ABU NASR IBN HARUN IBN 'ABD AL-MASIH

A thirteenth-century Coptic copyist whose handwriting was fine, clear, careful, and regular; the texts he copied are pleasantly spaced. Two manuscripts, now united in the Vatican Library (Arabic manuscript 103), provide information about him.

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The first (fol. 1-234/7-240 of the original Coptic numbering) contains the first volume (chapters 1-21a) of the *Summa Theologica* by Mu'taman al-Dawlah ibn al-'Assal, entitled *Majmu' Usul al-Din wa-Masmu' Mahsul al-Yaqin* (Graf, 1947, pp. 409-412). A larger volume contains the rest of the work (chapters 21b-70). Indeed, on folio 234v, Abu Nasr wrote, "Yatlu-hu al-juz' al-thani. Awwaluhu 'min Dawud Ibn Yassa al-Nabi'" (part two follows, beginning "from David son of Jesse, the prophet"). This

corresponds, in a manuscript in the National Library, Paris (Arabe 200; sixteenth century), to folio 155r, line 11. This second volume is now lost.

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The second manuscript is small, being a quinternion (set or gathering of five sheets of paper) contained in folios 235-44 (1-10 of the original

Coptic numbering). It contains the little treatise of Mu'taman al-Dawlah ibn al-'Assal entitled *al-Tabsirah al- Mukhtasarah* (Brief Instruction). A kind of catechism for children and simple people, it is divided into sixteen chapters in two sections: Unity and [Trinity](#) in God, and the Incarnation.

The Brief Instruction was composed in March or April 1260, and the *Summa Theologica* a few years later (cf. Samir, 1984). Abu Nasr copied his manuscript while Ibn al-'Assal was still alive, as can be seen from the invocation that God might prolong the author's life (cf. fol. 236r and 244v). He must have copied it around 1265-1270, probably for Ibn al-'Assal himself.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Samir, K. "Date de composition de la Somme Théologique d'al-Mu'taman b. al-'Assal." *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 50 (1984):94-106.

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