

## ***PATAPE or Bidaba (c. 244-312)***

An anchorite who became bishop of Coptos (Qift) and was martyred (feast day: 19 Abib). He was born to Christian parents from Hermonthis (Armant) and was brought up by Andrew, his cousin. When, at the age of fifteen, he became an anchorite, he and Andrew went to the same district where PACHOMIUS founded his monasteries some decades later.

The [Arabic](#) text tells us that Patape was an anchorite for forty- nine and a half years. He was ordained a [priest](#) and went to church with his cousin Andrew every forty days to receive Holy Communion.

Patape was consecrated bishop of [Coptos](#) about 309, in the tenth year of PETER, seventeenth [patriarch](#) of Alexandria. Under the governor Arianus, operating in the name of DIOCLETIAN, he was martyred about 312 at Coptos, where he had been bishop for three and a half years.

The Life of Patape, attributed to Theophilus, who probably was his immediate successor as bishop of Coptos, is important because it represents a biography or Encomium whose origin likely goes back to a Coptic text written before 325 in the southern part of Upper Egypt, decades before [ATHANASIUS of Alexandria](#) wrote his Life of Antony.

The texts on Patape include illuminating information about the state of the church, life among anchorites, and the relationship between the church and the anchorites in the district where Pachomius was soon to settle. The account of Patape also refers to many persons honored by the Coptic church, among them [bishops](#) from that relatively early time (Gabra, 1986).

Many monuments indicate that Patape was an important man. A monastery situated near Bahjurah (near Hiw) that bears his name (Lefort, 1939; Adli, 1980) is mentioned on the day of its dedication, 13 Kiyahk, by the Luxor manuscript (Coquin, 1978). One of the churches of the

monastery of Mercurius in Hijazah bears his name (Meinardus, 1965). His name is preserved with that of his companion Andrew on a diptych (Crum and Winlock, 1926).

According to Crum and Winlock (p. 117), this Patape, bishop of Coptos, should not be confused with his namesake who was a native and ascetic in Thebes (Upper Egypt), celebrated by the SYNAXARION of Constantinople on 8 December (Delehayé, col. 287).

The feast of Patape (19 Abib) is mentioned only by a single [manuscript](#) in Paris (National Library, Arabe, no. 4780; CSCO 67, p. 232, and 90, p. 227 [transl.]) and by the Copto-[Arabic](#) SYNAXARION.

His Life is preserved in two [Arabic](#) manuscripts. One, in the Coptic Museum, dates from the fifteenth century (Graf, no. 138; Simaykah, 1939). The other belongs to the library of the monastery of Saint Antony. This text is a homily of Theophilus, bishop of Coptos, in honor of the holy bishop and martyr [Anba](#) Bidaba (Patape).

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Patape Or Bidaba (C. 244-312) | 3

**RENÉ-GEORGES COQUIN**

**GAWDAT GABRA**

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