

MONASTERIES IN AND AROUND ALEXANDRIA

Very few [monasteries](#) in the city of Alexandria are mentioned in the texts besides those of Bruchheim, of Paul the Leper, and of the Tabennesiotes if, indeed Tabennesiotes was located in Alexandria itself. Most were at the town gates or some distance away. To the northeast was the Monastery of the Metanoia, on the ancient site of Canopus; to the east Saint Mark's Monastery (if this is not the same as the one designated DAYR ASFAL AL-'ARD in the Middle Ages), and the DAYR QIBRIYUS, whose location remains doubtful.

In the west, there were the Lithazomenon, the Monastery of the Forty Saints, the patriarchal residence of Metras, a second Monastery of Saint Mark, and then, on the tongue of land between the [Mediterranean](#) and Lake Maryut, the [monasteries](#) whose names were linked to the milestones near which they had been built: Pempton, Enaton, (medieval Dayr al-Zujaj), Oktokaidekaton, and [Eikoston](#) with the laura of Qalamun and the cenobium of Maphora.

Here are listed only those [monasteries](#) whose memory is preserved by short references only. The better-known monasteries covered in separate entries.

The Monastery of Bruchheim is also the name of a very old part of the town, situated near the sea, to the east, mentioned by Saint JEROME in his life of Saint Hilarion, a hermit.

The Monastery of Paul the Leper held the relics of the Prophet Elisha according to the *Chronographia* of Theophanes compiled between 810 and 814. On 11 May 463, Elisha's relics were transferred to the Monastery of Paul the Leper in Alexandria. Later, they were supposed to have been moved to Constantinople to the [Church](#) of the Holy Apostles. According to the Coptic sources, since the patriarchate of THEOPHILUS (385-412), these relics had been in the martyrrium of John the Baptist and

Elisha.

The Monastery of the Tabennesiotes was, perhaps, in Alexandria itself on part of the site of the Serapion, a Pachomian monastery; or else, simply, Tabennesiote monks served the [Church](#) or the Martyrium, or both at once, of John the Baptist and Elisha.

A traveler, Bernard the Wise, about 870 indicates “outside the East Gate, Saint Mark’s Monastery, where there are monks near the [church](#) where the saint himself rested.” He adds that a short time before Venetians had carried off the saint’s body to Venice.

The same Western traveler tells of having seen “outside the Western Gate, the so-called Monastery of the Forty Saints, where monks also live.” No other source mentions this monastery.

On the same western side but near the sea, [Abu al-Makarim](#) cites a Monastery of Saint Mark, unfortunately without any other detail. It is not possible for this monastery to be identical with the one placed by Bernard the Wise outside the East Gate, where as many sources attest, the Martyrium of Saint Mark stood.

G. Evelyn-White has made a case for the existence of a Monastery of the Mother of God “at Gazarta, near Alexandria” (1932, p. 371, n. 1, and p. 447). A certain Samuel Bar Cyriacus, a Syrian [Stylite](#) monk, between 1081 and 1101 copied several Syriac manuscripts originating from the DAYR AL-SURYAN.

But the Syriac *be gazarta* is not the [proper](#) name of a place; it means “in the island [of the Bani Nasr].” Moreover, one of the [colophons](#) of which Evelyn-White speaks says explicitly “in the island [*be gazarta*] called Niqiyus.” This copyist must therefore be identified with the Syrian hermit of whom the HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS speaks at that same period, as being at Azari, in the Jazirat Bani Nasr.

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