Presence of the Benedictine Rule in the Rule of St. Clare

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The original Latin text of the rule of St. Clare and its translation into French have appeared in volume 325 of the collection Sources chrétiennes. The editors took care to sort out by a typographical procedure whatever St. Clare borrowed from the Later Rule of St. Francis, which constituted nearly half the text, and whatever came to her from other sources. Of these, the Benedictine Rule is cited nearly as often as the Rule given to the Poor Sisters of San Damiano by their cardinal protector Hugolino, and approved by Honorius III in 1219. Clare had accepted this text because it fitted in better with her purpose than the Benedictine Rule, which she had followed in the early days. She hoped, however, to have a rule of life more in line with the Franciscan ideal and closer to the Rule drawn up by Francis. Pope Innocent IV made a partial concession in 1247 by agreeing to replace the Rule of St. Benedict with the Rule of St. Francis as the juridical foundation for the sisters of San Damiano. Undoubtedly, St. Clare began then to draft a text that corresponded more fully with the kind of life that she had led with her sisters; and that was the Rule that was approved by the same Innocent IV on August, 9, 1253 at the moment when Clare was dying. 1 As Thadée Matura observes: "Great patience, persistent measures, and stubborn diplomacy ended by guaranteeing her that which she had clung to absolutely: an original form of life based on the 'highest poverty' and a bond with Francis and his order."2

This time the concern was with a Rule composed specifically for the community at San Damiano and in accord with the ideal of an austere

¹The facts recalled here briefly are explained more completely and precisely in volume 325 of Sources chrétiennes: Claire d'Assise, Ecrits (Paris, 1985), pp. 10–13, hereafter cited as Ecrits. See also pp. 19–21. Let us also recall that "what we call here the Rule' did not always carry such a name, whether in the introductory Bulls or in the body of the text. It was always called forma: forma professionis, five times; forma vitae, four times; forma paupertatis, three times" (idem, p. 41). The Rule of St. Clare will be designated RCl, and that of St. Benedict RBen.

² Ecrits, p. 29, in the introduction by Thadée Matura, an especially valuable text.

and poor life, separated from the world—a life she desired to lead. Certainly Clare did not pretend to create something entirely new. That is why she retained from Hugolino's Rule and that of Innocent IV; all that seemed useful to her. Moreover, she knew how to adapt the Rule of Francis himself as the principal foundation of her own Rule. She adapted it not only to the conditions peculiar to a female community, but to what she and her sisters discovered by experience. If she was less strict than Francis as to poverty in dress, she was more rigorous than he as to fasting; and she kept a good part of the rigid regulations taken from Hugolino's Rule as to enclosure. Besides, she remained attached to the Rule of St. Benedict, which she had followed for more than thirty years; and she knew how to be inspired by it in more than one passage. That fact is well known, but it seems that we can be more precise as to the extent of this Benedictine heritage, and that we can explain it.

A study that appeared in the periodical Benedictina in 1954 gives a good survey of the links existing between the Rules of St. Clare and St. Benedict.³ A list of eleven texts common to both Rules shows a dependence intended by Clare. We must note, however, that at times the connection with the Benedictine Rule in several instances is indirect, because the borrowings made by Clare may have been either from St. Francis's or from Hugolino's Rule. Moreover, in the passages in which Clare did not follow those two documents, she seemed to have depended more on St. Benedict either as to his vocabulary or his thought. A new examination of the text of the Rule of Clare seems promising.

1. Connections between the Rule of Clare and the Rule of Benedict

a) Connections between the Rule of St. Clare and that of St. Benedict through the Intermediary of the Earlier or the Later Rule of St. Francis

Livarius Oliger, O.F.M., long ago uncovered the instances in which St. Francis cited the *Rule of St. Benedict*.⁴ Also, a recent edition of the writings of the saint that appeared in *Sources chrétiennes*⁵ enumerates the list of these borrowings, without however indicating all of them. Here it will suffice to note the formulas common to the *Benedictine*

³ Guglielmo Salvi, "La Regola di S. Benedetto nei primordi dell'Ordine di s. Chiara," in *Benedictina* 8 (1954): 77–121. The eleven parallel passages in the two *Rules* are to be found on pages 119–20.

⁴ Expositio quatuor magistrorum, ed. Livarius Oliger, O.F.M. (Rome, 1950), pp. 176, 181-82, 185-86, 189.

⁵ François d'Assise, *Ecrits* (Sources chrétiennes, [Paris, 1981]) p. 285. The two *Rules* of St. Francis, which appear on pages 122–99 of this volume, are designated here as *RegNB* and *RegB*. [The *Rule of St. Benedict* will be designated as *RBen.* — Editor]

Rule and Rule of St. Clare in which St. Clare cites one of the two Rules of St. Francis.

Rule of St. Clare

RCl I 2 (RegB I 1): without anything of one's own

RCl I 3 (RegB I 2): promises obedience

RCl II 1 (RegNB II 1): divine inspira-

RCl II 7 (RegB II 5): let her be eager to give to the poor 6

RCl II 16 (RegB IV 2): according to the diversity of persons, places, seasons and cold climates

RCl II 24 (RegB II 16): wear inexpensive garments

RCl III 1 (RegB III 1): celebrate the Divine Office

 $RCl~{
m III}$ 4 (cf. $RegNB~{
m III}$ 9): those who are illiterate

RCl VI 12 (RegB IV 1): of themselves or through an intermediary

RCl VII 2 (RegB V 2): idleness, the enemy of the soul

RCl X 2 (RegB X 2): they have renounced their will

RCl X 6 (RegB X 7): vainglory ... detraction

Benedictine Rule

RBen 33 (title): Monks and Private Ownership

RBen 58: 17: promises obedience

RBen 20: 4: under the inspiration of divine grace

RBen 58: 24: give them to the poor beforehand

RBen 55: 1: according to local conditions

RBen 55: 2: in cold regions

RBen 64: 14: as he sees best for each individual

RBen 55: 7: what is available in the vicinity at a reasonable cost

RBen 43: 1: an hour of the divine office

RBen 58: 20: if he is illiterate

RBen 59: 3: never personally, never through an intermediary

RBen 48: 1: idleness is the enemy of the soul

RBen prol. 3: give up your own will

RBen 49: 9: vainglory RBen 65: 7: envy ... detraction

Unquestionably, all these comparisons are not equally conclusive. Nevertheless, the expressions used in the Rule of St. Clare II 16 and those of Francis are surely taken from the Benedictine Rule, because Clare, in reproducing this text from the Later Rule, was reminded of Benedict's words locorum qualitatem (the condition of places). She then wrote secundum qualitates personarum et loca et tempora (according to diversity of persons, places and cold climates). Likewise in her Rule X 6, in formulating like St. Francis a list of faults that the sisters ought to avoid, she recalled the list in the Benedictine Rule 65: 7: invidiae (envy) ... detractiones (detraction) ... dissensiones (dissension). She added dissensiones (dissension), a word that Francis had not mentioned.

 $^{^6}$ Correct the references given in Ecrits, p. 126: 6, RegNB II, III, VII; RegB II, V. See Matt. 19: 21.

But there is one curious fact: It is only in the Earlier Rule VII 11 that the beginning of chapter 48 in Benedictine Rule is cited textually: Otiositas inimica est animae (Idleness is the enemy of the soul), while the Later Rule V 2 and the Rule of St. Clare use the phrase more loosely.

b) Connections between Rule of St. Clare and the Benedictine Rule in Passages Taken from Hugolino's Rule

Hugolino's Rule⁷ is often inspired by Benedictine Rule, especially in the chapters that treat of the admission of novices, the Divine Office, silence, fasting, the care of the sick, and dress. St. Clare cites it quite frequently; twenty-five out of a total of 182 verses in her Rule were inspired by it. But it is only in two passages that Rule of St. Clare, using the Rule of Hugolino, is in accord with the Benedictine Rule.

RCl III 8 (RHug 7): omni tempore, in the sense of "at all times"

RBen 11: 11; 41: 9; 42: 1-2; 49: 1: the same expression and same sense, whereas in verse 6 of the prologue the expression signifies 'constantly'.

RCl II 1 (RHug 13): sit (ostiaria) matura moribus (Let the portress be mature in her manner of acting)

RBen 31: 1: Cellararius elegatur ... maturis moribus (Let the cellarer be chosen from those acting maturely). Several manuscripts have maturus moribus. See 66: 1: cuius (ostiarii) maturitas.

It seems that the words capitale (pillow) and pedules (footwear) in Rule of St. Clare VIII 17–18 (RHug 8) come from the Rule of St. Benedict 55: 15, and 55: 6, 12, 19.

We can explain the rarity of these comparisons by the fact that 15 of the 25 verses borrowed by *Rule of St. Clare* from that of Hugolino are concerned with the enclosure of nuns, with which the *Benedictine Rule* did not deal, because he was addressing monks.

At least in one case Clare freely cites the Rule of Hugolino 12: De cuius religiosa vita et moribus atque fide notitia et securitas habeatur (There is full knowledge and a guarantee concerning his religious life and character). This is a passage inspired by the Rule of St. Benedict 32: 1: De quorum vita et moribus securus sit (Let him be certain about their life and manner of acting). She borrows from Benedict's text when she writes: De cuius honestate moribus plena notitia habeatur (Let complete knowledge of his character be had). Honestas (character) is a word especially dear to her. She used it 5 times in her Rule, and we find honestus (virtuous) in II 20 and XI 9, and honeste (virtuously) in IX 12.

We shall find the text of the Rule of Hugolino in Ignacio Omaechevarria, O.F.M., Escritos de Santa Clara y Documentos complementarios (Madrid, 1982), pp. 214-29.

It is found only once in the *Benedictine Rule* (73: 1). See *honestus* in 2: 27; 42: 11; and *honeste* in 61: 7.

c) Connections between the Rule of Clare and the Benedictine Rule through the Intermediary of the Rule of Innocent IV

The Rule of Innocent IV⁸ is cited in only four verses of the Rule of St. Clare (I 19–20; III 1; V 15; IX 12). Besides, chapter 8 of the Rule of Innocent IV provided the inspiration for the regulations contained in the Rule of St. Clare concerning canonical visitors. The only connection with the Benedictine Rule that we find in these four verses is of little importance and perhaps incidental: Rule of St. Clare III 1 (RInn 2): (Faciant divinum) officium secundum consuetudinem Fratrum minorum (Let them celebrate the divine office according to the custom of the Friars Minor). This brings to mind the Rule of Benedict: Duo psalmi dicantur secundum consuetudinem (Let them say two Psalms according to custom). The context is liturgical in the one and the other, but the formula used has nothing characteristic about it.

Apropos the formation of novices, the chapter one of the Rule of Innocent (quibus [novitiis] deputetur magistra [for whom (the novices) a mistress should be assigned]) is closer to the Benedictine Rule 58: 6: et senior eis talis deputetur (and a senior should be assigned for such as these). But that is not like the Rule of St. Clare II 19: et tam ipsis quam aliis novitiis abbatissa sollicite magistram provideat (Let the abbess carefully provide a mistress both for these and other novices), which is another example of the liberty with which Clare used her sources.

- d) Connections between the Rule of Clare and the Benedictine Rule where the Rule of Clare is Original
 - 1) Texts with a Common Vocabulary

It is above all in these texts that the dependence of Clare in connection with Benedict will be truly significant. Several points of contact which came to be noticed have already been indicated, either by Dom Salvi, or by the editors of *Ecrits*, but the survey may be complete and in some cases a bit complicated; it calls for a commentary.

RCl II 16: Abbatissa ... provideat (Let the abbess ... provide) RBen 55: 8 Abbas ... provideat (Let the abbot provide)

Clare calls for vigilance on the part of the abbess concerning the dress of the sisters, and she used the *Rule of St. Benedict* 55: 1–2 immediately afterwards, just as St. Francis had done. The two introductory words, which came to be cited and are parallel with *RBen* 55: 8

⁸ For the Rule of Innocent IV see Omaechevarria, Escritos, pp. 237–59.

⁹See p. 51 above.

and situated in the same context of garments, appear to have been inherited very likely from Benedict.

RCl IV 6: Electa vero cogitet quale onus in se suscepit et cui redditura est quale onus suscepit et cui rationem de grege sibi commisso (Whoever is elected should reflect upon the kind of burden she has undertaken and to Whom she must render an account of the flock committed to her)

RBen 64: 7: Ordinatus autem abbas cogitet semper quale onus suscepit et cui redditurus est rationem villicationis suae (Once in office, the abbot must keep constantly in mind the nature of the burden he has received and to Whom he will have to give an account of his stewardship)

RBen 2: 32: gregis sibi commissi (The flock entrusted to him). See 63: 2 gregem sibi commissum (the flock

entrusted to him).

Here the citation began with two distinct passages from the Rule of St. Benedict. Not wishing to repeat Benedict's villicationis suae, Clare borrowed from chapter 2 of the Benedictine Rule or perhaps chapter 63, the phrase grex sibi commissus (the flock entrusted to him).

The Rule of St. Clare IV 9: Studeat etiam magis aliis praeese virtutibus et sanctis moribus quam officio (Let her also strive as well to preside over the others more by her virtues and holy behavior than by her office). This recommendation made to the abbess appeared to be a combination of two phrases from the Rule of St. Benedict 64: 16, even though the similarity may be farfetched: Studeat plus amari quam timeri (Let him strive to be loved rather than feared); and from 64: 8 Sciatque sibi oportere prodesse magis quam praeesse (Let him recognize that his goal must be for the benefit of the monks, not preeminence for himself). Likewise, the last part of the phrase ut eius exemplo provocatae sorores potius ex amore ei obediant quam timore (so that moved by her example, the sisters may obey her more out of love than out of fear) combines elements taken from various passages in the Rule of Benedict 61: 9: ut eius exemplo (so that by his example); 27: 3: qui ... fratrem ... provocent (who urge the brother); 68: 5: ex caritate ... oboediat (let him in love obey); 7: 69: non iam timore gehennae, sed amore Christi (no longer out of fear of hell, but out of love of Christ); 64: 15: studeat plus amari, quam timeri (Let him strive to be loved rather than feared). At least one or other of these various texts appear to underlie the Rule of St. Clare.

The Rule of St. Clare IV 17–18: Quae tractanda sunt pro utilitate et honestate monasterii ... conferat (abbatissa) cum omnibus sororibus suis; saepe enim Dominus quod melius est minori revelat (Let the abbess consult with all her sisters concerning whatever pertains to the welfare and good of the monastery). The conclusion is clearly inspired by the Benedictine Rule 3: 2, which Clare cites freely, substituting minori (lesser) for iuniori (younger). Did she want the word to mean 'less intelligent', 'less capable'; or did she allude, as in a parallel text of

the Benedictine Rule, to 'younger'? In any case, it was not at all 'the smallest', as the editors of Ecrits translated it. Tractanda recalls the word tractet (ponder) in the Benedictine Rule 3: 2. St. Benedict previously wanted all the brothers to be consulted in the most important matters. Utilitas monasterii is found in the Benedictine Rule 3: 12 and 65: 12.

The Rule of St. Clare IV 21: Saepe de huiusmodi turbationes et scandala oriuntur (Such practices often give rise to troubles and scandals). If the word turbatio (troubles) is proper to St. Clare, the rest comes from the Benedictine Rule 65: 1: Saepius quidem contingit ut ... scandala gravia in monasterio oriantur (More often ... it becomes the source of serious contention in the monastery).

RCl IV 22: ad conservandam unitatem mutuae dilectionis et pacis (to preserve the unity of mutual love and peace).

RBen 65: 11 propter pacis caritatisque custodiam (for the preservation of peace and love).

Here as in the *Rule of Clare IV* 9, if there is a possible influence of the *Benedictine Rule* at work, it is necessary to recognize that Clare vigorously freed herself from Benedict's vocabulary.

The Rule of St. Clare VII 1: Post horam tertiae laborent (Let them work after the hour of Terce) recalls the Benedictine Rule 48: 3: A prima usque hora pene quarta laborent (They will work from Prime till after the fourth Hour).

The Rule of St. Clare VIII 7: Non liceat alicui sorori litteras mittere vel aliquid recipere aut extra monasterium dare sine licentia abbatissae (Let no sister be permitted to send letters or to receive or give away anything outside the monastery without the permission of the abbess). Salvi and Ecrits recognized here with good reason a borrowing made from the Benedictine Rule 54: 1. Clare, nevertheless, is less strict here than St. Benedict, since in adding extra monasterium (outside the monastery) she seems to suppose that small gifts can be exchanged between sisters. The word licentia (permission) that she used is more appropriate than Benedict's praeceptum (precept). Likewise, aliquid (anything) is a better replacement for eulogiae (blessed tokens) in a thirteenth-century text.

The Rule of St. Clare VIII 8: Nec quicquam liceat habere quod abbatissa non dederit aut permiserit (Let it not be permitted to have anything that the abbess has not given or allowed). Here the quotation is purely and simply from the Benedictine Rule 33: 5 but applied to women.

The Rule of St. Clare VIII 9: Quod si a parentibus suis vel ab aliis ei aliquid mitteretur (Should anything be sent to a sister by her relatives or others) was borrowed largely from the Benedictine Rule 54: 2. Clare substituted mitteretur (sent) for directum fuerit (has been directed),

and she added *vel ab aliis* (or by others). We shall see below that she showed herself more generous than Benedict in the matter of awarding these small presents.

The Rule of St. Clare IX 1–3: The Manner of Correcting a Sister Who Neglected Her Responsibility: Si qua soror ... peccaverit, per abbatissam vel alias sorores bis vel ter admonita, si non se emendaverit, quot diebus contumax fuerit ... et graviori poenae subiaceat (If any sister has sinned ... if, after having been admonished two or three times by the abbess or another sister, she does not amend ... for as many days as she shall have been obstinate). Clare is reminded here of the Benedictine Rule 23,1-4: Si quis frater contumax ... repertus fuerit, hic ... ammoneatur semel et secundo secreto a senioribus suis. Si non emendaverit ... excommunicationi subiaceat (If a brother is found to be stubborn ... he should be warned twice privately by the seniors. If he does not amend ... let him be excommunicated); perhaps also of Benedictine Rule 45: 1: Maiori vindictae subiaceat (Let him subjected to more severe punishment). These parallels were already noticed by Dom Salvi. We can add that in the same chapter 9 of the Rule of St. Clare, these two slight borrowings were made from the Rule of St. Benedict.

RCl IX 6 occasionem ... scandali suboriri (an occasion of scandal should arise)

RCl IX 10: iniuriam sibi illatam (the wrong she had done her).

And also this last parallel passage acknowledged in Ecrits:

RCl IX 15: Nec praesumant rumores de saeculo referre monasterio (Let them not presume to repeat the gossip of the world inside the monastery). RBen 69: 3: Gravissima occasio scandalorum oriri potest (A most serious occasion of scandal can arise).

RBen 58: 3: Inlatus sibi iniurias (in bearing harsh treatment).

Benedictine Rule 67: 5: Nec praesumat quisquam referre monasterio alio quaecumque foris monasterium viderit aut audierit (No one should presume to relate to anyone else what he saw or heard outside the monastery).

Finally the three following connections between the two *Rules* are to be noticed in chapters 11 and 12:

RCl XI 8: Nisi exigente manifesta, rationabili et inevitabili causa existat (unless a manifest, reasonable, and unavoidable cause).

RCl XII 4: secundum quod melius viderit expedire (as he sees best).

RCl XII 5: duos fratres laicos sanctae conversationis (two lay brothers of a holy way of life). RBen 2: 18: nisi alia rationabilis causa existat (unless another reasonable cause exists).

RBen 64: 14: Ut viderit cuiqui expedire (as it seems best).

RBen 21: 1: Fratres ... sanctae conversationis (brothers ... of a holy way of life).

One or other of these parallel passages might seem small; but taken together (and perhaps this list is not exhaustive) they give the *Rule of Clare* a quite marked Benedictine tone, so much the more if these texts

are added to those that came to Clare through St. Francis's Rule or that of Hugolino.

The comparison ought still to be pursued and made to bear this time, no longer on the common vocabulary, but on the regulations and recommendations that bring the two codes of religious life together.

2) Arrangements Made by Clare in Accord with the Benedictine Rule Beyond similar expressions, we find in the prescriptions of the Rule of St. Clare an undeniable relationship with the Benedictine Rule. Far from denying the monastic heritage that she received in the first years of religious life, Clare much rather sought to preserve from among them those elements that seemed to her compatible with the teaching and example given her by St. Francis. Thus, nearly every page of the Rule of St. Clare carries the mark of the Benedictine Rule's influence.

It is true that the first chapter (which is entirely dedicated to establishing bonds uniting "the Order of the Poor Sisters" with Francis and his successors) is exempt from any connection with Rule of St. Benedict except through the intermediary of the Later Rule. But chapter 2, which regulates the manner of receiving and forming novices, offers immediately afterwards a characteristic parallel with the Benedictine Rule 58 in verses 3 to 6. Certainly St. Benedict does not take up the problems of sound doctrine, of which Clare speaks in the verses 3 and 4, but he strongly insists, as she also does in verse 6, upon the necessity of carefully (curiose) examining the novices to see if they were truly fit to embrace the monastic life: Diligenter exponatur ei (noviter venienti) tenor vitae nostrae. That is a sensible regulation that corresponds to the three successive courses on the Rule that the novice had to attend to in the course of her year of probation. Compare the Benedictine Rule 58: 12: Ut sciat ad quod ingreditur (so that he may know what he is entering). There is no true dependence here of the Rule of St. Clare in connection with that of St. Benedict but a resemblance as to the thought content. An analogous observation can be made apropos regulations that suit younger members and those who are weaker in the matter of fasts (RCl III 10, a passage taken from the Rule of Hugolino 7; cf. RBen 37: 1-3).

When St. Clare in chapter IV 10 recommended to the abbess not to show her affection to certain of her sisters more so than to others (privatio amoribus careat) she was inspired by Thomas of Celano's Second Life 185; but she also linked up chapter 2 of St. Benedict with the exhortation made to the abbot in verse 17: Non unus plus ametur quam alius (He shall not love one more than another). 10

¹⁰ Ecrits, pp. 35, 134–35.

We have seen above that St. Clare wanted the whole community to be consulted in important matters (RCl IV 16). She also prescribed (IV 22) that "all the officials of the monastery should be elected by the common consent of all the sisters" ad conservandam unitatem mutuae dilectionis et pacis (to preserve the unity of mutual love and peace), whereas the Benedictine Rule gave the abbot the choice of prior (65: 11, 14-15) and, it seems, the choice of cellarer (31: 1), and of porters (66: 1, 5), since the whole organization of the monastery was propter pacis caritatisque custodiam (65: 11). The same motive for safeguarding peace and love was thus invoked to justify two different institutional situations. St. Clare, nevertheless, joined St. Benedict at the end of the chapter in foreseeing the provision of a council for the abbess constituted of some sisters, de discretionibus (from the discerning ones) chosen by the community (4: 23), the way the elders in the Benedictine Rule were chosen from among the brothers boni testimonii et sanctae conversationis (of good repute and holy way of life — RBen 21: 1).

The fifth chapter, which St. Clare devoted to silence, deals at length with minute regulations for the parlor and the grill, and evidently she borrowed nothing here from the *Rule of St. Benedict*. However, she implicitly joined Benedict by indicating that she was speaking of nocturnal silence (V l; cf. *RBen* 42) and of that silence which ought to be observed in the refectory (V 2; cf. *RBen* 38: 5–9). Inspired by good sense and discretion, she added that the sisters "could nevertheless speak always and everywhere briefly and in a low voice if that would be necessary" (V 4; cf. *RBen* 38: 7, 9; 42: 11).

Franciscan poverty is assuredly much more strict than that prescribed in the *Benedictine Rule* 33–34. St. Clare was inspired above all by the sixth chapter 6 of Francis's *Rule*. Moreover, on two accounts she showed herself there more moderate than Francis was in his *Later Rule*. She conceded that the monastery possess sufficient land to ensure solitude for the sisters and a part of their sustenance (VI 14–15). Also, in the second chapter, speaking of dress for the sisters, she made this touching recommendation: "For the love of the most holy and beloved Child, Who was wrapped in such poor little swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, and of His most holy Mother, I admonish, beg and exhort my sisters that they always wear cheap garments" (II 24). 11. She did not keep the additional phrase so typical of St. Francis: "And let

¹¹ The words moneo et exhortor in RCl II 24 come from RegB II 17: "Quos (fratres) moneo et exhortor ne despiciant neque iudicent alios homines." The context is entirely different. In her Testament 45–47, Clare mentions the whole thing in order to justify her love of poverty, and the destitution of the crib and of the cross: "That out of the love of God who was placed poor in the crib, lived poor in the world, and remained naked on the cross ... always see to it that his little flock ... observe holy poverty."

them mend them with pieces of sack cloth or other material with the blessing of God" (*RegB* II 16; cf. *RegNB* II 14). She "allowed the sisters up to three tunics and a mantle, as well as work clothes." ¹²

We can notice, however, a certain relationship between Rule of St. Clare VIII 1: Sorores nihil sibi approprient, nec donum, nec locum nec aliquam rem (Let the sisters not appropriate anything, neither a house nor a place nor anything at all), and the Benedictine Rule 33: 2–3: Ne quis praesumat ... aliquid habere proprium, nullam omnino rem (No one may presume ... to retain anything as his own, nothing at all). Nevertheless, while Benedict condemned all personal possessions but authorized the ownership of the goods by the monastery, Clare showed herself much more intransigent. When she used the word 'sisters', it was the community she pointed to.

We have seen above that the Rule of St. Clare VIII 7–8, where there is a question of the renunciation of personal property, is strongly inspired by the Rule of St. Benedict. But in the verses that followed, Clare showed herself more generous than was Benedict, when she envisaged the case of a gift offered to a sister. Using the Benedictine Rule 54: 2–9, she then modified entirely the attitude to adopt in a similar case. While Benedict said that the abbot could give the object to whomever he wished, Clare wrote: "Should anything be sent to a sister by her relatives or others, let the abbess give it to the sister. If she needs it, the sister may use it; otherwise let her in charity give it to a sister who does need it. If, however, money is sent to her, the abbess, with the advice of the discreets, may provide for the needs of the sister" (RCl VIII 9–11). This was an admirable concession that undoubtedly St. Francis would not have entirely approved. She showed a psychologically refined sensitivity, wholly evangelical.

In the recommendations that immediately follow, Clare insists that sick sisters be cared for with great solicitude. Likewise, she gives them counsels as to their food and everything else that they would need. It was the Rule of Hugolino and that of Francis that inspired the Rule of St. Clare down to the details about straw mattresses, cushions, feather pillows, and woolen stockings (RCl VIII 12), whereas chapter 36 in Benedictine Rule was not used here. One can only regret that rather than Benedict's expression in 36: 1: Sicut revera Christo ita eis serviatur (that they may be revered as Christ), that of St. Francis was preferred: Serviant ei sicut vellent sibi servire (Let them serve her as

¹² Ecrits, p. 42. See also RCl II 11, 15.

¹³ RCl VIII 10.

¹⁴ Nevertheless, notice, as we have seen above, that capitale and pedules could come from RBen 55: 6, 12, 15, 19.

they would wish to be served) (RCl VIII 14; cf. RegB VI 9-10). It was in this context about the sick that Clare cited Francis's phrase: Secure manifestet unus alteri necessitatem suam (Let each one confidently manifest her needs to the other — RegB VI 8; and RCl VIII 15), which belonged to another context and had to do with the mutual relations between brothers in every circumstance.

The ninth chapter in Rule of St. Clare, devoted to culpable sisters, presents a case more typical of the way she used the Later Rule and the Benedictine Rule alternately, as Sources chrétiennes has well noted. It will suffice to bring up here the points of contact between the Rule of St. Benedict and that of St. Clare. In verse 2, after the clause Si non se emendaverit (If he does not amend), which is common in the Benedictine Rule (5: 19; 23: 3; 28: 1; 32: 5; 33: 8; 43: 1 5; 48: 20; 62: 10; 65: 19), Clare foresaw (IX 2) that a culpable person who did not repent should fast on bread and water, seated on the ground in the presence of all as long as her obstinacy lasts (quot diebus contumax fuerit). The Benedictine Rule 24: 3-7 prescribed somewhat differently that the brother excommunicated from the common table should eat alone and at a later hour. Clare added: et graviori poenae subiaceat, si visum fuerit abbatissae, which is a small borrowing, as noted earlier, from the Benedictine Rule 45: 1. The prescription which comes immediately afterwards, and which recommends that they pray in community for the sister who had been unfaithful, deserves to be quoted: "As long as she remains obstinate, let the prayer be that the Lord will enlighten her heart to do penance" (RCl IX 4). The passage immediately brings to mind the teaching of Benedict in his Rule 28: 4-5, as Dom Salvi has shown. 15 Nevertheless, I think that the phrase in the Rule of St. Clare IX 4: oretur ut Dominus ad paenitentiam cor eius illuminet (Let the prayer be that the Lord will enlighten her heart to do penance) combines, in fact, two texts quite similar to Rule of St. Benedict, namely in chapter 27: 4: oretur pro eo ab omnibus (Let all pray for him) and in chapter 28: 4-5: Adhibeat etiam quod maius est, suam et omnium fratrum pro eo orationem, ut Dominus qui omnia potest, operetur salutem circa infirmum fratrem (Let him apply an even better remedy: he and his brothers should pray for him so that the Lord who can do all things, may bring about the health of the sick brother).

Likewise in v. 7, as was noted in *Ecrits*, the parallel between the *Rule of St. Clare IX* 6–10 and that of St. Benedict 71: 6–8 is certain: in the two *Rules*, what is required is that he or she who had troubled one or another prostrate himself or herself at the feet of the offended one in order to obtain pardon. The situation perhaps is not exactly the same in

¹⁵ "La Regola," p. 20, cited in n. 3 above.

the Benedictine Rule and that of St. Clare, for St. Benedict envisaged tension arising between the abbot (or other office holder) and a simple monk; whereas Clare simply speaks of differences between two sisters. Besides, she recalls opportunely the teaching of our Savior in Matthew 5: 23, and adds that the culpable sister ask of the one she hurt to pray for her. The offended sister ought to offer pardon: Liberaliter sorori suae omnem iniuriam sibi illatam (generously pardon her sister every wrong she has done her). This is a beautiful example of her wholly independent way of using and developing the sources.

One last case of an agreement in the thinking of Clare and Benedict, apart from any use of common terms, is found in this same chapter nine of the Rule of St. Clare, verse 18: Iuxta qualitatem culpae abbatissa poenitentiam iniungat (the abbess impose a penance on her according to the nature of the fault). This clearly brings to mind the Benedictine Rule 24: 1: Secundum modum culpae et excommunicationis vel disciplinae mensura debet extendi (There ought to be due proportion between the seriousness of a fault and the measure of excommunication or discipline).

The eleventh chapter of Clare's Rule, concerning the custody of the enclosure, is taken almost entirely from the Rule of Hugolino, and certain regulations that are given there astonish us today. It has to do also, and even primarily, with the portress. It is in connection with her that two comparisons can be made with the Benedictine Rule 66. The first has a bearing on the qualities required of the person charged with answering the door and welcoming visitors. Like the Rule of Hugolino, the Rule of St. Clare wished her to be matura moribus et discreta, sitque convenientis aetatis (mature in her manner of acting, discerning, and of a suitable age). St. Benedict required that the cellarer be maturus (or maturis) moribus (mature in his manner of acting). It is from the Benedictine Rule 31: 1 that the expression in the Rule of St. Clare comes from, with the implicit reminder of what St. Benedict expected from the porter: cuius maturitas eum non sinat vacari (whose maturity keeps him from roaming about); and sitque convenientis aetatis (Let her be of a suitable age), which immediately follows and in the Benedictine Rule 61: 1 corresponds more or less to senex sapiens (a sensible old man). Likewise, in the first verse, the words Ibidem ... in die resideat (During the day let her remain in an open cell without a door) brings to mind the recommendation in the Benedictine Rule 66: 2: Qui portarius cellam debebit habere iuxta portam (This porter will need a cell near the door).

Clare was largely dependent on St. Francis, but she also drew on the *Rule of Hugolino* and that of St. Benedict. In doing so she knew how to use her sources discriminately, choosing in each case that which best served her purpose; thus she practiced a wise eclecticism. If she modi-

fied here or there arrangements made by her predecessors, it was because her experience and spiritual sense, and the culture of the time inclined her that way. Also she saw that which she was proposing to her sisters was the surest way to serving God with fervor and interior liberty.

Moreover, Clare also knew how to be original. She consented to being called abbess in obedience to Francis, 16 but she considered this office as an evangelical service. 17 When in her Rule she dealt with the abbatial function, she characterized it above all as a responsibility destined to unite in the same person the infinite mercy of God and the humble devotion of the Good Shepherd: "Let her console those who are afflicted. Let her also be the last refuge for those who are troubled" (RCl IV 11-12). Thus she wrote, inspired by Thomas of Celano. 18 She added later: "The abbess should be the servant of all the sisters" (RCl X 5) a formula that comes from the Earlier Rule X 6. In reading that moving phrase in Clare's Rule IV 11-12, one thinks of the beautiful text in the Benedictine Rule 27: 5-7 about the solicitude that the abbot ought to have for a culpable brother. And one recalls the admirable statement of P.I. Hausherr, which could serve as a commentary: "The providential role of the monks (the father-abbots in any case) is to represent the Good Shepherd in the world and in the church not only by the universality of his love but also by his absolute devotion."19

The way in which Clare envisaged the abbatial function agrees but partially with the teaching given by Benedict in chapters 2 and 64 of his Rule. Clare is certainly aware of that, and she is happy to give fullest value to "the way of holy simplicity, humility and poverty," which attracted her the way it did Francis. ²⁰ Also, quite different from Benedict's is her way of envisaging the role of the conventual chapter in line with the communal context of her generation, one entirely different from that which Benedict knew. It was that the whole community ought to intervene not only to elect or depose the abbess and to contract debts, but also to admit novices, elect officers and discreets, or to change them. St. Benedict reserved the final decision to the abbot, once the views of his monks was considered. St. Clare judged it preferable to let the community decide. On the other hand, as far as the discreets are concerned the Rule of St. Clare is entirely similar to that of Benedict

¹⁶See *Ecrits*, p. 44.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 45.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 135, n. 23.

¹⁹"La théologie du monachisme chez saint Jean Climaque," in *Théologie de la vie monastique*, Etudes sur la tradition patristique (Coll. Théologie, 49: Paris, 1961), p. 403.

²⁰ TestCl 56

3: 12, since this council of eight members had only a consultative function (*RCl* IV 23; V 7; VIII 11; IX 18). Even on these points then where Thadée Matura speaks of 'democratization', it seems that Clare's *Rule* is not so different from the *Benedictine Rule*, in spite of the seven centuries of institutional development which separates them.²¹

2. The Way in which the Rule of St. Clare used the Benedictine Rule

The survey completed in the preceding pages shows that the borrowings made by St. Clare from the Benedictine Rule were of two kinds: there were the arrangements foreseen by Benedict which Clare adapted and felt free to modify slightly; and there was also the terminology of the Rule that Clare used freely, perhaps without recalling where it came from. This is a typical case of memorization of a text frequently read or heard, and so fully assimilated that afterwards it comes to mind as the author writes when he wishes to express his own thought; it is the phenomenon of 'reminiscence'. In fact, the Rule of St. Benedict had become so familiar to St. Clare that she used the same words, and quite naturally she cast her thought in formulas and expressions that came to her from the Benedictine Rule.

Moreover, she did it so freely that she did not always take into account the context of its source. She adroitly combined in one phrase elements from various passages in the Benedictine Rule (thus in 4: 8 and 4: 9). It also happened that she reproduced the thought of Benedict, preserving very little of his text (thus in 4: 22). She did not feel herself more bound by her source when she was inspired only by the Rule of St. Francis. We saw this in connection with Rule of St. Clare II 24, where moneo, deprecor et exhortor sorores meas ut vestimentis semper vilibus induant (I admonish, beg, and exhort my sisters to always wear inexpensive garments) corresponds to the Later Rule II 17: Quos (fratres) moneo et exhortor ne despiciant neque iudicent alios homines (I admonish and exhort my brothers not to look down upon or judge others). Other examples of the same liberty are in the Rule of St. Clare II 12, where it is applied to a simple departure from the enclosure by a novice: Deinceps extra monasterium ... eidem exire non liceat (Thereafter, she may not go outside the monastery). This is something of what Francis said (RegNB II 10) about leaving religious life: Non licebit ei ad aliam religionem accedere neque extra obedientiam evagari (He may not go to any other order or wander outside of obedience); et nullo modo licebit eis de ista religione exire (No one is permitted to leave this order

²¹ Ecrits, p. 46.

²² Dom J. Leclercq, Initiation aux auteurs monastiques du Moyen age, L'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu (Paris, 1963), p. 73.

in any way — RegB II 12); or also in the Rule of St. Clare VIII 15, where Francis's recommendation of manifesting one's needs (RegB VI 8) was used by Clare only in connection with the sick. It is necessary to note, however, that whenever she quoted Francis, she reproduced the content of his text exactly, with some very rare exceptions.²³

3. The Extent and Significance of the Borrowings Made from the Benedictine Rule

The Benedictine Rule had been so widely used by Clare in her form of life that not one of the twelve chapters in her Rule is exempt from a connection to it in vocabulary and thought-content. Only in chapters 5 (silence and enclosure) and 6 (poverty) is agreement very rare. Nevertheless, let us note that the prologue and the first chapters (except 2 and 3) of the Benedictine Rule, which discourse on the spiritual doctrine of Benedict, are almost absent from our survey. The Rule of St. Clare freely makes reference to a group of chapters (23 to 28, and 45) in the Benedictine Rule, where the penal code is to be found; to chapters 31 to 33, and 54 to 55, concerning the possessions of the monastery and receiving gifts and garments; also to chapters 41 to 42, which recommend silence; to chapter 48 "about each day's manual labor." But chapter 58, devoted to the admission of novices, and chapters 64 and 65, dealing with the abbot and the prior, are used most frequently.

Aside from her spiritual teaching, which she found preferably in the writings of her father St. Francis, Clare drew on the *Benedictine Rule* for directives for practical living appropriate to a community that observes a strict enclosure and needs such structures as a chapter and a council of discreets, but which must also look to a proper separation from the world (whence the borrowings from the *Benedictine Rule*: "the porter of the monastery" in chapter 66, and "mutual harmony" in chapters 63, 65, 68, and 71).²⁴

Far from denying the monastic heritage, she united it in a harmonious way with Franciscan spirituality, and she had no consciousness of thereby betraying her fidelity to the doctrine and example left her by her father St. Francis. Not only did she not harden herself against the *Rule* that had been imposed on her for thirty years, and to which she

²³ RegNB II 1: accipere hanc vitam; RCl II 1: vitam istam accipere; RegB II 2: examinent eos; RCl: II 3: examinet eam vel examinari faciat; RegB II 8: Deum timentes; RCl II 10: discretos et Deum timentes; RegB III 3: prima ... istarum: RCl III 4: prima vero ... istarum horarum; RegB VII 2: cum misericordia iniungant illis poenitentiam; RCl IX 17: sit in prudentia abbatissae misericorditer poenitentiam sibi iniungere; RegB IX 3: scandalum; RCl IX 14: murmuratio vel turbatio; RegB XII 4: observemus; RCl XII 13: in perpetuum observemus.

 $^{^{24}}$ It suffices to compare RegNB or RegB II 1 with RCl II 2 to establish how Clare was innovative on this point.

submitted herself along with her sisters in obedience to the Holy See, but she was thankful to St. Benedict for all that he had given her for living at San Damiano. Undoubtedly and almost unconsciously, here and there she used formulas from the *Benedictine Rule*, which had become entirely familiar to her.

We believe that this fusion of the two distinct traditions benefited the Franciscan family. Moreover, the extension of the *Benedictine Rule*, as found in the *Rule of Clare*, could be rich in spiritual fruits for the disciples of Benedict as well.