

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been long in the coming and a complicated process at that due to a number of circumstances, some fortunate, some less fortunate. The magnificence of the material from Professor Kazimierz Michałowski's excavations in Faras in the 1960s may certainly be counted among the strengths. Michałowski presented the wall paintings from the cathedral in Georg Gester's superb photographs published in the book *"Die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand"*, printed in 1967, almost immediately after the discovery. He followed it seven years later with a complete catalogue of the paintings that were brought to Warsaw in consequence of the division of finds (Michałowski 1974). The effect of this was that the scholarly world's appetite for information on the paintings was satiated for many years, inadvertently stopping the inventory of all the images, including the collection in Khartoum, as well as representations that were not removed from the cathedral walls. Being the only member of the Faras team who was not a conservator and who had studied the images and their chronology at the site, I took it upon myself to continue the work on a full publication. I can only be grateful for the benevolence and generosity of the Sudan Antiquities Service (now National Corporation for Antiquities and Museums) with its successive directors Hassan Hussein Idriss and Abdelrahman Ali Mohamed, who were ever helpful with this project, as well as the directors of the Sudan National Museum in Khartoum in the persons of Siddiq Ahmed Sadiq earlier and today Madame Ghalia Gar en-Nabi, who gave permission for unrestricted access to the wall paintings in Khartoum and print-quality photographs. I owe them all an immense debt of gratitude.

A scientific grant in 1995 from the then Scientific Research Committee allowed me to prepare within three years the text of a study of the architecture and wall paintings from the cathedral in Faras. The Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology (today the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures) of the Polish Academy of Sciences hosted the project and I am grateful to former Director Professor Karol Myśliwiec and current Director Dr. Teodozja I. Rzeuska, and their collaborators, my Colleagues in the Institute, for the excellent working atmosphere and readily extended assistance. First of all, however, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to my Co-Authors, Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka, Bożena Mierzejewska, Magdalena Łaptaś and Bożena Rostkowska, whose experience and knowledge were integral to the writing of the most essential part of the book — the catalogue. Special words of appreciation to Małgorzata, whose expert advice greatly enriched the commentaries to individual paintings, and Adam Łajtar for kindly revising the readings of the inscriptions. I would also like to thank the scientific staff of the Faras Gallery of the National Museum in Warsaw, headed at the time by the author of the architectural part of this undertaking, Professor Włodzimierz Godlewski. I would like to thank him in particular for many suggestions concerning the present volume, including the description standard applied in the catalogue section of the book. The Directors of the National Museum in Warsaw deserve special acknowledgment for their continued interest in the project, and the decision to contribute with a full set of photographic images of the wall paintings in their collection made after conservation and delivered without charge.

The study was completed in 1998, but funds were lacking at the time for the envisaged full-colour publication. The commendable initiative of the Pol-



The ruins on the kom in Faras, 1961

ish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw led to the publication of a volume on the architecture of the cathedral, the first in this new series of studies on Pachoras (Godlewski 2006a). In the wake of this, the Centre also undertook the financial and organizational challenge of publishing the present catalogue, working in association with the National Museum in Warsaw and the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The text was translated into English then by Mrs. Barbara Gostyńska, to whom I would like to address special words of thanks. Continuous rapid progress in Nubian studies, bringing new data from current excavations, necessitated an updating of the text, including opinions contradicting earlier statements. Revisions and additions took the better part of the next three years and by late 2014 the manuscript was ready (including the bibliography for that moment in time). All the time work continued on the technical side of the illustrations and the typesetting. The indefatigable Iwona Zych not only edited and revised the English text where necessary, but suggested several useful plans, drawings and tables to marshal the data on the wall paintings for the readers' convenience. She and her editorial team at the Polish Centre deserve credit for this work. A special role in these preparations fell to Marta Momot. Her exceptional drawing talent and trained eye allowed her to trace in her drawings many lines and ornaments that were hardly visible in the photographic documentation. She beautifully prepared the new table of ornaments, the informative drawings of royal and episcopal garb, and the chrono-table of all of the surviving, documented murals. She was actually able to add some details to the near perfect drawings made by Wojciech Chmiel. Words of thanks go also to Marek Puzkarski, who drew the plans and individual walls, following the original designs of Krzysztof Pluskota and Dobrochna Zielińska, and enriching this book immensely in the process. Not the least, computer technicians and photographers Ewa Czyżewska-Zalewska, Marcin Jerke and Tomasz Jakobielski processed all of the field photographic documentation, making a truly exceptional effort to bring out the best from these often poor-quality images.

If I were to list everyone whom I am indebted to for discussion, help or advice over the many years that I have been involved with this project, I would surely miss someone. It is only right to thank all without mention anyone by name. These discussions have built in me a deep appreciation of the special importance of this set of wall paintings from Nubia. Many opinions have changed during this time and many have become obsolete. An effort has been made to limit these to the commentaries in order to avoid colouring the information about the image, its description and sometimes also its definitive identification. The field for discussion is open. Hopefully — no, certainly — the discussion will go on. As a matter of fact, it does go on. Just recently several articles have appeared that should be referenced in the commentaries, but could not because of the advancement of the editing work. The commentaries in this volume, unlike the catalogue descriptions, will hopefully be treated for what they are: a voice in the discussion, keeping in mind the increasingly rapid development of Nubiology as a discipline.

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