

Life of Maximus and Domitius

English translation

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There are two copies of this Life in Coptic:¹ one, a Bohairic text in E. Amélineau *Histoire des monastères de la Basse Égypte* (1894): 262-315; the other, Sahidic text, published by Henri Munier 'Une relation copte sa'ïdique de la vie des saints Maxime et Domèce' *BIFAO* (1917): 94-140. The following is a translation of the extant Sahidic version, with notes referring to the Bohairic text. The first 23 folios of the text are missing. According to Munier the Sahidic version is 'une rédaction plus complète' than the Bohairic version.

The composition of the Life is attributed to Pshoi, described in the Bohairic text as 'man of Constantinople', who had once been the 'first deacon of Macarius'. Munier refers to him as 'pseudo-Pshoi'. Evelyn-White² thinks the name 'Pshoi' may conceal Arsenius, the tutor of Arcadius and Honorius, with whom the saints were confused. Pshoi himself becomes part of the narrative because of what he says he has witnessed and what the saints have told him, a fellow Constantinopolitan. The final seven or eight pages of this text, like the Syriac version of the Life³, are devoted to the personal reminiscences of Pshoi. Another text that has been woven into the story is the apophthegm of Macarius.⁴ Direct speech is indicated by the use of italics. I have added the page numbers of Sahidic text in brackets for the benefit of those readers who may wish to use this text in combination with the Sahidic.. A striking feature of the text is the very sparing use of Biblical quotations or allusions: all together, Munier identifies three.

The opening portion of the Sahidic text has no parallel in the Bohairic text and the two converge with each other only with the story of the priest of Seleucia (page 50 of the Sahidic=p.276 of Amélineau's text).

If many Coptic lives of saints have a predominantly Egyptian focus, the same cannot be said of this text, which offers a truly international setting, with a glimpse of imperial politics and all of the associated intrigue. The emperor named Valentinus in the text is Valentinian II (371-392). As a young man he supported the Arian position in Christology but was brought around by Ambrose of Milan to the position adopted at Nicaea. Valentinian, though Christian, was not rabidly anti-pagan, allowing Symmachus to

1 There are copies in other languages and they would all have to be considered in a proper study but not in a simple translation such as this. The only other language I allude to is the Syriac version, because I happen to have a copy of it.

2 H.G. Evelyn-White *The monasteries of the Wadi Natrûn* (1932) p. 98 n.7 and p. 101

3 F. Nau in *Patrologia Orientalis* 5 (1910) pp. 750 ff. with references to the Greek and Latin versions.

4 M. Chaîne *Le manuscrit de la version copte Apophthegmata Patrum* (1960) no. 239. Some portions of the apophthegm are related in the Sahidic and Bohairic texts, albeit in different sequence and in differing amounts of detail in both.

deliver his well-known oration in 384 in favour of restoring the Altar of Victory in the Roman Senate, which had been removed thirty years earlier by Gratian. One is sometimes reminded of a Greek romance, in particular with the emperor's apparently casual observation that his sons may have been captured by barbarians or the device of the shepherd to help the young men escape from a fate worse than fame.

Finally, the view of a non-Christian Roman aristocrat Rutilius Namatianus, who was Prefect of Rome in 414, about monks he had seen in a monastery at Lérins, not far from Cannes, expressed in verses he wrote to celebrate his return to Gaul as he fled from the Goths. The following are lines 441ff.

squalet lucifugis insula plena viris.
ipsi se monachos Graio cognomine dicunt,
quod soli nullo vivere teste volunt.

Whether or not the monks of Shiêt could be described as 'fleeing from the light' I do not know. Since the sun in Egypt can be quite hostile for long periods of time, I do not know if this description would be suitable. But the last line might have appealed to Maximus and Domitius.

(49) ... they being told of that poor woman that they would pray for her. When they heard of the impiety that she had committed, they were distressed about the destruction of her soul and said to her parents: *We will not pray for her unless she confesses what she has done before everyone, for she is not worthy to be prayed for as she has made God angry.* Her parents told the saints that she had confessed what she had done before the entire town. The servants of Christ Jesus took some water and made the sign of the cross over it. They prayed over it and gave it to her parents, saying: *Pour this over her in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ and we believe that she will be healed.*

They took the waters in great faith, poured them over her and she was healed that day, fulfilling Scripture: *I am living, said the Lord. I do not want the death of the sinner as much as that you should turn from the path of evil and live.*⁵ That woman spent the rest of her days in seemliness and wisdom, giving glory to the God of these saints.

5 Ez. 33,11

Listen to this other miracle and true cure **(50)** of our servant of Christ Jesus, as if he were in the hands of the apostles.

There was a priest in Seleucia of Isauria.⁶ Whenever he stopped doing wicked things, he would go to the altar of God. As long as he persisted in this sort of folly, he continued to fornicate with a Samaritan woman. It was the will of God to broadcast the impiety of the priest among all the Isaurians so that the rest of them might see him and be afraid. On the feast day of Saint Ignatius⁷ the priest, after doing thus, ⁸ went to church. After the prayers from the Gospel he went to the altar to celebrate.⁹ At that moment an angel of the Lord struck him a very painful blow so that the skin¹⁰ of his body became as swollen as a wineskin. He then fell to the ground like a dead man. He was picked up and taken to his house in great wretchedness and after another ten days his body suffered **(51)** to such an extent that worms came out of it and his bones became dislocated, as he cried out day and night about the cancer that was consuming him. He kept on weeping, confessing before everyone the impieties he had committed. He was then placed on a bed carried by men who took him to those through whom Christ spoke, Apa Maximus and Apa Domitius, the servants of Christ. When they laid him down before them, they were sad when they saw his humility and affliction and they began by saying¹¹ to him: *What have you done, brother, that this should happen to you ?* He said to them: *Forgive me, my holy fathers. Christ has already told you my wicked deeds.* They said to him: *Do you know Christ well that He is and sees the deeds that you commit ?* ¹²He said: *Yes, my lords. He has taught me well.* These blessed athletes of Christ Jesus know that God does not wish to destroy anyone polluted in his sins. But **(52)** rather He wishes them to return to Him in true repentance. They took a little water and made the sign of the cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ over him, <saying: *Lord,*

6 S. Central Asia Minor, bordering on Cilicia. Originally within the territory of the Patriarchate of Antioch, it became attached to the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the 7th cent.

7 In the Western Calendar Oct. 17th.

8 viz. fornicating

9 Following W.E. Crum *Coptic Dictionary* (1939) 567a. Later referred to as CD.

10 Wordplay, whether intended or not: ⲪⲗⲗⲢⲉ (strike) and ⲪⲗⲗⲢ (skin).

11 Translates the Coptic Imperfect, which is often used to indicate the inchoative aspect.

12 Bohairic: 'You know Christ well and you are aware that he is looking...'

> ¹³ *the true physician of our souls and bodies. (You are)*¹⁴ *the one who does not wish any of those who are lost to perish, but you wish them all to return to your spiritual sheepfold through repentance that their soul may be saved. You are the one who medicates us all with the prayers of your servant, Apa Macarius. Glory be to you forever. Amen.*

They then poured water on him and left him naked for two days, praying over him. His body became whole and his sores dried up and healed. The saints hid him in peace, saying: *Now you are healthy. Do not return to sinning lest the Lord be angry with you and you die a horrible death.* He went to his family, giving glory to God the whole time because of his recovery through the prayers of the saints.

Now then, ask me and I will tell of this other miracle that I have heard from trustworthy bishops.

There were two pagan philosophers in Athens. ¹⁵(53). When they heard about the cures performed by the saints through the power of Christ, they accused the saints, saying: *Who are those about whom it is said that they cast out demons when they pray in the name of Christ? Are they Athenian gods?*

Those idolaters rose full deceit and malice, intent on testing the saints. They bent their hands and bound them with cloths to appear like cripples and lepers and closed their eyes like blind people, saying: *If these men are prophets who cast out demons, they will know what we have done.*¹⁶ They took someone with them to act as guide and made their way to the dwelling place of the saints, led by their guide. They knocked on the door. Saint Domitius opened it. They said: *We have come to you, saints of God, begging you to show us your mecy and pray for us that we might be healed, because we are*

13 A scribal omission, according to Munier p. 99 n.1. Present in the Bohairic.

14 This is not in the text, but it can be understood from what follows.

15 Bohairic account opens with 'by chance'.

16 Lit. 'our work'.

*leprous cripples and blind. God has assigned us this man, and he led us to you. Saint Domitius said to them simply: (54) The Lord Jesus Christ will heal you, and what you ask for will happen to you. At that moment they became leprous and blind and their hands became bent. They became cripples and cried out: Men of God, have mercy on us that we tested you. They continued to beg to the saints, fervently expressing their belief: We implore you, have mercy on us and help us. And we too will become Christians from today and servants of Christ. Maximus said: Do you believe truthfully that Jesus Christ is the son of God? They said: Yes, holy lords. We believe wholeheartedly that Jesus Christ is the son of God and there is none other than you.*¹⁷

The servants of Christ then prayed over a little oil and gave it to them, saying: *Go to the place*¹⁸ *of Saint Leontius and wash yourselves in his well and anoint yourselves with this bit of oil. We believe that you will be healed.* They did as they were told and were healed by the power of the Lord. They received baptism in the the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy (55) Spirit. They became Christians in that place and started to preach the miracle that had happened to them in Athens, the city of the Athenians. From that day many Athenians became Christians to the glory of God the Incarnate Logos.

Even if I wished to narrate the miracle cures that God performed through them using the hands of these saints, the new Elijah and Elisha, there would not be enough time to recite them.¹⁹ But we will tell you a few more for the love of you so that you may know openly that there are those who secretly²⁰ cultivate virtue. God reveals them through their fragrance and their light like inextinguishable candles that illuminate everyone for the glory of His holy name everywhere.

A merchant of the city of Antioch, who used to go now and then to these blessed ones, would receive their blessings from them and take their work.²¹ So, as a result of his

17 Writer has slipped from 3rd to 2nd person.

18 Greek τόπος. For the many different meanings cf. G. Lampe *Patristic Greek Lexicon* (1961) pp. 1396ff. Whatever it refers to I can find no reference to it. The decree issued by Theodosius in 437 banning pagan cults probably helped to stimulate the growth of Christianity at Athens.

19 There is a misprint in Munier's text: read -ϠΑΑΤ for -ΚΑΑΤ

20 The two clauses with 'openly' and 'secretly' look like consciously contrived composition.

21 The word in the Sahidic and Bohairic texts (CΧΟΛΑΡΙΝ) does not, as far as I have been able to discover, exist. If it did, it might be related to some form of occupation, and in that sense it would mean work. If, however, as Amélineau and Munier suggest, it refers to the rigging of a ship, it could easily be σχοινίον.

great faith in them, he wrote their name on the ropes. He made them into crosses for the sails of his ship to protect (56) him on the sea. Once he was in Constantinople with his merchandise to sell it. The harbour of that city was in the middle of it inside the wall. The emperor ordered all the ships outside to be brought inside because of the violence of the waves of the sea. Iron chains²² were stretched out at the entrance. These were removed to allow the ships to be brought in to the city. The magistrate²³ of the emperor was standing there with soldiers, chatting with them about the ships moored within, and he saw the sail stretched out on the ground to be sewn by the sailors, as they usually did. He saw the names of the saints written on the rigging attached to the sails, Apa Maximus and Apa Domitius his brother. When he read the names, he ordered the sailors to be called and said to them: *What are these names written on these sails?* They told him that they were names of holy men in their country. The magistrate asked them if it was their ship and they said that it was not, but they had written the names of the saints on the sail because of their holy (57) prayers *that we might find help and our ship*. He asked them if they knew where the saints were and was told that they were in Syria. The magistrate then ordered the soldiers to shackle the sailors and bring them before the emperor. He reached the emperor before them and ordered them to be brought into his presence.

When the pious emperor Theodosius saw them bound, he ordered them to be released immediately, saying: *These are my closest companions, do not leave them shackled lest God be angry with me*. The servant of God said to them in a kindly tone: *Do you know who these men of God are?* And they said: *One of them is named Maximus and the other Domitius*. He then said: *What do they look like?* And they replied: *The older is broad and with a long beard; the other is short, young and has a handsome beard*.

The emperor then ordered three holokottinoi²⁴ to be given to each sailor (58) and then dismissed them.

22 At the entrance to the Horn. Robert of Clari describes these chains in ch. 43 of his account of the 4th Crusade (1205) cf. *Three Old French Chronicles of the Crusades*, ed. Edward N. Stone (Seattle, 1939).

23 **ΜΑΓΙΣΤΡΙΑΝΟΣ** Probably some sort of city official.

24 Hybrid Greek-Latin word meaning 'whole cooked' used of a gold coin first attested in Diocletian's price edict (301) known in Latin as *solidus* and Greek νόμισμα. It replaced the *aureus* and weighed 4.5 g.

In this way the emperor called a palace eunuch named Marcellus, who was as strong as a lion. He gave him a strong horse and sent him to Syria so that he might know how things were before he told the empress. After a few days the eunuch returned to the emperor, saying: *Your children and the brothers of the empress send greetings to you.* The emperor was glad to hear this and told the empress and all of his family. There was great rejoicing in the whole palace.

Some time later the emperor sent their mother and little sister to Syria to see them to set their mind at rest. When they arrived, the saints gave them strength, their mother and their sister, they might be relieved at heart about them. They sent them away in peace. From that day the people of Constantinople made their way to the saints. The paths to them day and night carried those suffering from all sorts of illnesses and those with unclean spirits. When they (59) reached them and received their prayers, they were healed through the grace of God our Saviour. Theodosius then went to visit them himself to receive²⁵ their blessing and counsel and to learn of their good works that they might be useful to the holy Church of God. Amid all of this he was greatly strengthened to keep the faith of Nicaea and leave the sons of the Church whom he respected in great honour and estimation.

Perhaps some of those listening might say: *Why did the emperor make the effort to visit the saints? Why did he not send for them and bring them to him?* I will reassure those listening.

Theodosius the emperor was an Egyptian by birth, originally a stable-boy of Valentinus, that is, the father of the saints. When he saw that Theodosius was a strong man, he made him master²⁶ of all the stables, the training places of the horses of the empire. The saints rejected the world (60) while their father Valentinus still had one year to live. Then, as he was about to die, he assembled the whole senate and said to them: *I am about to go the way of all earth. See, therefore, see: Do not let any Arian sit on the throne of my fathers. But be strong enough to keep the holy faith of Nicaea.* The

25 There is a misprint in the Coptic text: read ⲉⲧⲣⲉⲒⲭⲓ.

26 Coptic ⲁⲣⲭⲱⲛ.

senators replied and said: *Where are we to find an orthodox man worthy of this great honour of the empire? Your sons have gone and we do not know where they are. Will your daughter be able to administer the empire?* The emperor then said: *Perhaps my sons have been abducted by barbarians. Now, I have no-one, great or small, who will sit on my throne in my place, but if I die, bring Theodosius to the palace and marry him to my daughter and install him on the imperial throne that he might be emperor after me in my place.* The senators and the imperial magnates all answered: *You have ordered us, emperor, and we will do as (61) you say.* After his speech he dismissed the senate and called two senior generals of his, Sergius and Anastasius, very important figures and greatly respected by him. The emperor said to them: *When I die, the magnates of the city will perhaps not agree with the appointment of Theodosius, as I have ordered. If it happens that you reach the point of deploying the army against them, do not let anyone sit on my throne after me but Theodosius.* The generals replied: *God willing, our lord emperor. If all the Byzantines gather together against us, they will be unable to invalidate the order which you have entrusted to us.* After the senators had finished their meeting with the emperor, they left him in peace.

There was a great nobleman at Constantinople of the household of Julian the Lawless,²⁷ he firmly believed that he would occupy the throne after the death of Valentinus. When the emperor died (62) and he heard that Theodosius had been appointed in his place, he became very angry. After the death of the emperor the senators gathered around the nobleman, asking him to say whether he agreed with them or not. They said to him: *Whom²⁸ do you want to be emperor?* He replied, looking at them and knowing that he was being tested: *Truly, it is not my concern that Theodosius the stablemaster should be made emperor. The privilege is yours.* At the moment they cried aloud in a single divine voice²⁹ three times: *Worthy, worthy, worthy. Augustus Theodosius.* And this is how he was installed on the imperial throne.

While these saints were living in Syria, the pious emperor Theodosius used to visit

27 Presumably Julian the Apostate (emperor 361-363), not mentioned in the Bohairic version.

28 The word **ⲛⲓⲙ** could also mean 'so-and-so'

29 Lit. 'with one mouth and in one voice of God'.

them³⁰ to ask their advice and profit from their teaching and their blessing, as if knowing that the empire was theirs. For truly the trouble he took³¹ was of great benefit and instructiveness. I might almost (63) say in short: It was through the teachings of these saints that he came to³² this great love of God and this sort of respect for the churches of God. Not only he himself, but also his children, Arcadius and Honorius, whom he had brought up in piety of this kind through the teaching and the good advice of these saints. So also was Theodosius the Young.³³

After this the archbishop of Constantinople died, and this was certainly why God brought the saints to Shiêt, like the patriarch Jacob patriarch, who came to Egypt as a result of the famine until the population increased and filled the face of the earth. So it was too with Maximus and Domitius, the imperial children. I will refrain from calling them 'imperial children', so that everyone knows their worth and angelic conduct, since they preferred the love of Jesus to any glory of this world and followed him with all their heart. For this reason truly (64) He gave glory to them that He might guide them to come to the holy desert of Shiêt and complete their life there and build there³⁴ a church in their name, they having established the foundation on the immovable rock Christ and turned the apostles and prophets to it.³⁵ It became a safe haven for everyone who turns to God for the sake of the forgiveness of sins. Truly the paradise of God has rejoiced because of the salvation of the souls of sinners that happened in that place. And it will continue to be a safe haven forever.

But let us turn to the reason why these saints went to Shiêt. When they were looking for someone to consecrate as bishop of the imperial capital, the multitude asked for Saint Maximus to be made bishop of Constantinople. He was the choice of the people and the senate, a universal choice. Theodosius rejoiced greatly over this and sent an

30 Misprint in the text. Read **ΨΑΡΟΥ**. As later with 'their blessing'.

31 **σκυλμός**, a relatively uncommon word with several meanings, 'expenditure of effort' being only meaning 4 cf. H. Liddell and R. Scott *Greek-English Lexicon* (1940) q.v. The Bohairic text uses **ΧΙΝΖΗΚΟΤ** 'visit'

32 Read: **ΝΤΑΚΚΑΤΑΝΤΑ**. On the use of **καταντάω** cf. J. Moulton and G. Milligan *Vocabulary of the New Testament* (1929) p. 330. The English cleft sentence renders the Coptic Second Perfect **ΝΤΑΚ-**

33 The grandson of Theodosius, most notably associated with the Theodosian Codex.

34 Misprint for **ΜΜΑΥ**.

35 This enigmatic phrase has no equivalent in the Bohairic text. I guess that 'it' in this context refers to the 'rock' and not the 'church'. It may be an allusion to Eph. 2, 20: **ΕΛΥΚΕΤΗΥΤΗ ΕΞΡΑΙ ΕΧΝΤΕΝΤΕ ΝΝΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ ΜΝΝΕΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ**

official for him with 25 soldiers. He wrote to the governor of Syria (65) to apprehend the saints and watch over them until the bishops of the province were assembled. When the official reached the governor with the soldiers, they gave him the letter from the emperor. He was pleased and said to them: *Let us eat today for your journey has been an arduous one. We will bring them tomorrow, God willing.*

By divine providence, when the governor's wife learned of this, she thought that the emperor would take the saints to Constantinople. She was very sad, because she had great faith in them. She sent her son secretly with a eunuch at night.³⁶ She told the saints: *The emperor has ordered you to Constantinople. So, you may want to withdraw.* When the saints heard this, they were very sad. They quickly took the few clothes they had and left their monastery, saying: *This is the time when God wanted to take us to the monastery of Apa Macarius.* They found an elderly shepherd and he took them to his hut and hid them there.

On the following day (66) the official and his escort arrived at the monastery, looking for the saints. They did not find them. When they did not find, they became extremely³⁷ upset. The governor then ordered a thorough search to be made for them everywhere in Syria and Palestine.³⁸ For this reason the saints remained in hiding for a long time. They were unable to appear at all because they were known by everyone in Syria and the neighbouring territories. They later rose under the counsel of God, shed their monastic garments and put them into a sack and put on lay garments and tied turbans on their heads so that they would not be recognized. They went forth, each carrying the small sack and wearing lay garments like Syrians. They walked along praying to God: *God of our father Apa Macarius, You will show us the way and bring us to him in peace.* They walked for two days on the banks of the river.³⁹ Apa Domitius (67) said to his elder brother firmly: *My brother, be strong by the will of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the true God, and the prayers of our father Macarius, whom Apa Agabus⁴⁰ our blessed father*

36 Coptic: **ⲉⲡⲱⲥ ⲛⲧⲉϥⲱⲛⲓ ⲡⲉ**. I wonder if there might be misprint here for **ⲉⲡⲃⲟⲥ ⲛⲧⲉϥⲱⲛⲓ ⲡⲉ**, 'it being the half of the night'= 'midnight'. Crum (504a) has only the phrase **ⲧⲡⲁⲱⲉ ⲛⲧⲉϥⲱⲛⲓ** for this.

37 Coptic: **ⲉⲙⲁⲧⲉ ⲛⲧⲉⲓⲛⲉ ⲧⲏⲣⲥ**, all of which is subsumed under 'extremely'.

38 The Roman province of Syria Palestina was set up in 135 AD. Around the date of the events recorded in this text it seems to have been organized into six units.

39 Bohairic: **ⲉϭⲉⲛⲛⲉⲛⲥⲫⲟⲧⲟϥ ⲛⲫⲓⲟⲙ** 'along the sea coast'. This makes better sense than the Sahidic.

40 The monk with whom the two young men did their monastic 'apprenticeship'. He will undoubtedly be mentioned in

saw in the vision saying to him: "Order your sons and let them come to Egypt and be with me." We believe that his prayers will guide us to him. Let us therefore walk along the south coast of the sea with endurance until we reach Rakote. Maximus replied: Yes, but where are to stop and drink? His younger brother said joyfully and hopefully: My brother and my lord, do you not believe that the Lord Jesus has the power to move these hills and rocks and harbours of water? His brother said: I believe that He can do all these things. But forgive me, my lord brother, for I have sinned as a man. They then went on, rejoicing and blessing God. They continued to be an enduring mutual strength. It was God who guided Israel at that time⁴¹ and on sea. He it was also who guided these saints. If they are thirsty, they go to the sea and drink sweet water from it, without asking each other if it was bitter or sweet.

They walked until they came to a steep rock. They were very hardened, with the result that they often went on their hands and their feet, endured many tribulations on that very difficult rock. They did not know where they were going. But the joy they felt and their hope in Christ made these tribulations insignificant. As these saints, who had walked nine days, said to me,⁴² they felt great pain in their feet because they were of a delicate constitution and not used to these conditions. When, they said, we settled on a high rock, we were unable to walk and stretched out on the high rock. (69)

You have seen the valiant behaviour of athletes and contestants of Christ, who were martyrs without shedding blood through the great tribulations they endured. And they spent another five days lying on that rock, without eating or drinking, lying like corpses.

God saves everyone who hopes in him at all times, who rescues them from every tribulation. It is He who remembered Daniel when He saved him from the mouths of the lions. He saved Jonah from the belly of the whale. He saved Susanna from the one who pronounced the sentence of death. He also saved His Roman servants from the

the missing early section of the text. The name in the Coptic Synaxary is Agapêtus (اغابيتوس)

41 Probably something missing: 'on land'

42 The narrator begins to introduce himself into the narrative and continues this device by addressing the reader/listener directly in the following section with Biblical examples of fortitude such as that displayed by the young men.

mouths of wild beasts in that place and carnivorous birds on the sea shore. The God of hosts who turned Enoch from seeing death. He too sent the chariots of fire and snatched Elijah up to heaven. He sent His angel and transported Habbakum by air without harm to Babylon above the lions' den to bring Daniel food. (70). And He returned him to Judea instantly, although Judea was three months journey from Babylon. It was He also who sent His angel. He transported the saints without difficulty to Shiêt and deposited them on a high rock, south of which is the marsh. For in this place a sign from God occurred. When it appeared, the servant of God, Apa Macarius, called it the 'Rock of the Hollow of the Belly'.⁴³

Pay careful attention to me and listen to the miracle that happened to the saints, as they told it to me.⁴⁴ God brought the saints, the new Elijah and John, to Shiêt at night. They saw a man of light before them, taking their hand and leading them by air until he brought them to the Rock we have just mentioned. They said: *When we got up in the morning with the strength which Christ our God had shown in us, we found ourselves on the Rock of Shiêt. When we looked over the hillside, we saw a marsh and a few date palms. At the sight of the desert, we were astonished and it was as if our heart were at peace. We thought about what had happened to us, for the evening before we were sleeping exhausted on (71) the shore of the sea with its waves⁴⁵ and today we are in a calm place, fortified, and <looking> at date palms and water wells and other such sights.*

After some time, as we looked this way and that, at the fifth hour we saw a man leading camels in the marsh to the south of us. We rejoiced greatly and came down on to the Rock. We went to him to ask him where we were. He saw from our clothes that we were foreigners, with headbands bound around our heads. He became afraid and was about to let his animals run away until we prostrated ourselves before him so that he stay there.

43 Coptic: **ⲧⲓⲉⲧⲣⲁ ⲛⲕⲟⲛⲛⲉⲗⲓ**, where the second word combines **ⲕⲟⲩⲛ** 'bosom' and **ⲛⲏⲟⲉ** 'belly' (here notably in the Bohairic form). Crum (111b) cites this example and adds an Arabic equivalent (which I have not been able to check): **لحم الجوف** 'meat of the interior'. Evelyn-White *Wadi Natrun* mentions the place in his full description of the topography of Shiêt on p. 37, but offers no suggestion as to the meaning. One wonders if it might be connected with the 'demon of fornication' that had once troubled Abba Moses when he lived in Petra (p. 37): in his entry for **ⲕⲟⲩⲛ** Crum (111b) also gives the meaning 'genital parts'. It could of course also be a rather vivid description of an otherwise unremarkable topographical feature.

44 What follows is largely 1st person pl. narrative, in order to confirm the claim of the writer that these are the words of the two saints.

45 Bohairic: 'listening to the roar of the waves'

We approached him and asked him, but he did not know our language and we did not know his. Finally, he said to us: "Come and I will take you to Apa Macarius." When we heard the name of Apa Macarius, we were fortified and rejoiced, so we followed him, thanking God and blessing Him that He had shown us the way to the place of His servant. When we reached the place of the prophet of God, he received us with joy and (72) kindness. He asked us why we had come? We replied: "We have heard of your good virtues, our lord father. We have come to be under your protection and become monks with you." He continued to look at us carefully. Then he said: "You will not be able to remain here. The desert is harsh." We prostrated ourselves before him, saying: "If we cannot stay here, we will go elsewhere. But for God's sake do not reject us, our good father." He replied: "Good. If it has to be like this, come and I will tell you about the place." He then took us to a rock and told us how to build a cave and about the rest of the manual work at Shiêt.

The saints said that this is what had happened to them. Now, I am a citizen of Constantinople, like them. Throughout the saints kept making me swear, with the injunction: *Say nothing of what we have told you while we are still alive.* Indeed, if I had not already known them, they would not have spoken to me. But I knew them and they too knew me.⁴⁶

(73) The divine prophet Apa Macarius led the young prophets and brought them to the rock and showed them the place where stone is extracted. He gave them tools for digging and showed them the beginning of basket making and how to weave because they were not skilled at basketweaving. He also gave them other instructions and returned to his cell in peace. These saints took off their Syrian garments and put on the habit of the monks in that place. They started to speak to each other: *Look, do not let anyone know our name or that we were⁴⁷ formerly monks, because this place is near the emperor and near Syria.* They were thereafter zealous at all times not to speak to anyone or go to the place of anyone at all except their own cell and the church. Their nourishment was bread and salt at all times. From the time they became monks they

46 I have italicized this entire section because it is direct speech: of the narrator to the reader/listener. One cannot fail to be impressed by the insistent claim of the narrator to have known the young men.

47 Read: <N>ENO

tasted no meat or wine or fish. They fasted for two days at a time and spent much time in prayer. They used to recite the psalms each six verses, ⁴⁸ in the Syrian way.

(74) They stayed in Shiêt and saw no-one but an old watchman, who took their handiwork from them and brought them their small amount of bread. The same man also attended Apa Macarius because he had known him from the beginning. When the saints came to church, they did not raise their eyes at all to see the face of anyone, but kept them lowered until they came to their cave silently and attentively. For truly, if you see them in this state, you will say: *God is really in these men*. And if you wish to know this accurately, let us hear. Elijah is the one who brought fire from heaven to set fire to the idol worshippers in this place. Similarly, the fire of the Holy Spirit was in them, burning all the negative energy of the spirits of wickedness that are constantly and shamelessly at war with humanity. It is not I⁴⁹ who say this, but the spirit-bearing Macarius.

Apa Macarius then said: *When I wanted to visit them three (75) years later to find out they were and when evening fell, they said to me: "Are you leaving, our father?" I said to them: "No. I am sleeping here" They put out for me a small mat to one side, while they occupied the other side and slept in one space. They took a belt and a cloak and put them in front of me. After they had put them down, they were silent. They did this for a certain reason: the habit was Syrian and they did not have a girdle or scapular, but they wore only black clothes.*⁵⁰ *When the saints saw their spirit-bearing father wearing the girdle and scapular, they too wished to imitate their father and gird themselves like him. This is why they brought a girdle and scapular to him. They did this that he might pray over them so that they might put them on when they got up. At that moment he knew this through the prophetic spirit that was in him and he prayed over them. He said: "I prayed to God that their way of working might be revealed to me. The ceiling opened and there was a light like that of the day.*(76) *The elder then signalled to the younger and they*

48 Bohairic adds: 'and a halleluja'. The term λέξις is used here, but in the apophthegm of Macarius (see note 2), which has a dramatic and fuller account of the psalm recitation (minus the phrase 'in the Syrian way'), the term **CTIXOC** is used.

49 The narrator Pshoi, who wishes to clarify that he is quoting Macarius (see note 2). The Bohairic version of this story is more detailed than this one.

50 cf. Derwas J. Chitty *The desert a city* (1966) p.55

girded themselves. I saw them but they did not see me. They spread their hands to heaven. This was their custom at all times, as they spent the whole night with their hands spread praying to God. The younger one, he said, there was light coming from his mouth going up to heaven. In the same way, as the elder brother opened his mouth to chant, a great fire came from his mouth and went up to heaven."

And so we have heard the great Apa Macarius telling us explicitly that the blessed ones are worthy of the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, like fire. For truly if I begin to speak of all the things that that great one told me and the things I saw with my own eyes, the discourse will become very long. For this reason I have omitted the excess. For the sake of those of little faith, that they may not think that the truth is a lie, I will reduce a lot to a little⁵¹ and I will impose a limit to the discourse.

The elder of whom we have spoken as the attendant of these saints was a very god-loving man. He had (77) great faith in them. This man was forcibly relieved of his camels by a soldier: he seized the elder and stretched forth his hand and struck him on his right cheek. The elder turned the other cheek to him, to fulfil the injunction of the Gospel.⁵² The tyrannical soldier repeated his attack and struck him with the thing⁵³ in his hand and took out his left eye. The elder gave thanks to God that he had been worthy to lose his eye for the injunction of Christ.

It once happened that he took the small baskets of the saints to Egypt and prepared for them a little bread as he normally did. He was a man of Jepro Menesina⁵⁴ in the district called Peinoub. After having prepared the small amount bread of the saints, he took the camel and went to Shiêt. Having reached the marsh, he walked for some time with his camel and came to a place that was full of excrement and, by a conspiracy of the enemy of all good, the camel slipped and fell, and broke his two feet, only the skin remaining

51 Lit. 'I will say a few things of many'.

52 Matt. 5, 39. For a right-handed person to strike the right cheek of someone opposite the blow was presumably delivered with the back of the hand.

53 Unspecific term: **κρηγος**.

54 E. Amélineau *Géographie copte* (1895) p. 349 has an entry on Pinoub, which is for the most part based on the Bohairic version of this Life. The place is also mentioned in the notice on Alexander II (705-730) in the 'History of Patriarchs' (*PatOr* 5 p.82). The term **ⲭⲉⲡⲓⲠⲟ** means 'hamlet, farmstead' cf. CD 827a. It has gone into Arabic as **شبري** (shubra), and Werner Vycichl *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue copte* (1983) p. 345a lists 53 place names of which it is part.

intact. When this (78) happened, the elder wept bitterly and was in distress. He rent his garments and put earth on his head, for the camel was not his. Again he thanked God: *My Lord Jesus Christ, God of these saints, I thank you.* He then went into a cave and left the camel still breathing.⁵⁵

When he met the saints, he told them what had happened, weeping profusely. They did not know the facts of the matter. But when they saw him weeping wretchedly, they walked with him. When they reached the place, still a little way off from the camel, the elder wept when he saw it. They stood and prayed to God. As they came up to the camel, it became afraid and bellowed. It put its face on the ground, as if worshipping the saints. They said to the camel: *Do not be afraid, but arise and stand through the power of the one who rose from the dead, Jesus Christ, the God of the Christians.* Having said that they raised their eyes to heaven, saying: *God of our father Apa Macarius, listen to us.* At that moment the camel suddenly jumped up. (79) It stood on its feet as it had never fallen and suffered an injury. The elder kissed the saints, saying: *The Lord Jesus Christ is blessed, this one who is in you.*

Listen also to this great miracle of the saints of God. While they were walking together to the cell. Saint Domitius saw the elder, his face full of earth because of the time when he had put it⁵⁶ on his head when the camel fell from him. Saint Domitius took the corner of his cloak so that he might wipe the face of the elder. Because of his great faith the elder and the miracle that had happened through the power of the saints, he took the saint by the hand as if he might be blessed by him and put it on his injured eye. When the hand touched his eye, he was able to see straightaway. The watchman was astonished and gave glory to God. He was instructed not to say anything to anyone: *Do not think that this cure happened to you because of us, for we are sinners.* It happened because of the victorious power of Christ. After he (80) had set out the small amount of bread for them, he returned to his natron works. When his companions saw him with his eye open, they were astonished and asked him how he was able to see. He told them that he had been cured by the servants of God and disciples of Apa Macarius. All

55 CD 440a. Bohairic: 'After leaving the camel stretched out on the ground, he went to the cave of the saints.'

56 The verb **ἔβαλε** requires an object of some sort.

who heard glorified God.

I myself, when I heard this anecdote after they had died, asked the great Apa Macarius to confirm it: *My holy father, I have heard about the saints that they opened the eyes of the blind. Is it true or not ?* He replied: *Indeed it is, my son. It is not a great thing according to the power of the grace they received from God. For they were worthy of the grace that was in Elijah and John, Christ having given the order of his apostles to them, because they did not seek the glory of the world. For this reason they were like a fiery flame burning brightly, and so the breath that came from their mouth was a burning fire. When they opened their mouth to pray, the flame came from their mouth like bright lightning up to⁵⁷ heaven. Now, my son, believe all that you have heard about them.* I kissed his holy feet, glorifying **(81)** God, who performs his wonders in those who do His will.

Listen also to this amazing story,⁵⁸ which I saw with my own eyes. It happened on the day of the Feast of the Theotokos in Paône.⁵⁹ I went to them to receive their blessing. I found them just about to leave to draw water. I went with them. When we reached the Anaboullos⁶⁰ and were within a short distance of it, we found a hartebeest⁶¹ there with its calf that was blind. When she saw us, she ran away. When her calf was about to do the same, he fell into a pit of salt water. He was in distress in the pit, floating on and submerged in the water. When I saw the creature in this way I could not contain myself but started to laugh. I looked at the saints with their faces cast down and meditating. I went and got the calf and brought it to the Anaballous and said to the saints: *My holy fathers, come and see. This calf is blind.* They said: *Blessed by God.* I brought it to them, as I told them about it. Saint Maximus made the sign of the cross on the eyes of the calf, in wonderment at God's creation, **(82)** saying: *My Lord Jesus Christ, you are blessed and the miracles you perform.* When he said this, the eyes of the calf opened. He said to me: *Let him go. For he is not blind.* I released him and he hurried

57 Typographical error: for **ζαροc** read **φαροc**.

58 At this point the Bohairic text has a different anecdote.

59 It is not clear to me which of the four feasts associated with the BVM is meant here.

60 The Syriac text (*PO* 5 p.764) uses the same word as a name: 'the salt marsh called Anaboulos' (ܐܢܒܘܠܘܣ ܐܢܒܘܠܘܣ ܘܐܠܘܣܐ) The editor points to the Bohairic description (Amélineau p. 292) of the place: **†ΝΙΩ† ΜΠΕΤΡΑ ΘΗ ΕΠΙΧΟΨΕΩ ΜΗΨΟΟΥ ΣΑΡΗΣ ΜΜΟΣ** 'the big rock to the south of which is the outpouring of water'

61 A type of antelope. Syriac: 'wild cow'.

away leaping on the hillside in search of his mother. I was greatly amazed, glorifying God and his saints.

Let us once again tell you of this amazing incident of the new Daniel. It happened once as I was walking with Saint Domitius. We were bringing palm leaves from the marsh and, on my way, I found a small pile of dates, with two large serpents among them fighting each other, one of them having eaten half of the other. When I saw them, I fled in fear. Saint Domitius said to me: *Why are you running away like this ?* I said to him: *My father, I have just seen serpents.*⁶² He said to me: *Whether Satan appears as a serpent or a lion, do you take flight hurriedly and without self-restraint ?* I prostrated myself saying: *Forgive me, father. Come and see, each one is devouring the other.* When he came to the place where they were, he saw them as I had told him **(83)**. He was very distressed at their violent behaviour towards each other. He went to them and said: *Look at the hostility of these others, each one wishing to devour his brother.* He then took them in his two hands and seized the one being devoured by the other and dragged it from the belly and expelled it that it might go away and seized the other by the neck and hurled it away, so that they would not be able to find each other again. I stood there stupefied like one in distress. I was astonished to see how he dealt with the serpents.

After this it pleased God in his love for humanity to put his servants to rest and translate them from the transitory cares of this vain world and take them to the place of celestial peace where joy is unconfined and rejoicing eternal, the place from which distress, grief and sighing are banished.

Then, on the day of the Epiphany Apa Maximus began to lie down. He was ill.⁶³ He had been seized by a serious fever. When he became very ill, he said: *Please call Apa Macarius.* I went and called him. **(84)** After sunset, he said to us: *What time is it ?* We told him that it was the end of the day. He said: *There is still a little time until I go to my place of eternal rest.* As it was getting dark, our father Apa Macarius said: *Light the*

62 Not a literal translation.

63 Translates the Bohairic: $\alpha\psi\epsilon\rho\zeta\eta\tau\epsilon\ \nu\chi\epsilon\pi\mu\alpha\kappa\alpha\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \mu\alpha\zeta\iota\mu\omicron\varsigma\ \nu\epsilon\kappa\omicron\tau\ \alpha\psi\omega\omega\eta\iota = \alpha\psi\omega\omega\rho\tau\ \nu\epsilon\kappa\omicron\tau\ \epsilon\pi\omega\omega\eta\epsilon$ cf. CD 588a

lamp. How good the light is ! ⁶⁴ The mind of blessed Apa Maximus was taken to heaven and he began to speak as follows: *Send your light and your truth, my God, that they may guide me, for I believe that you will make straight my way and save me from the powers of darkness of the air, which are the spirits. Prepare my footprints on your way, my God, that I might come to you without hindrance. Be a powerful hope for me, my God, for you are my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear ?* ⁶⁵ He then fell silent for a short time.

And again he said: *Arise and let us go from here. Look, the apostles, they have come with the prophets to take me from this place.* He then fell silent. After a little Apa Macarius saw the chorus of saints who had followed him. Suddenly Apa Macarius stood up. He continued to stare in silence. When I saw the lamp extinguished, I said to the elder: *Do you want us (85) to light the lamp, my father ?* He said: *No. Leave it as it is.* I begged him, saying to him: *Please, my lord father, rest on this blanket for a while.* He replied: *Be quiet, my son. This is not the time for speaking but rather for silence.* Apa Maximus then spoke with one of the saints, asking him the name of the saints around him. We did not understand what he said. But the spirit-bearer told us that he had been told the name of those saints. Those to the right, he said, were John the Baptist and the holy apostles; those to the left, Moses the Lawgiver with Elijah and Elisha and the twelve minor prophets. I saw, he said, King David, Constantine the Roman Emperor, standing next to each other, crowns on their head and an angel of light standing by them with a sword of fire in his hand. If any energies of the spirits appeared, he pursued them. And this is what I saw him doing in the air, as he led the saints. The saints were gathered around the saint, looking to the command (86) from God. He therefore said, as his soul was about to be taken: I saw John the Baptist, with a gleaming garment, he spread it out and took the two corners and signalled to Moses, and he took the other side. The saints then all stood up. I saw Paul the apostle signalling to the emperor Constantine, saying: *Extend to him the free faith.* ⁶⁶ He handed him a sealed book, the name of Nicaea written on it. I saw the entire chorus of the saints, giving strength to the soul of the saint and saying: *Do not be afraid, but be strong.* The soul then leapt into the bosom of John and Moses, and the rest of the saints followed him, chanting: *I have heard their sweet voice.*

64 CD 64a. The word division **εψχε νανοϋ ποϋοειν** is perhaps easier to understand.

65 This passage contains a medley of Biblical refs.

66 Lit. 'the freedom of the faith'.

I have never heard a voice so sweet. And this is how the blessed Apa Maximus died, in peace, having found his rest with all the saints.

When we buried his holy remains, his blessed brother Domitius lay down and was ill. He had been taken by a fever. When the great Apa Macarius (87) saw this, he said to me: *Stay here, my son, and attend to him so that you may receive his blessing.* I kissed his feet, saying: *Pray for me, my holy father.* On the following day, Domitius' fever became worse.⁶⁷ On the evening of the third day, I saw him in pain. I said to him: *Do you want me to call our father Apa Macarius.* He said: *Yes.* I went and called him. As I was walking along with him on the path, he stood for a long time, looking at this side of the cave. He then turned to the east. Perhaps he was praying, I was thinking to myself, but he was looking at the chorus of saints processing before the soul of the blessed Domitius. He was looking up to heaven, sighing, weeping and beating his chest: *Woe is me, I never became a monk. These are true monks, for in a short time of tribulation they quickly found the place.* When I saw him weeping, I asked my holy father what was wrong and he said: *Come, my son Apa Domitius (88) has gone to his rest.* When we went into the cave, we found him leaning against the wall, with his two hands stretched out to heaven. And this is how he died. We took his holy body and laid it on the ground.⁶⁸ We looked at him. Apa Macarius testified to Apa Isidore: *The ranks that have come for the soul of the great brother, they have also come for the other one who is walking with them.*

So now, we have told you how these blessed ones completed their course and their angelic life. They loved the harsh life, the discipline, the transient hardship. They were long-suffering and struggled well as they ran the race of courage and stretched themselves at the finish,⁶⁹ as the apostle said, until they achieved the palm of the call to heaven to be with the beloved Jesus Christ, the true agonothetês, after having rejected the transient glory of this world and its insignificant, vacuous and perishable pleasures. They continued to reject the world as a prison.⁷⁰

67 Not a literal translation.

68 Bohairic: 'blanket'

69 The words I have selected are those that seem to me most fitting to conjure up the test of athletic endurance with which the 'martyr's' struggle is so often compared.

70 The next sentence can be understood as an axiom, but seems odd in the context and I have omitted it in the

It happened once, while I was chatting with them, that I said to them: (89) *If you were in Constantinople, my fathers, you would indeed⁷¹ now find yourselves emperors .They turned to me and said to me gently⁷²: Where is your mind that you say such a thing ? Perhaps it is in the place about which you have just spoken ? We have already told you many times, our brother Pshoi, whether you stay with us or in your own small cell, to grasp this blessed name of Jesus Christ without letting go of it. Indeed, if this holy name were in your heart, you would not have said what you said just now. So pay close attention, our beloved brother. Do not neglect this name of salvation, but keep it in your heart steadfastly and say it when you are suffering. For if you neglect it, then we will certainly⁷³ die in our transgressions. So let us not love bold speech,⁷⁴ playful speech and empty words, for these are things that destroy the entire fruit of the monk, as we came to know while we were still in Syria, as humanity⁷⁵ made us sportive (90) , that is, we were prevented from thinking of our sins. Exile, knowing silence, tribulation are tools of our people.⁷⁶ Tribulation gives birth to prayer in purity. Prayer gives birth to the fear and love of God, and these things give birth to weeping. Weeping purifies our sins, because no rank or wealth or supremacy is revered by God, but a pure soul is what He seeks. Sacrificing to Him and burnt offerings are what save us. I received their word with a joyful heart, and repented, saying: Forgive me, my fathers, and pray for me.*

A year after the death of these saints, the desert began to become very populous everywhere, whether in the desert of Pernoudj⁷⁷ or in the monasteries scattered around Egypt. In short, the desert became a built up area and a large church was constructed and Isidore ordained presbyter. My own humble worthlessness was made deacon. The great Apa Macraius called out from within the church and said: *Call this*

translation: **ΖΟΤΑΝ ΔΕ ΟΥΜΕ ΠΕ ΨΩ ΜΜΟΙ** 'But whenever it is true I say it.' The Bohairic text omits it.

71 The adverb **ΠΟΛΛΑΚΙΣ** can also have the meaning 'perhaps' in the protasis of a conditional sentence cf. Liddell and Scott see **πολλάκις** meaning III.

72 As so often this adverbial phrase seems to indicate a mild rebuke.

73 Greek **ἀκμήν**

74 Greek **παρησία**. In this context a distinction is perhaps being made between 'responsible freedom of speech' and 'irresponsible freedom of speech'.

75 One imagines that the emphasis here would be on the 'purely' human, detached from the divine.

76 Translates the Bohairic: **ΖΑΝΘΒΑΙ ΝΤΕΠΕΝΦΛΟΛ**. The Sahidic copyist seems not to have understood the phrase and has written **ΣΤΟΙ ΜΠΕΨΛΗ** 'odours of prayer'.

77 Amélineau *Géographie* p. 319 is one of the first to point out that this place was not be confused with Shiêt. Its non-Egyptian name is Nitria.

place the Roman Quarter. The three great elders (91) of Pernoudj who were with us, Apa Pamô, Apa Pihôr and Apa Hatre, said to Apa Macarius: Did you not know their name, father? He said to them: Yes, but it is not fitting to use the name of one and not the other in this place. They both completed an equal contest and so we have named both by calling it their monastery the Romans. Thus he had their names written on the diptych:⁷⁸ "Our fathers the Romans", as he was ordered by God. We have confirmation of this in the testimony of Apa Papnoute, the disciple of Apa Macarius who succeeded him as Father of Shiêt. He then said: When we built the church, God ordered our father through the Cherubim of light: Call this place the Roman Quarter. And you, follow me and I will show you the place that will be called after you. The Cherubim went before him and brought him to the Southern Bend of the marsh in the place of the spring. He stood on the rock to the west. He promised him that place, saying: This is the place (92) that will be named after you. It is also the place which you will build and will be given in perpetuity to the Romans, because they are the ones who left their body in this holy desert as first fruits of your labours in the vineyard of the Lord Sabaôth,⁷⁹ which is the revered family of monks, the people who perform the will of God, who transfer the worthiness of God to the family of man.

I therefore beseech you, my holy fathers, not to doubt what we have said about these saints. But accept to yourselves in love these words of our blessed fathers, especially those of our spiritual father Apa Macarius. It is written that if elders go to that great one, he receives them in his cave, saying: *Come and see the shrine of these young strangers so that you too may make progress in their virtues and be worthy of the portion and the lot belonging to them in the kingdom of Our Lord Jesus Christ.* For by allowing ourselves to recall the teaching of our holy fathers we will convert from worldly customs and receive the form of light (93) in the form of injunctions of our blessed fathers, as we leave behind us the things of behind and give ourselves to those of in front in true humility and love, walking with unerring footsteps and performing the laws of Christ and evangelical commandments of monkhood that lead us straight to God. Our fathers made the small cell belonging to our holy fathers a sort of a church for

⁷⁸ A two-leaf board with the names of the living and dead commemorated by the church.

⁷⁹ The use of Sabaôth ('of hosts') may be to emphasize the well-ordered nature of the desert settlement (in military fashion).

themselves, to which they would go from time to time and pray in faith. Large numbers of the sick, whether in Shiêt or in this desert, when they came to their shrine to pray, would be cured by the grace of God and the prayers of His servants. And let us also listen to the command that our father Apa Macarius gave us to visit their place⁸⁰ and pray in it, especially on their sacred commemoration days, the 14th and 17th of Tôbe.⁸¹ Let us take as a model for ourselves, in haste and endurance, their memory and the truth of their angelic way of life so that we too may be worthy of the portion and lot in the kingdom of heaven through the grace, mercy and philanthropy of Our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom ⁸² (94) the glory of the Father with him and the life-giving and consubstantial Holy Spirit, now and at all times, forever and ever. Amen.

80 Gk τόπος often means 'monastery'

81 Fifth month of Coptic calendar, the beginning of which corresponds to 27.12 (Julian calendar). In the Coptic Synaxary the date for both is 17th Tôbe cf. René Basset 'Synaxaire arabe jacobite' *Patrologia Orientalis* 11 (1913) p. 619 (the peculiar writing of their father's name conceals 'Valentinianus').

82 Bohairic: 'through whom all glory, honour and worship are fitting to the Father and himself and the life-giving and consubstantial Holy Spirit ...'