

2021

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Recommended Citation

'El-Gendi, Sherin Sadek (2021) "THE REFORM OF POPE CYRIL IV AND ITS INFLUENCE IN THE LIFE OF THE COPTIC COMMUNITY," *Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists*: Vol. 6: Iss. 3, Article 7. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.aaru.edu.jo/jguuaa/vol6/iss3/7>

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THE REFORM OF POPE CYRIL IV AND ITS INFLUENCE IN THE LIFE OF THE COPTIC COMMUNITY

By

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ABSTRACT

[AR]

إصلاح البابا كيرلس الرابع وتأثيراتها في حياة المجتمع القبطي:

خلال النصف الثاني من القرن التاسع عشر الميلادي، كان البابا كيرلس الرابع بطريرك الكرازة المرقسية (رقم ١١٠) قائداً لأكبر مسيرة إصلاح جذري كان لها آثارها العظيمة في حياة الأقباط في مصر. وتهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل المراحل المختلفة لهذا الإصلاح الاجتماعي والثقافي وتأثيراته المختلفة والهامة في المجتمع المصري في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر وأوائل القرن العشرين الميلادي، إلى جانب توضيح كيفية تأثير هذه الإصلاحات على السياسة العامة في مصر لحماية الأقباط حيث كانت إصلاحات البابا كيرلس الرابع بمثابة دعوة وكسب التأييد للكنيسة القبطية والأقباط في العصر المعاصر مما أدى إلى انخراط كثير من أعيان الأقباط في كثير من مجالات الحياة وبما ساعد في تحقيق نهضة المجتمع المصري على مختلف المستويات.

[EN] During the second half of the nineteenth century AD, the 110th Pope of the See of Saint Mark, Cyril IV, was the leader of a great radical reform program that had its large impacts in the life of the Copts in Egypt. The aim of this paper is to examine the different steps of this social reform, its different and important influences in the life of the Copts in the late nineteenth and during the twentieth centuries AD. It also aims to elucidate how these reforms influenced public policy in Egypt to achieve large-scale and far-reaching results for the protection of the Coptic families and community. His reforms may best be understood in terms of being an advocacy initiative and a powerful tool to support and unite the Copts against violence and other deep problems, including being marginalized in their own country. This paper will also shed light on how Pope Cyril's reforms motivated the Copts to claim their rights, enabling them to play a pioneering role in the development of the Egyptian society in so many different domains.

KEYWORDS: Reform, development, advocacy, Missionary, educational standard, revolutionary step, methodologies, services, influences, results, reformer, fruitful, consolidate, strengthen, opportunity.

I. INTRODUCTION

During the second half of the nineteenth century AD, the 110th Pope of the See of Saint Mark¹, Cyril IV (1854-1861 AD), was a man of vision and the leader of a great radical reform program that had a great impact on the life of the Copts in Egypt. Pope Cyril IV's reforms may best be understood in terms of being an advocacy initiative and a powerful tool to support and to unite the Copts against violence and other deep problems including being marginalized in their own country². This essay aims to examine the different steps of this social reform, its various and important influences in the life of the Copts in the late nineteenth and during the twentieth centuries AD. It also elucidates how these reforms influenced public policy in Egypt to achieve large-scale and far reaching results for the protection of the Coptic families and community. This essay sheds light also on how the Pope Cyril's reforms motivated the Copts to claim their rights, enabling them to play a pioneering role in the development of the Egyptian society in so many different domains.

II. REFORM OF POPE CYRIL IV

In 1816 AD, David³ or Daoud Thomas Bashut was born into an impoverished Coptic family of farmers at Nag^c Abū Zaqalī in al-Sawām^c al-Sharqīya in the district of Akhmīm in Upper Egypt⁴. He was known by his height, his physical force, his intelligence and his justice⁵. Iris al-Misrī described him as a man of great *charisma*. Moreover, Gibrael mentioned that Cyril IV was the longest serving patriarch in the Coptic Orthodox Church⁶. According to Mounir Shoucri, he displayed a deep passion, enthusiasm and love for learning so many things to gain a deep scientific knowledge. At twenty-two years of age, Daoud Thomas Bashut entered the Monastery of Saint Anthony the Great and became known as *Abūnā Dāwūd al-Antūnī*⁷. Later, he became *hegoumenos* and then the monastery's abbot for two years where he started a big reform in the monastic life. At Bush near Beni Sueif, Pope Cyril IV founded a new school for the monks and the local children. Meinardus states that: «Before being chosen as patriarch Pope Cyril IV in 1854 AD, father āwūd al-Antūnī was a regular visitor to the Bible classes of the Reverend John Lieder while residing in Bush»⁸ as Simaika wrote in a Coptic Layman: «The awakening of the Coptic Church that Cyril had been a regular attendant at the Bible classes of the Church of England's Church Missionary Society (CMS) which were given by the Reverend John Lieder, who lived in

¹ MEINARDUS 2015: 279.

² BUTCHER 1897: vol.2, 397-404; ISKAROS 1910; 1913; WAKIN 1963; ZEIDAN 1999: 53-67; HASAN 2003; ABIGAIL HAUSLOHNER 2013; HENDERSON 2015: 155-166.

³ MORGAN 2016: 440.

⁴ RUFAILAH 1889: 305; RIYAD 1961: 13-14, 20; SIMAIKA & HENEIN 2017: 76.

⁵ EVETTS 1912: 4, 14.

⁶ GIBRAEL 1991: 6.

⁷ MEINARDUS 1970: 6.19.

⁸ GOLDSCHMIDT JR., 2000: 44; MEINARDUS 2006: 102.

Cairo between 1830 and 1850 AD. This exposure to Protestant influence may explain some of the decisions he took as patriarch»⁹.

Although he was a patriarch for only seven years, Pope Cyril IV was the leader of a large and important Coptic renaissance that advocated the Coptic community in several levels until today especially the awaking of the Coptic Orthodox Church after the rule of the *Mamlūks* and the Ottomans¹⁰.

Pope Cyril IV spent his short pontificate in raising the educational standard of the Copts and establishing the modern schools for boys at the Coptic Orthodox patriarchate at the district of *Hārīt al-Saqqāyyīm*, at Darb al-Wāsi^c in Cairo¹¹, in Mansūrah¹² and in the Monastery of Saint Anthony at Bush in Beni Sueif¹³. Among the important graduates of the school of *Hārīt al-Saqqāyyīm* and who became government ministers later are: Butros Ghālī pasha, ‘Abd al-Khālīk Tharwat, Yūsuf Wahba and Husain Rushdī¹⁴, in addition to numerous others who became physicians, engineers, judges, writers, and poets.

As he was convinced that the girls constituted half of the society and also the future mother for the new generations, Cyril IV took the very progressive and revolutionary step of establishing the first two Egyptian schools for girls who were left before at home to pick what they could of education¹⁵: one in Ezbekieh and the other also in *Hārīt al-Saqqāyyīm*¹⁶. These schools were opened even before the school of *al-Khayyāt al-Wasfīya* built by Khayāt Wāsif in Asiyūt at 1867 AD and the *al-Sanīya* school built later during the rule of Khedive Ismā‘īl in 1873 AD¹⁷. Because at that time, sending girls to school was not common in Egyptian society, by establishing those schools, Pope Cyril IV became an unwitting leader of the modern feminine renaissance in Egypt, taking women from obscurity to light.

Pope Cyril IV also founded *madrāsāt al-Aqbāt al-Kubrā* which was open to all the social classes, dominations and faiths, not only the Copts¹⁸. The reformer Pope paid special attention also to the teaching of Arabic, Coptic and foreign languages¹⁹ like English, French, Italian and Turkish in addition to arithmetic, geography, history, calligraphy, modern sciences and arts in that time like painting and music²⁰. Cyril IV also introduced modern programs, systems and methodologies in the Coptic schools he established to

⁹ SIMAIKA & HENEIN 2017:76.

¹⁰ GABRA 2008: 87.

¹¹ Today, it is al-Kanīsa al-Murqusīya Street. SURIYAL 1984: 112, 163; GABRA 2008: 87.

¹² EL GENDI 2014: vol.1, 27-52.

¹³ SURIYAL 1984: 163.

¹⁴ SURIYAL 1984: 165; ISKAROS 2018: 37-40.

¹⁵ AL-MISRI 1961:11-12; MEINARDUS 1970: 20; MORGAN 2016: 440.

¹⁶ AL-MISRI 1961: 11-12; MEINARDUS 1970: 20.

¹⁷ SURIYAL 1984: 165.

¹⁸ ISHAQ 2011: 4-5.

¹⁹ RIYAD 1961: 14; EL GENDI 2014: 27-52.

²⁰ MEINARDUS 1970: 20; SURIYAL 1984: 112.

which he invited the international teachers and professors from the most important European universities. To attract quality teachers, he offered high salaries, and succeeded in recruiting teachers such as Mustafa Radwān who taught French and Arabic and the Syrian poet Iskandar Guda²¹.

Pope Cyril IV also introduced the teaching of Coptic history in Coptic schools²² and made regular visits to the schools²³ to encourage both teachers and students. His attention to Coptic language started early and is demonstrated by an article he wrote when he was still a metropolitan in which he encouraged members of the Coptic community to make donations toward the founding of a scientific institution concerned with preservation of the Coptic language. His great interest in the survival of the Coptic language may have been prompted by his own deep knowledge of several foreign languages, his awareness of European methods in teaching languages, and the progress achieved by international scholars in deciphering ancient Egyptian, starting from the lifetime of Jean-François Champollion until Auguste Mariette Pasha. Famous teachers of the Coptic language at the time included Father Tekla and al-Mu'alim 'Iryān Guirguis Muftāh, who wrote an important book entitled: *al-adilla al-rabtīya fīsihat al-alfāzal-qibitīya*. They taught Coptic at the Coptic schools using modern European methodologies²⁴.

Pope Cyril IV also inaugurated the first library within the monastery of Saint Anthony the Great at Bush. He also established the first public library at the Coptic school at Ezbekieh to which Yūsuf Wahba Pasha donated almost five hundred books²⁵. This important scientific library included rare and precious manuscripts and books discovered at the various Coptic monasteries and churches of Egypt. Meinardus confirmed that many of the orthodox co-workers were trained by England's Church Missionary Society. The first CMSmission started small schools for boys in six different Egyptian towns where evangelical services were held with orthodox Copts in attendance²⁶.

Moreover, Cyril IV devoted much of his attention to the education of Coptic clergy through holding regular theological discussions. During his lifetime, the cantors' training was a matter of prime importance for the Coptic Orthodox Church²⁷. In one instance, Meinardus reported that the candidates for the Coptic priesthood were summoned by Cyril to the Coptic patriarchate, where he or sometimes his assistant *Hegoumenos* Guirguis, were teaching them²⁸.

²¹ NUSAIR 1961: 21.

²² For more details, see: AL-QUMUS 1924: 192.

²³ SHOUCRI 1991: 677b-679a.

²⁴ ISHAQ 2011: 4-5.

²⁵ NUSAIR 1961: 21; SURIYAL 1984: 165.

²⁶ MEINARDUS 1970:102.

²⁷ GABRA 2008: 208.

²⁸ MEINARDUS 1970: 20.

The idea of a union between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Coptic Orthodox Church first appeared in 1850 AD after the arrival of the Russian archimandrite Porphyrius, who came to Egypt to look for precious manuscripts. He also visited the biggest monastery of the al-Galāla Mountain in the Red Sea together with Pope Cyril IV, where they placed the first building stone of the new walls of the monastery of Saint Anthony the Great built in 1854 AD²⁹.

At the request of the patriarch Peter VII (1809-1852 AD), Cyril IV went to Ethiopia in the spring season³⁰ of 1851 AD to mediate between Father Salāma and the clergy's members belonging to several Christological doctrines³¹. Immediately after the death of Peter VII, Cyril IV returned to Egypt.

After returning from his first religious visit to Ethiopia on 17 July 1852 AD, Pope Cyril IV continued with his reforms. In 1855 AD, the Coptic Patriarchal College was established³². Because he was the patriarch of Alexandria, Nubia, Ethiopia and Pentapolis, in September 1856 AD, Cyril IV undertook a second important, a dangerous and successful official diplomatic mission to Ethiopia on behalf of the Khedive Sa'īd³³ (1271-1280 AH/1854-1863 AD). During the second year of the rule of the Ethiopian emperor Theodore, and for eighteenth months, the area around the borders between the two countries had witnessed the revolution of some soldiers stationed there³⁴. Unfortunately, the Ethiopian emperor Theodore suspected Cyril to be a spy³⁵ and imprisoned him and Father Salāma on 11th of January 1857 AD. After five days, Cyril IV was released because of a public reconciliation and, in February 1858, he returned to Egypt. However, nothing proves if he visited *Dārūsge* Maryam during his first or second travel. In the British Museum in London, a painting on cloth of Salāma's *travails*, shows him in red headgear. Whether he is the true image of a historical person or an image of a high dignitary of the church is something which cannot be established without a caption. May be, he is father Salāma who was only thirty-five years old. As the human figure is crowned, he may be also Theodore and the painting is probably dating after the coronation in 1855 AD. Others believe that he may be a visiting church dignitary like Cyril IV the Coptic patriarch³⁶.

In addition, Cyril IV's efforts to consolidate the relations between the Coptic Church and the other orthodox churches abroad were fruitful. In addition, Cyril IV traveled frequently in Africa especially to the Sudan. He also visited Jerusalem and other Asian countries.

²⁹ EL GENDI 2014: 27-52.

³⁰ EVETTS 1912: 6.

³¹ MCEWAN 2013: 111; MORGAN 2016: 440.

³² MEINARDUS 1970: 19.

³³ GOLDSCHMIDT JR. 2000: 44; MORGAN 2016: 440.

³⁴ RIYAD 1961: 14; GABRA 2008: 208; MCEWAN 2013: 111; SIMAIKA & HENEIN 2017: 88.

³⁵ EVETTS 1912: 9-10.

³⁶ MCEWAN 2013: 111.

Furthermore, in 1860 AD, Pope Cyril IV imported the first Coptic printing press – the third one to arrive in Egypt – from Austria³⁷, with the purpose of supplying the monasteries, churches and schools with reasonably-priced textbooks³⁸. In this way, he was responsible for one of the first private printing presses in Egypt³⁹ and used it to publish various authentic and translated liturgical and devotional books. This marked the beginning of the publication of the Coptic periodicals, in particular religious' ones. To learn how to handle with this printing machine, Cyril IV asked Mohamed Ali pasha (1854-1863 AD) for permission to allow four Coptic apprentices to train at the government press⁴⁰. The printing press arrived while the Cyril IV was in the monastery of Saint Anthony at the Red Sea⁴¹. He sent his deputy to receive it and a well-organized procession and a very significant reception took place to celebrate its arrival. Boutros Muftāh, Basilios, George Kiriakos and Rāhib ʿĀzir were the names of the four men who received their salaries from the Coptic Pope himself⁴². They worked under the direction of a Syrian printer. Thus, Pope Cyril IV was able to reprint the majority of the precious manuscripts stored at the monasteries in an attempt to preserve Coptic heritage. His interest in the printing press encouraged the beginning of the Coptic press that advocated for the rights of Copts. His lasting influence is seen even today, in the weekly newspaper *Watan*⁴³ published in both Arabic and English.

Possibly, because of his early studies and training by British missionaries of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and his subsequent iconoclastic views, in 1854 AD and while the reconstruction of the old Cathedral of Saint Mark at Ezebakiah, Pope Cyril IV ordered the burning of a huge number of precious and rare icons⁴⁴ in front of a great crowd⁴⁵ as he considered them the object of people's devotion to the point and form of idolatry by honoring and worshipping these wooden objects⁴⁶. Although the Copts never venerated the saints decorating their icons, Cyril IV addressed the Coptic community by saying the following: «Behold, these wooden pictures you used to adore and worship can neither avail nor harm. God alone should be adored»⁴⁷. In fact, Pope Cyril IV was influenced by the icons' heresy of the Greek Church that is why he decided to destroy the

³⁷ Although GABRA said that it was brought from Austria, others mentioned that it was imported from Italy. This press was sold in 1903. GABRA 2018: 87; EL GENDI 2010B: 97; SIMAIKA & HENEIN 2017: 76.

³⁸ SHOUCRI 1991: vol.3, 677b-679a; GOLDSCHMIDT JR. 2000: 44; EL GENDI 2010: 60-97; EL GENDI 2014: 35-36.

³⁹ MEINARDUS 1970: 20; YUSUF 2000: 103.

⁴⁰ ISKAROS 1910: vol.2, 60-90, n°2; AL-MALLAH 1950: 333-338; MEINARDUS 1970: 210; YUSUF 2000: 103; GABRA 2008: 87.

⁴¹ EVETTS 1912: 12; SHOUCRI 1991: vol.3, 677b-679a.

⁴² SHOUCRI 1991: vol.3, 677b-679a.

⁴³ EL GENDI 2010A: 287-294.

⁴⁴ MEINARDUS 1970: 20; EL GENDI 2015: 250.

⁴⁵ MORGAN 2016: 441.

⁴⁶ MEINARDUS 1970: 20, note n° 1.

⁴⁷ SIMAIKA & HENEIN 2017: 77; MORGAN 2016: 440.

icons⁴⁸. Furthermore, the education and the salvation of the Coptic community were more important for him than the historical icons. In general, the Copts were keen usually of their arts and buildings through the different historical periods.

As Pope Cyril prevented the artists from drawing new icons and prohibited the existence of the icons within the churches and monasteries in addition to the loss of a unique heritage from the medieval Coptic art, history judges him harshly in this matter⁴⁹. Imitating the iconoclasm of Cyril IV the Reformer, the Coptic Evangelical notable Hanna Buqtur Wissā (1837-1907 AD) burnt the icons in the Coptic Orthodox Church in Asiyūt in 1870 AD⁵⁰.

Cyril IV reportedly also intervened to have the Copts exempted from military service⁵¹. In 1855 AD the poll tax, which had been imposed on non-Muslims for centuries, was abolished. Muhammad ʿAlī's successor, Saʿīd pasha, repealed the poll tax, and in 1856 AD, granted non-Muslims the right to serve in the military. Said pasha also removed the restrictions that were imposed on the Copts by their *dhimmi* status. Although Pope Cyril demanded rescinding of military service for the Copts, the Copts continued to play a significant role in Egypt as civil servants and as part of the landowning elite. As result, the Copts began to demand equality in appointments and promotions within the civil service, the appointment of more Copts to Egypt's representative bodies, Sunday as the day of rest for Christians, and Bible instruction to match Muslim religious instruction in public schools⁵².

Many new churches were erected, numerous monasteries were renovated and the reconstruction of the Saint Mark Cathedral at Ezbekieh was completed⁵³. Cyril IV also oversaw the repopulation of several abandoned monasteries and advocated Coptic monasticism in all Egyptian cities and villages. He reorganized the management of the Coptic Orthodox Church's property and finance to run more efficiently⁵⁴.

At the age of forty-five, Pope Cyril IV died on Tūbah 23, 1577 AM⁵⁵ / January 31, 1861 AD. He was buried alongside Pope Mark VIII the 108th patriarch (1796-1809 AD), Pope Peter VII the 109th patriarch (1809-1852 AD) and Pope Demetrius II the 111th patriarch (1862-1870 AD) in the same tomb situated between the small and the big churches in Ezbekieh⁵⁶. According to Mounir Shoucri, the events surrounding his death are rather

⁴⁸ MORGAN 2016: 440.

⁴⁹ SIMAIKA & HENEIN 2017: 77.

⁵⁰ MEINARDUS 2015: 118.

⁵¹ MEINARDUS 1970: 19.

⁵² LEVEUGLE 2013: 16.

⁵³ MEINARDUS 1970: 120; MEINARDUS 2015: 282; GOLDSCHMIDT JR. 2000: 44.

⁵⁴ GABRA 2008: XVII, 87.

⁵⁵ BASSET 1915: vol.3, 507-859, RIYAD 1961.

⁵⁶ SADIK 2011: 32-34.

obscure and he may have been poisoned⁵⁷. Gabra affirmed also that Cyril IV passed away immediately after a meeting with the ruler Sa`id Pasha⁵⁸. Despite his short papacy of seven years, Pope Cyril IV is remembered as one of the greatest Coptic Orthodox patriarchs and the best reformers in the history of the Coptic Church⁵⁹.

In 1911 AD, *al-Ikhlās* society celebrated the golden Jubilee of the death of Cyril IV and the historian Guirguis Filta`us `Awad wrote *Tārīkh al-anba Kyrollos al-rābi*⁶⁰. On Tuesday 21th of January 1961 AD, the Coptic community celebrated the centenary of the leader of this great reform in the Coptic Cathedral of Anba Ruwais in `Abbāsīya with a special commemorative issue of the *Sunday School Magazine*, published in February 1961 AD. Many delegates of the oriental and western churches, clergy and journalists were invited to participate in the centennial celebration.

Several historians have written about Pope Cyril IV and his unusual reforms as they attempted to immortalize his memory, his dynamic character and to preserve the history of the Church like Ya`qūb Nakhla Rufaila who wrote *Tārīkh al-umma al-qibtāya*⁶¹. Furthermore, Mikhail Sherubim wrote *al-Kāfī tārīkh Misr al-qadīm wa`l-hadīth* and Kāmil Sālih Nakhla wrote also about this reformer pope in *Silsilat tārīkh al-bābāwāt batārikat al-kursī al-iskandarī* which was printed in the print house of the Syrians Monastery in Wādī Natrūn in 1954 AD⁶².

II. RESULTS AND INFLUENCES OF POPE CYRIL'S REFORM

The results of these important reforms did not stop with the death of Pope Cyril IV. Direct consequences of his reforms can be observed in the first half of the twentieth century AD, while indirect consequences of his reforms can be witnessed in the second half of the twentieth century AD and more recently. These short-and long-term consequences appear in several fields and in so many different domains in Egypt and are outlined below.

A. The Religious Life

Because of his strong relations with Khedive Sa`id and the most important Egyptian intellectuals at the time such as Rifā`a Bik al-Tahtāwī, Pope Cyril IV was able to achieve his reforms. As he wanted a strong Coptic church, Pope Cyril IV was interested in improving

⁵⁷ GOLDSCHMIDT JR. 2000: 44; SHOUKRI 2011A: 38-39.

⁵⁸ GABRA 2009: 88.

⁵⁹ SHOUCRI 1991: vol.3, 677b-679a; EL GENDI 2014: 27-52.

⁶⁰ SHOUCRI 1961: 33.

⁴³ RUFAILAH 1889.

⁴⁴ `AWAD 1911.

⁴⁵ NAKHLA 1954.

the educational level of the clergy⁶³, and in the revival of the Coptic language. Both interests merged in his encouragement of the priests to use the Coptic language during liturgical services. Special stipends were given to those priests celebrating mass in Coptic in order to encourage the continued use of this important language and also to improve their economic conditions and enhance their social level⁶⁴. Simaika and Henein added that together with ʿĀrif Quzmān and Father Takla from the Coptic Cathedral in that time, Pope Cyril IV developed the pronunciation of the Coptic sounds. Moreover, in order to strengthen the relations with the Greek Church, a new accent appeared in the Coptic language to correspond with the Modern Greek. Cyril IV introduced also several hymns frequent in the Greek Church in the Coptic liturgy. Until today, many responses and liturgy's parts used in the Coptic Mother Church are similar to those of the Greek Church. Cyril IV's successors like Popes Demetrios II (1862-1870 AD) and Cyril V (1874-1929 AD) followed his footsteps in this matter⁶⁵.

Every Saturday, Pope Cyril IV used to meet the members of the clergy in the patriarchate to discuss with them and to uphold the canonical and religious topics of the Coptic Church⁶⁶. According to Suriyal, inside the Coptic monasteries, he encouraged the monks to follow the life of Saint Pachomius but he did not allow to them to wander into the cities and the villages⁶⁷.

One of the most important results of the Reform of Pope Cyril IV was the emergence of the Coptic Laymen's Movement, which resulted in the establishment of the *maglis millī*, a General Council of the Orthodox Copts, corresponding in structure and function to the idea of a general Church Community Council. This first *maglis millī* was elected in 1874 AD to share with the patriarchate the burden of supervising the financial and civil affairs of the Copts. The Copts also had the opportunity to have their own courts in which their canonical laws could be applied⁶⁸.

Furthermore, the Clerical College was founded in Cairo in 1875 AD. In the beginning of the twentieth century (1918 AD), the establishment of the Sunday schools by the famous Archdeacon, Habīb Quzmān Mankarious Guirguis (known as Habīb Guirguis or the Beloved George) when he was twenty four years old (1876-1951 AD)⁶⁹, was one of the important consequence of the reforms of Pope Cyril IV. Similarly, the offering Christian religion instruction to the Coptic students at governmental schools was an indirect

⁶³ For more details, see: FOWLER 1901: 131-133; STROTHMANN 1932; THOMAS (ed.) & YOUSSEF 2004; TEJIRIAN & SIMON 2012; TADROS 2013.

⁶⁴ ISHAQ 2011: 4-5; SHOUKRI 2011B: 29.

⁶⁵ SIMAIKA & HENEIN 2017: 77.

⁶⁶ EVETTS 1912: 13; ʿATALLA 1961: 7-9.

⁶⁷ RIYAD 1961: 14.

⁶⁸ CRAMER 1959: 93; GABRA 2008: 21; GUIRGUIS & VAN DOORN-HARDER 2011.

⁶⁹ SURIYAL 1984: 130; GIBRAEL 1991: 16.

consequence of his reforms⁷⁰. In fact, the Coptic educational and social life advanced and progressed during this period as a result of the hard works of the charismatic educator and reformer Habib Guirguis who followed the model of the great reformer Pope Cyril IV by dedicating himself to the Seminary and by extending all its building in Mahmasha. Speaking about the efforts of Habib Guirguis in following the model of Cyril IV, Victor Beshir reported that: «In about fifty years later, the Sunday School Movement in Egypt had grown very rapidly reaching 2,500 teachers and 43,000 children in 1949 AD. In addition to teaching the children, the movement expanded to include youth and adults. Social services were added to Sunday school programs, such as summer camps for children and youth, services for the poor, and Boy and Girl Scout Troops»⁷¹. Michael Gibrael added also that: «Habib Guirguis was who was so outstanding not only because of his momentous deeds, but also because of the number of brilliant disciples he left behind, who followed his path and also wrote at length about his achievements since his death in 1951 AD»⁷². Indeed, Habib Guirguis was convinced that the interest of young children were the true foundations of Sunday schools which became the fundamental pillar for the renaissance of Coptic Orthodox church and community during the twentieth century AD until today due to his great steps with his colleagues and followers in Sunday schools. Besides, the same deacon translated several foreign religious references into Arabic. Alongside that, he is the publisher of different important books like for example the Seven Sacraments of the Church and others. Additionally, he published also a periodical entitled *al-Karma* to well spread the teachings of the Coptic Christianity. After his death, his followers and students from the clergy completed the marsh after him in the Coptic Orthodox Church⁷³.

Being one of the most significant milestones in the history of the Copts, Cyril IV well managed also the properties of the church. The long-term influence of the reforms of Cyril IV can be seen in the Coptic Orthodox Church becoming a member of the World Council of Churches and the Middle East Council of Churches in 1959 AD⁷⁴. Following the Alexandrian rite, with millions members worldwide, the Coptic Church is the largest Christian Orthodox Church based in Egypt, Africa and Middle East. Nowadays, The Coptic Orthodox Church is present in many European countries, Kenya, South Africa and the United States of America through many monastic buildings, churches and theological studies in different international scientific intuitions. In 1975, the Theological Seminary was re-established for the preparation of the Coptic lay leaders and the clergy. Today, there are about nine seminaries in Egypt in addition to most probably five abroad. This exceptional influence extended to more than one and half century because of the outstanding clergy and the distinguished theological Coptic scholars who studied during

⁷⁰ GABRA 2008: XVII.

⁷¹ BESHIR (no date): 1-46; ANBA SURIEL 2014.

⁷² ANBA SURIEL 2014: 3; GIBRAEL 1991: 8.

⁷³ *THE COPTIC SYNAXARIUM* 2020.

⁷⁴ GABRA 2008: XVIII.

the lifetime of Pope Cyril IV and who taught to the new different Coptic generations of monks and priests chosen to serve in Egypt and abroad during the twentieth century AD.

Following the pattern established by Pope Cyril IV, many new Coptic dioceses and churches have been established in Egypt and abroad, especially in Australia, Asia, Africa, Canada and South America. All these religious foundations are still closely tied with the Mother Church in Egypt. Today, the number of the monks who were graduated from the Egyptian universities increased in Egypt and abroad which assures the efforts of Cyril IV and the great influence of his reform to improve also the educational level of the clergy in both the religious and the cultural life.

B. The Scientific Life

Beforehand, it is important to mention that the Coptic Mother church never stopped the teaching the reading and writing skills and the education of the Copts even in its darkest periods and it had usually its pioneers who devoted themselves to their country. In fact, Pope Cyril is the real founder of free national schools and libraries in Egypt⁷⁵. In his reference published in 1872 AD, M. Dor wrote the following: «*Parmi les élèves coptes, une vingtaine de musulmans, quatre Arméniens et une dizaine de Syriens catholiques. Il va sans dire que l'instruction y était gratuite, et le patriarche supportait les frais des livres et du matériel scolaire. Ce qui est vraiment admirable, il y surveillait les leçons lui-même, et s'informait, une ou plusieurs fois par jour, de ce qui s'y passait. Une salle y fut arrangée pour la réception des visiteurs, et Cyrille avait l'habitude d'inviter tous ceux qu'il rencontrait, soit des étrangers, soit des naturels du pays, s'ils s'étaient distingués par leurs talents linguistiques ou scientifiques, ou s'ils étaient compétents en matière d'instruction à faire une visite à son collège. Il les introduisait dans les classes, et les priait d'inspecter les élèves, et de lui proposer des améliorations de méthode*»⁷⁶.

So, it is proved that Pope Cyril IV received Christians from different doctrines and nationalities as well as Moslems in the new schools. He used to receive daily reports about all activities in these institutions to improve constantly its educational level. It is worth mentioning that because of this great leader, Coptic students were accepted in the Egyptian governmental schools during the rule of Khedive Ismāʿīl (1830- 1895 AD)⁷⁷.

In 1855 AD, Pope Cyril IV sent Albert Wassef ʿAzmī who was the first Coptic scholar on a scholarship to Europe to study law and management. Upon his return, ʿAzmī became the president of the mixed tribunal in 1883 AD⁷⁸.

Moreover, the powerful and courageous Pope Cyril IV asked Saʿīd pasha to allow the Coptic students to attend the schools of Medicine and Engineering and his request was

⁷⁵ HEYWORTH-DUNNE 1893: 481-92; SEIKALY 1970: 248-250; HANNA 2016.

⁷⁶ DOR 1872: 192; EVETTS 1912: 10.

⁷⁷ ISHAQ 2011: 5.

⁷⁸ SHOUKRI 2011B: 28.

granted⁷⁹. In 1863 AD, of the fifty-nine private schools in service in Egypt, twelve were Coptic schools. In 1875 AD, that number increased to eighteenth, and later to twenty-five in 1878 AD, largely due to the efforts of the Coptic reformer patriarch⁸⁰. As Khedive Ismā'īl appreciated the reform of Cyril IV, he ordered his successor Anba Demetrius to increase the number of the Coptic schools and offered one hundred acres to the Coptic Church to be used for that purpose. Ismā'īl also dedicated two hundred Egyptian pounds to the Coptic Church annually⁸¹.

As a result of the Pope Cyril IV's exceptional reforms, the educational standard of the Copts was raised, and their role in Egyptian society was felt over the past hundred fifty years, many of whom engaged in commerce or professionals in the fields of engineering, medicine, pharmacy⁸².

The Coptic modern renaissance of Pope Cyril IV paved the way for the news generations to progress in different domains and until now, it still affect several modern and contemporary scientific and cultural Coptic associations concerned with Coptic studies not only in Egypt but also abroad because the graduates from the institutions he founded and their successors took upon themselves the tasks of developing and spreading the Coptic culture and also preserving the Coptic heritage worldwide during all the twentieth century AD until the present day. In the first half of the twentieth century AD, the Coptic Diaspora started encouraging and putting up with the evolution of the Coptic history and heritage studies to research, collect, document and publish information on Coptic civilization, culture and history starting from the first century AD to the present day⁸³. In the academic and the practical fields today, the Copts are well represented between the professional staff in the governmental services as excellent educators, engineers, physicians and pharmacists. Moreover, a certain number of administrative posts in the Egyptian government services are entirely closed to the Copts⁸⁴. The all-too-compact and selective overview of the Coptic contribution to the universal culture is also remarkable.

In the beginning of the twentieth century AD, Mirrit Boutros Ghali established the *Société d'archéologie copte* to promote Coptic studies worldwide. From 1908 to 1910 AD, the famous Coptic notable Marcus Simaika Pasha founded the Coptic Museum in Old Cairo to preserve Coptic heritage and culture. In fact, as he was educated at the patriarchal school,

⁷⁹ RIYAD 1961: 14.

⁸⁰ SHOUKRI 2011B: 28.

⁸¹ KAMIL 1961: 25-29, 35.

⁸² ISKAROS 1910: 60-61.

⁸³ PAUL 2009: 1049; PAUL 2012: 1-2.

⁸⁴ MAKRAM 2009: 32.

Marcus Simaika Pasha was one of the most important beneficiaries of the reform of Pope Cyril IV⁸⁵. In March 1911 AD, the first Coptic conference took place in Asiyūt⁸⁶.

In 1954 AD, the famous historian, writer, librarian and prominent scholar ʿAziz Suryal ʿAtīya (1898-1988 AD), whose expertise was in different fields particularly those of the Crusades and Islamic and Coptic studies, encouraged the 115th Coptic patriarch Yusab II (1946-1956 AD) to found the Institute of Coptic Studies⁸⁷. The foundation of this institute was important to provide a home to distinguished scholars and experts studying and publishing Coptic heritage and the history of the Coptic Church and patriarchs, and to create a scientific center for the Coptic heritage and studies, and to encourage the Copts to pursue studies to improve the life of the Coptic society, to educate the clergy and laity alike about their heritage through publicly-held lectures and seminars. Until the present day, thousands postgraduate students were enrolled in this institute.

Because of his efforts in the foundation of this Institute, ʿAziz Suryal ʿAtīya was chosen as its first director. He is also the publisher of the eight-volume *Coptic encyclopedia* which appeared posthumously in 1991 AD⁸⁸. Today, scientific and cultural magazines and periodicals are published everywhere like for example *Coptica*, *Coptologia*, *the Coptic Church Review* and *the Journal of Coptic Studies*.

In 1976 AD, the International Association for Coptic Studies was created to encourage the development of the Coptic studies and to help in solving the problems of preserving the Coptic heritage. Many conferences and seminars in addition to various exhibitions of Coptic art were and are held today. These activities demonstrate an awareness and interest in Coptic heritage and civilization. Gabra states that: «*The last forty years witnessed a remarkable progress in Coptic studies. The exhibitions of Coptic art in several significant European cities such as Vienna, Zurich, Geneva, and Paris and with the latest at Budapest in 2005 engendered a vast awareness of the Coptic culture and legacy*»⁸⁹.

C.The Social Life

In 17th November 1877 AD, the Journal *al-Watan* was printed and published for the first time in Egypt to advocate for the Coptic community. It was the first Arabic journal managed by an Egyptian. Pope Cyril IV restarted also the use of the Coptic calendar, which was previously confined to the agricultural cycle⁹⁰.

The Coptic patriarch Cyril IV was also charitable to the poor and the needy and he consolidated the majority of the Christians in Egypt. As indirect impact of his great reform, nowadays, many social benevolent organizations offer primary healthcare programs and

⁸⁵ GABRA et AL. 2013: 248.

⁸⁶ SURIYAL 1984: 268.

⁸⁷ ATIA 1968: 104-107; ATIA 2005.

⁸⁸ EL GENDI 2013: vol.2, 17-47.

⁸⁹ GABRA 2012: 183-189.

⁹⁰ KAMIL 1961: 28; SHOUKRI 2011B: 29.

provide immediate medical assistance to the sick and the transportation to medical series as needed. They provide communities also with health clinics offering basic services, necessary check-ups and required immunizations. Health care program are also presented for ongoing medical needs for those who are physically or mentally challenged⁹¹.

Some Coptic community development and social welfare associations started to appear like *al-Tawfīq* Coptic Society that was founded in 1891 AD to educate and to advocate for the poor by providing financial aid and healthcare for those who live in extreme poverty.

In this context, Habeeb Guirguis was also a founding member of several welfare associations. He established «*al-lmān* Central Committee», «*al-Mahabba* Christian Education Society», and he helped and encouraged the establishment of many other societies to teach the Word of God like «The Society of the Friends of the Holy Bible», «Soldiers of the Church», «the Word of Salvation», «Society of Theological Graduates», and others. In a short time, these societies started the construction of new churches in the far suburbs of Cairo and nearby towns⁹². These programs improve living conditions, enabling people to provide for their families through the implementation and management of small projects that they can run themselves.

Other social societies were in charge of the education and of offering employment opportunities to needy families so that they can become self-sufficient. Literacy and adult educations programs began to be offered at various Coptic churches. Primary, preparatory and secondary schools as well as hospitals, orphanages and nurseries have been also founded and kindergarten programs to take care of preschoolers were also established in different villages and cities. All these Coptic Benevolent Societies continued covering a large range of spiritual, educational and welfare services. The Coptic laity participated in the religious and social life to meet the pastoral needs of the Coptic community.

D. The Political and Economic Life

After the reforms of Cyril IV, more Copts became landowners. They were participants and leaders in both the economic and political life of the state as they thrived from the Khedivate to the Free Officers Revolution of 1952⁹³.

In fact, the Copts contributed significantly to the struggle against the colonial rule. In 1881-1882 AD, the Coptic community put up with Ahmad ʿUrābī in his revolution.⁹⁴ As

⁹¹During all the twentieth century AD and even after the beginning of the twenty first century AD, the Copts Advocacy continued because of the appearance of the nonprofit organizations fighting for the Copts like the Sons of the Church founded in 1945 AD, the Free Copts, the Copts United and the Voice of the Copts founded by Ashraf Ramelah in 2007 AD. In addition, Care 4 Needy Copts (C4NC) was founded also in the same year and also the US Copts Association.

⁹² GIBRAEL 1991: 8.

⁹³ LEVEUGLE 2013: 16.

⁹⁴ SURIYAL 1984: 108.

they constituted a significant part of the Egyptian bureaucracy, they continued to participate in so many domains and activities.

In 1919 AD, the Copts were invited by Sa^cd pasha Zaghlūl to join the *Wafd* political Party to form a united front against the British colonization. In 1923 AD, the Coptic community was treated as Egyptian. Without giving details, Leveugle mentioned also that, in 1924 AD, the Copts won more seats in the Egyptian Parliament. The same author reported also that after the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty signed in 1936 AD, the Copts achieved economic and political equality with the Muslims⁹⁵. Since the military revolution in 1952 AD, the Coptic community continued to play her part in both the political and the public life in Egypt.

Last but not least, in the Egyptian feminist renaissance and movement started during the lifetime of Cyril IV, Coptic women have contributed significantly to further the cause of women's rights and the names of Esther Fahmī Wīssā, Mathilda Greiss, Lisa Milād and Lily Doss are intimately connected with the movement⁹⁶.

⁹⁵ LEVEUGLE 2013: 18.

⁹⁶ MEINARDUS 1970:120-121.

III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I attempted to cover the most important details and the deepest influences of the significant reform of Cyril IV in the life of the Copts from the second half of the nineteenth century until the beginning of the twenty first century AD. Pope Cyril IV the great Reformer was one of the most significant figures and the greatest patriarchs of modern Coptic history and one of the most vocal advocates for Coptic rights. His radical reform program was an important turning point in the history of the Copts because it paved the way for new generations. Throughout his lifetime, Cyril IV advocated for the Christian community of Egypt. His great efforts improved the living conditions of the Copts, their churches and monasteries not only in Egypt but also abroad; an influence that lasts until this day although his short pontificate of seven years of which more than two are spent on his Ethiopian missions.

Between the direct and indirect influences of this reform are the different programs that aim to help people to get better life opportunities. Activists who took active measures in the different political movements supported the Copts in the whole world. Finally, the reform of Pope Cyril IV was the base of the development and the evolution of the Coptic society starting from the second half of the nineteenth century AD until the present day. Today, the visitors of Egypt are able to see its important ancient Egyptian monuments as well as its wonderful Coptic religious and archeological sites and also the Coptic Museum. Because of his intelligence, his deep knowledge and all his efforts in this usual reform, many writers mentioned Pope Cyril IV with the title «Abū'l-Islāh» (The Father of Reform)⁹⁷ as he revived the Church and advocated for the education of both boys and girls that's why he was rightly titled by the majority of the Copts until now. Others said that he got this title from the famous Coptic writer Guirguis Philotheus 'Awad, and the others followed him. Guirguis was quite angry with the church of his age. In any case, Cyril IV is an ideal Model that must be followed by the new Egyptian generations to progress in their life.

⁹⁷ GIBRAEL 1991:6; MORGAN 2016: 440.

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