

4. THE COPTIC-ORTHODOX CHURCH: Impact of Catholic and Protestant Mission

4.1 Downturn during the Middle Ages

The conquest of Egypt by the Muslim general ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âṣ in 641 was probably experienced as a liberation by the Copts whose religion had been harshly suppressed by the Byzantine Empire:

The Byzantines had tried to efface both religious and political liberty in Egypt, whereas the early Arabs came at least with the prospect of religious enfranchisement for the Copts, who were destined to lose political independence anyway. The attitude of the Muslims toward the [Christians] would ensure under the Covenant of ‘Umar such religious status for the Copts as they had not enjoyed under the Byzantines for a long time.¹

After the Byzantines were defeated, the Copts enjoyed a period of unprecedented revival of their religion. However, under the successive Islamic regimes, their position in Egypt became gradually more problematic. The Church became focused on survival, not on a role in society. This does not mean that inside the Church, there were no positive developments. The development of Coptic literature in the first centuries under Islam shows its vitality. In spite of that, by the tenth century, about half of the population of Egypt had become Muslim.

One of the major ecclesiastic events was that the patriarchate was moved from Alexandria to Cairo during the 11th century. Patriarch Kyrollos II took residence in St. Michael’s Church on Rûdah Island in the Nile, opposite to Babylon, the old part of Cairo that had a high percentage of Christians and many churches.²

By the 16th century the Copts formed only ten percent of Egypt’s population. By the year 1800, this had decreased to an estimated five percent. This shrinking percentage was expressed in the fact that while during the seventh century Egypt had 70 bishops, there were only 12 in 1671. By that time, Coptic monks resided in only four monasteries in Wâdî Naṣrûn and in the Red Sea area. Under the Ottomans, the Copts had become largely invisible in society. Coptologist Otto F.A. Meinhardus speaks of the ‘spiritual paucity’ of the Copts from the 13th to the 20th

¹ Aziz S. Atiya, *A History of Eastern Christianity* (Millwood, 1991, first edition 1967), p. 82.

² *Ibid.*, p. 90.

century, reflected in the ‘almost complete absence of theological creativity’.³

4.2 Renewal since the 19th century

Under Muḥammad ‘Alī at the beginning of the 19th century, Egypt was set on a course of modernization. This influenced the Coptic community positively. Among Muḥammad ‘Alī’s financiers were some wealthy Copts, like the brothers Ibrāhīm and Jirjis Jūharī. They hired scribes to copy old Coptic documents, thus enabling the first serious studies of Coptology. Under Muḥammad ‘Alī some Egyptian provinces were governed by Copts.⁴

The Coptic-Orthodox Church went through an important phase of renewal under Patriarch Kyrollos IV (1854-1861), who had been an abbot of the Monastery of St. Antonios. He founded the Coptic-Orthodox College as part of his endeavor to ensure that priests had at least some theological education. Kyrollos IV stimulated the founding of schools, including the first girls’ college in Egypt. He also imported a printing press for the Copts, which was the only press in the country beside the governmental press in Bulāq.⁵

Kyrollos IV had Pan-Orthodox ideals. He was on such good footing with the Greek-Orthodox patriarch of Alexandria that during the latter’s absence he was sometimes asked to take care of the Greek-Orthodox flock. He also envisaged relationships with the Russian-Orthodox Church and the Church of England, but the *khedive* feared that this would lead to foreign interventions. When Kyrollos IV died in 1861, the *khedive* was suspected of having ordered his poisoning.⁶

The era of modernization under Muḥammad ‘Alī was also the period when Roman-Catholic and Protestant missionaries began to come to Egypt in large numbers. This forced the Copts to answer the theological and Biblical challenges that the Western missionaries held in front of them. According to Atiya:

The impact of their dynamism on the Coptic Church saw its modern awakening from centuries of lethargy. The challenge shook the ancient Church to its very foundations and inspired its sons to rekindle the dimmed flame of a glorious past.⁷

³ Otto F.A. Meinardus, *Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity* (Cairo, New York, 2004, first edition 1999), p. 66.

⁴ Atiya, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, pp. 100-101.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

This challenge was initially not met by the clergy. In 1874, a *Majlis al-Milli* (Confessional Community Council) was installed by the Egyptian authorities at the request of lay leaders in the Coptic community. This council was deemed necessary as some educated leaders among the Copts wanted to change the social, cultural and religious state of the Copts and the lack of leadership by the Church hierarchy. The 24 members, elected by the Coptic community, had power of participation in the management of Church property.

When Kyrollos V was appointed patriarch, he was the first to chair the *Majlis*. At the first occasion when the *Majlis* wanted to interfere in the management of some Church affairs, Kyrollos V refused to call it together, thereby rendering the *Majlis* ineffective. He unilaterally decided to close the clerical college and a girls' school. The lay leaders were so angered by the actions of Kyrollos V that they asked the government to interfere and demand that the *Majlis* meet. The situation deteriorated to such an extent that the Egyptian authorities forced Kyrollos V to retreat to the Monastery of Baramûs. The critics of the patriarch seemed to have overplayed their hand. According to Atiya, this measure 'aroused popular sympathy for him [...] as no one doubted his sanctity and good intentions'.⁸ By popular demand Kyrollos V was allowed to return to Cairo six months later. He immediately forgave his Coptic adversaries, re-opened the educational institutes he had closed, and even expanded the opportunities for Coptic studies in Cairo, Alexandria, Banî Sûayf and Asyût. In spite of Kyrollos V's conservativeness, he eventually accepted the *Majlis* as a part of Coptic life.⁹

The lowest ebb for the Copts was reached under Patriarch Yûsâb II (1946-1956). Atiya speaks of 'sterility' and the 'absence of constructive policies in Church affairs' prior to Yûsâb II, but under Yûsâb II 'simony and corruption' were added to the problems of the Church. The bishops, the *Majlis* and a synod all agreed to relieve Yûsâb of his patriarchal tasks. He was forced to retreat to the Monastery of Muḥârraq near Asyût. After his death in 1959, a monk from the Monastery of Baramûs was elected as Patriarch Kyrollos VI.¹⁰

Kyrollos VI was extremely popular. Even at the beginning of the 21st century, many Copts cherish pictures of him in their homes and wallets. Many remember him for his personality and miracles, but he was also an able administrator of the Church. Under Kyrollos VI many new churches were built, including a cathedral in Alexandria. Many Coptic

⁸ Ibid., p. 109.

⁹ Ibid, pp. 109-110.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 114-115.

benevolent societies were founded, often for Christian teaching and the welfare of the poor. One of the main examples of this is the Coptic Hospital in Cairo. Under his leadership the clergy of the Church began to be rejuvenated and better educated. A Sunday School movement began, to teach the laity the basis of the faith. Bible study became common in the Church.¹¹

By the middle of the 20th century, Ecumenical relationships of the Copts with other Churches began in earnest. In 1954, the first Coptic delegation participated in meetings of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Evanston, Illinois (USA). They protested strongly against the kind welcome that was given to them as 'newcomers to oecumenicity', according to Atiya who himself participated in the delegation. The Copts said they had been partners in the Ecumenical movement until they had been forced to withdraw because of the 'iniquities and humiliation of Chalcedon'. Since then, the Copts have participated in many Ecumenical forums. They also participated as observers at Vaticanum II (1962-1965).¹²

Under Patriarch Shanûdah III, the Church has entered into Ecumenical relationships with the other Churches of the Arab World and beyond. The emphasis on youth work has remained. At the beginning of the 21st century, in Cairo alone, the Copts had about 30,000 young people involved in teaching in Sunday School classes. The Church remains well established in all Egyptian provinces. There are also parishes in most Arab countries for the many Egyptians working overseas. In the USA, Europe, Canada, Australia and Brazil there are an estimated 400,000 to 1.2 million Copts. Estimations of the membership within Egypt range from 3.2 million to eight million.¹³

4.3 Coptic-Catholic Church

Yuḥanná, abbot of the Monastery of St. Anthony near the Red Sea, was present at the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1439) where the patriarchs of Christianity searched for unity. From Rome's perspective, this was a matter of bringing the other Churches back under its aegis. The meetings seemed successful and union was proclaimed; Yuḥanná's signature appears under the *Decretum pro Jacobitis*. The formulas for unifying the

¹¹ Ibid., pp. 115-117.

¹² Ibid., pp. 120-121.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 75. Andrea Pacini, (ed), *Christian Communities in the Arab Middle East; the Challenge of the Future* (Oxford, 1998), p. 317.

Churches were vague enough to be promising, but they were never put to the test as they were never followed-up.¹⁴

In 1586 a rather heavy-handed delegation from Rome visited Patriarch Yuḥanná XIV in Egypt. He arranged a synod and convinced enough of his bishops to accept the proposed union that effectively made the Coptic patriarch subservient to the pope. Yuḥanná died before the document was signed, and the movement lost its momentum. No further steps to unity were taken at that time.¹⁵

Because of Rome's continuing interest to bring the Copts under its leadership, in 1602 a Coptic College was formed in Rome. In 1630 a Capuchin friar from Paris founded a small Roman-Catholic center in Cairo. In 1675, Franciscans came to Asyût and Jesuits settled in Cairo. These missions were not very successful. The first serious victory for Rome was that the Coptic Bishop Athanasius of Jerusalem became a Catholic in 1741. Pope Benedict XIV appointed him the first Vicar-Apostolic of the small community of Egyptian Coptic-Catholics, which at that time numbered no more than 2,000. Although Athanasius eventually returned to the Coptic-Orthodox Church, a line of Catholic Vicars-Apostolic continued after him.¹⁶ During that same time a learned Copt, Rufâ'il al-Tûkhî converted to Catholicism and had to flee to Rome as he felt endangered by the Copts. There he edited the Coptic-Arabic *cuchologion* (a book describing the liturgies) and other Coptic prayer books, to make them suitable for Catholic usage.¹⁷

The Roman-Catholic Church gained real ground among the Copts in the early 19th century, after the French invasion (1798-1801). A French consul requested from Muḥammad 'Alî that he would summon the Coptic patriarch to submit to the Pope. Muḥammad 'Alî asked his Coptic secretary, Mu'allim Ghâli, to arrange this matter, so Ghâli decided to give the example and became a Catholic himself.¹⁸

Roman-Catholic missions significantly increased their activities during the second half of the 19th century; many schools and hospitals were opened. These Catholic schools were a great attraction for the Copts. Both the Catholic and Protestant missionaries were critical of the Copts for being ignorant of the Christian faith and the Bible. Many of the priests and bishops were indeed uneducated.

In 1895 Leo XIII re-established the patriarchate and in 1899 he appointed Bishop Kyrollos Makarios as Patriarch Kyrollos II 'of Alexan-

¹⁴ Atiya, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, p. 98.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ 'The Coptic-Catholic Church', on www.cnewa.org (5 December 2006).

¹⁷ Atiya, *A History of Eastern Christianity*, p. 112.

¹⁸ Ibid.

dria of the Copts'. He began to issue encyclicals to the Copts inviting them to offer allegiance to the pope. The Coptic-Catholic Church retained most of its Coptic-Orthodox habits although the liturgy was adopted and in the necessary places the name of the Pope was used instead of that of the Coptic-Orthodox patriarch. According to Atiya, the people 'did not distinguish differences and the whole scheme looked like a conspiracy'. Thousands of Copts joined the Coptic-Catholic Church during this period; the Coptic-Orthodox leaders preached in defense of the faith of their fathers from every pulpit.

In 1908 a major setback occurred for the Coptic-Catholics when their Patriarch Kyrollos II resigned and joined the Greek-Orthodox Church. It was not until 1947 that a new patriarch, Morqos Khuzâm, was installed. In the intervening years without a patriarch the churches were served by apostolic administrators.

4.4 Protestant Mission and Churches

4.4.1 *Beginning of Mission Efforts*

The first Lutheran missionary in the Arab World was Peter Heyling, who worked in Egypt in 1633-1634. He hoped to rejuvenate the Orthodox Church and visited some monasteries but he received a mixed reception due to the efforts of some Roman-Catholic missionaries who accused him of heresy. From 1634 Heyling worked in Ethiopia; he was beheaded in 1652 after being accused of spying by the local governor of a Sudanese Red Sea port while traveling to Cairo.¹⁹ The first organized Church mission was that of the Moravian Brothers, who worked in Egypt from 1768 to 1783.²⁰

Protestant mission to the Arab World only began on a sizeable scale at the beginning of the 19th century.²¹ Most Protestant mission work to the Arab World during the 19th century began with the assumption that they would be able to revive the historic Churches in order to, together, reach the goal of the conversion of the Jews and the Muslims of the Arab

¹⁹ Otto F.A. Meinardus, *Christians in Egypt: Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Communities Past and Present* (Cairo, 2006), pp. 104-107.

²⁰ Lyle L. Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record* (South Pasadena, 1977), p. 100.

²¹ The founding of the Baptist Missionary Society in October 1792 by 12 Baptist ministers in England is often taken as the beginning of the new mission movement. Among them was William Carey, who had published *An Enquiry into the Obligation of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*.²¹ A year later he went to India as a missionary; his example was followed by many more Christians from Europe and the USA. The American revival movement at the beginning of the 19th century and the Pietistic movement in Europe formed the socio-religious environment for this new movement.

World. This was often combined with a strong belief that the conversion of the Jews would usher in the return of Jesus Christ in millennial fashion.

The missionaries were soon disappointed in their goals, as the historic Churches were not interested in a Protestant reformation, while the Jews and the Muslims were only marginally interested in the Christian faith. They also faced strong resistance by the Ottoman authorities, who forbade evangelism among Muslims. This resulted in a change of focus among most mission workers, who around the middle of the 19th century began Protestant Churches that welcomed members from the historic Churches. This was deemed urgent as the leadership of the historic Churches often excommunicated those who had adopted more Evangelical convictions.

Missionaries founded many schools, hospitals and orphanages, thus playing an important role in the development of medicine and education in the Arab World. Their social activism and Biblical knowledge were attractive to many members of the historic Churches. It also held a mirror in front of those Churches; the presence of the Protestant missionaries certainly influenced the renewal movement in the historic Churches of the Middle East.²²

4.4.2 Anglican Communion

In 1815 the Church Missionary Society (CMS) began its involvement in the Arab World by sending William Jowett to Malta for collecting information on the state of religion in the Arab World. CMS was a para-Church mission agency that functioned within the context of the Church of England.²³ It wanted to win non-Christians and not proselytize among other Churches; in its apostolate to Muslims it hoped to enlist the help of the indigenous Churches. In Jowett's words:

As these Churches shall reflect the clear light of the Gospel on Mohammedans and Heathens around, they will doubtless become efficient instruments of rescuing them from delusion and death.²⁴

In 1816 CMS touched Egypt for the first time with some educational work. In 1819 Jowett moved to Cairo, where he was welcomed by

²² Betty Jane Bailey and J. Martin Bailey, *Who are the Christians in the Middle East?* (Cambridge 2003), pp. 97-98.

²³ El Hassan bin Talal, (Crown Prince of Jordan), *Christianity in the Arab World* (Amman, 1994), p. 88.

²⁴ Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, Vol. 1 (London, 1899), pp. 224ff, as quoted in Lyle L. Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record* (South Pasadena, 1977), p. 153.

priests and monks. He received letters of introduction from the Coptic-Orthodox patriarch to all monasteries, where Jowett distributed Arabic copies of the four Gospels. After him more CMS personnel arrived; they started schools for boys in six Egyptian towns where they also held Evangelical meetings with Copts in attendance.²⁵ CMS also supported the beginning of a school of theology for the Coptic-Orthodox Church.²⁶ Initially, CMS did not seek to start an Anglican Church in Egypt. During the first half of the 19th century, CMS did much of its work in cooperation with missionaries from the Swiss and German Lutheran and Reformed Basel Evangelical Missionary Society (Basel Mission).²⁷ In 1850, Samuel Gobat, who had been a missionary in Egypt for 23 years, concluded that the 'success of the ministry of the CMS has effected a revival in the native Church'.²⁸

After 1882, CMS' work in Egypt was reconstituted and its determination was now to bring the Gospel to Muslims. Literature was distributed, medical work was begun, and schools were started. Much attention was paid to the education of girls. William H. Temple Gairdner was one of the foremost missionaries working with Muslims.²⁹ In 1925, the Episcopal Church of Egypt was formed. In 1952, all institutes of CMS were handed over to the Episcopal Church.³⁰

4.4.3 Evangelical-Lutheran Church

The Basel Mission sent five men to work in Egypt in 1825, seconded through CMS.³¹ The organization was interdenominational, but with many Lutherans. Among the first five men was Samuel Gobat, the later bishop of Jerusalem. In 1862, the work of the mission in Egypt was closed due to difficult political circumstances.

²⁵ Adib Naguib Salamah, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Egypt and Sudan', in Habib Badr (ed), *Christianity: A History in the Middle East* (Beirut, 2005), p. 735.

²⁶ Salamah, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Egypt and Sudan', p. 736.

²⁷ Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record*, pp. 153-154.

²⁸ Salamah, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Egypt and Sudan', p. 736.

²⁹ Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record*, pp. 167-169.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

³¹ The Basel Evangelical Missionary Society was founded in 1815. It is one of the largest and oldest German speaking Protestant missionary societies and was international and interdenominational from the beginning. The society opened an institution for training missionaries in 1816 and was initially involved in training people from British and Dutch mission societies that were already engaged in evangelism. The largest number of missionaries was supplied to CMS. The Basel Mission Society also began to establish centers of its own.

In 1900, G. Guinness and K. Kumm founded the Sudan Pioneer Mission (SPM) in Aswân. This was an interdenominational mission, but again with a Lutheran component, with workers from Switzerland, Germany, Egypt and Nubia. In 1901 the first sent workers from Germany arrived in Aswan. The initial focus of SPM was on work among Nubians and Bejas in Sudan but since the British did not allow work in northern Sudan, the SPM worked in the region between Aswân and Isná. Initially, SPM started a school and Arabic Bible distribution. Later Bible translation into Nubian was added. A church was built on the mission compound in Aswân in 1909.

Branches of the mission were opened in Daraw (1907) and Adfû (1911). Medical work began in 1906 in one room on the Aswân compound, as an outpatient clinic. In 1913 that developed into a hospital, which was rebuilt in 1961. The mission was also running an outpatient clinic in the Old Nubian villages Koshtame, Gerf Hiscen, Dakke and Gharb Sehel until 1966. In 1985, the Nubians of Ballana in New Nubia invited the organization to open a clinic in their village. The mission, presently known as Evangelical Mission in Upper Egypt, consists of the church, the hospital, clinics in Daraw and Ballana, and a bookshop that was opened on the Aswân compound in 1999.³²

4.4.4 Presbyterian and Reformed Churches

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) sent its first people to Palestine in 1818. ABCFM was originally Congregationalist and Presbyterian, and later solely Congregationalist. The organization had been founded in 1810, and its missionaries were of the opinion that they should not involve themselves with the externals of religious habits, but with the 'pure Gospel' as derived directly from the Bible only. Many of the missionaries held millennial views, believing that their mission work would usher in the era of Christ's rule of peace on earth.³³ The Ottomans did not allow them to buy property or to settle more permanently in Palestine. ABCFM therefore decided to concentrate its work in Syria and Lebanon where it was not hindered by these problems.

³² Meinardus, *Christians in Egypt: Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Communities Past and Present*, p. 110. Christof Sauer, *Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt. Guinness, Kumm and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission* (Nürnberg, 2005), pp. 454ff.

³³ Antonie Wessels, *Arab and Christian? Christians in the Middle East* (Kampen, 1995), pp. 170-173.

Missionaries of ABCFM chose Beirut as their base in 1823 and began the Syrian Mission in Syria and Lebanon.³⁴ Due to wars, they had to retreat to Malta (1828-1830) and their mission work was also severely hampered by the Egyptian conquest of Syria in 1831. Shortly thereafter, in 1834, the Arabic section of the printing presses that were based in Malta, were transferred to Beirut. This was the beginning of one of the main publishing houses in the Arab World.³⁵

One of the early converts from the Greek-Orthodox Church and a prominent member of the literary elite of Lebanon, Buṭrus al-Bustânî, played an important role in producing the so-called *Van Dyck Bible* translation in Arabic. That work was begun by Eli Smith, and after his death, it was finished by Cornelius V.A. Van Dyck in 1864.³⁶

Initially, ABCFM assumed it could cooperate with the existent Churches in order to together convert Jews and Muslims. The missionaries were soon disappointed; they deemed the native Churches dead and heretical. Antonie Wessels, an Islamologist at the Free University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands) describes their attitude thus:

As long as these 'nominal' Christians were not reformed, one could not expect the Moslems to convert to Christianity. It was agreed that the Christians were worse than the Turks. [The] conduct, ceremonies and superstitions of the Eastern Christians had to inspire in the followers of the false prophet a disgust for the religion of the redeemer. Before the arrival of the Protestant missionaries, the Moslems had never had the opportunity to compare Islam with a form of Christianity that was exemplary enough to allow them to feel shame over their own religion. [...] Eastern Christianity had only solicited feelings of contempt from its Islamic environment.³⁷

Because the historic Churches resisted Protestant mission work and many converts from those Churches were in need of their own Church meetings, the personnel of the Syrian Mission decided in 1844 that Evangelical congregations should be formed as soon as feasible and that they should be led by native pastors. An important reason behind this was also, that the missionaries and their flock needed formal structures as the Ottoman rulers wanted to deal with them in the context of their

³⁴ Habib Badr, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Lebanon, Syria and Turkey', in Habib Badr (ed), *Christianity: A History in the Middle East* (Beirut, 2005), p. 715.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 718.

³⁶ Bailey and Bailey, *Who are the Christians in the Middle East?*, p. 109.

³⁷ Wessels, *Arab and Christian? Christians in the Middle East*, p. 174.

millet system.³⁸ The first Evangelical Church was opened in Beirut in 1848; dozens of new congregations were soon formed.³⁹

The missionaries were instrumental in effecting a general renewal within the historic Churches by raising the general level of education, by convincing many of the leaders of those Churches that change was needed and also because these Churches wanted to stop the trickle of members to the newly founded Evangelical denomination. Lyle L. VanderWerff writes about the mission workers:

No only did they become a more acceptable witness but they became a stimulant producing a renaissance of Near Eastern peoples, a leading cause in the elevation of the whole intellectual, social and spiritual life of the Near East. This achievement was marred only by the failure to create within either young Evangelical Churches or older Orthodox Churches a missionary zeal for Muslims.⁴⁰

In 1853, some of the Syrian Mission missionaries decided to move from Syria to Egypt. The first arrived on 15 November 1854. These were two missionary veterans, James Barnett and Gulian Lansing. Soon, other Reformed mission agencies arrived, such as the Holland Mission of the Dutch Reformed Church in 1866. That mission worked in Qalyûb and Barrâj.⁴¹

The greatest stumbling block for the conversion of Muslims, in the eyes of the Protestant missionaries, was the state of the Coptic-Orthodox Church.⁴² Initially most Protestant agencies hoped to revive the Coptic-Orthodox Church and to win converts from Islam.⁴³ The work of the missionaries led to a renewal in the Orthodox Church, but not to the extent desired by the missionaries so soon they began to focus their attention on converting the Coptic-Orthodox and the Catholics to Protestantism. The mission to Muslims was only marginally successful.⁴⁴

³⁸ Habib Badr, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East', in Habib Badr (ed), *Christianity: A History in the Middle East* (Beirut, 2005), p. 714.

³⁹ Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record*, p. 121. Badr, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Lebanon, Syria and Turkey', p. 715.

⁴⁰ Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record*, p. 125.

⁴¹ For more on this Holland Mission, see the excellent MA Thesis of Martin Strengholt done at the University of Utrecht (1993) under the supervision of Professor Dr. Jan. A.B. Jongeneel, and later translated into English: Martin J. Strengholt, 'An Altar to the Lord. History and Theology of the Dutch Society for Spreading the Gospel in Egypt 1886-1978', in Lems, Huub (ed), *Holland Mission: 150 Years Dutch Participation in Mission in Egypt* (Utrecht 2005).

⁴² Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record*, p. 145.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁴⁴ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. 6, (Grand Rapids, 1976, first edition 1956), pp. 25-27.

In 1860, Presbyterian missionaries formed their first church with seven Egyptian members and during the 1860s many churches were founded in different parts of Egypt.⁴⁵ In 1863, an Evangelical School of Theology was founded. Presently this is the largest Protestant theological institute in the Arab World. The missionaries, later aided by the first converts, traveled the country to *kerygmatically* witness through preaching and distributing literature. They also began educational institutes, hospitals and clinics, as part of their *diakonal* witness.

In 1871, the missionaries organized themselves into an association. This opened the way for the young churches that they had founded to develop as truly indigenous churches. These Coptic-Evangelical churches had oversight from the Synod of the United Protestant Church of North America (UPCNA). The *koinonia* of the newly founded churches must have been attractive, as towards the end of the 19th century they had about 4,500 members in 39 Coptic-Evangelical churches. Most growth was in the environment of Asyût. In that city they developed a large school, the Asyût Training College. In 1899, all over the country the Protestants enrolled about 15,000 students in 168 schools, which was almost the same number as in all the government schools combined. At that time, literacy among Protestants was 50 percent for men and ten percent for women which compared very well with the national average of ten and one percent.⁴⁶ Due to the growth of the mission work and the founding of churches all over the country, the number of presbyteries was expanded and in 1899 these were organized under one Synod of the Nile.⁴⁷

The Nile Mission Press (NMP) was an important Presbyterian publishing house for Christian Arab books. The Presbyterian missionaries were trained for service in the Muslim world in the School of Oriental Studies, which was later incorporated into the American University of Cairo (AUC).⁴⁸ Shortly before World War II they had about 78,000 members.⁴⁹

Even for those Egyptian Muslims who did not practice their religion devoutly, Islam increasingly became the symbol of their Egyptian and Arab nationalism. After the Suez War of 1956, Egypt began to expel

⁴⁵ Salamah, in 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Egypt and Sudan', p. 736-738.

⁴⁶ Vander Werff, *Christian Mission to Muslims: The Record*, p. 149. Salamah, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Egypt and Sudan', p. 741.

⁴⁷ Salamah, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Egypt and Sudan', p. 739-740.

⁴⁸ Ibid. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, Vol. 7, (Grand Rapids, 1976, first edition 1956), pp. 257-258.

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 257-258.

most of its missionaries. The Egyptian Churches remained entitled to a certain quota of 'missionary visas' for foreign personnel, but these people were meant to work within the Church, not in mission to Muslims. In 1958, the Synod of the Nile became independent of the founding Church in the USA.⁵⁰

4.4.5 Other Denominations

The Plymouth Brethren were begun in Egypt through the work of the formerly Presbyterian missionary B. Pinkerton. He began his work for developing Brethren communities in 1874, and he was instrumental in founding seven churches throughout Egypt. In Ṭimâ, south of Asyût, a Brethren missionary school for orphans was begun in 1934. For many decades the Dutch missionary Heleen Voorhoeve was the motivational soul of this school.⁵¹

In 1895, the first Evangelical Baptist Church was founded in Beirut by missionaries of the Southern Baptist Convention from the USA. The first Baptist church in Egypt was begun in the Fayyûm oasis in 1955.

The first Pentecostal church in Egypt was begun in 1914 through the work of some missionaries. Among the successes of the Egyptian Pentecostal Church, also known as the *Apostolic Church*, is the Lillian Trasher Orphanage in Asyût. This orphanage was founded in 1911 by Lillian Trasher, a Pentecostal missionary from the USA.⁵²

In 1899 an Irish missionary began the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) denomination in Egypt, mostly by trying to convince members of the Coptic-Evangelical churches to adopt the SDA views. The SDAs do not participate with the other Churches in the *Majlis al-Milli*; the denomination was registered independently in 1960 with the ministry of interior.⁵³ The SDAs in the Arab World are mostly Armenians; the Turkish genocide at the beginning of the 20th century made many SDA Armenians escape to the Middle East.

The Holiness Church began in Egypt in 1902 with the work of H.I. Randel. The Canadian Free Methodist Church relates formally to this denomination since 1959.⁵⁴ Rather similar is the Faith Church in Egypt, tracing its beginning to the mission work of Louis Glenn and his wife who settled in Damanhûr in 1905.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Salamah, 'Evangelical Missions and Churches in the Middle East: Egypt and Sudan', p. 740.

⁵¹ Meinardus, *Christians in Egypt: Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant Communities Past and Present*, pp. 112-113.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 111.