

## Monastic Economies in Late Antique Egypt and Palestine

This book situates discussions of Christian monasticism in Egypt and Palestine within the socio-economic world of the long Late Antiquity, from the golden age of monasticism into and well beyond the Arab conquest (fifth to tenth centuries). Its thirteen chapters present new research into the rich corpus of textual sources and archaeological remains and move beyond traditional studies that have treated monastic communities as religious entities in physical seclusion from society. The volume brings together scholars working across traditional boundaries of subject and geography and explores a diverse range of topics from the production of food and wine to networks of scribes, patronage, and monastic visitation. As such, it paints a vivid picture of busy monastic lives dependent on and led in tandem with the non-monastic world.

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# Monastic Economies in Late Antique Egypt and Palestine

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## Preface

This volume is the result of a conference organised by the editors and held on 16 and 17 March 2016 in Ertegun House, Oxford. Eighteen papers were presented at the conference, most of which have been included in the present volume. We are grateful to Alain Delattre, Arietta Papaconstantinou, Gesa Schenke, Jacob Ashkenazi and Mordechai Aviam, Karel Innemée, and Orit Shamir for their contributions to the meeting. An additional chapter was included in the volume after the conference, and we are grateful to Basema Hamarneh for adding her perspective on monastic economies in Jordan to the book.

The conference was made possible due to the generous support offered by Danmarks Frie Forskningsfond (via Troels Myrup Kristensen's project on the *Emergence of Sacred Travel: Experience, Economy, and Connectivity in Ancient Mediterranean Pilgrimage*) and a Danmarks Frie Forskningsfond–Mobilex grant (as part of Jennifer Cromwell's project *Monasteries as Institutional Powers in Late Byzantine and Early Islamic Egypt: Evidence from Neglected Coptic Sources*). We would also like to thank Bryan Ward-Perkins and Ertegun House for hosting our conference in Oxford. Finally, we are grateful to Michael Sharp for his support throughout the publication process and to Cambridge University Press's two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments and suggestions.

Some practical notes on the volume. We have made an editorial decision not to use diacritical marks in the transliteration of Arabic. This decision was made from the conviction that those familiar with Arabic will not need them as well as a pragmatic response to the different systems employed within individual chapters. The exception to this practice is in titles and direct quotations from other scholarly works. We have aimed at standardising transliterations throughout chapters, but we have maintained regional differences, which would otherwise confuse the reading of place names (e.g., *gebel* for mountain in the Egyptian dialect, commonly transliterated *jebel* in the Syrian dialect).

Several sites discussed within the book are commonly referred to by more than one name. This is particularly relevant for sites with long histories that span multiple periods and languages. We are using the

names by which the sites are best known. In some cases, this is the English version of the modern name, in other cases it is the Arabic transliteration.

As a result of the diverse nature of the contributions, we have foregone a list of abbreviation of works cited for the volume. Instead, for papyrological material, all references conform with the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets* (founded by John F. Oates and William H. Willis, and updated now at [papyri.info/docs/checklist](http://papyri.info/docs/checklist)). For literary sources, texts are referred to in full throughout, rather than by their abbreviation (for the benefit of those not familiar with the various sources in question), and references to principal editions and translations are included where relevant.