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Abstract
The third instalment in the “Unpublished Texts from the Arab Orthodox Tradition” series makes accessible a neglected document from the Orthodox Christian tradition in Arabic: the Paterikon of the Palestinian lavra of Mar Chariton. It includes an edition and an English translation of this text, which contains precious information about seven little-known ascetic fathers of this celebrated Palestinian monastery. Special attention is given to the ninth-century saint Eustratius of Mar Chariton, whose memory the Orthodox Church kept on 17 October. The Appendix includes an edition and an English translation of the Copto-Arabic version of the Vita of the same St. Eustratius.

Résumé
Le troisième article de la série « Textes inédits de la tradition arabe orthodoxe » rend accessible un document négligé de la tradition chrétienne orthodoxe en arabe: le Paterikon de la laure palestinienne de Mar Chariton. Il comprend une édition et une traduction anglaise de ce texte, qui contient des informations précieuses sur sept pères ascétiques peu connus de ce célèbre monastère palestinien. Une attention particulière est accordée au saint Eustrate de Mar Chariton, qui a été commémoré par l’Église orthodoxe le 17 octobre. L’appendice comprend une édition et une traduction anglaise de la version copto-arabe de la Vie du même Saint-Eustrate.
The purpose of the present article—the third instalment in the “Unpublished Texts from the Arab Orthodox Tradition” series—is to make accessible a neglected document from the Orthodox Christian tradition in Arabic: the Paterikon of the Palestinian “Old Lavra” (παλαιὰ λαύρα / al-sīq al-ʿatīq) of Mar Chariton (ca. 8 km south-south-east of Bethlehem, ca. 2.5 km northeast of the Palestinian village of Tuqūʿ/Tekoa; see Hirschfeld 2000; Pringle 1993-2009: II 221-224). This Paterikon—a brief account of the lives, sayings, and miracles of select monks of Mar Chariton, embedded in a much more extensive compilation of stories from John Moschus’ Spiritual Meadow, Anastasius of Sinai’s Narrationes, and the Apophthegmata Patrum—is preserved in Sinai ar. 563 (copied in 1257), fols. 22r-31v.

The Paterikon of Mar Chariton (PMC) contains the following seven items:

1. **Andrew of Mar Chariton** (said to be of ifranjī, i.e. Frankish, origin) – otherwise unknown [fols. 22r-v];
2. **Constantine of Mar Chariton** (said to be of rūmī, i.e. Byzantine, origin) – otherwise unknown [fols. 22v-23r];
3. **Cyriacus of Mar Chariton** (a native of Corinth) – this is Cyriacus the Anchorite (Κυριακὸς ὁ Ἀναχωρητής, d. ca. 557), a well-known saint, whose memory the Orthodox Church keeps on 29 September [fols. 23v-24v];
4. **Eustratius of Mar Chariton** (a native of Sicily) – discussed below [fols. 24v-28r];
5. **Cosmas of Mar Chariton** (a Syriac-speaking monk from a village near Aleppo) – otherwise unknown [fols. 28r-29v];
6. **Gabriel the Hermit** (Ghabrīl / Ghabriyīl al-ḥabīs) – otherwise unknown [fols. 29v-30v];
7. **Gabriel of Mar Chariton** (a native of al-Balqāʾ in Transjordan) – also otherwise unknown [fols. 30v-31v].

I shall now present and discuss each of these seven items in order.

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2 For the first and second instalments of the series, see Treiger 2014 (review: Panchenko 2014) and Treiger 2016. Section 4 of the present article will offer corrections to Treiger 2016.
1. Andrew of Mar Chariton

The first section reports a miracle performed by an otherwise unknown monk of Frankish (*ifranjī*) origin, Abba Andrew (Andhrāyā) of Mar Chariton. Abba Andrew accompanied an (unnamed) young monk to the Dead Sea in order to assist him in bringing wood for the construction work that the latter intended to carry out in his cell. This took place in August, and both monks were suffering from extreme heat, which the young monk was no longer able to tolerate. Abba Andrew’s prayer miraculously brought down rain; yet there was no sign of rain anywhere else in the vicinity.

We have no indication as to when Abba Andrew lived. While the Byzantine period appears, on balance, somewhat more likely, there is nothing improbable about this event having taken place after the Muslim conquest. “Frankish” (*ifranjī*) monks may have been present at the Lavra of Mar Chariton both before and after the conquest, and, in fact, we will soon encounter one of the monastery’s most celebrated monks, Eustratius (ninth century, discussed in Section 4 below), who was a native of Sicily.

2. Constantine of Mar Chariton

There follow two stories about Abba Constantine (Qustantīn) of Mar Chariton, an otherwise unknown saintly monk of “Byzantine” (*rūmī*) origin. In the first story, his (unnamed) disciple discovered that one Saturday night, Abba Constantine was miraculously transported to the Holy Anastasis (*al-qiyāma al-muqaddasa*, i.e., the Church of the Holy Sepulchre) in Jerusalem—presumably to attend a vigil there—and was then transported back to his cell.

The second story describes a rain miracle. At a time of a severe drought, while he was already on his death bed, Abba Constantine was able to bring down rain through his intense prayer that lasted from Saturday night to Sunday evening.

There is no indication of when Abba Constantine lived. The Byzantine and the early Muslim periods seem equally plausible.

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3 On the terms *ifranj* and *ifranjī*, see Feodorov 2012; Feodorov 2013; Feodorov 2016.
3. Cyriacus of Mar Chariton

The section on Cyriacus of Mar Chariton (=St. Cyriacus the Anchorite, d. ca. 557) is, essentially, an abridgment of certain episodes (§§8-10, 15-16, and 21) of Cyril of Scythopolis’ *Vita* of this saint (*CPG* 7538; *BHG* 463; edition: Schwartz 1939: 222-235).

A hitherto unpublished Arabic translation of Cyril of Scythopolis’ *Vita Cyriaci* is preserved in the Antiochian Menologion for September in Sinai ar. 395 (copied in 1328-9 AD), fols. 125r-134v (under 29 September). As shown by Gérard Garitte (Garitte 1971; cf. Pataridze 2013: 54), this Arabic translation served as an intermediary for the Georgian version, extant in a Georgian manuscript dated to 1034-1042 AD (London, BL Add. 11281). Consequently, the Arabic translation must have been produced *before* this date, in the early eleventh century at the latest, but probably quite a bit earlier (in the ninth or tenth century).

We now need to ask whether the abridgment preserved in PMC derives directly from the Greek original of Cyril of Scythopolis’ *Vita Cyriaci* or from its Arabic translation. The latter possibility seems more likely, since the abridgment in PMC displays certain *verbal correspondences* with the Arabic translation. Here is a brief comparison that will show this to be the case (cf. Greek text: Schwartz 1939: 227, line 6-228, line 8; this is the entertaining episode in which, following Cyriacus’ prayer, God makes bitter squill sweet).

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4 On the Antiochian Menologion (*Kitāb al-Dūlāb*), see Treiger 2017.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complete Version (Arabic Menologion, Sinai ar. 395)</th>
<th>Abridged version (PMC, Sinai ar. 563, edited below)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>فيعدّ مام الأربع سنين سمع رجل من كبار أهل تقوع في عيد الغرعة، الذين كانوا يزرون في البترية يخبر الباراً بأبا قرباقوس، وأن الرجل أخذ دابة معه فاوسقيها بالبركة، وعده به إلى به إلى دفعه. فكان الشبلاء يكلمونه، فأخذ الشبلاء من البصل العنصلي. وكن له من بصل العنصلي، وساقه وأدرك فالفت. وعده بذلك الشبلاء بابن نظير للسيدة المسية، والله يشيا، هل يبدي الشبلاء نفسه. ولم يضر ذلك شيا. ولا يتراع forn cha f française du pop la résidence et le but de ces populations. En outre, le respect de la diversité culturelle est une priorité pour le gouvernement.</td>
<td>(23ب) فيعدّ مام الأربع سنين سمع رجل من كبار أهل تقوع في عيد الغرعة، الذين كانوا يزرون في البترية يخبر الباراً بأبا قرباقوس. وأن الرجل أخذ دابة معه فاوسقيها بالبركة، وعده به إلى به إلى دفعه. فكان الشبلاء يكلمونه، فأخذ الشبلاء من البصل العنصلي. وكن له من بصل العنصلي، وساقه وأدرك فالفت. وعده بذلك الشبلاء بابن نظير للسيدة المسية، والله يشيا، هل يبدي الشبلاء نفسه. ولم يضر ذلك شيا. ولا يتراع.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is true that some of these correspondences could have arisen even in two completely independent Arabic re-workings of the same Greek text; others, however, particularly the occurrence of certain roots in both Arabic versions (e.g., √w-s-q for “load”) and a number of virtually identical sequences (e.g., daфа’ahu ilayhi/ilayhimā wa-nsarafa, fa-kānā; fa-lammā farigha l-khubz; and faziʿa an yadhūqahu) strongly point to the abridged version’s dependence on the complete one. The abridged version thus seems to be a rather free re-telling of the corresponding sections of the Arabic translation of Cyril of Scythopolis’ *Vita Cyriaci*.

4. Eustratius of Mar Chariton

The section on Eustratius of Mar Chariton is by far the longest in PMC. It may be subdivided into seventeen episodes (a)-(q) each of which is represented by a separate paragraph in the edition and translation below.

(a) Eustratius’ life prior to becoming a monk (we learn that he was born in Sicily and was then appointed by the Byzantine emperor as his chief general);

(b) Eustratius miraculously finds a loaf of bread in the desert;

(c) Eustratius’ stay at Sinai and miraculous revelation of the relics of Sts. John Climacus and Anastastius of Sinai;

(d) Eustratius saves fellow-travellers from a fierce lion;

(e) Eustratius heals a deaf boy;

(f) Eustratius arrives at Mar Chariton and engages in extreme fasting as a self-imposed “death sentence,” and nearly dies as a result;

(g) Eustratius engages in extreme fasting during the Fast of the Apostles;⁵

(h) Eustratius does not heal the priest Abba Jonah, but instead testifies that the latter has received spiritual purification prior to his death;

(i) Eustratius predicts an Egyptian fellow monk’s conversion to Islam (the conversion, about which, unfortunately, hardly any details are given, is said to have taken place during this monk’s trip to Egypt);⁶

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⁵ The Fast of the Apostles runs from the second Monday after Pentecost to the Feast of the Apostles on 29 June. Depending on the date of Easter in a given year, it could last (on the Julian calendar) from eight to forty-two days.

⁶ This episode is significant for the study of Christian-Muslim relations.
(j) Eustratius is able to discern whether or not the Holy Spirit descends upon clergy in the altar (presumably, during the Divine Liturgy);

(k) Eustratius exposes and rebukes a fellow monk who secretly bought and cooked meat;

(l) Eustratius is able to discern that a fellow monk has fallen into sin;

(m) Eustratius predicts that a fellow monk (Abba Job), who was asked to become bishop of Aleppo, will be rejected and will come back to the monastery;

(n) Eustratius is able to miraculously open the gates of a monastery in the desert;

(o) Eustratius “reads” a fellow monk’s (Abba Stephen’s) thoughts and predicts that he will become patriarch of Antioch, albeit for a short time; this prophecy was fulfilled thirty-five years later;\(^7\)

(p) Eustratius “reads” a fellow monk’s (Abba Abramius’) thoughts and predicts that he will learn Syriac and become the abbot of Mar Chariton; this prophecy was fulfilled after Eustratius’ death;\(^8\)

(q) Eustratius knew in advance the time of his own death.

It is significant that three of these episodes—(l), (m), and (n)—are derived from the text I edited and translated in the second instalment of the “Unpublished Texts from the Arab Orthodox Tradition” series: “The Miracles of St. Eustratius” (Treiger 2016). Specifically, these three episodes correspond to Miracles Nos. 1, 4, and 6, respectively. In comparison to “The Miracles of St. Eustratius,” the version in PMC is, however, considerably abridged. Here is a comparison of Miracle No. 4 and the corresponding Episode (m).

\(^7\) We know nothing of a patriarch Stephen of Antioch in the ninth century.

\(^8\) It is significant that this episode regards knowledge of *Syriac* as a prerequisite for abbacy.
There was at the Lavra another monk from Homs, whose name was Abba Job. At that time, bishops came from Patriarch Job of Antioch to find someone who could be fit to become bishop of Aleppo. They sought a certain man called Abba Symeon from Damascus, but he hid himself from them. As they could not find the man they sought, they approached this monk from Homs and asked him to go with them. He came to Abba Eustratius to seek his council, rejoicing at the news. This was the end of the day. When he told the saint about this, the saint said: “Come back to me tomorrow, and I will pray to Christ to direct you to the gate of the good.” The monk departed from his presence. At dawn, those people [i.e., the bishops] came and took the man with them, and he never came back to the saint, as the saint had bidden him to do.” When it was morning, the saint inquired about that monk and was told that he had left with the bishops. The elder then said: “Verily I say to you, he will have a wretched return and will be overcome with great sorrow. He knew what I was going to say to him; this is why he never came back to me.” When [Abba Job] came to Antioch, Patriarch Job did not accept him and sent him back. He came back weeping and overcome with sorrow. He then cast himself at the saint’s feet, crying and beseeching him, saying: “O saint of God, have mercy on me and forgive me my sin.” The elder said to him: “If you had come back to me, you would not have had to grieve, but now rejoice, for you will obtain this and will become a bishop soon.” Indeed, when Patriarch Job rejected Abba Job from Homs, he appointed a bishop over Aleppo whose name was Abba Nicetas. He remained [bishop] for two years and then died. Patriarch Job also died, and Abba Job from Homs was chosen and ordained to be bishop of Aleppo, as the saint had predicted.
In my 2016 edition of the “Miracles of St. Eustratius” I also identified—unfortunately, in overly confident terms—the protagonist of that text as Eustratius of Mar Saba, a disciple of the famous St. Stephen of Mar Saba; I also argued that the Lavra (ṣīq) mentioned in the “Miracles of St. Eustratius” must be the Great Lavra of Mar Saba (Treiger 2016: 8-9). In light of the new evidence now discovered in PMC, it has, however, become clear that the Lavra mentioned in the “Miracles of St. Eustratius” is the Old Lavra of Mar Chariton (not the Great Lavra of Mar Saba) and that, consequently, the Eustratius mentioned in both the “Miracles of St. Eustratius” and PMC should be re-designated as Eustratius of Mar Chariton (not Eustratius of Mar Saba).

Moreover, it turns out that Melkite Arabic Synaxaria mention an Eustratius of Mar Chariton commemorated on the anniversary of his death, said to be 17 October (Sauget 1969: 122, 179, and 307; Bīṭār 1995: 113, with reference to Sinai ar. 418, fol. 31r, which says only, in the section on 17 October: ﻓِي ﻷـِـه إِــسـِـتـِـرـِّـاتـِـوــيـَـس ـِـيـَـخـِـارـِـيـَـتن; “and on this [day is commemorated] the repose of St. Eustratius who laboured in the Lavra of Chariton”). This is certainly the same Eustratius of Mar Chariton. We are thus lucky to have discovered two fairly detailed documents about this virtually forgotten saint: the “Miracles” text, edited and translated in my 2016 instalment (with the caveat that the protagonist should now be re-designated as Eustratius of Mar Chariton), and the relevant section of PMC, edited and translated below.

When did this Eustratius of Mar Chariton live? Here I believe the conclusion of my previous study still stands. His approximate years of life would be ca. 770-ca. 850 (give or take ca. 10 years). This is because, as we

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10 It is perhaps still possible to “salvage” the identification of this Eustratius of Mar Chariton with the Eustratius, disciple of St. Stephen of Mar Saba. PMC (Section 4, Episode (b), fols. 24v-25r) mentions that Eustratius of Mar Chariton initially became a monk in “one of the cenobitic monasteries” (baʿd al-kanūbiyyāt). The name of the monastery is unspecified, but this could be Mar Saba, which was a cenobitic monastery par excellence. PMC then informs us that Eustratius of Mar Chariton spent twelve years in the desert, then travelled to Sinai, then returned to Jerusalem, and only then joined the Lavra of Mar Chariton, where he stayed for the remainder of his life. It is perhaps not very likely, but still conceivable that while in Jerusalem (prior to his departure to Mar Chariton) he was made basilicarius of the Holy Sepulchre, as we learn (from the Life of St. Stephen of Mar Saba) about the Eustratius who was St. Stephen’s disciple. In other words, the texts about the two Eustratii (of Mar Chariton and of Mar Saba) can perhaps be harmonized. Ultimately, however, we will probably never know whether the two are one and the same person, and it is safer not to assume their identity without further evidence.
learn from the “Miracles of St. Eustratius,” he was already a recognized saintly elder at around the time of the Patriarch Job of Antioch’s death (ca. 839 AD; on this date, see Todt & Vest 2015: I 336). As indicated above, he died on 17 October, though we are uncertain about the exact year.

It should be noted that in addition to the Melkite Arabic text presented here, there exists also a Copto-Arabic\(^\text{11}\) adaptation of the life of St. Eustratius. It differs in some significant details from the Melkite life (for instance, it presents St. Eustratius, whom it calls “Abba Stratius,” as a monk at Sinai, without ever mentioning the Lavra of Mar Chariton). This Copto-Arabic adaptation is reproduced and translated in the Appendix below.

5. Cosmas of Mar Chariton

The next section of PMC discusses another wonderworking monk, Abba Cosmas, a Syriac-speaking monk from an unspecified village near Aleppo.

This section has three episodes. The first episode relates how Abba Cosmas helped a visitor to the Lavra, a man from Rabba in Transjordan, who was in financial trouble, to escape with his two poor sisters to safety in Ascalan. The second episode relates how his disciple, Abba Theodore (a native of Baalbek) discovered that Abba Cosmas and another monk, whose name was Abba Gabriel the Hermit (on him, see also Section 6 below), were miraculously transported to Rome where they spent three days praying at the tomb of the Apostles Peter and Paul. The third episode is a rain miracle, very similar to Abba Constantine’s (Section 2 above).

Abba Cosmas must have lived ca. 800, because, as we shall learn in the next section, Abba Gabriel the Hermit, Abba Cosmas’ companion on the miraculous trip to Rome, was martyred in or shortly after 809 AD.

6. Gabriel the Hermit

The sixth section is devoted to the aforementioned Abba Gabriel the Hermit. The first episode introduces his disciple Abba John\(^\text{12}\) who, “was so advanced in abstinence that he would not excrete from below; [r]ather, at the end [of his meal], he would take in a cup of liquid and then vomit it from

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\(^{11}\) By “Copto-Arabic” I mean simply that it was written in Arabic by a Coptic Christian. I do not suggest that the text was, at any stage, redacted in Coptic.

\(^{12}\) This is St. John of the Ancient Caves in Palestine, commemorated by the Orthodox Church on 19 April.
above.” The second episode relates another miracle of teleportation: Abba John discovers how Abba Gabriel the Hermit was miraculously transported to Bethlehem and then back to his cell. The third episode relates how Abba Gabriel the Hermit recovered from his seemingly terminal illness in virtue of “hidden sustenance” provided by Christ.

Finally, the fourth episode relates the story of Abba Gabriel the Hermit’s martyrdom in a Bedouin attack on Mar Chariton in the wake of caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd’s death in 809. This correlates well with historical record. In the words of Moshe Gil:

[The Byzantine historian] Theophanes tells us of the events of 809—and as he was a contemporary, his evidence with regard to these years is both interesting and quite credible—when Hārūn al-Rashīd died and a fratricidal war broke out between the brothers al-Amīn and al-Māmūn. According to him these events caused the Christians an enormous amount of suffering. Many churches and monasteries in Jerusalem and its environs were abandoned, such as those of Sts Cyriac, Theodosius, Chariton, Euthymius, and Mar Saba. Four years later, in 813, the disturbances broke out anew and many Christians, both monks and laity, fled from Palestine to Cyprus and Constantinople, where they found a refuge from the Arabs’ terrible persecution in those days of anarchy and civil war. Palestine was the scene of violence, rape and murder (Gil 1992: 474-475; cf. translation of the relevant passages from Theophanes in Mango & Scott 1997: 665 and 683).13

The circumstances of Gabriel the Hermit’s martyrdom resemble those of the Twenty Martyrs of Mar Saba (martyred in March 797; Blake 1950; new edition and translation: Shoemaker 2016: 68-147): in both cases, Bedouin marauders attacked the monastery in search of treasures and, having found none, executed defenseless monks. Gabriel the Hermit’s arteries were slit, and he was bound with a rope and suspended above the valley. When the rope broke, he fell to his death. The other monks discovered his body, which—according to the report—exuded “a pleasant smell superior to any perfume.”

13 Griffith 1986: 118 considers Theophanes account to be exaggerated: “Theophanes’ remarks give one the impression that there was no one left in the monasteries of Palestine much after the first decade of the ninth century. And there is no other Greek source available which one might consult to correct this mistake scenario.” Griffith is, of course, correct in pointing out that the great monasteries of Palestine continued to exist and even flourish after the events of 809-813. Nonetheless, our text confirms that the horrific acts of marauding and violence directed at the Palestinian monastic communities were real.
7. Gabriel of Mar Chariton

Gabriel the Hermit’s namesake, Gabriel of Mar Chariton was a native of al-Balqā’ in Transjordan. Before he was tonsured a monk, he had been a secretary (kātib) to the “governor of the land” (wālī al-balad). Though this is not made explicit, we can assume that the governor was a Muslim. In his capacity as the governor’s secretary, Gabriel had to face a temptation with the governor’s beautiful wife, who tried to seduce him. At this point, the text draws a comparison with the story of Joseph and Potiphar’s wife in Genesis 39; like Joseph, Gabriel, of course, resisted the temptation. Upon becoming a monk, Gabriel distributed all his possessions to the other monks and to the poor and lived in extreme poverty. He practiced extreme fasting, similarly to Eustratius of Mar Chariton (Section 4, Episodes (f) and (g) above).

Edition and Translation

The edition below faithfully reproduces the text as it appears in Sinai ar. 563, without attempting to “correct” numerous deviations—whether morphological or syntactical—from Classical Arabic usage (occasionally, to facilitate reading, the corresponding Classical Arabic form is indicated in the apparatus). The hamzas are absent, as they are in the manuscript; however, I took the liberty to indicate the hamza in the word ماء, “water,” which, without the hamza, could be too easily confused with the particle ما. Asterisks indicate emendations to the text. Question marks indicate that the reading and/or the translation of a word or passage are uncertain, while three hyphens (---) indicate that a word or a part thereof is illegible in the digital copy of the manuscript at my disposal. The punctuation, occasional vocalization, and division into paragraphs are my own.

While for the most part Sinai ar. 563 is a unicum, the beginning of Section 4 (on Eustratius of Mar Chariton) is preserved in two other thirteenth-century manuscripts: Sinai ar. 438 and Sinai ar. 559. I have therefore used the following Sigla:

A = Sinai ar. 563, fols. 22r-31v
B = Sinai ar. 438, fols. 182v-184r
C = Sinai ar. 559, fols. 64v-67r
The readings of A are given in the main text, while those of B and C are provided in the apparatus.

...
في السياق المتبع عن راهم يقال له كریاقوس من اهل قورنثيا: أنّه كان
كثير الحب والامتناع والطاعة والب świadة وكان قد أخذ من الله موهبة علم الغاب، وكان
يحسن الصبر ويعززه عده ويشاوره ويشكو إليه قلائتمهم، ففسأ خبره في بلاد فلسطين وكانوا
اهل البيت المتقدس وكلما صبر على السباق من كافة البلدان يانونه فمبتغوا منه ويعززهم بكلامه الروحي.
فلما كثر عليه سجس الناس هرب إلى البرة ومعه تلميذهسه مبارك، وكان له من عمره ذلك الوقت سبعة
وسبعون سنة، ولم يكن في تلك البرة شيء يبعدوه به سوا بصل الفار، فطلب من الله فحصاً لنفسه، فكانوا إذا
اظفته: حاجة الحسد امر تلميذه يسلق منه وياكله، فاقاما على ذلك أربعة سنين.
فبعد ذلك سمع بهما رجل من كبار أهل تلوق فصار إليه بوسح من الخبر: فتبثóż الفشيخ ودفعه
البيها وانصرف، فكانا يأكلان منه من عشية إلى عشية. وفيما كان القديس يدور في البرة الداخلية | ١٤٢|
وقد خلف تلميذه في مغارة، اخذ كالعادة من بصل العنتل فسلقه، ونبذ دقيق مرارته ووقع كالمي لا يتزك
ولا يتكلم، فعلم القديس خبر القديس عليه، وحمله، وقامت، فجاء له جسد السيد المسيح وعانبه
وقال له: يا بني آن السيد المسيح كان يحيي لنا البال اذ لم يكن لنا شبهه.
فلم يفرغ الخبر ووجاء بارك القديس على تلميذهه وامره ان يسلق من ذلك البصل ويقدله فيه وفرع ان
يضمه قلبه عليه القديس وأكل بصلاة معلمة ومم. ١٧
فسمع بخير القديس رجل من اهل تلوق فصار إليه بابن له مجنون وسأله ان يسلق من ذلك البصل ويقدله فيه وفرع ان
يضمه قلبه عليه القديس وأكل بصلاة معلمة ومم. ١٧

فأدركوا الناس المляр الیه بالمجانين وغيرهم، فكان يصلع عليهم فيشجو، فلم كثر عليه الناس هرب إلى البرية
الداخلة التي لم يصبر إليها أحد من المتوحدين فاقام فيها زمان طويل، فكثر الملوث في الناس ووقع في السباق،
ومضى إليه بعض الرهبان فاعلموه بذلك فطلبوا إليه المسر | ١٤٣| ومعهم القديس فنادوا بهم، وسكو غارة
مذر خارطین القديس، فتسجس أيضاً ورجع إليه وضعفهم واتخذ معه في ذلك البال وكان يпотреб به في
الأوقات، وكانت الوحش ترعاه، فشكت إليه التلميذ ذلك، فلم يندور في البرية لقيه سبع هايل فامره ان
يبتهع إلى موضع البال ويمنع الوحش من فساده، فامتثل السبع امره.
فلما كبر القديس وضعف لأنه جاز الماية سنة علم بان خروجه من الدنيا قريب رفع إليه السباق فثبته وقد
ارضى الله بحسن إعماله.

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٢٢ Classical Arabic: الدین.
٢٣ Classical Arabic: بیت.
٢٤ Classical Arabic: اضطررتهم.
٢٥ My emendation. MS: الخیر.
٢٦ My emendation. MS: فاقاً.
٢٧ Illegible word.
فَزَهَدْهُ هذا الفاضل في ذلك وربه الراهبانية فتراهب في بعض | (35) الكنيويات | وتعليم سن الرهبانية وخرج إلى البرية فاقام بها اثني عشر سنة يتغذى بالعشب. فاحب البصر الالبرة، فصار إلى موضع يابس

استطردت عن قديس آخر كان في ديرهم | عن قديس كان في ديرهم راهب قديس | عن قديس كان في ديرهم | عن قديس كان في ديرهم B.

مِنَ عظُمَة اهل سقليّة، وكان منذ صباه عاقل، حسن التدبير، فاتصل ملك الروم خره و وجه طهيره فصار إليه فاستنطرقه، فوجده على أفضل: مما بلغه فصيرة ريس، قواده وولده تدير، الحروب وكان الله يعينه ويظفه باعدها الملك، فذكر عنده وعند عظايته ووقروه وجعلوه لرجليته وصلاحه واحبوه جدًا.

While the spelling is more common, سقليّة، with a sin, is also attested in medieval sources.

28 AC | الخبرون B.
29 A | على C | om. B.
30 اين كان في ديرهم راهب قديس | عن C | om. B.
31 اين كان B.
32 om. B.
33 While the spelling is more common, سقليّة، with a sin, is also attested in medieval sources.
34 صباه AB | صباه C.
35 om. BC.
36 A | فاضل add. C.
37 و A | ف BC.
38 في add. B.
39 AC | فاستنطره B.
40 A | محسن أكثر C | افضل B.
41 عنه abc.
42 abc | على جميع add. C.
43 ABC | المعادر B.
44 A | لبزيل عنه الههم الخطات (? | add. B.
45 AC B.
46 AC | ويظفه B.
47 AC | ببعده واعدا B.
48 عند الملك | تراه B.
49 فيجلوه ووقروه وبجلوه | ووقروه وهاهبوه جدا جدا | A | وبجلوه ووقروه C.
50 وحسن فروسيته B.
51 AC | فاحبوه B.
52 AC | قعد ذلك زهد B.
53 هذا om. C.
54 جميع add. BC.
55 AC B.
56 AC | البرية B.
57 AC | فزهده | BC.
58 AC | الكنيويات (أ) C | diwān B.
59 AC | الرهبانة B.
60 AC | واستهلت الشوق | وخرج B.

فُقَامَ بها اثني عشر سنة يتغذى من العشب واحب المصير | فاقام بها اثني عشر سنة يتغذى بالعشب فاحب أخر إلى داخل البرية | C | الداخلة | B.
لا عشب فيه ولا شيء تطابقه. فاضطرراف حاجة الجوع ان يطلب من الله المعونة، وفيما هو يدور البرية في وقت جوعه، يوجد كنيسة كبيرة فيها، منبجع حين وعلى خربة كبيرة طينية، فتعجب من ذلك جداً، وخشي ان يكون خدعة من الشيطان. فطلب طالبًا من الله ان يعره السبب في ذلك، تقدم الى المذبح فصل وسلب على الخبزة. ثم مذ يده واخذها وتعجب بها زمان طويل وشكر الله.

وبعد ذلك صار الى البيت المقدس فدار بريتها وصار الى طور سينا المقدس ودار بريته وسكنها، فكان الله ينتظره ويحرسه بالطعام. في وقت الحاجة، فبعد زمان رجع الى الدير المقدس وحبس.

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61 في AC | شيا B.
62 A | فاضطررف BC.
63 A | حاجه BC.
64الشديد والعطش الذي ما عنه مزيد add. B.
65 AB | ان يطلب C.
66 على ذلك add. B.
67 في تلك add. BC.
68 وقد جاع جداً A | وقد جاع B | وقد جاع C.
69 A | فأداه هو بكنيسة B | فأداها هو بكنيسة C.
70 AC | فيها B.
71 A | واحدة add. B.
72 A | فتم تلتح B.
73 فتم تلتح BC.
74 A | وفرع ان B | وفرع ان C.
75 ذلك add. BC.
76亿万 | بالشيطان B.
77 A | فصلى متضرعًا إلى B | فأتاسي مصليًا متضرعًا إلى C.
78 A | متوضئ B.
79 A | الحبز C.
80 AC | ثم مد يده B.
81 AC | طويل ب. C.
82 AC | وهو يهج سعدي شاكي B.
83 على ذلك add. B.
84 AC | هذا B.
85 A | البيت C. Cf. note 23 above.
86 في add. A.
87 ومغض B.
88 البيت المقدس فدار بريتها وصار الى C. Cf. note 23 above.
89 om. B.
90 A | بريتها المقدس B | بريتها المقدس C.
91 A | فكان B.
92 A | البيت المقدس BC.
93 ويعبده بشيء B | ويرسل له طعامه C.
94 A | الطهارة B | اللاء C.
95 A | زمان B.
96 طور سينا B.
فلما وصلوا المنزل كان معهم غلام آخر فأطلبوا إليه يرحمه فصلى عليه وصبر متكلمين فسبحوا الله جميع الحاضرين.

وما بلغ بيت المقدس اتصل به أن في السياق العتيق رهبان قديسين يعملون عجائب وينبون. وقيل: "لم إلى تلميذه اتّبعته ومعه جماعة من الرهبان فقروا الباب فلم يجيبهم أحد فظنوا أن قد مات فقلعوا الباب ودخلوا فوجدوه ملقا كالميت، وعملوا له حسوا وفتحوا فمه بعود وسقوه منه شيا وفعلوا ذلك وصبر على نفسه الموت بدلا منه.

وقد كنت أعطت عليها الموت"، فسالوه عن سبب ذلك فقالوا: "قد حسبنا نصيحة وقبلوه بفرح وسكن قلوبهم في الدار، وتمكنون من الرهبان الباب لكي يدخلوا فوجدوه ملقا كالميت، وعملوا له حسوا وفتحوا فمه بعود وسقوه منه شيا وفعلوا ذلك.

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لا يلق عليه باب القلابة ولا يقربه إلى انفظا الصوم، ولم يأخذ معه شيا يتناوله، ومع مام الصوم فتح التلميذ عليه فوجد له يابس كالعود واكتوريته مبخرة وقدنله يسرج فلم يرالوا يداوه حتى فاق

وكان في السِيْق ـ ٩٠ـ هذا القدّيس قسيس طب فعال ووقع في الرّّحسـ٦٠ـ وكان يعد لسانه ويدمه، وكانوا الرهبان يكون ـ ١٠٠ـ بحضرة القدّيس فمضى إلى القدّاس وخُلّفه على حالته وفِما هو واقف في القدّاس التفت إلي الذي كان واقف إلى جانبه فقال لهم: "أن ابا يونان قد تنبّ ونعبًا فارق الدنيا. كان له وسخ قليل ونقاء الله." 

فبعد ذلك حضر عيد تقدّيس ـ ١٣٣ـ امام ـ ٣٦ـ وتهّو رهبان للبوس الازكيم ـ ١٣٥ـ الكبير وكان فيه رجل مصري يقال له ابا غريرب يحسن حاجته فالبسوة الاسبك مع أصحابه وخرجوا يعطوا الإبلات ايريني، ـ ١٠٠٠ـ فانكر ابا استراتيوس على ابا غريرب لباس الاسبك وقال لهم: "ث٦٠٠ـ البستموه وليس هو نصري"، فحزنوا الراهب لأنهم كانوا يمرون المصري حريص لازم الكنيسة حسن التدبير من قدما السيق، فبعد مدة يسيرة خرج إلى مصر واسلم بها، فعلموا الراهب ان الله اكشفي القدّيس استراتيوس امره.

ومن بعد ذلك يأتي القدّيس قاني في القدّاس على باب الدياقونيقن بدأ يكي بيكي كا حار فساله قسيس يقال له ابا لاوتيوس عن السبب، فقال له: "انا حزين منجلكم ـ ١٧٠ـ لا تأتي الراهب الزهر في كل قدّاس وم اراه اليوم نزل عليكم وقد ارتفع عنكم"، فقالوا له: "يا ابونا، بيننا كلام كثير وسجس فاطلب من الله ان يرفعه عنكم".

قاتل العدو ما رдра وبحث رهبانا بالسِيْق العتيق يأكل اللحم فاحتال واشتراه وطبخه، فعرف القدّيس ذلك بالروح الساكن فيه ـ ١٧٧ـ فقام ـ ١٧٧ـ هم الراهب يأكل ويعمل استراتيوس باب قلاته ففتح وخرج له ساجدًا، فلما عملوا صلاة قال له الراهب: "إِي٦٠٠٠ـا الاب القدّيس، ايش هناك اليوم إلى مسكتني"؟، تجبهه: "أشبِهت اليوم اعمل معك محبة"، ـ ١٧٩٠ـ ففرح به جدًا وقدم له مما رزق الله من طعام الرهبان، فقال له القدّيس: "اطعمني

118 Possibly, Gr. οἰκητήριον (dwelling-place, habitation), though the Arabic transliteration is unusual.
119 One wonders if perhaps this word is related to the Syriac مِيَلاَمْثَةٌ or مِيَلاَمْثَةٌ, "incense burner" (especially as the parallel place in the Copto-Arabic version, edited in the Appendix below, reads شوري "censer").
120 My emendation. MS: يداوه.
121 Illegible word.
122 Illegible word.
123 My emendation. MS: قدّيس.
124 The spelling اسكم (used below) is more common.
125 Gr. εἰρήνη.
126 Classical Arabic: من أجلكم.
127 The Arabic مَحَابَّةٌ is evidently used as a calque of the Greek ἀγάπη, “love,” used in the sense of a joint “agape meal.”
كان هذا القديس يسح بترية القلمون وفشيّد على الحرّ فسار إلى باب الدير وضرب عليه فلم يكمله أحد، فصلّب على الباب وافتح له، وكان معه راهب من السقيّ فاخر بذلك.

وكان لهذا القديس لمبذلين يأخذهما معه إلى البرنيّة ويدور بهما في الليل ناحية الاردن، ففيما هو على تلك الحال وقف القديس مقابل الشرق ولسان طويلاً وذبح إلى احتضانه فقال له: "استانا، تريد تكون بتوفير، ستصر، وأماك قليلة وليس تفرح". وبعد ذلك بخمسة وثلاثين سنة أخذ اباستفانوس كميرك على انطاكية، واعتزل في الطريق، فلم يصل في ثمان يوم.

كان في السقيّ إخ طبّ بدعا إبراهيم يخدم استراطيوس. تبوس ويعتيد في البرنيّة وهو في مغارة فجاه يوم من ذلك بجرية ماء. فنظر إليه ويبسم وقال له: "ماذا تفكرت الليلة؟" فقال: "افكاري كثيرة ولا أعلم عن أيهما تظنّي". فقال له القديس: "افكرت أن تتّمع بالسريانية! أم تتّمع. ومّا أن تكون قسم؟ انت تكون راسا دير". وبعدها تلّمّا بالسريانية ومن بعد نياه القديس استراطيوس صوّره رسم على السقيّ، ولم يزل استراثيوس يظهر العجب وينبي بالغاب، وعرف وقت وفاته وخرّ بذلك، وتتّتح وارضا الله باعيا له الحسنة، والرب يرحمنا بصلواته، آمين.

ولكن أيضاً في هذا السقيّ البهاء راهب سرياني فاضل من بعض قرى حلب يظهر العجب، وينبي بالغاب، فقال له أبا قزما. فأخبرنّا انسان من اهل البرنيّة بأنه كان عليه دينّ فهو إلى عسقلان، وخلّف اختين ضعيفتين، ففيما هو به عسقلان ذكر ضعفهم وسار الي بيت المقدس وطلب من الله أن يسبّبه له امر يتفرّج به، فقال: "أنني سمعت بيت المقدس عن قدّيس بالسقيّ العتيق. يقول له أبا قزما يصفي العجب، فقصده:

128 Classical Arabic: يا أخي.
129 The λογισμοί, in the Evagrian sense.
130 Classical Arabic: يجيء بـ.
131 Classical Arabic: ويساء له.
132 Classical Arabic: بالغاب.
133 My emendation. MS: بالعجايب.
وقرعت باب قلاليته فشرح اليّ تلقيته وبيده عصا، فقال لي: قد عرف المعلم | (٢٦٨)| سبب الملك

الصواب، وانظر لحفرة مباحة تبقي فلن نفقشك الله في ولا تملك مكروه. وصرت إلى بلد واحمل اختي إلى عسقلان، وكاد الطريق رعى، ذلك البلد كان مفتوناً والطريق فزع، فافتشت العصاً بمانة فانصرت وقالت في الوقت النافع: "واختتاني احدٌ ولي عيني قلاليته قلاليته قلاليته قبل الراحة، قرعت بابها فلم يجيبني، ففي بعد تسع ساعات؟ فعملت فقطبهاه، ففتح لي وقال: "ليس قد أمرتك أن تجعلين اليّ تلقيته أو تلقيته؟ فعمرت إلى السع في جميع المسكونة فاجتمعوا اليه رهبان السيق يسلوا

نحو الساعة التاسعة وخمطنا وألقيننا في قلالينا وقت التسع ساعات".

وفي بعض الاوقات احتسب المطر وكان شدةً عظيمة في جميع المسكونة فاجتمعوا اليه رهبان السيق يسلو |

134 Classical Arabic: وسه.  
135 Classical Arabic: اأح.  
136 Classical Arabic: وسه.  
137 My emendation. MS:  
138 My emendation.  
139 My emendation. MS:  
140 Gr. ἐπεσκόπησαν (Trapp, Lexikon zur byzantinischen Grätziät, fasc. 6, p. 1436, with the meaning “Gebetsraum, Oratorium”). I gratefully acknowledge Fr. Sergey Kim’s generous help in deciphering this difficult word.
141 Gr. πρῶτη (ὥρα). Once again, I am deeply grateful to Fr. Sergey Kim for deciphering this challenging word.  
142 Classical Arabic: ليسألوه.
لا يمكنني قراءة النص العربي بشكل طبيعي. إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة في شيءٍ ما، فخذوا الوقت لفهم النص العربي بشكل أفضل. في حالة وجود أي ملاحظات أو مشاكل في قراءة النص العربي، فأخبروني بذلك. مبروك في مساعدةك!
The fathers of the Old Lavra informed us that there had been in their monastery a Frankish monk, distinguished in his love and humility, whose name was Andrew. He had a young neighbour, who was doing construction work in his cell. [The neighbour] was in need of wood, and so he asked [Abba Andrew] to go with him to the Dead Sea in order to assist him in carrying the wood. [Abba Andrew] agreed. They arrived at the spot, carried their load, and left. Then they were tormented by scorching heat, this having been the month of August. Abba Andrew managed to withstand the heat – by the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. As for the young man, he was suffering greatly from this and was afflicted by thirst. He cast himself down on the ground as one dead and cried for the saint’s help. [Abba Andrew] stood up on an elevated rock, praying to God with tears and imploring Him to have mercy on his [companion]. Then God shadowed them with a cloud, rain came down, and the valleys around this place were filled [with water]. They drank and took some water with them, glorifying God. When, however, they travelled past that place, they could no longer see any trace of rain.

In this Lavra, there was yet another [monk], a Byzantine man, whose name was Abba Constantine. He had been tonsured in his youth and excelled in abstinence and labour. Most of the time, he would walk in the desert naked, with only a monastic cowl over his shoulders. His body had become black from intense heat and cold. He had a disciple who took care of him. One Saturday night [the disciple] knocked on the door of his cell, but received

One wonders if this word should be emended to تعانقه.
no answer. He refused [to believe this] and scaled | (23r) the wall, but did not find [Abba Constantine] there. Confused, he went out and sat at the door. An hour later, he heard a powerful bang inside the cell and the voice of the saint praying. He knocked on the door. [The saint] came out to him and said: “When did you come here?” He told him when, then fell at his feet crying and imploring him to disclose the matter. After much crying and importuning on his part, [the saint] bade him to keep what he was going to say a secret for as long as he was alive. He then told him that on Saturday nights he enjoyed praying at the Holy Anastasis [i.e., the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem]. So he was transported there and then returned back to his cell.

There was once a shortage of rain, and a great deficiency of water for the monks. They implored [Abba Constantine] to pray to God that He would have mercy on His creation. Initially [Abba Constantine] refused, but when they importuned him, he directed them to carry him to the church. This was because he was sick and on the verge of departure from this world. He then gave instructions to gather three grains of incense from each monk. This was on Saturday night. He then asked three deacons to keep the incense going until the following day. They did as he instructed them. [Abba Constantine] himself remained in the diakonikon,149 weeping and praying to God till the morrow. Finally, on Sunday evening abundant rain came down, and the cisterns were filled. After that, [Abba Constantine] died, having [lived a life] pleasing to God, and obtained an everlasting rest.

<3> (23v) The fathers of the Old Lavra told us about a monk from the people of Corinth whose name was Cyriacus. He excelled in love, humility, obedience, and abstinence. He also obtained from God the gift of clairvoyance. Our monks would flock to him, seek his consolation and council, and complain to him about their struggles. His fame spread throughout the land of Palestine. People of Jerusalem and all others who visited the Lavra, from all the countries, would come to him in order to take his blessing, and he would console them with his spiritual teachings.

When he could no longer bear being disturbed by so many people, he fled to the desert, accompanied by one blessed disciple. He was seventy-seven years old at the time. In this desert there was nothing to feed on except sea squill. He prayed to God, and God made it sweet for them. Whenever their bodily

149 A chamber to the south from the altar where vestments and books are kept.
need overcame them, he would instruct his disciple to boil it, and the two of them would eat it. They lived in this way four years.

After that, a noble man from the people of Tekoa heard about them and brought them a load of bread. He took a blessing from the elder, gave them the [bread], and left. They would then eat this [bread] every evening. One day, when the saint was walking in the inner desert, | (24r) having left the disciple behind in his cave, the disciple, as usual, took some of the sea squill and boiled it. As soon as he tasted its bitterness, however, he fell as one dead, unable to move or speak. The saint realized what had happened to him, came to him, and prayed over him. The disciple woke up and arose, and the saint, having administered the Body of the Lord Christ to him, scolded him, saying: “My son, the Lord Christ would make the squill sweet for us, because we had then nothing else [to eat].”

Once they had finished the bread and became hungry again, the saint gave a blessing to his disciple and instructed him to boil some of the squill again and serve him. He did so; however, he was afraid to taste it, and so the saint made the sign of the cross over it, and he ate it, [trusting] in his teacher’s prayer, and it [caused him no harm].

A man from the people of Tekoa heard about the saint and came to him with his demon-possessed son, asking [the saint] to pray over him. [The saint] had compassion on him and healed him through the grace of the Holy Spirit. The man departed thanking God and relating the story of the saint’s miracle.

People would frequently bring to him the demon-possessed and [those suffering from] other [afflictions], and he would pray over them, and they would become well again. When, however, he could no longer bear being disturbed by so many people, he fled to the inner desert—a place where none of the solitary monks would go—and stayed there for a long time. At that time, many people were dying [of disease], and [the epidemic] affected the Lavra as well. Some of the monks came to him and informed him about this, imploring him to go | (24v) with them to the Lavra. He agreed, and settled in the cave of the holy Mar Chariton. But he was disturbed there as well, and so returned back to the old place, taking with him only some herb seeds [to plant and] to partake of [the herbs] from time to time. However, wild animals started grazing the [herbs], and his disciple complained to him about this. Then, when the saint was walking in the desert, he met a fierce lion. He
ordered the lion to follow him to the place where herbs had been planted and to guard it from the wild animals destroying it. The lion obeyed his command. When the saint became old and weak—for he was more than 100 years old—he knew that the time of his departure from this world had drawn near, so he returned to the Lavra and reposed in the Lord, having pleased God by his virtuous deeds.

<4> The monks of the Old Lavra told us also about another saint who lived in their monastery. His name was Eustratius, and he was one of the noblemen of Sicily. From his youth, he had been intelligent and chaste and had led a virtuous life. The Byzantine emperor heard about him and sent after him. When he arrived, the emperor asked Eustratius to speak, and found him to be even more excellent than what he had heard. He therefore appointed Eustratius to be his chief general and put him in charge of warfare. God was helping Eustratius and made him victorious over the emperor’s enemies. Both the emperor and his noblemen held him in high esteem. They honoured him and revered him for his courage and honesty; they also loved him very much.

This virtuous man, however, renounced all this and fled to become a monk. He was tonsured in one of the cenobitic monasteries and learned the rules of monasticism. After that, he left to the desert and spent twelve years there, eating grass. Then he desired to travel to the inner desert. He came to an arid place that had no vegetation and nothing else that could be used for food. Hunger forced him to pray to God for help. Then, while he was walking in the desert, suffering from hunger, he found a great church with a beautiful altar, on which lay a large and pure loaf of bread. He was greatly amazed by this. However, he feared that this could be Satan’s deception; so he prayed to God imploring Him to disclose the matter to him. Then he approached the altar, prayed, and made the sign of the cross over the bread. He stretched forth his hand, took it, and sustained himself with it for a long time, thanking God.

Subsequently, he came to Jerusalem and travelled through its desert. Then he came to the holy Mount Sinai, travelled through its desert, and dwelled in [this desert]. God would visit him and console him with food whenever he needed it. After some time, he returned to the holy monastery [of Sinai] and lived as a hermit in the monks’ cemetery for forty days, during which he tasted no food. All this time, he would pray to God imploring Him to reveal
unto him the bodies of the two holy abbots of Mount Sinai Anastasius and [John] Climacus. Then [their bodies] were revealed to him, and he took a blessing from them.

Subsequently, he left the place (25v) and headed for Jerusalem. While he was walking on the road with a group of people, they encountered an enormous lion and were terrified and confused. The saint came up to the [lion] and embraced it, while all the people passed by, glorifying God.

When they arrived at the campsite, they had among them a deaf boy, so they asked [Eustratius] to have mercy upon him. He prayed over him, and the boy regained ability to speak. Therefore, all those present glorified God.

When [Eustratius] arrived in Jerusalem, it came to his attention that in the Old Lavra there were saintly monks, wonderworking and clairvoyant, so he desired to stay with them. They accepted him gladly. He took his dwelling in the cell of Sts. John and Arcadius. A virtuous brother named Abba Joseph was in his service. There was a certain reason on account of which the saint imposed a penance upon himself. He would stay in his cell without going out for multiple days and without tasting food. He had asked his disciple not to approach him until the forty days were complete. After the period was over, the disciple, with a group of other monks, came to his cell and knocked on the door. Because [Eustratius] did not respond, they thought that he had died, so they broke the door and came in. They found [Eustratius] lying [on the floor] without moving, as one dead. So they called a doctor who was at the Lavra. The doctor examined him and told them that he still had his spirit within him. He gave them instructions to (26r) wash him with warm water. They did this, and he moved. Then they prepared a broth for him, opened his mouth with a stick, and gave him to drink of it a little. And so they treated him for several days, until he became well and told them: “My soul has been brought back to life, though I had imposed a death sentence upon it.” They asked him about the reason for this. He told them that he had once threw a little stone at a bird and it died, and so he imposed a death sentence upon his own soul in its stead.

After a little while, the Fast of the Apostles began, and it was extremely hot. [Eustratius] instructed his disciple Abba Joseph to lock the door of his cell and not approach him until the completion of the fast. Nor did he take any

150 The Orthodox Church commemorates Sts. Arcadius and John, together with their parents Sts. Xenophon and Mary on 26 January.
food inside. After the end of the fast, the disciple opened the door and found [Eustratius] to have become shrivelled as wood. His room\textsuperscript{151} was filled with incense, and his lamp was lit. They continued to treat him until he woke up.

[Together with?] the saint, there was at the Lavra a virtuous priest. He fell sick and had [seizures?],[ during which] he would bite his tongue causing it to bleed. The monks bewailed [his situation?] in the saint’s presence, but he went to the liturgy, leaving [the sick priest] behind in his [previous] state [i.e., uncured]. While standing at the liturgy, [the saint] turned to [the monk] standing next to him and said to them:\textsuperscript{152} “Abba Jonah\textsuperscript{153} has reposed in the Lord, having departed this world in a good manner; he had had a minor stain, but God has cleansed him.”

After this, there came the Feast of the Blessing of Water,\textsuperscript{154} and [several] monks were preparing for wearing the Great Schema.\textsuperscript{155} Among them there was an Egyptian man named Abba Gabriel, who was righteous in conduct,\textsuperscript{156} so he was also [blessed] to wear the Schema, together with the other [monks]. They went out to give “Peace” to the fathers. However, Abba Eustratius refused to accept Abba Gabriel’s wearing the Schema. He said to them: “Why did you allow him to wear the Schema, if he is not even a Christian?” The monks were overcome by sorrow, because they saw that the Egyptian man was devout, loyal to the Church, and righteous in conduct; moreover, he was one of the longest-serving monks of the Lavra. After some time, however, [this Abba Gabriel] went to Egypt and there converted to Islam, so the monks realized that God had revealed his situation to Saint Eustratius.

A few days later, the saint [Abba Eustratius] was standing at the liturgy near the door of the diakonikon.\textsuperscript{157} Suddenly, he burst into tears. The priest, Abba Leontius asked him about the reason [for his crying]. [The saint] responded: “It is on your (pl.)\textsuperscript{158} account that I am sad. Previously, I would see the Holy Spirit descend upon you (pl.) every liturgy, but today I did not see Him

\textsuperscript{151} Translation uncertain. See note 118 above.
\textsuperscript{152} A sudden shift from the singular to the plural.
\textsuperscript{153} Apparently, this is the name of the sick priest.
\textsuperscript{154} Theophany (6 January).
\textsuperscript{155} The most advanced degree of Orthodox monasticism.
\textsuperscript{156} Translation uncertain.
\textsuperscript{157} See note 149 above.
\textsuperscript{158} Presumably, the plural form signifies the priest Abba Leontius together with other clergy and servers of the altar.
descending upon you (pl.). He has departed from you (pl.).” They said to him: “Father, there are a lot of disputes and quarrels among us; pray to God that He would lift them from us!”

The Enemy\textsuperscript{159} once tempted one of our monks at the Old Lavra to eat meat. Through a cunning stratagem, he bought it and cooked it. The saint [Abba Eustratius] knew this by the Spirit dwelling in him, | (27r) so precisely at the time when that monk was about to eat it, Eustratius knocked on the door of his cell. The monk opened and made a prostration to him. When they prayed, the monk said to him: “Holy father, what brings you today to my habitation?” [Eustratius] responded: “I would like to have a [joint meal of] love with you today.” The monk rejoiced greatly and served him whatever monastic food he had had provided to him by God. But the saint said: “Serve me some food from the pot which you have just cooked.” Terrified, the monk brought the pot and put it in front of [the saint]. The saint rebuked him and said: “Brother, you are sullying your soul on account of your desire and you are obeying your [evil] thoughts.” Then he ordered him to bring a hoe, dug a hole in the garden, buried the pot there, and trampled it down with his foot. After that, he prayed over the brother and left.

One of the monks went to the city\textsuperscript{160} and fell into sin.\textsuperscript{161} Then he returned to his cell repentant and sorrowful. When night came, the saint [Abba Eustratius] knocked on the door of his cell, made a prostration to him, and said to him: “Forgive me, brother, for I have fallen into sin.” The brother realized that the saint knew what had happened to him, so he fell to his feet, crying, confessing his [evil] deed, and imploring [the saint] to pray over him. [Eustratius] consoled him and left.

In the Lavra, there was a monk whose name was Abba Job. | (27v) He was asked to become bishop of Aleppo, so he came to the saint [Abba Eustratius] to seek his council. [The saint] said to him: “Come back to me tomorrow morning, so that I can pray to Christ [that He may reveal] His will about you.” However, [Abba Job] left along with his companions without coming back to [Abba Eustratius]. The saint said to the monks: “He will come back, [because] they will not accept him,” and so it happened.

\textsuperscript{159} I.e., Satan.

\textsuperscript{160} Presumably, Bethlehem or Jerusalem.

\textsuperscript{161} Presumably, the sin of fornication.
This saint [Abba Eustratius] was travelling in the desert of Calamon,\textsuperscript{162} scorched by intense heat. Having come to the gate of the monastery, he knocked on it, but there was no response, so he made the sign of the cross over the gate, and it opened. Another monk from the Lavra accompanied him, and he is the one who told this.

This saint [Abba Eustratius] had two disciples whom he would take with him to the desert, so as to walk with them in the night towards the Jordan. While on this [journey], the saint stood facing East, prayed for a long time, then turned to one of his disciples and said: “Stephen, you want to become a patriarch; you will become one, but only for a few days, and you will find no joy [in this].” Thirty-five years later, Abba Stephen was taken to become patriarch over Antioch, but on his way there he became ill. Having arrived [there], he died on the eighth day.

In the Lavra, there was a good brother, whose name was Abramius. He used to serve Eustratius and attend to his needs in the desert, when [Eustratius] was living in his cave. One day [Abramius] brought [Eustratius] a jug of water. [Eustratius] looked at him, smiled, and said: “What were you thinking about last night?” [Abramius] responded: “I had many thoughts, and I don’t know which of them you are asking about.” The saint said to him: “Were you thinking of learning Syriac? You shall learn [it]. [Were] you thinking of becoming a priest? You shall become an abbot.” After some time, [Abramius] learned Syriac, and after Eustratius’ death was appointed to be the abbot of the Lavra.”

Eustratius continued to perform miracles and show [signs of] clairvoyance. He knew the time of his death, and told [others] about it. He reposed [in the Lord], having pleased God by his righteous deeds. May the Lord have mercy on us by his prayers, Amen!

<5> In this blessed Lavra, there was another virtuous monk who was a Syriac-speaker from one of the villages near Aleppo. He was a wonderworker and clairvoyant. His name was Abba Cosmas. One man from Rabba\textsuperscript{163} told us [the following story]. He had a debt and fled to Ascalon, leaving behind two poor [lit.: weak] sisters. While in Ascalon, he remembered their poverty

\textsuperscript{162} Calamon is the (now ruined) monastery in ‘Ayn Ḥajla on the Jordan River, about 1km from Dayr Ḥajla / the monastery of St. Gerasimos (Schick 1995: 279; Sharon 1997-in progress: III 48-54, 153).

\textsuperscript{163} Rabba (or al-Rabba) – near al-Karak in Transjordan.
[lit.: weakness], and so he went to Jerusalem, imploring God to provide a solution to his problem. He said: “When I was in Jerusalem, I heard about a wonderworking saint in the Old Lavra whose name was Abba Cosmas. I sought him out and knocked on the door of his cell. His disciple came out, carrying a staff in his hand. He told me: ‘The teacher knows | (28v) your situation. Take this staff and keep it always with you wherever you go. God will see to it that you lack nothing and suffer no harm. Go back to your town [i.e., Rabba] and take your sisters with you to Ascalon. Take the road of Zoara’. This town was then insecure, and the road was dangerous, but I took the staff in faith and left. I did everything as he had instructed me, and all my needs were provided for wherever I stayed. I went to the desert and travelled through it, and no one hindered me. Then I took my two sisters with me to Ascalon. No one was capable of walking on that road out of fear, but God kept me safe, and we arrived [safely] by the saint’s prayers.”

This saint [Abba Cosmas] had a disciple whose name was Abba Theodore of Baalbek. He told [us the following story] about him. [One day] he came to visit [Abba Cosmas], and [Abba Cosmas] told him: “Go to Abba Gabriel the Hermit and tell him to get ready for ‘That Thing’165 this night.” I went to the Hermit and told him. He said: “Yes.” So I came back to Abba Cosmas and told him this. He said: “Go to your cell, cook a pot of lentils on Wednesday, and bring it to me at 9 o’clock.”166 He prayed over me, and I left. I did as he bade me: cooked [the lentils] and came to his cell on Wednesday before the ninth hour. I knocked on the door, but there was no answer. While I was sitting there | (29r) confused, I heard the sound of a semantron (nāqūs)167 and then heard the saint doing his prayer in his cell. He opened the door to me and said: “Didn’t I instruct you not to come to me <until> after 9 o’clock?” I made a prostration before him and asked his forgiveness. He then took some of the lentils and instructed me to bring the rest to Abba Gabriel the Hermit. I did as he bade me, then came back to him, fell to his feet, and said to him: “I shall not raise my head until you tell me your secret.” He refused, saying: “This is

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164 The Biblical Zoar (Gen. 14:8, 19:22-23) and present-day al-Ghawr al-Ṣāfī in Transjordan, near the south extremity of the Dead Sea.
165 “That Thing” must have been a code word, agreed between Abba Cosmas and Abba Gabriel the Hermit. The meaning of this code word will become apparent at a later point in the narrative.
166 I.e., 3 pm.
167 A wooden board on which one knocks to summon monks to prayer.
not appropriate for you.” But I cried and importuned him so profusely that after much effort he agreed to tell the story, saying: “Let no one else know.” I agreed, and he spoke to me weeping: “Abba Gabriel and I had one and the same desire: to pray at the tomb of the Apostles Peter and Paul in Rome, so we met in the prayer room, read the First Hour, and prayed to the Lord Christ, and by His power we found ourselves in the twinkling of an eye in Rome. We stayed there for three days, prayed the Ninth Hour there, and were then transported back to our cells at exactly 9 o’clock.”

It once happened that there was a drought and great hardship through all the universe. The monks of the Lavra came to [Abba Cosmas] to ask him to pray to God that He would have mercy on them. He refused, but after they importuned him and wept profusely, he agreed with great humility. He was sick at the time, and so he asked them to carry him to the church of the Forty-Five Martyrs at the Old Lavra. The saint raised his hands to heaven, and everyone cried out together with him: “Lord, have mercy!” They did not leave the church until rain came down, and [water] filled the valley; then everyone gave glory to God. This saint continued to perform miracles and show [signs of] clairvoyance. He knew the time of his death, told [others] about it, and reposed in peace.

<6> Abba Gabriel the Hermit, whom we have just mentioned, had a blessed disciple whose name was Abba John. He was advanced in ascetic labours and devout. He would never taste wine, or oil, or anything fatty. Rather, he would take herb seeds with him to the desert, plant them, and feed on this. He was so advanced in abstinence that he would not excrete from below. Rather, at the end [of his meal], he would take in a cup of liquid and then vomit it from above.

This blessed disciple Abba John once came to his teacher Abba Gabriel at night on some business. He knocked on the door of his cell. There was no response, and so he scaled the wall and found the lamp burning and the cell

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168 I am deeply grateful to Fr. Sergey Kim and Nikolai Selezniov for their generous help in interpreting this passage.

169 Literally, “rain was blocked.”

170 Presumably, these are the forty-five martyrs of Nicopolis (martyred in 319; commemorated on 10 July).

171 In Christian Arabic literature, the word *zafar* refers collectively to animal products other than meat (dairy, eggs, animal fat, etc.).
full of incense, but no one present there. Confused, he went out and sat down opposite the cell on an elevated spot. Suddenly, he heard a powerful bang, as though hurricane wind | (30r) descended upon the cell. He came down rapidly and heard the voice of his teacher praying. After that, [Abba Gabriel] came out and said: “It [causes] monks’ ruin to search their brethren’s cells.” [Abba John] fell to his feet with the face down, crying and saying: “Blessed be the Lord, I shall not raise my face from your feet unless you tell me your secret.” [Abba Gabriel] agreed—on the condition that this would remain hidden as long as he was alive—and said: “My beloved brother, through His grace, the Lord Christ gave me the ability to travel wherever I want with no effort, so I just returned from Bethlehem.” [Abba John] was amazed by this and glorified God.

After that, [Abba Gabriel] became seriously ill. The monks opened [the door of] his [cell] to take a blessing from him. Everyone who had a disciple brought him to the [saint] so that he could pray for them. When [the saint] saw them gathered around him, he prayed over them and addressed them patiently and humbly, saying: “Go in peace, children, for I’m not going to die from this illness. My sustenance is hidden; only Christ knows it, for it is a gift from Him.” A few days later he rose up from his illness and took on the same kind of ascetic struggle that he used to practice. |

(30v) Hārūn, the king of the Arabs, died, and the world was plunged into strife. The monks came to [Abba Gabriel] importuning him to flee together with them, but he refused, saying: “It is only three days till the Great King comes.” All the monks left, and he alone remained in his cell. Three days later, Bedouins (aʿrāb) attacked him and tortured him. As they found him having no [treasures], they slit his arteries like those of a lamb, tied him with a rope, and suspended him above the valley. The rope broke, and he fell to his death. After some time, the monks came back to look for him in his cell. They found [the cell] full of traces of blood, and looked down to the valley. When they saw him, they came down and found him dead. His holy head had broken, but his body had suffered no change; nor did wild animals approach him, despite the amount of time that had passed. [His body] was exuding a pleasant smell

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172 It is somewhat unclear whether the protagonist in the remainder of the story is Abba Gabriel or perhaps his disciple Abba John. The former possibility seems much more likely, so I adopt it in the translation below.

173 The ‘Abbāsid caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd died on 24 March 809.
superior to any perfume. They wrapped him in a rug and buried him with crying and lamentation, glorifying God the Provider of life-giving grace.

<7> In this blessed Lavra, there was also another monk from Balqāʾ whose name was Abba Gabriel.¹⁷⁴ He led a virtuous life in the world, was chaste, and was filled with love. He was a secretary of the governor of the land and was helping every oppressed person. This governor had a young and beautiful wife, and he [i.e., the secretary = Abba Gabriel in his youth] was also young and beautiful. She would stay alone with him and would demand that he do what is inappropriate, just as had happened to Joseph in Egypt.¹⁷⁵ He would refuse to do this, while concealing this from her husband. One day it happened that the governor sent him to his [i.e., the governor’s] house on some business. [The governor’s wife] locked the door behind him, bound his hands and feet, and started torturing him. He endured it and gave her no response. His master [the governor] noticed that he was being late and became angry with him, so he came home and found him in this situation. He realized what had happened to him, untied him, and tied up his own wife, intending to kill her. However, [the secretary] importuned [the governor] with tears, and [the governor] agreed to release her [at] his [request].¹⁷⁷ [The secretary] led her out of the house. [The governor] held him in high esteem and honoured him.

After this, however, [the secretary] renounced his [worldly life]. He left secretly and came to our monastery, where he was tonsured a monk. He had had a lot of money, and he distributed everything to the monks and to the poor, leaving nothing for himself. He focused his attention [exclusively] on God and spent his days in hardship and poverty. During Lent, he locked himself up, and his disciple would attend to his needs once a week. (31v) After five weeks, [the disciple] found him shrivelled as though dead. They opened his mouth with a stick and fed him with a small amount of broth, until he woke up. After a while, he reposed having pleased God.

¹⁷⁴ This Abba Gabriel is evidently different from Abba Gabriel the Hermit.
¹⁷⁶ Or, alternatively, “embracing,” if one were to emend the text as indicated in note 148 above.
¹⁷⁷ Lit.: “to give her to him.”
Appendix: Life of St. Stratius (Copto-Arabic Version)

An interesting version of the life of St. Eustratius is preserved in an unspecified manuscript of the Dayr al-Suryān (Monastery of the Syrians) in Scetis. It was transcribed and, it seems, adapted by Abbot (qummus) Simʿān al-Suryānī in his book al-ʿĀbāʾ al-suwwāḥ (al-Suryānī 1990: 107-110). The text of the life of St. Eustratius as published in this book is available on a number of websites (e.g., http://www.coptic-churches.ch/sinksar/sinksar_Teil1.htm) as well as in an audio version on YouTube (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKZPx7xWk8E). Here is the text (with minor corrections and some notes), accompanied by an English translation. It is noteworthy that the saint’s name is given as “Stratius” rather than Eustratius.

الأنبا ستراتيوس السائح

في عصر أحد الملوك الأرثوذكس الذين حكموا روما كان هناك أميرًا من روما تحت سلطانه مائة جندي أدركه النعمة الإلهية فقال للملك: "أريد الآن أن أترك هذا العالم الفاني وأصبر هناك راهبًا"، وإنَّه ركب سفينة إلى الإسكندرية، وبعدها سافر برًا إلى طور سينا، وكان ذلك بعد مائتين عام من نباحة القديس يوحنا الدرجي اكليماكوس صاحب السلام الدراوي للفضائل وأب رهبان سينا والقديس أنسطاس السينائي مدب الرهبان اللذان ارتفعا في الفضيلة. وكان عدد رهبان الدير وقتئذ مائتين وخمسون راهبًا.

My emendation. Printed: الرهة.

178 I am deeply grateful to Dr. Hanna Repp for a photocopy of the relevant sections and to Fr. Anthony St. Shenouda, who kindly alerted me to the published English translation of al-ʿĀbāʾ al-suwwāḥ (El-Souriany 2008, under the title The Hermit Fathers; downloadable version: http://www.saint-mary.net/coptic_faith/The%20Hermit%20Fathers.pdf). The life of “Abba Stratios the Hermit” appears on pp. 108-110 of the downloadable version. The English translation below is, however, my own.

179 Classical Arabic: أميرًا
180 Classical Arabic: الذين
181 Classical Arabic: مائتين وخمسين
182 My emendation. Printed: الرهة
183 Classical Arabic: أبيه
184 Classical Arabic: أبيه
وإنه أحده وشاحه وجريدته، ومضى يسمع قائلًا: "أرفع عيني إلى الجبال، من حيث يأتي عوني؟ معونتي من عند
الرب صانع السموات والأرض".

إلى أن وصل مغارة عينها في الجزء الغربي، وهناك داوم على النسك الشديد والجهاد العنيف في حياته الروحية
ومحبة الرب يسوع المسيح، وصار يقتات من الحشائش التي تتبنا في الصخر وهو يمشي من يمين إله الذي كان قريبًا من هذه الحشائش في الربية. لقد كان يعلي أيضًا وهو صائم، بعدما يأكل مثل يده من
هذه الحشائش وقيل من الماء. أما صلواته فكانت لا حصر لها لأنه تشيّب بالروحانيين في تسبيحهم المستمر
وصولاتهم التي لا تقطع... وقد داوم على ذلك ثمانية عشر عامًا.

لقد أعلن له أنه ينطلق من هذا العالم الفاني إلى العالم الأبدي بعد أربعين يومًا، فلما شعر
بقرب ناحية رسم عليه الرب بعلامة الصليب المقدس الذي لربنا يسوع المسيح له المجد، فحمله لالوقت أتى
به داخل الدير. وذلك كان يسوع المسيح الذي كنت معه بالدير من أربعين يومًا. وقد جئت الآن لأن المنطقِ من هذا العالم قد قرب وسأمضى
إلى العالم الجديد حيث الراحة الأبدية بعد أربعين يومًا، وأريد أن أضفي هذه الأسمى القليلة مع إباء الدير
وصولات القداسات لاختبركم إلى أن أمضيها.

ففرح به كثيرًا وعاقله، ثم دعُ الناقوس فحضر الآباء وفرحوا برؤيتٍ القديس السائح. ثم أعطوه قلعة منبردة.
فدخل القلعة وأغلق الباب، ثم خرج دوم أن أحد بري ك، وذهب إلى قبر القديس بوتري الدجري (أكليماكوس)
وأضحى سلم الفضل وأبد ربي فلسطين والمدبر الفاضل وقرر القديس أنساطس السينائي مدير الرب، وقنا
ساجدًا على قرهما لتأوّل صلوات هذان القديسان اللذان، قد تقدمما منذ أكثر من مائتي عام.

وبينما هو يصلى ويترّك إليه ما قال له: "يا ستراتيوس، هذا القديس يوحنان وأنساطس
قد حضرنا لك بالروح لياضركا عليه، نذروقد السائح الطواوي، قيل انتقالك من هذا العالم"، وللوقت رآهما وتبّرك
منهما، وقالا له: "نحن أيضًا سنكون وقت خروج روحك من جسدك، ونصلي عليك في قلائتك التي أعطوها
لك الآباء داخل الدير"، و أعطته السلام ثمّ مضاها، وعاد بعدها إلى قلائته.

لم يخير أحدٌ بذلك سوى تلويه إذ قال له: "يا إبني، عند مبا سبيعة وثلاثين يومًا افتتح عليّ باب القلعة إذ
سأنطلق في ذلك اليوم من هذا العالم الفاني ولا تتواتي عن تعداد هذه الأيام لتدفقوها جسدي".
فلما مضت تلك الأيام وحان ذلك الوقت قرعوا الباب ولم يجيبهم أحد، وأخيرًا كسرًا باب القلعة
فوجدوه مسجًا، وقد غطى ذاته بوساحه الذي كان من الصوف الخشن.

185 Ps. 120/121: 1-2.
186 Classical Arabic: هذه القديسين اللذان.
187 Classical Arabic: أحيانا.
188 Classical Arabic: تواتان.
189 Classical Arabic: يجيبهم.
At the time of one of the Orthodox kings who ruled over Rome, there lived a commander / prince \(^{194}\) from Rome who was in charge of one hundred soldiers. Divine grace descended upon him, and he said to the king: “I wish now to renounce this transitory world, because I desire to go to the desert and become a monk there.” He went by ship to Alexandria, then by land to Sinai. This was two hundred years after the repose of St. John Climacus, the author of the *Ladder of Virtues*, and of St. Anastasius of Sinai, the leader of the monks, both of whom had excelled in virtue. At that time, there were two hundred and fifty monks in this monastery.\(^{195}\)

At the monastery, St. Stratius engaged in extreme forms of asceticism, with a burning zeal for the Lord Jesus Christ. He was deemed worthy to wear the habit (iskīm) of monasticism. After spending a few years in this monastery’s community, during which he served the monastic fathers with great love, he asked his spiritual father’s permission to go to the desert, and his [spiritual] father permitted him this, thinking that he would take his dwelling in a nearby cave, not too far from the monastery. He, however, took his girdle and his palm branch\(^{196}\) and left glorifying [God] and saying: “I lift my eyes to the mountains; from where shall my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth” (Ps. 120/121:1-2).

\(^{190}\) Coptic: ωὐγρη, “censer” (Graf 1954: 69).

\(^{191}\) Classical Arabic: فحَّا.

\(^{192}\) Classical Arabic: ذَا.

\(^{193}\) Classical Arabic: صلواتٍ.

\(^{194}\) Both translations are possible.

\(^{195}\) This is an interesting detail that finds no correspondence in PMC.

\(^{196}\) The significance of this item is unclear. Perhaps the text is corrupt here.
He reached a far-off cave in the inner desert and stayed there, persevering in extreme asceticism and intense [ascetic] labour in his spiritual life and in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. He would feed on the herbs growing between the rocks and would drink water from a nearby spring, which was close to this grass in the wilderness. He would spend entire days fasting and after that eat [only] a handful of these herbs and a small amount of water. His prayers were without number, for he resembled spiritual beings in their constant giving glory [to God] and in their ceaseless prayer. He pursued this for twelve years.

It was revealed to him that forty days later he would depart from this transitory world to the future world together with the saints. When he felt that his end was near, he made the sign of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (glory be to Him!) over the wind, and the wind carried him away immediately and brought him right inside the monastery. There, he saw the abbot of the monastery, who in the meanwhile had become an old man. [The abbot] asked him: “Who are you?” He responded: “I am your [spiritual] son Stratius who used to be with you at the monastery twelve years ago. I have come now, because the time of my departure from this world has drawn nigh. In forty days, I shall pass on to the new world, the place of eternal rest. I wish to spend those few days with the fathers of the monastery and with the prayers of the saints, so that I could take their blessing before I depart.”

[The abbot] rejoiced greatly and embraced him. After that, he beat the semantron;197 the fathers came in and rejoiced in seeing the saintly hermit. They gave him a separate cell. He entered the cell and locked the door. After that, he left without anyone noticing and went to the tomb of St. John Climacus, the author of the *Ladder of Virtues*, who was the father and virtuous leader of Palestinian monasticism, and to the tomb of St. Anastasius of Sinai, the leader of the monks. He prostrated himself on their graves asking that he may receive assistance from the prayers of these two saints who had preceded him by two hundred years.

While he was praying and imploring them, suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him: “Stratius, the holy John and Anastasius have appeared before you in the spirit in order to bless you, O blessed saint, before your departure from this world. Immediately, he saw them and took their blessing. They said to him: “We shall also be present at the time of your

197 See note 167 above.
spirit’s departure from your body and we shall pray for you in your cell, which the fathers have given you inside the monastery.” They gave him peace and left, while he returned afterwards to his cell.

He did not disclose this to anyone, except to his disciple, asking him as follows: “My son, open the door of my cell after thirty-seven days, because on that day I shall depart from this transitory world. Do not be remiss in counting these days, so that you will be able to bury my body.”

When these days have passed and the appointed time has arrived, they knocked on the door of his cell. There was no response, and so eventually they broke the door of the cell. They found him wrapped [in a shroud], for he had covered himself with his girdle which was made of coarse wool.

They also found an amazing thing, for next to him they saw a censer and therein a charcoal, and incense was rising from it, and its fragrance was exceedingly good. This was a sign that the hermit fathers [i.e., Sts. John Climacus and Anastasius of Sinai] had indeed come and prayed over him [at the time of his death]. The fathers held a short prayer for his [soul’s repose] and after that buried him with much reverence next to the ancient holy fathers of the monastery. His body exuded perfume-like fragrance which was beyond description. Thus he became a blessing to many. To our Lord is due all glory, honour, and worship from now and unto all the ages, Amen.

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