

In this paper, I analyze the connections between the army and the Egyptian temples in Ptolemaic Egypt and argue that the Ptolemies saw clear advantages in concentrating military and religious powers in the same people: their use of such existing social patterns was characteristic of their ruling practices. This argument stands in agreement with a new approach which considers that areas such as religion, army and administration can no longer be considered as completely distinct professionally or ethnically. I use papyrological and epigraphical sources to illustrate that military and religious functions were bestowed on the same people.

Dietze (2000) recently discussed the connections between the army and temples. She gave examples of people known at the same time as high priests of Egyptian gods and high officers and also suggested that temples (at least in Upper Egypt) were used as garrisons. In the past decades, the role played by Egyptians within the Ptolemaic army was emphasized. Lloyd (2002) used hieroglyphic inscriptions to demonstrate that the Egyptian elite maintained their previous military, religious, and administrative functions in Ptolemaic times.

I argue that the Ptolemies encouraged the pre-Ptolemaic tendency among the Egyptian elite to accumulate priestly and military titles within the same family or the same person. This strategy secured the loyalty of the elite and made it possible for the Ptolemies to rely on local power. Religious ideology functioned as an effective complement to military power in order to rule the country and more specifically to control (again) troubled areas after the Theban revolt (206-186 BC). The evidence for the second and first centuries BC in Upper Egypt could even suggest the recrudescence of the phenomenon, even though this might partly be the result of the abundance of sources from this period.

With the prosopography of the military officers established by Chevereau (2001²) I have made estimates of the percentage of military officers holding religious titles in pre-Ptolemaic Egypt. Combined with the information collected in the volumes of the *Prosopographia Ptolemaica*, these statistics reveal the extent to which the phenomenon persisted in the Ptolemaic period. I discuss specific examples of military officers with priestly titles belonging to the Egyptian or Hellenized elite and to the local elite and emphasize their involvement in temple building.

This paper describes and explains the connections between the Ptolemaic army and indigenous temples in Ptolemaic Egypt. The use, by the Ptolemies, of these connections between priestly and military status illustrates their approach to existing socio-religious institutions in order to secure loyalty and to rely on local power.