

Thomas

## Christians at the Heart of Islamic Rule: Church Life and Scholarship in 'Abbasid Iraq

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The chapters in this volume, which come from the Fourth Woodbrooke-Mingana Symposium, cover aspects of Christian life in and around Baghdad in the early centuries of 'Abbasid rule. The authors explore both broad themes, such as the place of monasteries in Muslim cultural life, accusations of Islam as crypto-idolatry, and Muslim responses to Christian apologetic arguments, and also specific topics, such as a Nestorian's explanation of the Incarnation, a Jacobite's purpose in composing his guide to moral improvement, and the development of Christian legends about the caliph al-Ma'mun. The volume illustrates the vigour of Iraqi Christian life in 'Abbasid times, and helps show that relations between Christians and Muslims, although strained at times, were often beneficial to followers of both faiths.

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**171,50 €**

160,28 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

*Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage*

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**Artikelnummer:** 9789004129382

**Medium:** Buch

**ISBN:** 978-90-04-12938-2

**Verlag:** Brill

**Erscheinungstermin:** 30.04.2003

**Sprache(n):** Englisch

**Auflage:** Erscheinungsjahr 2003

**Serie:** History of Christian-Muslim Re

**Produktform:** Gebunden

**Gewicht:** 662 g

**Seiten:** 273

**Format (B x H):** 168 x 248 mm

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24.07.2024 | 18:23 Uhr

