MONASTIC COMMUNITIES IN CONTEXT: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTERRELATIONS OF MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS AND LAYMEN IN MIDDLE EGYPT (6TH–8TH CENTURIES)

doctoral dissertation prepared
under the supervision of

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## CONTENTS

Abbreviations ........................................................................................................... v

List of illustrations ........................................................................................................vii

Introductory Remarks .................................................................................................. 1

Chapter 1: Monasteries and great landowners: the Apions and comes Ammonios .......... 17
  1. Monastic communities and the Oxyrhynchite estate of the Apions ......................... 18
     1.1. Introduction: the state of research—18; 1.2. Monastic institutions in the Apion
         archive: organisation, chronology, distribution—21; 1.3. Actors of the relations and their
         contexts—25 (1.3.1. People responsible for contacts between the Apionic oikos and the
         monasteries—26; 1.3.2. Contexts of the relations—32).
  2. Monasteries and comes Flavius Ammonios .............................................................. 51
     2.1. Contexts of relations—53; 2.2. Intermediaries in the relations—59.

Chapter 2: Monasteries in the world of medium landowners—the Aphrodito case .......... 75
  1. Introductory remarks ............................................................................................. 75
  2. Monasteries among the Aphroditan landowners ...................................................... 80
     2.1. Monastic property—80; 2.2. Handling the land and people: the monasteries' roles as
         depicted in the Aphrodito dossier—94.

Chapter 3: The monastery at Deir el-Naqlun and its relations with the external world
in the sixth–seventh centuries ....................................................................................... 115
  1. Introductory remarks ............................................................................................. 115
  2. The dossier of the Naqlun monastery in context: an overview of the sources ......... 117
     2.1. The site—117; 2.2. The papyri—121; 2.3. The literary sources—126.
  3. The Naqlun Fathers and the 'world outside': the inhabitants of the monastery
     and their dealings with laymen ............................................................................. 130
     3.1. 'The world engaged': correspondence from Deir el-Naqlun—132; 3.2. Monastic
         loans: the dossier from Hermitage 89—141; 3.3. 'Fathers of the holy Neklonion': a point
         of reference in local village networks?—146.

Chapter 4: The community of Apa Apollo in the Hermopolite nome (Bawit)
and its relations with 'the world' .................................................................................. 153
  1. Sources and state of research ................................................................................. 153
     1.1. Location of the monastery and excavations on the site—153; 1.2. The documentary
         dossier of the monastery of Apa Apollo—155.
  2. The setting: community structures and property organisation ................................ 164
  3. The people: defining identities and functions ....................................................... 174
4. The monastery, officials, and community representatives .............................178
   4.1. Monks and officials: fiscality and services—179; 4.2. The monastery and the representatives of local village communities—191; 4.3. Individual loan contracts: an unmediated relation between monks and laymen—201 (4.3.1. The creditors—206; 4.3.2. The debtors—207; 4.3.3. Witnesses, guarantors, and scribes—212; 4.3.4. Money, products, and measures—213).

5. Laypeople in monastic economy ...................................................................217

Chapter 5: The monastery of Apa Thomas in Wadi Sarga and its links to lay society ........235
1. Introductory remarks .........................................................................................235
2. State of research—general information ..............................................................236
3. Situation and characteristics of the site .............................................................237
4. The Wadi Sarga documentary dossier ...............................................................238
   4.1. Chronology—239; 4.2. The documents and their content—239.

5. Organisation of the community; functionaries and assets .................................242
   5.1. Functionaries and form of community—242; 5.2. The monastic estate—247.

6. The Wadi Sarga monastery and laypeople: a fragmentary image ......................250
   6.1. A starting point—250; 6.2. Requisitions, fiscality, officials of state and estate—252; 6.3. Laypeople in the everyday functioning of the monastery—257.

Chapter 6: The monastery Deir el-Bala’izah and the ‘world outside’ .................................265
1. The site .............................................................................................................265
2. Documents from the Bala’izah monastery: an overview ....................................267
3. The organisation of the monastery at Deir el-Bala’izah:
   functionaries and economic background .........................................................270
   3.1. Representatives and structure—270; 3.2. The monastery’s assets—274; 3.3. Form of the community—276.

4. Monks, monastery, and the fisc .........................................................................278
5. Monks of Bala’izah and their personal relations with ‘the world outside’ ..............284
   5.1. Monks and officials—284; 5.2. Business and family—monks of the Bala’izah monastery and their connections with laypeople—286.

Final Remarks .......................................................................................................297
1. Middle Egyptian monasteries: representation and community structures ..........297
2. Interconnections of monasteries and laypeople ...............................................307

Plates .......................................................................................................................315

Bibliography ........................................................................................................321
ABBREVIATIONS

The papyri and ostraca are quoted according to the Checklist of editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets (Web edition). Titles of periodicals are abbreviated as in Bibliographie Papyrologique; the exceptions to these rules are, I believe, self-explanatory. The following abbreviations are used throughout the present work:


Wipszycka, Moines et communautés – E. Wipszycka, Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte, IVe–VIIIe siècles [= JJurP Supplement 11], Warsaw 2009.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE 1. Monastic Egypt (drawn by Grzegorz Ochała) 316
PLATE 2. The monastery in Deir el-Naqlun—aerial view (©PCMA) 317
PLATE 3. Plan of the kom in Bawit (based on magnetic survey results; executed by Tomasz Herbich) 318
PLATE 4. R. Campbell Thompson’s sketch of the monastic site at Wadi Sarga 319
PLATE 5. Plan of the monastery of Apa Apollo in Deir el-Bala’izah 320
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

In an eighth-century letter written by a Theban anchorite Frange to his fellow monk Isaak, Frange says with reverence that the addressee has always had the authority over him in things concerning God and the world (καταπούθε καταπόκος). Godly and worldly affairs appear in this text as the two axes around which the life of a monk revolved; one organised his spiritual labour, while the other symbolised the challenges and necessities arising from everyday life. As shown in hundreds of documents from the Egyptian monastic milieu, the ‘things of the world’ were inevitably present in the life of monks and monastic communities.

The scholarship of Late Antique Egyptian monasticism is teeming with discussions of spirituality, the monks’ faith, prayer, and discipline. Small wonder, for the sway and the influence of the Egyptian monastic movement, even in the modern world, is impressive enough to guarantee it a lasting presence in the intellectual discourse. Much less, on the other hand, has been said about the monks’ relations with the ‘world’. This is because the rich and picturesque dossier of literary texts which fuels most of the discussions of Egyptian monasticism does not focus on this kind of relations. Most texts were written with the intention to edify new generations of monks and preserve the tradition of the ‘Fathers’. Relations with laypeople do not appear there for their own sake, as an independent subject of interest. Monastic ideal expounded in the literature was shaped in relation chiefly to God, not to men, hence the marginal role of the interactions with ‘the world’ in the literary discourse. But even though they were usually depicted as undesirable and potentially dangerous in monastic writings, they became inevitable as the monastic movement was growing and amassing social and material capital. A very careful reading of the corpus of monastic literature reveals in fact a ‘world engaged’—to use the expression of James E. Goehring—entangled in economic, social, and even political relations. In this approach monks—especially the large congregations of Pachomian and Shenoutean affiliation—were seen as a part of society, characterised on one hand by some undeniable idiosyncrasies, but not entirely cut off from ‘the world’ and its challenges. The discussion, however, still revolved mostly around literary topoi and constructed identities. A true breakthrough in the approach towards Egyptian monasticism as a

1 O. Frange 14, ll. 11–12.
part of social and economic landscape of the province was possible only thanks to investigation of documentary papyri.

The contribution of thousands of documentary texts preserved in the sands of Egypt to our understanding of ancient history in almost all possible aspects cannot be overestimated. The papyri shed light also on Late Antique Egyptian monasticism and its intricate workings 'on the ground'. Even though such themes as faith, prayer, and spiritual guidance do appear in the documents produced in the monastic milieu, it is first and foremost the ‘things of the world’ that we see in dozens of contracts, letters, accounts and waybills. This is ‘the world engaged’ in as much detail as we can ever see it: sometimes taking concrete shape, with names, toponyms, and figures describing ancient realities; sometimes exasperatingly elusive, reconstructed from hints and scraps. The papyri focus on procedures and actions, and the manner in which they were carried through; their main focus was, on one hand, the people involved in a process, and the subjects of the process itself: an amount of goods to be moved, a plot of land to be leased, a tax instalment to be paid, a worker to be hired—to mention only few of the numerous issues the documents touch upon. Some documents, or groups of documents, allow for the creation of micro-narratives showing various aspects of the functioning of monastic communities in the society of Late Antique and Early Arab Egypt. These narratives can, in turn, be juxtaposed and compared in order to reconstruct a broader picture, even though the intrinsic discontinuity of papyrological material should always warn us against easy generalisation.

The aim of the present work is to investigate monasteries as ‘the world engaged’ depicted in the papyri. I decided to adopt an exclusively documentary approach to the problem, for already upon the first reading of the papyri recording the dealings of monastic communities with laypeople, I saw the extreme difficulty with which papyrological material could be juxtaposed with the literary records. The subject and purpose of the two categories of sources are inherently different. The literary discourse is focused on spiritual legacy: preserving for the next generations the way of life, prayer, and work of ascetic champions or charismatic community leaders. The documents, on the other hand, were intended to organise the ‘here-and-now’ of various, often otherwise unknown, communities. Even when they did acquire a hint of symbolic value, their purpose remained first and foremost utilitarian in the most down-to-earth meaning of the word. They belong to that sphere of everyday life that hardly ever made it to the literary discourse: the monasteries’ activities in networks based on landowning and land exploitation, and their social entanglement with benevolent or vicious officials, neighbours, and business partners. Combining the documentary record with the testimony of the literary sources would result in a somewhat artificial conglomerate of discontinued narratives.
I had the impression that in spite of the immense progress in Late Antique studies, including research on monasticism and Late Antique Egypt fuelled by recent developments in papyrology and the publications of new (especially Coptic) texts, the practical aspect of the monasteries’ functioning in the society has not been explored well enough. Remarks concerning the monasteries’ contacts with laypeople—especially aristocratic landowners and fiscal administration of Byzantine and Arab Egypt—did appear on the margin of the discussions concerning the said aristocrats and administration, but they were rarely their main focus. Papyrological material constituted a key part of the source-base used by Ewa Wipszycka in her two ground-breaking studies: the book of 2009, *Moines et communautés monastiques en Égypte (IVe–VIIIe siècle)*, and the 2011 article in *The Journal of Juristic Papyrology*, ‘Resources and economic activities of the Egyptian monastic communities (4th–8th century)’. The question of contacts with laypeople surfaced inevitably in both works, but again did not constitute the heart of the research. As the importance of the relations with ‘the world outside’ became clear to me while I was reading the documents, I felt the need to fill this gap.

After narrowing down the source base I wanted to use (on my sources and their selection, see below, pp. 4–11), I had to define the actors of the relations I was to investigate. The ‘monastic’ side was obvious; as for laypeople, I decided to treat them as an inclusive category, encompassing a wide variety of non-monastic individuals and institutions encountered in our sources. People representing ‘the world outside’ in the documents can be roughly divided into three categories: estate owners and representatives; state officials; and members of rural (rarely urban) communities among which the monasteries operated. Out of these groups, the third is the most comprehensive, including people of various social standing, functions, and gender. In my work, I concentrated on the practical affairs of everyday life: managerial issues, fiscality, and exchange of goods and services.

The pivotal theme of the present argument is undeniably property ownership and management. The attitudes toward property ownership expounded in literary sources of monastic provenance varied from its complete rejection in early texts to reluctant acceptance in the works composed after the first, ‘heroic’ generation of monasticism.4 The major breakthrough in our

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4 In the literary sources, the prescriptions concerning property differed in anchoritic lauras and coenobitic monasteries. An ideal hero of the early monastic literature shunned property ownership and money and embraced the model of self-imposed poverty which led to unconditional reliance on God as the only source of means of survival. The texts, all the same, mention anchorites earning their living by selling the work of their hands (mainly ropes and baskets). A novice entering a Pachomian or Shenoutean monastery was obliged to renounce property, as reliance on individual assets was excluded. A monk could pass his property to the community, but was by no means obliged to do so. The communities, on the other hand, amassed wealth mainly thanks to pious donations. In the Pachomian corpus we find the famous fragment where Theodore, Pachomius’s disciple, deplores the material growth of the community which, in his opinion, coincides with spiritual decrepitude of the *koinonia* after the death of Pachomius (see *Vita Prima* 146). Some of the texts attempt to integrate the concept of property ownership into the monastic discourse (see R. S. Bagnall, ‘Monks and property: rhetoric, law and patronage in the *Aphorismata Patrum* and the papyri’, *GRBS* 42 [2001], pp. 7–24); the property in question are, again, assets of the entire community. In a world where accumulation of assets in the hands of monastic communities had become a
perception of the everyday workings of Egyptian monasticism which took place thanks to papyrological documentation consisted, among others, in showing that owning property was common in the Egyptian monastic movement, both for communities and individual monks. Between the literary models: the anchorite, allowed to retain property for self-sustenance on condition of not getting attached to it, and the coenobitic monk of Pachomian affiliation, owning no property of his own and thus entirely dependent on the community, a variety of solutions existed, with property-owning monks living in communities which, in turn, had communal assets at their disposal. Property ownership was central to both monks and monasteries and was among the most document-generating spheres of life. Owning property—especially land—meant paying taxes and doing a considerable amount of managerial and maintenance work; fiscality and management tended to bring about a lot of paperwork on one hand, an required contact with ‘the world outside’ (fiscal officers, workers, or tenants) on the other. Agricultural landscape of Egypt in our period consisted mainly of plots of modest size scattered around the chora; owning land meant having neighbours with whom one could clash or collaborate, but could not ignore them. Ownership of land (and, more rarely, buildings and workshops) is observed in our documents mainly for monasteries; individual monks appear rarely as landowners, but a part of their lives as reflected in the documents also revolved around property and business. Individual monks in our documentation were mostly creditors in loan contracts through which they established links with villagers of the Egyptian hinterland. Thus, on one hand, we have property-owning monasteries; on the other, property-owning monks—both categories with their networks of contacts. Any analysis of the relations of monastic communities with laypeople has to take these two ‘layers’ into account without confusing them. The independence of the Egyptian monks (also those living in well-structured communities), at least in terms of business activity and communication with ‘the world’, seems to have been an important feature of the monastic milieu as reflected in the documents.

Besides property issues and managerial matters, we glimpse community members—especially high-ranking individuals—engaging in social affairs and fulfilling obligations of symbolic nature. Monks could constitute links between villagers and officials, intervene in disputes in lay communities, take care of proper discharge of the Christian duty of charity on behalf of lay donors, fact, property ownership was integrated into monastic discourse thanks to the concept of ‘holy economy’: the readiness of the monasteries (and, for that matter, also the institutional Church) to give away their riches to support the poor and needy justified the acceptance of gifts bestowed by benefactors, and the care for the material well-being of the community. Property acquired with the intention of using it for good purpose was considered a ‘blessing’ and its accumulation did not constitute a breach of the rule of frugality. See, among others, D. Caner, ‘Towards a miraculous economy: Christian gifts and material “blessings” in Late Antiquity’, JECs 14 (2006), pp. 329–377; A. López, Shenoute of Atripe and the Uses of Poverty: Rural Patronage, Religious Conflict and Monasticism in Late Antique Egypt, Berkeley 2013.
or even show interest in local politics. This aspect of the monks’ functioning in ‘the world’ is another key theme in the present work.

There is one aspect of the symbolic role of monks and monastic communities that I deliberately excluded from my argument, even though it fits in the subject of contacts of monks with ‘the world’: visits of laypeople to monasteries. This aspect, however, is underrepresented in the documentary dossiers I investigated; moreover, it would need setting against a broader background of travel and pilgrimage in Late Antique Egypt which would exceed the framework of this study. A good introduction into the problem, based on literary, archaeological, and documentary material is provided by a study published recently by Maria Mossakowska-Gaubert, to which I refer the reader wishing to acquire information on the subject.\(^5\)

The task I set myself in the present work was thus to investigate how monks and monastic communities managed their material and social capital according to documentary sources. This approach gave me the chance to see the monastic milieu interacting with a wide range of members of lay society, encompassing individuals and groups of various ranks and spheres of influence. One category of ‘outsiders’ was deliberately left out: clergymen acting on behalf of the hierarchical Church. Relations of monastic communities with the Church constitute a subject apart, one that has to be investigated for its own sake in a separate study.\(^6\) Priests and deacons, however, do appear in the present work; not only were they present in monastic communities as its members, but also played the role of representatives for village communities of laypeople; in such cases, their inclusion into the argument was necessary.

The decision to focus on documentary papyri influenced the geographical scope of this work. Out of necessity, monastic communities of Alexandria and the Alexandrian hinterland, as well as Nitria, Kellia, and Sketis, represented only in the literary record, were left out.\(^7\) I had to focus, then, on communities in the hinterland of cities, towns, and villages of the Nile valley. The chronological scope of the work was to a great extend dictated by the source-base too. Monks regularly appear


\(^6\) A study of the relations of monastic communities with the hierarchical Church is now being prepared by Ewa Wipszycka as a part of her project \textit{Monks and Monastic Communities in the Eastern Mediterranean (4th–8th century)}, realised at the University of Warsaw.

\(^7\) The Pachomian community of Metanoia near Alexandria is an exception from this rule; it is mentioned in a number of sixth-century receipts for grain transports from Aphrodito and Hermopolis. I mention these documents in passing in the chapter devoted to the Aphrodito documents (Chapter 2, p. 77, with n. 10). The Metanoia receipts were thoroughly researched by French scholars: Roger Rémondon in the 1970s, and recently Jean-Luc Fournet and Jean Gascou; at the moment, there is nothing to be added to the work already done, which gives me the freedom not to discuss the suburban Metanoia community in the present argument.
in the documentary record already in the fourth century. The epistolary dossiers of Nepheros (P. Neph.), Papnoute (P. Lond. VI 1923–1929), and Apa Ioannes, and a group of texts connected with Melitian monks published in P. Lond. VI dated to this period, constitute the earliest documentation of the relations of monks with laypeople based on patronage, spiritual support, and business activities. These texts, valuable though they are, lack a broader documentary and archaeological context that could balance the inherent vagueness of epistolary production. The fifth century, which must have been a crucial period for the development of various social and economic phenomena that surface in the extensive sixth-century papyrological record, is notoriously poor in documentation. When monks and monasteries resurface in the documents in the sixth century, they are already firmly established in the networks of the Byzantine province, and it was this engagement with ‘the world outside’ that I wanted most to explore. Including the somewhat detached fourth-century epistolary material would mean leaving a gap that I knew was impossible to fill, and I deemed it better to sacrifice completeness for the sake of cohesion. In spite of changes that took place in the organisation of the province of Egypt between the early sixth century and the Arab conquest in 642 and its aftermath, the period witnessed stability as far as social structures and economy—especially in rural environment—were concerned. As the subject of the present study is monasteries in the social and economic structures of the Egyptian chora, it is possible to treat documentary material from the sixth–eighth centuries as a base for coherent reasoning.

8 See E. A. Judge, ‘The earliest use of the word “monk” (μονάχος), J-AC 20 (1977), pp. 72–89. The article comments on P. Col. Youtie 77 (6 VI 324), a petition to a praepositus pagi describing an assault on a man who had been helped out of his predicament by a deacon and a monk.


10 For a brief description of these dossiers, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 80–81 (the Melitian dossier); 81–82 (Nepheros and Papnoute); 83–85 (Apa Ioannes). Only one document among them does not represent the epistolary genre: the agreement P. Lond. VI 1913 (334) concerning the appointment of a temporary superior for the Melitian community of Hathor in the Kynopolite nome. See H. Hauben, ‘Aurélios Pageus, alias Paieous, et le monastère mélinien d’Hathor’, Ancien Society 32 (2002), pp. 337–352.

11 Byzantine Egypt of the sixth–century documents, with churches and monasteries owning extensive tracts of land and aristocratic landowners looming large in the society is a somewhat ‘ready-made product’; its formative period was certainly the poorly documented fifth century. The reconstruction of the processes in which the structures known from the sixth-century documentation were developed is one of the most disputed issues in scholarship of Late Antiquity. The showcase example is the development of great estates and the relation of their aristocratic owners to the state, commented by Jean Gascou in his article ‘Les grands domaines, la cité et l’Etat en Egypte byzantine. Recherches d’histoire agraire, fiscale et administrative’, in idem, Fiscalité et société en Egypte byzantine, Paris 2008, pp. 125–213, whose hypotheses sustain a continued discussion.

Focusing on dossiers of texts connected with particular communities or persons operating within a defined territorial range, and excluding single documents and texts of unknown provenance, seemed to me a reasonable and methodologically justified solution. Groups of documents gathered by an institution or a person during a certain period of time have the advantage of being firmly set in a well-determined context. The documents within a dossier supplement and explain each other thanks to prosopographical and contextual links, putting into relief various aspects of the reality in which they were created. It was this plurality of perspectives that became the key element of the selection of material for this work. Finally, I decided to include six large collections of documentary evidence: the Oxyrhynchite dossier of the Apions (sixth century), the Aphroditian dossier known as ‘the Dioskoros’s archive’ (sixth century), a group of documentary texts from the Fayumic monastery of Deir el-Naqlun (fifth–seventh century), and three largely Coptic monastic dossiers connected with the monasteries of Apa Apollo in Bawit (sixth–eighth century), Apa Thomas in Wadi Sarga (seventh–eighth century), and Apa Apollo in Deir el-Bala’izah (seventh–eighth century). In geographical terms, my work encompasses Middle Egypt, with the Fayumic extension in the form of Deir el-Naqlun. However, the proximity of the site (located on the south-eastern edge of the Fayum) to the Nile valley, and the relations it maintained with the Herakleopolite region made it a part of the Middle Egyptian network (see below, Chapter 3).

Western Thebes, and the region of the village-town Jeme established in the ruins of the mortuary temple of Ramses III in Medinet Habu in particular, have yielded several monastic dossiers which are, however, not included in the present argument. They are dated to the sixth–eighth centuries and their language is predominantly Coptic. The documentation from the village of Jeme and its surroundings shows a rather inward-looking, relatively isolated rural community with only few attestations of relations with other nomes, in sharp contrast to Middle Egyptian villages (and, for that matter, Middle Egyptian monasteries), where supra-regional relations are well documented. Jeme was surrounded by various types of monastic settlements for which it constituted a focal point; the best documented of them were the monastery of Apa Phoibammon in the temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari, the monastery of Epiphanius located in the tomb of

13 In terms of administrative divisions, the study encompasses the following nomes: Arsinoite, Herakleopolite, Oxyrhynchite, Antaiopolite, Antinopolite, Hermopolite, Panopolite, Lykopolite.
14 For a description of the Theban dossiers, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 91–99. See also W. Godlewski, Le monastère de St. Phoibammon, Warsaw 1986; E. Garel, Les testaments des supérieurs du monastère de Phoibammon à Thèbes (VIIe siècle): édition, traduction, commentaire, PhD thesis under the direction of Jean-Luc Fournet, defended in June 2015.
15 This feature of Jeme documentation is underscored by Wickham, Framing the Early Middle Ages (cit. n. 12), pp. 421–422 (description of Jeme at pp. 419–428).
a Pharaonic official Daga, and the hermitage of Frange in Theban Tomb 29. All three settlements were included by Richard Leigh Burchfield in his discussion of social networks of the Theban region presented in his doctoral dissertation defended in January 2014 at the Macquarie University in Sydney. Burchfield’s work covered also material connected with other Theban communities: the monastery of Apa Paulos and topos of Apa Psate. The author studied the relations of the inhabitants of Jeme with monastic institutions and individual monks, exploring such questions as donations of land and property, the famous donations of children to the monastery of Apa Phoibammon, religious connections between laypeople and the monks, and the circulation of goods between monasteries, hermitages, and Western Theban settlements. Since Burchfield’s and mine fields of interest overlap to a great extent, exploring the Theban dossier would mean reiterating Burchfield’s work in too many places; expanding his work, on the other hand, posed other problems, mostly of methodological nature. ‘Monastic’ documentation of Western Thebes is composed of a number of dossiers which include texts of various types: some of them repeat more or less standard documentary patterns (mostly legal documents, e.g., testaments, donations, deeds of sale), while a very large part of the documentation belongs to the fickle epistolary category. As already mentioned, the Western Theban area was a somewhat idiosyncratic microcosm, with numerous individual and family connections involving laypeople and monks. Monastic life of Jeme and its neighbourhood presented a variety of organisational patterns, including communities of monks on one hand, and individual anchorites adapting ancient tombs as dwellings for themselves and their disciples on the other. Disregarding one of these aspects to the benefit of the other would significantly distort the image of the Theban network of relations; treating them both would result in difficulties insurmountable within the framework of the present dissertation. While social and business life of the communities can be traced based on legal documents produced by them and for them, the reconstruction of the lives of the anchorites relies almost entirely on epistolary

For the sites, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 178–182 (St Phoibammon); 184–187 (laura of Epiphanius). For Frange and his dossier, see A. Boud’hors & Ch. Heurtel, introduction to O. Frange, vol. I, pp. 9–32. See also L. Bavay, ‘Dit au potier qu’il me fasse un kôtôn’. Archéologie et céramique de l’Antiquité tardive à nos jours dans la TT 29 à Cheikh Abd el-Gourna (PhD thesis under the direction of E. Warmenbol, Université libre de Bruxelles, 2008).

Richard Burchfield presented the results of his research of the relations of Theban monasteries in Jeme in his communication ‘Theban monasteries in their social and economic environment’ presented on 3 August 2013 at the 27th International Congress of Papyrology held at the University of Warsaw. See R. L. Burchfield, Networks of the Theban Desert: Social, Economic, and Religious Interactions in Late Byzantine and Early Islamic Thebes, Macquarie University, Sydney, January 2014. The thesis is accessible at https://www.researchonline.mq.edu.au/vital/access/services/Download/mq:52779/SOURCE1. Burchfield’s dissertation was essentially based on a social network investigation making use of statistical methods; the most important part of his argument, however, is well rooted in careful reading of the documents.

material; both groups of texts require a different approach if they are to receive an in-depth treatment. In the present text, I adopted the method of case studies, one for each group of documents I investigated (see below). The Theban material would require either splitting it into several case studies (some of which would be, out of necessity, based exclusively on epistolary material, reducing the argument to speculations), or jamming hundreds of very different documents, pertaining, moreover, to monastic settlements representing a variety of types, into one study which would require prosopographical investigation far beyond the limits of the present work. Therefore, for the sake of a better balance and cohesion of the argument, I decided to focus on Middle Egyptian communities with their supra-regional landowning networks and links to aristocratic landowners.

The present work, as already said, is made up of six case studies. For reasons stated above, I preferred to focus on distinct groups of texts stemming from particular institutions and circles of individuals. The dossiers I studied are characterised by their diversity, not only in terms of chronology, but also the contexts of their creation and documentary types represented therein. The method I adopted, however, gave me a good opportunity to examine these dossiers very carefully and spot points of convergence and common phenomena. When investigated side by side, the various groups of texts turned out to be complementary to a greater extent than I had expected.

The diversity of the material I used makes it necessary to briefly present the dossiers and the key points that organised my work on them. Before I proceed to the discussion of my sources, however, I shall point out a general organising rule behind all the studies. The task I set myself had to be accomplished on two levels: descriptive and interpretative. In each of the studies, I had first to recognise the context of interactions between monks and laypeople and the actors involved in them. Then, it was necessary to sketch the circumstances behind the creation of the documents; here, the descriptive work was so closely followed by reconstruction and interpretation that the two aspects tended to become almost indistinguishable. By describing the documents and filling

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19 Letters, which were written often by very close acquaintances about matters known to both sides, use frequently familiar language in which the position and affiliation of the writer and the addressee are not always stated in a manner legible to us. People are often mentioned only by their names; their role in the affairs mentioned in the letters is described only cursory; finally, the frequent use of family terms to express bonds of spiritual and emotional rather than biological nature adds to the general confusion, to the point that distinguishing laypeople is always difficult and frequently only hypothetical. A large number of the letters belonged to the correspondence exchanged between anchorites from neighbouring hermitages, and do not constitute testimonies of relations with laypeople at all.

20 I took the risk of juxtaposing epistolary material and documents of other types (legal deeds and accounts) in the studies devoted to Deir el-Naqlun, Bawit, and Deir el-Bala’izah. In these cases, however, the texts investigated as a part of one study pertained to one monastic community of a more or less defined structure and character, which allowed me to set the epistolary material in context and thus elucidate some of the murky details. With the Theban material such operation would be possible only to a limited extent.
the gaps with elements of my own reconstruction, I created the frame for further interpretative work. This frame is full of micro-narratives based on documents or groups of documents on one hand, and register-like enumerations of terms, titles, and phenomena on the other. While the latter serve mostly to sketch the wide background of the documentary production, some of the former turn sometimes into ‘case studies within case studies’ illustrating particular phenomena (e.g., mone

My intention in this work was to contextualise, as much as possible, the interactions between the monasteries and laypeople. This meant reconstructing various elements of monastic realities: organisational structures of the communities, their economic base and the ways in which it was created and managed, or the manner in which the monasteries were represented in their dealings with ‘the world’ on various levels of formality, to list only the most pronounced themes. Depending on the available source-base, this was possible to a different extent for each of the cases; while doing this kind of work in case studies, one must also remember about the limited degree of applicability of the conclusions to other groups of texts. In any case, I believe that I managed to grasp some common features and explain some phenomena thanks to parallels from other dossiers.

Let us now have a closer look at the dossiers I used in the present work. Each chapter is devoted to one of the dossiers, and their sequence is roughly chronological. Chapter 1 investigates the relations of monks and the great estate as recorded in the Oxyrhynchite dossier of the Apion family and the Aphroditan sub-dossier of comes Ammonios. Chapter 2 treats the remaining part of the Aphroditan dossier, or the so-called ‘Dioskoros’s archive’, which preserved a number of documents—mostly legal deeds and official correspondence—pertaining to a number of monasteries in Aphrodito and outside it. Chapter 3 is a study of the Fayumic monastery at Deir el-Naqlun, excavated by the Polish archaeological mission since 1986. The relations of the large monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit with ‘the world’ are the subject of Chapter 4; Chapters 5 and 6 explore the dossiers of Apa Thomas (Wadi Sarga) and Apa Apollo (Deir el-Bala’izah) respectively. While the first three chapters are set in the context of pre-Conquest Egypt, the vast majority of the documents mentioned in Chapters 4–6 are dated already to the Arab period.

In my description of the sources and the challenges they pose, I shall disrupt the sequence I presented above, the better to underscore the differences between the dossiers. In spite of their internal dissimilarities, the dossiers of Deir el-Naqlun, Bawit, Wadi Sarga, and Deir el-Bala’izah share a common feature: they are all internal monastic dossiers, assembled within the institutions and made up of documents addressed to, or pertaining to the affairs of the monks of the
communities in question. Many of the documents were produced by monks and conformed to bureaucratic idiosyncrasies of the monastic milieus that created them. The majority of people mentioned in these texts are monks—monastic functionaries and ordinary brothers—and the main point of reference is the community and its structures. This is visible in particular in the dossier of Bawit, where the complex organisation of the monastery can be seen in many documents. The least ‘community-oriented’ of the monastic dossiers is the one of Deir el-Naqlun, made up mainly of letters and private legal deeds. However, also here the monastic community is present as a point of reference, both for the monks themselves and the people from ‘the world’.

This is not the place to describe the content of the dossiers; relevant descriptions can be found in the beginning of each chapter. It is, however, necessary to underscore that the collections of texts from Bawit and Wadi Sarga, and a large part of the Bala’izah dossier were products of internal monastery administration (no such documents are extant from Naqlun). Administrative documents include accounts, lists, receipts, waybills, and epistolary orders addressed from superiors to subordinates. However diverse these documentary types are, they share a quality which makes their study particularly challenging. The people who created these documents—mainly monastic administrators—were writing to and for fellow monks who knew the affairs to which the documents pertained and were personally acquainted with the actors of the described situations. This is the reason behind the cursory character of the documentation and the limited use of identifiers that could instruct us who the people mentioned in the documents were. Fishing laypeople out of a documentary record this vague and sketchy (from our point of view) is one of the inevitable challenges of working with this material.

Out of the four monastic dossiers, the Bawit documentation is definitely the richest, including internal administrative texts of various types (some of them, moreover, unique to this monastery, like the documents connected with collection of land rents, or epistolary orders of superiors), fiscal texts, external correspondence, letters exchanged between monks but pertaining also to the affairs of ‘the world outside’, hundreds of waybills, and legal deeds concluded in the name of both the community and individual monks. With a source-base this comprehensive, one is tempted to treat the monastery of Apa Apollo as a ‘model case’ and use its documentation to fill the gaps in other, less well-preserved dossiers. The documents from other monasteries betray similarities to the Bawit material, but while finding and pointing out analogies is reasonable and justified, an automatic projection of patterns and solutions from one reality onto another is loaded with risk.

The dossiers of Wadi Sarga and Bala’izah may at the first sight seem incompatible with the Bawit collection and with each other: while the first one is made up mostly of epistolary orders and
waybills (with only a slight admixture of legal deeds and fiscal documents), the second one presents a variety of documents: administrative texts, tax receipts, letters, and legal deeds—being thus much closer to the Bawit documentation, with the single, but striking exception of waybills, which, curiously, are completely absent from among Bala‘izah documents. If, however, we do not treat Bawit as a ‘norm’ only because its dossier is richer than the others, there is no reason to see Wadi Sarga and Deir el-Bala‘izah as ‘deviations’; all the more so since the abovementioned differences between the two dossiers can at least partially be a result of the chances of preservation and discovery (see below, Chapter 5, p. 240–241). With this in mind, we are able to see the three groups of documents as reflections of various strategies applied in the communities’ dealings with their lay partners and antagonists in the Middle-Egyptian countryside. Such an approach allows us to spot analogies more easily and prevents from overrate the meaning of differences.

As already mentioned, the Naqlun dossier seems the ‘odd one’ among the four groups of monastic documentation. It is composed of several letters and few legal deeds; the vast majority of the material pertains to individual affairs of the monks. The Naqlun material, however, gives us a better insight into an important aspect of monastic life that can be glanced also in the Bawit and Bala‘izah dossiers: the private business activity of individual monks. The dossier also happens to preserve a group of texts related to a bishop named Nikolaos, who, after Abraham of Hermonthis and Pisentios of Koptos, is the third bishop residing in a monastery who left trace in papyrological record. Nikolaos’s orientation towards ‘the world’, with its business affairs and politics, so different from the attitude observed in the case of Abraham and Pisentios is what makes him and his community worthy of study. Last but not least, the documentary material of Naqlun, supplemented with archaeological material and the literary narrative of the Life of Samuel of Kalamun presents us with a unique opportunity to observe community structures ‘in the making’. Since it appears that relations with ‘the world’ were a key element in the process, it was inevitable to include the Naqlun dossier in the present discussion.

With the sixth-century dossiers of the Oxyrhynchite family of great senatorial landowners, Flavii Apiones, and the collection of texts gathered by Dioskoros, a notary from Aphrodito, and his family members, I took both a risk and a chance. Of all the documentary archives I discussed in this work, these two are the best researched, to the point that including them here could probably seem superfluous. Almost none of the documents of the two dossiers was drawn up in a monastic milieu strictly speaking; the exceptions are so rare that they could be ignored. The Apionic documents were mostly products of the administration of the Oxyrhynchite section of the Apions’ estate; they mention relations with monasteries as only one among the numerous affairs that kept
the Apionic staff occupied. The texts within the sphere of my interest include, first and foremost, accounts listing donations to monasteries, and receipts and orders testifying to the circulation of goods between the estate and communities. There is, of course, the spectacular P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 (545)—one of the very few documents that bother to tell us an actual, and, for that matter, very complex story of several years of a rather tense relation of one monastery and the Apions—but the document is unique not only on Apionic, but also Egyptian scale. The Apionic texts mention not one, not two, but several monasteries. Because of the scarcity of information provided by the documents, I had to give up on an attempt to reconstruct their structure and organisation. However, the opportunity of seeing monasteries from an entirely lay perspective was what made the effort of retracing these well-known documents worthwhile. The Apionic documents and the sub-dossier of count Ammonios, which constitutes a part of Dioskoros’s Aphroditan papers, allow us to see how the contacts with monasteries were handled by lay employees of the estates, and what was the part the monasteries played in the functioning of great landed property. The somewhat haunting phrase of Roger Rémondon, who spoke of ‘moral and economic dependency’ of the monasteries on great estates, lost something of its finality in the process.21

The remaining part of the Aphroditan dossier was in some ways even more challenging. The dossiers of the Apions and count Ammonios had at least a determined vantage point from which the relations recorded in the documents were regarded: the perspective was that of the great estate. The Aphroditan documents: legal deeds, letters, and petitions (connected mainly with Dioskoros the notary himself, even if only through the fact of having been written by his hand), but also two large documents: the Aphrodito cadastre and fiscal register (both mentioning several monasteries and monks), combined a variety of perspectives. Some of them, like the cadastre and the register, were drawn up by officials whose task was to record names, fiscal titles, and figures without giving much attention to anything beyond the data considered absolutely necessary from the point of view of taxation. Legal deeds produced for the monasteries and their counterparties by professionals (mostly Dioskoros himself) offer a neutral perspective and, more importantly, describe the parties with as much precision as we can hope for—a fact crucial for the study of monastic representation. The dossier contains also petitions, in which the communities speak for themselves, but not with their own voice, as their pleas are mediated by professional skills of Dioskoros. The testaments give us an insight into the expectations lay donors had while bequeathing their property to monastic communities. Finally, we have to mention the curious case of the monastery of Apa Apollo established by Dioskoros’s father. Dioskoros administered the institution, but remained a layperson and an ‘outsider’; the documents drawn up by him for the

monastery and on its behalf present thus a unique, ‘mixed’ perspective. Again, the dossier mentions a number of monasteries: from famous establishments such as the Pachomian Smine or Shenoutean monastery in the Panopolite nome, to an almost anonymous koinobion of Apa Jeremias of Antaiopolis. However, no matter how confusing this material may seem at the first sight, its actual internal cohesion made it a good starting point for my investigation. The vast majority of the documents were connected with the village of Aphroditos and its inhabitants; thanks to the relatively well-known social and economic profile of the people mentioned in the dossier as tenants or business partners of the monasteries, or the addressees of the monks’ pleas, it is possible to study material and symbolic links between the communities and laypersons in more detail than it is possible for any other collection of texts.

With such heterogeneous source-base, each of the case studies is out of necessity slightly different, in terms of both content and structure. Not all aspects of the relations I investigated are represented in every dossier (the case study devoted to the Apions and comes Ammonios being the least compatible with the rest); there are, however, several overarching themes which can be developed based on all, or almost all the cases. These themes were the ‘guidelines’ according to which I formulated my final conclusions. First, it was with particular care that I observed organisational structures and representation of the monasteries. The perspective I adopted proved particularly suitable, as it was in contacts with the ‘world outside’ that the monasteries deployed a variety of representation strategies. One of the key problems here was the influence of the requirements of contact with ‘the world outside’ on the development of various solutions that shaped the organisational structure of the monasteries. Another issue was the degree of dependence of the monasteries on laypeople; this problem used to be addressed mainly in connection with the relations between monasteries and great landed property, and was unnecessarily burdened with negative assessments of the detrimental influence of great landowners on the ‘moral stance’ of the monasteries and the Church in general (see Chapter 1, pp. 18–20). The question I wanted to ask, however, goes beyond this aspect and touches upon the involvement of laypeople (acting in various capacities) in everyday life of the monastic communities. This issue is in a way connected with the question of representation, for one of the roles assumed by laypeople in their relations with monasteries could be that of administrators of monastic property. While discussing questions of reliance and involvement, we need to address also the problem of integration of monastic communities into the rural landscape of Egypt and the ways thanks to which this integration was achieved. I believe that even this brief overview of themes and subject shows well enough that bonds between monks, monasteries, and the surrounding world were multiple and complex; it
remains only to explore them. That being the case, I feel that I owe the reader one more explanation. In the present introduction, and throughout the whole work I use (sometimes even overuse) the expressions ‘the world’, or ‘the world outside’. The fact that I always put them in inverted comas is not without meaning, pointing to their role as figures of speech; in fact, I am well aware that the ‘monastic’ and ‘non-monastic’ side of the interactions I investigate were parts of the same ‘world’; the same social and economic landscape. The role of the present study is to discover its internal dynamics.

The present work contains numerous quotations from Greek and Coptic documents. Translations of Greek texts are mine, unless indicated otherwise; translations of Coptic texts are given after the quoted editions (except for address forms and short expressions from documents originally translated into languages other than English, the translations of which are mine).
The aim of the present chapter is to explore relations between monasteries and great landed property documented in the papyri. The discussion of the subject is greatly facilitated by two factors. Firstly, the source material at our disposal comes from distinct and relatively coherent dossiers, namely the Oxyrhynchite archive of Flavii Apiones, a senatorial family of absentee landowners resident in Constantinople, and the Aphroditan dossier traditionally connected with Dioskoros, a notary and poet from the sixth century. A part of the latter consists of documents pertaining to the Aphroditan section of the estate of comes Ammonios—an absentee aristocratic landowner. Secondly, over the last twenty years the question of great landed property and its place in Egypt’s economy and social networks has received a thorough and careful treatment by various scholars. Far from the earlier critical stance, dismissing the Egyptian great estate as a hallmark of decline of the state and development of feudal structures, the modernised approaches allow for a more nuanced reading of the source material.\footnote{The list of publications concerned with great estates of Byzantine Egypt is long; here, I shall limit myself only to the most important positions. J. Gascou, ‘Les grands domaines, la cité et l’État en Égypte byzantine. Recherches d’histoire agraire, fiscale et administrative’, [in] idem, Fiscalité et société en Égypte byzantine [= ACHCB Bilans de recherche 4], Paris 2008, pp. 125–213 (first published in TM 9 [1985], pp. 1–90); R. Mazza, L’archivio degli Apioni. Terra, lavoro e proprietà senatoria nell’Egitto tardoantico, Bari 2001; J. Banaji, Agrarian Change in Late Antiquity: Gold, Labour and Aristocratic Dominance, Oxford 2001; P. Sarris, Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian, Cambridge 2006; T. M. Hickey, Wine, Wealth, and the State in Late Antique Egypt: the House of Apion at Oxyrhynchus, Ann Arbor 2012; G. Ruffini, Social Networks in Byzantine Egypt, Cambridge–New York 2008, esp. Chapters 1 and 2. For a brief overview, see T. M. Hickey, ‘Aristocratic landholding and the economy of Byzantine Egypt’, [in] R. S. Bagnall (ed.), Egypt in the Byzantine World 300–700, Cambridge 2010, pp. 288–308; J. Banaji, ‘Agrarian history and the labour organisation of Byzantine large estates’, Proceedings of the British Academy 96 (1999), pp. 193–216; for information on Egypt set against the backdrop of wider Mediterranean context, see the section of the chapter on aristocracy in Ch. Wickham, Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400–800, Cambridge 2005, pp. 274–276 and 411–419. For earlier perspectives, see E. Hardy, The Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt, New York 1931; on great estates in Late Roman Empire, see A. H. M. Jones, The Later Roman Empire 284–602. A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey, Oxford 1964, vol. II, pp. 781–823.} With Apions and the Aphroditan comes Ammonios one is setting foot on a rather well-trodden territory. However, what makes my attempt justifiable is, I believe, the fact that my primary focus are the monasteries in their own right, not the estates themselves. The documents we have at our disposal provide us with an exceptional opportunity to look at monastic communities from an external point of view. Such an approach not only reveals issues that still need elucidation, but also allows for a general better understanding of how the monasteries functioned and coped with everyday issues in the Egyptian countryside.
1. Monastic communities and the Oxyrhynchite estate of the Apions

1.1. Introduction: the state of research

The family of the Apions hailed from the Oxyrhynchite nome and was based in the city of Oxyrhynchos itself. The Apions are poorly attested in the sources prior to the mid-fifth century; later on, however, they appear both in literary narratives and numerous papyri. Members of the family attained senatorial ranks and high offices in the Empire, both in the provinces and at the court, although dogmatical controversies caused a temporary rift between the Apions and Emperor Justinian. The documents of the Oxyrhynchite dossier allow us to trace the history of the family during the whole sixth and the beginning of the seventh century. The main branch of the family seems to disappear from documentary record after the Persian occupation.²

The core of the estate of the Apions was located in the Oxyrhynchite nome, where the family emerges in the documentary record in the fifth century. Members of the family of the Apions were involved in administering imperial estates in the Oxyrhynchite nome.³ The domains of the Apions came to extend as far as the Arsinoite and Herakleopolite nomes; it is, however, the Oxyrhynchite part that constitutes the best-known section of their estate. The excavations of Bernard P. Grenfell and Arthur S. Hunt, conducted in March 1897 in Oxyrhynchos revealed hundreds of documents recording the functioning of the estate, and the activity of the Apions as absentee landowners and officials.⁴ The documents, popularly known as the archive of the Apions, lay at the basis of all the discussions of estate economy in Byzantine Egypt. They cover a wide range of subjects and transmitted names of countless individuals and institutions with which the estate administration interacted on a regular basis, including several monasteries.

The presence of monasteries in the documentation produced by the Oxyrhynchite division of the Apionic estate has already drawn scholarly attention. Roger Rémondon, in his article published posthumously in 1972,⁵ underscored in this context two phenomena that affected Egyptian monastic establishments of the Byzantine period, namely secularisation⁶ and growing

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³ See Mazza, L’archivio (cit. n. 1), p. 52; Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 1), p. 96. For the relations of the Apions with imperial estate in Egypt, see G. Azzarello, Il dossier della Domus Divina in Egitto, Berlin–Boston 2012 (see index, s.v. ‘Apioni’).
⁴ For the estate’s structures and management, see some of the works quoted in n. 1, especially Mazza, L’archivio, Chapter 3, pp. 75–156; Sarris, Economy and Society, Chapter 2 (accounts, workforce, and management), pp. 29–49; Hickey, Wine, Wealth, and State, Chapter 2 (labour organisation in sections of the estate concerned with viticulture), pp. 62–89 and 3 (accounts of oinochoeristai), pp. 91–98.
⁶ Rémondon quotes Justinianic legislation issued with regard to Egypt (Novellae 7 and 120 from AD 535 and 544 respectively), containing bans on secularisation of monasteries, and the famous P. Oxy. XVI 1890 (27 XI 508), lease
subjugation to great estates effectuated through the institution of lay curators. Rémordon’s outlook was essentially negative; he sums up the phenomenon he describes as ‘dépendance économique et morale’ and inserts it in a wider framework of the generally opportunist stance assumed by the church in Byzantine Egypt.

An attempt at a general discussion of relations between ecclesiastical institutions and estates was made by John Philip Thomas in Chapter 3 of his book *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, devoted to Egyptian documentary record. A section of this chapter deals with private foundations attested in our two groups of texts: the Apionic dossier (pp. 83–87) and the part of the Aphroditan dossier related to *comes* Ammonios (pp. 87–96). Religious foundations in the Oxyrhynchite nome, including the monasteries that will be our main concern here, are described by the author in a somewhat exaggerated manner as ‘a veritable ecclesiastical empire’. The image that transpires from Thomas’s discussion of monastic establishments within the sphere of agreement in which a woman, Serena *eugenestate* leases out a milling bakery ἐν τῷ λαβύκῳ ὑπὸ ταύτης τῆς πόλεως ἐν τῷ μνοστηρίῳ τοῦ καλομένου ἀββᾶ Κοπρεούλιος τῷ διαφέροντι τῇ ὠδενεια καὶ περιελθόντι εἰς αὐτήν ἐκ παραχωρήσεως Κοπρεούλιος τοῦ ἐκλέκτεστον μονηζῶντος. The document refers to a situation in which a monk left his property to a layperson. This testimony can now be supplemented by P. Duk. inv 728 (first half of the sixth century, provenance unknown): a donation of a third part of a monastery, which clearly shows the wide range of actions to which the secular owners were entitled when dealing with monastic property. For the edition of the document and a commentary, see J. R. Combs, ‘A marriage-gift of part of a monastery from Byzantine Egypt’, BASP 48 (2011), pp. 79–88. It is with certain reluctance that I regard Combs’s enumeration of examples of secularised monasteries in the sixth century. He quotes P. Dubl. 32 and 33—two famous documents from the Labla dossier (see B. McGing, ‘Melitian monks at Labla’, Tyche 5 [1990], pp. 67–94). The documents, however, do not seem to fit the definition of secularisation, as the monastic cells which are the object of transaction in both texts do not pass into secular hands but merely change hands within the community.

Also in the case of *P. Oxy. XVI 1890* the situation is not as clear as it may appear at the first glance. The object where the bakery which is the subject of the lease is located is called *μοναστηρίον*, which is immediately understood as ‘monastery’—that is, an organisation with its immovable property. Μοναστηρίων, however, can also designate a monk’s dwelling with appurtenances (this is, e.g., the meaning the word takes in the abovementioned Labla documents, and in the documents of the Naqlun dossier; see below, Chapter 3, p. 141; *P. Naqlun II* 22). Such an object could be of considerable size and contain much more than the rooms for the monk’s individual use; cf. the dwelling of Psates associated with the Aphroditan community of Apa Apollo, transformed into a hospice for itinerant monks (*P. Cairo Masp. I* 67096; see below, Chapter 2, pp. 88–89); here, the building is called κάλλιον, but the meaning—a single monastic dwelling place—remains the same. A monk could—and perhaps was expected—to leave such objects, often built and furnished at his own expense—to his community; however, circumstances could make him decide otherwise. Therefore, it is possible to assume that *μοναστηρίων* owned by Serena in *P. Oxy. XVI 1890* was not a whole monastery, but a single ‘house’ with milling bakery that used to belong to a monk. The baking and milling facility was well-equipped, with ‘three baking-ovens, two mills, and a stone for crushing corn with a mortar’ (l. 8–9: ἐν ὧ ἐστὶν κλίβανοι τρεῖς καὶ μιλὸν ὅδοι καὶ λῆθος στοικοσκός σὸν θυεῖ καὶ λῆθος ἀλεικός σὸν θυεῖ· translation after the edition). It is possible that the former owner of the milling bakery had been baker by trade before he became monk (this was suggested to me by Ewa Wipszycka).

As an example of this kind of relationship, Rémordon, *L’Église* (cit. n. 5), p. 271, quotes two institutions connected with the Apionic estate: the monasteries of Abba Andreas and *Homoeosion* (the latter being, in fact, the monastery of Abba Mousaios; Rémordon refers to the wrong reading of the institution’s name proposed in the *editio princeps*, *P. Oxy. XVI 1952*). Rémordon sees both institutions as administratively subjugated to the estate.

J. Ph. Thomas, *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire*, Dumbarton Oaks 1987, pp. 59–97. The chapter contains several misinterpretations of documents which lead the author to somewhat exaggerated conclusions. It also seems that Thomas treats every monastic institution that appears in private accounts as a private foundation, even if no other documentary record is available to confirm such an interpretation. He seems to forget that in the Oxyrhynchite environment, famed as a place of thriving religious life, great estates would not have acted in void as the sole promoters of institutions devoted to Christian cult.
influence of both the Apions and *comes* Ammonios is again that of subordination and subjugation to secular landowners wielding control of monastic assets. The problem of private churches aside, it is very difficult to determine, based on the extant documentation, the character of monastic institutions mentioned in the documents, which include mainly concise entries relating amounts of circulating goods, but reveal close to nothing of the intricacies of monastic management and organisation. As we will observe further on, publications of new documents tend to change diametrically the perspective in which we see the position of monasteries in the Oxyrhynchite environment.9

Ewa Wipszycka, in her study of the economic aspects of Late Antique Egyptian monasticism published in 2011, assumed a much more cautious stance and claimed that based on the scraps of Apionic archives recording subventions for ecclesiastical institutions we are unable to say whether the Apions built monasteries or only supported them materially.10 Further observations contained in the article, concerning particular cases and situations (e.g. bread-baking activity in the monastery of Apa Mousaioi or the production of ropes and mats by various communities; see below, pp. 42–45; Table 1 at p. 66 and Table 3, p. 69) reveal a much more nuanced picture of the relations between monasteries and estates, which goes beyond the sweeping statement about the ‘ecclesiastical empire’ of the Apions.

Still more recently, an interesting approach to the questions of monastic patronage and relations with landlords was proposed by Ariel López in his brilliant study in the discourse of poverty in writings from the circle of Shenoute of Atripe, a charismatic leader of an Upper Egyptian monastic congregation in the Panopolite nome.11 Although the author’s main focus is the literary world of the Shenoutean dossier, his analysis—which takes into consideration economic and social factors that shaped the Late Antique Egyptian countryside, such as shortage of manpower, or clustering of permanent workforce in *epoikia*—is useful also for the research of documentary sources. López sees patronage as a phenomenon to a certain extent independent from landowning (extensive tracts of land were not a condition *sine qua non* of the successful performance of patron’s

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9 See, e.g. *P. Oxy. LXIII* 4397 (545), a settlement between the representatives of Apion III and the monastery of Abba Hierax (see below, pp. 27–28 and 40–42); on the significance of this document for our assessment of negotiating capacities of monasteries, see Ruffini, *Social Networks* (cit. n. 1), pp. 87–91. Documents belonging to the Apionic dossier edited recently by Margaret Mountford in her doctoral dissertation *Documentary papyri from Roman and Byzantine Oxyrhynchus* (University College London, London 2012) are also crucial for our understanding of the position of some among the monasteries in the Oxyrhynchite environment. Mountford’s dissertation is yet unpublished; the edition of texts related to monasteries was made available to me by Nikos Gonis, to whom I am deeply grateful. All documents from this edition are quoted as Mountford [number]; for inventory numbers of the documents, see below, p. 60.


functions), which can help us to understand how monasteries placed themselves in the world of complex networks of patronage and interdependence.12

Arietta Papaconstantinou, in an article of 2012, touched upon the subject of relations between Apionic estates and ecclesiastical institutions while discussing the general problem of religious donations; although the study is focused chiefly on hagiography and Coptic children donations from the eighth century, some of the author’s remarks on types of donations and their possible economic impact can be used in more general discourse. Papaconstantinou distinguishes between offerings (prosphorai) and donations (doreai) and emphasises that only the latter constituted a permanent contribution to the economic resources of the recipient institutions.13

Some details connected with our present topic were also discussed in articles and commentaries to the editions of papyri.14 Major works on Egyptian estates that have appeared within the last fifteen years offer a rather cursory treatment of the problem or focus on its details (cf. the brief mention of the modest wine offerings for monasteries in Todd M. Hickey’s Wine, Wealth, and the State).15 The majority of what we have in existing scholarship are, therefore, either rather fragmented analyses of detached problems carried out on the margin of more extensive discourse, or somewhat dated overall statements which suffer from too general an approach, and can now be enriched thanks to new sources. Let us now proceed to a brief introduction to the material and its content in order to elucidate the questions which require further treatment.

1.2. Monastic institutions in the Apionic archive: organisation, chronology, distribution

Documents from the Apion archive list twenty-three monastic communities. The documentation consists chiefly of accounts (drawn by estate officials of various rank: local administrators called pronoetai16 and general overseers of affairs connected with circulation of wine in the estate,

12 In his definition of a ‘good patron’ (López, Shenoute of Atripe [cit. n. 11], p. 95), López follows P. Brown, ‘The rise and function of the holy man in Late Antiquity’, JRS 61 (1971), pp. 80–101. Being a good patronage included ‘mediating in conflicts between villagers, interceding before the authorities and the landowning class, arranging loans’.

13 A. Papaconstantinou, ‘Donation and negotiation: formal gifts to religious institutions in late antiquity’, [in:] J.-M. Speiser & É. Yota (eds.), Donations et donateurs dans la société et l’art byzantins, pp. 76–93. The article features also a very useful table gathering papyrological attestations of doreai and prosphorai (not including, however, the Apionic documentation); see pp. 78–80; see pp. 76–76 for the distinction between prosphorai and doreai.


15 Hickey, Wine, Wealth, and the State, pp. 102, 105.

16 For pronoetai and their position in the structure of Apionic estate, see literature in n. 1. The accounts in question are P. Oxy. XVI 1913 (ca. 555), 1911 (11 X 557), 1912 (before 566); LV 3804 (566); XVIII 2195 (576/577). See also other accounts: P. Oxy. LV 3805 (after 566; written on the verso of P. Oxy. LV 3804 and produced on a different administrative level than the original account of a pronoetes; see Sarris, Economy and Society [cit. n. 1], p. 30); P. Oxy. XVI 2020 (ca. 567/588); P. Oxy. XVI 2025 (sixth–seventh century).
lists of occasional offerings, and ephemeral pieces such as receipts for goods and delivery orders addressed to monks by estate representatives. Only three documents assume a more elaborate form: the curious Mountford 027: receipt for wheat dated to 553 (?); the fifth-century PSI XIV 1425: a petition whose attribution to the archive is only tentative; and finally the rather imposing in terms of length and phraseology P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 (settlement of claims; 17 III 545). Most of these documents state only the names of the institutions and the amount of goods received or delivered by them; some, however, name the type of monastic establishment (chiefly koinobia) or mention its representatives (archimandrite, proestos, oikonomas), while one— the all-exceptional P. Oxy. LXIII 4397—allows us to catch a glimpse not only of the details of the monastery’s structure (the document mentions a proestos and an oikonomas as the community’s representatives, and at least appears to create the fiction of the participation of all monks in decision-making), but also of its affairs conducted far outside the borders of the province, in Constantinople.

17 On oinocheiristai, see literature in n. 1 (mainly Hickey, *Wine, Wealth, and the State* [cit. n. 1], pp. 91–98). The accounts of oinocheiristai mentioning monasteries: P. Oxy. XXVII 2480 (565–566); PSI VIII 953 (567–568); P. Oxy. LVIII 3960 (621).

18 P. Oxy. LXVII 4620 (fifth–sixth century); PSI VII 791 (sixth century).

19 Items delivered by monks to the estate: P. Oxy. LI 3640 (20 VII 533); Mountford 029 (1 XI 549); P. Oxy. XVI 2015 (555–556); SB XVIII 14061 (19 II 556); SB XVIII 14062 (? III 556); P. Oxy. I 147 (? IV 556); P. Oxy. I 148 (12 IV 556); SB XVIII 14063 (19 VI 556); Mountford 030 (6 IX 583); P. Oxy. LXIII 4927 (23 V 564). Goods transported from the estate to monasteries: Mountford 026 (4–13 VII 548); Mountford 027 (553?); Mountford 028 (25 V–24 VII, sixth century); P. Oxy. I 146 (15 XI 555); PSI I 89 (25 VII–23 VIII 605).

20 Bread: P. Oxy. XVI 1952 (21 V 564); P. Oxy. LXII 4926 (21 V 564); P. Oxy. LXII 4928 (16–24 V 564); P. Oxy. LXII 4929 (27 V 564); ropes: Mountford 031 (sixth century).


23 Ten institutions are explicitly called koinobia: monasteries of Abba Hierax, Abba Andreas, Abba Kastor, Abba Petro, Abba Apollos, Abba Hermes, Abba Pamoun, Abba Sarmates, the unknown monastery of PSI XIV 1425, and the monastery of Abba Jeremias in the Thebaid. In the manner in which the entries recording allowances granted τοις μοναζόν (τοις μοναζόν) Προεστός and τοις μοναζόν (τοις μοναζόν) Βέρκυ (P. Oxy. XVI 1913, l. 58) are formulated does not allow for conclusions on the structure of communities to which they belonged. Prychthis and Berky were localised in the Hermopolite nome by Drew-Bear, *Le nome Hermopolite*, p. 80–81 and 222–223; cf. Calderini–Darris, *Dizionario*, vol. II, p. 44 (i.e. ‘Berki’); and vol. IV, p. 196 (i.e. ‘Προεστός’), where the latter is associated with the Oxyrhynchite nome. See also Timm, *Aggten*, vol. I, pp. 383–384 (i.e. ‘Berki’). One must remember that nome borders tended to fluctuate over the years. In the sixth and seventh centuries the villages seem to have belonged to the Oxyrhynchite nome (N. Kruit, ‘Local customs in the formula of sales on future delivery’, ZPE 94 (1992), pp. 167–184, esp. p. 178; A. Benaissa, *Rural Settlements of the Oxyrhynchite Nome*. A Papyrological Survey [= Trismegistas Online Publications 4], Cologne–Leuven 2012, pp. 50 and 295). For further references on Prychthis and Berky, see S. J. Clackson, ‘Reconstructing the archives of the monastery of Apollo at Baqir’, [in] *Pap.Congr.* XXII, pp. 219–236, esp. p. 220 with n. 6 and 7. *Oros* of Berky appears in PSI VII 786 (581)—a receipt for donation of six solidi made by heirs of Gerontion *scholastikos* to Kollouthos, μοναζόν of the oros. Other establishments are called simply μονάζων or monae—designations which reveal nothing about the communities’ structure.

24 Monastery of Abba Hierax: Ioannes, deacon and archimandrite (P. Oxy. LI 3640); Iosef, presbyter and proestos (P. Oxy. LXIII 4397); Fromanooch oikonomas (P. Oxy. LXIII 4397). Monastery of Abba Andreas: Melas proestos (P. Oxy. I 148). Monastery of Abba Kastor: Paulos proestos (Mountford 031). Monastery of Abba Petro represented by Προεστός και μονάζων in Mountford 027. Monastery of Mousious: Pamouthios proestos (P. Oxy. LXII 4928; P. Oxy. LXII 4926), called also archimandrite (P. Oxy. XVI 1952; P. Oxy. LXII 4927; P. Oxy. LXII 4929).
Chronological distribution of the attestations results naturally from the chances of preservation and our ability to date the documents in a precise manner. Numerous pieces are datable only very generally to the fifth–sixth centuries; securely dated documents cover the span of almost one hundred years—from 533 (the earliest certainly datable document pertaining to the monastery of Abba Hierax) to 621 (P. Oxy. LXVIII 3960; wine account).

The geographical distribution of the monasteries whose contacts with the Apion estate are recorded in our documents is limited almost only to the confines of the Oxyrhynchite nome. Unfortunately, in most of the cases we are unable to pinpoint the exact locations and must limit ourselves to approximations. Some of the monasteries seem to have been located in the city of Oxyrhynchos itself. This is the case of the monastery of Kaisareion, attested as μονὴ(α?) Καισαρίου in PSI VII 791, l. 10)—an ecclesiastical institution whose name indicates that it was connected with the site of the former temple of imperial cult in the city of Oxyrhynchos. The specification ‘Ano Kaisareion’ may confirm that the reference point in this case was rather a district than a particular building (see n. 25); it is thus possible that μονὴ Καισαρίου and the church Ano Kaisareion were in fact two distinct institutions located in the same district which had its own subdivisions. A kaisareion, important as it was in the public life of a Roman city, must have occupied a prominent place in the city and we may infer that the district which borrowed the name from it was a central one.

Another urban establishment was probably the monastery of Hierakion mentioned in the same documents as μονὴ Καισαρίου. PSI VII 791 lists also a church of Abba Hierakion as a distinct institution: (ll. 8 and 20: (παρὰ) τῆς ἀββᾶς Ἰερακίωνος … νο(μίσματα) β κ(εράτια) β and ἐκκλησία ἀββᾶς Ἰερακίωνος νό(μισμα) α κ(εράτιον) α respectively). Stefan Timm makes a connection between the two institutions and situates them in Oxyrhynchos.

Two institutions which seem to have been female communities: the monasteries of Ama Iouliane and Ama Maria, were probably located also in the city itself. The former features in P. Oxy. LXVII 4620 as a recipient of a grain donation. The list itself provides no clue to its location, but

25 A church of Kaisareion is attested in P. Merton I 41, l. 11–12 (order of payment from 15 X 406): τῷ κυρίῳ μου πατρὶ Πέτρῳ Κριστιντίῳ τῆς ἀγίας ἐκκλησίας τοῦ Καισαρείου χρυσ(οδού) νο(μίσματι) γ π(αρὰ) Ε [ . According to the editors of the text, the church would have been placed rather in the district that took its name from the former temple of imperial than in the temple itself (see P. Merton I, pp. 136–137). P. Oxy. LXVII 4620, l. 16 lists τῷ Άνω Καίσαριον among the recipients of grain donations. Whether this is the same church, or another one located in the same district, is difficult to tell. For kaisaria in Roman Egypt, see S. Strassi, ‘Or ἕν τοῦ Καίσαρειον. Diffusione e valore simbolico dei Kaisarea nell’Egitto romano’, AP 52.2 (2006), pp. 218–243, with references to attestations in the papyri.

26 No church of this name, however, is found neither on the list of stationary churches of Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy. XI 1357; 536/537) or the more recently published list of Oxyrhynchite churches P. Oxy. LXVII 4618 (sixth century).

27 P. Oxy. LXVII 4620, ll. 22–23 (list of offerings to religious institutions; 5th–6th c.): εἰς τῷ Ἀπίῳ Ἰερακίωνος (ἀρτάβαι) β; PSI VII 791, l. 13 (list of festal donations [6th c.]): μονῆ(α?) ἀββᾶς Ἰερακίωνος νο(μίσματα) β κ(εράτιον) β.


29 P. Oxy. LXVII 4620, ll. 24–26: εἰς τὸ μοναστήριον Ἄμα Ἱουλιανῆς (ἀρτάβαι) ν.
another sixth-century Oxyrhynchite document in which the monastery of Ama Iouliane is mentioned, *P. Oxy. XXIV* 2419, has a clearly urban setting and proves that this institution is to be searched for in the nome capital.\(^3\) The monastery of Ama Maria (*P. Oxy. LXVII* 4620, ll. 27–29) could have been another institution connected with a homonymous Oxyrhynchite church known from other documents.\(^3\)

Unfortunately, we have few indications as to the localisation of three monasteries that feature most prominently in our documentation: Abba Andreas, Abba Mousaios, and Abba Kastor. The monastery of Abba Mousaios baked bread for workers in some villages where the Apions possessed land (see below, pp. 42–43); the village toponyms that appear in orders for bread addressed to the monastery, however, do not form any geographically uniform cluster.\(^3\) In case of the remaining three institutions, a hint concerning their localisation may be concealed in the very nature of the documents that preserve their names. The receipts for ropes and mats issued to monasteries by Apionic representatives are connected with two estate units: the part of the estate called ἔξω τῆς πύλης, ‘outside the gate’, that is, in the *proastion* of the city of Oxyrhynchos, and γεουχικὸν λούτρον—private baths belonging to the Apions, also located in the city. It would be logical to assume that estate administrators would not have sought for such items as mats and ropes in faraway locations, but turned to some nearby—or at least not excessively remote—monasteries.\(^3\) The monastery of Abba Andreas appears as recipient of a grain donation in the accounts of *pronetai* of the so-called *pronoesia A* (*P. Oxy. XVI* 1911 and LV 3804).\(^3\) *Pronesia A* was located south of the city which may be a very general hint as to the location of the monastery.\(^3\) In the case of the monastery of Abba Hierax, its location close to the city is mentioned in ll. 194–195

\(^3\) This document is a declaration (unconnected to the Apion archive) which deals with a theft committed probably with the complicity of one of the nuns. Rémondon, *L’Église* (cit. n. 5), p. 261, lists this papyrus among the relatively rare situations when members of religious establishments became involved in a scandal.

\(^3\) Cf. church of Ama Maria at Oxyrhynchos in *P. Wash. Unit.* I 6.5 and possibly also *P. Oxy. LXVII* 4617, l. 15 (fifth century, Oxyrhynchos). The Washington papyrus mentions official proceedings taking place in the city in front of the church of Ama Maria.

\(^3\) See A. Benaissa, commentary to *P. Oxy.* LXII 4926–4929, p. 173. The villages mentioned in the documents were scattered in at least three *pronesiai* of the estate.

\(^3\) See, however, the peculiar case of Theban monks travelling to the Fayum to sell their ropes attested in *CLT* 3 (728 or 743). It is difficult to imagine that they could not find a possible buyer in the vicinity of their monastery. Could it be that they had a patron in the Fayum—a person having links to a remote religious institution—who would buy their produce in order to support them? See Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 243–244 and 252 (translation of the text).

\(^3\) *Pronesia A* comprised *epoikia* Apele, Pakiak, Kissinos, Trigeou, Loukiou, Tarousebt, and Kotyleeiou and was located in the southern part of the nome (see Appendix 3 in Mazza, *L’archivio* [cit. n. 1]); see also eadem, ‘*P. Oxy. XVI* 1911 e i conti annuali dei *pronetai*’, *ZPE* 122 (1998), pp. 161–172 and the commentary of J. Rea to *P. Oxy. LV* 3804.

\(^3\) Cf., however, the receipt Mountford 026, in which the monastery receives a disbursement of grain from the heirs of a *pronotes* of Polemon, a location in the northern *pronesia* E. This suggests that we should perhaps draw a distinction between sources of subventions and the places they were destined for.
of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4397: τὸ εὐαγές κονιόβιον καλούμενον Ἀββᾶ Ἱέρακος διακείμενον ἐν τῷ λιβικῷ ὄρει ταύτης τῆς Ὀξυρυγχιτα[ν]τ[η]ς πόλεως.36

Other monasteries also seem to have been located mostly in the southern part of the nome; this distribution may result from the chances of preservation of our documents.37 What matters most, though, is the fact that the texts prove that the Apionic estate maintained relations with establishments located both in the city of Oxyrhynchos itself and in the *chora.*

1.3. *Actors of the relations and their contexts*

The setting described, let us now proceed to an overview of the contexts in which the estate and monasteries interacted. Our documents attest to a variety of roles assumed by the communities in contacts with the ἰνδοξὸς οἶκος of the Apions. Scholars tend to give particular attention to the attestations of allowances in grain, wine, and vinegar received by various institutions from the Apions and emphasise the dependence of religious institutions on the estate. Other documents, however, enable us to see a more nuanced picture of the situation.

The monasteries appear in the Apionic dossier as recipients of regular and occasional disbursements, producers of goods (mats, ropes, breads) delivered to estate workers, supplicants, taxpayers; once, finally, we see a monastery as a party in a dispute. We have no documents relating to landholding-based relations (such as ordinary and emphyteutic leases, or deeds of land donations or sales) between the *oikos* and monasteries; by contrast, such documents form the major part of the contemporary Aphrodito dossier (see below, Chapter 2).38 The following section will be devoted to a discussion of these contexts and will focus on people engaged in the relations.

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36 See J. Rea, commentary to ll. 194–195 of *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4397, comparing this description with that applied to the monastery of Λὰ Απόλλων in Titkooh (Bawit); for monastic communities referred to by a name of a village, see the following note.

37 *Mega Oros: a chorion* of this name attested in *P. Leid.* Inst. 80 B ii 7 (seventh–eighth century) together with toponyms to be placed in the southern part of the nome; Monastery of Leukadios: it may be connected with the *episkiaion* Nesos Leukadiou, of which Mazza (*L’archivio* [cit. n. 1], p. 183) says that it was ‘in prossimità e forse connesso con la *pronoesia* Α’, but cf. Benaissa, *Rural Settlements* (cit. n. 23), p. 163, who does not include the monastery in the list of religious institutions connected with Nesos Leukadiou. Monastery of Abba Petros: no topographical indications provided; the receipt Mtford 027 records a disbursement of wheat to this institution by *pronotes* Anoup who might be connected with *pronoeis* I and H; see, however, the reservations in n. 35. Monastery of Abba Apollos: it appears in *P. Oxy.* XVI 1913 connected with places in the immediate vicinity of Oxyrhynchos, while *P. Oxy.* LV 3804 records land belonging to it located in *pronoesia* A. Monastery Lamasone: a village of this name is mentioned in *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4372 (second half of the fourth century) close to Ephemisos in the then sixth *pagus.* Monastery of Abba Hermes: no topographical indications; the disbursement in *PWI* I 89 made by Kosmas, *pronotes* of Terythis in *pronoesia* C close to the city. Monastery of Abba Pamoun: τὸ κονιόβιον Ἀββᾶς Παμοῦν ἐν τῷ Ὄψι Παμοῦν (P. Oxy. XXVII 2480.120)—unidentified location in the Oxyrhynchite. Monastery of Apheu: in *P. Oxy.* XVI 1912 listed together with churches in *pronoesia* F (around the modern village of Itnīh). Monastery of St Phoibammon: *P. Oxy.* LV 3805.67: δ(υ) τῶν μοναχῶν τοῦ ἀγίου Φοιβήματος ἐν Θυμονακόμαις; Thmoinakomi was located in the east toparchy, fifth *pagus.* Monastery of Pela: connected with the village in the west toparchy, identified with modern Billa al-Mustagadda, seven kilometres south of Oxyrhynchos (Benaissa, *Rural Settlements* [cit. n. 23], p. 268). No indications are available for the monasteries of Abba Sarmates. For Prychthis and Berky, see above, p. 22, n. 23).

38 Monastic property in general is poorly represented in the Oxyrhynchite material, although we are aware that the church was among the important landowners in the region. For monastic property in the Oxyrhynchite nome, see,
1.3.1. People responsible for contacts between the Apionic oikos and the monasteries

Several monasteries are mentioned in documents which reflect ‘institution-to-institution’ contacts, that is, relations in which we are able to identify the counterparts in the widest possible manner: we know that the estate interacted with a monastery but we are unable to distinguish individuals by whom an action was carried through. Each ‘institution-to-institution’ relation, however, implied several ‘person-to-person’ interactions, engaging individuals whose capacities were defined by organisational arrangements and/or circumstances.39 Jakub Urbanik, in his analysis of P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 which is devoted not only to the legal aspects of the document, but also its sociological and religious implications, suggests that legal representation of private monasteries worked in a distinct manner, with the founder, or a guardian appointed by the founder, acting as representative. Other institutions would have been represented by their priors and stewards drawn exclusively from the monastic milieu.40 While this premise is useful and revealing, its scope is limited to legal and official texts presenting the counterparts in as exact a manner as possible, which are extremely rare in the Apionic dossier.41

e.g. P. Oxy. XVI 1890 (5 XI 508; a milling bakery formerly belonging to Abba Kopreous; this, however, could have been property not of an institution, but an individual: see above, p. 19, n. 6); BGU I 103 (sixth–seventh century; a request for assistance in a dispute between people living most probably on a land belonging to a monastery; see G. Schmelz, Kirchliche Amtsträger im spätantiken Ägypten nach den Aussagen der griechischen und koptischen Papyri und Ostraka (= AP Beilage 13, Munich 2002, pp. 275–276). To this we can now add Mountford 032, a list interpreted as a record of tax payments made by various individuals and institutions, where in l. 10 we find a sum of over thirty solidi paid δ(ι) τοίς μον(αστηρίοις) ὀμβᾶς Κάστορος. If the list indeed pertains to fiscal obligations resulting from landownership, it would place the monastery of Abba Kastor, whose payment is the second highest after the one made by the heirs of Kyria, among the important landowners in the nome (see also below, p. 45).

For ecclesiastical property in the Oxyrhynchite, see P. Oxy. XVI 2020: list of fiscal contributions in barley in which the episcopal church of Oxyrhynchus pays almost 10% of the total sum; P. Oxy. XVI 2040: list of contributors for the reconstruction of public baths; the episcopal church is charged with ca. 11% of the total (see E. Wipszycka, Les ressources et les activités économiques des églises en Égypte du IVe au VIIIe siècle (= Papyrologica Bruxellensia 10, Brussels 1972, pp. 48–49, for these and other attestations of ecclesiastical property in the Oxyrhynchite nome).

The two aspects of relations are represented in our dossier by distinct types of documents: the accounts of pronoetai are the best example of ‘institution-to-institution’ interaction, while receipts for goods disbursed by individuals connected with the estate represent the ‘person-to-person’ level.

Urbanik, ‘P. Oxy. LXIII 4397’ (cit. n. 22), p. 228. The example quoted by Urbanik, namely that of the monastery founded by Apollon, the father of Dioskoros of Aphroditos, seems to confirm this reasoning. One should invoke also the case of the monastery of Apa Agenios, especially P.JVIII 933 (24–28 VIII 538): a fragmentary contract addressed to δ(ι)καίῳ τοῦ ἀγίου μοναστηρίου Ἀπα Αγενίου ὄρους τοῦ Ἀπολλονιστηρίου μα(κρ)ῦ νομοῦ, ὑπὸ τὴν διοίκησιν τοῦ ἐνδοειδετοῦ κόμ(πος) Ἀμμονίου τοῦ θείου κοινηστηρίου διὰ τούτῳ τεκμηριωμένου Ἀπα Ἀπολλωνίως Διοσκόρου Ψημιναυτῆς ἀπὸ Ἀργοθῆς, clearly indicating the administrative role played by Ammonios through his employees (even though here we do not know if the monastery was Ammonios’s foundation; see below, pp. 62–63). Another case that requires a closer investigation is the monastery of Apa Sourous—the biggest single landowner attested in the Aphroditos cadastré—represented in P. Lond. V 1704 by its proestos and Flavius Artemidoros singularis (see J. Gascou, ‘Les Pachômiens à Aphroditès’, [in] Les archives de Diosore, pp. 275–282, esp. pp. 277–278). Cf. P. Mich. XIII 667, a lease of land from the same monastery represented by Kollouchios, monk and proestos, and Ioannes son of Samouelios, presbyter and diakutes. For representation of other, non-private monasteries in the Aphroditos dossier, see below, Chapter 2, pp. 98–100. In some cases we may suspect that these institutions hired non-monastics as territorial representatives.

P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 is one certain example; we should probably add to it the receipt Mountford 027, which betrays characteristics of a formal agreement.
How formal contacts between the Apions and monasteries could have looked like can be inferred from the complex narrative contained in *P. Oxy. LXIII 4397*, which describes stages of an affair which lasted several years and involved a monastery, two successive heads of the Apion family, their employees, and Diogenes—an otherwise anonymous individual from the Oxyrhynchite nome.⁴² On 17 March 545, when the monastery and the house of Apion finally reached an agreement, the actors immediately involved were Iosef, presbyter and *proestos* of the monastery and its *oikonomos* Theodoros on Abba Hierax’s side, while the contemporary head of the Apion family, Flavius Apion son of Strategios (Apion III), was represented by *oiketes* named Menas. Several years earlier, the whole affair had started in Constantinople with two loans given to Diogenes by Theophilos on behalf of the monastery of Hierax.⁴³ The same Theophilos, that time already as a steward of the monastery, intervened later with Flavius Strategios when Diogenes, upon his demise, turned out insolvent and Strategios claimed the plot of land mortgaged to him by Diogenes as security on a loan that preceded the loans given by Theophilos on behalf of the monastery. Theophilos seems to have gone to the capital to submit the monastery’s claims to Strategios (ll. 67–69: ὃδεν Θεόφιλος ὁ εὐλαβὴς τὴν μνήμην τηνικάυτα ἀπέλθον εἰς τὴν βασιλείουςαν παρακλήσεις προσήγαγεν Στρατηγién τῷ τῆς πανευκλεός μνήμης περί τῆς εἰρημένης μηχανῆς). The content of the document suggests that an actual meeting and discussion with Strategios had taken place. A written order to satisfy the demands of the monastery was given by Strategios to ‘those belonging to his magnificence [Strategios] in this city [i.e. Oxyrhynchos]’ (l. 95–98: τοῖς προσήκουσιν τῇ αὐτοῦ ὑπερφυείς κατά ταύτην [τῇ]ν πόλιν δοῦναι τῷ εὐαγέ κοινοβίῳ οἰκονομουμένῳ παρὰ τοῦ τῆς εὐλαβοῦς μνήμης Θεοφίλου νομίσματα (hand 2) ἐκατόν τριάκοντα). Strategios’s people handed over a part of the ordered sum to ‘the said Theophilos of blessed memory, that is the same holy kainobion’ (l. 99–100: τῷ εἰρημένῳ τῆς εὐλαβοῦς μνήμης Θεοφίλῳ ἢτοι τῷ αὐτῷ εὐαγέ κοινοβίῳ). Nothing explicit is said in the document about the way Strategios’s letters were delivered to his subordinates, but maybe it was Theophilos himself who carried them all the way from the capital in order to submit them to the Oxyrhynchite estate officials, and received the sum upon delivery or soon afterwards. Still later on, another delegation of this time unspecified representatives of Abba Hierax (ll. 110–111: τοῖς ἀπ[δ] ἕνε ἑνταύς κοινοβίῳ τοῦ τῆς ὅσσας μνήμης [Ἄ]ββα Ίέρακος) went to Constantinople to negotiate with Flavius Apion, son of Strategios and Leontia, the latter now also involved in the affair.⁴⁴ Another exchange of correspondence took place between Apion, Leontia,

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⁴² For a commentary on the document, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, pp. 169–170.

⁴³ Theophilos features in the document (l. 19) without any indication of his status or position in the monastery; Urbanik, ‘P. Oxy. LXIII 4397’ (cit. n. 22), p. 228, doubts whether he was a monk at all. The lack of patronymic may point at his monastic affiliation, but we should note that also Diogenes, certainly a layman, is introduced without a patronymic.

⁴⁴ On possible interpretations of Leontia’s role in the settlement, see Urbanik ‘P. Oxy. LXIII 4397’ (cit. n. 22), pp. 232.
and their staff in Oxyrhynchos (l. 127: τοῖς προσήκουσιν τῇ αὐτῶιν ὑπερφυείᾳ κατὰ ταῦτην τὴν πόλιν), thanks to which financial claims of the monastery were finally satisfied. The man who received money from the Oxyrhynchite Apionic staff was the most pious Iosef, presbyter and prior of the monastery. He is the first prior of Abba Hierax mentioned in the story and appears together with a new steward, Theodoros the aikonomos (l. 132) as a party concluding the agreement in the name of the community members (l. 131–132: οἱ αὐτῶιν εὐρυμαχοῦσιν κοινοβίῳ διὰ τοῦ αὐτῶιν εὐλαβείᾳ τῶιν προσήκουσιν καὶ προστιτότος καὶ Θεοδώρου οἰκονόμου). What transpires from the story is an image of a very immediate model of contacts between a monastic institution and the oikos: Abba Hierax’s representatives seem to circumvent local Oxyrhynchite staff and pursue their goals addressing directly the Apions. It was people, not only petitions, that circulated between Oxyrhynchos and Constantinople.

The fact that monastic communities tended to address landowners directly in writing can be inferred also from PSI XIV 1425, a fifth-century epistolary petition addressed by monks of a koinobion (whose name is unfortunately not preserved) to a ‘most magnificent lord’ (recto: μεγαλοπρεπέστατος κύριος), the head of a ‘glorious house’ (l. 5: ένδοξος οἰκός) which perhaps can be identified with the Apion family. The tone of this letter-petition and its forms of address allow us to think that it was destined for the head of the oikos himself. The context of the text was a customary allowance that had been granted to the monastery but failed to be delivered. A μεγαλοπρεπέστατος κύριος was requested to order his subordinates to give the monks goods which the estate employees had neglected to give to the monastery (the text speaks of ‘disregarding’—παριθεῖν— the monks). The allowance in question, as indicated by the expression έξ έθους, was an offering disbursed on a regular basis. We can only regret that the names of both the sender and

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45 Everything indicates that Theophilos, who previously handled the matter, was first an unspecified representative, then the steward of the monastery, not its prior

46 Thus Jean Gascou in D. Feissel & J. Gascou, La pétition à Byzance (= CRHCByz Monographies 14], Paris 2004, p. 187. The text is unfortunately poorly preserved; it concerns an έξ έθους offering to the monastery from an ένδοξος οἰκός. It reads: ‘[…] now possessing our holy koinobion […] from your Christ-loving magnanimity. […] Whence […] we entreat you so that you do not disregard us […] but order that the things that your […] glorious house has benevolently accorded us in compliance with the custom be discharged to us so that we may thank you. Albeit we are sinners, we send to God our usual prayers for your salvation and well-being of the whole […] oikos. May the holy and life-creating Trinity be with you. Recto: […] to my master, in every respect […] most magnificent lord […]’. For the text with a French translation, see also Rémondon, ‘L’Église’ (cit. n. 5), p. 272, who does not attempt to identify the addressee.

47 It is in the context of this petition that Rémondon, moved by the servile tone of the document, uses the phrase ‘dépendance économique et morale’ to describe the relation between Late Antique monasteries and great estates. The moral aspect, however, should probably not be overestimated. As noted by Roger Bagnall (Egypt in Late Antiquity, Princeton 1992, p. 9), contrary to the common belief, papyri should not be regarded as an immediate, or ‘true’ reflection of the state of affairs. Especially such forms as petitions and letters had to comply with rules dictated by rhetoric and usage. What we observe in PSI XIV 1425 is an example of compliance with current modes of expression rather than any striking proof of ‘moral dependence’ on the part of the sender.

48 Cf. other Apionic allowances κατὰ τὸ ἔθος listed in Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), pp. 98–102; see also Hickey, Wine, Wealth, and the State, (cit. n . 1), pp. 100–106. These disbursements covered a wide range of offerings, from very substantial to truly modest ones. See also Wipszycka, Les ressources (cit. n. 38), p. 81; the
the addressee have disappeared, leaving us with no certain clues as to whether the monastery in question was indeed within the Apions’ sphere of influence, or was connected with another landowning family. Another regrettable fact is our inability to assess the amount and the exact character of the belated allowance; the tone of the petition makes us believe that the offering was vital to the survival of the monastery, but this may result from stylistic requirements of petition-writing. However, what concerns us most and what transpires clearly from this piece of evidence is the fact that monastic communities did not hesitate to contact directly a head of a great house to secure their interests.

These situations are, however, somewhat exceptional in our sources. The ‘Apionic’ monasteries had numerous tangential points with the staff of the Oxyrhynchite estate, and these contacts determined the dynamics of day-to-day relations between the religious institutions and the oikos. Estate workers involved in these relations belonged to both administrative and executive staff: Menas oiketes, responsible for Abba Hierax’s settlement with Apion III represented the former, while, e.g., the bath-keeper Ioustos receiving ropes for the landlord’s baths in P. Oxy. I 148 was among the latter. A list of estate and monastic representatives recorded in the Apionic documents is presented in Table 1 (below, pp. 65–66).

Most estate representatives appearing in our documentation belong to middle- and low-ranking estate administration; some of them were charged with very specific tasks. Pronoetai (and in one case heirs of a pronoetes, see below, p. 37) feature in grain receipts; they also took care of large and small grain disbursements recorded in the yearly accounts. Pronoetai were charged with numerous tasks, including control of the circulation of grain in their respective pronoesiai. The receipts reveal some intricacies of their contacts with monasteries. Three out of four Apionic grain receipts connected with monastic institutions represent the pattern ‘X was given to Y by Z’.

They were destined for Apionic offices in Oxyrhynchos, although copies would have probably been issued also to the respective monasteries, which—as it appears from PSI XIV 1425—were rather meticulous as far as donations were concerned. Monasteries would issue also their own receipts, similar to Mountford 027, or less elaborate. Mountford 027, issued by Anoup, presbyter and monk of the monastery of Abba Petros, is addressed not to a member of local staff but to some high-ranking individual, probably the geouchos himself, as suggested by the expression [εἰληφέναι καὶ πεπλήρωσαι τὴν ὑμῶν ἐνδόξητος] in l. 3. The considerable donation of 319 artabae, discussion concerns rather insignificant offerings made by the Apions to what seems to be private churches located in villages where the family possessed land.

49 These documents were produced by the estate, not the monasteries and were not receipts properly speaking, but notes recording the transfer of goods. The situation is reversed in Mountford 027, an exceptional, quite elaborate document recording an offering, addressed by a monastic representative to the endoxos oikos.
which was made πρὸς τὸ έθος καὶ ὑπὲρ καρπῶν τῆς παρούσης δευτέρας ἰνδικτίονος), was most probably a yearly allowance, perhaps integrated into the estate accounting. 50 A pronoetes is mentioned in l. 8 as the person through whom the transfer was carried out, and the document itself was supposed to function as a guarantee that he fulfilled his duties in a proper manner (l. 7–11: σῖτου ἀρτάβας τριακοσίας δέκα ἐννέα τάς καὶ δοθείσας μοι διὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ θαυμασιωτάτου Ἀνούπ προνοητοῦ τῶν αὐτῶν κτημάτων πατριμονιαλίων γύνωντα) σί(του) ἀ(ρτάβας) τιθαί καὶ πρὸς ἀσφάλειαν τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐνδόξου οἴκου καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ θαυμασιωτάτου Ἀνούπ ταύτην πεποίημι τὴν ἀπόδειξιν). Margaret Mountford, the editor of a series of new documents from the Apion archive, emphasises that the document bears resemblance to three other Apionic receipts: P. Oxy. XVI 1898, P. Oxy. XVI 1993, and P. Oxy. LXI 4131). 51 We can suppose that issuing such receipts to the endoxos oikos was a routine practice of religious institutions, applied for both considerable and modest gifts. The fact that only one such document issued by a monastery is preserved in our documentation is due rather to the chances of preservation than to its exceptional character.

The receipts for mats and ropes were produced by estate administration to record deliveries of products necessary for day-to-day running of estate commodities and installations such as baths, stables, and watering machines. We have at our disposal nine documents concerning deliveries of mats and ropes: eight are receipts, and one is an order of delivery. The order (Mountford 031; sixth century) and the receipt P. Oxy. LI 3640 are the only documents in which both parties are identified with some precision (see Table 1, pp. 65–66). In Mountford 031, a notarios named Anoup asks Apa Paulos, the archimandrite of the monastery of Abba Kastor, for one rope for the watering machine called ‘of the piglets’. In this situation, an estate manager contacts a person recognised as responsible for administering the monastery. One copy of the order was most probably delivered to the archimandrite, while the other one was deposited in estate archives for registration purposes. Once the requested products were ready, we can imagine that the monastic administrator would charge his subordinates with delivering them to a recipient directly in charge of the unit for which the goods had been ordered (e.g., bath-keeper, chaff-collector, or καταμείνας). 52 The reason for

50 Cf. donations for the monastery of Abba Andreas recorded in P. Oxy. XVI 1911, ll. 147–149 and 150–151; P. Oxy. LV 3804, ll. 184–187).
51 P. Oxy. XVI 1898: receipt of a grain offering (prophora) of 371 artabae of wheat given to the nosokomeion of Abba Elias, issued by Menas, notarios and aikononomos of the institution to heirs of Flavius Apion in 587. See Wipszycka, Les ressources (cit. n. 38), p. 65, 3, commenting on the use of the word prophora in the widest possible meaning of ‘pious offering’; P. Oxy. XVI 1993: receipt of a grain donation (prophora) of four artabae of wheat given to the church of St Thekla in Oxyrhynchos, issued by Ioannes, deacon and aikononomos of the same church to heirs of Fl. Apion in 587; P. Oxy. LXI 4131: receipt of a grain donation (prophora) of seven artabae of wheat given to the nosokomeion Leukadiou, issued by Maura, the female aikononomos of the institution to Flavius Apion on 18 IX 600 (day uncertain).
52 For katameinas, whose title means literally ‘the one staying (in a particular place)’, see J. Rea in his commentary to l. 2 of P. Oxy. LI 3640, who states, summarising the argument of I. F. Fikhman, ‘On the structure of the Egyptian large estate in the sixth century’, in [in:] Pap.Congr. XII, pp. 127–132, esp. pp. 127–129, that katameinas was ‘a sub-tenant holding land from a tenant-in-chief serving as an official in the administration of a large estate'.

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which people charged with issuing the documents we have at our disposal usually noted names and functions of the recipients while ignoring the identity of the monks who delivered goods was that they were interested in controlling the estate workers, not the monks, who from their point of view were irrelevant. Sometimes, however, they did not even bother to record the names of estate workers (see P. Oxy. I 147—an otherwise sloppy document with an inconsistent dating formula, and Mountford 030). On the other hand, P. Oxy. I 3640 (20 VII 533), while following the pattern of other documents, lists the names of both the recipient of the ropes destined for a ‘small orchard close to Eutrygiou’—a certain Phoibammon, καταμείνας ‘outside the Gate’—and the prior of the monastery of Abba Hierax, deacon and archimandrite Ioannes. Such precision is probably to be attributed to the exceptional diligence of the document’s scribe. As we can see in Apionic orders of bread supply (see below), short documents of everyday administration were produced by various individuals whose observed a general documentary pattern while paying different amount of attention to the details.53

Brief notes connected with bread production—four orders and one receipt—mention the name of Pamouthios, the prior of the monastery of Mousaïos; none of them, however, records names of estate representatives.54 The commissioner is either introduced simply as endoxos oikos (P. Oxy. XVI 1952; LXXII 4926; 4929), or not named at all; in the latter case only the amount and destination of bread are stated (P. Oxy. LXXII 4928). These nuances perhaps reflect individual scribal practices, just as the inconsistent use of Pamouthios’s titles does (he is called proestos in two texts, while in three he bears the title of archimandrite).55 The title of archimandrite was honorific, while that of proestos was associated with administrative duties; what was meant in the documents, however, was ‘the man in charge’; the intricacies of monastic titulature were of little importance to the issuers.56

The lack of perceptible participation of oikonomoi in everyday contacts may be curious at the first sight. P. Oxy. LXIII 4397, which mentions two oikonomoi of Abba Hierax, suggests that at least some of the Oxyrhynchite monasteries numbered stewards among their ranks.57 We would expect to see oikonomoi in such day-to-day transactions as those described above, but, quite contrary

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53 See A. Benaissa in P. Oxy. LXII 4926–4929, p. 174, who distinguishes four hands that produced five documents connected with bread supply.


55 For an analogous situation in a later document, cf. P. Ryl. Copt. 124; see below, Chapter 5, pp. 242 with n. 23.

56 The title of archimandrite was granted by bishops to particularly distinguished monastic leaders; such people could potentially be found in any community; see E. Wipszycka, [in:] CE, s.v. ‘Archimandrite’, and Moines et communautés, pp. 329–331. For proestotes, see eadem, [in:] CE, s.v., and Moines et communautés, pp. 327–328.

57 For oikonomos, see CE, s.v., and Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 331–335. See also Kahle, P. Bal. I, p. 34 with n. 4, who notes that oikonomos could be a designation of monastic superiors, especially in later Coptic texts from the Theban region.
to our expectations, other documents never use this designation. As Ewa Wipszycka observed for Egyptian churches, smaller and less wealthy institutions could do without a separate oikonomos; this could be true also of some of monasteries.58

Even documents of apparently more official character contain no precise references to monastic titles. In Mountford 027, the koinobion of Abba Petros is represented by ἐνωλαβέστα[τος Ἄνωυτ] πρεσβ[η]ς καὶ[ μο]ν[ά]ρχον; neither in the opening section, nor in the better preserved final part do we find any monastic functions associated with the individual.59 We may suspect that a mention of ecclesiastic title sufficed to indicate leading position of an individual in his community.60 Still, such omission in an official and otherwise elaborate document may come as a surprise. The image one obtains while reading the documents from the Apionic dossier suggests a certain degree of freedom in the manner of describing monastic parties of the relations; since we are unable to balance this testimony with internal monastic documentation, we cannot say to what extent this freedom reflected various strategies pursued by monasteries in the division of administrative duties. Examples from other collections of texts, however, render such correspondence possible.

1.3.2. Contexts of the relations

Two main contexts in which we encounter monastic communities in the Apionic dossiers are offerings and production of goods by monasteries for the estate. Rémondon and Thomas saw both phenomena as a visible proof of the monasteries’ subordination to great landowners. Thomas saw all the ‘Apionic’ monasteries as private establishments, even though, faced with the lack of sources on their history, we cannot be certain that all of them were indeed established by the endocos oikos.

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58 Wipszycka, Les ressources (cit. n. 38), p. 137. Cf. P. Cairo Masq. II 67151, the testament of Flavius Phoibammon from the Aphroditos dossier, in which the monastery of Apa Jeremias is appointed heir to a fragment of the testator’s property. The monastery is represented by Apa Besas, prior and administrator; see ll. 148–149: τὸν νῦν [δ]ιοικοῦντα προεστάτα καὶ θεωρεῖ πατέρα Ἀπα Βησς[ν] τὸν ἐνωλαβέστατον πρεβύτερον καὶ κοινοβιάρχην. A little earlier (ll. 146–147) the author of the text mentions τοὺς κατὰ καρόν ἡγουμένον[ς] τοῖς καὶ[ μο]ν[ά]ρχος καὶ[ διοικητές] προχρήστων τοῦ οἰκονομοῦ[ν]ικοῦ. Such enumeration could suggest that the writer had in mind three distinct groups of people; however, the flowery language of the document, with its tendency to use numerous synonyms, allows us to think he meant different aspects of monastic leadership. Such interpretation is confirmed by the combination of titles describing Apa Besas (prioṣtos, koinobiarχes, and ἐκομομενος; his ecclesiastic rank of presbyter is also mentioned). On the competences of oikonomai, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, p. 332: ‘Les compétences réelles dont disposaient les économos étaient sans doute fonction de la situation; elles dépendaient entre autres de la personnalité du supérieur et de celle de l’économé, de la nature des affaires à gérer et du lieu où il fallait opérer’.

59 What also draws our attention is the fact that while it is Anoup who introduces himself in the document, he uses the superlative ἐνωλαβέστατος, usual when addressing an ecclesiastic or speaking about one, but very rarely employed by ecclesiastics speaking of themselves. As Anoup did not draw the document himself, we may suppose that this oddity is a mistake of the scribe who wrote in Anoup’s name still thinking about the him in the third person.

60 For the presence and role of clergy in monasteries, see E. Wipszycka, ‘Les clercs dans les communautés monastiques d’Égypte’, Jtree 16 (1996), pp. 135–166. For ecclesiastics—a presbyter and three deacons mentioned without monastic functions, but certainly recognised as leading administrators of their community—see P. Naqlun 39 [= P. Gason 29]; see below, Chapter 3, p. 147.
In the following argument, we shall focus first on offerings to monasteries in the Apionic dossier (see Table 2, pp. 67–68). Two categories of documents provide us with information on products given to monasteries by the estate: the accounts of pronetai and oinocheiristai, and the receipts for disbursements. In keeping with the distinction made by Arietta Papaconstantinou, all the recorded gifts fall into the category of offerings (prosphorai, taken in their widest possible meaning of ‘religious gifts’); donations (doreai) of permanent nature, including land parcels, buildings, or equipment (e.g. boats) do not feature in Apionic papers. In the words of Papaconstantinou, ‘donations and bequests increased the institutions’ wealth due to transfer of profit-bearing items’; our documentation, however, does not preserve traces of such permanent gifts on the part of the Apionic eikos.61 The actual significance of Apionic offerings to the monasteries’ economic well-being is a question that has to be addressed here, even if the documents will not offer us an easy answer.

The word prosphora appears rarely in Apionic texts referring to monasteries. PSI I 89—a notice recording a gift of twenty-five artabae of wheat to the monastery of Abba Hermes—provides its only certain attestation.62 Here it is combined with the expression εξ ἔθος—a variant of the much more popular phrase κατὰ τὸ ἔθος (see also Mountford 027, where a yet different form, πρὸς τὸ ἔθος, is applied). The expressions can be translated as ‘because of custom’, ‘according to custom’, and ‘to fulfil the custom’ respectively, and suggest permanent donations, most probably disbursed every year, perhaps in tranches. Most Apionic offerings to monasteries are labelled as customary, suggesting stable support of the institutions by the estate. Based on the preserved documents we are unable to say whether or not the ‘Apionic’ monasteries received prosphorai in the narrow meaning of the term—that of a donation for a mass. PSI I 89 records a customary prosphora of twenty-five artabae of wheat; the amount seems small in comparison with some of the figures appearing in other customary donations not labelled as prosphorai (cf. Mountford 026 or P. Oxy. XVI 1911 and LV 3804, entries for the monastery of Abba Andreas), yet it is quite large for a Eucharistic offering. The monastery of Abba Hermes is also granted 13 dipla of vinegar in P. Oxy. XXVII 2480; this latter offering, made λόγῳ εἰσεβείας κατὰ τὸ ἔθος—a customary allowance motivated by piety—was most probably supposed for immediate consumption, and suggests

62 PSI I 89 (25 VII–23 VIII 605): ἐξ ἔθος διὰ Κοσμᾶ προνοητοῦ Τερύθεως εἰς τὸν Ἱγίτον ἀββᾶ Ἐρμῆς λόγῳ προσφορᾷ (διὰ) ἔξ ἔθος καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἑυθείας ἑτοίμου (κτισμῶν) στίτου κυριακῆς ἐκκυριακῶς γίνονται σίτου (ς) καὶ κυριακῆς ἐκκυριακῶς (ὑπερ) ἐμβολής καὶ ἑκάτης † (Given through Kosmas, pronotai of Terythis, to the holy Abba Hermes as prosphora according to custom and in the ninth indiction, twenty-five artabae of wheat in cancellus-measure; total: 25 artabae of wheat in cancellus-measure, only; year 281 and 250, month Mesore, in the eighth indiction, for embole of the ninth). Abba Hermes is identified with the koinobion mentioned in P. Oxy. XXVII 2480, l. 46, as a recipient of οὐκος.
modest support of the estate in satisfying the monks’ needs. The monastery of Abba Hermes is the only institution recorded as receiving both vinegar and wheat, while the other establishments are granted only one kind of product.\textsuperscript{63}

Concerning prosporai, Todd Hickey observed that no monasteries appear in the account of extraordinary offerings, \textit{P. Oxy.} LVIII 3960; Hickey connects this document with the premature death of Apion III. He concluded, following Ewa Wipszycka against Arthur Steinwenter, that monasteries were not institutions of choice for mortuary offerings.\textsuperscript{64} \textit{P. Oxy.} LXVII 4620, ll. 2–4, lists an allowance εἰς τὴν ἁγιὰ(αν) προσφορ(αν) τῆς μάμμης (ἀρτάβαι) ισι [‘for the holy prospora of the grandmother: 416 artabae’].\textsuperscript{65} The document, however, does not specify which institutions were supposed to receive the offering, which seems to have no connection with other entries which speak of donations of grain to ‘widows of the church of Phoibammon’, and contributions to churches and monasteries.\textsuperscript{66} Therefore, the document does not elucidate the question of the monasteries’ role in commemorating the members of the Apion family. As the character of prospora recorded in \textit{PSI I} 89 is difficult to determine, the question must remain open.

The disbursements κατὰ τὸ ἐθος (except for the already discussed \textit{PSI I} 89) appear in two variants: λόγῳ εὐσεβείας, ‘because of piety’ and ‘by written order’ (ἐκ κελεύσεως ἀπὸ γραμμάτων). The disbursements λόγῳ εὐσεβείας to monasteries feature only in \textit{P. Oxy.} XXVII 2480, ll. 31, 46, 119, and 120, out of which only two (200 diplo of vinegar for a monastery of Abba Jeremias in the Thebaid, and 13 diplo for the κοινόβιον of Abba Hermes) are also κατὰ τὸ ἐθος.\textsuperscript{67} Interestingly, the document shows that also institutions located far from Oxyrhynchus received regular gifts from the Apions. Moreover, they received products which were by no means luxurious but constituted an element of everyday monastic diet.\textsuperscript{68}

The donations made ‘by written order’ of the head of the family include the largest disbursements: 1112 artabae of wheat accorded in \textit{P. Oxy.} XVI 1911 and \textit{P. Oxy.} LV 3804 to the

\textsuperscript{63} The accounts of \textit{oinocheiristai} were made centrally by functionaries appointed for the whole estate; we would expect to find in them institutions we encounter in the accounts of \textit{pronometai} or locally issued receipts; this, however, is not the case, except for the monastery of Abba Hermes.


\textsuperscript{65} The document is attributed to the Apion dossier based on several names of churches that appear in other documents connected with the family; see \textit{P. Oxy.} LXVII, pp. 250–251.


\textsuperscript{67} \textit{P. Oxy.} XXVII 2480, l. 31 εἰς τὸ κοινόβιον ἄββα Ιερημίου ἐν Ὑπαλλήλῳ λόγῳ εὐσεβείας κατὰ τὸ ἐθος; l. 46: εἰς τὸ κοινόβιον ἄββα Εἰρήνη λόγῳ εὐσεβείας κατὰ τὸ [τὸ] ἐθος. Several monasteries of Apa Jeremias are attested in the Late Antique documentary material; see S. J. Clackson in \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} p. 33. Cf. also the Antaiopolite monastery of Apa Jeremias in \textit{P. Cairo Magp.} I 67007 and \textit{P. Cairo Magp.} II 67151 (see below, Chapter 2, pp. 91 and 106).

\textsuperscript{68} On monastic diet reconstructed based on literary records and information obtained from documentary and archaeological sources, see M. Mossakowska-Gaubert, ‘Alimentation, hygiène, vêtements et sommeil chez les
monastery of Abba Andreas. This yearly disbursement is made up of three parts: 1000 artabae described as ‘κατὰ τὸ ἐξὸς […] allocated to them (i.e. the monks) by written order of the lord consul’; 100 artabae given by the order of the late Flavius Strategios, and an extra 12 artabae ‘on the day of the great man’ (the feast of the monastery’s patron, Abba Andreas).69

The cost of transport of donated wheat was also covered by the estate and duly noted in the accounts.70 P. Oxy. I 146 (555) is another text connected with the monastery of Abba Andreas and transport. In the document, monks from the monastery of Abba Andreas pay Serenos the stableman for transporting chaff and hay from ‘the landlord’s barn’ (γεωργικὴ χορτοθήκη) to the stable (στάβλον) which most probably belonged to the monastery. Giovanni Ruffini tried to find a connection between the monastery and the Oxyrhynchite family of Eulogios by identifying Serenos of P. Oxy. I 146 with Aurelius Serenos σταβλίτης τοῦ ὀξέως ὁμόμοιου in P. Oxy. I 140.71 Margaret Mountford, based on terminological differences between P. Oxy. I 140 and 146, prefers to see the two Serenoi as two distinct people and connects P. Oxy. I 146 with the Apionic dossier.72 This interpretation seems reasonable; P. Oxy. I 146 would simply testify to another facet of relations of the monastery with the estate. The grain donations, which are best seen as pious distributions, were transported on the Apions’ expense; covering of the transport costs was perhaps a part of the gift. However, the costs of transport of other goods, which had nothing to do with donations, had to be covered by the monastery. Whether hay and chaff were bought or obtained for free remains uncertain, as P. Oxy. I 146 deals only with transportation costs. Mountford suggests that the products were destined for animals belonging to the monastery (curiously, she mentions horses and mules; especially the former seem out of place in monastic context; I would suggest donkeys or, less probably, camels, which were more common pack animals).73 It is interesting to observe


71 Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 1), pp. 67–68.

72 P. Oxy. I 140, l. 12, mentions Serenos undertaking duties σταβλίτης τοῦ ἄυτοῦ ὀξέως ὁμόμοιου, while P. Oxy. I 146 is issued Σερένοι σταβλίτης (τοῦ) βασιλικοῦ (στάβλου).

73 M. Mountford, Documentary papyri (cit. n. 9), commentary to 026. Cf. Gascou, ‘Les grands domaines’ (cit. n. 1), p. 180 with n. 324. Here, the situation is interpreted in the following manner: ‘Le stabilité Sérenos (le même que celui de P. Oxy. I 140?) donne quittance à des moines pour leur contribution à cette fête à la koubilisai depuis le fenil.
that the monastery was apparently unable to supply its animals with necessary fodder, which implies lack of sufficient land tracts from which hay and straw could be obtained.

Let us have a closer look at the donations recorded by *pronoetai* in *P. Oxy.* XVI 1911 and *P. Oxy.* LV 3804. The basis of the donation is constituted by 1000 artabae of customary allowance ‘allocated … by written order of the lord consul’ (Flavius Apion II). Flavius Strategios III added to this allowance 100 artabae of wheat, also by written order (*P. Oxy.* LV 3840, ll. 186–187: ὀμοὶ(ος) ἀπὸ γραμμ(άτων) ἐκ κελέσσως τοῦ ἐν εὐαγεί τῇ μνήμῃ πατρικίου Στρατηγίου). 74

Entries recording offerings of the ‘lord consul’ and Strategios are in both cases separated by a mention of twelve artabae disbursed ‘on the day of the great man’ (ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ μεγάλου ἀνθρώπου). 75 The expression ‘great man’ is to be found in Greek Late Antique documentary record only once, in the much earlier (348) *P. Anton* I 3, col. III, l. 19: ἐπέμην ἐπὶ φίλου τινὸς πα[ρ]ά 

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76 For the discussion of Apionic genealogy and chronology thanks to which we are able to identify family members mentioned in the documents, see the works quoted in n. 4.

77 Wrongly identified as birthday of one of the Apions in the *editio princeps*; this interpretation was repeated by Thomas, *Private Religious Institutions* (cit. n. 8), p. 86. J. Rea, in his commentary to *P. Oxy.* LV 3805, proposes the interpretation which I follow here.

78 For Polemonos and its attestations in Apionic documents, see Mountford, *Documentary papyri* (cit. n. 9); Mazza, *L’archivio* (cit. n. 1), p. 94, n. 105, and p. 184; Benaisa, *Rural Settlements* (cit. n. 23), p. 244–245. Mountford underscores (after A. Papaconstantinou, *Le culte des saints en Egypte des Byzantins aux Abbassides. L’apport des inscriptions et des papyri gres et coptes*, Paris 2001, pp. 240–241), that persons bearing the double designation ἀναπαύτως ἄββα may have been more prestigious than those labelled only ἄββα. The fact that we would be dealing with an exceptionally important local monastic figure could perhaps account for the Apions’ reverence and extraordinary largesse.

79 Disbursements for religious and charitable institutions could be made at any moment of the year; the receipts *P. Oxy.* XVI 1898; *P. Oxy.* XVI 1993; and *P. Oxy.* LXI 4131 are dated respectively to 13 March, 9 March, and 18 (?)
Mountford 026 does not contain information on its issuer, but we may suspect that it was drawn up in the unit directly responsible for the disbursement—perhaps Polemonos itself—and at some point sent to Oxyrhynchos, to serve as a proof that the allowance for the monastery had been handed over in due time. As no title of the payment is mentioned in the document, we do not know if the disbursement was a tranche of the allowance of 1112 artabae we know from later accounts, P. Oxy. XVI 1911 and P. Oxy. LV 3804.79 Other texts documenting disbursements of wheat to monasteries found in the Apionic documentation (Mountford 027: Abba Petros; Mountford 028: Abba Kastor) cannot be matched with any parallel mentions in the extant accounts of pronoeai, which makes us unable to determine whether the figures recorded therein represent fractions of donations, or total amounts.

P. Oxy. XVI 1913 records a donation of the considerable amount of 400 artabae of wheat to the monastery of Abba Apollo (ll. 8–9: εἰς τὸ κοινόβιον ἀββᾶ Ἀπολλό τί κελεύσ(εος) ἀπὸ γραμμ(άτων) τοῦ δεσπότ(ου) ἠμῶν τοῦ ὑπάτου ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱνδ(ικτόνος) καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γ ἱνδ(ικτόνος) σίτου κ(αγκέλλῳ) (ἀρτάβαι) ν).80 The donation is not labelled as customary; however, if we assume that δεσπότης ἠμῶν ὁ ὑπάτος is again to be identified with Flavius Apion II, who had been long dead at the moment when the document was drawn up (ca. 555?), we would be dealing with a continued tradition of offerings, perhaps of a commemorative character.81

The extant data on donations for monasteries does not allow us to determine if the institutions recorded in the dossier constituted a part of the supposed Apionic ‘ecclesiastical empire’. The character of our documentation makes it impossible to determine if the monasteries we see interacting with the estate were established and sustained by the Apions, or just ‘lay-supported’ (to use Thomas’s phraseology) communities whose beginnings were quite

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79 From the chronological point of view, this is not impossible. According to Sarris, Economy and Society (cit. n. 1), p. 19, Flavius Stratigos III died in the early 540s; thus, in 548 the offering of 1112 artabae of wheat could have already taken its final form known from the accounts of the 550s and 560s. Mountford, who juxtaposed the document of the heirs of Kyriakos with P. Oxy. XVI 1911 and P. Oxy. LV 3804, arrived at the conclusion that between 548 and 556–557 (the date of P. Oxy. XVI 1911) Polemonos ceased to belong to pronoeai responsible for supplying wheat for Abba Andreas’s offering (Mountford, Documentary Papyri [cit. n. 9], p. 215). On the size and composition of Apionic pronoeai, see Mazza, L’archivio (cit. n. 1), pp. 84–102.

80 P. Oxy. XVI 1913, l. 58, records two other donations to monks: τοῖς μοναζ(ουσι) Πρύχθεως σίτ(ου) κ(αγκέλλῳ) (ἀρτάβαι) κ, και τοῖς μοναζ(ουσι) Βερκ(αγκέλλῳ) (ἀρτάβαι) κ, (ὑπόστατον) σίτου κ(αγκέλλῳ) (ἀρτάβαι) μ. They bear no label and therefore are difficult to classify.

The coenobium of Abba Apollo in P. Oxy. XVI 1913 is difficult to identify; Sarah J. Clackson wanted to connect the attestation with the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit; see Clackson, ‘Reconstructing the archives’ (cit. n. 23), pp. 220–221.

81 For commemoration of the dead and the role of charitable donations in guaranteeing salvation of the soul, see P. Brown, The Ransom of the Soul. Afterlife and Wealth in Early Western Christianity, Cambridge MA–London 2015. The book focuses on the Latin-speaking part of the Christian Mediterranean, but offers a good presentation of the mindset and attitude that must have been largely common to the elites in both parts of the Empire.
We know practically nothing of these communities’ assets and thus are unable to estimate, even in the most hypothetical manner, what significance the estate’s contribution had for the institutions’ economy. If we proceed to purely theoretical estimations, assuming that one artaba sufficed to feed one person during a month, it turns out that, yearly, 1112 artabae for Abba Andreas could sustain ca. 92 monks; 400 artabae for Abba Apollos—ca. 33; and 319 artabae for Abba Petros—ca. 26. It would thus appear that the estate could secure maintenance food rations for one large and two small to medium-sized communities. There are, however, some reservations to be made. First, even though monastic diet was supposed to be frugal, one could barely expect the inhabitants of the monasteries—especially the sick—to live off wheat only; our documents do not speak of gifts of other products to these monasteries and we can assume that, to a certain extent, the monks must have been ready to fend for themselves. Second, and more importantly, we have all reasons to think that the allowances were not intended for the monks’ sustenance, but, first and foremost, for charitable distributions. Charitable activity of the monasteries is practically invisible in the papyri (except for some dubious—and much later—mentions in the dossiers of Bawit; see Chapter 4, p. 198). It is, on the other hand, well-attested in literary sources, such as the Shenoutean corpus. One sixth-century document of the Aphrodito dossier, P. Cairo Masp. III 67312 (567)—a testament of an Antinopolite resident Flavius Theodoros—states that the proceeds from the testator’s property, which was to be inherited by a monastery, were to be spent on ἐνσέβεις διάδοσις with the intention of helping the testator’s soul attain salvation (see below, Chapter 2, pp. 90–91). It is possible that also the wheat allowances, which, as we could see, were so often established ἐκ κελεύσ(εως) ἀπὸ γραμμ(άτων) (which implies a formal act of donation or testamentary provisions), were allotted to the monasteries so that they could be distributed to the poor and needy. Charity was one of the major duties of a Christian and an important element of self-presentation in Christian Empire, but the way charitable deeds were performed was just as important as the deeds themselves. Donations to the poor were considered much more soul-profiting if they passed through the hands of monks or clerics. The Apions were both pious and independent. The Oxyrhynchite nome had a rich tradition of thriving religious life. In the fourth century, the city of Oxyrhynchos itself was supposed to have housed ten thousand monks and twenty thousand nuns (HM 28.1), while the population of the city in the fourth century is estimated at thirty thousand people (see R. Alston, The City in Roman and Byzantine Egypt, London 2002, pp. 331–334. Even if this testimony should be approached with due scepticism, there can be little doubt that when the Apions established themselves as one of the leading powers in the nome, the local landscape included already a number of religious institutions.

For Shenoutean sources, see López, Shenoute of Atripe (cit. n. 11), passim.

See also Rémondon, ‘L’Église’ (cit. n. 5), p. 274: ‘Ainsi, par le biais de la curatelle, le monastère est transformé, d’une part, en centre de production, en atelier travaillant pour une puissante famille (songez aux moines de St. André); d’autre part, en centre de distribution de ses aumônes personelles, c’est-à-dire en moyen de pression ou de propagande’. Rémondon’s rather harsh phraseology, which serves to underscore the position of the monasteries’ regrettable dependence on great estates, does not do justice to the role played by patronage in rural societies in Late Antiquity. The element of self-presentation through benefactions was omnipresent in ancient societies well
ambitious, and bestowed large donations which were supposed to secure both their salvation and their good fame as benefactors. The family had special links with the local monastery of Abba Andreas: this is clear not only from the amounts of grain the institution was supposed to receive, but also the particular reverence towards its patron, whose feast was an occasion for an extra donation which, however modest, is unparalleled in the dossier. Large donations received by the monastery point to its importance to the Apions, which might have had various reasons, not necessarily the fact that it had been established, sustained, and controlled by the family. It would be equally risky to formulate a firm conclusion that other monasteries which received grain donations depended for their survival on the Apionic estate, as the monks were perhaps not supposed to consume the grain at all. The information we have is not sufficient to label these communities as ‘Apionic’ monasteries.

In the Apionic dossier, we do not have much to build on as far as monastic assets are concerned. At least some of the monasteries that appear in the documents could possess or lease land in the Oxyrhynchite which would provide them with means for subsistence (cf. P. Oxy. LV 3805, l. 67: ὃ(ῶ) τῶν μοναξ(ῶντων) τοῦ ἀγ(ίου) Φοιβάμμονος ἐν Θωμιανάκωμος ὑ(πὲρ) τῆς Νήσου Ταπετρωνίου ἰδ(ωτικῶ) νο(μισμάτια(?)) ἱ(ζητούμενο) ἀ(πὸ) τῶν ἱ(δημερίας) τῶν Πατριαρχῶν ἀ(πὸ) τῆς Προφορᾶς Ἀλεξανδρείας ἐν Θμοινακώμοις, for [land in] Nesou Tapetroniou: 14 solidi; carried off by the river). Thanks to P. Oxy. LXIII 4397, on the other hand, we may catch a glimpse if not of monastic landowning, then at least of the interest that some monasteries in the region had in land possession.

The affair, described in detail in the document, concerned the possession of a plot of 16 ½ arourae of irrigated land (μηχανή), pledged by its owner, Diogenes, first to Flavius Strategios II, before the spread of Christianity and constituted an important element of social harmony. For a modernised view on the questions of rural patronage, see López, Shenoute of Atripe (cit. n. 11), pp. 74–101. On the role of Egyptian monks in the care of the poor, see P. Brown, Treasure in Heaven. The Holy Poor in Early Christianity, Charlottesville–London 2016, pp. 89–108.

85 The amounts for grain destined for the monastery of Abba Andreas appear even more significant if we compare them with data from P. Oxy. XVI 1906 (embole account; sixth–seventh century). This document, whose association with the Apionic estate is unfortunately only hypothetical, records προφορὰ Αλεξανδρείας amounting to 1780 artabae of grain, which could be interpreted as Apionic allowance for Alexandrian religious institutions (see Wipszycka, Les ressources [cit. n. 38] 1972, p. 86, where another interpretation, making the prophets Alexandri à in P. Oxy. XVI 1906 a testimony of the Emperor Constantine’s permanent subvention for the Church, is also referred). If we are indeed dealing with an Apionic document, we can observe that the allowance for the otherwise unknown monastery of Abba Andreas amounts to 62% of Alexandrian donation. However, given the uncertain attribution of the document, this comparison is of small value.

86 The entry records a payment which an Apionic pronoetes was supposed to collect from the monastery as a part of the eikou’s paragarchic duties (for this aspect of the functioning of great landed property, see Gascoù, ‘Les grands domaines’ [cit. n. 1]). The sum, however, has never been actually paid, and the enigmatic word ποταμοφοροθηθ at the end of the line—interpreted as ‘carried off by the river’ indicates that the parcel may have been entirely destroyed (see J. R. Rea, commentary to P. Oxy. LV 3805, p. 170). Νεσοί were a particular and volatile category of land, created and destroyed by the river (for the category of land ποταμοφόρητος, see D. Bonneau, Le fisc et le Nil: incidences des irrégularités de la crue du Nil sur la fiscalité foncière dans l’Egypte grecque et romaine, Paris 1971, pp. 69–70).
then to the monastery of Apa Hierax. The monastery had to resign its claim due to the priority of Strategios’s loan. Even though the monks found out that they had no legal basis to demand the plot, they probably were still willing to acquire land, as shown by the further development in the narrative. After the written order of Strategios II, the Oxyrhynchite estate staff paid 58 solidi to the monastery; the other 72 solidi were deposited with the city’s zygostates Serenos, ‘with the intent that he should lend them out and provide the income from them each year to the well-sanctified coenobitic monastery until the time when there should be found an irrigated area for sale and the same well-sanctified coenobitic monastery should buy this and until the same Serenos should give the pound of gold (i.e. the seventy-two solidi) in respect of part of the price of the irrigated area, found and about to be sold, to the same well-sanctified coenobitic monastery.’

The monastery finally did not acquiesce in this solution and asked for the return of the whole sum; most probably, the monks wished to have a firmer grip on their finances. One should note, however, that the solution proposed by the Apionic staff was a response to the monks’ argumentation during their first encounter with Strategios, as they ‘begged the same Strategios of all well-famed memory not to make use of the law and of the rights belonging to him but to have regard to piety and to the neediness of the brothers in the said well-sanctified coenobitic monastery who required the same one hundred and thirty solidi for the acquisition of their necessary sustenance’. This essentially shows that by the involvement in the whole affair the monks hoped to increase their permanent assets. Although they ultimately failed to obtain Diogenes’s meche, they ended up receiving the whole sum they had lent, and dispensed with additional intermediaries. Nothing in the text indicates any form of patronage on the Apions’ side: their staff seems to be generally unconcerned with the monastery’s affairs unless requested, and no recourse to any tradition of previous relations is made in the argument. Theophilos, bereft of legal grounds for vindication in the dispute with Strategios, invokes only general feelings of piety and care for the well-being of the koinobion. Apion and Leontia’s favourable disposition, as described in the document, results from their natural


inclination towards piety and care for supplicants, especially if the latter are ‘the most pious men’.\textsuperscript{90}
In \textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII 4397 we are certainly dealing with an independent monastic establishment. Certainly, the situation of the monastery of Abba Hierax was exceptional: the institution must have been well-off, given that it could afford several journeys of its representatives to Constantinople; Theophilos, moreover, had at his disposal considerable sums of money he could lend to Diogenes.\textsuperscript{91} The exact sources of the monastery’s wealth remain unknown, but we may securely assume that at least a part of the income would have derived from landed property.\textsuperscript{92} Concern about land transpires from Abba Hierax’s stance in the whole affair: the monastery’s ultimate aim is to gain land, not money. Giovanni Ruffini claims that the community was actually competing with the \textit{endoxos oikos} in estate expansion.\textsuperscript{93} Even if this is an overstatement, it is true that the monastery’s main care was to secure a permanent source of revenue, not only to reclaim the forfeit sum of money. Ruffini also observes that all witnesses to the settlement were asked to participate in the deed by Ioseph and Theodoros, the monastery’s representatives, and argues that by calling the local Flavii the monastery sought to enhance the credibility of the agreement in the eyes of the Apions.\textsuperscript{94} It is a mere speculation, but we could possibly assume that the monastery’s ‘managerial board’ knew the local notables from landowning-based interactions similar to those attested in the Aphrodito dossier (see below, Chapter 2).\textsuperscript{95} Abba Hierax’s willingness to acquire land as a result of moneylending activity bears a certain resemblance to the actions of Phoibammon son of

\textsuperscript{90} \textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII 4397, ll. 122–123: ἐμφύτως ἐχοντες πρὸς εὐσέβειαν καὶ ἐπιρρεπεῖς ὅντις τὰς αἰτήσεις τῶν δομένων, μέλιστα τῶν εὐλαβεστῶν ἀνδρῶν.

\textsuperscript{91} The purpose of Theophilos’s first journey with which the whole story begun is obscure. J. R. Rea, in the commentary to the text (\textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII, p. 162) stated simply that ‘it (i.e. the monastery) had business which took its representatives to the capital of the empire’; J. Urbanik supposed that Theophilos was ‘a regular envoy of Apa Hierax, who would travel to the Bosporus, whenever there was a need to put in a petition at the imperial courts’ (Urbanik, \textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII 43976 [cit. n. 22], p. 229). Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 169, writes that the monks were probably ’seeking fiscal exemptions or privileges, or perhaps they sought audience with a member of the Egyptian Apion family residing in the capital’.

\textsuperscript{92} See Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 169, where a link is established between the possession of liquid cash, land purchases, and mortgage; ibid., p. 170, it is stated that Apa Hierax’s representation in Constantinople either possessed a surprisingly large sum of money, or was able to borrow it. In this second case, the monastery would have been able to find people willing to vouchsafe for it: ‘perhaps someone from the Constantinopolitan palace of the Apions, who knew of the monastery’. It thus must have been known that the establishment possessed assets considerable enough to make it a dependable debtor, even in case of such a large loan.

\textsuperscript{93} Ruffini, \textit{Social Networks} (cit. n. 1), p. 90.

\textsuperscript{94} Ruffini, \textit{Social Networks} (cit. n. 1), p. 91: ‘the monks were not intimidated by the Apionic estates, for they went to some lengths to recoup their lost investment, including the recruitment of powerful landowners as social counterweights. Perhaps the monks approached these other Flavii because their social connections to the Apions would provide credibility and assurance to the Apionic estate that the settlement they made would last’. To this we may add the remark in Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 170: ‘It does not cease to amaze me that, first of all, a small monastery was able to send a delegation—twice—to the imperial capital, and second, that the monks were in possession of such a huge sum of money, or were able to borrow it on the spot (so they found people who were ready to vouch for them, perhaps someone from the Constantinopolitan palace of the Apions, who knew of the monastery). All this makes us think of an influential institution, recognisable not only in the Oxyrhynchite nome, but also outside its borders.

\textsuperscript{95} See Ruffini, \textit{Social Networks}, p. 89, with n. 193 and 194 for references to documents in which the witnesses of \textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII 4397, Flavii Philoxenos and Phib appear as landowners or contributors.
Triadelphos from Aphrodito. Interesting though P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 is, the reading of the document may result in a pessimistic stance about the state of our sources: an institution which, on the basis of previously known P. Oxy. LI 3640 seemed rather insignificant, when seen through a prism of another document turns out to be a firmly established community acquainted with local elites.

Thus the commentary to the edition, P. Oxy. LXIII 4397, p. 162; Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 1), p. 90.

P. Oxy. LI 3640 (533), together with other small documents from the Apionic archive—receipts and orders of delivery—contributed to the formation of the opinion about the monasteries’ dependence on the estate. The monks were thought to have been obliged to produce various goods at the estate administrators’ bidding and deliver them free of charge. The supposition that the monks did not receive remuneration for their work is based on the fact that none of the documents record any form of payment for the ordered or delivered goods. However, the bread-delivery dossier connected with the monastery of Apa Mousaios (P. Oxy. XVI 1952; P. Oxy. LXXII 4926–4928) suggests a well-organised enterprise which was most probably pre-arranged by the estate and monastery administrators; the details of these arrangements, such as forms of payment and the schedule of the transports of grain (which was certainly provided by the estate) could have been contained in a separate document that has not been preserved. Ordering bread seems to appear also outside the Apionic dossier, as suggested by P. Monts. Roca inv. no. 619. The text, of unknown provenance, is dated to the sixth–seventh centuries. It is an order of delivery sent from a certain Hierakion to Metras the monk: Τῷ εὐλαβεστάτῳ ἀμβρα Μήτρᾳ μονάζ(οντι) 'Ιεράκιων |

96 For Phoibammon son of Triadelphos, a member of the family of Dioskoros the notary and an enterprising Aphroditan landowner, who acquired at least a part of his holdings as a result of his moneylending activity, see J. Keenan, ‘Aurelius Phoibammon, son of Triadelphus: a Byzantine Egyptian land entrepreneur’, B.ASIP 17 (1980), pp. 145–154. See also Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 1), pp. 161–162.

97 Thus Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 87, Rémondon, L’Église (cit. n. 5), p. 274.

98 For the assumption that grain was provided by the estate, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 195. We know that people working on irrigation installations in the estate were given grain as a part of their retribution. For instance, the Apionic P. Wash. I 28 (sixth–seventh century), a list of payments in money and grain to various people (a brickmaker, potamitai, a builder) connected with a lakkoos of Meskanounis. The brick-maker and the potamitai receive both money and grain for their work (see ll. 3–4: τῷ πλαν[θοποτη]ού λάχκου Μπικανούνις νο[μίσματα] ε ρ(όλλας) κ και σι(του) (ἀρτάβαι) κ τοίς πομα[τίας] υφ(ή) μισθ(ού) λάχκου νο[μίσματα] δ κερ(άπα) σι και σι(του) (ἀρτάβαι) δ. Interestingly, the same toponym, Meskanounis, recurs in P. Oxy. LXXII 4926, where the monastery of Mousaios is ordered to deliver the three hundred breads for the onomata of Meskanounis. For potamitai and their wages in cash and in kind, see F. Morelli, ‘Sulle retribuzioni nell’Egitto bizantino: il caso dei potamitai’, [in] Pop. Congr. XXI, vol. II, pp. 727–737. The monastery of Apa Mousaios need not have been a large institution; cf. the quite sophisticated bread-baking facilities in the laura of Epiphanius in Thebes, dated to the sixth–seventh century (P. Mon. Epiph. 1, pp. 53–54). For general information on bread production in the monasteries, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, pp. 187–191.

99 For general information on bread production in the monasteries, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, pp. 187–191.

100 See S. Torallas-Tovar & K. Worp, ‘Three Greek Montserrat texts related to the monastery of Apa Apollo’, [in] P. Clackson, pp. 126–127. Due to the lack of mention of the name of the monastic institution, the document is difficult to connect in a plausible manner with a known monastery. The editors associate the text with the eighth-century Coptic orders of payment from Bawit (P. Bruc. Bawit 14–16). The Bawit texts, however, seem to be products of internal monastic administration, while the Montserrat piece has all the appearances of a document delivered to a monastery from the ‘world outside’. Other texts from the same collection are probably of Hermopolite provenance.
The editors assumed that the bread was destined for workers as their payment in kind, and the ‘labourers of Dorané’ might have been people working in a particular location. The figures in the document are modest if we compare them with hundreds of loaves attested in the Apionic texts, but the mechanism seems the same and the form of the document bears a striking resemblance to the pieces from Apa Mousaios’s dossier. Although the Montserrat order is isolated, it seems that it was one in a series of documents of the same kind: the sender, Hierakion, introduces himself only by his name, which suggests that the recipient knew well with whom he was dealing. Just like in the case of its Apionic counterparts, no payment for the monastery is mentioned.

Another group of short texts from the Apionic dossier bears testimony to deliveries of other products from monasteries to the estate: ropes and mats. Literary sources suggest that plaiting ropes and weaving baskets—activities which did not interfere with constant prayer—were the preferable way in which anchorites could earn their living; production of mats is connected in monastic literature with the Pachomian milieu. From both literary texts and documentary attestations we learn that monks sold their produce. Sometimes they had to go very far to do it, like the Pachomians voyaging to Alexandria, or the brothers from Jeme who in the eighth century went for this purpose as far as the Fayum. Ewa Wipszycka emphasises that monks could not count on numerous purchasers in the countryside, as ropes and baskets were manufactured at home, limiting considerably the marketability of the monastic products. In the Oxyrhynchite nome, however, some monasteries could count on the Apionic estate to make use of a part of their produce. Three of the establishments known from Apionic documentation delivered their produce to the estate: the monasteries of Abba Hierax, Abba Andreas, and Abba Kastor (see, Table 3, p. 477 with n. 4, for the references to literary sources (Apophthegms) and secondary literature).

101 Translation (after P. Monts. Roca IV, p. 275): ‘To the most pious Abba Metras the monk, Hierakion. Deliver to the labourers of Dorané, eighteen loaves of bread, total 18 loaves of bread. In the month of Mesore on the 24th of the first indiction’.

102 The editors of the text assume that ἄγγαρ(ευταῖς) Δωράνης is either an uninflected form of a masculine name, a female genitive, or a geographical name. The latter option seems most probable to me, although we cannot pinpoint any possible location.

103 Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, p. 519.

104 For Pachomian monks travelling to Alexandria to sell mats made by the monks, see G 113; for the Theban monks and their voyage to the Fayum, see CLT 3 (728/729 or 745). The text is a petition addressed to an emir (pagarch) with a request to grant monks of the monastery of Apa Paulos in Jeme a permission to travel north with their produce. (‘Since some monks of the Kulol of Apa Paulos on the mount of Jeme […] wished to go north to the district of the Fayum and sell their small amount of rope which is the result of their labours, they are unable to do this without a permit (seal) from your lordship. Therefore, we request your revered lordship to order that a permit be given to them for the period of three months from today on, so that they find a way to go north and sell their small amount of rope’; translation after A. Schiller in CLT).
The production of both mats and ropes of the kind mentioned in our documents, destined for watering devices, required some professional skills (especially in the case of mats), collaboration, and equipment, however simple.\textsuperscript{106}

If we look at the units that received mats and ropes from the monasteries we observe that they were located in the city of Oxyrhynchos or its immediate vicinity.\textsuperscript{107} The documents are not numerous enough to allow for any conclusions concerning patterns of delivery. Ropes and mats could be delivered in response to current needs of the units. \textit{P. Oxy. XVI} 2015, however, reveals some details of the organisation of production. The document is a receipt for ropes delivered by the monks of the monastery of Abba Andreas to Biktor, bath attendant of the baths of the ‘great house’, i.e. the Oxyrhynchite residence of the Apions. The text is worth quoting in its entirety:

\begin{verbatim}
εὖδο\(\theta\(\eta\)) δι\(\alpha\) τῶν μοναζ\(\delta\)ντον Ἀββᾶ Ἀνδρέου Βίκτορι περιχύτη μ. [……] | τοῦ γενουχικ\(ο\(υ\)) \(\lambda\)ουτρ\(ο\(υ\)) τῆς μεγαλ\(\eta\)ς οἰκ\(\delta\)ίας εἰς χρε\(ϊ\)σ\(σ\ρ\)ν τῆς τοῦ λαου\[τρ\(ο\(υ\)) | ὡν\(ν\)λη\(σ\)σ\(ω\)ς \) ἄπο μη\(ν\)ος | \(\Theta\[\omega\θ\) ἵνδ\(ι\)κτίονος) ἔτως Μεσορῆ τῆς αὐτής ἓ ἵνδ\(ι\)κτίονος, τῶν μη\(ν\)ον γ, σχοι\[ν\(ι\)ς) | ἦτοι κρ\(ί\)κ\(ο\)ς) α \(\z\)ης, σχοι\[ν\(ι\)ς) εἵτ\(ο\)ι κρ\(ί\)κ\(ο\)ς α \(\z\)ης, γύ\(ν\)νονται) [τοῦ] λουτροῦ ἐνασ\(δ\)θ\(ο\)υ σχοι\[ν\(ι\)ς) ἦτοι κρ\(ί\)κ\(ο\)ς) \(\sigma\)μ\(ν\)ονα. \(\text{hand 2}) σχοι\[ν\(ι\)ς) ἦτοι κρ\(ί\)κ\(ο\)ς) \(\v\) | \(\v\) | (hand 1) (ἐκ\(τους) σλβ σα Θό\(δ\) ἕτος Μεσορῆ ἓ\(ν\)δ\(ι\)κτίονος) τε\[τ\]όρ\(τ\)ότις.\textsuperscript{108}
\end{verbatim}

The delivery covered three months; the total number of coils to be provided by monks during the year was six. Probably experience dictated the replacement of ropes approximately every three months to ensure good functioning of the watering equipment in the baths; based on it, the staff of the baths made arrangements with the monks for the supply of ropes. It is possible that the monks received remuneration for their work; maybe it was paid in advance or after the last tranche was delivered to the estate. It seems that the monastery of Abba Andreas was especially concerned with producing both ropes for baths equipment and mats for the use of its personnel during at least two years in a row. That arrangements between estate units and monasteries were not necessarily permanent is shown by \textit{SB} XVIII 14061 (556) and Mountford 029 (549)—both referring to the \textit{saqiya} of the \textit{topos} of Elias located in the estate ‘outside the gate’

\textsuperscript{106} For the production of mats, see Wipszycka, \textit{Moines et communautés}, pp. 511–512, 537, 544. For the production of ropes for watering equipment, which requires simple equipment and some amount of cooperation, see L. Menassa & P. Laferrière, \textit{La saqia: technique et vocabulaire de la roue à eau égyptienne}, Cairo 1974, pp. 14–18.

\textsuperscript{107} Except, perhaps, for μη\(κ\)ανή Χοιριδίων, which the editor, Margaret Mountford connects with \textit{ktēma} Psaei in the Apionic estate (\textit{Mountford, Documentaire papyri} [cit. n. 9]). The place in the text is mutilated; l. 3 of the document reads: παραχε\(υ\) εἰς χρε\(ϊ\)σ\(σ\ρ\)ν τῆς μη\(κ\)αν\(ή\)ς κα\(λο\)μ\(σ\ρ\)νος) Χοιριδίων μη\(κ\)αν. \(\text{hand 2}) κτ\(ή\)μ\(α\) Psaei mentioned in \textit{P. Oxy.} XVIII 2197; the place is localised by Mazza in the Apionic \textit{pronosia} B associated with the village of Matreou (see Mazza, \textit{L’archivio} [cit. n. 1], p. 185).

\textsuperscript{108} ‘One rope and a half, that is, one ring of rope and a half, was given by the monks of Abba Andreas to Biktor, bath attendant of the landlord of the great house, for drawing water for the baths from the month of Thoth of the fourth indiction until Mesore of the same indiction, of three months; one rope and a half, that is, one ring of rope and a half, the total for the baths per year being six ropes, or rings of rope, only. Six ropes or rings of rope. Year 232 and 201, from Thoth to Mesore of the fourth indiction’. For the expression σχοι\[ν\(ι\)ς) ἦτοι κρ\(ί\)κ\(ο\)ς, see Bonneau, \textit{Le régime administratif} (cit. n. 87), p. 113: ‘le krikos est un anneau de corde d’une longueur determinée, pense-t-on, sur lequel sont attachés les pots’. See also Menassa & Laferrière, \textit{La saqia} (cit. n. 106), pp. 13–23.
and connected with the monasteries of Abba Andreas and Abba Kastor respectively; it is also possible that more than one monastery was simultaneously supplying ropes for a given unit of the estate.

All three monasteries which appear as deliverers of products of handicraft feature also in other documents, which, moreover, allow us to see in these monasteries institutions of some importance. Abba Andreas received extraordinarily large oblations in grain from the Apions. The monastery of Abba Kastor also received donations from the Apions (see Mountford 028, a notice of delivery of fifty artabae of wheat to the monastery) and was certainly a landowning institution, as indicated by Mountford 032—a list of payments of money dated to the early seventh century.\textsuperscript{109} The document records payments made by several high-ranking individuals (including, e.g., the heirs of the bishop of Theodosiopolis) and institutions; among the latter we find the monastery of Abba Kastor paying 30 solidi—the second largest sum after 35 solidi paid by Philoxenos scholastikos on behalf of the heirs of a woman named Kyria.\textsuperscript{110} The payments recorded in the papyrus were most probably contributions of local landowners to the public finances.\textsuperscript{111} Thanks to this document, a monastery which until now was completely unknown, turns out to have been one of important fiscal contributors in the Oxyrhynchite.

The situation of the monastery of Abba Hierax is still more complex. \textit{P. Oxy.} LI 3640 tricked scholars into thinking that it was an insignificant establishment whose role was limited to providing the estate with its modest produce—or that at least such was its situation in 533. In 545, however, we see Abba Hierax as an independent, prospering monastery, powerful enough to obtain concessions from Flavius Strategios. Did the situation change within the twelve years that separate the two documents? Was the relative power of the monastery a ‘by-product’ of its former relations with the estate? In \textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII 4397, however, nothing suggests any kind of direct dependence of Abba Hierax on the ἔνδοξος οίκος (see above, pp. 27–28). In \textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII 4397, the development of the affair and the composition of the body of witnesses point to the fact that the monastery had a confirmed position in the local networks. The example of Abba Hierax shows that the kind of participation in the estate economy attested in the receipts for ropes and mats is not indicative of the position of a monastery.

Two of the three monasteries that delivered mats and ropes to estate units—Abba Hierax and Abba Kastor—seem to have been well-off, independent institutions, possessing land or being

\textsuperscript{109} Mountford, \textit{Documentary papyri} (cit. n. 9). Despite its Oxyrhynchite provenance, the text is not connected with the archive of the Apion family. The date of the document is uncertain.


\textsuperscript{111} Cf. \textit{P. Oxy.} XVI 2020 and 2040.
in the course of its acquisition. The third one—the monastery of Abba Andreas—was of special importance for the Apions, but this, as it has been already stated, does not suffice to determine to what degree it depended on the estate for its day-to-day survival (if at all). It seems that the fact that the monasteries delivered products of handicraft is not enough to define the relation between these monasteries and the estate as one of dependence and submission. The exchange of products was just one facet of the relations which in each of the cases could have been differently shaped by different circumstances. The preference for monastic products could be dictated by economic factors, such as convenience (e.g., we know that the monastery of Abba Hierax was not far from the city and the unit to which it delivered the ropes) or pious considerations (buying products from monks was believed an act of piety and a charitable offering). Most probably, in each case the circumstances behind the arrangements were slightly different; interpreting them in terms of the monasteries’ subjugation within the frames of Apionic ‘ecclesiastic empire’ is a convenient simplification, but one that definitely obscures the complex reality behind our documents.

The house of the Apions displayed generosity towards numerous religious establishments, including monasteries. This generosity, which expressed itself in offerings of wheat, sometimes on a truly impressive scale, is a testimony to the Apions’ compliance with the expected pattern of behaviour of the Christian elite. The purpose of the donations can only be guessed, but if they were indeed of charitable character, as suggested above, we need to treat them as the measure of the Apions’ piety, not their capacity to sustain a particular number of monks. It is obvious that some establishments were more important to the Apions than others, but the reasons for it remain unclear, as the circumstances of the foundation of these monasteries and their material conditions are completely obscure. We cannot even be certain how many monasteries enjoyed a privileged status in the relations with the Apions, or simply maintained contact with the estate. For instance, until recently the monastery of Abba Kastor, which now appears to have been an important institution, was completely unknown; it is possible that editions of new texts will provide data on yet more monasteries, or further elucidate the position of those already known.

Apart from its fragmentary character, another characteristic feature of the Apionic documentation concerning monasteries is its almost absolute one-sidedness. Except for PSI XIV 1425 and Mountford 027 (the attribution of both to the archives is uncertain) there are no documents emanating from monasteries and addressed to either the landlord himself or his representatives. We could possibly expect to find some letters or petitions from monasteries, but this is not the case. The Apionic correspondence consists mainly of letters exchanged between the members of the estate staff about contemporary problems and organisational issues. Petitions in
the Apion archive are generally few.\textsuperscript{112} The petitioners in the examples gathered by Denis Feissel and Jean Gascou include an insolvent debtor, an \textit{enapigraphos georgos} who had run from a \textit{ktema} and wanted to return, a party in litigation who turns to Flavius Apion as \textit{defensor civitatis}, a person seeking defence against village magistrates, a man from an \textit{epaikion} writing about problems with a farmer, and a person informing about a night assault and theft of cattle. The preserved Apionic petitions touch upon matters connected either with the estate’s workforce and their problems, public duties of the Apions, or the relations of patronage they maintained with local residents. This silence could be treated as an accidental result of the state of preservation of our sources, were it not for the fact that also churches and charitable foundations left no trace in Apionic epistolary record or among the petitions. The only documents addressed by religious and charitable institutions to the estate are receipts for grain donations (Mountford 027—monastery of Abba Petros; \textit{P. Oxy. XVI 1898—nosokomeion} of Abba Elias; \textit{P. Oxy. XVI 1993}—church of St Thecla; \textit{P. Oxy. LXI 4131—nosokomeion} of Leukadios), drawn up in response to actions on the part of the \textit{oikos} and its representatives, and serving as a guarantee for the staff members responsible for the disbursements.

Monastic petitions and requests expressed in letters are generally rather scarce. We can quote \textit{P. Cairo Masp. I 67062} (first half of the sixth century; letter to the father of Dioskoros of Aphrodito, Apollos, with a request to take care of the affairs of the monastery of Apa Ageneios); \textit{P. Cairo Masp. I 67003} (c. 567; petition of the monks of the monastery of Pharaohous to Flavius Theodoros, \textit{dux et Augustalis} of the Thebaid, concerning an inheritance dispute); \textit{P. Cairo Masp. I 67021} (567; epistolary supplication to a high-ranking ecclesiastic concerning damage to monastic property in the Antaiopolite nome); \textit{P. Cairo Masp. I 67007} (566–570; poorly preserved petition addressed by a monk of the Antaiopolite monastery of Apa Jeremias to the \textit{dux} of the Thebaid). To this we can probably add \textit{P. Strasb. VII 697}, a sixth-century letter from an agent charged with purchase of animals for a monastery (ll. 13–14: ἐνταῦθα εἰμὶ ζητῶν βοίδια ἀγοράσαι εἰς τὰ κτήματα τοῦ μοναστηρίου) addressed to an individual styled ἡ ὑμετέρα λαμπρότης.\textsuperscript{113} The document reflects a potentially conflictual relation between a monastery and a \textit{megaloprepéstatos} \textit{oikos} (ll. 17–18: ὥς ἡμεῖς ὑσσαν διαφορὰν μεταξὺ τοῦ μεγαλοπρεπε(πεστάτου) οἰκου καὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελος μοναστηρίου) which the writer is trying to prevent by exhorting the addressee to grant his request. Monks corresponded with lay officials in private and official circumstances reflected in later Coptic letters

\textsuperscript{112} For a list and summary description of petitions from the Apionic archive, see D. Feissel & J. Gascou (eds.), \textit{La pétition à Byzance}, Paris 2004, who list the following documents: \textit{P. Oxy. I 130} (548/549 ?); \textit{P. Oxy. XVI 1886} (end 5th—beg. 6th c.); \textit{P. Oxy. XXVII 2479} (6th c.); \textit{P. Oxy. I. 3584} (mid-5th c.); \textit{P. Oxy. I. 3585} (before 460); \textit{P. Oxy. I. 3586} (before 460); \textit{PSI XIV 1425} (5th c.).

\textsuperscript{113} Unfortunately, we are unable to determine precisely the identity of the sender and the addressee. The letter certainly contained a request, although its content is obscure. Since we are ignorant of who exactly was the sender, we cannot exclude that the text simply mentions a monastery but does not emanate from the monastic milieu.
(see below, Chapter 4, pp. 175 with n. 78 and 194–195; Chapter 6, pp. 284–287). However, if we limit ourselves to sixth-century incoming correspondence of estates, we observe a limited number of circumstances where the monasteries took the initiative to contact lay representatives. Firstly, it could happen when a layman acted as administrator of monastic affairs (such was the case of Apollos, who was at the same time a representative of comes Ammonios; see below, pp. 62–63). Other circumstances could include addressing claims to the ‘world outside’ (the case of PSI XIV 1425), or requests for protection against a third party’s claims or actions (P. Cairo Masp. I 67003). Donations to monasteries could spark claims and ensuing disputes; all the more so, since the ‘pious men’ were sometimes encouraged to claim their rights in case of reluctance or negligence on the part of those responsible for executing the dispositions, as we see in the testament of Aurelius Pankab from the Aphroditio archive (P. Cairo Masp. III 67324; before 525–526). The Apions certainly made numerous donations, but we can suppose that their disbursement was so well integrated into the estate’s administrative machinery with its system of yearly accounts, receipts, and multi-level control, that slips and omissions were rare (although they could happen—as probably attested by PSI XIV 1425).

Most paperwork, however, was generated by landowning-based relations, as can be clearly seen in the Aphroditio dossier (see Chapter 2). Mentions of landed property in monastic context are almost completely absent from the Apionic dossier, although they do occur in other monastery-related Oxyrhynchite documents.115

Attestations of monasteries in the Oxyrhynchite material are rather scanty.116 Among the documents connected with monastic property we find PSI III 176 (fifth century?)—an emphyteusic

114 See P. Cairo Masp. III 67324, ll. 2–8: βούδομαι δὲ καὶ το(ῦ)το, ὡς ἐι συμβάδῃ τῇ ῥαθυμίᾳ τὰς κληρονομοὺς μου] θυγατέρας ὁδὸς μὴ καταβαλλ[εν] ἐξ ἐμοῦ, δὴ τοις κληρονομο[ύς τῶν, τὴν προοριζθείσαν παρ᾽ ἐμοῦ] προσφέρ[ον τὸ ἄγιον μοναστηρίῳ σίτου τοῦ καὶ ὀν[υ[ο]] τοῦ τοῦ τοῦ τοῦ τριγυθήσετος, κελεύτων τὸν εὐλάβεστατον πρεσβύτερον το(ῦ) αὐτο(ῦ) μοναστηρίου καὶ τοῖς ἐν αὐτῷ ἐυλάβεσταστοι] μοναχὸς ἀποτίσει τα[υτ] (l. το(ῦ)τα) ἐκόντας καὶ ἄκοντας διὰ παντὸς, πρὸς τὸ ἀκαταγγέλτως προβῆναι τὰ τῆς ἁγίας προσφοράς εἰς Ἰε[ράς] τοὺς ἀποθανόντας προσδοκεῖν (I also want the following: if it happens that out of negligence my heirs, that is my daughters, or their heir, will not pay gratefully to the holy monastery the prosphora of wheat and wine determined by me, gathered […] I order that the most pious presbyter of this monastery and the most pious monks belonging to this monastery demand them by all means—no matter whether willingly or not—in order to prepare the things pertaining to the holy prosphora, unexceptionably for ever, for the commemoration of the deceased; translation after M. Nowak, Wills in the Roman Empire: a Documentary Approach [= JfJP Suppliment 23], Warsaw 2015, p. 410, with minor changes).

115 See the direct attestation of a parcel belonging to the monastery of St Phoibammon in Thmoanakomis destroyed by the river (P. Oxy. LV 3805, l. 67). From P. Oxy. I. XIII 4397 it can be indirectly inferred that also the monastery of Abba Hierax was a landowning institution (see above, p. 41)

116 See PSI III 176 (fifth century): emphyteusic act between Flavius Menas and an unknown monastery; P. Oxy. VI 994 (30 VIII–28 IX 499): order of delivery of grain to a monk; P. Oxy. XVI 1890 (27 XI 508): lease of a milling-bakery formerly belonging to a monk Kopreus (see above, p. 19, n. 6); P. Col. XI 303 (3 IX 515): order of delivery of oil to a monastery; P. Oxy. XVI 1945 (14 I 517): Christmas delivery of wine to monks; PSI VII 786 (2 II 581): receipt for a donation of six soldi given to monk Kollouthos of ὅς κόμης Βερκίδη from the heirs of Gerontios scholastikos; P. Lond. V 1762 (sixth–seventh century): an account reckoned in gold, mentioning the monastery of Abba Makrobiou (l. 3) and of Abba Philoxenos (l. 17); BGU I 103 (sixth–seventh century): letter to the
lease agreement concluded between an unknown monastery and Flavius Menas; P. Oxy. XVI 1890 is a lease of a milling bakery belonging to Serena daughter of Petros and located (ll. 6–8) ἐν τῷ λιβικῷ ὁρεί ταύτης τῆς πόλεως ἐν τῷ μοναστηρίῳ τῷ καλουμένῳ ἅββα Κοσμεύτου[ος] τῷ διαφέροντι τῇ σῇ εὐγενείᾳ καὶ περιελθόντι εἰς αὐτήν ἐκ παραχωρήσεως Κοσμεύτου τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου μοναζόντος (see above, p. 19, n. 6). A new attestation in Mountford 032 mentions the monastery of Abba Kastor—recipient of an Apionic wheat donation and supplier of ropes to the estate—among wealthy fiscal contributors in the beginning of the seventh century. Monastic property can perhaps be hinted at in BGU I 103 (6th–7th century), a rather clumsy letter addressed to ‘the most holy father, archimandrite Abba Serenos’ by Abraam, meizon of the village of Pinarchthis. The text concerns an inheritance dispute in which one of the parties was to be assisted by the monastic superior. It speaks of people who ‘pay demoia to the most holy father’—that is, the archimandrite himself—which most probably means they were tenants of monastic lands.117 Other Oxyrhynchite texts connected with monasteries include a donation of money (PSI VII 786); orders of delivery of various goods: five xestai of oil to the monastery in epoikion Skytalidos (P. Cal. XI 303 = SB XXVI 16753),118 twelve artabae of wheat to Ioustos μονάζων (P. Oxy. VI 994),119 and eighty dipla of wine for unnamed monks on the occasion of Christmas (P. Oxy. XVI 1945).

The ‘Oxyrhynchite monastic dossier’ outside the Apionic archive is modest and dominated by gifts and offerings; the titles accompanying names of the donors allow us to classify those people as members of local elite, whose fortunes were less spectacular than Apionic, but who were no less eager to support pious institutions or individual monks.120 A link between this group of texts and the Apionic dossier is established thanks to PSI VII 786, which is a receipt for 6 solidi of customary prospbora offered by heirs of the Oxyrhynchos-based ex-scholastikos Gerontios represented by their diniketes Anoup. Giovanni Ruffini identified the same Gerontios in P. Oxy. XVI 1913 (l. 56, receiving fifty artabae of grain λόγῳ φιλοτιμίας); curiously, the monks of Berky appear in the same document in l. 58, as the recipients of a donation of twenty artabae of wheat.121 Gerontios was an employee of the Apions; Ruffini, however, underscores the private character of the donation

archimandrite Serenos from Abraham, meizon of Pinarchthis; P. Oxy. XVI 1862 (c. 624?): a letter from Rheme to Marinos, speaking of transport of money to a monastery (l. 48).

117 BGU I 103 verso (address): τῷ ὁμοσπ(ατη)(ο)ν πατρ(ί)ν ἅββα Σερένα Αρχιμανδρ(ή)της Ἄραιμα Αρκων (· · ·) μεζ(ί)ων Πιναράκθιος [. . . ]; ll. 9–10: μέτρου εἴεν καὶ δημοτῶν συντελοῦσιν ὁμοσπ(ατη)ν πατρ(ί). The document was briefly discussed in G. Schmelz, Kirchliche Amtsträger (cit. n. 38), pp. 275–276.


119 The delivery is labelled λόγῳ όρθον κατὰ συνηθ(ί)ν—again we are dealing with a customary gift, which, however, appears to have been a sustenance ration (cf. Preisigke, IFB, sv. ‘ορθόν’).

120 People involved in the donations on the donors’ side include: heirs of Gerontions scholastikos (PSI VII 786); Makrobiós lampntatos (P. Cal. XI 303); comem Phoibammon and Samuel periherpetes (P. Oxy. VI 994 and P. Oxy. XVI 1945); for these individuals, see Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 1), pp. 63–64.

121 Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 1), p. 84 with n. 262.
effectuated by his heirs. Our documents do not allow us to elucidate this relation any further, but we can hypothesise that in some of the cases the employees of the Apions were responsible for the promotion of monasteries with which they had special, private bonds and could win the monks the favour of their aristocratic employers.

Independent activities of monasteries or their involvement in local affairs (which are reflected in such striking a manner in the Aphrodito archive) are quite rare in Apionic documentation (and the Oxyrhynchite dossier in general). However, important details can be gathered while reading newly edited texts, and re-reading those that had already been known. First, as already stated, among the monasteries which maintained contact with the Apionic estates, we find institutions which we can consider economically independent and even wealthy (Abba Hierax and Abba Kastor). There are, however, other institutions for which we have no attestations of any activity going on outside the ‘Apionic framework’. In both cases, we know close to nothing about the way the monasteries were administered; still, nothing indicates that the estate was involved in their daily management. Our rich documentation does not mention lay individuals whom we could connect with monastic administration; whenever a monastery interacts with the estate, it is never represented by a layman. Among monastic representatives we find proestates, archimandrites, a steward (oikonomos), and a monk and presbyter. The only case where no particular representation is mentioned is that of the monastery of Abba Andreas in the receipts for ropes; these documents feature the collective ‘monks of the monastery of Abba Andreas’ as the designation of the monastic party. This lack of Apionic involvement in the everyday administrative affairs of the monasteries could have contributed to the lack of petitions and requests directed to the estate by the monks.

It would be risky to assume that the Apions held an iron grip on the affairs of the monasteries with which they interacted. They could present them with large offerings, but whether these were intended for the monks’ sustenance or for pious distributions—in which case they would have had little bearing on the monasteries’ economy—it is impossible to tell based on known documentation. At least in some cases (Abba Hierax; Abba Kastor) we see the monasteries in control of their own affairs. Monasteries were well-integrated into the functioning of the estate, but this integration could frequently mean partnership, not submission.

122 Cf. the case of the monastery of Apa Agenios in Ammonios’s dossier; this monastery was probably estate-administered (see below, p. 62); cf., however, the monastery of Abba Kastor, which in the receipt Mountford 028 is mentioned without any representatives, but in the order for ropes Mountford 031 is represented by its archimandrite Paulos.
2. Monasteries and năm Flavius Ammonios

The Aphroditian dossier—a collection of papyri frequently called ‘the archive of Dioskoros’, from the name of the sixth-century notary from the village Aphroditio in the Antaiopolite nome who drew up many among its numerous documents—preserves accounts pertinent to another landowner of sixth-century Egypt—yam Flavius Ammonios. The notary Dioskoros was son of Apollos, who at a certain point served as a hypodektes in Ammonios’s estate. A part of his accounts, gathered in one codex, found their way to the Aphroditio dossier and were published by Jean Maspero as *P. Cairo Masp.* II 67138 and 67139. The documents record incomes (rents paid by tenants in wheat, barley, and money) and expenses of the Antaiopolite section of Ammonios’s estate. The expenditure sections include the estate’s operation costs and tax liabilities of the count, including demosia, embolai, and annonna militaris. The accounts record estate transactions in the fifth–sixth indictions, corresponding to 541–546. The sub-dossier of Ammonios contains also few other documents.  

123 On Ammonios and his relationship with the family of Dioskoros, see Ruffini, *Social Networks* (cit. n. 1), pp. 173–177. Ammonios was a count of the sacred consistory and a former praeses of the Thebaid. For documents associated with this figure, see G. Ruffini, *A Prosopography of Byzantine Aphroditio* [= *American Studies in Papyrology* 50] Durham 2011. The designation ‘the archive of Dioskoros’ obscures the actual composition of the dossier, which encompasses documents from period both before Dioskoros’s activity and some time after his death. On the content and chronology of the dossier, especially in its later phases, see J.-L. Fournet, ‘Archive ou archives de Dioscoré? Les dernières années des “archives de Dioscore”’, [in:] *Les archives de Dioscoré*, pp. 17–30. In this and the following chapter, I will refer to this collection of texts as ‘the Aphroditio dossier’.  

124 The term hypodektes means literally ‘collector’; in Late Antique documentary records, the title referred to a person charged with collecting fiscal payments in gold and transmitting them to *byzyes* subjugated to the provincial governor (see K. Gens, *Panopolis, a Nome Capital in Egypt in the Roman and Byzantine Period* (ca. AD 200–600) [= *Trismegistos Online Publications Special Series* I], Leuven 2014, p. 186). In the context of Ammonios’s estate, Apollos was a clerk responsible for collecting money from estate tenants and for the account-keeping.  


126 The lands in these documents was divided into three categories: *astika* (land registered in Antaiopolis), *kometika* (land registered in Aphroditio), and lands in Petó—a location which, according to Ruffini, constituted the core of Ammonios’s estate in the region and was not very remote from Aphroditio itself (see Ruffini, *Social Networks* [cit. n. 1], pp. 174–176).  

127 On Ammonios and his relationship with the family of Dioskoros, see Ruffini, *Social Networks* (cit. n. 1), pp. 173–177. Ammonios was a count of the sacred consistory and a former praeses of the Thebaid. For documents associated with this figure, see G. Ruffini, *A Prosopography of Byzantine Aphroditio* (= *American Studies in Papyrology* 50) Durham 2011. The designation ‘the archive of Dioskoros’ obscures the actual composition of the dossier, which encompasses documents from period both before Dioskoros’s activity and some time after his death. On the content and chronology of the dossier, especially in its later phases, see J.-L. Fournet, ‘Archive ou archives de Dioscoré? Les dernières années des “archives de Dioscore”’, [in:] *Les archives de Dioscoré*, pp. 17–30. In this and the following chapter, I will refer to this collection of texts as ‘the Aphroditio dossier’.  


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132 The lands in these documents was divided into three categories: *astika* (land registered in Antaiopolis), *kometika* (land registered in Aphroditio), and lands in Petó—a location which, according to Ruffini, constituted the core of Ammonios’s estate in the region and was not very remote from Aphroditio itself (see Ruffini, *Social Networks* [cit. n. 1], pp. 174–176).
Ammonios’s papers preserve names of several monastic institutions, but only a few of them are known from other papyri of the Aphrodito dossier. The attestations of the relations of monasteries with the estate of comes Ammonios received less attention than their Apionic counterparts. Thomas considered the monasteries mentioned in *P. Cairo Masp.* II 67138 and 67139 (oros Aphrodito and the monastery of Apa Agenios for sure; probably also St Apa Pathemous and oros Psinabla) private establishments receiving permanent allowances from the estate. He concluded that, ‘[t]hrough these registers, with the aid of some additional letters and receipts, it is possible to view the complete package of private financial aids to ecclesiastical institutions in a way that is impossible again until the advent of the monastic *typika* (foundation charters) of eleventh-century Byzantium’. This statement is far too optimistic. First, ‘letters and receipts’ of the Aphrodito dossier, were for the most part, created in contexts other than that of Ammonios’s estate. It is true that the dossier provides information on monasteries established by lay individuals, but the two certain examples of such institutions—the monasteries of Apa Apollos and Apa Sourous—were founded by locally prominent figures, not great absentee landowners of Ammonios’s stature. Second, as we have already observed while discussing Apionic donations, the destination of the allotments of grain (which happen to be the most significant context in which monasteries are attested in Ammonios’s papers) and, in consequence, their significance for the economy of the institutions which received them, is usually not stated. Therefore, instead of counting the donations into ‘the package of aids’, we should perhaps view them as offerings intended for charitable redistribution, and focus on their symbolic meaning rather than build hypotheses on the degree of dependence of monasteries on estates. All the more so since Ammonios’s documents—or rather the mere fraction thereof that came down to us thanks to diligence of Dioskoros’s family—leave us ignorant of more intricate workings of Ammonios’s relations with the monasteries. The history of these monasteries and the circumstances of their foundation are, in most of the cases, impossible to reconstruct. Ammonios’s dossier is much poorer than the Apionic one, and if the Oxyrhynchite documents rarely disclose any details of the organisation or structure of monasteries, Ammonios’s accounts are nearly completely devoid of such information. It is to be found in abundance in other documents of the Aphrodito dossier which, as already said, were drawn up in entirely different

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contexts.\textsuperscript{130} Nevertheless, a closer look at Ammonios’s account books—even if not very promising at the first glance—allows us to observe some important details.

2.1. Contexts of the relations

Let us first consider the roles assumed by monasteries in the dossier of Ammonios. The majority of attestations in \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67138 and 67139 are connected with disbursements of different amounts of grain to a number of institutions (see Table 4, pp. 70–71). Entries in Ammonios’s accounts reveal a variety of patterns according to which grain disbursements for monasteries were booked; the amounts of grain also vary greatly from institution to institution.

Two institutions—\textit{o}r\textit{os} Aphrodito and \textit{o}r\textit{os} Psinabla—are mentioned with their representatives: Apa Isaak and Apa Pheib. Both monks are associated in the documents with the term \textit{diakonia}.\textsuperscript{131} As the term is notoriously difficult to interpret, the mention of \textit{diakonia} does not render the interpretation of these entries much easier. The word could designate a board of monastic managers, goods belonging to a community and, by extension, the place where they were kept, but also, on a more symbolic note, Christian charity and ministration to one’s neighbour.\textsuperscript{132} As Apa Isaak and Apa Pheib were called \textit{en tē διακονία or tēs διακονίας}, their role is not entirely clear: they could have been responsible for material affairs of their communities or their charitable activities (see also below, pp. 61–62); in that latter case, we could consider the mention of \textit{diakonia} an indication of the purpose which Ammonios’s grain was supposed to serve. The entries, however, are too ambiguous to allow us to accept this interpretation without reservations.

The allowance to \textit{o}r\textit{os} Aphrodito is attested during three years (the seventh, eighth, and ninth indications); every year it was equally considerable, amounting to ca. 400 artabae of grain. 100 artabae for \textit{o}r\textit{os} Psinabla are recorded only in the seventh indication. In entries pertaining to both monasteries, we find an interesting accounting device, which was used by Thomas as a basis for a hypothetical reconstruction of how means allocated for the support of the monasteries were

\textsuperscript{130} The majority of Aphrodito documents outside Ammonios’s sub-dossier are legal deeds concerning landholding, which provide detailed descriptions of the parties involved. The Aphroditian dossier yielded also the absolutely exceptional collection of texts connected with the monastery of Apa Apollos, established by Dioskoros’s father in ca. 538. These documents, written in Greek and in Coptic, contain information about the structure, economic foundations, organisation and principles of functioning of this institution (see below, Chapter 2, p. 76–77).

\textsuperscript{131} \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67139, Fol. III r., ll. 1–2: λόγ(ος) σῖτο(υ) [διοθέντος] εἰς τὸ δρόος Ψινάβλα, κακονός ἐξ ἀδόμης ἱνά(οκτιονος)], δ(ί) ἀπὸ Φειβ μονίς(οντος) (και(?)) διακονιῶν; cf. ibid., Fol. IV r., l. 4: τὸ ἄπα Φειβ ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ δρόος Ψινάβλα σί(του) (ἄρταβα) [τα]. \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67139, Fol. III v., ll. 1–2: θέλ(υος) σῖτο(υ) διοθέντος εἰς τὴν διακονίαν τὸν άγ(ονον) δρόος Αφροδίτης δ(ί) τοῦ θεοφιλεστάτου(ο) ἀπὸ Ἰσακίου; cf. ibid., Fol. IV r., l. 3: τὸ ἄπα Ἰσακίῳ ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ δρόος Αφροδίτης σί(του) (ἄρταβα) [τα]. \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67138, Fol. II r., ll. 1–2: τὰ δόθ(έντα) τὸ ἄπα Ι(νί) τῆς [διακονίας]; cf. ibid., Fol. II r., l. 18: λόγ(ος) τῆς διακονίας [Αφροδίτης].

managed. The amounts of wheat disbursed every year to oros Aphrodito and in the seventh indiction to the monastery of Psinabla are made up of contributions of several (from three to eight) georgoi. Some of the georgoi turn up in all three indictions; most of them pay also phoros to Ammonios, which points to their status of his tenants. According to Thomas, the presence of a separate λόγος τῆς διακονίας τῆς Ἀφροδίτης in Ammonios’s accounts proves that a part of the count’s holdings was supposed to provide material support for oros Aphrodito, which Thomas considers a private foundation of the comes. Ammonios would provide workforce for the cultivation of these holdings to secure stable income for the monastery. Shifts in the makeup of the body of contributors recorded in the accounts would have been a natural result of changes in short-term contractual obligations that bound the georgoi with the comes. The endowment provided by Ammonios to the monastery would include only an allowance in grain, but no land, rendering oros Aphrodito entirely dependent on Ammonios’s estate. Careful calculations of wheat contributions point indeed to a particular degree of integration of the donations for the two oroi into Ammonios’s accounting, but I would be careful to interpret the donations themselves as a proof of total dependence of the monasteries on the estate, for the same reasons I have expounded for the Apionic dossier. Thomas estimated that the allowance for oros Aphrodito could feed from thirty to forty monks, but his count is just as theoretical as the estimations based on the Apionic allowances (see above, p. 38). Again, we have no chance of determining the purpose of the donation, even if its scale and care with which it was reckoned point to a special relationship with the Aphroditan monastery. The fact that large amounts of grain were involved cannot account for the use of the elaborate reckoning device: we see it applied for one hundred artabae for oros Psinabla, but not for the same amount of grain for Apa Agenios in the very same indiction. This is all the more curious

133 Thomas, Private Religious Institutions (cit. n. 8), pp. 89–96.

134 Jean Maspero in the editio princeps of the accounts interpreted the payments to oros Aphrodito as rents in kind paid by comes Ammonios for land rented from the monastery; this was rightly refuted by Thomas, Private Religious Institutions (cit. n. 8), p. , on account of the rather explicit wording of the text which states that the plots of land in question belong to Ammonios: λόγος ἐκφορίων τῶν κτημάτων τοῦ ἐνδοξοτάτου κόμιτος.

135 For the georgoi and their contributions during the three indictions, see Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 109, Chart 7.

136 I am convinced by this explanation of the changes in the makeup of the group of contributors proposed in Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), pp.89–90, even though Thomas’s argument does not dispel my doubts about the nature of Ammonios’s donations.

137 Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 91.

138 Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 95. In addition to wheat, oros Aphrodito also received eight artabae of barley in the seventh indiction (P. Cairo Masp. II 67139, Fol. IV v., l. 9, under the title λόγος κριθῆς κτημάτων τοῦ ζήτηματος ζητούμενον). The disbursement is the only one made to ecclesiastical institution in this section; other recipients of barley include various individuals, some of whom are mentioned with their occupations (e.g. a cook, a shepherd, a sitometres), which may suggest a form of payment in kind. The character of the disbursement for oros Aphrodito is not explained.
since we have reasons to suspect that the two monasteries maintained similar type of relations with the estate (see below, p. 62).

Apa Agenios’s donation in the seventh indiction is composed of two parts: one hundred artabae without further designation and forty artabae of festal allowance, including fifteen artabae for Easter and another fifteen artabae for unknown occasion. Yet more complex are the donations for the monastery of Apa Patemous, recorded in three subsequent indictions (from seventh to ninth). It appears that the ‘base’ was constituted by ca. 20 artabae of wheat (unlabelled) disbursed every year. In addition, the estate gave the monastery a prosphora, which amounted to forty-five, six, and thirteen artabae in the subsequent indictions. The six artabae given as prosphora in the eighth indiction were disbursed to Apollos katharourgos. An extra allowance of four artabae of wheat for the monastery went into Apollos’s hands also in the seventh indiction. Grain for Apollos was most probably supposed to be processed and delivered to the monastery in the form of high-quality bread.\textsuperscript{139} Even if some patterns do appear in Ammonios’s accounts—we see that at least two monasteries receiving allowances in at least three years in a row—the lacunae in our documentation, and fluctuations of the amounts of grain suggest that Ammonios’s donations were to a certain extent conditioned by circumstances we are now unable to reconstruct.

Besides allowances to monasteries, Ammonios presented individual monastics, or unspecified groups thereof, with modest gifts of grain: in the seventh indiction sixteen artabae of grain were given to daughters of Loukanos, nuns; the same women were given twenty artabae in the ninth indiction.\textsuperscript{140} Six artabae of wheat for monks of Antinoou are a negligible amount if we regard them as sustenance allowance; however, they were most probably another pious offering.

The accounts comprise also other estate expenditures connected with monasteries, which reflect another facet of relations between religious establishments and the estate of Ammonios (see Table 5, p. 72). The entries record sums of money given by estate representatives to monastic institutions for various products. Most of these payments—four out of six—are earlier than grain disbursements and date from 542/543 (sixth indiction); the remaining two payments date to the seventh indiction.\textsuperscript{141} No payments of this kind are registered in the eighth and ninth indictions. The

\textsuperscript{139} On katharourgoi, see R. S. Bagnall, J. G. Keenan & L. S. B. MacCoull, \textit{A Sixth-century Tax Register from the Hermopolite Nome [= P. Lond. Herm.]}, Durham 2011, p. 49; cf. LSJ, s.v. ‘καθαρουργός’. The nature of this allowance is obscure; this certainly was not a Eucharistic offering (bread used in Eucharist could not be baked by laymen, see E. Wipszycka, \textit{The Alexandrian Church: People and Institutions [= Jfep Supplement 25]}, Warsaw 2015, p. 403). One could probably think of a festal donation for the monks, connected with a Church holiday or day of commemoration, to be consumed during an \textit{agape} after mass.

\textsuperscript{140} P. Cairo Masp. II 67139, Fol. IV r., l. 9: ταῖς θυγατρ(άσι) Λουκανοῦ(ῦ) μοναζούσαις σί(του) ἀρτάβαι[ι]; ibid., Fol. VI r., l. 10: θυγατρ(ὸ) Λουκανοῦ(ῦ) ἄρταβας κ. Perhaps the editor decided to read θυγατρ(ὸ) instead of θυγατρ(άσι) on account of the lack of article in front of the abbreviation.

\textsuperscript{141} Leslie S. B. MacCoull connects the appearance of larger allowances for monasteries from the seventh indiction onwards with the increasing spiritual needs in the aftermath of the Justinianic plague (541–542; see C. Zuckermann, \textit{Du village à l’Empire: autour du registre fiscal d’Aphrodité (525–526)}, Paris 2004, pp. 189–212; see especially p. 207 for
payments were irregular and we are at a loss as to their exact purpose. This problem was noticed by Thomas, who wrote: ‘It is, for example, not always possible to determine if a laconic entry in an estate register means “Give X amount of money to Y so he can buy Z for his institution”, or “Give X amount of money to Y in exchange for commodity Z sold to us”‘.142 Five out of six of the discussed entries present, as a matter of fact, the ambiguous ‘ὑπέρ Z’ formula. Only one was plainly a disbursement given to monks for the purchase of goods (P. Cairo Masp. II 67139, Fol. V, r. l. 23: one solidus minus four keratia εἰς λοτίκ(ια) τῶν μοναχῶν).

Commodities mentioned in the remaining entries included oil and vegetables. Interestingly, oros of Ibeke received one solidus minus 1 1/3 carats ‘for the storehouse of the mill of oros Ibeke’. Why was the monastic storehouse an object of concern of estate administration? MacCoull sees in this ‘support payment’ a reflection of ‘prudence in providing food stockpiles as the first news of the plague might have been reaching Aphrodito’.143 Considering the currently accepted dates of the documents, however, we must observe that the sum, recorded as κανόνος πέμπτης ἱνδικτίονος (541/542), was paid already ἀπὸ ἐκφορίων ἐκτις ἱνδικτίονος (542/543), thus long after the ‘first news’ of the plague, which originated in the Empire in Pelusium in 541, and was over in Constantinople in July 542. If MacCoull’s speculations were right, we could expect a more immediate reaction on the part of estate administration.144 Unfortunately, the entry is the only mention of oros Ibeke, which remains an entirely obscure institution. The Apionic archives inform us about commissions for bread addressed by the estate to one of the monasteries; we do not know whether oros Ibeke was provided with a bakery in addition to the mill (although this seems logical) and thus could serve Ammonios’s estate in the same way as the monastery of Mousaios served the Apions (see above, pp. 42–43). If so, then we can conjecture that the estate’s concern for a storehouse on the premises of an establishment which contributed to the functioning of the estate would come as completely natural.

The payment of two solidi minus four carats ‘for the barley of Apa Sourous’ is another problematic point. The monastery—one of two institutions recorded in Ammonios’s accounts which is known to us from other documents—is known to have been an important landowner in the region of Aphrodito already in ca. 524, based on the so-called cadastre of Aphrodito (SB XX


142 Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 76.

143 MacCoull, ‘The Antaiopolite estate’ (cit. n. 140), p. 113, n. 36.

Thomas proposed that the disbursement ‘may have been intended to meet the institution’s tax obligations’. His assumption is based on the fact that the recipient of the two solidi, Artemidoros, is identified by his title of singularis, which Thomas connects with the function of tax-collector. Fiscal capacities of Artemidoros are perhaps confirmed by P. Ismailia inv. 2240, a Coptic letter concerning the collection of land-tax in Aphroditò, where a certain Artemitor is mentioned collecting taxes. Based on other documents of the archive, we know that Artemidoros acted as a manager for the monastery of Apa Sourous. In both P. Lond. V 1704 and P. Cairo Masp. II 67133 (dates uncertain) Artemidoros is said to represent a proestos of the monastery. The connection between Artemidoros, Ammonios, and the monastery is unclear and so is the exact capacity in which Artemidoros was acting in P. Cairo Masp. II 67139; did he represent the fisc or the monastery? While the second option leaves us in obscurity as far as the destination of the money is concerned (purchase of barley between two considerable landowners seems too far-fetched), the first one would support Thomas’s ‘fiscal’ interpretation. However, this does not suffice to conclude that Ammonios’s discharging a part of the monastery’s fiscal obligations points to Apa Sourous’s dependence on the count. Such assumption would have far-reaching consequences, provided that Apa Sourous, some twenty years earlier, was the most prominent

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145 For the edition of the document, see J. Gascou, ‘Le cadastre d’Aphroditò (SB XX 14669)’, [in] idem Fiscalité et société (cit. n. 1), pp. 247–305; for the monastery of Apa Sourous, see p. 282. See also Zuckermann, Du village à l’Empire (cit. n. 140), pp. 32–34. In the middle of the sixth century the monastery is attested pursuing economic activities in the vicinity of Aphroditò; see P. Mich. XIII 667, a land lease agreement in which Phoibammon son of Triadphros rents land west of Aphroditò from the monastery; Dioskoros himself appears as the monastery’s lessee in P. Cairo Masp. II 67133 (5425), paying a rent of ninety-two artabae of wheat; in P. Cairo Masp. I 67087 (543) he again features in the same capacity; in P. Lond. V 1704 (date uncertain) sons of the late Phoibammon pay rent to the same monastery. The beginning of P. Lond. V 1704 is not preserved; based on prosopographical criteria, Jean Gascou managed to identify the establishment in question with the monastery of Apa Sourous; see above, n. 127.

146 Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 73. Thomas writes: ‘Flavios Artemidoros […] held positions both as the epitropos of the monastery of Apa Sourous and as a singularis (tax collector) for count Ammonios’s estate. The count’s disbursement to him in the latter capacity on behalf of the monastery may have been intended to meet the institution’s tax obligations. The monks of Apa Agenios had urged Apollo to consider employing part of the money owed them for this purpose too’. I believe that the parallel between the two monasteries—of Apa Sourous and Apa Agenios—is pushed too far. While the latter was clearly under the management of comes Ammonios, and, on his behalf, Apollo father of Dioskoros (see PSI VII 933, quoted above, n. 40), no such circumstance can be proved for the monastery of Apa Sourous. In all documents where a ‘two-layered’ representation of the monastery of Apa Sourous is mentioned—that is, when Artemidoros acts on behalf of another person, this person is a monastic prositis, not a higher-ranking lay administrator (see below, n. 148).

147 A singularis was a minor official in provincial administration; see commentary to CPR XIV 39 (a list of praesidial officials), pp. 84–84.


Aphroditan landowner in the astika-category. Seizing control over such institution would result in Ammonios’s regional dominance that does not find confirmation in the documents. For the time being, the relation reflected in P. Cairo Masp. II 67139 escapes easy explanation.

Another monastery, the otherwise unknown institution called μοναστήριον Πετο, appears in the record in a yet different capacity. Peto itself appears to have been an important location in Ammonios’s estate. Giovanni Ruffini distinguishes twenty-two entries connected with this location in P. Cairo Masp. II 67138 and 67139 and concludes ‘that Ammonios had stronger ancestral ties to Peto than to other locales’, and that Peto—located most probably in the immediate vicinity of Aphrodito—constituted the nucleus of Ammonios’s holdings. Monasterion Peto was somewhat overlooked in Thomas’s discussion, although it was included in the list of subventions to ecclesiastical institutions. The Peto entries, however, are different from those concerning disbursements to monasteries discussed above, and were clearly connected with a different type of activity. The first entry, for the seventh indiction, appears in the section concerned with Ammonios’s embole (P. Cairo Masp. II 67139, Fol. II v.). After the countdown (l. 12) we find the entry (καὶ) (ὑπὲρ) ἀστ(ικ)ῶν, ὄν(όματι) το(ῦ) (αὐτοῦ) ἕνδοξ(ο)τάτου) σί(του) καν(ύςος) (ἀρτάβαι) ὀδ (l. 13), followed immediately (l. 14) by the registration of a payment (καὶ) (ὑπὲρ) μον(αστηρίου) Πετο δ(ι)ῦ(ων) (αὐτοῦ) σί(του) καν(ύςος) (ἀρταβαί) κβ λ γ’ κδ’. An entry appears also for the ninth indiction (P. Cairo Masp. II 67138, Fol. II v) in the section ἀστικῶν) θ ὄν(κτιόνος) (l. 15), which is followed immediately by μον(αστηρίου) Πετο, θ ὄν(κτιόνος) ἕνταγ(ον) α κατ(αβολής) κ(εράτια) κβ λ δ’ (ll. 19–20). Both entries relating to the monastery of Peto appear therefore in a clearly fiscal context. The record in P. Cairo Masp. II 67138 shows only that Ammonios was liable for the monastery’s taxes in cash, while P. Cairo Masp. II 67139 gives further details of the relation. The entry translates as follows: ‘for (ὑπὲρ) the monastery Peto, through (διὰ) the same, 22 ½ 1/3 1/24 artabae of wheat of the κανών’. That ‘the same’ here refers to Ammonios can be inferred from the preceding line, ‘and for astika, in the name (ὄνοματι) of the same ἕνδοξωτάτος, 94 artabae of wheat of the κανών’. In fiscal documents διὰ and ὄνοματος/ὄνοματι serve as indications of representation—a situation in which fiscal liabilities of one individual are discharged by another one, the modalities of which are described through the use of proper phrases. Thus, line 14

150 Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 1), pp. 173–175, esp. p. 175.

151 The entry ὄν(όματι) Πετο, η ὄν(κτιόνος) (P. Cairo Masp. II 67138, Fol. II v., l. 8), included by Thomas in his list of subventions could as well relate to other parts of Ammonios’s possessions in Peto for which he was held liable before the fisc. I am at a loss to propose an explanation why the scribe would now remember to note the designation ‘monastery’, now omit it. On the other hand, if we assume that we are dealing with the scribe’s lack of consistency, not a reflection of any essential difference between the entries, the problem of why the count paid taxes for monasterion Peto in the ninth indiction, but failed to do so in the eighth, would disappear.

records the payment of fiscal liabilities of the monastery of Peto by Ammonios. If Ammonios had indeed some ancestral ties with Peto, we may suspect that he could endow a local monastery with some land. However, being a pious man, he decided to take the responsibility for the land’s fiscal burdens; this resulted in a situation where the land formally belonged to the monastery, but it was the comes who was encumbered with its taxes.\footnote{Cf. the testament of Flavius Theodoros (\textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67151), where the testator bequeaths a parcel of land to the monastery of Apa Jeremias, with the reservation that its fiscal liabilities are to be discharged by his family. On arrangements concerning fiscal liabilities burdening property bequeathed to monasteries, see Thomas, \textit{Private Religious Foundations} (cit. n. 8), p. 82, with references to sources.}

All interactions between the estate and the monastery were possible thanks to the involvement of various intermediaries and representatives. The following section will focus chiefly on the monastic side of these relations. As the accounts provide only cursory mentions of the people who took part in various transactions—and these mentions are not always perfectly clear—we will need to have recourse also to other Aphroditan documents which happen to preserve details of the organisation of some of the institutions. Even if our material is too scanty to help us comprehend how particular communities were organised, the details we do see through its prism contribute to a better general understanding of the functioning of monasteries in social environment of Late Antique Egypt.

2.2. Intermediaries in the relations

The staff of Ammonios’s estate was engaged in relations with monastic institutions as a part of their everyday responsibilities, which included collecting income and securing the flow of goods through the estate. People such as Apollos, the father of Dioskoros, were responsible not only for bookkeeping but perhaps also for supervising the recorded transactions; we can assume that they were playing role similar to that of the Apionic pronetai. On the monastic side, hints as to who was responsible for the contacts with the estate are desperately few. In fact, the only representative that recurs in more than one entry is Apa Isaak/Isakios associated with oro Aphrodito and its diakonia, whom we find attested in a number of entries in \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67138 and 67139: \footnote{For this individual, see Ruffini, \textit{Prosopography} (cit. n. 123), s.v. ‘Isakios 43’ at p. 295.} P. Cairo Masp. II 67139, Fol. III v., ll. 1–2 (disbursement of grain for the seventh indication): εἰς τὴν διακονίαν τοῦ ἀγάνοι δροῦς Ἀφροδίτης δ(ή) τοῦ θεοφιλεστάτο(ο) ἄπα Ἰσακίου (cf. ibid., Fol. IV r., l. 3: τῷ ἄπα Ἰσακίῳ ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ δροῦς Ἀφροδίτης); 67139, Fol. V r., l. 9 (disbursement for the oil for the fifth indication from ekphoria of the sixth indication): τῷ ἄπα Ἰσακίῳ ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ δροῦς Ἀφροδίτης; 67139, Fol. V r., l. 19 (disbursement for vegetables, sixth indication): τῷ ἄπα Ἰσακίῳ τῇ διακονίᾳ; \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67138, Fol. II, ll. 2–3 (eighth indication): λόγγος ἐκφορ(ίου) τοῦ κτημ(άτων) τῷ ἅπα Ἰσακίῳ τῇ διακονίᾳ τῇ ἄπα Ἰσακίῳ τῇ διακονίᾳ. In the...
ninth indiction, grain disbursements are recorded in a section entitled λόγ(ος) τῆς διακ(ονίας) [Ἀφρ(οδίτης)]; no name of representative is recorded. The disappearance of Isaak/Isakios from the record might mean that he ceased to discharge his previous function, or might be due to a scribal omission. Another monastic representative appears in *P. Cairo Masp. II* 67139, Fol. III r., ll. 1–2 (λόγ(ος) σίτο(υ) [δ]οθέντ(ος) εἴς τὸ ὀρος Ψιναβλα, κανόνος ἕβδομης [νό(κτίονος)], δ(ιὰ) ἄπα Φέβ μονά(ζων) (καλ(ῆς)) διακονητοῦ; cf. Fol. IV r., l. 4: τῷ ἄπα Φέβ ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ ὄρους Ψιναβλα σί(του) (ἄρτάβαι) [π]). It is most probably the same Apa Pheib who appears in connection with Apollos hypodektes in *P. Cairo Masp. II* 67139, Fol. V r., l. 10 (τῷ Ἀπολλωτί ὑποδ(έκτη) (ὑπέρ(?)) ἄπα Φέβ (ὑπέρ) ἐλαί(ου) νο(μίσματα) γ π(αρὰ) ς). Apollos hypodektes is no other than Dioskoros’s father, whom we see here in connection with another monastic institution besides Apa Agenios. The entry reveals perhaps a similar mechanism as in the case of the monastery of Apa Agenios in *P. Cairo Masp. I* 67062 (see below, p. 62): even though the payment is made on behalf of a monk, it is Apollos who receives it. Let us observe that almost the same wording recurs in the already discussed entry *P. Cairo Masp. II* 67139, Fol. VI v., l. 3: τῷ Ἀρτεμιδ[ῶρο] σιγγ(ουλαρίῳ) (ὑπὲρ) τῆς κριθῆς [ellido Σουρ(οῦτος), (ὑπέρ) εἰ ἵδ(ιονος)· νο(μίσματα) β π(αρὰ) δ. Here, however, information drawn from other testimonies prevents us from reconstructing a straightforward chain of dependence between the monastery and the estate through Artemidoros (see above, pp. 57–58). Once again, we are reminded how deceitful the lapidary account entries may be without the backdrop of other documents.

Three individuals among the monastic representatives—Apa Isak of oros Aphrodito, Apa Pheib of oros Psinabla, and Apa Pheib of oros Ibeke—bear titles that point unequivocally to their connection with religious institutions. Not even one, however, is described in terms used in the documents for identifying heads of monastic communities. Their designations point rather to their involvement in administrative affairs of their monasteries. This is clear especially in the case of Phib of Ibeke; he bears the ecclesiastical title of deacon—a fact that may indicate that he belonged to a group of community leaders but, more precisely, he is described as the person in charge of the monastery’s mill (μυλονάρχης) and thus the proper person to collect a sum destined for the mill’s appurtenances. The other Apa Phib, that from oros Psinabla, is clearly a monk of the community; his other function, that of diakonetes, requires, however, a few words of explanation. *Diakonetai* recur in the Aphroditan dossier in the context of transporting *embole* grain to Alexandria. They were monks, members of the Pachomian community of Metanoia located near Alexandria, who were sent to the *chôra* and charged with transporting grain on boats belonging to their

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155 *Cf. P. Naqlun 39 [= P. Gascou 29]*, where a presbyter and three deacons are addressed by a community of villagers, apparently as the ‘administrative panel’ of the Naqlun monastery (see below, Chapter 3, p. 147).
However, a group of shipment receipts connected with Metanoia which come from the Hermopolite nome display a different formulary, reflecting perhaps a different procedure, involving not diakonetai, but tabelliones. Gascou and Fournet treat diakoneta as a technical term designating a monk charged with the care of ‘worldly’ interests of the monastery in general, and the exploitation of the fleet in particular. The authors are careful in making a connection between the term and the Pachomian milieu; it is indeed probable that its usage was not limited to the congregation. In Aphroditan documents we most often see it connected with a group of representatives of a particular (Pachomian) community, travelling from their monastery near Alexandria to the Antaiopolite nome on business. Since Psinabla, where Apa Pheib’s oros was located, was in the Panopolite nome, it is possible that Pheib’s duties as the community’s representative also included travel to the Antaiopolite section of Ammonios’s holdings. This would make him similar to the Pachomian diakonetai and could result in using the same term to describe him in the document.

As it has already been observed, Pheib μονάζων καὶ διακονητής and Apa Isak are connected with the diakoniat of their monasteries. The interpretation of this term is not obvious; in Aphroditan legal documents, where diakonía can most probably be understood as a managerial panel of a monastery, it is usually represented by a proestos, or—as it is the case with the monasteries of Apa Apollos or Apa Sourous—an oikonomos or a prior assisted by a lay administrator. However, in the case of the oroi of Aphroditos and Psinabla, we cannot be certain of the meaning of the term diakonía and therefore we probably should not be searching for patterns of representation analogous to those encountered in the legal context. Internal documentation of monasteries, of which the Bawit dossier constitutes a showcase example (see below, Chapter 4), reveals that division of tasks between monks in a community was rarely stiff (and so were monastic hierarchies), with different duties delegated to different people according to circumstances.

In some cases, names of monastic representatives could be entirely omitted; no names appear in association with the yearly allowances for Apa Patemous or grain donations for Apa

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156 On the procedure and the involvement of the Pachomian monastery of Metanoia in the process of tax collection, see Rémondon, Le monastère alexandrin (cit. n. 125); J. Gascou & J.-L. Fournet, Moines pachômiens et batellerie, [in] Ch. Déروب (ed.), Alexandria médiévale 2 [= Études alexandrines 8] (2002), pp. 22–45; for documentary attestations of diakonetai, see n. 25 at p. 31; for the discussion of the function of diakonetai, see pp. 31–34. The Aphroditan dossier speaks specifically of diakonetai Αντώνου or τῆς Ανταίου, which indicates the terrain on which they operated.


159 See P. Flor. III 283, a lease of an olive press concluded by the ‘diakonía of the holy diakonía called of the Oasites in oros of the village of Aphroditos of the Antaiopolite nome through the most pious Danielios son of Timothoe, monk and proestos’; for lay representatives appearing alongside monastic functionaries, see P. Cairo Masp. 1 67096 (Enoch oikonomos and Dioskoros in the capacity of phrontistes curator); P. Cairo SR 3733 (3) [= J.-L. Fournet, Un document], (cit. n. 149)] (Dioskoros κηδεμών and Ioannes, most pious presbyter and proestos); it is noteworthy that in the latter case Dioskoros is mentioned before the prior.
Agenios in the seventh indiction. There is virtually nothing we can say about the former institution. The latter, on the other hand, is known to have been under the stewardship of Ammonios and his subordinate Apollos. From *P. Cairo Masp. I* 67062, a letter addressed to Apollos, it transpires that landed property associated with the monastery was administered and supervised by the very same people as Ammonios’s estate (ll. 3–5: ἐν δὲ τῷ τέως περίελθε τὰ κτήματα καὶ διοίκησις/ αὐτά, ἤγουν ποίησον ἀνθρώπων ὑμέτερον τούτο πράξαι). A part of Apa Ageneios’s income could come from these *ktemata*; the monastery also had financial dealings with villagers, such as the farmer mentioned in *P. Cairo Masp. I* 67062, from whom Apollos was supposed to collect money promised to the monastery. The monastery had at least a partial control over its own finances, as shown by the dispositions Apollos was given in the letter. However, it relied on lay administrators for the execution of the dispositions, whose content indicates that the monastery had to deal with requisitions and taxes, and probably owned plots planted with vine. Nevertheless, it appears that the monastery had sources of income other than Ammonios’s donations. The establishment was located in the Apollonopolite nome (cf. *PSI* VIII 933, ll. 2–3), where it could possess land or other assets. The wording of *PSI* VIII 933 suggests that Ammonios acted as a ‘general’ steward of the monastery; Apollos, however, could have been responsible only for the Aphroditian part of its holdings, including the *ktemata* mentioned in *P. Cairo Masp. I* 67062. If the entry in *P. Cairo Masp. II* 67139, Fol. V r., l. 10, where Apollos *hypodektos* is said to receive money for Apa Pheib can be connected with the Psinabla monastery in the Panopolite nome (see above, p. 60), we may conjecture that Apollos played an analogous role also for this external institution.

Careful reading of Ammonios’s dossier and the associated documents shows that the Aphroditian section of the count’s estate assumed various roles in relations with monasteries in the region of Aphrodito and outside it. First, Ammonios was an administrator of at least one of the monasteries

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160 The opening section of the letter reads (ll. 1–3): οἱ τοῦ μοναστηρίου [ὕπα Aγενεῖος] [ἡ] ἤλθαν εὐχαριστοῦντες τῇ σῇ εὐδοκιμήσει: ἦλθαν δὲ καὶ νῦν αὐτοῦντες αὐτῶν φρ[ον]τ[ίζεσθαι] ἐξώτως καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων. καὶ τούτο μὲν ἣναγκάσθην γράψαι τῷ διεσπότῳ μοι τὸ μὲν[ε]γαλοπρεπεστάτο κόμ(ετι) Ἁμμονίῳ. The letter is addressed (verso) [ - - - τῇ θεμὴ(α)σοποτή Ἀπολλός] [τοῦ]. Even though the name of the monastery in line 1 is largely reconstructed, the supplementation seems almost certain, especially in the light of *PSI* VIII 933; see above, n. 40 for the opening section of this contract concluded with the monastery of Apa Ageneios).

161 *P. Cairo Masp. I* 67062, ll. 7–10, concerning the two solidi to be delivered by the georgos: ἡθέλησα σου ἡ θαυμαστήτης τοῖς δεξαίτεσθαι, καὶ ἐν μέν νόμισμα παρά τέσσερα / ἀποστειλαί μοι ἴπτερ σύνθερο (ἀγορασθέντος καὶ δυτικός Ἀφρωδίτου τῷ Σταρίττῳ, τό δὲ ἄλλο ἔχει τῷ ἵπτερ λόγων δημοσίων ἢ ταὐτά καλά[μιο]ν (may your excellency care to receive them, and send one solidus minus four [kerateia] to me for iron bought and given to Stephanos the soldier, and keep the other one, either for the account of public taxes or the price of reeds). Reeds were necessary for fastening vine shoots in the vineyards; cf., e.g., *P. Oxy. XVI* 1191, l. 175; *P. Oxy. XVI* 1912, ll. 152–154, recording the purchase of new reeds for vineyards in the Apionic estate, or *CPR* XIX 32, recording the purchase of reeds by an estate manager. In the Aphroditio cadastral reed-producing land was treated as a separate category (θρυίς). For references to reeds in vineyards, see D. Dzierzbicka, *Wine in Greco-Roman Egypt*, Warsaw 2011 (doctoral dissertation prepared under the supervision of Tomasz Derda).
mentioned in his accounts: that of Apa Ageneios. His agent Apollos was directly responsible for the Aphroditan estate of the monastery (cf. P. Cairo Masp. I 67062) and perhaps played also the role of Aphroditan ‘liaison’ for the Panopolite oros Psinabra. The fact that oroi of Aphrodito and Psinabra had their separate accounts in Ammonios’s ledgers may point to closer relations between the estate and these two monasteries, even though no documents survive to provide us with details. Here we also need to observe that while pious donations (and their somewhat vague character) constitute the common denominator of the Apions’ and Ammonios’s relations with monasteries, visible involvement in the administration of monastic institutions is an element that distinguishes Ammonios’s estate. It may be, however, that this impression is at least partially the result of the state of preservation of our sources. Our most telling documents are found outside the accounts and were connected with Apollos’s duties as Ammonios’s representative in the Aphrodito region. Analogous texts may have belonged to private archives of Apionic stewards and may not have reached the central, Oxyrhynchite level.

While examining the role of comes Ammonios as a patron of monasteries in Aphrodito, John Philip Thomas concludes that ‘the foundation and maintenance of a large private monastery […] was a very expensive undertaking. Such a foundation must have been beyond the resources of all but the wealthiest private benefactors […]’. Thomas’s conclusion is founded on the information about Ammonios’s yearly allowances of four hundred artabae for oros Aphrodito, which was supposed to feed from thirty to forty monks. But did Ammonios really establish and sustain the monastery? It is possible, just like in the case of Apions, that his allowances for oros Aphrodito (and other institutions) were for the most part destined for distributions among the poor. Ammonios’s intention could have been to establish his image as a pious and beneficent great lord in a region into which he had recently expanded. Local monasteries could have been of use in achieving this goal, but this in itself does not suffice to label them as ‘private’ institutions of Ammonios. The somewhat exasperating lack of patterns in booking donations and money payments we have just observed may correspond to a number of strategies and connections. This does not mean that none of the monasteries was ever dependent on the estate, only that this dependence could express itself in many different ways—actual support, sharing or lifting fiscal responsibility, enhancing the prestige of an institution through bestowal of pious donations, contribution to the maintenance of monastic property, finally, involvement in the administrative matters and mediation in relations with ‘the world’—and can by no means be reduced to feeding the monks, entirely unable to support themselves. Here we need to observe that one of Thomas’s assumptions on which his idea of extreme burdensomeness of sponsoring monasteries rests is

162 Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 95.
plainly wrong. Thomas writes that ‘unlike peasant clerics […] sixth-century monks were not expected to earn their livings from the land either at Aphrodito or Oxyrhynchus’.163 Although papyrological documentation from sixth-century Bawit, Naqlun, and Aphrodito itself does not show monks involved in land-related transactions, there can be little doubt that members of monastic communities had private sources of income, and moreover, that these sources were stable enough to allow them to function as creditors or invest in agricultural production or building activity. As we shall see in all these cases, sixth-century monks did not conform with the ideal of self-imposed material deprivation and reliance on communal resources.

Interestingly, apart from one mention in P. Cairo Masp. II 67139, we see no interaction between Ammonios’s estate and the most prominent monastic landowners in the region: the monasteries of Apa Sourous and the Pachomian community of Smine. It seems that the interests of these three institutions did not overlap. Aphroditan environment was much less dominated by Ammonios than the Oxyrhynchite countryside was by the Apions, giving the estate and the monasteries the opportunity to function next to each other without much of an interference. The circles with which the monasteries of Apa Sourous and Smine maintained most vivid contacts were those of medium landowners in the village. It is exactly this sphere of relations that will constitute the focus of the following chapter.

163 Thomas, Private Religious Foundations (cit. n. 8), p. 95.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document/date</th>
<th>Type of document</th>
<th>Estate employee</th>
<th>Monastery</th>
<th>Monastery representative(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. I 3640 20 VII 533</td>
<td>receipt for ropes</td>
<td>l. 2: Φοιβάμων καταμείν(αντι) έξω τῆς πύλης</td>
<td>Apa Hierax</td>
<td>l. 1: δι(ά) Ιωάννου διοικ(ίου) και ἄρχομανδρ(ίου)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 17 III 545</td>
<td>settlement of claims</td>
<td>l. 13: διά Μηνή οικέτου ll. 95–6: τοῖς προσήκουσιν τῇ αὐτοῦ ὑπερψείᾳ l. 127: τοῖς προσήκουσιν τῇ αὐτοῦ ὑπερψείᾳ</td>
<td>Abba Hierax</td>
<td>ll. 8–9: διά Ἰωσήφ προσήκουσιν καὶ προσεκτός τοῦ αὐτοῦ εὐαγγείου τόπου καὶ Θεοδώρου τοῦ οἰκ[ον]μοίοντος αὐτῷ ll. 19, 27, 31, 39, 41, 67, 83, 97, 100: Theophilos, first as an unspecified representative, than as αἰκονομόν (l. 97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 026 4–13 VII 548</td>
<td>receipt for grain</td>
<td>l. 1: δι(ά) τῶν κληρ(ονόμων) Κυριακοῦ προ(νοητοῦ) Πολέμωνος</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 029 17 XI 549</td>
<td>receipt for ropes</td>
<td>l. 1: Ἰωσήφ καταμείν(αντι)</td>
<td>Abba Kastor</td>
<td>l. 1: δι(ά) τῶν μοναζ(όντων) μυναστηρίου ἀββά Κάστορος</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 027 553 (?)</td>
<td>receipt for grain</td>
<td>l. 8: δι(ά) τοῦ αὐτοῦ θαυμασιοτάτου Άνωσ προνοητοῦ</td>
<td>Abba Petros</td>
<td>l. 2: ἐδόθη[ς] τοῖς Άνωσ[ι] προσήκουσιν καὶ μοναζ[ῶν]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. I 146 15 XI 555</td>
<td>receipt for payments for transporting hay and chaff to the monastery</td>
<td>ll. 1–2: Σερήνου στάβλιτ(η) τοῦ βασιλείτ(ου) στάβλου(ου)</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>l. 1: δι(ά) τῶν μοναζ(όντων) μυναστηρίου ἀββά Άνδρέου</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. XVI 2015 555–556</td>
<td>receipt for ropes</td>
<td>l. 1–2: Βίκτορος περιχύτη τοῖς καταμείν(αντι) οἰκ(ίας)</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>l. 1: ἔδοθη(ν) δι(ά) τῶν μοναζ(όντων) Λββά Άνδρέου</td>
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<tr>
<td>ΔΒ XVIII 14062 7 III 556</td>
<td>receipt for four mats</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>l. 1: δι(ά) τῶν μοναζ(όντων) μυναστηρίου ἀββά Άνδρέου</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. I 147 7 IV 556</td>
<td>receipt for ropes</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>l. 1: δι(ά) τῶν μοναζ(όντων) τοῦ ἀββά(ου) ἀββά Άνδρέου</td>
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<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. I 148 12 IV 556</td>
<td>receipt for mats</td>
<td>ll. 1–2: Ιούστος περιχύτη τοῦ γεωγράφο(ος) λοιποῦ τῆς μεγάλ(ης) οἰκ(ίας)</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>l. 1: δι(ά) Μέλανος προσήκουσιν τοῦ κοινονίου ἀββά Άνδρέου</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XVIII 14063</td>
<td>receipt for ropes</td>
<td>l. 2: Φιλοξένῳ χορτοπαραλ(ήμπτῃ)</td>
<td>Abba Andreas l. 1: δι(ά) τῶν μοναζ(όντων) μενασθηρ(ίου) ἀββά Άνδρείου</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. LXXII 4926</td>
<td>order of bread supply</td>
<td>not stated (l. 2: ὁ ἐνδοξός οἰκος)</td>
<td>Abba Mousaios l. 1: τῷ εὐλαβεστ(ήτω) Παμουθίῳ προεστ(ήτῳ) μονῆς Μουσαίου</td>
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<tr>
<td>P.Oxy. LXXII 4927</td>
<td>receipt for bread</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>Abba Mousaios l. 1: δι(ὰ) Παμουθίο̣υ̣ ἀρ̣χ̣ιμανδρ̣(ίτου) μοναστήρ(ίου) Μουσαίου</td>
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<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. LXXII 4928</td>
<td>order of bread supply</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>Abba Mousaios l. 1: τῷ εὐλαβεστ(ήτω) Παμουθίῳ εὐλαβεστάτῳ Παμουθίῳ ἀρχιμανδ(ίτῃ) μοναστηρίου Μουσαίου</td>
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<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. XVI 1952</td>
<td>order of bread supply</td>
<td>not stated (l. 2: ὁ ἐνδοξός οἰκος)</td>
<td>Abba Mousaios l. 1: τῷ εὐλαβεστ(ήτω) Παμουθίῳ εὐλαβεστάτῳ Παμουθίῳ ἀρχιμανδ(ίτῃ) μοναστηρίου Μουσαίου</td>
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<td>P. Oxy. LXXII 4929</td>
<td>order of bread supply</td>
<td>not stated (l. 2: ὁ ἐνδοξός οἰκος)</td>
<td>Abba Mousaios ll. 1–2: τῷ εὐλαβεστ(ήτω) Παμουθίῳ εὐλαβεστάτῳ Παμουθίῳ ἀρχιμανδ(ίτῃ) μοναστηρίου Μουσαίου</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountford 030 6 IX 583</td>
<td>receipt for ropes</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>Abba Kastor l. 1: δι(ά) τῶν μοναζ(όντων) τοῦ κοινοβίου ἀββά Κάστορος</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSI I 89 25 VII–23 VIII 605</td>
<td>receipt for grain</td>
<td>l. 1: δ(ιὰ) Κοσμᾶ προ(νοητοῦ) Τερύθεως</td>
<td>Abba Hermes not stated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mountford 028 25 VI–24 VII Sixth century</td>
<td>receipt for grain</td>
<td>l. 1: […] προ(νοητοῦ) Φάκρα</td>
<td>Abba Kastor not stated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 031 Sixth century</td>
<td>order for ropes</td>
<td>l. 2: Ἀνούπ νο(τάριος</td>
<td>Abba Kastor l. 2: ἢπα Παύλῳ ἀρ(χιμανδρίτῃ) μοναστηρ(ίου) ἢπα Κάστορος</td>
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</tbody>
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66
TABLE 2. APIONIC OFFERINGS TO MONASTIC COMMUNITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document/date</th>
<th>Monastery</th>
<th>Donated goods/amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Person responsible (E: estate; M: monastery)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. LXVII 4620 list of offerings 5th–6th c.</td>
<td>Ano Kaisarion (l. 16)</td>
<td>30 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>not stated</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mega Oros (l. 18)</td>
<td>30 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monastery Leukadiou (l. 20)</td>
<td>20 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monastery (?) of Apa Hierakion (l. 22)</td>
<td>100 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monastery of Ama Iouliane (ll. 24–25)</td>
<td>50 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monastery of Ama Maria (ll. 27–28)</td>
<td>6 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 026 receipt 4–14 VII 548</td>
<td>monastery of Abba Andreas</td>
<td>500 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>heirs of Kyriakos, pronoetes of Polemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 027 receipt 553 (?)</td>
<td>monastery of Abba Petros</td>
<td>319 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>πρὸς τὸ ὠδός</td>
<td>E: pronoetes Anoup M: Anoup, presbyter and monk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. XVI 1913 pronoetes’s account ca. 555</td>
<td>koinobion of Abba Apollo (l. 8)</td>
<td>400 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>έκ κελεύσιον ἡμῶν τοῦ ὑπάτου</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monks from Pruchthis (l. 58)</td>
<td>20 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monks from Berku (l. 58)</td>
<td>20 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. XVI 1911 pronoetes’s account 556/7 (5th indiction)</td>
<td>monastery of Abba Andreas (l. 147)</td>
<td>1000 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>κατὰ τὸ ὠδός […] έκ κελεύσιον ἡμῶν τοῦ ὑπάτου</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monastery of Abba Andreas (l. 149)</td>
<td>12 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>έν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ μεγάλου ἀνθρώπου</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monastery of Abba Andreas (l. 150)</td>
<td>100 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>κατὰ κέλευσιν τοῦ ὑπάτου</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. XVI 1912 pronoetes’s account before 566</td>
<td>monastery of St Apheu (?) (l. 117)</td>
<td>2 1/2 artabae of wheat and four solidi</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. LV 3804 pronoetes’s account 566</td>
<td>monastery of Abba Andreas (l. 184)</td>
<td>1000 artabae of wheat (for 50 solidi minus 6 keratia)</td>
<td>l. 184: κατὰ τὸ ὠδός</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>monastery of Abba Andreas (l. 185)</td>
<td>12 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>l. 185: έν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ μεγάλου ἀνθρώπου</td>
<td>not stated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Monastery</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. XXVII 2480</td>
<td>Monastery of Abba Andreas (l. 186–187)</td>
<td>100 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>ll. 186–187: ἀπὸ γραμμ(άτων) ἐκ κελεύσεως τοῦ ἐν εὐαγγεῖ τῇ μνήμῃ πατρικίου Στρατηγίου [...] κατὰ τὸ ἔθος</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI VIII 953</td>
<td>Monastery of Mega Oros (l. 6)</td>
<td>100 dipla of vinegar</td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koinobion of Abba Sarmates (l. 9)</td>
<td>100 dipla of vinegar</td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monastery Pela (l. 12)</td>
<td>360 dipla of wine+60 dipla of vinegar</td>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 028</td>
<td>Monastery of Abba Kastor</td>
<td>50 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>[λόγῳ προσφοράς εξ ἔθους (?)]—entirely reconstructed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI I 89</td>
<td>Monastery of Abba Hermes (l. 1)</td>
<td>25 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>E: Kosmas, pronoetes of Terythis M: not stated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The table provides information on the monasteries and their associated donations, including the type of goods donated and the quantity. The annotations include the source of the record (e.g., P. Oxy., PSI VIII), the specific monastery, and the type of goods (e.g., wheat, wine, vinegar). The descriptions also include notes on the specific context of the donation, such as the name of the donor or the type of activity associated with the donation (e.g., koinobion, pronoetes).
## Table 3. Deliveries of Mats and Ropes by Monks to the Apionic Estate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document /date</th>
<th>Monastery</th>
<th>Recipient unit</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Product/ amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. LI 3640 20 VII 533</td>
<td>Abba Hierax</td>
<td>ἔξω τῆς πόλης</td>
<td>saγγία watering an orchard</td>
<td>2 coils of rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 029 17 XI 549</td>
<td>Abba Kastor</td>
<td>ἔξω τῆς πόλης</td>
<td>saγγία in […] (toponym unpreserved)</td>
<td>1 pair of ropes or coils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>saγγία of the topos of Elias</td>
<td>3 pairs of ropes or coils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. XVI 2015 555/556</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>γεουχικὸν λουτρόν τῆς μεγάλης οἰκίας</td>
<td>water supply in baths</td>
<td>1 ½ coils of rope out of 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XVIII 14061 19 II 556</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>ἔξω τῆς πόλης</td>
<td>saγγία of the topos of Elias</td>
<td>1 coil of rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XVIII 14062 7 III 556</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>γεουχικὸν λουτρόν</td>
<td>εἰς χρείαν τοῦ γεουχικ(οῦ) λουτρ(οῦ)</td>
<td>4 mats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. I 147 7 IV 556</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>κηπίον τῆς ἁγίας Μαρίας</td>
<td>saγγία</td>
<td>1 coil of rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Oxy. I 148 556</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>γεουχικὸν λουτρόν</td>
<td>for the use of porters</td>
<td>4 mats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XVIII 14063 16 VI 556</td>
<td>Abba Andreas</td>
<td>στάβλον τοῦ ἄξιος δρόμου</td>
<td>saγγία</td>
<td>1 ½ coils of rope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountford 030 6 IX 583</td>
<td>Abba Kastor</td>
<td>βιαστικῶν στάβλων</td>
<td>saγγία</td>
<td>1 coil of cistern rope (σχοινίον τοῦ λάκκου)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus</td>
<td>Indiction</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. III r., l. 1</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) σίτου(ος) δαμαζόμενος(ος) εἰς τὸ ὄρος Ψηφαίβα</td>
<td>ὄρος Ψηφαίβα through Apa Pheib monasticus and diaconetes (cf. Fol. IV, r. 1. 4: τὸ ἄτα Φειβ ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ ὄρους Ψηφαίβα)</td>
<td>100 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. III v., ll. 1–2</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) σίτου(ος) δαμαζόμενος(ος) εἰς τὴν διακονίαν τοῦ ὄγ(ο)ος ἄρροδίτις</td>
<td>ὄρος ἄρροδίτις represented by Apa Isakios (cf. Fol. IV, r. 1. 3: τὸ ἄτα Ἰσακίων ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ ὄρους ἄρροδίτις(ος))</td>
<td>413 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. III r., l. 19</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) σίτου(ος) ἐνεβληθ(έντος) εἰς τὸν ἴθησα(ο)ς(όν) π(ο)ὺ(α) ἄρτικος ποιμ(ένος)</td>
<td>(ὑπό) ἄτα Πετμο(μ)ι(ς) (= Patemous)</td>
<td>4 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. III r., l. 21</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) σίτου(ος) ἐνεβληθ(έντος) εἰς τὸν ἴθησα(ο)ς(όν) π(ο)ὺ(α) ἄρτικος ποιμ(ένος)</td>
<td>τὸ ἄτα Ἀγενίο(υ)</td>
<td>100 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. III r., l. 25</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) σίτου(ος) ἐνεβληθ(έντος) εἰς τὸν ἴθησα(ο)ς(όν) π(ο)ὺ(α) ἄρτικος ποιμ(ένος)</td>
<td>τὸ ἄτα Ἀγενίο(υ)</td>
<td>30 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. IV r., l. 14</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) ἐφορ(ήσας) τὸ[ν] κτήμ(ατο)ν το[ῦ] ἔνδο(ζατο)ῦ κόμ(ι)το(ν) Ἄμμονιο(ν)</td>
<td>τὸ ἄτα Ἀγενίο</td>
<td>40 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. IV r., l. 6</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) ἐφορ(ήσας) τῶν κτήμ(ατο)ν το[ῦ] ἔνδο(ζατο)ῦ κόμ(ι)το(ς)</td>
<td>εἰς τῇ[ν] προσ[φο]ρ[ά]ν τοῦ ὄγ(ο)ου ἄτα Πατεμο(μ)ι(ο)ς</td>
<td>45 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. IV r., l. 8</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) ἐφορ(ήσας) τῶν κτήμ(ατο)ν το[ῦ] ἔνδο(ζατο)ῦ κόμ(ι)το(ς)</td>
<td>εἰς τὸ ὄρος το[ῦ] ὄγ(ο)ου ἄτα Πατεμο(μ)ι(ο)ς</td>
<td>21 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. IV r., l. 9</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) ἐφορ(ήσας) τῶν κτήμ(ατο)ν το[ῦ] ἔνδο(ζατο)ῦ κόμ(ι)το(ς)</td>
<td>ταῖς θυγατρ(ί)ας(αί) Λουκανώ(ν) μονικόξισις</td>
<td>16 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. IV v., l. 9</td>
<td>7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) τῆς κρῆ[θ]ης(ῆς) τῶν κτήμ(ατο)ν το[ῦ] ἔνδο(ζατο)ῦ κόμ(ι)το(ς)</td>
<td>ὄρος ἄρροδίτις</td>
<td>8 artabae of barley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. VI r., l. 9</td>
<td>9th (545/546)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) το[ῦ] κόμ(ι)το(ς), θ ἱνά(κτικώσιος)</td>
<td>εἰς τὸ δρ(ό)ς(ος) Ἀρροδίτης(ῆς)</td>
<td>400 ½ artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. VI r., l. 10</td>
<td>9th (545/546)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) το[ῦ] κόμ(ι)το(ς), θ ἱνά(κτικώσιος)</td>
<td>θυγατ[ρί]α Λουκανώ(ν)</td>
<td>20 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. VI r., l. 11</td>
<td>9th (545/546)</td>
<td>λόγος(ος) το[ῦ] κόμ(ι)το(ς), θ ἱνά(κτικώσιος)</td>
<td>ἄστα Πατεμο(μ)ι(ς)</td>
<td>20 artabae of wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fol.</td>
<td>Folio Type</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Line</td>
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<td>Fol. VI</td>
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<td>9th</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Fol. II</td>
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<td>38:</td>
<td>Fol. II</td>
<td>8th</td>
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<td>38:</td>
<td>Fol. II</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>38:</td>
<td>Fol. III</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>18–26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus</td>
<td>Indiction</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Amount</td>
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<td>-------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. V r., l. 9</td>
<td>5th (541/542) from the ekphoria of the 6th (542/543)</td>
<td>λόγ(os) ἀναλωμ(άτων) ἀναλισκομέν(ων) π(αρι) ἐμώ(ῦ) εἰς τὰ πραγματικά κόσμος, κανόνος πέμπτης ἱνδ(ικτίονος) ἀπὸ ἐκφορ(ιαν) ἔκτης ἱνδ(ικτίονος)</td>
<td>οἶνος Ἀρησιδῖτο (τῷ ἀπ’ Ἰσακίῳ τῆς δικαινίας)</td>
<td>3 solidi minus 6 keratia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. V r., l. 10</td>
<td>5th (541/542) from the ekphoria of the 6th (542/543)</td>
<td>λόγ(os) ἀναλωμ(άτων) ἀναλισκομέν(ων) π(αρι) ἐμώ(ῦ) εἰς τὰ πραγματικά κόσμος, κανόνος πέμπτης ἱνδ(ικτίονος) ἀπὸ ἐκφορ(ιαν) ἔκτης ἱνδ(ικτίονος)</td>
<td>τὸ Ἀπολλώττι ἱπουῆ(ἐκτη) (ὑπὲρ(?)) ἄπα Φείβ</td>
<td>3 solidi minus 6 keratia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. V r., l. 13</td>
<td>5th (541/542) from the ekphoria of the 6th (542/543)</td>
<td>λόγ(os) ἀναλωμ(άτων) ἀναλισκομέν(ων) π(αρι) ἐμώ(ῦ) εἰς τὰ πραγματικά κόσμος, κανόνος πέμπτης ἱνδ(ικτίονος) ἀπὸ ἐκφορ(ιαν) ἔκτης ἱνδ(ικτίονος)</td>
<td>οἶνος Ίβεκε (Φείβ μαλανάρχῃ) (καὶ ἐν ἡμικλήνῳ)</td>
<td>1 solidus minus 1 ½ keratia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. V r., l. 19</td>
<td>expenses of the 6th (542/543) from apargyrismos of the 7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγ(os) ἀναλωμ(άτων) ζ ἱνδ(ικτίονος) ἀπὸ ἄγορα(σημοῦ) ζ ἱνδ(ικτίονος)</td>
<td>οἶνος Ἀρησιδῖτο (τῷ ἀπ’ Ἰσακίῳ τῆς δικαστήριας)</td>
<td>3 solidi minus 6 keratia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. V r., l. 23</td>
<td>expenses of the 6th (542/543) from apargyrismos of the 7th (543/544)</td>
<td>λόγ(os) ἀναλωμ(άτων) ζ ἱνδ(ικτίονος) ἀπὸ ἄγορα(σημοῦ) ζ ἱνδ(ικτίονος)</td>
<td>τὸ ἀπ’ Ἐνδίος ὁ (ὑ) Σ(ενοῦς) ἡθ(ο)ν</td>
<td>1 solidus minus 4 keratia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39: Fol. VI v., l. 2</td>
<td>6th (542/543); payment for the 5th (541/542)</td>
<td>λόγ(os) Μηνᾶς</td>
<td>Ἀρα Σουροῦς (τῷ Ἀρτεμιδῷφρρῳ σηγ(οὐλαρίῳ))</td>
<td>2 solidi minus 4 keratia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inventory numbers of papyri from the Oxyrhynchos find edited by Margaret Mountford in *Documentary papyri from Roman and Byzantine Oxyrhynchus* (PhD thesis, University College London), London 2012.

Mountford 026 = 15 1B.201/E(g)
Mountford 027 = 54 1B.25(B)/A(3)a
Mountford 028 = 53 1B.26(F)/C(B)b
Mountford 029 = 53 1.B26(F)/D(9)a
Mountford 030 = 13 1B.132 D(a)
Mountford 031 = 30 4B.35/H(1–2)d
Mountford 032 = 7 1B.217/C(b)
CHAPTER 2
MONASTERIES IN THE WORLD OF MEDIUM LANDOWNERS—THE APHRODITO CASE

1. Introductory remarks

The dossier of over 500 documents discovered in 1905 in Kom Ishqaw, widely known as the archive of Dioskoros, contains texts pertaining to economic, social, and political activities of middle- and upper-class inhabitants of the village of Aphroditó: well-off landowners active as lessors, lessees, and moneylenders, now clashing, now collaborating with the state officials. Their relations with monasteries as reflected in the documents differ significantly from what we observe in Apions’ or count Ammonios’s dossiers, at least partially because of the different documentary perspective offered by the texts. A large part of monasteries-related documents in the Aphroditó dossier focus on landowning-based activities, such as leasing or selling land, which are absent from documentation pertaining to monasteries that we find in estate dossiers. The role of donations and allowances, on the other hand, so prominent in estate documentation, here is much less pronounced. Pious offerings do enter the picture, but their character is different than in the case of estate dossiers. Aphroditan documents offer an insight into the details of the functioning of monasteries which can be only conjecturally reconstructed for most of the institutions attested in connection with the Apions or Ammonios.

The documents at our disposal record relations of at least twenty-seven monasteries with various individuals and shed light on their position in local landowning and fiscal system. Some of these monasteries, namely the Pachomian monastery of Smine, the Panopolite monastery of

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Abba Shenoute, and the monastery of Penitence (Metanoia) in Canopus near Alexandria, are known to us from other papyrological, archaeological, and literary sources. The majority of the remaining establishments mentioned in the texts are much more obscure; in most of the cases we are ignorant of their model of organisation or even their location; the monastery of Apa Apollos, established by Dioskoros’s father in ca. 538, is our most important exception.

The study of the dossier is hindered by the asymmetry between the Greek and Coptic parts of Dioskoros’s collection as regards their accessibility to a wider circle of scholars. The Greek lot, the major part of which was published by Jean Maspero in *P. Cairo Masp.*, has received a thorough scholarly treatment. On the other hand, the Coptic lot had been long neglected until the 1980s, when Leslie S. B. MacCoull began to gather information on its dispersed documents which found their way to local Egyptian collections or had been altogether lost. Her effort resulted in editions of several texts dispersed in a number of articles. Some of the documents were published from poor-quality photographs or transmitted on second hand from Walter E. Crum’s transcriptions of documents now lost. The difference between the editions of the Coptic and the Greek part of the dossier is thus not only quantitative, but also qualitative; however, it can be hoped that the ongoing work of Coptologists will result in a dramatic change in the situation within the next few years.

 Aphroditan documents connected with monasteries include several texts and groups of texts which distinguish themselves in a particular manner. First, there is a sub-dossier connected
with the abovementioned monastery of Apa Apollos\textsuperscript{8} second, a group of receipts for the shipments of *embole*-grain carried out by monks of the Metanoia monastery.\textsuperscript{9} The former, composed of legal deeds, letters, and petitions, is a good illustration of the functioning of a private establishment outside great landed property. A synthetical presentation of this material was given by Ewa Wipszycka in her article of 2008 (see n. 5). In the following argument, I shall focus on the details of the documents and information they convey about the relations with landowners, tenants, and officials, which have not been explored by Wipszycka in her contribution. The Metanoia receipts will not be treated here, first and foremost because three generations of scholars have exhausted research possibilities offered by this sub-dossier; secondly, because addressing the question of Metanoia I would be obliged to venture into the area of Alexandrian monasticism, which, as I stated in the introduction, remains outside the scope of the present work.\textsuperscript{10}

The Aphrodito dossier contains two documents of extreme informative value, which allow us to get the general idea of the position monasteries occupied in local landscape as landowners and taxpayers. As these documents surpass other texts from the dossier in their complexity, a few words of further explanation are needed before we proceed to the subject proper of the chapter. The so-called cadastre of Aphrodito (\textit{SB XX} 14669), dated to 523–524, lists landholdings located in the Aphrodito region registered in the astika-category, which encompassed parcels whose fiscal liabilities were handled by the treasury in the nome capital, Antaiopolis.\textsuperscript{11} It was drawn up based on a land survey carried out by a censitor named Ioannes.\textsuperscript{12} The document constitutes one of the most important sources for the studies on Aphroditan


\textsuperscript{9} \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} III 67347 Fol. I r., ll. 1–7; \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} III 67347 Fol. I r., ll. 17–25; \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} Fol. III 67286, ll. 1–10; \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} III 67286, ll. 12–22; \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67138, Fol. IV r.; \textit{P. Flor.} III 298, ll. 74–76; \textit{P. Lond. inv.} 2822; \textit{P. Flor.} III 298, ll. 53–56; \textit{P. Berol.} 16383.


\textsuperscript{12} For the chronology of land surveys in Aphrodito, see Zuckerman, \textit{Du village à l’Empire} (cit. n. 11), pp. 35–36; cf. \textit{P. Vat. Apbroid.} 25C, ll. 23–24, mentioning the sequence of Aphrodito land surveys.
landowning. The purpose of the document, which enumerated landowners-taxpayers (physical and legal persons) and their holdings listed according to fiscal and crop-yielding categories, was to facilitate tax assessments. The information we can draw from the cadastre is of purely technical nature; it enables us to see the scale of monastic holdings and trace some of the social links established based on landownership. No holdings on Apionic scale are observed in the cadastre. The Aphroditian landowners formed a diverse group in which ecclesiastical institutions—churches and monasteries—occupied a prominent place. The monastery of Apa Sourous, holding 1/5 of the astika-land in the cadastre, is the largest single landowner recorded in the document. The land possessed by seven monasteries mentioned in the document was mostly arable; the monasteries owned also smaller plots of vineyards, gardens, and reed-land.

The document consists of nine columns containing several entries each; the organisation of the entries does not reveal any perceptible pattern. They list plots of land registered under the names of people and institutions. Some of the plots are held by more than one owner (co-propriety; ὁ δεῖνος κατὰ κοινωνίαν τοῦ δείνα); in other cases, a person or an institution represent a person officially registered as owner (ὁ δεῖνος διὰ τοῦ δείνα, or ὁ δεῖνος ὀνόματος τοῦ δείνα). Such cases are the least clear, as the phrase can indicate that the representative was either a tenant or contemporary owner of the land, which for various reasons was still registered under the name of the previous owner. A number of owners is said to have acquired the property through expropriation of a person or institution (ὁ δεῖνος ἀπὸ ἐκβ(ολῆς) τοῦ δείνα). In numerous cases the entries mention people (or institutions) responsible for farming the registered plot of land (ὑπὸ τῶν δείνα). These people were often not the actual cultivators (despite their designation georgoi), but tenants of the plots who could sub-lease them to farmers. The group of georgoi consists mostly of local residents, some of whom are attested in other documents of the

13 Unveiling prosopographic connections between people attested in the documents from the Aphroditian dossier is now much facilitated thanks to the painstaking work done by Giovanni Ruffini, which resulted in the publication of an extremely useful tool, G. Ruffini, Prosopography of Byzantine Aphroditio (= American Studies in Papyrology 50), Durham 2011. The particular value of Ruffini’s book lies in the references to documentary sources in which the individuals appear; it was thanks to Ruffini’s identifications that I was able to see connections of monasteries to prominent Aphroditian families.


15 Or eight; MacCoull, ‘Monastic and church landholding’ (cit. n. 14), p. 244, treats the monastery mentioned in col. 2, l. 53, whose name is not extant, as a separate institution.

16 For details, see Gascou, ‘Le cadastre’ (cit. n. 3), p. 250.

17 In this case, fiscal responsibilities can either be shared by all the co-proprietors, or divided proportionally between them. Each case is distinguished with an appropriate formula (see Gascou, ‘Le cadastre’ [cit. n. 3], p. 252).


Aphrodito dossier. The entries state the acreage of the plots, sometimes their location, but never give the tax quota imposed thereon. Land is divided into four main categories: arable, vineyards, reed-land, and orchards.

Information obtained from the cadastre can be supplemented with data from the so-called Aphrodito fiscal register (P. Aphrod. Reg.) dated to 525–526. The document records tax payments of different kind made by individual and institutional taxpayers whose lands were registered in the komotika-category, encompassing fiscal obligations handled by the village treasury. The register contains eighteen columns listing payments of taxes in gold solidi and in keratia by people acting alone or in groups, institutions, and companies of representatives of different trades. The last two columns sum up the previous entries. Payments in the register were made either in somebody’s own name (in such cases the entries contain the name(s) in the nominative case and the amount of money paid) or on behalf of someone else (such entries are composed according to the formula ὁ δεῖνος διὰ τοῦ δεῖνα, followed by the sum).\(^{21}\) In the second case, the name in nominative indicates the officially registered holder of fiscal responsibility—the owner of the land on which taxes were imposed. Relations between the owners and the intermediaries whose names are given in genitive are not clear and could vary from one entry to another.\(^{22}\)

By juxtaposing information from these two documents, we can obtain as complete an image of landowning and fiscal structures of Aphrodito as it is possible. This approach was at the basis of Constantine Zuckerman’s *Du village à l’Empire*—by far the most complex study of sixth-century Aphroditan fiscality, presented against a rich backdrop of political, economic, and social issues of the Empire. Zuckerman devoted a section of his book to ecclesiastical and monastic landholding. According to Zuckerman’s estimations, up to 11,5% of independent village territory could remain in the hands of monasteries.\(^{23}\)

Monks and monasteries appear in the cadastre and the register as owners or co-owners of land, tenants, or fiscal intermediaries. Landholding was an anchor that secured the position of the monasteries in the Aphroditan environment. The register and the cadastre constitute a convenient starting point for a discussion of the place of monastic institutions in Aphrodito, but

\(^{21}\) The first case is illustrated by, e.g., *P. Aphrod. Reg.* l. 6: / Ἐρμαυων ᾨρων πρεσβύτερος ν(όμισμα) η (παρὰ) < ζ δ’ ζογ(ῶ); the second is exemplified in (P. Aphrod. Reg. l. 8): / Παυχαβ Πανουφίδου δ(ιὰ) δοβμίλμου(ος) ν(όμισμα) α (παρὰ) δ ζ δ’ζογ(ῶ).

\(^{22}\) Zuckerman, *Du village à l’Empire* (cit. n. 11), p. 30: ‘Les formules elliptiques de représentation recouvrent—et dissimulent—des rapports sociaux très divers: un tenancier qui paye l’impôt du propriétaire, l’un des héritiers qui représente l’ensemble de la succession, un prêtre qui agit pour sa fondation pieuse, etc.’

\(^{23}\) Cf., however, the objections in Zuckerman, *Du village à l’Empire* (cit. n. 11), p. 228, concerning the monastic share in total landholdings in Aphrodito. Zuckerman’s cautious stance results from his awareness of the lack of information concerning the *ousia* of Ioulianos, a former prefect and pagarch, whose ἐνδοξος οἶκος could have possessed considerable amount of land in the territory of Aphrodito. If we include Ioulianos’s *ousia* in the estimate, the proportion of land held by monasteries falls from 11,5% to a mere 5 %. For the calculations concerning the size of the *ousia* of Ioulianos, see Zuckerman, *Du village à l’Empire* (cit. n. 11), pp. 221–222.
in order to explore some aspects of their relations with Aphroditan society at large, there will be need to have recourse to other texts from the Aphrodito dossier. If we want to go beyond prosopographical connections and general statements on the scale of institutional monastic landownershhip, we ought to put the cadastre and the register in the perspective of contracts, receipts, letters, and petitions: tangible traces of how the institutions acted ‘on the ground’. Such an approach is, of course, also limited, as the other documents at our disposal are, for the most part, connected with Dioskoros and his kin, and as such do not do justice to the multitude of connections we witness in SB XX 14669 and P. Aphrod. Reg.

Most of the issues that can be studied based on the Aphrodito dossier relate to landowning, as the texts at our disposal are chiefly documents concerned with land acquisition, management of landed property, dispositions concerning it, and problems encountered by landowning institutions. Among them, we find deeds of sale and lease, rent receipts, testaments, and, finally, petitions and letters by means of which communities and individuals tried to influence people of rank in order to protect their own interests. These texts permit us to trace links between monasteries and the circle of prominent Aphroditan figures, and, thanks to the part of documentation from the Antinopolite period of Dioskoros’s activity, let us venture also beyond the borders of the village.

Giovanni Ruffini’s analyses of social networks of Aphrodito and the dossier’s prosopography provide a point of reference for a more in-depth investigation focused on monasteries and their partners. Thanks to a careful rereading of Dioskoros’s documents pertaining to monastic communities we will be able to examine manners of land acquisition and—as far as it is possible with the material at our disposal—the conditions of establishing a monastic community. Strategies of property management, as well as challenges inextricably connected with functioning in the village environment are another sphere of monastic life that we should be able to discuss. It will be possible to look at the world of Aphroditan monastics not only from the perspective of their institutional functioning and representation, but also from the perspective of individual monks whose activity left traces in our documentation.

2. Monasteries among Aphroditan landowners

2.1. Monastic property

One of the most important sources for monastic landholding in Aphrodito is SB XX 14669, or the aforementioned cadastre. It gives us an idea of the scale of the holdings and their
composition, and allows us to picture how multiple and complex were the ties binding monasteries to local population. While reading the cadastre we need to realise that the situation it depicts was a result of a process of accumulation of landed property that must have begun years before the document was drawn up, somewhere in the fifth century—a period so crucial for the shaping of Byzantine Egypt as we know it and, alas, so poorly documented. Processes of property acquisition were by no means finished in the 520s, however, and later Aphroditan documentation allows us to catch a glance of how monasteries continued to expand their control over new parcels. Thanks to information from these later sources and our general knowledge of the ways in which religious institutions accumulated assets, we can propose a conjectural reconstruction of how monastic property became what it is in the cadastre. It is with this document, and the Aphroditan fiscal register in mind that one must start the discussion of landowning-based relations of monks and monasteries with Aphroditan residents.

Entries in the cadastre and the register refer both to individual monks and monastic institutions; the latter are predominant, especially in the cadastre, which lists only one individual Μοναζων. In P. Aphrod. Reg. individual monks appear both as holders of fiscal responsibility (landowners) and intermediaries. Monasteries appear in SB XX 14669 mainly as owners or co-owners of land parcels; representation of a current or previous owner by a monastery, expressed by means of the ὀνόματος-formula, is rare. Land could be co-owned by a monastery and an individual, a group of individuals, or, in one case, another monastery (SB XX 14669, col. II, l. 55: μ[ο]ναστ[ήριον] Ἄπα Σουρ̣οῦτος κ[ατὰ κο(ινωνίαν)] μοναστ(ηρίου) Ἀοσίτου, l. Ὄσστου). As Jean Gascou has observed, in the cases where a monastery owns land with another party, the co-owners do not reappear anywhere else in the cadastre; this leads to the conclusion that their share was registered in the kometika-category. Only one monastery, of Tarouthis, is attested in the function of tenant. When a monastery owns land jointly with one person, its share amounts

24 SB XX 14669 mentions the monasteries of Apa Sourous, Apa Zenobios, Smine, Porbis, Apa Shenoute, Tarouthis, and Ama Termouthia; whether the monastery whose name is not preserved in col. II, l. 53 is another institution or one of the already mentioned is open to question. P. Aphrod. Reg. mentions the monasteries of Apa Zenobios, Smine, and Tregetos among fiscal contributors.

The only individual monk in the cadastre is Isak son of Biktor (SB XX 14669, col. VI, l. 181–182); he recurs in P. Aphrod. Reg. ll. 9, 20, and 439. He is attested as monk already in P. Flor. III 279 (15 X 514), ll. 3–5: Αδηρη[λ]ιος Ἰσακος Βίκτορος Κωσταντίου μονάζων ἀπὸ κοίμης Αφροδίτης τοῦ Ἀντασσολοτην νομοῦ.

25 Only three instances in the whole cadastre: the monastery of Apa Sourous in the name (ὁνόματος) of Tachymia (col. IV, ll. 136–138), the monastery of Tarouthis with Apollos son of Dioskoros in the name of Athanasia (col. IV, ll. 105–106); and the monastery of Smine in the name of Sophia daughter of Chairemon (col. V, ll. 152–153).

26 Gascou, ‘Le cadastre’ (cit. n. 3), pp. 252 and 257 with n. 78.

27 SB XX 14669, col. III, ll. 97–98: / μοναστ[ήριον] Ἄπα Σουρούτος τὸ ἔδω (και) Υἱοίς σχολαστικοὶ τὸ δέ υπὸ(δ) τὸ μοναστηρίου Ταρούθεως σπο(μίμης γῆς) (ἀρουρα) κς [.] [.] [.] 38; ibid., ll. 99–101: / Βίκτωρ Χαργίας ἀπὸ Ἀπολλώνου και Τασία ἀπὸ Ανταίου ἀπὸ ἐκβ(ολίης) μοναστ[ηρίον] Ἄπα Σουρούτος και λοικ(ον) υπὸ(δ) τὸ μοναστηρίου Ταρούθεως σπο(μίμης γῆς) (ἀρουρα) ; ibid., ll. 102–103: (hand 2) κωμητ[ηρίαν] Τ. σ. . . . σαμίλ. προσβ(υτης) ἀδελφε(ς) / Μαρφρίου ἀπὸ ἐκβ(ολίης) τῶν (αὐτῶν) υπὸ(δ) τὸ μοναστηρίον Ταρούθεως σπο(μίμης γῆς) (ἀρουρα) σ . ibid., l. 104: / Πανόμηλος πολ(τευτομονικος) ἀπὸ ἐκβ(ολίης) τῶν (αὐτῶν) ὑπὸ τὸ (αὐτο) σπο(μίμης γῆς) (ἀρουρα) β; ibid., l. 105–107: /
always to no less than half of the whole parcel; in the cases where co-proprietors are more numerous, the monastery’s share is proportionally smaller. Monasteries could also gain or lose parcels of land through expropriation, which, most probably, was a result of revisions of property titles carried out as a part of Ioannes’s land survey. Co-propriety of parcels and expropriations were perhaps a ‘by-product’ of the process of acquisition of property through donations and testamentary bequests (see below, pp. 84–87).

Zuckerman, in his discussion of fiscal responsibilities of monasteries, focuses mainly on the monasteries of Apa Sourous, Apa Zenobios, and Smine, which are the most important monastic landowners in the light of the cadastre’s testimony. The presence of Apa Zenobios and Smine in P. Aphrod. Reg. implies that in contrast with Apa Sourous, unmentioned in this document, these institutions possessed also holdings registered in the kometika-category. The special status of Apa Sourous’s land, attested only in the attika-category, which drew attention of Jean Gascou, the editor of the cadastre, cannot be explained in a satisfactory manner.  

The monastery of Apa Sourous, being the largest landowner in the region, has received particular attention in scholarship. It appears in a number of documents from Dioskoros’s dossier besides ṢB XX 14669 (see above, Chapter 1, p. 57–58, and below, p. 94, n. 70). In the cadastre, the monastery appears as a landowner, co-owner, former (expropriated) owner, and representative in forty-seven entries. In one instance, it co-owns land with the monastery of the Oasites (col. II, ll. 55–57),31 which is known to have possessed immovables around Aphroditos as late as in ca. 585.32 This entry is probably the best illustration of the special position of Apa

29 Zuckerman, Du village à l’Empire (cit. n. 11), p. 228: ‘À peine deux ans avant le Registre, la totalité des terres ὑπάυγυς Απα Ζενοβίου καὶ Ἐρμανῶς Πολυζαιμᾶ, ἀπὸ ὑπὲρ μέρος (ὑπέρους) γὰρ σπορήματος (ὑποποτοῦ) κόσμου ἐς.` It is noteworthy that in the case of one parcel of land formerly belonging to the monastery of Apa Sourous, now in the hands of an unknown holder (ll. 102–103), the change in ownership caused most probably also the transfer to the kometika-category, as was duly noted on the margin of the document.
31 ṢB XX 14669, col. II, l. 55: μὴ ἐν τῷ κατὰ κοινωνίαν Ἀπα Σουροῦσος κινήσεως καὶ προσκύνησεως, identified with the otherwise known Aphroditian monastery of the Oasites by the editor (see commentary ad loc.).
32 Cf. P. Flor. Ill 285 (13 July 552), where Aurelius Kyriakos son of Hermuatos leases from the monastery a third part of an olive oil workshop with appurtenances; ll. 4–6: τῇ δικαιᾷ τῆς ἡγεμονίας κατακτήμας ἐν τῷ ἄρα [κόσμους Ἀφροδίτου] τοῦ ἄνθιστάκτου νομοῦ δίκαιος τὸ τιμηθείσα καταναπτήτου καὶ προσκυνητοῦ. See also P. Cairo Map. III 67325, an account book dated to 585–586: Fol. I r. (fragment of an estate account registering deliveries of wheat and vegetables from various plots), ll. 1–2: λόγῳ(ος) σημαίνου ἐν χρόνον παραθέτοντος (παρακομίους) Ἀπα Τατιανοῦ διοικητοῦ (ἄρμας) γιά[

82
Sourous’s monastery: in the case where two monasteries owned jointly one plot of land, only the part belonging to Apa Sourous was registered in the *astika*-category.

The monastery of Apa Zenobios was identified by Jean Gascou with an important Panopolitian establishment which survived until the eighth century, when it is still attested in fiscal registers. In the cadastre, it features in fifteen entries, six of which indicate joint ownership with individuals or groups thereof. The entries in *P. Aphrod. Reg.* connected with Apa Zenobios mention only two individuals through which the monastery is discharging its fiscal obligations: a man named Apollos, difficult to identify due to the commonness of his name (l. 14), and a certain Promaos μονάζων (ll. 16, 158, 225, 267, 545).

The monastery of Smine is the third most substantial landowner in the cadastre, where it appears in connection with nine parcels of land; only one of them is held in co-propriety (*SB XX 14669*, col. II, l. 46) and in one case the institution represents a woman, Sophia daughter of Chairemon (col. V, ll. 152–153). *P. Aphrod. Reg.* l. 294 registers a tax payment by the monastery of Smine (for land held together with Petros son of Psaios); interestingly, however, no intermediary is recorded in this entry. Some of the monastery’s intermediaries in the register are monastics and clergymen: the monk Mousaios (ll. 303 and 526; see below, pp. 101–102), Ama Rachel (ll. 532 and 540), and presbyter Apollos (l. 542).

Four institutions are attested in the cadastre but absent from the register: the monasteries of Porbis, of Shenoute, of Tarouthis, and the only feminine establishment in the whole lot, (Δπόσμ) ξι φι. The monastery is attested in Aphroditan fiscal context as late as the eighth century (*P. Lond. IV* 1419, 1456, 1458, 1260).  

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33 Gascou, ‘Le cadastre’ (cit. n. 3), p. 283, commentary to l. 44. Apa Zenobios was an important figure of the fifth-century monasticism; on literary texts connected with him, see D. Johnson, ‘The dossier of Apa Zenobius’, *Orientalia* 58 (1989), pp. 193–312; E. Lecches, ‘Le dossier d’Apa Zénobe: addenda et corrigenda’, *Analecta Bollandiana* 117 (1999), pp. 67–80. The monastery of Apa Zenobios is attested in a number of fiscal documents from Arab Aphrodito (*P. Lond. IV* 1460, l. 34; *P. Lond. IV* 1419; *P. Cairo Arab.* III 167); the monastery was located in *παγαρχία Πανός*.

34 See the index in Zuckerman, *Du village à l’Empire* (cit. n. 11), e.v. ‘Apollos’, where it is suggested that he could have been a tenant of more than one landowner. In line 14 Apollos represents the monastery of Apa Zenobios and a certain Besis son of Samelix.

35 Gascou, ‘Le cadastre’ (cit. n. 3), p. 267, translates the entry ἡμετ[ερ][ήθη]ν Σμίνησθ [± 12]χίου Ἡσα / [Κ]αλαπησέ (…) as ‘Monastère de Smine … Kalapèse (…)’. I propose to supplement the κατά κοινωνίαν formula in the lacuna before the ending of the genitive -χίου, which was perhaps the name of co-proprietor. Esaias and Kalapése would be the co-owner’s father and grandfather.

36 *P. Aphrod. Reg.* ll. 146, 182, 234, 311, 555. In line 311 taxes of Petros and his mother (Πετρός Ψαϊός καὶ ὤμος[ήθη]ν) are paid by Apa Hermalous, perhaps to be identified with Hermalous μονάζων of ll. 61, 443, 556, 574. In one case Hermalous μονάζων represents Mariam, daughter of Psaios, sister of Petros (l. 556).

37 On problems with localising the place, see Gascou, ‘Le cadastre’ (cit. n. 3), p. 282, commentary to l. 12. The monastery registers three parcels, one of which is held in co-propriety with a certain Daniel son of Isakios and others (col. IX, ll. 282–283).

38 Two parcels of arable land, one acquired through expropriation of another religious institution, *xenon* of Apa Dios (see below, p. 86).

39 Tarouthis was a village in the Antaiopolite nome; see ‘Le cadastre’ (cit. n. 3), p. 286 (commentary to col. III, l. 98). For Tarouthis, see Calderini–Darris, *Ptolemaia*, vol. IV, p. 364; Timm, *Ägypten*, vol. VI, p. 2537. The monastery was linked to the family of Dioskoros: in the cadastre it registers one-third of a plot of arable land held jointly.
the monastery of Ama Termouthia. One entry (col. II, l. 53) registers a plot of considerable size: 13 ¼ 1/8 arourae of arable land and [...] 1/8 arourae of vineyard held by a monastery whose name is unreserved.

The entries in the cadastre (the register is less relevant in this respect) allow us to find traces of processes through which the monasteries accumulated land, while both documents shed light on questions of tenancy and monastic representation. The rest of the present section will be devoted to the first issue, as my intention here is to look at how monasteries could root themselves in Aphroditan landscape. The monasteries in the Aphroditos dossier were both local, often private institutions, and external establishments whose influence could reach far into other nomes thanks to their fame and prestige; this, to use the vocabulary of the scholarly discourse concerning landholding, translated into local and absentee landownership. Each of these models presented different challenges, and this is where questions of tenancy and representation were crucial; they will be addressed in the next section.

A founder of a private institution, such as the monastery of Apa Sourous or Apa Apollos, would assign his community tracts of land in order to secure its sustenance. Unfortunately, no establishing act exists to instruct us on initial assignments of property to any of the private monasteries we know from our documentation. It is obviously impossible to distinguish the original core of holdings among the arourae registered under the name of Apa Sourous’s monastery in the cadastre of Aphroditos, although we may suspect that a part of the land came to the community at a date later than its establishment. The dynamic situation of the monastery in local landowning networks is reflected in entries that record expropriation, most probably as a

with Apollos son of Dioskoros, the notary’s father, in the name of Athanasia (col. III, ll. 105–106: / μοναστ(ήριον) Τε(ρ)μουθίου κατὰ κοιν(ονιάν) Ἀπολλ(ύσιος) Διοσκ(όρος) ἄν(δροτος) Ἀθανασίας ὑπ(ό) τὸ (ἀυτὸ) μοναστ(ήριον) καὶ Ἐρμομόσιος Πολομιμίαυ ἄγ(ό) (ἀρουρ.) 8 ½ (ήπαρ) μέρ(ιος) γῆς (ἀρούρης) ñ [ - - - ] η’ ἐσ’. The monastery and Apollos were subject to expropriation by a certain Psais (col. IV, l. 108). Interestingly, the entries concerning this monastery are clustered together in the end of column III; whether this has any meaning in a document without no perceptible organizing principle is open to question.

The name of the eponymous figure is reconstructed by Gasco, col. III, l. 76: / μοναστ(ήριον) [...]ρμουθίας, cf. commentary ad loc., [Ἀμα Τε]ρμοθής. The monastery’s holdings were very modest but quite diversified and included arable land, vineyard, and orchard.

The closest thing to an establishing act we find in our documents is KRU 105 (translated in W. C. Till, Die koptischen Rechturkunden aus Theben, Vienna 1964, pp. 188–191), connected with the famous monastery of St Phoibammon at Deir el-Bahari. Even this text, however, is not an actual foundation document, but an act of formal recognition of Apa Abraham’s—the monastery’s superior’s—ownership of the monastic site. The document was issued by the representatives of the village community of Jeme on whose territory the monastery had been established. See J. Ph. Thomas, ‘Apa Abraham: testament of Apa Abraham, bishop of Hermouthis, for the monastery of St Phoibammon near Thebes, Egypt’, [in] J. Thomas & A Constantinides Hero, Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founder’s Typika and Testaments, Washington DC 2000, pp. 51–58, esp. p. 51 with n. 5.

A slight chance may be offered by cadastral entries in which the monastery is said to co-own land with individuals and especially groups of heirs of persons for whom no connection with the family of Apa Sourous can be proved. Such division of land may point, e.g., to prior testamentary dispositions by virtue of which various individuals divided their property between their own family and the monastery which was already in existence. This, however, is only one of the possible explanations of such pattern of co-ownership emerging in the entries.
result of the revision of property rights by the surveyor Ioannes.\textsuperscript{43} The procedure deprived the monastery of five plots of land and allowed it to acquire two other.\textsuperscript{44} At least some of these changes would have occurred as a result of settlements of property claims challenging testamentary dispositions or land donations.\textsuperscript{45} Other situations when the rights of ownership could be a subject of dispute could have arisen from contractual arrangements of sale or loans (cf. the case of the monk and presbyter Ioannes son of Makarios, or \textit{P. Oxy. LXIII 4397}, a settlement between Flavius Apion III and the monastery of Apa Hierax).\textsuperscript{46} Monastic status did not offer immunity against claims, which in numerous cases were legally justified. Five instances of expulsion of the monastery from land are quite a lot, and they show that monasteries were treated as every other landowner and were subject to the same procedures. Interestingly, even though other monasteries also acquired land through expropriation,\textsuperscript{47} only one entry recording a loss of monastic property in this way refers to a monastery other than Apa Sourous.\textsuperscript{48} This results obviously from the extensive scale of transactions of Apa Sourous’s monastery in the region, and a greater number of links with local owners it could establish and maintain. Some of these intricacies may be glanced in two entries in \textit{SB XX 14669} related to Ioannes son of Ioannes. In the first one, the monastery of Apa Sourous registers 3 5/16 arourae of arable land in the \textit{topos} of Chinan acquired through expropriation of Hermias and his sister Rachel (col. VII, ll. 242–243). In col. VIII, ll. 269–271, the same monastery co-owns a sixth part of a plot of arable land and orchard in the \textit{topos ab actis} with Hermias son of Ioannes and others. Even though the parcels

\textsuperscript{43} This is how Jean Gascou proposes to understand the phrase \textit{ἀπὸ ἐκβολῆς τοῦ δεινος} which appears in numerous entries (see Gascou, ‘Le cadastre’ [cit. n. 3], pp. 254–255).

\textsuperscript{44} The monastery lost plots to Anastasios son of Onnophris (col. I, l. 24), heirs of \textit{κοιμες} Eleusinios (col. I, ll. 32–33), Biktor son of Chargaus and Tasia from Antaiopolis (col. III, ll. 99–101), NN son of NN, presbyter (col. III, ll. 102–103), and Panobios \textit{καριάλας} (col. III, l. 104). It acquired land at the expense of Psenhaesis son of Psempnouthis, presbyter and farmer (col. VI, ll. 197–198) and Hermias son of Ioannes and his sister Rachel (col. VII, ll. 242–243).

\textsuperscript{45} \textit{SB XX 14669} lists a number of private and legal persons whose property passed to someone else after revision of property rights. Nine entries concern individuals, seven—heirs of former holders, four—groups of holders explicitly stated as siblings and sometimes composed of an individual and a group vaguely described as ‘others’, four, finally, are institutions: one church (\textit{νοτιν ἐκκλησίων}), the hospital of Apa Dios, the monastery of Tarouthis, and the monastery of Apa Sourous. The last one is mentioned alone in l. 24 (\textit{ἀπὸ ἐκβολῆς (ολής)} μοναστητικοῦ) Ἀπα Σουροῦς (ονύς) and with others in col. III, ll.100 (\textit{ἀπὸ ἐκβολῆς} μοναστητικοῦ Ἀπα Σουροῦς καὶ λοιπῶν), 103, and 104 (\textit{ἀπὸ ἐκβολῆς} τῶν νέων). In the cases where the expropriated groups are explicitly called heirs we might suspect that later cadastral adjustments could be a result of a revision of testamentary dispositions. In four out of five cases where we observe expropriation of the monastery of Apa Sourous, the land was co-owned by the monastery and other unspecified people. Shared ownership might have been a result of testamentary bequests in which a testator would have left land to family members and the monastery.

\textsuperscript{46} For Ioannes son of Makarios, see Zuckerman, \textit{Du village à l’Empire} (cit. n. 11), pp. 29–30; for \textit{P. Oxy. LXIII 4397}, see above, Chapter 1, pp. 21–22, 32–34.


\textsuperscript{48} Monastery of Tarouthis expropriated together with Apollos son of Dioskoros (the father of Dioskoros the notary) by Psais, \textit{oiketes} of Alexandros singularis (col. IV, l. 108).
were in two distinct locations, they could originally belong to one person who could have bequeathed them to the monastery, Hermias, and other people (including Rachel). The monastery would have managed to expel Hermias and Rachel from one plot, while remaining co-owner of the other one. An analogous situation is observed in SB XX 14669 col. I, ll. 4–5, where the monastery registers half of a parcel with a Panopolite politenomenos named Panolbios (see below, p. 97), and col. III, l. 104, where the same Panolbios registers a plot of land acquired through expropriation of the monastery of Apa Sourous; here, however, the monastery loses a plot of land to the co-owner of instead of gaining one. Both cases indicate that landowning patterns in which the monasteries were involved were dynamic, with the monasteries not always having the upper hand. Questioning of property rights could occur not only between monasteries and individuals, but also between institutions. Such cases are unattested in the cadastrum of Apa Sourous, but one example is found among the entries pertaining to the Panopolite monastery of Apa Shenoute. In SB XX 14669 col. V, ll. 144–145, the monastery of Shenoute is said to register four arourae of arable land acquired through expropriation of the xenon of Apa Dios (/μοναστηρίου Ἀπα Σενούθου[θ]ου ἕκβ[ολής] ἐκενενός Ἀπα Δίου ὑπὸ Ῥασ[λορ][σ]ε[σ] Ἀστριτος[θ] γεωργ[ον] σπορίμης γῆς (ἀρουραί) δ). The entry can be a reminiscence of a dispute (or at least a situation where property rights had been called into question) between two religious institutions: a monastery and a hospital. Unfortunately, we know little about the xenon/xenodochion of Apa Dios. Such institutions could be private charitable establishments (like the one described in the testament of Flavius Phoibammon, P. Cairo Masp. II 67151, ll. 182–195, which was instituted and administered by the testator’s family); they could also receive material aid from great landowners (see above, Chapter 1). The xenon of Apa Dios possessed assets, necessary for efficient charitable work, in the region of Aphrodito. Acquisition of immovables by charitable institutions worked along the same lines as in the case of churches and monasteries, with donations constituting the main source of assets. We may conjecture that controversies around the right of ownership that are probably reflected in the discussed entry were an unpleasant side-effect of a pious testamentary bequest. God-fearing people who bequeathed their property to religious institutions wrote their testaments incited by faith and good will, but their donations could prove troublesome for the recipients; we can hypothesise that some bequests could even cause rivalry between the institutions appointed as heirs. We can assume that when a monastery acquired

49 On the xenon of Apa Dios, see Gascou’s commentary to l. 86 of the cadastrum, with documentary references. The institution possessed immovable property in Aphrodito, as attested by PSI IV 284 (sixth century), a rent receipt issued to Phoibammon son of Triadephos by the oikonomos Psates (l. 1: τὸ δίκαιον τοῦ ἁγίου ξενοδοχίου τόπου Ἀπα Δίου Σωρίας δ[ι] ἐμοί Ψάτου οἰκονόμου). See also P. Cairo Masp. I 67117 (524; transfer of tax obligations from εὐκτήριος τόπου of Apa Dios to an Aphroditan resident), ll. 10–12: ἀπὸ ὀνόματος τοῦ ἁγίου εὐκτηρ(ίου) τόπου Ἀπα Δίο̣υ(?) τοῦ ἐν τῇ κομη̣[τί] [κτημ(ένου)].
property through donation or testamentary bequest, it acquired also a network of landowning-based social links with families, individuals, and institutions. They could prove useful when it came to managing the land; on the other hand, accepting them could mean getting involved in disputes they could potentially entail, sometimes to the detriment of a monastery’s interests. The above scenario, however, is not the only possible explanation of the phenomenon of expropriation, and we need to remember that other processes could have been at work too.

Monasteries acquired not only land, but also facilities such as workshops or houses. In the case of the monastery of Apa Sourous, we see it sharing property with Sourous’s descendants in *P. Cairo Masp.* I 67110. One-third of a κεραμεῖον leased by two women belonging to the family of Apa Sourous is said to be a part of the same building as monastic pottery; we can therefore suspect that the workshop belonged to the initial bequest of the founder, who would have divided the building between his monastery and his blood relatives.\(^{50}\)

Although the documentation connected with the monastery of Apa Apollos is in some respects richer than that connected with Apa Sourous, even in this case we cannot estimate the size of the community’s initial holdings. We are somewhat better off as far as types of property belonging to the monastery are concerned: the documents speak of land, buildings in the village, monks’ cells becoming communal property, and livestock.\(^{51}\) The founder’s son, Dioskoros, occupied a building neighbouring with the monastery’s ἐπαύλεις in the village, although this time, contrary to the situation described in *P. Cairo Masp.* I 67110, rather in the capacity of a tenant, not co-owner.\(^{52}\)

Apa Apollos’s monastery was established in ca. 538; the documents allow us to see later additions to its property and the problems accompanying its expansion. In 567, ‘miserable hermits, monks of ὄρος of the Christ-bearing Apostles’ petitioned the dux of the Thebad Flavius

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\(^{50}\) *P. Cairo Masp.* I 67110, ll. 20–30: τὸ γονικὸν ὅμων τρίτον μέρος ὀλόκληρον τοῦ ὀλόκληρου κεραμοπλαστικοῦ κεραμείου, διακείμενον ἐκ νότου τῆς κόμης Ἀφροδίτης, ἔχοντα τὸ ἄγιον τόπον άββᾶ Μιχαήλου, τοῦ ἀντός ἐν τῇ γονικῇ ὅμων ἐπαύλει, πλησίον τοῦ κεραιμέου τοῦ ἁγίου μον(αστηρίου) άββᾶ Σοφόκλου τοῦ ὅμων προγόνου, κοινοῦ ἀντός πρός σύνολον εἰς τὸ βορινὸν/ μέρος ἤτοι δήμουν εἰς συμπλήρωσιν τοῦ ὀλοῦ κεραιμείου (‘our ancestral third part of the whole pottery workshop located to the south of the village Aphroditos, close to the holy ἔπαυλες of Abba Michaelios being in our ancestral farm-building, neighbouring the pottery of the holy monastery of Abba Sourous our ancestor, shared with it in the northern part, that is two-thirds to complete the entire pottery’). For examples of buildings shared by laypeople and monasteries, see, e.g., *P. KRU* 13 and *P. KRU* 12 (733), where a house is co-owned by Kyriakos, the superior of the Theban monastery of St Phoibammon and Patermouthios, a lay inhabitant of Kastron Jeme (see L. S. B. MacCoul, *Coptic Legal Documents: Law as Vernacular Text and Experience in Late Antique Egypt*, Tempe 2009, pp. 147–150 [P. KRU 13] ad 151–156 [P. KRU 12]).

\(^{51}\) For a discussion of the monastery’s economic foundations, see Wipszycka, ‘Le monastère d’Apa Apollôs’ (cit. n. 5), pp. 263–264.

\(^{52}\) *P. Cairo SR* 3733 (3) of 9 September 563, a lease of the ἐπαύλεις in question to Aurelia Te[...][sia, a woman from Aphroditos, concluded by the monastery of Apa Apollos represented by Ioannes presbyter and *proestos* and Flavius Dioskoros *κηδεμόν*; see ll. 25–28: [±11]ρὸς ὀλόκληρον ἐπαύλειν [±11] τῆς ἀχρονῆς τῆς ὑπὸ σὲ τὸν θεομητόρα διός τινον Διός κοινομενὲν ἐν κήμη Ἀρη[...][της ἐπὶ Ῥυμὸς Θανεκουοτος ([…] the entire ἐπαύλεις […] of the hay storage room occupied by you, the most excellent Dioskoros, located in the village Aphroditos in the street Thanekouootos). See Fournet, ‘Un document inédit’ (cit. n. 8), p. 401.
Athanassiōs (P. Cairo Masp. I 67003). The request, over half of which is occupied by salutation and eulogy of the addressee, concerned a pious donation of six arourae of land by an anonymous widow, which had been questioned by a certain Iezekiel. The duke, approached by the monks most probably through Dioskoros himself, was entreated to help the community get rid of Iezekiel. As observed by Ewa Wipszycka, the necessity to approach such a high-ranking official in order to get the problem solved may indicate that Iezekiel’s claims were not as groundless as the text would make us believe. The monks’ resolve to secure themselves the possession of the parcel could have been boosted by the fact that the land was located conveniently in the vicinity of their own land, giving them a precious chance to expand their holdings in a more systematic manner than donations usually allowed for.

An interesting aspect of property acquisition by the monastery of Apa Apollos is illustrated in P. Cairo Masp. I 67069 of 573. The text is a settlement between the dikaión of the holy diakonia of the monastery of Apa Apollos (represented by Enoch son of Ioannes, monk and oikonomos of the monastery, and Dioskoros, its phrontistes curator) and Psates, monk and presbyter originating from Temseu Skordon in the Hermopolite nome. The document contains a narrative of events that preceded the agreement. Psates established himself in the monastery of Apa Apollos during the stewardship of a certain Phoibammon. Having deposited a loan secured with a mortgage including the six arourae in question.


54 In 567 Dioskoros began the work in the office of the dux in Antinopolis; for this period of his career, which lasted until 574 see MacCoul, Dioskouroi of Aphrodito (cit. n. 1), pp. 11–14; Kuch, Channels of Imperishable Fire (cit. n. 1), pp. 69–74.

55 Wipszycka, ‘Le monastère d’Apa Apollôs’ (cit. n. 5), pp. 267. The monks claim that Iezekiel was unrelated to the donor and her family (l. 24; μὴ ἔχουν παντοὺς μεταμισθίας μετά τῶν κωμῶν τοῦ πρὸσματος). This might have been true, but Iezekiel’s title to their land might have resulted from prior arrangements with previous owners, e.g., a loan secured with a mortgage including the six arourae in question.

56 P. Cairo Masp. I 67003, ll. 15–17: διδάσκωμεν ὅν τὸν φιλόνομον ἄνδρον ὡς ἄνδρα τοῦ πολεμίου, ἠσκησις καὶ μόνον, απορρίματι γῆς, συννημμένας τοις ἐμπέρσιοις γεώτρις ἔστι τοῦ ἄνδρος τοῦ δικαϊον, ἴδερηστο ἡμῶν καὶ ἕγγραφον διαρκεί μᾶς τις γυνή χήρα (‘For we inform your benevolent highness that a small number of arourae, no more than six and only, adjacent to our parcels, is (that of) the holy diakonia, were donated to us through a written deed of donation by a widowed woman’).

57 P. Cairo Masp. I 67069, ll. 4–14: τῆς ἰάμας διακοινίας τοῦ νεκταρίου ἄρους τῶν ἀγῶν καὶ [χριστιανή] Ἀπολλούς ἀποτελεῖται, ὀνόμασις αὐτῶν δε ἀπαλλατοῖται, ἀνέκδοκος διακοινίας, διά Ἑνός Ἰερουσαλημ συνειλαβοκτόνου καὶ ἤδειαν ἐστιν τῆς αὐτῆς, διά σύνθες Φίλιππου Διοκλήσαντος ἔφιλος τῆς διακοινίας, καὶ διακοινίας τῆς ἰάμας καὶ ὁμολογίας τῆς ἀνυπόκτου τοῦ κληρονομοῦ, ἧς ἴδερηστο ἡμῶν τῆς τῶν ἀγῶν καὶ ἰάμας εἰς τὸ δικαϊόν τῶν ἰερομοναχῶν, καὶ τοῦ Ἑρμομουσίου νομοῦ, καταμένοντος δὲ τοῦ ἡμῶν τῆς αὐτῆς διακοινίας διὰ τῶν ἰερομοναχῶν καὶ ἱερεῖς (‘To the dikaión of the holy diakonia of the newly-established oros of the holy and Christ-bearing Apostles called (the monastery) of Apa Apollos after the founder, through Enoch son of Ioannes, most pious monk and oikonomos of the same (diakonia), through you, Flavius Dioskoros, son of the founder and phrontistes curator of the same holy diakonia in accordance with the command of his father, located in the oros of the village Aphrodito of the Antaiopolite nome, from me, Psates and Psates son of Apollos, of mother Sibylla, humble monk and presbyter from the village Temseu Skordon of the Hermopolite nome, now living in your oros of hermits-monks of the same diakonia, greetings’). For Temseu Skordon, see Drew-Bear, Le nome hermopolite, pp. 278–279, Timm, Ägypten, vol. VI, p. 2580.
the steward, Psates obtained the right to occupy a monastic dwelling belonging to the monastery. He intended to enlarge the cell and turn it into a hospice for itinerant monks; this, however, went against the intentions of the founder and was met with opposition (ll. 32–34: ἀμφεβάλλετε/ πρὸς ἐμὲ ὡς ἑφράγματα καὶ ἀποκέκλειστα τὸ/ ὄρος ἐκ παραδόσεως τοῦ πρωτόκτιστου). Finally, the monastery’s administration yielded; however, in the discussed document Psates declares that at the moment of his death the rights to the planned building and two solidi of his previous deposit would pass to the monastery. The text implies that Psates’s case was not isolate: the cell occupied by Psates is described as ἐλθὸν εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν διακονίαν καὶ ἀποκέκλειστα ὀροῖς ἐκ παραδόσεως τοῦ πρωτοκτιστου (ll. 22–25). Mousaios’s donation of the cell could have had similar form as Psates’s, or was included in his testamentary dispositons. We could imagine the cells in question as small houses, built and furnished according to the means each of the monks had at his disposal. We cannot determine how the monastery of Apa Apollos looked like; however, the document suggests that the network of monastic dwellings could not be very dense and allowed for the construction of new structures.

Besides local landowning communities, our documents attest also absentee monastic landowners: the cadastre alone speaks of three such institutions: the monasteries of Smine, Apa Zenobios, and Shenoute; the first and the third recur in other texts from the Aphroditan dossier, while the first and the second reappear in P. Aphrod. Reg. All of them were located in the Panopolite nome; it is possible that their Aphroditan holdings came into being as a result of testamentary bequests and donations that created the initial hub of monastic estate in the region. The presence of holdings of the three monasteries in the astika-category can perhaps find its explanation in the same phenomenon: some of the donors who willed to display their piety through donations to external, prestigious institutions, could have been Antaiopolite residents, whose lands were originally registered as subject to taxation in the city. Monasteries of Smine and Apa Zenobios had land registered also in the kometika-category; whether these holdings were also acquired as donations or bequests or purchased, we cannot tell.

How a testamentary bequest of an (urban) donor could look like can be partially reconstructed thanks to two testaments from the Aphroditio dossier, written by Dioskoros for two men belonging to Antinopolite elites: Flavius Theodoros (P. Cairo Masp. III 67312; 567) and Flavius Phoibammon (P. Cairo Masp. II 67151 and 67152; 570). The documents may seem irrelevant, as they do not pertain to Aphroditio region; the situation described in them, however,
fits well with our discussion, as we are dealing with bequests made by urban residents to monasteries located in nomes other than their own. In this manner, the documents illustrate well the process that lay at the basis of the phenomenon we see in the cadastre, the register, and other documents of the dossier: the existence of a patchwork of scattered parcels owned by monastic absentee landowners.

Flavius Theodoros, being childless, is leaving his entire property to the monasteries of Apa Shenoute in the Panopolite nome and of Apa Mousaios in the Hermopolite nome, and to his maternal grandmother Herais. The famous Panopolite community obtains a lion’s share of Theodoros’s inheritance: immovable property in the Hermopolite, Antinoite, and Panopolite nomes, as well as property in Antinoopolis and Panopolis.59 The archimandrite Petros is also supposed to arrange for the sale of Theodoros’s patrilineal property in Antinopolis and the property left by Theodoros’s wife, and spend the income on ransoming captives, the wife’s prosphora, and other pious works.60 The income of the property in the three nomes and two cities was also supposed to serve pious purposes.61 Movable property left to the monastery of Apa Mousaios was to be used for pious distributions.62 The actual goal of the testator was to safeguard the salvation of his soul, in keeping with the conviction, widespread in Late Antiquity, that lay offerings could become sanctified and gain additional value when they passed through the hands

59 P. Cairo, Map. III 67312, ll. 52–61: ὁ δῆμοι δὲ τοῖς καὶ κληρίδοι Πέτρου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ ἀγριμονίαρτον, ἧπιο τὸ δίκαιον τοῦτον ὑπὸ μονοστρατίου ἴσα Συνοίκου, ἦρεν εἰς τὴν ἒλεον ἔνστασιν πάντα τὰ παρ’ ἐμοὶ ἐν καρπὸ τελευτῆς καταλευθερώσομαι ἀκόντια πράγματα κατὰ τὸ τὴν Ἑρμοπολίτην καὶ Ἀντιοιτὴν καὶ Πανοπολίτην τοὺς νομοὺς, ἢ καὶ κατ’ ἑπάρκου ὡς ἕκος διαγείται τόπου αὐτὸν ἦρεν δὲ οὖν ἦπιον εἰς τὴν ἒλεον ένστασιν καὶ πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν Ἀντιοιτὴν ἢ κατὰ τὴν Ἑρμοπολίτην διακείμενα πανοστίῳ μοῶν πράγματα ἀκόντια (I want and order that Petros, the most pious archimandrite, and the dikaios of the same holy monastery of Apa Shenoute, have as their inheritance all immovable goods left by me at the moment of my death in the Hermopolite, and Antinoite, and Panopolite nomes, and in other likely places, and to have not less as their inheritance, and all my immovable goods situated in Antinoopolis and in Hermopolis’; transl. after Nowak, Wills [cit. n. 58], p. 419).

60 How such an arrangement could work is shown in P. KRU 13, a sale of a part of house donated to the monastery of St Phoibammon in Jeme (733); the arrangement is described in the document in the following manner: ‘[…] the two houses portions of which the sons of the late Pe{i}shate son of Pestine had given to the holy Phoibammon in the mountain of Jeme as an offering for their poor souls, and lest I be condemned at the fearsome judgement-seat of Christ and so that the holy martyr will not find fault with me for having disbursed, whether for good or for ill, an offering (made) to him for the salvation of the souls. Accordingly, the result is that you, Aaron son of Shenoute [the buyer—JW], are to be owner of the portions of these houses of Peshate, because you have given their price to me […] namely one gold solidus = 1 sol. I have put it into the bank for the poor and the needy in the holy topos, for the repose of the soul of the late Peshate’ (translation after MacCoull, Coptic Legal Documents [cit. n. 50],p. 148).

61 P. Cairo, Map. III 67312, ll. 61–63: ἐὰν ἡ τὴν ἐξ αὐτῶν πανοστίων συλλεγομένην ἐποίησαν πρὸ τὸν ἀνατέλλον ἐκεῖνοῦ καὶ λιτάπησαν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνοὺς συλλεγομένους ἐποίησαν πρὸ τὸν ἀνατέλλον ἐκεῖνοῦ καὶ λιτάπησαν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνοὺς συλλεγομένους (on the condition that all the collected rents and inomes from them are to be spent on pious distributions’; transl. after Nowak, Wills [cit. n. 58], p. 419).

62 P. Cairo, Map. III 67312, ll. 79–84: ὁ δῆμοι δὲ καὶ κληρίδοι Φοιβάμμων[ου] τοῦ ἐν εὐλαβήθετον παρ’ ἅπα Μοῦ(υ)σείου(ο) ἔν τῇ τοῦ δικαίου (ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ μονοστρατίου(ο)) ἦρεν εἰς τὴν ἐκεῖνον ἔνστασιν πᾶν τὰ ἐν καρπὸ τελευτῆς καταλευθερώσομαι παρ’ ἐμοὶ(ο) καίῆται πράγματα, καὶ ταῦτα ἦρεν ἐξ αὐτῶν διαδόσεως πρὸς [ὡς ἐξ ὁδομηθε] ἐποίησαν τὸ δικαίον (I want and order Phoibammon, the most pious prior of those from Apa Mousaios, and the dikaios of this monastery, to have as their own inheritance all movable goods left by me at the moment of my death, and to spend their revenues on such distributions as your God-lovingness deems proper’; transl. after Nowak, Wills [cit. n. 58], p. 419, with changes).
of pious monks; such offering was more pleasant to God than one given in person by a layman. 63 The situation described in *P. Cairo Masp.* II 67151 is rather curious. The text itself might have been a draft of a testament rather than document proper; it lacks some elements that would make it complete and legally valid. 64 A prominent place in the document is occupied by a long and verbose description of one aroura of vineyard bequeathed to the Antaiopolite monastery of Apa Jeremias, 65 whose income was supposed to secure the *prophora* of the testator, Flavius Phoibammon. The land was located in the Hermopolite village Ibion Sesymbotothos, and the aroura in question was to be chosen by the monastery from a larger tract of land that had once been left to Phoibammon by his father. The monastery was also given a boat, one of two boats in the testator’s possession. 66 The boat had been purchased by Phoibammon from people from Antaïopolis, and the testator emphasised his intention to surrender the document of sale together with the boat and its gear (ll. 278–279: μετὰ πάσης αὐτοῦ ἔξαρτίας ὡς ἔστιν καὶ τῆς προκτητικῆς ἐγγράφου [πράσ]εως). This was perhaps to secure the monastery against attempts to undermine the bequest; Phoibammon might have expected someone to question his own ownership right and, in consequence, the right to dispose of the boat by bequeathing it to the community.

The documents illustrate well the problem of the scattering of monastic property throughout more than one nome (*P. Cairo Masp.* III 67312 shows that it concerned also real estate in cities). Management of such property could be handled efficiently only through leases, which are well attested in Dioskoros’s archive. Such bequests created the need to establish and maintain contacts with local residents: potential tenants and workers. Our documents can show us tangible results of such contacts—lease agreements and rent receipts—not the processes and negotiations through which they developed, which can be reconstructed only hypothetically. We can, for instance, conjecture that monasteries would take advantage of the pre-existent relations and renew lease contracts with tenants of the previous owners, or lease the land to the donors’ descendants.


64 Doubts concerning the character *P. Cairo Masp.* II 67151 surfaced when Maria Nowak and I were working on the translation of the text for the book *Wills* (cit. n. 58). The extreme verbosity of the text, outstanding even by Dioskoros’s standards, and, first and foremost, the lack of information necessary in a legally valid will (such as the names of heirs and dates), and the curious presence of a protocol completely unrelated to the content of the document were what raised our suspicions.

65 The institution should probably be identified with the monastery of Apa Jeremias whose monk approached the *dux* of the Thebaid Flavius Athanasios in *P. Cairo Masp.* I 67007 (see below, p. 106).

66 *P. Cairo Masp.* II 67151, ll. 275–285. On boats owned by monasteries in Egypt, attested in literary sources (especially from the Pachomian milieu) and papyrological documentation, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, pp. 216–219. For references to boats and sailors in the seventh–eighth-century dossiers of Bawit, Wadi Sarga, and Deir el-Bala‘izah, see below, Chapter 5, p. 264 with n. 104.
Once a monastery established its presence in a region—and it is reasonable to assume that donations and testamentary bequests were the main factor responsible for the spread of monastic landownership into new locations—it could seek to enlarge its holdings. This is attested in Dioskoros’s dossier for the monastery of Smine in P. Lond. V 1686 (7 XI 565). The document is a deed of sale of three arourae of waterless land (l. 13: ἄροιρας τρεῖς ἀνύδρο(υ) γῆς). The land is bought from Dioskoros by the monastery represented by its proestos Ioannes. The conditions of sale are very interesting, as the monastery commits itself to cover Dioskoros’s fiscal obligations of the thirteenth and fourteenth indications resulting from his ownership of property in the village Pthla, amounting to four unweighed solidi and eighteen aratabae of wheat. The information crucial for the present argument is that the plot sold by Dioskoros is located ἐν τῇ νοτίῃ πεδιάδι τῆς αὐτῆς κώμης Ἀφροδίτης ἐν κλήρῳ Ἰεράδος ἐν τῷ μεγάλῳ γεωργίῳ τοῦ αὐτοῦ(υ) εὐσαγωγοῦ μοναστηρίου(υ) Ζήμους (ll. 13–14). The three arourae were thus attached to a pre-existent monastic holding, which, as the document makes us believe, was already substantial.

However, the expansion of monastic control over land parcels was not limited to accepting bequests and donations or purchasing land. If a monastery deemed it convenient, it could also lease land and sublease it to others. Such a solution was used by the monastery of Tarouthis, which in the cadastre is said to hold arourae that either still belonged to the monastery of Apa Sourous, or had belonged to it before expropriation by various individuals.67 The plots leased by this monastery were most probably leased out to local sub-tenants, who left no traces in the cadastre (cf. P. Lond. V 1690; see below). Entries following the ὀνόματος-pattern are difficult to interpret, but it cannot be excluded that monastic tenancy is implied also in the cases where monasteries of Apa Sourous, Tarouthis, and Smine are said to register land in the name of Tachymia, Athanasia, and Sophia (col. IV, ll. 136–138; col. IV, ll. 105–106, and col. V, ll. 152–153).

The wording of some among the lease agreements in the Aphrodito dossier concluded between monasteries and laypeople seems to present the institutions rather as tenants than owners of land. In P. Lond. V 1690 (30 VIII 527) Dioskoros’s father, Apollos, is leasing a plot of land (ἵσσωργιον) from the monastery of Smin represented by proestos Psaios and a local

67 SB XX 14669 col. III, l. 97: arable land owned by the monastery of Apa Sourous and Hunias scholastikos; col. III, ll. 99–101: arable land of Viktir son of Chargaus from Apollonopolis and Tasia from Antaiopolis, formerly of Apa Sourous and others; col. III ll. 102–103: arable land (moved to komitika-category) owned by NN, formerly of Apa Sourous and others; col. III, l. 104: arable land of Panolbios politeumenos, formerly of Apa Sourous and others. Interestingly, in only one case the expropriation of the monastery entailed the change in the fiscal category of land.

The monastery of Tarouthis had links to the family of Dioskoros (see coll. IV–V, ll. 105–108). It held a parcel of arable land together with Apollos son of Dioskoros (the father of the notary) in the name of a certain Athanasia. The entry, quite surprisingly, shows the monastery also in the capacity of tenant, together with Hermaous son of Ptolemaios (ll. 106–107). The editor of the text refrained from explanation of this rather extraordinary situation; I admit my inability to propose a satisfactory suggestion.
administrator, Senouthes. The way the plot is described points to the monastery’s status as its tenant (ll. 8–10: τὸ ὑπὸ τὸ εἰσπαγὲς μ[οναστήρι]ν γεώργιον πρὸ πολλοῦ καὶ ἀμνομονεῦτου χρόνου τοῦ ὀργάνου [. . . . . . .]ς πρότερον τοῦ τῆς μακάριας μνήμης Παβούτος Πολεύτος Παιο[πολίτου(?)].)68 The original lease agreement with the monastery appears to have been concluded long before the 520s; the plot was perhaps still registered under the name of its previous owner, Pabous, although the wording of the document implies that the owner could have changed in the meantime. Unfortunately, the location of the plot is not preserved, but Apollos’s involvement may point to Aphrodito. We also know that leasing was one of the strategies pursued by the monastery of Smine in its home location, the Panopolite nome. P. Cairo Masp. II 67170 (16 IV 564 or 565)69 records two men, Senouthes and Ioulios, leasing an orchard (πώμαριον) from the monastery of Smine; the orchard was located in the village of Smine and, again, described as τὸ ὑπάρχον τῷ ϊς' [υ]ﾒ[ά]ζει μον(απο)τήξιο (ll. 17–18). Several lines below, the relation of the lessees to the land is presented in an identical manner (ll. 24–25): ἐφ’ ὁ ἦ[μ]ᾶς τούτο ἔχειν ἔφ’ ἡμᾶς εἰς γεωργίαν[ν] καὶ εἰς κατάθεσιν λα[χ]άνων.

It was chiefly through leases and sub-leases of land and other immovables that the monasteries established relations with members of rural communities. The fact of possessing or leasing land in a particular location could also get monastic communities entangled in local conflicts, sometimes to the detriment of their interests (but sometimes to a quite opposite effect). Landowning-based relations generated much of our documentation—chiefly lease agreements and rent receipts, from which we can read information on people representing monasteries and the circle of local figures related to Dioskoros who were active in transactions with religious institutions. These documents, however important, do not cover the full scope of contacts maintained by monasteries with laypeople of various standing. Tenants of monastic land who did

68 The wording ἔσο + name recurs many times in the Aphroditan cadastre, indicating persons holding parcels of land in the capacity of tenants/people responsible for farming the land, in contrast to actual owners (see above, p. 78). The fact that the monastery of Smin in P. Land, V 1690 appears as a tenant, not the owner, was recognised by Gascou, ‘Les Pachômiens’ (cit. n. 3), p. 280, n. 15: ‘L’expression ἔσο τὸ (…) μοναστήριον suggère que le monastère de Zmine/Zminis n’était pas à proprement parler propriétaire du γεώργιον si bien que document enregistre plutôt une sous-location qu’une location. La suite montre toutefois que l’établissement en jouissait depuis longtemps sous un régime juridique ayant pratiquement les effets de la propriété’. Without going into the details of the rights the monastery exerted over the parcels, I believe that the first part of this interpretation is valid also for other documents where such wording recurs. Cf. J. Keenan, ‘Village shepherds and social tension in Byzantine Egypt’ YCS 28 (1985), pp. 245–259, esp. p. 248; see also idem, ‘Notes’ (cit. n. 14), p. 139 with n. 8

69 For the date of the document, see F. Reiter, ‘Datierungen nach dem Postkonsulat des Basilus in Papyrushorten’, ZPE 145 (2003), pp. 231–245, esp. p. 243 n. 132; for the relation of this document and P. Cairo Masp. II 67171—an opening of a contract concluded in the name of the monastery of Smine by the proestos Apa Ioannes—see ibidem. The document was considered a duplicate of P. Cairo Masp. II 67170 by Jean Maspero; this interpretation, however, was questioned by H. Comfort, ‘Prolegomena to a study of Late Byzantine land-leases’, Aegyptus 13 (1933), pp. 589–609, esp. p. 604. In the quoted article, Fabian Reiter adduces arguments against Maspero’s view.
not belong to Dioskoros’s circle are better known thanks to SB XX 14669 and P. Aphrod. Reg., and the work Constantine Zuckerman and Giovanni Ruffini put into disentangling prosopographic connections between these documents and other texts from Aphrodito. On the other hand, the documentation of the monastery of Apa Apollos gives us a unique insight into the elite environment in which the community was operating; the wills, which have been mentioned so far only in the context of property acquisition, bear testimony to social roles monasteries and monastic representatives could be expected to fulfil. In the following section I am going to explore—taking as my starting point the source base just delineated—the way in which monasteries functioned—or were supposed to function—in the society as reflected in Aphroditan papers.

2.2. Handling the land and people: the monasteries’ roles as depicted in the Aphrodito dossier

Among the monasteries known from the documents of the Aphrodito dossier, the majority are attested leasing and sub-leasing property to Aphroditan residents. Most of these attestations come from the Aphroditan cadastre and register, but the contribution of other, more detailed documents, is crucial in qualitative, if not in quantitative terms.\(^70\) The role of locally prominent figures, such as Dioskoros himself or his cousin Phoibammon son of Triadelphos, in landholding-based relations with monasteries and churches has been already appreciated by James Keenan and Giovanni Ruffini in their respective studies on Aphroditan landowners and social networks. In Keenan’s words, quoted by Ruffini, ‘Phoibammon fulfills, at least in part, some of the specifications of the entrepreneur, particularly in his “forging a link” between “unconnected circuits”, in Phoibammon’s case, the link between absentee landlords, monasteries, churches and the village workforce’.\(^71\) The fact that both Phoibammon and Dioskoros played a vital intermediary role between monasteries, other subtenants, and workforce, cannot be denied.


It is, however, a matter of question how unconnected were the circuits they linked. Among the monastic lessors in our documentation, only some were absentee landowners, while others—the monasteries of Apa Apollos, Apa Sourous, or the Oasites—were local establishments. The first two were certainly deeply rooted in Aphroditan networks on account of multiple ties between the families of their owners and local society. We are unfortunately unable to trace the history of monastic landholdings and their subsequent managers, but it is reasonable to assume that a great deal of relations maintained by Phoibammon, Dioskoros, and others with the monasteries, in fact continued earlier arrangements. Similar pattern could work for Aphroditan holdings owned by external communities, whether as a result of donations and bequests or purchases: the monasteries could substitute for earlier absentee landowners while still relying on connections established by them.

As the role of the family of Dioskoros in landowning networks—including those involving monasteries—has been otherwise explored,\(^72\) in the present argument I will focus on other tenants of monastic land attested in \(SB\ XX\ 14669\) and \(P.\ Aphrod.\ Reg\). The majority of the people who leased land from monasteries are otherwise unknown; the group included people from the circle of local functionaries and representatives of various, sometimes very modest, trades and occupations.\(^73\)

Some among the tenants attested in the cadastre leased land from more than one monastery. This is the case with Rachel daughter of Makarios, Moses son of Hermauos, Kallinikos son of Apollos, and Palos son of Patais.\(^74\) In other cases, people leased land from monasteries and other ecclesiastical institutions: churches, sanctuaries, or hospices.\(^75\)

One monastery and one monk are found among tenants of monastic land: the monastery of Tarouthis.


\(^73\) \(SB\ XX\ 14669\): Psaios son of Patermouthis, shepherd and farmer, tenant of Apa Sourous (col. I, l. 5); Moses son of Hermauos, doctor (see below, n. 74); Moses, former protokometes, tenant of the monastery of Apa Sourous (col. 5, l. 150–151); Abraamios, presbyter and baker (see below, p. 96, n. 76); Anouphis son of Abraamios, shepherd and farmer, tenant of the monastery of Smine (col. VIII, l. 251); Isakios nomikos, tenant of the monastery of Shenoute (col. II, ll. 49–50). None of the entries pertaining to monasteries in \(P.\ Aphrod.\ Reg\) states the occupation of the fiscal intermediaries.

\(^74\) Rachel daughter of Makarios: tenant of the monastery of Apa Sourous (\(SB\ XX\ 14669\) col. II, ll. 39, 65) and Apa Zenobios (col. II, ll. 67–68); Moses son of Hermauos: tenant of the monasteries of Apa Sourous (col. I, l. 31; col. I, ll. 32–33: land formerly belonging to Apa Sourous) and Apa Zenobios (col. V, l. 167); Kallinikos son of Apollos: tenant of the monasteries of Apa Sourous (col. VI, l. 194) and Apa Zenobios (col. VIII, ll. 252–253); Palos son of Patais: tenant of the monasteries of Smine (col. III, l. 81; col. IV, ll. 121, 128, 135; col. V, ll. 152–153) and of a plot of land for which the monastery of Apa Sourous was held responsible ‘in the name of Tachymia’ (col. IV, ll. 136–138). Kallinikos son of Apollos could have been a brother of Kallimachos son of Apollos, the co-owner of a plot of land with the monastery of Apa Zenobios in col. VIII, ll. 275–276. The rare, ‘classical’ names of the men may point not only to their kinship, but also to their affinity with the elite.

\(^75\) Palos son of Patais: tenant of the eukterion of Archangel Michael (col. III, l. 84); Phoibammon son of Martyrios: tenant of the monastery of Smine (col. III, l. 88), church of Ant[aiopolis]? (col. III, l. 85), and xenon of Apa Dios (col. III, l. 87).
mentioned above, and Isakos son of Biktor, μονάζων; ecclesiastics are rare in this group and nothing suggests that monasteries favoured them over laypeople in their lease agreements. Monks and ecclesiastics are better attested in *P. Aphrod. Reg.*, where they appear as intermediaries in the majority of entries recording payments in the name of monasteries. This document, however, registers actual payments made to the village treasury and names of the people who made them and, moreover, is much less straightforward in its wording than the cadastre (see above, p. 79). Therefore, it is possible that individuals attested as intermediaries were not tenants, but representatives of their monastic communities (see below, p. 100–102).

The abovementioned Rachel daughter of Makarios, identified with Ama Rachel of *P. Aphrod. Reg.*, whose case drew the attention of Constantin Zuckerman, is a good example of a person whose relations with monasteries overlapped with private links. On account of her diverse connections with individuals and institutions, Zuckerman wants to see her as a ‘femme-entrepreneur’ active in subleasing plots of land for which she was fiscally responsible. The family of Romanos, with whom Rachel was connected, was investigated in Ruffini’s study of important Aphroditan families before the time of Dioskoros. Romanos was most probably a son-in-law of Sourous, the founder of the well-attested monastery. In two entries of the cadastre (col. II, ll. 39 and 65), Rachel appears as a tenant of land belonging to the monastery of Apa Sourous; she could have established contacts with this institution through the family of Romanos (or vice versa). The third occurrence of Rachel in the cadastre (col. II, l. 67–68: / μοναστ(ήρων) Ἄπα Ζηνοβίου ὑπὸ ἐ[κ]β[οί] θ(ηρονόμων) Ῥωμανοῦ Βίκτορος ὑπὸ Ῥαχήλ Μ[ακαρίου σπο(ρίμης γης) (ἀρουραί) γ] is a good example of relations persisting after the revision of property.
titles, and the use of already existing tenancy arrangements by absentee monastic landowners. We may suspect that originally Rachel would have been tenant of Romanos’s heirs—a capacity in which she is frequently attested—and was left on the land even when it became the property of the monastery. Interestingly, Rachel herself became a nun at some point of her life, and her connections supplement our knowledge of social status of monastics in the Aphroditan dossier (see below, pp. 107–109).

In one case we have indications that a tenant of monastic land was suggested by co-owner of the parcel. In the very first entry connected with the monastery of Apa Sourous, a certain Psaios son of Patermouthis, shepherd and farmer, is said to occupy a plot co-owned by the monastery and Panolbios aurialis, a prominent Antaiopolite figure known from other documents of the dossier. In these texts, he appears as the lessor of land to two Aphroditan shepherds; it is possible that—for reasons that escape us—he tended to recruit his tenants from among this group. Psaios son of Patermouthis, who was also a shepherd, could have been the tenant of Panolbios’s share (unregistered in the cadastre) and, for the sake of convenience, could have leased also the monastery’s part. Such arrangements must have been more frequent, but the cadastre gives us little opportunity to reconstruct them.

Tenants of monastic land—those attested in the cadastre and the register, and those found in other documents of the Aphroditan dossier, who belonged, for the most part, to Dioskoros’s family—were thus a very diversified group. It included local elites, few ecclesiastics, and a large number of anonymous people; some of the tenants known from the cadastre were attested in the register as landowners. The diversification of this group, combined with the lack of sufficient information on the majority of its members, do not permit to draw general conclusions on its makeup. The fact that monastic land was often in hands of entrepreneurial individuals, such as Apollos, Phoibammon, or Rachel, was rather the result of these individuals’ activities than any preference on the part of the monasteries. Some of the arrangements could copy earlier solutions or modify them changing the roles of the involved actors, as we can see in

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97
the case of Koleuchia daughter of Promaos, an ex-owner of 1 7/8 aro urae of arable land, expropriated by the monastery of Apa Zenobios but left on the land as a tenant.\textsuperscript{81}

The documents allow us—though to a limited extent—not only to observe what people interacted with monasteries in the function of tenants, but also to see the monastic side of these interactions. In their contacts with tenants, subtenants, and other parties in legal deeds, monasteries were represented by various individuals. The majority of legal documents from the Aphrodito dossier concerning monasteries mention proestotes—heads of communities—who may or may not be accompanied by other people of monastic or lay status. Monastic representatives appear also in \textit{P. Aphrod. Reg.}, paying taxes in the name of their institutions. An exceptional part of our documentation is the sub-dossier of the monastery of Apa Apollos. Its texts give us the opportunity of seeing not only how a lay curator of a monastery—in this case Dioskoros himself—could function outside strictly legal contexts. Before we focus on this case, however, let us proceed with an overview of monastic representatives of all communities we encounter in our documentation.

The case of the monastery of Apa Agenios (see above, Chapter 1, pp. 62–63) is curious in that it is the only example of an institution whose monastic authorities are entirely obscure. We know that Apollos, Dioskoros’s father, acted as the monastery’s agent on behalf of comes Ammonios. \textit{PSI VIII} 933 (538), the only legal deed connected with Apa Agenios, shows this couple, Ammonios and his representative, Apollos, representing the monastery. The \textit{dikaios} is said to be managed by Ammonios who, in turn, is represented by Apollos;\textsuperscript{82} no reference is made to any monastic representative, in contrast to a number of texts in which lay managers appear alongside monks bearing titles clearly connected with administration and representation (\textit{proestotes} and \textit{oikonomoi}).\textsuperscript{83} Other documents, on the other hand, mention only unassisted \textit{proestotes}.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{81} \textit{SB} XX 14660 col. VII, ll. 215–216: \(\) μοναστηριοῦ Ἀπα Ζηνοβίου ἀπὸ ἑξακολῆξις Κολευχίας Πρωμαὸς τῶν ἀρουρᾶς τῆς τῆς ἁγίου μοναστηρίου υἱὸς διὶ ἁγίου Σεροῦ συνμονάζοντος διοικητοῦ.

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{PSI VIII}, II. 2–5: τῷ [δ]ικαίῳ τοῦ ἀρουρας μοναστηρίου Ἀπα Ἀγενίος ὑἱὸς τοῦ ἀπολλωνικόπολον μ[κρού νομοῦ, ὧν τὴν διοικίαν τοῦ ἑνδόξωτοῦ κύριον ἦμιον τοῦ τῆς κυρίου κοινομετρίαν δί προφοράς σεβασιμοτάτου Ἀπα Ἀπολλῶτος διοικητὸς Ἀπασκόρῳ ὑμισομεθετείται ἀπὸ Ἀρρηθῆς τῆς κύριος τοῦ ἀνταπολλωνικοῦ νομοῦ (To the \textit{dikaios} of the holy monastery of Apa Agenios of \textit{oms} of the Small Apollonopolite nome, under the management of the most honoured \textit{comes} Ammonios of the holy consistory, through the most venerable Apa Apollos son of Dioskoros son of Pismahobet from the village Aphrodito of the Antapoliotone nome).


\textsuperscript{84} Other documents, on the other hand, mention only unassisted \textit{proestotes}. in this case Dioskoros, who represented the monastery, appears in his capacity as agent of Ammonios in the name of his son and monastic representative, Senouthes, of the monastery of Apa Zenobios. \textit{PSI VIII} 933 (538), the only legal deed connected with Apa Agenios, shows this couple, Ammonios and his representative, Apollos, representing the monastery. The \textit{dikaios} is said to be managed by Ammonios who, in turn, is represented by Apollos; no reference is made to any monastic representative, in contrast to a number of texts in which lay managers appear alongside monks bearing titles clearly connected with administration and representation (\textit{proestotes} and \textit{oikonomoi}). Other documents, on the other hand, mention only unassisted \textit{proestotes}.\textsuperscript{84}
Additional representation, monastic and lay alike, is attested for our two best-known private establishments (monasteries of Apa Souriou and Apa Apollon) and two external institutions (monasteries of Smine and Shenoute). In the latter case, the acts in which we see people representing the monasteries alongside a proestos or an archimandrite pertain to local, Antaiopolite affairs: a sub-lease of arourae in Aphroditos held by the monastery of Smine (P. Lond. V 1690), or issuing receipt for rent paid by Pboiammon son of Triadelphos for land owned by the monastery of Shenoute in Phthla (P. Ross. Georg. III 48). Conversely, wherever the external monasteries are represented by no one but their head, the subject of the document is connected with permanent change in monastic holdings (like in the sale agreement P. Lond. V 1686 or the testaments), or the transaction pertains to holdings close to monastic ‘headquarters’ (P. Cairo Masp. II 67170, lease of an orchard in Smine by two men from the same village). A third case is that of the Aphroditian monastery of the Oasites, where a local transaction is concluded by Danielios proestos alone.

Lay representatives of private monasteries could be appointed on explicit wish of the founders, as was the case with the monastery established by Apollon, who appointed his son Dioskoros curator of the institution.85 We are unable to show family connections between Souriou and Flavius Artemidoros or, even less so, Ioannes son of Samouelios, who served as dioiketai of Apa Souriou’s monastery. Artemidoros, in any case, was very active in Aphroditian

85 This is stated beyond a shadow of a doubt in P. Cairo Masp. I 67096, ll. 7–9: διὰ σεόν Ἰωάννου Διοσκόρου [ὑπὸ τοῦ] προειρημένου, καὶ ἐφορεῖ τοῦ κουρσίου τῆς αὐτής ἀγίας [διακονίας] κατὰ κάθε[σιν] τοῦ αὐτοῦ σου πατρός [[,] through you, Flavius Dioskoros, son of the founder and phronistes curato of the same holy diaconia, according to the order of your father].

environment and could have secured his position in the monastery in many ways, not necessarily by virtue of family links. 

On the other hand, the ‘secondary representatives’ attested in documents related to external institutions—the monasteries of Smine and of Shenoute the archimandrite—could have been local administrators of monastic estate, entitled to conclude deeds pertaining to property within their jurisdiction and confirm the receipt of rents. As these monasteries, important and rich as they were, had property scattered around more than one nome, it was only natural that they would have had recourse to such a solution. Local administrators could have been monks, like Senouthes συμμονάζων καὶ διοικητής of the Smine proestos Psaios in P. Lond. V 1690, or perhaps Mousaios and Promaos attested in P. Aphrod. Reg. in connection with the monasteries of Smine and Apa Zenobios (see below), but presumably also laypeople, like Koursios son of Iosephios, the pronoetes representing the monastery of Shenoute in P. Ross. Georg. III 48. His lay status is implied by the combination of the presence of patronymic and absence of monastic titles. Local administrators could reside at the place under their supervision, as suggested by P. Cairo Masp. I 67021, an epistolary supplication of 567. The request, addressed to an unknown ecclesiastical figure of rank, was created for Pachomian monks, perhaps of the monastery of Smine. It concerns events taking place in the Antaiopolite nome and focuses on the misdeeds of the pagarch Menas—the well-known villain of Dioskoros’s archive—affecting, this time, also the holdings of the monastery (see ll. 16–18, where the monks ask the addressee: κα[ί] μὴ ἄν[έ]ξε[σσ][ί] τό ἑσσαγές μον(αςτήριον) ἀδικηθῆ[ναι] παρά Μηνά του λαμπρο(τάτου) σκριν[ι]ρίον καὶ παγάρχοι(υ) τῆς Ἀνταίο(υ)). Armed henchmen of the pagarch had not spared even the home of a dioiketes, in whom Jean Gascoù sees a local agent of the monastery (verso, ll. 10–12: διοικο(ῦ)τος εἰρηκότος, καὶ τὸν οἴκον αὐτοῦ πεπορθημένον παρά τῆς ἐποιήμης τοῦ εἰ[ρημ]ῦ[νο] κυρ(ὶ) Μηνά βο[θ](είς) ἔξ ὅ[σο] παρ[θ]ή(έντων) τόπο[ν]). The request, unfortunately, does not contain any hints about the administrator’s status. As we have seen, dioiketai of the Smine monastery concerned with Aphroditan affairs were sometimes monks; with P. Cairo Masp. I 67021, however, we are in 567, perhaps in changed conditions in which the monastery decided that a permanent resident was necessary to secure the proper functioning of Aphroditan estate. We know that in

86 On Artemidoros’s connections, see Ruffini, Social Networks (cit. n. 5), pp. 236–238.
87 Cf. the probable local administrators of the property belonging to the monastery at Bawit (see the order of payment P. Bruc. Bawit 15, ll. 1–2: ἐπι[ρο]ς [κόλας της κοινωνίας τοῦ] καὶ τοῦ Μηνά). See below, Chapter 4, p. 228.
88 The document, despite its affinity with the petition genre, is not categorised as a petition by Fournet & Gascoù, ‘Liste des pétitions’ (cit. n. 53), no. 26 at p. 154.
89 On the connection between this document and the Pachomian community, see Gascoù, ‘Les Pachômiens’ (cit. n. 3), esp. pp. 279–281. Gascoù suggests the archimandrite of the Pachomian congregation, or even the bishop of Alexandria himself, as potential addressees of the request (p. 281).
the monastery acquired land from Dioskoros and joined it to an already existing μεγάλον γεώργιον; perhaps the change from a delegate monastic administrator to a dioiketes residing close to the local section of the estate was connected with the expansion of monastic holdings.

We may suspect that Promaos μονάζων and Apa Mousaios μονάζων, who discharge fiscal obligations of the monasteries of Apa Zenobios and Smine in P. Aphrod. Reg. represented their respective communities.91 The situation of Promaos seems much more clear: five out of seven payments on behalf of the monastery of Apa Zenobios are made by him, which may indicate that making of payments was his permanent responsibility.92 The same Promaos μονάζων appears in l. 546, paying taxes for the heirs of Sarapion son of Besios.93 We can compare this situation to that in the entries in lines 48, 66, and 397, where two monks, Abba Biktor and Apollos μονάζων, represent heirs of Hermauos son of Biktor. Zuckerman notes that Abba Biktor is the only individual in the register whose title can be connected with monastic superior. Since this is the only instance when a group of heirs is represented by two people, he suggests that the two men—perhaps a hegumen and his subordinate—could have represented a monastic community holding land that formerly belonged to a group of heirs and was still registered under their name (in such case, however, we could wonder why the ὤνόματος-formula was not used).94 Zuckerman’s observation that, regardless of the details of the situation, ‘l’ancienne propriété d’Hermauos est désormais exploitée au profit d’une communauté monastique’ perhaps holds true also for the heirs of Sarapion and Promaos;95 this time, however, we are able to identify the community, which most probably was that of Apa Zenobios. But why Promaos does not act as intermediary for Apa Zenobios in all entries connected with this monastery? The answer may lie in the slightly different status of land whose tax obligations are discharged by Apollos (l. 14): the owners are jointly Βησίς Σαμαλίς καὶ μ[ον(αστήριον)] ἀπα Ζενοβίου paying δ(ιὰ) Ἀπολλόρτος. The monastery, being a co-owner of land, perhaps had to accept the arrangements made by the other party with an intermediary who conduced the whole plot.96

92 In one entry (l. 14) the responsibility lies with a certain Apollos, while in another one (l. 298) the name of the representative has not been entered.
93 P. Aphrod. Reg., l. 545–546: μον(αστήριον) ἀπα Ζενοβίου δ(ιὰ) Προμαος μονάζ(οντος) | κληρονόμοι Σαραπίων Βησίου δ(ιὰ) τοῦ αὐτοῦ.
95 It is possible that these entries represent situations analogous as the one in P. Lond. V 1690 (see above, pp. 92–93), where the monastery of Smine is sub-leasing a plot of land registered under the name of its old owner.
96 Since a co-owner could collect rents for the share of other owners (Keenan, ‘Notes’ [cit. n. 14], p. 149, quoting P. Lond. V 1702), it is also possible that for the sake of convenience one intermediary dealt with the taxes of both owners, according to a relevant arrangement.
The situation of Mousaios, a monk associated with the monastery of Smine, is much less clear. Jean Gascou sees in him a monastic representative analogous to Senouthes \( \sigmaυμμονάζων \) \( και \) διοικητής of P. Lond. V 1600. Gascou treats Mousaios as Senouthes’s predecessor in the position of monastic administrator; he also interprets the figure of Anouphis from l. 526 of P. Aphrod. Reg. as Mousaios’s subordinate \( \muον(\alphaστήριον) Σμίνος \) δ(ι) \'Ανουφίου \( \dot{\upsilon}(\piέρ) \) Μονσαίου \( \muον(\acute{\alpha}σοντος))\). If we assume that Gascou is right, we also need to observe that the scope of Mousaios’s activities must have been different than Promaos’s. While Promaos is definitely a dominant figure in the entries connected with Apa Zenobios, being responsible for the majority of its payments, Mousaios is only one of the people who shared responsibility for the discharge of taxes of Smine. Moreover, he could delegate his duties to a third person, such as Anouphios, perhaps a tenant of monastic land (an Anouphios is mentioned in SB XX 14669 as the monastery’s tenant; col. VIII, ll. 249–250: \( \muον(\alphaστήριον) Σμίνος \) τόπ(ου) Μακαρίου \( \'Αρποκρά \) και τόπ(ου) \'Αλαπανε \( \upsilon(\dot{\alpha}) \) \'Ανουφίν \( \'Αβρααμίου \) ποιμ(έ)να \( \gammaεωρ(\gammaόν)\)). It is possible that the monastery of Smine preferred to delegate the discharge of fiscal obligations to its tenants rather than have a representative collect the money and pass it to the officials.

Among monastic individuals in P. Aphrod. Reg., Menas \( \muονάζων \) (l. 323), paying taxes of Mousaios son of Psimanobet, is a completely obscure figure; his situation can perhaps be compared to that of Abba Biktor and Apollos \( \muονάζων \), and Promaos \( \muονάζων \) in l. 546, in which case he would represent an unknown monastery exploiting land registered under the name of an individual.

The administrators and representatives described above were most probably entitled to act only in affairs concerning the part of monastic estate they were responsible for. On the other hand, we would expect that the duties of such administrators as Dioskoros for Apa Apollos amounted to much more than care of a section of monastic property. The sub-dossier of the monastery of Apa Apollos, as already said, provides us with valuable information about the capacities of a lay administrator of a monastery on its ‘central’ level. Moreover, it gives us a chance to step beyond the obvious sphere of legal representation in contracts and observe Dioskoros interacting on behalf of the community also in other contexts. Sometimes he may be absent from the textual layer of the document, but his involvement is implied otherwise.

This is the case of P. Cairo Masp. I 67003 of ca. 567, therefore the period when Dioskoros was working in Antinopolis. The text is a petition addressed by monks of oros of the Christ-bearing Apostles, that is, the monastery of Apa Apollos, to Flavius Athanasios, the dux,

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98 Mousaios is attested in the cadastre as tenant of 4 ½ […] arourae of arable land belonging to the monastery of Porbis (SB XX 14669, col. I, l. 11. For other references, see Ruffini, Prosopography (cit. n. 13), s.v. ‘Mousaios 7’.
represented by *magister* Dorotheos.\(^9\) The hand of the petition is that of Dioskoros;\(^10\) however, the notary is not mentioned as the monks’ representative, perhaps for a stronger rhetoric effect. It is, however, doubtful that it was through Dioskoros that the monks approached the office of the *dux*, with the intention to persuade Athanasios to assist them in winning their case against a man claiming property rights to a parcel of land donated to the monastery (see above, p. 88). Dioskoros would not only have written the petition; we can imagine him delivering it to the place of destination, taking advantage of his professional relation with the *dux*.

In SB XX 14626, Dioskoros is openly intervening on behalf of the monastery. The document is a letter to a high-ranking person whose name is restored as Konstantinos son of Neilos.\(^11\) One of the subjects of the letter is mismanagement and loss of monastic property, including livestock.\(^12\) The key point is, however, the attempt, made by a certain Loukanos, an Aphroditan ktetor, and other ktetores, to introduce detrimental changes in the monastery. The exact phrase used by Dioskoros to describe the situation reads as follows (ll. 11 and 13–16):

> παρακαλῶ τὴν ἀκινητὴν πρόσοδον τοῦ ἰδίου \(\text{τού} \) αὐτοῦ \(\text{ἀγίου} \) τοποῦ/ ἀδιαφόρος ὡς ἱδιού \(\text{μὴ} \) εὐθυγράμμως ἰδιότητος καὶ ἀποπιστήσαν \(\text{λουκανὸν} \) καὶ \(\text{kto(n)ai} \) λουκοῦ \(\text{τός} \) θέλοντας κανονομίσαι τὸ εὐαγραφάριον καὶ παρὰ ἔθος ἐλεκτεσθαὶ ζητοῦντάς \(\text{τό} \) τοῦ \(\text{τοῦ} \) καὶ ἀφαριανοῦ/λόγον (I beseech you always respected by everyone illustrious lordship […] to put your soul into taking care of the said holy *topos* as if it were your own, and stop Loukanos and others who want to introduce changes in the holy *oros* and, in disaccord with the custom, grasp (profit for themselves?) demanding (money) for *Apharianoi logoi*). *Apharianoi logoi* is a hapax, but it was certainly a fiscal term; the following sentence shows clearly that the discharge of fiscal obligations is the backdrop against which the whole situation has to be seen.\(^13\) The addressee is

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99 P. Caer. Map. I 67003, ll. 1–5: Φιλόμου Τριαδίου Μαριανοί Μαχείνιος Αγριππάνω Κονσταντίνου Θεόδωρος Μαρτυρι(ου) ἤλθον λαθανίον ἄνδρον τὸ ἐνδοξοστάτειον στρατευματίας ἐπιτάδω ὑπάτων καὶ ὑπερφυσιστάτειον πατρικιακῷ πρωτεύοντος ἰουσιναίων δουκι καὶ ἀγγουστάλιῳ τῆς Θηβαίων χώρας τὸ βδι τοῦ ἑορταστήτου μνήμητος Λουκανὸν δημοσίευσι διοίκησις καὶ ἕκσια παρά τῶν ἀνθρώπων μοναχόι[ν] τοῦ δρόμου τῶν ἐπιστροφών ἀποστόλων καὶ αὐθομένου Φαραιοῦ κτετο(υ) (to Flavius Triadios Marianos Michaelios Konstantinos Theodoros Martyrios Ioulianos Athanasios, the most glorious *stratēgēs*, ex-consul and the most extraordinary *patricius* of the prefect Ioustinos, *dux et Augustalis* of the country of the Thebans for the second time, through the most magnificant *magister* Dorotheos† entry and supplication of the miserable hermits, monks † of *oros* of the Christ-bearing Apostles called [the monastery] of Pharaous).


102 For an interpretation of the situation described in the document, see Wipszycka, ‘Le monastère d’Apa Apollôs’ (cit. n. 5), pp. 263.

103 SB XX 14626, ll. 16–18: κτήτωρ ἀδριανοῦ καὶ \(\text{kto(n)ai} \) καὶ \(\text{λουκοῦ} \) καὶ \(\text{άρων} \) καὶ \(\text{δέποτε} \) ἐξ ἐθος δεδωκας διαφορικήν πρόσοδον τοῦτο/ \(\text{τοῦ} \) τρόπου κτήτωρ ἀδριανοῦ καὶ \(\text{αὐτοῦ} \) δ ἐνυγράμμως \(\text{θεοῦ} \) σικας (Loukanos is a possessor, and so are the others, and according to custom they have never given the imperial revenue in this manner, and also this holy house of God is a possessor). Care for fiscal matters is revealed also in ll. 4–5 of the document, where the steward of the monastery is accused of the intention to ‘suffer the holy topos to be unmanaged to the detriment of the most […] public account’ (ἐπαύει τὸν ἄγων τόπον ἀναικισθαι ἐξ ἐθος \(\text{τοῦ} \) τρόπου), … to φροντίζειν τοῦτο/λόγον). Fiscal context of the situation has been recognised by Wipszycka, ‘Le monastère d’Apa Apollôs’ (cit. n. 5), p. 263.
entreated to act and preserve the status quo: ‘lest you pay no heed and allow changes to be introduced in the holy house of God during your tenure, as it had not happened before you.’ (ll. 23–25; καὶ παρίδετα καὶ συγχωρήσητε τὸν εὐαγή θ(εο)ῦ οἴκων κανονομηθῆναι ἐπὶ τῆς ὑμὸν διοικήσεως ὑπὲρ οὐκ ἐξεγένετο πρὸ ὑμῶν). The phrase ἐπὶ τῆς ὑμὸν διοικήσεως made the first editor of the text, Alia Hanafi, think that the addressee of the letter was the actual administrator of the monastery. I believe that Dioskoros referred rather to the official capacity of the addressee, who could have held responsibility over fiscal matters and would have been able to curb Loukanos’s attempts. Dioskoros invokes also threads of a network of relations between elite members that could strengthen his plea: he speaks of friendship between his father and the father of the addressee, and of a suggestion made by comes Dorotheos to the addressee of the letter to take care of the monastery’s affairs. Dorotheos is perhaps the same individual who represented the dux Flavius Athanasios in P. Cairo Masp. I 67003 (see above, p. 102); it might be that in that document he was the person whose mediation was supposed to secure Athanasios’s benevolence towards the monks. SB XX 14262 reveals that Dorotheos’s care for the monastery could have been a result of a personal connections with one of the community members. The letter,
therefore, shows Dioskoros having recourse to a wide range of arguments: from the standard invocation of personal piety to references to personal bonds.

Coptic texts found among Dioskoros’s papers reveal other facets of his activity as representative and caretaker of his paternal monastery. They comprise letters written to various individuals which touch upon matters related to the monastery. P. Alex. inv. 689 recto + P. Cairo Masp. II 67176 recto recounts an arbitrage concerning the property of two men, Anoup and Ioulios, who joined the monastery following the advice of their mother. The subject of the arbitrage, which involved—apart from Anoup and Ioulios—also a third individual, Apa Papnoute, were property rights to a building and fields. The men were to receive half-shares of the property; Anoup and Ioulios’ rights were, however, conditional on their joining a monastic community. It is unclear if Dioskoros presided over the arbitrage or merely related the matter to the superior of the monastery of Apa Apollos. The document is dated to 4 VI 569, thus to the period when Dioskoros was living in Antinopolis. It is possible that Anoup, Ioulios, and Apa Papnoute went to the capital to seek judgement of an official; once the decision was made, Dioskoros duly reported it to the head of the monastery. This may imply that the community which Anoup and Ioulios joined was indeed the monastery of Apa Apollo; knowing the willingness of the monks to leave their property to the monastery, the community could perhaps count on future generosity of the men; this is what would make the judgement relevant to the monastery’s interests.

Another text, Dioskoros’s letter written from Antinopolis to Biktor, an Antaiopolite defensor civitatis, refers to contributions in artabae of wheat that were to be delivered to an institution—perhaps the monastery of Apa Apollos—by various people, perhaps the monastery’s tenants. The reason why Biktor was informed about the precise amounts of grain the institution was supposed to obtain is not entirely clear, but it is possible that Dioskoros’s intention was to secure the deliveries through the involvement of a functionary. If the letter can indeed be connected with the monastery of Apa Apollos, we would have another attestation of an individual of rank asked by Dioskoros to take care of the community’s affairs.


109 The former is maintained by Leslie MacCoul in the edition of the document (MacCoul, ‘A coptic cession’ [cit. n. 6], p. 163), while the latter is proposed by Ewa Wipszycka (Wipszycka, ‘Le monastère d’Apa Apollôs’, [cit. n. 5], p. 268: ‘l’arbitre (inconnu de nous) a décidé que les droits successoraux seraient divisés en deux parties égales’).

110 Cf. P. Cairo Masp. I 67096, mentioning donations of buildings constructed by monks to the monastery of Apa Apollos (see above, p. 88–89 and below, p. 107).

Dioskoros, however, had connections not only with the monastery established by his father. Apart from his already mentioned involvement in landowning networks, we can see him assisting monks and monasteries in his capacity of a notary and mediator. The only link between *P. Cairo Map* II 67170 (16 IV 565) and Aphrodito was Dioskoros himself: this document, a lease of an orchard by the monastery of Smine to two gardeners from the same village, set in an exclusively Panopolite context, is written in Dioskoros’s hand. We know that Dioskoros’s father Apollos sub-leased land from the monastery in the 520s (*P. Lond.* V 1690) and that in November 565 Dioskoros sold a parcel to the community (*P. Lond.* V 1686). The year 565 seems to have been a period of intensified contacts between the notary and the monastery; we may assume that Dioskoros would have met monastic representatives and on at least one occasion was requested to draw up a legal deed for them.

In his Antinopilate period Dioskoros was approached by monks of two communities beside Apa Apollos’s: the monastery of Apa Jeremias in the Antaiopolite nome, and Smine again, and composed for them two petitions to lay and ecclesiastical officials. *P. Cairo Map*. I 67007 (567) was addressed to Flavius Athanasios, the dux of the Thebaid, by Maximinos, a monk of the *koinobion* of Apa Jeremias. The document is badly preserved and the whole affair is not entirely clear. It appears that a financial transaction was involved (l. 12: [- - -] ἐν τὸν ἑκ[ . . .] παρ’ ἐμο[ . . .], [π]αρασκεύασεν ἵπτερ τοῦτοι νομίσματα [χρ[. . .]]) νο(μίσματα) ἰβ οὐ . . .), which perhaps affected the interests not only of the monk, but also his monastery (l. 13: [- - -] ἱκουμηνίσης καὶ [ . . .] ἵνα δῶ . . . [. . .]. [π(?)] ἔνση κα[ί] τῷ ἐμῷ κόπου[ή] καὶ[αι?] [ὅ] ντη); a mortgage of the monk’s property was perhaps mentioned (l. 14: καὶ πάντως τὸ δόντ[α] μοι δι[ό]να). *P. Cairo Map*. I 67021 (567) is an epistolary supplication in Dioskoros’s hand addressed to a high-ranking ecclesiastic concerning pagarch Menas and his actions against the property of a monastery—most probably the Smine community—in the Aphrodito region (see above, p. 100). The details of the situation remain obscure, but given the earlier links of Dioskoros with the monastery and his involvement in the conflict with the pagarch, we cannot exclude that his personal interests—e.g., as a potential tenant, or neighbour, of monastic land—were at stake (cf. *P. Cairo Map*. III 67319 of 567–568, where damage was inflicted on property belonging to the monastery of Shenoute). The above, p. 100). The details of the situation remain obscure, but given the earlier links of Dioskoros with the monastery and his involvement in the conflict with the pagarch, we cannot exclude that his personal interests—e.g., as a potential tenant, or neighbour, of monastic land—were at stake (cf. *P. Cairo Map*. III 67319 of 567–568, where damage was inflicted on property belonging to the monastery of Shenoute).

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113 The document is a list of Dioskoros’s pasturages destroyed by various people, perhaps in connection with the ongoing conflict with the pagarch (l. 1: [ἢ] ἵπτερονος Μακάριος τῶν βοσκημάτων τοῦ [τὸν] βασιλείας τῆς Θησαυρίου, [τά] κρίις ἐν ἐπιστομίῳ καὶ[τα] βασιλείας τῶν ἐπιστομικῶν).
assistance offered to the Smine monastery could have had a practical background, but the same cannot be proven in the case of Maximinos from Apa Jeremias’s community. The fact that Dioskoros was a son of monastic founder and, on top of that, a curator of his father’s monastery, could have accounted for his reputation of a pious and benevolent person, willing to assist monks in gaining access to high-ranking officials with whom he happened to be connected by virtue of his profession.

A curious situation—quite unique in the whole dossier, in which monasteries are so often supplicants or victims—is depicted in P. Cairo Masp. I 67002: a petition of Aphroditan inhabitants to the dux of the Thebaid dated to May–July 567, and again set in the context of the conflict with the pagarch Menas. The document lists a long litany of various misdeeds of the pagarch and his subordinates, among which we find the mention of a diversion of fiscal contributions for other purposes. The village’s contribution had been, according to the petition, directed to the monastery of Shenoute (col. III, l. 20: διαρπάξαι καὶ ἀθέτησαι φησιν τὴν παγαρχίαν, ἧν ἐξεπόθησεν ἀποτεθεικὼς τὰ τα(ῦ)της χρήματα εἰς τὰ Ἅπα Σενουθἱ[ο(υ)])]. The petitioners do not dwell on the details of the case, perhaps unwilling to cast aspersions on the monastery, but the document shows nevertheless how ambiguous the situation of a famous landowning monastery could become. On one hand, it could suffer at the hands of authorities as every ordinary landowner; on the other hand, as an important religious centre, receiving much attention from the elites, it could benefit from donations from questionable sources offered by the very same authorities.

Dioskoros made the most of his professional expertise and private contacts to assist various communities in their dealings with ‘the world’: monasteries from outside the Aphroditan circle and, first and foremost, the institution established by his father. He constituted the main link between the monastery of Apa Apollos and the powers that be; we must not, however, imagine him as a spokesman of a community of humble brothers. There is not much to be gathered about the social background of the monks connected with Apollos’s community, but what we do know, however, allows us to depict them as a financially secure group. One of our best sources is P. Cairo Masp. I 67096. The document mentions two monks—Psates, one of the parties of the settlement, and Mousaios, the former owner of the cell Psates inhabited—originating from Temseu Skordon in the Hermopolite nome and an unknown village in the Oxyrhynchite nome διαφόρων ἄνθρωπων. The document mentions (l. 15) τὸ ἣ[υ]μ[ῖ]ν[ῳ το[ῦ] ἀ[ε]ρ[ῷ]rho[υ]ο[ῦ] Ἀπ[α] Σενουθ[ῳ]. It is possible that Dioskoros had in mind a parcel he leased from the monastery (in this case the expression ‘my pasturages’ would have had the broadest meaning possible, encompassing both owned and leased land), or a parcel indeed belonging to the monastery, but neighbouring his own, the destruction of which he duly reported to authorities. In any case, this example shows in what circumstances external monasteries could fall victim to local clashes.

respectively. This shows that even a local, private community could draw people from other nomes. The material status of the newcomers must have been secure enough to allow them to leave their place of habitation and build or expand a dwelling which later became the property of the monastery that hosted them. As we have seen, it was perhaps material concern that rendered the news of the judgement on property rights of Anoup and Ioulios interesting to the prior of Apa Apollos’s monastery in P. Alex. inv. 689 recto + P. Cairo Masp. II 67176 recto. However, it was not only property that a monk could bring into the community: the mention of θεοφιλέστατος ἄπα Τατιανός—perhaps a monk of Apa Apollos’s monastery—in line 22 of SB XX 14626, who apparently had a connection with the Antaiopolite comes Dorotheos, reveals that Dioskoros, although doubtlessly the most crucial figure in the monastery’s relations with the world, was not the only link the community had with people of rank. Let us observe, however, that it was through his actions that these other links could be efficiently played out to the community’s benefit. The monastery of Apa Apollos might have united people of rank similar, or not much lower than that of its founder: well-off men, sometimes with important personal connections, willing to live a life of piety in reasonable comfort and company of their peers. Since Aphroditan elite had links to other nomes, it is possible that the news of the community, its model of monastic organisation, and the company to be expected there, reached potential newcomers by secular channels of communication.

Social and material situation of Aphroditan monastic figures at an earlier date can be observed on the examples found in SB XX 14669 and P. Aphrod. Reg. We have already discussed Ama Rachel, the entrepreneurial nun (see above, pp. 95–97). Other examples are monks: Isakos son of Biktor, Hermauos, Ioannes son of Makarios, and Apa Aleitos. Isakos is attested in SB XX 14669 col. VI, ll. 181–182 as a tenant of land registered by comes Ammonios. He appears also in three entries of P. Aphrod. Reg. (ll. 9, 20, 439; here simply as Ἰσάκ Βίκτορος Κωσταντίου) as holder of fiscal responsibility (landowner). Isakos, who both owned land and leased it from others, is a good example of monk-entrepreneur, very remote from the ideal presented in the literary sources, but with numerous counterparts in documentary sources. Giovanni Ruffini managed to trace the family of Isakos down into the fifth century, showing its local prominence: David, Isakos’s brother, was a protokometes of Aphrodito; Ioannes, paternal uncle of Isakos and David, is attested as synteletes in a surety of July 521 (P. Cairo Masp. III 67328); Eulogios, maternal grandfather of Ioannes, was also a protokometes, and his daughter Mariam bears the epithet eugenestate (P. Cairo Masp. III 67306). Biktor, the father of Isakos and David, owned land together with his brothers, Ioannes and Apollos (P. Cairo Masp. I 67119+67048). A person born to a prominent

landowning family inherited numerous links to social and economic networks; severing bonds with ‘the world’ in such circumstances could prove difficult. The case of Isakos shows clearly that family background could determine one’s conduct after taking on the monastic schema to a greater extent than ideals expounded in literary sources.

Hermiauos μονάζων and presbyter is attested in P. Aphrod. Reg. paying taxes in the name of other people and holding fiscal responsibility for his own land, discharged by a certain Ioannes. If Zuckerman’s identification of the person is right, we find Hermiauos also in the cadastre as a titular holder of a plot of land. Presbyterial rank would make Hermiauos a candidate to elevated position in his monastic community and it is possible that in some of the entries he acted as monastic representative (cf. above, pp. 101–102). In any case, he undeniably held his own land, from which we would expect him to draw at least modest income.

Ioannes son of Makarios is another person attested in several entries of P. Aphrod. Reg. who bears both the ecclesiastic title of presbyter and the designation μονάζων, although the use of these two elements is just as inconsistent as in the case of Hermiauos. Ioannes appears as owner of leased land in other documents from the dossier. P. Mich. XIII 659 (527–546/547) shows heirs of Ioannes, Apollos, Paulos, and Maria, ending a dispute with a certain Psaios son of Mousaio. The dispute concerned parcels of land which Ioannes had appropriated in a dishonest manner. Zuckerman categorises Ioannes among the small group of Aphroditan landowners who could live off rents from their property. Another landowning monastic figure was Apa Aleitos, whom Zuckerman describes as the only certain example of monk without ecclesiastic title who continues to be fiscally responsible for his land. Aleitos’s fiscal contribution, amounting to 1.5 solildi, approaches the figure established by Zuckerman.

116 Zuckerman suggests to identify Hermiauos presbyter and μονάζων, Hermiauos μονάζων, Hermiauos presbyter, and Hermiauos son of Psentaclos, presbyter; see l. 61: Ἐρμαίωνος πρεσβύτερος καὶ μονάζ(ων) δ(ι) Ἰωάννου; l. 309: Ἐρμαίωνος Θεοδοσίου πρεσβύτερος δ(ι) Ἰωάννου. 322: Μεριμὰ Ψαχτὸς δ(ι) Ἐρμ(υούς) πρεσβύτερος; l. 556: Μαρίμα Ψαχτὸς δ(ι) Ἐρμ(υούς) μονάζ(ων) οντος; l. 443: [Ἐρμ]αιωνε[φ] Μαυτ[ος] ὑπερ(όματος) Θύτου δ(ι) Ἰωάννου. l. 512: Ἐρμαιωνος πρεσβύτερος ὑπερ(οματος) Προμαζωνος Βύττου. Another Hermiauos μονάζων, distinguished in Zuckerman’s index as a separate person (l. 574: Κιλονόμοι) Προμαζων Ψενθαησ(ος) δ(ι) Ἐρμ(υούς) μονάζ(ων) οντος might in fact be the same person. The cadastral entry invoked by Zuckerman is SB XX 14669, col. IV, l. 133–143: [ - - ] Ἀμμάνθιος Θεοδοσίου ὑπερ(οματος) Ἐρμ(υούς) Ψενθαησ(ος) ὑπὲρ(όματος) ὑπερ(οματος) Βύττου Ἰωάννου δ(ι) Ἐρμπορα γι(γι). The cadastral entry invoked by Zuckerman is SB XX 14669, col. IV, l. 133–143: [ - - ] Ἀμμάνθιος Θεοδοσίου ὑπερ(οματος) Ἐρμ(υούς) Ψενθαησ(ος) ὑπὲρ(όματος) Βύττου Ἰωάννου δ(ι) Ἐρμπορα γι(γι).

117 Zuckerman categorises Ioannes among the small group of Aphroditan landowners, from which we would expect him to draw at least modest income.

118 P. Mich. XIII 659 (527–546/547) shows heirs of Ioannes, Apollos, Paulos, and Maria, ending a dispute with a certain Psaios son of Mousaio. The dispute concerned parcels of land which Ioannes had appropriated in a dishonest manner. Zuckerman categorises Ioannes among the small group of Aphroditan landowners who could live off rents from their property. Another landowning monastic figure was Apa Aleitos, whom Zuckerman describes as the only certain example of monk without ecclesiastic title who continues to be fiscally responsible for his land. Aleitos’s fiscal contribution, amounting to 1.5 solildi, approaches the figure established by Zuckerman as the lower limit.
allowing to be counted among ‘propriétaires fonciers relativement aisés’ (2–5 solidi). It is a pity that we are unable to connects these landowning monks with any of the known local monasteries. If these people belonged to Aphoditan communities, they would fit well in the image we can sketch based on the documentation of Apa Apollos’s community.

As we have seen above, even communities composed of financially secure or well-placed monks, or famous establishments with long tradition had to have recourse to members of elite, both village and urban, when in need of assistance in their dealings with the challenges of social and economic life. The roles could nevertheless be reversed—or at least such reversal was deemed perfectly thinkable. Two testaments from the Aphrodit dossier which we have already seen in the context of property acquisition (P. Cairo Masp. III 67312 and II 67151; see above, pp. 89–91) give testimony to what representatives of urban elite could expect from monastic communities in exchange for their bequests. It is a matter of question whether the two documents were drafts of actual last wills or—especially P. Cairo Masp. II 67151—showcase examples of Dioskoros’s skill and style (see above, p. 91, with n. 64). Even if the latter is true, their composition must have been based on what was considered probable and just by legal, social, and religious standards. In both documents property is bequeathed to monasteries and its income is to serve pious purposes; however, the texts reveal also other tasks monastic representatives were expected to complete. In P. Cairo Masp. II 67151 one of the requests, of a clearly religious nature, concerns the permission to bury the testator, Flavius Phoibammon, in the monastery, and add his name to a list of people commemorated during services in the monastery church. The practice is unknown from other documentary sources connected with monasteries; however, it reminds us of prestigious burials of laymen from the Byzantine period in the so-called Cemetery C at Naqlun (see below, Chapter 3, p. 119). This shows that important monasteries served as burial grounds for elite members (not necessarily from their immediate vicinity: Phoibammon lived in Antinopolis and made provisions for burial in the Antaiopolite nome). In addition to dispositions imbued with clear religious overtone, the prior of the monastery, Apa Besas, is expected to deal with a number of worldly matters. Phoibammon appoints him curator of his minor sons and overseer of their property until their coming of age. This task is presented as another facet of Besas’s service to God and fulfilment of Christian duty of supporting orphans. The prior is also requested to deal with a debt of the testator, amounting to a

122 P. Cairo Masp. II 67151, ll. 252–258. ὃτι οὖν ἀδελθήσει ἐκ τοῦ το[το(ν)]· ὥσπερ σο[στηρίας αὐτοῦ]· εἰ ἀμελήσῃ δὲ, ὃπερ ἀπεί, τῆς τούτων δ[τοι]·κ[η]ς[ων], ε[ἰ][η][[ἀποδοθὸς] τῷ φρυκτῷ θ(εο)ῦ βῆματ, τὰς ἀπολογίας [παρέ]ξον τῷ πα[ντικράτηρι] Θ(ε)ῦ καὶ δραματικάτορ [ποτ] τῆς πατη[ς] ἀμελείας εἰ δὲ ἄμαθον αὐτῶν] φρόντισμα ποιήσ[ε], κατός δὲ ἱκανοδοτ[έ] θὸς Ἀ(ντι) τῶν χῶν [τοῦτων] ἀμεμήσθης αὐτῷ πλουσία χεῖρ ἐκ τῶν ἀμθήσθων [αὐτοῦ(?)] ἀγαθῶν τὰ ἀντίμωσια μυριαντελείας, καὶ πολυχρόνου [αὐτῶν κατηστήθη {[...] he will not break faith with them, for the sake of his own salvation. And if he neglects the administration of their finances—may it not happen—he will give account at the fearsome judgement of God, justifying himself of his negligence in front of Almighty
suspiciously large sum of fifty solidi, and to repay it with an overdue rent from Petros hypodektes. Petros’s financial obligations towards Phoibammon are still more impressive: the sum of sixty solidi stated in the document would imply extensive landholdings owned and leased out by Phoibammon. However, as already said, the reliability of the document is disputable, and the sums could have been entered only exempli gratia. The document mentions also an allowance of wheat, barley, oil, and wine assigned by Phoibammon to a certain Athanasios (l. 294: Ἀθανασίῳ τῷ τρεφομένῳ π[αρ'] ἔμοι). Even though the identity of the person supposed to handle this allowance is not stated explicitly in the document, it is reasonable to believe that the task would fall to Besas in his capacity of the administrator of Phoibammon’s property during his sons’ minority. A similar provision is found in P. Cairo Masp. III 67312, where Petros and Phoibammon—priors of the monasteries of Shenoute and Apa Mousaios and heirs of Flavius Theodoros—are ordered to provide twelve solidi a year to a woman, Tadelphe (the testator’s τροφός) and her daughter Leontia. The two monastic representatives were most probably expected to make necessary arrangements for the allowance and divide it between their institutions. Once made, the arrangement would perhaps work permanently, but it is nevertheless interesting to observe that testamentary dispositions could oblige representatives of monasteries located in different nomes—in this case Panopolite and Hermopolite—to collaborate.

The importance of the Aphroditan dossier for our understanding of the functioning of monastic communities of Egypt in their social landscape cannot be overestimated. The Aphrodito documents elucidate a number of aspects of monastic life that escape us entirely when we regard the Egyptian communities from inside, adopting the perspective of internal dossiers.

The cadastre of Aphrodito, the fiscal register of the village, loan contracts and rent receipts—all these documents bear testimony to the multiple ties that connected monastic institutions to individuals thanks to landowning-based relations. Landowning itself is somewhat better illuminated than in most of other dossiers: in Aphroditan documents we see how monasteries accept land donations (mainly of mortuary character), lease and sub-lease parcels, and expand into territories where their presence had already been established. In at least one case (see P. Lond. V 1686) we may suspect that the expansion was proceeding according to a rational plan realised with the intention to form larger clusters of monastic property, which were certainly easier to manage and gave better perspectives for future investment.¹²³ Our documents give us no

¹²³ Let us observe that the land purchased by the monastery encompassed ἀρούρας τρεῖς ἁνδριό(υ) γῆς (l. 13). Waterless land had to be artificially irrigated with machinery set up on the parcel itself, or could rely on watering

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information how frequently such strategies were pursued. We can only imagine that in an agricultural landscape with many small and medium owners, and in a situation where ‘footholds’ for the monasteries, in the form of bequeathed land parcels, could be small and randomly distributed, monastic communities would find themselves forced to assume an opportunistic stance, taking advantage of the pre-existing arrangements. When clashes occurred, monasteries were sometimes constrained to admit their defeat and withdraw from disputed land; institutions with more considerable social capital could turn to high-ranking individuals to settle the matter. Tenants of monastic land were both well-known members of Aphroditan elite and anonymous figures. Communication between monasteries, their tenants, and local fiscal administration was maintained thanks to the presence of monastic and lay administrators representing superiors; this double system of representation was particularly important for absentee monastic landowners.

The documents from Aphrodito illustrate well one more facet of monastic life that usually escapes us: the social standing of the monks. Some of the Aphroditan monks were landowners themselves; others were engaged in entrepreneurial endeavours, which could be due to the social (and material) capital amassed still when they lived as laypeople. The community of Apa Apollos included monks whose acquaintances were among the high-ranking representatives of landowners from the nome capital (see above, p. 104). On the other hand, some of its monks were well-to-do ‘outsiders’ from other nomes, whose material contributions increased the monastery’s assets in the long run.

An important part of Apa Apollos’s social capital was also Dioskoros himself, with his own network of contacts and acquaintances among the people of rank. Apart from the Aphroditan Apa Apollos, also other, external institutions and their monks (the monastery of Smine and Maximinos from the monastery of Apa Jeremias in Antaiopolis) used (or at least try to use) Dioskoros’s help to their advantage. It is interesting to observe that the monastery of Apa Sourous—an otherwise well-attested landowner—is absent from the Dioskorean letters and petitions, even though it must have been deeply involved in local relations and clashes and at least from time to time needed support. This might be due to the chances of preservation of the documents—as so much in papyrology is—but the possibility that the monastery of Apa Sourous used other social connections to reach the officials to solve its problems has to be taken into consideration too. The roles of a business partner and assistant in social relations could overlap, as we can observe in the case of Dioskoros and the monastery of Smine (see above, pp. 105–106);

on the other hand, the relations could as well be limited to business, as in the case of the monastery of Tarouthis, which had landowning-based links with the family of Dioskoros attested in the cadastre, but is otherwise completely absent from the dossier.

The Aphrodito dossier presents multiple strategies deployed by the monasteries in their everyday functioning in a world of middling landowners: tenants were left to cultivate the land, monastic and lay administrators employed by the institutions took care of the matters of rents and taxes. Operating in the world of the sometimes fragile harmony between various forces: other owners and institutions, and the state administration, could entangle the communities in conflict, either as a party or a victim, if a violent action ricocheted toward monastic holdings and representatives (cf. *P. Cairo Masp.* I 67021). In such circumstances, the communities did their best to assure a positive outcome of the confrontation, using all social capital they could call to their aid. Expropriations and attempts at circumventing normal procedures show, however, that the position of a religious institution was in itself not enough to secure the monasteries immunity.
CHAPTER 3

THE MONASTERY AT DEIR EL-NAQLUN AND ITS RELATIONS WITH THE EXTERNAL
WORLD IN THE SIXTH–SEVENTH CENTURIES

1. Introductory remarks

The material from Deir el-Naqlun is of particular importance for the study of Late Antique Egyptian monasticism. Even though the papyrological documentation from the site is modest in comparison to the vast dossiers of Bawit, Wadi Sarga, or Deir el-Bala’izah, its great advantage consists in the fact that it has been excavated in its entirety in well-documented archaeological contexts. This increases significantly its informative value and allows us to elucidate some of the aspects of everyday life of the monks and their relations with the surrounding communities.1 The present chapter focuses on the Naqlun community in the sixth and seventh centuries—a period for which our documentation is richest, including papyrological, archaeological, and literary sources.

The monastic site at Naqlun site have been excavated by a Polish team directed by Włodzimierz Godlewski since 1986. Years of archaeological work resulted in unearthing numerous Late Antique and medieval constructions, various movable finds (ceramics, basketry, glass objects, textiles, leather), and papyri. Papyrological material includes texts representing various types, dated from the sixth to the fourteenth century. The sixth- and seventh-century material is primarily Greek, while in the later documents we can observe a shift towards the Coptic and Arabic languages.

The material from Naqlun is both rich and diversified; however, many questions concerning the history and development of the monastery still await an answer. New discoveries are systematically reported by Włodzimierz Godlewski and his team; the reports focus on architectural remains unearthed in the course of excavations, the technical aspects of their construction, and movable objects found on the site.2 The state of research and publication of

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2 Since 1989 the reports are published in the periodical of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean [P/AM]. For the initial seasons of Naqlun excavations, see W. Godlewski, T. Herbich & E. Wipszycka, ‘Deir el-Naqlun (Nekloni) 1986-1987: First preliminary report’, Nubica 1–2 (1987–
the textual finds is characterised by a certain asymmetry. The documentary and literary texts from Naqlun written in Greek have been published in two volumes of The Naqlun Papyri and in separate articles. Some of the Coptic finds have also been edited, but so far the vast majority of Coptic material remains unpublished. The same is true also of a number of Arabic papyri from the medieval period; on the other hand, the largest collection of Arabic texts from Naqlun—the eleventh-century archive of the sons of Bifam—has been published and studied by Christian Gaubert and Jean-Michel Mouton.

So far, there has been no synthesis which would treat in a comprehensive manner the aspects of the community’s functioning that can be studied based on the available material. Historical outlines have been proposed in articles focusing mostly on the development of the site and mutual relations between its sections. However, the continuous increase in the amount of data calls for revision of some of the older conclusions. Attempts at a synthesis, based chiefly on papyrological material, have been recently undertaken by Tomasz Derda and the present author; they concern mostly the organisational structures of the community in the Byzantine period and the economic pursuits of the monks. As the papyrological material from Naqlun is largely


oriented towards the external world, as we will soon have the occasion to observe, these studies are, perforce, focused on the relations with laymen, and thus will constitute a starting point for the following argument.

The present chapter will explore the relations of the Naqlun monastery with ‘the world outside’ mainly on the basis of sixth- and seventh-century Greek documents. Insufficient access to the Coptic documentation limits our possibilities of studying the monastery’s functioning in a broader diachronic perspective. However, the focus on the Byzantine period has its advantages. Even though the Byzantine documents from the dossier of Naqlun are diverse and sometimes difficult to interpret, in the course of reading and rereading their content some patterns do emerge, allowing us to sketch a cohesive—although largely hypothetical—image of the community in what seems to have been a crucial period in its development. The present chapter will use to a certain extent the prosopographical approach adopted in the study of monastic structures at Naqlun of 2016, since it is through ‘micro-dossiers’ connected with particular Naqlun residents that we can best address the questions interesting from the point of view of the present argument.8 However, it is necessary to begin the discussion with a general overview of the material and its context.

2. The dossier of the Naqlun monastery in context: an overview of the sources

2.1. The site

Deir el-Naqlun is situated in the south-eastern Fayum (the meris of Polemon in the ancient territorial division), between the cultivation zone and a range of small hills in the desert (Gebel el-Naqlun). The place is still an active religious centre, with the monastery of Archangel Gabriel attracting numerous visitors and pilgrims. The activities of Polish researchers were focused on various sections of the site: the plateau at the feet of Gebel Naqlun (called kom in older literature), with numerous buildings of mostly medieval date, the eastern group of hermitages delved in the gebel, and the western group of monastic dwellings built close to the Bahr el-Gharaq canal (the main waterway in the area, certainly dating back to Antiquity; see Plate 2, p. 319). Documentation and preservation works were carried out also in the church of the monastery of Archangel Gabriel, which can boast eleventh-century murals.9

8 Derda & Wegner, ‘Πατέρες’ (cit. n. 7), pp. 78–86 (section ‘Prosopography’).
The excavations on the plateau revealed a dense network of buildings which underwent a number of reconstructions in the Arab period. The interpretation of the structures is hindered not only by vestiges of numerous rebuilding phases, but also by the damage caused to this part of the site by medieval lay burials of the so-called Cemetery A.10 The earliest constructions discovered so far on the plateau are the so-called Building A (early sixth century) and the adjacent contemporary structures (AA).11 Due to the later transformations, however, we are unable to determine the buildings’ original functions with any degree of certainty. Controversies surround especially the imposing Building A, measuring 18,5 x 13,0 metres, with walls 150 cm thick. One interpretation suggests that it served as a keep; Peter Grossmann, however, sees in it a church which has undergone several alterations.12 The precise location of the monastic church remains unknown, although it is possible that it was incorporated in the complex A–AA. Architectural elements that once adorned the monastery’s church have been found scattered on the plateau and in the church of Archangel Gabriel.13 Other structures most probably dating back to the late antique period are the buildings E and J (in the earliest phase of their existence), whose functions also remain obscure. Late Antique material has been excavated in the refuse dump in Sector B of the plateau (the early phase: sixth–seventh century, dated based on ceramic material). The majority of Greek documents unearthed to-date at Naqlun come from this place. The layers in the refuse dump are characterised by well-discriminable clusters of finds (including documents) which suggests that the deposit was formed as a result of accumulation of subsequent basketloads of refuse, probably dumped after the cleaning of particular structures in the neighbourhood. The


range of documentary material excavated in the refuse dump is wide, comprising official and private letters, fragmentary contracts, and accounts (see below). The plateau is the focal point of the study of the monastery’s medieval history. The late antique material excavated there is unfortunately much more scantly and difficult to interpret; however, the papyri from the refuse dump, which will be the main focus here, bear testimony to a wide range of activities of the Naqlun inhabitants and to the local significance of the centre in the Byzantine period.

Clusters of monastic dwellings were discovered west and east of the plateau. The western group close to the canal and cultivation zone encompassed carefully built hermitages provided with kitchen facilities. One of the two structures excavated in this part of the site, which is the earliest in the whole Naqlun complex (second half of the fifth century)—Hermitage 85, had a single-aisled church adjacent to the courtyard. Unfortunately, neither Hermitage 85 nor the neighbouring Hermitage 87 yielded documentary material that could be firmly connected with the structures. Between the western site and the modern road, archaeologists discovered the so-called Cemetery C with burials dated to the sixth–seventh centuries. The excavated graves yielded interesting finds: the bodies of the deceased were dressed in high-quality, even luxurious garments (including pieces made of silk); they were carefully wrapped in shrouds and bandages, and their heads were additionally secured with protruding construction on frame made of reeds. The individuals buried in Cemetery C were certainly laypeople. Cemetery C is the most probable

15 This is due not only to the extensive architectural remains on the plateau, but also other important finds from the site. The aforementioned archive of the sons of Bifam (see n. 5) is a collection of Arabic documents which record sales and land leases in the region in the eleventh century; it provides comprehensive information about the economy and social relations of the medieval Fayum. Another important find is the hoard of eighty golden Abbasid donarii (first half of the tenth century) unearthed in 2009 in the building J on the plateau (see Godlewski, ‘Naqlun [Nekloni]. Excavations in 2008–2009’, [cit. n. 10], pp. 201–204). Finally, the medieval Cemetery A has yielded numerous finds of fabrics, glass and metal items which await publication and will contribute greatly to our knowledge of the material culture of Fayumic population in Middle Ages (for reports, see n. 10).
16 It is possible that monastic living quarters were located also on the plateau; this is suggested in the Life of Samuel of Kalamun (see below, p. 128) and was mentioned by the excavator of the site, Włodzimierz Godlewski on a number of occasions.
18 The provenance of P. Naqlun II 31, a letter fragment found in the apse of the church in Hermitage 85, is difficult to explain. We are unable to reconstruct the accidents of its preservation in that place or to provide any plausible link between the document and the hermitage. The letter’s addressee was someone addresses megaloprepeia (l. 3: μεγαλοπρεπίας τίς σής)—certainly a layman, as the title never appears in connection with ecclesiastics or monks.
place of provenance of a number of funerary stelae inscribed in Greek, re-used in medieval constructions on the plateau.20

The eastern group comprises eighty-nine hermitages in the gebel, out of which only six have been excavated (hermitages 1, 2, 6, 25, 44, and 89). This part of monastic settlement developed in the sixth century, although the earliest phases of occupation of hermitages 44 and 89 date back to the second half of the fifth century.21 The latest documentary material excavated in the hermitages suggests some kind of sustained activity as late as the twelfth century.22 All of the hermitages (except for 44) have similar layouts, with sequences of rooms (a larger ‘living-room’ with a ventilated storage pit, and a smaller room which can be interpreted as the monk’s ‘bedroom’) organised around a courtyard. Some of the hermitages had kitchen facilities (best preserved in the recently excavated Hermitage 6). The hermitages were provided with a number of niches for the storage of the monks’ private items. The walls were carefully plastered but, as far as we know, undecorated. The hermitages must have been constructed by skilled professionals with considerable expertise in working the soft sedimentary stone dominant in Gebel el-Naqlun. But even the most careful execution could not prevent the hermitages’ ceilings from collapsing, as can be seen on the example of Hermitage 44.23 So far, the excavations in the gebel have not revealed any structures apart from the hermitages themselves (e.g. storage towers), although we may hypothesise about their existence based on written testimonies (see below, p. 144, n. 115). Estimating the size of the community of anchorites living in the gebel is impossible in the present state of our sources. Due to the modest scope of excavations we do not know how many hermitages were inhabited at any given moment; also the number of monks living at the same time in one hermitage is a matter of discussion, and so are the relations between the hermitages’ inhabitants.24

21 The connection between Hermitage 44 and the later monastic community at Naqlun is unclear. The hermitage is located far to the north and its layout differs from the ‘standard’ one recorded in other excavated hermitages. It also seems that its inhabitant was a Coptic-speaking individual, while the overwhelming majority of early documents from Naqlun are Greek. See W. Godlewski, ‘Naqlun: the Hermitage of Phibamo’, [in:] K. M. Ciałowicz & J. A. Ostrowski (eds), Civilisations du bassin méditerranéen. Hommages à Joachim Śliwa, Cracow 2000, pp. 91–98.
22 See Urbaniak-Walczak, ‘Ein Fragment’ (cit. n. 4).
24 The easiest explanation, namely that the modules of which the sixth-century hermitages were composed were destined for elder monks and their disciples, was challenged by Ewa Wipszycka in the communication ‘Aspects sociologiques de la laure de Naqlun dans la période antérieure à la domination arabe’ presented at the session Deir el-Naqlun in the Monastic Landscape of Egypt (Warsaw, 17–18 June 2010, Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw). While discussing Hermitage 1, composed of modules A and B, Wipszycka concluded: ‘Il n’y a pas de doute que dans les ermitages de Naqlun composés de deux ou trois modules, ceux-ci ont été construits en même temps. Or, il est improbable qu’en se faisant construire un ermitage, un moine ait voulu faire construire aussi un ensemble supplémentaire pour l’avenir, à un moment où il n’avait pas encore la certitude qu’il aurait un élève et que cet élève deviendrait un moine. Il est plus raisonnable d’imaginer que deux ou trois moines, pouvant disposer
The community of Naqlun in the sixth and the seventh century was a semi-anchoritic lāura composed of a number of independent hermitages. Such form of monastic organisation developed in the earliest days of the community (Hermitages 85 and 87) and was maintained later, although the focal point of the settlement moved towards the east. The details of the hermitages’ relation to the plateau are unclear, for we lack knowledge of spatial organisation and functions of the Late Antique structures on the plateau. The earlier reconstructions of the monastery’s history depicted Naqlun as a community of anchorites functioning parallel with a coenobitic monastery centred on the plateau. According to more recent interpretations, however, some central organisational structures started to develop at Naqlun at the turn of the sixth century and were operating most probably on the plateau, while at the same time the community as a whole preserved its semi-anchoritic character.25

The quality of execution of monastic dwellings, both in the western group of hermitages and in the gebel, suggests that the people who embraced monastic life at Naqlun possessed considerable means at their disposal. The hermitages excavated in the gebel yielded also an important part of the Naqlun papyrological documentation, which attests to a variety of occupations pursued by the monks and sheds some light on their status and occupations (see below, Section 3.1. and 3.2.).

2.2. The papyri

The Naqlun excavations were conducted paying very careful attention to papyrological finds. The papyri found on the site form a heterogeneous, yet well-contextualised collection of documents representing a variety of types. This material, however valuable for reconstructing the monastery’s history, is not unproblematic. First, the sample we have at our disposal is unfortunately random, as the finding spots of the papyri are limited to three places: the Byzantine layers of the refuse dump (sixth–seventh c.), and Hermitages 89 and 25, with only occasional finds retrieved from other places (P. Naqlun I 11 from Hermitage 2; P. Naqlun II 31 from Hermitage 85; Nd.15.084 from Hermitage 6; and P. Naqlun II 24 from site D on the plateau).

Secondly, we are well aware of the fragmentary state of our sources. The refuse dump has not

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25 See Derda, P. Naqlun I, pp. 28–33; see also Derda, ‘Polish excavations’ (cit. n. 1). The coenobitic community was supposed to have developed much later than the lāura of anchorites. This view was rejected by Godlewski, ‘Deir el-Naqlun. Topography’ (cit. n. 6), pp. 126–127. Godlewski, ‘Deir el-Naqlun. Quelques observations’ (cit. n. 6), p. 183 postulated that the hermitages and the plateau complex were contemporary (however, he proposed too early, fourth-century date for the ensemble). Derda, P. Naqlun II, p. 94 states: ‘Already in the first centuries of the monastery’s existence this area [upper plateau—JW] must have functioned as a hub of industrial activity and certainly also a religious centre, although it surely was not a Pachomian-style coenobium’. For the present state of the discussion, see Derda & Wegner, ‘Πατέρες’ (cit. n. 7), pp. 87–94.
been entirely excavated, and the number of archaeologically investigated hermitages is very modest (six out of eighty-nine hermitages in the gebel and two out of nine in the western cluster). The two dossiers of Naqlun anchorites: the one from Hermitage 25 (P. Naqlun I 1–7), consisting exclusively of religious texts written on the back sides of administrative documents, and three loan contracts (P. Naqlun II 21–23) from Hermitage 89, can be considered representative examples of individual collections of texts reflecting various attitudes and occupations of the monks inhabiting the laura. But just how typical (or extraordinary) these stances were in the community as a whole is impossible to say based on such a modest documentation. On the other hand, our tentative reconstructions of monastic organisational structures, which take as their starting point papyrological material excavated on the plateau, may prove short-lived should any new documents come into the light. The state of preservation of the documents also hinders their interpretation. The complete list of papyrus fragments excavated to date at Naqlun comprises hundreds of items (taking into account only the Greek texts), out of which no more than thirty are preserved well enough to yield any information useful for the historian. Another problem is the dating of the documents: only few of them can be dated on other, firmer, grounds than palaeography. Finally, there is the question of uncertain attribution of some of the documents. In some cases (e.g. P. Naqlun II 25 and 26—very fragmentary documents speaking of unrest in the region and juridical matters) the connection with the monastery is very difficult to establish due to the documents’ poor state of preservation. Some of their features, however, such as the elements of address in P. Naqlun II 25, may point to the connection with the monastery through bishop Nikolaos, who resided there most probably in the second half of the sixth century (see below, pp. 131–132). But in the case of a group of lists and accounts (P. Naqlun I 7, 8, and 9; P. Naqlun II 24; P. Naqlun 36), we lack any internal criteria that would allow us to connect these texts with the Naqlun community. These documents were certainly products of administrative units: P. Naqlun I 7 is a list of grain supplies dated to the sixth century; P. Naqlun I 8 is a sixth-century list of fields with their expected yield, mentioning also the people responsible for cultivation; P. Naqlun I 9 is an account recording payments and purchases of luxurious...

26 In the editio princeps the text is published as 'A fragment of a proceedings record (or a letter)', P. Naqlun II, p. 129. The address formula on the verso reads θεοφιλ(εστάτῳ) δεσπότῃ μου μακαριωτ(άτῳ) (καὶ) θεοφιλ(εστάτῳ) | ἀρτ(ὸ) ὑπερβὼς μου (καὶ) πατρί[.]
27 The address formula on the verso reads θεοφυλάκτ(ῳ) δεσπότῃ μου μακαριωτ(άτῳ) (καὶ) θεοφιλ(εστάτῳ) | αρτ(ὸ) ὑπερβὼς μου (καὶ) πατρί[.
28 P. Naqlun I 7 and 8 had been reused by the pious inhabitant of Hermitage 25; their back sides bear texts published as P. Naqlun I 4 (fragment of Psalm 103) and P. Naqlun I 5 (fragments of Psalms 65 and 98). The original documents were written by professional scribes. The question is: how did they make their way to the hermitage? There are two possibilities: a) they could have been wastepaper presented to the community by administrator of an estate (estates?) for private use of the monks; b) the hermit got them from administrators of the monastic estate of Naqlun itself. The second interpretation has serious implications for our understanding of the monastery's history (see below; cf. Derda & Wegner, 'The Naqlun Fathers' (cit. n. 1)).

The same reservations concerning provenance can be made in connection with Nd. 08.567, an unpublished register of income or tax payments written in a 'handsome upright cursive' (see the description in Derda &
goods, also from the sixth century; *P. Naqlun* II 24 is a tax register of Herakleopolite *choria* dated to the seventh–eighth centuries; finally, *P. Naqlun* 36 is a list of names (a fragment of a larger document) which perhaps should be dated to the sixth century. As we can see, almost all of these documents pertain either to estate management or fiscal matters—thus the issues which must have played an important role in the functioning of the Naqlun community. However, nothing in these texts justifies a firm connection with the monastery—a fact that reduces to the minimum the possibility of using them in our reconstructions. Any argument based on them must be treated as purely hypothetical until new discoveries shed some light on monastic administration and resources.

Byzantine Naqlun was essentially a semi-anchoritic *laura*, and in such a community we would expect to find mostly testimonies of the monks’ individual activity (a striking example of it is the dossier from Hermitage 89). However, *P. Naqlun* 39 points to the emergence of a group—composed of a presbyter and three deacons—recognised by ‘the world outside’ as people responsible for communication and decision-making (see below, pp. 146–147). We can assume that some kind of internal organisation could have appeared also in the period when bishop Nikolaos resided at Naqlun: these could have been the immediate collaborators of the bishop, whose position certainly distinguished them among the monks. The *Life of Samuel of Kalamun* paints the picture of Naqlun in the 630s as a community of 120 monks and 200 *kosmikoi* regularly visited by people from the ‘world’. An unpublished seventh–eighth-century Coptic document mentions an *oikonomos* of the Naqlun *nosokomeion*. Running a hospital, hosting visitors, and organising activities of laypeople permanently connected with the monastery required economic base which could not have been a mere sum of the individual monks’ assets; this, in turn, implies some kind of central organisation. The lack of documents that could be attributed in a reliable manner to such central administrative units is the major problem in our reconstructions of the monastery’s functioning and summarises better than anything else the deficiencies of the Naqlun documentation.

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Dzierzbicka, ‘Refuse dump’ [cit. n. 14], p. 217. The document was found in the refuse dump on the plateau.


30 *P. Naqlun* 39, ll. 2–7: τὸς ἀγαπητὸς καὶ πατρίς ἡμῶν Ἀγαθίῳ (Ἀγαθῆτι?) πρεσβυτέρῳ καὶ ἅπα Παύλῳ καὶ ἅπα Νειλάμμωνι καὶ ἅπα Αανίῳ διάκονοι. While quoting this document I refer to the restoration of the text, written in a rather messy Greek, proposed in the *editio princeps*.

31 *Life of Samuel* 9: ‘then the holy Apa Samuel […] assembled all the brothers who were on the mountain of Neklone: they numbered two hundred lay brothers (ἹΟΝΗ ΙΗΡΟΧΙΚΟΝ) and one hundred and twenty monks (ἸΗΡΟΧΙΚΟΝ).’ See A. Alcock (ed.), *Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaak the Presbyter*, Warminster 1983, pp. 83–84

This image may seem overly pessimistic; however, the value of the material we are able to use is still considerable, especially from the point of view of the present argument. A large part of Naqlun documentary record concerns relations with the external world: private individuals, officials, and a community of villagers.

The Naqlun documentation comprises three small dossiers of which two were originally deposited together (the aforementioned texts from Hermitages 25 and 89), while the third one, connected with bishop Nikolaos, is reconstructed from documents excavated in the refuse dump on the plateau. Other documents do not form coherent assemblages. Of the three dossiers only two—the one from Hermitage 89 and the Nikolaos’s dossier—will be of use in the present chapter.

The dossier from Hermitage 89 is composed of three contracts recording loans given by two monks, Neilos and Menas, to laypeople from the Arsinoite nome; these are the only published legal deeds from Naqlun. One of its texts, P. Naqlun I 12 is, interestingly, a letter from the bishop and his secretary to a layman. The fact that the document was found at Naqlun indicates that the bishop changed his mind and decided not to send it, or else, the version we have was only a draft. Other texts represent the bishop’s ‘incoming correspondence’, as indicated by their address formulae. In the case of P. Naqlun II 32–34 these formulae are almost all that has survived of the texts; however, these documents preserve the name of the bishop and his title. More questionable is the abovementioned case of P. Naqlun II 25 [= P. Sijp. 61], in which the writer reverentially calls the addressee θεοφιλάκτω τοῦ μακαριώτατος ἄρτος (καὶ) θεοφιλεστάτου, ἀρητὸς, ὑπερβολῶς πώς μου κ(α)π(α)τρι [ - - - ]. These titles seem to point to a high-ranking addressee, probably the bishop himself. A δεσπότης appears also in the closing formula of P. Naqlun II 27 (ll. 8–9):

34 Other types of documents are represented by P. Naqlun 35: a stripe of papyrus containing only address: δεσπότης ἐμοῦ τὰ πάντα ὑπερβολῶς θεοφιλάκτω τοῦ μακαριώτατος πατρὶ πνευματικῶς ἀββᾶς Νικ(ολάο(υ)) ἐπισκόπως Σανσνε(ς) δούλος(ς). The text is interpreted as an address tag attached to some items delivered to the bishop (see Derda & Wegner, ‘New documentary papyri’ [cit. n. 3], pp. 118–120). P. Naqlun I 10: a list of foodstuffs delivered to a high-ranking person in the monastery; the association with the bishop is hypothetical but probable; the recipient of goods is called δεσπότης καὶ πατήρ—a respectful designation used chiefly for monastic figures. Cf. P. Grenf. I 63 (bishop of Apollonopolis); P. Naqlun 35 (bishop Nikolaos); P. Fouad 86 (head of the Metanoia monastery); see also, however, lay context of its use (P. Apoll. 49 and 50, addressed to a pagarch, called δεσπότης καὶ πατήρ by his subordinate). The recipient could have been a high-ranking person in the monastery’s structure, as suggested in the editio princeps.

35 P. Naqlun II 32, verso: ὦ ἄββᾶ Νικολάου ἐπισκόπου τι π virtues: τὸ θεοφιλάκτο τοῦ κυρίου Νικολάου ἐπισκόπου; πατήρ(α); letter from + ἱεράνθρωπος ἐν ἐκκλησίας ΕΑ; P. Naqlun II 34, verso: ὦ κυρίῳ πατηρ(α) Νικολάου ἐπισκόπου.

36 See the commentary to P. Naqlun II 25, p. 128, where the identification of the addressee with the bishop Nikolaos is implied.
πολλὰ δ[ὲ] ἀσπάζομαι τὰ τίμια ἴχνη τοῦ † ἐμοῦ δεσπ(ότου). Also in this case we may suppose that the addressee was bishop Nikolaos, although other possible recipients, such as a monastic superior or an oikonomos cannot be excluded. The case of P. Naqlun II 29 is similar; again, the forms of address are full of reverence (cf. l. 1: ἀσπάζομαι τὸν ἐμὸν δεσποτὴν καὶ πατέρα, and l. 8: καὶ προσκυνήσαι τοῖς πόδας τοῦ ἐμοῦ δεσπό(του) †), but the absence of additional titles and names hinders the identification.

The Naqlun documentation in the present state is dominated by letters.38 On one hand, such a composition of the material is a disadvantage; there is no need to repeat the cliché, all too well-known to all papyrologists, about the intrinsic ambiguity of epistolary material. On the other hand, while in most cases the letters’ contents are obscure, the conclusion that can be drawn from this material on a general level is optimistic. When we are able to identify the context, we see that the correspondence that found its way to the monastery pertained to a very wide range of ‘worldly’ affairs which will be treated further on.

Non-epistolary material from the monastery has been largely described above. It comprises three loans from Hermitage 89 (P. Naqlun II 21, 22, 23); one land-lease agreement (Nd. 86.270) whose connection with the monastery is uncertain (although the very badly preserved address on verso might mention a monk); the administrative documents described above (P. Naqlun I 7, 8, 9; P. Naqlun II 24; Nd. 08.567); a list of names of uncertain purpose (P. Naqlun 36); a list of goods (P. Naqlun I 10); a list of pieces of clothing bought by an anchorite (P. Naqlun I 11); finally, an address label from Nikolaos’s dossier (P. Naqlun 35). The majority of these documents record external connections of the monastery, realised in such activities as money-lending or circulation of goods (as objects of trade or gifts).

An important observation can be made concerning the language of Naqlun Byzantine texts. Almost all documents found in the hermitages and the vast majority of texts retrieved from the refuse dump on the plateau are written in Greek.39 The image that emerges from these

37 See P. Naqlun II, p. 146.
38 See P. Naqlun I, pp. 29–31 for the description of the material from the refuse dump. Other letters from the Naqlun dossier are: P. Naqlun II 28 (letter from Herakleopolis Megale, found in the refuse dump); P. Naqlun II 30 (a very fragmentary piece mentioning, again, a δεσπότης; ll. 2 and 3); P. Naqlun II 31 (letter concerning juridical matters found in Hermitage 85); P. Naqlun 37 and 38 (very fragmentary incipits of letters addressed to monks, found in the refuse dump); P. Naqlun 39 (letter from villagers of Tébétny to the Naqlun community, also from the refuse dump); Nd.15.084 (letter to an anchorite concerning a journey to a city, found in Hermitage 6); Nd. 08.566 (a letter from Kyriakos illustris to a distinguished monk of Naqlun, mentioning the Fayumic village of Zinnis and the sum of 172 solidi; see Derda & Dzierzbicka, ‘Refuse dump’ [cit. n. 14], p. 216–217 for a description of the document).
39 The exceptions among the early papyri are the finds from Hermitage 44: magical texts in Coptic, perhaps connected with the activities of the hermitage’s inhabitant (see van der Vliet, ‘Les anges du soleil’ [cit. n. 4]). The monk, whose dwelling was provided with a rather spacious room with benches along the walls, accessible through two separate entrances, one from the outside and another one from the hermitage itself, was probably a physician, as attested by the finds of medical instruments in the hermitage (see M. Mossakowska-Gaubert,
findings is one of a Greek-speaking monastic community operating in a largely Greek-speaking environment. The people who contacted the inhabitants of the Naqlun monastery were usually proficient scribes (cf. the letters certainly and tentatively ascribed to Nikolaos’s dossier); however, the example of P. Naqlun 39 shows that the monastery’s correspondents included also persons for whom written expression in the Greek language meant much effort. The almost majuscule hand in P. Naqlun 39 betrays a person familiar with the activity of writing as such, as the script is very legible. But the orthography, the inflexion, and the syntax pose a real challenge; it is clear that the scribe was not proficient in Greek and had problems putting his thoughts into writing.40 The letter was sent to the monks by a village community headed by a presbyter and a deacon; we may guess that its author was one of the two ecclesiastics who, in spite of his visible problems with written expression, struggled to address the monks in Greek. Perhaps this was what he considered the proper way to communicate with the Naqlun community; if so, we may assume that the community was known for its ‘Greekness’ even among the villagers in the region. The scribe of P. Naqlun 39 did not ask for help of a professional scribe. One may wonder why; was it simply unavailable in Tebetny, or the hectic period of the year, the harvest, in which the whole situation described in the letter was taking place caused the local scribes to be otherwise engaged? The author might also have thought that he was able to handle the matter just fine in spite of his linguistic deficiency. In any case, P. Naqlun 39 proves that the environment with which the monks of Naqlun had dealings at the turn of the sixth century was characterised by capillary Greek literacy extending to small local communities. 41

2.3. The literary sources

When the Polish team began to excavate at Naqlun, the rule of the monastery had been already known to the scholarly world; on the Egyptian scale, this was a unique situation. 42 The so-called

‘L’anachorète et ses visiteurs’, JJuP 42 (2012), pp. 165–194, esp. pp. 184–185). Some Coptic documents have been also excavated in the refuse dump, but they are largely outnumbered by the Greek texts. The proportions among the papyri retrieved from layers dated archaeologically to the sixth–seventh centuries are very telling: there are more than one hundred Greek documents, while the number of the Coptic texts is a dozen or so. 40 The writer might have been a Coptic-speaking person, although the influence of Coptic is not manifest in the document (some of its features, like, e.g. the absence of inflection can be a result of such an influence, but they may be as well attributed to the writer’s poor command of Greek). See Derda & Wegner ‘Letter from Tebetny’ (cit. n. 3).

41 Except for the language of the sixth- and seventh-century documentation, also the name of bishop Nikolaos may provide an indication that the community was essentially Greek-speaking. Nikolaos is not an ordinary name: its Late Antique attestations in Egypt are extremely rare; on the other hand, the name was popular in other regions of the East. The fact that a prominent person connected with Naqlun used such a name points to a certain attachment to a ‘Byzantine mainstream’ tradition.

42 Monastic rules in the western meaning of the word are completely absent from Egypt. The pieces of spiritual and organisational advice known from the Pachomian and Shenoutean communities are loose collections of precepts rather than actual rules. Also the Naqlun ‘rule’ is rather unstructured and casual. See E. Wipszycka, ‘Une nouvelle règle monastique égyptienne’, [in:] Copt.Congr. III, pp. 499–503; reprinted in E. Wipszycka, Études sur le

126
Rule of St Antony (which in fact has nothing to do with the ‘founding father’ of Egyptian monasticism) is a text preserved in an Arabic translation which was, in turn, translated into Latin in the seventeenth century. It betrays similarities to the Commandments (Ἑντολαὶ) of Stephen of Thebes—an ascetic writer who lived most probably in the end of the fourth century or in the beginning of the fifth. The date of its creation is unknown; we can, however, hypothesise that it was created in a period when the community started undergoing structural changes in which a body of representatives and administrators emerged. As shown by our documentation, this could have taken place in the second half of the sixth century (see Final Remarks, p. 294).

The interest of the texts consists in the fact that it is the oldest known Egyptian rule devised for a semi-anchoritic community. The Naqlun rule consists of loose and very general guidelines of mostly spiritual nature; its value for reconstructing the life of monks who are supposed to have lived under its guidance is very limited, as organisational and everyday matters are not treated in any detail. According to the rule, the monks could possess property, and a certain degree of differentiation of their material status was considered a norm. The monks draw resources from labour, organised in consultation with the ‘father of the monastery’, work at harvest, and cultivate land leased from local owners. A certain degree of the monks’...
mobility is assumed in precepts concerning the harvest and visits in local churches and towns. The rule contributes to our understanding of Egyptian semi-anchoritic milieu in general, in that it presents a literary image of a laura which, however, is not entirely devoid of realistic elements. But realistic does not equal specific, and the value of the text for our reconstruction of the history of the community at Naqlun is minimal.

Another source pertaining to the Naqlun community is the Life of Samuel of Kalamun by Isaac the Presbyter. The text was written in the eighth century and narrates the story of Samuel, a saintly monk and founder of community in Kalamun. Isaac is supposed to have possessed a good knowledge of the community of Kalamun in which the memory of the founder’s life was carefully preserved by his disciples. Samuel’s stay at Naqlun in the 630s was only an episode in his turbulent life. Originally a member of the community at Sketis, the Monophysite Samuel was conflicted with the Chalcedonian Cyrus, who fulfilled the duties of Alexandrian patriarch. Persecuted by the latter, Samuel had to leave Sketis and moved to Naqlun with four disciples. However, he was not meant to leave peacefully in the Fayum: once again, he fell victim to Cyrus’s violence and left the place, and after many wanderings established his eponymous community of Kalamun, where he was joined, among others, by fourteen monks who had previously lived at Naqlun (see Life of Samuel 26).

The section of the text devoted to the description of Samuel’s life and activities in Naqlun gives the impression of a reliable account. The spatial disposition of the monastic settlement described in the text corresponds with the actual features of the site. The author was aware that the monastery was located close to a canal. In Isaak’s description, the monks’ dwellings were found both in the central area (which can be identified with the Naqlun plateau) and in the hills east of it (the main group of hermitages). The central area was the religious and economic heart of the community, with a church and facilities for visitors, to whom the monastery was opened on Sundays. When Cyrus, wishing to impose the acceptance of the Monothelete doctrine by the version is the one in recension B, where the word used to designate a leader is ἄρχων, which in Late Antique documentation appears in secular contexts and refers to officials. The Naqlun rule associates the ‘tenants du pouvoir’ with the subject of cultivation of land which might suggest that the latter were local authorities or patrons. But considering the lack of any visible key organising the precepts (cf. no. 28 quoted below, where the first and the second part of the precept concern completely different matters: participating in mass in village churches and almsgiving), and the parallel material in the Commandments, we cannot be sure of this interpretation.

51 § 28: ‘Ne te rends pas à une église où se réunissent les gens. Fais l’aumône selon ta capacité’.
52 § 17: ‘Si une nécessité exige de toi d’aller à une ville, n’y va pas seul’.
53 Edited by Anthony Alcock (see n. 31). See also A. Alcock, ‘Samū’īl of Qalamūn, saint’, [in:] CE, s.v.
54 Cyrus’s status was a matter of controversy in the scholarship. He held the title of totpoteretes of Alexandria, literally a ‘placeholder’ sent by the emperor to fulfil particular tasks (see E. Wipszycka, The Alexandrian Church: People and Institutions [= JJP Supplement 25], Warsaw 2015, p. 168); See also Derda & Wegner, ‘Πατέρες’ (cit. n. 7), p. 85 with n. 36.
55 Thus Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, p. 432.
56 Life of Samuel 8–9: ‘The holy Apa Samuel hastily aroused his disciples, Jacob, Joseph, Solomon and Selbane. […] So
Fayumic monks, arrived in the Fayum, he decided to send soldiers to the Naqlun monastery in order to make way for him. The soldiers came to monasterion and encountered the community’s oikonomos, left on duty in what seems to have been his ordinary area of operation. The community as described by Isaac had no formal leadership: the example of Samuel himself suggests that the brothers were free to choose a place to live and to organise their ascetic practice and work in whatever manner they wanted; the Eucharist in the monastery church was the strongest unifying element. An especially saintly individual, such as Samuel, could persuade other monks to act in a particular manner, but such forms of leadership were negotiable and could remain unrecognised by the outside authorities.

According to Life, the monastery counted 120 monks and 200 people labelled as kosmikoi—literally, ‘people of the world’, or laymen. Just who the latter were remains one of the most important questions concerning the text. The monastery could permanently host some people who needed care and support; a number of lay servants and workers could perhaps live somewhere nearby, but still it is surprising to see monks so heavily outnumbered. We are still several years before the Arab conquest—a period when groups of people took refuge in monasteries to avoid fiscal burdens.

This, however, was already the reality then, they came down to the province of the Fayyum and settled in the holy monastery of Neklone. After he had been some days in the mountain of Neklone (τόπος Νηκλόνης), the fame of his sweet odour went from the Fayyum and almost reached the neighbouring districts, and everyone who was sick with any disease was brought to him, and the Lord granted healing to them through him. […] 9. When the holy Apa Samuel saw that men troubled him very much and that they did not let him alone for a single day, he made for himself a cave (οὐγιαπόν) on the east side of the monastery, about a mile away, and nobody knew of it. The holy Apa Samuel would shut himself up in it for the whole week working on nets, which are called baskets. When he reached Saturday and Sunday, he would go to the monastery to celebrate the mass and he would find a crowd of people assembled at the outer gate, where his small cell was, many among them sick or troubled. See Alcock (ed.), The Life of Samuel (cit. n. 31), pp. 81–83; all italics are Alcock’s indicating words of Greek provenance in the Coptic text.

9 Life of Samuel 9–10: ‘Then after Samuel had spent a full year in complete peace in the small cave, Cyrus the Colchian came south from the land of Egypt, conducting the persecution everywhere and seeking after the holy Apa Benjamin. […] he came into the province of the Fayyum with great pomp, and Victor the Bishop of the Fayyum came out to meet him in great joy and empty glory of this world, glory being given to him until he was received into the city of the Fayyum. […]When the Colchian saw that the magistrates and the rest of the orthodox avoided and ignored him and did not obey his erroneous words, he then became very angry and said to himself, ‘I shall arise and visit the monasteries of the entire district, and I shall make the monasteries submit to me and the monks first subscribe to the Tome of Leo and my faith, if they subscribe, then the people will subscribe without any hesitation.’ […]Then when morning came and the sun was just rising, three soldiers came to the monastery (ἐπιμοναστήριον) to prepare the place for the arrival of the Colchian. They did not find a single monk, except only the one who serves (ὑπηρέτης). The soldiers hastily seized him, took him with them and met the Colchian on the road at the mouth of the canal;

of the eighth-century world in which Isaac lived, and we cannot exclude that his own experience made him distort the proportions. In any case, the text suggests that laypeople permanently associated with the monastery were an integral element of the community (even if their number was not as large as Isaak would like us to believe). Whether they were the monks’ charges or people working for the monastery and receiving wages from monastic administration, their presence implies the existence of managerial devices serving, among others, to integrate them into the functioning of the community.

The narrative of Samuel’s stay in Naqlun conveys valuable information. First, it confirms that the community maintained its loose organisation still in the 630s; on the other hand, by that time it had developed administrative structures represented by an oikonomos (symptomatically, the only technical term in the whole account). Samuel’s Naqlun was a numerous and popular community visited by laypeople (although we must observe that in the narrative this popularity was due to Samuel’s presence—or at least this is what Isaac the Presbyter wants us to believe). Securing the well-being of monks and lay associates must have been a challenge which could be met only by engaging considerable resources. Thus, even if Life of Samuel does not add many details to our reconstructions, it considerably enriches the general image of the community, giving us a hint of the scale of the monastic enterprise we try to investigate, and allows us to sketch the context into which we will try to fit detached scraps of information obtained from the papyri.

3. The Naqlun Fathers and the ‘world outside’: the inhabitants of the monastery and their dealings with laymen

The Fayum in the sixth and the first half of the seventh century remained relatively prosperous, in spite of the changes in settlement patterns that had occurred there since the third century.61 Great landed property is well attested in the discussed period (including holdings of members of aristocracy based in Alexandria); the aristocratic presence is especially visible in the eastern Fayum.62 Viticulture is attested in the region in the sixth and seventh centuries, which points to


the interest in investment on the part of Fayumic landowners. The villages (komai) and epoikia are recognisable in the material, but the details of landowning patterns are more difficult to establish here than, e.g. in the Oxyrhynchite nome.

The inhabitants of the Naqlun monastery maintained relations with representatives of various groups operating in the social and economic landscape of the Fayum, from villagers to officials; I will try to explore these relations in some detail. I will focus in particular on the dossiers of bishop Nikolaos and monks associated with Hermitage 89. I believe that the information we can draw from the latter can be supplemented with data from other, more dispersed documents, which, however, clearly pertain to individual activities of the monks. The two dossiers, however modest, seem to represent two models of social performance within the monastery: on one hand, we meet a bishop, whose scope of contacts and interests was determined by his position; on the other, we see independent monks—obviously much less influential but by no means limited to the networks existing in the immediate proximity of their settlement. We need to remember that a model of active participation constituted only one possibility in the palette of choices: one could also resolve to live a life of prayer and contemplation, without involvement in worldly affairs, as the monk from Hermitage 25 apparently did. What constitutes a link between these models is the fact that they pertain to individual performances. In the light of this observation we would perhaps be tempted to perceive ‘the Naqlun community’ more as a construct than a reality observable in the documents. This is to a certain extent true, as can be said of almost every group whose history and functioning we try to reconstruct. However, P. Naqlun 39 offers us another perspective—that of the community and its actions; this is why the document will be treated with particular attention.


63 See Banaji, *Agrarian Change* (cit. n. 62), pp. 174–176. This author emphasises that the situation is due partially to the state of research of the Fayumic material, the majority of which has been published without further commentary in *SPP*.

This could probably be dismissed as an obvious and banal statement; however, as we shall see, Nikolaos’s performance as seen through the prism of his reconstructed dossier is significantly different from what we observe, e.g., in the almost contemporary (and much larger) collections of documents associated with Upper Egyptian bishops, Abraham of Hermouthis and Pisentios of Koptos (for a description of these two dossiers, see Wipszycka, *The Alexandrian Church* [cit. n. 54], pp. 34–41).
3.1. ‘The world engaged’: correspondence from Deir el-Naqlun

Bishop Nikolaos is an otherwise unknown individual; we cannot even be certain what his episcopal see was, as the documents do not preserve such information. Two options are to be taken into consideration, namely Arsinoiton Polis or Herakleopolis Megale. Most probably he had been a member of the Naqlun community prior to his ordination and remained there after becoming a bishop. His situation can be compared with the cases of Abraham of Hermontis and Pisentios of Koptos. These two Upper Egyptian bishops never performed their functions in their respective episcopal capitals, but lived in monasteries in the chora, while the cities most probably remained in the hands of their Chalcedonian counterparts.

The composition of Nikolaos’s dossier is unsurprising: although incomparable in scale with the collections of texts connected with Abraham and Pisentios, it is also predominantly epistolary. But who were the correspondents of the bishop? P. Naqlun 32, 33, and 34 are good examples of the notoriety of papyrological documentation: although these letter fragments, which have luckily preserved the name and the title of their addressee (see above, p. 124, n. 35), provide secure attestations of the bishop’s presence in the monastery, nothing has survived neither of their content, nor of the elements of the senders’ identification. Other letters, as we have already seen, are less securely ascribed to Nikolaos’s dossier on the basis of titles mentioned in the address formulas. These, however, have preserved either some information on their senders, or the context in which they were written.

The verso of P. Naqlun II 25 [= P. Sijp. 61] is inscribed with a typical address script proper to chancellories of the officials of rank. Official standing of the author fits well with the information contained in the letter, which reports on riots which lead to burning down a praetorium. The term praetorium in Late Antiquity ‘could be used to indicate any building of official character’; its papyrological attestations suggest that it was a building usually associated with metropoleis. Therefore, the turbulent events described in the letter would have taken place in a city (Arsinoiton Polis? Herakleopolis Magna? We could expect the city in question to be the episcopal see of the addressee). Unfortunately, the details of the events, and, most importantly, the role of the addressee in the whole affair remain

67 See T. Derda in P. Sijp. 61, p. 381.
68 The reading of the sender’s name is very uncertain. The name Kosmas was very popular in Late Antiquity, with numerous attestations in the Arsinoite nome.
69 Derda, P. Sijp. 61, commentary to l. 3, p. 383.
obscure. It seems that *P. Naqlun* II 25 was only one link in a longer chain of correspondence. Line 1 mentions an earlier exchange of letters between Kosmas and the addressee (ἵνα ἐγραψα τῷ ἐμῷ ἁγαθῷ καὶ θεοφιλάκτῳ δεσπότῃ); other references to letter-writing recur in lines 5 (τοῦ παρόντος μηνὸς γράμματα), 8 (ἐγραψαν), and 16 (ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ γρ[π]φ[ε]). The mention of a *paneuphemos* in 1. 2 (disposing as to the letters of ἐς τῆς τοῦ παρόντος μηνὸς ὁ πανεύφ[ημος] is very interesting. If we assume an Arsinoite context for the letter, this would direct us towards Flavius Strategios, a landowner and most frequently attested bearer of the title *paneuphemos* in the Arsinoite documentation in the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century.71 He was the pagarch of the Arsinoite and Theodosiopolite nomes, while Arsinoiton Polis—the main local centre of power and administration—must have constituted his regional base. The role of our *paneuphemos* in the affair is just as obscure as the bishop’s; we do not know if there was any link between the *paneuphemos* and the bishop, whether immediate or through an official; the latter, however, must have taken interest in the dealings of the former.

Link to the bishop can also be suggested for *P. Naqlun* II 26. This very fragmentary papyrus (neither the opening nor the ending are preserved) is most probably a letter informing the addressee about unrest and acts of violence in three regions: the Apollonopolite, the Lykopolite, and the Hypselite.72 The subject is similar to that of *P. Naqlun* II 25; the editor also draws attention to the fact that the papyrus was found in close proximity of *P. Naqlun* II 25 in the refuse dump and thus could have constituted a part of the same dossier. Unfortunately, we have no clue as to who the sender of the letter might have been (if the document is indeed a letter). Perhaps he belonged to official or higher ecclesiastical circles, as may be inferred from the broad scope of his interest in current problems, his knowledge of the dealings of the dux,73 and his acquaintance with ἀναψηλάφησις (retractatio)—a procedure performed on the highest official level in Constantinople.74 We are definitely dealing with a correspondent of high rank, whose interests extended well beyond the borders of the Arsinoite nome (it is also possible that he was writing from one of the nomes mentioned in the text). If the document can indeed be connected with

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71 For the archive of Flavius Strategios *paneuphemos*, composed of numerous documents connected with the Arsinoite and the Oxyrhynchite nomes, see Banaji, *Agrarian Change* (cit. n. 62), Appendix 1, table 10, pp. 233–234. Other candidate may be another pagarch, Flavius Apion, mentioned in a lease of a dye-house of 556–579 (CPR XIV 10), ll. 1–3: Ἐν ὃς ἄνθρωπος Ἀπιῶν τὸ πανευφήμιον ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμέρας, παγάρχα τῆς τῆς Ἀρσινοίτων καὶ Θεοδοσιουπολιτῶν(ν). The least probable candidate is the otherwise unknown Faustus of *P. Rain. Cent.* 155 (fifth–sixth c.), l. 3: Φαύστος ὁ τοῦ ἐξετασθέντος ἡμῶν τοῦ πανεύφημου ὑπάτου.

72 *P. Naqlun* II 26, ll. 2–3: καὶ τῶν τῶν Ἀπολλωνοπολίτου καὶ Λυκοπολίτου καὶ Ἡσσηλής πάντων εἰς φόνους καὶ ἡπαλασίας σχολακτίστων (L. σχολακτίστων).

73 *P. Naqlun* II 26, l. 8: ἀπὸ τῆς λίθου ἀπελθείσιν μετὰ τοῦ δουλών. The reconstruction is hypothetical but probable, see *P. Naqlun* II 26, commentary to l. 4 of fragment B, p. 133.

74 On the interest this document, containing the first papyrological attestation of *retractatio*, has for the history of law, see J. Urbanik in *P. Naqlun* II, pp. 135–139.
the monastery in general, and with Nikolaos in particular, then again, we would have a testimony of an extraordinary broad network of contacts maintained by the bishop.\textsuperscript{75}

\textit{P. Naqlun} II 25 and 26 are so extraordinary because they pertain to matters that are rarely brought up in correspondence connected with monastic communities, which usually focuses on business and fiscal affairs on a local scale. This is true also of the remaining letters from the Naqlun dossier, including the ‘episcopal’ \textit{P. Naqlun} I 12. The document is the best preserved papyrus connected with Nikolaos, but at the same time it presents a number of interpretational difficulties. It is addressed to an otherwise unknown \textit{comes} Basilios. The structure of the document is rather unclear;\textsuperscript{76} it consists of three parts, all written in one hand: the main body, signed by Nikolaos,\textsuperscript{77} and two subscripts which appear to be personal communications of a certain Apa Hor. Hor was most probably Nikolaos’s secretary and Basilios’s personal acquaintance, and did not hesitate to address the latter in a more straightforward manner. We may speculate that this behaviour was finally deemed improper, causing the letter to end up in the monastery’s refuse dump instead of finding its way to the addressee. The letter is interesting in many respects, also from the linguistic point of view, as the expressions used in it betray a writer who possessed a certain education, even erudition, but still tended to get confused as to the proper meaning of the sophisticated vocabulary he used.\textsuperscript{78} This renders some of the phrases obscure; the text, nevertheless, allows us to glimpse much of the bishop’s activities and networks in which he played a part.

\textsuperscript{75} The relations maintained by Nikolaos with high-ranking officials may point to Chalcedonian affiliation of the bishop; this is the hypothesis Tomasz Derda and the present author proposed in the communication ‘Naqlun in the 5th–7th century: papyrological and literary evidence’ during the colloquium \textit{Le Fayoum: archéologie, histoire, religion} held in Montpellier on 26–28 October 2016. Possible Chalcedonian orientation of the monastery was suggested at the same colloquium by Włodzimierz Godlewski (‘The monastic settlement in Naqlun in the seventh century, in a period of important political and social changes’). Godlewski suggests that traces of destruction on the plateau point to a violent manner in which the Arab conquerors dealt with the monastery, perhaps as a result of its affiliation with the ‘Byzantine’, Chalcedonian doctrine. In narrative of \textit{Life of Samuel} (\textit{Life} 10–11), we read that Cyrus ‘cursed the steward and the monastery and the monks who lived in it. He turned to another road and he has not been up to the mountain to this day. After this the brothers returned to the monastery in peace’. Samuel and his disciples, whom the author of \textit{Life} presents as zealous Monophysites, were, on the other hand, forced to leave the monastery. It is possible that the peaceful return of the brothers to Naqlun, preceded by Cyrus’s violent actions, was due to the fact that the community finally confessed its allegiance to the Chalcedonian side. We know that the monastery was in existence few years later, when fourteen monks left it to join Samuel in his new community in Kalamun (\textit{Life} 26).

The hypothesis concerning Nikolaos’s doctrinal affiliation needs further consideration; firstly, correspondence between influential individuals could be maintained in spite of doctrinal differences; secondly, the identity of Nikolaos’ correspondents cannot be determined with any degree of certainty, and the same is true of their religious ideas (I would like to thank Phil Booth for pointing this out in a personal communication).

\textsuperscript{76} For a detailed analysis of the document’s structure, see the introduction in the \textit{edition princeps}, \textit{P. Naqlun} I 12, p. 155.

\textsuperscript{77} For the basis of the interpretation of Nikolaos as the bishop, see \textit{P. Naqlun} I 12, p. 154 with n. 3.

\textsuperscript{78} The editor of the document invokes similarities of script between Apa Hor and Dioskoros of Aphrodito (\textit{P. Naqlun} I 12, p. 153–154. We can also observe that both Hor and Dioskoros shared a predilection for using sophisticated words, sometimes in a slightly confusing manner. According to the \textit{edition princeps}, Apa Hor, similarly to Dioskoros, ‘belonged to Coptic intellectual elite’.
Apart from the bishop and his putative secretary, the letter mentions a number of other individuals—all of them lay—with various links to the bishop. Let us observe that in the first part of the letter nothing indicates that the bishop is acting on behalf of the monastery; were it not for the archaeological context of the letter, we would never be able to figure out any connection with a monastic community from its mere content. The persons mentioned in the document are, unfortunately, otherwise unknown. First, we have the addressee—the comes Basileios. This person seems to have been a crucial link in the chain of relations connecting Nikolaos with people from the ‘world’; his title does not shed any light on his exact standing or function.\(^79\) Second, a certain kyrios Timotheos is mentioned on the occasion of a transaction in which the bishop could have been a party. Two other people, kyra Ioannia and kyrios Philoxenos, play a part in an affair which is still more obscure. The text features also three nameless figures: an epimeletes and a grammateus—both most probably being local officials—and an employee of Basileios who was supposed to sustain communication between the comes and the bishop. All these people were involved in two different affairs. Kyra Ioannia had been previously addressed concerning a matter known to both Nikolaos and Basileios; since the bishop has not yet received answer from her, he urges the comes to let him know Ioannia’s response through an employee. More obscure is the role of kyrios Philoxenos, and our doubts concerning his role result from the ambiguity of the syntax. Everything depends on our understanding of the sentence (ll. 3–5) καὶ σημάνῃ μοί, διὰ τοῦ εὐρισκομένου παρὰ αὐτῆς ἔρχομένου ἔγγυς ἤμων, καὶ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν τῆς κυρᾶς Ἰοακίνιας καθὼς ἐπόν αὐτῆ καὶ τῷ κυρίῳ Φιλοξένῳ. The problematic part is the dative αὐτῆ in line 4: if we take it to denote Basileios (αὐτῇ would refer to ἡ ύμετέρα ποθεινότης; this is the interpretation proposed in the editio princeps),\(^80\) we would be inclined to think that Philoxenos played a role analogous to that of Basileios. On the other hand, if αὐτῆ refers to Ioannia, καθὼς ἐπόν αὐτῆ καὶ τῷ κυρίῳ Φιλοξένῳ should be translated ‘as I told her (i.e. Ioannia) and kyrios Philoxenos’, which would place Philoxenos in the same position as Ioannia. It is a pity that we know nothing about Ioannia and Philoxenos and their relations with Nikolaos; judging from the use of the respectful designations kyrios and kyra, they could have been people of certain social standing.\(^81\)

\(^79\) For comites in Late Antique documentary papyri, see the commentary of T. Derda to P. Naqlin I 12, l. 12 (p. 163), with exhaustive references.

\(^80\) The translation of the sentence proposed in the editio princeps reads: ‘And please [Your Dearness] let me also know through the person who is with you and is coming to us [from] you the answer of Your Dearness, and kyrios Philoxenos’.

\(^81\) Attestations of women labelled kyra are very numerous in Byzantine papyri. In the cases where we are able to tell more about the context of a document, the designation refers to women of high social standing (members of the families of respected individuals, or landowners, often acting through representatives. Cf., e.g., BGU XII 2195 (6th c.), ll. 1–2: π(αρά) τῆς κυρᾶς Αρτεμιδώρας λαμπρο(τάτης) ᾧ ἀπολλοίτι παραλῆμπτη; P. Bodl. I 26 (6th c.), l. 1: προ(νοιατ) κύρας<\*> Βικτορίνη<\*>; P. Cairo Map. ΠΙ 67279, ll. 7–8: παρά τῆς σεμινορεπεστάτης κυρᾶς Θεοφίλης, τῆς γαμετῆς τοῦ τῆς περιβλέπτου(ο) μνήμης Φοιβάμμωνος Διοσκόρου Ἰουλίου(ο); P. Gen. IV 190 (523); l. 14: μέτρῳ
The affair in which kyrios Timotheos was involved concerned property. Timotheos came into possession of vineyards in epoikia (estate settlements; l. 3: ὁκειώσατο (l. ὁκειώσατο τὰ χωρί τῶν ἐποικίων) and was to be provided with some documents issued by two functionaries, an epimeletes and a grammatēs. Their role cannot be determined, as both designations suggest a number of various functions that could be performed by their bearers. Of the two interpretations of the verb ὁκειώσατο (ὁκειώσατο in the papyrus) proposed by the editor, I would lean towards the one suggesting that Timotheos acquired the land in a legal manner; otherwise, we would have a problem understanding why the bishop would ask Basileios to provide him with documents (l. 1: καταξιώσῃ ἢ ὑμετέρα ποθειόν ὑπόδιδον τὰς δύο ἀποχὰς ἢς ἔξα). The documents in question are called ἀποχαί; in Byzantine papyri the term denotes a receipt for rents, taxes, or wages. Apochai provided security against unjust claims and were frequently witnessed by a third party in order to add to their weight. Here, the two ἀποχαί were to be passed by Basileios to Timotheos, apparently a new owner of some parcels of land. It might be that these receipts pertained to already fulfilled obligations imposed on the land; Timotheos could have been interested in having them at hand should the functionaries of the fisc claim the payments from him. The question we need to answer is: who was the previous owner of the land? In the editio princeps the monastery is suggested as a possible candidate, but this is problematic, given the imperial legislation which forbade monasteries and churches to alienate property. In my opinion, we can assume that the land belonged to the bishop himself.

The main body of the text is thus a business letter pertaining to Nikolaos’s affairs. The remaining part, composed of two subscriptions, opens with the phrase ἐγὼ δὲ ἄπα ἅγ, which suggests a more immediate address to the same recipient, this time by Apa Hor himself. It is interesting to observe his changing role in the correspondence: in the beginning only a ‘hand’, he becomes an active participant in the exchange of thoughts. Both subscriptions concern
Basileios’s visit to the monastery, during which he made a gift of some wine to monks, whose list he failed to deliver to the bishop. Nikolaos disapproved of his behaviour for unknown reasons, perhaps of disciplinary nature. It might be that he did not cherish the idea of receiving Basileios’s wine for free, as indicated by the attempt at at least partial remuneration in must mentioned in lines 7–8 (πλὴν καλὸς ποιεῖτε δεχόμενοι παραυτὰ τὰ ἕσα κοῦρι μοῦστου καὶ μὴ ἔπεισαι τμῆν ἕνα κἂν οὗτος δυνηθοῦμεν πληρωθῆναι). Nikolaos had learned about the problem and showed concern, so much so that Hor wanted to keep his master out of the affair and handle it in a personal subscription. The editor suggests—most probably rightly, given the immediacy with which Hor addresses Basileios—that the two men were personally acquainted.86 Comes Basileios provided Nikolaos with a link to the external world; he was a ‘communication channel’ through which the bishop dealt with affairs involving laymen. Let us notice that he also had in his keeping some documents pertaining to property connected in some way with the bishop. We can hypothesise that Basileios was charged with administration of at least a part of the property in question and it is in this capacity that he contacted locally prominent figures mentioned in the letter (the very cursory references to these people show that Basileios knew perfectly well who they were and where to seek them, which further suggests his involvement in Nikolaos’s affairs on a regular basis). The letter is a perfect example of multi-layered, personalised bonds with the outside world that permeated the life inside the monastic community. Such bonds could sometimes bypass the community as a whole; nothing in the first section of the letter suggest the involvement of the Naqlyn monastery on the institutional level. But sometimes the community could be influenced by the activities of an external agent; this is what seems to have happened in the circumstances described in Apa Hor’s subscriptions, much to Nikolaos’ dismay.

Outside Nikolaos’s dossier as we reconstruct it today, we find other letters touching various matters—financial operations, travel, and transport—that could have been connected with ‘business’ activities of the monks. The types of activities recorded in the letters can be identified only in a very general manner; the same can be said of the reach of contacts maintained by the correspondents. The documents we will focus on here are P. Naqlyn II 27, 28, 29, 30 (Sector B, refuse dump), Nd.15.084 (Hermitage 6, storage pit), and Nd. 07.228 (Hermitage 87). The attribution of P. Naqlyn II 31 to the monastic dossier is problematic, but it is possible that also this document was a part of a hermit’s correspondence.87 P. Naqlyn II 29, Nd.15.084, and Nd.

86 Derda, P. Naqlyn I, p. 155.
87 P. Naqlyn II 31—a letter pertaining most probably to court proceedings—was found in Hermitage 85 between two floor levels in the apse of the hermitage’s church (on the context of the discovery, see Godlewski, ‘Naqlyn (Nekloni): preliminary report, 2006’ [cit. n. 17], p. 203 with fig. 13 on p. 205). The papyrus preserves only a
07.228 can be fit into monastic context based on firmer indications,\textsuperscript{88} in the case of \textit{P. Naqlun} II 27, 28 and 30, the identification is less straightforward. \textit{P. Naqlun} II 30 preserves no address; the recipient is addressed in the third person as δεσπότης (l. 2: παρακαλῶ τὸν ἐμὸν δεσπότην; l. 3: χρῆσασθαι τῷ δεσπότῃ). Also the addressee of \textit{P. Naqlun} II 27—a lengthy and obscure letter concerning financial transactions involving the rather significant sum of four solidi—is styled δεσπότης in the closing formula: πολλὰ δὲ[ε] ἀσπάζομαι τὰ τίμια ἧνη τοῦ ἐμοῦ δεσπότου (ll. 8–9). The same epithet appears in \textit{P. Naqlun} II 29 (l. 1: ἀσπάζομαι τὸν ἐμὸν δεσπότην καὶ πατέρα; l. 7(?): δεσπότ(?)) Ἰου τὸν ἄββα Μήναν; l. 8: καὶ προσκυνήσασι τοὺς πόδας τοῦ ἐμοῦ δεσπό(του); verso, l. 11: παράκαλω τὸν ἐμὸν δεσπότην), where the monastic context is more visible, with Abba Menas mentioned in line 8. We do not know if Menas was the addressee of the letter, or only one of the people to whom the writer wanted to show his respect. The designation δεσπότης could be used in manifold contexts, both secular and ecclesiastical, as a marker of respect toward people placed higher in the hierarchy. \textit{P. Naqlun} II 27, together with the aforementioned letters to the bishop, evidence that it recurred in correspondence sent to Naqlun. In the cases where the accompanying titles were less numerous than in the letters attributed to Nikolaos’s dossier, we can assume that the addressee could occupy a proportionally lower rank. \textit{P. Naqlun} II 28 was sent from Herakleopolis; both the sender and the addressee of the document are unknown. Monastic context, however, might be indicated by the mention of a ‘brother’ in line 1—perhaps a monk from the sender’s community for whom the addressee was supposed to keep some animals, most probably sent to Naqlun with some cargo.\textsuperscript{89}

This group of documents evidences the existence of a supra-regional range of contacts between the addressees and ‘the world’, the mobility of the monks, and the scale of their transactions. In \textit{P. Naqlun} II 27, a transaction is said to have taken place in Psenneris—a location fifteen kilometres north of Medinet el-Fayum.\textsuperscript{90} The sender of \textit{P. Naqlun} II 29 is operating in the vicinity of Alexandria, in Chaireou Polis, searching for a ship, and duly informs the addressee about his progress.\textsuperscript{91} \textit{P. Naqlun} II 28 contains a request to the addressee to take the trouble of a portion of the body of the letter; the identification of both the sender and the addressee is lost.

\textsuperscript{88} Nd. 15.084 and Nd. 07.228 are being prepared for publication by Tomasz Derda and the present author. Nd. 15.084 is addressed in the following manner (verso): τῷ . . . π. . . . ταξι[ρ]ήσει . . . . . S θεοφ[λ]εστα[το]. εἶλον μοι(ντι?) — α? l. πρὸς Νεῖλον μοναξ(οντο?) το ἐμο πατρι. The forms of address in Nd. 07.228 leave little doubt as to the monastic affiliation of its addressee (see ll. 7–8: οἱ σὺν ἐμοί πάντες [προσαγορεύουσιν τὴν σήν?] θεοσέβειαν and l. 11: ἄγωτετα πάτερ); preliminary transcriptions by T. Derda.

\textsuperscript{89} \textit{P. Naqlun} II 28, ll. 1–2: [† ἵνα παρατηρήσης αὐτὰ τὰς ὁδὸς?] ἡμέρας ἔοις ἄντλησε ὁ ἄδελφος καὶ λάβῃ οὐθε εἰς τὴν πόλιν (‘Keep (?) these (animals?) for two (?) days, until the brother comes and takes [them] back to the city’; transl. T. Derda in \textit{ed. pr}.).


\textsuperscript{91} \textit{P. Naqlun} II 29, l. 4: ἐν τῇ Χαιρέου ἑραυνών ἐν σκάφῳ. verso, l. 10: τὰ πλοῖα καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν ἀπετέλησα. See
voyage to Herakleopolis—the place of residence of the sender (ll. 2–3: παρακαλῶ σε/ κοινοθηναι ἐχες τῆς Ἡρακλῆσος ἵνα λαλήσω σοι ἀπόκρισιν). Herakleopolis is only about fifteen kilometres from Naqlun and the document shows clearly that this distance did not constitute any hindrance in personal contacts. Another interesting point in this letter is the mention of a man from Alexandria, who appears in a rather modest role, being sent from Herakleopolis to the Fayum with two animals (perhaps pack donkeys, as suggested by the editor of the text).92 The mistrust with which he is treated (ll. 4–6: ἐπιθῇ δὲ ξένοις ἵστιν ὦ ἄνθρωπος τὸν ἐπέμψα μετὰ τῶν ὀνόματος, Ἀλεξάνδρε[ῦς γάρ ἦστιν, μή] θαρρήσεις αὐτῷ τὰ ἔξω ἀλλὰ πέμψων τοῦτον ἀὑρίον) contrasts with the sense of intimacy between the sender and the addressee conveyed in the letter (cf. ll. 2–3). Another monastic travel to a city is implied in the unpublished Nd.15.084 from Hermitage 6, where the addressee is asked in l. 1: καταξιώσῃ (ἢ) [ὑ]μετέρα[τον title] ἐθέθαν ἐχες τῆς πόλεως πρὸς ὑμᾶς. Both Arsinoiton Polis and Herakleopolis are possible destinations. In this scanty correspondence both the addresses and the senders move a lot; this reminds us somehow of the fourth-century epistolary dossier of Nepheros, whose agent Paulos was regularly sending reports of his comings and goings in Alexandria.93

The clues we get from the Naqlun documents as to the nature of actions mentioned in the letters are extremely scanty. Circulation of goods is the background of P. Naqlun II 28 and 29, even though each of the documents suggest a different scale of the transactions. The former attests to local transport of smaller amounts of goods (cf. P. Naqlun I 11, which is a list of clothing items delivered to a Naqlun hermit on donkeyback by a certain Joseph; ll. 1–3: γνώσες ὀνέλαιων παρ᾽ ἐμοὶ ἱστήῃ), while the latter refers perhaps to a larger cargo transported between the Fayum and Alexandria, which required one or more ships. The same text reports the sender’s failure to find something, which, as we can suspect, the addressee had ordered him to find (ll. 3: καὶ οὐκ ἑρμῆμεν). Fish travelled with the messenger who carried P. Naqlun II 27, but whether this was a merchandise or a gift, we cannot say.94 P. Naqlun II 27 is the only document for which we can attempt a reconstruction of at least general outline of the situational context. This has been done by the editor of the document, who also emphasises the scale of the transaction, involving four solidi invested in the purchase of some objects, and an income of five solidi. A


92 P. Naqlun II, p. 149.

93 Cf., e.g. P. Neph. 5, ll. 16–20: καὶ περὶ δὲν χρείαν σοι ἐστιν ἐν τῇ Ἀλεξάνδρείᾳ, μὴ δοκεῖς γράψαι. μετάδος δὲ Πρῶτον περὶ τοῦ συμφόρου, περὶ οὗ μοι ἔγραψαι, ὅτι τέας τὸ εἴδος οὐκ ἐστιν ἐν Ἀλεξάνδρείᾳ (‘and do not hesitate to write to me about the things you need from Alexandria. Also, notify Protos about the iron, about which he wrote to me, that this product is now unavailable in Alexandria.’).

94 P. Naqlun II 27, ll. 7–8: ἀπέστειλα δὲ μετὰ τοῦ γραμματηφόρου κοριάξους παιστοὺς ἐννέα καὶ νεορθόες πέντε (‘With the messenger I sent koriaxoĩ, nine salted and five fresh’; transl. T. Derda in ed. pr.).
hypothesis is put forward in the editio princeps that the sender of the letter could have been a person charged with the care of economic affairs of the monastery, perhaps even the oikonomos.\textsuperscript{95} But if we assume that the letter was a part of incoming correspondence (the lack of address docket on the verso does not exclude such an interpretation: the address might not have been necessary, as suggested by the mention of a grammatephoros who would have known where to go), we can propose another interpretation: the sender could have been an agent—perhaps a layperson—working for the community or one of its members, providing services similar to those attested in Paulos’s letters to Nepheros. He must have been a person of some means, as we see him engaging his own agents instead of handling the matters in person (l. 2: ἄρρέσταλα τοὺς ἄνθρωπους μετὰ γ’ νομισμάτων). Still, we have no possibility to determine on whose behalf the transactions recorded in the letter were carried out: one monk, or the monastery as a whole. The large sums involved do not constitute a reliable indication (again, let us invoke \textit{P. Naqlun I 11} recording a personal transaction amounting to almost three solidi).\textsuperscript{96} As we shall see, the Naqlun monks had ready cash at their disposal and were willing to borrow it, which suggests considerable surpluses and financial security.

Thus, the overall impression we gain from reading these documents is that of a mobile community, occasionally linked through agents with very remote locations. There is nothing spiritual to this correspondence, which focuses exclusively on commercial activities and organisation matters. This fact could possibly undermine the attribution of these texts to the monastic milieu, were it not for \textit{P. Naqlun 39}—whose attribution to the monastic dossier is beyond a shadow of a doubt—where again, organisation and involvement in the affairs of ‘the world outside’ constitute the main focus, and the dossier from Hermitage 89—our best attestation of individual business of the Naqlun monks.

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{P. Naqlun II} 27, pp. 144–146.

\textsuperscript{96} Another document attesting to a personal transaction of a Naqlun monk is Nd. 07.228 from Hermitage 87, dated on palaeographic grounds to the fifth century. The addressee—most probably the inhabitant of the hermitage—was asked to purchase wax for the substantial sum of two solidi. On account of the history of the Naqlun complex, it cannot be assumed that the wax was supposed to be acquired from monastic apiary, since community infrastructure did not exist yet at such early a date. The addressee of the letter could simply count an owner of beehives among his acquaintances. The expressions used in the letter point to monastic or ecclesiastical status of both correspondents. The sender is accompanied in his greetings by a group designed to Abba Georgios (presbyter Sarapion), ll. 10–13: ὑμᾶς καὶ τοὺς σὺν ὑμῖν ἐγώ τε καὶ οἱ σὺν ἐμοί προσαγορεύομεν. Still, we have no possibility to determine on whose behalf the transactions recorded in the letter were carried out: one monk, or the monastery as a whole. The large sums involved do not constitute a reliable indication (again, let us invoke \textit{P. Naqlun I 11} recording a personal transaction amounting to almost three solidi). As we shall see, the Naqlun monks had ready cash at their disposal and were willing to borrow it, which suggests considerable surpluses and financial security.

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3.2. Monastic loans: the dossier from Hermitage 89

P. Naqlun II 21, 22, and 23 were retrieved from a storage pit in Room A1 of Hermitage 89 in 1990. They are the only documents of the whole Naqlun dossier whose date can be established on more than palaeographic and archaeological grounds. Although the dates they preserve are only indictional, they can be plausibly translated into absolute years, allowing us to place the dossier in the last two decades of the sixth century.\(^7\) This finding is important, for it allows us to date not only one of the phases of the hermitage’s occupation but also a very interesting assemblage of miniature vessels discovered in the pit filling with the documents. This find of ca. sixty pottery pieces, including varied and elaborate forms modelled on actual vessels, most probably attests to artisanal activities of the hermitage’s inhabitants; what was the purpose of this production remains open to question.\(^8\)

The value of the dossier lies also in the hints it gives about the organisational structure of the community. It suggests the existence of smaller subdivisions in the Naqlun laura (labelled Ὁρος Κελλῶν, or ‘Mountain of the Cells’), of which three are named in the documents: ‘the Tower and St Phoibammon’ in P. Naqlun II 21 (ll. 6–8: μονάζοντι κυρία προεστός [l. προεστώτι] Πύργου καὶ τοῦ] ἄγιον Φοιβάμμονος [Ὁρους Κελλῶν]; ‘the Tower’ alone in P. Naqlun II 22 (l. 5: μονάζοντι μὲν ἐν Πύργῳ καὶ ἄναξ[ο]ρ[η]τοι); and Kothau in the same document (ll. 9–10: άβδα Μηνά μονάζοντι [ἀπὸ τοῦ] μοναστηρίου Κωστᾶ Ὁρος Κελλῶν). As indicated in P. Naqlun II 21, these subdivisions had their own heads, which suggests a monks’ community composed of independent units.\(^9\)

The three documents are the most striking evidence of the Naqlun monks’ individual business. All three are loan contracts: P. Naqlun II 21 and 22 are ordinary loans of money (P. Naqlun II 21 explicitly mentions interest), while P. Naqlun II 23 belongs to the group of so-called sales on future delivery, which involved various products (most often wine, like in our papyrus, but also other commodities such as wheat or oil). Two monks appear in them as creditors: Apa Neilos (P. Naqlun II 21 and 23) and Apa Menas (P. Naqlun II 22); all three debtors

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\(^8\) The assemblage is researched by ceramologist Tomasz Górecki, who is responsible for its publication. On the place of this find in our image of the economic activities of the Naqlun hermits, see Derda & Wegner, ‘The Naqlun Fathers’ (cit. n. 1). Information in our forthcoming article is based on personal communication of Tomasz Górecki.

are laymen from the Arsinoite chora (Aurelius Makarios from Alexandrou Nesos in *P. Naqlun* II 21; Aurelius Georgios from Eleusina in *P. Naqlun* II 22; Aurelius Biktor from an unknown village in *P. Naqlun* II 23).

The question of credit in monastic circles has been treated in some detail by a number of authors; here, I will not dwell long on the place of the Naqlun documents in the dossier of monastic loans as a whole, as they are typical examples of this type of documents and further confirm earlier conclusions. I will try, however, to look at them through the prism of their local context.

The debtors, as we have already seen, were villagers from the Fayum (in the case of *P. Naqlun* II 23 the name of the village is not preserved, but it is hard to imagine transporting wine on unreasonably long distances). Eleusina was located between Naqlun and Arsinoiton Polis; Alexandrou Nesos remains unidentified, but it is tentatively located close to the southern shore of the Lake Qarun. It seems that the monastery was quite renowned in the region as a place where liquid cash could be obtained. A mechanism—one among many that determined the relations between monks and the ‘world’—through which a layman could establish contact with a monk in order to obtain a loan is visible in *P. Naqlun* II 22. Here, both the debtor and his guarantor are sons of a monk, Apa Apanakios, an anchorite of ‘the Tower’ (the same unit is mentioned in *P. Naqlun* II 21). The creditor, Apa Menas, is associated with another subdivision of Oros Kellon—the enigmatic Kothau. The emphasis put on monastic affiliation of the debtor’s father seems meaningful; perhaps the fact that both the debtor and his guarantor were related to a monk made them more trustworthy. Apanakios was most probably unable to help his son with a loan, but introduced them to his fellow monk, Apa Menas. This might have resulted in the loan

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100 T. Markiewicz, ‘The Church, clerics, monks, and credit in the papyri’, [in] *P. Clackson*, pp. 178–202. The article focuses mainly on the documentation from the monastery of Apa Apollo in the Heralkeopolite nome and is supplemented by tables compiling data on monks’ activity in moneylending. This article was conceived as a response to Sarah Clackson’s bold statement that ‘monasteries performed a public service by providing what appear to have been interest-free “banking” facilities for laypeople’ (*P. Mon. Apollo*, introduction, p. 26). For monastic loan contracts as a documentary category, see also A. Delattre in *P. Brux. Bawit*, pp. 241–252, again, mostly on the basis of the extensive Hermopolite dossier.

101 In loan contracts between monks and laymen, monks were usually the creditors; this is true of the whole Naqlun dossier. The sums mentioned in the documents: one solidus minus 7 ¼ keratia in *P. Naqlun* II 22 and ca. 2 solidi proposed as reconstructed capital for *P. Naqlun* II 21 (see *P. Naqlun* II, p. 105) are in conformity with what we know of the sums in monastic loans (cf. tables compiled by Markiewicz in his article). The involvement of monks in sales on future delivery is very well attested for the Hermopolite monastery of Apa Apollon (see N. Kruit, ‘Three Byzantine sales for future delivery’, *Tyche* 9 (1994), pp. 67–88; see also below, Chapter 4, pp. 205, n. 192, with bibliography.


103 *P. Naqlun* II 22, ll. 4–6: ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδίου (ἀδελφοῦ) ἀπαναγήματος, μὲν ἐν δὲ ἀναχωρήσει, τοῦτο τινὰ ἐν Ἔρημῷ. Καὶ ἐν οἴκῳ ἀναχωρήσει, τοῦτῳ ἐν Ἔρημῷ ἄναπαγήματος.
being free of interest; this, however, is only hypothetical. The identity of Apanakios can be a subject of discussion. He lived in Pyrgos and was certainly a revered figure, as suggested by his title anachoretēs. However, in contrast to Apa Neilos in P. Naqlun II 21, he bears no additional titles. He might have been a successor of Apa Neilos in Hermitage 89, who, however, did not inherit the title of proestōr. He played a role of an intermediary between laypeople (in this case members of his own family) and other independent monks. We may suspect that although no formal guarantee is stipulated in the loan, Apanakios’s authority could serve as ‘informal’ security, the more so since he was entrusted with the document.

Situations in which we can see possible mediators in the contracts between members of monastic communities and the ‘world’ are very rare. In other documents, an idea of how the contact was established can be gathered by paying attention to the details which allow us to propose a hypothetical reconstruction of the contexts of relations. Such is the case of P. Naqlun II 23—a loan of an unknown sum of money to be repaid with 200 kouri of wine.

To my knowledge, it is the only sale on future delivery from the Arsinoite nome involving a monk as a party. Such deeds were frequent in the sixth- and seventh-century material from the nome and concerned a variety of goods: wine, grain, fodder, hay, even reeds and empty ceramic vessels. The debtors came from various settlements in the Arsinoite nome: komai, chorai, epoikia, less frequently the nome capital itself. In all the documents I know, the creditors are said to have lived in Arsinoiton Polis (except for P. Naqlun II 21 and 23, both connected with Apa Neilos). Links with the city, however, are visible in the document all the same. NN son of Isak, who subscribed for the illiterate debtor, and Aurelius Georgios, the witness, are said to hail from Arsinoiton Polis. The debtor, Aurelius Biktor son of Joseph, was

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104 The interest might have been hidden in the sum to be repaid to Apa Menas; cf. Markiewicz, ‘The Church’ (cit. n. 100), p. 188; see also pp. 179–180 for secular and ecclesiastical legislation regulating the question of interest. Monastic moneylending on interest is firmly confirmed in P. CrYMBR inv. 1747 (566/7); see A. Benaissa, ‘A usurious monk from the Apa Apollo Monastery at Bawit’, CôtE 85 (2010), pp. 374–381.

105 See Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 294–303.

106 For a hypothetical reconstruction of the relation between Neilos and Apanakios, see Derda & Wegner, ‘Πατέρες’ (cit. n. 7), pp. 83 and 92.

107 SPP III 123 (6th–7th century) mentions a creditor—a certain Kosmas from Arsinoiton Polis—whose father (name unpreserved) was a monk (l. 1–2: σοὶ Κοσμῆ καὶ μονάζοντος ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥακοιτονίου πόλεως).

108 Surprisingly, loans to be repaid in wine are rare in the Arsinoite documentation. For the list of documents of this kind, see A. Jördens, P. Heid. V, pp. 296–301. For later supplementations and bibliography on the subject, see S. Gallimore, ‘A contract for the advanced sale of wine’, BASP 49 (2012), pp. 151–165, esp. pp. 151–152, with notes.

109 In case of debtors from Arsinoiton Polis, the documents either state explicitly their involvement in activities in the nome chorai—as is the case with two sales of ceramic vessels on future delivery, P. Eirene II 28 and 29, where the debtors’ workshops are either explicitly stated to have been located in epoikia, or their location can be deduced from the document’s content. These documents attest to economic activities of a group of non-aristocratic city residents with economic base in the chorai.

110 P. Naqlun II 23, ll. 13–17: ‘(hand 2) [Ἀ]ὰρῆλας Βικτόρ υἱὸς Ἰσαίας ὁ πρωκείμενος [Ἀρσινοιτὸς] ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥακοιτονίου πόλεως ἤτοι τῶν Ῥακοιτονίων ἔναμνεν καὶ διακοσίων καὶ ἀποδέχοντα’ [ὡς πρόκειται † - - - - †] υἱὸς τοῦ Ιακώβου Ισαίας ἐπὶ τῆς Ῥακοιτονίου πόλεως
a villager from an unknown kome; thus we may wonder to whom the Arsinoite link was due. The opening part of the contract in which the place where the deed was concluded could be stated—as it was frequent with this type of document—is unfortunately unreserved. The involvement of two men from Arsinoiton Polis, however, indicates that it could have been the city itself. The city was the most obvious destination for someone searching for liquid cash, and it might be that it was in the nome capital that Biktor met Neilos. *P. Naqlun* II 28 and Nd.15.084 clearly show that monastic voyages to cities were deemed natural.112

As observed in the editio princeps, the obligations of the borrower in *P. Naqlun* II 23 exceed the usual scope registered in other documents of this kind. Not only was Biktor supposed to transport the wine from his village to a place whose name unfortunately disappeared in a lacuna (the dwelling place of Neilos, that is, the monastery of Naqlun, is the most plausible proposition),113 but he was also to provide empty jars for the wine—a task which was usually the creditor’s.114 We can only wonder where the empty jars were supposed to be stored in the monastery (and, apart from that, how much place would it take, since the capacity of *kouri* is unknown); the Naqlun hermitages as we know them were insufficiently equipped to allow for the storage of large amounts of goods.115 Another question is the final destination of the wine; would Neilos

111 *P. Naqlun* II 23, ll. 8–10: καὶ ἀποκαταστοῦντος ἐς [τῇ]ν [- - - ék tīs (?)] ἡμετέρας κλήμας ὑπὸ κ[α][ρ]ῆμον καὶ δόσεως τῆς εἰσοδίας(?). - - - ἀποκαταστάσεως

112 For the role of urban residents as a source of credit for villagers, see R. S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, Princeton 1993, pp. 73–75.

113 For the list of documents in which the seller has to provide the vessels, see recently Gallimore, ‘A contract’ (cit. n. 108), pp. 154–155 (commentary to l. 3 of P. Vindob. inv. G 40267, which also belongs to this group). For a discussion of the question of providing empty jars in sales on delivery, see ibid., pp. 161–163.

resell it, and if yes, to whom? Maybe he played a role in wine distribution in his own community. Since we know Neilos as a moneylender—also on interest—we could easily imagine him involved in other profit-oriented activities.

With *P. Naqlun* II 21, 22, and 23 we are as close to individual monks’ business activities as we can get in the whole monastic dossier of the site. Similarly to the pattern known from contemporary documents from the monastery of Apa Apollo in the Hermopolite nome, we see the monks in two main capacities: of moneylenders and investors in agricultural production. Thanks to *P. Naqlun* II 22, however, we are also able to speculate on the manner in which bonds based on business activities could be stimulated by the community members who did not take part in the transactions but acted as intermediaries thanks to their pre-existing relations. The case of Apa Neilos sheds some light on how monks could increase their income by lending money on interest; however, we are unable to say what their initial economic basis was.

Neilos, Menas, Nikolaos, and anonymous correspondents in other documents presented above exemplify the discontinuity characteristic of the Naqlun dossier. Each of the better preserved documents has a story to tell, and in some cases, if we put together scattered pieces of evidence, a somewhat impressionistic picture can emerge: now of a high-ranking ecclesiastic with a wide network of contacts and range of interests—from business affairs to political and social matters—now of an entrepreneurial individual with business links to the *chora* and (perhaps) the nome capital. It is obvious which one of the two was more typical. I daresay Nikolaos’s model as we build it based on the bishop’s reconstructed dossier is indeed unique on the Egyptian scale; in much better preserved archives of Abraham and Pisentios, the echoes of the ‘world’ resound much more faintly. When we look at Nikolaos in the context of the Naqlun community, we cannot really determine how much of his interest was directed towards the monastery. There is nothing that would point to his involvement in monastic management, even though he was obviously concerned with matters of propriety in the community, as indicated by his displeasure with Basileios’s gift of wine granted during his visit at Naqlun.

located in the front courtyard and serving as a storehouse. The existence of such a tower, eponymous for Neilos’s subdivision μοναστήριον Πύργου and destroyed in a landslide, was proposed by Tomasz Derda for Hermitage 89 (P.Naqlun II, pp. 95–96 with n. 20 with further bibliography on the function of *pyrgoi* in ancient architecture). This proposition was rejected by Peter van Minnen, who wants to identify *Pyrgos* of the papyri with the vast remains of Building A on the plateau. Both interpretations are not without problems, see Derda & Wegner, ‘Πατέρες’ (cit. n. 7), pp. 82 and 91–92.

116 Cf. *P. Aust.* 1 47 and 48, where the archimandrite of the monastery of Apa Apollos in the Hermopolite nome purchases large amounts of wine on delivery, most probably acting on his own behalf rather than representing the community (see below, Chapter 4, p. 207).

117 See below, Chapter 4, Section 4.3.
Worldly affairs feature prominently also in the second model, although this time the motivations—at least the well-perceptible ones—behind establishing networks of contacts with laypeople were mainly economic. The initiative in such contacts lay on both sides: on one hand, the anchorite from Hermitage 2 must have at some point contacted Joseph the textile-dealer to order the clothes whose number and price is recorded in *P. Naqlun* I 11; we can assume that the Alexandrian donkey-driver in *P. Naqlun* II 28 was also realising orders from the monastery. Behind the reports on the progress of business activities in *P. Naqlun* II 27 and 29 we can surmise the presence of demanding addressees, ready to engage a number of individuals, whether directly or through agents, in activities on a regional or supra-regional range. On the other hand, we guess than in the case of loans, it was the debtors who approached the monks. Still, however, such actions would have resulted from common knowledge of the monks’ willingness to participate in such transactions—a knowledge that was a natural consequence of their general activity and mobility, clearly perceptible both to laymen and to other monks.\(^\text{118}\)

Although the information we can obtain from Naqlun documents consists of detached individual stories (sometimes largely reconstructed), several elements in the dossier hint at the existence of some points of juncture, thanks to which ‘the Naqlun community’ is not only a construct. Nikolaos feels responsible for controlling the situation affecting more than just himself; Apanakios’s monastic affiliation seems to have had some meaning for the parties of a loan contract in which the creditor was another monk; the subdivisions named in the documents from Hermitage 89 were ‘building blocks’ in a fluid structure, but could nonetheless join under one monastic supervisor (as Pyrgos and St Phoibammon do in *P. Naqlun* II 21) and all shared affiliation to Ὀρος Κελλῶν. If we look at the account of *Life of Samuel*, we can see that these volatile and most probably negotiable structures remained a feature of the Naqlun community until the period immediately preceding the Arab conquest. It is all the more striking to see against this background a group of people who seem to have been widely acknowledged as ‘universal’ representatives of the Naqlun monks. This is the case of *P. Naqlun* 39.

3.3. ‘Fathers of the holy Neklonion’: a point of reference in local village networks?

*P. Naqlun* 39 was unearthed in the refuse dump in Sector B on the plateau, in a layer which can be dated archaeologically to the sixth–seventh century. The hand, however, bears more resemblance to seventh-century scripts. Although unprofessional, the script is rather neat, in sharp contrast to the grammar and style of the letter which betray a rather superficial knowledge

\(^{118}\) See the two letters, Nd.15.084 and *P. Naqlun* II 28; the former was sent by a layman, the latter—most probably—by another monk. Both contain requests to their addressees to come to the city.
of written Greek. The awkward syntax and very relaxed attitude toward conjugation and declension hinder our understanding of the letter; the situation in which it was written can be reconstructed in general outline, but the details remain obscure.119

Editorial problems notwithstanding, P. Naqlun 39 is a very important text for more than one reason. First, it provides the first attestation of the Coptic name of the monastery in a Greek text: ἀγιον Νεκλόνιον (l. 8–9: πάσι τοῖς μονάζουσι ἁγίου Νεκλονίου).120 Second, with P. Naqlun 39 we get as close as possible to what most probably was the official representation of the monastery: a ‘managerial board’ consisting of a presbyter and three deacons, mentioned in the beginning of the lengthy address formula in ll. 2–9: τοῖς ἄγαμῶις καὶ πατράσιν ἡμῶν Ἀγαθάω (Ἀγαθῆτι?) πρεσβυτέρῳ καὶ ἅπα Παύλῳ καὶ ἅπα Νειλαμμώνι καὶ ἅπα Λανίῳ διακόνοις καὶ πάσι τοῖς μονάζουσι ἁγίου Νεκλονίου. The three men do not bear any monastic titles, but their prominent position in the formula leaves little doubt as to their standing in the community.121 Agathios, Paulos, Neilammon, and Aanios represent all the monks of the holy Neklion in the same way the nameless presbyter and deacon represent ‘all the people of the village Tebetny’ (ll. 10–12: παρὰ τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου καὶ διακόνου καὶ πάντων ἀπὸ κόμης Τεβέτνυ).122 The third feature thanks to which the Tebetny letter counts among the most important Naqlun documents is the confirmation it provides of monks’ taking part in fieldwork during the harvest. The phenomenon

119 For the edition of the text, see Derda & Wegner, ‘Letter from Tebetny’ (cit. n. 3). Due to grammatical and syntactical problems of the text, the edition has two transcriptions (pp. 140–141): diplomatic, which reproduces the text exactly as it is on the papyrus, and proposed restoration, which renders the editors’ understanding of the text. All quotations from the document are given after the restored text.

120 The hypothesis that the Coptic form Neklone can be etymologically related to Ὄρος Καλλόν from the late sixth-century contracts was put forward twenty years ago by Tomasz Derda (see P. Naqlun I, pp. 26–27). The hypothesis, although criticised, has not yet been supplanted by a more convincing proposition.

121 The fact that they bear ecclesiastical titles is not without significance; Ewa Wipszycka observes that in monastic papyrological documentation the majority of heads of monasteries were clerics. See E. Wipszycka, ‘Les clercs dans les communautés monastiques égyptiennes’, JHuP 26 (1996), pp. 135–166, esp. p. 151: ‘Elles (pieces of information in the papyri—JW) témoignent en outre qu’il existe une tendance, pour ne pas dire une règle, d’après laquelle, parmi les membres des communautés monastiques, ce sont surtout les supérieurs qui possèdent une dignité ecclésiastique, l’ayant reçue le plus souvent dans leur monastère ou leur lauré, soit immédiatement après avoir assumé leurs fonctions de supérieurs, soit peu de temps après’.

122 Ecclesiastics are found as representatives of village communities in papyrological documentation; see P. Oxy. I, pp. 3963—a fifth-century letter from the presbyter, the deacons, and the inhabitants of the village Akoutou to presbyter Philoxenos (ll. 1–4: τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου καὶ θεοπεστάτου Φιλοξένου πρεσβυτέρῳ νυν ὑποτάμῳ καὶ διάκονω καὶ λοιποὶ τῆς κόμης Ακούτου); P. Haun. III 58 (439; a sworn deposition concerning a controversy surrounding access to water in Karanis), ll. 1–7: μετὰ ὑπατον τῶν διεσπαρτῶν ἡμῶν Θεοσοσιοῦ τοῦ Ἱεροφάγοτον <τοῦ> λαμπροτάτου Πάνου καὶ τῆς ἐξουδήμος ἱεραδίνου, Λυχνίου Τιμίως Παπίας καὶ Παμμήνης Πακεσίου καὶ Οὐσίαρρους Λεονίδου καὶ Ἀτίπους Παντοῦ καὶ Καλάκων ἱππόκρατος καὶ Ἱππόκρατος καὶ Λεονίδου καὶ Παμμήνης Σαμβίδου καὶ Σερήνης Τειφόρου καὶ Πανανθίσιος Ἀμαντάκης καὶ Ολ. Ηρώνου καὶ Απειρίου καὶ Σεράφου πρεσβυτέρους καὶ Παπέρους καὶ Σαμβίδους καὶ Ισίας καὶ Σοκράτης καὶ Ασῆμα διακόνους καὶ λοιποὶ μικροὶ καὶ μεγάλοις τῶν ἀπὸ κόμης Καρανίου. For the discussion of this document’s address formula, see G. Schmelz, Kirchliche Amtsträger im spätantiken Ägypten nach den Aussagen der griechischen und koptischen Papyri und Ostraka [= AfP Beikett 13], Munich 2002, pp. 310–312. See also P. Mon. Apollo 24, where a proestos of the monastery of Apa Apollo purchases land from ‘the council of the settlement (ἐπισκοπία) of Poraleu, through me, Eisitre the hiereus, son of Belkort, and Petre the deacon, and Anoup the priest, and Shenoute, son of the late Phil, and the rest of the settlement’ (ll. 1–2). For this document see below, Chapter 4, p. 192.
is well-known from the literary sources and is attested also in documentary record; let us observe
that harvesting is among the few practical matters that are found in the so-called Naqlun rule (see
above, p. 127 with n. 49). Finally—and most importantly from the point of view of the present
argument—the document shows that the Naqlun monastery was a hub of a local network
involving at least two villages and a putative church-owned epoikion.

A brief summary of the situation described in the text is necessary at this point. The
villagers of Tebetny, represented by two ecclesiastics, address the representatives of the
monastery with two requests. First, someone from the monastery (most probably the presbyter
Agathios mentioned first in the address formula) is asked to go to a Fayumic village Oxyrhyncha
and handle some matters concerning ‘Hagia Eirene’ (ll. 15–18: ἀπελθεῖν καὶ[ι ἐνν[α] ἔν Ὁξυρύγχων
(κόμη). καὶ παρακαλόσατε αὐτούς ὧδη τὴν ἀγίαν Εἰρήνην). It appears that the Tebetny villagers
had already corresponded with the Oxyrhyncha community, always on the subject of ‘Hagia
Eirene’ (ll. 19–21: ὅτι ἐν γράφηκαμε[ν] πρὸς αὐτούς ἄλλοτε περὶ τῆς ἀγίας Εἰρήνης). Unfortunately, the content of this previous correspondence is very obscure; we know only that
some financial matters were at stake, as the text mentions ‘the wages of the people’, the
disbursement of which was supposed to determine further actions of the Oxyrhyncha people (ll.
22–25: καὶ ἐν γράφηκαν ἡμῖν ὡστε ἐξός τοῦ παισθῆ ὁ μισθὸς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἡμῶν). It appears
that financial matters had been settled by the time our letter was written: someone already paid
‘the wages of the people’ (ll. 35–37: ἵδου γὰρ κατέβαλεν τὸν μισθὸν τῶν ἀνθρώπων). This,
however, had not changed much in the situation, so much so that Agathios still had to intervene.
But his role was not limited to mediation. The writers ask him also to send his monks to Tebetny,
whence they are supposed to go to ‘Hagia Eirene’ (ll. 25–30: καὶ πέμψατε ἡμῖν τοὺς μονάζοντας τῆς
ἡμῶν πατρικῆς διαθέσεως, καὶ παρέχομεν τῇ Εἰρήνῃ). The whole situation would perhaps make
little sense, were it not for the last sentence of the letter which provides a setting for the
reconstructed actions: the letter was written in the period of harvest (ll. 39–41: ἐπεὶ οἴδατε ὅτι ὁ
καρπὸς γὰρ τῶν καρπῶν ἐν τῷ ἄγρῳ ἔστιν). Harvest was a crucial period of the year, and one that

123 For monastic labour during harvest, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 487–489, with references to the
sources.
124 The whole section of P. Naqlun 39 referring to the Tebetny–Oxyrhyncha correspondence is very difficult to
interpret. While editing the text, we considered the whole sentence-condition in ll. 22–25 a quotation from the
response of the Oxyrhyncha villagers (thus, ἀνθρώπων ἡμῶν would refer to people of Oxyrhyncha, not Tebetny).
Another problem is the phrase ὅστε ἔξος τοῦ παισθῆ ὁ μισθὸς. It looks like a condition presented by the
Oxyrhyncha community to the villagers of Tebetny. First, however, we do not know what action depended on
this condition, as the authors of P. Naqlun 39 do not quote their own initial letter in which the action must have
been referred to. Second: what does the verb παισθῆ mean in this context? Literally, the sentence means ‘until the
wages of our people are stopped’ This may point to a situation in which payments due to some men from
Oxyrhyncha had been suspended and the Oxyrhyncha community refrained from undertaking any action until
the suspension would have lifted.
125 Κατέβαλεν in the sentence lacks the subject, thus we do not know who made the payment. Perhaps it was
obvious to the monks of Naqlun.
posed real challenge to agricultural workers and managers, considering the lack of manpower in the Egyptian countryside.\textsuperscript{126} It was most probably the question of providing agricultural workers that was at stake here; Agathios’s monks were supposed to help at ‘Hagia Eirene’ in a situation where the villagers of Tebetny were incapable of dealing with the problem by themselves.

The mysterious ‘Hagia Eirene’ is the element that connects Tebetny, Oxyrhynchus, and Naqlin. Unfortunately, its identification is only hypothetical; the name can be connected with the phrase describing the Arsinoite episcopal church in \textit{P. Köln} III 152, addressed (ll. 3–4) Ειρήνη τῇ καὶ Εὐλογίᾳ καθολικῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καλομένῃ [ . . . . ] τῆς Ἀρσ[η][θ]ο[ς] πόλις.\textsuperscript{127} In \textit{P. Naqlin} 39 ‘Hagia Eirene’ can stand for the church itself, but, given the context, it is much more probable that the expression refers to land owned by the church (an \textit{epoikion}). If this interpretation is correct, we can assume that the administrators of church land exerted pressure on the villagers, perhaps searching for additional workforce. Unable to satisfy the demands, the villagers had to turn to the monastery for help. One of the main problems with the document’s interpretation is the lack of any premise that would allow us to determine whether the Naqlin monks took part in the whole affair due to practical reasons (e.g. economic links with Tebetny or Hagia Eirene) or only on account of their authority.

Let us focus on the content of the document and the information it conveys about the monastic community and its contacts with the villagers. We have already identified the main addressees of the letter as representatives of the whole community: the people whom ‘the world outside’ recognised as capable of arranging practical matters. They constituted a ‘managerial board’ concerned with such issues as reacting to incoming correspondence and deciding on the deployment of workforce. Among the Naqlin monks, they were the persons one had to contact when asking for a favour or a service. The elliptic character of the letter and the lack of mention of the senders’ names show that we are dealing with a correspondence sustained over a longer period of time, not an occasional request.

The monks (or, more precisely, the presbyter Agathios, who seems to have been the one addressed with the title ἡ ὑμῶν πατρικὴ διάθεσις in ll. 13–14) are asked for mediation and help in a situation where the villagers of Tebetny were unable to take care of their interests. Determining what these interests consisted in depends on our reconstruction of the context. As we have already seen, the question of workforce (most probably hired labourers, as suggested by the

\textsuperscript{126} For the significance of hired workforce in the context of seasonal work, including harvest, see Bagnall, \textit{Egypt} (cit. n. 112), p. 123; Banaji, \textit{Agrarian Change} (cit. n. 62), pp. 201–202.

\textsuperscript{127} Sale on future delivery of AD 477. In the document, a certain Aurelius Ioannes, introducing himself as a ‘farmer of the same holy church from the village Psenyris’ (l.7). Note that some business taking place at Psenyris and most probably connected with the Naqlin monastery appears in \textit{P. Naqlin} II 27 (see above). See J. Gascou, ‘Notes d’onomastique ecclésiale ancienne (à propos de \textit{P. Lond.} III 1303 descr.)’, \textit{ZPE} 96 (1993), pp. 135–140.
mention of misthos) seems to have been crucial. An arrangement involving people from Oxyrhyncha did not work, and it is possible that in case of their unwillingness to assume the tasks, the people from Tebetny were obliged to substitute for them. Being unable to do so (probably because of their own fieldwork), they asked Agathios to send monks to Tebetny. The obscure duties towards Hagia Eirene were thus the villagers’—they knew the details of the affair and could convey them to the monks, who, in turn, were to substitute for the people of Tebetny.

The monks’ ability to help resulted from two factors: first, the authority of their representative(s), who were believed capable of mediating with another village community. Second, in the most practical dimension, it appears that the monastery had workforce to spare during the harvest. We have no certain information about the economic basis of the Naqlun community; the image which emerges from the juxtaposition of various sources suggests that it must have had considerable and stable sources of income—which in our period and setting meant land. The system of land management must have been such that it allowed a group of monks to remain uninvolved in the fieldwork on their community’s property and be free to work elsewhere.128

The letter, again, shows a feature we have already witnessed in other documents from Naqlun: the expected mobility of the monks. The tone of the request to come to Oxyrhyncha and to send monks to Tebetny addressed to Agathios is polite, but nothing indicates that the presbyter is being asked for an extraordinary favour. While in P. Naqlun II 28 and Nd.15.084 we see ‘the Naqlun fathers’ being requested to go to the city, in P. Naqlun 39 the relations are firmly set in the Fayumic choros. Tebetny is the modern Dafadnu, a village ca. 10 kilometres from the nome capital; the exact location of Oxyrhyncha is as yet unknown, but the extensive documentation pertaining to this village suggests that it was not far from Tebetny.129

128 Among the documents of uncertain attribution mentioned above, one—P. Naqlun I 8—is of particular interest. It was edited as ‘A list of crops to calculate land rent (?).’ Apart from the size of land parcels and their expected yields, the document mentions also kaino—a designation of communities of cultivators (for the term, see D. Bonneau, ‘Communauté rurale en Egypte byzantine?’ [in] Les communautés rurales. Deuxième partie: antiquité [= Recueils de la société Jean Bodin pour l’histoire comparative des institutions], Paris 1983, pp. 505–523; T. Gagos & P. van Minnen, ‘Documenting the rural economy of Byzantine Egypt: three papyri from Alabastrine’, JR 45 (1992), pp. 186–202; J. Gascou, ‘Les grands domaines, la cité et l’état en Egypte byzantine: recherches d’histoire agraire, fiscale et administrative’. [in] idem, Fiscalité et société en Egypte byzantine, Paris 2008, pp. 172–173; Hickey, Wine, Wealth and the State (cit. n. 82), pp. 65–67. If the document refers to the property of the monastery, we could assume that workforce on at least a part of its land was secured by such communities; this assumption, however, must remain only hypothetical.

129 For Oxyrhyncha, see Calderini–Darris, Dizionario, s.v. Οξυρηνχα; W. Clarysse, ‘Graeco-Roman Oxyrhyncha, a village in the Aristeitina nome’, [in] Lippert & Schentuleit (eds.), Graeco-Roman Fayum (cit. n. 6), pp. 55–73; Derda, ΑΡΣΙΝΟΙΤΗΣ ΝΟΜΟΣ (cit. n. 102), p. 110 with n. 150. For Tebetny, see Calderini–Darris, Dizionario, s.v. Τεβέτνυ 1; commentary of F. Morelli to P. Horak 64; Timm, Αιγύπτης, s.v. Dafadnu; Mueller, ‘What’s your position?’ (cit. n. 102), pp. 199–213; D. Rathbone, ‘Towards a historical topography of the Fayum’, [in] D. M. Biley (ed.), Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt: The Proceedings of the Seventeenth Classical Colloquium of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum, Held on 1–4 December 1993 [= JRA Supplementary Series 19], Ann
The ‘managerial board’ of *P. Naqlun 39* was charged with administrative decisions on one hand, and interventions aimed at regulating the relations between local communities on the other. We can imagine that such a body would have developed in response to the demands of everyday functioning of the community, which included not only the management of monastic assets and work organisation, but also representing the monastery before the external world: neighbours in the countryside and state apparatus. Representation and administrative capacity go hand in hand also in the narrative of *Life of Samuel*, we already had the chance to observe that the person left in the monastic ‘centre’ to meet the soldiers working on the orders of Cyrus was no one else than the monastery’s *oikonomos* (see above, pp. 129–130).

In the late-sixth-century contracts from Hermitage 89, we see that the monks of Naqlun felt a sense of belonging to a larger ‘organisation’. The mentions of *Oros Kellon* as an entity superior to particular hermitages, and the presence of representatives and administrators serving the whole community are the only traces of an overarching structure that at some point in the sixth century became a common denominator for the inhabitants of the desert fringe close to Bahr el-Gharaq canal.

The most important contribution of the Naqlun dossier lies, however, in the information it conveys about the functioning of particular individuals in a semi-anchoritic *laurae*—even if in some cases we have problem determining whether an action described in the correspondence was undertaken on behalf of the individual in question or his community (see above, pp. 139–140). Some instances, however, are evident. The documentation reveals a continued independence of the Naqlun monks in the sphere of various transactions, and, indirectly, communication and travel: from the addressee of Nd. 07.228 in the fifth century, asked to purchase wax for his correspondent, to monastic moneylenders in the documents from Hermitage 89 in the late sixth century, who might have concluded their contracts in the city (see above, pp. 143–144). It was a community in which travel was considered normal and apparently was undertaken without much ado, for the sake of both private and communal business. The Naqlun monks relied much on ‘the world outside’, but people from ‘the world’ also sought their assistance as moneylenders and investors. The sum of the contacts established in the course of business and personal relations resulted in a network which reached Fayumic villages, nome capitals (Herakleopolis, most probably also Arsinoiton Polis), and important communication hubs such as Chaireou (*P. Naqlun* II 29). A number of individuals involved in these relations were prominent inhabitants of the monastic settlement: bishop Nikolaos, and other title-bearing community members, including

Arbor 1996, pp. 50–56, esp. p. 50 (on the map published there, Tebetny seems to be indicated too far to the south). For documentary references to both locations in Late Antique papyri, see Derda & Wegner, ‘Letter from Tebetny’ (cit. n. 3), pp. 144–145 (commentary to ll. 12 and 16 of *P. Naqlun 39*).
Apa Neilos, a head of one of the subdivisions of *Oros Kellon*. In other cases (e.g., *P. Naqlun II* 28), we have no indication of the status of the involved monks within the community (we need to remember, however, that the presence and absence of official designations—mainly in correspondence—is a function of many factors, including the difference of status between the correspondents, or the lack thereof, and the degree of familiarity). Archaeological material suggests that the Naqlun residents were people of considerable means who could afford relatively comfortable dwellings. In such conditions, negotiations of status could have become a complex affair in which the network of contacts one could establish was perhaps not without meaning. It is a pity that the Naqlun documentation as we know it now does not allow us to discover to what extent the relations of individual monks determined the networks of the monastic institution—a problem that one must face also with other, much richer monastic dossiers (see Chapter 4).
CHAPTER 4
THE COMMUNITY OF APA APOLLO AT BAWIT IN THE HERMOPOLITE NOME
AND ITS RELATIONS WITH ‘THE WORLD’

The monastery of Apa Apollo was the most prominent monastic institution in the Hermopolite nome in the end of the Byzantine period and the first one hundred years of Arab rule. Material traces of its splendid past have been preserved in the form of extensive architectural remains on a kom located in the vicinity of the modern village Bawit. The documentary dossier of the community is counted among the largest and most comprehensive collections of textual finds attributed to single monastic site.

1. Sources and state of research

1.1. Location of the monastery and excavations on the site

The Bawit monastery was located 25 kilometres from the ancient nome capital Hermopolis Megale. Its main enclosure was situated on the level hilltop of the aforementioned kom, measuring 930 x 410 metres. An agglomeration of hermitages associated with the enclosure was discovered on a plateau 800 metres west of the kom; it comprises thirty-six hermitages grouped in four clusters. Archaeological research on the site commenced in the beginning of the twentieth century and has continued with periodical interruptions until the recent years. The first phase of the excavations,

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conducted still before the outbreak of World War I under the auspices of the IFAO, first by Jean Clédat, then by Jean Maspero, revealed a fair amount of architectural remains.²

The French excavations brought to light two churches,³ a refectory, and a number of vaulted edifices, some of which had once been multi-storeyed. Walls of many of the buildings on the kom were covered with graffiti and painted inscriptions; many of these texts mention the name of the monastery, names and titles of its superiors, and names of visitors, both laymen and ecclesiastics. Numerous inscriptions were discovered in the so-called hall VI, unearthed during one of the campaigns conducted by Jean Maspero; they were left there by visitors and pilgrims which must have visited the place with considerable frequency.⁴ In the southern part of the kom, Charles Palanque and Jean Maspero discovered structures with inscriptions and paintings which may point to the occupation of this part of the plateau by female monastics. The relation between the alleged female community and the community of Apa Apollo cannot be plausibly reconstructed based on the available material.⁵

Some among the structures discovered in the beginning of the twentieth century were finely decorated with murals and had windows with glass panes. Initially, Clédat interpreted them as chapels; Maspero and Maurice Martin, however, saw in them dwellings of the richest members of the community, and their interpretation is widely accepted nowadays.⁶ The structures excavated in this phase of research on the kom included also a number of small bread ovens—an important fact for the reconstruction of the community’s organisation (see below).⁷

After a major break, the excavations were resumed in 1976–1985 by the Egyptian Service des Antiquités. The most recent phase of archaeological research started in 2003, again under the auspices of the IFAO, and was joined by a team from the Louvre. Works executed during this

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⁵ See Maspero & Drioton, *Fouilles* (cit. n. 2), vol. I, Introduction, p. vi. See also Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés*, pp. 583–596. Female monastics are almost completely absent from Bawit documentary record, except for *P. Lond. Copt.* I 1130, where a nun named Ruth is said to receive thirty-six kadi of wine. The amount is considerable (it equals the disbursement for three agricultural workers listed in the same document) and we may suspect that Ruth was representing her community to which the wine was actually given.


phase comprised, among others, a geophysical prospection of the kom conducted by Tomasz Herbich between 2004 and 2007. The results of this research allowed Herbich to elaborate a detailed plan of architectural structures on the kom.8 Herbich’s efforts to juxtapose the results of his non-invasive prospection with maps and plans drawn during the early excavations revealed inaccuracies in the older documentation. Geophysical prospection carried out in 2005 and 2006 by Sylvie Marchand encompassed the area west of the kom and shed light on the western grouping of hermitages, whose existence had been signalled already by Clédat.9 The absence of kitchen and storage facilities in this group of edifices may imply their dependence on another unit, most probably situated on the kom itself.10

Although the literary tradition connected with the monastery of Apa Apollo suggests a very early, fourth-century date of its foundation, the oldest remains discovered at the site can be dated to the sixth century; the site was abandoned in the twelfth century.11 Most buildings on the kom date to the sixth–eighth centuries, while the installations in the western cluster functioned between the second half of the seventh and the first half of the eighth century. The chronology of archaeological material converges with the dates established or proposed for the documents of the monastery’s dossier, which span the period from the sixth (Greek) to the seventh–eighth centuries (Coptic; occasionally Greek).

1.2. The documentary dossier of the monastery of Apa Apollo

Documentary evidence connected with the community of Apa Apollo has received much scholarly attention over the last twenty years. The enormous dossier of the monastery comprises administrative documents produced by managerial units of the community (mostly in Coptic),

8 T. Herbich & D. Bénazeth, ‘Le kom de Baouît: étapes d’une cartographie’, BIFAO 108 (2008), pp. 165–204; the private version of the plan executed by Tomasz Herbich is reproduced in Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, between pp. 142 and 143. See below, Plate 3, p. 320.
9 Clédat, Le monastère et la necropole (cit. n. 2), pp. 190–191, fig. 2.
10 On the investigation carried out on the western plateau, see Marchand, Marouard et alii, ‘Survey du monastère’ (cit. n. 1), forthcoming. The question of the interpretation of the relation between the plateau settlement and the settlement on the kom has been explored in detail in a draft of an article by Ewa Wipszycka, ‘Baouît, ermitages’, which I had the chance to read thanks to the Author’s kind permission.

A reservation must be made concerning the absence of kitchen facilities in archaeological material. Polish archaeologist Tomasz Górecki underscores the fact that kitchens serving for the preparation of modest meals necessary for a monk’s daily sustenance need not have been complex structures that would have left distinguishable traces. A kitchen could have consisted of a makeshift hearth on which a pot could be placed.

11 See Wipszycka, Moines, pp. 27–28 and 150, with a reservation that the connection of the literary texts known to us with an actual monastery is hindered by the fact that in Middle Egypt there was more than one monastery bearing the name of Apa Apollo. The question of the establishment and abandonment of the monastery has been studied in detail in H. Torp, ‘La date de la fondation du monastère d’apa Apollô de Baouît et de son abandon’, Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire (1965), pp. 153–177. For a summary of the discussion, see Delattre, P. Brux. Bawit, pp. 54–58.
Coptic agreements concluded by the monks and related to the community’s economic activities, and a group of loan contracts drawn up in Greek or in Coptic. In the dossier, there are texts retrieved during excavations and documents without known archaeological context scattered around the world in various collections. It was possible to associate the documents of the latter group with the Bawit monastery thanks to internal criteria such as typical documentary formulae, or recurrent toponyms or anthroponyms. The painstaking task of reconstructing the Bawit archives was initiated by the prematurely deceased British Coptologist Sarah J. Clackson and is continued by a number of scholars, including Alain Delattre, Anne Boud’hors, and Gesa Schenke.

The community of Apa Apollo appears in the documents under various names, e.g., ‘the monastery of the mount of Titkois (Τίτκωις; Copt. ⲉⲧⲕⲟⲟⲟ)’, ‘the topos of Apa Apollo (in the region of Shmoun = Hermopolis)’, ‘the monasterion of Apa Apollo’, or ‘the place (Copt. Ⲟⲧ) of Apa Apollo’.

The question of identification of the monastery of Titkois/Titkooh with Bawit was a subject of long discussion. Sarah J. Clackson, in her paper presented at the International Congress of Papyrologists in Florence, identified the two institutions; however, in her major publication of Bawit documents (P. Mon. Apollo), she questioned the identification and listed the documents from Titkois separately in Appendix 3. Niko Kruit, who studied the designations of various monasteries bearing the name of Apa Apollo in the papyri, was inclined to think that Titkois constituted a separate monastic settlement. Ewa Wipszycka refrained from conclusive statements invoking the absence of decisive proofs. Alain Delattre, who in the introduction to P. Brux. Bawit gave the most thorough study of Apa Apollo’s history and structure, believed that the Hermopolite monastery of Apa Apollo and topos of Titkois were one and the same place. Also Jean Gascou


16 Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, p. 150.

17 Delattre, P. Brux. Bawit, pp. 42–44, quoting Tito Orlandi (in T. Orlandi & A. Campagnano, Vita dei monachi Phif e Longinu, Milan 1975, p. 18), who considers Titkois the most ancient name of the monastery, referring to the nearby village. After the monastery had become famous, the designation would have changed to Bawit (derived from the Coptic ⲡⲧⲏⲧ, ‘the monastery’) which, with the passage of time, came to describe also the village itself. Delattre also connects all the Greek loan documents mentioning Titkois with Bawit in A. Delattre, ‘Un contrat de prêt copte du monastère de Baouit’, CdE 79 (2004), pp. 385–389, esp. p. 385.
pronounced himself in favour of the identification, connecting the appearance of a number of texts mentioning Titkois on antiquity market with the pillage of the Bawit site in c. 1975.18

Texts connected with the monastery of Apa Apollo in the Hermopolite nome and texts mentioning Titkois share several features. Both groups include the so-called ‘aparche collection texts’, which form a clearly distinguished category of Coptic documents. Also, documentary formulas, toponyms, names of persons, and titles recur both in texts of established Bawit provenance and in documents mentioning Titkois. Therefore, it appears that the ‘Titkois dossier’ can be safely connected with the Bawit monastery.

The dossier of Apa Apollos is one of the largest collections pertaining to a single monastery from Byzantine and early Arab Egypt. It is also one that has profited greatly from general dynamic development of Coptic studies; the majority of the texts were published recently in a number of books and articles.19 Studies of general nature, focused mostly on the internal organisation of the monastery, or the fiscal and economic issues have also appeared,20 but as yet there has been no comprehensive attempt to study the community’s relations with the ‘world outside’.

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18 J. Gascou, *P. Sotb. II* 69, p. 81.


The Bawit dossier is made up of hundreds of texts on papyri and ostraca written mostly in Coptic. Greek documents make up ca. ten percent of the dossier and date mainly from the sixth century; the majority of them are loan contracts concluded between monks and villagers from various locations in the Hermopolite nome, among which we find both ‘standard’ money loans and the so-called sales on future delivery. Loan contracts are found also among Coptic documents from Bawit; the monks’ counterparts in these texts are both laymen and other monks. Other legal deeds include a sale of land to the monastery by the representatives of the village Poraheu (P. Mon. Apollo 24 = P. Hermitage Copt. 7), a renunciation of property by Isak, a monk of Apa Apollo, addressed to the dikaion of the monastery (P. Mon. Apollo 25 = SB Kopt. I 49), and a lease of monastery-owned land to two monks of Apa Apollo (P. Mon. Apollo 26 = P. Hermitage Copt. 3). The dossier includes also a seventh-century guarantee for beehives (P. Mon. Apollo 50 = SB Kopt. I 52), which sheds some light on the way the monastery was dealing with providing necessary services (in this case a layperson is charged with the care of bees most probably belonging to the monastery).

Legal deeds are heavily outnumbered in the dossier by administrative documents of various types (lists, accounts, and short texts representing characteristic types; see below). Other important subgroup is constituted by texts related to fiscal matters. The dossier has also preserved several letters, which, despite interpretational problems inherent to this category of documents, reveal many interesting details concerning the everyday functioning of the monastery.

21 See Appendix 3 in P. Mon. Apollo. On the proportion of linguistic components in the dossier, see Schenke, P. Köln ägypt. II, p. 2, with n. 6; see also Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 20), p. 215.


23 The Bawit epistolary dossier includes: P. Mon. Apollo 16 (letter mentioning tithe collections; 7th century); P. Mon. Apollo 56 (letter to a topoteretes, most probably a local official of unknown standing; 8th century); P. Mon. Apollo 57 (letter mentioning expenses; 7th–8th century); P. Bawit Clackson 73 (letter mentioning a chartularius; 8th century); P. Bawit Clackson 74 (letter to a prominent member of the Bawit community; 8th century); P. Bawit Clackson 79 (letter to a superior; 8th century); P. Bawit Clackson 80 (fragmentary end of a letter; 8th century); P. Bawit Clackson 81 (letter...
The Bawit dossier contains a number of subgroups of documents, distinguished by their form, subject, or both. These subgroups are: texts related to the collection of *aparche*, the so-called ωνεα ostraca: Coptic waybills for various goods, mainly wine and wheat; and two types of orders issued by monastic superiors: Coptic texts beginning with the formula πενεικυτ πετερα (translated as ‘it is our father who writes’), and bilingual (Greek and Coptic) orders of payment. While the *aparche*-related documents are more extensive texts modelled on legal deeds, the ωνεα ostraca and the orders of payment are brief and provide only cursory information. These groups of documents are numerous and shed light on various aspects of the monastery’s economy.

The *aparche*-related documents, dated to the seventh–eighth century, proved so far to be the most controversial texts of the Bawit dossier. In the majority of cases they assume the form of an agreement in which individuals—monks of the monastery of Apa Apollo—agree on the collection of *aparche* and sums of money from localities determined in the text. The *aparche* dossier is composed mostly of texts representing two categories distinguished by their first editor, Sarah J. Clackson: ‘tithe collection guarantees’ (*P. Mon. Apollo* 1–7) and ‘tithe collection contracts’ (*P. Mon. Apollo* 8–14). Four recently published guarantees from the Cologne collection (*P. Köln ägypt. II* 30–33) can now be added to the dossier.

mentioning travel and economic transactions; 8th century); *P. Bawit Clackson* 82 (fragmentary letter in Greek; 7th century); *P. Bawit Clackson* 86, 87, 88, 89, 90 (fragmentarily preserved letters dated to the 8th century); *P. Mich. Capt.* 14 (letter concerning provision of animals for the *saqija* belonging to a high-ranking official; 8th century); P. Heidelberg K.98 (letter concerning transport of a considerable amount of wheat to the monastery; see H. Förster, ‘Der vergessliche Mönch und die Fürsorge. Edition von P. Heidelberg K.98’, *JCS* 11 [2009], pp. 139–150, attributed to the Bawit dossier in A. Delattre, ‘P.Heid. inv. K. 98’ [cit. n. 19]); *P. Köln X* 426 (letter of a village scribe; 7th–8th c.); *P. Köln X* 427 (letter of Picou from Terot in the Hermopolite nome; 7th–8th c.); *P. Köln ägypt. II* 39 (letter to the archimandrite George; 8th c.); *P. Köln ägypt. II* 40 (letter of Isaac to George, proestos and archimandrite; 8th c.); *P. Köln ägypt. II* 41 (Apa Pamoun to Apa Enoch; 8th c.); *P. Köln ägypt. II* 42 (Makare to Patermoute and Joseph; 8th c.); *P. Köln ägypt. II* 43 (Apa Joseph to Apa Phoibhammon on village administration; 8th c.). See also *P. Louvre Bawit* 38–61, the majority of which are only fragmentarily preserved. All dates have been established based on palaeographic criteria.

The meaning of the term *aparche* and the discussion that surrounds it are addressed in more detail below (see p. 160, n. 28).

Orders of payment as a separate group of documents have been distinguished and studied by Alain Delattre; see the section on orders of payment in *P. Brusc. Bawit*, pp. 159–225 (nos. 4–27) and Delattre, ‘Ordres de paiement bilingues’ (cit. n. 19).

In ‘tithe collection guarantees’, a monk of the monastery of Apa Apollo acknowledges to his fellow monk(s) the fact of receiving from them the responsibility for the collection of payments from a particular place. The second category includes cases where a monk cedes his responsibility for collecting payments to another monk. On these categories, see G. Schenke, ‘Monastic control’ (cit. n. 20); see also eadem, *P. Köln ägypt. II*, pp. 48–49.

*P. Mon. Apollo* 15 was too badly preserved to determine the type of the document; it has been published as ‘tithe collection contract/guarantee’. Only two of *aparche*-related documents published until now are not agreements: *P. Mon. Apollo* 16 (letter from a monk named Makare to his fellow monks, Apollo and Anoup, mentioning *aparche* collection in the region of Pousiris) and *P. Mon. Apollo* 17 (letter of introduction for an *aparche* collector addressed to a village representative by a certain Theodoros, a representative of the monastery of Apa Apollon). See also *P. Louvre Bawit* 47, another letter of introduction, perhaps for an *aparche* collector, with formulae analogous to those in *P. Mon. Apollo* 17.
Monks undertaking the collection of *aparche* were also responsible for other payments, called *pactum* or *demosion* in the texts. Both words appear interchangeably in the clauses describing the monks’ scope of responsibility and refer respectively to rent or land-tax due from the plots of land in the localities the monks received or ceded as their ‘assignments’. The interchangeability may suggest that what was meant here was in fact land-tax for monastic plots paid with money collected as rents.\(^{27}\) The plots in question belonged most probably to the monastery and were leased out to lay tenants (see below, p. 220). The third term, *aparche*, literally meaning ‘first fruit’, was variously interpreted since the appearance of the texts in scholarly discussion. The currently accepted interpretation sees in it an additional payment due by tenants of monastic land besides their rent. Sarah Clackson’s translation of *aparche* as ‘tithe’ has been abandoned in more recent publications, as the strong suggestion that the payment in question constituted one-tenth of agricultural produce it contains is now thought to cause unnecessary confusion.\(^{28}\)

The so-called *ⲧⲓⲬⲛⲡ ⲧⲱⲧⲓَا* ostraca form a very numerous group. They were brief notes composed by members of monastic administration according to patterns which could vary, probably depending on the person who drew up the document. *ⲧⲓⲬⲛⲡ ⲧⲱⲧⲓَا*, the usual opening formula of these texts, is translated as ‘inquire for’, ‘seek after’, or, in French, ‘faire rentrer’ and refers to various goods—predominantly wine and grain, but also fish sauce (*tariche*), onions, and herbs—that were transported to the monastery from various locations (some of them clearly specialised in particular commodity, e.g. Pmanle, mentioned in several ostraca published in *O. Bawit* as the place of provenance of wine). The *ⲧⲓⲬⲛⲡ ⲧⲱⲧⲓَا* texts were essentially waybills; in their most comprehensive form they stated the date of transport (day of the month, sometimes indictional year), the product and its amount (sometimes expressed in two corresponding units), place of provenance of the product, the person responsible for the transport, and the number of transport called *phora*. The documents could be used later by monastic administration to compile lists of products delivered to the monastery, such as *O. Bawit* 73 and *P. Louvre Bawit* 28: two wine accounts.


\(^{28}\) Clackson translated *aparche* as ‘tithe’ and believed that this payment was the only one collected by the monks, and that it was supposed to encompass money due as *pactum* or *demosion* (see *P. Mon. Apollo*, p. 18; see also S. J. Clackson, ‘Archimandrites and andrismos: a preliminary survey of taxation at Bawit’, [in:] *Pap.Congr. XXIII*, pp. 103–107, esp. p. 106). Ewa Wipszycka’s interpretation of the term changed over time; first, she proposed to see in *aparche* an actual ‘first-fruit’ offering collected by monks; later on, she suggested that *aparche* was simply a payment made to the monastery in addition to ‘rent-tax’ (see Wipszycka, ‘Le fonctionnement’ [cit. n. 20], pp. 179–186; Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés*, pp. 559–561; Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, pp. 205–206. See also T. S. Richter, ‘The cultivation of monastic estates in late antique and early Islamic Egypt. Some evidence from Coptic land leases and related documents’, [in] *P. Clackson*, pp. 205–215, esp. pp. 210–212; Delattre, *P. Brux. Bawit*, pp. 96–97.
mentioning numbers of successive phorai and individuals responsible for the transports. They are dated to the seventh–eighth centuries.

Another ‘signature group’ of the Bawit dossier are documents beginning with the formula $\text{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ \text{ⲡⲉⲧⲥ \text{ⲁⲓ}}$, ‘it is our/the father who writes’. The texts were orders and instructions issued by high-ranking members of monastic administration—sometimes signing the documents with their names, sometimes remaining anonymous—to their subordinates. In most of the documents, the recipients are requested to provide various individuals with commodities and products, perhaps as a payment for work for the monastery. Many of the texts pertain to issues connected with poll-tax; these examples, addressed to the group of monastic functionaries called ‘brothers of the poll-tax’, are mainly the superiors’ instructions how to proceed in special situations (e.g. tax exemption or the necessity to exchange a contribution in kind into money required for the payment). One of the major problems connected with this category of documents is the identity of their issuer(s). Since the moment when these documents entered scholarly discourse, the opening formula $\text{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ \text{ⲡⲉⲧⲥ \text{ⲁⲓ}}$ was interpreted as an indication that the orders were written in the office of the Bawit archimandrite himself; this view has been recently challenged by Gesa Schenke, who wants to see the issuers of the documents as heads of administrative subdivisions of the monastery. Schenke’s argument is based on the following points: 1) the opening word $\text{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ}$, literally ‘our father’ does not have to refer to the father, that is, the head of the whole community, but can be used in the same manner as $\text{ⲡⲁⲛⲟⲛ}$, literally ‘my brother’, which in Bawit and other monasteries was used to express monastic affiliation of a person and understood simply as ‘brother’, that is, a monk; in an analogous manner, $\text{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ}$ would mean ‘a superior’; 2) some of the superiors attested in $\text{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ}$ documents are otherwise unattested as archimandrites; 3) the sequence of issuers as reconstructed from indictional years mentioned in the documents suggests their suspiciously short tenures; if the documents form a series from one indiction cycle, some tenures would even overlap; 4) the signatories of the documents consistently address matters pertaining to

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29 The edited part of the $\text{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ \text{ⲡⲉⲧⲥ \text{ⲁⲓ}}$ dossier is composed of seventy-one texts prepared for publication by Sarah J. Clackson ($P. \text{Bawit Clackson}$ 1–71); three or four documents from the Brussels collection investigated by Alain Delattre ($P. \text{Brux. Bawit}$ 1–3, 48?); P. Palau Rib. inv. 352 (see M. J. Albarrán Martinez, ‘A new Coptic text from Bawit: P. Palau Rib. inv. 352’, [in] Pop.Congr. XXVI, pp. 7–10; P. Duk. Inv. 259; P. Duk. Inv. 1053 verso (both edited by Delattre, ‘Deux ordres’ [cit. n. 19]). For a brief description of this documentary type, and the differences between the $\text{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ}$ orders and the so-called ‘orders of payment’, see Delattre, ‘L’administration de Baouît’ (cit. n. 20), pp. 392–393.

30 The largest group of documents of this kind was prepared for publication by Sarah J. Clackson; they were gathered in the posthumously edited volume $P. \text{Bawit Clackson}$. The group includes: $P. \text{Bawit Clackson}$ 1, 4, 6, 14 (poll-tax receipts or orders to issue them); $P. \text{Bawit Clackson}$ 3, 5, 9, 10 (waivers of poll-tax liability); $P. \text{Bawit Clackson}$ 11 and 12 (order to delay demand for andirimos and order to sell rugs delivered as a poll-tax contribution). For general remarks on the documents, see the introduction to $P. \text{Bawit Clackson}$, and Delattre, ‘L’administration de Baouît’ (cit. n. 20).

31 P. Köln ägypt. II, pp. 7–14; see also Schenke, ‘Micro- and macro-management’ (cit. n. 20).
certain spheres of activity, which may correspond to their fields of responsibility (e.g. Keri writes usually to the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’; Daniel is concerned with food orders; Georgios deals with distribution of grain and vegetables). As for the third point, the short tenures of the superiors—people who could attain their elevated position at a late age, after years of monastic career—do not come as a surprise. Moreover, the documents show that at least some among the superiors—Keri among them—did not hold their functions for life (see below, p. 166, n. 48). The consistency with which some of the signatories address particular matters is only apparent: Keri’s dossier contains an order to distribute fish sauce to some monks (P. Köln ägypt. II 21), while Daniel addresses the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ in connection with a clearly fiscal matter (P. Bawit Clackson 14). On the other hand, I am convinced that Schenke’s understanding of the title ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ is acceptable. The argument that not all the signatories of ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲧⲥ ⲡⲓⲧ documents are otherwise attested as archimandrites is less compelling. First, we cannot be sure that other documents—papyri and inscriptions—record all the heads of the monastery; second, as the title of archimandrite was bestowed by the bishop as a mark of recognition of monastic superior’s extraordinary qualities, there could be Bawit superiors who never bore the title at all (see below, p. 166) In the present state of documentation, I believe that the question should be left open to discussion; one should keep in mind that hierarchies in Late Antique monasteries were not always as rigid as our models make them appear, and managerial tasks could be shared by a number of people. The monastery was headed by a diakonia (see below, pp. 165–167)—the most probable milieu in which the documents in question were produced. Some of the documents were subscribed by particular members of the ‘managerial panel’ (including the superior himself), while others were not (we also need to take into account a considerable number of ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲧⲥ documents without any subscription). What is important from the point of view of the present argument is the degree of control over the fiscal matters and the flow of goods through the monastery exerted by the monastic management.

Finally, the Bawit dossier contains around forty eighth-century bilingual orders of payment. The texts were issued by members of monastic administration (e.g. oikonomoi) and contain information on products (mostly wine and foodstuffs) destined for various recipients, both monks and laypeople. Their particularity consists in the fact that, unlike in the ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲱⲧ ⲡⲉⲧⲥ documents, all information apart from the names of beneficiaries is conveyed in Greek.

These four groups of documents are not only the most characteristic, but also the most numerous in the Bawit dossier; other types are worse represented. What may strike us while looking

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at the dossier is the fact that despite numerous indirect indications that the monastery possessed extensive tracts of land in the Hermopolite nome and perhaps in other locations, testimonies of land leasing more direct than the aparche-related documents are limited to P. Mon. Apollo 26 and P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (6a) verso. However, it must be logically assumed that such documents, drawn up on behalf of the whole community, did exist.

Besides the documents belonging to the four characteristic groups discussed above, the Bawit dossier includes also other administrative texts, mostly lists and accounts. They record incomes of the monastery, products dues as payments to various people working for the community, or list the monastery’s properties. Some of them, like the aforementioned O. Bawit 73 and P. Louvre Bawit 28, perhaps provide a link between minor documents and more extensive lists. In her recent article, Gesa Schenke has underscored the ‘estate-like’ character of the monastery at Bawit as seen through the prism of its documentary dossier. While the Bawit dossier is in many respects different from, and even incomparable to, earlier collections of texts such as the Apionic archive or the papers of comes Ammonios, also discussed in this dissertation, it still reflects the workings of a considerably large rural enterprise.

Therefore, the perspective from which the dossier will be regarded in the present chapter is somewhat similar to that adopted in the case of Apions and comes Ammonios. In these two sixth-century dossiers I was searching for traces of the presence of monastic institutions in the everyday functioning of great estates; here, I will do the same with laypeople. The task will prove much more difficult, though, and the results will in many respects be less conclusive. Our understanding of

33 See Delattre, Pilette & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 40–42.
34 P. Bruc. Bawit 28 (list of payments in money and wheat; 7th–8th c.); P. Bruc. Bawit 29 (poorly preserved account of wheat and money; 7th c.); P. Bruc. Bawit 30 (poorly preserved account of wine; 7th–8th c.); P. Bruc. Bawit 31 (account of embole wheat from various locations; 7th–8th c.); P. Bruc. Bawit 32 (list of items; 7th–8th c.); P. Bruc. Bawit 33 (list of names; 8th c.); P. Mon. Apollo 45, 46, 48 (wine accounts; 8th century); P. Mon. Apollo 27 (list of pactum payments); P. Bawit Clarkson 85 (list of payments; 8th century); P. Med. Copto inv. 76.22 (= SB Kopt. II 1031; an account listing people and amounts of fish, measured in lakoots; 7th–8th c.; see S. Pernigotti, ‘I pipari copti della Università Cattolica di Milano’, Aegyptus 65 [1985], pp. 67–105, esp. pp. 97–101); SB Kopt. II 1044–1046 (lists of names; 8th c.); SB Kopt. II 1047 (list of sheep; 8th c.); O. Bawit 71 (an account listing people and amounts of wine analogous to P. Med. Copto inv. 76.22; 8th c.); O. Bawit 72 (wine account; 8th c.); O. Bawit 73 (notice of deliveries, phorai, and people responsible for them; 8th c.); O. Bawit 74 (list of transports of wine from the topoi of Nohe; 8th c.); O. Bawit 75 (list of recipients of wine; 8th c.); O. Bawit 76 (very fragmentary account of unknown character; 8th c.); O. Bawit 77 (list of wine transporters; 8th c.); O. Bawit 79 (list of recipients of wine; 8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 25, 26, and 27 (very fragmentary accounts of money, and money and wine; 7th–8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 28 (account of wine analogous to O. Bawit 73; 7th–8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 29 (list of topoi; 7th–8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 30 (list of eposokia and choroi; 7th–8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 31 (list of names/account; 7th–8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 32 (account of money; 8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 33 (list of products; 8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 34 (list of utensils; 7th–8th c.); P. Louvre Bawit 35–37 (very fragmentary lists or accounts; 7th–8th c.); P. Duk. inv. 445 (list of properties; 7th–8th c.; see Delattre, ‘Une liste’ [cit. n. 19]); P. Lond. Copt. I 1130 (= SB Kopt. IV 1780; bilingual document containing a letter—order of payment of wine to various persons—and a list of wine disbursements; 7th–8th c.; see Delattre, ‘La traduction’ [cit. n. 20]).
some phenomena recorded in the Bawit dossier is obscured not only by the poor state of preservation of many of its documents, but also by a somewhat vague or cursory manner in which the texts are formulated. Finally, the problem of datation is not without significance: very few of the texts provide absolute dates; the majority are dated only by indiction and/or based on palaeographic criteria. In the absence of absolute chronology, we cannot attempt building a reliable diachronic picture of the community’s relations with laypeople.

Before I proceed to my analysis of the relations of the monastic community at Bawit with ‘the world outside’, I owe the reader a brief explanation of the organisational, administrative and economic setting in which these relations were established and maintained. I will also try to elucidate some of the aspects of documentary formularies of the Bawit dossier which cause problems for our interpretation of the documents. In the following section I will rely on earlier scholarship on the subject, while also focusing on aspects which I consider especially important, yet somewhat marginal in the existing studies.

2. The setting: community structures and property organisation

A detailed study of the organisation and administration of Apa Apollo community based on documentary material is to be found in Alain Delattre’s introduction to the publication of Bawit papyri from the Brussels collection. Delattre’s study remains the most comprehensive overview of the community; some points, however, need emphasis as especially relevant to the subject of the present argument.

Considering the type of monastic community at Bawit, Delattre concludes, taking as the point of departure literary texts, documentary material, and archaeological remains: ‘Dans une perspective historique, on peut proposer que le monastère aurait été au départ une fondation semi-anachorétique […] qui se serait ensuite développée en *coenobium*, tout en gardant quelques caractéristiques anachorétiques’. Delattre and other scholars have especially emphasised the fact that the monks of the community of Apa Apollo were allowed to possess their own assets (as reflected, e.g., in numerous private loan contracts concluded within the community or between monks and laymen).

Archaeological sources shed light on some elements of the monastic organisation. The problem with their interpretation consists in our inability to estimate in a plausible manner how many of the structures on the *kom* at Bawit were in operation at any given moment. As already said, only a small number of structures have been explored by archaeologists, while the existence of others was revealed only thanks to geophysical search, which, however useful for determining the total surface of built space and verifying the position of previously excavated buildings, does not allow to date the structures. In this way, the possibilities of reconstructing spatial organisation of the monastery in different periods of its existence are significantly limited. Peter Grossmann, who studied differences between various types of monastic communities as reflected in their spatial layout, has concluded that the community of Apa Apollo was characterised by a ‘semi-idiörrhytmische Lebensweise’. The discovery of individual monastic dwellings, some of which were provided with kitchens, reflects a certain degree of autonomy of small groups of monks within the community in the sixth–eighth centuries. However, this picture is further nuanced by the results of the recent survey of the monastic agglomeration on the plateau west of the *kom*. These late-seventh- and early-eighth-century installations did not have facilities which would allow them to function in the long run without support from the monastic centre on the *kom*. The life of the community was therefore a mixture of independence and necessary collaboration, the modalities of which depended perhaps on material capacities of individuals, but also on their personal choices.

On the other hand, from the very beginning of the studies in Bawit documentation, much emphasis has been put on centralisation of monastic management, which resembled the system encountered in coenobitic communities such as the Pachomian congregation. But the existence of a centralised administration does not translate inevitably into coenobitic character of an institution. A large community, endowed with considerable assets and active in local economy, could develop an advanced management system while retaining elements of loose organisation.

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38 Hence also the problem with estimating the community’s size. ‘Several thousands’ of monks proposed by Gesa Schenke (*Köln ägypt. II*, p. 6) after Alain Delattre (*Bruc. Bawit*, p. 55 with n. 139) are certainly an exaggeration. Some estimations have been proposed by Ewa Wipszycka for the Hermopolite community of Apa Apollo mentioned in *HM 8* (Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés*, pp. 430–432); the author, however, refrains from a straightforward identification of this institution with the remains of the monastery at Bawit, given the chronological gap between the account of *HM* and the archaeological remains, dated to the 6th–8th century.


40 See Marchand, Marouard et alii, ‘Survey du monastère’ (cit. n. 1).

41 See *Bruc. Bawit*, pp. 63 and 77, n. 247.

42 See above, Chapter 3, pp. 123 on the organisation of the monastery at Deir el-Naqlun in the sixth–seventh centuries. In the case of Naqlun we are dealing with a semi-anchoritic community centred around an economic and ecclesiastic hub, which developed structures and functions focused on management and the care for material goods belonging to it.
The Bawit administration was complex, multi-layered, and included numerous representatives and executives. Apart from the central ‘administrative panel’, the diakonia, endowed with dikaion, frequently translated as ‘legal personality’, our documentation shows also administrators of particular units of the monastery, e.g. its churches, or ‘cells’ (τοποί)—smaller subdivisions grouping monks who lived (and probably also worked) together. ‘Fathers’ are attested also for other units of the monastery, both in papyri and inscriptions (‘father of the diakonia’; ‘father of the field’; ‘father of the cemetery’).

The monastery’s head exercised control over finances and management of the monastery, but also intervened on behalf of laypeople. Numerous Bawit superiors are attested with the honorific title of archimandrite; on the other hand, our documentation reveals a variety of designations applied to the community superior (προέτου ιερημος; πενειωτ; πενειωτ). The title of prœstos is not very frequent and the exact function of its bearers is unclear. What we know for sure is that the function was not necessarily held for one’s lifetime, as indicated by P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. Inv. M662 B (23b), which lists two ex-prœstotes (l. 2: ἐγεραι παποπροεστως; l. 21: ἀνοηγη παποπροεστως). The circle of top-ranking members of the monastery centred around

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43 See E. Wipszycka, s.v. ‘Diakonia’, [in:] CE; eadem, s.v. ‘Dikaion’, [in:] CE. See also A. Steinwenter,‘Die Rechtsstellung der Kirchen und Klöster nach den Papyri’, Zeitschrift der Savigny Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Kanonistische Abteilung 50 (1930), pp. 1–50, esp. pp. 31–34. The monastery’s diakonia is mentioned in the following documents: P. Mon. Apollo 1, l. 6; P. Mon. Apollo 3, l. 13 (?); P. Mon. Apollo 22, l. 2; P. Bawit Clackson 60, l. 2; P. Bawit Clackson 79, l. 3; P. Köln ägypt. II 30, l. 7; P. Köln ägypt. II 32, l. 5–6. Dikaion is attested in P. Mon. Apollo 25, l. 1; P. Mon. Apollo 26, l. 2; [P. Mon. Apollo 37, l. 12 of fragm. 1; reconstructed]; P. Mon. Apollo 38, l. 1; P. Mon. Apollo 56, l. 3; P. Mon. Apollo 59b, l. 1; P. Mon. Apollo 60, l. 2 (the last three texts are badly preserved fragments of scribal exercises); P. Köln ägypt. II 38, l. 6.

44 These ‘cells’ had at their head a representative called ‘the father of the cell’ (προετου ιερημος). See P. Mon. Apollo, pp. 29–30; P. Brux. Bawit, pp. 68–69, with n. 208 (numerous epigraphic attestations). Delattre invokes here an analogy with the Pachomian oikoi. In papyromatological material the title is attested in P. Mon. Apollo 51, l. x+8. An unpublished text from the Ismailia Museum mentioned by Sarah Clackson (P. Mon. Apollo, pp. 18 and 29) attests to the existence of a separate diakonia of a cell, mentioning ‘the father of the diakonia of the cell’ (ἐντὸς ηδιακονίας της).


46 See P. Köln ägypt. II 40, a letter from Isak from Telke to ‘the beloved in the Lord father apa Georgios, prœstos and archimandrite’ (l. 1–2: ἐπιμνηστ ἄξοις ἵπτω […] ἀλ γρηγορίος προεστὸς ἵπτω παρακαλῶ). The archimandrite appears to have helped Isak in some difficulties, but the details of the situation remain obscure.

47 For a discussion of these designations, see P. Brux. Bawit, pp. 67–67, and, more recently, Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 20), pp. 215–217. For the title of archimandrite, see E. Wipszycka, s.v. ‘Archimandrite’, [in:] CE; Wipszycka, Moeurs et communautés, pp. 329–331. Contrary to Delattre’s statement in P. Brux. Bawit, p. 67, it was used not only for heads of large monasteries (cf. the otherwise unknown community of Apa Hierax in the Oxyrhynchite nome, represented by Ioannes, deacon and archimandrite in P. Oxy. LI 3640).

48 For the attestations of Bawit prœstotes, see Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 20), pp. 215–216, with notes (esp. n. 14, where Delattre quotes an inscription on a wooden lintel mentioning, side by side, a prœstos and a ‘father of the topoi’, which indicates that they were two separate functions). P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. Inv. M662 B (23b) is a register of unknown purpose, listing men with their patronyms or profession statements, clerics, and monastic functionaries; see Delattre, Pilette & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 45–51. The editors inform, in note to l. 2 of the papyrus, that the designation παποπροεστως appears in an inedited papyrus P. Palau-Ribes Inv. 367, l. 5 in connection with Keri, whom we find as signatory in numerous πενειωτ documents (see below, p. 162).
the superior constituted the Bawit diakonia, described by Alain Delattre as a ‘bureau of economic affairs’. It included administrative functionaries and scribes among its members. Their responsibilities encompassed the management and supervision of the community’s assets. This group could include also the representatives of particular monastic units that are attested to have had their own ‘managerial panels’.

The competences of monastic administrators as reflected in the documentation encompassed the control over incomes and expenses of the community. Monastic representatives, however, played also other roles: they were dealing with state officials and representatives of local villages, and were sometimes addressed by laypeople seeking help and protection. In the following argument, I intend to explore various facets of the monastic representatives’ social roles. In local networks of relations, the monastery, through its representatives, acted as landowner, employer, taxpayer, patron, and (business) partner; some of the contacts attested in our documents, however, escape this somewhat rigid classification. Many of these capacities developed as a direct result of the economic activities of the monastery, which, unsurprisingly, were connected chiefly with landowning and agricultural production. Therefore, a quick glance at the monastic estate and its composition may be useful for a better understanding of the background of the relations we want to investigate.

We are, unfortunately, unable to determine how much land the monastery or its monks possessed. As for the manner of property acquisition, it is surmised that donations (inter vivos or testamentary bequests) would have been the main source of landed property. The monastery could also buy land; unfortunately, no document attesting to this kind of transaction on community level has been

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49 P. Brux. Bawit, p. 76.
50 P. Brux. Bawit, p. 67 (proestos) and 68 (oikonomos). At Bawit, if a proestos was granted the title of archimandrite, both designations could appear in a document (cf. Georgios, the proestos and archimandrite in P. Köln ägypt. II 40); proestotes with no additional titles are also attested (P. Bawit Clackson 22, l. 1: πρεσβυοικονόμος; P. Mon. Apollo 24, l. 3: οικονόμος προχειρότητος). Oikonomoi are mentioned in a number of Bawit documents in various capacities, most often in connection with payments, disbursements or services (also to Arab officials; see below, pp. 188–190). See P. Mich. Copt. 14; P. CrYBR inv. 1767 [Delattre, ‘Une lettre copte’ (cit. n. 19)]; P. Bawit 13, 19, 22, 27, 44; P. Hermitage Copt. 16; P. Köln ägypt. II 21. This function appears sometimes together with the ecclesiastic title of presbyter (see Delattre, P. Brux. Bawit, p. 175; connection attested in P. CrYBR inv. 1767; P. Brux. Bawit 27; P. Hermitage Copt. 16).
51 An overview of the monastery’s economic activities is found in P. Brux. Bawit, pp. 77–104, with a discussion of the monastery’s sources of revenue and expenditures. In the present argument, I will focus rather on some organisational issues connected with the monastic estate.
identified and published in connection with Bawit. Purchase of land from villagers is, however, attested indirectly in P. Mon. Apollo 26, mentioning in ll. 5–6 ‘eight waterless arouras from the fields of the small meadow which you [i.e. the archimandrite of the monastery acting on its behalf—[JW] have exchanged with the men of Senesla’ (Ἠγγονεψ Μεστεράχα Χαθούρ Χε Μεγάρ Οικογενεί ου Χε Χαθούρριος Σίνεσλα)."

Not only the scale of monastic landholdings, but also the exact positions of the plots cannot be determined based on the documentation, even though our texts abound in toponyms: fields described according to a particular nomenclature (see below), and villages. Thanks to cross-referencing some of these toponyms with documents from outside the dossier, we can at least say that a large number of them can be connected with the Hermopolite nome, and more precisely, its southern part.

As far as we can see in our sources, the land in the Hermopolite nome was held mainly by non-aristocratic landowners and lower aristocracy, incapable of controlling the village landscape to such extent as, e.g., the Apions did in the sixth-century Oxyrhynchite. It is thus among lower

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53 P. Mon. Apollo 24 cannot be treated as a certain attestation of such transaction. This deed of sale is addressed by the village community of Poraheu to ‘the scribe/master Athanase, (the) proestos of the monastery of Apa Apollo’. S. J. Clackson treated Athanase as a representative of the monastery; Ewa Wipszycka refrains from conclusions, stating that due to the lack of explicit information we cannot be certain that Athanase acts in the name of the community and not his own. Alain Delattre shares her doubts (P. Bruc. Bawit, p. 79 with n. 257). See Wipszycka, ‘Le fonctionnement interne’ (cit. n. 20), p. 172: ‘Si, dans un acte, une des parties est le proestos ou l’oikonomos d’un monastère, ce fait ne suffira pas, par lui-même, à nous donner la certitude que l’acte concerne des affaires économiques de la communauté prise dans son ensemble’, and 173: ‘Dans les cas où les documents en question ne mentionnent ni le dikaion, ni la diakonia, ni le titre d’un fonctionnaire monastique comme représentant de la communauté, il y a lieu, en principe, de penser que l’affaire dont il s’agit dans le texte donné, concerne un moine en tant qu’individu’. Monastic representation is explicitly stated in other texts from Bawit: P. Mon. Apollo 25, ll. 1–2: ‘to the dikaion of the monastery of the topos of Apa Apollo through the God-loving holy father Apa Daniel, the archimandrite and father of the topos’ (νηδακιών Φηνοναςτηρίων οικουμος ου δοξονω Βαρτός Φηνοναςτηρίων οικουμος ου δοξονω νηδακιών ου δοξονω Βαρτός). The formula opening P. Mon. Apollo 24 resembles rather the formulations encountered in private loan contracts between monks or between monks and laymen. Titles and functions appear as additional elements of identification in private documents in the Bawit dossier (P. Amst. I 47 and 48 [6th c.]), two sales on delivery concluded by laymen with the archimandrite Serenos; P. Mon. Apollo 41, loan contract between Enoch from the topos of Apa Apollo and ‘scribe Hor, the monk of this same topos’, and outside it (P. Nagl. II 11, loan contract concluded by a layman with apa Neilos, proestos of Pyrgos and of St Phoibammon).

54 Λάλαλος in Coptic contracts refers to the deed of sale (see commentary ad loc in P. Mon. Apollo). For documentary references, see Förster, Wörterbuch, s.v.

aristocracy and landowning villagers that we would search for the donors of landed property to the monastery, or the sellers of parcels it purchased. Monastic landed property would consist of many small parcels scattered throughout the nome, of various quality and agricultural profile (the documentation, unsurprisingly, shows the prevalence of grain and wine production). This reminds us of the structure of holdings of the Aphroditian monastery of Apa Sourous, although most probably on a larger scale (see above, Chapter 2, pp. 82–83). Land could be cultivated by the monks themselves (see below, pp. 223–225) or leased, either to monks (cf. P. Mon. Apollo 26) or laypeople. Lease contracts with laymen do not survive in our documentation, but their existence is assumed based on the dossier of the aparche-related documents (see above, p. 160 and below, p. 220). A direct attestation of lease of monastic land to a layperson is provided by P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (6a) verso, a letter from the seventh–eighth century mentioning a lay tenant, a Jew named Eilezierou.56

The details of organisation of landed property belonging the monastery are difficult to reconstruct. Documents mentioning land parcels are numerous, but the terms used in them are often ambiguous. They include such designations as ΜΑ: literally ‘place’, sometimes translated as ‘estate’; СТЕЛΔΧΕ: ‘measure’, ‘aroura’; or ΓΟΙ: ‘field’.57 Names of plots which perhaps belonged to monastic estate appear in the ΑΙΜΕ ΜΑ ostraca as places of provenance of transported products, and in registers, which, according to all probability, mention monastic property (P. Duk. inv. 445 [seventh–eighth century]; P. Brux. Bawit 31 [seventh–eighth century]). References to locations that could belong to the community are found also in the ΝΕΙΔΩΡΙΤ ΠΕΤΩΡΙΣ papyri. Among the terms referring to fields, ΜΑ was the most commonly used. It also happens to be the most confusing, as it could refer not only to toponyms, but also to monastic units connected with various artisanal activities.58


57 Cf., e.g., P. Mon. Apollo 25, l. 3: ‘Whereas I have two places’ (ΣΕΚΑΔΩΡΙΤ ΣΙΤΗ ΜΑ). P. Mon. Apollo 24, l. 4–5: ‘three good arouras of fodder and twenty-five arouras of pasture in the meadow of our settlement (ΝΕΙΔΩΡΙΤ ΝΕΣΤΑΙΡΙΟ ΜΑ ΔΟΧΙΙΙ ΝΕΣΤΑΙΡΙΟ ΜΑ ΤΟΙΟΥ ΠΑΠΡΙΚΟΙ(Ι)Ο(Η)) and P. Mon. Apollo 26, l. 5: ‘eight waterless arouras from the fields of the small meadow’ (ΝΕΙΔΩΡΙΤ ΝΕΣΤΑΙΡΙΟ ΝΕΣΤΑΙΡΙΟ ΜΑ ΤΟΙΟΥ ΠΑΠΡΙΚΟΙ ΠΑΙΩΝ). On the designations of plots of land, see generally Wipszycka, ‘Resource’, p. 203. In his recension of P. Mich. Capt. 14 (‘Une lettre copite’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 89–90), Alain Delattre translates the term ΠΟΙ as σαγία, which fits best with the contexts of the document, mentioning a team of animals needed for operating a waterwheel (on this very important document, see below, pp. 189–190). Here ΠΟΙ is equivalent to Greek μισθός, widely attested in Byzantine documents. Unfortunately, in most cases we lack context necessary to precise the character of the plot.

58 On place names constructed with the prefix ΠΗΚ ΜΑ and their possible interpretations, see S. J. Clakson in P. Bawit Clackson, introduction, pp. 11–16. Cf. P. Bawit Clackson 13 (a ΠΗΚΕΡΙΤ ΠΕΤΩΡΙΣ order), II. 1–2: ΠΗΚΕΡΙΤ ΜΑ
The clearest suggestion of how the structure of the monastic property could look like is found in *P. Bruc. Bawit 31*: a Greek list of contributions in wheat and barley destined for the *embole* of the *osia* of Koussai. The document lists places called *topoi*, and two toponyms with no additional designation: Kamoul and Timi, as well as the amount of grain expected from them as tax contribution (from 6 to 130 artabae). The designation *topos* resembles the terminology of the sixth-century Aphroditian cadastre, where plots belonging to individuals and institutions were located in various *topoi*, the majority of which had been named after their former owners. The same practice recurs in the seventh- and eighth-century documents from the same village. Since the names of all but two of the *topoi* in *P. Bruc. Bawit 31* are derived from personal names, we are most probably dealing with the same system. These plots must have been close enough to each other to be treated as parts of the same *osia*. The differences in registered contributions most probably reflect the size of the parcels.


Kamoul is otherwise unknown, while Timi appears as a *topos* in P. Duk. inv. 93 (list of payments of wheat from *topoi* and a village; l. 5: Επὶ τὸν τοπὸν Καμωτῆς (καὶ) Τρακωνῆς (καὶ) Τιμίου σιτοῦ ὑποτάσσεται διὰ τὴν Μονὴν Ἀπερί ως μοναστηρίον, ὁς (see N. Gonis, ‘Hermopolite locations and splinter nomes’, ZPE 142 [2003], pp. 176–184, esp. pp. 178–179) and in *P. Louvre Bawit 29* (l. 7: τοποῦ Δημ). It is possible that in *P. Bruc. Bawit 31* the designation *topos* is lacking due to a simple omission. Drew-Bear, *Le nom de lieu*, p. 137, treats τόπος Κάμωθος as a monastery.

60 See Gonis, ‘Hermopolite locations’, (cit. n. 60), p. 182. Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 204, commenting on *P. Bruc. Bawit 31*, hesitates about the interpretation of the term *topos* ‘It is hard to tell what the term *topos* refers to: land cultivated by a specific farmer […] or land in a given location that was cultivated by more than one farmer?’. I believe that the latter interpretation is closer to the truth.

61 The exceptions are τόπος Νέου Ἀδκοῦ in l. 6, which most probably got its name from its characteristic feature—a cistern—and τόπος ἴματος Σωφίας in l. 18, which may refer to a monastery (see *P. Bruc. Bawit*, comm. *ad loc*). In the latter case we cannot exclude, however, that we are dealing with a tract of land formerly belonging to a nun (cf. the entrepreneurial Ama Rachel in the Dioskoros archive, see above, Chapter 2, pp. 95–97). I am not thoroughly convinced that τόπος Ἰερεμίας (l. 5) should be connected with a monastic institution. Gonis ‘Hermopolite locations’ (cit. n. 60), p. 184, commentary to l. 4 of P. Duk. inv. 93 mentions the monastery of Apa Ieremias (*τοια παλιά πρεσβυτερία*) recorded in inscriptions from Bawit and *P. Mon. Apollo 19*, and suggests that a reference can be made here to ‘an area named after the monastery’. A plot of land named simply after an individual cannot be put out of question, however.
P. Duk. inv. 445 is another list of toponyms connected with the estate of Apa Apollo. The list registers two types of toponyms: preceded by ρωι (nine cases) or by ωι (five cases). One of the toponyms, ωι χωι, is not preceded by any designation; however, SB Kopt I 227 and 228 (ομια οικα ostraca) attest the form ισια ισια χωι. Just like Apa Djoi, also other toponyms mentioned in the list recur in ομια οικα ostraca—a fact that allowed the editor of the document, Alain Delattre, to establish a firm connection of the list with the monastery in Bawit. P. Duk. inv. 445 is unfortunately less informative than P. Brux. Bawit 31, as it does not seem to reflect any hierarchy of the places mentioned in it. There must have been a difference between ρωι and ωι, but it is difficult to grasp. ωι could denote larger area within which smaller sections could be distinguished (cf. P. Mon. Apollo 26, quoted in n. 57). P. Bawit Clackson 20 mentions a team of workers attached to the field (φοι) of Taparoou receiving aracus as payment (ll. 2–3: χε τι ριαρακε λειοεοι ιφοι ιταμαρογ). Other documents mention a ‘father of the field’, who most probably was a person directly responsible for cultivating monastic parcels and care of agricultural equipment (P. Bawit Clackson 52 = P. Köln IX 386, ll. 2–4: χε τι ογκλοι ιφοι ιπολλοι πιοτ ιφοι, ‘Give a field klom to Apollo the father of the field’). P. Bawit Clackson 85 lists two ‘fathers of the field’ in l. 10: ιφι πιοτ ιφοι ([…] and the father of the field’) and l. 11: ιφοι ικαρει ιφι πιοτ ιφοι ([…] of the field of Makare and the father of the field’). A monastic functionary charged with the care of a land parcel appears also in P. Mon. Apollo 25, where a plot is said to have been ‘under the supervision of Apa Phoibammon’ (for details, see below, p. 193–194). The parcel in question was artificially irrigated from a cistern; as we have seen, also the word ωι appears in connection with irrigated land (see above, p. 169, n. 57). The connection is further confirmed by P. Lond. Capt. I 1130, where the same person is mentioned in Coptic letter as ιποι ιουστε πι ιφοι (l. 10) and ἀββ(α) ἵοστε πατρ(δς) ὁρυ(του) in genitive in Greek account (l. 4). Such parcels would have required particular care, and this is perhaps why they remained under particular supervision of monastic functionaries whom we can glance in our sources.

On the other hand, no functions analogous to πιοτ ιφοι appear in connection with ισια-based toponyms, even though people associated with ισια appear in πεινουτ πετεραι documents.

63 See Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 203. The document was edited by Delattre, ‘Une liste’ (cit. n. 19).
64 Delattre, ‘Une liste’ (cit. n. 19), p. 165.
65 See Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 203: ‘Unfortunately, it cannot be determined if the difference between φοι and ισια lies in the size of the plot belonging to the monastery or if in both cases we are dealing with toponyms’.
66 For the interpretation of the term, see commentaries ad loc. in P. Köln IX and P. Bawit Clackson.
67 Both texts preserved on P. Lond. Capt. I 1130 pertain to the same situation—a disbursement of wine, most probably as a payment—and mention the same people in both languages, allowing us to observe how technical terms proper to monastic milieu at Bawit were rendered in Coptic and in Greek. See Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 20), pp. 218–221.
and in waybills.68 There are strong arguments to treat ἡκατείν as the equivalent of Greek τόπος (in any case, the semantic fields of the two words overlap).69 Such a strong, perhaps even technical meaning of the term ἡκατείν is characteristic of the Bawit documentation; ἡκατείν as a specific place designation is absent from the Wadi Sarga dossier, and the majority of attestations in P. Bal. point toward the most general meaning, ‘a place’.70

P. Louvre Bawit 30 (seventh–eighth century) seems at the first glance to complicate the picture. It is a Greek list of places supplying commodities measured in ἐθραί in the months of Meheir and Phamenoth, including ἐποίκιον of Tilot (l. 1), ἄλοχον of Ekous (l. 5), ἄλοχον of Hermitarios (l. 10), ἐποίκιον of Georgios (l. 14), ἐποίκιον of Zeilos (l. 18), ἄλοχον (?) of Issos (l. 20). Three of the locations are attested in the toparchy of Leukopyrigites Ano in the Hermopolite nome (see commentary in the edition). Both terms, ἐποίκιον and ἄλοχον, although very frequent in Byzantine and early Arab documentation in general, are encountered extremely seldom in Bawit documents.71 When they do appear, they refer to locations external in respect to the monastery: in P. Mon. Apollo 24 the council of the ἐποίκιον of Poraheu (ΤΡΙΟΝ ἩΠΟΙΚΙΟΝ(Ο) ΝΥΠΡΟΧΥ) sells land to the monastery;72 in P. Mon. Apollo 35, a loan contract between a layman and a monk of Apa Apollo, the debtor comes from the ἐποίκιον of Posh n-Telke. Nothing in the documents suggests monastic ownership of these ἐποίκιον. ἄλοχον in the Arab period designates a fiscal unit,73 it is

68 See, e.g. P. Bawit Clackson 23: a poorly preserved document of unclear content addressed by a superior to ΝΙΝΑ ΠΑΝΑΘΑΙΔΗ (ll. 1–2; ‘his son Menas of Pmanle’); P. Bawit Clackson 29: an order to supply barley, in which a superior addresses ΝΙΝΑ ΤΑΥΡΙΝΗ ΠΑΝΑΘΑΙΔΗ (ll. 1–2; ‘his son Taurine of Pmanle’); O. Bawit IFAO 49, ll. 2–3: ΡΩΘ ΜΟΝΟΣ ΠΑΝΑ ΝΙΝΑΣΙ (‘through Moses of the ΝΙΝΑ of Nesain’).
70 Only P. Bal. 186, 187, and 259 seem to use the word in a more specific manner. Cf. P. Bal. 186, ll. 25–30: πους προφοι δο νος ἐκ ομει ἐτος ἔμψει ΠΑΝΑ ΝΑΛΑ ΔΟΛΗ ΤΕΒΕ ΟΥΚΟΥΗ ΠΑΝΑ ΝΑΙΝΗΝΕΡΚΑΛΕΙ ΝΠΗΟΥ ΠΑΝΑ ΠΑΡΧΟ(ΜΗ) ΕΤΒΗΝΗ: ‘the superior is saying: I shall come south to the place of Apa Atham for some small occasion and we will beseech him to ask the archon concerning you’. Kahle (see comm. ad loc) sees in πανα ονα an individual; πανα ονα δολη would have been his dwelling place (see below, Chapter 6, p. 285, n. 59). P. Bal. 187, ll. 10–11 features ‘the place of the emir’ (i.e. pagarch), where a letter was supposed to be handed, that is, perhaps, the office of the pagarch. P. Bal. 259 is set in the context of monastic estate, but what kind of unit is meant, we do not know (l. 4: ‘For you know that the works of the place (περίψως ΝΠΗΟΥ) require to be done’).
72 For κοινοτές in Coptic documents, see A. Steinwenter, Studien zu den koptischen Rechtsurkunden aus Oberägypten (= SPP XIX), Leipzig–Hässsel 1920, pp. 52–53; idem, Das Recht der koptischen Urkunden, Munich 1955, p. 18. G. Schmelz, Kirchliche Anstifter im spätantiken Ägypten nach den Aussagen der griechischen und koptischen Papyri und ostraka (= AJP Beiheft 13), Munich 2002, pp. 307–308, with references to Greek and Coptic examples, underscores the problem with the interpretation of the term. Κοινοτες, and the similar term κοινος could designate a group of village leaders or the ensemble of inhabitants.
73 For the role of χωριον in fiscal system of Arab Egypt, see P. M. Sijpesteijn, Shaping a Muslim State: the World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official, Oxford 2013, p. 70, with n. 155 and 156, with further literature. See also J. Gascou,
therefore probable that P. Louvre Bawit 30 does not list income from monastic properties, but rather obligatory payments for the authorities. It might have been a list of requisitions drawn up in a fiscal office that ended up in the monastery in unclear circumstances.74

According to what we learn from our documents, organisation of the monastic estate appears to have been based on units called topoi in Greek and ως in Coptic. Topoi/ως could constitute parts of ousiai. The relation of other designations (posal, t epit, cteiopos) to the most frequently mentioned term ως is unclear.75 Too little is known about estate organisation at Bawit to allow us to propose, even hypothetically, what technical meaning—if any—these terms had in the documents. So far, no monastic epoikia are firmly attested in the documentation. This may only result from the chances of preservation of our material, but it is also possible that the absence of concentrated settlements belonging to the monastery is connected with the manner in which the monastery acquired its land. As other institutions of this kind known to us, the community of Apa Apollos would have benefited from donations and testamentary bequests which usually encompassed scattered plots of land in various locations, previously belonging to medium-scale landowners (cf. the pattern encountered in the Aphrodito dossier). Such plots of land could be either leased to villagers living in their immediate neighbourhood or farmed by the monks themselves, and were not extensive or concentrated enough to guarantee the existence of separate settlements of permanent agricultural workers. On the other hand, we do find individuals associated with particular toponyms (especially in the υψιος ως and ἐποικὶς ως documents); most often, however, we are at a loss as to whether they represent the Bawit monks or laymen working for the monastery, and, if the latter is true, what the conditions of their employment were.

This last issue is connected with one of the greatest challenges posed by the Bawit dossier: sifting the ‘outsiders’ from the monks. The following section is devoted exactly to problems—

74 Cf. the collection of documents associated with the monastery at Deir el-Bala‘izah, which contains a number of administrative and fiscal documents written in Greek, which cannot be connected in a satisfactory manner with the monastery. Some of these documents mention fiscal districts and administrative divisions (see below, Chapter 6, p. 268, n. 12).

75 ως is encountered twice with the toponym Kame, which is otherwise attested as ως and τόπος (see n. 213); cteiopos refers to a precise number of arourae (in P. Mon. Apollo 24 and P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (6a verso)). posal could either designate a location of a parcel (cf. P. Mon. Apollo 26), an irrigated parcel (P. Mich. Copt. 14), or a unit with its own staff and administrators (see above, p. 171). ως could also have its own staff, as attested by P. Brux. Bawit 26 and P. Duk. inv. 259.
frequently unsurmountable—one can encounter while searching the documentation for traces of relations with the outer world.

3. The people: defining identities and functions

The Bawit dossier contains hundreds of names of individuals: monastic representatives, ordinary monks, officials, people representing village communities, and common laymen. Some of them are immediately identifiable thanks to mentions of their titles and functions; in many other cases, however, we are left with little to no clue as to the standing of the individuals in question. Many persons are mentioned only by their names, while others are associated only with occupations or toponyms. In such instances, we often cannot distinguish monks from laypeople due to the lack of reliable criteria we could use.

The monks of Bawit established and maintained relations with laypeople in, roughly speaking, three different spheres: first, there were individual contacts of monks with laymen, reflected mainly in private loan contracts. Second, the documentation gives us an insight in the sphere of relations I would call official or public: contacts with state administration (chiefly within the fiscal framework) and local representatives (taking part in legal actions and other arrangements, usually resulting from economic activities). This sphere encompassed also contexts in which monastic representatives interceded with the representatives of state or local administration by virtue of their authority or economic power. The third sphere, which had a special importance in the life of the Bawit community, but unfortunately is the hardest to grasp, included the relations resulting from everyday economic activities: farming the land, transporting goods, and performing various services.

These three spheres differ in the ways their actors are presented in the documents. For the most part, private legal deeds provide us with clear information on the status of the parties involved; this is what law demanded in documents that were supposed to guarantee legal protection. Official relations between communities of monks and communities of laypeople could be reflected in legal documents in which we could hope for an easy identification of parties involved.

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76 The division is, of course, somewhat artificial, as human relations can rarely be strictly classified; in reality, the spheres of activity which provided context for investigated relations often overlapped. In the presented division this is true especially of the sphere I call here ‘official’ and the sphere of economy. I exclude from my argument contacts resulting from religious practice and performance, as the phenomena connected with pilgrimage are not encompassed by the present dissertation (see Introduction, p. 4).

77 Exceptions, however, did exist; see the newly edited Coptic loan contract of the 7th–8th c.: Delattre & Albarrán Martínez, ‘Un contrat de prêt’ (cit. n. 19), in which the status of the debtor has raised doubts of the editors.
(this, however, is not always the case; see below, p. 213). In other circumstances (e.g. in correspondence), titles by which laymen introduced themselves or were addressed by their correspondents, together with the situational context allow us to pinpoint non-monastic actors with more ease.\footnote{See, e.g. P. Mon. Apollo 17, a letter of introduction for an aparche-collector, where the requested services and expected competences of the addressee allow us to identify him as a headman of a village, or P. Mon. Apollo 56, a letter to an individual introduced as topotere, perhaps a military or administrative official. On topoterei, see C. Kunderewicz, ‘Les topotérètes dans les Novelles de Justinien et dans l’Égypte byzantine’, JUrP 14 (1962), pp. 33–50.}

The most numerous group of administrative texts related to monastic economy (our ‘third sphere’) is also the most difficult to fathom. Administrators who drew up these documents were not overly diligent in conveying in writing what must have been otherwise clear to the interested parties: the monastic or lay status of the people mentioned in the texts as recipients of payments in kind, contributors of goods and sums of money, or persons responsible for the circulation of goods. Especially in lists, accounts, and a number of \textit{oμιχ λιγα} ostraca, laymen are often indistinguishable from monks due to the absence of unequivocal status indicators. References to the individuals’ occupations do not indicate status, since we know that professionals were encountered not only in the ‘world outside’ but also in the monasteries (cf. numerous monastic builders mentioned in the inscriptions of Bawit, or Apa Phil, ἄρχων ἐλαιωργός of the monastery mentioned in the loan contract \textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 10 of 543, or representatives of various occupations in \textit{P. Lond. Copt. I} 1130).\footnote{See P. Mon. Apollo, pp. 31–32, with further references; \textit{P. Brux. Bawit}, p. 92; \textit{MIF-AO} 12, no. 12; \textit{MIF-AO} 59, nos. 100 and 348; \textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 10, ll. 6–8: Ἀπα Φῆβη (l. 8) μοναζότος (l. μονάζοντι) καὶ ἄρχον (l. ἄρχοντι) ἐλαιωργός (l. ἐλαιωργή) τοῦ ἀγίου μοναστηρίου Αββᾶ Ἀπολλόπος ἐν ὧρῃ κόμης Τιτκώς (l. Τιτκώς). \textit{P. Lond. Copt. I} 1130 lists, among others, carpenters, a symmachos, guards, smiths, and potters (see Delattre, ‘La traduction’ [cit. n. 20], table at pp. 219–220). In some communities, monks used to continue to practice trades they had learned before joining their communities.}

The same problem is valid for some of the recipients of payments in the \textit{ⲡⲉⲛⲉⲓⲧ ϡⲉⲧⲥ ϡⲁⲟ} documents which sometimes feature various professionals.\footnote{See P. Mon. Apollo, p. 25–26 with n. 131 for further reference.}

Individuals bearing Arab names (e.g. Razid/Rashid in l. 5 of \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 45; Salei/Saleh in \textit{P. Hermitage Copt.} 16 and \textit{P. Camb. UL Michael.} 1262; Amer in \textit{P. Brux. Bawit} 27) were doubtless laypeople, most probably government officials.\footnote{The documents mentioning Salei and Amer are orders of payment issued by monastic authorities (see below); for general information on these documents, see \textit{P. Brux. Bawit}, pp. 220–223; for a reedition of \textit{P. Hermitage Copt} 16} In the documents we also find designations of

\footnote{See \textit{P. Mon. Apollo}, pp. 31–32, with further references; \textit{P. Brux. Bawit}, p. 92; \textit{MIF-AO} 12, no. 12; \textit{MIF-AO} 59, nos. 100 and 348; \textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 10, ll. 6–8: Ἀπα Φῆβη (l. 8) μοναζότος (l. μονάζοντι) καὶ ἄρχον (l. ἄρχοντι) ἐλαιωργός (l. ἐλαιωργή) τοῦ ἀγίου μοναστηρίου Αββᾶ Ἀπολλόπος ἐν ὧρῃ κόμης Τιτκώς (l. Τιτκώς). \textit{P. Lond. Copt. I} 1130 lists, among others, carpenters, a symmachos, guards, smiths, and potters (see Delattre, ‘La traduction’ [cit. n. 20], table at pp. 219–220). In some communities, monks used to continue to practice trades they had learned before joining their communities.}

\footnote{The documents mentioning Salei and Amer are orders of payment issued by monastic authorities (see below); for general information on these documents, see \textit{P. Brux. Bawit}, pp. 220–223; for a reedition of \textit{P. Hermitage Copt} 16}
local functionaries (ἈΡΧΗ, ‘the headmen’) — a term frequently used in Coptic documents to describe village officials performing various administrative functions, equivalent to Greek πρωτοκωμῆται), who represented their communities in relations with monastic authorities. Other titles, such as kyrios, also refer to non-monastic individuals (e.g. P. Bawit Clackson 38: kyrios Sarapion and kyrios Iouliane; P. Köln ägypt. II 29: kyrios Mega; P. Duk. inv. 1053 verso: kyrios Petros the chrysones). Some of the functions performed by people mentioned in the documents may also point to their non-monastic status, like it is the case with symmachoi, mentioned, e.g., in P. Mon. Apollo 45 (ll. 9, 16, 19, 22). Symmachoi were usually couriers and letter-carriers and we would be tempted to regard them as laymen, but it is difficult to solve the question with any degree of certainty. Another problematic function is that of pistikos; the word means simply ‘a confidential person’, and can refer to a person in charge of requisition procedures under Arab rule. However, the mentions of pistikoi in the Bawit dossier (in ΑΡΧΗ ΝΑΑ waybills, two orders of payment, a list of payments, and a superior’s order) suggest rather their monastic affiliation. One of these documents, P. Bawit Clackson 17, mentioning ‘brothers of the pistikos’ is especially clear in this respect. Also O. Bawit 63 and O. Bawit IFAO 4 point to monastic affiliation of the individuals mentioned in them.

For a general overview, see O. Bawit 64, patholomaios pistikos; O. Bawit IF-AO 1: Petros pistikos; O. Bawit IF-AO 3: Patholomaios pistikoi (most probably identical with O. Bawit 63); O. Bawit IF-AO 4: ΠΑΧΝΗ Patholomatios pistikos; O. Bawit IF-AO 9: [...]os pistikos; O. Bawit IF-AO 11: George pistikos, SB Kopt. I 227: Petros. For a general overview, see P. Bawit 10, l. 5–6, where an Apollo pistikos is responsible for the disbursement of 2 megale of wine to cantors; P. Mon. Apollo 47, l. 2: Enoch pistikos responsible for the payment of 1 kolaliion of wine to a builder.
Other elements that can point to a person's status are the statement of his origin and the presence of patronymic. Both *nomina* and patronymics were usually dropped from names of monks in the documents. However, they were sometimes preserved in legal deeds for the sake of precision, like in an example from the Bawit dossier, SB XVI 12267 (13 VIII 540); ll. 4–5: Αἰρ[η]λίῳ Ἀπολλώτι Ὄμου μονάζοντι [μοναστηρίῳ Ἀββᾶ Ἀπολλώτος ἐν ὅρει] κώμης Τιτκώκως). Patronymics reappear in monastic contexts in the Arab period in documents issued by state administration. In most of the documents drawn up in the monastic milieu, however, the presence of a patronymic can be treated as an indication of non-monastic status, but again not without necessary reservations.

Indications of origin appear in legal documents for the lay parties, while in the case of monks reference is usually made only to their monastic affiliation (although, as always, exceptions do appear). Alain Delattre observed that places of origin are sometimes mentioned in lists drawn up by monastic administration, where they probably served to distinguish homonymous individuals within the community. Toponyms appear in connection with names in the ÓJINE NCA and NEHIAI NECTΩΛI documents, but their interpretation is fraught with difficulties.

92 See, e.g. tax demands addressed to monks of Bawit: P. Mon. Apollo 28 (Pamoun son of Paul); P. Mon. Apollo 29 (Phinouke [son of?] Apollo); and P. Mon. Apollo 30 (Apollo son of George). Interestingly, patronymics appear also in fiscal documents produced within the monastery; see the tax receipts from the Bawit dossier: SB XXVI 16788 (= P. Duk. inv. 498v): Biktor son of Psouros, monαδος; P. Lond. V 1747: Pamoun son of Onnophrios. The latter document does not designate the taxpayer as a monk, but the attribution to the Bawit dossier is certain based on the signature of the responsible, Biktor (see Delattre & Gonis, ‘Le dossier des reçus’ [cit. n. 19], p.62).
93 See the interpretation of a list of names from the Bawit dossier, P. Pierpont Morgan Libr inv. M662 B (6a recto in Delattre, Pilette, & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ [cit. n. 19], p. 42: ‘Rien n’indique clairement si nous avons affaire à des moines ou à des laïcs, mais la mention d’un père et de son fils à la l. 10 plaidue en faveur du second scénario, à moins que laïcs et moines ne soient mêlés dans cette liste’. In the very same article, however, the authors express the following opinion commenting on a register from the Bawit monastery, P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (23b), (p. 45): ‘Le système d’identification des individus est assez disparate: parfois le scribe précise le patronyme de la personne, tantôt son titre, sa profession (παπας ou son orij [introduit par ἐν]) [or origin] de la communauté monastique.’
95 Delattre, ‘Éléments de l’identification’ (cit. n. 90), p. 156–157; similarly in the case of P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (23b): Delattre, Pilette & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ (cit. n. 19), p. 45 (see above, n. 87). In some of the cases, place names do not even refer to villages, but merely to divisions of land. In such cases, we may suspect that the toponym indicates an estate unit in which given person worked (cf. SB Kopt. II 1045, a list mentioning several individuals in connection with various παπας and φοι toponyms (e.g., l. 4: ἱοδόρος ἐν παπας ἑλανκάς; l. 5: οἰκοδόμος ἐν φοι ἐκκατόριον). The status of these individuals is impossible to determine. Cf. R. Burchfield, “The
In order to analyse the role of laymen in the functioning of the Bawit community as reflected in our documents, we need to look carefully at particular attestations of individuals and their actions within their contexts. We must be aware of two serious hindrances that will reduce the conclusiveness of the search. First, as already said, uncertainty as to the status of some individuals will remain despite our sincerest efforts to identify the actors as precisely as possible. Second, the conclusions will show only general tendencies over a long period of time (the seventh–eighth centuries) but will not allow for a diachronic analysis of how the relations of Bawit monks with local communities developed in the time of transition from the Byzantine to the Arab period. The sixth-century private loan contracts, despite the abundance of information they provide, will be of little help here, as they are somewhat disconnected from the major part of the Bawit dossier, concerned as it with administrative and economic functioning on community level. I decided to treat them here all the same, as they allow at least to see the extent of the networks of individual contacts, which, I believe, can to a certain extent reflect the monastery’s sphere of local influence. These documents give also a precious insight into the monastery’s organisational structure which created conditions for establishing and maintaining a complex patchwork of contacts.

In the following section I will proceed to a detailed analysis of the testimonies, beginning with what I called the official, or public sphere of relations. Further on, I will focus on private loan contracts; last but not least, I will delve into the formidable administrative dossier of Bawit. The nature of the relations I will analyse is usually legible from the documentary context: we know whether we are in the sphere of fiscality, private business, or internal monastic administration. As already stated, the main problem in the majority of cases consists in identifying the actors and determining their roles in the relations. Guesswork will be inevitable, especially in the administrative dossier, but it is anyway necessary to go through as large a number of documents as possible in order to find at least some patterns and gain insight into the role of laymen in the functioning of the monastery at Bawit.

4. The monastery, officials, and community representatives

Both individual monks and the community as a whole were dealing with various officials: representatives of the state (Byzantine, and, throughout the majority of the period under scrutiny,
Arab), local village headmen, and other functionaries. Documents were produced in various circumstances and belonged to a wide range of types: administrative and fiscal orders, lists, protocols, legal agreements, petitions, or less formal correspondence. Fiscal matters loomed large among the subjects of these documents, but such issues as keeping the order, execution of previous arrangements, or local business affairs were also of importance.

The present section will be divided in two parts. In the first part, I will explore the documents of the Bawit dossier pertaining to relations with state representatives. Unsurprisingly, almost all of these texts are related in one way or another to fiscality issues: poll-tax paid by particular monks, taxes in kind, obligatory services, and requisitions. The second part will be focused on contacts with local village functionaries. Here also fiscal matters appeared, but other issues, connected with business or agricultural activities, were present too. Both parts will draw information from official documents of administrative or legal character, but the argument in some points will have to rest on data obtained from correspondence. Letters were exchanged between monks and officials, but a part of epistolary production concerning the public sphere belonged to internal correspondence between the members of the community. The frequency with which official contacts surface in the letters points to their importance in the everyday life of the monastery. Sometimes, however, a mere attestation of a phenomenon is all we can get from these texts, often badly preserved and notoriously vague.

4.1. Monks and officials: fiscality and services

Anyone who studied papyrological material is well aware of the fact that interactions with state officials very frequently took place in fiscal contexts. The situation did not change at all after the Arab conquest. The fiscal system was now based on four pillars: the land-tax (demasion), the grain embole, a maintenance tax called dapane, and the poll-tax (andrismos or diagrapheon). Apart from them, there were various occasional requisitions and obligatory services (e.g. naval service, or compulsory work at building sites at Fustat). A taxpayer—whether individual or institutional—had thus plenty of occasions to enter in contact with state officials responsible for the flow of money, goods, and people within the framework of the fiscal system. The monastery at Bawit and its residents were

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no exception, and this is well visible in our dossier. So far, the Bawit dossier yielded at testations of all the basic tax payments; it also attests to interesting solutions applied by the monastic administration for handling them. The documents point to the existence of at least two groups of monastic functionaries for whom taxes constituted the main concern: the *aparche*-collectors for the land-tax, and ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ for *andrismos*.

For the sake of the present argument I have—somewhat arbitrarily—created a ‘Bawit fiscal dossier’, selecting texts pertaining to various obligations of the monastery and its monks towards the state and its representatives. Among the Bawit documents, only few were produced as a result of direct contact with the officials, namely the small dossier of tax demands published by Sarah J. Clackson as *P. Mon. Apollo* 28, 29, and 30. Other documents either provide indirect testimonies of such relations, e.g. *P. Mich. Copt.* 14, which attests to correspondence with a pagarch concerning a requisition of animals, or orders to disburse various products to members of state administration issued by monastic superiors to their subordinates. Others were created in the course of administrative procedures devised to handle fiscal obligations (e.g. lists and accounts pertaining to taxes and other burdens; references to taxes in monastic correspondence; tax receipts issued by monastic representatives to monks; finally, the series of superiors’ orders addressed to the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’).

A relatively significant part of the ‘Bawit fiscal dossier’ attests to landowning-related taxes. *P. Sorb.* II 69 (618–619 or 633–634), which refers to fiscal contributions of a monastery of Apa Apollo—perhaps the one at Bawit—might be the earliest attestation of the community’s fiscal obligations. In another Greek document, this time already associated (admittedly, in an uncertain manner) with the dossier of the monastery, *P. Mon. Apollo* 27 (seventh–sixth century), the monastery of Abba Apollos is mentioned in line 11 along with other contributors—lay and ecclesiastical—of *pactum*. *P. Brux. Bawit* 31 (seventh–eighth century) mentions the *embole* of the *ousia* of Koussai. A seventh-century tax receipt from the Leiden collection, *P. Lugd. Bat.* XXV 78 issued by Daniel, whose recipient is unfortunately unknown, deals with payment of considerable...

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97 For a general overview of fiscal obligations of the monastery of Apa Apollo, see A. Delattre in *P. Bruc. Bawit*, pp. 101–104, with references to the sources.
98 On the dating of the Hermopolite fiscal register, see the introduction by Jean Gascou in *P. Sorb.* II, pp. 15–17. For the identification of the monastery, see *P. Sorb.* II 69, p. 81, and *P. Brux. Bawit*, p. 102.
99 *P. Mon. Apollo* 27, l. 11: δ(ιὰ) μοναστηρ(ίου) ἀ(ββᾶ) Ἀπολλως; the sum is unfortunately unpreserved.
100 See *P. Bruc. Bawit*, p. 102, and commentary to the document. On the *ousia* of Koussai and its subdivisions, see above, p. 170.
sums in gold and wheat (thirty-four gold solidi and eighty artabae respectively). The wheat mentioned in the document (l. 2: ὁμωδόσιον τὸν ἄρταβ(νς) μὲ(τρο) τοῦ Θε( ) ὁ(μου) γ(τος) το(υ) ἀρ(ταβα) π) could be destined for embole. The large amounts of both contributions (in cash and in wheat) suggest that there had been more than one contributor, or that the contribution was due from a division of monastic property rather than an individual (cf. the amounts of wheat destined for embole in P. Brux. Bawit 31).

These documents, however valuable for the general picture of Bawit fiscality, do not inform us about the manner of collection of the taxes. Other documents, however, help us understand how the community dealt with fiscal obligations due from the land it possessed.

Fiscality lay at the basis of a system that can be glanced through the aparche-collection documents (see above, pp. 159–160). Let us focus on the fiscal aspect of the aparche-related texts. In these documents, aparche is an addition to another contribution which was supposed to serve as a payment for the monastery’s pactum or demission; Jean Gascou’s term ‘rente-impôt’ is probably most convenient for describing the nature of this payment. Gesa Schenke has observed that the monks of Apa Apollo who assumed the responsibility to collect money for the ‘rent-tax’ acted after the manner of tax-collectors. The monastery was sending monks to a number of locations where the parcels of land belonging to the community were scattered; this was a significant logistic operation, especially considering troubles that could ensue (cf. P. Mon. Apollo 17; see below, pp. 194–195). The collection of aparche and the ‘rent-tax’ could be considered a service for the monastery, for which the monks could receive remuneration. Transfers of assignments between monks were recorded with particular diligence, for, by renouncing the duty, a monk would renounce the financial responsibility for the ‘rent-tax’ of a domain, and the right to receive remuneration, which must have been important from the point of view of monastic administration.

102 Schenke, ‘Monastic control’ (cit. n. 20) and P. Köln ägypt. II, p. 49. For a reconstruction of the collection procedure, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 206.

103 Cf. P. Bawit Clackson 24, a superior’s order to hand ‘a lebiton and a small garment’ (ll. 2–3: ὁγγοβητο τη γη ὅγκογι μειστη) to Ammone, who was supposed to collect aparche at Pankalou. The document, however, does not state if Ammone received the garments by virtue of his function of aparche-collector or for other reasons. Lebiton as an item delivered as a part of wages recurs in work contracts from Deir el-Bala‘izah (P. Bal. 161 and 164). It appears frequently in monastic literary sources as a designation of a part of monastic garment; papyrological attestations, however, cannot be firmly connected with monastic contexts. See M. Mossakowska-Gaubert, Le costume monastique en Egypte à la lumière des textes grecs et latins et des sources archéologiques (IVe–début du VIIe siècle), Warsaw 2005 (doctoral dissertation under the direction of Włodzimierz Godlewski), pp. 153–173.

104 In earlier interpretations it was assumed that products collected by the monks were kept by them as their income; those among the brothers who were well-off enough to manage without it, could cede their assignments to less fortunate community members (see Wipszycka, ‘Le fonctionnement interne’ [cit. n. 20], p. 185). But if we assume, after Tonio Sebastian Richter (‘The cultivation’ [cit. n. 28], pp. 210–212), and, more recently, Gesa Schenke (P. Köln ägypt. II, p. 49) that the monks who undertook the collection of aparche and ‘rent-tax’ undertook with it also the
The majority of *aparche*-related documents do not mention any representatives of the monastery—a fact that raised objections as to the official character of the recorded arrangements.¹⁰⁵ However, a recently published *aparche*-collection guarantee, *P. Köln ägypt.* II 30, provides an explicit attestation of ‘the fathers of the *diakonia*’ among the addressees of the document, while in *P. Köln ägypt.* II 32 the phrase can be reconstructed with a certain degree of probability.¹⁰⁶

Some details of the way the ‘rent-tax’ matters were handled can be read from two documents, *P. Mon. Apollo* 2 and 3. In the former, following the badly preserved *demotion* sum, we encounter the phrase ‘[I shall (?)] give them to the great brother’ (ll. 12–13: (ⲛ)ⲧⲁⲟⲩ ⲫⲁ ⲧⲡⲛ Ⲫⲟ ⲥⲟⲛ). This suggests that a monk, having collected the payments, handed them over to senior brothers; just what a ‘great brother’s’ capacities could be is open to question.¹⁰⁷ *P. Mon. Apollo* 3, on the other hand, deserves our attention due to the special treatment it received. The document is a standard *aparche* collection guarantee, witnessed by three persons. However, the whole of the text is written in the same hand, described by Sarah Clackson as ‘an experienced, essentially majuscule hand with cursive tendencies’. The document had been rewritten, perhaps for administrative purposes, by a proficient scribe. Therefore, it is possible that records of these documents were kept by the monastic administration—this, however, in the present state of the sources is no more than a hypothesis. In any case, I believe that the testimonies we have allow us to assume that official control over the *aparche* agreements did exist also at the stage of adjustment of the assignments. After all, most texts are explicit, stating that the payments were collected for fiscal responsibility in case of the tenants’ shortcomings, the situation becomes clearer. The monks most probably did not file private financial declarations at the monastery administration; thus, an assignment could fall on the shoulders of a person who could not handle it. Even if the monastery remunerated the monks for their effort of going to villages and collecting payments, the risk and the profit perhaps were not balanced out. While ceding the assignment to someone else, a monk would not only resign a remuneration, but also rid himself of a burdensome and financially dangerous obligation.

¹⁰⁵ In the first lot of *aparche*-related documents published by Sarah J. Clackson in *P. Mon. Apollo*, only one, *P. Mon. Apollo* 1, mentioned ‘the fathers of the *diakonia*’ (l. 6). The opening section of this document is, however, badly damaged, and the phrase does not necessarily indicate the addressees of the document.

¹⁰⁶ *P. Köln ägypt.* II 30, ll. 5–6: ⲛⲧⲁⲩⲟ ⲟⲧ ⲛⲟⲩ ⲥⲧⲛⲣⲉ ⲥⲧⲣⲉ ⲟⲩⲧ ⲟⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲡⲛ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ϩⲧⲓⲧⲓⲣⲟ ⲧⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ϩⲧⲓⲧⲓⲣⲟ ⲧⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧ_oauthoria.  In *P. Köln ägypt.* II 32, ll. 3–6: ⲛⲧⲁⲭⲟ ⲧⲧⲓⲧⲓⲣⲟ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧ_oauthoria.

¹⁰⁷ The phrase ‘great brothers’ recurs twice in *P. Mon. Apollo* 25 (lines 4 and 7). In this document they play an advisory role and mediate in property renunciation. In *P. Mon. Apollo* 2 the ‘great brother’ is probably a monastic representative charged with land-tax management. Since renunciation of responsibility for monastic property by a monk, such as in case of *P. Mon. Apollo* 25, could potentially affect fiscal affairs of the community, we are tempted to see in Bawit ‘great brothers’ or ‘great sons’ (ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧوظ. In the monastery of Apa Apollo at Deir el-Bala‘izah, ‘great brothers’ or ‘great sons’ (ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧⲟⲩ ⲧوظ, represented the monastery’s *dikaios* together with the superior (see *P. Bal. 102*, l. 4; *P. Bal. 108*, l. 2; *P. Bal. 103*, ll. 3–4).
the sake of the monastery of Apa Apollo.\textsuperscript{108} We can expect that administrators on community level would make efforts to secure an unproblematic transmission of important fiscal responsibilities.

On the other hand, transfer of fiscal obligations to monastic tenant is attested in P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. Inv. M 662 b (6a) verso, a letter which allows us to trace some elements of the procedure.\textsuperscript{109} A tenant of two arourae of monastic land, Eleizerou, is said to have delivered a solidus for the monastery (most probably as the rent for the parcel), together with his epistalma for the ninth indiction.\textsuperscript{110} Epistalma has been identified by the text’s first editor, Leslie MacCoull, with ἐπίσταλμα σωματισμοῦ, a declaration in which the lessee committed himself to pay taxes of the land in the place of the landowner.\textsuperscript{111} The letter is addressed by superiors to subordinates.\textsuperscript{112} It was the former who received the rent payment and handled the fiscal ‘paperwork’, while the latter were expected to entrust the tenant with the two arourae (which perhaps also meant undertaking some formal actions we are unable to reconstruct). The details of the whole procedure are not explained, although the letter suggests that both money and the epistalma were brought by Eleizerou himself rather than collected by monastic representatives. Collection of money by the monastery’s representatives is shown not only in the aparche documents, but also in P. Louvre Bawit 41—an eighth-century letter from two monks, Kyros and Jacob, to an archimandrite.\textsuperscript{113} The monks inform the superior about the progress of collection of the monastery’s taxes in the already known ονσία of Kos (Koussai; see above, p. 170).\textsuperscript{114} The sum they have managed to collect, six solidi, is sent to the monastery’s headquarters via πακοινο Jacob (most probably the same as one of the senders). The document is an interesting testimony of the activity of monastic fiscal agents in an important section of the monastic estate, whose manner of management remains, unfortunately, largely unknown.

\textsuperscript{108} Aparche-related texts mention also other monasteries as recipients of the collected payments; see below, pp. 220–221.

\textsuperscript{109} See Delattre, Pilette & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 39–42.

\textsuperscript{110} P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. Inv. M 662 b (6a) verso, ll. 3–4: υἱὸς φολοκ(ο)τ(τινος) ἐπίσταλμα ἐπιμαστή(πιον) ἡν προποσταλμα ὁν ἐννύητις ἠποθ(κίοιος).

\textsuperscript{111} See MacCoull, ‘P. Morgan Copt.’ (cit. n. 56), pp. 3–4, and Delattre, Pilette & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ (cit. n. 19), p. 42. For epistalma, see, e.g. Preisigke, \textit{WfB} coll. 572–573, ἐπίσταλμα 9: ‘Meldung eines Privatmannes an die Steuerbehörde, daß er die Steuerlast eines andern auf seine eigene Schultern nehmen will’.

\textsuperscript{112} See Delattre, Pilette & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ (cit. n. 19), p. 41, comm. to l. 1 of the document. The editors quote another document of the Bawit dossier, \textit{P. Mich. Copt.} 14, a letter from an archimandrite to an ὥκονομος, which also skips the salutation formula, and suggest that this straightforwardness is an indication of higher status of the sender.

\textsuperscript{113} Address on the verso: [ ] ἀρχιμ(αλω)(ητικος). + ἥγουρος χυρος πι[ ] ἡρακλειος τοιος ἤτοις.

\textsuperscript{114} P. Louvre Bawit 41, 1, 3: [ ] ἐπισταλμὸν ἴσθαμμον ἐπι[ ] ἑκατον̣τος στοιχείῳ προλοκ(ο)τ(τινος). The editors connect the tax with landed property (p. 73). I believe that the form ἴσθαμμον, ‘our (land-)tax’, refers to the taxes of the whole monastery. Otherwise, what reasons would the monks have had to inform the archimandrite of their progress? On individual fiscal liabilities of monks, see below, p. 184.
Monks were held liable for their private landholdings. Individual fiscal liabilities can be traced in the modest dossier of Bawit tax demands (P. Mon. Apollo 28–30). The three documents are addressed to members of the community by fiscal officers; in only one case the title of payment is fully preserved: P. Mon. Apollo 30 states that the monk, Apollo son of George, has to pay an unknown amount of money ‘on the first instalment in your [...] demosion for indiction-year five’. The term demosion was comprehensive enough to cover various types of taxes (land tax, dapane, and poll-tax); in the Bawit dossier, it could serve as a designation of land-tax. While commenting on this dossier, Sarah Clackson observed: ‘In 28–30 each monk is addressed individually and held liable for a small amount of tax by a representative of the Arab administration. This practice contrasts with evidence which shows monasteries as responsible for collecting taxes from their own monks [...]’. Alain Delattre concluded that ‘A Baouît, chaque moine était directement responsable de son andrismoς’. However, the Bawit dossier abounds in documents which illustrate how andrismoς was handled by community representatives. Because of this evidence, I am inclined to believe that the fiscal burdens in the tax demand dossier were rather connected with the monks’ private property. How was the payment procedure handled cannot be reconstructed in the present state of documentation. The only mention of an individual paying demosion outside the dossier of tax demands (P. Bawit Clackson 22) suggests some kind of involvement of monastic administration. The document in question is a notice from Petre the proestos to his fellow monk Pshoi, accompanying ‘a solidus which I [i.e. Petre] received for Bene’s taxes’ (ll. 2–4: χε <ε>ις ὁγρολοκοτὴν αὐτοῦ ἐτοτ χε ἤτενος ἰμῖνος). ἤτενος stands for demosion and the document associates its payment with an individual. It is perhaps reasonable to think that the developed fiscal apparatus of the monastery could, for the sake of convenience, facilitate also payments of taxes other than andrismoς by collecting money from individuals and forwarding them to the authorities.

115 P. Mon. Apollo, 30, ll. 3–4: ἔν τοῦρ μα καθαρῶς ἡ πεζ(±4) [±2] εκκληςίων; for the propositions of filling the lacuna (which do not change the interpretation of the document), see the commentary ad loc. P. Mon. Apollo 29 preserves only the ending of the name of the tax, -ον (l. 4), which can be reconstructed either as demosion, or as diagnosto. The part of P. Mon. Apollo 28 where the title of the payment was stated is entirely lost.


117 P. Bruc. Bawit, p. 103 with n. 363. While I believe that Delattre’s statement about how taxes were handled is not valid for all situations we see in our documents, I agree that individual tax demands addressed to monks prove indeed ‘the majority of the monks earn money, in one way or another’.

118 The involvement of monastic administration in the payment not only of andrismoς, but also other taxes (artisanal taxes and embole) by individual monks is well attested in the dossier of the monastery of Deir el-Bala‘izah. There, monastic functionaries were issuing receipts to taxpaying monks (see P. Bal. 133–136, 139(?), 142–149) and appear in fiscal accounts as intermediaries through whom sums of money were paid (see P. Bal. 290, 291+292). On the other hand, a document from the same dossier, P. Bal. 138 addressed by ‘Pshoi and Kolthe from An[...]’ to ‘Chael of the same village’, otherwise attested as monk (see P. Bal. 157), suggests that monks could discharge their fiscal duties individually in their villages. Entagia of the monks could be delivered also to the villages where they used to
Among the fiscal matters handled by monastic authorities at Bawit, the management of andromos is by far the best documented. Under Arab rule, monks were subject to poll-tax since the beginning of the eighth century. The responsibility for the payment rested with monastic authorities, who received information about the total amount of andromos for an indictional year. The community ‘managers’ then divided the sum among the monks. Further procedures were handled by a group of monks headed by a superior, called the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ in our sources. Their field of responsibility, which can be reconstructed thanks to the documents, included keeping updated lists of taxpayers, recording payments and issuing receipts, or handling contributions in kind brought by the taxpayers who did not have liquid cash. It appears that their competences were chiefly executive, while the decision-making was in the hands of the superiors.

Similarly to aparche assignments, the division of andromos also needed adjustments. In several documents, labelled ‘waivers of poll-tax liability’ by their editor, Sarah Clackson, the issuer asks the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ not to hold various individuals liable for the taxes of an indictional year. It seems that the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ had registers of taxpayers according to which they proceeded with tax collection. However, an individual unable to pay the required amount could probably complain to a superior, who, in turn, waived his liability or allowed a delay. Reassignments must have naturally happened afterwards, but unfortunately they are not recorded. It was also the superior’s task to decide whether to accept a contribution in kind or not, and how to proceed with obtaining money in exchange for it. We would expect that the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ would issue tax receipts on a regular basis; however, in some cases they needed an extra
order to do so, as in P. Bawit Clackson 4, where the payment is made in kind, or in P. Bawit Clackson 6, where the brothers were to issue a receipt for a certain Anoup whose poll-tax was paid by someone else. It appears that the well-organised system at Bawit was used also by smaller monasteries, as it is the case with P. Bawit Clackson 14, in which Daniel orders the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ to accept wine worth one solidus ‘from the sons of Prashe, the men of the monastery of Jeremias of Pmanbete’.

As already mentioned, the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ were issuing receipts to taxpayers. A dossier of twelve such receipts has been preserved among the Bawit documents. In nine cases, the taxpayers are explicitly called monks. The issuers of these documents are mentioned without any particular titles (except for a kathegetes in P. Clackson 36). Alain Delattre and Nikolaos Gonis refrained from any decisive statements as to their function, although they hypothesised that the documents could have been issued by the superior of the community, based on the identification of one of their issuers with the signatory of two πενευτος πετεραί documents. The signatories of the πενευτος πετεραί orders could, as we have already seen, have been involved in the procedure of issuing receipts, but it was the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ who normally dealt with it and handed the papers to the taxpayers. The andrismos receipts we have at our disposal were perhaps produced in their bureau, and the people recorded therein as the issuers were no other than the ‘brothers’ themselves. Interestingly, it appears that this section of monastic administration was using Greek—the language of all tax receipts for andrismos we know. Although the Arab administration did use Coptic (see, e.g., the tax demands P. Mon. Apollo 28–30), it might have seemed proper to write the receipts—which the monks could be asked to produce when ordered by an official—in the Greek language, which still remained in use in state administration.

124 P. Bawit Clackson 6, ll. 3–6: ‘David (?) has […] poll-tax — he has paid for Anoup his son. I shall release this young son — give him (a) receipt for his son (ΔΑΥΙΔ ἐπὶ ΔΙΑΒΡΟΧΟΣ ΒΙΤΙ ἔκαθεν πέτρῳ αὐθήν ἐβαλ τι εἴθακεν ηαω ἐπὶ πενθήμερον). The commentary to the text states: ‘If both are monks, David would have been Anoup’s spiritual, rather than natural, father’.

125 P. Bawit Clackson 14, ll. 2–4: ἵτω ἔρωτος ηὐπρο david ἐπὶ γαβάρῳ ἔρωτος εἰρήνη εἰρήνη ἐρήμησα ἐρήμησεν ναόνα τιμολόγητο. Gesa Schenke suggested that the text does not pertain to andrismos itself, but records a payment in wine (P. Köln ägypt. II, p. 12). In my opinion, however, the situation is analogous to the one from P. Bawit Clackson 1 and 4, where the superior Keri accepts rugs in place of money contribution.

126 On this dossier, see Delattre & Gonis, ‘Le dossier des reçus’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 61–69. It is made up of the following documents: P. Clackson 36; P. Clackson 37; P. Lugd. Bat. XIX 24; P. Lond. V 1748; P. Clackson 38; P. Clackson 39; SB XXVI 16646; P. Lond. V 1747; SB XIV 11332; SB XXVI 16788; P. Amst. V 63. A recently published P. Clédat 89+90 issued to Biktor son of Faustos, a smith of the monastery, has now to be added to the dossier. See Delattre, ‘Nouveaux papyrus’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 71–73.

127 See Delattre & Gonis, ‘Le dossier des reçus’ (cit. n. 19), p. 63, and commentary to l. 5 of P. Clackson 36 on p. 65. Kathegetes was a ‘teacher’ in a religious sphere; the title is attested in some of the Bawit inscriptions. Here it is probably used as a mark of respect towards its bearer.

128 Delattre & Gonis, ‘Le dossier des reçus’ (cit. n. 19), p. 63 and 61 with n. 7. P. Lugd. Bat. XIX 24 was signed by a certain Germanos, who appears as the responsible also in P. Bruc. Bawit 1 and P. Bawit Clackson 21.
Other obligations of the monastery towards the state included *dapane*—a tax destined for the maintenance of administrative officers—as well as various requisitions and services. *Dapane* itself is explicitly mentioned in only one document in an unclear context; on the other hand, we have several attestations of disbursements of goods and money to people connected with the Arab administration. In *P. Mon. Apollo* 45 a *shaliou* of Ptene is recorded three times as recipient of *hepsema*, boiled wine—a commodity usually destined for Arab officials. In *P. Bawit Clackson* 19, a document, the recipients of the disbursement are people who may have worked for a *shaliou*. Unfortunately, the fragmentary state of preservation hinders our understanding of the text. Scattered mentions of various payments of undetermined character whose recipients were people connected with officials are found also in other documents. In *P. Duk. inv. 1053 verso* a ‘father’ gives the order to hand a small amount of vegetables and incense to a man belonging to the entourage of an otherwise unattested Petros the *chrismos*. *P. Louvre Bawit* 32 juxtaposes quite randomly various expenses, including a payment of two solidi to ‘the lord Zacharias, son of the pagarch’, who can be identified with a high-ranking official in charge of taxation. An extra contribution for someone entering an office appears in a document from the Vatican collection, the unpublished *P. Vatic. copti Doresse* 20 (a communication from an Arab official, Rashid b. Halid to monks of a monastery of Apa Apollo, probably the one at Bawit).  

129 *P. Bruc. Bawit* 39, a letter to the archimandrite Zacharias dated to the 7th–8th century. *Dapane* (ταπάνι) is mentioned in l. 9. The letter, which most probably transmits the orders of a pagarch (l. 1: ‘your son the pagarch’; ἐπιτρέπω μαχαρίας) speaks also of a shipment of grain, most probably in connection with fiscality.


131 *P. Bawit Clackson* 19, ll. 3–5: οἱ τινὲς τῶν ὀνόματι Π[(....] ἀνήματα (έ +4 ὑπάρχει) ... ἔδωκαν δὸς ... τὸν *shaliou*).


133 The office of *chrismos* appears in the papyri in the fourth century; in Late Roman and Byzantine period, *chrismos* was a financial officer at the head of provincial treasury (see introduction to *P. Würzb.* 15, pp. 86–87; J. Lallemand, *L’administration civile de l’Egypte de l’avènement de Dioclétien à la création du diocèse* (282–382), Brussels 1964, pp. 190 no. 1 and 219). In Coptic documents, the term designates a fiscal official in charge of district treasury ( Förster, *Wörterbuch*, s.v.).

134 *P. Louvre Bawit* 32, l. 2: πυρρός *Zacharios* πυρρός παγαρίσις οὐκ [μίσμα] β. On Zacharias, see the commentary ad loc. in the edition. The editors quote *P. Ryl. Copt.* 319, a document mentioning in l. 1 a certain Zacharias, son of the pagarch Flavius Senourios. *P. Ryl. Copt.* 319 is a letter written in a very imperious tone, in which Zacharias, acting in the name of his father, instructs the headmen of some villages or *epoikia* about fiscal procedures, to be followed. The opening of the letter reads as follows: ‘... Flavius Senourios, by God’s will pagarch, through me, Zacharias his son, writeth unto the headmen of the places that are indicated ... ὑπαρχεῖν ἐπί τοὺς ἱερουσαλημίας ... to Peter son of Cyrus “and the...
Some of the administrative documents mention individuals with Arab names. Most probably they were also representatives of state administration entitled to payments in kind. This is the case of Razid, mentioned in l. 5 of *P. Mon. Apollo* 45 as recipient of a *knidion* of wine.\textsuperscript{136} Among the orders of payment we find a ‘micro-dossier’ of three documents concerning disbursements of products to two men with Arab names.\textsuperscript{137} *P. Hermitage Copt.* 16, issued by Serenos, presbyter and *oikonomos*, records one *kollathon* of boiled wine (*hepsema*) registered in the account of Saleh (ⲉⲡⲗⲟⲅ *(ⲟⲧ) ⲛⲥⲁⲗⲉ*). The same account is mentioned in *P. Camb. UL* inv. 1262, again signed by Serenos; the payment consists of *hepsema* and honey. Serenos the presbyter signed also the third document of this group, *P. Brux. Bawit* 27: an order of payment of one *kollathon* of *hepsema* and one *kannion* of honey to the account of Amer (ⲉⲡⲗⲟⲅ *(ⲟⲧ) ⲛⲁⲙⲉⲣ*). All three documents were written in the same month in the office of Serenos.\textsuperscript{138} Serenos the *oikonomos*, who does not appear in any other orders of payment edited until the present day, could be in charge of the ‘accounts’ of Arab officials. Arab officials in the Bawit dossier appear in a rather random manner; however, the orders of payment suggest the existence of separate accounts dedicated to them, thanks to which monastic administrators could control the payments and avoid delays.

But delays did occur, as is to be expected in a large institution with numerous obligations. Such a situation is attested in *P. Vatic. Aphrod.* 13 (late seventh–early eighth century), which is a list of arrears of requisitions of the monastery of Apa Apollo, attributed to the Bawit dossier (l. 1: γνῶ(σις) λοιπ(ῶν) διανομῶ(ν) μον(αστηρίου) αββ(α) Ἀπόλλω(νος)).\textsuperscript{139} The list mentions considerable amounts of various goods, including cloth, sacks, nails, and boiled wine.\textsuperscript{140}

Orders of the Arab administration concerned not only goods but also services. Some documents in the Bawit dossier seem to hint at services being requested from the community. Out of the three attestations, however, two are extremely vague. *P. Louvre Bawit* 38 is a letter from Zacharias, a high-ranking monk of the community, mentioning an individual going to Babylon. Unfortunately, since the document is extremely badly preserved, we cannot interpret it in a

\textsuperscript{136} Not boiled wine, as in the case of the *shaliou* of Ptene in the same document and other Arabs attested in the dossier. S. Clackson (*P. Mon. Apollo*, p. 26) suggests that the disbursement could have been ‘some sort of government levy, destined for distribution to non-Muslims’, for example the employees of Rashid recruited among local people.

\textsuperscript{137} On this micro-dossier, see Delattre, ‘Le monastère de Baouît et l’administration Arabe’ (cit. n. 20). The article contains a redaction of two of its documents (*P. Yale* inv. 1866 [= *P. Brux. Bawit* 27], p. 44–45; *P. Hermitage Copt.* 16, pp. 46–47) and the edition of one new text from the Cambridge collection (*P. Camb. UL* inv. 1262, p. 45).

\textsuperscript{138} See Delattre’s commentary to l. 2 of *P. Brux. Bawit* 27, p. 223.

\textsuperscript{139} For a redaction of the document and an exhaustive commentary with further bibliography, see Gonis, ‘Two fiscal registers’ (cit. n. 135), pp. 21–25.

\textsuperscript{140} Gonis, ‘Two fiscal registers’ (cit. n. 135), p. 22, observes that the ‘arrears’ are fairly high, which suggests a monastery of some size, and would suit the picture of the large monastic complex at Bawit’. 

188
convincing manner. However, a prosopographical connection can be made between the Zacharias of the Louvre papyrus and the archimandrite Zacharias, the addressee of *P. Bruc. Bawit* 39. The Brussels papyrus is a letter, already quoted in connection with *daophane* (see above, p. 187, n. 129). Alain Delattre, in his interpretation of the document, points to the main focus of the text, which is the transport of grain on a ship, and perhaps also an obligatory naval service. The superior was personally responsible for fulfilling the obligations of the monastery towards the state, hence his role in the situations where services were at stake. From the point of view of the monastery, such obligations was perhaps especially troublesome, since every such demand on the part of the Arab administration temporarily deprived the monastery of people and equipment. In order to guarantee unproblematic functioning of his monastic ‘enterprise’, the superior must have been keeping his finger on the pulse. He was assisted in this task by his subordinates, such as the anonymous writer of *P. Bruc. Bawit* 39. It appears that it was he who had received the order of the pagarch (the beginning of the text, mentioning ‘your [i.e. Zacharias’s] son, the pagarch’ seems to introduce the archimandrite into the details of the matter), but was unable to handle the matter without the necessary decisions of the superior.

A ‘showcase example’ of how requisition procedures worked ‘on the ground’ is found in *P. Mich. Copt.* 14, an eighth-century letter from a superior (πασχαλικός) to Mena the oikononomos. The situation presented in the text unfolded as follows. A certain kyrios Platon, an official, had drawn up an official request addressed to the monastery, demanding to provide two teams of oxen to

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141 Numerous papyri mention people sent to the capital as a part of personal service, or to deliver goods or payments. Cf., among others, *P. Lond.* IV 1334 (requisition of a τερπονταί); *CPR* XXII 43 (requisition of carpenters, sailors and soldiers); *CPR* XXII 46 (account of ropes sent to Babylon through a person; l. 1: [· · · περιφέρεις ἐν Βαβυλωνί] μετὰ Κοσμίου Αποστολίου); *CPR* XXII 49 (account of workers from various choría; l. 1: γνώσεται ἐν Βαβυλωνί); see also *P. Bal.* 240, mentioning people going north to Babylon (l. 3: μητριπόθους εἰς Βαβυλῶνι) and making declaration about money gathered as taxes. Cf. also ‘men who are in Babylon’ in the eighth-century Aphroditio documents (see H. I. Bell in *P. Lond.* IV, p. xv). Travel to the capital could disrupt important work in people’s place of residence, as we can see in *CPR* XXX 18 (ca. 643/644), where Menas scholastikos asks the pagarch Athanasios to relieve a builder of his service duty; otherwise, the builder would not finish work at a cistern in a village, to the detriment of the fields, the taxes imposed thereon, and, finally, the pagarch himself (l. 4–5: ἐπεὶ ἐὰν κατέρχεται οὐχ ἔρισκα τὴν οἰκονομίαν τῆς ἐπίθετος κοσμίου [ἐν] ἀφάνεια μάνον ὡς γιόν ὁποῖον οὐθεὶς). Officials were sometimes requested to come to the capital to see the governor in person; see, e.g., *P. Lond.* IV 1338 and 1339 (both dated to 709), where the pagarch Basilieos is ordered to arrive at Qurrah’s headquarters with his subordinate functionaries.

142 See *P. Louvre Bawit*, p. 6.


144 For a redaction with an exhaustive commentary, see Delattre, ‘Une lettre copte’ (cit. n. 19).

145 Alain Delattre draws attention to the phraseology of the letter in this point. The phrase the writer uses to render Platon’s action is σε ὑπερεστολήν, which in the light of numerous documentary analogies points to the official
operate a water-wheel in an estate (օⲥⲓⲁ) belonging to the dux (i.e., the emir). The superior, in turn, wrote to the oikonomos Mena, asking him to send a man to the ϝⲟⲩⲓ of Ioule and order the monastery’s ox-breeder Enoch to go to the ωⲧⲓⲁ of the dux with the animals. Platon shifted the responsibility for the logistics of the operation entirely onto the monks, much to the superior’s distress, which was apparently due to the shortage of time left for the completion of the task. Delattre saw in the ‘father’ of P. Mich. Capt. 14 the archimandrite of the monastery. Even if we need to remember, as already observed (see above, p. 162) that not all of the Bawit superiors were necessarily archimandrites, it is certain that we are dealing with the head of the community, as he was the obvious person to care for the proper handling of obligations imposed on the monastery, and to give dispositions in this respect.

The Bawit dossier contains also scattered mentions of other taxes, e.g. stichos in P. Louvre Bawit 7 (l. 1) and 50 (l. 6), and O. Bawit 83. In the first document, stichos is mentioned together with demosion; this intriguing but unfortunately fragmentary text is a contract pertaining to taxation matters which we are unable to interpret with any degree of certainty. O. Bawit 83 is perhaps a receipt for stichos, which could probably indicate that the payment of this tax was also handled by the monastery administration. P. Louvre Bawit 50 is perhaps the most interesting of these three documents. The text does not mention the monastery (it is, however badly damaged; monastic representatives could appear in the lost part of the address formula) but was reused there for a writing exercise published as P. Louvre Bawit 64. It was addressed by the pagarch Flavius Kollouthos, acting through an intermediary whose name is unpreserved, to the headmen of some villages. The subject of the letter is taxation, or, more precisely, arrears, as indicated in lines 4–5 which speak of letters received by the pagarch ‘au sujet de l’arriéré des impôts’ (ⲉⲧⲃⲉⲡ̣ⲗⲟⲓⲡⲟ̣ⲥ̣ⲛ̣ⲉⲇⲏⲙⲟⲛ̣). The arrears include perhaps also a stichos-tax (l. 6: ‘et du reste de stichoi’; ⲡⲧⲁⲛⲧⲉⲧⲓⲭⲉ). If this text was addressed also to monastic representatives (in this case we would be dealing with one copy of the document out of several destined for various recipients), it would testify to the importance of the monastery to the local fiscal officials—importance which could be inferred anyway, given the character of Platon’s request (see Delattre, ‘Une lettre copte’ [cit. n. 19], pp. 92–93). Direct attestations of correspondence addressed to Bawit from state officials have not yet been recorded in the dossier. P. Duk. inv. 1053 verso, a περιστατικά document, was written on the verso of a bilingual (Greek-Arabic) protocol, perhaps opening an official letter (see Delattre, ‘Deux ordres’ [cit. n. 19], pp. 172–173). Unfortunately, the recto preserves nothing except for the protocol traces.


147 P. Mich. Capt. 14, ll. 4–5: ρὰκον υπάρχουσα αὐτόν δεν έχω κανένα άλλο μένον, ουκ έχω δείξει αυτή την μάχη για την ζωή της (‘Il [= Platon] m’a écrit qu’il ne fera rien pour cela. Puise une demi journée suffire!’).

148 On the attestations of stichos in documentary material, see P. Louvre Bawit 7, comm. to l. 1.

extensive tracts of land possessed by the community and the ensuing significance of its fiscal contributions. This, however, is only a speculation, as the mystery of how and why the papyrus ended up at Bawit cannot be solved.

The document provides us, all the same, with a valuable insight into the environment in which the community at Bawit functioned: the world of villages which did their best to cope with their fiscal obligations and protect their interests. The monastery and its members had a share in these activities which will constitute the subject of the following section.

4.2. The monastery and the representatives of local village communities

The process of economic expansion of monasteries and their ensuing integration with the local agricultural and social landscapes was bound to bring the communities of monks in contact with the communities of villagers. This phenomenon is well attested in the Bawit dossier. Relations with local villagers operated within different frameworks: local laypeople leased land from the community, could be hired by the monastery, or borrow money from the monks. In each of these cases an individual, prompted by necessity or economic pragmatism, established a relation with the institution or its member. However, a group of documents from the Bawit dossier attests to another facet of relations with rural settlements. These texts feature functionaries and representatives of Hermopolite villages acting as ‘spokesmen’ of their communities.

The degree of consolidation and self-assertion of rural communities in Late Antiquity is a matter of discussion; this is not the place to dwell on the problem. What interests us most here are the contexts of interaction of the representatives of the monastery with their village counterparts. While reading the documents we see that their relations were based on common concerns (connected primarily with purchase and exploitation of land), but also various forms of mutual reliance; some documents, however, hint even at some forms of control and supervision. The documents we shall discuss now are both formal agreements and less formal correspondence exchanged on various occasions.

See D. Bonneau, ‘Communauté rurale en Égypte byzantine?’ [in:] Les communautés rurales. Deuxième partie: antiquité [= Recueils de la société Jean Bodin pour l’histoire comparative des institutions], Paris 1983, pp. 505–523. Bonneau reached the conclusion that for Byzantine Egypt it is impossible to speak of true ‘village communities’ defined as groups of people united by consciously perceived common interest; for her, Egyptian rural community can be reduced to fiscal solidarity. R. S. B. Bagnall, Egypt in Late Antiquity, Princeton 1993, pp. 133–138, also underscores the role of fiscality for the definition of village communities and emphasises the absence of political organisation. For the development of village societies in Late Antique and Early Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean, see Ch. Wickham, Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800, Oxford 2005, Part III: Peasantries, pp. 383–441. For rural authority in Late Antique and Early Arab Egypt, especially in the perspective of dispute resolution, see M. S. A. Mikhail, From Byzantine to Islamic Egypt. Religion, Identity and Politics after the Arab Conquest, London–New York 2014, pp. 154–157.
As it is to be expected in a rural landscape, landowning and land management constituted one of the spheres in which communities and their representatives could interact. Purchase of land from a village community is explicitly attested in P. Mon. Apollo 24 and hinted at in P. Mon. Apollo 26 (both dated to the eighth century). The first document is a deed of sale in which a certain Carpocrater, priest of the monastery of Apa Apollo (l. 3), purchases three arourae of fodder-land and twenty-five arourae of pasture. The other party is identified in the following manner ‘we, the council of the settlement (ἐποικίων) of Poraheu, through me, Eisitre the hiereus, son of Beiktor, and Petre the deacon, and Anoup the priest, and Shenoute, son of the late Phib, and the rest of the settlement’ (ll. 1–2). 151 Out of four representatives, one (the hiereus) was a lay functionary charged with fiscal matters and keeping the order,152 one does not bear any titles, and two were clerics. Presbyters and deacons representing fellow villagers occur in Late Antique correspondence;153 the present text points also to a more formal dimension of their leadership. The presentation of the sellers’ side is interesting also in its effort to suggest the involvement of the whole village community in the action. Since on the other side there is nothing to balance out this lengthy introduction of the seller, it seems that the buyer, the monk Athanase, was acting on his own behalf (see above, p. 168, n. 53).

P. Mon. Apollo 26 is an indirect attestation of a sale of land, this time concluded between villagers and the monastic institution. In the document, two monks lease land from the monastery, addressing its dikaion through the archimandrite Georgios. The object of the lease is ‘eight waterless arourae from the fields of the small meadow which you have exchanged with the men of Senesla’ (ll. 5–6: ἅψιμονες ἡστενάων οὐθονον ἐν ἡσεσάρε νῦκοι ποι ἅταθελλάσσε ἕνοικο \[\text{P. Mon. Apollo 39}\] νεποθεσικά). The transaction could have been analogous to that recorded in P. Mon. Apollo 24, but the land may have also been purchased from individual farmers who had no means to invest in ‘waterless arourae’ so as to make them profitable.154 The monastery could either invest in

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151 Ἀθανάσιος τού προσεκτικοῦ ηποικίων(Η) παρασκεύασε ἰτοῦτον ἄλοχον εἰσορεύς προς τοὺς ἐποικίων τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἅπαν τοῖς ἄρουραις τῶν εἰσορεύσεως τῆς ποιητικοῦ(Η) ἡποικίων.


154 P. Mon. Apollo, p. 85; an analogous document is CPR IV 117, also concluded between a monastery’s dikaion and a monk. ξειθοῦς, ‘waterless’, is the equivalent of Greek ἄρωπος, which was a designation of uninundated land which was not provided with watering equipment and had to rely on machinery located on other plots; see D. Bonneau, Le fleuve et le Nil: incidences des irrégularités de la crue du Nil sur la fiscalité foncière dans l’Égypte grecque et romaine, Paris 1971, pp. 80–81 with n. 399; eadem, Le régime administratif de l’eau du Nil dans l’Égypte grecque, romaine et byzantine, Leiden–New York–Cologne 1993, pp. 208 and 221–222; see also I. Marthot, ‘L’irrigation des terres du village d’Aphrodiété.
watering equipment for the land or make use of pre-existing machinery. In that latter case, we would imagine arrangements with owners or lessees of watering equipment on the neighbouring plots, which would account for further involvement of the monks in local networks.

In *P. Mon. Apollo* 25, on the other hand, we see a Senesla headman involved in what appears to have been an internal affair of the monastery. In the document Isak, a monk of the *topos* of Apa Apollo, renounces to the monastery’s *dikaion*, represented by the archimandrite Daniel, the responsibility for one of the two ‘places’ (*hα ρχα*) he had been in charge of. The renounced parcel, ‘which was the cistern-half’ (thus probably a half of a plot watered from one reservoir), is assigned to another monk, Ieremias. The agreement is reached within the monastic community, with ‘great brothers’ (ll. 4 and 7: *νος ηνειοι*) playing the part of advisors and intermediaries between Isak and the *dikaion*. The witnesses included Apollo son of Abraham, NN son of the late Taurine of Taposh, and Lazaros of Senesla, all of whom were almost certainly laypeople. Lazaros, however, appears in a double role. He not only witnesses the deed (l. 20) but also states in the subscription under the main body of the document: ‘I, the headman (*πανε*) Lazaros, of Senesla, at a good time I came to the pit of the basin/Tnout (*ποιη ιντοιτ*) under the supervision (*κα τειλαριχ *) of Apa Phoibammon, the man in charge of the judgement (*απορχις*)’ (ll. 19–20).

The statement contains some interesting elements. First, the document mentions Tnout, which appears as a source of wine transported to the monastery in a number of *οινη νεα* ostraca. Sarah Clackson connected *θινοτ* with *λοιμη* mentioned in ll. 5, 6, and 8 on account of the two words’ being synonymous. I believe, however, that in this particular case it would be preferable
to treat Tnout as a more general topographic designation, and consider ἡμη and οἵς (l. 19) as words used synonymously to refer to a water basin.  

Since artificial irrigation was connected with wine production, the image we obtain fits well with what we know about the place called Tnout from the Bawit waybills. The water reservoir at Tnout is said to have been under the supervision of a certain Apa Phoibammon who was also responsible for ‘the judgement’. This expression is somewhat obscure, since nowhere in the text the whole affair is described as a ‘judgement’; the document is quite literally called ἀποτάγη (l. 23: ἀποτάγη). The ‘judgement’ in question would perhaps refer to the process of accepting Isak’s renunciation and reassignment of the parcel to another monk. Apa Phoibammon, who was apparently responsible for a plot of land at Tnout before the head of the monastery, played a part in it. But what was the role of Lazaros of Senesla? In P. Mon. Apollo 25 he appears with two titles: ἀπε and πρωτοκοινητῆς. This may suggest that he was acting in an official capacity, although it could also be that the titles served only for identification purpose. However, out of the three witnesses only Lazaros is said to have come to the place under discussion, perhaps to inspect it, which points to special reasons he had to be involved in the affair. The location and position of Tnout in relation to Senesla is unknown. As attested in the ὁμμεν ιεα ostraca, P. Mon. Apollo 26, and P. Köln ägypt. II 38 (see below, p. 196), the monastery maintained relations with both places. P. Mon. Apollo 26, recording purchase of land from villagers of Senesla gives us the idea that the monks and Senesla people were neighbours in the countryside. Also the plot of land renounced in P. Mon. Apollo 25 could border upon other plots held by the villagers; therefore, the headman of Senesla could be interested in the state of maintenance of neighbouring property and proper delimitation of its borders. Despite all its obscurities, P. Mon. Apollo 25 shows that the role of laypeople in monastic contracts could go well beyond mere witnessing as a third party. In some situations, the monastic management wanted for their actions to get a seal of approval of representatives of local village communities. In local rural landscape the monastery was, first and foremost, a neighbour who had to take into account other parties’ concerns. 

Another proof that monastic authorities needed to count with local leaders is found in P. Mon. Apollo 17, an eighth-century letter written by Theodoros, a member of the community of Apa

159 In the Greco-Coptic dictionary from the archive of Dioskoros of Aphrodito, οἵς is equivalent to Greek λάκκος (see Marthot, ‘L’irrigation’ [cit. n. 154], p. 1880–1884, esp. p. 1881; W. Crum, Coptic Dictionary, s.v. οἵς: ‘pit’, ‘cistern’, λάκκος, φάζαι) It is possible that the scribe of P. Mon. Apollo 25 used the word ἡμη in ll. 5, 6, and 8 in the meaning which in Greek texts was usually ascribed to λάκκος: a water reservoir used for artificial irrigation, in this case located in a place named Tnout. Tnout itself could have received its Coptic name exactly on account of the presence of irrigation installations there. Cf. Förster, Wörterbuch, s.vv. ‘λάκκος’ and ‘ἡμη’, which can both be understood as ‘Zistern’.

160 P. Mon. Apollo 25, l. 19: δινόκ πάπε λάκαρος πρωτοκοινητής and σιννόν λάκαρος σενέσα πρωτοκοινητός.
Apollo, whose titles are unfortunately unpreserved. The information on the addressee’s identity is also unpreserved, but the context suggests that he was a representative of an unknown village. He is requested to receive and help Makare, an aparche-collector sent to the village by Theodoros. Although the details of Makare’s task are somewhat obscure (e.g. we find ourselves at a loss as to how to interpret the mention of farmers and sailors in l. 7), the heart of the matter is the help that the addressee was supposed to offer to the collector. It is interesting to notice the religious tone perceptible in the letter, which is rarely so intense in Bawit correspondence in general. In invoking the blessings of Apa Apollo (l. 4), but also in inquiring politely after the health of the whole village community (l. 3) the writer seems to attempt a captatio benevolentiae of the addressee. The very necessity to send a letter of this type may point to expected problems which an aparche-collector could face. The system of aparche-collection in operation at Bawit was based on assignments of areas from which the monks were supposed to gather payments for an indictional year. As we cannot trace in our documentation the ‘careers’ of monks as aparche-collectors over longer periods of time, we are unable to say if the assignments changed yearly or could remain with the same person for more than one indictional year. In any case, there would always come a moment when a new collector arrived in a village, and the head of the monastery probably did his best to secure the newcomer a favourable reception. P. Mon. Apollo 17 assumes the form of a polite request, not an order issued from a position of power.

Documents from Bawit bring to light also a less known facet of the functioning of monastic institutions: customary obligations towards local communities. Although the attestations do not speak explicitly about the character of disbursements the monastery of Apa Apollo was supposed

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161 The content of P. Mon. Apollo 17 made Sarah J. Clackson think that the letter was most probably written by a head of the monastery. Monastic functionaries named Theodoros are attested in a number of Bawit documents: P. Mon. Apollo 38 (an archimandrite representing the monastery in a loan contract); P. Bawit Clackson 24; P. Bruc. Bawit 3 (but see n. 162). Since we are dealing with a very banal name, it is impossible to identify the sender of P. Mon. Apollo 17 with any of these men in a certain manner; however, the context itself is sufficient to determine Theodoros’s elevated position in the community.

162 P. Mon. Apollo 17, l. 3: ‘and I enquire after the health of all your village […]’ (ⲁⲩⲱ Ⲏⲛⲉ ⱥⲓ Ⲣⲉⲧⲓ ⲙⲓ ⲛⲉ ⲩⲉⲩ ⲛⲡ Ⲥ [ⲉ ⲧⲛ ⲧⲓ ⲙⲉ ⲩⲟ ⲛⲡ]).

163 S. Clackson (P. Mon. Apollo 17, p. 69) interpreted them as fiscal contributors. Such an interpretation raises little question as far as farmers are concerned; in the case of sailors we would probably need to assume that they were leasing boats from the monastery and were obliged to pay contractual obligations in the same way as land tenants did.

164 Such documents could have constituted an important part of the outgoing monastic correspondence; unfortunately, P. Mon. Apollo 17 is the only example preserved well enough to allow for any conclusions. P. Louvre Bawit 47, a fragmentary text presenting analogous formulas of politeness and blessings, could possibly represent the same type of text (see commentary to P. Louvre Bawit 47, pp. 80–81), especially considering the inclination of the Bawit monastic authorities towards using fixed formulas in particular contexts.

165 This character of the letter has not escaped Wipszycka, ‘Le fonctionnement’ (cit. n. 20), p. 181: ‘C’est une prière, et non pas un ordre, comme le dit S. J. Clackson’.
to make, they do allow us to learn how they were received and what happened if the monks failed to deliver them.

The newly published *P. Köln ägypt. II 38* (eighth century) is a wine receipt issued by people from Senesla to the *dikaion* of Apa Apollo represented by the ‘father of the *topos*’, Apa Germane. The lengthy opening formula is worth quoting in full: ‘We, the koinon of the people of Senesla, through David son of Enoch (?), and NN son of Pхоibammon, and David son of Tiane, and Apanok son of Athanase, and all other landowners of the people of Senesla, are writing to the holy *dikaion* of Apa Apollo through Apa Germane, the father of the *topos* of Apa Apollo’. After the opening, the issuers acknowledge the receipt of a modest amount of wine (two *lakoote*; l. 8: ϗⲗⲁⲕⲟⲟⲧⲉ Ⲝⲧⲉ). The text informs us that the wine was delivered to Senesla people as a customary payment for the third indiction (the document itself was drawn up on 14 Pachon of the fourth indiction).

The term *synetheia* appears in two other Bawit documents, in contexts which suggest that the payments were not always discharged without interruption. *P. Köln ägypt. II 43* shows that slackness on the part of the monastery could put monastic representatives in a serious trouble. The text is a letter from a monk, Apa Joseph, to his superior, Apa Phoibammon. Joseph was staying away from the monastery, in an unknown village ‘in the north’ where the monastery apparently had a business. He was in charge of fieldwork in the area, and despite the initial troubles, he managed to carry on the execution of his tasks. A problem arose when the village scribe (l. 21: ⲏⲩⲣ Ⲣⲱⲃⲓⲧ) approached him asking about an overdue *synetheia* and the payment due for the current year. The situation became serious (the text suggest the possibility of Joseph’s arrest should the disbursement fail to be delivered) and the writer asked his superior to deal with the matter as soon as possible, and, interestingly, not to inform anyone about his troubles.

Since the text deals with a matter that was known to both the writer and the addressee, the nature of the *synetheia*-payment mentioned in it is not clarified. Gesa Schenke suggests a payment in money, translating *κατὰ λαβήν* (II. 24 and 26) as ‘(Geld-)Beutel’. Crum’s *Coptic Dictionary*, s.v. *κατὰ λαβήν*, gives ‘bag or some such receptacle’. I believe that Schenke’s supplemented translation is superfluous. The two other *synetheiai* we encounter in the Bawit dossier were both in kind.

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166 *P. Köln ägypt. II 38*, ll. 1–8: + ὁμ Κοίλην ἐνδικεῖαι εἰς ἑνεκείς ἢ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν τῷ ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτόν ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτόν ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτῷ ἢ ἑν ἑαυτώ κατὰ λαβήν (transl. JW).

167 Neither Joseph nor Phoibammon bear any titles that would allow us to determine their functions. Joseph calls himself simply ‘a monk’ (*ποιμήν*(*πάνικος*)) and addressed Phoibammon as ‘beloved father’ (*παμπερτ ἱερωτ*).

168 *Synetheia* was a customary additional payment expected from e.g. tenants of land; it was usually composed of agricultural products and next to the proper rent. Work contracts from the sixth and seventh century stipulate extra payments for the workers, also called *synetheiai*, paid on feastal occasions or around harvest (see below, p. 197).
is no reason to make the one in *P. Köln ägypt.* II 43 a cash payment (in this case, we would expect a concrete sum rather than somewhat vague mention of a ‘bag of cash’). The *synetheia* was rather an agricultural product that could be transported in bags.\(^{169}\)

In all three documents we are dealing with a yearly payment, described as customary, but nevertheless subject to execution either by persuasion or threat. *P. Köln ägypt.* II 38 points to a formalised character of *synetheia*, which required receipts issued by the representatives of village communities. The formalised character of the payment is further confirmed by *P. Brux. Bawit* 3, an order signed by Theodoros, in which an unknown product is to be given to ‘[…] the one from Tabo according to annual custom’ (I. 1: [- - -] πα ταβο προς τευχενεία κατὰ ποι[νε]).

Alain Delattre considers the *synetheia* in *P. Brux. Bawit* 3 ‘gratification habituelle’. *Synetheiai* for workers are attested in Greek documents of the Byzantine period; examples show that they were an integral element of estate accounts and a part of payment received by workers.\(^{170}\) The Bawit *synetheiai* probably did not differ from their precedents; they could have been modest (two *lakoote* of wine and one bag of an unknown product is all that we see in our documents; we cannot be sure that these amounts represent the entirety of the required *synetheiai*), but were nevertheless an element of mutual obligations incurred by the monastery and village communities. The texts connected with *synetheiai* feature village representatives: a whole group of the members of the Senesla *koion*\(^{171}\) and a village scribe. On the monastery’s side we have indications of the involvement of the archimandrite and the *dikaion* of the community; other texts mention monks who were concerned with the monastic administration and could be members of the *diakonia*.


\(^{169}\) Perhaps even grain, as suggested by the context. After describing his problem and asking Phoibammon for help, Joseph goes on explaining that he needed ‘grain for the fields’ (II. 29–33, as translated by Schenke): ‘Du hast zwar gesagt: “Öffnet keinerlei Türen! ” Siehe, ich habe (aber) das Getreide für den Acker benötigt. Ich habe die Schatzkammer geöffnet. Ich sage noch einmal, dass er sich anschickte, meine Hand zu verschließen’.


\(^{171}\) It is interesting to observe that the Senesla representatives identify themselves as ‘landowners (*παττητοιρ*) of the people of Senesla’. This reminds us of the Aphroditian petition *P. Cairo Map.* I 67082 (567), with the opening δέοσι καὶ κατά παι(ρί) τῶν ἐλενοττών δόσων ὡμιῶν καὶ θήλων λεπτοκτήτορον τέ καὶ δικητόρον τῆς παντάσλεσις κράτις Ἀφροδίτης. The humble designation λεπτοκτήτορος was nothing more than a rhetorical device aimed at capturing the benevolence of the petition’s recipient, the *dux* of the Thebaid; what was meant was most probably the group of affluent landowners at Aphroditos; a reservoir, so to speak, of village leaders who represented the community before authorities and other communities. In Senesla, just like in Aphroditos nearly two hundred years earlier, we can catch a glance of a similar system.
Synetheiai must have been important for the process of integration of the monastery into the local social landscape. It is interesting to see that the monks were by no means a privileged party: in case of their negligence, the matter could be pursued by lay representatives using more or less polite means. Again, the monastery had to take into account the interest of local communities and their eagerness to claim whatever they thought was justly due. Although this cannot be read directly from our documents, matters of prestige and trust must have also played a part in these relations.

There is, however, another document mentioning a neglected synetheia, this time of a different nature. *P. Mon. Apollo* 55, written by an unknown person from Pesou(te) to a member of Apa Apollo community\(^\text{172}\) contains elements of both a polite request and a letter of complaint. The subject of the letter are two textile objects called *mabortia* (l. 4: *στὰ μαφόρτε*) which had not been delivered to the village by a subordinate of the addressee, contrary to a customary arrangement. The delivery, again, was supposed to happen on a yearly basis (l. 5: *πρὸς τὴν ηἰκα τῆς ῥομῆ*).

Sarah J. Clackson proposed to see in the *mabortia* of *P. Mon. Apollo* 55 either women’s head coverings or cloaks for monks. In the former case they would have been a charitable offering for poor women (not necessarily female monks, although this interpretation cannot be entirely excluded); in the latter, it would appear that the monastery at Bawit supplied another community with necessary clothing.\(^\text{173}\) Given the reference to a village made in l. 3 (*πεντηκος πεογθή*, ‘our village Pesouete’), I would rather incline, following Alain Delattre, towards the former interpretation.\(^\text{174}\)

While reading *P. Mon. Apollo* 55, one is vaguely reminded of *PSI* XIV 1425, a fifth-century epistolary petition to a *megaloprepestatos kyrios* of an *endoicos oikos*, perhaps the Apion house itself.\(^\text{175}\) It was written by monks of a *koimobion* who ask the addressee ‘not to neglect us […] and order to deliver the things that your glorious house has granted as a benefaction according to custom (ἐκ ἐθούς), so that we express our gratitude accordingly’.\(^\text{176}\) Here, the overdue disbursement was

\[^{172}\] *P. Mon. Apollo* 55, l. 10: *οὐχ θετήτω ηὔμαρτι καὶ θέτων πολυῖ·* *(to my) God-honoured lord and honoured father*.


\[^{174}\] *P. Brux. Bawit*, p. 186. See also Delattre’s commentary to l. 1 of *P. Bruc. Bawit* 3 with the explanation of the term *synetheia* as used in the document: ‘cf. Förster, *WB*, p. 778, qui cite pour ce sens [i.e. ‘gratification habituelle’], à mon avis à tort, *P. Mon. Apollo* 55’. Delattre is convinced that the *synetheia* of *P. Mon. Apollo* 55 had a charitable character and was not connected with the monastery’s ordinary economic affairs; see *P. Bruc. Bawit*, p. 186: ‘Il semblerait qu’il s’agisse d’une donation à laquelle l’habitude aurait donné un caractère quasi obligatoire’. A trace of the monastery’s charitable activity is probably to be found in *P. Bruc. Bawit* 9, an order of disbursement of oine *megas* of wine for the poor (‘[…] pauvre(s) par charité’, l. 1: + _καὶ_ ἄχρι θαλαμ[α]τικον αὐτῆ*).


\[^{176}\] *PSI* XIV 1425, ll. 3–6: [ἀλλὰ ἀν- - - κεχαλέως προσποιουόμενοι ἡμῶν ὡς ἐκ ἐθούς εὐχαριστήκη τοῖς ἀνδρέσι ὑμῶν ὀίκοις ὡς καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο εἴχασθε τίμαν αὐτήν. For the discussion of the document, see above, Chapter 1, pp. 28–29.
probably a pious offering. Whether it was necessary or not for the survival of the monastery, we cannot say; but the mechanism behind the claim was similar in both cases: an obligation, once undertaken, had to be fulfilled. An elevated social standing or religious status of the negligent party did not matter as much as we would have thought—not so much as to stop the other party from making claims. This was true in the sphere of economic and symbolic obligations. We can see the writer of P. Köln ägypt. II 43 doing his best to secure the delivery of the belated disbursement. He could be embarrassed with the situation and accuse the village scribe of handling the matter in a way that suggested a certain amount of ill will, but he nevertheless duly asked his superior to send the required products, without denying the scribe’s right to claim them. Documentary papyri present a complicated network of relations in which kind requests go hand in hand with threat; the monasteries were a part of it to the same extent as other members of the society.

Village representatives could intervene not only on behalf of their communities, but also individuals. In P. Köln X 426, a village scribe (𝔓𝔓_nickhe) Pankraten is writing to a member of a monastic community, Apa Pkol, with a request for a letter of recommendation for another person. The letter is to be presented to another scribe, Ioannes. The details are obscure, but in any case the document shows that village representatives were willing to act on behalf of their fellow villagers to obtain help from the representatives of the monastery. Unfortunately, the text cannot be attributed with absolute certainty to the Bawit dossier.

Three among the orders of monastic superiors indicate that village headmen were receiving money from the monastery. P. Bawit Clackson 7 and 8 are ἄρνειον πετρεῖται documents—a category of texts notorious for the scantiness of information on the context they provide. For that reason

177 The name of the community is, unfortunately, unpreserved. The scribe Pankraten from Samalut—a village in the Hermopolite nome—addresses his monastic correspondent in the following manner (ll. 2–3): τεχνητὸς ρῆμακος … ἔμοι ἄμα παῦα ψαλω ψαλω Κρόνου Παῦλου ἁμα [a name of the patron saint of the institution to which the addressee belonged]; (your Fatherhood in the Lord […] brother Apa Pkol, the great man of the holy Abba NN). The letter, interestingly, features the designation μνοῦ ἴρῳς, commonly used for heads of monastic and lay communities (see P. Mon. Epiph., p. 131) but surprisingly rare in the Bawit dossier (P. Hengstenberg 4 [= SB Kopt. III 1492], l. 1: μνοῦ ἴρῳς εὐξα ὑπὸ ρῶν ὁ πλεῖς ὁ Προκλῆς, translated by Alain Delattre as ‘les grands hommes qui sèment les plantes dans le grand jardin’; see Delattre, ‘Ordres de paiement’ (cit. n. 19), p. 389; cf. also P. Mon. Apollo 25: ‘other trustworthy great brothers of the monastery’; l. 4: ἄρνειον πετρεῖται ἡμῶν ἱερομοναχῶν ἕτερον ἑλεύθερον.

178 The editor, Gesa Schenke, did not comment on the provenance of the document, apart from the brief statement that both the mention of the Hermopolite village Samalut and linguistic features of the document point to the Hermopolite nome (see the introduction to P. Köln X 426). In the commentary to the designation μνοῦ ἴρῳς in l. 3, Schenke refers to an Apa Pkol invoked in an inscription on a stela from Bala’izah (𝔓𝔓 𝜙ἢψικός αἱ ὀψίῳ; see the inscription no. 7 on pl. LIII in W. M. Flinders Petrie, Memphis I, London 1909); however, she refrains from connecting the text with the monastery at Bala’izah. P. Köln X 426 has been ascribed to the Bawit dossier in the list of published documents connected with the monastery: P. Louvre Bawit, Annexe, pp. 133–175 (at p. 161).
we cannot determine why the $\text{ⲡⲏⲩⲉ}$ obtained money from the monastic ‘managerial board’. P. Bawit Clackson 8 explicitly mentions ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ and the tax itself; I believe that the very fact that both texts mention money, which is rare in the ‘our father’ dossier outside fiscal context, may point to the fact that these payments belonged to the sphere of taxation. Unfortunately, in the present state of our knowledge the connection between local headmen and the monastic system of poll-tax management must remain unexplained.

P. Brux. Bawit 16 mentions $\text{ⲡⲧⲡⲡⲁⲡⲏⲣⲉⲡⲃⲓⲅ(ⲃ)ⲧ(ⲗ)}$ as a recipient of various alimentary products. In the commentary to line 1, Alain Delattre writes: ‘Il semblerait dans ce cas que le terme ne désigne pas un chef de village, mais un supérieur de manière générale’. It is indeed difficult to interpret the meaning of the word $\text{ⲡⲏⲩⲉ}$ in this particular context. I believe that the person was in any case a layman (in the vast dossier of the Bawit monastery $\text{ⲡⲏⲩⲉ}$ is never used to refer to monastic superiors or functionaries). Administrators of monastic property did not have to be monks; we can imagine that a village official could keep an eye on monastic property on the spot and receive wages. But without more documentation it is impossible to say anything about the role of representatives of rural communities in monastic economy and fiscality.

The Bawit monastery is sometimes described in terms of its economic power and compared to great landowners known from earlier papyrus documentation (see below, p. 218–219). It certainly marked its presence in many places in the southern part of the Hermopolite nome, and the scope of its agricultural activity is undeniable. But the documents we have at our disposal show clearly that this situation did not translate straightforwardly into an absolute social dominance. Local communities could defend their interests if the monastery failed to fulfil its obligations; some actions undertaken within the community needed their seal of approval. Village representatives—members of the local elite—on one hand, and monastic figures from the managerial circles on the other provided channels of communication thanks to which the matters were dealt with as smoothly and profitably for both sides as possible. The monks not always had the upper hand, but

headman of Titkoohe. The sum is to be reckoned as poll-tax; unfortunately, we do not have enough information to explain the procedure. See also P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. Inv. M 662 B (5b), an order where village headmen are mentioned in an unclear context in connection with wine delivery (see Delattre, Pilette & Vanthieghem, ‘Papyrus coptes’ (cit. n. 19), pp. 38–39.

The monasteries administered by laymen could be private religious foundations (the chief examples being the monastery of Apa Apollos, the father of Dioskoros of Aphrodito, and the Aphroditan monastery of Apa Sourous; see above, Chapter 2); this, however, was not the case with Bawit. But in the case of P. Brux. Bawit 31 we are not dealing with a general administrator, but rather an administrative worker, probably attached to a certain section of monastic property. Cf. P. Russ. Georg. III 48 (6th c.) mentions Koursios son of Josephios, pro nominate of the monastery of Apa Shenoute and apparently a layman, issuing a rent receipt to Aurelius Phoibammon, lessee of land in Phthla near Aphrodito. We can suspect that Koursios was responsible for the land owned by the monastery in the region of Aphrodito.
this was a natural consequence of integration with an environment of scattered landed property, with many neighbours and many ensuing social ties (and, eventually, tensions). If we go back to the Aphrodito dossier, we can catch a glimpse of some of the problems that a monastery integrated in a rural landscape could face (see above, Chapter 2). The Bawit documents reveal another facet of what must have been the reality under Arab rule, in the Egyptian chora that still has remained largely unchanged in terms of its everyday functioning.

4.3. Individual loan contracts: an unmediated relation between monks and laymen

The Bawit monks could retain their private property and make use of it the way they wished. The most conspicuous testimony to this capacity of the community members is the dossier of loan contracts concluded between Bawit monks (creditors) and laypeople from various villages (debtors).

In the following argument I decided to treat the Coptic loan contracts and the earlier Greek documents mentioning the monastery of Titkois/Titkooh together, following the approach of Alain Delattre, whose proposition to identify the monastery of Titkois/Titkooh and the monastery of Apa Apollo seems to me entirely convincing (see above, p. 156). This choice was made not with the intention of sketching a cohesive diachronic picture of the activities of the monks of Apa Apollo as moneylenders, but rather to show some long-lasting general tendencies. We need to remember that the dossier is supposed to be chronologically scattered throughout three centuries (sixth–eighth), with the majority of the documents dated only on palaeographical grounds. The texts will not show us how many monks engaged in moneylending activities at a given moment; however, they do point to a lasting presence of financially independent monks in the community for over two centuries, and shed light on networks of contacts established by them.181

Monastic loans from Bawit have already been a subject of analyses. In the edition of documents from the monastery of Apa Apollo, Sarah J. Clackson famously stated that ‘monasteries performed a public service by providing what appear to have been interest-free “banking” facilities for laypeople’.182 This view was challenged by Tomasz Markiewicz in his contribution to the collection of studies published in honour of Sarah Clackson in 2009.183 Markiewicz showed that monastic loans were not interest-free and fit well with what can be called commercial activity. His

181 Financial independence of the Bawit monks is visible also in the archaeological material. As we have already observed (see above, p. 154), excavations as Bawit showed a number of carefully built and beautifully decorated monks’ dwellings built most probably at the expense of their inhabitants. Architectural remains of monks’ houses on the Bawit kom show not only that the monks had financial means, but also that these means could be quite considerable, allowing the monks to maintain quite high living standards.


view received support in the form of a recently published document, P. CtYBR inv. 1747, a loan contract between a monk and a layman, most probably mentioning interest on four solidi of the capital.\textsuperscript{184} Formal and linguistic aspects of the loan contracts from Bawit have been explored by Alain Delattre in his introduction to the edition of \textit{P. Brux. Bawit} 34 and 35; his study still remains the best general introduction to this category of documents, despite the fact that it is focused mainly on the Coptic part of the dossier.\textsuperscript{185}

The table below gathers such information on the creditors and debtors in monastic loans from Bawit as can be obtained from the preserved documents.

\textbf{Table 1. Excerpts from loan contracts connected with the monastery of Apa Apollo in Bawit}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Creditor</th>
<th>Debtor</th>
<th>Sum</th>
<th>Witnesses</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>\textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 18</td>
<td>487/8</td>
<td>NN, [a monk?] ‘of the holy Apa Apollos’</td>
<td>Aurelius Biktor s. of Olympios</td>
<td>6 sol. less 2 (\frac{1}{2}) ker. each</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>money measured according to the standard of the village of Pois (Koussite nome); Coptic subscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XXII 15322 = \textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 8+13</td>
<td>19 III 535</td>
<td>NN son of Papnouthios, camel-driver of the monastery of Abba Apollos</td>
<td>Aurelius Abraamin s. of Papnouthios and Nonna, with his guarantor, Aurelius Makare s. of Biktor and NN, both from Magdolon Megalou (Hermopolite nome)</td>
<td>1 sol. less 6 ker.</td>
<td>Aurelius Phibis s. of Biktor, olive-maker; Hellos s. of NN; Phibis s. of Phoibammon; (all from the same village) Aurelius Phoibammon s. of Apollos (scribe?)</td>
<td>Coptic subscription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{P. Amst. I} 47</td>
<td>1 II 537</td>
<td>Serenos, the archimandrite of the holy monastery of Abba Apollos in the territory of the village Titkois</td>
<td>Aurelius […]nes s. of Bekios and NN, from a village in the Hermopolite</td>
<td>equivalent of more than 250 \textit{knidia} of must</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>sale on future delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>\textit{P. Amst. I} 48</td>
<td>6th c.</td>
<td>Serenos, the archimandrite of the holy monastery of</td>
<td>NN from a village in the Hermopolite</td>
<td>Equivalent of 450 \textit{knidia} of must</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>sale on future delivery; empty jars</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{184} The formula is almost entirely restored, but the editor of the document, Amin Benaissa, shows that the ‘restoration is virtually inevitable’; see Benaissa, ‘A usurious monk’ (cit. n. 19), p. 375.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Athen. Xyla 5</td>
<td>7 IX 539</td>
<td>Abba Apollo in the territory of the village Titkois provided by Serenos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XVI 1226?</td>
<td>13 VII 540</td>
<td>Apa Anouphios, monk of the monastery of Apa Apollo in oros of the village Titkois, Aurelius Mathias s. of Pamounios and Tabiktor with his guarantor, Aurelius Abraamios s. of Danielios, komarches, both from Moirai (Koussite nome)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Athen. Xyla 10</td>
<td>19 XI 543</td>
<td>Aurelius Apollos s. of Horos, monk of the monastery of Abba Apollos in oros of the village Titkois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Copt Museum 3512?</td>
<td>566/7</td>
<td>Iakubios s. of Danielios from (the village?) NN, monk of the holy monastery of Apa Apollos in oros of the village Titkois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Lond. V 1899 descr.</td>
<td>18 VI 600</td>
<td>Abba Isaak pr(eshyter / provestoi?) [and monk] of the holy monastery of Abba Apollos in oros of the village Titkois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Coptic Museum 3512?</td>
<td>25 III 610</td>
<td>NN from the holy monastery of abba Apollos in oros of Titkois</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document</th>
<th>6th c.</th>
<th>Monastery</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Witness</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Currency</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P. Athen. Xyla 6</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>NN from the village Demetriou</td>
<td>equivalent of 150 metra of new wine</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>sale on delivery; wine measured according to the standard of the monastery ( attribution based on the standard)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Athen. Xyla 12</td>
<td>Apa Andreas (a monk?)</td>
<td>Aurelius Anoup s. of David</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>Sois s. of Biktor, a deacon</td>
<td>the document mentions tokoi (l. 2: τούτων τοῦς τόκους) Coptic subscription</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Athen. Xyla 19</td>
<td>NN, monk of the most revered monastery of Apa Apollos in oros of the village Titkois</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>due to the state of preservation, the type of the document cannot be determined with certainty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB VI 9051 = SB XXII 15596</td>
<td>Abba Phoibammon from the monastery / topoi of Abba Apollos in oros of the village Titkois of the Hermopolite nome</td>
<td>Aure. Matheias s. Theodoros &amp; NN from the village Tanemois (Herm.)</td>
<td>equivalent of 3,5 artabae of wheat</td>
<td>Aur. NN s. NN; Mouis s. of Abra[...]; Elias s. of Serenos; Aurelius Ioannes s. of Biktor, subscriber for the witnesses and the scribe</td>
<td>wheat measured according to the measure of the monk; Greek subscription; penalty: 14 ker. in the case of non-compliance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XXIV 16130 = P. Palau Rib. 243a</td>
<td>NN, monazon of the holy monastery of Abba Apollos in oros of the village Titkois</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SB XVI 12401+12402 = SB XXII 15595</td>
<td>Abba Apollos, monk of the holy monastery of Abba Apollos in oros of the village Titkois of the Hermopolite nome</td>
<td>Aurelius Anoush s. of Ioannes and Thecharie from the village of Tanemois (Hermopolite nome)</td>
<td>equivalent of 140 metra of must</td>
<td>Aurelius Enoch s. of NN; Biktor s. of Noumenios</td>
<td>sale on future delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P. Mon. Apollo 36</td>
<td>Apa Enoch, monk of the monastery of Apa Apollo</td>
<td>Biktor s. of Mathias from Esou (Hermopolite nome) with surety, Pieou s. Papre</td>
<td>equivalent of 30 sextarii of oil</td>
<td>Serene s. of Biktor; Pakob s. of George; Paulos s. of Ioseph, scribe</td>
<td>sale on future delivery; oil measured according to Enoch’s measure; Greek subscription</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we take into consideration all loans from the Bawit monastery (thirty-five documents),
we observe that loans between monks and laymen (twenty-four examples) outnumber those
between monks. Interestingly, the whole Greek part of the dossier are loans involving laypeople;
in the Coptic part, the majority of documents record monastic loans. Out of twenty-four

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189 S. J. Clackson and A. Delattre, the editors of the document, consider him a layman, due to the appearance of
precise juridical formulas which are seldom found in documents between monks (P. Louvre Bawit, p. 28).
190 The editors of the documents, however, consider him a layman, invoking the fact that he is acting with his mother,
a hardly imaginable thing for a monk (for possible arguments to the contrary, see below, p. 213); also, in contrast
to other monastic loans between monks of Apa Apollo, Pekosh is not styled a monk in the body of the document
(see Albarrán Martínez & Delattre, ‘Un contrat de prêt’ [cit. n. 19], p. 81).
191 The count is based on the tables compiled by Delattre in P. Brux. Bawit, pp. 257–259, with additions (P. Athen. Xyla
19; P. CtYBR inv. 1747; P. Lond. V 1899 descr.; P. Palau-Rib. inv. 354). I decided not to include P. Athen. Xyla 17
(marked as dubious also by Delattre); this document bears no trace of any titles or other indications that people
involved in the transaction were in any way connected with the monastery.
documents quoted in Table 1, thirteen are the so-called sales on future delivery and loans to be repaid in kind; goods mentioned in these contracts include wine, grain, and oil.\footnote{For sales on delivery and information on the documents’ formulary, see \textit{P. Heid. V}, pp. 296–339; see also R. S. Bagnall, ‘Prices in sales on delivery’, \textit{GRBS} 18 (1977), pp. 85–96; A. Jördens, ‘Kaufpreisstundungen (sales on credit)’, \textit{ZPE} 98 (1993), pp. 263–282; N. Kruit, ‘Local customs in the formulas of sales of wine for future delivery’, \textit{ZPE} 94 (1992), pp. 167–184; Kruit, ‘Three Byzantine sales’ (cit. n. 13), p.67 with n. 1; E. Jakab, ‘Guarantee and jars in sales of wine on delivery’, \textit{JJP} 29 (1999), pp. 33–44. See also Chapter 3, pp. 143–145 concerning the Naqlun example of a monastic sale of wine on future delivery taking place in a semi-anchoritic community.}

In the following argument I will not dwell on subjects already explored in previous scholarship, such as the economic questions or the formal aspects of the documents. The elements I intend to analyse include the identity of the creditors; the identity and provenance of the debtors; witnesses, guarantors, and scribes; finally, standards and measures used in the documents.

4.3.1. The creditors

Almost the whole corpus of Bawit loan contracts consists of loans given by individuals to individuals. The only case where an institutional creditor appears is \textit{P. Mon. Apollo 38}—a loan given to a ‘monk of the holy Apa Apollo’ by the dikaios of the monastery acting through Apa Theodoros, ‘the archimandrite and father [of the topos]’. No such example is to be found among loans given to laypeople. The creditors are monks of Apa Apollo monastery, whose affiliation is stated in the opening section of the document, which in both Greek and Coptic variants assumes the form of epistolary salutation.\footnote{See Delattre, \textit{P. Brux. Bawit}, p. 244.}

The forms of the introduction of the monastic affiliation of the creditors vary; the majority of the documents state that the creditor belonged to the monastery of Apa Apollo in the village Titkois/Titkooh. The toponym is absent from the Coptic documents (except for \textit{P. Mon. Apollo 33}, ll. 1–2: \textit{ⲁⲡⲁ ⲡⲥⲓⲛⲟⲥ ⲡⲓⲁⲡⲗⲁ ⲡⲟⲩ ⲡⲙⲟⲩⲟⲭⲟⲥ [ⲡⲧⲟⲟⲩ ⲡⲧⲓⲧⲕⲟⲟ υⲩⲡⲟⲟ ⲡⲧⲓⲧⲕⲟⲟⲧⲓ]}\footnote{Other Coptic documents from the dossier mentioning monastery at Titkooh: \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 1 and 2 (aparche-collection agreements; 7th c.); \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 43 (fragmentary acknowledgement of a debt; 8th c.); \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 61 and 62 (fragmentary documents opening with the \textit{ⲧⲟⲩⲩ ⲡⲟⲟⲩ ⲡⲧⲓⲧⲕⲟⲟⲧⲓ} formula, possibly debt acknowledgments; 7th–8th c.); \textit{P. Lauren Bawit} 9 (fragmentary contract concerning aparche; 7th–8th c.); \textit{P. Köln ägypt. II} 30 (aparche-collection agreement; 7th c.). The dates have been established on palæographical basis.} and \textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 18. These inconsistencies are most probably random.

In the majority of the documents which preserve the opening clause, leaving little or virtually no doubt as to the status of at least one of the parties, the creditors are explicitly called \textit{μονάζοντες}. Five contracts give additional information on their functions in the monastery: \textit{P. Amst. I 47} and 48 introduce Serenos the archimandrite; Apa Phib from \textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 10 was a monk and the ‘chief olive-maker’ (\textit{ἄρχων ἐλαιωργός}) of the monastery; \textit{P. Lond. V} 1899 descr. mentions either a clerical or administrative function, as the abbreviation in l. 8, \textit{ἀββᾶ Ἡσακίῳ πρ( ), can stand for either \textit{προεστότι} or \textit{πρεσβυτέρῳ}. \textit{SB XXII} 15322 differs from the other textst. It features NN son
of Pamouthios, camel-driver of the monastery (ll. 9–10: Παπνουθίου καμηλαρίου [- - μοναστηρίου Άββα Απολλώτος [χαίρειν]). Interestingly, the document does not call Pamouthios a monk and mentions his patronymic. In any case, the connection of the man with the monastery of Apa Apollo was strong enough to serve as the main element of his identification. The absence of his monastic title is perhaps a result of omission.

All these functions and titles serve as elements of the creditors’ description and it seems that they have nothing to do with the content of the documents. In the most striking of the cases, that of Serenos the archimandrite, nothing in the document suggests that he was acting on behalf of the monastery. P. Amst. I 47 and 48 speak of large quantities of must acquired by Serenos: at least 250 and 450 knidia respectively; it is possible that Serenos redistributed the wine in the monastery, but this would count as private business anyway. In any case, the monastery as institution had other means of securing wine deliveries for the community (see below, pp. 227–228); this sphere of activity on one hand, and particular entrepreneurial acts as those of Serenos on the other, did not necessarily overlap.

The loan contracts illustrate well the character of the community of Apa Apollo, where all monks, from ordinary brothers to functionaries, or even the archimandrite himself, could engage in individual transactions. It is difficult to say whether this individual business was linked to the relations of the whole monastery with the external world; nevertheless, we will try to find traces of such links through a careful exploration of information about the debtors provided in the documents.

4.3.2. The debtors

The majority of the documents under scrutiny preserve information about the debtors: their names, names of their parents, or their places of origin. Except for the protokometes of the village Sentrphy in SB XVI 12267 (l. 3: [Αὐρήλιος ὁ δείνα τοῦ δείνος πρωτοκ(ωμήτης) ἀπὸ κόμης Σεντρύφεως) and

195 Read: Παπνουθίου καμηλαρίου. The text was published for the first time in P. Athen. Xyla as two separate documents, 8 and 13. The two fragments were joined and re-published by B. Kramer, ‘Urkundenreferat’, AP 40 (1994), pp. 177–227, esp. pp. 194–199. The lacuna before νουθίω καμηλαρίου was deemed too large by the editors to hold only the name of the creditor, hence the interpretation of νουθίω as the ending of a genitive—patronymic of the creditor.

196 Cf. the case of Apa Neilos, receiving 250 kanu of wine as a repayment of debt in P. Naghum II 23 (see above, Chapter 3, pp. 144–145). Serenos was also supposed to provide empty jars for wine, as is the case in the majority of sales on delivery (see S. Gallimore, ‘A contract for the advanced sale of wine’, BASP 49 [2012], pp. 151–165, esp. p. 161–163). Serenos could order the jars in the pottery workshop of the monastery (the monastery must have produced its own jars, including vessels for wine; this is indirectly confirmed by the mention of the measure of the topos of Apa Apollo in ll. 5–6 of P. Athen. Xyla 6). On the destination of wine purchased on delivery, see D. Dzierzbićka, *Wine in Greco-Roman Egypt*, Warsaw 2011 (doctoral dissertation prepared under the supervision of Tomasz Derda), p. 197.
the two headmen of Migdol in *P. Mon. Apollo* 34 (l. 1: ΑΛΟΥΠΙΗ ΚΟΛΕΗ ΝΑΠΗΟΥΕ ΝΗΓΔΑΩΛ), the
debtors do not bear titles or designations of function. All of them originated from villages of the
Hermopolite and the Koussite nomes and most probably made their living as farmers—owners or
tenants of plots of land, including vineyards, as attested by a number of sales of wine on delivery.
A more precise description of their status is, unfortunately, impossible. Sarah J. Clackson attempted
to establish a prosopographic link between two of the documents: *P. Athen.* Xyla 10 (543) and *P.*
*Mon. Apollo* 33 (palaeographically dated to the seventh century). The former features a certain
Aurelius Phoibammon from Demetriou, son of Mousaios and Pia, in the role of the debtor; in the
latter, a Pia daughter of Dioskre (Dioskoros) from Tahrouj (Greek Tarrouthis) borrows money
from a monk of the monastery of Apa Apollo. Clackson suggested to identify the former and the
latter Pia and re-date *P. Mon. Apollo* 33 to the first half of the sixth century. While the fact that
Phoibammon and Pia lived in two different villages does not exclude the identification (it is possible
that an adult man would move to another, not very remote, village to establish his own family), I
believe that the premise is in general too weak to build upon it.

Villagers could seek credit with people or institutions possessing ready cash in order to
fulfil their fiscal obligations; however, as observed by Alain Delattre, the sums mentioned in the
loan contracts from Bawit exceed those which appear in fiscal documents. It is therefore possible
that the debtors needed money to invest them; in the case of sales on future delivery we can
even imagine that the money borrowed from monks before the vintage was supposed to pay the
cost of the vintage itself. In this manner, monks of the Bawit monastery would play a role in local

The documentation we have at our disposal is too scanty to allow for any kind of statistical
reasoning, but from what we see it seems that the monks of the monastery of Apa Apollo
maintained more vivid contacts with some of the villages. Out of twelve documents that preserve
the debtors’ place of origin, four (maybe five) mention the village Tanemois, and two Demetriou;
other toponyms appear only once.

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197 *P. Mon. Apollo*, p. 26. Clackson suggested also a link with *P. Mon. Apollo* 36, where the creditor was a certain Apa
Enoch from the monastery of Apa Apollo; she connected Enoch with Apa Ienocho of *P. Mon. Apollo* 33. *P. Mon.
Apollo* 36 is dated palaeographically to the first half of the sixth century, which would support the earlier date for
*P. Mon. Apollo* 33. Enoch, however, was a banal name, and this attempt at identification is only hypothetical.

198 For general information on mobility of people in Egypt, see H. Braunert, *Die Binnenwanderung: Studien zur


200 Tanemois: *P. Lond.* V 1899 descr.; SB XXII 15595; SB XXII 15596; *P. Bawit Louvre* 18 preserves only the beginning
of the toponym: ἀπὸ κώμης Τάνεμοις. Demetriou: *P. Athen.* Xyla 10; *P. Athen.* Xyla 6. Magdolon Mega: SB XXII
Demetriou does not appear anywhere else in the monastic dossier; Tanemois recurs both in another Bawit document and inscriptions from the site. Mentions of people from Tanemois in the epigraphic material point to the possible circumstances of establishing relations: visitors to the monastery would get to know its residents, learning of those among the monks who could and were willing to provide credit. P. Mon. Apollo 53 (letter; eighth century?), although difficult to interpret, hints at further connections of the monastery with the village. The addressee of the letter is Iaanes, the monk of Apa Apollo; the sender is NN, ‘son of Eisak (and?) Lia, of Danaier (?).’ The subject of the letter were financial matters (the nature of which is obscured by the state of preservation of the text and its usual vagueness) in which ‘the people of Tanamneou’, who had sent half a solidus to the sender, were involved. We will never know the destination of the sum, but what we do glimpse is a ‘business’ connection of some kind between villagers and monks. It would be interesting to know if the relation recorded here worked on individual or community level; unfortunately, we are unable to determine it.

Migdol—a toponym attested in P. Mon. Apollo 34—can possibly be identified with a place mentioned in several other written testimonies: an inscription and five documents. The mention in P. Mon. Apollo 51 (ⲙⲓⲩⲗⲁⲛⲟⲩⲣⲓⲉ) is very ambiguous. The document is an agreement mentioning the sum of three carats; two toponyms, Midjol and Nemhate, appear in lines 7 and 4. The text might have been connected with aparche-collection. If this is the case, it would follow from the document that the monastery possessed land in the vicinity of the two locations mentioned in the text. Connection with Migdol is visible also in other documents, CPR XX 15 and 18, which are two waybills for fish preservatives (ⲧⲁⲣⲓⲉⲝⲉ). People responsible for the transport are Salman and Tauros from Migdol (CPR XX 15: ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲙⲣⲕⲃⲛⲟⲩ; CPR XX 18: ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲙⲣⲕⲃⲛⲟⲩ). CPR XX 15 is a typical Ⲟⲓⲉⲣⲓⲣⲉ ⲡⲟⲥ ostraca; CPR XX 18 has a different formulary, but it is certainly a waybill variant. Further attestations of the toponym are found in the corpus of Bawit ostraca from the

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201 For this location, see Drew-Bear, Le nome hermopolite, p. 90. Demetriou was an epiokion that at some point became an independent village (it is called both kome, like in our documents, and epiokion).

202 P. Mon. Apollo 53, ll. 4–5: ‘The people of Tananeuou have sent (?) me (?) a half solidus to finish it (?).’ For the inscriptions, see Clédat, Le monastère (= MIFAO 12) (cit. n. 2), p. 121, no. 8 and 9 (inscriptions from ‘Chapel XX’, commemorating monks bearing the designation ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲙⲣⲕⲃⲛⲟⲩ); p. 78, an inscription in ‘Chapel XVII’ mentioning ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲙⲣⲕⲃⲛⲟⲩ; see also Maspero & Drioton, Foulles (cit. n. 2), vol. I, p. 49, no. 2 (inscription in Hall 1: ⲧⲧⲥⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲙⲣⲕⲃⲛⲟⲩ); p. 64, no. 60, l. 10 (long inscription mentioning, among others, ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲙⲣⲕⲃⲛⲟⲩ); p. 177, no. 388, l. 6 (long inscription mentioning, among others, ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ; see also Drew-Bear, Le nome hermopolite, pp. 264–265.

203 Clédat, ‘Le monastère et la necropole’ (cit. n. 2), no. 2.17.

204 For Nemhate, see Timm, Ägypten, vol. IV, pp. 1766–1767. The place is tentatively located in the Herakleopolite nome.

205 S. Clackson ascribed the document to the Bawit dossier based on its epistolary formula ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ NN ⲑⲧⲧⲩⲣⲟⲦ. This formula appears in internal monastic agreements, mainly those connected with aparche.
Fribourg collection. O. Bawit Frib. 39 is a ωνε νεα document concerning the transport of two bags of wheat by a man from Midjol, προδιμιξολ; the editor of the corpus reconstructs ηιξολ also in O. Bawit Frib. 47 (ll. 2–3: ρνοσυνε νε(ο)υο ντε [νιξολ]).

In ΣΒ XX 15322 we find a similar toponym, Magdolon Megalou; however, its identification with other similarly sounding Hermopolite place names is problematic. Migdol/Midjol/Mikdol could perhaps be treated as one and the same place, while Magdolon Megalou would refer to another village. The editors of the documents featuring Migdol/Midjol/Mikdol point to a possibility of identifying this place with Magdolon Mire, a settlement in the Hermopolite nome in the toparchy of Peri Polin Kato attested in a number of late documents.206 The connection, however, is uncertain, since ‘Migdol’ was a popular element of Egyptian toponyms. It seems all the same that a place called Migdol/Midjol/Mikdol was an important point in the Bawit network. Mikdol/Midjol is a source of alimentary products (wheat and preserved fish) in four ωνε νεα ostraca, while P. Mon. Apollo 51 points to a connection between Midjol and financial operations effectuated by monks. It would seem that the community of Apa Apollo play a double role for the people of Migdol: on an institutional level, the monastery was connected with the village as a landowner or a business partner, while on individual level monks of the monastery acted as a source of credit for the villagers.

Other toponyms from the loan dossier do not appear in the remaining part of Bawit documentation (Esou;207 Sentries;208 and Tahrouj/Tarouthis209). Tahrouj features in a number of documents from Wadi Sarga connected with wine deliveries;210 it is also mentioned in SPP XX 241 (sixth–seventh century) in a list of wine-producing ktemata.211 The case of Moirai212 is more ambiguous; it appears in P. Duk. inv. 93, which, I believe, can be added to the Bawit dossier based on the appearance of toponyms that recur in documents connected with the monastery in a more secure way.213 Interestingly, all the locations that we are able to pinpoint with

206 Magdola Mire; see Drew-Bear, Le nome hermopolite, pp. 160–163; Timm, Αγγυτ, vol. IV, pp. 1671–1673, s.v. Miqtul, with variations of the toponym attested in different documents. The identification of the Coptic variant ηιξολ with Magdola Mire is treated as certain by Serena Lopizzo (see O. Bawit Frh. 39, commentary to l. 4).
208 Drew-Bear, Le nome hermopolite, p. 245.
211 SPP XX 241, ll. 1–2: ἡ ἐπικάθαντον ὤντος [κάθημα(πτων)] Βάνου δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἱεριστικῆς καὶ τακτικῆς Ταρρούθου(του) μεταστάσεως Ιουσίου κοινη(ῶν) [- - -].
213 Three toponyms recur in P. Bruc. Bawit 31 and P. Duk. inv. 93: τοποί of Jeremias, Time, and Neos Lakkos. In l. 2 of P. Duk. inv. 93 we find τάκας Καμμέτος (Ἐπιφανες τάκας) Καμμέτου(τος) σήμαινε (ἄρτημα) β, which can probably be identified with toponyms mentioned in P. Bruc. Bawit 26 (order of payment l. 1: ξοσσνυ έγκυον πόρος Κάμν, ‘the brothers assigned to the field of Kame’); P. Duk. inv. 259 (ll. 3–4: Άκα Κολθος έγκυον πόρος Κάμν, ‘Apa Kolthe who
more or less precision are in the southern part of the Hermopolite nome, thus probably not far from the monastery itself.

Unsurprisingly, we are dealing with a very fragmentarily preserved local network of contacts; and unfortunately, we find ourselves at a loss trying to reconstruct its formation and changes it must have undergone in time. In the case of Migdol it is clear that individual relations of monks with villagers could go hand in hand with institutional interest of the monastery. Analogous situation could exist at Moirai, if P. Duk. inv. 93 belonged indeed to the Bawit dossier. Interests of the community would certainly stimulate contacts between individuals on both sides. But if we regard our material as a whole, we can glimpse no legible patterns that would allow us to establish connections between institutional networks of the monastery as we know them from administrative documents, and the scraps of individual networks of Bawit monks visible in the loan contracts. This can be due to two facts. Firstly, personal relations and activity of individual monks were not necessarily a mere extension of the monastery’s interest (or vice versa). Novices were coming to the community of Apa Apollo from various places—not only those with already existing connections with the monastery. Contacts they had established before taking the schema could nevertheless continue to shape their activities as monks. Second, our perspective on the networks of the monastery as a whole is to a certain extent distorted. Administrative documents from Bawit mention dozens of toponyms, but only relatively few among them can be securely identified with otherwise known villages. The majority refer to divisions of agricultural land (see above, pp. 169–173), which could belong to the territories of various villages. Our data for Hermopolite rural settlements is incomparable to what we know about sixth-century Aphrodito, whose territory numbered dozens of topoi, but we can assume that even a village of modest size could comprise a number of topoi/ⲡⲃ/ⲥⲟⲩ in which the monastery had landholdings. In the majority of administrative documents from Bawit we find only the place of provenance of goods (or rents and other payments), or organisational affiliation of agricultural workers (see below, p. 224–226 and 229–230). In this manner, a large part of our documentation reflects relations with units of land, not with people from villages. But despite the lack explicit testimonies, it would be logical to assume that individual, credit-based contacts of villagers with monks would be more intensive in the settlements the inhabitants of which had other links with the monastery; the few scraps of information that we have point indeed in this direction.

is assigned to the field of Kame’); CPR XX 19, mentioning transport of ṭαⲣिवτι ρητις βπιποτο πα
Last but not least, we need to keep in mind the problems with the chronology of our documentation. Firmly dated Greek loans date from the sixth century, while the Coptic part of the loan dossier is dated on palaeographic grounds to the seventh–eighth centuries. Administrative documents which could give us an external point of reference for the study of toponyms and networks are dated also to the seventh–eighth centuries, also on palaeographic grounds. One could possibly argue that in the earlier period the structure of the monastery’s institutional network of contacts was significantly different from the one in operation in the beginning of the seventh century and after the conquest. These earlier structures would be a complete mystery due to the lack of sixth-century administrative documents. But to assume that the sixth-century Greek loans, where the majority of attestations of people and toponyms are found, merely lack comparative material would be an oversimplification.

First, the peak of building activity at Bawit is believed to have occurred between the sixth and the eighth century. In this period we are already dealing with a wealthy community with stable sources of income. It is possible that the landowning network was at least partially established in the shape we know it from later documents already in the sixth century. The problem with precise dating of the documents is valid also for some among the Greek documents, which are also dated only on palaeographic grounds. With such uncertain chronology, we cannot exclude that Greek and Coptic parts of the dossier overlap to a greater extent than we have previously thought.

4.3.3. Witnesses, guarantors, and scribes

In contrast to loans contracted between monks, which were written in Coptic by the monks, the contracts with laypeople were executed by professional scribes, sometimes even notaries. Only few documents preserve the names of the people who wrote them. In all documented cases the scribes were laymen (as indicated by the use of the nomen Aurelius in SB XX 15322 and SB XXII 15596, and patronymics which appear in all cases) hired by the debtors. The documents written by

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214 The problem of how the uncertain dating of the documents hinders our reasoning is well illustrated with the example of SB XXII 15280, a transport receipt for six *thallia* of grain written on an ostracon, dated by the editor to the sixth century († ιαφορ(γίς) δ(θῆς) Β(ικτορος) καμ(ήλιο) β(ικτορος) θ(αλλία)). See R. Pintaudi, ‘Ricevuta di transporto’, *Analecta papyrologica* 5 (1993), pp. 143–144. To accept this early date would mean to admit that some of the administrative solutions were in operation already in the sixth century (e.g. the system of transport organised by *phoral*). However, Anne Boud’hors and Sarah Clackson rejected Pintaudi’s dating and propose to place the document with the rest of Bawit ostraca in the eighth century. See Boud’hors & Clackson, ‘Ostraca de Bawit’ (cit. n. 19), esp. pp. 5–6.

215 SB XXII 15322, l. 19: Αὐρ(ήλιος) Φοιβάμμον Απολλ(άτος); SB XXII 15596, l. 18: Αὐρ(ήλιος) Ἰωάνν(ης) Βίκ(τορος) δ(ὲ) γειτον(ας) ἐγγράφη ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ γραμματία μὴ [ἐφότου · · · ]; P. Mon. Apollo 36, l. 6: Μιχ(άλις) παγ(λος) ποταμί(ας) αργός. P. Mon. Apollo 33 and P. Palau-Rib. inv. 354 preserve only a part of the information on the scribes (their names are not preserved). In P. Athen. Χυλα 12, l. 14, we find the standard formula recurrent in documents executed by notaries: [† δὲ ἐμοὶ] Κολλούθου Ἰωάννου ἐγγράφη.
professionals are obviously more correct from legal and formal point of view, featuring formulae which are absent from monastic loans.\textsuperscript{216}

Witnesses were a necessary element of legal procedures; our documents preserve names and places of provenance of several of them. A few documents mention also guarantors—people undertaking the responsibility for the repayment of the debt (see the Table 1). In almost all cases the patronymics of the witnesses and guarantors are mentioned (some of the sixth-century examples record also the \textit{nomen} Aurelius), which points toward their identification as laypeople. The only odd one is \textit{παρον} Laonte of P. Palau-Rib. inv. 354—the only monk among the witnesses.

In this case, however, also the debtor, Pekosh, is called \textit{παρον} in the subscription on the verso.

The editors of the document doubt whether a monk would act together with his mother, as Pekosh does, and assume that the monastic title could possibly be a mistake of the scribe.\textsuperscript{217} However, if we look at the correspondence of the Theban hermit Epiphanios with his mother, we find out that she played a crucial role in the management of Epiphanios’s affairs that still bound him to ‘the world’.\textsuperscript{218} The involvement of a monk’s family in his financial affairs is thus not surprising at all; the modest sum of the loan recorded in P. Palau-Rib. inv. 354 suggests that the money might have been needed for a tax payment. If Pekosh still engaged himself in managing worldly affairs together with his family, he would not hesitate to obtain a loan with his mother.

The witnesses and sureties were neighbours of the debtors, as we can see in \textit{SB} XXII 15322, where all four men involved on the debtor’s side are said to hail, like the debtor himself, from Magdolon Megalou, and \textit{P. Athen. Xyla} 5, where both the debtor and the guarantor were from Moirai in the Koussite nome. The documents preserve no traces of family connections between the participants on the debtors’ side. The people who participated in contracting loans were chosen according to the debtors’ will, which is obvious, since the initiative was also the debtors’.

4.3.4. Money, products, and measures
Among the documents that preserve the object of the loan, twelve give additional information concerning accounting standards (in case of money) or measures (in case of products in sales on delivery and loans to be repaid in kind).

\begin{itemize}
  \item E.g. the good faith clause in \textit{SB} XXII 15596; \textit{SB} XVI 12267; \textit{P. CtYBR} inv. 1747; \textit{P. Louvre Bawit} 16; \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 33; \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 36; P. Palau-Rib. inv. 354. The clause appeared frequently in sixth- and seventh-century loan contracts from the Hermopolite nome. See \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 33, commentary to l. 4 for further references.
  \item Delattre & Albarrán Martínez, ‘Un contrat’ (cit. n. 19), p. 81.
  \item See \textit{P. Mon. Epiph.} 259 (Epiphanius to his mother asking her, among others, to send him a sum of money and sell some wine); \textit{P. Mon. Epiph.} 336 (Kolodje, Epiphanius’s mother, to her son informing him about problems with selling some wine and promising to send him money as soon as she finds a buyer); \textit{P. Mon. Epiph.} 397 (Epiphanius to his mother, asking her to manage some financial matters for him).
\end{itemize}
Three documents mention local money standards: *P. Athen. Xyla* 18 (6 solidi, each minus 2½ keratia, according to the standard of Pois; l. 3: κεφαλαίου νομισμάτα ἐξ ἐκατοστὸν παρὰ κεράτια δῶν ἢμισυ σταθμῷ τῆς [κὸ]μῆς Πόισεως); *P. Athen. Xyla* 10 (7 solidi, each minus 6 keratia, according to the standard of Demetriou; ll. 13–14: νομισμάτα ἐπτὰ ἐκάστου [παρὰ κεράτια ἐξ σταθμῷ τῆς κόμης Δ(ημητρίου)); and *P. CtYMBR* inv. 1747 (4 solidi according to the standard of the village; ll. 10–11: κεφαλαίου χρυσοῦ νο[μισμάτα τέσσαρα ἐξοδιαζόµενα τῆς κόμης]. The expression νοµισµάτα x παρὰ κεράτια γ σταθµῷ (or ἐκατοστὸν) z recurs frequently in the documents and refers to local exchange rate of solidi. In most popular documentary use, these terms are synonymous with ἐξοδιαζόµενος which appears in the third of our texts.\(^{219}\)

Our three documents mention villages which had such local exchange rates: Pois, Demetriou, and a settlement the name of which is not extant. Demetriou is the place of origin of the debtor in *P. Athen. Xyla* 10; the provenance of the debtor in *P. Athen. Xyla* 18 is unknown. It is possible that, like in *P. Athen. Xyla* 10, the village whose standard was used in the transaction was also the debtor’s home; Pois can perhaps be located in the southern part of the Hermopolite nome.\(^{220}\) As for *P. CtYMBR* inv. 1747, its editor, Amin Benaiassa, hesitates about the identification of the *κόμη* in the text, taking into consideration both the village of the debtor and κόμη Τιτκόως, or the location of the creditor’s monastery.\(^{221}\) I believe that the village in this case could also have been that of the debtor. People seeking credit with monks of the monastery of Apa Apollo would conveniently refer to the standard they were accustomed to use in their everyday transactions; the monks, on the other hand, would have needed flexibility and the ability to keep their private accounts in order, in spite of various standards they had to deal with. On community level, e.g., in payments of rent by tenants of the monastery who hailed from different villages, the problem could be solved by applying a uniform standard. Such solution is attested in *P. Mon. Apollo* 11 and 22, recording the collection of *pactum* reckoned ‘according to the measure of the *diakonia*.\(^{222}\)

Although in money transactions the monks of the monastery Apa Apollo had to cope with a number of local standards, they were in much more convenient position as far as other goods were concerned. Four contracts from Bawit specify the standard by which the debtor was supposed to measure goods he was supposed to deliver to the creditor. *P. Athen. Xyla* 6 speaks of 150 *metra*

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\(^{220}\) Drew-Bear, *Le nome hermopolite*, p. 228.

\(^{221}\) Benaiassa, ‘A usurious monk’ (cit. n. 19), p. 380, comm. to l. 11 of *P. CtYBR* inv. 1747.

\(^{222}\) *P. Mon. Apollo* 11, ll. 14–15: ἀντίκροσ ἀντίκροσ; *P. Mon. Apollo* 22, l. 6: ἀντίκροσ ἀντίκροσ. It is difficult to tell whether this solution was applied in a consistent manner; the *aparthe* related texts are too poorly preserved to give us an answer. In *P. Mon. Apollo* 10, ll. 14–15, S. J. Clarkson reconstructed ἀντίκροσ ἀπ’ ἀντίκροσ, *(‘according to the measure of’)* the cell of (?)* in the lacuna after the sum of *pactum*; this may point to the use of another standard in these transactions, but the state of preservation of the text is too poor to allow for firm conclusions.
of wine according to the measure of the *topos* of Apa Apollo (ll. 5–6: μέτρῳ τοῦ τόπου...). Here, the mention of the measure was decisive for the attribution of the document to the Bawit dossier. In *SB* XXII 15596, we read of three and a half artabae of wheat according to the measure of the creditor, Abba Phoibammon from the Apa Apollo monastery (l. 7: [γίν(οντα) σί(του) (άρταβαι) γ ζ έκάστην άρταβην] τῷ σῷ μέτρῳ[θ]. *SB* XXII 15595 refers twice to the measure of the *topos* for 140 *metra* of wine (l. 5: [ο[ί]νον μο[ύστου] μ[έτρον] [έκατον] τε]σσαράκ[οντα] ὧ[ν έξ]ποστῆ[ν] [τι]ρυ[ῦν έγι] σουλάτους τοῦ τόπου; l. 7: ἐν ο[ί]νῳ νέου καλλίστῳ καὶ εὐαρέ[στῳ] μέτρῳ τοῦ πίτου). Finally, the Coptic *P. Mon. Apollo* 36 speaks of 30 *sextarii* of oil according the measure of the creditor, Apa Enoch (ll. 2–3: ὙΠΑΛΛ ΧΗΣΤΕ ΝΗΡ ΝΙΕΚΩΙ). Sarah Clackson proposed to identify the measure of Apa Enoch with that of his monastery, which is the most logical solution, and one that should be applied also for Abba Phoibammon of *SB* XXII 15596. Measures for goods mentioned in contracts refer to particular containers that were in use in monasteries, church estates, and other domains.

Monastery of Apa Apollo certainly had pottery workshops working for the community. Phoibammon and Enoch would refer to a measure that was, on one hand, best known to them, and, on the other, considered reliable by the debtors. In fact, all four documents show that the monastery had its own standards for various products: wine, oil, and wheat, which were regularly used in loan contracts with laymen. The popularity of monastic (and ecclesiastical) measure standards was, according to Georg Schmelz, due to two factors. First, people had trust in honesty and impartiality of monks and ecclesiastics; second, and more practically, these groups possessed, or had access to, proper containers. This is visible, e.g., in *P. Athen. Xyla* 6, which states that the creditor (buyer) was to provide new empty jars for the wine. The use of measuring standards in Bawit loan agreements concluded by monks with laypeople was thus an outcome of a compromise in which both practical and symbolic considerations had a part to play.

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223 Troulla is another designation of measure which recurs also in other documents. See the editio princeps of *SB* XXII 15595: H. Harrauer & P. J. Sijpesteijn, ‘Verkauf von Wein gegen Vorauszahlung’, CDIE 57 (1982), pp. 296–302, esp. p. 300 (commentary to l. 6). See also J. M. Diethart, ‘Neue Papyri zur Realienurkunde’ ZPE 64 (1986), pp. 75–81, esp. p. 78. Μέτρον τοῦ πίτου appears here without any further designation (cf. *SB* XVI 12401, l. 8; *SB* XVI 12490, l. 4; *SB* XVI 12492, l. 17); in other documents the formula μέτρῳ τοῦ ἕμων πίτου is to be found (*BGU* XII 2209, l. 19; *SB* XVI 12491, l. 6). Georg Schmelz (*Kirchliche Amtsträger* [cit. n. 72], p. 271 with n. 83) suggests to interpret the measure as that of the creditor/buyer; this assumption is logical also for our text.


225 The lack of archaeological remains of pottery workshops is commented on by Delattre, *P. Brux. Bawit*, p. 92.

226 *P. Mon. Apollo* 24 mentions also a monastic measure of land surface; see ll. 3–5: ‘Whereas we agreed with you to sell you three good arouras of fodder and twenty-five arouras of pasturage in the meadow of our settlement, we allot you them (according) to the measure of the monastery’. 

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A brief recapitulation is due at this point. The monks of Bawit—ordinary brothers and functionaries of the community—were often seen concluding private loan contracts with laypeople from villages in the vicinity of the monastery. These loans were granted to people who needed ready cash for tax payments or, in case of more considerable sums, investment in production. Monks, on the other hand, could derive profit from money loans which included interest. They could also utilise products bought on delivery for further redistribution; more modest amounts (see, e.g., P. Laur. Bawit 18, with 10 artabae of wheat and 5 ½ artabae of barley) could be consumed by the monks themselves. The creditors could also potentially profit from the debtor’s insolvency if the latter had secured the contract with his own property. Only two of our documents preserve such security clauses, but we need to note that a large part of the papyri lack the bottom part where such clause is to be expected. Any assets obtained in this way would have been added to the monks’ private property. The Bawit documentation does not preserve any straightforward attestations of controversies or disputes resulting from moneylending activities of the monks.

From our point of view, it is important that the monks’ individual business brought them into contact with local residents; this suggests that monastic authorities did not exercise control over the monks’ relations with the outer world. The chronological span of the dossier of loan


228 For probably the best-known case of a monastery trying to enlarge its assets as a result of a debtor’s insolvency, see P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 (see above, Chapter 1, pp. 27–28 and 40–41). In this case, however, the loan had been granted by the monastery’s representative in the name of the whole community.

229 Such situations, however, could certainly take place, as we can see in the much earlier dossier of Nepheros (P. Neph. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 78). In this dossier, the leader of the community is asked to intervene in a dispute between a layman and a monk, Pannouthis son of Horion (here, however, the monk is debtor). Perhaps an echo of a credit-based dispute is to be found in P. Köln X 427. This Coptic letter is dated to the 7th–8th century based on its script. The letter was written in the Hermopolite village Terot; its attribution to the Bawit dossier is only tentative. The addressee is ‘our beloved holy father, alpa NN’ (l. 2: παθερίτ ιαυτ θεογάλ α[πα ...]). The sender, Pieou son of Taurine from Terot, asks the addressee to help him to solve the ‘matter of the scribe (κλαύτα) Klauta. Klauta has received a deposit from Pieou; the deposit was connected with a loan, as indicated by the presence of the verb χεραδοφερέ (χρατοφέρε) in l. 3. Complications ensued and Pieou found himself incapable of proceeding with the affair. The interpretation of ll. 2–3 where the writer’s request begins is problematic (see G. Schenke in P. Köln X, comm. ad loc, who suggests the following: ‘sprich in der Angelegenheit des Schreibers Klauta nicht gegen mich’ ['sage nicht gegen mich aus’, ‘beschuldige mich nicht’], also an eine Bitte um Nachsichtigkeit’). The text, however, suggests at least an ongoing dispute of which the addressee was aware. The key to our interpretation is the identity of the scribe Klauta (see Schenke, P. Köln X, p. 236); if he was also a monk (the title κλαύτ is frequently attested in monastic context, also at Bawit), the addressee would probably intervene from a position of authority in a dispute between a layman and a monk. If the scribe was a layperson (cf. the village scribe Pankrate in P. Köln X 426), the document would bear testimony to the involvement of respected monks in the affairs of people living in the ‘world’.

A newly published document, P. Köln ägypt. II 36, suggests, however, that monastic authorities could be involved in loan contracts between monks, or at least they were informed about such contracts and probably received their copies. The document is a loan agreement between two monks of Apa Apollo, Mena and George. The address on the verso, however, states that the document is addressed by Mena to someone occupying a more prominent place
contracts connected with the community attests to the longevity of economic freedom enjoyed by the monks.

Far from the urban centre of Hermopolis Megale, monks of Bawit played the same role as a source of loans as the city-based creditors whom we see in a number of Byzantine contracts. The number of preserved loan contracts points to the scale of the phenomenon. Parallel with that, the community as a whole was consolidating its estates, administered in a minute and cohesive manner. However, as far as we can observe in our sources, the monastery did not provide credit facilities and was involved in local economies rather as a landowner and employer. The documents show that the various functions fulfilled by members of monastic communities in local structures were played out on different levels of community organisation.

5. Laypeople in monastic economy

The present section will focus on laypeople involved in the functioning of the monastery at Bawit as an economic unit. This involvement expressed itself in terms of work and service; there are no unequivocal testimonies to show that laypeople appeared in administrative capacities at Bawit. In order to understand the role played by persons from ‘the world outside’ in monastic economy, we need to take a closer look at the organisation of economic activities in Bawit.

The first question one needs to ask here concerns the model according to which the Bawit community functioned in the economic and social landscape. The most recent reflection on the subject is found in Gesa Schenke’s article ‘The monastery of Apa Apollo as landowner and employer’. Here, monasteries in general are described as an “alternative” form of rural in the community (ⲧ̣ⲁⲁⲥⲛⲁⲡⲉⲣⲓⲧⲛⲓⲧⲉⲧ̣ⲧ̣ⲁ̣ⲓⲥ ϩⲓⲧⲛⲙⲏⲛⲡⲉϥⲛⲏⲣⲉ). In the introductory note to the edition, Gesa Schenke states: ‘Durch die Nennung des Namens Mena als Absender (Verso) und Darlehensempfänger (Recto) scheint gesichert zu sein, dass beide Seiten zu ein und demselben Dokument zu gehören, was die Vermutung nahe legt, dass eine solche Darlehensurkunde als Kopie bei einem Verantwortlichen des Klosters hinterlegt wurde’. Such practice is so far unattested in Bawit for contracts with laypeople. We know, however, that monks could be entrusted with their colleagues’ contracts concluded with laypeople, as was the case with P. Naqlun II 22 (see above, Chapter 3, pp. 142–143). The Naqlun example, however, does not have any official touch to it, which, on the other hand, seems the case with P. Köln ägypt. II 36. A monastic superior entrusted with a copy of a document could probably intervene should any litigation between his monks occur.

For the role played by urban residents in providing credit to villagers in an earlier period, see Bagnall, Egypt (cit. n. 150), pp. 73–75; see also J. Keenan, ‘On village and polis in Byzantine Egypt’, [in:] Pap.Congr. XVI, pp. 478–485. A number of sixth–seventh-century loan contracts from the Hermopolite nome (including numerous sales on delivery) record transactions between city residents and people from various komai and epoikia (see, e.g., P. Amst. I 45 [501]; P. Lond. III 1001 [539]; CPR IX 31 [581]; BGU XVII 2694 [608]; BGU XVII 2695 [608]; BGU XII 2208 [614]; BGU XII 2209 [614]; BGU XII 2210 [617]).

Forthcoming; I would like to express my gratitude to the author for giving me access to the manuscript of the article.
settlement’ that could assume ‘village-like character and structure’. Further on, the author proceeds to a comparison of the forty-hectare kom at Bawit to Fayumic villages; large churches and other sizeable edifices on the kom are recalled to emphasise similarities with rural settlements. I believe that this is an overstatement. In the article Schenke estimates, after Alain Delattre,\(^{233}\) that the Bawit community at the peak of its development (that is, the seventh and eighth centuries, thus the period from which the majority of our documents come) numbered ‘several thousand monks’, while the average number of inhabitants is estimated at around one thousand. Nothing, however, allows us to think that all of the structures on the large kom of Bawit were inhabited simultaneously, even in the period of the most dynamic development of the monastery. In any case, it is impossible to estimate how many monks lived at Bawit at any given moment (see above, p. 165, n. 38). As already noted, the kom has not been excavated in its entirety; however, even if it had been thoroughly excavated, we could obtain only a very general reconstruction of the fluctuations of habitation patterns, as the material found at the site—mostly ceramics—gives only wide chronological spans.

If we remove thousands of monks from the picture, the idea of a crowded, indeed village-like kom at Bawit becomes less pronounced. Schenke, however, in the same article proposes another approach which can prove more suitable for describing the monastery’s functioning as reflected in our documentation. Schenke’s statement that ‘monasteries like that of Apa Apollo seem to function more like large estates though with a rural rather than an urban centre’ is, I believe, a good starting point for the task I set myself in the present chapter. Of course, the Bawit dossier can hardly be compared to or used for the same research purposes as such groups of texts as the Apionic archives, or even the Aphroditto papers of comes Ammonios, given the difference in their respective contents. For instance, the question of economic rationality (or the lack thereof), which has become a recurrent theme in more recent publications based on the archive of the Apions, was possible to discuss thanks to the existence of the elaborate accounts of the estate pronoeatai and oinocheiritai (see above, Chapter 1, pp. 21–22) in the Oxyrhynchite documentation.\(^{234}\) As such documents are absent from the Bawit dossier, an analogous research cannot be done for the monastery. On the other hand, despite the obvious differences between the dossiers, resulting also from the differences in scale and the respective organisational solutions, I believe that the Bawit dossier and the texts related to great estates can be, at least to some extent, seen as complementary. While the Apions’ or Ammonios’s dossiers are largely composed of accounts compiled on higher

\(^{233}\) P. Brux. Bawit, p. 55 with n. 139. Schenke repeats this statement also in the recent publication of Cologne papyri (P. Köln ägypt. II, p. 6).

levels of the administrative apparatus, the Bawit documentation (especially the superiors’ orders and waybills) helps us understand the everyday procedures applied in a serious agricultural enterprise. The relative scarcity of accounts in the Bawit dossier can perhaps be explained in terms of the chances of preservation (as a matter of fact, accounts and lists do occur among the Bawit documents, although their state of preservation most often does not allow to advance our reasoning beyond the mere statement of the document’s type). The monastery’s diakonia would need them in order not to ‘drown’ in minor documents, which abound in the dossier as we know it today, and exert proper control over the incomes and expenses. However, the documents we do have at our disposal reveal a certain degree of formalised, ‘estate-like’ control of the flow of goods through the hands of monastic administrators.

From the organisational point of view, the Bawit documentation suggests that the monastery combined various forms of land exploitation.\(^{235}\) Workers hired to farm the land under the supervision of the institution’s representatives coexisted with tenants concluding contracts for agricultural exploitation. Gesa Schenke distinguished three ways of exploiting the land within the monastic community: first, monks could draw profit from their private landholdings;\(^{236}\) second, they were working on parcels belonging to the monastery; finally, a part of the land was leased out.\(^{237}\) The first option is inferred indirectly from our knowledge that at least some of the monks possessed assets which allowed them, i.a., to act as creditors, secure the payment of their personal taxes, and act as guarantors for land-tax payments for their own monastery (see above, pp. 181–184; 206–207). It is in this last aspect that private property of the monks had meaning for the community as a whole; whatever monks did with it outside the fiscal sphere was probably not that much of a concern, as long as their obligations towards the monastery were fulfilled. The second option is attested in some of the documents, while the third is, again, surmised from the mentions of pactum in the dossier of aparche-collection documents (see above, p. 160). Only the second and the third of Schenke’s options were directly related to the community’s economic concerns.

Apart from land cultivation, however, the economic life of the monastery encompassed other activities, such as transport, production of various items, necessary repairs, etc. These jobs could have been done (and in many cases they most probably were done) by the monks themselves, but possibilities of ‘outsourcing’ cannot be altogether ruled out.

Laypeople engaged in the monastery’s everyday functioning could be found in a number of spheres, including land tenancy; work done for the monastery on its premises and the monastic

\(^{235}\) For general information on land exploitation by monasteries, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, pp. 199–212.

\(^{236}\) We would not expect the monks to farm their own parcels all by themselves; they most probably leased out their land and drew profit collecting its rents and synetheiai.

\(^{237}\) Schenke, ‘The monastery of Apa Apollo’ (cit. n. 20).
estate; production and services. In the following argument I will try to trace the non-monastic component in each of them. I am well aware that any attempt at an assessment of the scale of involvement of laypeople in monastic economy is bound to failure, given the obscurity of much of our documentation and the ensuing problems with determining identities of the people mentioned therein (see above, p. 175–177). Still, I am deeply convinced that studying phenomena is by no means useless in our effort to understand Late Antique monasticism in a more comprehensive manner, even if broader patterns do and will escape us.

First, let us have a look at the question of tenancy as seen through the collection of Bawit aparche documents. We should observe at the very beginning that it concerns not only the monastery of Apa Apollo, but also other landowning monastic institutions which, however, relied on the Bawit community for the collection of ‘rente-impôt’ and aparche.\(^{238}\) In *P. Mon. Apollo* 3, a monk from the monastery of Apa Apollo is collecting payments for his own monastery and for the monastery of Apa Makare. *P. Mon. Apollo* 11 does not preserve the opening clauses, but features three beneficiaries of the payments: monasteries of Apa Apollo, Apa Anoup, and Apa Jeremias. The sum to be collected is considerable: sixteen solidi minus ½ each,\(^ {239}\) according to the measure of the diakonia (meaning, most probably, the diakonia of the monastery of Apa Apollo). Sarah

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\(^{238}\) For general observations on other monasteries in *aparche* documents, see *P. Mon. Apollo*, §3.3.9, p. 23. For the respective monasteries, see *P. Mon. Apollo* §3.12.1, pp. 32–33, with references to other attestations of the institutions in documentary record. An *aparche*-related document is found also in the dossier of the monastery of Deir el-Bala‘izah, *P. Bal.* 253. It is a letter from Apa Isaak to village headmen mentioning ‘small *aparche*’ (l. 3: ῥυμαίον ναπάρσι). The document is, unfortunately, very poorly preserved. See below, Chapter 6, p. 282–283.

The list of monasteries that benefited from *aparche*-collections presented in *P. Mon. Apollo* §3.3.9 includes the monastery of Apa Mena, which is mentioned in *P. Mon. Apollo* 16. A Middle Egyptian monastery of Apa Mena appears in the Bala‘izah dossier (*P. Bal.* 119 and 140; see Kähle, *P. Bal.*, vol. I, p. 25 for further references). However, I do not believe that *P. Mon. Apollo* 16 should be treated as an attestation of Apa Mena as a separate community. The text is a letter written most probably to monks of Apa Apollo, which mentions other monks collecting *aparche* on behalf of Apa Mena in a Hermopolite location (ll. 4–5: ἔρεμνη ἐπὶ οὗ έγίνετο ποὺσψε ὦ ἀγαθών ἐπαιρῆθεν ἐταίρειτ ὀρῇ Μηνίας ἐν Πελεκεμέ [‘some brothers of mine collecting tithes for our beloved father Apa Mena in Peletkeme’]). The adjective ἀγαθών, ‘beloved’, does not appear in the descriptions of monastic patrons when the monastery is introduced as an institution, while it is frequently used as an affectation form of address and introduction of a third person. In *P. Mon. Apollo* 16 it appears five times: in l. 2 and 13 it describes the addressee of the letter, brother Apollo (παθῆρτι Μηνίας ἐττάθαι ἀγαθῷ; ταῦτα παθῆρτ ἐν Μηνίᾳ ἀγαθῷ); in l. 8 and 12 it is used to address Apollo again (‘Now then my beloved brother’—τινος ἐς παθῆρτ ἐνοῖ; ‘Farewell in the Lord, my beloved brother’—οὐκάλ ρή πλόοςος παθῆρτ ἐνοῖ); finally, in l. 5 it describes ‘the father’ Apa Mena. I believe it possible that also in the last case the reference is made not to a monastic patron, but to a living person—the superior of the monastery, ἔφυτος ἐν Μηνίᾳ, who might have been the monastic functionary who ordered the collection of *aparche* in Peletkeme. A ἐκτῆτος named Menas is attested in an inscription from Bawit; see *P. Mon. Apollo*, p. 28 (quoting M. Krause, ‘Die Inschriften auf den Türsturzbalken des Apa-Apollon-Klosters von Bawit’, Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont [= Cahiers d’Orientalisme 20], Geneva 1988, pp. 111–120, esp. p. 114, n. 37, no. 11); see also E. Enss, Holzkunstwerke der spätantiken bis frühislamischen Zeit aus Ägypten. Funktion und Dekor, Wiesbaden 2005, No. 3. Delattre connects Menas from the lintel with the homonymous individual depicted on the famous icon of Christ and Abba Mena in the Louvre collection (Delattre, ‘La traduction’ [cit. n. 20], p. 216).

\(^{239}\) The document does not specify the unit to be deduced; two options can be taken into consideration: *tremissis* and *keration*, see commentary to ll. 12–13 of *P. Mon. Apollo* 11.
Clackson wrote the following about these institutions: ‘[...] far from being independent monasteries, they were subsumed into the general organisation of the monastery of Apa Apollo to the extent that they were considered subdivisions of that monastery’ (P. Mon. Apollo, p. 23). The documentation does not allow us to explore the details of the relations between Apa Apollo and these institutions. What is important from the point of view of the present argument, however, is the fact that they are clearly stated as beneficiaries of the payments next to the monastery of Apa Apollo. Even if an overarching system of *aparche*-collection did exist, covering all of these monasteries, from the fiscal perspective their landholdings still constituted separate units, hence the delimitation between the institutions we see in the documents.\(^\text{240}\)

Land tenancy must have involved numerous laypeople, but, much to our distress, information about the tenants is almost untraceable in our documentation. The only exception is the already quoted P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (6a) verso (see above, p. 183). The document attests to a renewal of one-year land lease contract with a man bearing the Jewish name Eieleizerou (Eliezer). The rent for two aoroua of fodder land leased by this man amounted to one solidus; no other payments are specified, neither do we learn anything about the location of the plot. Still, the document is of great importance, as it constitutes a testimony of short-term contracts of lease of monastic land which stipulated the transfer of fiscal obligations to the tenants. Short-term lease agreements occur frequently in earlier documentation; Jairus Banaji sees them as the means by which the landowners ‘were simply maximising their freedom to recruit new labourers if they felt dissatisfied with existing ones’.\(^\text{241}\) We can imagine that should the tenant prove trustworthy (as was certainly the case with Eielezerou), the landlord would renew the contract during several indictional years. The system was at work also at Bawit, but whether its application was widespread or limited, we cannot say.

Leasing in the Bawit monastery was not, however, restricted to landed property. Line 7 of *P. Mon. Apollo* 17 mentions ‘farmers (?) and sailors’ who most probably belonged to the body of *aparche* contributors of an unknown village. The presence of the sailors (ⲉϦⲉ) may point to the fact that the monastery leased out its boats (see above, p. 195, n. 163). *P. Mon. Apollo* 50 is a guarantee in which three monks, Helias, Papnoute, and Germane declare that they will protect Lazaros, a lay

\(^{240}\) From this point of view, *P. Mon. Apollo* 19 is an interesting example. It is a fragmentarily preserved document connected with the *aparche* dossier on the basis of the formula of assignment (‘whereas we gave you’) preserved partially in ll. 6–7. It was addressed by the ‘fathers of the diakonia of the [ι] of Apa Ieremias’ (ll. 2–3: ἱδικονίαι ἱδικονίαι τοῦ ἱδικονίαν ἱδικονίαις) to ἱδικονία κλωή and ἱδικονία Οὐενόβερ of the ἱδικονία τοῦ ἱδικονίας ἱδικονίας of Apa Apollo (ll. 4–6: ἱδικονία κλωή, ἱδικονία Οὐενόβερ ἱδικονίας ἱδικονίαις ἱδικονίας, ἱδικονίας ἱδικονίας). I do not know if the switch from ἱδικονία to ἱδικονία is meaningful, or the two words were simply used as synonyms. In any case, it appears that the members of *diakoniai* of other institutions could make assignment arrangements with monks of Apa Apollo.

lessee of 214 beehives, from possible claims of Enoch the beekeeper (perhaps an employee of the monastery). Nothing in the document indicates that the three monks were acting on behalf of the monastery. The guarantee, however, was drawn up only to secure Lazaros against a particular situation; we know that it was preceded by a lease agreement, and this may well have been concluded in the name of the community. These two documents indicate that lease agreements must have played a role—unfortunately impossible to assess due to the texts’ unique character—in the exploitation of monastic assets other than land.

In conclusion of the quoted article, Gesa Schenke hypothesises on the status of the tenants of monastic land; by leasing land to people from outside the community, the monks, in her opinion, ‘enable landless villagers to make a living on monastic land which also serves the “holy monastic community”. In this way local farmers and their families might somewhat partake in a sanctified situation; we know that it was preceded by a lease agreement, and this may well have been concluded in the name of the community. The guarantee, however, was drawn up only to secure Lazaros against the monks.

For the discussion of the toponyms attested in the aparche documents, see Clackson, P. Mon. Apollo, §3.3.7, pp. 21–22.

For the origin of the term κοτός, see commentary to l. x+2 of P. Mon. Apollo 6. For the formulary of the aparche documents, see P. Mon. Apollo, §3.3.6, pp. 20–21.
texts are territorial divisions. From *P. Mon. Apollo* 17 we know that the tenants lived in independent village communities (and were expected to try and put up resistance against monastic collectors; see above, pp. 194–195). We can hypothesise that when the monastery purchased or inherited parcels in dispersed localities, the acquisition comprised not also the land itself but also a network of connections with previous holders or tenants.

In the *aparche*-related documentation lay tenants are virtually invisible. In other types of documents related to management and agricultural produce, laypeople are frequently well-hidden among the monks; suffice it to recall the editors’ frequent remarks on the impossibility of determining the status of individuals mentioned in the documents. The task I have set myself may thus appear hopeless; in any case, I will at least try to reflect on some cases in which the presence of laypeople seems probable. I believe, however, that before I proceed to a discussion of these cases, I owe the reader some preliminary insight into some aspects of the work organisation in the monastery at Bawit. In the following argument, I will not focus on craftsmanship or the division of tasks within the monastery itself, as these questions have been already explored in Delattre’s introduction to *P. Brux. Bawit*.²⁴⁶ On the other hand, I will draw attention to some documents (including newly published examples from the Cologne collection) which shed light on the management of monastic estate.

While discussing the issues of land cultivation in the monastic milieu, Ewa Wipszycka concluded that ‘unfortunately, we do not find out if a monastery like Bawit managed a part of its landed property in a direct fashion’.²⁴⁷ Indeed, nothing in the otherwise vast Bawit documentation allows us to determine the role of direct management in monastic economy. One needs to remember, however, that the definition of ‘direct management’ is not as self-understood as it may appear. Of course, in Bawit there can be no question of direct management with *epoikia*-based, resident workforce (cf. above, pp. 172–173). The definition of direct management and leasing as opposite extremes is also problematic, especially in a situation when leases themselves are almost completely obscure.²⁴⁸ On a more optimistic note, the Bawit documents do reveal some details on non-tenant workforce on monastic estates; they also allow us to see how monastic administrators proceeded with their managerial tasks.

²⁴⁷ Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 207.
²⁴⁸ Cf. Banaji, ‘Agrarian history’ (cit. n. 234), p. 204: ‘Nor should the contrast between direct management and leasing be exaggerated, both because the more humble lessees were often simply labourers and the lease more like a labour contract (this was especially true of sharecroppers), and because “tenancy” could be integrated into a regime of direct management [...]’. 

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Some among our texts refer to monks working in the fields. Considering monastic workforce, Schenke wrote: ‘Even though the monastery of Apa Apollo seems to have had the manpower needed to cultivate their own land, this might often have seemed impractical or inconvenient due to large distances involved between monastery and property’. The distance, however, was certainly not the only criterion according to which workforce was engaged and distributed. On the other hand, the statement that the monastery was able to provide all agricultural workers it needed from among its residents is certainly an exaggeration which, again, results from the bloated number of monks estimated by Schenke for the Bawit community in the period under discussion.

P. Brux. Bawit 26 and P. Duk. inv. 259 mention monks connected with the ‘field of Kame’ receiving modest amounts of food (salted fish and bread respectively). The Brussels text describes the recipients as ‘brothers assigned to the field of Kame’ (l. 1: γεννυ εγκυ πορ καμή), while the other document states that the payment was destined for ‘Apa Kolthe assigned to the field of Kame’ (ll. 3–4: ηανα κολθε εγκυ πορ καμή). In P. Brux. Bawit 26 the use of the designation γεννυ points to the monastic status of the workers; in the latter case the fact that Kolthe was a member of the monastic community is clear from the context. The formula used to express his assignment finds analogies not only in the Brussels document but also in P. Bawit Clackson 24, where it is found in connection with an aparche assignment. It could have been a technical expression indicating an assignment of a task by a superior to a monk or a group of monks.

An interesting testimony of the mobility of monastic workforce is found in P. Köln ägypt. II 21. In this μενικωτ πετραι order, the superior Keri tells Apa Anouph, an oikonomos, to give one κολλαθον of salted fish (ταρίχιον) to ‘the brothers of the western workplace’ (l. 2: γεννυ ηνη αντιος μενικωτ). The key information follows: at the moment when the order was issued, the recipients of the payment were working at harvest at a place called Rane (ll. 2–3: γυλη επαρξαρανε μενικωτ). Monks’ involvement in fieldwork during harvest is known from both literary and

249 Schenke, ‘The monastery of Apa Apollo’ (cit. n. 20).
250 Cf. Delattre, ‘Deux ordres’ (cit. n. 19), p. 172 (commentary to l. 4 of P. Duk. inv. 259). In P. Bawit Clackson 24 (a superior’s order to deliver pieces of clothing to an aparche collector) the formula reads as follows (ll. 3–4): ΝΑΜΙΝΚΩΤ ΕΙΚΗ ΕΠΑΝΚΑΛΟΥ ΝΟΣΚ ΑΠΑΡΧ(Η) (‘to Ammone who is going to Pankalou to collect aparche’).
251 Gesa Schenke informs that the same phrase is to be found in an unpublished papyrus from Vienna, Inv. K. 11426, quoting Alain Delattre who is currently preparing the publication of the text (see P. Köln ägypt. II 21, commentary to ll. 2–3). On the possible interpretations of the phrase, see ibidem. Schenke mentions the proposition of Anne Boud’hors to interpret πορ not as the noun ‘work’ but as the verb ‘to spin’. Schenke herself translated the recipients’ designation as ‘Brüdern vom westlichen Arbeitsplatz’. If we accept the interpretation of Boud’hors, the essential meaning of the text, which lies in the fact that groups of monks could be sent from one place to another to do various works, will not change.
252 ηανικωτ is attested in three QINE ηα ostraca from Bawit in connection with wine (O. Bawit 21, 22, and 23). It is also mentioned in P. Bawit Clackson 49 (edited first as O. Bawit 81), together with other toponyms, Pmanlouga and
documentary sources.253 Here, the work is done for the benefit of the monks’ own community, which duly compensates their efforts with a payment in kind. The amount of *kollathon* seems quite considerable (according to Alain Delattre, one *kollathon* corresponds to ca. 12.5 litres);254 however, we do not know how many monks were supposed to share it. The document shows that teams of monks at the superior’s disposal could be sent to various places according to the current needs.

Workers of unknown status appear in a clearly agricultural context also in *P. Bawit Clackson* 20. The document is an elaborate *πενείατα πετραγι* order of payment of aracus and barley ‘to cultivators of the field of Taparoou according to this list’ (l. 3: *νεογοιη ιποι οιπαροου προς τηγιασιις*). The list contains four names, and in its absolute lack of status indicators summarises perfectly one of the main interpretational problems posed by this type of documents. An analogous situation is observed in *P. Lond. Capt.* I 1130, which records a disbursement of the total of thirty-six *kadoi* of wine to three farmers: Ioannes, Georgios, and another Georgios.255 Even if we do not know who these cultivators were—monks or laypeople—the text still attests to the presence of agricultural workers whose wages were paid in kind in the economic landscape of the Bawit monastery.

Even though our clearest attestations of remunerated agricultural workers pertain to monks, we can also find examples of groups of laypeople receiving disbursements in kind, probably as a payment for their work. *P. Köln ägypt.* II 22, a *πενείατα πετραγι* order signed by Ioannes and addressed to the ‘brothers of the garden of the community’ (ll. 1–2: *εκευη ιτεωμην ιπλαος*) refers to a disbursement of herbs and vegetables to ‘the people of Terot’ (l. 3: *περωνι τερατι*). The products were to be given to Apa Pkol, who apparently was an intermediary between the group of recipients and the monastery. Admittedly, neither the status of the recipients, nor the agricultural context are certain.256 However, I believe that the lay condition of the men can be postulated on account of their designation as ‘the people of Terot’, in contrast to the undoubtedly monastic

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253 See Wipszycka, *Maines et communautés*, pp. 487–489 for references to monks working in the fields in the Apophtegms and John Moschos’s *Pratum*. Cf. Derda & Wegner, ‘Letter from Tebetny’ (cit. n. 153), where a monastic administrator is asked to send his monks to a village whence they are supposed to be sent to St Eirene, perhaps a church *epoikion* (ll. 25–30: και πέμψατε ιμν τους μοναζοντας της ιμνον πατρικι διαθεσα και παρεχομεν τη Ειρηνη; standardised transcription).


255 *P. Lond. Capt.* I 1130, l. 4: *κουραμε πουουε ιηι γεωργη ιηι πηε γεωργη* (Coptic letter); ll. 26–28: *ιοαννου γγγ, Γεωργιου γγγ, Γεωργιου γγγ* (Greek account).

256 The document is dated to 22 Phaophi, thus to the period of the Nile flood. While fieldwork on arable land was obviously impossible, it was the moment of harvesting crops in orchards and preparing vineyards for winter (see Bagnall, *Egyp* [cit. n. 150], pp. 21–22). ‘The people of Terot’ could have been employed for such seasonal activities.
‘brothers of the garden’ in the same document. If we treat Pkol’s title ‘Apa’ as an indication of his monastic status (which is not certain, but probable, given the frequency with which it appears in Bawit in monastic contexts) we would thus have a group of lay workers represented (and perhaps also supervised) by a monk.

A monastic supervisor working ‘in the field’ is attested in the letter P. Köln ägypt. II 43 (see above, p. 196). The sender, Apa Joseph, wrote from a village where apparently he was fulfilling the tasks of an overseer. He reports to his superior, Apa Phoibammon, that he is occupied with the fields (the work he was charged with included sowing, as indicated in lines 30–31, where he explains that he was in need of ‘grain for the fields’). But this was not his only task; the text mentions earlier correspondence of Phoibammon and Joseph, which was probably connected with problems the latter had faced. The text hints at the fulfilment of the wishes of the village community, most probably thanks to instructions sent from the monastery. It appears that Joseph was not only a supervisor, but also an intermediary between the monastic administration and villagers. Unfortunately, the text does not state who farmed the monastic land in the village under Joseph’s supervision, tenants or wage workers. We know that the monastery was obliged to pay the village a synetheia, claimed rather harshly by a local scribe (see above, pp. 196–197).

P. Köln ägypt. II 41 is another letter from the milieu of monastic managers. In the text, a monk named Pamoun addresses his superior Enoch with due reverence and informs him about problems in wine-producing units. Pamoun seems to have operated in two places: the ‘garden of the place of Loukas’ and ‘the other garden’ (l. 4: ΝΕΚΕΩΝ ΝΠΗ ΛΑΩΚΑ; l. 7: ΝΕΚΕΩΝ ΧΩΙΠΟΝ (?)). The tone of urgency and the mention of a date—perhaps a deadline—prompted the editor of the text, Gesa Schenke, to suggest that the whole affair was connected with tax payments in kind.

257 We ought to note, however, that the word sometimes appears with laypeople’s names as a honorific; see Derda & Wipszycka, ‘L’emploi des titres’ (cit. n. 91). In any case, in the Bawit dossier it is widely used not only as a title of address, but also as an element of personal introduction (cf., e.g., P. Köln ägypt. II 43, with the address on the verso: ΤΑΣΕ ΠΑΜΙΟΡΙΤ ΝΙΟΤ ΕΤΕΛΙΝΥ ΑΠΑ ΦΟΙΒΑΜΜΟΝ ΓΙΤΤΙ ΠΑΜΑ ΙΟΣΕΦ ΠΙΟΝ(ΑΧΟΣ)).

258 Gesa Schenke, the editor of the text, refrains from determining Apa Pkol’s position; see P. Köln ägypt. II, introduction to no. 22, p. 28: ‘Ob Apa Pgol hier als Lieferant der Güter für die Einwohner von Terot fungierte, bleibt spekulativ’.

259 P. Köln ägypt. II 43, ll. 15–16: ‘Das Dorf wünschte es’ (ἌΠΤΗΕ ΟΥΧΑΒ ΤΗΝΟΥ).

260 The fact that it was Joseph who was responsible for providing sowing-grain does not point toward direct exploitation model, since also in lease arrangements this responsibility could rest with the landlord.

261 The context is clear from the mentions of empty jars (ΙΧΟΥΦΗ, κοίφοφ) in l. 6, and ‘Shenoute the vine-dresser’ in l. 9 (<data:image alt=""/>).

A tax, *embole*, is mentioned in an unclear context in line 7 on the verso. *Embole*, however, was a grain tax, and its appearance here most probably has no connection with the main subject of the letter, which was the organisation of vintage and collection of empty jars for the wine. In lines 6–7 we read (translation after G. Schenke): ‘Krüge (κούφον). Es gibt nichts anderes. Dieses genügt jenem. Hundert [Maß Wein? …] Auch nicht aus den anderen Gärten gibt es irgendetwas Großes’.

In her description of the process of wine production, Dorota Dzierzbicka has underscored the importance of vessels, which needed to be collected and prepared before the vintage. It is exactly this trouble that Enoch could have been dealing with on behalf of his superior.

From the collection of *qimhe nca* waybills we know that large amounts of wine and must were arriving at the monastery from different locations. It was widely assumed that these documents attest to the vital role played by wine production at Bawit. However, the proportion of wine produced on monastic estate to wine purchased from other producers cannot be estimated. The *qimhe nca* documents which are the main source of knowledge of wine transports to the monastery reveal nothing about the manner of wine acquisition, stating only its amount, the date of transport, or the type of wine (e.g. a series of ostraca edited in *O. Bawit* mention ‘old wine’, *hπι nπαος*). Some of the texts would probably represent wine acquisitions resulting from sales on future delivery; some wine could also be bought in the ordinary way. We do not know how much wine was consumed by the monks, but needs of the monastery were certainly great, given the fact that wine served as payment to workers and was a part of other disbursements. Bought wine could constitute an important addition to the monastery’s resources, but I believe the monastery produced at least a part of its wine on its own estates. Vine-dressing was a type of agricultural activity which required particular investment: in vine-plants, the equipment (especially watering

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263 Ίκωφη Μη Κεφά πά τι πώδο επί οὕτως ὡς κοκτει ἄντρον (?)[οαε ερεχήσας ηδάς ην ἑκατερον λο[πον (?)].

264 Dzierzbicka, *Wine* (cit. n. 196), p. 150. The author quotes, among others, *P. Oxy.* I. 3588 (AD 157) mentioning 7,165 vessels that had to be prepared before 13 Mesore, that is, in the period of vintage.


266 *O. Bawit* 1–6, 8–9, 11, 15–18, 21–23, 29, 31–32. Cf. O. Clackson 16, ll. 1–3: τάπανον νοθίαν ὁ(?) Ταυρίνε οὐ(νοι) παλαιού μ—(γ)’(–) 0.

267 As we have seen in the section dedicated to loans from Bawit (see above, p. 201–217), none of the loan contracts we have at our disposal bears any signs of having been concluded on behalf of the whole community. On the other hand, the *qimhe nca* waybills, due to the absence of information on the identity of their issuers, cannot be firmly connected with a concrete unit of the monastery, even though it seems logical to ascribe them to ‘central’ monastic administration wielding control over the flow of wine through the monastery. Therefore, it appears that there is a gap in the sources which we cannot fill in the present state of our knowledge. We need to take into account the possibility that the monastery as an institution concluded loan contracts, including sales on delivery, and that individual moneylenders within the community made use of monastic infrastructure.

devices, as vineyards could not be planted on inundated land), and, last but not least, skilled labourers. A rich monastery, capable of bearing elevated maintenance costs, would make a good candidate for a vineyard landowner, in the same manner as medium and large estates did.\textsuperscript{269} Pamoun’s concerns in \textit{P. Köln ägypt.} II 41 are best explained if we assume that the vineyards he was dealing with were monastic property. As the letter mentions an \textit{ampelourgos}, the vineyards visited by Pamoun were most probably leased out to professionals.\textsuperscript{270}

Careful reading of Bawit documents broadens our perspective on the administration of the monastery’s assets. First, we see both monks and laypeople working for the monastery. Using the monastery’s own monks to farm monastic land may be considered a variation of direct management system, but whether lay workers functioned within the same or analogous framework, is impossible to say based on the documentation presently at our disposal. Moreover, the body of workforce engaged by the monastery must have comprised both permanent cultivators and seasonal workers; unfortunately it is impossible to distinguish them in our material. Both monks and laypeople were remunerated from the resources at the disposal of the monastery’s \textit{diakonia}.\textsuperscript{271} Decision-making rested most probably with the members of the \textit{diakonia}; the monastery had also a group of ‘field representatives’, who acted as intermediaries between the institution and a group of people maintaining various relations with the monastery: monastic and lay workers, and the monastery’s tenants. They forwarded the payments to their subordinates, as Apa Pkol did for ‘the people of Terot’ in \textit{P. Köln ägypt.} II 22, and dealt with local people and their representatives, sometimes with varying degrees of success (cf. \textit{P. Köln ägypt.} II 43). These administrators could stay at least temporarily in the places where monastic property was located, like Joseph of \textit{P. Köln ägypt.} II 43, or the two men in \textit{P. Brunc. Bawit} 15, Apa Ioannes and Apa Kosma, \textit{dioiketai} of the nome of Antinoe.\textsuperscript{272} The mention of Antinoe shows that landed property of the monastery extended beyond the borders of the Hermopolite nome and confirms the pattern we saw in the sixth-century dossier of Aphrodito, with its mentions of local representatives of monastic absentee landowners (see

\textsuperscript{269} Cf. the role of monasteries in olive-oil production in Syria-Palestine: T. Waliszewski, \textit{Elaiion. Olive Oil Production in Roman and Byzantine Syria-Palestine}, Warsaw 2014, esp. pp. 245–252; 256; 275–276; see also index, \textit{i.e.} ‘monasteries’. For the role of aristocratic landowners in the development of vineyards, see Hickey, ‘Aristocratic landholding’ (cit. n. 55), pp. 292–294; see also Banaji, \textit{Agrarian Change} (cit. n. 55), pp. 60–61 for the role of monasteries (‘Monasteries and aristocrats were in the forefront of the revival of wine economy’).


\textsuperscript{272} \textit{P. Brunc. Bawit} 15, ll. 1–2: [+ ει]ΠΟ\textit{ύΟΣ ΝΑΠ ΚΩΗ ΜΠΑ ΚΟΙΚΗΝΗ ΝΙΤΟΚΥ ΑΝΤΙΝΟΩΥ.}
above, Chapter 2, p. 100). In the correspondence sent to Bawit by the ‘field functionaries’, we see the mobility of this group of monks engaged in the administration of the monastic estate.

As we have already seen, the Bawit dossier is characterised by the presence of large groups of administrative documents representing various types (see above, pp. 159–163). As these documents touch upon such matters as transport of agricultural products to the monastery (ὀμελεία κατα γενικόν documents and orders of payment), they offer us a valuable insight into the flow of goods through the monastery, its scale and dynamics. Unfortunately, their usefulness for researching lay involvement in the functioning of the monastery is very limited.

The ὁμελεία κατα γενικόν orders concerning payments, and the so-called orders of payment are notorious for their lack of, first, unequivocal status indicators, and second, information why the payments were made. Thus, even if in some (very rare) cases we do catch a glimpse of individuals who were or could have been laypeople, the reasons why they receive the disbursements escape us. In any case, we need to take into account that not all of the distributions recorded in administrative documents were payments; at least some of them could have to do with charity (see above, p. 198, n. 174). For the very same reasons, using lists and accounts from Bawit for my purpose is also a risky, if not an impossible, enterprise. Lists from Bawit are not only vague as far as identification of the people listed is concerned, but again, either do not state (or do not preserve) the titles of the disbursements, or present them in very general terms. Suffice it to quote P. Mon. Apollo 48 (a list of wine disbursements), which preserves the names and patronymics of seven men (most probably laypeople), while the title of the account is lost; or P. Mon. Apollo 46, mentioning ‘the account of the people of Ten(?)’ (l. 1: ἐπισκοποι τοίη άρα τεντηγένησο), receiving, among others, ‘festival wine’ (l. 2: ποιόν οὖν). This latter detail can be connected with information about extra disbursements for workers found in other documents.

Other laypeople seem to feature in P. Mon.
Apollo 45: ‘the men of Pioh Pemom’ (l. 3: ΠΕΙΡΟΝ ΠΙΟΡ ΠΕΜΟΝ) and ‘the men of Micholeos’ (l. 8: ΝΕΡΙΝΗΧΟΛΕΟΣ) could possibly be teams of workers originating from (or working at) the listed places.

A number of people working for the monastery is mentioned in the ΟΙΝΗ ΝΟΣ waybills as responsible for the transport of goods from various domains to Bawit; their identity, however, is usually as obscure as in other types of administrative documents. Many among the ΟΙΝΗ ΝΟΣ texts mention solely the names of the transporters. On the other hand, a certain number of documents feature people styled Apa, Abba, or ΠΑΧΟΝ, who were or could have been monks of the community.

Less clear are the mentions of people (usually described as ΠΑΧΝΟΥΝΗ, ‘camel-drivers’) connected with units which could have been parts of the monastery. In an overview of monastic production and consumption of wine, Seyna Bacot assumed that the monastery at Bawit transported goods by means it had at its own disposal. In 2006 Jacques van der Vliet published several ostraca from the Los Angeles collection. One of these, a ΟΙΝΗ ΝΟΣ ostracon LACMA inv. M.80.202.174, speaks of thirty-three megala and thirty-three knidia of wine to be delivered by


I believe that the term ‘the people of …’ can point to non-monastic affiliation; see above, pp. 225–226. Cf., however, *P. Bawit* Clackson 14, where the expression refers to monks of a monastery of Jeremias. In the bilingual *P. Lond. Capt.* I 1130, the same man is identified once as ΠΑΧΝΟΥΝ ΠΡΟΝ ΑΙΜΟΥ (l. 3, Coptic letter) and ΠΑΜΟΥΝ διάκονος (l. 3, Greek account); see Delattre ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 20), p. 221: ‘[…] aussi Pamoun est décrit comme originaire de Simou dans la lettre copte, mais c’est son titre de diacre, plus officiel et plus prestigieux, qui a été retenu dans le compte grec’. Pamoun’s relation to the monastery is obscure, but it can be assumed that he was a member of the community. On the other hand, the formula ‘X man of Y is found in *P. Mon. Apollo* 50, a guarantee for beehives issued by three monks, Helias, Papnoute, and Germane, to ‘Lazaros son of Apollo, beekeeper, of Tbake’ (l. 5–6: ΛΑΖΑΡΟΣ ΠΑΠΝΟΥΝ ΠΕΒΕΤΡ ΠΡΟΝΤΙΒΑΚΕ), where Lazaros is almost certainly a layman, leasing beehives from the three monks. The epigraphic usage is of little help. First, the inscriptions in the monastery—chiefly visitors’ graffiti—were executed by various people and thus would not correspond with documentary usage. Second, the expression is used inconsistently also in epigraphic material. Among the graffiti in the so called Hall 6 it is used both for monks and laypeople; in the majority of cases, the identity of the commemorated person is impossible to determine. See Maspero & Drioton, *Fouilles* (cit. n. 2), vol. I, pp. 53–120 (esp. nos. 114, 128, 252, 253, 261, 262, 263, 275, 305).

277 I.e. Phib the shoemaker (*O. Bawit Frhik* 13), called also ‘Phib of the shoemakers’ place’ (*O. Bawit Frhik* 3, 9, and 38), or ‘Phib the camel driver of the shoemakers’ (*O. Bawit Frhik* 31); finally, he can be also identified with ‘Phib the camel driver’ from a document of the same collection (*O. Bawit Frhik* 32). See also Apanok the camel driver of ‘the garden of our father’ (*O. Bawit Frhik* 26); camel-drivers of the cemetery and the baker (*O. Bawit Frhik* 27); Jacob the camel-driver of the cemetery (*O. Bawit Frhik* 29); Phoibammon the camel-driver of the infirmary (*O. Bawit Frhik* 55), and others.

278 See Muhs, Worp & van der Vliet, ‘Ostraca and mummy labels’ (cit. n. 19), p. 55, with n. 17.
‘Pamoun of the camel stable of John Qam’ (ll. 4–6: ⲡⲁⲙⲟⲩⲛ ⲡⲁⲡⲕⲁⲙ(ⲏⲗⲱⲛ) ⲛ̄ⲧⲉ ⲓ̈ⲱϩⲁⲛⲛⲏⲥ ϭⲁⲙ). The same man is perhaps mentioned in LACMA inv. M.80.202.186 (here only as ⲡⲁⲙⲟⲩⲛ ⲡⲡⲕⲁⲙ(ⲏⲗⲱⲛ)). Van der Vliet observes: ‘In any case, the assignment of individual drivers to stables run or owned by a third party, John Qam or others, shows the development of this branch of transport’. He claims further that ‘in the light of the involvement of these stables, Bacot’s statement that at Bawit the monastery was its own transport firm may need qualification’. The οινεικα ostraca show that various monastic units had camel drivers associated with them (whether they were only monks, or outsiders hired to serve a particular unit is and will remain obscure), but it is probable that at least some of the transport services were outsourced.

Finally, there is a rather numerous category of ostraca which give the names of transporters associated with various toponyms.\(^{282}\) The locations are names of Hermopolite villages (which sometimes are otherwise attested, like e.g., Senesla in CPR XX 11) or toponyms constructed according to the ⲩⲧⲓⲣⲓⲱⲧⲓ scheme. These toponyms refer most probably to provenance of the people in question or their assignment to a part of the estate. We can assume that at least some among the people in these documents were villagers hired to supplement the insufficient monastic workforce; unfortunately, sifting them out of the material is impossible without further indications—the more so as the use of toponyms with monks’ names in order to avoid confusion between homonymous individuals was a common practice in the monastic milieu. (see above, p. 177).

The reading of the Bawit administrative dossier with the intention of finding out to what extent laypeople were involved in the monastery’s everyday functioning may result in pessimistic conclusions. As we saw, groups of people are somewhat better identifiable than individuals; the latter—unless they are labelled with straightforward designations of office or status—merge with monks to the point of being indistinguishable. This, on the other hand, leads to the observation that monastic administration had no need for introducing and applying clear status designations. Monks, laymen, and officials drew income from the same sources, administered by the diakonia, the payments were handled by the same people (cf. the lengthy wine account P. Mon. Apollo 45, drawn up by a single person for the monastic administration, in which monks and clerics neighbour with Arabs and groups of villagers), and in the same manner (cf. the accounts for two Arab officials

\(^{282}\) The connection between the two elements can be made in a number of ways. First, and most frequently, by a simple juxtaposition of a name and a toponym, e.g. in O. Bawit 57: ⲛⲡⲡⲧⲧⲧⲡⲧⲟⲩⲧ ⲛⲡ ⲧⲓⲣⲇⲟⲩⲧⲓ ⲡⲟⲩⲣⲟⲩⲧⲓ, ‘Petros, the one from Terot’.
referred to in *P. Brux. Bawit* 27, *P. Hermitage Copt.* 16 and *P. Camb. Ul. Michael.* 1262, and the ‘logos of the people of Ten(-?)-’ in *P. Mon. Apollo* 46. In some circumstances, laymen could have been subordinate to monastic administrators, but in some spheres the interactions were based on collaboration (perhaps in transport, where services of private stable-owners were used by the monastery). All these elements show that lay workers (but also—to a certain extent—Arab officials) were well-integrated into the administrative machinery of the monastery.

The immense progress in the field of papyrology has allowed to see monastic communities of Egypt as socially and economically involved entities with a wide range of relations that bound them to the lay society. Papyri and ostraca show the aspects of monastic life that were never the subject of interest of the authors of our literary sources who focused on spiritual concerns of the monks and sought to edify their readers. As for laypeople, literary texts had a set of prescribed roles in which they could appear. The dossier of the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit is a showcase example of the contribution papyrological documentation can make to our understanding of Egyptian monasticism in Late Antiquity and the various aspects of its functioning, including its relations with laypeople.

A monastery, which was an entity with movable and immovable property that had to be administered, worked, and taxed, was as a matter of fact bound to become entangled in multiple relations with other entities. Monastic organisation served in the first place to secure uninterrupted functioning of the community. In the rural landscape—the setting in which our story unfolded—this inevitably meant assuming the roles of landlord, manager, employer, and taxpayer. Operating the whole network of contacts with institutional and individual actors of ‘the world outside’ must have consumed much time and energy of monastic administrators and constituted one of their main fields of activity. By looking at the workings of these relations we have a chance to gain a better understanding of communal organisation. What we see is a system in which partial centralisation—visible especially in fiscal matters and relations with the state, where neglect and lack of control could prove particularly detrimental—went hand in hand with shared responsibility for day-to-day management. This is visible especially on the executive level, not only in the existence of specialised groups of monks with well-defined tasks, such as ‘the brothers of the poll-tax’, but also in the presence of ‘field managers’—community members who roamed the *chora* overseeing monastic estate. Based on our present documentation, it is impossible to say to what extent sharing responsibility took place on the decision-making level. In a system where no monastic rule imposed fixed patterns of behaviour, the solutions applied within widely accepted tradition could have varied from one superior to another. Our documentation suggests that
superiors could change with considerable frequency (see above, pp. 161–162), and the executive organisation must have been able to adjust.

The position of the monastery’s fellow players: the state and its representatives, village communities, and finally the individuals with various links to the monastery was secured by a wide range of factors: laws and regulations and the ensuing obligations, but also customary devoirs and common sense rules of peaceful neighbourly coexistence. The monastic and the lay side maintained the relations as a result of collaboration and negotiations—not always unproblematic—between their respective representatives.

Apart from the community level, there was also the sphere of the monks’ individual activity; it is exactly here where papyrological documentation belies in the most striking manner the clear-cut models of literary narratives. Our documentation allows us to reconstruct only partially how and where the monks’ and the monastery’s business overlapped. Archaeology and papyrological records suggest that the Bawit community was included people of considerable economic means, able to fend for themselves. We can expect that, armed with their experience of the worldly affairs, they would not only continue to pursue their individual social and economic roles (e.g. as the providers of credit), but also assume new roles working for their community within the networks it established and maintained on institutional level. For the time being, however, these considerations must remain only hypothetical.
CHAPTER 5

THE MONASTERY OF APA THOMAS IN WADI SARGA AND ITS LINKS TO LAY SOCIETY

1. Introductory remarks

While describing the ruins of the monasteries of Apa Thomas at Wadi Sarga and Apa Apollo at Deir el-Bala`izah, Jean Doresse wrote: ‘Après Baouît, ce sont les plus importantes des restes des monastères jusqu’à présent retrouvés en Moyenne-Egypte’. The two monasteries were located close to each other, in a large cluster of monastic settlements which flourished in Middle Egypt in the sixth–eighth centuries; both were situated in ancient quarries.

In the present and the following chapter, I will examine documentary dossiers of Wadi Sarga and Deir el-Bala`izah communities. Papyrological material from these sites illustrates well the complex question of cohesion and compatibility of different dossiers that can be used to reconstruct various aspects of ancient monasticism. Both communities left us dossiers which are counted among the most extensive collections of documents from the Egyptian monastic milieu. However, the dossiers display significant differences in documentary types they include, and, in consequence, in the scope of subjects and activities covered by the source material. The majority of Wadi Sarga texts are concerned with circulation of goods in the monastery and current administrative issues dealt with by the superiors and stewards communicating through formulaic correspondence. The Bala`izah dossier, on the other hand, preserves elaborate accounts, legal deeds, and vast correspondence of completely different nature than the ‘epistolary orders’ so frequent at Wadi Sarga or Bawit. Waybills and invoices which, statistically speaking, dominate the Wadi Sarga dossier, are absent from the Bala`izah collection. Whether the two archives can be treated as complementary and representing different aspects of essentially the same, or very similar, reality, cannot be determined in a certain manner. There are, however, indications that their composition as we know it from publications is a result of the chances of preservation and discovery of the documents (see below, pp. 240–241).

2 For a detailed description of the monasteries, see Doresse, Les anciennes monastères (cit. n. 1); idem, ‘Monastères coptes de Moyenne Égypte’, BYFE 59 (1970), pp. 7–29; for a clarified map of monastic sites in Middle Egypt, based on the map published by Doresse in the article from 1970, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, p. 142, fig. 21.
The present chapter focuses on the monastery of Apa Thomas in Wadi Sarga. The community’s dossier is famous mainly for its extensive documentation of wine transports recorded in dozens of waybills and receipts. Despite its focus on the circulation of goods, the collection from Wadi Sarga sheds light also on some other aspects of the community’s functioning, such as work organisation and land tenancy. This, in turn, adds to our knowledge of the ways the monasteries were anchored in local environment. Before we proceed to explore them, a few words of general description of the site and the dossier would not be out of place.

2. State of research—general information

The site at Wadi Sarga is currently inaccessible, being an area of military activity. The only systematic excavations were conducted on the site in November 1913–January 1914 under the direction of Reginald Campbell Thompson, acting on behalf of the Byzantine Research Fund. The campaign was considered a failure, and the outbreak of World War I hindered the publication of its results. Campbell Thompson’s brief introduction to the volume of documentary material from Wadi Sarga has long been the only widely available description of the site, its topography and some among the finds. Textual finds, on the other hand, were duly edited by Walter E. Crum and Harold I. Bell in the P. Sarga volume of 1922. Crum and Bell had chosen for edition 385 texts (including graffiti, stelae, papyri and ostraca) out of over 2,700 items from the site. Four documents firmly connected with the site had been published earlier, in 1909, in P. Ryl. Copt. by Crum (Nos. 124, 201, 289, and 294); one Wadi Sarga ostracon was published recently by Lincoln H. Blumell.

3 In the documents, the monastery was called ‘the holy monastery of Apa Thomas’ ( nomine monastirion etoia dei ena apoa tommos; P. Sarga 164; P. Sarga 375; P. Ryl. Capt. 124 III; P. Ryl. Capt. 201), ‘the monastery of Apa Thomas’ ( nomine monastirion ena apoa tommos; P. Sarga 344) ‘the rock (petra) of Apa Thomas’ ( nomine petra apoa tommos; P. Ryl. Capt. 289 and 294), ‘the rock of Abba Thomas’ ( nomine petra abba tommos; SB XXIV 16122), ‘the holy rock’ ( nomine petra die ena; P. Sarga 166; P. Ryl. Capt. 124 II), and ‘Apa Thomas’ ( nome apoa tommos; P. Ryl. Capt. 124 [IV], V, [VI], VII).

4 W. E. Crum & H. I. Bell (eds.), Wadi Sarga, Coptic and Greek Texts, with an introduction by R. Campbell Thompson [= Coptica 3], Copenhagen 1922. Campbell Thompson’s introduction at pp. 1–5.

5 Despite the fact that the Wadi Sarga dossier contains both papyri and ostraca, for the sake of convenience I will use the abbreviation P. Sarga for all the documents, regardless of the support on which they were written (inscriptions, which are of marginal interest in the present argument, are quoted as I. Sarga).

6 See J. Cromwell, ‘The Rylands contribution to the history of the monastery of Apa Thomas’, Bulletin of the John Rylands Library, forthcoming. The article, containing a reedition of P. Ryl. Capt. 124, 201, 289, and 294 was made available to me by the Author, to whom I am deeply grateful.

Material from the site is now a subject of investigation by a team headed by Elisabeth O’Connell as a part of the project *Wadi Sarga at the British Museum*. The objectives of the project include, among others, the edition of yet unpublished documentary texts, a reedition of published material according to modernised standards, establishing maps and plans of the site based on Campbell Thomas’ documentation on one hand and data obtained thanks to satellite imaging on the other, and, finally, the publication of finds and establishing their connections with structures on the site in order to determine the functions of the buildings, and clarify the spatial organisation of the monastery. Preliminary result of these works is available in form of an updated description of the site published by O’Connell in 2014, which has entirely supplanted Campbell Thompson’s introduction as the primary reference text on the monastery.

3. Situation and characteristics of the site

The monastery of Apa Thomas was located on the western bank of the Nile, in the Antaiopolite nome, twenty-five kilometres south of Lykopolis. It occupied the mouth of a wadi which in Pharaonic times was used as a quarry. Monastic settlement was preceded by a mudbrick enclosure (‘vallum’ on Campbell Thompson’s plan printed in *P. Sarga*; see Plate 4, p. 319) and Cemetery 1. Numerous buildings were preserved on north and south slopes of the wadi. Among them there were extensive structures, such as the so-called Rock-church and Campbell Thompson’s ‘stabl’ in the southern part of the settlement. Other structures included clusters of habitations built against the walls of the wadi; the best known are Nos. 1–33 (Campbell Thompson’s ‘North houses’), built on seven levels on the north slope. Some among them were carefully plastered; others had painted decoration (No. 17). No. 5 was furnished with a stone

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10 See O’Connell, ‘R. Campbell Thompson’s 1913/14 excavation’ (cit. n. 9), pp. 122–123, with bibliography. The site is mentioned as ‘Deir el Ganadleh, a large quarry-cave full of walls, paintings and inscriptions and considerable buildings outside of it’ in W. M. Flinders Petrie, *Gizeh and Rîjeh*, London 1907, p. 2.

11 The church could boast ‘the most elaborate decorative programme recorded in the wadi settlement’ (O’Connell, ‘R. Campbell Thompson’s 1913/14 excavation’ [cit. n. 9], p. 130). Exhaustive bibliography of wall paintings of Wadi Sarga can be found on the *Wadi Sarga at the British Museum* project website.

12 The building is interpreted as a place for keeping the animals working for the monastery; see Wipszycka, *Moines et communautés*, p. 156, with the remark ‘Les dimensions de cette construction témoignent de l’ampleur des activités économiques du centre, qui nous est connue par ailleurs de nombreux ostraca’.

13 O’Connell, ‘R. Campbell Thompson’s 1913/14 excavation’ (cit. n. 9), pp. 128–130 with a new architectural plan of the structures (fig. 21 at p. 155), based on Campbell Thompson’s sketch (fig. 20 at p. 154).
threshold and an oven. Similar structures were discovered further to the west on the north slope and on the south slope next to the church and ‘stabl’.

Field documentation mentions seven ‘throw-outs’ (rubbish dumps), four of which appear on the 1922 plan. They were probably located close to the structures they served and were the main source of textual material retrieved during the excavations. The richest of them was the ‘throw-out’ No. 80 next to the wadi entrance, which yielded 669 ostraca and some papyri; documents were discovered also in other dumps, next to the church and the ‘Middle cave’.14

In the present state of our knowledge, the archaeological remains provide only modest clues as to the community’s organisation. Religious and economic heart of the monastery can be placed in the area around the church and ‘stabl’. Storerooms and offices could have been located somewhere near the wadi entrance, as indicated by the large find of administrative ostraca from the refuse dump No. 80 in this place. Construction of the monks’ habitations on the wadi slopes doubtless required skilled builders and artisans who were most probably hired by the monks willing to join the community; the newcomers must have been able to afford the services of specialists. The fact that at least some of the ‘houses’ had ovens points to a certain degree of independence of their inhabitants, who could prepare meals on their own, without relying on a common kitchen and refectory.

4. The Wadi Sarga documentary dossier

The dossier of papyri and ostraca from the monastery of Apa Thomas is our main source for reconstructing the community’s organisation and economic activities. The information it provides concerns mainly transport and distribution of goods; many other aspects of everyday life of the community are absent from the collection as we know it. The aim of the present section is to discuss briefly the chronology of the texts and the documentary types they represent. The latter factor is especially significant, as the character of documentation at our disposal is what defines the limits of research possibilities offered by each collection of texts. As we shall see, the Wadi Sarga dossier presents both insurmountable difficulties and invaluable opportunities.

4.1. Chronology

Documentary material from the monastery is dated on palaeographic basis to the seventh–eighth centuries. Coins discovered at the site date from the sixth to the eighth century, while the beginnings of the community are placed before AD 600, when the probable community founder, Apa Thomas, is supposed to have lived.15

Some among Coptic epitaphs from Wadi Sarga feature the so-called ‘genealogical lists’: invocations of monastic figures that can be identified with the monastery’s superiors.16 By correlating these lists with the names of superiors appearing in documentary texts, it is possible—as Renate Dekker proposed in her recent article—to establish a relative chronology of the documents. The result (seventh–eighth century) confirms palaeographic dates. Firmly dated documents are extremely scarce; one of them is an opening section of a letter sent from the chancellery of Qurrah ibn Sharik, the governor of Egypt from 709 to 715.17

4.2. The documents and their content

The Wadi Sarga material is, as it has been already said, of predominantly administrative nature. The most numerous and quite heterogeneous category are receipts, documenting mainly transports of wine (P. Sarga 205–374; perhaps also 194–204). Other types include invoices (short notices accompanying the dispatch of products from one individual to another: P. Sarga 187–193), accounts and lists (summing up transports of wine; listing items or products such as tools, agricultural implements, or vessels; lists of persons: P. Sarga 121–160), few contracts dealing

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15 See W. E. Crum, ‘The monastic settlement and its inhabitants’, in P. Sarga, pp. 8–9. Apa Thomas is an entirely obscure figure; he is mentioned at the head of a number of invocations listing persons venerated in the monastery and appears in the designations of the monastery in documentary texts (see above, n. 3). His name appears in a palimpsest from Nitria; the manuscript was reused in Nitria in the tenth century, when Syriac texts were written over the original content, dated palaeographically to the seventh century. The last page of the text lists the names of Apa Thomas, Apa Petros, Apa Joseph, and Apa Mena, the first three of whom are identical with the persons mentioned in the Wadi Sarga invocations, which point to Wadi Sarga as the original provenance of the manuscript. Relying on the seventh-century date of the manuscript, Crum proposes the period before AD 600 as the time of Apa Thomas’s activity. For the manuscript, see H. Thompson, A Coptic Palimpsest Containing Jessina, Judges, Ruth, Judith and Esther in the Sahidic Dialect, Oxford 1911.


17 O’Connell, ‘R. Campbell Thompson’s 1913/14 excavation’ (cit. n. 9), p. 136; see also Crum, ‘The monastic settlement’ (cit. n. 15), p. 9 with n. 2, with a transcription of the document in Arabic. Qurrah ibn Sharik is well known from the eighth-century Aphrodito dossier; see, among others, N. Abbot, The Kurrah Papyri from Aphrodito in the Oriental Institute [= Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 15], Chicago 1938; Y. Ragib, ‘Lettres nouvelles de Qurrah b. Sarik’, JNES 40.3 (1981), pp. 173–187. Texts originally issued by Qurrah’s chancellery found their way to the collection of texts associated with the nearby monastery of Deir el-Bala‘izah; however, they cannot be connected with the monastery in a persuasive way (see below, Chapter 6, p. 268, n. 12).
mainly with work and service (P. Sarga 161–166), and letters. This last category is perhaps also the vaguest. Crum and Bell distinguish in their edition between two different documentary categories: letters (P. Sarga 86–120) and orders of payment (P. Sarga 167–186). In fact, the majority of Wadi Sarga ‘letters’ are actually epistolary requests of administrative character, whose recipients were expected to run errands, provide the sender or a third party with a product, or deal with some organisational matters. Therefore, I believe that both groups can be categorised as ‘epistolary orders’ and I will treat them conjointly in the following argument. The requests were usually addressed by superiors to subordinates; however, the Wadi Sarga administration did not develop a clear-cut formula for this sort of documents, as was the case at Bawit, with its preeminent petkət orders. The superiors of Apa Thomas used to open their requests with various phrases: taḥc n- [... ptn [...] ‘give it to [recipient] from [sender]’; ti, ‘give’, followed immediately by the product to be delivered; or the most universal variants of cpət-based formulas (found not only in letters but also in contracts).

Four texts from the Rylands Library collection (P. Ryl. Copt. 124, 201, 289, and 294) are also associated with the Wadi Sarga dossier. They belong to the so-called Rylands Collection B, labelled ‘the Ashmunain collection’ on account of large number of documents connected with this location. The exact circumstances of their acquisition are unknown. These items, however, represent strikingly different documentary types than the texts published in P. Sarga by Crum and Bell. P. Ryl. Copt. 124 is a compilation of seven tax receipts; P. Ryl. Copt. 201 is a debt acknowledgement issued by the monastery to a woman, Maria; P. Ryl. Copt. 289 is a letter concerning fugitives addressed by Sarapammon of the petra of Apa Thomas to an archimandrite of another monastery; P. Ryl. Copt. 294 is another letter, written to the head of the monastery of Apa Thomas by an anonymous individual, which deals with a donation of a garden. These types—external correspondence, tax receipts, and credit-related documents—are otherwise absent, or almost absent, from the dossier of Apa Thomas; on the other hand, they are well-represented in the Bala’izah dossier (see below, Chapter 6, pp. 268–269). We know that not all of the refuse dumps at Wadi Sarga have been excavated by Campbell Thompson and his team. On the other hand, the example of the Naqlun dump excavated by Polish archaeologists (see above, Chapter 3, pp. 118–119) shows that even within a single dump, rubbish could be deposited by basketloads, following the rhythm of subsequent clean-ups of structures where the documents

18 P. Sarga 174 has to be excluded from their number, since its well-preserved opening formula preeminent petkət points to its connection with the Bawit dossier (see above, Chapter 4, pp. 161–162). The text was reedited by Sarah J. Clackson as P. Bawit Clackson 14.


20 This feature was also observed by Jennifer Cromwell in her reedition of the documents; see ‘The Rylands contribution’ (cit. n. 6).
had been kept. 21 Campbell Thompson’s excavations encompassed spots that yielded only particular types of documents—perhaps dumps, or parts thereof, that served monastic storerooms where goods arrived with camel-drivers, or the office of the ὀικονόμος. The Rylands documents could have been excavated earlier in a different place, maybe in a dump where baskets carrying papers from a different section of the monastery had been emptied. The composition of the dossier from Deir el-Bala‘izah, excavated during rather casual search by Petrie’s team, which, in sharp contrast to its Wadi Sarga counterpart, contains no invoices or receipts, may be a result of similar discovery circumstances. I reckon that originally the two dossiers were much more similar in content than their present state would make us believe.

The Wadi Sarga texts are predominantly Coptic. Coptic was the language of everyday communication and transactions: all letters and epistolary orders are written in this language; the same is true also of the contracts. Greek, however, does appear in receipts and accounts, but its knowledge was limited to basic structures and technical vocabulary. 22

Administrative documents of the Wadi Sarga dossier allow us to glance some basic details of the monastery’s organisation and main channels of communication between its functionaries. Although the majority of attestations pertain to internal community matters, at least some of the texts hint at the role played by monastic representatives in the community’s relations with ‘the world outside’. Other texts enable us to find scattered pieces of information concerning the monastic estate and people supervised by these functionaries. Identifying actors of the relations and understanding organisational and economic basis underlying the monks’ activities in local environment is necessary from the point of view of our present task—hence the need of a closer look at the Wadi Sarga community as an institution.

21 See T. Derda in P. Naqlun II, p. 7: ‘The rubbish [in the Naqlun refuse dump—JW] lay as it was dumped, by basketload or other rubbish container. Particular basketloads can differ dramatically in content, even though they lie next to each other. And so, the majority of the papyrus pieces were found in two clusters, suggesting the contents of baskets with rubbish from the cleaning of an archive (or library) had been dumped there’.

5. Organisation of the community: functionaries and assets

5.1. Functionaries and form of community

Technical terms and titles found in the dossier belong to the standard set known from a number of documents connected with monasteries. In legal and financial documents (the latter, as a matter of fact, are related mainly to fiscal), we find the monastery’s dikaion, or ‘legal personality’, represented by a proestos (P. Sarga 164; proestos Enoch; P. Sarga 344; proestos Germane; P. Ryl. Capt. 201: proestos Ioustos) or an archimandrite (P. Ryl. Capt. 124; Apa Georgios/George). An archimandrite appears also in a contract with carpenter Paulos, P. Sarga 161, which lacks the standard formula of representation; the capacity of the archimandrite as the community’s representative is, however, clear from the context. While proestos was technical designation of the monastery’s head, archimandrite was a title granted by local bishops to particularly distinguished individuals. As the title of archimandrite was purely honorific, we can suspect that, on institutional plane, its bearer would fill exactly the same functions as a proestos.

Proestotes and archimandrites were assisted in their everyday work by oikonomoi, who fulfilled an executive role, supervising and organising circulation of goods. The oikonomoi, in turn, could charge other members of the community with particular tasks (cf. P. Sarga 88, a letter from the oikonomos Enoch to Apa Pkol, asking the latter to give four sacks of onion to papa Iohanes). There is only one (uncertain) attestation of an oikonomos related to a particular location, Nesieu (P. Sarga 99, ll. 2–3: πακον ενοχ πο[κονομος?] ημεσιν). Nesieu is mentioned in the dossier as a source of wine and tax grain (see below, p. 249); we can assume that the monastery possessed considerable amount of land there—perhaps considerable enough to guarantee the place its own oikonomos.

P. Sarga 375, a letter from a bishop’s chancellery addressed to the monastery’s proestos, contains in its address formula the mention of a ‘second-in-authority’ (ΠΙΕΡΟΠΗΤΗ), corresponding

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23 See E. Wipszycka, ‘Dikaion’, CE, s.v.; eadem, ‘Proestos’, CE, s.v.; eadem, ‘Archimandrite’, CE, s.v. On archimandrites, see also Wipszycka, Monastés de communautés, pp. 329–331. Archimandrite George, who represents the monastery’s dikaion in P. Ryl. Capt. 124, is called also ΠΡΟΕΣΤΟΣ ΠΡΩΘΟΣ, literally ‘great man’. Wipszycka, Monastés de communautés, p. 330, n. 6, quotes an analogous example from Deir el-Bala’izah, where an archimandrite named Petros appears with the title ΠΡΟΕΣΤΟΣ ΠΡΩΘΟΣ in P. Bal. 291 (see below, Chapter 6, p. 270, n. 17).

24 P. Sarga 161, ll. 1–2: διανοιγεντα τοπονοματικον παραθετον τον εορτασμον. ‘Daniel, by the mercy of God, archimandrite’ (διανοιγενετα τοπονοματικον παραθετον τον εορτασμον) is the monastery’s head, archimandrite, according to Wipszycka. ‘Daniel, by the mercy of God, archimandrite’ (διανοιγενετα τοπονοματικον παραθετον τον εορτασμον) features in P. Sarga 87 addressed to a certain Apa John ‘of the pickle store’ (II 1–4).

25 Connections between the proestoses of the monastery of Apa Thomas and their respective oikonomoi are briefly discussed by Dekker, ‘The monastery of Apa Thomas’ (cit. n. 16), p. 7. For oikonomoi, see E. Wipszycka, ‘Οικονομος’, CE, s.v.

26 Crum’s proposed translation in P. Sarga has ‘to my brother Enoch, the steward (?) of Nesiew’.
perhaps to deuterarios, a term attested chiefly in literary sources of the Pachomian corpus. Nothing can be said about this function in Wadi Sarga, as this is its only occurrence in the whole dossier. It is possible that the person called deuterarios from the external perspective of the sender fulfilled in his monastery one of the functions known from the documentary record, e.g., that of oikonomos. 27

A generic designation of monastic superior recurring most frequently in administrative correspondence was ἐπίσκοπος (father), attested several times with names of men otherwise known as proestotes: Ioustos and Enoch. 28 The designation was, however, not purely technical: it could function also as a mark of respect, as it is most probably the case in two documents, P. Sarga 92 and 186. Both texts are addressed by one of the superiors to Papnoute, otherwise known as steward (oikonomos), and both request him to provide wine to a person who is, in turn, called ‘my father’ (ΠΑΤΟΣ) by the sender. Since we can assume that both texts had the same author—one of the monastery’s proestotes—it appears that in these two cases the term was used for the second time in honorific rather than technical meaning. 29

The organisational pattern of the community cannot be reconstructed with any degree of certainty. In his introduction to P. Sarga, Crum refrained from sweeping statements, but was inclined to see in the monastery of Apa Thomas a koinonion, on account of the mentions of archimandrites in the documents. 30 Jennifer Cromwell invokes the title ἡγεμόν in P. Sarga 375

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27 P. Sarga 375, ll. 4–7: ΜΠΟΜΑΝΙΤΡΙΩΝ ΕΤΟΥΛΑΙ ΠΑΠΝΟΥΤΕΣ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ ΕΠΙΔΙΝΑ ΗΓΕΜΟΝ. On deuterarios, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 337–338, with further references in n. 14 at p. 337. See also cadem, ‘Deuterarios’, in CE, i.e., where the author concludes: ‘It is not by coincidence that the majority of the evidence concerning the title deuterarios comes from monasteries with clearly defined rules in which the organisational structures were more distinctly regulated and ‘named’. We can presume that the deputies of the superior were often stewards especially as regards everything connected with economic matters’. In Wadi Sarga documents, links between the superiors and oikonomoi are quite well-visible (see above, n. 25); it is possible that this relation was a recognisable feature of the community and lead to the identification of Wadi Sarga oikonomos with the superior’s ‘second’. The title is otherwise unattested in the papyri; Leslie MacCoull wanted to read it in one of the papyri connected with the dossier of the Aphroditan monastery of Apa Apollo (see L. S. B. MacCoull, ‘The Apa Apollos monastery of Pharouou [Aphroditos] and its papyrus archive’, Le Muséon 106 (1993), pp. 21–62, No. 14 at pp. 39–40: ΜΠΟΚΛΑΙΕΠΙΡΟΠΟΣ). The restitution was rightly rejected by E. Wipszycka, ‘Ἀγαθομαντίας, ἐρμής, ἐρκλαματις, ὑποκρατός. Su la terminologie monastique en Egypte’, JfurP 31 (2001), pp. 147–168, esp. pp. 157–158, n. 17.

28 Ioustos: P. Sarga 94, 102, 103, 113, 186; Enoch: P. Sarga 95, 169, 170, 171, 183.

29 The sender of P. Sarga 186 is Apa Iouste the proosto. In P. Sarga 92, the sender introduces himself simply as the ‘father’ of the recipient (l. 1–3: ΤΑΣ ΜΠΟΜΑΝΙΤΡΙΩΝ ΠΡΟΣΘΟΠΟΣ), but due to general similarities between the two documents (the same recipient and almost the same content), we can assume that Ioustos sent both of the orders. The same phenomenon of using the otherwise ‘technical’ designation proosto as a mark of respect towards saintly figures and respected brothers is observed at Bawit; see A. Delattre, ‘La traduction des institutions administratives dans les monastères égyptiens (VIIe–VIIIe siècles)’, in: F. Colin, O. Huck & S. Vanséveren (eds.), Interprétaio. Traduire l’altérité culturelle dans les civilisations de l’Antiquité, Paris 2015, pp. 213–228, esp. p. 216 with n. 32.

30 Crum, ‘The monastic settlement’ (cit. n. 15), introduction, pp. 9–10. Crum associated the title with ‘the abbeys of the principal monasteries in Egypt […] which, in such cases, implied a coenobium and not a luna’. This reasoning is obviously wrong, on account of the honorific, not administrative value of the title of archimandrite (see below, p. 246).
and points to its connections with the Pachomian tradition, which would also imply a coenobitic model. The appearance of ⲫⲙⲉϩⲥⲛⲁⲩ in the incoming correspondence may be, however, a result of an ‘external’ interpretation of an organisational arrangement typical of the monastery of Apa Thomas (see above, p. 242–243). On the other hand, the presence of an archimandrite in a monastery does not suffice to determine the model according to which the monks were organised. In the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit archimandrites are mentioned on several occasions, both in inscriptions and papyri; however, the community cannot be, by any means, treated as a coenobium organised according to Pachomian model (see above, Chapter 4, p. 165). In any case, Crum’s understanding of community models in 1922 was much more simplistic than ours, being conceived as it was in terms of dichotomy between the anchoritic pattern and coenobitism. As it has already been said, archaeology is of little help, even though such indications as the presence of ovens in monastic habitations do suggest a certain degree of independence allowed to community members in their daily routine. It must be noted, however, that clustering of the monks’ habitations so close to each other on the wadi walls (see above, pp. 237–238) was most probably a deliberate choice and attests to a different concept of communal life than that represented, e.g., by the Bawit community, with its separate monastic dwellings. On the other hand, P. Sarga 166, a loan contract between two monks of the ‘holy Rock’ shows that the monks had ready cash at their disposal, similarly to their Bawit and Bala‘izah counterparts (see above, Chapter 4, p. 164 and below, Chapter 6, pp. 276–277).

Recently a hypothesis has been put forward by Alain Delattre to consider the monastery of Apa Thomas at Wadi Sarga a part of a congregation centred around Bawit. Delattre observed that the monastery of Apa Apollo was involved in administering other centres. He sees indications of a connection between the monastery of Apa Thomas and the monastery at Bawit in P. Mich. XV 749, P. Lond. Copt. I 1130, and P. Sarga 175 [= P. Bawit Clackson 60]. The first document is a list of embole-payments from various locations for which the monastery of Apa Tomas was responsible before the fisc (see below, p. 248). Delattre proposes to connect P. Mich. XV 749 with the milieu of Bawit managers, arguing that had the account been drawn up for monastic administration, there would have been no need to indicate the name of the monastery

31 Cromwell, ‘The Rylands contribution’ (cit. n. 6).
32 The contract was concluded between ‘brother Germanos, the carpenter of the Holy Rock […] the city’ and ‘brother the deacon […] the monk of this same monastery, in this same nome’ (ll. 1–6: ἀνὴρ πασχὸς γερμανὸς τῇ θείᾳ ἱππείᾳ ἑτοιμάζει […] τίμως […] ἱππον παλαρλ[ον] […] πανθοχος πανθονα[…] τιμωτ ἐμπετον). The subject of the loan was one solidus, and the debtor was supposed to procure cheese as its repayment. For analogous loan contracts between monks of the same monastery, see the Bawit dossier, P. Mon. Apollo 58–44 and P. Bruc. Bawit 34 and 35, with commentary in A. Delattre, P. Bruc. Bawit, pp. 241–252, esp. pp. 251–252. See also T. Markiewicz, ‘The Church, clerics, monks and credit in papyri’, [in] P. Clackson, pp. 178–204.
in the opening. The problem is, however, that we do not know for whom the account was made (a record of embole drawn up for fiscal officers is not out of question). Another link between the two monasteries is, in Delattre’s opinion, P. Lond. Copt. I 1130: a bilingual text containing letter of a monastic superior concerning disbursements of wine to various people—monks and workers—and a Greek wine account of roughly the same content, made most probably after the actual disbursement had taken place. The text features three toponyms: παρά (Παρά), πομπαρπε (Νευλακ()=Νευλακ(κου)), and ποσλαμπρε. Delattre connects them with three locations from P. Mich. XV 749 (κτήμα Νεολάκκου, κτήμα Παρά, and κτήμα Καλαστιρίου) and argues that P. Lond. I 1130 documents records payments of wine to institutions and individuals connected with the monastery of Wadi Sarga, whose personnel would be dependent on Bawit administration. The parallel is interesting indeed; on the other hand, we cannot exclude the possibility that the spheres of influence of the two monastic institutions overlapped; the Aphrodito cadastre (SB XX 14669) shows that a number of monasteries could possess plots of land on the territory of one village; these plots were, moreover, the subdivisions of smaller units called topos. The Hermopolit rural landscape might have been similar to the Aphroditan one, with several monastic landowners in particular locations. If we are to accept the connection between the two monasteries, however, we need to remember that administrative relation does not necessarily imply subjugation within the framework of one overarching organisation.

Of the documents discussed by Delattre, P. Sarga 175 is the most problematic. It was incorporated into the Bawit dossier in Sarah J. Clackson’s edition of πηνειατ πετεραί documents; however, as pointed out by Jennifer Cromwell, the text preserves only the very beginning of the opening formula (πηνειατ(- - -)), and πηνειατ πετεραί is not the only possible reconstruction. The text was signed by a superior named Daniel; a homonymous signatory of superiors’ order is known from the Bawit dossier. However, as observed by Delattre himself, the hand that signed P. Sarga 175 is different from the hand of Daniel of P. Bawit Clackson 14–17.

Renate Dekker treats Delattre’s arguments with due reserve, but supports the idea of congregation. She argues that ‘judging from the documents, the leader of the Monastery of Apa

34 Delattre quotes P. Brusc. Bawit 31 as an analogy to P. Mich. XV 749: ‘Ainsi, par exemple, P. Brusc. Bawit 31 […] ne provient sans doute pas de Koussai, mais du monastère de Bawit, qui possédait des biens fonciers dans les environs de cette ville’. The text in question opens with the formula λόγῳ ἐμβολή(τ)ς οἰκίας(ς) Κουσσά(ν) (ἐπίπερ ἴθ(υτίον)ος(ς) ἢ) (l. 1; see also above, Chapter 4, p. 170).
35 For a comparison between the two texts and a reconstruction of their sequence, see Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 29), pp. 218–221.
36 Cf. the situation of other monasteries mentioned in the aparche dossier of Bawit (see above, Chapter 4, pp. 220–221).
37 Cromwell’s remarks quoted in Dekker, ‘The monastery of Apa Thomas’ (cit. n. 16), n. 20 at p. 13: ‘[…] the text could also begin with πηνειατ[τ επεραί] instead of πηνειατ[τ πετεραί], which is not a formula restricted to Bawit’.
38 Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 29), p. 226, n. 84.
Thomas was called “father” or “superior” (proestos) when he represented the dikaion of the monastery, and the archimandrites were associated with another monastery, which is once designated as the “Holy Mountain” [in P. Ryl. Copt. 124, Entry II—JW]. At a later stage, archimandrites interfered with the administration of the Monastery of Apa Thomas’. She emphasises, moreover, that the names of both Wadi Sarga archimandrites, George and Daniel, recur in Bawit in connection with superiors of the monastery of Apa Apollo. Dekker invokes also the monastery at Bala’izah, with its five proestotes and two archimandrites. Considering that the title of archimandrite appeared with particular frequency at Bawit, Dekker conjectures that Wadi Sarga and Bala’izah monasteries were included in a congregation with the centre at Bawit.

As it has already been observed, the title of archimandrite was a honorific designation granted by bishops to distinguished monastic superiors. It could, then, appear at random in various monastic institutions, depending on the bishop’s will. Bishops were perhaps more inclined to name archimandrites heads of important monasteries, and the impressive number of Bawit archimandrites could be a result of the monastery’s prominence. However, this is not enough to prove that other monasteries could not have their own archimandrites. I also do not believe that documentary sources invoked by Dekker give us grounds for connecting the two archimandrites mentioned in them with a monastery other than Wadi Sarga. First, it is difficult to say whether the archimandrites in P. Sarga 161 and P. Ryl. Copt. 124 were really associated with ‘another monastery’. In fact, the former document has no representation formula at all, and were it not for its certain finding spot, we would be entirely unable to connect it with any community whatsoever. The latter, on the other hand, is a collection of tax receipts addressed to an archimandrite of a monastery. Dekker is right to observe that the designation ‘dikaion of the Holy Mountain’, absent from the main Wadi Sarga corpus, appears once in this document (entry II); however, in three other cases the same man represents the ‘dikaion of Apa Thomas’ (entry III, V, VII). All texts pertain to payments of money, most probably of fiscal nature, and we can assume that such a compilation would have made sense from the point of view of monastic bookkeepers only if it had been drawn up for the estate of one monastery, represented by one dikaion. Changing designations of monasteries come as no surprise in the papyri, as can be observed in Bala’izah materials (see below, Chapter 6, p. 270) or in the earlier Aphroditan dossier of the monastery of Apa Apollos, called sometimes ‘the monastery of Pharouu’ (see above, Chapter 4, p. 105, n. 109). Moreover, if we return to Daniel of P. Sarga 161 we need to take into account another document in which he appears, and which Dekker omitted. It is P. Sarga 87, an epistolary request addressed by ‘Daniel, by the mercy of God archimandrite’ to ‘Apa John of the pickle

store’, concerning the dispatch of pickled food. If we identify the two Daniels—and I believe this a reasonable solution—we see the archimandrite involved in everyday administration, including such tasks as current deliveries of foodstuffs and employing craftsmen for the community. Unless we assume a developed system of representation, untraceable in the documents at our disposal, we would rather be tempted to regard the archimandrite Daniel as a local figure involved in local affairs; relying on a remote decision-making centre in Bawit would render everyday administration in Wadi Sarga extremely unwieldy. Therefore, I do not believe that Wadi Sarga documents give us any proof that the monastery belonged to a congregation.

5.2. The monastic estate

The Wadi Sarga dossier occupies an important place in discussions of monastic economy; it is especially its dozens of ostraca related to wine transport that draw the attention of the researchers. These brief texts document the vast scale of the monastery’s involvement in economic activities connected with production, transport, and consumption of wine, with annual supply of wine estimated at 25,665 litres.40 Although much is to be gathered from these documents about the organisation of wine circulation, they are far less informative as to the manner of acquisition of wine and other products by the monastery; they are also of little help for reconstructing the shape of the monastic estate.

The ostraca mention numerous toponyms indicating the provenance of products delivered to the monastery. The place names in themselves allow only to determine geographical scope of the community’s economic activities, not the character of the processes as a result of which the products reached the monastery. Wine and grain could be produced on monastic estates or purchased, but what mechanism was at work in each of the cases is impossible to say. According to Jennifer Cromwell’s reasonable assumption, wine from localities as remote as the Fayum or the Herakleopolite nome was produced in the monastic estate.41 It would be otherwise

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incomprehensible why the monastery would put time and effort into arranging purchases of wine from remote external sources instead of searching for a seller closer at hand.\textsuperscript{42} Cultivation of fields located in distant nomes would be secured by sharecropping lease agreements, of which, however, none survives.\textsuperscript{43}

A number of places recurrent in the Wadi Sarga ostraca, including some of the most frequently attested, such as Thallou,\textsuperscript{44} Nesieu, or Paroou, are connected with the Hermopolite nome. Of these, Nesieu was almost certainly the location of parcels belonging to the monastery (see below, p. 249). However, a large number of Wadi Sarga toponyms cannot be ascribed to any of the nomes, while even those for which such connections can be made are frequently impossible to pinpoint on the map.

A testimony of monastic landownership is found in \textit{P. Mich. XV} 749, dated to the seventh century.\textsuperscript{45} The document is an account of shipments of barley for \textit{embole} (grain tax) of various plots (κτήματα) for which the monastery was held fiscally responsible. The document mentions toponyms recurring also in other texts from the dossier, such as κτήμα Νεολάκκου (identified with the Hermopolite Coptic Senberras/Pshenberre),\textsuperscript{46} Νεσιέου, κτήμα Παα,\textsuperscript{47} Παροβ,\textsuperscript{48} or κτήμα Πααμπατο.\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{42} Dzierrzibicka, ‘Wine consumption’ (cit. n. 40), p. 101, following Cromwell. Cf. \textit{P. Bal.} 291 from the Bala’izah dossier, recording purchase of wine from Nerebe (Calderini–Darris, \textit{Dizionario III}, p. 337, s.v. ‘Nēpʰḕς’). The toponym is connected with the Lykopolite pagarchy; as Deir el’Bala’izah was ca. eighteen–nineteen kilometres south of Lykopolis, it is possible that the monastery and Nerebe were located considerably close to each other.


\textsuperscript{44} Source of wine in \textit{P. Sarga} 211, 216, 217, 240, 241, 242, 243, 257, 268, 269, 295, 304, 308, 309, 325, 326, 327. On Thallou, see Calderini–Darris, \textit{Dizionario}, vol. II, p. 235, s.v. ‘Thallou’. The location, which in the seventh–eighth century is attested as ωοςιον, is connected with the Pathemite topharchy of the Hermopolite nome.


\textsuperscript{46} Mentioned in connection with grain production in \textit{P. Sarga} 131 (account of shipments of corn), 149 (?), 176 (?), and 360–362. The last three documents are written in the same hand and mention an ‘account of Pshinberre’ (Ανος(ος) Παιμπηρη), all of them record amounts of grain measured in \textit{thallia}. See Drew-Bear, \textit{Le nome hermopolita}, pp. 239–240, s.v. Ξανθόρρας. The Coptic toponym is a translation of the Greek one; see Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 29), p. 222. For homonymous toponyms, see N. Gonis, ‘Hermopolite locations and splinter nomes’, \textit{ZPE} 142 (2003), pp. 176–184, esp. p. 184.

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{P. Sarga} 133: a receipt for 104 artabae/52 \textit{thallia} of grain κτήματος Παι. Calderini–Darris, \textit{Dizionario}, vol. IV, pp. 6–7 (s.v. ‘Παι’ connects the attestation in \textit{P. Mich. XV} 749 with the mention of Παι in ll. 268 and 271 of \textit{BGU} XI 2072—a second-century list of kleruchs of Arsinoite provenance. The identification is hypothetical.

\textsuperscript{48} To be identified with Hermopolite Paarou (see Timm, \textit{Ägypten}, vol. IV, p. 1845; Drew-Bear, \textit{Le nome Hermopolita}, p. 194, s.v. Παροβού), attested in \textit{P. Sarga} 121, 122, 355, 357 (?), 385.

\textsuperscript{49} The toponym does not appear in any of the published Wadi Sarga materials; it is found, however, in a brief description of Greek administrative texts—apparently of extreme interest—that were deemed too fragmentary for publication by the first editors, Bell and Crum. These documents are dated ‘not earlier than the seventh century […] and, more often than not, to the period after the Arab conquest of Egypt’. See H. I. Bell, ‘Greek papyri’, [in] \textit{P. Sarga}, pp. 14–15, esp. p. 15, where we find the reconstruction ΑΠΟ(Ο) ΚΤΙΝ(Η)(Ο) ΠΑΑΝ ΠΑΤΕΡ[ΒΡΟΝΟΥ]. The toponym should rather be identified with κτήμα Πααμπατο from \textit{P. Mich. XXV} 749. Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 29), p. 225, proposes the same reading. Also the toponym Parob/Paarou (see n. 44) is mentioned in one of the unpublished accounts (see Bell, ‘Greek papyri’, p. 15: ΔΝΟ ΠΑΡΟΒ).
An ὄργανον Nesieu was a wine-producing unit that appears in the receipts P. Sarga 345–354 written by a monk named Menas. Nesieu is usually identified with the Greek Ἐνσεῖ in the Hermopolite nome, perhaps not very far from Hermopolis itself. From P. Mich. XXV 749 we learn that the monastery took fiscal responsibility for a κτῆμα Νεσείου, paying its embole in barley. It is thus possible that the land managed by the monastery at Nesieu comprised several plots producing different crops.

Receipts from Wadi Sarga mention two other wine-producing ὄργανα, ὄργανον ἀμπέλου (P. Sarga 355–357) and ὄργανον Νοτινοῦ (P. Sarga 358, 359 (?)). P. Sarga 178 speaks of ‘wine of the southern vineyard’ (ἡπὶ ἱππικὴ ἱππικὴ) destined for potters, perhaps as a payment. Can this location be connected with ὄργανον Νοτινοῦ? Even if this is the case, we still remain at a loss as to whether the plot was a part of monastic estate or the place of provenance of purchased wine. In the case of ὄργανον ἀμπέλου, we learn the name of the person responsible before the monastery for the delivery of wine, which may suggest a sharecropping lease agreement between the monastery and the person in question (see below, pp. 258–259).

The documents speak also of gardens exploited by the monastery. A garden in the community’s possession is found in P. Ryl. Capt. 294, which is a letter mentioning ‘the gift of the garden’ to be given ‘to you, into the Rock’ (ll. 2–3: ταῷρεα ἱτειμψι [ λας ἵτει ἱρονι ἐπιτετρα). The garden is connected with an otherwise unattested place called Tjaser mentioned in line 1. Gardens are referred to in the very fragmentary P. Sarga 153, listing three places, of which one has a clear monastic connection (the cell of papa Psha; ρατρ παίπα ποια); the two remaining are the ‘great garden’ (τίους παμνη), and ‘the garden of Tahrouj’ (κατεμψι νταρπου[α]). The account P. Sarga 147 suggests the existence of a ‘northern garden’ (?) (λάγος[ας] λαχανι[ας] βορα (?)).

50 Menas consistently calls himself Δηλακτος or Νοίαζον in these documents.
51 See Drew-Bear, Le noms hermopolites, s.v. ‘Ἐνσεῖ’; Calderini–Darris, Dizionario, vol. II, p. 148, s.v. ‘Ἐνσεῖ’. The village is located in the toparchy of Πατρί Πόλιν ἄνω. Delattre, ‘La traduction’ (cit. n. 29), p. 225, n. 6 is not convinced about the identification.
52 Cells, ρετρ, as subdivisions of the monastery, recur in the Bawit dossier (see above, Chapter 4, p. 160). Tahrouj can be identified with the Greek Ταρουθίς in the southern part of the Hermopolite nome (Drew-Bear, Le noms hermopolites, p. 264 and 270; cf. Timm, Egypten, vol. II, pp. 493–495, s.v. ‘Dahrut’). The location recurs frequently in the present dossier as a place of provenance of wine (P. Sarga 218, 255, 256, 288, 292, 313, 321, 330, 335, 338).
53 Λαχανί denotes a vegetable garden; the word is attested in a number of Byzantine papyri; see, among others, P. Michael. 46 (559), II. 9–10: στὶς μέρει τοῦ ὄρους ἅλκου καὶ δεξίμην καὶ μονή καὶ λαχανιν (‘together with the share of the pond therein, and the receiving-tank and lodge and vegetable patch’; transl. after the edition); P. Mich. XIII 666 (6th c.), I. 9: καὶ ἄμφοτες καὶ χορίον καὶ λαμπρανι καὶ λαχανιν (‘and a chaff-holder and a vineyard and an orchard and a vegetable-patch’; transl. after the edition). For attestations in Coptic texts, see Förster, Wörterbuch, s.v. λάχανον, τό. The Coptic word ἄμμη covers more than one meaning; cf. Crum, CD, s.v. χαλανθ, translated as ‘garden’ but in fact used to render such different Greek words as κήπος, παραθείρος or ἀμπέλων. 249
Despite the scantiness of our data, the documents allow us to see the monastery at Wadi Sarga as an essentially agriculture-based enterprise. A closer look at the documents will enable us to get an idea how it was managed by the community’s functionaries, and worked by monks and laypeople alike. Landowning and work—in the fields, but also on the monastery’s premises—resulted in a range of contacts with persons from ‘the world outside’, and the following sections will focus on these relations. It is true that an exhaustive analysis, along the lines of the one I proposed for Bawit, is impossible for Wadi Sarga, due to the nature of documentation at our disposal. A number of activities attested at Bawit are simply absent, or almost absent from the Wadi Sarga dossier (e.g. leases of land or loans), while determining the status of people in the documents from the monastery of Apa Thomas is even more risky than in the case of Bawit.

The Bawit texts are sufficient to form an idea how laypeople could fit into the monastery’s everyday concerns. In the Wadi Sarga documents, we can try to find traces of lay involvement in monastery’s actions in the spheres of work, agriculture, and fiscality; out of necessity, we need to focus on particular cases and try to avoid as much as possible the risk of unfounded generalisation.

6. The Wadi Sarga monastery and laypeople: a fragmentary image

In order to analyse the scattered traces of relations with laypeople in the Wadi Sarga dossier, we need to have recourse to an already known procedure: identifying lay actors of the relations on one hand, and the contexts in which they functioned on the other. It is necessary to tackle the tricky question of the selection of material suitable for researching our subject, and explore the two main spheres in which the monastery of Apa Thomas interacted with laypersons: fiscality and internal workings of the monastery as a place for living and labour.

6.1. A starting point

The criteria for distinguishing laypeople in monastic archives have been set forth in detail in Chapter 4 discussing the dossier of Apa Apollo’s monastery in Bawit (see Chapter 4, pp. 175–177); here, I will only recount them as briefly as possible. The most reliable indications are the mentions of functions of an individual, either monastic (proestos, oikonomos, archimandrite, etc.), or lay (dux, pagarch, etc.), or titles and designations (formal, honorific, or technical) that could be applied only to laypeople or only to monastics/ecclesiastics (e.g., kyrios, illustris for laymen; abba, papas, pason for monks/clerics). The very frequent honorific apa is not unequivocal, as it could be
used for monks, clerics, and respected laymen alike.\textsuperscript{54} If a person’s place of provenance is stated, it cannot function as status indicator by itself; the same holds true for patronymics, although the latter could point to lay status of a person.\textsuperscript{55}

If we apply these criteria to the Wadi Sarga dossier, we are left with a very modest selection of dispersed testimonies. Entire groups of texts, such as receipts for wine transports, in which the status of the mentioned people—mainly camel-drivers—is very difficult, not to say impossible, to determine (see below, pp. 262–263) have to be left out. Our few points of departure thus obtained are: \textit{P. Sarga} 95 (\textit{proestos} Enoch to \textit{oikonomos} Papnoute; an epistolary request to consult \textit{kyrios} Sarapion (\textit{Πυρτής Καρπήνιος}) about transport documentation); \textit{P. Sarga} 102 (letter to Ioustos the \textit{proestos} from a monk John mentioning a decision of a \textit{dux}); \textit{P. Sarga} 104 (brother Enoch to Enoch \textit{oikonomos}, letter mentioning a sailor of a \textit{liburnus} ship); \textit{P. Sarga} 107 (Apa Enoch to Kosmas concerning a wedding-gift for the ‘pagarch’s bride’; \textit{Τύρκαλατ Μπακαρχός}; \textit{P. Sarga} 118 (scrap of text mentioning an \textit{antigeouchos} and a \textit{chartoularios}); \textit{P. Sarga} 128 (list mentioning a \textit{sebolastikes} from Sbeht); \textit{P. Sarga} 129 (list of names of various people and their kin); \textit{P. Sarga} 140 (account of supplies to a worker (?), Jacob son of Hor); \textit{P. Sarga} 157 (list of men and their places of provenance, mainly villages in the Hermopolite nome); \textit{P. Sarga} 205 (receipt for wheat delivered by Nohe son of Konstantinos on behalf of the ‘people of Sebetef’); \textit{P. Ryl. Copt.} 124 (collection of receipts issued, among others, by ‘Apollo of the \textit{ousia}, \textit{απαλός πατούςχας}). In other cases the involvement of people from ‘the world’ is implied by the content of the documents. In both \textit{P. Sarga} 161 (work contract with a carpenter) and \textit{P. Sarga} 164 (work contract with a ‘salt-dealer’), the workmen hired by the monastery are expected to come to it from the outside to perform their tasks, as indicated by amounts of fodder assigned for animals they were supposed to use for transportations.\textsuperscript{56} Lay identity of the writer of the letter \textit{P. Ryl. Copt.} 294 can be inferred thanks to the mention of an official proclamation of a gift of a garden he made. All these documents record contacts maintained on monastery level: laypeople recur in correspondence exchanged between community functionaries, or in lists and receipts issued by


\textsuperscript{55} For general information on methods of personal identification in Byzantine documents, see A. Delattre, ‘\textit{Éléménts de l’identification en Egypte (IV\textsuperscript{e}–VIII\textsuperscript{e} siècles)}’, [in:] M. Depauw & S. Coussement (eds.), \textit{Identifiers and Identification Methods in the Ancient World [= Orientalia Lovaniensia analecta 229]}, Leuven 2014, pp. 153–162, esp. pp. 156–157 and 159. The presence of a patronymic is perhaps more significant in groups of texts where, as indeed in the Wadi Sarga dossier, names of fathers are mentioned but very rarely. One needs to treat the patronymics carefully in fiscal contexts: since it was the usage of fiscal officers in the Arab period to introduce monastic taxpayers by their names and patronymics, monks can be indistinguishable from laypeople if no additional information is provided. Cf. tax demands from the Bawit dossier: \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 28, 29, and 30, where the three taxpayers are mentioned with their patronymics, but their monastic affiliation is also stated; tax receipts from the Bawit dossier repeat the name-and-patronymic pattern (see \textit{3B XXVI} 16788), sometimes omitting the statement of monastic affiliation (\textit{P. Lond.}, V 1747). See above, Chapter 4, p. 177 with n. 92.

\textsuperscript{56} Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, pp. 196–197.
monastic administration. In contrast to the Bawit and Baʿlaʿizah material, there are no documents that would bear testimony to contacts of particular monks with local residents.

In order to use these dispersed testimonies of various people and their links to the monastery, we need now to locate each of them in a proper context. Our contextual background encompasses relations resulting from fiscal obligations of the monastery and other units with which it was linked, and the requirements of everyday life in a community which had to provide its members with means of subsistence and maintain its economic status.

6.2. Requisitions, fiscality, officials of state and estate

Representatives of the state appear, quite unsurprisingly, in documents related to fiscality and requisitions. An unpublished text mentioned by H. I. Bell (P. Sarga, p. 14) refers to a payment of *dapane* (maintenance tax) for an Arab governor (δαπάνης τοῦ συμβούλου). In P. Sarga 102, a certain Iohannes relates to the *proestos* Ioustos an order of the *dux* concerning a group of people who were supposed to stay at their gates; the text is too obscure to allow for interpretation.⁵⁷ P. Sarga 107 is an intriguing letter in which Apa Enoch (we do not know whether the steward or the prior) asks ἱάκων Kosmas to ‘set four sucking pigs apart […] and give them a little barley, that their bodies may improve somewhat thereby.’⁵⁸ For it is desired to give them to the pagarch’s bride’. What is meant here is, again, some form of requisition rather than a gift properly speaking.⁵⁹ Requisitions appear also in the fragmentary account SB XXIV 16122 [= P. Eirene I 34] of the seventh–eighth century, recording payments (ὑπὲρ) ὄνοµα(τος) πέτρ(ας) ἀββὰ(ς) Θωµᾶ (l. 2).⁶⁰ The document gives impressive sums of money: 16 *nomismata* for 32 sheeps (l. 3: (ὑπὲρ) προβῆ(τον) λβ νο(μίσµατα) τις), together with 161 *nomismata* one *keration* plus 24 *nomismata* and 9 *keratia* for an unknown purpose, paid in advance (ll. 4–5: (ὁµοί) νο(µίσµατα) ρξα (κεράτην) α (hand 2) μετ(υ) νο(µισµάτων) κδ (κερατίων) ἃ προ[τ]ὲ(τος) δέ(ντων) ἄµο κρατηθή(ντων) (ὑπὲρ) λό(ιποῦ) ὃ(µοιοῦ).⁶¹ These very large sums may have included various fiscal obligations (cf. P. Bal.

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⁵⁷ P. Sarga 102, ll. 5–8: ‘And | so the *dux* sent them southward (saying), Let each one remain at his gate’ (τακτεῖ | οὐ ποιηθέντος ἐθνὸς οἴκῳ ποιηθέντος θύλα).

⁵⁸ Cf. P. Mich. Capt. 14, a letter from Bawit where a head of the monastery is asking an *ektaton* to arrange the dispatch of teams of oxen to an estate belonging to a *dux* (see A. Delattre, ‘Une lettre copie du monastère de Bawit. Récéitión de P. Mich. Capt. 14’, BASP 44 [2007], pp. 87–95.). The situation is somewhat similar in the two texts, with superiors asking their subordinates to satisfy the demands of an official from the monastery’s resources.

⁵⁹ See P. M. Siipsteijn, *Shaping a Muslim State: the World of a Mid-Eighth-Century Egyptian Official*, Oxford 2013, p. 180, who assumed that an explicit request of the pagarch directed to the monastery was at the origin of the discussed document; cf., again, P. Mich. Capt. 14, where an official letter from the pagarch is sent to the monastery to demand animals for the estate of the *dux*.


⁶¹ Cf. P. London IV 1412 (Aphroditto, drawn up in October 705), where προτέλεια appear as a category of payment in οἰκ[στικό(ν)] χρησικῶν δημοσίων ἀνὰ κύριο(ς) ἀφροδίτ(v). On προτέλεια, see H. I. Bell in *P. Lond.* IV, 252
where the payments, including the monks’ poll-tax, *dapane*, and extra payments, amount to 76 1/24 1/48 solidi in Pauni and Mesore, and 88 1/3 1/24 1/28 solidi in Phaophi and Hathyr; see below, Chapter 6, p. 278).

In contrast to Bawit documentation, with its sub-dossier of texts related to *andrismos*, references to taxes paid by individual monks in the Wadi Sarga dossier are rare and difficult to interpret. Payments of the monks’ poll-tax are perhaps hidden in the abovementioned sum of over one hundred solidi recorded in *SB* XXIV 16122. *P. Sarga* 369 may refer to individual fiscal obligations of a monk: it is a receipt issued by Konstantinos (unfortunately, mentioned without any titles) to *Πασού* Pisoou for 15 ¼ *keratia* (*ὕπερ*) *κεφ*(αλής) for a fourth indiction. The document mentions also ὅμεια, interpreted in the *editio princeps* as a harbour due.

Fiscal terms connected with land taxes (*embole, demosion*) appear in some important documents from Wadi Sarga. The phrasing of these testimonies shows that the payments were made on community level. The aforementioned *P. Mich.* XXV 749 is an account of *embole* in barley paid by the monastery of Apa Thomas (l. 1: σῦν θ(αύ) λόγ(ος) ὑποθέσεις ένδολής κριθής) ὑπὸ μον(αστηρίου) [ . . . . .]. *P. Sarga* 344 is a receipt for fifteen hats of wine paid ‘on account of the tax of the fields of Tahomo’ (ll. 4–5: ἀριθμόθεσεν ἡμέρας Ὠτραμών), issued by ‘Phoibammon the humble *proestos* (?)’ (ll. 8: φοιβαμμόν ελ(αξία)τ(ος) προ(εκτος)) to ‘the *dikaios* of the monastery of Apa Thomas, through Apa Germane the *proestos*’ (ll. 2–3: ἡμειδιακοὸν ἱπταιον(α)κτηριον) ἵπται θεοὶς ὑπὲρ τῆς ἱερωμας πεπρω(εκτος)). *P. Ryl. Copt.* 124, on the other hand, is a collection of receipts for various payments. The document consists of seven entries: No. I: issued by Melchizedek to a certain Ioannes son of Biktor for 15 *nomismata* on account of the *demosia* and *οὐδον* (ὑπὸ δῆμο(σίων) (καὶ) ὡτόν) of the thirteenth indiction; No. II: issued by Apollo ‘of the *ousia*’ (*ἀπαθὸν πατογεῖα*) representing the *ousia* of Daniel (*Δανιῆλ*

p. 35: ‘It seems on the whole most probable that what is intended is some sort of prepayment on the taxes of an indiction, whether to meet an emergency or not is doubtful’.

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62 *P. Sarga* 369, ll. 1–5: † [k] † ἡσυχ[ον] Πασοῦ (ὑπέρ) κεφ(αλής) τετάρτης ἱν(δίκε) κεφ(άτια) δεκαπέντε τέταρτον γί(νεται) κεφαλίας με δέ ψευδεξία(αί). For *kephale*, see the introduction to *P. Lond.* V 1793 (472), where the word is used as a designation of the unit for personal taxation (and thus is equivalent to the Latin *caput*). Other Byzantine documents mentioning *kephale* include: *P. Lond.* V 1807, ll. 3–5; *P. Oxy.* X 1331 descr.; *P. Oxy.* XVIII 2195, l. 34.

63 *P. Sarga* 369, l. 7: (ὑπέρ) ὅμειας. It is immediately followed by the name of the issuer of the receipt (ll. 7–8: δ(α) Κοσσανόσανας ποι(γῇ μοι);) the absence of sum prompted the editor to ask whether the (ὑπέρ) κεφ(αλής) payment was supposed to cover harbour dues (*P. Sarga*, p. 212, comm. to l. 7 of *P. Sarga* 369). Cf. M. P. Sijpesteijn, ‘Multilingual archives and documents in post-conquest Egypt’, [in] A. Papaconstantinou (ed.), *The Multilingual Experience in Egypt from the Ptolemies to the Abbasids*, Farnham 2010, pp. 105–126, esp. p. 110: ‘[…] *kephale* [sic—JW], the head-tax, and possibly for harbour dues paid by a member of the monastery (*P. Sarga* 369), where the sum is also thought to encompass both *kephale* and *ormeia*. If we are to treat *kephale* as a fiscal unit, as in the earlier documents, it would be the ‘general’ title of the payment, encompassing the sum of personal obligations of *Pisoou*.

64 An obscure tax, attested in *CPR* IV 6, 22b, and 170 (see Cromwell, ‘The Rylands contribution’ [cit. n. 6], comm. to entry I of *P. Ryl. Copt.* 124).
οὐσίας) to ‘the dikaion of the holy Rock through George the archimandrite’ (ⲛⲇⲓⲕⲉⲟⲛ υπὲρ τοῦ οἰκουμήνης χρῆς) for payments in the thirteenth indiction (title of the payment and the amount unpreserved); No. III: issued by Apollo ‘of the ousia’ to ‘the dikaion of the holy monastery of Apa Thomas through you, George’, for a payment of ½ of a solidus in the thirteenth year; No. IV: issued by Pachomo to ‘the dikaion of Apa Thomas through Apa George, the great man’ (ⲡⲛⲟⲩⲩⲓⲩⲣⲟⲩⲧⲏⲩⲧⲛⲕⲏⲣⲱⲕⲡⲁⲣⲭⲏⲙⲁⲧⲣⲛ) for the payment of three nomismata for the demosion and eight nomismata for […] (title unpreserved) for the third (sic) indiction; No. V: issued by Pachomo of Ama Sophia (ⲣⲁⲩⲩⲁⲃ ⲉⲧⲫⲟⲟⲧⲧⲏⲩ ⲧⲃⲃ ⲡⲁⲣⲭⲏⲙⲁⲧⲣⲛ) to ‘the dikaion of Apa Thomas through Apa George the great man’ for a payment of twelve nomismata; No. VI: issued by Pachomo of Ama Sophia to ‘the dikaion of Apa Thomas through Apa George the great man’ for a payment for the thirteenth year (title and sum unpreserved); No. VII: issued by Pachomo to ‘the dikaion of Apa Thomas through Apa George’ for the payment of eight solidi for the thirteenth indiction year.

It is especially P. Sarga 344 and P. Ryl. Copt. 124, whose issuers are known to us, that raise interesting questions. Both documents speak of demosia; the term can denote fiscal obligations in general, or land-tax in particular.66 In P. Sarga 344 the payment is explicitly connected with a plot of land. In P. Ryl. Copt. 124, extraordinarily high sums of demosia are mentioned only in Entries I and IV. The beginning of Entry I is lost and we are unable to say if the recorded payments (an unknown sum and 1/3 of a nomisma paid by an unknown individual, and fifteen solidi paid by Iohannes son of Biktor) were made on behalf of individual monks—if Ioannes was monk at all—or the monastery.67 The size of the contribution points to institutional rather than individual character of the payment.

In the thirteenth year of an indictional cycle, the monastery (or the people connected with it) had financial obligations towards several recipients: an unknown unit represented by

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65 Cromwell, ‘The Rylands contribution’ (cit. n. 6), is at a loss as to how this date should be understood. She writes: ‘Unless a consistent error in this receipt, it is possible that an old receipt was found and entered at the same time as the later receipts’. Wherever the entries preserve their dates, they state that the original receipts were issued in a fourteenth year of an indictional cycle for payments made for a thirteenth year. Why would a receipt ten years older than the remaining ones have been incorporated in such compilation is a complete mystery; it would make no sense from the point of view of record-keeping; the document, written in more than one hand, was certainly not an exercise of a scribe who would put together completely random documents for the sake of practice. Perhaps an error on the part of the scribe who copied Entry IV is a better explanation—although, admittedly, not a perfect one.


67 Cromwell, ‘The Rylands contribution’ (cit. n. 6), is also uncertain of the man’s status. The fact that Ioannes is introduced with a patronymic in the document is not a decisive factor for his identification. This is also the practice in fiscal documents from Bawit (tax demands addressed to monks by state representatives: P. Mon. Apollo 28, 29, and 30; tax receipts issued by the monastery: SB XXVI 16788 [= P. Duk. inv. 498v] and P. Lond. V 1747); sometimes, the indication of monastic affiliation of the recipients is absent from these documents.
Melchizedek, the ousia of Daniel (otherwise unknown), and Ama Sophia. The last one is counted by Stefan Timm among monasteries,\textsuperscript{68} while Jennifer Cromwell hesitates in her identification between a monastery and a topos. The representative of Ama Sophia, Pachomo, quite unhelpfully, bears no titles that would clarify the situation. The involvement of a religious institution—or, more precisely, a part of its estate—is possible, but another option has to be taken into account. Ama Sophia could have been a person—a well-off woman, perhaps of monastic status, who had dealings with the monastery, and whom we could compare to Ama Rachel, a ‘businesswoman’ from the Aphrodito fiscal dossier (see above, Chapter 2, pp. 95–97). Regardless of how we interpret Ama Sophia, the fact is that none of the receipts whose issuers are known to us was drawn up by anyone whom we could connect with state administration.

It is \textit{P. Sarga} 344 that can help to clarify the picture. The document was issued by a certain \textit{ⲫⲟⲓⲃⲛⲁⲛⲟⲩⲓ} \textit{ⲓⲧ(ⲟⲟⲓ)} \textit{ⲧⲣⲟ(ⲧⲧⲣⲧⲧⲟⲩⲓ)}. Crum, in his translation of the document proposes to interpret the abbreviated titles of the issuer as ‘the humble agent’. Few lines earlier, he has recourse to the same circumvention translating the abbreviated designation of the document’s addressee, Apa Germane \textit{ⲣⲓⲧⲧⲓⲣ}, who is certainly the monastery’s \textit{priestos}. The abbreviation of Phoibammon’s title, \textit{ⲧⲧϫⲧⲟⲩⲓ}, instead of the usual \textit{ⲧⲧⲧ}, may raise suspicions, but the epithet and the function put together form a logical whole. Crum considered such a reading, but expressed his reservation in a note stating that ‘If we read “prior”, we must assume this a transaction between two monasteries’.\textsuperscript{69} If, however, we reject this reading, we need to solve the problem of one abbreviation used in the same document for two entirely different functions.

A monastic setting of the act recorded in \textit{P. Sarga} 344 was recognised by Petra M. Sijpesteijn.\textsuperscript{70} Although Sijpesteijn is right to assume that the payment was in one way or the other ‘forwarded’ to authorities, she does not try to explain the nature of the contribution. \textit{P. Sarga} 344 has been interpreted as a testimony to vineyard ownership by the monastery of Apa Thomas.\textsuperscript{71} The document unquestionably testifies to vineyard ownership; the identity of the owner, however, may be different than it seems at the first sight. It is possible that the payment made by the monastery of Apa Thomas would in fact represent an instalment of land tax paid to a landlord—another (unknown) monastic institution, whose representatives would take care to direct it (perhaps, as suggested by Sijpesteijn, after conversion to money) to authorities.\textsuperscript{72}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[69] Crum, \textit{P. Sarga}, p. 198, n. 5.
\item[70] Sijpesteijn, \textit{Shaping a Muslim State} (cit. n. 59), p. 301: ‘Wine was also paid as taxes to monasteries, but it is not clear whether this was then passed on to the Arab authorities or “converted” into taxes (\textit{P. Sarga} 344; \textit{P. Mon. Apollo}).’
\item[71] Dziuba, ‘Monastic vintages’ (cit. n. 40), forthcoming: ‘A document which attests to wine production on land belonging to the monastery at Wadi Sarga is \textit{P. Sarga} 344 (7th c.?), a receipt for a tax paid in wine’.
\item[72] Monks making contributions in wine for their \textit{anatrimos} are attested in \textit{P. Bawit Clackson} 14, where the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ are asked to accept one-solidus worth of wine from monks from Pmanbete. The Bawit dossier
\end{footnotes}
Monasteries are more frequently attested as landlords than tenants, but the idea of one religious institution leasing land from another is not unthinkable. We actually find it confirmed in one of the entries of the Aphrodito cadastre (SB XX 14669, col. III, ll. 97, stating that the monastery of Tarouthis cultivated land registered as the property of the monastery of Apa Sourous; and ll. 99–101, 102–103, 104, where the monastery of Tarouthis cultivates plots registered under the names of various persons who had acquired the land after expulsion of the monastery of Apa Sourous; see above, Chapter 2, p. 92). The payment called demosion in P. Sarga 344 may have thus represented rent(-tax) (or a part thereof) received from the monastery of Apa Thomas for the ‘arourae of Tahomo’ by the (also monastic) landlord. The term demosion is sometimes used in the aparche-related documents from Bawit to denote obligatory payments collected by the agents of the monastery from its tenants. The situation could have been similar in the case of Pachomo of Ama Sophia, who could have represented an estate belonging to a religious institution or a rich nun, just like ‘Apollo of the ousia’ represented the estate of Daniel towards which the monastery had other financial obligations, perhaps also resulting from a relation of tenancy.

Thus, apart from such ‘predictable’ elements as requisitions, shipments of fiscal grain and (admittedly, very poorly attested) individual fiscal obligations of the monks, the dossier of Wadi Sarga points to an interesting phenomenon of payments, in some cases of clearly fiscal nature, mediated by other institutions: estates and ecclesiastic establishments. This can be explained by the involvement of the monastery in landowning networks in the role of a tenant. The community of Apa Thomas certainly possessed land in various localities; this, however, would not collide with the possibility of leasing conveniently located plots of land from other owners. The presence of other religious institutions among them comes as no surprise, given the density of monastic settlement in the region. Although it is impossible to delve deeper into these matters records other poll-tax contributions in kind, which were supposed to be commuted into money (see P. Bawit Clackson 4 and 12). The wine contribution in P. Bawit Clackson 14 was perhaps to be dealt with in the same manner (see Chapter 4, p. 185, n. 121).

73 Cf. P. Mon. Apollo 1, 2, 3; a more frequent term referring to the payments collected by the Bawit monks is pactum (literally ‘rent’; P. Mon. Apollo 10, 11, 12, 13, 6; P. Köln ägypt. II 31).

74 This is not the only hint that leads us towards the assumption that the monastery maintained relations with estates. The other one is provided by P. Sarga 118, an extremely fragmentary scrap of a letter mentioning an Apa Basile (l. 5), a chartularius (l. 4: χαρτουλαριος), and ‘sailors of the ship’ (l. 1: πολιτομοι νησιωτα). An antigeouchos is the supposed author of the letter, as suggested by the formula ρ ι τ ι α ε μα χ ο (ο) α χ (ο)c in line 2. The state of preservation of the letter is too poor to allow for conclusions. After AD 600 antigeouchoi appear in a number of documents from the Arsinoite nome (including the latest attestations of the title, P. Got. 29 [after 641], CPR XXIV 33 [653], and SPP X 252 [8th c.]) and Oxyrhynchus (attestations in the Oxyrhynchite material are connected chiefly with the last years of the Apionic archives). The monastery had Arsinoite connections (it most probably possessed vineyards in this nome), but in present state of our knowledge it would be risky to pursue this reasoning any further. For antigeouchos/vicedominus, see E. R. Hardy, The Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt, New York 1931, pp. 80 and 85–87.
with such modest material, the testimony of the Wadi Sarga dossier seems to broaden our perspective on strategies applied in the monastery’s business affairs.

Apart from matters connected with fiscal obligations, the community of Apa Thomas involved laypeople in its everyday activities centred around production and distribution of goods. The testimonies pertaining to this sphere that we have at our disposal are, however, even less coherent than in the case of fiscal documents. Fortunately, the material includes a number of texts that yield details unavailable for other communities, which will be analysed in the following section.

6.3. Laypeople in the everyday functioning of the monastery

From the Bawit dossier—our most comprehensive collection of sources of monastic provenance—we learn that everyday functioning of the monastery was secured by a considerable number of people of various status: community members performing duties of administration and control; monks who worked in the fields, transported goods, or made use of professional skills acquired outside the monastery; lay workers hired for accomplishing various tasks (e.g., fieldwork in the period of harvest); finally, lay tenants of monastic land. Traces of similar arrangements can be glanced also in the Wadi Sarga dossier.

The spine-bone of monastic administration including the superior, the oikonomos, and their subordinates can be reconstructed thanks to Wadi Sarga epistolary orders. On the other hand, we know little, for instance, of how monastic estate was actually worked. Some work was certainly done by groups of monks. One of these groups can be traced in P. Sarga 94, a letter addressed to the superior Ioustos by the ‘brethren of Pohe’ (ll. 1–2: ταας ΗΗΠΑΙΑΟΥΝ ΑΠΑ ‘ΙΟΥΣΤΗ ΑΠΙΙΗΕΝΗΥ ΙΠΟΥΗ). Pohe, which can be identified with Kom Buha in the Hermopolite nome, would have been the place where the monks had been sent to work.75 The monks urge the superior to send them camels so that they can deal quickly with gathering palm branches before a feast. Organisation of teams of agricultural workers is suggested by P. Sarga 167, mentioning Apa Agene ‘the chief husbandman’ (ll. 9–10: ἀπά αγένε πογάϊν). ‘The people of Sebetef’ (ΗΕΡΩΝ ΕΣΒΗΝΤΙ) and their camel-driver in a receipt for seventy-six artabae of wheat, P. Sarga 205, represent most probably lay workers of monastic land (see below, pp. 263–264).76 We can only

75 Pohe can be identified with Kom Buha in the Hermopolite nome (see P. Sarga, comm. to No. 94, n. 6; cf. Drew-Bear, Le nome hermopolite, p. 220). In the Bawit dossier, someone’s assignment to a working place was expressed with a different construction (see above, Chapter 4, p. 224), which, however, could be proper to Apa Apollo’s monastery only.

76 Lay status of these people is again hypothetical. In P. Köln ägypt. II 22 from Bawit, a group of monks designated as ‘brothers of the garden of the community’ (ΙΕΣΙΟΥΝ ΙΤΕΩΜΙΝ ΙΠΟΛΟ) is clearly distinguished from ‘people of Terot’ (ΗΕΡΩΝ ΤΕΡΟΤ) mentioned as recipients of a payment, which may point to a deliberate use of ΙΕΣΙΟΥΝ and
hypothesise about the way in which these people were involved with the monastery: they could have been residents of a village where the monastery possessed plots of land leased out to local inhabitants, or workers hired for the period of harvest and threshing. Neither form of attachment to the monastic institution is firmly attested in the documents at our disposal.

Scanty testimonies hint at the arrangements concerning the farming of plots of land associated with the monastery of Apa Thomas; one of them is P. Sarga 165. This distressingly fragmentary contract mentions ‘my portion of field’ (Ἱντάκτον ἴππες). In the same document we find a mention of someone who ‘has given (or sold) his portion for (?) the four palm-trees’. The document is addressed by an unknown sender to an individual named Pshere; unfortunately, too little of the text survives to allow for any conclusions. An interesting testimony of responsibility for land from which the monastery obtained wine is constituted by a group of three receipts for wine from ὀργανὸν ἤμπολο (P. Sarga 355–357). All of them follow a uniform pattern, with the toponym in the first line followed by date, an abbreviated clause, and the amount of wine and its carrier. The clause following the date reads as follows in all three documents: Δ/ τεσσαράς ΚΑ/ Παροοῦ. Crum interpreted Teshne as a place name and concluded, not without reservations, that ‘Teshne must be a subdivision of ὀργανὸν ἤμπολο, forming part of the allotment [κλέος—]W of Paroou’. However, John Shelton proposed to understand both Teshne and Paroou as personal names, which resulted in a new reading, Δ(ικ) τεσσαράς ΚΑ(νομοι) Παροοῦ. If Shelton’s proposition is accurate, Teshne would have been a person responsible for sending the wine to the monastery (perhaps as a tenant of the vineyard at Ampelou). The phrasing would suggest a relation lasting more than one generation.

The document is dated to 19 Mesore; we could expect that the harvest would have finished by that time. However, it is possible that the threshing was still not over; cf. R. S. Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, Princeton 1993, p. 22 with n. 42, quoting P. Cairo Isid. 66 (299) which speaks of grain left on the threshing floor as late as 27 Mesore.

Neither form of the document therein can be determined.

The reading of this is Πάσσης ἴππες, translated by Crum ‘[…] we write to the son of […]’. However, we would expect the verbal form εἰπὼν in this kind of document to be followed immediately by the name of one of the parties, not the introduction of the party’s patronymic. A name ἴππες is not listed Monika Hasitzka’s register of Coptic personal names (https://www.onb.ac.at/files/kopt_namen.pdf), which gives only παροοῦ, παρόμοιοι, and παροοῦ. In any case, logic suggests to read a personal name in the first preserved line of the document.

Such an interpretation may seem obvious at the first glance, since the word τεσσαράς means ‘garden’ (see above, p. 249–250, n. 53).

J. Shelton, ‘An etmoonl ostraca at Trier’, *Enchoria* 17 (1990), pp. 109–114, esp. pp. 113–114. This reading is supported by the fact—of which Crum himself was well aware when proposing his reading (see *P. Sarga*, p. 104), that the preposition διά was usually followed by a name of a person, not a toponym. Teshne is unattested as personal name, while Paroou appears in *3B Kapt.* 1225.
The absence of lease contracts in the monastic dossier comes as no surprise, for such documents would have been kept by the tenants. The hypothetical leases of land by the monastery, suggested above (see p. 256), are, admittedly, equally unsupported by the evidence we possess. However, the absence of direct contractual evidence cannot be taken as a proof that the monastery did not lease out its land: were it not for the aparche documents and P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (6a) verso, we would be equally clueless about the tenants of the Bawit monastery. In any case, we have good reasons to think that the composition of the Wadi Sarga dossier is to a large extent a result of chances of preservation and discovery of the documents (see above, pp. 240–241).

Quite apart from the arrangements concerning the management and farming of land, it was the very process of acquisition of landed property by a monastery that could fuel relations with laypeople. As the most frequent way in which religious institutions acquired land was through donations,81 these contacts involved, first and foremost, the donors and their families, and—in cases where a donation became a matter of dispute—officials authorised to settle the matter to the benefit of one party or the other.82 In the case of the monastery of Apa Thomas, we know very little about the composition of its estate, let alone the manner of its acquisition. However, a trace of a probable controversy surrounding a donation to the community can be found in P. Ryl. Copt. 294—a letter from an unknown individual to ‘the pious and esteemed Apa Amoun, father of the Rock of Apa Thomas’ (verso, l. 5: ΠΗΝΟΙΩΤΕ ΑΥΔΗ ΕΤΤΑΙΝΥ .. ΑΠΑ ΑΜΟΥΝ ΠΕΙΑΡΤ ΝΤΠΕΤΡΑ ΑΠΑ ΘΟΜΑΣ[ς Ρ])—the superior of the monastery.83 The letter concerns a donation of a garden (l. 2: ΤΑΟΡΕΑ ΝΤΕΟΜΗ) which apparently had been questioned by people from Tjaser—an otherwise unknown location. The writer intervened on behalf of the monastery by sending a letter to Tjaser and officially announcing the dorea so that it was questioned no more.84 One may wonder who the sender of the letter was, as he is not introduced in the document. The editor of the text, Jennifer Cromwell, suggests ‘a senior figure’, pointing to the rather abrupt tone of the letter, which starts immediately with the discussion of the affair. She

81 On donations of land to churches and monasteries, see E. Wipszycka, Les ressources et les activités économiques des églises en Egypte du IV° au VIII siècle, Brussels 1972, pp. 36–38.
82 Cf. P. Cairo Masp. I 67003 (ca. 567), a petition of Aphroditan monks concerning an attempt to seize six arourae of land left to the monastery of Apa Apollos by a widow. Such disputable situations are reflected also in the Aphrodito cadastre, where monasteries are expelled from plots of land granted ultimately to laypeople, or vice versa (see above, Chapter 2, pp. 84–85 with n. 45).
83 See Cromwell, ‘The Rylands contribution’ (cit. n. 6).
84 ‘I have received the letter from your piety and, look, I have written to Tjaser (ในปีⲡⲙⲁⲓⲥⲧⲡⲁⲧⲣⲁⲛⲧⲡⲁⲧⲣⲁ) as I had ordered them […] so that they will not come because of this matter. I have announced the gift of the garden (ⲧⲇⲟⲣⲉⲁ) […] give it to you, into the Rock.’ It is interesting that the letter to Tjaser does not seem to have been a formal order; in that case we would expect some form of the verb ςⲙⲓⲉ (cf. A. Delattre, ‘Une lettre copte’ [cit. n. 58], pp. 92–93, discussing P. Mich. Copt. 14, where the verb is used to denote a formal order sent by a pagarch).
doubts the monastic affiliation of the person, in my opinion rightly. The writer appears to have been in a position to impose a decision—in this case a transfer of property rights—on what appears to have been a village community, which may point to his administrative capacities. It is also possible—since it was him who had made the announcement of the dorea—that he was the donor himself, or a person connected to the donor, e.g., their descendant. His willingness to be of help to the monastery if need be, expressed in the closing sentence of the letter, if not a mere formula of politeness, may point to a more durable connection between him and the institution; it may also hint at anticipated further trouble with the dorea. What matters here is the fact that the monastery had to have recourse to an ‘outsider’ to lay hand on a donated parcel of land, and preferred to avoid confrontation with whoever represented Tjaser in the affair. This does not necessarily mean that the monastery’s position was weak (in fact, since there was an official announcement to be made concerning the dorea, it was quite the contrary!), only that monastic representatives preferred the problem to be solved without meeting the counterparty, which could potentially end up in a dispute.

Outside the agricultural sphere, the Wadi Sarga dossier records various workers, both monks laypeople, appearing alone or in teams. The group includes Joseph the baker (P.Sarga 110; interestingly, the man acts in a context entirely unrelated to his profession, as a mediator between a group of camel-herds and a person in charge of their wages), Psynhor the ‘salt-dealer’ (P. Sarga 164), Apa Paul the carpenter (P. Sarga 161), and brother Germanos the carpenter (P. Sarga 166). Other texts mention groups or teams of workmen: shepherds (P. Sarga 106), masons (P. Sarga 132), and potters (P. Sarga 178). The best-represented group are camel-drivers, whose names (and nothing but names) are preserved mainly in the receipts. They certainly operated in teams and could receive their payments collectively (see P. Sarga 110).

Workers hired from the ‘world outside’ would have been indispensable in the monastery itself, as for instance the construction, furnishing, and decorating the monks’ habitations would have required professional skills. Two well-preserved work contracts—P. Sarga 161 (a carpenter) and 164 (a preservative-maker)—inform us whom the community had to hire from among laypeople, and what the conditions offered to these workers were. Another document, P. Sarga 140, is a list of goods delivered to a certain Jacob son of Hor, perhaps as a payment for his work.

Amounts of fodder provided for animals in P. Sarga 161 and 164 indicate that the men

85 Ewa Wipszycka sees in the man a specialist in salting alimentary products (Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 197).
86 For general information on Coptic work contracts, see W. C. Till, ‘Die koptischen Arbeitsverträge’, EOS 48.1 (1948) [Symbolae Raphaeli Tanbenschlag dedicatae], pp. 273–329; for further bibliography, see CPR IV, p. 140; see also editions of seventh-century work contracts of various types, CPR IV 155–165. For Greek examples, see O. Montevecchi, I contratti di lavoro e di servizio nell’Egitto greco-romano e bizantino, Mailand 1950. Till, ‘Die koptischen Arbeitsverträge’, discusses three Wadi Sarga work contracts (P. Sarga 161 = No. 2; P. Sarga 162 = 24; P. Sarga 164 = No. 15). For a more detailed discussion of the two documents, see Wipszycka, Resources, pp. 196–197.
hired by the community were not monastic residents but were supposed to come to Wadi Sarga to work for the monastery. The worker was supposed to receive as his payment twenty-five artabae of corn, twelve labē (= knidia) of wine, an unknown amount of fodder, four artabae of barley, two kadoi of wine (with the reservation ‘according to vintage’, which means that this was an extra payment dependent on the monastery’s income in wine), a cloak, a sackcloth, and a pair of sandals. Monthly wage of Psynhor the ‘salt-dealer’, as the term ἡρῴος was translated in P. Sarga 164, consisted of three artabae of an unknown product (almost certainly wheat, which is always mentioned first when payments in kind are listed), an unknown number of maage of fodder, a lakōote (= knidion) of wine, and an unknown amount of pickle; the wage was supposed to include also a cloak, and (quite mysteriously) ‘a single (shoe) sole’—although these items were given to Psynhor on a yearly rather than monthly basis. Multiplied by twelve months, the amounts of products for which we have certain information in the papyrus would give thirty-six artabae of wheat and twelve lakōote of wine, thus a little more wheat and—assuming the equivalence of labē and lakōote—exactly the same amount of wine as in P. Sarga 161. Jacob son of Hor in P. Sarga 140 receives 25 maage of corn, 6 xestai of oil, 3 oipe of cucumbers, and a sack of an unknown product. The amount of grain corresponds with the average monthly allowance per person calculated by Alain Delattre on the basis of P. Sarga 161 and CPR IV 160. The document, therefore, represents perhaps only a part of Jacob’s entire wage in kind.

87 Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 197.
88 There were carpenters also among the Wadi Sarga monks: cf. P. Sarga 166, mentioning a ‘monastic’ carpenter, πατριάρχης φαλαγχ ἱπποτής εὐποίλου. Paulos and Germane might not have been contemporaries; it is also possible that monastic carpenters could not fully satisfy the needs of the community.
89 This is an equivalent of ἰηναιδομα, or τρυγητικά; cf. CPR IV 160 and 161. Trygetika was an extra payment granted to workers on the occasion of vintage (see Hardy, The Large Estates (cit. n. 74), p. 121; cf. T. M. Hickey, Wine, Wealth, and State in Late Antique Egypt. The House of Apion at Oxyrhynchus, Ann Arbor 2012, p. 135, for Apionate attestations). See esp. CPR IV 160, where this payment, added to the basic 24 knidia of wine, is labelled as ἰηναιδομα in l. 14, whereas in l. 16 the Greek equivalent is used: οἶνος (οὐ) κνίδιω ιω βεν ῥυγητικ. See Till, ‘Die koptischen Arbeitverträge’ (cit. n. 86), p. 277, n. 17. The mention of trygetika can serve as indirect attestation of vineyard ownership by the monastery.
90 Walter C. Till points out that the expression ἡρῴος, could designate ‘jemanden, der sich berufsmässig mit der genannten Sache beschäftigt’ (Till, ‘Die koptischen Arbeitverträge’ cit. n. 86), p. 287–288).
91 For the relation of labē, lakōote, and knidion, see H. I. Bell, ‘Metrology’ [in] P. Sarga, pp. 22–23; cf. N. Kruit & K. Worp, ‘Metrological notes on measures and containers of liquids in Graeco-Roman and Byzantine Egypt’, APF 45 (1999), pp. 96–127, esp. p. 114 with n. 25, who suggest to distinguish between labē and lakōote. Bell’s remarks, however, point to inconsistencies in the use of the terms and suggests that the two terms could be confused to the point of being treated as equivalents.
93 Not necessarily a monthly one; different products could have been disbursed at different intervals, according to the needs of the recipient and means at the employer’s disposal.
Agreements concerning wages are hinted at in two epistolary orders from the dossier, P. Sarga 106 and 110. The former was sent from Isaak to Apa Enoch (perhaps the monastery’s oikonomos) and is a request to increase the amount of wine given to shepherds from two to three small hots.\(^94\) Interestingly, the letter was sent after some complaints on the part of the shepherds.\(^95\) In P. Sarga 110 a baker named Joseph is reported to have come from a vineyard and asked about prior arrangements concerning the amount of wine to be given to camel-drivers.\(^96\) The text is unclear, but again, it could have been a claim on the part of the camel-drivers that lay at the basis of Joseph’s query. The documents show a double role of monastic oikonomoi in handling the wages. On one hand, the oikonomos was the person who set them, and was responsible for the settlement (P. Sarga 110); on the other, he could only execute someone else’s orders, as in P. Sarga 106.\(^97\) However, what is most noteworthy is the active role assumed by workers in P. Sarga 106; the closing sentence of the letter suggest that the shepherds had recourse to some form of ‘strike’: ‘Do not delay to come [out], for they have been idle’, writes Isaak to persuade Enoch to take action. The issue that is most crucial for the present argument—whether the shepherds were monks or laypeople—must unfortunately remain open to question.\(^98\) Regardless of their status, the administrators had no intention to discipline them, and were resolved to yield to their claims rather than risk a conflict (the shepherds are even given an extra allowance of dates!).

It is most unfortunate that the largest group of workers attested in the Wadi Sarga dossier—the camel-drivers—is almost completely obscure. Most often all information provided in the documents about people responsible for transport consists of their names, frequently followed by the designation καμηλίτης; indications of provenance are very rare (cf. P. Sarga 284, l. 4: κολοκε παπουοουτε).\(^99\) Jennifer Cromwell, in a personal communication expressed the opinion that the community possessed ‘at least a medium-sized’ herd of camels, which could be tended by monks or hired specialists.\(^100\) From P. Sarga 194 we know that a caravan carrying wine to the monastery could number as many as forty camels.

\(^94\) For the hots measure, see Bell, ‘Metrology’ (cit. n. 91), p. 26.
\(^95\) P. Sarga 106, ll. 2–7: ‘Be so kind, send a little wine out to the shepherds. For we gave them the two small hots and they said, We want three a day. Come out and satisfy them’ (αρι ταγανε δουο ρικουγι ηριυ εβολ ηνθριας ενοιματι τρογι ροτε σηντε δαν πεκαχ χενουγμονοτε εηνη χενου εβολ δημοι ϙυυ).
\(^96\) P. Sarga 110: ‘Joseph the baker came from the vineyard meadow (saying,) Did not Apa (?) Papnoute the steward say, “Give six […] of pure wine to the camelherds”?’ (χενη απα παπουτε ηηνονομο κετι δουο ϙηε ηεκραθη πιηκαλατη).
\(^97\) In P. Sarga 106, Isaak does not bear any designations that would indicate his position in the community.
\(^99\) Bacot, ‘La circulation’ (cit. n. 40), p. 275, considered him one of the ‘transporteurs indépendents propriétaires des chameaux’. The vagueness of the figure should make us refrain from further conclusions.
\(^100\) E-mail from 26. 09. 2016: ‘[…] the wine transportation logistics didn’t necessarily require much contact with the lay population. There is little evidence concerning whether camel drivers were monks or not. However, as the indications are that the monastery owned at least a medium sized herd (based on letters asking for 8 camels, for example), there are two options: (i) their own monks were responsible for tending them; (ii) they contracted lay
Some of the camel-drivers transporting goods to the monastery could be associated with external groups of workers, as attested in *P. Sarga* 205, which is a receipt for seventy-six artabae of wheat delivered by Nohe son of Konstantine, the camel-driver of the people of Sebetef (ll. 3–4: υπερ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΗ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΑ ΚΑΛΗ(ΙΤΗΣ) ΝΕΡΩΝ ΣΕΒΕΤΕΥ). External affiliation of a group of camel-drivers is suggested in *P. Sarga* 95. The text is a letter from the superior Enoch to the steward Papnoute, asking the latter to consult κυρικ Sarapion about ‘the potsherds of the camelherds’ (ἡβελάξε ἡβελάξαμουν). Based on this text, Seyna Bacot contrived a ‘transport enterprise’ of Sarapion, which in her opinion would have monopolised the flow of goods to and from the monastery—an obvious exaggeration which has not been taken up in the literature. People like Sarapion, Nohe son of Konstantine, and possibly also Kolthe from Pouoote would have provided the monastery with additional workforce (and most probably also additional camels). Their activity would have been particularly visible in critical periods of the year, such as harvest or the time of transporting wine from the wineries to the monastery. It would be logical to assume that a large part of wine deliveries were effectuated on boats and ships, but such means of transport are poorly attested in the dossier. *P. Sarga* 104, a letter from brother Enoch to Enoch the oikonomos mentions a sailor of a *liburnus* ship (ll. 3–4: γεωργε πιθηκ ἑταλβηρος) requesting palm-fibre ropes. The character of the vessel was a matter of some controversy: Crum stated that ‘[t]he *liburnus* should be a war-ship’; Petra Sijpesteijn connected it with the Arab fleet. This interpretation served Renate Dekker to establish the date of the document after 650, which is the date of the first mention of Muslim fleet in the papyri. In a note to her article, however, Dekker quotes the opinion of Jennifer Cromwell, who considers the *liburnus* a vessel owned by the monastery and used for transport of various goods, e.g., wine. Cromwell’s interpretation seems reasonable; if the ship belonged to Muslim fleet and the ropes were a part of requisition, we would barely expect a sailor to come and request them; requisitioned goods and products were apportioned on the level of state administration and information about them reached local fiscal herders to tend them (this seems to be the strategy being pursued at Thebes, from where survive a few camel herder contracts, which are normally between one herder and one camel, sometimes two). I am deeply grateful for Jenny’s kind remarks.


officers in the form of official demands.\textsuperscript{103} If the ship, on the other hand, was a part of the monastery’s property, it would be most natural for its sailor to address the monastic administration with a request for supply of cordage.\textsuperscript{104} The question that would interest us most: whether George was a monk or a layman hired by the monastery—again must remain open.

Although the documents from Wadi Sarga provide us with some interesting details of relations between the monastery and laypersons, the question about the scale of lay involvement in the functioning of the Wadi Sarga community cannot receive a satisfactory answer. The monastery could engage whole groups of people associated with external locations, such as ‘the people of Sebetef’ and their camel-driver of \textit{P. Sarga} 205, but whether they were tenants of monastic land or hired labourers providing workforce during harvest and the time of transporting grain—we cannot say. We see specialised workers hired by the monastery on conditions similar to those offered by contemporary lay employees. Even though we do not know if the striking shepherds in \textit{P. Sarga} 106 were monks or laymen, the document allows us to assume that wages in the monastery were negotiable. Some issues—connected probably with organising and remunerating outsourced workforce—were consulted by monastic authorities with people from ‘the world’, such as \textit{kyrios} Sarapion of \textit{P. Sarga} 95. It is possible that \textit{P. Sarga} 355–357 implies a lasting relation of tenancy, perhaps based on sharecropping (see above, pp. 258–259). No other, more solid testimonies are available concerning the tenants of the monastery. On the other hand, it appears that the Wadi Sarga dossier contributes to our knowledge of how monasteries functioned in lay society thanks to attestations of the involvement of the community of Apa Thomas in landowning networks as a tenant of both lay and monastic owners (see above, p. 256). A similar situation could be observed in the sixth century in the Aphroditan cadastre; Wadi Sarga documents allow us to learn more about how such arrangements could work in practice, at least in terms of discharging fiscal obligations.

\textsuperscript{103} Cf. letters from Qurrah to the Aphroditan pagarch Basileios, e.g., \textit{P. Lond.} IV 1346, in which Basileios is reminded to dispatch ship supplies which he had failed to send (ll. 4–10: ἡμῖν διαστελλόμενοι διὰ τῆς διακήπτου σοὶ διάφορα ἑδίκησις καὶ εὐεργείας πλοίων τοῦ Ἱλίσματος καὶ ἑτέρων κατὰ τὴν ἐπιστολήν ἡμῶν); and \textit{P. Lond.} IV 1348, concerning the delay in dispatch of workmen and supplies (ll. 5–7: δεχόμενος οὖν τὰ παρόντα γράμμα μεταβαίνει καὶ τὰ πλοίαν τοῦ Ἱλίσματος πότε πέμψαι πρὸς τὸν κινητὸν τοῦ Ἰλίσματος καὶ τὸν ὑπαύλην τοῦ Ἰλίσματος).\textsuperscript{104} For boats owned by monasteries, see J.-L. Fournet & J. Gascou, ‘Moines pachômiens et batellerie’, in: Ch. Décobert (ed.), \textit{Alexandrie médiévale} 2 (= \textit{Études alexandrines} 8) (2002), pp. 22–45; \textit{P. Cairo Masp.} II 67151, ll. 275–285, where a testator from Antinópolis bequeaths the monastery of Apa Jeremias one of his two boats; \textit{O. Bawit} 71, l. 1: ἔλεγεν σατανάτου τὸν ἀνδρίσμον ἔλεγεν τὸν ἀνδρίσμον τὸν ἀνδρίσμον, concerning a transport of wine and wages for the sailors; \textit{P. Mon. Apollo} 17, which perhaps mentions lessees of monastic boats. Chael, a sailor connected with the monastery at Deir el-‘Bala‘izah is mentioned discharging his \textit{andrismos} in \textit{P. Bal.} 294; this would point to his status of a member of the community. The document is extremely fragmentary, but the character of the preserved entries allow to connect it with better preserved accounts from the monastery of Apa Apollo, which record various tax payments, including the poll-tax of the monks (see below, Chapter 6, p. 269).

264
CHAPTER 6
THE MONASTERY DEIR EL-BALA‘IZAH AND THE ‘WORLD OUTSIDE’

In the introduction to the previous chapter, devoted to the monastery of Apa Thomas at Wadi Sarga, I allowed myself few remarks which are valid also for the present part of my work focused on the monastery of Apa Apollo at Deir el-Bala‘izah. This gives me the liberty to dispense with generalities and proceed straight to a description of the physical remains of the centre and its documentary dossier.

1. The site

The monastic site at Deir el-Bala‘izah was never a subject of proper archaeological investigation. Brief excavations took place there in 1907, as a part of W. M. Flinders Petrie’s campaign in Middle Egypt; it was during these works that a cache of literary and sub-literary manuscripts and documentary texts was discovered. The find was published in 1954 by Paul Kahle in two volumes of *P. Bala‘izah*; Kahle’s introduction to the edition was the first study of the monastery’s organisation and some aspects of its functioning in the Arab period.¹

The site was mentioned in a cursory note in *The Egypt Exploration Fund Archaeological Report 1906–1907* and Petrie’s *Gizeh and Rifeh*.² It was not until Peter Grossmann’s survey of the site between 1982 and 1985 and the ensuing publication of a plan and description of the monastery in 1993 that more precise information on the physical remains of the Bala‘izah monastery was made accessible to wider public (see Plate 5, p. 320).³

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The monastery at Deir el-Bala’izah was located ca. eighteen–nineteen kilometres south of Lykopolis, on the west bank of the Nile. Similarly to the monastery at Wadi Sarga, it was also established in part in an ancient quarry and in the area in front of it. Its area (ca. 220 x 240 m) was enclosed by a wall on the north, east and west, whereas on the south it touched the gebel. It was accessed from the east through a gate. Outside the enclosure and east of the gate, there was a structure identified as building for the monastery’s visitors. Inside the enclosure, Grossman noted a number of buildings of various functions. West from the gate, there was a three-aisled church, perhaps accessible to the visitors. Behind them, one approached a cluster of buildings including two halls—perhaps the monastery’s refectories—and a number of oblong structures (3 x 5 m) interpreted by Grossmann as monks’ dormitories. Following the suggestion of the archaeologist Włodzimierz Godlewski, Ewa Wipszycka proposes to see in them storage rooms and suggests to look for the monks’ dwellings (‘maisonnettes’) in the still unexcavated part of the site which could accommodate a considerable number of free-standing houses similar to those known from Bawit.\(^4\) One of the buildings in the northern part of this central cluster was provided with niches, which made Grossmann put forward a cautious interpretation of this structure as the monastery’s library or archive.\(^5\) Unfortunately, the place where the manuscripts were found was not recorded and we are unable to say if the supposed library was indeed the finding spot of Bala’izah texts.\(^6\)

The westernmost section of the site located in the ancient quarry hosted another church, built in an old quarry cave. The neighbouring structures included rooms with basins and a number of small rooms of unknown purpose.\(^7\)

As no structures that could be unequivocally interpreted as monastic habitations have been discovered on the site yet, archaeology is of little help for reconstructing the community’s organisation. The presence of large halls indicates that monks would perhaps gather for meals, but this alone is not enough to conclude that we are dealing with a coenobitic institution along the Pachomian lines, with regular common meals. Even the size of the community cannot be estimated with precision; Grossmann’s estimations of the number of monks—from four hundred

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\(^4\) Apart from Grossmann’s texts quoted in the previous note, a brief description of the site’s topography can be found in Goehring, ‘The monastery of Apa Apollo’ (cit. n. 3), pp. 42–44, and Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 157–160. Cf. P. Bal. 188, in which a member of the Bala’izah community staying outside the monastery as a punishment for some kind of transgression is willing to return to his ‘dwelling place’ (ⲙⲁⲛϣⲱⲡⲉ). Kahle comments the passage as follows (p. 612): ‘dwelling place’ (ⲙⲁⲛϣⲱⲡⲉ) in this context probably refers to the monk’s cell. The word appears frequently in monastic contexts in the meaning ‘monk’s cell’; see Crum, CD, s.v. ‘ⲙⲁⲛϣⲱⲡⲉ’.

\(^5\) Grossmann, ‘Ruinen des Klösters’ (cit. n. 3), pp. 188–189.

\(^6\) This was considered certain by Crum; see Petrie, Gizeh and Rifeh (cit. n. 1), p. 39, to whom the textual finds were ‘clearly the debris of the monastic library and charter-room’.

\(^7\) Grossmann, ‘Ruinen des Klösters’ (cit. n. 3), pp. 199–201.
to more than one thousand—seem much exaggerated. What can be gathered from the physical remains of the Bala’izah monastery is the fact that it was a community of considerable means, with solid, imposing buildings and an impressive number of storage facilities. The existence of a separate housing facility close to the monastery, but outside its proper enclosure, points also to its popularity among visitors.

In order to tell more about the community’s organisation and functioning, one must turn, again, towards the documentary material, which fortunately is rich and varied enough to provide us with some interesting insights. The following section will be devoted to a brief presentation of the documents from Bala’izah: their chronology, categories they represent, and their content.

2. Documents from the Bala’izah monastery: an overview

The Bala’izah collection is dated to the seventh–eighth centuries, based on palaeographic criteria and absolute dates featured in some of the Greek and Arabic texts from the collection (the latest among well-dated documents are from the 740s). A number of documents contain recurring names, sometimes in connection with titles and function designations, which suggests that we are dealing with a dossier covering a short span of time. Some of the literary manuscripts are much earlier, their dates covering the impressive period between the fourth and the eighth century. However, the dating of literary manuscripts has little bearing on the chronology of the monastery where they were kept, as books could be preserved for centuries and change hands several times.

The Bala’izah find consisted of more than three thousands fragments, of which only 412 found their way to Kahle’s publication. Eighty-five percent of the material are Coptic texts, while Greek and Arabic are represented by respectively nine and six percent of the documents. None of the documents originating in monastic environment was written in Greek. This language appears in connection with Bala’izah monks only in one official notification, P. Bal. 130—an entagion addressed to a monk named Apollon son of Apakyre.

Interestingly, in contrast with the very uniform Wadi Sarga dossier, a considerable number of texts edited by Kahle cannot be firmly connected with the monastery, or even present

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features that speak against such identification. These documents mention government officials, fiscal districts, and village communities unrelated to the community of Apa Apollo. In some cases, such texts found their way to the monastery after they had been reused for letters addressed to community members (e.g., *P. Bal. 245*: a letter to Mone from his parents, written on the back side of *P. Bal. 154*—a contract between a village community and a *symmachos*). Other documents entered the collection in unclear circumstances. Some of them originated in the offices of government agents or were addressed to them, as indicated by their content (mentions of fiscal districts, land divisions, functionaries—e.g., *γυγοσταται* or work overseers, and taxes)\(^\text{12}\) and form (the majority of the registers are written in ‘professional’ Greek, with numerous abbreviations).\(^\text{13}\)

A significant part of the monastic dossier is made up of letters. However, we do not find here formulaic epistolary orders characteristic of Wadi Sarga and Bawit. The Bala’izah letters often feature monastic superiors (*proestotes*, archimandrites) and administrative functionaries as addressees or authors. Matters touched upon in this correspondence are connected with administration, fiscality, and organisation. An intriguing sub-dossier is composed of *P. Bal. 188–191*, all connected with the same individual, Shenoute, a monk of the monastery of Apa Apollo, who appears to have faced disciplinary problems and maintained various relations with ‘the world outside’ (see below, pp. 289–290).

\(^\text{12}\) *P. Bal.* 180–182 (three *entagia* of Qurra b. Sharik; 181 and 182 are genuine documents, while 180 is a writing exercise modelled on an *entagion*; see N. Gonis, ‘Arabs, monks, and taxes: notes on documents from Deir el-Bala’izah’, *ZPE* 148 [2004], pp. 213–224, esp. pp. 217–219); *P. Bal.* 122 (a Coptic text addressed by a community of an *epoikion* to a pagarch, reused for *P. Bal.* 287: a Greek fiscal register mentioning the pagarchies of Lykopolis, Koussai, and Hypsel with their *γυγοσταται*); *P. Bal.* 256 (Coptic letter to a fiscal official written on the back of *P. Bal.* 286: Greek register mentioning names of workers’ overseers); *P. Bal.* 277 (badly preserved Coptic letter concerning the dispatch of watchmen [l. 5: πρεσπόροι], written on the back side of an Arabic letter unpublished in Kahle’s volume); *P. Bal.* 288 (register of tax payments dues from various locations, Greek with Coptic entries, including the monastery of Apa Apollo, l. 12: ἤβηχον Παλαιά διά ζυγοστάτου Μεγίστα τὰ μίσματα εἰς δ [· · ·]); *P. Bal.* 297 (Greek land-tax account); *P. Bal.* 298 (Greek tax account mentioning, among others, fiscal obligations of the monastery [l. 1: ἡς Παλαιας ὑπάτου Μεγίστας μίσματος ο[·]ε[·]]; reused for Coptic letter, *P. Bal.* 173; very fragmentary); *P. Bal.* 299 (Greek tax account); *P. Bal.* 300 (Greek account of poll-tax, *depano*, and sums to be covered up on behalf of fugitives); *P. Bal.* 381 (Greek tax account).

\(^\text{13}\) As stated by Kahle (*P. Bal.* I, pp. 2–3), the material from Petrie’s excavations which found its way to the Bodleian Library was mixed with items from Deir el-Ganadlah. Some inscriptions published in *Gizeh and Rifæ* as finds from Ganadlah are actually connected with Wadi Sarga (cf. Doresse, *Les anciennes monastères* [cit. n. 10], p. 364). However, Kahle hesitates to connect the ‘Ganadlah’ part of the Bala’izah find with Wadi Sarga (‘[…] at any rate, none of the numerous fragments of literary manuscripts found at Wadi Sarga are part of any of the manuscripts now kept in the Bodleian Library as a part of the Bala’izah find.’). Further on, he observes: ‘Furthermore, no records appear to have been kept indicating whether the manuscripts were all found in one place only, or whether they were scattered about or found on rubbish-heaps’. In any case, we are unable to explain the admixture in the Bala’izah find of texts that so clearly have nothing to do with monastic administration, and due to the lack of documentation of their discovery circumstances, we have no chance of settling the matter in a satisfactory way.

Additionally, *P. Bal.* 119 and 140 are connected with monks from the monastery of Apa Mena; both documents are written on one side of the papyrus only, so their presence at Bala’izah cannot be explained by reuse as writing material. I attempt to explain the presence of *P. Bal.* 140 below (see p. 283–284); however, my proposition is only conjectural, as it is based on uncertain prosopographic identification.
Contracts are quite numerous in the Bala’izah dossier. Some among them appear to have been credit-related (e.g. P. Bal. 102, 103, 111, 114, 115, 116–118). Other legal deeds include sales (P. Bal. 120: sale of land, parties unpreserved; P. Bal. 121: contract between a layman, George son of NN, and Apa Kosma, subject of sale unpreserved; P. Bal. 157: a document of uncertain content, perhaps a deed of sale), as well as two unusual documents of extreme interest: P. Bal. 100 (temporary appointment of a superior for the monastery of Apa Apollo) and P. Bal. 152 (marriage contract deposited in the monastery). Receipts from Bala’izah refer to payments of rent (P. Bal. 123), sums of money—in some instances perhaps in connection with earlier contracts: loans or deeds of sale (P. Bal. 124, 125, 127)—and taxes (P. Bal. 131–151), while only one document—the aforementioned P. Bal. 130—is a tax demand (entagion).

The accounts of the dossier are of particular importance for the study of monastic fiscal liabilities in the Arab period. Fiscality-related accounts include P. Bal. 290 (mentioning, among others, dapane and diagraphon); P. Bal. 291 (demesion, poll-tax, other expenses); P. Bal. 292 (demesion); P. Bal. 293 (andrismos); P. Bal. 301 (dapane of a symboulos); P. Bal. 303A+B (poll-tax, various disbursements). All these documents give us an insight into the monastery’s expenses; unfortunately the content of P. Bal. 344, opening with the promising statement (l. 1–2) ⲧⲱⲧⲟⲟⲩ ⲫⲕⲟⲛⲧⲁⲉ ⲧⲱⲧⲟⲟ ⲧⲓⲧⲟⲟ ⲧⲓⲧⲟⲟ ⲧⲓⲧⲟⲟ ⲧⲓⲧⲟⲟ 'the fourth book of the income through me, Ouenober, the humble one') has not survived to balance this out with information on the incomes. Some of the Bala’izah accounts list various products (wine: P. Bal. 312, 313 (?), 314, 317; food: P. Bal. 309 and 310; grain: P. Bal. 319–321; items belonging to various categories: P. Bal. 323, 331). Texts labelled as lists of persons (P. Bal. 358–394) could have belonged to other documentary types, now unrecognisable due to their state of preservation (e.g., P. Bal. 378: a tax account?).

As can be gathered from the above overview, a considerable part of the documentation was a product of people responsible for the monastery’s administration. In the following section we shall take a closer look at monastic functionaries at Deir el-Bala’izah and their capacities. The dossier of the community of Apa Apollo gives us the unique opportunity to learn about these functionaries’ careers in the monastery. Their activities were also tightly connected to the relations we intend to study in the present argument, hence the need to introduce them in some detail.
3. The organisation of the monastery at Deir el-Bala‘izah: functionaries and economic background

3.1. Representatives and structure

The monastery was one of a few communities in Egypt that bore the name of Apollo.\(^{14}\) Its fullest designation found in the documents is ‘the holy monastery of Apa Apollo in the nome of the city Sheh’ (ⲧⲡⲇⲧⲟⲣⲟⲩⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛⲟⲛ ⲧⲩⲣⲟⲩⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛⲟⲛ) \(\text{sheh} \text{ Apollo in Oxyrhynchus (see Clackson,}\) – \(\text{above, P. Bal.}\) in other instances the patron of the monastery is called saint (e.g., \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 102, ll. 1–2: ⲧⲡⲇⲧⲟⲣⲟⲩⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛⲟⲛ \(\text{Sheh}\) \(\text{Apollo}\)). Other documents feature the cursory designation ‘petra of Abba Pouli’ (= Apollo; \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 113, 288, 298).

Superiors of the community were designed by different titles \((\text{proestos},\) \(^{15}\) rarely \(\text{begoumenos}\)\(^{16}\)); some among them used the honorific title of archimandrite and its Coptic equivalent, ⲫⲟⲓⲝ ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ.\(^{17}\) The superiors represented the monastery’s \(\text{dikaios}\) in legal deeds (\(\text{P. Bal.}\) 102, 103, 106, 107, 109, 125) and were responsible for the communication with officials (\(\text{P. Bal.}\) 211, a letter addressed to a pagarch by Petros, otherwise known as superior). A ‘great man’ could also be involved in everyday management of monastic property. Kahle saw the superior as the person

\(^{14}\) Other monasteries with the same patron were: the Aphroditan monastery of Apa Apollo (see above, Chapter 2, p. 75, n. 5; the monastery of Apollo in Memphis (see S. J. Clackson, ‘Reconstructing the archives of the monastery of Apollo at Bawit’, \(\text{in} \) \(\text{Pap.Congr.}\) XXII, pp. 219–236, esp. pp. 221–222; the monastery of Apa Apollo in Bawit (see above, Chapter 4); the supposed monastery of Abba Apollo in Oxyrhynchus (see Clackson, ‘Reconstructing the archives’, pp. 220–221; see also above, Chapter 1, p. 37). For the discussion of the Egyptian monasteries of Apollo, see N. Kruit, ‘Three Byzantine sales on future delivery: \(\text{SB}\) XVI 12401 + 12402, \(\text{SB}\) VI 9051, \(\text{P. Lond.}\) III 997\(^{3}\), \(\text{Tyche}\) 9 (1994), pp. 67–88, esp. pp. 69–77.

\(^{15}\) \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 102 (Apa Kyre, presbyter and \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 103 (Psha, presbyter and \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 104 (Psha, presbyter and \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 107; \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 109 and 110 (Apa Abraham, presbyter and \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 115 (Isaak \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 125 (Apa Damian \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 132 (Psote \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 159 (Apa Ammone, presbyter and \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 207 (Apa Ouenober, presbyter and \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 208 (Apa Ouenober, presbyter and \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 209 (Apa Biktos \(\text{proestos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 303A (apa M[... \(\text{proestos}\]).

Some among these names recur in other documents. Psha: \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 293 (account; intermediary in payment); Abraham: \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 102 (presbyter and \(\text{boethos}\)); Isaak: \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 116 (loan witnessed by Isaak \(\text{aikonomenos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 253 (sender of a letter to headmen of a village community); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 317 (list of contributions, mentioning ⲡⲓⲛⲟⲩⲧⲣⲟⲩ ⲩⲓⲧⲁⲧⲓ ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛⲟⲛ); Ouenober: \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 223 (as envoy of a superior sent to handle some problematic matters), \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 344 (compiler of an income book; see below, n. 18); Helias: \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 146 (receipt by Helias); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 291 (account; intermediary in payment, \(\text{boethos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 293 (account; intermediary in payment). For Ammone, see below, n. 20.

\(^{16}\) \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 205 (Apa Abraham presbyter and \(\text{begoumenos}\); perhaps identical with Abraham of \(\text{P. Sarga}\) 109 and 110; the document was interpreted by Kahle as a writing exercise modelled on a letter written by a \(\text{begoumenos}\)); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 235 (Joseph, archpresbyter and \(\text{begoumenos}\)).

\(^{17}\) \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 210 (Petros the archimandrite; \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 291: ⲩⲁⲧⲣⲟ ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ); \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 395 features at least two designations of the same individual: ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ \(\ldots \) ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ (\(\text{Pithos}\); ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ ⲧⲣⲓⲟⲛ. Helias \(\text{proestos}\) appears in \(\text{P. Bal.}\) 317. An unknown archimandrite is mentioned in fragment d 136b, quoted by Kahle at p. 639 (I \(\text{arkhontes}\) \(\text{proestos}\)). The equivalence of the two titles is visible in \(\text{P. Ryl. Capt.}\) 124, where the same representative of the Wadi Sarga community is designed with both of them interchangeably (see above, Chapter 5, p. 242, n. 25).
responsible for monastic accounts. 18 P.Bal. 291 shows πέτρος πνεόν ὑπάρχει allocating one solidus ‘for the rope of Pateron’ (l. 2: γιανοῦ ἐπατεροῦ γιτὴ ἀπὸ πέτρος πνεόν ὑπάρχει), most probably in connection with the conservation of a watering machine on monastic land.19 The superior could be appointed temporarily and leave the position after some time, even surprisingly short: P. Bal. 100 attests to such an appointment of a certain Ammone,20 who was supposed to ‘administer (διοικεῖν) it [i.e. the monastery] for some days’. P. Bal. 312, an account of wine, in l. 28 mentions an ex-superior, Apa Aaron (l. 28: ἐβολὴ ναρών ἀπὸ προ(εκτος)).21

The monastery’s dikaiōn was represented by the superior—alone or assisted by a group of monks, called ‘senior brethren’ (怜; P. Bal. 102, l. 4 and 108, l. 2) or ‘senior sons’ (μενος ὑμηρε; P. Bal. 103, ll. 3–4). In the cases where there was no superior, like in P. Bal. 100, the representative role was assumed by the document’s subscribers (ll. 1–2: ‘the dikaiōn of the holy monastery of Apa Apollo in the nome of the town Sbeht through us who subscribe below this agreement’; πλακιαον ἡπιοναστη(ριων) ετ[ωγ]αβ ναρ ηπολ λαρ ἐπιονο(ς) ἦπερτ τηπις ριοτοοη ηνον υ[ετρ]υπογραφε ρατ[α]τ[ε] ὑπονολογ(ων)). As the subject of the document was the appointment of the superior, we can assume that this group was made up of the most prominent members of the community who chose the proper person from among themselves. We can imagine that ‘great brethren/sons’ were people involved on a regular basis in monastery management. Whether this group can be connected with any other collective designations encountered in the dossier is questionable. The plural ὁιος—‘the fathers’—appear outside legal contexts and is perhaps best understood as an honorific manner of addressing

18 Commentary to P. Bal. 344, p. 775. See the extremely fragmentary opening of the account P. Bal. 302 (ll. 1–2: πεδὸ εβολὴ ἡπιοναστηριον [… ἀνοκ ἀμμονε]; Kahle identifies this Ammone with a homonymous superior known from other documents; P. Bal. 303Α, drawn up ‘through me [the least priest and (2)] proestos’ (ἀρια ἀπολέως γιτοοὴ ἀπὸ [… ἐπατεροῦ προ(εκτος)] κυβ [προ(εκτος)]; P. Bal. 344 is an income book drawn by ‘Ouenober this last one’ (ll. 1–2: ριθροοὐ ινοκαται ἀνον ἐρουμ γιτοοη ἀπὸ ὑευοορ πελακιοτος), identified by Kahle with prior and proestos from P. Bal. 207 and 208. In fact, it is only in one document that the person responsible for its making is explicitly called proestos.

19 Cf. the receipts for ropes produced by monks for watering wheels of urban units of the Apionic estate (P.Oxy. LI 3640; P. Oxy. XVI 2015; SB XVIII 14061; SB XVIII 14062; P. Oxy. I 147; SB XVIII 14063; Mountford 029; Mountford 030; Mountford 031; the last three documents were edited by Margaret Mountford in her dissertation Documentary papyri from Roman And Byzantine Oxyrhynchus to which I had access thanks to invaluable help of Nikolaos Gonis). It is interesting to see monks of Apa Apollo buying a rope, the more so since rope-making was considered a monastic occupation par excellence. However, ropes for watering machines belonged rather to the sphere of specialised production (for monastic production of such ropes, see above, Chapter 1, p. 44); perhaps there was no one in the monastery who possessed the necessary skills?

20 Mentioned as superior in P. Bal. 159, a fragmentarily preserved contract, in which Ammone acts as representative of the monastery (l. 1: γιτοοη ἄνοικ ἀπὸ ἀμμονιε πολε[ης][ἐπατερ公式] κυβ [προ(εκτος)]). P. Bal. 190 (letter of Shenoure to monastic authorities, addressed to ‘the God-honoured, God-bearing lord and honoured father Ammone’, verso, l. 6: παμοναστηοπο ρωτορπο σωμαο πος ἐττ(ἀνυ) ἀπὸ αἰμ(ιον). Perhaps he can be tentatively identified with Ammone mentioned in P. Bal. 103, 142, 149, and 242.

21 P. Bal. 100, ll. 3–4: χε εβολὴ[ν] ἡπιοναστηριον τεκλαοοκ ναρ ἀπο(εκτος) (since you were appointed father of the monastery, that you should administer it for some days’). On the procedures of the choice of monastic superiors, as attested in literary and documentary testimonies, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 341–353. For other ex-proestotes, see the examples from Bawit quoted in Chapter 4, p. 166.
particularly respected members of the community, not only its administrators. Mentions of diakonia in the Bala'izah dossier are too scanty and difficult to place in context to prove conclusive.

Apart from proestos, the function that appears most often in the Bala'izah dossier is that of boethos. Officials with this designation surface frequently in lay contexts. Lay boethoi (literally ‘assistants’) were executive functionaries attached to higher-ranking officials or communities, e.g. villages; their tasks included playing the role of intermediaries in tax payments. The Bala'izah boethoi, however, were clearly members of the monastic community. They belonged to high strata of the monastic community and could represent the superior, like Achillites in P. Bal. 207, or be in charge of payments, like the same Achillites in P. Bal. 197, where another monk is asking him to make a payment in kind. A part of the tasks of these monastic boethoi was connected with fiscality: they appear in the Bala'izah dossier as issuers of tax receipts and intermediaries of payments in the accounts. Their function was therefore partially analogous to that of the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ at Bawit (see above, Chapter 4, p. 185), only their field of responsibility

22 P. Bal. 189: addressees of the letter of Shenoute, a monk asking for readmission to the community; P. Bal. 202: letter from Basil and Pishote asking for readmission to the community; P. Bal. 239: letter of Shenoute of Esou with request for support, mentioning (l. 8) υἱοὶ θεοῦ ημῶν, ‘lords and fathers’. Singular ἐχθρός appears several times in the dossier, in contexts that either indicate clearly its association with monastic superior (P. Bal. 100. where ἐχθρός is the title of the newly-appointed prior Ammone, or, again, in P. Bal. 190, again referring to Ammone) or point strongly in this direction (P. Bal. 223: a letter reporting actions of a monk travelling on business, addressed to ὁ προέδρωσε τὰ ἄρθρα ἐν τῷ χρυσῷ ἐνθύμησε u. a.); P. Bal. 192: letter from a woman Krekopia, sending greetings to, among others, ‘our [= the] father and the whole people of God’; ll. 12–13: ημῶν ἐν πᾶσι ταῖς ημῶν ἑαυτῶν. For honorific use of the designation ἐχθρός in Wadi Sarga, see above, Chapter 5, p. 243.

23 P. Bal. 164 mentions diakonia in the opening part of the document—perhaps a contract—where the representative of the community is to be expected (l. 1–3: ἡ ἀδικαυκοσία ἡ παράδοσις ἐν τῷ πιθόντος ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ ἡ τάξεως; P. Bal. 312 is an account of ‘the expenses of the wine of the diakonia’ (l. 1: πῶς εἶναι ημῶν ἡ τάξεως διακονίας); here, diakonia can be probably understood as a storeroom, a place where goods were kept. See Kahle, P. Bal. I, pp. 35–40. For general overview of the monastic diakonia in Egyptian context, see E. Wipszycka, ‘Diakonia’, [in], CE, s.v.


25 The text is addressed in the following manner (ll. 15–16, verso: ‘...the Christ-loving archdeacon Apa Achillites the chartularius [...] this least brother’ (ἥ νομος ρυγίαν) ἐν τῷ ἄρθρῳ ἐν τῷ ἀδικονίῳ κατὰ ἀσίλλατις παράγων ὁ λόγος) + ἀλ [- - -] [...]. The payment was to be made in saltfish (l. 8: ‘Be so kind and pay us with some few salted fish’; ἀφί σέ [τινι] ἀνερρήγοις ἐν τῷ ἐλθέω); A standard entry in a Bala'izah account consisted of three elements: title of the payment (frequently stated with the payer's name)—person through whom (πρεσβύτερος) the payment was made to the monastery's account (the 'intermediary', or, in other words, the issuer of the receipt to the payer)—sum.
was not limited to one type of tax. A number of people attested as boethoi are found in more than one text, sometimes bearing ecclesiastic titles.  

Proestates and boethoi were frequently presbyters; there is also a number of Bala'izah presbyteroi who appear in documents without any functions. Several deacons are found in texts as scribes or issuers of receipts. Generally speaking, in the Bala'izah dossier ecclesiastics appear much more frequently than in any other of the examined collections, making the dossier a very good example of the position of priests as the elite of the community.

The whole dossier features only four attestations of oikononomoi, of which only one shows an oikonomon in a context proper to his capacities as we know them from other sources. In P. Bal. 301 it appears that oikonomon played a part in compiling the monastery’s accounts, possibly after consulting his superior.  

27 Bala'izah boethoi: P. Bal. 102 (Apa Abraham, presbyter and boethos); P Bal. 132 (Echos boethos, issuing a tax receipt together with Psote proestos; connection with the monastery of Apa Apollo uncertain); P. Bal. 135 (Achillites boethos and Helias boethos issuing tax receipts); P. Bal. 136 (two tax receipts by Johannes, mentioned once as boethos, once as a presbyter); P. Bal. 145 (tax receipt by Mena boethos); P. Bal. 149 (tax receipt by Apa Kyre boethos); P. Bal. 291 (Helias boethos as intermediary of a payment); P Bal. 312 (Theodoros boethos receiving wine).

Of those, Achillites and Mena are mentioned otherwise as clerics. Achillites: P. Bal. 197 (letter addressed to archdeacon Apa Achillites the chartularius); P. Bal. 253 (letter addressed to Achillites the deacon); P. Bal. 290 (intermediary in payments, mentioned as Achillites the deacon or Achillites). An Achillites is mentioned twice without any titles, but in contexts that allow us to identify him with the deacon and boethos: P. Bal. 207 (Achillites writing a letter in the name of Apa Ouenober the proestos); P. Bal. 293 (intermediary in payments; Achillites). The name is unattested in documents outside the Bala'izah dossier. Mena: P. Bal. 133 (tax receipt by Mena the presbyter); P. Bal. 290 (intermediary in payment; presbyter); without title in P. Bal. 291 (intermediary in payment).

28 P. Bal. 118 (Apa Ter, a witness); P. Bal. 119 (Maka, a witness); P. Bal. 133 (tax receipt by […]rek the presbyter); P. Bal. 145 (taxpayer mentioned in a receipt); P. Bal. 152 (monastery resident and father of a groom whose marriage contract was deposited at Bala'izah); P. Bal. 358 (list of names mentioning presbyters Iohannes and Senouthios).

29 P. Bal. 105 (loan contract drawn up by deacon George); P. Bal. 142 (tax receipt by Apa Thomas, written by deacon George); P. Bal. 143 (tax receipt by deacon George); P. Bal. 225 (fragmentary text written by deacon Petros); P. Bal. 292 (account; intermediaries in payment: deacons Thomas, Lampou, Achillites, and George); P. Bal. 293 (account; intermediaries in payment: deacons Petros and Thomas); P. Bal. 295 (deacon Thomas, intermediary in payment (?)).

Other documents featuring deacons are: P. Bal. 114 (loan contract; creditor: deacon Lampou; witness: deacon Thomas); P. Bal. 158 (fragmentary contract mentioning NN the deacon in the opening section); P. Bal. 186 (letter delivered by deacon Ioannes); P. Bal. 223 (deacon Jeremiah travelling on monastic business); P. Bal. 259 (deacon Ioannes greeted in a letter); P. Bal. 291 (deacon Pkol paying his andrismos); P. Bal. 292 (deacon Petros paying fare charges); P. Bal. 293 (deacon Severus contributing to the monastery’s chrea); P. Bal. 358 (list of people, mentioning deacons Lampou, George, and Apollo); P. Bal. 395 (list of people mentioning deacons Lampou and George). The best known of these men is deacon Achillites, see n. 28.


31 P. Bal. 116: Isaak oikonomon (ἈΙΣΑΚΟΣ ΠΟΙΟΝΟΜΟΣ) witnessing a loan; P. Bal. 177 (Isaak oikonomon assenting to a deed: ΔΝΟΚ ΑΙΣΑΚ ΠΟΙΟΝΟΜΟΣ ΔΙΚΗΝΟΜΟΣ ΤΙΣΙΤΗΚΗ Σάς); P. Bal. 317 (brother Isaak the oikononomos paying one solidus for wine (ΠΑΣΟΝ ΑΙΣΑΚ ΠΟΙΟΝΟΜΟΣ ΧΑΡΜΗ ΝΟΗΜΑ Α)); P. Bal. 301 is one of the few accounts preserving the opening section, translated by Kahle as follows: ‘[…] the expenses for the tax-payment (διοίκησις) of the monastery (μοναστήριον) through [?] … the steward (οἰκομήτωρ) from the time when he agreed with [?] (μυκρομήτωρ) Apa […]’. I disagree with Kahle’s interpretation of διοίκησις as ‘tax-paymet’ and prefer to understand the opening phrase as ‘administration expenses’; the ἀπαντὶς of the symboulos in l. 11, being the only preserved entry, cannot alone determine the character of the whole document.

32 For superiors as the people responsible for compiling the accounts, see above, p. 273 with n. 18. Kahle (P. Bal. I, p. 775), quotes P. Bal. 301 as an example of an account compiled by a superior; it appears, however, that it was
Names of some among the members of the ‘monastic executive board’ are found in connection with titles of superiors in other documents. We see Helias as *boethos* in *P. Bal.* 135 and 291; a *ⲡⲉⲕⲧⲏⲥ* Helias appears in *P. Bal.* 317. An Apa Kyre is *boethos* in *P. Bal.* 149, while a homonymous individual features in *P. Bal.* 102 and perhaps 106. Three out of four attestations of monastery’s *oikonomos* (*P. Bal.* 116, 177, and 317) refer to an Isaak; *proestos* of this name is found in *P. Bal.* 155. In *P. Bal.* 223, Ouenober is to be sent by someone—most probably his superior—to handle the matter of some lost items, whereas a *proestos* called Ouenober appears in *P. Bal.* 207 and 208. An Abraham is presbyter and *boethos* in *P. Bal.* 102, presbyter and *proestos* in *P. Bal.* 109 and 110. Admittedly, all these men bear popular Christian names and their identification is uncertain. However, the consistence with which the same names appear among monastic functionaries, frequently of clerical status, and the superiors is quite striking. Most probably the Bala’izah dossier provides an example of what could be otherwise deduced based on the knowledge of the functioning of monasteries: the superiors were elected from the ‘inner circle’ of administrators and at least a basic ‘cursus honorum’ was required to attain the highest position in the monastery. In Bala’izah, the function of ‘assistant’ (*boethos*) appears to have played a particular role in it.

3.2. *The monastery’s assets*

The composition of monastic estate and the foundations of the community’s economic existence are difficult to grasp in the documents of the Bala’izah dossier. The existence of vast storage spaces in the monastic enclosure indicates that significant amount of goods was passing through the monastery. Some of the products could be purchased by the community, but a major part of the goods would have been produced on monastic estate; it was out of the agricultural produce that the monastery repaid the loans it had to take to assure fiscal solvency (see below, p. 278).

Parcels of land for which the community was held fiscally responsible were found in the Hermopolite and Antaiopolite nomes. Among the monastery’s expenses listed in *P. Bal.* 291, we find *demasion* of Pektes and Tohe and *embole* of Pshonte.\(^{33}\) In the same document, a mention of

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\(^{33}\) For Pektes, see Drew Bear, *Le nome hermopolite*, p. 200; Timm, *Ägypten*, vol. IV, p. 1882. The place is attested only in the Bala’izah dossier. Drew Bear makes a reservation that ‘*ημετριον* ne se trouvait pas forcément dans cette région; aux lignes 4 et 7 on rencontre la mention de Siout notamment’; mentions of Siout do appear in the document, but do not refer to plots of land and fiscal payments. Line 5 records ‘the receipt of some money from Siout’, while line 7 speaks of a horse-doctor from the city. For Tohe, see Drew Bear, *Le nome hermopolite*, pp. 312–313 (the place is attested outside the Bala’izah dossier in *SB Kopt.* III 1311 [= *P. Jews* 1920]—letter of 330–340 addressed to Apa Paieus of the monastery of Phathor by Hatre of Tmou m-pahon, mentioning Tohe in l. 6, and in *P. Ryl. Capt.* 342—a letter from headmen (*ⲡⲁⲡⲧⲥ* ) of Tohe to their superior, dated to the seventh–eighth century); cf. Timm, *Ägypten*, vol. VI, pp. 2723–2724. For Pshonte, called *γῆδιον* or *τόπος* in documents outside the Bala’izah dossier, see Calderini–Darris, *Dizionario*, vol. IV, p. 224, and Timm, *Ägypten*, vol. IV, pp. 2051–2052.
one solidus spent for a ‘rope for Pateron’ suggests that the monastery owned or farmed land also in this unknown location. The parcel was perhaps irrigated artificially with a saqiya, whose ropes would need replacement from time to time.\textsuperscript{34} In \textit{P. Bal.} 292, the monastery spends an unknown sum of money on \textit{demosion} of Pamaotos. These are virtually all references to fiscal responsibilities of the monastery that could result from ownership or exploitation of land. On the other hand, from one of the accounts we learn that some goods, including clover and wine, had to be purchased outside the monastic estate. Nerebe, a place located in the Lykopolite pagarchy, thus not very far from the monastery itself, is indicated as provenance of these goods in lines 10 and 18 of \textit{P. Bal.} 291.\textsuperscript{35} Although wine was, as everywhere else, an important element of monastic economy, constituting a basic element of payments (see \textit{P. Bal.} 312, an account of wine distributed by the \textit{diakonia} to individuals and monastic units), the documentation is silent about its production on the monastic estate. On the other hand, it appears that particular community members could own or lease vineyards (cf. \textit{P. Bal.} 114; see below, p. 276–277).

Almost nothing can be said about the workforce employed by the community. Mentions of workers and specialists are scattered throughout various documents, frequently out of context. Palm-leaf pickers (\textit{ὐγκωκὴν}) appear in \textit{P. Bal.} 229 and 259; they were sent to various places according to the needs and operated in larger teams; at least some of them were monks of the community.\textsuperscript{36} \textit{P. Bal.} 307, of which only two incomplete lines are extant, speaks of ‘the account of the shepherds’ (\textit{ἄγος ἰησοῦ}) who seem to have constituted a distinct group from the administrative point of view. One of the intermediaries through whom payments are made in \textit{P. Bal.} 291 and 292, Theodoros, is a fisherman (\textit{ποιάρη}); another fisherman, Kolthe, appears in the fragmentary account \textit{P. Bal.} 317. Chael the sailor discharges his \textit{andrismos} in \textit{P. Bal.} 294; Apa Kyre the potter (\textit{ἄπα ΚΥΡΕ ὙΠΗΡΑΜ(ΕΥΣ)}) appears in the fragmentary \textit{P. Bal.} 364. \textit{P. Bal.} 331 is a list of

According to Kahle, this place is mentioned several times in \textit{P. Lond.} IV 1419 + \textit{SB} XX 15099 as fiscal contributor.

\textsuperscript{34} On conservation of watering equipment, see D. Bonneau, \textit{Le régime administratif de l’eau du Nil dans l’Égypte grecque, romaine et byzantine}, Leiden–New York–Cologne 1993, pp. 224–234, with special focus on Apionic receipts for replacement parts for \textit{mekhainai}.

\textsuperscript{35} \textit{P. Bal.} 291, l. 10: \textit{Εὔερθης Ὄπ Νερεβης ἀστητής} \textit{Παλαμόν οἰκοδόμος ποιάρη κωπηθικός} λ (‘for clover from Nerebe, through brother Theodore the fisherman, one solidus’; l. 18: \textit{Εὔερθης Ὄπ Νερεβης ἀνάστης} \textit{Με[νᾶ]} (‘for wine from Nerebe through Me[na …’]). Another purchase of wine is recorded in l. 28 (\textit{Εὔερθης Ν[.] ἀνάστης} \textit{Με[νᾶ] οἰκοδόμος} (‘for wine from Nerebe, through brother Theodore, one solidus’). Another purchase of wine is recorded in l. 39 (\textit{Εὐερθης Νερηβης} οἰκοδόμος (‘for wine from Nerebe, through person Νερηβης οἰκοδόμος’)). For Nerebe, see Calderini–Darris, \textit{Dizionario}, vol. III, p. 337. The place, called Νερήβη or Νερηβή is mentioned twice in \textit{P. Lond.} IV 1460 (a fiscal register from the Lykopolite pagarchy).

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{P. Bal.} 229 is a letter addressed to ‘the brothers palm-leaf pickers’ (ll. 11: \textit{τὰκακὴν ἱησοῦν} \textit{ὐγκωκὴν}) who are asked to send sealed bundles of palm leaves to the monastery via an intermediary. \textit{P. Bal.} 259 is a letter from an unknown sender to an unknown addressee (monastic contexts is indicated by greeting formula in ll. 11–12, mentioning ‘brothers’ Theodore, Biktor and Aaron, and deacon Ioannes). The writer asks the addressee not to expel a palm-leaf picker, who is necessary for some work that has to be done at the place where the writer is staying. Palm-leaf fibre was a material used in various branches of handicraft, including making of ropes or baskets; see Wipszycka, \textit{Moines et communautés}, pp. 533–545, especially the description of the making of baskets from the leaves of the date palm in an Upper Egyptian village at pp. 536–542 (after N. H. Henein, \textit{Mari Girgis, village de Haute-Egypte}, Cairo 1988, pp. 179–194).
various items, including (l. 5) ὠⲩϣⲁⲁⲣ ⲛⲉⲣⲅ(ⲁⲧⲏⲥ?)—‘a skin for a workman’, maybe given as a part of reimbursement. P. Bal. 132, 133, and 134 are receipts for tax on artisanal production—weaving—practised by some of the monks. On some occasions, the monastery had to hire specialists from ‘the world outside’: P. Bal. 291, line 8, lists a payment of the sum of 1/6 of a solidus to a ‘horse-doctor from Siout’ (ⲱⲧⲉⲛ Ⲣⲏⲣⲛⲟⲩⲧ). The fact that the veterinarian had to be sought in the city indicates that no such specialist was available in the neighbourhood. Interestingly, the horse doctor provides the only link of the monastery with a city in the region.

3.3. Form of the community

Grossmann, and after him Goehring, wanted to see in the monastery of Apa Apollo at Deir el-Bala‘izah a coenobitic community. Their conclusion was based mainly on archaeological evidence in the form of structures occupying a significant part of the monastic enclosure, which they both agree to interpret as monks’ dormitories. In P. Bal. 312 (wine account of the diakonia) we see that monastic administration distinguished various units to which separate disbursements of wine were granted: the church (l. 9: ṭⲡⲉⲗⲉⲣⲓⲥⲉ), the ‘table of the superior’ (archimandrite?) (l. 8: ⲧⲣⲏⲥⲉ [l. ⲧⲣⲏⲥⲉ] ⲧⲛⲟⲩⲧ ⲧⲣⲟⲩⲧ), and ‘our table’ (l. 10: ⲧⲧⲣⲏⲥⲉⲧⲉ). This last entry, combined with the presence of large halls interpreted as refectories on the site, points to the practice of common meals in the monastery. This, in itself, cannot help us determine the monastic regime, as we do not know whether the monks sat at ‘their table’ on everyday basis or only during Sunday or festal gatherings.

On the other hand, there are clues that point to economic independence of the community members. First, monks appear as creditors in loan contracts concluded by the monastery. In P. Bal. 103, Apa Ammone lends the monastery one solidus to be repaid with ten artabae of wheat. P. Bal. 106 is perhaps another contract between the monastery’s dikaion, represented by Apa Ky[r], and ⲧⲧⲟⲩⲧ Theonas. Unfortunately, only fragments of the opening formula of the text are extant. In P. Bal. 110, opening with the ‘since we besought’ formula, typical of loans, Abraham the proestos addresses ‘the God-loving brother Apa Helias’. Loans were concluded also between the monks: in P. Bal. 114 ‘Jacob and George his son of Pnom[.].’

37 P. Bal. 132 was issued to Chael, who belonged to the community of Apa Mena; see below, p. 281–282.
38 One may wonder what would the monastery need him for; horses were not used for transport, only in military and postal service. However, P. Bal. 249 does mention a horse brought to the monastery. The only possible explanation seems to be a compulsory delivery of animals for governmental service; perhaps the animals would need to spend some time in the monastery before being taken by government representatives. On the procedures of animal requisitions under Roman rule, see C. Adams, Land Transport in Roman Egypt: A Study of Economics and Administration in a Roman Province, Oxford 2007, pp. 135–155.
40 On refectories, see P. Grossmann, [in:] CE, s.v. ‘Refectory’.
nome of Antinoou, monks’ (ll. 1–3: ἵκῳ υἱῷ Γεωργίῳ Πεταμπρόν [.]. Κτῆς ζητώντος Ἀντινοοῦ [各方面] ἤμους [各方面]) borrow a solidus from ‘brother Lampou’ (ll. 3a: [π]ασο λαμποῦ), to be repaid with an unknown number of lābe-measures of wine. An attestation financial transactions of a monk is found in P. Bal. 124, a receipt for four solidi paid by πασο Samuel to ‘Zacharias son of the late Mena from the ἑσές of the field of Tmoumer’ (ll. 1–3: ἀνὸ[ν] ζαχαρίου παώ π[各方面] [各方面] ἔρι πένθους [各方面] ἱκεσο [各方面] ἱττονίους εἰς ἑσές ἵπποι [(各方面)] σαλοι). In P. Bal. 157 (perhaps a deed of sale, as suggested by the mention of τίθη in line 8), several people of unclear status address πασο [_pay]ς [各方面] (各方面 (?)) ἵππα [各方面] [各方面]. Property ownership by a monk is attested in P. Bal. 130: an entagion issued by Salih son of Abi Rashid to Apollo son of Apakuros from the πέτρα of Abba Poulei, that is, Abba Apollo (ll. 1–2: Σαλή ὑιὸς Αβιρας δ[各方面] Ἀπάλλω (τι) Ἀπακόλου (round) ἀπὸ πέτρας (各方面) α[各方面]μ(各方面) Πουλεί). The fiscal obligations of the monk included δεμοσία, διαγράφων (1 1/3 of a solidus), δαπάνη for twelve months (1/3 of a solidus), and ἐμβολε (½ artaba of wheat). Demosia refer to land-tax, which is hidden behind the term eixe in line 4.41 The presence of land-taxes in money and in kind is a clear indication that Apollos held land for which he was fiscally responsible.

It is thus clear that Bala‘izah monks had assets at their own disposal which enabled them to pursue individual business activities and assist their own institution. Interestingly, among the monastic moneylenders we find three men that can be identified with otherwise known monastic functionaries, even superiors: Ammone, Helias, and Lampou. A monastery handled tax payments of the institution and its monks, and the superior was personally responsible for proper discharge of fiscal obligations.42 It is therefore natural that the people occupying prominent positions in the community (like Ammone and Helias) would belong to the community’s financial elite.

In the following sections we will focus on such aspects of the monastery’s relations with the outside world as can be seen through the prism of our documentation. As the Bala‘izah dossier is especially rich in fairly cohesive documentation pertaining to fiscal matters, tax-related issues will occupy an important position in our argument. On the other hand, different aspects of the monastery’s functioning, especially those connected with everyday running of monastic estate, are almost invisible in the material at our disposal. Scattered hints and traces do appear, but unfortunately their main source is epistolary material, which is notorious for the random and cursory character of information it provides. Despite the deficiencies of our sources, we are able to spot some interesting details of relations with laypeople, on the communal and private level.

41 For a detailed analysis of the text, see Gonis, ‘Arabs, monks, and taxes’ (cit. n. 12), pp. 216–217. The document is important, as it provides us with rare information on the amount of taxes paid by an individual.
42 On the responsibilities of monastic superiors towards the fiscal officers, see Wipszycka, ‘Resources’, p. 256.
4. Monks, monastery, and the fisc

The Bala’izah dossier preserves information on taxation of monasteries and individual monks in the Arab period. Not only some detailed accounts mentioning fiscal expenses are extant, but also other documents from the collection—loan contracts and receipts—revolve around taxes. Since the introductory study of Kahle in P. Bal., the accounts of Deir el-Bala’izah have been treated as a testimony of the downfall of Egyptian monasteries in the Arab period. Kahle assumed that it was fiscal burdens—especially the poll-tax—imposed on monastic communities that led to their disappearance in the eighth century. The main focus of Kahle’s reasoning was the account P. Bal. 290, dated to the eighth century on palaeographic basis. Kahle’s two main points were the heaviness of the fiscal burden—76 1/24 1/48 solidi for one period covered by the account (Pauni and Mesore), and 88 1/3 1/24 1/48 for the other (Phaophi and Hathyr), including poll-tax of the monks—and the fact that the monastery had to borrow money in order to meet its fiscal obligations (cf. loan contracts P. Bal. 102, 103, and 111). Kahle’s view was convincingly challenged by Tomasz Markiewicz and Ewa Wipszycka. Markiewicz pointed out that borrowing money to pay taxes could be a result of the lack of coined money, which, in turn, ‘may be a sign of undermonetised economy, but not necessarily of financial distress‘; a landowning monastery could as well remain economically stable and capable of meeting its financial obligations by selling its agricultural production, either on the market or through sales on future delivery (indeed, both P. Bal. 102 and 103 belong to the latter documentary type). Wipszycka, on the other hand, downplayed the role of poll-tax in P. Bal. 290, pointing out that even though in the period Pauni–Mesore it amounted to forty-five out of over seventy-six solidi, in Phaophi–Hathyr the sum was much more modest: eight out of eighty-eight solidi. Moreover, the majority of poll-tax sums paid by individual monks recorded in P. Bal. 293 amount to 1/3 of a solidus, which represents a standard instalment of this tax.

The poll-tax paid by members of monastic communities was handled by monastic administration. The superior would receive a notification of the total amount of tax due in a year from his community; then, with the help of his collaborators, he would allocate the sums to particular monks according to their financial capacities. However, exceptions did occur, as we can see in P. Bal. 130, which is addressed directly to a monastic taxpayer. The Bawit dossier, with its numerous letters from superiors to the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ shows that at the stage of

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allocation various shifts could occur: monks were paying *andrismos* in the name of other community members, contributions in kind were accepted and sold to obtain cash for the payment proper, waivers were issued by the entitled decision-makers (see above, Chapter 4, pp. 185–186). None of these various shifts and adjustments can be traced in Bala’izah, but we can imagine that they did take place, and were effectuated by *boethoi* on superiors’ request.

*Boethoi* are well-visible at the next stage—the actual payment of poll-tax and other levies—recorded in a number of receipts issued to individual monks for different payments (the title of the payment is not stated in some of the documents, while in other cases it is not preserved). The content of these documents can be best presented in a table.

**Table 1. Tax receipts from the Bala’izah dossier—extract**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P. Bal.</th>
<th>Issued by</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>For (sum)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>132</td>
<td>Enoch <em>boethos</em> and Psote <em>proestos</em></td>
<td>Chael</td>
<td>1 ½ sol.</td>
<td>weaving-garments tax</td>
<td>most probably connected with the monastery of Apa Mena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>133</td>
<td>Mena <em>presbyteros</em></td>
<td>L[...]</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>weaving-garments tax (part of demosia)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134</td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>Aplo (Apollo)</td>
<td>1 ½ sol.</td>
<td>weaving-garments tax (part of demosia)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135a</td>
<td>Achillites <em>boethos</em></td>
<td>Kolthe son of Jeremias</td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>diagraphon (part of demosia)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135b</td>
<td>Achillites <em>boethos</em></td>
<td>Kolthe son of Jeremias (?)</td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>embole</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135c</td>
<td>[...rek <em>presbyteros</em></td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>a solidus (?)</td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135d</td>
<td>NN <em>presbyteros</em></td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>[...] soli</td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>135e</td>
<td>Helias <em>boethos</em></td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>diagraphon (?)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136a</td>
<td>Ioannes <em>presbyteros</em></td>
<td>Apa [...]nc</td>
<td>1 <em>trimesion</em></td>
<td>diagraphon (part of demosia)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>136b</td>
<td>Ioannes <em>presbyteros</em> and <em>boethos</em></td>
<td>unpreserved</td>
<td>1 <em>trimesion</em> (reconstructed)</td>
<td>diagraphon (part of demosia)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137a</td>
<td>Pshoi and Kolthe from Apa[...]Chael 'from our village'</td>
<td>3 solidi</td>
<td>demosion</td>
<td>reckoned without dyke and sailor (service); written and witnessed by Hermias; witnessed by</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>137b</td>
<td>Job</td>
<td>ὑποκεφαλή Chael</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>payment discharged through Kolthe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

45 P. Bal. 135 is a compilation of receipts.
46 P. Bal. 136 is a compilation of receipts.
47 P. Bal. 137 is a compilation of receipts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>139</td>
<td>NN and Philotheos son of Kollouthos</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>3 sol and a trimesion</td>
<td>[demosia and] diagraphon</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140</td>
<td>Not preserved</td>
<td>Chad of the mount of Apa Mena</td>
<td>1 1/6 sol.</td>
<td>demesion of the village and service tax</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>142</td>
<td>Apa Thomas</td>
<td>Apa Ammone</td>
<td>1 trimesion</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>George diakonos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>143</td>
<td>George diakonos</td>
<td>Athanasios</td>
<td>1 trimesion</td>
<td>diagraphon</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>144</td>
<td>Not preserved</td>
<td>Nason Philammon</td>
<td>1 trimesion</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>145</td>
<td>Mena boethos</td>
<td>Apa Phoka</td>
<td>2 kerata</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>146</td>
<td>Helias</td>
<td>Nason Taurine</td>
<td>1/2 trimesion</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>147</td>
<td>NN boethos</td>
<td>Apa Ammone</td>
<td>1 trimesion</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>149</td>
<td>Apa Kyre boethos</td>
<td>Apa Ammone</td>
<td>1/3 sol.</td>
<td>andrismos</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the majority of the receipts that preserve the title of payment, the instalments of one *trimesion* (one third of a solidus) are connected with the poll-tax, and it is possible that this was also the case in the documents where the title is not stated or unpreserved. Other taxes handled by monastic administrators included a weavers’ tax and *embole*. The case of *embole* is curious. The tax appears in *P. Bal.* 135, a compilation of receipts issued by at least three different representatives for various payments, including *diagraphon* and *embole*. The name of the taxpayer is, unfortunately, preserved in full in only one entry (135a) and can be tentatively reconstructed in another (135b), but it would be logical to assume that such compilation pertained to one person. Interestingly, the taxpayer in *P. Bal.* 135a bears a patronymic, which is rare in monastic documentation. People with patronymics occur also in the register *P. Bal.* 293 as payers of *andrismos* or contributors toward the monastery’s *chreos* (see Table 5, p. 295). There is no reason to assume that they were not community members; the presence of patronymics in fiscal documentation could be the result of copying the official usage. It appears, therefore, that Kolthe

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48 Markiewicz, *The Church, clerics, monks* (cit. n. 43), p. 183 with n. 20 and 21. Markiewicz interprets *chreos* of the monastery as the sums the monastic institution owed its creditors ("The “debts” being loans contracted by the monastery with various individuals"). This is interesting if we compare the data from *P. Bal.* 293 with the preserved loan contracts concluded between the monastery and individuals. In both *P. Bal.* 102 and 103, the debt is to be repaid in kind. *P Bal.* 102 is especially informative as to the manner in which the commodities were to be measured. In the document, in which the debt amounts to eight solidi, we read: ‘On the one hand as regards six solidi we shall give them to you in lentils from this crop at the rate of eight artabae and two *oipe*-measures, they being acquired (?) per solidus. That is […] fifty artabae they being acquired. And further, [as regards the other] two solidi, I shall repay them to you according as we shall find them. If God wills that we find honey, we shall repay them to you according to the price which shall be determined. Alternatively, we shall repay them to you in lentils, according as I have given you for the other six solidi, which is eight artabas acquired (?) and two *oipe*-measures (per solidus).’ In *P. Bal.* 103, the rate is set at ten artabae of wheat for one solidus lent to the monastery by Apa Ammone. On the other hand, the receipt *P. Bal.* 125 issued by Pekosh to the *dikaion* of the monastery for ½ and 1/3 of a solidus implies that some loans contracted by the monastery were also repaid in cash. In *P. Bal.* 293, the sums labelled ‘for the debt of the monastery’ are all in money (they range from the modest 1/3 of a solidus to 4 2/3 solidi), and they change hands with the participation of intermediaries (among whom we see, e.g., the already known Achillites and Apa Helias). The intermediaries, whom I believe to have belonged to the monastery’s ‘executive board’, were responsible for the transfer of the borrowed money to proper recipients, and perhaps also took care of the repayment of the debts at the rate set in the contracts.
son of Jeremias, who most probably was a monk of the monastery, discharged his grain-tax through his institution. Monks paying taxes other than *andrismos* through their monastery recur also in the Bawit dossier (see above, Chapter 4, p. 184).

Perhaps the most intriguing part of the small sub-dossier of Bala’izah tax receipts are four documents addressed to a monk named Chael. *P. Bal.* 140 makes it plain that Chael belonged to another community, a ‘mount of Apa Mena’.9 Other interesting details are found in *P. Bal.* 137, another compilation of receipts issued to Πασον Chael. *P. Bal.* 137a was issued by Pshoi; in *P. Bal.* 137b issued by Job, Chael’s payment (sum and title unpreserved) is made through a certain Kolthe. Interestingly, Pshoi and Kolthe recur, this time together, in *P. Bal.* 138 as the issuers of the receipt. Both are said to hail from a village whose name is unpreserved and Chael is said to be their compatriot.50 As the Bala’izah receipts are in general poorly preserved, we need to be careful in comparing them; however, it seems that *P. Bal.* 138 is the only document of the lot that was witnessed by a third party (Paule son of NN and Hermias from the monastery of Apa Jeremias, who is also the scribe of the document). Also the title of Chael’s payment in this document is different than in other texts: three solidi of *demosia*, without service payments. *P. Bal.* 140 is a receipt of Chael’s payment of *demosia* of the village (l. 3: ἸΤΗΝΙΟΠΟΝ ἤΠΤ[Ι][Ε] and ‘the works of hand’ (interpreted by Kahle as payments made instead of ἐν σῶματ service). It is clear that several elements distinguish Chael as the ‘odd one’ in the receipt dossier. Out of four documents connected with Chael only one, *P. Bal.* 132, bears similarities with the remaining Bala’izah receipts; its issuers bear titles well attested in the Bala’izah dossier—proestos and boethos—none of them, however, is otherwise attested in our documents. *P. Bal.* 138 could have been issued in the home village of Chael, where he was held liable for taxes that burdened his property. The provenance of at least two receipts of *P. Bal.* 137a and 137b (mentioning Pshoi and Kolthe respectively) is probably the same. The issuer of *P. Bal.* 140 is unknown and so is the document’s provenance. I cannot propose a satisfactory explanation of Chael’s connection with the monastery of Apa Apollo. It might be that he moved from one community to another and some of his papers ended up with him in Bala’izah (*P. Bal.* 140 among them), where he continued to pay his taxes through this monastery’s representatives (*P. Bal.* 132). *P. Bal.* 137 and 138 reflect

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9 For this monastery, see Kahle, *P. Bal.* I, p. 25. See also C. Schmidt, ‘Ein koptischer Werkvertrag’, *ZA* 67 (1931), pp. 102–106; idem, ‘Das Kloster des Apa Mena’, *ZA* 68 (1932), pp. 68–68, for two contracts drawn up in the name of the dikaios of the monastery of Apa Mena. See also Clackson, *P. Mon. Apollo*, p. 23. S. Bacot, ‘Une nouvelle attestation de la “petra d’Apa Ména”’, *BIFAO* 201 (2002), pp. 1–16 (edition of a loan contract concluded between a layman and Apa Ioannes of the infirmary of the petra of Apa Mena). Out of the two attestations of Apa Mena in the Bawit dossier quoted by Clackson and Bacot (*P. Mon. Apollo* 16 and 42), only the latter (a loan contract between two monks) refers to a monastery, while Apa Mena of *P. Mon. Apollo* 16 refers to a person (see above, Chapter 4, p. 220, n. 238).


281
perhaps other categories of Chael’s taxes, discharged in the place where he possessed land. It is also possible that we are dealing with more than one recipient and another random addition to the Bala’izah dossier (in any case, I believe that P. Bal. 137 and 138 are certainly connected with the same Chael).

It appears that Bala’izah receipts and accounts supplement our knowledge of monastic fiscal management with information on the stages of procedure of tax collection in monasteries that are not represented in the Bawit documents. After collecting the money and issuing receipts to taxpayers, the boethai, or analogous functionaries, would provide the monastery’s oikonomos or proestos with necessary documentation which served as basis for such accounts as P. Bal. 291, 293, or 294, where individual payments were listed according to the ‘taxpayer—intermediary’ system. Such documents as P. Bal. 290, with general entries listing total sums of various fiscal categories (e.g., poll-tax, dapanes, wages) were perhaps the next stage of documentation process and the actual basis for clearings with the pagarch’s office (after all, the pagarch would have been interested in full sums, not the intricacies of their allotments within the monastery).\(^{51}\) Full sums of various categories, listed under different dates of the sixth indiction in P. Bal. 290, were handled by fixed sets of persons, which suggests that some among the administrative functionaries of the monastery were taking turns making intermediary sum-ups (see Table 2 below, p. 296).\(^{52}\) Perhaps analogous documents were drawn up also for other taxes, e.g., the land-tax, based on such documents as P. Bal. 291 and 292 (most probably fragments of the same account; see Table 3 and 4 at pp. 294 and 295), where particular payments—probably corresponding to parcels of land or clusters thereof—were registered.

No receipts are preserved for land-taxes paid by the monastery. In P. Bal. 291 and 292 various monastic representatives are mentioned as intermediaries of demosion-payments. We can think of a system similar to that applied in Bawit, with community representatives collecting rent-tax from tenants of monastic land and acting as intermediaries (see above, Chapter 4, p. 160). One document from the Bala’izah dossier, P. Bal. 253, may actually point to the existence of aparche-system at Bala’izah. It is a letter written by Apa Isak to ‘the headmen of the great village Mou[…]’ (verso, l. 7: ΝΕΞΩΝΩΧΕ ΧΝΟΧΟ ΝΤΗΝΕ ΝΟΥ[…] ΡΙΤΝ ΑΝΑ ΙΧ([Λ]Κ)). In line 3 of the document ‘small aparche’ (ΤΚΟΥ ΝΑΧΡΧΗ) is mentioned; the very same expression is found in

\(^{51}\) Cf. the Aphroditan dossier of eighth-century fiscal accounts in P. Lond. IV, where in the majority of cases the payments expected from five monastic units (Abba Hermou, Tarouou, Pharouou, Barbarou, and Hagia Maria) are stated as bulk sums.

Interestingly, P. Bal. 290 finds an approximate pendant in P. Bal. 300, a Greek tax account, most probably from an office outside the monastery. The document lists names of taxpayers and the payments they were supposed to make as diagrapthou and dapanes for twelve months. It might be that the tendency to list poll-tax payments together with dapanes, visible in P. Bal. 290, resulted from copying official accounting patterns.

\(^{52}\) One of these persons is Achillites, a well-known monastic boethos and representative (see above, p. 275, n. 27).
aparche-related documents from Bawit. Unfortunately, the letter is too fragmentary to give us grounds for any further reasoning.

As already noted, Kahle was impressed by the sums of money listed in P. Bal. 290; indeed, the amounts of ready cash the monastery was supposed to possess was considerable (note also that the sums in this document represent only a part of its taxes, as land-tax is absent from the register). From other documents of the dossier we know that the monastery had recourse to loans of cash from its own monks and people from ‘the world’ to meet its fiscal obligations.\(^5\)

The possible economic implications of this situation were explored by Tomasz Markiewicz (see above, p. 278). What does this situation imply, however, from the point of view of the present argument? If individual monks had access to ready cash (sometimes in significant amounts, as in P. Bal. 115, with its four solidi minus eight and a half keratia), it would appear that they were better integrated in exchange networks than the monastic institution as a whole. It would also mean that individual financial capacities of the monks and the financial capacity of their monastery did not overlap, which provides another argument for far-reaching economic independence of the community members.

The part of the dossier examined so far concerned the relations with the fisc and mechanisms developed in response to the demands of fiscal apparatus. These relations were institutionalised, not personalised; however, a great deal of contacts of monks with officials were played out on personal level. Personal bonds with people in ‘the world’—not only officials, but also family and acquaintances—continued to play a role also in the life of ordinary monks. Relations on the

\(^{53}\) P. Bal. 102 is a loan of an impressive sum of eight solidi for the monastery’s demosion. The creditor is Apa Amrou the shaliou (ll. 1–6: ἀπαρχῆς ἑπιμοιοντητικὰς παρεξήγης ἁπλοῦ ἀναλύειν ἃπερ ἀποκαλέσθη / ἀπό τοῦ ἀναφέροντος ἀχρὸν προσέγγισεν ἐν σεβαστῇ ἱερον ἡμῖν ὑποκλιτῷ ἤς ἐξερχόταν ἁπλοῦ παράλληλον; the loan is supposed to be repaid in lentils and honey (or lentils only, if the institutional debtor finds itself unable to acquire honey). The creditor bears a typically Arab name (see Kahle’s commentary to the text) and fills function associated with Arab fiscal administration (see Clackson, P. Mon. Apollo, pp. 25–26 with n. 131; see also above, Chapter 4, p. 175, n. 80 and 176, n. 85). Interestingly, the text mentions honey, which appears in monastic contexts in connection with disbursements to Arab officials; see A. Delattre, ‘Le monastère de Baouît et l’administration arabe’, [in] A. T. Schubert & P. M. Sijpesteijn (eds.) Documents and the History of the Early Islamic World. 3rd Conference of the International Society for Arabic Papyrology, Alexandria, 23–26 March 2006, Leiden 2014, pp. 43–49. The fact that Amrou’s name is preceded by the honorific ‘Apa’ is not sufficient to identify him as monk, since the title was used to refer both to monks and respected laymen (cf., however, Markiewicz, ‘The church, clergies, monks’ [cit. n. 43], table at p. 201, no. 101, where Amrou is identified as a monk). P. Bal. 103 is loan of one solidus for demosion from Apa Ammone, to be repaid in wheat. Other documents do not display fiscal connections, but further prove the reliance of the monastery on cash provided by its own monks and people from the world outside. P. Bal. 110 is a loan of an unknown sum of money for unknown purpose from Apa Helias; P. Bal. 106 is very fragmentary legal deed (perhaps also a loan) addressed by the monastery’s dikaion to ἀπαθὼν Theonas. The beginning of P. Bal. 115 is unresolved, but the content of the document allows to interpret it as a loan agreement; the text mentions a high sum of four solidi and 8 ⅓ keratia and is confirmed by Isaak the proestos, which may imply the involvement of monastic administration. P. Bal. 125 is a receipt issued by Pekosh son of the late Biktor to the dikaion of the monastery of Apa Apollo for ⅔ of a solidus; the document refers to an earlier agreement (ἀσφάλεια) of the monastery’ (l. 5)—most probably a loan contract.
personal level were a significant element of the monastic administration and business, as well as the psychological welfare of the community members. Researching them is not always an easy task, all the more so since they are usually reflected in letters, which are perhaps the most tricky documentary category. Information on private contacts of monks with laypeople obtained from letters can be supplemented with data from other types of documents related chiefly to monks’ business activities, which are more formulaic, but not necessarily easy to interpret. Without examining these relations, however, any attempt at understanding links of monastic communities with lay society would be incomplete; the following sections will therefore exploit the opportunities provided by the Bala’izah dossier for studying this category of personal relations and the spheres in which they worked.

5. Monks of Bala’izah and their personal relations with ‘the world outside’

5.1. Monks and officials

Testimonies of contacts of Bala’izah monks with officials are rather scarce and poorly preserved. P. Bal. 211 is a letter written by Petros—perhaps the otherwise attested superior—to an official bearing a double title: ‘[…] and pagarch (ll. 4–5: ⲏⲕⲡ ⲡⲡⲁⲅⲁⲣⲭ (ⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲧⲣⲟⲥ ⲡⲉⲓⲗⲁⲭ (ⲓⲧⲟⲥ ⲥ ϩⲧⲉⲧⲣ ⲫ ⲡⲁⲡϩⲡⲡⲡⲱ))(54) Unfortunately, nothing of the letter’s content is extant. It was never sent from the monastery, or the papyrus we have is a copy. An interesting situation is described in P. Bal. 186, which is another letter, addressed to someone called ‘the sweetness of you the dear lord and brother’ (ll. 2–3: ⲛⲡⲁ ⲩⲟ ⲥ ⲛⲡⲡⲩⲡⲩⲩⲧⲕⲉ ⲧⲕⲟⲩⲩⲧ ⲥⲧⲟⲩ ḳⲟⲩⲩⲩ; the manner of address points to monastic context of the letter. The addressee is evidently in trouble; it is possible that he had been imprisoned under a pretext the writer considers false. The release of

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55 Cf. P. Naqlun I 12, a letter from bishop Nikolaos to komos Basileios, found in the Naqlun monastery which was the bishop’s place of residence (see above, Chapter 3, pp. 134–136), or P. Mon. Apollo 56, a letter from the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit to a topoteretes, associated with other documents of the same provenance.
56 In the introduction to this text (P. Bal., p. 594), Kahle wrote: ‘The background to this and the following letter 187 is evidently the ἐν σώματι service. In n. 7 to the text (at p. 598), he says ‘That the person to whom this letter was addressed was in some difficulty is obvious from lines 33 to 39, but exactly what had happened is not made clear, perhaps intentionally’. I believe that it was imprisonment rather than personal service that was at the heart of the addressee’s problems. The letter speaks of prior experience shared by the writer and the addressee which involved being held in custody (see the following note). The writer is sending the addressee fifteen double loaves of bread; other documents indicate that imprisoned people relied on supplies sent by their friends and relatives (see, e.g., P. Mon. Epiph. 177: ‘Send the rations for us to the jailer’). A monk imprisoned by a village scribe for his failure to deliver something that the monastery was expected to provide is found in P. Köln ägypt. II 43. P. Mon. Apollo 31 is a notification of arrest of a monk Ioannes of Apa Apollo for his failure to pay one solidus of demasion; for a commentary, see Clackson, P. Mon. Apollo, p. 25. Since a pagarch is involved in the present situation, we may suspect that also in P. Bal. 186 the transgression of the arrested man had to do with fiscal matters. On
the addressee was within the competences of a pagarch, but it appears that the writer and his fellows had attempted to intercede on the addressee’s behalf also with another official (ἄρχων), and failed to meet him. However, the writer comforts the addressee informing him that ‘the superior (πρὸς πρῶθε) is saying: ‘I shall come south to the place of Apa Atham for one small occasion and we will beseech him to ask the ἄρχων concerning you’ (ll. 25–31). Kahle interprets πρὸς πρῶθε as a lay official; however, the tone and phraseology of the letter point to its origins in the monastic milieu. Therefore, ‘the superior’ can be identified with the prior of the writer’s community. He was planning to visit someone, perhaps another monk or a respected individual, and his subordinates were intent to persuade him to seize the opportunity and ask for intercession on behalf of a person in trouble.

Another intervention—this time on request from a layperson—is hinted at in P. Bal. 239. The document is a letter from Shenoute from Esou in the Hermopolite nome, mentioning ‘lords and fathers’ towards the end of the text, in a place where the addressees’ names can be expected (l. 8: ἵνα ἴμ-provider). Shenoute asks the addressee(s): ‘[…] may your] mercy meet me to draw up a letter (τεκαίν ογγιες τολη) […] that he draw up a sigillion (τεκαίν ογγικλι).’ Forms based on the verb σιγιλλά point to official character of both documents. Sigillion is a term well-known from the documents of the Arab period: it designates a safe-conduct issued by an official punitive means at the disposal of fiscal officers, see P. M. Siipisteijn, Shaping a Muslim State: The World of a Mid-Eighteenth-Century Egyptian Official, Oxford 2013, p.100, with further references.

The text of P. Bal. 186 is worth quoting in its entirety: ‘I greet and salute the sweetness of you the dear lord and brother. I rejoiced greatly when I found my brother (πρῶθε) the deacon Johannes coming to you, and I wrote greeting you the dear brother until I see you and my joy be complete, since I am delayed. For I came away from you saying there is no delay to come south, we are asking the pagarch concerning you, that he should release you. Then when we had come north, the archon (ἄρχων) came north to Apotheke and we did not find the means to come south another time. And so that you do not say in your heart, I have forgotten to [buy (?)] the bread […] together […] I being in custody with you, I being smitten with sticks. Behold the superior (πρὸς πρῶθε) is saying: I shall come south to the place of Apa Atham for some small occasion and we will beseech him to ask the archon concerning you (σιγίλλαι νὰ ὑπείρασον αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τοῦ ἄρχους τὸ μικρὸν ἐντόθι διὰ τῆς ψυχῆς τῆς ἀργους καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς τοῦ ἄρχους φαίνεται). This one, if he were to ask him concerning you, he would release me (sic). I therefore beseech your fraternity, that you do not continue being troubled, since God knows that you have not sinned in the slander which has been cast upon you, and he has not permitted this evil to happen to you. But if (?) some other matter has happened to us in our littleness, we do not know it. God has desired that he should give this small […] that he should […] These I am writing, I greet the sweetness of your fraternity. We shall fare well in the Lord. Behold fifteen double loaves I have sent to you.’

Cf. Kahl, P. Bal., n. 6 at p. 598: ‘In view of what follows it seems probable that Apa Atham is a person here, and not a place name. Atham presumably stands for the name Adam’. The identity of Atham, the dweller of Αθᾶμ, is obscure. He is equivalent of Greek τοάς and can refer to a monastery or another religious establishment; in such case, however, we would expect the name to refer to patron saint of the place, rather than an actual person asked for intercession. The place of Apa Atham is most probably to be understood simply as the place of residence of the individual, or his workplace, as in the case of P. Bal. 187, which features ‘the place of the emir’, i.e. the pagarch (ll. 10–11), where a letter was supposed to be handed; in this case, we are dealing with the pagarch’s office. For ἵνα τοάς in monastic context, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 290–291.

Cf. Drew-Bear, Le monie hermopolite, p. 103.

of the government to assure its holder freedom of travel outside his place of residence. The addressees of *P. Bal.* 239—high-ranking monks of the community—are asked to request such a safe-conduct for Shenoute. The document speaks of *dapane* and *demosion*, as one of the requirements for obtaining a safe-conduct was a clean record at pagarch’s office, it is possible that the taxes are mentioned to assure the addressees of Shenoute’s proper discharge of fiscal obligations. The question remains: in what capacity were the monks asked to file a formal request to an official in the name of a man from the Hermopolite nome? Did Shenoute work for the monastery, farm its land, or simply ask influential people for protection?

We can see that dealings with officials could be effectuated through correspondence. However, *P. Bal.* 186 points to the importance of personal contacts in handling various affairs, and, again, emphasises the significance of the monks’ mobility. Quite unsurprisingly, the people we see communicating in one way or the other with lay functionaries belonged to high strata of the community. However, relations were established and maintained not only with representatives of lay administrative apparatus, nor were they the exclusive domain of monastic functionaries. Letters and other documents allow us to gain insight into connections between other members of the community of Apa Apollo and laypeople. On the other hand, the correspondence, which frequently refers to travel, elucidates another aspect of monastic life, already hinted at in connection with official contacts: the mobility of monks in ‘the world’.

5.2. Business and family—monks of the Bala’izah monastery and their connections with laypeople

As we have already seen, the monks of Bala’izah possessed assets of their own and could engage in financial transactions with their own monastery as its creditors. Some among Bala’izah documents, categorised by Kahle as receipts, feature monastic figures involved in transactions with people who do not appear to have belonged to the community. *P. Bal.* 124 is a receipt for four solidi issued by Zacharias son of Mena from an unknown *epoikion* near the village Tmoumer to brother Samuel. The reason why Samuel had to pay such a considerable sum to Zacharias is unknown, as the document does not refer to any prior arrangements between the two men; the

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63 *P. Bal.* 124, II. 1–3: ‘I Zacharias the son of the late Mena from the *epoikion* Hr[.]feesh of the field of Tmoumer, I am writing to my brother Samuel’ (Δηοκ ζαχαρίας ήπειρ πηλαρκος ηνήλ προ πανστήριον νηρ[.]θηορ εποικιον εργαλη ηπικον σαμουλι). The document indicates that the custom of calling monks ‘(my) brother’ (πανστήριον) was not restricted to the monastic milieu and that the word was perhaps treated as technical term for a monk. Tmoumer was a village located perhaps in the Antinoite nome (see Drew-Bear, *Le nome hermpolite*, p. 114; Timm, *Ägypten*, vol. VI, pp. 2710–2711; see also Crum in *Gizeh and Rifeh* [cit. n. 1], p. 41).

64 In fact, the total sum paid by Samuel could perhaps amount to as much as four and a half solidi. The text reads: ‘as regards (?) <the> half solidus which is from you, behold four solidi have come into my possession this day,
transaction between them could have been, for instance, a loan or a deed of sale. If the former is true, we would be dealing with one of rare cases of monks owing money to laypeople. P. Bal. 127 is another document in which one of the parties was a man from the village Tmoumer (l. 1: ΠΑΝΩΝ ΝΑΜΕ ΝΑΥΜΠΡ ΝΠΙΤΛΟΥ ΝΠΙΝΟΙΟΥ ΝΠΙΟΝΙΟΥ). The man from Tmoumer appears in the very first line of the text, but if we assume that whose upper section is broken off, followed the usual pattern ΔΟΚ ΝΗ ΕΠΙΚΑ ΝΗ, it would appear that he was the addressee, not the issuer of the receipt, as the very next line proceeds to the sum (ἹΙΕΤ ἩΡΟΛΟΚΟΤΙΙ ὩΛ[.]Υ) ἩΣΤΕΠΗΜΟΝΗΣ; ‘ten solidi of gold for their satisfaction’). The docket on the verso mentions ΝΑΚΩΝ Iohannes (ΤΑΣΦΑΛΑΝ ΝΑΚΩΝ ΝΙ[.]ΛΙΝΗΝ). The sum mentioned in the document is, again, extraordinarily large, and the transaction behind the document cannot be reconstructed. A considerable sum of money is mentioned in P. Bal. 214, a letter from an unknown sender to ‘the men of (the monasteries of) Apa Apollo and Jeremias’ (l. 1: ἩΠΑΙΩΝ ἩΜΙΝΑΠΟΕ ΝΗ ΙΕΡΕΝΙΑΣ). The writer warns the monks: ‘now do not give money to him from the eight solidi which are with you’. Dispatch of an unknown sum by a woman is mentioned further on: ‘Now behold the money [which (?)] she sent […].’ The text, unfortunately, is badly damaged, but still bears testimony to the scale of financial transactions in the monastery; however, deprived of a part of the opening formula we cannot be sure whether the recipients were addressed privately or as representatives of their communities.

Relations were established not only within the economic framework. The presence of a marriage contract, P. Bal. 152, in the monastery can be explained only if we assume familial ties between one of the parties and a resident of the monastery. The opening sentence of the document reads: ‘I, Biktor, the son of Makare the presbyter, and his mother Tekroompe, and Iohannes his elder brother, in the monastery of the holy Apa Apollo in the nome of the town

which is the sixteenth day of Paoni (?).’ In his n. 3 at p. 533 of P. Bal. Kahle comments: ‘The passage is extremely difficult; I can only suggest that Samuel had paid half a solidus and was then told to pay four solidi which are now received’.

Cf. P. Mon. Epiph. 92 (‘I, Hello it is, the humblest monk (?) that dwell in the dwelling of Apa Epiphanius, do write (unto) John and Abraham, the traders, of the Epoikion’); here also the borrowed sum is considerable, amounting to seven gold solidi. Monks borrowed money more frequently from other monks; see Markiewicz, ‘The church, clerics, monks’ (cit. n. 43), tables at pp. 197–202.

In line 3, the document mentions Iohannes, son of the late NN. We do not know if he is to be identified with the monk Io(annes) mentioned on the verso (cf. P.Palau-Rib. inv. 354, where the debtor, Pekosh, is mentioned without the monastic designation ΝΑΚΩΝ in body of the document, but bears it in the subscription on the verso; see A. Delattre & M. J. Albarrán, ‘Un contrat de prêt copite du monastère d’apa Apollô à Baouît conservé à la collection Palau-Ribes’, B-ASP 52 (2015), pp. 79–85), the man from Tmoumer, or other participant of the transaction (perhaps a witness, as he is mentioned towards the end of the document).

The salutation formula, ‘peace to you and your all-holy fathers’ (ll. 1–2: ΤΕΙΡΙΗ ΤΙΡΙΑ ΝΗ ΝΗΝ ΠΑΝΑΓΙ[.]ΟΗ] ΝΗΘΟΙ[.]Ε is not decisive for the addressees’ identification as people from the outside of the circle of monastic superiors; as we have seen, the designation ‘fathers’ could be used in honorific rather than technical manner (see above, p. 273–274). The fact that the letter is addressed jointly to people from the monasteries of Apa Apollo and Apa Jeremias points to links—perhaps of administrative or fiscal nature—between the two communities.
The monastery was the place where the deed was drawn up in the presence of Biktor’s family, perhaps after obtaining the father’s blessing. Makare would then have been entrusted with the document for safekeeping. This reconstruction is merely conjectural, but another document, P. Bal. 245, gives a more straightforward indication of how the monks were involved—or were expected to be involved—in the affairs of their families in ‘the world’. The text is a letter addressed to a monk named Mone by his father and his mother; greetings from Mone’s daughter are also passed in the opening sentence. The parents explain their inability to visit Mone due to the illness first of the mother, then of the father. The most interesting part comes right afterwards, with the imperative, ‘Write! Give your daughter to your mother, since you know that this young boy is wicked and your mother and she have been suffering’. Mone’s daughter appears to have become entangled in an unfortunate relationship, which Mone is expected to put an end to by restoring the daughter to her grandmother’s care.

Mone’s father appears to have been involved in business affairs with his son’s fellow monks. The letter mentions a ‘solidus’ worth of wheat for the brother […]. Interestingly, another letter from an individual to a monk, this time pertaining to fiscal affairs, P. Bal. 244, also mentions Mone and was also sent by a man and a woman. The senders introduce themselves as Phoibammon and Maroou; in their lengthy greetings which encompass the whole community (l. 6: παλος τηροῦ) Phoibammon includes also ‘Mone my son for he is your [i.e. the main addressee’s] own son’ (l. 7: ἡμεν παθηρε χε πικομηρε). The main subject of the document is an entagion, sent with the letter as an

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68 Monks could be entrusted with documents of their family members; the best example in the examined material is P. Naqlun II 22, a contract documenting a loan taken by a son of a monk of monastery Pyrgon from another monk residing in monastery Kothau in the ‘mountain of the cells’, that is, the Naqlun monastery. Both Tower and Kothau were subdivisions of the Naqlun laura, and it was probably the debtor’s father who introduced his son to the creditor (see above, Chapter 3, p. 142).

69 P. Bal. 245, l. 1: ‘First of all we greet our dear son Mone with all our heart and your daughter greets you heartily’ ( showc ην προε ην τιανης εεπεηρητη νομηρε νομεν επεηρητη ηπρη τηρον νομεν επεηρητη ηπρη ηπρη ηπρη ηπρη ηπρη); verso, ll. 15–16: ‘Give it to my dear son Mone from his father and his mother’ (ταλος επεηρητη νομηρε νομεν επεηρητη νομεν επεηρητη νομεν επεηρητη νομεν επεηρητη ην τηροῦ). One possible interpretation of this sentence is that Phoibammon was Mone’s biological father, while the addressee of the letter was his spiritual overseer in the community.
It appears that an *entagion* of one of the monks had been delivered to his place of origin rather than his current monastic dwelling, and was duly sent to the monastery via an intermediary from the village. Is it possible to identify Phoibammon, Marou and Mone with the family from *P. Bal. 244*? If yes—and I believe that such solution is very probable—we would be witnessing an interesting case of a monk’s family in ‘the world’ acting as intermediaries for their son’s colleagues. The opening formula of *P. Bal. 244* is interesting, as it is not only Phoibammon who salutes his addressees in it; other people: men, women, and children, also pass their greetings through Phoibammon. It seems that the circle of the monks’ acquaintances at the place of Phoibammon’s residence encompassed more people than just him and his kin. Among them, Phoibammon played the active part, contacting the monks, passing them messages, and making business with them. The two letters under scrutiny point to an important element of monastic reality: when a person was joining a monastery, what he brought to the community was not only his religious zeal and his assets, but also his ‘social capital’: the sum of connections that could prove useful or profitable not only to himself, but also to his fellow monks.

The monks not only relied on external contacts, but were also used to staying outside their monastery on business. Other circumstances could also force a community member to stay in ‘the world’; the best documented case in Bala’izah dossier is Shenoute, the author and co-author of four letters (*P. Bal. 188, 189, 190, and 191*). *P. Bal. 188* shows Shenoute in trouble: he had left the monastery because of unclear disciplinary issues and was asking for readmission, on condition that he would be treated in the same way as the rest of the monks. He had been prevented from returning to the monastery by ‘cares of the *ousia*’ (ll. 7–8: ἡρῴον ἔντοιχο). Some people with whom he was in touch while staying outside the monastery had warned him that after the return to the monastery he may be subject to inferior treatment, which he was clearly unable to accept. It might be that he had occupied a prominent position in the

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71 *P. Bal. 244*, ll. 8–10: ‘and that (?) you may search after […] since I have received his receipt (*ἐντάγιον*) from him for him (?) […] And behold I have sent the receipt […]’ ( timespec ne[ίς] – [-] επι[ν] ἐνεπενετεῖν[αι ὑπὸ] ἡρῴον ἔντοιχον αὐτοῦ ἐν[ […]]] ἡρῴον ἔντοιχον [η] […]]] ἡρῴον ἔντοιχον [η] […]].

72 Originally, Shenoute’s correspondence could have been more extensive; see *P. Bal.*, pp. 614–615 for four very small fragments of letters by the same scribe.

73 The text, again, merits an in extenso quote: ‘[…] I know—I, this sinner and disobedient (one)—that I transgressed all the commandments which you commanded me and I am guilty in every sin. I [wrote (?)], therefore, because you told me as I was going away from you, saying: Come south at (the fixed (?) time and prostrate yourself upon our (deceased) fathers. The cares of the *ousia* did not let me come; and, what is more, if I come again, I shall be seized for even some care of the monastery as they are advising me here. And if you will give me a promise by God, and I am permitted (to come) into [my] dwelling place like all the people, I shall come south; if not, it is not possible for me to dwell (?) within the boundaries of the monastery. Now, whether north or south, I adjure you by God, that you do not cast me out from you in your prayers. And if you need anything at all in the need of the body, tell us; and if the monastery needs anything within our power, tell us concerning it; we will not be
community prior to his troubles. This point can be further proven by Shenoute’s statement that should the addressee(s) or the monastery need to obtain or achieve anything within his powers, he would do whatever he could to arrange the matters.\footnote{P. Bal. 188, ll. 15–18: _άγιον ἐξηγεὶν τετεχρὶς ἀλλὰς πρὸς ἐνθερμάτωσις οὐκ θανὼν άγιον ἀγῶν ἐργαληθεὶς(θη)(θῃ)ν ἀρχὴν οὐράνια κατὰ τελευτὴν τίμων ἐρωθηνενήτωτα._} The enigmatic mention of the _ousia_ Shenoute had been taking care of requires commentary. Kahle assumed that Shenoute ‘was working for some village and probably had contracted to work for it for a definite period of time’. However, I cannot recall any monks contracted as workers on lay estates; thus, it is probably safer to assume that the _ousia_ was either Shenoute’s private property, or the monastery’s land. We know that Shenoute was sometimes acting as the monastery’s agent. In _P. Bal._ 189, addressed by Shenoute to ‘his lords and fathers’ (l. 2: _νεκτορική ὁμοιότε_, he is sending money received from some people, perhaps as a pious offering.\footnote{P. Bal. 223 speaks of some losses a monk and the addressee had suffered while being away from the monastery. The addressee, ‘the most holy dear lord (and) holy father Apa NN’ (verso, l. 12: _ῥοσιο(τατος) πνευτική νικοβίτιες ετούχας ἀ[πα]_]—thus perhaps a senior figure in the monastery—is asked to dispatch Ouenober (the later superior?) and another person to help the sender in his predicament. Again, the sender appears to have written his letter from a location north of the monastery.\footnote{P. Bal. 249 contains a puzzling mention of a horse brought to the monastery, too}$)$}

Information about other monastic agents is scattered in letters of the dossier. In _P. Bal._ 215, written by _καὶ_ Apa Kyre, we read of someone who ‘came north in the business of the monastery with Apa Severos, [… Apa] Ter and Apa Shounte’ (ll. 3–4: _ἐπεὶ ἠταχεὶς ἐχθρὸν ἔνας ἕνωπος ἡμοιον(το)ν ἐποιεὶς Διαὶς Μεγαλοίς ἑταῖροι συνήκοις οὐκ ἠμέτρητος._) Further, behold half a solidus [I have received] from Pamoun and George [… the presbyter] is the scribe and witness of a loan contract, _P. Bal._ 189, ll. 21–25: ‘Further, behold half a solidus [I have received] from Pamoun and George […] church for its wheat […] its wine we will send to [you …]’ (ἐναποι ἲς ὑποπρέπεις μέσο[ν τις ιδιοτίς ἱλαρος ἵνα γεωργ[ε]ς τεκτελεῖ κεντηροφόρος ἀρτάρσιν κενοῦ ἀν][] περιεπι μακανοφοιος νομίζω).\footnote{All three names are otherwise attested in the dossier: Apa Shenoute can be the Shenoute of _P. Bal._ 188–191; Apa Ter the presbyter is the scribe and witness of a loan contract, _P. Bal._ 116 (l. 24: _ἄνω οἰκτήρ πεντακρακο(γέιτερος) κερδα ἀγοράς ἀγωνία[ν][_] [κατά]_; Apa Severos is an intermediary of a payment in _P. Bal._ 291 (ll. 13–14).}$)\footnote{P. Bal. 223, l. 2: ‘for when we were about to come south we went up to Mansabes’ (ἐναὶ ἄγιον ἐπάνω εἰς τὴν ἐναποι ἐναὶ ἄγιον ἀγωνίω περιαπειναίω ἐναὶ ἄγιον ἀγωνίω περιαπειναίω).\footnote{P. Bal. 191; Apa Severos is an intermediary of a payment in _P. Bal._ 291 (ll. 13–14).}$)\footnote{P. Bal. 223, l. 2: ‘for when we were about to come south we went up to Mansabes’ (ἐναὶ ἄγιον ἐπάνω εἰς τὴν ἐναποι ἐναὶ ἄγιον ἀγωνίω περιαπειναίω ἐναὶ ἄγιον ἀγωνίω περιαπειναίω).\footnote{P. Bal. 191; Apa Severos is an intermediary of a payment in _P. Bal._ 291 (ll. 13–14).}$}
obscure to allow for interpretation that would go beyond mere guesswork (see above, p. 276 with n. 38). The writer wants to communicate news to Apa Isaak and Apa Ammone—whose names, again, can be connected with Bala’izah functionaries—and promises to ‘come south and pray’ (l. 4: ωἰκεὶ ἐρής ταῦτα), and ‘send the young (or: small) camel south with the brethren’ (l. 11: ὅχληνοος πικοῦ ὑδοὺς ἐρής ἕν ηκη[ν]).

Dispersed though they are, these testimonies do provide us with some interesting details. Some among the people mentioned in the documents—either as addressees or persons travelling outside the monastery in business—recur in other texts in administrative capacities. Monastic elite appears to have been considerably mobile, but, apart from few cases, the reasons for which monks were leaving the monastery, remain obscure. Travel was necessary to manage the community’s property in an efficient manner (perhaps it was during such journeys that monastic representatives collected rents from the monastery’s tenants), and some matters were best dealt with in person (cf. P. Bal. 215). While staying away from Bala’izah, community members received various products and sums of money (P. Bal. 191: bread; P. Bal. 189: money, perhaps wheat and wine), some of which were pious offerings (P. Bal. 189); they were duly forwarded to the monastery through the letter-carriers. Our material is often too fragmentary to allow us to distinguish private business of the monks from the affairs of the monastery. At least in one case, P. Bal. 223, we see that the authority of an envoy dispatched by a senior monk was to be used to the benefit of a particular monk who had suffered a loss (see above). The monastery as an institution had its agents; community members were either dealing with their affairs on their own (like Shenoute in P. Bal. 189 if we assume that the ousia that engaged him so much was his own estate, or monks striking various financial deals which resulted in drawing up the Bala’izah receipts), or relied on people from ‘the world’, (like the monks mentioned in P. Bal. 244 and 245, with their ties to the sender of these two letters).

Another interesting element that can be gathered from the dossier is the fact that the interests and contacts of the monastery and its monks were clearly northward-oriented. One of the recurring motives in Bala’izah letters is the journey south planned or attempted by either monks staying in business in locations north of the monastery or laypeople from northern locations, and sometimes hindered by inconvenient circumstances. In most of the cases the only geographical reference we get is to the cardinal points. More precise references mention Tmoumer in the Antinoite nome (in two receipts dealing with financial transactions, P. Bal. 124 and 127), and Pmansabes north of Hermopolis (in a letter describing journey of community members, P. Bal. 223). Hermopolite locations appear in P. Bal. 291, where plots of land for which

Crum suggests to identify Mansabes with Mansafis north of Hermopolis (see Kahle, P. Bal., p. 651); people originating from Pmansabes appear as witnesses in P. Lond. IV 1619 (ὁμολογία from 710).
the monastery was fiscally responsible are mentioned, while Shenoute of Esou, also in the Hermopolite nome, asks high-ranking community members for intercession with authorities (P. Bal. 239).

The Hermopolite connection brings to mind an issue which I have not addressed so far, although it is connected with the organisational structure of the monastery. In the chapter devoted to Wadi Sarga I have discussed the hypothetical congregation with the centre in Bawit to which, according to Renate Dekker, the monastery of Apa Apollo could belong. Dekker’s argument is based on the presence of archimandrites in the Bala’izah monastery; however, as I have stated above (see Chapter 5, pp. 246–247), there is no reason to think that in Middle Egyptian reality the title was connected exclusively with the Bawit monastery of Apa Apollo. Other factors, however, point to similarities between the two establishments. First, in both institutions we find groups of monks concerned with fiscal issues (fiscality was one of the spheres of operation of Bala’izah boethoi and the more specialised ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ at Bawit). Second, one testimony (P. Bal. 253) suggests that the Bala’izah monastery was involved in the collection of aparche, which was an important element of Bawit administrative system. P. Mon. Apollo 11, a Bawit document related to aparche, mentions two monasteries: of Apa Anoup and Apa Jeremias; monks of Jeremias’s monastery are addressed along with Bala’izah monks in P. Bal. 214. Finally—and here we come to the point that brought about the present excursus in the first place—at least a part of the economic basis of the Bala’izah monastery seems to have been located in the Hermopolite nome. I am well aware of the weak points of these examples: the development of similar administrative, and, especially, fiscal apparatus could have occurred parallel in two unrelated institutions in response to a uniform governmental system; the mention of aparche in the Bala’izah dossier lacks sufficient context; there was more than one monastery of Apa Jeremias in Egypt; finally, monastic estates were frequently scattered around more than one nome and we are not even certain how significant a part of Bala’izah estate was in the Hermopolite nome. I am therefore very careful while speaking of a link between the two communities, which—if it existed at all—might have been a result not necessarily of their being united in one congregation, but perhaps of some nuances of their history we are—and maybe will always be—unable to reconstruct.

In this and the following tables translations of the entries after Kahle's edition, with minor modifications.

A special maintenance payment for Muslim officials?

Kahle refrains from proposing an unequivocal interpretation of the word σικος.

The latter recurs in P. Bal. 362.

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**Table 2. Extract from P. BAL. 290**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Intermediary</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 Pauni, 6th ind.</td>
<td>γρήγορα of the monks</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dapane of the same indication</td>
<td>these same persons (ηπροδοτον)</td>
<td>2 solidi (?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane of the Almounein</td>
<td>ηπροδοτον</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the wage of (?) [...] (ζανβεκε σικος)</td>
<td>ηπροδοτον</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the wage of the craftsmen who are on the sea (ζανβεκε ιετεκτης ετηθωλας)</td>
<td>through them again (ςιτωτωγ ον)</td>
<td>1/6 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Pauni, 6th ind.</td>
<td>the poll-tax of the monks (Διαγραφων ηενον(α)Χ(ος))</td>
<td>Achillites the deacon and Petros the doctor (ιατρος)</td>
<td>15 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane</td>
<td>through him (ιις) again (ςιτωτωγ ον)</td>
<td>2 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane of the Almounein</td>
<td>through these same persons</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Pauni, 6th ind.</td>
<td>the poll-tax of the monks</td>
<td>Achillites and Mena the priest and Lampou (Δξυλλαγθης) (λυω) ηενων(α) πρε(σβυτερος) (λυω) λαμη(ογι)</td>
<td>15 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane</td>
<td>through him again (ςιτωτωγ ον)</td>
<td>3 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane of the Almounein</td>
<td>through these same persons</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Mesore, 6th ind.</td>
<td>the poll-tax of the monks</td>
<td>Apollo the cleaner and Petros (απολλω πραετ (λυω) πετρος)</td>
<td>15 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane</td>
<td>through them again (ςιτωτωγ ον)</td>
<td>2 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane of the Almounein</td>
<td>through them again</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Phaophi, 6th ind.</td>
<td>the poll-tax of the monks</td>
<td>Apa Hlo (Hello) and Petros</td>
<td>8 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane</td>
<td>through them again (ςιτωτωγ ον)</td>
<td>1 ½ solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane of the Almounein</td>
<td>through them again</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for wheat (ςαυων)</td>
<td>through them again</td>
<td>½ solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Hathyr, 6th ind.</td>
<td>the dapane</td>
<td>Achillites and Petros</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the dapane of the Almounein</td>
<td>through them again (ςιτωτωγ ον)</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>[through them again (?)]</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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79 In this and the following tables translations of the entries after Kahle's edition, with minor modifications.
80 A special maintenance payment for Muslim officials?
81 Kahle refrains from proposing an unequivocal interpretation of the word σικος.
82 The latter recurs in P. Bal. 362.
### Table 3. Extract from P. Bal. 291 (Expenses and Fiscal Payments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Intermediary/payer</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the land-tax (δημόσιον) of Pektes</td>
<td>through Mena from Pektes</td>
<td>1 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for rope for Pateron’</td>
<td>through Apa Petros the superior and Thomas the deacon</td>
<td>1 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the freight of the ferry-boat of the nome of Antinoou</td>
<td>through Apa Petros the superior and Thomas the deacon</td>
<td>1/24 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the receipt of some money from Sioout</td>
<td>through Lampou the deacon</td>
<td>2/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poll-tax of deacon Pkol</td>
<td>through deacon Pkol</td>
<td>½ solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the horse-doctor from Sioout (γαλενός θέρατου)</td>
<td>through papa Theodoros and Onophrios (the son of) Palan</td>
<td>1/6 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the rest of the land-tax (δημόσιον) of Tohe</td>
<td>Theodoros the fisherman (παρέκκλισις κοιμητηρίου)</td>
<td>1 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for clover from Nerebe</td>
<td>through the brother Theodorus the fisherman (παρέκκλισις κοιμητηρίου)</td>
<td>1 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the occasion (προφάσις) of the carpenter</td>
<td>through Achillites the deacon, and Apa Hello, and Mena (the son of) Biktor</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the watchman’s wage (Ιωακείμ)</td>
<td>Markos and Athanasios from the mount of Tahnout (Μάρκος και Αθανάσιος της Ιωακείμ) through Apa Severos</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[…] the date-seller</td>
<td>Apa Jeremias for […] through Hello (?) the priest (?) (παρέκκλισις κοιμητηρίου)</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the corn-tax in barley of Pshonte (παρέκκλισις κοιμητηρίου)</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for wine from Nerebe (ἐν πηρόπια)</td>
<td>through Mena (?)</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gap and three fragmentary entries

| the land-tax (δημόσιον) of Tohe | through Lampou the deacon | ½ 1/3 solidus |
| for wine for the prosphora | through Pader the priest | 2/3 solidus |
| for […] from Sioout | through George the deacon | 1/3 solidus |
| for the synetheia (?) of the soldiers (συνοικία < [ ] >) Mena toto | through Helias boethos | 2/3 solidus |
| for wine […] | through Apa Helias | ½ 1/3 solidus |
| for the receipt of four solidi | through Lampou the deacon | 1/8 solidus |
Kahle translates in this place ‘Apollo the eunuch’, without excluding the opportunity that Psiour can be treated as a personal name; thus M. Hasitzka, ‘Namen in koptischen dokumentarischen Texten’ accessible at https://www.onb.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF_Download/1_PAP_kopt_namen.pdf, s.v. ‘ⲯⲓⲟⲩⲣ’.

### Table 4. Extract from P. Bal. 292 (Expenses and Fiscal Payments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Intermediary</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘for the fare of the deacon Petros and Ouenerober as far as Tkema[...]’</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(gyptan hierakon(roc) petros nh ouenerober qa tkm[    ]l)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Thoth, 10th indiction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the land-tax (δημόσιον) of […]</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the land-tax (δημόσιον) of Tohe</td>
<td>through him again (ϣⲩⲟⲟⲩⲩ ⲥⲟⲛ)</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[the land-tax of (?) Tohe]</td>
<td>through Achillites the deacon</td>
<td>½ ¼ solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(?) for us</td>
<td>through him again</td>
<td>¼ solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for the fare of […]</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the land-tax (δημόσιον) of Pamaotos</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
<td>not preserved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5. Extract from P. Bal. 293 (Expenses and Fiscal Payments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Intermediary</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the deacon Severos for chreos (of the monastery)</td>
<td>through Apa Helias</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo son of Kyros for his andrismos</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamoun from Pepsone for his andrismos</td>
<td>through Diometes</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apa Diometes for chreos of the monastery</td>
<td>through Achillites and Apa Psha, and Petros the deacon, and Ellotos</td>
<td>4 2/3 solidi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremias son of Labes for his andrismos</td>
<td>through Apa Phoka</td>
<td>1 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apa Johannes from Lahmef for chreos (of the monastery)</td>
<td>through Apa Phoka</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apa Isaak and Theodoros for chreos (of the monastery)</td>
<td>not stated</td>
<td>2/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apa Kyri and Zacharias son of Pekrok for chreos (of the monastery)</td>
<td>through Apa Johannes</td>
<td>1 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johannes and Philotheos his brother for their andrismos</td>
<td>through Apa Joseph</td>
<td>1 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Markos for his andrismos</td>
<td>through Diometes</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph the shoemaker for chreos (of the monastery)</td>
<td>through Panikyros</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo son of Psiour(^3)</td>
<td>through Thomas the deacon</td>
<td>1/3 solidus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^3\) Kahle translates in this place ‘Apollo the eunuch’, without excluding the opportunity that Psiour can be treated as a personal name; thus M. Hasitzka, ‘Namen in koptischen dokumentarischen Texten’ accessible at https://www.onb.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF_Download/1_PAP_kopt_namen.pdf, s.v. ‘ⲯⲓⲟⲩⲣ’.  

295
The six case studies presented above allowed us to look at monastic communities from various viewpoints. As I have stated in the introduction, some overarching themes appear in almost all of the dossiers I investigated. The present section will be devoted to a discussion of these themes and, hopefully, will indicate how the perspective adopted in this work contributes to our better understanding of the monastic movement as such. These final remarks constitute an attempt to propose a synthetic sketch of some of the phenomena that are visible in the investigated material. I am well aware, however, that with a material so diversified I will not always be able to present a developed, diachronic picture. This problem is all too well known to scholars working with the papyri; still, it should not prevent us from finding analogies and cross-explanations for the problems encountered while reading the papyri.

The questions which will be addressed in the present section concern the representation of monastic communities, the development of administrative structures in the monasteries, various forms of reliance of monks and monasteries on laypeople and vice versa, and the nature of the connections between the lay and the monastic world as reflected in the documents. Each of the dossiers contributes to our understanding of these problems to a different extent and in a different way. When put together, however, they allow for discerning some general patterns.

1. The Middle Egyptian monasteries: representation and community structures

While looking at the issue of monastic representation in the relations with laypeople, we need to discern the levels on which it worked. On one hand, there was representation in legal contexts: the people entitled to act on behalf of a community when concluding legal deeds. On the other, we have the representation in everyday contacts, which engaged people involved mainly in managerial and business affairs, who actually travelled the countryside, organised work, and collected money and agricultural produce on behalf of their communities. The two functions could in reality overlap, as the ‘formal’ representatives and the administrators all belonged to the circle of people responsible for the communities in the economic and fiscal aspect of their functioning.

This is not a place to explore the details of legal representation of the monasteries and connected problems (e.g. the meaning of the term dikaios in the documents); some general remarks, however, will not be out of place. As we could observe in the legal deeds among our papyri, the
communities were usually represented by an individual bearing one of the titles associated with the head of a monastery (*proestor*; frequently *archimandrite*), often assisted by a ‘secondary’ representative: an *oikonomos*, a monastic delegate without additional titles, or a lay administrator. Only in Bala’izah we observe the involvement of an entire group of monks—the ‘senior brethren’ or ‘senior sons’—in legal representation (*P. Bal.* 102, 103, and 108). The ‘double’ representation as reflected in the Aphroditan papyri allows us to observe a phenomenon which may have been connected with administrative strategies of monastic absentee landowners: in documents related to local, Aphroditan land leases, the monasteries of Smine and Apa Shenoute are represented by their heads and additional representatives (*P. Lond.* V 1690; *P. Ross. Georg.* III 48). In the Smine-related documents which record either permanent change in the monastery’s state of possession (*P. Lond.* V 1686) or pertain to local, Panopolite leases (*P. Cairo Masp.* I 67170), the monastery is represented only by its head. The ‘double’ representation may thus reflect a reality in which absentee monastic landowners assigned the external pieces of their property to the care of regional representatives, empowered to perform all actions necessary from the managerial point of view, such as leasing the parcels out and handling rent payments. In one case, we have reasons to suspect that an analogous solution was applied to a lay-administered monastery of Apa Agenios located in the Small Apollonopolite nome (*PSI* VIII 933—beginning of a land lease (?); see Chapter 2, p. 98). If Promaos and Mousaios—two monks attested in *P. Aphrod. Reg.* making tax payments for the communities of Apa Zenobios and the Smine monastery—can be interpreted as such local representatives, we may assume that this group of monks was active also in another formal context: the discharge of fiscal obligations for landholdings within their sphere of responsibility (see Chapter 2, pp. 101–102 and below, pp. 307–308).

Other documents reveal also the existence of people involved in various manners in the management of their monasteries’ property in the *chora*. These ‘field managers’ of monastic communities were in the forefront of the relations with laypeople, and their tasks were as varied as the necessities of the rural life. Sometimes we find them overseeing work on monastic estates (Pamoun in *P. Köln aegypt.* II 41, making preparations for the vintage; Joseph in *P. Köln aegypt.* II 43, trying to secure grain for sowing; both documents are from the Bawit dossier; the unknown sender of *P. Bal.* 259 overseeing work for which a palm-leaf picker was necessary). In *P. Brux. Bawit* 15, we find two *dioiketai* of the nome of Antinoe, Apa Ioannes and Apa Kosma; no hint is provided as to their scope of responsibility, but their title points to their engagement as regional administrators on behalf of the monastery. Some of the local *dioiketai* lived in the place where their assignment was located; this was the case of a hapless *dioiketes* of the Smine monastery in Aphroditio, whose house was ravaged by the people of the pagarch Menas (*P. Cairo Masp.* I 67021). A very particular
group of ‘field representatives’ of the monastery was constituted by the Bawit *aparche*-collectors (see above, Chapter 4, pp. 159–160). It appears that they were supposed to travel to the places assigned to them for the collection of rent-tax and additional payments; they were temporary representatives (our documents show us arrangements for *aparche*-collection for single indictional years), who needed introduction by their superior (see *P. Mon. Apollo* 17). A number of other documents show us people whose managerial responsibilities are unclear, but who evidently travelled the *chora* on monastic business (*P. Bal.* 215; *P. Bal.* 223). The majority of the mentions of these agents and managers are found in correspondence, most of which comes from the Bawit and Bala’izah dossiers. On one hand, this is a major disadvantage, as the letters inform us only cursory about the matters the agents were dealing with, and dismiss with the titles of the persons involved (hence our inability to determine if the ‘field agents’ occupied fixed positions in monastic hierarchies). On the other hand, the source-base itself points to the crucial role of written communication in the management of monastic affairs—another proof of the importance of literacy for the monastic milieu.

It is possible to sketch a profile of monastic representatives and managers as depicted in our documentation. In letters we see them communicating with the ‘headquarters’ from afar, hence the impression that mobility was one of the key features of this group. It is a pity that the organisation and logistics of their voyages are unknown; we would expect monasteries to provide their representatives with means for travel and sustenance, but no documents exist to confirm this assumption. This mobility of monastic representatives must have been a known and expected characteristic of the milieu, as attested by *P. Naqln 39* [= *P. Gascou 29*], where a head of the Naqlun community is politely but firmly requested to come to the Fayumic village of Oxyrhyncha and stay there until a problem is solved (see Chapter 3, pp. 148–149). The range of these travels is frequently unknown, but we may assume that most of them were effectuated within the boundaries of a nome or between neighbouring nomes. The representatives of one monastery—the Oxyrhynchite Apa Hierax—travelled to Constantinople on more than one occasion (see *P. Oxy.* LXIII 4397).

We are able to say something about the status of some among the functionaries we encounter in the documentation (even though they constitute a minority). The Bawit *aparche*-collectors must have had enough means to shoulder fiscal responsibilities of their monastery (see Chapter 4, pp. 181–182). Apa Ammone of the monastery of Deir el-Bala’izah is attested lending money to his own monastery (*P. Bal.* 103); he also functioned as at least temporary head of the community (cf. *P. Bal.* 100; 159; perhaps also 190). Another monk of the same community, Helias, appears in the documents as a moneylender, *boethos* (executive functionary charged, among others, with fiscal duties), and superior of the monastery (*P. Bal.* 110, 135, 291, 317). Little can be said
about the representatives who travelled to Constantinople on behalf of the monastery of Apa Hierax in 545 (P. Oxy. LXIII 4397), but the fact that they were charged with such a mission suggests that they had enough experience and education to cope with the challenges of the capital, where they were supposed to negotiate with members of senatorial aristocracy. However scarce our testimonies concerning monastic representatives are, wherever we learn anything about them or are able to guess their profile from situational context, they appear to have been people whose material and perhaps also social background, prepared them for efficient activity on behalf of their monastery.

People representing monasteries and working for them in managerial capacities could encounter various problems while discharging their duties; some of our documents shed light on what these problems could have been. When a community did not fulfill properly its obligations towards a lay partner, its representative could fall victim to threats, which could eventually turn into actions in case of non-compliance (cf. the monk Joseph, threatened with imprisonment in P. Köln ägypt. II 43). The letter of introduction for an aparche-collector, P. Mon. Apollo 17, implies that a monastic representative arriving to a certain place to collect payments could expect resistance, or at least lack of goodwill, on the part of the village community. The Aphroditan dossier, on the other hand, shows the grievous consequences of the entanglement of an absentee monastic landowner in a local conflict—the house of a local dioiketes of the Smine monastery is destroyed as a result of an assault of the men of the pagarch Menas (P. Cairo Masp. 1 67021). It appears that monastic representatives enjoyed no immunity from the consequences of their communities’ actions (or the lack thereof) or of the unfortunate fact of being in a wrong place at a wrong time. This is connected with an observation I already made concerning the position of monastic communities in the world of Aphroditan landowners: the cases of expulsions of monastic landowners from the land as a result of revision of property titles, recorded relatively frequently in the Aphroditan cadastre (SB XX 14669), indicate that the monasteries were subject to the same mechanisms as their lay counterparts. To this evidence we can add also P. Mon. Apollo 25, in which we see a village official involved in supervising an internal monastic transaction (see Chapter 4, pp. 193–194). On the other hand, we see the monastery of Apa Hierax using its position to good effect for securing the satisfaction of their financial claims by the Apions themselves, with virtually no legal grounds to build upon (P. Oxy. LXIII 4397). However, there are more documents to show that in local landowning and social networks the monasteries and their representatives frequently had to yield before justified claims and mechanisms of control designed to bring balance between various actors.
The monastic representatives who counted themselves among the community members functioned within the framework of their monastery’s organisational structure. Each of the monasteries attested in the papyri for which we have enough information on the subject, presents various monastic functionaries charged with tasks which more often than not have to do with property management and circulation of goods.

The literary sources present charismatic spiritual leadership at the heart of the monastic movement; functions and structures concerned with managerial issues emerged in response to the requirements of everyday life. Oikonomoi—the administrative functionaries par excellence—were expected to be people of particular honesty and piety. By necessity, they had to operate between the monastic and the lay world; thus, their behaviour must have been free of all fraud in order not to stain their community’s reputation, and their character strong enough to resist the temptations of ‘the world’.

The beginnings of spiritual leadership in the monasteries attested in our documentary record are largely obscure—with the exception of communities for which we can refer to literary dossiers, such as the Pachomian Smine, the monastery of Apa Shenoute, and the monastery of Apa Zenobios (all mentioned in the Aphroditan documents). The case of Apa Apollo of Bawit is complicated; even though the patron of the monastery can be connected with a hero of literary narratives, the connection between the activity of Apa Apollo in the Hermopolite region and the actual monastery whose ruins are preserved on the kom at Bawit is not straightforward. Apa Thomas of Wadi Sarga was venerated in his monastery (see Chapter 5, p. 239, n. 15), but the initial shape and early history of his community are unknown. The ‘Apionic’ monastery of Abba Andreas could have been originally centred around a saintly monk, whose commemoration day appears to have been a point of reference in the religious calendar of the estate (see P. Oxy. XVI 1911; cf. Chapter 1, pp. 28–29). Two of the Aphroditan monasteries took their names from their otherwise known founders and members of the local elite, Apollos and Sourous. In P. Cairo Masp. I 67110, Sourous is mentioned with the designation ἀββᾶ, indicating the reverence he inspired. The position of Apollos in his monastery is a matter of discussion (see Chapter 2, p. 76 with n. 5); nothing in the documents, however, indicates that either of the founders was in any way venerated in his establishment. As for the beginnings of the monastery of Deir el-Naqlun (called Ὄρος Κέκλων or Ὅγιος Νεκλόνιον in our sources), or monasteries with ‘topographic’ designation (the monastery of Tarouthis in SB XX 14669, Ὅρος of Aphrodito and Ὅρος of Psinabla in the sub-dossier of Count

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1 For oikonomoi, see Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 331–335.
2 See especially Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, pp. 149–150.
Ammonios, or Berky and Prychthis in the Apionic P. Oxy. XVI 1913), we are—and most probably remain—absolutely clueless. Fortunately, we are much better off as far as administrative structures of our communities are concerned, as our sources are either explicit in expounding some of their nuances, or allow for a plausible reconstruction. Our examples differ significantly from the models (anchoritic and cenobitic) known from the literary sources; below, I will allow myself a brief overview of the better-known monastic structures from the documentation.

The Aphroditan community of Apa Apollos was composed of monks inhabiting independent dwellings, whose number was supposed to be restricted. Both the closed character of the community and the manner of its management—by a lay phrontistes Dioskoros—were determined by the founder, Apa Apollos, privately Dioskoros’s father (P. Cairo Masp. I 67096). The key elements of the community’s structure: its shape, the limitations imposed on its development, and the management mode, were pre-determined by the founder. This was most probably the model followed also by other private establishments, which—with the single exception of the monastery of Apa Sourous—are well-hidden in our documentation.

The early, fifth-century history of the Naqlun community is obscure. Papyrological, material, and literary sources allow us to propose a tentative reconstruction of the monastery’s structure. In the 580s–590s, Ὄρος Κέλλων was most probably a conglomerate of hermitages, some of which had separate proestotes (cf. P. Naqlun II 21: proestos of μοναστήριον Πύργου καὶ τοῦ ἅγιου Φοιβάμμωνος; P. Naqlun II 22: μοναστήριον Κωθαυ). Some time around this period, the monastery was inhabited by bishop Nikolaos and his collaborators, of whom one, Apa Hor, is known to us from P. Naqlun I 12. The bishop received gifts and maintained vivid contacts with people of rank outside the monastery (see Chapter 3, pp. 132–137). It is possible that in this period the monastery tightened its contacts with the external world and gained in importance; we also observe that all attestations of administrative functionaries on community level post-date the dossier of Nikolaos. In P. Naqlun 39, we see a ‘managerial panel’ composed of four clergymen, involved in dispute-solving and decision-making; the document is dated to the seventh century. The only technical designation in the description of Naqlun in the Life of Samuel, which is supposed to refer to the late 630s, refers, perhaps symptomatically, to the community’s oikonomos (Life of Samuel 9–10), while no uniform spiritual leadership is mentioned. All types of sources available for the site indicate that the monks of the community led independent lives and were involved in private business activities.

Slightly later, in the seventh–eighth century, the monastery of Apa Apollo at Bawit was a community headed by superior, bearing various designations and sometimes nominated archimandrite. The broad managerial circle of the monastery included oikonomoi (whose scope of responsibility is difficult to determine), various subordinates without determined designation
charged, e.g., with payments and disbursements, and ‘field representatives’ supervising the estate (cf. the abovementioned *P. Köln ägypt.* II 41 and 43). Two ‘special groups’ of functionaries: *aparche*-collectors and the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ are characteristic of Bawit. Monks, some of whom lived in elaborately decorated ‘houses’, were entitled to have private assets which they used, i.a., for providing credit.

The contemporary Bala’izah dossier depicts a community headed by a superior, also here sometimes entitled to use the honorific title of archimandrite. The Bala’izah *oikonomoi* were entirely obscure figures; on the other hand, a group of *boethoi*—literally ‘assistants’—often of clerical status, appears to have played a role in representing the superiors (*P. Bal.* 207) and managing fiscal payments (e.g. *P. Bal.* 132, 135, 136, 145, 147, 149). The Bala’izah legal deeds, recording loans given to the monastery by its monks (*P. Bal.* 103, 106, 110), and other transactions (*P. Bal.* 124 and 157) indicate that the community members, like their Naqlun and Bawit counterparts, had private assets at their disposal. The dossier of Wadi Sarga, dated roughly to the same period, reveals a structure headed by a superior (again, sometimes nominated archimandrite) and managed with the help of *oikonomoi*. Their tasks as attested in the dossier consisted in delivering products and managing the payments. No ‘special’ groups are attested in the Wadi Sarga dossier; this, however, can be a result of the state of preservation of this collection, which is definitely the least varied of all dossiers investigated here. The documents do not preserve any indications of the financial status of individual monks.

Both Bawit and Deir el-Bala’izah present a similar model of community with developed, specialised structures, which at the same time allowed the monks a considerable degree of liberty in pursuing private economic affairs.4 Such individual liberty is observed in the earlier material only in Naqlun (which results from the bias of our sixth-century documentation), where we are dealing with private loans and business correspondence of particular monks. The degree of development of communal structures at Naqlun at the turn of the sixth century is poorly known: a ‘managerial panel’ composed of community members of clerical rank, and perhaps also the function of *oikonomos* were already in place. It is logical to assume that the shaping of administrative structures was a response to the growth of monastic property; unfortunately, there are no firm testimonies of communal assets of the Naqlun monastery to elucidate the matter. It is, however, possible that the Naqlun dossier illustrates an earlier phase of a path of development whose mature stage we see best at Bawit.

4 For Bawit, this observation is valid for the entire period documented in our texts; the sixth-century documents from Bawit are all private loan contracts and sales on delivery concluded between monks and laymen; see Chapter 4, Table 1 at pp. 202–205.
In Bawit and Bala’izah we observe specialised elements of monastic structure connected with the requirements of land management and fiscality. The task of the already mentioned *aparche*-collectors consisted in collecting rents which served to cover the monastery’s fiscal obligations. This group of functionaries was most probably personally responsible for the payments—hence the developed system of arrangements regulating the exchange of territorial assignments between monks, at least partially supervised by the monastic *diakonia* (see *P. Köln ägypt. II* 30; *P. Köln ägypt. II* 32; *P. Mon. Apollo 1(?)). The *aparche*-collectors were monastic representatives who met the tenants, travelled to their settlements and sometimes needed support from the village officials in order to deal smoothly with their tasks (cf. *P. Mon. Apollo 17*). One document suggests that such system could function also in Bala’izah (*P. Bal. 253*), but its state of preservation and isolated character leave us with practically nothing to build on.

The best-defined group of monastic functionaries dealing with taxes were the Bawit ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ (for their competences and activities, see Chapter 4, pp. 185–186). The Bala’izah dossier, on the other hand, shows the existence of a group of monks—who sometimes bear the designation *boethos*, often have clerical status, and in several cases can be identified with later heads of the community (see Chapter 6, p. 274)—involved as intermediaries in various fiscal payments (poll-tax, weavers’ tax, land tax, *embole*). No narrow specialisation along the Bawit line is observable in Bala’izah; the Bala’izah group covered responsibilities which in Bawit were split between the ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ and, perhaps, the *aparche*-collectors.

For earlier monastic tax payments we can refer only to *P. Aphrod. Reg*. In this document, we observe that fiscal obligations of the monasteries of Smine and Apa Zenobios were discharged either by monastic representatives or individuals who did not belong to the respective communities (most probably lay tenants). To sum up: in our documentation seen in a diachronic perspective, the monastic functionaries connected with tax payments: i) representatives of monasteries making payments to the fisc (*Aphrodito*); ii) the *aparche*-collectors (Bawit); iii) intermediaries in fiscal payments constituting a link between individual payers and the monastic institution or the fisc (Bala’izah).

What we see are, therefore, three groups of monastics with analogous functions. The details of how they operated and the actual similarities and differences in handling tax payments in different Middle-Egyptian monasteries in the sixth–eighth centuries, however, cannot be reconstructed, for in each case we lack information on some stages of the procedure in which the functionaries were involved (either the tax-collection itself, or the manner in which the payments

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5 For the use of the designation *boethos* in lay fiscal administration, see Chapter 6, p. 272.

6 The procedure followed by the Bala’izah fiscal intermediaries is obscure; we do not know if they transferred the money gathered from the taxpayers first to higher levels of monastic organisation, or straight to the state fiscal officers.
were forwarded to fiscal officers of the state). The sources are analogous, but not complementary; it is possible that the fiscal intermediaries of the monasteries from the Aphroditan register fulfilled a function similar to that of the Bala’izah intermediaries; our information, on the former, however, is too scanty to allow us to draw a parallel. The correspondence between the Bawit collectors and the Bala’izah intermediaries is tentative, but probable. The Bawit ‘brothers of the poll-tax’ had receipt-issuing among their duties, and we can logically assume that the aparche-collectors did the same for the tenants paying rent-tax and extra charges to the monastery. We know that Bala’izah intermediaries issued receipts for various taxes (see Chapter 6, Table 1 at pp. 279–280); it appears that they also fulfilled the function of internal collectors for the monastery. It is also possible that the deacon Lampou and the monk-fisherman Theodoros attested in P. Bal. 291 as intermediaries for the demision of Tohe were the people immediately responsible for collecting and recording the payments. The developed monastic fiscal structures as we see them in the eighth-century dossiers included the poll-tax, whose imposition on the monks by the Arab government meant extra responsibilities and paperwork for monastic administration. The question of whether this new fiscal burden was integrated into a pre-existing system of handling land-taxes, or influenced and precipitated its development can receive only a tentative answer. The Bawit dossier may indicate that the rent-tax-, embole- and aparche- collection system was in existence already in the seventh century, but the documents at our disposal are dated only on the basis of palaeography. However, it was probably in the course of the sixth and seventh century that the monastery amassed landholdings in the Hermopolite ehora and elsewhere; the necessity to handle land-tax would have naturally predated the introduction of the poll-tax, and the latter would perhaps trigger an expansion or multiplication of monastic fiscal structures than a revolution in them. No data, unfortunately, is available for Deir el-Bala’izah.

Let us go back to the sixth-century P. Aphrod. Reg., as one feature of the document is particularly worth of attention in the context of the present discussion. The two monasteries which feature most prominently in the document: the community of Apa Zenobios and the Pachomian Smine, discharge their fiscal obligations respectively through Promaos μονάζων and Apa Mousaios μονάζων. The two monks had different scope of responsibility, with Promaos appearing in most of the entries for the monastery of Apa Zenobios and Apa Mousaios discharging only a part of Smine’s fiscal obligations alongside lay tenants (see Chapter 2, pp. 101–102). This may point to different strategies pursued by the two absentee monastic landowners in Aphrodito: one making use of a fiscal representative for a part of holdings, and the other ceding fiscal responsibility to the

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tenants. Later, in the seventh–eighth century, the adoption of various solutions for the discharge of land-tax is attested within the Bawit monastery, for which the transfer of fiscal obligations to a tenant is attested in P. Pierpont Morgan Libr. inv. M 662 B (6a) verso (see Chapter 4, pp. 221). In P. Bal. 291, l. 1, we see a certain Mena from Pektes paying the demision of Pektes. Given the problems with identifying laypeople in internal monastic documentation, we cannot be sure of his status (see Chapter 4, p. 177); it is, however, possible, that the entry records a fiscal payment made by a local tenant in the monastery’s name. Our documentation is too scanty to allow for answering the question of how universal or occasional the solutions we see applied by various communities in fiscal payments were. Their patterns were perhaps influenced by the degree of consolidation of monastic estate in particular locations, and the pre-existing arrangements concerning land bequeathed or donated to monasteries. Even if a monastery developed elements of administrative structure designed to facilitate some procedures, it does not mean that their application was absolute and extended to all payments dues from the community and its members. Nevertheless, the requirements of being a landlord and taxpayer did shape the internal reality of the monasteries, even if the details of the processes escape us, both in the long chronological perspective and in particular cases.

The contemporary manner of thinking about monasticism is to a great extent determined by the solutions that regulate monastic communities of the Western tradition and Coptic monasteries of Egypt. These institutions are characterised by a great degree of uniformity and compliance with universally applied rules. The image emerging from the papyri is thus all the more striking, as the documents show us everything but uniformity. Structural differences appear not only between the communities, but also—wherever we are able to observe it—within the package of solutions used in one monastery to deal with certain matters. All the communities faced similar challenges, and, in consequence, the structures they developed presented similarities, but there were no overarching rules or imposed precepts—in other words, no ‘specifically monastic’ way of doing things. The responses the communities gave to the problems they encountered were a function of various determinants which, in turn, stemmed from the social and economic conditions in which the monks had to function. Practical requirements of the coexistence with local lay inhabitants and functionaries weighed more in this equation than any theoretical concepts. Moreover, we need to

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8 Monastic representatives are attested in the same document paying taxes in the name of lay owners; they either act as private persons leasing land from other lay individuals, represent land-leasing monasteries, or pay taxes for land belonging to monasteries, but registered under the name of old lay owner (see Chapter 2, p. 79).

9 If we look at the problem from the other side, we observe that a monastery could be obliged to adjust to the solutions proposed by its landlords, as indicated in P. Ryl. Copt. 124 and P. Sarga 344, where we see the head of the monastery of Apa Thomas discharging payments in cash and in kind to representatives of various institutions (see Chapter 5, pp. 254–256).
observe that the division of monastics into hermits and coenobitic monks which permeates the 
literary discourse (and, to a great degree, the scholarly discussions of Egyptian monasticism) is 
virtually untraceable in documentary sources.

2. Interconnections between monasteries and laypeople

On one hand, the necessity to respond to fiscal and economic reality prompted the development 
of administrative structures in the monasteries. On the other, the mechanisms of social and legal 
control determined the position of the communities and their representatives in the countryside. 
We can thus conclude that—to an extent which is very difficult to assess—the monastic structures 
and their modes of operation were at least partially a result of compromise and adjustment in which 
‘the world outside’ played an important part. It is now time to look at the details of the dynamics 
of contacts between the monasteries and their environment and assess the contribution of each of 
the parties to the functioning of the other.

The question of reliance of monastic communities on laypeople was addressed mainly in 
terms of dependence, and the documentation adduced to support the discussion pertained mainly 
to the Apions’ and comes Ammonios’s estate, their donations of considerable amounts of wheat to 
a number of monasteries, and the alleged influence of aristocratic landowners on the management 
of the institutions recorded in their dossiers. However, except for the case of the monastery of Apa 
Agenios (P. Cairo Masp. I 67062; PSI VIII 933; see Chapter 1, p. 62 and Chapter 2, p. 98), there are 
no clear indications of the estates’ involvement in the management of monasteries. The donations, 
on the other hand, are best seen as Ammonios’ and the Apions’ provisions for the salvation of the 
souls of their ancestors, and the fulfilment of Christian duty of charity towards the poor and the 
needy, here mediated by monastic agents. Some monasteries were integrated into the Apionic 
system of remuneration of workers and provision of equipment (see Chapter 1, pp. 42–45), but 
whether they did it as partners or subordinates is difficult to say based on the documents at our 
disposal. The case of the monasteries of Apa Hierax and Abba Kastor, both producing ropes for 
the estate, shows that some of these institutions were economically independent and capable of 
defending their interests (Chapter 1, pp. 45–46). Defining the relations of the Egyptian great estates 
with the monasteries in terms of submission is an oversimplification which dismisses both the 
actual economic position of the monasteries on one side, and the strong symbolic motivation of 

307
The question I wish mostly to explore in the present section is, however, the contribution of laypeople to the everyday functioning of the monasteries in its various aspects. Here, the question of the involvement in monastic administration is a good starting point. In the documents I explored, lay administrators are attested for the Panopolite monastery of Shenoute (Koursios son of Iosephios; P. Ross. Georg. III 48), the monastery of Apa Apollos in Aphrodito (Dioskoros son of Apollos; P. Cairo SR 3733 (3); P. Cairo Masp. I 67096), the monastery of Apa Sourous of Aphrodito (Flavius Artemidoros; P. Cairo Masp. II 67133; P. Lond. V 1704), the monastery of Apa Agenios in the nome of Apollonopolis Mikra (comes Ammonios represented by Apollos; PSI VIII 933). No lay representative is found in any of the monasteries in the Apionic dossier, or at Naqlun. In the dossiers of Bawit, Wadi Sarga, and Deir el-Bala‘izah, lay representatives are either non-existent, or impossible to identify; in any case, we would expect to find them in local sections of monastic estates rather than on the ‘central’ level of administration represented by most of these documents. If we are to take into account only the firmly attested cases, lay representatives and administrators seem to have been a relatively rare phenomenon. They appear when a monastery is a lay foundation—as is the case with the monastery of Apa Apollo and Dioskoros, appointed curator by his father, the founder, and perhaps the monastery of Apa Sourous—or when a monastery is an absentee landowner. The latter case is observed in the case of the monastery of Shenoute, where Koursios son of Iosephios was perhaps an administrator of a part of the monastery’s property in the region of Aphrodito. The scope of responsibility of such lay administrators varied according to their position in the monastery’s structures, and the level of centrality on which they served (while Dioskoros acted as a ‘central’ administrator of a privately founded monastery, Koursios was responsible only for a section of property of a community which belonged to a congregation). Their tasks included formal representation in legal deeds, semi-formal representation (best illustrated by Dioskoros, with his letters and petitions written on behalf of the monastery of Apa Apollos), and actual management (the execution of arrears, supervision of the estate, allocation of financial means, and collecting rents; cf. P. Cairo Masp. I 67062; P. Ross. Georg. III 48).

While the involvement of laypeople in monastic administration was a result of particular conditions of a monastery’s foundation or the necessity to manage scattered landholdings, we can assume that the participation of laymen was most pronounced in the sphere encompassing the actual work that had to be done on monastic estates and the premises belonging to the communities.

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10 John Philip Thomas interpreted also the monastery of Apa Agenios, administered by comes Ammonios and Apollos, as a private establishment of the former (J. Ph. Thomas, Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire, Dumbarton Oaks 1987, p. 89).
First, the monasteries needed lay tenants to farm their land, especially in more remote regions. This phenomenon is best visible in the Aphrodito dossier, with its lease contracts, rent receipts, and the extensive cadastre. Tenancy must have played an important role also in Bawit, as attested by the extensive dossier of *aparche*-related texts. Secondly, the documents suggest the presence of hired lay workforce in and around the monasteries. The workmen most probably represented two categories: people employed for a determined time period based on a contract and seasonal workers hired according to the current needs, e.g., as extra help during harvest or vintage. We would expect such people to appear in the internal monastic dossiers, focused on the regulation and documenting of the everyday functioning of the communities. The scantiness of the elements of personal identification, typical of such documents, makes our search for such workers a difficult, and in some cases even hopeless task, but some clues can be gathered nevertheless. External workforce attested in our documents included specialised workers (a pickle-maker in *P. Sarga* 164 and a carpenter in *P. Sarga* 161), people involved in transport (camel-drivers of *kyrios* Sarapion in *P. Sarga* *P. Sarga* 95; John Qam and his employee in LACMA inv. M.80.202.174 and LACMA inv. M.80.202.186), a palm-leaf picker (*P. Bal.* 259; lay affiliation uncertain), as well as unspecified groups of people from particular locations ‘people of …’ (*nephi*), perhaps teams of agricultural workers.

The scale of the phenomenon of the presence of lay workforce in monasteries is difficult to assess owing, mostly, to the abovementioned problems with identification of laypeople in monastic documentation. As a matter of fact, neither are we able to estimate the monastic workforce potential in any given community. In a number of publications, based on the imposing size of monastic ruins in Egypt, the number of monks is estimated at several hundred, or a thousand or more. The reliability of such estimates is doubtful, and this maximalist approach leads to a false impression that a community such as Bawit could be self-sufficient in terms of securing workforce, at least for the work to be done in the monastery and its neighbourhood.

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11 J. Keenan, ‘Notes on absentee landlordism at Aphrodito’, BASP 22 (1985), pp. 137–168, esp. p. 138, n. 6, observed that at least a part of agreements connected with farming the land could be concluded verbally, without leaving traces in documentary record.


15 See Schenke, ‘The monastery of Apa Apollo’ (cit. n. 14): ‘Even though the monastery of Apa Apollo seems to have had the manpower needed to cultivate their own land, this might often have seemed impractical or inconvenient due to large distances involved between monastery and property’.
in a medium-sized community can be realistically estimated at around forty.\(^\text{16}\) Even though the monasteries counted representatives of various professions among their members, and at least a part of monastic land was tilled by the monks,\(^\text{17}\) the assumption that all tasks could be accomplished without external help is unrealistic. The profile of the communities from which our documents come implies a wide range of everyday challenges that had to be faced, including, among others, agricultural work on scattered landholdings, land and river transport, maintenance works, and care of animals and equipment. It is also possible that some of the monasteries simply chose to rely on external workforce in some aspects of their functioning. The letter from Tebetny to the monks of Naqlun (\textit{P. Naqlun} 39; see Chapter 3, p. 147) implies that the community had monastic workforce to spend in the period of harvest. This can lead to two conclusions, both of which are hypothetical due to the lack of information on the assets of the Naqlun monastery: i) the monastery had no (or very little) communal land farmed by the monks; ii) the monastery had land, but managed it in such a manner that the monks’ involvement in actual cultivation was not necessary (e.g. through leases). As the monastery at Naqlun gives the impression of a wealthy and significant community and it is difficult to imagine that it held no land at all, the second option appears more plausible.

The monasteries relied on laypeople also in another sphere, observable in particular in the Aphrodito dossier: maintaining relations with well-placed individuals in ‘the world’, who could assure a positive outcome of various conflictual situations. Dioskoros of Aphrodito is the best example of a person who provided a link between monasteries and high-ranking individuals; his help consisted in drawing up petitions, gaining access to officials, and using personal connections to win the monasteries the favour of prominent people. Obviously, the majority of our attestations of this capacity of Dioskoros are connected with his father’s monastery in Aphrodito, but Dioskoros’s activity was not limited to it. On the other hand, \textit{P. Oxy.} LXIII 4397 indicates that unmediated contacts of monastic representatives with prominent individuals were not only possible, but sometimes successful. \textit{P. Ryl. Copt.} 294 from Wadi Sarga points to the involvement of a lay individual—perhaps an official—in a situation where, apparently, the monastery’s rights to a donated garden were questioned (see Chapter 5, pp. 259–260). In this case, however, we do not know how the intervention had come about. The phenomenon seems relatively rare outside the Aphroditan dossier, but this is perhaps a result of the bias of our documentation. Petitions and letters with requests for support belonged to the outcoming correspondence and thus had little

\(^{16}\) Personal communication of Ewa Wipszycka, based on her discussions with the archaeologist Włodzimierz Godlewski, the excavator of the site at Naqlun and specialist in monastic archaeology of Egypt. For the number of monks in the monasteries of Egypt, see Wipszycka, \textit{Moines et communautés}, pp. 403–436.

chance to be preserved in monastic dossiers; Dioskoros, on the other hand, seems to have been keeping copies or drafts of his letters and petitions, which accounts for the uniqueness of his dossier in so many respects.

Persons of rank were addressed not only on behalf of communities, but also individual monks and other people associated with the monasteries. Such was the case of Maximinos, a monk of the Antinopolite koinobion of Apa Jeremias, addressing a dux in a petition drawn up by Dioskoros (P. Cairo Masp. I 67007), or a hapless monk—perhaps sitting in prison—mentioned in a Bala’izah letter (P. Bal. 186). A superior was supposed to intervene on the monk’s behalf in order to turn the attention of an official to the latter’s case. Individual monks relied also on networks of private acquaintances and agents. This is the case of Mone from the Bala’izah monastery of Apa Apollo and his parents, who made business with some of their son’s colleagues and transmitted information to others (P. Bal. 244 and 245). Also the earlier Naqlun examples point to the reliance of monks on a network of agents (P. Naqlun II 27; P. Naqlun II 29); here, however, we do not know on whose behalf the actions mentioned in the documents were undertaken.

In business contacts this relation of reliance could sometimes be inversed, as we see in the documents mentioning monks involved as creditors and buyers in loan contracts and sales on delivery (P. Naqlun II 21–23; for Bawit, see Chapter 4, Table 1 at pp. 202–205). Even though the sweeping statement of Sarah J. Clackson about the monasteries providing credit-free facilities for the villagers cannot be maintained (credit was provided on private, not communal level, nor was it interest-free), it is true that the villagers of the Arsinoite and the Hermopolite nome could rely on monastic ‘businessmen’ willing to lend money or invest in agricultural production. In the Bawit documentation, most of the loans belong to the earliest, sixth-century layer of documentation, but later Coptic documents attests to the survival of the practice. No documentation later than the sixth century is available for Naqlun.18

Loan contracts are a good example of documents recording contacts in which the initiative lay with the people of ‘the world’. Lay initiatives may also lie behind transactions pertaining to landowning and agricultural exploitation, even though we are not always able to reconstruct the circumstances that had led to the conclusion of a contract. From the letters of the Bala’izah and Naqlun dossiers (P. Bal. 244; 245; P. Naqlun II 27; 29), we learn that agents operating outside the monasteries contacted the monks to report on the progress of actions they undertook on behalf of community members.

18 Archaeological evidence seems to point to a temporary disruption in the monastery’s functioning immediately after the Arab conquest. The evidence was presented by Włodzimierz Godlewski in his communication ‘The monastic settlement in Naqlun in the seventh century, in a period of important political and social changes’ at the colloquium Le Fayoum: archéologie, histoire, religion held at the CNRS Montpellier, 26–28 October 2016.
In this place we need to ask the question whether the circumstances in which laypeople contacted monks were limited only to business contacts. The answer is no, even though other contexts surface suspiciously rarely in our documents. We could expect various requests for aid and mediation to be addressed to monks in the incoming correspondence, but our documentation is in fact rather disappointing in this respect. In the dossiers included in the present work, requests for assistance are extremely rare and constitute an insignificant part of the bulk of documentation. The seventh–eighth-century Coptic collections do not change much: monastic superiors of Bala’izah are once asked to write an introduction letter for a layman trying to obtain a safe-conduct (P. Bal. 239); in one letter, tentatively attributed to the Bawit dossier (P. Köln X 426) a monk is asked for a letter of recommendation by a village scribe. Another letter of uncertain attribution may point to the involvement of a monk in a conflictual situation involving a scribe (P. Köln X 427; perhaps Bawit). In the Greek documents, only the letter P. Naqlin 39, where monastic representatives are asked to help solve a conflict and send workers to harvest, can fit in the definition of a request for help. In the case of the Tebetny letter, however, we do not know if the involvement of the monks was conditioned only by their authority, or actual business connections with the places mentioned in the text. A testament preserved in Dioskoros’s papers (P. Cairo Masp. II 67151) is an interesting example of a situation in which the superior of the monastery of Apa Jeremias is requested to take care of the testator’s children and their property (see Chapter 2, p. 110). The donations of wheat and property attested in the sixth-century documents can also be treated as a very specific form of ‘request’ addressed to monastic communities: the monks were supposed to handle the donated goods in a manner that would prove most soul-profiting for the donor. Even though this aspect of the monasteries’ activity was tightly connected with management and administration, it was deeply rooted in the symbolic role of the monastic communities. In our documentation, this phenomenon is limited to elite milieus.19

From the above overview it appears that, with very rare exceptions, laypeople were more frequently using the monks’ material capital than social and symbolic one. Of course, we need to take into account that much of the monks’ social activity—relief to the poor and needy, mediation in minor neighbourly conflicts, or personal advice—would leave no trace in the documents. This was the sphere of immediate, personal, and first and foremost, oral contact. What concerns us here is the fact that in the period and the dossiers under investigation monks and monasteries did not appear to have acted as a link between local communities and higher-ranking individuals or

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19 Donations of grain are attested in the dossiers of the Apions and Comes Ammonios (see Chapter 1); two testaments composed by Dioskoros which mention donations of land and movable property to monasteries, with the request to spend the income of the bequests on charitable distributions and prosphorai (P. Cairo Masp. III 67312 and II 67151) are connected with two Antinopolite Flavii, Theodoros and Phoibammon.
institutions. It is perhaps symptomatic that the lengthy list of subscribers under the Aphroditan petition to the Empress Theodora (P. Cairo Masp. III 67283), which is thought to provide an insight into the representation of the village elites in the sixth century, mentions only one monk, Ioannes, who moreover does not represent his community but only subscribes for an illiterate priest of the church of Apa Hermauos (l. 23: Ἰωάννης μονάζων ἄξιωθείς ἐγρ[αψα] ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ γράμματα μη [εἰδότος]). The region of Aphrodito was home to a number of monastic institutions; none of them, however, is represented in P. Cairo Masp. III 67283, subscribed by protokometai, kteores, and priests of local churches. On the other hand, the position of the monastery of Apa Apollos as kteor is underscored in SB XX 14626, where the institution is equalled with other kteores of the village (ll. 16–18: κτήτωρ ἔστιν Λοὐκάννας κ(α)ί οἱ λοιποί κ(α)ί οὐ/δὲπότε ἐξ ἔθους δεδόκασιν δεσποτικὴν πρόσοδον τούτο/ν το/ῦ/ τρόπου κτήτωρ ἔστιν καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ εὐαγγέλθης θ(εο)ῦ οἶκος). It appears that even if a monastic community was recognised as a vital element of the economic and fiscal system, its social impact could be limited, and the possibilities of successful performance in local networks was conditioned to a great extent by the links in the lay world it was able to forge. An especially entrepreneurial community, like the monastery of Apa Hierax in P. Oxy. LXIII 4397 could succeed in persuading a great landowner to yield to its claims; however, as emphasised by Giovanni Ruffini in his discussion of the document, in the agreement finishing a delicate financial affair between the monastery and the Apionic estate Apa Hierax’s representatives had the support of local Flavii who feature in the witnesses’ subscriptions.20 This may point to the monastery’s aptitude in local diplomacy on one hand; on the other, it shows the importance of establishing and maintaining external social links for running the monastery’s business.

In the sixth century, the monasteries known from our documentation appear to have made the most of their external connections in order to retain or enhance their material status. On the other hand, they do not appear to have been a catalyst of social reactions between various strata of society. The picture we obtain from later, sixth–eighth-century documentation is largely the same. The monasteries of Apa Apollos at Bawit and Deir el-Bala’izah may have become more important after the conquest as fiscal hubs and units responsible for the collection of various tax obligations (poll-tax; land taxes in cash and kind) and goods subject to requisitions; they had no chance, however, of gaining more social impact. The links between individual monks and monastic communities on one hand, and lay society, including officials, local elites, and villagers on the other, were forged almost exclusively on the basis of property possession and the ensuing duties and prerequisites. The monasteries were undeniably rich, hence their importance for the fisc, attested throughout the investigated period. Monks themselves were well aware of this aspect of their

functioning and developed internal organisational structures to cope with managerial and fiscal issues. As economic units, the monasteries could offer work and land for lease. However, as I have already explained above, the extent of the reliance of monasteries on external workforce is impossible to assess. Gesa Schenke, in her article on the role of the Bawit monastery as landowner and employer stated that ‘monasteries like the one in Bawit have come long way to managing their estates by leasing their land to local farmers, employing outside labour, and making a profit. In doing so, they enable landless villagers to make a living on monastic land which also serves the “holy monastic community”. In this way local farmers and their families might somewhat partake in a sanctified existence, albeit driven most likely by necessity than by religious considerations’. With the scanty information on Bawit leases, the assumption that the tenants of the monastery were recruited among landless villagers sounds somewhat bold. All the more so if we look back at the Aphroditan material, where, apart from otherwise unknown (and perhaps landless indeed) tenants of monastic land registered in the cadastre, the lessees of the monasteries—both local and external—included landowners and entrepreneurial individuals sub-leasing plots to others. The Aphrodito dossier is the best example of the monasteries’ entanglement in local landowning networks with their disputes, clashes, and chains of relations linking one landowner to another, showing that neither local nor absentee institutions acted in void in the countryside. The story of Aphroditan monasteries is one of adjustment and attempts to preserve, and to the possible extend expand their estates using all the lay social links they could muster. There is nothing comparable in the documentation of the seventh–eighth-century history of Middle Egyptian communities: Bawit, Deir el-Bala’izah, and Wadi Sarga. All these communities, however, were owners of scattered parcels of land, much after the manner of their earlier counterparts; they must have been equally exposed to all challenges this situation implied. We never see any of these communities asking for help through a member of local elite; however, we do listen to complaints of lay communities addressed to monastic representatives of Bawit, or see a donation of garden to the monastery of Apa Thomas in Wadi Sarga questioned by local people and defended by an official. These two different perspectives point to the relative vulnerability of monastic communities (even the large and famous ones) in the Egyptian countryside, which appears to have been their permanent feature—and an unescapable existential necessity.

21 Schenke, ‘The monastery of Apa Apollo’ (cit. n. 14).
22 Even in a situation where social links of a monk are quoted to strengthen a plea, as is the case with SB XX 14626, where a connection of an Apa Tatianos of the monastery of Apa Apollos is invoked by Dioskoros (see Chapter 2, p. 104, n. 107), the mediation of a (lay) third person is necessary for them to work for the advantage of the supplicant.
PLATES
PLATE 1. Monastic Egypt (drawn by Grzegorz Ochała)
PLATE 2. The monastery in Deir el-Naqlun—aerial view (© PCMA)
PLATE 3. Plan of the kom in Bawit (based on magnetic survey results; executed by Tomasz Herbich; after Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, between pp. 142 and 143).
PLATE 4. R. Campbell Thompson’s sketch of the monastic site at Wadi Sarga (after P. Sarga, between pp. 2 and 3).
PLATE 5. Plan of the monastery of Apa Apollo in Deir el-Bala’izah (after P. Grossmann, ‘Ruinen des Klösters Dair al-Balaizā in Oberägypten’, JAC 36 (1993), pl. 1, reproduced in Wipszycka, Moines et communautés, p. 158). 1—gatekeeper’s house; 2—building for the visitors; 3—church; 4—the supposed library; 5—refectories; 6—outbuildings.
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330


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