

Confiscation or Coexistence

Egyptian Temples in the Age of Augustus

A volume in the New Texts from Ancient Cultures series

It is generally accepted that Roman administrators, arriving in Egypt in the aftermath of Augustus' annexation of the province, confiscated *en masse* the land and other property belonging to the temples of Egypt—estimated at as much as one-third of the country. It is further accepted that this confiscation doomed the temples by removing their economic support and making them subservient to the Roman state, and that this in turn led to the collapse of Egyptian religion. In *Confiscation or Coexistence: Egyptian Temples in the Age of Augustus*, author Andrew Connor takes direct issue with both claims.

The interpretative consensus developed after the publication of a handful of key documents—*P.Tebt.* 2.302 especially, alongside *BGU* 4.1198 and 1200, and *P.Berl.Leihg.* 1.5. Connor offers a fundamentally revised interpretation of these texts, building from a fresh examination of the papyri themselves. The book frames the interpretation in a wider discussion of Roman interactions with Egyptian religion, including material from inside and outside Egypt, and locates the development of an interpretative consensus in early 20th-century scholarship within the wider context of empire and colonization at the time. In doing so, Connor explores these papyri through their historical, intellectual, and linguistic contexts, alongside a number of other important texts bearing on the relationship between the temples and the Roman state.

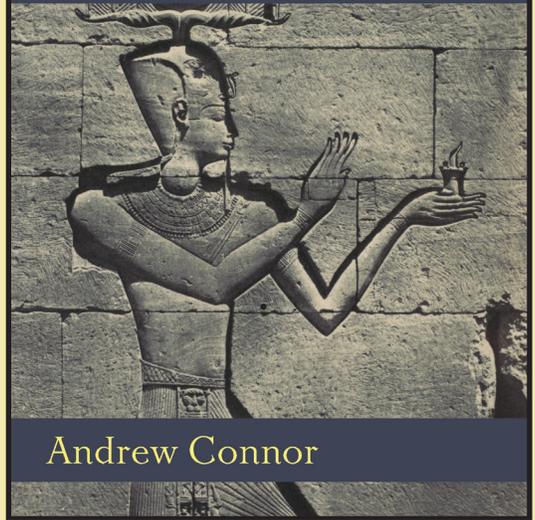
Andrew Connor is Lecturer, The Centre for Ancient Cultures, Monash University, Melbourne.

“Andrew Connor convincingly argues that the ‘confiscation narrative’ does not accurately represent the Roman imperial relationship with Egyptian temples. This perspective helps to shape our understandings of temples and priests, land holding, economic relationships, imperial negotiations, and social change. This is a well-written and well-argued book on a topic of great interest to specialists.”

— Anna Lucille Boozer, Baruch College and the Graduate Center, CUNY

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Andrew Connor

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