of the *maqāmāt* from, 152, 157; *qāf* pronunciation in, 141, 144, 148, 165
Irbil, 144, 179
irrigation, 48, 73–74, 78–80, 87, 103, 224, 240–41, 246–48; officials, 73, 79, 118, 128, 198
Irwin, Robert, 193
Islamization, 5, 83, 88–89, 94, 106–9, 111, 253. *See also* conversion
Ismaʿīl ibn Māzin al-Hawwārī, 236–37
Ismaʿīl ibn Yūsuf (amir of the Hawwāra), 239
Issac b. Joseph Chelo, 101
Iyās al-Jarkasī, 206
izār, or *mīʾzar*, 151, 224

Jaʿāfira. *See* Banū Jaʿfar
Jabal ʿĀmila, 121
Jabal Banu Hilāl, 197
Jabaliyya (auxiliary force), 194, 197–200, 211
Jābir b. al-Walid al-Mudlijī, 28
jacquerie, 215, 225
Jaffa, 60
Jāhiliyya (pre-Islamic Arabia), 1, 9–10, 13, 51, 54, 109–10, 136, 142, 166, 174, 176–80, 182–86, 193, 195, 197, 204, 207, 212, 254
James, Boris, 10, 14
Jammāʾil, 65
Jarm, 104, 118
Jawjar, 245
Jawlān (Golan), 200
Jaydūr, 208
Jazīra, 1, 25, 27, 39–40, 42, 44–45, 166, 168–69
Jean de Joinville, 89, 155–56
Jenin, 121, 210

Jerash, 162
Jerusalem, 42, 103, 121, 160, 207–9, 211; governor of, 102, 206–7; Islamic court of, 2, 16, 92–93, 95, 200, 209; rural hinterland of, 66, 93–97, 100–101, 106–7, 111, 122–23, 158, 160, 163, 197–98, 206, 209, 255, 269n95. *See also* Haram al-Sharif documents, Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem
Jews, 15, 38, 42, 45, 52, 90–91, 101, 122, 169, 188, 190; dialect of, 141, 149; of Khaybar, 90; shared shrines with Muslims, 108
jinn, 203
Jirjā (Girga), 233, 236–38, 240
Jirja b. Bifām, 28, 30–32, 84
Jisreen, 209
Jīt, 64
Johns, Jeremy, 16, 162
Jordan Valley, 13, 65, 121, 207
Jordan. *See* Transjordan
Judhām, 42–43, 49–54, 82, 116, 118, 126, 172, 223, 269n92, 283n18
Judhayma, 118
Juhayna, 35, 37–38, 49, 51, 116, 122, 130, 194, 229
Jumayl, Usāma, 11, 255

kafā'a (in marriage), 125
kafāla (surety), 95, 102–3
Kafrsūsyā, 203, 209
Kahlān, 146
Kanz al-Dawla, 35. *See also* Banū Kanz
Karak, 104, 134, 150, 160–61, 196–98, 200, 202, 205, 211, 240
kāshifs, 207, 227–28, 231, 233, 237, 240;
kāshif al-ʾurbān, 175
keeping the peace, 77, 93–94, 96, 102–3, 222
khafāra (protection), 26–28, 30–34, 38, 40; and *khafārat mulk*, 30; and *iqṭā'*, 44, 86; in Iraq and the Jazīra, 27, 40; in Sinai, 240; in Sirat ʿAntar, 187; in Syria, 41
Khalaf b. Naṣr Shams al-Dawla Abū ʿAlī, 120
Khālīd b. al-Walīd, 118, 121
Khān al-Ifranj (Khān Banī Saʿd), 99, 103, 108
Kharāj. *See* land tax
Kharibtā, 28
khawli al-baḥr. *See* irrigation
Khāyirbak, 250
Khirbat Kaʿkul, 160
Khirbat Rūḥā, 3, 113, 133–35, 206

- Khirbet Beth Loya, 43
 Kināna, 118, 125, 130, 133 285n81
 Kinda, 122, 285n81
 Köprülü, Mehmet, 189
 Kruk, Remke, 182
 Kufa, 40
kuffiya, 254
 Kūfiyya (village), 98
 Kurds, 10, 14; and Kurdish amirs, 119, 198;
 under Buyids, 27, 40, 44; genealogy of,
 10; in Ottoman surveys, 13, 255; division
 into Qays and Yaman, 212
 Kutāma, 35

 Lakhm, 51, 115–17, 126, 132
 land tax, 2, 6, 26, 31, 34, 74, 76–78, 89, 121,
 124, 127, 207–8, 214, 221, 225, 228–32,
 235–36, 238, 241, 244, 249–51, 256;
 munājaza, 77; in *Sīrat ‘Antar*, 187
 Larcher, Pierre, 143
 Latin charters, 2, 16, 18, 48, 61–63, 66, 68,
 97, 106, 163, 198. *See also* Hospitallers
 Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, 2, 5, 18, 20,
 47–48, 51, 59–61, 65–66, 69, 97, 101,
 106, 111
 Lawāta, 36, 48–50, 53, 174, 220; in the
 Fayyum, 75, 80–81, 84
 leadership in prayer, 143, 148–49, 170
 Levy-Rubin, Milka, 106
 lineage claims, 5–7, 10, 19, 35, 109–10,
 113, 121, 124, 128, 130, 136, 217, 249,
 254; in cities, 130; disputed, 118,
 124, 129, 134; on tombstones, 217.
 See also genealogy
lithām, 3, 139–40, 150–57, 164–65, 188, 254
 livestock, 12–14, 16, 64, 73, 101, 108, 208,
 223; goats, 60; of nomads, 77, 89; pigs,
 107; ratio of goats to sheep, 108; sheep,
 53, 60; sheepskin, 156; in Sinai, 240;
 small cattle, 14, 36, 38, 45, 50, 64, 186,
 200, 223, 228–29. *See also* camels, cattle,
 horses
 Livingston, Daisy, 78

 Madīnat al-Fayyūm, 83–86
 Madyan (Sufi shaykh), 244
 Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), 151
 Mālikī, 128, 151–52
 Mallawī, 228
 Mamjāna, 28

mamlūk military elite, 120, 202, 221, 240,
 245, 306n4. *See also* slaves
 Mandeville, 245
 Manfalūt, 116, 217, 229
maqāmāt, illustrations of the, 16, 151–54,
 156–57
 Mardā, 65
 Marj (of Damascus), 122, 199–200, 207
 Marj Banī ‘Āmir (Jezreel Valley), 108–9
 marriage, 14, 25, 27–28, 30, 32, 124–25, 182,
 201, 204; contracts, 25, 30, 45, 113,
 131–32; divorce, 50, 148
mawlā (client, protégé), 33, 118, 130
 Mecca, 145, 180, 182, 229
 Medina, 97
 Melisende (Queen), 62, 64
 merchants, 12, 36, 45, 47, 58, 106, 132, 155,
 156, 182, 199, 201, 222, 245; European,
 156, 220, 233, 245, 250; Jewish, 15, 47;
 as target of revolts, 225, 232; as tax
 farmers, 250
 Meri, Josef, 108
 Michel, Nicolas, 87, 100
 migration: as myth of origin, 7, 90, 128, 130,
 135–36, 254, 257; of peasants, 48, 62, 65,
 68, 75, 83, 88, 134, 203, 206, 247–48; of
 potters, 162; seasonal, 14, 126, 236; of
 tribes, 1, 7–8, 11, 38, 45, 51, 54, 108–9,
 125–26, 135, 139, 142, 149, 166, 186, 200,
 204, 236, 254
mihmindār, 112, 114, 175
miḥrāth, 97
 Miṭāsh (Timurbughā al-Ashrafī), 201–5,
 207–9, 211
 Minyat al-Uṣqf, 79, 81, 84
 Minyat Aqnā, 77–78, 80
 Minyat Ghamr, 50, 116, 118
 Minyat Ibn Khaṣīb (present-day al-Minyā),
 230
 monasteries, 1, 4, 26, 29, 34, 38, 43, 73, 84,
 107
 Monastery of Ibn Maqqār, 36
 Monastery of Mt. Sion, 209
 Monastery of Naqlūn, 32–34, 85
 Monastery of Qalamūn, 28–30
 Monastery of St. Catherine, 15–16, 48,
 54–59, 67, 107, 185, 223, 227, 234–35,
 240–42; documentary corpus of, 54–55,
 240–41
 Mongols, 5, 19, 114, 119, 199, 211, 224

- Montreal (Transjordan), 66
 mosques, 43, 73–74, 84–85, 94, 101, 107, 152, 189, 203, 254; Friday Mosques, 65, 74, 85, 208, 217
 Mosul, 39, 41, 44, 45, 114, 144, 156
 Mouton, Jean-Michel, 57
 Muḍar, 40, 121–22, 180; Arabic of, 146, 149
 Mughultāy, ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, 169
 Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā al-‘Ā’idhī, 240
 Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar Abū al-Sunūn, 237–38
 Muhayyā b. ‘Ulwān, 119
 Mu‘izz b. Bādis, 38
 Mujallī b. Khalīfa, 130
 Müller, Christian, 92–93
muqaddam (of Arab troops), 49–50, 52–53, 58, 67, 82, 118, 197–98, 202–3, 205–6, 209–10, 216, 222–23
 Mūsā b. Muhannā, 121
 Mūsā ibn ‘Umar, leader of the Hawwāra, 239
 music, 107, 155, 172, 290n81, 297n113
mutadarrikūn, 245, 247, 250
muwallad, 56, 59, 67; in *Sīrat ‘Antar*, 185
muzārī, 53, 76, 249

nabaḥī, 172, 186
 Nablus, 2, 13, 47–48, 61–68, 97, 101, 103, 106–7, 121, 132–33, 197, 207, 209
 Naḥālīn, 99, 104–6
 Najd, 123, 166, 172
naqīb al-ashrāf, 113–14, 129, 132, 209
naqīb al-‘urbān, 175
 Naqīdat Banī Fulays, 127
 Naṣībīn, 41, 44
 Nāṣir al-Dawla, 41
 Nawā, 122, 132
 Negev, 101, 108
 Nirenberg, David, 90
nisba (as written evidence of lineage), 134
 Nizār, ancestor of the Arabs, 121, 180
 nomads, 3, 8, 13–14, 18, 28, 36, 41, 45, 48, 52, 54–55, 58, 63–64, 67, 126, 197, 199, 201, 207, 256–57; and Black Death, 226–27; conflict with sedentary, 11–12; in European narratives, 60, 68, 102, 155; in the Fayyum 74, 77; in popular epics, 185; and settling down, 6–7, 11, 43, 88, 90, 108; as “true Arabs”, 121–23, 128. *See also* migration

 North Africa (Maghreb), 9–10, 25, 35, 36, 38, 49, 59, 128, 142, 120, 151, 165, 166, 170–74, 189, 226; dialect of, 142, 145, 148–49; migrants and travellers from, 59, 128, 226
 Nu‘ayr (Amīr al-‘Arab), 201–2, 204
 Nu‘ayr (clan), 133
 Nūb Ṭarīf, 117
 Nūbā (Bethnoble), 60, 96, 99, 102–3, 105
 Nubia, 216, 224, 229
 Numayr, 40, 196
 Nūr al-Dīn Zengi, 51, 53, 199
 Nusayris, 197

 olives, 93–96, 105, 108; olive oil, 96–7, 100
 orchards, 36, 41, 58–59, 67, 74, 79, 84–87, 104–5, 156, 217, 219, 241; orchardists, 12, 81
 Ottomans, 8, 13, 89, 155, 212, 255–57; cadastral surveys by, 13–14, 93, 100, 105, 239, 255–57; conquest of Egypt and Syria, 21, 233, 236, 245, 251–52, 255; Kanunname of 1525, 255–56
 oxen, 14, 60, 156–57, 224, 228; as booty, 225, 238. *See also* cattle

 palms, 32, 36, 41, 54, 105; dates, 186
 parrotfish, 107
 pastoralism. *See* nomads
 pasturage, 63–64, 108, 200, 240, 275n9; purchase of rights to, 60, 89, 273n63, 274n88
 Paul, Jürgen, 40
 Persian, 113, 143, 150, 294n44
 petitions, 15, 31, 54–58, 67, 78, 131, 249
 pilgrimage (Hajj), 51, 104, 150, 200, 217, 229
 pilgrimage guide, 107, 111
 Piloti, Emmanuel, 220, 245–46, 250
 poetry, 12, 17, 110, 115, 126, 130–32, 144, 154, 166, 170, 175, 172, 175, 177–78, 180, 182, 184, 212, 227
 Pohl, Walter, 182
 Poliak, A. N., 214, 255
 poll tax, 28, 32, 65, 73–74, 79, 83–86, 90, 225
 popular epics. *See* *siyar*
 postal stations, 223, 242
 pottery. *See* handmade geometrically painted wares
 poultry, 14, 76

- Prawer, Joshua, 63
 pre-Islamic. *See* Jāhiliyya
 private ownership of land, 5, 27, 32, 40–41, 69, 105, 249
 pronunciation, 16, 133, 145; of *daqīq* (“wheat”), 144, 147; of *qāf*, 4, 17, 141–50, 154, 164–65, 188, 225, 254; Prophetic pronunciation, 145–47, 149
 Prophet Muḥammad, 5, 90, 109–10, 113, 124, 170, 221, 245; in *Sīrat ‘Antar*, 182–85
 protection. *See* *khafāra*
 public treasury (*bayt al-māl*), 96
- qabāla*, 31–32, 34
qabīla (tribe, pl. *qabā’il*), 19–20, 50, 65, 122–24, 126, 132, 176, 185, 195, 197–98, 210, 220
qādī, 2, 16, 36, 53, 92, 95, 101, 117, 123, 129, 131–33, 134, 196, 205, 230; of the peasants, 209
 Qaḥṭān, 110, 114, 120–21, 180, 184, 193
 Qā’itbāy (Sultan), 245
 Qalandiyya, 106
 Qalāwūn (Sultan), 234; memorandum of, 222–23
 Qalqashanda, 3, 123, 175–77
 Qāniṣawh al-Ghawrī (Sultan), 244
 Qarāfa cemetery, 189, 217, 231
 Qarmāṭī, 45
qasāma (a sworn undertaking), 93, 96, 195
 Qashshāsh b. Shabīb al-‘Āmirī, 28, 32–33, 266n17. *See also* Abū al-Khayr b. Qashshāsh
 Qassām al-Ḥārithī, 41
qawm, 38, 63, 115, 118, 134
 Qayrawan, 38, 223
 Qays (tribe), 28, 172
 Qays al-‘Absī, 176–77
 Qays and Yaman, 1, 3, 19–20, 146, 193–207, 210–12, 253; during Barqūq-Minṭāsh civil war, 201–5; in Egypt, 194, 215, 227–28; among Kurds, 212; Mamluk recognition of, 194, 205–6; in *Sīrat ‘Antar*, 176, 180, 184–85; in Umayyad Syria, 193, 211
 Qirwāsh b. Ḥumayd, 25, 27, 45
 Quran, 49, 50, 113, 143; Quran reciters, 145, 149
 Quraysh, 37, 116, 121–22, 125, 130, 132
- Qūs Narmuda (Narmouthis), 28
 Qūṣ, 13, 82, 218–19, 237, 239
 Qushayr, 40
 Quṣūr, 206
- Rafah, 223
 Ramallah, 93, 97, 99, 103–6, 109
 Ramatha (present-day al-Rām), 66, 106
 Ramla, 41–42, 133, 278n16
 Rammūn, 99, 103, 105, 255, 279n34
 Raqqā, 39
 register (of tribes), 51, 112, 119
 reoccupation of rural sites, 74, 83, 88–89, 94, 111, 122, 135, 161
 revolts, 9, 11, 35–36, 45, 50, 147, 224–26, 231–32, 201, 250; of al-Aḥḍab, 226–232, 238; al-Asadī’s explanation of, 210, 235, 247; in al-Buḥayra, 244; in Damascus, 207; in Hawran, 208; of Ibn Tha’lab, 219–21, 250; ideology of, 220; in Palestine, 41; in Upper Egypt, 3, 20, 35, 38, 82, 120, 212, 214–16
 Reynolds, Dwight, 187, 254
 Richards, D. S., 93
 riders. *See* horsemen
 Riḍwān b. Walkhashī, 50
 Rouighi, Ramzi, 9
routiers, 64
 Rustow, Marina, 44
- Sabra, Adam, 243
 Sa’d b. Abī Waqqāṣ, 3, 134
 Sadan, Joseph, 186
 Safed, 133, 159, 206–9
 Saft Giza, 36
 Sāhiliyya (near Tiberias), 133
 Sajdi, Dana, 107
 Sakhā, 50, 52
 Saladin, 5, 48, 51, 54–55, 57, 69, 107, 111, 114, 118, 130, 216
 Salamiyya, 199
 Saleh, Mohamed, 86
 Ṣāliḥ Ibn Yaḥyā (d. 839/1436), 51
 Samalūt, 217
 Samaw’al al-Maghribī, 169, 188, 190
 Ṣanhāja, 151
 Santo Brasca, 245
 Ṣarkhad, 121, 264n38, 271n6
 Ṣawl Canal, 115
 seed advances, 53, 78, 94, 96, 104, 111

- Seleth (Sīlat al-Dhahr), 48, 61, 64, 67–68, 101
 Seljuks, 39, 45, 118, 144
 semi-sedentary, 11, 14
 Shādhī (Sultan), 150
 Shāfiʿī, 30, 92, 125, 129, 132, 143, 148
 sharecropping, 58
 Shāwar (vizier), 49–51, 53
 Shawbak, 58, 134
 Shaybat Shaqqāra, 250
 Shaykh al-ʿArab (or Amīr al-ʿArab, in Egyptian provinces), 243–44, 251
 Shaykhū (amir), 227–31
 Shayzar, 122, 209
 sheep. *See* livestock
 Shiʿa, 25, 170, 172–73, 197, 206–7
shidda (environmental and political crisis of 1068–74), 15, 26, 45, 48, 52, 69
 Shīrkūh, 51
 shrines (rural), 16, 107–8, 111, 168, 189, 254
 Sībawayh (d. c. 180/796), 142
 Sidon, 97, 99, 209
 Sīla (Fayyum), 85
 Sīlat al-Dhahr. *See* Seleth
 silk, 25, 45, 52, 131, 154
 Sinai, 15, 20, 48, 51, 54–59, 60, 64, 67–68, 155, 175, 219, 223–24, 227, 234, 239, 242–43. *See also* Monastery of St. Catherine
 Sindibīs, 177
 Singer, Amy, 100, 255
 Sinjār, 40
 Sinnūris, 80, 84
 Sīrat Aḥmad al-Danif, 170–71
 Sīrat Alexander, 169, 188, 295n71
 Sīrat ʿAlī al-Zaybaq, 167, 170
 Sīrat ʿAntar, 3–4, 16, 133, 166, 168–90, 201, 212, 230, 254; and Abbasid literature, 170, 188; Abraham’s story in, 180, 182, 184; and al-Qalqashandī, 175–78; clans in, 184–87; Dāḥis and al-Ghabrāʾ in, 174, 176, 179, 180, 186; in Ibn al-Dawādārī, 174–75; idols, 182, 183, 185; and the Kaʿba, 180; manuscripts of, 16, 174, 179–80, 187–88, 295n73; nomads and peasants in, 185–86; as origin myth of the Arabs, 168, 178–84; and the Prophet Muḥammad, 182–83; putative narrators of, 172; recitation of, 170, 187; and Shaybūb, 174, 177, 186; slavery in, 185; and Zabība (ʿAntar’s mother), 182
 Sīrat Banū Hilāl, 3, 13, 166, 171–74, 177, 189, 254; as origin myth, 171–72
 Sīrat Baybars, 166, 168, 178, 186, 188–89
 Sīrat Dhāt al-Himma and al-Baṭṭāl, 3, 166, 168–71, 173–74, 177–79, 187–89, 212, 254
 Sīrat Ḥamza, 172–73
 Sīrat Sayf b. Dhī Yazan, 167, 178, 183–84, 188, 292n11
siyar (popular epics), 166–90; credulous attitude to, 167, 171–72, 176–78; emergence, 3–4, 166, 169–71; in the Geniza, 190; and group identity, 13, 168, 177; language of, 17, 167, 188–89; and Mamluk sultans, 189; manuscript copies, 16, 166, 178–79, 188–89; as origin myths, 168, 174, 183–84; performance of, 169–70, 172, 254; reading notes, 179; rural audience, 168, 171–75; scholarly opposition to, 167–68, 170–71, 173; storytellers of, 3, 169, 171, 173, 179; and tomb visitation, 189
 slaves, 33, 63, 66–67, 155, 251; owned by Arabs in Upper Egypt, 130–32; enslavement of Arab rebels, 197, 230, 238; female, 25, 32, 49, 131, 154; manumitted, 36; in the *maqāmāt*, 152, 156; in Sīrat ʿAntar, 183, 185; as troops, 5, 35, 216, 220–21, 246, 250. *See also* *mamlūk*, *muwallad*
 sleeves, 155, 157
 small cattle. *See* livestock
 Sneath, David, 19
 Sowayan, Saʿd, 172
 stablemen, 147, 180
 Stern, Edna, 162
 stew, 161, 164
 Stewart, Frank, 11–12, 256
 Subk (in al-Minūfiyya), 132
 Suez (al-Qulzum), 223, 239–40
 Sufism, 12, 64–65, 125, 155, 195, 226; alliance of Sufi saints and Arab families, 231, 239, 244, 256; Sufi shrines, 85, 107, 254
 sugarcane, 76, 79, 84, 161, 228, 233, 237–38, 243
 Sūhāj, 219
 sumac, 101, 108
 Sunqur al-Manṣūrī, 224
 surplus (sale of), 77–78, 94, 96, 100, 111, 235, 248
 Suwayd of Judhām, 118, 283n18

- Syrian desert, 14, 114, 120, 122, 126, 155, 163, 194, 199–202, 211
Szombathy, Zoltán, 9
- Tabaristan, 143
Tadmur, 122, 199
taḥnik (tucking the loose ends of the turban under the chin), 150–52, 157
Taḥta al-Qal'a (in Damascus), 204
Talfita, 41, 202
Ṭalit, 30, 33, 88
Tall Ṭanbūl, 117
Tamerlane (Tīmūr Lank), 154, 207, 209, 234, 243
Tamīm al- Dārī, 109–110, 121, 207
Tanabtawayh Canal, 80
Tanta, 12
Taqdūs (present-day Daqados), 117
Ṭarīf b. Maknūn, 118
Tarqūmiya, 99, 102, 105
ṭarṭūr caps, 154. *See also* headgear
Ṭayība al-Ism (present-day Taybeh), 99, 103
ṭaylasān shawls, 77, 156, 289n60
Tell Hisban. *See* Ḥisbān
Templars, 66
tenants, 5–6, 12, 30–32, 41, 59, 66, 74, 76, 79, 86–90, 93–94, 112, 186; and collective tenancy leases, 6, 19, 77, 87, 89, 94, 111, 135; usufruct rights of, 256
tents, 13, 25, 45, 48, 52, 60–65, 68, 82, 89, 126, 182, 185, 200, 210, 222, 256
textiles, 84–86, 119, 132, 155, 246; as booty, 230
Thietmar, 58, 60, 64
Tiberias, 39, 41–42, 133, 155
Tihāma, 123
Ṭimā, 228, 230
Tomb of the Patriarchs. *See* Hebron
toponymy (village names), 7, 89, 108, 127
transport, 64; by camels, 38, 208, 223, 309n62; of harvests, 51, 77, 162, 208, 216
tribal confederacies, 1–3, 8–9, 19–20, 35, 37, 74–75, 79–80, 82, 103, 111, 113, 115–19, 151, 155, 171, 176, 184, 211–12, 221–22, 240, 243, 244, 251. *See also* Qays and Yaman
tribal territories. *See* *diyār*
tribes. *See* *qabīla*, tribal confederacies
Tripoli (Lebanon), 97
Tripoli (Libya), 35, 38
Ṭūbhār, 77, 250
Ṭūmān Bāy (Sultan), 251
Turcomans, 10, 13, 17, 54, 60, 97, 119, 172, 200, 202, 208–9, 223
Turkic, Turks, 10, 54, 126, 156; military elites, 5, 6, 41, 82, 218–20, 246, 250–51; popular epics of, 172–73, 189
ṭuruqiyya (street charlatans), 170, 173
Ṭuṭūn (Tebtynis), 28, 30, 32, 84, 88
Tyre, 97, 210
- Umayyads, 27–28, 32, 193, 208, 211, 272n44; in popular epics, 166, 170, 173, 177
Umm al-Jimāl, 160, 281n81
Umm al-Khayr (Banū Kanz princess), 131–32
‘Uqayl (clan), 39, 40, 144
‘Uqayl b. Ḥudayj, 28, 30, 266n16
Uqlūl, 25, 26, 28, 32–33, 89
‘urbān, 2, 17–18, 47–54, 67–68, 82, 124, 215–16, 219–221, 226–30, 235, 237, 243–45, 257; collaboration with the Franks, 51; Dīwān al-‘urbān, 223; dress of, 139, 150, 152, 154–55, 157, 164, 224–25; emergence of, 49, 54–55; etymology, 17; in the Fayyum, 74, 80–82, 89–90; iqtā‘ grants for, 52, 201; *kāshif al-‘urbān*, 175; *muqaddam al-‘urbān*, 49–50, 82, 118, 209; *naqīb al-‘urbān*, 175; under Ottomans, 255–56; in Palestine, 104, 255; and peasants, 6, 52, 202, 208, 210, 224–26, 229, 246–49, 251, 255; *qabā’il al-‘urbān*, 19, 50; in Sinai and al-Sharqiyya, 54–59, 234, 240–42; in Sīrat ‘Antar, 179, 182, 186–88; suppression of, 221–26; in Transjordan and Syria, 51, 104, 194, 196, 199–202, 204, 207, 209, 211, 255; *zāwiyat al-‘urbān*, 231. *See also* auxiliary forces
Usāma ibn Munqidh, 49, 50, 216
‘ushrān. *See* ‘ashīr
- van Steenberg, Jo, 208
Vanthieghem, Naim, 33
Venice, 97
Versteegh, K., 142
village guards (*khufarā*), 74, 77–78, 81
village protectors. *See* *khafāra*
villani, 59, 61, 64, 66, 68, 101
vineyards, 31, 41, 108
visitation. *See* shrines

- Wādī al-Ghizlān, 229
Wādī al-Taym, 197, 203
Wādī Banī Zayd, 121
Wādī Baradā, 197, 203
Walker, Bethany, 16, 135
Waqf. See endowments
water buffalos, 203, 225, 238
waterwheels, 76, 156, 228, 237, 239, 243
weapons (of Arabs or villagers), 6, 102, 127, 224, 226, 228, 230; ban on, 41, 216, 222, 225, 231–32, 255; bow and arrows, 219, 245; lances, 131, 135, 144, 150, 154, 222, 245; swords, 34, 131, 144, 152, 154, 203–4, 222, 224, 229
weavers, 84
Webb, Peter, 9
Weitz, Lev, 33
Western Oases (al-Wāḥāt), 36, 38, 224, 238
Wickham, Chris, 7, 32
William of Tyre, 60, 68, 97
women, 12, 25, 26, 30, 32–33, 38, 42, 49, 51, 81, 131–32, 151, 154–55, 164, 197–98, 220, 225, 228–30, 238; in *Sīrat ‘Antar*, 174, 185
Ya’fūr, 203
Yālū, 96
Yāqūt, 108, 217
Yashbak min Mahdī, 239
Yemen, 8, 10, 19, 42, 114, 180, 183
Yosef, Koby, 129
Yotvata, 158–59
Zabīd (Arab clan), 118, 205–6, 211
Ẓāhir al-‘Umar al-Zaydānī (d. 1775), 256
Zakariyā al-Biṭṭikh, 96, 99, 103, 105
Zanāta, 28, 35
zarbūl boots, 150
Zarnīkh (near Esna), 130
Zayd al-Ḥawrānī, 144
Ziftā, 116, 245
Ziyāda, Nicola, 229, 255
Zorzi (Venetian fiscal agent), 97
Zubayr b. al-‘Awām, 129
Zubdat Kashf al-Mamālik, 239, 241, 243
Zufaytā, 177
Zura’, 122, 133, 197