

CHILDREN AND FAMILY IN LATE ANTIQUE EGYPTIAN MONASTICISM

This is the first book-length study of children in one of the birthplaces of early Christian monasticism, Egypt. Although comprised of men and women who had renounced sex and family, the monasteries of late antiquity raised children, educated them, and expected them to carry on their monastic lineage and legacies into the future. Children within monasteries existed in a liminal space, simultaneously vulnerable to the whims and abuses of adults and cherished as potential future monastic prodigies. Caroline T. Schroeder examines diverse sources – letters, rules, saints’ lives, art, and documentary evidence – to probe these paradoxes. In doing so, she demonstrates how early Egyptian monasteries provided an intergenerational continuity of social, cultural, and economic capital while also contesting the traditional family’s claims to these forms of social continuity.

CAROLINE T. SCHROEDER is Professor of Classics and Letters at the University of Oklahoma. She is the author of *Monastic Bodies* (2007), coeditor of *Melania* (2016), and cofounder of the groundbreaking digital project Coptic Scriptorium.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY IN
LATE ANTIQUE EGYPTIAN
MONASTICISM

CAROLINE T. SCHROEDER

University of Oklahoma



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-316-61008-4 — Children and Family in Late Antique Egyptian Monasticism
 Caroline T. Schroeder
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE
 UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
 314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
 103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
 It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
 education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316610084
 DOI: 10.1017/9781316661642

© Caroline T. Schroeder 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
 no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
 permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021
 First paperback edition 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data

NAMES: Schroeder, Caroline T., 1971– author.

TITLE: Children and family in late antique Egyptian monasticism / Caroline T. Schroeder,
 University of Oklahoma.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY, USA : Cambridge University
 Press, 2020. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2020012174 (print) | LCCN 2020012175 (ebook) | ISBN 9781107156876
 (hardback) | ISBN 9781316661642 (ebook)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Christian children – Religious life – History – To 1500. |
 Children – Egypt – History – To 1500. | Families – Egypt – History – To 1500. | Church
 history – Primitive and early church, ca. 30–600.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC BR195.C46 S37 2020 (print) | LCC BR195.C46 (ebook) |
 DDC 276.2/02–dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020012174>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2020012175>

ISBN 978-1-107-15687-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-316-61008-4 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
 accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
 this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
 or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61008-4 — Children and Family in Late Antique Egyptian Monasticism
Caroline T. Schroeder
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

For David Brakke

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	x
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xii
Introduction	i
PART I FINDING CHILDREN	
1 Documenting the Undocumented: Children in the Earliest Egyptian Monasteries	19
2 The Language of Childhood	50
PART II REPRESENTATIONS	
3 Homoeroticism, Children, and the Making of Monks	69
4 Child Sacrifice: From Familial Renunciation to Jephthah's Lost Daughter	84
5 Monastic Family Values: The Healing of Children	112
PART III A SOCIAL HISTORY	
6 Making New Monks: Children's Education, Discipline, and Ascetic Formation	127
7 Breaking Rules and Telling Tales: Daily Life for Monastic Children	145

8	The Ties That Bind: Emotional and Social Bonds between Parents and Children	160
	Conclusion: Monastic Genealogies	191
	<i>Bibliography</i>	220
	<i>Index of Ancient Sources</i>	247
	<i>Index of Names and Subjects</i>	250

Figures

1	The sacrifice of Isaac, Saint Catherine's Monastery	<i>page</i> 87
2	Jephthah and his daughter, Saint Catherine's Monastery	88
3	The sacrifices of Isaac and Jephthah's daughter, Monastery of Saint Antony	89
4	The sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter, Monastery of Saint Antony	100
5	The sacrifice of Isaac, Monastery of Saint Antony	101
6	Southern apse of the triconch sanctuary of the Red Monastery basilica	204
7	Northern apse of the triconch sanctuary of the Red Monastery basilica	205
8	Northern apse of the triconch sanctuary of the Red Monastery basilica, niches	206
9	Basilica (or great church) of the White Monastery, exterior	216
10	Basilica of the Red Monastery, exterior	217

Acknowledgments

Many people and institutions have helped me bring this project to fruition. I conducted early research during a postdoctoral fellowship in the Introduction to the Humanities Program at Stanford University, during research terms funded by the Mellon Foundation. Additional support from internal grants at the University of the Pacific and a Graves Award in the Humanities allowed me to continue the early phases of research and write the chapters in Part II. A fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and a summer stipend from the National Endowment for the Humanities allowed me to write additional chapters. I am deeply grateful to the Seminar for Egyptology and Coptology at Georg-August University, Goettingen, and my host, Heike Behlmer. This book could not have been completed without the extensive resources at their library, the help of research assistant Frederic Krueger, and feedback from faculty, including Heike and Jürgen Horn. A fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies provided the release time necessary to write the final pages and revise the full manuscript.

Some chapters contain material I previously published elsewhere. Content originally published in the chapter “Children in Early Egyptian Monasticism” in *Children in Late Antique Christianity*, ed. Cornelia B. Horn and Robert R. Phenix (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 317–38, has been revised and now appears throughout the book. Chapter 3 is an edited version of “Queer Eye for the Ascetic Guy?” from the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 77 (2009): 333–47. Chapter 4 has been revised from its original appearance as “Child Sacrifice in Egyptian Monastic Culture” in the *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 20 (2012): 269–302. Chapter 5 has been edited and expanded from its original publication as “Monastic Family Values” in *Coptica* 10 (2011): 21–28. Some material in the section “Reading Early Christian Emotions” of Chapter 8 is a revised version of a section on Stoicism and affect theory in “The Perfect Monk,” published in *Copts in Context*, ed. Nellie van Doorn-Harder

Acknowledgments

xi

(Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2017), 181–93. I also thank the American Research Center in Egypt for permission to print images from the Red Monastery and the Monastery of Saint Antony in the book and on the cover, and the University of Michigan Visual Resources Collections for permission to print images from Saint Catherine’s Monastery in Sinai, Egypt.

The wisdom and generosity of colleagues and friends were boundless. I appreciate comments and advice from the many people who read drafts of various chapters: Mattias Brand, Malcolm Choat, Jennifer Cromwell, Stephen Davis, Andrew Jacobs, Tina Sessa, and most especially Janet Timbie. Many colleagues suggested sources and avenues of research along the way, and I wish to thank Susan Ashbrook Harvey, Alain Delattre, Andrew Crislip, and the late William Harmless especially. Elizabeth Bolman, William Lyster, Stephen Davis, Marcus Mueller, and the monks of the Red and White Monasteries hosted me on trips to the sites of the men’s and women’s communities in the White Monastery Federation, site visits that immeasurably affected my work; Elizabeth and William’s insights and conversations at the Red Monastery with Agnes Szymańska, Malcolm Choat, David Brakke, and Eugene Rogers also provided an experience of a lifetime. I thank Jonathan Farr and Anna Cwikla for their careful editing. Audiences at many academic lectures, workshops, and conference presentations asked questions and gave feedback that shaped the book for the better. Any remaining errors are solely my own. Elizabeth A. Clark, Elizabeth Castelli, Christopher Goff, Rebecca Krawiec, Andrew Jacobs, Tina Shepardson, C. Mike Chin, Michael Penn, Hany Takla, and Amir Zeldes encouraged me even when I feared failure. Eric E. Johnson’s unshakable faith in my work and my vision sustained me over the many years of research, writing, and revision.

I dedicate this book to David Brakke. David’s work has been for me an academic north star, guiding my research and inspiring my writing since early in my graduate training. David has since become a mentor and friend who has championed my work during challenging times, shared the hard truths when I needed them, and nourished my intellect and broadened my world. I know he has been such a figure for many. This book is for you, David.

Abbreviations

All papyri are cited using the sigla at <http://papyri.info/docs/checklist>. Many are available at <http://papyri.info/> or www.trismegistos.org/.

<i>AJR</i>	<i>Ancient Jew Review</i>
<i>AP</i>	<i>Apophthegmata Patrum</i>
<i>AP Anon.</i>	<i>Apophthegmata Patrum, Anonymous Collection</i>
<i>AP Syst.</i>	<i>Apophthegmata Patrum, Systematic Collection</i>
<i>A22</i>	<i>Acephalous Work 22 (by Shenoute)</i>
<i>BMCR</i>	<i>Bryn Mawr Classical Review</i>
<i>BSAC</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie copte</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>CCSL</i>	<i>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</i>
<i>CSCO</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i>
<i>CSEL</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JJP</i>	<i>Journal of Juristic Papyrology</i>
<i>Mus</i>	<i>Muséon: Revue d'études orientales</i>
<i>NPNF</i>	<i>A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church</i> . Edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. 28 vols. in 2 series. 1886–89.
<i>OLA</i>	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</i>
<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologia Graeca</i>
<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina</i>
<i>PO</i>	<i>Patrologia Orientalis</i>
<i>SAC</i>	<i>Studies in Antiquity and Christianity</i>
<i>SC</i>	<i>Scriptores Coptici</i>

List of Abbreviations

xiii

<i>Vit. Patr.</i>	<i>Vitae Patrum</i>
<i>V. Pach. Bo</i>	Bohairic <i>Life of Pachomius</i>
<i>V. Pach. G¹</i>	First Greek <i>Life of Pachomius</i>
<i>V. Pach. S¹⁰</i>	Tenth Sahidic <i>Life of Pachomius</i>
<i>WZKM</i>	<i>Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes</i>