

with Egyptian Christianity is evident from the fact that one of his concubines was Miriam, a Coptic slave girl,<sup>1</sup> who was the mother of his beloved son Ibrahīm, and the cause of no little scandal and flurry in the Prophet's domestic circle. It is possible that he learned a few Christian legends from Miriam, but if he learned along with them any new Christian terminology of Coptic origin, this has left no trace in the Qur'ān.

As we might expect, the Muslim philologists show no real acquaintance with the Coptic language, in spite of the fact that in discussing the word غساق *as-Suyūṭī* (*Itq*, 323) refers to a dialect of Coptic, viz.

الطحاوية.<sup>2</sup> Dvořák, arguing from the fact that the philologists stated that الاولى meant الآخر in Coptic, and الآخر meant الاولى,<sup>3</sup> suggests that the Muslims simply made these statements in order to throw contempt on the Coptic community.<sup>4</sup> In any case it is clear that there is no philological justification whatever for their attribution of a Coptic origin to any Qur'ānic words.

(ix) *Turkish*. - It goes without saying that no dialect of Turkish had any influence on Arabic until well on into the Islamic period. There is one word, however, which we find given as Turkish by quite an array of authorities including even al-Jawālīqī,<sup>5</sup> and Ibn Qutaiba,<sup>6</sup> viz. غساق, which occurs twice in the Qur'ān (xxxviii, 57, lxxviii, 25), and is said to mean the corruption which oozes from the bodies of the damned. The word غساق certainly can be found in the Turkish

<sup>1</sup> There is, of course, no certainty that Miriam was a Copt by race, and there are some grounds for thinking that she may have been an Abyssinian slave-girl living in Egypt before she was sent as a gift to Muhammad.

<sup>2</sup> طحا is a district of Upper Egypt, cf. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, iii, 516.

<sup>3</sup> *Itq*, 319; *Mutaw*, 63.

<sup>4</sup> *Fremdur*, 23, 24. Along with الاولى must be classed بطائن of lv, 54, which clearly means "inner linings", but which the same authorities, according to as-Suyūṭī, say means "exteriors" (ظواهر) in Coptic. It should be noted, however, that as-Suyūṭī also quotes authorities as claiming that وراء was Nabataean for امام, see *Itq*, 325; *Mutaw*, 61.

<sup>5</sup> *Mu'arrab*, 107 (cf. Khafājī, 142); as-Suyūṭī, *Itq*, 323; *Mutaw*, 64. Others, however, as we have seen, said it was Coptic.

<sup>6</sup> *Adab al-Kātib*, 527.