

# DONGOLA SEASONS IN 2012–2013

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with appendix by Robert Mahler<sup>2</sup>

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**Abstract:** The four seasons, two in 2012 and two in 2013, carried out in ancient Dongola by an expedition from the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, University of Warsaw, were devoted to continuing excavations in a number of areas: the fortifications on the Citadel and houses from the Funj period (17th–18th century) outside of the fortifications; site SWN on the Citadel, including Building B.I (Palace of Ioannes) and Building B.V (church); and the monastery complex on Kom H, encompassing the monastic church, sanctuary of Anna, gates to the monastery for monks and laity, finally the commemorative building of the Dongolan bishops with three crypts where the third of the crypts was revisited to study the burials from an anthropological perspective. In late 2013, a new Qatar–Sudan Archaeological Project (No. 10) was launched with fieldwork concentrated on the Mosque Building and within the Citadel.

**Keywords:** Dongola, citadel, Funj, Throne Hall, Mosque Building, SWN, Building B.I/B.X, B.V, monastic church, crypt, sanctuary of Anna, monastery gates

Archaeological work at the site of Dongola, the ancient capital of the Nubian kingdom of Makuria, took on extra momentum in 2012 and 2013 with four excavation seasons of at least four weeks each being carried out in the course of two years. The second season in 2013 (the fourth reported here) was also the initial season of a new undertaking funded by the Qatar–Sudan Archaeological Project (QSAP 10), a Qatari initiative with the aim of promoting the rich archaeological heritage of Sudan.

Investigations concentrated on the fortifications of the Citadel in the northern

and northeastern part of the site. This was combined with an extensive study of Funj-period (16th–17th century) architecture on the Citadel as well as outside the fortifications, to the east and north. Continued exploration of the palatial structure (Building B.I) was geared primarily to tracing remains of the earlier structure (B.X) under rooms B.I.41 and B.I.37 in the southwestern part of the building. A study of the pottery repertoire, especially amphorae, from this location has yielded important data for stratigraphic and chronological considerations.

The site of Building B.V, discovered in the previous season, was protected with a shelter roof in order to improve conditions of further exploration and immediate protection and restoration of murals preserved on the walls of this structure of evidently religious nature. The full plan of the building was traced as well.

Fieldwork in the Monastery on Kom H concentrated on documentation of the foundations of the church building, which is one of the best preserved early (mid-6th century) churches in Dongola. The last of three bishops' burial crypts in the so-called Northwest Annex, discovered in the 1990s, was also revisited, as was the grave of Anna next to the monastic church, in both cases for the purpose of an anthropological study of the skeletal remains, which had not been examined during the original excavations. A full documentation

of the structures was completed (see below, appendix, and separate report on crypt 3 in this volume, Mahler et al. 2015).

Mural restoration work was also continued inside the Throne Hall of the Kings of Makuria. Important Nubian Christian wall paintings had been discovered there under coats of neutral white plaster applied in the centuries following the turning of the building into a mosque in the 14th century. This work was part of the QSAP project, the first season of which was carried out in the second part of 2013. The QSAP project also entailed a brief survey of the site by architects from the Wrocław University of Technology Faculty of Architecture, specialists in site presentation projects, who prepared the idea and completed the technical documentation for transforming the site into an attractive tourist destination.

#### Team

*Dates of work:* 15 January–1 March 2012; 18 November–19 December 2012; 19 January–16 February 2013; 16 November–21 December 2013

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*Archaeologists:* Barbara Czaja-Szewczak, textile restorer and specialist (Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów; 2012.1), Lucia Dominici (PhD candidate, Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw; 2013.1), Dr. Dorota Dzierzbicka (Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw; 2013.2), Łukasz Jarmużek (independent; 2012.2, 2013.2), Szymon Maślak (PCMA UW; 2012.1, 2013.2), Marek Woźniak (independent; 2012.2), Dr. Dobrochna Zielińska, archeologist and art historian (Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw; 2012.1, 2013.1), Łukasz Zieliński (independent; 2012.1)

*Ceramologist:* Katarzyna Danys-Lasek (independent; 2012.1, 2013.1)

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*Archaeozoologist:* Dr. Marta Osypińska (Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poznań; 2012.1, 2013.1)

*Architects:* Dr. Teresa Dziedzic, Dr. Romuald Tarczewski (both Wrocław University of Technology; 2013.2)

*Painting restorers:* Jolanta Ewa Kurzyńska (freelance; 2013.1); Dorota Moryto-Naumiuk (freelance; 2012.1)

*Student-trainee:* Justyna Dziubecka (Institute of Archaeology, University of Warsaw; 2013.1)

## CITADEL FORTIFICATIONS

The 5th and 6th century Citadel rises impressively on a rocky uplift along the Nile bank. Massive defense walls were constructed on the northern and eastern sides: the curtain was 5.70 m wide, reinforced with towers set at regular intervals of 32–35 m, projecting from the curtain 8.50–8.90 m [Fig. 1]. Mud brick and broken limestone were used for the outside face (approximately 0.90 m thick). The northwestern tower, which had been explored partly in 1993–1995, still stands about 6.00 m high on a rock foundation. The riverside defenses were constructed of mud brick and measured 3.70 m in the northern part and 2.10 m in the southern part.

The northeastern tower, which was explored during the first campaign of the season, was in a much better state of preservation than the northwestern tower excavated earlier [Fig. 2]. It was also founded on bedrock. The width was 6.10 m, length 9.00 m, and it rose to 8.35 m in height. The stone structure was reused for the outer walls of a 17th-century house, which was built on the top of the tower. Taking this into account, the original height of the tower (and the curtain on either side of it) can be estimated at about 10.50–11.00 m.

At some point the fortifications underwent a program of development, building on top of the accumulated sand dunes and adding a new outer facing of dried bricks, approximately 1.00 m wide, on a level 4.70 m higher than the stone-wall foundation [Fig. 3]. This investment appears to have taken place sometime at the end of the 16th century, presumably in response to a growing Ottoman threat (the excavator

had previously suggested a date in the end of the 13th century, in defense against raiding Mamluks). The pottery assemblage, coming from sand corresponding stratigraphically to the dried-brick wall facing, consisted of handmade ware with not one sherd of wheel-made ceramics being found; it was undoubtedly post-Makurite and could be attributed to the 15th–16th century. The dwellings to the north of the fortifications, excavated in the first of the reported seasons of fieldwork, can be dated to the 17th century. These were small houses with no upper storey, built of dried brick, usually with two or three interiors, founded directly on the sand dune. A rich assemblage of handmade domestic pottery, attributed to the last phase of the functioning of the house and hence dated to the 17th century, was excavated in house DH.116 [Fig. 4]. The pots were finely burnished on the outside, decorated with bands of engraved decoration and a neatly impressed mat on the bottom part.

The sand fill by the northeastern tower, already below the foundation level of the dried-brick curtain facade, but also corresponding to and above the foundation, yielded an extensive assemblage of faunal remains. The bones were evidently post-consumption refuse dumped from the 17th century village located on the citadel summit. Archaeozoological research has established that villagers in the 17th century were eating mainly cattle and camel meat.

In the northern part of the Dongola fortifications, a 60-m stretch of curtain wall between towers NE and N.1B, as well as N.2, was exposed, clearing away accumulated sand deposits [see Fig. 1]. Once sand

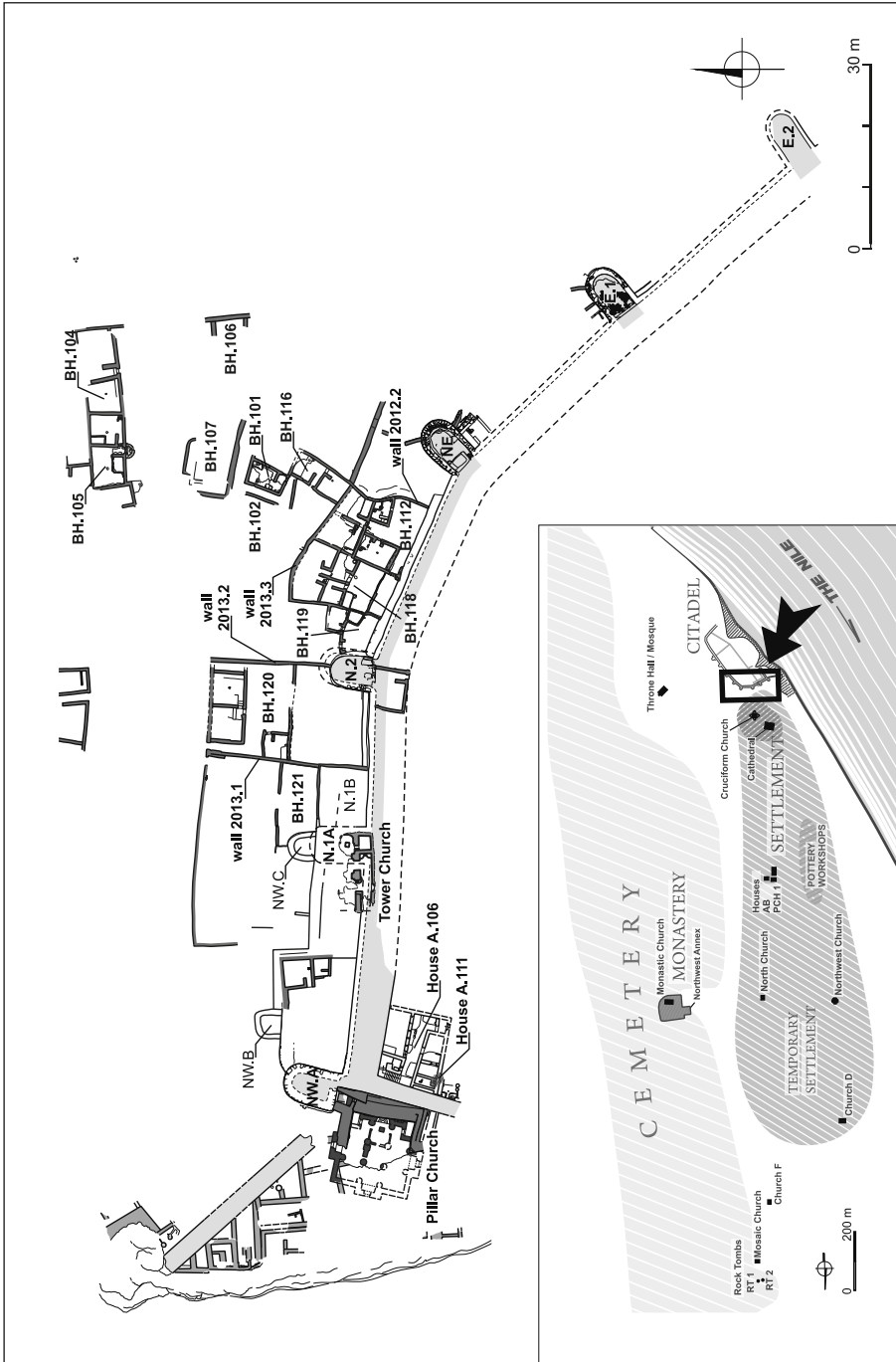


Fig. 1. Plan of the northern and eastern fortifications of the Citadel (Drawing and digitizing S. Maslak, PCMA UW)

was removed, the industrial and dwelling structures that were provisionally dated to the turn of the 16th century were recorded and dismantled to reveal the wall face.



*Fig. 2. Northeastern tower, view from the north  
(Photo W. Godlewski, PCMA UW)*

Exploration stopped at the foundation level of the mud-brick wall that had been built against the stone face of the original fortifications from the turn of the 5th and early 6th centuries. This level is about 4.50 m below the preserved top of the fortifications. This mud-brick casing was removed on a stretch 12.60 m long, between towers N.2 and N.1B, revealing the stone face of the first wall. Research in 2012 indicated that the bedrock under the original walls near tower NE was 2.50–3.00 m below the foundation level of the 16th/17th-century mud-brick casing.

Tower N.2, largely rebuilt with mud brick, has a preserved stone face only on a stretch of 4.00 m on the western side and it is structurally associated with the stone curtain between towers N.2 and N.1B. It may have been a gate giving access to the Citadel from the north. This hypothesis will be verified after the removal of the lower-lying deposits that abut the walls and the dismantling of the mud-brick casing.



*Fig. 3. Facing of dried brick between the towers NE and N.2  
(Photo W. Godlewski, PCMA UW)*



Fig. 4. Pottery deposit from House DH.116  
(Photo W. Godlewski, PCMA UW)

Tower N.1B to the north of the original tower N.1, constructed of irregular stone blocks and brick, was built contemporaneously to the brick casing of the walls and can be dated to the end of the 16th century [Fig. 5]. In terms of structural phases, it is earlier than the mud-brick casing of the wall between towers N.2 and N.1A. The foundation level of the east wall of the enlarged tower N.1B was identified and found to be even with the brick casing of the curtain wall (24.31–24.43 m a.s.l.).

This construction work carried out along the northern face of the original

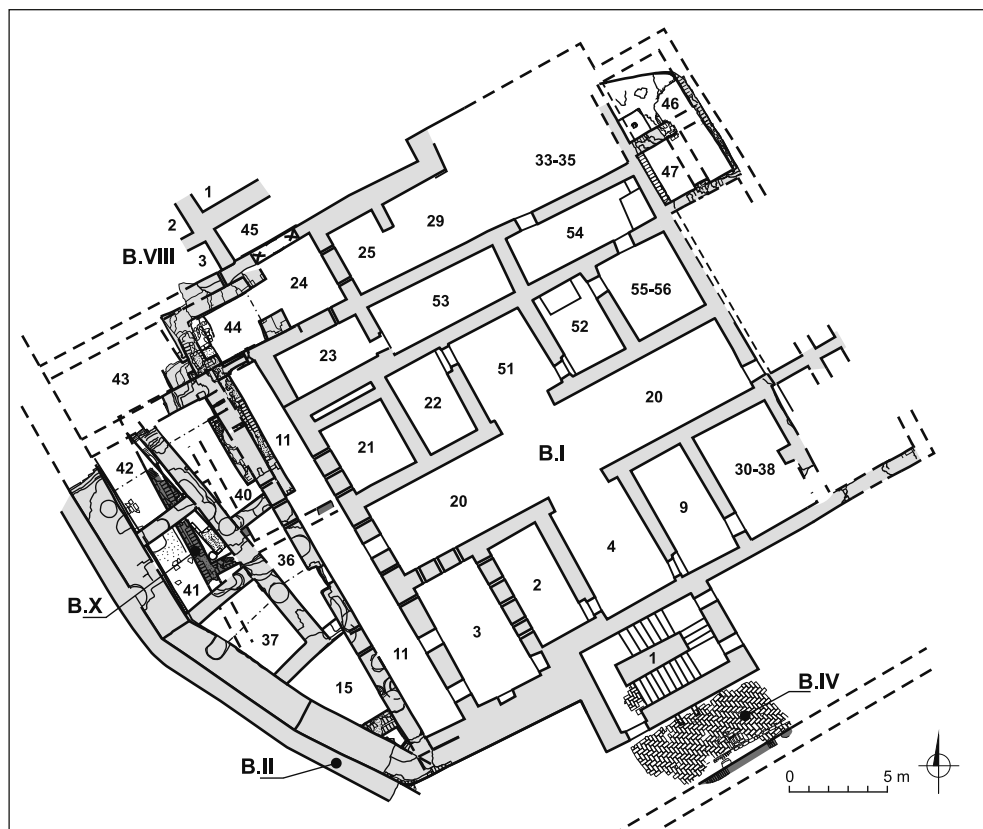


Fig. 5. Plan of Building B.I and the earlier remains of Building B.X  
(Drawing and digitizing S. Maślak, PCMA UW)

fortifications is likely to be associated with the growing threat posed by the Ottoman Turks towards the end of the 16th century.

As a matter of fact, the latter never reached Dongola, as their progress was halted near the Third Cataract by the army of Funj.

## FUNJ-PERIOD HOUSES ON KOM B

Clearing of the northern ramparts uncovered a complex of mud-brick structures built on the sand dune, as well as a rubbish dump at the foot of the citadel walls [*Fig. 1*]. Two buildings (BH.112 and BH.119) were documented. Each consisted of a series of rooms with industrial and dwelling function, as indicated by diverse features and objects found within: pottery, grinding stones,

fire-dogs, etc. Deposits of animal dung in the house courtyards are proof that livestock, identified as goats and sheep, was kept there. Artifacts offering a glimpse into the lives of the inhabitants of this quarter included imported Ottoman clay pipes from the 16th–17th century, as well as two amulets, one of which contained a long Arabic text written on a thin sheet of paper.

## THE CITADEL (SITE SWN)

### BUILDING B.I

The work was a continuation of earlier excavations in 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007–2011 (Godlewski 2002; 2004; 2006; 2010; 2014) and concentrated on Building B.I, identified as an extensive palace complex and ascribed most probably to King Ioannes of the end of the 6th century.

Excavation of the western part of the complex, inside rooms B.I.37, B.I.41, B.I.42 and B.I.24, aimed to investigate the architecture that preceded the palace in this part of the site. The date when Building B.I was established was verified by the results of a pottery study, which identified imported amphorae from Byzantine Egypt (Aswan, Middle Egypt and Mareotis), as well as mud (clay and lime) stoppers from Egypt and Palestine (see Danys-Lasek 2015; Dzierzbicka 2015). The excavations inside room B.I.41 provided clear evidence of the

trade relations with Byzantine Egypt and the massive import of wine from different regions of Egypt: Aswan, Middle Egypt and the Mareotis, as well as Palestine.

The evidence from rooms B.I.41 and B.I.42 matched finds from other storage rooms in the western part of the palace attributed to King Ioannes. The entrance to room B.I.37 from B.I.11 was uncovered in a pit inside room B.I.37, demonstrating that the western part of B.I was accessible from corridor B.I.11 by two entrances which gave on rooms B.I.40 and B.I.37. In turn, corridor B.I.11 and the western part of the palace proved to be connected directly with the northern vestibule of the palace, which was formed in the original palace layout by rooms B.I.44 (explored in an earlier season) and B.I.24. The two rooms were cleaned down to the level of the original floor corresponding with the functioning of the palace.

## BUILDING B.X

Relics of an earlier building (B.X), preceding the palace of Ioannes (B.I), were found under rooms B.I.41 and B.I.42 [Fig. 5]. The preserved part of the plan shows a regular pattern with well-built walls of mud brick. The building was rather extended and was most probably contemporary with Building B.IV, the paved floor of which was uncovered in front of the palace in 2003 (Godlewski 2004) and which was constructed earlier than the palatial building. The pottery associated with the raising of this earlier structure suggests a date for this foundation in the middle of the 6th century. Similarly dated analogous pottery was found on site CC to the north of Citadel, under the pavement of building BX, as well as close to the Dongolese pottery kilns (Site R).

Three trenches were explored in the first of two seasons in 2013. In the eastern part of the building, relics of palace walls were discovered under thick post-Makurian accumulation (Houses H.27 and H.28). Despite a location on the main axes of the palace, the trench did not reveal any unquestionable trace of the expected outer east wall of the building and potential entrance. Thus it may be that the original palace building was even more extended than hitherto supposed (1200 m<sup>2</sup> on the ground floor). Two other trenches were excavated in the western part of the building in corridor B.I.11 and inside room B.I.36. Both spaces were filled with bricks and sand. The lower part of the deposit inside room B.I.36 yielded a substantial collection of potsherds and mud stoppers from the 7th century, as well as wall relics of mud brick belonging to the earlier structure of Building B.X. Despite this further

evidence the plan of the building is still poorly recognized. It is now evident, however, that it was constructed at the same time that the fortifications on the river side of the Citadel were built.

## BUILDING B.V

The building located to the south of B.I and B.III was identified in 2005 and 2008 and partly studied in 2011 (Godlewski 2007; 2010; 2014) [Fig. 6]. The western and northwestern parts were cleared down to the level of the original floor of stone slabs, which proved to be well preserved, unlike the walls which had been dismantled practically down to the ground (the walls in the eastern part of the building rise 4.00 m above the ground). Two entrances to the interior were uncovered. From the south, an entrance in the southwestern corner gave access to a narrow western room, narthex most probably, connected by three doors with the central part of the interior (naos) of the building. The second entrance was situated in the central part of the north wall and opened directly into the naos. Remains of a staircase were observed in the southwestern corner of the naos. Small fragments of painted plaster in the debris was all that remained of walls from the western part of the building, proving that they had once been plastered and painted. The most striking find was a Greek stela reused as a paving slab in the stone pavement [Fig. 7]. The stela belonged to Staurosaña, a grandchild of King Zacharias, dated to ME 774, 22 Choiak (AD 1057/1058). It seems that Staurosaña died as a small child, perhaps at the age of one or four years (difficult to read on the stela). It is very likely that the child's father had died before him as only the



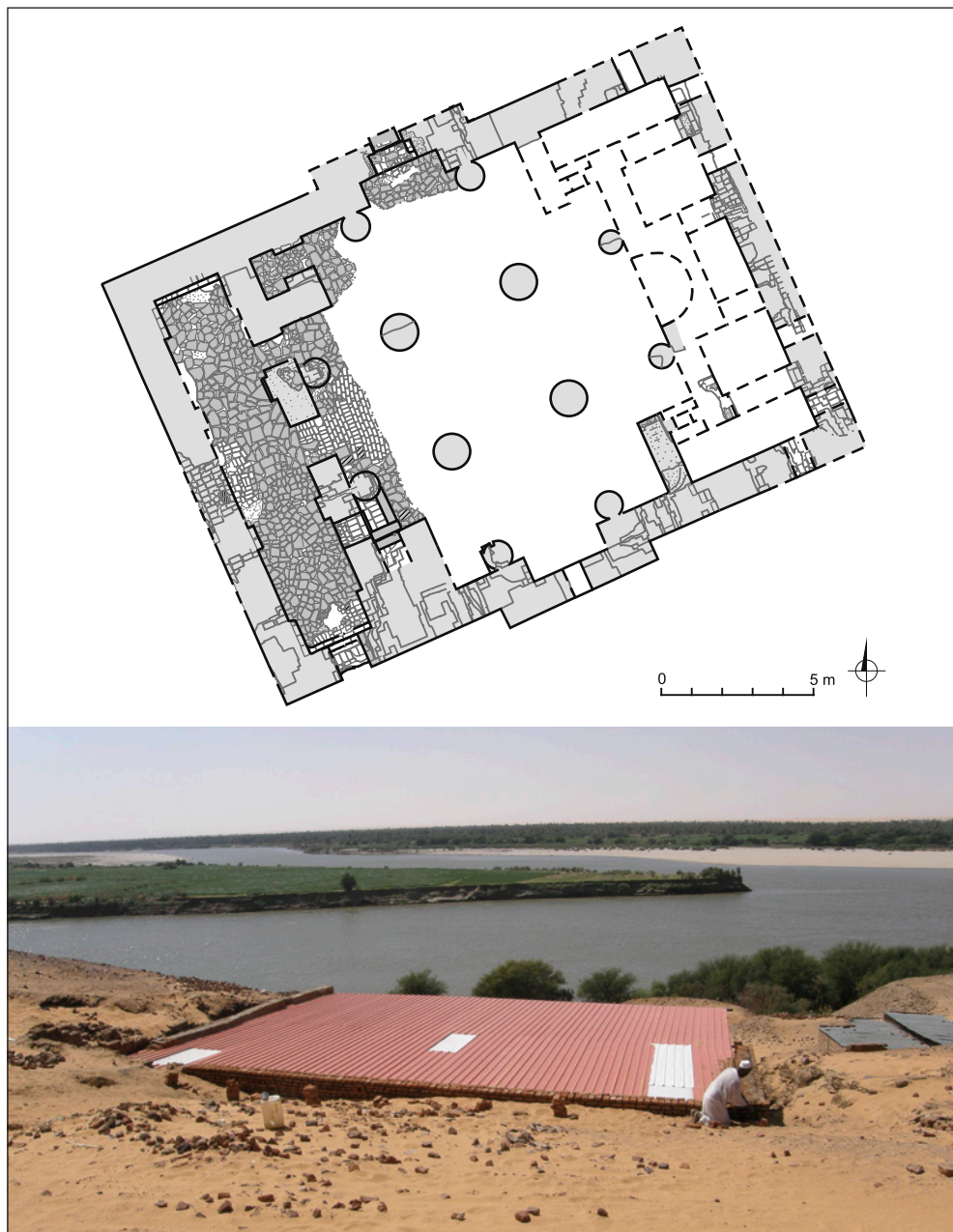


Fig. 6. Building B.V: top, plan after the 2013 season; bottom, roof shelter constructed over the part of the building with well-preserved walls, seen from the east (Drawing S. Maślak; photo W. Godlewski, PCMA UW)

grandfather is mentioned. It also shows that in 1057/1058 King Zacharias (IV) was still alive. We can thus suppose that Zacharias IV, who is here mentioned for the first time in written sources, was the last king of the Dongolose dynasty founded by Zacharias I in AD 836. He was a successor of King Stephanos who was mentioned in turn in one of the unpublished documents from Gebel Adda, dated to AD 1022. Solomon, the first king of Dotawo, most probably succeeded King Zacharias IV, who died most probably after his son (Godlewski 2013).

The function of this exceptional building from the architectural and technical point of view is still unclear, but it could

be a religious building functionally connected with the royal palace of Ioannes. The date of this foundation is still unclear; B.V was built most probably before the end of the 9th century as a royal church.

The protection of the walls and piers covered with paintings had to be immediate, especially in view of the heavy rain in 2010 which destroyed modern/ancient(?) houses in the village of El-Ghaddar. Excavations were suspended in 2011 after the upper parts of the walls had been uncovered and a roofing of zinc corrugated sheet installed over the part of the building with well-preserved structure (80% of the interior, that is, over 200 m<sup>2</sup> of surface) [Fig. 6 bottom]. The first construction suffered damage out-of-season from the encroaching sand dune and needed to be reconstructed; an additional iron wall was raised as protection against drifting sand. This shelter has provided better conditions for further excavation, as well as the study and restoration works in the seasons reported here.

In the first season of 2013, a thick deposit was cleared from inside the northern part of the building and the murals and plaster on the wall and pillars were preserved. Mostly domestic refuse, that is, ashes and animal excrements from the 16th–17th-century occupation, found filling the building had had an adverse effect on the plaster on the walls and pillars. Murals were explored section by section and preserved. The work proceeded at a rate dictated by the progress in mural restoration (see Zielińska 2015b). All the paintings identified up to now are of a religious character, including Christ, the Virgin and the Archangels. The roof shelter was extended to the western part of the structure, covering the entire building,

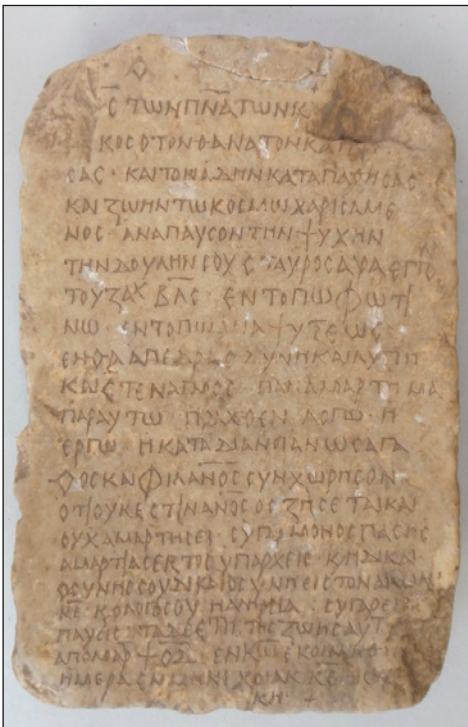


Fig. 7. *Stela of Staurosasña*  
(Photo W. Godlewski, PCMA UW)

and the open space from the west was closed temporarily with wire netting.

#### ROYAL THRONE HALL

Restoration of paintings from the time of the kingdom of Makuria was continued inside the central room on the second floor of the building. The work, carried out in the first season in 2012, was undertaken in close cooperation with the Conservation Department of the Sudanese National Council for Antiquities and Museums. Murals on the north and south walls of the central room were cleaned and protected (Calaforra-Rzepka, Sosnowska, and Moryto-Naumiuk 2015). In effect, fragments of different compositions were

uncovered under coats of successive lime wash and plaster introduced once the interior had been transformed into a mosque in the early 14th century, becoming the earliest mosque building anywhere in Sudan. The paintings were cleaned as far as possible and protected provisionally, after which they were documented (Zielińska 2015a).

One of the most important paintings was uncovered on the north wall, in the northwestern corner of the room. The cross with five tondos: a central one with a representation of Christ and four with the apocalyptic beings on the arms, stood centrally at the top of a set of steps [Fig. 8]. Flanking the cross at the base was

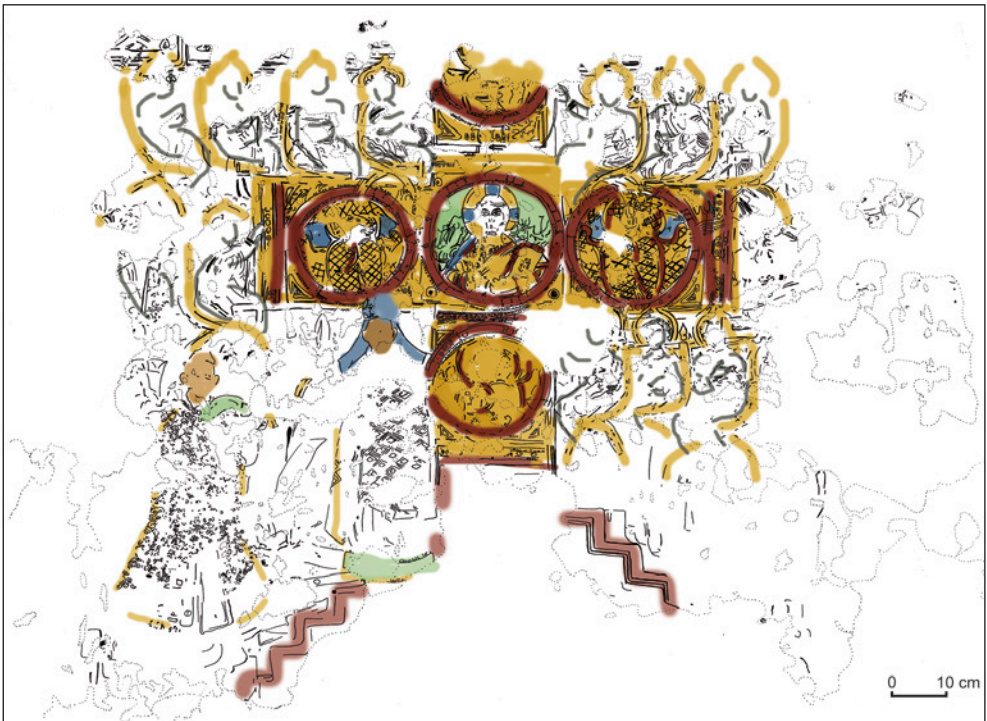


Fig. 8. Representation of a cross with accompanying royal ecclesiastical figures and added figures of Twenty-four Elders of the Revelation (Drawing and interpretation D. Zielińska)

a series of white-robed enthroned figures, the exact number of which is difficult to ascertain due to the poor state of preservation of the wall plaster. These were most likely wise men (elders) and there should be twenty-four of them, twelve on either side. Other fragmentary figures, presumably adoring the cross, were depicted on the two sides of the base of the cross. The composition, apparently unique in Nubian painting, refers to the text of the Revelation of Saint John and a text attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem, a fragment of which,

translated into the old Nubian language, was found at Qasr Ibrim in 1982. It reads:

*...when the four (living creatures) give  
glory, honor and  
thanksgiving, the twenty-four white,  
glorious priests, when  
they take off their crowns, worship the  
throne...*

(transl. M. Browne)

The figures on either side of the cross are not easily identified. One of them wears a partly preserved crown.

## MONASTERY ON KOM H

Work inside the monastic complex on Kom H consisted of revisiting the crypts in the Northwest Annex and the grave inside the sanctuary of Anna, located by the monastic church, for the purpose of completing the architectural documentation and an anthropological study of the skeletal remains. Additional documentation concerned the inside of the monastic church as well.

### CRYPT 3 IN THE COMMEMORATIVE BUILDING OF THE BISHOPS

Work in the first season of 2012 concentrated on completing the investigation of the commemorative building of the bishops of Dongola (referred to as the Northwest Annex in earlier research). Crypt 3 was excavated and the anthropological and textile remains were studied (see Mahler et al. 2015, in this volume). The crypt [*Fig. 9*] was built simultaneously with the crypt (No. 2) cleaned in the 2009 season (Godlewski, Mahler, and Czaja-Szewczak 2012). Five burials, all identified as adult males, were found deposited in two levels: three in the lower

and two in the upper. The latter two were buried wrapped in silk shrouds; remains of clothes were also observed: a wool shawl and a small fragment of a tunic. Remains of a sixth individual, a solitary skull, were found as well.

In the sanctuary of Anna, his tomb located in front of the altar was revisited for the purpose of anthropological study, the results of which are presented in the appendix below. The paintings and graffiti on the walls were studied thoroughly and documented. A roof was constructed over the reconstructed naos walls of the sanctuary, laying corrugated metal sheets on a grid of metal beams [*Fig. 11 top*]

The monastic church in Dongola is one of the best preserved buildings from the mid-6th century. Studies have shown it to be built on the plan of a three-aisled basilica with central tower, a design entirely unique in Makuria. Additional documentation concerned the tiled pavement in the northwestern part of the naos and the building foundations which were studied in two probes dug along the north and south walls of the church.

### BUILDING H.SW.B3 AND THE MONASTERY GATES

A comprehensive review was carried out of the excavated sections of the external annexes added to the west wall of the monastic compound, immediately to the north of the west gate. A presumably storied building, H.SW.B3 (referred to in earlier research as the Southwest Annex), extended from the west gate to the north, in the direction of another earlier building, interpreted now as the main monastery entrance for monks.

The Southwest Annex had been excavated successively by Bogdan Żurawski in 1995 (Żurawski 1997) and by Stefan

Jakobielski in 2005 (Jakobielski and Martens-Czarnecka 2008); the wall paintings from the annex were published recently by Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka (2011). The poor condition of the shelter roof constructed in 2005 called for immediate action and a new metal roof was installed this season [Fig. 10 left].

The work provided an opportunity to clear the west facade of sand, as well as to carry out additional research and documentation of the architecture, paintings and inscriptions preserved on the walls. Studies undertaken by Adam Łajtar on the inscriptions from the annex have demonstrated that most of them were written in Greek

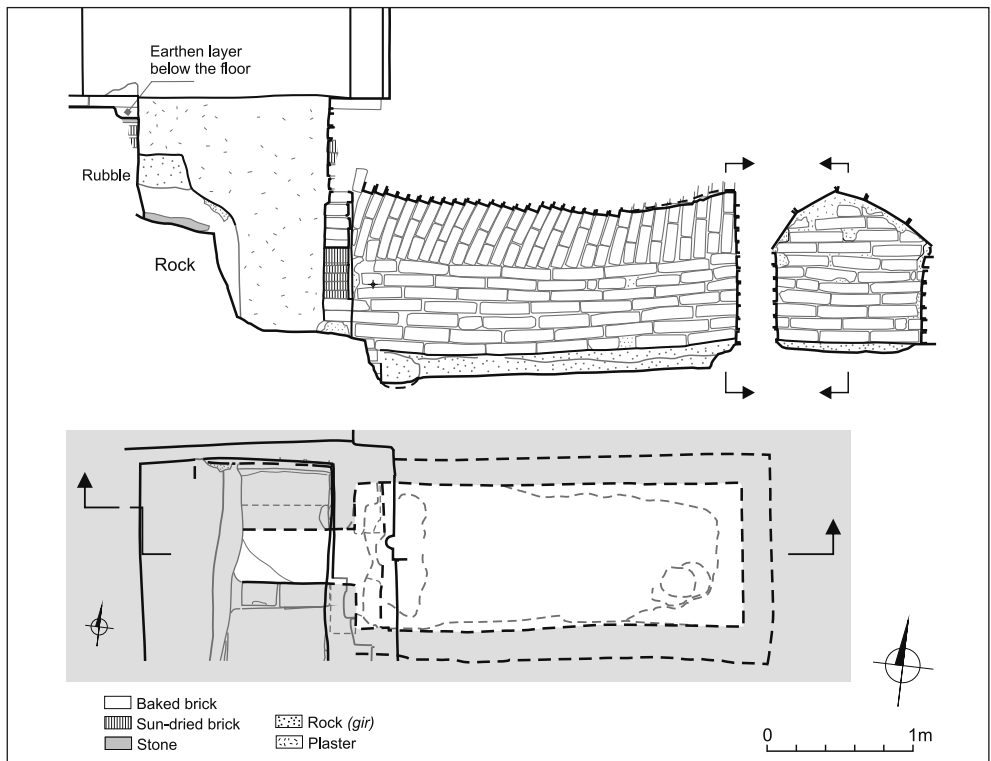


Fig. 9. Crypt 3 in the commemorative building of the bishops (Northwest Annex), part of the Monastery on Kom H (Drawing S. Maślak, PCMA UW)

(Łajtar 2015, in this volume). Only a few of the graffiti scratched in the plaster were in Old Nubian. Most of the Greek texts were legends accompanying murals: prayers and literary texts (psalms); despite their poor state of preservation, they are of key importance for understanding the repertoire of painted decoration on the ground-floor of the structure. The graffiti were left by visitors. None of the inscriptions included a date.

The building was undoubtedly of a religious nature, but the exact function has not been determined despite the preserved inscriptions and murals, as well as some inner installations. The date of foundation also could not be established, although the building is evidently later than the second architectural phase of the west gate for the laity visiting the monastery church.

Four successive phases of development were identified [Fig. 10 right]. Originally there were just three rooms added at right

angle to the monastery wall, between the southwestern entrance for monks (leading both to the ground and upper floor of the western part of the monastery complex) and the west gate to the courtyard in front of the church and the sanctuary of the saint Anna, intended for laity. The monumental entrance from the west to the northern of these three rooms (H.SW.B3.6) served simultaneously as an entrance for monks and an entrance to a new structure, which appears to have been furnished with an altar (partly preserved structure, measuring 0.59 m by 0.52 m in plan, preserved height 0.70 m) by the east wall of the chamber and a ceramic basin in the southeastern corner of the adjacent room (H.SW.B3.5), 0.76 m by 0.40 m and 0.39 m deep, set on a rectangular dais that was 0.25 m high. It is not clear whether these furnishings should be attributed to the original building. Judging by its shape and size, the basin may be considered as a baptismal font for infants. The steps in the southernmost

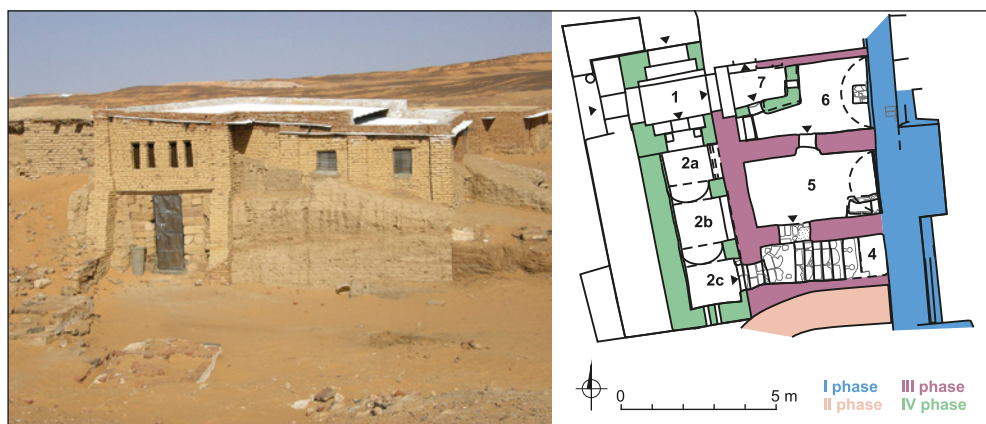


Fig. 10. Building H.SW.B3 (=Southwest Annex) between the gates to the southwestern part of the monastery: left, most recent view of the annex following roofing in 2015, looking east; right, plan of the annex reflecting the results of a new architectural reinterpretation (Drawing S. Maślak; photo W. Godlewski, PCMA UW)

of the three rooms (H.SW.B.3.4) of the annex were introduced in the third phase of rebuilding.

In the second phase, a square vestibule (H.SW.B.3.1) was constructed at the entrance. It was vaulted with a monastic type of dome supported on four pillars. Three arcades, on the west and on the north and south, gave entrance to this vestibule.

The rebuilding in the third phase involved a kind of corridor or narthex being added along the entire length of the western facade. This passage was divided into three units by two inner arcades (H.SW.B.3.2abc) and it was presumably at this time that a door was introduced. It led from the passage to the southernmost room (H.SW.B.3.4), which now received a staircase constructed of sandstone blocks that appear to have come from an earlier structure. It is not clear whether this staircase led to the upper floor or was linked to a kind of platform on the inside of the outer monastery wall. This platform would have enabled communication with people gathered in the monastery courtyard in front of the sanctuary of Anna and the monastic church. However, the state of preservation of the building does not permit this architectural issue to be resolved beyond doubt.

In the fourth and last rebuilding phase, the structure of the building was

reinforced with a wide wall along the western and northern sides. The entrance vestibule (H.SW.B.3.1) was also rebuilt with additional walls being introduced in the northern and southern arcades. Only a small doorway was left in the south wall, leading into the corridor/narthex (H.SW.B.3.2abc). It was now the sole entry into the building, as the western part of the northernmost chamber (H.SW.B.3.6) was set off by a partition wall, creating an area (H.SW.B.3.7) from which the western part of the monastic complex could still be entered on both floors.

The paintings preserved in the annex are unusual in terms of the repertoire chosen for this structure: representations of a nursing Virgin, the Nativity, saints and genre scenes like selling a slave and a ritual dance of masked individuals. The murals are not well dated and there is no certainty that they were painted at the same time. It is equally difficult to recognize the connection between the symbolism of these paintings and the function of the building in its discrete phases. The inscriptions discussed in his report by Adam Łajtar (see below, Łajtar 2015, in this volume), both the legends accompanying the murals and inscriptions written on the walls of the rebuilt structure, lend themselves to a broader interpretation following a thorough study, which will be published separately.

## SITE PROTECTION

A protective wall started to be constructed on the northern fringes of the plain stretching before the Citadel fortifications and to the northeast of the complex of religious buildings that includes the Cruciform Church and Cathedral IV.

The purpose of the wall, built of concrete blocks with pillars of reinforced concrete, is to hold back drifting sand blown in from the north and northeast. It is intended to be ultimately 3 m high. The two sections of the wall constructed thus far are 75 m long.

## APPENDIX

THE SKELETAL REMAINS FROM THE SANCTUARY  
OF ANNA IN THE MONASTERY ON KOM H

Robert Mahler

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The grave was located inside the commemorative chapel of Anna (Room S1 in the original excavation report, see Żurawski 1999: 244–247; Jakobielski

1993: 106–108), to the west of the altar, close to the south wall [Fig. 11 bottom]. It had been opened in 1992, but anthropological examination was not carried out at



Fig. 11. Sanctuary of Anna: top, view from the south following general preservation work; bottom, plan and section views of the grave pit inside the sanctuary (Photo W. Godlewski; drawing J. Dobrowolski)



the time. In 2012, the tomb was reopened and the strongly disturbed skeleton was taken out in order to document it in full.

The floor of the sanctuary had been disturbed, but even so, traces of lime mortar observed on the pavement gave no suggestion for the shape of a marker. The biggest likelihood is that there was never any kind of marker for this grave in the restricted space of the sanctuary. The grave itself was a deep and narrow pit excavated in the soft limestone bedrock under the pavement; it was 2.40 m long, 0.39 m wide and 1.30–1.34 m deep (the dimensions may be slightly bigger than originally reported in view of the earlier exploration). Its southern edge was 0.63 to 0.80 m from the south wall of the shrine, the western end being closer to it.

The osteological remains of a male who died at the age of 50–60 years lay on the bottom of the pit. The disturbed position of the bones and sporadic damage indicate that the skeleton had been removed from the grave during the archaeological exploration in the 1990s. Based on the records of that work, the body was buried “on its right side with hands crossed in front of the

pelvis, the head pointing west”; the ankles were crossed (Żurawski 1999: 244 and Fig. 43; Jakobielski 1993: Fig. 5). The arrangement appears to be the result of both the location of the grave pit and the burial practices of the time. The E–W orientation, hands crossed and bricks protecting the head (Żurawski 1999: 244) are typical of Christian burials (Welsby 2002: 48–49). The laying of the body on its side could have been enforced by the restricted width of the pit, measuring approximately 0.31 m at the narrowest point on the bottom (Bogdan Żurawski [1999: 244] mentions 0.60 m as the width of the pit, but his drawing shows a much smaller dimensions, especially at the bottom). The size of the pit could have been dictated by practical issues, namely, the hardness of the ground, which would have made excavation quite difficult. It could also have been restricted by the wish to limit the damage to the pavement, which was repaired quite sloppily after the burial (Żurawski 1999: 244).

None of the furnishings or textiles said to be with this burial were found during the reexcavation.

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