

DAYR MART MARYAM

A monastery near Bilbeis. The [HISTORY](#) OF THE PATRIARCHS records the following episode, before the election of the forty-sixth patriarch, KHA'IL I (744-767). Toward the end of al- Qasim ibn 'Ubaydallah's governorship of Egypt (therefore before 743), a bedouin tribe comprising more than 30,000 horsemen was encamped in the Eastern Desert between Bilbays and al- Qulzum. Their tents were erected as far as the vicinity of the monastery of [the Virgin](#) Mary, Dayr al-Sayyidah Mart Maryam, in the neighborhood of Bilbeis.

The general of these bedouin troops and his two brothers plundered and pillaged the monastery and the church, the superior of which was Epimachus of Arwat. The author of the life of the patriarch Kha'il I tells us that Epimachus had come from the Monastery of Saint Macarius at the Wadi Habib (Wadi al- Natrun), and that he afterward became a [bishop](#) of Pelusium. This Epimachus was one of the [disciples](#) of John, the superior of SCETIS (c. 585-675). Menas, who became [bishop](#) of Memphis, was also a monk there. This monastery was, therefore, closely linked with that of Saint Macarius in the Wadi al- Natrun (Evelyn-White, 1932, pp. 277, 284).

The editor of ABU AL-MAKARIM, Samu'il (1984, p. 39, n. 1), proposes the identification of this convent with the village called Kafr al- Dayr, in the district (*markaz*) of Minya al-Qamh (Sharqiyyah), or else with the one named al- Dayr in the *markaz* of Tukh (see MONASTERIES OF THE PROVINCE QALYUBIYYAH), but both these sites are too far from Bilbeis.

[BIBLIOGRAPHY](#)

- Evelyn-White, H. G. *The Monasteries of the Wadi'n Natrun*, pt. 2;
- *The [History](#) of the Monasteries of Nitria and Scetis*. New York, 1932.
- Seybold, C. F. *Severus ibn al-Muqaffa' Alexandrinische Patriarchengeschichte*. Hamburg, 1912.



Dayr Mart Maryam | 2

RENÉ-GEORGES COQUIN

Tags: [Places](#)