

## **MONASTERIES OF THE LOWER SA'ID**

This region, which nearly corresponds to the Arcadia of the Byzantine period, was very rich in monasteries, as is shown by the papyri.

### **The Left Bank**

The ancient monastery of DAYR NAHYA is also called Dayr al-Karram. The monastery of Apa Harun may have been near Giza. It may be the monastery of Apa Harun mentioned in the Life of ABRAHAM AND GEORGE OF SCETIS (Amélineau, 1893, p. 54). Attention should also be paid to the group of monasteries of DAYR AL-AHMAR, DAYR ABU SAYFAYN (Tamwayh), and DAYR AL-SHAM'.

Between the pyramids of Giza and the pyramids of Abusir at Zawyat al-'Tryan, excavations have brought to light a small monastery the name of which is unknown (Barsanti, 1906, p. 110). To the north of Saqqara, on the remains of a temple of Nectanebo II destroyed by the Christians, Emery discovered a monastery composed of cells ranged along the length of a street, a church, and communal halls (Emery, 1969, p. 34; 1970, p. 5). To the south of Saqqara was the important DAYR APA JEREMIAH.

Near Dahshur a monastery existed and had already disappeared at the time of ABU SALIH in the thirteenth century; with the disappearance of "good people," the [church](#) was transformed into a mosque.

In the mountain adjoining the village called Bamha, monks and hermits lived about 640-650 (Menas, *Life of Isaac*, Porcher, ed., PO 11, p. 318; Amélineau, 1893, pp. 297-98; Evelyn-White, 1932, p. 283, n. 3). A little more to the south of the famous pyramid of Licht was the DAYR AL-MUHARRAQAH. Near the Nile and near the village called Bush, farms were built relating to the two monasteries of the Red Sea, DAYR ANBA ANTUNIYUS and DAYR ANBA BULA. Not far from there was the monastery called Takinash, where the road for Dayr Anba Samu'il of

Qalamun began. Near the Nile was the monastery of al-Nur, according to Abu Salih, who is the only one to mention it. Its [church](#) was dedicated to the archangel Gabriel. There was also a monastery at Aqfahs, an important Christian center.

Farther to the south was the town of Tanbida, where Abu Salih located a monastery consecrated to the martyr Tarnimah not otherwise known; the martyr's body was preserved in this monastery. The HISTORY OF THE PATRIARCHS indicates there a monastery named for Apa Epima, with his relics. Al-MAQRIZI mentions a monastery there, named for the Holy Virgin, outside the town and containing only one monk. A little more to the south, in the village of Ishnin al-Nasara, al-Maqrizi also draws attention to a monastery in the name of the Virgin Mary. Abu Salih mentions simply a church. Still farther to the south, the village of al-Jarnus remained famous because of the passage of the Holy Family.

Farther to the south, the *State of the Provinces* (fourteenth century; ed. Sacy, 1810, p. 689) points out a Dayr al-Qasanun and also a DAYR ATIYYAH. To the west of al-Bahnasa, the place-name Saba' Banat may bear witness to a monastery now disappeared. At the limits of the province, beyond al-Bahnasa, was Dayr Sanquriyyah.

## **The Right Bank**

Going back up the Nile, DAYR AL-'ADAWIYYAH is the first monastery encountered. Farther on, on the mountain, are Dayr Qusayr and Saint George of Turah, and the one that received the popular nickname DAYR AL-FAKHURI (monastery of the potter). It was attested by Abu Salih, who says it was dedicated to Saint Mercurius. The *History of the Patriarchs* also speaks in the same terms of this monastery. Farther south is DAYR SHAHRAN. Recent excavations have uncovered the remains of a monastery at Hulwan.

Farther south is evidence of a small monastery, DAYR AL- QASRIYYAH,

near Itfih; the ancient site consecrated to Saint Antony, DAYR AL-MAYMUN; and Bayad al-Nasara, where there was a monastery. Opposite [Fashn](#) is evidence for DAYR AL-HADID. Sharuna preserves some Christian remains.

## Sites Not Identified

The HISTORIA MONACHORUM IN AEGYPTO indicates that the region of Oxyrhynchus was full of monks. We should have some faint idea from the preceding enumeration, but we can complete it by the data from the Greek papyri for this region. Bataille's manual (1955) lists the editions of the relevant texts.

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