

Eusebius and Sozomen.

For a few more secondary sources dealing with specific topics, I would recommend: Evett's *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* (1948), Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement* (1972), Grant, *Eusebius as a Church Historian* (1980), Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Eastern Christianity* (1977), Barns, Browne, and Shelton, *The Nag Hamadi Codices: Greek and Coptic Papyri from the Cartonnage of the Covers* (1981), Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (1979), and Bentley Layton's *Gnostic Scriptures* (1987).

Even with so much recent good work produced in various diverse fields dealing with or touching upon the history of this period, the wide ranging topics that have been approached are only one indication of the complexity of the material and the problems of presenting even a reasonably objective history. The problem is compounded by religious aspects both anciently and modernly -- anciently, through the attempts, with more or less success, in establishing and imposing orthodoxy while suppressing divergent views, and modernly, because the divisions created in the formative years of Christianity are still with us today on the one hand, while on the other there are enough cynics around to make life interesting by savaging the traditional saints and resurrecting the poor down-trodden heretics. Much skepticism of the hagiographers is indeed necessary and justified, but, for example, it is a little disconcerting to see how many out there are eager to embrace Gnosticism as some form of reaction to the established religions.

Tradition has always had at least some validity among church historians, but when it is the tradition of a separatist movement, it represents a weak point to be attacked or that can be used to conceal the attackers own weaknesses. Early church history is not a shining example of democracy in action, and the Coptic church was surely the first victim of a mutual alliance of church and state in Byzantium, that foreshadowed much of later western history.

For my methods in dealing with the history of Coptic Egypt, I begin with the likely origin of Egyptian Christianity in the Jewish community at Alexandria. The real spur to Christianity's separate development was probably Trajan's violent suppression of the Jewish Rebellion in 115-117 AD. The first significant contribution of Egyptian Christianity was the Catechetical School of Alexandria, so we must look at its background (in Neoplatonism and in opposition to Gnosticism), its mission, its methods, and most of all its personalities, particularly Clement and Origen, the latter the most influential teacher of church fathers, who was, however, deposed and banished, and later condemned as heretical. The second major contribution of Egyptian Christianity was monasticism, and this has to be viewed in relation to the great persecutions, the edicts of Emperor Constantine, and the efforts of St. Anthony's famous biographer, Athanasius Patriarch of Alexandria, who promoted the ascetic life after spending time in a monastery during one of his five periods of exile. Following the condemnation of Arius at the First Ecumenical Council at Nicea convened by Emperor Constantine in 325, Athanasius doggedly pursued Arius and Ari-

anism, successfully preventing any reconciliation. The efforts of St. Athanasius which now stir up emotions on both sides, were clearly important in unifying Egyptian Christians, but also stirred them to violence. Apa Shenute besides giving a picture of Egypt being attacked from the south and suffering from inflation, also was involved with the violence against pagans, formed a large and strict monastic community, and supported Patriarch Cyril, who won a second major victory for the Egyptian Church at the Council of Ephesus in 431. Of course, in the study of the doctrinal questions there are differences of opinion about the central importance of the issues and other related factors, but I think it is important to look at all the political ramifications. In this case, Cyril, who is said to have been trained in a monastery, was defending the doctrine that Mary was the mother of God, an idea which had been taught by eastern monks and have been condemned by Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, before Cyril's victory over him at Ephesus. The next major issue again involved a doctrine taught by monks, defended by the Alexandrian Patriarch, Dioscorus, who this time lost at the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in 451, resulting in the first great schism in Christianity. In this case if the doctrine had been the most important issue, it could have been cleared up by later efforts at reconciliation, but it had been officially decreed at Chalcedon that Constantinople would henceforth outrank Alexandria as a Patriarchial See, and also that monks should be subject to bishops and not interfere in ecclesiastical or secular business. After Justinian there were two contemporaneous patriarchs of Alexandria -- a Chalcedonian appointee and the Coptic Patriarch to serve the bulk of the Egyptian Christians. The situation was exacerbated when the Byzantine Emperor, Heraclius, imposed a ruthless Chalcedonian Patriarch, Cyrus, to serve also as imperial Prefect in Egypt to bring it into line. After suffering under him for a few years, many Copts would certainly have welcomed the Arab General Amr Ibn al As when he conquered Egypt in 642. The new invaders made it advantageous for many to convert to Islam, but Coptic culture did continue to flourish for some time.

Coptic Egypt provides a wonderful link between Ancient and modern, between East and West, between all the major religions with Near Eastern origins, and why should it not be the wave of the future?

Leonard H. Lesko, Brown University

TEACHING EGYPT AND HELLENISM

My first reaction to the invitation to take part in this workshop was an uneasy feeling that I might not have much to say, at least not that made coherent sense or was useful to anyone else. My second reaction was that the other panelists might mostly feel the same way. But it is indeed somewhat embarrassing to reveal how little teaching of Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt I manage to do, compared to both its dominance of my research and the abundance of material. Most

papyrologists would probably have much the same story to tell.

I hold a joint appointment in Classics and History. In Classics, my teaching is largely composed of Greek at various levels and of classical civilization courses in which the reading is in English translation. Of these, perhaps the most satisfying is the graduate course in papyrology, in which students are confronted with unedited Greek texts and thrown into the water. The emphasis in the course is on palaeography, language, and document types, rather than on the history illuminated by the texts. But interpretation goes hand in hand with reading, and the students find themselves willy-nilly driven to explore various corners of social, economic, and administrative history. Those who get hooked on papyri -- and there are always several -- learn much more than they bargained for, as they continue to work on their texts after the course ends, preparing them for publication. There remains, nonetheless, a kind of miscellaneous character about the historical side of this enterprise.

In the course on ancient law, the papyri -- this time published ones, in translation -- are again the point of entry, as students find both legislation and practical legal documents from Ptolemaic Egypt much the best source for how legal systems worked in the Hellenistic monarchies. Ptolemaic Egypt gets one week (150 minutes) of class time in this survey, which goes from Mesopotamia to Justinian; some students also write papers on Ptolemaic documents. This course is much more directly historical; its audience is upperclass undergraduates who have already taken Columbia's core curriculum and thus have a fair acquaintance with ancient Greek and Roman literature. The papyri stand out in this course because they are mostly not normative in character but practice-oriented; most of the other readings are of codes, oratory, and juristic writing. Egypt itself is the focus only in the sense that the central question in this unit is the way in which the Ptolemies balanced the native Egyptian legal traditions, their own legislation, and the legal customs of their Greek immigrant subjects.

If introducing the papyri, and Hellenistic and Roman Egypt, into my classics courses seems at times almost a subversive act, it is more straightforward in my historical half. My teaching consists mainly of two sequences of courses. The first is of lecture courses, attended by upperclassmen and graduate students, covering in three terms classical Greece, Alexander the Great, and the Hellenistic World. Egypt plays only a bit part in the first two of these, but a central role in the Hellenistic course. Here the students read large numbers of documents, mostly papyri, in translation. In part, Egypt is integrated with other areas like Syria and Asia Minor -- in the political history, for example; but there are many subjects for which it alone furnishes significant amounts of accessible source material for life in a traditionally nonhellenic country settled by Greeks and Macedonians. Notable here are economic and social life, with, once again, the practice of law.

The second cycle is of graduate seminars, one on the Greek city, one on social and economic life in the Hellenistic period, and a third on late antiquity. Here (and only here,

except in papyrology) I am working with students who can be expected to read something other than English: not Demotic or Coptic, unfortunately (neither regularly taught either at Columbia or in the metropolitan area), but Greek and the necessary modern languages. Students can be turned loose not only on those papyri which have been translated, but also on those available only in Greek, as well as on archaeological material where pertinent. The Hellenistic seminar deals with the whole Greek world, but inevitably the mass of the papyri make them a uniquely rewarding body of evidence, which draws some of the students into working on Egypt. The late antique seminar is specifically Egyptian -- the only course I teach only on the history of Egypt, in fact -- and focuses on the fourth century, a period for which publications of the past thirty years have created a kind of boomlet in historical studies and of which I am at present writing a general account of society and economy. Collection and analysis of papyrological evidence is the center of this course.

Some aspects of this situation are obviously the product of the particular position in which I find myself: appointed half-time in a history department to teach Greek history, and half-time in a classics department to teach Greek and, particularly, epigraphy and papyrology. My room for maneuver at the undergraduate level is not very great, particularly because with only two or at most three term courses a year in each department, just getting through the regular cycles in a reasonable span of time is hard, by the time sabbaticals are figured in. When I have a course reduction for administrative work, flexibility declines further. My graduate courses offer more flexibility, but even there to some extent student choice, driven by thoughts of future jobs, places limits -- though I must admit that thirteen signed up for beginning papyrology this spring. Since the papyrology room holds only eight, there are an unprecedented two sections.

This is a personal situation; and yet I think it is not unusual. As Deborah Hobson observed in an article on the value of comparative evidence in social history of Graeco-Roman Egypt, those who write the history of this period are usually trained in Classics and classical history, and they teach mainly in classics and ancient history programs. My teachers had similar demands on them and a similar range of courses. Even the privileged life of a tenured professor in a research university does not free one from the constraints of curricular necessities. Those necessities, in turn, reveal a deeper pattern of importance: the continuing fixation by the classical profession on what is viewed as central by traditional canons, that is, the classical periods and works of Greek and Roman history and literature. Hellenism, the story of the dynamic spread of Greek civilization to a wider area and its ability to absorb and be a vehicle for other cultures, gets the back seat. Hellenistic and Roman Egypt is the best documented example of this process, but it shares their fate. No more than Asia Minor, Syria, or any other area outside old Greece does Egypt get much curricular attention, no matter how vital it may be as a locus of research.

So much for the externals. The students have, as this would suggest, a strong background in the Greek and Roman

material, particularly in the languages, but little knowledge of Egypt in earlier or later periods. In fact, there is no instruction in pharaonic history in the university above the freshman level, a serious deficiency. Since papyrological literature is mostly not very rich in appreciation of continuities anyway, it is very difficult to provide a sense of chronological context. I attempt to do this myself, but in a rather un-systematic fashion. But in any case it would be unrealistic to expect that graduate students can master all of what the ideally-equipped historian of Graeco-Roman Egypt would know, which would surely include all of the languages used in Egypt over five thousand years along with a substantial amount of art, archaeology, and the social sciences. One must begin somewhere, and I suppose that my students are likely to continue to begin with Greek texts, using the rest at second hand and in translation.

Finally, a third reaction, one that set in after much of the above had passed through my mind: why not think about devising a course that would really tackle the subject head-on? Despite all the constraints, there are some plausible spots: an undergraduate history seminar for majors; an upperclass lecture course like that on ancient law; even an upperclass history lecture course. A basic textbook lies ready to hand, Alan Bowman's excellent *Egypt after the Pharaohs*, now available in paperback. For primary texts in translation, there are three sourcebooks on the Hellenistic period, providing altogether quite a fair selection. For the Roman and Byzantine periods, however, things are not so rosy. There are texts in Lewis and Reinhold's *Roman Civilization* and various other sourcebooks, but nowhere a really adequate selection. The closest approach, in fact, is the old *Select Papyri* volumes of Hunt and Edgar in the Loeb Classical Library, a bit expensive for most undergraduates for its contents, but widely available in libraries. It is true that many papyrological editions have translations, and one could ask students to read texts in such series as the *Oxyrhynchus*, *Tebtunis*, *Hibeh*, *Michigan*, *Merton*, and *Columbia* collections; but this is problematic in any course larger than a handful. Perhaps more promising would be a photocopied volume handled by Kinko's or a similar firm. With papyri, at least, there is not likely to be a problem with copyright and commercially-minded publishers.

In the course of undergraduate advising over the years, I have observed a great deal of interest in Egypt. I can see no reason that this could not be capitalized on in a course on Egypt and Hellenism. It is not clear that this is true at the graduate level, where hiring realities lead the students to concentrate on the canonical periods and authors, but at the upperclass undergraduate level, it seems feasible. Perhaps this talk will have the effect, if no other, of pushing me to give it a try.

Roger S. Bagnall, Columbia University

TEACHING MEDIEVAL EGYPTIAN HISTORY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Since few of us have the opportunity to teach an entire course on this history of medieval Egypt, rather than address teaching medieval Egyptian history per se I will discuss integrating the history of medieval Egypt in a larger context.

On the undergraduate level, I teach upper division surveys or topical courses, and at the graduate level courses in our MS in Ed. program. New York and New Jersey have recently internationalized their school curriculum. So middle and high school teachers enrolled in our MS in Ed. program are especially eager for courses which indicate ways of integrating non-European areas in to the curriculum.

This audience needs to be able to include Egypt in a Middle Eastern component of global history. What's important? What are the key issues? What's Egypt's role in the context of global history from ancient to modern times? For the purpose at hand, how can we integrate Egypt into a global context during the medieval period?

I divide the medieval period of Egyptian history into the following topics:

- 1) The pre-Islamic legacy (500-640)
- 2) The effects of the Islamic conquests (640-900)
- 3) The rise of Egypt to Great Power status (900-1200)
- 4) Egypt as the pivotal Mediterranean and Middle Eastern state (1200-1500)

These topics are then dealt with in a global context.

Materials and Sources

Problems with materials and sources for the history of medieval Egypt include the following: Surveys of pre-Islamic Egypt situate Egypt within the Greco-Roman world and ignore, or are little interested in, Coptic Egypt. But, for the purposes of understanding Islamic Egypt, it is Coptic and not Greco-Roman Egypt which is most important. Yes, Greco-Roman Egypt may impinge institutionally, but culturally, socially, politically, religiously, it is Coptic Egypt that is important for understanding the dynamics of Islamic Egypt. This is an issue you will not easily pick up in the sources or materials, so I point it out as something of which to be aware.

Prejudices in the field of Islamic history/studies also give rise to problems in dealing with the history of medieval Islamic Egypt. The overwhelming weight of research since the 19th century has been on the Eastern Islamic world. Islam originated outside of Egypt. The Islamic state was formed elsewhere. The first two dynasties were eastern. Therefore, the origins of Islamic institutions, politics, culture, intellectual life, are sought in the East. Egypt is treated as if it were at best irrelevant and at worst atypical. Our earliest narrative sources are eastern. What possible role could Egypt have played in the formative period of Islam? Conversely, what could early Egyptian sources possibly tell us about the formative period? Therefore, the history of early Islamic Egypt is but a footnote in surveys, even in otherwise very good surveys such as those by Hodgson and Watt.