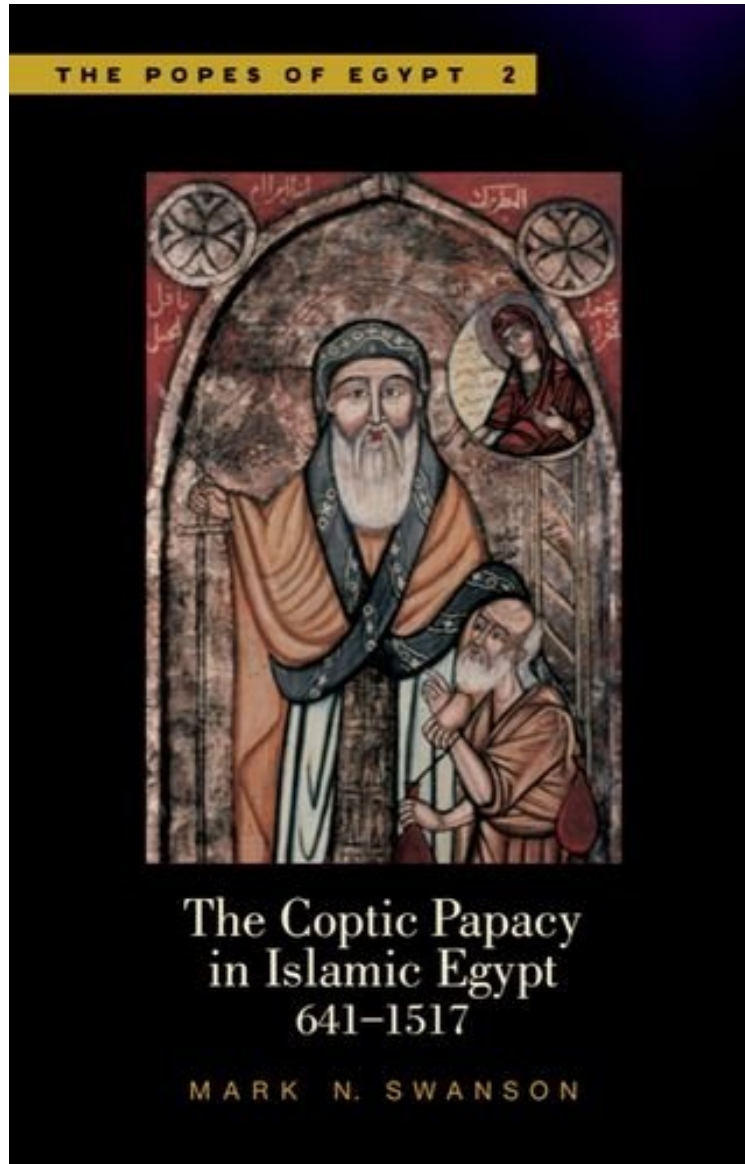


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In Volume 1 of this series, Stephen Davis contended that the themes of apostolicity, martyrdom, monastic patronage,

and theological resistance were determinative for the cultural construction of Egyptian church leadership in late antiquity. Volume 2, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt*, shows that the medieval Coptic popes (641-1517 CE) were regularly portrayed as standing in continuity with their saintly predecessors; however, at the same time they were active in creating something new, the Coptic Orthodox Church, a community that struggled to preserve a distinctive life and witness within the new Islamic world order. The medieval popes are depicted as living martyrs in the Church of the Martyrs, as conductors of an orchestra of holiness, as community representatives hard-pressed by financial obligations and engaged in complex relationships with both Muslim officials and Coptic lay notables, as patrons of a resilient sacred geography that rooted Coptic culture in a network of holy places, and as leaders in both acculturation and resistance to a largely Islamic society. Building on recent advances in the study of sources for Coptic church history, the present volume aims to show how portrayals of the medieval popes provide a window into the religious and social life of their community.