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*Volume 21, Number 2 . . . . . Summer 2000*

- *Moses and the Mystery of Christ in Cyril of Alexandria's Exegesis. Part II*
- *A Fourth Gospel Pilgrimage*
- *Professor Naguib Mahfouz\**
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# ***MOSES AND THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST IN ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA'S EXEGESIS\****

## ***PART II***

*Fr. John A. McGuckin*

Having set out his unrepentant Alexandrian hermeneutical principles generically in this way, Cyril advances into the precise exegesis of the nativity of Moses (Exodus ch. 5) working from consistently Christocentric bases. The story of the birth is prefixed in the biblical text by the desperate state of Israel, forced to work like slaves under harsh overlords. This, for Cyril<sup>32</sup>, signifies the state of humanity at the time of Christ, when all the nations of the earth were labouring under the worst dominion of demons. The children of Israel, are a type of humanity under the tyranny of sin. The Pharaoh is the evil Prince of this world (Satan), whose overseers (localised demons) keep the people enslaved, and at a time when misery could hardly increase, the evil king devises a plan for the blotting out of male Israelite children. These signify those in whom the desire to serve God is still strong (virile) : in other words, the last hope among the elect for the world to turn back to God in the future. It is at the lowest ebb of the world's fortunes that God decides to send his Son for the salvation of the race. Cyril does not explicitly cite his fundamental source for this but it is surely an echo of the fifth chapter of Romans<sup>33</sup> which draws the distinction between the covenant of death (Phthora - corruption as Cyril will have it) stretching from Adam to Moses, and that of life, from the time of Jesus onwards. The macro-context again ensures that he draws the

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\* The first part of this article appeared in the last issue of CCR (Volume 21, Number 1). Fr. John McGuckin is an Orthodox priest and theologian. He is Professor of Early Church History at Union Theological Seminary, New York.

32 *Glaphyra* in Exod. 1. 2-3. PG 69. 386 C - 392B.

33 cf Rom. 5.20.

sharpest possible lines, in his exegetical theory, between the two Testaments, and accepts the Old Covenant only in so far as it has relevance to the New, a relevance as determined by the New. This is a radicalisation of Origen's biblical theory who (though positing the same generic principle of the New dispensation unfolding the significance of the Old) more genuinely than Cyril saw an eternal verity in the Old Testament text, as part of his wider philosophical hermeneutic. Cyril, in the Fifth Century, is more ready to draw a sharper line of division.

The textual 'motive' for Moses' nativity story as given in Exodus, therefore, that of the broken and tragic state of Israel ( the elect ), is elevated by Cyril as the fundamental textual indicator that this story is 'essentially' about the time of the economic advent of the Saviour Christ. This is what typological exegesis means in Cyril - the essential interpretation of narrative meaning :

We were 'labouring' under the sin inherited from our first parents, and were 'heavy burdened'<sup>34</sup> by our deprivation of all that was good. What is more, we had been enslaved in the savage dominion of that wicked ruler Satan, and set under those brutal overseers, the unclean spirits. We had come to the extremity of our trouble. Nothing could have been added to the sum of our misery and degradation. Then it was that God took pity upon us, lifted us up and saved us. And we shall understand how this was so, from those things that follow in the text. For all that is written about the blessed Moses we affirm to be an icon and a type of that salvation which comes in Christ.<sup>35</sup>

Here his interpretative key moves from the concept of bondage under sin universally experienced ( again *Romans* and *Galatians* ) and hinges on the ideational parallelism of the world in bondage as yoked unwillingly (enslaved) to Satan but, when redeemed, as finding itself yoked to Christ by the Lord's Kenotic choice to come alongside us in our broken condition. The Pauline sense of yoke, the analogy of the movement from slavery to freedom in Christ, helps Cyril to underline the radical break between the dispensations which he wishes to sustain.<sup>36</sup> It is another reminder how constantly he comes at the Old Testament text from Pauline starting points. The New dispensation alone interprets the Old. Even when the Old foreshadows the New, as far as Cyril is concerned, that very foreshadowing can only be recognised retrospectively, in and through the Christ Mystery. Chronological principles of priority have no valid application here. That which comes before is not more authentic (a frequently used presupposition in historical exegesis of the modern era), merely analogous, and helpful only in so far as the analogy can be discerned largely from the basis of the exegesis of the proto-

34 He is alluding to Mt. 11.28

35 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.3. PG 69. 392 AB

36 As for example in *Galatians* 5.1.

type. In this sense, the exegesis of the Old Testament, for Cyril, is merely a set of extended comments illuminating aspects of the New which are more clearly given in the Gospel and Apostolic writings, but can be 'checked' against their ancient prefigurations in particular cases.<sup>37</sup>

From this exegetical basis the nativity story of Moses is unfolded as a Christological type, in the following manner, the details filling out, as it were, the significance of his master-idea that all relevant Old Testament narratives retain an essential salvific significance only in and through the Christ economy.<sup>38</sup> So, as the Hebrews were before Moses, so was all Mankind in peril before the advent of Christ. The male children, those who had the potential to be specially pleasing to God as faithful servants, were especially prone to fall under the hostility of evil forces ( the evil King and his minions), Satan-Pharaoh had set his heart obdurately on submerging such male children in the waters and mud of the river, that is the filth of earthly passions, which could distract them from their quest for God. The race was, by this Satanic device, left so effete ( de-masculinised ) that those who remained as the few specially chosen initiates of the Spirit ( the prophets ) were amazed at the state of general corruption and expressed how badly the race had declined from God.<sup>39</sup> To express the nadir of the decline Cyril alludes to LXX Ps 13.3:<sup>40</sup>

All had fallen away and become utterly useless. There is no-one acting in goodness, not even one.'

Once again this takes us straight back to Cyril's invisible master-text, for the selfsame Psalmic proof text features large in Romans ch. 3 where the Apostle is making the same point: that when sin had reached its zenith, and the old dispensation was incapable of dealing with its effects, then God designed a new Christic economy of salvation.

At this low point, Cyril says, Emmanuel came : one of our nature, who elected to be with us, but who was supremely 'male', that is having no effete inclination to sin:

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37 cf. *Comm. in Isaiam*. 2.3. verse. 23. PG 70. 640D- 641A.

38 I am following the main typological line. Cyril adds in several other detailed interpretations in other places, such as the name of Moses' father being obscured in the narrative to merely 'a certain man', and this being a sign how Christ's earthly paternity would not be a feature of the true sacred narrative ( Glaphyra in Exod. 1.4. PG 69. 396A ) ; Moses as a levitical figure - signifying Christ's hidden priestly character (Glaphyra in Exod. 1.4. PG 69. 393B ) ; The innocence of the baby signifying that new creaturehood the incarnate Lord would effect ( ibid. PG 69. 393CD); & Moses' elegance as a child connoting the beauty of the Messiah (ibid. PG 69. 396B).

39 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.5. PG 69. 396 CD. Cyril refers especially to Ps. 13.3

40 In western numbering = Ps. 14. Its parallel is in LXX Ps. 52.4. ( Ps. 53.3)

But since he came among us, and was numbered among the transgressors, he was called Emmanuel; for how truly he was by nature a male child, having no trace of any effeness of character, since in no way was he a weakling in regard to sin.<sup>41</sup>

Cyril tells us that because of his radiant goodness Christ was, as it were, hidden from ( and implicitly invisible to ) the eye of the wicked King Satan-Pharaoh, just as the child Moses was hidden, and the 'Synagogue' nurtured him until he grew to maturity.

So far all this has been generally predictable, but Cyril then turns into a Cross-centred apologetic with Judaism. It is an interesting textual movement, somewhat unexpected, *in situ*, and apparently<sup>42</sup> based on the thought pattern of 1 Cor. 2.8<sup>43</sup> where Paul himself makes a deliberate parallel between the Jewish leaders who crucified Christ, and the 'princes of this world' who are the demonic influences at work seeking out the just. Moses' true mother, then, who stands now for the 'synagogue which resists Christ' ( the contemporary synagogue as he infers (not merely the historical Jewish chief priests) places the baby Moses into a basket and sets the child adrift on the waters. The daughter of Pharaoh finds the child and adopts it. The true mother of Moses has been led astray by the evil king's edict of destruction. Even though unwillingly, she is brought into a kind of assonance with an evil mentality (Israel's unwilling bondage in sin and the inability of the Law to remove the root of sin<sup>44</sup>) and this is why she typifies the Synagogue under condemnation for sin (a sinfulness which will peak in the rejection of the Saviour and (Cyril implies) will endure in the continuing resistance to the spread of Christianity in his own time. The basket to which she abandons her child to the real threat of death (the waters of the Nile) is thus a type of the tomb of Christ who is also abandoned by his own people to the experience of death, which he overthrows in his resurrection. The symbol of the waters of the river Cyril uses to connect the two motifs of the one woman who rejects and the other who receives : for the daughter of Pharaoh (an unlikely convert from sin since she is flesh and blood of the most wicked archetype of sin) means essentially the gentile world which through the mystery of the saviour-found-in-the-waters (Baptism into Christ<sup>45</sup>) is liberated from sin and death and comes into possession of life:

41 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.5. PG 69. 397A.

42 In so far as Cyril is himself also making a close parallel throughout his text between the Archon Pharaoh and the demonic Archon Satan.

43 Also seen in Acts 2 :23, 36; and Acts. 4.10 which probably represents a Lukan form of the Pauline kerygma.

44 Paul's general thesis in *Hebrews* 10; *Romans* 5 ; and *Galatians* 3-4 .

45 Again showing how much *Romans* (6.4-5) is behind his mind throughout this whole exegetical essay.

The Synagogue of the Jews alienated itself from Emmanuel, but the daughter of Pharaoh, which is the Church of the gentile nations, even though she had Satan as her father, discovered him in the waters, which can be understood as a type of holy baptism through which and in which we discover Christ, and she opened up the wicker basket. For Christ did not remain among the dead but rather rose to life again, trampling death underfoot and rising from the tomb, so that they might come to belief, through faith in him who through us came to death that he might regain life on our behalf.<sup>46</sup>

His conclusion is that this mystery of the nativity of Moses setting out the mystery of Christ's economy of salvation is 'patently obvious':

And so the Nativity of Moses and all those things signified along with it are patently obvious symbols of the Mystery of Christ, for people of good sense.<sup>47</sup>

His confidence is remarkable. This is the first of the three perorations to the Moses triptych which we noticed above, and thus the first place where he turns around the exegesis to its primary conclusion: the gentile Church alone has the proper claim to interpret the significance of Moses. In Cyril's active exegesis of what Moses 'really' means he finishes with an invitation to the daughter of Israel, Moses true mother, that is the Alexandrian Synagogue, to come to faith in Christ under the guidance of the daughter of Pharaoh who has seen the true light, and thereby becomes the real agent of the story of how Moses was elevated as type of saviour to come. If the daughter of Israel does this, he says, the Synagogue will not lose its reward. As was the case with Moses' true mother, the experience will prove to be one which allows her to receive back her natural baby as her own. In seeing Moses as the forerunner of Jesus, the Synagogue will be reappropriating its own story of salvation:

The text speaks of the daughter of Pharaoh, and says that the little child was 'of the Hebrews' (Ex. 2.6). And so, as in the fullness of time the Synagogue of the Jews shall receive the Christ from the Church of the gentile nations, this is clearly and mystically signified in the way the daughter of Pharaoh gives back the child to its mother. For even though the Synagogue of the Jews once, as it were, exposed and cast off Jesus through faithlessness, even so in these last days it shall receive him, being initiated into the mystery through the teachings of the Church. And then it may indeed have the confidence that it shall not miss its reward, but rather a great hope shall be offered to it. And this is why the daughter of Pharaoh is said to promise a reward to the mother of Moses if she will nurse her own child.<sup>48</sup>

46 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.5. PG 69. 397B.

47 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.5. PG 69. 397D.

48 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.5. PG 69. 397 CD.

This 'convincing' of Israel which the Church's preaching effects is, for Cyril, a sign of the 'perfecting of times' and is an indication (once again) of his reliance on Paul<sup>49</sup> and perhaps also a sign of his great confidence as Christian Ethnarch in the second decade of the Fifth Century when he was extending the missionary activity of his church, encouraged by the imperial policy emanating from Constantinople. As with his attitude to the Hellenistic cults around him, Cyril stands revealed in his exegetical philosophy as dynamically interested in missionary apologetic.

After this extended treatment of the type of Moses' nativity, Cyril begins to paraphrase the rest of the Moses' story<sup>50</sup> up to the point of his flight to a foreign land where he defends the daughters of Jethro the priest, marries Sepphora, and fathers a son called Gersom. The narrative is a straightforward 'historic' re-telling of the story. It is not, however, an exegesis as far as Cyril is concerned, for the essential meaning still requires elucidation. This, in line with his earlier treatment of Moses' nativity, means precisely that inner significance, in which the narrative appears to relate to the mystery of Christ:

And now our discourse turns again to that inner and higher sense (theoria) supplying as much of the history as is appropriate but turning more to what appears to be the spiritual meaning, that is in the way the text refers to the economy (of salvation) in Christ.<sup>51</sup>

The Christological significance of the exile in Midian, Cyril tells his readers, confirms the symbolism of Moses' birth story. The general motive for Moses' exile was the way in which he had come to the rescue of his afflicted brother (Exodus 2: 11-12). So too, Christ comes kenotically among mankind, to rescue his distressed brethren. The Pauline hermeneutical key is again discernible. Here Cyril explicitly alludes to Galatians 4.4.<sup>52</sup> This demonstrates how the Kenosis of the Word is the manner in which the Saviour redeems the race from the oppression of the evil of Egypt and its Pharaoh. The Egyptian whom Moses killed, is the Satan, brought down to death by Christ's economy.<sup>53</sup> When he continues the narrative to the point of how Moses defends the daughters of Jethro from the shepherds who are driving their flocks away from the watering trough, he follows up on the same idea. The shepherds hostile to the priest's children are the demons who prevent mankind

49 See, for example, *Romans* 11. 25-28 where the return of Israel is set as an eschatological sign. Also Gal. 4.4. which he specifically alludes to in his following section (*Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.7. PG 69. 400D).

50 Exodus 2. 11-22a. cf. *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.6. PG 69. 397D - 399A.

51 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.6. PG 69. 400.C

52 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.7. PG 69. 400D.

53 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.7. PG 69. 401B - 405A.



drawing wholesome water: that spiritual water<sup>54</sup> which is true worship that would allow the flock to live and see truth. The demons have oppressed mankind ( here specifically the gentile peoples ) through a false cult. But Cyril lingers on one detail more than any other as bearing a significance in the narrative of the exile of Moses in Madian, and that is his marriage to only one of the daughters ( he 'elect one') out of no less than seven potential spouses. This, he tells us, was Sepphora. Jethro, the father, is etymologically explained as 'vacuous man'. For Cyril he means a worldly unredeemed man, who serves as priest of an alien (gentile) false cult. His daughter Sepphora, however, signifies the woman that Moses, the type of the Saviour, has elected as his own. She is, therefore, mystically a symbol of the 'church of the gentiles', whom Christ has chosen as his bride :

For Moses took Sepphora to himself as his own most beautiful spouse, a bride from the gentile nations, which we understand to symbolize the Church.<sup>55</sup>

Her name means beauty, visitation, or spiritual grace, Cyril goes on to tell us,<sup>56</sup> and this ideally shows her as a type of the redemption that Christ brings to the elected gentile church. After the daughters are liberated by Moses, even Jethro is renamed Raguel, a new title which signifies 'flock of God'. In all this Moses appears straightforwardly as a positive prior type of the Christ as liberating saviour. There is an interesting resumption of the Sepphora typology, however, in his *Commentary on John*, which shows a different side of the picture, for there Sepphora is the liberator of Moses. It concerns the episode where the angel of God seeks to kill Moses in the tent (Exod. 4: 24-26), which Cyril regards (like many moderns still ) as rather 'problematic'.<sup>57</sup>

This does not stop him from going on to interpret it anyway, and he notes how Moses' circumcision clearly cannot save him from the hand of death. Here he speaks of Moses' 'boast' of circumcision in terms so redolent of Romans 2 :17, 23 that we again detect the general context and guiding line of his hermeneutical approach. There Paul spoke of the 'boast of the law' being insufficient to save, and argued that the uncircumcised who have faith shall judge the circumcised, since the true Jew is the one who is so 'inwardly'. Cyril is substantially following all of this when he goes on to interpret the enigmatic passage, noting how it is the intervention of Sepphora which saves Moses' life. She, whom he repeats is the typological symbol of the gentile church, becomes the actual saviour of Moses. Even if

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54 Here he relies on John 7.37. cf. Glaphyra in Exod. 1.8. PG 69. 408 B.

55 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.8. PG 69. 408D.

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Comm. in Joannem.* Bk. 4. PG 73. 693C. 'If anyone thinks otherwise in regard to this most mystical and enigmatic text, I would be grateful to hear from them.'

sometimes Moses stands as a type of Christ the saviour, he is also a type of other more limited things such as the Law, or the sinful disobedience of Israel (as when he is punished for striking the rock). In this instance he stands as a symbol of the circumcision of the Law which cannot save even a man such as he from the power of death. The gentile church, who became 'the spouse' by the elective marriage of Moses *qua* Christ, is thus given the mission to save Moses' life. Sepphora's sacrifice is acceptable to God, and Moses is liberated. Cyril means, by this extended typology, something very similar to the peroration given after his discourse on the nativity of Moses : whatever the historical sequence of the election of the gentiles (coming after that of Israel) the essential meaning of the text is that it is the Christian Church which now has the mystery of election and stands inviting Moses (the Synagogue) into life. It is quite clear that he wishes the type of Moses to operate Christologically, but not absolutely so, or always in a positive and straightforward sense.

The third chief point where Cyril expands on the typological significance of Moses turns around the epiphany of the Burning Bush. Here the tension around Moses as a Christological type is very visible, for the general patristic tendency was to view the theophanies in the Old Testament as epiphanic experiences of the Logos. This is why Moses features ambivalently as a type of Christ in the narrative. Cyril immediately begins the section restating his generic explanation of the motive for the incarnation. The human race had sunk in sin to a miserable extent. There were some, however, who retained some clarity of spiritual vision, and these, the prophets who related to God in ancient times, were able to call upon God for mercy, to appeal for the rescue He would finally effect in the fullness of time by the incarnation of the Logos. Such was Israel calling to God for rescue, when God heard their cry and sent them Moses, back from his exile in Madian. Moses, as such, is still a type of Christ the Saviour who comes into the world to crush Satan (Pharaoh has just died in the Exodus narrative) and deliver mankind from tyranny.<sup>58</sup> Moses is also called to Mount Horeb. This too signifies how, when human misery had reached its peak, God sent his Son into the world to effect salvation.<sup>59</sup> In both cases, then, as a 'called one', Moses stands as a type of Christ as redeemer. Having said this, however, Cyril quickly turns away from Moses as a Christological type, for he begins to expatiate on the significance of the Logos' epiphany in the Bush. From this point on Moses appears as a symbol of incomprehension before the divine plan.

The mystery of Christ, and how it prefigures the end of the shadows of the old dispensation is the essential truth contained in this enigmatic vision, Cyril says :

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58 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.9. PG 69. 409C - 412B.

59 *Ibid.* 1.9. PG 69. 412D. cf. Heb. 10.1, 5f ( a favourite Christological source for Cyril).

For God gave the Law as a help, as the prophet said<sup>60</sup>..... But he set up this demonstration of the more perfect things to come as if it were a shadow of them. And the final goal of this initial pedagogy was the Christ Mystery.<sup>61</sup>

And to underline his intent to stress the discontinuity, having closely paraphrased the Exodus story to this point, he deliberately breaks off the paraphrastic narrative from Exodus (what he refers to as the ‘history’) at the telling verse where it depicts Moses being unable to look at the face of God after the Lord reveals He is the God of Moses’ fathers.<sup>62</sup> The type of Moses as Christ figure thereafter gives way in his treatment to demonstrations of how Moses as prophet could not approach the fullness of the Logos’ epiphany.

The first aspect of this, for Cyril, is how fire generally connotes in the biblical text, the power of the divinity. The fire was within the bush, carried by it in a sense, but it did not consume the bush. Moses cannot understand how this can be, or indeed what it can mean:

How utterly amazing a thing this was and beyond all comprehension..... and this was why the blessed Moses cast down his eyes.<sup>63</sup>

It falls to Cyril, the mystagogue of the new dispensation, to explain how simply it connoted the manner in which the deity inhabited the human nature of the Christ and, by extension, how divinely he continues to inhabit his elect Church in the ongoing mystery of salvation :

Who can doubt that it signifies how the Word of God, being Life Himself, gives life to his own temple<sup>64</sup> and perfects it to incorruptibility, rendering it beyond its own natural limits as even greater than death. Thus the Fire blazes in the Bush, but somehow is made tolerable to the spindly and fragile branches. Just so the Godhead, as I have said, is made tolerable for the humanity. This was the Mystery that occurred in Christ, for the Word of God dwelt among us.<sup>65</sup>

Cyril enthusiastically adopted this image, until well on in the time of the Nestorian crisis, when he realised its potential for being interpreted in a manner

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60 The context is specifically echoing *Galatians* ch. 3, the Pauline doctrine of the Law as temporary Pedagogue.

61 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.9. PG 69. 413 B

62 Ex. 3.1-6. PG 69. 412D - 413A.

63 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.9. PG 69. 413B.

64 His body.

65 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.9. PG 69. 413D.

damaging to his insistence that the deity and humanity were seamlessly united in the One Christ, that is when the Antiochene theologians Andrew of Samosata and Theodoret began to accuse him of not giving the flesh of Christ any greater role than that assigned to it by the heretic Apollinaris, where it appears as little more than a medium of apparition. After this time, Cyril started to abandon the Fire-Bush imagery in favour of Christological symbols which connote mutual interpenetration, most notably the image of the coal suffused by fire, or the lily and its perfume.<sup>66</sup> His sense here in this early passage, however, is just the same as what he means in his later work. He is not dwelling on the separateness of the fire and the bush, the divinity and the humanity of Christ, rather their immediate presence to each other in a mysterious bond that exceeds natural comprehension. Cyril is not saying in this passage that he knows how it happened, he is simply saying that (unlike Moses) he knows what it signifies. The fleshly economy of Christ, for Cyril was always a profound mystery escaping human logic, but he saw theology's proper task as expounding the effect of the economy of salvation in the life of the church. Moses, therefore, is not criticised for not being able to understand, he merely stands as a symbol of the inability of the Law to grasp the power of a new theophany and a new covenant in Jesus. It is a mystery that is related to the old dispensation: for Moses encounters the angel of God, a type of the Logos himself, but the result is that he is unable to approach until he has taken off his sandals. And this, Cyril says, he cannot do, for the real meaning of the revelation was that he had first to divest himself of mortality and corruption (the dead skins) before he could see the deity. His only method for divesting himself of mortality (and here Moses shifts to become a symbolic type of Israel) was the divine cult, but the blood of animal sacrifices could never effect something so ontologically profound.<sup>67</sup> It could only be effected (he implies) by the economy of the Logos incarnate and the true divine cult which follows from it (Cyril intends the Eucharist and its moral and ontological implications which is so central an aspect of his incarnation theology).<sup>68</sup>

His conclusion to this argument forms the peroration to his third Moses triptych, and once again it culminates in an invitation to the 'Synagogue' to enter into the 'holy ground' of the Church. First they must set aside the shadow of their adherence to the Law - but the essential matter, for Cyril, is clearly one of cult. Laying aside the old ways which are dead skins, and mortality, an entrance into the church will promise to be an entrance into the holy place, and a discovery of life. It

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66 *Scholia on the Incarnation*. 9-10. (E.T.) McGuckin. (1994) pp. 301-302.

67 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.9. PG 69. 416C. (Yet again Cyril is working out of Heb. 10. 1-5).

68 See, for example, E. Gebremedhin. *Life-Giving Blessing. An Inquiry into the Eucharistic Doctrine of Cyril of Alexandria*. Uppsala. 1977.

is, again, an indication that a chief friction point of Church-Synagogue relations in Alexandria in his time, turned on the question of the practices that marked off the various communities from one another (fasting and food laws, and festal celebrations) which were themselves synopses in daily custom of the respective adherences of those local communities: to Moses, or to Christ. It is this generic context of missionary evangelisation, and theological apologetic, which undergirds most of Cyril's thought:

It is necessary that those who wish to understand the Christ Mystery should first set aside that cultic ritual of shadows and types which is incapable of overcoming either corruption or sin. Only then shall they understand, and only then can they enter onto the holy ground, which is the Church. Those who can not renounce this cult of the Law are still held captive to corruption, as Christ himself so clearly demonstrated when he said: 'If you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man, or drink his blood, you shall not have Life within you.' (Jn.6.53).<sup>69</sup>

His final words concluding the first book of Exodus *Glaphyra* have about them the character of a general peroration to a set of detailed preached exegeses. It marks off the first book from the others that follow, and suggests that Book One was conceived separately, characterised by its more detailed preached exegesis of the text. In the later books, not only is there less close attention to verse by verse development in the Exodus narrative, but Cyril's treatment of the figure of Moses is less attentive too, and the latter's symbolic value is slightly altered, as we shall briefly note. Here, however, in this significant peroration to all three Moses exegeses, Cyril reveals a significant motive of his preaching: an attempt to evangelise the large sections of the Alexandrian populace who were hovering between allegiance to the Synagogue or to the Church. If we can give any weight to his words in the earlier peroration of this same book, that some of these people are: 'even now in these latter days being convinced by the mystical arguments of the Church',<sup>70</sup> we might even envisage that these preached interpretations of Exodus, suggesting how Moses prefigured the life which Christ brings, may have been part of his catechetical offerings to a group of Jewish baptismal candidates in Alexandria in the early decades of the Fifth Century. His invitation is once again set in clearly Pauline terms drawn from Galatians, whose own context was the contrast drawn between being locked in to sin and death under the Pedagogue of Law, and brought to liberation through Baptism.<sup>71</sup> Cyril's final invitation is clear and unambiguously addressed to the 'Synagogue' conceived on the widest term at

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<sup>69</sup> *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.9. PG 69. 416 D.

<sup>70</sup> *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.5. PG 69. 397C.

<sup>71</sup> cf *Galatians.* 3.22-28.

the end of the first book in the passage we have already noticed: it is invited to lay off its Mosaic sandals of corruption and approach the life-giving grace of Christ who shall initiate it into the presence of God.<sup>72</sup>

This triptych, then, represents Cyril's most extended treatment of the Moses' type where he is, generally speaking, most positive about the Christological parallels involved. The reason for this, I suggest, is perhaps the context of pre-baptismal catechesis which may have formed the immediate occasion of this particular section of his exegeses in Book One of the *Glaphyra on Exodus*.

The type of Moses figures on many other occasions in Cyril's works, mainly in scattered allusions, but there are only two other places where one notices a definite lingering on the Moses typology for its own sake, and they are: Book One of the *Commentary on Isaiah*, and the *Commentary on John*, where the Gospel's own interest in Mosaic Christology predetermines Cyril's attention.

The appearance of Moses in the midst of a commentary on Isaiah<sup>73</sup> is somewhat unexpected. Cyril takes his cue from the Isaian denunciation of the festivals of Israel, and his point is quite clear: Moses stands as a type of Prophet and Lawgiver. His legislation on the festivals of Israel, however, is not of enduring significance. The later prophet Isaiah shows how clearly the system of ancient cult can go astray, and so Moses only had authority for a limited time. Now that the new dispensation has dawned, the old prophets (Moses especially) must be subordinated to the words of the new prophets. The explicit depiction of Moses as Pedagogue for Christ, makes us clearly understand that it is the Mystagogue Paul he is referring to, taking his cue, once again, from *Galatians* ch.3. Moses, if rightly understood, is predicting the end of his own law by commanding the people to hear the Gospel:

Hear, then, the word of the Lord, and observe the Law of God. This means : understand for yourselves the true signification of these oracles of the good news.<sup>74</sup> This is what Moses commanded who was our preparatory teacher before Christ, and we can see how all the sense of the divine commandments has a bearing on that Mystery which is in Him. But know this, he tells us, that it is pleasing to God to bring to a fulfilment all these things which you now study in shadows and types.<sup>75</sup>

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72 *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1. 9. PG 69. 416D-417A. Translation given in fn. 29.

73 *Comm in Isaiam.* Bk. 1 Orat. 1. (concerning *Isaiah* 1. 10-14 ). PG 70. 33C - 36A.

74 Making a pun that the prophecies were foreshadowing the Gospel good news.

75 *Ibid.* PG 70. 33C.

The cultic context of several arguments shows Cyril at his most acerbic, surely addressing a Christian audience here, and demanding that even the authority of the Law itself called for a cessation of the observance of sacrifices. It is perhaps an indication that the problem complained of by Origen, that is Christians observing Jewish religious kosher practices, is still a factor in Alexandrian church life. It is certainly an intellectual defence of the current imperial legislation, reinforcing Constantine's ban on animal sacrifice generally. It leads Cyril to his most explicit statement about the radical discontinuity of the Old and New. When the new dispensation dawns, the old becomes 'pointless folly':

For even though Moses did speak about holocausts and sacrifices, this manner of cultic ritual was still displeasing to God. These things were set in the Law so that the people could be led by type and shadow to the truth, until the times could be fulfilled when God could be pleased by proper service. He did not speak this way in regard to sacrifices alone, for as the mentality of those under his pedagogical care was very limited so he led them by the hand, by means of the types and shadows of the letter, until they came to truth. But when the times were fulfilled, when the beauty of the truth was destined to shine forth, then did the type become pointless, and the shadow become folly.<sup>76</sup>

In short, Moses, if correctly understood, is in the process of deconstructing himself. Cyril's Moses typology is quickly losing the positive element it possessed in the earlier books of comment on *Exodus*. The same process, if not negativising, at least neutralising the typological force of the symbol, can be discerned in the several references to Moses throughout Cyril's *Commentaries on the Minor Prophets*. In almost every instance in which he appears, Moses' role of leader and mediator is contextualised in a negative setting. In the *Hoseah Commentary*, Cyril notes how Moses was called to lead the people to the Promised land, but they rebelled and both they and he died without gaining it. As such they were a symbol of how Israel has been rejected by God in favour of the Church.<sup>77</sup> Realising how this does not give a particularly good typological base for Moses' leadership, Cyril goes on to explain how his role as leader was positively fulfilled in his general 'prophetic' vocation, that is in his function as teacher of virtue and as one who tried (unsuccessfully) to call a rebellious people back to the right path. In his inability to effect their conversion, however, Moses foreshadowed Israel's rejection, and the election of the gentiles, who shall not be scattered as Israel has been if they remain obedient.<sup>78</sup> In the *Micah Commentary* Moses is again depicted as a supreme

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76 Ibid. PG 70. 36A.

77 Comm in Oseam. 109. PG 71. 236D.

78 Comm. in Oseam. 110. PG 71. 238D-240A.

example of how prophets in general heard the word of God addressed to them.<sup>79</sup> Here, once again, Moses has shifted from being a type of Christ, to being the chief symbol of prophetic charism in general, and this approach can be noted in many other instances.<sup>80</sup> The real (and reductionist) significance of this ostensible praise of Moses *qua prophet* is revealed when Cyril, in the *John Commentary*, radically qualifies the prophetic vocation as something that pales into insignificance as a temporary charism compared to the abiding enjoyment of the Spirit's indwelling given to the 'least' of the Christian disciples in the Christ mystery:

The Spirit was in the holy prophets in the form of a specifically rich illumination and initiation, one that was designed to instruct them in what was to come, and give them the knowledge of hidden things. But as for those who believe in Christ, we affirm that there is not just an initiation from the Spirit, rather an indwelling of that Spirit who takes up his home therein. This is why we are rightly called the temples of God. Not one of the holy prophets has ever been called a temple of God.<sup>81</sup>

The general track throughout the *Commentary on John* is one where Moses' function is depicted as having had a limited validity for a time, but now has been replaced by the work of Christ. Cyril takes his lead from John 1. 17-18 which returns like a *leitmotiv* on several occasions in his text, but is announced most resonantly in Bk. 3 of the Commentary. Here, Moses' mediation is described as a dim type of that of Christ, though he did not 'see' the deity. The Word of God, however, was able to effect a true mediation because of his divine nature, and as a mediator between God and humanity he became ideally fitted for the task in his incarnation. Moses was as a servant in the economy. Christ's order of mediation is substantively different.<sup>82</sup> He is the free and natural son who admits others into Sonship by adoption - something which is the very heart of the economy, the 'Mystery of Christ', as Cyril conceives it.<sup>83</sup> A mediator must be able to access both factors in the equation, and only the Son could approach the deity as the Divine Word, and all humanity as Word made flesh.<sup>84</sup>

79 *Comm. in Michaeam* 4. PG 71. 644B.

80 *Con. Julianum* 54.8 PG 76 900C ; *Comm. in Joannem* 10. PG 76. 1004C; *Comm. in Isaiam* Bk. 1.5. PG 70. 220D; *Comm. in Isaiam* 2.4. PG 70. 469A;

81 *Comm. in Joannem*. 5.2. ( Jn. 7.39 ). PG 73. 757AB.

82 A recurring Christological argument of Cyril's cf. *Comm. in Joannem* 10.14. PG 73. 1045C; *Ibid.* 14.5-6 PG 74. 192AB; *De Trinitate* 3. PG 75. 853C; *De Recta Fidei ad Theodosium* 40. PG 76. 1193B.

83 'Adoptive Sonship' is Cyril's biblical synonym for depicting the Theosis which the Logos brings on the race through his incarnation.

84 Cyril is working out of Paul once more ( Rom. 8.15; Gal. 4.5 ); See also *Con. Julianum* 1.3. PG 76. 668B; *De Adoratione in Spiritu et Veritate*. 1.8. PG 68. 580A. For a systematic analysis of 'Adoptive Sonship' in Cyril. cf. L Janssens. 'Notre Filiation divine d'après S. Cyrille d'Alexandrie.' *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses*. vol. 15. May, 1938, pp. 233-278.



And so, as an icon of mediation, Moses can be understood as an ancient type of Christ who ministered godly commandments to the children of Israel. But the mediation of Moses was that of a servant. The mediation of Christ was that of a freeborn son and far more mystical in character, since he attained the status of a mediator wholly naturally, being able to relate both realities: humanity whose mediator he is, and also God the Father. For he is by nature God ..... and the selfsame is man, since he became incarnate, and was made like us.<sup>85</sup>

The very terms of this passage are, yet again, clearly taken from Paul, for here Cyril is working out of Hebrews chapter three which contrasts Moses as a servant and Christ as a son. Throughout the *John Commentary*, however, it is notable how the negative aspect of Moses' functions are stressed. There is a veritable series of negative aspects of Moses' role: Christ does not give the wine of the wedding in Judaea, for example, but in Galilee. This is a symbol how the Law of Moses is no thing of joy, but the new wine of the new covenant is given in the land of the gentiles.<sup>86</sup> Again, Moses' law was severe and condemnatory in character, a glad-some aspect of Christ's work has been to liberate the Church from it.<sup>87</sup> Again, Moses gave the Law but it had a condemnatory character. Christ's economy of salvation ends this time of gloomy shadow and gives the truth.<sup>88</sup> Or, although Moses preached the mystery of Christ in many figures,<sup>89</sup> his mediation was only of a very limited type, designed as a 'medicine' for a time of weakness and suffering (astheneia). This is its limited typological character.<sup>90</sup> Or again, Moses' mediation gains a nominal (or merely figurative) sonship for the children of Israel, for he served as mystagogue when he baptised Israel in the mysteries of the cloud (Spirit) and waters of liberation. Even so, this type gives way to a fuller reality, for the Church is baptised not by a mere creature but by the divine Lord himself, and as they are baptised into a mediator of a wholly different kind to Moses, so the Christians gain a Sonship which is no longer figurative but 'true'.<sup>91</sup> 'Cast off the type,' he says, 'those of you who have been delivered into the truth.'<sup>92</sup>

Continuing this negative typological characterisation elsewhere, Cyril notes how Moses cannot lead the people up the mountain of theophany, as this is solely a function of Christ the supreme mediator<sup>93</sup> His incredulity is severely punished

85 Comm. in Joannem. 3.3. PG 73. 429BC.

86 Comm. in Joannem. 2. PG 73. 228D-229B.

87 Comm. in Joannem 2. PG 73. 252A-C.

88 Comm. in Joannem. 1. PG 73. 173C.

89 Comm. in Joannem 3. G 73. 425C- 428A.

90 Comm. in Joannem.3. PG 73. 429A.

91 Comm. in Joannem. 1.13. PG 73. 156CD; *Glaphyra in Exod.* 1.3. PG 69. 497A-C; *Ibid.* PG 69. 512B-D; *Comm. in Isaiam* 1.1. PG 75. 604D-605A.

92 Comm in Joannem. 3 5. PG 73. 425D.

93 *Glaphyra in Exod.* Bk. 3. PG 69. 508A-509B.

by God, when he is not allowed to enter the Promised Land.<sup>94</sup> The entirety of the Old Dispensation, summated by the figure of Moses, is a twilight shadowy time when truth could not be fully grasped. When the Christ comes into the world in his incarnation<sup>95</sup> all is made clear - not least the enigmas of the ancient scriptures.<sup>96</sup>

All in all, then, the Moses typology in the exegetical writings of Cyril of Alexandria, comprises a complex set of messages. Cyril clearly takes the macro-structure of his 'Mosaic' theology from Paul in every significant episode. Even when he is commenting on the *Gospel of John*, Paul is never far from his mind. He uses, however, the terms of the argument in *Hebrews*, *Galatians*, and *Colossians*, to sharpen the polemic noticeably. His received tradition (not least from Origen) is one where Moses is clearly a type of Christ the Mediator, but Cyril wishes to divest this typology of significant 'application' in ways comparable to the manner in which the *Gospel of John* and *Hebrews* themselves applied a Mosaic Christology in order to argue Christ's essential 'incomparability' to Moses. There were, perhaps, similar contextual grounds for the Johannine, late Pauline, and the Cyrilline Mosaic theologies. All appear to have been forged in the local context of communities where a significant level of friction existed on a cultural and theological level between the Church and the Synagogue. In Cyril's case the one notable difference in tone to the manner in which he generally and consistently deconstructs the traditional Moses typology, occurs in the first book of *Glaphyra on Exodus* where he was possibly addressing Jewish catechumens. Otherwise it is interesting to see how time and time again he feels it necessary to stress the discontinuities between the Old Dispensation and the New, especially in matters of cultic practice. His doctrine of shadows to realities is a radical one - not so much about adumbration, but actual obscuration which is only illuminated retrospectively when the light of the new Apostolic writings allows the interpreter to see the inner meaning of the old texts that otherwise have merely an historic or moral signification. Cyril's treatment is almost wholly concerned with the spiritual meaning (Theoria). As such he is primarily interested in explicating the 'Mystery of Christ' from the enigmas of his text and, accordingly, he ultimately finds more in the Moses story from which he wishes to dissent (when speaking from a purely Christ-typological basis) than he wishes to affirm.

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94 *Comm. in Joannem* 3. PG 73. 452A.

95 Here Cyril applies the Johannine phrase 'I have come as Light into this world' to signify the ending of the obscurity of the Old Dispensation, of the 'Mosaic letter.'

96 *Ibid.* PG 73 509A.

Moses' primary significance in the Second Temple midrashim that formed the context of the New Testament writings, was as a Seer of God, and Mediator of the Covenant, both things the Alexandrian exegetical tradition, in Cyril's hands, discounts. The encounter with God in the Old Dispensation is, for Cyril, fundamentally a partial encounter with the Logos himself, and to draw the contrast with the full encounter with the Logos which humanity receives in and through the incarnation of the Logos, in the person of Christ, becomes the entire point and goal of Cyril's exegetical work. In this context the ground is too narrow to develop a positive typology, and from the perspective of his view on Moses we see more the radical discontinuities drawn than any lingering on the positive values.

This, in a real way, reflects the political condition of the respective Jewish and Christian communities in Alexandria in Cyril's time. He, and his uncle Theophilus before him, mark a real dividing point between Hellenistic religion ( at least in the city ) and Christian praxis. This aspect of Church history, involving the often violent destruction of pagan shrines in Egypt, has frequently been studied. In the relation between the Alexandrian Synagogue and the Church, a battle fought less on the streets than in the struggle for the high ground of correct biblical hermeneutic, we also find a distinct parting of the ways. Cyril's use of the Moses typology, for all its ostensibly positive aspects, ultimately represents this.

# ***A FOURTH GOSPEL PILGRIMAGE***

*Fr. James Furman\**

I once made a list of what tourists do. Then I made a list of what pilgrims do. My intention was to question tourists and to praise pilgrims. Strangely, I found that tourists and pilgrims do very similar things. They talk, explore, eat, drink -- whatever. The great point of difference is that pilgrims intend to pray and often do. Pilgrims are explicit and conscious about their faith.

This difference between tourists and pilgrims can also be found in Bible readers. Some come to the Bible as tourists -- others as pilgrims. In terms of the clergy, some tour the Scripture looking for a text or a problem, others move rather less briskly because they are experiencing a message. I can only say that I myself have been both a Bible tourist and a Bible pilgrim. I now know the difference.

It is in the Fourth Gospel, the message book of the Beloved Disciple, that the matter of tour versus pilgrimage becomes most noticeable. This is, the Sunday readings from the Fourth Gospel always seem hugely long -- and yet they always seem incomplete, oddly shaped. As a result, a preacher often selects a single striking phrase or verse and deals with its isolated richness. John 3:16 could well stand for what I have in mind -- particularly if we wonder what happened to John 3:17 or even 3:17 - 21.

John's Gospel requires pilgrimage although it offers the tourist many blessings. The task is to find a good spiritual guide -- to locate someone who can help suggest when to kneel, where to be quiet and listen.

Having offered this introduction, I will begin to share what I have learned in partnership with two guides to pilgrimage in the Fourth Gospel. I am not sure that either would agree with everything or anything that I will note. I can only insist that they did -- in fact -- set me on a pilgrim path. The guides that I have in mind are Stephen C. Barton (*The Spirituality of the Gospels*, SPCK, 1992) and Mark

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W.G. Stibbe (*John as Storyteller*, Cambridge, 1992). Their books have led me to reconsider and rearrange understandings shaped by earlier generations of scholars.

What is John's Gospel? John's Good News is a meditation on the Pentateuch in terms of Jesus. John's Gospel treats the Jewish holy books in a way that is simi-lar to the way Hebrews treat Temple worship and the priestly tradition of Israel. That is, John knows and loves the Five Books of Moses and is eager to say that Jesus interprets their deepest meaning. In John's theology, the deepest meaning of Jesus is revealed by his relationship to images, events and themes presented in the Five Books of Moses.

"Meditation on the Pentateuch" -- this is the "generic structure" that flavors and colors the Fourth Gospel. John represents a group that valued the Pentateuch even as it responded to a Risen Christ. It is this "meditation on the Pentateuch" that allows John to be both poet and historian, both author and theologian, both Greek and Jew. It is John's acceptance of the Pentateuch that will not allow him to be a Gnostic.

The Fourth Gospel is not Gnostic despite much that has been suggested by many. John can not be Gnostic because he will not affirm a separate God, a god apart from Creation. If this is a startling idea about John, I suggest that one will continue to be startled by insights that come when the Jesus story continues to be related to the symbols, events, and themes of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

The Fourth Gospel is not intended to be obscure and difficult. It is intended to be entirely convincing and clear. The words, the stories, the shape, the emphases -- each of these tools are intended to communicate. They offer us direct address as we relate John to the Pentateuch.

Now the time has come to join our guides and to be enthusiastic pilgrims journeying through the Fourth Gospel.

It has often been noted that John 1:1 is written so as to evoke Genesis 1:1. What does this suggest? Above all, it suggests a powerful Jewishness, a faith accustomed to looking at Creation and saying "*this* is where things of heaven and earth are joined in unity and in reality, not by accident and certainly not in a rivalry where Good and Evil, Matter and Spirit are at war." Note that John 1:11 goes so far as to say that "the world" is "his own realm" and not a "dark, Satanic" domain. From the beginning, Jesus and His Father are at peace; from the beginning all that is or will be is directly related to the will and Being of God Himself.

I suggest that much else flows from this source in the thought of Genesis. The Fourth Gospel offers seven signs and seven "I am" sayings. This is a matter of presenting sets that corresponds numerically to the seven days of Creation and their accompanying blessings in which the parts of Creation are pronounced "good."

I do not mean that there is a parallel construction in which "A" equals "B" or that a certain Genesis day equals a certain Gospel episode. What I do find is that John presents one thing so that another thing is recalled, suggested, evoked. It is

as though each situation is a huge bell that has both its own tone and an echo derived from a neighboring bell. John's proclamation includes the echoes of other voices and his teaching is the richer for the inclusion since the "other voice" is also speaking for God.

John 3:13-15 contains an image that unites Exodus traditions with the text of Numbers (Numbers 2:4-9). This image is strange and is rarely found elsewhere (Wisdom 16:5-6). Again, Leviticus could be seen as the precursor of the High Priestly Prayer of John 17. Even more, the theme of consecrating a new people could be taken as the motif of the entire range of the Farewell Discourses (John 15-17). Bread in the Wilderness, the Water of Life, and much else have strong Old Testament relationships and each has been discussed many times. I simply allude to them and suggest further evaluation in terms of the theme "meditation on the Pentateuch."

I will spend time dealing with what balances the Prologue. I want to emphasize the Fourth Gospel's "*Postlude*." In other words, I want to linger in the Seventh Day, God's Day, the Sabbath in which all things are renewed and new life is abundant. "New time," new hope, new direction and relationship is the goal of John's Gospel just as the new home, the land of milk and honey is the goal of Moses and the Hebrew tribes. If John has an "artistic Christology," then both his style and his doctrine are intense in chapter 20.

Let us move through the text as pilgrims. 20:1 introduces the new day, light in darkness: the Chaos of disorder waits for God to give form and meaning. What comes next is striking.

As the story develops we encounter a woman in relationship with a prohibition, a spiritual being with a message, a message shared with immediate response. All of this is very Christian -- and very intended to reverse the results of the most famous story with similar elements.

As Christians, we hear John talk about a Christian moment, a time in history that centers on Jesus. But more is to be heard. Indeed, more must be heard if we are to hear our story correctly and as strongly as was intended by John the Evangelist.

Once again, consider what it is that the Gospel narrative presents: a woman in relationship with a prohibition, a spiritual being with a message, a message shared with immediate response. Here is Genesis and the story of the Fall: the garden in which a tree is "off limits," the snake, the temptation followed by the fatal sharing with Adam in all of his doting weakness. Here is the garden with its tomb "off limits" due to the ruling of Pilate, Jesus himself offering greeting and admonition. The very fact that the network of evocations is not a set of exact parallels speaks for historicity and connection with a theological method.

What is the effect of John's presentation? Mary of Magdala functions as the new Eve -- and her accomplishment is to free men from their ignorance and fear. Mary of Magdala calls the Apostles into the Garden so that they may discover their own relationship to the Risen Lord.

At this point, John's writing seems to include apostolic memory -- Peter and the Beloved Disciple running, speaking, and responding. However, do not allow the references to Genesis and the actual presentation of Mary of Magdala to get lost. It is Mary of Magdala who indicates and sums up the power and the intensity of Easter newness, the degree to which the old order has passed away: a woman brings blessing to a man, a woman allows enlightenment to be experienced.

The image-selecting skill of the Evangelist makes the Fourth Gospel what it is. And what is the Fourth Gospel? The Fourth Gospel is a literary unity, a master work that connects the history of Jesus with the inheritance of His people. It is a Jewish work -- it is a Christian work -- it is a pilgrim journey from Prologue to Postlude. I am sure that this is why our selective and interpretive author closes with his observation in 20:30-31.

And why the Epilogue? Why chapter 21? Because the Church came into being. Because the new Israel needed to be shown its entry into the Promised Land, needed to see its commission and its church order in terms of Resurrection. To say more about this in this essay would be to say too much. I encourage you to make your own pilgrimage and your own discovery of what is to be found in John's Good News and its fruitful meditation on the Pentateuch.

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*Famous Contemporary Copts*

**NAGUIB PASHA MAHFOUZ**

*A Grandson Remembers*

*Amin Makram Ebeid, MD\**

The topic of this monograph is not a subject but a person; a man who continues to be very near to my heart: My grandfather, Dr. Naguib Mahfouz.

I am very grateful to have been given this opportunity, not because of family pride, but because Dr. Mahfouz continues to be an example to emulate and an educator to heed.

I will start with a brief biographical sketch: My maternal grandfather was born in Mansoura in 1882, which is the very year that witnessed the British occupation of Egypt, and died of a stroke in 1974 at age 92, a year after the October War.

He graduated from the medical school at the top of his class at the dawn of the 20th century, in 1902. Soon after the results were published, because of economic constraints, he was forced to go to Mansoura to sell a parcel of land that he still owned, and thus missed the opportunity to get the best position. As a result, he started his career in Suez as an associate physician, a position which he occupied from 1903 to 1904.

In 1904, he was appointed at Kasr El-Aini Hospital as an anesthetist, and he recounts in his autobiography how much he learned from watching two superb surgeons, Drs. Madden and Milton. He continued to work as an anesthetist, and soon found himself helping both surgeons in their private practices. This was often carried out in the patients' homes until two private Cairo hospitals were finally established, one by Dr. Herbert Milton in Garden City, and the other being the Anglo-American Hospital which is in Gezira.

This was also a time he introduced spinal anesthesia in Egypt, and later published the results in the *Lancet* (1917). He soon became a personal friend of the

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two famous surgeons, whom he assisted, and was often invited to dine in their homes. During one social visit to Mr. Madden, he proposed to start a GYN clinic before the 9:00 a.m. operating time of the teaching hospital of Kasr El-Aini Medical School. With the support of Mrs. Madden, he prevailed in his request, and the first gynecological clinic in the history of modern Egypt was established. Surgery was initially performed by Mr. Milton and Mr. Madden\*\*, who soon found it necessary to reserve two wards for gynecologic patients. The clinic was put on probation for two months by the hospital director, Dr. Keatinge. But the idea of a clinic for women's diseases that had previously failed on many occasions, finally became a reality. That I am sure must be considered a credit to the professionalism and compassion of the young Dr. Mahfouz, whose conduct must have encouraged recalcitrant husbands to bring their wives to the clinic. Nonetheless, lacking practical experience in the specialty that he was about to found in Egypt, he became an avid reader of the books given to him by Dr. Criswell, his superior at Suez, who taught him the rudiments of gynecology. In the meanwhile, practical experience came as a result of assisting Mr. Madden and Mr. Milton, who soon entrusted him with the performance of major operations himself. His experience in obstetrics came from a different source; namely from the public health department, where he offered his services free of charge in return for experience. The arrangement led to a hard, but rewarding regimen that lasted 15 years, during which he did not think that he ever slept more than two nights a week at home.

Until 1906, he did not receive the sought-for professional formal training in obstetrics and gynecology, but had enough practical experience to publish, with the help of Mr. Madden, the result of his experience in the *Lancet* in 1906. Nonetheless, in order to complete his training, he considered traveling to Europe, but Mr. Keatinge, the medical director, remarked that if he did that, the whole gynecology department would collapse. That prompted him to request the appointment of an established British professor of obstetrics. The medical school council agreed and published the announcement in three medical journals. Mr. Roy S. Dobbin, assistant master of the Rotunda, responded to the call of the Egyptian School of Medicine, to whom the offer seems to have become attractive after reading my grandfather's article in the *Lancet* because it revealed the wide scope of useful work that could be carried out in that ancient land.

In 1906, Mr. Dobbin became the first professor of obstetrics in Egypt. At the same time, my grandfather was finally allowed to resign from his anesthetist position in order to dedicate himself to obstetrics and gynecology. He became professor Dobbins' assistant at the tender age of 24. It was Mr. Dobbin who first insisted on the universal use of aseptic techniques in the surgical theaters (OR), such as the use of surgical gloves, sterile gown and mask, which were henceforth enforced on both surgeons and nurses. In January of 1929, Dr. Mahfouz became the first Egyptian professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Kasr-El-Aini, a post he occu-

\*\*Mr. is the title given to British doctors who specialize in surgery.

pied until he retired in 1942, at which time the authorities extended his services until 1947. His achievements were innumerable, and are best divided into two segments, Foundational and Academic

### ***I Foundational Achievements***

The institutions he created were listed in the candidacy report filed on his behalf for the first class order of merit and state prize of distinction for science which he actually received from President Nasser in 1960 and which included the following: -

- a) I have already alluded to the first foundation credited to him, namely that of Department of Gynecology and Obstetrics. The story of the evolution of that discipline in the Valley of the Nile is a reflection of the vision, as well as the courage and perseverance of that one man Naguib Mahfouz. Its fascinating story is recorded in his autobiography either in Arabic or English or in his "History of Medical Education in Egypt". The candidacy report insisted that "it is thanks to him that students had access to clinical experience in gynecology and obstetrics before sitting for the final exams".
- b) The second institution was the foundation of a maternity training school that handed its first diploma in 1914 when he was only 32 years old. In 1950, the then director of Cairo University, Professor Shawki Pasha summarized his achievements and made the following statement: "The school owes everything to him. Mahfouz Pasha organized this school and taught general nursing and midwifery to its pupils for over 30 years, so that no less than 1,000 experienced midwives graduated under him. His two books on nursing and midwifery are still (1950) the principal source on these subjects". It is to be noted that he was instrumental in opening 17 other maternity schools throughout Egypt in order to train an ever-increasing number of midwives and *dayahs*.
- c) Establishment of the first antenatal clinic in Egypt (c. 1919) in which he devoted two days a week to follow pregnant women, who were then given the choice of hospital or home delivery where they would be assisted by a midwife, a student or a doctor.
- d) His next achievement was the foundation of the first child welfare center. Again, Professor Shawki testified in 1950, and made the following comment: "When I returned from my education mission in September of 1920, I took charge of what Mahfouz started in the maternity center, which was the clinic for the newborn. It was following the success of this center that the Ministry of Public Health established in 1937 maternity and child welfare centers that now (1950) number over 100 in all parts of the country".
- e) He initiated the curricula and wrote the books that allowed proper teaching of gynecology and obstetrics in the medical school, as well as in the school of midwifery and in the school of nursing of which he was also a foundation pillar.

- f) One of his greatest achievements was the foundation of the Museum of Obstetrics & Gynecology at his own expense, which he subsequently offered to the faculty of medicine of Cairo University. The museum was assessed by Sr. Eardley Holland, who was invited by the Egyptian government to report on the status of medical education in Egypt, and who made the following statement in 1949: "There is no university in the world that could produce such a museum even if all of its physicians worked all their lives toward that end". (The comment was published in the Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology of the British Empire). It was also praised in the Annals of British Medicine (Vol 6, #4), that included a comment that "Mahfouz's spirit is akin to that of the great John Hunter who loved science for its own sake".
- g) He was the founder of the Egyptian Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology (in the 40's), of which he was subsequently and unanimously elected to become its lifetime president.
- h) His active and essential contribution to other fields could easily be forgotten because of the centrality of those just mentioned. I will mention, as examples, his vital role in establishing the Coptic Hospital, and the enormous help he offered his wife to found '*The friends of the Holy Bible Association*', which continues to offer poor Copts vocational training in the Coptic Orthodox Christian guidance. The story of that foundation deserves more details. It is found in my grandfather's autobiography, where he recounted that my grandmother's "first aim was to open schools, free of charge, for boys and girls of poor families in order to provide education and religious teaching and at the same time, to supply food, clothing and medical care for them and their families. He then went on to write that: "Six schools have been opened in Cairo and four in the Provinces. Over 1,800 pupils are cared for. Most of them obtained the government's primary certificate. But my wife often thought of what would become of these poor children after having obtained the primary certificate, and after deep reflection, she decided to set up a vocational school where they could continue that education and learn crafts which would enable them to earn a living and to become respectable citizens. With this purpose in mind, she bought a piece of land of about 1,000 square meters at Kubbeh but death overtook her before she could complete her noble project. The Society Council, however, went on with the scheme and named it the '*Fayka Mahfouz*' Vocational Foundation'. It consists of two sections, one for boys containing four departments; carpentry, printing, rug making and typing. The second section is for girls, again comprising four departments; dress-making and dress designing, sewing, knitting and embroidery, as well as domestic sciences".

## ***II Academic Achievements***

His second legacy was in the realm of teaching academics. I know of a few medical pioneers in Egypt who bequeathed to their country establishments that sur-

vived them, yet few were inextricably linked to their founder, as was the case with Dr. Mahfouz, and none succeeded in joining to their foundations the impressive academic legacy of the Egyptian founder of modern obstetrics and gynecology. I will start with his most impressive contribution that I will simply call the "Atlas" (*Atlas of Mahfouz Obstetrics and Gynecological Museum*). It is a 1350 page book divided into three volumes. When it appeared in 1949, it was reviewed by Sir Eardley Holland, the then president of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology in England, who commented that it was "till this day (June '49) no doubt the best book that has appeared in obstetrics and gynecology whether in Germany, the United Kingdom or the United States of America". He went on to comment on the Atlas as a fitting reflection of a professional life filled with high quality original research. When the second volume appeared a short while later (December '49), Professor Holland felt that it was even more praiseworthy than the first because it contained the research in surgical techniques that made him world famous, especially in the realm of fistulae and incontinence, and also on other subjects such as ectopic gestation and Schistosomiasis. Praise and honors quickly followed the publication of the three volumes.

Lord Alfred Webb Johnson, the then president of the Royal College of Surgeons called it then best available reference in obstetrics and gynecology, and likened his work to that of Sir Christopher Wren, whom upon completing St. Paul's Cathedral declared that "he built for eternity".

A couple of years later (June, 1951), Professor Greene Armytage wrote him a letter in which he informed him that the conclusion and pathologic demonstrations offered in his Atlas have become the cornerstone of modern gynecology and obstetrics.

Years later (in 1966), Sir Cecil Wakeley, who at the time was president of the Royal College of Surgeons called it the best atlas of obstetrics and gynecologic specimens that has ever been published.

Such a work, his 'magnum opus', according to Mr. Wakeley, could not have arisen out of a vacuum, it was the product of a vast experience, and also of hard work, sweat, toil and disappointments that are beautifully recounted in his autobiography.

In 1937, he was already world famous and was invited to deliver a series of talks of his choice at London University. When he completed his presentation on the surgical treatment of fistulae and other subjects, the college dean, Dr. James Young, thanked him and declared that "there never was a presentation from this podium that surpassed in interest and importance the lectures delivered by Mahfouz".

In 1956, he was invited to give the presentation for the Fletcher Shaw memorial lecture. His choice was an exposition of five new surgical techniques that he developed to correct various kinds of fistulae and incontinence that were hitherto considered inoperable. Sir Charles Read presented the speaker and revealed that no sooner did the university publish a notice of the forthcoming event, that requests

to attend poured in from the four corners of the world to the extent that a much bigger space was needed for that event. The lecture was finally delivered in the largest available auditorium, namely the lecture hall of the Royal Society of Medicine.

A similar event took place in 1958 and he was enthusiastically praised by Professor Nixon, who was at the time the leading professor of gynecology and obstetrics of the University of London.

Professor Mahfouz, published many scientific papers, and encouraged his associates and students to do the same. Thanks to him and to a few of his contemporaries or near contemporaries, such as Mr. Madden, Dr. A.K. Henry, Professor Ali Ibrahim, Professor Naguib Makkar, and Professor El Sebai, Cairo University received a well-deserved universal acclaim that should render us proud (see the selective bibliography). As mentioned earlier, he also published gynecology and obstetric texts in the Arabic language, which he continued to update until 1958. These include *the Art of Midwifery* (Fourth Edition), *Elementary Gynecology* (Fourth Edition), and finally *Practical Gynecology*.

His medical interest also included a history of medical education in Egypt, which he summarized in a book intended to be distributed to the members of the international congress of tropical disease in 1935. The history behind that book makes an interesting story, worth reading in his autobiography. Not mentioned in the published text was his accidental discovery that one of the generals responsible for the successful campaign of Ibrihim Pasha was an Egyptian Copt. The document was discovered thanks to the help of his friend, Mohsen Bek Fawzi, the chief librarian of the palace archives, who helped him by translating Turkish documents for his book. They were both elated of that discovery that should give dignity to the despised Fellahin, but it seems that King Fouad was less enthusiastic and had the documents burned.

The book was written in relative haste, and he meant to update it both with published and unedited documents. Unfortunately, the help he expected from us, his grandchildren, and from his other students never materialized. Furthermore, personal tragedies and historical events all conspired to abort an enterprise that could very well have been most fascinating. Nonetheless, he did lecture on the subject of Arabic medicine, and published a monograph (in Arabic) that he entitled "Medical Culture and Female Medicine among the Arabs".

He was also interested in the Coptic impact on the development of Arabic medicine. I remember, for instance, attending one of his lectures at Dar El-Hikma in Cairo on Ibn El-Nefis, who discovered the pulmonary circulation 300 years before Michael Servatus. I still remember today, that is more than 35 years after that lecture was delivered, his remark that it was a Coptic physician who trained the great Ibn El-Nefis.

Another example of his interest in the Egyptian Christian influence on the development of Arabic medicine was inserted in his acceptance speech the day President Nasser conferred on him the first class order of merit and the State Prize

of Distinction for Science in 1960. After thanking the president, he offered a summary on the medical achievements of Egyptian Alexandrian and Arabic medicine in which he did not fail to mention that Ibn Abi Osayba credited Bishop John the Gramarian (Yahya El -Nahawi ), as being the first and richest medical source for the Arabs.

Professor Mahfouz, the acadamecian and the founder of institutions, gained worldwide recognition to the extent that he was included in a BBC program entitled "World Leaders". The Mahfouz story was presented by Professor Nixon on May 26, 1950. The broadcast was translated by the official Arab-speaking magazine of BBC called "The Arab Listener". It greatly emphasized:

- 1) Domiciliary delivery and obstetric care that he offered at no charge
- 2) The museum in which 3,000 specimen, mostly of his private collection, were indexed in 25 volumes
- 3) The Atlas in which he spent large sums of money from his personal funds.

Mr. Nixon went on to describe the various honors bestowed on that Egyptian pioneer, and which included:

- An MCh from Cairo.
- An MRCP (1932), followed by FRCP (1937), from London., granted only to four scientists before him.
- An FRCOG (Hon) 1934.
- In 1943, he was granted an honorary FRCS from London, which took place during the same ceremony that honored Sir Winston Churchill with the identical honorary degree.
- When the Honorary Fellowship of the Royal Society of Medicine (London) was bestowed on him in 1947, it was done during the same ceremony that recognized the discoverer of penicillin, Sir Alexander Fleming.
- The Honorary Fellowship of the Edinburgh Obstetric Society.
- A corresponding fellowship of the New York Academy of Medicine.

Egypt also honored him with medals and titles such as:

- The Order of the Nile in 1919.
- The title of Bey 2nd Class, 1925.
- Then the title of Bey 1st Class, 1930.
- The Pashahood in 1937.
- The First Class Order of Merit and the State Prize of Distinction for Science in 1960.

### ***Character***

Yet in spite of the honors bestowed upon him, Professor Mahfouz was one of the humblest people I ever met. My mother used to point my attention to the fact that he had that unique gift to make us feel that he has the least importance in his

own house. To understand that remark, one has to be familiar with the frequently dictatorial role the Egyptian head of a family assumed in the first part of the 20th century as beautifully depicted by the man whose mother named him after my grandfather for saving both of their lives, in the course of a difficult delivery, and who became known to us as the doyen of modern Egyptian novelists, the Noble prize winner, Naguib Mahfouz. In his famous trilogy: *'Between the Palaces'*, the contrast with the main character (Si-Sayed) of that work is so striking! My grandfather was so mild that he never forced us to do anything, even for our own good. For instance, his knowledge of botany was encyclopedic, and he would frequently take us in his garden to give us the Latin, English and Arabic name of each plant. He was also extremely interested in various aspects of biology, and I remember him taking us to the Diana cinema of Cairo for what must have been a most unusual trip for him, but it was a documentary movie on the life of the bees, and he had to take his grandchildren to stimulate their scientific curiosity. After that documentary, he left us to enjoy the main program and sent us the car back to return home. Yet he never quizzed us or made fun of our chronic ignorance. He even tried to teach us good Arabic by reciting passages of great poets to illustrate a point, and often made comments on a given event by quoting some great Arabic writer. It is such a tragedy that we did not learn from him because he was known to be a great Arabist. He was even offered, in his later years, to join the Arabic Academy, which he declined because of poor health. But again, he never used compulsion even for our own good. Some may fault him for being too gentle for our best interest, but I would disagree because like a Christian father who is expected to be the shadow of the Father in Heaven, he respected our God-given autonomy and free will and simply gave us the occasion to excel. Sometimes he would put his obstetrics skills to good use and emulate the Socratic admonition to teachers that ideas are better delivered from the students themselves, rather than force-fed on them. Sometimes grandfather helped deliver those ideas from the more resistant students or colleagues, and did it in a most practical manner, such as occurred in 1919, when he started an external midwifery service that employed students of both sexes. My grandfather knew that virtue is best protected by innate morality which is reflected in consistent, decent behavior, modesty in dress (which is an integral part of temperance), and respect for the other sex as a person, not an object. He knew that virtue is not a fossilized quality to be protected in well-guarded prisons, such as in the "Haramleks" of his days, but is rather a life-giving force for society that needs to grow for the betterment of all.

It is time to describe how he dealt with that opposition to allow a mixed team of both sexes to work for the external midwifery service established in 1919. The whole project started with two centers that he equipped with all the necessary instruments. He overcame the resistance of the public health authorities, who severed the pay of two nurses, by compensating them from his own pocket, and when the project seemed to succeed, he wrote the following passage in his 1966 autobiography:



"Nevertheless, I was subjected to quite unexpectedly severe criticism in the daily press for inviting the cooperation of students of both sexes in this work without sufficient supervision, and without the permission of the parents of the female students. I was held responsible for whatever misconduct might occur in the centers or during the visit of students and nurses to the homes where they assisted in the deliveries. To counteract this malicious attack, I immediately called the parents of the students and had a talk with them. I asked them what they would do when their daughters graduated? Would they appoint eunuchs to chaperone them? They laughed and said, 'certainly not'. In that case, I said I wish you to sign a statement that you accept full responsibility for allowing your children to continue this work. They all signed willingly. It is worth noting that during the last 43 years there have been no complaints whatsoever of misconduct by students or nurses, either in the centers or in the patients' homes"

Much later he applied the same principle in his own family. My mother recounts an incident in Paris in 1936, in which she had just graduated from the Sacred Heart School of Cairo and was eager to visit the Louvre in order to see for herself what she had learned to love in her art books. Unexpected resistance came from her mother, who secured the help of her brother, Judge Kamel Azmy to forbid a visit to "a place that shamelessly exposes nudity in the name of art". But thanks to my grandfather's insistence and gentle persuasion of his wife and brother-in-law, my mother was finally able to enjoy that place of iniquity (that is the Louvre) in the company of her parents. Even Uncle Kamel discovered that fine art cannot be indecent. Fifty years later, the roles were reversed, and I had to plead with my children to visit the same galleries with them.

Before proceeding to the more serious assessment of his faith, one cannot miss an incident that reflects his gentle humor. It occurred after he delivered the last daughter of King Farouk and his Queen, Farida. The King was greatly disappointed that he still had no heir to the throne and ordered Mahfouz to get him a boy next time, upon which my grandfather replied that he was only a postman and was thus not expected to write the letters. The King, in his benevolence, deigned to smile in return.

### ***Faith***

At this point, I would like to address what I know of his belief, to which I have alluded so briefly.

His Christian faith was deep and unassuming. He was a faithful son of the Coptic Orthodox Church, but must have inherited from the American Mission School a deep attachment to the Bible that he read on a daily basis. He had this habit since childhood, when he regularly read a chapter of the Holy Book to his father. I am sure that my mother must have inherited from her own paternal grandmother the habit to recite and comment on various Biblical passages. I have also learned that Dr. Mahfouz, the surgeon, made it a habit to read a Biblical passage



before operating. Nonetheless, my grandfather also recounted in his autobiography how impressed he was as a child by the broad-mindedness and tolerance he found in the proceedings of a religious congress held in India between Christians and Muslims. That particular concern for tolerance remained with him until his death, and must have been the underlying reason that would explain why the overwhelming majority of his appointees in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the School of Medicine were of the Muslim faith. Even one of his two 'private assistants at the "Coptic" Hospital was a Muslim, Dr. Fadel Selim. He must have also nourished the subconscious hope of reciprocity in a country whose overwhelming majority follows the Islamic faith. My good friend, Dr. Sam Attiya illustrated that salient trait of my grandfather, and recalled that when his own father, Dr. Labib Attiya, complained to Dr. Mahfouz about some fanatical incidents that victimized a number of Coptic students during their medical examinations, his response was an irritated disbelief. That belief in mutual tolerance must have been the result of a favorable intellectual climate that was prevalent during the interwars era, which was the liberal phase of Egypt's modern history in which he befriended such giants of the intellect and champions of tolerance as the great Lotfy Pasha El-Sayed, Dr. Kamel Hussein, and Taha Hussein. My cousin, Samir also knew that our grandfather had great admiration for the tolerance of Haykal Pasha, the famous author of the Life of Muhamed. The time came for mutual reciprocal benevolence that would permit his grandson, Dr. Samir Mahfouz Simaika, appointment at Kasr El-Ainy in the staff of Gynecology and Obstetrics. The rejection of his own flesh and blood by his former students only resulted in sadness, but never in bitterness. His strong Christian faith was the source of solace and strength which always showed through the many tragedies that struck him during his long life. Samir, my cousin, remained in our ancestral land in spite of Kasr El-Ainy's rejection. He rose to become one of the brightest practitioners of the art and science he learned from his grandfather, while I chose to uproot myself so as not to feel marginalized in my own country. But we both continued to cherish the sanctity of our roots and deeply love all our Egyptian brethren, even those who felt it their sacred duty to keep us in "our place" as a "protected minority" for the sake of a unified 'Umma'. That, incidentally, is not false humility, but is rather the fruit of Christian love that realizes that if we are called to be adopted sons of the living God, that infinite gift and immeasurable honor, free as it is, has to be reciprocated by a return of a Christ-like, loving obedience to the will of the Father, who taught us that there is infinitely more dignity hanging on a cross than by reigning in Caesar's palace.

It was that belief that preserved my grandfather's sanity and kept the family together when tragedies assailed him mercilessly. In 1933, his only son, my uncle Sami, chose to take a tram to go to school. We later learned that he went secretly to provide financial help to a fellow student and did not want to be chauffeured. As he was hanging precariously on the steps of that tram, it seems that he was acciden-

tally pushed in front of it. My mother later told me that his first words were to exonerate the conductor and to insist that the accident was entirely his fault. His last words were: My poor mother! I am so sorry!

One can imagine the horror that followed. Again, my mother recalled that when her father tried to climb the stairs of his house, he was overcome by grief and sat down on one of its steps and was heard to whisper: "Thy will be done". Few Christians understood so well that our joys and sufferings could only be given meaning and dignity if we accept to be members of the household of God to which we have been invited as adopted sons and daughters. He knew that even though our bodies may dissolve in dust and our earthly family eaten up by disease or death, authentic Christian families have no alternative but to make it their life's aim to preserve the spiritual evangelical pact that will keep them united after the dissolution of time, in an eternal now, in which "God will wipe away every tear" (Rev. 17:7). A few years later, his daughter, Rawhaya died at the age of 20 after a long illness. He remembered that tragedy in his autobiography as a "heartbreaking loss". Then, in 1952, my grandmother, the love and support of his earthly life suddenly died in their country house in Mansoura. His acceptance of the will of God never wavered. My mother heard him plead with his maker: - "Three times my Lord, preserve me from more, but thy will always be done". My mother and aunt Samira later told me that, simply writing the chapter on his wife, that recalled the three calamitous events that I just mentioned, left him physically and emotionally drained for a considerable time. So when my mother died in 1973, the family felt that it would be too much to tell him that tragedy had struck for the fourth time. Finally, in 1974, he found eternal peace and died assured that life can only be given meaning by the Cross, because he really believed that to be glorified with Christ, we first have to ascend Golgotha. It was indeed his deep Christian faith that shaped his whole life, in its joys, but also in its tragedies and even though his grief cut deeply through his heart, he could only express it in the whisper of "Thy will be done" that his Savior taught him.

I have rarely seen a person who practiced what Christians call the four cardinal virtues, which are open to all since they "are acquired by human effort, and yet dispose the human person for communion with divine love" (CCC 1804) and hence with the Holy Trinity, who will permit faith, hope and love to grow, so as to render a believer more Christ-like.

I will try to illustrate each of the virtues with an episode or an example in his life.

### ***1-Prudence***

*Prudence* is often called the charioteer of all virtues and is not to be confused with timidity or fear (CCC 1806). In a famous quote of St. Antony, when he was asked what would be the salient quality of a Christian, he answered that it was the gift of discernment, which I have taken to mean the same as the

Thomist understanding of prudence which is "right reason in action" since both terms mean the faculty to guide our conduct by Holy discernment and judgment. I will illustrate that particular trait with the advice my grandfather gave to my paternal uncle, Makram Pasha Ebeid in 1943, as the latter was about to publish his famous "Black Book". Makram Ebeid was at the time, the secretary general of the popular Wafd party and wrote that book, ostensibly to expose the corruption of the Wafd government, led by his best friend, Nahas Pasha. But he must have also hoped to ascend to supreme power on the platform of incorruptibility. He should have remembered that Robespierre, the "incorruptible" was finally guillotined with his incorruptibility intact in 1793. History has indeed taught us that incorruptibility can only be an a-posteriori virtue of a leader who has definitively closed the last chapter of his public life. When my grandfather became aware of Makram Ebeid's project, he paid him a visit in order to make a strong plea against the project in the name of "Christian-like prudence", and assured him that such a book will bring him infamy rather than power. (See also El-Feky). After a polite promise to follow his advice, my unfortunate uncle chose to publish the book after all. Since the event took place during World War II, Nahas Pasha retaliated by arresting him invoking wartime extraordinary powers. He was put in a prison whose sanitary conditions were so appalling that his life was endangered. Fortunately, a timely intervention in my grandfather's name, secured his freedom for humanitarian reasons, following an appeal of my mother to Lady Kilurn, whose life was apparently saved by her father, Dr. Mahfouz. The propitious intervention of her husband, Lord Kilurn, who was the all-too-powerful British ambassador at the time, saved my uncle's life, who was then taken from prison straight to the Italian hospital to recover. But a greater harm remained undone, and the book became an accusation against him as the "Coptic traitor".

## **2-Justice**

This particular trait is the "moral virtue that consists in a constant and firm will to give one's due to God and neighbor" (CCC 1807), and that could only be assessed by a whole life in which the other person (that is the neighbor in the Christian understanding) is only judged by righteousness, irrespective of wealth, race or creed. To illustrate that, I can only use an anecdote. It concerns one of his residents at the Coptic hospital who suddenly presented his resignation to Dr. Mahfouz, who was so mystified as to the reason behind the sudden action, that he promptly asked him the reason for that decision. The young man answered "don't you remember that you criticized my management of patient, so and so". My grandfather was startled and asked him why is it that the other Pasha's residents don't mind his abusive language and even his occasional physical kicks (*shallouts*\*), and you are so sensitive to what was simply an educational comment? His answer was revealing "Because you are so just that

any negative comment must have been for a grave offense". As you may imagine, the issue was soon resolved when the young doctor realized that constructive criticism should only be seen as the foundation of a successful career. Other better examples that illustrate his support of justice are scattered in his autobiography but too lengthy to cite here.

### ***3-Fortitude***

This is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and consistency in the pursuit of good (CCC 1808). It is well illustrated in a separate chapter of his autobiography (Chapter 20 'In Support of Justice') in which he never faltered in his resistance to orders or manipulations that he considered unjust even if that entailed sacrifice of his own career.

### ***4-Temperance***

This is the moral virtue that ensures "the will's mastery over instincts, and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable" (CCC 1809). My grandfather was well-aware of the immeasurable value of temperance, and he must have written his eighth chapter that he called "Temptations" as personal advice to the younger generation, including his own grandchildren. Family members of one of my father's colleagues witnessed the incident I am about to relate. The story is best told by my grandfather, who at the time was studying in his uncle's apartment which faced that of a fun-loving rich person. Years later, he wrote the following story:

"In order to entertain his family, the rich man hired two girls. One of them played the mandolin and the other sang. Their singing and music were clearly heard by us. One night as these musical entertainments were being given, a friend of mine who had arranged to study with me the bones of the skull was present, and while we were studying, pebbles were thrown at the window of our room. We went to find out the cause and discovered that these two girls were throwing them in order to attract our attention. At once they began a conversation which I cut short and went back to our studies. The same thing happened the following night. On the third night, I told my friend that we should put an end to this nonsense. This displeased him. He left the house and met the girls on the opposite side of the street. Naturally, his visits to me came to an end. As for me, I obtained some nails and a hammer and nailed the window shutter to prevent any further disturbance"

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\*A word that means "foot" in pharaonic Egyptian language and is colloquially used in Arabic Egyptian to signify a kick with a foot usually against another person.

That kind of moral rectitude was to yield a rich harvest, not only in his professional life, but also in the respect he commanded by his moral ascendancy. As an illustration, let me quote Lord Dawson of Penn's address in his capacity as President of the Royal College of Physicians in 1934, on the occasion of granting Dr. Mahfouz the honorary degree of fellowship of that college, in which he insisted on addressing Mahfouz' character, and in which he mentioned his stand in defending truth at a time when the Egyptian medical school was going through a critical phase. He then credited his fortitude as a major factor that preserved the good reputation of that school and he felt it proper to congratulate the Royal College of Physicians in bestowing Dr. Mahfouz the greatest honor it is capable of offering, namely the honorary fellowship, which was only granted to four scientists before him.

There is no doubt that Mahfouz, the doctor, the professor and the writer, would never have received as much honor and respect for himself, for the Kasr El-Ainy and for his country if he did not have these moral qualities. That would explain why Professor Nixon, the doyen of gynecologists in London in 1958 ended his comment on the very technical subject of fistulas which my grandfather presented, by mentioning that he considered his friendship to Mahfouz to be what is "dearest to him in life!"

## ***Conclusion***

I will end this little apperue on my grandfather with a personal observation. When my grandfather was on his deathbed, we were all naturally extremely saddened, and hardly left his house. In my despondence, I was trying to search for an answer and pulled his bedside Bible in English. I found that only one passage was underlined, and the line was a little shaky, and thus must have been recently traced. It highlighted a passage from St. Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, (4:6-7):.."The time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.."

The other passage that explains his life was not underlined by his pen but by his whole life, and I mean by that I Cor. 13, in which the apostle Paul reminds us that if we give up everything we have, and even offer our bodies to be burned, but have no love, it will do us no good. (Verse 3 of a chapter that should be read in its entirety). I know how precious that passage must have been to him because of his deep love of the poor. My grandmother's society was a hands-on charity in which my mother and aunts were forced to attend to the poorest of the poor in the most squalid quarter of the forgotten segments of the city, and such visits had to be repeated twice a week. But it was my grandfather who reminded them again and again that "unless you've given yourselves, you've given nothing". He also had a form of unassuming charity that he practiced every day, such as the episode which I witnessed in the corridor of the Coptic Hospital in Cairo when I was still a med-

ical student in 1959-1960. A patient's husband approached him and told him that he had paid his fees a few days ago, but now has not enough money to live. My grandfather asked him how much it was and returned the full sum. None witnessed that event except myself. When he left, he told me "patients and their families have enough problems dealing with illness. We (physicians) should never compound their suffering with economic ills". Today some of that love seems to have grown cold. The media imposes its hold on us and designer shops offer an irresistible allure. We still see the poor, but we don't look anymore. Perhaps it is time to open ourselves to the Holy Spirit and pay much less attention to the evanescent glitter so as to seek Christ in the poorest of the poor, which was recently so beautifully illustrated by the life and love of Mother Theresa of Calcutta.

Has Professor Mahfouz left a message to the younger Egyptian generations? The answer is a resounding yes, and consists of one word and one exclamation point: EXCEL! It is a message to all Egyptians but carries a more pressing sense of urgency and greater poignancy to the Christian minority since it is also and most importantly a Biblical message; because we have been ordered to be a light to the world (Matt. 5:14), and have been asked to be the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13). Mediocrity is dangerous for any people, but suicidal to a minority that naturally tends to be marginalized. Now I understand why my grandfather was so irritated when medical students complained of discrimination. He wanted them to be so perfect that even an unfair grade would not affect them. That does not mean that he expected Copts to be lowly. Christian humility does not call for a lowly status, but rather for a genuine recognition that any quality we may have is a free gift of God, and since we have been given the immeasurable dignity to belong to the household of God, that dignity comes with duties. It is our sacred duty to excel in order to express our gratitude to such a priceless gift? He never asked us to conquer territories for him nor did he expect us to revolt in his name. On the contrary, he asked us to heed to the authorities as St. Paul reminds us (Romans 13:1-6). Today, 2000 years later, we still have no alternative but to live the dignity that befits our nobility as members of the household of God.

The Christian way to shine is to strive for holiness through moral ascendancy, and to become the salt of the earth that will render any land prosperous. Copts should thus make themselves "indispensable" like Mahfouz Pasha did during the better part of a century by working hard to the betterment of all irrespective of their sex, race or creed, and thus truly become the salt of the earth.

We should also learn from our Jewish brethren how to eliminate poverty from our midst, and that does not mean to feed the poor only, but also to push for endowments and scholarships from the many successful Copts who should encourage the growth in their midst, of giants of the thought, mathematical geniuses, philosophers, writers and many more Naguib Mahfouz.

It is now 24 years since I last saw my grandfather alive, and I miss him all the more. How could an aging grandson forget the frail, unassuming, almost brittle elderly grandfather, whose whole being seemed to have been only heart and brain eliminated by the peaceful smile of the believer, who never stopped seeing the love of God, even through the agony of tragedies? How can I forget a man whose life illustrated what it is to be the salt of the earth? And finally, how can I forget a man who has discovered the great spiritual joys that rendered him not only impervious to the vanities of worldly success, but also shielded him from despair when he was forced to part with what was dearest to his heart.

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I hope that this presentation be the first in many that address the stories of successful Copts in the medical field, such as those of Minyawy Pasha, Professor Georgi Sobhi, Professor Anis Salama, Naguib Bek Makkar, Professor Shafik Shalaby, Sir Magdy Yaakoub, and Dr. Emile Tanaghrou, to mention just a few.

I would also like to suggest the study of an Egyptian contemporary, Dr. Helena Sidarous, the first female physician of modern Egypt. I remember working for her between 1963 and 1966. She was a wonderful teacher and a superb gynaecologist and obstetrician. Like my grandfather, she was on record to have given free medical help to countless indigent patients irrespective of their faith, and like him, would often pay their hospital bills and send them home with monetary gifts. But unlike my grandfather, she is spending the last years of her life abandoned by all, practically penniless and forced to teach in an elementary school in order to survive. I am mentioning her because she exemplifies feminism at its most sublime level, not only because she had the courage to study medicine at a time when only men were allowed in that profession, but because she established her independence from man by sanctifying her Savior and him alone.

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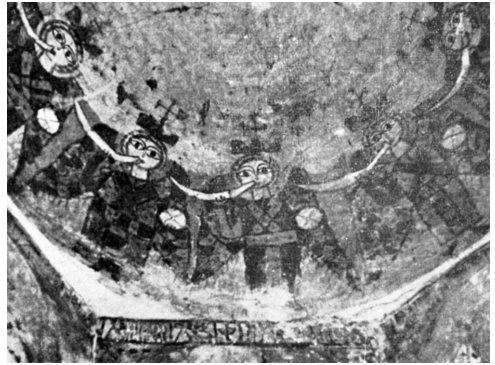
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# ***THE HEAVENLY HOST IN COPTIC TRADITIONS***

*Otto F. A. Meinardus, Ph.D.\**

Within the context of the theology and piety of the Copts the heavenly host occupies an important place. There are the seven archangels Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Suriel, Zedekiel, Serathiel, and Ananiel. They are the seven spirits of God (Rev. 4:5). Furthermore, the Holy Scriptures mention the seraphim with their six wings who filled the house with smoke (Is. 6:2 f) and the cherubim that provide the throne for the Lord (Ps. 99:1). The angels represent the lowest category of the celestial hierarchy. They are also closest to mankind.



**The Seven Spirits of God  
Chapel of the Twenty-four Elders  
The Monastery of St. Paul the Theban (1710).**

The Holy Scriptures offer several answers pertaining to the various functions and responsibilities of angels. On the one hand, they appear in the form of a person conversing extensively with Hagar, the maid of Sar'ai (Gen. 16, 7), on the other hand, they are invisible (Col. 1:16). They are spiritual, bodiless creatures representing a superior rank in God's creation. They protect and guard mankind (Ps. 91:11) and they expel all demons (Tobit 8). On the day of the last judgment they will separate the evil from the righteous one (Mt. 13:49). Moreover, they will carry the souls of the destitute to Father Abraham (Lk. 16:22). An angel appeared to Joseph

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(Mt. 1:20), to Zechariah (Lk. 1:13), to Mary (Lk. 1:28) and to the holy women at the empty tomb (Mk. 16:5). As to their numbers the biblical books provide different answers. Jacob dreamed that angels ascended and descended the heavenly ladder (Gen. 28:12). According to the prophecy of Daniel (7:10) there were literally millions of angels that served the 'Ancient of Days,' on the other hand, Jesus merely referred to twelve legions of angels (Mt. 25:53). For the seer of Patmos there were myriads and thousands of thousands (Rev. 5,11). On Christmas Eve we hear of the angel being accompanied by a multitude of the heavenly host (Lk. 2:13) For the medieval Kabbalists there were altogether 300,655,722 angels. The Dominican theologian St. Albertus Magnus (13th cent.) corrected the Jewish figure and estimated 399,930,004 angels, of whom, however, a third had fallen. Over against these almost astronomical figures, the Coptic numbers appear quite moderate. An early Coptic text, attributed to St. Bartholemew, merely mentions 12,000 cherubim, 20,000 seraphim and another 43,000 celestial beings.

The Copts pay special attention to St. Michael. On the 12th of each month they ask the archangel for protection and support. His power and might is limitless. He determined the annual rising of the Nile flood (12. Misra) and even stopped the movements of the sun (12. Baûna). At least 40 Coptic churches in Lower and Upper Egypt are dedicated to St. Michael. In most Coptic churches one altar is named after the archangel. On the occasion of the apparition of the Holy Virgin Mary on the roof of the Church of the Holy Virgin in Zeitûn in April 1968 "there appeared standing behind the Holy Virgin Mary a huge angel with his wings spread out" (24. Baramhat). Many Copts believed that this was St. Michael, the prince of the heavenly host.

Special psali - songs of praise - are offered to honor St. Gabriel, the angel of the annunciation (Dan. 8:16; Lk. 1:19, 20) on 30. Baramhat and 26. Baûna. St. Raphael commands the celestial powers and protects all those who call upon him. For the Copts St. Suriel serves as the heavenly trumpeter. With a loud trumpet-call he will gather the elect from the four winds (Mt. 24:31). He will cause the righteous to rise from the dead (1 Thess. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:32) and he will lead them to paradise (27. Tabah).

In the Coptic tradition apparitions of angels and archangels are quite common. It is, therefore, impossible to present a complete listing of all the various celestial manifestations. The following events are recorded in the Coptic synaxar. Sts. Dioscorus and Aesculapius were strengthened in their faith when the archangel appeared to them (1. Tubah). The angel of the Lord touched the tongue of St. Ezekiel of Armant (14. Kihak) and comforted St. George of Damirah (19. Baûna). An angel called upon St. Isaac of Tiphre to prepare himself from martyrdom (16. Bashons). St. John of Sanhût was guided by an angel to the town of Atripe to testify there to his faith (8. Bashons). An angel appeared to St. John of Lycopolis and ordered him to settle down in the desert (12. Hatûr) and St. John Kame received word from an angel to establish a monastery (25. Kihak). St. Macarius was led by

an angel into the inner desert (27. Barmudah) and Sts. Warshanufi and Paphnutius of Dendera were admonished by an angel to seek the crown of martyrdom (20. Barmudah). An angel appeared to St. Pidjimi and told him to become a monk (11. Kihak). During the years 1995 and 1996 many Copts from Cairo and Lower Egypt, but also many Muslims, experienced numerous apparitions of the Archangel St. Michael in the Church of St. Michael in the Sharqiya-village of Kafr Yusuf Samri, a few kilometers south of Zaqaq in the diocese of Anbâ Yaqûbûs of Minya Qamh and Zaqaq. According to the testimony of Abûnâ Samîl Zecharîah, the parish priest of the Church of St. Michael, the archangel appeared in various forms, sometimes as a youth dressed in a white galabiya (cf. Mt. 28:3), others saw the angel in an unusually bright light, while others even testify of having seen the angel with his wings in the nave of the sanctuary. Many miracles were recorded, viz. demon-exorcisms, multiplications of oil, several healings of oedema, hypertrophies, Haemorrhoids, tumors, etc.



**The Church of St. Michael in Kafr Yusuf Samri, Province of Sharqiua.**

These manifestations ought to be seen in the light of the present precarious situation of members of a beleaguered minority. Wholeheartedly they trust in the words of the prophecy that “all that time the archangel Michael shall arise and deliver his people from all trouble” (Dan. 12: 1, 2).

In addition to the “good angels,” the Copts also know about Abbaton, the merciless and furious angel who punishes the unredeemed. Moreover there exists Sakliatboth or Mastema, known among Western Christians as Lucifer or Satan, the Leviathan (Ps. 74:14). It is interesting to note that Coptic iconography has avoided to present the angels in the form of the Old Testament tetramorphs with their four faces each having four wings (Ez. 1:4-28). On the contrary, the forerunners of the Coptic angels seem to have been the hellenistic angels, viz. the “flying eros” on a square tunica-insert.



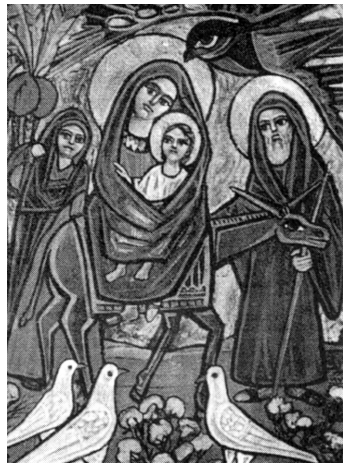
**A “flying eros,” 4th cent. tunica-insert, Upper Egypt.**

Additionally to the seraphim, cherubim, archangels, angels, thrones,

dominions, principalities and authorities (Col. 1:16), there are the Twenty-four Elders of the Apocalypse. They play an important rôle in Coptic theology, liturgy, magic and iconography. They are clad in white garments wearing golden bowls full of incense and joining in a new song (Rev. 4:4; 5:8). Before the heavenly throne they fall down while praising the Lamb of God (24. Hatûr). The oldest iconographic representation of the Twenty-four Elders - although badly damaged - is in the apse of the church of the Monastery of St. Simeon, Aswân (9th / 10th cent.) Another 10th century fresco adorns the haikal of the Chapel of St. Takla Haymanot in the Church of the Holy Virgin al-Mu'allaqah in Old Cairo. Throughout the centuries, Coptic parish-and monastic churches in Lower and Upper Egypt were adorned with frescoes of the imagery of the Apocalypse, including the Twenty-four Elders. Among the better known Apocalyptic cycles are those in the Chapel of St. Benjamin in the Monastery of St. Macarius (11th century) and in the Chapel of the Twenty-four Elders in the Monastery of St. Paul the Theban (1710). In most churches the paintings of the Twenty-four Elders decorate the walls of the haikal as in the Church of the Holy Virgin, Rod al-Farag, Shabra or the Church of St. George in Giza.

According to Coptic tradition the Twenty-four Elders are named after the 24 letters of the Greek alphabet, viz. Akhaêl, Banoêl, Ganoêl, Daoêl, Zaoêl, Eaoêl, Thaoêl, Ioêl, Kaoêl, Laoêl, Maoêl, Naoêl, etc. It is really not surprising that for the Copts the images of the Apocalypse are part and parcel of their religious tradition. On Easter Sunday all 22 chapters of the last book of the New Testament are being read. Moreover the four bodiless living creatures (asomati) and the Twenty-four Elders are mentioned in the final blessing at the service of the evening raising of incense.

A few years ago, there has been a rather interesting 'addition' to the celestial world of the Copts. The iconographers of the neo-Coptic school of art of Professor Isaac Fanus have repeatedly incorporated pre-Christian pharaonic images and symbols into traditional biblical subjects. Thus, for example, to the well-known Coptic theme of the Flight of the Holy Family from Bethlehem to Upper Egypt they have added Horus, "the god ruling over the sky and the stars" in the form of a magnificent bird whose wings touch the limits of the earth. He guides the Holy Family and Salome the midwife along the Nile Valley to Upper Egypt. Special attention is given to the udjat-eye which was damaged by Seth but eventually restored by Thot. The Christian, however, sees in the well-known udjat the "never-sleeping eye" of God with which He leads his people through heights and depths of their daily life. (Ps. 121:3,4).



**The Flight of the Holy Family with Salome the midwife, guided and protected by Horus with his udjat eye. (Modern Coptic art)**

## ***BOOK REVIEWS***

### ***Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity***

*By Otto F.A. Meinardus, The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo 1999. 344 pp. hbk.np purchase through <http://aucpress.com> I US\$ 24.50 / LE.70.00 ISBN: 977 424 511 3 24*

This fine new compendium of Coptic history and life, from the greatly admired scholar Professor Otto Meinardus, will immediately take its place as the one essential Coptic Orthodox desktop reference book in English, whether for a scholar or for the general reader. The arabophone student would be hard pressed to find most of the information here without recourse to several libraries, and without this volume most of the material would otherwise not be available to the English-language Coptologist. In a single volume, the author, probably the greatest individual European contributor to Coptic studies in the last century, has combined some Coptic material from *The Copts in Jerusalem* (Cairo, 1960), *Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts* (Cairo 1961, 1989), *The Holy Family in Egypt* (1963, 1986), *Christian Egypt, Ancient and Modern* (Cairo 1965, 1977), *Christian Egypt, Faith and Life* (Cairo 1970), with data from numerous articles, and has created this glorious synopsis of a life's study.

It is no criticism to observe that the work generally reads as a catalogue or encyclopedia. The Christian pilgrim in Egypt would discover here a vade mecum that makes many standard works redundant.

Professor Meinardus has always been a shrewd observer of the modern Coptic scene and he prefers not to commit himself. This is understandable, but the reader is wise to seek the inevitable sub-text in any of his books. The present volume opens with a panegyric for Pope Shenouda, and this tone remains throughout any presentation of the Coptic Revival and the present life of the Church. There are some carefully guarded comments which must be calculated to tickle our ribs and our minds: on p. 136 the Coptic monks in qalansuwas appear in Jerusalem not only



as monks of the Coptic Orthodox Church but also as "representatives" of "His Holiness Shenouda III". Similarly (p.64), Professor Meinardus exercises his delightful sense of humour by comparing the literary output of Fr. Matta - "more than fifty books" - with that of Pope Shenouda - "more than ninety titles": one feels that the author is writing tongue-in-cheek for a certain very visible kind of Copt. The author unashamedly refers to St. Justus al-Antuni (1910-76), (p.261), though he must know that this humble monk, surely one of the greatest Christian mystics of the twentieth century, has not yet been glorified by the Holy Synod, though many of us frequently ask 'Saint' Justus for his prayers. There are many other examples which might be given, but which may be far too sensitive. 'Seek the sub-text' can be a worthy injunction. The reviewer may also be permitted a double-barrelled and seditious question of his own: "Who is left out, and why?" Every reader of Otto Meinardus will enjoy producing their own answers.

There are many fine passages in this book, and all these deserve to be highlighted, but it is impossible to do justice to the book within the length permitted for a review: three significant excerpts particularly effected the present writer and must be regarded as illustrative of the whole. The most important pages in the book may be those that recall a Christian witness on the fringe of the ecclesial institution and Egyptian society. In one memorable section (pp.253-55) Meinardus recounts the awesome story of those who followed the eremitic example of the legendary Abuna 'Abd al-Masih al-Habashi, and lived the angelic life in the Wadi al-Rayyan under the direction of Matta El Meskeen. Here once again the Copts were able to imitate the example of those great originals of Coptic Orthodoxy, St. Paul of Thebes and St. Antony the Great, mysterious, marginal figures who are the glory of mankind and of the Copts. To these marvellous pages about the community of the Wadi al-Rayyan we may add the brief but exemplary account of the translation of the Holy Bible into Arabic, leading to the prominence of the Smith-Van Dyck version, and the admirable description of the return of the relics of St. Mark to Egypt. Few outside the Coptic Orthodox Church realise the great importance attached to relics in Egypt. These three sections are representative of the many literary and spiritual gems to be found in these pages.

The volume includes twenty-four photographic plates. The author took most of the photographs. There are useful appendices on Coptic names, tattoos, patriarchs, secular rulers, Coptic language, architecture, calendar and relics.

It is impossible to imagine the library of any Coptologist or student of Middle Eastern Christianity at the birth of this Millennium without this entrancing volume.

### ***Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia***

*Edited by Alan Fitzgerald, O.S.A. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993. 951 pp. \$75.00 (hardcover). ISBN 0-8028-3843-X.*

This exhaustive study of Augustine puts, within a single volume, the full account of the life, works, thought, and influence of this great Church Father in the hands of the reader. The book is an indispensable reference work that contains over 400 articles written by more than 140 international scholars. There are articles on the life of Augustine and of his contemporary philosophers, Church Fathers, heretics and other important historical figures. Augustine's great influence on the theology in the West till the twentieth century is discussed in entries on Gregory the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Harnack and other Western theologians.

Major articles discuss in detail Augustine's extant writings, many of which are unavailable in English. There is a separate entry for each of his major works. The teaching of Augustine on the main theological and liturgical themes are discussed in separate articles. These include entries on the Trinity, Christology, Bible, Eucharist, Penance and other Sacraments, St. Mary, and fasting. Other articles discuss the errors in his teaching on predestination, original sin/ guilt, and other errors that denied him sanctity in all Orthodox Churches and for which modern scholars give the term Augustinianism. Other entries deal with the social and moral issues discussed by Augustine in his writings, and are still unsettled in the contemporary world. These include role of women, church-state relations, war, and abortion.

This volume is of great use to any reader whether he is a scholar, student or one who reads for general knowledge or for spiritual benefit. An up-to-date bibliography to each entry and cross-references add to its value.

### ***On Being a Theologian: Reflections at Eighty (? Summer 2000)***

*By John Macquarrie. Edited by John H. Morgan with Georgina Morley and Eamonn Conway ISBN 0-334-02771-3, SCM Press 1999. Sterling £12.95 pp. viii x 232.*

In June 1999 Professor John Macquarrie an Anglican priest and Emeritus Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford celebrated his eightieth birthday. He is, by any reckoning, one of the most popular and widely read theologians in the world. His work has been translated, as one might expect, into French, German and Italian but also, as one would certainly not expect, into Chinese. Macquarrie gave a theological lecture at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in the University of Peking in October 1995. The lecture is reproduced in this book, issued to celebrate the author's birthday.



The Coptic Orthodox Christian, and others deeply imbued in the Eastern Patristic tradition, will do well to study this book carefully, especially if there is insufficient time to read larger works of Western theology. This book is absolutely clear about what it can mean to be a theologian in a significant school of modern thought.

As a theologian, John Macquarrie expounds an indirect approach to modern man living in a godless time such as this, though he knows well that God must always be the Subject of Christian Theology. The reader of the *Coptic Church Review* is likely to be starting theology from a different place. Macquarrie tells us that he has often wished that he had received a thorough grounding in the Fathers, and that the tradition in which he was trained in Scotland was definitely deficient in patristics. He is too modest. No theologian can know everything and, in any case, he freely quotes the Fathers of good effect. Macquarrie is a philosopher-theologian who has successfully interpreted German theology for those who have no German. Service with the Royal Army Chaplains Department forced him to cultivate his existing German, and the need to preach and lecture to Germans gave a new dimension to his studies. Most important modern theology has been written in German, and Professor Macquarrie gained international recognition for his work as a critical, at times a fiercely critical, disciple of Rudolf Bultmann and Martin Heidegger. An Existentialist Theology is well known and highly valued. When Macquarrie joined Oxford's Faculty of Theology, from Union Seminary in New York, in 1970, the university had an international reputation for historical and patristic theology. His teaching of Systematic Theology was of a distinction that raised the profile and authority of that field of study in the English-speaking world.

The reader will be impressed with the integrity of Macquarrie's life and work. His writings are invariably of spiritual merit. Clearly focused entirely upon God, his systematic theology has nevertheless maintained the programme of always beginning with the human situation and tracing the path from our ordinary human existence to the question of ultimate Being.

In addition to the professor's personal reflections, essays and lectures, this volume contains thirty-six pages outlining Macquarrie's major works. For these pages alone, the reader is urged to welcome and weigh this most helpful book.

*John Watson*

*Sutton Valence School, Kent, UK*



## **Professor Naguib Mahfouz**

On the right hand side of President Mohamed Naguib during his visit to the Coptic Hospital in Cairo

(Article on page 119)