ROUTLEDGE STUDIES IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN WORLD

THE LEGACY OF DEMETRIUS OF ALEXANDRIA 189–232 CE

THE FORM AND FUNCTION OF HAGIOGRAPHY IN LATE ANTIQUE AND ISLAMIC EGYPT

MAGED S. A. MIKHAIL

ROUTLEDGE

THE LEGACY OF DEMETRIUS OF ALEXANDRIA (189–232 CE)

This is the first full-length study of Demetrius of Alexandria (189–232 CE), who generated a neglected, yet remarkable hagiographic program that secured him a positive legacy throughout the middle ages and the modern era. Drawing upon Patristic, Coptic, and Arabic sources spanning a millennium, the analysis contextualizes the Demetrian corpus at its various stages of composition and presents the totality of his hagiographic corpus in translation.

This volume constitutes a definitive study of Demetrius, but more broadly, it provides a clearly delineated hagiographic program and charts its evolution against a backdrop of political developments and intercommunal interactions. The methodology, source-base, and conclusions of this fascinating study will be a welcomed resource for a wide range of students and specialists of the Church in Egypt and hagiography, as well as early Christian and Arabic Christian studies.

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FOR MY PARENTS
SAMIR AND JULIETTE

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PREFACE

On occasion, the mind fixates upon a seemingly inconsequential parallel or discrepancy. While completing my graduate studies, I had noted a few structural similarities between a passage in the *Life of John the Almsgiver* and another in the *Encomium on Demetrius of Alexandria*. The reference occupied but a footnote in my Ph.D. dissertation, but it would periodically come back to mind. A few years ago, I finally had an opportunity to explore that nagging reference and began to tug at the proverbial thread. Quickly, I became immersed in Demetrius's hagiographic corpus.

In my research, I drew upon the resources at the library of the Saint Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society (Los Angeles), which were kindly placed at my disposal by the Society's president, Mr. Hany Takla. Undoubtedly, however, the conclusions of this study are my own and in no way reflect the views of that organization. I have also profited from the suggestions and observations of several colleagues and friends who read sections of this study, or have answered various questions in person and over email. I am thankful to Gordon M. Bakken†, Gayle Brunelle, Jochen Burgtorf, Ashraf Hanna, Alan Kirk, Mark Moussa, Jeffrey Burton Russell, Adel Sidarus, Mark Swanson, Hany Takla, Janet Timbie, and Youhanna Nessim Youssef. As always, I could count on the encouragement of His Eminence anba Serapion, Coptic Orthodox Metropolitan of Los Angeles and Hawai'i. Fr. Bishoy Kamel suggested the icon used for the cover of this volume and graciously provided his blessing to use it for that purpose. It is one of the very few that exist for Patriarch Demetrius. My brother, Sameh Mikhail, provided the photo.

Tim Vivian was kind enough to provide feedback on the bulk of the manuscript, saving me from various errors and oversights. I am also thankful to Lacey McGee Romano and Gheorghe Gelu Pacurar for their editorial and research assistance. At Routledge, I was fortunate to have Amy Davis-Poynter as my editor; she shared my enthusiasm for this project and had the patience to see it through. Elizabeth Thomasson and Autumn Spalding were equally patient in guiding me through the publication process. I must

also thank the anonymous reviewers for their detailed comments, which ultimately made this a more approachable study.

My wife, Reagan, is always my first editor and funniest critic, and our boys, Lucas and James, may be credited with providing endless, amusing distractions. This study is dedicated to my parents, Juliette and Samir Mikhail, as a small token of gratitude for the numerous sacrifices they have made over the decades.

Maged S. A. Mikhail
May 24, 2016

ABBREVIATIONS

ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers series
BSOAS	*Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*
CoptEncyc	*Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya, 8 vols.
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
EH	*Ecclesiastical History*, Eusebius
EncDem	*Encomium on Demetrius of Alexandria* (Budge, 1914)
FC	Fathers of the Church series
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller
HP-P	*History of the Patriarchs*, "primitive" recension (Seybold, 1912)
HP-V	*History of the Patriarchs*, "vulgate" recensions (Evetts, 1904–15; Seybold, 1904)
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
NPNF	Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers series
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PL	Patrologia Latina
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
SC	Sources Chrétienne

Part I

THE GENESIS AND EVOLUTION OF A HAGIOGRAPHIC PROGRAM

1

THE BISHOP AND THE SCHOLAR

A host of ancient authorities along with the bulk of modern scholarship gaze askance at Demetrius "the Vinedresser," the third-century Archbishop of Alexandria (189–232 CE).[1] Demetrius's rancorous interactions with Origen (d. *ca.* 253),[2] coupled with his meager literary output, have relegated him to the footnotes of history,[3] while his prominent rival has experienced a resurgence of late, inspiring an abundance of monograph-length studies, a series of international conferences, and a sizable bibliography of critical editions and modern translations.[4] Even within the bounds of the Coptic Orthodox Church, where Origen's mere mention had traditionally evoked an onslaught of epithets, his writings and persona have been largely rehabilitated due to the publications of Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty, whose monograph-length commentaries on each book of the Bible consistently draw upon Origen's works. Moreover, Malaty's 550-page anthology-like study of Origen's biblical insights and theological outlook has made the figure and his thought highly accessible to a Coptic lay readership.[5] Today, Origen is typically referenced as "the scholar" (Ar. *al-ʿallāmah*; cf. *magister*) in the Coptic Church – a far cry from the labels of "pest" and "heretic" that have been adjoined to his name in Alexandrian literature across the past sixteen centuries.[6]

Rarely opting to describe the historical interactions between Demetrius and Origen in neutral terms, academics tend to read the clash between them in accordance with polarizing ideals predicated upon the traditional hagiohistorical depictions of the two figures. Thus, among the various schemes employed, scholars have interpreted the conflict between the bishop and the priest-scholar as the symbolic eclipse of intellect by piety, as the subversion of an ecumenical Christianity by a parochial "fundamentalism" and in light of Max Weber's Charismatic (expert) versus Traditional (hierarchal/coercive) authority model.[7] On that front, the conclusions of this study repeatedly demonstrate the inadequacies of these interpretive schemes.

Despite his marginality in the patristic record and current scholarship, Demetrius enjoys tremendous popularity among Egyptian Christians (both

Coptic and Melkite) and has long been canonized as a saint of the church in the east and west.[8] The earliest evidence for the archbishop's biography and career is meager, but at an uncertain date, argued here to belong to the ninth or tenth century, an anonymous author plaited an assortment of patristic and hagiographic traditions into a Coptic encomium that came to serve as the basis for Demetrius's *vita* by default – for all intents and purposes, it is the earliest *Life of Demetrius*.[9] Relying in part on that text, its Arabic renderings, and the traditions they have engendered, it is possible to observe the steady growth of Demetrius's hagiographic corpus, historical significance, and influence during the middle ages (*al-ʿuṣūr al-wusṭā*)[10] within a complex socio-religious environment, the dynamics of which we are just beginning to grasp.

Under Umayyad and ʿAbbasid rule, both Copts (anti-Chalcedonians) and Melkites (pro-Chalcedonians) came to regard Demetrius as the third member of a patristic – in this context, pre-Chalcedonian (451 CE) – trilogy that informed their religious identity. Both communities forwarded the exclusive claim of constituting the legitimate descendants of Demetrius, Athanasius, and Cyril. Still, the patriarch's significance was particularly acute for the Copts as his late eleventh-century hagiographic persona in Coptic-Arabic literature came to embody a (subconscious) retrojection of that community and church's self-image back into the early patristic era. In that capacity, the archbishop established a precedent that validated much of the Coptic community's medieval practices and socio-religious outlook. Certainly, this was not a dynamic unique to the Copts; the Melkites similarly manipulated Demetrius's image to reflect their collective ideals.[11] Yet, despite the fact that a Melkite – Eutychius (Saʿīd ibn Baṭrīq), the tenth-century Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria – triggered the mechanism that positioned Demetrius at the crux of communal polemics and the processes of identity formation, the resulting hagiographic persona was distinctly Coptic. By the mid-fourteenth century, a striking metamorphosis was completed: a thinly documented patristic figure could claim a sizable hagiographic corpus that lauded him as a paragon of chastity, a reformer of liturgical practice, and the seal of orthopraxis.

Nonetheless, Demetrius's dossier and popularity strike a somewhat dissonant chord. While Egypt's Christians celebrate his hagiography in literature and the liturgical calendar, and the highlights of his career have become commonplace in Coptic sermons and Sunday School classes (every Coptic child knows the story of the Omen of Grapes, which identified Demetrius as Bishop Julian's successor, and that of the Miracle of Coals, which vouchsafed his chastity), the saint's popularity seems more confessional than devotional. His "cult," if one may call it that, lacks many of the typical elements associated with popular saintly figures.[12] Demetrius does not have any relics or a specific locus associated with him; historically, there is no church, monastery, or even an altar dedicated to his name or his veneration.[13] None of

the archbishop's commemorations (there are several) ever developed into an annual celebration, let alone a *mawlid* (a carnival-like festival commemorating a saint or martyr). As an iconographic subject, Demetrius has been overlooked until the past two decades. Moreover, while the author of the *Encomium on Demetrius*, written in the "southern" or Sahidic dialect that dominated Coptic literature until the tenth century, claims to have omitted the archbishop's miracles due to the "frailty and inadequacy" of his "meager words" and for the sake of brevity, one fails to attribute any miracles to the saint beyond those discussed in that composition and its Arabic recensions in the *History of the Patriarchs*, which largely embellish the same *topoi*.[14] Fundamentally, while this study traces the origins and development of the Demetrian corpus in some detail, the asymmetrical nature of the overall hagiographic program remains puzzling.

Demetrian texts belong to a distinct cohort of hagio-historical tracts – mainly patriarchal biographies – that had tremendous ideological significance but lacked the popular following of the wonder-working saints, such as George, Colluthus (Qultah), and Dimyana, or that of the larger-than-life monastics, such as Antony and Macarius the Great, who are lauded for their piety and asceticism. This, however, should by no means detract from the significance of the historical figure or his hagiography. Indeed, Demetrius is in good company. Coptic literature focused on Saint Mark himself, the traditional founder of the Alexandrian Church, and several of Demetrius's successors, including Athanasius "the Apostolic," Benjamin I, and Isaac I, belong to the same category. In all, the texts associated with these figures retain the miraculous, even the "marvelous" as Jacques Le Goff would have it,[15] but their subjects never achieved the status of the popular intercessor saints. Neither monastic nor devotional, these hagiographic tracts tend to delineate a confessional identity, an orthodox line of succession,[16] or, as is the case with the *Life of Isaac [of Alexandria]*, mitigate new developments within the community. (In the case of the *Life of Isaac*, a contested patriarchal election posed the immediate issue, but the Islamic government's novel interference in patriarchal elections, which would quickly become normative, posed much greater angst.)[17] That said, even within such a cohort, Demetrius's hagiography stands out. The Coptic community treasured the relics of Saint Mark, and Patriarch Athanasius is not an infrequent subject of medieval iconography; as mentioned above, Demetrius's hagiographic program lacks both elements. On the other hand, Demetrius's program steadily developed over the centuries surveyed, while those of his peers remained relatively static.

At its core, Part One of this study analyzes the late antique and medieval depictions of the archbishop with four objectives in mind. The first is a minimalist endeavor: to distill the evidence and (if possible) identify the historical Demetrius. A second, multifaceted, goal aims at excavating his intriguing hagiography, seeking to identify its various strata and themes, some aspects

of which were influenced by Eusebius's so-called *Life of Origen* (*EH* 6).[18] Third, the analysis underscores the function of the Demetrian corpus in constructing and reflecting the Coptic community's identity and ideological claims, particularly from the eleventh to the fourteenth centuries. Finally, the study traces the manipulation of Demetrius's hagiographic legacy by Copts and Melkites within the context of their intracommunal apologetics and the means by which both confessions relied upon his alleged reforms to rebuff a specific polemic leveled at them by their Muslim and Jewish interlocutors. Admittedly, while some of the late and heavily redacted sources and recensions analyzed in this study are not likely to elucidate the career of the historical figure, and may be interpreted by some as nothing more than defilements of an *Urtext*, they prove valuable – even fundamental – if read as vignettes onto the various stages of redaction and translation. Beyond reading hagiography as a reflection of its time of composition rather than the era it purportedly documents,[19] however, a close reading of the various recensions of Demetrius's corpus facilitates a nuanced discussion of the development of his hagiography over time as well as the means by which it came to reflect distinct historical developments. The methodology employed here repeatedly demonstrates the ongoing, delicate symbiosis between an evolving hagiographic corpus and its socio-religious and literary environments at several stages of composition. Part Two of the study contains the entirety of Demetrius's scattered hagiographic dossier, some texts among which are available here in a western language for the first time. Textual notes are predominantly limited to Part Two of the study.

Over the past millennium, several literary themes and hagiographic motifs have defined Demetrius's hagio-biography, and these will serve as reference points throughout the subsequent analysis.[20] 1) An angel informed Bishop Julian of Alexandria (178–188 CE) that his successor would be the man who will present him with a cluster of grapes out of season. 2) Demetrius, an illiterate peasant, fulfilled the prophecy and was subsequently elevated to the episcopate despite being married. 3) Once ordained, God's grace miraculously enlightened the peasant. 4) Demetrius received a spiritual gift that enabled him to discern the sins of parishioners as they approached the Eucharist; those individuals were encouraged to repent and were deprived of communion on that day. This prompted certain wayward members of the Christian community to retaliate and undermine Demetrius's authority on the grounds that he was a married bishop, which, we are assured, was an unprecedented appointment in Alexandria. 5) A self-imposed ordeal by fire ensued. In this famous incident, Demetrius and his wife placed burning coals in their garments, which remained unscathed, thus proving the couple's virginity and sanctity. 6) The miracle introduces a narrative that details the couples' childhoods and the events that led them to practice a spiritual – that is, chaste – marriage. Demetrius's traditions additionally note: 7) commissioning Pantaenus to preach in India; 8) his discord with Origen;

9) the ordination of bishops for other Egyptian dioceses; 10) reforming Lent; 11) deriving the *Epact* calculations, which determine the date of the Easter celebration; 12) and baptizing Dionysius, who would lead the School of Alexandria and eventually succeed Heraclas as bishop of that city in 248 CE. Any study of Demetrius necessarily rests upon determining the historicity and genesis of these traditions, accounting for their evolution, and interpreting their socio-religious significance.

Notes

1 The date for Demetrius death is typically cited as 231 or 232; see the texts and dates cited in Text I. The Coptic Monastery of the Vinedresser does not appear to have had any connection to Demetrius; see B.T.A. Evetts, *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighbouring Countries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895; repr. Gorgias Press, 2001), 186, 190–91 (*fols*. 63b, 64b). The titles changed over time; Bishop, Pope, Archbishop, and Patriarch of Alexandria, all referenced the same individual (in that historical progression, with overlapping usage). Given that this study covers a millennium and that several texts are difficult to date, I will use these titles interchangeably. On their historical origins, see Text II, note 74, and Text III, note 2.

2 For a summary of the dispute, see Joseph Wilson Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983), ch. 6; Stephen J. Davis, *The Early Coptic Papacy, Vol. 1, The Egyptian Church and Its Leadership in Late Antiquity* (Cairo and New York: American University at Cairo Press, 2004), 22–8; W.C. Griggs, *Early Egyptian Christianity* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1990), 56–8, 91–2. Also, Eusebius, *EH* 6; Origen, *Commentary on Gospel of John*, 6: 8–11.

3 Demetrius's alleged writings are discussed below. Late antique and modern authors typically address him either in conjunction with Origen's dismissal from Alexandria or in terse encyclopedia entries. He is briefly discussed in Jerome's *On Illustrious Men*, in the entries for Pantaenus and Origen: see Aldo Ceresa-Gastaldo, ed./trans., *Gerolamo: Gli uomini illustri = De viris illustribus*, Biblioteca patristica 12 (Florence: Centro internazionale del libro, 1988); Thomas P. Halton, trans., *Saint Jerome: On Illustrious Men*, FC 100 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1999). Even in academic reference works, such as the *Blackwell Dictionary of Eastern Christianity* [Ken Parry *et al*., (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001)], Demetrius is only mentioned in Origen's entry and did not warrant his own. As a saint, Demetrius is unattested in the sources surveyed in Arietta Papaconstantinou's *Le culte des saints en Égypte des Byzantins aux Abbassides. L'apport des inscriptions et des papyrus grecs et coptes* (Paris: CNRS, 2001), which would bolster the claim forwarded below that the archbishop's popularity was largely a product of the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries.

4 See Henri Crouzel, *Bibliographie critique d'Origène*, Supplement II (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996); John A. McGuckin, ed., *The Westminster Handbook to Origen* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004); Adele Monaci Castagno, ed., *La biografia di Origene fra storia e agiografia* (Verucchio: P.G. Pazzini, 2004); Christopher A. Beeley, *The Unity of Christ: Continuity and Conflict in Patristic Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), Part I; Markus Vinzent, ed., *Studia Patristia* vol. 56.4, *Rediscovering Origen* (Louvain: Peeters, 2013); the proceedings of eleven *Origeniana* conferences have been published thus far.

5 English translation: Tadros Y. Malaty, *Lectures in Patrology: The School of Alexandria, Vol. 2, Origen*, pp. 319–885 (Jersey City: St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church, 1994). Fr. Tadros's voluminous publications on biblical, monastic, liturgical, patristic, theological, historical, and ecumenical topics are omnipresent in Egypt and in Coptic Church bookstores, but they are not easily accessible in the west. Origen has also received a very kind appraisal from the Roman Pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI: see his homilies delivered on April 25, 2007 and May 2, 2007 <http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/audiences.index.html#audiences>, accessed October 2015.

6 See the discussion of Origen in the latter half of chapter seven, below. Patriarch Dioscorus called Origen a "pest" (*loimos*) in a letter to the Abbot Shenoute; Herbert Thompson, "Dioscorus and Shenoute," in *Recueil d'études égyptologiques dédiées à la mémoire de Jean-François Champollion*, BEHE 234, eds. G. Bénédite and C. Boreux (Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1922), 376.

7 E.g. Mario Baghos, "The Conflicting Portrayals of Origen in the Byzantine Tradition," *Phronema* 30.2 (2015), 69–104; James Corke-Webster, "Violence and Authority in Eusebius of Caesarea's *Ecclesiastical History*" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Manchester, 2013), 133–36, 140–43; S.J. Davis, *Early Coptic Papacy*, 19–27; Michel Fédou, *La sagesse et le monde: essai sur la christologie d'Origène* (Paris: Desclée, 1995), 373–414; W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 53–6; Cyril C. Richardson, "The Condemnation of Origen," *Church History* 6.1 (1937), 50–64.

8 Demetrius is commemorated in the west on 9 October; among the Greek Orthodox he is commemorated on 22 October (9 October, Julian). His primary commemoration in the Coptic Orthodox Church is on the 12th of the Coptic month of Paopi/Bābah (23 October); but a second entry, focused on Lenten reforms, is read on the 10th of Hathor/Hatūr (20 November); a third entry, commemorating the Miracle of Coals and the revelation of his virginity, is read on the 12th of Paremhat/Baramhāt (21 March); and he figures prominently in yet a fourth lection (4th of Baramhāt/13 March). Demetrius is mentioned in every Coptic liturgy in the Commemoration of Saints (the Diptych).

9 E.A. Wallis Budge, *Coptic Martyrdoms in the Dialect of Upper Egypt I* (London: British Museum, 1914), Cop. 137–56, Eng. trans. 390–408; hereafter *EncDem*, cited according to *folio*, which will allow the reader to reference the same section in Budge's Coptic text and translation, and the translation forwarded here in Text II. On writing biographies in the patristic era, see Patricia Cox, *Biography in Late Antiquity: A Quest for the Holy Man* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983); John Dillon, "Holy and Not So Holy: On the Interpretation of Late Antique Biography," in *The Limits of Ancient Biography*, ed. B. McGing and J. Mossan (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2006), 155–67; M.J. Edwards and Simon Swain, eds., *Portraits: Biographical Representation in the Greek and Latin Literature of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997); Tomas Hägg and Philip Rousseau, "Introduction: Biography and Panegyric," in idem, eds., *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 1–28, n. 9. In that work, the authors challenge the distinctions between vita/bios/life, encomium, and panegyric.

10 The terminology is problematic, particularly within a non-western context. Yet, "middle ages" and its cognates in Arabic, *al-qurūn al-wusṭā* and *al-ʿuṣūr al-wusṭā*, remain handy – though admittedly vague and potentially misleading – designations. The term is used here (in lower case) largely to designate the period roughly from the ninth to the fourteenth centuries CE.

11 Also see the discussion in chapters eight and nine. On this process during two earlier junctures, see Alberto Camplani, "L'autorappresentazione dell'episcopato di Alessandria tra IV e V secolo: questioni di metodo," *Annali di storia dell'esegesi* 21.1 (2004), 147–85; A. Papaconstantinou, "Historiography, Hagiography, and the Making of the Coptic 'Church of the Martyrs' in Early Islamic Egypt," *DOP* 60 (2006), 65–86.

12 E.g. see Arietta Papaconstantinou, "The Cult of Saints: A Haven of Continuity in a Changing World?" in *Egypt in the Byzantine World, 300–700*, ed. R.S. Bagnall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 350–67; eodem, "Hagiography in Coptic," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography, Vol. 1, Periods and Places*, ed. Stephanos Efthymiadis (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2011), ch. 11; Otto F.A. Meinardus, *Coptic Saints and Pilgrimages* (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2004); Febe Armanios, *Coptic Christianity in Ottoman Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

13 Cf. A. Papaconstantinou, "Hagiography in Coptic," 325.

14 *EncDem*, *fol.* 39v: "If I want to prolong [my] discourse with you, I would tell you of the marvels that God performed at the hands of this holy man, Demetrius, the holy archbishop, but I am mindful of the frailty and inadequacy of my meager words."

15 Jacques Le Goff, *The Medieval Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), ch. 1.

16 Maged S.A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt: Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 239–41.

17 Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 41–2, 153, 184–86, 205.

18 Gustave Brady, ed./trans., *Historia Ecclesiastica*, SC 31, 41, 55, 73 (Paris: Cerf, 1952–60); Roy J. Deferrari, trans., *Eusebius Pamphili: Ecclesiastical History*, 2 vols., FC 19, 29 (New York: Fathers of the Church Inc., 1953–55; repr. Catholic University of America Press, 1969), ch. 6. Pierre Nautin provides an essential discussion of the *Life* in his *Origène: Sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), chs. 1–2; J. Corke-Webster, "Violence and Authority," 33–37; P. Cox, *Biography in Late Antiquity*, ch. 4; J.A. McGuckin, ed., *Westminster Handbook to Origen*, ch. 1; Joseph W. Trigg, *Origen*, The Early Church Fathers (New York: Routledge, 1998); A.M. Castagno, ed., *La biografia di Origene*.

19 Cf. Averil Cameron, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), ch. 3; Charis Messis, "Fiction and/or Novelisation in Byzantine Hagiography," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to Byzantine Hagiography, Vol. 2, Genres and Contexts*, ed. S. Efthymiadis (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2014), ch. 11.

20 Cf. Aziz S. Atiya, "Demetrius I," *CoptEncyc* 3:891–93; "De S. Demetrio Ep. Conf. Alexandriæ in Ægypto,"*Acta Sanctorum*, 9 Octobris vol. 4:855b–64F.

2

SOURCES

Demetrius's dossier is extant in four chronologically distinct clusters: the earliest traditions survive in Greek and Latin patristic writings; a Sahidic Coptic encomium constitutes a second stratum of evidence; Arabic sources readily segregate themselves into "early" and "late" Arabic traditions, reflecting the final evolutionary stages of Demetrius's hagiographic program. Notably, all the texts surveyed in the "northern" or Bohairic Coptic dialect, which dominated Coptic literature beginning in the tenth century, reflect late Arabic motifs, and may be addressed in tandem with those sources. At each phase, the number of texts along with the diversity of hagiographic episodes and embellishments associated with the archbishop increased. Hence, one may argue that the sheer volume of evidence at each stratum may function as a rough gauge indicating Demetrius's popularity at various historical junctures.

While Greek and Latin glosses provide the earliest references, even collectively they fail to provide anything resembling a biography. Among that assemblage of sources, the earliest is a fragment from a letter by Alexander of Jerusalem in defense of Origen; it survives only in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*.[1] In fact, it is Book Six of that *History* which establishes the basic biographical sketches for both Origen and Demetrius, though its discussion of Origen is complimentary but that of the archbishop is critical and modest in length and depth. For Eusebius (d. 339 CE), Demetrius was an essential antagonist, though otherwise marginal figure, in a grand narrative – his *Life of Origen*.[2] Additionally, a single line in Eusebius's *Chronicle* (as preserved by Jerome),[3] terse glosses in Jerome's *Illustrious Men* and two of his epistles (33 and 70), along with cursory remarks in the late, though valuable, *Bibliotheca* of Photius, all but exhaust the Greek and Latin passages pertaining to Demetrius.[4] The terse references to Demetrius that may be culled from these patristic writings are collated in Text I.

In general, patristic authors provide succinct biographical gleanings and independent traditions that later writers grafted onto the archbishop's normative hagiography. If the paucity and fragmentation of the earliest sources are any indication, however, it would seem that the archbishop did not

attract much attention from his peers or immediate successors. There is no need to wax effusive over the patristic literature cited in this study; it has long been the subject of rigorous critical editions and modern translations and studies, cited in the subsequent footnotes. More relevant is the way these sources fit within the context of the fourth-century controversies surrounding Origen, which is a topic addressed in the following chapter.

The first developmental phase, in which something resembling a biography first appears, commenced with pseudo-Flavian of Ephesus's *Encomium on Demetrius of Alexandria* (hereafter, *EncDem*: Text II). Flavian is unattested elsewhere, and as Tito Orlandi has suggested, may be nothing more than a literary fiction.[5] Moreover, it would seem unlikely that Demetrius served as the subject of a sermon delivered in late antique Ephesus. His own Alexandrian successors, even an ardent anti-Origenist such as Theophilus, seldom referenced the archbishop.[6] The encomium, which clearly postdates the extant Greek and Latin sources, survives in a unique Sahidic Coptic manuscript (BL.Or.6783), which E. A. Wallis Budge edited and published nearly a century ago.[7] (This study re-reads that manuscript, and offers a new translation in Text II.) Most scholars agree that the work is pseudonymous but have dated it within the bounds of the late antique – pre-Arab conquest – era. This study, while it rejects the attribution to Bishop Flavian, contends that the extant recension (which may not date long after the autograph) is demonstrably much later than hitherto envisioned. Other Coptic sources, primarily late Bohairic Coptic doxologies and short liturgical refrains, are not analyzed in conjunction with the encomium. As mentioned above, they reflect the final stage of Demetrius's Arabic hagiography as it crystallized in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries CE.[8] Here, Sahidic and Bohairic glosses are independent of one another, with the Bohairic exclusively drawing upon Arabic traditions rather than Sahidic antecedents.

The title of the encomium is somewhat deceptive; Demetrius is but the first figure addressed in a composition that is equally concerned with the martyrdom of Saint Marturia and her young sons. A resident of Antioch during the Great Persecution, Marturia sailed to Alexandria seeking baptism for her two young boys at the hands of St. Peter of Alexandria (d. 311 CE). On the way to that city, however, a massive storm nearly capsized the ship and, fearing that her sons would die without the sacrament, Marturia performed an impromptu baptism that would prove valid in light of a subsequent miracle in Alexandria (that is the only part in which Peter of Alexandria plays a role).[9] Upon her return to Antioch, however, Marturia's still-pagan husband turned her into the authorities, who dutifully prompted her to deny her Christian faith and subsequently executed her along with her sons. In the Coptic-Arabic *Syanxarium* (29 Hathor/Hatūr and 25 Paremoude/Baramūda; 9 December and 3 May), she is named "Sarah," and the *History of the Patriarchs* repeatedly refers to her actions and subsequent martyrdom in the entries for patriarchs Peter and Damian.[10] As Tito Orlandi has demonstrated,

however, the entire account stems from the cycle of Basilides the General and, hence, dates no earlier than the seventh century.[11]

Only with great difficulty can the encomium masquerade as a delivered sermon, let alone a unified composition. One has to strain to find any organizational scheme or theme to link the two halves of the work. As it stands, the encomium may have been a literary product that grouped two separate texts concerned with Alexandrian patriarchs under a single rubric. But even then, it remains disjointed and incomplete. Peter of Alexandria's role in the second half of the encomium is incidental; the heroism of Marturia emerges as the true focus of that section.[12] Finally, the *EncDem*'s long introduction, which provides something of a table of contents, states that it addresses: Demetrius of Alexandria, Peter of Alexandria, Marturia and her two sons, the compunction of the soul, and a passage from the Book of Jeremiah. Yet, the last two topics have been omitted in the extant manuscript. The fact that they hardly relate to the other accounts likely facilitated their excision, though one wonders if the medieval author or scribe intended this to be a much longer composition, or if he was simply careless in his task.

Arabic writings chronicle the third and fourth phases of Demetrius's hagiographic program. While they constitute the largest body of evidence, these sources also pose the greatest interpretive and textual difficulties. Until recently, Christian Arabic literature has not received adequate scholarly attention; hence, despite its (relative) accessibility, distilling definitive results remains an arduous task. The tracts are immensely rich and diverse, though the state of the extant texts coerces the researcher to invariably engage in tentative textual criticism. Pseudonymous writings abound, dates of composition are but rough estimates, and – particularly for Egypt – all major chronicles (e.g. the *History of the Patriarchs* and the *Synaxarium*) are available in two or more editions, none of which is definitive or critical. Thus, a brief orientation is warranted.

Arabic Christian literature began with the rise of the ᶜAbbasid Caliphate in 750 CE. By that time, the number of Arabic speakers had been steadily increasing, largely due to a 705 CE Umayyad edict that instructed officials to keep all records in Arabic (rather than Greek). This prompted Christians, the bulk of the administrative personnel in Egypt and Syria, to teach their children the Arabic language in hope of securing their future success. Once implemented, this edict extended the reach of the Arabic language well beyond the Muslim community for the first time. Nonetheless, ᶜAbbasid policies provided the direct impetus for Christian Arabic literature. Most significant were the new regime's egalitarian attitude toward converts to Islam, which included their exemption from the *jizya* tax, and the systematic intellectual challenges ᶜAbbasid scholars posed to the adherents of the other Abrahamic religions. The genre began among Syrian Christians, who authored the first Arabic *Defense* of Christianity (*ca.* 751–4 CE), and produced some of the earliest Arabic translations of the Christian

Scriptures.[13] In Egypt, these processes were delayed by as much as two full centuries.[14] The Pro-Chalcedonian (Melkite) patriarch Eutychius (d. 940 CE) has the distinction of being the first notable Egyptian-Christian to write in Arabic. Among the Copts, Bishop Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ wrote *Tafsīr al-amānah* (*An Exposition of the Faith*) in the mid-tenth century. (There are a few anonymous Arabic texts that may predate the writings of these two authors.) Once that Arabic literary movement commenced among the Copts, however, the process of drafting new tracts proceeded in tandem with a translation movement that rendered Greek and Coptic texts into Arabic. These twin programs, which are easier to distinguish in theory than in practice, spanned the tenth to the fourteenth centuries. The translation program has been studied in accordance with three phases; significantly, the last of these coincides with the "Golden Age" of Coptic-Arabic literature.[15] The Arabic Demetrian corpus spans all three stages, though much of it was drafted between the mid-thirteenth and the early fourteenth centuries, under late Ayyubid and early Mamluk rule in Egypt.[16]

The *Nazm al-jawhar* (*The String of Pearls*; also known as the *Annals* or *Taʾrīkh*) of Eutychius/Saʿīd ibn al-Baṭrīq, the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria (d. 940 CE), preserves the earliest Arabic references to Demetrius: see Text IV. The work survives in two distinct editions. Michael Breydy has studied and published the older Alexandrian version, while Louis Cheikho edited the later Antiochene recension a century ago.[17] This later version reflects a highly developed polemical program that this study further underscores. Eutychius's brief discussion of Demetrius is intriguing, though it raises as many questions as it answers. On the whole, he appears to have been completely unaware of Demetrius's hagiography as preserved in the Coptic encomium. Still, Eutychius introduced two novel traditions: the often-cited passage identifying Demetrius as the first Bishop of Alexandria to ordain bishops for other Egyptian cities, and another that credits him with a Lenten reform, which chapter eight addresses at length below.

Among early Coptic-Arabic sources, the *History of the Patriarchs* (HP) established the hegemonic narrative. Better known in the manuscript tradition as the *Biographies of the Holy Church* (*Siyar al-bayʿah al-muqaddasa*), the compilation's traditional attribution to the tenth-century Bishop of al-Ashmunīn, Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. after 1000 CE), has been convincingly rejected by modern scholars, particularly in light of Johannes den Heijer's studies of the HP, in favor of the Alexandrian deacon Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij (d. *ca.* 1100). Mawhūb translated and redacted the patriarchal biographies in the late eleventh century, during the second stage of the Coptic-to-Arabic translation program – long after Sawīrus had died.[18] The HP survives in the so-called "primitive" (HP-P) and "vulgate" (HP-V) recensions, which are separated by approximately one hundred and fifty years.[19] The Arabic text and an English translation of HP-V have circulated

in print and online for some time now, though the primitive recension, which has been edited in part, remains relatively inaccessible,[20] and only Demetrius's biography in that edition may now be read in a western language (Text III).

Demetrius's *sīrah* ("biography") has two distinct portions. The first half, "Part One," forwards a translation of the *Encomium on Demetrius*, augmented and revised to reflect the translator's *Sitz im Leben* both in form and content. "Part Two," the remainder of the biography, which I read as earlier, draws heavily on Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, though it may also preserve readings from the anti-Chalcedonian *Histories of the Church [of Alexandria]*. Only fragments of that work survive, and nothing remains of Demetrius's biography in that composition.[21] Part Two's dependence on Eusebius's *History* is unmistakable, though it is far from a faithful or an accurate translation of that text.[22] Its relation to the *Histories of the Church*, on the other hand, is more tenuous. Scholars postulate that a certain Menas the Scribe relied upon Eusebius's *History* to craft the *Histories of the Church* sometime in the late fifth century CE. By the eleventh century, what existed (or remained) of the *Histories* likely found its way into the Arabic *History of the Patriarchs*, where it provides the basis for the first quire of biographies (2 to 24: Anianus to Cyril I). Part Two of the *sīrah* likely enshrined the entirety of what was generally known about the patriarch until the eleventh century, when the encomium came to head Demetrius's biography. Nonetheless, whether or not Part Two of the *sīrah* is an independent composition or a version of the *Histories* is difficult to answer with certainty; chapter seven, below, explores that issue at greater length.

In both recensions of the HP, Demetrius's biography retains this composite, two-part structure that is delineated by concluding remarks at the end of each section; these are best preserved in HP-P.[23] This accounts, at least in part, for the length of Demetrius's *Life* in the HP, which is substantially longer than the entries for his ten predecessors combined. The task of translating and editing these texts into a single *sīrah* may have been accomplished by Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr himself (or possibly by his principal assistant, the deacon Abū Ḥabīb Mikhā'īl ibn Badīr al-Damanhūrī). As demonstrated below, Bishop Michael of Tinnīs (d. after 1056 CE), who drafted a quire of patriarchal biographies in *ca.* 1050 CE, documenting the lives of Khā'īl II (849–51 CE) to Shinūda II (1032–46 CE), does not appear to have been aware of Demetrius's hagiography, while his younger contemporary, Mawhūb, who edited and translated all the previous biographies and added two of his own in Arabic (in *ca.* 1095 CE), was undoubtedly acquainted with it.[24]

The independent *History of the Patriarchs* attributed to the mid-thirteenth-century Bishop Yūsāb of Fūwah, a pseudonymous work of a later era,[25] proves of limited utility here. It forwards an abridgement of Demetrius's biography in HP-V, in which the only notable deviation is its insistence that

the archbishop appointed ten bishops in Egypt – three is the number typically cited. Aside from this tidbit, however, that *History* offers little else that is of relevance here.

Five thirteenth- and fourteenth-century texts reflect the "late" Arabic tradition. Most were likely written during the first century of Mamluk rule in Egypt (1250–1350 CE), as an extension of an effervescent literary period – the Golden Age of Coptic-Arabic literature – that began under the Ayyubids (1711–1250 CE). Despite the literary accomplishments of that century, however, it was under Mamluk rule that the Coptic community faced an increasingly precarious socio-political situation, which deteriorated significantly at the end of that century as a much harsher reality set in. Beginning in the mid-fourteenth century, Egyptians endured repeated bouts of the plague, a series of economic downturns, and pervasive unrest due to the violent political maneuverings that characterized Burjī ("Tower") Mamluk rule of Egypt from 1382 until the Ottoman conquest of 1517 CE. All of these calamities were doubled upon the Copts who were often scapegoated and habitually targeted by the government for economic exploitation, and by frustrated and opportunistic mobs for violence and looting. The volume of Coptic-Arabic literature dropped precipitously and irreversibly during the second century of Mamluk rule.

The relevant texts are Demetrius's biography in the HP-V, Abū Shākir's *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* (*Book of Histories* or *Chronography*), the anonymous *Chronicon orientale*, entries in the Coptic-Arabic *Synaxarium*, and Abū al-Barakāt ibn Kabar's *Muṣbāḥ al-ẓulmā* (*A Lamp in the Darkness*): see Texts V–VII. The earliest of these was likely the HP-V, which has been discussed above. Two closely related works, which betray a rather early recension of HP-V, were written within a few years of one another. In 1257 CE, the scholar Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib completed his first major publication, *Kitāb al-tawārīkh*, a universal account beginning with the creation of Adam and continuing down to his own day. The latest references in that work are to Patriarch Athanasius III (1250–61 CE) and sultan al-Manṣūr Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī I (1257–59 CE).[26] Abū Shākir hailed from a prominent Coptic family, many members of which, including his father, uncle, and himself, were high-ranking administrators under the Ayyubids.[27] In *ca.* 1220 CE, his father retired and became a monk in the Monastery of St. Antony at the Red Sea and took the name Buṭrus; hence, Abū Shākir's moniker as "Ibn al-Rāhib," "Son of the Monk." Later, Buṭrus became the lead priest at the church of Abū Sirjah in Old Cairo, where, because of the influential connections he made during his secular career and the vacancy of the patriarchal office from 1218 to 1235, and again from 1243 to 1250 CE, he exercised tremendous influence in the church. Abū Shākir, himself, would be ordained a deacon for the prominent Muʿallaqah ("Suspended") church in *ca.* 1260 CE.

By the date of Abū Shākir's ordination, an anonymous author, Pseudo-Abū Shākir, drafted the *Chronicon orientale* (*al-Ta'rīkh al-sharqī*), which is

heavily dependent on chapters 47 and 50 of *K. al-tawārīkh*.[28] The *Chronicon* has been frequently dismissed as an inferior work in comparison with its exemplar. Yet, at least where the entry for Demetrius is concerned, it does present a degree of competence and originality. For one thing, the dates and traditions cited by the *Chronicon*, even when in error, were faithfully copied from *K. al-tawārīkh*. Moreover, the author of the *Chronicon* made some original contributions that betray an independent reading of the HP. Textually, *K. al-tawārīkh* and the *Chronicon* appear to rely upon an early version of HP-V that still retained much of the verbiage of the primitive recension.[29] Although the entries are brief, important details confirm this conclusion: both texts document an odd tradition that seems to reflect a misreading of a sentence in the HP-V,[30] and the *Chronicon*'s version of the ordeal reflects elaborations only attested in the HP-V. Additionally, in spite of his propensity to cite conflicting dates when they are available, Abū Shākir does not cite any of the variant dates cited in HP-P (several of which appear in the terse biographies penned for Demetrius's predecessors). In sum, the *Chronicon* is clearly dependent upon *K. al-tawārīkh*, and both draw upon an early version of HP-V. The virtues of both texts are best appreciated in chapter seven's discussion of Demetrius's Arabic dossier, and in Text V, where the entries for Demetrius are translated, and may be readily compared, based on MS Berlin or. Fol. 434's recension of *K. al-tawārīkh* and L. Cheikho's edition of the *Chronicon*.

The fourth text, the Coptic-Arabic *Synaksār* (*Synaxarium*), has been traditionally attributed to Buṭrus Sawīrus al-Jamīl, the early thirteenth-century Bishop of Malīj,[31] but the book circulated in several recensions and various entries fluctuated over time and (re-)positioned to reflect regional variants in the liturgical cycle (Text V).[32] The customary attribution poses some difficulties, however, in that the *Synaksār* appears to draw upon the HP-V, which, at the moment, cannot be dated prior to the mid-thirteenth century. The issue is considerably complicated by the facts that the various recensions of the work are largely documented in later manuscripts, and that the *Synaksār* alternates between quoting, paraphrasing, and tersely summarizing its source texts. Hence, it is difficult to determine its dating based on the wording of a passage or the absence of any single motif. Nonetheless, the wording of various accounts in the *Synaksār* and the traditions it elaborations upon tend to resonate best within a later thirteenth-century context (e.g. compare the entries for Demetrius on Bābah 12th and that in the *Chronicon*: Texts V and VI). This need not eliminate the possibility that Bishop Buṭrus contributed to the drafting of the *Synaksār*, but it is to stress that it did not remain fixed after it left his hands. Here, the dominant recension of the *Synaksār* – which is accessible in the extant medieval manuscripts and may be positively identified in the writings of fourteenth-century authors – is treated as a product of the second half of the thirteenth century. The composition may have been published earlier, but it was certainly in

circulation by 1300 CE (see below). The Coptic-Arabic *Synaxarium* may be accessed in three versions. Jacques Forget and René Basset published two independent editions of the work based on medieval manuscripts, though neither made a clear distinction between Lower and Upper Egyptian manuscripts and recensions.[33] A third version, the current ecclesiastical rendition, may be read as a living text – for better or worse.[34] ᶜAbd al-Masīḥ Mīkhā'īl and Armanyus Ḥabashī produced the first edition in 1937 (a precursor was *Kitāb al-ṣādiq al-amīn fī akhbār al-qiddīsīn*, 1913). In it, they modernized the *Synaxarium* by embedding commemorations for events and personalities under Ottoman and British rule. Subsequent editors of that recension – over the past thirty years, but particularly in the last decade – have continued to modernize the book, but, unfortunately, have taken such tremendous liberties in "correcting" and augmenting it that they have rendered it more suitable for a study of modern Coptic sensibilities and attitudes rather than historical research.[35]

Abū al-Barakāt ibn Kabar's (d. 1324 CE) encyclopedic *Muṣbāḥ al-ẓulmā* (*A Lamp in the Darkness*) is the latest text discussed here.[36] It will prove particularly useful in tracing the Lenten reforms attributed to Demetrius. Initially, Abū al-Barakāt made a good living as the chief secretary for the Mamluk *amīr* and historian Baybars al-Manṣūri (d. 1325 CE); he even assisted Baybars in drafting a key history of early Mamluk rule, *Zubdat al-fikra fī ta'rīkh al-hijra* (*Quintessence of Thought in Islamic History*).[37] Abū al-Barakāt retired from his secular position in 1293 CE, when the sultan ordered the firing of Christians from the administration unless they converted to Islam.[38] By 1300 CE, he had been appointed a priest at the Muᶜallaqah church, the patriarchal residence at that time. Two decades later, in 1321 CE, violent anti-Christian riots forced Abū al-Barakāt to leave his church and flee for his life. In those lamentable last years of that remarkable man's life (1321–24 CE), his old patron, Baybars, likely protected him. Abū al-Barakāt spent his final days writing several works, prominent among which is the *Muṣbāḥ* (see Text VII), in which he quoted from the *Synaxarium*. This enables us to organize the late sources at our disposal in a fairly secure chronological sequence: HP-V was in circulation by 1250 CE; Abū Shākir utilized an early version of that recension in his *K. al-tawārīkh* in 1257 CE; a few years later, in 1260 CE, an anonymous author compiled the *Chronicon orientale*, based on chapters from *K. al-Tawārīkh*; meanwhile, sometime between 1250 and 1300 CE, the dominant recension of the *Synaxarium*, which is dependent upon the HP-V, was put into circulation; finally, Abū al-Barakāt drew upon or demonstrated knowledge of all of these sources in his *Muṣbāḥ*, which he wrote a few years prior to his passing in 1324 CE.

A survey of literature beyond the fourteenth century (including the Ethiopic *Synaxarium* and Bohairic doxologies: see Texts VIII and IX) did not yield any new traditions,[39] only minor variations on preexisting themes. Thus, the fourteenth century marks the closing of the patriarch's

hagiographic dossier. To facilitate an analysis of Demetrius's corpus amid this unwieldy assortment of texts, recensions, and editions, this study maintains the admittedly imperfect partition between "early" and "late" Arabic sources. Hence, Eutychius's *Nazm al-jawhar* and the primitive recension of Demetrius's biography in the *History of the Patriarchs* (HP-P) are deemed "early" traditions; all other Arabic sources are "late." Bohairic Coptic literature, which is wholly dependent on Arabic accounts and does not retain any of the distinctive readings in the Sahidic Coptic encomium, is included in this last category as well.

Notes

1 Eusebius, *EH* 6.19.17–18.
2 See chapter one, note 18.
3 R. Helm, *Eusebius' Werke* 7: *Die Chronik des Hieronymus*, 3rd ed. GCS 47 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1984). Originally composed by Eusebius, the *Chronicle* only survives in Jerome's Latin rendition of the text, which he edited and augmented. See the 2005 online edition posted on <www.tertullian.org>, which contains the Latin text and an English translation.
4 Jerome, *On Illustrious Men*, s.v. Origen (ch. 54); for the epistles, see I. Hilberg ed., *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae*, CSEL 54–6 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1996); W.H. Fremantle, "The Letters of St. Jerome," NPNF 2.6: 1–295; Photius, *Bibliotheca*, §§ 117 and 118; René Henry, ed./trans., *Photius, Bibliothèque*, vol. 2 (Paris: Société d'édition les Belles lettres, 1959–91); N.G. Wilson, *Photius: The Bibliotheca. A Selection Translated with Notes* (London: Duckworth, 1994).
5 Tito Orlandi, "Flavian of Ephesus," *CoptEncyc* 4:1117.
6 Norman Russell, *Theophilus of Alexandria*, Early Church Fathers (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pgs. 18–27 and ch. 5.
7 *EncDem* Cop. text, pgs. 137–56; Eng. trans., pgs. 390–408; cf. Text II. I have also consulted a microfiche copy of the manuscript. The double-date clause of this manuscript is problematic; it is dated to the Year of the Martyrs 719 (1003 CE) and Hijra date 363 (973 CE). As Budge notes, one would expect the Hijra date to read ⲧϥⲅ (393), not the attested ⲧⲍⲅ (363). For a discussion of the importance of this text in reconstructing lectionary readings, see Youhanna Nessim Youssef, "Two Liturgical Quotations from Coptic Hagiographical Texts," *Abr-Nahrain* [now *Ancient Near Eastern Studies*] 35 (1998), 145–49.
8 See Samir Khalil Samir's "Book of Epact," *CoptEncyc* 2:409–11; Texts VIII and IX, below.
9 That passage identifies Maundy Thursday as the normative day for performing baptisms in Alexandria (*EncDem*, *fol.* 41v). Still, that date was never exclusive, and that preference clearly fluctuated at various historical junctures.
10 Cf. HP-V, PO 1.4: 121–23. I diverge from C.B. Horn's reading of these references (29 Hatūr and 25 Baramūda) as distinct from each other; aside from the name change, the two incidents are identical. Cf. Cornelia B. Horn, "Reconstructing Women's History from Christian Arabic Sources: The Witness of the Arabic *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria* Regarding Challenges and Ecclesial Opportunities Family Life Provided for Women," *Parole de l'Orient* 32 (2007), 435.
11 Orlandi, "Flavian of Ephesus," 1117.

12 The account is in the HP-P, -V, and the Synaxarium, but it is lacking in earlier literature relating to Peter of Alexandria. See Donald Spanel, "Two fragmentary Sa'idic Coptic texts pertaining to Peter I. Patriarch of Alexandria (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris: MSS. coptes 129[14], *foll.* 109, 131," *Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie copte* 24 (1982), 96–7.

13 Samir Khalil Samir, "The Earliest Arab Apology for Christianity (c. 750)," in *Christian Arabic Apologetics during the Abbasid Period (750–1258)*, ed. S.K. Samir and J. Nielsen (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 57–114; Sidney H. Griffith, *Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); idem, *The Bible in Arabic: The Scriptures of the 'People of the Book' in the Language of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013).

14 See Johannes den Heijer's "Coptic Historiography in the Fatimid, Ayyubid and Early Mamluk Periods," *Medieval Encounters* 2 (1996), 67–98; S.H. Griffith, *Church in the Shadow of the Mosque*.

15 Samuel Rubenson, "Translating the Tradition: Some Remarks on the Arabization of the Patristic Heritage in Egypt," *Medieval Encounters* 2.1 (1996), 4–14; ibid., "The Transition from Coptic to Arabic," *Égypte/Monde arabe* 27–8 (1996), 77–91; Tonio Sebastian Richter, "Greek, Coptic, and the 'Language of the Hijra': The Rise and Decline of the Coptic Language in Late Antique and Medieval Egypt," in *From Hellenism to Islam*, ed. H.M. Cotton et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 401–46; Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 5. The literature is surveyed in Adel Y. Sidarus, "The Copto-Arabic Renaissance in the Middle Ages: Characteristics and Socio-Political Context," *Coptica* 1 (2002), 1–22; A. Wadi[c] Abullif, "Introduzione alla letteratura arabo-cristiana dei Copti (in arabo)," *Studia Orientalia Christiana* 29–30 (1998), 441–92; J. den Heijer, "Coptic Historiography."

16 On that era, see Carl F. Petry, ed., *The Cambridge History of Egypt, Vol. 1, Islamic Egypt 641–1517* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Mark N. Swanson, *The Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt (641–1517)*, The Popes of Egypt 2 (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2010); Kurt J. Werthmuller, *Coptic Identity and Ayyubid Politics in Egypt 1218–1250* (Cairo and New York: American University in Cairo Press, 2010); Maged S. A. Mikhail, "An Orientation to the Sources and Study of Early Islamic Egypt (641–868 CE)," *History Compass* 8.8 (2010), 929–50. See also chapter seven, note 25.

17 Eutychius, *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini annales (Tārīkh)*, ed. L. Cheikho, B.C. de Vaux, and H. Zayat, CSCO 50, 51, *scr. arabici* 6, 7 (Beirut and Paris: Secretariat du Corpus SCO, 1905–1909; repr. Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1954); Michael Breydy, *Das Annalenwerk des Eutychios von Alexandrien*, CSCO 471, 472, *scr. arabici* 44, 45 (Louvain: Peeters, 1985); also see idem, *Études sur Saʿid ibn Batriq et ses sources* (Louvain: Peeters, 1983); Sidney H. Griffith, "Apologetics and Historiography in the Annals of Eutychius of Alexandria: Christian Self-Definition in the World of Islam," in *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage*, ed. Rifaat Ebied and Herman Teule, Eastern Christian Studies 5 (Louvain and Paris: Peeters, 2004), 65–90.

18 Johannes den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansur ibn Mufarrig et l'historiographie Copto-Arabe: Étude sur la composition de l'Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie* (Louvain: E. Peeters, 1989); M.N. Swanson, *Coptic Papacy in Islamic Egypt*; idem, "Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr ibn Mufarrij al-Iskandarānī," in David Thomas and Alex Mallett *et al.*, eds., *Christian-Muslim Relations: A Bibliographical History*, vol. 3, *(1050–1200)* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2011), 217–22.

19 Den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansur*, 77–8. The older, "primitive," recension, is preserved in C.F. Seybold, ed., *Severus ibn al-Muqaffa'. Alexandrinische*

Patriarchengeschichte von S. Marcus bis Michael I (61–767), nach der ältesten 1266 geschriebenen Hamburger Handschrift im arabischen Urtextherausgegeben (Hamburg: L. Gräfe, 1912). [HP-P hereafter. References are to page and line.] The later "vulgate" recensions is available in two publications. C.F. Seybold published the Arabic text with a Latin translation in *Severus Ben el-Moqaffa'. Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum*, CSCO 52, 59, *scriptores arabici* 8, 9, ser. 3, pts. 1–2 (Louvain: Secretariat du Corpus SCO, 1904–1910; repr. 1962). A second publication, containing the Arabic text and an English translation, was published by B. Evetts, ed./trans., *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria*, PO I.2, I.4, V.1, X.5 (Paris, 1904–15; repr. Firmin-Didot, 1947–1959). HP-V hereafter. References are to page and line. On the HP-V, see Perrine Pilette, "*L'Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie*: Une nouvelle évaluation de la configuration du texte en recensions," *Le Muséon* 126.3–4 (2013), 419–50.

20 A project headed by Prof. Johannes den Heijer aims to change that.

21 Tito Orlandi, *Storia della Chiesa di Alessandria*, 2 vols. (Milan: Cisalpino, 1968–1970). The most complete version is now available online through Orlandi's *Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari* [CMCL]; idem, "The Coptic Ecclesiastical History: A Survey," in *The World of Early Egyptian Christianity: Language, Literature, and Social Context*, ed. James E. Goehring and Janet A. Timbie (Washington DC: Catholic University Press, 2007); David W. Johnson, "Further Fragments of a Coptic History of the Church: Cambridge OR. 1699 R," *Enchoria* 6 (1976), 7–17; H. Brakmann, "Ein oder zwei koptische Kirchengeschichten?" *Muséon* 87 (1974), 129–42.

22 On the use of Eusebius in Coptic and Coptic-Arabic literature, see W.E. Crum, "Eusebius and Coptic Church Histories," *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 24 (1902), 68–84; Johannes Den Heijer, "*À propos de la traduction copte de l'Histoire ecclésiastique d'Eusèbe de Césarée: nouvelles remarques sur les parties perdues*," in *Acts du IVe Congrès Copte*, 2 vols., ed. M. Rassart-Debergh and J. Ries (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1992), II.185–93; and Part Two of Text III, below.

23 There are two sets of concluding remarks HP-V 30.4–9 and 36.4–5 (cf Text III). The distinction is clear in both recensions, but an editorial gloss in HP-P, which was omitted in HP-V, further accentuates the division: "Another recension, [written] in the hand of Abū al-Bishr the scribe (*ibn al-ḥurūf*), may God rest his soul, at the Monastery of Nahya, contains the rest of the biography of Father Demetrius" (18.8–9, my emphasis). Ibn al-Ḥurūf is likely an Arabic translation of the title "scribe" or possibly, "the grammarian."

24 On Mīkhā'īl al-Damrāwī, the bishop of Tinnīs, see Mark N. Swanson, "Michael of Damrū," in D. Thomas and A. Mallett *et al*., eds., *Christian-Muslim Relations*, vol. 3, pgs. 84–8; cf. chapter five, note 24.

25 See Bishop Ṣamū'īl and Nabīh Kāmil, eds., *Tarīkh al-ābā' al-batārika li al-anbā yūsāb usquf fūwah* (Cairo: n.p., n.d.); Samuel Moawad, "Zur Originalität der Yūsāb von Fūwah zugeschriebenen Patriarchengeschichte," *Muséon* 119 (2006), 255–70.

26 L. Cheikho, ed., *Petrus Ibn Rahib: Chronicon Orientale*, CSCO 45, 46 (Beirut: E. Typographeo catholico, 1903; repr. Louvain: L. Durbecq, 1955). A critical edition of the first part of *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* has been published recently by Samuel Moawad: *Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib: Kitāb al-tawārīkh*, vol. 1 (chs. 1–47), (Cairo: The School of Alexandria, 2016); Adel Y. Sidarus, *Ibn ar-Rāhibs Leben und Werk: Ein koptisch-arabischer Enzyklopädist des 7./13. Jahrhunderts*, Islamkundliche Untersuchungen 36 (Freiburg: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1975), chs. 1–2, esp. pgs. 41–5; idem, "Ibn al-Rahib," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*,

Supp. to vols. 1–3 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1982), 396; idem, "Copto-Arabic Universal Chronography. Between Antiquity, Judaism, Christianity and Islam: The *K. al-Tawārīkh* of N. al-Khilāfa Abū Shākir Ibn al-Rāhib (655 Heg. / 973 Mart. / 1257 Chr. / 1569 Alex. / 6750 AM)," *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 11 (2014), 221–50; idem, "Les sources multiples de l'encyclopédie calendaristique et chronographique *Kitāb al-Tawārīḫ* d'Abū Šākir Ibn al-Rāhib (1257 A.D.)," *Collectanea Christiana Orientalia* 13 (2016).

27 See Adel Y. Sidarus, "Families of Coptic Dignitaries (*Buyūtāt*) under the Ayyūbids and the Golden Age of Coptic Arabic Literature (13th cent.)," *Journal of Coptic Studies* 15 (2013), 189–208.

28 See the previous note. The publications of Adel Sidarus and Samuel Moawad are indispensable here. The *Chronicon* also samples chapters 47–9 of *K. al-tawārīkh*.

29 He may also have had a copy of the *EncDem*, or a translation of it. See chapter seven, note 27.

30 See chapter seven, the argument notated by notes 43–7.

31 O.H.E. Burmester, "On the Date and Authorship of the Arabic *Synaxarium* of the Coptic Church," *JTS* 39 (1938), 249–53; René-Georges Coquin and A.S. Atiya, "Synaxarion, Copto-Arabic," *CoptEncyc* 7: 2171–90. The attribution to Bishop Buṭrus is cited by Abū al-Barakat. The motivation to draft a Coptic-Arabic Synaxarium likely came from the Melkites; the Byzantine church had a Synaxarium as early as the late tenth century.

32 See chapter 47 in S. Moawad's edition of Abū Shākir's *K. al-tawārīkh*.

33 Jacques Forget, ed./trans., *Synaxarium I*, CSCO vols. 46, 47, 48 (Beirut, Louvain, Paris: Peeters, 1905–1926), pages are consecutively numbered; idem, *Synaxarium II*, CSCO vols. 67, 78, 90 (Beirut, Louvain, Paris: Peeters, 1905–1932), pages are consecutively numbered; René Basset, ed./trans., *Le Synaxaire arabe-jacobite (rédaction copte)*, PO 3, 13, 56, 78, 84, 100 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1905–1928). The *Synaxarium* often demonstrates the development of traditions; see the discussion in Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 11.

34 Liturgically, the relevant *Synaksār* entry is read immediately after the lection from the Book of Acts. While it is not considered divinely inspired, the Coptic church perceives the book as a continuation of the historical accounts in the Book of Acts.

35 Many of the "corrections" introduced are themselves based on questionable reasoning and assumptions. Moreover, the widely available English translation of this popular recension is riddled with inaccuracies.

36 A.S. Atiya, "Ibn Kabar," *CoptEncyc* 4: 1267–68; Abū al-Barakāt ibn Kabar, *Muṣbāḥ al-zulmā fī īḍāḥ al-khidmā*, Bishop Ṣamū'īl, ed., 2 vols. (Cairo: Mu'asasat Mīnā lil-ṭibāᶜah, 1998). I was unable to consult Samir Khalil Samir's edition of the *Muṣbāḥ* (Cairo: Maktabat al-kārūz, 1971). The title is usually translated *Lamp of Darkness*, but Sidney Griffith's rendering, followed here, is more accurate.

37 Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Zubdat al-fikra fī ta'rīkh al-hijra: History of the Early Mamluk Period*, ed. D.S. Richards, Bibliotheca Islamica 42 (Berlin: Das Arab Buch, 1998).

38 M.N. Swanson, *Coptic Papacy*, 102. This edict was repeated on 1301, 1321, 1354 CE.

39 E.A. Wallis Budge, *The Book of the Saints of the Ethiopian Church*, 4 vols. (London: Cambridge University Press, 1928), s.v. 12 Ṭĕḳĕmt (I.141–144), 10 Khĕdâr (I.229–30).

3

EARLY IMPRINTS

While chapter two's survey of the extant sources may lead to the conclusion that a sufficient quantity of texts has survived to facilitate a critical study of the archbishop's long tenure, this impression could be misleading. Nearly all the evidence postdates the historical figure by centuries and much lacks corroboration. In the earliest sources, and even those stemming from the various Origenist controversies, Demetrius appears as a marginal figure consistently eclipsed by Origen. The only autonomous information retained by patristic sources amounts to a few terse references that document the bishop's elevation to the episcopacy, the date of his death, and the claim that he commissioned the Christian philosopher Pantaenus (d. *ca*. 200 CE) to preach in "India."[1] These scattered allusions may be supplemented by a tenth-century gloss that identifies Demetrius as the first Alexandrian prelate to appoint bishops to other Egyptian dioceses and an eleventh-century passage that places the baptism of Dionysius of Alexandria at his hands.[2]

The paucity of early evidence is perplexing. Demetrius's tenure spanned four decades during which Alexandrian Christianity emerged, displaying considerable sophistication, and his turbulent interactions with Origen constituted one of the most contentious episodes in early Christian history. Yet early discussions of the bishop are few.[3] Ancient authorities ascribe several epistles to the archbishop – one of which was ironically used in defense of Origen – but all such writings are now lost.[4] Nothing Demetrius wrote survives in Greek or Coptic literature, and the only attribution in Arabic, the *Book of Epact*, subsequent analysis will prove erroneous.[5] Moreover, much of the early evidence stems from individuals who admired Origen but did not hold Demetrius in high regard, and even later sources written by vehement anti-Origenists hardly mention the archbishop. Lacking any direct evidence, an assessment of the historical figure necessarily rests upon the writings of his contemporaries and the generations immediately succeeding them.

The earliest relevant text is by Alexander of Jerusalem (martyred in 250 CE),[6] who participated in Origen's contentious ordination and had rallied to his support by openly criticizing the Archbishop of Alexandria. Around 225 CE

Alexander and Theoctistus wrote an apologetic letter,[7] *On behalf of Origen against Demetrius*, only a fragment of which survives.[8] By 232 CE, Demetrius had passed away and Origen had left Alexandria and permanently settled in Caesarea.[9] Origen's relations with Heraclas, who led the School of Alexandria (the *Didaskaleion*) after his dismissal and subsequently succeeded Demetrius as bishop of the city,[10] seem to have been less than ideal. This is surprising given that Heraclas, along with his brother Plutarch, had converted to Christianity, at least in part, due to Origen's teaching, and that Origen had personally selected him to "share in the instruction" at the School.[11] Yet, once seated upon the Throne of Saint Mark, Heraclas failed to extend anything resembling an olive branch to his teacher. In fact, a marginal tradition attested in Patriarch Theophilus's *First Synodal Letter* (*ca*. 400 CE) and the First Greek *Life of Pachomius* overlooks Demetrius altogether and places the banishment of Origen from Alexandria at Heraclas's hands.[12] A later tradition cited by Photius in his *Ten Questions and Answers* details a legendary account (perhaps the one Theophilus had in mind) in which Origen returned to Alexandria after Demetrius's death only to be expelled from the city by Heraclas.[13] Purportedly, Origen then sought refuge with another Egyptian bishop, Ammonius of Thmuis (Tilbanah), but Heraclas pursued him there as well. That tradition found its way into Part Two of Demetrius's biography in the *History of the Patriarchs*, where it is situated within Demetrius's patriarchate. This provided the author-editors of the HP with an opportunity to depict Demetrius as a zealous hierarch who did not want a dangerous heretic anywhere within his jurisdiction (see chapter seven and Text III).

Relations were arguably better with another of Origen's leading disciples. Once Heraclas took over Origen's advanced classes at the *Didaskaleion*, Dionysius taught the introductory courses; in 232 CE, he then succeeded Heraclas as the head of the School, and subsequently as Bishop of Alexandria in December, 248 CE.[14] Dionysius's theology was heavily influenced by Origen,[15] and he later wrote a personal letter to him on martyrdom, likely exhorting Origen in the midst of the Decian persecution (250 CE) in which he was singled out and severely tortured.[16] Additionally, Photius, quoting Stephan Gobar (fl. mid-6th c.), maintains that Dionysius also wrote a letter to Theotecnus of Caesarea after Origen's death, praising his former teacher's virtues.[17] Still, Dionysius may have been the first Alexandrian to contest Origen's interpretation of the "tunics of skins" in Genesis 3:21,[18] challenging the doctrine of the preexistence of souls. If true, then Peter of Alexandria (300–311 CE) would reiterate this same correction half a century later.

Dionysius's adherence to Origen's legacy was not anomalous. Every leading figure associated with the *Didaskaleion*, from Theognostus to Pierius – "Origen the younger," with whom Pamphilus studied – to the last notable head of the School, Didymus the Blind (d. 398 CE), was an intellectual heir to Origen.[19] This goes a long way in explaining the rapid decline of the

School after Didymus's death, just two years prior to Theophilus's condemnation of Origen in 400 CE. At that juncture, Didymus's successor, the barely attested Rhodon, seeking a more hospitable ecclesiastical environment, moved the School from Alexandria to Side, in Pamphylia.[20] In all, Origen's legacy in Alexandria remained strong and largely positive through the third and fourth centuries. Inadvertently, the intense scholarly interest over the past few decades in the founding of Caesarea as a center of learning, due to Origen's resettlement there and the means by which Pamphilus and Eusebius presented themselves as his successors, has often obscured an equally significant fact:[21] long after Origen left Alexandria, the *Didaskaleion* remained an institution openly carrying on the *magister*'s legacy.

Moreover, it is worthwhile to distinguish between the perceptions of Origen within Egypt, where some of his teachings were singled out and scrutinized, and outside of the province where he would be first depicted as an outright heretic. Early in the fourth century, Peter of Alexandria sought to correct two aspects of Origen's legacy, particularly in relation to the nature of resurrected bodies, and the interpretation of the tunics of skin in Genesis 3:21 – as stated above, this may have been a correction already forwarded by Dionysius.[22] Still, as Jon F. Dechow and especially Tim Vivian and Ilaria Ramelli have persuasively argued, this hardly qualifies Peter as an anti-Origenist.[23] Additionally, T. Vivian's analysis has demonstrated that the blatantly anti-Origen passages in Peter's extant works were later additions.[24]

Origen's reputation in Egypt does not appear to have suffered much due to the limited critiques forwarded by patriarchs Dionysius and Peter; their successors continued to be inspired by him. Origen's thought clearly informed Alexander of Alexandria's (313–28 CE) theology.[25] Later, still, he was thought of quite positively and openly lauded at the middle of the fourth century by no less than the "Father of Orthodoxy," Athanasius himself,[26] along with a host of leading monastics, including Antony the Great, Macarius the Great, Amoun, Pambo, and Paul of Tamma (not to mention John Cassian and Evagrius), down to the very end of the fourth century.[27] Judging by the vitriol in the writings of Shenoute of Atripe (d. 466 CE), however, the perception of Origen's legacy in Egypt, even among monastics, changed radically during the first half of the fifth century.[28] Read in this light, a distinct pattern emerges, which may account in part for the dearth of sources pertaining to Demetrius throughout the patristic era. In spite of Demetrius's efforts, the Alexandrians maintained a positive impression of Origen and his teachings. If anything, one could argue that the Alexandrians voiced their disapproval of Demetrius's actions through their omission of the whole incident. Conversely, the earliest authors to challenge Origen's orthodoxy – as opposed to criticizing specific aspects of his theology – were largely non-Alexandrians (e.g. Methodius of Olympus and Epiphanius of Salamis), until Patriarch Theophilus took up the matter at the very end of

the fourth century and condemned Origen in 400 CE, an act met with mixed reactions from various circles.[29]

The first author to criticize Origen and his writings as such was Methodius of Olympus (martyred *ca.* 310 CE) who, especially in his *On the Resurrection*, but in several other works as well, launched a major, though at times misinformed and intellectually muddled, polemical campaign against the *magister*.[30] At various junctures, Methodius appears to have misunderstood, if not misrepresented, Origen's views, which he then proceeded to correct by forwarding arguments that were fashioned by none other than Origen himself.[31] It is with Methodius that a true anti-Origen author emerges, prompting the *Defense* (or *Apology*) drafted by Pamphilus and Eusebius.[32] It is also with Methodius that an odd but persistent literary pattern first manifests itself: throughout his critique, Methodius never references Demetrius's dismissal of Origen, or the fact that it was over a jurisdictional issue (one which Demetrius could have very easily overlooked).[33] Granted, much of Methodius's writings is fragmentary; nonetheless, this pattern can be observed with every anti-Origen author.

It was Methodius's writings that prompted Pamphilus (martyred in 309 CE), an ardent advocate of Origen, to compose the bulk of the *Defense of Origen*.[34] Eusebius had assisted his mentor in editing the first five books of that defense, and then proceeded to complete the work by drafting its concluding sixth book.[35] Even more significant however, was Eusebius's depiction of Origen in the Sixth Book of his *Ecclesiastical History*, which was as much history as hagiography and apology (see chapter six, and Text I.H and I).

Eustathius of Antioch (d. 337 CE) followed upon Methodius's attack, though in a much more restricted sense. In *ca.* 320 CE, he took issue with Origen's interpretation of 1 Kings 28 (LXX; 1 Samuel 28) – the incident involving the "Witch" of Endor.[36] It was perhaps he who first drew a line from Origen's thought to all heresy, particularly that of Arius (while ignoring that it was likewise the basis for Nicean orthodoxy),[37] an argument that would be articulated and propagated on a much greater scale in the 370s by Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis (367–403 CE), in his *Ancoratus* and *Panarion*.

In 374 CE, Epiphanius launched his first attack against Origen in the *Ancoratus* (especially pars. 52–5, 58–63);[38] two years later, he completed the lengthy chapter sixty-four of his *Medicine Chest*, the *Panarion*, which he simply titled "Against Origen."[39] Together, these two texts constitute the most aggressive attack against Origen's person and theology since Methodius's. It comes as no surprise that the longest surviving extract of Methodius's *On the Resurrection* is the passage quoted in the *Panarion* (64.12–62). Epiphanius began chapter sixty-four with his own *Life of Origen*, in which he maligns Eusebius's hero, largely through half-truths and what Jon Dechow has appropriately labeled "gossip."[40] Notably, just as

with Methodius, Epiphanius omits any references to Demetrius, the historical circumstances surrounding Origen's departure from Alexandria, or that he continued to live, teach, and serve as a cleric until his death.

Still, even the *Panarion* functioned as nothing more than a prequel to the first Origenist Controversy proper, which crisscrossed the Mediterranean and involved prominent figures from every major see.[41] That controversy, which has been the subject of several erudite monographs, lies beyond the scope of the present study and, in general, the ensuing literature has very little to contribute to the topic at hand.[42] Only a few gleanings may be mentioned here. One is the above-cited tradition in which Theophilus praises Heraclas rather than Demetrius for removing Origen from Alexandria.[43] Also significant is that in his early writings, that is, those written before he became embroiled in the Origenist controversy, Jerome's comments about Demetrius were reserved, even implicitly critical and sarcastic,[44] and later his ardent anti-Origenist views did not incline him to vindicate the actions of the archbishop, who hardly figures in his later writings at all.

Surprisingly, the literature relating to the First Origenist Controversy exerts a very limited bearing on the study of the historical Demetrius or his actions. If anything, the heated missives and tracts launched back and forth during the height of that dispute seldom mention the archbishop. The same pattern occurs in the surviving textual sources pertaining to the Second Origenist Controversy in the mid-sixth century. While the writings of Origen, Evagrius, and Didymus the Blind were anathematized in the Second Council of Constantinople in 553 CE, none of the extant authors or writings from that period was particularly concerned with the person or actions of Demetrius.[45]

The nature of the extant patristic evidence perhaps renders a search for the "historical" Demetrius an academic chimera. Still, some basic but fundamental conclusions emerge. Early sources consistently depict Demetrius as a figure engrossed in the debates and issues of his day. He comes across as an individual who is quite at home in a Hellenistic milieu – even his very name is thoroughly Hellenic (as opposed to Origen, whose name means "born of Horus"). Additionally, nothing in the early sources suggests that Demetrius was illiterate, came from a parochial background, was married, or reformed liturgical practices. Minimally, one may conclude that the moorings of Demetrius's hagiography, as it was propagated during the middle ages, were not documented by his contemporaries or immediate successors.

The Sahidic Coptic tradition built upon this meager base by providing the themes that would come to dominate the archbishop's sacred biography. One tradition in particular would prove foundational: Demetrius's chaste marriage. Apart from this singular, though pivotal amendment, however, the early Coptic tradition largely substantiates the conclusions gleaned from the earlier Greek and Latin sources.

Notes

1 Jerome, *On Illustrious Men*, 36; cf. Eusebius, *EH* 5.10; 5.22, 6.2 and 6.26; Jerome, *Epistles*, 70.4; cf. W.C. Griggs, *Early Egyptian Christianity*, 56–8, 91–2. In Greek, Latin, and medieval Arabic literature, "India" may also designate Persia or Ethiopia. Jerome, however, did understand the reference in the traditional sense.

2 Eutychius, *Nazm*, CSCO 50, pg. 104.12; HP-P, 23.18–9; *Chronicon orientale*, 108; see Texts IV and V.

3 In general, see Birger A. Pearson, "Earliest Christianity in Egypt: Some Observations," in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, ed. B.A. Pearson and J.E. Goehring (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986). W. Telfer, "Episcopal Succession in Egypt," *JEH* 3 (1952), 1–13, allows Demetrius, whom he calls "the second founder of the Church of Alexandria," to play a very significant role. It is a tempting interpretation repeatedly alluded to by W.C. Griggs in his *Early Egyptian Christianity* and S.J. Davis, *Early Coptic Papacy* (chs. 1–2), but, more conservatively, the conclusion lacks any definitive historical evidence.

4 Photius, *Bibliotheca*, §§ 117 and 118; P. Nautin, *Origène*, 99–114; see Text I.

5 Demetrius is not referenced in M. Geerard's *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, T. Orlandi's *Clavis Patrum Copticorum*, or G. Graf's *Geschichte der Christlichen Arabischen Literatur*. Demetrius is referenced as the author of an Arabic sermon on Saint Victor. It is likely spurious, but I have not been able to examine that manuscript; Pope Victor of Rome was martyred in 199, but the popular martyr by that name died under Diocletian, well after Demetrius's tenure; see manuscript 470 in Georg Graf's *Catalogue de manuscrits arabes chrétiens conservés au Caire, Studi e testi* 63 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1934).

6 Alexander was the bishop of Caesarea before he became the bishop of Jerusalem. Such a transfer from one bishopric to another was highly irregular and often criticized in the early church. In Alexandria, it was absolutely prohibited for any bishop to be nominated to become patriarch – the Bishop of Alexandria – until the late nineteenth century. Here, Alexander's relocation has so many extenuating circumstances and oddities that it can hardly be considered normative.

7 Timothy D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), ch. 6, favors a slightly different chronology for the events described here and in the following chapter.

8 Eusebius, *EH* 6.19.17–8. For Bishop Alexander, see Jerome, *On Illustrious Men*, ch. 62.

9 Joseph A. Fischer, "Die alexandrinischen Synoden gegen origenes," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 28 (1979), 1–16; Richard P.C. Hanson, "Was Origen Banished from Alexandria?" *Studia Patristica* 17.2 (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1982), 904–96.

10 On the School, see Annewies van den Hoek "The 'Catechetical' School of Early Christian Alexandria and Its Philonic Heritage," *Harvard Theological Review* 90.1 (1997), 59–87; Roelof van den Broek, "The Christian 'School' of Alexandria in the Second and Third Centuries," in *Studies in Gnosticism and Alexandrian Christianity* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996), ch. 12; Clemens Scholten, "Die alexandrinische Katechetenschule," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 38 (1995), 16–37; M.P. Roncaglia, "Pantène et la Didascalée d'Alexandrie," in *A Tribute to Arthur Vööbus: Studies in Early Christian Literature and Its Environment, Primarily in the Syrian East*, ed. R.H. Fischer (Chicago: Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 1977), 211–33; Manfred Hornschuh, "Das Leben des Origenes und die Entstehung der alexandrinischen Schule," *Zeitschrift für die Kirchengeschichte* 71 (1960), 1–25, 193–214.

11 Eusebius, *EH*, 6.3 and 15.
12 N. Russell, *Theophilus of Alexandria*, 92, 192 n.17; Pachomius, *First Greek Life*: François Halkin, *Sancti Pachomii vitae Graecae*, Subsidia Hagiographica 19 (Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1932); Armand Veilleux, trans., Pachomian *Koinonia I: The* Life of Saint *Pachomius*, CS 45 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1980), par. 31; Veilleux discusses that recension of the *Life* on pages 4–6.
13 Photius, *Ten Questions and Answers*, Qn. 9; PG 104.1229–30; cf. John J.I. von Döllinger. *Hippolytus and Callistus*, trans. Alfred Plummer (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1876), 245.
14 Eusebius, *EH*, 6.29 and 6.35; Jerome, *On Illustrious Men*, ch. 69.
15 Ilaria L.E. Ramelli, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis: A Critical Assessment from the New Testament to Eriugena* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2013), 230–36; C.A. Beeley, *Unity of Christ*, 105–6, 158–60.
16 Eusebius, *EH*, 6.39.5 and 46.2.
17 Photius, *Bibliotheca* (Code. 232); see Adolf von Harnack, "The 'Sic et Non' of Stephanus Gobarus," *HTR* 16.3 (1923), 205–34; at 212 (se. II.16), and 233. On Gobar, see G. Bardy, "Le florilège d'Étienne Gobar," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 5 (1947), 5–30; 7 (1949), 51–2.
18 The pertinent text is attributed to Dionysius of Alexandria, though not without difficulties; see the discussion in T. Vivian, *St. Peter of Alexandria*, 111–16.
19 Eusebius, *EH*, 7.32.26, 30; Jerome, *On Illustrious Men*, ch. 76; Richard A. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late Antique Alexandria* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004); L.B. Radford, *Three Teachers of Alexandria, Theognostus, Pierius and Peter: A Study in the Early History of Origenism and Anti-Origenism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908).
20 Rhodon and the relocation of the school are mentioned in Philip of Side, Fragment 2: see Günther Christian Hansenin, ed., *Theodoros Anagnostes Kirchengeschichte*, GCS n.f. 3, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1995), 160; (= PG 39:229, frag. 11); Eng. trans. Andrew Eastbourne <www.tertullian.org/fathers/philip_of_side_fragments.htm>. Van den Broek, "The Christian 'School' of Alexandria," 205, interprets this in light of an increase in episcopal authority. Still, the relocation of the School can be interpreted as part of Theophilus's anti-Origenist campaign. The relocation eliminated the institutional memory of Origen from Alexandria shortly before his official condemnation in 400 CE.
21 Thomas C. Ferguson, *The Past Is a Prologue: The Revolution of Nicene Historiography* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005), 29–35; Joseph Verheyden, "Origen in the Making: Reading Between (and Behind) the Lines of Eusebius' 'Life of Origen' (HE 6)," in *Origeniana decima: Origen as Writer*, ed. S. Kaczmarek and H. Pietras (Louvain: Peeters, 2011), esp. 721, 724–5; Elizabeth C. Penland, "The History of the Caesarean Present: Eusebius and Narratives of Origen," in *Eusebius of Caesarea: Tradition and Innovations*, ed. A.P. Johnson, and J.M. Schott (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2013), 83–96.
22 Tim Vivian, *St. Peter of Alexandria*, 111–16.
23 Jon F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen* (Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1988), 108–12; Tim Vivian, *St. Peter of Alexandria*, 110–26; I.L.E. Ramelli, *The Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis*, 273–5.
24 Vivian, *St. Peter of Alexandria*, 97–100.
25 C.A. Beeley, *Unity of Christ*, 114–7.
26 Athanasius, *On the Council of Nicea* (*De decretis*), 27.1, references the "diligent," or "labor-intensive" (φιλοπόνου) Origen; H.G. Opitz, ed., *Athanasius*

Werke, vol. 2.1 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1940), 2: pg. 23; Athanasius likely wrote this text in 356 CE. In the fourth *Letter to Serapion* (4.9–10; new enumeration 4.2–3) Athanasius described Origen as "Very learned and industrious"; Dietmar Wyrwa, *Athanasius Werke I: Epistulae I-IV ad Serapionem* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010); PG 26: 637–76; Mark DelCogliano, Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, and Lewis Ayres, trans., *Works on the Holy Spirit* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2010). The new enumeration is according to Wyrwa's edition; on the textual history of that letter see the introduction by DelCogliano *et al*., *Works*, and Michael A.G. Haykin, *The Spirit of God: The Exegesis of 1 and 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 60. The letters were composed between 350 and 361. Also see Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.9 and 13; A. von Harnack, "The 'Sic et Non' of Stephanus Gobarus," 212 (sec. II.16); W.A. Bienert, "Athanasius von Alexandrien und Origenes," *Studia Patristica* 26 (2003), 360–64. Athanasius was also complementary of Theognostus; *Letters to Serapion*, 4.9, 11 (new enumeration 4.2 and 4); *On the Council of Nicea* (*De decretis*) 25.1–2. In general, see C.A. Beeley, *Unity of Christ*, ch. 3, and 166–68.

27 J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, chs. 7 and 8; Samuel Rubenson, "Origen in the Egyptian Monastic Tradition of the Fourth Century," *Origeniana Septima*, ed. W. Bienert (Louvain: Peeters, 1999), 319–37. On St. Antony, see S. Rubenson, *The Letters of St. Antony: Monasticism and the Making of a Saint* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), ch. 4, 180–82, 185–91. On the supposed anti-Origenism of St. Pachomius, see James E. Goehring, "Monastic Diversity and Ideological Boundaries in Fourth-Century Christian Egypt," *JECS* 5 (1997), 61–84; repr. idem, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999), at 208–13; William Harmless, *Desert Christians: An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 354–63.

28 Hugo Lundhaug, "Shenoute's Heresiological Polemics and Its Context(s)," in *Invention, Rewriting, Usurpation: Discursive Fights Over Religious Traditions in Antiquity*, ed. J. Ulrich, A.-C. Jacobsen, and D. Brakke (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2012), 239–61; J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, 230–40; Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 151–57.

29 Krastu Banev, *Theophilus of Alexandria and the First Origenist Controversy: Rhetoric and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), chs. 1–3.

30 L. Patterson, "*De Libero Arbitrio* and Methodius' attack on Origen," *Studia Patristica* 14 (1976), 160–6; idem, *Methodius of Olympus: Divine Sovereignty, Human Freedom, and Life in Christ* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997); see chapter one regarding Methodius's dates and attributes. Much of *On the Resurrection* is only accessible in Epiphanius's lengthy excerpt in *Panarion*, 64.12–62; Epiphanius, *Ancoratus und Panarion*, ed. Karl Holl, rev. Jürgen Dummer, vol. 2, GCS 31 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1980); Frank Williams, trans. *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis, Books II and III. De Fide*, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2013).

31 See J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, 112–13, 259–60; K. Banev, *Theophilus of Alexandria*, 10–2; E.A. Clark, *Origenist Controversy*, 89 n.27, 93–4; Caroline Walker Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), ch. 2, esp. 68–70, 81, 88.

32 C.A. Beeley, *Unity of Christ*, 50–5; J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, ch. 12. Photius (*Bibliotheca*, 117) cites a second, anonymous *Apology* that was depended on the one cited here; see J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, 254–58.

33 The notion that Demetrius's objection was based on Origen's status as a self-made eunuch is doubly problematic. First, one would have to accept the self-castration account as historical – see chapter five, note 1, below. Moreover, even if it were historical, the canon that would have invalidated Origen's ordination (Nicea, *Canon* 1) was not drafted for almost a century after Origen became a presbyter. Significantly, while other canons of Nicea simply recognize established norms (e.g. *Canon* 6), the first canon inaugurates a new standard. It permits clerics castrated against their will to retain their clerical rank, but those who had voluntarily castrated themselves were to cease exercising their office, and it stipulates that "*from henceforth* no such person should be promoted [to a clerical rank]."

34 See Nautin, *Origène*, ch. 3; I.L.E. Ramelli, *Christian Doctrine of Apokatastasis*, 279–85. Rufinus's version is found in PG 17.521–616, which has been superseded by René Amacker and Éric Junod, *Apologie pour Origène*, SC 464, 465 (Paris: Cerf, 2002); Thomas P. Scheck, *St. Pamphilus: Apology for Origen with the Letter of Rufinus on the Falsification of the Books of Origen*, FC 120 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2010); an older, partial translation is in NPNF 2.3: pgs. 420–27. Eusebius documented Pamphilus's martyrdom in his *Martyrs of Palestine*, §§ 7 and 11; G. Bardy, ed./trans., *Eusèbe de Césarée Histoire Ecclésiastique Livres VIII-X et les martyrs en Palestine*, SC 55 (Paris: Cerf, 1958; repr. 1967); NPNF 2.1: pgs. 342–56; and in his lost *Life of Pamphilus*.

35 On the extent of Origen's influence on Eusebius, see Charles Kannengiesser, "Eusebius of Caesarea, Origenist," in *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism*, ed. H.W. Attridge and G. Hata (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), 435–66; C.A. Beeley, *Unity of Christ*, 55–7.

36 Eustathius of Antioch, *De Engastrimytho contra Originem*; see "Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch, on the Belly-Myther, against Origen," in *The "Belly-Myther" of Endor*, translated by Rowan A. Greer and Margaret M. Mitchell (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), ch. 5; Joseph W. Trigg, "Eustathius of Antioch's Attack on Origen: What Is at Issue in an Ancient Controversy?" *The Journal of Religion* 75.2 (1995), 219–38; J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, 81, 95, 97, 114–24, 260–61. Eustathius clearly had access to Methodius's *On the Resurrection*.

37 For reliable assessments of Origen's theology, see A. Beeley, *Unity of Christ*, ch. 1; Ilaria L.E. Ramelli, "Origen, Greek Philosophy, and the Birth of the Trinitarian Meaning of Hypostasis," *HTR* 105.3 (2012), 302–50; eodem, "Origen's Anti-Subordinationism and Its Heritage in the Nicene and Cappadocian Line," *Vigiliae Christianae* 65.1 (2010), 21–49; J.A. McGuckin, ed., *Westminster Handbook to Origen*, s.v. "Christology," "God," "Trinity"; H. Crouzel, *Origen: The Life and Thought of the First Great Theologian,* tr. A.S. Worrall (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989); Joseph Wilson Trigg, *Origen: The Bible and Philosophy in the Third-Century Church* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1983).

38 Epiphanius, *Ancoratus und Panarion haer. 1–33*, ed. Karl Holl, vol. 1, GCS 25 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1915); Epiphanius of Cyprus, *Ancoratus*, trans. Young Richard Kim, FC 128 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2014). On Epiphanius's life and works, see Kim's *Epiphanius of Cyprus: Imagining an Orthodox World* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015).

39 J.F. Dechow's *Dogma and Mysticism* is fundamental on this front. Also see, Rebecca Lyman, "The Making of a Heretic: The Life of Origen in Epiphanius *Panarion* 64," *Studia Patristica* 31 (1997), 445–51; repr. A.M. Cameron and R.G. Hoyland, eds., *Doctrine and Debate in the Eastern Christian World,*

300–1500 (Burlington: Ashgate Variorum, 2011); Young Richard Kim, "Reading the Panarion as Collective Biography: The Heresiarch as Unholy Man," *Vigiliae Christianae* 64 (2010), 382–413; Blossom Stefaniw, "Straight Reading: Shame and the Normal in Epiphanius's Polemic against Origen," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 21.3 (2013), 413–35.

40 J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, ch. 6; E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, 86–104; also see Rebecca Lyman's discussion of Epiphanius's depiction of Origen as an unwilling heretic in "The Making of a Heretic."

41 See Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.21, 35; 4.25–7; 5.22; 6.7–17; Sozomen, *Histoire ecclésiastique*, André-Jean Festugière, trans., annotation by Guy Sabbah, SC 306, 418 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1983; repr., 1996); Eng. trans. Chester D. Hartranft, "The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen," NPNF 2.2, 8.11–7; Evagrius, *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. Joseph Bidez and Léon Parmentier (London: Methuen & Co., 1898; repr. AMS Press, 1979); Michael Whitby, trans., *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 4.37–39; K. Banev, *Theophilus of Alexandria*; E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*; and J.F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*.

42 One would have expected praise to have been heaped upon Demetrius for banishing Origen.

43 K. Banev, *Theophilus of Alexandria*; E.A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, 105–21; and J. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, 403–8, 436–48.

44 See Jerome, *Letter* 33.5, *To Paula* (Text I.D and note 16); and also his *On Illustrious Men*, ch. 54 – on Origen; the completion of this text was likely immediately before the turmoil of the first Origenist Controversy. On Jerome's depiction of Origen, see M. Vesey, "Jerome's Origen: The Making of a Christian Literary *Persona*," *Studia Patristica* 28 (1993), 135–45.

45 On Origenism in the sixth century, see J. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, ch. 15; A. Louth "The *Collectio Sabbaitica* and Sixth-Century Origenism," *Origeniana Octava* (Louvain: Peeters, 2003), 1167–76; Lorenzo Perrone, "Palestinian Monasticism, the Bible and Theology in the Wake of the Second Origenist Controversy," in *The Sabaite Heritage in the Orthodox Church from the Fifth Century to the Present*, ed. J. Patrich, OLA 98 (Louvain: Peeters, 2001), 245–59; Daniël Hombergen, *The Second Origenist Controversy: A New Perspective on Cyril of Scythopolis' Monastic Biographies as Historical Sources for Sixth-Century Origenism*, Studia Anselmiana 132 (Rome: Pontificio Ateneo S. Anselmo, 2001); Brian E. Daley, "What Did 'Origenism' Mean in the Sixth Century?" in *Origeniana Sexta: Origen and the Bible*, eds. G. Dorival and A. Le Boulluec (Louvain: Peeters, 1995), 627–38; Aloys Grillmeier with Theresia Hainthaler, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, vol. II.2, *The Church of Constantinople in the Sixth Century*, trans. P. Allen and J. Cawte (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), part 3, ch. 3; Antoine Guillaumont, *Les "Képhalaia Gnostica" d'évagre Le Pontique et l'histoire de l'origénisme chez les grecs et chez les syriens* (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1962); Frantz Diekamp, *Die origenistischen Streitigkeiten im sechsten Jahrhundert und das fünfte allgemeine Concil* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1899).

4

DATE AND SOCIO-LITERARY SETTING OF THE SAHIDIC COPTIC TRADITION

Patristic authors provided only rudimentary information about Demetrius, and much of that was not complimentary. For centuries, what was known about the archbishop and his forty-three-year career, the third longest in Coptic history, was meager. By the tenth century, an anonymous author had redressed that omission by drafting the *Encomium on Demetrius* [*EncDem*], which provided the foundation for Demetrius's hagio-biography. That composition serves as the focus of this chapter and the next. Here, the aim is to resolve the thorny problem of dating the *EncDem* by identifying its literary parallels and socio-historical setting; the following chapter addresses the encomium's hagiographic traditions and its presentation of Demetrius's biography.

With its authorship undetermined, the task of dating the encomium gains urgency. Scholars have consistently attributed it to the late antique period,[1] a date roughly congruent with the pseudonymous attribution, but one that the present study roundly dismisses. The *EncDem* has defied dating on linguistic and grammatical grounds – hence the subsequent analysis scrutinizes the text's literary motifs and historical parallels in order to better situate its composition. Several key passages are parsed below; the analysis challenges the prevailing consensus by arguing for a *terminus post quem* no earlier than the mid-seventh century, while several arguments push the dating of the extant recension into the ninth or tenth century CE. A colophon at the end of the Coptic manuscript of the encomium (BL.Or.6783) provides a definitive *terminus ante quem* at the very end of the tenth century under early Fatimid rule. Several characteristics, however, including problematic passages in *fols*. 34r and 37v (see Text II) and a few sharp transitions that betray abridgment of a slightly longer recension, would preclude that manuscript from being the autograph.

Background evidence from Jerome

Jerome forwards two traditions that may aide in dating the encomium. In *Against Vigilantius*, he maintains that all the bishops of Alexandria

were celibate, and even those who were married "abandoned their conjugal rights."[2] Although this is by no means conclusive, Jerome fails to note Demetrius's marital status – easily the most remarkable aspect of the saint's biography – as an obvious exception to the general rule.[3] His *Epistle to Evangelus* provides another important gloss. Here, Jerome states: "even at Alexandria, from the time of Mark the Evangelist until the episcopates of Heraclas and Dionysius [d. 264 CE], *presbyters always named as bishop one of their own number* chosen by themselves."[4] Again, Jerome appears to have been unaware of the tradition in the encomium, which describes Demetrius as a layman at the time of his ordination. The *EncDem* is unambiguous, identifying Demetrius as the only married successor to Saint Mark and detailing his election through a congregational – not a clerical – vote.[5] This is in tune with the later tradition penned in the Arabic *History of the Patriarchs* [HP], where most of Demetrius's predecessors are described as celibate laymen who were elected through congregational votes.

There is something of a double-blind tradition here. While Jerome is completely unaware of the traditions detailed in the *EncDem*, the author of that text was, likewise, unacquainted with Jerome's assertions.[6] Otherwise, Demetrius's election would have been contested not just on grounds of his marital status, but on grounds of his lay background and the electoral proceedings that led to his elevation as well.[7] Assuming that Jerome is transmitting a genuine and commonly known late fourth- or early fifth-century Alexandrian tradition concerning patriarchal elections, then, minimally, the encomium, which presents an altogether different scheme, must postdate the early fifth century.

The ordeal of coals

A key passage that describes Demetrius's self-administered ordeal, in which a miracle offered evidence for his virginity, provides a pivotal clue for the earliest possible date for the text. Since various ordeals are documented in ancient and medieval literature,[8] a particular case would be extremely difficult to date. Fortunately, the account in question adheres to a specific hagiographic *topos* unattested prior to the late sixth century in the west and the mid-seventh century in the east. The motif follows a particular sequence: a celibate holy man appears to have taken a wife and fathered a child (or children), an ordeal by coals proves the virginity and virtue of the couple, and a brief exposition then divulges the true nature of the relationship between the man and the woman and accounts for their alleged offspring.

Variations of this *topos* occur in the Latin writings of Gregory of Tours (d. 594 CE) and the mid-seventh-century Greek biographies of Leontius of Neapolis (modern Limassol in Cyprus).[9] Among these parallels, an account preserved in the *Life of John the Almsgiver*, the pro-Chalcedonian patriarch of Alexandria (610–19 CE), likely inspired the account of Demetrius's

ordeal. Leontius composed the *Life of John* in 641–42 CE and couched the *topos* within a cautionary tale Patriarch John relayed to his guests in hope of dissuading them from judging others. The Almsgiver, himself a widower whose children had passed away prior to his ordination, begins: "For I read the life of a father that had the following (account)."[10] John's reference rings true; the earliest attestations of the *topos* predate the *Life of John*, though those were in Latin.

The moral tale begins by describing a sarcastic prostitute as she shouts to a monk on an errand in the city: "Save me, father, as Christ saved the harlot!" Immediately, the pious monk responds with a Christ-like, "Follow me."[11] He then grabs the woman by the hand and leads her outside the city, inciting rumors that the monk has taken a wife. Under the monk's influence, the prostitute, Porphyria, repents and takes monastic vows (she is addressed as *ammas* thereafter).[12] The two monastics then set on a journey to a monastery, but en route they chance upon and rescue an infant abandoned on the side of the road. Thus, to the eyes of the world it would appear that the monk married a prostitute and fathered a child, while in reality he led a woman to repentance and saved an infant from certain death.

Seven years later, that holy family made its way to Tyre (in Southern Lebanon), where the monk fell gravely ill. Desiring to avert leaving a scandalous legacy, he requested a censer full of burning coals, which he promptly emptied into his lap, but, miraculously, he remained unharmed; thus, the miracle provided divine assurance of his chastity and the sincerity of his subsequent confession.[13] Upon hearing the details of the pious couple's *vita*, a number of local prostitutes were moved to repentance by Porphyria's example; they renounced their former lives and followed her monastic vocation. As for the elder, he died immediately after his vindication. And, thus, the patriarch concludes, "I warn you, my children, not to be so ready to mock, or judge, the actions of other people."[14]

The Almsgiver noted that the faithful who witnessed this miraculous event "glorified God who has such servants, though they are unrecognized."[15] Similarly, in the *EncDem*, "it was God, himself, the Good, who did not want the name of the saint to remain hidden."[16] While not as scandalous as a monk marrying a prostitute, Bishop Demetrius's marriage presumably contradicted precedent and caused an outrage among his parishioners. Contextually, the pericope detailing Demetrius's ordeal and the subsequent expository narrative function in an identical manner to that of Porphyria and the anonymous monk in Patriarch John's pious tale. Essentially, two problems are resolved. The *EncDem* accounts for Demetrius's wife by depicting their relationship as a chaste marriage – an aspect retained in the Arabic tradition. It then proceeded to reveal the couple's relationship to the three children they cared for; in the *EncDem*, the archbishop is not only married, but he is believed to have fathered children as well. There is no trace of this unique tradition in any other source surveyed, though it

persuasively links Demetrius's ordeal to the *topos* at hand. Regrettably, the pertinent lines in the encomium are corrupt, but enough information is still discernible. After divulging the nature of his marital relationship with his wife, Demetrius continues: "As for these three children who reside with us, it was God who placed them [in our care]."[17] Adherence to this particular ordeal *topos* conservatively dates the *EncDem* no earlier than the mid- to late seventh century.

Proof of virginity

A detail in the encomium's description of Demetrius's consanguine marriage to his cousin pushes the date for that composition later still. The account itself conveys a variation of an established motif – the Bridal-Chamber Scene – discussed at length below; here, the focus is on a novel detail that appears in the *EncDem* adaptation of that *topos*, which aids in dating the text. At the conclusion of the wedding celebration, the *EncDem* describes the bride and groom as they entered their bridal chamber while the guests lingered outside, awaiting the public display of the "Tokens" or "Proof of Virginity" – the bloody sheets of the initial nuptial union. Eventually, when a "proof" never materialized, Demetrius's parents reasoned with the guests that the couple was simply young and bashful, and they departed.[18]

The reference has been read as historical by the few scholars who have noted it,[19] but both its historicity and attribution to the patristic era are highly doubtful. Deuteronomy 22:15–7 provides the rationale for the peculiar tradition of keeping the Proof of Virginity, but observance of the practice – even among Jewish communities – during the first millennium of the Common Era, appears to have been marginal,[20] and the proof's ritualistic, public display at wedding celebrations is not documented in early Christian texts. Historically, several late antique accounts gloss incidents in which a midwife verified a woman's virginity through physical examination, though the prevalence of such examinations, particularly among non-elites, is far from certain. The apocryphal *Protoevangelium of James* (mid- to late second century) retains a notorious passage describing such an examination of the Virgin Mary (which proved her virginity after delivering Jesus); that account eventually found its way into the introductory chapters of the Arabic *History of the Patriarchs*.[21] Still, the *Protoevangelium*'s miraculous postpartum examination notwithstanding, late antique sources consistently reference *specialists* – midwives – who *privately* examined women and vouched for their virginity *prior* to marriage. The details of these late antique examinations sit in sharp contrast to the ritualistic display described in the encomium.[22] There, no expert administered the examination, and the wedding guests implicitly understood the ritualized *public* display of the proof on that very night, soon *after* the conclusion of the marriage ceremony, as a normative element of nuptial proceedings.

The ritual practice and societal expectations documented in the *EncDem* contradict late antique norms.

The cultural context and meaning of the ritualized display of the Proof provides another clue in dating the *EncDem*. In late Roman legal codes and Patristic thought, the consent of both parties, rather than their sexual union, validated a marriage; sexual relations, though expected, were not a legitimizing principle in the secular or religious spheres of the late antique world.[23] At least since the time of the Roman legal scholar Ulpian (d. 223 CE), and as explicitly reiterated in Justinian's sixth-century *Digest*, the general principle was that "consent and not coitus makes a marriage."[24] Yet the public viewing of the Proof, which the Coptic encomium glosses as a common – the HP adds "vile" – feature of marriage celebrations, would resonate only within a society that prized a woman's virginity at the time of marriage and the physical consummation of the nuptial union.[25] Such a cultural context prevailed under Islamic rule in Egypt, where matrimonial customs and Islamic jurisprudence explicitly reference the conjugal act.[26] Among Christians, the sentiments were not as blatantly expressed but were, nonetheless, implicit in late Coptic matrimonial rites and ideals.[27]

Essentially, while both practices – examinations and viewings – obsess over a woman's virginity, believing that it provides an authoritative commentary on an array of subjects ranging from purity to morality and the legitimacy of an eventual offspring or heir, the two practices approach the topic from two radically different trajectories. The quasi-gynecological examinations attested in Late Antiquity functioned as a means of guaranteeing a woman's virginity, declaring her *virgo intacta*, while the *ex post facto* display of the Proof celebrated the breach of the "seal of virginity." In some respects, the matrimonial rite had transitioned into an increasingly sexualized life-cycle ritual far removed from the sterile contractual arrangements documented in late antique sources.

In contrasting the matrimonial proceedings of Late Antiquity with those of the middle ages in Egypt, an intriguing reversal in social attitudes and ritual performance may be observed. Occasional, private examinations of the betrothed gave way to systematic public displays of Proofs, which functioned as tangible evidence that a transition had taken place and liminality had been breached. Both the woman and the man were no longer virgins but had become husband and wife, a new status that fundamentally altered their standing within their community.[28] Public displays of the Proof do not reflect late antique norms but rather, among Christians, resonate best within a ninth- or, more likely, a tenth-century socio-religious context.

Literary and thematic parallels

Throughout the history of Christianity, spiritual marriage (also "chaste" or "white" marriage)[29] was far from a rhetorical ideal;[30] for many, it was an

ascetic calling,[31] which was interpreted through several lenses. In addition to scriptural references to Mt. 12:19 and 1 Cor. 7:29, several early authors, including Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria,[32] hailed the practice. Among less mainstream circles, considered heterodox – if not outright heretical – the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas* (§§ 11–15) promoted spiritual marriage, but it also reflects extreme views that malign marriage, sexuality, and childbearing – encratite tendencies that many second- and third-century Christian authors criticized.[33] Nonetheless, while its ideology was rejected, the *Acts of Thomas* provided something of a literary blueprint for the Bridal-Chamber Scene. That is, the point after the marriage celebrations have been concluded, when, in the privacy of their bedroom, one of the newlywed couple tries to convince his or her spouse to lead a spiritual marriage. The basic structure of the Scene in the *Acts of Thomas* would be replicated for well over a millennium.

Both in history and hagiography, spiritual marriages commenced at different junctures and took various forms: some practiced celibacy from the very beginning of their marriage, others after having children, others upon the husband's ordination, or after the death of their children.[34] A few couples from the patristic era, particularly Paulinus of Nola and Therasia, Melania the Younger and Pinianus, Paulina and Pammachius, and, to a lesser extent, the later example of Theophanes the Confessor and Megalo, have monopolized the historical discussions of this type of asceticism,[35] which was widespread and persisted throughout the middle ages, and is attested even today. In this section, however, the emphasis is on the depictions of this ascetic practice rather than its historical attestations.

The hagiographic representations of spiritual marriage have been the subject of erudite studies by Baudoin de Gaiffier, Dyan Elliott, Anne Alwis, and Claudia Bornholdt.[36] Here, the analysis demonstrates the extension of the motifs parsed by those scholars into Coptic and Arabic literature, along with highlighting aspects that hitherto appear to be specific to, or at least more prominent in, Egyptian recensions of the *topos*. The general pattern, well outlined and discussed by Alwis, adheres more or less to the following details: each spouse is an only child; both come from rich families; they are forced to marry against their will; in a Bridal-Chamber Scene, one partner attempts to convince the other to lead a spiritual marriage; both consent and (at least implicitly) agree to conceal their pact from their relatives who forced them to marry in the first place.[37] At least two of the Egyptian examples cited below – those of Demetrius and Mīnās II – additionally emphasize the circumstances that ultimately led to the revelation of the couple's pious secret.

The following analysis focuses on several accounts of spiritual marriage that circulated in Egypt under Byzantine and Islamic rule, from the fourth to the eleventh century CE. In addition to noting the similarities they share with the above-mentioned touchstones of the Bridal-Chamber *topos*, when

read chronologically, the accounts establish a distinct trajectory: the later the account, the more in common it has with the tropes forwarded in the *EncDem*.

Amoun of Nitria and Macarius of Scetis

The earliest example of a spiritual marriage in Egyptian sources stems from the various accounts relating to Abba Amoun (*ca*. 290–347 CE), who was one of the founders of monasticism in Nitria and Kellia.[38] The anonymous *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* (ch. 22), written in 397 CE, and Palladius's *Lausiac History* (ch. 8), written *ca*. 420 CE, present a common core for his biography, but the details of the two accounts are irreconcilable. Both texts agree that the young Amoun, forced to marry against his will, spent his first night as a married man convincing his wife of the virtues of chastity. He succeeded, and the two led a chaste marriage for a while but, subsequently, separated; Amoun set off to Nitria, while his wife remained in their home, which she transformed into a women's monastery. As to the conflicting details, the *Historia Monachorum* maintains that Amoun was forced to marry by his parents and that he remained with his wife for only a few days before heading to Nitria, while the *Lausiac History* maintains that the saint was an orphan who was forced into marriage by his concerned uncle and that he lived celibately with his wife "in separate beds" for eighteen years prior to heading to Nitria.

The ecclesiastical histories of the mid-fifth century briefly discuss Abba Amoun's biography as well. In 439 CE, Socrates synthesized the two earlier accounts, and added a few hitherto unattested glosses. The most prominent of which maintains that Amoun and his wife traveled to Nitria, where they shared the same cell for a short duration before separating.[39] A few years later, Sozomen completed his *History* in 443 CE, in which he briefly discussed Amoun's biography based primarily on the *Lausiac History*.[40] On the whole, Amoun's is the earliest account of a celibate marriage in Egyptian sources. Already it highlights one of the frequently attested features of the Egyptian versions of this motif, namely, that the husband persuades his wife to practice celibacy in the Bridal-Chamber Scene. This is antithetical to the western versions of this trope, where the wife is typically the one who convinces the husband to remain celibate.[41]

Traditions pertaining to Macarius the Great ("the Egyptian": 300–90 CE) provide additional antecedents to the *EncDem*.[42] While the earliest accounts do not comment on Macarius's early life, several important details appear in the eighth-century *Life of Macarius of Scetis*.[43] Similar to Amoun, Macarius is said to have been forced to marry against his will. He participated in the wedding celebration, and then, when he was left alone in the bedroom with his new bride, he tried to convince her to lead a spiritual marriage. All of this adheres to the basic moorings of the motif, but then there is an

unexpected turn of events. Despite his best efforts, Macarius's wife was not enamored with the notion of an asexual marriage. There is tension and an awkward pause in the narrative here; bride and groom quarrel over the most private aspect of their relationship. Nonetheless, as the hagiographic account would have it, she died soon after their wedding, defusing the tense situation and freeing Macarius to pursue a celibate monastic life. Although it presents an atypical Bridal-Chamber Scene, the account is but a variation of the Egyptian depiction of the *topos*, in which a male forced to marry against his will attempts to convince his wife to lead a spiritual marriage and ultimately leads a chaste life.

Julian and Basilissa

The *Life of Julian and Basilissa* presents several parallels to the *EncDem*,[44] including the emphasis on spiritual marriage and an elaborate Bridal-Chamber Scene. The *Life* has a complicated textual history. At its core is the Greek *passio* of Julian, an Egyptian martyred in Antinoopolis during the Great Persecution. The Martyrdom was drafted sometime before the sixth century, when a long section (§§ 1–16) focused on Julian's early life was appended to the Latin version of the *passio*, transforming it into a *vita*.[45] As Anne P. Alwis has demonstrated, much of that recension appears to have been directly influenced by the *Life of Cecilia*.[46] The new addition also introduced the traditions pertaining to Basilissa and the theme of spiritual marriage into the narrative.

Alwis argues that the Latin life was drafted between 431 and 600 CE. In general, the evidence she presents strongly suggests that the Latin *Life* was known in the sixth century, and it can be positively identified in a seventh-century lectionary. Nonetheless, I remain skeptical of the arguments pushing for an earlier date of composition. At some point between the seventh and tenth centuries, the Latin *Life of Julian and Basilissa* was translated into Greek and circulated in the east, where it is attested in three tenth-century Greek manuscripts. Unfortunately, the precise date of that Greek translation remains a mystery.[47]

The primary figure in the narrative, the devout Julian, hailed from a prominent family. Although an only child, he sought to remain a virgin, but his parents insisted that he should marry and proceeded to select Basilissa, also the only child of an affluent family, as his bride. The two families arranged for a large wedding celebration, in which the couple played their part. Once alone, however, they shared with each other their desire to remain celibate in a long Bridal-Chamber Scene (§§ 6–8), punctuated with a host of miraculous phenomena. The following morning the couple received well-wishers, while retaining their pious secret, and, eventually, they separated and founded monasteries. Basilissa passes away in paragraph 15; the remainder of the text, the older portion, describes the *passio* of Julian.

Although the literary style is very different, the *EncDem* and the *Life of Julian and Basilissa* share several commonalities: a much longer Bridal-Chamber Scene than hitherto encountered; the wife discreetly introduces the topic of celibacy; the husband launches into the main discussion of the theme and "convinces" an already celibate-minded spouse to lead a chaste life; their accord is then certified from above, as it were, through miraculous phenomena that are observed by the married couple. Equally significant, for both couples the marriage is real. It is not a theatrical performance put on for the sake of relatives, or a temporary inconvenience to be abandoned in a few days as the two spouses separate;[48] rather, it is a lifelong commitment. Still, the *EncDem* presents this theme in its ultimate manifestation. While a layman, Demetrius never separated from his wife; their physical proximity, within the same house, under the same covers, is explicit and never compromised by long trips abroad or monastic retreats (this issue is taken up again in the next chapter).

John Khame

The *Life of John Khame* provides closer, more intriguing thematic parallels that suggest a tenth-century literary context for the *Encomium on Demetrius*.[49] John Khame lived in the mid-ninth century (d. 859 CE), but his *Life* may be securely dated to two stages of composition within the tenth century CE.[50] Like his predecessors, John married against his will and had a long conversation with his wife on their wedding night (a Bridal-Chamber Scene) that culminated with a vow to lead a spiritual marriage.

Both the *EncDem* and the *Life of John Khame* demonstrate the sanctity of chaste marriage and its validity as a spiritual vocation through miraculous phenomena – a persistent aspect within this motif (though lacking in the early, brief account of Amoun). John's *Life* relays divine approval of the pact in the form of a marvelous vine that grew throughout the couple's bedroom and house, transforming the home of the asexual, married couple into a garden of sorts (prelapsian imagery is just below the surface of several of these accounts). Similarly, the *EncDem* describes an eagle-like being that would mysteriously appear in Demetrius's bedroom and lie down between the sleeping couple, taking each spouse under one of its wings. In addition to the focus on chaste marriage, both texts address the topic from the vantage point of Mt. 19:12, rather than the more direct 1 Cor. 7:29. This was an intentional choice; the author of the *Life of John* was undoubtedly familiar with 1 Cor. 7, from which he cites two other verses.[51] Moreover, Proverbs 6:27–8 is glossed in both accounts. But while the *EncDem* provides a literal enactment of those verses (the ordeal), the author of the *Life of John Khame* only wonders rhetorically: "Who can approach a fire and not be burned, who can walk upon burning coals, like you my holy father, and not feel it?"[52]

The similarities between the biographies of Demetrius and John Khame continue: both men were ordained against their will (though that is a prevalent *topos*); they regularly witnessed divine visions as they celebrated the Eucharist; and both had the ability to miraculously discern the sins of others.[53] The similarities are suggestive but not conclusive. Nonetheless, they point to a common literary environment and socio-religious concerns – particularly for promoting chaste marriage by stressing a particular interpretation of Mt. 19:12. These close parallels demonstrably led to confusion between the biographies of the two saints. John Khame's entry in the *Synaxarium* (25 Koiak/Kyahk) adopted several motifs from Demetrius's biography. There, in addition to the miraculous vine that grew in their bedroom, John and his wife would see an otherworldly figure that would overshadow them with its wings every night.[54] And John's doxologies maintain that he slept with his wife on the same bed, a rare motif that is lacking in the *Life of John* but is explicit in the *EncDem*.[55]

Patriarch Mīnā II

The biography of Patriarch Mīnā II (956–74 CE), written by Bishop Michael of Tinnīs (d. after 1055 CE), provides additional evidence and may have provided a blueprint for Demetrius's biography in the primitive recension of the *History of the Patriarchs* (HP-P). It is a tantalizing account that provides thematic parallels to the *Life of John Khame* and the *EncDem*, though Mīnā's biography is somewhat disjointed. Nearly a third of the text (HP II.2: 124–28) traces the patriarch's early life and subsequent elevation to the patriarchate, while the remainder of the *sīrah* (HP II.2: 128–35) focuses on Ikhshīdid (935–69 CE) and early Fatimid rule in Egypt. Conspicuously, patriarch and church are absent from that whole portion until the concluding paragraph.

An analysis of the opening third of the biography reveals several distinct parallels. Similar to John Khame and Demetrius, the devout young Mīnā married a relative against his will. After the marriage ceremony and festivities, Mīnā spoke with his new bride in their bedroom about the vanity of the world and convinced her that they should remain celibate.[56] Thus, after remaining for three days in their home, they decided that he would go to Scetis (Wadī al-Naṭrūn) to become a monk while she would lead a devout life in their home (cf. the wives of Abba Amoun and John Khame).[57] Yet, long after they had separated, their paths would cross again.

Searching for a candidate to succeed Patriarch Theophanes (Tāwfānīus: 952–56 CE), the electoral committee found its way to a noted ascetic, who refused the honor on account of his age,[58] but he proceeded to nominate his spiritual son, Mīnā. Elated, the delegation took Mīnā "in iron fetters" to Alexandria for ordination,[59] but immediately after the conclusion of the rite someone from his village contested the ordination on the grounds that Mīnā

was married. This objection introduces a crucial passage. Having ordained a married man to the patriarchal office, the clergy became disheartened. Seeing their demeanor, and to stave off the imminent scandal, Mīnā called for his wife to be brought before them and then instructed her: "Reveal to them the secret that is between me and you." Upon discovering that the couple never consummated their marriage, the clergy and faithful rejoice. Here, there are several thematic parallels to the *EncDem*, the most palpable being the scandal of a married patriarch and the ensuing tensions that ultimately led to the public spectacle of the revelation of a pious secret. Yet, Demetrius was not cited as a precedent or rationale to justify Mīnā's ordination. This is crucial. Writing the biography of Mīnā II in the early 1050s, Bishop Michael of Tinnīs[60] appears to have been completely unaware of the traditions encapsulated in the *EncDem* or those that would be soon documented in the primitive recension of the HP by his younger contemporary Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr, who was at least an acquaintance, if not a friend, of the bishop.

As mentioned above, Patriarch Mīnā is absent from the remainder of the biography save for a single paragraph at the very end of the text, which maintains that a rich patroness named Dīnah hosted the patriarch and his entourage in Maḥallat Danyāl for possibly as long as seven years. While residing there, the patriarch also consecrated a church to St. Mark and broke with tradition by preparing the Oil of Chrism (*al-mayrūn*) there rather than in Alexandria. Aside from these tidbits, however, the biography is completely silent as to Patriarch Mīnā's eighteen-year career.

Ultimately, while attested early, the theme of spiritual marriage in hagiographic texts is most prominent in sources written in the east and west *ca*. 800–1200 CE.[61] Of the examples cited here, the thematic and literary parallels are strongest among the *Life of John Khame* (10th c.), the *sīrah* of Mīnā II (mid-11th c.), and the *EncDem*. Read in this light, a tenth-century date for the *EncDem* seems most appropriate. Still, even among its closest peers, the *EncDem* stands out in its insistence that the couple led a chaste marriage for decades under the same roof, in the same bed, and under the same covers.[62]

Pregnant pauses and positive proof

The argument in favor of a late date for the *EncDem* and for the popularity of Demetrius's hagiographic program in general is reinforced by an argument from silence and another from the *Synaxarium*. While arguments from silence are seldom conclusive, the omissions cited here are, nonetheless, significant. Historically, the celibacy of Egyptian bishops is often assumed, though positive evidence from the early Patristic period is scarce and far from uniform. Five Alexandrian accounts, spanning the fifth through tenth centuries CE, prominently address the elevation or the nomination of married

individuals to the episcopacy, yet not one of these incidents references Demetrius as setting a precedent. This is a notable omission. Throughout the middle ages, and certainly today, Demetrius's elevation to the episcopacy in spite of his marital status was central; it is the quintessential tradition upon which the whole hagiographic corpus hangs.

Synesius, the philosopher-bishop of Cyrene (*ca.* 410–14 CE), provides the first relevant account.[63] Theophilus of Alexandria (385–412) officiated at Synesius's marriage in the early fifth century and later ordained the Neoplatonist philosopher and biological father of three as Bishop of Ptolemais (in Libya). In a letter to his brother shortly before ordination, Synesius stressed that he had informed Theophilus of his intentions to maintain marital relations with his wife after his ordination and that he "shall desire and pray to have many [more] virtuous children."[64] Far from typical, the ordination of a married father of three who spurned celibacy was still acceptable to a staunch dogmatist such as Theophilus at the dawn of the fifth century CE.

Later, under Islamic rule, the ordination of widowers was not uncommon, but the elevation of individuals whose wives were still alive or who fathered children usually evoked notice. The mid-eighth-century biography of Patriarch Khā'īl I (Michael: 743–67 CE) yields a tantalizing gloss on a certain Abba Cyrus, bishop of Jaujār:

> Similar to father Abraham,[65] he had been married since his youth and lived with his wife for a long time. They reached the age of a *hundred and five* years, while remaining pure virgins as they *slept on the same bed* for their whole life. Their food was barley-loafs, salt, and great piety. All that they had, they gave in alms to the poor. When Abba Cyrus advanced in years, he gave up his pure chaste wife, Manshiba, to the women's monastery. *(dayr al-rahbānāt)*[66]

The passage here draws no parallels to Demetrius despite the palpable similarities: both bishops led spiritual marriages of a rarely attested type, one in which the spouses share the same bed for life.[67] Moreover, like Demetrius, Bishop Cyrus purportedly died at the exact age of one hundred and five years.[68]

Early ᶜAbbasid rule provides a third example. In the mid-ninth century, Isḥāq ibn Andūna's promising campaign for the patriarchate failed once his opponents capitalized on the fact that he was still married and that his sons were alive.[69] Isḥāq did not evoke Demetrius's legacy; as discussed above, according to the Sahidic encomium, he too was thought to have been married with children. A fourth example, also from the ninth century, stems from the negotiations leading to the end of the Barsanuphian schism, which resulted in the reordination of Bishop George and his biological son, Abraham, as Coptic bishops – an apparent stipulation of the reunion agreement.[70]

A final antecedent may be deduced from the above-mentioned biography of Patriarch Mīnā II.

None of these accounts cite the elevation of the married Demetrius as a possible antecedent, justification, or parallel to the topic discussed. Arguably, the *EncDem* may not have been written until the tenth century, and, with greater certainty, that composition remained obscure after it was drafted – eluding even the erudite Michael of Tinnīs. In fact, the available evidence strongly suggests that both the saint and his biography remained marginal until roughly the late eleventh century CE. Demetrius's commemorations within the Coptic liturgical calendar (detailed below), along with the sudden recasting of his origins, which is discussed in chapter seven, bolster this conclusion.

Demonstrably, while references to the archbishop were scarce throughout the first Christian millennium, his popularity soared beginning in the eleventh century. The decisive point of transition coincides with the career of Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr who translated and edited all the previous patriarchal biographies, including those by Bishop Michael. At that moment, the drafting of HP-P, Mawhūb likely combined a translation of the *EncDem* and the earlier source text that underpins Part Two of that biography to form Demetrius's *sīrah* (see chapters two, seven, and Text III). After translating and editing the HP-P, Mawhūb added the biographies of his contemporaries, patriarchs Christodoulos (1047–77 CE) and Cyril II (1078–92 CE). Notably, he draws an explicit parallel between Cyril II and Demetrius as portrayed in the HP-P; he notes that both were of "little learning," but through diligence and hard work Cyril transformed himself into an erudite churchman worthy of admiration.[71]

Fundamentally, both Demetrius's early obscurity and his subsequent renown are well demonstrated by the frequency of his commemorations within the liturgical calendar. According to the *EncDem* (*fols*. 30v and 32r), the saint is celebrated on the twenty-fifth of Thūt (5 October). Typically, such an explicit statement reflects (or establishes) the normative commemoration of a saint. Yet in no other text is the archbishop associated with that date, which must have marked a localized commemoration for the saint.[72] Intriguingly, while the earliest surviving *Difnār* (*Antiphonar*), dated 892, omits Demetrius altogether (the *Difnār* and *Synaxarium* follow the same liturgical calendar),[73] by the late eleventh century the HP-P explicitly cites two commemorations: his passing, on the Twelfth of Bābah (23 October), and the revelation of his virginity on the Twelfth of Baramhāt (21March), though HP-V conflates the two occasions. By the thirteenth century, Demetrius would also figure prominently in the entry for the Tenth of Hatūr (20 November), which memorialized the last set of traditions to be associated with the archbishop, the Lenten reforms and the *Epact* calculations. Neither of these traditions is cited in the HP (see chapter eight). Finally, in yet another entry, the Fourth of Baramhāt (13 March), though not a

commemoration *per se*, Demetrius emerges as one of the leading figures of Christendom, whose opinion helped guide a regional council to censure the Quartodeciman observance: see chapter eight and Text VI.D. The Quartodiciman controversy occurred during Demetrius's tenure, yet no patristic authority has suggested that it involved the see or patriarch of Alexandria.

Individually and collectively, the arguments advanced here point to the same set of conclusions. Although the *Encomium on Demetrius* draws upon various patristic and Byzantine traditions, internal evidence and thematic parallels strongly suggest that the composition is a late Coptic text that postdates the Arab conquest of Egypt and that the extant recension resonates best within tenth-century socio-religious and literary environments. Furthermore, while sources through the mid-eleventh century consistently fail to mention the archbishop, Demetrius's popularity experienced a surge beginning in the late eleventh century when HP-P was published. Not only does the volume of sources focusing on him dramatically increase after that date, but, initially overlooked within the liturgical calendar, Demetrius came to enjoy three separate commemorations by the end of the thirteenth century and figured prominently in yet a fourth. The trice-venerated Demetrius is an anomaly in the Coptic-Arabic *Synaxarium*, in which most saints are only honored on the day of their martyrdom or repose. Only the Virgin Mary and the Archangel Michael are referenced more frequently in the Coptic liturgical calendar.

Notes

1 Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 250–51, ns. 47–8; Brian Brennan, "'*Episcopae*': Bishops' Wives Viewed in Sixth-Century Gaul," *Church History* 54.3 (1985), 312; C.B. Horn, "Reconstructing Women's History," 440–42.

2 Jerome, *Against Vigilantius*, 2: text in PL 23:353–68; translation NPNF 2.6: pg. 418: "What is to become of the Egyptian Churches and those belonging to the Apostolic Seat, which accept for the ministry only men who are virgins, or those who practice continence [celibacy], or, if married, abandon their conjugal rights?"

3 Married priests have always dominated in the east. According to the traditional narrative, under the leadership of the ascetic Paphnutius at the Council of Nicea, the east championed the right of lower clergy to marry prior to ordination. See Peter Brown, *Body and Society*, 256; Karl Josef von Hefele, "Proposed Action on Clerical Celibacy," NPNF 2.14 (1900), 51–2. The ideal of clerical celibacy among priests took some time to become normative in the west; see James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1987), and Lisa M. Bitel, *Land of Women: Tales of Sex and Gender form Early Ireland* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1996), especially ch. 8.

4 Jerome, *Ep*. 146.1, my emphasis. The epistle continues: "and set in a more exalted position, just as an army elects a general, or as deacons appoint one of

themselves whom they know to be diligent and call him archdeacon." On later elections, see Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 215–17, and 153, 184–86, 204–13.

5 *EncDem*, *fol.* 33r; E. Ferguson surveys the evidence in "Origen and the Election of Bishops," *Church History* 43.1 (1974), 26–33. As he notes, the evidence is far from uniform and is contested: see L. Lécuyer, "Le problème des consérvations épiscopales dans l'êglise d'Alexandrie," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* (1964), 241–57; idem, "La succession des éveques d'Alexandrie aux premiers siècles," *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* (1969), 80–99. Also see note 7, below.

6 The author of the *EncDem* may have been acquainted with the first assertion noted here, but, certainly, there need not be direct reliance on Jerome on that front. Emphasis on the celibacy of bishops is prevalent throughout the patristic era. On the increasing significance of episcopal celibacy, see Robert Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

7 On the role of Alexandrian presbyters in the election of patriarchs, see E.W. Brooks, "The Ordination of the Early Bishops of Alexandria," *JTS* 2 (1901), 612–13; W. Telfer, "Episcopal Succession in Egypt," *JEH* 3 (1952), 1–13; E.W. Kemp, "Bishops and Presbyters at Alexandria," *JEH* 6 (1955), 125–42; S.J. Davis, *Early Coptic Papacy*, Appendix II; Tim Vivian, *St. Peter of Alexandria*, 47–9; Alistair Stewart-Sykes, "Origen, Demetrius, and the Alexandrian Presbyters," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 48.4 (2004), 415–29. On ordination in the Early church, see Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250–600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Everett Ferguson, "Ordinations in the Ancient Church," *Restoration Quarterly* 4 (1960), 117–38; 5 (1961), 17–32, 76–82, 130–46; idem, "Origen and the Election of Bishops." For a later period, see Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 10.

8 Medievalists have traced the origins of the judicial ordeal by fire to the Franks in the late eighth century, at which time it was frequently invoked in cases involving allegations of sexual misconduct. See Robert Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), ch. 2; Peter Brown, "Society and the Supernatural: A Medieval Change," *Daedalus* 104 (1975), 133–51; repr. idem, *Society and the Holy in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982).

9 Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*, § 2.1; Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, eds., *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum* [MGH SRM], vol.1, pt.1, 2nd ed. (Hannover: Hahn, 1951); trans. L. Thorpe, *Gregory of Tours: The History of the Franks* (London: Penguin Books, 1974); cf. Gregory of Tours, *Glory of the Confessors*, §§ 14, 54, 41; B. Krusch ed., *MGH SRM* vol. 1 pt. 2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1885); Raymond van Dam, *Gregory of Tours: Glory of the Confessors* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1988); Gregory of Tours, *Liber in Gloria Martyrum*, ed. B. Krusch, *MGH, SRM* 1, 2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1885): trans. R. Van Dam, *Gregory of Tours: Glory of the Martyrs* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1988), §§ 9, 80, 83. There are indirect references in Leontius's *Life of Symeon the Holy Fool*, but the more important text is his *Life of John the Almsgiver*. For both texts, see A.J. Festugière, ed./trans., *Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre*, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 95 (Paris: Geuthner, 1974), 256–631; Eng. trans. in *Three Byzantine Saints*, trans. Elizabeth Dawes and Norman H. Baynes (Crestwood, NY: Saint Vladimir's Seminary, 1977), 199–262; Derek Krueger, *Symeon the Holy Fool: Leontius's Life and the Late Antique City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996). On Leontius's writings, see Cyril Mango, "A Byzantine

Hagiographer at Work," in *Byzanz und der Westen: Studien zur Kunst des europäischen Mittelalters*, ed. I. Hutter (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984), 25–41; Vincent Déroche, *Études sur Léontios de Néapolis*, Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 3 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 1995).

10 *Life of John the Almsgiver*, 50.24: Ἀνέγνων γὰρ εἰς βίον πατρός τι τοιοῦτον.

11 E.g. Mt. 9:9; Jn. 1:43.

12 On the conversion of prostitutes, see Benedicta Ward, *Harlots of the Desert: A Study of Repentance in Early Monastic Sources* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1987); Ruth Mazo Karras, "Holy Harlots: Prostitute Saints in Medieval Legend," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1 (1990), 3–32; Lynda L. Coon, *Sacred Fictions: Holy Women and Hagiography in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), ch. 4; Carolyn L. Connor, *Women of Byzantium* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), ch. 4; Virginia Burrus, *The Sex Lives of Saints: An Erotics of Ancient Hagiography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), ch. 4.

13 The *Life* references the miracle of the burning bush (Ex. 3:2–3) as an antecedent. The monk stated: "Now be assured, brethren, that as God preserved the bush unburnt from the fire, and as the live coals have not even singed my robe, so, too, I have never committed sin with a woman from the day I was born."

14 *Life of John the Almsgiver*, 50.68–9: Διὰ τοῦτο ὑμῖν, ὦ τέκνα, μὴ προχείρους εἶναι εἰς τὸ κρίνειν καὶ σκοπεῖν τὰ ἀλλότρια.

15 *Life of John the Almsgiver*, 50.59–61: καὶ πάντες ἐξεπλάγησαν τὸ πῶς οὐ κατεκάη τὸ στιχάριν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ ἐδόξασαν τὸν θεὸν τὸν ἔχοντα κρυπτοὺς δούλους.

16 *EncDem*, *fol.* 34v; cf. HP-P 15.6, HP-V 27.4; see Krueger's discussion of "The theme of concealed sanctity" in *Symeon the Holy Fool*, ch 4.

17 *EncDem*, *fol.* 37v: ⲡⲉⲓ ϣⲟⲛϩⲛ̄ⲧ ⲟⲉ ⲛ̄ϣⲛⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲛⲕⲁⲁⲩ ⲛⲁⲛ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲧⲁϥⲧⲟϥⲟⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ […] ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲣϩⲩ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲉⲡⲣⲛϣ ⲛⲟⲩⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲃⲥ̄ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉϧⲱⲛ ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲁⲩ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲣϩⲩ ⲉⲓ ⲙⲏ ⲧⲉⲓ ⲡⲛⲁⲩ ⲉϣⲁⲣⲉ ⲧⲉⲥⲣⲓⲙⲉ ⲡⲱⲣⲭ̄ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣⲟⲟⲩⲧ. The text is actually contiguous; see the discussion of this passage in Text II, note 102, and Text III, note 40.

18 *EncDem*, *fol.* 37v.

19 P. Brown, *Body and Society*, 250–51, ns. 47–8; Brennan, " '*Episcopae*': Bishops' Wives," 312; C.B. Horn, "Reconstructing Women's History," 440–42.

20 Jeffrey H. Tigay, "Examination of the Accused Bride in 4Q159: Forensic Medicine at Qumran," *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 22 (1993), 129–34. Tigay lists a host of references to the practice in his *JPS Torah Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Philadelphia and Jerusalem: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 205–06, 384 n. 47. However, the references are either from other regions altogether, or date no earlier than the nineteenth century CE. His most important references are: E. Westermarck, *Marriage Ceremonies in Morocco* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 159, 228 – see also his index under "virginity marks of the bride" and "Defloweration of the Bride"; H. Granqvist, *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village*, 2 vols. (Helsingfors: Akademische Buchhandlung, 1931–35; repr. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, l955), 2: 127–30; I. Ben-Ami and D. Noy, eds., *Studies in Marriage Customs* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1974), 54, 174, 260, 262. A few examples are mentioned in the Talmud; Rabbi I. Epstein, gen. ed., *The Babylonian Talmud*, 4 vols. (London: Soncino Press, 1936), vol. 2.3, 2 *Kethuboth*, pgs. 50–1, 86–92, 263–65 – only the last reference deals squarely with the proof. Neither the Book of Deuteronomy nor the Talmud, however, prescribes the public viewing of the Proof as a normative act, and neither associates it with the wedding ceremony proper. In the Geniza corpus, which chronicles the lives of medieval Egyptian Jewry,

only two cases involving the proof are mentioned. See S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 6 vols. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967–1994), 3: 101. Historically, this Coptic encomium may in fact preserve the earliest documented account of a public display of the Proof in the Middle East. See also note 26, below.

21 *Protoevangelium of James*, § 19–20, in J.K. Elliott, ed., *Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in English Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Gillian Clark, *Women in Late Antiquity: Pagan and Christian Life-Styles* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 73–6; cf. HP-V 12. In his edition and translation of the HP-V (PO I.2: 120), Evetts labeled that whole section "The Priesthood of Christ." For a discussion of that passage in the *Protoevangelium*, see Mary F. Foskett, *A Virgin Conceived: Mary and Classical Representation of Virginity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), ch. 5; Kathleen Coyne Kelly, *Performing Virginity and Testing Chastity in the Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2000), ch. 1; cf. Cornelia M. Horn, "Intersections: The Reception History of the *Protoevangelium of James* in Sources from the Christian East and in the Qu'rān," *Apocrypha* 17 (2006), 113–50; eodem, "Mary between Bible and Qur'ān: Soundings into the Transmission and Reception History of the *Protoevangelium of James* on the Basis of Selected Literary Sources in Coptic and Copto-Arabic and of Art Historical Evidence Pertaining to Egypt," *Islam and Muslim-Christian Relations* 18.4 (2007), 509–38.

22 G. Clark, *Women in Late Antiquity*, 74–6; P. Brown, *Body and Society*, 251; and K.C. Kelly, *Performing Virginity*, 33–5, provide several patristic references to the practice. Kelly parses the distinction between tests and proofs in her sources, which span the High Middle Ages in Europe, but she doesn't necessarily perceive a shift in practice. She notes that the use of the proof was "apparently ancient practice among certain peoples of the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the middle East," (see pgs. 19 and 128). The proof is certainly attested early, but its public display and its framing as a constituent element of marriage ceremonies are an altogether different issue; that aspect, I believe, was a later development.

23 See Susan Treggiari, *Roman Marriage:* Iusti Coniuges *from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), chs. 2, 5, 9; and J.A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society*, chs. 3–4.

24 Justinian, *Digest* 35.1.15, *Nuptias enim non concubitus sed consensus facit*; P. Krüger and T. Mommsen, eds., *Institutiones, Digesta*, 16th ed., vol. 1 *Corpus iuris civilis* (Berlin, 1928); A. Watson, ed., *The Digest of Justinian*, Revised English-language Edition, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

25 The public viewing of the Proof is said to be "according to the custom which, as you well know, people observe in this matter." ⲕⲁⲧⲁ ⲑⲉ ⲧⲉⲧⲛ̄ⲥⲟⲟⲩⲛ ⲉⲛⲉⲥⲃⲏⲩⲉ ⲉⲩⲁⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣ̄ⲱⲙⲉ ⲁⲁⲩ (*EncDem*, *fol.* 37v). The Arabic version translated this line but qualified the practice as a "vile custom of the masses," *afʿāl al-nās al-bāṭilah* (HP-P 16.22; HP-V 28.23–9.1; it may also be read as "the deeds of vile people"). It should be noted that this aside may be read as commenting on a practice that has only recently become normative: HP-P, 16 and HP-V, 28: *mā jarrat bihī al-ʿādah*.

26 The physical consummation of a marriage is paramount in Islamic jurisprudence: Malik ibn Anas, *al-Muwaṭṭa'*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Bāqī (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-ʿArabīyah, 1951), ch. 28; trans. Aisha Aburrahman Bewley, *al-Muwatta of Imam Malik ibn Anas: The First Formulation of Islamic Law* (New York: Kegan Paul International, 1989); J. Schacht, "Nikāḥ," *Encyclopedia of*

Islam, 2nd ed., 8:26b-8b; Richard F. Burton, trans., *A Plain and Literal Translation of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, Now Entitled the Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night*, 10 vols. (Denver: Burton Club, 1885–1886), I.180; II.50, 175; III.289; IV.143; Hasan M. el-Shamy, *A Motif Index of the Thousand and One Nights* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006); Delia Cortese and Simonetta Calderini, *Women and the Fatimids in the World of Islam* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), esp. ch. 6. For the public display of the Proof in Islamic societies, see W. Heffening, "ᶜUrs," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 10:899b–906a; at 905b. In Arabic, the wedding night is provocatively labeled *laylat al-dukhlā*, "night of the entry." *Dukhūl*, "entry," is lexicalized in Islamic jurisprudence to mean "the first coition in marriage." On contemporary significance, see Kelly, *Performing Virginity*, 128–29. See also note 20, above.

27 In the Coptic Rite of Matrimony, the bride and groom are repeatedly qualified as *bikr*, "virgin." The term is inaccurately translated as "blessed" in the dominant English translation of the rite, which is widely used by Coptic churches in English-speaking countries. Additionally, the two dominant scriptural readings in that rite (Eph. 5:22–6:3 and Matt. 19:1–6), reference Gen. 2:24: "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and *they become one flesh*." My emphasis; cf. Al-Ṣāfī Abū al-Faḍā'il ibn al-ᶜAssāl, *al-Majmūᶜ al-ṣafawī*, ed. Jirjis Filūthā'ūs ᶜAwaḍ, 2 vols. (Cairo: n.p., n.d.), 24.80, 105, 123, 125.

28 Thus, a host of formally illicit activities, such as cohabitation, sexual relations, and childbearing, are deemed socially and religiously normative.

29 Susanna Elm, *'Virgins of God': The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 324–26.

30 See Elizabeth A. Clark, "The Celibate Bridegroom and His Virginal Brides: Metaphor and the Marriage of Jesus in Early Christian Ascetic Exegesis," *Church History* 77.1 (2008), 1–25.

31 Gillian Cloke, *"This Female Man of God": Women and Spiritual Power in the Patristic Age, AD 350–450* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 38–47, ch. 6.

32 Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, 29; cf. 15; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata*, 6.12.

33 Claudia Bornholdt, *Saintly Spouses: Chaste Marriage in Sacred and Secular Narrative from Medieval German (12th and 13th Centuries)* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2012), ch. 1; *Acts of Thomas*, First Act, esp. §§10–16; *Acts of Thomas: Introduction, Text, and Commentary*, trans. A.F.J. Klijn, 2nd rev. ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2003); Syriac text: William Wright, *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*. 2 vols. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1871; repr. Amsterdam: Philo Press, 1968); Greek text: Richard A. Lipsius and Max Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, 2.2. (Leipzig: Mendelssohn, 1903; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1959).

34 See the convenient Appendixes in Dyan Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

35 On the theme of unconsummated marriage in Greek hagiography, see Alexander Kazhdan's "Byzantine Hagiography and Sex in the Fifth to Twelfth Centuries," *DOP* 44 (1990), 131–43; P. Brown, *Body and Society*, 242–43; Anne P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages in Late Antique and Byzantine Hagiography: The Lives of Saints Julian and Basilissa, Andronikos and Athanasia, and Galaktion and Episteme* (London and New York: Continuum, 2011).

36 Baudoin de Gaiffier, "Intactam sponsam relinquens. à propos de la vie de S. Alexis," *Analecta Bollandiana* 65 (1947), 157–95; D. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*; A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*; C. Bornholdt, *Saintly Spouses*.

37 Anne P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 113–18; C. Bornholdt, *Saintly Spouses*, ch. 1.
38 W. Harmless, *Desert Christians*, 279–81; S. Elm, *Virgins of God*, 253–4, 325–26.
39 Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.23.
40 Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.14.
41 A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 116, 145, n. 44; Dyan Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, Appendixes 1 and 5.
42 One may also cite the account of Andronicus and Athanasia as a type of celibate marriage. The story circulated within the dossier of Daniel of Scetis and as such was translated into several languages [Tim Vivian, ed., *Witness to Holiness: Abba Daniel of Scetis*, Cistercian Studies 219 (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2008)]. Their account is positioned within the late fourth century, but it was most likely drafted in the sixth century or after (Vivian, ed., *Witness to Holiness*, 319, n.106). Subsequently, at an uncertain date before the tenth century, the account morphed into an independent short *bios* (*Life of Andronikos and Athanasia*, in A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 249–77), which was subsequently translated into Syriac and Ethiopic (A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 7–8). The existence of an Ethiopic recension strongly suggests that an Arabic translation once existed.
43 *Life of Macarius of Scetis*, §§7–9: E. Amélineau, "Vie de Macaire de Scété," in *Histoire des monastères de la Basse-Égypt* (Paris: Leroux, 1894), 46–117; Tim Vivian, *Saint Macarius the Spiritbearer: Coptic Texts Relating to Saint Macarius the Great* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2004).
44 The Greek life and an English translation are in A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*; also see Alwis's discussion of that text, pgs. 52–7; see also Robert K. Upchurch, "Virgin spouses as Model Christians: The Legend of Julian and Basilissa in Ælfric's *Lives of the Saints*," *Anglo-Saxon England* 34 (2005), 197–217.
45 A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 27–34.
46 A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 32–3; Alwis notes seven common traits. On the *Life of Cecilia*, also see Dyan Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, 64–9; Thomas Connolly, *Mourning into Joy: Music, Raphael, and Saint Cecilia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), ch. 2.
47 A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 5–6.
48 A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 90–4.
49 *The Life of Abba John Khame*, ed./trans. M.H. Davis, PO 14.2 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1920; repr. Turnhout/Belgique, 1973), pgs. 321–70; Maged S.A. Mikhail, "A Lost Chapter in the History of Wadi al-Natrun (Scetis): The Coptic *Lives* and Monastery of Abba John Khame," *Le Muséon: Revue d'études orientales* 127.1–2 (2014), 149–85.
50 The composition and dating of this text are more complex than hitherto envisioned; see Maged S. A. Mikhail, "A Lost Chapter."
51 Verses from 1 Cor. 7 are cited in the *Life of Abba John Khame*, 328, 330; 1 Cor. 6:19 is cited on pg. 332.
52 *Life of Abba John Khame*, 332. Perhaps, "without wincing," ⲛ̄ⲧⲡⲉϥⲥⲉⲥⲟⲗⲛⲉⲥⲟⲉ (αἰσθάνεσθαι).
53 For visions at the Eucharist, cf. *EncDem*, *fol.* 34r; HP-P 14.20–3; HP-V 26.18–23 and *Life of John Khame*, 344, 354. On the discernment of sins, cf. *EncDem*, *fol.* 34r and *Life of John Khame*, 343.
54 J. Forget, *Synaxarium*, 25 Kyahk, I.174.17–8.
55 See D. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, 72 n. 83; Gregory of Tours, *The Glory of the Confessors*, §§ 31, 75; cf. §§ 41, 74, 77; Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*, I.47.
56 See Bornholdt, *Saintly Spouses*, ch. 1.

57 The *Life of John Khame* has two traditions. In the earlier recension, John's wife purportedly led an ascetic life in their home (*Life*, pgs. 334–35). It is only in the latter tradition that she is presented as a monastic leader (*Life*, pgs. 348–49); See Maged S. A. Mikhail, "Lost Chapter," 160.

58 The elder maintained that that the canons of the church stipulate that the candidate must be "middle aged." This is deceptive. When explicit, ecclesiastical canons tend to stipulate a minimum age requirement not a maximum limit. Still, the assertion reflects contemporary considerations. Mīnā's predecessor, Theophanes, was already advanced in age at the time of his elevation, and as patriarch he exhibited signs of senility and quickly became an embarrassment for the Copts. The scandal was somewhat mitigated by confining him to a monastery and forbidding visitors from seeing him. The HP retains a tradition that he may have been killed in his sleep. The preference for middle-aged men cited here, and in some subsequent biographies, is a direct consequence of Theophanes's disastrous patriarchate.

59 See chapter seven, note 19, below.

60 Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ was likely unaware of that tradition as well; see chapter five, note 9, below.

61 A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 64–5, notes this pattern in the medieval west. Certainly the Egyptian sources discussed here reinforce that chronology and broaden the geographic focus and literary base for the study of this phenomenon.

62 HP-P 16.23–4; A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 64, mentions that living in continence forever was "completely unfeasible even to the imagination"; cf. pgs. 59, 93; see the appendixes in D. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, which lists the duration of time a couple remained together before separating. Demetrius's account defies these conclusions; the inevitable separation of the couple due to martyrdom or monastic vocation does not occur in the *Life of Demetrius*. See the earlier discussion of this issue above.

63 Evagrius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.15. For the works of Synesius, see Augustine Fitzgerald, trans., *The Letters of Synesius of Cyrene* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926), see in particular letter 105; idem, *The Essays and Hymns of Synesius*, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1930); cf. PG 66.1054–1616. For historical treatments, see Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), ch. 5; T.D. Barnes, "Synesius in Constantinople," *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies* 27 (1986), 93–112; Jay A. Bregman, *Synesius of Cyrene, Philosopher-Bishop* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982); J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, "Why Did Synesius Become Bishop of Ptolemais?" *Byzantion* 56 (1986), 180–95; idem, *Barbarians and Bishops: Army, Church, and State in the Reign of Arcadius and Chrysostom* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990); Alan Cameron and Jacqueline Long, with Lee Sherry, *Barbarians and Politics at the Court of Arcadius* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993).

64 Synesius, *Letter*, 105; Synesius professed his love for his wife in *Hymn* 8.

65 Notably, here the precedent is Abraham, not Demetrius, who would have posed a closer parallel.

66 HP-P 204.12–7, my emphasis. HP-V PO 5.1: 460 preserves a slightly altered version. There, the wife's name (*m-n-sh-b-a*), which is nearly incomprehensible in HP-P, has been omitted. The italicized phrases preserve parallel readings to passages in Demetrius's Arabic *vita* and Athanasius's *Life of Antony*, which are discussed below.

67 See notes 55, 61, and 65, above.

68 The age of individuals in religious texts is often allegorical. Within the Jewish tradition, 120 years was deemed the ideal lifespan for a righteous individual (see Gen. 6:3; and the age of Moses, Deut. 31:2, 34:7). Within monastic and hagiographic literature, however, there is a preference for 105 years. To my knowledge, the only Old Testament figure to live to that precise age was Judith (Jdt. 16: 21–5). In the New Testament, Anna (Lk. 2: 36–7) likely reached 105: "having lived with her husband seven years *from her virginity*, and as a widow till she was eighty-four" (RSV); see, J.K. Elliott, "Anna's Age (Luke 2: 36–7)," *Novum Testamentum* 30.2 (1988), 100–02. In Christian literature, there are many who are said to have lived to that venerable age, beginning with Antony the Great (*Vita Antonii* 89.3), the above cited Bishop Cyrus, the eighth-century saint, Matthew the Poor, and Patriarch Demetrius. Also see chapter seven, notes 7 and 42; Text III at note 164; Text VI at note 19.

69 HP-V in PO 10.5: 591–96, 610–11, 616, 633–37. Nonetheless, soon after his elevation, Patriarch Khā'īl I (Michael) ordained Isḥāq as Bishop of Wasīm, an office later conferred upon his two biological sons in succession: see Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 3. Isḥāq's chances of becoming patriarch were quite good. His ordination was championed by the Alexandrians themselves and the Bishop of Fusṭāṭ, who at that time was the second most powerful bishop after the patriarch.

70 HP PO 10.5: 528–29; Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 63–4.

71 HP II.3: 213 Arabic (cf. Eng. 332–33), my translation: "At the ordination of this father, Cyril (Kīrilluṣ), some of the bishops of Lower Egypt believed that he would administer [the affairs of the church] according to their preferences, and that they would control all the affairs [of the church], because he was initially [a man] of little learning, like Demetrius the former father, but he was a good cleric (*kāhin*), because he was a priest (*qiss*) of the *Skene* of the Monastery of Abba Macarius. Nevertheless, when he became patriarch, the expectations of [the aforementioned bishops] did not come about. Rather, [Cyril] persisted in reading the Scriptures and their commentaries to the point that, once I [Mawhūb], the sinner, went to him and I found a commentary on the four Gospels before him, so I proceeded to question him concerning many passages (*kalām*) from the holy Gospels, and he gave exceptional interpretations of them that exceeded the knowledge of most bishops and priests."

72 Similarly, *K. al-tawārīkh* (ch. 47) documents only one commemoration for the saint, on the 29th of Bābah. Like the 25th of Thūt, that commemoration is not cited by any other text or authority surveyed. Such anomalies are not uncommon. See the critical edition of *K. al-tawārīkh*'s ch. 47 in S. Moawad's edition. Clearly, as that book was copied, scribes adjusted the details of commemorations listed in ch. 47 to fit their local liturgical cycles, just as they added patriarchal entries to ch. 50.

73 Maria Cramer and Martin Krause, ed./trans., *Das koptische Antiphonar*, Jerusalemer Theologisches Forum 12 (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2008).

5

THE *ENCOMIUM* AS HAGIOGRAPHY

This chapter focuses on the encomium as hagiography and is more concerned with the narrative and structure of that composition. To facilitate that task, the *EncDem* has been partitioned into six segments. That same scheme also informs chapter seven's discussion of the Arabic recensions and adaptations of the *EncDem*, and the translations in Texts II and III.

Proemium (*fols.* 30v–32v). After the narrator's perfunctory exposition upon his inability and unworthiness to speak of the virtues and life of the great saint, he establishes virginity as the central theme of the encomium, which may be read in one light as a popular commentary on Matthew 19:12: "there are some who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven" – the biblical passage that allegedly led Origen (and others) to contemplate castration.[1] Without entertaining the possibility of a literal reading, however, the encomium conveys the normative interpretation of that verse and proceeds to praise the piety of "the one who made himself a eunuch" for the kingdom of heaven – Demetrius![2] The text achieves this goal by setting Demetrius against two prominent biblical figures. Initially, the encomium contrasts Demetrius with King David.[3] The hagiographer maintains that while David may have killed "lion and bear once, twice, or even three times, Demetrius the archbishop has, nonetheless, *killed his passions daily*."[4] It is through this constant slaying of lust, the new martyrdom – the asceticism of virginity – that Demetrius proved superior to David.[5]

A second comparison juxtaposes Joseph, the son of Jacob, and Demetrius – "the second Joseph" (*Iōsēph nbrre*). Similar to King David, Joseph succumbs to a familiar argument. He overcame temptation once, while the archbishop waged an incessant and ever-victorious battle against it. But then the author interjects fresh insight by shifting attention from Demetrius to his wife. In contrasting Joseph with Demetrius, the narrator sought to positively exclude any comparison between the impious "Egyptian woman" and the virtuous "servant of the saints" – Demetrius's wife, whom the encomium positively portrays throughout.[6] It was she who first contested the marriage in the privacy of their bedroom and discreetly suggested refraining from consummating

it, inciting Demetrius's brief monologue on the virtues of celibacy. The encomium then proceeds to sharpen the contrast between Demetrius and Joseph. It stresses that not only was Joseph tempted once, but in demonstrating restraint and keeping his body pure, he acted in a manner typical of any believer. On the contrary, had the archbishop elected to engage in sexual relations with his wife, his actions would have been lawful. Demetrius did not simply resist evil temptations, rather he voluntarily abstained from a permissible activity; hence, his was a greater sacrifice.[7]

The hagiographer then proceeds to discuss whether or not it is possible for a man to "remain a virgin after marriage" (*fols*. 32r–v), and he answers in the affirmative by citing and discussing Matt. 19:12. Still, that seemingly general discussion (which is omitted in the HP) is soon marshalled in support of a specific argument focused on whether or not bishops can be married and the legitimacy of Demetrius's episcopacy (*fols*. 33v). In that later argument, the author references the *Epistle to the Hebrews* (13:4) and the *Canons of the Apostles* (echoing 1 Tim 3:2 and Titus 1:6) as proof texts justifying episcopal marriage,[8] though it remains uncertain whether the arguments were sincere or simply intended to further exalt Demetrius's sacrifice. In general, the Coptic tradition does not denounce the archbishop's marriage but rather depicts it as a blessing alongside virginity.[9] Even the later discord in Alexandria did not result from Demetrius's marriage *per se* but the belief that all his predecessors were celibate.[10] Still, neither Demetrius nor Mīnās II (see previous chapter) were actually married in the eyes of their communities. This seems to reflect a period in which the prospect of a married bishop was acceptable in theory but not in practice. There is considerable tension in the Demetrian dossier on that front. As mentioned in the previous chapter, and addressed at greater length in chapter six, the *EncDem*, in particular, presents the bishop's marriage as an eternal, non-sexual union. It was not for show nor an inconvenience to be discarded a few days later. If anything, the argument of the *EncDem* is that a spiritual marriage forges a more lasting bond between the two partners.[11] Yet all that mattered to the parishioners was that Demetrius's marriage was not consummated. In other words, from their perspective, his marriage was acceptable because it was not real, and, hence, the imminent crisis was averted.

By and large, the encomium's thematic emphasis is clear from the opening sentences and reverberates throughout the text: an individual who voluntarily refrains from sexual activity is more honorable than the one who abstains involuntarily.

> Listen, my beloved, you who were perplexed [earlier] when I said that if a man made himself a eunuch, he would be more honorable than the one who was born a eunuch. It was because of this very reason that *these saints* were not burnt; for *they* had extinguished the flame of the fire of lust.[12]

It should be noted that while gender-specific language (e.g. eunuchs, castration) permeates the *EncDem*, this passage attributes the virtue of extinguishing the "fire of lust" to both Demetrius and his wife,[13] though that would change in the Arabic recensions (see chapter six, below).

Background and Election (*fols.* 32v–33v). A single sentence encapsulates the archbishop's background: "Demetrius descended from a prominent, established, and celebrated family in the city of Alexandria."[14] Bereft of originality, this hagiographic *topos* proves significant nonetheless.[15] Primarily, it corroborates the evidence gleaned from the earliest Greek and Latin sources, namely, that Demetrius hailed from an urban, Hellenic environment. Moreover, the early Coptic tradition does not preserve any reference to Demetrius's rustic background or illiteracy. On the contrary, one would expect an individual from such a "prominent, established, and celebrated" Alexandrian family to have attained at least a rudimentary education and certainly to have been fluent in the Greek language (perhaps exclusively so). While the assertion may have been formulaic, the Demetrius depicted in third- through fifth-century sources interacting with Origen, exchanging letters with fellow bishops, and convening local councils – not to mention shepherding a predominantly Alexandrian constituency – may be easily reconciled with an individual born into such an elite family, rather than the rustic figure who monopolizes later sources.

Proceeding to his election and appointment, the *EncDem* preserves two unique traditions abandoned by all other narratives. According to the encomium, Bishop Julian never met Demetrius; rather, the Apostolic Throne of Alexandria remained vacant for an unspecified duration. Secondly, Demetrius's election and elevation are attributed to the will of "God and the vote of the whole congregation."[16] In Coptic-Arabic sources, the hitherto unattested Prophecy of Grapes subverts both traditions, and in the *Synaxarium*'s later rendering, Julian not only identifies his successor but he even ordains him: Text VI. The current ecclesiastical version of the *Synaxarium* even goes as far as identifying the date of that ordination: the 9th of Baramhāt (18 March). The Coptic encomium then introduces a novel tradition that would become central to the archbishop's hagiographic program: Demetrius was married while all his predecessors were celibate.

Spiritual Discernment and Discontent in Alexandria (*fols.* 33v–35v). The account introduces the gift of spiritual insight or discernment, which enabled Demetrius to mystically divine the sins of individuals as they approached the Eucharist.[17] Although the archbishop discreetly chastised such wayward parishioners, this spiritual gift led some congregants to resent him and to retaliate by condemning his marriage, a development that ultimately prompted the ordeal – the Miracle of Coals. First introduced here, the theme of spiritual discernment would undergo two evolutionary developments in the Coptic-Arabic texts discussed in chapter seven.

As Demetrius's marriage came under scrutiny and condemnation, an angel appeared to him with a somewhat cryptic message: "The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep" (Jn. 10:11). Confused, and interpreting the message as an exhortation to martyrdom, Demetrius boldly retorted: "I am ready to shed my blood for the name of my Lord Jesus Christ."[18] Here, the account depicts Demetrius as one eagerly awaiting an opportunity to receive the crown of martyrdom.

The angel's words came from John 10:11, where they signify the sacrifice on the cross – Christ's martyrdom. Thus, martyrdom was not introduced haphazardly. Rather, the staged misunderstanding functions as a rhetorical device interjecting the archbishop's zeal for martyrdom, a theme entirely lacking in earlier texts. Upon hearing Demetrius's fervent remarks, the angel proceeded to lightly scold him and instructed the saint as to the true intention of his statement: to reveal the nature of his marital relationship to the congregation in order to avert the imminent scandal. Initially, Demetrius protested, arguing that he would prefer death to divulging his pious secret, but he eventually acquiesced. This leads to the account of the ordeal by fire and a significant transition away from the martyrdom of blood to a topic of greater relevance to a post-Constantinian audience – the martyrdom of virginity.[19]

The Ordeal of Coals (*fols.* 35v–36v). The following morning, after celebrating the liturgy of the Feast of Pentecost (in which tongues of fire appeared over the heads of the apostles without harming them: Acts 2:2–3),[20] Demetrius did not dismiss the parishioners but asked the archdeacon to seat them in an assembly hall (ⲡⲥⲩⲛⲉⲇⲣⲓⲟⲛ). He then sent for his wife to come and "enjoy the blessing of the congregation." The subsequent events have a strong ritualistic structure that evolved in later recensions of the account. Attendants brought wood into the middle of the congregation and set it ablaze. Demetrius prayed and, then, in a literal enactment of Proverbs 6:28, he stood "over" the pyre, grasped burning coals, and placed them in his outstretched liturgical vestment (cf. Prov. 6:27). After that, the archbishop transferred some coals to his wife's outstretched tunic as the congregants looked on. Both carried burning coals in their clothing but emerged unscathed by the ordeal, for they had long ago "extinguished the flame of the fire of lust."[21] The marvel prompted the parishioners to repent of their slanderous accusations and to inquire into the meaning of the miracle.

Early Life and Marriage (*fols.* 36v–38r). The ordeal functions as an endorsement and a prelude to the latter half of the account, which succinctly narrates Demetrius's life and marriage prior to ordination. A version of the chaste marriage motif detailed in the previous chapter, it maintains that while he was still a child, Demetrius's parents took in his orphaned cousin and, some years later, desiring to safeguard and consolidate the family's wealth, married the two youths. On their wedding night, the young bride and groom vowed to lead a chaste marriage,[22] a resolve additionally

fortified by divine grace and miraculous phenomena. Each night, when they went to bed, a mysterious creature resembling an eagle would appear and come to rest between them on the bed, covering each spouse with one of its wings until morning. Significantly, the holy couple shared the same bed for forty-eight years before Demetrius's ordination and likely continued to do so afterwards as well – a far from typical arrangement.[23]

This latter aspect requires greater scrutiny. The evidence is suggestive, though somewhat ambiguous, as to whether or not Demetrius continued to live with his wife after his ordination. For one thing, it is not clear if the congregation took offense to Demetrius because he continued to live with his wife or because he was married to begin with.[24] Moreover, all the personal information at our disposal is situated at the beginning of Demetrius's tenure as patriarch; the *EncDem* has nothing to say about the bishop's forty-three-year career. Still, the evidence, such as it is, favors cohabitation after ordination. In the encomium, Demetrius's reproach of sinners during communion led some disgruntled parishioners to rhetorically ask, "Isn't it true that he has his wife [living with him], while he "rebukes [others] in this manner?" (*EncDem*, *fol.* 34r). This is soon followed by the ordeal and Demetrius's truncated explanation for the three children, "who reside with us" (*fol.* 37v). Moreover, the encomium explicitly champions a bishop's right to have a wife (*fol.* 33v), and near the end of the account, the hagiographer asks rhetorically of his audience: "Are you not amazed by this saint *who spent his whole life with his wife* practicing self-control?" (*fols.* 38r–v). Hence, in the *EncDem*, the bishop's continued cohabitation with his wife is likely the issue at hand. The only evidence to the contrary is an ambiguous phrase at the end of the account, stipulating that Demetrius dismissed his wife to "her place" (*fol.* 38r). This vague phrase is seized upon in the late Arabic tradition, which puts greater distance between the bishop and his spouse. Hence, in the *Synaxarium*, Demetrius's wife is said to reside in "the women's house" (see the following chapter and Text VI.C).

Peroration (*fols.* 38r–39v). Following the digression into their past, Demetrius dismissed his wife and the congregation. The author of the encomium then contrasts the virtue and restraint Demetrius exhibited with the vices and impiety of the married couples of his day, focusing in particular on wayward husbands. He recounts that the archbishop overcame his sexual instincts by reflecting upon the vow he took on his wedding night and staved off desire by contemplating the corruptibility of human flesh and the torments of eternal damnation.[25] The above-referenced theme of Demetrius as a new Joseph briefly reemerges in this section, and the author concludes by stating that, for the sake of brevity, he will refrain from recounting the archbishop's miracles. (None is mentioned in any of the sources surveyed.) The remainder of the encomium, which has been discussed in chapter two above, has no bearing on the biography of the bishop.

In summary, the drafting of the *EncDem* inaugurates a new phase in which Demetrius emerges as a historically significant figure in his own right. Its depiction of the historical Demetrius reinforces the basic biographical sketch deduced from the earlier patristic tradition: namely, that he hailed from a privileged family living in one of the greatest Hellenized urban centers in the Roman Empire – Alexandria. Hagiographically, the text introduces the salient themes that would come to dominate the archbishop's *vita*: elevation to the episcopate despite marriage, spiritual discernment, the ordeal of coals, and the account of his early life and consanguine marriage.

Notes

1 In all, I am more convinced by Jon F. Dechow's argument that the whole self-castration tradition is more fiction than history; see his *Dogma and Mysticism*, 128–35. On the relevant sources, cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.1–3 and Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 64.3.11–3. The practice was repudiated by Origen himself: *Commentary on Matthew*, 15.1–5, esp. section 3; Origen, *Der Kommentar zum Evangelium nach Mattäeus*, Part 2, trans. Hermann Vogt (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1990), 91–7. If true, Origen may have been also influenced by Sextus, *Sentences* 13 & 273 [H. Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959; repr. 2003)], and a saying attributed to Philo which he cites in the *Commentary on Matthew*, 15.3. R.P.C. Hanson ("A Note on Origen's Self-Mutilation," *Vigiliae Christianae* 20.2 (1966), 81–2) presents other early sources that advocated the practice. Daniel F. Caner, "The Practice and Prohibition of Self-Castration in Early Christianity," *Vigiliae Christianae* 51 (1997), 396–415; P. Cox, *Biography in Late Antiquity*, 88–90; P. Brown, *Body and Society*, 168 n. 44; Gary Taylor, *Castration: An Abbreviated History of Western Manhood* (New York: Routledge, 2000), ch. 11.

2 *EncDem*, *fol.* 32r.

3 Another aspect of the comparison, discussed below is more focused on David's defeat of Goliath; 1 Sam. 17.

4 My emphasis. *EncDem*, *fol.* 32v: ⲛ̄ⲧⲁϥⲡⲁⲧⲁⲥⲥⲉ ⲛ̄ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲁⲟⲛⲏ ⲙ̄ⲙⲏⲛⲉ. Similar sentiments are expressed at the end of *fol.* 39r. See 1 Sam. 17:34–7. There is an echo of this line of thinking in an apophthegm attributed to John the Little, in which John prayed to God to remove his passions. Once the gift had been granted, however, an elder reprimanded him saying: "Go, beseech God to stir up warfare" for "it is by warfare that the soul makes progress." See Benedicta Ward, *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1975), John the Dwarf §13 (and § 2); cf. Maged S.A. Mikhail and Tim Vivian, ed./trans., *The Holy Workshop of Virtue: The Life of John the Little by Zacharias of Sakhā* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press/Cistercian Publications, 2010), §§ 21, 34.

5 Thomas J. Heffernan, *Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 244–55; V. Burrus, *Sex Lives*, 33–9. Jerome's *Life of Malchus* (§ 6) maintains: "chastity preserved has its own martyrdom."

6 *EncDem*, *fol.* 36r and 39r. A thoroughly positive portrayal of a bishop's wife – an *episcopa*, such as the one in this source and in the *Life of John Khame*, is rare; cf. B. Brennan, "'*Episcopae*': Bishops' Wives," 311–23. See the discussion of gender in chapter six, below.

7 Cf. Brown, *Body and Society*, 255–56.

8 *EncDem*, *fol.* 33v. See also Mt. 8:14/Mk.1:30/Lk. 4:38, 1 Cor. 9:5; *Canons of the Apostles*, § 16 and Canon 5 (pgs. 18 and 176); see Henry Tattam, ed./trans., *The Apostolical Constitutions: or Canons of the Apostles in Coptic* (London: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Brittan and Ireland, 1848; repr., Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2008). The English title of this compilation can be misleading; the Coptic title of the work is ⲛⲓⲕⲁⲛⲱⲛ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲛⲓⲁⲡⲟⲥⲧⲟⲗⲟⲥ – at times it is also referenced as the *Apostolic Church-Ordinance*; P. de Lagarde had published a Sahidic version of this text in *Aegyptiaca* (Göttingen: A. Hoyer, 1883), 209–37. The compilation should not be confused with the much longer (late fourth/early fifth-century) *Apostolic Constitutions*: see, Marcel Metzger, *Les Constitutions Apostoliques*, 3 vols. SC 320, 329, 336 (Paris: Cerf, 1986), cf. 2.1.2.

9 *EncDem*, *fol.* 32r, my emphasis. "[Demetrius] was clothed with the foundation of virtue: virginity *and* matrimony (ⲁⲣⲉⲧⲏ ⲧⲡⲁⲣⲑⲉⲛⲓⲁ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲡⲅⲁⲙⲟⲥ)." Cf. the tradition quoted in note 24, below.

10 *EncDem*, *fol.* 34r–v: "no one sat upon the throne of the archbishopric after Saint Mark the Evangelist except virgins." The same sentiments are repeated in the following paragraph (*fol.* 34v). This is congruent with, and perhaps informed by, the above-referenced tradition in Jerome's *Against Vigilantius*.

11 See *EncDem*, *fol.* 37r–v; and chapter six, below.

12 *EncDem*, *fol.* 36v. My emphasis; cf. I Cor. 7:9.

13 See John Kitchen, *Saints' Lives and the Rhetoric of Gender* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), chs. 4 and 6.

14 *EncDem*, *fol.* 33r: ⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ ⲟⲉ ⲟⲩⲛ ⲇⲏⲙⲏⲧⲣⲓⲟⲥ ⲛⲉⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲡⲉ ⲉⲛ̄ ⲛⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃⲩⲧⲉⲣⲟⲥ ⲉⲧϯⲥⲟⲉⲓⲧ ⲉⲛ̄ ⲧⲡⲟⲗⲓⲥ ⲣⲁⲕⲟⲧⲉ.

15 The *topos* has a long history; see D.A. Russell and N.G. Wilson, eds./trans., *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), Treatise II (§370, pgs. 80–1); A.P. Alwis, *Celibate Marriages*, 58–60.

16 *EncDem*, *fol.* 33r: ⲉⲓⲧⲙ̄ ⲡⲟⲩⲱⲟ ⲟⲩⲛ ⲙ̄ⲡⲓⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲙⲡ̄ ⲧⲉϥⲩⲫⲟⲥ ⲙ̄ⲡⲗⲁⲟⲥ ⲧⲏⲣⲟ̄. Also see chapter four, notes 5 and 7.

17 *EncDem*, *fol.* 34r; cf. *Life of John the Little*, Mikhail and Vivian, §§ 60 and 75.

18 *EncDem*, *fol.* 35r: ⲙⲏ ⲉⲕⲧⲙ̄ⲛⲟⲟⲩ ⲙ̄ⲛⲟⲓ ⲉⲩⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲙ̄ⲁⲣⲧⲩⲣⲟⲥ ϯⲥⲃⲧⲱⲧ ⲉⲡⲱⲉⲣ̄ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁⲥⲛⲟϥ ⲉⲁⲡⲣⲁⲛ ⲙ̄ⲡⲁ.ⲭ̄ⲥ̄ ⲓ̄ⲥ̄ ⲡⲉⲭ̄ⲥ̄. Cf. J. Kitchen, *Saints' Lives and the Rhetoric of Gender*, 51–2.

19 T.J. Heffernan, *Saints and Their Biographers*, 252–55; Robert E. Winn, "The Church of Virgins and Martyrs: Ecclesiastical Identity in the Sermons of Eusebius of Emesa," *JECS* 11.3 (2003), 309–38; Gillian Clark, "Bodies and Blood: Late Antique Debate on Martyrdom, Virginity, and Resurrection," in *Changing Bodies, Changing Meanings: Studies on the Human Body in Antiquity*, ed. Dominic Montserrat (London: Routledge, 1997), 99–115, which focuses primarily on martyrdom.

20 Y. N. Youssef suggested that this passage and event are possibly an implicit reference to the Rite of Genuflection (*al-sajdah*), which is observed on the afternoon of Pentecost Sunday ("Two Liturgical Texts," 148–49). The inference is not impossible, but seems unlikely given the details in the encomium: the ordeal is said to have been early in the day, it was not held in church (as opposed to the HP which repositions it there), and the assumption is that the people were returning to their homes immediately after the liturgy – hence, the need to ask them to wait. The Rite of Genuflection is clearly attested in the Coptic Church by the fourteenth century, but it is uncertain when it was introduced. See also chapter seven, note 37.

21 *EncDem*, *fol.* 36v. The imagery of sexual temptation as a live coal is found in Athanasius, *Life of Antony*, 5.5; cf. Eph. 6:16. In the *Life of Symeon the Holy*

Fool, Leontius likewise demonstrates the virtue of the saint by his ability to hold live coals without being harmed; see D. Krueger, *Symeon the Holy Fool*, 145. Similar accounts are reported even today. Abuna (Fr.) Yustus (d. 1976) was a Coptic monk at the Monastery of St. Antony who engaged in the "Fools for Christ" tradition. It is reported that on a cold night some workers at the monastery were keeping warm next to a fire pit when one of them began to harass the disheveled monk. Later, as that man looked to light a cigarette, the saint went up to the fire pit, selected a large glowing coal, picked it up with his bare hands and walked over to the man and lit his cigarette. Then he walked back and placed the coal back in the pit. The stunned man never bothered the saint again.

22 On arranged and consanguine marriages, see G. Clark, *Women in Late Antiquity*, 13–5, 41–6.

23 Cf. Abba Cyrus and Amoun in chapter four, and notes 55, 62, and 66 in that chapter. Also see the tradition cited by Sawīrus in the following note; cf. note 9, above.

24 Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ, *Kitāb muṣbāḥ al-ᶜaql: The Lamp of Understanding*, ed. S. Khalil (Cairo: Dār al-ᶜalam al-ᶜarabī, 1978), sec. 10, pg. 95: "As for the Egyptians, they prefer that the bishop of Alexandria in particular, be a celibate man, who was unmarried while a layman."

25 *EncDem*, *fol.* 38v–39r. This account may have been influenced by that of Abba Amoun's in the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, ch. 30.

6

HAGIOGRAPHY ACROSS LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Situated between the analysis of the patristic and Sahidic Coptic underpinnings of Demetrius's dossier and their Arabic recensions and adaptations, this chapter provides an opportunity to reflect on various thematic elements as they negotiated the linguistic and cultural transitions from Greek and Coptic into Arabic.[1] In many ways, this is a persistent theme throughout the study, which is further advanced in the following chapters. Nonetheless, while subsequent discussions parse specific passages and incidents in Demetrius's hagio-biography, here the focus is on three overarching themes whose significance resonates beyond the boundaries of the dossier at hand.

The initial discussion focuses on Demetrius's hagiographic program as a form of apology. This aspect emerges in the Sahidic encomium and reaches its zenith in the late Arabic tradition. Spiritual marriage is the second theme analyzed. Here, the specifics of Demetrius's nuptials retain rare aspects of the motif, the most intriguing and theologically suspect of which was not retained in any Arabic text. Finally, the last section focuses on the shifting perceptions of marriage and women more broadly in pre- and post-eleventh-century literature, which coincide with the second phase of the translation project from Coptic and Greek to Arabic in Egypt (see chapter two). In all, as demonstrated here and in the next chapter, translating Demetrius's corpus went far beyond a mechanical or literal linguistic rendering from one language into another but extended to the manipulation of the tradition to reflect new cultural and ideological impulses. Notably, this analysis focuses on hagiography as it crosses languages and cultures, within the same geographic location and the same confession.

Hagiography as apology

History, hagiography, and apology are easiest to distinguish in their purist forms, rather than in their most common attestations. Texts and authors, both deliberately and inadvertently, habitually present hybrids of these genres. Eusebius's famed *History* provides a rich example.[2] It is certainly a history, though it has also been read as an apology (or defense),[3] and it includes

distinct hagiographic elements (discussed here in the context of Origen, but the theme reoccurs with other figures in the *History* as well).[4] Eusebius's depiction of Origen in that composition, along with how Origen may have wanted to represent himself,[5] have received a great deal of scholarly attention. Certainly, where Origen and Demetrius are concerned, history, hagiography, and apology closely intertwine.[6]

Unabashedly hagiographic, Demetrius's dossier retains a discreet apologetic tone as well. The *Encomium on Demetrius* first demonstrates this aspect, though a perusal of the *Life of Origen* in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* (Book VI) may be necessary in order to appreciate the *EncDem*'s apologetic nuance. Both Michael Grant and Pierre Nautin (among others) have suggested that Eusebius's depiction of Origen reflects hagiographic admiration rather than historical objectivity.[7] But scholars have yet to appreciate the cursory and unsympathetic portrayal of Demetrius in that same work, which has negatively influenced appraisals of the archbishop in the patristic tradition and in modern scholarship.

The depiction of Origen's asceticism provides a salient example.[8] Eusebius maintains that the Alexandrian scholar slept on the ground, walked barefoot, and spurned all luxuries. Even the alleged extreme act of his self-castration, which is said to have initially gained Demetrius's admiration, is interpreted in light of his rigorous *askēsis*.[9] As for Demetrius, Eusebius fails to attribute any ascetical regimen to the patriarch; rather, he notes that as Origen gained prominence, Demetrius succumbed to "human weakness" and proceeded to harass and defame him.[10] Similarly, where Eusebius commented on Origen's yearning for martyrdom and intellectual brilliance, references to Demetrius are wanting. To later generations, many of whom never directly read Origen but only polemical excerpts that enumerated his alleged heresies (many of which were pure fabrications, misunderstandings, or passages read in light of anachronistic concepts of orthodoxy), it would appear that Eusebius and the patristic tradition had missed the mark; they admired and documented the virtues of the "heretic" rather than those of the saint. Within such a context, the encomium readily functions as a counternarrative to Demetrius's sparse and largely unfavorable patristic legacy. Read as hagiography, three themes dominate the so-called *Life of Origen*: martyrdom, virginity, and biblical erudition – all of which Eusebius positively attributes to the scholar but not the bishop.[11] Of these themes, the Coptic encomium addresses the first two omissions, while the Arabic recensions complete the hagiographic program by focusing on the third.

As sacred biography, the *Life of Origen* and the *Encomium on Demetrius* demonstrate an intriguing thematic symmetry,[12] though it is difficult to discern the resolve behind the congruence – whether it was intentional or happenstance. Still, if the whole of Demetrius's hagiographic dossier is considered (especially Part Two of the biography of the saint in the HP, which is discussed in the following chapter), then a definitive, positive answer may

be given. A deliberate shaping of Demetrius's early hagiography is possible – I would argue likely – but the purposeful structuring of his legacy in Arabic texts is all but certain. As demonstrated above, not only were the focal texts a product of the ninth through the eleventh centuries, but the archbishop's popularity was largely predicated upon the HP's primitive recension – *not* the Coptic encomium, which did not enjoy much circulation. Indeed, the formative period for the production of the archbishop's biography may have been quite brief and, doubtless, very few individuals took part in drafting what would be recognized as the saint's normative biography – perhaps just Mawhūb ibn Manṣūr and his assistants. Moreover, the fact that both figures are associated with the same virtues is intriguing. Demetrius could have been connected with a long litany of pious deeds, spiritual gifts, and ascetic practices that had nothing to do with Origen; yet what emerges is a hagiographic program that attributes to Demetrius the same virtues as Origen, going as far as calling Demetrius "the one who made himself a eunuch."[13]

Of the three themes, the *EncDem* first addresses martyrdom. Origen's credentials here are impeccable. Eusebius narrates the famous anecdote in which Origen's mother hid the youth's clothes to prevent him from leaving their home to proclaim his faith to Roman authorities.[14] On firmer historical grounds, Origen authored the inspiring *Exhortation to Martyrdom*, encouraged Christian prisoners in plain view of Roman soldiers,[15] endured torture under Decius, and possibly died due to the extent of his injuries.[16] He was minimally a confessor and the son of a martyr. As for Demetrius, his whereabouts and actions during periods of persecution remain unknown. The encomium compensates for this by depicting the archbishop as a latent martyr or, at least, as one possessing a martyr's zeal in the choreographed misunderstanding between the angel and Demetrius (discussed in the previous chapter). The *History of the Patriarchs* builds on this theme. Stopping short of depicting Demetrius as a martyr, it introduces a hitherto unattested (and problematic) tradition that maintains that the archbishop was sent into exile by Emperor Severus during a period of persecution and that he eventually died in exile. The details of this tradition are addressed in the following chapter.

The second theme, virginity, monopolizes the encomium. Both the *Life of Origen* and the *EncDem* interpret the virtue through the prism of Matthew 19:12.[17] Whereas a young Origen purportedly interpreted the verse literally and castrated himself to avert scandal and temptation, the encomium repeatedly refers to Demetrius's chaste marriage as the true exegesis of that biblical passage.[18] The encomium's comparison of Demetrius and Joseph underscores this: remaining a virgin in spite of temptation is admirable, but the restraint of a married man – the abstinence of one who is allowed to lawfully engage in sexual intimacy – is divine. Here, Demetrius is not simply a spiritual eunuch, as much is expected of the average single Christian,

but in leading a chaste marriage he epitomizes self-restraint (ἐγκράτεια) and spiritual excellence.[19] He is every bit the ascetic Origen was – even greater.

> For if David had killed Goliath while bearing weapons, he would not be praised so much, would he? But when [David], killed [Goliath] without shield or spear, were there not triumphal celebrations as is customary among all mortals? So too, then, when the man who is born a eunuch strives [for chastity], it is counted for him [as something] not needing strength in the way that it does of the one who will strive while having [all] his members.[20]

Whereas the Coptic encomium addresses martyrdom and chastity, the Arabic tradition completes the hagiographic program by forwarding a counternarrative to the third Eusebian/patristic omission – erudition. There, the elevation of an illiterate peasant to the Alexandrian episcopacy subsequently led to his miraculous enlightenment. Hence, Demetrius was graced with a sublime intellect and incomparable learning. The HP-V is explicit: "As for Demetrius, the saintly Patriarch of Alexandria, he exhibited knowledge and wisdom after being illiterate, unable to read or write . . . from the afternoon until night he did not cease teaching as the faithful visited him to benefit from his teachings."[21] This passage lacks a direct comparison to Origen, but after establishing Demetrius as a hallowed teacher, a later barb berates Origen as "the self-appointed teacher who was unworthy of being a student,"[22] a charge that echoes Patriarch Theophilus's assertion that Origen's hubris led him to become "his own teacher."[23] Conveniently, this gloss omits the fact that Origen became the head of the School of Alexandria at Demetrius's insistence.[24] The *Synaxarium* expands on this premise. It adds that Demetrius memorized the books of the church, offered commentaries on most of the Bible, and mastered various fields of study (Text VI). Moreover, as the discussion in chapter eight demonstrates, much of the *Epact* tradition is predicated upon the tradition of Demetrius's erudition (Texts VII and VIII).

In summary, one may read the dominant themes of Demetrius's hagiographic dossier as apologetic counternarratives to the scant and predominantly negative assessment of the archbishop in the patristic tradition, particularly in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*. The master hagiographic narrative set by the *EncDem*, and completed in the HP-P, lauds the archbishop's virtues, which mirrored Origen's. Beyond its thematic congruence with the *Life of Origen*, however, there is no doubt of the resounding success of Demetrius's hagiographic dossier as a form of apology. Whereas the archbishop appears as an insecure, marginal, and vindictive figure in Greek and Latin patristic writings, during the middle ages Demetrius emerged as a popular saint characterized by unassailable chastity, miraculous erudition, and a martyr's zeal.

Demetrius's spiritual marriage

The historical and literary details of Demetrius's nuptial proceedings were discussed in chapter four, but the ideological significance and connotations of his marriage demand further comment. The account provides precious details that aid in disentangling the academic study of spiritual marriage, and it forwards a seldom attested commentary on the eternal repercussions of that ascetic practice. The Demetrian corpus also provides important insight into the changing perceptions of the status of women, marriage, and married men in the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. This aspect is not readily evident but is cajoled to light through a careful comparison of the *EncDem* and its Arabic renderings in HP-P and HP-V.

Under the prevailing rubrics, Demetrius engaged in a *syneisaktic* relationship, a "spiritual marriage," the likes of which sparked considerable debate and repeated censure by various patristic authors and ecclesiastical synods throughout Late Antiquity.[25] Caution is warranted, however. Much of modern scholarship on this issue lacks the nuance of the ancient authorities. A prevailing definition identifies spiritual marriage as: "the cohabitation of the sexes under the condition of strict continence, a couple sharing the same house, often the same room, and sometimes the same bed, yet conducting themselves as brother and sister."[26] Thus, several patristic texts, most notably Athanasius's second *Letter to Virgins* and John Chrysostom's treatises on the *subintroductae*, figure in condemning the practice.[27] Yet, this definition fails to distinguish between individuals who practiced celibacy within a sanctioned marriage and those who simply cohabitated.[28] Patristic authors, on the other hand, painstakingly underscored that the type of union they condemned lacked both civil and ecclesiastical recognition. Moreover, the logic of the passionate arguments of Athanasius and John Chrysostom denouncing this practice would be rendered meaningless in the context of a couple who were married in the eyes of their church and community.[29] For its part, the encomium lacks any censure of the practice; rather, it depicts Demetrius's spiritual marriage as a pious ideal, which is further emphasized in Arabic sources.

Still, the account is atypical on several fronts. Couples that practiced celibacy, either from the commencement of the marriage or upon the ordination of the husband, usually separated, or at minimum slept in different rooms.[30] Yet, according to the encomium, Demetrius continued to share an asexual bed with his wife for decades. The reference is rare. Interpreting sexuality as a consequence of the Fall, many Church Fathers, including those in the east who generally tended to have a more positive view of sexuality within marriage,[31] advocated celibacy as a means to regain the prelapsarian condition.[32] Hence, in the patristic era, celibacy increasingly emerged as a memory and a promise of the pristine human state. In promoting that ideal, bishops advocated modesty and limited interactions between the two

sexes, while monastics often went a step further by prescribing strict gender segregation, which, ironically, limited the extent to which they could realize that very ideal. Simply put, Adam and Eve lived together – not apart – in the garden. In this context, what emerges in the Demetrian account (and the *Life of John Khame*) is arguably the most complete version of the memory/renewal ideal of the prelapsarian condition: a man and a woman – husband and wife – sharing an asexual bed, a restored image of humanity.[33]

More fascinating, even exceptional, is the rationale the *EncDem* conveys for the practice. In hagiographic literature, marital celibacy typically signifies a negation of the union. Thus, while a couple's wedding would satisfy societal and familial obligations, celibacy ensured each spouse's fealty to his or her true bridegroom – Christ. In the encomium, however, the couple practiced celibacy not to negate their marital bond but to fortify it by rendering it impervious to death. Responding to his new bride's prompting, Demetrius declared:

> If you listen to me, my sister, we will live in a place where we can never be separated from each another. For even if I were to marry (*eišanjite*) you [in this world], I will be separated from you and you will be separated from me at death, but if we keep our bodies holy, in purity, we will not leave each other in the heavenly Jerusalem.[34]

This is a rare exposition according to which sexuality within marriage ultimately leads to separation at death, while a celibate, spiritual marriage forges an eternal bond.[35] Mitigated in both recensions of the HP, this notion of a perpetual union is most striking in the Coptic encomium. It presents a marginal, though, nonetheless, alternative version of the post-human condition that is dominated by the "angelic life" motif (cf. Matt. 22:23–30), which negates any bond between husband and wife beyond this world.

Finally, the account reflects its post-Constantinian socio-religious setting by assuring paradise to both spouses on account of their virginity rather than a martyrdom of blood, a rationalization that is faithfully retained in the HP-P and HP-V.

Gender and marriage in medieval Egypt

The various recensions of the *EncDem* provide a vantage point onto changing attitudes toward gender and marriage in medieval Egypt, which may be documented starting with the eleventh century.[36] By and large, later Coptic literature, down to the ninth century, while reflecting the perspectives of that age, which ring of chauvinism in modern ears, often present a refreshing, evenhanded depiction of the status of women, marriage, and married men as compared to life-long celibate ascetics. That nuance, however, is often lacking in Arabic texts and recensions.

The *Encomium on Onnophrius* attributed to the seventh-century Bishop Pisentius of Coptos (Qifṭ) provides a relevant example.[37] Delivered on St. Onnophrius's feast day (Ba'ūnah 16/1 January), the encomium, nonetheless, has next to nothing about that saint, though it provides much by way of social values and attitudes. While it encapsulates traditional opinions regarding the modesty expected of single women, its depiction of marriage and married couples is rather positive:

> Young people, those who are in adolescence,[38] and the young girls whose bodies are young with ephemeral youth, keep your holy bodies in all purity so that you may truly become children of this holy [saint] in the kingdom of heaven . . . fight against sin as he did: flee evil thoughts, guard our undefiled purity in freedom and sobriety and complete confidence until you [are joined together in] marriage. . . . In this way, through the purity of your flesh and your purified hearts, you will come to resemble the righteous one. That is to say, let the husband watch over his wife, and let the wife do likewise for her husband, and you will do what is righteous in everything you do.[39]

Similarly, the *EncDem* and the tenth-century *Life of John Khame* exemplarily depict the anonymous wives of Demetrius and John. Here, while the male figures are clearly the focus of both hagiographic accounts, the texts portray their spouses as saints in their own right. They are true partners, striving alongside their husbands, spurring them toward a common goal. Contrary to the prevalent western hagiographic depictions of the wives of clerics and ascetics,[40] which depict them as temptresses or obstacles in the spiritual path of the holy man, the *EncDem* distinguishes Demetrius's wife as the one who first contested their marriage; she endures the same ordeal as her husband, and she is equally credited for extinguishing the "flame of lust."[41] In general, the *EncDem* is reverential in its treatment of Demetrius's wife. In contrasting Demetrius with Joseph, the hagiographer explicitly negates the possible symmetry that would depict both men as being tempted by Egyptian women:

> Perhaps, however, you who are listening might say to me, "You may compare this saint to Joseph, [but] do not compare the wife of this holy and gentle man to that obscene woman who had evil intentions for the saintly Joseph." – I am speaking about the Egyptian woman, [Potiphar's wife]. No, by no means! Forgive me, Christ-loving people.[42]

Similarly, the *Life of John Khame* presents John's wife as a saintly woman who, prior to marriage, secretly longed to remain a virgin. When John

suggested that they should live as siblings rather than spouses, she fell to her knees thanking God. Later, after their separation, she purportedly took monastic vows and is described as a miracle-working abbess. The same perspective resonates in the Arabic *Martyrdom of Jirjis Muzāḥim*. Drafted in the late tenth or early eleventh century, the *Martyrdom* portrays Jirjis's wife, Saywālā, as a key figure in the events leading to his martyrdom and consistently depicts her as a living saint.[43]

These positive depictions of women and marriage in late Coptic and some of the earliest Coptic-Arabic literature sit in sharp contrast to the more stringent attitudes that emerge in the late eleventh century. The Demetrian corpus provides several key examples. A paradigmatic sentence in the *EncDem* reads: "The one who slays a lion is not mighty, nor is the one who kills a panther strong; rather whoever dies while undefiled by the deceit of women, such an individual is mighty indeed."[44] Clearly the passage retains the old trope that depicts women as perpetual temptresses and men as (gullible) would-be victims. The subject clause of this sentence in the *EncDem*, HP-P, and HP-V is nearly identical, though the Arabic recensions omit "or a panther." What is noteworthy is the predicate clause: ⲡⲉⲧⲛⲁⲙⲟⲩ ⲇⲉ ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ ⲉⲧⲁⲡⲁⲧⲏ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉϩⲓⲟⲟⲙⲉ, "rather whoever dies while undefiled by the deceit of women." The phrase gains a peculiar resonance in the Arabic translations. The HP-P reads, ". . . whoever dies while pure of a wife (*al-marāh*)[45] and the snares of women," while the HP-V, more nuanced, reads, ". . . whoever dies while pure from lying with a woman (*maḍjaʿat al-imraʾah*) and the snares of women."[46] In both clauses, the Arabic *imraʾah* may be read as "woman" or "wife," though my translations are guided by my sense of the texts. HP-P is especially coarse and sweeping – avoid women and marriage – while the wording of HP-V is less universal.

"Slips" in the HP's rendition of the *EncDem* further betray an inclination toward downplaying the role of Demetrius's spouse, the primary female figure in the corpus. A key phrase in the *EncDem*, which was referenced above, commends both Demetrius and his wife because "they extinguished (ⲁⲩⲟⲩⲱϣⲛ̄) the flame of the fire of lust." Unmistakably, however, the HP-P and HP-V translate the plural pronoun in this clause, "they," as a singular masculine: hence, the Arabic reads, "for *he* extinguished the flame of lust."[47]

A comparison of the Coptic and Arabic recensions of the *Life of Samuel of Qalamūn* demonstrates a similar pattern. Samuel lived right before the Arab conquest of Egypt, but his Coptic *Life* was not recorded until the eighth century. That text describes an incident in which Samuel was taken as a slave and sold to a sun-worshiping "barbarian" who tried to marry him to one of his slaves, hoping that the couple would have children and increase his possessions. As a preface to that account, in which the saint is tested through physical temptation, the Arabic recension appends a parenthetical gloss altogether lacking in the Coptic original: "the Devil returned to his original deception, which is the woman."[48]

The various recensions of the *Life of Bishoi* (Paisios) provide another attestation of this pattern.[49] One of the incidents discussed in the *Life* focuses on the case of the monk Isaac, who abandoned his monastic calling and religion to marry a Jewish woman. The Greek recension criticizes the specific woman in question, whereas the Arabic (BN Arabe 4796, *fol.* 150r–v) presents even the great Bishoi as being fearful of interacting with women, and it forwards a long litany of biblical accounts in which women tricked men: Gen. 39:20; 2 Sam. 11:1–8; Num. 25:9; 1 Cor. 10:8; Mt. 14:1–12, 26:69–75.

Although the number of examples cited here is admittedly limited, one can discern an unmistakable shift in the development of the medieval framing of the issues discussed in this section. Certainly, there is a tangible difference between pre- and post-eleventh-century narratives, even among those that were translated – as opposed to composed – after that juncture. The Arabic recensions cited above reflect an increasingly stringent attitude toward the socio-religious standing of women, marriage, and married men.

Concluding observations

As a text travels through time, languages, and cultures, it loses something and gains another. Perhaps the major contribution of this chapter is demonstrating just how complex and far-reaching that "something" may be. Certainly, the loss/gain argument has long been acknowledged within a purely linguistic context. As a basic example, one may note that word order – and the subtle nuance and stylistic imprint that it may convey – is much more diverse in the Greek and Latin languages than in Coptic, Arabic, or English. Once history is also considered, even a static passage preserved in a unique manuscript may be interpreted quite differently over time, and even by the same individual. Much depends on what the reader brings to the text through his or her background, abilities, aims, and presuppositions – to poorly sum up a few of the ramifications of the postmodern approach, but without accepting its more radical claims. In this light, even an exceptional translation is never a purely linguistic product but a historical and cultural artifact as well. A translation is both old and new; for scholars the challenge lies in employing a methodological strategy that promotes a contrapuntal reading of a particular passage or theme.

The analyses of the three topics addressed in this chapter demonstrate the propensity of not only authors but translators and scribes as well working with hagiographic literature to – intentionally and unconsciously – produce living texts. In other words, perhaps due to the popular nature of their genre or because of what it is not (Scripture), they are more liable to allow the socio-religious and cultural impulses of their day to influence their tasks. Ultimately, however, the extent to which this observation marginalizes or enriches hagio-historical literature lies in the eye of the beholder. From its

onset, this study has argued that changes in hagiographic sources, even in their recensions, should not be interpreted as desecrations of an *Urtext*, but rather as unique vignettes onto the various periods of composition.

In the discussion of hagiography as apology, scribes consistently honed and expanded the apologetic impulses found in the *EncDem* as that narrative found its way into the Arabic HP-P; this was a process that only gained momentum in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as demonstrated in the following chapter. The details of Demetrius's spiritual marriage document another process: scribal manipulation of the tradition. There, as Demetrius's marriage transitioned from the *EncDem* to the HP-P, the spiritual ideal was maintained, though the unique – theologically problematic – underpinnings of the account, which rendered Demetrius's marriage an eternal bond, were ever so slightly adjusted to conform to established orthodoxy. The Arabic recensions promise Demetrius and his wife a heavenly reward and a blissful thereafter, but the notion of the endurance of their union in heaven was eliminated.

The last section's focus on the shifting perceptions of gender and marriage underscores the impact of cultural assumptions and ideals on the processes of translation. The influence may be subtle or brazen. In the examples culled from Demetrius's dossier, several linguistically straightforward passages, due to their subject matter, provided an opportunity for the cultural attitudes and beliefs of the translator (or scribe) to seep into the Arabic recensions of the *EncDem*. In other examples, such as those cited in the lives of saints Samuel and Bishoi, translators took on a more active role in altering the text they inherited. Such interpolations and "slips" (as opposed to homeoarchy or homeoteleuton, which results from human error) may in theory occur at any point in a text, but they seldom do. Hence, we may presume that where these anomalies occur underscores key culturally or theologically sensitive passages for the medieval scribe. Here, with regard to the Arabic texts of the Demetrian corpus, the interjections and slips noted – the distortions of the *Urtext* – consistently reflect a harsher tone regarding women and marriage than that recorded in the Coptic *EncDem*. As the scope of the investigation expanded to include other texts translated roughly at that same juncture (*ca.* 1100 CE), the same pattern was reinforced.

Notes

1 On the transition of Greek and Coptic literature into Arabic, see chapter two, note 15, above.

2 Glenn F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius*, 2nd rev. ed. (Macon GA: Peeters, 1986); Warren Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); H.W. Attridge and G. Hata, eds., *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992).

3 Enrico Norelli, "Il VI libro dell'*Historia ecclesiastica* appunti di storia della redazione: Il caso dell'infanzia e dell'adolescenza di Origene," and Éric A. Junod, "L'*Apologie pour Origène* de Pamphile et Eusèbe et les développements sur Origène dans le livre VI de l'*Histoire ecclésiastique*," both in *La biografia di Origene fra storia e agiografia*, ed. A.M. Castagno; T.C. Ferguson, *The Past Is a Prologue*, 22–47; Arthur J. Droge, "The Apologetic Dimensions of the *Ecclesiastical History*," in *Eusebius, Christianity and Judaism*, ed. H.W. Attridge and G. Hata, 492–509; Robert M. Grant, *Eusebius as Church Historian* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980).

4 Timothy D. Barnes, *Early Christian Hagiography and Roman History* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 42–7; E.C. Penland, "The History of the Caesarean Present: Eusebius and Narratives of Origen," in *Eusebius of Caesarea*, ed. A.P. Johnson, J.M. Schott; P. Cox, *Biography in Late Antiquity* (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2013), 83–96; J. Verheyden, "Origen in the Making."

5 Lorenzo Perrone, "Origen's 'Confessions': Recovering the Traces of a Self-Portrait," *Studia Patristica* 56 (2013), 3–27.

6 See R.M. Grant's *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 77–81; cf. T.D. Barnes, "Panegyric, History, and Hagiography in Eusebius's *Life of Constantine*," in *The Making of Orthodoxy: Essays in Honour of Henry Chadwick*, ed. R. Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 94–123.

7 P. Nautin, *Origène*, ch. 1, discusses Eusebius's sources and how he utilized them; Robert M. Grant, "Early Alexandrian Christianity," *Church History* 40.2 (1971), 133–35. Also see Grant's, "Eusebius and His Lives of Origen," in *Forma Futuri: Studi in onore del Cardinale Michele Pellegrino* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1975), 635–49; idem, "The Case against Eusebius, or, Did the Father of Church History Write History?" *Studia Patristica* 12 (1975), 413–21.

8 Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.3; cf. Grant, "Early Alexandrian Christianity," 134–35; J. Corke-Webster, "Violence and Authority," 84–8, 94–6.

9 On Demetrius's initial admiration, see Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.3. This was later the subject of repudiation even by Origen himself in his *Commentary on Matthew*, 15.1–5, especially sec. 3. Also see chapter five, note 1, above.

10 Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.4.

11 R.M. Grant identifies four themes: zeal for martyrdom, devotion to the study of the scriptures, distaste for heresy and heretics, and the philosophical ascetic way of life; see his "Eusebius and His Lives of Origen," in *Forma Futuri*; idem, *Eusebius as Church Historian*, 81–2. See the following note as well.

12 Interestingly, while the *EncDem* does not depict Demetrius as a defender of orthodoxy or the persecutor of heretics, those aspects are documented, even romanticized in Part Two of his biography in HP-P and HP-V. See the discussion in chapter seven, below.

13 *EncDem*, *fol.* 32r.

14 Eusebius, *EH* 6.2; cf. Grant, "Alexandrian Christianity," 133–35.

15 Eusebius, *EH* 6.3.4–5; 6.4–5. For the *Exhortation*, see P. Koetschau, ed., *Origenes Werke I*. GCS 2 (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs Verlag, 1899), 3–47; Rowan A. Greer, trans., *Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer, and Selected Works*, Classics of Western Spirituality 11 (New York: Paulist Press, 1979).

16 Eusebius, *EH* 7.1.

17 Mt 19:12 is explicitly referenced in Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.1; the whole self-castration tradition is problematic; see Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism*, 128–35, and chapter five, note 1, above.

18 *EncDem*, *fol.* 36v; HP-P 16; HP-V 28; cf. chapter five, note 1 and chapter three, note 33.
19 "Self-restraint," *enkrateia*, is repeatedly referenced in the *EncDem*, *fols.* 31v and 38r.
20 *EncDem*, *fol.* 32r–v. I am very thankful to Prof. Janet Timbie for her reading of this paragraph, much of which I have adopted here.
21 HP-V 33.18–22.
22 HP-P 19.13–4; HP-V 31.19.
23 Theophilus's *Sixteenth Festal Letter* (401 CE), § 6 (in Jerome, *Ep.* 96); Russell, *Theophilus*, pg. 102.
24 Eusebius, *EH* 6.3.8.
25 Hans Achelis, *Virgines Subintroductae: Ein Beitrag zum VII Kapital des I. Korintherbreifs* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1902); Roger E. Reynolds, "*Virgines Subintroductae* in Celtic Christianity," *Harvard Theological Review* 61 (1968), 547–66; Elizabeth A. Clark, "John Chrysostom and the '*Subintroductae*,' *Church History* 46 (1977), 171–85; repr. eodem, *Ascetic Piety and Women's Faith* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986). The practice was condemned in various councils; see Pierre de Labriolle, "Le 'Mariage Spirituel' dans l'Antiquité Chrétienne," *Revue historique* 137 (1921), 204–25.
26 Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Sexual Relations in Christian Thought* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 33; cited by E.A. Clark in *Ascetic Piety*.
27 Elizabeth A. Clark has translated the two relevant treatises by John Chrysostom, *Adversus eos qui apud se habent subintroductas virgines* and *Quod regulares feminae viris cohabitare non debeant*, in her *Jerome, Chrysostom, and Friends: Essays and Translations* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1979), 158–248. See the important discussion of these texts in Blake Leyerle, *Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives: John Chrysostom's Attack on Spiritual Marriage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), chs. 4–6. For the *Letter to Virgins*, see David Brakke, *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), Appendix II, esp. §§ 20–9. Also see Jerome, *Ep.* 22.13–4 and Basil of Caesarea, *Ep.* 55.
28 In this regard, some Medievalists have been much more precise in their conceptual framework than Patristic scholars; see especially D. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, 25–50. Nonetheless, that remains the exception rather than the rule; cf. Margaret McGlynn and Richard J. Moll, "Chaste Marriage in the Middle Ages: 'It were to hire a greet merite,' in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. V.L. Bullough and J.A. Brundage (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1996), ch. 5. Often, there is a fundamental disconnection between how many modern scholars and ancient authorities discuss this issue. Church Fathers lauded unconsummated sexual desire between married individuals; both individuals attained virtue by refraining from indulging – their abstinence became a sacrifice unto God. Unconsummated sexual desire between two unmarried ascetics, however, still fell under the purview of Mt. 5:28.
29 Chrysostom repeatedly chastises the cohabitants for causing a scandal among their fellow Christians, bringing condemnation upon Christians from nonbelievers and, thus, profaning the name of God. His arguments take for granted that Christians were scandalized by unrelated individuals living together outside of a sanctioned marriage and that the practice brought unwelcomed attention and ridicule from outsiders.
30 Such was the case with Abba Amoun; see chapter four, above.
31 See Eve Levin, "Eastern Orthodox Christianity," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. V.L. Bullough and J.A. Brundage, ch. 15, see in particular pgs.

331–35, 341–42; W.B. Zion, *Eros and Transformation: Sexuality and Marriage – An Eastern Orthodox Perspective* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992); John W. Morris, *The Historic Church: An Orthodox View of Christian History* (Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2011), 141–43.

32 Most patristic authors believed that sexuality emerged due to the Fall. For a dissenting patristic opinion, see David G. Hunter, "Ambrosiaster, On the Sin of Adam and Eve," in *Ascetic Behavior in Greco-Roman Antiquity: A Sourcebook*, ed. Vincent L. Wimbush (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 99–116. The discussion focuses on Question 127 of Ambrosiaster's *Questions on the Old and New Testament*.

33 Cf. J. Kitchen, *Saints' Lives and the Rhetoric of Gender*, 83–5, 108–12, 116. In light of this discussion, each night Demetrius and his wife slept, enframing their bodies within the confines of an asexual bed, they transformed it into an icon: an image that simultaneously depicts the past and the future, the pre- and post-history of humanity. This is a select representation to be sure but one that gains credence due to the miraculous phenomena occurring in their bedroom.

34 *EncDem*, *fol.* 37r: ⲣⲱⲙⲁⲛ ⲥⲱⲧⲙ̄ ⲛ̄ⲥⲱⲓ ⲧⲁⲥⲱⲛⲉ· ⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲫⲙ̄ ⲡⲛⲁ ⲉⲧⲉ ⲙⲉⲩ ⲡⲟⲣⲭⲛ̄ ⲉⲛⲉⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲛ̄ⲣⲏⲧⲫ ⲱⲁⲉⲛⲉⲣ· ⲁⲗⲗⲁ ⲉⲓⲱⲁⲛⲭⲓⲧⲉ ⲫⲙ̄ ⲡⲉⲓⲛⲁ· ⲥⲉⲛⲁⲡⲟⲣⲭⲧ̄ ⲉⲣⲟ ⲁⲩⲱ ⲛ̄ⲥⲉⲡⲟⲣⲭⲉ ⲉⲣⲟⲓ ⲫⲓⲧⲙ̄ ⲡⲙⲟⲩ· ⲉⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲇⲉ ⲫⲱⲥⲫ ⲛ̄ⲱⲁⲛⲫⲁⲣⲉⲫ ⲉⲛⲉⲛⲥⲱⲙⲁ ⲉⲩⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ ⲫⲙ̄ ⲡⲧ̄ⲃⲃⲟ ⲧⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲥⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲛⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲁⲛ ⲫⲙ̄ ⲟⲓⲉⲗⲏⲙ̄ ⲛ̄ⲧⲧⲡⲉ.

35 Cf. *Life of Galaktion and Episteme*, 8; for western parallels, see Dyan Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, 69–72, 274–75, 292; cf. J. Meyendorff, "Christian Marriage in Byzantium," 100.

36 Cf. C.B. Horn, "Reconstructing Women's History"; Maryann Shenoda, "Regulating Sex: A Brief Survey of Medieval Copto-Arabic Canons," in *Across the Religious Divide: Women, Property, and Law in the Wider Mediterranean (ca. 1300–1800)*, ed. J.G. Sperling and S.K. Wray (New York: Routledge, 2010), 25–37; Mark N. Swanson, "The *Other* Hero of *The Martyrdom of Jirjis (Muzāḥim)*: Saywālā the Confessor," *Coptica* 11 (2012), 1–14.

37 W.E. Crum, "Discours de Pisenthius sur Saint Onnophrius," *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 20 (1915–17), 38–67; Tim Vivian, trans., *Paphnutius: Histories of the Monks of Upper Egypt and the Life of Onnophrius*, rev. ed. (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2000), 167–88.

38 Lit.: "in the rank (*tagma*) of youth."

39 T. Vivian, *Paphnutius*, 176–77 (with a few modifications); also see 178 and 185. More traditional attitudes towards modesty occur on page 180.

40 Cf. Dyan Elliott, "The Priest's Wife: Female Erasure and the Gregorian Reform," in *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, ed. Constance Hoffman Berman (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 22–33; Jo Ann McNamara, "Chaste Marriage and Clerical Celibacy," in *Sexual Practices and the Medieval Church*, ed. V. Bullough and J. Brundage (New York: Prometheus Books, 1982), 22–33.

41 *EncDem*, *fol.* 36v; cf. I Cor. 7:9.

42 *EncDem*, *fol.* 33r–v; see chapter five's discussion of the *Proemium*.

43 M.N. Swanson, "The *Other* Hero." Jirjis was martyred in 978.

44 *EncDem*, *fol.* 39r: ⲉⲧⲛⲁⲙⲟⲩ ⲇⲉ ⲛⲧⲟϥ ⲉϥⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ ⲉⲧⲁⲡⲁⲧⲏ ⲛ̄ⲛⲉϩⲓⲟⲟⲛⲉ ⲡⲁⲓ ⲟⲩⲭⲱⲱⲣⲉ ⲡⲉ ⲛ̄ϩⲟⲩⲟ.

45 The issue is complicated by the form of the word used here. While *marāh* is not uncommon in early Arabic literature, in Egyptian Arabic, it is a derogatory form of *imra'ah*. This nuance, however, does not seem to be shared by other Arabic dialects where both terms simply indicate "woman." Still, an Egyptian reading this passage would discern an additional polemical coloring to the phrase.

46 HP-P 17.24–18.1; HP-V 30.5.
47 *EncDem*, *fol.* 36v (my emphasis); cf. HP-P 16.10 and HP-V 28.10.
48 Anthony Alcock edited and translated both recensions: the Coptic version is in *Life of Samuel of Kalamun* (England: Aris & Phillips Ltd., 1983); the Arabic recension is in "The Life of Anbā Samaw'īl of Qalamūn," *Muséon* 109 (1996), 321–45 and 111 (1998), 377–404. Here, compare Coptic § 19 with Arabic, pg. 385.
49 Translations of the Greek, Syriac, and Arabic recensions are forthcoming in Tim Vivian, ed., *Life of St. Bishoi*, Cistercian Studies (Kalamazoo: Liturgical Press, forthcoming). The Arabic translation is based on Göttingen Ar. 114, fols. 150v – 180r; there is no Coptic recension of the *Life of Bishoi*.

7

ARABIC RECENSIONS, AMENDMENTS, AND OMISSIONS

Emergence of the normative hagiography

As discussed in the survey of sources, one must distinguish between early and late Arabic texts in order to facilitate a structural and thematic analysis of Demetrius's corpus. Early sources are comprised of tenth- and eleventh-century writings, predominantly the *Nazm* of Eutychius and the primitive recension of Demetrius's biography in the *History of the Patriarchs*, which was drafted under Fatimid rule (see Texts III and IV). Later texts, the Copto-Arabic *Synaxarium*, *Kitāb al-tawārīkh*, *Chronicon orientale*, and *A Lamp in the Darkness*, were drafted in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Texts VII–IX), during the Golden Age of Coptic-Arabic literature under Ayyubid and early Mamluk rule. Chronologically, HP-P belongs to the early tradition while the HP-V must be classified among later texts. In regard to Demetrius's biography, however, the two versions are often congruent. The distinctive readings in HP-V are routinely grammatical corrections and minor embellishments to the primitive recension. Still, there are a few key shifts in the opening passages as well as several subtle, though significant, differences and omissions between the two recensions; these are highlighted below and in the footnotes to Text III.

Eutychius, the Melkite patriarch of Alexandria (d. 940 CE), provides the earliest Arabic references to Demetrius. He documents the often quoted tradition identifying the patriarch as the first to appoint bishops to various Egyptian dioceses.[1] Other than this assertion, however, the remainder of his account focuses on Demetrius's role in reforming Lent and, hence, best figures within the context of chapter eight's discussion of that tradition. In all, Eutychius's Arabic depiction of Demetrius is congruent with the Greek, Latin, and Sahidic Coptic sources surveyed. The archbishop comes across as an educated, Hellenized Alexandrian. In other words, the Melkite patriarch Eutychius (similar to the Coptic bishop Michael of Tinnīs) does not appear to have been informed by any of the traditions preserved in the Coptic encomium or the early Coptic-Arabic tradition.

As noted in chapter two, Demetrius's *sīrah* (biography) in the HP is comprised of two distinct tracts; each is analyzed here in turn. Moreover, while the primary analysis forwarded in this chapter compares Demetrius's

biography in the HP-P with the earlier traditions in the *EncDem*, the evolution of each hagiographic trope receives appraisal in the context of all the available sources.

Part One of the *sīrah*

Since Part One of the biography is based squarely on the *EncDem*, the following analysis adheres to the same sixfold division employed in chapter five's discussion of the encomium as hagiography. Notably, the florid *proemium* is altogether omitted from the HP.

Background and Election. The account begins by introducing Bishop Julian and then quickly shifts its attention to Demetrius. Immediately within the opening sentences, a new theme emerges. Whereas the encomium positively excludes a meeting between Bishop Julian and Demetrius, the HP begins with Julian in conversation with an angel who introduces the hitherto unattested Prophecy of Grapes that identifies Julian's successor as the man who would present the bishop with a cluster of grapes out of season.[2] HP-P retains a curious reading that includes the original editor's gloss as he attempts to document two contradictory traditions at his disposal: "When Patriarch Julian was reposed – though another recension [reads]: an angel came to [Julian] on the night of his passing."[3] Awkwardly, though purposefully, the HP-P retains dichotomous traditions: a tension HP-V resolves by omitting the initial phrase altogether, while retaining the miraculous account, which in time became normative. Despite its brevity, this comparison well demonstrates the literary and thematic characteristic of the two recensions. Repeatedly, HP-P aims to record all the traditions available, even when they are diametrically opposed. The linguistically more refined HP-V, on the other hand, consistently aims at presenting a homogeneous, singular narrative devoid of dissenting or alternative voices.

Here, the Prophecy of Grapes emerges as covert knowledge in the early Arabic tradition, where only Bishop Julian is aware of the omen, but it is progressively revealed in later accounts. In the *Synaxarium*'s abridgment, Julian shares the prophecy with his clergy, and in the *Chronicon orientale* (though not in the *K. al-tawārīkh*), he reveals it to the whole congregation – a curious act that prompted further elaboration.[4] Puzzled by the prophecy, the congregants wondered if their ailing bishop had become delirious with fever. Again, they questioned Bishop Julian about his successor, but he quickly reassured them that the next bishop would be, indeed, the man bearing grapes.[5] This is the first of two elaborations that the anonymous author introduced in his *Chronicon*, which, as discussed in chapter two, was completed in 1260 CE and is largely based on Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib's *K. al-tawārīkh* (see Text V).

Demetrius then appears as a married "peasant (*fallāḥ*) who could neither read nor write."[6] This single clause negates the nucleus of the historical

Demetrius as depicted in Greek, Latin, and Sahidic Coptic sources, along with Eutychius's tenth-century Arabic account. Far from the upper-class Hellenized figure hitherto encountered in the sources, here one encounters a rustic, illiterate, but pious man – a latter-day Antony.[7] The dramatic remolding of the patriarch's hagiography in the late eleventh century coincided with heightened interest in his career. This was likely sparked by Eutychius's terse tenth-century account in which he depicted the patriarch as a Lenten reformer, positioning him at the crux of confessional polemics among Copts, Melkites, and even Muslims (see chapter eight). These two dynamics – an accessible, engaging biography and newfound recognition as a Lenten reformer – merged to bolster Demetrius's popularity over the next few centuries.

Undoubtedly, the patriarch's hagiography was largely unknown prior to the composition of HP-P. A wealthy man from a celebrated Alexandrian family, as he is depicted in the *EncDem*, cannot be abruptly and flawlessly recast as an illiterate peasant unless no one knew better. Collective memory enshrines the biographies of popular saints, and while traditions never remain static, such a sudden and radical shift in Demetrius's hagiographic persona reflects popular ignorance of the basic tenets of his *vita*. This assertion is only bolstered in light of chapter four's discussion of Demetrius's commemorations within the liturgical calendar, as well as the subsequent analysis of the Lenten reform tradition parsed in chapter eight. In all, the saint's popularity is squarely predicated upon his Arabic *sīrah* along with later Arabic and Bohairic Coptic texts, not the Sahidic encomium or the tidbits that may be gleaned from patristic authors.

This new-found tradition describing Demetrius as an illiterate peasant, which continues to sway perceptions of the patriarch today, engendered an implicit problem: How is it that an illiterate peasant could have even understood the brilliant Origen, let alone correct or censure his teachings? HP-P (as it survives) appears to take this somewhat for granted, though a clause, which maintains that "divine grace was perfected in [Demetrius]"[8] upon his ordination, provided a vague answer. In redressing the dilemma, the author-editor(s) of HP-V introduced a passage into Part Two that describes an aged, learned Demetrius as he instructed his flock despite his frail health (see below, and Text III).[9] Read in isolation, this presents the once illiterate Demetrius as something of a self-made man – or scholar in this case.[10] Still, other thirteenth- and fourteenth-century sources go a step further and are much more explicit, maintaining that Demetrius's learning was nothing short of miraculous and instantaneous. In those texts, divine grace rendered the illiterate peasant into a scholar of the ecclesiastical sciences, who could contend with the great Origen and who purportedly expounded at length on the scriptures.[11] Both the *Synaxarium* and *A Lamp in the Darkness* retained and embellished the twin themes of Demetrius's illiteracy and miraculous enlightenment,[12] though the *Chronicon orientale* omits the *topos*.[13]

Primarily a pious trope, this new compound tradition of ignorance and enlightenment addressed a specific concern within the socio-religious outlook of the Coptic community. While Alexandria regained its former ecclesiastical clout under Umayyad (661–750 CE) rule (though it would incrementally yield to the new political capitals, Fusṭāṭ and, later, Cairo), the Coptic church increasingly looked to the desert, particularly Wādī al-Naṭrūn (Scetis), for its hierarchy and sense of identity.[14] On that front, the desert routinely provided the Copts with their hierarchy, pious saints, and ethos, but for theological insight and scholarly achievements, the faithful consistently looked to clerics and laymen living in urban centers. Indeed, most of the notable authors of the Golden Age of Coptic-Arabic literature fit this profile: the three erudite brothers collectively known as Awlād al-ᶜAssal, who wrote on nearly all the "ecclesiastical sciences," were laymen, the scholar Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib was a deacon, and Abū al-Barakāt ibn Kabar was a priest.

This dynamic also led to friction among clerics, who reflected a broad cross-section of Egyptian society, and Coptic urban notables, whose educational background and cosmopolitanism far surpassed that of the majority of monks, bishops, and patriarchs they interacted with. Such tensions are explicit in the pseudonymous *Apocalypse of Athanasius*, which roundly censures Coptic clergy for their impiety and ignorance.[15] This is not the only text to voice such complaints, though it stands out in that it appears to address an urban lay audience. (However, I would argue that, in spite of their pretext, the bulk of Coptic-Arabic apocalypses targeted that same demographic.)[16] A Coptic version of the *Apocalypse of Athanasius* circulated in Egypt in the eighth century, and by the eleventh century an Arabic recension prevailed. Contextually, this new Demetrian tradition maintaining the divine enlightenment of an illiterate peasant may be read as an apology for "medieval" Coptic practice, arguing that even an ignorant, rural peasant, through the grace God bestows during clerical ordination, and upon the person of the patriarch in particular, might be transformed into a teacher of Alexandrian sophisticates. More plainly, the message is that holiness trumps erudition; God can make anyone a learned intellectual, but holiness is harder to attain.[17] On a popular level, such sentiments continue to carry weight in the Coptic community today and are still buttressed by this very tradition of Demetrius's miraculous enlightenment.

The *sīrah* then proceeds to provide some novel information, stating that while pruning his vineyard (hence, his moniker as the "Vinedresser") Demetrius discovered a cluster of grapes and brought it to Bishop Julian to receive his blessing. As he approached Julian, however, the patriarch seized him and called to the congregants: "They took him against his will, bound him with iron fetters, and on that day they ordained Demetrius [patriarch of Alexandria]."[18] Demetrius's elevation was still in accordance with God's will, but no longer by the "vote of the whole congregation," as qualified in the

EncDem. Details in this novel tradition betray the Arabic text's historical environment. Binding patriarchal candidates is well documented in the HP, but the practice commenced in Egypt in the ninth century, not the patristic era, and it would later become a normative, ritualistic aspect of the ordination rite.[19]

As the Arabic biography proceeds, it omits Demetrius's comparison with King David,[20] truncates the analogy to Joseph, and subtly shifts the emphasis of the whole account: "[Demetrius] resembled Joseph son of Jacob because he was married, and he surpassed (*afḍal min*) Joseph because even though he was married, he did not know his wife."[21] The narrative no longer focuses on the young Joseph's steadfastness in the face of temptation in the house of the Egyptian, but rather on chastity within marriage (shifting the focus from Gen. 39:6–12 to 41:45, 50–2). Similarly, in the HP the Miracle of Coals underscores the virtue of marital celibacy – not living as a eunuch for the Kingdom of Heaven as in the encomium, though the biography still retains that theme.[22]

Here, the thirteenth-century HP-V appends a gloss that defines the office of the Alexandrian patriarch: "The bishop of the city of Alexandria has jurisdiction over (*lahu al-ri'asah ʿalā*) the bishops of its provinces because he is the successor (*khalīfat*) of Saint Mark the Apostle. [He also has jurisdiction] over all the districts of Egypt and the Five Cities [namely the Pentapolis] and all of Nubia and Ethiopia."[23] This anachronistic description provides another clue as to the socio-political context of the recension. (Demetrius lived long before any significant attempts to evangelize Nubia or Ethiopia.) The new addition is a common assertion under Islamic rule, which enabled Coptic authors to discreetly remind Muslim authorities, particularly during periods of communal discord, that the Coptic patriarch's dominion extended to (i.e. he had recourse to) the Christian kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia.[24] Appending this gloss to the vulgate recensions reflects the increasingly precarious status of the Copts in the second half of the thirteenth century. In general, the demographic decline of the Coptic community under the Ayyubids (1171–1250 CE) and, more precipitously, under Mamluk rule (1250–1517 CE) paralleled its legal and social marginalization as well.[25]

Spiritual Discernment and Discontent in Alexandria. Following the sequence of events in the encomium, the *sīrah* distinguishes Demetrius as the only married successor to Saint Mark. The HP retains the theme of spiritual discernment at the moment of dispensing the sacrament, further augmenting it with a new tradition maintaining that Demetrius would routinely see the "Lord Christ administer the Eucharist by his [own] hand" to the communicants.[26] Ironically, whereas the encomium maintains that a gentle Demetrius discreetly reproached sinners, he appears much more brazen in the HP.[27] The contradiction is retained in later Arabic texts, which clearly drew upon dichotomous traditions. Following the lead of the HP, the *Synaxarium* retains the Christ passage and limns Demetrius as he publicly

censured sinners, though the *Chronicon orientale* maintains that the patriarch reproached malefactors privately (*sirran*).[28] As in the *EncDem*, Demetrius's spiritual gift antagonized some of his parishioners who lashed out by condemning his marital status.

The Ordeal of Coals. While the recension of the ordeal in HP-P closely resembles the Coptic account, there is one major difference: the location. In the *EncDem*, after the liturgy had concluded, the archdeacon assembled the congregation in a meeting hall and the ordeal occurred there. In all Arabic sources, however, the miracle takes place in the middle of the church.

Since the ordeal is one of the most vivid and frequently recounted incidents of Demetrius's life, it is not surprising that it takes on various manifestations in later Arabic sources. On the Twelfth of Baramhāt, the Coptic-Arabic *Synaxarium* commemorates the revelation of Demetrius's virginity (Text VI). There, inspired by the passage that describes Demetrius as he stood "over" (ϩⲓϫⲛ̄) the fire to pick up a burning coal, the entry presents a Demetrius who endures something of a double ordeal.

> [Demetrius] then commanded that a fire be lit in the middle of the church, and he sent to the women's house to bring his wife. [The congregants] were astonished by his actions, for they did not understand what he was doing. He then stood up, prayed, and walked over the fire as it blazed. Then he took [burning coals] from it and placed them in the hem of his liturgical vestment, and he *proceeded to pray for hours as he stood over the fire, with the [burning coals] in his vestment*. He then called out to his wife and turned over the [burning coals] on to her tunic, and *then he continued to pray for a long while*, and nothing was burned on either garment.

Here, Demetrius stands for hours over blazing coals, while carrying others in his vestment. Focusing on the trial as spectacle, the *Synaxarium* emphasizes the fantastic elements of Demetrius's ordeal.

In another thirteenth-century text, the HP-V, the quasi-liturgical structure of the miracle is developed further. There, after placing coals in his wife's tunic, the archbishop dusted them with incense and ordered her to circumambulate the congregation – a liturgical act readily recognizable by an orthodox congregation even today.[29] (Manuscripts of the *Synaxarium*, until the ecclesiastical editions of the last century, omit the incense motif altogether.)[30] The current ecclesiastical edition of the *Synaxarium* adds another aspect to the spectacle. It depicts both spouses as they circumambulated the congregation with burning coals in their outstretched garments.

The *Chronicon* retains yet another version of the ordeal; this is one of the passages in which the author of the *Chronicon* demonstrates independence from *K. al-tawārīkh*. There, while the account largely conforms to the HP-V's rendering, it introduces an intriguing elaboration. It retains the incense motif

and identifies Demetrius's wife alone as the one who circumambulated the congregation, but the text further develops the details and significance of the act. There, Demetrius is said to have "raised incense" over the coals in his wife's tunic.[31] The language is no doubt intentional, since "raising incense" (*raf*ᶜ *al-bakhūr*) designates a series of liturgical prayers that accompany the actual burning of incense during the Liturgy of the Word (*synaxis*), Vespers, and Matins.[32] Moreover, the account states that not only did Demetrius raise incense, but so did all the clergy in attendance, indicating that they each took a turn praying and adding incense to the coals in the outstretched tunic of Demetrius's wife. Over the centuries, the structure of the ordeal evolved along a logical, liturgical trajectory: live coals (*EncDem*; in church, as the HP-P would have it) called for the inclusion of incense (HP-V), which, in turn, mandated the recitation of the liturgical prayers that usually accompany such an act (*Chronicon*). Significantly, since this motif is completely lacking from *K. al-tawārīkh* (completed in 1257 CE) this would allow us to date this liturgical turn in the depiction of Demetrius's ordeal precisely to the year 1260 CE, when the *Chronicon* was published.

Another divergence is noteworthy. The *EncDem* and HP-V position the ordeal after the liturgy of the Feast of Pentecost, but the HP-P dates the miracle to *al-khamīs al-*ᶜ*īd*: "Thursday, the [day] of the feast." As in most liturgical cycles, only two feasts consistently fall on a Thursday among the Copts: Maundy Thursday and the Feast of Ascension. Both *K. al-Tawārikh* and the *Chronicon* resolve the ambiguity;[33] they rendered the odd phrase as *al-khamīs al-kabīr*, "Great Thursday," which unambiguously designates Maundy Thursday in Christian Arabic.[34] (Still, the possibility that the original intention may have been "the Thursday of the Feast [of Ascension]" should not be discounted.) On Maundy Thursday, the Coptic rite celebrates an abridged liturgy with a unique Fraction Prayer that contrasts the typology of the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22) with its fulfillment in the sacrifice of Christ. It reads in part: "As Isaac carried the fire of the offering, likewise Christ carried the wood of the Cross; and as Isaac returned alive, likewise Christ was resurrected from among the dead."[35] (Interestingly, that portion of the Fraction Prayer seems to paraphrase Origen's interpretation of Genesis 22.)[36] This is perhaps the context for this alternative tradition, but the antiquity of that prayer is uncertain.[37] Additionally, that reading was aided by the fact that the miracle is commemorated on the 12th of Baramhāt (as mentioned in the HP-P and the *Synaxarium*). Still, it is awkwardly situated. A Maundy Thursday on the 12th, would position Easter on the 15th of Baramhāt (11 March – Julian). The difficulty is that the earliest Easter could fall is the 26th of Baramhāt (22 March – Julian). Nonetheless, under optimal circumstances, the 12th of Baramhāt would be within a two-week proximity to Easter, while it would be nearly two months away from the Feast of Ascension. On this front, the tradition in HP-P and that in the *EncDem* and HP-V are irreconcilable.

Early Life and Marriage. The HP then recounts the subsequent narrative detailing Demetrius's upbringing, marriage, and the vow he made with his wife. On the whole, it faithfully translates the parallel passage of the encomium, but the HP discretely resolves a subtle and potentially embarrassing tradition within the *EncDem*. There, Demetrius states: "As for me, today I am sixty years old and the woman you see [before you], she is almost fifty-one."[38] Later in that text, the patriarch notes that he was married at the age of fifteen, thus implicitly establishing the age of his "bride" at six. Most likely, the Coptic hagiographer simply failed to realize the mathematical inferences of his oblique references; marriage at such an early age was never legally or socially sanctioned in Egypt.

The Arabic recension resolves this latent problem in an equally subtle manner. It does not directly yield the age of Demetrius's wife; rather, the HP alters the age of Demetrius at the time of the miracle to sixty-three, forty-eight years of which, it states, he spent with his wife. Thus, he was married at the age of fifteen.[39] Moreover, the pivotal Coptic phrase that established the bishop's age at the time of marriage, "when I was fifteen," is rendered in the Arabic edition as, "when *she* was fifteen."[40] Thus, according to the mathematical inferences derived from the Arabic tradition, both bride and groom were fifteen years old – a legal age in conformity with custom and law.[41]

The *Synaxarium*, *K. al-tawārīkh*, and the *Chronicon orientale* maintain the same chronology,[42] but the latter two deviate in a puzzling manner. In *K. al-tawārīkh*, Abū Shākir notes that the bishop died four months after the ordeal and the *Chronicon* adds that the holy couple died immediately after divulging their *vita*. This would place the patriarch's death at the age of sixty-three, not the traditional 105.[43] Both accounts seem to reflect a misreading of a single sentence in the HP-V:[44] "He was reposed there [in exile][45] on the twelfth of Baramhāt, which I believe to have been the [commemoration] of the date on which his virginity was revealed."[46] Abū Shākir likely failed to read the sentence in context, which mandates the insertion of "commemoration."[47] On another front, the chronology forwarded for Demetrius's tenure in both texts is compromised by a full decade. Abū Shākir maintains that Demetrius's tenure should be "corrected," and that it lasted for thirty-three years, less a few days (see Text V).

Peroration. The Arabic *vita* proceeds to reiterate the same parenthetical critique of married men as in the *EncDem* and then appends a final addition. Both recensions of the HP maintain that Emperor "Severus" ordered a persecution and sent Demetrius into exile where he later died, never having returned to Alexandria.[48] These traditions of exile and death, unattested in earlier literature, would problematize the whole of Demetrius's chronology, and are almost certainly spurious. The quandary is identifying "Severus."[49] One possibility is that the reference is to Emperor Septimius Severus (d. 211 CE), who unleashed the persecution that claimed the life of Leonides,

Origen's father (though Laetus the Augustal Prefect of Egypt (200–203 CE) was the immediate aggressor where Leonides is concerned).[50] Significantly, the martyrs named at the beginning of Part Two of Demetrius's biography were martyred under Septimius Severus. Nonetheless, this identification would place Demetrius's death in or before 211 CE rather than 232 CE. On the other hand, if "Severus" is identified as Emperor Severus Alexander (222–235 CE), to keep with the normative chronology for Demetrius's tenure, then one difficulty would be substituted for another. There is no early evidence for an imperial persecution – as opposed to isolated incidents of anti-Christian violence – under this emperor. To the contrary, by most accounts, including those of Eusebius and Eutychius, Christians fared well under Severus Alexander, whose religious worldview allowed for the worship of Jesus alongside Serapis, Orpheus, Abraham, and Apollonius of Tyana.[51] In the same tone, the emperor's mother, Julia Mamaea, became so curious about Origen's reputation for learning that she summoned him to meet with her when she traveled through Antioch.[52] Sources that depict Severus Alexander as a persecutor of Christians are of a late date, and it is perhaps such traditions that the author-editor(s) of the HP had in mind. Another possibility is that the text confuses Severus with his successor Maximinus Thrax (235–38), who did orchestrate a persecution of Christians;[53] but Demetrius had already died by the time Maximinus came to power. Inevitably, the tradition of Demetrius's death in exile is historically untenable.

HP-P proceeds to append references to Demetrius's commemorations within the liturgical year, discussed in chapter four, above. The recension then forwards unambiguous concluding remarks, leaving little doubt that at one point this was an autonomous, independent text. HP-V truncates these concluding remarks in an attempt to forge the two parts of the biography into a single, seamless whole (cf. the biography of Dionysius in HP-P and HP-V). Thus ends the first half of Demetrius's biography in the HP.

Part Two of the *sīrah*

The remainder of the *sīrah* draws heavily upon Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* and may reflect readings from the *Histories of the Church [of Alexandria]* (see chapter two). Moreover, while Part One, based as it is on the *EncDem*, may be read as an implicit counternarrative to the Eusebian *Life of Origen* and the unflattering depictions of Demetrius in the patristic record (as argued in the previous chapter), Part Two launches several direct, explicitly hostile attacks against the *magister*.[54] The pattern is unmistakable. Although Part Two adheres to the structure and content of Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* 6.4–26, it omits any positive glosses pertaining to Origen, replaces two long passages that are particularly reverential toward him (6.8.1–6 and 6.19)[55] with traditions that defame the scholar-priest, and exalts Demetrius as a vigilante shepherd and a staunch defender of

orthodoxy. Needless to say, the *Ecclesiastical History*'s contention that Demetrius gave in to "human weakness" and, consequently, persecuted Origen out of envy (*EH* 6.8.4), is nowhere to be found.

Textually, Part Two of the *sīrah* is somewhat puzzling, as the notes to the translation forwarded in Text III demonstrate. Aside from the passages relating to Origen, which were intentionally omitted or altered, the translation habitually reflects a fundamental lack of understanding of Eusebius's prose. Entire sentences are misconstrued and clauses are muddled to the point that in one instance, Aquila, a Roman judge who sentenced Christians to torture and death, is recast as a fellow martyr alongside those whom he executed.[56] Repeatedly, Part Two reflects such a poor rendering of the *Ecclesiastical History* that one is left with three possibilities: the editor-author of the HP-P relied upon a corrupt manuscript that hindered his ability to read the text; he depended upon a poorly translated recension; or he simply lacked fluency in the language of the original text (be it Greek or Coptic).

The HP-P then mentions two letters written by Bishop Alexander. One was addressed to the people of Antinoë (ʾΑντινοῖτας; cf. *EH* 6.11.3), possibly between 212 and 216 CE; another was sent shortly before 211 CE to the people of Antioch (ʾΑντιόχειαν) in support of Asclepiades's nomination to the episcopate of that city.[57] The HP's rendering of the content of the second letter (cf. *EH* 6.11.4–5) provides further insight and is particularly illuminating.[58] The HP-P presents a confused account of Bishop Alexander's communication, transforming a letter full of praise into a searing condemnation. The narrative then jumps to its own version of *EH* 6.19, swapping out a chapter of Eusebius's *History* that praises Origen with one that roundly condemns him. Significantly, the latter recensions of the HP address these glaring mistakes. There, the content of the letter is corrected and the missing passage, corresponding to *EH* 6.12–1, is inserted. Cleary, HP-V was the result of a thorough revision accomplished by skilled individuals. Moreover, this indicates that the editors of HP-V had access to a more complete (or reliable) recension of the source text that served as the basis for Part Two of Demetrius's biography (be it the anti-Chalcedonian *Histories of the Church* or another composition). This enabled them to correct the errors in Bishop Alexander's letter and to append the passage based on Eusebius's *EH* 6.12–8, while retaining the remainder of Part Two intact, including other misreadings of Eusebius's *History* and that section's vehement anti-Origen bias. Here, HP-V is more complete than HP-P.

Certainly, however, even if one assumes that the *Histories of the Church* served as the basis for Part Two, the recension used could not have been the original (or, perhaps, it was not copied verbatim). The *Histories* would have been in circulation by 500 CE, yet the imbedded references to Sabians and the Muʿtazila, in the corresponding section in HP-V, could not have been written prior to the mid-ninth century CE.[59]

A close reading of Part Two in HP-P and HP-V provides additional insight as to the textual and ideological concerns that informed the drafting of the vulgate versions.[60] A couple of the characteristics of that recension have already been noted above: it forwards a grammatically and orthographically more refined Arabic text than HP-P; and it corrects some glaring mistakes, such as those discussed in the preceding paragraphs. Additionally, HP-V consistently eliminates awkward and ambiguous readings in HP-P (see notes to Text III). Finally, it is clear that Mawhūb (presumably) sought to reflect the diversity of sources at his disposal by citing variant traditions in the HP-P. This is striking in the above-referenced opening sentence of the biography, which cites two contradictory traditions, and again in the concluding paragraphs of the *sīrah*, which explicitly cites alternative traditions.[61] This aspect is largely lost in HP-V, where the editor(s) consistently retained one tradition and eliminated all variants. This results in a more cohesive, stylistically more sophisticated narrative, though one that privileges certain traditions while eliminating others from the historical record and communal consciousness altogether.

Turning to other thematic elements, while the additions that replaced *EH* 6.8.1–6 and 6.19 present a hyper-patrician and historically flawed depiction of Origen's theology and his interactions with Demetrius, that which replaces *EH* 6.19, in particular, demands closer scrutiny. The passage retains a version of a tradition documented in the early ninth century by Photius in his *Ten Questions and Answers* (Qn. 9), alleging that Origen returned to Alexandria after Demetrius's death only to be banished from that city by Heraclas. Leaving Alexandria, Origen purportedly found refuge in the diocese of Thmuis, in the eastern Delta, but, again, Heraclas pursued him there and ousted him from that diocese as well. In the HP's version of events, it is Demetrius who refuses to accept Origen back into the church. Beyond the insistence on Origen's doubtful attempt to return to Alexandria after he had settled in Caesarea, and the confusion between Demetrius and Heraclas, the account still retains an intriguing tradition that runs contrary to the rest of Demetrius's biography and may yet retain a kernel of historical truth. Demonstrably, once the dispute between Demetrius and Origen raged, the scholar found support among bishops outside of Egypt, namely, Alexander of Jerusalem, Theoctistus of Caesarea, and Firmilian of Caesarea in Cappadocia. Remarkably, the events described in the passage at hand would indicate that Origen found support within Egypt as well. Although the overall chronology is confused, the account maintains that Bishop Amūnah of Tilbanah (Ammonius of Thmuis) hosted Origen in his diocese after Demetrius's condemnation. The text initially attributes this to Origen's cunning rather than the bishop's support, but later it condemns Amūnah for accepting and admiring Origen in spite of knowing "his disposition [within the church] and his deceit."[62] Once news of this act of clemency reached Demetrius, however, he was livid; he immediately traveled to Tilbanah,

excommunicated Amūnah, and appointed Phileas in his place.[63] Remarkably, Phileas refused to serve as bishop of that diocese as long as Amūnah was alive. This is not a typical reaction and would indicate that Phileas believed Amūnah's dismissal to have been illegitimate. The defiance attributed to bishops Amūnah and Phileas may reflect the resistance Demetrius met even from bishops within his own see. Moreover, this would indicate that not all Egyptian clerics sanctioned Demetrius's (or Heraclas's) defamation and persecution of Origen.

A view from above

History may be recorded and organized according to a multiplicity of schemes and themes. Eusebius conceived of his *History*, more or less, in terms of eras. Patriarch Eutychius structured the *Nazm* according to the tenure of secular rulers: Roman emperors, then Muslim caliphs. Several Syriac, Byzantine, and Arab historians preferred a chronographic or annalistic approach that rendered each year into something of a chapter. In the late eleventh century, the Copts conceived of their history in terms of patriarchal tenures. This was an intentional, conceptual, and ideological choice largely – if not solely – predicated upon the community's ideals. As ecclesiastical leaders, patriarchs enjoyed tremendous popularity, and while some, such as the reclusive Simon I (692–700 CE) or the simoniacal Cyril III (1235–43 CE), failed to attain an aura of sanctity or popularity, most did. In Egypt, this impulse was given purpose in the turbulent decades following the Chalcedonian schism, during which patriarchs were no longer simply theologians or spokesmen for a clerical body, but slowly transformed into confessional symbols and identity markers – they became sectarian leaders, for better or worse (Dioscorus was revered; Proterius was lynched). This metamorphosis accelerated under Islamic rule, as caliphs and local governors negotiated with Coptic and Melkite patriarchs regarding various communal demands, taxes, and a host of issues that had nothing to do with theology or clerical authority proper. In Egyptian literature, this impulse to focus on patriarchs as a primary symbol for the community found its first expression in the late-fifth-century *Histories of the Church [of Alexandria]*, which inaugurated the tradition of writing history in the form of (anti-Chalcedonian) patriarchal biographies. The *Histories* demarcates a convergence of genres: ecclesiastical history was becoming communal and sectarian. (A dynamic the developed among the Melkites as well, as demonstrated by Eutychius's *Nazm*.) Subsequently, both dynamics, the merging of genres and the radical expansion of patriarchal duties to encompass non-religious affairs, reached their zenith in the drafting of the Arabic *History of the Patriarchs*, in which the Coptic community came to envision its history, confessional aspirations, even its very identity through the prism of the patriarch office. Even the titles for the two works betray the transition: the *Histories*

of the Church [of Alexandria] were grafted onto the *Siyar al-bayᶜah al-muqaddasah*, the *Biographies of the Holy Church* – the actual title for what is commonly referenced now as the *History of the Patriarchs*. Seamlessly, "histories" transitioned into "biographies," a fusion that largely persists today. Even among specialists, it remains difficult to discuss the Coptic community apart from the history of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and institutions.

While the drafting of HP-P demarcates the zenith of one dynamic, the emergence of HP-V signals the beginning of another. The basic characteristics of both recensions have been outlined above and in chapter two. As noted, HP-P has a propensity to preserve multiple, even conflicting traditions, while HP-V strives to present a singular narrative. Arguably, these characteristics reflect a wider ideological shift as well. Beginning in the second half of the thirteenth century, Coptic-Arabic literature seems less accommodating toward divergent traditions. Across the spectrum of several genres, there is something of a harmonizing trend that recasts distinct traditions as though they were different aspects of the same phenomenon. The earlier phase may still be observed in the *nomocanon* of al-Ṣafī ibn al-ᶜAssāl, the *Majmūᶜ al-ṣafawī*, which was completed by 1240 CE. In the same spirit as the HP-P, al-Ṣafī includes diverse traditions within his *Majmūᶜ*. Historically the foremost *nomocanon* within the Coptic community, and the formal basis for law in Ethiopia from the sixteenth century until 1931 CE (in the form of the *Fetha Nagast*),[64] the *Majmūᶜ* has been often criticized within the Coptic church over the past several decades precisely because of its inclusive nature. Individuals and hierarchs found al-Ṣafī's inclusion of divergent traditions frustrating in their attempts to identify the singular "correct," "authentic" answer to the issues they researched or the position they hoped to substantiate. Hence, they deemed it a mere "assemblage" of sources and challenged its official status within the community – historically, both allegations are extremely problematic. Medieval authors, as early as the fourteenth century, often made their peace with the composition by harmonizing the traditions it cites or by quoting them in isolation.[65] This shift may have been indirectly influenced by the ecclesiastical situation at that time. During the thirteenth century, the patriarchal office remained vacant for long stretches (1216–1235 and 1243–1250 CE) that were interrupted by the avaricious Cyril III, a contentious election that led to the elevation of Athanasius III, and the bizarre events of the 1260s, during which, because of internal divisions and governmental interference, Gabriel III (1268–1271 CE) and John VII (1262–68, 1271–93 CE) alternated back and forth between exile and the patriarchate.[66] All of these events transpired against the political backdrop of the fifth and seventh crusades, which targeted Egypt, the rise of the Mongols and their devastation of Baghdad and Syria (and the threat they posed to Egypt), and the rise of the Mamluk dynasty. It is tempting to interpret the late-thirteenth-century push toward uniformity and singularity of tradition, as a search for certainty and stability during an era that provided neither.

The liturgical genre provides another vantage point to observe this trend toward uniformity. Liturgical reforms are attested intermittently throughout the middle ages. Already by the mid-twelfth century, Patriarch Gabriel ibn Turayk (1131–45 CE) limited the number of Eucharistic prayers to three: the liturgy of St. Cyril, (Alexandrian) Basil, and (Alexandrian) Gregory the Theologian. But that reform only addressed the liturgies prayed; all the texts that actually describe the liturgical rite, and the means by which it should be – universally – observed, date to the fourteenth century and beyond. Most influential among these are Abū al-Barakāt's *Muṣbāḥ*, written in the early 1320s, the nearly contemporary *al-Jawharah al-nafīsah* (*The Precious Pearl*) of Ibn Sabbāʿ, and the (likely) fourteenth-century *Sirr al-thālūth fī khidmat al-kahanūt* (*The Mystery of the Trinity in the Ministry of the Priesthood*). In 1411 CE, after securing the endorsement of a Coptic synod, Patriarch Gabriel V published the *al-Tartīb al-ṭaqsī* (*The Ordo* or *The Ritual Order*), which was the first (and, to my knowledge, the only) official liturgical manual of its kind published in the Coptic Church.[67] Over the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, there was an emphasis on discerning the one, correct way that the liturgical rite was to be observed – variations became deviations. Historically, this impulse toward uniformity, which is common in ecclesiastical bodies, was constantly balanced by the limitations of the pre-modern world, but it has intensified within the Coptic Orthodox Church over the past 150 years. Aided by the modern technologies of the printing press (introduced into Egypt at the middle of the nineteenth century), cassette tapes, and, now, digital media and recordings, Coptic liturgical texts and hymns have achieved an unprecedented level of homogeneity. The liturgical cycle itself has become much more stable and fixed over the past two centuries than it has ever been.[68] This has yielded mixed results. The natural diversity that existed and flourished up to the modern era has largely given way to a fundamentalist (ahistorical) notion that there is only one "authentic" way for chanting a particular hymn, a singular wording of a liturgical passage or a theological turn of phrase; at least on a popular level, all variants are rendered heretical or wrong. Undoubtedly, there is a plethora of contingent factors in play here, but at the risk of oversimplification, the drive toward a singular – historical, liturgical, ritual – narrative within the Coptic Church finds its genesis with the drafting and dissemination of HP-V and its eclipsing of HP-P.

More specific to the topic at hand, the late eleventh century introduced a decisive phase in the formation of Demetrius's hagiographic dossier, a process that continued into the early fourteenth century. Reliant in part on the Coptic *EncDem*, the HP-P proceeded to preserve some traditions, obliterate others, and introduce new motifs as well. Prominent within the newly constructed historiography is the depiction of the bishop as an illiterate peasant, who would be miraculously enlightened and, subsequently, emerge as a zealous defender of orthodoxy and a tireless exegete. This ignorance/

enlightenment motif continues to influence perceptions of the patriarch down to this very day. In time, the *Epact* and Lenten reform traditions that are addressed in the following chapter further embellished that narrative. Still, one should note that with the singular exception of Eutychius's account, these later additions were grafted onto the figure of the poor, pious Coptic peasant, not the prominent Alexandrian whom the encomium extols.

Notes

1 Eutychius, *Nazm*, CSCO 50, pg. 104.12.

2 HP-P 14.11–2; HP-V 26.5–6; *Synaxarium*, s.v. Bābah 12, PO I.3.3 pg. 333, CSCO 60.4. For grapes out of season as a religious omen, see Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History*, 5.1. Cf. the account of Macarius of Alexandria in the *Historia monachorum in Aegypto*, ch. 29. A Midrash on Psalm 128 further parses the motif: "Whether in season or out of season, it is a good omen to see white grapes in a dream. With black grapes there is a difference: in their season it is favorable, but if they are seen when they are not in season it is exceedingly unfavorable, and the dreamer should pray for God's mercy." Samuel Rapaport, *Tales and Maxims from the Midrash* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1907; New York: B. Blom, 1971), 211.

3 HP-P 14.11. This pattern of citing multiple traditions, while not completely eliminated from HP-V (e.g. 61.6), is far more common in HP-P: e.g. page/line, 12.13, 13.3, 13.17, 23.6, 30.14. None of the traditions in these passing examples are retained in HP-V.

4 *Synaxarium*, s.v. Bābah 12, PO I.3.3, pg. 333, CSCO 60 7.8; *Chronicon orientale*, 105: Texts V and VII.

5 *Chronicon orientale*, 105.

6 HP-V 26.5, HP-P 14.3; *Synaxarium*, s.v. Hatūr 10, PO III.3.13, pg 75.4; CSCO 101.10; s.v. Bābah 12, PO I.3.3 pg. 332, CSCO pg. 60.2, cf. 95.20.

7 Similar to Antony (*VA* 66.2, 89.3), Arabic sources describe Demetrius as one taught by God and give his age at the time of his death at 105. The issue of Antony's literacy is still a matter of debate, but in general his qualification as *agrammatos* is better read as "unlettered" or "uneducated," that is, one lacking a true Hellenic education, rather than "illiterate." Still, Antony appears to have been much more sophisticated than his *Life* would indicate; see S. Rubenson, *Letters of St. Antony*. Being taught by God is an aspect of the age to come, not the here and now; thus, the biblical parallels (Is. 54:13, Jer. 31: 33–4, Jn 6:45, I Thess 4:9) are interpreted in an eschatological context that is lost in the encomium. On this tension between Greek learning and Christian piety, see Samuel Rubenson, "Philosophy and Simplicity: The Problem of Classical Education in Early Christian Biography," in *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, ed. T. Hägg and P. Rousseau (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), ch. 5. In an Islamic milieu – the social context of this recension – one must also consider the traditional biography (*sirāh*) of the Prophet Muḥammad, which stresses his lack of education: A. Guillaume, trans., *The Life of Muhammad* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Muḥammad's description as *ummīyūn* is traditionally translated as "illiterate"; though, historically, the term more likely referenced the Arab polytheists of his day. It designated one "lacking scriptures," not lacking letters; see Suliman Bashear, *Arabs and Others in Early Islam*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 8 (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1997), ch. 3; Isaiah Goldfeld, "The Illiterate Prophet (*nabī*

ummī): An Inquiry into the Development of a Dogma in Islamic Tradition," *Der Islam* 57 (1980), 58–67.

8 HP-P, 14.8–9; HP-V 26.8–9, reads: "and divine grace descended upon him."

9 HP-V: 33; the textual history of that gloss is complicated. See the discussion of Part Two of Demetrius's biography in the second half of this chapter.

10 Significantly, in the explicit comparison Mawhūb makes between Demetrius and Cyril II (HP-V, HP II.3: 332–33), Cyril was depicted as something of a self-made scholar; see chapter four, note 71.

11 HP-V: 33; *Synaxarium*, 12 Bābah and 10 Hatūr (Text VI). Also see the following note.

12 The *Synaxarium* (s.v. Bābah 12, PO I.3.3 pg. 333.9–12; CSCO 60.10) reads: "[Demetrius] was filled with heavenly grace, and learned many fields of study, and he mastered the ecclesiastical books and their commentaries. He commented on many subjects and fields of study." Abū al-Barakāt appears to rely on this tradition (perhaps the very wording) and adds that the archbishop "knew all the books of the church, delved deeply into their meaning, and commented on many of them." See Texts VI and VII.

13 Here, the patriarch is simply introduced as: "a married man called Demetrius [who] was pruning *his vineyard* in the winter and found a cluster of grapes that were overlooked [during harvest]" (*Chronicon orientale*, 104, my emphasis; cf. *K. al-tawārīkh*, Text VI). This reading, also retained in the HP, allows for the possibility that Demetrius owned the vineyard and was perhaps a man of some means. In general, the omission of motifs from the *Chronicon* or the *K. al-tawārīkh* must be interpreted very conservatively; both texts provide fairly short accounts that omitted much from the *sīrah* – here omission cannot be interpreted as absence.

14 Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 10. Coptic (anti-Chalcedonian) patriarchs were intermittently prevented from residing in Alexandria from the mid-sixth century until the Arab Conquest.

15 The Coptic recension of this work may be dated to the eighth century CE, while an Arabic translation circulated among the Copts by the dawn of the eleventh. See Bernd Witte, *Die Sünden der Priester und Mönche. Koptische Eschatologie des 8. Jahrhunderts nach Kodex M 602 pg.104–54 (ps. Athanasius) der Pierpont Morgan Library*, 2 vols., Arbeiten zum spätantiken und koptischen Ägypten 12, 13 (Altenberge: Oros, 2002–2009); Francisco Javier Martinez, "Eastern Christian Apocalyptic in the Early Muslim Period: Pseudo-Methodius and Pseudo-Athanasius" (Ph.D. Diss., Catholic University of America, 1985). Also see, See Bishop Michael of Tinnīs's poignant remarks in HP II.2:180/148v; Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 9, note 36.

16 The attribution of these texts to noted patristic and monastic figures should be read as an attempt to provide an air of legitimacy and authenticity, but not much else. A great deal of the social concerns and critiques couched in this literature would only resonate within an urban context.

17 This was not a new impulse in Egypt, but it became increasingly prominent in the middle ages. See Norman Russell, "Bishops and Charismatics in Early Christian Egypt," in *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West. Festschrift for Bishop Kallistos (Ware) of Diokleia*, ed. J. Behr, A. Louth and D. Conomos (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), 100, 107; cf. S. Rubenson, "Philosophy and Simplicity."

18 HP-P, 14; HP-V 26.8; Text IV.A; cf. Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 10. See the following note as well.

19 The first individual confined with chains prior to ordination was likely Mark II (799–819 CE): see HP-V, PO 10.5: 10. He was chained until his ordination as a priest, but managed to escape shortly thereafter. Consequently, having never been ordained a bishop, he remained eligible to become patriarch at a later date. (Bishops were explicitly forbidden from consideration for the patriarchate in the Coptic church until the late nineteenth century.) A similar incident is recorded regarding Patriarch Yusāb I (Joseph: 830–49 CE); see HP PO 10.5: 594. Chaining candidates fleeing ordination was not uncommon in subsequent centuries. Eventually, that act became normative, and was incorporated into the consecration rite: see Pseudo-Sawīrus, *Die Ordnung des Priestertums* (Tartīb al-kahanūt): *Ein altes liturgisches Handbuch der koptischen Kirche*, ed. Julius Assfalg (Cairo: Centre d'Etudes Orentales de la Custodie Franciscaine de Terre-Sainte, 1955), ch. 9, pg. 26.

20 What remains is a vague echo of the comparison, which maintains that Demetrius possessed more courage than "a lion-slayer" in his struggles against temptation (HP-P 17.24–18.1; HP-V 30.5).

21 HP-V 26.9–10.

22 Still, Joseph's restraint with the Egyptian woman is praised in HP-V 30.7–8.

23 HP-V 26.13–6.

24 HP-V PO 5.1, pg. 400; cf. Evetts, ed./trans., *Churches and Monasteries of Egypt* [HCME], *fol.* 105a, pg. 284–86; 95b, 264; 99a, 272; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, I.524.15–6: see Taqiyy al-Dīn Ahmad ibn ᶜAlī ibn ᶜAbd al-Qādir al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawāᶜiz wal-Iᶜtibār fī Dhikr al-Khitat wal-Atār*, ed. Ayman Fu'ād Sayyid, 5 vols. (London: al-Furqān Islamic Heritage Foundation, 2002–2004). The same comments were repeated in the contexts of the violent persecution of the Fatimid Imam, al-Hākim bi Amr Allāh (996–1021 CE); HP II.2: 206–7/153r [O.H.E. KHS-Burmester and Yassā ᶜAbd al-Masīh, ed./trans., *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church* (Cairo: Société d'Archéologie Copte, 1948–59)]. Egyptian officials feared that their southern neighbors would divert the Nile's water from them. Al-Maqrīzī (*Khiṭaṭ*, I: 140.10) mentions the existence of dams that would have theoretically stopped the flow of the Nile into Egypt. In another incident (*Khiṭaṭ*, IV.1010), al-Maqrīzī recounts that the Coptic patriarch traveled to Nubia during a year of low flooding and caused the Nile to rise, presumably through his authority over the Nubians. In the mid-fifteenth century CE, the *Syanxarium* states that the kings of Ethiopia threatened to cut the flow of the Nile on account of the hardships the Christians of Egypt were enduring (*Syanxarium*, s.v. Bashans 9). The historical and mythical (cf. Prester John) aspects of this belief in Ethiopic and European sources are discussed by Richard Pankhurst, "Ethiopia's Alleged Control of the Nile," Benjamin Arbel, "Renaissance Geographical Literature and the Nile," and Emery van Donzel, "The Legend of the Blue Nile in Europe," all in *The Nile: Histories, Cultures, Myths*, ed. Haggai Erlich and Israel Gershoni (London: Lynne Rienner, 2000). For a discussion based on Egyptian sources, see Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 11.

25 For an orientation, see D.P. Little, "Coptic Conversion to Islam during the Bahri Mamluks," *BSOAS* 39 (1976), 552–69; M. Perlmann, "Notes on anti-Christian propaganda in the Mamluk Empire," *BSOAS* 10 (1939–42), 843–61; U. Vermeulen, "The Rescript of al-Malik as-Salih against the dhimmis (755 AH/1354 AD)," *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 9 (1978), 175–84; Seth Ward, "Construction and Repair of Churches and Synagogues under Islam: A Treatise by Tāqī al-Dīn ᶜAlī b. ᶜAbd al-Kāfī al-Subkī" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1984); idem, "Ibn al-Rifᶜa on the Churches and Synagogues of Cairo," *Medieval*

Encounters 5 (1999), 70–84; J.R. Zaborowski, *The Coptic Martyrdom of John of Phanijoit: Assimilation and Conversion to Islam in Thirteenth-Century Egypt* (Leiden: Brill, 2004); Febe Armanios and Boğac Ergene, "A Christian Martyr under Mamluk Justice: The Trials of Salib (d. 1512) according to Coptic and Muslim Sources," *Muslim World* 96 (2006), 115–44; John Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia—and How It Died*, Reprint edition (New York: HarperOne, 2009). See also chapter two, note 16.

26 HP-P 14.20–3; HP-V 26.18–23; *Synaxarium*, s.v. 12 Bābah, PO I.3.3 pg. 334.4, CSCO 60.16–9.

27 The base text, the older *EncDem* (*fol.* 34r), emphasizes that "[Demetrius] never upbraided a man."

28 Cf. *Synaxarium*, s.v. Bābah 12, PO I.3.3 pg. 334.5, CSCO 60.17–8; and *Chronicon orientale*, 105; Texts V and VI.

29 HP-V 28.4–7. Circumambulation with incense is a standard rite performed during various liturgical services including Vespers, Matins, and the Liturgy of the Word. In the patristic period, a cleric – in Egypt at that time usually the deacon – would circumambulate the church with incense. See (Pseudo-)Athanasius, *The Canons of Athanasius of Alexandria*, ed./trans., Wilhelm Riedel and W.E. Crum (Oxford: Text and Translation Society, 1904), § 106; Thomas Halton, "The Kairos of the Mass and the Deacon in John Chrysostom," in *Diakonia: Studies in Honor of Robert T. Meyer*, ed. T. Halton and J.P. Williman (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1986), 53–59.

30 *Synaxarium*, s.v. Bābah 12, PO I.3.3 pgs. 334–35, CSCO 61.2–3. The discussion of the ordeal in the entry for the Twelfth of Bābah is particularly terse: "When some among the members of the congregation had misgivings about him because he was married, the angel of the Lord appeared to him and commanded him to reveal the secret he shared with his wife to the faithful, fearing that they would otherwise perish because of him. Thus, [Demetrius] revealed the [secret] to them."

31 In the HP-V, the main text has "raised" (*rafaʿa*) while "placed" (*waḍaʿa*) is in the footnote. The earliest reading, however, must have been "placed"; *waḍaʿa bakhūrān fī al-nār* lacks the liturgical inference but is much more idiomatic than *rafaʿa bakhūran fī al-nār*. That phrase is only rendered idiomatic in the *Chronicon*'s reading, which eliminates *fī al-nār*, enabling the phrase to unambiguously carry the liturgical undertones.

32 In Arabic, Vespers and Matins are designated as "the Raising of Morning (or Evening) Incense." The reading here is clearly based on the HP-V, but whereas in that text Demetrius "placed incense into the fire" (see HP-V n. 5 pg. 28), the *Chronicon*'s language is much more liturgical.

33 Cf. *Chronicon orientale*, 106, and HP-P 15.15 with *EncDem*, *fol.* 35v and HP-V 27.18.

34 It is possible that the divergence is based on a misreading or a bad manuscript. Ar. *khamīs al-ʿahd*, "Covenant Thursday," and *khamīs al-ʿīd*, "Thursday of the feast" differ by a single letter.

35 Hegomen ʿAbd al-Masīḥ Ṣalīb, ed., *ⲡⲓϫⲱⲙ ⲛⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲩⲭⲟⲗⲟⲅⲓⲟⲛ ⲉⲑⲟⲩⲁⲃ: al-Khulajī al-muqaddas*, 2nd printing (Banī Suif: Diocese of Bani Suif, 1984), 721: ⲉϥⲟⲛⲉ, ⲡⲁⲓⲣⲏ ⲅⲱϥ ⲡⲓϫⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ ⲁϥⲧⲱⲛϥ ⲉϥⲟⲛⲉ ⲉⲃⲟⲗⲉⲉⲛ ⲛⲓⲙ ⲉⲑⲙⲱⲟⲩⲧ.

36 Origen, *Commentary on Genesis*, homily 8; W.A. Baehrens, ed., *Origenes Werke VI. Homilien zum Hexateuch*, GCS 29 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1920); R.E. Heine, trans., *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, FC 71 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1982).

37 For the late "medieval" and current Coptic rite for Palm Sunday, see Yuḥannā ibn Abī Zakariyya ibn Sabbāʿ, *al-Jawharah al-nafīsah fī ʿulūm al-kanīsah/Pretiosa Margarita de scientiis ecclesiasticis*, ed. Vincentio P. Mistrih (Cairo: al-Markaz al-faransiskānī lil-dirasāt al-sharqī al-masīhī, 1966). Chapter 100 discusses the General Funeral, while chapter 103 focuses on Maundy Thursday. Chapter 107 of the work focuses on the Rite of the Prostration (*al-sajdā*), which is performed late in the day on the Sunday of Pentecost (Whit Sunday). See O.H.E. Burmester, "The Office of Genuflection on Whitsunday," *Muséon* 47 (1934), 205–57. Also see chapter five, note 20.

38 *EncDem*, *fol.* 36v, my emphasis.

39 For Demetrius's age at the time of the miracle, see HP-P 16.13, HP-V 28.14–5. At that point, he was married for forty-eight years; HP-P 16.23–4, HP-V 29.3.

40 My emphasis. Cf. *EncDem*, *fol.* 37r, ⲛⲧⲉⲣ ⲉⲓⲣ̄ ⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲏ ⲇⲉ ⲛ̄ⲣⲟⲙⲡⲉ with *fā-lammā ṣarā lahā khamsatū ʿashr sanā* (HP-P 16.15–6, HP-V 28.17).

41 The Code of Justinian set the minimum age for marriage at twelve for females and fourteen for males. See John Meyendorff, "Christian Marriage in Byzantium: The Canonical and Liturgical Tradition," *DOP* 44 (1990), 99–107. For the Copts during the middle ages, males had to be "more than fourteen," and females had "to exceed twelve" years of age (al-Ṣāfī ibn al-ʿAssāl, *Majmūʿ*, ch. 24.5.78). In its translation of this passage, the *Fetha Nagast* deviates by citing the minimum ages as twelve for the bride and twenty for the groom. In Islamic law, the minimum age for marriage is fixed at nine for females and twelve for males. See J. Schacht, "Nikāḥ," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 8:28a.

42 *Synaxarium*, s.v. Bābah 12, PO I.3.3 pg. 335, CSCO 61.7–9. The passage reads: "He reached a hundred and five years of age, having spent fifteen years unmarried, forty-seven years until he became patriarch, and forty-three years in office (*fī al-riyasah*)." On the significance of the age of 105, see chapter four, note 68.

43 *Chronicon orientale*, 107 (Text V); the contradiction is not addressed in the text. On the age of 105, see chapter four, note 68.

44 It is unlikely that this is dependent upon the above-mentioned account of the anonymous monk in the *Life of John the Almsgiver*, who died of natural causes immediately after his ordeal.

45 The exile is explicit in the previous sentence and is addressed shortly below.

46 HP-V 30.10–1. The necessity of adding "commemoration" is better appreciated in the context of the paragraph. That miracle is, indeed, commemorated on the 12th of Baramhāt. See Text VI.

47 *Chronicon orientale*, 107–08.

48 HP-P 18.5; HP-V 30.10–1; cf. W.H.C. Frend, "A Severan Persecution? Evidence of the "Historia Augusta," in *Forma Futuri*, 470–80. HP-P 18.5 states that he was exiled to the city of *m-r-sh-ī-n*, likely Marsonia in the Roman Province of Pannonia – modern-day Slavonski Brod in Croatia. HP-V 30.10–1, on the other hand, identifies the city as *m-w-s-ī-n*, perhaps Roman Messana, modern Messina in Sicily.

49 HP-P and HP-V favor different orthographies for the name: HP-P *s-w-r-y-w-s*, HP-V *s-w-a-r-y-a-n-w-s*.

50 Eusebius, *EH* 6.2.5–12; W.H.C. Frend, "Open Questions Concerning the Christians and the Roman Empire in the Age of the Severi," JTS n.s. 25.2 (1974), 333–51, esp. 338–41; cf. Enrico Dal Covolo, "Quando Severo scatenò una persecuzione contro le chiese . . . la persecuzione del 202 AD Alessandria nella *Historia Ecclesiastica*." In *La biografia di Origene fra storia e agiografia*, ed. A.M. Castagno.

51 Eusebius, *EH* 6.21, 28; Eutychius, *Naẓm*, I.110. Although riddled with problems, the *Historia Augusta* also depicts a religiously tolerant Severus Alexander:

see *Historia Augusta*, trans. David Magie, 3 vols. Loeb Classical Library (London: Heinemann, 1921–23), 22.4, 29.2, 43.6–7, 45.67, 49.6, 51.7.

52 Eusebius, *EH* 6.21, cf. 6.28. Orosius believed that she was a Christian, and several later authors followed suit, but the assumption has been dismissed by most scholars. Orosius, *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*, trans. A.T. Fear (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2010), 7:18.

53 Eusebius, *EH*, 6.28.

54 Another text containing a hostile depiction of Origen in passing is discussed in Donald Spanel's "Two Fragmentary," 92–6.

55 Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.1–6, recounts Origen's castration, Demetrius's initial admiration, and his subsequent slandering of Origen. *EH* 6.19 comments on Origen's learning and growing renown; Demetrius does not come across as a sympathetic figure here either.

56 HP-P 18; see Text IV.

57 These identifications are also in Eusebius's *History*. Still, I wonder if this reading reflects an early scribal error, and that the two letters, or perhaps we are looking at the prologue and content of the same letter, were addressed to Antioch. It is puzzling why Alexander would send a letter to a population under the jurisdiction of another bishop – Demetrius.

58 HP-P 20.

59 See Text III, note 122.

60 On the textual differences and alterations between the two recensions in general, see Johannes den Heijer, *Mawhub ibn Mansur*, §§ 2.3–2.5; and P. Pilette, "*L'Histoire des Patriarches*." Focusing in on Patriarch Benjamin's biography, Den Heijer explores another aspect of that transition in "La conquête arabe vue par les historiens coptes," in *Valeur et distance: Identités et sociétés en Égypte*, ed. C. Décobert (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 2000), 227–45.

61 See note 3, above.

62 HP-P 21; HP-V 34.

63 This is likely the same Bishop Phileas of Thmuis (martyred *ca*. 307) mentioned in Eusebius, *EH*, 8.10 and Jerome, *Illustrious Men*, ch. 78.

64 Abba Paulos Tzadua, trans., Peter L. Strauss, ed., *The Fetha Nagast: The Law of the Kings* (Addis Ababa: Faculty of Law, Haile Sellassie I University, 1968; repr. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2009).

65 See the discussions of how these sources and traditions were utilized over time in Maged S. A. Mikhail's "Fast of the Apostles," and "Evolution of Lent in Alexandria."

66 K.J. Werthmuller, *Coptic Identity and Ayyubid Politics*; M.S. Swanson, *Coptic Papacy*, 98–100.

67 Ibn Sabbāʿ, *al-Jawharah al-nafīsah fī ʿulūm al-kanīsah / Pretiosa Margarita de scientiis ecclesiasticis*, ed./trans., Vincentio P. Mistriḥ (Cairo: Edizioni del Centro Francescano di Studi Orientali Cristiani, 1966); Patriarch Gabriel V, *al-Tartīb al-ṭaqsī*, ed./trans., P. Alfonso ʿAbdallah (Cairo: Edizioni del Centro francescano di studi orientali cristiani, 1962).

68 See Maged S.A. Mikhail, "The Fast of the Apostles in the Early Church and in Later Syrian and Coptic Practice," *Oriens Christianus* 98 (2015), 1–20, esp. 19–20; and S. Moawad's critical edition of chapter 47, which lists the commemorations of the liturgical cycle, in *K. al-tawārīkh*. While retaining a common core, there are frequent discrepancies among the various recensions of that chapter. Demonstrably, each scribe manipulated the writing of that chapter to reflect the liturgical calendar he was familiar with.

8

LENT AND *EPACT* IN ALEXANDRIA

In search of the origins of Lent in the patristic era and its designation as the "Forty Days," historians and liturgists have focused on the Lenten traditions associated with Demetrius under the assumption that they reflect historical developments.[1] I have explored these traditions at length elsewhere;[2] here, a summary of that analysis will provide grounding for a discussion of Demetrius's role as a reformer of the observance of Lent and as the author of the complex *Epact* calculations.

A reformer of Lent?

The Lenten tradition is encapsulated in the *Synaxarium* (10th Hatūr; cf. 4th Baramhāt), but an often-cited passage in Abū al-Barakāt's *A Lamp in the Darkness* (*Muṣbāḥ al-ẓulmā*) more fully describes it:[3]

> Our holy fathers, the pure apostles, along with the faithful who accompanied them, would [begin to] fast the Holy Forty Days on the day after Epiphany, that is the twelfth of Tūbah [20 January]. And they would celebrate the glorious feast on the twenty-second of Amshīr [1 March]. They would [later] observe Passion Week after that by [many] days, and they concluded it with the Feast of the Resurrection. [This was the practice] until the days of the Holy Father, patriarch *anba* Demetrius, the twelfth patriarch of Alexandria. He was a peasant who could not read at all or write well, but God enlightened him through the Spirit of Grace, so that he knew all the books of the church, delved deeply into their meaning, and commented on many of them. He was [divinely] inspired to set the *Epact* calculation, and to reform the observance of the holy fast according to the current practice, in which it concludes with the Week of Passion, and the celebration of the glorious Feast [of the Resurrection] on the appointed month and time. He sent news of this to Father Peter, patriarch of Rome, and to the Patriarch of

> Constantinople, and the Patriarch of Antioch. They agreed upon [Demetrius's reform], and it was thus maintained ever since.[4]

Clearly informed by later Arabic hagiographic traditions (the ignorance/enlightenment motif), several issues converge here: a Lenten reform, derivation of the *Epact* reckoning – which ensured that Christians would celebrate Easter after the Jewish Passover – and Demetrius's role vis-à-vis both developments. The subsequent analysis initially addresses the Lenten reform and then turns to the *Epact* tradition.

The textual tradition

Advocating the case for Demetrius's Lenten reform, several leading scholars have interpreted the above-quoted passage as a historical relic that proves the existence of an Alexandrian forty-day Lent, which was initially observed immediately after the Feast of Epiphany and was subsequently joined to Passion Week during the tenure of Demetrius or, as David Brakke has more recently argued, Athanasius.[5] Proponents of this hypothesis have shored it up by identifying three ante-Nicaean glosses that allegedly document the practice, the *Canons of Hippolytus* (20), the *Canonical Letter* of Peter of Alexandria (Canon 1), and Origen's *Commentary on Leviticus* (10.2), while identifying later references in the *Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* and the writings of the Armenian Catholicos Isaac (d. *ca*. 1200).[6] Unchallenged, the thesis of a post-Epiphany Lent has gained wide acceptance and has emerged in scholarly literature as a given in arguments pertaining to other aspects of the liturgical cycle in Alexandria and the Early Church.[7]

The lure of a post-Epiphany fast is appealing, since it would align early communal practice with the Gospel narratives.[8] Nonetheless, the evidence does not withstand scrutiny, and several problems inevitably emerge. I have addressed the problematic interpretations of the alleged patristic evidence at length in the study alluded to above.[9] Significantly, considered separately, none of the early references can prove the existence of the fast in question. They can serve that purpose only when read through the lens of the later Christian-Arabic tradition. Moreover, not one of the ante-Nicean glosses may be interpreted in the context of the Feast of Epiphany.[10] Attempts to prove the historicity of this tradition face additional, formidable obstacles in that it is unattested in Greek and Latin sources – the earliest stratum of data – the early Coptic tradition, and the *History of the Patriarchs* (HP-P and HP-V).

The nucleus of the account the *Synaxarium* and Abū al-Barakāt borrowed and embellished is first attested in the *Nazm* of the Melkite patriarch

Eutychius (d. 940 CE). The pertinent gloss reads similarly in the Alexandrian and Antiochene recensions of that work (see chapter two):

> At that time, Demetrius, the patriarch of Alexandria, wrote to Agapius, bishop of Jerusalem, Maximus, patriarch of Antioch, and Victor, patriarch of Rome, concerning the calculations for the Passover of the Christians [i.e. the Feast of the Resurrection] and their [Great] Fast, and how to calculate them in relation to the feast of the Jews. They *exchanged many books and epistles* until they established the feast of the Christians in accordance with [the cycle] they observe today.[11]

Here, striving to resolve the inconsistencies associated with the observance of Lent and the celebration of Easter,[12] Demetrius allegedly initiated several exchanges with his contemporaries and eventually settled the issue through a collaborative effort. A careful reading of the two excerpts translated above, from the *Nazm* and the *Muṣbāḥ*, affirms that Eutychius and Abū al-Barakāt presented the alleged post-Epiphany fast as the normative practice of the early church, not just of Alexandria or Egypt, a fact that further degrades the historical claims of both accounts. Beyond the absence of unambiguous patristic evidence for a post-Epiphany Lent, the multiplicity of documented patterns for the Lenten fast in fourth- and fifth-century sources eliminates any pretense for the uniformity of that rogation among early Christians.[13]

Ostensibly, three factors inspired the Melkite patriarch's account. The first is that Epiphany and Lent/Easter were already somewhat linked in Egypt since the fourth century. Beginning with Athanasius, Alexandrian patriarchs issued their Festal Letters (also designated as "Paschal" or "Easter" letters), which identified the beginning of the forthcoming Lent and the date of Easter, at the Feast of Epiphany. Another factor was likely a misreading of a passage from a late fourth-century Antiochian text, the *Apostolic Constitutions* (5.13):

> Brothers and sisters, observe the festival days; and first of all the birthday which you are to celebrate on the twenty-fifth of the ninth month; after which let the Epiphany be to you the most honored, in which the Lord made to you a display of his own Godhead, and let it take place on the sixth of the tenth month; after which the fast of Lent is to be observed by you as containing a memorial of our Lord's mode of life and legislation.[14]

Here, the *Constitutions* simply lists communal fasts and celebrations throughout the liturgical year.[15] Yet, whereas the feasts of Nativity and Epiphany are dated to month and day, Lent (a "floating" fast) is not – hence

the abrupt shift from Epiphany to Lent. Rather than interpreting the passage on Lent as the next item on a list of liturgical celebrations, however, Eutychius (or the source he relied upon) appears to have read it as an apostolic injunction to observe Lent immediately after the Feast of Epiphany.[16] Eutychius may have even read that passage in light of Eusebius's comments in *EH* 7.20, which depict an exchange of letters among Dionysius and other hierarchs about this very subject. (The "misreading" is further contextualized in light of the polemical/apologetic trope discussed below, which likely facilitated this line of reasoning.) Accordingly, Eutychius proceeded to resolve a contradiction between what he perceived as a universal apostolic precedent and the later (contemporaneous) observance he knew prevailed. Significantly, behind his seemingly unobtrusive depiction of a collaborative reform lies a covert theological apology for what would have appeared as a major, widespread shift that contradicted apostolic practice. Hence, the reform, as Eutychius described it, secured the approval of four patriarchal sees; thus it possessed a quasi-ecumenical endorsement that would justify the eventual adoption of that practice by most Christians. Finally, perhaps as a point of pride, the reform was purportedly spearheaded by one of his Alexandrian predecessors (though it would appear that Demetrius is given credit for Dionysius's efforts).

The *Synaxarium* (12th of Bābah; 10th of Hatūr) and Abū al-Barakāt's accounts rely upon Eutychius's (mis)reading, but, taking their cues from the then dominant hagiography, they further embellish Demetrius's contribution. Whereas Eutychius describes a collaborative reform, Abū al-Barakāt credits Demetrius with single-handedly altering the observance of Lent by adjoining it to Holy Week, and for authoring the complex *Epact* calculations. The *Muṣbāḥ* depicts the patriarchs of the other sees as passive agents who simply recognized the genius of Demetrius's reform and dutifully implement them.[17] Thus, the *Synaxarium* and Abū al-Barakāt (who augment the *Synaxarium*'s entry) manipulated the Eutychian account and used it to embellish Demetrius's alleged contribution and to stress the extent of his divine learning – a prominent theme in later Coptic-Arabic texts.

Communal contexts

The textual analysis presented thus far is but one aspect of this complex tradition, the normative version of which – as reflected in the later Antiochene recension of the *Nazm*, the *Synaxarium*, and *A Lamp in the Darkness* – mirrors the intercommunal polemics that existed under Arab rule. It is to that milieu, the third factor influencing Eutychius's reform account, and its shaping of the tradition, that this study now turns.

Islamic rule witnessed the persistence of the intense confessional rivalries rampant among Copts and Melkites since the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE). The contentious discourse extended to communal practice, especially the

correct observance – and rejection – of communal fasts, their respective lengths, and the calculations that positioned them within the liturgical cycle. These disputes were sharpest where the observance of floating fasts and feasts was concerned. In the context of Lent, the Copts needed to account for the fast of "Preparation," better known in medieval literature as the "Fast of Heraclius": the initial week of the eight-week Lenten cycle that prevailed among the Copts since the early eighth century. The Copts strictly observed that week's rogation, while the Melkites refused to acknowledge it altogether.[18] They even went as far as designating that week an anti-fast: fasting was forbidden, even on the Stationary Days of Wednesday and Friday.

Focusing on the Fast of Heraclius, throughout the middle ages the Melkites censured the Copts for recognizing that extra-canonical week of Lent, while the Copts inverted the argument by describing their practice as ancient and rejoined by criticizing the Melkites for breaking with patristic precedent and for instructing their flock not to observe that week's fast.[19]

By the thirteenth century, the Coptic scholar al-Ṣafī ibn al-ʿAssāl casually referenced the "Week of Heraclius" in his *Majmūʿ* and qualified it as the Introduction to Lent (*muqaddimāt al-ṣawm al-kabīr*).[20] For his part, Abū al-Barakāt provided another justification, alleging that the Copts had observed that week's fast even before Heraclius. He then presented the central argument: *all* fasts were fixed by Demetrius of Alexandria and ratified by the Council of Nicea.[21]

Behind the Demetrian Lenten traditions lies the dynamic inaugurated in the tenth century by Eutychius's *Naẓm*, which embroiled the patriarch, a mutually recognized pre-Chalcedonian authority, in confessional squabbles by identifying him as the nexus of orthodox practice. In general, the prevailing socio-religious environment in Egypt during the middle ages informed both authors' apologetic agendas on two fronts. Within the context of their intra-confessional rivalries, each author sought to demonstrate that his community alone faithfully observed Demetrius's Lenten reforms "until this very day" (*īlā yawmanā hādhā*).[22] Thus, Eutychius and Abū al-Barakāt employed Demetrius's memory to vindicate their respective community's normative practice a millennium after the historical figure had died.

Their intercommunal interactions with Jewish and Muslim interlocutors also informed their apologetic goals and likely engendered this whole Lenten tradition. A crucial detail emerges in al-Makīn "the Younger's" *Mukhtasar*, where he notes that "non-Christians" criticized the community for not observing Lent immediately after the Feast of Epiphany as in the Gospels (e.g. Mk. 1:9–13).[23] In essence, Muslims and Jews accused Christians of neglecting their own scriptures, an explicit polemic forwarded by Ibn Ḥazm (994–1064 CE) in his critique of Christianity in the *al-Fiṣal fī al-milal*.[24] Eutychius's tradition, and with it the entirety of the Demetrian Lenten tradition, is likely an apology aimed at rebuffing similar contentions. Coptic and Melkite accounts alike present the initial observance of Lent

in congruence with the biblical narrative and then proceed to discuss its modification through canonically legitimate means. Melkite authors argue that the shift was prompted by four patriarchs – Demetrius and three of his peers, a tradition that was echoed by the Copts who further embellished Demetrius's role and maintained that the reforms were subsequently endorsed by the Council of Nicea as well.[25] Consistently, both sides accepted Demetrius's reform tradition but disagreed as to its particulars.

On the whole, these Lenten traditions stem from the tenth through the early fourteenth centuries and explicitly address the socio-religious concerns of that period, but they remain far from proving the historicity of a post-Epiphany Lent in third-century Alexandria. They are the product of the manipulation of Demetrius's hagiographic program within an environment saturated with intra- and intercommunal polemics and apologetics. Overwhelmingly, the pertinent issues had nothing to do with the traditional theological feuds that distinguished Copt from Melkite, or Christian from Muslim; rather the controversies focused on communal practices – the theology of the masses.

Book of Epact

Finally, the focus shifts to Demetrius's relation to the *Book of Epact*, which represents a popular genre of religio-scientific literature.[26] Historically, Demetrius lived during an era in which Christians adhered to local traditions in determining the date of the Easter celebration. By the late second century, two major factions emerged. In Anatolia, Quartodecimanism dominated; thus, Christians celebrated Easter on the fourteenth of the Jewish (lunar) month of Nisan, in conjunction with the observance of the Feast of Passover, without regard for the day of the week on which the fourteenth fell. Rome and Alexandria, on the other hand, celebrated Easter on the first Sunday after the fourteenth of Nisan (cf. Mk. 16:9; Acts 20:7). The contentious issue resulted in a schism when Pope Victor of Rome (d. 198 CE) broke communion with the Quartodecimans of Asia Minor, who were led by Bishop Polycrates of Ephesus (d. 196 CE). At the conclusion of that brief schism, each region retained its normative observance. Beyond the fact that the schism occurred during Demetrius's tenure (cf. *EH* 5.23–5), however, no patristic authority has suggested that it involved the Alexandrians or their bishop in any capacity.[27] The only evidence to the contrary emerges in the *Synaxarium*'s entry for the fourth of Baramhāt (see Text VI). Still, even in that highly problematic entry,[28] Demetrius's involvement is nothing more than the drafting of a letter in which he expressed his views.

The career of another Alexandrian, Anatolius, is arguably more pertinent to this tradition. Born *ca.* 230 CE, a year or so prior to Demetrius's death, Anatolius would become a noted philosopher and mathematician, and he was eventually ordained Bishop of Laodicea (in Syria). It was Anatolius's

Canon, the so-called *Liber Anatolii de ratione Paschali*, which has formed the basis for the Alexandrian Easter calculations from the patristic period until today, though the calculations attributed to Dionysius of Alexandria were also significant.[29] In fact, the structure and wording of the *Synaxarium*'s entry for Demetrius on the Tenth of Hatūr seems to reflect Eusebius's discussion of Dionysius's attempt to establish uniformity in the celebration of Easter (*EH* 7.20). In any case, it would appear that paschal calculations became a prominent issue in Alexandria after Demetrius's death.

All the traditions linking Demetrius to the *Book of Epact* are late, and are unattested in Greek, Latin, and Sahidic Coptic sources, both recensions of the HP, *K. al-tawārīkh*, and the *Chronicon*. The earliest texts to associate Demetrius with a Lenten reform and the *Epact* are Eutychius's *Nazm*, the *Synaxarium*, and *A Lamp in the Darkness*. Aside from literary references, however, Demetrius's authorship is typically lacking in the manuscript tradition, and hence it was omitted from Graf's *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*,[30] though a few late Arabic and Ethiopic manuscripts (themselves based on Arabic exemplars) tend to name Demetrius as the author of the work.[31]

A recently identified eighteenth-century Arabic manuscript of Ibn al-ᶜAssal's *Mirror* (a medieval manifestation of the *Book of Epact*) further bolsters this observation. It acknowledges the pioneers who contributed to the development of the *Epact* system but characteristically omits Demetrius from that list.[32] In 1942 Georgy Sobhy published a translation of another Arabic *Epact* manuscript that provides a pertinent example that may be cited as an exception that endorses the general rule.[33] Dated to 1768 CE (though it is likely a copy of a text drafted in 1715 CE),[34] the manuscript refers to Demetrius, but he is not the author. In fact, the whole passage on Demetrius is clearly an appendix adjoined to the end of the manuscript, just before it introduces various calendrical tables. The reference is brief and is little more than the grafting of the *Synaxarium*'s entry for the Tenth of Hatūr (itself, likely added in the late thirteenth century) onto the manuscript.[35] The pertinent section has a heading in red ink: "An old manuscript from the Holy Desert [of Scetis] was found in which it was written, 'From the saying of Abba Demetrius.'" But even then, two-thirds of what immediately follows does not directly relate to the patriarch. The anachronistic nature of the whole excerpt is blatant on several fronts, not least of which are references to "monks" and "monasteries" in the early third century, and references of the Fast of the Apostles. Although normative today, this is an altogether later rogation that was observed in Egypt according to several patterns from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries CE.[36]

The evolution of the Demetrian *Epact* tradition is intriguing, and it well compliments other aspects of his hagiographic program. The gift of spiritual discernment, documented in the Coptic encomium, was supplemented in Arabic sources with scholarly knowledge (the ignorance/enlightenment motif and

the depiction of the bishop as a tireless exegete), and, in turn, this divine illumination came to encompass liturgical reforms and even the "hard" sciences – the realms of astronomy and mathematics: the *Epact* (see Text VI.A).

Demonstrably, the above-referenced communal polemics and apologetics extended to the very means of calculating feast days and the proper lengths of fasts. Thus, in addition to debating patristic precedence, each community justified its normative practice by referencing a host of scientific tracts.[37] Above all, the "correct" means of calculating the feast day of Easter became contentious, even among members of the same confession,[38] as is evident from the discrepancies that crept in among the Copts of Upper Egypt and those in the Delta, not to mention the various irregularities between the Copts and Melkites in general.[39] Surely the computations were functional, but the overriding emphasis was, over all, in adherence to an apologetic agenda. As much may be readily verified by Ibn al-Rāhib's *K. al-tawārīkh* (*Chronography*), in which he is as interested in correcting what he sees as flaws in the reasoning and calculations of his Christian predecessors and interlocutors as he is in providing the basis for the Coptic Easter calculations. By the thirteenth century CE, calendrical calculations had deep roots in sectarian squabbles and identity-forming strategies; they were much more than an "objective" scientific enterprise.[40] The magnitude of the polemic surrounding calendrical observances is perhaps best illustrated by the instructions placed on the lips of Demetrius to his clergy at the very end of the manuscript translated by Sobhy. There, the archbishop purportedly proclaimed that knowledge of the *Epact* calculations and adherence to the dates derived through it is more important than knowledge of all the scriptures and the liturgies combined.[41] Such a radical statement must be read within the socio-religious context of the late Coptic-Arabic tradition. In the *Synaxarium* and the *Difnār*, the *Epact* was not derived through trial and error, or even Demetrius's divine enlightenment *per se*, rather it is positioned as a direct revelation that the archbishop uttered in an ecstatic state, while he was "in the Spirit."[42]

In sum, the *Book of the Epact*'s attribution to Demetrius reflects a late pietistic and ultimately literary tradition, best understood in light of the communal apologetics and polemics that thrived in Egypt during the middle ages. The association underscores Demetrius's divine erudition, and through the explicit claim of observing feasts and fasts in accordance with the "correct" procedure of Demetrius's calculations and reforms, Copts and Melkites alike proclaimed their fidelity to the patristic tradition and the validity and purity of their spiritual genealogy and liturgical practice.

Concluding observations

By far, the *Epact* and Lenten traditions have become the best-known aspects of Demetrius's dossier, particularly beyond the borders of Egypt and within the larger contexts of patristic and liturgical studies. Ironically, it is these

very traditions, the most contentious within the middle ages, and the most widely studied by modern scholars, which have been habitually misinterpreted. The pertinent passages have been disjointed and read out of context. Here, positioned within their literary and socio-religious settings, the Lenten and *Epact* accounts prove far more revealing of hitherto marginally understood intra- and intercommunal dynamics than the early third-century developments they purportedly describe.

Under Islamic rule, the ritual and sectarian practices of the Copts and Melkites functioned as identity-forming strategies. This was nothing new. That process had begun in earnest in the immediate wake of Chalcedon with the development of the pro- and anti-Chalcedonian versions of the liturgical Trisagion hymn. Incrementally thereafter, the religious and communal practices of the two confessions diverged, allowing Coptic-Arabic authors to routinely enumerate a dozen or so "deviations" maintained by the Melkites – all related to communal or liturgical practice not theology *per se*.[43] Amusingly, as medieval theologians parsed what is identified today as *mono-*, *mia-*, and *dyo-physite* theologies, at times with all the density and little of the elucidation of a "thick description," the majority of parishioners sought more tangible, less convoluted expressions of their faith and adopted practical markers of differentiation and communal identity.

Notes

1 P.F. Bradshaw and M.E. Johnson, *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts and Seasons in Early Christianity* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2011); Thomas J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991); John Paul Abdelsayyed and Moses Samaan, "A History of the Great Lent," *Coptic Church Review* 31.1 (2010), 18–32.

2 Maged S.A. Mikhail, "The Evolution of Lent in Alexandria and the Alleged Reforms of Patriarch Demetrius," in *Copts in Contexts: Negotiating Identity, Tradition and Modernity*, ed. Nelly van Doorn-Harder (South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, forthcoming).

3 Abū al-Barakāt, *Muṣbāḥ al-zulmā*, ch. 18, pg. 140; see also ch. 23, pg. 212; and Text VI, below.

4 The account retains several inaccuracies: Constantinople did not exist in the third century, and Rome never had a pontiff named Peter – aside from the apostle. The reading of "Peter" is possibly due to an orthographic error. "Victor," the Roman Pope at that time, is usually rendered in Arabic as *b-q-ṭ-r*, but the earliest manuscripts read *b-q-ṭ-r-s* (cf. PO III.3.13 and CSCO 101.5), which is only one letter removed from "Peter," *b-ṭ-r-s*. See Text VI, notes 21 and 27.

5 René-George Coquin, "Les origines de l'Épiphanie en Égypte," *Lex Orandi* 40 (1967), 140–70; idem, "Une Reforme liturgique du concile de Nicee (325)?" *Comptes Rendus, Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres* 111.2 (1967), 178–92; T.J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 189–202, 214–22; idem, "Origin of Lent at Alexandria," in *Between Memory and Hope: Readings on the Liturgical Year*, ed. M.E. Johnson (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2000); David Brakke, "Jewish Flesh and Christian Spirit in Athanasius of Alexandria," JECS 9.4 (2001), esp. 459–61; Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for*

the Origins of Christian Worship, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 179–82; Maxwell E. Johnson, "Preparation for Pascha? Lent in Christian Antiquity," in *Passover and Easter: The Symbolic Structuring of Sacred Seasons*, ed. P.F. Bradshaw and L.A. Hoffman (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999); repr. in *Between Memory and Hope*, ed. Johnson; Patrick Regan, "The Three Days and the Forty Days," in *Between Memory and Hope*, ed. Johnson.

6 W. Stokes, ed./trans., *Félire Óengusso Céli Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1905), verses for January 6 and 7 (pg. 34); text and current bibliography are on <www.ucc.ie/celt/>. P.F. Bradshaw and M.E. Johnson, *Origins of Feasts*, 105–08; N.V. Russo, "A Note on the Use of Secret Mark in the Search for the Origins of Lent," *Studia Liturgica* 37.2 (2007), 181–97; idem, "The Origins of Lent" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2009). Russo ("Origins of Lent," 398) analyzes a gloss by the twelfth-century Armenian Catholicos Isaac, which maintains that the church observed a post-Epiphany Lent for its first 120 years.

7 This leads to the layering of several tentative arguments on top of one another; for example, see the discussion in Talley, "Origins of Lent at Alexandria," 199.

8 Mt. 3:13–4: 11; Mk. 1:9–13; Lk. 3:21–2, 4:1–13.

9 See note 2, above.

10 Gregory Dix and Henry Chadwick, eds., *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of Saint Hippolytus of Rome, Bishop and Martyr*, 2nd ed. (London: Alban Press, 1992); T. Vivian, *Peter of Alexandria*, ch. 3 and Appendix I; Paul A. de Lagarde, *Reliquiae Iuris Ecclesiastici Antiquissimae* (Leipzig 1856), 63–73 (= PG 18:467–508); Gary W. Barkley, trans., *Origen: Homilies on Leviticus 1–16*, FC 83 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1990). A presumed, later reference is in *The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*, January 6 and 7. Still, early ninth-century Celtic evidence cannot prove the existence of a post-Epiphany fast in Egypt more than 500 years earlier (cf. Talley, *Origins*, 193, cf. 201).

11 My emphasis. This translation is based on Breydy's edition of the Alexandrian recension, pgs. 59–60, §172. In regard to this passage, Cheikho's edition does not contain any major deviations (cf. Cheikho, CSCO 50, pgs. 104.20–105.6). As noted in chapter seven, in this, the earliest Arabic witness, the reader again encounters the Demetrius depicted in Greek, Latin, and Sahidic Coptic sources: a thoroughly Hellenized figure, a patriarch exchanging letters – no doubt in Greek – with his peers.

12 Still, in that context the Pascal fast would have been the likely intent.

13 See Egérie, *Journal de voyage*, ed./trans., Pierre Maraval, SC 296 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1997); George E. Gingras, trans., *Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage*, Ancient Christian Writers 38 (New York: Newman Press, 1970), ch. 27 and n. 321; Talley, *Origins of the Liturgical Year*, Part III. Beginning in the 330s and until the seventh century, Egypt observed a six-week Lent that included Holy Week; see Maged S. A. Mikhail, "The Evolution of Lent." Evidence for fourth-century Cappadocia has been surveyed by Jill Burnett Comings, *Aspects of the Liturgical Year in Cappadocia (325–430)* (New York and Berlin: Peter Lang Publishing, 2005), ch. 2.

14 Marcel Metzger, *Les Constitutions Apostoliques*, 3 vols. SC 320, 329, 336 (Paris: Cerf, 1986), 2: 246: Τάς ἡμέρας τῶν ἑορτῶν φυλάσσετε, ἀδελφοί, καὶ πρώτην γε τὴν γενέθλιον, ἥτις ὑμῖν ἐπιτελείσθω εἰκοστῇ πέμπτῃ τοῦ ἐνάτου μηνός. Μεθ' ἣν ἡ ἐπιφάνιος ὑμῖν ἔστω τιμιωτάτη, καθ' ἣν ὁ Κύριος ἀνάδειξιν ὑμῖν τῆς οἰκείας θεότητος ἐποιήσατο· γινέσθω δὲ καὶ αὕτη ἕκτῃ τοῦ δεκάτου μηνός. Μεθ' ἃς ὑμῖν φυλακτέα

ἡ νηστεία τῆς τεσσαρακοστῆς, μνήμην ϖεριέχουσα τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου ϖολιτείας τε καὶ νομοθεσίας.

15 *Apostolic Constitutions*, 5.17, provides more detailed instructions on the observance of Lent.

16 The Celtic observance of Lent referenced in the *Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* likely stems from a similar reading of the *Constitutions* rather than an older Egyptian precedent. In general, several aspects of Celtic-Christian practice were literally "by the book," relayed through the reading of ecclesiastical literature rather than a living conduit.

17 See the *Synaxarium*'s entry for the tenth of Hatūr; Text VI.

18 See note 2, above. Fasting or feasting during that week developed into a reflection of confessional allegiance; see Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 11.

19 Jirjis ibn al-ᶜAmīd al-Makīn, *al-Mawsuᶜā al-lahutiyyā*, ed. *A Monk from the Monastery of al-Muḥarraq*, 4 vols. (Egypt: Dayr al-Muḥarraq, 1999–2001), 4: 64. This edition erroneously attributes the authorship of the text to the thirteenth-century author, al-Makīn Jirjis ibn al-ᶜAmīd; it is rather the product of the fourteenth-century author, Jirjis ibn al-ᶜAmīd al-Makīn (see Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur 2:453 [§ 139.3]). The two are distinguished here as al-Makīn "the Elder" and "the Younger"; see A. Wadiᶜ Abullif, "Al-Makīn Jirjis ibn al-ᶜAmīd wa tārīkhahu," in *Actes de la septième rencontre des Amis du patrimoine arabe-chrétien* (Cairo: Manshūrāt al-markaz al-fransīskānī lī al-dirāsāt al-sharqīyah al-masīḥīyah, 1999), 5–24.

20 Al-Ṣafī Abū al-Faḍā'il ibn al-ᶜAssāl, *al-Majmūᶜ al-ṣafawī*, ed. Jirjis Filūthā'ūs ᶜAwaḍ, 2 vols. (Cairo: n.p., n.d.), 1: 171.

21 The notion is prevalent; see Bishop Basilios's "Fastings" in *CoptEncyc* 4:1093–97; see also note 25, below.

22 This is implicitly the context of the earlier Alexandrian recension (M. Breydy, ed., *Das Annalenwerk*, 129), and it is rendered explicit in the Antiochene version (L. Cheikho, CSCO 50, pgs. 6–7); cf. *Synaxarium*, s.v. Tūbah 12, PO I.3.3 pg. 334.3, CSCO 60.16; s.v. Hatūr 10, PO III.13.3, pg. 75.12; CSCO 102.1. See Texts IV and VI.

23 Ibn al-Makīn, *Mukhtasar al-bayān*, 4:229.

24 ᶜAlī ibn Aḥmad ibn Ḥazm, *al-Fiṣal fī al-milal wa al-ahwā' wa al-niḥal*, 5 vols. (Cairo: al-Maṭbaᶜah al-adabīyah, 1899–1903), 2: 72; Theodore Pulcini, *Exegesis as Polemical Discourse: Ibn Hazm on Jewish and Christian Scriptures* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998), 135–36, 159.

25 Ibn al-Makīn, *Mukhtasar al-bayān*, 4: 230–32, 236, 238, 240, 244–46; Abū Shākir, *K. al-tawārīkh*, MS Berlin or. Fol. 434, *fols*. 187v (ch. 50 – in the entry for Patriarch Alexander), and 220r (ch. 51 – in the entry for the Council of Nicaea); Abū Shākir notes the reform but does not explicitly associate it with Demetrius. In his description of the reform at the Council of Nicaea, Abū Shākir states: "and they established the fasting of the forty days, and its calculations, *and joined it to Holy Week*" (*fols*. 187v). Although Abū Shākir is relying on the HP's entry for Patriarch Alexander, the last clause (in italics) is his own. The relevant passage reads: HP-P, pg. 55, lines 20–1: "they established the faith/creed (*al-amānah*) and the days for the feast and the fast." HP-V: "the right faith was established and the days of the fast and the day of the Feast [of Easter]." The passage seems to be based on Sawīrus ibn al-Muqaffaᶜ's *Kitāb al-majāmiᶜ*: *Refutation d'Eutychius par Sévère, Eveque d'Aschmounam (Le livre des conciles)*, ed. P. Chébli, PO 3.2.12 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1906; repr. Turnhout: Editions Brepols, 1983), 43.

26 Samir Khalil Samir, "Book of Epact," *CoptEncyc* 2: 409–11; Alden A. Mosshammer, *The Eastern Computus and the Origins of the Christian Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 109–16.

27 A.A. Mosshammer, *Eastern Computus*, 110. Mosshammer's otherwise brilliant analysis suffers from reading late Demetrian traditions at face value. He notes that his sources vis-à-vis Demetrius span a millennium (pg. 109), and (focusing on the *Synaxarium*'s entries) he proceeds to document several inconsistencies (pgs. 112–14), but then he concludes: "In any case, the core of the Coptic tradition – that Demetrius was the 'inventor of the epacts' and that he had a particular concern for the regulation of the fast – is likely to be true. . . . Someone in the early third century must have taken that step, and there is no reason to deny that it was Demetrius" (pg. 114). Nonetheless, my contentions are: (1) as evidenced in this chapter, there are good reasons to deny Demetrius's authorship; (2) there are several other candidates. Mosshammer, himself, in a different context, identifies two better third-century candidates: Anatolius (chs. 8, 18) and Dionysius (pg. 110, citing Eusebius, *EH* 7.20).

28 Chapter 47 of *K. al-tawārīkh* (1257 CE) cites the commemorations of the liturgical cycle. Of the four manuscripts utilized by S. Moawad in his critical edition of chapters 1–47, this commemoration is only found in a single manuscript, roughly dated to the seventeenth or eighteenth century. The fifth manuscript used by Moawad lacks a significant portion of the work, including the entirety of chapter 47.

29 Eusebius, *EH* 7.32.13–20, cf. 6.22 and 7.20; Jerome, *On Illustrious Men*, ch. 73; *Liber Anatolii de ratione paschali*, PG 10.207–32; Daniel P. McCarthy and Aidan Breen, *The ante-Nicene Christian Pasch* De ratione paschali: *The Paschal tract of Anatolius, Bishop of Laodicea* (Portland: Four Courts Press, 2003). McCarthy and Breen's edition supersedes the older translation in the ANF 6:145–51.

30 There may be some exceptions, but they need closer examination. As discussed below, even where there is a reference to Demetrius, it may lack substance. See the texts identified at the end of Samir Khalil's "Book of Epact," and in G. Graf's *Catalogue de manuscrits arabes chrétiens conservés au Caire*, manuscripts 347.13 and 661.4 text 5.

31 On Ethiopic texts identifying Demetrius as the author of the *Epact*, see A.A. Mosshammer, *Eastern Computus*, 112; Otto Neugebauer, *Ethiopic Astronomy and Computus*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Sitzungsberichte 347 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1979), 92–3.

32 This manuscript is located in an unidentified Coptic church in Bani Suwayf. It is discussed in Ramses Wassif, "The Epact: Exposition of a Manuscript," *Coptica* 5 (2006), 83–93.

33 Georgy Sobhy, "The Coptic Calendrical Computation and the System of Epacts Known as *ḥisāb al-abuqṭī* 'the Epact Computation' Ascribed to Abba Demetrius the XII Patriarch of Alexandria," *Bulletin de la société d'archéologie copte* 8 (1942), 169–99.

34 The manuscript colophon is dated to 1484 AM/1768 CE, though in all likelihood that whole text is a copy of a manuscript drafted *circa* 1431 AM/1715 CE; see the table referenced at the end of the manuscript. It is unlikely that a manuscript drafted in 1768 would intentionally provide the Easter calculations of the previous fifty years; typically these texts provide the tables for upcoming decades.

35 Sobhy, "Coptic Calendrical Computation," 189–91; see also Text VI.

36 Maged S. A. Mikhail, "The Fast of the Apostles." The pattern noted in that manuscript, fasting from the Monday after Pentecost until the commemoration of saints Peter and Paul, is first attested in Egypt in the eleventh century, but it coexisted with several other fasting patterns for the Fast of the Apostles among the Copts until the eighteenth century.

37 That much is clear from Neugenbauer's summary; see Otto Neugebauer, *Abu Shaker's "Chronography"; A Treatise of the 13th Century on Chronological, Calendrical, and Astronomical Matters, written by a Christian Arab, preserved in Ethiopic*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Sitzungsberichte 498 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988). This volume provides a summary and analysis of the Ethiopic version of the work, not a full translation; a critical edition of the Arabic text of chapters 1–47 has been recently published by S. Moawad, ed., *Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib: Kitāb al-tawārīkh*, vol. 1. Also see Adel Sidarus's "Copto-Arabic Universal Chronography," and "Les sources multiples"; and Adel Sidarus and Samuel Moawad, "Un comput Melkite Attribuable à Yaḥyā b. Saʿīd al-Anṭākī (XI^{E} s.)," *Muséon* 123 (2010), 455–77.

38 In 664 CE, "there was confusion as to the date of the Feast of the Resurrection. While some Christians celebrated the Feast of Hosannas [that is, Palm Sunday], others celebrated Easter; and when the former were still celebrating Easter, the latter celebrated New Sunday" (*Chronicle of 1234*/History of Dionysius, § 188). In his *The Seventh Century in West-Syrian Chronicles* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1993), Andrew Palmer provided this English translation as part of a reconstruction of the *Secular History* of Dionysius of Ṭel Maḥrē based on the text of the *Chronicle of 1234*. For the *Chronicle of 1234*, see J.-B. Chabot, ed., *Chronicon ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens*, 2 vols., CSCO 81–2, *scr. syri* 36–7 (Paris, 1916–20); Latin translation of the first volume by Chabot, CSCO 109, *scr. syri* 56 (Paris, 1937); French translation of the second volume by A. Abouna, CSCO 354, *scr. syri* 154 (Louvain, 1974); cf. Michael the Syrian, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*, J.-B. Chabot, ed./trans., 4 vols. (Paris: E. Leroux, 1899–1924), 11.12b.

39 E.g. O. Neugebauer, *Abu Shaker's "Chronography,"* 77–86, 90–5, 97, 100, 151–52, 160; S. Moawad, ed., *Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib: Kitāb al-tawārīkh*, 17 and note 41; and ch. 43 in general; Maged S. A. Mikhail, "Fast of the Apostles."

40 Neugebauer points out that the parameters for these calculations were often random; also see Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 6. Calendrical disputes were not limited to Christian factions – the Jewish community had similar debates; see Marina Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 15–20, 57–65.

41 G. Sobhy, "Coptic Calendrical Computation," 191.

42 See the entry for the Twelfth of Bābah in the *Synaxarium* (Text VI), that for the Twelfth of Baramhāt in the *Difnār* (Text VIII), and the doxologies (Text IX).

43 Al-Makīn (the Younger), *Mukhtaṣar al-bayān*, IV.38–68, cf. 316–18; cf. Pseudo-Sawīrus, *Tartīb al-kahanūt*, ch. 21; Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 238–39.

9

FORM, FUNCTION, AND MEANING

Over the course of this study, the historical Demetrius has emerged as an elusive figure, whose long career lies beyond the reach of the modern historian in all but the most elementary aspects. Much of what is known is derived from his hagiographic dossier, which is best read as a palimpsest that retains various layers of composition, redaction, and even radical contradictions just beneath what initially appears as a homogenous narrative. What can be stated with certainty is that the sources of the first Christian millennium – Greek, Latin, Sahidic Coptic, and Eutychius's Arabic account – consistently depict the archbishop as a Hellenized Alexandrian from a prosperous family. By the late eleventh century, however, the early Coptic-Arabic hagio-biographic tradition presented the archbishop as an illiterate peasant – the normative hagiographic depiction that has endured. The dominance of this tradition has influenced, if not established, the basis for the bulk of academic and lay interpretations of the clash between Demetrius and Origen until today. That is not to say that Demetrius was as learned as the *magister* – few are on that same short list; nonetheless, whatever the actual cause of tensions between the two men may have been, it was not due to the pitting of a towering intellect against an authoritative peasant out of his league. Minimally, both shared a common Hellenic idiom and the basics of a sound education. The traditional depiction has also led some scholars to the extremely problematic (even pejorative) labeling of the presumably illiterate Demetrius as the first *real* Coptic patriarch of Alexandria, a perspective that clearly views all Copts as ignorant peasants, overlooking the great diversity within that community across the span of time.

The ambiguity of the historical figure provided later generations with the opportunity to mold the saint's persona and legacy as they deemed fit. This dynamic is evident among the Copts and the Melkites, particularly with regard to the Lenten reforms, though the bulk and nature of the extant sources allow for the study of this process among the Copts at much greater depth. Nonetheless, the existence of the dynamic among both confessions is fundamental.[1] Over the past decade, much has been made of the construction of Coptic identity after the Arabic conquest as though it were a

distinct, novel process. Behind that perspective is a still pervasive, though for many unintentional, reading of the Coptic community as a schismatic or heretical faction comprised of disgruntled Egyptian "natives" opposing an "authentic," objectively distinct "Byzantine" or Melkite hierarchy; hence, it is the Copts who needed to engage in identity-forming or -legitimizing strategies – not the Melkites. Nonetheless, the conceptual problems and contrarian evidence that undermine this perspective are many. In the wake of Chalcedon, the creation of rival hierarchies was carefully accomplished by both confessions, a process that was reinforced by theological debates, clerical ordinations, and the drafting of historical texts, such as the late fifth-century *Histories of the Church*, but even more so through the adoption of evolving strategies of differentiation that included guidelines for conversion. Initially, those who converted from one confession to the other (which is at times designated as Institutional Conversion) were merely asked to "repent" and to provide a written statement of their faith. But eventually, such converts had to undergo more extensive rituals and even rebaptism.

With regard to nomenclature, the seemingly self-evident categories of "Byzantine" and "Copt" were historically much more permeable and fluid than current scholarship would permit in all but theory. Overwhelmingly, the Melkites were every bit as "Egyptian" as the Copts, and "Coptic" patriarchs, long after Chalcedon, were still predominantly Hellenized urbanites. The seventh-century anti-Chalcedonian patriarch Andronicus had much more in common with his pro-Chalcedonian counterpart, John the Almsgiver, than either of them would share with their later successors under the ᶜAbbasids. Linguistically, Greek continued as the official language of theology, liturgy, and intra- and intercommunal communication among both factions at least until the ninth century. The Copts of Alexandria, in particular, purposefully and proudly retained Greek as their liturgical language well into the thirteenth century.

As to political identity, beyond a notion of regionalism that had parallels in every corner of the empire, the notion that the anti-Chalcedonians of Egypt, the Copts, conceived of themselves as an "other" within the Byzantine Empire, or that the empire regarded them as such, is an extremely problematic supposition that finds its most ardent evidence in the ninth century, not the fifth or the seventh. The schism was largely theological, not "ethnic" or political; in addition to "Copt," the community labeled itself, "Severians," "Theodosians," "Jacobites," and simply "the orthodox" – all of these designations coexisted, were used interchangeably, and, with the exception of "Copt," routinely included the Syrians, Nubians, and Ethiopians.[2] Examined closely, the details of the Arabic conquest betray utter confusions, but what they do not support is the notion that the Melkites resisted the Arabs as a singular block or that the Copts supported them as such. Allegiances were much more complex than that old cliché would permit, and demonstrably the Copts viewed themselves as members of the empire long after even their

medieval descendants would have admitted. Leading up to the Arab conquest, the "Jacobites" prayed that God would send them a "good," that is, anti-Chalcedonian emperor, and long after that event, when it was dangerous to voice support for the Byzantine Empire and Coptic historiography began to depict Byzantine rule as an unvaryingly oppressive period, the idealistic narratives penned in Coptic-Arabic apocalypses consistently prophesied the Byzantine emperor's reconquest of Egypt, his rightful domain, and his return to the orthodox – that is, anti-Chalcedonian – fold.[3]

Ideologically, and more specific to Demetrius, both hierarchies employed the same strategies to align themselves – through word, art, liturgy, monument, and propaganda – with the undisputed pre-Chalcedonian Alexandrian patriarchs. Whether in debating the validity of their lines of Apostolic Succession, suing one another over the ownership of ecclesiastical properties in the eighth century, or debating Demetrius's reforms (or, rather, which community observed them faithfully), the Melkites were every bit as concerned as the Copts about constructing an identity that positioned them as the exclusive, legitimate heirs of the patristic past in general, and patriarch Cyril I, in particular. This is the image and message that each faction promoted among its own constituents and sought to project to all others, whether rival Christian factions or Jews and Muslims. The historiography of the observance of Lent in Egypt is but another demonstration of this dynamic, but equally insightful are the "deviations" in communal observances alluded to in passing in the previous chapter. Consistently, the competing factions adopted opposing practices: [since] the Melkites wore shoes in the sanctuary, [then] the Copts refused; [since] the Copts fasted the Week of Heraclius, [then] the Melkites would not fast at all during that week. Like quarreling siblings of a similar age, each faction affirmed its identity by adopting a practice that diametrically opposed that of its closest counterpart. In essence, both confessions relied upon the same strategies, fussed over the same issues, and were actively constructing their respective identities. It just so happens that the Coptic evidence (due to a much larger demographic) is far more plentiful than what has survived for the Melkites; yet, demonstrably, these dynamics were ongoing in both camps.

Returning to the development of Demetrius's hagiographic program proper, while various patristic traditions supplied the raw materials and provided a general framework, the genesis of the hagiographic program may be traced back to a pseudonymous Sahidic Coptic encomium, the extant version of which almost certainly dates to the Islamic period, and may have been drafted as late as the tenth century CE. Textually, the encomium drew upon a modest base of patristic evidence, which it augmented with an array of monastic and hagiographic motifs. The resulting composition was original, engaging, and thoughtful – particularly in its depiction of Demetrius's wife. The hagiographer also supplied rare, even unique, insight

into the rationale for spiritual marriage. Thematically, one may read the encomium as a counternarrative to the cursory and unflattering depiction of the archbishop in earlier patristic literature. Thus, it portrays Demetrius as an eager would-be martyr and a chaste ascetic whose pious legacy came to embody the true exegesis of Matthew 19:12.

A second stage of development commenced in the middle of the Fatimid era with the drafting of the late-eleventh-century "primitive" recension of the *History of the Patriarchs*. As discussed in the concluding remarks to chapter seven, the publication of HP-P demarcates the zenith of one dynamic within Coptic historiography, while the dissemination of HP-V signaled the beginning of yet another. In HP-P, two texts, a translation of the *EncDem* and an independent historical tract based on Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* (possibly as preserved in a recension of the *Histories of the Church [of Alexandria]*) merged to produce Demetrius's *sīrah*. There, in Part One, the Arabic recension of the *EncDem* presented Demetrius as an illiterate rural peasant devoid of any Hellenic influence, which, in a late-eleventh-century milieu, may have implied that he was a Copt rather than a Melkite.[4] "Translating" the saint's sacred biography at that juncture introduced several elements that synchronized it with contemporary norms and expectations, allowing the Arabic recension to be read as a historical vignette onto eleventh-century Coptic sensibilities. Over the course of that process, three miraculous elements were added: the Prophecy of Grapes, the illiteracy/enlightenment motif, and the vision of Christ dispensing the Eucharist. A subtle shift in focus also ensued. Chastity within marriage, rather than virginity proper, emerges as the locus of Arabic traditions and as the true exegesis of Matt. 19:12. This permutation likely reflects the tenor of Coptic lay spirituality at that time. It is a theme that is also reflected in the *Life of John Khame*, the biography of Patriarch Mīnā II, and medieval *nomocanons*.[5] In general, there seems to have been an increase in the hagiographic accounts of spiritual marriage in Egypt, Byzantium, and the west at roughly the end of the first millennium and the opening centuries of the second. Finally, as discussed in chapter six, beginning in the late eleventh century, Arabic recessions and translations of Demetrius's dossier reflect a misogynist bent that is without parallel among their Coptic precursors.

Part Two of Demetrius's biography in the HP has proven to be textually and thematically significant in its own right. Dependence on Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* is unmistakable, though the translation is far from accurate or polished. Additionally, its anti-Origenist additions are important both in their hyperbole and omissions. Among the pertinent passages in Part Two is that based on (or perhaps drawing on the same sources as) Photius's *Ten Questions and Answers*,[6] which details bishop Amūnah's (Ammonius) support for Origen, and Amūnah and Phileas's defiance of Demetrius.

By the mid-thirteenth century, the vulgate recension(s) of the HP appeared as part of the Golden Age of Coptic-Arabic literature and inaugurated a third phase of development in Demetrius's dossier. Orthographically and grammatically, it offers a more refined version of HP-P. It consistently eliminates ambiguous readings, and, for better or for worse, omits multiple and contradictory traditions, resulting in a homogeneous textual tradition that has served as the basis for Demetrius's hagiography ever since. The vulgate recensions also appended a sizable passage, roughly corresponding to Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* 6.12–8, and they reflected the development of various motifs. Hence, the details of the ordeal (the Miracle of Coals) became explicitly liturgical (HP-V, *Chronicon*) and more elaborate (*Synaxarium*). Moreover, the theme of Demetrius's divine erudition functioned to legitimize medieval Coptic practice, which elected bishops and patriarchs based primarily on perceived sanctity rather than erudition or sophistication. Demetrius's unilateral reform of Lent and authorship of the *Epact* calculations quickly came to underscore the extent of his divine enlightenment. Additionally, the HP-V appended several parenthetical glosses, most important among which is a passage detailing the authority and jurisdiction of the Coptic patriarch, particularly outside of Egypt.[7] Documented in other contemporary texts, this excerpt provides insight into the precarious life situation of the Coptic community under Mamluk rule.

With the *Encomium on Demetrius*, the archbishop emerged as an important historical figure for reasons that seemed to have little to do with Origen. Accounts that depicted him as a reformer of Lent and author of the *Epact* calculations, first put into circulation among the Melkites in the tenth century, furthered this trend. Perhaps the Coptic majority also entertained similar notions. In any event, they too embraced the flattering traditions and embellished them further, transforming a collaborative effort into a unilateral reform. Consistently, both confessions relied upon Demetrius's legacy as a Lenten reformer to validate their specific observance of Lent and to fend off polemical attacks by Muslims and Jews who accused them of ignoring the patterns of worship evident in their own scriptures. In essence, medieval scholars and scribes projected onto Demetrius's patriarchate the precedence needed to legitimize their current communal observances and norms. Thus, a scantly documented patristic figure became historically and dogmatically pivotal.

Both confessions recognized Demetrius as the nexus of orthodox practice but quarreled over the details of the reforms he allegedly decreed. Thus, a hagiographic gloss briskly wrapped itself in the guise of antiquity and engendered real historical controversies. Ironically, through all the bitter sectarian rivalries between the Copts and Melkites under Islamic rule, both confessions maintained (and still profess) Athanasius and Cyril as the canons of orthodox theology and hail Demetrius as an unimpeachable authority – the seal of orthodox communal practice.

Notes

1 Much of what follows is discussed in greater length and documentation in Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, chs. 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11; see also chapter one, note 11.
2 Cf. Severus of Antioch, Theodosius of Alexandria, and Jacob Baradeaus; two of the three were Syrians, not Egyptians.
3 See Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 2 in particular.
4 As mentioned above, the Greek language survived among the Copts as an official language that was used in inscriptions and actively taught within the community at least through the ninth century; see Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 5. Thus, the prevalent dichotomous depiction of Egyptian Christianity as fractured between Coptic/anti-Chalcedonian and Greek/pro-Chalcedonian is quite problematic. Nonetheless, by the eleventh century, as the Greek language became increasingly marginal in society and even within the Melkite confession, the stereotypical depiction seems to have gained some resonance among the Copts.
5 Minimally, the laity was instructed to refrain from sexual relations during fasting periods, especially Lent. See Ibn al-ᶜAssāl, *al-Majmūᶜ al-ṣafawī*, ch. 15; cf. A.P. Tzadua, trans., P.L. Strauss, ed., *The Fetha Nagast*, chs. 15 and 24.5.8.
6 It is possible that Part Two and Photius's *Ten Questions and Answers* are independently drawing upon another text; see the discussion of chapters three and seven and Text III.
7 In a late-thirteenth-century context, Coptic control of the Pentapolis was a distant memory, and authority over Nubia and Ethiopia had been largely indirect and strained. Still, Cyril III (1235–43 CE) did attempt to reestablish relations with Nubia and extended the formal Coptic hierarchy into Syria and Jerusalem, despite the vocal disapproval of his counterpart, the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch, Mor Ignatius III David (1222–52 CE). This dynamic is well discussed by Kurt J. Werthmuller in his *Coptic Identity and Ayyubid Politics*.

Part II

TEXTS

Demetrius's bio-hagiographic dossier

INTRODUCTION TO THE TRANSLATIONS

Part Two of the study aims to present the entirety of Demetrius's widely dispersed dossier in English translation. The lengthy primitive recension of Demetrius's biography in the *History of the Patriarchs* (Text III) and the entries from *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* (Text V) have never appeared in a western language. A chief text, the Sahidic Coptic *Encomium on Demetrius*, had been published previously, but E.A. Wallis Budge's exceptional reading of the only surviving manuscript for this work is somewhat dampened by a translation that seems rushed at several junctures. Text II presents a new translation of the encomium, and it corrects a few glitches in Budge's Coptic edition based on a fresh reading of BL Or. 6783. Another set of texts, Demetrius's entries in the *Synaxarium* (Text VI), are accessible (in print and online), though in an uneven English translation based on a rather problematic modern edition of that book. Here, my translation relies on the medieval recensions of those entries. The majority of the remaining texts, with the exception of the Greek and Latin passages translated in Text I, have hitherto only been accessible in French, German, or Latin renderings.

I have rendered the ubiquitous and somewhat generic "said"—Coptic ϫω and Arabic *qālā* – with latitude depending on the context of the original text. Hence, it may appear as "answered," "asked," or "stated." Moreover, the Greco-Coptic ⲡⲗⲁⲟⲥ and Arabic (*u*)*nās* and *shaʿb* are inconsistently rendered as "people" or "congregation," depending on context. All paragraph divisions, punctuation, and headings are my own. The honorific title *anba* (< *abba*) has been left untranslated in Arabic texts. The transliteration of Arabic terms adheres to the guidelines of the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. All dates are given in accordance to the Common Era. Words between brackets [ ] have been supplied to elucidate or complete passages, but do not appear in the original text as such. Those between angle brackets < > are likely to be mistakes in the original manuscript.

TEXT I

EARLIEST EVIDENCE

The following passages from Greek and Latin literature are all that survive (and likely all that was known) about Bishop Demetrius during the patristic era. Although they are not part of Demetrius's hagiographic program proper, they provide the foundation for the hagiographic dossier, and they constitute the nucleus of what may be identified as the "historical" Demetrius. The fragmentary nature of the following anthology is unavoidable. Demetrius is not the specific focus of most of these passages. The glosses are arranged chronologically.

A. Alexander of Jerusalem and Theoctistus of Caesarea, *Letter to Demetrius*.[1] (*ca*. 225)

In his letter, [Demetrius] added that it was unheard of, let alone actually the case, that laymen may preach in the presence of bishops, though I do not know how he would say something so patently false.[2] Wherever those who are qualified to benefit the congregation are found, they are called upon by the holy bishops to preach to the people. This was the case with Euelpius who was commissioned by Neon in Laranda, Paulinus who was commissioned by Celsus in Iconium, and in Synnada, Theodore was commissioned by Atticus – [all] are our blessed brother-[bishops]. This likely occurred at other places as well, though it is unknown to us.

B. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical history*.[3] (*ca*. 313 CE)

5.22: In the tenth year of Commodus' reign [189 CE] . . . [Bishop] Julian also having completed his tenth year, the ministry for the diocese of Alexandria was entrusted to Demetrius.

6.3.8: The catechetical[4] instruction had been entrusted by Demetrius, head of the church, to [Origen] alone.

6.8.3–5: Later, when Demetrius, who presided over the diocese there, came to know [of Origen's act], he marveled greatly at his daring deed, but

approving of his zeal and the sincerity of his faith, he reassured him, and proceeded to urge him all the more to continue the work of instruction.[5] This was the attitude of [Demetrius] at that time, but shortly thereafter the same [Demetrius], seeing him prosperous, great, illustrious, and celebrated by all, was overcome by human weakness. He wrote to the bishops of the whole world, attempting to describe [Origen's] deed as most outrageous, just then the most respected and prominent bishops in Palestine, those of Caesarea and Jerusalem, judged Origen worthy for the highest honor, that of the presbyterate,[6] and they laid their hands and ordained him to the priesthood. . . . Lacking any other accusation, Demetirus slandered [Origen] viciously for the act he had done long ago while he was a boy. He even dared to include those who elevated him to the priesthood in his accusations.

6.14.11: Without delaying long in [Rome], [Origen] returned to Alexandria and even continued his usual instructional duties there with great enthusiasm, Demetrius still bishop then, urging him all the more to engage in the activities that benefit the brethren.

6.26: It was in the tenth year of [Alexander's] reign [232 CE], when Origen relocated from Alexandria to Caesarea, leaving the school[7] for catechetical instruction there to Heraclas.[8] Not long after, Demetrius the bishop of the church of the Alexandrians, died, having completed forty-three years in the ministry.[9] He was succeeded by Heraclas.

C. Jerome/Eusebius, *Chronicle*.[10] (*ca*. 380 CE)

1. 2205 Year of Abraham; 242.1 Olympiad; 10th year of the reign of Commodus [189 CE]: Demetrius is appointed (*constituitur*) the eleventh bishop of Alexandria for forty-three years.[11]

2. 2247 Years of Abraham; 252.3 Olympiad; 9th year of the reign of Alexander son of Mamaea [231 CE]: Heraclas is ordained (*ordinatur*) as the twelfth bishop of the Alexandrian church for sixteen years.

D. Jerome, *Letter* 33.5, *to Paula*.[12] (*ca*. 384 CE)

Do you see how the labors of this one individual [, Origen,] have surpassed those of the Greeks and the Romans? For who has ever been able to read all that he has written? But what kind of a reward has his toil brought him? He was condemned by bishop Demetrius, and except for the bishops[13] of Palestine, Arabia, Phoenicia, and Achaia, all consented. [Even] Rome convened a council[14] against him, not for the novelty of his doctrine, or because of heresy, as the rabid dogs that now pursue him claim, but because they could not tolerate the glory of his eloquence and erudition, by which all were silenced.[15]

E. Jerome, *On illustrious men*, ch. 36, *On pantaenus*.[16] (Written in 392 CE)

Pantaenus, a philosopher of the Stoic sect – following a certain ancient custom in Alexandria, where, beginning with Mark the Evangelist the clerics were always scholars – was endowed with such wisdom and learning both in the holy Scriptures and secular literature that he was sent by Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, to [preach in] India at the request of representatives from that region.[17]

F. Jerome, *On illustrious men*, ch. 54, *On Origen*. (Written in 392 CE)

At eighteen years old, [Origen] undertook the work of teaching the catechesis, in the scattered[18] Church of Alexandria. Later, appointed by Demetrius, bishop of this city, as successor to the presbyter Clement, he flourished many years. When he had already reached middle life, on account of the churches of Achaia, which were vexed with many heresies, he undertook [a journey to Athens], by way of Palestine, authorized by an ecclesiastical letter. [En route,] he was ordained presbyter by Theoctistus and Alexander, bishops of Caesarea and Jerusalem, thus he offended Demetrius, who was so enraged at him that he wrote to the whole world to damage his reputation. It is known that before he went to Caesarea, he had been at Rome during the reign of Bishop Zephyrinus. Immediately on his return to Alexandria, [Origen] made Heraclas the presbyter, who continued to wear his philosopher's garb, his assistant in the school for catechesis. [Heraclas] became bishop of the church of Alexandria after Demetrius.[19]

G. Jerome, *Letter* 70.4, *to Magnus*.[20] (written *ca*. 397 CE)

Pantaenus, a philosopher of the Stoic school, on account of his distinguished (*praecipuae*) reputation for learning, was sent by Demetrius bishop of Alexandria to India, to preach Christ to the Brahmans and philosophers of that region.

H. Photius, *Bibliotheca*, 117.[21] (written 820s CE; on an anonymous, *In Apology of* Origen)

Read a work, without title or author, defending Origen and his detestable writings, in five volumes. The style is neither clear nor balanced and contains nothing worthy of mention. The author brings forward witnesses on behalf of Origen and his dogmas, [such as] Dionysius of Alexandria, Demetrius, Clemens, and many others, but particularly relies upon [the *Apology* by] Pamphilus the martyr and Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine.[22]

I. Photius, *Bibliotheca*, 118.[23] (Written 820s CE; on the *Apology for Origen* by Pamphilus and Eusebius)

It is said that the movement against Origen began as follows. Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, greatly approved of Origen and considered him among his dearest friends.[24] But when Origen was about to leave for Athens, without the permission of his bishop,[25] he was ordained by Theoctistus, bishop of Caesarea in Palestine, contrary to the ordinance of the church, with the consent of Alexander, bishop of Jerusalem. This incident turned the affection of Demetrius to hatred and his praise to blame. A synod of bishops and some presbyters convened to condemn Origen. According to Pamphilus, it was decided that Origen must not remain in Alexandria or teach there, but that he would not be removed from the dignity of the priesthood. But Demetrius and some Egyptian bishops, with the consent of those who had formerly supported him, [subsequently] also deprived him of his priesthood.[26] After Origen had been banished from Alexandria, Theoctistus, bishop of [Caesarea] in Palestine, gladly welcomed him, allowed him to live at Caesarea, and entrusted him with complete authority to teach. Such are the reasons that Pamphilus gives for the attack on Origen.

Notes

1 Eusebius, *EH*, 6.19.16–9. Eusebius published four editions of the *Ecclesiastical History*, but most of the alterations were to the latter books. Most likely, the passages at hand were in circulation by 312 CE. See G. Brady, ed./trans., *Historia Ecclesiastica*; cf. R.J. Deferrari, trans., *Eusebius Pamphili: Ecclesiastical History*; also A. Louth's articulate revision of G.A. Williamson's text (Penguin Classics, 1989).

2 This letter records the earliest accusation leveled at Origen by Demetrius. Notably, it lacks any charge of heresy or heterodoxy. If anything, it condemns the bishops who allowed a layman to preach in their presence, but Demetrius did not comment on the content of Origen's sermon or his theological thought. Similarly, the rest of the passage, Alexander's defense, parses the propriety of the action, but there is no theological discussion here either.

3 See note 1, above.

4 Gr.: κατηχεῖν.

5 Gr.: κατηχήσεως.

6 Gr.: ϖρεσβείων; see Lampe 1128b.

7 Gr.: διδασκαλείον.

8 Cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.15.

9 Gr.: λειτουργίᾳ. There are some discrepancies regarding the exact date of Demetrius's death – whether it was in 231 or 232. See the following entry, and Text V.

10 Originally composed by Eusebius, the *Chronicle* only survives in Jerome's Latin rendition of the text, which he edited and augmented. See the online edition (2005): <www.Tertullian.org/fathers/> (accessed December 4, 2015), pages 293 and 296. The site has a revised Latin text and translation based on R. Helm's edition: *Eusebius' Werke* 7: *Die Chronik des Hieronymus*, 3rd ed. GCS 47 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1984).

11 On the significance of the enumeration, and the shift from "eleventh" to "twelfth," see Text II at note 56; Text III at note 8.
12 I. Hilberg ed., *Sancti Eusebii Hieronymi Epistulae*, CSEL 54–6; W.H. Fremantle, "The Letters of St. Jerome," NPNF 2.6: 1–295. This letter was written before the Origenist Controversy, while Jerome was still enamored with Origen.
13 Lat.: *sacerdotibus*.
14 Lat.: *senatum*.
15 Here, Jerome walks a fine line, but he positively disassociates Origen from heresy. Only a tone of cheer and admiration for the life and writings of the *magister* is discernable. One gloss is particularly revealing: "who has ever managed to read all that he has written? Yet what reward have his exertions brought him? He was condemned by bishop Demetrius"; this is a sarcastic statement, something along the lines of the sardonic adage: "No good deed goes unpunished."
16 A. Ceresa-Gastaldo, ed./trans., *Gerolamo: Gli uomini illustri*; cf. T.P. Halton, trans., *Saint Jerome: On Illustrious Men*.
17 This passage is often cited in support of the notion that Pantaenus was one of the founders of the School of Alexandria, and, within the modern literature of the Coptic Orthodox Church, that the School was founded by St. Mark himself. Both propositions are highly unlikely, though Pantaenus's association with the ecclesiastical establishment in Alexandria – though not the School – is likely. On the School, see chapter three, note 10.
18 Latin *dispersa*; "scattered" due to the persecution that occurred a year earlier that claimed Leonides, Origen's father.
19 See Eusebius, *EH* 6.15 and 26.
20 See note 13, above.
21 R. Henry, ed./trans., *Photius, Bibliothèque*; cf. J.H. Freese, trans., *The Library of Photius*.
22 This was an anonymous abridgment of the *Apology for Origen* by Pamphius and Eusebius.
23 See note 22, above.
24 Gr.: φιλτάτους.
25 Here, "without permission" qualifies the ordination, not the trip to Athens.
26 This would support the commonly held view that two councils in Alexandria condemned Origen. Still, the account is peculiar. According to the first council, Origen was not allowed to teach or remain in Alexandria. Depriving him from teaching in the School of Alexandria is one thing, but ousting him from the city is another issue. In a pre-Constantinian context, the hierarchy would not have been in a position to officially exile anyone. (Perhaps they counted on the assistance of a friendly official.) Moreover, deciding that Origen should not teach, yet should retain his clerical rank, is odd. The second council is equally problematic. At the point it would have convened, Origen would have presumably left Alexandria. Yet, the council purportedly strips the ordination of a priest who was not ordained by Alexandrians and did not serve in their city. If at all historical, the decree of the council was purely ideological, and it would depict the vindictiveness with which Demetrius pursued Origen. What can be said with historical certainty is that Origen exercised the liturgical duties of a presbyter and continued to teach in Caesarea until his passing. If historical, then the decrees of the councils in Alexandria and that in Rome (see D, above) were completely ignored in Caesarea for two decades.

TEXT II

AN ENCOMIUM ON DEMETRIUS OF ALEXANDRIA

This translation is based on a rereading of BM Oriental 6783 (*fols.* 30v–39v) and a comparison with E. A. Wallis Budge's edition of that manuscript in *Coptic Martyrdoms I*.[1] Notwithstanding the few minor errors cited in the following notes, Budge's rendition of the Coptic text is thorough, and on several occasions he offers readings that are preferable to those in the manuscript. The English translation presented here is my own and deviates from Budge's reading at various passages throughout the encomium.

This translation adheres to the sixfold partition utilized throughout the study and in the subsequent translation of Demetrius's *sīrah* in the primitive recension of the *History of the Patriarchs*.[2]

(*fol. 30v*)

An Encomium
that our holy father Flavian,
the bishop of the city of Ephesus, preached concerning
Saint Demetrius, the Archbishop of Alexandria, on the day of his
honorable commemoration, which is the twenty-fifth of the month
of Thūt;[3] he also spoke concerning the marvels that God performed at
his hands.[4] In this same encomium, he spoke concerning the holy
saint, martyr, and virgin, apa Peter the Archbishop of this same
city of Alexandria. [He also spoke] concerning the holy
female martyr from the city of Antioch and[5] her two
sons, Philopater and Eutropius. Moreover, he spoke
concerning the compunction of the soul, and the
passage written in [the book of] Jeremiah the
prophet, "On that day, I will establish
a righteous dawn over the
house of David"[6] In the
peace of God.
Amen.

Proemium

Now the[7] occasion stirs me to move the instrument of my stammering tongue and my feeble mouth (*fol. 31r*) to proclaim together with David, the psalmist and hymnist, to God saying, "You visited the earth and saturated it, you abundantly enriched it; God has filled the river with water. You prepared its nourishment."[8] For such is our disposition indeed. [God] visited the earth, saturated it, and he abundantly enriched it. If indeed material wine [brings] joy to humanity, that from which the more they drink the more they become intoxicated and dissolute, then how much more is the joy and delight of those who drink from the spring of living water: Christ![9] And if that land rejoices when the rain of heaven comes upon it, how much more is the joy and delight of [the faithful] at the moment when spiritual rain[10] comes upon the wool of the spiritual [sheep].[11] The visible rain brings forth physical, fleshy fruit,[12] and this spiritual rain, when it comes down upon earth, causes people to bring forth spiritual fruit.

Now then, what kind of fruits are those? Listen, I will tell you. Only do not doubt [the marvels] or grumble [in disbelief at what I say]. (*fol. 31v*) A single assembly has been closed; I speak of the Synagogue of the Jews.[13] Yet it was not called[14] "the Church of the Spirit,"[15] for this very reason it was closed by the one who was raised from among the dead and sat at the right hand of his Father.[16] He became human at his [Father's] command,[17] gracing[18] us with thousands of thousands and ten thousands of ten thousands of [blessings] through his holy blood, which he poured out on our behalf.[19] Now, the fruits that I had spoken of earlier are these: self-control,[20] purity, virginity, compassion, peace, hope, gentleness, obedience, and the [other virtues] that accompany them.[21] These are the things the spiritual field brings forth because of the spiritual rain that comes down upon it.

Now the occasion prompts me to say with the prophet and lawgiver Moses, "Let us sing to the Lord, for gloriously he was glorified."[22] If [the Israelites][23] who saw their enemies die in the sea marveled, then why should I not marvel when I see the one who died for us, (*fol. 32r*) and was resurrected so as to humble the Proud One?[24]

Come now as I move the instrument of my tongue to proclaim a few of the honors of this saint, in whose holy name we are gathered [today]. He was a father who loved his children, a shepherd who tended [his flock] well. He was clothed with the foundational virtues: virginity and holy marriage.

Nonetheless, perhaps someone would say to me, "It's not possible for a man to remain a virgin after marriage." Let that one listen! I will provide that person[25] with proof from the Holy Scriptures. I say together with our Savior that "there are some who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven."[26] For eunuchs who were "born from their mothers" as eunuchs, are simply called "eunuch,"[27] but as for the one who will make himself a eunuch, who will be able to speak of his strength? For if

David had killed Goliath while bearing weapons, he would not be praised so much, would he? But when he killed him (*fol. 32v*) without shield or spear,[28] were there not triumphal celebrations as is customary among all mortals?[29] So too, then, when the man who is born a eunuch strives [for chastity], it is counted for him [as something] not needing strength in the way that it does of the one who strives while having [all] his members.[30] Indeed, for while David may have slain lion and bear once, twice, or even three times,[31] Demetrius the archbishop has, nonetheless, killed his passions daily.[32]

The one who fights with wild animals is not as mighty as the one who fights the passions. If wild beasts devour an individual, they would not attack [that person] again, but lust, my beloved,[33] will remain in the heart, relentlessly attacking the individual daily until it destroys and takes him over.[34] The wise ascetics[35] knew this, and because of this very reason they fled into the desert. Nevertheless, let us return to the discourse about this saint.

Background and election

Now we will tell you about his virtues and his might. (*fol. 33r*) Saint Demetrius, as I was saying, hailed from a prominent, established,[36] and celebrated [family] in the city of Alexandria. After the holy Julian, the archbishop of Alexandria, died, the throne of Alexandria remained without a bishop for many days. No one sat upon the throne of the archbishopric[37] because of the reign of impious, idol-worshiping emperors who waged a great persecution upon the church. The people became as sheep without a shepherd at that time.[38] Then, by the will of God and the vote[39] of the whole congregation, they seized a new Joseph – I am speaking of Saint Demetrius. Then, they seated him upon the throne of Saint Mark the Evangelist.

Perhaps, however, you who are listening might say to me, "You may compare this saint to Joseph, [but] do not compare the wife of this holy and gentle man to that obscene woman who had evil intentions for the saintly Joseph." – I am speaking about the Egyptian woman, [Potiphar's wife].[40] No, (*fol. 33v*) by no means! Forgive me, Christ-loving people. For if Joseph had slept with the Egyptian woman, it would have been considered a sin for him; he would have committed adultery. For this very reason, he kept his body pure before the God who created him. But the saintly Demetrius, on the other hand, if he had slept with his wife, it would not have been considered a sin for him; they were joined together before God.[41] Moreover, no doubt, you will say that a bishop ought not to take a wife.[42] Do not speak in this manner, brothers and sisters![43] In fact, the holy *Canons of the Apostles* state that it is permissible. For if a leader[44] had a wife with him before he became a bishop, he may not leave her afterwards,[45] when he becomes a bishop. Rather, let him remain with her.[46] [Furthermore,] the holy apostle said, "Marriage is honorable in all aspects, and the [marital] bed is pure, [but] God will judge fornicators and adulterers."[47]

Spiritual discernment and discontent in Alexandria

Now, this saint (*fol. 34r*) was elevated, as we have said, when he was seated upon the throne of the episcopate. [. . .] [48] [We might inquire as to] what sort of individual this was to whom [Demetrius] would not give [communion]. Rather, he would say, "My child, go, repent[49] from whatever sin you are committing, then I [will allow you to] receive from the holy mysteries."[50] He persisted in this manner [until] the whole city avoided sins – even ceased sinning altogether. It was to the point that if someone saw another sinning, he would reproach the sinner saying, "Repent[51] from this matter before the archbishop turns you away while the congregation looks on." That person would become fearful and stop sinning. For this reason, many[52] ceased sinning.

Nevertheless, many busybodies would say, "Isn't it true that he has his wife [living with him], while he rebukes [others] in this manner?"[53] And all took offense and complained about him because no one sat upon the throne of the archbishopric after Saint Mark (*fol. 34v*) the Evangelist except virgins. Yet, some who understand the scriptures said to those who said such things, "Marriage is wholly honorable, and the [matrimonial] bed is pure;[54] it was God who established it.[55] Why then are you complaining about the archbishop?" Still, they could not persuade those who said that he is the twelfth[56] to sit on the throne of the archbishopric, but except for him alone, none had a wife.

Now it was God, himself, the Good, who did not want the name of the saint to remain hidden, but he wanted to reveal it and to receive glory from it, as it is stated in the Gospel, "They do not light a lamp and place it under a basket, but it is placed upon a lampstand that it may shine to all those in the house."[57] Thus, he revealed the matter of the archbishop.

One night, while [Demetrius] slept, an angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "Demetrius! Demetrius! Do not seek after what is good for you alone, but seek after [what is good] for your neighbor as well.[58] Remember what the Lord said in (*fol. 35r*) the Gospel, "The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep."[59]

The holy Demetrius answered the angel, "What is it my lord?" Or, "What do you demand of me? You are sending me to martyrdom, aren't you?[60] I am prepared to shed my blood for the name of my Lord Jesus Christ." The angel replied, "Listen to me, Demetrius, Christ became human[61] because he loved us and, moreover, to save his people. Now then, is it proper that you scandalize the people God has appointed to you?"[62] The archbishop said to the angel, "My lord, tell me of my sin that I may repent."[63] The angel said to him, "The secret[64] that you share with your wife, reveal it to the whole congregation." Demetrius replied, "I plead with you, my lord, let me die before you [now], only do not reveal this [secret] or allow anyone to know it."[65] The angel said to him, "Demetrius, you know full well what is written, 'The disobedient will perish.'[66] Therefore, early (*fol. 35v*) in the morning,

after you complete the liturgy,[67] gather all the clergy and your *philoponoi*[68] and tell them about the secret you share with your wife." After the angel said these things to him, he vanished from his sight.

The ordeal of coals

When the morning came, it was the day of the holy [Feast] of Pentecost. The archbishop celebrated the Eucharist[69] of that day,[70] and explained[71] [the scriptures] to the congregation by his holy mouth. Then, after receiving from the holy mysteries and concluding the liturgy, the archbishop instructed[72] the archdeacon not to allow anyone from the congregation to leave, but to gather them in the assembly hall,[73] saying, "It is the archbishop who commands that none of you may leave, saying 'I have a word to say to you.' "

When they were seated in the assembly hall, the archbishop instructed [some individuals] to gather a large amount of wood and to bring a flame, (*fol. 36r*) and he set the wood on fire. The people marveled, asking what is the meaning of this? Then the Pope[74] said, "Rise to pray,"[75] and after they prayed, they sat down. The Pope then said to them, "I call upon your kindness[76] to allow your servant, my wife, to come to enjoy your blessing." As for them, they marveled, and said, "Whatever you wish, our father, let it be." The archbishop then called for one of his servants and said to him, "Go, call upon the servant of these saints, my wife."

Now when the holy woman heard, she came to the middle of the assembly.[77] Then the archbishop stood up, while they were all watching him, and he stood over[78] the coals engulfed in flames. He stretched out his liturgical vestment,[79] and picked up some burning coals with his hands and tossed them onto his vestment. Now all those seated[80] in the assembly hall marveled at the amount of coals and that his vestment did not burn. Then he said to his wife, "Stretch out your robe[81] (*fol. 36v*) and tunic." Then the saint transferred coals to her garment as she remained standing next to him in the middle [of the congregation], and the fire did not burn her or her clothing. The archbishop said a second time, "Let us pray," while the scorching coals remained in her garment without burning it.

Listen, my beloved, you who were perplexed[82] [earlier] when I said that if a man made himself a eunuch, he would be more honorable than the one who was born a eunuch. It was because of this very reason that these saints were not burned; for they had extinguished the flame of the fire of lust.[83] Therefore do not dismiss this adage any longer. [Now] let us return and complete the account for the glory of God.

Early life and marriage

After they prayed and sat down, the clergy said to the archbishop, "We implore you and your saintly [wife][84] to explain this sign[85] you have

performed; for we are all puzzled by this matter." He said to them, "Listen to me as I explain, for I did not do this seeking after human glory.[86] As for me, today I am sixty years old and the woman you see [before you], she is almost fifty-one. Her father died while she was young, (*fol. 37r*) then her uncle,[87] who is my father, brought her in [to live] with us. For the girl was an only child, like me, for I, too, was an only child. They raised us together in the same home."[88]

"When I turned fifteen years old, our parents wanted to unite me with her [in marriage],[89] though previously we [lived] as siblings with one another. [They sought to do this] because of the pride of this world,[90] and so that none of our inheritance might be squandered by a stranger who could come between us. Now, after [our parents] celebrated[91] our wedding according to social customs,[92] I was prompted to have relations with her.[93] But while we were in bed, she said to me, "My brother, can a brother marry [his] sister?"[94] I replied, "No." She said to me, "Why then were we given to each other; am I not your sister?"[95] I said to her, "If you listen to me, my sister, we will live in a place where we can never be separated from each another. For even if I were to marry you [in this world], I will be separated from you and you will be separated from me at death, but if we keep our bodies holy, in purity, we will not leave each other in the heavenly Jerusalem."[96] After she heard these words from me, we agreed with each other to keep our bodies (*fol. 37v*) as they were, without blemish.[97] Our parents did not know of the agreement, but they said to the guests in the hall,[98] who were awaiting the display of the proof of the virginity of the bride[99] – such, as you know, are the things people typically do – that "the children are young [and bashful]." The [guests], for their part, were persuaded by what our parents said, and with these words our parents ceased inquiring into our affairs."

"When our parents died, we remained with each other, and we became as orphans.[100] As for these three children who reside with us, it was God who placed them[101] [in our care.] [. . .][102] [We lived our whole life] with each other. A single blanket covered us both together, except at the time when the woman customarily separates from the man."[103]

"The Lord knows – that is, he who will judge the living and the dead,[104] who knows what is concealed in the heart[105] – that I have not known [her as] a woman, nor has she known me as a man, except by appearance only to each other. The union of the [conjugal] bed of this world, I have never known. Now then, whenever we slept next to each other, we would see a creature (*fol. 38r*) resembling a flying eagle that would come and blanket our bed. It would cover me with its right wing, and it would likewise cover her with its left wing. And daily at dawn, it would depart as we looked on."

"Do not think that I am seeking after human glory. No! Nor was it my intention to inform you of this [secret], had not he who desires good for all,[106] God who loves humanity,[107] commanded me."

After he said these things, [the congregants] prostrated themselves at his feet saying, "Indeed, our father, you are more glorious than the whole of creation!" After this, he instructed his wife to return to her place. Likewise, he prayed and dismissed the [congregants], so each one might return to his or her home in peace.

Peroration

Doesn't your heart move you when you hear of marvels such as this? Are you not amazed by this saint who spent his whole life with his wife practicing self-control (*fol. 38v*) with her?[108] Where are the [men] who, even now, are committing sin though they have their wives with them? Particularly those who proclaim, "We are Christians!" Let them come now, in their shame, to see their father Demetrius, the holy archbishop, say to them, "We didn't see[109] [any part of] each other, except for the face only." O grand judge,[110] the passion-fighter, Saint Demetrius! My father, wasn't your heart moved when you looked at your wife, who was beautiful in every way? Didn't the smoothness of her soft body disturb your thoughts because you were a youth, especially when you spoke with her in private?[111] Didn't the evil archer shoot arrows at you?[112]

"Indeed," he replied, "I am a man with a body like everyone else. Nonetheless, listen and I will tell you [how I overcame temptation]. Whenever my heart was moved with passion, I would recall the agreements I made with Christ, for if I transgressed them, he would have denied me before his Father and his (*fol. 39r*) holy angels as well.[113] Again, whenever I remembered the smoothness of her body, I would recall the ugliness of the body in the grave, and the misfortune it encounters. And we would not allow our mouths to utter provocative words,[114] since we feared the threat of the fire and flame of hell,[115] which is the realm of the dead.[116] And as those who dwell in it want to open their mouths entirely, they are unable to do so."[117]

I recall, God-loving assembly,[118] that at the beginning of the preamble[119] I stated that this saint is exceedingly holy and superior to the one who slays a lion or a bear. Indeed, someone among the philosophers said, "The one who slays a lion is not mighty, nor is the one who kills a panther strong, rather whoever dies while undefiled by the deceit of women, such an individual is mighty indeed." Now Joseph the patriarch lived in the house of the Egyptian woman, and to be perfectly clear, that impious woman was wicked and conversed[120] with him daily until she found an opportunity to [entice] him[, then his temptation ended], but you, Saint Demetrius, [your passions] fought against you daily through your thoughts.[121]

I want to speak with you at length and proclaim to you the virtues, wonders, and mighty deeds of this saint, but I know that (*fol. 39v*) his honor in heaven is before him who became human for us through the Virgin Mary.[122]

Indeed, you finished the race, you kept the faith,[123] and now you intercede for us where you are. Now, if I want to prolong [my] discourse with you, I would tell you of the marvels that God performed at the hands of this holy man, Demetrius, the holy archbishop, but I am mindful of the frailty and inadequacy of my meager words.[124]

Notes

1 The Saint Shenouda Coptic Society kindly provided a digital copy of that manuscript.
2 The translation is based on BM Oriental 6783 (*fols*. 30v–39v); cf. Budge, *Coptic Martyrdoms I*, Coptic, pgs. 137–48, English translation, pgs. 390–408.
3 Twenty-fifth of Thūt (6 October). Budge, "twenty"; but the Coptic is ϫογτ (ϫογτ-τ). This does not match any of Demetrius's commemorations in the Coptic-Arabic *Synaxarium*: Twelfth of Bābah (23 October), Tenth of Hatūr (20 November), Twelfth of Baramhāt (21 March); see Text VI and chapter four.
4 That portion, if it existed at all, is omitted from the extant manuscript of the encomium; see chapter two.
5 Budge, ⲙⲡ̄, should be amended to ⲙⲛ, as in the manuscript.
6 Cop. ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲉϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ϧⲛⲁⲧⲁϩⲟ ⲉⲣⲁⲧⲥ̄ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲛⲁⲧⲟⲗⲏ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉ ϩⲙ̄ ⲡⲙⲓ ⲛⲇ̄ⲇ̄ⲇ̄. Budge had identified the verse as a possible allusion to Jer. 21:12. It may be a corrupt version of that verse or, more likely, it is a reading of Jer. 23:5: ϩⲛ ⲛⲉϩⲟⲟⲩ ⲉⲧⲙ̄ⲛⲁⲩ ϧⲛⲁϥ ⲟⲩⲱ ⲛ̄ⲟⲩⲁⲛⲁⲧⲟⲗⲏ ⲙ̄ⲙⲉ ⲛⲇ̄ⲇ̄ⲇ̄, that is, "In those days, I will raise up for David a righteous dawn." For the Coptic version of the Book of Jeremiah, see Frank Feder, ed., *Biblia Sahidica: Ieremias, Lamentationes (Threni), Epistula Ieremiae et Baruch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2002).
7 In the manuscript, the initial pi "ϖ" is enlarged and two short words are circumscribed in the form of a cross in the midst of the arch of that letter: *phōs* (light) is vertical while *zōē* (life) is horizontal, and both words intersect at the omega; cf. Jn. 8:12.
8 Ps. 64:10 LXX = Ps. 65:9.
9 Jn. 4:14; also see Jn. 7:38; Rev. 7:17, 21:6, 22:1.
10 Budge, ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲓ ⲛϩⲱⲟⲩ, should be amended to ⲡⲛⲟⲩ ⲛϩⲱⲟⲩ as in the manuscript. Cf. λογικός, Lampe, 805b.
11 Cop. ⲉⲓ ⲉϧⲛ̄ ⲧⲥⲟⲣⲧ̄ ⲛ̄ⲛⲟⲏⲧⲏ (νοητός): "come upon the rational wool." Budge translates, "the grass of the mind." Cf. λογικός, Lampe, 805b.
12 Cop./Gr. σαρκικός; see J. Mark Sheridan's discussion in, *Rufus of Shotep: Homilies on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (Rome: C.I.M., 1998), 260; Lampe, 1222–23.
13 "Synagogue of the Jews," Acts 13:5; 14:1; 17:1, 10.
14 Budge, ⲉⲓⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ, should be amended to ⲉⲣⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ as the manuscript reads.
15 Cf. Acts 9:31, 20:28.
16 E.g. Acts 1:3, 2:24; Rom. 8:11, 10:9; 1 Cor. 15:12, 15; Col. 2:12. "At the right hand of the father," Acts 2:33; Col. 1:3; Eph. 1:20.
17 Jn. 1:14, 4:34, 5:30, 6:38.
18 Lit.: "opening."
19 Mt. 26:28; Mk. 14:24; Lk. 22:20; cf. Acts. 20:28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:12–14; Rev. 1:5, 5:9.
20 Cop./Gr. ⲉⲅⲕⲣⲁϧⲁ / ἐγκράτεια. Acts 24:25; Gal. 5:23; 2 Pet. 1:6.
21 Cf. Gal. 5:22–3.

22 This is Exodus 15:1, the beginning of the praise the Israelites sang after the miracle at the Red Sea. It is the First Praise (*hōs*) of the Coptic midnight *ibsalmudiya*, which is comprised of four praises that are prayed each time along with that day's praise of the Virgin, which focuses on her role in the incarnation – the *thu'ūtūkiya*, and its commentary, the *lubsh*.
23 Lit.: "those."
24 Cf. Phil. 2:8–10, Heb. 2:14–5, Jas. 4:6, and 1 Pet. 5:5 (cf. 1 Jn. 3:8). The "Proud One" here is likely a reference to Satan; see Is. 14:12–5, 1 Tim. 3:6.
25 Lit.: "him."
26 Mt. 19:12.
27 Cf. P. Brown, *Body and Society*, 169, 268.
28 See 1 Sam. 17.
29 Cop./Gr. ⲛ̄ⲉⲡⲓⲛⲓⲕⲓⲟⲛ (ἐπινίκιον). More literally, "as is the manner with all mortals, were there not triumphal celebrations?"
30 I am very thankful to Prof. Janet Timbie for her reading of this paragraph, much of which I have adopted here.
31 1 Sam. 17:34, 37.
32 Cop./Gr. ⲡⲁⲑⲟⲥ, "passion," includes physical lust (referred to above as ϩⲩⲇⲟⲛⲏ / ἡδονή), but it encompasses several other vices and theological nuances as well; see Lampe, 992–95, esp. 992–93.
33 Cop. ⲡⲣⲱⲙⲉ.
34 Cop. ⲛⲉⲥⲁⲩϫⲁⲛⲉ (αὐξάνειν) ⲛ̄ϩⲛⲧϥ; lit.: "increases/spreads in him," "grow."
35 For ἐγκρατής as "ascetic," see Lampe, 403b; Sophocles, 417a.
36 Cop. /Gr. ⲡⲣⲉⲥⲃⲩⲧⲉⲣⲟⲥ; "venerable" is also a possible translation. "Priestly" is also possible, but nothing in the corpus indicates that Demetrius came from a line of Alexandrian priests.
37 Cop. ⲡⲉⲑⲣⲟⲛⲟⲥ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙ̄ⲛ̄ⲧⲁⲣⲭⲏⲉⲡⲓⲥⲕⲟⲡⲟⲥ.
38 Cf. Mt. 9:26; Mk. 6:24.
39 Cop./Gr. ⲧⲉⲯⲩⲫⲟⲥ / ψῆφος. See chapter four, above.
40 See Gen. 39.
41 Cop. ⲛⲧⲁⲩⲱⲟⲛⲃⲟⲩ ⲙⲙ̄ⲛ̄ ⲛⲉⲩⲉⲣⲏⲩ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ϩⲓⲧⲙ̄ ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ is an intentional echo of Mt. 19:6, which uses the same verb ⲱⲟⲛⲃ (ⲱⲟⲛϥ), "to unite," "to join." This is the only attestation for this verb in the Sahidic New Testament.
42 See *fol.* 34v, below; cf. chapter five, note 24 and the discussion at that note. Budge, ⲛⲉⲱⲱⲉ ⲛⲉ ⲣⲟϥ ⲉⲭⲓ ϲϩⲓⲛⲉ, should be amended to read, [ⲛ]ⲱⲱⲉ ⲁⲛ ⲉⲣⲟϥ ⲉⲭⲓ ϲϩⲓⲛⲉ, as in the manuscript.
43 Lit.: "brother."
44 Cop. ⲁⲡⲉ (lit. "head"), in this context, is typically something of a formal title; e.g. the elected village headman, or the head of a monastery. Also "magistrate," or "chief"; Crum, 13b–14a.
45 Cop. ⲙ̄ⲙⲫⲉⲱⲙⲟϫϲ̄ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ, literally, "may not set her aside," which may also be read as, "may not divorce her."
46 *Canons of the Apostles*, § 16 and *Canon 5* (Tattam, *Apostolical Constitutions*, 18, 176).
47 Heb. 13:4.
48 A passage of indeterminate length is lacking here. The text of the manuscript is contiguous and clear, but there is an obvious disconnect between the previous sentence and the next, which lacks a grammatical theme. Compare this same passage to its counterpart in the HP: see Text III.
49 Lit.: "withdraw," or "leave." The expression is used here as a synonym for μετάνοια.

50 On "receiving" (ⲭⲓ) rather than "taking" from the mysteries, see Robert F. Taft, "Byzantine Communion Rites I: The Early Ritual of Clergy Communion," Orientalia Christiana Periodica 65 (1999), 307–45; idem., "Byzantine Communion Rites II: Later Formulas and Rubrics in the Ritual of Clergy Communion," Orientalia Christiana Periodica 67 (2001), 275–352.
51 See note 49, above.
52 Budge, ϩⲁϩ, should be amended to read ⲁϩⲁϩ, as in the manuscript.
53 Lit.: "while he speaks these words thus." On this passage, see the discussion in chapter five at note 24.
54 Cf. Heb. 13:4.
55 Gen. 2:24; Mal. 2:14; Mt. 19:6–9.
56 This likely indicates a late date of composition. Throughout the patristic era, the typical enumeration reckoned bishops "after the apostles" (cf. Eusebius, *EH* 5:22; Eusebius/Jerome's *Chronicle*, Year of Abraham 2205 and 2247; see Text I; cf. Text III at note 8). The founding apostle was not enumerated, only successors. (Apostles are not bishops, but had far greater authority and jurisdiction.) The enumeration that includes the apostles – hence Demetrius is reckoned here as the twelfth – is later, appearing routinely in Arabic texts.
57 Mt. 5:15; Mk. 4:21; Lk. 11:33.
58 Lev. 19:18/Mt. 5:43; Mt. 19:19; 22:39; Mk. 12:31–3; Lk. 10:27; Rom. 13:8–10; 15:2; Gal. 5:14; Jas. 2:8.
59 Jn. 10:11.
60 Angels often appeared to martyrs, exhorting them before or during their tortures.
61 Cop. ⲣ̄ⲣⲱⲙⲉ. Here, the term is likely used as a synonym for "incarnate," ⲭⲓ ⲥⲁⲣⲝ.
62 Cf. Mt. 18:6; Mk. 9:42; Lk. 17:2; 1 Cor. 8:13.
63 See note 49, above.
64 Cop./Gr. ⲙⲩⲥⲧⲏⲣⲓⲟⲛ; translated here as "secret" and "mystery/sacrament." The Arabic HP employs *sirr*, which likewise carries both connotations (see Text III, note 17).
65 More literally, "not only let this not be nor let any man know of it."
66 See Deut. 28:15–68, especially verse 20; cf. Ps. 37:38; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; 1 Thess. 1:8–9; Heb. 11:31.
67 Cop./Gr. ⲥⲩⲛⲁⲝⲓⲥ.
68 Cop./Gr. ⲛⲉⲫⲩⲗⲟⲡⲟⲛⲟⲥ / φιλόπονος. The term designated several groups in patristic literature. Lampe (1480a) glosses the term as designating a group of lay members who carried out certain duties in church. See also Christopher Haas, *Alexandria in Late Antiquity: Topography and Social Conflict* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 229–40; Frank R. Trombley, *Hellenic Religion and Christianization: c. 370–529*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2001), 2: ch. 5.
69 Cop./Gr. ⲉⲓⲣⲉ ⲛ̄ⲟ̄ⲩⲕⲁⲑⲟⲗⲓⲕⲏ ⲥⲩⲛⲁⲝⲓⲥ / σύναξις καθολικὴ. On this term, see Ewa Wipszycka, *Études sur le christianisme dans l'Égypte de l'antiquité tardive*, Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum 52 (Rome: Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, 1996), 168–69, n. 18; H. Brakmann, "Σύναξις καθολική in Alexandreia Zur Verbreitung des christlichen Stationsgottesdienstes," *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 30 (1987), 74–89.
70 "Of that day" may indicate that the liturgy of that feast had a specific rite. In general, the celebration of Pentecost as a specific liturgical rite dates to the late fourth century; see Thomas J. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 2nd ed. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), part 1, ch. 13; Paul F. Bradshaw and Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Origins of Feasts, Fasts and Seasons in Early Christianity* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2011), ch. 8.

71 Cop./Gr. ⲉϫⲏⲡⲉⲥⲑⲁⲓ / ἐξηγεῖσθαι.
72 Cop./Gr. ⲕⲉⲗⲉⲩⲉ / κελευεῖν; the liturgical nuance of the following passage may have started here; see Lampe, 741a.
73 Cop./Gr. ⲡⲥⲩⲛϩⲉⲇⲣⲓⲟⲛ / συνέδριον, here, and in the following sentences, indicates a meeting place distinct from the church proper (see Lampe, 1315a). As discussed in chapter five, in Arabic sources the ordeal is positioned within the church rather than this meeting hall, which, the context suggests, was a distinct space.
74 Cop./Gr. ⲡⲁⲡⲁⲥ, "father." The earliest attestation is to Heraclas, Demetrius's successor. The reference is by Dionysius of Alexandria (248–64 CE) who referred to Heraclas, his predecessor, as *papas* (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 7.7; Eutychius, *Nazm*, CSCO 50, pg. 104). The term was used once at the end of the fourth century for the Rome Pontiff, but it was not used consistently in Rome until the sixth century. It may have been that the title was first applied to Heraclas while he was the head of the School of Alexandria and that it was retained when he became bishop; cf. A. van den Hoek, "The 'Catechetical' School," 64 and note 24.
75 This is a liturgical instruction.
76 Cop./Gr. ⲁⲅⲁⲡⲏ.
77 Lit.: "brothers."
78 Cop. ϩⲓϫⲛ̄; cf. this passage in *Synaxarium*, 12th Baramhāt; Text VI.
79 The phailonion; Cop./Gr. ⲫⲓⲗⲟⲛⲓⲟⲛ (φαιλόνιον – 2 Tim. 4:13: ⲫⲁⲓⲛⲟ̀ⲗⲓⲟⲛ < Lat. *paenula*; Ar. *burnus*; cf. Gr. κουκούλ[λ]ιον). This may designate a "cloak," "robe," or the outermost liturgical garment worn by an eastern bishop or priest. It is similar to the chasuble worn in the Latin west; see Herbert Norris, *Church Vestments: Their Origin and Development* (New York: Dover Publications 2002). It is not certain whether the reference here designates a liturgical vestment, which I believe is likely, or if it simply designates a plain "cloak" or "robe." Some later Arabic versions of this account unambiguously read the references as designating a liturgical vestment.
80 Lit.: "All the brothers seated."
81 Cop. ⲡⲟⲩⲫⲓⲗⲱⲛⲓⲟⲛ ⲙⲛ̄ ⲡⲟⲩⲣ̄ⲯⲱⲙ. Here, φαιλόνιον indicates a cloak (see note 79, above). The altered spelling (with the omega) betrays the scribe's intention to make a distinction, and in the remainder of the account, the woman's garment is simply referred to as an ⲣ̄ⲯⲱⲙ. Since she had come from another location and had never been blessed or ordained to any rank, there is no reason to suppose that she too wore a liturgical vestment like her husband.
82 Lit.: "who marveled at me."
83 Cf. 1 Cor. 7:9.
84 Cop. ⲧⲡⲉⲧⲟⲩⲁⲁⲃ.
85 Cop./Gr. ⲧⲩⲡⲟⲥ /τύπος. The term indicates a symbol or type that stands for, or points to, a deeper truth or reality; see J.M. Sheridan, *Rufus of Shotep*, 257–59; Lampe, 1418–20.
86 Jn. 5:41–4; 12:43; 1 Thess. 2:6.
87 Lit.: "the brother of her father."
88 Lit.: "same place/location."
89 Cop. ϩⲟⲧⲣ̄ⲧ ⲙⲛ̄ⲛⲁⲥ. On the issue of the age of the young couple, see chapter seven at the section titled, "Early Life and Marriage."
90 Cf. 1 Jn. 2:16; Eph. 2:2.
91 Cop. ⲛⲧⲉⲣⲟⲩⲣ̄ ⲧⲛ̄ⲯⲉⲗⲉⲉⲧ ⲇⲉ.
92 Lit.: "that which is appropriate by human [standards]."
93 Lit.: "enter her."

94 The question begins with ⲙⲏ / μή. Also, "Surely a brother may not marry a sister."
95 It is not clear if her words were rhetorical, or meant to emphasize just how young she was when she was taken in by her uncle.
96 Cf. Gal. 4:26; Heb. 11:10, 16; 12:22; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10.
97 This may also be translated as "undefiled" or "blameless." The Greek ἄμωμος (e.g. Eph. 5:27) is typically rendered ⲁⲧⲧⲱⲗⲏ̄ in the Sahidic New Testament.
98 Cop./Gr. ⲡⲛⲩⲙⲫⲱⲛ / νυμφών; typically, "bridal-chamber," but clearly that is not the intended space here.
99 Cop. ⲡⲉⲥⲛⲟⲧ ⲛ̄ⲧⲙⲛ̄ⲧⲣⲟⲟⲩⲛⲉ ⲛ̄ⲧⲯⲉⲗⲉⲉⲧ.
100 "As orphans," maintaining the sibling analogy.
101 Budge, ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲛⲧⲁϥⲧⲟⲯⲟⲩ, should be amended to ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲡⲉⲛⲧⲁϥⲧⲟⲯⲟⲩ as in the manuscript.
102 There is a missing passage of indeterminate length here. As is, this passage cannot be read as a single sentence. It begins by accounting for three children that lived with Demetrius and his wife, which people must have assumed were their offspring. Then it proceeds to discuss how Demetrius and his wife – the "both of them" – conducted themselves in the privacy of their bedroom. Cf. this passage in Text III and note 40 and the discussion in chapter four.
103 This is possibly a reference to the menstrual cycle, which would present interesting evidence for the influence of Jewish practice on medieval Copts. Less likely, given Demetrius's spiritual marriage, is the possibility that the reference is to the days in which medieval canon law forbade sexual intercourse, such as on the days of fasting and the week of Pascha.
104 Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5.
105 Cf. 1 Cor. 4:5, 14:25; also Ps. 44:21; Jer. 17:10; Mt. 9:4; Mk. 2:8; Lk. 16:15; Heb. 4:13.
106 Lit.: "what is of benefit." See for example Jer. 29:11; Jn. 10:10; 1 Tim. 4:2, 6:17.
107 Cop. ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲧⲉ ⲡⲛⲁⲓⲣⲱⲛⲉ.
108 "Control" here is Cop./Gr. ⲉⲅⲕⲣⲁⲧⲉⲩⲉ / ἐγκρατεῖν. The implicit reference is to 1 Cor. 7:9: "But if they are not practicing self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to be aflame with passion." Here, although Demetrius was married, he nonetheless practiced *enkrateia*.
109 Lit.: "know."
110 Cop./Gr. ⲡⲁⲅⲱⲛⲟⲑⲉⲧⲏⲥ / ἀγωνοθέτης, is a "president or judge in a contest" (Lampe, 26b). In the classical period, this was the judge of the ancient Olympic games.
111 Lit.: "with no one around." The erotic language is intentional; these questions could have been easily posed without the details. On eroticism in hagiographic literature, the starting points are Peter Brown's *The Body and Society* and Virgina Burrus's *The Sex Lives of the Saints* and *Saving Shame: Martyrs, Saints, and Other Abject Subjects* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).
112 Eph. 6:6.
113 Mt. 10:33; Mk. 8:38; Lk. 9:26, 12:9; cf. 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:5.
114 Lit.: "strange words."
115 Gehenna. For fire of hell, see Is. 66.44; Mt. 3:12; Mk. 9:48; Lk. 3:17.
116 Lit.: "Hades."
117 This may be a reference to Lk. 16:24–5 or, more likely, the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* 13:5–6; see Robert Henry Charles, ed., *The Apocrypha and*

Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913).

118 Cop./Gr. ⲡⲥⲩⲛϩⲉⲇⲣⲓⲟⲛ / συνέδριον.

119 Cop./Gr. ⲡⲉⲡⲣⲟϩⲟⲓⲙⲓⲟⲛ / ϖροοίμιον. On the term, see Boris Maslov, "The Real Life of the Genre of *Prooimion*," *Classical Philology* 107.3 (2012), 191–205.

120 Cop./Gr. ϩⲟⲙⲟⲓⲗⲉ / ὁμιλεῖν.

121 Cop./Gr. ⲗⲟⲅⲓⲥⲙⲟⲥ / λογισμός. In monastic literature, the term often has the connotation of "tempting thought," which seems appropriate here.

122 This is a paraphrase of a clause in the Nicean-Constantinopolitan Creed.

123 2 Tim. 4:7.

124 No specific miracles are mentioned in any other text; see note 4, above. The remainder of the encomium has no bearing on Demetrius's biography.

TEXT III

SĪRAT (BIOGRAPHY OF) DEMETRIUS OF ALEXANDRIA

Primitive recension

This is the first translation of the primitive recension of Demetrius's biography into any western language. As discussed in chapters two and seven, the *sīrah* (biography) was fashioned by joining two tracts, which are annotated with distinct concluding remarks. In general, the Arabic text of HP-P is brimming with orthographic and grammatical anomalies that demand a slow, judicious reading.

Part One of the *Life*, which reflects an Arabic recension of the *Encomium on Demetrius*, replicates the same sixfold division employed to analyze the *Enc-Dem* in the earlier chapters and in Text II. Part Two's dependence on Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* is unmistakable, though the results are often flawed. The in-text references to the *EH* and the accompanying footnotes delineate the seams of this biography. Still, some parts of its chronology are outlandish. Moreover, it must be noted that the references to the *EH* seldom indicate an exact correlation. Typically, the HP-P presents a terse summary of the parallel passage in the *EH* and, on occasion, it presents a rather thorough reworking of that account.

The Twelfth Biography[1]

Patriarch Demetrius

Part One

(cf. *Encomium on Demetrius; Synaxarium*, 10th Tūbah and 12th Baramhāt)

Proemium [omitted in the HP]

Background and election

[14] When Patriarch[2] Julian was reposed – though another recension[3] [reads]: the angel came to [Julian] on the night of his passing and said to him, "The one who will come to you tomorrow with a cluster of grapes[4]

will succeed you as patriarch." [The following morning,] Demetrius came to [Julian]; he was a peasant,[5] who could neither read nor write. When he had gone out to prune his vineyard, he found a cluster of grapes and brought it to [Julian]. [Upon seeing him,] Patriarch Julian [seized Demetrius, and he] addressed the congregation before his death, "This is your patriarch, for so the angel has instructed me." They took him against his will, bound him with iron fetters, and on that day they ordained Demetrius [patriarch of Alexandria], and divine grace was perfected in him.

He resembled Joseph son of Jacob because he was married,[6] and he surpassed Joseph because even though he was married, he did not know his wife. Nonetheless, someone asked, "How could a patriarch be married?" [Hear then,] for the disciples had stated in the *Canons* that a bishop married to one wife is blameless.[7] Still, the majority of the congregation said, "This is the twelfth patriarch after Saint Mark,[8] but all were unmarried except for him." Thus, they were aggrieved.

Spiritual discernment and discontent in Alexandria

[Demetrius] had a [spiritual] gift. When he celebrated a liturgy, before he dispensed communion to anyone from the congregation, he would see the Lord Christ present the oblation with his hand. If someone undeserving of the holy mysteries approached, the Lord Christ would reveal to [Demetrius] his sins. [Demetrius] would know his sins and reproach [the parishioner], and he would not offer communion to that individual, but would instruct him or her, "Repent[9] from the sin you are committing, then come and partake of [15] the holy mysteries." He did this for so long that the faithful in Alexandria would not sin, fearing that this patriarch would expose [their sins] and embarrass them.[10] Each of the faithful would say to his friend or relative, "Don't you dare sin, or the patriarch will expose [your sins] and embarrass you in front of the congregation."

Now, some would protest, "This is a married man! How dare he rebuke us when he is seated on this [patriarchal] throne,[11] which no one had occupied except celibate men?" But another group among the faithful[12] contended that marriage is holy and pure before God. Now, God desired to reveal his chosen one so he[13] may be praised. He did not keep this great [chosen] vessel hidden,[14] as he said by his divine mouth, "A city cannot be hidden upon a mountain."[15] Thus, he revealed [the virtue of] this patriarch.

On a certain night, a holy angel came to him, and said, "Demetrius! Do not seek after your salvation and neglect that of your neighbors. Remember what the Lord said in the Gospel, 'The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.' "[16] Demetrius responded to the angel, "What is [your command] my master? If you are directing me to martyrdom, I am prepared to shed my blood for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." The angel replied, "Listen to me, Demetrius, Christ took flesh to save his people. It is inappropriate for

you to save yourself alone and let the congregation harbor misgivings on your behalf." Demetrius asked, "What is my sin, my master? Let me know it that I may repent." The angel said, "This secret,[17] which is between you and your wife,[18] reveal it!" Then Demetrius said to the angel, "I ask you that I may die here before you, rather than let anyone know this [secret]." The angel said to him, "You know that the [Holy] Book states that the disobedient will perish.[19] Now then, tomorrow, after communion, gather the clergy and the congregation and inform them of this secret which is between you and your wife." When the patriarch heard this, he marveled, saying, "Blessed is the Lord who does not turn away those who rely on him."[20] Then the angel departed.

The ordeal of coals

On the following day, which was the Thursday of the Feast,[21] the patriarch celebrated the Eucharist and [he then] ordered the archdeacon to instruct the clergy and the congregation not to leave the church, but to gather around the [patriarchal] throne. [Hence,] the archdeacon addressed all the people, saying, "The patriarch says to all, 'I want to address you. No one may leave [before] hearing [what I have to say].'" Once they were seated, [Demetrius] instructed some of the congregants[22] to gather a large quantity of firewood; and they were baffled, pondering what the patriarch was doing. Then, the patriarch said, "Stand up, let us pray."[23] After they prayed and sat down, the patriarch said, "I ask of your charity that your maidservant, my wife, may come [16] and receive your blessings." Bewildered, they questioned in their hearts the nature of the request, but they responded, "We will do whatever you command." The patriarch then called one of his servants and instructed him, "Call upon my wife, the servant of the saints, to [come and] receive their blessing." The saintly woman came and stood in the midst of the congregation.[24] Then, in the sight of all, the patriarch rose up and stood over the blazing fire as it increased in intensity, he spread out his liturgical vestment[25] and took burning coals with his hand and placed them in it.[26] All were fixated by the large amount of burning coals in his tunic, though he remained unsinged. He then instructed his wife, "Spread out your woolen tunic."[27] She stretched it out, and the father, the saintly patriarch, emptied the burning coals onto it, as she stood still,[28] and the tunic was not burned. Again, the patriarch called out, "Rise, let us pray." Meanwhile, the coals remained lit in the woman's tunic but it was not burned.

You have now heard, my beloved, this great wonder. When an individual makes himself a eunuch by his own will, such an individual is more exalted than the one who was born a eunuch.[29] Because of this, this saint was not burned, nor was any part of his or her clothing, for he had extinguished the

flame of lust.[30] Now, let us abbreviate our words and return to the biography[31] and let us praise God forever.

Early life and marriage

After the clergy prayed, they said to the patriarch, "We ask your holiness to explain this mystery to us." He replied, "Let all of you listen. I have not done this seeking after human glory.[32] Today I am sixty-three years old.[33] My wife who is here before you, she is the daughter of my paternal uncle. Her parents died, leaving her as a child. Her uncle, that is my father, brought her to [live with] me.[34] [My father] did not have any [other children] except me, nor did his brother, that is my uncle, [have any other children] except her, and I grew up with her in the same house.

"When she turned fifteen, my father and mother wanted to marry me to her, intending for our inheritance not to be squandered. They conducted the wedding as customary, and instructed me to consummate the marriage.[35] But, once we were alone, she said to me, 'How could they have given me to you, when I am your sister?' I replied, 'Listen to me. We must remain in this place and never separate, but nothing should transpire between us until death separates us; for if we unite in purity [in this world], we will take comfort[36] in the heavenly Jerusalem[37] where each will have their fill of the other.' When she heard this from me, she dedicated her body to purity. My parents did not know of [the agreement] between us. [Meanwhile,] the wedding guests inquired about what has become customary in wedding [celebrations], as they learned from the deeds of vile people.[38] [But when the Proof of Virginity was not produced, our parents reasoned],[39] saying, 'These are youth, they have many days ahead of them still.' Thus, we remained as we were."

"Now, when my parents died and we became orphaned [. . .]."[40]

"It has been forty-eight years since I married her, and we sleep on the same bed, with the same linens, and the same covering over both of us. The Lord who knows [all things][41] [17] – the judge of the living and the dead,[42] who knows what is hidden in the heart[43] – he knows that I never gained [carnal] knowledge of her as a woman nor she of me as a man. We would see only each other's faces; we never gained knowledge of the [conjugal] bed of this world. Whenever we slept together, we would see a figure resembling an eagle that would come flying [into our room] and then settle on our bed, between me and her. It would then place its wings over us, the left wing over her and the right wing over me, until morning when it would vanish before our eyes."

"Do not suppose, Christ-loving congregation, that I revealed this [secret] to you seeking after the glory of this vain world. Nor do I inform you willingly, but this is a command I was given by the one who desires the salvation of all people;[44] that is, Christ the Savior." After he narrated this [account] to them, they all bowed their faces to the ground, saying, "Indeed, our father,

you are more exalted than the whole of creation."[45] After this, he instructed the woman to return to her home. He then prayed for the people, and each returned to his or her abode in peace.

Peroration

Were you amazed, listeners, when you heard of these wonders and envisioned them [before your eyes], and the dignity of this venerable saintly father, along with this woman, and [the extent of] his forbearance? Where are they now? Those who are married yet committed adultery, while [still] claiming, "I am a Christian!" – let them come now to hear their father, Saint Demetrius, the patriarch, as he says, "I have not seen [any part] of my wife except for her face only." Let them hear, be ashamed and humiliated. Behold, the Holy Father, the warrior, the slayer of thoughts. How wondrous! How was your heart not troubled when you beheld this fine, beautiful woman? How did your body remain unmoved by the softness of her body? How wondrous were your words with her when you were in seclusion? Were you not injured by the archer who strikes everyone; that is, the Evil One?[46]

[Patriarch Demetrius] said, "I am human, and I have a physical body like everyone else, but I will teach you the means [to overcome temptation]. Whenever my heart struck me with a vain thought, I remembered the agreement I made with Christ and that if I transgressed it, I feared that he would denounce me in heaven before the Father and his holy angels.[47] And if I noticed the beauty and softness of her body, I recalled the bodies that have decayed in the tombs with their putrid odors; thus, I keep myself from [engaging in] provocative conversations,[48] fearing the fire that cannot be quenched in the thereafter,[49] where no one can even open his mouth."[50]

My beloved, the courage of this exceptional father who is sincere in his struggle is more daring than that of a lion slayer. As some teachers have stated, "A brave individual is not [18] the one who slays a lion, but rather whoever dies while pure from a wife and the snares of women."[51] Blessed is this saint, for he has surpassed Joseph's virtue![52] For while [Joseph] was living in the house of the Egyptian woman, she could not constantly speak with him about her desires, but could only do so when she found an opportunity, but as for this [saint] he would slay his thoughts every day and night. Thus, he completed his[53] struggles and preserved his virginity and his orthodox faith.[54]

Postscript and first set of concluding remarks[55]

He remained patriarch for forty-three years.[56]

A disturbance had occurred in Alexandria, and Emperor Severus[57] exiled [Demetrius] to the city of Marsonia.[58] He was reposed there on the Twelfth of Bābah; we also celebrate him on the Twelfth of Baramhāt.[59]

Glory be to the Lord Jesus Christ, with honors and worship, along with the merciful Father, and the Holy Spirit, the Life-Giving, the consubstantial [Trinity], from now and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Another recension, [written] in the hand of Abū al-Bishr the Scribe,[60] may God rest his soul, at the Monastery of Nahya,[61] contains the rest of the biography of Father Demetrius.[62]

Part two

(cf. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical history*, 6.4–26; the *Synaxarium*'s entry for 12th Bābah)

Many were martyred in the days of this father on account of [their] love [for Christ]. Among them . . . [63] Now there was a man known as Origen who had learned the secular[64] sciences and refused [to follow] the books of God, and he began to refute them. When Father Demetrius learned that [Origen] did this, and saw that some among the congregation were beginning to be swayed by his lies, he separated[65] him from the church.[66]

EH 6.4As for the martyrs,[67] they were Heraclides, Plutarch, and Serenus; they were burned alive. As for Heraclides and Hero, they were beheaded by the sword, likewise the two women, Sīrīs[68] and Herais. *EH* 6.5Basilides, Potamiaena, and Marcella, their mother,[69] were afflicted with great pain and struggles,[70] [along with] another virgin named Aquila.[71] Basilides [who] was a soldier, voluntarily [divulged his faith], and when he was interrogated, he said, "I am a Christian because for over three days, when I sleep, a woman would appear to me and place a crown on my head for the sake of Christ." He received the crown of martyrdom. Likewise, a great multitude was martyred as the woman Potamiaena would appear to them in their sleep, urging them on to believe in the Lord Christ until they received the crown of martyrdom.

EH 6.6A man named Clement came to Alexandria to succeed Pantaneaus, and he brought with him a book he authored[72] in which he chronicled histories. *EH* 6.7Then there was a scribe named Judas who was proficient in [interpreting] the Vision of Daniel the Prophet, [which he correlated] with the tenth year of [the reign of] Emperor Severus. He calculated the dates and years until the time of the selection of the antichrist,[73] which, it was said, had [19] drawn near due to the actions of Emperor Severus, the enemy [of the church].

[cf. *EH* 6.8.1–6][74] When Origen, whom Demetrius had excommunicated[75] and banished, saw that he no longer had a share in the church,[76] – on account of his excommunication for doing what was inappropriate from the books of sorcery and refusing the books of the saints – he authored

numerous books containing many blasphemies, in which he wrote that the Father created the Son, and that the Son created the Holy Spirit. [Nor] did he state that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were one God, or that the Trinity is not lacking anything, but is a single Power and a single Lordship.[77] For this, the church rejected him, as a stranger to her, not [recognizing him as] one of her children, on account of his polluted writings. When he was banished from her and lost his position,[78] he left Alexandria and went to Palestine where he schemed until he attained the rank of the priesthood and was ordained a priest at the hand of the Bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. He then returned to Alexandria believing that his priesthood would be recognized and that his demands would be met. But the saintly father Demetrius refused to accept him, and he said to him, "The canon of the fathers the apostles stipulates that a priest must [not depart] from the altar he was ordained over.[79] Go to the place where you were ordained a priest, and serve in it with humility according to the canon, for I will not disregard a canon of the church for the sake of human glory." Thus he remained banished. This was before the Father, Patriarch Demetrius, [even] learned of his blasphemies and apostasy.[80] [Origen] became a disgrace before all people, for he dared to make himself a teacher, though he was not worthy of being a student.

EH 6.8.7Severus remained emperor for eighteen years, and then he died. His son Antoninus[81] ruled after him. At that time a group, mighty through the Lord Jesus Christ, appeared through the providence of God, one of whom was named Alexander the Confessor who was the Bishop of Jerusalem after Narcissus, *EH* 6.9who[82] performed many miracles during his life. [Once,] when the church lacked oil for lighting the lamps, [Narcissus] ordered the [attendants] to fill the lamps with water, and this was on Good Friday.[83] Then he prayed, and all the water turned into oil and the lamps were filled[84] several times because of his faith in the Lord Christ. Everyone attributed this [miracle] to him, and we learned of his deeds through five godly individuals.[85]

EH 6.9.4A group resented [Narcissus] due to their evil [deeds] and they sought to kill him. They swore that he committed deplorable acts, and they made him out to be a liar. [cf. *EH* 6.9.5]Now, as one [of his accusers] was lighting a fire, a spark fell on his belly[86] and he died. Another, his body began to break down, and another became blind. And the congregation learned of their lies, when on account of the holiness of the bishop, [cf. *EH* 6.9.7] the Divine Eye, which sees everything, punished the hypocrites for their evil accusations and their deceitful faith. The first died, along with his whole [20] household, by fire that fell upon [his home]. Another was afflicted with a great burning pain from his head to his feet. Now, the [third conspirator] began to flee when he learned

what had transpired [to his acquaintances], but God caught up to him and immediately blinded him. Now the one who was blinded began to confess before everyone about the evil deed he had committed against the saint.[87] He was remorseful and regretted [his actions], and wept on account of losing his sight.[88]

EH 6.10As for Narcissus, he disappeared into the wilderness and no one knew his location for a long time.[89] Now, necessity mandated, on account of the vacancy of the churches over which [Narcissus] was bishop, that they ordain an individual to succeed him named Dius, but he did not remain but for a short while, and then he died. And another was ordained in his place named Germanion. Afterwards, the venerable father Narcissus [re]appeared, similar to one who had risen from the dead. They pleaded with him to return to his people, and they greatly rejoiced [at his return]. He had dedicated himself to [the pursuit of] wisdom and the grace which God bestowed upon him, *EH* 6.11but he did not return to service on account of his advanced age.

As for Alexander, who was previously mentioned,[90] he was over another diocese[91] for twelve years. He learned through a vision from God that he should help Narcissus – who had been glorified by God; [Alexander had the vision while he was] in Cappadocia, for he had previously been ordained there. [cf. *EH* 6.11.2][Alexander] then came to Jerusalem to pray and visit the holy churches, which he had desired to see, and he visited all of them. When he set out to return to Cappadocia, his country, however, the faithful[92] prevented him. Then, he learned in his sleep, [through another revelation, that he was to remain in Jerusalem.][93] And they all heard a voice in church saying, "Go out to the gate and the first man who enters through it, receive him, and ordain him a bishop." They did this in the presence of a group of bishops from [the dioceses surrounding] Jerusalem, and [the voice][94] commanded them to be of one mind and accord. They went out [to the gate] and found Alexander. They cleaved to him, but he refused saying, "I will not do this," but they compelled him by force. [cf. *EH* 6.11.3]Then Alexander recalled the letter that he had sent to Anṣinā,[95] in which he mentioned that he and Narcissus were of the same faith and in one accord in the church of Jerusalem. And in all of his writings, he would state, "and Narcissus [also] sends you his greetings. He who precedes me in the episcopacy of this diocese,[96] he is now with me and he strengthens me through his prayers that I may have the strength to carry out the ministry. He has remained a hundred and sixteen years in this ministry, and I ask that you remain with me in one accord."

EH 6.11.4As for Serapion, he was Patriarch in Antioch, and he was reposed, and the Confessor Asclepiades was ordained in his place, and he became distinguished [in that diocese].[97] Alexander had written to the people of Antioch in that year.

Primitive Recension	*Vulgate Recension*[98]
[cf. *EH* 6.11.5]He reproached them, exposed their lies and what they had interpreted from various books through their deceptions.[99]	Alexander had written to the people of Antioch on his behalf, stating thus, *EH* 6.11.5 "Alexander, the servant of God, who confesses Jesus Christ, writes to the holy church in Antioch, may she rejoice in the Lord at the hand of the virtuous priest Clement. My brothers and sisters,[100] I would ask[101] that you promote Asclepiades, he is deserving of this position." Hence, they ordained him. *EH* 6.12.1 He[102] also wrote to them a letter in which he stated that a Jewish man named Arius[103] wrote books that he attributed to Peter, the leader of the disciples,[104] in which he recorded deceitful words. [He wrote,] *EH* 6.12.3 "Guard yourselves from these books. We accept [the instructions of] Peter and the rest of the disciples in the same manner as we accept the commandments of Christ, for they saw him and heard his very words. As for these deceitful writings, however, we do not accept them; rather, we reject them because they do not contain anything from the teachings of our fathers." [cf. EH 6.12.4–6]When the priest reached them with the letter, he said, "Stand firm in the true faith and do not return to the fraudulent book that is attributed to Peter; it is fake, deceitful, and it contains the origins of heresy.[105] It is regarding this matter that I came to you quickly." We have [also] learned that this Arius the Jew[106] has led a group astray with his writings, and they have become heretics, for this heretic had written many books. Detailing them in the biography would be too lengthy, so I will dispense with recording them.[107] As for Demetrius,[108] the saintly Patriarch of Alexandria, he exhibited knowledge and wisdom after being illiterate, unable to read or write. All his children were instructed by him. [cf. EH 6.15] When he realized that he had aged and matured to the point that he could no longer search the various theological and holy books – [for] he had to be carried in a carter to church, [cf. *EH* 6.15] [where] from the afternoon until night he did not cease teaching as the faithful[109] visited him to benefit from his teachings[110] – he [then] appointed Heraclas in his place [to teach].[111] [Heraclas] was an exceptional man, learned in the books of God, instructed in the teachings of the church, knowledgeable about the commandments of God, and observant of the canons of the church.[112]

Primitive Recension	*Vulgate Recension*[98]
	[cf. **EH 6.16**] Now, when Origen, whom Demetrius had excommunicated, saw that the church had rejected him, he went to the Jews and disingenuously interpreted passages from the Hebrew scriptures for them, concealing the prophecies the prophets had made about the Lord Christ. To the extent that when he came to the tree that entangled the horns of the ram of the venerable Abraham, which the fathers interpreted as the wood of the cross, he concealed its mention and omitted it.[113] He interpreted many books falsely; [his writings] have no merit.[114] [cf. ***EH* 6.17**] [Origen] was joined by another heretic, named Symmachus,[115] who brought forth many schisms. He maintained that Christ was born of Mary and Joseph[116] and denied the veracity of the miraculous birth, and that Christ, who was born without [birth-]pains[117] – for that is how he was born of the Virgin, without [birth-]pains – is truly God and Man,[118] and that he is one [nature] of two.[119] Moreover, [Symmachus] contradicted the truthful Gospel as Matthew had recorded[120] it and he said concerning the birth [of Christ] that the gates of Hades would not be able to resist [it].[121] That heretic would maintain that he was a Christian and his followers claimed that he was wise and had read the books of the Sabians and the Muʿtazilah.[122] He befriended Origen and misled a group of naive individuals.[123] [cf. ***EH* 6.19.2–11**] [124]At that time there was a virtuous saint, possessing divine wisdom, named Ammonius.[125] He responded to both of them and exposed their lies and [proved] that what they interpreted in the books was contrary to the truth, and he refuted their lies.

[cf. ***EH* 6.19**][126] Origen then went [21] and brought documentation from Caesarea, where they had ordained him, and he came to Alexandria, but Father Demetrius did not accept him; rather, he exiled him on account of his deed.[127]

[**cf. Photius, *Ten Questions and Answers*, Qn. 9**][128] Thus, [Origen] went to a place known as Tīmī[129] in the diocese[130] of Tilbānah,[131] and he fooled its bishop, whose name was Amūnah,[132] who placed him in one of his churches. But when his news reached Father Demetrius, he purposely went to Tīmī and exiled Origen and excommunicated[133] Bishop Amūnah who had accepted him and admired him. [Demetrius] installed another bishop instead of [Amūnah], once he confirmed that he had accepted that heretic[134] even though he knew

of his disposition [within the church] and his deceit. He ordained in his place a bishop named Phileas,[135] who was a faithful, God-fearing man. [Nonetheless, Phileas] declared, "I will not sit upon the [episcopal] throne while Amūnah is alive." [Only later,] when Amūnah died, did he sit upon the throne. This same Bishop Phileas was later martyred and he died in peace.[136]

Banished [from Alexandria], Origen went to Caesarea and continued to celebrate the Eucharist there as a priest.[137] [cf. *EH* 6.19.17]Father Demetrius then wrote to Alexander, the Bishop of Jerusalem, saying, "We have not heard of a heretic[138] who teaches in a place where there are appointed bishops." He reproached the bishop of Caesarea named Theoctistus and he emphasized the [gravity of the] situation to him,[139] saying, "I did not believe that such a thing would take place in Caesarea under [the watch] of that bishop. We have found in the writings of this Origen that he maintained that Christ is a creature [along] with the Holy Spirit." When the Bishop of Caesarea read the letter of Patriarch Demetrius in church, he excommunicated Origen and banished him from Caesarea, his diocese.[140] Thus, [Origen] returned in disgrace to Alexandria.

The Roman emperors and the patriarchs of Antioch changed, but we will dispense with the details in order to abbreviate and not prolong [this biography]. *EH* 6.21.2Now a patriarch named Philetus was ordained[141] over Antioch. In his days, there was a man who wrote heretical[142] works contrary [to the teachings of the church].[143] *EH* 6.23.2Philetus died and in his stead came a patriarch over Antioch named Zebennus. He decreed that neither the writings of that heretic,[144] nor the writings of Origen, who was exiled from Alexandria, should be read – for his writings were widespread. He[145] said that it is appropriate to read from the [holy] books in church. These are the names of the books of the Old [Testament]: the Torah, five books; Joshua son of Nun; Book of Judges; Ruth; Books of Kings;[146] the two books of Ezra;[147] Psalms of David; the books of Solomon; Book of Isaiah; Book of Jeremiah; Book of Ezekiel; Book of Daniel; Book of Job; Book of Esther;[148] Book of Judith;[149] the Book of the Minor Prophets.

And the books of the New [Testament books extant] in Coptic: the Gospel of Matthew. It was written in Hebrew, and all of its expressions are Hebraic.[150] [The apostle wrote it] in Caesarea on papyrus scrolls, while staying [in the house] of an individual [named] Protopolites,[151] which [22] in Coptic is Archdeacon;[152] it was preserved from generation to generation.[153] It was translated into Latin by the power of the Lord Christ. The Gospel of Mark was written in Latin,[154] and Peter used it in his preaching in the company of kings,[155] but [another] recension states that he wrote it in Greek. The Gospel of Luke was written in Antioch;[156] he was the disciple of Paul. The Gospel of John; the apostles had repeatedly requested it from him, until he wrote it at an advanced age. [Another] recension maintains that he wrote it in Greek in Ephesus. The Book of the Stories of the Disciples, which is the Acts; the seven Catholic epistles;[157] the fourteen epistles

of Paul, the Apocalypse of John the Evangelist, and the *Teaching of the Disciples*.[158] Additionally, these books [may be read]: they are the *Didascalia* of the apostolic, catholic church; the *Canons of the Church*,[159] which [the apostles] wrote before they dispersed to evangelize; the writings of the fathers, the teachers who wrote[160] them by the Holy Spirit; the sermons[161] and other [writings], without increasing or omitting [the canonical books listed here].[162]

As for what Origen and the other man had written, they are rejected by God and they contain nothing written by the Holy Spirit, as Paul the apostle had said, "For we have not taken the spirit of this world, but rather the Spirit that was given to us by God."[163]

Second set of concluding remarks

EH 6.26As for Demetrius, the venerable father and patriarch, he remained [in office] for forty-three years[164] and was reposed while in exile, as we have mentioned.

And may God be continually praised forever.

Notes

1 Ar. *sīrah*. The basis for this translation is C.F. Seybold, ed., *Severus ibn al-Muqaffa'* (Hamburg, 1912), 14–22. Where applicable, references to the vulgate recensions are to the Arabic texts published by Seybold (1904) and Evetts (1947). On the enumeration, see Text II, note 56.

2 On the early history of the title of "patriarch" in the east, see Roger S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University press, 1993), n. 146. Adoption of the title in Egypt was later than in other regions, however. Seventh-century papyri employ both "archbishop" and "patriarch" (see *P.Mon. Epiph*. 131, 133, 143 in W.E. Crum and H.G. Evelyn White, ed./trans., *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes*, Part II (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1926; repr. Arno Press, 1973). In the early eighth-century *Life of Isaac of Alexandria* (Porcher, 68, 78; Bell 68, 72), only the governor ᶜAbd al-ᶜAzīz ibn Marwān addressed Isaac as "patriarch," which the author of that Coptic *Life* viewed as a pious novelty. Consistently, the *Life* refers to Isaac as "archbishop," and designates the office as the "archiepiscopate" (51; Bell 61).

3 Ar. *nuskhah*. The clause literally reads: "and in a copy other than this one."

4 Cf. *Canons of the Apostles*, *Canon* 4 (Tattam, *Apostolical Constitutions*, 174).

5 Ar. *fallāḥ*, "peasant," or "farmer."

6 Cf. Gen. 41:45, 50–2.

7 *Canons of the Apostles*, § 16 and *Canon* 5; cf. *Canon* 51 (Tattam, *Apostolical Constitutions*, 18, 176, 196). HP-V adds: "For the believing wife is pure and her bed (*firāshshaha*) is pure and blameless (cf. Heb. 13:4). Now, the patriarch is the bishop of the city of Alexandria and he has jurisdiction over the bishops of the dependent dioceses because he is the successor of Saint Mark the Apostle over all the districts of Egypt, the Five Cities, Nubia, and Ethiopia. All these locations were allotted to Father Mark, the Apostle and Evangelist, to preach the gospel there. Hence, the Bishop of Alexandria has jurisdiction (*ḥukm*) over all of them."

8 This should read, "Eleventh *after* Saint Mark." Demetrius is only the "Twelfth" if Saint Mark is included in the enumeration; see Text II, note 56.
9 Lit.: "turn away from." Cf. Text II, note 49.
10 The Arabic verb *faḍaḥa* / *faḍḥ* may denote humiliation or embarrassment due to the revelation of a salacious secret or hidden sin.
11 Ar. *kursī*: "throne," "diocese/bishopric," "see." The clause reads: "when he has succeeded to this [patriarchal] throne."
12 Ar. *ikhwa*, "brothers."
13 That is, God.
14 Cf. Acts 9:15 (NKJV).
15 Cf. Mt. 5:14. The HP-V adds: "He [that is the angel] revealed to this patriarch the rest of his [message] in order to reconcile him to his congregation."
16 Jn. 10:11.
17 Ar. *sirr* denotes holy "mysteries" and the pious "secret" that Demetrius shared with his wife. The Coptic encomium uses *mustērion*, which also carries both connotations; see Text II, note 64.
18 HP-V adds: "that you have never approached her."
19 See Deut. 28:15–68, especially verse 20; cf. Ps. 37:38; Eph. 5:6; Col. 3:6; 1 Thess. 1:8–9; Heb. 11:31.
20 Lam. 3:25; cf. 2 Cor. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:8; Ps. 9:10; 25:1–3; 86:2; Dan. 6:23; Jer. 17:5–9.
21 Ar. *al-khamīs al-ʿīd*; literally, "the Thursday, that is a feast," which indicates either the "Thursday, of the feast [of Ascension]" or "[Maundy] Thursday," as was interpreted by Abū Shākir in *K. al-tawārīkh* and retained in the *Chronicon orientale*. See the discussion in chapter seven, above; cf. Texts V and II, which position the miracle on the Feast of Pentecost.
22 Ar. *ikhwa*, "brothers."
23 This is a standard liturgical instruction. On the semi-liturgical structure of this account, which became even more prominent in later recensions, see chapter seven.
24 Ar. *ikhwa*, "brothers."
25 Ar. *ballīn*; "robe"; "pallium." Cf. Text II, note 79.
26 Cf. Prov. 6:27–8.
27 Wool is slightly fire resistant, but it is flammable.
28 HP-V adds: "and he offered incense over the fire [in her tunic] and he instructed her to offer incense to the whole [congregation], and she did all of this."
29 Cf. Mt. 19:12.
30 Lit.: "extinguished the efficacy (Ar. *fiʿl*) of the flame of lust." The awkward construction is improved in HP-V. As noted in chapter six, in the *EncDem*, "extinguishing the flame of lust" is attributed to both Demetrius and his wife; cf. Text II.
31 Ar. *sīrah*.
32 See Jn. 5:41–4; 12:43; 1 Thess. 2:6.
33 As expected, the incident is positioned at the very beginning of Demetrius's patriarchal tenure.
34 HP-V adds: "I was reared up with her in my father's house, and we lived in the same place (*makān*)."
35 Lit.: "to go in to her." The explicit language is mitigated in HP-V: "and I entered [the bridal-chamber] to her, and when we were alone, she said . . ."
36 Ar. *nunaʿʿam*.
37 Cf. Gal. 4:26; Heb. 11:10, 16; 12:22; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10.
38 As mentioned in chapter four, note 25, this sentence may be read as a disapproving critique of a new social trend among Christians, as opposed to a preexisting norm.

39 Ar. "they." HP-V reads: "my mother said to the [guests]."
40 This is a subject clause lacking a predicate. To avoid the awkward construction, HP-V (29.2) rendered this into a complete sentence: "Now, when my parents, and hers, died, we remained together as orphans." The author of HP-P appears to have been reading *EncDem* (*fol.* 37v), and like Budge, failed to make sense of the corrupt passage beyond the initial phrase. Hence, he omitted the remainder of the sentence (see Text II, note 102). As argued in chapter four, this is almost certainly the beginning of a new – now mostly lost – paragraph that discussed the early life of Demetrius with his wife, and explained how they came to be the caretakers for three children. Significantly, this would indicate that the author of HP-P was likely reading the exact recension we have for the *EncDem*, mistakes and all.
41 Ps. 139:1–16; Jer. 23:24; Mt. 10:30; 11:27; Heb. 4:13; 1 Jn. 3:20.
42 Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5.
43 Cf. 1 Cor. 4:5, 14:25. Also Ps. 44:21; Jer. 17:10; Mt. 9:4; Mk. 2:8; Lk. 16:15; Heb. 4:13.
44 1 Tim. 2:4; Tit. 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:9.
45 Perhaps a reference to the prelapsarian Adam: cf. Gen. 1:27–9. HP-V replaced this awkward sentence with: "Indeed, our father, you are better than many of the righteous [saints]. The Lord had mercy upon us when he appointed you our leader. They, then, thanked him and asked him to forgive the [evil] thoughts they entertained about him. [Demetrius] blessed them and wished [blessings] on them, and they departed to their homes praising God."
46 Eph. 6:6.
47 Mt. 10:33; Mk. 8:38; Lk. 9:26, 12:9; cf. 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 3:5.
48 Lit.: "strange words."
49 Mt. 3:12; Mk. 9:44, 48; Lk. 3:17; Is. 66.44; also Judith 16:21. HP-V completes the verse: "unquenchable fire and undying worms" – Mk. 9:48.
50 Perhaps a reference to Lk. 16:24–5 or, more likely, the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* 13:5–6: see R.H. Charles, ed., *The Apocrypha*.
51 Ar. *imra'ah* (here *al-marāh*) may be translated as "woman" or "wife." My reading favors "wife" here, but "woman" is also possible. HP-V reads "sex (*maḍjaᶜat*) with a woman" – presumably one other than a wife. See the discussion of this passage in chapter six.
52 Lit.: "station" or "rank." See the discussion of Joseph at the beginning of this biography.
53 This sentence was added at the margin of the manuscript; see Seybold, pg. 18, note 1.
54 This comparison is incomplete. The gist is that Joseph was only occasionally tested, while Demetrius constantly faced temptation. The comparison emphasizes that an "Egyptian woman" tempted Joseph and Demetrius, though such a comparison is explicitly negated in the *EncDem*, *fol.* 33r–v. HP-V is explicit in completing the comparison: ". . . and he would slay his thoughts every day and every night." See the discussion of this passage in chapter six.
55 This is unique to the HP-P and it refers to the earliest days of commemoration for the patriarch. As discussed above, the date of the commemoration in the *EncDem*, Thūt 25th, never made it into any Arabic traditions. These concluding remarks, which once served as the end of the biography (or the Arabic translation of the *EncDem*), were omitted in HP-V.
56 Albeit very brief, this is one of the few traditions in Part One of the biography that may be traced back to Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History* (6.26).

57 Ar. *malik*, "king." The difficulty is identifying which "Severus"; see chapter seven, above.
58 Lit.: "a place known as the city of *Marshīn*." This is likely Marsonia in the Roman province of Pannonia, the modern city of Slavonski Brod in Croatia. HP-V (30.10–1) identifies the city as *m-w-s-ī-n*, perhaps Roman Messana, modern Messina on the eastern tip of Sicily.
59 HP-V conflates the dates: "He was reposed there [in exile] on the Twelfth of Baramhāt, which I believe was the day on which his virginity was revealed."
60 Ar. *Ibn al-ḥurūf*, "the Son of Letters." See chapter two, note 23.
61 This prominent monastery was destroyed in 1354–55 CE; see *History of the Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*, pp. 180–88 (*fol.* 61a–64b); René-Georges Coquin and Maurice Martin, "Dayr Nahya," *CoptEncyc* 2: 843–44.
62 The remainder of the *sīrah*, Part Two here, was likely a recension that lacked Part One altogether. Referring to the bishop as "Father Demetrius" (*al-āb dimītriūs*) is exclusive to Part Two of the biography.
63 This sentence is not completed, but the focus shifts to Origen. Such awkward transitions are common in the HP-P.
64 Lit.: "external."
65 Ar. *abʿadahū*, to "cast out," "place at a distance," or "segregate." Perhaps the intention was "excommunicate," but that notion is typically relayed by the verb "to cut," *qaṭʿ*, see note 75 below.
66 Ar. *bayʿah*, "the purchase" or "that which was bought," is commonly used for "church" in Christian Arabic texts. The usage may be based on Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:19–20; 7:23: Col. 1:14; Rev. 5:9, or a more literal reading of the word, which may indicate "pledging oneself" or "giving a promise or allegiance."
67 These martyrs were among Origen's disciples: see Eusebius, *EH* 6.3.13–6.4.
68 In Eusebius, *EH* 6.4.3, this is another Serenus – a male martyr – who simply shares the same name as the previously referenced martyr (*EH* 6.4.2). The mistake was likely facilitated by the Greek text, which reads "among the women" (γυναικῶν), though it names only Herais.
69 Basilides was inspired by Potamiaena, but they were not siblings.
70 HP-V adds: "Armalas, the father of kings, and Eusebius, and Macarius, the uncle of Claudius, Justus and Theodore the Eastern, these martyrs were all related to one another." In the Arabic text, "Claudius" is either a double translation, "Claud Claudius," or a corruption of "kyrios/lord Claudius." The HP-V is a bit clearer (Evetts, 1947). It corrects the problem with Claudius's name and identifies the odd "Armalas" as "Anatolius." Still, the entry is erroneous on several fronts. All of these individuals are part of the *Synaxarium*'s entry for Thūt 11, which is based on the *Passion of St. Theodore the General and St. Theodore the Eastern*, trans. Eric O. Winstedt (Oxford: Williams and Norgate, 1910). In the *Synaxarium*, Basilides is identified as "the father of kings." It is unclear why HP-V inserted these saints into Demetrius's biography. Perhaps the tradition that rendered Basilides, Potamiaena, and Marcella members of a family of martyrs – a persistent pattern in medieval Coptic hagiography and cycles – led the author-editor(s) of HP-V to include another, more prominent, family of martyrs. Moreover, these martyrs are chronologically out of place. Here, they would appear to have been martyred under emperor "Severus," while the *Synaxarium* and the *Passion of Theodore* places their martyrdom under Diocletian.
71 The original text, rather than Seybold's correction, is likely correct. Here, the HP-P presents a rather confused account. Aquila (Akīlā) is the judge who sentences the martyrs to torture and death – he was not a fellow martyr.

72 The basis for this sentence is: "In the first book of the work called Stromata, which Clement wrote . . ." τήν γέ τοι τῶν Στρωματέων πραγματείαν ὁ Κλήμης ὑπομνηματιζόμενος, κατὰ τὸ πρῶτον σύγγραμμα χρονικὴν ἐκθέμενος γραφήν.
73 Cf. 2 Thess. 2:1–4, 7–10; 1 Jn. 2:18, 4:2–3; 2 Jn. 1:7; Rev. 13:11–7.
74 The following section presents a substitution for Eusebius's flattering account of Origen in *EH* 6.8.1–6; here, Origen is a heretic and Demetrius is a hierarch only interested in safeguarding his flock from heresy.
75 Ar. *qaṭaʿahu*.
76 Ar. *al-bayʿah*. See note 66, above.
77 This is an ahistorical diatribe. For reliable assessments of Origen's theology, see chapter three, note 37.
78 Lit.: "his rank removed." Presumably, the position in question was his post as the head of the School of Alexandria.
79 See *Canon Sixteen* of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea, 325. Historically, the ordination of a Coptic priest explicitly referenced the church he would serve in. In contemporary practice, if the priest will serve in several parishes or the like, he is ordained to serve "in the Church of God." The consecration rite is typically performed right at the Royal Doors, in front of the altar.
80 This sequence is confused. Earlier the account maintained that Origen was already excommunicated and banished on account of heresy. Here, after his ordination in Caesarea during that same exile, he returns to Alexandria but Demetrius objects on jurisdictional grounds rather than any presumed excommunication or heresy. Historically, this latter tradition is more accurate. Demetrius's noted objections in Eusebius's *EH* did not cite heresy, only the jurisdictional issue and the notion that a layman should not preach before bishops – a charge that other bishops quickly challenged.
81 Following Seybold's reading of "Antoninus" for "Antony." Antoninus is better known as Caracalla (r. 198–217); he became sole ruler after his father's death in 211.
82 Lit.: "he." In the context of the passage it is clear that the reference is to Narcissus not Alexander. The HP-V eliminates the ambiguity by replacing the pronoun with "Narcissus."
83 Lit.: "the Friday of the Passover." The Greek is more explicit: "Once at the Great all-night vigil of Pascha," κατὰ τὴν μεγάλην ϖοτὲ τοῦ ϖάσχα διανυκτέρευσιν.
84 Lit.: "lit."
85 Reading *t-q-a-t* as *atqiyā'*; "five" is written above the line.
86 Lit.: "innards" or "insides."
87 Lit.: "saints."
88 While at several junctures HP-V provides a more cogent reading and various corrections to HP-P, this passage is the exception. A poor reading and translation in HP-P became even more convoluted and wordy in HP-V, though a few clauses are less obtuse. Additionally, "wept on account of losing his sight," in Eusebius, *EH* 6.9.8 is "poured out such a flood of tears, that he lost the sight of both eyes."
89 In the *Nazm* (1:110), Eutychius provides a different, and chronologically confused, rationale for Narcissus's departure. He maintains that in the twelfth year of his patriarchate, Narcissus learned of the martyrdom of Babylas of Antioch, during the persecution of Emperor Maximinus (235–38 CE), and consequently fled the city. Nonetheless, Babylas was most likely martyred in 250 CE under Decius, and placing Narcissus's departure from Jerusalem during Maximinus's reign would place Alexander's arrival at that see later still – long after Demetrius's death.

90 "Previously mentioned" is directly from Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.7.
91 Ar. *kursī*, see note 11 above.
92 Ar. *ikhwa*, "brothers"
93 This, I believe, is the sense the author of HP-P intended. As is, the Arabic preserves an incomplete thought. My reconstruction is based, in part, on Eusebius *EH* 6.11.2, though, there, the revelation is received by several members of the community, not just Alexander.
94 Lit.: "he" or "it."
95 The *EH* reads, "people of Antinoöpolis" ('Αντινοΐτας). Emperor Hadrian founded the city in 130 CE. Here, the translator of the HP-P provided the Arabic equivalent: Anṣinā. This initial clause is odd and much of it was dropped from HP-V. Moreover, even in Eusebius's text, it is unclear why Bishop Alexander would have sent a letter to Christians in a city that was not within his jurisdiction.
96 Ar. *makān*: "place" or "location."
97 Lit.: "his rank was elevated," which may refer to his elevation to the episcopacy. Serapion was Bishop of Antioch, 191–211 CE.
98 HP-V: Seybold, CSCO 52: 33–4; cf. B. Evetts, PO I.2.
99 The content of the message deviates completely from the pious extortions cited in *EH* 6.11.5–6: see the discussion of Part Two in chapter seven. The translator conflates the writings of Alexander with those of Serapion mentioned in *EH* 6.12, where he does censure a community that began to rely upon the so-called *Gospel of Peter*: Paul Foster, *The Gospel of Peter: Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2010).
100 Ar. *ikhwatī*, "my brothers."
101 Lit.: "love."
102 Here, the pronoun refers to Alexander; however, in *EH* 6.12.1 Serapion is the subject.
103 "Marcion" would be the anticipated name, as in Evetts's text and translation, but most manuscripts retain "Arianus."
104 This designation is not in the *EH*, but it is fairly common in Greek, Coptic, and Arabic literature from Egypt and throughout the east (e.g. HP-P, 54 line 24). Traditionally, the Orthodox east maintains that St. Peter enjoyed a leadership position among the Twelve, but the premise that the Orthodox take issue with is the Roman Catholic belief that St. Peter's authority extended beyond that of his peers and that it is handed down exclusively to the Bishop of Rome. (The see of Antioch was also founded by Peter.) In the modern era, this traditional view has been severely skewed among the Copts. In confronting Catholic missionary efforts, most Coptic apologists have simply denied St. Peter any special role among the Disciples. See Maged S.A. Mikhail, "A Reappraisal of the Current Position of St. Peter the Apostle in the Coptic Orthodox Church," *Bulletin of the St. Shenouda the Archimandrite Coptic Society* 5 (1999), 53–72; John Meyendorff, ed., *The Primacy of Peter: Essays in Ecclesiology and the Early Church* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992).
105 Reading *khalf* for *khalq*, with Evetts.
106 See note 103 above.
107 This sentence is a gloss by the author-editor of HP-V. It could also be read as: " . . . has written many books. Some of [their content] has been explained in the *sīrah*, but [I will] dispense with recording the details." In this case, *sīrah* would be the text he was copying from.
108 The previous paragraph concluded with *EH* 6.12.6; this paragraph is unique and has no parallel in the *EH*; cf. the *Synaxarium*'s entry for 12th of Bābah.

109 Ar. *ikhwa*, "brothers."
110 Cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.6, where the subject is Origen.
111 Cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.15, 6.19.13, 6.26, where Origen, rather than Demetrius, is the one who appoints Heraclas to teach.
112 Cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.31.2.
113 Gen. 22. Origen did not focus on the bush. Nonetheless, this is an incredibly obtuse reading of Origen's commentary on that passage, in which he focuses on the sacrifice of Christ as signified simultaneously by the one who was spared, Isaac, and the one that was slain – the ram: see Origen, *Commentary on Genesis*, homily 8.
114 This may also be read: "he interpreted many false books that have no merit." Here, "false books" likely refers to apocryphal or Gnostic writings.
115 In all likelihood, Symmachus died before Origen was born. Origen did own books written by Symmachus (*EH* 6.17), and he used Symmachus's Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures as one of the translations in his *Hexapla*, but the notion that he agreed with Symmachus's theological views is certainly erroneous.
116 In his translation of Is. 7:14, Symmachus translated the Hebrew *ʿalmah* as "young woman" (νεᾶνις) rather than "virgin" (παρθένος).
117 This is a common patristic belief based on Is. 66:7.
118 Ar. *insān*.
119 See Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, ch. 1.
120 Ar. *shahada*, "witnessed," "testified."
121 Mt. 16:18. This verse is used out of context.
122 This gloss – and hence, recension – must have been quite late. It plays to the notion that the Sabians and Muʿtazila traded in suspicious, heretical learning, an idea that began to circulate at the mid-ninth century. The Sabians cannot be positively identified prior to the Islamic era (Qur'ān 2:62; 5.69; 22:17). They are often assumed to have been the Pagans of Ḥarrān (Carrhae/Hellenopolis), but even that identification is problematic. Until the mid-ninth century CE, they were treated as though they were part of the People of the Book (*ahl al-kitāb*), but the Caliph al-Mutawakkil (d. 861) withdrew that status. In general, see Sarah Stroumsa's *Maimonides in His World: Portrait of a Mediterranean Thinker* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), ch. 4. Al-Mutawakkil also declared the Muʿtazila doctrine of the Created Qur'ān a heresy, and persecuted that theological movement: see Michael Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), ch. 9; al-Ṭabarī, *Incipient Decline*, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa-al-mulūk*, vol. 34, trans. J.L. Kraemer (Albany: SUNY Press, 1989).
123 The reference to Ambrose, which should sequentially follow, is omitted here. Ambrose converted under Origin's influence, and he later became his patron in Caesarea. Origen addressed his *Exhortation to Martyrdom* to him; see *EH* 6.18.1, 6.23.2, 6.28.
124 This section, which in the *EH* praises Origen, is rendered unrecognizable in this version.
125 This passage is taken completely out of context (cf. Eusebius, *EH*, 6.19.1–11). In the *EH*, Eusebius aims to praise Origen by citing what Prophyry, the Pagan philosopher and anti-Christian polemicist, said about him. The Ammonius in the *EH* is the noted philosopher Ammonius Saccas (d. 243), the teacher of Plotinus. Prophyry believed that Ammonius was raised a Christian but that he later abandoned that faith, while Eusebius believed that he was a life-long Christian. Modern scholars postulate that there were two individuals: Ammonius Saccas,

the Pagan philosopher, and Ammonius of Alexandria, a third-century Christian author.

126 Rather than *EH* 6.19, which depicts Origen in a positive light, this is the beginning of the replacement passage, which defames Origen and depicts Demetrius's pursuit of the "heretic."

127 It is not clear if Origen's "deed" here refers to accepting ordination outside of Alexandria or the self-castration motif (cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.8.1–2 and 5; also, chapter five, note 1, above).

128 See the discussion of this passage at the end of chapter seven.

129 Gr. Thmuis.

130 Ar. *kursī*, see note 11 above.

131 This is near modern Manṣūra in the Daqahliya Governorate. Earlier, this was part of the Roman administrative province of Augustamnica.

132 Amūnah and Ammonius [Amūnius] are simply the Arabized Coptic and Greek renditions of the same name. The author of HP-V tried to distinguish the two figures.

133 Ar. *qaṭaʿa*.

134 Ar. *mukhālif*.

135 Ar. Filās. Bishop Phileas of Thmuis was martyred *ca*. 307 CE; See Eusebius, *EH*, 8.10; Jerome, *Illustrious Men*, 78.

136 The author of the HP seems to have had in mind Bishop Phileas, who was martyred during the Great Persecution: see Eusebius, *EH* 8.9.7, 8.10, 8.13.7. Still, given that this martyr must have died after 306 CE, and that this incident must have occurred prior to 232 (Demetrius's death), the association does not seem likely. Still, the HP-V reinforces the identification by adding that Phileas "was martyred some time (*bi-zamān*) later."

137 Reading *qiss* as *kā-qiss*. Seeking to be more provocative, HP-V states that Origen celebrated the Eucharist in Caesarea "as a bishop."

138 Ar. *māriq*.

139 Theoctistus of Caesarea had joined Alexander in writing a rebuttal to Demetrius: Eusebius, *EH* 6.19.17, 27.

140 Ar. *kursī*, see note 11 above. This tradition is not historical, but it may be a trace of the same tradition Photius references; see Text I.i.

141 Ar. *karras*.

142 Lit.: "external."

143 HP-V identifies the individual as Symmachus the Ebionite; Eusebius, *EH* 6.17.

144 Ar. *mukhālif*.

145 Here, the pronoun refers to Zebennus; hence, it would appear that he forwarded the following canon of scripture. Nonetheless, in the *EH* 6.25, it is clear that the canon discussion is based on Origen's writings. The authority referred here is actually Origen.

146 In the Septuagint, 1 and 2 Samuel are 1 and 2 Kings. HP-V adds "Chronicles." It refers to them as *al-barālubūmānun* (ϖαρωλειϖομένων).

147 That is, the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

148 HP-V adds "Book of Samuel; Book of Sirach."

149 Judith is not mentioned in the HP-V's list.

150 Eusebius, *EH* 3.39.16; 5.10.3

151 Ar. *ibrūṭūbulītīs* (Gr. ϖρωτοϖολίτης): "first citizen" or "leading citizen." This is a title not a proper name.

152 Reading *a-r-sh-ī-d-ī-a-q* as *arshīdiyāq*[*ūn*].

153 The problematic title/name and its proposed Coptic equivalent are omitted in HP-V.

154 Eusebius, *EH* 2.15.2; 3.39.14–5; 6.14.6; 6.25.5. This was likely due to the frequency of Latin loan-words in that Gospel and the tradition that it was written in Rome.
155 Saint Peter "preaching before kings" may be a reference to the apocryphal *Acts of Peter*, § 36.
156 Eusebius, *EH* 3.4.7.
157 Ar. *kāthūlīkūn*. Oddly enough, undoubtedly due to negligence, the Catholic Epistles are omitted from the listing in HP-V.
158 This is likely the *Didache*.
159 Perhapse Tattam's *Apostolical Constitutions*; cf. note 7, above.
160 Lit.: "placed" or "arranged."
161 Ar. *mayāmar*.
162 Cf. Eusebius, *EH* 6.25.
163 1 Cor. 2:12; cf. Rom. 8:15.
164 He was patriarch for forty-three years; he had already completed forty-eight years of marriage *soon after* his ordination – on that date he also turned sixty-three years old (pg. 16 within this text above). This would mean that Demetrius was fifteen when he was married (63 – 48 = 15). Now, 15 + 48 + 43 = 106, but given that at the time of his ordination, Demetrius was married for forty-seven years and had not yet completed forty-eight years of marriage, a year has to be subtracted from the equation: 106 – 1 = 105. The *Synaxarium's* entry is more straightforward in accounting for the overlapping year that is subtracted here. It explicitly states that Demetrius lived for 105 years: on the significance of the 105-year lifespan, see chapter four, note 68; chapter seven note 42; and Text VI at note 19.

TEXT IV

EUTYCHIUS'S *NAẒM AL-JAWHAR (THE STRING OF PEARLS)*

Three passages from Eutychius's *Nazm al-jawhar* (the "*Ta'rīkh*") are translated below. The first is the terse reference that identifies Demetrius as the first to appoint bishops in Egypt. The second text (B), which is focused on Demetrius's alleged Lenten reform, is nearly identical in the Alexandrian and Antiochene recensions of the *Nazm*; hence, only the older Alexandrian account is translated. The third passage is focused on the foundational narrative for the Fast of Heraclius, which is discussed in chapter eight. Here the Alexandrian (C.1) and Antiochene (C.2) recensions are significantly different and both are translated. While the Alexandrian text sought to describe the origins of the Heraclian fast among different pro-Chalcedonian populations, the later Antiochene version simply contrasts the Melkites with the Copts (*qibṭ*). It maintains that while the Melkites, who are recast as a monolithic faction in that recension, briefly observed the fast, it was eventually abandoned by them. The Antiochene account then proceeds to note that the Copts continued to observe the aberrant rogation. This is in line with the polemical leanings of the Antiochene version of the *Nazm* noted by previous scholars.[1]

A. Ordaining bishops in Egypt[2]

Demetrius was appointed Patriarch of Alexandria, and he remained for forty-three years [in office], and then he died. He was the first patriarch to appoint bishops over the districts of Egypt.

B. On the Lenten reform and *Epact*[3]

At that time, Demetrius, the patriarch of Alexandria, wrote to Agapius, bishop of Jerusalem, Maximus, patriarch of Antioch, and Victor, patriarch of Rome, concerning the calculation for the Passover of the Christians [i.e. the Feast of the Resurrection],[4] their [Great] fast, and how to calculate[5]

them in relation to the [Passover] Feast of the Jews. They exchanged[6] many books and epistles concerning this matter until they established the feast of the Christians in accordance with what they observe today. Hitherto, after celebrating the ascension of our Lord Christ *into heaven*,[7] [Christians] would celebrate the Feast of Epiphany[8] and,[9] on the following day, they would begin to fast for forty days. Then they would break [their fast] just as our Lord Christ had done – for our Lord Christ, after he was baptized in the Jordan [River], went out into the wilderness and remained there, fasting for forty days[10] – then, at the Passover of the Jews,[11] the Christians would also celebrate the Feast [of the Resurrection]. Thus, these patriarchs established a calculation for the feast so that Christians would fast for forty days and then break the fast on the day of the Feast [of the Resurrection].[12]

C. *On the Fast of Heraclius*

C.1[13] *Alexandrian Recension*	**C.2**[14] *Antiochene Recension*
And they instituted on his behalf the first week of the fast, in which the Melkites abandon the consumption of meat only and fast on behalf of the Emperor Heraclius as forgiveness for revoking the pact[15] and killing the Jews. And they prescribed this to all who [belong to] the same confession.[16]	And they instituted on his behalf the first week of the fast,[18] in which the Melkites abandon the consumption of meat only and fast on behalf of the Emperor Heraclius as forgiveness for revoking the pact and killing the Jews. And they prescribed this to all who [belong to] the same confession.
The people of Jerusalem and Egypt observe this fast, but not the Syrians and Greeks,[17] for they abandon the eating of meat during that week and only fast on Wednesday and Friday.	The Copts of Egypt observe this fast until today. As for the Syrians, Greeks, and Melkites, after the death of Heraclius they reverted to eating eggs, cheese, and fish during that week according to the *Canons* of Saint Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople,[19] the martyr and confessor. The church has maintained this [practice until this very day].

Notes

1 Sidney H. Griffith, "Apologetics and Historiography in the Annals of Eutychius of Alexandria: Christian Self-Definition in the World of Islam," in *Studies on the Christian Arabic Heritage*, ed. Rifaat Ebied and Herman Teule, Eastern Christian Studies 5 (Louvain and Paris: Peeters, 2004).

2 Eutychius, *Naẓm*, CSCO 50, pg. 104.

3 Alexandrian recension: M. Breydy, ed., *Das Annalenwerk*, pgs. 59–60, §172; cf. Antiochene recension: Cheikho, ed., CSCO 50, pgs. 104–05; Cf. *Synaxarium*, 10th Hatūr.
4 Ar. *fiṣḥ al-naṣārā*.
5 Possibly "deduce" or "separate."
6 Lit.: "wrote."
7 This is an odd phrase that is ignored by the Coptic Arabic tradition. It is superfluous in the context of the remainder of the account. At best, it should read: "celebrating the ascension of our Lord Christ from *the water of the Jordan River*." Ar. *īlā al-sama'*, should be *min al-miya'*.
8 Ar. *ʿīd al-ḥamīm*.
9 As is, Eutychius's account would not only call for Lent to follow Epiphany, which is followed by Abū al-Barakāt, but would additionally position Epiphany after the Feast of Ascension. This aspect was not adopted by any other text; still, the phrase is likely erroneous. See note 7 above.
10 Mt. 4:1–11; Mk. 1:12–13; Lk. 4:1–13.
11 Ar. *fiṣḥ*.
12 Cf. Eusebius, *EH* 7.20.
13 Alexandrian recension: M. Breydy, ed., *Das Annalenwerk*, 129; cf. M. Breydy, *Études sur Saʿid ibn Batriq*, 96–8.
14 Antiochene recension: L. Cheikho, ed., *Eutychii*, II.6–7.
15 Ar. *ʿahd*.
16 Ar. *al-awfāq*.
17 Ar. *rūm*. Most likely, this gloss aims to distinguish between the pro-Chalcedonians of Jerusalem and Egypt with those in Antioch and Constantinople.
18 In a marginalia, "which is before the fast," n. 11.
19 Patriarch Nicephorus of Constantinople, *Canon* 33 (PG 100: 860). Nicephorus (d. 829 CE) was patriarch from 806 to 815; the canons were issued in 811. Notably, this would indicate that the Melkites had observed the Fast of Heraclius in the same manner as the Copts until the early ninth century.

TEXT V

KITĀB AL-TAWĀRĪKH AND THE *CHRONICON ORIENTALE*

In 1257 CE, Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib completed *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* (the *Book of Histories* or *Chronicles*). Chapters one through forty-seven have appeared in an excellent critical edition by Samuel Moawad.[1] Unfortunately, chapter fifty, which retains the passages translated below, has not yet been published; hence, my translation is solely based on MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434. Chapter fifty provides a careful chronology for Coptic Patriarchs, initially down to Athanasius III (1250–61). Beyond the chronology forwarded, each entry provides a brief, though uneven, entry that minimally identifies the ruling authorities, the most outstanding events, and major personalities that lived or were martyred during each patriarch's tenure. The dynamics discussed at the end of chapter seven, by which the Copts came to conceive of their history in terms of patriarchal tenures, is well demonstrated here.

By 1260, the year in which Abū Shākir was ordained a deacon for the church of al-Muᶜallaqah, the patriarchal church in Old Cairo (*Qaṣr al-shamᶜ*), an anonymous author completed the *Chronicon orientale* (*al-Ta'rīkh al-sharqī*) largely based on chapters forty nine and fifty of *K. al-tawārīkh*. As argued in chapters two and seven, above, while the *Chronicon* is often criticized, where the entry for Demetrius is concerned, it does demonstrate a degree of competence and originality. A comparison of the parallel translations below will quickly demonstrate the dependence of the *Chronicon* on *K. al-tawārīkh*, as well as the novel contributions of that text, particularly in emphasizing the liturgical nuance of Demetrius's ordeal. In addition to the entries for Demetrius, those for Julian, Heraclas, and Dionysius, which have a bearing on the bishop's biography, are also translated.

Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434, 183v–186r 1257 CE	Pseudo-Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Chronicon orientale* Ar. ed. Cheikho, pgs. 104–08[2] *ca.* 1260 CE
(183v) Julian the Patriarch remained [in office] for ten years. Further, he did not reside as bishop in that [city], but he would go out secretly and ordain[3] clergy everywhere.[4]	[104] Afterwards, Julian did not reside as bishop in Alexandria, but he would go out secretly and ordain clergy in all places.[4]
He was reposed on the eighth of Baramhāt in the fifth year of the reign of king Severus.	
On the night of his passing, the angel of God appeared to this patriarch and said to him, "The one who will come to you tomorrow with a cluster of grapes, he is the patriarch after you." That morning a married peasant, who could not read or write, named Demetrius, came to him. Julian said to the congregation, "This is your patriarch as the angel had commanded me yesterday." And he was immediately reposed.	On the night of his passing, the angel of the Lord appeared to this patriarch and said to him, "The one who will come to you with a cluster of grapes [will be] patriarch [after you]."
Length of Patriarchate: 10 years, 33 days.[5]	*Length of Patriarchate*: 10 years, 33 days[5]
Sum of the years [since the Birth of Christ]:[6] 191 years, 188 days	[*Date of Repose*]:[8] *anno Domini* 191, day 188
Length of Patriarchate, beginning: Saturday	*Ruling Caesars*: Pupienus, 3 months;[9] Gordian, 4 years[7]
Length of Patriarchate, in days: 3,683	*Year of Creation*: 5691, day 188
Length of Patriarchate, end: Tuesday	
Sum of days: 69,951	
Year of Creation: 5691, Baramhāt 188	
Name of king: Gordian Caesar[7]	
Tenure: 4 years	
Sum of their years: 286 ½ years	
(184r) Demetrius the patriarch remained [in office] for forty-three years, and he was reposed on the Twelfth day of Bābah. He was a married peasant, unable to read or write.	

Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434, 183v–186r 1257 CE	Pseudo-Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Chronicon orientale* Ar. ed. Cheikho, pgs. 104–08[2] *ca.* 1260 CE
[One day] he went to prune his vineyard and found in it a cluster of grapes, which he brought to the patriarch.	Afterwards, there was a married man called Demetrius pruning his vineyard in the winter. When he found a cluster of grapes that was overlooked [during the harvest], he said, "I will present this as a gift to Patriarch Julian." [Meanwhile,] the whole congregation was gathered at the patriarch's [residence] awaiting [Julian's] repose. They asked him, "Our father, who will be [appointed] patriarch [105] over us after you?"[10] He responded, "The one who will bring me a cluster of grapes." [The faithful reasoned,] "Where can one find grapes in the winter? The patriarch [must] not be aware of what he is saying on account of illness." Then they repeated the question, "Our father, who will administer our affairs after you?" He replied, "I have already told you that the one who will bring me a cluster of grapes is your patriarch." And while he was speaking, behold, Demetrius brought the grapes to him, and they immediately seized him.
The patriarch then said to the congregation, "This is your patriarch, as the angel instructed me yesterday."	It was Demetrius who brought the cluster of grapes to *anba* Julian, the patriarch, before his repose. The patriarch said to the people, "This is your patriarch, as the angel of God had instructed me yesterday."
They took him against his will and bound him with iron fetters, and when he was ordained, divine grace came [upon him]. The majority of the congregation would say, "This is the twelfth patriarch after Saint Mark,[11] but all were unmarried except for this one," and they were aggrieved by him.	They took him and bound him with iron fetters, because he wanted to escape, and consecrated him. The congregation celebrated [his ordination] saying, "This is the twelfth after Mark the Evangelist,[11] but all were unmarried except for this one," and they were perplexed.[12]

(*Continued*)

Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434, 183v–186r 1257 CE	Pseudo-Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Chronicon orientale* Ar. ed. Cheikho, pgs. 104–08[2] *ca.* 1260 CE
Now, the saint would discern whoever had sinned secretly from among the congregation, and he would reprove him for that sin. [This persisted] to the extent that the faithful ceased from sinning, fearing him, lest he embarrass them in front of the congregation. But some among them would say, "This is a married man, how [dare] he reproach us when no one had sat upon this throne except for celibate men?"	Subsequently, God granted him a [spiritual] gift that enabled him to see the sins of people, and he would reproach them secretly, in private. Most of the faithful abstained from [106] sinning, fearing him, lest he would see [their sins] and embarrass them in front of the congregation. But some of the congregants would say, "This is a married man, how [dare] he reproach us when no one has ever sat on this holy throne except celibate men?"
One night, the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "Demetrius, do not seek after your salvation and ignore your neighbor's. Remember what the Master said in the gospel, "The good shepherd sacrifices himself for his sheep."[13] Demetrius said to the angel, "What is [the matter], my master?" [The angel] said to him, "The secret[14] that is between you and your wife – reveal it to the congregation."	One night, the angel of the Lord appeared and said to him, "Demetrius, do not seek after your salvation and ignore your neighbor's. Remember what the Master said in the gospel, "The good shepherd sacrifices himself for his sheep."[13] The patriarch said to the angel, "Clarify the matter to me, my master." [The angel] said to him, "The secret[14] that is between you and your wife – reveal it to the congregation."
On the following morning, which was Maundy Thursday,[15] the patriarch celebrated the Eucharist and he instructed (*amara*) the archdeacon to say (*yaqūl*) to the clergy and congregation not to leave the church, but to gather at the [patriarchal] throne, and so they assembled. He then called for a great amount of firewood, and he set it on fire. And he brought his wife in the midst of the congregation, and the patriarch stood before all. He then stood over the fire as it was blazing,[16] and he stretched out his liturgical vestment and with his hands he took blazing coals and placed them in it, but it did not burn.	On the following morning, which was the feast of Maundy Thursday,[15] the patriarch celebrated the Eucharist and said (*qalā*) to the archdeacon to instruct (*ya'mur*) the clergy and congregation not to leave the church, but to gather at his throne, and so they assembled. He then called for a great amount of firewood and set it on fire. And he brought his wife in front of the whole congregation. The patriarch then rose up and stood over the fire as it was blazing,[16]

Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434, 183v–186r 1257 CE	Pseudo-Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Chronicon orientale* Ar. ed. Cheikho, pgs. 104–08[2] *ca.* 1260 CE
He then said to his wife, "Spread out your woolen tunic, the one you are wearing." She spread it out, and he emptied the burning coals onto it. And the coals blazed in the two garments, but they did not burn.	and he said to his wife, "Spread out the wool tunic, the one you are wearing," and he emptied the burning coals in it.
	Then he said, "Stand, let us pray." He then offered incense[17] over the fire in his wife's tunic [107] – he, and all the clergy [who were in attendance].[18] Then he said to her, "Go around the church and offer incense to the whole congregation."
He then he said to his wife, "Thus God has said, 'Whoever overcomes the fire of lust, cannot be overcome by this tangible fire.' "[19]	He then said to the congregation, "Do not be astonished or disturbed! All who overcome the fire of nature cannot be overcome by this tangible fire."[19]
The clergy said to him (185r), "We ask of your holiness, our father, that you explain this mystery to us." He said to them, "God knows that I did not do this seeking after human glory."	
"For today I am sixty-three years old, and my wife, who is before you here, is the daughter of my paternal uncle. Her family passed away, leaving her as a child. I was raised with her in the same home. When she turned fifteen years old, my father married me to her. Now, when they left us alone, she said to me, 'How could they marry me to you, when I am your sister?' I said to her, 'Would you prefer that we remain in this place and never separate, and that nothing transpire between us?' "	"Today I am sixty-three years old, and my wife, who is before you here, is the daughter of my paternal uncle. Her father died and left her as a child. I was raised with her in the same home. When I grew up, my parents married me to her. Now, when they left us alone, she said to me, 'I grew up with you as though I were your sister, how can you marry me?' "

(*Continued*)

Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434, 183v–186r 1257 CE	Pseudo-Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Chronicon orientale* Ar. ed. Cheikho, pgs. 104–08[2] *ca.* 1260 CE
It has been forty-eight years since I married her. We sleep on the same bed and the same linens. The Lord, [he who] knows[20] what is hidden in the hearts, he knows that I have not gained [carnal] knowledge of her as a woman, nor has she gained knowledge of me as a man. When we would sleep together, we would see a figure resembling a flying eagle that would settle upon our bed, between me and her. It would place its left wing over her, and its right wing over me until morning, when it would vanish before us.	It has been forty eight-years since I married her. We sleep on the same bed and the same linens. God knows that I have not known her, nor has she known me, in a worldly manner. Whenever we slept, we would see a figure resembling an eagle flying over us. It would place its left wing over her, and its right wing over me until morning, when it would vanish before us.
I have said this to you, congregation, for the angel of God commanded me to do so. He was reposed after this [miracle] by four months.[21]	Do not think that I have revealed this [secret] to you seeking worldly glory,[22] but I was thus instructed by the one who desires the salvation of all people, and that all may come to know and accept the truth[23] – I mean Christ the Savior." Immediately, he and his wife were [108] reposed.[24]
	This saintly patriarch had excommunicated from the priesthood a man named Origen, who then traveled and became a priest through deception at the hand of the bishop of Caesarea in Palestine. He then returned to Alexandria, but he was not accepted by father [Demetrius], because he was associated with heresy.[25]
The accurate chronology is that he remained [in office] for thirty-three years, lacking a few days. This is [deduced] by synchronizing the [chronology of the] reigns of the kings who ruled during his tenure, and from [the chronology] of those who were in office before and after him.	

Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434, 183v–186r 1257 CE	Pseudo-Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Chronicon orientale* Ar. ed. Cheikho, pgs. 104–08[2] *ca.* 1260 CE
Length of Patriarchate: 32 years, 219 days[26]	*Length of Patriarchate*: 32 years, 219 days[26]
Sum of the years [since the Birth of Christ]:[27] 224 years and 42 days[28]	[*Date of Repose*]:[27] *anno Domini* 224, day 42[28]
Length of Patriarchate, beginning: Wednesday	*Ruling Caesars*: Philip I, 7 years;[30] [Trajan] Decius, 1 year[29]
Length of Patriarchate, in days: 21,907	*Year of Creation*: 5724, day 42
Length of Patriarchate, end: Tuesday	
Sum of days: 81,858	
Year of Creation: 5724, Bābah 42	
Name of king: Decius Caesar[29]	
Tenure: a single year	
Sum of their years: 244 ½	
(185v) Heraclas the patriarch remained [in office] for sixteen years, and was reposed on the eighth of Kyahk. He was the first to be called "Pope."[31] In his days, saints Sergius, Bachos, and Barbara were martyred. [Agapius] of Manbij[32] stated that he began [his tenure] in the eighth year of king Alexander Mamaea['s reign].[33]	Heraclas was the first to be called Pope.[31] In his days saints Sergius, Bachos, and Barbara were martyred. He was reposed on Monday, the eighth of Kyahk.
Length of Patriarchate: 16 years, 56 days[34]	*Length of Patriarchate*: 16 years, 56 days[34]
Sum of the years [since the Birth of Christ]:[35] 240 years, 98 days	[*Date of Repose*]:[35] *Anno Domini* 240, day 98
Length of Patriarchate, beginning: Wednesday	*Ruling Caesars*: Valerian, 2 years[36]
Length of Patriarchate, in days: 5,900 days	*Year of Creation*: 5740, day 98
Length of Patriarchate, end: Monday	
Sum of days: 87,758	
Year of Creation: 5740, Kyahk 98	
Name of king: Valerian [and] Gallienus Caesar[36]	
Tenure: 2 years	
Sum of their years: 246 ½ years	
The [patriarchal] throne remained vacant, without a patriarch for a year.	The [patriarchal] throne remained vacant for a single year, which is to be added to the chronology.

(*Continued*)

Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Kitāb al-tawārīkh* MS Berlin or. *Fol.* 434, 183v–186r 1257 CE	Pseudo-Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib *Chronicon orientale* Ar. ed. Cheikho, pgs. 104–08[2] *ca.* 1260 CE
Length of Patriarchate: — *Sum of the years [since the Birth of Christ]*: 241 years, 98 days *Length of Patriarchate, beginning*: Tuesday *Length of Patriarchate, in days*: 365 *Length of Patriarchate, end*: Tuesday *Sum of days*: 88,123 *Year of Creation*: 5741, Kyahk 98 *Name of king*: Valerian Caesar *Tenure*: 14 years *Sum of their years*: 260½ years	
Dionysius the Patriarch [led] during the reign of King Philip.[37] The length of his tenure was nineteen years, and he was reposed on the third of Thūt, in the days of Claudius Caesar. He was an author and a philosopher. In his days, Mercurius was martyred at the hands of Decius the king of Rome. During [his days] the People of the Cave slept,[38] and their number was seven. They were from among the most eminent among the sons of Ephesus. They fled from king Decius when he demanded that they bow [and worship] the idols. [Also] during [his days] Antony the Egyptian monk, who populated the monasteries, [was born]. He is the first monk.	Dionysius came from among the Sabians.[39] He was a great philosopher and a prominent figure that entered the faith by reading the epistles of Paul.[40] He went to Demetrius who welcomed him and baptized him.[41] After Demetrius's repose, Heraclas appointed him his deputy and advisor[42] on account of his knowledge and intelligence. Paul of Samosata lived during his days. [Also] in his days, Mercurius was martyred at the hand of King Dacius in Rome. [Also] during [his days] the People of the Cave slept;[38] they were seven prominent individuals from Ephesus. Many were martyred in his days.
Length of Patriarchate: 19 years, 281 days[43] *Sum of the years [since the Birth of Christ]*:[44] 261 years, 13 days *Length of Patriarchate, beginning*: Wednesday *Length of Patriarchate, in days*: 7,220 *Length of Patriarchate, end*: Friday *Sum of days*: 95,343 *Year of Creation*: 5761, Thūt 13 *Name of king*: Claudius Caesar[45] *Tenure*: a single year *Sum of their years*: 261½	*Length of Patriarchate*: 19 years, 281 days[43] [*Date of Repose*]:[44] *anno Domini* 261, day 13 *Ruling Caesars*: Claudius, 1 year[45] *Year of Creation*: 5761, day 13

Notes

1 Abū Shākir ibn al-Rāhib, *Kitāb al-tawārīkh*, vol. 1, ed. Samuel Moawad; Adel Y. Sidarus, *Ibn ar-Rāhibs Leben und Werk*; idem, "Copto-Arabic Universal Chronography"; idem, "Les sources multiples de l'encyclopédie calendaristique et chronographique."
2 L. Cheikho, ed., *Petrus Ibn Rahib: Chronicon Orientale*, CSCO 45, pgs. 104–08.
3 Ar. *yuwsim*.
4 Traditionally, following Eutychius, Demetrius has been identified as the first Alexandrian bishop to ordain bishops in other Egyptian cities. Here, his predecessor Julian perhaps laid the groundwork by ordaining priests outside the city.
5 Cf. *Synaxarium*, 8th Baramhāt.
6 Cf. note 8, below.
7 Gordian III ruled for six years: 22 April 238 to 11 February 244.
8 The heading is "Date of the Birth [of Christ]" – that is *anno Domini*. The entry identifies the date of the patriarch's passing.
9 Pupienus did rule for three months: 22 April 238 to 29 July 238.
10 Lit.: "who will be over us patriarch after you?"
11 This should read, "eleventh" *after* Mark; the mistake is retained in most Arabic texts: see Text III, note 8, and Text II, note 56. The direct quote may end at this point.
12 Ar. *yataᶜajjabuna*: "amazed," "puzzled."
13 Jn. 10:11.
14 Ar. *sirr*, "secret," "mystery"; also "sacrament."
15 Ar. *al-Khamīs al-kabīr*, "Great Thursday." On the various dates for this miracle, see chapter seven and Texts II and III.
16 Prov. 6: 27–8.
17 As discussed in chapter seven, the "Raising of Incense" is a series of liturgical prayers in the Coptic rite. Here, the context clearly favors this lexical meaning rather than a literal one.
18 In keeping with the heightened liturgical context of this recension of the ordeal, this passage would indicate that each cleric took a turn offering prayers and added incense to the coals held in the outstretched tunic of Demetrius's wife.
19 Ar. *al-nār al-maḥsūsah*.
20 Arabic should read *ᶜālim* rather than *yaᶜlam*.
21 This tradition is erroneous. It overlooks the fact that this must have taken place very early in Demetrius's tenure, when he was sixty-three. If he died four months later, his tenure would have hardly lasted a year, let alone the traditional forty-three years recorded in most other sources, or the thirty-three, which Abū Shākir argues for just a few lines below.
22 See Jn. 5:41–4; 12:43; 1 Thess. 2:6.
23 1 Tim. 2:4; cf. Jn. 8:32; 17:8; 19:35; Tit. 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:9.
24 This is a misreading of the HP-V; see the discussion in chapter seven.
25 Ar. *ṣāḥib bidᶜah*.
26 This is a decade shy of his actual tenure; he was patriarch for forty-three years.
27 See note 8, above.
28 This places Demetrius's death at the beginning rather than the end of the reign of Emperor Severus Alexander (222–35 CE), who is not mentioned among the ruling Caesars.
29 Trajan Decius ruled for two years: 249 to June 251.
30 Philip I ruled for five years: February 244 to September/October 249.

31 Ar. *bābā*; Eusebius, *EH* 7.7.4; Eutychius, *Nazm*, I:110; also Text II n. 74, above.
32 Agapius (Maḥbūb ibn Qusṭanṭīn), Melkite bishop of Manbij (Hieropolis/Mabbug; d. 941 CE), and author of *Kitāb al-ʿunwān*, ed./trans. Alexander Vasiliev, PO 5.4, 7.4, 8.3, 11.1 (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1909–47).
33 Emperor Severus Alexander (222–35 CE). "Alexander son of Mamaea" is also attested in the patristic literature; see Text I.C.2. Nonetheless, "Mamaea" was never taken as an official part of the emperor's name. It is his maternal grandfather's name. His mother, Julia Avita Mamaea, was the major power behind the throne during her son's reign.
34 His tenure lasted for thirteen years; cf. *Syanxarium*, 8th Kyahk.
35 See note 8, above.
36 Valerian ruled for seven years: October 253–60. He is the only emperor listed in this entry.
37 Emperor Philip "the Arab" (244–49 CE). Of the entries translated here, this is the one that demonstrates the greatest divergence between *K. al-tawārīkh* and the *Chronicon*.
38 Ar. *ahl al-kahf*. The account of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus is of Syrian origin, where it may be positively identified by the mid-fifth century. It eventually made its way into the writings of various Christian authors and, later, into the Qur'ān: *sūrat al-kahf* (18:9–26). See Ernest Honigmann, "Stephen of Ephesus (April 15, 448–October 29, 451) and the Legend of the Seven Sleepers," in idem, Patristic Studies. Studi e testi, 173 (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1953), 125–68; S.P. Brock, "Jacob of Serugh's Poem on the Sleepers of Ephesus," in *"I Sowed Fruits into the Hearts" (Odes Sol. 17:13): Festschrift for Professor Michael Lattke*, ed. P. Allen, M. Franzmann, R. Strelan, Early Christian Studies 12 (Strathford: St. Paul's Publications, 2007), 13–30; Matthias Vogt, "Die Siebenschläfer – Funktion einer Legende," *Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientwissenschaft* 38 (2004), 223–47; James Drescher, *Three Coptic Legends: Hilaria, Archellites, the Seven Sleepers*, Supplément aux Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Egypte 4 (Cairo: IFAO, 1957).
39 The tradition that Dionysius was formerly a Sabian is in the *Synaxarium's* entry (13 of Baramhāt) and the HP (oddly, see the entry for Heraclas), but not in the *K. al-Tawārīkh*. The tradition betrays the Arabic environment of the recension; see Text III, note 122.
40 Also in *Synaxarium*, 13th Baramhāt.
41 The dates for Demetrius and Dionysius certainly overlap. The tradition placing Dionysius's baptism at the hands of Demetrius is cited here and in Dionysius's commemoration in the *Synaxarium*, 13th Baramhāt. Dionysius was a disciple of Origen: Eusebius, *EH* 6.29.5.
42 In this entry and the HP-P, *ḥākim* (ruler; sage, philosopher, "doctor") appears to be used for "philosopher." Hence, here "*nā'ibuh fī al-aḥkām*" may be read as an awkwardly phrased, "his deputy, teaching philosophy [in the Catechetical School]."
43 Dionysius's tenure was seventeen years; the *Synaxarium* is more accurate on that front.
44 See note 8, above.
45 Claudius ruled for one year and four months: September 268 to January 270.

TEXT VI

THE *SYNAKSĀR*

Coptic-Arabic *Synaxarium* (thirteenth century)

Traditionally, the drafting of the Coptic-Arabic *Synaksār* (*Synaxarium*) is attributed to the early thirteenth-century bishop of Malīj, Buṭrus Sawīrus al-Jamīl. Nonetheless, the attribution is complicated by the lack of early manuscripts of that book and its reliance on the vulgate recension of the HP, which was completed by the middle of the thirteenth century. Bishop Buṭrus's authorship is still possible, but, demonstrably, the *Synaksār* evolved over time and due to regional variations in the liturgical cycle. Writing in the early fourteenth century, Abū al-Barakāt ibn Kabar (d. 1324 CE) had access to this or a similar recension of the *synaksār* as that documented in the editions by J. Forget and R. Basset, which are the basis for the following translations rather than the ecclesiastical edition in current use (see the discussion in chapter two).

The commemoration cited in the Coptic *Encomium on Demetrius*, the twenty-fifth of Thūt, is not attested in any Arabic source. The late-eleventh-century primitive recension of the HP (Text III) cites the first and the third commemorations below. The second entry, focusing on the *Epact* calculations and the reform of Lent, is likely a later addition (see chapters two and eight). The fourth lection, that for the fourth of Baramhāt, is not a tribute *per se*, but it is the only passage that positions the patriarch within the context of the Quartodeciman controversy, though several details in that entry are either unattested or cannot be verified.

A. Twelfth of Bābah / Paopi

(23 October Gregorian / 10th Julian)[1]

First lection: On this day Saint Matthew the Evangelist was martyred . . .

Second lection: [59] On this [day] also, the saint, the pure virgin, who fought against lust,[2] the conqueror of [human] nature, Father [60] Demetrius, the Patriarch of Alexandria, who was the twelfth in the enumeration of the patriarchs rested [in the Lord]. This saint was an illiterate peasant, who did not know how to write. He had married a woman, and remained

with her until he became patriarch. Forty-seven years they remained together as pure virgins, and no one knew of their [way of life], except for he who knows what is hidden in the heart.[3]

When the repose of Father Julian, who preceded [Demetrius], drew near, an angel of the Lord appeared to [Father Julian] and informed him about this saint, and that he would become patriarch after him. [The angel] gave him a sign [to identify him]. He told [Julian], "Tomorrow, one will come to you with a cluster of grapes. Seize him and consecrate him patriarch."[4] When Saint Julian regained his senses, he told the bishops and clergy who were accompanying him about the dream.[5]

Now, on the following morning, this Saint, [Demetrius,] found a cluster of grapes out of season in the vineyard. He took it to Father Julian, seeking his blessing, but [Julian] clasped his hand and proclaimed to the congregation, "This is your patriarch after me!" Then he prayed over him. Now [Demetrius] was filled with heavenly grace, and learned many fields of study,[6] and he mastered[7] the ecclesiastical books and their commentaries. He commented on many subjects and fields of study.[8]

It was he who established the calculation of the Epact. *For the faithful in his day would be baptized and then fast on the day following [the feast of] Epiphany until they complete forty days. Then, they would celebrate a feast.*[9] *Then, during the week of unleavened bread*,[10] *they would celebrate the Week of Passion [and the Resurrection] separately.*[11] *[This remained the practice] until the tenure of this father who spoke of the* Epact *in the Spirit, and arranged the calculation for [the Great] fast. He circulated [the* Epact *calculation] in letters that he sent to every leader among the leaders of Rome, Antioch, Ephesus, and Jerusalem. They preferred it [to what they were using], and have followed it until this very day*.[12]

God was with this father because of his purity.[13] He would see the Lord Christ during the Eucharist, administering with his hand the oblation to those who are deserving and turning away[14] sinners. [Demetrius] would reproach [sinners] and reveal their sins in front of the congregation,[15] and prevent them from receiving the oblation. He would say to them, "Go, repent! Then come to receive the holy mysteries. This is so that you may not be taken [from this world] while you persist in your sins and go to hell."

His flock remained steadfast during his tenure, and no one dared to sin, fearing [61] that [their sins] would be revealed before the congregation. The faithful would warn each other, fearing that they might fall into sin and perish.

When some among the members of the congregation had misgivings about him because he was married, the angel of the Lord appeared to him and commanded him to reveal the secret[16] he shared with his wife to the faithful, fearing that they would otherwise perish because of him. Thus, [Demetrius] revealed the [secret] to them.

During his tenure, some heretics appeared, some of which were Clement,[17] Origen, and Arius,[18] among others. They wrote deceitful books, so he anathematized and excommunicated them. He did not cease throughout his patriarchate from teaching and confirming the faithful daily. As he aged and became frail, he would be carried on an apparatus to church, where he would teach from dawn until dusk, as people came to him constantly.

He completed a hundred and five years,[19] of which fifteen were before his marriage, forty-seven years before he became patriarch, and forty-three years in the leadership [of the church]. Then he was reposed in peace.

May the blessing of his prayer be with us. Amen.

B. Tenth of Hatūr / Hathor

(20 November Gregorian / 7th Julian)[20]

First lection: On this day, the saintly pure virgins, the fifty nuns, and their mother Sophia were martyred . . .

Second lection: [101] On this [day] also a holy synod convened in the city of Rome during the days of Victor, the Pope of that city, and in the days of Demetrius, the Pope of Alexandria. That council convened because after Christians were baptized, they would fast the Great Fast on the following day; that is, the twelfth of Tūbah [20 January]. Then they would celebrate the end of the fast[21] on the twenty-second day of Amshīr [1 March].[22] Then they would celebrate the Passion and the Resurrection after they had ceased fasting for some time.

When Father Demetrius came into office, he was a peasant, unable to write or read books, but God enlightened his mind through divine grace, so that he came to know all the books of the church. He mastered[23] them, and commented on most of them. Then he deduced the *Epact* calculation, by which he calculated [the beginning] of the [Great] fast and the [Feast of the] Resurrection. He published it in Coptic and Greek, and then sent a copy to Father Victor, the Pope of Rome, and a copy to Father Maximus, Patriarch of Antioch, and a copy to Father Agapius in Jerusalem.[24] When the letter reached Father Victor, the Pope [of Rome], and he read it, he greatly preferred [Demetrius's calculation] and was very pleased with it.[25] He summoned fourteen scholarly bishops from within his jurisdiction, as well as a group from among scholarly priests, and he read the calculation [of the *Epact*] to them. They preferred it [to what they were using], adopted it, and made several copies of it, which they distributed to the other dioceses.[26] Thus, the Holy Fast and the [Feast of the] glorious Resurrection[27] [102] have been arranged [within the liturgical cycle] as they are today.

All [the Roman clergy then] departed, glorifying God, and his Only Begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit, to whom is praise and dignity forever. Amen.

C. Twelfth of Baramhāt / Paremhat

(21 March Gregorian / 8th Julian)[28]

First lection: On this day, we celebrate the commemoration of the pure Archangel Michael . . .

Second lection: [21] And on this [day] we celebrate the revelation of the virginity of Saint Demetrius the Patriarch of Alexandria. The details of its revelation are [as follows]: On the night before Saint Julian, the Patriarch of Alexandria, was reposed,[29] the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "You are departing for Christ; now, the one who will come to you tomorrow bearing a cluster of grapes, he is the one qualified to succeed you as patriarch." On the following day, [when] this saint came with a cluster of grapes, Father [Julian] seized him, and called to the congregation, "This is your patriarch after me!" He then relayed to them [what] the angel of the Lord [had told him]. [The congregants] seized [Demetrius] and ordained him patriarch.

[Now Demetrius] had been married, but no married patriarch had been appointed to the Throne of Alexandria except this saint. Then Satan influenced the congregation, and they began to slander and criticize [Demetrius's] ministry on account of his marital status. Then, the angel of the Lord appeared to Saint Demetrius and said to him, "Some among the congregants are suffering loss on your account; it is appropriate that you should remove doubt from their hearts and reveal to them the type of life[30] you lead with your wife." But [Demetrius] refused this matter. [Then] the angel of the Lord said to him, "It is inappropriate that you should save yourself and cause another to perish on your account. If you are a shepherd, then strive for the salvation of your congregation."

Now, on the following morning, that is the Twelfth of Baramhāt, he ministered the service [22] of the liturgy, and then commanded the congregants to remain so he may meet with them. He then commanded that a fire be lit in the middle of the church, and he sent to the women's house to bring his wife.[31] [The congregants] were astonished by his actions, for they did not understand what he was doing. He then stood up, prayed, and walked[32] over the fire as it blazed. Then he took [burning coals] from it and placed them in the hem of his liturgical vestment,[33] and he proceeded to pray for hours as he stood over the fire, with the [burning coals] in his vestment. He then called to his wife and turned over the [coals] on to her tunic,[34] and then he continued to pray for a long while, and nothing was burned on either garment.

The congregants were amazed and asked Father [Demetrius] to explain why he had performed this [sign]. Hence, he divulged the type of life[35] he led with his wife, [detailing] how his parents married him without his consent, and that his wife had no desire to marry. And that [even though] they

had been married for forty-eight years, sleeping on one bed, under the same covering, that he had never come to know her as a man knows a woman. Moreover, that throughout that whole time, the angel of God would descend every night and cover them with its wings, [adding] that he had not revealed this [matter] to anyone that whole time, [nor would he,] had the Lord not commanded him to do so.

The congregants were amazed by what they had seen and heard, and they praised the Lord Christ, and they asked [Demetrius] to forgive them the sins they committed toward him.[36] He accepted their apology and forgave them. He then blessed them and dismissed them to [return to] their homes, glorifying the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, proclaiming the wondrous [things] they had seen.

May his blessings and prayers be with us. Amen.

Third lection: On this [day] is the commemoration of Saint Malachi the martyr in the land of Palestine. May his prayers be with us. Amen.

D. Fourth of Baramhāt / Paremhat

(13 March Gregorian / 28 February Julian)[37]

First Lection: On this day, a council convened in the island of Banī ʿUmar[38] concerning a faction known as the Quartodecimans.[39] [The members of that sect] would celebrate the glorious Feast of Easter[40] along with the Jews on the fourteenth of the lunar [month] of Nisan, regardless of the day of the week it fell on. The bishop of the island stopped them; then he sent letters to Serapion, Patriarch of Antioch (191–211), [197] Demokrates, Pope of Rome,[41] Demetrius, Patriarch of Alexandria (189–232), and to Symmachus the bishop of Jerusalem.[42] He informed them about the innovation of that faction. Each of [the hierarchs then] sent a letter [to the bishop of the island] in which they stipulated that the feast is not to be celebrated except on the Sunday that follows the feast of the Jews, and that whoever transgresses that [rule] is excommunicated.

Now eighteen bishops gathered at the [abovementioned council], and these holy letters were read to them. They [then] summoned the dissidents, and the letters were read to them. Some of them abandoned their erroneous belief, but others persisted in their folly.[43] Those [who refused to abandon their practice] were excommunicated and banned [from communion]. [The fathers at the council] established the celebration of the Feast [of Easter][44] according to the commandments of the holy apostles who stated that whoever celebrates the day of the Resurrection of the Lord on a day other than Sunday has joined the Jews in their feasts, and has separated from the Christians. May God guard us and save us from the temptation of Satan. Amen.

Notes

1 J. Forget, ed., *Synaxarium*, CSCO 46, pgs. 59–61; cf. R. Basset, ed./trans., *Le Synaxaire arabe-jacobite*, PO I.3.3, pgs. 118–21.
2 The same honorific title is in the *EncDem*, *fol.* 38v.
3 Cf. 1 Cor. 4:5; 14:25.
4 Ar. *ṣallī ʿalayhī baṭriyarkan*; cf. Maged S. A. Mikhail, *From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt*, 209–12.
5 This vision is presented as though it came about in an ecstatic state.
6 Ar. *ʿulūm kathīrah*.
7 Ar. *ḥafiẓa*: "retain," "memorize," "become well acquainted with," "study," "take complete possession of."
8 Ar. *ʿulūm kathīrah*.
9 Here, I followed the reading in CSCO page 60, note 9. The Arabic text is literally, "and celebrate Easter" (*ʿīd al-fiṣḥ*), which makes very little sense in the context of this paragraph; cf. note 27 below, and Text VII, note 2.
10 Ar. *al-fiṭīr*.
11 See notes 9 and 27 here. To read the passage as is would mean that they celebrated Easter at the end of that fast and then celebrated it again after they observed Passion Week.
12 Although this commemoration is attested in the late eleventh century (HP-P), this *Synaxarium* entry would have been composed by the late thirteenth century. Significantly, in the context of this entry, this passage (in italics) on the *Epact* is out of sequence and is likely a later interpolation borrowed from the entry for Hatūr 10, below. Once removed, the natural flow of the entry is resumed.
13 It is not clear where that initial sentence ends. It may be that God was with him or that he was able to see the vision of Christ "because of his purity."
14 Or "expel."
15 Ar. *al-nās*, "people;" cf. Coptic *prōme*.
16 Ar. *sirr*.
17 This is likely due to a rather hasty reading of Part Two of the *sīrah*. There, Clement is mentioned before Origen and "Arius" (see the following note), but he is not included as a heretic along with them in that text. Clement was accused of heresy in the middle ages on rather questionable basis; see Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria on Trial: the Evidence of "Heresy" from Photius' Bibliotheca* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2009).
18 "Arius" follows the reading in pg. 61 n.2b; otherwise, read "Elias." This is not the famous Arius, but "Arius the Jew" who is accused of circulating a fraudulent writing under the name of Saint Peter; see Part Two of the *sīrah*, and Text III, at notes 103 and 106.
19 On the significance of the 105-year lifespan, see chapter four, note 68.
20 J. Forget, ed., *Synaxarium*, CSCO 46, pgs. 101–02; cf. R. Basset, ed./trans., *Le Synaxaire arabe-jacobite*, PO 3.3.13, pgs. 198–99.
21 Ar. *fiṣḥ al-ṣawm*. See note 27, below.
22 This would seem to account for a forty-day Lent, including Saturdays and Sundays, which preceded Holy Week. This is not the Coptic observance of Lent at the time of Abū al-Barakāt, but it is what the Melkites observed at that time. As discussed in chapter eight, this whole tradition finds its origins with the Melkite patriarch Eutychius. From the 330s to the seventh century, the Christians of Egypt observed a forty-day (six-week) Lent that *included* Holy Week. Beginning in the late seventh or early eighth century, the Melkites adopted a seven-week cycle while the Copts followed an eight-week observance. See chapter eight, Text IV, and Maged S. A. Mikhail, "The Evolution of Lent in Alexandria."

23 See note 7, above.
24 Ar. *al-bayt al-muqaddas*.
25 The difficulty here is that Rome and Alexandria followed the same reckoning for Easter.
26 Ar. *al-karāsī*.
27 Ar. *al-fiṣḥ*, typically meant the "Passover," which is routinely used in Christian Arabic to reference the Week of Passion and Easter, or Easter alone. This is in keeping with the Christian understanding that the Passion and Resurrection of Christ are the true Passover. The term may also be used, as in note 21 above, as "feast" or "celebration," a synonym for *ʿīd*.
28 J. Forget, ed., *Synaxarium*, CSCO 47, pgs. 21–2; cf. R. Basset, ed./trans., *Le Synaxaire arabe-jacobite*, PO 16.2, pgs. 217–19.
29 Lit.: "when Saint Julian the Patriarch of Alexandria was on the night of his repose."
30 Ar. *sīratak*.
31 This sentence seems to contradict the well-established motif evidenced in the Coptic encomium and both recensions of the HP; namely, that the patriarch and his wife shared the same house and bed before and *after* his ordination. See chapter five.
32 Ar. *masha*; "stood," *waqafa*, is a variant in some manuscripts; pg. 22 n.2.
33 Ar. *ghaffārah*, is lexical in Christian Arabic to designate a cope.
34 Ar. *izār*: a "wrap," "shawl," or "covering."
35 Ar. *sīratahu*.
36 Here, the Arabic literally reads: "the sins they committed because of him." The odd reading was omitted from some manuscripts.
37 J. Forget, ed., *Synaxarium*, CSCO 47, pgs. 18–9; cf. R. Basset, ed./trans., *Le Synaxaire arabe-jacobite*, PO 16.2, pgs. 196–97.
38 I am unable to identify this island. There is a Wadi Banī ʿUmar in Oman, but it is a landlocked location. There is a single passing reference to the Island of Ibn ʿUmar in al-Maqrīzī's *Khiṭāṭ* (4.805; *ibn*, "son of"; *bani*, "sons of"), but that location appears to be in Egypt.
39 Ar. *arbaʿata ʿashariyah*, "fourteeners."
40 Ar. *al-fiṣḥ*.
41 I am unable to account for this figure.
42 Ar. *al-bayt al-muqaddas*. I am unable to account for this bishop. The closest possibility is a poorly documented Bishop Symmachus of Jerusalem who died prior to 162 CE – long before Demetrius became bishop.
43 Lit.: "their darkness."
44 Ar. *al-fiṣḥ*.

TEXT VII

ABŪ AL-BARAKĀT'S *MUṢBĀḤ AL-ẒULMĀ (A LAMP IN THE DARKNESS)*

Writing in the early fourteenth century, Abū al-Barakāt's discussion of Demetrius is clearly informed by the late Arabic tradition. The passage translated below appears to be heavily influenced by the content and wording of the *Synaxarium*'s entry for the Twelfth of Bābah, which Abu al-Barakāt augmented with florid language. Nonetheless, a few of the glosses he added, while understandable in light of his apologetic goals (see chapter eight), are historically inaccurate.

Demetrius's Lenten reform[1]

(Cf. Synaxarium's entries for the 12th of Bābah and 10th of Hatūr)

Our holy fathers, the pure apostles, along with the faithful who accompanied them, would [begin to] fast the Holy Forty Days on the day after Epiphany, that is the twelfth of Tūbah [20 January]. And they would celebrate a glorious feast on the twenty-second of Amshīr [1 March].[2] They would [later] observe[3] Passion Week after that by [many] days, and they concluded it with the Feast of the Resurrection. [This was the practice] until the days of the Holy Father, patriarch *anba* Demetrius, the twelfth patriarch of Alexandria. He was a peasant who could not read at all or write well, but God enlightened[4] him through the Spirit of Grace, so that he knew all the books of the church, delved deeply into their meaning, and commented on many of them. He was [divinely] inspired to set the *Epact* calculation, and to reform the observance of the holy fast according to the current practice, in which it concludes with the Week of Passion, and the celebration of the glorious Feast [of the Resurrection] on the appointed month and time. He sent news of this to Father Peter,[5] patriarch of Rome, and to the Patriarch of Constantinople, and the Patriarch of Antioch. They agreed upon [Demetrius's reform], and it was thus maintained ever since.

Notes

1 This translation is based on Abū al-Barakāt's *Muṣbāḥ al-ẓulmā*, ch. 18, pg. 140.
2 One would anticipate "the glorious feast [of the Resurrection]." Here, Abū al-Barākat is following the same odd reading in the *Synaxarium*'s entry for the Twelfth of Bābah; see Text VI and notes 9 and 21. As in that entry, the context here would eliminate the obvious reading.
3 Ar. *yaᶜmalūn*.
4 Ar. *anara*.
5 On the various mistakes in this entry, see chapter eight, note 4.

TEXT VIII

THE *DIFNĀR* (ANTIPHONARIUM)

The Antiphonarium, or *Difnār*, commemorates saints in verse according to the liturgical calendar. It is chanted during the Midnight Praises of the Coptic rite (the *ibsalmūdiya*). That said, most entries appear to have been originally composed in prose and are simply chanted according to the prescribed tones (hence, the text is sometimes divided into quatrains). In a full entry, a saint would have two hymns. One is chanted in the "Adam" tone when the commemoration falls on Sunday through Tuesday. The other hymn is chanted in the longer "Batos" (*wāṭus*) tone when the commemoration falls on the other days of the week. Only Demetrius's entry on the Twelfth of Baramhāt has two hymns; the others have only one. While such anomalies are common in that composition, it would appear, nonetheless, that that entry constitutes the primary commemoration for Demetrius in the *Difnār*.

The oldest surviving recension of the Coptic *Difnār* dates to the late ninth century,[1] but it does not commemorate Demetrius. Today, that unique text remains something of an anomaly since none of the hitherto identified manuscripts of that composition date prior to the eighteenth century, and only one of those may bear a fourteenth-century recension of the work.[2] Consistently, the details documented in the entries below reflect the readings and tropes of the late Arabic tradition.

The following translations are based on two editions: one is in Coptic, and the other is a hybrid Coptic-Arabic text. Nonetheless, both editions are very similar, differing largely in the occasional switching between the second and third grammatical person ("you" becomes "he"). Moreover, as several scholars have argued, it appears that the Coptic edition is likely a translation of the Arabic entries; hence, my preference for the Arabic readings when there is a divergence. De Lacy O'Leary edited an eighteenth-century all-Coptic manuscript (with Arabic headings) in his *The Difnar (Antiphonarium) of the Coptic Church* (London, 1926–30).[3] The second edition is the current Coptic-Arabic ecclesiastical version published by the diocese of Bani Suif in 1989. Each entry in that publication begins with a few lines in Coptic, followed by the full Arabic entry. In current practice, the Coptic is chanted in tone then the Arabic text is read out loud according to a rhythm.

A. Twelfth of Bābah (23 October)[4]

(Commemoration of Demetrius's repose)

On this holy day is your venerable commemoration, our father, the Patriarch *anba* Demetrius the celibate. For the God of heaven sent him to us for the peace of the church. Thus, the priests rejoiced, and the deacons cheered, and the seven pure orders that belong to the house of the living God have received bountiful blessings from Jesus Christ. O pure virgin, who is clothed in true humility, the teacher of truth, *anba* Demetrius the patriarch, ask the Lord on our behalf that he may forgive us our sins.

B. Tenth of Hatūr (20 November)[5]

(Commemoration of the Epact Calculation and the Reform of Lent)

In the "Wāṭus" tone

Christ has chosen you, O great shepherd, our father *anba* Demetrius, [as] the head of the clergy of Alexandria. For in the days of this father, a synod convened in Rome, the holy city, in the days of Pope *anba* Victor. For the Christians would be baptized during the Feast of Epiphany, and then fast. After they would break their fast, they would observe the Week of the Passion of Christ, after the holy fast. When Christ willed, he established a luminous pillar, which is *anba* Demetrius the honorable patriarch. He derived the *Epact* [calculation], in the Spirit and wisdom, which Christ granted him because of the purity of his heart. He wrote three copies, and sent [the *Epact* calculation] to the three patriarchs in the world.[6] They rejoiced at its reception, and established the [Great] Fast and Pascha [as they are today] to the end of the ages. May their blessings be with us. Pray to the Lord on our behalf, our father, the saintly patriarch,[7] *anba* Demetrius, that he may forgive us our sins.

C. Twelfth of Baramhāt (21 March)[8]

(Commemoration of the revelation of Demetrius's virginity)

In the "Adam" tone

Blessed are you, our father Demetrius, who was chosen by Christ our God because of his great purity. He entrusted an angel to cover your bed, while you lay in it with your wife, who must be [also] praised. Forty-eight years

of virginity until God revealed your virtue to those who complained against you from among the congregation. For because of the abundance of your purity and virginity, and that of your saintly, pure, virgin wife, you placed burning coals in your palladium and in her tunic for a long time. They were not worn away or burned on account of your sincere prayers and purity. When the people witnessed this, they glorified God and your [holy] state. They repented and praised your fatherhood, and asked for your forgiveness. As for you, our father, you blessed them and they returned to their homes praising God – he who performs great wonders through his saints and those who follow his commandments. Intercede for all of us before our savior that he may have mercy upon us.

In the "Wāṭus" tone

Indeed, your holy commemoration has dawned upon us along with your perfect virginity, our father *anba* Demetrius. All the tribes of earth have been blessed by you – you who are great among the patriarchs, our father *anba* Demetrius. Those who doubted you, [now] praise you once they saw the wonder [that you performed]. Thus, they praised our Savior. Then they give forth a holy crop of a hundred, sixty, and thirtyfold, as is stated in the holy Gospel.[9] Who can count the miracles you have performed, great shepherd of the flock of Christ? We, your children, truly rejoice when we recall your purity and your angelic life. And the Holy Spirit, the Comforter,[10] who spoke to your heart, and upon your lips like the apostles, to whom you are a son. He spoke in the Holy Spirit with the *Epact* calculation, and you established with it [the date of] the Feast [of the Resurrection] and the [other] spiritual feasts. They were accepted by the faithful in the four corners of the earth, and with joy they praised your fatherhood. As David the prophet said, "The righteous will be remembered forever."[11] You have filled every place, especially the districts of Egypt, with the sweet smell of incense, which is of your holy purity.

Notes

1 Maria Cramer and Martin Krause, ed./trans., *Das koptische Antiphonar*, Jerusalemer Theologisches Forum 12 (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2008).
2 See Emile Maher Ishaq, "Difnar," *Coptic Encyclopedia*, 900–01.
3 Mr. Ashraf Hanna has edited and translated many of the entries in O'Leary's edition, which he has checked against several other editions. His work may be read at <stmarkla.org/download>.
4 In both editions consulted here, the entry for Demetrius on the Twelfth of Bābah appears to be something of an appendix to the main entries.
5 In both recensions, Demetrius is only commemorated in the *Batus* hymn.
6 Ar.: *maskūnah*.
7 Lit.: *anba al-qiddīs al-baṭriark*.

8 In comparison to the other two entries above, it would appear that this is Demetrius's primary commemoration in the *Difnār*.
9 Mt. 13:23.
10 Jn. 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7.
11 Cf. Ps. 112:6.

TEXT IX

DOXOLOGIES AND PRAISES

Arabic and Bohairic-Coptic

In addition to his commemorations within the liturgical calendar, in current practice, Demetrius is routinely referenced in every Coptic liturgy during the Diptych (Commemoration of the Saints). On the Twelfth of Bābah, which commemorates his passing, seasonal liturgical texts may also be changed; two are translated below. The first, the Liturgical Greeting/praise (*asbasmus*), would have been chanted right after the Kiss of Peace, the beginning of the Coptic Liturgy of the Faithful proper. Although attested, this greeting has fallen out of current use. The second is a doxology that may be chanted during the services of Matins, Vespers, or the Midnight Praises (*ibsalmūdiya*).

A. A liturgical greeting

(A *salam* or *asbasmus* for the Twelfth of Bābah[1])

Hail to Demetrius
who ordered abstinence from drink
and organized fasting from foods
for the fifty days!
Had this not been under the inspiration
of the Spirit who reveals
how could it have been possible
to discover and find the calculations
of the periods of time called *Epact*.
Hail to you, priests
be thanked and praised
for having come with diligence and without delay
to the meeting place of the assembly.
Where the calculation of *Epact*
dictated by the Holy Spirit

was communicated to you
by the venerable Demetrius.
Hail, Demetrius
to your hands that wrote
the computation of past epacts
and that of future epacts.
[Today through the grace of Christ
he displays the virtues of his virginity
by wrapping the fire in his bosom and in the clothing of his wife
for the people who doubted.][2]

B. A doxology

(To be chanted on the Twelfth of Bābah[3])

You are great indeed
among the patriarchs,
O anba Demetrius the Vinedresser,
on account of your deed, which is full of wonder.
For you lived with your wife,
in holy virginity,
God covered both of you,
in your bed to strengthen your resolve.
God revealed
the sign of your leadership
when you brought the cluster of grapes
to the patriarch outside of its season.
When they appointed you patriarch,
your mind was enlightened,
thus you organized the Epact calculations
that we may celebrate the Resurrection.
You would see Christ our God
at the time of communion,
as he would draw the worthy to himself4
and send sinners afar.
When the people complained because of you,
you revealed your secret to them
after the liturgy you completed,
as the angel had instructed you.
You placed fire in your tunic,
and you held it with your wife,
and both of you turned around in their midst,

thus the smell of virginity spread.
Ask the Lord [on our behalf],
my lord, father, the patriarch,
anba Demetrius the Vinedresser,
that he may forgive [us our sins].

Notes

1 This is the translation provided by Samir Khalil in "Book of Epact," *Coptic Encyclopedia*, 410. I have not been able to locate this text otherwise, though A.A. Mosshammer (*Eastern Computus*, 112) cites either the same text or its Ethiopic translation based on Hiob Ludolf's *Ad suam Historiam aethiopicam antehac editam Commentarius, in quo multa breviter dicta fusius narrantur* (Frankfurt am Main: Sumptibus Johannis David Zunneri, Typis Martini Jacqueti, 1691), 438–39, 448.

2 Jeffrey Burton Russell was kind enough to translate this last stanza from Ludolf's Latin.

3 The following is my translation. I have not been able to identify this printed text; it is likely published in one of the new doxology books used in Egypt, which are very poorly catalogued. I was able to retrieve a PDF copy of the printed edition, but, unfortunately, while easy to navigate, the site does not provide bibliographic information for the texts it posts: see http://home.massarra.org/samina/Saints/0_Main_index/A_08.htm (accessed December 3, 2015).

4 "Draw near" (*yuqarrib*) retains the literal meaning, which is contrasted in the following stanza, but it is also a common expression for "to receive communion," which fits the liturgical context here.

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