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The Manichaeans of Kellis : religion, community, and everyday life
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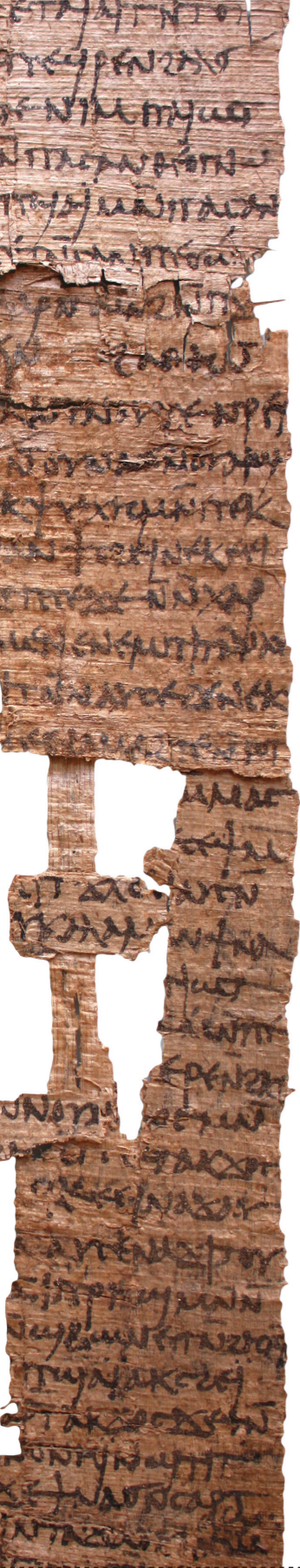


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The Manichaeans of Kellis: Religion, Community, and Everyday Life is the first monograph examining daily life of a Manichaean community in the Roman Empire. It shows where and when a Manichaean affiliation mattered for ancient individuals and families, how it affected their personal letters, as well as their day-to-day interactions in a fourth-century village. The papyrological and archaeological evidence from the village of Kellis (modern Ismant el-Kharab) presents a unique perspective on this late antique religion that is otherwise mostly known for its theological and cosmological system. The specific setting of these finds, in particular having liturgical texts and personal letters from the same houses, offers many opportunities to reconstruct family networks, village interactions, as well as some of the underlying religious structures and practices. By pursuing a bottom-up approach, this study brings Manichaeism to life as a religion for ordinary people. It also engages with the larger theoretical debates concerning the role and position of “lived religion” in the academic Study of Religion, as well as current perspectives on the fundamental transformation of religion in Late Antiquity.

Mattias Brand studied history and religious studies at Leiden University. His PhD project “Manichaeans and Others in Fourth-Century Egypt: The Mechanisms of Religious Change in Late Antiquity” was sponsored by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO). He is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Department for the Study of Religions of the University of Zürich (UZH).

The Manichaeans of Kellis | Mattias Brand

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Religion, Community, and Everyday Life

Mattias Brand

