

Two Private Prayers in Wall Inscriptions in the Faras Cathedral

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Abstract: The present paper aims at analysing two inscriptions from the Faras Cathedral. Both contain prayers addressed to God by certain individuals. The first of them is in Greek and is modelled on *Ps.* 85:1–2; the second is an original composition in Old Nubian with information about the protagonist and the author in Greek. The publication gives the description of inscriptions, transcript of texts with critical apparatus, translation, and commentary elucidating all significant aspects of the texts.

Keywords: Christian Nubia, Faras, wall inscriptions, Greek in Christian Nubia, Old Nubian, Biblical citations

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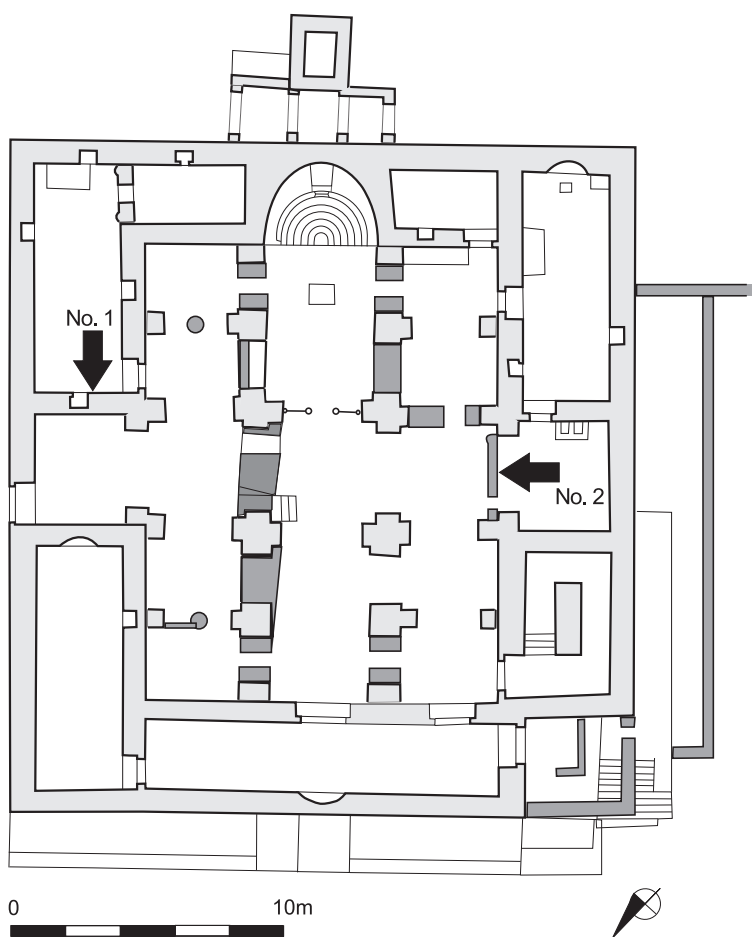
The present article has come into existence in connection with our work on a catalogue of wall inscriptions in the Faras cathedral.¹ It offers the publication of two inscriptions, which, although they differ from one another in many respects (a different location within the sacral space, a different technique of execution, and a different language), belong to the same genre of texts, namely prayers addressed to God by individuals.

A typical private prayer put into an epigraphic text in Christian Nubia consists of two elements: (1) an invocation of God or a saint, and (2) a request for a favour made in the name of a person. The inscriptions studied here follow this general model but develop it in a different way with respect to both the form and the contents.

1. PRAYER FOR KINYAKOUDA(?)

The inscription was situated on the west wall of the north pastophorium (**Fig. 1**). It measured 7cm in width and 3.5cm in height. It was executed in black ink. It bears number G.60d.2/3

¹ For a short presentation of the project and its first results, see: Łajtar, Ochoła 2015.



1. Plan of the Faras cathedral with location of the inscriptions marked with arrows (Digitizing: D. Zielińska; based on: Godlewski 2006: Fig. 5).

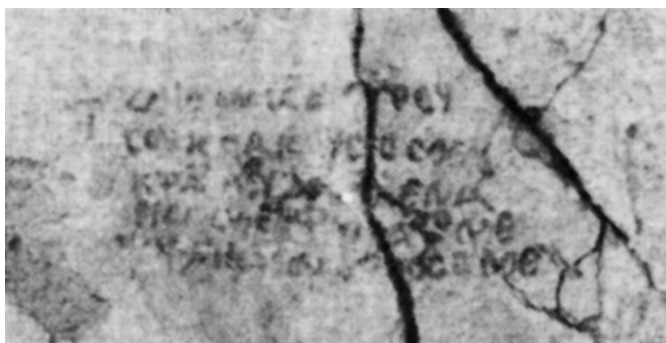
in Stefan Jakobielski's inventory of inscriptions prepared during the 1962/1963 season of work by the Polish mission in Faras. It was left on site and is now lost under the waters of Lake Nubia. The inscription was written on the second and the last layer of plaster covering the wall in this place, which means that it can be only broadly dated to the tenth–fifteenth century.²

The inscription remains unpublished. It was not edited by Jadwiga Kubińska in her study devoted to the north pastophorium of the Faras cathedral.³ Kubińska noted only, after Jakobielski's inventory files, that the inscription consisted of five lines in Old Nubian,⁴

² The second layer of plaster was connected with the rebuilding of the cathedral during the episcopate of Bishop Petros I (AD 976–999); for this rebuilding, see: Godlewski 2006: 93–117.

³ Kubińska 1976.

⁴ Kubińska 1976: 34 (no. 59).



2. Inscription no. 1 (© IKSiO PAN).

a note which has been proven false by the present edition. Our edition was prepared mainly on the basis of Jakobielski's transcript kept in the inventory files. The photo was of less importance as it is very blurred (**Fig. 2**).

† κλῖνον, κ(ύρι)ε, τὸ οὖ
 σου κ(αί) ἑπάκουσό με \\
 κψᾶκογδα, δηνά-
 4 <μ>εισό με, || φύλαξό με
 ψυχῆς μου, σῶσό με \\

1. οὖς || 2. ἐπάκουσον || 3. κψᾶκογδα(?) || 3–4. δυνάμησον (for δυνάμωσον; see commentary) || 4. φύλαξον || 5. σῶσον

Bow down Thine ear, O Lord, and hear me, Kinyakouda(?), strengthen me, guard my soul, save me.

The inscription is composed as a prayer in the name of a certain Kinyakouda. The prayer is obviously modelled on or, rather, is an adaptation of *Ps.* 85:1–2: κλῖνον, κύριε, τὸ οὖς σου, καὶ ἐπάκουσόν μου, ὅτι πτωχὸς καὶ πένης εἰμί ἐγώ. φύλαξον τὴν ψυχὴν μου, ὅτι ὀσιός εἰμι. σῶσον τὸν δοῦλόν σου, ὁ Θεός μου, τὸν ἐλπίζοντα ἐπὶ σε. The author of the prayer (Kinyakouda or someone commissioned by him) kept some expressions of the psalmist *in extenso* (κλῖνον, κύριε, τὸ οὖς σου, καὶ ἐπάκουσόν μου; φύλαξον τὴν ψυχὴν μου), reshaped another (σῶσόν με instead of σῶσον τὸν δοῦλόν σου), and eliminated some others (ὅτι πτωχὸς καὶ πένης εἰμί ἐγώ; ὅτι ὀσιός εἰμι; ὁ Θεός μου, τὸν ἐλπίζοντα ἐπὶ σε). It is easy to observe that the retained expressions are those containing verbs of request, whereas the eliminated one refers to the requesting person and characterises his/her attitude towards God. In addition, the author used one more verb of request that cannot be found in the above-quoted Psalm (δυνάμησον, i.e. δυνάμωσον); it is attested, however, elsewhere in the Book of Psalms, in *Ps.* 67:29.

The inscription shows numerous graphic peculiarities. The most characteristic of them is dropping the final *ν* in forms of the aorist imperative before the following

μ (᾽πάκουσό με, δενά(μ)εισό με, φύλαξό με, σῶσό με). This can be analysed either as a phonetic notation of the aorist imperative forms under the loss of /n/ at the end of the word, a phenomenon frequently occurring in post-Classical Greek,⁵ or as an example of assimilation of /n/ and /m/ with the concomitant haplography: /phylaxonme/ > /phylaxomme/ > /phylaxome/.⁶ One needs to note that the two possibilities may have overlapped. A somewhat similar situation can be observed in the phrase οὖ σου (ll. 1–2), where the omission of the c may result from either haplography or the loss of /s/ in final position, which, in late Greek, is as common as that of /n/.⁷ The occurrence of ψυχῆς instead of ψυχῆν in line 5 may be caused by the same phenomena too: the loss of /n/ in final position with the concomitant insertion of /s/. Additionally, one observes an unorthodox notation of δενά(μ)εισο instead of δυνάμησον related to the iotacistic phenomena on the one hand and the substitution of ε /e/ for γ /i/ on the other, the latter being a rather rare phenomenon rooted in the pronunciation of post-Classical Greek. For other, more specific phenomena, see the line commentary.

An interesting element of the inscription is the use of a double stroke as an editorial sign. In line 2 the double oblique stroke seems to mark the end of a colon and in line 4 the vertical double stroke probably indicates the end of the first verse of the Psalm, even if the verse was considerably reshaped in comparison with the original. The oblique double stroke at the end of line 5 marks the end of the inscription and the end of the second verse of the Psalm (again considerably changed in comparison with the original).⁸

1. κλῆνον: The transcript of Stefan Jakobielski has κη . εν. The reading κλῆνον is assured by the textual parallel (see above).

2. κ(αὶ) ᾽πάκουσό με: Jakobielski's transcript has κ πακογομε (with a space between κ and π). We have edited the text as if we were dealing with the abbreviation for καί (pronounced /ke/) and apheresis.⁹ Another possibility is to admit a kind of haplography and to edit: κ(αὶ) (ἐ)πάκουσό με. Theoretically, it is also possible that the free space between κ and π originally contained the letter ε (now lost), which would give the reading κ(αὶ) [ἐ]πάκουσό με. The original text of the Psalm has: ἐπάκουσόν μου. This was changed by the person who composed the text into ἐπάκουσόν με probably under the influence of other aorist imperatives with με as a direct object occurring in it. An additional factor contributing to this change could have been the collapse of the Greek system

⁵ Gignac 1976: 111–114.

⁶ Such a phenomenon (assimilation + haplography) is quite common in the Old Nubian language; see, e.g., commentary to l. 3 (αοκα) in inscr. no. 2, below.

⁷ Gignac 1976: 124–131.

⁸ Double vertical and oblique strokes occur frequently as diacritics in literary and subliterate texts from Christian Nubia. Their function requires a separate study.

⁹ Apheresis is sporadically attested in Nubian Greek. The clearest example occurs in a visitor's graffito in the Northwestern Annex to the monastery on Kom H in Dongola: † ᾽γὼ φγιων (unpublished; Adam Łajtar's reading from the original).

of declension in Christian Nubia. Inscriptions left by visitors in cult places, frequently constructed according to the pattern: ‘I, NN, wrote this’, show that various forms of the pronoun of the first person singular [ἐγώ, (ἐ)μοῦ, (ἐ)μέ] were considered, irrespective of the syntax, as just different words for the same general notion ‘I’.¹⁰

3. κψ̄ακογΔα: Stefan Jakobielski’s transcript offers κψα κογΔα; however, a free space between α and κ is probably purely accidental. Here we are obviously dealing with a personal name. The name κψ̄ακογΔα, attested for the first time here, is puzzling. Morphologically it is a compositum with κογΔα-, ‘servant’, as the second element.¹¹ Its first element poses a problem. κψα- is phonetically unlikely; one expects a horizontal stroke above κψ indicating /i/ in order for the form to be pronounced. However, even if this observation holds true, the word κψ̄α- has not to date been attested in Old Nubian. We know the word κψ̄(ψ)-, ‘(to be) without’, but it does not offer a satisfactory meaning in the given context. The parallel formations show that what is expected here is a name of a saint or a word referring to divinity. Under these circumstances we have to content ourselves with a *non liquet*.

3–4. δανά(μ)εισο must be a phonetic notation of δυνάμησον. Prayers for protection for the donors accompanying painted representations in the Faras cathedral contain, among other requests, ἐνδυνάμησον, ‘strengthen!’.¹² Obviously the verb δυνάμωω had the form δυνάμέω in Faras and possibly elsewhere in Christian Nubia.¹³

4–5. φύλαξό με ψυχῆς μου: με is superfluous in the given context. Similar to the substitution of με for μου in line 2, it was probably introduced under the influence of other aorist imperatives with με as the direct object occurring in this inscription.

5. σῶσό με: Stefan Jakobielski’s transcript offers . . . οσομε. The reading σῶσό με is assured by the textual parallel (see above).

2. PRAYER FOR ARWA

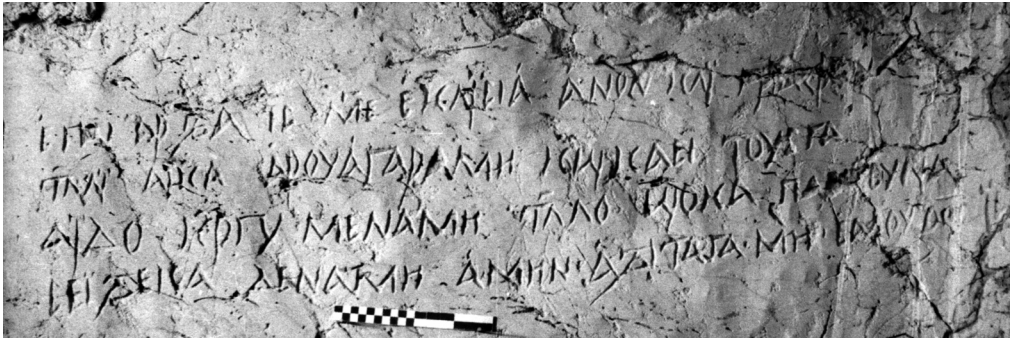
The inscription (**Fig. 3**) was incised in the plaster of the walled-up arcade between the southern aisle and the southern vestibule (**Fig. 1**). It measured 107cm in width and 28cm in height. It bears number K.253a.4 in Stefan Jakobielski’s inventory of inscriptions. It was

¹⁰ Łajtar 2003: 141; 2010: 760.

¹¹ For such names, see: Satzinger 1992.

¹² Jakobielski 1974: 297–298, no. 31, ll. 5–6 (ἐνδινάμισον); 298, no. 32, ll. 3–4 (ἐνδινάμισ[ον]); 298–299, no. 33b, ll. 2–3 (ἐνδινάμισον); Kubińska 1974: 148, no. 91a, l. 3 (ἐνδινάμισ[ον]); reconstructed in: Jakobielski 1974: 298–299, no. 33a, l. 3 (ἐν[δι]νά[μι]σον); 299, no. 34, l. 3 ([ἐν]διν[ά]μισ[ον]); Kubińska 1974: 111, no. 49, l. 5 (ἐνδινά[μισον]).

¹³ For similar phenomena in post-classical Greek (change of the thematic vowel of contracted verbs), see: Gignac 1981: 363–365.



3. Inscription no. 2 (© IKŚiO PAN).

left on site and is now lost under the waters of Lake Nubia. The partition wall between the aisle and the southern vestibule came into existence during the last reconstruction of the cathedral sometime in the Late period,¹⁴ which indicates that the inscription should be dated to the twelfth century at the earliest.

The inscription was transcribed and partly analysed by Stefan Jakobielski in his seminal work about the history of the Faras bishopric.¹⁵ Jakobielski rightly recognised the name of the inscription's protagonist and his church affiliation opening the text (ⲁⲣⲥⲁ Ἰ(ησοῦ)ϥ μέγ(αϥ)), as well as the name of the inscription's author occurring at its end (ἐμοῦ Ἄξος). The rest was incomprehensible to him. The present edition was prepared mainly on the basis of a photograph of the inscription with the additional help of Jakobielski's transcript.

† ἐγὼ ⲁⲣⲥⲁ Ἰ(ησοῦ)ϥ μέγ(αϥ) ἐκκλησία ἀν(θρώπ)ον κλη(ρικὸς) γράφ(ου).
 τλλἰ αἰκα ἀροῦⲁⲓⲁⲣⲁⲣⲁⲙⲏ κῳ<κῳ>καεἰ τοῦⲥⲁ
 αἰλο κΰⲣⲓⲕⲓ ⲙⲉⲛⲁⲙⲏ τλλο ϣοκα πα[ογ]ογⲏα
 4 ⲥεῖⲥⲏⲥⲁ ⲁⲛⲁⲙⲏ ⲁⲙⲏⲏ : ⲁⲥἰⲧⲏⲁⲓⲁⲙⲏ. ἐμοῦ Ἄξος Ἰ(ησοῦ)ϥ.

1. τϥ ⲙⲉⲓⲥⲁ ἐκκλησία ἀνῶν κλη || 4. ἰϥ

1. ἐκκλησία ἀνθρώπων κληρικὸς γράφω || 4. ⲥεῖⲥⲏⲥⲁ Jakobielski

I, Arwa, cleric of the Great (Church of) Jesus of the people, write (this). Let God protect me! Do not let the jealous ones cause a curse to come upon me! Let God give the Book to the inheritor of power. Amen, let it be done. I, Axos, (of the Church of) Jesus.

The inscription starts with a presentation of its protagonist (l. 1) and closes with a subscript of its writer (end of l. 4). These two pieces of information are in Greek. The rest of the text is in Old Nubian and contains a prayer in the name of a single individual (cf. αἰκα, 'me', in l. 2), most probably the protagonist.

¹⁴ For the latest modification in the cathedral, see: Godlewski 2006: 119–137, especially 123–124, with Figs 114–115 (about the partition wall between the aisle and the southern vestibule).

¹⁵ Jakobielski 1972: 172, Fig. 51.

The prayer seems to consist of three requests expressed in the impersonal imperative with predicative -α and command suffix -MH, which is worth stressing as the form used in this kind of texts is normally the second-person imperative. If the first request asks God quite generally for protection, the second expresses a wish that a curse on the part of jealous persons not fall upon the protagonist. By ‘curse’ the author probably meant any hostile action of a magical character against the protagonist, be it now or in the future, although one cannot exclude that he had in mind a specific act, even if not named. In the third request, God is asked to grant a book to a person called ‘the inheritor of power’.¹⁶ It is unclear what is at stake here. The phrase ‘the inheritor of power’ most probably refers to the protagonist, perhaps as a member of the clergy representing God’s power on earth. In this context, ‘book’ should probably be understood as the Holy Scripture as the conveyor of divine knowledge and power. One may also think about a book of spells giving the protagonist the power over all spirits in order to defend himself against magic hostilities or even to curse other people. The second possibility is especially tempting considering the overall protective character of the inscription.

An interesting element of the Old Nubian part of the inscription is its spelling. One comes across some unorthodox notations such as τΟΥCΓΑ (for τΟΥCΚΑ), ΔΑΤΤΑΓΑΜΗ (for ΔΑΤΤΑΚΑΜΗ),¹⁷ and κΡΓΥ (for κΡΙΓ(Α)Ρ-). Our imperfect knowledge of Old Nubian does not allow us to decide whether these unorthodox spellings are due solely to the writer or represent more general language phenomena, for example having dialectal nature.

1. The personal name Arwa (Aroua) is known mainly through the wall inscriptions in the Faras cathedral. In addition to the present inscription it is attested in inscriptions E.191c.4, E.201b.4, E.201c.4, and E.201e.4.¹⁸ All of them are visitor’s inscriptions and seem to have been authored by the same person, Arwa, *tot* of Faras. Although his title is mentioned only in inscription E.191c.4, the palaeography of the graffiti and the fact that they were executed right next to each other, on late walls dividing the eastern part of the southern aisle, make this assumption highly probable. An epitaph from Sakinya commemorates a certain Olpna Aroua.¹⁹ The proper name ΔΡΑ most probably derives from the word ΔΡΟΥ-, ‘rain’, and possibly also ‘cover, protection’,²⁰ through the addition of the predicative -α, hence ‘the one who is protector’. It is worth noticing that the name under consideration is spelled with ρ here, although the verb from which it is derived is written with οϥ in line 2.

¹⁶ A series of wall inscriptions in Nubian Christian cult places including the Northwestern Annex to the monastery on Kom H at Dongola, the upper church at Baganarti, the southern pastophorium of the Faras cathedral, and the church in Medik south of Qasr Ibrim, contain a request to God to teach someone a book; for these inscriptions, see: Łajtar 2014: 266. Under ‘book’, the authors of these inscriptions probably understood ‘book of life’ in the sense ‘proper way of living’.

¹⁷ The change of κ versus ρ is very common in Old Nubian as noted by Browne 2002: 18.

¹⁸ All of them remain unpublished.

¹⁹ Mina 1942: no. 293 = Pernigotti 1975: no. 16.

²⁰ Browne 1996: 19, *s.v.*, lemmatizes the word with only the first meaning, but the derivative verb ΔΡΟΥΑΡΑΡ- is attested also with the meaning ‘to protect, cover’.

The inscription indicates that Arwa was a cleric in a Great Church of Jesus. Interestingly enough, Axos, who wrote the inscription, also served in a church dedicated to Jesus Christ.²¹ Unfortunately, they did not provide any information on the location of their churches. The Great Church of Jesus is one of the most frequently (if not the most frequently) mentioned sacral edifices in the corpus of Nubian written sources,²² yet in only three instances is the exact location of the church indicated: the famous inscription from Deir Anba Hadra at Aswan²³ and a commemorative inscription left by one Adelp() in the upper church at Baganarti²⁴ mention a ‘Great (Church of) Jesus at Timikleos (= Dongola)’²⁵ and an anonymous visitor’s graffito from the Baganarti church informs us about a ‘Great (Church of) Jesus at Jagje’.²⁶ Unless Jagje is another name for Dongola (known already as Tungul and Timikleos), we have to assume that there existed at least two Great Churches of Jesus Christ in Makuria, an assumption that hinders all guesses on the location of churches by this name, including the location of the church where Arwa and Axos fulfilled their service. The designation ἐκκλησία ἀνθρώπων, literally ‘church of the people’ or ‘people’s church’, is found frequently in Nubian inscriptions, especially in visitors’ mementos written on the walls of cult places, in the presentation of persons.²⁷ As far as we are aware it has not to date been attested outside Nubia. Perhaps it is a Nubian counterpart of ἐκκλησία καθολική.²⁸ If so, ἐκκλησία ἀνθρώπων would qualify a church as belonging to a bishop (in contrast to monastic or private churches).

The reading γράφ(ου) is suggested by two other inscriptions written by Axos (see below), which attest to the use of this form. γράφου probably stands for γράφω through the interchange of ογ and ω, a phenomenon frequently attested in post-classic Greek, especially in unaccented endings like here.²⁹ It should be observed that the present tense looks strange in the given context. Nubian inscriptions normally use γράψων (most probably the first-person singular aorist active with the historical ending and the omission of the augment) to describe the process of leaving an inscription in a cult place.

²¹ For the identification of Axos, see below, commentary to l. 4, and Jakobielski 1972: 173–174.

²² The attestations come from the cathedral of Faras, the upper church at Baganarti, the church of Sonqi Tino, and Deir Anba Hadra in Aswan, and are dated in the period between the tenth and the fourteenth century.

²³ Griffith 1928: 18–30 (no. 3), Pls 3–4. A new edition and interpretation of this text is in preparation by Adam Łajtar.

²⁴ Łajtar forthcoming: no. 960; for a translation and interpretation, see: Łajtar 2008: 399–400, Fig. 2.

²⁵ For the identification of Timikleos with the capital of Makuria, see: Łajtar 2015, complemented by Seignobos 2015. The Great Church of Jesus at Dongola should perhaps be identified with the so-called cruciform church excavated by the Polish mission at the foot of the Dongolese citadel (see: Godlewski 1990: 136).

²⁶ Łajtar forthcoming: no. 349; mentioned in Łajtar 2006: 96 with Fig. on p. 100.

²⁷ Examples are too numerous to be listed here. Suffice it to say that they are found in visitor’s inscription on the walls of churches in Faras, Sonqi Tino, Dongola, and Baganarti.

²⁸ This was hypothesized by Łajtar 2003: 145 with n. 15, who was the first to resolve the abbreviation ΔΝΩΝ as ἀν(θρώπ)ων. For the meaning of the designation ἐκκλησία καθολική with relation to Egypt, see: Wipszycka 1994.

²⁹ Gignac 1976: 208–211.

2. τλλι: τλλ-, ‘God’, + -i. This is a curious form, especially because the *iota* has a diaeresis. This makes its interpretation as a juncture vowel (or anything phonological) quite unlikely, as diaeresis indicates at least a separate syllable, and perhaps a suprasegmental value, too. Perhaps this is a variant vocative ending; cf. τλλο in the next line.

ἀροῦἀγαραμη: ἀροῦἀγαρ-, ‘to rain over, cover, protect’ + predicative -α + the marker of the imperative -μη. The form ἀροῦἀγαραμη is found in the so-called Griffith’s Stauros-Text (p. 29, l. 3): οηκεταλλε ἀροῦἀγαραμη ὀμμἀγοῦέσῃ ταν ἑταγρ[οσλ]Δω τεελογοκα, ‘And also let him protect all who hope in his cross’.³⁰

κῶ<κῶ>καεῖ: The form κῶκαεῖ standing on the wall is obviously the result of the writer’s having committed a haplography by omitting one element of the reduplicated stem. The reconstructed form κῶκῶκαεῖ is an irregular plural of κῶκῶκαττ-, ‘envious, jealous’.³¹

τοῦσα: This probably stands for τοῦσα. For the change of ρ for κ, see also the word ἀστταγάμη in line 4 (with commentary). τοῦσα can be analysed as τοῦσ- + the accusative -κα. The problem is that τοῦσ- is attested only as the verb ‘to curse’ and not as a substantive meaning ‘curse’, the latter appearing only as τοῦστ- in Old Nubian texts. Either the scribe made a mistake omitting a syllable, hence we should reconstruct τοῦσ<τι>σα, or τοῦσ- could also be the substantive ‘curse’.

3. κῆργ μεναμη: κῆρ-, ‘to come’ + causative -ρ(α)ρ- + negative verb μεν- + predicative -α + the marker of the imperative -μη. The construction is paralleled by Δαπμενναμη, ‘let him not ruin’, in *P.QasrIbrim* II 28, l. 9;³² see also ἀμμεναμη, ‘do not say’, in *P.QasrIbrim* II 24, l. 15. A free space between the verb and the negation may suggest that the construction was felt as consisting of two words and not one. The expected form is κῆραρ- or κῆρῆρ-. κῆργ present in the inscription is a variant spelling under the loss of the final ρ³³ and the concomitant change of the horizontal dash denoting /i/ into γ.

τλλο: τλλ- + vocative -ο. The regular vocative ending is -α; -ο has so far been attested only in παπο, ‘O father’.³⁴

αοκα: αολ-, ‘book’ + accusative -κα = αολ-κα > αοκκα > αοκα.

πα[ογ]ογνα: The reading is not entirely certain. It is possible that the first ογ has been lost not as a result of damage done to the plaster but through an intentional erasure made by the writer. In this case, one has to edit: πα[[ογ]]ογνα.

³⁰ Browne 1983; 1989: 28 (English translation) and 29 (Old Nubian text).

³¹ Browne 2002: 31.

³² For the construction, see: Browne 2002: 63.

³³ The loss of ρ, especially after a vowel, is a frequent phenomenon in Old Nubian as noted by Browne 2002: 21–22.

³⁴ Browne 2002: 37.

4. $\text{ce}\ddot{\text{t}}\text{e}\kappa\alpha$: The verb $\Delta\text{IN-}$, ‘to give’, requires both the direct and indirect objects, both marked with the formant $-\kappa\alpha$; the latter usually follows the former.³⁵ This means that $\text{t}\rho\kappa\alpha$ is the direct object and $\text{ce}\ddot{\text{t}}\text{e}\kappa\alpha$ the indirect one depending on ΔENAMH . Thus, $\text{ce}\ddot{\text{t}}\text{e}\kappa\alpha$ should be analysed as $\text{ce}\ddot{\text{t}}\text{-}$, ‘to inherit’ + the participial $-\epsilon\lambda + -\kappa\alpha = \text{ce}\ddot{\text{t}}\text{-}\epsilon\lambda\text{-}\kappa\alpha > \text{ce}\ddot{\text{t}}\text{e}\kappa\alpha > \text{ce}\ddot{\text{t}}\text{e}\kappa\alpha$.

ΔENAMH : $\Delta\text{EN-}$, ‘to give’ + predicative $-\alpha$ + the marker of the imperative $-\text{MH}$.

$\acute{\alpha}\sigma\text{I}\tau\alpha\gamma\acute{\alpha}\text{MH}$: $\acute{\alpha}\sigma\text{I-}$, ‘to make, do’ + passive $\tau\alpha\gamma\text{-}$ (= $\tau\alpha\kappa\text{-}$) + the predicative $-\alpha$ + the marker of the imperative $-\text{MH}$. The form means literally ‘let it be done’ and is obviously the Nubian counterpart of the Greek $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$ and the Coptic $\epsilon\text{f}\epsilon\omega\omega\text{p}\epsilon/\epsilon\text{c}\epsilon\omega\omega\text{p}\epsilon$. Both $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\tau\omicron$ and $\epsilon\text{f}\epsilon\omega\omega\text{p}\epsilon/\epsilon\text{c}\epsilon\omega\omega\text{p}\epsilon$ were frequently used, especially in connection with $\acute{\alpha}\mu\eta\nu/\rho\acute{\alpha}\text{MH}\text{H}$, to conclude prayers. Similarly, $\acute{\alpha}\text{MH}\text{H}\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\tau\alpha\kappa\alpha\text{MH}\ \acute{\alpha}\text{MH}\text{H}$ is found in this function at the end of Ps.-Chrysostom, *In venerabilem crucem sermo* (p. 25, l. 15).³⁶

Jakobielski’s transcript has $\epsilon\text{MO}\zeta\text{OC}$, but the photo clearly shows that α was present on the wall. Axos, who wrote this inscription, is mentioned as the scribe in another two inscriptions from Faras. One of them, containing a prayer in debased Greek, was situated immediately to the left of the text discussed here.³⁷ The other, having the form of a typical visitor’s graffito, was found in the so-called Rivergate Church at Faras.³⁸ In the first, Axos presents himself with only his personal name. In the second, he is described as a cleric of the people’s church of Jesus Christ. Apart from these three inscriptions left undoubtedly by the same man, the name Axos has not been attested in Christian Nubia. It is also unknown elsewhere in the Greek world, although it is doubtlessly of Greek origin.

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³⁶ Browne 1984; see also Browne 1989: 28–45 (Old Nubian text on odd pages, English translation on even pages).

³⁷ Jakobielski 1972: 172–173, Fig. 52.

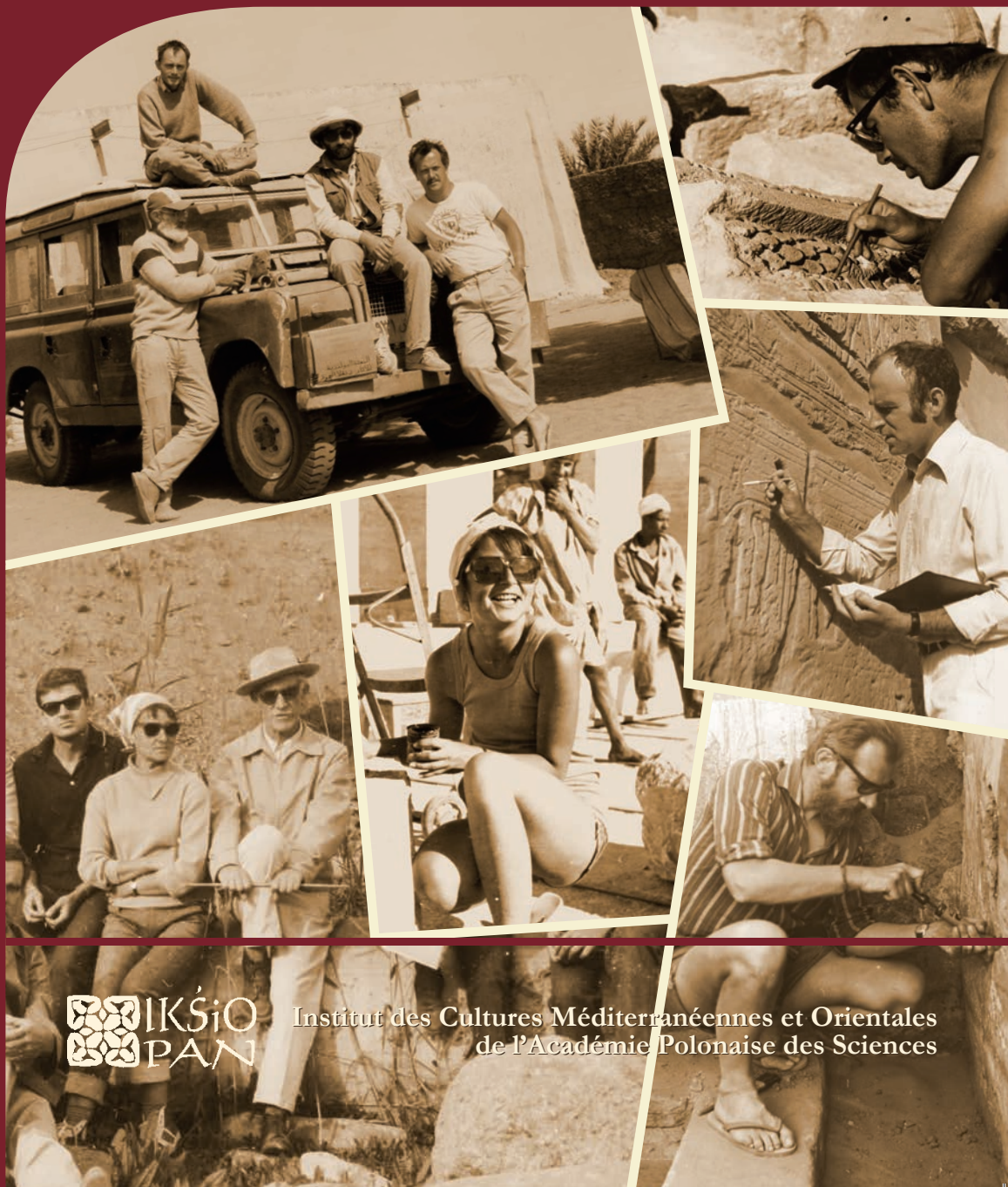
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