

ISSN 0273-3269

COPTIC CHURCH REVIEW

Volume 21, Number 3 Fall 2000

THE LIFE OF MACARIUS OF EGYPT



Society of Coptic Church Studies

EDITORIAL BOARD

Bishop Wissa
(Al-Balyana, Egypt)

Bishop Antonious Markos
(Coptic Church, African Affairs)

Bishop Isaac
(Quesna, Egypt)

Bishop Dioscorus
(Coptic Church, Egypt)

Fr. Tadros Malaty
(Alexandria, Egypt)

Professor Fayek Ishak
(Ontario, Canada)

William El-Meiry, Ph.D.
(N.J., U.S.A.)

Girgis A. Ibrahim, Ph.D.
(Florida, U.S.A.)

Esmat Gabriel, Ed.D.
(PA., U.S.A.)

EDITOR
Rodolph Yanney, M.D.

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Ralph Yanney

© **Copyright 2000**
by Coptic Church Review
E. Brunswick, NJ

Subscription and Business Address:
Society of Coptic Church Studies
P.O. Box 714
E. Brunswick, NJ 08816
email: ralph.yanney@home.com

Editorial Address:
Coptic Church Review
P.O. Box 1113
Lebanon, PA 17042
email: yanney@mail.ptd.net

Subscription Price (1 Year)
U.S.A. \$10.00
Canada \$12.00 (U.S. dollars)
Overseas \$13.00

This periodical is indexed in
the *ATLA Regional Database*,
published by the
American Theological Library Assoc.
250 S. Wacker Dr., 16th Floor
Chicago, IL 60606
E-mail: atla@atla.com
WWW: <http://www/atla.com/>

Abstracts of articles appear in
Religious and Theological Abstracts,
Myerstown, PA 17067.

COPTIC CHURCH REVIEW

A Quarterly of Contemporary Patristic Studies
ISSN 0273-3269

Volume 21, Number 3 Fall 2000

82 *Coptic Palladiana III: The Life
of Macarius of Egypt*
Tim Vivian

110 *Book Reviews*

- Among the Copts
- Lives of The Jura Fathers

*Microfilm and microfiche copies of previous
issues and articles are available from University
Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann
Arbor, MI 48106*

COPTIC PALLADIANA III

THE LIFE OF MACARIUS OF EGYPT (LAUSIAC HISTORY 17)

Translated, with an Introduction,
by Tim Vivian

INTRODUCTION

For the General Introduction to the “Coptic Palladiana” and the *Life of Pambo*, and a list of abbreviations used, see *Coptic Church Review* 20.3 (Fall 1999); for the *Life of Evagrius*, see 21.1 (Spring 2000).

Saint Macarius the Great

Macarius the Great, also called Macarius of Egypt or Macarius the Egyptian (to distinguish him from Macarius of Alexandria),¹ is one of the most venerated saints of the Coptic Church (his name, which means “blessed,” in Greek is “Makarios,” in Arabic “Maqar”). He was born around the year 300 in Jijbêr (present-day Shabshâr), a village in the south-west portion of the Nile delta and, therefore, was a child during the Great Persecution (306-311) and a teenager when Constantine promulgated the Edict of Toleration in 313.² As a young man he was a camel driver; as part of his job as a gatherer of natron, he may have visited the Wadi al-Natrun, his future monastic home.³ Still a young man, he became a village ascetic or anchorite, like Saint Antony and others before him.⁴

¹ In ancient monastic literature “Egypt” often stands in juxtaposition against (Greek) “Alexandria.”

² Much of this biographical section is drawn from Antoine Guillaumont, “Macarius the Egyptian, Saint,” *The Coptic Encyclopedia* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 5.1491, and Evelyn White, 2.60-72. On Macarius in the AP, see Jean-Claude Guy’s discussion in his introduction to *Les Apophtegmes des Pères* (Sources chrétiennes 387), especially 47-49.

³ The *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 7-8 records earlier visits. This *Life*, attributed to Sarapion of Thmuis, is independent of the *Life of Macarius of Egypt*. Years later, his thievery as a young camel driver was still a reproof, and means of humility, for him. See AP Macarius the Great 31; Ward, 134.

⁴ See the *Life of Antony* 3-4; on village ascetics, see E.A. Judge, “The Earliest Use of Monachos for ‘Monk’ (P. Coll. Youtie 77) and the Origins of Monasticism,” *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 20 (1977): 72-89, and James E. Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Studies in Antiquity and Christianity; Harrisburg: Trinity, 1999), 13-35 and 53-72.

About 330 Macarius went to the Wadi al-Natrun (Scetis), southwest of the Nile delta, about the same time that Amoun was founding a monastic settlement just to the north in Nitria. Settling eventually near the site of the present-day monastery named in his honor, Deir Anba Maqar, Macarius at first lived alone. Soon, however he began to attract disciples and a small community formed around him. By 340 a growing monastic settlement was solidly in place in Scetis; a mere sixteen years later, Abba Sisoës would leave Scetis for remoter regions, complaining that it was now too crowded.⁵ Little more, however, is known for sure of either Macarius or his community at this time. Macarius apparently was made a priest ten years after coming to the Wadi al-Natrun. He was deported during the Arian persecution in 374 to an island in the delta, returned some time later to Scetis, and died about 390.⁶ As with other monastic saints, his body underwent numerous adventures and movings about, coming to rest finally at Deir Anba Maqar, where it is venerated today.⁷

Macarius' life, as was often the case, soon became the stuff of legend.⁸ In Coptic tradition Macarius was later hailed as "the first shoot of this vine . . . that is Shiêt [Scetis]."⁹ Macarius came to preside, in a loose manner, over the monks of Scetis. These monks were semi-anchoretic; that is, they lived alone or in small groups in scattered cells, and came together as a larger community usually only on Saturday and Sunday, when they celebrated the eucharist together and participated in a communal meal. We should not impose later structures, either architectural or monastic, on these monks: the monastic enclosure, with its high defensive walls, would not be the rule until the ninth century, and the rules and regulations of medieval, Benedictine, monasticism, much less the ways of modern orders, were unknown to them. The best way to understand these early monks, in any case, is not historically, but spiritually, through their thought and practices;

⁵ AP Sisoës 28 (Ward, 218).

⁶ See Rufinus, *Ecclesiastical History* 2.4, Palladius, *Lausiac History* 17, and AP Macarius the Great 2 and 4 (Ward, 125, 128).

⁷ See Father Matta el-Meskeen, *Coptic Monasticism and the Monastery of St. Macarius: A Short History* (Cairo: the Monastery of St. Macarius, 1984), 27-31, 53-54. On the removal of his remains from Scetis to Jijbêr, see the *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 37.

⁸ For a full and judicious account of the material about Macarius, see Evelyn White, cited above. Evelyn White, 2.465-68, argues that the *Life of Macarius* consists, for the most part, of "some fragments of surviving tradition floating in a sea of pious imagination" (2.468). Nevertheless, the *Life* contains historical elements (as Evelyn White acknowledges) and is an important hagiographical document.

⁹ E. Amélineau, ed., *The Life of Maximus and Domitius, Histoire des monastères de la Basse Égypte* (Annales de Musée Guimet 25; Paris, 1894), 263.

the *Sayings* of the desert fathers and mothers offer the best access to their world.¹⁰

At their best, the early monks simplified the spiritual life to work and prayer, and erected no boundaries between these two, seeing them as integral parts of life in God.¹¹ In the same way, they numbered their spiritual precepts as two or three and not in the thousands: “Do no evil to anyone, and do not judge anyone. Observe this and you will be saved,” offered Macarius.¹² Macarius taught that prayer did not require “long discourses; it is enough to stretch out one’s hands and say, ‘Lord, as you will, and as you know, have mercy.’ And if the conflict grows fiercer say, ‘Lord, help!’”¹³ The monk was to become “a dead man.” When a brother asked Macarius how to be saved, he told the monk to go to the cemetery and insult the dead; when the brother reported that he had done as he was told, Macarius then told him to go praise the dead. When the monk returned again, Macarius asked him, “Did they answer you?” When the monk said no, Macarius drove home his point: “You know how you insulted them and they did not reply, and how you praised them and they did not speak; so you too if you wish to be saved must do the same and become a dead man. Like the dead, take no account of either the scorn of men or their praises, and you can be saved.”¹⁴

Such advice as Macarius gave to that monk might seem quaint to us today, unrealistic, but it is unrealistic in precisely the way that the Sermon on the Mount is “unrealistic”: that is, it challenges us so profoundly that our usual defense is to dismiss it. In the same way, Macarius’ actions are impossible, just as Jesus’ are impossible. But Macarius, like Jesus, was known for his wonderworking: “The Egyptian had acquired such a reputation that he always had a disciple with him to receive ‘clients’ ‘on account of the number of those who came to be healed by him.’”¹⁵ One day Macarius discovered a man plundering his goods, “so he came up to the thief as if he was a stranger and he helped him to load the animal. He saw him off in great peace of soul.”¹⁶ Strange? Yes. But less strange, perhaps,

¹⁰ Although there is no doubt that the *Apophthegmata* were compiled and edited later, there is also no doubt that they have their origins in the fourth century at Nitria and Scetis; for good recent discussions, see Graham Gould, *The Desert Fathers on Monastic Community* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 1-25, and Douglas Burton-Christie, *The Word in the Desert: Scripture and the Quest for Holiness in Early Christian Monasticism* (New York and Oxford: Oxford, 1993), esp. 76-103 on the origins of the *Apophthegmata*, and Part III on spirituality.

¹¹ For a good discussion, see Lucien Regnault, *La vie quotidienne des pères du désert en Égypte au IV^e siècle* (Paris: Hachette, 1990), esp. 109-16. An English translation has recently been published as *The Day-To-Day Life of the Desert Fathers in Fourth-Century Egypt* (St. Bede’s, 2000).

¹² AP Macarius the Great 28 (Ward, 133).

¹³ AP Macarius the Great 19 (Ward, 131).

¹⁴ AP Macarius the Great 23 (Ward, 132).

¹⁵ Regnault, 233.

¹⁶ AP Macarius the Great 18 (Ward, 131); see also 40 (Ward, 137-38).

than someone today watching, with fear and trembling, as the stock market plummets five hundred points one day and rockets up three hundred the next, and calling such a life “normal.” It is worth noting that Macarius assists his thieves while quoting scripture: “We have brought nothing into this world, and we cannot take anything out of the world” (1 Tim 6:7). Such detachment, ancient monasticism shows again and again, can lead to real peace.

The Coptic Life of Macarius and the Lausiatic History

There are two recensions of the Coptic *Life of Macarius the Great* (which should be distinguished from the later *Life of Macarius of Scetis* attributed to Sarapion of Thmuis.¹⁷ The Long Recension of the *Life* replicates most of *Lausiatic History* 17, with some additional material, most notably par. 6 on the follower of Hieracas (see below for a brief discussion of it), while the Short Recension has only five of the thirteen paragraphs of Palladius’ *History* (LH 17.6-9, 11).¹⁸ Except for one slightly displaced paragraph (8 = LH 17.10), the twelve paragraphs of the Coptic *Life* follow the order of chapter 17 of the *Lausiatic History*. The Coptic *Life* then has three additional paragraphs: par. 10, Abba Macarius and Abba Amoun; par. 11, the mighty deeds and works of Abba Macarius; and, most interesting, par. 12, the death of Abba Macarius.

Palladius includes only one sentence about Macarius’ death (17.13): “I did not meet him, since he had fallen asleep a year before I entered the desert.” The Coptic *Life*, by contrast, narrates at some length Macarius’ ascent to heaven and reception on high. Par. 12 of the Coptic *Life*, thus, is classic hagiography: an editor, dissatisfied with the lack of an edifying conclusion to Macarius’ life (his holy death), appended the story of the saint’s assumption into heaven. He does, however, vouch for the story by giving his source—“Abba Paphnutius, the disciple of Abba Macarius.” The *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 36 agrees that the “holy man Abba Paphnutius, who was the greatest of the saint’s disciples . . . assumed the fatherhood in the holy places after Abba Macarius.” The problem here is that *Lausiatic History* 18.27, devoted to the life of Macarius of Alexandria (= Coptic *Life of Macarius of Alexandria* 18), says that Paphnutius was a disciple of the Alexandrian. Paphnutius was a common Coptic name, so it is possible that each Macarius had a disciple named Paphnutius. Palladius speaks of “Paphnutius of Scetis” (LH 46.2) and Cassian locates Paphnutius in Scetis (*Conferences* 3.1.1, 10.3.1, 18.15.1), where Macarius lived, which would seem to indicate that this Paphnutius was indeed the disciple of Macarius

¹⁷ For the *Life of Macarius of Scetis* and the *Virtues of Saint Macarius*, see Vivian, *Disciples of the Soul’s Beloved* (forthcoming).

¹⁸ The Short Recension is clearly a translation of LH 17:6-9 and part of 17.11.

the Great. But Cassian does not connect Paphnutius with Macarius the Great, Paphnutius was a priest, and he was already an old man at the time that Cassian and Palladius visited the desert. Thus this Paphnutius can not have been a disciple of Macarius the Great. Given the confusion in antiquity between the two Macarii,¹⁹ it seems possible that the editor who appended the hagiographical ending to the *Life of Macarius the Great*, or his source, confused the two Macarii and so gave the disciple of Macarius of Alexandria to Macarius of Egypt.²⁰

One must caution, however, that this editor is not necessarily the same person responsible for the beginning of the rather intriguing *Life* (words in italics are not found in the *Lausiac History*):

I will first tell about the Egyptian; *he finished life in the body first, before the Alexandrian, and it was also he who buried the body of Abba Antony.* He spent sixty-five years living in the desert and died in his ninety-seventh year. *Two years after his leaving the body, I entered the monastic community and met the Alexandrian, who lived another two years.*²¹ *When I encountered the true disciples of the Egyptian I implored them and they told me about a few of his virtues and ascetic practices. Abba Evagrius was also very close to him; he himself told me about a few of his virtues too.*

In *Lausiac History* 17.13 Palladius says that Macarius fell asleep a year before he came to the desert; here it is two years. The author of the Coptic *Life* goes on to add that Macarius of Alexandria lived another two years, which is a reasonable statement.²² This author hurts his historical credibility, however, by saying that Macarius of Egypt had buried Antony; in this he is followed by the *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 19. The hagiographical intention of the latter is to make Macarius the disciple of Antony the Great. The *Historia Monachorum* 28.1 follows this tradition when it says that Macarius was “the disciple of Antony.” It was widely reported in antiquity that a Macarius had interred the great Antony.²³ Given the close association

¹⁹ See Antoine Guillaumont, “Le problème des deux Macaires dans les *Apophthegmata Patrum*,” *Irénikon* 48 (1975): 41-59, and Gabriel Bunge, “Evagre le Pontique et les deux Macaires,” *Irénikon* 56 (1983): 215-27, 323-60. As Guillaumont, 48, aptly calls it: “le désaccord profond entre ceux qui paraissent être les premiers témoins.”

²⁰ Either he was followed in this attribution by the *Life of Macarius of Scetis* or each Macarius did have a disciple named Paphnutius.

²¹ This would be about 392.

²² In LH 18.1 Palladius says that Macarius of Alexandria was alive for three years. The *Historia Monachorum* 23.1, an account of a trip made in 394-95, says that Macarius “had just died.” Guillaumont, 46, dates the death of Macarius of Alexandria to 394.

²³ In the *Life of Antony* 91, Antony commands two (unnamed) disciples to bury him, and in par. 92 they do so. Jerome, *Life of Paul* 1, gives these two disciples names: Macarius and Amatus, but it is the latter who buries Antony. LH 21.1 gives these same names and says the two buried Antony.

between Macarius the Great and Antony (see AP Macarius 4 and 26), it is not surprising that the Macarius who buried Antony (according to Jerome and Palladius) became Macarius the Great. Since, however, Palladius clearly states (LH 21.1) that Antony's Macarius still dwelt in Pispir, Antony's outer mountain, he can not have also believed that Macarius the Great buried Antony. It is clear that later monastic tradition, in its desire to *more closely* associate two of the great founders of monasticism (an association, as noted above, that does have historical basis) conflated Macarius of Pispir and Macarius of Scetis.

The chronology is close, but the mistaken statement that Macarius the Great buried Antony is wrong. Could the latter be an editorial (or scribal) gloss? This seems possible because of what the author goes on to say: that he learned about Macarius directly from the saint's disciples—and from Evagrius. In the *Virtues of Macarius*, Evagrius “the sage” is the interlocutor of Macarius most often mentioned. That such a statement about Evagrius could come from Palladius is not only plausible but likely. In fact, the author of the *Coptic Life* is careful to indicate his sources (pars. 4, 6, 10, 12; all but the last do not have parallels in the LH). The fact that the author gives Evagrius as a prominent source, and that this fact does not appear in the *Lausiatic History*, makes it seem credible that this source was edited out by a later editor of the *History*. (On the expunging of Evagrius from the monastic record, see the General Introduction.)²⁴ If, therefore, the *Coptic Life* represents an early draft by Palladius of what would become the *Lausiatic History*, Palladius himself could have deleted some of it later. Or, if the *Coptic Life* represents an unexpurgated version of the *Lausiatic History*, the extra material found in the *Coptic Life* could have been effaced in the Greek tradition by a redactor. In any case, there is at least a possibility that *some* of the extra material in the *Coptic Life* is Palladian. I would suggest that the statements about Evagrius do go back to Palladius, and that some of the other Coptic material was added during later transmission by scribes and editors.

Undoubtedly the most important of this extra material is par. 6, on the monk led astray by an evil spirit that “wrapped him in the erroneous doctrine of heresies that are named after Hieracas.”²⁵ The account of the follower of Hieracas preserved in *Lausiatic History* 17.11 is obviously an epitome, combined (badly) with the story of a demoniac. The *Coptic Life* preserves what must have been the original, longer, version (par. 5) and follows it with the story of the demoniac (par. 6). We know from other sources

²⁴ C.P. Bammel, “Problems of the *Historia Monachorum*,” *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS, 47.1 (April 1996), 92-104, esp. 99-101, has shown that the *Historia Monachorum*, like the LH, was subjected to anti-Origenistic and -Evagrian editing.

²⁵ The monk is later called “Hieracas” in the story, but this is a mistake.

that Hieracas lived in a monastery outside Leontopolis, a city in the southern delta. He flourished about 335 and died before 370;²⁶ therefore this account of a run-in between one of his followers and Macarius is at least chronologically accurate and probably took place in some form. According to the Coptic *Life*, Hieracas' heretical doctrines were many; he held that:

our Lord Jesus Christ did not assume human flesh but a heavenly flesh that he brought when he came to earth. They say that there is no resurrection of the flesh for human beings. They also say that there are three principles, God, Matter, and Evil, and on account of this they dare to say with certainty that the Logos of God did not descend into humanity nor did he become completely human in everything human except sin alone. They say that the Logos of God was not the cause of creation. They say that through free will all human beings choose for themselves evil and thinking and acting like animals.

But in order not to proceed with a multitude of words about this heresy, let me simply say that that man led a multitude of souls astray: he led astray five hundred souls, both men and women. Indeed, he rejected marriage, saying that no man marrying a woman would enter the kingdom of God.

The account given here of Hieracas' thought is reasonably accurate.²⁷ The assertion that the Hieracites stressed free will is at odds with Athanasius' polemic against their leader.²⁸ Presumably the encounter between Macarius and the disciple of Hieracas took place after Hieracas' death; if so, this account is important because it shows the lingering influence of Hieracas and the felt need of the orthodox monks to combat it, probably sometime in the second half of the fourth century. As David Brakke has concluded, Hieracas' beliefs were "at home in the loosely relat-

²⁶ David Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995), 45. Brakke discusses Athanasius' confrontations with Hieracas on pages 44-57. See also Goehring's discussion of Hieracas, 110-33.

²⁷ See Brakke for a full discussion. The most complete ancient source on Hieracas is Epiphanius, *Panarion* 67 (PG 42.172-84). See also Sozomen EH 3.14. Augustine, *De haeresibus* 47 (PL 42.38-39), gives this summary: "The Hieracites, whose founder is called Hieraca, deny the resurrection of the body. They receive only monks, nuns, and the unmarried into communion with them. They say that children do not belong to the kingdom of heaven, for they have gained no merit by struggling against sin"; See Liguori G. Müller, *The De Haeresibus of Saint Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1956), 96 (Latin), 97 (English). For modern assessments, see G. Bareille, "Hiéracas," *Dictionnaire de spiritualité catholique* 6. 2359-61; J. Kraus, "Hierakas," *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (2nd ed.; Freiburg, 1957-), 5.321; Karl Heussi, *Der Ursprung des Mönchtums* (Tübingen, 1936), 58-65; Bernhard Lohse, *Askese und Mönchtum in der Anrike und in der alten Kirche* (Munich, 1969), 179-81, and Goehring.

²⁸ See Brakke, 49-51.

ed Christian groups of the third century, but increasingly out of place in the developing imperial Church of the fourth. Certainly the social practices of Hieracas and his followers did not cohere with the institutional, episcopally centered Christianity that Athanasius was forming." It is striking that the anti-heresiological concerns of the author of the Coptic *Life of Macarius* are with Hieracas' theology and not with his ascetical teachings and the resulting social practices which so vexed Athanasius. Presumably these practices would have also challenged Macarius and his followers; perhaps this unnamed follower of Hieracas was a lone figure and the Hieracite communities had now vanished and thus were no longer a threat.

As the account of the disciple of Hieracas shows, the *Life* is of more than passing interest, both in its parts and as a whole; in conclusion, therefore, it is worth quoting in full M. Chaîne's appreciation of it:

One must recognize that the talent of the redactor, in these passages, is not slight, his information is not of the usual kind, and his account contains everything one would wish from an historian. Called on to reveal facts that smack of the marvelous, he works hard to specify the sources he has drawn on, as he does to be exact about the dates of the events he is narrating, according to the needs of the narration. Thus he informs us, at the beginning, that it was the second year after the death of Macarius of Egypt that he arrived at the Mountain, two years before the death of Macarius of Alexandria. He also questioned the very disciples of the great monk, and he sought information in particular from one of them whose name he gives us: Evagrius. And gradually, as he tells his story, he takes care to distinguish what he has seen from what he has heard told. He always seems to have present in his mind what he wrote at the outset, alluding to his veracity. Laying stress on precise documentation, full of details, the story in our text, said to be exaggerated, appears nevertheless in a more lively form, with a more revealing personality, than that which we have in the brief account. Our author, more often than the latter, puts himself in the action. More often he addresses the reader, whom he connects to his narration, either by challenging him in the course of his account or by making him participate in what he narrates. He lets the persons he treats live and move; he lets them speak. He is fond of a direct style in preference to a simple telling of their words or feelings. He puts himself in the action up to seven times. Overall he maintains a tone that disparages

nothing, a sense of discretion that falsifies nothing, and everywhere he demonstrates moderation without ever deviating into any kind of excess, without spilling over into prolixity or obscurity. One does not see anything one could cut out of his story, nor what could be considered useless or irrelevant. If he is only a redactor, he incon-
testably evinces an uncommon mastery in his art, and one can not deny a talent in him at least equal to the original. It seems that, moreover, just as when one has read the brief text one has the impression of confronting an abridgment, a summary, likewise when one has read our redactor, the brief text does not strike one as having served him as a rough draft.²⁹

* * * * *

The Coptic *Life of Macarius the Great* was read on 27 Phamenot.

* * * * *

SYNOPTIC TABLE
THE COPTIC LIFE OF MACARIUS THE GREAT &
LAUSIAC HISTORY 17

COPTIC LIFE

LAUSIAC HISTORY

THE LONG RECENSION

1.	Prologue	LH 17.1
2.	Abba Macarius the Egyptian	LH 17.2
3.	Macarius Foresees the Ruin of His Disciple John	LH 17.3-4
4.	His Way of Life and Virtues and Ascetic Practices	LH 17.5
5.	Abba Macarius Saves a Woman Changed into a Mare	LH 17.6-9
6.	Concerning a Follower of Hieracas	LH 17.11
7.	Abba Macarius Heals a Young Man	LH 17.11
8.	Macarius' Secret Tunnel	LH 17.10
9.	Macarius Rebukes the Widow for her Lack of Charity	LH 17.12-13
10.	Abba Macarius and Abba Amoun	_____
11.	The Mighty Deeds and Virtues of Abba Macarius	_____
12.	The Death of Abba Macarius	_____

²⁹ M. Chaîne, "La double recension de l'Histoire Lausique dans la version copte," *Revue de l'orient chrétien* 25 (1925-1926): 232-59, at 236-37.

THE SHORT RECENSION

1. Abba Macarius Saves a Woman Changed into a Mare LH 17.6-9
 2. Abba Macarius Heals a Young Man LH 17.11

CONCERNING ABBA MACARIUS THE GREAT³⁰***[THE LONG RECENSION]***

Prologue (LH 17.1)³¹

1. It is necessary now for us to speak about the works first of Abba Macarius the Egyptian and then of Abba Macarius the Alexandrian, *for the two of them were great on account of their way of life and ascetic practice and were famous throughout the whole monastic world*³² *on account of their labors*. Those who hear about them, if they are unbelieving, will not believe that such men existed or did the things they did.³³ Therefore I hesitate to write about them, so many are their deeds and so difficult to believe, lest some think me to be a liar, for truly it is written, “The Lord will destroy everyone who tells lies.”³⁴ You yourself know, since you are a believer, that I do not speak lies, *for you have devoted yourself to numerous ascetic practices*.³⁵ Therefore, do not disbelieve their histories. With regard to these two Macarii, then, one was an Egyptian while the other was an Alexandrian and early in life a vendor of confectionaries.

Abba Macarius the Egyptian (LH 17.2)

2. I will first tell about the Egyptian; *he finished life in the body first, before the Alexandrian, and it was also he who buried the body of Abba Antony*.³⁶ He spent sixty-five years living in the desert and died in his ninety-seventh year.³⁷ *Two years after his leaving the body, I entered the*

³⁰ Translated from Chaîne, 239-59, with additional textual material supplied by Adalbert de Vogüé, “La version copte du chapitre XVII de l’Histoire Lausiacque: Les deux éditeurs de les trois manuscrits,” *Orientalia* 58.4 (1989): 510-24.

³¹ Section titles are my own. Portions in italics are lacking in Gk. Paragraphs without “LH” in parentheses lack parallels with the *Lausiac History*. Paragraph numbers do not correspond to LH but are given for ease of reference.

³² Perhaps “all of monastic Egypt,” literally “all of monasticism.”

³³ See *Life of Antony* Prologue.

³⁴ Ps 5:6 (RSV). Gk adds: as the Holy Spirit declared.

³⁵ See *Life of Antony* Prologue.

³⁶ In the *Life of Antony* 91, Antony commands two (unnamed) disciples to bury him, and in par. 92 they do so. Jerome, *Life of Paul* 1, gives these two disciples names: Macarius and Amatus, but it is the latter who buries Antony. LH 21.1 gives these same names and says the two buried Antony. The *Historia Monachorum* 28.1 and *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 19 say that Macarius was a disciple of Antony.

³⁷ LH: ninety years, with which Sozomen, EH 3.14, concurs, adding that Macarius spent sixty years in the desert.

monastic community³⁸ and met the Alexandrian,³⁹ who lived another two years.⁴⁰ When I encountered the true disciples of the Egyptian I implored them and they told me about a few of his virtues and ascetic practices. Abba Evagrius was also very close to him;⁴¹ he himself told me about a few of his virtues too. They told me that from the time he was little he was considered worthy to have received great discernment; his counsel was so discerning that he was called “the old man” from his youth. On account of his knowledge,⁴² therefore, which was pure, he made great progress. When he was forty years old he was worthy to receive grace against spirits; he healed every kind of human illness and also received the grace of prophecy:⁴³ often he told those who had faith in his words about events that had not yet happened, and they happened.

Macarius Foresees the Ruin of His Disciple John (LH 17.3-4)

3. Two disciples lived *alone* with him in the interior of the *great* desert called Scetis. One of his disciples, on account of the sick who came to Abba Macarius, lived near him in order to serve them, while the other lived *alone* in an *enclosed* cell in the great interior desert.⁴⁴ When a little time had passed, Abba Macarius, with enlightened foresight,⁴⁵ began to see what would happen to his disciple, and he said to him,⁴⁶ “John, *my servant*, listen to me, my child, and receive my instruction, for truly you are being tempted by a passion and at present you do not know it. Indeed, I see that the spirit of avarice is about to master you and I know that if you listen to me you will finish your life⁴⁷ in this dwelling and will be honored by all and ‘the scourge will not touch your dwelling.’⁴⁸ But if you do not listen to me, your end will be ugly, like that of Gehazi, *the servant of Elisha*,⁴⁹ for truly you are sick with his passion.”

It turned out therefore that when John did not listen to Saint Abba Macarius, after his death, fifteen or twenty years later, he contracted leprosy *over his whole body* so that you could not find the smallest place on his body where you could poke your finger [without its being contaminat-

³⁸ Or “mountain,” Coptic *pitōou*.

³⁹ See LH 18.1 where Palladius says he met “the other Macarius . . . , the one from Alexandria.”

⁴⁰ This would be about 392. In LH 18.1 Palladius says that Macarius of Alexandria was alive for three years.

⁴¹ This important sentence, lacking in the LH, may also suggest discipleship on Evagrius’ part.

⁴² His knowledge: Gk this. “Knowledge,” *kati*, is also an important virtue in the *Life of Evagrius*.

⁴³ Gk +: He was even deemed worthy of the priesthood.

⁴⁴ In the great interior desert: Gk in a cell near by.

⁴⁵ Literally: with the eye of light of his understanding (*kati*).

⁴⁶ Gk + who later became a priest in his own place.

⁴⁷ Coptic *jōk ebol* suggests “perfect” (verb), which the Gk has.

⁴⁸ Ps 91:10.

⁴⁹ See 2 Kings 5:20-27.

ed],⁵⁰ for truly he was in the habit of stealing money that was given to him to distribute to the poor. This then was the prophecy of Saint Abba Macarius, *for he saw what would happen before it happened.*

His Way of Life and Virtues and Ascetic Practices (LH 17.5)

4. *With regard to his way of life, we will report it just as we heard. The first of his virtues was that he lived alone in the desert at all times. The Egyptians, to be sure, take great pride in this ability, along with manual labor, which for them is a thing of beauty, and along with poor quality food eaten in poverty and keeping vigil where you live while working with your hands.* But it is unnecessary to speak further about this old man's food and drink, for truly even those who neglect their ascetic practice do not find sufficient bread and water in the desert of Scetis,⁵¹ either because of the poverty where they live or on account of zeal that leads each of them to asceticism.⁵² *Truly that desert leads each person into feats of asceticism, whether he wants to or not.* And concerning the great asceticism of the old man, they say about him that in everything that he undertook he turned his thoughts to union with God in everything he did so that when he prayed his thoughts would often fly to the heights and he would speak with God while abiding in the vision of heaven. And everyone was amazed at all the graces that God gave to him, and in all these things no one was able to surpass him in all the virtues or be greater than he.⁵³ God did⁵⁴ great miracles through this Abba Macarius the Egyptian, healings of those who were sick, all of which I will recount together, for he used to cast out numerous demons.⁵⁵

Abba Macarius Saves a Woman Changed into a Mare (LH 17.6-9)⁵⁶

5. An Egyptian fell in love with a free woman who was married.⁵⁷ He had a word with her but she did not listen to him. When he saw that she would not give herself to him, he went to a magician's place and made this request, saying, *"I'm in love with a woman but she won't give herself to me.*

⁵⁰ This phrase, supplied from Gk, seems required for the sense, and may have been omitted accidentally.

⁵¹ Do not find sufficient bread and water in the desert of Scetis: Gk one cannot find gluttony or indifference.

⁵² See *Life of Antony* 7.6-7. See also Philo, *De vita contemplativa* 34-35, reproduced by Eusebius, EH 2.17.16-17 [BV].

⁵³ See *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 38.

⁵⁴ Literally: created.

⁵⁵ And concerning . . . demons: Gk And now I will speak of the rest of his asceticism, for he was said to be in continual ecstasy. He occupied himself much more with God than with earthly things, and these are the wonders told of him:

⁵⁶ For a condensed version of this story with considerable differences, see HM 21.17 (Russell, trans., 110 and 151). See also the Short Recension below.

⁵⁷ Gk + "of good position." In both the Greek (21.17) and Latin versions of this story, attributed to Macarius the Great, the girl is not married but is a consecrated virgin and her parents, not her husband, take her to Abba Macarius.

Either force her to love me or stir up enmity between her and her husband so he will repudiate her *and I can take her as my wife.*”

When the magician had received a great deal of money from the Egyptian, he worked his wicked sorcerer’s craft and cast a spell⁵⁸ over human eyes that caused them to see her as a mare.⁵⁹ (*It is not possible for a person to change God’s creatures; only God can do so: he who created them is the one who has the power to change the nature of his creatures as he wishes.*)⁶⁰ Her husband spent many days with his clothes torn, mourning for his wife, seeing her as a mare, and she spent many days without eating anything. If he gave her a bunch of hay, she would not eat it; if he gave her bread, she would not eat it. Her husband was amazed, saying, “How has my wife, who is lying in my bed, become a mare?” He would speak to her, weeping, but she gave him no reply.

He went and implored the priests of the Church, saying, “Come to my house and see the suffering that afflicts me.” When they entered his house they saw her but did not understand what was taking place. When she came to her third day of not eating (she had eaten neither bread nor hay for two days), he said, “If I let her go on like this, she will die from starvation. I will rise and take her to the house of Abba Macarius, the man of God so he will see her and know what is going on.”⁶¹ This happened so that the power of God that resided with Abba Macarius the Great might be manifested.

Her husband got up and put a bridle on her like a mare and led her to the desert *and brought her to Abba Macarius’*. When he arrived at the place, the brothers gathered together outside the church of Abba Macarius.⁶² The brothers quarreled with the man, saying, “*Why have you dared to bring this female mare⁶³ up here to this monastic community? You have committed a very great sin.* Why then have you brought this female mare here with you?”

He said to them, “I have brought her *to the saint* so pity might be taken on her.”

They said to him, “What’s wrong with her?”

He said to them, “This is my wife and I do not know how she became a mare. Look, she hasn’t eaten for three days.”

⁵⁸ Literally: darkness.

⁵⁹ Gk simply says that he “caused her to assume the shape of a brood mare.” See the next sentence.

⁶⁰ This theological reflection is put in the mouth of Abba Macarius below.

⁶¹ Gk: At last, so that God might be praised and the virtue of the holy Macarius be made manifest, it entered into the mind of the husband to lead her out into the desert.

⁶² Gk: by the cell of Abba Macarius. BV suggest, 107 n. 18, that perhaps the Coptic editor misread “church” (*ekklêsia*) for “cell” (*kellês*), although the short recension (below) also reads “church.”

⁶³ BV point out, 107 n. 19, that this redundancy (omitted by Chaîne in his translation) emphasizes that female animals were not allowed in the community, the same situation that exists today (with the exception of hens) on Mt. Athos. See *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 32 for a similar situation. In Coptic, “female,” *shimi*, is the same word as “wife.”

They left and told the old man, saying, “There’s a man outside over there in possession of a mare and he’s saying ‘This is my wife and I do not know how she became a mare through magic.’”⁶⁴ What had God already told Abba Macarius concerning her? For they found him praying for her. Saint Abba Macarius opened the door; came out, and saw her; he said to the brothers, “It is you, rather, who are horses, you who have the eyes of horses. She is not a mare; rather you see her looking like a mare, for this is a woman and I am looking at her. *It is not possible for a person to change one of God’s creatures into something else; rather, it is a spell that has been placed over our human eyes. So you will know that this is the case, bring me that water over there.*”

When they brought him the water; he prayed with the brothers, made the sign of the cross over it, blessed it, and sprinkled it over her head. This immediately caused her to appear in the form of a woman, *speaking and giving thanks to God and to the old man in front of everyone.* And Abba Macarius took some bread, blessed it, gave it to her, and had her eat,⁶⁵ and she recovered her strength and everyone saw her become a woman. And he gave her this order: “Do not eat flesh lest the demon find the pleasure of flesh in you and return once again to you by means of the pleasure of heat and fleshly matter.” And he gave this order to her in these words: “Do not skip receiving the eucharist a single Saturday, ever. Go to church regularly, morning and evening, every day. Because what has occurred happened because you went five weeks without partaking of the mysteries⁶⁶ of Christ.” He dismissed her and she went home with her husband, *the two of them together giving thanks to God.*

Concerning a Follower of Hieracas (LH 17.11)⁶⁷

6. I also heard from some trustworthy men about this other small mat-

⁶⁴ Note the repetition of oral literature—and how the editor slips and adds “through magic.”

⁶⁵ See Mt 14:20.

⁶⁶ Or: sacraments, *-mustêrion* (pl).

⁶⁷ This story is summarized in one sentence in the LH (Meyer, 57): “A report went about concerning him that he had brought a dead person to life to convince a heretic who did not believe in the resurrection of the body.” Therefore I have italicized this whole section. The story occurs elsewhere: PG 34.209-16; HM 28.4 (Latin; Russell, trans., 152); Cassian, Conference 15.3 (where the unnamed heretic is a Eunomian; see the Coptic *Life of Evagrius* 29); AP [1]490B (K 300), where the unnamed monk lived near Arsinoë (Lucien Regnault, *Les Sentences des pères du désert: série des anonymes* [Solesmes: Bellefontaine, 1985], 174-77). BV, 108 n. 25, mistakenly refer to AP 1490A (Macarius S1). Evelyn White, 1.124-26, published two small Bohairic Coptic fragments found at the Monastery of Saint Macarius. Epiphanius, *Anacrotus* 82, speaks of “certain ascetics of Egypt, of the Thebaid, and of other places, who, following the Hieracites, deny the identity of the resurrected flesh with our own flesh”; see K. Holl, *Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller* 25 (Leipzig, 1915), 102.30-103.4. Guillaumont, *Kephalaia Gnostica* 55, identifies these persons as Origenists, but this seems questionable. On Hieracas, see most recently James E. Goehring, “Hieracas of Leontopolis: The Making of a Desert Ascetic,” in his *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Studies in Antiquity and Christianity; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 110-33, esp. 125-30.

ter concerning him. It happened that there was a monk, a man who lived in the deserts of the village of Boushêm,⁶⁸ practicing asceticism for many years with great and strenuous practices in the great seclusion of the Great Desert, walking in purity of life, and he did not ever pay a visit to an old man, for he was vain and full of himself. After a while, the passion within him led him astray. A spirit of divination,⁶⁹ that is, the demon of falsehood, came to dwell in him so that he would tell people about numerous events that were going to happen to them: he would say “they will happen,” and they happened, and he spoke about the waters of the Nile and about many other worldly events that he learned about from the spirits.⁷⁰ As a result, he became vain and his understanding of God was very clouded.

When the spirit knew that this man’s heart was joined to him, he first of all led him away from the orthodox faith and wrapped him in the erroneous doctrine of heresies that are named after Hieracas, which say that our Lord Jesus Christ did not assume human flesh but a heavenly flesh that he brought when he came to earth. They say that there is no resurrection of the flesh for human beings. They also say that there are three principles, God, Matter, and Evil, and on account of this they dare to say with certainty that the Logos of God did not descend into humanity nor did he become completely human in everything human except sin alone.⁷¹ They say that the Logos of God was not the cause of creation.⁷² They say that through free will all human beings choose for themselves evil and thinking and acting like animals.

But in order not to proceed with a multitude of words about this heresy, let me simply say that that man led a multitude of souls astray: he led astray five hundred souls, both men and women. Indeed, he rejected marriage, saying that no man marrying a woman would enter the kingdom of God; as a result, he caused a multitude of men to leave their wives and a multitude of women to leave their husbands.⁷³ Indeed, they believed in him because he said that the Spirit had entrusted them to him, telling people events that had not yet taken place and they would take place. In a word, he controlled them through these predictions. Indeed, if all the people’s possessions were lost, he would say to them, “Go to a certain place and you will find them,” and they would go and find them. He would also tell them when war was going to take place and how many people were going to die and it

⁶⁸ A village in the Fayum. The Gk does not give the name of the village but situates Hieracas in the region of Arsinoë.

⁶⁹ See Acts 16:16.

⁷⁰ See *Life of Antony* 31-32.

⁷¹ See Heb 4:15; *Coptic Life of Evagrius* 29.

⁷² See Jn 1:3.

⁷³ See Athanasius’ first *Letter to Virgins* (Brakke, 274-91, esp. 282-84), where he attacks Hieracas who says that “marriage is evil inasmuch as virginity is good.”

happened just as he had said. Furthermore, he would cast out other demons from people, and fulfilled in himself the words of the Lord in the Gospel: “They will produce signs and wonders so they can lead astray even my chosen ones.”⁷⁴ Indeed, a demonic⁷⁵ spirit had possession of him; as a result, the demons obeyed him. Indeed, the demons agreed to work together in this in order to induce vainglory and haughtiness on all sides so that a multitude of souls might perish with him.

Therefore the bishop of Boushêm came with his clergy to see Abba Macarius the man of God. They implored him, “For God’s sake help us. Please, take the trouble and bother; come where he lives so you can see what it is appropriate to do. If you do not purify our diocese from this growing error, all of Egypt will readily follow after it, for truly they are going astray when they see its signs and deeds.”

Abba Macarius said to the bishop, “I have decided to come with you. You know that I am an ignorant man and that I do not know what I will say to him. What, then, do you want me to say to him?”

The bishop fervently implored him, saying, “I believe that if you come with us, God will give peace to his Church. Indeed, often I have gotten ready to come to you concerning this matter but my clergy stopped me, saying, ‘The world will laugh at you.’ Now, then, I have been unable to see the destruction of the people and I fear danger encroaching against me since God says, ‘I will seek their blood from your hands.’”⁷⁶ Therefore, I have come because God sent me to you.”

The old man got up right away and walked with them and they stood outside the dwelling of that deceiver. When the old man saw him at a distance, he said to the bishop, “A demonic spirit is at work in this man. You should know that this matter is outside my ken for I have never done battle against great spirits like this. For our fathers told us that there are two orders of demons: one order pours pleasure into people’s bodies and the other order pours error into the soul. To be sure, this second is difficult to defeat, while the first, the demons that attack the body, is very easy to humiliate. Satan has prepared these two orders. He has sent these two herds and has commanded that whoever they lead astray becomes a heretic and that they humiliate him by means of a delusion in order to destroy a multitude on account of him. These orders, therefore, are the friend of the leaders of heretical errors and magic making sorcerers (especially wizards) and enchanters and diviners.”

⁷⁴ See Mt 24:24.

⁷⁵ Coptic/Gk: *archontikon*, which originally meant “ruling,” then “angelic,” but came to be used most often of evil angels (see LH 22:9-10); in Gnostic thought, the term designated the seven evil angels that ruled the world. This sentence might also be translated “a ruling spirit was in him.”

⁷⁶ Ezek 3:20.

⁷⁷The bishop said, "What will we do, then, my father? We need great prayer from the depth of our hearts, for words will be ineffective." And he ordered them to call him outside.

When he came out to them, the old man⁷⁸ strode confidently up to him with a mild look on his face; he greeted him and said to him, "Why haven't I seen you until today, and why haven't you paid us a visit?"

He said to the old man, "I haven't paid you a visit because your faith is not firm."

The man of God said to him, "What about your faith? Are you orthodox?"

He said to him, "Quite orthodox."

The man of God said to him, "What is wrong or irregular about our faith?"

He said to him, "Your faith is not orthodox because you say that this flesh and this bone will rise. Not only that, but you also say that the Son of God took on flesh and bone."

The holy old man responded to him with dignity, saying, "If we say these things by ourselves or if we have discovered them by means of our own intelligence, then you are right to find fault with us, but if holy scripture has given them to us, then what we do is right. If, therefore, the righteousness of God wishes it to be this way, why do you oppose God's ordinance? In order not to get off track with a lot of words, we will inform you about our faith.⁷⁹ If you agree with us, good; but if you do not agree with us, then your judgement is in God's hands and you are overthrowing his ordinances in opposing him."

He said to him, "I will explain my faith first."

The old man said to him, "We will not allow a wicked faith to be explained. No, we will explain our orthodox faith, the faith of the Catholic Church."

And the old man ordered the bishop to speak, and while all the people stood,⁸⁰ the bishop spoke and first began to explain the orthodox faith, saying, "We believe in one God, God the Father Almighty, creator of what is visible and invisible. We believe in his only-begotten Son, the Logos of God, consubstantial with the Father who created everything through him;⁸¹ who, at the end of time, wanted to destroy sin and became human, complete in everything according to our image except sin alone,⁸² having entered the

⁷⁷ Evelyn White's first fragment (1.125) begins here.

⁷⁸ In Gk the bishop acts and the first exchange takes place between the bishop and the heretic.

⁷⁹ Evelyn White's first fragment (1.125) ends here.

⁸⁰ One notes that all the people stand and it is the bishop who recites the creed. The scene has a liturgical "feel" to it, one that resembles the *traditio symboli*, the "handing over of the creed" which was a rite during Lent for those preparing for baptism (at least in Jerusalem, Milan, Rome, and North Africa). See J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Longmans, 1950).

⁸¹ See Jn 1:3.

⁸² Heb 4:15.

womb of the Virgin Mary; who was crucified and died in the flesh; who rose on the third day. He ascended to the heights in heaven and sat at the right side of his Father. He will come to judge the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is consubstantial with the Father and the Son.⁸³ We also believe there is a resurrection of the soul and of the body, according to the word of the apostle: 'It is sown a physical body; it will be raised a spiritual body,'⁸⁴ and 'It is necessary that this death put on deathlessness and that this corruptibility put on incorruptibility.'⁸⁵ You see, therefore, how he speaks about this corruption."

That heretic and deceiver said, "I am not seeking a merely verbal faith, but if your faith is orthodox, let it be shown through works and mighty deeds. Let us go to the tombs, therefore, and there raise for me someone from the dead and if you raise someone from the dead, then we will know that your faith is orthodox. If not, I will produce for you a soul without a body."

Saint Abba Macarius looked at the bishop and said, "It is a great evil to tempt God on account of a single misled person in order to bring about this great sign."

The bishop said to him, "It is not on account of a single person but rather a whole diocese with its city and villages."

They went to the tombs and Hieracas⁸⁶ began to call out to a demon, for in truth it is not possible to bring forth a soul that is naked, one without its body; rather, the demon assumed the shape of the soul in front of Hieracas until he deceived him. Although he called to the demon a long time, he was able to do nothing and stopped, for the Holy Spirit who indwelt Abba Macarius the Great prevented him from doing anything. When the heretic was put to shame, he said to them, "It is because of your lack of faith that I am not able to produce a soul."

And Saint Abba Macarius stood firm in the Holy Spirit and his spirit burned. He single-mindedly threw himself to his knees and spent an hour submerged in prayer with the bishop and the whole crowd that had accompanied them. He got up from the ground with the power of the Holy Spirit bestowed on him by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, and knocked on the tomb with the staff made of palm branches that he carried in his hand (the staffs of the monks are made from date-palm trees),⁸⁷ and

⁸³ It is unusual that the term *homoousios* ("consubstantial") is applied here to the Holy Spirit; the term is not used for the Spirit in either the Nicene or Constantinople creeds. Interestingly, Athanasius did apply the key Nicene term to the Spirit, in *Letter to Serapion* 1.25: "Because he [the Spirit] is one, and still more, because he is proper to the Word who is one, he is proper to God who is one, and one in essence [*homoousios*] with him." See also *Letter to Serapion*, 2.6. Athanasius, however (like Basil of Caesarea), did not call the Spirit "God." See Hanson, *Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 748-53.

⁸⁴ 1 Cor 15:44.

⁸⁵ See 1 Cor 15:53.

⁸⁶ The follower of Hieracas is now mistakenly called "Hieracas" here and below.

⁸⁷ See Evagrius, *Praktikos*, Prologue 7; Cassian, *Institutes* 1.7-8; Cassian, *Conferences* 11.3 (BV).

while he struck the door of the tomb, he said,⁸⁸ “By the holy power of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, who came in human flesh and died in it and rose in it, he will also do this mighty deed!” And immediately the door of the tomb opened and everyone saw the dead person bound forward until he reached the entrance. The saint ordered them to undo the bandages that bound him.⁸⁹ The dead man who had been raised stood up and spoke with them, saying,⁹⁰

[And he gave a knock on the tomb with the staff that he held in his hand and said, “In the name of the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, who assumed human flesh from the holy Virgin Mary; he suffered among us for our salvation and died in the flesh and rose from the dead as God. It is you, my Lord Jesus Christ, who will do this mighty deed.”⁹¹

And suddenly the door of the tomb opened and they saw the dead man come forward until he reached the entrance of the tomb, and immediately Saint Abba Macarius ordered them to loosen the wrappings with which he was bound.⁹² And moreover that day was the 22nd of Pharmouthi [March 19] in the 82nd year of Diocletian [366 A.D.] and it took place in the 362nd year since the economy of Christ, as the zealous servants of God who were with him that day told us.

What a great miracle this was! Or, rather, it was the power of God with which God had graced this holy man on account of his good works,⁹³ for who would be able to say that this miracle was different from those that the apostles did or was inferior to them? Indeed, this great saint Abba Macarius was himself an apostle in the way he emulated them through the evangelical works that he established which were like those of the apostles. But let us proceed to the conclusion of this miracle that took place through the great God-bearing and blessed saint Abba Macarius. The one who had been raised from the dead stood and said to them,]

“Blessed be God who has brought my soul above from Hades below⁹⁴ so I can see this light again!”

They said to him, “What generation are you? Did you know Christ, or not?”

The dead man said, “I belong to an ancient generation from the time of the kings of Antioch; I am a pagan who does not know God.⁹⁵ But while I

⁸⁸ These words, and the details that follow, are missing in Gk (BV).

⁸⁹ See Jn 11:44.

⁹⁰ and knocked . . . saying: one ms. (124v-125r; Chaîne, 251) differs considerably, so I have placed it in brackets.

⁹¹ “Mighty deed” and “power” both translate *jom*.

⁹² See Jn 11:44.

⁹³ See the *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 29 for a similar statement and emphasis on the power of God.

⁹⁴ See Ps 86:13.

⁹⁵ See 1 Th 4:5, Gal 4:8.

was in punishment, suddenly a royal personage came down where I was; there was a golden crown on his head and going before him was a cross of gold. That king whom I saw I recognize today, standing and commanding his friend and saying, ‘Lazarus, come, bring this soul and place it in its former body and give it to Macarius the righteous because he is standing there today before my judgement seat.’”⁹⁶

When the man who had been raised had spoken, Abba Macarius spoke to Hieracas, “Ask this man who has been raised whether or not those who have died and who will rise again have flesh.” And when the heretic stood refuted, his demon fled and left him filled with shame, for he saw the great sign. He threw himself to the ground, therefore, and worshipped God, kissing the feet of the holy man Abba Macarius with the whole crowd in prayer.

The crowd was trying to get their hands on him in order to kill him but the old man would not allow them to do it but instead took him with him into his cell in the interior desert. Hieracas practiced asceticism with Abba Macarius with great repentance and with abundant tears and when he had spent three years doing acts of penance for God, God put his body at ease⁹⁷ while he diligently practiced asceticism with the aid of the holy prayers of Abba Macarius the Great.

As for the man who had been raised from the dead, Abba Macarius took him to the cell where his disciples lived and he baptized him in his church because he had said “I am a pagan who does not know Christ.” And he entrusted him to his disciples until the repentance of Hieracas was completed. When he died and was buried, the old man transferred his remains to his church. He took the man who had been raised under his direction for three years and instructed him with determination until he successfully completed his life and died. He lived six years, having gone to his rest in good repose⁹⁸ so that the word of Christ was fulfilled⁹⁹ concerning him: “Neither this man nor his parents sinned but . . . in order that the glory of God might be revealed in him.”¹⁰⁰

[And yet another thing happened in the tomb: the stone that was placed at the entrance of the tomb that Saint Abba Macarius had knocked on with the palm-tree staff in his hand rolled away by itself from the entrance of the tomb where he had approached and stood, and no one has been able to move it inside from there since the day that God placed it with another tomb as a sign for everyone who wanted to see it.]¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ See Rom 14:10, 2 Cor 5:10. On Lazarus, see Jn 11:1-44.

⁹⁷ *Chaf ebol* can also mean “forgive.”

⁹⁸ See 1 Tim 1:18, 1 Tim 6:12, 2 Tim 4:7 for this construction (BV).

⁹⁹ “Fulfilled” and “completed” both translate *jök*.

¹⁰⁰ See Jn 9:3. The editor has omitted “he was born blind” (indicated by the ellipses), the omission of which fits his purpose but jars the syntax.

¹⁰¹ One ms. adds.

A little later the bishop asked the old man Abba Macarius, saying, “My father, do not conceal your thoughts from me. Did human glory enter your heart when all these people worshipped you on account of the great sign that took place through you?”

Abba Macarius said to him, “For the person whose heart rests in God, united with him at all times, it is not possible for human glory to bind itself to him nor enter his heart. As for the person whose heart human glory ascends, that person has not known God. What he does is human.¹⁰² The person who seeks to please people ceases to please God and has been mocked in battle and has fallen from virtue. But the person who has been worthy to receive right knowledge of God while locked in a great struggle, fearful of losing the fervor that unites him with God, is like someone standing on a dancer’s mast:¹⁰³ if he turns the slightest bit he will fight and fall. He never even has any concern of leaving his body because his desire is to leave his body and be with Christ.¹⁰⁴ As for human glory, it never enters his heart; or rather, he shuns it like an antelope. Indeed, it seems to us that this human glory is vain and transitory.

“I will give you an analogy that will explain this matter to you.¹⁰⁵ It is like a person who stands on the waters of the sea looking at the sun in the sky above, held aloft by means of its rays. If he removes his gaze from the sun, which is holding him aloft by means of its rays, and looks at the waters that he treads upon, will he not sink because he has turned his gaze from the heights of the sun that holds him aloft by means of its rays? What will happen to him because he has disobeyed the sun who says to him, ‘Do not look at the waters nor cease gazing at me; it is not you holding yourself aloft but my rays’? So too is it with the person whose view is united with God, who seeks always the glory of God: he tramples underfoot all human glory. But if he turns toward human glory, he falls from the glory of God and his sight. He defiles himself by means of a multitude of different passions so that in the end he sinks with all his cargo.”

The bishop was amazed and marvelled at his speech and his subtle

102 One ms. has a much shorter version of Macarius’ speech from this point to the end: The person who acts on account of human glory, seeking to please people, in behaving this way ceases from pleasing the Lord and is mocked in battle and falls from virtue and loses what he has gained through hard work because he has acted according to human values.

103 Gk has “razor,” but *thok* also means “razor” (Crum 403a). See Cassian, *Conferences* 23.9.1: “Rightly then would I say that holy persons, who keep firm hold of the recollection of God and are as it were carried along on their lofty way by lines stretched out on high, should be compared to funambulists, popularly called tightrope walkers” (Ramsey, 799-800).

104 Phil 1:23.

105 Evelyn White’s second fragment (1.126) begins with the next sentence.

*understanding. He returned to his village in peace, having profited, glorifying God.*¹⁰⁶

Abba Macarius Heals a Young Man Possessed by a Demon (LH 17.11)

7. An old woman came to him one time bringing him her son *bound in iron fetters*, detained by two men, *for this young man was possessed by a madly raging demon.*¹⁰⁷ His mother *was walking behind him*, weeping. This was what that demon was doing: after eating three measures¹⁰⁸ of bread and drinking a jug of water¹⁰⁹ *each day*, he would vomit and all the food would disintegrate *like smoke* and the food would be consumed like a fire *devouring stubble.*¹¹⁰ And the food that he ate each day was not enough for him¹¹¹ but he would turn even to his excrement: he would eat it and also drink his urine.¹¹² *For this reason the two men had bound him in order to stop him from eating even his excrement, and he would try to escape from them so he could tear up his clothes and eat them.*¹¹³ *If they allowed him firewood or some other combustible or if he found them on the ground, he felt great shame [sic].*¹¹⁴

His mother threw herself at the feet of Saint Abba Macarius, weeping and pleading with him, *saying, "Help me in my widowhood and my feebleness! This is my only child and this evil demon has taken control of him."*¹¹⁵

He said to her, "Be patient, old woman. I believe that God will take pity on you and your little one. Therefore be patient a few days."

The saint ordered them to lay him in a cell inside the hospital and there cover his mouth so he could not eat and drink. The saint used to heal a

¹⁰⁶ One ms. adds: There were in addition many other wonders even greater than these and numerous healings that he accomplished through God's grace that we have not <written> at greater length in this book because they are written in the book of his way of life which the man of God Saint Jerome has made known. Evelyn White's second fragment (1.126) lacks this addition. One ms., LIX, of the *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 32 contains this statement.

¹⁰⁷ See Jerome, *Life of Hilarion* 10.1-2, 5-6 (BV).

¹⁰⁸ Coptic *ment*, less than an *ertob*; Chaïne suggests that it equals Gk *modios* (Mt 5:5; Mk 4:21; Lk 11:33), about eight quarts.

¹⁰⁹ Evelyn White's second fragment (1.126), which has included all the Coptic additions in 7 (in italics in the text above), breaks off here.

¹¹⁰ Gk +: For there is a class of demons called fiery, since demons have differences just as men do, not of essence but of knowledge (Meyer, 57).

¹¹¹ Gk +: from his own mother.

¹¹² For examples of similar behavior, see *Life of Antony* 64.1 (Evagrius' Latin version) and Cassian, *Conferences* 7.27 (BV).

¹¹³ See Lk 8:29.

¹¹⁴ This seems to be a confused repetition of the earlier "after eating three measures of bread and drinking a jug of water *each day*, he would vomit and all the food would disintegrate *like smoke* and the food would be consumed like a fire *devouring stubble.*"

¹¹⁵ The Gk from here to the end differs completely (see LH 17.12-13; Meyer, 57-58); see par. 9 below for the conclusion of the story.

multitude of people at all times; five or six recovered their health every day on account of his prayers. As a result, there was not enough water in the cistern for the crowds that came to him each day.

I myself saw the place where the sick lay; the place lay at a distance of a third of a stadion from the church.¹¹⁶

Macarius' Secret Tunnel (LH 17.10)

8. *Since it was necessary for him to take the road to see those who were sick in order to pray for them, and since the crowds bothered him, he dug in the earth below the church¹¹⁷ and made a tunnel that he took to the hospice for the sick¹¹⁸ and he would travel it beneath the earth twice a day to see them by means of the hidden passage (no one knew about it), saying twenty-four prayers while walking to see them under the earth and twenty-four prayers with *metanoia*¹¹⁹ while returning from them under the earth until he came to his church.¹²⁰ And in this way he would visit them twice a day, praying with them and petitioning God to heal them.*

Macarius Rebukes the Widow for her Lack of Charity (LH 17.12-13)¹²¹

9. After twenty days he opened the door of the young man's cell, brought him out, and undid his fetters because in truth the demon had left him, and the man of God spoke to the young man's mother,¹²² "How many loaves of bread would you have your son eat *each day*?"

She said to him, "I would have him eat ten pounds¹²³ of bread a day."

The old man *grew angry and rebuked her*, saying, "The amount you're saying is too much, *but if you have more than you need, give seven pounds each day to the helpless widows and give the other three pounds to your son every day.*¹²⁴ See here! By the grace of God, from now on your son will eat only three pounds of bread each day so he can do a little manual labor.¹²⁵ *But listen, and I will also tell you how this demon got power over*

¹¹⁶ About 70 yards.

¹¹⁷ Gk omits the part about the church and says that the tunnel ran from his cell for about half a mile and that he dug it "over a long period of time."

¹¹⁸ Instead of a hospice, Gk says that the tunnel ended in a cave.

¹¹⁹ A *metanoia* at this period was probably an act of prostration.

¹²⁰ Gk says that one of Macarius' "earnest disciples" told the author about the prayers.

¹²¹ See par. 7 above for the first part of this story.

¹²² After . . . mother: Gk And after one or two days, when the fever had abated, blessed Macarius asked her.

¹²³ Coptic *lutra* = Gk *litra*, 12 ounces, therefore seven and a half of our pounds.

¹²⁴ Five and a quarter and two and a quarter pounds, respectively.

¹²⁵ See here . . . labor: Gk He prayed over the young man and fasted for the space of seven days; then he put the young man on a diet of three pounds and obliged him to do some work. Three pounds = two and a quarter pounds.

your son.¹²⁶ His father died and left you a few necessities, more than you needed to live, and there were old women, widows—poor, powerless, and infirm—who were your neighbors and were in need of alms and you gave them nothing. Because of this, God allowed this demon to enter your son so he would eat your goods and dissipate them through his insatiable appetite so you yourselves would become poor¹²⁷ because you would not give alms to the infirm.”

And in this way he taught them to give alms, having given the young man back to his mother, healed, praying to God and giving thanks to Christ while his thoughts were firmly fixed on the Lord. And everyone who heard gave glory to God who glorifies and exalts his saints who love him with all their hearts.

God did this other miracle through Abba Macarius. I did not see it with my own eyes¹²⁸ because in truth he went to his rest before¹²⁹ I entered the monastic community,¹³⁰ *but his disciples told me about the mighty deeds that God did through him.*

Abba Macarius and Abba Amoun¹³¹

10. They also told me this story: Abba Macarius told us that there was an old man named Abba Amoun who was a neighbor of Abba Antony in the interior desert.¹³² The old man paid a visit to Abba Antony one time. When he entered the cell, they prayed, sat down, and discussed a question. The old man said to Abba Antony, “Why is my labor greater than yours but your name is so great among the people? No one knows that I’m alive.”

Abba Antony said to him, “But I love God more than you.”¹³³

The old man said to him, “How do you love God more than I? I have left everything behind and I’ve taken on greater labors than you.”

Abba Antony said to him, “Believe me. So great is the love in my heart for God that if my thoughts turn away from him for even a little, I weep like little children when their mother lays them down and hides herself a little while until she sees her children’s love for her.”

The old man replied and said, “Woe is me! I do not know that a single tear has ever fallen from my eyes, from the day I became a monk up to today. Pray for me; perhaps the Lord will have mercy on me.”

¹²⁶ See HM 30.2.1-3 (= Gk 22.3-4) (BV).

¹²⁷ A wry etymology occurs here: “poor,” *hēki*, comes from the root word *hko*, “hungry,” so the young man was quite literally eating them into hungry poverty.

¹²⁸ I . . . eyes: Gk I did not meet him.

¹²⁹ Gk: a year before.

¹³⁰ LH 17 ends here.

¹³¹ Although absent from the LH, this story may be found, in a shorter version, in AP Amoun 1.

¹³² See *Life of Antony* 60. On Amoun, see Evelyn White 2.45-50.

¹³³ AP Amoun 1 ends here.

The Mighty Deeds and Virtues of Abba Macarius

11. With regard to the rest of the mighty deeds and virtues of Saint Abba Macarius the Egyptian, what sort they were, how he was so compassionate, and how he kept such close watch over himself, if I were to recount all of them, I would unduly lengthen this account. But I will cease narrating here the lofty works of Abba Macarius, who was so perfect in righteousness that it is impossible to gather together all the healings that the Lord worked through him and his numerous ascetic practices, especially since other works of his are written in other books.

*The Death of Abba Macarius*¹³⁴

12. Abba Paphnutius, the disciple of Abba Macarius, said that when Christ the King came to visit Abba Macarius and take his body from this world in order to give him rest from the sweat and labors he had accepted for the sake of immortality in life eternal, while some of the saints who had come to see him were standing over his precious remains, at that time he glowed with fire and they saw his blessed soul seized and taken through the gateway of life. They saw those in the air gathered together in great commotion, and suddenly they cried out before him with loud voices, "You have come, Macarius!"

He replied to them, "I am not yet able to trust or believe what you are saying." In saying these things, he stepped through the gate.

Once again they cried out, "You have come, Macarius!"

And Abba Macarius lifted his voice on high with a loud voice of angelic rejoicing and celebration so that the earth resounded with the sound, "Blessed be the Eternal One, whose mercy is great, whom my soul has loved, for I sought and I have found, I knocked and the King of Glory, the true God, Christ, has opened for me the way to eternal life;¹³⁵ he has deemed me worthy of heavenly freedom from the snares you [(pl.) sic] have dug for humanity."

When he had said these things, the just judge,¹³⁶ who rewards those who stand in fear before him and who love his Gospel well, hid him from them.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

¹³⁴ BV 121 (see n. 80) switch to Amélineau's text here (104-11), but since I plan to provide a translation of Amélineau's entire text in the volume *Disciples of the Soul's Beloved*, I will continue here with Chaîne's text, with V's notes. BV give a French translation of this paragraph on 126 (D). See *Life of Macarius of Scetis* 35.

¹³⁵ See Mt 7:7 and Ps 24:8.

¹³⁶ See 2 Tim 4:8.

[THE SHORT RECENSION]¹³⁷

Abba Macarius Saves a Woman Changed into a Mare (LH 17.6-9)¹³⁸

1 [5]. An Egyptian fell in love with a free woman¹³⁹ who had a husband. He was unable to sport with her and went to a sorcerer's shop and entreated him, "Either get her to love me or let *there be enmity between her and her husband so that he repudiates her.*" So the sorcerer received a large amount of money from him and worked his evil craft and caused the woman to have the appearance of a mare. When her husband saw her, he was astonished and said, "How has this mare climbed into my bed? *What is going on here?*" The man spoke with the mare, weeping *with great suffering*, but she did not answer him. The man got up and went to find the priests of the village and brought them inside his home. They saw her and did not know what was the matter. Three days passed without her eating anything: she neither ate fodder like a mare nor did she eat bread like a woman but was deprived of food.

In the end, however, this took place so God might be glorified and so the virtue of *Abba Macarius the Great*¹⁴⁰ might be revealed. This thought occurred to her husband: "Go to the desert where the man of God lives," and her husband rose and bridled her like a <horse>¹⁴¹ and led her to the desert. When he drew near where the brothers were standing beside the church¹⁴² of *Abba Macarius*, they quarreled with the man, "You there, why have you brought this mare here?"

The man answered, "In order that pity might be taken on her."

The brothers said, "Why?"

He said to them, "She's my wife. I don't know what's happened to her. She's turned into a mare and has tasted nothing for three days."

They left and told the old man. They found him praying,¹⁴³ making intercession on her behalf. *Abba Macarius*¹⁴⁴ replied to them and said, "It's you, rather, who are horses, who have the eyes of horses. She could not have been changed into a mare unless tricks were being played on people's eyes."

¹³⁷ Translated from M. Chaîne, "La double recension de l'Histoire Lausique dans la version copte," *Revue de l'orient chrétien* 25 (1925-1926): 271-73, with additional textual material supplied by Adalbert de Vogüé, "La version copte du chapitre XVII de l'Histoire Lausique: Les deux éditeurs de les trois manuscrits," *Orientalia* 58.4 (1989): 510-24.

¹³⁸ Section titles are my own. Portions in italics are lacking in Gk. Paragraphs without "LH" in parentheses lack parallels with the *Lausiac History*. Paragraph numbers do not correspond to LH but are given for ease of reference. Numbers in brackets indicate paragraph numbers of the long recension above.

¹³⁹ Coptic lacks "of good position."

¹⁴⁰ Gk: the holy Macarius.

¹⁴¹ Text: dog. Chaîne points out that the scribe mistakenly wrote *hor* (dog) instead of *hthôr* (horse).

¹⁴² Gk: cell.

¹⁴³ Coptic lacks: for God had revealed this to him.

¹⁴⁴ Gk: the holy Macarius.

He blessed some water and poured it over her from her head down and prayed over her and immediately he caused her to look like a woman *in front of all of them*. And he brought her some bread, which she ate, and he dismissed her with her husband. She gave thanks to God and he gave her this command: “Do not ever stay away from church¹⁴⁵ and not receive the mysteries; *do not ever stop attending the synaxis where one drinks the cup*. All these things happened to you because you stopped receiving the holy mysteries for five weeks.”

And so they went home, glorifying God.

Abba Macarius Heals a Young Man Possessed by a Demon (LH 17.11) 2 [7]. One time he was brought a young man possessed by a demon; his mother was *walking behind him*, weeping, and two *other young men* had hold of him *so he could not escape*. And this was how that demon acted: after he ate three measures¹⁴⁶ of bread and drank a *kilikision*¹⁴⁷ of water from a pot, he would vomit. The food would dissipate *like smoke*; in this way he made like fire all the food and water that he vomited. There is also an order of fiery demons [since demons have differences] just as human beings do, [not of essence but] of knowledge.¹⁴⁸

The young man, therefore, was never satisfied with everything he ate, but would turn and eat his excrement and drink his urine. His mother wept *in great sadness* and beseeched the *holy saint of God, Abba Macarius*. And the blessed old man *rose and* prayed and beseeched God on her behalf¹⁴⁹ and after a day or two the young man was released from the demon through the prayers of the old man.¹⁵⁰ And *the man of God, Saint Abba Macarius*,¹⁵¹ addressed the young man’s mother, “How much bread would you have your son eat *a day?*”

She said, “I would have him eat ten pounds¹⁵² *of bread a day.*”

The old man rebuked her and the old man said to her, “The amount you’ve said is too much,” and he prayed for him while fasting.¹⁵³ He

145 Literally: remain outside.

146 Coptic *ment*, less than an *ertob*; Chaîne suggests that it equals Gk *modios* (Mt 5:5, Mk 4:21, Lk 11:33), about eight quarts.

147 The same term is used in LH 17.11; see Lampe 753b and Bartelink, 334.

148 The Coptic omits a number of words, supplied from the Gk.

149 Gk: for him.

150 The young man . . . the old man: Gk when the fever had abated.

151 Gk: blessed Macarius.

152 *Litra*, twelve ounces; so seven and a half of our pounds.

153 Coptic lacks “for seven days.”

apportioned three pounds¹⁵⁴ *of bread a day* for him so he could work and thus he returned him safe and sound¹⁵⁵ to his mother. *They went home with great joy, glorifying God, marvelling at the acts of grace that God did through the blessed old man and the numerous healings that took place through him. We will now cease . . .*¹⁵⁶

154 That is, two and a quarter pounds.

155 Coptic *ouoj* also suggests “saved.”

156 The text breaks off here.

BOOK REVIEWS

Among the Copts

By John Watson. Brighton, UK: Sussex Academic Press, 2000. 208 pp. \$50.00 (hardcover). ISBN 1-902210-56-5. (Orders from North America should be sent to: Sussex Academic Press, c/o ISBS, 5804 NE Hassalo St., Portland, OR 97213-3644).

This is a comprehensive presentation of the life and thought of the Coptic Orthodox Church at the turn of the millennium. It is the fruit of the author's work during the last two decades, in which he studied the Coptic Church history, theology, liturgy, spirituality, art and language. During these years he has been in close contact with many of her members in the Diaspora and he had prolonged visits to the mother Church in Egypt.

In nine chapters, the book explores all the important themes of the Copts from the earliest moments of Christian history to the present day. Among these are sections on monasticism, liturgy, history, mission, theology, and martyrdom.

The chapter on monasticism describes important ancient monastic centers that have enjoyed an outstanding revival during the second half of the twentieth century. Among these are the Monastery of Al-Muharaq, built on the site where the Holy Family, according to ancient tradition stayed for three years during their sojourn in Egypt; the Monastery of St. Bishoi in Scete, where Pope Shenouda spent more than three years in exile (1981-85) and which has become since then a secondary center of his patriarchate; the Monastery of St. Macarius where Father Matta El-Meskeen has led one of the greatest monastic revivals in recent history; and St Antony's Monastery, the cradle of monasticism in the whole world. In the chapter on Liturgy, Dr. Watson describes the rites of the Divine Liturgy of St. Basil as used in the Coptic Church. This leads him to a discussion of Coptic icons as well as Coptic music that is regarded as the successor of the ancient Egyptian music.

The chapters on history deal with the significant events in the Church since the middle of the twentieth century. They include a biography of the present Patriarch, Pope Shenouda the Third, and of his predecessor Pope Kyrillos the Sixth who is venerated as a saint by many Copts. The book describes the austere situation of the Copts, who, under the pressure of the Islamic resurgence during the last three

decades, have been suffering from discrimination, attacks of the Moslem extremists and even the occasional frank persecution by government officials.

In the section 'Thinking with the Church', Father Watson examines the writings of contemporary Coptic authors and gives a sympathetic, though frank, portrait of Coptic Orthodox theology that is still trying to keep its biblical and patristic Tradition against a background of rising Islamic fundamentalism, infiltration of Latin philosophical terms, a tendency for clericalization of teaching positions, and the rise in publications that deal with monastic spirituality at the expense of neglecting patristic theological studies.

Biographical summaries of representative Copts are found throughout the book. Among these we find the neomartyr Father Rueiss Fakher (1956- 1988); Abba Justus, a monk of St. Antony who the author believes to be one of the great mystics of the 20th century; Fr. Marcos El-Eskiti; the Coptology scholar Professor Aziz Atiya, Boutros Ghalli, the previous Secretary General of the UN; the iconographer Isaac Fanous and others.

This book, which is finely printed and well illustrated with pictures of Coptic life and historical sites, is one of the best informed and most authoritative books on the contemporary situation in the ancient Church of Alexandria. It fills a gap in the literature on the recent history and contemporary status of the Coptic Church and will be greatly welcomed by all who have an interest in Eastern Christianity.

If this book is to receive the wide attention it deserves then it must appear in paperback as soon as possible. It is far too expensive for many who will be anxious to read it.

Lives of The Jura Fathers

Tim Vivian, Kim Vivian, and Jeffrey Burton Russell. The Lives of the Jura Fathers (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Cistercian Publications, 199). Pp. 240, Index, Bibl. \$ 21.95 (paper).

The three monastic lives translated here for the first time into English describe the transformation of monasticism in the Jura Mountains of Eastern France from its solitary origins into two thriving monastic communities. The lives are those of the monastic pioneer of the Jura Mountains, Romanus, his brother Lupicinus, and their successor Eugendus. It is under Eugendus that we see the monks achieve a classic cenobitic community in which all possessions were held in common and monks lived together, ate together, and prayed together. In addition to the Lives, this volume contains three appendices: Bishop Avitus' twenty-eighth letter to Viventiolus, and two works by bishop Eucherius, "The Martyrs of Agaune, Saint Maurice and his Companions," and "In Praise of the Desert".

The lengthy introduction (66 pages) and comprehensive footnotes situate the

Lives within their historical context and highlight the literary works which both influenced the monastic vocation of the Jura Fathers and molded the narrative that is the *Lives*. The translators are particularly thorough in citing parallels between the *Lives* and *The Life of St. Antony*, *The Life of St. Martin*, *The Rule of St. Benedict*, and *The Life of the Fathers* by Gregory of Tours.

The *Lives of the Jura Fathers* introduce three distinct monastic figures. Romanus, a prayerful and gentle soul, was a deliberate imitator of St. Antony (pg. 106) who attracted many to his way of life. His brother and successor, Lupicinus, was his first convert to the monastic life. He was not the gentle spirit that Romanus was; rather, we might euphemistically call him a “disciplinarian.” Despite their polar dispositions, the author of the *Lives* is quick to note that Romanus’ gentleness and Lupicinus’ austerity complemented one another and actually benefited their community. This is best illustrated by an account in which a group of monks took such advantage of Romanus’ gentleness that he had to call on his brother to deal with them (pg. 119-21). Finally, the author relays the life of Eugendus, who entered the monastery as a child. Though remembered as a wonderworker, perhaps more impressive is the fact that “Eugendus never taught anything about authority that he did not first accomplish by his own example or with his own work” (pg 180).

On a technical note, footnote 60 (pg. 176) treats the practice of anointing the sick with holy oil—one of the recurring events in the *Lives*. Though it provides many literary parallels, the volume entitled *The Oil of Gladness: Anointing in the Christian Tradition*, edited by M. Dudley and G. Rowell (SPCK, Liturgical Press, 1990), may also be consulted for a treatment of this practice in the New Testament and early church.

Undoubtedly, *The Lives of the Jura Fathers* will be the definitive English work on the subject for many years to come.

Severus S. A. Mikhail

University of California, Los Angeles

**This publication
is available
in microform
from University
Microfilms
International.**



Call toll-free 800-521-3044. In Michigan,
Alaska and Hawaii call collect 313-761-4700. Or
mail inquiry to: University Microfilms International,
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Articles: The Journal invites submission of articles on biblical, liturgical, patristic or spiritual topics.

Special Issues: We are planning for a special issue on: *The Coptic Orthodox Church: History and Doctrine*.

We welcome scholarly and general articles on these or related subjects, as well as translations from the original languages.

Special Sections: Contributors to the sections of *Book Reviews* and *Currents in Coptic Church Studies* are advised to contact the editor before submitting their articles. Of the extensive new literature, we only choose for review books of lasting spiritual benefit for the reader.

Manuscripts are preferred to be typed double spaced (including references and footnotes).

Authors are expected to hear from us within one month of the receipt of their articles. Unpublished material is returned only if requested.

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

Subscription Price: U.S.: \$10.00. Canada: \$12.00 (US dollars). Other countries: \$13.00 a year. Half price for full-time students.

Subscription is for one year (four issues). Unless otherwise stated, it starts from the current issue. However, new subscribers are advised to start by the spring issue to get the full benefit of the annual index which appears at the end of the year.

Previous Issues: \$2.50 per copy plus postage (while supply lasts).

Renewals: Early renewal is appreciated, you do not have to wait for an expiration notice. Notices are sent after you receive your last issue. Failure or delay of renewal will result in interruption or delay of the subsequent issue.

Change of address requires six weeks notice.

SUBSCRIPTION AND BUSINESS ADDRESS:

Society of Coptic Church Studies
P.O. Box 714
E. Brunswick, NJ 08816

EDITORIAL ADDRESS:

Coptic Church Review
P.O. Box 1113
Lebanon, PA 17042

Website: <http://home.ptd.net/~yanney/>