



The Medieval Nile: Route, Navigation, and Landscape in Islamic Egypt

John Cooper

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The book presents a ground-breaking view of the navigational landscape of the Nile in medieval Egypt by drawing on a broad range of sources: medieval Arabic geographies; traveler accounts; archaeology; and meteorological, hydrological, and geological studies.

Its first major section charts the changing geography of the Nile waterways, particularly in the Delta, from the eve of Islam to the early modern period, and logs the "rise and fall" of these waterways for natural and/or anthropogenic reasons. The book then presents a new perspective on the Nile: it draws on traveler accounts and environmental data to portray the river as a uniquely challenging and sometimes dangerous navigational environment requiring extensive local knowledge by skilled and hard-working Nile navigators.

Finally, the book looks at how the main Delta and Red Sea ports of medieval Egypt fitted into the navigational landscape described: it explains how these ports were effected by changes occurring to the navigational landscape, and how they reflected the navigational conditions of the Nile and surrounding seas. The book is richly illustrated with maps and images.

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