

“TRADITIONAL” CHARITY VERSUS “MODERN” DEVELOPMENT: PHILANTHROPY AND
COMMUNAL BOUNDARIES IN THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

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Preface

If Christian unity is allied to the idea of temporal force even if it is only to safeguard the interests of the weak, or if it seems useful for *bringing human pressures to bear* on the wayward sheep, it immediately loses its divine value; it is then nothing but a number of “unions,” destined to disintegrate and then to disappear like every temporal undertaking in the works of humanity—Fr. Matta El Miskeen

Writing this thesis has been my most challenging, frustrating, yet informative academic exercise. I now have invaluable insight into the context in which I, and other Copts like me, work to improve the lives of those in our community all over the world. Before beginning, I would like to take a few pages to indulge in explaining my “intellectual journey” with its twists and turns throughout the 15 months of writing this thesis.

At the onset of this project I felt what so many young Copts feel—the crushing “irrationality” of Coptic tradition with its archaic and at times harmful teachings that place such little faith in the power of individuals to create “good societies.” I was convinced of the moral primacy of classical liberalism with its focus on the freedom of the individual as both the means to, and the ends of “civil society.” This predilection towards classical liberalism, along with the modernity it undergirds, led me in search of ways of facilitating the progress of Copts towards “modernity” and away from “tradition.” I dreamed of the day when the Church would embrace “rationality,” when they would refocus their efforts towards improving the physical lives of their

parishioners. I believed that once the Church truly started to focus on the plight of humanity, it would allow itself to reach out to those outside of the community. This, I believed, would be the solution to the Coptic problem—religious discrimination. Once Copts recognized the humanity of their Muslim neighbors and started offering consistent aid to them, they would build better, stronger relationships—on every level of society. Human development, with its concern for the physical state of people in this world at its core, would engender a philanthropically oriented community that nobody can deny.

However, as I ventured further and further into Coptic tradition, I began seeing the merits of the traditionalists. I began understanding the philanthropic prioritization of church building, religious education, and the “hemming in” of the vulnerable—less in terms of control, and more in terms of community. My shifting understanding of tradition and community, in turn, tempered my faith in the “human development” solution to the Coptic problem.

What initiated this shift was my relocation from Indianapolis, where the local Coptic Church resides on the periphery of the larger community, to working at Coptic Orphans in Washington, D.C.—a place that has as much claim to being the center of Copts in diaspora as any other. On New Year’s Eve 2015, I found myself and several other Coptic Orphans employees, along with the only (and quite possibly first) Coptic nun with a doctorate in Theology, discussing the question: “what would a 3rd/ 4th generation Copt born in diaspora look like?” It was then I began questioning my unflinching allegiance to the individual and recognizing the importance of the group. In

contemplating the disintegration of Coptic identity in diaspora over time due to the West's championship of individuality, I began recognizing the importance of the Church's traditional approach to philanthropy.

I realized that traditional Coptic charity, as I call it, was not just a flawed attempt at humanitarianism, as many in Egypt believe. It is not just "giving a man a fish" as proponents of "human development" argue. Traditional Coptic charity, as I hope to explain, is an integral part of a larger social system that works together to maintain (and grow slowly) a religious community whose very salvation rests in the practice and transmission of its complex Liturgical body. By merit of its theological peculiarity, and the soteriological significance it gives the practice of sacraments and other religious activities, the Coptic Church effectively hems in the community in perpetuity. This realization contrasted starkly with the other side of the philanthropic coin—development.

Development, which is championed by Coptic Orphans and stands as a bulwark of "modernity" in the face of charity's traditionalism, does not fit into the soteriological orientation of the Church's Liturgical life (in fact, being an independent organization, Coptic Orphans stands decidedly outside ecclesiastical life). In essence, development's ultimate goal is to "develop" individuals to the point of "financial independence"—a goal that does not fit into the Church's communal ethos or exclusively contribute to salvific ends. In recognizing these facts, I began to reevaluate my initial stance on human development as the best way of engaging non-Copts.

Overall, this thesis is can be read as a continuation of an ongoing debate between modernity and tradition—and the philanthropic tools they deploy—development and charity.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Copts of Egypt, the largest Christian community in a Muslim country, have faced unique challenges brought about by Egypt's transition into "modernity." Over millennia, they have embraced their identity as the "other," by negotiating a semi-private space within the larger Egyptian community where they practiced their religion publicly. This arrangement was maintained through the advocacy of certain well-connected "Archons" from wealthy families. However, with the "modernization" of these Archons, and their eventual embrace of a secular vision of Egypt based off of individual rights and citizenship, they drifted away from the bulk of the Coptic community that still functioned within a traditional familial/tribal understanding of the individual. The fallout between the Archons and the rest of the Coptic community marks the start of an indigenous quest for a "Coptic modernity."

Reeling from a change in communal leadership and struggling to respond to European and American missionaries, a group of newly educated Copts saw the Sunday School Movement as a vehicle for responding to these changes. In essence, SSM leaders worked to create a Coptic identity that they, quite literally, taught each Sunday at Sunday School. Most notable among these leaders were Pope Shenouda, Bishop Samuel, and Fr. Matta El Miskeen. However, because Fr. Matta chose to avoid social issues, including philanthropy altogether, he will only be briefly mentioned in this thesis.

Bishop Samuel and Pope Shenouda each had a different vision for Coptic modernity based off of individual and communal relationships respectively.

As I will explain more fully later on, Pope Shenouda III prioritized “Liturgical”¹ activity while Bishop Samuel was more inclined towards ecumenicalism and “evangelism”² These differences translated into different voluntary activities, in other words, they chose to use different types of philanthropy³. Bishop Samuel, in tune with the West’s “development” approach to philanthropy, created the community’s first professional, inter-religious, inter-denominational development organization: the Bishopric of Ecumenical and Social Services (BLESS). Pope Shenouda III, on the other hand, emphasizing ethnoreligious communal solidarity, supported more traditional forms of “charity.” These two initial responses would shape Coptic philanthropy for years to come. Bishop Samuel had a strong impact on the Coptic diaspora.

Both of these paths represent a personal response to modernity and its tendency to break down traditional familial identities. Pope Shenouda III focused on building an ethnoreligious identity that used, what I term “Liturgical life” to both widen Coptic loyalties past the family/tribe, as well as to set up a semi-permeable boundary

¹ I use the term “Liturgical” to refer to the ritualization of religious activity. As I will explain later on, Pope Shenouda expanded the ecclesiastical domain past the traditional 7 sacraments to include activities such as fasting, prayer, and tithing. It is important to note that Pope Shenouda was not anti-evangelism, however, he was more focused on developing the Copts’ Liturgical life.

² Because of Islamic prohibition, evangelizing had long ceased to be a part of Coptic life. In 1961 however, Bishop Samuel himself undertook the Coptic Church’s first mission to Nairobi, Kenya (Watson, 2002). Even in Egypt, one of Bishop Samuel’s first projects was the creation of the “Rural Diaconate” for the religious education of underserved Copts in rural villages. It is important to note that Bishop Samuel’s missionary work did not undermine his commitment to Liturgical activity.

³ Throughout this thesis I use Robert Payton’s broad definition for the word philanthropy: “voluntary action for the public good.”

around the community. Bishop Samuel, on the other hand, embraced a more humanistic identity that prioritized philanthropy, in its original Greek meaning, as a way of imitating Christ on earth. For him, active service and evangelism were duties for all Christians to be offered to everyone; these teachings expanded familial boundaries, but I argue, did not set limits. Both responses to modernity have had a tremendous impact on the relationship between an individual Copt and her/his community, nation, and world.

Debates between advocates of charity and development still occur, both sides arguing heatedly about the effectiveness of each type. However, in this thesis, I choose not to dwell on the effectiveness of the philanthropy per se, but rather the history, values, communal implications, and long-term consequences each philanthropy brings along with it. Inherent in this discussion of identity and philanthropy as a response to modernity are the nuances of each of these identities and responses. The correlations between the different *types* of philanthropy employed and the respective identities that espoused them will be a running theme throughout this work. In the end of this thesis, I draw conclusions that follow from the discussions, as well as make recommendations on how Copts should approach the interrelated issue of religious discrimination

Terms and concepts: Weber's Rationalities and their Philanthropic Implications on the
Path Towards Modernity

As most scholars who have written on the Copts over the last two decades have come to realize, the most important issue that faced the community during the 20th century was modernity—specifically the arrival of Protestant and Catholic missionaries in Egypt. Because of this, and because of its pertinence to this conversation, I will begin by offering a brief discussion of modernity in relation to the Coptic community. For the purposes of this paper, I use Max Weber's notion of modernity—a society in which people are completely committed to practical rationality⁴—as the panicle of modernization. However, because most societies would either fall short of, or consciously refuse being “eminently practical,” as Charles Dickens' Thomas Gridiron would say, there are different levels and responses to “modernity.”

As Max Weber observed in parts of Europe and America during the 19th century, practical rationality, something that has always existed to varying extents in society, took on an ethically positive slant. Because of certain religious teachings, which I will explore later on, work and the creation of wealth became the ultimate goal of life. This socio-religious change, according to Weber, was fertile grounds for capitalism—a way of life that values the production of measurable wealth above all else. As modernity, in this

⁴ I will delve more into the different types of rationality shortly. However, for the sake of clarity, practical rationality as referred to here, is one of Max Weber's 4 rationality types. It is most strongly characterized by its reliance on scientifically measurable results as justification for action.

sense, spread throughout the world due to colonization and its concurrent globalization, people everywhere formulated responses to this new way of thinking.

At the turn of the 19th century, three distinct Coptic reactions to modernity could be identified: 1) total embrace of modernity and rejection of tradition by the Archons 2) total rejection of modernity and an embrace of tradition by the “Old Guard” clergy 3) and a synthesis of modernity and tradition by the SSM leaders. Understanding the underlying historical tensions between the “Old Guard” the Archons sets the scene for the aforementioned responses of the SSM leaders. Here, I would like to briefly introduce these three initial Coptic responses to Egypt’s modernization. In doing so, I hope to make clear the connection between the theories of modernity which I will soon introduce, and the ideas of the different Coptic actors.

Traditionally, there have been two sources of Coptic leadership: the clergy and a class of well-connected, wealthy laymen called “Archons” (El-Masri, 1948). By the end of the 19th century, these wealthy Archon families were heavily influenced by Western culture, and having received degrees from prestigious universities in Europe, they attempted to impose their own visions of modernity on the Coptic community—this was the community’s first brush with modernity. However, because of a disconnect with ordinary Copts and the Old Guard clergy, they failed to fulfill this vision. As I will explain later on, these Archons sought to wrestle control of the Church’s endowments away from the clergy because they saw them as inefficient, undereducated, and corrupt.

In fact, the Archons' complaints against this Old Guard were not unfounded. The memoirs of Protestant missionaries to Egypt during the 19th century are riddled with stories of illiterate priests soliciting fees for performing their Liturgical duties, truncating the Holy Liturgy to smoke a cigarette, and openly practicing cronyism (Tadros, S., 2013:99). This Old Guard would resist attempts at modernization by both the Archons and later on, the new wave of educated clergy that led the SSM. Clergy from the Old Guard responded to modernity by rejecting it, they sought to hold on to their ecclesiastical posts without vying for reform.

The third response to modernity in the Coptic community came from the initial waves of Coptic graduates of Egypt's first public university from 1935-1945. These young Copts, educated in Egypt, saw the need for the reformation of the Church in response to modernity as represented by European and American missionaries; however, unlike the Archons, they made a conscious decision to work within the framework of the Church.

Newly educated and well acquainted with Protestantism, this new generation of Coptic youth began reforming both the Church and the general Coptic population to respond to Egypt's modernization under Nasser. However, this reformation was not a homogeneous effort, in fact, two expressly different visionaries led it: Saad Aziz (Bishop Samuel) and Nazir Jayid (Pope Shenouda III). While I will go into more depth later on, I would like to briefly introduce their visions here.

Bishop Samuel and Pope Shenouda III differed most in their levels of dedication to what I call the Coptic "Liturgical life." Pope Shenouda saw the unifying power of a

Christian life centered on Coptic Orthodox Liturgical praxis. This is visible in his attempt to revive the Coptic language, his expansion of the role of the Church in the life of Copts, and his use of social and religious services that established “the pastoral relationship that will bring those who are abandoned by everyone back to the fold of the Church” (Nikolov, 2007:119). Core to his approach were meticulous efforts to define and disseminate his thoughts on all that concerned Liturgical life—to an almost legalistic extent (El Khawaga, 1997). The emphasis he placed on the proper performance of Liturgical activities is reflective of his vision of a community where Liturgical praxis was both the means to, and ends of a good Christian life.

Bishop Samuel, having received graduate degrees from the American University in Cairo and Princeton University—as well as being among the first Copts to enter into dialogue with other Christian denominations at the World Council of Churches, was less interested in community strengthening Liturgical praxis of the Copts. His main goal was to “become a true Christian, not only through worship, but by showing Christian love—serving everyone by showing them the Spirit of the Lord” (Interview, Dr. Meawad, 2015). He was the visionary behind the Coptic Church’s missions to Africa (Watson, 2002) and the pioneer of organized Coptic communities in the West. Bishop Samuel’s legacy, the Bishoprific of Ecumenical and Social Services (BLESS), became one of Egypt’s first Western-style development organizations and the Coptic Church’s first inter-religious organization. Bishop Samuel believed that human development and social work were his “personal callings” (Interview, Dr. Meawad, 2015). Important to note is Bishop Samuel’s equal commitment to working within the ecclesiastical boundaries of

the Church. While he may have questioned certain parts of Liturgical life, he accepted them and was himself a part of the clerical leadership as well as a monk.

Overall, the main distinction I want to make between these two leaders is one of vision. Bishop Samuel and Pope Shenouda did, for the most part, engage in similar activities. Bishop Samuel chose to make the rigorous monastic vows of the Coptic Church; he practiced the sacraments and fasted. Pope Shenouda, likewise, while initially opposed to Bishop Samuel's undertakings, eventually kept the development arm of the Church, BLESS, and later on even attended the World Council of Churches in Bishop Samuel's stead (Hasan, 2003). The main difference between the two men was their vision for what the community should strive for. Bishop Samuel's focus on human development led him to envision a good Christian life as one committed to serving others through both religious education and social services that empowered the poor to become economically self-sufficient. Pope Shenouda, on the other hand, envisioned a Liturgically defined community that practiced charity as a means of economic redistribution that "hems in" the frailest edges of communal fabric—the poor. These distinctions in philanthropy lead nicely into a discussion of Weber's and his scholarly devotees' belief in the role of philanthropy in the transition into modernity.

Modernity, Tradition, and Rationalities in Transition

According to Max Weber, modernity, along with its “large scale institutional change brought about by the emergence of a market industrial economy, a bureaucratically organized state, and growing cities” (Taylor, 1999:162), was possible in the West because of what he termed, “The Spirit of Capitalism.” To define this Spirit, Weber draws on the person of Benjamin Franklin, along with his famously well-ordered life and his injunction that “time is money,” to illustrate this spirit. Franklin, according to Weber, believed that

The aim of a man’s life is indeed moneymaking, but this is no longer merely the means to the end of satisfying the material needs of life. This reversal... of what we might call the “natural” state of affairs is a definite leitmotiv of capitalism... at the same time it contains a line of thought that comes very close to certain *religious* ideas (Weber, 2012:12)

What makes Franklin unique in his embrace of this “spirit” is his embodiment of two of Weber’s rationality types simultaneously: “practical rationality” and “value rationality.”

Practical rationality, which animates “means-ends rational action,” is a “pragmatic and this-worldly predisposition of practical rational patterns” (Kalberg, 1980:1154). The key to understanding practical rationality is the idea of measuring results in a scientific or economic manner and basing action on those results. According to Weber, while practical rationality is found in many different cultures, it has never held morally positive value as it did in Franklin’s mind. Literature and history are replete with characters whose sheer practical rationality is explained as avarice and inhumanity.

Value rationality, on the other hand, works to accomplish goals that are more difficult to quantify and, therefore, difficult to measure. Value rational action involves measuring a “flow of unending empirical events” against “unique standards” or different value systems (Kalberg, 1980:1155). Value systems include “political systems, religious traditions, cultural norms and ‘notions of the beautiful’” (Kalberg, 1980:1155). There are an infinite number of different value systems. From within, each of these value systems adheres to its own specific form of rationality based on internal consistency. From the outside, each of these different value systems may seem irrational to the other, but their rationality derives from adherence to, or belief in an “ultimate value-standpoint” within each system (Kalberg, 1980:1156).

Modernity, along with its capitalism, bureaucracy, industry, and large cities, is built on the backs of modern men with a “Benjamin Franklin” like faith in the sacredness of efficiency and industriousness. The meeting of Weber’s practical and value rationalities in the person of Franklin sets up *work* as an “ethically slanted maxim for the conduct of life” (Weber, 2002:11). Ironically, Franklin believed that it was his Christian “calling” to live a productive life *in this world*. Weber explains this development as being the logical progression of the Protestant Reformation—in particular, Martin Luther’s and John Calvin’s disenchantment of religion. By disenchanting religion, or ridding religion of the idea of the “sacramental mediation of salvation,” Luther and Calvin removed the reassurance of the soteriological impact of human action (Carroll, A. 119). In other words, they reinforced the notion that “to assume that human merit or fault had any influence on one’s fate would be to regard God’s absolutely free decisions,

which had stood for all eternity, as capable of being changed by human influence—an impossible idea” (Weber, M. 2002:73). This doctrine, according to Weber “had one principal consequence for the mood of a generation which yielded to its magnificent logic: it engendered, *for each individual*, a feeling of tremendous inner *loneliness*” (Weber, M. 2002:73).

Interestingly, this loneliness and individualism following the Reformation soon gave way to a structured and orderly society in Calvinism. According to Weber, the connection between the individualism caused by the Reformation’s doctrine and Calvin’s “social organization,” was Christian *charity*. Weber describes this “mysterious” transition towards the primacy of this worldly action in the Calvinist mindset as a result of

the particular characteristics which Christian ‘charity’ was forced to assume under pressure from the inner isolation of the individual resulting from the Calvinist conception of God. The world was destined to serve the self-glorification of *God*, and the Christian existed to his part to increase the praise of God in the world by obeying his commands. God willed the social achievement of the Christian *because* it was his will that the social structure of life should accord with his commands and be organized in such a way as to achieve this purpose. The *social* work of the Calvinist in the world was merely work “in majorem gloriam Dei.” Labor in a *calling*, in the service of the secular life of the community, also shared *this* character. Luther himself spoke of specialized work in a particular calling deriving from “Christian charity.” But what had been for him a tentative suggestion became for the Calvinists a characteristic part of their ethical system. ‘Christian charity’—since, after all, it was to serve only the glory of *God*, not that of the creature—expressed itself *principally* in fulfillment of the duties of the *calling* given through the *lex naturae*, and in this it took a peculiar neutral and *impersonal* character—one which served the rational structuring of the surrounding social *cosmos* (2002:75-76).

The primacy of charity, which is inextricably intertwined with the idea of the “calling” is what Weber saw as the bridge between Luther and Calvin’s initially otherworldly doctrines and the later measuring of the “usefulness of a calling... in practice, [by] its most important criterion... ‘*Profitability*’” (Weber, 2002:110). A crucial link between the reformation’s “Protestant ethic” and the “Spirit of Capitalism,” is, according to Weber, charity... or more specifically the fulfillment of God’s will on earth through people.

Weber saw charity, or, philanthropy as the “gateway” between the traditional and the modern because philanthropy, which is a measurable, this-worldly activity, finds its impetus in traditional religious teachings. In other words, philanthropy, which can be performed in a practically rational way, is an activity that finds religious reinforcement in Calvinism. What made Calvinist charity so conducive to Capitalism and practical rationality was its “this-worldly” orientation. Calvinists, focusing on “the social achievement of the Christian” reoriented their religious efforts towards the world and called it “charity.” In other words, Calvinism expanded and reoriented the charity downward to replace otherworldliness. Weber points out that

Certainly Catholicism has always, right up to the present, regarded Calvinism as the real enemy... the reason for the revulsion felt by Catholics and Lutherans alike lies in the *ethical* [Weber’s italics] peculiarity of Calvinism. Even the most cursory glance reveals that a completely different kind of relationship has here been created between religious life and earthly action than in either Catholicism or Lutheranism (Weber, 2002:33-34).

By reprioritizing religious activities towards this world, Calvinists further diminished the importance of otherworldly activities and increased “disenchantment.” This peculiar

ethical embrace of the worldly would create the fertile grounds needed for Capitalism's measurable, precise, concise, and worldly activities.

This Weberian history of the growth of modernity from a Christian doctrine is important to the Coptic community as it faces these ideas for the first time. At this point, I would like to take a few pages to return to the Coptic revivalists and show how Weber comes to bear on their visions of a modern Coptic community. Weber's observation that charity is the linking factor between practical rationality and value rationality is, I argue, the defining difference between Pope Shenouda and Bishop Samuel. As I will explore further on, Pope Shenouda will, throughout his long tenure as Patriarch of the Church, vigilantly fight all clergy who he saw as "Protestant." I argue that for Pope Shenouda, "Protestants" are any who place this worldly activity on a level plain as the Liturgical life of the congregants.

And while the SSM, taken as a whole, did not begin its path towards modernity, as Weber posits for Protestants, with the disenchantment of religion, individual leaders had different religious priorities. It is important to note, however, that all of the Sunday School Movement leaders were committed to being Orthodox to some extent—the majority of them became clergy. Sana Hasan, the only author to look at Copts through a Weberian perspective, astutely points out that the Sunday School Movement (SSM) leaders created a "modern Orthodoxy" which offered young Copts an

Ideology of transition which... tempered the frenetic mobility and the attendant anxiety of the post-revolutionary era, when one's place in society was determined not by one's birth but by how much money one was able to make. The moral discipline of the Sunday School generation,

with its emphasis on methodical work and perseverance, was excellent preparation for the kind of attention to detail and exactitude required by Egypt's newly modernized schools and commercial industrial establishments (70:2003)

Hasan argues that the Sunday School Movement (SSM) revivalists, by drawing on Coptic Orthodox spiritual teachings, specifically the ascetic teachings of the monastic tradition, were able to create an "Orthodox ethic" to match Weber's "Protestant ethic."

While Hasan describes Pope Shenouda as a "spiritual revivalist" and Bishop Samuel "social activist," she insists that both were modernists claiming that Pope Shenouda's "revivalism was rooted in a modern approach to historical scholarship brought to ancient texts" (Hasan, 2003:35) However, I argue that while both Shenouda and Samuel were modern in their scholarship, they differed in their philanthropy. Pope Shenouda had a very traditional view of philanthropy and championed charity funded by tithes. Bishop Samuel, on the other hand, was very modern in his view of philanthropy and sought international and local donors to fund his human development projects. While Hasan makes little of the differences in the philanthropies of these leaders, I argue that their understanding of the role of philanthropy in the community shaped their visions of "modernity" and "tradition." I argue that Pope Shenouda embraced a culturally bound modernity with a well-developed value rational system that intentionally clashed with practical rationality at the doorstep of the Church.

When referring to "traditional society"—the name given to societies unconcerned with practical rationality and economic development—certain scholars, unable to find seeds for capitalism, ridicule them as "backwards" Edward Banfield,

Robert Putnam, Francis Fukuyama, and others have, like Hasan, attempted to pick up the Weberian project of locating specific religious, cultural, and social values to undergird practical (economic) action within traditional societies. Banfield's seminal work, *The Moral Basis for a Backwards Society*, attempts to explain certain cultures' inability to embrace modern political and economic structures because of what he terms, "amoral familism." Banfield defines "amoral familism" as the maximization of "the material, short-run advantage of the nuclear family; [and the assumption] that all others will do likewise" (1958:85). "Amoral familism" limits individuals' voluntary action for the public good because of a sense of obligation *only* to his/her nuclear family; without voluntary action or civic cooperation, the political or economic structures of modern society fail to develop. This directly reflects Weber's claim that charity—which to his mind was a calling to order society according to God's will—is the basis for modern society.

In fact, while describing the Montegrano's (traditional community in southern Italy where Banfield lived and observed) work ethic and religious beliefs, Banfield finds that because their religious world view stipulates that "God is luck," the Montegrano do not value "thrift, work and enterprise" (1958:114). Meaning, since the Montegrano did not see God's will for society as being a structured, well-ordered, productive society, they had no incentive to order their lives as such. Without religious teachings inculcating charitable behavior, there was little supporting the Montegrano's involvement in public or civic life. Banfield then, in a note, compares this Montegrano belief with the Calvinists as described by Max Weber:

organization and arrangement of this cosmos is, according both to the revelation of the bible and to natural intuition, evidently designed by God to serve the utility of the human race. This makes labor in the service of impersonal social usefulness appear to promote the glory of God and hence to be willed by Him (1958:114).

By comparing the value rationalities of the Montegrinos with the Calvinists, Banfield evaluates the compatibility of religious beliefs with modernity—as distinguished by its spirit of capitalism.

This is an example of the two tracks scholars often build for traditional societies: a path towards Weberian modernization—or a path towards stagnation and “backwardness.” Backwardness in this situation refers to traditional social relationships that are not in line with modern capitalist practices. By drawing on this Weberian model, they accept his assertion that “the course of development... involves the bringing in of calculation into traditional brotherhood, displacing the old religious relationship” (Weber, 2003:256). Following this logic, advocates for civil society and development, implicitly work towards the displacement of traditional social and religious relationships with ones geared towards economic and political institutions.

In his search for traditional alternatives to the Protestant Ethic in various other countries, Francis Fukuyama, another seminal scholar in the field of civil society and developing nations, posits that

It is entirely possible that a-rational cultural traditions, practiced as a matter of habit and for the sake of other-worldly ends, can nonetheless advance utility maximization understood in a narrowly materialistic sense. This was the central argument of Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic...* An argument central to this book is similar to Weber’s: there are ethical habits, such as the ability to associate spontaneously, which are

crucial to organizational innovation and, therefore the creation of wealth (1995:37).

Fukuyama, here, is again reiterating the same Weberian path towards modernity through the “discovery” of value rational, or “a-rational,” “habits” that can pave the path towards “modernity,” again in the Weberian sense. In his comparison between China, France, Italy, and South Korea—all countries he calls “familistic,” to Japan and Germany, which he calls “high-trust societies,” Fukuyama repeats the thesis that traditional relationships are not conducive to economic development saying “not only did such societies [high-trust] move early to modern professional management, but they have been able to create more efficient and satisfying workplace relationships on the factory floor” (1995:12). Fukuyama, along with Banfield, both champion a clear progression away from traditional relationships and religious values towards relationships based off of “economic calculation.”

Robert Putnam, another seminal scholar of civil society, presents a similar argument but with surprising results to those of Fukuyama and Banfield. In his book, *Bowling Alone*, Putnam finds that American civil society, the gold standard for civil society since Tocqueville’s famous *Democracy in America*, has changed in a surprising way. Membership organizations, which build “social capital (features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit),” have declined (1995:2). Instead, these traditional membership associations have been replaced by “mass-membership organizations” where the “only act of membership consists in writing a check for dues or perhaps occasionally reading a newsletter” (1995:6). Putnam’s findings were used to justify a

redoubled effort to revitalize American civic life through the service learning and interfaith service learning movements (Dean Stover, 2003).

I highlight Banfield, Fukuyama, and Putnam as representatives of a larger discourse on civil society as being the harbinger of economic development, which, in agreement with Weber's thesis, leads to a capitalist society built on "purely teleological efficiency" and a social order he describes as "the polar night of icy darkness" (Weber, 1994:xvi). The idea of development, in this context, becomes the process through which societies transition from traditional communal or familial relationships to modern "civil societies" geared towards producing commodities. Gilbert Girst, a fierce critic of development in general, defines it as "a set of practices... which require... the general transformation and destruction of the natural environment and of social relations. Its aim is to increase the production of commodities" (1997:13).

Returning back to Pope Shenouda III's and Bishop Samuel's visions, we see the relationship between modernity and Coptic societal relations is clearest in their philanthropy. Boris Nikolov observes this relationship in 2007 in his dissertation on philanthropy and communal governance pointing out that employees of BLESS, embracing the modern "development" approach, "work in the name of development, not Christ... in more specific terms, the people involved do not do this as part of their Liturgical duties... but as 'fieldworkers,' volunteers,' 'activists,' ... which makes it possible to offer it outside the boundaries of the ecclesia" (2007:162). On the other hand, proponents of more traditional charity do not "challenge the existing boundaries between the two religious communities [Muslim and Christian], between religion and

society, the existing forms of religion and sociality which relegate Muslims and Christians in Egypt to different social spaces.” (2007:162). Nikolov’s observation about communal boundaries and the philanthropy type highlights the intra-communal implications of philanthropic activities. Traditional charity, with its Liturgical, communal orientation cannot be offered to anyone outside. Alternatively, development, being performed as a secular activity, can be offered outside of the community.

I agree with Hasan’s claim that both SSM leaders were “modernists,” but I argue that there were significant distinctions in their “modernities,” something Hasan fails to notice. Both are modernists in that they helped widen Copts sphere’s of allegiance past their traditional familial/tribal orientation. However, where they differ is in the scope. I argue that Bishop Samuel’s evangelical, “this worldly” orientation did not delineate boundaries around the Coptic community. Pope Shenouda, however, worked hard to build cultural and Liturgical walls around the community. By systemizing and expanding Liturgical, “otherworldly” activities, Pope Shenouda was able to create a distinct Coptic community governed and guided by a complex Liturgical corpus. Bishop Samuel was less focused on prioritizing the “Liturgical life of the Church” but rather its social services side—its “this worldly” philanthropy.

Scholars of civil society place “developing” nations in a hypothetical fork in the road forcing them to choose between “traditional” religion and community and “modern” economic and political institutions. This biased and fatalistic outlook places moral primacy on practical rationality and predetermines “modernity” as the end goal of “development.” It is implicit in development and civil society literature that

“modernity,” as most significantly defined by its economic and political institutions, is the only viable goal. Looked at from another angle, to become modern, societies need to develop *past* traditional familial or communal relationships into “civil societies” defined by their goal to create material wealth efficiently and peacefully. I argue that this tension between the traditional and the modern colored the relationship between Pope Shenouda and Bishop Samuel and continues to shape the debates on philanthropy in Egypt today.

I choose not to commit to either path, and to sidestep this debate as my interest lies not in the development of economic or political institutions or the development of “autonomous, rights-bearing individuals” that staff them. Rather I examine inter-religious social relationships. I choose to focus this thesis on the social consequences of both these paths, and in doing so, I hope to shed light on the possibilities that both paths present. In the conclusion, I would like to offer a third path, one that draws on tradition to cross boundaries for the sake of Christian love. I argue this in response to the larger conversation on civil society and development, rejecting both of them as I reject their economic and political end goals. I advocate for the maintenance of an ethnoreligious understanding of the Coptic community that maintains its semi-permeable boundaries, while at the same time embracing, what I believe to be, Christian, boundary-crossing philanthropy in imitation of the “philanthropos.”

Coptic Philanthropy: A Closer Look at Charity and Development

For the sake of clarity, I would like to go back and better define the terms I have been using thus far and to flesh out my purpose for using them. To define Philanthropy, I utilize Robert Payton's broad definition: "voluntary action for the public good." The breadth of this definition allows me to speak freely of all activities done without a profit motive or government coercion. The one caveat is governmental funding for non-governmental organizations, which although straddles the boundaries between public and private, will be considered philanthropy. In this thesis, the two main forms of philanthropy that will be discussed are charity and Human development.

"Charity," "Coptic charity," or "traditional charity" are all terms I use to refer to traditional forms, teachings, and practices regarding philanthropy within the Coptic Church before the introduction of human development by Bishop Samuel and the Archons. Traditional Coptic teachings on charity include sacrifice, renunciation of the world, simplicity, trust in God, secrecy, and humility. As I will argue throughout this thesis, traditional charity is a social cohesive, which ensures that, through sacrifice, the Coptic community is well preserved, and its most vulnerable members are taken care of. Charity's inter-communal role can be found in other traditional communities, however, because of the Copts' highly Christian orientation, there can be found, peppered into the Coptic gamut of saint stories, anecdotes reflecting the peace building power of charity that crosses boundaries. These stories will be important to the project of building inter-religious philanthropic traditions.

Traditional Coptic philanthropy has been a core component of Coptic life, and can be seen in the spiritual teachings of the Church and the lives of its saints. It is intimately tied with building and maintaining a religious Coptic identity. Anonymity is encouraged and faith in the Church's use of funds is unquestioned because tithes are given to God, and their effect on this world is irrelevant to the giver. Because charity is considered religious giving, and because it often comes in exclusive and competitive⁵ physical forms such as cash or in-kind donations, it is often parochial.

Charitable donations given to the Coptic Orthodox Church, in the form of "tithes," are used for various activities that include: religious education, monthly allowances to the poor, church buildings, and priest salaries. I consider all of these activities a part of a larger "Coptic charity" whose function is to maintain the entire community. Integral to my idea of "Coptic charity" is its holistic support of an otherworldly Liturgical community that incorporates charity as part of its Liturgical life. In this way, the community becomes self-sustaining and self-perpetuating. Liturgical life, as I interpret it, is, in essence, an attempt to live out a view of Heaven on earth. Heaven, while an illusive concept for many Western faiths, is concretely understood and portrayed by the Copts. Every Coptic Alter in every Church across the world is adorned with a massive icon of God on his throne surrounded by the Heavenly Hosts—most frequently represented by the 24 priests referred to in Revelations holding censors and wearing the traditional beard and dress of Coptic clergy performing the sacrament of

⁵ I use the term "competitive" in the economic "rival goods" sense. Money and in-kind donations are excludable goods that cannot be offered to the public. This type of giving is different from say, a workshop conducted by a volunteer to an open audience (non-rival)

the Eucharist (see picture below). In fact, the Copts view heaven as a never-ending liturgy, and frequently refer to the Mass as a few hours spent in heaven.

It is important to note that I use the term “charity” to refer to activities carried out by the Church and not by individual philanthropists acting on their own. By making this stipulation, I am able to compare the “programs,” “goals,” and “mission” of Coptic charity as articulated in the institution of the Coptic Church to those of development as embodied in a nonprofit organization. For the purposes of this thesis, I define the Coptic Church as the institutionalized clerical body, the teachings they approve, and congregants participating in its Liturgical life. However, because of the massive revival the Church underwent under the SSM leaders, the term “Coptic Church” will refer to the Church they created in the 20th century. Pope Shenouda’s active role in shaping the Church over the last century cannot be under-estimated. In fact, because of his authoritarian style and far-reaching vision for the Church, Pope Shenouda was able to spread the influence of the Church into the private lives of its parishioners.

The term “human development,” as I utilize it, draws on notions of humanity as made up of, as one of my professors so eloquently puts it, “autonomous, rights-bearing, individuals.” In their book, *Reinventing Development: Translating Rights-Based Approaches from Theory into Practice*, Paul Gready and Jonathan Ensor attempt to link human rights and development. According to them, human rights and development can be traced back to what is called “the first human rights revolution” during the era of the Enlightenment and the US Declaration of Independence (Gready, 2005:2). According to them, the modern era of human rights stems from the notion of the social contract and

the idea that an individual consents to be ruled, assuming, of course, that certain inalienable rights be respected by the ruler (Gready, 2005:2). National development practices developed directly after the Second World War and the subsequent drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration was based on the understanding that there is a “social contract” that states are bound to uphold, changing the idea of power changed from who can govern, to who can uphold rights (Gready, 2005:5).

At its onset in the 1940s, “development” referred to aiding economic growth in the “global south” (Hefferan, Adkins, Occhipiniti, 2009:1). Economic growth was seen as shifting national economics towards production thus increasing national revenue and spurring modernization (Hefferan, Adkins, Occhipiniti, 2009:2-3). This type of development was predicated on the notion that States can bring about modernity through institutionalizing “Western-defined notions of progress” away from “presumed backwardness” (Hefferan, Adkins, Occhipinti, 2009:1). Aid at this time was given directly to governments and was often politically motivated and caused suspicion. Over time, however, this belief that Governments have the ability and motivation to empower their citizens economically faltered and gave way to neoliberal theories of free markets (2009:4).

As a direct result of this shift to neoliberalism, Faith-Based-Organizations were introduced as an alternative to national governments. Shifting the focus away from governmental intervention to spur market capitalism, practitioners of development work began investing in non-governmental organizations to catalyze the free market as

evidenced by USAID's shift towards Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs) during the 1980s. The introduction of these organizations was also meant to challenge governmental hegemony in accordance with neoliberalism's small government preferences. In relation to the topic of this thesis, I see these organizations as also setting up a challenge to the traditional hegemony of the Coptic Orthodox Church in the lives of its parishioners.

The Sphere Project was initiated in 1997 to create a set of minimum standards that organizations must adhere to. Human rights discourse played a significant role in the creation of the Sphere Handbook standards (Gready, 2005:7). While humanitarian aid was still the dominant paradigm, the relationship with human rights discourse gave it its developmental understanding. Building upon this relationship was the Nobel Prize winning Economist Amartya Sen who "has now become famous for challenging the technocratic approach to managed, welfarist economic development and introducing the notions of freedom, agency, capabilities and entitlement" (Gready, 2005:19). Sen's focus on capabilities and entitlement helped broaden the understanding of human rights past socio-economic and civil-political rights to include a right to the "ability to choose and achieve different and important aspects of life" (Gready, 2005:19).

While Sen's approach is not explicitly geared towards building political and economic institutions, it begins and ends with a belief that all humans are "modern" in the sense that they are all autonomous, rights-bearing individuals who need to be set free. In fact, the central theme that runs through Sen's varied works is a strong belief

that humans are capable of “prioritizing reason” in order to make choices that are best for their lives (otherwise he wouldn’t be an economist!). And based off of this belief, Sen advocates for development work that creates environments that give individuals the freedom to choose what they want to do with their lives. This ends does not necessarily conflict with the Coptic Church’s goals, but they do differ. Coptic charity, as used by the Church, does have a clear purpose of maintaining the loyalties of its parishioners.

Chapter 2

Contextualizing the Sunday School Movement and its Leaders

The single most influential factor in the Sunday School Movement (SSM) has to be Egypt's changing economic, political, and social landscape during the early to mid 20th century—changes that prompted the Church's massive internal revival as a response. In order to understand the need for a revival of the scope the SSM leaders undertook it is essential to understand the circumstances in which these leaders acted. This is why I provide this brief historical account of the SSM and its leaders. Understanding the challenges that the Copts faced during the 20th century is important to understanding the differing responses of the revivalists. This history aims to accomplish two separate, but interrelated things: 1) to introduce the economic, political, social, and cultural context in which the SSM began and to 2) introduce the different revivalists, their social and religious backgrounds, and their responses to Egypt's shifting landscape within the modern versus traditional debate.

Initially, the SSM began during the late 1800s as an organized attempt to educate young Copts about their faith during weekly Sunday School sessions in response to a rise in the number of Catholic and Protestant missionaries in Egypt. Beginning with the official recognition of Protestant missionaries as a "separate entity" in the empire by the Ottomans during the 1850s, the American United Presbyterian Mission sent 7 consecutive missions from 1854-1861 which settled in Upper Egypt (Tadros, 2013:99). These missions established schools that held great allure for wealthy Copts who wanted

to give their children “Western” educations. The first school opened in 1855 and “by 1870 there were twelve of them with 633 students... in 1897... there were 168 schools with 11,014 students” (Tadros, 2013:100).

Besides the benefit of these Western-style schools for children, the missionaries were also a means for making connections outside of Egypt with Western countries. In fact, many prominent Coptic families with strong connections with Europeans and Americans would eventually convert to Protestantism, and “while there may not have been direct causation, there was certainly a correlation between their occupation as counselors and their conversions” (Tadros, 2013:100). These mass conversions to Protestantism pushed the Coptic Church to re-articulate its faith to its parishioners. Pope Kyrillos IV (1851-1864), who is commonly known as “Father of Reform,” dedicated his short tenure as Pope to establishing Coptic schools (which included Egypt’s first school for girls) and writing and disseminating theological rebuttals to Protestant missionaries using the only privately owned printing press in Egypt (Coptic Synexarioum). After his death, missions continued to increase through the papacies of several inactive pontiffs.

However, with the ordination of Kyrillos V (1874-1927), the Church resumed its confrontation with the Protestant theology. Perhaps the most important figure in this conflict was Pope Kyrillos V’s personal deacon, Habib Girgis. Girgis, to whom I will return soon, is considered the “father of the Sunday School Movement.” Girgis would institutionalize the SSM, as well as admit and encourage younger generations of Copts

to the movement. He would have the foresight to accept the young leaders when the rest of the clergy from his generation rejected them.

While Habib Girgis was leading his SSM during the 1920s, the first cohorts of Coptic youth graduated Cairo University (then King Farouk University). These youths graduated into a country that was in the throes of social unrest. The Egyptian economy, was, at the start of the 20th not in the hands of Egyptians, but owned mostly by colonialists and other European businessmen. In fact, by the 1920s, more than 90% of the Egyptian economy was owned by British, Armenian, and Greek businessmen (Hasan, 2003:44-45). These Europeans lived mostly in Cairo and Alexandria where they made up 10%-20% of the population, and were, for the most part, partial in their dealings with Egyptian “Wogs” (Ghali, 1964). Education and a lack of opportunity for Egyptians gave credence to a nativist Islamic movement that began to show itself during the 1930s, and then more so after World War II. Hasan Al-Banna was just starting his Muslim Brotherhood in the 1920s.

Socially, the Coptic position is shaped by two factors: external hostilities and the internal visions of the SSM leaders. Habib Guriguis’s movement, initially a response to educate Copts against Protestant missionaries, grew to be a “staunchly Orthodox” reform movement (Hasan, 2003; Tadros, 2007). Along with Protestant missionaries came other Western developments, namely British Colonialism (1881-1922). While some Copts found Colonialism to their benefit (Mohamed, D., 1968:319), the vast majority joined hands with Muslims to rid themselves of the British (Hasan, 2003:36). This period of anti-colonialism and moderate political freedoms is often called the

“golden age of Egypt” (Mohamed, D., 1968; Hasan; 2003). However, this “golden age” was characterized by vast inequalities of wealth and power (Hasan; 2003:xiv), and a native Egyptian elite that hardly spoke Arabic.

Curtailling this unity was the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) in response to an Egypt that was economically dominated by Greeks, Armenians and British businessmen. Taking up the banner of Islam, the MB was able to give power to ordinary Egyptians, but at the same time sidelining the Copts who were already in a precarious position (Scott, R.M., 2010; Hasan, S.S, 2003). Gamal Abdel Nasser, who deposed King Farouk, the puppet king supported by Great Britain, ushered in an era of socialism and the Egyptian attempt at “modernity” (Hasan, 2003, Tadros, 2013). Nasser’s newly created system of higher education for all Egyptians, combined with “cheap Islamization of the State,” (Bayat, 2007:204) led to the creation of an educated, ambitious, but excluded generation of Copts.

Joining the Church as Sunday school teachers in Habib Girgis’s SSM, ambitious young, educated leaders would take it upon themselves to modernize the Church. Three of these young educated men took the reins of the SSM: Saad Aziz who became Bishop Samuel, Nazir Jayid who became Pope Shenouda, and Youssef Eskandar who became Fr. Matta El Miskeen (Mathew the Poor). While each of these reformers left their mark on the Church, Pope Shenouda III’s vision would eventually have the most lasting effect.



Habib Girgis, the father of the Sunday School Movement is, as of 2014, a recognized saint in the Coptic Orthodox Church.



Pope Shenouda III (Nazir Jayid)



Bishop Samuel (Saad Aziz)



Fr. Matta El Miskeen (Youssef Eskander)



God and the Heavenly Hosts

During the 1930s and '40s, the Sunday School Movement and a revived theological seminary drew a new generation to the Church. These new adherents were not “illiterate adherents who followed the clergy blindly, but instead some of the best minds Egypt had to offer” (Tadros, 2013:170). The three leaders of the Sunday School Movement came from two different geographical areas of Cairo: Saad Aziz (Bishop Samuel) led a reform movement from Giza, a tremendously impoverished area of Cairo; Nazir Jayid (Pope Shenouda) led the revival in Shubra, an area of Cairo with a disproportionately high concentration of Copts. Youssef Eskandar (Fr. Matta El Miskeen), another brilliant leader of the movement, was outside of Cairo but served alongside Jayid (Pope Shenouda); Eskandar (Fr. Matta) was an advocate of monastic reform based on the examples of the early church fathers (Tadros, 2013:171-172).

Bishop Samuel was a graduate of the American University in Cairo, and later earned an MA from Princeton Theological Seminary in Pastoral Theology (Hasan; 2003:95). He was deeply committed to ecumenicalism and believed that leading a good Christian life meant to work with and for the needy; “Love thy neighbor was his working philosophy” (Tadros, 2013:176). Bishop Samuel’s commitment to development work in Egypt connected him with an extensive network of international German and Swedish funders and stakeholders, many of whom were Protestant (Hasan, 2003). He led a revival that was “less concerned with the issue of a return to the origins of the Coptic church and more with the debates on poverty in the Third World that engaged the attention of Western Christianity” (Hasan, 2003:95). Bishop Samuel was the first to

begin the Coptic Church's missions to Africa as well as the first person to commit to serving the Coptic diaspora (Interview, 2015, Dr. Meawad).

Economically, Bishop Samuel was in favor of fiscal liberalism and encouraged "the Copts to forget about the public sphere... and to invest their energy and talents instead in education and in the private sector" (Hasan, 2003:99). Bishop Samuel's disillusionment with Nasser's socialist policies started with the nationalization of one of his biggest projects, a Coptic Hospital in Cairo, by President Nasser (Dr. Meawad, 2015, Interview). The nationalization of this hospital seems to have convinced him that Copts living in diaspora were better off settling there and starting their own churches where they wouldn't face discrimination from the state. It was after this incident that he began increasing his pastoral visits to European and North American Coptic communities (Dr. Mewad, 2015, Interview).

Bishop Samuel, disagreeing with Nasser's socialist policies found little inclination to engage with his government. However, he benefited indirectly from Sadat's liberal economic policies through his connections with wealthy Coptic businessmen who grew rich in this new system. Bishop Samuel would later agree to act as the representative of the Copts in Sadat's government during the house arrest of Pope Shenouda—something that earned him both the wrath of the Patriarch as well as harsh criticism from the majority of ordinary Copts. The Bishop would never regain his popularity with the

community after this “betrayal.” Today, Bishop Samuel’s legacy is still very controversial among the few who remember him⁶.

Theologically, Bishop Samuel was an ardent advocate of ecumenicalism and inter-denominational dialogue. He introduced the Coptic Church to the World Council of Churches (WCC) in the 1960s and would later represent it in a “whole gamut of such associations and participated in numerous religious conferences in Europe South America, Africa, and the Middle East, where the focus on pastoral concerns made possible a dialogue free of acrimony that discussion of different dogmas and church doctrines aroused” (Hasan, 2003:98). Bishop Samuel’s dialogue with the Catholic Church resulted in improved relations as evidenced by this statement from the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Willebrands saying:

We recognize that the setting up of Catholic institutions has at times resulted in expansion of the Catholic Church at the expense of the Orthodox. Therefore we could accept a formulation of a recommendation, which states that, the Catholic Church carry out its pastoral activities within the framework of structures and institutions already existing, and that any changes in these be determined uniquely by needs of its own faithful (Attia, 2001:241)

Here, the Cardinal agrees to end a century-long practice of converting Copts into the Catholic Church that had cost the Coptic Church thousands of parishioners. Bishop Samuel’s inter-denominational and international relationships would lead to significant funding for his various development projects. However, among the majority of other

⁶ See recent twitter argument between several well known Coptic activists: <https://twitter.com/dioscorusboles/status/559764236180930560>
See also: <http://www.roger-pearse.com/weblog/2009/10/01/samuel-al-suryani/>

Coptic clergy, this ecumenicalism was not well received and was seen as dangerous and as “Western acculturation” (Hasan, 2003:97).

Opposing Bishop Samuel and his followers were the followers of Nazir Jayid (who would become Pope Shenouda III) in the Shubra district of Cairo. Pope Shenouda III was an active member of the SSM since its inception, editing its official publication *The Sunday School Magazine* (which would later become “El Keraza” Magazine) until his death in 2012 (Tadros, 2013:77). Preferring politics and poetry, and intensely averse to criticism and dissent, his intellectual disposition would lead to clashes with both Bishop Samuel and Fr. Matta (Tadros, 2013:176). His charisma earned him great popularity among his parishioners who attended his weekly sermons to listen to his opinions on topics concerning “every aspect of life” (Tadros, 2013:176).

Pope Shenouda’s revival, which was based out of St. Anthony’s Church in Shubra, was very much a call for a revival of the *Coptic* identity (Hasan, 2003). According to Hasan, Shenouda believed that “revitalization of the church depended on their digging for their spiritual roots, on looking backward and inward toward their own heritage, which had been largely lost over the centuries” (2003:77). Shenouda’s Coptic revivalism attracted talented scholars such as Wahib Attalah who later become Bishop Gregorius of the Bishopric of Advanced Coptic Research; who, in his youth wrote a 538-page doctoral dissertation on the etymology of Greek words in the Coptic language (Hasan, 2003:205). The revivalists drew on the Church’s rich history, its Synexarium (hagiographies of Coptic saints), the Coptic language, its elaborate hymnologies, and its monastic traditions to reconstruct a Coptic identity. Doing this gave Copts something to

be proud of in the face of a country growing more and more hostile towards them (Hasan, 2003).

At the heart of Pope Shenouda's revival was an allegiance to a very specific *Coptic* theology around which he necessitated participation in a *Coptic* Liturgical life. He spent his early years as a Sunday School teacher in Shubra Cairo, fighting against Bishop Samuel and his "Protestant" followers in Giza (who in turn fought back against Pope Shenouda and his "Dervishes")(Hasan, 2003:78). As Patriarch, he continued his vigilant crusade to keep the Coptic Church free of Protestant ideas, about which he said:

Believe me, the most dangerous problem is that Protestantism wears black turbans to work in the Orthodox Church. If it's a Protestant brother dressed in a handsome suit you may reject his talk. But if wearing a black turban he's considered a father. And that is the worst problem we are facing now a days. People spread Western ideas in the church. You would find such principals crawling in the church... When one of these priests organizes a meeting, all the Protestants in the area attend it and start shouting 'Hallelujah and Glory' and it turns to chaos. If he preached other words they would leave and his meeting would vanish... Orthodoxy is Orthodoxy"(Pope Shenouda, 1991).

Pope Shenouda's life long struggle to keep Protestant ideas out of the Coptic Church was necessary to maintaining the importance of the Sacraments of the Church—upon which Liturgical life is built.

Regarding his relationship with other "Liturgical" Churches such as the Catholics, Pope Shenouda introduced the practice of rebaptism to undermine their sacramental authority. In the same letter from Cardinal Willebrands to Bishop Samuel, the Cardinal mentions this practice as a hindrance to full cooperation between the two Churches saying:

Furthermore, there is one point that I think I must mention in all frankness. The authorities of our Church in Rome will make every effort to implement the recommendations of the Vienna meeting, along the lines I have indicated. However, in our contacts with Catholic representatives at all levels – bishops, agents of Catholic fund agencies, religious superiors, laymen – we have encountered a hesitation to go further towards implementing the Vienna proposals because of a practice, recently introduced in the Coptic Orthodox Church, of refusing to recognize baptism conferred in the Catholic Church and therefore of insisting that this holy sacrament be conferred again on any Catholic who wishes to enter the Orthodox Church. By questioning the validity of Catholic baptism in these cases, the Coptic Orthodox Church seems to deny the very existence of the Catholic Church with its hierarchy, liturgy, sacraments, etc. which have their foundation in the sacrament of baptism. This practice has been the occasion of crises of conscience and of bitterness among Catholics. Many individuals and organizations see it as an obstacle to their putting themselves at the service of the Orthodox authorities and to establishing the cooperation we all desire. Until this practice, which has not been part of the long tradition of our Church, is changed, we will continue to have difficulty in receiving cooperation from many Catholics in our efforts to implement the recommendations of the common declaration of Pope Paul VI and Pope Shenouda III as well as those of the various meetings of the Joint Commission. I must ask you therefore, that even if no public or formal declaration about this be made on your part, something be worked out to bring this practice to an end, as a matter of fact, in all situations in which a Catholic enters your Church (Attia, 2001:241-242).

This letter from Cardinal Willebrands was sent in 1977, exactly 6 years after Pope Shenouda's elevation to the position of Patriarch. In introducing rebaptism, the Pope undermines the sacramental power of the Catholic Church and, therefore, in essence, its religious legitimacy. By doing this, Pope Shenouda was able to reserve salvation exclusively for adherents of the Coptic Orthodox Church and practitioners of *its* Liturgical life. Bishop Samuel, however, is said to have "supported the cause of women and condemned the denial of Catholic and Protestant baptism" (Mostyn, 2001:32).

Shenouda's vision for a revived Coptic Church reclaiming its own glorious past (pre-Chalcedon) was intended to give Coptic identity the strength it needed to stand up to an increasingly hostile State under President Sadat (Hasan, 2003). The Copts, led by Pope Shenouda III, decided to break away from their traditional acquiescence and to fight for Coptic rights (Hasan, 2003; Tadros, 2013). In response to a 1972 incident where a chapel was burned down without a State response, Pope Shenouda sent an assembly of one hundred bishops and priests to hold vigil at the site, telling them "to hold their ground even if it meant being shot at" (Hasan, 2003:107).

This tactic of opposition was novel to a Coptic population that had been acquiescent towards religious discrimination since their expulsion from the council of Chalcedon in 457 AD (Otto, 1999:55). Pope Shenouda's direct political actions were perceived by some as instigating, and gave birth to the myth "that everything had been fine in Egypt between its Muslims and Christians until Shenouda became pope" (Tadros, 2013:185). President Sadat adopted this view as evidenced by his inflammatory rhetoric and accusations of Pope Shenouda of trying to create a "state within a state" (Hasan, 2003:109).

Direct political actions, even Pope Shenouda's nonviolent forms, were met with harsh political repercussions and eventually led to his arrest in 1981. An interesting story about "the straw that broke the camel's back" was Sadat's anger after having been met by "a hundred thousand" diaspora Copts protesting Sadat's discriminatory policies in Egypt led to his decision to arrest Pope Shenouda (Medina, 1981). After his release in 1985 under President Mubarak, Pope Shenouda reemerged appearing not as the "same

fiery pope who had traded blows with Sadat but a broken man” (Tadros, 2013).

Shenouda no longer relied on a direct political action such as sit-ins and fasts, rather he himself took on the role of past Archons as the mediator with the State. Hasan explained this sudden transformation as a result of the decline, deaths, and migration of the Archon class, leaving the post of spokesperson or mediator for the Copts open (2003:113). Pope Shenouda’s assumption of this role was the latest maneuver in the centuries-long struggle between well to do Coptic laity, the Archons, and the Coptic clergy.⁷

Pope Shenouda’s brief period of political opposition came in response to an increasingly conservative Islamic movement which was engaging with the Sadat/Mubarak regimes in a contest over the title of the true bearers of Islam (Bayat, A., 2007:137). The Islamist movement in Egypt, having successfully dominated the social sphere, was stopped at the “state’s doorstep” and stagnated, causing the movement to experience “a process of simultaneous decline and fragmentation, as conservative religiosity, individualized piety, and the ‘secularreligious state’ converged”⁸ (Bayat, A., 2007:138). The “secularreligious state” being the product of conservative, individualized

⁷ Ever since the establishment of a well to do Coptic class or “Archons” (from the Greek word for ruler or lord) under Mohammad Ali during the early 19th century, there has been a struggle for control over the Church’s endowments between these Archons and the clergy. These tensions culminated with the banishment of Pope Kyrillos V in 1853 by the ruler of Egypt at the request of the Archons. He was eventually reinstated due to popular demand from the Coptic congregation.

⁸ Bayat uses the term “secularreligious state” to talk about the Egyptian government that while nominally secular, began embracing its population’s increasingly religious sensibilities in order to provide a religious alternative to Islamic groups. This involved raising the status of Al-Azhar to that of official representative of Islam in Egypt. In other words, the State unofficially adopted a “moderate” form of Islamism that would rival and defend against anti-government Islamist groups.

piety, and a paternalistic, nativist State was marked by a “remarkable stagnation in religious and intellectual thought” (Bayat, A., 2007:138).

For the Copts, this “secularreligious state” stood idly by as Coptic jewelry stores were looted, Coptic Churches burned, and Coptic girls raped and forced to convert to Islam (Hasan, 2003:107). By the early 1990s, Egyptian society, and State had undergone an Islamic “revolution by stealth” (Bayat, A., 2007:138) which effectively excluded Coptic Christians from civil society. In this state of heightened Islamic religiosity, Copts were barred from specific social positions which society deemed inappropriate for them to occupy, such as educational posts, gynecology, obstetrics, and mass media; all areas that could “taint or corrupt” pious Muslims (Zeidan, D., 1999:58). In response, Copts, led by the now politically acquiescent Pope Shenouda, sieged themselves, at least socially, within the walls of their Churches (Hasan, 2003; Tadros, 20013; Nikolov, 2009; Zeidan, D., 1999).

The third revivalist was Youssef Eskandar or Fr. Matta El Meskeen (Matthew the Poor) who is considered the “greatest theologian the Coptic Church ever produced in its two-thousand-year history,” writing 181 books in his lifetime (Tadros, 2013:176). Similar to Nazir Jayid (Pope Shenouda), his vision was a revivalist one, but one relegated to spirituality and the practice of sacraments only. He was critical of social work and politics, fearing the development of a “patron/client dependency between the clergy and the community” (Tadros, 2013:176) and was a big advocate of the monastic life. While Jayid (Shenouda) and Eskandar (Matta El Miskeen) had shared a common vision

during the first days of the reform movement, they later had a falling out that was quite public.

Hasan argues that all three of these reformers were modern in that they drew on traditional texts to inculcate essential habits necessary for functioning in a modern (institution-wise) Egypt, she fails to distinguish between the key differences between Pope Shenouda's partial modernity, and Bishop Samuel's "Christian modernity." Pope Shenouda was modern in that he worked to broaden Coptic allegiances, especially in the villages, to embrace the whole of the ecclesia rather than just family. In other words, Pope Shenouda worked to expand what Banfield called "amoral familism" to "amoral Coptic communalism." Bishop Samuel's focus on ecumenicalism blurred communal lines as it worked to undermine the theological specificity at the core of Coptic Liturgical exceptionalism. Bishop Samuel's development and evangelical work reflected his broad *Christian* identity while Pope Shenouda's communally based Coptic charity reflected his *Coptic* identity. While all the SSM leaders understood the need for modern persons in order to take advantage of Egypt's modern institutions, each leader's allegiances shaped their vision of the Coptic community.

Bishop Samuel, identifying with a Western Christian identity, worked to carry out what he perceived to be God's will on earth: the development of individuals who worship Christ. In other words, his allegiances were to a broad, worldwide *Christianity* and development philosophy not interested in the specific theological differences (and Liturgical practices) that made the Copts "exceptional." Pope Shenouda, however, saw individuals within the context of the Coptic community. For him, education,

employment, and wealth were important because, as I will discuss later on, a good Copt “partners with God” in his/her finances, time, and talent. Successful individuals, for Pope Shenouda, made up a successful community and vice versa.

The end result of their efforts was a well-educated, relatively well-off community that was better able to function in a newly modernized Egypt. The reformers were able to use what Hasan called an “Orthodox ethic” that functioned in a similar way to Weber’s Protestant ethic. However, because of the eventual hegemony of Pope Shenouda’s vision, the Copts’ Orthodox ethic—which is not rooted in Weber’s disenchantment of religion, but in a “Liturgical life”—tied individual success to Liturgical, communal participation.

While all three were products of the SSM, each had a different vision about the Church’s role in relation to the state and in the lives of the Coptic congregation. Nurturing and aiding these young leaders was Pope Kyrillos VI, who was selected as pope in 1959 following Pope Yousab (Tadros, 2013). Pope Kyrillos VI gave credence to the SSM by ordaining both Bishop Samuel and Bishop Shenouda as the first “general bishops” in the Coptic Church’s history. Bishops Samuel and Shenouda were assigned to the newly created Bishopric of Ecumenical and Social Services (BLESS) and the Bishopric of Education, respectively.

As the overview of the Coptic Church’s revival shows, development, and ecumenicalism, or inter-religious cooperation, both have their roots in the ideas of Bishop Samuel and his BLESS. On the other hand, Pope Shenouda’s focus on reviving an

authentically Coptic Orthodox identity, and his use of Church charity to do it, came at the expense of most inter-religious cooperation. The thoughts of both of these leaders still exist in the Church today, albeit few people still remember Bishop Samuel. Pope Shenouda III's life work has been accomplished; he created a revived and strengthened Coptic Orthodox community that now exists worldwide, however, the effects of an all-encompassing Coptic identity has placed Copts in a very precarious position. Copts now live with a very real fear of religious genocide, a fear that was most evident on the faces of Copts after the 2012 elections which brought in the MB into power, followed by an equally visible sigh of relief at their ouster in 2013.

In the following chapter, I will explore historic and contemporary Coptic identities from which the leaders of the Sunday School Movement have drawn to shape their own identity makeup. The reformers, coming from a monastic tradition, have been heavily influenced by monastic teachings and culture. Archons, the traditional lay leaders of the community, were quickly losing their rapport, creating a power vacuum that SSM leaders quickly filled. Having revived the community and consolidated power, they engaged in the creation of a new Coptic identity, that of the servant. Servants, as the name suggests, are involved in carrying out the philanthropic projects of the Church, but unlike the Archons, they have little individual power in the hierarchy. An exploration of these three identities can help explain the actions of the reformers as well as be a resource for the creation of new identities. The following chapter will explore (1) monastic teachings on philanthropy, (2) the Archons, their philanthropy and their changing identities, and (3) the servant and contemporary Coptic teachings on service. It

hopes to create a vivid picture of past and present Coptic philanthropy through traditional Coptic texts, primary historical texts relating to the Archons, recent lectures on service and giving by Pope Shenouda and other bishops, and interviews with current and past servants in the Church.

Chapter 3

The Monk and The Servant: Charity as *a Part* of Liturgical Life

In a newsletter that I received from Santa Verena Charity, a Coptic diaspora nonprofit managed by Bishop Serapion of the Diocese of Los Angeles, the logic of a specific strand of Coptic thinking on philanthropy was made clear to me. This newsletter, being written in the classic sermonizing style of a Bishop to his parishioners, is replete with the monastic ethos of obedience and tradition applied to philanthropy. In this charity's newsletter, the bishop specifically instructs his parishioners to not give out of emotion for the poor, rather out of a fulfillment of a commandment from God. These instructions by Bishop Serapion reflect the close interplay between the Coptic monastic community and its lay teachings. I will return to the bishop's newsletter shortly, but first, I would like to expand on the relationship between the laity and the monastic community.

Coptic leadership is chosen from among Egypt's desert dwelling monks, people who, at least ostensibly, have committed their lives to completely otherworldly ends. In fact, according to Mark Gruber, a scholar who studied Coptic monasticism extensively argues, "the credibility of the monastic community rests on its opposition to secular views and symbols" (Gruber, 1995: 74-75). Coptic monasteries are, according to Gruber, the "nexus of Coptic Cosmology" and "anchor people into a church" (Gruber, 1995:81). Today, with the demise of the Archon class and the consolidation of power by the clergy, the community looks to the monastic community for both spiritual as well as

communal leadership. The leadership, in turn, looks to the Coptic monastic tradition for its spiritual guidance. In fact, during an interview with the younger brother of a prominent member of the Sunday School Movement, and close friend of Bishop Samuel, Dr. Atef Meawad was adamant in stressing the importance of the SSM leaders' decisions to join the monasteries as the key element in their success. Dr. Meawad mentioned several other popular revivalist movements funded by the children of the earlier Archons that failed because of their refusal to change the church from within.

The decision made by the SSM leaders to join the monasteries was in itself an act of sacrifice on behalf of the community. These Coptic youth were the cream of the community's crop—they were the first generation to obtain university educations and were well positioned to climb Egypt's newly created ladder of upward social and economic mobility. Their decision to take the vows of monasticism and to "die to the world," reflects their commitment to both the ecclesiastical structure of the Church as well as its traditional spiritual teachings. In fact, both Pope Shenouda and Fr. Matta El Miskeen not only took the monastic vows, they each voluntarily chose to dedicate portions of each year to hermetical lives without human contact. The SSM was not only a revival for the laity; it was also a movement to "repopulate the desert." Fr. Matta would dedicate the rest of his life to reinvigorating the monasteries and would refuse all higher ecclesiastical ranks offered to him. It is a well-known fact that monks in his monastery were the most theologically educated, fecund monks who sought the contemplative life only. In fact, there was not a single bishop ordained from St. Macrious monastery under Fr. Matta's abbotship, a reflection of his reservations against

the Church stepping into the role of communal leadership. For him monastics were to be spiritual guides for the world—setting the highest example of religious life.

The first part of this chapter will delve into classical monastic views on service and its place in a good Christian life. It will cover the two main acts of philanthropy in the life of the monk: the initial renunciation of the world, and the hospitality that monks offer to other travelers, monastics and hermits. It will also show how the decision to live a monastic life is a sacrifice that set the monastics as spiritual leaders for the entire Coptic community. The second part of this chapter will show how the SSM leaders, specifically Pope Shenouda, were able to create and mobilize cadres of “Servants” who focus on maintaining and perpetuating the Liturgical and spiritual life of the community. Through interviews and conversations with servants, priests, church leaders, and the sermons of Pope Shenouda, I was able to gain insight into the end goals of the Church.

The Monk: Spirituality and Sacrifice

A return to Bishop Serapion's newsletter leads nicely into a discussion of the influence that monasticism has had on Coptic philanthropy. As background, the Coptic Church, like many other Orthodox Churches, selects its bishops from among its monks in Egypt's many monasteries. Unlike the Catholic Church where bishops and cardinals are selected from among the priests, Coptic priests must be married and, therefore, are ineligible for higher ranks within the Church. Coptic Bishops are usually selected by either the Pope directly from a monastery or are recommended by the head of a monastery who is usually a bishop himself. During the recent revival, laymen with a desire for celibacy and who showed strong leadership skills in church services were often guided by their fathers of confession towards a specific monastery where they were groomed for the post of Bishop. Bishop Serapion himself was found and recruited from Upper Egypt by the current Bishop of Youth, Bishop Moses, when he was a Medical school student/servant in his church in the city of Assiut (Hasan, 2003:185). To start the discussion of Bishop Serapion's vision of what Coptic charity should look like, I would like to point out that while he was chosen as the head of the progressive Bishop Samuel's BLESS, he was not fully committed to Bishop Samuel's vision of philanthropy. In fact, according to Hasan, he preferred funding projects that covered the basic human necessities (2003:147).

The newsletter I received for the month of March 2014 continues a conversation started several years back by Bishop Yousef, Bishop of the Southern Diocese. In a letter written in 2009 to the parishioners of the Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern

United States, distributed in both Arabic and English, both Bishops jointly condemn organizations that abuse “the orphans by printing their pictures in magazines or in reports” and call on “all the Church’s children to reject this non-Christian method of helping the orphans and not to encourage those non-ecclesiastical organizations”. This letter was a direct attack on the DC based Coptic Orphans (CO) and its CEO Nermien Riad. CO had grown significantly during the first decade of the 21st century. CO is the first and largest para-Church Coptic diaspora organization, its annual “contributions and grants” income have grown from \$428,960 in 1999 to over \$4.1 million in 2009. Coptic Orphans does utilize the photographs of some of the 24,000 orphans that they have worked with in Egypt since their inception in 1989 in their newsletters and literature.

This growth, as well as the growth in competing Church-run organizations such as Santa Verena Charity on the West Coast, H.O.P.E. in the Southern Diocese, and Care4NeedyCopts on the East Coast, could have spurred these comments, because as Nermien points out in an interview, “in the end we are competing for the Coptic dollar.” While this may be the case, there is merit in the Bishop’s point of view. In Santa Verena Charity’s newsletter, Bishop Serapion continues this 5 year long conversation by elucidating his contention with the practice of utilizing pictures of the poor in literature saying: “seeking the worldly ways in marketing and distribution of the poor children’s pictures among the donators as an excuse to create a connection between the donator and the child, is moving us away from the Christian way that Christ taught”. Bishop Serapion sees giving as religious practice to be incorporated into the Liturgical life of an

Orthodox Christian. Giving is not, as “Westerners” view it, a purchase of feel-good emotions, or “warm-glow” as nonprofit economist James Andreoni has said (1990).

Bishop Serapion, having been an ardent follower of Pope Shenouda, and his appointment as the Bishop of BLESS following Bishop Samuel’s assassination in 1981, is very much affected by Pope Shenouda’s his traditional identity and his vision of modernity. His view of philanthropy reflects a very monastic tradition of otherworldliness and ritualization. For him, “donation in Christianity relates to the relationship between the donator and Christ more than his relation to the poor, the more he increases the depth of his relation with Christ, his heart melts with love in giving and benevolence.” Philanthropy is a part of a healthy and complete Christian life, it cannot be pursued outside of that life, otherwise it becomes it becomes a human endeavor that “may succeed at raising money, but does not succeed in changing the hearts of the rich.” In other words, it becomes an economic endeavor where the nonprofit sells “warm-glow,” but as soon as the donor does not want to buy, or the organization fails to deliver, the giving ceases.

Bishop Serapion is able to tie philanthropy with the Liturgical life of Copts by placing it in the same category as ritualized fasting and prayer. Having written this newsletter for the months of Lent, he concludes saying “may God grant us in this period of Lent to incorporate our fasting with prayer and charitable deeds and may he grant us the diligence to strengthen our relationship with our living Christ that our hearts melt with compassion toward the needy putting all our needs in the hands of our loving God who cares for everyone.” Concluding the newsletter by reminding the congregation to

live a “life of submission” highlights the monastic emphasis on building a good Christian character through the practice of both sacramental as well as traditional ritual, and a trust in God as the telos. Reverence for ritual and tradition among the Copts stems from and is nurtured by, its monastic history and leadership. Human reason and emotion cannot be trusted to ensure the continuity of Coptic philanthropy, philanthropy must be ingrained in the Liturgical lives of the congregation and treated with the same meticulous reverence as other Christian sacraments and practices. In her unique study of contemporary Coptic nuns in Egypt, Pieterella van Droon-Harder points to obedience of traditional authority figures as the guard against the most “feared pitfalls” for the monk—“false claims to virtue and vainglory” (1995:131). Monks and nuns are required to obey their spiritual guides “even if the judgment or advice seems unwise, a monk or a nun can never trust his or her own thoughts since it is believed that it is through trusting their own judgment that monastics fall” (1995:131).

Dating back to the 3-5th centuries, the monastic community has always been deeply distrustful of human reason and emotion while emphasizing absolute obedience to the tradition and the fathers. Coptic literature is replete with the stories of the superhuman obedience of novice monks to their spiritual fathers at the expense of their own emotional, physical, and intellectual wellbeing. These stories are documented in the volumes of the Apophthegmata Patrum, translated as “*Paradise of the Desert Fathers*” or “*The Garden of the Monks*” which are read to the monks during mealtime. According to Van Droon-Harder, “next to the Bible, Bustan al-Ruhban (The Garden of the Monks) is indispensable. From it the monastic can learn the desert fathers’ and

mothers' opinion on each stage of spiritual growth" (1995:131). And as Bishop Serapion points out, the stories of the fathers' charitable deeds are scattered throughout the text beside stories of superhuman fasting, obedience, and prayer—their charity was part and parcel of their lives as monks. Philanthropy can be found in the lives of these desert dwellers in two distinct, reoccurring practices, the initial act of relinquishing all worldly wealth, and the practice of hospitality in the desert. Alongside the stories of monastic abstinence, fasting and prayer, are the stories of relinquishment and hospitality. The stories of the monks' nonattachment and hospitality shape the Coptic community's philanthropic actions today and are constantly mined to give credence to specific teachings and practices. I will discuss first monastic non-attachment.

Saint Antony, whose life was documented by Archbishop Athanasius's *Life of Antony* written in the 4th century, is widely considered the first Christian monk to popularize this lifestyle. Because of this, he is widely regarded in Egypt, along with his life and his teachings. His life, as related in the *Life of Antony*, is considered the blueprint for a monastic's life. Saint Antony is said to have been the son of wealthy fellaheen (Egyptian farmers) from Upper Egypt, whose death caused him to contemplate

How the apostles gave up everything and followed the Savior. There were those who sold their possessions, as is written in Acts: They brought them and laid them at the feet of the apostles so they could give them to those in need. And he reflected on what sort or what kind of hope there is for them in heaven. Pondering these things in his heart, he went to church and it happened that the gospel was being read: he heard the Lord saying to the rich man, "If you want to be perfect, go and sell all your possessions and give them to the poor, and come and follow me, and you will have treasure in heaven.

Now Antony, when he received the remembrances of the saints from God and reckoned in his heart that the passage had been read for his sake, immediately left that church, and the possessions that his parents had left him (there were three hundred very prosperous acres) these he freely gave away to the people of his village so they would not bother him or his sister about anything. All the rest of his lesser possessions he sold and, and collecting a great amount of money, gave it to the poor. He kept a few things for his sister... His sister he entrusted to some faithful women, knowing that they were virgins, so that she would live in virginity. He for his part left his household and devoted himself from then on to ascetic practice, disciplining and strengthening himself.

This first action of renunciation of worldly possessions is an essential step in the life of a monk, it is a reoccurring theme in Coptic monastic literature. It is important see these acts of giving as being a part of, and inspired by, the Saint's Christian life; they are not given in response to any type of perceived need or vision for a better world. In fact, it is an act of separation from the world, both its wealth and poverty. Today the consecration ceremony for the monk includes a traditional dirge to symbolize a life that is "dead to the world." The new life which begun in the monastery or the desert is a life of prayer, fasting, chastity, and hospitality.

Rooted in otherworldliness, this act of material renunciation is copied by lay Copts to a lesser extent in the practice of tithing. In the next chapter, I will discuss more fully how these monastic teachings are practiced among the laity, for now it suffices to say that for Copts both monastic renunciation and lay tithing have their roots in a nonmaterial vision of a living a good Christian life.

The other type of philanthropy found in the lives of these monastics is hospitality. Out of the fathers, the story of St. Bishoy the Perfect Man's hospitality is very influential in how Copts are taught to view the poor and stranger. St. Bishoy's

hagiography is found in the Synexarium or book of Coptic saints. Two things stand out in the life of St. Bishoy, his life of prayer and his hospitality:

It is said that because of St. Bishoy's love for God and his desire to be with Him always, he used to tie his hair with a rope to the ceiling of his cell in order to resist sleeping during his night prayers. St. Bishoy struggled in much asceticism and many worships that made him worthy to see the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are told that Saint Bishoy saw our Lord Jesus Christ on several occasions. On one such occasion, he carried Our Lord, Who met him as an old man on his way, and that it is for this reason that his body remains incorrupt to this day. Saint Bishoy is also said to have washed the feet of the Lord, Who visited him as a poor stranger.

In this story, Christ himself is seen as the homeless or the stranger. This way, the giver is taught to see the poor in a non-skeptical light, viewing them as being an image of Christ *always* deserving of the giver's attention. However, the story of St. Bishoy's hospitality and care for the stranger is always coupled with his intense life of prayer and love of Christ. According to the story, St. Bishoy, an old man himself, stopped to carry another elderly monk on his shoulders on his way to listen to a renowned hermit. Further down the road, the stranger's weight lessened and eventually this elderly monk revealed himself as Christ. In its retelling, the story of St. Bishoy attributes both the opportunity to see Christ as well as the Saint's very own philanthropic actions to his monastic life of prayer.

Interestingly, there is another strand of monastic thinking that absolves monks from their duty to be hospitable, one rooted in the idea of "spiritual warfare." In a sense, monastics see their lives as a struggle with the devil and must always be alert to

his trickeries. This hypersensitivity to demonic attempts on their spiritual life has led some monks to claim that “steadfastness in the cell keeps a monk in the right way” (Ward, 1975:11). Out of the desert fathers, the strongest proponent of a monk’s self-confinement to his own cell was Arsenius, the roman tutor to the children of Emperor Theodosius I. Arsenius fled Rome secretly for Alexandria and from there went to the desert of Scetis and placed himself under the guidance of Saint John the Short, the cell-mate of Saint Bishoy. As a monk, Arsenius was renowned for his learning, silence, and austerity. The sayings attributed to him are the basis of an influential monastic tradition of abstaining from even social interaction with other monks.

In explanation for his departure from Rome, it is said that “while still living in the palace, Abba Arsenius prayed to God these words, ‘Lord, lead me in the way of salvation.’ And a voice came saying to him, ‘Arsenius, flee from *men* and you will be saved’” [My emphasis] (Ward, 1975:.9). For Arsenius, absconding from social interaction is the path to salvation. In fact, Saint Arsenius’s most famous saying is “I have spoken much and have regretted, but silence, I have never regretted” and he is most well known for his practice of placing a stone in his mouth in order to disallow himself from engaging in conversation. For him, charity itself can be a stumbling block to the monk, only in the life of solitude and silence can a monk keep the right way. This conversation between a troubled monk and Saint Arsenius illustrates his wariness of charitable action outside of the cell:

Someone said to Abba Arsenius, ‘My thoughts trouble me, saying, “You can neither fast nor work; at least go and visit the sick for that is also charity.”’ But the old man, recognizing the suggestions of demons said to

him, 'Go, eat, drink, sleep, do no work, only do not leave your cell.' For he knew that steadfastness in the cell keeps a monk in the right way.

Because charity and hospitality cannot be seen as separate from a Christian life, they ought not to be practiced at the expense of a monk's spiritual wellbeing. Saint Bishoy was known to be hospitable and congenial while Saint Arsenius was austere and forbidding.

While each of these saints represent two vastly different opinions to charity, both stem from a monastic tradition that roots charity, hospitality, prayer, and fasting deeply within a Christian life. Another story involving Saint Arsenius illustrates the acceptance of both strands of charitable thinking into the Coptic tradition:

It was told of a brother who came to see Abba Arsenius at Scetis that, when he came to the church, he asked the clergy if he could visit Abba Arsenius... So, because Arsenius' cell was far away, they sent a brother with him. Having knocked on the door, they entered, greeted the old man and sat down without saying anything. Then the brother from the church said, 'I will leave you. Pray for me.' Now the visiting brother, not feeling at ease with the old man, said, 'I will come with you,' and they went away together. Then the visitor asked, 'Take me to Abba Moses, who used to be a robber.' When they arrived the Abba welcomed them joyfully and then took leave of them with delight. The brother who had brought the other one said to his companion, 'See, I have taken you to the foreigner and to the Egyptian, which of the two do you prefer?' 'As for me,' he replied, 'I prefer the Egyptian.' Now a Father who heard this prayed to God saying, 'Lord, explain this matter to me: for Thy name's sake the one flees from men, and the other, for Thy name's sake, receives them with open arms.' Then two large boats were shown to him on a river and he saw Abba Arsenius and the Spirit of God sailing in the one, in perfect peace; and in the other was Aba Moses with the Angels of God, and they were all eating honey cakes.

This story in the Apophthegmata illustrates the validity of both the contemplative life as well as a social life of service as they both contribute to a life with Christ. Both Abba

Moses's as well as Abba Arsenius's dealings with the stranger were acceptable before God as they were choices made on a personal quest to live a Christian life.

While both these strands of charitable/hospitable thinking are found in the Apophthegmata, they are both found within a desert dwelling monastic community. The practice of monastic hospitality usually took place within the community of fellow monks or with the rare lay visitor seeking blessing and spiritual advice. There are rare incidences of monastics leaving the desert to serve as illustrated by Saint Antony's (the first monk) two visits to Alexandria: once to defend against the Arian heresy and another to console Christians in the face of persecution. Unlike the Catholic tradition, an active monastic order never developed in the Coptic monasticism until very recently (ex. Banat Mariam). These recently developed active communities have drawn on the sayings of the desert fathers and their traditions of hospitality and charity as the basis for an active lifestyle in the world. Service in the world was usually left to bishops, priests, deacons and a wealthy class of class of devoted Copts called Archons.

To conclude, the monastic view of charity cannot be taken out of the context of living a Christian life. Monastic charity is not rooted in concern for this worldly suffering of the poor, rather it is to be practiced as it relates to the monk's spiritual wellbeing. If charitable activity comes at the expense of the monk's spiritual life, it is forbidden. For most, however, the initial act of giving up their worldly possessions is an essential step towards a life of nonattachment and renunciation.

Monastic teachings on hospitality and inter-monastery politics are an important part of how the monasteries are viewed by the community. In fact, Mark Gruber posits that the “self-deprecation, alter-adulation, self-abasement” that monks use in daily communication with each other, and with visitors, set the monastic up as a

Dramatic, heroic persona, even if his own character is actually rather ordinary. The great claims of a religious order are better served by heroes than by doctrines. The Copts, who depend upon their religion for ethnic survival, will discern or impute heroic ideals in their monks because to do so invests their religion with greater symbolic power and social efficacy. The monk must provide the dramatic persona onto which a religious counterculture can safely be projected... Even if he does not perfectly embody these ideals, the public presentation of monastic poetics will serve to keep custody of the ideals which grant the Copts ethnic viability (van Droon-Harder; Vogt, 1997:75).

In other words, the extreme sacrifice, hospitality, and humility shown between the monks grant them a sort of “holiness” which translates into legitimacy and self-affirmation in the eyes of the community. However, there are a few monks who choose to avoid the “theatrics” of monastic communal life and instead are “self-effacing, rather than self-deprecating” (van Droon-Harder; Vogt, 1997:61). These “true” monks the very important role of granting “a kind of legitimacy to the monastery, and form, not its margins, but its silent heart. If other monks do not quite embody the special quality of monastic transcendence, they can be comforted that the whole monastery is not so undermined” (van Droon-Harder; Vogt, 1997:75-76). Monks preferring to live in complete contemplation to the glory that come with the poetics of monastic life are following the path of St. Arsenious.

This monastic tradition, with its teachings on philanthropy, has been very influential in the creation of the reformers “identity makeups” especially Pope Shenouda who popularized many of these monastic ideals among the laity. Fr. Matta El Miskeen was also heavily influenced by this monastic identity but was a proponent of separating between the monastery and the church, the monks and the people. St. Macarius monastery, of which he was the abbot, was and still is notorious for its lack of hospitality to visitors and the austerity of its monks. Care for physical welfare is not the focus of the monk, spiritual growth and an otherworldly contemplation motivates the monk. The SSM leaders, in their revival, applied monastic teachings on the role of charity as “a part” of Christian life.

The Servant: Otherworldliness and Charity

Hasan, discussing Bishop Samuel and Pope Shenouda writes:

It would be a mistake to regard St. Anthony's group [Pope Shenouda's] as the traditionalists and the Giza group [Bishop Samuel's] as the modernists. I prefer to refer to Nazir Jayid's [Pope Shenouda] group as the spiritual revivalists and to Saad Aziz [Bishop Samuel's] group as the social activist, for both groups were, in my opinion, modernists" (2003:97).

Hasan insists on calling both revivalists "modern," however, I argue that Bishop Samuel was more "modern," specifically because of his label as a "social activist" and his ecumenical leanings. If modernity is understood as the replacement of traditional familial circles of trust with ever widening allegiances, then Bishop Samuel's attempts at ecumenical cooperation, or an embrace of a wider Christianity, indicate an embrace of wider circles. Stemming from his ecumenical spirit, Bishop Samuel devoted himself to philanthropic activity that focused on this worldly change, rather than the development of communal identity. Pope Shenouda III, on the other hand, maintained a traditional communal view of philanthropy that served to strengthen the Coptic identity. Pope Shenouda III's understanding that charity is a sacrifice for the benefit of the community shines most bright in his discussion of the practice of tithes. The "Servant," an identity created by the SSM and greatly shaped by Pope Shenouda's long tenure as Patriarch, is an amalgamated modern-traditional identity that combines, in its teachings, elements of the modern and the traditional. It is semi-modern in its philanthropic thinking in that it widens Copts' allegiances past familial boundaries, but limits them theologically.

During one of his weekly sermons/question-and-answer sessions, the Pope was asked about using one's tithes to aid an ailing mother, in response the Pope Shenouda recommends:

Your mother is worth your tithes. Your mother is worth your entire life. If you want to, instead of saying you 'paid out (for her medication) of your tithes,' say you borrowed from the tithes, so you can repay the tithes later. But you cannot repay after decades, you have to pay God back as soon as you can" (youtube video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ba5ERYGlxIA>).

This is a telling quotation by Pope Shenouda III as it illustrates his vision for a partial modernity that expands traditional allegiances from a familial scope to embrace the whole of the Coptic community.

Up until the SSM started affecting people, Copts have traditionally kept the adage "my brother and I against my cousin, and my cousin and I against a stranger (in an argument)." Upper Egypt, which is still very traditional in the rural villages, maintains what Edward Banfield called "amoral familism," or a strict maintenance of ethics within familial bounds only. This outlook, as Banfield rightly observes, greatly reduces the prospect of cooperation or voluntary action on behalf of the community. SSM revivalists, knowing this, worked to widen "amoral familism" and to include the whole Coptic community. Their goal was to build the Coptic community up in the circle of Coptic allegiances so that the adage may replace "cousin" with Copt. Going back to Pope Shenouda's advice, we see that he respects the traditional familial obligations, but separates them from communal obligation. By advising that the asker "borrow" from

his/her tithes, Pope Shenouda III respects both the traditional familial obligation but maintains an emphasis on a communal obligation.

The tithes, when given to the community, are not lost to the giver, but grow, and the tither can expect a return. Pope Shenouda III is often quoted as saying

Tithing is partnering with God in your finances, God will bless those finances and those nine-tenths will become greater than the whole”
(youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3f1JnEkyLo>).

Gifts or sacrifices made to the community are not lost—in fact, they are often thought of as investments. This communal strand of thinking motivates much of the individual voluntary actions within the Coptic community. Fasting, prayer, and service are all thought of as investments made on behalf of the community.

In an essay concerning Coptic asceticism, another seemingly individualistic practice, Mark Gruber points to the communal sacrifice inherent in contemplative isolation. Comparing Coptic to Western asceticism, Gruber notes that

the Coptic monk makes a sacrifice of his bodily comfort, of his procreation potential, and of his impulse to roam a wider world—not because he or his culture views these things as fundamentally bad or suspect—but, all to the contrary, because these experiences are esteemed as comprising much of what is best to offer to God. Such an attitude grants to Coptic asceticism a very different aspect than that of Western mortifications (van Droon-Harder; Vogt, 1997:60).

In this way, Gruber differentiates between Western notions of asceticism as being done for the purpose of self-discipline, and Coptic asceticism, which is done as a sacrifice to God. Because of this, Gruber argues, the “monk conquers the limitations of the self not by self-absorbed punishments, but by an other-oriented self-giving” (van Droon-Harder;

Vogt, 1997:61). Other-oriented sacrifice is representative of a larger upwardly orientation that places traditional Coptic charity at odds with the modern Western development.

An interesting example is the hagiography of Anba Boula (Paul of Thebes) “the First Hermit” and the relationship between the monastic ideal of individuality and the ideal of communal sacrifice. Boula, a contemporary of St. Anthony the first monk, was the son of a wealthy merchant. After seeing his father die, he became disenchanted with the material world and renounced his wealth (similar to the monks), and leaves to dwell in the desert. Boula is believed to have lived in the desert for 80 years “without seeing the face of man.” According to his story, an angel was sent to St. Anthony telling him “there is a man who lives in the inner wilderness; the world is not worthy of his footsteps. By his prayers, the Lord brings rain and dew to fall on the earth and brings the flood of the Nile in its due season” (Coptic Synexarium). The angel’s description of Boula, a man who had avoided human contact for 80 years, as being the reason for the Nile’s essential flooding, points to the communal benefit of even the most individual of sacrifices.

Pope Shenouda III’s teachings on charity and tithing adhere to an otherworldly orientation. These teachings contrast with Bishop Samuel’s BLESS which, as Nikolov observed, is this-worldly oriented in its goal to accomplish specific, measurable “projects.” In fact, the term, “el Sedma” or “the service,” became, during Pope Shenouda III’s papacy, synonymous with “Sunday School service” or religious education. SSM revivalists, specifically Pope Shenouda III, were so successful at integrating Sunday

School culture into Coptic society, that for most Copts, moving through the phases of Sunday School (student, trainee, servant) became an expectation and not an exception. Almost all youth are expected to grow up attending Sunday school at their local church, and to themselves start teaching classes after high-school. Very little heed is paid to merit or capability in this case, less capable but “spiritual” youth are often placed with younger children, while more “gifted” spiritual youth are assigned to older classrooms. Most continue teaching up until marriage, after which their familial obligations take precedence.

In an interview with Fr. Pavlos⁹, the priest in charge of youth affairs in the Bishopric of Mallawi, a governate in Upper Egypt under the auspices of Bishop Dimitrius, I was able to understand the vision of the Church for the creation of the youth’s identity. Fr. Pavlos has worked with youth alongside Bishop Dimitrius since 1990 by starting and managing twelve programs aimed at high school and college age youth over the course of the past 24 years. Although there is diversity among the 12 programs, they, for the most part, aim to connect youth to the Coptic community. While the governate of Mallawi is only a single diocese, the late Pope Shenouda was able to achieve high levels of hegemony in terms of diocesan bishops to ensure an overall adherence to his vision of Coptic modernity. Because of this, valid generalizations can be made from a single bishopric.

⁹ Coptic priests and bishops receive saint names upon ordination, and while they retain their last names, they are almost never referred to by it unless by state authorities. The name Pavlos(Coptic) or Bolos (Arabic), are both translations of the name Paul.

My interview with Fr. Pavlos occurred during his annual visit to the United States to solicit funds for both his Church and his youth services with the Diocese. His two-week trip included a visit to 11 different states to “visit friends” all over the United States. By asking Fr. Pavlos to describe, what in his opinion, constituted a “good Coptic youth,” I was able to gain insight into what character traits were valued and which were scorned. Understanding character traits can be a good way of understanding what kind of identity the Church hopes to create in its congregation. This modern Coptic identity that the Church hopes to create is the direct result of Pope Shenouda and the Sunday School revivalists’ vision for a modern Coptic community. Along with learning what the Church values, I was also able to learn about the means by which servants in the Church work to instill valuable character traits in its youth.

My questions to Fr. Pavlos were mainly geared at understanding the goals that motivated his work with the diocese regarding youth. In essence, I hoped to find out what his vision of a “good” Coptic youth looked like. What character traits is the Church trying to instill in upcoming generations of youth? The most telling of Fr. Pavlos’s answers came as a response to a request to describe “bad Coptic youth:”

Bad youths are rebellious, philosophical, angry, loners, rebellious [his repetition]. You find these youth and find a specific strength and passions. Make them feel like you care. The best thing is to make them feel you care. For instance, the rebellious youth refuses everything, they don’t like anything, you cannot confront them you cannot tell them they are wrong. You have to make them feel as if you are fond of them specifically, that is the first step. After that you try to get closer to them, their rebelliousness is often related to their distance from God. You have to get them closer to God through you because you are working with God. Get them to carry out a personal task for you. When they start to

really love you, you start telling him that he has a rebellious nature and then you can start confronting it from there... this is called “El Khedma el infradya” or individualized service. This is a tactic used in serving youth by making one on one time with the individual youth and drawing them into the church this way. The first step in this type of service is lavishing the youth with individual attention and finding out their strengths and passions. Once strengths are recognized the servant finds a way to engage the youth in Church activities. Once the youth starts serving in the Church he is drawn into other activities and becomes a member of the community and moves closer to God. Engaging the individual with the community is the end goal.

This quotation by Fr. Pavlos describes a “bad youth” as one who is outside of the community, someone who is disengaged, rebellious, a “loner” without a role in the Church. Traditional teachings about youth interested in philosophy and other religions is that these subjects should only be explored by those well rooted in their own traditions. Pope Shenouda often banned specific books he disagreed with and reading them was considered a sign of rebellion.¹⁰ Servants strive to draw these individual youth into the Church using their charismatic personalities and later by engaging them in different Church programming targeted at youth such as the ones mentioned above in the Mallawi diocese. Through their intentional discovery of passions and strengths, the servant finds a place in the community for the “bad youth” in an attempt to transform them into servants in their own right.

Using this method of “individualized service” to draw in new ranks, servants work to perpetuate the work of the Church. Very interesting to the modern versus

¹⁰ By virtue of being the only major Church in Egypt, the main school of theology is operated by the Coptic Church and is staffed with bishops. Pope Shenouda III retained the position as dean of the school until his death in 2012.

traditional debate was Fr. Pavlos's refusal to label the Church as a "mo'assasa" or an "organization" saying that:

I don't think of this as an organization as much as it is a service. We ensure continuity through drawing another generation to the group. There are constantly people who are leaving and coming, we find new people when others leave. There is an established system that everyone follows. We are not an organization; we are not trying to put money in the bank. An organization strives to perform a specific thing in return for payment. Service is free. A church is not an organization.

Fr. Pavlos's distinction hones in on the Church's mission regarding youth programming as strictly otherworldly and communal. Youth service does not provide any type of service outside of communal engagement; all of the activities the Church organizes for youth are specifically targeted at engaging youth with the Church and the community. Youth programming targets college students specifically because they are "the most malleable" and, therefore is "the most important age to change them." Fr. Pavlos touched briefly on "punctuality, proper speech, and thievery [a vice that is combated]" as values that the programs try and instill in the youth, however, these were mentioned only briefly.

Establishing these youth as stakeholders in the Coptic community ensures both their physical and financial presence later on in life. Sana Hasan traces this agenda up to Bishop Moses the head of the Bishopric of Youth Affairs, and the late Pope Shenouda saying that they recognized "that once a youngster has been firmly planted in the church, he will remain a lifelong servant of the church, a lifelong donor of his time and money" (2003:186). To this end, the Bishopric of Youth, has

Systematically attempted to penetrate the private space of the young... this practice of sending young church servants, deacons, and priests to check on the families to make sure the children's attendance in Mass is regular and, if not, to talk over with them the problems that may be preventing them from attending, has spread to the point where today such church emissaries cover every Christian residence in Egypt in a systematic fashion (Hasan, 2003:186)

The widespread use of "individualized service" by servants to grow the ranks of the youth, who in turn become servants themselves has been a sustainable system of indoctrination.

This invigorated Coptic identity has created a mobilized, financially successful and dedicated congregation. Both in-kind and financial donations to the Church are used to strengthen communal bonds through Church building, aid to the poor, and youth programming. Comparing Copts to other Orthodox Churches, Nikolov notes exclaims that

I thought it was unusual and, in fact, remarkable to have young people volunteering their time to community and church life... I thought that the reason they made such a strong impression on me was that I have never seen an Orthodox church attracting so many young people and motivating them to participate in church life (2008:3).

Sunday school servants, as described here, are the most popular form of service throughout Egypt. Servants are recruited and retained by local churches as members of local communities—and because relocation is rare in Egypt, families will often attend and serve in the same church for generations.

Except for Bishop Samuel and BLESS, most Coptic charity work is decentralized and is dependent on local clergy and diocesan bishops. Although ecclesiastical finances are often kept secret, through a chance meeting with a disgruntled priest on his way

home from Cairo, I was introduced to the logic of priest salaries in Egypt. Priests are paid by their local diocese, which rank differently in terms of wealth depending on their location, the priest I spoke with mentioned a certain area in Cairo where priests were paid up to 25,000LE (~\$3,000) a month, while he was only paid 3,000LE. (\$500). The justification for the discrepancy in the pay of priests as an attempt to keep priests on an equal footing with their parishioners. Since Coptic priests marry and have families, it is recommended they reflect their parishioners.

Similar to how priest salaries vary by location, allotment of charitable funds also vary by location. During a conversation with an “Amin Khedma,” which literally translates into “the trusted servant” of a Coptic church in Cairo, I learned about how Churches get funding for their poor. There are two sources of funding for churches, donations collected by the priest through the donation bin, and funds from the diocese. Interestingly, each church is required to pay tithes on their collections to the diocese, which is then redistributed depending on need among the churches. Diocese also receives funding from local monasteries, which generate revenue through the sales of produce, cattle, and handicrafts. However, not all dioceses are equal, certain Governates like Sohag in Upper Egypt tend to be poorer, which limits the amount of funding the entire diocese has.

This decentralized system of distribution leads to the latent effect of keeping the status quo, not of individuals but of areas. Because of the redistribution of wealth within each diocese, poorer churches within rich dioceses are better provided for. Similarly, poor individuals within rich churches are not made to feel unequal to their fellow

parishioners, rather they are afforded many of the same opportunities and activities. Poor dioceses however, do not collect enough money for any type of meaningful redistribution. Because the poorer dioceses are almost all in Upper Egypt, there are often feelings of neglect, especially in light of systematic discrimination against Upper Egypt by the Egyptian Government itself.

My conversations with the priest shed light on a system that values communal solidarity and sacrifice. By limiting priest salaries, talented and highly motivated individuals often forgo more lucrative careers for a life of service. The importance in maintaining the façade of equality among all youth within a single local church is also important as it works to incorporate and envelope poorer youth in the “arms of the church.” In doing so, socio-economic differences, while known, are downplayed, and feelings of solidarity prevail. Whole dioceses are also treated in this same way. All programming and charitable activities that are used to maintain the community are funded through the tithes of that community. However, because tithes “belong to God,” tithers are different from donors because they are merely returning to God what is God’s, and are not, as in Western nonprofits, “stakeholders.” In other words, tithers do not share the same expectation of accountability from the Church as donors do from nonprofits.

Interestingly, some of Pope Shenouda’s most lasting reforms were meant to limit the power of diocesan bishops and to increase the power of the patriarchate in Cairo. He systematically divided up dioceses after the passing of diocesan bishops into smaller, less powerful dioceses. He also introduced the practice of appointing general bishops as

“assistants” to diocesan bishops who opposed him in order to ensure that his policies were put into practice (Hasan, 2003). Hasan even mentions Pope Shenouda’s efforts to bring even Coptic philanthropic associations under his control in order to “increase the weight of the Church vis-à-vis the state” (Hasan, 2003:135).

These efforts to centralize reflect his parallel efforts to widen Coptic allegiances to embrace the community as a whole rather than family, local church, or even diocese. While merely speculative, I believe that Pope Shenouda saw tithes in a way similar to how a government sees taxation. He defined and codified the practice of tithes in a way that is very similar to the codification of a tax code. This attempt to centralization reflects his overall vision of Coptic identity—an identity that extends to the edges of the Liturgical community and includes all those baptized into the Church. By defining Coptic identity in this way, Pope Shenouda allows for non-ethnically Coptic people through conversion—an extremely important factor for the Church in diaspora. By instituting tithes into Coptic Liturgical life, Pope Shenouda secured a reliable source of income to fund his identity building services.

By drawing on the monastic tradition’s prioritization of “spiritual wellbeing,” Pope Shenouda was able to emphasize Coptic Liturgical life as the end goal of the Church. In doing so, he was able to mobilize all of the Church’s resources for the growth and maintenance of a Coptic identity—in a way that perpetually replenished itself by incorporating tithes and service into Liturgical life. Lending legitimacy to this revival is the “holiness” of the monastics from which now hail both the spiritual as well as the communal leaders of the Copts. This consolidation of spiritual and the communal

leadership was reflected in the union between communal and spiritual boundaries of the whole community to form a “Liturgical community.”

The next chapter will discuss the efforts of other Coptic leaders who attempted to “modernize” the community. These other attempts differ from Pope Shenouda’s vision for the community in that they do not unify these two elements of Coptic identity. First, I will discuss a class of lay Copts who traditionally acted as communal leaders called Archons. These Archons were not interested in the spiritual lives of the Copts, rather, they were interested in professionalizing the management of the community’s affairs. The second set of modernizers I will talk about is Bishop Samuel, and his philanthropic decedents, Coptic Orphans. Bishop Samuel, while interested in the spiritual development of the Copts, was less interested in maintaining them as a separate, well-defined community. Coptic Orphans, which is currently operating in Egypt on a massive scale, has similar commitments to Bishop Samuel, except their position outside of ecclesiastical structure sets them up as competitors with the Church—threatening to diminish the self-perpetuating Liturgical system that Pope Shenouda had created.

Chapter 4

The Modernists: Development *Apart* from Liturgical Life

When Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt at the beginning of the 19th century, Egyptians reacted to the French's modern guns, cannons, and scientific instruments in much the same way as they would react to the modern economic and political system about a century later: rejection, embrace, and cooption. The Egyptian scholar and historian, Al-Jabarti, captures the ambivalence of the people towards the French by ridiculing their claim as "defenders of the faith, [he] rejects their belief in liberty and equality, and despises their lack of morality and personal hygiene, but approves of their efficiency, common loyalty and cooperation, and wonders at their technical and scholarly abilities" (Hurly, 2012:37). Napoleon's invasion will leave a lasting impact on Egyptian law, politics, and most importantly the culture of its ruling elite, both Muslim and Christian, whom from then on will look towards Europe as the source of "modernity."

The influence of the French on Coptic communal leaders will set them on a course that will disconnect them from the rest of Coptic society. The first part of this chapter will attempt to chronicle the rise and fall of Coptic communal leaders called Archons. The story of the Archons provides an example of communal fall-out through secularization. It also provides a small glimpse into the centuries long communal tug-of-war between the laity and the clergy. While the Sunday School Movement and its clerical leadership have consolidated power during the 20th century, the laity, especially

after the passing of Pope Shenouda and the post January 25th, 2011 revolutionary liberalism, has begun questioning the authority of the clergy.

The second part of this chapter will focus on both the “modern” philanthropy of Bishop Samuel and his organization, BLESS, as well as the work of the nonprofit Coptic Orphans. Both of these organizations have adopted the development approach to philanthropy but differ in their relation to the institution of the Church. BLESS, while sharing similar goals as Coptic Orphans, operates under the auspices of Bishop Youannes, and Pope Tawadros II. Coptic Orphans, on the other hand, operates independently but in close coordination with the Church. Coptic Orphans’ independence acts as a challenge to the clerical establishment by offering another model of holiness based on philanthropic actions. BLESS, itself, while a part of the official church, also provides an alternative model of holiness to the traditional contemplative monk. However, because Pope Shenouda was able to appoint the aforementioned Bishop Serapion as the Bishop of BLESS after the death of Bishop Samuel, he was able to place it back into the Liturgical life of the congregation. Both of these organizations utilize the development approach to philanthropy and are dedicated to improving of the “this-worldly” circumstances of the poor. However, while both believe in an active interpretation of a good Christian life, Coptic Orphans does not view service as *part* of a Christian life, but rather the full fulfillment of it. Coptic Orphans, being an independent organization, represents a challenge to the clergy by the laity over communal leadership through their philanthropic actions.

An important difference between the Archons and the new wave of modernists is their focus on the rest of the laity. While the Archons held ordinary Copts in low-esteem, the latter modernizers placed them at the center of their reformation. In fact, Coptic Orphans operates at a distance from the rest of Egypt's post 2011 (January 25th revolution) "civil society" groups to both remain unbothered by the State, and because of these group's relative affluence. Coptic Orphans does not collect funds in Egypt and does not allow sponsorship of their children by Egyptian residents. These facts point to an organization that is less concerned with the politics of Egyptian civil society and more focused on empowering the fatherless children they serve. The Archons, on the other hand, were much more focused on wresting power away from the Church and politicking the State to support them.

Archons of the Past—Lessons for the Future?

The story of the Archons is a story of a class of Copts who, embracing a Western modernity, attempted to impose their vision without attempting to change the Coptic population first. It is also the story of a group of Copts whose shift from a traditional “otherworldly” orientation towards a modern “this worldly” perspective, contributed to the breakdown of traditional communal relations. Their Western education functioned as a European lens through which they viewed traditional Coptic practices as “oriental,” backward, practices that offered nothing in terms of “this-worldly” gain.

In describing the views of his Europeanized Coptic friends regarding the patriarch Kyrillos V in 1918, the British traveler S.H. Leeder says:

The opponents of Cyril [Kyrillos V] think him obstinate through ignorance, and unscrupulous in gaining his own way; they deplore the Church’s rule which sends to the distant monastery to choose a Patriarch from amongst men unlettered, untraveled, mostly of ignoble birth (Leeder, 1973:250)

Archons, having taken a step away from the traditional Coptic other-worldliness, found Coptic beliefs as superstitious and harmful. In his semi-autobiographical novel, *Beer in the Snooker Club*, Wagiuh Ghali, a descendent of the Archon Ghali family, comically reflects on his religious experience saying:

‘*Kyria lysoon*,’ I said. I don’t know what *Kyria lysoon* is, neither does Font, but we have often heard high Coptic priests sing it in the churches of Egypt. There they stand under their magnificent beards and sing what sounds like *Kyria lysoon* to four ugly, Orthodox youths, who sing *Kyria lysoon* back to them. Long ago Font and I came to the conclusion that this was a secret tennis match being played between the priest and the youths, with *Kyria lysoon* for balls. Font got a tummy cramp once, laughing. The priest serves a *Kyria lysoon* and you can see the four youths

bumping each other trying to hit it back to him. They often miss, and a *Kyria lysoon* is heard bouncing in a corner of the church. But that particular priest was a fantastic player. He used to take *Kyria lysoon* from the youths before they even served it as it were, modulating it cunningly in his own corner, and before you knew where you were, he had a smasher right out of the window, the youths looking at each other in perplexity. Once the priest came to speak to us after church and Font said: 'Well played, sir,' in English. I nearly died laughing (Ghali, 1964:152).

This irreverent description of a Church service by Ghali reflects the state of a class of Copts who, having embraced modernity, found traditional Copts servile, superstitious and uncouth. Hasan, quotes Boutros Ghali, the father of Boutros-Boutros Ghali, on the issue of state supported discrimination against the Copts saying: "Name ten Copts with personality!.. You have been listening to too many frightened, hostile Copts. Besides, instead of whining and lamenting they should do something about their problems. Let's face it, the Copts just don't have balls!" (Hasan, 2003:112).

However disconnected from the community the Archons' decedents may be today, their forefathers were once well-respected leaders who financed and protected Coptic folk festivals and religious events in Egypt. Ottoman Egypt (1517-1867AD) marks the rise and fall of the influential class of lay Copts called Archons. According to Pheobe Armanios's study of *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt*, certain Coptic families whom have long controlled Egypt's financial sector¹¹ became high ranking officials due to Turkish interest in tax collecting (2011:28). The demotion of Egypt from the center of the Mamluk Empire (1260-1517AD) to a province of Turkey's administrative machine

¹¹ To maintain their control over the financial sector, Coptic accountants often used an amalgam of Coptic and Arabic in their book keeping. This prevented others from entering the field. Copts also typically held most of banking jobs due to the Islamic injunction on collecting interest that prevented Muslims from entering the field.

greatly increased the need for administrative and financial professionals. Each of the Egyptian governates was ruled by officers from the specialized Turkish Janissary corps, aided by trusted Coptic financial advisors and scribes (Armanios, 2011). Through these high ranking positions, these Coptic families were able to increase their financial status and their influence with Ottoman authorities. Using their connections and wealth, these notables earned the respected title of “Archon” through their philanthropy and politicking on behalf of their communities. Through their generosity, Archons were able to supervise “certain dimensions of Coptic religious life” (Armanios, 2011:90).

During the same period, Armanios points out that the movements of the clergy were often curtailed by the state out of a fear of Coptic collaboration with other Christians in the empire (2011:67-68). State intervention against the clergy, along with the strengthened position of lay Archons, tipped the balance of Church power in favor of the laity. This state of weakened clergy and influential Coptic laity contrasts strongly with today’s empowered clergy and submissive laity. Understanding the rise and fall of the Archons can offer valuable lessons for the Coptic diaspora, who, because of their wealth and political voice, occupy a position similar to that of the Ottoman Archons. I argue that the fall of the Archons began with their embrace of a European identity and vision of modernity. Beginning with the Napoleonic invasion of Egypt in 1798, the gradual Europeanization of the Archons led to constant clashes with an increasingly nationalist Coptic community with whom they shared little in terms of identity and vision.

While the history of the different Archons and their families was well documented in books by Coptic historians such as Tawfik Iskaros's *Nawabigh ul-Aqbad wa-mashahreeohom* (Talented Copts and their Notables of the 19th Century) and Iris Habib al-Masri's *Habib Basha ElMasri* (The life of the Archon patriarch of the al-Masri family) these books were never translated into English. The lack of an English translation of these books, despite the availability of several other articles and books by both of these authors in English, may reflect a lack of interest in the history of the Archons. Al-Masri's massive nine-volume *The Story of the Coptic Church* is available in the popular pdf format for free download on the internet. However, the memory of the Archons is preserved in the story of the most philanthropic Archons of the Ottoman era: Ibrahim al-Jawahri and his brother Jirjis al-Jawahri. Both brothers are generally considered saints in the Church. Their story is worth mentioning as they exemplify the Archon class at the height of their power in the late 18th century.

Al-Jabarti, the well-known chronicler of Napoleon's occupation of Egypt introduces Jirjis al-Jawahri as "the chief of the Copts" on his way to a feast at Napoleon's residence (1975:62). Jirjis's brother, Ibrahim al-Jawahri, was the protégé of Rizq al-Badawi¹², the personal advisor to Ali Bey al-Kabir the ruler of Egypt at the time. Ibrahim succeeded Rizq and was well respected within the Coptic community as well as Egypt as a whole. He earned his sainthood in the church on account of his well-documented philanthropic gifts. The philanthropy of the Jawahri brothers, as well as other Archons in

¹² Rizq al-Badawi is a distant ancestor of the late Bishop Samuel. Other decedents of the Rizq family currently reside in diaspora in the United States in Indianapolis, Indiana; Florida, and California.

Ottoman Egypt, is very similar to the philanthropy found in the rest of the Ottoman Empire as observed by Amy Singer. Singer argues that Ottoman Sultans would commission various projects for self-aggrandizement and power (2002). Similarly, Archons gained much respect within their communities through patronizing clergy, commissioning church buildings, renovating monasteries and churches, hosting feasts, and organizing festivals commemorating various saints.

Tawfik Iskaros, the Coptic chronicler of the Archons of the 19th century, lists 29 of Ibrahim al-Jawahri's philanthropic gifts. Of the gifts listed, 26 included a decree of permission solicited by al-Jawahri to build, renovate or inspect a church or monastery along with financial gifts. Because of the Huymani decree, an Ottoman law that required direct permission from the Sultan or his vicar in Egypt to build or renovate a church, permission to build a church was highly prized. Being the chief of scribes, as well as the personal advisor of Ali Bek al-Kebir, al-Jawahri was in a position to advocate for the Coptic community and to acquire decrees from Ali Bek. Iskaros's listings are replete with al-Jawahri's maneuvering with Muslim officials on behalf of the Copts.

Al-Jawahri's gifts were directed towards four geographical areas of Egypt: Old Cairo, Rosetta, Damietta, and Alexandria. Out of these four locations, the majority of the gifts (12) were directed towards The Religious Complex in Old Cairo. The Religious Complex brings together Muslim, Christian, and Jewish houses of worship in one location. By looking at his giving preference, it seems that Al-Jawahri valued the Churches in the Religious Complex and made sure that the Coptic community was well represented there. In fact, Ibrahim al-Jawahri was buried in the Religious Complex in a

very ornamental sepulcher which is a popular destination for Coptic pilgrims and tourists. Besides his interest in the Religious Complex, five of his gifts went to building and restoring walls for Coptic cemeteries. Cemetery restoration and protection points to a deep concern for the community. Al-Jawahri's gifts earned him respect and even sainthood in the Coptic Church. Iskaros's flattering eulogy of Al-Jawahri attests to his significance in the community.

The last two gifts mentioned by Iskaros relate to his interaction with the Pope. Gift number 29 is a declaration from the Sultan in Turkey obtained by El-Jawahri confirming ownership of land and property in a part of Cairo as that of the Copts and the Patriarch. The language mentions several Muslim Beks who seem to have been working to annex Church property, but are ordered to cease these actions by the Sultan. The Sultan's missive indicates the Patriarch of the Copts as the rightful owner of the land. Al-Jawahri's advocacy for the patriarch, Pope Paul, indicates good terms with the Pope and the community at large. In exchange for his support, Archons such as al-Jawahri gained for themselves the privilege of supervising "certain aspects of Coptic religious life" (2011:100). A survey of Iris al-Masri's massive *Story of the Coptic Church* reveals a deep-rooted tradition of cooperation between Archons and clergy. Of course no relationship is without its vicissitudes, disagreements and struggles occurred (Armanios, 2011). However, there seemed to be a functioning relationship between these communal leaders.

Beginning with the French invasion in 1798 the relationship between the Archons and the clergy began declining, and eventually culminated in an intense power

struggle between the lay counsel and the Clergy over control of Church endowments in 1892. The French invasion of Egypt is considered the first major brush between the Middle East and the West since the Middle Ages. The humiliating defeat of the Turks and Mameluks of Egypt brought with it both anguish and awe. These ambiguous feelings are well reflected in al-Jabarti's chronicle of the French invasion in which he aptly portrays the distaste the Egyptians had for French customs along with a fascination with their technological advancements indicated in his meticulous notation on the subjects of science. Al-Jabarti's mixed feeling towards the French seems to reflect the feelings of the majority of Egyptians, including the Copts. This ambivalence manifested itself in the first separations within the Coptic community that arose during this time.

Stories from this period reflect the initial stages of separation of the Archons and the rest of the Coptic community. A story that is very indicative of this separation is that of the patriarch of the Ghali Family, Mu'allim Ghali, who converted to Catholicism at the behest of Mohammad Ali for political purposes.¹³ Mohammad Ali, the man considered as the father of modern Egypt, was able to fill the power vacuum created by the departure of the French and to institute Egypt's modern military which would dominate Egypt's political sphere for centuries to come (Samuel, 2013).

The "Europazation" of Egypt required strengthened relationships and cooperation with European superpowers and their religious institutions. The story of Mu'allim Ghali, the patriarch of the well-known Ghali family, and his brother, Francis

¹³ The Ghali Family is still prominent both in Egypt and around the world. Boutros Boutros Ghali, the sixth secretary general of the UN is a direct decedent of Mu'allim Ghali.

Ghali, show how an embrace of a “this-worldly” modernity, and the prospect of increased communal authority, lured some Archons to embrace Western Catholicism—an indication of communal separation. Al-Masry’s rendition of this story is highly critical of the Ghali’s actions as they embody some of the Copts worst fears.

Al-Masry places her story of the Ghali family directly after an injunction praising the Coptic Church for “[proving] to the world what little disregard it had for offers of money, power or security” (1948:317). Al-Masry’s story of the Ghali family’s betrayal to their community is indicative of both the first signs of separation within the Church as well as of the community’s disapproval of their actions. However, because the Mohammad Ali era was very good to the Copts in terms of direct governmental treatment, the divide fostered within the Church is often forgotten. This story is a foretelling of the challenges of modernity and pluralism which the Church will face for the following two centuries:

The one discordant note that marred the harmony of this era came, unfortunately through the renewed attempt of the Catholic Church to dominate the Coptic Church. And this time the attempt was made through official channels; for the French noting that the amicability of Mohammad Ali towards France suggested that he use his authority to sway the Copts towards Catholicism. In response to their suggestion, the Pasha called his chief scribe Mu’allim Ghali, his brother Francis and his son Basilios and told them of the French proposition. The three agreed that while it would be impossible for them to induce the Pope or any number of Copts on a large scale to accept this proposition, they themselves were willing to do so for the sake of making the Pasha appear successful in the eyes of his strong allies. And it was thus that these three leaders, their families, and their retinues joined the Catholic Church... This was the month of January 1822. Six months later on July 1st 1822, Mu’allim Ghali was assassinated by one of Mohammad Ali’s own men. The reason??? His brother Francis had forged a letter in the Pasha’s name and with his signature requesting the Roman Pontiff to ordain a friend of

his as Archbishop of Memphis and promising to coerce the Copts into submission to Rome. Furious by this act, Mohammad Ali himself ordered Ghali's assassination, in accordance with the Oriental concept that the head of a family is responsible for the actions of its members (1948:322).

As the ending of the story connotes, the Ghali family's actions were disloyal to their community and reflected a dishonest character and poor moral character. Mu'allim Ghali's assassination was well deserved as a consequence for his family's betrayal and dealings with the Catholic Church. However, while Mu'allim Ghali got his "just deserts" his conversion "gave the Catholic Church the official status it had long been seeking... this status constituted the first rift, which, alas, was to be followed by other rifts" (1948:322). Egypt's introduction into modernity brought with it religious pluralism which more often than not affected the Coptic community more directly as it was, and still is, forbidden to proselytize Muslims in Egypt. And while the Ghalis' political maneuverings with the Catholic church are not "modern" in the sense that they employ

Strict Orthodox hierarchy leaves little room for lay leadership within Orthodox communities. This pushed some powerful Archons to join nascent religious communities where their influence was increased. As Egypt became more and more entangled with European affairs, more and more of the Archon families moved away from the Coptic community and towards a Western mindset with little regard for their fellow Copts. Archons, who were once well-respected leaders within their communities, were now ashamed of the "backwardness" of their coreligionists their own traditions in the face of Western religion. These families were increasingly identifying with Western Christianity and less with Coptic traditions and customs.

The British colonial traveler, S.H. Leeder, describes the Copts at the end of the 19th century as not being content to be fellow-Christians with the English man, but:

He [the Copt] wants the Western visitor to see only those phases of his Christianity which approximate to that of England. And so with the refined skill of the East he will, in most cases lead the inquirer aside from everything that the Oriental in him has made indubitable, but which is, if he could only realize it, the chief interest of the Western inquirers well as being the last thing ever to be suppressed or eliminated (1978:267)

Uncomfortable with the traditions and customs of their fathers, Archons moved further and further away from their fellow Copts who maintained many of their superstitions, traditions and customs well into the 20th century. S.H. Leeder, commenting on the feelings of his Coptic acquaintances regarding the selection of the patriarch, says:

It has to be admitted that the rule of sending to the monasteries for all the men who are to govern the Church is the greatest possible hindrance to advance, seeing that these desert institutions have long since sunk to a low level of spiritual life, and to an intellectual poverty which is contemptible.... there is scarcely anything so disheartening to the intelligent Copt of to-day, who desires to see the spiritual life of his Church revived, as the contemplation of the life of the monasteries, which still retain important functions and great revenues. In his bitterness he declares that these are nothing but the resort of ignorant men of low origin, who seek only a lazy and untroubled existence... The weakness of the system is, that proved character and ability in the priesthood count for nothing, and men of talent and long experience in the work of the Church are often obliged to submit to the rule of the ignorant—or even illiterate—novice; with the result that paralysis overtakes all the best endeavor of cleric and layman alike, and there is an ever-recurring set-back, as one desert recluse succeeds another, as Patriarch and Bishop with no advantage from what his successors may have learned in the practice school of responsible life (Leeder, 1918:252-254).

These complaints, made by Leeder's English speaking Coptic friends reflect the dissatisfaction with the traditional Church, which they viewed as genuinely inefficient because of its poorly educated clergy and decaying monasteries. Differences in the

visions of the clergy and the Archons for the Coptic community culminated in 1892 during the papacy of Pope Kyrillos V. Under the rule of Khedive Tawfik the ruler of Egypt, the Archons were able to obtain a Khedival decree creating “al-Majlis al-Milli” or the “Communal Lay Council”, a government instituted body to oversee Coptic affairs alongside Pope Kyrillos V.

This lay council was headed by Boutros Ghali, the descendent of Mu'allim Ghali, and the grandfather of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the secretary-general of the United Nations, who led a group of lay leaders in “open rebellion against their pope!” (al-Masry, 1948:351). Al-Majlis al-Mili's disagreement with Pope Kyrillos V was over the right to control the Church's various Waqfs or religious endowments. The debates between the Pope, clergy, and al-Majlis led by Ghali became so heated that Ghali “headed a group of lay leaders and... presented a request to the Khedive to banish S. Mark's Successor to his monastery! Abba Younnis, Bishop of Bohaira was to be banished also... for he was Secretary to the Holy Council and the Pope's right hand” (al-Masry, 1948:351-352). Lord Cromer, who was the British Agent in Egypt, washes his hands this disagreement between the Archons and the Patriarch calling it a quarrel “between the temporal and the spiritual authorities of a creed which is not my own” (Leeder, 1918:261).

The result of this disagreement is an indicator of the growing schism between the Archons and the ordinary Coptic laity. According to Al-Masry,

The people, however, who were neither minions of the temporal rulers, nor mimics of the missionaries' general trend, but were wholeheartedly

loyal to St. Mark's Successor, expressed their indignation so forcefully that on the 31st of January 1893, the governor of Alexandria with two high government officials and two hundred citizens went to al-Baramus Monastery to escort Abba Kyrillos V back with due honor. When he arrived at the Cairo station, he was met by the statesman and given a military salute. Moreover, in apology, the Khedive conferred on him... the order of the Sultan 'Abd'l Magid-the highest decoration then (1978: 352).

The disagreement between the clergy and Archons is obvious in this story, but what is more important to note is the schism between the Archons and the ordinary Copts. In terms of identity, the Archons seem to be disconnected from both the Clergy and ordinary laity and thus failed in their attempt to seize control of Church properties. Recalling the reception of the Patriarch by the Copts in Cairo, Leeder states "Never within memory has Cairo been the scene of such a thrilling popular ovation as greeted the Patriarch when he returned. The crowds held up the city, and the great sea of enthusiasm swept aside every idea but that of passionate rejoicing at the restoration" (Leeder, 1918:261).

Al-Masry attributes this growing schism to a change in Archons' values saying, "their logical reasons were that the clergy were not as well educated as the laymen; that the land and other property owned by the monasteries should be administered by men living in the world; that problems of personal status (marriage; inheritance, etc...) are the domain of the fathers of families" (1978:353). These "logical reasons" are indicative of a shift in the identity makeup of the Archons. Having been educated in the European schools of Catholic and Protestant missionaries as well as abroad in England and France, the Archons identity makeups and values continued to change while that of the rest of the Copts remained quite stagnant. To deal with this stagnation, Archons chose to

confront the clergy, whom they saw as the guardians of this culture of backwardness. However, because of their disconnect from the rest of the laity, they failed to accomplish their goals.

The grievances of these Archons were similar to those of the later Sunday School Movement leaders, however their approaches differed greatly. The leaders of the SSM, for the most part, came out of the ordinary laity and chose to change their communities and the Church from within; the Archons, on the other hand, wanted to impose what they saw as “rational” through the administration of Church property. To the Archons, modernity was a natural process of rationalization that left little room for the superstitions of the uneducated clergy; they demanded a decreased role for the clergy and an increased role for “men living in the world.” Education, specifically a Western one, was an indication of capacity to administer Church affairs. In contrast, the SSM leaders, who voiced similar grievances, chose to work within a framework of a Coptic cultural identity and to develop it into an identity that excels both financially and spiritually in modern Egypt. To do this, SSM leaders created two identities to carry out their visions for the Church: the “servant,” and the “professional servant.”

This story of the rise and fall of the Archons offers a very valuable lesson for diaspora Copts hoping to contribute to the development of their fellow Copts in Egypt. Coptic Archon saw the “otherworldliness” of the clergy as unfit for the management of Church finances and were concerned with what they saw as the mismanagement of funds. The failure of the Archons did not lie in their goals, but rather, in their approach. Transformation lies in the development of people and of culture rather than in the

accomplishment of specific goals. SSM leaders were successful in their creation of identity and culture, whereas the Archons failed because of their attempt to force ends through their wealth and power. Bishop Samuel, whose revival I will discuss next, found many friends among the children of the Archons who saw him as a “rational” alternative to the much more conservative, traditional Shenouda (Hasan, 2003).

The “Professional” Servant: This-Worldliness and Human Development

Out of the SSM revivalists, Bishop Samuel seemed most reluctant in his commitment to the contemplative life. In fact, a personal journal that he kept during his first year in the monastery reveals a person torn between his monastic vows and an active life of service. In his journal, Bishop Samuel compares the usefulness of the contemplative life versus an active life of service saying:

And the temptations of the past would bring some simple thoughts comparing monasticism with the life of service... and the usefulness of the latter... I went and told Fr. Mina [who would become Pope Kyrillos VI] about these troubling thoughts. So he told me: ‘Answer those thoughts and tell them this: the keepers of the King’s secrets are more beloved to Him than those who fight for Him in the squares’ (Bishop Samuel, 1947:14).

While this excerpt ends with the Bishop accepting the teachings of his spiritual father regarding the superiority of the contemplative life, it is Bishop Samuel’s later support and partnership with Bishop Athanasius, one of his disciples, to establish the first official, active monastic order, *Banat Mariam* (daughters of Mary), that highlights his commitment to promoting an active, rather than contemplative religious life. This inclination towards living an active life is very evident in his most lasting legacy, BLESS. His interaction with various international foundations and development organizations, has embraced a professional, non-parochial, this-worldly view of philanthropy—development. BLESS’s commitment to being a part of the ACT Alliance, and other similar international NGO governing bodies, shape its development goals. For example, the first of the ACT Alliance Principles is a commitment to not use “humanitarian or

development assistance to further a particular religious or political partisan standpoint” (ACT Alliance Principles, 2005:3).

Unlike servants at local churches, BLESS and other nonprofit organizations operating in Egypt have specialized “professional” servants. These professional servants are often implementers of larger nation-wide projects that seek to “develop” underdeveloped areas and are at times paid. Boris Nikolov, delving into the complexities of the Coptic Church’s philanthropic activities, sheds light on how charity and development are seen by practitioners. Within the Coptic Church, the efficacy of the different approaches is often debated. According to Nikolov, “activists working for [BLESS] described charity as a short-sighted waste of parish resources, and, from an extreme angle, as a way of strengthening the power of conservative local priests who... expect people to ‘kiss their hand and obey them’” (2008:122). In response, church members who were active in their local churches contend that: “their work [was] the true form of care, the direct fulfillment of the Christian duty to help those in need” (Nikolov, 2008:122). Detractors of human development often decry it as a foreign concept brought over by the British during Egypt’s colonial era, or that it is a Protestant practice that will dilute the Church’s authenticity (Nikolov, 2008:136).

Nikolov posits that because the human development approach was adopted by the official church in the form of BLESS, it has lost its “foreignness,” and is now a part of the Coptic tradition. I agree with him, but argue that the loss of “foreignness” was not a natural progression, instead it was an intentional redirection of BLESS away from Bishop Samuel’s initial human development approach. Because human development has the

this-worldly aim of developing individuals, it does not necessarily support a Coptic Liturgical life, which, etymologically stemming from Greek roots, signifies communal action. I disagree with Nikolov's assertion that Pope Shenouda wished to control BLESS on the basis that it was an "emerging sphere of ecclesiastical life... and an efficient tool of government" (Nikolov, 2008:148). Instead, I argue that Pope Shenouda intentionally redirected BLESS toward charity in order to support his vision for a Liturgical community. Today, BLESS may appear "modern," however, in terms of the services it provides, it is very much in line with Pope Shenouda's Liturgical vision. Nikolov astutely observes that, "with time, development ceases to be a Protestant concept and becomes accepted as part of Coptic Orthodox life" (Nikolov, 2008:148). Nikolov is right in his observation that BLESS had changed, however, being unfamiliar with the historical and theological context in which the change took place, he fails to explain why and how BLESS had transformed under Pope Shenouda. The concepts in BLESS were not accepted over time as Orthodox, rather they were rewritten as traditional concepts in modern guise.

While many people knew that Pope Shenouda and Bishop Samuel were not on good terms, few knew the extent to which they disagreed. In an intriguing portion of her book, Sana Hasan quotes Pope Shenouda in a rare moment of candidness referring to Bishop Samuel as "a very bad man," which is an accusation he seldom made about clergy in order to maintain face (2003:96). Hasan goes on to say that the Pope "described his [Bishop Samuel's] assassination at the hand of Islamic militants as an act of "divine justice" that had rid the church of a 'scourge'" (2003: 96). I argue that this

animosity for Bishop Samuel, on the part of Pope Shenouda, stems from an understanding that Bishop Samuel's embrace of a "this worldly" philanthropy does not support the Liturgical community that the Pope was building. While not secular, as it is motivated by a mandate to live a good Christian life, Bishop Samuel's focus on development work does not share the identity building Liturgical goals that the rest of the revival had focused on. This tension between Bishop Samuel and Pope Shenouda is what I believe to be the most important and most influential conversation shaping the Coptic community as they navigate the "modern" world.

At the death of Bishop Samuel, Pope Shenouda appointed Bishop Serapion, a staunch traditionalist, as the head of this bishopric to tone down Bishop Samuel's influence on BLESS. Following Bishop Serapion's enthronement on the Diocese of Los Angeles in the United States, Pope Shenouda appointed his personal secretary, Bishop Youannes as the head of BLESS. Bishop Youannes, while not as outspoken a critic as Bishop Serapion regarding development style NGOs, has very traditional priorities. A quick glance at BLESS's 2014 annual report shows Bishop Youannes's priorities. Of the 15,811,845LE collected in 2014, (1) the largest portion, 7,408,849LE; was used to pay for medical expenses, (2) the second largest amount; 3,140,950LE was used to cover marriage expenses, and finally, (3) the third largest amount 1,845,360LE was used to cover housing needs (BLESS UK 2014 Annual Report). As these numbers show, Bishop Youannes dedicated close to 80% of the yearly budget to non-development type projects in 2014. His decision to prioritize assistance with marriage is very indicative of his leanings towards charity, something I will explain shortly.

It is difficult to compare Bishop Youannes's budget with one from Bishop Samuel's tenure as the head of BLESS as annual reports were not being written to satisfy diasporan donors then. However there is detailed information from a report written on his largest project, *The Zabaleen (Garbage Collectors) Association* that was funded by grants from the Ford Foundation, Oxfam, the World Bank, the Government of Egypt, and other international and local funders. The association functioned like a local Community Development Association (CDA) in the Mokattam region of Cairo. Mokattam mountain is the home of a large Coptic community known as the "El Zabaleen," or "The Garbage Collectors." It is an extremely impoverished part of Cairo and the focus of many philanthropic efforts.

The Zabaleen Association was founded by Bishop Samuel through BLESS and undertook a series of human development projects which included: (1) *Area Upgrading and Infrastructure Extension* which included extending city water, electricity, and sewage networks resulting in "a dramatic rise in the value of land;" (2) *The Internal Clean-up Project*; (3) *The Small Industries Project* which got special funding from Oxfam, which "concentrated on establishing small community-based recycling industries designed to maximize the resource value of waste;" (4) *The Women-Headed Households Project*, a project funded by the Ford Foundation "designed to provide income generating opportunities by extending credit to widows, divorcees, and women with unemployed or disabled husbands;" (5) *The Animal Health and Production Project*; (6) *The Rout Extension Project*; (7) *The Mechanization Project*—meant to make transportation of garbage more efficient; (8) and finally, *The Composting Project*

(Neamatalla, 1998:6-12). The accomplishments of the *Zabaleen Association* are listed as follows: (1) Environmental Benefits; (2) *Economic Development*; (3) *Capacity Building and Human Development*; and (4) *Enhanced Public Image* (Neamatalla, 1998:6-12). The projects implemented by the *Zabaleen Association* are all geared towards aiding local residents increase their productive capacities.

Today, BLESS no longer works in Mokattam and the majority of the projects listed above are no longer functioning (Medina, 2007). Comparing the projects implemented by Bishop Samuel and BLESS in El Mokattam to Bishop Youannes's current projects for BLESS points to a drastically different organization today. Bishop Youannes's prioritization of "marrying girls" or aiding in marriage expenses is indicative of a very traditional organization aiming to support the Liturgical lives of families. Because the Coptic community, for the most part, is perpetuated through childbirth and baptism, the support of marriages is direct support for the perpetuation of the community. It is also important to note that by supporting young women and men who are unable to afford wedding expenses, the Church minimizes the chances of illicit Muslim-Christian romances. The support of traditional Coptic marriages is a major discerning point between charity organizations and development organizations.

Coptic Orphans, a Coptic diaspora organization based out of Washington DC, prides itself on being committed to a development approach to philanthropy and is a strong advocate of deferring marriage until after education is complete. For Coptic orphans, early marriage is a major hindrance to the goal of education. In a blog post on the topic of early marriage, Coptic Orphans points to their disagreement with the

Church on the topic of early marriage by telling the story of a 14 year old girl in an arranged marriage:

Everyone in the village knew it, including—believe it or not—the local priest. They tried their best to hide it from their Coptic Orphans Rep, who visited them every week from a neighboring village. The marriage was less than a month away when Sarah’s volunteer Rep found out about he scheme (Jackson, 2011)

In this story, the local priest is “scheming” with Sarah’s mother to lock Sarah up in a marriage that will leave her with “no education or means of support... a tragedy felt across generations” (Jackson, 2011). While child marriage is truly a tragedy, by pitting the village priest against the Coptic Orphans Rep, this blog illustrates the tension between the traditional and the modern.

While Coptic Orphans has no direct relationship with Bishop Samuel and BLESS, it was influenced by his teachings and understanding of philanthropy. In fact, a blog post and a new fund at Coptic Orphans were created in 2014 as a tribute to Bishop Samuel.

The blog post *Bishop Samuel: How His Legacy Will Shape Your Life in 2015*, states:

One of my heroes is H.G. Bishop Samuel, who departed from this earth in 1981 after a lifetime of great accomplishments for the Coptic Church in Egypt and around the world... we owe a debt of gratitude to the Bishop Samuel for pioneering ideas that underpin our mission of transforming generations by empowering the fatherless (Riad, 2015).

Coptic Orphans, is, by all measures, much more committed to Bishop Samuel’s vision for a development organization in its philanthropy than BLESS. Coptic Orphans, having remained independent but cooperative with the Coptic Church, has retained a certain level of autonomy from Pope Shenouda’s hegemonic liturgical vision. In fact, it works daily against his vision and his traditional charity approach.

I have already discussed Bishop Youssef and Bishop Serapion's disagreement with the organization in terms of fundraising; now I would like to discuss some of the differences between Coptic Orphans and the Coptic Church in terms of their teachings on service. During a new "Representative," or "Rep" orientation I attended for Coptic Orphans volunteers in June 2013, the difference between serving for Coptic Orphans and the Church was made clear. In fact, the majority of the 3-day orientation was meant to "reorient" servants away from the Church's charity towards Coptic Orphans' development. Because Coptic Orphans Reps are chosen from among a list of servants recommended by the local Bishop, lengthy 3–10-hour a day orientations are required for all new volunteers.

A good deal of the orientation was spent going over the logistics of how money is dispersed among the Reps and how different forms are collected and when. Besides logistics, the second most discussed topic was how service with Coptic Orphans differs from traditional Church service and how Coptic Orphans interacts with the Church. Throughout the discussion, several comments were made by Coptic Orphans staff as well as the incoming Reps criticizing the Church for creating "an army of blood-sucking poor people... we [Coptic Orphans] are not a charitable institution, we are a development organization, these people are living with or without us" (Akram, 2013). The Church's practice of hemming in the poor by maintaining them as members of the Liturgical community, through minimal support, is seen by Coptic Orphans' practical rationality as irrational and harmful. For Coptic Orphans, if the child does not have the potential to grow through education, there is no point in spending money on them. At

the end of the orientation a few parting words were said to contrast serving at Coptic Orphans with serving at the Church—“this is not for the blessing of service, we are people who work, and our work is to get results... I don’t care about the blessing of service, I care about my families” (Akram, 2013). Akram saying summed up the point of the Reps’ services: “we want success stories” (Akram, 2013).

Regarding Coptic Orphans’ relationship with the Church, Nadia, the liaison between Coptic Orphans and the Church, explained: “we couldn’t operate in Egypt without the Church” (2013). In fact, the first step Coptic Orphans takes when expanding into a new area is to contact the diocesan bishop under which the area falls to ask for a list of possible Reps that he recommends. From that list, Coptic Orphans selects people based off of two qualifications: “is he ambitious, and does he think developmentally” (Nadia, 2013). The potential volunteer is asked the question: “if you got money for a client, what would you do with it? If they focus on food and clothing, they don’t qualify” (Nadia, 2013). Interesting to note is Nadia’s use of the term “client” to refer to participants in Coptic Orphans’ programs to stress the organization’s professionalism.

Both Akram and Nadia’s emphasis on professionalism and results contrast starkly the words of the Catholic scion of religious philanthropy—Mother Teresa. Commenting on the issue of professionalization, Mother Teresa said:

We are first of all religious. We are not social workers, not teachers, not nurses or doctors. We are religious sisters. We serve Jesus in the poor. We nurse him, feed him, clothe him, visit him, comfort him in the poor, the abandoned, the sick the orphans, the dying... our lives are very much woven with the Eucharist. We have a deep faith in Jesus’ Blessed

Sacrament. Because of this faith, it is not so difficult to see Christ and touch him in the distressing disguise of the poor (Mother Teresa, 1989)

I draw on this quotation by Mother Teresa because of its clear contrast between “this worldly” and “other-worldly” philanthropy within a Liturgical tradition. According to Mother Teresa, professionals aim to change the world—they seek results. Liturgical service, on the other hand, strengthens bonds of community through and for Communion—the colloquial term for Eucharist. For a traditionalist like Mother Teresa, the goal of Catholic philanthropy is not to effect physical reality for the sake of the temporal well being of an individual, it is to ensure that both we as philanthropists, and the poor as the suffers, participate in the sacramental life of the Church.

Mother Teresa has garnered a lot of criticism for her traditionalist stance, most notably by Christopher Hitchens who calls her “an ally of the status-quo” and accuses her of being “less interested in helping the poor than in using them as an indefatigable source of wretchedness on which to fuel the expansion of her fundamentalist roman Catholic beliefs” (Taylor, 2015). Hitchens’s critiques of Mother Teresa’s service parallel Coptic Orphans’ criticisms of the Church’s traditional charity. In terms of goals, development and charity differ drastically. While both seek to fulfill the biblical commandment to love and care for the poor, charity is oriented inward towards the group, while development outward towards others. A crucial element of development work is the evaluation process, projects are deemed successful based on measures of efficiency, how much was accomplished by the resources that we used? Charity, on the other hand, is measured by how many people are kept within the “arms of the church.”

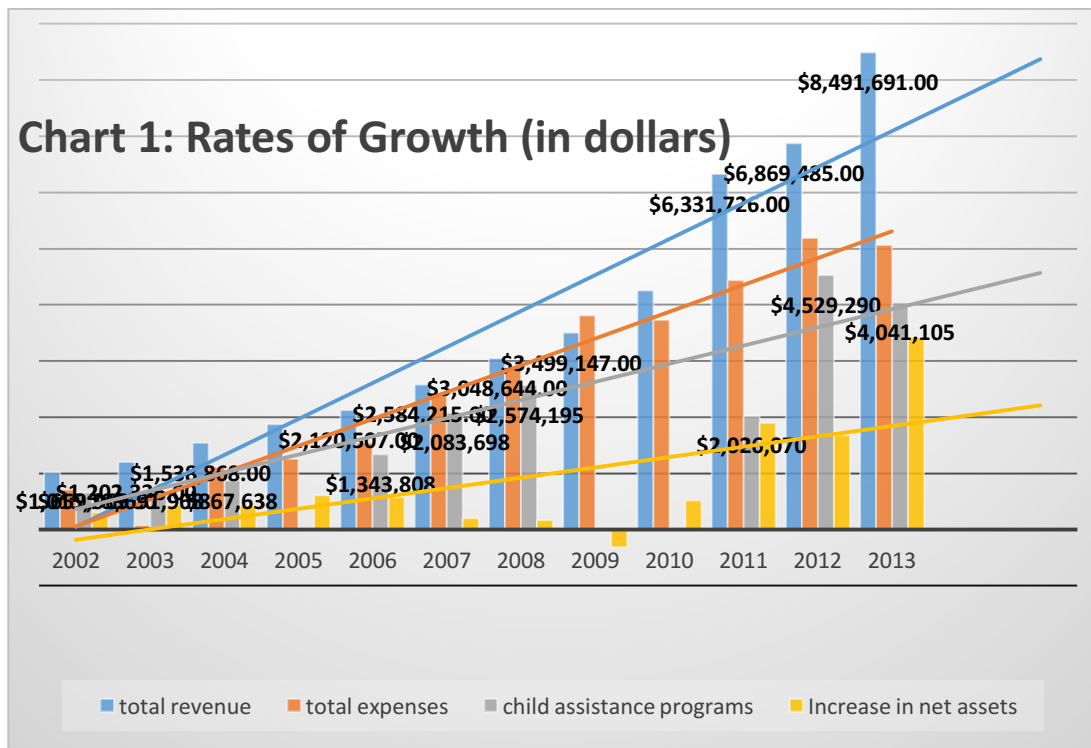
The goal of charity is the maintenance of the connection between the ecclesia and its congregation (Nikolov, B., 2008:140).

Traditional charity, being focused on maintaining ties to the community, cannot and does not reach out to Muslims. Because clergy administers charity, it may be perceived as proselyting, which is against the law, also social norms would push Muslims to find charity at the mosque. Volunteers, or professional volunteers from organizations such as BLESS and Coptic Orphans however, have enough distance from the church to be able to go into a community and talk to both Christians and Muslims (Nikolov, B., 2008:161). Nikolov attributes this distance to the Church as a result of the existence of these organizations in a “social space, which is both within and without religious life” (Nikolov, B., 2008:161). Activists in human development organizations are *guided by* religious teachings, but “work in the name of development, not Christ” (Nikolov, B., 2008:162). Because the work done becomes secularized, the organization can appeal to a larger, more diverse donor base to fund its work.

As described by Jarome Baggett, Habitat for Humanity, which was founded by a mainline Protestant, Millard Fuller generalized its theology to suit the sensibilities of its funders and volunteers. Habitat’s focus on efficiency, numbers and accomplishments, led to the development of a “theology of the hammer,” which is telling of its commitment to physical work, as well as a mock of traditional theological differences (Baggett, J., 2002:55-78). In his article, “The Irony of Para-church Organizations,” Baggett illustrates the pitfalls of uprooting an organization from its theological groundings, saying, that in a way, Habitat is now contributing to the very social ills it

sought to combat. Baggett’s warning portrays the strong isomorphic forces that pressure organizations to homogenize.

Interestingly, by looking at Coptic Orphans finances, as provided by their annual reports and their form 990s, we can see an organization with a clear focus on organizational and financial growth. Comparing the growth of their income from 2002-2013 we see the organization’s annual income grow almost tenfold (see chart 1), while the average number of new program participants did not grow from year to year but hovers around of 1150 new children annually. These numbers hint at an organization with a fundamental concern for financial growth.



Owing to their commitments to human development *and* the Coptic community, both Coptic Orphans and BLESS straddle the modern and the traditional. In doing so, both organizations find themselves torn between the traditional parochial-hierarchical relationships of their Coptic identities, and the secular, egalitarian relationships of their modern commitment to development. This contradiction is noted by Nikolov in BLESS in the role of the local fieldworkers that implement BLESS's "projects" in their villages. BLESS projects, according to Nikolov, are "directly expressed in the notion of sustainability," and are meant to function "even after the projects have ended." In other words, "the project, therefore, is mainly a tool of transformation whose objective is to achieve self-government" (2007:199). BLESS's work to create sustainable projects which can be "taken over" by local servants shows, according to Nikolov, the contradiction between BLESS's goals, and the wider traditional Church's work. BLESS servants, who function as partners of BLESS, are still servants, and, therefore are "embedded in the vertical relationships of the church; they operate as part of church hierarchy bringing it "down" to the grass-roots, providing an example of the verticality of ecclesiastical life and rule" (2007:196).

Interestingly, the integration of BLESS servants in the overall hierarchy of the Church helps servants maintain both their modern and traditional identities simultaneously. Coptic Orphans, however, differs as it functions both in Egypt, and in diaspora. In terms of their work in Egypt, they are similar to BLESS because they draw their volunteer servants, or "Reps," from the ranks of traditional church servants. In doing this, their servants "keep a foot in both doors," and work to influence the church

with their modern approach, as well as being influenced by the Church's traditionalism. Coptic Orphans, like BLESS, recruits the Copts' native "charitable impulses and practices... for the purposes of development and reconfiguration" (Nikolov, 2007:200). Coptic Orphans' Reps are often active members in their congregations whose outlooks are strongly shaped by Coptic Orphans' views on charity and development. According to the 2012 annual report, 23 Reps have been ordained priests so far. These priests can then institutionalize elements of development into their local churches. During a conversation with Fr. Philopateer, a past Coptic Orphans Rep, management and organization were brought up as the most important aspects of Coptic Orphans. He mentioned how after becoming the priest of his church, he created a database with the names of the poor in his church which is updated by volunteers regularly. This type of pressure to professionalize was also evident in Pope Tawadros's talk with a group of Coptic Orphans Reps. The comments by Pope Tawadros indicate his leanings towards internalizing development:

The ministry of Coptic Orphans is a good and outstanding example of a ministry with specific characteristics: administratively, it's excellent, ten out of ten; in terms of practicality, and perceiving people's needs, ten out of ten... it's a good management model that I hope all our Church bodies can emulate and follow.

The coercive pressure placed on the Church by the mere existence of Coptic Orphans seems to be pushing the church into internalizing development as a model of service, especially with the passing of Pope Shenouda and his staunch stance against development.

By highlighting the quality of Coptic Orphans' management and its organizational approach above all other attributes, both Pope Tawadros, and Fr. Philopateer acknowledge the organization's proficiency in the this-worldly part of philanthropy. The language used by the organization is very reflective of the human development approach to development but motivated by a religious calling. In other words, Coptic Orphans' theology has become, in some ways, similar to what Jarome Baggett called "the theology of the hammer." Coptic Orphans has embraced their mission to improve the physical and social situation of Orphans to a theological extent. This theology of service is, by its mere existence, a challenge to the established liturgical theology of the Church, and to the clergy, its guardians.

The challenge to the clergy posed by Coptic Orphans happens within the historical context of the challenge posed by the Archons over a century ago. Both the Archons and Coptic Orphans critique the "backwards," "irrational," philanthropy of the Church based off of a rational, practical, this-worldly view of how the Church should use its resources. The biggest difference between Coptic Orphans and the Archons is the egalitarian lens out of which Coptic Orphans sees of the role of the poor and the laity in the Coptic community. Archons simultaneously challenged the clergy, and maintained their loyalty to the ridged class structures of Egypt, pitting themselves against the majority of the laity. By working to "unlock the potential" of the poor through donations from ordinary regular Copts, Coptic Orphans engages the entire community in work that it deems theologically grounded.

Pope Tawadros and Fr. Philopateer's praises of Coptic Orphans focus mostly on their technical skills. Besides the criticism of Bishops Sarapion and Youssef mentioned earlier, very little is said about Coptic Orphan's philosophy. The primacy of the Church's traditional approach to charity and its hierarchical relationships, as well as Egypt's overall traditional environment render the effects of modernity obsolete in terms of scope.

Both development, and a "this worldly-orientation" leading to modernity will take root in the Coptic community on a large scale is yet to be seen. However, gauging from Pope Tawadros's seemingly indiscriminate support for all types of philanthropic organizations, there does not seem to be a widespread movement in the direction of development specifically rather towards decentralization. In terms of philanthropic outlook, Pope Tawadros seems more concerned with the popular debates on the effectiveness of philanthropy rather than the earlier debates on modernity and Coptic identity that concerned Pope Shenouda and Bishop Samuel.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

Understood within the context of Coptic culture and history, the philanthropies of Bishop Samuel and Pope Shenouda take on more significance because of their allegiances with historical and theological debates and trends. Pope Shenouda drew on the Church's strong contemplative monastic tradition to embrace a partially modern vision for the Coptic community working to widen familial bonds to include the Coptic community as a whole. In doing so, he was able to create a successful, proud, and active Coptic community that now spans the entire globe. Bishop Samuel, alternatively, operated under a wider humanistic Christianity that did not emphasize the communal boundaries of the Copts. Bishop Samuel's maintained his allegiance to the clergy, but was not tied down by the specificity of Coptic theology, which he hoped to reconcile with other Churches. His theological leniency earned him the suspicions of an earlier generation of clergy who had to see their parishes dwindle due to Catholic and Protestant missionaries. Pope Shenouda was especially irked with Bishop Samuel's ecumenical efforts as they challenged his vision of a Liturgical community.

I want to conclude this thesis by highlighting what I believe to be the most important take away from this discussion of philanthropy and modernity: traditional Coptic charity must not be measured against development in terms of "success" in reducing poverty or alleviating suffering. These two activities may overlap in their work at times, however, they differ drastically in goal and scope. Coptic charity dwells within

a larger religious framework and is meant to assist in the spiritual progress of the community through service provision, religious education, and humanitarian assistance. Human development works to develop the capabilities and talents of individuals in order for them to live economically independent lives. These differences make comparing these two philanthropies in terms of this-worldly efficacy flawed and distorting.

Instead, recognizing the strength of each philanthropy aids in making the decision to support one type of philanthropy or another. It is important to note that Coptic charity is not obsolete as proponents of development would like to argue. Charity serves a communal, otherworldly purpose that ensures a continuous commitment to the community's weakest and most vulnerable members. It binds the eternal fate of the wealthiest Copts to their charitable contributions to the Church, and the Church to all its members. Development philanthropy on the other hand is much more of a secular, this-worldly endeavor that can serve utilitarian purposes. It is able to provide services that transcend religious boundaries—a fact that makes it very useful in Egypt's religiously charged atmosphere. However, it is not an alternative to charity. Recognizing the this-worldly orientation of development is important when imbuing it with religious impetus, or Weberian value rationality.

Because of the similarities in action and impulse, these two philanthropies can be easily seen as interchangeable. However, replacing traditional charity with development by redirecting the value rationality traditionally reserved for charity towards development, would give development, and its practical, this-worldly nature,

the value rationality of Coptic charity. By giving value rationality to the practical rationality of development, Copts could transition into the “Benjamin Franklin” phase of modernization. While I have little evidence that this phase will inevitably lead to a modern, eminently practical society, there is evidence that the religious orientation of the Copt would tilt towards earth—along with its monetary allure—which is especially dangerous for development organizations. Because of this, I recommend practicing development work that is clearly demarcated as a secular endeavor. In doing so, individual Copts can use this modern tool to improve the lives of others and facilitate inter-religious cooperation, while at the same time not displacing traditional Coptic charity or challenging clerical authority.

Overall, this thesis raises bigger questions than it answers. The largest of these being “what is lost in terms of traditional communal life by too quickly accepting the West’s overly uniform Weberian understanding of civil society?” This question deserves a closer look as more and more diaspora groups try and impose their new visions of a good society back on to their homelands. How can organizations like Coptic Orphans work to maintain a communal commitment while pursuing a this-worldly, practical, a-cultural goal? How can the communal ideals of the Sunday School Movement continue to find relevance in an increasingly diversifying Church? Especially in a diaspora living in a disenchanted world? Will the liturgical structures revived by the Sunday School Generation and Pope Shenouda continue to bind Copts together? These are all important questions, for the Copts in particular, and for all traditional communities facing “modernity” for the first time in general.

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Dr. George Bebawi (March 12, 2014)

Fr. Pavlos (April 3, 2014)

Dr. Atef Meawad (January 5, 2015)

Nermien Riad (March 23, 2012)

Field research

Coptic Orphans New Rep Orientation in Cairo (2013)

Rep quarterly training in Sohag (2013)

Websites

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14 and Married: <http://www.copticorphans.org/blog/2011/07/to-be-14-and-married/>

Bishop Samuel: How His Legacy Will Shape Your Life in 2015:

<http://www.copticorphans.org/blog/2015/01/hg-bishop-samuel/>

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Master of Arts, 3.6/4.0 GPA
Lilly Family School of Philanthropy at Indiana University
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Bachelor of Arts, 3.8/4.0 GPA
Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis
Graduated: May 2011

Awards and Recognitions

Medical Humanities Essay Award: 2013
President's Volunteer Service Award: 2011
IUPUI Deans List: 2007-2011 Every Semester

Work and Leadership Experience:

Communications Associate at Coptic Orphans October 2014-Present

- Execute and co-plan communications strategy for several multi-million-dollar fundraising campaigns annually.
- Write for and update Coptic Orphans blog on a weekly basis.
- Oversee production of bi-monthly newsletter and monthly email field updates.
- Monitor and update Coptic Orphans social media.
- Create appealing video and photographic material for Coptic Orphans media outlets.
- Develop communications data mining strategies.
- Produce high impact media (photo and video) for use in Coptic Orphans media campaigns.

Camp Counselor at Camp Boggy Creek May 2014-September 2014

- Played with, and took care of a cabin of 7-11 kids with a range of serious illnesses for 8 consecutive sessions.
- Planned activities, monitored health, and facilitated friendships between a different set of campers each week.

Graduate Assistant at Lumina Foundation for Education September 2013-May 2014

- Worked directly with the director of organizational learning and alignment on internal projects such as the transition from Razor's Edge to Salesforce.
- Created educational videos on the potential uses of Salesforce for colleagues.
- Convened 3 organization wide meetings updating colleagues on the initiatives of different departments.

-Prepared over 50 PowerPoint presentations for Community Partnerships for Attainment initiative.

Research Assistant to Prof. Barbra Ibrahim, founder and director of the Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement at the American University in Cairo May 2013- September 2013

- Assisted Prof. Ibrahim in the writing of two book chapters.
- Conducted an evaluation on the effectiveness of civil society employee training for the Gerhart Center's Lazord Academy.
- Did personal research for thesis on Coptic Orphans' relationship with, and impact on the Coptic Orthodox Church.
- Witnessed and participated in the 2013 uprising and political events that followed.

Graduate Assistant at the School of Philanthropy September 2012-August 2013

- Assisted with preparation for conferences, meetings and other events.
- Responsible for implementation of a new student employment website.
- Assisting various professors with research and daily tasks.
- Attending and volunteering at a variety of different School of Philanthropy events.

Volunteer English Teacher and Translator, Coptic Orphans May 2011- November 2011

- Taught English at two different rural villages for about a month each.
- Translated for several visitors and volunteers with Coptic Orphans.
- Aided and attended several workshops in Cairo and other Egyptian cities.
- Made weekly house visits to CO families with local volunteers.
- Volunteered at St. Mina monastery near Alexandria, Egypt for two weeks as dishwasher, and observed child labor practices first hand.

Youth Leader at St. Mary and St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church 2007-2014

- Leading the Advertisement Committee for annual *Taste of Egypt* Festival.
- Planning and organizing semi-annual youth retreats.
- Teaching a Sunday school class of 12 five-year-olds.