Published in English.
Since their discovery in 1945, the significance of the texts contained in the thirteen papyrus manuscripts now known as the Nag Hammadi Codices has been fiercely debated. In the history of scholarship, the texts have primarily been analyzed in light of the contexts of their hypothetical Greek originals, which in a majority of cases have been thought to have been authored in the second and third centuries CE in a variety of contexts. The articles in this volume take a different approach. Instead of focusing on hypothetical originals, they ask how the texts may have been used and understood by those who read the Coptic papyrus codices in which the texts have been preserved and take as their point of departure recent research indicating that these manuscripts were produced and used by early Egyptian monastics. It is shown that the reading habits and theological ideas attested historically for Upper Egyptian monasticism in the fourth and fifth centuries resonate well with several of the texts within the Nag Hammadi Codices.

Survey of contents


Hugo Lundhaug
Born 1970; 2000 Cand. philol. from the University of Oslo; 2007 Dr. art. in the History of Religions from the University of Bergen; Professor of Theology (Biblical Reception and Early Christian Literature) at the University of Oslo, Faculty of Theology.
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4643-7198

Christian H. Bull
Born 1978; 2003 Cand. philol. from the University of Bergen; 2014 Dr. art. in the History of Religions from the University of Bergen; Associate Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Bergen, Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion.
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0054-8052

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