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*THE COPTIC ENCYCLOPEDIA
COPTIC MARIOLOGICAL PIETY*



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ABOUT THIS ISSUE

The Coptic Encyclopedia

It has never been an easy task to review an encyclopedia. It is more difficult with the Coptic Encyclopedia which has the right to claim that it is the most comprehensive work on the Copts who are the descendants of the ancient Egyptians, their church and their impact on civilization. 267 scholars from more than 20 countries and belonging to different specialities wrote its 2500 articles. The life of the Copts in 20 centuries is looked upon and studied through various disciplines which include, but are not limited to, history, archaeology, theology, linguistics, art, architecture, education, politics, geography and music. One can only wonder at the enormous task which the editors have marvelously accomplished in eleven years. Three of the editors, including the Editor in Chief, *Professor Aziz S. Atiya*, died before the Encyclopedia appeared in print. Coptic Church Review devoted a special issue on the life and work of Dr. Atiya (Volume 11, Number 4, Winter 1990). The review of the encyclopedia in this issue is limited to its major subjects. However, we regret that the reviewers of three of the top fields in the Encyclopedia-Coptic Art, Archaeology and Coptic Monasteries, have failed to get their articles in time for this issue. These and others may appear in future issues as space permits.

Macmillan Publishing Company is to be highly commended for producing this long awaited work in eight beautiful volumes.

Mariological Piety in the Coptic Church

The article '*Recent Development in Coptic Mariological Piety*' reviews the recent apparitions of the Holy Virgin in Egypt since 1968, with a comment on the response of the Copts to them as seen in the background of Orthodox Tradition in general and Coptic Tradition in particular. The author, *Dr. Otto Meinardus*, has written extensively on the Coptic Church including 10 entries in the Coptic Encyclopedia and two articles in this Journal. As the case with his other papers and books, the present article reflects his vast knowledge of Coptic Church history and the effort he spends in order to write about places he actually sees and persons he actually meets.

Coptic Iconography is well demonstrated by the picture on the backcover which is taken from a color icon of the Holy Virgin Mary drawn by the Coptic iconographer Dr. Stephen René. He may be reached at: 205e Ladbroke Grove, London W106HG, U.K.

Editor

THE COPTIC ENCYCLOPEDIA

Introduction

Macmillan, publisher of several encyclopedical works, is to be congratulated with the publication of the Coptic Encyclopedia, the first Encyclopedia with focus on one of the Oriental Orthodox churches. This Encyclopedia is the fruit of the Coptic emigrant community and the crown on the work of Dr. Aziz Suryal Atiya.

Dr. Atiya (1898-1988), general editor of the encyclopedia, known for his scholarly contributions to the study of the history of the Coptic Orthodox Church, unfortunately did not see his Encyclopedia in print. Dr. Atiya migrated to the USA where he founded the Middle East Centre of the University of Utah with its prestigious library.

During the years Dr. Atiya developed a vision to publish an encyclopedia. Such a task needed however a large organization, contributions from many different disciplines and funds. Dr. Atiya had the skills, the vision and the courage to start the project to develop an Encyclopedia.

An editorial committee was founded. Scholars from all over the world were asked to contribute. Suggestions for entries were given. The work was started in 1980.

This encyclopedia was a fruit of the Coptic emigrant community, especially in North America. Professor Atiya was an emigrant himself. The Coptic Orthodox emigrant community played a role in the increasing western interest in Egyptian churchlife. If the interest in a Coptic Encyclopedia in English had not existed and if the project of the Coptic Encyclopedia had not received support in the Coptic migrant community in North America the idea of producing an English Coptic community would have never born fruit.

For this reason I believe that this Encyclopedia could not have been produced in the decades before or following the Second World War. An emigrant community first needs to be settled before coming to such a monumental work. The Encyclopedia therefore could only be produced in our days. Dr. Atiya was, due to his enormous reputation and organizational skills, the right person to carry out this task.

The Encyclopedia has a large number of high quality contributions of many aspects of Coptic studies. It covers the period of the Church Fathers, Christian Egypt until the Arab conquest of Egypt in 642 and the Church in the Islamic period of Egypt. Articles can be found in the fields of history, theology, archeology, art,

literature and hagiography. The Encyclopedia also gives entries on geographical areas outside Egypt; Christian Nubia and Ethiopia.

Well known contributors are besides Dr. Atiya, H.H. Pope Shenouda on emigration; Bishop Basilios on a number of theological subjects seen from a Coptic Orthodox perspective and Coptic Orthodox liturgy; Dr. du Bourguet S.J. on art; Dr. Subhi Y. Labib, Dr. Mounir Shoucri, and Dr. Khalil Samir S.J. on Coptic medieval history; Dr. René-Georges Coquin, Dr. Peter Grossmann, Dr. Martin Krause, Dr. Maurice Martin S.J., Dr. O.F.A. Meinardus and 255 other contributors. From the contribution of H.H. Pope Shenouda can be seen how much the Church in Egypt is concerned with the Church in the emigration. On the other hand the Encyclopedia proves how the Church in Egypt is valued in the emigrant community.

The contributions came from Egyptian Christians and western scholars among whom a number of Roman Catholic priests. As can also be seen from the articles on the Jesuits, the Franciscans and Dominicans in Egypt the Roman Catholic Church shows a strong interest in Egyptian Christianity which seems to be stronger than the interest of other western churches. Of course much of the Roman interest goes to their wish to unify the Coptic Orthodox Church with Rome. But as can be seen from the contributions of the Jesuits and the Franciscans in the encyclopedia their interest goes fortunately far beyond this.

The Encyclopedia contains also contributions from two well-known Egyptian Muslim scholars: Dr. Mustafa el-Fiqi and Dr. Ali el-Hillal Dessouki. It is good that also Muslim scholars contributed to this Encyclopedia. After all, Coptic history is Egyptian history. Dr. el-Fiqi, counselor in the Cabinet of President Hosni Mubarak, wrote his Ph.D. on the Coptic politician Makram Ubaid and naturally wrote the article on Makram Ubaid for the Encyclopedia. Dr. Ali el-Hillal Dessouki, a well-known professor of political science at the University of Cairo, wrote his contribution on another Coptic leading personality in the thirties, Salama Musa.

The Encyclopedia gives a good picture of the state of research in the several fields of Coptic Studies. Articles are well written and often well documented. The Encyclopedia will be a tremendous help for many years to come for those who are involved in Coptic studies. The Encyclopedia is a must for church historians, copologists, students in the fields of Egyptian archeology, art history, and Islamologists. Unfortunately students in the history of Islam have generally not paid much attention to the position of Egypt's Christian minority in Islamic Egypt. May this Encyclopedia also stimulate their attention for the history of the Copts in Egypt.

This encyclopedia in 8 volumes, 2500 articles, illustration and maps deserves all praise!

Leiden, The Netherlands

Drs. C. Hulsman

Church History

For 20 centuries Coptic Christians have been studying their faith, practicing it and witnessing for it. Their work has helped shape Christian Tradition and civilization as we know them now. Dozens of first class historians and scholars contributed to the historical entries in the Coptic Encyclopedia. Many of these are non-Copts and they all give credit to the Copts as leaders of the early Church in three major fields.

1. On the doctrinal level, theologians of the Catechetical School of Alexandria from the second to the fourth centuries wrote biblical commentaries and doctrinal treatises. Although their main goal was to explain Christianity to their contemporaries, whether Christians, Heretics, Jews or Pagans, yet they were pioneers in putting the basis for Christian theology. The Encyclopedia has an article on the history of the School and one on the life and works of each of its main teachers, the most famous of whom are Clement, Origen, and Didymus the Blind.

2. In the fourth and fifth centuries the Coptic Church Fathers led the whole Christian world during the Trinitarian and the Christological controversies. There is a separate entry for St. Athanasius, St. Cyril of Alexandria and each of the other Fathers as well as for each ecumenical and the historically relevant local church councils. Each is written by an authority on the subject, among whom we mention, Aziz Atiya, W.H.C. Frend, Samir Khalil and Heinz Heinen.

3. On the spiritual level, the greatest Christian revival since the Apostolic time has been that of monasticism which started in the third century in the Egyptian Deserts. And it is here that no effort has been spared by the contributors and scholars of history, art and archaeology in order to put in the hands of the reader by word, picture and diagram an extensive review of Coptic Monasticism, ancient and modern. There are several articles on the subject in general, discussing the history of Egyptian monasticism and its economic activities and the distribution of the monasteries in the various regions of Egypt. The main monastic centers of Scete, Nitria, Kellia and the Pachomian Koinonia are dealt with in depth. There is a special entry on each of the numerous monasteries which are known to have existed in Egypt. The history of the monasteries is written mostly by René George Coquin and Maurice Martin, S.J., the architecture and plans are given by Peter Grossman.

However, the history of the Copts did not end with the 451 AD Council of Chalcedon which separated them from the Byzantine and Western churches, nor by the 642 Arab invasion of Egypt. In the Encyclopedia there is an entry on every Coptic Patriarch, starting by St. Mark the Apostle who preached the gospel in Egypt till in an uninterrupted succession - the 117th Patriarch, His Holiness Pope Shenouda III. These biographies are written, for the most part, by Subhi Labib and Samir Khalil, S.J. The Copts loved their Patriarchs and gave them the title of Papa (Father) or Pope as early as the beginning of the third century; one and a half centuries before its use for the Pope of Rome. This fact is well known and acknowledged even

by Roman Catholic historians. It has been stated in the Encyclopedia by Petro Bilanik (p. 1998-2000). Yet, in a number of other articles, notably by those of Frend and other Western historians, the title is used exclusively for the Pope of Rome.

Throughout the long history of the Copts, the laymen played a major role in their Church and in their country. The Encyclopedia has hundreds of entries on Coptic theologians, writers, physicians, architects, and politicians. Some are well-known like the Sons of Al-Assal who led a Coptic renaissance in the thirteenth century and there are full articles on them. Little is known of others and the contributors, especially Atiya, Coquin, Ferré, Vincent and Krauses had to search the Coptic and Arabic manuscripts, and old encyclopedias in order to keep their memory and work alive for generations to come.

Important events in Coptic history are given in detail. Examples are Alexandria in Late Antiquity (p. 95-103), Alexandria: Christian and Medieval (p. 88-92), Roman and Byzantine Rule in Egypt (p. 942-948), Arab Conquest of Egypt (p. 183-189), and Islamization of Egypt (p. 936-942).

Lebanon, Pennsylvania
Rodolph Yanney

Liturgy

The liturgical life of the Coptic Orthodox Church is discussed from all its different aspects in numerous entries in the Coptic Encyclopedia. There are articles that describe the daily services: The seven canonical hours, the Divine Office and the Raising of Incense.

There is an entry for every fast and every feast in the liturgical cycle, reviewing its history, how it is practised and its liturgical service. However, the interpretation given for the origin of the first week of Lent is not convincing. Several reasons were given to prove that it is not the same as 'the fast of Heraclius' observed in the Byzantine Church. None of them is historically accurate:

- (1) The statement (p. 1094) that Lent lasted for 55 days at the time of Pope Demetrius in the second century is not consistent with the dates given by St. Athanasius in his festal letters two centuries later.
- (2) The tension between the churches of Alexandria and Constantinople, reaching its utmost limits in the seventh century, is given as reason to preclude any exchange of rites between them. Gregory Dix takes the opposite view! In fact, many rites have been exchanged after the separation of the churches in 451 AD. The Coptic Encyclopedia gives the example of the iconostasis which the Copts took from Constantinople after the 10th century.²
- (3) "Al-Safi Ibn-Al-Assal, who antedated Heraclius by several centuries, states that all men and women should observe Great Lent for eight

weeks'." (p. 1095). Actually it was Heraclius (7th century) who antedated Al-Assal (13th century).

The entry on each of the seven major and the seven minor feasts in the yearly cycle comments on its biblical basis and its liturgical services.

The doctrine and the liturgies of the seven Church Sacraments are discussed in detail in various articles. Many references from Scripture and the Church Fathers are given in support of the Orthodox Tradition.

Three separate articles deal with the three Anaphoras (Eucharistic liturgies) now in use in the Coptic Church. These are the Anaphoras of St. Basil, St. Gregory and St. Cyril. Another article deals with the Greek liturgy of St. Mark which was the basis of St. Cyril's liturgy.

A 33-page section on Coptic Music by Ragheb Mofiah³, Marian Robertson, Margit Toth and Martha Roy elaborates on the wealth of the hymnology of the Coptic Church worship, whether in the Divine Liturgy, the canonical hours or the Psalmodia (Divine Office). It also discusses the 21 canticles taken from Scripture for liturgical use, history of Coptic music, musical instruments and musicologists. The section on Coptic Music, which is followed by 127 references, is one of the best entries on the Liturgy in the Encyclopedia.

It has been a great achievement by the editors and the contributors of The Coptic Encyclopedia to gather all this information on the Coptic liturgical life and have it available in a single reference. However, with the exception of the section on Coptic Music, as compared to other topics in the Encyclopedia the liturgical entries are among the weakest. They suffer from major drawbacks. First-emphasis is given to the description of the rites, rubrics and liturgical practices, while very little is offered regarding the history, theology and spiritual values of those liturgies and rites. Second, the references are not updated, and most of them date before the middle of this century. This fact is reflected in some of the entries themselves which show elements of western scholastic theology that infiltrated the Orthodox writings in the first half of this century. The reader will get the false impression that there is no modern scholarship in Coptic liturgical studies whether by Copts or non-Copts. While such scholarship is not lacking, the burden of the vast majority of the entries has been carried by a single man-the late Metropolitan Basilios of Jerusalem. More space could have been given to the very brief articles on the anaphoras and on Pascha by Aelred Cody, O.S.B., and on the Synaxarion by René-George Coquin. Thanks to the liturgical revival in different churches, the Coptic liturgies have been studied by other western scholars who could have contributed to the encyclopedia. It is sad that the writings of the two leading theologians in the Coptic Church who have written extensively on the liturgy, Father Matta Al-Maskeen and Father Tadros Malaty, are almost totally ignored.⁴

In conclusion, we do not want to belittle the work which has been accomplished. The publisher, editors and contributors are to be commended for their huge effort.

But more entries are needed in order to give credit to the rich liturgies of the Coptic Orthodox Church.

Notes

1. Gregory Dix: *The Shape of the Liturgy*. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1970:548.
2. Pages 200, 201, 211.
3. Ragheb Mofiah is the Director of the Department of Coptic Music at the Institute of Coptic Studies in Cairo.
4. While a few of the books by Father Malaty appear in the references of some articles, I could not find in them a single work by Father Matta, whose published books include more than ten volumes on the Eucharist, the daily office and the liturgical feasts. Neither contributed to the liturgy topics of the Encyclopedia.

Lebanon, Pennsylvania

Rodolph Yannev

The Coptic Encyclopedia and Contemporary Copts

It is important to ascertain the audience to whom this work is directed. The Coptic Encyclopedia comes from an academic press, Maxwell MacMillan International and obviously is directed to an international academic audience. Yet, many of the authors, especially Copts, have been obviously careful to avoid any expressions to which a Muslim reader may take exception. It sometimes gives an extremely comprehensive treatment of a particular topic, such as on martyrology (pp. 1548 ff). The authors claimed to present an honest historical fact of the Copts, past and present. However, martyrology confined itself to the past and ignored the contemporary martyrs.

For obvious reasons the tone of the book, in general, is calm and temperate. But, how can a temperate book accurately describe the stormy history of the Copts? The Coptic reader will deduce it "from many well written articles," as those written by His Holiness Pope Shenouda III, on "Coptic Migration," (pp. 1620 ff); and the international reader will deduce it from short articles; "Copts in Modern Egypt," by Samirah Bahr (pp. 1636-37); or "Mikhail, Kyriakos," written by Ragai N. Makar (pp. 1627 ff).

By writing the Coptic Encyclopedia, Dr. Aziz Atiya had done much to aid the scholars as well as the students interested in the branches of Coptology; and we hope that some other scholars will complete the work on a contemporary Coptic Encyclopedia.

Peru, Indiana

Rafik S. Farag, M.D.

Language

Volume 8 of the Coptic Encyclopedia consists of three distinct divisions, as follows:

- a. Part 1: Maps.
- b. Part 2: Appendix, Linguistics.
- c. Part 3: Index.

Part 1, Maps:

This part consists of 12 maps of Egypt or parts of it. The maps are designed to be illustrations for some of the articles included in the previous seven volumes. These maps help in providing a better understanding of Christian Egypt in the past as well as in the present.

Part 2, Appendix:

This part is the largest part of this volume. It consists of 55 articles, dealing with the many aspects of Coptic Language such as Alphabet, Dialects, Phonology, Vocabulary, etc. These articles summarize the extensive research that has been done on the Coptic Language for well over a century by many dedicated scholars in a variety of languages. The simple fact that such articles exist in the English Language will have a great effect on the promotion of the study of Coptic among the Copts, scattered throughout North America. In the past, the knowledge of foreign languages presented a major obstacle for Copts in gaining a better understanding of their language and prevented many from pursuing a deeper study approach of it. Now that the Tower of Babel Complex is resolved, it is hoped that many Copts will be encouraged to do a more thorough study of the language. This will consequently lead toward advancing the movement to preserve, revive, and promote the Coptic Christian Heritage.

This collection of articles were written by 11 Coptic scholars. Fiftythree articles were written by individual contributors and two articles were written by two contributors each. The contributing scholars were as follows:

- + Dr. Peter Nagel (PN), 2 articles.
- + Dr. Rodolphe Kasser (RK), 31 articles.
- + Dr. Ariel ShishaHalevy (ASH), 3 articles.
- + Dr. Helmut Satzinger (HS), 2 articles.
- + Dr. Jean Dorese (JD), one article.
- + Dr. WolfPeter Funk (WPF), one article.
- + Dr. Emile Maher Ishaq (EMI), one article.
- + Dr. Werner Vycichl (WV), 7 articles.
- + Dr. Jan Quaegebeur (JQ), 3 articles.
- + Dr. HansMartin Schenke (HMS), one article.
- + Dr. Francis Thomas Cignac (FTC), one article.
- + Drs. R. Kasser & A. ShishaHalevy (RK/ASH), one article.
- + Drs. R. Kasser & WP Funk (RK/WPF), one article.

The articles contributed by the above scholars were written in various languages and later translated by the staff of the Coptic Encyclopaedia. Each article is concluded with a valuable bibliography pertaining to the subject matter discussed. The following is a quick synopsis of these articles:

- + AKHMIMIC (PN): This article provides an overall survey of the Akhmimic dialect of Coptic which is one of the major dialects of Upper Egypt. The survey includes the general characteristics of the dialect such as its phonetics; and morphological, lexical, and syntactical features. There is also a general discussion of the grammatical features of the dialect. At the end of the article the author provides an inventory of the Akhmimic texts that have been identified or published.
- + ALEPH (RK): This is a general discussion of the character of the consonantal sound 'a' in the Coptic language. The discussion deals with the position of such consonant among the different dialects of Coptic as well as Ancient Egyptian.
- + ALPHABET IN COPTIC, GREEK (RK): A survey of the strong Greek presence that is exhibited in the different Coptic dialects and its evolution.
- + ALPHABETS, COPTIC (RK): An exhaustive survey of the Coptic Alphabet among the different dialects of Coptic.
- + ALPHABETS, OLD COPTIC (RK): A discussion of the alphabet characteristics of a group of texts, known among the Coptic scholars as Old Coptic. These texts present a more primitive form of Coptic that includes characters borrowed from the Demotic. The article deals with these characters and their Demotic origins.
- + AYIN' (RK): A survey of the character of the voiced laryngeal fricative 'ayin' sound which is used in Arabic. This sound has lost its place in the Coptic phonetics of modern days.
- + BASHMURIC (RK): A historical discussion of the so-called phantom dialect that was said by some to have existed, yet no distinct literary remains have been found.
- + BODMER PAPYRI (RK): A detailed survey of this great collection of papyri and parchment texts that reside in Cologne near Geneva, Switzerland, held by the Martin Bodmer Foundation. This collection includes some of the earliest Greek and Coptic Christian texts found in substantial forms. The article lists the contents of the collection and the dialect identification of each of the Coptic texts included. This article is probably more suitable to be placed within the main body of the Encyclopaedia, i.e. volumes 1 through 7, rather than in the linguistic appendix. Probably its late arrival to the publisher dictated its present placement.
- + BOHAIRIC (ASH): This is an overall look at the last surviving dialect of Coptic, Bohairic. The author deals in general terms in the different grammatical aspects of the language as well as its subclassification. It also surveys the work that has been done on the dialect, literary corpus, grammar, and lexical features.
- + BOHAIRIC, PRONUNCIATION OF LATE (HS): A discussion of the pronunciation of the Coptic letters in Bohairic as exhibited in the transcribed texts of

Arabic into Bohairic and vice versa. The article also discusses the new pronunciation of Bohairic which reflects the influence of modern Greek. Despite the changes in the sound values of some of the letters, the author contends that the ancient tradition has been remarkably preserved.

- + CRYPTOGRAPHY (JD): A discussion of the Copts' use of code to hide contents of certain annotation, formulas, inscription, and messages. The author divides up this usage into three types, which shows evidence of borrowing of Greek methods. The purpose for employing such system can be attributed to the need to enhance the magical or mystical power of such texts or to just enable the scribe to hide notes or personal devotions.
- + CRYPTOPHONEME (RK): This article is a short and general discussion of the use of letters in encoding messages in Coptic texts of all dialects.
- + DIALECT, IMMIGRANT (RK): A discussion of the use of a dialect of Coptic outside its traditional geographical region of origin. Such phenomenon in Coptic can only be attested in written texts. Its accuracy is dependant on the accurate determination of the provenance of such texts which often present a challenge to Coptic scholars. Based on Coptic texts found, Sahidic seems to have been the most travelled, thus it is labeled by the author as a neutral dialect. It should be noted that such phenomenon is a very valuable tool for all those who are interested in producing a comprehensive history of the Copts.
- + DIALECT, SPORADIC (RK): This is one of the more specialized articles of this volume. It deals with the process of identifying a dialect, based on textual evidence, that shows a mixture of characteristics, yet components of such mixture are rather transparent. There are some subdialects of Coptic that fall under such classification.
- + DIALECT G (or BASHMURIC or MANSURIC) (RK/ASH): This dialect was discovered among the non-literary texts (letters or legal documents) from the eighth century A.D. Its origin is in the Delta which explains the small number of texts preserved because of the clay soil condition of such region. The author groups it with the Bohairic dialect. The majority of the article deals with the inventory of its most striking feature, that is the lack of use of any Demotic characters. This in essence preserves a dialect of people with a great deal of Greek influence and a rather minor Ancient Egyptian background.
- + DIALECT H (or HERMOPOLITAN OR ASHMUNIC) (RK): This is a detailed discussion of a dialect attested by a single manuscript found in the collection of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. It is comparable, according to the author, to a dialect of Southern Fayyum which shows less typical features than that of pure Fayyumic. The existence of this manuscript allows the author to explore in some details the phonetics as well as the grammatical patterns of this dialect.
- + DIALECT I (or PROTOLYCOPOLITAN) (RK): Here one finds another dialect that was identified through a small number of discovered texts. The brief nature of such texts can only allow discussion of some phonological characteristics

+ DIALECT P (or PROTOSAHIDIC) (RK): As the parade of the great number of identified Coptic dialects continues, one encounters another dialect that was identified through a single text in the Bodmer collection. The early date of the text (Book of Proverbs) has suggested a prototype dialect of Sahidic which shows strong Egyptian background as exhibited in the greater number of Demotic characters employed. The rather extensive size of the text affords the author to go into more details of the dialect's phonology and grammar.

+ **DIALECTS (RK)**: This article gives a general discussion of the geographical distribution of the identified Coptic dialects throughout Egypt. It contains lists of such dialects and examples of their diversity.

+ DIALECTS, GROUPING AND MAJOR GROUPS OF (RK): This is a more concise survey of the Coptic dialects and the grouping system that scholars use to organize them. It is noteworthy to mention that Dr. Kasser, the author, is considered the foremost authority on this subject.

+ DIALECTS, MORPHOLOGY OF COPTIC (WPF): This article deals with the various Coptic dialects from the grammatical point of view. It discusses in more details the common and uncommon grammatical forms of these dialects.

+ **DICTIONARIES (RK)**: This is a useful survey of the history of Coptic dictionaries up to the present time.

+ DJINKIM (RK): This is a historical as well as grammatical discussion of the orthographical sign Djinkim' , , . This is primarily used in texts of the Bohairic dialect.

+ EGYPTIAN ARABIC VOCABULARY, COPTIC INFLUENCE ON (EMD): this is a detailed study on how Coptic has influenced the current Egyptian dialect of Arabic. The author included a representative inventory of such examples arranged in 22 divisions. The work reflects the author's contribution to modern Coptic.

+ **ETYMOLOGY (WV):** This is a detailed discussion of the history of the research in Coptic etymology and its primary features. The discussion is limited mainly to words of Egyptian origin.

+ FAYYUMIC (RK): The dialect discussed here is considered to be one of the major Coptic dialects due to the relatively large number of texts found. It was mistakenly labeled as Bashmurić in earlier studies up to the end of the 19th century. The article contains a full discussion of the phonology, conjugation system, and vocabulary.

+ GEMINATION (RK): This article discusses the grammatical feature of vowel duplication or gemination in Coptic. It discusses its presence in the different Coptic dialects as well as it surveys the literature done on the subject.

+ **GEOGRAPHY, DIALECTAL (RK):** This is a discussion of the geographical distribution of the Coptic dialects as detailed in the various studies made on this sub-

ject. The author supplies maps to graphically illustrate the theories advanced by each of these various studies.

+ GREEK TRANSCRIPTIONS (JQ): This article discusses the practice of the transcription of Egyptian words, mostly names, in Greek characters. The author deals with the history as well as the principles of such practice that has proven to be of great importance to the study of the Coptic language.

+ IDIOLECT (RK): This is a relatively new term being used in Coptic studies. This term has been developed to describe the use of the language peculiar to a certain individual at a certain time frame. The article deals with the history and development of such term in Coptic studies. The writings of St. Shenouda the Archimandrite provide the best example for this.

+ LANGUAGE(S), COPTIC (RK): This article discusses Coptic as the last written representation of the Egyptian language. It deals with the origin of the term 'Coptic' as well as the systematic evolution of the language from its Egyptian roots to the advanced stages of Coptic development. Unfortunately this work is not for the general reader as it should have been. It also does not go far enough in tracing the historical development of the language despite the unquestionably great knowledge that the author has in this subject.

+ LYCODIOSPOLITAN (RK/WPF): a short article that explains this new designation being used to refer to the Lycopolitan or the Asyutic dialect.

+ LYCOPOLITAN (or LYCODIOSPOLITAN OR SUBAKHMIMIC) (PN): This work provides a detailed discussion of this dialect. It deals with the history of the research done on this dialect, its texts and editions, geographical placement, phonetics, and conjugation system.

+ MEMPHITIC (RK): The author here discusses the use of the term 'Memphitic' in earlier Coptic studies. The term was used predominantly to denote the dialect of Lower Egypt. In essence it was the collective term used to refer to the Bohairic dialect. Only in the late 19th century was such use abandoned by the scholars.

+ MESODIALECT (RK): This is a term used to describe an idiom that is neither strong enough to be labeled dialect nor weak enough to be considered a subdialect of a major dialect. The author discusses such uses and their applications.

+ MESOKEMIC (HMS): This article is a discussion of a new dialect that its existence was postulated first by P. E. Kahle Jr. in his major study of the Bodleian's Balaizah collection. Its origin has been identified as the region of Oxyrrhynchus, or Beni Suef, in the northern parts of Upper Egypt. The article discusses the essential features of the dialect such as texts, characteristics, conjugation system, and vocabulary.

+ METADIALECT (RK): This is a brief discussion, yet very difficult to digest for the general reader, about a phenomenon that describes a state of a language dialect that has passed its literary prime and is further showing signs of weakness. Dialect H has been identified by the author as one such examples.

+ MUQADDIMAH (WV): This is a historical survey of a Medieval concept that has appeared in Coptic. The word, as translated from Arabic, means 'Introduction'. It identifies grammatical works of the Coptic language written in Arabic. Such works, though not terribly comprehensive, have proved to be of great importance for the study of Coptic as well as Egyptian in Europe. They are also important in the study of the general history of the Copts.

+ OLD COPTIC (HS): This study provides a detailed exposition of the term 'Old Coptic', that has not been fully understood by scholars yet. The author discusses the main grouping of texts and associated comparative material. He further goes in some length into the description of the writing system that abounded in Demotic characters. He also explores the underlying regional dialect behind some of these texts as well as other features. In essence these texts afford us a look at primitive Coptic or rather the early attempts of writing the Egyptian in a different script than Demotic whether by pagans or Christians.

+ PALEOGRAPHY (RK): This is a general historical survey of the studies done in this field, a field that encompasses the study of the ancient Coptic script for the primary purpose of establishing a more accurate method of dating of manuscripts. The author supplies representative illustrations from manuscripts from the 3rd to the 14th century. The article however, lacks more precise data about the characteristics of the script throughout its history, however such precise information needs more research to be done on the subject than what currently is available.

+ PHONOLOGY (RK): This article presents a complete inventory of Coptic sounds that occur in four dialects of Coptic; Bohairic, Sahidic, Akhmimic, and dialect P. Also included is a discussion of the grouping scheme used by scholars for these sounds along with some of the dissimilar features found in other dialects. In future editions it is hoped that more comprehensive information about the other dialects can be included.

+ PHONOLOGY OF THE GREEK OF EGYPT, INFLUENCE OF COPTIC ON THE (FTC): The Greek language used in Egypt, as evidenced by the massive number of nonliterary texts discovered, reflects a rather unique form of Greek different from classical Greek. The author here discusses the influence of Coptic phonology on this new Greek. He cites several examples of such influence as seen through the variant readings from classical Greek which were found in these texts. This phenomenon, though being recognized for a long time, had not been utilized to explain such variant readings found. This can possibly be attributed to the traditionally low esteem that Coptic enjoyed among scholars of classical Greek.

+ PRE-COPTIC (JQ): This article explores the transitional period from the Demotic to the Coptic script. It discusses the history of this transition as well as some of the reasons that led to it.

+ PRE-OLD COPTIC (JQ): The author here describes the stage just preceding Old Coptic, a stage he characterizes by individual attempts to render the Egyptian language in Greek scripts. He cites nine instances where such case is seen to some

degree of certainty. These examples came down to us in the form of texts written on papyrus or ostraca or simply from inscriptions found in Egypt.

+ PROTODIALECT (RK): This article defines in elaborate details the term 'Protodialect', which is the more primitive stage preceding the development of such dialect. The author explores the loss of consonantal sounds between the protodialect and its respective dialect. Dr. Vergote has made great contributions in this field. The author here uses samples of Dr. Vergote's work, in a slightly modified order, to illustrate this phenomenon.

+ SAHIDIC (ASH): This is one of the most extensive articles in this part. It deals with the classical dialect of Coptic that is popularly known as 'Sahidic'. It has earlier been labeled as Upper Egyptian, Theban, or the Southern dialect. The term was first used by bishop Athanasius of Qus (13th century A.D.) and was adopted into Coptic scholarship by Stern in 1880. This dialect is the dialect taught wherever Coptic is taught on an academic basis. This is due to the rich literary yield that survived as well as its linguistic uniformity. After the introduction the article is divided into three major parts. The first deals with the grammatical features of the Standard Sahidic. The second part discusses the various types of Sahidic that were identified by the scholars. The third and last part gives a quick inventory of the work done in this dialect in the form of edited texts, grammar, and lexical works.

+ SHENUTEAN IDIOM (ASH): This is an enlightening and rather short article that describes the use of Coptic as seen in St. Shenouda writings. These writings afforded the Coptic linguist a golden opportunity to probe, study, and describe a complete grammatical system. They were helped of course by the extensive amount of authenticated writings that have survived. Such corpus of texts can only be matched among Biblical texts. The article deals in general terms with the problems of compiling such corpus. It further briefly describes and lists some of the linguistic characters of these writing. It also touches upon some of the unique lexical usage of St. Shenouda. The information included in this article reflects the highly learned status of the author. However, I was personally hoping to see more material presented here for such an important subject.

+ SULLAM (WV): This is the Arabic term used to describe the vocabulary lists in Coptic and Arabic that appeared during the period of the 12th-15th century A.D. The Arabic term literary means 'ladder' which represents the impression that the person has when he views their arrangement. The article surveys the history of these works and some of its manuscripts. It describes the purpose behind the compilation of such lexical works. The author goes in some details into the character of the vocabulary included in these lists. It should be noted that such works provided European scholars with access to the sense of the Coptic Bible at an early date. It also greatly assisted Champollion in his decipherment of the hieroglyphs.

+ SYLLABICATION (RK): Syllabication is a companion to phonetics. It gives the reader of the language the mechanism by which he can properly pronounce combination of sounds as grouped together. Coptic, unfortunately is not a living

language (but still alive). This makes the bases for such work more theoretical. The author goes into some of the intricate details of the subject, its development, components, and relationship to the Ancient Egyptian. He then uses Sahidic to list the types of Coptic syllables and illustrates each type with few examples. Then at the end he categorizes syllables in Coptic and divides them into a total of nine groups or subgroups. This article is very specialized and unfortunately a beginner in Coptic studies will have a very difficult time benefiting from it, even though he might be interested to learn about this important subject.

+ **VOCABULARY, AFRICAN CONTACTS WITH AUTOCHTHONOUS COPTIC (WV):** This is the first of six consecutive articles, dealing with the outside influences on or by the corpus of vocabulary found in Coptic texts. This one investigates the influence that Coptic had through contacts with three neighboring African languages, Berber, Bedawiye, and Nubian. In the case of each of these languages, the author sites some examples to illustrate such contact. The article is short but not pertinent to many students of Coptic or scholars.

+ **VOCABULARY, COPTOARABIC (WV):** Coptic in its evolution into near extinction borrowed some Arabic words and transcribed them in Coptic characters. This article illustrates briefly some of the instances where this phenomenon occurred.

+ **VOCABULARY, COPTOGREEK (RK):** This is the most extensive of the six articles on Coptic vocabulary. It deals in length with the use of Greek loanwords in Coptic and how that practice differs from one dialect to another. The author ventures to make some attempts to rationalize this varying usage of Greek words among the known literary dialects of Coptic. He then explores in detail the grammatical usage of the Greek vocabulary by Coptic and what form in which these words have come into it. The article is richly illustrated with examples and is very important to all Coptic students and scholars alike.

+ **VOCABULARY, CUNEIFORM TRANSCRIPTION OF PROTOTYPES OF AUTOCHTHONOUS COPTIC (WV):** This is a short and interesting article that deals with the value that Cuneiform transcriptions had in uncovering the origins of some of the Coptic vowels. This is achieved through the transcriptions made of words of Egyptian origin in Cuneiform. The information included is probably deeper than what an average Coptic student is willing to devote time for.

+ **VOCABULARY OF EGYPTIAN ORIGIN, AUTOCHTHONOUS COPTIC (RK):** Coptic is traditionally known as the last form of the written Egyptian language. So it should not come as a surprise that the greater part of the Coptic vocabulary is derived from Egyptian. The author illustrates this fact by examining the vocabulary used in two Sahidic texts. The first is from St. Shenouda's writings which is originally written in Coptic, and the second is from The Apophthegmata Patrum which is probably a translation from Greek. This article serves more as an illustration of known fact than a vehicle to furnish new information. Nevertheless it is recommended reading due to its interesting approach to the subject.

+ **VOCABULARY OF SEMITIC ORIGIN, AUTOCHTHONOUS COPTIC (WV):** This is the sixth and last of the articles on the Coptic vocabulary. It deals with loanwords of semitic origin. This source of vocabulary has in part come via Ancient Egyptian into Coptic. The article lists some of these words as found in several of the Coptic dialects. It should be mentioned that Coptic has acquired many other semitic or rather Hebrew words through Bible translations from Greek into Coptic.

Comments:

In spite of the wealth of information compiled in this part, there are some areas that could have been addressed here for the sake of completeness. Noticeably absent are separate Apophthegmata articles on some of the unique grammatical features of the Coptic language such as the Bipartite and Tripartite conjugation systems, the second tenses, and the nominal sentence structure. Also a clearer discussion of the evolutionary history of the Coptic language is sorely needed, what was provided, in my humble opinion, was not adequate.

Part III, Index:

This is a complete index of all the articles included in the first seven volumes only. It is hoped that future editions of this work will include index for the this volume also.

Summary:

In conclusion, this volume continues the fine tradition that has started in the first seven volumes. It will surely make a most positive impact on all aspects of Coptic studies. In particular, it will increase the number of people that will study the language in more detail.

Los Angeles, California

Hany N. Takla

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN COPTIC MARIOLOGICAL PIETY

Otto F.A. Meinardus, Ph.D.

Undoubtedly inspired by the mariophanies of Zeitûn in 1968 and in 'Ard Babadeblu/Shubra in 1986, Copts have experienced during the past twenty years rather unusual mariological events. For the attentive and alert observer of the Coptic scene some of these apparently strange phenomena are really not that obscure and inexplicable if seen in their social-political context. Especially in times of overt discrimination and political pressure and persecution members of the Coptic minority have always remembered their religious heritage and identity. The fact that Coptic Christianity is strongly determined not only by mariological doctrinal theology¹ but also by mariological devotion and piety explains some of the recent developments. After all, the Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, has always been considered as the omnipotent, omnipresent protector and defender against all kinds of personal ills and social threats and dangers.

In this essay I shall call attention to four very different mariological occurrences in the realm of the Coptic Church. 1. The blood-weeping "Mater Dolorosa" or al-Hazina in the Church of St. George in the village of Wādî 'n-Natrûn. 2. The lithophany in the Church of SS. Cyrus and John, south of the Qasr ash-Sham 'in Old Cairo. 3. Some contemporary mariophanies among the Copts and 4. The plastic representations of the Holy Virgin of Zeitûn.

1. The Weeping "Mater Dolorosa" in the Church of St. George in the village of the Wādî 'n-Natrûn

The Church of St. George, consecrated in 1987 by Anbâ Bakhûm of Behaira (Damanhûr), is situated in the south-easterly part of the village of Wādî 'n-Natrûn, between Cairo and Alexandria. The church has three altars which are dedicated to the Holy Virgin (north), St. George (center) and St. Bishoi (south). In the northern apse there is a large colour print (85 x 55 cm) of the popular painting of the "Mater Dolorosa" by the Florentine master Carlo Dolci (1616-1686). Copies of this picture, which is well-known and very popular in countries of central and southern Europe, have been widely disseminated and distributed throughout the Coptic communities from Alexandria to Aswân. Thus, e.g. her picture has already replaced in several instances the paintings of the Holy Virgin of Zeitûn. We find representations of Dolci's



Adhra al-Hazina
The Weeping Virgin
Church of St. George, Wādî 'n-Natrûn

"Mater Dolorosa" in the Coptic Cathedral of St. Michael in Aswân, in a special women's prayer chapel in the Convent of Dair Amir Tâdros at Medinet Habu (Thebes) and in the Church of St. Bishoi at Dair Anbâ Bishoi, Wādî 'n-Natrûn, etc.

The picture in the Church of St. George is protected by a plastic cover. Literally hundreds of votive-cards and-notes are scattered on the altar-slab. Numerous beautiful bouquets of red and pink roses decorate the frame of the picture. Both sides of the picture are framed with several bandages, scarfs, pieces of fabric, etc., undoubtedly testimonies to the miraculous healing power of the image of the "Mater Dolorosa." To the right and to the left of the wonderworking picture are prints of the "Madonna of the Passion" by Rico da Candia, 16th century, of St. Menas and two photos of Pope Cyril VI.

According to the testimony of the local Copts the image of the "Mater Dolorosa" began weeping blood on Wednesday, May 17th, 1989. This continued for about a fortnight. It is said that the blood ran out of her right eye and trickled down her right cheek. Traces of the flow of blood are still noticeable on the picture. Yet, in all

fairness it must be said that this particular poster is not an exact copy of the original? though it does include many of the characteristics of Dolci's work, e.g. the posture of the Holy Virgin, the typical tip of the index-finger, the colouring of the maphorion, etc. However, instead of a single tear on the original, the Coptic picture shows now a dark streak of dried liquid which is supposed to represent the flow of blood protruding from her eye.

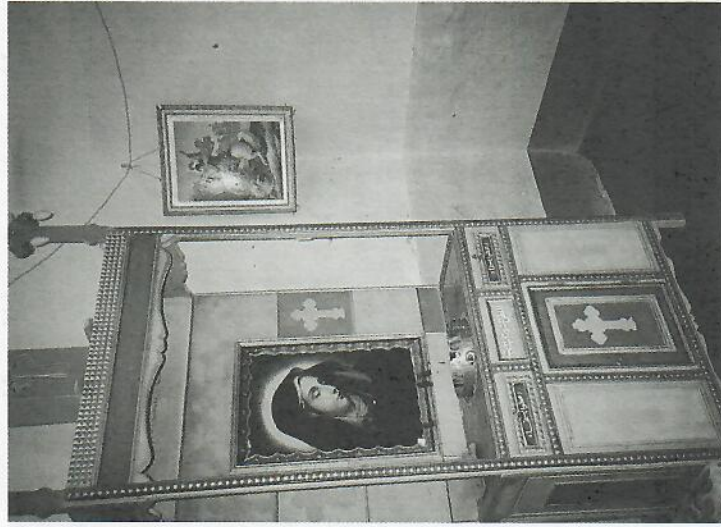
Irrespectively what people may say and how this mariological phenomenon may be interpreted, there is no doubt that large numbers of Copts have repaired to this picture to find answers to their problems. Here they experienced solace, comfort and confirmation. In many cases troubles, fears and anxieties have been remedied by the faith of the believers in the loving concern of the Holy Virgin. The testimonies of actual healings have caused others to visit this church.

The Coptic monks in the nearby monasteries, the Dair Anbâ Bishoî, the Dair as-Surfân and the Dair al-Barâmûs have responded rather reluctantly to my questions about the bleeding tears of the image of the "Mater Dolorosa." This hesitation was surprising to me. There are also in the Coptic tradition several instances recorded about weeping icons. Whenever the Coptic Church suffered from external pressure or persecutions or internal dissension, intrigues or disunity, the church triumphant symbolized by the Holy Virgin shared in the trials of the church militant. During the patriarchate of Cosmas (851-858) all the pictures which were in the Dair Abû Maqâr gushed with tears like fountains of water. The Christians knew that this was on account of what the evil and unjust walis did.³ In the 11th century, the icons are said to have wept again, although this time the sorrow of the Holy Virgin and the saints was due to the gluttony and pride of the Christians.⁴ The picture of the Holy Virgin that weeps tears of blood should be interpreted in terms of the corporate sorrow of the Coptic Church for the suffering of her children. The *History of the Patriarchs* reports that in the 9th century an icon of Christ in the Dair Abû Maqâr shed blood profusely while the faithful collected the same which healed many illnesses and troubles.⁵

As in the case of other traditions pertaining to miraculous icons it is idle to employ the criteria of the natural sciences, for an explanation, e.g. an investigation of the chemistry of the liquid. It is only as we ask ourselves the question of purposes, and relate the manifestation to the social and political climate of the Copts that we might find a satisfactory answer.

2. *The Lithophany of the Holy Virgin in the Church of SS. Cyrus and John in Old Cairo*

A few years ago (1987) the interior of the early medieval Church of SS. Cyrus and John (Abû Kîr wa Yuhannâ) within the compound of the Dair Amir Tâdros south of Qasr ash-Shamî, Old Cairo, underwent basic restorations. In the course of this work also the columns of the nave were cleaned. As this process continued the faithful recognized on the southern side of the plaster-coating of the north-westerly column



Dair Amir Tâdros
Medinet Habu (Thebes)
"Mater Dolorosa"

the contours of the Holy Virgin and Child. In order to preserve this lithophany of the Holy Virgin the column was enclosed in a glass case. A large picture of the Madonna of the Passion was placed inside the glass case. It is noteworthy that many Copts see in the accidental varieties of the colourings of the plaster certain signs and messages of divine grace. A parallel to this lithophany can be seen to the right of the entrance to the Church of the Holy Virgin at Zeifûn. The faithful maintain that they see in the plaster the contours of Jesus Christ. Also these outlines are preserved by a pane of glass.

The appearance of the Holy Virgin on a column has a long tradition among the Copts of Old Cairo. At the same time I wonder whether the Copts of the Church of SS. Cyrus and John are consciously aware that they are preserving a medieval Coptic tradition.

The stories of the miraculous column of the Church of the Holy Virgin al-Mu'allaqah in Old Cairo are certainly noteworthy. Coptic tradition records that the Holy Virgin appeared to the Patriarch Ephraem (975-978) and informed him that near the

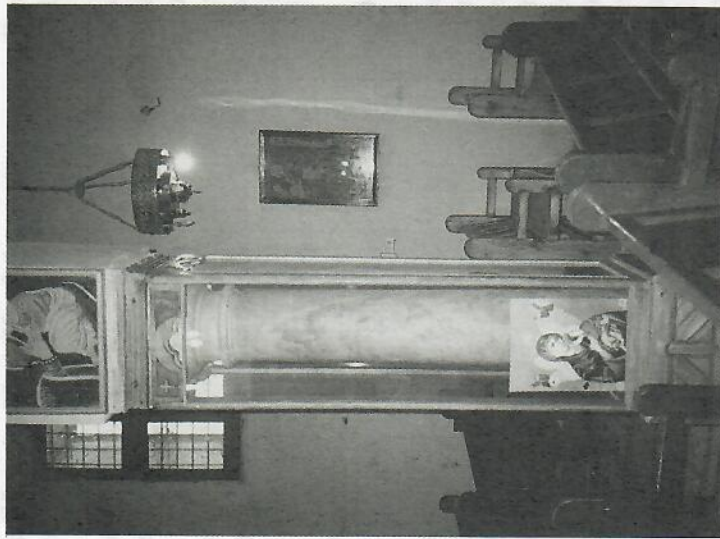
Darb al-Hadîd he would meet a man, whose faith could move a mountain.⁶ Western pilgrims and visitors were aware of the peculiarities of this column. The Irishman Symon Semeonis, who visited Egypt in 1322-1324, mentioned that the Holy Virgin spoke out of this column to a certain Jacobite about the liberation of the Christians.⁷ Leonardo di Niccolo' Frescobaldi (1384) knew that the Holy Virgin had spoken to the Sultan out of this particular column⁸ and John Poloner (1422) had heard that a voice used to speak out of this column.⁹ Certainly until the second half of the 17th century the tradition of a small image of the Holy Virgin on the church column which spoke to the Patriarch Ephraem was repeated.¹⁰

3. *Contemporary Mariophanies among the Copts*

Mariophanies which were experienced by individuals or also by large groups of believers must be considered as an integral part of the Coptic heritage. The testimonies of the well-known mariophanies of Zeitûn (1968) and 'Ard Babadeblu (1986) are undeniable evidence of this phenomenon. Individuals claim again and again to have experienced visions of the Holy Virgin. Unfortunately, young 'Azer, the future Pope Cyril VI (1959-1971), did not record for us a pictorial description of the vision of the Holy Virgin which he experienced in 1910 in Alexandria. He merely called her "Mother of the Light."¹¹ There is no doubt that the popular iconology of the Holy Virgin of the respective region and period determines the subjective imagery of the vision. A good example of this fact is the mariophany on the dome of the Syrian-Orthodox Church of the Holy Virgin at Museitbeh in Beirut on April 10, 1970. All Christians agreed that they saw that very night the "Vierge du Liban" of Harissa!¹²

On November 25, 1987 the Holy Virgin appeared to a Muslim woman, Mrs. Nahed Muhammed Methwallî, principal of the Girls' High school in Helmiya az-Zeitûn. This event caused a rather serious political stir in Egypt. It happened on said day at 11 am that Mrs. Metwallî saw in her office the figure of the Holy Virgin in the form of the Virgin of Zeitûn in a white robe and a light blue cloak.¹³ Mrs. Salwa Ramzî, her secretary, was a witness to this apparition. On account of this experience Mrs. Metwallî accepted the Christian faith and consequently changed her name to Fibi (Phoebe) Salîb. Several times Mrs. Salîb was threatened because of her change of religion. Finally, she left Egypt for Europe. Temporary arrests and threats were also experienced by some of the Christian members of the faculty, Mr. Maurice Ramzî, Mrs. Lauris Aziz and Mrs. Eugenie Yaqûb.¹⁴

Significantly enough the Holy Virgin does not only show herself in the form of the Virgin of Zeitûn, but since a few years also in the figure of Dolci's "Mater Dolorosa." Thus, for example, it is recorded that the "Mater Dolorosa" appeared in January 1988 in an Alexandrian hospital to Abûnâ Andarâûs as-Samwîlî. This happened a few days before his death on February 7th. Many Copts in Upper Egypt consider the famous blind monk Abûnâ Andarâûs as-Samwîlî as a thaumaturgos on



Lithophany of the Holy Virgin and Child

Abu Kir wa Yuhanna
Sts. Cyrus and John
Old Cairo "Column"!

account of his many miracles, exorcisms and his prophetic insights. Because of his blindness he could not see the image of the Holy Virgin, however, those attending to his needs clearly stated that they had seen the "Mater Dolorosa" above the suffering Abûnâ Andarâûs.¹⁵

A mariophany of a very unusual kind is reported by the Copts in the Dair al-Azab, 6 km. south of Medinet al-Fayyûm. While visiting the old Church of the Holy Virgin in this well-known pilgrimage-center I was shown an Italo-Byzantine picture (print) of the Holy Virgin (80 x 60 cm) attached to the north-western column of the central nave. The print was under glass and set in a baroque frame. On the occasion of the large Coptic pilgrimage in honour of the Holy Virgin on August 22, 1989, many Copts have seen the Holy Virgin as she stepped out of the frame.¹⁶ Hereby the glass was cracked from the upper right to the lower left part of the picture. This crack is being purposely preserved as a testimony to the apparition of the Holy Virgin!

4. *The Plastic Representations of the Holy Virgin of Zeitûn*

Since the eighties of our era there has developed a rather strange and so far unknown form of mariological veneration among the Copts. Plastic works, sculptures of the Holy Virgin of Zeitûn and 'Ard Babadeblu in wood, plaster or cheap metals made in Hong Kong, Taiwan or Italy are offered in the various kiosks of the Coptic monasteries and pilgrimage-shrines.

There is little doubt that some 25 years ago the Copts borrowed from Roman Catholic mariology the image of the *Immaculata* for their iconography of the Holy Virgin of Zeitûn and 'Ard Babadeblu.¹⁷ In fact it is noteworthy, if not lamentable, that the image of the Holy Virgin who appeared in Zeitûn in 1968 and in 'Ard Babadeblu in 1986 was not represented with any Oriental, Semitic or at least Middle Eastern characteristics! On the contrary, the image reflected purely 19th century European dispositions.

Since the apparitions of the Holy Virgin one notices an intentional and deliberate movement to impose upon the Copts purely western or Roman Catholic forms of devotion and piety. Statues of the Holy Virgin of Zeitûn, phosphoresced in various sizes, embedded in large shells or added as decorations to pendulum-clocks are offered in church-kiosks and-stores from Alexandria to Aswân.

In view of this development it is well to remember that the Copts consider themselves heirs to the famous Catechetical School of Alexandria and to those theological giants as St. Clement of Alexandria and Origen. The Alexandrian fathers had warned their contemporaries of the cult of statues and reminded them of the Mosaic prohibition: It is clearly forbidden to manufacture deceptive images, for Moses had stated: 'You shall not make yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth' (Ex. 20, 4). Moreover, the strong emphasis upon the spirituality of the nature of God led to a radical condemnation of anything that had the appearance of the pictorial. In short, the theology of the Catechetical School of Alexandria had no use for religious pictorial art!

This tradition was continued by a number of non-Chalcedonian theologians. It is no coincidence that we discover certain iconoclastic tendencies in the realm of the miaphysitic¹⁸ communities from the 5th century until the era of iconoclasm. Undoubtedly, in some instances the rejection of the veneration of images was just as much a matter of an anti-Byzantine, anti-Chalcedonian position as it was a reflection of the Mosaic condemnation of images.

Destructions of statues and images are recorded as having been initiated by such staunch miaphysitic theologians as Philoxenes of Mabbug (5th century) and Severus of Antioch (6th century). True, in Egypt this unyielding antagonism towards the veneration of images had somehow worn off by the 7th century. Yet, largely on account of the Mosaic prohibition, we do find at least from the 8th century an intentional "dematerialization" of the traditional images. Artists were compelled to



Dair al-Azab

Church of the Holy Virgin

The wonderworking picture of the Holy Virgin. She is said to have stepped out of the frame of this picture.

deviate from the assumed forms of classical art and restrict their work to purely iconographical productions.

In view of this well established and time-honoured practice within Eastern Orthodoxy the present public offences against the traditional interdict of the Church appear not only incomprehensible but also inexplicable. True enough, there is an early medieval Roman Catholic tradition according to which the Apostle St. James is said to have ordered the manufacture of the first statue of the Holy Virgin, namely the Nuestra Señora del Pilar of Saragosa, Aragon. However, I wonder whether the Coptic theologians actually would have turned this rather spurious story to their advantage for the purpose of defending the exhibition and the sale of statues of the Holy Virgin of Zeitûn!

Notes

1. Meinardus, O., "Ägypten: Frömmigkeitgeschichte," *Lexikon der Marienkunde*, Regensburg, 1989, 43-45.
2. The original of Carlo Dolci's "Mater Dolorosa" is in the Eremitage, St. Petersburg. Cf. Brückner, Wolfgang, *Elfenreigen-Hockzeitstraum. Dumont Kunst-Taschenbuch*, 22, Köln, 1974, Pl. 84.
3. *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church (HPEC)*, Yassâ 'Abd al-Masîh, O.H.E. Burmester, Cairo, 1943, II, i, 13.
4. *HPEC* (A'îz S. Atiya, Yassâ 'Abd al-Masîh, O.H.E. Khs-Burmester) Cairo, 1959, II, iii, 276-7.
5. *HPEC*, II, i, 12.
6. "Synaxaire Copte" (6th of Kîhak), *Par. Orient.* III, 384-88. "Synaxaire Ethiopien" (6th of Tanâssâ), *Par. Orient.* XV, 612-616. Coptic tradition identified this mountain with the Mukattam mountain-range east of Cairo.
7. *Itinerarium Symeonis ab Hybernia ad Terram Sanctam*. (Ed. M. Esposito), Dublin, 1960, 89.
8. *Viaggio di Leonardo di Niccolò Frescobaldi in Egitto*. (Ed. G. Manzi) Rome, 1818, 102.
9. *Descriptiones Terrae sanctae ex saeculo VIII^o, IX^o, XII^o, et XV^o*. (Ed. Titus Tobler) Leipzig 1874, 279-280. Also the Flamish traveller Joos van Ghisele (1485) mentions that a strange voice emanated from the first column on the left hand side which caused this church to be known as that of the "miraculous column." *Toyage van Joos van Ghisele naar t'Heiligland in 1485* (Ed. H. van der Keere), Gand, 1572.
10. Vansleb, J.M., *Nouvelle relation en forme de journal d'un voyage fait en Egypte en 1672 et 1673*. Paris, 1677, 237-8.
11. *Egyptian Gazette*, May 16, 1968.
12. *The Daily Star*, Beirut, April 11, 1970.
13. Mrs. F. Salib described to me the details of the apparition in Leiden (The Netherlands) on January 16, 1992.
14. Cf. Report, Commission on Human Rights, 47th Session, Item 22/57 in *The Copts - Christians of Egypt*, 18, 3, July 4, 1991, 17.
15. Kamal 'Abdallah, *Anhâ Andârâûs as-Samwîlî*. Cairo, Sons of Pope Kîrillus VIth Society, 40 Hadayek, Shubra, 1990.
16. A similar story is reported from the Church of Apa Nûb in Samannûd. Periodically the youthful martyr is said to leave the miraculous icon and join the children in the inner court of the pilgrimage center.
17. Meinardus, O., "Von der Mariophanie zum Gnadenbild," *Oskirchliche Studien*, 39, 4, 1990, 289-299.
18. Whereas the christological terminus "monophysitism" has been officially rejected by recent theological declarations of the Coptic hierarchy, the substitute "miaphysitism" is nowadays accepted. Cf. Father Tadros Malaty, *Christologie*, Kröffelbach, 1988, 6 f.

CURRENTS IN COPTIC CHURCH STUDIES

*The Egyptian Martyr, St. Mena the Miracle Worker
Publication of the Church of St. Mena of Fleming in Alexandria, Egypt,
1963. 439 pp.*

The book begins with the persecution of the Christians during the reign of the Roman Emperors. At this time, in 285 A.D., Mena was born to a Christian family from the city of Nikios in Lower Egypt. His father, a ruler during the occupation of Egypt by the Romans, passed away when Mena was eleven. Mena's mother died when he was thirteen. In spite of these tragedies, Mena continued his religious life and had a deep faith in the loving God.

Upon the death of Mena's parents, a Roman leader who had been a friend of his father befriended him and gave him a rank in the Roman army. Three years later (303 A.D.) an edict was issued by the Emperors Diocletian and Maximian that everyone, regardless of his position, should worship the Roman deities. Unwilling to do this, Mena resigned from the army and went to the desert to become a Coptic hermit, taking some camels to help him in preparing a small area for cultivation.

After spending five years in the desert Mena heard a voice from heaven asking him to be a witness for God and telling him to announce this to the Roman ruler. In the early morning, St. Mena gave his camels to a Libyan, telling him, "I will go to die in the name of Jesus Christ, take these camels and take care of them and let them serve you." The Libyan asked the saint to pray for him and said, "I will give these camels to your church after your martyrdom" (p. 35).

The saint then went to the city during a certain festival to fulfill his goal. He was arrested, tortured and finally was beheaded. The author gives many reasons why the saint suffered these persecutions and tortures. The reader will find a good discussion concerning the life of the saint, his family, his birthplace, the years of his parents' death, information concerning his joining the army, the year and style of writing the Edict, the life of the saint in the desert, various opinions about his death (309 A.D.) and information about the place in which he was beheaded.

The book also offers information about the body of the saint which was partially burned and then taken by Christians who anointed and wrapped it and kept it in a chapel. One of the Roman leaders, a friend of the saint, took the body with him when fighting the Libyans. After conquering them, he tried to take the body back to

its original resting place, putting it on a camel. The camel refused to move. So the soldier placed the body on a second camel, which also refused to move while carrying the body. The soldier then put the body in a casket, built a tomb and placed the casket in the tomb at the spot where the camels refused to move, which was the village of Esfé in the area of Maryut.

Some years later the tomb was accidentally discovered by a small boy who was healed from an illness by coming close to the tomb. The people of the village gradually recognized the power of the saint, even in death, to perform miracles through the Lord. The fame of the saint became widespread and a church was built in this location. During the time of Pope Athanasius (228-373) another large church was built and the saint's body was placed in a special room under the church. Later, Pope Theophilus (385-412) built a still larger church, although the body of St. Mena remained in its original location.

During the rule of Emperor Zeno (474-491) a city was built around the church of St. Mena in Maryut. The period between the fifth and seventh centuries was considered the golden age for the church of the saint and the pilgrimage to it.

The book goes into great detail about the repeated loss and subsequent findings of the body and the miracles attributed to it.

The ancient city of Abu Mena is discussed, along with its history, its monuments, its discovery and the way in which life returned again to it. Information is given concerning the fame of St. Mena in various parts of the world and the various monuments in his honor. We read also about many of the Popes, bishops, martyrs and saints who have been named after St. Mena, as well as the numerous churches and monasteries.

The book deals too with Coptic hymns about St. Mena, written in Coptic in different periods of time. These have been translated into Arabic, and are still chanted on certain occasions in the Coptic Church.

At the end of the book is a helpful supplement, a number of references in Arabic, English, French, German and Coptic as well as an index for proper names.

This book, with its pictures, plates and great detail concerning archaeology, culture, religion and history, is a valuable addition to the library of anyone interested in Coptic Egypt and the Coptic Church. Prior to the publication of this book, this information could be located only in scattered rare books; there was no central source of information. It is a complete volume on the life of St. Mena with information that has been gathered from various sources.

Boulos Ayad Ayad
University of Colorado

BOOK REVIEWS

Fathers of the Desert: Life and Spirituality

By Marcel Driot. St. Paul Publications Middlegreen, Slough SL3 6BT England pp. 144 (UK price five pounds ninety-five pence). USA agents Paulist Press NJ.

Marcel Driot is a French monk and hermit. This volume is useful precisely because it helps us to see the Desert Fathers through the eyes of a Roman Catholic religious. The book is designed as a 'practical' introduction and although it has some scholarly apparatus it does not claim to be an academic piece. It relates aspects of the teaching of these ancient Coptic monks to contemporary spiritual life and some famous Roman Catholic teachers of Spirituality. It is a good example of a certain method of interpretation.

Driot ignores the life situation in which the apothegmata arose. There is no understanding of Egypt, no awareness of the ascetic life within Oriental Orthodoxy, which is the essential background for interpretation, and no recognition of the fact that Coptic monks today, in places like the Wadi Natroun, show us that we are dealing with a living tradition. It is a sad indication of the recent collapse of Ecumenism that this book nowhere uses the word Copt or its cognates. An innocent reader might assume that the Desert Fathers were Roman Catholic monks.

Despite these reservations, Driot can help us to interpret the Apophthegmata for today, even when he shows how it ought not to be done. Any sincere reading of the Desert Fathers should not be wasted upon us. But for a serious appreciation of the Coptic aspect, also from a Roman Catholic monk and hermit, we should still turn back to the *Wisdom of the Desert*, the introduction to Thomas Merton's book of the same title, which Fr. Matta El Meskeen has accurately described as "one of the finest short analyses of the golden age of Coptic Monasticism."

The publishers are to be congratulated in their choice of cover illustration: a fine example of the artistry of the Coptic Orthodox photographer Monica Rene whose work has been admired by many of us for years. The icon shows St. Onuphrius with St. Tekle Haymanot the Ethiopian in the Church of St. Mercurius (Deir Abu'l Seifein: the Father of the Two Swords), Old Cairo. As I have remarked in these pages before, if only the Copts would use their wonderful heritage when they decorate their own books!

Sutton Valence School, Kent, England.

John Watson.

The Arab Christian: A History in the Middle East.

By Kenneth Cragg. Westminster/John Knox Press, Louisville, Kentucky 1991. pp. 336 np.

Kenneth Cragg is internationally recognized for his studies of Islam but his "alongsidedness - in good faith" has not always been welcomed. This is a pity. His books are the products of a first-class mind. He is a distinguished Arabist and quietly exhibits a profound knowledge of ancient and modern Christian literature. The bishop is also a writer of spiritual depth: Evangelical in origin, universal in sympathy. He is never an "easy read." The writing is tight and stylised. But he deserves to be read.

The present book is, if my calculations are correct, Dr. Cragg's twenty-second major publication. It is a miracle of concision encompassing a history from pre-Islamic Arabia to the present time, surveying the dilemma of Arabic-speaking Christianity "bound over to a language that is bound over to Islam." Disclosures abound in a book which teaches much in a small space.

A section entitled "the European factor" contains striking vignettes of St. Francis (1182-1226) whose "nobility lay in the effort to displace force with love and power with poverty"; Ramon Lull (1232-1316) "the scholar given to the care of love within the setting of discourse-at once comparative, erudite and missionary"; and of Nicholas of Cusa (1410-1464) whose "ecumenism reached ambitiously to Islam."

On Palestine, Dr. Cragg is fair but blunt: "One cannot unilaterally sacralize statehood in this human world. Experience should perhaps have persuaded the Zionists that the mystique cannot ride with the reality."

Kenneth Cragg was Anglican bishop in Cairo and the chapter "Perspectives of Egypt" cautiously employs significant episodes to provide an overview: "Egypt has often been likened to a palimpsest, a parchment on which the old survives beneath the new, as scribes in sequence write upon a fading past. Coptic Christianity is the text that persists below the Arabic and the Arabism of Islam and is itself a superscription on pharaonic Egypt through the Greco-Roman heritage." This reading of the Coptic undertext will repay study. As an important representative, Salama Musa (1887-1958) receives special attention.

Kenneth Cragg ends with an evocation of the Arab Christian witness where the divine unity and the human situation are seen together in the "God who reigns in the meaning of the wounds of Jesus."

This is essential reading.

Sutton Valence School, Kent, England.

John Watson.

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The Coptic Orthodox Church
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We welcome scholarly and general articles on these or related subjects, as well as translations from the original languages.

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Manuscripts are preferred to be typed double spaced (including references and footnotes).

All authors are expected to hear from us within one month of the receipt of their articles. Unpublished material is returned only if requested.

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