

The Rule of St Basil in Latin and English

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A Revised Critical Edition

Translated by
Anna M. Silvas



A Michael Glazier Book

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Scripture has been translated by the author directly from Rufinus's text.

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*In memory of Sven Lundström (1914–2007),
eminent Swedish Latinist and scholar*

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Anna M Silvas
The University of New England
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The site of Basil's ascetic retreat (AD 358–362) and earlier of Naucratius' and Chrysaphius' retreat (c. 351–356) as reconnoitred, identified, and photographed by the author on 17 March 2006. The view is to the south southwest. It is situated in mountainous gorge country, just after the confluence of the Rivers Lycus and Iris, heading north to the Black Sea. Here is a small sloping plane, cut off on all sides except for narrow access by foot at the top of the ridge above. The river Iris (very turbulent in the early spring) surrounds it almost on three sides. Annisa (Uluköy), the family villa where Emmelia and Macrina lived, is about eight kilometers distant, on the other side of the ridge, in the direction of the top right hand. See the report, Anna M. Silvas, "In Quest of Basil's Retreat: An Expedition to Ancient Pontus," *Antichthon* 41 (2007): 73–95.

Introduction

The idea of the present volume came partly from *RB 1980*.¹ In that volume the editors and commentators availed themselves of the critical Latin text already established by Jean Neufville for the *Sources Chrétiennes* series, volumes 181–186 (1971–72), endeavouring to distil and convey academic scholarship to a less specialized audience.

The subject of this book is itself one of the major sources of the *Rule of Benedict* (RB), namely, the ‘Rule of our Holy Father Basil’ recommended to zealous monks in RB 73.4. The *Regula Basilii* (RBas) is St Basil the Great’s *Small Asketikon* as translated into Latin by Rufinus of Aquileia in AD 397.

The choice of a Latin text for the RBas, however, was a little more problematic than that faced by the editors of *RB 1980*. The first and only truly critical edition is *Basili Regula—A Rufino Latine Versa*.² Two new tranches of critical awareness, however, suggest an updating of Zelzer’s text. First is the study of the transmission of the *Regula Basilii* by Sven Lundström, tentatively at first in his review of Zelzer’s edition published in *Gnomon* 60 (Munich 1988), 587–90, and then very forensically indeed in a monograph, *Die Überlieferung der lateinischen Basiliusregel*.³

Second, there is the study of the Syriac translation of the *Small Asketikon*, the title of which is ܩܘܥܝܘܢܐ ܕܩܘܥܝܘܢܐ, *Quaestiones Fratrum* (‘QF’) = *Questions of the Brothers*. In fact, the present author has examined the QF from the manuscripts and is concurrently publishing its first critical edition.

¹ *RB 1980: The Rule of Saint Benedict in Latin and English with Notes*, ed. Timothy Fry, et al. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1981).

² *Basili Regula—A Rufino Latine Versa*, ed. Klaus Zelzer, CSEL 86 (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1986).

³ *Die Überlieferung der lateinischen Basiliusregel*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, *Studia Latina Upsaliensis* 21 (Uppsala: Academia Upsaliensis, 1989).

The present volume will therefore present an updated version of Zelzer's Latin text, emended in the light of Lundström's advice and as generally confirmed by the Syriac text, together with an annotated English translation. It is in effect a new Latin edition, but assuming and entirely referring back to the work accomplished by Zelzer. Philological specialists will certainly need to continue to use Zelzer. The notes to the Latin text here largely concern justifications of changes to Zelzer's Latin text, and two cases in which Lundström's emendments have not been admitted.

The primary interest of this volume is in the *Regula Basilii* as a text in its own right, and not merely as a tool of access to a lost Greek original, however important a goal that may be. The aim of the author has been to mediate somewhat between the rigours of academic research on the one hand and the interests of an intelligent non-specialist readership on the other hand. Ultimately the hope is that when the Syriac edition and translation is published even readers without all the languages may be able to make their own comparisons, up to a point.

Before proceeding to textual matters, let us first consider the origin of the *Small Asketikon* itself. It begins with a person, Basil of Caesarea, and on the familial, ecclesiastical, theological, and historical ground that informed his vocation in the Christian church.

Basil of Caesarea

Basil of Caesarea (AD 329–378), called 'the Great' by later generations, was very possibly the first non-martyr accorded the cult of a saint in the Christian tradition.⁴ He was the second child and eldest son of a tenaciously Christian and aristocratic family of Pontus in Eastern Anatolia, south of the Black Sea. His mother, Emmelia, came from a family in Cappadocia to the south. His father, Basil Senior, was a rhetorician and advocate in the city of Neocaesarea, metropolis of Pontus Polemoniachus. Sts Emmelia and Basil the elder are recognized with a feast day in the Greek church. Amid contemporary efforts to promote Christian family life and the possibilities of married holiness, the retrieval of this husband and wife team from the early church for wider recognition in the church Catholic would seem an obvious recourse.

⁴ To judge from the timing and intent of St Gregory of Nyssa's encomium on his brother, *In Basilium Fratrem*, in *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* 10.1, 109–34, written in 381. Gregory's aim was to promote January 1 as his brother's memorial day. He proposed that his exceptional holiness of life merited this formal recognition by arguing that Basil's life and virtues were in every way the equal of those of the prophets and martyrs.

As eminent as the younger Basil became, he was but one of several remarkable siblings. The firstborn was St Macrina the Younger, the spearhead in the family of zeal for the ascetic life and the subject of one of the greatest biographies of the patristic era, written by her brother Gregory. The third-born child and second son of the family was Naucratus, the first to follow his sister's example in a life of ascetic retirement from the world. The third son was no less than St Gregory of Nyssa, who became a great speculative theologian and church father in his own right. Another daughter, Theosebia, was highly praised by Gregory Nazianzen as her brother's companion and a leader among Christian women. Finally, the last-born, St Peter II of Sebasteia, was a monastic father in his own right who became metropolitan of Sebasteia in Armenia Minor.

The Christian antecedents of the family too are notable. Basil's paternal grandmother was St Macrina the Elder. She and her husband had suffered confiscation and outlaw status for seven years during the last savage persecution of Christians in the Roman east by Maximin Daia in the early fourth century. This Macrina was a great champion of the traditions of the church of Neocaesarea, which had been founded by St Gregory Thaumaturgus (ca. 213–ca. 270), disciple and panegyrist of the seminal Christian thinker of Alexandria, Origen (ca. 185–253). A moderate, not uncritical Origenism was part of the family's Christian intellectual culture. On the other side of the family, Basil's maternal great-grandfather had died a Christian martyr in the Decian persecutions in the mid-third century.⁵ The memory of martyrs and confessors of the faith ran deep in this family.

During the 330s and 340s, while resident in Neocaesarea, Basil's family came to know and befriend a controversial figure, Eustathius of Sebasteia (ca. 300–379), leader of an unsettling ascetic movement then making its influence felt across northern Anatolia from Constantinople to Armenia. The exaggerations and disorders of this movement were the object of censures in a spate of church councils. Eustathius himself seems to have taken note and modified his approach, as he continued his association with the family throughout the 350s and 360s.

Having begun the higher curriculum with his own father (who died ca. 345) as teacher, Basil went on to pursue the best classical Greek

⁵ Most of these details can be found in Gregory Nazianzen's Oration 43, his eulogy on Basil, which in its expanded and published form became a lengthy biography. See Leo P. McCauley, et al., trans., "On St. Basil the Great," 27–99 in *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose*, Fathers of the Church 22 (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1953, repr. with corrections 1968). Basil's family history is in chapters 5–8, pp. 30–35.

education then available, first at Caesarea in Cappadocia, then in Constantinople (349), followed by some five years in Athens under such masters as Himerios and Prohairesios.⁶ There his dearest companion was Gregory of Nazianzus from Cappadocia, who also went on to gain lasting renown as a Christian orator, being acclaimed as ‘the Theologian’ and studied as a model of Greek style for many centuries to come.

In 356 Basil suddenly returned from Athens, very possibly in response to a family tragedy. His brother Naucratus had been living an ascetic life for some five years in a hidden retreat he had discovered by the river Iris in the mountain gorge country, about 8 kilometers from the family villa at Annisa. But early in the spring of that year Naucratus, while fishing in the river, died in a sudden onrush of waters. Basil spent a term teaching rhetoric in Caesarea of Cappadocia, but on his return home to Annisa in Pontus, his elder sister Macrina brusquely challenged him concerning his earlier intention of pursuing the ascetic life, a life of maximum dedication to the Christian ideal, including the choice of celibacy. Most of these details we learn from Gregory of Nyssa’s *Life of Macrina*, where he says memorably of Macrina and Basil:

He was at that time excessively puffed up with the thought of his own eloquence and was disdainful of local dignities, since in his own inflated opinion he surpassed all the leading luminaries. She, however, took him in hand and drew him with such speed towards the goal of philosophy that he withdrew from the worldly show and despised the applause to be gained through eloquence, and went over of his own accord to the life where one toils even with one’s own hands, providing for himself through perfect renunciation a life that would lead without impediment to virtue.⁷

Thus, thanks to his sister’s intervention, Basil did not continue to pursue the same way of life as his father, that of the Christian profes-

⁶ For an excellent study of Basil’s intellectual formation and his attitude to Greek *paideia*, see Philip Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 27–60. Basil synthesises his own ideas on the use of classical Hellenism in the education of Christian youths in his *Pros tous Neous*, written for the benefit of nephews. It became a great favourite in the Renaissance, being taken as a classic statement of Christian humanism. For text and translation see Roy J. Deferrari, trans., *Saint Basil—The Letters*, 4 vols., LCL (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1926, 1928, 1930, 1934), 365–435. For analysis see Ann Moffat, “The Occasion of St Basil’s Address to Young Men,” *Antichthon* 6 (1972): 74–86.

⁷ Anna M. Silvas, trans., *Macrina the Younger, Philosopher of God* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 117. See also Pierre Maraval, ed. and trans., *Grégoire de Nyse: La Vie de Sainte Macrine*, SC 178 (Paris: Cerf, 1971), with this passage on p. 162.

sional man and landed aristocrat. In the year 358 he committed himself to 'philosophy', i.e., the celibate, dedicated ascetic life, in what was evidently the same retreat Naucratus had vacated by his death.

In the 360s and 370s Basil gained a large and lasting influence in the churches of central and eastern Anatolia and Syria. In terms of the universal church his greatest work was to give coherence and leadership to what is called the Neo-Nicene movement. The Christian churches had been tormented for much of the fourth century by the Arian controversy. In a nutshell, Arianism was the attempt to recalibrate *the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit* of Matthew 28:19 to a sophisticated Neo-Platonist emanationism. In this view only the Father was truly God, while the *Logos*, or the Son emanating from the Father, was a created entity, however lofty, while the Spirit too was created, but on the next rung down from the *Logos*. In essence, the bar between the uncreated and the created was set between the Father on the one hand and all else on the other, the *Logos* and the Spirit included. At stake was Christian identity: was Christian faith and doctrine commensurable with the latest and best in philosophical thinking, or was there something in its genius inalienably deriving from other sources and irreducible to the spirit of the times?

Beginning in the late 360s, in league with such leaders as Meletius of Antioch and Eusebius of Samosata, Basil forged a theological alliance based on a clarification of the terms οὐσία (substance, essence, related to nature) and ὑπόστασις (individual subsistence, related to person). Earlier the semantics of these terms had been somewhat confused. This had led not a few church leaders to be suspicious of the definition of the Nicene Council in 325 that the Son is ὁμοούσιος ('consubstantial', or 'of the same essence') with the Father, if this could be taken to mean *identity of subsistence* or *person* with the Father. Once the distinction between three divine *hypostases* was soundly articulated it became easier to argue the legitimacy and the authority of the Nicene definition. Despite the intimidations of the Arian Emperor Valens, the Neo-Nicene initiative gathered momentum under Basil's captaincy throughout the 370s till it eventually triumphed under a new and staunchly Nicene Emperor, Theodosius I, in the Council of Constantinople in 381.⁸ This council reaffirmed the

⁸ It commenced with Basil's friend, Gregory of Nazianzus, who was then the bishop-designate of Constantinople. He had been instrumental in rallying the Neo-Nicene orthodox in the imperial city. For a general survey of the Arian controversy culminating at this council, see Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, rev. ed. (London: Penguin, 1993), 133–51, and Jean Daniélou and Henri Marrou, *The Christian Centuries: The First Six Hundred Years* (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1964), 255–68. For a more

central Christian intuition, that the divine absolute is both inalienably *one*, and also mysteriously and inalienably *three*, and hence personal, and hence a communion of love, with immense consequences for one's understanding of the constitution of the universe and of the human being. The reaffirmation of orthodox Christian belief insisted that the bar between the uncreated and the created lay between the *Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit* on the one hand, and all else, from angels to rocks, on the other.

Scarcely less important than Basil's labours in theological exposition and church politics was his role as a leader of ascetic reform and a father of monks. Indeed, it was the mainspring of his theological and ecclesial vocation, for at the heart of all his activity Basil was always the ascetic and man of prayer. There was something awesome in his single-minded seeking of God. At the beginning of his commitment to the ascetic life in the late 350s he had become deeply depressed at the terrible mess of the contemporary church.⁹ He conceived a solution: the promotion of small communities in which could be realized a full and uncompromised dedication to the Christian vocation, the life of obedience to *all* the commandments. The experience of the years was to teach him that true doctrine always needed to be accompanied by true *praxis*, and *praxis* by true doctrine, that one without the other tilted toward a failure of the Christian life, and the failure of the church.¹⁰

Showing an outstanding capacity for leadership, Basil addressed himself to the rather unruly and idiosyncratic ascetic movement of northern Anatolia, which till then had looked to the leadership of Eustathius of Sebasteia. It is my contention, argued in several places, that Macrina and her direction of the community at Annisa in the late 350s and early 360s was a determinative influence in the early maturing of Basil's conception of the Christian ascetic community. Basil was never Macrina's spiritual father. Rather, in more than one sense she was his spiritual mother, as indeed she was the spiritual mother of her own mother. All the other

detailed study of the later phase and the pivotal role of the Cappadocian Fathers, see Thomas A. Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

⁹ He tells of his dismay at the contemporary chaos in the church, his conclusions about the cause of it, and what to do about it in *De Iudicio Dei*, PG 31.653–676. See the translation by W. K. Lowther Clarke, *The Ascetic Works of St Basil* (London: SPCK, 1925), 77–89.

¹⁰ The corollary with Socrates/Plato was that the dialectical quest for truth on the intellectual plane could not be validly engaged without an accompanying commitment to the quest for virtue on the moral plane.

siblings looked up to Basil as their 'father', but not his elder sister. While Basil was away in Cappadocia from ca. 362–363 Peter, the youngest of the siblings, reached a 'vowable' age of about 17 years. In taking this step Peter resolved not to depart to the secluded retreat in the mountain gorge country, but to stay at the Annisa villa. In this way the family household reached its final transformation into a dedicated ascetic community, comprising a house of virgins, a house for dedicated men or monks, a house for children, and a house for guests, with a common 'house of prayer'. When Basil returned north in 363, this final 'monastic' transformation of Annisa is what confronted him.

Thus between the years 358 and 363 Basil's ascetic thinking underwent a considerable shift from the earlier freelance life of male ascetics to a comprehensively communitarian conception of the Christian ascetic life. During his mission in Pontus, 363–365, he preached and taught a well-ordered cenobitic (from κοῖνος βίος, 'common life') monasticism, inserted into, exemplary for, and at the service of the wider church.¹¹ This conception of Christian community went hand in glove with the theology of communion and order in the Holy Trinity. The divine summons of the human person to communion was reflected in the very constitution of humanity, made in God's image as a social being. This call to communion was realized and refracted in the church at large and in each local community, and in a very concrete fashion in the Christian ascetic community. Thus Basil's ascetic and moral teaching was based on a well-thought-through anthropology and pedagogy, an understanding of what human beings were created to be and how they might be best helped to achieve their ultimate calling. One of the strongest arguments in Christian literature against the solitary life is found in the *Small Asketikon* 3.35. Meditating the scene portrayed in John 13:5, Basil targets the ascetic individualist with the immortal words: 'Whose feet will you wash? For whom will you perform the duties of care?'

Basil worked for the reform of the ascetic movement by means of his preaching tours through the 360s and 370s. The corpus of his ascetic writings, above all his *Asketikon*, is the fruit of this mission.¹² This work

¹¹ See my book, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Chapter 4, "The Emergence of Monasticism in Fourth-Century Anatolia," 51–101, traces in detail the development of Basil's thinking and practice of the Christian monastic life.

¹² The textual transmission of Basil's ascetic works is an exceedingly complex and ramified affair involving analyses of manuscripts in Greek, Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic, Georgian, and Slavonic, et al. It has received magisterial attention by Paul J.

originated during conferences in which the ascetics would ask Basil how they might live the Gospel life with greater accuracy under this aspect or that. Their questions and Basil's replies were taken down by tachygraphers and eventually worked up as a single book. Basil himself describes the procedure in his Letter 223, addressed to Eustathius in about 375, by which time a serious falling out over doctrinal issues had taken place between them. He asks Eustathius:

Ask yourself: how often did you come to look in on us at the abode by the river Iris (ποσάκις ἐμᾶς ἐπεσκέψω ἐπὶ τῆς μονῆς τῆς ἐπὶ τῷ Ἴριδι ποταμῷ), when, moreover, our most divinely beloved brother Gregory was present with me, achieving the same purpose in life as myself? . . . And how many days did we spend in the village on the opposite side, at my mother's (πόσας δε ἡμέρας ἐπὶ τῆς ἀντίπεραν κώμης, παρὰ τῆ μητρὶ μου), where we lived as friends among friends, with conversation astir among us day and night? . . . And all the time were your tachygraphers not present with me as I dictated matters against the heresy? Were the most faithful of your disciples not in my presence the whole time? While visiting the brotherhoods (ἀδελφότητας) and spending whole nights with them in the prayers, always speaking and hearing things concerning God without contention, did I not furnish precise proofs of my own mind?¹³

The first edition, the *Small Asketikon*, represents the matured conception of the Christian community Basil had developed between his own first beginnings as an ascetic in ca. 357/358 and his second, permanent return to Caesarea in 365, as priest and assistant to Bishop Eusebius. It seems very likely that he finished editing the work in about 366 and sent it back to Pontus as a legacy to those he had left behind.

Basil continued to make pastoral visits to ascetic communities during the late 360s and throughout his years as Bishop of Caesarea (370–378). Further question and answer sessions were recorded and incorporated into the text. Thus the *Asketikon* was a 'work in progress' as long as Basil lived and was able to devote strength to visiting and encouraging the ascetic communities. By the time he died in September 378 the revised form of the *Asketikon*, called the *Great Asketikon*, had expanded to more than twice the size of the original edition and was itself already extant

Fedwick. See especially his *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis 3: Ascetica*, CCSG (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997). Analyses of the *Asketikon* transmission occupies pp. 1–698.

¹³ Basil, "Letter 223," in *Correspondance*, vol. 3, ed. and trans. Yves Courtonne, 2d ed. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2003), 14; English in Deferrari, *Letters* 3, 302–5.

in two or three versions. A major reordering of the *Great Asketikon* along thematic lines—the ‘Pontic Recension’—may have been carried out as early as Basil’s last visit to Annisa in 376. It is my contention that Peter, Basil’s youngest brother and both priest and male superior there, may have had a significant role as the editor of this ‘Pontic Recension’ under his brother’s eye.

Rufinus of Aquileia

Basil’s influence as a monastic father also left its mark in the life of the Western church. His great mediator to the west was Rufinus of Aquileia (ca. 354–411).¹⁴ From about 370 to 397 Rufinus was a member of a Latin monastery on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem. It had been founded by Antonia Melania (St Melania the Elder). The structure of Melania’s monastery seems to have been very like the conception of the *adelphotes* in Basil’s *Asketikon*: separate houses for women, for men, for guests, etc., all using a common church and all conceived as part of the one Christian ascetic community. In about the year 378 Rufinus journeyed north to Syria on a book-hunting expedition. He visited Antioch and even reached as far as Edessa, the heartland of Syriac-speaking Christianity. Since Basil himself had visited upper Syria, and certainly Samosata, Rufinus only missed him in these regions by a few years.¹⁵ It is very tempting to think that during this journey Rufinus may have acquired his copy of the Greek *Small Asketikon* and that he and Melania used it thereafter in the governance of their community.¹⁶ However, it must be said that the Greek text used by the Syriac translator shows such distinctive features, to be discussed below, that it does not seem to have been quite the same version

¹⁴ On the life and chronology of Rufinus see Francis X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411): His Life and Works*, (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1945), and Giorio Fedalto, “Rufino di Concordia. Elementi di una biografia,” *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 39 (1992): 19–44. Useful summary studies are E. C. Brooks, “The Translation Techniques of Rufinus of Aquileia (343–411),” *Studia Patristica* 18 (1982): 357–64, and Monica Wagner, *Rufinus the Translator*, (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1945), especially chapter 3, “Adaptation Procedures,” 29–64.

¹⁵ According to Benoît Gain, Basil visited Samosata more than once: *L’Église de Cappadoce au IV^e Siècle d’après la correspondance de Basile de Césarée 330–379*, OCA 225 (Rome: Pontifical Oriental Institute, 1985); Appendix 2: “Voyages de Basile,” 393–96. In his letter 145 to Eusebius, written in 373, Basil speaks of his “returning from Syria.”

¹⁶ For a study of Rufinus’s role as an intermediary see my “Edessa to Cassino: the Passage of Basil’s *Asketikon* to the West,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 56 (2002): 247–59. In that article I argued for a Syrian source of Rufinus’s copy. Now I would be more cautious about such an assertion.

as used by Rufinus. Alternatively, Melania and Rufinus may have acquired their copy during its postal progress down to the monks in Egypt.¹⁷ Basil himself had contact with monks on the Mount of Olives in the 370s, and this relationship may have gone back to the late 360s.¹⁸ So here too is another possible point of access to the *Small Asketikon* in Palestine, and the most direct, from Basil himself. Alas, the Origenist controversy, sparked by Epiphanius of Salamis and fanned by Theophilus of Alexandria and Jerome of Bethlehem, caused fierce controversy in the church in Palestine in the 390s. The local church became too hot to contain both Jerome and Rufinus, and in 397 the latter returned to the west.

When Rufinus disembarked, probably in Puteoli or Naples, and was on his way up the *Via Appia* to Rome, he was very pleased to accept hospitality in a monastery at 'Pinetum', which appears to have been somewhere near Terracina on the Tyrrhenian coast. As Rufinus relates in his own prefatory letter, the superior there, Ursacius, after hearing Rufinus wax lyrical about Basil as a monastic father, begged him to translate for his monks this work of so renowned a Greek father. By acceding to this request Rufinus launched his career as a Latin translator of the Greek fathers that filled the remainder of his days. In his prefatory letter Rufinus refers to the document as the *Institutiones Basilii* (the 'Institutes of Basil'), though it soon became known as the *Regula Basilii* or Rule of Basil.

Rufinus expressed the hope that Basil's rule might become the standard for the monks of the West. It did not quite work out that way. Instead, this Latin Rule became part of a canon of monastic writings circulating

¹⁷ A fragment of the Greek *Small Asketikon* from Egypt, preserved in the Ashmolean Museum Oxford, was recognized by Sever J. Voicu, "P. Antin. 111, un testimone ignorato delle *Eratopokriseis brevis tractatae* di Basilio," *Basil of Caesarea: Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, ed. Paul Jonathan Fedwick (Toronto: PIMS, 1981), 565–70. Significantly, this fragment includes the equivalent of RBas 117 and 118, which do not appear in the QF, clearly implying a Greek text closer to that which lay before Rufinus. Fedwick, *BBV* 3, 3, also lists two other fragmentary traces of the Greek *Small Asketikon*, one originally from the Great Lavra, Mount Athos; the other from St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai.

¹⁸ Basil certainly had connections with monks on the Mount of Olives in the 370s. The earliest letters from around 370/371 suggest the familiarity is already well-established, i.e., going back into the 360s. See Letter 258 to Epiphanius (a masterpiece of courteous irony), Deferrari, *Letters* 4, 38–39, and Letter 259, *ibid.*, 46–49. See also the note on pp. 206–7. Basil's intermediaries with the monks on the Mount of Olives were Palladius and Innocent. This Palladius may have been the one who wrote to Athanasius (PG 26, 1167) bidding him counsel the monks in Caesarea to cease opposing Basil—apparently over Basil's "economy" in discussing the divinity of the Holy Spirit.

in southern Italy in the fifth and sixth centuries. Thus it was available in that time and in that region when the author of the sixth-century *Rule of Benedict* made use of it as one of his major sources. So it was not the *Rule of Basil*, but the *Rule of Benedict* that in the Carolingian era was made the canonical standard of Western monasticism. At the very end of the RB zealous monks, eager for something more, are sent to 'the rule of our Holy Father Basil'.¹⁹ The discourse of the RB inherited much of the language and thought-world of Egyptian monasticism, particularly through the influence of the so-called 'Rule of the Master' and of St John Cassian's *Institutes* and *Conferences*. This desert tradition laid stress on individual endeavour and austere asceticism. It tended to esteem the anchorite or hermit as the ultimate ideal of the monk.

The influence of Basil, however, together with that of Augustine and others, acted on the author of the RB to qualify this anchoretically inspired heritage with a doctrine of the primacy of communion and of mutual love as the way of life of Christians, and of the necessity of a well-tested good order and a certain sense of moderation, all under the protection of a common obedience. Some of the most famous 'Benedictine' tags of the RB prove on closer inspection to derive from Basil.²⁰ When RB 1.12, in discussing four types of monks, describes cenobites—monks who live in a well-ordered community under a superior—as without doubt 'the strongest (or should we understand 'bravest'?) kind of monks', it very much conveys the mind of Basil, who spends his longest chapter, RBas 2, arguing just that.

The *Regula Basilii* as a document

Modern critical investigation of the text of the *Regula Basilii* begins with Jean Gribomont's major work, *Histoire du Texte des Ascétiques de Saint Basile*.²¹ Up to that time it was generally assumed that the Latin version of the *Asketikon* had been Rufinus's heavy-handed précis of the much longer extant Greek version.²² Acknowledging the prior work of

¹⁹ RB 73.5. An accessible edition, in both Latin and English with copious historical studies and notes, is *RB 1980* (see above).

²⁰ E.g., the Benedictine stress on the reverent handling of all material things, based on RB 31.10: *He will regard all utensils and the goods of the monastery as sacred vessels of the altar*. This essentially derives from the *Small Asketikon / Regula Basili* 103.

²¹ Jean Gribomont, *Histoire du Texte des Ascétiques de Saint Basile* (Louvain: Muséon, 1953).

²² An example of the older view: "What he, Rufinus, actually did was to combine the two sets of questions and answers (the 55 *regulae fusius* and the 313 *brevius tractatae*)

Ferdinand Laun,²³ Gribomont confirmed and demonstrated extensively the existence of the *Asketikon* in two versions: an earlier and shorter one called the *Small Asketikon*, and a later revised and much augmented version, the *Great Asketikon*. The integral Greek text of the *Small Asketikon* has not survived,²⁴ though of course much of it remains embedded in Basil's later revisions.

Gribomont highlighted the information supplied by the Scholiast.²⁵ This erudite editor of Basil's *Great Asketikon* in the late fifth or early sixth century told of a shorter earlier version of Basil's *Asketikon* and how a subsequent longer version came to be produced. Finally, Gribomont furnished conclusive proof of the prior existence of the *Small Asketikon* with a study of the content of the Syriac translation, which is based on essentially the same shorter text as Rufinus's translation. Gribomont concludes: 'In the collection of these Questions, Rufinus and the Syriac translator knew one and the same shorter text, the existence of which was attested in the sixth century by the Vulgate Scholiast. The prior existence of this recension, affirmed by the Scholiast, deserves to be admitted'.²⁶

Study of the transmission of Basil's *ascetica* and other writings culminated in what today must be considered the first port of call for all investigators in this field. This is Paul J. Fedwick's multi-volume *Bibliotheca Basiliana Vniversalis*, especially, in our case, volume 3: *Ascetica*. Analysis of the textual transmission of Basil's *Asketikon* in its several versions and editions, and the libraries preserving the manuscripts, covers nearly six hundred pages, 1–585. The *Small Asketikon* (Fedwick's 'Asketikon 1') is surveyed on pp. 1–86; within those pages the report on Rufinus's Latin translation ('Asketikon 1r') is found on pp. 4–43, and that on the Syriac version ('Asketikon 1s') on pp. 43–46.

that made up the Rules of Basil into 203 questions and answers, rearranging the order, combining several of the originally separate sections, and rather freely translating the whole." Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia*, 91.

²³ Ferdinand Laun, "Die beiden Regeln des Basilius, ihre Echtheit und Entstehung," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 44 (1925): 1–61, acknowledged by Gribomont, *Histoire du Texte*, 1, 2, 193 n. 1, 207, 237 n. 2, 252–53.

²⁴ Except for three fragments, noted in Fedwick, *BBV* 3: *Ascetica*, 2–4.

²⁵ On the Scholiast see Gribomont, *Histoire*, 151–57, and Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 4–8. He was the *Endredaktor* of what Gribomont calls the Vulgate recension of the *Great Asketikon*, later designated "Asketikon 3" by Fedwick (on whom more below), and what I prefer to call the Pontic Recension.

²⁶ Gribomont, *Histoire*, 238 (present author's translation).

Towards a critical text of the *Regula Basilii*

We now narrow our focus to 'Asketikon 1r', the *Regula Basilii*. But first we should clarify the spelling of the Latin title. It long puzzled me just what the genitive of Basil's name in Latin, 'Basilus', ought to be. Zelzer renders it as 'Basili'. But then, the genitive of 'Gregorius' is posted as 'Gregorii' in the title *Gregorii Nysseni Opera*. Finally, I questioned Professor Benoît Gain about it, and record gratefully the following advice:

1. According to a strict philology, the genitive is in -i; for that of nouns (i.e., substantives) in -ius, it is in -i until the era of Augustus. For adjectives, the transformation seems to have taken place somewhat earlier: already in Lucretius, there is *patrii* in l.832, and several other examples. From then on manuscripts present a genitive in -ii, even the oldest manuscript of the *Regula Basilii*, namely Sessorianus 55, from the second half of the sixth century (see the apparatus in K. Zelzer, p. 3).

2. Zelzer has adopted the orthography of the classical era, the 'Ciceronian' so to speak. It is a learned affectation. Perhaps he took example from the writings of Ambrose? I do not know, it would have to be verified from the critical editions of St Ambrose, which I do not have to hand. Perhaps, even without doubt, not one example of 'Basili' as the latinised form of the Greek name of a man (*Basileios* in Greek), and hence of our Basil, has been preserved from the fourth century.

In conclusion, in order to avoid shafts from Zelzer, you could justify the orthography *Basilii* by saying that you have adopted the orthography in use at the time of Rufinus, which is not the classical orthography.

What I have been able to say is after verification from Alfred Ernout, *Morphologie historique du latin*, 3^e édition revue et corrigée, Paris, 1953, pp. 28–29. In France, that is the Bible of the student of Latin.²⁷

In this book 'Basili' it shall be then, and hence: *Regula Basilii*. A brief sketch of the course of its appearance in editions²⁸ will show us the long trail of the centuries that lead towards a truly critical edition.

We begin with the twelfth century, which saw the last flourishing of 'the Benedictine Centuries' under such leaders as Bl Peter the Venerable,

²⁷ Author's translation from French.

²⁸ See the survey in Gribomont, *Histoire*, 323–32, and the comprehensive gazette of editions in Fedwick, *BBV* 3, 521–85.

St Bernard of Clairvaux, and St Hildegard of Bingen. Early in the following century, in November 1215, the fourth Lateran, the 'Great Council' as it was called, was held under Pope Innocent III. In its thirteenth canon a brave attempt was made to curb the proliferation of new religious orders or congregations, a phenomenon destined for a long career in the western church.²⁹ Though these are not mentioned individually, henceforth there were to be only four monastic rules accepted in practice: the Rule of Benedict, the Rule of Basil (the RBas)³⁰, the Rule of Augustine³¹, and the Rule of Francis, approved by Pope Innocent in principle as recently as 1209.³²

²⁹ Concilium Lateranense IV, Capitulum XIII: *Ne nimia religionum diversitas gravem in ecclesia Dei confusionem inducat, firmiter prohibemus, ne quis de cetero novam religionem inveniat: sed quicumque voluerit ad religionem converti, unam de approbatis assumat. Similiter qui voluerit religiosam domum fundare de novo, regulam & institutionem accipiat de religionibus approbatis. . . .* Latin text from Giovan Domenico Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, vol. 22, cols. 1002–3 (Paris: Hubert Welter, 1901; repr. 1960): "Lest too great a variety lead to confusion in the Church of God, we firmly forbid that anyone henceforth found a new religious order: but if anyone wants to be converted to a religious life let him take on one of (its forms already) approved. Likewise whoever wants to found a new religious house, let him accept a rule and constitution from the religious orders that are approved."

³⁰ The estrangement of Eastern and Western Christendom had lately been reinforced by the notorious 1204 sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade. Thus Eastern monks who looked to Basil as their father (or really, preeminent among their fathers) and were in communion with Rome would have been reduced at this time to those of the monastery of Grottaferrata near Rome and monasteries of Sicily and southern Italy, all heirs to the cenobitic reforms of St Theodore Studite. The idea of an "Order of St Basil the Great" or congregations based on the Rule of Basil are post-Tridentine developments.

³¹ The sanction of this brief Rule reflects the status of the premier father in the Western church. Its earliest appearance was in the collections of Rules in the pre-Carolingian era. RM and RB quote it. The RA first came into its own in the post-Carolingian period, being associated not with monasteries but with clerics in community (canons). It first began to be used as a monastic rule proper by a variety of institutes, including the Premonstratensians and the Knights Templar, in the twelfth century. Its use escalated after the Great Council. The most important of the new orders to adopt it was the Order of Preachers or Dominicans, because their constitutions came to be a model for the constitutions of other orders, even of the Franciscans and Carmelites, who had their own primitive rules. See Raymond Canning and Tarcisius Jan Van Bavel, *The Rule of Augustine* (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1984), 3–6.

³² St Francis's "Rule" had been approved in germ by Innocent in 1209 but was still in the process of articulation until Francis's last years. The Rule of Albert received initial approval by Honorius III in 1226, since it had been composed at Acre by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem between 1206 and 1214. See Joachim Smet, "Carmelites," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1967), 118. The Rule

The first appearance of the RBAs in print reflects this canonical legislation.³³ On 13 April 1500 a collection of the Rules of Benedict, Basil, Augustine, and Francis, compiled by Jean François Brixianus, a Benedictine monk of the Congregation of St Justina of Padua, was published at Venice by Jean Émeric de Spire. The manuscripts used were not indicated, nor had they been identified to the time of Fedwick's *BBV* 3. This first edition was subsequently republished at Rouen in 1510, Paris in 1514 and 1519, and Cologne in 1575. The same text was borrowed unchanged, although with chapters divided differently, in an edition of *Sancti Basili Opera*, published at Paris by Josse Bade and republished at Paris in 1523, Cologne in 1523 and 1531, Zurich in 1588, and Geneva in 1619 and 1669.

The Cistercian scholar François Bivar (Franciscus Bivarius) was the first editor of the RBAs to pay some critical attention to his sources. He prepared a new edition using H, and noted variants from a manuscript (not identified but very like Brixianus's text) he attributed to Smaragdus. However, he died prematurely in 1634 so that his text did not appear till 1662, when it was published at Lyons by his confrère Thomas Gomez.

In 1661 Vitale Mascardus published at Rome the *Codex Regularum* of St Benedict of Aniane in an edition prepared by Lucas Holste. As the basis of his text Holste used a copy of a Cologne manuscript (*Hist. Archiv. W. f.* 231) made in 1643 for Fabio Chigi, papal nuncio in Cologne at the time.³⁴ The Cologne manuscript itself was copied from a Trier manuscript, M. This edition of the *Codex Regularum* was republished in Paris in 1663 and in Augsburg in 1759. It was also the version used by Migne in 1851, *Patrologia Latina* vol. 103, cols. 423–702. The RBAs is found in cols. 483–554; introductory material, including Rufinus's preface, is in cols. 483–86, the text beginning in col. 487. Compared with M, Holste's edition showed faulty readings, regrettable omissions, and a text left unintelligible in places. But even the text of Benedict of Aniane (M) shows that the latter had been collating, emending, and editing on his own account in the eighth century,³⁵ for M itself was far from representative of the RBAs text. Zelzer says that 'this version of the text (M) was known to Benedict from

of Clare, drawing in part on those of Francis and Benedict, was approved at the urgent insistence of the saint just before her death in 1253.

³³ See Gribomont, *Histoire*, 100–2.

³⁴ Chigi was Pope Alexander VII by the time of this printing in Rome and was known for his fostering of scholarship and archival science.

³⁵ Gribomont, *Histoire*, 102, adduces the text-critical work of A. Boon, whose study of the Rule of Pachomius is in the same collection.

his south-west Gallic home. That helps explain the Holste text, which ultimately goes back to M and which text version deviates strongly from the general transmission, as a consequence of the exceptional form of the south-Gallic/Spanish transmission'.³⁶

Gribomont³⁷ made a couple of textual 'soundings': first, of the opening of Rufinus's preface, second, of RBas 8. He used S, L, C, D, two eleventh-century Monte Cassino manuscripts (#16, 17), the Venice edition of 1500, Bivar, and Holste. His judgement of Holste was: 'Holste's, nevertheless, is the best of the three editions . . . his text contains several literary improvements . . . with other late witnesses, he adapts his biblical text to that of the Vulgate . . . but is in general faithful'.³⁸ Zelzer in the meantime more thoroughly researched the matter and found he could not support Gribomont's relatively favourable assessment of Holste's edition.³⁹

Zelzer's edition of the *Regula Basilii*

The first comprehensively critical edition of the *Regula Basilii* was published in 1986, i.e., Klaus Zelzer, *Basili Regula—A Rufino Latine Versa*.⁴⁰ Zelzer explains in his preface that his work was part of a long-term project to publish critical editions of the Latin monastic rules. His volume is the third in a series, following Rudolph Hanslik's edition of the *Rule of St Benedict* and Adalbert de Vogüé and Ferdinand Villegas's edition of the *Rule of Eugippius*.

In the account of his editorial work (pp. xxviii–xxix) Zelzer furnishes a list of sixty-five codices containing the text of the RBas. They date from the sixth to the fifteenth centuries. He appends a list of five codices mentioned in catalogues of manuscripts of the ninth and tenth centuries but that are now lost. For his edition Zelzer examined twenty of them and chose fourteen, ranging from the sixth to the eleventh centuries, for collation. The following is a list of his selection with abbreviated notes,⁴¹ together with a note on the Holste edition.

³⁶ Klaus Zelzer, "Zur Überlieferung der Lateinischen Fassung der Basiliusregel," in idem, *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen*, ed. Franz Paschke (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), 634.

³⁷ Gribomont, *Histoire*, 103–5.

³⁸ Author's translation from French.

³⁹ Zelzer, "Zur Überlieferung," 635 n. 1.

⁴⁰ See n. 2 above.

⁴¹ Zelzer's notes on the text may be found on pp. xvii–xxvii. See also Gribomont's notes, *Histoire*, 96–102, and Fedwick's notes, *BBV* 3, 15–33.

Codices and Edition collated by Zelzer

Of the following codices, only B and C, and in a qualified sense T, contain only the RBAs. All other manuscripts consist of collections of monastic rules and other ascetical writings of interest to monks, of which the RBAs is but one, albeit an important one.

B

Codex Mediolensis Ambrosius C. 26 sup. (Milan, Ambrosian Library), seventh century; in Anglo-Saxon majuscule script (and orthography) very like script from the monastery of Bobbio; corrected by later hands.

C

Codex Leninopolitanus F. v. I. 2,⁴² formerly 'Corbeiensis', end of seventh, beginning of eighth century; uncial and semiuncial script very like script from Corbie abbey ca. 700; Merovingian orthography; together with E and S often preserves more the sparer, most authentic text.

E

Codex Parisiensis Bibl. Nat. lat. 12634 (Paris), late sixth century; in southern Italian uncial script. Passed through the abbeys of Corbie and S. Germain-des-Prés, whence to the National Library. This interesting and very old codex originally came from the same locale (Compania) and is almost contemporary with the composition of the RB, bearing witness to the same field of monastic reading as that underlying the RB. De Vogüé has plausibly connected the codex with Eugippius of Lucullanum, whose library was also the source of a transmission of Rufinus's translations.⁴³ Folios 9^r-77^v contain a collection of excerpts from the rules of Augustine, the Four Fathers, the Master, Basil, Pachomius, the works of Novatian, the Conferences and Institutes of Cassian, and Jerome's Letter 125. The ensemble is edited by de Vogüé and Ferdinand Villegas under the name *Regula Eugippii*.⁴⁴ It contains seventeen chapters of the RBAs. Together with C and S, E it tends to preserve a sparer, more authentic text.

F

Fragmenta codicis Aurelianensis 192 (169) (Orléans), ff. 2-3, sixth/seventh century; in southern Gallic script; once of the abbey of St Benoît-sur-Loire, Fleury; mutilated condition; an inept later hand has 'corrected' with mistakes, e.g., 8.25 *vagos* (accusative) to *vagus*.

⁴² I do not know whether the manuscript has been renamed following the reversion of Leningrad to its former name, St Petersburg, or returned to the manuscript's former name, "Corbeiensis."

⁴³ See Zelzer, "Zur Überlieferung," 5.

⁴⁴ It was published as volume 87 in the CSEL series, immediately following the *Regula Basili*.

G

Codex Sangallensis 926 (Sankt Gallen), pp. 2–226, ninth century; in Carolingian minuscule; written without doubt at the abbey; its collection of documents stems ultimately from Lerins and very close to LW, even deriving from a single copy (Zelzer 1980, 634); represents the most ‘amplified’ or augmented text.

H

Codex Londiniensis Musei Britannici Add. 30055 (London), ff. 142–194, tenth century; a collection of monastic rules, beautifully executed in Visigothic script with Visigothic orthography; it once belonged to the monastery of St Peter in Cardeña, diocese of Burgos, and was known as *Codex Caradignensis*, whence Dom Bivar borrowed it for his edition. It includes texts from the Iberian Fathers.

J

Codex Rotomagensis 728 (Rouen), ff. 1–50, tenth century. Once of the monastery of Jumièges; the order of chapters (which Zelzer gives) is in considerable disarray; Merovingian orthography.

L

Codex Lambacensis XXXI (Lambach), ff. 1–72, beginning of ninth century; a collection of Rules and monastic writings in Carolingian script very like that of the monastery of Münsterschwarzach; heavily corrected by later hands; composed of two parts, joined, it is thought, in the twelfth century. The earlier part is an extensive collection of monastic rules and writings deriving ultimately from Lerins and representing the most ‘amplified’ or augmented text of the RBAs.

M

Codex Monacensis Bibl. Nat. Lat. 28118 (Munich), ninth century. *Codex Regularum S. Benedicti Anianensis*—St Benedict of Aniane’s collection of monastic rules and of a dating contemporary with him. It is a huge collection, beginning with the RB; once of St Maximinus of Trier, written before the year 821 in the same monastery in which Codex Z was written, perhaps Indae (Kornelimünster). Transmitted from copy to copy, it is the ultimate source of Holste’s printed edition. Zelzer (1980 p. 632) tested M against concurrences of the two oldest Italian manuscripts, E and S, and found that of all the codices containing the RBAs, M had the widest divergence.

P

Codex Parisiensis Bibl. Nat. Lat. 12238 (Paris), ff. 1–72, beginning of ninth century; once of St Germain-des-Prés; in southern Gallic script.

S

Codex Romanus Bibl. Nat Sessorianus 55 (Rome), second half of sixth century. S, along with E, is the oldest surviving witness to the text. In northern Italian semiuncial script; it was renovated in the eighth/ninth century at the monastery of Nonantola (near Modena); folios 68 and 69 are in a pre-Carolingian minuscule; folios 169–176 are a palimpsest over the natural history of Pliny the elder (at folio 177 RBas begins). Together with C and E, S tends to preserve the sparer, most authentic text.

T

Codex Turonensis 615 (Tours), ninth century. This codex, containing only the RBas, is the first part of a codex of monastic rules from the monastery of Marmoutiers and was divided into three in Toulouse at the beginning of the eighteenth century; Visigothic orthography.

W

Codex Guelferbytanus 4127 (Wolfenbüttel), ff. 81–118^v, eighth/ninth century. Title in the first folio: *Codex of the monastery of the holy apostles Peter and Paul in Wissenburg* (where it was written); its collection of writings derives ultimately from Lerins; represents the most ‘amplified’ or augmented text.

Z

Codex Aurelianensis 233 (203) (Orléans), beginning of the ninth century. Concordia Regularum S. Benedicti Anianensi, i.e., St Benedict of Aniane’s collection of monastic rules; once of the monastery of Fleury; see M; written before 821.

Hol.

Benedicti Aniansis Codex Regularum, ed. Lucas Holste, Paris, 1663; first published at Rome by Vitale Mascardus, 1661; this printed edition of the *Codex Regularum* was reproduced by Migne in 1851, PL 103, cols. 423–702. The RBas is found in cols. 483–554, introductory material including Rufinus’s Preface, cols. 483–486, the text, col. 487–702. Though Zelzer adduces Holste’s text in the apparatus he by no means investigated its sources or methods, but simply states that Holste culled his text from the transmission in codices of the rules of Benedict of Aniane and in other texts available to him in Rome, and glossed it with his own additions as was the custom at that time.

The early dissemination of the Regula Basilii

Zelzer’s account of the textual transmission⁴⁵ may be fittingly supplied here. He begins with a sketch of the pattern of dissemination.

⁴⁵ Largely from pp. x–xvi.

The most ancient witnesses, the codices **E** and **S** on the one hand and the codices **G**, **L**, and **W** on the other, show that Rufinus's Latin translation was already well used in the sixth century both in Italy and in the monasteries of Lerins. **GLW**, copied in the eighth and ninth centuries in various German locations, contain not only the **RBas** but other monastic texts whose authors were very popular during the fifth and sixth centuries in the monastery of Lerins and were held in high repute in southern Gaul. From this it is clear that their text of the **RBas** derived from a source in the monastery of Lerins. This text in many places and their own index of chapters already differ in the earliest centuries from the text in the Italian and certain other Gallic codices, whose principal codices are **CES**. That is, even before **CES** were written the text had already been widely disseminated in the monasteries of Italy and Gaul and been adapted by the monks of Lerins to their own purpose.

The period from the sixth to the eighth centuries was the era of the 'mixed rules'. The **RBas** was used in many monasteries of Italy and Gaul as one of a growing library of monastic rules and monastic literature, e.g., the Rules of Basil, of Pachomius, of Columbanus, of the Master, of Benedict, and others. Sometimes this body of monastic writings was synthesised by local abbots into a rule for their particular time and place. This is exactly the historical milieu in which the Rule of Benedict was originally composed.

The codices **HO**⁴⁶**T** show that another form of the text was disseminated through the region of Visigothic Spain. Very like it was the text used by Benedict of Aniane in the compilation of his Codex and his *Concordia Regularum*, attested in the codices **MZ**. From these two latter codices it is evident that though Benedict of Aniane primarily derived his text of the **RBas** from the Visigothic tradition, he also accepted readings from the tradition of Lerins; whether he himself conflated the Visigothic and southern Franco-Gallic traditions or found some such 'contaminated' transmission among the monks is uncertain.

Thus the codices of the *Regula Basilii* from the sixth to the tenth centuries do not offer a very consistent text, but show several different strands of transmission. Since both the **Italian** and **Gallic** codices, of which **CES** are the most ancient, differ among themselves in several places and do not lack errors and corruptions, and the codices that followed the **Lerins (GLW)** and **Spanish Visigothic (HOT, MZ)** transmissions not only cohere among themselves in adding certain corrupt readings of their own but also accord in different ways with other wit-

⁴⁶ Not used in Zelzer's collation.

nesses or show a discrepancy from them, it appears that already in the earliest centuries the Latin text of the RBas was corrupted, altered, intermixed, and corrected (by copyists and proofreaders) in various ways.

Zelzer's critical material summarized above does not pursue the dissemination of the RBas beyond Italy, Gaul, Germany, and Spain. I am indebted to Fr. Mark Savage of Pluscarden Abbey for bringing to my notice the likelihood that St Columba (521–597) also knew and used the RBas. The early Gaelic poem *Amra Choluimb Chille* ('The Elegy of Colum Cille') extols this great church father of Ireland and Scotland, 'the Apostle of the Picts'. Written shortly after Columba's death by the Irish poet nicknamed Dallán Forgaill, it declares 'Ar-bert Bassil bráthu / ar-gair gnímu de adbsib airbrib aidbilib' ('He applied the judgments of Basil / who forbids acts of boasting by great hosts').⁴⁷ Columba also seems to have known Cassian.⁴⁸

1. ERRORS IN THE EARLIEST COPIES

*1. There are some places in all or most codices which demonstrate that **even the oldest copies, or the text either of the translator himself or of those who transmitted it in the first decades, are not without several faults, errors, omissions, and corruptions**, e.g., Pref. 2 *saeculo dedit* (where a lacuna might be suspected?); 4:11 *qui*; 7:14 *nec*; 8:13 *dum / cum* (omitted through correction PW); 9:12 *elementi* (corrected by Benedict of Aniane); 36:4⁴⁹ *eius* (for *Iesu*); 46:3 *non* (through translator's error?); 49:3 *si in opere . . . contendamus*; 99:2 *dat / det*; 122:7 *et quidem* (for *equidem*); 171:3 *et quia* (for *ex qua*); 172:4 *pro* omitted (through haplography); 178:3 *replere illius* (for *replebimus*); 184:7 *audit autem* (for *audita autem* through haplography).

2. WHERE C(E)S ARE PREFERABLE

*2. However, it is clear from several places that **the most ancient codices C(E)S more often preserve the authentic text**, where:

*2.1 their text accords with the Greek text of the *Great Asketikon*, to which it is most probable that the lost Greek text of the *Little Asketikon* had been very close, e.g., 2:82 *speculam quandam* CS; 3:38 *et alt.* CES, P, GLW; 5:9 *est*

⁴⁷ In Thomas Owen Clancy and Cilbert Márkus, eds. and trans., *Iona: the Earliest Poetry of a Celtic Monastery* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 107.

⁴⁸ See Clancy and Márkus, *Iona*, 109.

⁴⁹ A correction of Zelzer's 36:3.

vobis CS; 6:2 *sancta doctrinae* S; 13:1 *Iothor* Cac.S; 29:1 *hoc contrarium est illi testimonio* CES, JP; 34:2 *faciebat* CS; 55:2 *voluntates* CS; 78:1 *zelus tuus* CS, P; 80:1 *ille me misit* S; 99:2 *suscipiet* ES; 101:2 *ingressibus* CS; 120:3 *oboeditis* S; 122:7 *cum furatus est linguam auream* ES, J, *ira Domini* CES, J; 122:8 *equidem* ES; 123:6 *libertatem* CS, J; 132 Quest. *illa* S, J; 139:3 *ait* CS, PT; 155:1 *praecipua sunt* CS; 162:1 *audientiam* CS, P.⁵⁰

*2.2 their text lacks those words which when added to the Latin version make it more easily intelligible, or lacks those words added to passages of Sacred Scripture that extend it more fully (from which places it is clear that **the Lerins tradition is more contaminated with certain additions than are the other traditions**),⁵¹ e.g., Prol.5 *manifestare* GLW, M, Hol.; *sermonis* GLW, M, Hol.; Prol.11 *spatium* GLW, Hol.; 2:7 *a Deo* GLW, Hol.; 14:3 *nostri Iesu Christi* (for *Dei Sui*) GLW; 42:4 *vias eius discas et* GLW, PMZ, Hol.; 43:1 *debet* GLW, JMZ, Hol.; 52:3 *et non egerunt paenitentiam* GLW, H.; 55:3 *et requiem temporibus meis* GLW, Hol.; 112:5 *vel voluntate* . . . *Dei moderetur* GLW, MZ, Hol.; 164:3 *vel a maioribus* GLW, HJMPT, Hol.; 172:3 *similiter et peram* GLW, M, Hol.; 173:1⁵² *possitis* GLW, HM, Hol.; 173:3 *et non ipsis praesumus sed* GLW, HM, Hol.

*2.3 their text preserves the errors of either the Greek text of Scripture or of Rufinus the translator, e.g., 8:2 *in sanctitate* CS; 74:1 *audientes* CS, JP, GL.

*2.4 Such examples demonstrate that even those places for the adjudication of which neither the Greek text nor any other criterion avail may be determined by the testimony of the codices **C(E)S**. Thus of the highest importance are those places in which the oldest codices, ES, not corresponding completely between themselves, agree with Corbeiensis, i.e., C, e.g., 3:3 *usibus*; 3:5, 6 (quite often) *ne* . . . *quidem*.

3. WHERE C(E)S DO NOT OFFER THE BEST TEXT

*3. However, from certain places it is clear that these codices **C(E)S** are not without errors, corruptions, and variant readings where:

*3.1 their text is plainly corrupt: 3:19 †*proditur*† ES alone;

*3.2 the vowels *e/i*, *o/u* and the labials *b/v* are confused, e.g., 12:1 *loquitur* for *loquetur*, cf. 125:2; 3:8 *visitavit* for *visitabit*; 44 Quest. *observavimus* for *observabimus*; 69:1 *quid debet ad for qui devitat*; 86 Quest. *qui in opere* for *qui nuper*;

⁵⁰ These are cases where more weight attaches to the witness of a minority of codices (CES) and that of the *Great Asketikon* than to the witness of the majority of codices.

⁵¹ The principle of *lectio difficilior*.

⁵² I correct Zelzer's "173: Quest."

*3.3 their readings disagree with the text of other codices when these accord with the Greek: when versions are found, in codices C(E)S and others, of passages of Sacred Scripture disagreeing with the authentic text of Scripture they may be taken, as we said above, for the genuine versions of Rufinus. These versions of Scripture, having arisen from errors either of the text itself or of the translator, were afterwards corrected in a number of other codices according to the authentic text of Scripture. However, we do suspect that certain places of the Rule itself which disagree with the text of certain other codices that are themselves in accord with the Greek are readings proper to the codices C(E)S rather than genuine readings of Rufinus (e.g., 22:2 *germinabunt* CS, P) since it is manifestly unlikely that the Latin text of the RBAs copied from the codices C(E)S would have been corrected afterward according to the Greek text.

4. WHERE GLW ARE PREFERABLE

*4. Thus it is clear that **in a few places codices GLW**, either alone or with other codices—excepting CES—**preserved the authentic text from the Greek**, e.g., 2:67 *ergo per primum completur et secundum*; 79:1 *si*; 88:2 *ab apostolo*; but in many places they offer a poorer text, affected of course by the Lerins transmission, whether through alterations or additions, or exhibiting in passages of Scripture needing translation a Vulgate version, as we call it, for the use of Rufinus the translator.

Moreover, we may regret that codex Floriacensis (F Fragmenta codicis Aurelianensis 6/7c.) One suspects that though it does not lack faults and corruptions it might have added something to contribute to the determining of the text, but unfortunately it has come down to us in little fragments.

5. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GREEK TEXT

*5. The testimony of the Greek text of the *Great Asketikon* is of special importance when it alone indicates to us what the Latin version, corrupted by errors of the translator or of the later copyists, means to convey; e.g., 49:3, **where the Latin text is manifestly corrupt**; 69:4, where Rufinus has defectively put *vel . . . vel* for $\eta\acute{\iota}$. . . $\eta\grave{\iota}$; 79:2ff., where the Latin text is scarcely intelligible; 99:2, where it is apparent that the meaning of the question/heading appears to have been contaminated with the addition of the word *miser cordiae*; 178:3, where we find *reple re illius* defectively for *replebimus*.

All the same, the Greek text is not everywhere of the same importance, since the text of the *Great Asketikon* is not the same as that of the *Small*

Asketikon as translated by Rufinus, now lost, nor did Rufinus himself always translate his Greek text word for word.

6. PROBLEMS WITH VERSIONS OF SCRIPTURE

*6. The wording of sacred scripture used by Basil is far more difficult to decide than the rest of his Latin translation, since not only was the Greek text of Scripture itself already marked by diverse readings, but also the Latin text of Scripture was transmitted in several versions, whether of the Old Latin or of the Vulgate. Not only that, but often the copyists wrote down not only readings of the Vulgate instead of the Old Latin readings but even readings retained in their memory instead of those found in any copy, e.g., 8:9 *instabunt* HJMTZ, Hol.; 16:1 *corripe* GLW, P; 16:3 *ecclesiam non* B, GLW, P; 18:2 *sed timorem* HJMT, Hol.; 26:4 *erue* GLW, P, Hol.; 26:5 *membrorum tuorum* GLW, HJM(T)Z, Hol.; 82:8 *ad imitandum* B, GLW, HMTZ, Hol.; 114:3 *talenta* GLW, M, Hol.; 118:2 *reliquimus* GLW; 156:7 *dilectione* GLW, HMT, Hol.

Lundström's review of Zelzer's edition

In 1978 Sven Lundström, a specialist in Latin textual criticism at the University of Lund, published a lengthy book review of Zelzer's edition. He suitably commends Zelzer's achievement, because by means of it we are acquainted with the readings of the important manuscripts. He praises the critical apparatus, which he says is seldom or never incorrect, and the full and very reliable Index Verborum. He regards Zelzer's text in most cases as correct.

The major fault he would find with Zelzer's approach, however, is that he insufficiently investigated the stemma, i.e., the systematic pattern of descent and relationship between the manuscripts. To work that out, he says, one must look for passages where obviously impossible readings are transmitted in more than one manuscript, and must then work out errors relating to the linking and division of words. So he briefly sketches the probable stemma, using sigla for sub-archetypes:

- class α consisting of S and C.
- class β consisting of sub-classes γ (i.e., P and W, LG) and δ (i.e., B and TH, MZ and J).

Copyists and proofreaders, of course, carried out their own corrections and conjectures, and sometimes consulted some other manuscript apart

from their primary exemplar. This is where the stemma can be useful in discerning the crossed lines of influence, or ‘contamination’, to use Lundström’s term.

In a section of smaller font-size he proceeds to give a few instances of what he means. Most cases show that Zelzer’s judgment has been faulty due to the lack of a clear sense of the stemma.⁵³ They are usually of such slight consequence that they rarely impact on translation. Even from the few examples Lundström gives in this review it was clear that he himself had worked in intimate detail with the Latin manuscripts.

Lundström’s monograph

The full extent of Lundström’s familiarity with the interrelationship of the manuscripts was revealed in a monograph he published in the following year: *Die Überlieferung der lateinischen Basiliusregel*.⁵⁴ Lundström verifies his discernment of the stemma by very many examples and his judgment, so well attested, deserves consultation.

After a brief introduction in which he recapitulates his book review, Lundström divides his work into three sections:

1. The Filiation: the genealogical descent of the manuscript transmission.
2. Contamination: when copyists and proofreaders consulted other manuscripts or versions of Scripture in addition to their primary exemplar, thereby mingling the lines of descent, and also when they conjectured and editorialized, sometimes very thoughtfully, over problematic words or passages.
3. The Archetype: highlighting the fact that there were errors and omissions even at the earliest stage of the transmission.

Lundström’s diagram of the stemma on p. 9, showing the lines of filiation and contamination, is reproduced here with permission.

In summarizing *Die Überlieferung* below, only those examples will be mentioned in each case that represent departures from Zelzer’s editorial decisions.

⁵³ The opening of 79.1 is greatly varied in the MSS, and Zelzer decided to reconstruct it as “*si possibile est*,” in keeping with the available Greek, εἰ δυνατόν ἐστι. This seems a reasonable choice. Lundström, however (L¹ 589), considers that Rufinus originally wrote “*sane*,” which is not so close to the available Greek text.

⁵⁴ See n. 3 above.

On p. 82 Lundström supplies an index or ‘Stellenregister’ (List of Passages), subtitled ‘Abweichungen von Zelzer und Querverweise’ (Departures from Zelzer and cross-references). Eighty-five items are listed, a few of them containing two, and in one case (122.7) three wordings under consideration. A few passages where Zelzer is corrected (or in the case of 122.5 potentially corrected) are not listed: 11.35, 11.39, 61.3, 87.Q, 122.5.

The subtitle of this Stellenregister is somewhat puzzling on two counts: (1) Many more passages in the RBAs are examined in the monograph than find a place in this list and (2) of the passages listed, more than a third, about thirty, are instances where Zelzer’s editorial choice is confirmed, not corrected. For example, on p. 41, Lundström: ‘in 10,1 Zelzer rightly chose the reading *qui*’. Thus the accuracy of Zelzer’s edition is better than might appear from a first glance at this list, because even if Zelzer did not give a formal account of the stemma he worked with an implicit understanding of it. All the same, we are greatly in Lundström’s debt for the range of emendations he expertly demonstrates. The following, then, is Lundström’s summary list of references to the RBAs, to which I have added a few references to passages where Zelzer is corrected that do not appear on the list. These are marked by an asterisk.

Praef.2, Prol.13, 2.Q, 2.2, 2.25f., 2.29, 2.70, 2.71, 2.76, 2.97, 3.18, 3.19, 3.31, 3.32, 5.3, 8.11, 9.22, 10.1, 10.6f., 11.8, 11.16, 11.25, 11.35*, 11.39*, 14.1, 29.3, 34.3, 37.1, 40.2, 45.3, 49.3f., 61.4, 63.3, 64.1, 67.Q, 68.Q, 70.2, 74.1, 77.2, 79.1, 79.2, 82.3, 87.Q*, 83.1, 87.4, 88.Q, 92.2, 96.1, 101.2, 113.1, 114.Q, 121.2, 121.6, 122.7, 122.8, 123.Q, 123.11, 123.12, 126.6, 127.8f., 130.3, 130.4, 137.4, 139.2, 139.3, 140.3, 145.1, 156.5, 164.Q, 171.1, 173.3, 173.4, 175.Q, 175.5, 184.Q, 184.3, 186.1, 190.Q, 195.9, 196.Q, 196.4, 198.2, 199.1, 202.1, 202.2f., 202.7.

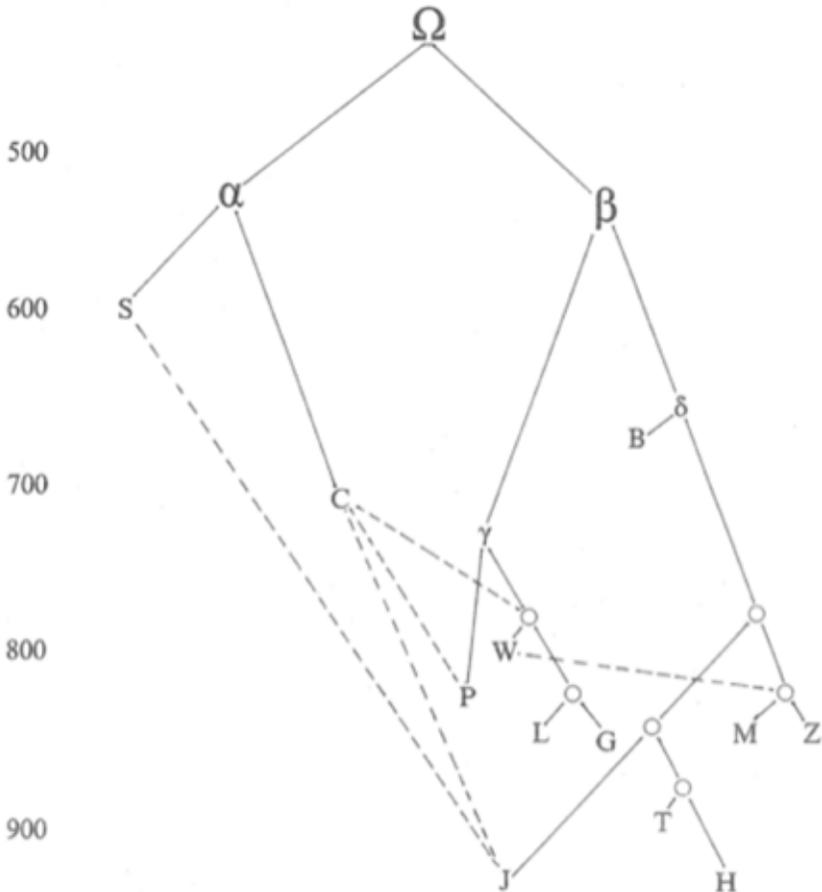
In the Latin text all cases in which I have followed Lundström’s advice and emended Zelzer’s text are footnoted.

I. *Errors*

I. A. ERRORS IN α (= S AND C) (pp. 10–13)

Identifiable errors in the earliest manuscripts highlight the fact that sounder readings may be preserved in later manuscripts. Examples: 92.2, where five words are omitted through haplography. Zelzer was also mistaken to have followed α rather than β in 2.2, 82.3, and 101.2.

STEMMA CODICUM

I. B. ERRORS IN β (= P, WLG, B, TH, J, MZ) (pp. 13–18)

Here Lundström examines some ten cases in which Zelzer rightly rejected a mistaken reading from β . Then he says there are four cases in which Zelzer incorrectly followed β instead of α . They are: 108.1, 5.3, 198.2, 156.5. It is difficult to see what Lundström's issue with Zelzer's rendition of 5.3 is, except over-punctuation. It may be that the *quam* of α was preferable to the *quantum* of β , but Lundström maintains that *quantum* was Rufinus's text, just as Zelzer has it. The issue reappears in

198.2 where, according to Lundström, Rufinus wrote *quam fieri potest rationabiliter* instead of the *quantum fieri potest rationabiliter* of Zelzer's text. But there is no textual support, and the argument seems opaque.

I. C. ERRORS (VARIANTS) IN γ (= P AND WLJ) (pp. 18–19)

Here Zelzer has rightly treated many readings peculiar to P and WLJ as errors or faulty variants. Lundström advocates no departures from Zelzer's edition in this category.

I. D. ERRORS (VARIANTS) IN δ (= B AND THJ, MZ) (pp. 19–21)

Zelzer has correctly discerned the errors in this class. Lundström has no departures from his text to recommend.

II. *Contamination*

As Lundström notes,⁵⁵ theoretically a proofreader could by means of contamination pick up both correct and incorrect readings. His intention is always, of course, to improve the text, but naturally he will err from time to time and retain a false reading in place of a correct reading. In the working out of the stemma, faulty readings played a great role. The correct readings are not really reliable indicators, since a proofreader can rectify a mistake in his source document through his own conjecture or through the use of another manuscript and thereby obscure the character of the manuscript in question. The issue here is how some manuscripts are dependent on certain other manuscripts through contamination. Here indeed the errors are important, because by and large a proofreader scarcely replaces correct readings of his source document with obviously false readings he finds in another manuscript.

II. A. FROM C TO P (pp. 22–30)

Lundström argues a correction at 2.Q, where he says both sub-archetypes α and β probably had *ait* rather than *ais*. P borrowed C's idiosyncratic conjecture *asseris*. Corrections likewise occur at 63.3, 68.Q, 130.4, 110.1, 122.7 (*e[t]quidem*), 122.8, 123.Q, 164.Q, 173.3–4, 108.1 (two cases), 190.Q, 195.9.

⁵⁵ L² 22.

II. B. FROM C TO J (pp. 30–32)

In this category Lundström corrects Zelzer's text only at 45.3.

II. C. FROM C TO WLG (pp. 32–43)

Here Lundström corrects Zelzer's text at 3.31, 2.25, 79.1, 121.2.

II. D. FROM W TO MZ (pp. 43–48)

Lundström commends Zelzer (p. 44) for eradicating the errors in MZ that had been imported into Holste. The only correction is at 139.2 (*incident/incedunt*).

II. E. FROM S TO J (pp. 48–54)

Lundström corrects Zelzer's text at 3.18, 113.1, 130.2, 130.3, and 137.4. At 122.7 *Nam Achar ille cum furatus est linguam auream*, Lundström confirms Zelzer's choice of *linguam* over the *regulam* of most manuscripts, but is undecided between the *furatus est* of EJS and Zelzer's text and the subjunctive *furatus esset* of the other manuscripts.

II. F. NOT FROM S TO P (pp. 54–58)

In this section it is demonstrated how P often shows the same errors as S, but not through contamination. It had access to the α transmission through S. Lundström corrects Zelzer's text only at Prol. 13.

II. G. NOT FROM WLG TO J

J has adopted readings from C (Chapter II B), and certainly also from S (Chapter II E). There are certain agreements between J and W. One can easily gain the impression thereby that J is also dependent on WLG. In this section Lundström shows how this is not so. There are no corrections of Zelzer's text.

III. *The Archetype*

By the 'archetype' Lundström refers to a state of the text before its separation into α and β streams, though sometimes he also refers to an archetype of the sub-classes. 'Archetype' therefore does not strictly refer

to Rufinus's text as far as it can be established. He begins by commending Zelzer's corrections of many errors that had already appeared in the archetype. Here he corrects Zelzer's text at 40.2.

III. A. OMISSIONS (pp. 63–78)

This section examines the instances of lacunae in the ms. text, most often in the archetype, and their bearing on a correct estimate of the text. Zelzer's text receives corrections at Praef. 2, 2.71, 3.19, 11.8, 11.16, 11.25, 49.3, 61.3 (not in the list on p. 82), 61.4, 79.1, 83.1, 87.Q (not in the list on p. 82), 87.4, 126.6, 175.Q, and 184.3.

Lundström paid special attention to passages obelized or put between cruces by Zelzer as corrupt or irredeemably problematic, and he has provided solutions in every case. At Praef.2 he commends Zelzer for resisting Manlius Simonetti's emendment and for suspecting a lacuna, which he now supplies. At 3.19, †*proditur*†, Zelzer had rightly indicated a corruption. Lundström goes further and restores the original word. At 49.3 Lundström wonderfully elucidates, as incomprehensible except through the Greek, a difficult Latin passage Zelzer had also placed between cruces. At 79.2 the wording of Zelzer's text is correct, but Lundström finds that his cruces, marking it as a corrupt text, are needless. He elucidates the meaning through a change of punctuation.

No doubt the most sweeping display of Lundström's expertise is his detailed analysis and reconstruction of the transmission at 11.8.

III. B. MISCELLANEOUS ERRORS (pp. 78–81)

These discuss passages at 74.1, 3.32, 61.3 and 4, and 140.3.

Rufinus's Approach to Translation

When investigating the RBas 'backwards' rather than 'forwards', i.e., as a witness to the lost Greek text of the *Small Asketikon*, a careful estimate of Rufinus's translation techniques and of Basil's editorial techniques in the *Great Asketikon* is absolutely essential. The present author has published an extensive study of these issues.⁵⁶ Here a selective summary is

⁵⁶ Anna M. Silvas, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great* (see n. 5 above), chap. 5: "Rufinus, Witness of the *Small Asketikon*," 102–29, and chap. 6: "Basil and the *Great Asketikon*," 130–45.

in order, so that the reader may be implicitly aware of Rufinus's rhetorical style and approach to translation.

Rufinus's tendency to paraphrase, gloss his text, interpolate material into it, and abbreviate or omit sections, has often been noted⁵⁷ and deplored.⁵⁸ He candidly explains his approach to translation in the prefaces to several works and is consistent in carrying out his intentions. The following statement from the preface to his translation of Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus* may be taken as characteristic:

When experienced teachers of the Sacred Scriptures try to convey something from the Greek language for Latin ears, they take care not to translate word for word, but sense for sense. And well they might. For if Latin discourse intended to imitate the Greek idiom, it would quite choke both the rhythm of speech and the sense of meaning. And this is also true for us in translating the life of Gregory Thaumaturgus from Attic speech. In recasting what the holy Gregory of Nyssa composed in a foreign, that is, in the Greek tongue, we have made many additions and many omissions, as the most suitable meaning required, attending to the sense while fittingly accommodating Latin readers.⁵⁹

In short, Rufinus sought to refashion his Greek source as a Latin work in its own right. In this more or less broad approach to translation he was following an established convention of both pre-Christian and Christian

⁵⁷ Useful summary studies are Brooks, "Translation Techniques," and Wagner, *Rufinus the Translator*, esp. chap. 3 (see n. 14 above).

⁵⁸ J. E. Oulton, "Rufinus's Translation of the Church History of Eusebius," *Journal of Theological Studies* 30 (1929): 150–74, deplores Rufinus's approach: "But even when no temptation lay upon him, Rufinus transgressed the bounds of freedom which every translator must be expected to observe. It is not merely that he eschews the bald literalism of Aquila or the Latin translator of Irenaeus: he is continually taking unjustifiable liberties with his original. He omits, abbreviates, transposes, expands according to taste: and perhaps his favourite method is to produce a kind of paraphrase which gives the general sense."

⁵⁹ *Sanctarum scripturarum doctores egregii, cum de graeca lingua latinis auribus tradere aliquid statuerunt, non verbum verbo, sed sensum sensui reddere curaverunt. Et merito. Nam si latinus sermo graeco idiomati respondere voluerit, et euphoniae subtilitatem et rationis sensum penitus suffocat. Et nos beati Gregorii Thaumaturgi vitam ex loquela attica transferentes, imitando eam quam sanctus Gregorius Nyssenus pontifex in peregrina, hoc est in graeca lingua composuit, plurimis additis, plurimis ademptis, ut ratio utillima postulabat, sensum attendentes latinis viris compediōse curavimus ministrare.* For the text, see Stephen Mitchell, "The Life and Lives of Gregory Thaumaturgus," 99–138 in Jan Willem Drijvers and John W. Watt, eds., *Portraits of Spiritual Authority: Religious Power in Early Christianity, Byzantium and the Christian Orient* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), at 132.

translators. The topic of translation theory was well canvassed by Jerome in his Letter 57. In fact, Rufinus invoked Jerome himself as an exemplar of the approach he wished to follow.⁶⁰

In assessing the character of Rufinus' translation, one must of course be constantly reading the RBas against the Greek text of the *Great Asketikon*. Although much of the *Small Asketikon* is more or less embedded in the expanded Asketikon, the extant Greek text does not necessarily preserve the Greek text Rufinus had before him. One has to be constantly alert also to Basil's editorial techniques, which on occasion involve deleting text, refining the expression of text, interpolating text, and eliding earlier text altogether with a much expanded treatment.

With those provisos understood, we can now present a selective summary of Rufinus's translation techniques, with a few examples in each category.

Preserving text loss from the Greek.

Nothing is more welcome than when Rufinus preserves those small personal interjections, 'I think', 'it seems to me', etc., that Basil later edited out. Such interjections preserve the original oral delivery. For example, RBas 199.1 has 'It seems to me more honourable and religious', against the declaration in the Greek: 'It is more seemly and pious'.

A particularly striking example occurs at RBas 2.18: 'The utterly ineffable love of God—as I at any rate experience it—which can be more easily experienced than spoken of, is a certain inexplicable light'. This personal, testamentary phrase has been lost from the later Greek.

With access to the Syriac text, it is now possible to test some of these cases. At times the RBas preserves the earlier form of text which is embedded in a partial and scattered form in the later Greek text. Here the state of the earlier text seems to have served Basil as a springboard to revise and expand his teaching, sometimes very considerably. It usually affects only the nuances and not the substance of his doctrine. Examples occur at RBas 1.5 (LR 1), RBas 6.4–11 (LR 10.1), RB 7.3, 5–10, 11–13 (LR 15).

⁶⁰ Much to Jerome's annoyance! Cf. Rufinus's preface to the Περὶ Ἀρχῶν (NPNF, ser. 2, vol. 3, 427–28) and his *Apologia* against Jerome (PL 21, cols. 541–624, NPNF ser. 2, vol. 3, Book 1, chap. 14, 441; chap. 16, 442; chap. 19, 445; Book 2, chap. 8, 463, and especially chap. 27a, 472), where he comments on Jerome's Letter 57, insisting that he was only following the task set by Jerome himself and imitating his approach to translation—the same Jerome who had previously expressed his contempt of *verbatim* translations and had himself inserted explanatory phrases into his translated text.

This last example concerns the upbringing of the young in the brotherhood and the age at which profession ought to be considered valid. In his revised edition Basil completely abrogated his earlier text and gave the topic a far more extended treatment. The QF version of the text falters, whether through misunderstanding on the part of the translator or perhaps through reflecting local practice. It appears to say that profession is to be considered valid from the time a child reaches the age of reason, or the ability to discern good and evil. This is definitely not St Basil's thought. Here the RBas, rather than the QF, certainly preserves Basil's earlier version.

Pleonasm

Rufinus frequently expands his original text with words or even phrases of explanation or interpretation. There are innumerable instances. Here is just one example, from RBas 123.Q. Rufinus's putative glosses are in brackets. A translation of the present state of the Greek text follows for comparison:

'Why is it that sometimes upon the soul, (even) without much effort, spontaneously as it were, a (kind of) sorrowing (of heart) falls upon it and a compunction (from the fear of God), while at other times, so great a listlessness (or negligence) holds down (the soul) that even though (a man) forces himself, he cannot assume any (sorrow or) compunction (of heart)?

SR 16.Q: 'Why is it that sometimes the soul feels compunction without much effort, a sorrow coming upon it spontaneously as it were, while at other times, it is so unconcerned that even if it forces itself, it cannot induce any compunction?'

For further comparison, this is how it looks in a translation of the Syriac:

QF 109.Q: Why is it that sometimes, even without our making an effort, a sorrow falls upon our soul without toil, while at other times even when we wish to experience this sorrow, and even constrain ourselves, we cannot?

As can be seen, Rufinus has not actually changed the meaning of the text in any way, but he has expressed it rather fulsomely.

One of Rufinus's commonest forms of pleonasm is his use of 'doublets', as I called them in my earlier study, i.e., hendiadys, expressing one idea with two terms. No doubt Rufinus is very aware of the multiple nuances of some Greek words and strives to convey that richness of nuance by using two slightly different synonyms. But often this duplication of words is redundant. The Latin text is studded with samples of this device.

For example, RBas 1.Q ends with 'he could make a beginning anywhere on the circle (or crown)'. 'Circle' has received a perfectly needless synonym.

In the following case there is a double translation of the Greek term, and then Rufinus supplements it with the original Greek term anyway:

RBas 170.Q: 'What is (worthy or) holy (which the Greeks call ὅσιον), and what is just?'

It is a refreshing change occasionally to find instances in which Basil himself uses hendiadys, perhaps due to later editorial revision, and Rufinus uses only one term.

Idiomatic and literary enhancement

Here we can only briefly suggest the rich field of Rufinus's efforts to enhance his text. He was constantly on the lookout for ways of ensuring the rhetorical quality of his text and of 'naturalizing' it as a Latin literary work. As we have seen, he frequently expresses more fully in a Latin idiom what is expressed tersely or elliptically in the Greek. Where he can, he renders expressions more sharply or vividly. He is so conversant in both languages that he knows well how to use an *idiomatic equivalent*. He personalizes impersonal constructions, often by using the first person plural.

The following are some examples of negotiations of vocabulary in which Rufinus can be seen to change the nuance slightly: πάθος is commonly translated as *vitium*, e.g., RBas 67.Q (SR 117); Θεόπνευστος (literally 'God-breathed') as *sanctum*, e.g., RBas 1.6 (LR 1), where Θεοπνεύστοις Γραφαῖς is translated *sanctis scripturis*; ἀδελφότης is not translated *fraternitas* but *fratres*, prefixed with a preposition as in *ad fratres* in RBas 196Q (SR 94.Q), 192.Q (SR 105.Q); τῆ ἀδελφότητι appears as *inter fratres* in RBas 25.3 (SR 159). Εὐλάβης, i.e., 'pious' and 'piety', is commonly translated as *religiosus*, e.g., SR 171 (RBas 116), χρεῖα as *usus*, as in RBas 95.4 (SR

168), κρίμα as *sententia* (very commonly) and as *iudicium* in RBAs 100.1, 2 (SR 169), γνησίως as *ex corde*, as in RBAs 23.12 (SR 16), RBAs 27.Q (SR 8), etc. In (RBAs 159.1) he uses an idiomatic equivalent for the qualifying adverb τάχα in SR 55 as a qualifying *puto*, ‘I think’.

Many examples of Rufinus’s enhancements may be found in RBAs 2. RBAs 2.73 (LR 4) improves on the style of the Greek, infusing some Latin elegance with a play on words between *pondus* = ‘weight’ and *gravioris* = ‘heavier’. RBAs 2.77 (LR 5) recasts the original more elegantly, personalising it by using a cohortative mood and expanding a single adjective, ἀνεξόλειπτον, into a clause. In RBAs 2.99 (LR 6) the more dynamic Greek verb περιγένησθαι, ‘to prevail against former habits’, appears twice, so Rufinus employs *variatio* and creates a doublet with a shift of verbal nuance: *reflectat et revocet*, ‘to reexamine and recall oneself from former bad [added] habits’. In the following sample the original text is artfully rearranged and expanded to add emphasis and rhetorical effect.

RBAs 2.109-110: ‘Then by reason of (the obstacles and) the tumults and preoccupations with which the common life (of human beings) is usually filled, the soul is unable to preserve that which is (greater and) more precious (than anything else), the memory of God. (With this memory repulsed and shut out from the soul) it not only . . .’

LR 6.2: ‘Then by reason of the tumults and preoccupations with which the common life is usually filled, the soul is unable to preserve the more precious memory of God, it not only . . .’

We can compare the Syriac translator, who also takes a liberal approach:

QF 2.109: ‘Yet again, through the tumult and the hindrance at work in that mingled way of life, he will be defrauded of the memory of God, which memory should above all be constant in our disposition’.

These three headings barely introduce the reader to the many issues involved in Rufinus’s approach to translation.

Consulting the Syriac

The present author has worked on a critical edition of the Syriac *Quaestiones Fratrum*, concurrently with updating the critical edition of the *Regula Basilii*. Some background information on the QF for the reader of the RBAs is in order.

The liberal approach to translation, the pre-Peshitta rendering of scriptural citations, the archaic orthography of the best readings, and the peculiar character and interests of the translator all suggest that the Syriac translation of Basil's *Small Asketikon* took place very early, certainly in the fourth century, perhaps even in Basil's lifetime. It is an intriguing possibility that Eusebius of Samosata might have been the mediator of this seminal work of monastic wisdom in Greek to the Syriac-speaking world. Eusebius was an older contemporary of Basil who appears to have come to friendship with Basil during the consolidation of the Neo-Nicene front in the late 360s. He travelled all the way from Samosata on the Euphrates to be one of Basil's co-consecrators as bishop in September of 370. From the evidence of eighteen or more surviving letters from Basil, he seems to have been Basil's closest confidante and friend during his last years. When Basil occasionally mentions his discussion of theological terms with a Syriac speaker, one can well imagine it might have been with the bishop of Samosata.⁶¹ Eusebius did not survive his friend for long. He died a martyr at the hand of an Arian assassin on his return to Samosata after exile, within a year of Basil's death.

The Syriac text has been collated from the five following manuscripts, denoted by their *sigla*, A to E:

- A. British Library, Additional 14544; parchment, 5th–6th centuries.
- B. British Library, Additional 14545; parchment, 5th–6th centuries.
- C. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (Vatican Library), sir. 122; parchment, completed 769.
- D. Vatican Library, sir. 126; paper, completed 1226.
- E. Ambrosian Library, Milan, Fragments 10/34, no. 38, 10 folios 155–164, parchment, 8th–9th centuries.

Very briefly, two major items of bibliography concerned with the QF are:

⁶¹ On Basil's contacts with Syriac-speaking Christians, see David G. K. Taylor, "Les Pères cappadociens dans la tradition syriaque," 43–61 in Andrea B. Schmidt and Dominique Gonnet, eds., *Les Pères grecs dans la tradition syriaque*, Études Syriaques 4 (Paris: Geuther, 2007); idem, "Basil of Caesarea's Contacts with Syriac-speaking Christians," *Studia Patristica* 32 (1997): 213–19; and the introduction to Taylor's *The Syriac Versions of the De Spiritu Sancto by Basil of Caesarea*, 2 vols. CSCO 576, 577 (Leuven: Peeters, 1999).

1. Gribomont, *Histoire du Texte des Ascétiques de Saint Basile*, 'La version syriaque', 108–48, especially at 108–14. Marred by a few typographical errors, and by the fact that Gribomont took a poor view of the QF, being only interested in it as a witness to the lost Greek text, this monument of philological enquiry nevertheless remains a touchstone for all study of the QF.
2. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliiana Universalis 3: Ascetica*, 'A Comparative Table Between *Ask 1r*, *Ask 1s* and *Ask 4'*, 9–15; 'iii. The Syriac Version: *Ask 1s'*, 43–46.

The Syriac translator only gradually became more liberal in his approach as he progressed through Basil's *Asketikon*. He is quite capable of translating with a fair degree of verbatim accuracy, and he begins in this vein. Only in QF 1.4 do we detect the translator recasting his text somewhat and alluding to rather than actually citing a scriptural passage. The glosses initially are of words and brief phrases, the kind of thing Rufinus himself does. Even in QF 2, philosophically the most sophisticated segment of the *Asketikon*, the translator steers generally close to the text. Then the glosses begin to lengthen, an entire sentence or two typically being added to the end of an answer. This can be particularly well seen in QF 106, which is an almost verbatim translation to which a lengthy invented passage has been added at the end. Rufinus never went nearly as far as this. It seems that about halfway through the QF the Syriac translator's sense of liberty suddenly escalated. Perhaps QF 69.2 represents the turning point. The translation remains quite close to the text for a few lines. Then we see the translator really beginning to take leave of his text, adding further scriptural texts and paraphrasing and amplifying so completely as to be making up his own text. Other examples are QF 79 and QF 149. From then on he departs ever more freely from his text by recasting it and adding sizeable passages of his own invention. Basil's text has become a springboard for his own reflection and teaching. It is precisely because we have such material that is verifiably of his own invention that we can build up a picture of the Syriac translator's distinctive interests and character, 'profile' his personality, so to speak.

It remains for us here to investigate to what extent Lundström's emendments of the Latin text can be supported or verified from the Syriac translation. The principle to bear in mind is that we are not seeking confirmation of the Greek text but of the *Latin* text, which on occasion

may reflect a different text from the Greek or the Syriac. Hence if the Syriac does not have Lundström's emendment of the Latin it may be because it preserves a text closer to the Greek, which is not our concern here. In other cases where the Syriac is liberally paraphrasing or inventing it is impossible to confirm or disconfirm. We now revisit our list of notable passages above, eliminating those for which there is no parallel in the Syriac. ~~Strikethrough~~ is used for cases where Lundström and Zelzer agree; – signifies 'not applicable or unverifiable', x 'disconfirms', and ✓ 'confirms'.

Praef.2, –Prol.13, –2.Q, x2.2, ✓2.25f., 2.29, 2.70, –2.71, ✓2.76, 2.97, –3.18, –3.19, –3.31, –3.32, 5.3, ✓8.11, 9.22, 10.1, –10.6f., ✓11.8, x11.16, –11.25, –11.35*, –11.39*, 14.1, 29.3, 34.3, 37.1, ✓40.2, ✓45.3, ✓49.3f., –61.3*, x61.4, x63.3, 64.1, 67.Q, ✓68.Q, 70.2, ✓74.1, 77.2, ✓79.1, ✓79.2, –82.3, ✓83.1, –87.Q*, –87.4, 88.Q, 92.2, 96.1, –101.2, –121.2, –121.6, ✓122.7, –122.8, –123.Q, 123.11, 123.12, ✓126.6, 127.8f., ✓130.3, x130.4, –137.4, 139.2, ✓139.2(2nd), 139.3, –140.3, 145.1, –156.5, –164.Q, 171.1, –173.3, –173.4, –184.Q, ✓184.3, 186.1, ✓190.Q, x195.9, –196.Q, ✓196.4, 198.2, –199.1, 202.1, 202.2f., 202.7.

Some comment on the disconfirmations are in order.

In 2.2 both QF and the α text of RBas, chosen by Zelzer, lack the word 'whole' in the standard scriptural phrase: *the whole law and the prophets*. The fact that both the QF and RBas α lack a normalised scriptural citation favours the retaining of Zelzer's reading. On this argument the oldest Latin ms., S, would preserve not an archetype error, as Lundström argues, but Rufinus's original text, and all later manuscripts, including the Greek of the *Great Asketikon*, represent various instances of normalisation. 'Ipsa' gives the impression of being Rufinus's own attempt to add a certain rhetorical punch, in the absence of a form of 'whole'. So here we do not adopt Lundström's emendation.

RBas 61.4 happens to be a case where the Syriac parallel, QF 62.4, is translating quite verbatim. With ܘܠܘܢ ܗܘܢܘܢ ܕܘܢܘܢ it uses a passive form of the verb 'to move' ('and is not moved') which, in a reflexive sense, appears in the phrase *vel movendo* in the majority Latin text. With not the faintest possibility of 'contamination', and the chance of coincidence being too much to ask, this surely is an endorsement of Zelzer's reading against Lundström's emendation. Here too there is enough independent evidence to maintain Zelzer's reading.

The lack of 'et' in Zelzer's text of RBas 63.3 is paralleled by its absence from QF 64.3. The Syriac translator is usually exceedingly liberal in using ܘܟܝܢ (too/also/even), so its lack here points to an archaic form of text.

QF translates: ‘as the Apostle says’ or ‘in accordance with what the Apostle says’, which is probably closer to the original Greek exemplar. But in this case the overriding principle is our concern with the integrity of the *Latin* text, and the appearance of ‘et’ as part of the introductory phrase ‘maxime cum et’ (‘especially when the Apostle too says’) suggests a certain exercise of rhetorical emphasis coming from Rufinus himself. We retain Lundström’s emendation of Zelzer.

In RBas 130.4 there is another issue of ‘et’. Here QF 117.4 parallels the Latin with an earlier use of ‘et’ in the sentence, but, as in Zelzer’s choice, lacks the second instance. The case turns on the very slim hazards of introducing a scriptural citation. The Syriac introduces it with ܐܘܪܝܢܐ (‘that’), and not ܘܐܘܪܝܢܐ (‘and’), which is the Greek usage in Scripture and in the *Great Asketikon*. We might have some modest case for maintaining Zelzer’s text, but it is tenuous, and Lundström’s emendation stands.

In RBas 195.9, in a citation of Isaiah 5:14, Lundström corrects Zelzer’s plural *uvas* with the singular *uva*, following the singular *σταφυλήν* of the Septuagint text. QF 178.9, on the other hand, uses the plural ܩܘܨܝܢܐ, and this is supported by the plural marker, *seyame*, which appears in all available mss., including the oldest (from the late fifth/early sixth centuries). At issue of course is the notorious ambiguity of both the Greek and the Latin words. Each has one term encompassing a singular meaning, ‘grape’, and a collective meaning, ‘cluster of grapes’. As to number these words could fall either way in translation. Lundström’s marshalling of evidence is sound. He even quotes Rufinus elsewhere citing the same scriptural passage using a singular noun, so Lundström’s emendation here stands.

To turn now to the cases of confirmation: what a testimony it is to Lundström’s expertise as a Latinist and a text critic that so many of his emendments are corroborated by the Syriac text, of which he knew nothing. It may be worthwhile pausing over a few of the more interesting cases.

RBas 45.3 concerns the gospel phrase *the evil man (malus homo) brings forth evil things from the evil store of his heart* (Matt 12:35). Following three mss., Zelzer jettisoned *homo*, mistaking it for a Vulgate normalisation. But the Greek text has ὁ πονηρὸς ἄνθρωπος, so that Lundström restored *malus homo* with most Latin mss. QF 45.3 confirms the emendment with ܩܘܨܝܢܐ ܩܘܨܝܢܐ.

In RBas 49.3 the linchpin of a very technical elucidation of the confused Latin text is Lundström’s restoration of <usu> *eorum quae desideramus* as the object of *perfrui*. QF 50.3 bears this out with the use of a noun, ܩܘܨܝܢܐ (‘satisfaction’/‘consolation’) ‘of the things desired’.

generically Christian terminology in his ascetic writings, the idea is that in the *Small Asketikon* Basil is tentatively offering ‘advice’ to casual groups of freelance Christian enthusiasts living in the world, who can take it or leave it as they please. The evidence of dedicated, disciplined communities of ascetics withdrawn from the common life of the world, living in voluntary poverty and a God-oriented common obedience only occurs in the *Great Asketikon*, they think. *Not*.

Gribomont, for example, several times avers in print that ἄδελφότης as the title for a dedicated ascetic community occurs only in the *Great Asketikon*.⁶⁴ Already in a comparison of the RBAs and the Greek of the *Great Asketikon* it was possible to infer that Rufinus had paraphrased instances where the Greek uses the noun for *brotherhood* by using a form of ‘brothers’ instead. Comparison with the QF now confirms such an inference, and it is a puzzle why Gribomont, who knew the Syriac text very well, missed it. In RBAs 6.9 (the only case in which Rufinus actually uses *fraternitas*), 194.Q, 196.Q and 4, we find the Syriac using the substantive ܪܕܘܘܪܐ (‘brotherhood’) where the Greek also uses the substantive ἄδελφότης, but where Rufinus for his part uses a form of *fratres*. RBAs 6.9 is particularly valuable, since at this point in the *Great Asketikon* Basil considerably editorializes and expands his text, and the relevant passage from the *Small Asketikon* has vanished. Here the Latin has *corpori fraternitatis* and the Syriac has ܪܕܘܘܪܐ ܕܐܘܪܘܚܐ, which is exactly the same phrase, verbatim: ‘in(to) the body of the brotherhood’.

Variant recensions of the Greek *Small Asketikon*

In a comparison of the QF to the RBAs and the *Great Asketikon*, many cases of a Syriac/Greek alliance against the Latin are to be found. Not all of these are due to Rufinus’s method of translation. Some examples are:

QF 112.5 omits Matt 6:31, but in agreement with the Greek presents it immediately following in QF 113.Q as part of the question; QF 13.1, a good section of sentence is attested in both Syr/Gk, but not in RBAs 11.39. In QF 18.5, Gk/Syr show up an odd passage at the very end of RBAs 16.5, as if he is translating a scribal error in his

⁶⁴ See, for example, Gribomont, “Le renoncement au monde dans l’idéal ascétique de s. Basile,” *Irénikon* 31 (1958): 282–307, at 299, and idem, “Saint Basile,” in *Théologie de la vie monastique, Études sur la tradition patristique*, Faculté de Théologie S.J. de Lyon-Fouvière (Paris: Aubier, 1961), 99–113, at 106.

Greek text; QF 19.2 uses Prov 13:13 with the Gk, whereas RBas 17.2 uses Sir 19:1, QF 112.5 omits Matt 6:31 but in agreement with the Greek presents it immediately following in QF 113.Q as part of the question.

An accumulation of such instances gives an impression that there may have been some differences in the actual Greek text that lay before the two translators. Might there have been at least two recensions of the *Small Asketikon*, as early as the period, 365–370?

One historical hypothesis is that the Greek text behind the RBas reached Palestine very early, possibly as part of Basil's correspondence with monks on the Mount of Olives there. This might be as early as 366. The text of the *Small Asketikon* that lies behind the QF would then represent the editorial progress of a very few years, say by 368–369, and it was this slightly revised version, with three extra pieces, that perhaps Eusebius of Samosata took back with him late in 370 after his presence at Basil's ordination as bishop.

And yet, as soon as one frames this hypothesis one is left with a conundrum. If the RBas has behind it an earlier Greek text, why does it preserve some seventeen questions/answers that do not appear in the QF? Since most of the missing items in the QF are all in a single bloc (RBas 106–118), one wonders whether something very simple and pragmatic could be the explanation: if a quire of a codex slipped its threads, say, as it was being carted about over long distances.

And whence the three questions/answers that appear only in the QF? The following hypothesis suggests itself. We know clearly enough the process from oral delivery to edited written text. The tachygraphers took down notes during the visits of the renowned monastic father to various ascetic communities, in Pontus to begin with, then also in Cappadocia. There was a systematic 'in-gathering' of these notes, or fair copies made from these notes, which became the basis of editorial work by Basil himself. Perhaps these *extravagantes* have their origin in some tachygraphers' notes, from one particular community for example, that somehow missed the general muster but were preserved and surfaced later, perhaps towards the end of the 360s in the text of a slightly amended *Small Asketikon*.

Abbreviations

- RBas: *Regula Basilii*, Rufinus's Latin translation of Basil's *Small Asketikon*.
- L¹: Sven Lundström, review of Zelzer's edition of the RBas, published in *Gnomon* 60 (Munich 1988): 587–90.
- L²: Sven Lundström, *Die Überlieferung der lateinischen Basiliusregel*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, *Studia Latina Upsaliensia* 21 (Uppsala: Academia Upsaliensis, 1989).
- SR: *Shorter Rules of the Great Asketikon*, Pontic/Vulgate recension (Fedwick's 'Ask 4'), *Regulae Brevius Tractatae*, PG 31 cols. 1079-1506.
- LR: *Longer Rules of the Great Asketikon*, Pontic/Vulgate recension (Fedwick's 'Ask 4'), *Regulae Fusius Tractatae*, PG 31 cols. 889-1052.
- QF: *Quaestiones Fratrum/Questions of the Brothers*, the Syriac translation of Basil's *Small Asketikon*.
- Zelz.: Klaus Zelzer, *Basili Regula—A Rufino Latine Versa*, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 86 (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1986).

Regula Basilii

This is keyed from the critical edition edited by Klaus Zelzer,¹ February 2007. Justifications for emendations to the Latin text are found in the footnotes. Paragraphing is reconsidered and matched with my English translation.

Praefatio²

1 Satis libenter, carissime frater Ursaci, adventantes de partibus orientis et desiderantes iam fratrum consueta consortia monasterium tuum ingressi sumus, quod superpositum angusto arenosi tramitis dorso hinc atque hinc passivi et incerti maris unda circumluit; **2** rara tantummodo latentes locos eminus arguit pinus,³ ex qua et Pineti clarum nomen saeculo decidit.⁴

3 Et inde maxime delectati sumus, quod non, ut aliquibus mos est, vel de locis vel de opibus orientis sollicite percontatus es, **4** sed quaenam ibi observatio servorum dei haberetur, quae animi virtus, quae instituta servarentur in monasteriis perquisisti.

¹ *Basilii Regula—A Rufino Latine Versa* (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1986).

² See also the critical edition of this preface by Manlius Simonetti: “Tyranni Rufini Prologus in Regulam Sancti Basilii,” 239–41 in *Tyranni Rufini Opera*, CCSL 20 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1961).

³ *Rara . . . pinus*: the cadence of the hexameter will be noted.

⁴ *De·ci·dit*, restored L² 64–65; †*saeculo dedit*† Zelz., with a note that a lacuna is suspected, which Lundström has now supplied. Zelzer rightly rejected Simonetti’s conjecture *saeculum*, maintaining the *saeculo* of all MSS except “solo” in GL. Rufinus expresses to Ursacius a courteous analogy: as a cone drops from a pine to the ground, so the name of Pinetum has dropped down to the world.

The Rule of Basil

Preface

Letter of Rufinus To Ursacius of Pinetum

1 Most dear brother Ursacius, when we had arrived from eastern parts and we were already longing again for the accustomed fellowship of brothers, how gladly we entered that monastery of yours, sited there above the narrow ridge of a sandy causeway, washed about on this side and that by the waves of the shifting and uncertain sea. **2** Only a scattering of pines marked out the hidden places at a distance,¹ from which the famous name of Pinetum has dropped down to the world.²

3 But we were especially delighted in this, that you did not, as is the way with others, press inquiries about the places or riches of the East. **4** Instead, you asked eagerly about the observance of the servants of God there, their character of mind, and the institutes kept in their monasteries.

¹ W. K. L. Clarke, *The Ascetic Works of Saint Basil* (London: SPCK, 1925), 28–29 n. 1, puzzles over a monastery situated *above* (*superpositum*) the ridge and the places *lying hidden* (*latentes*). He provides three diagrams of possible geographic arrangements.

² The location of Pinetum has been matter of some debate. Earlier opinion, e.g., Clarke, *Ascetic Works*, 28, placed it on the upper Adriatic coast near Ravenna, evidently because Jordanis in his *History of the Goths* spoke of an ancient pine forest called *Pinetum* as one of the three parts of Ravenna. Later opinion has settled for a site at or near Terracina on the Tyrrhenian coast, some eighty kilometers south of Rome. Francis X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia* (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1945), 90, says in favour of the Terracina location: “I believe the notice of Paulinus of Nola (Letter 47) mentioning the fact that Cerealis would have to go out of his way on the journey between Nola and Rome to see Rufinus, then staying at Pinetum, is decisive; especially when taken in conjunction with Rufinus’s answer in his *Praef. ad De bened. patriarcharum* II,2.” The usual route to Rome from Nola lay inland through Capua and up the Via Latina, which followed the Liri/Sacco valley.

5 Ad haec ego ne quid tibi minus digne, non dico quam geritur sed quam geri debet, exponerem, 6 sancti Basili Cappadociae episcopi, viri fide et operibus et omni sanctitate satis clari, instituta monachorum, quae interrogantibus se monachis velut sancti cuiusdam iuris responsa statuit, protuli. 7 Cuius cum definitiones ac sententias mirareris, magnopere poposcisti ut hoc opus verterem in Latinum, 8 pollicens mihi quod per universa occiduae partis monasteria si haec sancti et spiritualis viri sancta et spiritalia innotescerent instituta, 9 omnis ille servorum dei profectus qui ex huiusmodi institutionibus nasceretur, mihi quoque ex eorum vel meritis vel orationibus aliquid gratiae vel mercedis afferret.

10 Exhibui ergo ut potui ministerium meum: imple et tu et omnes qui legis et observatis gratiam, ut et agentes et orantes sic quemadmodum statuta haec continent, mei quoque memores sitis. 11 Tui sane sit officii etiam aliis monasteriis exemplaria praebere, ut secundum instar Cappadociae omnia monasteria eisdem et non diversis vel institutis vel observationibus vivant.

5 To your request I reply—but that what I expound for you may not be unworthy, I say, not of myself, but of the dignity of the subject—6 I bring forth from the holy Basil, bishop of Cappadocia, a man greatly renowned for faith and works and for every mark of holiness, his Institutes for Monks, which he handed down as a kind of sacred case-law³ to monks who questioned him. 7 For when you were admiring his definitions and expressions, you begged me urgently to translate this work into Latin, 8 promising me that if these holy and spiritual institutes of a holy and spiritual man were to become known through all the monasteries of the west, 9 the great progress that would accrue to the servants of God from precepts like these would, through their merits and prayers, bring me some grace or reward.

10 I have exerted myself, therefore, to the best of my ability: do you fulfil your part then, and may all you who read this also observe the favour, and remember me as you act and pray in accordance with the content of these statutes. 11 Make it your task to provide copies also for other monasteries, so that, after the likeness of Cappadocia, all the monasteries may live not by different, but by the same institutes and observances.⁴

³ The analogy appears to be Roman civil law, in which interpretations of already existing statutory law were made by authorised jurists on a case-by-case basis. This is not such an inaccurate idea of Basil's approach, which is to look on Scripture as the "God-breathed" testimony of the Lord's commandments to be used, quite literally, strictly, and in detail, Christian ascetics, as the rule of life for Christian ascetics and on his own role as merely a dispenser of the scriptural word, understood with the sensibility of the faith of the church and lived in the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Thus Rufinus, in looking to Basil himself and his "Rule" as a statutory source of authority, and even in using the term "monks," reflects a certain institutionalizing of monastic life and the canonizing of the holy orthodox "fathers" as guarantors in their own person of authentic Christian doctrine.

⁴ Here most manuscripts mark the transition to the text of Basil with a discretionary formula variously put, e.g., "The Preface of the Rule of holy Basil the Bishop finishes. The chapters begin . . ." C; "It finishes. The book of holy Basil the Bishop on the Institute of monks begins . . ." G; "The Rule of holy Basil the Bishop on the Institute of monks begins . . ." H; "Here begins the teaching of the holy Basil Bishop of Cappadocia to monks . . ." M; "The Preface finishes; here begins the Institute for monks, dispensed by the holy Basil to seniors who questioned him . . ." P; "The Prologue finishes. Here begin the sayings of holy Basil the Bishop . . ." S.

Prologue

(Zelzer 5–7, QF Prologue, 1–11 SR Prologue [PG 31.1080], 12–20 LR Prologue [900–1])

1 Humanum genus diligens deus et *docens hominum scientiam* his quidem quibus docendi contulit gratiam praecipit per apostolum *permanere* in doctrina, **2** his vero qui aedificari divinis institutionibus indigent per Moysen protestatur dicens *Interroga patrem tuum et annuntiabit tibi, presbyteros tuos et dicent tibi.*

3 Propter quod necesse est nos quidem quibus ministerium verbi creditum est, in omni tempore paratos esse et promptos ad instructionem perfectionemque animarum, **4** et quaedam quidem in communi ecclesiae auditorio simul omnibus de praeceptis domini contestari, quaedam vero secretius perfectioribus quibusque disserere, **5** et inquirere atque interrogare volentibus de fide et veritatem evangelii domini nostri Iesu Christi et de conversatione perfecta copiam nostri facultatemque praebere, **6** quo possit ex his *perfectus* effici et consummatus *homo dei.*

Prologue

1 God who loves the human race⁵ and *who teaches man knowledge* (Ps 94:10), through the Apostle commands those on whom he has bestowed the gift of teaching, to *persevere in teaching* (1 Tim 4:16; Rom 12:7), 2 while through Moses he also exhorts those who are in need of being built up by the divine instructions, saying *Ask your father and he will declare it to you, your elders⁶ and they will tell you* (Deut 32:7).

3 Wherefore, we to whom *the ministry of the word* (Acts 6:4) is entrusted⁷ must at all times be prepared and eager for the instruction and perfecting of souls,⁸ 4 now bearing witness to all in the common hearing of the church concerning the commandments of the Lord,⁹ now making ourselves available in private to the best of our ability to any of the more perfect¹⁰ 5 who wish to enquire and ask questions concerning the faith and the truth of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the perfect way of life¹¹—6 through which the *man of God* might be made *perfect and complete* (2 Tim 3:17).

⁵ SR Prol. PG 31.1080A: Ὁ φιλόανθρωπος θεός.

⁶ 1080A: πρεσβυτέρους σου. This hints that Basil is ordained to the presbyterate.

⁷ The “charism of the word,” tested and approved, i.e., empirically verified, is pivotal to Basil’s conception of discerning leadership in the community. See also RBas 17, 32.2, 33.2, 35, 45.2.

⁸ 1080A: πρὸς τὸν κατάρτισμον τῶν ψυχῶν.

⁹ “Concerning . . . Lord” appears only in Colb. (Fedwick’s “Ask 6”) here.

¹⁰ *Perfectionibus quibusque* Rufinus has either taken προσιόντων for some form of “the advanced” or has inserted “*perfectioribus*” here as a gloss to specify the class of Basil’s addressees, i.e., the more zealous Christians and ascetics. Jean Gribomont (“Obéissance et Évangile selon Saint Basile le Grand,” *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle* 21 (1952): 192–215, n. 21) considers that Rufinus has interpreted to the more evolved mentality of his own time. Yet the concept of being more or less “perfect/complete” in the Christian life was very much part of Basil’s thought. His ascetic and anthropological vocabulary is studded with the words τέλειω, τέλειος, i.e., “perfection” and its field. For him Christian “perfection” involves a progress towards maturity and completeness; it is fostered by instruction and diligence and can be skilfully monitored, e.g., LR 2.2 (RBas 2.7–10), LR 3.1, 59–63; it implies assiduous effort towards the goal of piety, imitation of a pattern or a correspondence to a template, e.g., LR 5 (RBas 2.82–93). In fact, Basil himself uses the term “the more perfect,” e.g., τέλειοτέροις, in LR 10.1, LR 15.1 (and note), LR 15.2 (twice), LR 4. Basil’s teaching on perfection is very clear in *Homily on Ps 44* (PG 29.388A) where he describes its attainment as a gradual process. “This psalm seems to be one adapted to the perfecting (τελειωτικός τις ὢν) of human nature, one that lends help towards gaining the end (τέλος) set before those who have chosen to live according to virtue. For there is need of the teaching this psalm provides, if those making progress (προκόπτουσι) are to be perfected (τελειωθῆναι).”

¹¹ SR Prol. 1080A: τὰ τε πρὸς ὑγείαν τῆς πίστεως καὶ ἀλήθειαν τῆς κατὰ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτείας—concerning the soundness of faith and

7 Vobis autem convenit nullum tempus vacuum praeterire, quominus ad ea quae communiter cum omni ecclesia discitis, etiam secretius de eminentioribus et perfectioribus inquiratis, 8 ut omne aevum vitae vestrae in inquirendo de melioribus et in percontando de utilioribus transigatis.

9 Quoniam ergo et in hoc nos congregavit deus, et paululum quid a molestiis turbarum silentii agimus et quietis, 10 neque in aliud opus animum demus neque residuum temporis somno rursus et remissioni corporeae mancipemus, 11 sed in inquisitione et sollicitudine meliorum noctis hoc quod superest exigamus, adimplentes illud quod dictum est per beatum David quia *In lege eius meditabitur die ac nocte.*

12 Si quid ergo unusquisque vestrum deesse sibi ad scientiam putat, ad communem id proferat inquisitionem, 13 facilius enim pluribus simul conferentibus, si quid illud difficile vel obiectum videtur esse,⁵ clarescit, deo sine dubio inveniendi gratiam quaerentibus largiente.

⁵ *Videtur esse*, SPJ, Hol., in the sub-archetype of β , confirmed L² 56; *esse videtur* WLG; *videtur* Zelz., following CH.

7 It befits you for your part not to allow any time to pass by idly, so that in addition to what you learn in common with the whole church you also inquire in private concerning the higher and more perfect things 8 and so conduct the whole span of your life enquiring what are the better things and searching out what is more useful.

9 Since God has brought us together here and we enjoy some small silence and quiet from the disturbances of the crowds, 10 let us not give our mind to any other task, or devote the remaining time to sleeping again and the repose of the body 11 but spend what is left of the night¹² in enquiry and concern for the better things, fulfilling what was said by the blessed David: *On his Law he shall meditate by day and by night* (Ps 1:2).

12 So then, whatever knowledge each of you thinks he is lacking, let him bring it forward for common investigation, 13 for if something appears to be difficult or obscure it is more easily clarified when the many look into the matter together, since God without doubt bestows the grace of *finding* upon those who *seek* (Matt 7:7).

the truth of the way of life according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rufinus may have reordered the sequence somewhat; even so, there is a new stress in the later Greek text on “soundness” of faith. A similar reediting of the intent occurs a few lines later in LR Preface (RBas Prol. 14). In either the Latin or Greek version the indirect interrogative clause comes down to two elements: doctrine and way of life. The necessary link of sound doctrine and moral endeavour is also argued in SR 20. In Letter 294 (Def IV, 206–9) from the late 370s, after the rupture with Eustathius, Basil addresses a community formerly under Eustathian influence seeking reform along his lines: “neither a strict way of life by itself is of benefit, except it be illumined by faith in God, nor can an orthodox confession, bereft of good works, commend you to the Lord, but both of these must go together, that *the man of God may be perfect*.” On Letter 294 see Susanna Elm, *Virgins of God: The Making of Asceticism in Late Antiquity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 214–15. Basil likewise stresses the complete interdependence of prayer and an effective moral life.

¹² This reveals something of the original setting of the *Small Asketikon*: Basil has attended, if not presided at, a vigil in common with other Christians, for the Sunday liturgy maybe, or for one of the “synods” or local festivals (cf. LR 40 and note), or for a gathering of superiors of communities that Basil advises in LR 54. When the service is over, a smaller group of the devout gather round Basil to question him and hear his teaching till dawn. The location is certainly in Pontus. Basil describes such occasions in Letter 223 Def III, 302–5, quoted in the introduction. This *modus operandi* continued in Cappadocia. In *Homily on Ps 114* (PG 29.484–93), Way 351–59, dating from the 370s when Basil was bishop, his addressees have kept vigil at a sanctuary of the martyrs from midnight to midday, waiting for him to arrive. The lack of the usual commotion that Basil so deploras at these “synods” (LR 40), his hearers’ piety and their affection for him all indicate that they are the devout faithful and ascetics.

14 Sicut ergo nobis necessitas imminet et *vae mihi erit si non evangelizem*, ita etiam vobis, si ab interrogatione et inquisitione cessetis vel remissiores ac resolutiores ad ea implenda quae recta inventa fuerint existatis, simile discrimen impendit. **15** Propterea enim et dominus dixit quia *Sermo quem locutus sum vobis, ille iudicabit vos in novissimo die*, **16** Et iterum *Servus qui ignoravit voluntatem domini et fecit digna plagis, vapulabit paucis, qui autem cognovit et fecit contra voluntatem domini, vapulabit plurimum*.

17 Oremus ergo misericordiam domini, ut et nobis verbi inculpabile tribuat ministerium et vobis fructuosum doctrinae concedat eventum, **18** tamquam ergo scientes quoniam stabunt ante faciem vestram verba haec ante tribunal Christi, *Arguam enim te, inquit, et statuam ea ante faciem tuam*; **19** ita et intendite animum vigilanter ad haec quae dicuntur, et ad opus dignum quae audistis festinanter adducite, **20** quia *nescimus qua die vel qua hora dominus noster veniat*.