Andra Jugănaru

DAILY LIFE IN THE MIXED AND DOUBLE MONASTERIES OF THE

LATE ANTIQUE NEAR EAST

MA Thesis in Medieval Studies

Central European University

Budapest

May 2013

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ANTIQUE NEAR EAST**

by

Andra Jugănaru

(Romania)

Thesis submitted to the Department of Medieval Studies,

Central European University, Budapest, in partial fulfillment of the requirements

of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies.

Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU.

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Chair, Examination Committee

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Examiner

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I, the undersigned, **Andra Jugănaru**, candidate for the MA degree in Medieval Studies, declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

Budapest, __ May 2013

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Signature

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is my pleasure to express my gratitude towards those who supported me throughout this academic year. This thesis is the fruit of my close collaboration with Marianne Sághy and Volker Menze, who supervised my work and helped me to finish it. I owe special thanks to Marianne Sághy for her unceasing encouragements, patience, and guidance. Due to her advice I chose to apply for a research grant in Rome, where the Library of the Patristic Institute Augustinianum and the American Academy in Rome provided me valuable materials for my thesis.

I am grateful to Judith Rasson for her interest in my research and for improving my language, to József Laszlovszky, György Geréby, Katalin Szende, Gábor Buzási, Cristian Gaşpar, for their comments and advice, and to Annabella Pál and Csilla Dobos for the assistance they always offered me.

I would also like to give my warm thanks to the librarians from ELTE-CEU Medieval Library, Ágnes Havasi and Borbála Lovas, for their constant help and kindness.

Last but not least, I thank all my colleagues and friends who generously motivated and supported me during this year.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCSL - *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*

LR – *The Longer Responses*

PL – *Patrologia Latina*

SR – *The Shorter Responses*

INTRODUCTION

Key-Concepts and Case-Studies

In the fourth century, a special type of monastic life emerged among cenobites. It involved groups of men and women who belonged to a single ascetic community, forming what the secondary literature called "mixed" and "double" monasteries, differentiated according to the proximity of the two groups. In double monasteries monks and nuns lived separately, in different buildings, in some cases at considerable distances. Sources even indicate "natural borders," such as rivers and mountains, which separated the monks' from the nuns' sites. In contrast, in mixed monasteries, monks and nuns cohabitated. [1]

Proximity between groups of monks and nuns was intriguing, due to the great danger of fornication waylaying them. In these conditions, why and how did men and women live an ascetic Christian life in close proximity or even in cohabitation? This is the chief question that this thesis aims to address, by analyzing three examples of fourth-century double monasteries in the Near East.

The earliest double community, founded at the beginning of the fourth century by Pachomius at Tabennesi (Upper Egypt), included a male monastery and a female convent built for his sister, Maria. In the middle of the same century, Macrina and her brothers, Basil the Great and Naucratius, transformed their house in Annisa (Cappadocia) into a small "family" mixed monastery, which evolved to a larger double one. The third monastery discussed in this thesis was founded at the end of the century in Bethlehem by Jerome and his brother Paulinianus, together with the former's faithful disciples, the Roman noblewomen Paula and her daughter Eustochium.

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[1] Daniel F. Stramara, "Double Monasticism in the Greek East, Fourth through Eighth Centuries," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 2 (1998): 271-273.

1

Sources

Although none of the terms "διπλοῦν μοναστήριον" and "duplex monasterium" is attested before the sixth century,[2] the use of this denomination for fourth-century communities is appropriate, since their contemporary sources describe the same ascetic phenomenon. For each of the three double communities discussed in this paper only written evidences survived, varying from hagiographic texts to normative rules and epistles.

The monastery in Tabennesi is mentioned by *Paralipomena*,[3] the letter of Bishop Ammon to Theophilos,[4] *The Lausiac History* of Palladius[5] the *History of the Monks in Egypt*,[6] and the *Apophthegmata*.[7] Chapter 32 of Palladius' *Historia Lausiaca*, a collection of stories about Egyptian desert fathers written around 420, is one of the most relevant sources about Egyptian monasticism and, with some reserves, about the monastery in Tabennesi.[8] In addition, various *Lives of Saint Pachomius* and *Lives of Theodore*,[9] along with the Rules of Pachomius,[10] document the organization of the monastery. Special attention must be given to the hagiographic texts of the "Pachomian dossier." Pachomius' *Lives* have survived in Coptic,[11] in Greek[12], Latin[13], Arabic, and Syriac. The Rules are comprised in four different

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[2] Ibid., 271-272.

[3] "Paralipomena," ed. and trans. Armand Veilleux, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, *Pachomian Chronicles and Rules* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1981), 19-70.

[4] "Letter of Bishop Ammon," in Ibid., vol. 2, 71-110.

[5] "Draguet Fragment 1," in Ibid., vol. 2, 111-114; "Draguet Fragment 2," in Ibid., vol. 2, 115-120; Palladius, "The Lausiac History," in Ibid., vol. 2, 123-137.

[6] Palladius, "The History of the Monks in Egypt," in Ibid., vol. 2, 121-122.

[7] "Apophthegmata," in Ibid., vol. 2, 137-138.

[8] Palladius completed his own experience as a monk in Lower Egypt with legends. For the monastery in Tabennesi, he must have relied on sources which have not survived until now. He did not visit Pachomian monasteries, his tone of writing about them being very distant and impersonal, see: Joseph Dyer, "Monastic Psalmody of the Middle Ages," *Revue bénédictine* 99 (1989): 45.

[9] *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, *The Life of Saint Pachomius and His Disciples*, trans. Armand Veilleux, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1980).

[10] "The Rules of Saint Pachomius," ed. and trans. Armand Veilleux, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 141-196.

[11] Among its many recensions,, the Sahidic text S1, preserved only as a fragment, is the oldest text, and the Bohairic *Life* is the most complete version (though, from the ninth century), see: "Introduction," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 2.

[12] With six recensions, among which G1 is the oldest (written around 390) of all the texts, see: Satoshi Toda, "Pachomian Monasticism and Poverty," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 5, *Poverty and Riches,* ed. Geoffrey D. Dunn, David Luckensmeyer, Lawrence Cross (Strathfield, Australia: St. Paul's Publications, 2009), 194.

[13] Translated in the sixth century from G2 by Dionysius Exiguus.

parts, *Precepts* (*Prec.*), *Precepts and Institutes* (*Inst.*), *Precepts and Judges* (*Jud.*), and *Precepts and Laws* (*Leg.*). All of them were translated into Latin and accompanied by a *Preface* (*Pref.*) in 404 by Jerome after Paula's death, for the double community that both of them had founded in Bethlehem. A part of *Precepts* has been preserved in Coptic. Jerome also translated into Latin the *Letters* of Pachomius, and a Greek text and Coptic fragments have survived as well.[14] This thesis relies on the first Greek and the Bohairic *Lives of Pachomius*, the Rules, and the *Pachomian Chronicles*.[15]

For the monastery in Annisa, the most important source is *The Life of Saint Macrina*, written by her brother, Gregory of Nyssa.[16] Macrina is also mentioned in Gregory of Nazianzus' letters[17] and epigrams.[18] Among the many letters of Macrina's brother, Basil the Great, unfortunately none refers explicitly to his sister, but four of them and a homily in which he described and lauded the monastery in Annisa have survived.[19] The organization of the monastery followed the Rules included in Basil's *Asketikon*. The first edition (the *Small*

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[14] These letters were written in a cryptic way, which makes their interpretation difficult, see: Satoshi Toda, "Pachomian Monasticism and Poverty," 191-192. In the same article, the methodology used by Armand Veilleux in his English translation of the entire "Pachomian dossier" in the three volumes of the *Pachomian Koinonia* is criticized. See ibid., 192-193.

[15] John Cassian also referred to the Pachomian Rules in the *Preface* of his *Institutes*, written around 417-425. Yet, it is not relevant for the topic of this thesis, since it does not refer to the Tabennesi monastery, which the author have never visited. See Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in the East and West. The Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*, 2nd revised edition (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 58.

[16] Gregory of Nyssa, "Life of Macrina," ed. and trans. Anna M. Silvas, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger, Philosopher of God* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 109-148. The editor based her translation on the critical edition of Pierre Maraval, in Grégoire de Nysse, *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, ed. and trans. Pierre Maraval (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1971).

[17] Gregory of Nyssa, "Letter 19," ed. and trans. Anna M. Silvas, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 83-92. Gregory of Nyssa, "Letter 19. To a Certain John, Especially on Macrina," in Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, ed. and trans. Anna M. Silvas (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 172-180. As in the previous case, the editor considered the letter published in the critical edition of Pierre Maraval, Grégoire de Nysse, "Lettre 19. À un certain Jean, sur divers sujets et sur le mode de vie et le caractère de sa célèbre sœur Macrine," in Grégoire de Nysse, *Lettres*, trad. Pierre Maraval (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1971), 242-257.

[18] "Epigrams of Gregory the Theologian," ed. and trans. Anna M. Silvas, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 79-82.

[19] "Testimonies of Saint Basil the Great," ed. and trans. Anna M. Silvas, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 55-78. The editor used the French edition of Basil's letters edited by Yves Courtonne, Saint Basile, "Lettre 46. À une vierge tombée," in Saint Basile, *Lettres*, vol. I, trans. and ed. Yves Courtonne (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1957), 115-125, Saint Basile, "Lettre 207. Aux clercs de Néocésarée," in Ibid., vol 2, trans. and ed. Yves Courtonne (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1961), 183-188, Saint Basile, "Lettre 210. Aux premiers citoyens de Néocésarée," in Ibid., 190-206, and Saint Basile, "Lettre 315. Sans adresse. Pour une parente," in Ibid. vol. 3, 189.

Asketikon), finished in 365-366, contained a series of teachings that Basil intended to transmit to all the ascetic communities in Pontos. Later on, Basil has enlarged and rearranged it progressively, according to the needs of the monasteries, until his death, in September 378, when it became twice larger and it comprised three more editions.[20] The *Small Asketikon* has survived only in the Latin translation and commentaries of Rufinus of Aquilea, done in 397-398.[21] In addition, three fragments have been preserved from Syriac.[22] Another relevant source is the only letter written in 380-381 by Peter, Macrina's youngest brother and the superior of the monks.[23]

The monastery founded in Bethlehem was the consequence of the relations between Jerome and his spiritual daughters. The best witnesses of this evolution are Jerome's epistles addressed to women. The famous Letter 22 (to Eustochium), named *De uirginitate seruanda*,[24] written in 384, is an entire book focused on the virtue of virginity and also addressing other topics related to asceticism. In the same year, Jerome wrote to Paula his 30th epistle, teaching her the etymologic and mystic sense of the Hebrew letters. In the 31st letter, also from 384, he advised Eustochium on asceticism. At the end of the year, he wrote to Paula the 39th letter, to comfort her on her daughter's, Blessila, death. The next year, in the 33rd letter, he sent Paula a catalog of Varro's and Origen's works. The monastery of Bethlehem itself is mentioned in Letter 46 (from Paula and Eustochium, dictated by Jerome[25] to Marcella, inviting her to the Holy Land),[26] Rufinus criticized the monastic practice of

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[20] Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketicon of St. Basil the Great* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 2-4.

[21] For a detailed analysis about the translation techniques of Rufinus see: Anna. M. Silvas, "Rufinus' Translation Techniques in the *Regula Basilii*," Antichthon 37 (2003): 71-93.

[22] Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 16.

[23] "Letter 30. Reply of Peter to Gregory" in *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, 208-210.

[24] Jérome, "Lettre 22, À Eustochium," in Jérôme. *Lettres*, vol. 1, trans. Jérôme Labourt (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1949), 110-114. Jerome, "Letter 22. To Eustochium," in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, ed. Philip Schaff, Henry Wace (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1892), 22-41 http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.v.html (accessed 19 April 2013).

[25] Pierre Nautin, "La letter de Paule et Eustochium à Marcelle (Jérôme, Ep. 46),"*Augustinianum* 24 (1984): 441-449

[26] "Lettre 46. De Paule et Eustochie à Marcella," trans. Jérôme Labourt, in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 2 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1951), 100-114.

Jerome in his *Apologies*,[27] but Jerome answered to the accusations of heresy in his *Apology against John of Jerusalem*.[28] Jerome's letters[29] and prefaces of biblical Books[30] document several aspects of monastic life in Bethlehem. Jerome also praised Paula's asceticism in the epitaph dedicated to her in Letter 108, from 404.[31] The attack against the monastery in 416 is mentioned by Augustine's treatise *Against Pelagius*.[32]

Apart from textual sources, few archeological traces of these monasteries survive. The monastery in Tabennesi disappeared in the floods of the Nile River. The site of the monastery in Annisa was partially determined in two research trips by Anna M. Silvas in 2003 and 2006. As for the monastery in Bethlehem, some scholars argue that one of the caves linked by a

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[27] Rufinus, "Apology in Defence of Himself," trans. and ed. William Henry Fremantle, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, (New York: Christian Literature Publishing, 1892), 430-432, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf203.vi.ix.html (accessed 19 April 2013).
Idem, "The Apology of Rufinus," trans. and ed. William Henry Fremantle, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, vol. 3, (New York: Christian Literature Publishing, 1892), 434-482, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf203.vi.xi.i.html (accessed 19 April 2013).

[28] Jerome, "To Pammachius Against John of Jerusalem," 42, trans. and ed. Philip Schaff, Henry Wace, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1892), 447, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.vi.viii.html (accessed 19 April 2013).

[29] Jérôme, "Lettre 30. À Paula," in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 31-35; "Lettre 31. À Eustochium," in Ibid., 35-37; "Lettre 33. À Paula," in Ibid., 38-44; "Lettre 39. À Paula," in Ibid., 71-85; "Lettre 45. À Assela," in Ibid., 96-100; "Lettre 66. À Pammachius," in Ibid., vol. 3, 167-181; "Lettre 127. À la religieuse Principia," in Ibid. vol. 7, 136-148; "Lettre 134. À Augustin," in Ibid., vol. 8, 69-70. Jerome, "Lives of Illustrious Men," in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 3, 359-384, (accessed 19 April 2013).

[30] *Comm. in Mich., Prol.*, CCSL 76, 421, liber II, CCSL 76, 473; *Comm. in Soph., Prol.*, CCSL 76a, 655; Comm. in Agg. ad Paulam et Eustochium, Prol., CCSL 76a, 713, and 746; *Comm. in Naum, Prol.*, CCSL 76a, 525-26; *Comm. in Ep. ad Ephesios, Prol.*, PL26 c.439-442; *Comm. in Ep. ad Titum, Prol.*, PL26 c.555-556, *Comm. in Ep. ad Philemonem, Prol.*, PL26 c.599-602; *Pref. Hieronymi in Libros Salomonis juxta LXX Interpretes*, PL29 c.425-28; *Pref. Hieronymi in Librum Esther*, PL 28 c.1433-1436; *Pref. Hieronymi in Librum Psalmorum*, PL29 c.117-120; *Pref. Hieronymi in Librum Isaiae*, PL28 c.771-774; *Pref. Hieronymi in Librum Jeremiam*, PL28 c.847-850; *Pref., Comm. in Eccl.*, CCSL 72a, 249; *Comm. in Ep. ad Galatas, Prologus*, PL26 c.307-308, 399-411, 308-312; *Pref. Hieronymi in Libros Samuel et Malachim*, PL28, c.547-558; *Pref. Hieronymi in Librum Job*, PL29 c.61-62; *Pref. Hieronymi in Danielem prophetam*, PL28 c.1291-1294; *Pref. Hieronymi in Librum Josue Ben Nun*, PL28 c.461-464; *Prol., Comm. in Esaiam*, CCSL 73, 1-4, and *prologues* to individual books, CCSL73, 1-4, 41, 83, 128, 159, 223, 266, 315, 354, 336-37, 427-28; CCSL73a 465-66, 506-07, 552, 598-99, 641-43, 691-92, 740-42; *Prol., Comm. in Hiezechielem*, CCSL75, 3-4, 54, 91, 136, 185, 224, 277-78, 333-34, 385, 434, 480, 549, 605-06, 676.

[31] Jérôme, "Lettre 108. Oraison funèbre de Sainte Paule," trans. Jérôme Labourt, in Jérôme. *Lettres*, vol. 5 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1954), 159-202.
Jerome, "Letter 108. To Eustochium," in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 195-212.

[32] Augustine, "A Work on the Proceedings of Pelagius," 66, trans. Peter Holmes, Robert Ernest Wallis, Benjamin B. Warfield, in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, series I, vol. 5, ed. Philip Schaff (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1887), 210-212, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf105.xiv.html (accessed 19 April 2013).

corridor to the Church of the Nativity was the cell were Jerome retreated,[33] but other scholars

disagree.[34]

Scholarship on Mixed and Double Monasticism

The topic of mixed and double monasticism has attracted little attention in

scholarship.[35] The first article dedicated to double monasteries, "Origin and Early History of

Double Monasteries," by Mary Bateson, was published in 1899.[36] At the beginning of the

twentieth century, this type of monastic life was the subject of three other publications: *Early*

Double Monasteries[37] by Constance Stoney, "Les monastères doubles chez les byzantins" [38]

by Jules Pargoire, and *Die Doppelklöster: Entstehungund Organisation* by Stephanus

Hilpisch.[39] After a 70-year pause, Daniel F. Stramara published "Double Monasticism in the

Greek East, Fourth through Eighth Centuries" in 1998, bringing up the problem of gender

individuality in these communities.[40] More recently, in 2009, Ewa Wipszycka dedicated a

subchapter of her *magnum opus* about the Egyptian monastic communities to double

monasteries in Egypt, emphasizing aspects of the organization of everyday life.[41]

Methodology and Analysis

My aim is to reconstruct the daily life in three monasteries that belonged to this

special type of monasticism and also shared another common characteristic: their existence

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[33] Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 137, 156-157.

[34] Jerome Murphy-O'Conner, *The Holy Land. An Oxford Archaeological Guide from Earliest Times to 1700*, 5th edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 232-233, 237.

[35] The present section will only briefly discuss the scholarly contributions strictly related to double monasteries. For each of the three communities that this thesis is concerned with, the amount of secondary literature is enormous and the limited space of the thesis does not allow a deep analysis of each work.

[36] Mary Bateson, "Origin and Early History of Double Monasteries," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (New Series)*, 13 (1899): 137-141, http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayFulltext?type=1&pdftype=1&fid=3429344&jid=RHT&volumeId=13&issueId=-1&aid=3429336 (accessed 22.09.2012).

[37] Constance Stoney, *Early Double Monasteries* (Cambridge: Deighton, 1915), http://archive.org/details/earlydoublemonas24633gut (accessed 26.09.2012).

[38] Jules Pargoire, "Les monastères doubles chez les byzantins," *Echos d'Orient* 56 (1906): 21-25.

[39] Stephanus Hilpisch, *Die Doppelklöster: Entstehungund Organisation* (Münster: Verlag der Aschendorffschen, 1928).

[40] Daniel F. Stramara, "Double Monasticism in the Greek East."

[41] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe-VIIIe siècles)* (Warsaw: Warsaw University, 2009).

constituted an opportunity for members of the same family to live an ascetic life in proximity. In order to avoid confusion, my thesis will add a remark made by Ewa Wipszycka to the definition of double monasteries given above: in these communities, female convents were connected to male monasteries.[42] My work will attempt to go beyond existing scholarship on the topic by emphasizing the communitarian organization as well as the religious practices within these monastic units. For each of these two characteristics of everyday life, my thesis will also stress in what sense these monasteries were different from the regular cenobitic establishments.

When dealing with the primary sources, I employ several methods of analysis, according to each one's particularities, in an interdisciplinary approach. The interpretation of hagiographical works will be conducted in the light of the theories developed by Patricia Cox Miller,[43] Thomas Hefferman,[44] Evelyne Patlagean,[45] Anna Wilson,[46] Averil Cameron,[47] and Claudia Rapp,[48] which stress that hagiographies are reliable sources, although their aim was to present exemplary lives. I shall consider normative sources in relation to the context of their production, and I shall analyze the letters exchanged by monks and nuns according to the new theories about their public character.[49]

At the beginning of the thesis, one chapter provides a theoretical introduction to the subject and another explains the emergence of double monasteries in the context of all the

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[42] Ibid.: 578.

[43] Patricia Cox Miller, *Biography in Late Antiquity. A Quest for the Holy Man* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

[44] Thomas Heffernan, *Sacred Biography. Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford Universoty Press, 1988).

[45] Evelyne Patlagean, "Ancient Byzantine Hagiography and Social History," in *Saints, Studies in Hagiography*, ed. Sandro Sticca (Binghamton: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1996), 101-120.

[46] Anna Wilson, "Biographical Models. The Constantinian Period and Beyond," in *Constantine: History, Historiography, and Legend*, ed. Samuel N. C. Lieu, Dominic Montserrat (London: Routledge, 1998), 107-135.

[47] Averil Cameron, "Form and Meaning. The *Vita Constantini* and the *Vita Antonii*," in *Greek Biography and Panegyric in Late Antiquity*, ed. Thomas Hägg, Philip Rousseau (Berkeley: University of Califormnia Press, 2000), 72-88.

[48] Claudia Rapp, "Holy Texts, Holy Men, and Holy Scribes. Aspects of Scriptural Holiness in Late Antiquity," in *The Early Christian Book*, ed. W. E. Klingshirn, L. Safran (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 194-222.

7

major ways of organizing ascetic life "withdrawing from society." The main body of the thesis focuses on two aspects relevant for the daily life in these communities. One chapter discusses the communitarian organization, considering both relations inside the monasteries and those between the members of the communities and outsiders. A separate part is devoted to authority, not only for each ascetic group within a monastery, but also for the entire unit. As the architecture of the community had a role in the monastic organization, part of the chapter will attempt to present its characteristics. Focusing on the religious practices of the double monasteries -- monastic service and prayer, fasting, dress, education, and the ceremonies and rituals for entering monastic life -- I emphasize the ways they were adapted to the particularity of each community.

One more remark concerning double monasticism should be discussed. Although they continued to exist throughout the Middle Ages and up to our days, after several centuries of popularity the interest in founding such communities decreased. Why this wide-spread form of monasticism did not become the dominant one in the following centuries? On the one hand, its decline was caused by the great controversies that the Origenist ideas inevitably brought among the ascetics.[50] On the other hand, the Augustinian theology in the West and the Chalcedonian theology in the East, which emerged and spread at the end of Antiquity, shifted the focus of monastic founders to single-gender communities.

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[49] Andrew Cain, *The Letters of Jerome: Asceticism, Biblical Exegesis, and the Construction of Christian Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[50] Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

CHAPTER I. THE RISE OF DOUBLE COMMUNITIES

Laetatus sum[51]
(Psalm 122:1)

Double monasticism represents an instance of the ubiquitous pattern of Christian ascetic men and women trying to live an angelic life in proximity or cohabitation, part of a long tradition which goes from the ancient Syrian *Benai* and *Benat Qeiama*[52] to nineteenth-century American Shakers[53] or to contemporary male monasteries close to women's convents, such as the large monastic community Paltin-Petru Vodă in Romania. By presenting briefly the evolution of ideas about Christian asceticism and monasticism and by examining the institutional framework of Late Antique monasticism, this chapter offers an overview of the context in which double monasticism emerged in Late Antiquity, as the preferred solution chosen deliberately by men and women willing to seclude from society and live a God-pleasing life in close proximity.

I. 1. The Roots of Christian Asceticism

Christian communal living goes back to the account of the community founded by the Apostles in Jerusalem after Jesus' Resurrection. The Apostles lived a common life, in both spiritual and the material senses (Acts 2:42-47; Acts 4:32-35), renounced their property, shared their wealth with the needy, and had a vow of celibacy, temporary or definitive. The first Christians took the example of the Nazarite Jews who, starting in the pre-exile period (Amos 2: 11-12, Laments of Jeremiah 4:7), took a vow of abstinence, and had special rules of

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[51] I was glad.
[52] Arthur Vööbus, "The Institution of the Benai Qeiama and Benat Qeiama in the Ancient Syrian Church," *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 30, no. 1 (1961): 19-27.
Idem, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient: A Contribution to the History of Culture in the Near East*, vol. 1, *The Origin of Asceticism. Early Monasticism in Persia* (Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1958).
[53] Daniel W. Patterson, "Word, Song, and Motion: Instruments of Celebration among Protestant Radicals in Early Nineteenth Century America," in *Celebration: Studies in Festivity and Rituals*, ed. Victor Turner (Washington D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1982), 220-229.

living.[54] Because of their chastity, they were empowered by God with special missions.[55] Among the first Christians, both the preachers (Paul) and the new adherents to Christianity (Deacon Philip's four daughters – Acts 21:8-9) took the vow of celibacy.

Christian ascetic practice was also inspired by the Scriptures. Jesus provided examples of fasting, prayer, and retreat from society (Mathew 4:1-2; Mark 8:34-35; Luke 5:16; 9:10), He invited the disciples to follow Him (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20) and even to die for Him (Matthew 16:24-26; Luke 9:23-24) in order to gain eternal life. These ideas were the main resorts for ascetics willing to become martyrs, and the context of the first three centuries, marked by persecutions, was favorable.[56] The recognition of Christianity as a licit religion in the Roman Empire brought a new dynamic to the ascetic life. The model of the lives of the Prophets and the "perfect life" lived by the Apostles in Jerusalem after Pentecost could be imitated through fasting, prayer, renunciation of property and wealth, and leading a virtuous life (Matthew 19:21).

In the fourth century, the idea of an imminent Parousia was wide-spread, and ascetic men and women unceasingly sought to recreate the life of the Early Church in Jerusalem. Men and women alike considered that the only way of keeping communion with God untainted was seclusion from the world.[57] For women, however, this decision was not easily put into practice due to their particular statutes. In Late Antiquity, a woman was legally supposed to depend on a man all her life. From birth to marriage she was under the tutelage of her father, after marriage she depended on her husband, and as a widow she was to obey to other male relatives and even to re-wed. Since her marriage was important for her family, due to the forged potentially profitable matrimonial alliance, families were reticent to women

[54] They were forbidden to drink wine or strong drinks, to eat grapes or raisins, to cut their hairs, and to touch dead bodies – Leviticus 6:2-21.
[55] For example, Samson was called by God to be a Nazarite before his birth, since he was supposed to fight (Judges 13:5 – LXX), Samuel was dedicated by his mother to God, and then he was given the gift of making prophecies (1 Kings 1:28 – LXX), and Paul was called to be an Apostle (Acts 18:18; 21:24).

attempting to renounce marriage for the sake of an ascetic life. Asceticism was first practiced by wealthy widows, who, firstly, succeeded in gaining some autonomy over the heritage of their husbands, and secondly, were encouraged by the special care that the Church always awarded widows.[58] In contrast, young women whose weddings were arranged by their families but who attempted to renounce the espousal were sometimes forced to appeal to the artifice of disguising themselves in men's clothes, on the model of Saint Thecla.[59] Another example was the figure of Saint Antony of Egypt, whose life inspired both men and women to follow Christ.

I. 2. The Institutional Framework of Asceticism in Late Antiquity

The beginning of the fourth century saw a profound transformation in the Christian world. Not only did Christians escape harsh persecutions, but their religion was legalized in the Roman Empire. These events brought a new dynamic to the Christian lifestyle in general and to asceticism in particular. Men and women chose, as an alternative to marriage, to live in seclusion, either in the desert as hermits, or in communities of ascetics. Jerome explained:

> There are three types of monks in Egypt. The *cenobites*, ... we should say 'the ones living in common'; the *anchorites*, who live alone in desert, each of them on his own, so called because they withdrawn from people; the third type is what they call *remnuoth*, a worse and disregarded kind …. These ones dwell together in groups of two or three …, living according to their own judgment and law. [60]

What happened to those people who did not have the opportunity of going to the desert? What other options were available to those who wanted to live a contemplative life?

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[56] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 73-75.
[57] Ibid., 48.
[58] Susanna Elm, *'Virgins of God,'* 167.
[59] Stephen J. Davis, *The Cult of Saint Thecla: A Tradition of Women's Piety in Late Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 17.
[60] Jérome, "Lettre 22, Ad Eustochium," 34, in Jérôme. *Lettres*, vol. 1, 149: "*Tria sunt in Aegypto genera monachorum: coenobium ..., nos 'in commune uiuentes' possumus appellare; anachoretae, qui soli habitant per deserta et ab eo quod procul ab hominibus recesserint nuncupantur; tertium genus est, quod dicunt remnuoth deterrimum atque neglectum .... Hi bini uel terni ... simul habitant suo arbitratu ac dicione uiuentes.*" (My translation).

Finally, why did they choose on purpose to found double-see monasteries instead of single-see ones?

When withdrawing to the desert was not possible, the other option for living an ascetic life was to create it in one's own house. The spreading ideal of this type of life inspired entire families to convert to asceticism, giving birth to a "domestic ascetic movement." Women were eager to dedicate themselves to Christ in their own homes, and sources testify to wives who led their entire families to be baptized and to reorganize their lives accordingly. In the houses of the newly baptized families "pre-monastic features' appeared. Without necessarily being celibates, members of these families adopted a new way of life: they freed the slaves, retreated to the countryside, (in "desert places," places perceived as desert, although physically they were not in the desert), and practiced charity to the poor, imitating the Scriptural examples.[61]

The transformation of a Christian household started with the conversion to παρθενία (vocational celibacy), after which it became a visiting place for women with ascetic interests. The bishops encouraged widows to remain unmarried and to establish communities of perpetual virgins in their houses.[62]

Another possibility of dedication to God appeared when spouses converted to celibacy but still lived together,[63] which led to a long tradition of familial asceticism. Even when a family household was transformed into an ascetic community, the "domestic realities" of the place were maintained, but they were given a more Christian understanding.[64]

Women claiming religious freedom chose virginity as a religious vocation. In Anatolia, they enjoyed greater freedom both inside society and inside the Church, in this way

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[61] Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 75-83.
Eadem, *Macrina the Younger, Philosopher of God* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 3-5.
[62] Eadem, *Macrina the Younger*, 5.
[63] Eadem, *Macrina the Younger*, 6-7.

aspiring to leadership in the Church. This situation led to forms of asceticism that warded off what was considered to be "orthodoxy." Thus, the Montanists had women prophets among their leaders and women who attempted to take over the prerogatives of priests and to offer the Holy Communion. A form of "hyper-ascetic enthusiasm" arisen around 340s in Anatolia as a result of the preaching of Eustathius of Sebasteia, Macedonius, and Marathonius, became the "Homoiousian" asceticism. Marathonius set up ascetic retreats for both men and women and settlements for the needy,[65] and Eustathius inspired many women to the choice of a celibate vocation.[66] Although the Council of Gangra (341) forbad Eustathian asceticism, it did not disappear and did not manifest only in Anatolia.[67]

Asceticism spread outside the *domus*, and a new category of ascetic women appeared, the *virgines subintroductae* who cohabitated with clerics or with another ascetic man in a spiritual marriage. Despite the practical aspects of cohabitation, this was badly received because of the danger of falling into sin and thus the Church Fathers were against it.

What types of cohabitation were still accepted as orthodox? According to the canons, apart from his wife, a priest was allowed to live in the same house only with his sister and his mother. However, relatives willing to share the ascetic life in the same establishment, even if in different cells, were a frequent occurrence, especially in Egypt.[68] Sometimes conflicts arose and the blood-relationships proved to be an impediment in one's ascetic progress. In other cases, ascetic relatives were inseparable.[69] Since family members continued to wish to share the ascetic life, the border between just a pious household and an ascetic community

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[64] In his *Jérôme et le nouveau modèle féminin. La conversion à la « vie parfaite »*, Patrick Laurence explains in details the origins of the home asceticism in Rome. See Patrick Laurence, *Jérôme et le nouveau modèle féminin. La conversion à la « vie parfaite »* (Paris : Institut d'études Augustiniennes, 1997).
Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 7-9.
[65] Ibid.: 25.
[66] Ibid.: 31.
[67] Ibid.: 21-22.
[68] Philip Rousseau, "Blood-Relationships among Early Eastern Ascetics," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 23 (1972): 135-144.
[69] Ibid., 143.

was opaque.[70] Thus, the logical solution to overcome the risk of falling into sin was foundation of double monasteries.

I. 3. The First Years of Double Monasticism

At first sight, Tabennesi, Annisa, and Bethlehem might not have much in common. Closer observation, however, shows shared characteristics in all respects of their everyday life.

Contrary to a wide-spread opinion, cenobitism was not invented by Pachomius. The Melitians had communities of ascetics[71] and Pachomius formed a "monastic network" by integrating cloisters founded by others into his *koinonia*.[72] Pachomius, however, was the first to organize the ascetic life in a community systematically. His foundation became the archetypal monastery which marked the later development of monastic life until today.

Pachomius was born to pagan parents around 292 in Snê (Latopolis) in Upper Egypt. In his childhood he certainly learnt to read and probably also to write Coptic, and later he also learned Greek. In 312 he was forced to enlist in the army of Maximinus Daia to fight against Licinius. Impressed by the charity of the Christians in Thebes, he decided to become Christian. Sent to Antinoe, in Middle Egypt, he went on up the river and around 313 he settled in Schenesêt, where he was baptized, and became a disciple of the anchorite Palamon. Around 323, he settled in the "deserted village" Tabennesi, where he was joined by villagers from nearby, and then by people living farther away. In 324, he organized all of them into a community. A few years later, his brother, John, joined him, but after a while they separated, due to John's option for heremitism. In 333, his sister, Maria, came to Tabennesi.[73] Despite her insistence, Pachomius did not allow her to enter the retreat, but he sent out monks to build

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[70] Ibid., 5-7.
[71] James Goehring, "Melitian Monastic Organization: A Challenge to Pachomius Originality," *Studia Patristica* 24 (1993): 388-395.
[72] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 51, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 72; "The First Greek Life of Saint Pachomius," 54c, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 335.
[73] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 27, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 49-50.

a monastery for her and for other women who wanted to share the ascetic vocation on the other side of Nile. He then attached it to his community, and Maria became the head of the nuns' cloister. At this time, Pachomius put in writing the Rules which were circulating among the brothers and sent them to the sisters. Between 329 and 340, Pachomius founded other monasteries and united them in a "monastic federation."[74] Pachomius died on 9th May 347. The written accounts concerning the monastery in Tabennesi do not go further the time of Abbot Theodore. No trace of this monastery is left: flooded by the Nile, it has completely disappeared.[75]

The second double monastery to be discussed here was founded by Macrina, in Annisa (Cappadocia). Born in 327 in Neocaesarea, Macrina was the first child of Basil the Elder and Emmelia, two devoted Christians. When she was twelve, she was engaged, but after her fiancé died around 344, she decided not to marry and to dedicate her live to God. Around 345, Macrina's father died, and after a while Emmelia transferred all her household from Neocaesarea to Annisa. This event marked a transformation in Macrina's life. Not only did she deepen her ascetic practices, but she also helped her mother to raise her younger siblings and she started to bake bread, a task done exclusively by slaves. Macrina's brother, Naucratius, also decided to adopt an ascetic life on the other side of the hill on their estate. In 356, the household in Annisa was already transformed into a double convent. Macrina persuaded Emmelia to free all their slaves and live a common ascetic life together. Although the household had good relations with Eustathius of Sebasteia, Macrina did not create a mixed community of men and women.[76] At the end of 357, Macrina persuaded Basil to renounce his worldly career and to adopt the philosophical life. Basil came to Annisa and dwelt in Naucratius' retreat. An earthquake and a terrible famine had important consequences

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[74] Phbôou, Tsê, Scmin, Tsmîne, Phnoum, Schenesêt, Thmouschons, and Thbêou, see: "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 49-58, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 71-79.
[75] L. T. Lefort, "Les premiers monastères pachômiens. Exploration topographique," *Le Muséon* 52 (1939): 327.
[76] Contrary to Susanna Elm's suggestion, in *'Virgins of God,'* 210.

in the evolution of Annisa. The monastery accommodated orphans and helped the poor with food, and Basil wrote four homilies associated to this calamity.[77] Before 370, when he was ordained archbishop of Caesarea, Basil wrote the *Small Asketikon*, a set of monastic rules destined not only for the community in Annisa, but also for other monasteries in Pontos. Around 370, Basil ordained his youngest brother, Peter, priest over the men's community in Annisa, and Macrina presided over nuns. Macrina died on the evening of 19 July 379, not before she had a profound dialogue on the nature of soul and the resurrection with Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory wrote the *Life of Saint Macrina* in 381 and later the dialogue *On the Soul and the Resurrection*.[78]

Yet another experiment in double monasticism was established in the Holy Land. The monastery in Bethlehem was founded by Jerome and Paula. Paula's husband died in 379 and from that time she started to practice asceticism. Initiated by another noble widow, Marcella, Paula was drawn to asceticism due to Marcella's ascetic circle even before her husband's death.[79] From 380, Paula transformed her house into a *domestica ... ecclesia*,[80] and her daughter Eustochium also followed the ascetic path.

Jerome arrived in Rome in 382, met Paula through the intermediary of Marcella, and immediately became her spiritual father. Their relationship matured into a deep friendship, traced in their assiduous correspondence and in the dedications of Jerome's Biblical translations to her until her death. Paula's household became an ascetic community when "a choir of chastity" joined her house.[81] After her husband's death, Paula's relatives tried to convince her not to lavish her fortune on the Church in general and on Jerome in particular. They put the death of one of her daughters, Blesilla, on Jerome's shoulders because of a too

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Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger,* 32.

[77] For their translations and an analysis, see: Anna M. Silvas, "The Emergence of Basil's Social Doctrine: A Chronological Enquiry," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 5, 133-176.

[78] Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 154-155.

[79] Paula was called *discipula* and Marcella was called *magistra* in Letter 127.5; see: Patrick Laurence, *Jérôme et le nouveau modèle féminin*, 24.

harsh self-mortification to which she subjected her body on Jerome's advice. On the 11 December 384, Pope Damasus, Jerome's protector, died, and the new pope, Siricius, was against the monks present in Rome at that time. Besides all this, being accused of illicit relations with his female disciples, Jerome was forced to leave Rome, which he did definitively in August 385. He went to Cyprus and Antioch, and then he was sent to Jerusalem. In the meanwhile, Paula and Eustochium went on a pilgrimage to Egypt and to the Holy Land. On donkeys, they went to Beirut, Sidon, and Tyre, and finally they arrived in Jerusalem in the middle of the winter. They traveled through Palestine and visited Egypt, Alexandria, Nitria, and Kellia. In 386, they embarked from Pelusium for Gaza, and traveled to Bethlehem. Here, Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem allowed them to found a monastery close to the Church of the Nativity. The monastery soon comprised three buildings for the women's cells and one for the men's cells. Jerome and Paula met there and looked for other people willing to share the ascetic vocation. They found disciples from very different social conditions, some of them not even baptized. Families even entrusted their children to the monastery. In three years, all the buildings of the monastery were built with the help of Paula's fortune. Although they were allowed to settle in Bethlehem, Jerome and Vincent of Constantinople, one of the priests who accompanied him, did not receive the right to exercise their sacerdotal functions.[82] In 387, Bishop Cyril of Jerusalem died, and Bishop John followed him. In 393, a conflict arose between Bishop John and Epiphanius of Salamis about Origen. Present in Jerusalem for the Feast of Encaenia, the two bishops had a quarrel in front of many clerics. The next spring, in 394, Jerome's brother, Paulinianus, together with monks and deacons from the Bethlehem monastery, went to in Bishop Epiphanius, who was residing in Besanduc. Although he was breaking the canons of Nicaea, Epiphanius ordained

[80] Jérôme, "Lettre 30. À Paula," 4, in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 32-33.
[81] Idem, "Lettre 31. À Eustochium," 14 , in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 35-37.
[82] Pierre Nautin, "L'excommunication de Saint Jérôme," *École pratique des hautes études, 5e section, Sciences religieuses. Annuaire* 80-81, no. 2 (1971-1973): 9-10.

Paulinianus deacon and priest. Being in conflict with Epiphanius because of divergent opinions about Origen, Bishop John of Jerusalem excommunicated all those from his diocese who recognized the ordination of Paulinianus as valid. Since Jerome refused to deny the ordination, he fell under the excommunication, together with his monks and deacons. As a result, the Church of the Nativity was closed by the bishop. The members of the monastery were able to use only the cavern underneath, since the other churches in the diocese were forbidden to them. Deceased monks and nuns were no longer allowed to be entombed in Christian cemeteries, and the catechumens belonging to the monastery were not allowed to be baptized on Easter. In 395, Jerome's situation crystallized. He also triggered the anger of Rufinus of Aquilea, the spiritual father of the double monastery on the Mount of Olives, where the abbess was the Roman noblewoman Melania the Younger. Bishop John obtained an order of expulsion from the territory of his diocese against Jerome from the prefect of the praetorian of Constantinople, Rufinus, with whom Melania had good relations. Fortunately for Jerome, the prefect was soon murdered on 27 November 395, and his successor, who had family ties with Paula, was persuaded to cancel the order. During Holy Week 397, due to interventions from other bishops, Bishop John agreed to readmit Jerome and his supporters in the Church under the condition that Jerome agreed to fulfill the rituals for public penitence. On Holy Thursday, the traditional day for remission of public sinners, his excommunication was lifted.[83] In 404 Paula died, and Jerome translated the Rules of Pachomius in order to send them to Eustochium. No trace of the monastery survives from 404 to 416. Augustine wrote that in 416 a group of *cuneus perditorum* launched a terrible attack against it.[84] The last information about the monastery comes from Jerome. After the ravages done by the Visigoths

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[83] Ibid., 18.
[84] Josef Lössl, "Who ASttacked the Monasteries of Jerome and Paula in 416 A.D.?," *Augustinianum* 44, no. 1 (2004): 91-112.

in Rome, Jerome sent his brother to sell what remained from their family estate, since the monastery was in a very difficult financial situation.[85]

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[85] Jérôme "Lettre 66. À Pammachius," 14, in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 3, 173.

CHAPTER II. THE COMMUNITARIAN ORGANIZATION

Fraternitatem diligite[86]
(1 Peter 2:17)

How was the communitarian organization of the three settlements discussed here adapted to the proximity in which ascetic fleshly relatives lived? This is another query whose answer gives a significant clue to the thesis' core question. On the one hand, written sources offer sufficient details concerning the architecture of the monasteries, although archeological evidence is lacking. Another aspect of their organization concerns the relations inside them, both the ones within each of the two ascetic groups (men and women) involved individually and the rapports established between brothers and sisters, and the relations between monasteries and outsiders. All these aspects determined the way authority was defined, legitimized, and practiced in these communities.

II. 1. Buildings and Landscape

What role did architecture and the natural setting play in the monastic organization? The landscape must have been carefully chosen before an ascetic community was established. The way in which the buildings were arranged and used determined the proximity or, on the contrary, the segregation between brothers and sisters.

The landscape provided ideal conditions for asceticism, since monasteries were placed in quiet and isolated sites. Pachomius chose a "deserted village" for the foundation of his monastery.[87] However, the term "ἐρῆμος" refers more to the decline of the population of the village rather than to its landscape.[88] The location of Tabennesi on the banks of the Nile gave access not only to fertile land, but also to large cities nearby.[89] The landscape of Annisa

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[86] Love your brotherhood.
[87] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 17, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 39.
[88] James E. Goehring, "Withdrawing from the Desert: Pachomius and the Development of Village Monasticism in Upper Egypt," *The Harvard Theological Review* 89, no. 3 (1996): 275-277.
[89] Ibid., 273.

was a place perceived as a desert, uninhabited, ensuring the withdrawal of the ascetics from society:[90]

> There is a high mountain, covered with a thick forest, watered on its northerly side by cool and transparent streams. At its base is outstretched an evenly sloping plain …. A forest of many-coloured and multifarious trees … acts almost as a hedge to enclose it, so that even Kalypso's isle, which Homer seems to have admired above all others for its beauty, is insignificant as compared with this.[91]

The monastery of Paula and Jerome in Bethlehem acted as "an enclave," although Palestine was one of the most glamorous and popular places for ascetic retreat.[92]

The sites of these monasteries have only been partially determined based on descriptions provided by written sources, but without archeological surveys. For the Pachomian community, no attempt at identification is possible, since it disappeared in the floods of Nile.[93] The community's estate in Annisa was identified in 2003 by Anna M. Silvas and a team of scholars, during a reconnaissance trip.[94] Part of the monastery's site is located north of the Ancient Via Pontica, in today's Turkish village of Uluköy, 8 kilometers west of the confluence of the Iris and Lycus rivers.[95] In 2006 Anna M. Silvas and her sister, Carmel Silvas, organized another field trip, this time to the plain at the bend of the Iris River, where the exact place of the retreat of Naucratius and Basil the Great was discovered, "in the gorge

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[90] Hendrik Dey, "Building Worlds Apart. Walls and the Construction of Communal Monasticism from Augustine through Benedict," *Antiquité tardive* 12 (2004): 357-371.

[91] Basil, "Letter 14," ed. E. H. Warmington, G. P. Goold, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 106-107.

[92] William Harmless, *Desert Christians. An Introduction to the Literature of Early Monasticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 432.

[93] L. Th. Lefort, "Les Premiers monastères pachômiens:" 393-397.

[94] G. de Jerphanion, "Ibora-Gazioura? Étude de géographie pontique," in *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale, Université Saint-Joseph, Beirouth*, 5 (1911), 333-354.

[95] As for the other part of the retreat, two possibilities were equally plausible, but neither of them was certain. Firstly, the retreat could have been located near the village Haçibey, but the distance from the Iris River does not correspond to the written descriptions. It could also have been situated on the northern part of the area lying behind Uluköy, but the landscape does not fit the description given by *The Life of Saint Macrina*. See Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 43-50. However, one may question whether this very detail is relevant, since the landscape could have suffered transformations during centuries, or it could originally have been described through *topoi*.

country north of the junction of the Rivers Yeşil Irmak (Iris) and the Kelkit Çayi (Lycus)."[96]

As for the monastery in Bethlehem, some scholars claim that one of the caves linked by a corridor to the Church of the Nativity was the cell were Jerome retreated, and thus that the other buildings of the monastery were nearby,[97] but other scholars disagree.[98]

The Pachomian monastery was unified in a sort of "ascetic village," surrounded by an enclosing wall, and connected with the "outside world" through a single gate.[99] The wall had a double function; it not only acted as a barrier against outside dangers, but, as Alice-Mary Talbot observed for later Byzantine monasteries, together with the single gate, it also prevented the monks and the nuns from being tempted to go outside easily.[100] The main church, the kitchen, the refectory, and the infirmary were situated in the middle of the monastery. The Nile separated the men's and the women's quarters, but it was not impossible to cross.[101] Each monk or nun lived in his or her own cell, where he or she was supposed to fulfill the canon regarding individual prayer.[102] The houses where the monks and nuns dwelt were built around the church. Both the men's monastery and the women's convent had "fathers and stewards, weekly servers, ministers and a master of each house. A house has … forty brothers[103] who obey the master, and, according to the number of brothers, there are thirty or forty houses in one monastery, and three or four houses are federated into a tribe."[104]

The monastery in Annisa, described as ἡ ἀδελφότης (the brotherhood) of the men and women who consecrated their lives to Christ,[105] distinguished a residential section dedicated to the nuns (ἡ γυναικωνῖτις or ὁ παρθενών) and a similar one for monks (ὁ ἀνδρών). These

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[96] Anna M. Silvas, "In Quest of Basil's Retreat: An Expedition to Ancient Pontus," *Antichthon* 41 (2007): 73-95.

[97] Denys Pringle, *The Churches of the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem*, vol. 1, 137, 156-157.

[98] Jerome Murphy-O'Conner, *The Holy Land*, 232-233, 237.

[99] "Prec. 52," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 154.

[100] Alice-Mary Talbot, "Women's Space in Byzantine Monasteries," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 52 (1998): 113.

[101] Palladius, "The Lausiac History," 33, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 129.

[102] "Prec. 19," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 148.

[103] Or sisters. Pachomius sent the nuns the same rules he had previously established for the monks.

[104] "Pref. 2," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 142.

[105] Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 24.

two parts were clearly separated by a strong natural obstacle, which could have been either the Iris River or the mountain located nearby.[106] Apart from these buildings, sources mention a single church (ἡ ἐκκλησία) and a ξενοδοκεῖον for receiving guests. However, guests might also have been invited to the brothers' or to the sisters' quarters, as appropriate.[107]

The monastery in Bethlehem borrowed some architectural features of the monastic buildings in Kellia. The men's section, placed near the tomb of King Archelaus[108] and designed by Jerome with the term *cellulae* (the equivalent of the Greek *kellia*), also had a church and a tower. The nuns dwelt and worked near the Church of the Nativity, divided in three groups according to their social background, each in its own distinct building (*monasterium*). The nuns' section probably had also either one common church for all the three groups, or one separate church for each of them, since all the sisters reunited to sing the Psalms each day, but they only joined the monks in the Church of the Nativity on Sundays. In addition, a guesthouse was built by the wayside for receiving pilgrims or for recruitment.[109]

Whatever the border between monks and nuns was, its existence demonstrates that segregation was felt to be necessary between women and men. It did not obviate any contact between the two ascetic groups, since in each community there were means for passing from one part to the other.[110] Both Pachomius' and Basil's Rules established the conditions under which monks and nuns were supposed to meet and interact. The most frequent occasions were the common prayers in the main church of the monastery, but even there the separation

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[106] Although sources are not explicit, the mountain is more likely to have functioned as a boundary for monks and nuns, since the river was impossible to cross. See: Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 46-48; Eadem, *Macrina the Younger*, 38-39.

[107] Eadem, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 20-21.

[108] Eusebius, *Onomasticon* 42:10-14; Jerome, *Onomasticon* 43:18-45,5, ed. Klostermann, 45, http://www.christusrex.org/www1/ofm/mad/sources/sources072.html (accessed 19 April 2013): "And near Bethlehem itself they show the tomb of Archelaus, once king of Judaea, which marks the beginning of the path leading off the main road to our cells." (*Sed et propter eandem Bethleem regis quondam Iudaeae Archelai tumulus ostenditur, qui semitae ad cellulas nostras e via publica divertentis principium est.*)

[109] Pierre Nautin, "L'excommunication de Saint Jérôme," 10-11.

[110] Gregory of Nyssa, "Letter 5. To Those Who Discredit His Orthodoxy," in Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, 135-140.

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between the monks and the nuns was maintained. Meals were taken at the same time, but in separate places.

II. 2. Relations between Ascetic Brothers and Sisters

What kind of relations between monks and nuns did their proximity generate? Since the preoccupation with preserving the ascetic ideal dominated the communities, serious attempts were made to keep a certain distance between men and women. Most rules included limitations which transformed their relation into one of dependence, implying, consequently, obedience. However, sincere admiration and even friendship also developed between monks and nuns.

As Ewa Wipszycka remarked, in double communities female convents were connected to male monasteries.[111] One may even assume that a particular aspect of their daily existence implied a sort of dependence between them. [112] Work was divided between the members of the community, but the results were always shared. Sources often indicate the activities of the men, which ensured the economy of the monasteries. In Tabennesi and Annisa, the leaders appointed monks to prepare the food, transact sales, make purchases, work in the shops,[113] weave linen or mats, tailor, make wagons or shoes,[114] work in the fields,[115] build dwellings, hunt or fish.[116] Unlike monks, who had a wide variety of types of work, nuns were tasked only with two charges: baking bread and weaving cloth. This last detail was probably chosen on purpose, since the hagiographic image of a woman producing clothes signified her ascetic devotion.[117] Ewa Wipszycka explains the scarcity of details

[111] Ewa Wipszycka, "Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte," 578.

[112] "Not one of us suffices for himself alone, since we have need of each other for the provision of necessities." Basil, "LR 7," 2, in *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 181.

[113] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 26, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 48.

[114] "Pref. 6," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 143.

[115] "Prec. 24," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 149.

[116] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 10-11, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 118-120. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Epigram 156. On Naucratius, the Brother of Basil the Great*, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 80.

[117] Lynda L. Coon, *Sacred Fictions: Holy Women and Hagiography in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 41-44.

about women's activities by the fact that the male authors of these writings were neither fully aware nor very interested in women's work.[118]

The proximity of monks and nuns maintained a constant concern about temptation that could arise in the community. Monastic rules, letters, and hagiographies insist that encounters between the two groups happened only on rare occasions. In spite of the use of "literary techniques" which describe exceptional events, these texts can be regarded as providing reliable data, since they are based on real people who could not have been simply invented by the authors.[119]

The various *Lives of Pachomius* often refer to rare meetings between monks and nuns, always in the presence of the abbess. In addition, on every occasion when physical work was necessary in the nuns' dwellings, the monks were supervised by trustworthy old brothers. When a sister died, the funeral was organized by a small group of monks, and during the entire ceremony encounters were avoided between the groups of nuns and monks:

> When one of the sisters died, they brought her to the oratory and first their mother covered her with a shroud. Then … Apa Peter sent word to our father Pahomius who chose experienced brothers and sent them to the monastery with Apa Peter. They proceeded to the assembly room and stood in the entryway chanting psalms with gravity until the deceased was prepared for burial. Then she was placed on a bier and carried to the mountain. The virgin sisters followed behind the bier while their father walked after them and their mother before them.[120]

Although the monasteries discussed here were family establishments, family ties were transformed, in parallel with both the spiritual evolution of their members and the development of the communities. Pachomius, Macrina, and Paula started to live their ascetic

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[118] Ewa Wipszycka, "Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte," 571.

[119] In this respect, when he discusses *The Life of Saint Macrina*, Jaroslav Pelikan states: "If Macrina as a historical personage had not been in fact as she was portrayed in the biography, it would have been extremely difficult for a fourth-century Greek Christian writer, even if he was her brother and a bishop of the church, to make up such a portrait and to claim that a real woman had been not only as pious but as learned and as articulate as this if she had not been". See Jaroslav Pelikan, *Christianity and Classical Culture. The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 9.

[120] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 27, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 50-51.

lives accompanied by several relatives. However, at this time, the "fleshly" family was replaced by an ascetic brotherhood, "relatives in spirit," who shared the same vocation of dedicating their lives to God. In spite of the detachment from the earthly family,[121] the monastic community actually imitated its structure. According to Susanna Elm,

> Here, as in the original family, the ascetics' sisters, mothers, wives, and daughters were provided and cared for, and supervised by brothers who replaced the original *paterfamilias*, while at the same time all natural family ties were effectively severed. The rules and regulations are a precise reflection of this process.[122]

Amity was also encountered among these spiritual relatives. The reserved attitude that the fourth-century Church Fathers had towards women did not deter some clerks from developing strong friendships with their female disciples.[123] Macrina and Paula's relationships with their spiritual directors, who lived in the same double communities at least for a short while, can be traced based on the letters and the dialogues between them.

Most of the letters Jerome wrote to Paula and Eustochium[124] were focused on explaining biblical verses. Because of Paula's eagerness, for Jerome "no other matron in Rome could dominate my mind but one who mourned and fasted, who was squalid with dirt, almost blinded by weeping."[125] He constantly addressed his disciples in an admiring tone ("Therefore, O Paula and Eustochium, unique model of nobility and humility, accept these spiritual and enduring things as a gift"[126]) and often declared his feelings towards them. For example, after the death of Blesilla, Eustochium's sister, he sent to Paula a letter meant to

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[121] For example, Theodore refused to see his mother, who had come to visit him in his monastery; see: "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 37, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 60-61.

[122] Susanna Elm, *'Virgins of God,'* 272.

[123] Elizabeth Ann Clark, *Jerome, Chrysostom, and Friends. Essays and Traslations* (New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1979).

[124] From the correspondence of Paula and Jerome, 22 letters and prefaces to biblical books have survived. Some are addressed only to Paula, others both to Paula and her daughter, Eustochium.

[125] Jerome, "Letter XLV. To Asella," 3, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 59, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.v.XLV.html.
Idem, "Lettre 45. À Assela," 3, in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 98-99: *nulla fuit alia Romae matronarum quae meam posset edomare mentem, nisi lugens atque ieiunans, squalens sordibus, fletibus pene caecata.*

soothe her, in which he confessed his own sadness: "I confess my affections, this whole book is written with tears"[127]. In 404, when Paula died, he wrote a long and moving letter to Eustochium, ending with: "And now, Paula, farewell, and aid with your prayers the old age of your votary."[128]

After the death of Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa visited Annisa, where he found Macrina on her deathbed. Affected by the loss of his brother, Gregory discussed the nature of the soul and the resurrection with his older sister in a deeply spiritual dialogue, which he remembered few years after she died.[129] He referred to her as "my teacher," since he sought answers to all the intriguing interior questions about death that had arisen through the mixture of his philosophical education and religious belief:

> When Basil … had passed from this human life to God … our sister and teacher remained as yet in this life, I went to her then with haste, to share with her the calamity of our brother. Indeed my soul was keening at so exceedingly painful a loss, and I sought one with whom I might share my tears, one who bore the same burden of grief. Alas, when we came before each other's eyes, the sight of the teacher only rekindled the passion, for she too was already in the grip of a mortal illness. She, like an expert equestrian, allowed me briefly to be carried away by the torrent of my grief. Then she endeavoured to bridle me with words and to steer with the bit of her own reasoning the disorder of my soul.[130]

II. 3. Authority

Double monasteries required detailed regulations to keep untouched the ideal of ascetic perfection in communities of men and women living close to each other. How was authority legitimized, shaped, and manifested in these communities? Several issues arise from this question. One possible answer to the problem of legitimacy implies formulation of

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[126] *Pref. Hieronymi in Librum Job*, PL29 c.61-62: *Quapropter, o Paula et Eustochium, unicum nobilitatis et humilitatis exemplar, ... spiritualia haec et mansura dona suscipite*, http://epistolae.ccnmtl.columbia.edu/letter/262.html (accessed 23 September 2012). (My translation).

[127] Jérôme, "Lettre 39. À Paula," in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 72: "Confiteor affectus meos, totus hic liber fletibus scribitur." (My translation).

[128] Jerome, "Letter CVIII. To Eustochium," 34, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 212, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf206.v.CVIII.html.

[129] Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, trans. and ed., Anna M. Silvas, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 171-246.

monastic rules, emphasized and strengthened when their founders decided to put them in a written format and to send them to the ascetics.[131] The economic and social context of the era also influenced the way authority was constructed.[132] As for the last part of the question, one must establish which aspects of the monastic life actually required legitimate authority. Finally, the sources indicate both the forms and the means through which authority was shaped within these monasteries.

Anthropological research provides a theoretical background for the concept of authority. According to Alberto Camplani and Giovanni Filoramo, authority is "the institutionalized and legitimized form" of power[133] in Late Antique society, and it inherited the meaning of the ancient *auctoritas.*[134]

In the words of Mohamed Kerrou, "authority is a modality of social influence … fundamentally of moral and psychological order."[135] Calling it "legitimate domination," Max Weber distinguished three types of authority*: legal,* expressed in laws and competences; tradition, founded on the "sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them;" charismatic authority, applicable to Early Christianity and monasticism, derived from the "exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an

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[130] Ibid., 1-2, 171.

[131] As was explained above, Pachomius was the first to take this initiative, approximately in 333, when his sister entered the monastery in Tabennesi. He was followed by Basil, who wrote his first *Asketikon* between 365 and 370. Finally, in 404, after the death of Paula, Jerome translated the *Pachomian Rules* for the community in Bethlehem.
"The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 27, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 50.
Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketicon of St. Basil the Great*, 140-145.
"Pref. 1," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 141.

[132] Alberto Camplani, Giovanni Filoramo, ed., *Foundations of Power and Conflicts of Authority in Late-Antique Monasticism: Proceedings of the International Seminar Turin, December 2-4, 2004* (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2007), 12. This volume is the result of the most extensive scholarly attempt to address the topic of authority in general, and its legitimation and forms within early monasticism in particular, at a workshop dedicated to the "Foundation of Power and Conflict of Authority in Late Antiquity," held at the University of Turin in 2004.

[133] Alberto Camplani, Giovanni Filoramo, ed., *Foundations of Power and Conflicts of Authority…*, XI.

[134] Ibid., 5-6.

[135] Mohamed Kerrou, *L'autorité des saints. Perspectives historiques et socio-anthropologiques en Méditerranée occidentale* (Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1998), 14.

individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him."[136] Narrowing down the concept to cases of religious association, Weber introduced the notion of "corporate authority":

> When fully developed, religious associations and communities belong to a type of corporate authority. They represent 'hierocratic' association: … their power to rule is supported by their monopoly in the bestowal or denial of sacred values.[137]

Claudia Rapp has criticized the Weberian model of authority, insisting on three types of authority; all three, institutional, pragmatic, and ascetic authority,[138] were encountered in the communities analyzed in this thesis.

I would suggest that in double monasteries types of authority belonging to both models accumulated and coexisted. Moreover, since ascetics were members of "brotherhoods" dedicated to God which imitated the traditional ancient families, the "family-authority" was also manifested.

What kind of legitimacy and practice of all types of authority did the nature of double monasteries lead to? The legitimation of authority had a double source. Monks and nuns became charismatic figures in their lifetime. By instructing Pachomius during his first years of zealous asceticism,[139] "the great monk" Palamon legitimized him to achieve his own charisma due to his virtues. Similarly to Pachomius, Macrina achieved charismatic authority, on the one hand, due to her alleged kinship with Saint Macrina the Elder, persecuted during the reigns of Galerius and Diocletian, and, on the other, through her personal example of devotion and renunciation. Jerome's influence on ascetics is explained by the fame that he

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[136] Max Weber, *Economy and Society. An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth, Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Pr.ess, 1978), 215.
[137] Idem, "The Social Psychology of World Religions," ed. Hans Gerth, C. Wright Mills, in Max Weber, *Essays in Sociology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1946), 294.
[138] Claudia Rapp, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity. The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
[139] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 10, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 29-33.

pretended to have acquired.[140] Ewa Wipszycka's remark for the monastery in Tabennesi is valid for the other two communities as well: besides charismatic authority, the founders of the monasteries also had institutional authority, embodied in the terms in which they were referred to. The superiors of the Tabennesi monastery were addressed with the terms "father" and "*hegoumen*." [141] In his translation of the Pachomian Rules, Jerome kept the meanings of these words.[142] The term "father" had a variety of senses according to the ascetic context in which it was used. "Most frequently, it expresses the profound respect, the humility and the obedience that a son must testify to his father … The filial respect is also expressed through the honorific titles of *apa* and *abba*."[143] Sources also use formulas such as "the prince of the monastery," "the father of the monastery," "the man of the monastery," and, rarely, "head."[144] The *Historia Lausiaca* refers to Pachomius as "*archimandrites*"[145] to suggest his rank.[146] The Pachomian congregation had a tripartite structure with three echelons of power. The highest one was the *koinonia* (the congregation itself), ruled by "the head" (or archimandrite). It was followed by the monasteries (including Tabennesi) ruled by a superior, seconded by the abbot of the monks and the abbess of the nuns, and the houses, governed by housemasters, followed by their seconds.[147] The term *proestos* probably designated an elder monk whom the superior of the community consulted for several decisions.[148]

Charisma gave women both spiritual and institutional authority. Gregory of Nyssa calls Macrina "the greatest one,"[149] "the holy one,"[150] "the blessed one,"[151] or "my

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[140] J. N. D. Kelly, *Jerome. His Life, Writings and Controversies* (Peabody, Massachussets: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998).

[141] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte,* 336.

[142] He called the superior of the monastery "*pater*" or "princes." See Adalbert de Vogüé, "Les appellations de la cellule dans les écrits Pachômiens traduits par Saint Jérôme," *Studia Monastica* 37, no. 2 (1995): 241.

[143] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte*, 327.

[144] Ibid., 335-336.

[145] Palladius, *The Lausiac History*, 7, 6, trans. and ed. Edward Cuthbert Butler (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1967).

[146] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte*, 329.

[147] Ibid., 335-336.

[148] Ibid., 328.

[149] "ἡ μεγάλη". Grégoire de Nysse, *Vie de Sainte Macrine*, 10,1; 15, 28; 18,7; 19,39; 28,6; 31,3, p. 172, 192, 200, 204, 234, 242.

[150] "ἡ ἁγία". Ibid., 28,14; 29,6; 30,8; 31,6; 37,13; p. 234, 236, 240, 242, 258.

teacher."[152] He expresses the influence that his sister had on his existence in a deeply sensitive letter sent to a member of the Church administration:

> We had a sister who was for us a teacher of how to live, a mother in place of our mother. Such was her freedom towards God that she was for us a strong tower and a shield of favour as the Scripture says, and a fortified city and a name of utter assurance, through her freedom towards God that came of her way of life.[153]

The function of charismatic authority was to maintain the continuity and the stability of the community, especially in critical moments such as the death of a leader.[154] For this purpose, Pachomius named a successor, Petronius, whom he legitimized to rule the monastery after his death, thus transferring his authority to him.[155]

Legitimation was also founded in the Holy Scriptures. The Rules of both Pachomius and Basil follow Biblical commandments. In addition, they were correlated with other ecclesiastic texts such as the *Apostolic Constitutions* and different conciliar canons.[156] Thus, the Rules had the necessary legitimacy for being enforced, together with punishments, the consequences of disobedience: "Those who spurn the precepts of the superiors and the rules of the monastery, which have been established by God's precept, and who make light of the counsels of the elders, shall be punished according to the established order."[157] In addition, failure to obey the rules, even due to the weakness of the body, was sufficient reason for giving a guilty monk penance:

> If someone has promised to observe the rules of the monastery and has begun to do so, but abandoned them, and later on returned and did penance, while putting forward the weakness of his body as the reason for his incapacity to fulfill what he had promised, he shall be made to stay with the sick and shall be fed among the idle until, having done penance, he fulfill his promise.[158]

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[151] "ἡ μακαρία". Ibid., 37,4; 37,19; p. 258, 260.
[152] Idem, "On the Soul and the Resurrection," in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, passim.
[153] Idem, "Letter 19," 6, in Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, 176-177.
[154] James E. Goehring, "New Frontiers in Pachomian Studies," in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity*, ed. Birger A. Pearson, James E. Goehring (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 241.
[155] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 121, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 176.
[156] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte*, 325.
[157] "Jud. 8," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 177.
[158] "Jud. 12," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 178.

The forms and means of authority were articulated in the monasteries over spiritual and practical life alike. Both the person and the actions of the monastery's *abba* (the Father of the entire community) had the greatest authority not only over the members, but also over outsiders. His personal example of living an ideal ascetic life and the miracles that he performed guaranteed that God Himself legitimized[159] and continuously confirmed his position. The authority of the Scriptures and of the Apostles was added to his charismatic and monastic authority, which consequently enforced the reception of the monastic rules.

The Rules provided the monasteries with rigorous organization. The community in Tabennesi was shaped similarly to the military camps where Pachomius had been enrolled during his youth.[160] Another feature that contributed to the shaping of authority was the way in which monks and nuns were grouped. According to the Rules, those who were charged with the same duty had to live close to each other. For example, all the tailors lived in the same house:

> Brothers of the same craft are gathered together into one house under one master. For example, those who weave linen are together, and those who weave mats are considered one family. Likewise, tailors, carriage makers, fullers and shoemakers are governed separately by their own masters, and every week they render an account on their works to the father of the monastery.[161]

The military heritage was perceived within the division among the members of the community. There was a hierarchy among the monks and the nuns, and the *abba* presided over the entire community.[162] Both the monks and the nuns followed the same written rule and therefore one may assume that they were similarly organized even in terms of the hierarchy among members. Each group had a supervisor, a person responsible for its

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[159] Alberto Camplani, Giovanni Filoramo, ed., *Foundations of Power and Conflicts of Authority*, 9-10.
[160] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 7, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 26-27.
[161] "Prec. 6," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 143.
[162] "SR 104," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of St. Basil the Great*, 330.

integrity, but the women's monastery was supervised by a group of elders.[163] Each male house had a housemaster, assisted by a vice-housemaster.[164] His role was to assign the monk in charge with a certain function inside the monastery. He had the same competences as his superior, but acted mainly in the case of the latter's absence.[165] For this reason, a second was necessary for almost every monk who had responsibility over a group of brothers.[166] Housemasters exercised their own legitimate authority, subsidiary to that of the entire community: "all the hoods shall bear the sign of the community and the sign of their house."[167] The portar of the monastery also had authority in both the spiritual and the practical issues. Firstly, he was supposed to instruct newcomers on their arrival to the monastery and afterwards to introduce them to the community.[168] Further, at least the brother's community had a stewart (*oikonomos*) responsible for the economic activities of the establishment.[169] No one exercised his or her own will without the approval of their superiors and the rank of each member of the monastery had to be respected:

> When someone uninstructed comes to the assembly of the saints, the porter shall introduce him according to [his] rank from the door of the monastery and give him a seat in the gathering of the brothers. He shall not be aloud to change his place or rank of sitting until the *oikiakos*, that is, his own housemaster, transfers him to the place he should have.[170]

The monastery in Annisa had a male (*presbyter / proestos*) and a female superior (*presbytera / proestosa*). The abbess was subordinated to the abbot, but the abbot could not decide anything that concerned the sisters without consulting the abbess. In Anna Silvas'

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[163] "The elders appointed to the virgins' ministry." "Prec. 143," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 167.
[164] "Leg. 5," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 181.
[165] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte*, 337.
[166] "Prec. 65," "Prec. 70," "Prec. 101," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 157, 158, 162.
[167] "Prec. 99," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 162.
[168] "Prec. 1," "Prec. 49," "Prec. 59," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 145; 152-153; 159.
[169] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte*, 331.
[170] "Prec. 1," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 145. The other rules which refer to the rank are "Prec. 13," "Prec. 20," "Prec. 63," "Prec. 65," "Prec. 131," "Prec. 136," "Prec. 137," in Ibid., 147, 148, 157, 165.

words, "the *presbytera* acted largely as a *co-ordinate* superior."[171] The two superiors also decided what work every monk or nun must do for the group they were in charge of.[172]

The strict division among the members of the community reveals the predominance of charismatic authority, legitimized through monastic rules. Because of the complexity of the organization, authority had to be distributed so that it could cover all aspects of material and spiritual life. Despite his charisma, the abbot of the community needed intermediates through whom he could control the community. For example, the abbot of Tabennesi distributed garments through the housemaster and the other members were forbidden to possess more without approval.[173] Another occasion for using one intermediary was to enlarge the community. The Bohairic *Life of Pachomius* narrates the circumstances in which this monastery was founded and later transformed into a double community. Fifteen years after Pachomius settled in his monastery in Tabennesi, his sister, Maria, visited him. In order to keep the purity of his life untouched, he decided not to allow her to see him. After few days, convinced by her eagerness to adopt the same existence, he decided to build a convent for her in close proximity:

> When our father Pachomius had found that [Maria's] heart inclined to the good and right life, he immediately sent the brothers over to build a monastery for her in that village, a short distance from his own monastery … Later on, many heard about her and came to live with her. They practiced *ascesis* eagerly with her, and she was their mother and their worthy elder until her death. When … Pachomius saw that the number of [these women] was increasing …, he appointed an old man called Apa Peter, whose speech was seasoned with salt to be their father and to preach frequently to them on the Scriptures … [he] also wrote down the rules of the brothers and sent them through [Peter], so that they might learn them.[174]

[171] Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 24.
[172] Ibid., 23.
[173] "Prec. 81," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 159-160.
[174] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 27, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 49-50.

Until his death in September 378,[175] Basil had the most prominent influence on the monastery in Annisa. Macrina was the abbess of the nuns, but a deaconess, Lampadion, was in charge of the women's section under her. The men were led spiritually by Peter, Macrina's youngest brother, who was ordained as a priest by Basil in approximately 371.[176]

Legal authority covered the interior and the exterior of the community. Inside the monastery, a monk punished for disobedience was removed from the "assembly of the brothers" and had the obligation to repent:

> If someone is prone to slander and to saying that which is not [true] and is caught in this sin, he shall be admonished twice. And if he is too contemptuous to listen, he shall be separated from the assembly of the brothers seven days and shall receive only bread and water until he firmly promises to convert from that vice. Then he shall be forgiven.[177]

The sins of the monks had to be analyzed by the abbot: "When a sin is committed, the fathers of the monasteries shall have the authority to correct it and to establish what must be done."[178] However, if a monk supposed to judge sinned in his turn, he was to be judged by an assembly of devoted men whose age was a guarantee of their wisdom and competence:

> If the one who is the judge of the sins of all abandon the truth, because of the perversity of his heart or out of negligence, he shall be judged by twenty holy and God-fearing men, or ten or even only five about whom all bear witness. They shall sit and judge him, and degrade him to the lowest place until he amends.[179]

External authority was exercised over the community by the local bishops. After the destruction of the temple of Serapis at Canopos (392), Theophilus (c. 345-412[180]) built a monastery in the same place, where he invited Pachomian monks. After the death of

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[175] The date of Basil's death, assumed until recently to have been 1 January 379, has been re-discussed. Anna M. Silvas has made an overview of all the recent attempts to establish an accurate chronology of "the four Cappadocians" in her introductory study to the edition of the Gregory of Nyssa's *Letters*. See Anna M. Silvas, "Biography," in Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, 32-39.

[176] Anna M. Silvas, ibid., 25.

[177] "Jud. 1," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 175.

[178] "Leg. 4," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 181.

[179] "Jud. 9," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 177.

Theodore (368), Pachomius' successor as the head of the monastery, Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria, sent a letter to the members suggesting a new leader of the community. In this way, not only did the new father achieve legitimacy, but patriarchal authority over the monastery was confirmed.[181]

The numerous features that authority had determine the necessity of its analysis from various perspectives. In mixed and double monasteries, authority had a double aspect. On the one hand, it was exercised from outside the monastery, through the conciliar canons and interventions of the bishop. On the other hand, the members of one community were subordinate to a many-branched internal authority. The 'chain' of obedience(s) that an ordinary monk or nun owed to various superiors indicates, on the one hand, the charisma of several members, and on the other hand, the distribution of the authority among them. As for legal and institutionalized authority, the scriptural and apostolic origins which were perceived behind the monastic rules ensured the idea of God's intercession for their elaboration among the members of the monastery.

What sources do not fully reveal is how monks and nuns could influence authority inside the monastery. John W. Coakley's remark for a later period may also be valid for cases of double monasteries in the Late Antique Near East. In these communities, men "functioned as figures of power and control. But on the other hand, the men – often the very same men – also typically cast themselves as the women's admiring followers, pupils or friends."[182] In the examples here, one may assume at least that the monks admired the nuns whom they had to

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[180] Norman Russell, *Theophilus of Alexandria* (London: Routledge, 2007), 3, http://books.google.ro/books?id=fmIy81rY8ikC&hl=ro&source=gbs_navlinks_s (accessed 18 February 2013).
[181] Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 190.
[182] John W. Coakley, *Women, Men, and Spiritual Power. Female Saints and Their Male Collaborators* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 2.

supervise, since many concrete references in this respect appear in the sources.[183] Therefore, one may question whether the exercise of authority was affected by this admiration.

II. 4. Relations with 'Outsiders'

The foundation of double monasteries and especially their enclosure, meant to separate them from the lay world, raise a number of questions concerning relations with persons that did not belong to them. These questions are legitimate, particularly because encounters with foreigners were far from rare, as the distances between these communities and settled localities were not great. Who was allowed to visit a monastic community, when, and where visitors were allowed to enter? Why did laymen want to visit a monastery? How did monks and nuns relate to their neighbors? Did a monastery have a role in the society around it? Were monks and nuns allowed to travel outside the monastery?

The most obvious characteristic of these monasteries concerning relations with their neighbors is philanthropy. *The Life of Macrina* describes many cases of the ascetics giving alms and hospitality. When famine broke out in Cappadocia, in 367-369, the monastery in Annisa provided food to the hungry: "crowds from all sides poured into the retreat where they lived, drawn by the report of their generosity. It was then that [Peter] supplied, through his prudence, such an abundance of food."[184] Naucratius used to hunt for the sake of the poor and the sick,[185] and Macrina took care of orphans whom she found wandering and starving.[186] After the famine, Basil introduced details in his Rules concerning the acceptance of the children into the monastery: "Children bereft of parents we take in of our own accord, thus becoming fathers of orphans. But children who are under their parents' authority and are

[183] Despite the unavoidable rhetoric of the sources, this admiration is truly founded. See Kate Cooper, "Insinuations of Womanly Influence: An Aspect of the Christianization of the Roman Aristocracy," *The Journal of Roman Studies*, 82 (1992): 150-164.
[184] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 14,6, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 123-124.
[185] Ibid., 10,4, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 119.
[186] Ibid., 28,5, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 137.

brought by tem in person we receive before several witnesses, so as to give no pretext to those on the look-out for one." [187]

Philanthropy was not limited to charity during disasters. In general, the monks gave *eulogia*, blessed gifts, to visitors to the monasteries. Philanthropic actions were delivered equally inside and outside the monastery, a particularity of Late Antique monasteries in the Near East; later, in Byzantine monasteries, these actions could take place only outside the gates. [188]

Despite their hospitality, the communities tried to avoid monks and nuns encountering too many visitors, who could distract them from their spiritual exercises, "so that the flock of the brothers may freely tend to its duty and no occasion for detraction be given to anybody." [189] The Pachomian and Basilian Rules specify how foreigners, laymen, and clerics, had to be received inside the monasteries and the places where they were supposed to stay during their visits. Different rules were established for relatives. Guests were received in certain spaces within the monastery, "according to their rank" [190] and gender. Special attention was devoted to women:

> If seculars, or infirm people or weaker vessels – that is women – come to the door, they shall be received in different places according to their calling and their gender. Above all, women shall be cared for with greater honor and diligence. They shall be given a place separated from all areas frequented by men, so there may be no occasion for slander. [191]

The most important guests of a monastery were clerics, for whom the Rules established an entire ceremony on their arrival: "they shall be received with greater honor if they are clerics or monks. Their feet shall be washed, according to the Gospel precept, and

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[187] "LR 15," 4, in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 200.
[188] Alice-Mary Talbot, "Women's Space in Byzantine Monasteries," 115.
[189] "Prec. 52," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 154.
[190] "Prec. 1," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 144.
[191] "Prec. 52," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 154.

they shall be brought to the guesthouse and offered everything suitable to monks."[192] High

clerics' visits to monasteries were not rare.[193] For example, Bishop Araxius took part in

Macrina's funeral,[194] and Athanasius of Alexandria and Sarapion of Nitentori spent some

time in Tabennesi in 328.[195]

As for the members of the earthly families of the monks or nuns, since their purpose

of withdrawal was to separate themselves from the world the ascetics received their relatives

under the supervision of a trusted member of the community:

> If someone presents himself at the door of the monastery and says he would
> like to see his brother or his relative, the porter shall inform the father of the
> monastery, who will call the housemaster and ask him whether the man is in
> his house. Then, with the housemaster's permission, he shall be given a
> trustworthy companion and so shall be sent to see his brother or relative.[196]

The reasons for the visits of laymen were related to the fame of the monks and nuns

that dwelled there. Pilgrims received spiritual or material gifts from the ascetics. In various

places the sources mention Pachomius' healings and *eulogia* given to the visitors, both inside

and outside the monastery.[197] In light of the permanent care for the stability of the

communities, visitors could spend several days to learn the ascetic life.[198] Those willing to

become part of the community had to be tested for a long period of time.[199]

The risk of breaking the ascetic ideals could also appear during travels. Therefore, in

general, the monastic rules and the clerics were not favorable to voyages, especially for nuns.

In Pachomian monasteries, monks could leave a monastery under certain conditions, but the

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[192] "Prec. 51," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 153-154.
[193] One may question about the practice and the impact of their authority during their presence in the monasteries. However, sources are not explicit in this respect and the topic goes beyond the aim of this thesis.
[194] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 36,1, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 143.
[195] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 28, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 51.
[196] "Prec. 53," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 154.
[197] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 41, 43, 44, 45, 48, 109, 110, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 64, 67-71, 161-162.
[198] "SR 97," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 326.
[199] "LR 14," "LR 15," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 198-204.
The problem of the ingress into communities will be discussed in the next chapter.

Rules do not specify anything for nuns. For Annisa, the Rules state that no one could travel without a mandate from the superior.[200]

Without being as elaborated as the late medieval monastic networks, connections between double communities directed by the same spiritual father were gradually established. Pachomius created a *koinonia* of nine monasteries, which he supervised from Phbow.[201] Gregory of Nyssa and Basil the Great instructed several monasteries in Pontus.[202] Jerome and Paula maintained relations with Marcella both in Rome and in the Holy Land. [203]

Apart from spiritual concerns, practical aspects of social life were also part of the relations between monasteries and the local community. Economic activities were favored by the position of the monasteries. Tabennesi was situated close to several markets where monks could sell their handiwork.[204] The Nile River offered a means of transportation to the monasteries included in the *koinonia*. Since the affiliated monasteries spread over 175 kilometers, communication would not have been possible without easy transportation. Relations outside the monastery were extended so that the community gained land outside the walls, new markets for selling products, and the amount of travel increased, as did the distances covered during journeys.[205]

In spite of their isolated appearance and seclusion from society, these monasteries were not separated from settlements. They were either situated inside localities or easily accessible from nearby villages. However, in their cases the cities were "deserts." These communities were ideologically placed within "immaterial deserts."

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[200] "SR 120," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 339.

[201] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 49, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 71.

[202] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Letters*, 32.

[203] "Lettre 46. De Paule et Eustochie à Marcella," 13, in Jérôme, *Lettres*, vol. 2, 113.

[204] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 26, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 48-51.

[205] James E. Goehring, "Withdrawing from the Desert," 273-274; 283; Idem, "New Frontiers in Pachomian Studies," 250. Sources from 367-368 report a brother paying taxes for the agricultural land in the Hermopolite nome to the monastery in Tabennesi, part of the Tentyrite nome. These documents could indicate that the older

community in Tabennesi had legal responsibilities for the land worked by the younger community to which that monk belonged.

CHAPTER III. RELIGIOUS LIFE: BETWEEN PRIVATE AND PUBLIC

Deus fortitudo mea Tu es[206]
(Psalm 63:2)

The communitarian organization of double monasteries reflected two major ideas. First, the segregation between monks and nuns was emphasized by the way in which buildings were arranged and by the distribution of duties among brothers and sisters. Second, the unity of a whole community was maintained through the various types of authority that some members had over the entire group of ascetics. This chapter will confirm that the same segregation-unity dichotomy was maintained in the religious conception of the monasteries, which emphasized, in addition, two more pairs of dualities. These communities embodied principles from both private and public worship and life, redefining them and reversing their classical hierarchy.[207] The ascetics' main aim was seclusion from society, and thus they emphasized the private character of their existence. At the same time, inside communities, another type of privacy was practiced, namely, the intimacy of each ascetic individually. As contrasted to these two types of privacy, these monasteries had also a certain limited public character. Although they attempted to be separate from society, they were opened, in some respect, to outsiders. Communitarian organization and religious practice alike centered on the common aspect of their existence. These practices were meant to ensure not only the salvation of the world and that of the entire community, seen as a spiritual family of ascetic brothers and sisters in Christ, but also the salvation of each of its members. Salvation could be achieved through reciprocal efforts:[208] the community was saved only if each of its

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[206] Lord, You are my strength.
[207] Kim Bowes, *Private Worship, Public Values, and Religious Change in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 211.
[208] Caroline T. Schroeder, *Monastic Bodies: Discipline and Salvation in Shenoute of Atripe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), .26.

members was saved and the other way around, the unrighteousness of one of them led to the ruin of all.

How did the proximity of monks and nuns in the same three double monasteries influence their asceticism? To what extent were the ceremonies and rituals for entering a monastery, the wealth or the poverty, the monastic dressing, the intellectual and spiritual instruction, the monastic prayers and services, and the ascetic exercises public or private? Which of these ascetic practices were conducted in common and which of them were individual?

III. 1. Ceremonies and Rituals for Entering the Monastery

Clifford Geertz suggested that religious practices reproduced features of the interactions between the members of a society and the organization of its secular life.[209] In the Near Eastern society, what type of social communities did the double monasteries reproduce (or strengthen) in the fourth century, since these establishments were very new entities? Apparently, their examples do not fit Geertz's thesis because of their innovative character. They did, however, reproduce the structure and organization of the Classical ancient family in a new type of group. Double monasticism broke up the earthly relations between relatives, but based on the model of the family, monks and nuns of the same community together built up a spiritual family. Once an ascetic left his earthly relatives, he entered the heavenly Jerusalem of the monastery and thus became part of the sacred family of brothers and sisters devoted to Christ. This process involved an ensemble of rituals and ceremonies.

Roy Rappaport has defined ritual as "the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers."[210] In an

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[209] Clifford Geertz, "Ritual and Social Change: A Javanese Example," *American Anthropologist, New Series*, 59, no. 1 (1957): 34.
[210] Roy A. Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) 27.

ascetic environment, it became "a mode of communication" with God which involved and encouraged emotions.[211] Referring to the differences between the substance of a ritual and its form, he stated: "The ritual form … adds something to the substance of ritual, something that the symbolically encoded substance by itself cannot express."[212] A ceremony emphasizes the development of the actions that compose its rituals, rather than the finality and consequences of the acts.[213]

Referring to rituals in the monastic milieu, Giles Constable noted that from the early years of monasticism, ascetics followed a similar chain of everyday signs and habits.[214] The sources offer numerous details about rituals and standard appearance, different according to the geographical space and chronological period to which the monastic communities belonged. Rituals had a double role. They maintained the unity and the harmony of the entire community, and they assured the connection of their members with God.[215]

One's perpetual ascetic existence began with a deep self-examination before definitively retiring from society. Consecration to the Lord took place with the clearly stated expression of self-willingness, a personal choice between a life in the world, in a marriage, and a life outside the mundane, which, through personal spiritual endeavor, could reach the level of sainthood. Such a decision could only be taken by a mature person, both spiritually and intellectually,[216] the proper age being around sixteen.[217] Sources also attest the ritual of

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[211] Ibid., 49-51.
[212] Ibid., 31.
[213] Ibid., 38-39.
[214] Giles Constable, "The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life and Taking the Monastic Habit from 4th to 12th Century," in *Segni e riti nella Chiesa altomedievale occidentale: 11-17 aprile 1985*, vol. 2 (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1987), 772-774.
[215] Ibid., 773.
[216] Basil, "Letter 199," ed. E. H. Warmington, G. P. Goold, trans. Roy J. Deferrari, in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 108-109. "She is named a virgin who willingly consecrated herself to the Lord, has renounced marriage, and has preferred the life of holiness. We sanction their profession [since] their age possesses the fullness of reason. For it is not proper to consider children's words entirely final in such matters, but she who is above sixteen or seventeen years, and is mistress of her faculties, who has been examined carefully and has remained constant and has persisted in her petitions for admittance, should then be enrolled among the virgins, and we should ratify the profession of said virgin, and inexorably punish her violation of it. For parents, and brothers, and other relatives bring forward many girls before the proper age, not because these girls have an inner urge towards celibacy, but in order that their relatives may provide some

asking a novice several questions,[218] to make sure that he or she had really interiorized the choice and realized the effects. The questions had to be followed by a vow with huge significance and serious consequences "whenever they return to the life of the flesh and pleasure."[219]

One had to feel the presence of a *pater* of his future ascetic *familia* from his or her novitiate.[220] Church Fathers stressed the importance of the novitiate in one's monastic life. Pachomius used to let both men and women wait at the gates of the monastery for several days before allowing them to enter it,[221] and Basil also insisted on the importance of this stage.[222]

The confirmation of entry into the choir of ascetics dedicated to God was the moment of the blessing bestowed by the priest: "Why need I ever speak of … the words of commendation for your virginity? Or of virginal blessings?"[223]

Ceremonies did not have a fixed content, since monasteries were in their first ages. Thus, for Pachomius the vow of chastity was not part of a great ceremony, whereas for Basil it was solemn[224] and continued with a serious deliberation by the candidate, witnessed by

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worldly advantage from themselves. Such should not be received readily, until we shall have clearly examined into their own personal inclination."

[217] However, it is interesting that Macrina, his sister, was betrothed when she was only twelve, and the proper age for marriage was considered to be fourteen. Since marriage was in general arranged by parents, without too many chances of opposition especially for a girl, Basil's statement proves that the decision of celibacy was considered much more difficult to be achieved. Another possible explanation is that he probably did not want to counter parents' decisions, assuming that when a desire to remain a virgin appeared, the tutors consented in some respect.

[218] Giles Constable, "The Ceremonies and Symbolism of Entering Religious Life," 790.

[219] Basil, "Letter 199," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 3, 110-111. "But we do not recognize the profession of men except such as to have enrolled themselves in the order of monks; these seem to have taken up celibacy in silence. Yet … the following course of action should precede; they should be questioned and a clear profession received from them, so that whenever they return to the life of the flesh and pleasure they may undergo the punishment of fornication."

[220] Basil, "Letter 96," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 291-293. "the Paul of to-day, under whose mediation and instruction you left your father's home and were married to the Lord."

[221] "Prec. 49," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 152-153.

[222] Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, "Le système cénobitique basilien comparé au système cénobitique pachômien." *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 152, no. 1 (1957): 49.

[223] Basil, "Letter 96," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 290-291.

[224] Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 199-204.

bishops and the superior of the monastery.[225] If for celibacy a solemn vow is attested, sources do not reveal any distinctive vow for poverty or obedience. However, these two features were required in the monastic rules and, moreover, breaking them was followed by punishments.

How actively did both the ascetics and the 'outsiders' participate in the rituals and ceremonies that they attended? Some of the rituals present in the daily life of double monasteries were individual and sometimes private events of the brothers and sisters. Entering a monastery was regarded as a personal passage in one's life, and attendance at it was allowed only for other members of the same community. In rare cases, people coming from outside could take part.

Confession was not only a private event, but also an intimate act between an ascetic and a spiritual father. Other rituals and ceremonies were public and needed mass participation. The Liturgy, funerals, and some of the Hours involved not only people equally from inside and outside monasteries attending them, but also their active participation especially through singing.

III. 2. Common Wealth *vs.* Individual Poverty

Dedicating one's life to God was accompanied by the renunciation of wealth. Starting with the *Life of Saint Antony*, hagiographies incorporated the *topos* of giving one's wealth to the poor or to the monastery before becoming an ascetic as a result of the obedience towards Christ's commandments. This gesture was founded not only in the Biblical examples of the poor who had more chances to be saved (Luke 18:25), but also in homilies and treatises which argue against richness and suggest that a true Christian life is incompatible with the accumulation of wealth. Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus wrote long works in which they reminded the readers that God created all humans equal and differences appeared only after the original sin. Therefore, renunciation of wealth and love

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[225] Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, "Le système cénobitique basilien," 49-50.

for the poor meant not only a means of *imitatio Christi*, but also represented an attempt to return to the original perfect estate of human beings at the creation of the world.[226] Another example is given in the *Life of Saint Antony*, well-known in the period. After he heard the verses of Matthew 4:20, Acts 4:34-35, and Matthew 6:31, Antony gave all his possessions to the poor and became a hermit, thinking that becoming himself a poor man would free him from temptation. Later, the conditions for entering the Pachomian monasteries included renouncement of possessions as a literal obedience to the verses in Matthew 19:21 and Luke 14:16-17;33.[227] The insistence on the donation of everything that one monk possessed was made for the salvation of both that monk and his community. However, this discourse seems to present not a historical reality of very poor monks, but an "ascetic ideal." Poverty did not mean only not to possess anything, but also to live modestly and thus to renounce all worldly preoccupations for the sake of the heavenly ones.[228] Personal poverty was not only a way of gaining a place in Paradise in the afterlife, but it also involved philanthropy as a way of loving one's brother similarly to loving Christ (Matthew 25:40).[229] The distribution of one's wealth was done as a means of "voluntary poverty," but also "prudently," according to the needs of the poor. In the second half of the fourth century, voluntary renunciation at one's

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[226] Mary Sheather, "Pronouncements of the Cappadocians on Issues of Poverty and Wealth," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 1, ed. Pauline Allen, Raymond Canning, Lawrence Cross (Queensland, Australia: Everton Park, 2000), 376-392.

[227] "The First Greek Life of Saint Pachomius," 24, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 312.
"Prec. 49," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 152-153.

[228] Samuel Rubenson, "Power and Politics of Poverty in Early Monasticism," in *Prayer and Liturgy in the Early Church* vol. 5, 93-102.

[229] Moreover, the rich had also the responsibility of being generous for the sake of the common good. See Peter Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in Late Roman Empire* (Hannover: Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures: 2002), 3-5, apud Samuel Rubenson, "Power and Politics of Poverty in Early Monasticism," 103.
This thesis contests Samuel Rubenson's claim that the idea itself of helping the poor was not taken into account, see: Samuel Rubenson, "Power and Politics of Poverty in Early Monasticism," 103: "In the Gospel of Matthew itself, as well as in its usage in the early monastic sources, the words of Jesus to the rich young man focus on the wish to have eternal life, and the subsequent invitation to follow Jesus. Neither the rich young man, nor Antony, is asked to renounce their wealth for the sake of the poor, but rather for their own sake." Ibid., 104: "The really poor, to whom the monk is supposed to give are in our sources usually barely visible, and there are hardly any models."

wealth and almsgiving became current in ascetic communities.[230] In Tabennesi, Pachomius

and his disciples took care of the poor who were living around the monastery[231]; in Annisa,

Macrina hosted orphans[232] and Peter went fishing to feed local needy inhabitants during the

great famine.[233] In Bethlehem, Jerome and Paula invited and hosted visitors.[234] Traditionally,

hospitality was viewed as a civic value, but in the fourth century the focus was more on

imitatio Christi rather than on earning civic praise.[235] Since the donations were made on

behalf of the entire community, and not by individual members, the monasteries needed to

have good material conditions. Communities were materially supported through donations. A

wealthy man donated all his properties to the Pachomian *koinonia*,[236] which supported

philanthropic actions. Macrina and her family renounced the properties of their household for

the sake of the monastery they founded.[237] Paula and Eustochium donated their entire fortune

to the monastery in Bethlehem.[238] In addition, monasteries also had economic activities

through which they were able to support their philanthropic actions. However, despite the

wealth of these communities as entities (sometimes impressive, in the case of Annisa and

Bethlehem), what prevailed was the modesty in which each of the brothers and sisters lived.

Apart from material donations to poor neighbors, one important aspect of

philanthropy was healing, in both the physical and spiritual respects. Monastic rules mention

infirmaries and hospices where the sick were taken care of,[239] and monks with ascetic and

charismatic authority performed healings for visitors, as a result of their spiritual progress.

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[230] Anna M. Silvas, "The Emergence of Basil's Social Doctrine: A Chronological Approach," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 5, 143.
[231] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 25, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 47.
[232] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 28,5, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 137.
[233] Ibid., 14,6, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 123-124.
[234] Jerome,"Letter 108. To Eustochium," 14, in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 202.
[235] Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 3.
[236] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 53, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 73.
[237] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 13,2, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 121.
[238] Jerome,"Letter 108. To Eustochium," 20, in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 206.
[239] "Prec. 40" – "Prec. 47," "Prec. 92," "Prec. 105," "Prec. 129," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 151-152, 161, 162, 165.

III. 3. "Garments of Salvation" as a Sign of Dedication to God

Recent studies on the significance of dressing have pointed out that clothes acted "as a symbolic expression of identity within a social system."[240] How did the monastic dress of brothers and sisters indicate their ascetic vocation or spiritual progress?[241] The poor and modest clothes likened a monk to a saint or a prophet, and made a woman a bride of Christ,[242] testifying at the same time to the contradiction between the transcendental perfection and material imperfection in the life of an ascetic.[243] Ascetic men and women had a special way of dressing with rich symbolic meanings. The μηλωτή (sheepskin or goatskin) was specific to men and one the most important parts of their clothing. Elijah wore it as prophetic garb during his conversation with God (3 Kings 19:13 – LXX), and as a protection against the cold. Later it became a piece of clothing which confirmed the charismatic authority of an ascetic man and that was offered to his successor in order to transfer charismatic and ascetic authority.[244] The tunic (Coptic: *cacitôn*; Greek: λεβίτων; Latin: *tunica, lebitonarium, colobium*) was a long sleeveless linen robe, also called σχῆμα in Coptic and Greek. The hood (Coptic: *klapht, klbt, kouble, koukli*; Greek: κουκούλλιον; Latin: *cucullus*) was used to cover the head and the neck. The mantle (Coptic: *prêš*; Greek: μαφόριον; Latin: *pallium, palliolum, sabanum, amictus, mafors*) was used during the night and when needed against the cold.[245]

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[240] Rebecca Krawiec, "'Garments of Salvation': Representations of Monastic Clothing in Late Antiquity," *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 17, no. 1 (2009): 129.

[241] I am aware that many anthropologists (Pierre Bourdieu, David Swartz, Linda B. Arthur, Mary Douglas, Erving Goffman, Michele Foucault, Bryan Turner, Catherine Bell) and historians (Sebastian Brock) have referred to the role of the dress in general within different types of society and in the monastic milieu in particular.

[242] Rebecca Krawiec, " 'Garments of Salvation': Representations of Monastic Clothing in Late Antiquity:" 131.

[243] Patricia Cox-Miller, "Is There a Harlot in the Text? Hagiography and Grotesque," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 33, no. 3 (2003): 419.

[244] Antony left his μηλωτή to Athanasius, thus transferring his authority.

[245] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 19, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 41; Notes, 270.
"Pref. 4," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 142: "They have nothing in their cells except a mat and what is listed here below; two *lebitonaria* (which is a kind of Egyptian garment without sleeves), and a third one already worn, for sleeping and working, a linen mantle, two hoods, a goat skin which they call *melote*, a linen belt, and finally shoes and staff to go on journeys".
"Prec. 81," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 159-160.

Basil stressed the practical aspect of clothes, recommended for covering and warming the body.[246] Monks had to wear a belt which kept the clothes close to the body, especially during work.[247] Clothing had to remain unchanged in style for decency and humility, [248] and thus for imitating Biblical characters (prophets, John the Baptist – 3 Kings 19:13; 4 Kings 2:8; Matthew 3:4 – LXX) in order to gain spiritual authority.[249]

Unlike men, for nuns the way of dressing did not create any connection with Biblical characters, but they wore a distinctive veil (μαφόριον) as a sign of the consciousness of their sinful natures. The dress was distinct from secular fashions. On the 13 June 356, during an attack against the Orthodox believers about to finish prayer in a church, the consecrated virgins were insulted by having their veils snatched off.[250] The Scriptures and the Church Fathers alike stressed the importance of the veil,[251] and thus it became a sign of a woman's

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[246] "LR 31," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 232; Basil, "Letter 2," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 20-23; Idem, "Letter 22," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 134-135.

[247] "LR 37" – "LR 42," in ibid., 243-254.

[248] Rebecca Krawiec, " 'Garments of Salvation': Representations of Monastic Clothing in Late Antiquity:", 128.

[249] Ibid., 134.

[250] "They scourged with stripes the holy persons of the Virgins, tore off their veils and exposed their heads, and when they resisted the insult, … kicked them with their feet. This was dreadful, exceedingly dreadful." Athanasius, *Arian History (Historia Arianorum ad monachos)*, VII, 55, trans. Archibald Robertson, ed. Philip Schaff, Henry Wace, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series II, vol. IV (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1892), 290, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf204.xx.ii.vii.html (accessed 3 April 2013).

[251] In 1 Corinthians 11:10, both the initial Greek text and the later Latin translation use a polyvalent word. In Greek, the most frequent meaning of ἐξουσία is power, authority, and therefore the term was translated in Latin as *potestas*. Later on, the Church Fathers interpreted this verse in association with the entire context of the Epistle, associating to the veil itself the significance of a woman's submission and obedience through the acceptance of a man's authority over herself. For a deeper discussion about the significance of the veil in Saint Paul's writings see Rosine Lambin, "Paul et le voile des femmes," *CLIO. Histoire, femmes et sociétés*, 2 (1995), http://clio.revues.org/index488.html (accessed 3 April 2013).
The aim of this paper limits us in giving more details about the origin and the use of the veil throughout centuries. It is well-known that women were supposed to wear it at least in public in both Greco-Roman Antiquity and Judaism. After the rise of Christianity, Church Fathers constantly referred to it, recommending women to wear it most of the time, according to the Pauline Epistle. When quoting the verse of 1 Corinthians 11:10, several Fathers replaced the word ἐξουσία with κάλυμμα, which meant veil. It is the case of Irinaeus of Lugdunum, in his treatise *Against Heresies*. See Irinaeus of Lugdunum, "Against Heresies. Book I," I, IV, 5, ed. Philip Schaff, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1885), 321, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.ix.ii.v.html (accessed 3 April 2013).
Clement of Alexandria considered that a woman should wear the veil only during prayers, according to Paul's Epistle, on the one hand in order to avoid the sin of fornication, and on the other hand in order not to tempt the men.At the same time, the covering proved her honesty and humbleness. See Clement of Alexandria, "The Instructor," III, XI, ed. Philip Schaff, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1885), 290, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf02.vi.iii.iii.xi.html, accessed 3 April 2013. Another argument brought in by Clement refers not to the Scriptures, but, surprisingly, to characters of pagan literature. He argued that Aenaeas' wife did not renounce the veil even when she was captured in Troja. Ibid., III, XI, 290.

spiritual vocation, signifying her mystical wedding with Christ.[252] Later a law from 30 May

394 stated that women who supported themselves through dishonorable activities were

forbidden to wear "the dressing of those virgins who are dedicated to God."[253]

One of the signs through which a woman adopted the ascetic life was to cut her hair.

Jerome wrote to Deacon Sabinianus about this custom in Egyptian and Syrian monasteries:

> It is the custom in the monasteries of Egypt and Syria that both the virgin and
> the widow who dedicate themselves to God, renounce the world, and trample
> all the world's joys, offer the mothers of the monasteries their hairs to be cut,
> afterwards they do not have to reveal their head uncovered, contrary to the will
> of the Apostles, but tight and veiled. No one is witness, except for the trimmed
> women and men, but because everyone does it, it is known by almost
> everyone….[254]

Tertullian was undoubtedly one of the most fervent and zealous critics of women. *De uirginibus uelandis* is the treatise in which he offers the most numerous details about the reasons for all women's obligation of constantly wearing the veil, regardless of their marital status. Tertullian, "On the Veiling of Virgins," VII-VIII, trans. S. Thelwall, ed. Philip Schaff, in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 4 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1885), 37, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf04 .iii.iv.xvii.html, accessed 3 April 2013. He specified that the veil should cover only the head, the ears, and the neck, unlike the one used by women of pre-Islamic Arabia, which covered even a the face. For this reason, he considered it excessive and named it *barbarior*. See Ibid., XVII, 4.

John Chrysostom considered that a woman should cover her head all the time: "For he said not merely covered, but 'covered over,' meaning that she has to be carefully wrapped up on every side. And by reducing it to an absurdity, he appeals to their shame, saying by way of severe reprimand, 'but if she be not covered, let her also be shorn.'" See John Chrysostom, "Homily XXVI on First Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 11:6," trans. Talbot W. Chambers, ed. Philip Schaff, Henry Wace, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series I, vol. XII, (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1889), 152, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf112.iv.xxvii.html, accessed 3 April 2013.

[252] Jan Gerchow, Kattrinette Bordarwé, Susan Marti, Hedwig Röckelein, "Early Monasteries and Foundations. An Introduction (500-1200)," in Jeffrey F. Hamburger, Susan Marti, Dietlinde Hamburger, *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2008), 13, http://books.google.ro/books?id=U2zQOFH8d-0C&printsec=frontcover& source=gbs_atb#v=onepage&q&f=false, accessed 13 April 2013.

[253] "Habitum earum virginum, quae Deo dicatae sunt." *Les lois religieuses des empereurs Romains de Constantin à Théodose II (312-438)*, vol. 2, *Code Théodosien I-XV, Code Justinien, Constitutions sermondiennes*, XV, 7, 12, trans. Jean Rougé, Roland Delmaire, ed. Roland Delmaire (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2009), 392-393. (My translation).

[254] Jérome,"Lettre 147. Au diacre Sabinien," 5, in Jérome, *Lettres*, vol. 8, 125-126: "*Moris est in Aegypti et Syriae monasteriis, ut tam uirgo, quam uidua, quae Deo se uouerint, et saeculo renuntiantes, omnes delicias saeculi conculcarint, crinem monasteriorum matribus offerant desecandum, non intecto postea contra Apostoli uoluntatem incessurae capite, sed legato partier ac uelato. Nec hoc quispiam, praeter tondentes nouit et tonsas, nici quod quia ab omnibus fit, paene scitur ab omnibus. Hoc autem duplicem ob causam, de consuetudine uersum est in naturam, uel quia lauacra non adeunt, uel quia oleum nec capite, nec ore norunt, ne paruis animalibus, quae inter incultum crinem gigni solent, et concretis sordibus obruantur.*" (My translation).

III. 4. Monastic "Pedagogy": Between Spiritual Instruction and *Paideia*

What were ascetic men and women taught in double monasteries? Despite the absence of any "monastic school" in the medieval sense,[255] Late Antique double monasteries did offer a certain "pedagogy" to their monks, nuns, and novices. As earthly projections of the Heavenly Jerusalem, these "cities of God" could receive only the most pure in bodies and souls inside their gates.[256] For this reason, before being allowed to enter the choir of ascetics, novice men and women had to pass "trials" and be continuously instructed on practical and spiritual needs. Spiritual instruction was not directed to the new adherents only, but also to the old members who had to continue their spiritual evolution, even though they were no longer on the first steps of their ascetic paths.

Therefore, monks and the nuns had a continuous spiritual upbringing, stressed in preaching and rules. Part of their instruction consisted in avoiding spiritually harmful teachings, such as the works of the authors considered "heretics,"[257] and replacing them with "orthodox" writings. Rubenson's project demonstrates that hagiographical writings such as *The Life of Saint Antony* or *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* were used as 'textbooks' for ascetics.[258]

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[255] Samuel Rubenson's project entitled *Early Monasticism and Classical Paideia*, http://www.monasticpaideia.org/ (accessed 3 April 2013), aims to demonstrate the opposite idea for the monasteries in Gaza, stating that they continued the Classical education of the ancient world and had a crucial role in transmitting Classical texts. However, this rule does not apply to the monasteries analyzed here. *Paideia* needs a much deeper analysis according to their particular context.

[256] In her study, "The Earthly Monastery and the Transformation of the Heavenly City in Late Antique Egypt," Kristi B. Copeland refers to the Egyptian monasteries only, but the perception of the monastery as "the City of God" characterized other communities also. Kristi B. Copeland, "The Earthly Monastery and the Transformation of the Heavenly City in Late Antique Egypt," in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions*, ed. Ra'anan S. Boustan, Anette Yoshiko Reed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 154-156.

[257] "The First Greek Life of Saint Pachomius," 31, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 311.
Pachomius found a book written by Origen and since he had forbad this author, he threw it in the Nile.

[258] Samuel Rubenson, *Early Monasticism and Classical Paideia* (http://www.monasticpaideia.org/). However, this analysis must probably be nuanced; the monks and the nuns read or were read the lives of the saints, but they were not able to follow literally the examples presented. The members of the monasteries did not begin their ascetic lives as hermits, nor did Macrina become a transvestite in order to follow an influential ascetic leader in his missionary travels. One may affirm without hesitation that hagiographies certainly acted as spiritual guides, but not as models to be imitated.

Another set of writings meant to be known by ascetics stemmed from the theological debates that reached their peak in the fourth century. During his retreat at Annisa between 358-362, together with Gregory of Nazianzus Basil composed a *Philocalia* which included even Origen's *De Principia*, which must have been read at Annisa.[259] *The life of Saint Thecla* had a strong influence on the women.[260] Other frequent readings for monks and nuns were the *Apophthegmata* and, naturally, the Scriptures.[261] The latter were used by the spiritual fathers for two purposes: to legitimize their way of living and to find models for their ascetic practices. Not only was the amount of time spent reading the books important, but also the order of the books that one had to assimilate gradually during the process of spiritual instruction:

> A most important path to the discovery of duty is also the study of the divinely-inspired Scriptures. For in them are not only found the precepts of conduct, but also the lives of saintly men, recorded and handed down to us, lie before us like living images of God's government, for our imitation of their good works.[262]

None of the Rules mentioned the particular times when the *lectio divina* had to be held. In Pachomian monasteries, the superiors of the houses were in charge of catechesis on the readings from the Scriptures, and ascetics were encouraged to discuss them. Brothers and sisters recited texts from Scriptures while working (*meditatio*), which means that they were supposed to learn to read and to learn at least the New Testament and the Psalter.[263]

Education in the Scriptures was actually "part of an oral culture," since these texts were sung at least at home and in the Liturgy.[264] During Macrina's childhood, her mother took care of her daughter's education in Scriptures.[265] After she grew up, Macrina read the

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[259] Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 17.
[260] Gregory of Nyssa compared Macrina with Thecla, and Macrina surely knew about Thecla through reading. Anna M, Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 18.
[261] I am aware of the fact that this is the time when the Bible and of the Apophthegmata were canonized.
[262] Basil, "Letter 2," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 14-15.
[263] Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius*, 81.
[264] Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 3.
[265] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 4, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 113-114.

Psalter after waking up, at the beginning and at the end of her work, during and after meals, before sleeping and during the night prayer.[266] Her brother also studied the Scriptures and the tradition of the Church in Neocaesarea from childhood.[267] Psalms' recitations also appear in Pachomius' Rules,[268] and Jerome advised his spiritual daughters to learn the Psalter by heart.[269] Being willing to learn the Scriptures and the traditions of the Church in one's own household were part of the cultural changes that appeared when an increasing number of believers chose to be baptized and transform their lives in a Christian sense.[270] The result of this transformation was made material in the language used by the Church Fathers before and after they embraced the monastic life. Anna M. Silvas' remark about Basil[271] is also valid for Pachomius and Jerome: after their "hinge-years" spent in their monasteries, their spiritual growth was manifested in all aspects of their lives, but most clearly in their new, "consciously de-Hellenized" discourse, full of Biblical quotations.[272]

But how was the Classical *paideia* which one had studied before entering a monastery integrated in a Christian education? Initially, the brothers and sisters in Annisa and in Bethlehem had a religious formation based on Christian principles combined with a Classical education. Macrina learnt "childish lessons,"[273] although her mother tried to prevent her from

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[266] *La vie de Sainte Macrine*, 69-70.
[267] Basil, "Letter 223," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 3, 298-299.
[268] "When the *synaxis* is dismissed, each one shall recite something from the Scripture while going either to his cell or to the refectory". "Prec. 28," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 150.
This practice is also mentioned in "The First Greek Life of Saint Pachomius," 58, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 338. In the notes at page 414, Armand Veilleux explains that the verb μελετᾶν (*meditari*), meaning *to meditate*, expresses the action of reciting something (usually a text from the Scriptures) either in a low voice or within one's heart. The Pachomians spent most of their time reciting and they were able to learn a great part of the Scriptures by heart. They learnt it by small sections, each one called μέρς ἀποστήθους in the Coptic texts.
[269] Jerome, "Letter 108. To Eustochium," 20, in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 208.
[270] Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 3.
[271] Eadem, "The Emergence of Basil's Social Doctrine: A Chronological Enquiry," 135.
Eadem, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 86-89.
[272] Eadem, "St Basil: Passages of Spiritual Growth," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 1, ed. Pauline Allen, Raymond Canning, Lawrence Cross, B. Janelle Caiger (Brisban: Australian Catholic University, 1998), 354-355.
[273] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 4,1, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 113.

encounters with fragments of Classical authors that could have disturbed her soul.[274] Paula and Eustochium received a theological education in their house in Rome, and in Bethlehem they learned Hebrew and were able to comment on Jerome's biblical translations. The correspondence with Jerome not only concerned philological issues, but also theological problems. Perhaps even the order of the translation of the books was intentionally chosen by Jerome in order to contribute to their personal instruction.

These examples refer only to a Late Antique social elite. Macrina and her brothers, Jerome and his brother, Paula and Eustochium, belonged to the richest families of their native lands and received a good Classical *paideia* in their youth. They also had educated slaves who joined them in their monastic communities. As for the "ordinary" members of the monasteries who were not from rich and well-educated families, the sources do not reveal whether they were able to read. One must assume that some of the brothers and sisters from these monasteries knew at least how to read, since Pachomius and Basil put their monastic rules in written form with the express purpose of sending them to their communities.

Yet, these monasteries functioned as "schools," in the sense that monks and nuns had to learn the Psalms, to listen to monks reading from Scriptures in the church's ambo, to receive children whom they had to instruct, and some of the brothers were in charge of writing.[275]

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[274] Ibid., in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 113.
However, in *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, Gregory of Nyssa narrates a deep dialogue on the nature of the soul that he had with his sister one day before her death. Macrina permanently referred to Epicureans and Stoic philosophers and used Platonic terminology, which proves that she knew their writings, but at the same time she had progressed both intellectually and spiritually so that she was able to integrate their ideas into the Christian perceptions about the soul and the resurrection. Moreover, she perceived the monastic life as "a direct continuation of that noble tradition of the *vita contemplativa* begun by the philosophers of Ancient Greece" and she had become able to teach her brother, himself a clerk with a previous ascetic experience that succeeded a good education in rhetoric, the ideas of the philosophic life.
On the other hand, this dialogue is an imitation and a response to Methodius' *Aglaophon or Concerning the Resurrection*. A copy of it together with his well-known *Symposium or Concerning Chastity*, were certainly available either in the household in Neocaesarea, or in Annisa, see: Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 17-20.
[275] Palladius, "The Lausiac History," 32, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 125-129. In Tabennesi there were monks who worked in a *scriptorium*; each house had a *praepositus* in which books were guarded, and they

Teaching the most important values and traditions was done in each community by the most influential authority figure, either the spiritual father or mother. Alexandrian theology was transmitted and preserved in Annisa through the efforts of Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus. In the dialogue *On the Soul and the Resurrection*, Macrina is the teacher of her brother. Jerome was also in charge of teaching the monks and nuns in Bethlehem.[276]

III. 5. Spiritual Exercises: Fasting, Repentance, and Confession

Part of the virtue of ἐγκράτεια, fasting was fundamental for ascetics, since it facilitated the rest of the spiritual exercises through which they were able to contemplate God. Sources are rich in details concerning both the reasons for fasting and what monks and nuns were recommended to eat. The theological reasons for these conventions were founded not only in the Scriptures, but also in the effects of each kind of food on the body and the soul. A pure body needed a purified soul, so repentance and confession were the next steps that an ascetic had to take before receiving Christ in Holy Communion. What spiritual exercises were practiced in double monasteries and how were they adapted to the proximity of brothers and sisters?

Church Fathers spoke about two types of fasting. The spiritual one, involving abstinence from sin, was more important than the abstinence from food, but could not be achieved without it.[277] The ascetic could practice virtues only if his soul was purified through

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could be borrowed for one week, see: Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*. Jerome frequently discussed his translations of the Hebrew Scriptures in his letters and prefaces addressed to Paula and Eustochium.

[276] Actually, Rufinus accused Jerome of teaching them pagan authors. Rufinus, *Apol.* 2, 11, 15a, in *CC* 20, 92, apud Pierre Nautin, "L'excommunication de Saint Jérôme," 21: "after he had settled in the monastery at Bethlehem, … he took the office of a teacher in grammar, and explained 'his own' Maro and the comedians and lyrical and historical writers to young boys who had been entrusted to him that he might teach them the fear of the Lord: so that he actually became a teacher and professor in the knowledge of those heathen authors, as to whom he had sworn that if he even read them he would have denied Christ." (*etiam illud addatur ... quod in monasterio positus in Bethleem ante non multum adhuc temporis partes grammaticas executus sit, et Maronem suum comicosque ac lyricos et historicos auctores traditis sibi ad discendum dei timorem puerulis exponebat, scilicet ut et praeceptor fieret auctorum gentilium, quos si legisset tantummodo, Christum se iurauerat negaturum*)

Translation in "The Apology of Rufinus. Addressed to Apronianus, in Reply to Jerome's Letter to Pammachius," 2, 8 (2), 465, http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf203.vi.xi.iii.xii.html (accessed 19 April 2013).

[277] Gregory of Nyssa, *De pauperibus amandis Oratio I*, apud Herbert Musurillo, "The Problem of Ascetical Fasting in the Greek Patristic Writers," *Traditio* 12 (1956): 39.

fasting; Judas served as a counterexample, since he fasted with the apostles, but then betrayed Jesus.

Too much food was considered harmful for asceticism because a too-full stomach did not allow the soul to contemplate God, since the exterior life influences the interior one.[278] Wine and meat were considered the most dangerous,[279] especially for the vow of celibacy:

> avoid wine as you would avoid poison. Wine is the first weapon that devils use in attacking the young. The restlessness of greed, the windiness of pride, the delights of ostentation are nothing to this. Other vices we easily forgo: this is an enemy within our walls and wherever we go, we carry our foe with us. Wine and Youth – behold a double source for pleasure's fire. Why throw oil on the flame; why give fresh fuel to a wretched body that is already ablaze?[280]

However, one needed moderation and common sense.[281] Exaggeration had to be avoided, since only Christ, because of His divinity, was able to fast for forty days. Too-modest nourishment was harmful for the body and thus not helpful for the spirit.[282] For an ascetic, it was enough to avoid the transformation of the fleshly need for food into a sinful desire.[283]

All these recommendations and reasons were the basis for the monastic rules concerning fasting. Double monasteries did not have special rules for fasting, but had specific times and places of eating, influenced by the proximity of the groups of monks and nuns.

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[278] Terrence G. Kardong, "The Monastic Practices of Pachomius and the Pachomians," *Studia monastica*, 32, no. 1 (1990): 70

[279] Basil, *Homily on Martyr Iulitta*; apud Herbert Musurillo, "The Problem of Ascetical Fasting;" Basil, *Hom. 14 in ebriosos 1*, apud Herbert Musurillo, "The Problem of Ascetical Fasting."
Basil, "Letter 22," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 122-123: "The Christian ought not to be a slave to wine, nor fond of meat, nor in general to find pleasure in food or drink."

[280] Jerome, "Letter 22," 8, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 25.

[281] Gregory of Nyssa, *De mortuis*, apud Herbert Musurillo, "The Problem of Ascetical Fasting in the Greek Patristic Writers," 39.
"LR 16," "SR 128," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 205-208; 343.

[282] Jerome, "Letter 108. To Eustochium," in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6.

[283] Gregory of Nazianzus *Oration 40*, apud Herbert Musurillo, "The Problem of Ascetical Fasting in the Greek Patristic Writers," 39-40.

Living in community involved a sort of "democracy" in terms of eating. [284] All monasteries emphasized eating in common and communitarian fasting. In Tabennesi, throughout the year, with the exception of Passover and of the Fifty Days, Wednesdays and Fridays of every week were dedicated to fasting. Fasting was practiced in many ways. A common custom was to have two meals daily, one after noon and one in the evening, probably after the Ninth. Fasting was subject to regulation, because everything done "above the norm" was considered dangerous.[285] Harsher fasting could not be practiced in common; a monk who wanted to do it had to separate from the community and go inside his cell.[286] Every common meal involved a set of rituals aimed at maintaining the unity of the monastery. A gong sounded before the meal started, gathering the whole community, and monks and nuns were supposed to eat in silence, with their heads bowed.[287] After the meal, which normally included bread and cooked vegetables, they received a small piece of a sort of dessert or a dried fruit called *tragematia* (or κορσενήλιον).[288] Exceptions to the communitarian way of eating and rules of fasting existed.[289]

In Annisa, fasting differed in some details from Tabennesi. Basil insisted on temperance and on renunciation of unnecessary and pleasant things, in order to achieve

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[284] "Prec. 35," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 151. "The ministers / superiors shall eat nothing but what has been prepared for the brothers in common, nor shall they dare to prepare special foods for themselves."

[285] Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius*, 89.

[286] "Pref. 5," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 143: "The healthy practice a greater abstinence. They all fast twice a week, Wednesday and Friday, except during the Passover and the Fifty Days [of Eastertide]. On other days those who want to do so eat after noon and the table is set again at dinner time on account of those who are tired, the old, and the boys, and on account on very severe heat. There are some who eat a little the second time, others who are satisfied with one meal, either at noon or in the evening; and some taste a little bread and then go out. All eat together. Anyone who does not want to go to table receives in his cell only bread with eater and salt, either daily or every other day, as he wishes."

[287] "History of the Monks in Egypt," 3, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 121.
"Prec. 29" – "Prec. 30," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 150.

[288] Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius*, 84.

[289] Terrence G. Kardong, "The Monastic Practices of Pachomius," 66.
"Prec. 37" – "Prec. 38," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 151.
Once Pachomius agreed to break the well-known and practiced rule of fasting, according to which no monks was allowed to eat flesh meat, see: "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 48, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1.

piety.[290] Moreover, fasting was not meant to weaken the body, so that the mind could concentrate on prayers.[291]

One's place at the table was also related to fasting. Monastic rules stress the importance of the good order, which maintained the unity of the communities.[292] Although according to the Gospel, the greatest humility was to have the last seat at the table, inside a community this virtue was difficult to achieve. Therefore, in cenobitic monasticism, one's greatest humility was to take the place assigned by the spiritual father obeying him, in accordance with 1 Corinthians 14,40.

The purpose of fasting was a deeper meditation on one's soul and thus on one's salvation. Unlike fasting, which had a communitarian aspect, meditation was strictly individual. Sadness and weeping were means for proper meditation,[293] naturally followed by confession, one of the most important Church mysteries, since it resulted in the forgiveness of sins. Confession had to be the result of repentance, also strictly individual. Sources do not state how often monks and nuns had to confess, but they reveal two types of confessions: one was done for disciplinary reasons, whereas the other one was according to the one's conscience. The superiors of the monasteries were supposed to watch over their spiritual sons and daughters, since they would have to render an account to God for each of them.

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[290] Herbert Musurillo, "The Problem of Ascetical Fasting," 9.

[291] Basil, "Letter 2," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 22-23. "As one should consider practical utility in the matter of clothing, … in the matter of food, bread will satisfy actual needs, water will cure the thirst, if one is healthy, and there are … all the dishes of vegetables and fruits that help to preserve the body's strength for inevitable needs. One should not exhibit frantic gluttony in eating, but on all occasions should preserve composure, gentleness, and restraint as regards the pleasures of the palate. And not even at table should one allow the mind to be unoccupied with the thoughts of God, but one should make the very nature of the food and the structure of the body that receives it an occasion for His glorification. … Before meals let prayers be said worthy of the bounties which God both gives now and has stored up for the future. After meals let prayers be said that include thanksgiving for the gifts received, and petitions for those promised. Let one hour, the same each day, be set aside for food, so that out of the twenty-four hours of day and night, barely shall it be expended on the body, the ascetic devoting the remainder to the activities of the mind."

[292] *LR 24* – "*LR 36*," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 224-242.

[293] *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 127.

Spontaneous confessions could also take place, and special attention had to be paid to the confessions of the novice.[294]

The purified soul was thus prepared to receive the Communion, the holy nourishment of both the body and the soul. The Eucharist for the believers at the end of every Liturgy was public. Monastic rules do not specify how often Holy Communion should be taken, but Church Fathers stress its importance by suggesting that ascetics take it as often as possible.

> and also to take communion every day … is good and beneficial. We for our part, however, take communion four times each week – on Sunday, on Wednesday, on Friday, and on Saturday – and on the other days only when there is a commemoration of a saint (of a martyr – variant, footnote 3, page 144)[295]

The good order mentioned in the Pauline Epistle was maintained even during the moment of taking the Eucharist. According to Pachomian Rules: "The first to enter the monastery … says the psalm first, … and communicates first in the church."[296]

Spiritual exercises were the only aspect of the everyday ascetic life without any specificity in double monasteries, compared to individual communities. However, a brief survey of their fundamentals and role is necessary, since any other religious practice was based on them.

III. 6. *Ora et Labora* (Work, Prayer, and Monastic Services)

The daily lives of monks and nuns were built on the pillars of prayer and work according to the Pauline advice "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessaloniceans 5:17) and "[work] with [your] hands the thing which is good, that [you] may have to give to him that needeth" (Ephesians 4:28). Apparently a paradox[297], the ideal of unceasing simultaneous prayer and

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[294] Emmanuel Amand de Mendieta, "Le système cénobitique basilien," 59.
[295] Basil, "Letter 93," in Basil, *The* Letters, vol. 2, 144-145
[296] "Prec. 103," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 162.
"Pref. 3," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 142.
[297] Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in the East and West*, 67.

work could be achieved by integrating prayer in one's work ("we praise God … while we put our hands to work"[298]).

Church Fathers included in the notion of philosophy both the ideas of the Christian faith and of ἄσκησις.[299] For anchorites, both prayer and work were supposed to help them remain awake and meditate on God. While he was a hermit, Pachomius learnt from his spiritual father, Palamon, to spend half of the night in prayer while plaiting fibres into ropes and baskets in order to avoid falling asleep.[300] After the foundation of the monasteries, he started to recite sixty prayers during the day and fifty during the night.[301] For every ascetic environment, vigils, at least for half a night, were as important as fasting. Since it was difficult to overcome the sensation of sleep, monks found three ways of keeping the vigils: "either you pray from evening till midnight, then sleep till time for synaxis … or … you sleep till midnight and then pray till morning. Or finally you pray a little and then sleep a little (doing that) from evening till morning."[302]

In time, monasteries developed a precise routine of daily prayers and vigils, both for each ascetic individually, and for the entire group in common. How were they adapted to double communities? By the middle of the fourth century, a cycle of seven prayers became regulated, according to the psalmist: "Seven times in a day have I praised Thee because of the judgments of Thy righteousness" (Psalm 118:164).[303] Each service indicated an important moment from the history of salvation. The Third remembered the Pentecost. The Sixth and

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[298] "LR 37," 2, in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 244.
One may question to what extend this idea was really feasible in a monastery. It may not have been just rhetoric, since in the community in Annisa "we boast of having a body of men and women … who…, being undistracted and in constant attendance upon the Lord, remain night and day in prayer. Their mouths do not proclaim the works of men, but they sing hymns to our God unceasingly, while they work with their own hands that they may have something to share with those who have need," see: Basil, "Letter 207," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 3, 184-187.
[299] Elena Gianarelli, "Prayer and Spirituality in Early Christian Female Martyrdom and Monasticism," in *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church*, vol. 2, ed. Pauline Allen, Wendy Mayer, Lawrence Cross (Brisban: Australian Catholic University, 1999), 118.
[300] Terrence G. Kardong, "The Monastic Practices of Pachomius and the Pachomians," 63.
[301] "The Bohairic Life of Saint Pachomius," 9, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 29.
[302] Terrence G. Kardong, "The Monastic Practices of Pachomius and the Pachomians," 64.
[303] "ἑπτάκις τῆς ἡμέρας ᾔνεσά σοι ἐπὶ τὰ κρίματα τῆς δικαιοσύνης σου".

the Ninth were the times of the Crucifixion and the death of Jesus. The Ninth and the midnight office imitated the Apostles at their moments of praying.[304] All in all:

> There is Orthros, that the first movements of the soul and mind may be dedicated to God and nothing else enter our consideration before we take delight in the thought of God, as it is written *I remembered my God and I am delighted* (Psalm 75:3) and that we do not stir the body to work before doing as it is said *To You will I pray, O Lord. In the morning You will listen to my voice; in the morning I shall stand before You and watch* (Psalm 5:4-5).

> Again at the Third hour we must rise up for prayer and gather the community together, if they happen to be scattered at their various tasks. Remembering the gift of the Spirit given to the apostles at the third hour, we must all do homage[305] *with one accord* (Acts 1:14) that we too may become worthy to receive His hallowing and seek guidance and teaching from Him in what is fitting, as he did who said *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not deprive me of Your Holy Spirit. Give me again the joy of Your salvation, and with the spirit of guidance strengthen me* (Psalm 50:12-14) and elsewhere *Your good Spirit shall guide me on a straight path* (Psalm 142:10). Then we take up our tasks again. …

> The prayer at the sixth hour is necessary ... from the pattern of the saints who said: *At evening, down and noon I will announce and proclaim and He shall hear my voice* (Psalm 54:17) and the ninetieth psalm is also recited …, that we may be delivered from assault and from the noonday demon (Psalm 90:6).

> The ninth hour is handed down to us as necessary for prayer by the apostles themselves in the Acts, where it is told how *Peter and John went up to the temple at the ninth hour of prayer* (Acts 3:1).

> As the day draws to a close, let us give thanks for what has been given us during the day and for what we have done well, and let us confess what we have left undone, whether voluntary or involuntary, or an inadvertent fault in word or deed or in the heart itself, making atonement for all things through prayer. …

> Again, as the night begins, we ask that our rest may be without offence and free from fantasies, and of necessity we recite again … the ninetieth psalm.

> The duty of prayer at midnight Paul and Silas have handed down to us, as the history of the Acts recounts it saying *But at midnight Paul and Silas were singing praises to God* (Acts 16:25) and the Psalmist also says *At midnight I will rise up to give You thanks, because of the judgment of Your justice* (Psalm 118:62).

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[304] Juan Mateos, "L'Office Monastique à la fin du IVè siècle: Antioche, Palestine, Cappadoce." *Oriens Christianus* 47 (1963): 77.

[305] Prostration.

And again we must anticipate the dawn and arise for prayer, so that the day does not overtake us asleep in bed.[306]

In Annisa, the Orthros started at sunrise and included hymns and chants. It was followed by periods of work and lectures from the Scripture alternating with prayers and hymns. During the Third the verses 12-14 of Psalm 50 and the 12th verse of Psalm 142 were recited. This service was common, since at the third hour of the Ascension Day men and women were praying together in Jerusalem.[307] The Sixth was marked by the Psalm 90. Vespers was followed by a prayer to prepare for sleep, the midnight office and the rest.[308]

How did the prayers and the monastic services vary from region to region? Was their common or private character affected by the traditions of the local churches? Pachomian monasteries insisted on private meditation on the Scriptures rather than on common liturgical offices.[309] A Pachomian monk started the day alone in his cell, after few hours of sleep or after vigil on a special chair (καθισματία) following the evening prayer.[310] At dawn, a gong rang, announcing the morning common *synaxis* (*collecta*), when monks and nuns meditated on Scriptural passages, recited mostly from memory.[311] Although they attended the service together, the two groups sat in different choirs. Each ascetic, however, spent the prayer time strictly in his own place, in privacy. Every day had services in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, consisting of at least six prayers. In order to bring the work near prayer, Pachomius advised ascetics to find good reasons for thanking and asking for divine help during work.[312] The Vespers were common only for the ascetics of each house,[313] and linked

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[306] "LR 37," in Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 245-247.

[307] Ibid., 246.

[308] Juan Mateos, "*L'Office Monastique à la fin du IVè siècle: Antioche, Palestine, Cappadoce*," 53-88.

[309] "Prayer? Without letup, in your room between you and God" (Pachomius, "Instructions 1," 8, in *Pachomian Koinonia* vol 3, 14).

[310] "The First Greek Life of Saint Pachomius," 79, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 351-352.

[311] Joseph Dyer, "Monastic Psalmody of the Middle Ages." *Revue bénédictine* 99 (1989): 46.

[312] Adalbert de Vogüé, "Les grandes règles de S. Basile: un survol," *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 41, no. 3 (1979): 217.

Basil, "Letter 2," in Basil, *The Letters*, vol. 1, 12-13. "What is more blessed than to imitate on earth the anthems of angels' choirs; to hasten to prayer at the very break of day, and to worship our Creator with hymns and songs;

to the Orthros by a vigil kept individually throughout the year, except for Easter night, when it was common.[314] Ascetics who did not keep private vigil all night had to wake up earlier and recite five or ten psalms in their cells before the beginning of the common morning *synaxis*.[315]

In Bethlehem, the nuns had a common church for their *monasterium* or one church for each of the three groups in which they were divided. During the weekdays, they reunited there to sing Psalms during the Orthros, the Third, the Sixth, the Ninth hours, for Vespers, and, if it existed, for the midnight office. Similarly, Jerome's monks used the church in their *monasterium* for common prayer every day except Sundays. On this day, they went to the Church of the Nativity, since Jerome was not allowed to serve the Liturgy outside Antioch. There they were joined by the nuns from the three communities, each of them led by its spiritual mother.[316]

Apart from the moments when the ceremonies were served and their public or private character, sources also reveal their contents. In Tabennesi, the usual *synaxis* started with the sign of the cross. Before the signal for prayer, monks sat down and concentrated on their hand-work of weaving rushes into baskets and mats. When the signal was given, they rose. At the next signal they knelt, made the sign of cross, and prostrated themselves, sometimes on the face. Further, another signal was given for sitting, followed by the sign of the cross. After sitting, the ascetics listened to the recitation of passages from the Scriptures.[317] One appointed brother recited a memorized passage from the Scriptures (not necessarily from the Psalms) at the ambo. At the end of each passage, the reader gave the signal to rise and all the ascetics rose, made the sign of the cross, and recited the *Our Father* with their arms extended

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then, when the sun shines brightly and we turn to our tasks, prayer attending us wherever we go, to season our labors with sacred song as food with salt?"
[313] "Inst. 14," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 171.
[314] Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West*, 63.
[315] Ibid., 66.
[316] Pierre Nautin, "L'excommunication de Saint Jérôme," 10-11.

in the form of a cross. At another signal, they made the sign of the cross and prostrated themselves again. Then they rose, made the sign of the cross, sat down and prayed in silence. After the next signal, the whole cycle started again.[318] The Sunday service, in particular, had a psalmody comprising the chanting of psalms by the abbots of the monasteries with responses given to the soloist who was singing the verses by the selected brothers. The Liturgy ended with the Eucharist and one catechesis done by the abbot. A second catechesis on Sunday was also done by the abbot in the evening.[319] While fragments from the Scriptures were texts for meditation and thus did not involve singing, the Psalms implied a sung response and therefore they were interpreted in a lyrical mode.[320] Each week a brother was assigned to conduct the services and he was forbidden to be absent on Sunday, since he had to respond to the psalmist.[321] Responsibility for the psalms was regarded as a privilege given only to the housemasters and the elders of the monasteries: "on Sunday and the synaxis in which the Eucharist is to be offered, let no one be allowed to sing psalms apart from the housemaster and the elders of the monastery."[322] The Psalms were chanted by a single ascetic, and the other monks and nuns were listening in silence and sometimes responded with short refrains.[323] In *Historia lausiaca*, Palladius wrote a legend about recitation of the Psalms in Pachomian monasteries. An angel visited Pachomius and asked his monks "to pray twelve prayers each day and twelve prayers at the nightly vigils … and to add to each prayer a Psalm."[324] However, Armand Veilleux states that the commandment of the angel did not

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[317] "Regulations of Horsiesios," 7, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 199-200.

[318] Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West*, 64-65.

[319] Ibid., 65

[320] Joseph Dyer, "Monastic Psalmody of the Middle Ages," 46-47.

[321] "Prec. 127" – "Prec. 128," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 164.

[322] "Prec. 15," in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 2, 147.
Joseph Dyer, "Monastic Psalmody of the Middle Ages," 47.

[323] Joseph Dyer, "Monastic Psalmody of the Middle Ages", 43.

[324] Joseph Dyer considered it "the earliest known version of … The Rule of the Angel." Inid., 45. Armand Veilleux discussed the variant readings of this fragment, see: Armand Veilleux, *La liturgie dans le cénobitisme Pachômien au quatrième siècle* (Rome: Libreria Herder, 1968), 324-329.

indicate different periods of praying, but the idea of constant continuous prayer all day long.[325]

In Annisa, the midnight service started with the canticle of Isaiah 26:9-26,13 and it included kneeling and prostrations.[326] After the believers stood up, the psalmody began, executed in two different ways. First, the ascetics were divided in two choirs, answering each other.[327] It is not clear whether the singing was simply alternative or antiphonal, but, since other sources do reveal the practice of antiphony for psalmody, it can be assumed that it was often practiced.[328] At the beginning of the Orthros, Psalm 50 was recited.[329] Since it started in the middle of the night and it lasted for long time, the midnight service was mostly designed for ascetics living in a monastery, but the participation of some outside believers cannot be excluded.[330]

In Bethlehem, the midnight service was preceded by the *Compline*, a service not mentioned by Basil. In Annisa the number of seven prayers was maintained through the division of the Sixth into two parts, one before the meal and another after it.[331] Another difference between Cappadocia and Bethlehem appeared in the Orthros. In Annisa, it contained the morning prayer, whereas in Bethlehem it indicated the end of the night *synaxis*

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[325] Armand Veilleux, *La liturgie dans le cénobitisme Pachômien*, 329-330.

[326] Juan Mateos, "*L'Office Monastique à la fin du IVè siècle: Antioche, Palestine, Cappadoce,*" 82.

[327] This way of singing differed from Tabennesi, where brothers and sisters listened to the Psalms in silence.

[328] Unlike Juan Mateos, who does not accept the presence of the antiphony in the midnight office. See Juan Mateos, "*L'Office Monastique à la fin du IVè siècle: Antioche, Palestine, Cappadoce,*" 83-84.
This way of singing is described in details for Macrina's funerals: "I … put the crowd of women with the choir of virgins, while the menfolk I put in the order of the monks. I then elicited a single psalmody, rhythmical and harmonious, coming alternately from either side as in choral singing, and blending beautifully in the common responses." Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Macrina*, 35,3 in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 142-143. "A kind of mystic procession was set in train, the psalmody resounding harmoniously from beginning to end, sung as in the hymnody of the three children (cf. Daniel 3:51)." Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Macrina*, 36,2, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 143-144.

[329] Juan Mateos, "*L'Office Monastique à la fin du IVè siècle: Antioche, Palestine, Cappadoce,*" 84.

[330] Besides, Basil refers explicitly to an ensemble of women and men taking part in the office. As Mateos affirms, based on the letter Basil's 207, which answered to laymen dissatisfied with what they thought to be new offices in their region, see Juan Mateos, "*L'Office Monastique à la fin du IVè siècle: Antioche, Palestine, Cappadoce,*" 85-86.

[331] Ibid., 72.

and the time of the beginning of rest for the monks.[332] As for the way of singing, sources indicate that the antiphony was currently used: "all present united in chanting the psalms in their several tongues. … One after another they chanted the psalms, now in Greek, now in Latin, now in Syriac."[333]

At crucial moments of their existence, ascetics recited the most profound of all prayers. On these occasions, they were either alone, or, at most, surrounded by the most intimate persons of their lives. Before building the monastery in Tabennesi, Pachomius prayed intensely in the desert.[334] Macrina prayed alone for the healing of her illness. Before her death, she said a series of moving prayers of thanksgiving to God, in the presence of her brother and her most faithful disciple.[335] Macrina did not appreciate tears or lamentations in the presence of others, since she considered them a sign of disorder and irrationality,[336] but when no witness was around, she prayed so intensely that the resulting tears helped her to be cured. Similarly, on their deathbed, Emmelia thanked God and blessed her children,[337] and Paula had a moving moment of prayer.[338]

As in single-gendered monasteries, in double communities prayer and work were intertwined. During the Liturgy, monks and nuns prayed together, but in separate choirs. Some other services were, though, served separately. Some of them were open to laymen, but others were explicitly private. What were the criteria for deciding if a service was open to laymen or only to ascetics? A possible answer may be linked to the specificity of these services in the monastic milieu. One can postulate that the services in which only the

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[332] Ibid., 74.

[333] Jerome,"Letter 108. To Eustochium," 30, in *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 211.

[334] "The First Greek Life of Saint Pachomius," 12, in *Pachomian Koinonia*, vol. 1, 305.

[335] Elena Giannarelli observed a similarity between Macrina's last prayer and the prayer murmured by Saint Stephen before his martyrdom (Acts 7). See Elena Gianarelli, "Prayer and Spirituality in Early Christian Female Martyrdom and Monasticism," 124.

[336] Ibid., 119.

[337] Gregory of Nyssa, "The Life of Macrina," 15, in Anna M. Silvas, *Macrina the Younger*, 134.

[338] Jerome, "Letter 108. To Eustochium," 29, in *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, series II, vol. 6, 210-211.

members of the monasteries were involved were not open to the public (such as the canonical vows of the entering the monastery). In contrast, the Liturgy and funerals were public and sometimes saw great attendance (as at Macrina's and Paula's funerals).

CONCLUSION

Nisi Dominus[339]
(Psalm 126:1)

This thesis has aimed to provide an introduction to the problem of proximity between ascetic men and women seen in the foundations of three "family" double monasteries. In the first chapter, the scarcity of the sources and the penury of scholarly research on this topic were revealed. Archeological traces of the monasteries in Tabennesi, Annisa, and Bethlehem have not survived. In addition, scholars have devoted little attention to the problem of the rapports between monks and nuns living in proximity, focusing instead at great length on the general aspects of individual monastic life.

The second chapter revealed that the emergence of double communities was influenced by the complex phenomena and various forms of asceticism that were present in the fourth century. However, double monasticism did not find its way into the non-orthodox forms of religious lives of ascetic men and women dwelling together, nor in the debates on Origenist and Pelagianist doctrines. It rather followed the pattern of the ancient family, converted to Christianity,[340] in which women, far from being left in a secondary position, had an important role. In all three cases, even though differently, women were presented as founders. In Tabennesi, the presence of Maria, Pachomius' sister, led not only to the creation of a women's cloister, but also to its union with a men's monastery into a single monastic unit and, maybe most important, to the setting down in a written format of the first monastic rules, which soon became the norm for communitarian organization even for single-gendered monasteries. Macrina is clearly recognized by her brother in blood (Gregory of Nyssa) and by her spiritual sibling (Gregory of Nazianzus) not only as the true founder of the monastery in Annisa, but also as a true philosopher, a spiritual leader, a teacher, a mother, and a sister.

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[339] Unless the Lord.
[340] As suggested by Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of Saint Basil the Great*, 74-75.

69

Jerome recognized in Paula the core of the monastery in Bethlehem, since her fortune had been supporting the daily life of the monastery for years, but also a zealous spiritual mother and a good example of a life stirring for ascetic perfection. Since double monasteries imitated and even embodied the organization and the function of the ancient traditional family adapted to Christian asceticism, they became the preferred option of men and women who attempted to live a God-pleasing life in close proximity.

The last two chapters aimed to provide an overview of the daily life in double monasteries, upheld by the pillars of the communitarian organization and the religious practices. These two main aspects of the everyday life revealed not only features typical for this kind of monastic life, but also characteristics always present in any cenobitic establishment. In the framework of the daily routine, double monasteries did not differ from the single-gender ones. What differentiated them from the individual monasteries, however, apart from inherent discrepancies connected to each one's region of development (Upper Egypt, Cappadocia, Bethlehem) was the result of the proximity in which monks and nuns lived in the same monastic unit. Both ascetic groups were spiritual siblings dedicated to Christ, who lived in separate quarters. However, they were not isolated from one another; on the contrary, they attempted to serve each other in their practical and spiritual needs. Their lives were at the edge of public and private and between community and individuality. Common activities, such as the most important prayers and meals, were emphasized, but monks and nuns did not renounce privacy. In terms of the practical aspects of communal life, the two groups were interdependent: monks provided nuns not only with "working-hands" for the activities improper for women, but also with monastic services, whereas nuns returned the help to their spiritual brethrens. Nevertheless, in terms of organizing the monasteries, the spiritual father of each entire community transferred the role of the old earthly *paterfamilias* to this new-shaped spiritual family, having the greatest authority and, at the same time,

70

responsibility for it. For this reason, nuns owed obedience towards the monks, which they showed through their distinctive monastic garments. Yet, in some cases, it was the wealth of women entering the monasteries which helped the communities to survive.

"Family double monasteries" is the proper scholarly denomination for the type of ascetic establishments analyzed in this thesis. The fact that monks and nuns lived in proximity did *not* change the monastic vocation of either of the two groups. Having as basic ideology the equality in soul of men and women, these communities embodied the idea of the essential unity of human beings, as Jerome directly expressed it, inspired by Origen.[341] The option of founding double communities devoted to asceticism was chosen by people willing to reproduce on earth the angelic life of Paradise. In the three cases studied in this thesis, the best means of achieving this aim was the transformation of the earthly family into a spiritual one.

One final remark will conclude this thesis. All three *abbas* of the communities discussed here, Pachomius, Basil, and Jerome, were monastic legislators, and their rules and ideas about asceticism became patterns for monastic life in the centuries to come. Although they considered that *it was possible* for akin monks and nuns to live a perfect life dedicated to God in close proximity, and this model was wide-spread in the fourth century, the flowering of family double monasteries was very soon cut down. Two causes compromised the future of this form of cenobitism, deterring it to become the dominant form of monasticism. First, their family nature opposed the idea of one's total break with the earthly matters, requirement that an ascetic had to fulfill before entering a monastery, since family still maintained an emotional connection with "the world."[342] Second, the emerging non-orthodox controversies

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[341] Marianne Sághy, "The Master and Marcella: Saint Jerome Retells the Bible to Women," in *Retelling the Bible. Literary, Historical and Social Contexts*, ed. Lucie Dolezalová, Tamás Visi (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), 135-136.
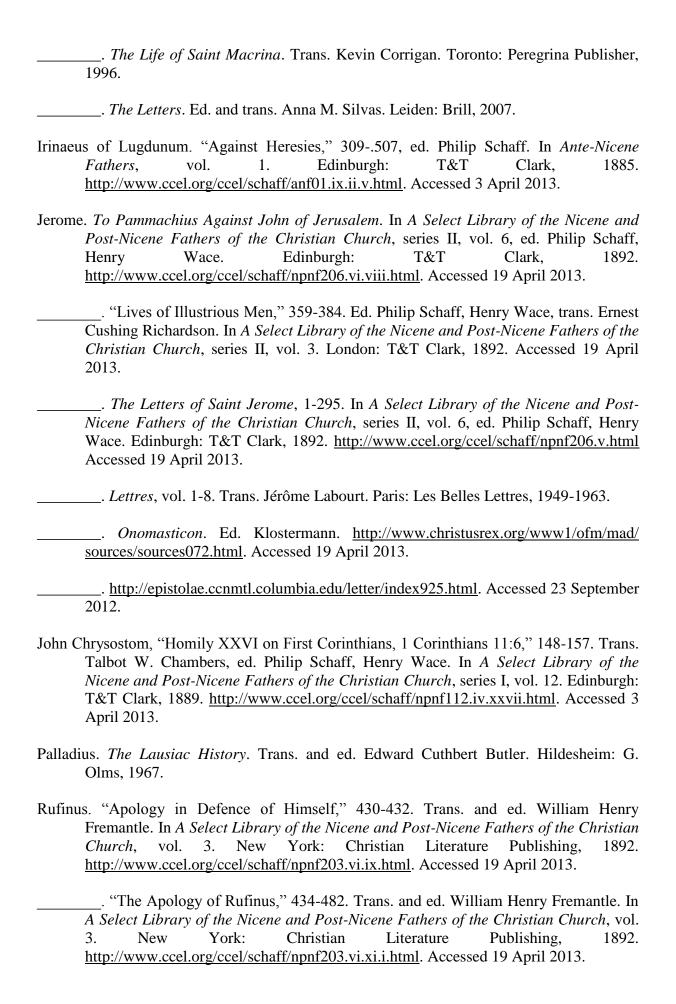[342] Ewa Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte*, 569.

around Origenist and Pelagianist ideas stirred the intrigue raised up by the proximity between

genders.

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74

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Tabennesi	Annisa	Bethlehem
292: birth of Pachomius	327: birth of Macrina	c. 364 (or 368?): birth of Eustochium
323*[343]: Pachomius settles in Tabennesi	329*: birth of Basil	c. 380: Paula's husband dies; she converts to asceticism
324*: Pachomius' first disciples arrive in the "desert village" Tabennesi	c. 339: Macrina's fiancé dies; she decides to remain a "virgin widow"	382: Jerome at the Council of Rome; first meeting with Paula
328*: Theodore arrive to Tabennesi	c. 340: Council of Gangra	c. 384: Eustochium makes a vow of virginity
329*: foundation of other monasteries	349-356: Basil studies in Athens	385, August: Paula and Eustochium depart to the Holy Land
333*: Pachomius's sister comes to Tabennesi => the first monastery for women; Pachomius composes his Rules	351: Naucratius adopts ascetic life; he moves to "the other side of the mountain" on their family estate	386, beginning of spring: Jerome and his brother Paulinianus, Paula, and Eustochium found the monastery in Bethlehem
336-337*: Theodore becomes abbot at Tabennesi; Pachomius moves to Phbow	356: Macrina persuades her mother Emmelia to turn their house into an ascetic community; they free their slaves, who join the community	394, Spring: Jerome, Paulinianus, and all their supporters are excommunicated
346, 9th May, 10th hour: Pachomius dies; Petronius becomes abbot of the *koinonia*	Late 357 / 358: Basil comes to Annisa and adopts the ascetic life in Naucratius' hermitage	397, Holy Thursday: Jerome re-admitted in the Church
346, 21st July: Petronius dies; Horsiesius becomes abbot	360: – Basil ordained deacon and leaves Caesarea; visits Gregory of Nazianzus – Basil attends the Council of Constantinople	404, 26th January: Paula dies
367: Athanasius' *Festal Letters*	362, July: Basil ordained presbyter in Caesarea	404: after Paula's death, Jerome translates the Pachomian Rules
368: Theodore dies	363 (early): Basil returns to Pontos	416: monastery attacked
	365-366: Basil completes the first edition of the *Asketikon*	c. 420: – Eustochium dies – Jerome dies in Bethlehem
	365-370: Basil presbyter in Caesarea	
	368, 11th October: earthquake in Nicaea (almost the entire	

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[343] All the dates marked with * are accepted even if they are not certain.

	city is destroyed)	
	369: – Emmelia dies; Basil visits Samosata – famine in central Anatolia	
	370, September: Basil elected bishop of Caesarea	
	370-371: Basil ordaines Peter as priest to Macrina's monastery; Peter is the monks' superior; Macrina is the abbess of the nuns	
	371: Gregory writes *On Virginity*	
	375-376: Basil comes to Annisa	
	378, late September: death of Basil	
	379, 19th July, evening: death of Macrina	
	381: – Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople – Peter elected bishop of Sebasteia	
	397, summer: Rufinus of Aquileia translates Basil's Rules	