

**Towards a History of Immigration to Hellenistic Egypt:  
The Contribution of Ethnic Designations to Research**

The population and demography of Graeco-Roman Egypt have seen a great increase in interest from researchers in recent decades.<sup>2</sup> Scholars have studied these subjects either directly, as their main focus of interest, or indirectly, as part of and as a fundamental factor in the economic history of the country. The chief area of research has so far been the Roman era but the Hellenistic period has sometimes also been studied, at least as an introduction to discussions of later developments. As to the Hellenistic era, the main questions that have occupied researchers so far have been the size of the population of Ptolemaic Egypt and of its capital, Alexandria, population growth and decrease, the distribution and density of the population in general and in the different parts of the country, urbanisation and the proportion of the urban population.

Within the wider research area of the demography of Graeco-Roman Egypt, the closely interrelated problems of immigration and the ethnic composition of the population, questions that are central to the emergence of the Macedonian state in the country and the structure and nature of its society and economy, have sometimes also been discussed or touched upon by recent research. Nevertheless, generally speaking these two intertwining topics have to date remained in the background in comparison with other aspects of the population and demography of Graeco-Roman Egypt. This is clearly unjustified as it is generally recognised that immigration was a fundamental, probably the single most important, factor of population growth and urbanisation, at least in the early Hellenistic period.<sup>3</sup> In this article I shall argue that a key piece of evidence in reconstructing immigration to and the ethnic composition of the population of Hellenistic Egypt has to date remained greatly underutilised by research despite the large amount of available ancient sources and an increasing number of recent studies into them, making the hitherto scattered multilingual evidence more accessible to ancient historians.

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All dates are BC unless otherwise stated. References to ancient sources and scholarly literature conform to the conventions of abbreviation employed in J. F. Oates et al., *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets*, internet edition available at <https://papyri.info/docs/checklist>, and to the abbreviations found in recent epigraphic and Egyptological publications.

It is further important to note in general that in this article all statistical calculations have been done manually as information on ethnic designations is currently not yet available through the 'Trismegistos' data bank (email correspondence with Professor Mark Depauw of the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in September 2019). Human error in these extensive calculations therefore cannot be ruled out. As the precise numbers are frequently changing with more documents being published, the importance of these calculations should be seen as the demonstration of trends rather than the specific numbers.

<sup>2</sup> Without the intention of exhaustiveness, I include here a brief list of some of the most important recent literature on the population and demography of Graeco-Roman Egypt: Delia (1988), Rathbone (1990), Bagnall and Frier (1994), Scheidel (1996), Bagnall (1997a) and (1997b), Lo Cascio (1999), Alston (2001), Scheidel (2001a) and (2001b), Manning (2003) 47-49, Scheidel (2004), P.Count vols. 1-2, Mueller (2006), Manning (2007) 440-42, Rathbone (2007b) 699-700 and 705-06, Monson (2007) and (2012) and Scheidel (2012).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Rathbone (1990) 113-14.

In his seminal study of the population of Graeco-Roman Egypt, a study which gave important new impetus to such research, Dominic Rathbone rightly commented that “we are indeed ill-informed on the scale, chronology and practicalities of Greek immigration under the Ptolemies”.<sup>4</sup> Whilst this was certainly the case at the time Rathbone wrote his inspirational article nearly 30 years ago and in some respects is still true today, the last three decades or so have brought many improvements. These improvements are mainly due to the great increase in new papyrological and, to a lesser extent, epigraphic sources that supply relevant information and to a growing number of papyrological and historical studies on these. Thus, it is now possible to take a fresh look at the questions of immigration to and the ethnic composition of the population of Hellenistic Egypt in the light of these new sources and to assess how the new evidence and the new studies advance our knowledge of these key historical problems.

Previous research into immigration to Hellenistic Egypt has been strongly helleno-centric, which is understandable from the perspective of both the direction of the main historical developments of the period and the academic background of the topic’s researchers. The only exception to some extent has been the study of Jewish immigration and the large Jewish diaspora of Hellenistic Egypt but even this important immigrant group has usually been seen as part of Greek, or at least hellenised, society in Egypt and has tended to be studied as such. In this paper I intend to show in concrete terms that non-Greek immigration was also substantial and that we can and consequently should move away from this traditionally helleno-centric and incomplete picture of immigration to Egypt under Macedonian rule.

In this study I would like to argue that the ethnic designations we find in the documentary sources, both papyrological and epigraphic, in reference to specific individuals can help us greatly in reconstructing some aspects of immigration to and the ethnic composition of the population of Egypt and that these terms constitute the best evidence we currently have for studying these aspects of the demography of the country in the Hellenistic era.

From assessing recent research, ethnic designations have been used only to a very limited extent in studying immigration to and the population of Hellenistic Egypt. One line of research, represented so far only by a brief article<sup>5</sup> and a short book chapter,<sup>6</sup> has concentrated on the ethnic and geographical origin and the chronology of the settlement in Egypt of a special occupational group of Ptolemaic society, namely that of the cleruchs. Christelle Fischer-Bovet has widened this focus to include not just the cleruchs but also the whole army: chapter 5 of her recent monograph on the Ptolemaic army and its socio-economic context represents the greatest extent to which ancient historical research has used ethnic designations to date.<sup>7</sup> Whilst her examination of ethnics in relation to the army is conscientious, detailed and meticulous, it remains, understandably, firmly focused on the military and therefore only touches upon ethnic terms used in other contexts. Further, Katja Mueller’s recent large-scale study of Ptolemaic settlements has devoted some, albeit surprisingly little, space to the question of foreign immigration where she deploys some ethnic terms as part of her evidence.<sup>8</sup> Finally and most recently, in a short introductory sketch of immigration to Egypt in the early Ptolemaic period, Willy Clarysse makes a brief reference to ethnic terms as markers of Greek immigrants in the written sources.<sup>9</sup>

As ethnic terms are relatively frequent in the documentary sources from Hellenistic Egypt and have long been known to papyrologists, epigraphers and ancient historians, it may be quite surprising

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<sup>4</sup> Rathbone (1990) 112. See also W. Scheidel’s general statement about migration in the ancient Graeco-Roman world: “Migratory flows are usually impervious to any but the crudest probabilistic attempts at quantification” in Scheidel (2007) 49; see also id. (2001a) 46-48.

<sup>5</sup> Bagnall (1984).

<sup>6</sup> Stefanou (2013), challenging Bagnall’s conclusion that Ptolemaic cleruchs formed “almost a closed class”, created at the time of the foundation of the Ptolemaic state: Bagnall (1984) 18. See also Clarysse (2019) 199, who accepts Stefanou’s argument.

<sup>7</sup> Fischer-Bovet (2014) 160-95.

<sup>8</sup> Mueller (2006) 165-80: 16 pages including three page-size maps. Her brief discussion includes not just immigration to Egypt but also emigration from it, as well as modern comparative examples.

<sup>9</sup> Clarysse (2019) 299.

that recent research has made only such a limited use of them in attempting to reconstruct immigration and the ethnic composition of the population. However, on closer inspection of this type of source material, when one considers it from a practical perspective this greatly limited use becomes to some extent understandable, as I shall argue in the paragraphs that follow.

Between Fritz Heichelheim's pathbreaking study entitled *Die auswärtige Bevölkerung im Ptolemäerreich*,<sup>10</sup> and the two supplements respectively published in 1930 and 1937,<sup>11</sup> on the one hand, and my book on *Foreign Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt*, which appeared in 2002,<sup>12</sup> on the other, no comprehensive study had been devoted to the problem of ethnic terminology in Hellenistic Egypt. The few studies that appeared between 1937 and 2002 were devoted to only some ethnic terms but not others or looked at the sources solely in one language, Greek, and ignored the important evidence supplied by Demotic papyri.<sup>13</sup> Some ethnic terms such as Πέρσης τῆς ἐπιγονῆς and Περσίνη enjoyed more attention than others but this attention was accorded to them for special reasons and only in isolation from other terms.<sup>14</sup>

In addition, although Heichelheim's studies did contain some Demotic ethnic designations, prior to the publication of my book, which was based on volume II of my 1996 Cambridge doctoral thesis,<sup>15</sup> no attempt had ever been made to gather all the available evidence in both the Greek and the Demotic papyrological and epigraphic documentation, the two main languages in which documentary texts were written in Hellenistic Egypt, no work had ever made its objective the treatment of the problem of ethnic designations in its entirety – chronologically, geographically as well as linguistically. Thus, for this reason ancient historians interested in studying the problems of demography, immigration and the ethnic composition of the population of Hellenistic and early Roman Egypt had been faced with a lack of up-to-date papyrological and epigraphic studies on ethnic terminology.

Another obstacle in the path of historical research into these problems has been the fact that the evidence is in a variety of different ancient languages and scripts, primarily in Greek and the highly complex Demotic Egyptian. In addition, in order to be able to survey and assess the available written sources for their relevance to the topic, it is necessary, or at the very least advantageous, also to know some Middle Egyptian in the hieroglyphic and hieratic scripts, as well as some Aramaic, Carian, Phoenician and also lesser known ancient Semitic languages like Minaean and Nabataean. Few classically trained ancient historians, the principle group of scholars interested in the population and demography of Graeco-Roman Egypt, would readily be able to muster such a wide range of skills that is necessary for successfully tackling the diverse sources and the topic as a whole. Thus, this very high and wide skills barrier and the consequent lack of concerted work on the papyrological and epigraphic texts containing ethnic terminology had resulted in a dearth of research on this important topic for over half a century.

Another difficulty is the very large size of this research topic considering that one has to read through and check carefully a vast quantity of written sources in a range of different ancient languages and scripts just to find the ethnic terms that can form the basis of any systematic study of ethnic terminology. This means that in order to assemble an exhaustive corpus of ethnic terminology from Hellenistic Egypt one has to scrutinise well over 10,000 papyri and inscriptions. Before the age of computer- and, later, internet-based search programmes such an undertaking would have taken up years but even today when we have 'Pandora' and 'Papyri.info' it is a long and laborious process mainly because the Egyptian and other non-Greek evidence, which is scattered over countless books, journal

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<sup>10</sup> Heichelheim (1925).

<sup>11</sup> Heichelheim (1930) and (1937).

<sup>12</sup> La'da (2002), based on volume II of La'da (1996).

<sup>13</sup> For example, although M. Launey's 'Prosopographie militaire hellénistique' on pages 1108-1271 of volume 2 of his monumental *Recherches sur les armées hellénistiques* (1949-50) includes some ethnic designations in the documentary evidence from Hellenistic Egypt, it contains only such terms that refer to soldiers.

<sup>14</sup> See, for instance, Oates (1963) and Pestman (1963).

<sup>15</sup> La'da (1996).

articles and other publications, still has to be searched through mostly manually without the aid of information technology.

Given these great practical difficulties, therefore, it is hardly surprising that for approximately six decades between the 1930s and the early 1990s there was no comprehensive and systematic research into ethnic terminology from Hellenistic Egypt.

In addition to such difficulties that might be described as external or practical challenges, let me also mention briefly, merely by way of example, some of the internal complexities of this topic that may well have deterred potential researchers in the past.

My first example is the fact that, puzzlingly enough, the evidence of the Greek sources coincides only to a small extent with that of the Demotic material, the two main languages in which ethnic terms are attested from Hellenistic Egypt. There are only few ethnic designations in Greek which correspond directly to those in Demotic. These tend to be direct transliterations of Greek ethnics such as Ἀθηναῖος ‘Athenian’ – ʔthʔnys ‘Athenian’; Ἀσπένδιος ‘Aspendian’ - ʔspntyʔs ‘Aspendian’; Κάρεις ‘Carians’ – Krs.w ‘Carians’; Κυρηναῖος ‘Cyrenean’ – Grnys ‘Cyrenean’ and Μυσός ‘Mysian’ – Mss ‘Mysian’. Oddly, for a large proportion of ethnic terms in Demotic there is to date no Greek equivalent in our evidence from the Hellenistic period even though our Greek evidence is very large containing hundreds of different ethnic terms. Such “lonely” Demotic ethnic terms without a corresponding Greek equivalent include Iḡš, Iḡš ms n Kmy, Blhm, Blhm ms n Kmy, Mḡbr ms n Kmy, Nḡs, rmt Pr-iy-lq, rmt Pr-iy-lq ms n Kmy and rmt Prm.

Conversely, there is an even larger group of ethnic terms in Greek for which no direct Demotic equivalent is attested to date such as the vast majority of Greek city-ethnic terms and such frequent ethnics in Greek documents as Μακεδών ‘Macedonian’, Θρακίς ‘Thracian’ or Ἰουδαῖος ‘Jew’, although for the first of these Mḡʔdn and Mḡʔdwn<sup>16</sup> and for the second Dryksw<sup>17</sup> seem to be attested in hieroglyphic non-documentary inscriptions and for the last we find Yhyt.w ‘Jews’ in a still unpublished and little known Demotic text,<sup>18</sup> Iwdʔy? in the hieroglyphic inscription on the statue San 91-200, OAE 3003<sup>19</sup> and Ybr ‘Hebrews’? in a non-documentary Demotic papyrus of late Ptolemaic date, containing a collection of meteorological *omina*.<sup>20</sup>

For yet another group of ethnic terms the correspondence between Greek, Demotic and occasionally hieroglyphic is not literal but only loosely semantic and functional, such as Ἄραψ ‘Arab’ – Hgr lit. ‘Hagrite’; Ἕλλην ‘Greek’ – Wynn lit. ‘Ionian’ – Ḥʔw-nbw.t and Πέρσης ‘Persian’ – Mdy ‘Mede’.

For a further group, multiple correspondences are possible, for example, Πέρσης ‘Persian’ – Mdy ‘Mede’ – rmt Prs ‘man of Persia’ and Σύρος ‘Syrian’ – Iʔ(w)r ‘Syrian’ – Ḥr ‘Syrian’? or ‘Phoenician’?.

Another difficulty is the fact that the assortment of ethnic terms in use in the sources appears to change over time in the Hellenistic period with the initial great variety and frequency of ethnic designations greatly decreasing especially in Greek documents.

Furthermore, it is striking that, while by the end of the Ptolemaic period most ethnic designations have disappeared from the documents, a small number (for example, Πέρσης τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, Περσίνη ‘Persian woman’, Μακεδών ‘Macedonian’, Μακέτα ‘Macedonian woman’, Ἰουδαῖος ‘Jew’ and

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<sup>16</sup> Kockelmann and Rickert (2015) 49, no. 31. The dating of the inscription Esna 1 is either “Ptolemy III Euergetes I or Roman”: see *ibid.* p. 26; the dating of Esna 3 is “Trajan”: *ibid.* p. 30 and the dating of the inscription from Komir is “Antoninus Pius”: *ibid.* p. 31.

<sup>17</sup> Kockelmann and Rickert (2015) 74, no. 80. For the dating of the inscriptions Esna 1 and Esna 3, see the preceding footnote.

<sup>18</sup> Ray (1978) 29.

<sup>19</sup> Zivie-Coche (1998) and (1994).

<sup>20</sup> Collombert (2014) 23. Cf. also ʔybr (with spelling variants) ‘Hebrew’ in a Demotic papyrus of Roman date (late II – early III c. AD) on astronomical *omina*: Parker (1959) p. 10 line 22 (ʔybr), line 27 (ʔbr), p. 12 line 1 ([ ʔybr ]), p. 14 line 5 (ʔybr), line 13 ([ ʔybr ]), p. 20 line 9 (y[b]r), p. 22 line 11 ([ ybr ]) and line 17 ([ ʔbr ]).

Ἄραβι 'Arab') survive for some time into the Roman period. The number and variety of ethnic terms in use in Demotic documents from the early Roman period becomes even smaller than those in Greek.

My penultimate example for the complexity of this research topic poses probably the greatest of all problems for researchers. Whilst some ethnic designations seem to have retained their original ethnic semantic value until the end of the Ptolemaic period (e.g. Ἀργεῖος 'Argive', Κυρηναῖος 'Cyrenean' and Ἰγῆ 'Kushite'), others (for example, Πέρσης and Μακεδόν) appear to have lost any real ethnic meaning over time and to have developed into fictitious ethnic, occupational and status designations. The semantic evolution of the designations Πέρσης τῆς ἐπιγονῆς and Περσίνη takes a somewhat different course. By the early Roman period they have clearly become a legal fiction assumed by individuals intending to facilitate loans and certain other types of transaction by which they voluntarily put themselves into a disadvantageous legal position in terms of execution in case of delay or non-compliance with their contractual obligations. The roots of this legal development appear to reach back into the Ptolemaic period.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, the meaning of the τῆς ἐπιγονῆς literally 'of the *epigone* or descent' and ἠγῆ Kmy literally 'born in Egypt' expressions, which often follow a wide range of different ethnic designations, has been highly controversial and, despite recent advances,<sup>22</sup> needs to be clarified further especially for the early Hellenistic period.

These then are some of the main problems which have plagued and thwarted effective research into ethnic terminology for many decades.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, let us now turn to examining in what ways and to what extent ethnic designations can positively help us reconstruct and understand better immigration to and the resulting ethnic composition of the population of Hellenistic Egypt. But before we launch into such an enquiry, we need to keep in mind some of the limitations and biases of our sources to ensure that the use we do make is well founded.

As ethnic designations are found overwhelmingly in papyri and inscriptions, they are consequently liable to all the deficiencies and distortions that papyrological and epigraphic evidence suffers from, in addition to the hazards of survival usual for this type of evidence.<sup>23</sup> As a brief reminder, we may mention here some of the main such problems. First of all, papyri and inscriptions reflect primarily the life of well-to-do and elite members of society, those with property and making use of writing for documentary, legal and private purposes. Further, for reasons of physical preservation, papyri originate overwhelmingly from the Egyptian countryside, especially from Middle and, to a lesser extent, Upper Egypt, and only exceptionally from Alexandria or Lower Egypt. Among the areas of Egypt where papyri do survive the Fayyum is greatly overrepresented. In addition, large finds of papyri and archives, in other words the archival character of our sources, tend to distort the general picture presented by them.<sup>24</sup> Another problem is that the chronological distribution of the papyrological evidence is greatly uneven with a large portion of our material coming from the middle and the second half of the third century BC, and smaller numbers from other periods, especially from the early and late Hellenistic eras. Finally, the traditional editorial partiality towards the usually easier-to-decipher Greek documentation, which is only slowly being balanced by more Demotic material being published, also skews our picture.

Because of these limitations and biases, it is obviously impossible to draw a fully accurate and undistorted picture. Thus, for these reasons, we must remain constantly conscious that from our study of ethnic terms in papyri and inscriptions we can only draw quite general conclusions and only for Middle and Upper Egypt. Nevertheless, I would like to argue that the ethnic designations we find in the documentary sources remain our best, that is, our most accurate, detailed, plentiful and most readily

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<sup>21</sup>Pestman (1963a), PDion. pp. 56-63, La'da (1996) and the important new results in Vandorpe (2008) 106-07.

<sup>22</sup> See, for example, La'da (1996) 154-72, (1997) and Vandorpe (2008).

<sup>23</sup> See, for instance, Cuvigny (2009) and Frösén (2009), esp. 79-90, 87 and 92.

<sup>24</sup> Préaux (1978) 102-05 and Bagnall (1984) 9.

quantifiable, sources for immigration to, the ethnic composition of the population of and the relative proportions of the different immigrant groups in relation to each other in Hellenistic Egypt. No more direct, reliable, detailed or quantifiable textual evidence is available to us currently to attempt an answer to these questions as the literary and historiographic sources are greatly limited and unreliable<sup>25</sup> – not to mention hotly debated by scholars – and as the onomastic evidence, although much more plentiful, is hugely complex and often untrustworthy as an indicator of ethnic origin.

But it is important once more to emphasise that not all ethnic terms found in the papyrological and epigraphic evidence are straightforwardly suitable as sources for the study of immigration to and the population of Egypt under Macedonian rule. As already mentioned briefly, we need to be aware that over time some originally ethnic terms lost their literal meaning and assumed other, occupational, status or legal, senses. Therefore, in a study on immigration and the ethnic composition of the population it is essential to distinguish between real and what I call ‘fictitious’ ethnic designations or ‘pseudo-ethnics’, in other words between those terms that preserved and those that lost their original ethnic sense.

This is, however, a greatly complex and laborious task a detailed discussion of which would require far more space than available to me here. I shall therefore be relying on references to the results of my previous research, both published and unpublished, into ethnic designations,<sup>26</sup> as well as on the important work of Fritz Uebel<sup>27</sup> and Katelijn Vandorpe,<sup>28</sup> work that supports and corroborates my own results reached independently from others’. On the basis of this research, we need to exclude from the present analysis a number of ethnic designations that over time did lose their original ethnic meaning. I have argued elsewhere that Πέρσης 'Persian', Πέρσης τῆς ἐπιγονῆς literally 'Persian of the descent', Περσίνη 'Persian woman' and the Demotic terms Mdy 'Persian', literally 'Mede' and Mdy ms n Kmy literally 'Mede born in Egypt' are unlikely to designate any real Persian or Iranian ethnicity in reference to specific individuals in the documentary sources currently available to us from Ptolemaic Egypt.<sup>29</sup> This is neatly corroborated for Upper Egypt from the 160s BC onwards by K. Vandorpe's important new research.<sup>30</sup> I shall therefore exclude from my discussion that follows all bearers of these five, interrelated, designations.

A further group of problematic terms is that of Μακεδών 'Macedonian', Μακεδών τῆς ἐπιγονῆς literally 'Macedonian of the descent' and Μακέτα 'Macedonian woman'. Fritz Uebel had previously drawn attention to the fact that from 216/5 BC onwards the ethnic designation Μακεδών was used fictitiously in conjunction with the military title τριακοντάρουρος (κληροῦχος),<sup>31</sup> which I have been able to confirm and document to a greater extent.<sup>32</sup> Further, I have also argued that from 111 BC onwards Μακεδών appears to have been used fictitiously also without the title τριακοντάρουρος (κληροῦχος).<sup>33</sup> Thus, in the discussion that follows I shall ignore bearers of the ethnic Μακεδών with the title τριακοντάρουρος (κληροῦχος) from 216 and all bearers of these three designations from 111 onwards.

A third group of problematic ethnics is formed by Ἕλλην 'Greek', Wynn 'Greek', literally 'Ionian', Wynn ms n Kmy literally 'Ionian born in Egypt' and the feminine forms γυνὴ Ἑλληνίς 'Greek woman', šm.t Wynn(t) literally 'Ionian woman' and ʔ Wynn literally 'the Ionian (woman)'. As it is clear that numerous non-Greeks could also bear these designations (for example, the Jews and Thracians of Trikomia in the Arsinoite nome and some individuals bearing good Egyptian names),<sup>34</sup> it appears safer to exclude these terms from my examination of immigration to and the ethnic composition of the population of Hellenistic Egypt: we simply cannot be certain of the real ethnic background of their

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<sup>25</sup> For a detailed analysis of such sources, see Rathbone (1990), esp. 103-07.

<sup>26</sup> La'da (1994), (1996), (1997) and (2002). See also the introductory study in my book (2019).

<sup>27</sup> Uebel (1968) 40 n. 3, 59 n. 4, 313 n. 4 and 381-82.

<sup>28</sup> Vandorpe (2008) and (2014).

<sup>29</sup> La'da (1996) 36-40, 128-53, 160-69 and (2019) 8-9.

<sup>30</sup> Vandorpe (2008) and (2014).

<sup>31</sup> Uebel (1968) 40 n. 3, 59 n. 4, 313 n. 4 and 381-82.

<sup>32</sup> La'da (1996) 117-22 and La'da (2002) 100, no. E827 and 192, no. E1633.

<sup>33</sup> La'da (1996) 123-28.

<sup>34</sup> Clarysse (1994), La'da (1994) and (1996) 92-115, and P.Count, vol. II 138-47.

bearers. Although many, perhaps most, of their bearers were probably ethnic Greeks, especially in the early Hellenistic period, and although it might consequently seem overcautious to ignore them, it appears to me to be preferable to err on the side of caution rather than to introduce a large degree of uncertainty and potential error into the argument.

Finally, I also exclude from my analysis the ethnic term Μῆβρ μς ν Κμγ literally ‘Megabarian born in Egypt’, attested so far in only a single instance, as the father of its bearer surprisingly has the ethnic designation Βλμ μς ν Κμγ literally ‘Blemmye born in Egypt’<sup>35</sup> and as it seems more likely that the latter remained a real ethnic designation.<sup>36</sup>

At the same time, despite a recent suggestion that they might have been used fictitiously from an ethnic perspective as early as the Hellenistic period,<sup>37</sup> I treat, as do W. Clarysse and D. J. Thompson,<sup>38</sup> the ethnic designations Ἄραψ ‘Arab’, Ἄραψ τῆς ἐπιγονῆς literally ‘Arab of the descent’, Ἀράβισσα ‘Arab woman’ and Ἡγρ ‘Arab’, literally ‘Hagrite’, as real and include them in my discussion that follows. As I argued in my doctoral thesis and also more recently,<sup>39</sup> because (1) to date there is no case of a change of these designations attested in our evidence from Hellenistic Egypt, (2) because we cannot show that anyone from a non-ethnic Arab background assumed these designations and (3) because the bearers of these designations performed a large variety of widely diverse occupations, in the current state of our evidence it appears to me to be safer to consider these as real ethnic designations rather than fictitious ethnic, occupational terms in the sources from the Hellenistic period.

After this introduction, let us now see what ethnic designations can tell us about immigration to and the ethnic composition of the population of Egypt in the Hellenistic period. We must start with a few important definitions of the source material. As my aim in this study is to quantify the sources as far as it is possible in a methodologically safe, rigorous and non-speculative way, the best, that is, the most precise, plentiful and most readily quantifiable, type of evidence for it is formed by the ethnic designations that refer to specific individuals. I shall therefore use such ethnic terms as my main evidence and shall mention plural ethnics in reference to unspecified groups of individuals only occasionally. Ethnic designations that refer to specific individuals in the sources from Hellenistic Egypt are gathered, text critically examined and presented in a prosopographical way in my *Foreign Ethnics in Hellenistic Egypt*<sup>40</sup> and in the update contained in my recently published *Ethnic Terminology in Hellenistic and Early Roman Egypt: New Sources and New Perspectives of Research*,<sup>41</sup> two volumes which together form an up-to-date and exhaustive collection of such ethnic terms in the sources hitherto published.<sup>42</sup> It may be helpful at this point briefly to remind the reader precisely what sources have been gathered together and presented in these two volumes and consequently exactly what evidence this study is based on. The source material of these two volumes consists of all ethnic terms that refer to specific individuals originating (or, in the case of fictitious ethnics, allegedly originating) from specific ethnic groups, countries, regions and cities outside Egypt and that are found in the Greek, Demotic and hieroglyphic papyrological and epigraphic non-literary and non-magical evidence from Hellenistic Egypt (332-30 BC) published to date. In addition to published material, a small number of unpublished sources that have come to my attention have also been included. Further, in my first book I have also included such ethnic terms found in the ancient historiographic, scholarly, scientific and other non-literary and non-religious-magical sources in Greek and Latin from or for Hellenistic Egypt. Finally, I

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<sup>35</sup> See La’da (2002) E2592 and 2594.

<sup>36</sup> La’da (1996) 34-36.

<sup>37</sup> Honigman (2002) 62-67.

<sup>38</sup> P.Count vol. II, p. 160.

<sup>39</sup> La’da (1996) 59-64 and (2019) 8.

<sup>40</sup> La’da (2002).

<sup>41</sup> La’da (2019).

<sup>42</sup> Up to July 2017, to be precise: see La’da (2019) 5.

have also surveyed and checked, mostly with the help of transcriptions and translations whenever available, a large number of ancient documentary sources from Hellenistic Egypt written in Aramaic, Carian, Minaean, Nabataean and Phoenician and have included in my more recent volume references to these whenever relevant.

After these definitions, let us now examine the evidence. In the following analysis I shall be relying primarily on ethnic terms in the Demotic and Greek sources as these form the vast majority of our evidence and as other languages and scripts supply comparatively little relevant material, the interpretation or dating of which is often problematic. Let us start with the Demotic sources.

In the Demotic documentary sources from Hellenistic Egypt published to July 2017 19<sup>43</sup> different real ethnic designations are attested in reference to 47 specific individuals.<sup>44</sup> In all the Demotic documentary sources published to July 2017 there are 55 attestations of such ethnics in 43 different texts.<sup>45</sup>

The first table shows the number of attestations of all such ethnic terms in Demotic documents by decade.

• Century:	IV-III	III	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
• Decade						
• 99-90	0	0	0		0	
• 89-80	0	2	0		0	
• 79-70	0	1	0		0	
• 69-60	0	0	0		4	
• 59-50	0	0	3		0	
• 49-40	0	0	1		0	
• 39-30	0	10	4		0	
• 29-20	0	1	1		0	
• 19-10	0	5	1		0	
• 9-0	0	3	3		0	
• Uncertain:	2	1	5	1	1	6
• Total:	2 (3.63%)	23 (41.81%)	18 (32.72%)	1 (1.81%)	5 (9.09%)	6 (10.90%)

<sup>43</sup> For a quick overview of Demotic ethnic designations, see page 365 of La'da (2002) and the table of contents of La'da (2019). I include here the uncertain ethnic [I]šr in P.Firenze Mus.Arch.Dem. 3678.7 = P.Testi Botti 6, see La'da (2002) E2681, as this word is widely attested in the papyrological and epigraphic sources from Hellenistic Egypt, for example, as an ethnic in the plural, as an adjective, as part of various country names for Syria and as part of a variety of place names in Egypt.

<sup>44</sup> I ignore spelling variants of the same ethnic terms. I count corresponding feminine and masculine ethnic terms as separate. I also count as separate ethnic terms with and without the ms n Kmy, literally 'born in Egypt', expression even if their first, ethnic, element is identical.

<sup>45</sup> For practical statistical purposes, throughout this article I count texts by their publication or, in the case of unpublished documents, inventory numbers. Owing to their poor state of preservation, it is often difficult or indeed impossible to decide with complete certainty whether some fragments belong to the same or different documents as others. Copies or abstracts of individual documents included in registers and individual parts of chains of official correspondence are not counted separately. Double documents are however counted separately. This method can obviously give us only an approximate number for documents. However, given the time and space limits available for writing this study, this method offers the best compromise between complete accuracy and practicality. As no major arguments are based in this study on the precise number of documents, an approximate number for them is sufficient and helpful for the purposes of this article, principally as a rough indication of trends rather than absolutely precise figures, which would in any case be bound to change with more material being published.



The second table shows the number of different specific individuals with an ethnic designation in the Demotic documentary sources by decade.

• Century:	IV-III	III	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
• Decade						
• 99-90	0	0	0		0	
• 89-80	0	2	0		0	
• 79-70	0	1	0		0	
• 69-60	0	0	0		2	
• 59-50	0	0	2		0	
• 49-40	0	0	1		0	
• 39-30	0	10	4		0	
• 29-20	0	1	1		0	
• 19-10	0	3	1		0	
• 9-0	0	3	2		0	
• Uncertain:	2	1	5	1	1	5
• Total:	2 (4.25%)	21 (44.68%)	16 (34.04%)	1 (2.12%)	3 (6.38%)	5 (10.63%)

(The grand total of different individuals is 48 rather than 47 because the individual E2590 in La'da (2002) appears in two different documents in two different decades.)

The third table shows the number of different Demotic documents in which ethnic terms occur in reference to specific individuals by decade. For purposes of comparison, after each figure I include in brackets in smaller type the number of Demotic texts dating from the particular decade and currently registered in the data base *Demotic and Abnormal Hieratic Texts* (DAHT).<sup>46</sup> This can obviously give us only a very rough idea of proportions as the DAHT is neither currently up-to-date nor fully exhaustive. A further difficulty is that in the DAHT it is practically impossible to differentiate in a straightforward way between documentary and non-documentary sources as it uses 2765 different terms to describe text types. Finally, the list of terms used by DAHT for describing different text types is more than five years old (dated 25 August 2014). Notwithstanding these difficulties, to the best of my knowledge we currently have no better or fuller data base for Demotic documentary texts.

• Century:	IV-III	III	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
• Decade						
• 99-90	0	0	0		0	
• 89-80	0	2 (40)	0		0	
• 79-70	0	1 (94)	0		0	
• 69-60	0	0	0		2 (24)	
• 59-50	0	0	3 (114)		0	
• 49-40	0	0	1 (140)		0	
• 39-30	0	1 (194)	3 (193)		0	
• 29-20	0	1 (192)	1 (119)		0	

<sup>46</sup> Available at: <https://www.trismegistos.org/daht/search.php>). The information presented in the table was retrieved from this data base in August 2019.

• 19-10	0	5 (79)	1 (217)	0		
• 9-0	0	3 (39)	3 (244)	0		
• Uncertain:	2	1	5	1	1	6

Total: 2 (4.65%) 14 (32.55%) 17 (39.53%) 1 (2.32%) 3 (6.97%) 6 (13.95%)

Finally, the fourth table shows the number of different ethnic designations in Demotic documents used in reference to specific individuals by decade. In other words, this table shows the variety of ethnic designations in use in the documents in each decade.

• Century:	IV-III	III	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
• Decade						
• 99-90	0	0	0		0	
• 89-80	0	2	0		0	
• 79-70	0	1	0		0	
• 69-60	0	0	0		1	
• 59-50	0	0	2		0	
• 49-40	0	0	1		0	
• 39-30	0	2	3		0	
• 29-20	0	1	1		0	
• 19-10	0	2	1		0	
• 9-0	0	2	2		0	
• Uncertain:	2	1	2	1	1	4
Total:	2	9	9	1	2	4

What these statistics show is that the use of ethnic designations in the Demotic documentary sources from the third and second centuries BC is similarly well documented and widespread. However, to date we have much less evidence for the use of ethnic designations in the fourth and the first centuries BC, which to a large extent may be because of the more limited availability of documentary evidence from these periods.

The size of the relevant Greek documentation is hugely greater than that of the Demotic.<sup>47</sup> In the Greek documentary sources from Hellenistic Egypt published to July 2017 as well as in some

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<sup>47</sup> From the statistics that follow I exclude all uncertain and fragmentary ethnics (collected in Part II of La'da [2002] and in Part II of La'da [2019]). I also exclude the individuals bearing an ethnic designation in the non-documentary, that is, in the Greek and Latin ancient historiographic, scholarly, scientific and other non-literary and non-magical sources. For these individuals only a *Prosopographia Ptolemaica* number and no indication of the source is provided in La'da (2002). The reasons for my excluding these individuals from the statistics and the discussion that follow are: (1) the Greek and Latin ancient historiographic, scholarly, scientific and other non-literary and non-magical sources, from which the information is derived, are often difficult to date precisely; (2) as no historical individuals identified by ethnics are found in corresponding sources in Demotic, their inclusion would create a certain mismatch between the Demotic and Greek evidence; (3) in the present study I wish to keep the focus firmly on ethnic terms in the documentary evidence from Hellenistic Egypt as it is the most reliable type of source material for immigration and the ethnic composition of the population. Finally, as the Greek city-ethnics from Egypt Ἀλεξανδρεὺς, Ἀλεξανδρεὺς τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, Ἀλεξανδρεῖα, Ναυκρατίτης, Ναυκρατίτις and Πτολεμαεῖς obviously form a special category, I do not include them in the following statistics. Although their bearers were ethnic Greeks and probably also Macedonians, these terms cannot tell us about their precise origins in the same way as other ethnic designations can and so their value in this study on immigration to Hellenistic Egypt is more

unpublished evidence that has come to my attention 322<sup>48</sup> different real ethnic designations are attested in reference to 1767 specific individuals. There are 2156<sup>49</sup> attestations of such ethnics in 1143 different documents.<sup>50</sup>

As above for the Demotic material, the first table shows the number of attestations of all such ethnic terms in Greek documents by decade.

<b>Century:</b>	<b>IV</b>	<b>IV-III</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>III-II</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>II-I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>General Hellenistic</b>
Decade								
99-90			0		29		1	
89-80			51		41		2	
79-70			19		94		3	
69-60			43		49		3	
59-50			126		39		3	
49-40			113		51		0	
39-30	0		99		69		0	
29-20	0		200		7			
19-10	17		152		18			
9-0	0		53		20			
Uncertain:	45	18	279	47	189	18	24	237
Total:	62	18	1135	47	606	18	36	237

The second table shows the number of different specific individuals with an ethnic designation in Greek documents by decade.

<b>Century:</b>	<b>IV</b>	<b>IV-III</b>	<b>III</b>	<b>III-II</b>	<b>II</b>	<b>II-I</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>General Hellenistic</b>
Decade								
99-90			0		22		1	
89-80			25		38		2	
79-70			13		88		3	
69-60			34		17		3	
59-50			77		28		3	
49-40			99		43		0	
39-30	0		97		58		0	
29-20	0		170		5			
19-10	9		113		15			
9-0	0		33		14			
Uncertain:	44	18	264	46	183	17	21	220

limited. As they are relatively rare in the documentary sources, their omission does not affect the statistics in any significant way.

<sup>48</sup> I count as separate masculine and feminine forms of ethnic designations and designations followed by the τῆς ἐπιγονῆς expression.

<sup>49</sup> For practical reasons, I count as separate attestations plural forms of ethnics in reference to a group of specific individuals identified by personal names.

<sup>50</sup> On the method of counting documents followed in this study, see footnote 45 above.

Total: 53 18 879 46 502 17 33 220

(The grand total of different individuals is 1767 rather than the total of the figures for the individual decades because numerous individuals are attested in more than one decade.)

The third table shows the number of different Greek documents in which ethnic terms occur in reference to specific individuals by decade. After each figure I include in brackets in smaller type the number of Greek documentary texts dating from the particular decade and currently registered in the data base *Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens* (HGV).<sup>51</sup>

Century:	IV	IV-III	III	III-II	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic Date uncertain
Decade								
99-90			0 (0)		9 (94)		1 (179)	
89-80			9 (13)		18 (163)		1 (160)	
79-70			6 (25)		35 (169)		3 (68)	
69-60			14 (134)		33 (244)		3 (154)	
59-50			66 (1170)		29 (414)		3 (95)	
49-40			55 (527)		25 (287)		0 (50)	
39-30	0 (1)		31 (246)		42 (351)		0 (48)	
29-20	0 (0)		75 (383)		7 (164)			
19-10	2 (1)		81 (260)		11 (457)			
9-0	0 (0)		19 (129)		12 (236)			
Uncertain:	18	10	172	33	67	16	19	218
Total:	20 (2)	10	528 (2887)	33	288 (2579)	16	30 (754)	218

(HGV total for all Hellenistic: 6222)

The fourth and last table shows the number of different ethnic designations used in reference to specific individuals in Greek documents by decade. In other words, this table shows the variety of ethnic designations in use in Greek documents in each decade.

Century:	IV	IV-III	III	III-II	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
Decade								
99-90			0		13		1	
89-80			17		14		2	
79-70			6		27		3	
69-60			20		8		3	
59-50			46		13		3	
49-40			51		16		0	
39-30	0		54		21		0	
29-20	0		74		5			
19-10	5		54		9			

<sup>51</sup> Available at: <http://aquila.zaw.uni-heidelberg.de> and accessed in August 2019.

9-0	0		24		7			
Uncertain:	31	12	98	32	58	14	20	86
Total:	35	12	214	32	102	14	29	86

It is clear from a number of papyri that the Ptolemaic government prescribed and strictly regulated the use of ethnic designations in official and legal documents,<sup>32</sup> which is probably the explanation for their frequent occurrence. It is, therefore, highly surprising to find the discrepant use of ethnic designations in Greek and Demotic documents. This discrepancy expresses itself in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Quantitatively, the contrast between real ethnic designations in Demotic and Greek documents, as set out in the eight tables above, is striking. Two reasons may explain this great quantitative difference. First, it is probable that our view of ethnic designations is to some extent distorted by the surviving and published evidence itself. Since a larger quantity of Greek documents has survived and been edited to date than Demotic, it is plausible that the imbalance between the Greek and Demotic material is not as large as the currently available evidence suggests. It is, however, hardly likely that this alone could account for this significant discrepancy. The main reason for the quantitative difference between Greek and Demotic ethnic designations is probably to be found in the fact that, as the ethnic designations themselves indicate (see further below), the large majority of the immigrants were Greeks and Macedonians or came from hellenised parts of the ancient world, who were more likely to use Greek for official purposes, to integrate with the Greek part of the population and, consequently, to appear in Greek documents rather than in Demotic ones. Against the large numbers of Greeks, Macedonians and other foreigners from hellenised regions stand the smaller numbers of immigrants from various different African peoples to the south of Egypt and from the areas bordering on the Nile Valley, who were probably more likely to assimilate to the native Egyptians and use Demotic because of the traditional links between Egypt and African tribes and the predominantly Egyptian ethnic composition of Upper Egypt, the area where most southern immigrants entered the country. Thus, the ethno-geographical sources of immigration and the direction of most immigrants' linguistic and cultural assimilation are probably the main reason for the great quantitative difference between ethnic designations in Greek and Demotic documents.

As to the principal qualitative difference between Greek and Demotic real ethnic designations used in reference to specific individuals, it is that only a few ethnic designations in documents in the two languages correspond to one another<sup>33</sup> while most ethnic designations have no equivalent in the other language that we have so far been able to identify. The relative rarity, particularly from the perspective of the much larger amount of Greek evidence, of corresponding ethnic designations in Greek and Demotic clearly indicates that Greeks and Egyptians employed largely different ethnic terminologies. It is important to observe here the relatively large variety of ethnic designations in Demotic documents for African peoples (7 out of 19, that is, nearly 37% [36.84%]) while there are only six ethnic designations, some of them related to each other, Αἰθίοψ, Αἰθίοπισσα, Λίβυς, Λίβυς τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, Λίβυσσα and Τρωγοδύτης, attested in a small number of instances, for these in Greek (6 out of 322, that is, little more than 1.86%). In contrast, while there is a huge abundance of ethnic designations for individuals from Greek cities and regions and for hellenised peoples in Greek

<sup>32</sup> BGU VI 1213.3 (cf. C.Ord.Ptol.<sup>2</sup> pp. 246-47, no. 34) (late third century); 1250 (cf. C.Ord.Ptol.<sup>2</sup> p. 250, no. 47) (second century); XIV 2367 (late third century); PHamb. II 168 (mid-third century); P. Rev. Laws (= Wilcken, *Chrest.* 258 = SB Bh. 1) col. 7 (third century); SB V 8008.20 (262/1 or 261/0); for the secondary literature, see the notes to lines 5-12 of BGU XIV 2367.

<sup>33</sup> Ἄραβ 'Arab' – Hgr 'Arab' lit. 'Hagrite'; Ἀσπένδιος 'Aspendian' – ἰσπντῆς 'Aspendian'; Ἀθηναῖος 'Athenian' – ἰθηῆνυς 'Athenian'; Κυρηναῖος 'Cyrenean' – Grnys 'Cyrenean'; Μυσός 'Mysian' – Mss 'Mysian'; Σύρος 'Syrian' – Ἰσ(w)r 'Syrian' – Hr 'Syrian'? or 'Phoenician'?; Σύρα – ἡ Ἰσῳρ 'the Syrian woman', cf. also ḫm.t Ἰsr.t ms (n) Kmy lit. 'Syrian woman born in Egypt'.

documents, in Demotic only a limited number of ethnic designations exist for such immigrants (ἰσπντῦς, ἰθῆνῆς, Mss, rmt Ἰσως, Γρῆνῆς; but cf. also the often fictitiously used Wynn, Wynn ms n Kmy, ἰθῆμ.τ Wynn(.t) and ἰ Wynn). The larger number and the much larger proportion of different ethnic designations for African peoples in Demotic than in Greek and their far greater relative frequency of occurrence within a much smaller body of evidence indicate firstly that, as may be expected, the native Egyptians were much more familiar with African peoples and had a far more developed vocabulary for designating them than did the Greeks, who only used six terms, some of these related to each other, in the evidence available to date. Further, these also indicate that most African immigrants tended to assimilate to the native Egyptians and to use Demotic rather than Greek for official purposes. On the other hand, the much smaller number and proportion of ethnic designations for Greeks and hellenised peoples in Demotic (5 out of 19 = 26.31%)<sup>54</sup> than in Greek (276 out of 322 = 85.71%)<sup>55</sup> and the fact that almost all of these are simple transliterations of Greek terms into Demotic show that the Demotic language was ill-prepared to cope with such a sudden and great influx of foreigners from the Mediterranean. Furthermore, the fact that only one ethnic designation, Mss (= Μυσός), is attested to date in Demotic documents for hellenised non-Greek immigrants,<sup>56</sup> if this interpretation of the word is correct, suggests that such immigrants, undoubtedly because of their hellenisation even prior to their settlement in Egypt, tended to use Greek for the purpose of official documents and naturally became integrated into Greek, or at least Greek-speaking, rather than native Egyptian, society.

The qualitative and quantitative differences between ethnic designations in Greek and Demotic documents, therefore, clearly indicate the following. First, there is a marked discrepancy between the ethnic terminology used in Greek and that in Demotic documents. Secondly, that the main source of immigration into Hellenistic Egypt was the Graeco-Macedonian world and Hellenised regions (e.g. Thrace and western Asia Minor) rather than Africa or other areas. Finally and perhaps most significantly, these differences also clearly bear out the polarisation of immigrants in terms of assimilation and language use between the Greek and the native Egyptian spheres of the population: while Africans tended to acculturate to the native Egyptians, hellenised non-Greeks from Europe, Asia Minor and the Eastern Mediterranean became part of Greek, or at least Greek-speaking, society.

What else can ethnic designations tell us about immigration to and the presence of foreigners in Hellenistic Egypt? First of all, they show us, in the most concrete and objective terms possible, how hugely poly-ethnic and multicultural society in Hellenistic Egypt was. The immense diversity of immigrants is clearly demonstrated by the 322 different ethnic designations in Greek and the 19 ethnic terms in Demotic documents we currently know of that are used in reference to specific individuals. Even after deducting those ethnic terms that correspond to each other in Greek and Demotic or are clearly related to each other (i.e. male and female forms of the same designations and designations with and without the τῆς ἐπιγονῆς and the ms n Kmy expressions), individuals from 237 different ethnic and cultural groups are attested in Greek and Demotic documents. If we add to these those ethnic terms that are today not yet attested in reference to specific individuals or do not occur in documentary texts, an even more diverse picture results. Thus, we can conclude that the ethno-cultural diversity of Hellenistic Egypt was markedly similar to modern countries of immigration such as the United States, Canada or Australia. This information is the most concrete and perhaps the most valuable contribution of ethnic designations to the study of immigration to Hellenistic Egypt.

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<sup>54</sup> ἰσπντῦς ‘Aspendian’ – Ἀσπένδιος ‘Aspendian’; ἰθῆνῆς ‘Athenian’ – Ἀθηναῖος ‘Athenian’; Mss ‘Mysian’ – Μυσός ‘Mysian’ and Γρῆνῆς ‘Cyrenean’ – Κυρηναῖος ‘Cyrenean’. The designation rmt Ἰσως ‘man of Iasos’ contains a transliteration of the name of the city of Iasos in Caria: cf. the Greek ethnic Ἰασεύς (see La’da [2002] E2595), currently not yet attested in documentary sources from Hellenistic Egypt.

<sup>55</sup> See below.

<sup>56</sup> The presence of Thracian names among the onomastics of those designated as Ἑλλῆν in fiscal papyri (P.Count 26.110, 113, 189 [Trikomia, Arsinoites, 254-231 BC]; cf. P.Count vol. 2, p. 145) may (but does not necessarily) suggest that before acquiring a fiscal-status sense Wynn and the related Wynn ms n Kmy, ἰθῆμ.τ Wynn(.t) and ἰ Wynn may have been applied not only to ethnic Greeks but also to hellenised non-Greek peoples.

Further, as to the precise numbers of people involved, we cannot be certain. The hazards of survival and the traditional editorial partiality towards the usually easier-to-decipher Greek documentation clearly make it impossible for us to know the exact size of the immigrant population as a whole or that of the various foreign ethnic groups it comprised.

Ethnic designations can only show us the approximate relative proportions of the various different immigrant ethnic groups settled in Middle and Upper Egypt (excluding the Greek *polis* of Ptolemais, from where no documentary sources with ethnics survive). But even in this regard there is a difficulty: namely that posed by those ethnic terms that over time became fictitious from an ethnic perspective and the fact that we do not know precisely when this shift in their meaning actually took place.

From the real ethnic designations preserved in our sources the largest immigrant ethnic group in Middle and Upper Egypt appears to have been the Greeks including the Macedonians, originating from numerous different cities and regions of mostly Greece, Macedon, the Aegean and the eastern and central (Sicily and Southern Italy) Mediterranean basin but also from such distant places as Massalia in southern Gaul and a variety of Greek cities on the shores of the Black Sea (for example, Mesembria, Odessos and Sinope). To date, 185 different places of origin are known for Greek and Macedonian immigrants, which is more than 78% (78.05%) of all ethnic or geographical origins of immigrants found in ethnic designations. This large proportion and huge variety of different Greek origins, however, has to a large extent to do with the fact that the Greeks traditionally identified themselves with the myriad cities or numerous regions they originated from whereas for most non-Greeks we find people-ethnics, designating whole peoples rather than individual cities or regions, in the documentary sources. The cities and regions that dominate among Graeco-Macedonian immigrants are Macedonia (347 individuals [= 19.63% of all individuals designated with an ethnic in our Greek sources]), the Cyrenaica (182 individuals [= 10.29%], including bearers of the ethnic designations Κυρηναῖος – Grnys, Κυρηναῖος τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, Κυρηναία, Βαρκαῖος/Βαρκαϊεύς, Βαρκαῖος/Βαρκαϊεύς τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, Βερενικεύς ἀφ' Ἑσπερίδων, Ἑσπερίτης, Ἑσπερίτης τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, Πτολεμαϊεύς ἀπὸ Βάρκης and Πτολεμαῖσσα [ἀπὸ Βάρκης]), Thessaly (54 individuals [= 3.05%]; cf. also the ethnic designations Μάγνης and Μάγνης τῆς ἐπιγονῆς, which may refer to the region of Magnesia in Thessaly, and Λαρισαῖος, which may designate the city of Larisa in Thessaly) Crete (53 individuals from Crete in general [= 2.99%] plus 22 individuals from 13 different specific Cretan cities; total 75 individuals = 4.24%), Athens and Attica (51 individuals [= 2.88%]), and Rhodes (26 individuals from Rhodes in general [= 1.47%]).

A much more surprising finding is that the second largest immigrant ethnic group is formed by the Thracians with 168 specific individuals attested in our sources to date. This may surprise us as, apart from Greeks and native Egyptians, the ethnic group that has received the most attention from previous research is the Jews, perhaps giving the impression that they were also numerically dominant among immigrants. However, whilst this was certainly the case in Alexandria where a large Jewish community existed, the picture provided by the ethnic terms from the *chora* (that is, Middle and Upper Egypt, to be precise) indicates otherwise. From the Egyptian countryside 95 specific individuals are currently known who are explicitly identified as Jews, thus making the Thracian community about three quarters more numerous based on frequency of known occurrence.

Other large ethnic communities were formed by Arabs (51 individuals), Mysians (24 individuals) and Syrians (21 individuals). Although their numbers are not large, the variety of different ethnic groups from the Balkans and especially Asia Minor is remarkable: from the Balkans: apart from Thracians, Agrianes (1 individual), Illyrians (4 individuals) and Paionians (4 individuals); from Asia Minor, apart from Mysians, Bithynians (5 individuals), Cappadocians (1 individual), Carians (3 individuals), Cilicians (4 individuals), Lycians (11 individuals), Lydians (1 individual), Paphlagonians (2 individuals), Pisidians (8 individuals) and Phrygians (1 individual) are attested. Finally, we may also mention such distant places of origin of immigrants to Hellenistic Egypt as India, Carthage, Rome, Tyrrhenia, that is, Etruria and Sicily.

Thus, the ethnic designations clearly indicate that in the Hellenistic period a major reorientation of immigration took place to a large extent away from such traditional origins of immigrants to Egypt as the Near East<sup>57</sup> and North-East Africa towards the north-eastern Mediterranean basin, that is, South-East Europe, in particular the southern Balkans and the Aegean, as well as Asia Minor. This represents another important contribution by ethnic terminology to the study of immigration to Hellenistic Egypt.

Further, we need to address the question of whether ethnic terms can help us understand the chronology and the rate of immigration and socio-ethnic integration better. In this regard ethnic designations are less helpful as in general we simply do not know how long immigrants and their offspring kept their original ethnics after arrival in Egypt and before they were fully integrated into local society to the point where the immigrants no longer felt it appropriate or, alternatively, were no longer required by the Ptolemaic state, to describe themselves with foreign ethnics.<sup>58</sup> The precise nature of the relationship between ethnic designations in documents and the chronology of immigration is almost always unclear. Thus, we can only draw very general conclusions on the basis of the reasonable assumption that there is a more or less direct correlation between the use of ethnics in the documents and immigration to Egypt at the time the documents were drawn up and in the preceding decades and generations. Thus, since the vast majority of real ethnic designations are attested in the third and, to a lesser extent, in the second centuries BC, the general conclusion may be drawn that immigration in the Hellenistic period, starting with Alexander the Great's peaceful conquest of the country in late 332 BC, was at its most active during the late fourth and in the third centuries, decreasing (or, depending on the time-lag we postulate between immigration and foreign settlers' giving up using their original ethnics, perhaps even stopping entirely, at least from Greece and Macedonia<sup>59</sup>) in the second, particularly in its last three decades. The first century shows a dramatic decline in the use of ethnic designations in documentary sources and also in the variety of ethnic terms used, which suggests that immigration greatly decreased or indeed stopped in this period and in the preceding decades, but at the same time we need to remember that the available papyrological evidence from the first century BC is also far less abundant than from the preceding two centuries and so to some extent the lesser availability of the evidence from the first century may well skew our picture in favour of the third and second.

Another caveat we need to be conscious of is that these observations are obviously based on the assumption that there existed the same official requirement for individuals to use ethnic designations in legal and official documents throughout the whole of the period examined, not just in the mid- and in the second half of the third century and some of the second,<sup>60</sup> something that cannot automatically be taken for granted. It is perfectly possible to postulate that with the gradual decline of the Ptolemaic state and bureaucracy in the late second and in the first centuries, the earlier official requirement of the use of ethnics in legal and official documents was given up, or was simply ignored in everyday bureaucratic practice as a corner-cutting measure. We simply have no evidence. So the dramatic drop in the use of ethnic designations in the documents observable in our sources from the first century might in fact have to do more with changing official rules and/or with the decline of Ptolemaic bureaucracy than with a dramatic fall in immigration. However, since we have no independent evidence for immigration in the

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<sup>57</sup> See, for example, V. J. Schuenemann et al. (2017), esp. 5 and 8.

<sup>58</sup> Although in a recent introductory work W. Clarysse (2019) 299 writes: "The Greeks who settled in Egypt can be recognized because for at least five generations they continued to call themselves after their place of origin outside Egypt: Athenians, Cyrenaeans, Cretans, Macedonians, Thracians, and so on.", he unfortunately offers no evidence or arguments to support this potentially greatly significant claim. So, whilst this suggestion is possible as a rough estimate of the minimum length of foreign settlers' retention of their ethnics after immigration to Egypt, it remains unclear what it is based on. In any case, from any attestation of an ethnic it is impossible to know without any additional evidence whether the person to whom the ethnic is applied is a first-generation immigrant or an Egyptian-born descendant of earlier immigrants and, if the latter, how many generations had elapsed since the ancestor's immigration to Egypt.

<sup>59</sup> On the question of changes in immigration to Hellenistic Egypt in the second century BC, see further below.

<sup>60</sup> In this context it is relevant that BGU VI 1250, one of the papyri attesting to the Ptolemaic state's regulation of the use of ethnics, is dated to the mid-second century by Clarysse and Thompson: P.Count vol. 2, 146 n. 114.



first century in the same way we have for the third in Greek historiography, it appears to me to be far more likely that the marked decline in the use of ethnic designations in our sources from the first century reflects a dramatic drop in immigration then and in the preceding decades. In addition, we shall see below that the Demotic documentation suggests that there was no change in the use of ethnic designations in legal and official documents between the third and second centuries and that, as far as we can tell from our evidence, the use of ethnics continued essentially unchanged in Demotic documents in the second century.

Returning to the second century, recent research has argued that immigration came to a halt towards the end of the third century.<sup>61</sup> We may note however that, although less plentiful than from the middle and the second half of the third century, there is still a considerable amount of evidence for the use of ethnic designations in documents from the first seven decades of the second. Depending on the time-lag we assume between immigration and the giving up by foreigners and their descendants of their original ethnics, this could suggest that immigration did not stop completely after the third century and that it continued, albeit at a reduced rate, for some time into the second century.

Further, it is important to note that the Demotic evidence (see the four tables for ethnic designations in the Demotic sources above) appears to support even less the argument that immigration came to a halt towards the end of the third century. In fact, the number of Demotic documents in which ethnic designations occur increases in the second century over the third and in terms of the variety of ethnics in use the second century is at the same level as the third. In other respects, too, the second-century Demotic evidence is comparable to that of the third. If we divide the Demotic sources into two large groups according to the origins of immigrants, that is, into the group of Greeks and other settlers from hellenised regions of the Mediterranean (the Balkans and Western Asia Minor such as Mysia, the only such region currently attested in Demotic ethnics),<sup>62</sup> on the one hand, and into that of non-Greek immigrants from unhellenised parts of the ancient world (in other words, immigrants from Africa and the Near East closer to Egypt),<sup>63</sup> on the other, we can obtain instructive results both for the ethnic composition of immigration and for its chronology.<sup>64</sup>

The first table shows the number of attestations of all real ethnic terms for Greeks (as no Macedonians are currently identified as such in Demotic sources, I omit to mention them separately in the descriptions of the following four tables) and other immigrants from hellenised parts of the Mediterranean (currently only Mss), followed by the corresponding number in italics for immigrants from unhellenised regions of the ancient world in Demotic documents by decade.

• **Century:**      **IV-III**   **III**                      **II**      **II-I**      **I**              **General Hellenistic**

<sup>61</sup> See, for example, Clarysse (2019) 299: “immigration probably continued for most of the third century BC”. Fischer-Bovet (2011) presents a more detailed picture, based primarily on evidence relating to the Ptolemaic army; see, for example, 152: “In addition, the number of Macedonian settlers (second method) suggests that the flow of immigration was not regular. Greek immigration had stopped in the mid-third century – at least mass immigration of potential soldiers. Later on, emergency hiring of soldiers, as in the case of Raphia (217 BC), remained exceptional and involved a limited number of migrants. Further on, the third method (the *katoikoi hippeis*) illustrates that the Greek population did not grow during the second century BC.”. See also *ibid.* p. 144. Cf. also Cole (2019) 18.

<sup>62</sup> Ἰσπντῦς ‘Aspendian’ – Ἀσπένδιος ‘Aspendian’; ἰθῆνῆς ‘Athenian’ – Ἀθηναῖος ‘Athenian’; Mss ‘Mysian’ – Μυσός ‘Mysian’; rmt Ἰσως ‘man of Iasos’ and Grmys ‘Cyrenean’ – Κυρηναῖος ‘Cyrenean’.

<sup>63</sup> Ἰσ(ω)ρ ‘Syrian’, ἰ Ἰσῶρ ‘the Syrian woman’, šḥm.t Ἰšr.t ms (n) Kmy lit. ‘Syrian woman born in Egypt’, Igš ‘Kushite’, ‘Nubian’, Igš ms n Kmy lit. ‘Kushite’ or ‘Nubian’ ‘born in Egypt’, Blhm ‘Blemmye’, Blhm ms n Kmy lit. ‘Blemmye born in Egypt’, Nḥs ‘Nubian’, rmt Pr-iy-lq ‘man of Philae’, rmt Pr-iy-lq ms n Kmy lit. ‘man of Philae born in Egypt’, rmt Prs ‘man of Persia’, Hgr ‘Arab’ and Ḥr ‘Syrian’(?) or ‘Phoenician’(?). I consider as unhellenised immigrants bearers of the ethnics Ἰσ(ω)ρ ‘Syrian’, ἰ Ἰσῶρ ‘the Syrian woman’, šḥm.t Ἰšr.t ms (n) Kmy lit. ‘Syrian woman born in Egypt’ and Ḥr ‘Syrian’(?) or ‘Phoenician’(?).

<sup>64</sup> I exclude the uncertain rmt Prm.

Decade						
• 99-90		0/0		0/0		0/0
• 89-80		0/2		0/0		0/0
• 79-70		0/1		0/0		0/0
• 69-60		0/0		0/0		0/4
• 59-50		0/0		0/3		0/0
• 49-40		0/0		0/1		0/0
• 39-30		10/0		1/3		0/0
• 29-20		0/1		0/1		0/0
• 19-10		0/5		0/1		0/0
• 9-0		1/2		0/3		0/0
• Uncertain:	0/1	0/1		0/5	0/1	0/1 1/5
• Total:	0/1	11/12		1/17	0/1	0/5 1/5

The second table shows the number of different specific individuals with an ethnic designation for Greeks and other immigrants from hellenised parts of the Mediterranean (currently only a Mss), followed by the corresponding number in italics for immigrants from unhellenised parts of the ancient world in Demotic documents by decade.

Century:	IV-III	III	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
• Decade						
• 99-90		0/0	0/0		0/0	
• 89-80		0/2	0/0		0/0	
• 79-70		0/1	0/0		0/0	
• 69-60		0/0	0/0		0/2	
• 59-50		0/0	0/2		0/0	
• 49-40		0/0	0/1		0/0	
• 39-30		10/0	1/3		0/0	
• 29-20		0/1	0/1		0/0	
• 19-10		0/3	0/1		0/0	
• 9-0		1/2	0/2		0/0	
• Uncertain:	0/1	0/1	0/5	0/1	0/1	1/4
• Total:	0/1	11/10	1/15	0/1	0/3	1/4

The third table shows the number of different Demotic documents in which ethnic terms occur in reference to specific ethnic Greek immigrants and for those from hellenised parts of the Mediterranean (currently only Mss occurring once in a single document), followed by the corresponding number in italics for immigrants from unhellenised parts of the ancient world by decade.

Century:	IV-III	III	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
• Decade						
• 99-90		0/0	0/0		0/0	
• 89-80		0/2	0/0		0/0	

• 79-70		0/1	0/0		0/0	
• 69-60		0/0	0/0		0/2	
• 59-50		0/0	0/3		0/0	
• 49-40		0/0	0/1		0/0	
• 39-30		1/0	1/2		0/0	
• 29-20		0/1	0/1		0/0	
• 19-10		0/5	0/1		0/0	
• 9-0		1/2	0/3		0/0	
• Uncertain:	0/1	0/1	0/5	0/1	0/1	1/5
• Total:	0/1	2/12	1/16	0/1	0/3	1/5

Finally, the fourth table shows the number of different ethnic designations in Demotic documents used in reference to specific ethnic Greek individuals or those from hellenised parts of the Mediterranean (currently only Mss), followed by the corresponding figures in italics for ethnics for immigrants from unhellenised parts of the ancient world in each decade.

• Century:	IV-III	III	II	II-I	I	General Hellenistic
• Decade						
• 99-90		0/0	0/0		0/0	
• 89-80		0/2	0/0		0/0	
• 79-70		0/1	0/0		0/0	
• 69-60		0/0	0/0		0/1	
• 59-50		0/0	0/2		0/0	
• 49-40		0/0	0/1		0/0	
• 39-30		2/0	1/2		0/0	
• 29-20		0/1	0/1		0/0	
• 19-10		0/3	0/1		0/0	
• 9-0		1/1	0/2		0/0	
• Uncertain:	0/1	0/1	0/2	0/1	0/1	1/3
Total:	0/1	3/6	1/8	0/1	0/2	1/3

What these tables indicate very clearly is that, whilst in all these four aspects there was a huge drop in the evidence between the third and the second centuries for ethnic designations used for ethnic Greeks and other peoples from hellenised regions of the Mediterranean, of ethnic designations for immigrants from the unhellenised parts of the ancient world there was a considerable increase. This shows clearly that, first, there was apparently no change in the use of ethnic designations in the bureaucracy between the third and second centuries and that the use of ethnic designations continued in the second century more or less in the same way as a change in central regulation or in bureaucratic practice or standards would clearly have affected all ethnic designations in the same proportionate way. Further, this also shows that immigration to Egypt from Africa and neighbouring countries in the Near East did not decrease in the second century. If anything, the ethnic terms seem to indicate an increase in immigration in the second century, although we need to remind ourselves that we do not know how quickly or slowly immigrants from these areas gave up using their original ethnic designations and how much earlier they or their ancestors immigrated to Egypt than the dates of the documents in which they appear. These conclusions are corroborated by the Greek evidence for bearers of the designations Ἄραψ 'Arab', Ἄραψ τῆς ἐπιγονῆς literally 'Arab of the descent' and Ἀράβισσα 'Arab woman', of which a large proportion is from the second century BC (19 out of 45 individuals = 42.22% from the II c. against

20 out of 45 = 44.44% from the III c.). So, when we talk about a decrease in immigration in the second century BC, we need to remember that this only applies to the Graeco-Macedonian and hellenised parts of the Mediterranean and not to the non-Hellenic areas of the ancient world, which provided a not insignificant component of immigration to Egypt in the Hellenistic period, something which seems to have been overlooked by recent discussions of the problem of immigration.

Further, the size and importance of the non-Hellenic part of the immigrant population, at least in Middle and Upper Egypt (excluding the Greek city of Ptolemais), is borne out clearly by our evidence. In Greek and Demotic documents 1813 different individuals in total are designated with an ethnic term. Of these 1291 (= 71.20%) bear designations referring to a Graeco-Macedonian ethnic background and 522 (= 28.79%) have designations indicating other ethnic origins.<sup>65</sup> This suggests that non-Graeco-Macedonian immigrants formed about 30% of the foreign population settled in Middle and Upper Egypt (excluding the Greek city of Ptolemais). For the whole of Egypt, however, the large numbers of Greeks in Lower Egypt and especially in the three Greek *poleis* of Alexandria, Naucratis and Ptolemais will further increase the proportion of Graeco-Macedonian immigrants vis-à-vis non-Greek foreign settlers, even though Alexandria was also inhabited by a large Jewish community. Whilst in the current state of our evidence the precise percentages are impossible to establish with certainty for the whole of Egypt, the proportion of approximately 30% for non-Graeco-Macedonian immigrants, reached on the basis of ethnic designations from Middle and Upper Egypt, may be useful at least as a rough indication of the maximum for them. Whatever the precise proportions may have been, the evidence clearly shows that non-Graeco-Macedonian immigration was also substantial, especially to Middle and Upper Egypt and that, in the interest of reconstructing as full and accurate a picture of immigration to and the ethnic composition of the population of Hellenistic Egypt as our sources allow, we should not ignore it.

In the final part of this paper I would like to try and correlate the information offered by ethnic designations on the relative proportions of various foreign immigrant groups to the various estimates of the size of the total population of Hellenistic Egypt and of the proportion of Greek immigrants within it as I believe that this method may help us achieve a more detailed and more accurate reconstruction of the ethnic composition of the population. This is, however, not a straightforward undertaking at all for several reasons. First, it is not always immediately clear precisely how researchers define Greeks, whether Macedonians or other hellenised immigrants are part of this category, and, further, whether the inhabitants of Alexandria are also included in their estimates. As both Dominic Rathbone<sup>66</sup> and Christelle Fischer-Bovet,<sup>67</sup> the authors of the two most detailed recent studies on the topic, seem to include Macedonians among Greeks but exclude hellenised non-Greek ethnic groups (for example, Thracians,<sup>68</sup>) and seem to include in their estimates also the Greek population of Alexandria, in the following calculations I shall include Macedonians but exclude all other ethnic groups. A further difficulty has already been outlined above, namely that whilst the various estimates tend to comprise the whole of the *chora* including the Greek *poleis* of Naucratis and Ptolemais, and in most cases also

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<sup>65</sup> In these calculations I have divided specific individuals bearing an ethnic designation in our documentary evidence into two large groups: on the one hand, those from Macedonia or from Greek *poleis* and regions and, on the other, all others, in accordance with the division of the immigrant population by recent researchers of the topic, in particular Rathbone (1990) and Fischer-Bovet (2011), so that my work may be compatible with their results (see further below). This ethnic division of the population is slightly different from that used in the preceding section of this paper based on Demotic sources where with the Greeks I included hellenised non-Greek immigrants as this division suited better the argument about the differing chronology of immigration from the different parts of the ancient world put forward there. In practical terms, this is a negligible difference as in the Demotic evidence, on which the previous section is based, only a single individual originates from a hellenised non-Greek background (La'da [2002] and [2019] 1899: *Mss*).

<sup>66</sup> Rathbone (1990) 110-14, esp. 110.

<sup>67</sup> Fischer-Bovet (2011) 136.

<sup>68</sup> Segrè (1934) 262-63, however, includes among the Greeks such non-Hellenic peoples from the Balkans as well as numerous other peoples from the Near East. For Segrè Hellenes in Ptolemaic Egypt are practically synonymous with all non-Egyptians.

Alexandria, the information ethnic designations in the documentary sources offer us relates to Middle and, to a lesser extent, Upper Egypt (excluding Ptolemais) only. So, since the proportion of Greeks in these three Hellenic cities was obviously much higher than in the countryside, the proportion of Greeks for the whole of Egypt including the three Greek *poleis* was most probably higher than that for Middle and Upper Egypt only.

After these prolegomena, let us now see how we can correlate the evidence of ethnic designations with the various estimates for the population of Hellenistic Egypt and the proportion of Greeks within it that we find in recent studies.<sup>69</sup> Two estimates have emerged from recent research as the two most likely and most widely cited views: on the one hand, a total population for Hellenistic Egypt of approximately four million people with about 10% Greeks (including Macedonians), put forward by Dominic Rathbone,<sup>70</sup> and, on the other, c. 5% (more precisely, 4.6%) of Greeks (including Macedonians) of a total population of also approximately four million, argued more recently by Christelle Fischer-Bovet.<sup>71</sup> It is important to note here that, whatever the precise proportion of immigrants, among them Graeco-Macedonian immigrants, to Hellenistic Egypt may have been, these generally low estimates are confirmed by recent archaeogenetic research based on ancient (from the late New Kingdom to the Roman Period) mummy genomes from Abusir el-Meleq in Middle Egypt which has suggested that foreign immigration in the Graeco-Roman period was not substantial enough to alter the pre-existing ancient genetic composition of Egypt's population to any significant extent. The genetic fabric of the Egyptian population appears to have remained essentially unchanged until the Arab period when, over a time-span of some 1,250 years, an influx of sub-Saharan African ancestry, perhaps in the context of the trans-Saharan slave trade, which reached its high point in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, made a major impact on the genetic make-up of Egypt.<sup>72</sup>

Taking Rathbone's estimate of c. 10% Greeks and our result of approximately 30% of immigrants to Middle and Upper Egypt being of non-Graeco-Macedonian origin, we arrive at about 14.28% for the proportion of all foreign settlers and at about 571,000 (571,428) immigrants to the whole of the country. Fischer-Bovet's estimate of c. 5% for Greeks combined with our result of approximately 30% of all immigrants to Middle and Upper Egypt coming from non-Graeco-Macedonian backgrounds results in about 7.14% for the total percentage of all foreigners and c. 286,000 (285,714) immigrants to Egypt as a whole. Because the c. 30% share for non-Graeco-Macedonian immigrants arrived at on the basis of the evidence from Middle and Upper Egypt is the absolute maximum, in reality the proportion of non-Graeco-Macedonian immigrants for the whole of Egypt and the total number of all immigrants in the whole country will be lower than these figures. Owing to the problems with our sources outlined above, these calculations can obviously give us only a very rough idea of proportions and numbers but both sets of results appear to be entirely compatible with the findings of recent genetic research. However, we may note that approximately 14-15% as the share of foreigners of the total population of Egypt does not seem to be very far from the region where one would start to expect a larger genetic impact of immigration than appears to have been the case. So about 14-15% for all foreigners, c. 70% of whom were Graeco-Macedonian immigrants, seems to come relatively close to the maximum proportion one would expect for the foreign population of Hellenistic Egypt in the light of recent archaeogenetic research. These calculations and considerations again remind us that non-Graeco-Macedonian immigration to Hellenistic Egypt was also important and should not be ignored.

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<sup>69</sup> As in this section I intend to use estimates for the whole of Hellenistic Egypt, I leave aside those for individual nomes of Egypt such as the Arsinoites: see, for example, Bagnall (1997b) 18, Clarysse and Thompson in P.Count Vol. 2, 92-94 and 138-40 and Clarysse (2019) 299. For the Apollonopolite nome, see Clarysse (2003) 21.

<sup>70</sup> Rathbone (1990) 107-14. See also Segrè (1934) 262-67 and Manning (2007) 441 for this proportion of Greeks.

<sup>71</sup> Fischer-Bovet (2011). Cf. also Clarysse (2019) 299-300, who tentatively suggests that the proportion of Greek immigrants for the whole of Hellenistic Egypt was higher than 5%.

<sup>72</sup> V. J. Schuenemann et al. (2017), esp. 8: "Our genetic transect suggests genetic continuity between the Pre-Ptolemaic, Ptolemaic and Roman populations of Abusir el-Meleq, indicating that foreign rule impacted the town's population only to a very limited degree at the genetic level."

In summary, in this paper I have argued that ethnic designations in reference to specific individuals in the documentary sources constitute our best, that is, the most direct, precise, plentiful and most readily quantifiable, evidence for immigration to, the ethnic composition of the population of and the relative proportions of the different immigrant groups in relation to each other in Middle and Upper Egypt (but also for the whole of Egypt because of a lack of sources from other parts of the country) in the Hellenistic period. On the reasonable assumption that the use of ethnic designations in the sources positively indicates immigration to Egypt, the widespread use of ethnics and their great variety show that, as a result of a sustained period of mass immigration, Egypt became a hugely diverse country ethnically and culturally. Immigrants from 237 different ethnic and cultural groups from all over the ancient eastern and central Mediterranean, the Near East, North-East Africa and the Black-Sea region can be found in our sources but even more distant origins are also attested. This is clearly unprecedented in Egyptian history and involved social and cultural change on a massive scale. As to the precise numbers of immigrants involved, we cannot be certain. Ethnic designations only show the approximate proportions of foreign ethnic groups settled in Middle and Upper Egypt. The main source of immigrants was the Graeco-Macedonian world, approximately 70% of foreigners in Middle and Upper Egypt arrived from this ethno-cultural group. However, non-Graeco-Macedonian immigration was also substantial: about 30% of foreign settlers came from such ethnic groups. The period of immigration was extensive, beginning with Alexander the Great's conquest of the country towards the end of 332 BC and lasting for well over 100 years, perhaps even longer from the Graeco-Macedonian world and hellenised regions and probably much longer, to the end of the second century BC, from other parts of the ancient world, that is, from north-eastern Africa and the ancient Near East. Of the Graeco-Macedonian immigrants to Middle and Upper Egypt the largest sources were Macedonia, the Cyrenaica, Crete, Thessaly and Athens. Of the non-Graeco-Macedonian settlers the most prolific senders of immigrants were Thrace, the Jewish homeland, the regions of the Near East traditionally inhabited by the ancient Arabs, Mysia and Syria but other parts of Asia Minor and North-East Africa as a whole also sent not insignificant numbers. These are the most important contributions of ethnic designations in the Greek and Demotic documentary sources to our knowledge of immigration to and the ethnic composition of the population of Hellenistic Egypt, making our picture much more extensive, detailed and accurate.

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