

Nubian Letters

-4-



Smidswater 8, 2514 BW The Hague
The Netherlands

February 1985

NUBIAN LETTERS is an independant biannual bulletin for nubian history and archaeology, published under the auspices of the International Society for Nubian Studies and the Department of Early Christian Art at the University of Leiden, The Netherlands.

Edited by Elisabeth de Ranitz and Karel Innemée

Voluntary subscription: Dfl. 45,- or an equivalent in other currency for member of the I.S.N.S. Non-members, libraries and institutions: Dfl. 90,- for a period of four years (1983-'86) to be paid by international money-order, sent to the editorial adress.

All copy should be sent to the editorial adress, Smidswater 8, 2514 BW The Hague, The Netherlands. Contributions should not exceed a length of three pages and should be typed on Din A4 with a margin of 3 cm on both sides, an equal distance from the upper edge and a distance of 3.5 cm from the lower edge.

CONTENTS

Editorial	1
West German excavations on the Islands Sunnarti, Turmuki and Tangur, E. Dinkler	2
La symbolique des lettres et dans l'apside de Faras, K. Babraj	15
Some remarks on the cruciform church in Old Dongola, W. Godlewski	20
Typological problems of the Nubian four- pillar churches, P. Grossmann	23
Some iconographical remarks on St. Michael in Sonqi Tino, W. van der Helm	26
Murals from house A in Old Dongola, M. Martens-Czarnecka	28
Relationship between episcopal and monastic vestments in nubian wall-painting, K. Innemée	29
Announcement and Addenda	31

EDITORIAL

In August 1984 the congress of the International Association of Coptic Studies was held in Warsaw. A section of this congress was dedicated to Nubian studies. In this issue of Nubian Letters a number of the papers presented here are published in abridged form, awaiting the publication of the official proceedings of the congress.

Nubian Letters is generally meant for concise articles on current research, recent excavation-reports and announcements. We made an exception for the article with which we open this issue. It concerns an unpublished article for Kush by the late Prof. Erich Dinkler. Next issue will contain a comparable article on the excavations at Kulb.

In the previous issue Prof. Paul van Moorsel made an appeal to the readers to send in information on Nubian Studies in Preparation. Since then he has started worrying that research on Nubia has internationally stopped, since hardly any reaction reached him. Please take a second look at page 24 of Nubian Letters 3 and convince him that his worries are unfounded.

Once again we would like to draw your attention to the fact that our finances for the next issues of this periodical are getting tight. Contributions from those who appreciate this magazine and have not yet paid would be most welcome! We thank all those who remitted money so far. One of them is still unknown to us, since his/her contribution only carried the indication "Universitätskasse 7800 Freiburg". Please let us know which name and adress correspond to this.

Hoping that you will enable us to continue by financial support and written contributions (excavation-reports 1984/'85) we wish you pleasant reading.

Karel Innemée
Elisabeth de Ranitz.

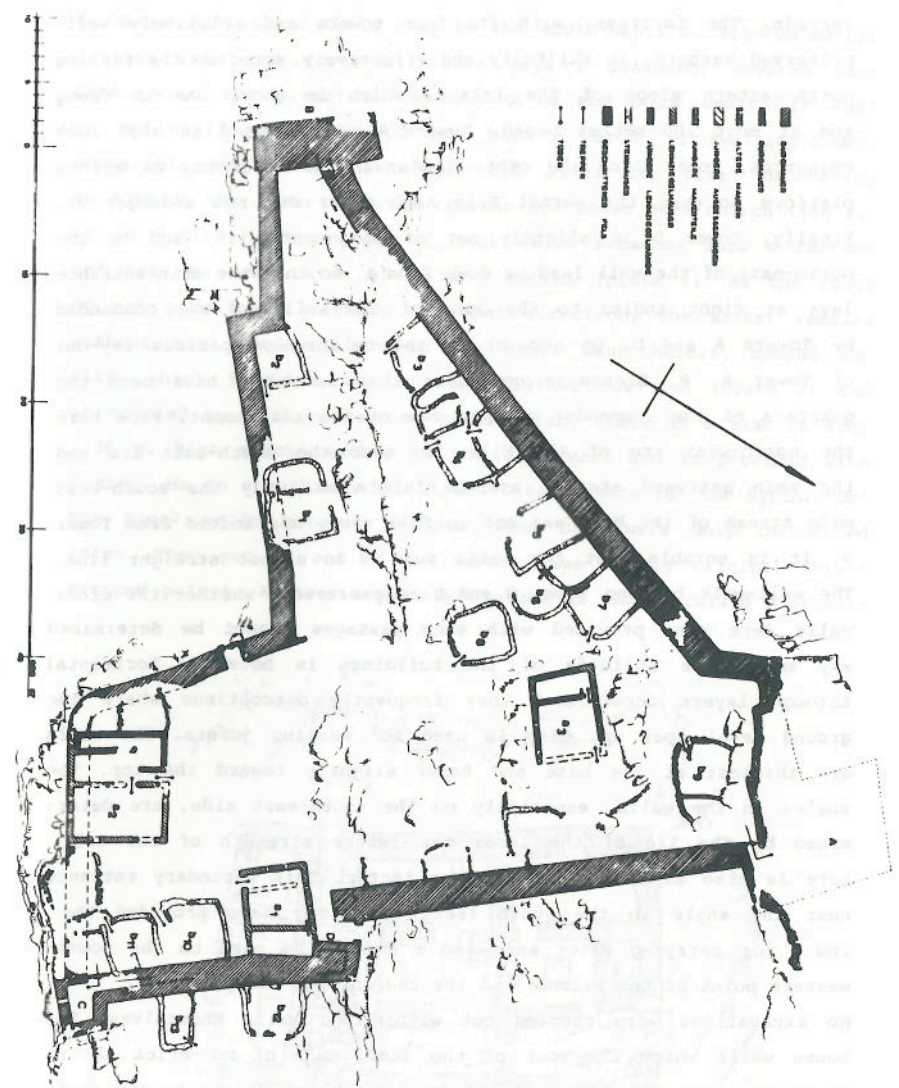
The following article is the first in a series of two excavation-reports by the late professor Erich Dinkler. They were written on the basis of reports that appeared in Archäologischer Anzeiger 1970/72 and were meant to be published in Kush. Following suggestions these articles are now published in Nubian Letters, which was made possible by Mrs. E. Dinkler-Von Schubert. Reading these articles, however, one has to bear in mind that they were written in 1972 and are now published posthumously. Therefore it is inevitable that on certain points new conclusions have been reached and additional information has been published since. Nevertheless we publish these articles in their original form, followed by an editorial postscript, which points at additional material.

WEST GERMAN EXCAVATIONS ON THE ISLANDS SUNNARTI, TURMUKI AND TANGUR IN 1967 - 1968

By Erich Dinkler†, Heidelberg, FRG

We present this report of the expeditions which the German Archaeological Institute carried out in conjunction with the UNESCO "Saving Nubia Campaign" in the spring of 1967 (11 Feb. to 8 March) and in the spring of 1968 (21 Feb. to 26 March)¹. The 1967 expedition addressed itself chiefly to the question of how appropriate a large scale excavation as recommended by UNESCO would be. At the same time the fortress of Sunnarti was measured by P. Grossmann and a faulty former publication thereby corrected². The actual digging only began in 1968. In the following pages we do not make any distinction between the two expeditions but publish their combined results. All the plans (figs. 1-5), together with the analyses and reconstructions of the buildings are the work of P. Grossmann, while I am responsible for the chronological arrangement and for the conclusions reached³.

Fig. 1: Sunnarti, Groundplan fortress.



1. Sunnarti⁴

A. The groundplan of the fortress triangle (fig.1) is determined by the accomodation of the towers and walls to the surrounding terrain. The fortress, with its four towers and relatively well-preserved masonry, is skilfully and effectively sited on the falling north-eastern slope of the island, which is about one km. long and at most 200 metres broad. Towers A and B stand on high rock eminences, Tower C on the other hand near the river but on a rock platform so that the normal Nile high water dit not endanger it. Finally, Tower D is slightly out of alignment with, and to the north-east of the wall leading down from A, so that the main entrance lays at right angles to the line of the wall and was commanded by Towers A and D. On account of the relatively spacious lay-out of Tower A, P. Grossmann concludes that here may have been the quarters of the Commander or Head Man of the settlement. From here the north-west arm of the Nile, as also the south-east arm and the main eastward stream, are in full view. Only the south-west main stream of the Nile was not in full view, nor indeed from Tower B. It is notable that the walls run in an almost straight line. The wall-walk between Tower C and D is preserved, whether the other walls were also provided with such passages cannot be determined any more. The solidity of the buildings is notable. Horizontal through layers occur, but they frequently discontinue where the ground level goes up. Clay is used for sealing joints. The walls are thickest at the base and taper slightly toward the top. The angles in the walls, especially on the south-east side, are determined by the lie of the land; the lesser strength of the wall here is also explained by the same factor. This secondary entrance near the angle in the south (east) wall may have provided the route for carrying water and also a connecting path to the south-western point of the island - to the church, for example.

No excavations were carried out within the walls themselves. The house walls which rise out of the sand, made of mud-brick (a) or of rough stone (b), are sketched into the plan. Nearby to the north of the fortress and in the whole south-western part of the island, are numerous pre-Christian houses, mostly of type b. One cannot exclude the possibility that the fortress was only sought out in time of danger. The date of the construction of the fortress may

be taken as the late classical period, 11th to 12th cetury, and its occupation as lasting untill the 14th to 15th century. The pottery finds confirm this suppositional dating.

B. Where the island falls away to the south-west, c. 300-400 metres distant from the fortress, there lays a building, covered with sand, with the preserved remains of a mud-brick vault. In 1967 we had still thought it to have been a watch- or dwelling-tower, comparable with South Turmukki, but after the first uncovering in 1968 it was clear that the remains are those of a church (fig.2). It is fitted into a ledge of rock which broadens into a terrace and has the small size of 12 x 7 metres (plate 1). As the rocks do not permit an extension in that direction, the Haikal remains without any flanking room to the east. Nevertheless, behind the altar which is preserved in its original position (plate 2) and is covered by a three section marble slab, there is a slab of rock 1.30 m. high which reaches to the east wall and is provided with a step. We do not think that it was a substitute for the Synthronon. The Higab walls between sanctuary and nave were only introduced later. They put an end to the further use of the original three-stepped pulpit. Another secondary feature is the so-called Prothesis

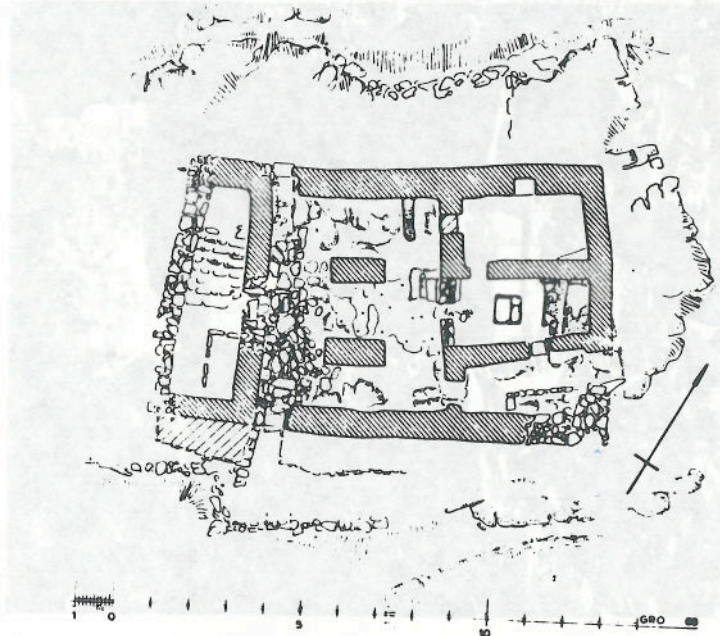


Fig. 2: Sunnarti, groundplan church.

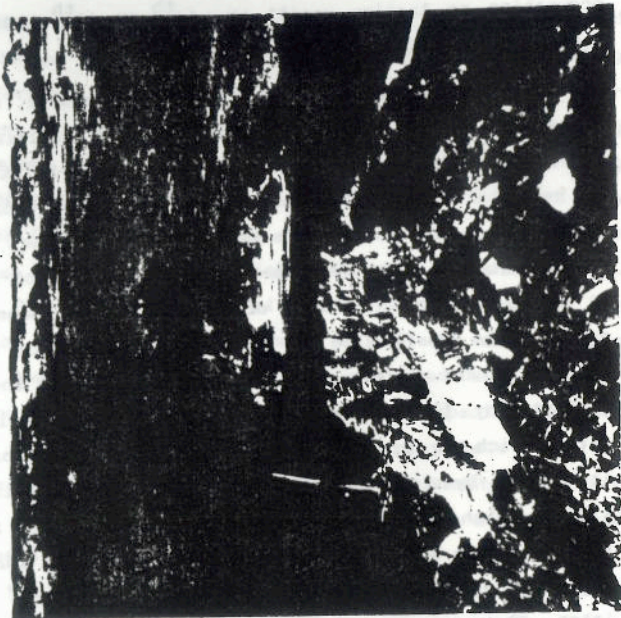


Plate 1: Sunnarti, south-west end of Island with church

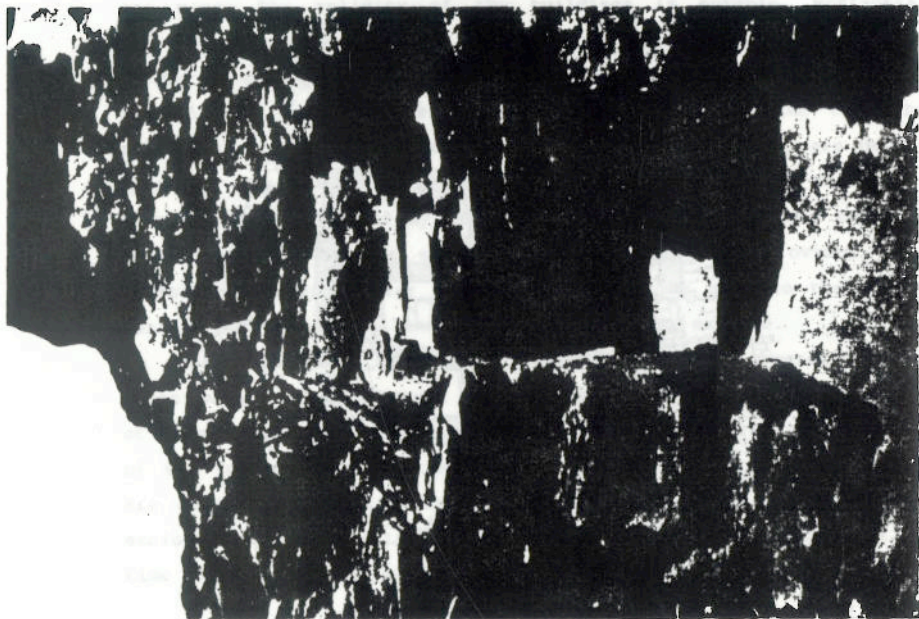


Plate 2: Sunnarti, church: haikal with altar, as seen from the west

with its connecting door also broken through the wall of the left aisle at a later date and protected by a little wall found also in other Nubian churches. The entrances to the nave are, as is common, on its western part and provide access from both north and south. The western part of the church lacks the division into three parts which is frequently found. Some steps lead up northwards, while in the southern part is an area of 1.60 x 1 m., bounded by mud-bricks, the purpose of which is unknown - there is no trace of its use as a tomb.

The outer and inner walls were built of rough stone to a height of about 1.50 m., with the vaulting and superstructure made of mud bricks set upon them. In some places, traces of barrel vaulting were still recognisable, clearly for instance in the northern side room of the Haikal, the Prothesis. On account of the brick layer in the east wall of the north aisle, P. Grossmann infers stone supports for a cross barrel vault and supposes the church to have had a domed roof in addition to the barrel vaulting⁵. That would fall in with Adams' type 4, which is the relevant one for our church⁶.

The inner walls were treated with mud plaster, still identifiable in places, on which a lime painting with signs of a coloured pattern had been overlaid. No remains of figural representations were found. The treatment of the floor was careless. Fragments of rocks projected here and there, to the west the falling ground had been brought up to the level by stone flags, in the Haikal a mud covering overlay the floor.

In the northern side of the Haikal some fragments of parchment were found. They are all small, even minute, and among them all no single line remains complete. The language of most is Nubian, with some Greek and one fragment Coptic (?). The largest fragments of Greek text, written variously with red or black ink, provide what seems so far the oldest text of the Nubian church referring

to the eucharist liturgy. The date of composition of the largest Greek fragment could be the 11th century⁸. On the basis of the pottery finds, the 9th century may be taken to have been the date of the church building and its use to have been renewed in the 11th and 12th centuries⁹.

2. The excavations on the Island of Turmukki

The work was confined to the towers which had hitherto been taken by some to have been watchtowers and by others a Turkish fort¹⁰. Tower A to the south-west of the long island commands the landscape (plate 3) and was already mentioned by Linant de Bellefonds on his journey of 1821¹¹. Two storeys remains and are only to be reached by a ladder, as the relatively low opening for entering, or crawling in, is found in the upper storey. The 6 x 8.25 m. quadrilateral of the ground plan (fig. 3) tapers off slightly towards the top. Except for the western corner the tower is built in rough stone up to a height of 2.40 m, while the vaulted ceilings within, and likewise the partition walls between, the 5 rooms of the upper storey are made of mud-brick. Entrance into the ground floor and roof-rooms alike was only possible by means of a ladder. While in the ground floor there are, except in one room, no window openings, slit windows are let into the wall of each room of the upper storey. It is uncertain how the roof over the vaulted ceiling was constructed. It is conceivable that defence was possible from the roof.

Tower B (fig. 4) lies on the north-west bank of the island, about 600 m. north of Tower A¹². It is smaller (6 x 5 m.) but formed on the same principle. Because the entrance to the storey now remaining has not survived, and especially on account of the surrounding masses of stones, one has to reckon with the possibility that there were originally two storeys here also, the building thus reaching a height which permitted a view of a long stretch of the north-western arm of the Nile. Below Room 6, which is at a rather higher level, is a cellar passage of restricted height which can only be reached through the ceiling. Here too the lower part of the building is made of rough stone, the thickness of the wall being nearly 1 m. It is also technically notable that the floors over the barrel vaulted ground floors were first filled in with mud mixed with grass and then covered with flat stones. In recent years it has been maintained by various scholars¹³, that these towers were not military watch towers but dwellings. At that time the whole settlement was no longer, like Sabagura and Ikhmindi, surrounded by a wall, but the decrease in population obliged each

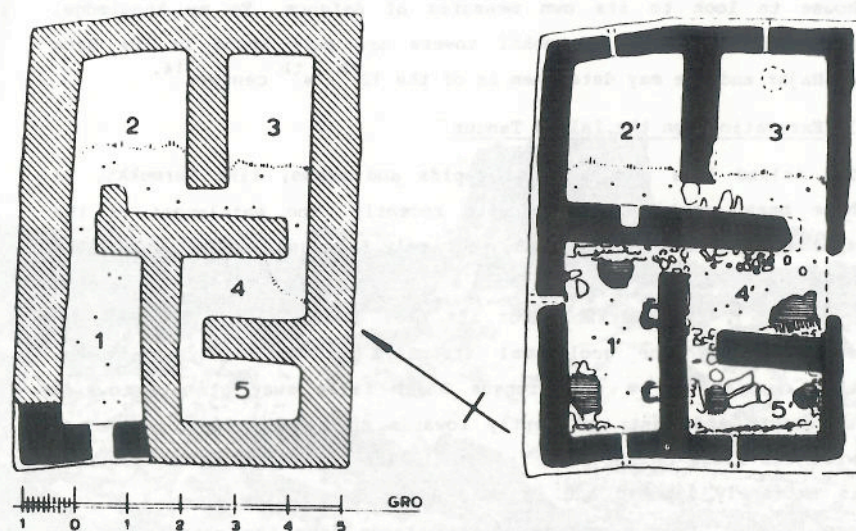


Fig. 3: Turmuki, tower A, groundplan

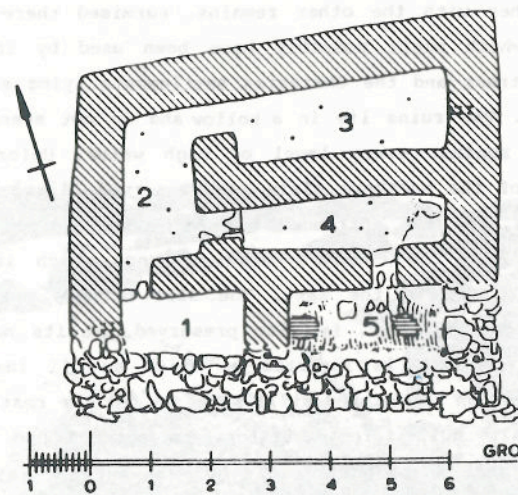


Fig. 4: Turmuki, tower B, groundplan

house to look to its own measures of defence. To my knowledge, analogies with these Turmukki towers are only found in the Batn el Hajar and one may date them as of the 12th/14th century¹⁴.

3. Excavations on the Island Tangur

The island lies near rushing rapids and seems, like Turmukki, to have been inhabited until quite recently. The settlement of the same name on the eastern bank, with only 6 houses, served as resting place in 1822 for F. Caillaud¹⁵. The fortress, already mentioned by Mills¹⁶, is remarkable for its oval ground plan. The shape is determined by the geological structure of the rocky landscape: this consists of a rock tongue which falls away steeply towards the north and west and gently towards the south, being connected with the ridge on the east (plate 4). The space inside the fortress is extremely limited and in consequence the living rooms are cramped. Only a narrow passage leads from the gateway on the south-eastern side to the western rooms. Mud-bricks seem to have been little used for the small living units, all is built with native stone. Yet remains of an older brick superstructure can be seen on the high surrounding walls in the south-eastern bay, though a reconstruction is not possible.

About 150 m. away to the south-east P. Grossmann discovered collapsed vaulting and sections of broken down walls, and considering them together with the other remains, surmised there to have been a church which might possibly have been used by the inhabitants of the fortress and the Christian settlements lying scattered about the island. The ruins lie in a hollow and do not seem to have been made safe against every level of high water. Unfortunately only the walls of the northern aisle are preserved (fig.5), which show on the one side the entrance from the aisle to the nave, and on the other side the church's side entrance which is pushed more than usually far to the east. The sill between Haikal and nave, possibly inserted later, is also preserved, at its northern corner a small stone slab is inserted on which an oil lamp used to be set as traces on the ground still show. As for the rest, the building was carelessly built, for instance, no attempt had been made to reach firm soil in preparing for the wall but the layers of bricks were just allowed to rest on the sand; whether in the west existed

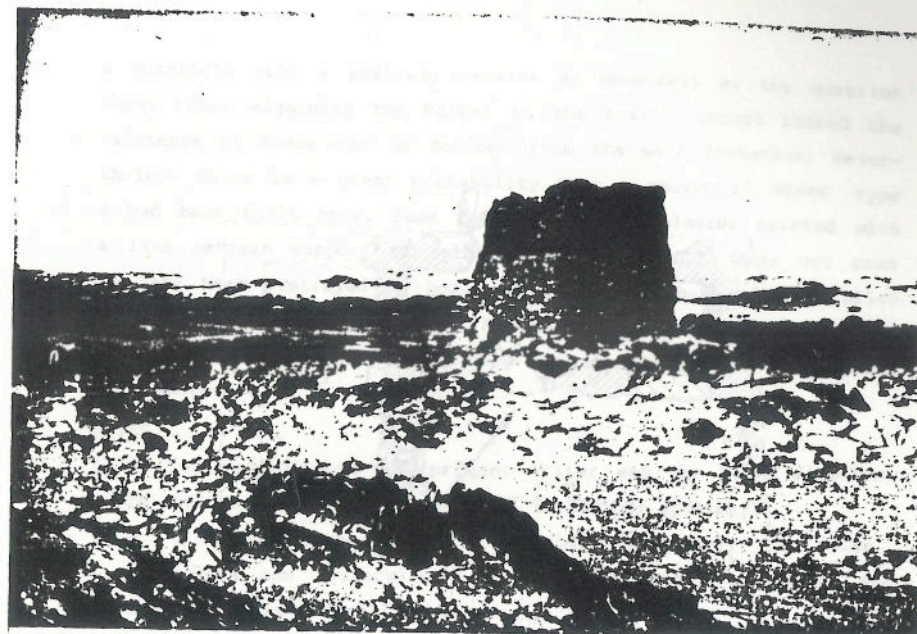


Plate 3: Turmuki, tower A



Plate 4: Tangur, fortress overlooking western arm of the Nile, as seen from the south-west.

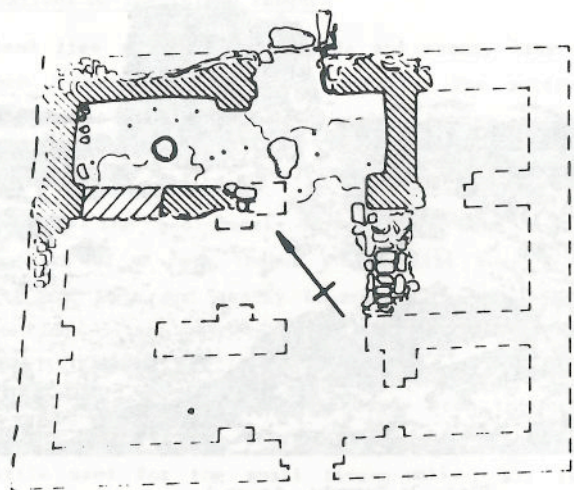


Fig. 5: Tangur, groundplan church

a vestibule with a stairway remains as uncertain as the question about rooms adjoining the Haikal in the east - though indeed the existence of these can be deduced from the wall formation. Nevertheless there is a great probability that a church of Adams' type 4 had been built here. Some remains of wall plaster painted with a line pattern support the probability. The church does not seem to have been destroyed by human powers but rather to have fallen into pieces through flooding¹⁷. A clay lamp of the church is attributed to the 9th century, the few pottery finds point to the 11/12th centuries.

NOTES

1. Of all expeditions the present writer was the field director. In 1967 the rest of the team were: B. Diebner (pottery), P. Grossmann (architect), R. Herzog (ethnology), M. Krause (coptology and history). In 1968 P. Grossmann (architect) and H. Schmidt (assistant) took part.
2. Cf. H.N. Chittick, in: *Kush V* (1957) 45 ff, pl. X.
3. Here I make use of the ceramic catalogue by M. Rodziewicz, Warsaw, which is due to appear in *AA 1972/1973*
4. See A.J. Mills in: *Kush 13* (1965) 8 and Pl. II a.
5. See *AA 1971* (1972), 122 ssq.
6. See *JARCE* (1965). - The Sunnarti church has not so far been recognised as such and is therefore missing from the survey by A.J. Mills in: *Kush 13* (1965) as well as from Somers Clarke and U. Monneret de Villard.
7. Cf. C.D.G. Müller, *Deutsche Textfunde in Nubien*, in *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens* (1970) 245-258.
8. *ibid.* 255.
9. This wide span is suggested by the pottery investigation of M. Rodziewicz, *AA 1972* (1973)
10. See A.J. Mills, *op.cit.*p. 9.
11. See Linant de Bellefonds, *Journal d'un Voyage à Méroé* (1821/1822) ed. by Marg. Shinnie (*Occasional Papers 4*), 1958/8.
12. The uncovering was made possible through the kind loan of some workers by our Scandinavian Colleague L. Gezelius for about 5 days.

- 13. See for instance: Abu Sir, Adams (Kush 11, 1963, 38 f.); Meinarti, Adams (Kush 12, 1964, 229 ff.), Duweishal, A.J.Mills (Kush 13, 1965, 7); Serra-East, Knudstadt (Kush 14, 1966, 169 f); Kananarti Adams (Kush 12, 1964, 222); Abkanarti, Presedo Velo (El Poblado Cristiano...de Abkanarti 1965, Tav. XII f.).
- 14. This also corresponds with the few pottery pieces found there.
- 15. F.Caillaud, Voyage à Méroé au Fleuve Blanc, au delà de Fazoql (1826) Text vol. III, 255 F and illustration II, Pl. XXI and XXII.
- 16. A.J.Mills in: Kush 13 (1965) 9, and Chittick, op.cit.p. 45.
- 17. The church has up to now not been recognised as a Christian building and is therefore missing from the survey by A.J. Mills.

Editorial postscript

A recent publication which deals with the church of Sunnarti is P. Grossmann, Mittelalterliche Langhauskuppelkirchen und verwandte Typen in Oberägypten, Glückstadt 1982. The author here repeats his difference of opinion with Erich Dinkler concerning the dating of the church (p. 193, note 864) which he supposes to be 13th/14th century.

As additional information to note 7 can be noticed that in the meantime G.M. Browne identified the presumed Coptic fragment as an Old Nubian text of Luke I:27-29, another fragment in Old Nubian as a version of Mark XI:6-11 (ZPE 37 (1980), p. 173-178; Ibid. 44 (1981), p. 153-166)

Additional information to note 8: the liturgical text in Greek (Müller 225) presents a part of an anaphora formula and is of considerable importance to Nubian church-history (H. Quecke in Orientalia 40 (1971), p. 367 ssq.)

LA SYMBOLIQUE DES LETTRES Γ ET Η DANS L'APSIDE DE LA CATHEDRALE DE FARAS ET LEURS LIENS AVEC L'ART COPTE


by Krzysztof Babraj, Krakow, Poland (traduction : Katarzyna Zietkiewicz et Mařia Gawron)


1. L'ESSAI DE L'INTERPRETATION DES ORIGINES DU TERME "GAMMADIA"

L'intérêt porté au problème des lettres sur les vêtements sacerdotaux date de 1605. A cette époque-là a été écrit par A. Joanne L'Heureux l'ouvrage intitulé: "Hagioglypta sive picture et sculpturae sacrae antiquiores praesertim quae Romae reperiuntur explicatae" édité à Paris en 1865. Dans le chapitre "De picturis Ecclesiarum et Coemeteriorum" l'auteur parle des lettres I, H, X dans les peintures des catacombes et dans les mosaïques paléochrétiennes. Et les lettres Π, Θ l'auteur les a trouvées sur les vêtements d'une femme qui dans le traité de Boethius "De Consolatione philosophiae", personnifiait la philosophie. L'auteur de cet ouvrage représente la philosophie en tant que femme parée d'un vêtement somptueux dont les deux côtés opposés ont des lettres brochées - supérieur Θ et inférieur Π.

L'Heureux tâche de prouver, sans grand succès, un rapport hypothétique entre le texte de Boethius et les lettres figurant sur les vêtements liturgiques, dans la peinture et dans les mosaïques. Dans sa conclusion, il se réfère à l'opinion du pape Grégoire IX qui met les lettres évoquées au même niveau que les attributs des saints.

Egalement Antonio Bosio, dans son ouvrage intitulé "Roma Sotterranea" associait les lettres sur les vêtements aux lettres apparaissant dans les peintures et les mosaïques.

Le terme "gammadia" (singulier - gammadium) - forme latinisée de la désignation de la lettre grecque gamma avait un emploi, à partir de 1677, différent de celui admis à présent, c'est-à-dire, on l'emploie pour désigner le signe en forme soit d'une seule gamma, soit composé de quelques gammas. La croix à branches égales composée à l'aide de quatre gammas  (crux gammata) lui appartient.

Ce terme a été employé pour la première fois par Macri dans l'ouvrage édité en 1677 intitulé "Hiero lexicon, sive dictionarium sacrum" à l'occasion de la description de la chasuble sur laquelle se trouvait un signe en forme d'un gamma Γ, L, soit en forme d'une croix . Les ouvrages scientifiques plus anciens ne connaissaient pas la notion de gammadia mais employaient la désignation "les lettres sur les vêtements".

F.X. Kraus, auteur de "Real-Enzyklopädie der Christlichen Alterthümer", est le premier à constater qu'il ne faut pas associer gammadium (comme le désigne crux gammata déjà mentionnée) à une seule lettre gamma.

Cependant, nous pouvons remarquer qu'on a cherché une signification qui soit propre seulement à cette lettre. Parmi d'autres lettres apparaissant sur les vêtements (I, T, H, X), ce n'est que le gamma qui a été distingué par son propre terme gammadium (se rapportant aussi à crux gammata) et on en a parlé à part bien qu'il ne soit pas mentionné dans les mots-souches concernant la question des lettres grecques sur les vêtements.

J.A. Martigny dans son "Dictionnaire des Antiquités Chrétiennes" publié en 1865 emploie le terme "gammadiae vestes" sans essayer de les interpréter. Il trouve que les chercheurs ne sont pas du même avis sur l'interprétation des notions éventuelles comprises dans ces lettres. Il associe la signification des lettres sur les vêtements aux nombres symboliques sans étudier la question de la lettre gamma dans ce contexte. Il établit le rapport entre les lettres et la symbolique des nombres.

F.X. Kraus voit le problème de la même façon: pour lui les signes qui sont l'objet de notre étude sont nommés "Buchstaben auf Kleidern" ou "Monogramme und Figuren auf Kleidern". L'auteur n'établit pas de relations entre la lettre gamma et d'autres lettres. Il distingue parmi "vestes litteratae" "vestes gammadiae" où se trouve crux gammata et il l'associe à crux immissa dont il désigne l'apparition fréquente par le terme polystauria.

Dans la nouvelle étape des études sur gammadiae participent, en principe, deux personnes: Klaus Wessel et Antonio Quacquarelli. Le dernier est en fait le seul à faire des recherches sur ce problème.

2. LES PEINTURES DE L'APSIDE DE LA CATHEDRALE DE FARAS ET LES ANALOGIES DE L'EGYPTE COPTE

Dans l'apside de la cathédrale de Faras, il y a plusieurs peintures interposées, datant probablement du IXème au XIIème siècle. L'apside a été repeinte à différentes reprises. Mais les personnages principaux du Collège des Apôtres et la Sainte Vierge sont restés pendant tout le temps de la célébration de la liturgie à l'église.

Sur les vêtements de dessus des apôtres - himation - apparaissent les gammadiae. Ces gammadiae correspondent aux lettres grecques $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\mu\mu\alpha$ et $\eta\tau\alpha$. Il n'y a que deux types de signes écrits en majuscule. La scène de l'apside de Faras, du point de vue de la composition, rappelle les peintures de la XVIIème chapelle du monastère d'Apollon à Baouït, datant du VIème siècle. Dans la partie inférieure de la scène est représentée la Sainte Vierge dans l'attitude d'une orante, entourée du Collège des Apôtres. Les apôtres entourant la Vierge ont chacun sur leur vêtement une lettre gamma. Sur le voûte de la niche est représenté "Maiestas Domini" de la vision d'Ezechiel, le Christ sur le trône tenant dans la main gauche un livre ouvert où nous apercevons hagios, répété trois fois. Le geste de la main droite est une représentation symbolique de la bénédiction.

Une peinture analogue se trouve dans la VIème chapelle du même monastère: le Christ en majesté tenant un livre ouvert où apparaît Trisagion dans le geste d'ogdoada. Dans la partie inférieure, entourant la chapelle, nous voyons la Sainte Vierge de Majesté tenant Jésus entourée du Collège des Apôtres.

Dans les scènes présentées à Baouït et à Faras, il y a deux types de lettres: gamma et èta (Faras) et gamma (Baouït).

A chaque lettre de l'alphabet grec correspond un nombre et ainsi: α -1, β -2, γ -3, δ -4. Or, le nombre trois correspond à la lettre gamma, tandis que èta a son équivalent au nombre huit. La symbolique du nombre 3 est très importante de l'Antiquité jusqu'à nos jours. Dans la culture antique de la Grèce et de Rome, les triades de différentes divinités sont connues. Dans la religion antique, on a insisté sur la création des triades: les divinités à trois yeux, les trinités, les personnages tricéphales etc. Les groupes de trois divinités ne constituent pas seulement la liaison extérieure du nombre mais, dans leur triplicité, se faisait ressentir

l'unité. Usener a conclu que la croyance chrétienne dans la sainte Trinité avait les mêmes origines, c'est-à-dire l'inclination de l'homme à trouver dans l'image de Dieu le nombre trois. Le nombre avait une importance particulière pour les Chrétiens. Dans la conscience chrétienne, il est doté d'attributs particuliers d'inspiration et de sainteté. Les sources patristiques le confirment. Toutes les données du Nouveau Testament soulignent cette importance. Il transmettait une vérité universelle, connue de tous à l'époque paléochrétienne et qui, pour nous, reste obscure. Alors la lettre gamma était le symbole du nombre trois et annonçait Trinitas. Les croyants en voyant cette lettre l'associaient d'une façon univoque à la Trinité omniprésente.

Dans la niche de la XVII^{ème} chapelle du monastère d'Apollon, la représentation de la Sainte Vierge dans l'attitude d'une orante symbolise intercession (une grande prière pour l'intercession). Dans la liturgie copte, Epiclesia est suivie de la partie appelée Intercessio dans le cadre de laquelle on a trois fois chanté Hagios. Dans la partie supérieure de cette scène, le Christ tient dans la main gauche un livre ouvert où nous voyons ces paroles qui expliquent la symbolique du nombre trois. (Apocalypse de Saint Jean, 4, 8). Une situation analogue a lieu dans la VI^{ème} chapelle. Cette représentation avait un rapport avec l'Eucharistie. Trigeminus apparaissant dans le livre ouvert tenu par le Christ en est la confirmation. Dans la liturgie copte, pendant Anafora, hagios apparaissait trois fois dans la prière eucharistique.

Dans la nef sud de la cathédrale de Faras, sur la paroi est, se trouve la représentation du Christ en majesté et Trinitas entourée d'Apôtres (interprétation de K. Michałowski). Cette représentation a le caractère de Trigeminus. Ce n'est pas la seule triplicité trouvée dans les églises nubiennes. Donc, nous voyons que le nombre trois était en vogue dans les scènes de différent caractère.

Un autre problème à traiter est la signification symbolique du nombre huit dont la lettre H était l'équivalent. La symbolique du nombre 8 est très significative dans la religion chrétienne et implique différentes idées. Pour les Pitagoriciens, ce nombre était l'image de la perfection, de l'éternité et de la paix. Huit est un nombre de sphères qui tournent autour de la Terre. Les chrétiens

lui ont attribué un sens nouveau. La Résurrection du Christ a eu lieu le huitième jour. Huit personnes embarquées sur l'arche ont traversé l'eau, etc. La conscience de la Résurrection en tant que trois fait historique placé dans le temps et l'espace, constitue la raison la plus importante du sacré de ce nombre qui lui est attribué par la religion chrétienne. La somptuosité de ce nombre a été constamment l'objet de la contemplation, qui devait accompagner les fidèles pendant toute leur vie terrestre. Antonio Quacquarelli, dans son article "Il monogramma cristologico" (gammadia H), cite plusieurs exemples de la littérature patristique traitants le problème de dies dominica, dies resurrectionis, dies christianorum, dies nostra empruntant les désignations, pour dimanche, à Saint Jérôme. On peut comparer la vie d'un chrétien au dimanche, elle devait avoir un caractère solennel. Quacquarelli trouve que le principe d'ogdoade se rapporte au monde paléochrétien entier.

Saint Ambroise était l'un des Pères de l'Eglise qui s'intéressait particulièrement à la symbolique du nombre huit.

La symbolique des lettres éta et gamma était connue de tous, ce qui implique qu'il en était de même avec les nombres. Chaque chrétien comprenait leur signification et les déchiffrait correctement. Elle était connue en Occident, en Orient, de même qu'en Egypte. Le centre alexandrin s'intéressait particulièrement à leur signification. Il suffit de mentionner les Pères de l'Eglise tels que: Filon, Clément, Cyrille, Origènes d'Alexandrie.

Ce n'est pas par hasard que les deux lettres **Γ** et **H** apparaissent dans l'apside de la cathédrale de Faras. Les convergences de ces lettres sont très importantes. Ces deux signes étaient le plus fréquents dans tout Orbis Christianus Antiquus.

SOME REMARKS ON THE CRUCIFORM CHURCH IN OLD DONGOLA (SUDAN)

by Włodzimir Godlewski, Warsaw, Poland

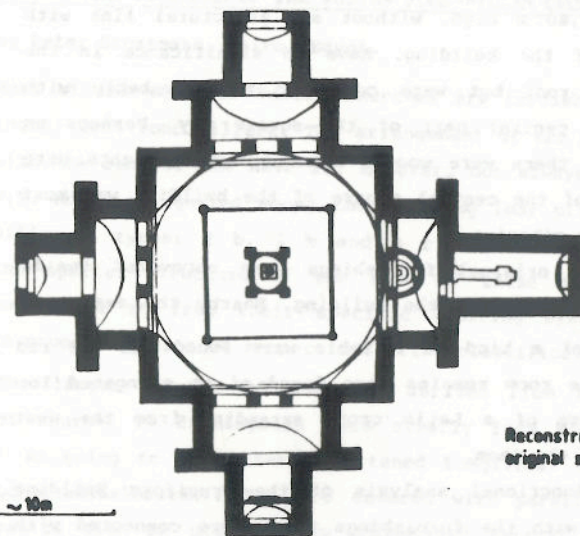
After the last season of excavation in Old Dongola in 1984, 70% of the inner space of the Cruciform Church was uncovered. Only the northern part of the building is still under the sand. On the bases of detailed analysis of remnants of the building as well as of material which was found during the excavation, we can say that the Cruciform Church in Dongola was built most probably, in the 9th century and was later twice rebuilt. The second reconstruction of the edifice was connected with the destruction of the monument at the end of the 13th century or at the beginning of the 14th, most probably during the campaigns of the mameluc army against Nubia. The Cruciform Building was abandoned at the end of the 14th century.

The main core of the Cruciform Church in Old Dongola is the central square bay (14 x 14 m.) which is closed from each side by a two columns portico (triforium). The cross was formed by arms radiating outward from the central part. Each arm of the Dongolese building is composed of two parts. The identical inner parts of the arms are wider (7,15 m) and open by a portico to the central bay. The outside parts of the arms are narrower (3,40 m) and differ in size as well as in function.

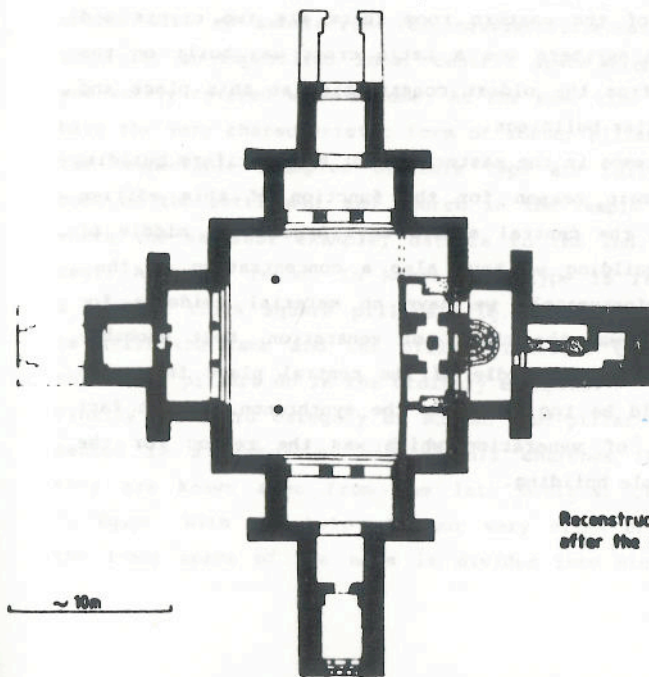
The Cruciform Building in Dongola belongs to the wellknown group of the cruciform martyria and commemorative buildings from Palestine, Syria and Asia Minor. All of these buildings of "croix libre" are earlier than the Dongolese edifice and are connected either with a tomb of a martyr or with a holy place.

Coming back to the interior of the Cruciform Building in Dongola, we should analyse the preserved remnants of the furnishing. It is possible to show that some of them belong to the original equipment of the edifice.

In the middle of the eastern side of the central bay, between the two bases of the eastern portico, we have a partly preserved structure of red brick, semicircular from the outside and with two steps in the front. This is most probably the lower part of the synthronon. On the central square there are more elements which belong to the original inner-dress of the building. One can see four columns, in a strange construction, in corners of the central square. All



Reconstruction of the original situation



Reconstruction of the situation after the second rebuilding

these columns, ca. 6,60 m high, without any structural link with porticos or walls of the building, have no significance in the construction of the roof but were connected most probably with the function of the central part of the square bay. Perhaps on top of these columns there were wooden beams on which lights were hung. In the middle of the central square of the building was most probably a great stone ciborium.

More remnants of the original furnishings were uncovered inside the eastern room in the arm of the building. Nearby the east wall red brick remnants of a kind of a table were found. On the red brick pavement of the room remains were found of an elongated low structure in the form of a Latin cross extending from the west wall to the middle of the room.

Proceeding to the functional analysis of the Cruciform Building in Dongola together with the furnishings which were connected with the original form of this building, first we should underline the architectural division of the whole interior of the edifice in two parts. The eastern arm of the monument was separated by a wall from the rest of the building. Furnishings uncovered in both parts of the interior also confirm the functional and ideological division of the interior.

Under the pavement of the eastern room there are two crypts and over the top of the northern one a Latin cross was built on the floor. Both crypts from the oldest construction at this place and were part of two earlier buildings.

The location of the tombs in the eastern arm of the cruciform building suggests that the main reason for the function of this edifice should be sought in the central square bay. Around the middle of this part of the building we have also a concentration of the furnishings, but unfortunately we have no material evidence for the centerpiece that was the object of veneration. Most probably under the ciborium, in the middle of the central place there was no altar, which would be too far from the synthronon, but in fact an important object of veneration which was the reason for the foundation of the whole building.

TYPOLICAL PROBLEMS OF THE NUBIAN FOUR-PILLAR CHURCHES

by Peter Grossmann, Cairo, Egypt.

Most of the medieval Nubian churches are furnished inside the nave (naos) with four pillars. The arrangement of the pillars in relation with the rest of the nave is, however, not always the same. Already W.Y. Adams recognized among the existing four pillar churches three different types: 2 b, 3 b and 3 c(1). Taking into consideration the spacial structure of the nave of these churches as one can understand it from their specific vaulting system, I would like to propose an in some respect different classification.

The largest number of examples derived from the basilican type of church. To distinguish them clearly from all the other types, I am going to call them: Shortened Longitinal Churches (Verkürzte Longitudinalbauten). They are covered with parallelly running barrel vaults with an occasionally emphasized central nave (fig. 1). A dome upon the centre is never to be met with.

The earlier examples of this type have still a regular sequence of the two rows of pillars with always equal intermedial spaces. In the younger examples the central intercolumnium is in some cases slightly enlarged (fig. 2). But a dome is again always missing. The second category is, on the contrary, a typical centralized church with an ambulatory (Umgangsvierstützenbau). The ambulatory encircles an emphasized inner central space which now in all cases was surely covered with a dome. At the same time the pillars always have the very characteristic form of corner pillars (Winkelpfeiler). The respectable examples of this type are fully described in my book on the settlement and church in the Temple of Elephantine(2), where the earliest example, datable to the 2nd. half of the 6th. cent. A.D. was found. In Nubia this type is represented also in a kind of thick square pillars (fig.3). However, the basic design is still the same and the pillars fulfill the same function as the corner pillars do in the ordinary examples.

Finally the third category of Nubian four-pillar churches is represented in a number of simple hall churches (Hallenkirchen), as they are known also from the late medieval church architecture in Egypt. With the help of four very often cross-shaped pillars the inner space of the naos is divided into nine bays of usually

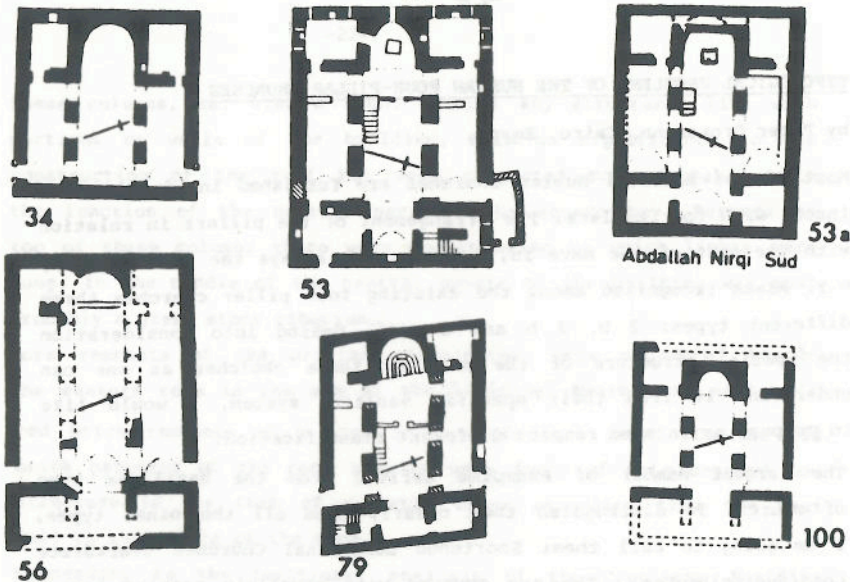


Fig. 1

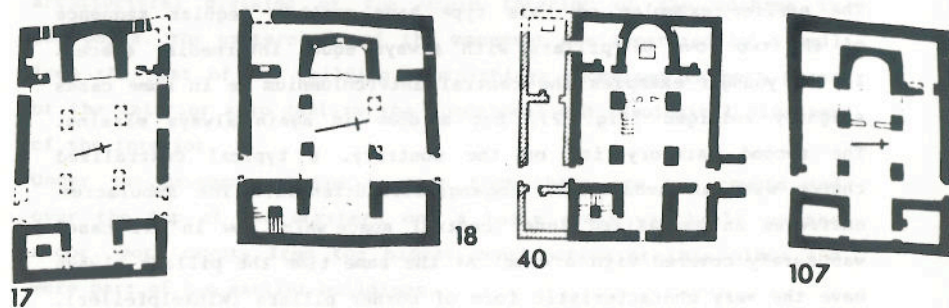


Fig. 2

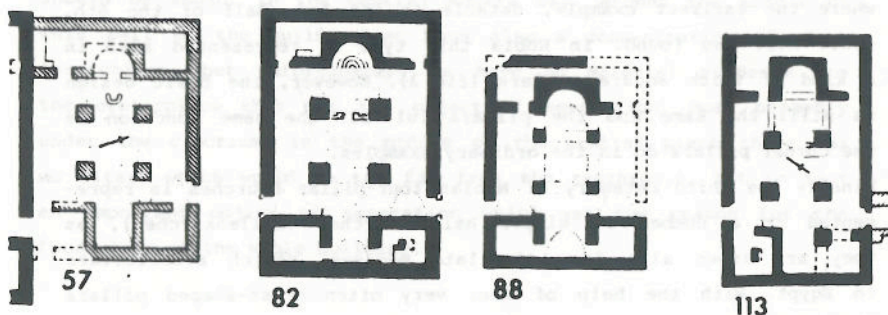


Fig. 3

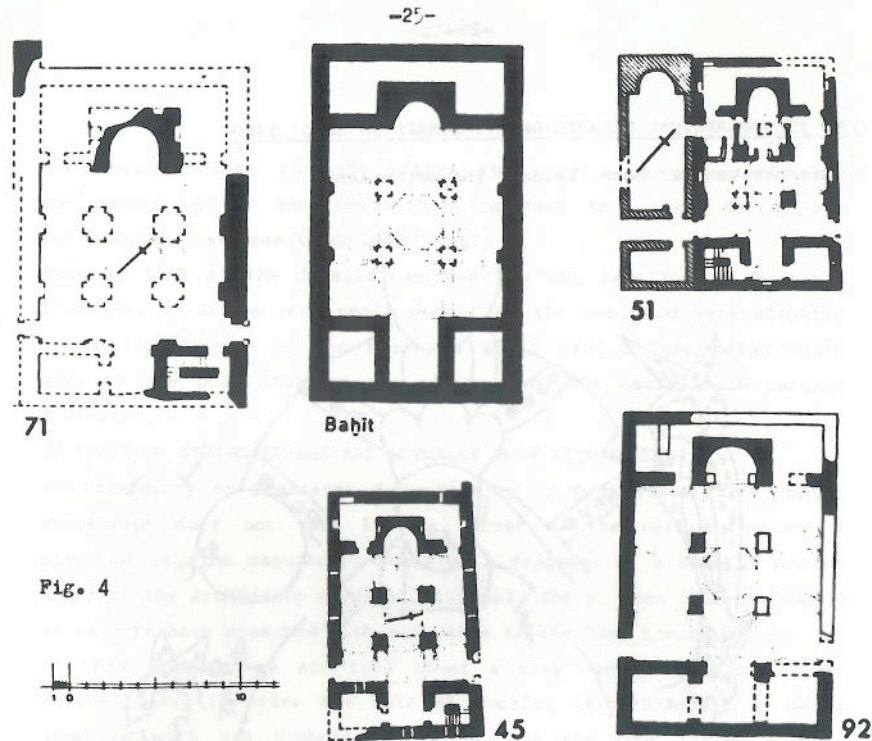


Fig. 4



equal size (fig.4). Each of these bays is covered with a little dome. While in the surviving cases the central bay shows a higher dome on squinches, in one case also on pendentifs, the eight surrounding bays are covered by shallow sailing vaults (hanging vaults) or occasionally also by barrel vaults. The earlier examples of them show a kind of cross-shaped arrangement, since the middle bays in the two axes carry a slightly higher vault.

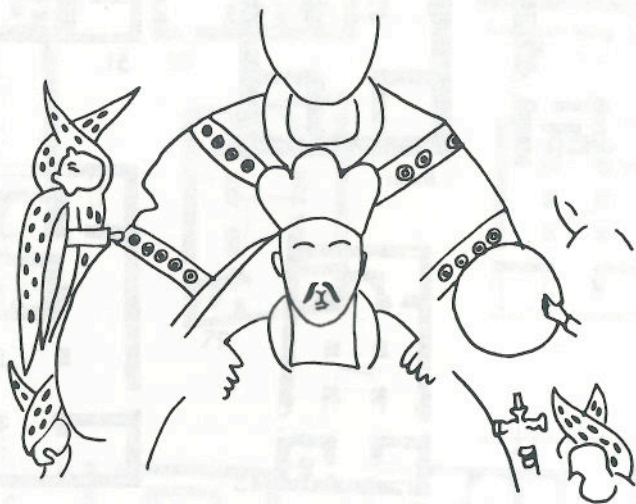
Although all these churches are equally furnished with four inner pillars, from the typological point of view, they do not belong together. The first examples, the shortened longitudinal churches, have their relatives in the ordinary basilicas with six or more pillars. The centralized dome churches with an ambulatory form since their introduction an architectural type for themselves. The hall churches finally, are dependants from the so-called Late Byzantine "cross-in-square churches" the knowledge of which might have come via Egypt to Nubia.

(1) W.Y. Adams, JARCE 4, 1965, 87ff.

(2) cf. P. Grossmann, Elephantine II (AV 25, 1980) 104ff.

SOME ICONOGRAPHICAL REMARKS ON ST. MICHAEL IN SONQI TINO

By Mieneke van der Helm, Leiden, The Netherlands



This mural painting, discovered by Professor S. Donadoni between 1967 and 1969 in Nubia, is now to be found in the museum at Khartoum (1). The painting shows archangel Michael, who protects a Nubian eparch (or according to Prof. Michalowski a royal person) surrounded by the four Living Beings. Still visible are the lion, up in the left hand corner, the man, down in the left hand corner, and the eagle in the right hand corner.

In addition there are remains of inscriptions; near the angels head:

" Michael - Samson (pray for us)

You have saved the souls of the just out of the Hades

We pray.....

Metropolitites.....

Ecclesias an anthropon...." 2)

So far it is all very clear and yet something special seems to be going on, in my opinion!

A protecting archangel Michael occurs more frequently, but the Four Living Beings with Michael are exceptional. Usually these Living Beings only occur with an enthroned Christ. So what are they doing here with Michael?

The solution lies in fact within the mural painting itself and the answer to the question within the fact that these beings are not passive, but seem to do something!

When we look at the details, we see how the lion touches Michaels clothing; we see a very small detail of the man, and very slightly in the upper zone on the right, a small hand of the being which must be the bull, holding the sfaira, and the eagle which carries a crozier.

SO THE FOUR LIVING BEINGS ARE ACTUALLY BUSY WITH SOMETHING!

The discovery by Professor J.M. Plumley in Qasr Ibrim of a coptic manuscript does not just lift a corner of the veil but quite a piece of it. The manuscript contains a fragment of a hymn of praise which is the archbishop of Constantinopel, the H. John (Chrysostomos?) is said to have preached with reference to the Four Living Beings.

In this fragment we are told about a very special Michael scene: Michael, shortly after the fall of Lucifer (Archeplasma), is being supplied with his symbols of victory by the Four Living Beings.

(1) S. Donadoni, Les fouilles à l'église de Sonqi Tino, Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in Christlichen Zeit, Recklinghausen 1970

(2) With thanks to Prof. Donadoni who translated this for me.

SOME KNOWN AND SOME NEW FEATURES OF NUBIAN PAINTING ON THE MURALS FROM HOUSE "A" IN OLD DONGOLA

by Dr. Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka, Warsaw, Poland

This paper contains some remarks on the subject of the murals from House "A" in Old Dongola.

The poor state of preservation makes the interpretation of the paintings very difficult. Nevertheless on the ground of preserved parts of murals an analysis can be attempted.

All characteristics such as colouring, facial features shape and decoration of robes and way of representation of folds on them as well as the strictly " en face " position and the schematizm of the figures prove that paintings from House "A" in Dongola belong to the so called Violet Style of the Nubian painting occurring in the 8th and 9th Century. Another proof of that classification is of a paleographic nature.

Stylistic analysis of the murals from House "A" confirms once more that the styles established for the painting of Nobadia/Faras (in that case the Violet style) are applicable also to the painting of Makuria. In the considered group of paintings however, there is a new factor so far unknown in the Nubian painting of the 8th or 9th Century. Namely the presence of floral motifs handled in the artistic manner contrary to the distinctly schematic representations of figures. On the paintings from House "A" in Dongola flowers and branches make the important part of the whole composition, have a purely ornamental character and add to the decoration of the wall.

Stylistic and iconographic similarities between Nubian and Coptic painting have been proved in many publications. The analysis of style of the group of murals from House "A" in Dongola adds some new arguments confirming connections between Nubian and Coptic art. The purely decorative character of floral motifs in Coptic art is beyond any doubt as it is in the case of floral motifs from House "A" in Dongola, which adds a new element to the question.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EPISCOPAL AND MONASTIC VESTMENTS IN NUBIAN WALLPAINTINGS

By K.C. Innemée, Leiden, The Netherlands

So far little is known about liturgical vestments in Nubia, as represented in wall-paintings, especially those from Faras. As written sources concerning Nubian liturgical dress are still lacking, information might be obtained from comparison with Coptic, Syrian and Byzantine vestments, about which we have both pictorial and literary sources.

Nubian bishops were most probably consecrated from Alexandria¹. Therefore the Coptic rituals of consecration and the information we get from them about the vestments might be applied to Nubian episcopal dress. The Coptic higher clergy, starting from bishops, was supposed to have the monk's status. As a consequence the ordination rituals provide a preceding ceremony for the monk's profession for the case that the candidate bishop was not a monk. Either the complete monastic costume was given or the most characteristic pieces, the **СХИМА** and the **КАФТ** being the scapular and the cap². In the wall-paintings in St. Anthony's monastery near the Red Sea it seems that bishops and patriarchs wear both the scapular and the monk's cap³. One of the Syrian episcopal headdresses is called **eskimō**, a vestment in name and shape derived from the monastic costume⁴. It is therefore not illogical to suppose vestments of monastic origin in the portraits of bishops from Faras.

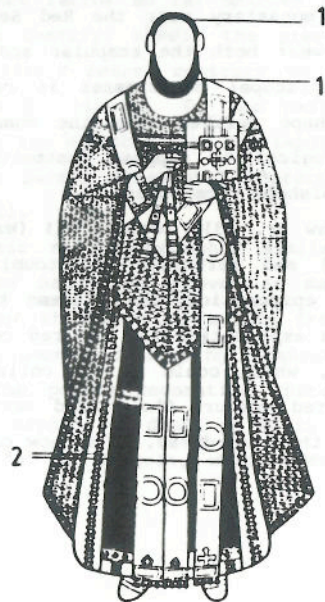
In the portraits of Petros I (Warsaw nr. 33), Ioannes III (Warsaw nr. 19), Marianos (Warsaw nr. 45) and Merkurios (Khartoum), we find a vestment, up to now called epigonation, which seems to be a scapular. This could also mean an explanation for the red collar appearing from under the phelonion, which could be the collar of the scapular, as it has the same red colour. The second vestment that might be of monastic origin is the head-dress, up to now called,

shamla. It does not resemble the Coptic shamla, which was a priest's vestment, but much more the headdress a monk is wearing, depicted on a wall-painting from Deir-al-Fakhoury⁵. It could be a form of the ΚΑΔΦΤ.

The Nubian episcopal dress is likely to express the monastic status, be it pro forma or not, of its bearer, as in the case of Coptic and Syrian vestments of bishops and patriarchs.

Notes

1. W.Y. Adams, Nubia, corridor to Africa, London 1977, p. 471/2
2. V. Mistrih (ed.) Jūhannā ibn Abi Zakariā ibn Sibā^C, Pretiosa Margarita de Scientiis Ecclesiasticis, Cairo 1966, p. 511
3. P.P.V. van Moorsel, La Peinture Murale chez les Coptes III, Le Monastère de St. Antoine, (in preparation)
4. A.A. King, Liturgie d'Antiochie, Paris 1967, pp. 58/9
J. Assfalg, P. Krüger, Kleines Wörterbuch des christlichen Orients Wiesbaden 1975, p. 240
5. J. Leroy, La Peinture Murale chez les Coptes I, Les Peintures des Couvents d'Esna, Cairo 1975, pl. 66.



1. The monk's cap (?)
2. The scapular

(from: K. Michałowski,
Faras, Die Wandmalereien
in den Sammlungen des
Nationalmuseums zu
Warschau.)

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology will organize a symposium on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Polish excavations in Egypt and the Near East, as well as the 25th anniversary of the Centre itself. This Symposium will take place in Warsaw on June 23-27, 1986.

Application and information: Miss Krystyna Polacsek

Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology,
University of Warsaw,
Warsaw 64, Poland

ADDENDA

In the list of Nubian Campaigns, published in the previous issue of Nubian Letters should be added:

28. French exactions at SedeŶnga (dir. J. Leclant)

In the list of member of the International Society of Nubian Studies the following changement of adress should be made:

Nora Ferrero,
5, Av. Th.-Flournoy,
CH-1207 Geneva

...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...



...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...
 ...the ... of ...