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Organization of the Church in Medieval Nubia in the Light of a Newly Discovered Wall Inscription in Dongola^{*}

with four figures

ABSTRACT: The paper offers an edition of a Greek inscription written on a wall of the so-called Church B.V in Dongola, the capital of the Christian Nubian Kingdom of Makuria. The inscription commemorates the inauguration or a renovation of the church, accomplished by the archbishop of Dongola Aaron. It says that the ceremony of the church consecration was attended by nine bishops in addition to Aaron, and lists their names and the names of their sees. The bishops stayed in Dongola for seven days, probably taking part in a synod of the local Church. The content of the inscription casts light on the organization and functioning of the Makurian Church. Prosopographical indications, especially the mention of Ioannes bishop of Faras, suggest that the event took place either between AD 804 and c. 815 or AD 999 and 1002.

KEYWORDS: Greek Wall Inscriptions, Church Organization, Nubia, Dongola

It is a well-known fact that Nubia, the southern neighbour of Egypt stretched along the Middle Nile Valley, was Christian in the period corresponding more or less to the European Middle Ages¹. Christianity started to infiltrate the area already in the fourth century and was formally established as a state religion in the sixth century. At the time of the area's Christianization, Nubia was divided into three independent kingdoms: Nobadia in the north—between the first and the third Nile cataracts—with its capital first at Qasr Ibrim (Greek and Coptic Phrim, Nubian Silmi) and later in Faras (Greek and Coptic Pachoras, Nubian Para), Alwa in the south—below the fifth Nile cataract—with its capital at Soba, and Makuria lying between these two kingdoms, with its capital at Dongola (Greek and Coptic Timikleos, Nubian Tungul). The process of the formal Christianization of the Nubian kingdoms is

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The following abbreviations are used throughout this paper: I.KhartoumCopt. = J. VAN DER VLIET, Catalogue of the Coptic Inscriptions in the Sudan National Museum at Khartoum (I. Khartoum Copt.) (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 121). Leuven – Paris – Dudley, Ma. 2003; I.KhartoumGreek = A. ŁAJTAR, Catalogue of the Greek Inscriptions in the Sudan National Museum at Khartoum (I. Khartoum Greek) (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 122). Leuven – Paris – Dudley, Ma. 2003; I.QasrIbrim = A. ŁAJTAR, J. VAN DER VLIET, Qasr Ibrim. The Greek and Coptic Inscriptions (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 13). Warsaw 2010; I.Varsovie = A. ŁAJTAR, A. TWARDZECKI, Catalogue des inscriptions grecques du Musée National de Varsovie (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 2). Warsaw 2003; P.QI III = G. M. BROWNE, Old Nubian Texts from Qasr Ibrim III (*Egypt Exploration Society, Texts from Excavations* 12). London 1991; P.QI IV = G. R. RUFFINI, The Bishop, the Eparch, and the King. Old Nubian Texts from Qasr Ibrim (P.QI IV) (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 22). Warsaw 2014.

¹ For Nubians and Nubia, with a focus on its medieval history, see W. Y. ADAMS, Nubia, Corridor to Africa. Princeton – London 1977, *passim*, especially 433–546; D. A. WELSBY, The Medieval Kingdoms of Nubia. Pagans, Christians and Muslims along the Middle Nile. London 2002; R. WERNER, Das Christentum in Nubien. Geschichte und Gestalt einer afrikanischen Kirche (*Studien zur Orientalischen Kirchengeschichte* 48). Münster 2013.

poorly known². It appears that there were three official evangelization missions, sent from Constantinople but involving mainly Egyptian forces and support. The first, in the 540s, and the second, at the turn of the 560s, aimed at Nobadia, while the third, in the 580s, had Alwa as its destination. The exact date of the evangelization of Makuria is unknown; we know, however, that its king was Christian at the time of the second mission to Nobadia.

In the period immediately following Christianization, when the group of adherents to the new faith was rather small and consisted, it seems, mainly of members of the elite, each of the three kingdoms apparently had only one bishop. As a matter of fact, this situation is attested only for Nobadia, which became a bishopric in 566 with the ordination of the Egyptian priest Longinos, but it can easily be assumed also for two other kingdoms. One can suppose that the sees of these “state” bishops were royal capitals: for Makuria—Dongola, for Alwa—Soba, and for Nobadia—Qasr Ibrim or Faras, but probably the former since there is no sign of a bishopric in Pachoras (Faras) before c. 610 (see below). With the progress of Christianization and in response to growing pastoral needs, a network of bishoprics emerged in the Middle Nile valley. The exact date of this change is unknown; it could have occurred some time in the first half of the seventh century, when the bishopric of Pachoras was created³.

At a certain moment, perhaps around 630, Makuria absorbed Nobadia and their Churches merged into one Makurian Church⁴. From that moment on, only two kingdoms—Makuria and Alwa—with their two Churches (Makurian and Alwan) existed in the Middle Nile valley. Both Churches were subordinated to the Alexandrian Miaphysite Patriarchate in pastoral terms but otherwise seem to have retained their autonomous status. Their existence can be traced up to the end of independent Nubian Christian statehood, which for Makuria came towards the end of the 15th and for Alwa at the beginning of the 16th century.

Very little is known about the history and organization of the Christian Church in Alwa. Much more can be said about the structure and the functioning of the Church in Makuria thanks to intensive archaeological research in southern Egypt and northern Sudan, largely in conjunction with major dam construction projects. Basic information on this subject, however, comes from written sources,

² For the Christianization of Nubian Kingdoms, see S. G. RICHTER, *Studien zur Christianisierung Nubiens (Sprachen und Kulturen des christlichen Orients 11)*. Wiesbaden 2002; J. H. F. DIJKSTRA, *Philae and the End of Ancient Egyptian Religion. A Regional Study of Religious Transformation (298–642 CE) (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 173)*. Leuven – Paris – Dudley, Ma. 2008, 271–304. Our main source here is the chronicle of John of Ephesus, a Monophysite bishop and historian of the sixth century, contemporary of the events. His account is strongly influenced by his religious attitude and therefore must be taken with great caution.

³ That the bishopric of Pachoras was established in the first quarter of the seventh century may be calculated on the basis of the list of Pachoras bishops with additional use of data provided by other sources; for the list of Pachoras bishops, see S. JAKOBIELSKI, *La liste des évêques de Pakhoras, Études et Travaux 1* (1966) 151–170; with improved text: S. JAKOBIELSKI, *A History of the Bishopric of Pachoras on the Basis of Coptic Inscriptions (Faras 3)*. Warsaw 1972, 190–195. The cathedral of Faras discovered by Polish archaeologists in the 1960s was founded in AD 707 by bishop Paulos, as indicated by foundation inscriptions in Greek (I.Varsovie 101) and Coptic (I.KhartoumCopt. 1). Paulos was the fifth bishop of Pachoras according to the list of bishops. Assuming that every predecessor of Paulos officiated for 25 years (i.e. one generation), this means that the bishopric was created c. 610; see also JAKOBIELSKI, *A History 27–28*. This calculation is, of course, purely theoretical and should be taken with caution.

⁴ On the incorporation of Nobadia into Makuria, see most recently W. GODLEWSKI, *The Rise of Makuria (late 5th–8th cent.)*, in: *Nubian Studies 1998: Proceedings of the Ninth Conference of the International Society of Nubian Studies, August 21–26, 1998*, ed. T. Kendall. Boston 2004, 58–61. The date of this event is a matter of controversy. The earliest indubitable proof of the existence of a greater Makuria that also encompassed Nobadia is the reign of Merkurios (late seventh–early eighth century) who is attested also in the north as king in Dongola. It is assumed that the incorporation of Nobadia by Makuria occurred long before the reign of Merkurios, most probably still prior to the Arab raid on Dongola in 652; all Arabic reports of this event are completely silent about Nobadia, as though this kingdom did not exist. Recently Włodzimierz Godlewski (personal communication) put forward a hypothesis that Nobadia ceased to exist as an independent political organism as early as the end of the sixth century.

namely lists of Nubian bishoprics transmitted by Coptic *scalae*, a kind of dictionary that has circulated among Copts since late medieval times. One such list was copied in 1673 from an “old Coptic manuscript” in the possession of the then bishop of Assiut by a Dominican friar, Johann Michael Wansleben (Jean-Michel Vansleb), who published it shortly after this date in his account of the Alexandrian Patriarchate⁵. Five other lists, preserved in Coptic and Arabic manuscripts now in the libraries of London, Manchester and Paris, were identified and published recently by Robin Seignobos⁶. These manuscripts were copied at the very end of the 18th and the first half of the 19th century, but the lists of Nubian bishoprics in them rely on much earlier, probably late medieval sources. The lists can be divided into two groups, labelled A and B by their editor, of which the latter represents the same tradition as the list of Vansleb. Robin Seignobos was able to identify yet another list of the same type (list C), preserved exclusively in Arabic. That list of bishoprics is attached, together with some other compositions, to a copy of the *History of Churches and Monasteries of Egypt* by Abū al-Maḳārim (the manuscript is now split between Paris and Munich). According to the colophon, that copy was prepared in 1338, and its attachments were added at an unknown date but before 1672, when part of the manuscript (already divided) was purchased for the collection of the king of France.

According to the lists of group A there were seven bishoprics in the land of the Makurians (ⲭⲟⲣⲁ ⲛⲓⲙⲁⲕⲟⲣⲉⲟⲥ): Kourte, Ternekhi (correctly Terpekhi), Silme of Ethiopia (?), Narasi (correctly Parasi), Sinklōtta, Ephrim, and Sinkir. Lists of group B (including that of Vansleb) also attribute seven bishoprics to Makuria (Maracu, Markou or Mārākū). These were: Korta (Kourta, Qurṭa), Ibrim (Pirimnēn, Ibrīm), Bucoras (Pakhōras, Būḥ.rās which is also called al-Dū), Sai (Saēl, Ṣāy), Dunkala also called Dungala (Temklē, Dunqulā)⁷, Termus (Onadour, B.r.nūs), and Scienkur (Shenkour, Ṣ.t.kī)⁸. List C, under the heading “Land of the Nubians” (*bilād al-Nūba*), has nine bishoprics: Bilāq, M.l.h.s.ṭ.s, Qurtā, [Ba]hūras, Dunqūla, [- -]āda, Ak.d.[-], Ifrīm, and Y.k.sār. It is easy to observe that the lists are internally inconsistent, contradictory, and sometimes give false information⁹. The lists of group A feature Ibrim twice (once described as Silme, once as Ephrim) and omit Dongola, which (as Tougoun) is placed among the bishoprics of the “Land of the Nubians”, ⲭⲟⲣⲁ ⲛⲓⲧⲉ ⲛⲓⲁⲛⲛⲟⲩⲣⲓ, a designation referring to Alwa in this case. List C includes the Egyptian Bilāq (= Philae), which most probably was never a Nubian bishopric. The most reliable of these lists seem to be those of group B. Their reliability is confirmed by the fact that five out of seven bishoprics mentioned in them—Kourte, Ibrim, Pachoras, Sai and Dongola—are well attested in internal Nubian sources. Ibrim, Pachoras, and Dongola have left behind an important archaeological record, which demonstrates that they were fortified settlements with densely built living quarters and numerous churches including cathedrals¹⁰.

⁵ J.-M. VANSLEB, *Histoire de l'Église d'Alexandrie: fondée par S. Marc, que nous appelons celle des Jacobites coptes d'Égypte, écrite au Caire même, en 1672 et 1673*. Paris 1677, 29–30.

⁶ R. SEIGNOBOS, *Les évêchés nubiens: nouveaux témoignages*. La source de la liste de Vansleb et deux autres textes méconnus, in: *Nubian Voices II. New Texts and Studies on Christian Nubian Culture*, ed. A. Łajtar – G. Ochała – J. van der Vliet (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 27). Warsaw 2015, 151–230.

⁷ For Temklē as a name for Dongola, see A. ŁAJTAR, *The Mystery of Timikleos solved!*, in: Łajtar–Ochała–van der Vliet, *Nubian Voices II*, 231–244.

⁸ The basic forms of the names are those given by Vansleb. The forms in parentheses come from Copto-Arabic lists edited by Seignobos.

⁹ See commentary of SEIGNOBOS, *Les évêchés*.

¹⁰ For Christian Qasr Ibrim, see W. Y. ADAMS, *Qasr Ibrim. The Late Mediaeval Period* (*Egypt Exploration Society, Excavation Memoir* 59). London 1996; W. Y. ADAMS, *Qasr Ibrim. The Earlier Medieval Period* (*Egypt Exploration Society, Excavation Memoir* 89). London 2010; for its cathedral, see F. ALDSWORTH – H. BARNARD – P. DRURY – P. GARTKIEWICZ, *Qasr Ibrim. The Cathedral Church* (*Egypt Exploration Society, Excavation Memoir* 97). London 2010. For Christian Faras and the cathedral there, famous for its painted decoration, see K. MICHALOWSKI, *Faras. Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand, Einsiedeln – Zürich – Cologne* 1967; W. GODLEWSKI, *Pachoras. The Cathedrals of Aetios, Paulos and Petros. The Architecture* (*Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean Supplement Series* 1). Warsaw 2006; S. JAKOBIELSKI et al., *Pachoras/Faras. The Wall Paintings from the Cathedrals of Aetios, Paulos and Petros* (*Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean Monograph Series* 4).

Christian-period Sai has never been an object of systematic study, even if we know the putative location of its cathedral¹¹. Kourte can plausibly be identified with present-day Qurta or Qurṭah, a locality in Lower Nubia opposite the entrance to Wadi al-Allaqi; however, no archaeological survey was undertaken there before the area was flooded by the waters of Lake Nubia. Inscriptions and documents written on perishable materials give us insight into the episcopal *fasti* of all these sees which, in the case of Pachoras, are uninterrupted between the beginning of the seventh and the second half of the 12th centuries¹². The two remaining bishoprics of the lists of group B—Termus and Scienkur—are unknown to us except for their general location, which was to the east and southeast of Dongola, given the topographical arrangement of the lists proceeding up the Nile. Scienkur has recently been tentatively identified with the present-day Shemkhiya, a locality upstream of the fourth cataract¹³; however, this identification, though attractive, is not entirely certain (see below).

Fortunately, our source base for the structure and functioning of the Makurian Church has recently been enriched by an extraordinary discovery made by Polish archaeologists in Dongola, the capital of Makuria. This is an ink inscription written on a wall of so-called church B.V. The church in question is located in the southern part of the medieval town, to the south of a large residential building (B.I), probably the palace of Makurian kings¹⁴, and a small cruciform building of commemorative character (B.III), transformed into a church at a later stage of its existence (**Fig. 1**)¹⁵. According to the hypothesis of Włodzimierz Godlewski, all three buildings—the palace, the commemorative building, and church B.V—could have formed a single complex with both royal and state connections¹⁶. Archaeological evidence and formal criteria show that church B.V was built at the end of the eighth or the very beginning of the ninth century. Its plan, which may be described as a “cross over rectangle”, was typical for Dongolan sacred architecture of the ninth century and the radiocarbon examination of a wooden beam used in its construction has provided a date in the second half of the eighth century¹⁷. The church functioned throughout the period of Nubian Christianity until the 14th/15th century. It was

Warsaw 2017. For Dongola, see W. GODLEWSKI, *Dongola – Ancient Tungul (Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology Archaeological Guide 1)*. Warsaw 2013; for its cathedral, see P. M. GARTKIEWICZ, *The Cathedral in Old Dongola and its Antecedents (Nubia I, Dongola 2)*. Warsaw 1990.

¹¹ On Christian Sai, see H. HAFSAAS-TSAKOS – A. TSAKOS, *First Glimpses into the Medieval Period on Sai Island. Beiträge zur Sudanforschung* 10 (2009) 77–85; H. HAFSAAS-TSAKOS – A. TSAKOS, *A Second Look into the Medieval Period on the Sai Island. Beiträge zur Sudanforschung* 11 (2012) 75–91; H. HAFSAAS-TSAKOS – A. TSAKOS, *A Note on the Medieval Period of Sai Island*, in: *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond. Proceedings of the 12th International Conference for Nubian Studies*, ed. J. R. Anderson – D. A. Welsby (*British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan* 1). Leuven 2014, 985–988; H. HAFSAAS-TSAKOS – A. TSAKOS, *Nubian Cathedrals with Granite Columns*, in: *Aegyptus et Nubia Christiana. The Włodzimierz Godlewski Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday*, ed. A. Łajtar – A. Obluski – I. Zych. Warsaw 2016, 389–410.

¹² For the episcopal *fasti* of Christian Nubia, see A. ŁAJTAR, *Nubian Bishops: A Study of a Group of the Christian Nubian Society*, forthcoming.

¹³ B. ŻURAWSKI, *Where the Water is Crying. Survey and Excavations in Shemkhiya, Dar el-Arab (Suegi al-Gharb) and Saffi Island Carried out by the Polish Expedition to the Fourth Cataract in the Winter of 2004/2005. Preliminary Report*, in: *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on the Archaeology of the Fourth Nile Cataract*, Berlin, August 4th–6th, 2005, ed. C. Näser – M. Lange (*Meroitica* 23). Wiesbaden 2007, 180–184.

¹⁴ For building B.I, see GODLEWSKI, *Dongola – Ancient Tungul* (see n. 10), 26–29 (with earlier bibliography); W. GODLEWSKI with contributions by K. DANYS and M. OSYPIŃSKA, *Palatial Building SWN.B.I and Earlier Relics of Buildings SWN.B.IV and SWN.B.X*, in: *Dongola 2012–2014. Fieldwork, Conservation and Site Management*, ed. W. Godlewski – D. Dzierzbicka (*Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, Excavation Series* 3). Warsaw 2015, 65–84.

¹⁵ For building B.III, see D. ZIELIŃSKA, *Edifice without Parallel: Cruciform Building on the Old Dongola citadel*, in: *Between the Cataracts. Proceedings of the 11th Conference for Nubian Studies*, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006, vol. II: *Session Papers*, ed. W. Godlewski – A. Łajtar (*Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean Supplement Series* 2, 2). Warsaw 2010, 695–704; GODLEWSKI, *Dongola – Ancient Tungul*, 35–39.

¹⁶ GODLEWSKI, *Dongola – Ancient Tungul* 25.

¹⁷ For the architecture of church B.V, see W. GODLEWSKI, *The Church of Raphael (SWN.B.V)*, in: *Dongola 2015–2016. Fieldwork, Conservation and Site Management*, ed. W. Godlewski – D. Dzierzbicka – A. Łajtar (*Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, Excavation Series* 5). Warsaw 2018, 115–132.

probably dedicated to Archangel Raphael, whose representations feature prominently in the painted decoration.

The inscription under consideration was discovered during the 2016 work season of the Polish mission¹⁸. It is located on the western pilaster supporting the arcade that separates two parts of the southern *pastophorium*—the smaller square section to the north from the larger rectangular part to the south (**Fig. 2**). The start (top) of the inscription is 295.5 cm above the floor, which means that it was not destined for reading but had only a symbolic function. 72 cm wide, it occupies almost the entire width of the pilaster, leaving a margin of only 6.5 cm on the left-hand side. The height of the inscription is 23 cm (31 cm including the initial symbol Α † Ω). Letters are c. 1.5 cm high, though some of them, for example φ, are considerably higher. The inscription was executed with black ink by a well-trained hand, which, however, is not a particularly good one. The script may be classified as Biblical majuscule slightly inclined to the right (**Fig. 3**).

The inscription can be transcribed as follows:

Α † Ω

† ἔνεκαινίσθη ἡ ἐκκλησία αὕτη ὑπὸ θεοῦ π[αν]τοκ[ράτ]ωρος . [. . .] . . . [.]ω.
 τοῦ φιλοχ(ρίστο)υ καὶ φιλαγάθου καὶ φ[ι]λεκκλησί[ο]υ Γεωργίου β(ασι)λ(έω)[ς]
διὰ τοῦ [ἀβ(βα)]

4 Ἀαρων ἀρχ(ι)επισκ(όπου) μ[ητ]ροπολίτου ἐν μηνὶ Χοιὰκ κδ τῆ τετάρτη
ἡμέρα. ἐνδι[ῆ]-
 γον ἀνεκλάλ[ητο]ν ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας συνηγμένων ἐπίσκοπος τῆς Παχωρας ἀβ(βα)
 Ἰω(άννου)υ (καὶ) ἀβ(βα) {ἀβ(βα)} Ἀδ[α]μ Ἄνω Οὐγγερ (καὶ) ἀβ(βα) Χαῆλ Ζαη (καὶ)
ἀβ(βα) Μηνᾶ Φριμ (καὶ) ἀβ(βα) Μά[ρ]-
 κου Κουρτε (καὶ) ἀβ(βα) Μηνᾶ ἐπισκ(όπου) [. . .] . . . (καὶ) ἀβ(βα)
[. . .] . . . (καὶ) ἀβ(βα) Χρισ[τοδοῦ]λου [. . .]

8 καὶ ἀβ(βα) Ἰγνατίου . . [. .] . . ε[ἰ]σ[ι]όντες ἀπε. [. .] . τε[ρ] . . [.]
εὐφραινομένων τ[ὸ] αὐτό.

2 θ̄γ || 3. φιλοχ̄γ | βλ̄[ς] || 4 ᾱρ`χ̄`επισκ̄`κ̄` || 6 ῑωγ̄ ς̄ ᾱβ̄ ᾱβ̄ | ς̄ ᾱβ̄ | ς̄ ᾱβ̄ || 7 ς̄ ᾱβ̄ | επισκ̄`κ̄`
 | ς̄ ᾱβ̄ | ς̄ ᾱβ̄ || 8 ᾱβ̄
 2 παντοκράτορος

Translation

Alpha + omega.

+ This church was inaugurated/renovated by the Almighty God ... of the Christ-loving, good-loving, Church-loving Georgios the King, through abba Aaron, metropolitan archbishop, in the month of Choiak (day) 24, on Wednesday. Indescribably assembled and spending seven days together were bishop of Pachoras abba Ioannou, and abba Adam (bishop) of Upper Unger, and abba Chael (bishop) of Saï, and abba Mena (bishop) of Phrim, and abba Markou (bishop) of Kourte, and abba Mena, bishop of ..., and abba Christodoulou (bishop) of ..., and abba Ignatiou (bishop) of ..., (and) ... came ... enjoyed this.

1. The reading Α † Ω is not entirely certain but is assured by the context.

¹⁸ The authors wish to thank the restorer Urszula Kusz for all her efforts in cleaning and consolidating the inscription immediately following its discovery.

2. The final part of the line, now badly damaged, might have continued the preceding characteristics of God or opened the following mention of the king. The second possibility has the advantage of explaining genitives in the royal presentation. One can, for example, hypothesise a regnal date: “in year so-and-so of the Christ-loving, good-loving, Church-loving Georgios the King”. Another possibility is that the text explained the role of the King in the construction/renovation of the church, e.g. that it was accomplished through his zeal (σπουδῆ).

3. The royal titulature, which occupies the entire first half of the line, consists of three compound adjectives with φιλο- as the first element. Adjectives in φιλο- open the pompous titulature of King Moses Georgios as in the first Greek subscript to his Coptic letter to Patriarch Mark (AD 1187) found at Qasr Ibrim¹⁹. The list includes: φιλόχριστος, φιλεκκλησίσιος, φιλόπτωχος, φιλόανθρωπος, and φιλόξενος. The epithet φιλόχριστος, which opens the lists of titles of both Georgios and Moses Georgios, was a common title of Eastern Roman emperors, especially popular in late antique times (fifth–sixth century)²⁰. It is well attested as part of the titulature of Nubian kings. In addition to this inscription and to Moses Georgios’ letter, it is found in an inscription commemorating the erection of the defences of Ikhmindī (sixth century) as an epithet of the Nobadian king Tokiltoeton²¹; in the Greek foundation inscription of the Faras cathedral (AD 707) as an epithet of the king of Makuria, Merkourios²²; in the foundation inscription of the church in Tafa (AD 710) as an epithet of the same king²³, and in two legal documents of Lower Nubian provenance, once in the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria (early ninth century), as an epithet of King Chael²⁴. The Coptic (Sahidic) counterpart of φιλόχριστος—ⲙⲙⲁⲓⲭⲣⲓⲥⲧⲟⲥ or ⲙⲙⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲮⲧⲉ—is found in the Coptic foundation inscription of Faras Cathedral as an epithet of King Merkourios²⁵; in a sale document of Lower Nubian provenance, now in Vienna (mid-eighth century); as an epithet of King Kyrikos²⁶, and as an epithet (largely supplemented) of King Georgios in a fragmentarily preserved document from Qasr Ibrim (AD 1071)²⁷. Two sale contracts in Coptic, originating from Lower Nubia and now kept in London

¹⁹ The letter, together with its three subscripts (two in Greek, one in Coptic), remains unpublished. An English translation is found in ADAMS, Qasr Ibrīm. The Late Mediaeval Period 228–229. The first Greek subscript was transcribed by J. M. PLUMLEY, New Light on the Kingdom of Dotawo, in: Études Nubiennes. Colloque de Chantilly, 2–6 juillet 1975 (*Institut français d’archéologie orientale, Bibliothèque d’étude* 77). Cairo 1978, 238. The titles of the king were studied by A. ŁAJTAR, Georgios, Archbishop of Dongola († 1113) and his Epitaph, in: ΕΥΕΡΓΕΣΙΑΣ ΧΑΡΙΝ. Studies Presented to Benedetto Bravo and Ewa Wipszycka by their Disciples, ed. T. Derda – J. Urbanik – M. Węcowski (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 1). Warsaw 2002, 171–173.

²⁰ G. RÖSCH, ONOMA ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙΑΣ. Studien zum offiziellen Gebrauch der Kaisertitel in spätantiker und frühbyzantinischer Zeit (*BV* 10). Vienna 1978, 65.

²¹ S. DONADONI, Un’ epigrafe greco-nubiana da Ikhmindī. *Parola del passato* 14 (1959) 458–465; A. G. WOODHEAD, Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum, vol. 18. Amsterdam 1962, 724; J. BINGEN, Un roitelet chrétien des Nobades au VI^e siècle. *Cahiers d’Égypte* 36 (1961) 431–435 (reprinted in: J. BINGEN, Pages d’épigraphie grecque: Attique – Égypte. 1952–1982 [*Epigraphica Bruxellensia* 1]. Brussels 1991, 16–162); E. KIESSLING, Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten, vol. 8: nos. 9642–10208. Wiesbaden 1965–67, no. 10074; F. W. DEICHMANN, Die Bauinschrift von Ikhmindī, in: F. W. DEICHMANN – P. GROSSMANN, Nubische Forschungen (*Archäologische Forschungen* 17). Berlin 1988, 81–88; see also J. VAN DER VLIET, Gleanings from Christian Northern Nubia. *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 32 (2002) 191–194.

²² I. Varsovie 101, l. 4 (see commentary to this line).

²³ The most recent edition of this inscription is: A. ŁAJTAR, Varia Nubica XII: Zum nubischen König Merkurios (7./8. Jh.). *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 39 (2009) 83–89.

²⁴ J. KRALL, Ein neuer nubischer König. *WZKM* 14 (1900) 236 and 238. φιλόχριστος is used as a Greek loanword in these documents edited in Sahidic Coptic.

²⁵ I. KhartoumCopt. 1, l. 3.

²⁶ J. KRALL, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Blemmyer und Nubier (*Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie Wien, Philosophisch-historische Classe* 46). Vienna 1898, 15–20; W. TILL, Die koptischen Rechtsurkunden der Papyrussammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek (*Corpus Papyrorum Raineri* IV). Vienna 1958, 28 (with ⲙⲙⲁⲓⲛⲟⲩⲮⲧⲉ in line 3).

²⁷ J. M. PLUMLEY, A Coptic Precursor of a Medieval Nubian Protocol. *Sudan Texts Bulletin* 3 (1981) 5–8.

(probably from the first quarter of the ninth century) have both φιλόχριστος and κμαινογτε as epithets of King Ioannes²⁸. φιλάγαθος, listed in the second position among Georgios' titles, is found only here as an epithet of a Nubian king. It is paralleled by the titles ἀγαθός and ἀνδράγαθος, which occur in Moses Georgios' titlature. The third epithet of Georgios—φιλεκκλήσιος—is attested as a title of Moses Georgios and, outside of the royal titlature, as an epithet of Georgios, bishop of Dongola, in his epitaph dated AD 1113²⁹.

3–4. The reading διὰ τοῦ [ἀβ(βα)] | Ἄαρων ἀρχ(ι)επισκ(όπου) μ[ητ]ροπολίτου is not entirely certain but is corroborated by another wall inscription in church B.V, which undoubtedly mentions the same man. This other inscription is written across the *epitrachelion* of a church dignitary (clearly the bishop Aaron) represented in a painting on the west wall of the southern section of the south *pastophorium*. It is executed in black paint, with small letters, palaeographically resembling a bookhand, and reads: Ἄαρων [ἀ]ρχ[ι](ε)πίσκ(οπος) μητροπ(οιλίτης) | Μιχαήλ³⁰. Aaron must have been a bishop of Dongola even if his see is named neither here nor in the other inscription.

4. τῇ τετάρτῃ ἡμέρᾳ, “on Wednesday”. References to weekdays are rare in Nubian sources, as observed by Grzegorz Ochała³¹.

5. The reading ἐνδι[ῆ]γον is not entirely certain but we find it hard to suggest anything else that would fit the context both palaeographically and semantically. The compound ἐνδιάγω is very rare. We can cite only Justinus Martyr, *Dialogus cum Tryphone* 74.3 (ed. E. J. GOODSPEED, *Die ältesten Apologeten*. Göttingen 1915); Ioannes Anagnostes, *De extremo Thessalonicensi excidio narratio* 14 (ed. G. TSARAS, *Ἰωάννου Ἀναγνώστου Διήγησις περὶ τῆς τελευταίας ἀλώσεως τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης. Μονοδία ἐπὶ τῇ ἀλώσει τῆς Θεσσαλονίκης*. Thessalonica 1958), and Ioannes Cantacuzenus, *Historiae* (ed. L. SCHOPEN, vol. I [*CSHB*]. Bonn 1828, 510, l. 23).

The reading ἀνεκλάλ[ητο]γ seems certain. One wonders how this adjective, probably used adverbially, should be understood in the given context. Does it mean that the bishops remained silent throughout their meeting or that their meeting was a *mysterium* of which it is not permitted to speak, or that is indescribable because of its magnificence? We are inclined towards the last interpretation.

The genitive συνηγμένων is strange in this context, as one expects the nominative συνηγμένοι. The same holds true for εὐφραينوμένων in line 8.

τῆς Παχωρας is a brachylogy for τῆς Παχωρας πόλεως, “of the city of Pachoras”. Pachoras (Faras) is called πόλις in the Coptic foundation inscription of the cathedral there built by Bishop Paulos in AD 707³², and in the epitaph of Bishop Thomas of AD 862³³. In several sources of the ninth to the eleventh centuries, both Greek and Coptic³⁴, it is designated as μητρόπολις, which indirectly confirms its description as a πόλις.

6. The writer of the inscription mistakenly repeated the abbreviated word ἀβ = ἀβ(βα) in the presentation of the bishop of Upper Ounger. In doing so, he was probably misled by the sequence of syllables consisting of α followed by a consonant: αβ, αΔ, αΜ.

²⁸ P.Lond.Copt 449–450.

²⁹ ŁAJTAR, Georgios (see n. 19) 165, l. 14, with commentary.

³⁰ Adam Łajtar's reading from the original. The inscription remains unpublished.

³¹ G. OCHAŁA, Chronological Systems of Christian Nubia (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 16). Warsaw 2011, 327–343.

³² I.KhartoumCopt. 1, l. 9.

³³ JAKOBIELSKI, History (see n. 3), 75–79, l. 12.

³⁴ For a collection of evidence, see below, p. 147.

The designation Ἄνω, “Upper”, most probably refers to the topographical situation of Οὐγγερ: this was located upriver in relation to Lower Ounger. Alternatively, Upper Ounger would have been located on high ground, possibly on a raised, rocky bank of the Nile valley, as, for instance, in the case of Qasr Ibrim. One notes the spelling Οὐγγερ, in which the two *gammas* are most probably an attempt to represent the Nubian /ŋ/³⁵. The place name (Upper) Ounger is otherwise unattested. A visitor’s inscription in the upper church at Banganarti records the name Ougêrri (οὐγηρρι), which may be either an anthroponym or a toponym³⁶; its resemblance, however, to Ounger (ογγερ) is somewhat distant and apparently accidental. Medieval Ounger may possibly be identified with the present day Ungri, a locality on the east bank of the Nile opposite the Island of Argo; the arguments for such identification are discussed below.

Qasr Ibrim is mentioned either as φριμ or κλιμ in Christian Nubian sources, the former name being found in Greek texts and the latter in Old Nubian ones. The present inscription, written in Greek, has the name φριμ as expected.

6–7. The reading Μῶ[ρ]κου at the turn of the lines is near to certain. The only problem with this reading is that there is no place for ρ on the wall. Perhaps this ρ was written on the north face of the pilaster at right angles to the rest of the text. The plaster is damaged in this spot, which makes verification of this hypothesis impossible. Another possibility is that the ρ was omitted by the scribe, giving the reading Μῶ(ρ)κου.

7. In contrast to other entries in the list of bishops, the office of Bishop Mena, different from Mena of Phrim, was introduced with the word ἐπίσκοπος. Because of the damage to the inscription, we do not know if this was only a stylistic variation or a reflection of the special character of his office; the first possibility seems more probable to us.

The third letter of Mena’s see is likely an γ and the second an ο. The first letter has a bowl on the left-hand side as if in a c. Traces of a letter, perhaps a χ or κ, are visible above the penultimate (?) letter of the toponym, which suggests that it was recorded in an abbreviated form. Perhaps it consisted of two elements, of which the second was a common word normally abbreviated in writing.

The name of the bishop listed between Mena and Christodoulou and the name of his see were rather short considering the available space. Each probably consisted of only three letters. Perhaps these words, or at least one of them, were recorded in abbreviated form.

As far as we can see, the name Χριστοδούλου (Χριστόδουλος) is here attested for the first time in Christian Nubian sources. Theophoric names with Χριστός as the first element are generally rather rare in Christian Nubia. A certain Χριστόφορος was buried in grave 246 in cemetery 55 at Ginari/Tafah³⁷, and another man with the same name was commemorated with a tombstone found in Sakinya³⁸. The name of Abba Χριστόφορος, archimandrite of the Great Monastery of Anthony, is recorded on

³⁵ A similar spelling occurs in the place-name τογγρολ (= Dongola). For the name of Dongola, see A. ŁAJTAR, On the Name of the Capital of the Nubian Kingdom of Makuria. *Przegląd Humanistyczny* 57/2 (2013) 127–134.

³⁶ Cf. A. ŁAJTAR, The Late Christian Pilgrimage Centre at Banganarti: The Evidence of Inscriptions. Forthcoming, no. 617: $\psi\omicron\gamma\delta\delta\iota\epsilon\alpha\ \omicron\upsilon\gamma\eta\rho\rho\iota\ \rho\epsilon\alpha\pi\iota\ \tau\omicron\tau\eta$.

³⁷ C. M. FIRTH, The Archaeological Survey of Nubia, Report for 1908–1909. Cairo 1912, I 46, left column, second inscription from the bottom.

³⁸ T. MINA, Inscriptions coptes et grecques de Nubie. Cairo 1942, no. 300. Another epitaph of the same collection (no. 119) commemorates a man with the name Χριστέ.

a plate discovered in the monastery on Kom H in Dongola³⁹. There are also two attestations of the name Χριστοφορία⁴⁰.

8. The name of the bishop mentioned at the beginning of the line read Ἰγνατίου rather than Ἰγνάτιος. Names following rules of Greek declension have forms of the genitive of the second declension in this inscription (Ioannou, Markou, Christodoulou)⁴¹. Ignatios is the name of a bishop of Pachoras who died in AD 802 after 36 years in post and was buried in a tomb attached to the west wall of the cathedral, marked with a sophisticated epitaph in Greek⁴². Otherwise the name Ignatios has not been attested in Christian Nubia. Both the bishop of Pachoras and the man occurring in the inscription discussed here could have been named after Saint Ignatios, bishop of Antioch and second-century martyr.

The final letter of Ignatios's see resembles the round element of a ρ; however, it could also be a somewhat clumsily executed c. The penultimate letter was a round one: either an ε or an ο.

*

The inscription obviously commemorates an event connected with church B.V, on the wall of which it is written. The exact nature of the event cannot be known with certainty as the verb ἐγκαίνιζω has the meaning of both “inaugurate” and “renovate”. The first meaning prevails in post-Classical Greek, especially when the verb is used in the passive, thus suggesting that the inscription was made in connection with the inauguration of the church. However, the possibility of its connection to a renovation at some stage cannot totally be ruled out. The character of ἐγκαίνισμός—either inauguration or renovation—is directly related to the question of the dating of the inscription. This issue is discussed in detail at the end of the present article. For now, it suffices to say that it dates either to the beginning of the ninth century, between AD 804 and c. 815, or to the turn of the tenth century, between AD 999 and 1002.

Interestingly, the inscription states that the church was constructed/renovated by God Almighty himself. This should most probably be understood as signifying that, in the perception of the inscription's author, the construction/renovation of the church represented the fulfilment of divine plans. If so, the expression ὑπὸ θεοῦ παντοκράτορος, otherwise unattested in such a context, should be regarded as a counterpart of the more common θεοῦ προνοία, “through the providence of God”, or θεοῦ βουλήσει, “through the will of God”⁴³. The church's inauguration/renovation was accomplished through (διὰ) the metropolitan bishop of Dongola, Aaron. The role played by King Georgios in this event is unclear due to the damage to the final part of line 2. It could have been non-existent or could have involved his support through patronage (see the line commentary).

The church was formally consecrated after its construction/renovation on Wednesday, 24 Choiak (20 December in regular years, 21 December in leap years). This date was probably not accidental. It immediately preceded the Feast of the Nativity, which falls on 29 Choiak in the Egyptian (Coptic)

³⁹ S. JAKOBIELSKI, The Holy Trinity Monastery in Old Dongola, in: *Between the Cataracts. Proceedings of the 11th Conference for Nubian Studies, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006*, vol. I: Main Papers, ed. W. Godlewski – A. Łajtar (*Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean Supplement Series 2*, 1). Warsaw 2008, 288, fig. 8 (top).

⁴⁰ M. G. TIBILETTI BRUNO, *Iscrizioni nubiane*. Pavia 1962, nos. 20 and 37.

⁴¹ For the interpretation of this phenomenon, common in Christian Nubia, see A. ŁAJTAR – J. VAN DER VLIET, Empowering the Dead in Christian Nubia. The Texts from a Medieval Funerary Complex in Dongola (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement 32*). Warsaw 2017, 226–227.

⁴² For Ignatios, see JAKOBIELSKI, *A History* (see n. 3), 67–72; for his epitaph, see I. Varsovie 106.

⁴³ These two formulae are found in Greek epitaphs from Christian Nubia in which they are used as a justification for one's death.

calendar. Archbishop Aaron (and possibly the King) may have wanted the church to be ready for the celebration of the Nativity.

The ceremony of the church's consecration was attended by nine high ecclesiastics in addition to the archbishop of Dongola, Aaron. The list of bishops, unfortunately badly damaged, occupies almost the entire second part of the inscription (lines 5–8). Five of these individuals, whose names open the list, are explicitly described as bishops of Makurian sees: Ioannou of Pachoras, Adam of Upper Ounger, Chael of Sai, Mena of Phrim, and Markou of Kourte. Yet another man, listed as sixth, was surely a bishop, but the name of his see has not been preserved: Mena, bishop of (. . .). The three men listed last escape secure identification; the logic of the list, however, suggests that they too were bishops. In fact, all of them bear the title of ἀββᾶ, which was generic for bishops in Christian Nubia (see below). The question arises which sees these unidentifiable bishops belonged to. Possibly, they were not bishops of the Makurian Church but strangers coming, for example, from Egypt or from Alwa. In our opinion, however, this possibility should be ruled out. If these unidentifiable hierarchs were bishops of foreign sees, on the principle of hospitality they would have been mentioned at the beginning of the list rather than its end. In our view, all ten bishops mentioned in the Dongola inscription were bishops of the Makurian Church and their number corresponds to the number of Makurian bishoprics at the time of the consecration of church B.V in the Capital of Makuria. Clearly the ceremony of the church consecration was an important event in the life of the Makurian Church and was attended by the entire Makurian episcopate of the time.

The number of bishops who took part in the ceremony commemorated by the inscription is interesting in the context of lists of Nubian bishoprics transmitted by Coptic *scalae*. We should remember that the most reliable of these lists, those representing group B, contain the names of seven bishoprics, namely Kourte, Ibrim, Pachoras, Sai, Dongola, Termus, and Scienkur. Of these bishoprics, five are recognisable in the inscription from Dongola: Kourte, Ibrim, Pachoras, Sai, and Dongola⁴⁴. Two further bishoprics—Termus and Scienkur—could have been in the damaged part of the text in lines 7 and 8. However, the inscription listed three further sees, of which one is known by name (Upper Ounger), and two remain anonymous. The difference in number of bishoprics between the inscription and the lists contained in Coptic *scalae* is due to chronological reasons. The Makurian Church had ten bishoprics at the time of the meeting in Dongola (either the first quarter of the ninth century or around AD 1000; see below), but there were only seven Makurian bishoprics at the time the *scalae* were compiled (no earlier than the 12th/13th century). The decrease in the number of bishoprics between the ninth/tenth century and the 12th/13th century may have been due to ordinary changes in the church administration: in medieval Nubia, as in other times and places, bishoprics were founded, dissolved, divided, etc. Another reason could be the territorial contraction of the Kingdom of Makuria and its church. In the ninth/tenth century, in the southeast the territory of Makuria perhaps stretched to the fifth cataract⁴⁵, whereas in the 12th/13th century, its eastern part—roughly between the fourth and the fifth cataract—probably formed a separate political entity known by its Arabic name as Al-Abwab (literally: “The Doors”). The bishopric(s), if any, of this kingdom were clearly not counted among the Makurian ones⁴⁶. In the latest period, when the Christian Kingdom of Makuria split into

⁴⁴ It is probably pure coincidence that the sees in question are those which are otherwise well attested in internal Nubian sources.

⁴⁵ On the southeastern border of the Kingdom of Makuria, see M. DRZEWIECKI, The Southern Border of the Kingdom of Makuria in the Nile Valley. *Études et Travaux* 24 (2011) 93–107.

⁴⁶ Very little is known about this Kingdom. It is constantly mentioned in Arabic accounts of the conflicts between Mamluk Egypt and Makuria in the last quarter of the 13th century as a place of refuge for kings of Makuria fleeing from Dongola before the Egyptian invaders. The king of Abwab assumed a somewhat ambiguous position in these conflicts. He usually harboured the fugitive, but then arrested him and finally sent him in chains to Cairo. This behaviour suggests that, although Nubian, he was probably no longer Christian.

a series of smaller political entities and Christian Nubian culture shrank under the pressure of Islam, bishoprics must have been less numerous still. Thus, the Arabic version of the letters testimonial for Bishop Timotheos of Pachoras, drafted in Cairo in 1372 on the occasion of his consecration, suggests that the bishoprics of Pachoras and Ibrim could by then have been merged into one⁴⁷.

Assuming that the Church of Makuria was organized into ten bishoprics at the time of the consecration of Church B.V in Dongola, let us now consider the question of their location (**Fig. 4**). The inscription seems to yield some information on this subject, even if this is not precise. The sequence in which the bishops are listed at first sight looks accidental, but a closer look reveals an obvious logic. The organizer of the event, the metropolitan bishop of Dongola, Aaron, is mentioned as the first in a separate passage immediately following information on the reigning king. The actual list of participants of the event is headed by Ioannou (Ioannes), bishop of Pachoras (Faras), capital of the once independent Kingdom of Nobadia, and continues with mention of the bishops of Upper Ounger, Sai, Ibrim, and Kourte. The last three bishoprics, also otherwise well known to us, occur in topographical order from south to north, with the omission of Pachoras, which was already mentioned earlier. This suggests that the list was organized topographically in a somewhat peculiar, quasi-symmetrical way, with Dongola as its reference point. The first part of the list gave names of bishops administering sees downriver from the capital; the second part, bishops of the sees upriver of Dongola. Provided this observation is correct, one has to conclude that the otherwise unknown bishopric of Upper Ounger should be placed immediately to the north of that of Dongola⁴⁸. The bishopric in question would have been the northernmost bishopric in the territory of the Kingdom of Makuria, at the time before its union with Nobadia. It would have encompassed the northern part of the Dongola Reach and the densely populated Kerma basin as far as the third cataract, where it bordered on the bishopric of Sai. The episcopal see in question is possibly to be identified with present-day Ungri, a place between Kadruka and Kudi on the east bank of the Nile opposite the centre of the Argo Island⁴⁹. The identification, however attractive, is only tentative, the more so as we know next to nothing about the antiquities of Ungri⁵⁰. Nothing is known about any ruins of a large church, which would be expected in a place that had once functioned as an episcopal see. As for the bishoprics situated upriver of Dongola, little can be said given the fragmentary nature of this part of the list. Assuming that Makuria of the ninth/tenth century extended as far as the fifth cataract and the area between the kingdom's capital and its southeastern frontier was divided more or less proportionally, one can hypothetically place the episcopal sees in (1) the neighbourhood of present-day Karima, (2) the area of the fourth cataract, especially its eastern part, (3) the neighbourhood of Abu Hamed, and (4) somewhere in the so-called Abu Hamed Reach, i.e. the area between Abu Hamed and the fifth cataract. The locations suggested here find justification in the relevant settlement patterns. The area of Karima always encompassed important centres of human occupation, and at times, as for instance in the Napatan period, even the capital. It was most probably the cradle of the Kingdom of Makuria in the late fourth/

⁴⁷ The letters testimonial state that Timotheos was nominated as bishop of Pachoras (Faras); however, whenever the name Pachoras occurred in the Arabic version it was provided secondarily with the name Ibrim written above it; cf. J. M. PLUMLEY, *The Scrolls of Bishop Timotheos. Two Documents from Medieval Nubia (Egypt Exploration Society, Texts from Excavations 1)*. London 1975, 22, commentary to l. 6, and see further W. GODLEWSKI, *The Bishopric of Pachoras in the 13th and 14th Centuries*, in: *Divitiae Aegypti: koptologische und verwandte Studien zu Ehren von Martin Krause*, ed. C. Flück – L. Lange – S. Richter – S. Schaten – G. Wurst. Wiesbaden 1995, 115–117.

⁴⁸ If so (Upper) Ounger cannot be identified with Onadour mentioned in one of the lists of group B as a counterpart of Termus, since this latter bishopric should, according to the logic of the list, be placed upriver of Dongola.

⁴⁹ C. ARMBRUSTER, *Dongolese Nubian. A Lexicon*. Cambridge 1965, 211, s.v. úngur. The entry relies on a Sudan Survey map from the beginning of the 20th century. In later maps the locality is called Anguri, maintaining Nubian /ŋ/.

⁵⁰ Fragments of Christian gravestones were noted in the neighbourhood by A. H. SAYCE, *Egyptian and Nubian Greek Inscriptions from the Sudan. Proceeding of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 32 (1910) 267.

early fifth century, before the foundation of Dongola towards the end of the fifth century⁵¹. The region is rich in Christian remains, including the fortress at Merowe East and the monastery at Ghazali⁵². Alternatively, the see of this hypothetical bishopric could have been Bakhit, situated 30 kilometres downriver of Karima, a fortified settlement of impressive size second to only Dongola⁵³. As far as the fourth cataract area is concerned, the archaeological survey carried out between 1996 and 2009 as part of the Merowe Dam Archaeological Salvage Project demonstrated that this area was not a backwater, as thought before, but a lively occupational zone that did not fall behind the rest of the Middle Nile valley. It is dotted with numerous remains from the Christian period⁵⁴, of which three seem to be especially pertinent from our point of view: the twin fortresses Suweigi East and West dominating the two sides of the river immediately behind the cataract⁵⁵, the stronghold at Redab upstream of the fourth cataract, which encompasses important remains of buildings⁵⁶, and the fortified settlement at Al-Ar, accompanied by two smaller forts and extensive cemeteries in the locality called Shemkhiya⁵⁷. In the environs of Abu Hamed, the possible candidates for an episcopal see would seem to be several fortified settlements on Mograt Island⁵⁸ or Kuweib, the largest of the local strongholds situated on the right side of the Nile near the southeastern end of Mograt⁵⁹. In the Abu Hamed Reach, the episcopal see should probably be sought in either Kurgus or the area of Gandeisi—Wadi Dam al-Tor. The first of these locations, marking the southern border of Egyptian influence in Nubia in the second millennium BC, finds justification in the presence of a medieval fortress and cemeteries⁶⁰, the

⁵¹ For the formative period of the Kingdom of Makuria, see W. GODLEWSKI, MtoM. Early Makuria Research Project. *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 16 (2004 [2005]) 385–388; W. GODLEWSKI, MtoM. Early Makuria Research Project, Season 2006. *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 18 (2006) 463–476.

⁵² For the fortress of Merowe East, built in the formative period of the Kingdom of Makuria and used extensively in later times, see GODLEWSKI, MtoM. Early Makuria Research Project. Season 2006 465–469; M. DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms and Their Forts. The Role of Fortified Sites in the Fall of Meroe and Rise of Medieval Realms in Upper Nubia (*Nubia* 6). Warsaw 2016, 114–115. For the monastery of Ghazali as seen through the results of the recent work of the Polish mission, see A. OBLUSKI – G. OCHALA, La redécouverte d'un monastère nubien: premiers résultats des fouilles polonaises à Ghazali, Ouadi Abu Dom, in: *Études coptes XIV. Seizième journée d'études* (Genève, 19–21 juin 2013), ed. A. Boud'hors – C. Louis (*Cahiers de la Bibliothèque copte* 21). Paris 2016, 63–77; A. OBLUSKI et al., The Winter Seasons of 2013 and 2014 in the Ghazali Monastery, *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 26/1 (2017) 367–398; A. OBLUSKI, The Monasteries and Monks of Nubia (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 36). Warsaw 2019, 64–70.

⁵³ B. ŻURAWSKI et al., Survey and Excavations between Old Dongola and Ez-Zuma (*Nubia* 2, *Southern Dongola Reach Survey* 1). Warsaw 2003, 369–373; DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 112–113. Ruins of a large church can be detected in the southwest part of the fortress.

⁵⁴ Generally on the subject, see B. ŻURAWSKI, The Fourth Cataract in the Medieval Period, in: *The Fourth Cataract and Beyond. Proceedings of the 12th International Conference for Nubian Studies*, ed. J. R. Anderson – D. A. Welsby (*British Museum Publications on Egypt and Sudan* 1). Leuven 2014, 135–154.

⁵⁵ M. WIEWIÓRA, Suegi: A Fortified Settlement near the Fourth Cataract. Preliminary Results of Archaeological and Architectural Survey, in: *Proceedings of the Archaeology of the Fourth Nile Cataract*, Gdańsk – Gnień, 23–25 July 2004, ed. H. Paner – S. Jakobielski (*Gdańsk Archaeological Museum African Reports* 4). Gdańsk 2005, 167–180; DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 124–127.

⁵⁶ H. PANER, The Christian Fortress at Redab, GAME Survey, 2002. *Gdańsk Archaeological Museum African Reports* 3 (2005) 179–201; DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 130–132. One of the buildings within the fortress was tentatively identified as a church.

⁵⁷ ŻURAWSKI, Where the Water is Crying (see n. 13), 180–184; DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 134–135. It is exactly at Shemkhiya that Bogdan Żurawski suggested locating the episcopal see of Scienkur.

⁵⁸ G. REES – M. LAHITTE – C. NÄSER, The Fortresses of Mograt Island Project. *Der Antike Sudan* 26 (2015) 177–200; cf. DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 136–137 (Ras al-Gezira), 138–139 (Mikeisir).

⁵⁹ O. G. S. CRAWFORD, Castles and Churches in Middle Nile Region (*Sudan Antiquities Service Occasional Paper* 2). Khartoum 1953, 7–10; DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 140–141.

⁶⁰ I. WELSBY SJÖSTRÖM, New Fieldwork at Kurgus: The Cemetery and the Fort. *Sudan & Nubia* 2 (1998) 30–34; M. NICHOLAS, Excavations in the Fort, Site KRG 2. *Sudan & Nubia* 18 (2014) 148–155; DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 144–145.

second in the existence of two smaller forts and extensive necropoleis which yielded several fragments of funerary inscriptions in Greek⁶¹.

The inscription further informs us that the bishop of Dongola carried the title of *metropolitēs*. The bishop of Pachoras could also have been a *metropolitēs* even if not actually designated as such. Putting him in an honorary position at the head of the list of bishops, outside of the topographical order, supports this view. That Dongola and Pachoras were Church *metropoleis* is known from elsewhere. Several bishops of Pachoras of the ninth/tenth centuries are labelled as *metropolitai* in inscriptions discovered by Polish archaeologists in and around the Faras cathedral. This title is attested for the following bishops: Kyros (AD 866–902)⁶², Kollouthos (AD 903–923)⁶³, Elias (AD 926–952)⁶⁴, Aaron (AD 952–972)⁶⁵, and Petros (AD 972–999)⁶⁶. Dongola (called Timikleos) is designated as a *metropolis* in the title of its bishop in the protocol of a Coptic legal document of AD 925 found at Qasr Ibrim⁶⁷. The existence of two *metropoleis* in the Makurian Church is surely a remnant from the time when there were two independent kingdoms, Nobadia and Makuria, each with its independent Church. After the incorporation of Nobadia into Makuria, this administrative structure was retained while turning the formerly separate Churches into the ecclesiastical provinces of a single, united Church. The Pachoras province must have included bishoprics that existed in the formerly independent Kingdom of Nobadia (Kourte, Ibrim, Pachoras, and Sai), and the province of Dongola—all remaining bishoprics of the unified Makurian Church (Upper Ounger, Dongola, Termus, Scienkur, and two anonymous sees on the eastern frontiers of the Kingdom).

This suggestion, if correct, has serious consequences for our understanding of the history of the Christian Church in the Middle Nile valley. It implies that this area received its Church administration at a time prior to the incorporation of Nobadia by Makuria, regardless of when exactly this incorporation happened⁶⁸. The division of the Makurian Church into two provinces administered from Dongola and Pachoras is attested for the ninth and tenth centuries. It undoubtedly existed earlier but left no traces in the sources at our disposal. One wonders how long it lasted, or, in other words, what the organization of the Makurian Church looked like after the tenth century. No direct evidence for *metropoleis* is available for this period, but some data seem to point indirectly to their existence. Sources of the 12th to 14th century mention the title of archbishop, usually given to *metropolitēs*. This title was borne by the following Church leaders: Georgios, who died in AD 1113 and was buried in a tomb under room 5 of the so-called Northwestern Annex to the monastery on Kom H in Dongola⁶⁹; Lukas, who is known as the sender of an Old Nubian letter found at Qasr Ibrim (12th century?)⁷⁰;

⁶¹ CRAWFORD, Castles and Churches 24–30; DRZEWIECKI, Mighty Kingdoms 146–147 (Wadi Dam al-Tor) and 148–149 (Gandeisi). For epigraphic material from Wadi Dam al-Tor, see I.KhartoumGreek, nos. 70–76.

⁶² JAKOBIELSKI, A History (see n. 3), 86; JAKOBIELSKI et al., Pachoras/Faras (see n. 10), 192–193, no. 45 (inscription accompanying the portrait of Kyros in the cathedral). Two wall inscriptions in the Faras cathedral left by a certain Onnophrios mention an anonymous *metropolitēs* whom JAKOBIELSKI, A History (see n. 3), 89, identifies as Kyros.

⁶³ A. ŁAJTAR – J. VAN DER VLIET, CIG IV, 8952 Revisited (‘Gebel Maktub’ near Qasr Ibrim), in: Nubian Voices. Studies in Christian Nubian Culture, ed. A. Łajtar – J. van der Vliet (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 15). Warsaw 2011, 141–148 (graffito of Chael, son of Kollouthos, on the rocks of the so-called Gebel Maktub near Qasr Ibrim).

⁶⁴ I.KhartoumCopt. 2, l. 2 (foundation inscription of the Church on the South Slope at Faras).

⁶⁵ I.KhartoumCopt. 3, l. 8 (epitaph of Aaron); JAKOBIELSKI, History (see n. 3), 125 (inscription of Aaron in the Faras cathedral).

⁶⁶ JAKOBIELSKI, A History (see n. 3) 127–28; JAKOBIELSKI et al., Pachoras/Faras (see n. 10) 338–341, no. 108 (inscription accompanying the portrait of Petros in the cathedral); JAKOBIELSKI, History 134–135 (graffito of an ecclesiastic with the mention of Petros written on a wall of the cathedral); JAKOBIELSKI, History 135–38, l. 7 (epitaph of Petros).

⁶⁷ The document remains unpublished; its publication is under preparation by Joost L. Hagen. For a transcript of the fragment of the protocol with the title of the bishop of Dongola, see ŁAJTAR, The Mystery (see n. 7), 232–233.

⁶⁸ See above, note 4.

⁶⁹ For Georgios and his dossier, see ŁAJTAR, Georgios (see n. 19).

⁷⁰ P.QI IV 105 v^o.

[- - -]ja, the sender of a letter found at Qasr Ibrim (12th/13th century)⁷¹; Joseph, the author of a commemorative inscription of AD 1322 in Deir Anba Hadra (St Simeon Monastery) near Aswan⁷²; and perhaps Martyrophoros, the author of a visitor's inscription in the church in the temple of Horemhab at Abu Oda (date unknown, but apparently late)⁷³. In addition, a visitor's graffito in the upper church at Banganarti (most probably first half of the 14th century) mentions a person from the entourage of an unnamed archbishop⁷⁴. All these attestations most probably refer to the bishopric of Dongola, testifying that it retained its metropolitan status as late as the 14th century. Interestingly, bishops of Nobadian sees seem not to have carried the title of archbishop, not even the *metropolitai* of Pachoras of the ninth–tenth century. Yet another strange phenomenon can be observed in Nobadia in the 11th–12th century. Three bishops of Kourte (Petrou, Marianou I, and an *ignotus*) and one bishop of Pachoras (Marianou) were buried at Qasr Ibrim, as attested by their tombstones found in the bishops' cemetery located near the cathedral on the site⁷⁵. The bishop of Kourte by the name of Iesou is listed next to the bishop of Phrim, coincidentally also Iesou, in the protocol of a legal document from Qasr Ibrim⁷⁶. Two further bishops of Kourte (Marianou II and Darne) occur as witnesses to legal acts concluded in Phrim⁷⁷, and a bishop of Pachoras by the name of Merk[.]kouda drafted and witnessed a deed of sale from this town⁷⁸. Qasr Ibrim also yielded an Old Nubian letter from Aaron, Bishop of Pachoras, to Iesou, Bishop of Sai⁷⁹. These sources testify to the fact that bishops of Nobadian sees (Kourte, Pachoras, and Sai) frequently visited Phrim, resided there for some time, and even died there. What drew them to Phrim is unclear; it is possible, however, that they were visiting the head of their Church, the metropolitan bishop of the province of Nobadia. Were this the case, then the capital see of the province must have been transferred from Pachoras to Phrim in the 11th century⁸⁰.

The existence of *metropoleis* in the Makurian Church is worth viewing in the wider context of the universal Church. In the period under consideration (the first quarter of the ninth century or the end of the 10th / beginning of the 11th century; see below), the Church of Makuria was subordinated, in pastoral and administrative terms, to the Egyptian Church, which had no *metropoleis*. The authority of the bishop of Alexandria was so great in Egypt in late antique and early medieval times that it made the creation of a transitional step between him and his bishops in the *chora* impossible⁸¹. Outside Egypt, a similar situation existed only in *Italia suburbicaria*, which was subordinated to the bishop of Rome; everywhere else the institution of metropolitan bishop developed. Thus, the organization of the Makurian Church, different from the organization of the Egyptian Church, runs parallel to general trends in the universal Church.

⁷¹ The document remains unpublished. The address is known to us through a photo kept in the Qasr Ibrim Archive in the British Museum.

⁷² For the reading and interpretation of the inscription in question, see A. ŁAJTAR, The So-Called Kudanbes Inscription in Deir Anba Hadra (St. Simeon Monastery) near Aswan: An Attempt at a New Reading and Interpretation (in preparation).

⁷³ U. MONNERET DE VILLARD, *La Nubia medioevale I*, Cairo 1935, 175.

⁷⁴ For the publication of the graffito, see ŁAJTAR, *Pilgrimage Centre* (see n. 36), no. 347.

⁷⁵ I.QasrIbrim 22 (Marianou of Pachoras), 23 (Petrou of Kourte), 24 (Marianou I of Kourte), 25 (*ignotus* of Kourte).

⁷⁶ P.QI IV 84.4–5.

⁷⁷ P.QI III 37.21–22 (Darne) and 41.8–9 (Marianou).

⁷⁸ P.QI IV 65.19.

⁷⁹ P.QI III 57.

⁸⁰ In general terms Qasr Ibrim appears to replace Faras as the leading political and cultural center of Nobadia starting from the 11th century.

⁸¹ For the structure of the Egyptian Church in late antique and early medieval times, see E. WIPSYCKA, *The Alexandrian Church. People and Institutions* (*Journal of Juristic Papyrology Supplement* 25). Warsaw 2015, passim, especially Chapter Ten: The Patriarch of Alexandria and his Bishops (pp. 271–303). Metropolitan bishops appeared in the Egyptian Church only in late medieval times and exist until today; cf., e.g., E. M. ISHAQ, *Metropolitan sees*, in: *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, ed. A. S. Atiya. New York 1991, V 1612–1614.

All participants in the Dongola meeting are designated *abba*. The title *abba* is used by default in Nubian sources when referring to bishops, which implies this was their regular practice. The term indicates their monastic state, which is in agreement with the Oriental practice of choosing bishops from among monks. Those names of bishops which survive in their entirety belong to the Christian onomastic repertoire. Among them we encounter Biblical names originating from both the Old and the New Testaments (Adam, Aaron, Ioannou [Ioannes], Chael [a shortened form of Michael], Markou [Markos]), names of Christian saints (Ignatiou [Ignatios], Mena), and Christian theophoric names (Christodoulou [Christodoulos]). That the bishops who participated in the ceremony of consecration of Church B.V in Dongola exclusively bore good Christian names reflects a wider Nubian phenomenon. The large majority of Nubian bishops known to us have names of either Biblical or Greek origin that are clearly identifiable as Christian. Names of Nubian origin occur very rarely in this group of people and only in the late period (12th to 13th century). This is in sharp contrast to the onomastics of commoners, known best from the Qasr Ibrim documents, in which epichoric names form a quantitatively important component. Does this mean that names with which bishops are presented in written sources were not their original names, given by parents at birth or at baptism, but rather their “professional” names, received at the moment of episcopal ordination? The hypothesis is attractive but requires further argument to be proven true.

The inscription states that the bishops stayed for the entire week at Dongola. The dates of this stay in their relation to the ceremony of consecration of church B.V are not indicated; it is tempting, however, to suppose that they followed it. This would give the bishops opportunity to celebrate, together with the local bishop and the king, the Feast of the Nativity in the newly consecrated church. The five-day span between these two important religious events (24 Choiak: consecration of Church B.V–29 Choiak: Feast of the Nativity) was possibly intended for a working meeting of bishops. Meetings of bishops of local Churches (synods) were important elements in the life of the universal Church in Late Antiquity. According to the Church canons⁸², they should be held regularly, at least once a year, and should serve for the settlement of matters of organizational, disciplinary, pastoral or dogmatic character. There is no reason to suppose that the situation was any different in the Makurian Church, which, in many aspects, continued late antique traditions. Makurian bishops must have gathered regularly to discuss and settle actual problems of their Church. Our complete ignorance of these meetings is a consequence only of the state of preservation of our sources: no Church archives are known to us from Christian Nubia and inscriptions mention events in the life of the Church only occasionally. Dongola was obviously the most suitable place for such meetings. In addition to other advantages of the state capital and seat of the metropolitan bishop, it had a convenient location in the heart of the kingdom, which spared the bishops a long and burdensome trip. Perhaps the presence of all bishops of the Makurian Church in Dongola was in fact connected to a long-planned synod and the consecration of the newly-built/renovated Church B.V simply an event which accompanied this synod.

The final question that should be raised in connection with the inscription is its date. External evidence suggests that it was put up sometime between the late eighth–early ninth and the late tenth–early 11th century. The *ante quem* date is yielded by the construction of church B.V (see above), the *post quem* by the abandonment of Biblical majuscules in favour of Nubian-type majuscules in

⁸² See, for example, canon VIII of the council in Trullo of AD 692: H. OHME – R. FLOGAUS – Ch. R. KRAUS, *Concilium Constantinopolitanum a. 691/2 in Trullo habitum (Consilium Quinisextum) (Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum, Series Secunda II: Concilium Universale Constantinopolitanum Tertium 4)*. Berlin – Boston 2013, 28. The canon stipulates that synods of local Churches should be held between Easter and the month of October, but this might have been difficult to follow in the Middle Nile Valley because of the climate.

Nubian Christian scribal practice around AD 1000. Internal evidence helps to narrow down the date still further.

The most important in this respect is the mention, among the bishops of the Makurian Church, of the Bishop of Pachoras Ioannou (Ioannes). Luckily we possess a complete list of the bishops of Pachoras between the establishment of the Pachoras bishopric in the first quarter of the seventh century and AD 1169. This has been preserved in the form of an ink inscription in a niche in the east wall of the south pastophorium of Faras Cathedral⁸³. The list gives the names of bishops together with the length of their time in office (lacking for the first five entries), but without any absolute dates. These can be reconstructed on the basis of other epigraphic sources, notably epitaphs of some bishops. The bishops' list mentions three with the name Ioannou (Ioannes), labelled Ioannes I, Ioannes II, and Ioannes III by Stefan Jakobielski in his seminal study of the history of the Pachoras bishopric. Ioannes I and Ioannes II occur in the list as immediate successors to Bishop Ignatios, who died in AD 802 according to his Greek epitaph⁸⁴. Ioannes I was probably bishop for seven years, while the length of the episcopacy of Ioannes II is unknown but must have been rather short to give space for Markos and Chael, the latter being already out of office in AD 827 when Thomas ascended the episcopal throne (a sequence which can be reconstructed thanks to Thomas' Coptic epitaph)⁸⁵. Ioannes III is known from a number of attestations including, in particular, his entry in the list of bishops and his funerary inscription⁸⁶. Thanks to these, we know he was bishop between 20 July AD 997 (death of his predecessor Petros) and 21 September AD 1005 (death of Ioannes III)⁸⁷. After Ioannes III, the episcopal throne of Pachoras was occupied by his two sons, Marianou and Merkourios⁸⁸. The mention of Ioannes of Pachoras allows us to date the inscription, and consequently the events described in it, to either AD 802–c. 815 or AD 999–1005.

Another chronological benchmark is the mention of King Georgios. Four kings of Makuria with the name Georgios are known in the ninth–tenth centuries. These were labelled Georgios A, Georgios B, Georgios C, and Georgios D by Grzegorz Ochała in his study of the Nubian royal *fasti*⁸⁹. All of them belonged to the same dynasty, which was founded in the 820s by a certain Ioannes and probably remained in rule until the end of the 1080s. The hallmark of the dynasty was the alternation of the names Zacharias and Georgios in the royal onomastics throughout most of the period. Georgios A, grandson of the dynasty's founder (Ioannes), was ruler of Makuria between c. AD 860 and 887, Georgios B between AD 887 and 915, and Georgios C between AD 940/1 and 961/2 or 962/3. Georgios D ascended the throne around AD 969 and was still king during the patriarchate of Philotheos (AD 979–1003), provided he is the same as King Jirjis (Georgios) who mediated between the patriarch and an unnamed king of Ethiopia in the matter of the establishment of a new bishop for the Ethiopian Church as described in the *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church*⁹⁰. The date of the end of his rule is unknown, but it must have occurred sometime before AD 1002, when the throne in Don-

⁸³ See n. 3.

⁸⁴ JAKOBIELSKI, A History (see n. 3) 74–75. The most recent edition of the Ignatios' epitaph is I.Varsovie 106.

⁸⁵ For Thomas' epitaph, see JAKOBIELSKI, A History 75–80.

⁸⁶ The most recent edition of the inscription is I.KhartoumGreek 2.

⁸⁷ JAKOBIELSKI, A History 140–147; see also I.KhartoumGreek, no. 2.

⁸⁸ M. KRAUSE, Bischof Johannes III von Faras und seine beiden Nachfolger. Noch einmal zum Problem eines Konfessionswechsels in Faras, in: Études Nubiennes. Colloque de Chantilly, 2–6 Juillet 1975 (*Institut français d'archéologie orientale, Bibliothèque d'étude 77*). Cairo 1978, 153–164.

⁸⁹ G. OCHAŁA, List of Nubian kings (in preparation). For a slightly different picture, see W. GODLEWSKI, Introduction to the Golden Age of Makuria (9th–11th centuries). *Africana Bulletin* 50 (2002) 75–98.

⁹⁰ History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church Known as the History of the Holy Church, vol. II 2: Khaël II – Shenouti II (880–1066), transl. and annot. A. S. ATIYA – YASSA ABD EL-MASIH – O. H. E. KHS-BURMESTER, Cairo 1948, 171–172; repeated in G. VANTINI, Oriental Sources Concerning Nubia, Heidelberg – Warsaw 1975, 205–206; see also below, n. 92.

gola was occupied by a certain Raphael⁹¹. He could easily still have been king in AD 999, the year of the start of Ioannes III's episcopate. Theoretically, Georgios of the inscription here could have been a different ruler from Georgios D, his follower in either direct sequence or with another king between⁹². We already know that the kings of the dynasty that ruled over Makuria in the ninth–11th centuries regularly bore the name Georgios, and the space between the known dates of Georgios D and Raphael is long enough to fit in another ruler or rulers. Thus the coincidence of King Georgios with the bishop of Pachoras Ioannou (Ioannes) speaks in favour of dating the inscription under discussion to the episcopacy of Ioannes III (AD 999–1005), and more exactly to the very beginning of this period, prior to AD 1002. This does not, however, preclude dating the inscription to AD 802–c. 815. The sequence of the kings of Makuria in this period is not well known. Two fragmentary legal documents in Coptic originating from Lower Nubia and once kept in the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria mention a king with the name Chael⁹³. The protocol of one of these documents preserves traces of a dating formula consisting of the month, day (Phaophi, number not preserved), year according to the Diocletian Era (of three digits only the first two are visible: 5 and 2) and the regnal year (the numeral written in a partly visible word: “[. . .]teen”). Based on these incomplete data, one may conclude that Chael's rule began somewhere in the last two decades of the eighth century and lasted until at least AD 804/5. The next known king is Ioannes, the founder of the Georgios-Zacharias dynasty, who may have become the ruler c. AD 822. This gives enough space for an intervening king who may be identical with the Georgios in our inscription.

The above discussion shows that the data at our disposal do not allow us either to provide an unequivocal date for the inscription under consideration or to know the exact nature of the event it commemorates. The initial ἐνεκαίνισθη suggests the inauguration of the church and the date AD 802–c. 815, but the coincidence of the bishop of Pachoras named Ioannes and King Georgios found here speaks rather in favour of the years 999–1002 and a renovation of the building. In view these circumstances, we must content ourselves with a *non liquet*.

⁹¹ The information is given by Abū al-Makārim in: *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and Some Neighbouring Countries*, ed. T. T. A. Evetts. Oxford 1985, 265; repeated in: VANTINI, *Oriental Sources* 326.

⁹² It is even possible that Georgios D is not the same as Georgios mentioned in the *History of the Patriarchs of the Egyptian Church* (see above, n. 90), as the latter is described as a young man, which would be rather unfitting for someone who was king for at least ten years. If so, Georgios from the *History of the Patriarchs* would have been Georgios E ruling Makuria for an unspecified number of years towards the end of the tenth century.

⁹³ KRALL, *Ein neuer nubischer König* (see n. 24), 236–40; see also S. MUNRO-HAY, *Kings and Kingdoms of Ancient Nubia. Rassegna di studi etiopici* 29 (1982/3) 103.



Fig. 1 (left)
Plan of the royal quarter in Dongola, the capital of the Christian Nubian Kingdom of Makuria
(Drawing: Włodzimierz Godlewski, Marek Puzkarski, Szymon Maślak; © Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

Fig. 2 (below)
Plan of Church B.V in Dongola. The arrow indicates the location of the inscription
(Drawing: Szymon Lenarczyk; © Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

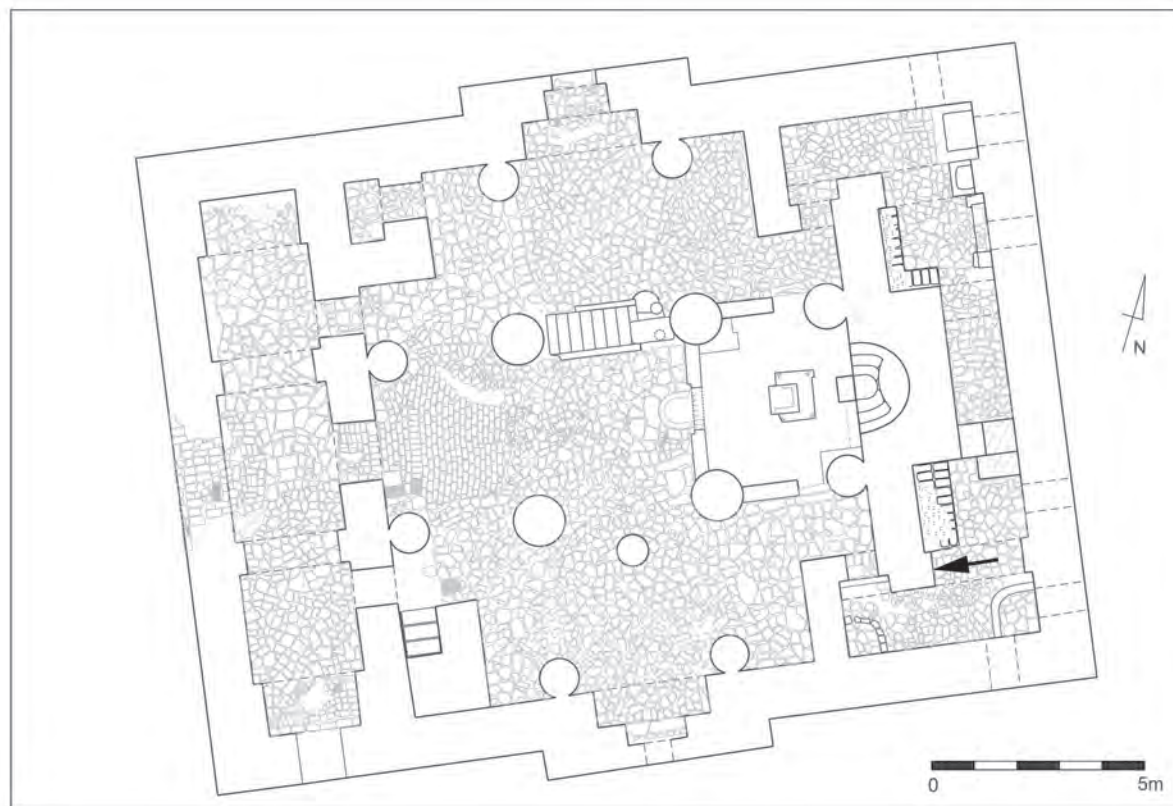




Fig. 3: Inscription commemorating the consecration of Church B. V in Dongola (Photo: Tomasz Derda; © Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw)

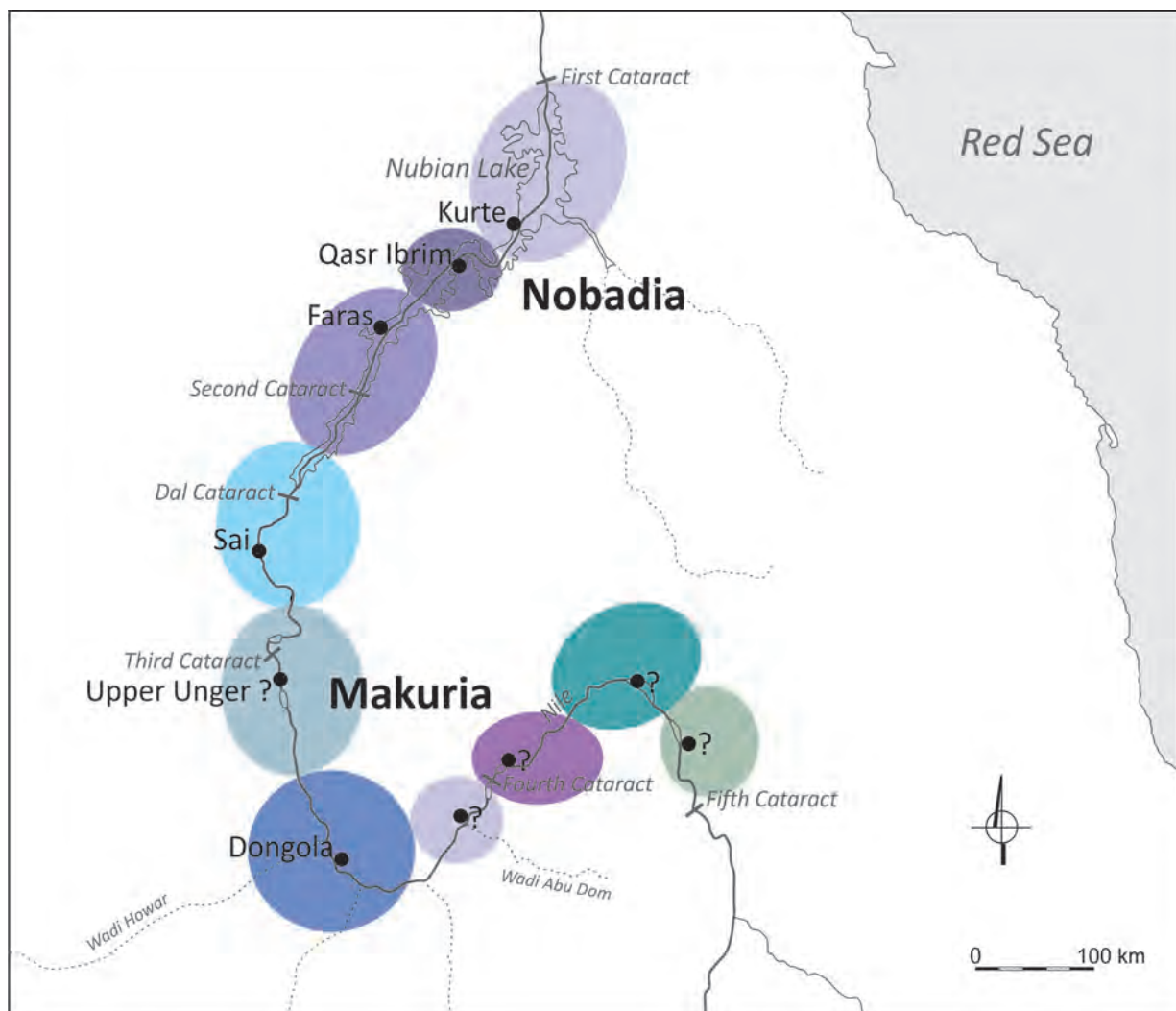


Fig. 4: Bishoprics of the Makurian Church at the time of the consecration of Church B.V in Dongola (Drawing: Szymon Maślak)