It is a well-known fact that from Alexander the Great’s conquest until subjugation by the Arabs, Egypt was a bilingual society, in which a large percentage of the population was completely fluent in both Greek and Egyptian. For over a millennium Greek was the official language of the country, and anyone who studies the papyri which have survived from the period soon realizes that all dealings with the ubiquitous bureaucracy had to be carried on through Greek documents. The practical value of acquiring the ability to read, write and speak Greek was enormous, and it did not take long for bilingualism to develop.1

This bilingualism has an interesting ramification which has not yet been sufficiently explored. In studying the Coptic translations of Greek biblical and patristic literature, scholars have long used the Greek original to elucidate the meaning and structure of Coptic. But the operation can be reversed: we can learn something about Greek if we pay close attention to the work of the Coptic translators. Since the latter had an intimate knowledge of Greek, it is not surprising that they should reproduce in their versions the subtleties and nuances of the original.

To demonstrate the skill of the Coptic translators, I have selected some passages from the Sahidic version of St Athanasius’ Life of St Antony and have compared them to the original Greek.2 These passages

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1 For aspects of this bilingualism, see W. Peremans, “Over Tweetaligheid in ptolemaïsch Egypte,” *AntCl* 4 (1935) 403-17; H. C. Youtie, “ΑΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΟΣ: An Aspect of Greek Society in Egypt,” forthcoming in *HSCP* 75 (1971); G. Mussies, “Egyptianisms in a Late Ptolemaic Document,” *Antidoron Martino David [Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava 17]* (Leiden 1968) 70-76. I should like to thank my colleagues, Bentley Layton and Zeph Stewart, for their helpful advice in the preparation of these notes.

show that the Copts were familiar with features of Greek that are by no means obvious to modern scholars.

I

In chapter 52 the author relates how Satan sent a pack of hyenas to attack St Antony. The latter addressed the animals in uncompromising terms, and the text continues: ταύτα τοῦ Ἀντωνίου λέγοντος, ἔφυγον ἑκείναι οὐ υπὸ μάστιγος τοῦ λόγου διωκόμεναι (920 A 1–3).

The syntax of ως υπὸ μάστιγος τοῦ λόγου διωκόμεναι has frequently been misunderstood; editors and translators have long tended to regard τοῦ λόγου as dependent upon μάστιγος and to render accordingly: “as if pursued by the whip of the word.” The anonymous fourth-century Latin version has beluae fugiabant, quasi a flagello sermonis effugatae; and Evagrius, who translated the text ca. A.D. 370, appears to have a similar view of the syntax of the passage, despite his rather free paraphrase: omnis bestiarum multitudo, quasi maiestatis verbere caederetur, auffigit. Bernard de Montfaucon’s version, which appeared originally in 1698 and which was reprinted in Migne, has auffuger illae quasi verbi flagello pulsae. Finally, in 1950, R. T. Meyer wrote “they fled, as though hounded by the whip of that word.”

These translators should have noticed that ως υπὸ μάστιγος τοῦ λόγου διωκόμεναι is an idiomatic piece of Greek, which means not “as if pursued by the whip of the word,” but rather “pursued by the word as if by a whip.” We are dealing with a condensed form of expression for υπὸ τοῦ λόγου ως υπὸ μάστιγος διωκόμεναι. When cases other than the genitive are involved, the construction is clearer; e.g. 856 B παρεκαθέζοντο ως ἐπὶ νεκρῷ τῷ Ἀντωνίῳ; Heliodorus, Ἀθηνιόπτα 9.18.3 ὁσπερ ἐπὶ λόφον ἡ φρούριον τὸ ζώον καταφεύγοντες.

Phrases of this type appear occasionally in classical Greek (see Kühner-Gerth II p.492.2), but the construction is not confined to Attic. The XVIII-century scholar d’Orville, on p.283 of his commen-
tary on Chariton, collected instances from the Koiné. From his examples I select the following:

Heliodorus 9.22.2 ἐσέλθακεν ὁσπέρ ἔφ’ ἁρματος τοῦ ἑλέφαντος,
   “he rode in, mounted on the elephant as if on a chariot.”
Here it is particularly obvious that the second noun cannot depend upon the first.
Chariton 3.2.6 ἀνακύπτειν ἐβιάζετο καθάπερ ἐκ τρυχύμας τοῦ πάθους,
   “he forced himself to bear up under his passion, as if under a mighty flood.”
Especially close to the phrase ὅς ὑπὸ μάστιγος τοῦ λόγου are the following examples from d’Orville:

Heliodorus 7.7.5 ἔβεβλητο μὲν ὅς ὑπὸ τρύγεως τῶν λόγων,
   “he was struck by the words as if he were wounded.”
The author expressed the same idea in 7.7.7 ὁσπέρ βέλει τῷ ῥήματι
   βληθεικ, “wounded by the word as if by a missile,” a phrase which elucidates the syntax of ὅς ὑπὸ τρύγεως τῶν λόγων.
Chariton 6.5.6. τὴν καρδιὰν ἐπλήγη ὁσπέρ ὑπὸ ἐξήνοι τοῦ λόγου,
   “she was struck in her heart by the word as if by a sword.”

There can now be no doubt that ὅς ὑπὸ μάστιγος τοῦ λόγου διωκό-
   μεναι is to be translated “pursued by the word as if by a whip.” The Coptic translator has not fallen into the error of the versions listed above; his translation shows that he correctly understood the passage: ἄγωτη νῦι ἑντῶαν ηρε περφαξε πητ ἑνωον θε ΝΙΟΥΑΣΤΙΓΑ (p.59.3–4), “they fled, with his word pursuing them like a whip.”

II

In chapter 33 St Antony discourses on the futility of knowing the future in advance. He concludes: οὐδὲις γὰρ ἡμῶν κρίνεται διὰ τί σῶκ
   οἴδε, καὶ οὐδὲις μακαρίζεται ὅτι μεμάθηκε καὶ ἐγνω (893 Α 5–6). The

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6 J. P. d’Orville, Charitonis Aphrodisiensis de Chaerea et Callirhoe amatoriarum narrationum libri viii, 2nd ed. C. D. Beck (Leipzig 1783).
8 ΝΙΟΥΑΣΤΙΓΑ for ΝΟΥΑΣΤΙΓΑ.
anonymous Latin version renders this sentence as *nemo enim nostrum iudicari habet*9 quia non scit, neque beatus appellari habet quia dicit talia aut novit; Montfaucon has *nemo nostrum in iudicium vocatur, quod ea non norit; nemo beatus censetur, quod didicerit et noscat*; and Meyer translates “for no one of us is judged by what he does not know, and no one is called blessed because of what he has learned and knows.”

These versions ignore the precise meaning of διὰ τί; it is not the equivalent of ὅτι or διότι (‘because’), but is rather an interrogative, ‘for what reason?’, ‘why?’10 The Coptic translator has captured its proper force: ὥν ἀλλὰς γράψα ὡμοί ἐγνάτι γὰρ ἕρρξη τοῖς ὑστεροῖς ἔτε οὖ ἐνόθον ἵπταν ἄν θνατή ὥν ἀλλὰς ἐγνατακαρίζε ὡμοί τε ἐνα λαθεῖν ἐναι (p.40.21–23), “for there is no one of us whom they are going to judge by saying ‘why does he not know these things?’, and there is no one whom they are going to bless by saying ‘he knows these things’.”11

III

In “Kolon und Satz II”12 E. Fraenkel showed that the particle ἄν could be used to determine the division of a Greek sentence. Fraenkel was concerned with semantically independent units, which he called cola, and he maintained that ἄν, when not immediately attached to a verb, invariably occupies second place in a colon. The particle not only marks the beginning of the colon in which it occurs, but it indicates that the preceding word-group is also a colon. Isaeus 3.51 (cited by Fraenkel p.94) provides an obvious example: γενομένων δὲ τούτων, δοκεῖ ἂν ὑμῖν ὁ θεὸς ἐπιτρέψαι κτλ. But cola need not be syntactically isolated clauses; they may be prepositional phrases, adverbial ex-

9 Habere+ infinitive is used in this Latin version as a future expression; see Hoppenbrouwers, op.cit. (supra n.3) 39.
10 See e.g., K. van Leeuven-Boomkamp, “Τί et διὰ τί dans les Évangiles,” REG 39 (1926) 327–31, and cf. Hermæ Pastor, ed. M. Whittaker (GCS 1956) II (27) 5 οἱ δὲ λαμβάνοντες ἀποδόθαις λόγον τῷ θεῷ διὰ τί δέλαβον καὶ ἐκ τί, “those then who receive alms shall render account to God as to why and for what purpose they received them,” where διὰ τί more or less= ἐκ τί. [I owe the reference to the Hermæ Pastor to Bentley Layton.]
11 Coptic characteristically uses *oratio recta* to render Greek *oratio obliqua*. The *or. rec. may be introduced by* ἔμε, a common ellipse for εἰκός ὡμοί ἔμε. See W. Till, *Koptische Grammatik* (Leipzig 1961) §397. The conjunction ἔμε in *ἔμε λαθεῖν ἐναι* could mean ‘because’, i.e. ὅτι, but it is more likely that the translator here handled his original somewhat freely and continued the direct discourse of ἔτε οὖ ἐνόθον ἵπταν ἄν θνατή.
12 Kleine Beiträge I (Rome 1964) 93–130 (= NAkG 1933, 319–54).
pressions, or even nouns. If they function as cola, they acquire an emphasis and semantic independence that they would not normally have. In Isaeus 4.11 (Fraenkel p.119), πρό δὲ τούτων, οὐδὲ ἢν τῶν τεθνεῶτων οὔδεις κατεψεύθη, the position of οὖν shows that πρό δὲ τούτων is semantically isolated from the rest of the sentence; it functions as a substitute for a clause and means “and, what is more important than this” (Wyse’s translation, quoted by Fraenkel, loc.cit.).

We can find a quite different kind of support for Fraenkel’s view if we examine the Coptic translation of a passage from the Vita, ταύτην μὲν οὖν τὴν πρόθεσιν δικαίως ἢν τις ἐπαινέει (837 Λ 5–6). Athanasius is about to pass on to a new topic and the phrase ταύτην μὲν οὖν τὴν πρόθεσιν summarizes what has been said in the preceding sentences; οὖν shows that the words constitute a separate colon, which we can perhaps translate “as far as this purpose is concerned.” The Coptic version reflects the emphasis of the Greek with noteworthy accuracy: πεισοροτ δὲ ἰντεινειο υμακιαν πε ετρε υκον νιῳ αιπαινον υμον (p.1.11–12), “as for such a resolve as this, then, it is just for everyone to praise it.”

IV

It is a demonstrable feature of Greek that in phrases of which the kernel consists of a nominative participle+ subject+ verb, the subject is to be taken directly with the participle, not, as we might think, with the finite verb. E.g. ἀκούσας ὃ ἄνθρωπος ἀπῆλθεν is to be articulated with a comma after, not before, ὃ ἄνθρωπος. We can demonstrate the correctness of this articulation by referring to Fraenkel’s doctrine of οὖν as a colon-marker. Since οὖν is the second word of a colon, such a sentence as Demosthenes 19.313 (cited in “Kolon und Satz II,” p.98) can be divided only as follows: οὖν ἀποστερῶν ἐκεῖνος οὗτος, αὐτὸς οὖν τῆς

13 Fraenkel’s views on colometry have been most recently expressed in his Leseproben aus Reden Ciceros und Catos (Rome 1968); see pp.13f for a summary of his previous work on the subject. Although this book is mainly concerned with Latin, his remarks can be applied, mutatis mutandis, to Greek. For a sensitive evaluation of Fraenkel’s work in this area, see E. Laughton’s review of Leseproben in JRS 60 (1970) 188–94.

14 Strikingly similar is the following sentence from Hdt. 6.98: τοῦτος μὲν δὴ τὸς βασιλέας ὥσπερ ἄν ὁμοίως κατὰ γλῶσσαν τὴν εὐθύνην Ελληνικές καλέως. Τοῦτος μὲν δὴ τὸς βασιλέας is a separate colon, as the position of οὖν shows; the words are emphasized because Herodotus wished to indicate clearly that he had reached the end of one section and was about to proceed to a new subject; see “Kolon und Satz II,” p.112.
This type of pattern may also be compared to sentences like ἀκούσας τις ἀπήλθεν, which, because of the enclitic, must be analyzed as ἀκούσας τις ἀπήλθεν.

Since the Copts were completely fluent in Greek, it is not surprising that they should appreciate this form of articulation. I here list examples of this pattern which I have found in the Vita. In each case the translator has preserved the Greek word order and, by using the particle ἃδι (‘namely’), has associated the subject with the Coptic equivalent of the Greek participle.

τοῦτον Ἰδὼν Ἀντώνιος, ἐξηλωσεν (844 B 5–6), παί δὲ ἱπτεραναγ εροη ἃδι Ἀντωνιος ἀπεκωρθεὶς εροη (p.5.13–14), “and as for him, when he, namely Antony, saw him, he became jealous of him.”

οὗτος δὲ οὖν εὐφίλεις ἕτοιμος ὁ Ἀντώνιος, ἀπέρχετο εἰς τὰ . . . μνήματα (853 c 1–3), ἱτείγε ἄρσογκ ἃδι Ἀντωνιος ἀρβὼκ εροην ἐνύζαγ (p.12.25–26), “and thus he, namely Antony, braced himself, and went to the tombs.”

τοιοῦτος δὲ φανώμενος ὁ τῶν δαμονίων ἄρχων, ἐκφοβεῖ (877 c 3–4), ερογνως δὲ ἵππος εβολ ἱτείγε ἃδι παρχων ἱνενδαιων ἱνενδαιων ἱνενδαιων (p.30.19–20), “this then is the way in which he manifests himself, namely the leader of the evil spirits, when he inspires terror.”16

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February, 1971

16 ἱνενδαιων for ἱνενδαιων.
16 Cf. also 888 4 12–13 (p.36.22–23), 949 b 12 (p.82.18), 956 b 2–4 (p.86.21–23).