

Ancient and Modern Churches of Alexandria

by

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I. Early Christianity in Alexandria

According to a tradition, which, however, is constant, St. Mark the Evangelist visited Alexandria, where he preached the Gospel, founded the See of Alexandria, and on April 25, A.D. 63 received the crown of martyrdom.

Eusebius who wrote his Ecclesiastical History in the first quarter of the 4th century records this tradition and states that St. Mark came to Egypt in the first or third year of the reign of the Roman Emperor Claudius, in A.D. 41-42 or A.D. 43-44. If these dates are correct, St. Mark's stay at Alexandria could not have been of long duration, for in A.D. 46 he was at Antioch and the following year in Cyprus. From A.D. 49-50 it seems that he was again at Antioch, and from A.D. 58-62 at Rome with St. Paul. For the intervening period between A.D. 50-62, however, the New Testament is silent in regard to St. Mark, and, therefore, it is quite possible that the Evangelist may have visited Alexandria at this time. It is generally held that, when St. Paul was released from his first captivity at Rome in A.D. 62, St. Mark did not accompany him on his new missionary journey, and this being the case, the Evangelist could very well have left Rome for Alexandria.

A martyr's chapel dedicated to St. Mark had existed in close proximity to the Large Harbour. During the first century and the first half of the second century, the spread of Christianity in Alexandria and in Egypt had not been considerable. It appears even that Alexandrian Christianity was rather syncretistic. Hadrian (A.D. 117-138), according to his letter to Servianus, saw those Christians who worship Serapis and those who call themselves bishops of Christ devoting themselves to Serapis. Thus, Alexandrians prostrated themselves before Serapis or Christ impartially. From the beginning of the reign of Commodus (A.D. 180), the Christian religion, almost completely purified of its gnostic doctrines and of all traces of paganism, appears firmly established in Alexandria. By the time of Septimius Severus (A.D. 193-211) Christianity had begun to make history, and from this period onwards its development was very rapid. The founding of the Catechetical School of Alexandria by Pantaenus ought to be placed into this period. It might suffice to mention only two of the most celebrated scholars of this school, Clement of Alexandria and Origen.

The Alexandrian Catechetical School endeavoured to relate Christianity to Neo-Platonism which sprang up about this time at Alexandria. Among the teachers were Ammonius Saccas, Herennius, Plotinus, Porphyrius and others.

Until the time of Constantine (A.D. 313), the Church in Egypt encountered many obstacles in the course of its existence. The conflict between church and state came to its height in Alexandria, which, more than any other city in the Empire, may claim to have won the battle for

Christianity. But in the meantime, the Christians suffered severely under the rule of Septimus Severus (A.D. 204), under Decius (A.D. 250), under Valerian (A.D. 251) and under Diocletian (A.D. 303).

From the 4th century onwards, Egyptian Christianity was characterized by its emphasis upon the ascetic life, and the neighbourhood of Alexandria began to be covered with monasteries, which grew more numerous as time went on. In the 5th and 6th century, we are told, there were no less than six hundred of them, all built like fortresses. The group of monasteries of the Ennaton (the ninth mile) was the most famous.

In the 4th century, the churches in Alexandria were fairly numerous, and in the course of the 5th and the 6th centuries their numbers steadily increased. The most celebrated churches of this period were:

The Church of St. Mark, which must have been near the shore of the Eastern Harbour, — not the present Church of St. Mark. To-day, there is nothing to see of the site where the original church must have stood.

In the History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria we are informed, that upon St. Mark's return to Alexandria, the brethren built a church in a place called "Bucolia", near the sea, beside a rock from which stone is hewn. At the time of the martyrdom of Peter, the 16th Patriarch of Alexandria, the relics of St. Mark were kept at a place called "Bucolia", for this was the place where was accomplished the martyrdom of St. Mark the Evangelist.

When Alexandria was taken by the Arabs, St. Mark's Church was burnt; its reconstruction was carried out in A.D. 680, but in A.D. 828 two Venetian merchants, Buono di Malamocco and Rustico di Torcello, removed the corpse which was considered to be that of St. Mark and carried it away.

The church was destroyed by the Sultan Malik al-Kamil at the approach of the Crusaders in 1218. As the sea encroaches at this part of the coast, the foundations of the church are probably submerged.

The Church of St. Alexander or the Church of St. Michael is considered to have been at one time the Temple of Saturn. Some archaeologists have placed the original site into the vicinity of the present Municipality.

The Megale Ekklesia, Kyriakon or Dominicum took the place of the Caesareum.

The Caesareum was a temple, begun by Cleopatra in honour of Antony, but completed by Octavian and dedicated forthwith to the worship of the emperors under the name of Caesareum or Sebasteum. In A.D. 354, Constantius II intended to present it to the church, but before the transference could be effected, St. Athanasius had held an Easter service in it. The emperor was offended. Two years later, his troops nearly killed St. Athanasius inside the building, and the emperor handed over the church to the Arians. For the following years, Arians and Orthodox fought about the sanctuary. In the 4th century, the Caesareum was dismantled and converted into a cathedral, known as the Megale Ekklesia. The church was plundered and restored many times. In A.D. 368 it was reconstructed by St. Athanasius and dedicated to St. Michael. It became the Cathedral of Alexandria, superseding St. Theonas. Here, in A.D. 640, Patriarch Cyrus held a solemn service before surrendering the city to the Arabs. Later, Copts and Melkites disputed its possession until A.D. 912 at which time it disappeared in a conflagration, and its ruins were never restored.

The Church of St. Athanasius, which was constructed by the patriarch of this name in the Bendidion or Mendidion Quarter and consecrated in A.D. 370 was turned into a mosque at the time of the Arab Conquest. The church was adapted into a large square-shaped mosque like the Mosque of Ibn Tulun in Cairo. The Attarine Mosque is situated in the immediate vicinity of the Place of St. Catherine, in the Zuk al-Attarine.

The oratory built by St. Theonas (A.D. 282-300) near the shore of the Eunostos Harbour was reconstructed and enlarged by the Patriarch Alexander (A.D. 313-326). After that date, the sanctuary was used as the Cathedral of St. Mary until the end of the 4th century, when the Caesareum became the cathedral. The Church of St. Theonas served for many years as the palace of the bishops. Here St. Athanasius was brought up. Under Muslim rule, this church was turned into a mosque. The Arabs gave it the name of the Western Mosque, or the Mosque of a Thousand Pillars. This historical site is now occupied by the church and the school of the Franciscan Fathers at Rue Karam.

The Church of St. Cyrus and St. John east of Alexandria, on the site of Abûqîr.

Following the destruction of the Serapis and Isis cults by Patriarch Cyril I, the relics of the SS. Cyrus and John were deposited at this site. The relics, however, were so intermingled that they could not be separated. A church was built in honour of the relics. According to tradition, the two saints remained quiet for 200 years, but then began to disentangle themselves and work miracles. With the Arab Conquest, their church vanishes, but St. Cyr has given his name to the modern Abûqîr (Father Cyr).

The Church of St. John the Baptist was situated on the site of the ancient Serapeum.

The small hill on which stands Pompey's Pillar, or more correctly Diocletian's Pillar, marks the site of the Serapeum, the temple dedicated to the worship of Serapis. Following the destruction of the Serapeum by the Patriarch Theophilus (A.D. 391), a monastery was installed on the plateau and a church was dedicated to St. John the Baptist. This building, also known as the Angelion, was destroyed in the 10th century.

The Church of St. Theodore was situated in the eastern part of the city, i. e. in the Bruchium, and the Church of St. Peter the Martyr was built opposite to the Serapeum. The Church of the Archangel Raphael was situated on the Island of Pharos. There were two other churches on or near the Pharos, the Church of St. Faustus and the Church of St. Sophia. The Church of the Saviour was built by the Patriarch Theophilus; though burnt down, it was reconstructed and was still in existence in the 11th century.

There were no vast catacombs in Alexandria. The Christian cemeteries, partly subterranean, partly open, were outside the city and were spread over the hills between Chatby and Hadra, near the Serapeum in the south-west and beyond the ancient pagan necropolis between the Abattoir and Dakhela. A very interesting tomb, known as Wescher's catacomb, was discovered at Karmous not far from Pompey's Column in 1858, but it has since disappeared.

Wescher's catacomb was decorated with frescoes which were considered very beautiful. Another catacomb of Christian origin was discovered east of the city on the hills near Hadra, but this catacomb has been buried for ever under the Deaconesses' Hospital.

Lit.: Ev. Breccia, *Alexandria ad Aegyptum* (Bergamo 1922)

A. Calderini, *Dizionario dei nomi geografici e topografici dell'Egitto greco e romano* (Cairo 1935)

E. M. Forster, *Alexandria* (New York 1961)

J. Faivre, *Canopus Menouthis Aboukir* (Alexandria 1918)

R. Herzog, *Der Kampf um den Kult von Menuthis* = Pisciculi. Festschrift für F. J. Dölger (Münster i. W. 1939) 117-24

H. Leclercq, *Alexandrie (Archéologie II. Topographie)* = DACL I 1098-1182

II. The Ancient Monasteries around Alexandria

The monasteries as well as their remains around Alexandria have almost completely vanished except for some of their names which have lingered on in the minds of the people. Unfortunately, it is virtually impossible to identify with certainty any of the numerous ruins around Alexandria with the monasteries which have played such an important role in the history of the Egyptian Church from the 5th to the 9th century.

South-west of Alexandria, on the way to the Desert of Scetis (Wādī 'n-Naṭrûn), there used to be several monasteries which were known by the distance which separated them from Alexandria. They were named after the milestone which was situated closest to the monastery.

Closest to Alexandria, at the fifth milestone, on the way to Mareotis, there was the famous Pempton.

This monastery was founded by St. Anastasia, a virgin of Constantinople, whom the Emperor Justin asked in marriage, though his wife was still living. Anastasia reported this to the empress who sent her to Alexandria and built her a convent outside the city. Later, Anastasia retired to Scetis.

The most famous of this monastery group was the Ennaton, at the ninth milestone. The Ennaton, also known as the Dair al-Hanatûn or the Dair az-Zugag, was situated west of Dakhela. To this day, the bedouins refer to the site west of Dakhela as the Kom az-Zugag which is near the Kom al-Hanadoun (Ennaton). Four or five kilometres west of Kom az-Zugag is a small village called ad-Dair where there are several ruins.

By the 6th century, the Ennaton had achieved considerable importance in the life of the church. John II (A.D. 505-516) and Peter IV (A.D. 576) had been monks in the Ennaton prior to their elections as patriarchs. In A.D. 616, Patriarch Anastasius (A.D. 605-616) resided at the Ennaton when he welcomed the Patriarch of Antioch. Moreover, it was at the Ennaton where the conference was held which resulted in the reestablishment of full communion with the Church of Antioch. Thomas of Harkel and Paul of Tella wrote many Syriac MSS. at the Ennaton Monastery on order of Anastasius. According to Maqrizi, who calls the Ennaton az-Zugag, it was

the duty of the Coptic Patriarch after his election in the Church of al-Muallaqah in Cairo to proceed to the Ennaton, but the custom fell into disuse. It certainly points to the very great importance of the Ennaton in the eyes of the Copts.

Other monasteries around Alexandria were the Dekaton at the 10th milestone and the Eikoston at the 20th milestone.

The Oktokaidekaton, which was situated at the 18th milestone, was known as the third monastery from Alexandria, though not on the road to the Desert of Scetis but to the episcopal see of al-Karyûn.

It has been suggested that the site called ad-Dair north of the village of al-Amiriyah may mark the place where the ancient monastery was situated. The monastery is said to date from the 5th century.

The Dair Kibrius (Cyrius or Cyprius) was situated to the north-east of Alexandria on the coast.

By the 7th century the monastery had acquired considerable importance. The abbot Theonas had lived at the monastery from A.D. 572 at least until A.D. 622. The monastery escaped the destructions by the Persians. In A.D. 621, Benjamin I entered the monastery as a monk before he was elected to the patriarchate.

In the latter part of the 4th century, the Metanoia or the Monastery of Penitence, a monastery of the Pachomian order, was built at Canopus, east of Alexandria, on the site of the ancient and famous pagan pleasure resort. Theophilus, who destroyed the Alexandrian Serapeum, did not spare the temples at Canopus and installed a monastery, while another monastery was set up at Menuthis in the Temple of Isis. The Metanoia attracted both Greeks and Romans for whom St. Jerome translated their rules into Latin.

The ruins of Canopus and Menuthis form an almost uninterrupted series of small elevations which extend all around Fort Tewfiq. Before the foundation of Alexandria, Canopus was the capital of the Menelait Nome and the most important port in the Delta. Canopus was celebrated for its sanctuary of Serapis which was visited by numerous pilgrims who went there to implore the god to cure their illnesses.

At the beginning of the 5th century, Cyril decided to convey the body of St. Cyr to Menuthis together with that of St. John who had been buried in St. Mark's Cathedral, in order to replace the pagan healing cult by a Christian one. Numbers of miracles were soon performed and the fame and prosperity of the new sanctuary became as great as that of the earlier.

In the 6th century, the Metanoia was considered to be one of the leading monasteries, and Anbâ Andârâûs, the abbot of the monastery, appears to have been a kind of provincial superior for the Nile Delta or perhaps for the monasteries founded by the Metanoia. By the end of the 6th century, the Metanoia was definitely in Byzantine hands, whereas the Ennaton remained a stronghold of the Copts. The Metanoia escaped the destructions which fell on the Ennaton and also evaded the destructions by the Persians.

The region around Alexandria was covered with cells, hermitages and monasteries and some monks from Upper Egypt had travelled to Alexandria to establish themselves near the seashore. Dorotheus the Theban, who lived at the seashore near Alexandria occupied himself in the building of stone cells for other monks.

It is most unfortunate that actually nothing has survived of this once so distinguished tradition of Alexandrian monasticism.

The Temple of Taposiris Magna is situated in Burg Abûsîr in the immediate vicinity of the ancient Roman lighthouse. The visitor would travel from Alexandria along the coast road in westerly direction as far as Burg al-Arab (35 km). At Burg al-Arab, turn to the north and follow the road for 5 km to the village of Burg Abûsîr.

The large temple construction, known to the bedouins as Qaşr al-Bardaul, stands on the summit of a hill. The temple was at one time dedicated to Osiris as the name Abûsîr indicates.

Taposiris was the centre from which the Prefect of Egypt used to take the census for the Libyan Nome. From the 19th century onwards the site was studied by Pachon (1819), Scholz (1820-21), Minutoli (1834), Robecchi-Brichetti (1890) and Breccia (1920).

The ruins of the ancient town cover the southern slope of the hill on which the temple was built. The space within the vast temple enclosure causes an impression of a great void. Excavations have brought to light traces of a small Christian Church, the apse of which was built against the pylons on the eastern wall of the temple.

In the interior of these pylons, a narrow staircase leads to the top from where one enjoys a marvellous view over the desert and the sea.

In the 7th century, the Monastery of Taposiris was an important institution. Victor, a monk of this monastery, was nominated for the candidacy of the Patriarchate (Hist. Patr. = PO V 26).

Lit.: De Cosson, *Mareotis* (London 1935)

R. Herzog, *Der Kampf um den Kult von Menuthis* = Pisciculi. Festschrift für F. J. Dölger (Münster i. W. 1939) 117-24

C. M. Kaufmann, *Zur Ikonographie der Menas-Ampullen* (Cairo 1910)

III. The Christian Churches in Alexandria

1. a) The Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate of St. Mark in Alexandria

The Coptic Orthodox Patriarchate with the Cathedral of St. Mark and the patriarchal offices is situated at 19, Rue de l'Eglise Copte. One approaches the cathedral through a large court-yard which is enclosed by a school and by the offices of the patriarchate.

The Cathedral, which was reconstructed between 1950 and 1952, has three haikals which are dedicated to St. Michael (north), St. Mark (centre) and St. George (south). The iconostasis is adorned by the following icons which show traces of Graeco-Syrian origin: St. Michael, St. Paul the Theban, St. Dimianah, the Holy Virgin, Christ, St. Mark, St. Antony and St. George. The dome above the apsis is decorated with stained-glass windows of Christ and the Evangelists. The stained-glass window of the Crucifixion shows the western inscriptions of the Cross INRI, instead of the eastern inscription INBI.

The Coptic Orthodox Cathedral of St. Mark appears to be situated on the site of the Church of St. Mark which was constructed by St. Cyril. This new church replaced the former Martyrium which was abandoned in the first half of the 5th century. The Church of St. Mark was destroyed by the Arabs in the middle of the 7th century. Benjamin I (A.D. 623-662), however, received permission to restore the church, yet it was not until the time of John of Samannūd (A.D. 681-689) that the church was restored. It was from this church that two Venetian merchants, Buono di Malomocco and Rustico di Torcello removed the relics of the Saint and carried them to Venice. During the reign of al-Muqtadir the Church of St. Mark was destroyed (A.D. 912), but later rebuilt.

Lit.: M. Chaîne, *L'Eglise de Saint-Marc à Alexandrie* = ROC, ser. 3, IV (XXIV), 3 & 4, 372-86.

b) The Church of St. Menas (Coptic Orthodox)

The Church of St. Menas is situated at Rue al-Hurrayah in the district of Fleming. The large basilican style church was built in the first part of the 20th century by Dr. Sami Bey Saboungi. The church is impressive on account of its simplicity. The altar is mounted on four different Graeco-Roman columns. A series of beautiful stained-glass windows adorns the apse. The baptistery is situated on the northern side of the church.

Below the central haikal, which is dedicated to St. Menas, is the tomb of Dr. Sami Bey Saboungi (d. 1943).

c) Other Coptic Orthodox Churches

The other Coptic Orthodox Churches in Alexandria are: The Church of the Holy Virgin (1935), Rue Radi, Muharram Bey; the Church of St. Michael (1939), Rue Shagarat ad-Durr; the Church of SS. George and Antony (1951), 71, Rue Muharram Bey; the Church of St. Mercurius (1952), 52, Rue el-Hilmayah; the Church of St. George (1937), 64, Rue al-Anhar; the Church of the Holy Virgin (1956), Rue al-Fawakih; the Church of St. George (1944), Rue Canal as-Suez, Chatby; the Church of St. Theodore (1950), Rue Canal as-Suez; the Church of SS. Mary and Joseph (1956), Rue Simuha; the Church of St. George (1960), Rue Amir Ibrahim, Sporting; the Church of St. Shenute (1953), Rue al-Maks; the Church of St. Dimianah

(1953), Rue Arif Bey; the Church of St. George (1951), Rue as-Saqf, Maks; the Church of St. George (1959), Rue al-Mattaqi, Baqus; the Church of St. George (1958), Rue as-Sabba Abd as-Salam, Mandarah; the Church of St. Menas (1952), Rue al-Gaysh, Mandarah.

2. a) The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of St. Mark

The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate is temporarily situated at 166, Rue Port Said, Ibrahimiyah, in a building which at one time served as a Greek High School. The Patriarchal Palace with the throne-room is situated on the first floor of the Institute for Oriental Studies of the Patriarchal Library.

The throne-room is decorated with the paintings of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchs of Alexandria of the 19th and 20th century.

On the second floor, the Patriarchal Library is situated with a collection of rare MSS. There are 536 Greek and Arabic MSS, 2110 rare editions and about 25 000 printed volumes. The Librarian is Dr. Th. D. Mosconas.

Lit.: Th. D. Mosconas, *The Library of Alexandria* = AREO Quarterly (New York) I 1 (Winter-Spring 1956) 9

b) The Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. Sabas

The Cathedral of St. Sabas is situated in Rue de Patriarcat Grec. One approaches the cathedral through an outer and an inner court, which are 2 m below the street level.

In the outer court is the famous large church-bell which was presented to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate by H. B. Alexis, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

The inner court is interesting because of the numerous tombs among which are the tombs of the British officers Arthur Brice (d. 1801) and Thomas Hamilton (d. 1807). Moreover, there is a Russian tomb and that of Nicephorus, Archbishop of Libya (d. 1855).

One enters the Cathedral of St. Sabas through a door in the north wall. Noteworthy are the six ancient granite columns in the nave. In the north-east corner is the famous altar of St. Catherine with the conch of Aphrodite and a Coptic cross. The ambon has a spiral staircase winding around a red granite column. On the west wall is a row of icons (18th century) from the Greek Orthodox Monastery at Rashîd.

St. Sabas, born in A.D. 439 in Cappadocia, became a monk at the age of eighteen. During his life he fought unceasingly for the doctrines promulgated at the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451). In A.D. 518 he took refuge from the Bishop of Antioch and fled to Alexandria. Most of his life, however, was spent in Palestine. He died in A.D. 532.

According to tradition, the Cathedral of St. Sabas was burnt down in A.D. 641. It was soon rebuilt, for it was mentioned by Eutychius in A.D. 727. The pilgrims to the Holy Land included the Cathedral of St. Sabas in their itineraries. The pilgrims inform us that Greek monks of the Order of St. Basil

inhabited the site. Felix Fabri (1483), Francois Suriano (1484) and other pilgrims saw in the Cathedral the throne from which St. Peter, St. John, St. Athanasius and others preached. In 1701, twenty monks lived in the Monastery of St. Sabas.

The Western pilgrims identified the site with the martyrdom of St. Catherine and even insisted on calling the church St. Catherine's. In the middle ages, Latins and Greek Orthodox worshipped in the church.

Lit.: Th. D. Mosconas, *L'Eglise de Saint-Saba à travers les siècles* = Rev. des Conf. Françaises en Orient (August 1947)

c) The Church of the Evangelismos

The Church of the Evangelismos or the Church of the Annunciation to the Holy Virgin, St. Mark the Evangelist and SS. Athanasius, Cyril and John the Almoner, is situated at the Place de St. Catherine. The church is 41.80 m long and 32 m wide. The church is of the basilican order. The foundation stone of the church was laid on November 16, 1847, and the consecration took place on March, 25, 1856, by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria, H. D. B. Hierotheus II.

In the apse behind the central altar there is a wall-painting depicting Christ as High-priest distributing the Holy Mysteries to his Apostles. Beneath there are shown the Angelic Powers and the Doctors of the Church in act of adoration. To the right of the central altar there is an altar commemorating the Crucifixion, and to the left, one commemorating the events which took place when Our Lord gave up the Spirit. In the respective niches of the Proscomidis (Table of Preparation) there are wall-paintings of the Nativity of Christ, the Adoration of the Magi, and the Flight into Egypt. The icons of the iconostasis are covered with silver. On the walls there are paintings in Byzantine style of scenes from the life of the Holy Virgin. Beneath the dome there is Christ represented as Pantocrator and above the apse is a painting of the Holy Virgin as "wider than the heavens". The stained-glass windows represent the Twelve Apostles and the Baptism of Christ and the Annunciation.

d) Other Greek Orthodox Churches

Other Greek Orthodox Churches in Alexandria are the Church of St. Michael and all Archangels at 74, Rue Heliopolis in Ibrahimiyah. The church is noteworthy because of its Byzantine wall-paintings of themes of the Old Testament, the New Testament and the Feasts of the Church. In this church the ambon is situated above the iconostasis.

The Church of St. Demetrius at 82, Rue Chatby is attached to the Kaniskerion Orphanage. The outstanding characteristic of this church is its black and white marble iconostasis. The Greek Orthodox Sailors' Church is the Church of St. Nicholas at Rue Tanis in Ibrahimiyah. The small church was built in 1899. The Church of St. Elias at Gianaclis is very spacious and beautiful; it was built in 1861.

The Russian Orthodox Church of St. Alexis Nevsky is situated on the first floor of 32, Rue Sa'ad Zaghloul.

3. The Syrian Greek Orthodox Churches (Arabophone)

a) The Syrian Greek Orthodox Church of the Dormition

The Church of the Dormition is situated at Rue al-Gaied Gohar and is interesting on account of its many icons. Noteworthy is the large icon of the Last Judgement on the northern wall which is surmounted by icons of the Crucifixion, St. Antony and St. Elias. Moreover, there is another set of ten icons representing scenes of the Life of Christ. On the south wall are icons of the Entombment, the Resurrection, the Ascension and others.

b) The Syrian Greek Orthodox Church of St. Antony the Great

The Church of St. Antony the Great, which was built in 1957, is situated in Chatby. It is one of the most beautiful of the modern Orthodox Churches in Alexandria. The walnut iconostasis is in pure Byzantine style. The apse has six stained-glass windows, and the chandeliers are of wrought-iron work. The church, which is a donation by Virginia Kamar Bassili, is attached to the Syrian school at Chatby.

4. a) The Armenian Orthodox Church of SS. Peter and Paul

The Armenian Orthodox Church of SS. Peter and Paul is situated at Rue Abû Dardar. The church was built in 1884. The land for the church was acquired from Muhammed Ali by Boghos Yussef Bey and Gabriel the monk. After the death of Gabriel and the abdication of Mesrob the bishop, who had succeeded Gabriel, the church was built under the supervision of Takvor Pasha. The church was named after Boghos (Paul) Pasha and his son Peter. The cost of the Church was 6,000 pounds.

The high-altar has five grandines and sixteen candles. As usual, there is a curtain to be drawn during certain parts of the Divine Liturgy. Behind the altar is a reproduction of Raphael's "Madonna". The two side altars are dedicated to St. Peter (north) and to St. Gregory the Illuminator (south). The patriarchal throne is situated in the northern part of the nave. South of the main church is the Chapel of the Nativity, north of the main church is the Chapel of the Holy Virgin.

Noteworthy are the twenty fine sanctuary lamps in the nave of the main church. In the narthex is a rather interesting painting of St. Gregory the Illuminator preaching in the catacombs.

North of the church is an Armenian cemetery, where among others, there is the tomb of Nubar Pasha (1825-1899).

b) The Chapel of SS. Bartholomew and Thaddaeus

This chapel was built by Abraham Pasha in 1835 on the farm which he owned in the village of Disunis, Behaira Province, 20 km south-east of

Alexandria. The chapel was used as a place of worship for those working on the farm.

5. a) The Church of St. Catherine (Latin)

The Church of St. Catherine at Place de St. Catherine is one of the most majestic sanctuaries in Egypt. The church, which was dedicated in 1850, was built upon a piece of land which was given by Muhammad Ali in 1835. The church is maintained by the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land in Egypt.

The high-altar of St. Catherine is flanked by the shrine of St. Catherine (south) and a beautifully carved pulpit on the north. The side altars on the north wall are dedicated to the Holy Virgin of Mt. Carmel and SS. Clara and Elias, St. Joseph, the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Conception.

The altar of the Sacred Heart is enclosed by two large mosaics of St. Francis and the Sacred Heart. The altar of the Immaculate Conception is adorned by two statues representing St. Lucia and St. Theresa of Lisieux.

The side altars on the south wall are dedicated to the Holy Virgin of Pompey, the Crucifixion, St. Antony of Padua and St. Francis.

The side altar of St. Francis is adorned by two statues of St. Louis IX (d. 1270) and St. Elizabeth. In the south corner of the narthex is a statue of St. Salvatore da Orta. The baptistery is situated in the north corner of the narthex.

Behind the high altar of St. Catherine is the tomb of Victor Emmanuel of Savoy (1869-1947). The apse is adorned by a large painting of St. Catherine disputing with the pagan philosophers.

The organ of the Church of St. Catherine is the largest organ in Egypt. The instrument was sent from Italy in 38 »boxes of notable dimensions« and installed in 1927.

North of the Church of St. Catherine is the Church of St. Sabina. The altar contains the complete relics of St. Sabina who suffered martyrdom in Rome in A.D. 126. According to tradition, St. Sabina was converted to Christianity by her slave Seraphia.

The Church of St. Sabina is adorned by two statues of St. Theresa and the Holy Family and by a large painting of the Blessed Amedeo IX, Duke of Savoy (1435-1472).

Lit.: *Un Secolo di Vita Parrocchiale Santa Caterina in Alessandria d'Egitto* (Parrocchia di Santa Caterina 1950)

b) The Church of St. Mark (Latin)

The Church of St. Mark is situated on the campus of the College of St. Mark at Camp de César. The College of St. Mark, which is maintained and operated by the Christian Brothers, was founded in 1928 to relieve the College of St. Catherine (1847). According to a Latin tradition the College is built on the site of the ancient Martyrium of St. Mark.

The spacious Church of St. Mark has three altars which are dedicated to Our Lady of Good Welcome, St. Mark the Evangelist and St. Joseph. On both sides of the central step-altar are statues of St. Mark and St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle. The step-altar is surmounted by a statue of the Christ.

The church is worth visiting because of its many beautiful stained-glass windows which represent the following themes.

North wall: The martyrdom of the Blessed Solomon, Brother of the Christian Schools, St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle consecrating his institute to the Virgin, Jean d'Arc praying before battle, St. Athanasius confounding the Arians, St. Louis IX rendering justice.

South wall: The glorification of St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle, St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle, universal patron of youth, St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, St. Cyril of Alexandria defending the Divine Maternity of the Virgin, St. Catherine disputing with the pagan philosophers.

The apse is decorated with two large mosaics of Christ at Emmaus (north) and the Crucifixion (south), and stained-glass windows of Christ and the Evangelists.

Lit.: *Prospectus General*, Imp. Ecole Don Bosco, Alexandrie

c) The Church of St. Francis at Sidi al-Monnayer

The Church of St. Francis was built in 1882 to serve a predominantly Maltese constituency. To-day, the church is the Catholic sailors' mission in Alexandria.

The spacious church has the following side altars: St. Joseph, St. Antony of Padua, the Sacred Heart, the Immaculate Conception, St. Rita, the Crucifixion. Above the high-altar is a statue of the Crucifixus and St. Francis.

The Church of St. Francis was built on the site of the ancient Church of Theonas.

The Church of Theonas (16th Patriarch of Alexandria) was reconstructed and enlarged by Alexander (A.D. 313-326). It was in this church that the Patriarch Alexander witnessed the young Athanasius "acting" as bishop and baptizing his fellow mates. In A.D. 356, Syrianus the prefect attempted to arrest Athanasius in the Church of Theonas. In A.D. 431 the Church of Theonas became the Church of the Virgin Mary, and in A.D. 640 the Church of the Virgin Mary was transformed into the Mosque of the Thousand Pillars, famous for its marble and porphyry columns. When the French arrived in Egypt in 1798, the site was converted into an artillery camp. In 1872, a hospice for the poor and destitute was built here, which later became barracks for the police. In 1881 the site was acquired by the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land.

d) The Convent of the Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Heart

Those interested in Christian archaeology should not fail to visit the court-yard of the Convent where there are numerous pillars, socles and capitals of the ancient Church of Theonas and the Mosque of a Thousand Pillars. The Convent is situated opposite the Church of St. Francis.

The small Chapel of the Sacred Heart was built in 1886 and is very simple and plain.

The site of the convent was acquired by the Abbess Maria Caterina Trapani of Rome and Sister Maria Pia Girolimini of Sinigaglia, the Superior of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Egypt.

Lit.: E. Dulith, *Deux colonnes de l'église de Théonas* = Bull. Soc. Arch. Alex. VII, 55-57

e) The Church of the Immaculate Conception

The Church of the Immaculate Conception at 70, Rue Saba Banat is maintained by the Lazarists or the Congregation of the Mission.

The church with its rich stained-glass windows in the apse has four side altars which are dedicated to St. Vincent de Paul, the founder of the Lazarists, the Pietas, Gethsemane, and the Flight into Egypt. The wall-paintings portray the Crucifixion, Purgatory, an Apparition of the Holy Virgin and the Blessed Jean Gabriel Perboyre (d. 1840). Above the high altar is the statue of the Holy Virgin.

f) The Church of the Sacred Heart

The Church of the Sacred Heart is situated at Rue Port Said, almost opposite the temporary Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. The church, which was consecrated on June 22, 1924, is maintained by the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land.

The high-altar is dedicated to the Sacred Heart, whereas the side-altars are dedicated to the Holy Cross, St. Francis, St. Joseph, St. Rita, the Holy Rosary, St. Antony of Padua, Our Lady of Fatima, St. Theresa of Lisieux. North of the high-altar is a small chapel dedicated to the Holy Virgin. The baptismal font is situated in the north-western corner of the church. The stained-glass windows represent events in the life of St. Francis.

6. The Coptic Catholic Patriarchate

The Coptic Catholic Patriarchate is situated at Rue Kolliet at-Tib opposite Rue Docteur Ali Ibrahim Ramez. The Cathedral of the Resurrection, which was reputedly built on the site of the ancient Caesareum, was dedicated on May 12, 1902 by Cyril II, Coptic Catholic Patriarch of Alexandria.

The Cathedral of the Resurrection gives a completely Latin impression. The side altars are dedicated to the Sacred Heart, St. Rita, Our Lady of Fatima, and St. Theresa of Lisieux. On the southern wall there is also a Shrine of St. George.

The patriarchal throne is situated on the northern side of the nave and carries a Greek inscription: "Peace be unto thee, Mark, my witness." The high-altar has all the usual characteristics of a latin altar. Above the high-altar is a painting of the Resurrection.

7. a) The Greek Catholic Patriarchate

The winter residence of the Greek Catholic Patriarchate is situated at Rue Girgis Tawil. The Cathedral is dedicated to the Dormition of the Holy Virgin, and was built around 1870.

The spacious cathedral has three altars which are dedicated to St. George (north), the Dormition of the Holy Virgin (centre) and the Annunciation (south). The patriarchal throne is situated on the south side of the centre aisle, facing a lesser throne. The cathedral has a beautifully carved ambon. Noteworthy are the ten large pink marble pillars.

In the immediate vicinity of the cathedral is the tomb of Girgis Tawil, who presented the church with the site of the present patriarchate.

The summer residence of the Greek Catholic Patriarchate is situated at Fleming (Ramleh), Rue al-Fath. The Church of St. Joseph is beautifully situated in a large garden where there are also the shrines of the Holy Virgin of Lourdes and of St. Theresa of Lisieux.

The Church of St. Joseph is rather simple. Two stands with icons of the Holy Virgin and Christ replace the traditional iconostasis. North of the main church is the Chapel of the Sacred Heart.

b) The Church of the Immaculate Conception (Greek Catholic)

The Church of the Immaculate Conception is situated at Rue de Busiris, Ibrahimiyah. This church is one of the modern Greek Catholic churches which is decorated with beautiful wall-paintings which represent the following persons:

The Holy Virgin, St. Elias, St. Barbara, St. Maximus, St. Basil, SS. Peter and Paul, the Baptism of Christ, the Resurrection, the Dormition of the Holy Virgin, the Birth of the Holy Virgin, the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, the Transfiguration, St. John the Baptist, St. John Chrysostom, St. John of Damascus, St. Catherine, St. Nicholas, St. Joseph. Behind the altar is a representation of Christ as High-priest, above the altar, the Annunciation.

c) The Church of St. Peter (Egreja Sao Pedro) (Greek Catholic)

The Egreja Sao Pedro is a gift of a former Brazilian Consul at Alexandria and was constructed in 1889, renovated in 1956. The church is situated at Rue de Bagne.

The iconostasis is adorned with the icons of St. Athanasius, and St. Cyril, the Holy Virgin, Christ, and the three Cappadocian Fathers. Other icons represent the Sacred Heart, St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Michael, the Protection of the Christians, and the Dormition. In the narthex, there is an icon of the Holy Virgin of the Grotta Ferrata and a picture of St. Theresa of Lisieux with many ex-votos.

8. The Armenian Catholic Patriarchate

The Armenian Catholic Patriarchate, which was built in 1890, is situated at 8, Rue Port Est. The Cathedral is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.

The side altars of the cathedral are dedicated to St. Antony of Padua, the Sacred Heart, St. Gregory the Illuminator, St. Joseph, St. Theresa of Lisieux and St. Rita. The patriarchal throne is on the northern side of the central aisle. Like in all Armenian churches, the cathedral has a curtain which is drawn at certain periods during the celebration of the Divine Liturgy.

9. The Church of the Holy Virgin Mary (Maronite)

The Maronite Church of the Holy Virgin Mary is situated at 4, Rue de L'Eglise Maronite.

Noteworthy in this church are only the large paintings representing St. Maron, St. Joseph, Gethsemane, and St. George. On both sides of the high altar are statues of the Sacred Heart and St. Antony of Padua.

In addition to this church, the Maronites maintain a small church dedicated to St. Theresa of the Child Jesus at Mustafa Pasha, Ramleh.

10. The Anglican Chaplaincy of Alexandria

The Anglican Chaplaincy in Alexandria comprises the Church of St. Mark at al-Tahrir Square, All Saints' Church, Stanley Bay, Bulkley and the Church Hall at Rue Memphis, Ibrahimiyah.

a) The Church of St. Mark

The altar of the Church is adorned by beautiful paintings representing St. George, St. Patrick, St. Davis, and St. Andrew. In the centre is the Crucifixus. The stained-glass windows in the apse show Christ and the Evangelists. On the left, when entering the church is the Catherine Phillips Batchelder Chapel which was dedicated on February 21, 1904 by the Rt. Rev. G. F. P. Blyth, Archbishop in Jerusalem.

The Church of St. Mark was commenced in 1839 when the foundation stone was laid. Owing to various difficulties, it was not completed for more than fifteen years. The consecration was performed by Bishop Samuel Gobat in April 1855. The site of the church was given by Muhammad Ali to be held in perpetuity by the local Anglican community.

b) All Saints' Church

The patronage of All Saints' Church, Stanley Bay, is vested in the hands of the Chaplain of St. Mark's, Alexandria.

The Church of All Saints was commenced in 1890, and the following year was consecrated by Bishop Blyth. It is a handsome building, and the internal decoration is rich and in good taste. The first chaplain appointed to the church was the Rev. T. R. Lawrence (1891-1897).

11. The Coptic Evangelical Church

There are four Coptic Evangelical churches in Alexandria. The principal Coptic Evangelical church is known as the Attarine Church. In addition, there are the Coptic Evangelical churches in Palais, Ramleh; Muharram Bey and Sidi Bishr.

12. The Protestant Church of Alexandria

The Protestant Church of Alexandria is situated at Rue de la Poste. The church, which is very plain and beautiful, radiates an enchanting atmosphere. On the left side there are several stained-glass windows, the baptistery is

constructed out of marble and the sanctuary is adorned with a beautiful wooden altar. Noteworthy is the French Altar-Bible which was printed in 1707 by Henry Desbordes.

The congregation was founded on November 23, 1856. About ten years later, on March 22, 1866, the birthday of King William of Prussia, the Protestant Church was dedicated. The church, which began its services as a German church, remained as such until the First World War, when the Protestant Church, being German property, was sequestered. Following the First World War, the church was served by Swiss ministers. Ever since, Divine Services are conducted alternately in French and in German. The church is congregationally administered.

Lit.: A. Kaufmann, *Die Geschichte der Evangelischen Gemeinde zu Alexandrien von 1856-1898* (Lahr i. Baden 1898)

13. The Alexandria Community Church

The Alexandria Community Church is an interdenominational fellowship of Protestant Christians who are resident in Alexandria, and who worship in All Saints' Anglican Church at Stanley Bay. The Church is situated in English Church Street. From the attractive garden which surrounds the building, one overlooks the sea. The church is served by the resident missionary of the United Presbyterian Church of the USA and the missionary of the Church of God.

The church was inaugurated in 1954, when it was known as the American Community Church in Alexandria. At that time, the Sahara Petroleum Co. had its offices in Alexandria with eighty American families resident in the city. The church committee, elected annually at a congregational meeting, is responsible for the administrative affairs of the church. The congregation is affiliated with the Department of Overseas Union Churches of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA.

14. The Neff Christian Fellowship Centre of the Church of God

The Neff Christian Fellowship Centre of the Church of God in Egypt is situated at 51, Rue Ahmad Kamha, Camp de César, Alexandria. The centre was named in honour of the first resident missionaries of the Church of God in Egypt, the Reverend and Mrs. Thaddeus Neff.

The centre, which offers services in English, Arabic and Armenian was established in 1953. From its beginnings, the centre was served by the Rev. and Mrs. Ernest W. LaFont. Divine Services are conducted weekly.

IV. The Christian Churches of Abûqîr

The town of Abûqîr, situated 20 km east of Alexandria, was famous for its temples of Serapis and Isis, which, however, were destroyed by Cyril the Great. Subsequently, the relics of SS. Cyrus and John were taken to Abûqîr. Following the removal of the relics of SS. Cyrus and John to Old Cairo, the tradition of the Unmercenary Saints was continued by the people of Abûqîr.

1. The Church of SS. Cyrus and John (Coptic Orthodox)

The Coptic Orthodox Church of SS. Cyrus and John is situated at 3, Rue Anba Kirill in Abûqîr. The small church, which was built in 1935, is worth visiting because of its numerous modern Coptic paintings, which are the product of the Coptic Art School at Abbassiyah, Cairo.

The paintings by Isis Habib Gorgi and Ishaq Fanus represent Gethsemane, the Mystical Supper, the Washing of the Feet, the Woman with the issue of blood, the Healing of the Blind, the Raising of Jairus' daughter, the Raising of Lazarus, the Palm Sunday Procession, the Miraculous Draught of Fish, the Flight into Egypt, the Deposition from the Cross, the Anastasis, the Annunciation, the Nativity and the Flight into Egypt.

2. The Church of the Unmercenary Saints (Greek Orthodox)

The Greek Orthodox Church of the Unmercenary Saints is situated at Rue al-Fath in Abûqîr. The small wooden building was constructed in 1920. The church is adorned with many icons of SS. Cyrus and John and SS. Cosmas and Damian.

3. The Church of St. Lucia (Latin)

The Catholic Church in Abûqîr is situated behind the Greek Orthodox Church of the Unmercenary Saints. The church is maintained by the Franciscan Fathers of the Custody of the Holy Land.

V. The Greek Orthodox Monastery of St. Nicholas at Rashîd

The Greek Orthodox Church maintains a small monastery in Rashîd (Rosetta), about 60 km east of Alexandria. Those interested to visit the monastery ought to obtain a letter of introduction from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Alexandria, 166, Rue Port Said.

The monastery is situated in the centre of Rashîd at Rue Kenisset al-Arwam. The monastery consists of two small churches. The church furthest to the south is dedicated to St. Christophorus, whereas the main church is dedicated to St. Nicholas. Once a year, on the Feast of St. Nicholas, December 6, a Greek Orthodox mûlid is celebrated at the church which is attended by pilgrims from Alexandria. The monastery is not inhabited, except for a care-taker.

Greeks, especially from Crete, had settled in Rashîd around 1645, and their number increased as time went by, so that by 1813, there was a Greek Orthodox Bishop of Rashîd. Of the history of the monastery almost nothing is known.