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Egypt in the period from the reign of the emperor Constantine to the Arab conquest was both a vital part of the Late Roman and Byzantine world, participating fully in the culture of its wider Mediterranean society, and a distinctive milieu, launched on a path to developing the Coptic Christian culture that we see fully only after the end of Byzantine rule. This book is the first comprehensive survey of Egypt to treat this entire period including the first half-century of Arab rule. Twenty-one renowned specialists present the history, society, economy, culture, religious institutions, art and architecture of the period. Topics covered range from elite literature to mummification and from monks to Alexandrian scholars. A full range of Egypt's uniquely rich source materials - literature, papyrus documents, letters, and archaeological remains - gives exceptional depth and vividness to this portrait of a society, and recent archaeological discoveries are described and illustrated.

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Review

This is an excellent collection of essays, each of which deserves much more comment than can be reasonably expected here. As a whole the volume covers an extremely wide range of topics across the entire scholarly spectrum of research into Byzantine Egypt, while each contribution successfully offers lucid and penetrating analyses of specific topics. This book will quickly and deservedly find a wide readership among all those interested in Egypt in the Byzantine world, and will no doubt serve as a helpful spur to future research.

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About the Author

Roger Bagnall is Professor of Ancient History at New York University and Director of the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World. He is an internationally acknowledged leader in the field of papyrology and his publications include Egypt in Late Antiquity (1993), The Demography of Roman Egypt (1994, with Bruce Frier) and Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History (1995). He is also editor of the Oxford Handbook of Papyrology (2009).

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