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978-1-107-00775-8 - Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt  
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## Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt

This is the only substantial and up-to-date reference work on the Ptolemaic army. Employing Greek and Egyptian papyri and inscriptions, and building on approaches developed in state-formation theory, it offers a coherent account of how the changing structures of the army in Egypt after Alexander's conquest led to the development of an ethnically more integrated society. A new tripartite division of Ptolemaic history challenges the idea of gradual decline and emphasizes the reshaping of military structures that took place between *c.* 220 and *c.* 160 BC in response to changes in the nature of warfare, to mobilization and demobilization, and to financial constraints. An investigation of the socio-economic role played by soldiers permits a reassessment of the cleruchic system and shows how soldiers' associations generated inter-ethnic group solidarity. By integrating Egyptian evidence, Christelle Fischer-Bovet also demonstrates that the connection between the army and local temples offered new ways for Greeks and Egyptians to interact.

CHRISTELLE FISCHER-BOVET is Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of Southern California.

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*Institut Archaeologii Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego*

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*To my mother and to the memory of my father*

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## Preface

This book emerged from a PhD dissertation defended at Stanford University in June 2008, and it has been revised and expanded to become part of the series *Armies of the Ancient World*. I would like to thank my advisor Joseph Manning for introducing me to the Egyptian side of Hellenistic Egypt and to the use of social theory to approach pre-modern states. From our reading of bilingual families' archives of soldiers, it became clear that a reassessment of the role of military power in Egypt in the centuries after Alexander's conquest was needed. I am grateful for his support throughout the years, his friendship and his trust in my work. The project would not have been the same without the guidance of Walter Scheidel and Ian Morris, whose approach to history and specifically to ancient state formation has profoundly influenced my research. Walter Scheidel's input on the role and cost of armies in the ancient world and his clarity of thought helped me articulate the larger questions at stake in this study. Ian Morris' incisive comments encouraged me to reshape my arguments, improving the project immensely. I am indebted to both of them and to many other faculty and former graduate students at Stanford for their support, including Josh Ober and Richard Roberts, who served on my defense committee, Susan Stephens, Andrew Monson, Eirene Visvardi, Lidewijde De Jong, James Collins and Marcus Folch.

Heartfelt thanks go also to Willy Clarysse, who joined my PhD committee and welcomed me numerous times in Leuven (Belgium). I gained immeasurably from his breadth of knowledge, and his keen eye for detail allowed me to refine the arguments in this manuscript. He shared many ideas and much forthcoming work with me, as did his colleagues Katelijn Vandorpe and Mark Depauw in Leuven and Dorothy Thompson in Cambridge, whose insights on Ptolemaic Egypt were particularly illuminating. To all of these individuals I express my gratitude.

Further thanks are owed to the Stanford Humanities Center, which hosted me as a Geballe fellow, and to the Center for the Tebtunis Papyri at the University of California, Berkeley, where Todd Hickey and his colleagues in the Classics and History Departments welcomed me as a fellow of the Swiss National Science Foundation. Since 2010 I have had an opportunity

to work in a stimulating academic environment, thanks to my colleagues in the Department of Classics at the University of Southern California, who have protected me from various duties.

I am grateful to many scholars who shared their work in advance with me, including Nick Sekunda, Jean-Yves Carrez-Maratray, Thorolf Christensen, John Bauschatz, Philippe Matthey, Andrew Meadow, Cathy Lorber, Daniel Wolff, Sandra Lippert, and the “French triad” Gilles Gorre, Damien Agut-Labrodère and Anne-Emmanuelle Véisse, who also invited me to exchange ideas with other European scholars at a conference devoted to the army in Egypt. At various stages of the project I benefited from discussions with and comments and moral support from friends and colleagues, in particular Saskia Hin, who shared her expertise in demography, John Lee, Stanley Burstein, Uri Yiftach-Firanko, Philip de Souza, Silvia Barbantani, Arthur Verhoogt, Roberta Mazza and Paul Schubert. My gratitude goes also to Carolin Arlt and Darian Totten, as well as to S. Douglas Olson, for their careful reading of the manuscript at different stages and for identifying many errors of writing and thought. Marike Van Aerde, Günther Hölbl and Edda Brescianni generously allowed me to use their photographs for the illustrations. I would also like to thank Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press as well as the editor of the series, Nick Sekunda, and the anonymous reader for Cambridge University Press, for their comments and judicious suggestions about expanding and rearranging the manuscript. Any defects of substance or style are my responsibility alone.

I owe a personal debt to Andrew Monson, with whom I spent countless hours sharing ideas about Hellenistic and early Roman Egypt, discussing the use of social theory and reading papyri. He has been and remains exceptionally inspiring and supportive, and I thank him for opening up new intellectual perspectives for me during my time in graduate school. Finally, I wish to thank my family, especially Denise and Eric Bovet, who read earlier drafts of this book and encouraged me many times over the telephone and during their visits. I also owe an enormous amount to my husband Jean Bovet for his unconditional support, first by flying across the ocean to visit me as often as possible, and then in California for his deep and constant trust in my undertakings. I am particularly grateful to him for leading me through the meanders of many computer software programs while caring for our two children. But none of this would have been imaginable without the support and encouragement of my mother, Anne-Lise Fischer, and her partner, Maurice Frainier. I dedicate this work to her and to the memory of my father, Claude Fischer.

## Notes on abbreviations

I refer to editions of papyri and ostraca according to the abbreviations used in the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, which is updated online.<sup>1</sup> For inscriptions, I use the abbreviations proposed in the *Guide de l'épigraphiste*.<sup>2</sup> For unpublished papyri or inscriptions, I give the inventory number. Unless specific comments from editors are mentioned, editions of all such texts are not included in the bibliography. In many cases, I indicate when a papyrus or inscription has been republished with the sign “=” and provide the date and provenance of the text according to the online database of the *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis des Griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens*, e.g. P.Cair.Zen. II 59254 = SB III 6992 (Arsinoite, 252 BC). *PP* is my abbreviation for Peremans and Van 't Dack's *Prosopographia Ptolemaica*, which collects soldiers and officers in volumes I and II, with corrections in volume VIII. For periodicals, I use the abbreviations of *L'Année philologique*. I have not abbreviated ancient authors' names, in order to make the references as accessible as possible to non-Classicists.

Greek names and proper names are generally given Latinate forms. Egyptian names that appear in Greek texts have been transliterated according to the Greek spelling. When a person is known by two significantly different transliterations, I give both, for example Pachou/Pasas. I indicate in parentheses the vocalization of the most common Demotic words when they occur for the first time (e.g. *mr-mš'*, vocalized *mer-mesha*). Because some sections of this book contain a large number of technical terms, I have compiled a glossary with straightforward definitions, which can be complemented by standard introductions to Hellenistic Egypt.<sup>3</sup> I thus use *chōra*, for example, with its traditional meaning in papyrological studies, referring to all villages and cities of Egypt except the territories of Alexandria, Naucratis and Ptolemais, which are defined as Greek city-states

<sup>1</sup> Sosin *et al.* (2011); [http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist\\_papyri.html](http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist_papyri.html).

<sup>2</sup> Bérard and Briquel (2000).      <sup>3</sup> E.g. Bagnall and Derow (2004), Pestman (1994).

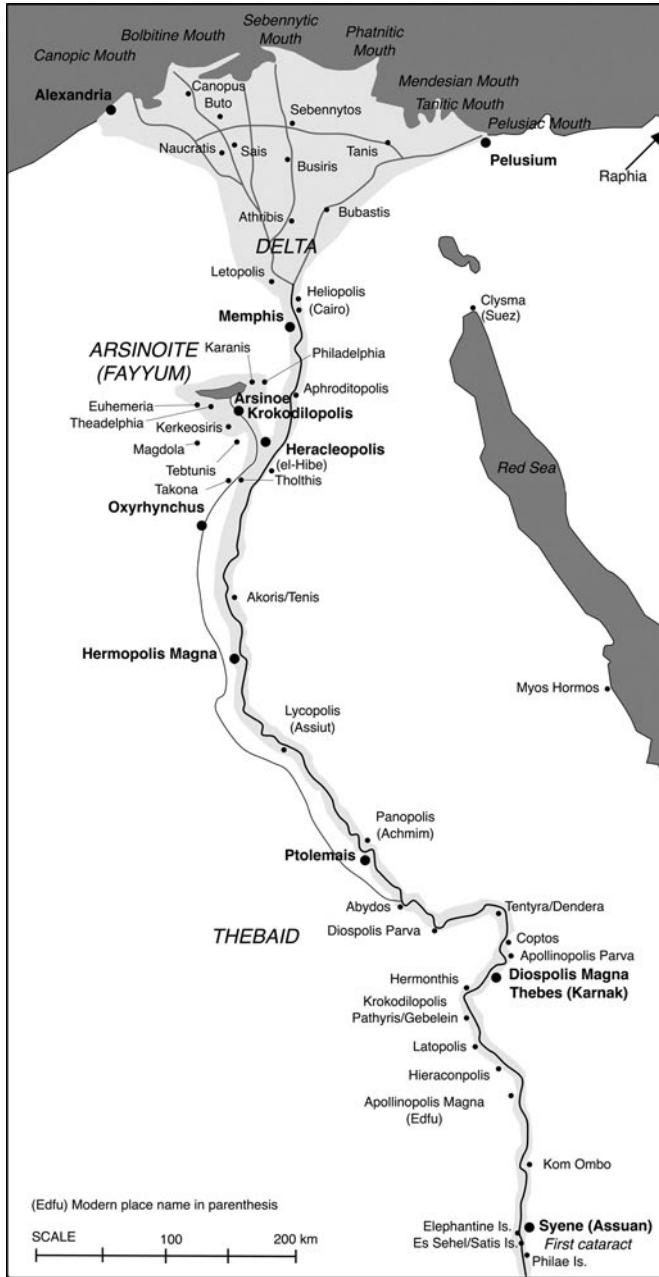
(poleis).<sup>4</sup> To avoid confusion, I generally use the Greek word polis (plural poleis) to distinguish these three places from other Egyptian cities.

<sup>4</sup> Euergetis, a late foundation by the *epistratēgos* Boethos, is regarded by Cohen (2006) 347–8 as a fourth Egyptian polis because the term is used to describe it in the papyri.

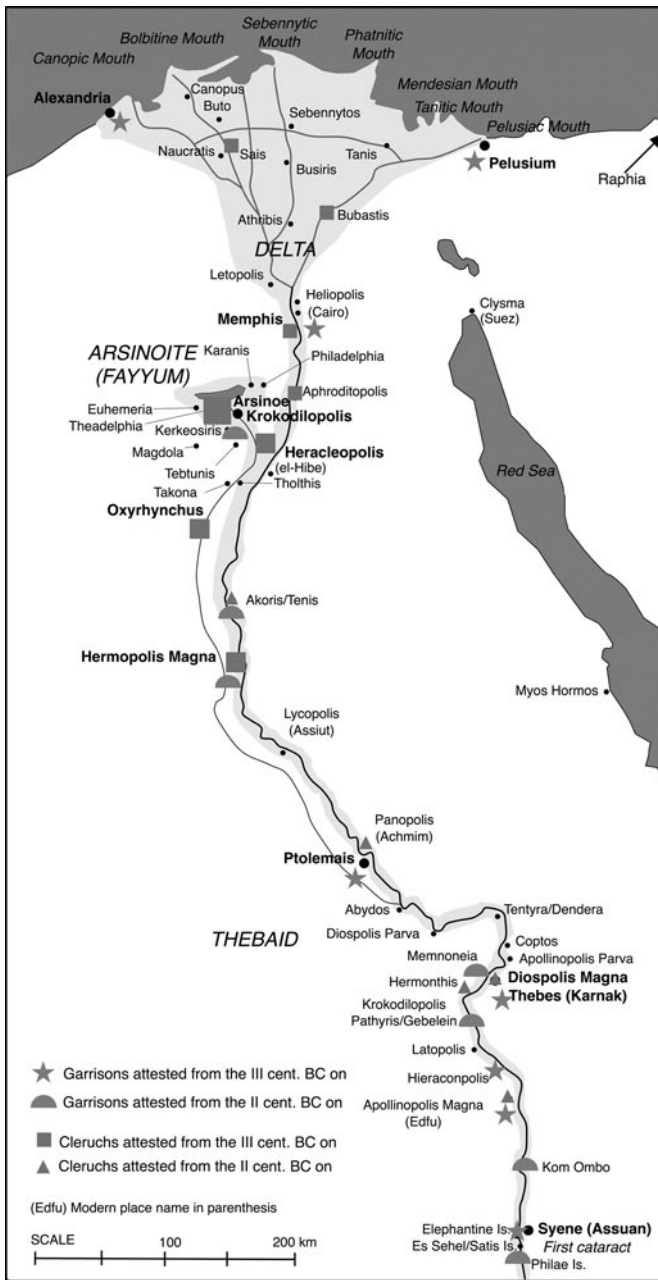
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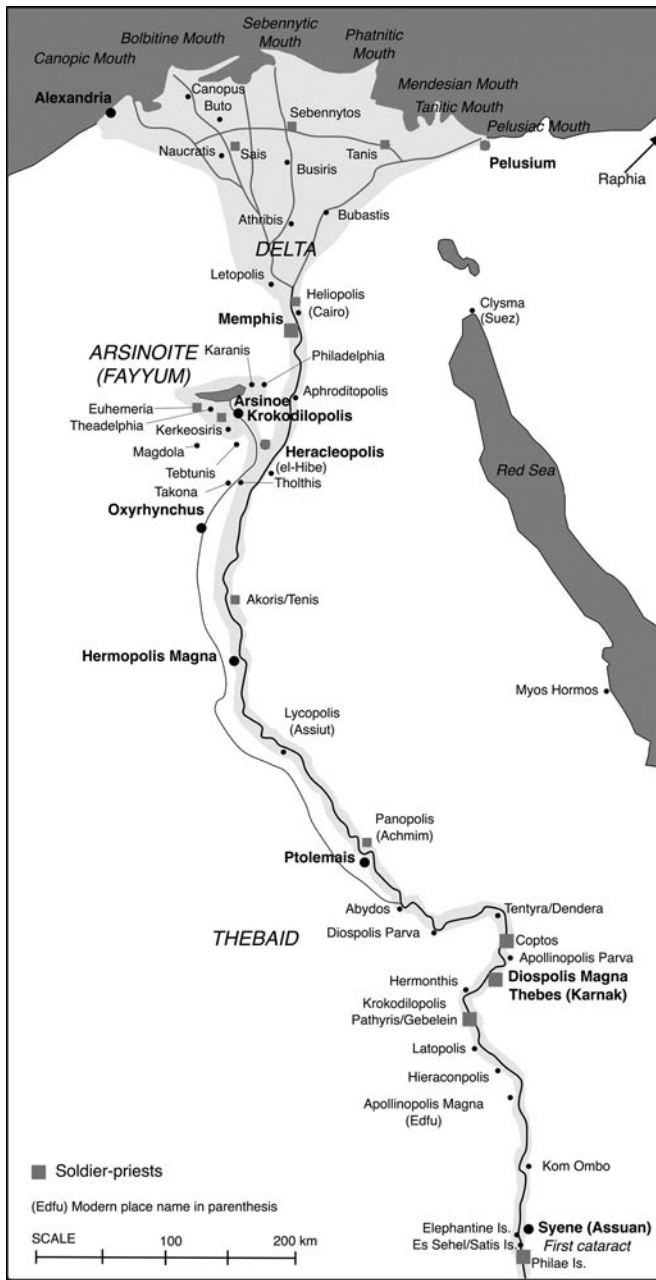
## Maps



Map 1 Map of Egypt

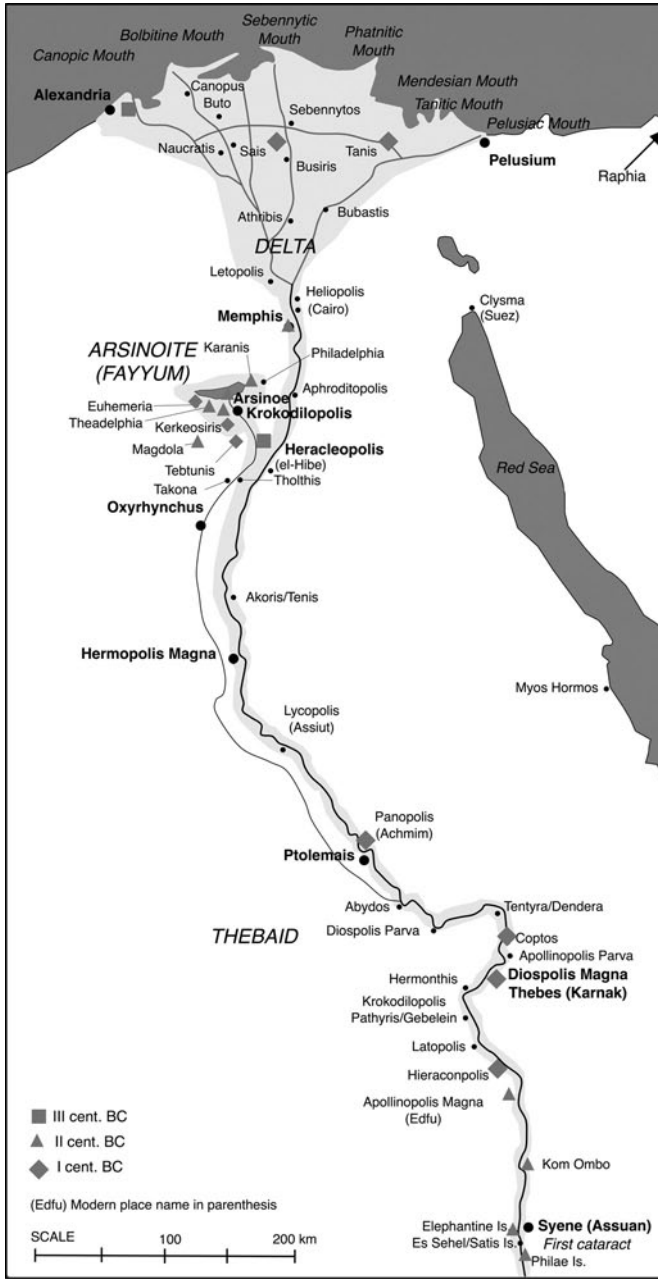


Map 2 Distribution of cleruchs and garrisoned soldiers



Map 3 Distribution of soldiers and officers with priestly functions





Map 4 Soldiers funding Egyptian temple-building