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Horned Crown – an Epigraphic Evidence

Amongst large collection of mural paintings¹ from the famous excavations of Kazimierz Michałowski at Faras in the Sudan there are several portraits of kings and high court dignitaries, represented usually under protection of holy figures.² These murals originating from the period between twelfth and fourteenth centuries pose several problems which till now are not sufficiently transparent. One of those is a question of the attire of the Nubian nobles, and in particular, the headgear in form of a horned crown worn by them. The identity of depicted persons was apparently so obvious for painters that rarely a caption (usually applied to other murals) was given. Legends, even if they were written, disappeared or were found considerably damaged. Similar situation can be observed also in murals recently discovered in Banganarti³ where no legend is extant to portraits of all five court dignitaries having horned crown which were represented in the Raphaelion.

Different types of such crown are known and may generally be classified as follows (**Fig. 1**):
1. Helmet with a pair of horns, topped by a crescent lying on its side, mounted on a rod.⁴

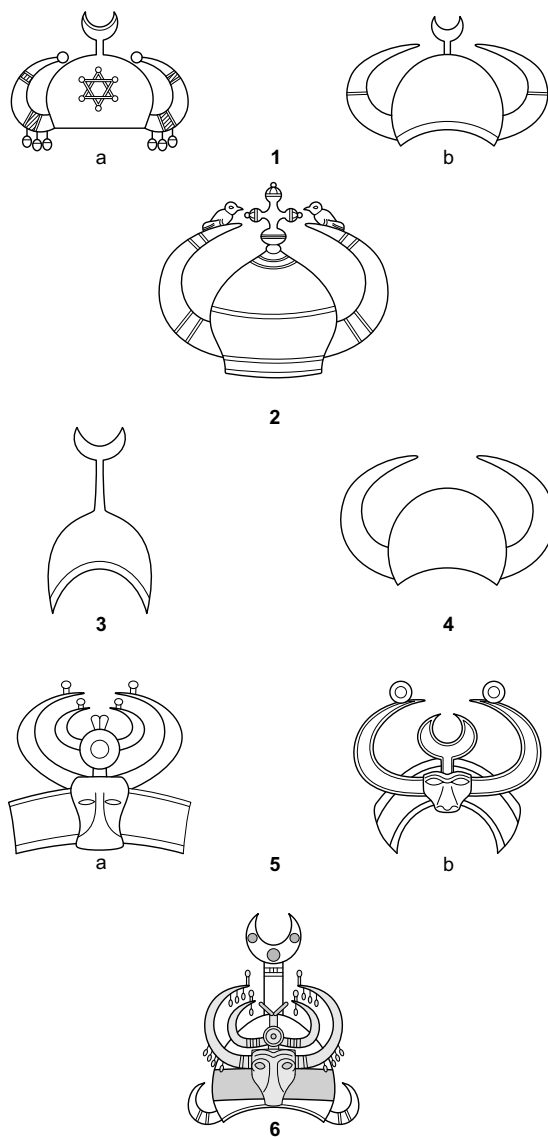
* The subject of this article was not chosen at random: one of the early interests of Karol Myśliwiec at the beginning of his scientific career was the head-dress of noble figures as a criterion for its identification and dating (K. MYŚLIWIEC, *Le portrait royal dans le bas-relief du Nouvelle Empire*, Varsovie 1976, pp. 20–22); I wonder whether in the time of his jubilee this theme can still preoccupy, or at least, enjoy him.

¹ K. MICHAŁOWSKI, Faras. Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand, Einsiedeln-Zürich-Köln 1967 [= *Die Kathedrale*]; ID., Faras. Wall paintings in the Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw, Warsaw 1974 [= *Wall Paintings*]; M. MARTENS-CZARNECKA, Les éléments décoratifs sur les peintures de la Cathédrale de Faras, *Faras VII*, Varsovie 1982 [= *Faras VII*]; S. JAKOBIELSKI *et al.*, Pachoras [II]. The Cathedrals of Aetios, Paulos and Petros: The Wall Paintings, *PAM Monograph Series 4*, Warsaw 2013 [= *Pachoras Paintings*].

² On his theme see: M. DE GROOTH, Mögliche Einflüsse auf die nubische Protektions-gebärde, [*in:*] N. JANSMA, M. DE GROOTH, Zwei Beiträge zur Ikonographie der nubischen Kunst, [separatum from *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek 22*, 1971], pp. 9–19; S. JAKOBIELSKI, Nubian Scenes of Protection from Faras as an Aid to Dating, *EtudTrav XXI*, 2007, pp. 43–50; M. ŁAPTAŚ, Archangels as protectors and guardians in Nubian painting, [*in:*] W. Godlewski, A. Łajtar (Eds), *Between the Cataracts*. Proceedings of the 11th International Conference for Nubian Studies, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006. Part two. Session Papers, Fasc. 2, *PAM Supplement Series 2.2/1-2*, Warsaw 2010, pp. 675–681 [= *Archangels as protectors*]; B. MIERZEJEWSKA, *Intercessio perpetua*. The Nubians and their Heavenly Allies in Painting, *ibid.*, pp. 653–674.

³ B. ŻURAWSKI, The Churches of Banganarti, 2002–2006, [*in:*] W. Godlewski, A. Łajtar (Eds), *Between the Cataracts*. Proceedings of the 11th International Conference for Nubian Studies, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006. Part one: Main Papers, *PAM Supplement Series 2.1*, Warsaw 2008 [= *Banganarti 2002–2006*], pp. 303–320; B. ŻURAWSKI, Banganarti, SDRS Season 2003, *PAM XV* (Reports 2003), 2004, pp. 231–243; M. ŁAPTAŚ, Banganarti 2003, *The Wall Paintings*, *ibid.* [= *Banganarti Paintings*], pp. 244–252; B. ŻURAWSKI, Banganarti 2004/2005, *PAM XVII* (Reports 2005), 2007, pp. 301–321; ID., Banganarti, Archaeological Excavations of the Site in 2007, *PAM XIX* (Reports 2007), 2010, pp. 327–335; ID., *Tà σύμβολα τῆς ἀρχῆς*. Kilka uwag o nubijskiej ikonografii królewskiej XI–XII wieku, [*in:*] B. Nowak, M. Nagielski J. Pysiak (Eds), *Europejczycy, Afrykanie, inni*. Studia ofiarowane Profesorowi Michałowi Tymowskiemu, Warszawa 2010, pp. 265–300 [= *Studia M. Tymowski*]; ID., A tale of two sites. Ten years of excavation in Banganarti and Selib, *GAMAR 8*, 2013, pp. 123–231;

⁴ *a) Abd el-Qadir, inv. No. 12*: F.L.L. GRIFFITH, Oxford Excavations in Nubia: The Church at Abd el-Gādir near the Second Cataract, *AAALiv XV*, 1928, pp. 70–71, Pls XXIX,12, XXXI,2, XXXIII; U. MONNERET DE VILLARD, *La Nubia Medioevale*, Le Caire 1935–1957 [= *Nub. Med.*], vol. I, p. 158, vol. IV, Pl. CLXXXIX; *b) Faras Cathedral, Apse, field inv. No. 1B*: MICHAŁOWSKI, *Die Kathedrale*, p. 122, Pl. 40; ID., *Wall Paintings*, Cat. No. 19, pp. 132–137; JAKOBIELSKI *et al.*, *Pachoras Paintings*, Cat. No. 143; *c) Faras Rivergate Church, inv. No. 34*: F.L.L. GRIFFITH, Oxford Excavations in Nubia: The Church by the Rivergate, *AAALiv XIII*, 1926, p. 77, Pls LXI, LXIV; M. MARTENS-CZARNECKA, New look at the wall paintings of the Rivergate Church in Faras,



1. Types of crown of Nubian dignitaries: 1. **Helmet with a pair of horns, topped by a crescent on a rod**: a) Crown of the dignitary from the church at Abd el-Qadir, inv. No. 12; b) Reconstructed crown of a dignitary under protection of the Virgin and Christ; from the apse of Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 1B. 2. **Helmet with a pair of horns with a cross instead of the crescent**: Crown held in hand by a dignitary represented in Chapel 3 in the Upper Church (Raphaelion) at Baganarti. 3. **Helmet with crescent without horns**: Crown of Aron, a dignitary under protection of Christ from the south aisle of Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 63. 4. **Helmet with pair of horns but without the crescent**: Reconstructed crown of a dignitary under protection of Archangel Michael, from the South Chapel in Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 74. 5. **Diadem with a bucranion with two pairs of horns**: a) A dignitary holding the diadem in hand, on west pilaster in the nave of Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 13; b) Crown of a dignitary represented in Room 20 in the Upper Church (Raphaelion) at Baganarti. 6. **Composite crown: a diadem mounted on the horned helmet**: Crown of an eparch protected by Christ, from the nave of the Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 7 (Drawing M. Momot).

2. Helmet with a pair of horns with a cross instead of the crescent mounted on the rod.⁵
3. Helmet with crescent without horns.⁶
4. Helmet with pair of horns but without the crescent.⁷
5. Diadem with a corned *bucranion* topped by a sphere with an additional pair of horns.⁸
6. Helmet with a pair of horns together with the diadem of two pairs of horns mounted on it.⁹

Many terms relevant to the identification of a rank of individual figures were already proposed. Recently the names ‘ruler’, ‘royal person’ or simply ‘king’ are applied to

[in:] P.O. Scholz (Ed.) *Orbis Aethiopicus* II, Albstadt 1992 [= Rivergate], pp. 366–369; **d) Dongola, House B:** S. JAKOBIELSKI, W. GODLEWSKI, *Dongola 1978–1980*, *EtudTrav* XIV, 1990, p. 400, Fig. 4; M. MARTENS-CZARNECKA, *Wall Paintings discovered in Old Dongola*, [in:] S. Jakobielski, P.O. Scholz (Eds), *Dongola-Studien*, 35 Jahre der polnischen Forschungen in Zentrum des makuritischen Reiches, Warszawa-Wiesbaden 2001, p. 282, Fig. 25; **e)** possibly also *Tamit, Church of Angels*: MONNERET DE VILLARD, *Nub. Med. I*, p. 158, vol. IV, Pl. CLXIX – on which the rod with crescent is destroyed.

⁵ **a) Banganarti, chapel 3:** ŻURAWSKI, *PAM* XV (Reports 2003), 2004, p. 240, Fig. 8; Id., *Survey and Excavations between Old Dongola and Ez-Zuma*, *SudNub* 6, 2002, pp. 76–78, Fig. 4; Id., *Studia M. Tymowski*, pp. 269–282; Id., *GAMAR* 8, 2013, pp. 185f., Figs 4 and 5; M. ŁAPTAŚ, *St Andrew the Apostle in the Murals of the Upper Church in Banganarti*, *EtudTrav* XXII, 2008, pp. 104–106, Fig. 3; EAD., *Archangels as protectors*, p. 676, Fig. 4; **b) Banganarti, chapel 2:** ŁAPTAŚ, *EtudTrav* XXII, 2008, pp. 103–104, Fig. 7; ŻURAWSKI, *Studia M. Tymowski*, p. 272; Id., *GAMAR* 8, 2013, p. 187, Fig. 8; **c) Banganarti, room 21:** ŻURAWSKI, *GAMAR* 8, 2013, pp. 189, 191, Fig. 13; **d) Crown drawn on potsherd from Serra East:** L.V. ŽABKAR, *The Eparch of Nubia as a King*, *JNES* 29, 1963, pp. 217–219; **e) Faras Cathedral, a drawing of crown scratched on plaster:** MICHALOWSKI, *Die Kathedrale*, p. 35.

⁶ **a) Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 63:** MICHALOWSKI, *Die Kathedrale*, pp. 169–170, Pls 95b, 96; Id., *Wall Paintings*, Cat. No. 58; MARTENS-CZARNECKA, *Faras* VII, pp. 93, 97, 100, 103–105, Pls 139–140; S. JAKOBIELSKI, *Tentative d'identification de certaines peintures de Faras*, *EtudTrav* XIX, 2001, pp. 70–73, Figs 8–9; B. MIERZEJEWSKA, M. ŁAPTAŚ, *Katalog*, [in:] W. Seipel (Ed.), *Faras. Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand*, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien 2002 [= *Katalog Wien*], pp. 91–92, No. 23; JAKOBIELSKI *et al.* *Pachoras Paintings*, Cat. No. 132; **b) Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 5:** MICHALOWSKI, *Wall Paintings*, pp. 46, 52, 60; MARTENS-CZARNECKA, *Faras* VII, pp. 93, 96, 101, 105; S. JAKOBIELSKI, *Portraits of the Bishops of Faras*, [in:] J.M. Plumley (Ed.), *Nubian Studies. Cambridge Symposium 1978*, Warminster 1982, p. 130, Fig. 14; JAKOBIELSKI, *EtudTrav* XIX, 2001, pp. 73–77, Fig. 10; Id. *et al.*, *Pachoras Paintings*, Cat. No. 148.

⁷ **Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 74:** MARTENS-CZARNECKA, *Faras* VII, pp. 94, 97, Pls 145, 154; EAD., *L'archange Michel sur les peintures de Faras*, *EtudTrav* XII, 1983, pp. 184, 190–192; JAKOBIELSKI, *EtudTrav* XXI, 2007, p. 48; Id. *et al.*, *Pachoras Paintings*, Cat. No. 135.

⁸ **a) Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 13:** MICHALOWSKI, *Die Kathedrale*, pp. 44, 166, Pl. 93; Id., *Wall Paintings*, Cat. No. 61; MARTENS-CZARNECKA, *Faras* VII, pp. 99, 101, Pl. 159; W. GODLEWSKI, *The Late Period in Nubian Art – from the middle of 13th to the end of 14th centuries*, [in:] R. Gundlach, M. Kropp, A. Leibundgut (Eds), *Der Sudan in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart (Sudan Past and Present)*, Frankfurt a/Main, Berlin 1995 [= *Late Period*], pp. 39–40, 56, Fig. 2; JAKOBIELSKI *et al.*, *Pachoras Paintings*, Cat. No. 138; **b) Banganarti, room 20:** ŁAPTAŚ, *Banganarti Paintings*, pp. 249–251, Figs 4–5; ŻURAWSKI, *Studia M. Tymowski*, pp. 284, 286; Id., *GAMAR* 8, 2013, pp. 187f., Fig. 12; **c) possibly also Banganarti, sketch in room 22:** ŻURAWSKI, *Studia M. Tymowski*, p. 286, Fig. 14.

⁹ **Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 7:** MICHALOWSKI, *Die Kathedrale*, pp. 165–166, Pl. 91; B. ŻURAWSKI, *A Study of the Origins of Nubian and Ethiopian Horned Headgears of the Medieval Period*, [in:] *Äthiopien und seine Nachbarn/Etiopia and its Neighbours 3. Wissenschaftliche Tagung des Orbis Aethiopicus*, Gnień, 25–29. September 1997, Gdańsk-Frankfurt a/Main 1998 [= *Headgears*], pp. 127–128, Fig. 5; M. MARTENS-CZARNECKA *Some remarks on iconography of rulers and archangels in Nubian painting*, *EtudTrav* XXI, 2007, pp. 105–106, Fig. 10; JAKOBIELSKI *et al.*, *Pachoras Paintings*, Cat. No. 140.

them,¹⁰ while previously, when no murals from Dongola region were known, even by the same authors they were labelled ‘eparchs of Nobadia’, as opposed to Nubian kings wearing crowns of the so-called ‘Byzantine type’, i.e. diadem with *pinnae* or *kamelaukion* variety. Besides the names proposed for kings and queen mothers¹¹ there were also some efforts made to identify other nobles represented in the Faras Cathedral, thus names of Eparch Marikuda and Urrosi¹² were imputed to two of them. There were studies of the significance and origin of horned crown used in Christian Nubian period, seeing it in both indigenous Kushite and Ballaṇa tradition¹³ as well as Sassanian influence. However, no effort has been made so far to exemplify the elements of the dress of these figures in view of possible similarities and differences. After all, names of several official titles next in rank to the Nubian king are known, as *eparchos*, *nauarchos*, *exarchos*, *meizon*, *domestikos* etc.,¹⁴ recently complemented by *tetrarchos* and *hegemon*. Whether is it possible that except the eparch any one of them not having been depicted? Therefore the main purpose of this short article is to turn attention to this problem, and also to a discrepancy between the multitude of pictorial records and the paucity of epigraphic ones which would serve to identify these paintings. Curiously enough there are only three examples where the rank of the depicted dignitary in a horned headgear was mentioned directly, but only in one instance this information can be regarded as definite. The latter concerns the mural depicting a protection scene in which a figure, presumably of a Nubian dignitary, wearing composite crown (of type 6) stands frontally side-by-side with Christ, who watches him over.

The painting originally adorned the west face of the south-eastern pillar in the Faras Cathedral (at present in the collection of the Sudan National Museum in Khartoum inv. No. 24353).¹⁵ It was discovered on the nave’s floor in rubble of a collapsed section of the pillar.¹⁶ Top of the mural with the head of Christ, and a dignitary’s crown is preserved only (**Fig. 2**). The painting is dated to the twelfth century on archaeological,¹⁷ stylistic¹⁸ and epigraphic¹⁹ grounds.

¹⁰ Cf. e.g. ŻURAWSKI, *Studia M. Tymowski*, pp. 269–282; Id., *GAMAR* 8, 2013, pp. 187f.; W. GODLEWSKI, *Bishops and Kings*, the official Program of the Pachoras (Faras) Cathedrals, [in:] W. Godlewski, A. Łajtar (Eds), *Between the Cataracts. Proceedings of the 11th International Conference for Nubian Studies*, Warsaw University, 27 August – 2 September 2006. Part one: Main Papers, *PAM Supplement Series* 2.1, Warsaw 2008, pp. 263–282 [= *Bishops and Kings*].

¹¹ JAKOBIELSKI, *EtudTrav* XIX, 2001, *pass.*; GODLEWSKI, *Bishops and Kings*, esp. pp. 270–280.

¹² GODLEWSKI, *Late Period*, p. 56 (these identifications seem highly doubtful, cf. JAKOBIELSKI, *Pachoras Paintings*, commentaries to Cat. Nos 138 and 143).

¹³ ŻURAWSKI, *Headgears*, pp. 121–135.

¹⁴ Cf. T. HÄGG, *Titles and honorific epithets in Nubian Greek texts*, *Symbolae Osloenses* LXV, 1990, pp. 147–177.

¹⁵ Dimensions: W. of representation – 70cm; H. of Christ’s head – 21.5cm; H. of the crown – 26cm.

¹⁶ The mural’s high moisture levels made it impossible to carry out appropriate conservation procedures, hence the marked difference in the painting’s original and present (inferior) condition. That is the reason that the original photo showing the object *in situ* is solely used here notwithstanding dislodged fragments of the painting forming a hindrance in drawing up a facsimile of the inscription.

¹⁷ It is much later than the pillar originating from the main rebuilding of the Cathedral in the late tenth century as it was painted on second, additional layer of plaster applied on the pillar.

¹⁸ Characteristic rendering of facial features of Christ, his halo with the cross of flared arms.

¹⁹ A similar graphic style of letters and a rare formula of the legend, analogous to that which describes portrait of King Moyses Georgios dated to 60s of the twelfth century.



2. Mural representing an eparch and Christ *in situ* in the nave of the Faras Cathedral, field inv. No. 7 (at present in Sudan National Museum, Khartoum, inv. No. 35324, Phot. K. Łątka).



3. A facsimile of the legend to the eparch's figure – drawn after piecing the dislodged fragments together (Elaborated by S. Jakobielski and M. Momot).

The crown represented on the mural is composed of two parts: a diadem with *bucranium* mounted on a helmet (**Figs 1.6 and 2**). A pair of upward-turned horns, of which only the one on the left survives, are attached to the base of the helmet. Fine chains of pearls or small bells hang from the extant horn. The helmet is topped by a crescent lying on its side, mounted on a long rod capped by a row of pearls and bounded by double lines (rings?). Three round brownish-red jewels adorn the crescent. The *bucranium* on the diadem (represented as a bull-mask with green eyes) has a pair of upward-turned horns terminating in single pinnacles which are topped with small spheres. The other pair of similar, but slightly smaller, horns is attached to a sphere adorned with a large, round, green jewel and fastened to the upper part of the *bucranium*. A series of pearls hangs from the lower pair; single ones hang from the upper. Above the conjunction of the upper pair of horns a brown (leather?) strap²⁰ is seen fixed to vertical element and wrapped in a V-shape around the base of the rod attached to the helmet.

The crown, drawn with a black line, is depicted as white with a grey shading possibly in an attempt to present it as a silver one.

The legend in Greek (cf. **Fig. 2**) is written in black ink to the left of the crown, regardless its incompleteness clearly states what a dignitary had been represented on the painting, namely the eparch (of Nobadia). There must have been at least three lines of text, though at present only fragments of two remain (**Fig. 3**):

[† O]ΥΤΟC ΕCΤΙΝ
^Χ
 [- - -] ΕΠΑΡ[(ΟC)

[+o]υτος εστιν | [- - -] επαρ'χ(ος) |
 (+) *This is (...) eparch ...*

The analogous scheme of legend beginning with expression οὗτος ἐστίν appears in Faras Cathedral paintings only once, in a legend describing a figure of King Moyses Georgios²¹ reigning from 1155 most probably until 1191.²² The beginning of line 2 must have contained the dignitary's name and judging from the space at disposal it ought to be a short one of a maximum six characters. During nearly whole of the second half of the twelfth century certain Adam (ΑΔΑΜ) fulfilled functions of the 'Eparch of Nobadia' and the 'Domestikos of Pachoras'. His name perfectly fits in with the text and could perhaps be interpolated if only we would have sufficient evidence that the painting originates just of this half of the century, and it is not earlier as can be suggested by a relatively prominent

²⁰ On a hypothesis concerning the leather strap and technique for mounting the two parts of crown see MICHALOWSKI, *Wall Paintings*, pp. 44–45.

²¹ Painting field inv. No. 18A: MICHALOWSKI, *Die Kathedrale*, pp. 37–38, 147–148, Pl. 70; A. ŁAJTAR, *Varia nubica XIII: Die Titulatur des Königs Moyses Georgios nach einer Wandinschrift aus der Faras-Kathedrale*, *JJP* 39, 2009, pp. 89–97; JAKOBIELSKI *et al.*, *Pachoras Paintings*, cat. No. 142.

²² J.M. PLUMLEY, *New Light on the Kingdom of Dotawo*, [*in:*] *Études nubiennes*, Colloque de Chantilly, 2–6 juillet 1975, IFAO, *BdE* LXXVII, Le Caire 1978 [= *New Light*], pp. 234–238.

location occupied by this composition in the Cathedral. For the title ἑπαρχος a typical abbreviated form appears here which is widely used in texts and cannot be mixed up with popular abbreviation $\overset{\chi}{\Pi\Delta}$ (but never: $\overset{\chi}{\Pi\Delta\rho}$) for $\overset{\chi}{\Pi\Delta\chi\omega\rho\alpha\varsigma}$ (*Pachoras* = Faras). Most probably the third line provided the further part of eparch's title: $\overset{B}{NO}$ (or $\overset{\Delta}{NOB}$) = *of Nobadia*, or *of Nobadians* and perhaps also another title in the twelfth century, customarily held by eparchs, namely: *Domestikos of Pachoras* written also in abbreviated form $\overset{M}{\Delta\omega}$ $\overset{\chi}{\Pi\Delta}$ as attested in texts from Qasr Ibrim.²³ A tentative interpolated text of the legend would perhaps be as follows:

[† Ο]ΥΤΟC ΕCΤΙΝ | [$\overset{\chi}{\Delta\Delta\Delta M}$] ΕΠΑΡ | [$\overset{B}{NO}$ $\overset{M}{\Delta\omega}$ $\overset{\chi}{\Pi\Delta}$]

My identification of this crown as the eparch's one was already made during the field-work at Faras, but never presented in detail. As such it was included into the first elaboration of the paintings from Faras²⁴ and cited in many general publication on Christian Nubia. Is however worth bringing it back for a new theory being created and recently endorsed by W. Godlewski²⁵ concerning this and other dignitary's figures from Faras who accepts that they are representation of kings wearing 'the Nubian crown of the Kingdom of Dotawo',²⁶ however no literary source nor inscription referred to is mentioned to support his belief. According this author the change of regalia drew from a supposed personal union between Makuria and Arwa (i.e. Alodia) and the crown was derived from southern Nubian tradition. It is in that work called also an 'Arwan crown'.

The next identification of a dignitary on the basis of extant inscription is known since 1928 when F.Ll. Griffith published the report on works at Abd el-Qadir church near Wadi Halfa including in it a representation of local dignitary under protection of Christ and possibly another saintly person (**Fig. 4**). The mural is currently housed in the Sudan National Museum, inv. No. 24325. The dignitary depicted in an attitude of a founder of church, wears a crown of type 1 of the present classification. The legend is not extant (and there is doubtful whether has ever been written), but beside the figure a text of five lines framed with a thick line occurs, no doubt connected with the painting. F.Ll. Griffith transcribed²⁷ the greater part of text, which can be complemented as follows (**Fig. 5**):

²³ G.M. BROWNE, Old Nubian Texts from Qasr Ibrīm III, Texts from Excavations, *EES Memoir* 12, London 1991, Nos 46.5, 48.II.6, 51.9.

²⁴ MICHAŁOWSKI, *Die Kathedrale*, p. 165.

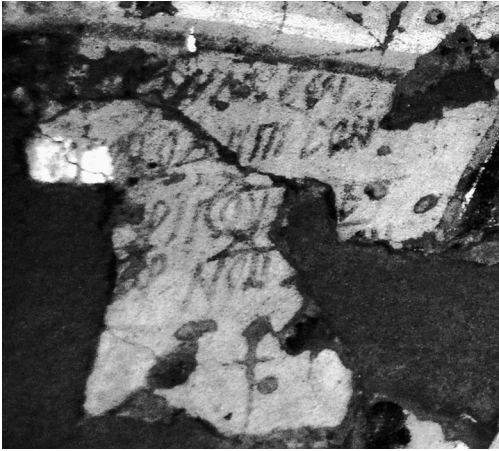
²⁵ GODLEWSKI, *Bishops and Kings*, pp. 271–274, 277–278.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 277. Further (p. 277) he writes: *Both Michalowski and Jakobielski believed it to be the crown of the eparchs of Nobadia. There is hardly any doubt that these were different forms of royal Nubian crowns, worn at various royal court ceremonies. The most complex form is presented by the helmet with horns topped by a crescent on a shaft and the front decorated with bucranium and two pairs of horns.*

²⁷ GRIFFITH, *AAALiv* XV, 1928, Pl. XXIX.12.



4. Mural representing a dignitary protected by Christ from the church at Abd el-Qadir, field inv. No. 12 (at present in the Sudan National Museum, Khartoum, inv. No. 24325) (Phot. B. Żurawski).



$\overline{\kappa\epsilon}$ $\overline{\phi\gamma\lambda\alpha\zeta\omicron\nu}$ $\overline{\epsilon[\gamma\lambda\omicron\gamma]}$
 $[\text{HCO}]N^{28}$ $\overline{\omicron\delta\eta\gamma\eta\varsigma\omicron\nu}$
 $\overline{\mu\alpha\rho\iota\kappa\omicron\upsilon}$ $\overline{\mu\epsilon\gamma}$
 $\overline{\epsilon\pi\alpha\rho}$ $\overline{\nu\omicron\beta}$ $\overline{\omega}$
 $[\overline{\pi\alpha}]\overline{\chi}$

5. Ink inscription accompanying the figure of a dignitary depicted in Abd el-Qadir church, inv. No. 12 (Phot. B. Żurawski).

Κ(ύρι)ε·φύλαζον | εὐλό(γησον)·οδηγήσον [μα]ρίκοϋ· $\overline{\alpha'(\alpha)}$ [μ]έγ(αν) | [ἐ]πάρ'χ(ον)
 Νοβ(ά)δ'(ων) δ'ῶ(μέστικος)²⁹ | [Πα]χ(ωρας).

O Lord, guard, bless(?) (and) guide Marikouda great(?) eparch of Nobadians, domestikos(?) (of Pachoras).

The reading of the text is still doubtful in part. At the end of the line 3 an epithet of the eparch is expected and reading μέγας is not sure. The title 'great eparch' is not attested in texts, but it might be put by the scribe to emphasise the importance of portrayed person. The title *domestikos* regularly follow the title of eparch in texts of the Late Christian period, however the abbreviation which occurs here is not met. A variant form using ω instead of $\omicron$ is quite common. Thanks to Włodzimierz Godlewski's identification³⁰ of Marikouda as the Eparch of Nobadia mentioned in written sources from Qasr Ibrim,³¹ the Abd el-Qadir painting can be dated to 1270s.

The inscription cannot be treated as a proper legend. It reminds rather the scheme of dedication formula of donors of Faras paintings used in the beginning of eleventh century, and perhaps occasionally later:

+ Κ(ύρι)ε Ἰ(ησο)ῦ Χ(ριστο)ῦ (... ...) φύλαζον εὐλόγησον σκέπασον ἐνδυνάμησον βοήθησον τὸν δοῦλον σου... (*† Lord Jesus Christ, and [here a theme of the painting]*)

²⁸ Following suggestion of Griffith who reads here **CON**.

²⁹ GRIFFITH, *ibid.* and MONNERET DE VILLARD, Nub. Med. I, p. 214 read here **ΟΥ**.

³⁰ GODLEWSKI, Late Period, p. 38. In a recent work (Bishops and Kings) the identification of this figure as the eparch was abandoned by W. Godlewski in favour of a king.

³¹ PLUMLEY, New Light, p. 235.



6. A Nubian dignitary under protection of the Holy Trinity from the Rivergate Church (after GRIFFITH, *AAALiv* XIII, 1926, Pl. LXI).

guard, bless, protect, strengthen, help Thy servant [here a name of the donor]...),³² however, it seems that the formulation on Abd el-Qadir mural got another character and it would be rather more likely that the painter used a part of this formula to describe the depicted dignitary rather, than to accept that an eparch was a founder of this dignitary's portrait. Therefore most probably the eparch (this time wearing slightly modest type of horned crown), and not a king, is concerned here.

The third example of the representation of a Nubian dignitary in a horned helmet is known from the documentation drawing of a mural from the Rivergate Church at Faras (**Fig. 6**). The figure is depicted under protection of the Holy Trinity, according to Nubian iconography represented as three busts of Christ.³³ The painting was evidently provided with a legend of seven lines. The text is in Greek, or in Greco-Nubian. It was presumably

³² Cf. S. JAKOBIELSKI, *A History of the Bishopric of Pachoras, Faras III*, Warszawa 1972, pp. 177–180.

³³ Listed in category 1 (c), n. 5, *supra*. For the description of the painting done on the basis of unpublished original (coloured) drawing see MARTENS-CZARNEKA, *Rivergate*, pp. 368–369.

barely visible at the time of discovery and seems to be mistranscribed by F.Ll. Griffith (Fig. 7), but no photograph of it is available. An attempt to imagine what was there written is presented here, on the very same figure.

//OY T//ECTIN OY T IC̄E//P NOBA'// ΠΔ//M// ΡΑC// IC̄N//E// CAME//OYCCYN NE///ΠΟΛΛΑ//: TH : ~	[†]OY[TOC]ECTIN OY.T K̄OY[^Δ ΕΠΑ] ^Χ Ρ ^Δ NOBA[S] ΠΔ [ΔΟ]M[EC T ΠΑΧΩ] ΡΑC [ΚΝ.Ε [] Σ ΠΔ CAME[T]O YCCYN NE.[] ΠΟΛΛΑ[ΤΑ Ε]ΤΗ : ~
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7. The legend to mural of a dignity under protection of the Holy Trinity represented in the Rivergate Church in Faras, inv. No. 34. Copy of the text after GRIFFITH, *AAALiv* XIII, 1926, Pl. LXIV.12.

A tentative translation: *This is (NAME) Eparch of Nobadia and also Domestikos Pachoras (... ..), and also Samet³⁴ (... ..) many years to (him).*

As to the name of the eparch mentioned in the text the letters which are read by Griffith do not suggest any known one. It is possible that it ended with ...kouda.

There is an unique literary source describing the eparchs headgear in writings of Abu-I-Makarim (formerly known as Abu Salih, the Armenian):³⁵ *at Bujarāš* [i.e. Buḥarās = Faras], *the capital of the province of al-Marīs, which is a well populated city, there is the dwelling of Jawsār, who wore turban (‘aṣābah) and two horns (al-qurnayn) and the golden bracelet (as-suwār adh-dhahab).*

And there is no other evidence available so far for identification of dignitaries wearing horned crowns. All written information in inscriptions mentioning kings are applying to figures wearing Byzantine types of crowns, or unfortunately, to figures with crowns not extant.

³⁴ *Samet* in Old Nubian is the equivalent of Greek *domestikos*. Another possible title of the same beginning is *sametiñol*.

³⁵ Cf. G. VANTINI, *Oriental Sources concerning Nubia*, Warsaw-Heidelberg 1975, p. 323; Arabic text in: L.E. Matveev, V.V. Kubbel (Eds), *Arabskije istočniki XII–XIII vekov po etnografii i istorii Afriki južnee Sahary*, Leningrad 1985, fol. 119, p. 35.

From the other hand, a hypothesis that the horned crown might have been used also by Nubian kings of the Late Christian Period is worth considering even for a single reason: a similarity between king's and eparch's vestments and attributes, as a bouffant overskirt, a kaftan, a bow or a sac-ended sash, i.e. a wide strip of fabric hanging from the right shoulder, draping across the chest and left arm. Another question is, of course, why and when the change of kings' attire came (if it really happen), and this might be answered only with the help of textual or epigraphic evidence, and this, at present, is just lacking.

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