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DONGOLA

2015-2016

FIELDWORK, CONSERVATION AND SITE MANAGEMENT

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ADAM ŁAJTAR AND VINCENT W.J. VAN GERVEN OEI

WOMEN IN THE SOUTHWEST ANNEX

The Southwest Annex of the Monastery on Kom H in Dongola [Fig. 6.1] has a number of features that indicate a relation with womanhood, including, first of all, the many depictions of the Virgin Mary (Martens-Czarnecka 2011: Cat. Nos 86, 89B, 94, 97, 98, 108). One of them, located on the north wall of room 5, assumes the form of an icon of the Standing Virgin Mary with Child (Martens-Czarnecka 2011: Cat. No. 108). Next to it, rendered in the same style, is a scene of a dance (Martens-Czarnecka 2011: Cat. No. 107), in which the participants invoke Mother Mary, asking for her intercession in the

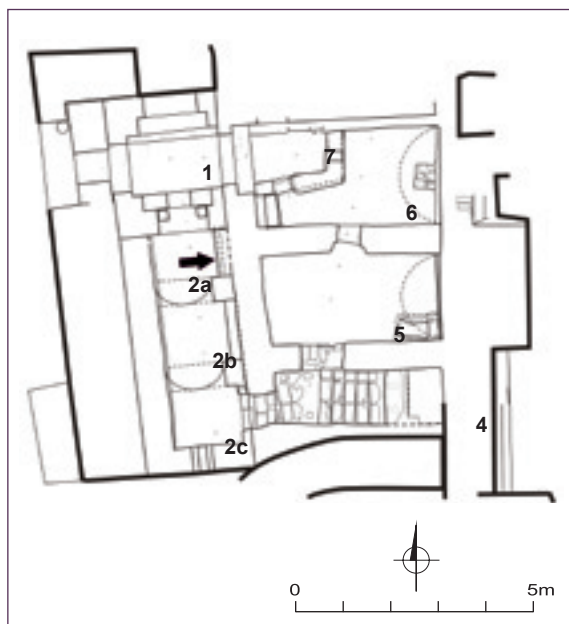


Fig. 6.1. Location of the graffito in the Southwest Annex

labors of the *ngonnas*, the sister of the king (van Gerven Oei 2018). Furthermore, at least three wall paintings in the Annex were donated by women, as is suggested by small representations of female donors accompanying them (Martens-Czarnecka 2011: 221–225). In the light of these features, the Southwest Annex may be constructed as a marked feminine space.¹ This interpretation is strengthened by a graffito in Old Nubian found in room 2, in which an anonymous woman asks for the intercession of Mary with God the Christ in the birth of her firstborn. The publication of this inscription is the main



Fig. 6.2. Enthroned Virgin and an unidentified figure on the east wall of room 2

¹ This was already suggested by Stefan Jakobielski (2008: 297).

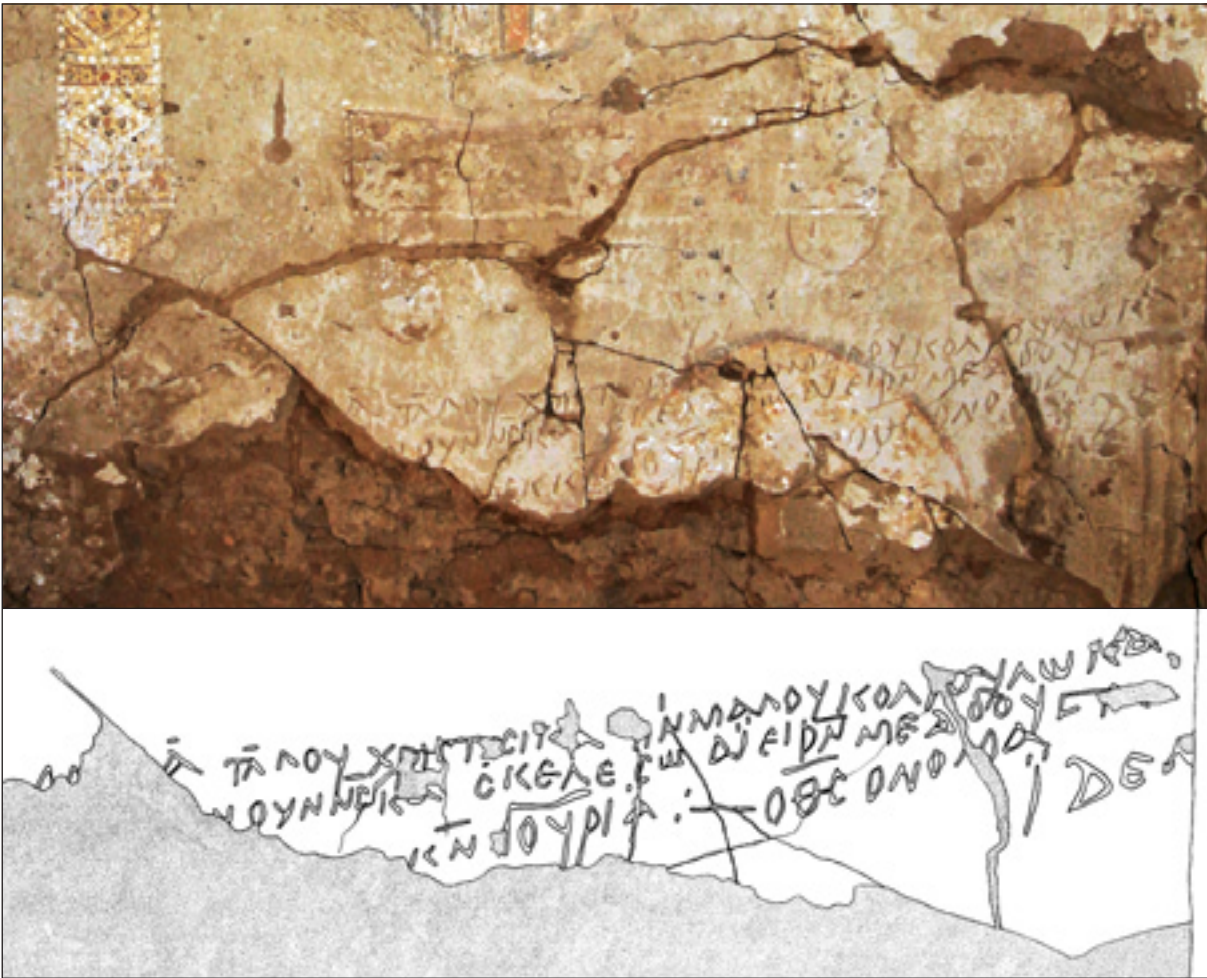


Fig. 6.3. Graffito of an anonymous woman on the east wall of room 2 of the Southwest Annex

purpose of the present paper. As an addendum we offer the publication of an ink inscription in Greek, also from room 2, accompanying a representation of one of the female donors.

The Old Nubian inscription is found on the east wall of room 2 of the Southwest Annex [see Fig. 6.1]. It is located 38 cm away from the northeastern corner and 207 cm above the floor, underneath a mural showing the Enthroned Virgin with Child (Martens-Czarnecka 2011: Cat. No. 86) [Fig. 6.2]. It is written across a painting of an

unidentified figure (Martens-Czarnecka 2011: Cat. No. 87),² and is adjacent at right angles to a representation of a figure, supposedly the donatrix of the painting(s). The inscription is 11.5 cm in height and 76 cm in width. Height of letters varies between 1.3 cm (o) and 4 cm (ρ, τ). The inscription is a graffito scratched in the plaster [Fig. 6.3]. The writing is in Nubian-type majuscules. The hand is trained but not particularly neat. The scribe could not fit the word ἴδεν in line 3 and put it beneath thus producing line 4.

† Μ[ΑΡΙ]Δ ΤΧΛΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣΙΚΑ ΗΝΜΑΛΟΥ ΚΟΛΤΟΥΛΩ ΚΑ-
 [ΚΙ]Ν ΟΥΝΝΕΚΑ ΣΚΕΛΕΩ. Αἶ ΕΙΡῆ ΜΕΔΔΟΥ Ε . .
 [ca. ?] ΜΕΚΚῆ ΔΟΥΡΙΑ : — ὁ θ(εὸς) ὄνομα
 4 ἴδεν.

² Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka identifies this figure as St Epiphanius, but it rather appears to be an archangel (information kindly provided by Dobrochna Zielińska).

Mary, beg to God the Christ, according to this (prayer) that the firstborn is born in purity. I, your servant, [- - -] for the sake of the small [one]. God knows the name.

The essential part of the inscription is a prayer in Old Nubian, with which an anonymous woman asks for the intercession of the Virgin Mary in relation to the birth of her firstborn and heir. The prayer is followed by a formulaic expression in Greek, which explains the petitioner's anonymity: her name is known to God. The two elements are separated from one another by a sign consisting of a colon and a prolonged line. As this sign is habitually used to close a text in Nubian scribal tradition, one gets an impression that the expression of anonymity was added as if in afterthought. The code switching from Old Nubian to Greek may be related to the formulaic nature of the Greek expression or its absence in Old Nubian.

Particular linguistic aspects of the Old Nubian used in the inscription suggest that the author may have been a local from the region in which it was found, namely the area surrounding the capital of Makuria, Dongola. Although Old Nubian as a literary and official language used throughout the Makurian kingdom appears to have been initially based on the Nobiin language, spoken in the region of Nobadia (Rilly 2010: 165–166), it appears that in this case the influence of Dongolawi can be detected in some of the morphology (see below, commentary to lines 1 and 2). This may give us insight into how Old Nubian developed after it was adopted as the official language of Makuria following the incorporation of Nobadia in the 6th/7th century.

1. ΗΝΜΑΛΟΥ: ΗΝ “this” (Browne 1996: 70) followed by the suffix -ΜΑΛΟΥ, supposedly a regional variant of -ΜΑΛΟ, “according to, following”. The orthography -ΟΥ suggests a pronunciation as /-u/ rather than /-o/, which would appear in standard Old Nubian. Perhaps this is an indication of the influence of the regional Dongolawi dialect of the author. The locative ending in -u has been preserved in toponyms in the Dongola reach, for example Gebel Kullaru, a rocky hill near Old Dongola, supposedly from *kullu*, “rock”, with locative -ru, cf. Old Nubian -λο. In contemporary Andaandi, the final -u of the locative has been dropped.

ΚΟΛΤΟΥΛΩ: A word with the root ΚΟΛ, “pure” (Browne 1996: 96) followed by the nominalizer -Τ, and locative -ΛΩ. As the overall writing direction of the inscription goes upward to the

left, the scribe perhaps had difficulties keeping a straight line.

1–2. ΚΑ[ΚΙ]Ν: If no additional letters are missing at the beginning of line 2, ΚΑ[ΚΙ]Ν appears to be a plausible reconstruction. Only the nominative ΚΑΚῶ, “firstborn”, and the irregular plural ΚΑΥΕΙ have been attested (Browne 1996: 83), suggesting that the final *lambda* of the root is labile and thus allowing a genitive ΚΑ[ΚΙ]Ν. It is unlikely that ΚΑ at the end of line 1 belongs to the previous word, as that would create an ungrammatical sequence of locative–accusative. To pray for the successful delivery also appears to be worthy of special intercession by Mary, as the firstborn was supposed to be the heir. For example, a woman's desire for a ΚΑΚῶ drives the plot in the Old Nubian *Miracle of Saint Menas* (El-Shafie El-Guzuuli and van Gerven Oei 2013), and it could be argued that also the dance scene in room 5 is concerned with the production of an heir to the throne and thus a firstborn. ΚΑ[ΚΙ]Ν is the genitive-marked subject of ΟΥΝΝΩΚΑ.

2. ΟΥΝΝΩΚΑ: From ΟΥΝΝ, “to bear” (Browne 1996: 138), with preterite -ῶ and accusative -ΚΑ, which marks a complement clause dependent on ἔκελεσῶ, the 2nd/3rd person singular imperative “beg”.

ΕΙΡῆ: This form of the 2nd person singular pronoun ΕΙΡ with genitive -ῆ has heretofore only been found in a specific genre of literary texts, the regular form being ΕΙΝ. This particular form, together with its 3rd person singular pronoun parallel ΤΑΡῆ for ΤΑΝ, has only been attested in Psalms. Of the nine texts displaying this feature, four came to light in Qasr Ibrim and are written on parchment (Plumley and Browne 1988: nos 2 and 3; Browne 1989: nos 12 and 13) and five in Dongola, where one is written on parchment (Browne 1987: 76–81, no. 1) and four have the form of ink inscriptions on the walls of the so-called Northwest and Southwest Annexes to the Monastery on Kom H (Browne 2006; van Gerven Oei and Łajtar in preparation). Thus, more than half of the texts containing this specific form of the genitive personal pronoun have been found in Dongola. The appearance of -ΜΑΛΟΥ and ΕΙΡῆ in the same graffito suggests that the latter form is perhaps also a local variant, either derived from the Dongolawi language in that period or the result of a development internal to Old Nubian originating in Dongola. This would, in turn, suggest that all attested Psalm translations found both in Qasr Ibrim and in Dongola, most of which are partly or fully bilingual Greek–Old Nubian and share a host of other stylistic and linguistic features, have their provenance in the

same place, presumably the Makurian capital (see for further discussion van Gerven Oei and Tsakos in preparation).

3–4. The formula οὐδὲ θεὸς ὄνομα εἶδεν occurs in two visitors' inscriptions in the upper church at Banganarti, probably left by the same man (Łajtar forthcoming a: Nos 416 and 853). It is probably also used by the author of a wall inscription in the so-called Church of Angels in Tamit (Donadoni 1967: 71, No. 29b, l. 3; the text has: Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς Χ(ριστ)ὲ ὄνομα εἶτων). The formula οὐδὲ θεὸς ὄνομα εἶδεν is frequently found in Christian votive inscriptions from the Balkan Peninsula, Aegean islands and Asia Minor. Its attestations were collected and discussed by Denis Feissel (1983: No. 104), although his list of attestations may be enriched by numerous further items (here only a selection) coming from Athens (SEG XV 141), Corinth (Meritt 1931: no. 253), Sparta (SEG XXXIV 305), Demetrias in Thessaly (SEG XXXVII 464), Rhodes (SEG XXXI 737 and XLIII 537), Hierokaisareia in Lydia (TAM V 1, 1300), Sinuri in Caria (Scheibelreiter 2006: no. 27), and Anemourion (Russell 1987: no. 78). A similar formula οὐδὲ θεὸς γινώσκει τὸ ὄνομα appears in votive inscriptions, especially the mosaic ones, from southeastern Asia Minor,

Palestine and Arabia (Haensch 2010). Also, a rare variant with ἐπιστάται is known (Scheibelreiter 2006: no. 28; the inscription comes from Sinuri in Caria). The Greek οὐδὲ θεὸς ὄνομα εἶδεν/γινώσκει/ἐπιστάται has a counterpart in the Latin *cuius nomen Deus scit* (Thiel 2014). A similar expression is also known in Hebrew. All these formulae, both in votive inscriptions from the Balkan Peninsula, Asia Minor and Palestine/Arabia and in visitors' inscriptions from Nubia, are expressions of the anonymity (and modesty) of the authors of these inscriptions in front of God, who, being omniscient, knows the name of the donor and visitor (Roueché 2007).

The paintings on the east wall of the room may have been donated by an individual represented on the northern face of a pilaster adjacent to this wall. This person, presumably a female, is clad in a red robe (Martens-Czarnecka 2011: Cat. No. 87A) and is accompanied by a dedicatory inscription in Greek. The inscription is found 16 cm away from the southeastern corner, 169.5 cm above the floor. Its dimensions are 12.5 cm in height and 7 cm in width. The letters have a height varying between 0.9 cm and 1.2 cm and are executed in black paint. The inscription is severely damaged, especially in its lower part.

† κ(ύρι)ε Ἰ(ησο)ῦ Χ(ριστ)έ,
 φύλαξον
 εὐλόγησον
 4 [β]οίηθισον
 τὴν δ[.] [.] [.]
 .[- - -]
 .[- - -]

4. βοήθησον

O Lord Jesus Christ, guard, bless, help [- - -].

The inscription follows the habitual structure of dedicatory inscriptions in Christian Nubia, which are regularly written in Greek. They start with an invocation of God or a saint, followed by a series of requests expressed in the aorist imperative active starting with φύλαξον εὐλόγησον (see remarks by Adam Łajtar in *Chapter 13*). After this series of requests, the name of the person making them is given, always preceded by the qualification “your servant”. In this particular

instance, the feminine article τὴν in line 5 seems to suggest that the donor, whose name can no longer be deciphered, was female. Even though Nubian texts show that gendered nouns and articles could sometimes be used to refer to either gender (Łajtar 2003: No. 7, commentary to line 13), in this case the red dress of the person depicted next to the inscriptions rather suggests that the article is gendered properly.

DONGOLA PLAN AND TIMELINE

Topography and site locations

All major sites and buildings excavated in ancient Dongola, their location and new coding system in brackets

- B.I** Building I = "Palace of Ioannes" (Site SWN)
- B.II** Building II (Site SWN)
- B.III** Building III.1 = commemorative monument;
Building III.2 = church (Site SWN)
- B.IV** Building IV (Site SWN)
- B.V** Building V = Royal Church (Site SWN)
- B.X** Building X (Site SWN)
- BX** Building X (Site CC)
- CC.I** First Cruciform Church (Site CC)
- CC.II** Second Cruciform Church (Site CC)
- DC** Church D (Site D)
- EC.I** First Cathedral = Church of the Stone Pavement (Site CC)
- EC.II** Second Cathedral = Church of the Stone Pavement (Site CC)
- EDC** Early Church D (Site D)
- FC** Church F
- Fortifications** Towers NW, N2, N1, NE, E1, E2
- H.HC** Monastic Church, Great Monastery of St. Anthony (Kom H)
- H.NW** Northwest Annex, Great Monastery of St. Anthony (Kom H) (H.NW.B.I, B.II, B.III – constituent parts of the annex)
- H.SW** Southwest Annex, Great Monastery of St. Anthony (Kom H)
- House A.106** NW fortifications
- Houses A, B, PCH.1** architecture on Site P
- MC.I** First Mosaic Church
- MC.II** Second Mosaic Church
- NC** North Church

- NWC** Northwest Church
- OC** Old Church
- PC** Pillar Church
- RC.I** Third Cathedral = Church of the Granite Columns
- RC.II** Fourth Cathedral = Church of the Granite Columns
- RT.1, RT.2** Rock-cut tombs
- Site = Kom A** Citadel
- Site C** northwestern Citadel area
- Site CC** area around the Cruciform Church
- Site D** northern outskirts of the town settlement
- Site = Kom H** Great Monastery of St. Anthony
- Site P** northern town agglomeration
- Site R** pottery workshops
- SWN** southwestern part of the Citadel
- TC** Tower Church
- Throne Hall** = Mosque Building



Note:

For the sake of compatibility with earlier reports, the elevation quota in this report refer to the 1964 geodetic vertical datum based on the level of the River Nile in Dongola (Michałowski 1966).

EARLY MAKURIA I	Rise of the Kingdom of Makuria; founding of Dongola 5th–early 6th century	El Ghaddar cemetery Hammur cemetery Citadel of Dongola
EARLY MAKURIA II	Main center of the Kingdom 6th–early 7th century	Rock tombs (R.I and R.II) Old Church (OC) Building X (B.X) First Mosaic Church (MC.I) First Cathedral = Church of the Stone Pavement (EC.I) Site SWN: Building B.IV Great Monastery of St Anthony (Kom H) Site R: Pottery workshops Iron-smelting furnaces Fortifications
EARLY MAKURIA III	Center of Great Makuria early 7th–early 9th century	Site SWN: Building B.I (“Palace of Ioannes”) Site SWN: Building B.III.1 – commemorative monument Site SWN: Building B.V = King’s Church NW fortifications: House A.106 Second Cathedral = Church of the Stone Pavement (EC.II) Third Cathedral = Church of the Granite Columns (RC.I) Second Mosaic Church (MC.II) Site D: Early Church (EDC) Site P: House PCH.1 and Houses A and B
MIDDLE MAKURIA	Center of Great Makuria early 9th–mid 11th century	First Cruciform Church (CC.I) Throne Hall Fourth Cathedral = Church of the Granite Columns (RC.II) Site SWN: Building B.V = King’s Church Pillar Church (PC) Site D: Church (DC)
LATE MAKURIA I	Dotawo Kingdom mid 11th–end of 12th century	Northwest Church (NWC) Northwest Annex (Great Monastery of St. Anthony)
LATE MAKURIA II	Dotawo Kingdom 13th–mid 14th century	New fortifications on the Citadel Site SWN: Building B.II Second Cruciform Church (CC.II) North Church (NC) Tower Church (TC) Site SWN: Late Building I Site SWN: Building B.III.2 = church Mosque
LATE MAKURIA III	Small Makuria (Dotawo Kingdom) In Dongola: Kingdom of Dongola Town mid 14th–16th century	New houses: Site B and Site SWN Palace of the Mek Southern settlement, <i>qubbas</i> South Wall
FUNJ KINGDOM	Funj Kingdom In Dongola: Kingdom of Dongola Town 17th century–1822	New houses: Site B and Site SWN Southern settlement

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BAR IS</i>	<i>British Archaeology Reports International Series (Oxford)</i>
<i>CCE</i>	<i>Cahiers de la céramique égyptienne (Cairo)</i>
<i>GAMAR</i>	<i>Gdańsk Archaeological Museum African Reports (Gdańsk)</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology (London)</i>
<i>JJP</i>	<i>Journal of Juristic Papyrology (Warsaw)</i>
<i>PAM</i>	<i>Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean (Warsaw)</i>
<i>PG</i>	<i>J.-P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca, 161 vol., Paris 1857–1866</i>
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum (Amsterdam–Leiden)</i>
<i>TAM</i>	<i>Tituli Asiae Minoris (Vienna)</i>

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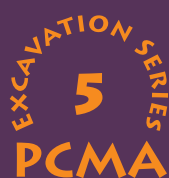
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DONGOLA 2015–2016

FIELDWORK
CONSERVATION
AND SITE MANAGEMENT



DONGOLA
2015-2016



The royal city of Old Dongola was the political and economic center of Makuria, a medieval Christian kingdom. It flourished from the 5th/6th century, when the royal complex on the Citadel was built and enclosed within massive stone fortifications. Over the centuries, other representative buildings were founded, among them the imposing Throne Hall later converted into a mosque that still towers over the site today. Equally impressive are the religious complexes unearthed in Dongola. The Makurian capital's churches and monastic buildings boast stunning mural paintings and inscriptions that shed light on local religious practice, while their architectural design testifies to the skills of local builders. After the royal court abandoned Dongola in 1364, the city remained an important urban center, as indicated by the extensive residential quarters functioning on and around the Citadel for several centuries. The city, still a vital node in the long-distance trade network, was inhabited by a lively community, which cultivated old traditions and embraced new trends.

The Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology University of Warsaw mission to Old Dongola has been excavating the Makurian capital for over 50 years. This volume is the second comprehensive report on fieldwork and conservation conducted in 2015–2016 by a team led by Włodzimierz Godlewski. The contributions report on the work of recent seasons and present in-depth studies on the site's urban development, architecture and building techniques. The volume also includes results of the most recent specialized research on material brought to light during these and earlier campaigns. The discussed categories of finds include inscriptions, ostraka, pottery, animal bones, and textiles. The wealth of archaeological finds recovered on the site in the seasons under consideration contributes new data to studies on the history of Dongola, as well as the culture, art, architecture and economy of Makuria.



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