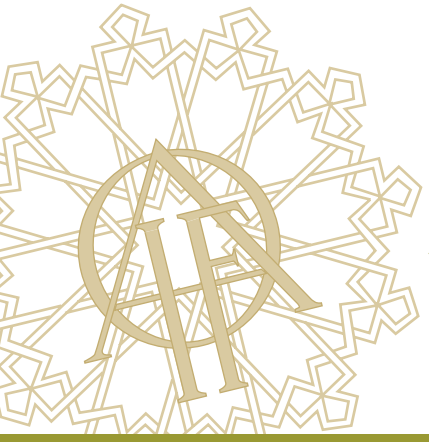
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Lena Sophie Krastel, Anna Lagaron

Epigraphic Documentation of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawā’ (Aswan, Egypt). A Selection of Coptic and Arabic Secondary Inscriptions from the 10th–14th Century CE

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LENA SOPHIE KRASTEL*, ANNA LAGARON**

Epigraphic Documentation of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ (Aswan, Egypt)

A Selection of Coptic and Arabic Secondary Inscriptions from the 10th–14th Century CE

ABSTRACT

This article provides a short discussion of some Coptic and Arabic secondary inscriptions from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ, an Upper Egyptian monastery situated on the west bank of the Nile opposite modern-day Aswan. Since vast areas of the monastery are still buried under sand and have hardly been researched, if at all, the Coptic, Greek, and Arabic secondary inscriptions uncovered in the monastic church during excavations at the end of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century provide an important source of information on the history of the monastery. Starting with a brief overview of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ—topography and research history—the contribution turns to its focal point, the discussion of some Coptic and Arabic secondary inscriptions dating from the 10th to the 14th c. CE, providing an idea of the occupation of the site in the medieval period based on this selection.

Keywords: epigraphy, graffiti, Arabic, Coptic, Eastern Christian, Copts, history, Qubbat al-Hawāʾ monastery, Aswan, Upper Egypt

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✦ **RÉSUMÉ**

La documentation épigraphique de Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ (Assouan, Égypte) : sélection d'inscriptions secondaires coptes et arabes datées du x^e^ au xiv^e^ siècle

Cet article présente une brève étude de quelques inscriptions secondaires coptes et arabes provenant du Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ, un monastère de Haute Égypte situé sur la rive ouest du Nil, en face de l'actuelle ville d'Assouan. Dans la mesure où de vastes zones du monastère sont encore enfouies sous le sable et n'ont pratiquement pas fait l'objet de recherches, les inscriptions secondaires coptes, grecques et arabes découvertes dans l'église monastique lors de fouilles à la fin du xx^e^ et au début du xxi^e^ siècle constituent une source importante d'informations sur l'histoire du monastère. En commençant par un bref aperçu du Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ – topographie et histoire des recherches –, la contribution se concentre sur la présentation de quelques inscriptions coptes et arabes datant du x^e^ au xiv^e^ siècle de l'ère chrétienne, donnant une idée de l'occupation du site à l'époque médiévale.

Mots-clés : épigraphie, graffitis, arabe, copte, chrétien oriental, Coptes, histoire, monastère de Qubbat al-Hawāʾ, Assouan, Haute Égypte

✦ **ملخص**

توثيق نقوش دير قبة الهواء (أسوان، مصر): مجموعة من النقوش الثانوية القبطية والعربية من القرن العاشر إلى الرابع عشر الميلادي

يقدّم هذا المقال دراسة موجزة لبعض النقوش الثانوية القبطية والعربية الموجودة في دير قبة الهواء، وهو دير في مصر العليا يقع على الضفة الغربية للنيل مقابل مدينة أسوان الحالية. ونظرًا لأن مساحات واسعة من الدير ما زالت مدفونة تحت الرمال ولم يتم إجراء أبحاث فيها قط، فإن النقوش الثانوية القبطية واليونانية والعربية التي تم اكتشافها في كنيسة الدير خلال عمليات التنقيب في أواخر القرن العشرين وبداية القرن الحادي والعشرين تُشكّل مصدرًا هامًا للمعلومات حول تاريخ الدير. يبدأ المقال بعرض موجز لدير قبة الهواء، من حيث الطبوغرافيا وتاريخ الأبحاث، ثم يركّز على عرض بعض النقوش القبطية والعربية التي تعود إلى القرن العاشر حتى الرابع عشر الميلادي، لتقدّم فكرة عن كيفية استخدام الموقع في العصور الوسطى.

الكلمات المفتاحية: نقوش، مخربشات، عربية، قبطية، مسيحية شرقية، أقباط، تاريخ، دير قبة الهواء، أسوان، مصر العليا

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On the slope of the most prominent hill on the west bank of the Nile, opposite modern-day Aswan, referred to as Qubbat al-Hawā'—after Sheikh ʿAlī Abū al-Hawā'[1]—are the ruins of a medieval monastery (fig. 1).[2] It is situated in the immediate vicinity of ancient rock tombs built in pharaonic times for the elite of Elephantine, which the monastic complex partially occupies (figs. 2–3).[3] The date and circumstances of the monastery's foundation and abandonment are still the subject of debate. However, it seems that some of these tombs served as hermitages in late Antiquity before becoming the "core" around which the monastic complex developed.[4] The monastery was built on two terraces connected by two staircases. The remains of a residential building and an economic complex have been identified on the upper terrace, while the lower terrace was dominated by the monastic church.[5] The church is now in ruins, but some of the walls, mainly on the western side but also a few on the eastern side, are still standing and covered with plaster dating back to medieval times. It is in this church that several hundred inscriptions in Coptic, Greek, and Arabic were identified in the 2000s. They were then re-surveyed in 2024, and a selection will be presented in this article.

1. Research history

1.1. *Previous studies*

Although the rock tombs from the pharaonic period have been visited by numerous travellers from the 18th century onwards and have been excavated intermittently since the 1880s,

1. Some say that the sheikh was buried under the dome, but this seems impossible because it is built directly on a huge block of rock. In addition, there are other domes of this type on the west bank of Aswan. See Meinardus 1965, p. 328.

2. For a short overview of the monastery, see e.g. Coquin, Martin, "Dayr Qubbat al-Hawa: History", *CoptEnc*, 1991; Grossmann, "Dayr Qubbat al-Hawa: Monuments", *CoptEnc*, 1991; Gabra 2004, pp. 1074–1075; Dekker 2008; 2013b; Abdin 2013; Barba Colmenero, Torallas Tovar 2020. Further bibliography on Dayr Qubbat al-Hawā' is compiled in Martin 2015, p. 181.

3. Edel 2008, I, pp. 459–597, QH 34e–QH 34h.

4. The rock tomb QH 35h(a) located in the north-western corner of the church shows traces of a secondary use as a hermitage. Magdi Abdin (2013, p. 3) therefore considers whether this hermitage could have formed the beginning of the monastic complex. The Spanish team, in contrast, considers a 5th/6th-c.-CE chapel in QH 34-aa to be the probable starting point. However, some ostraca which were found nearby and which can be dated archaeologically to the 6th/7th c. CE suggest that monastic structures already existed at Qubbat al-Hawā' at this time. See Torallas Tovar 2010, p. 298; Torallas Tovar, Zomeño 2011, p. 306; 2013, p. 396; Dekker 2013a, pp. 117–118; Barba Colmenero, Torallas Tovar 2020.

5. The buildings on the upper terrace were exhaustively investigated for the first time by the Spanish excavation team. See Monneret de Villard 1927, pp. 16–18, fig. 2; Grossmann, "Dayr Qubbat al-Hawa: Monuments", *CoptEnc*, 1991, p. 852a; Barba Colmenero, Torallas Tovar 2020, p. 155. For the monastic church, see Dekker 2013b; Abdin 2013. The considerations expressed by Peter Grossmann (1985) as well as the suggestion made by Renate Dekker (2008) to reconstruct a northern and a southern church could be revised by the excavations of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA—now Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities). The general layout of the monastery with upper and lower terraces clearly shows parallels to the nearby Dayr Anbā Hadrā; see e.g. Monneret de Villard 1927.

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the monastic remains have rarely been mentioned in travel and excavation reports.[6] Today, the ruins of the monastery are still largely covered in sand and have so far only been partially studied and excavated.

While the first investigations on the monastic remains were conducted by Ugo Monneret de Villard in the 1920s[7] and a few Coptic inscriptions were recorded in the course of the German excavations on some pharaonic rock tombs under the direction of Elmar Edel from 1957 to 1984,[8] the actual research did not begin until the 1980s, when Peter Grossmann worked on the monastic remains. Even though he focussed mainly on the church, which was still largely covered in sand at that time, he also attempted to document the other surviving buildings of the monastery.[9] In 1998, the Supreme Council of Antiquities—now the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities (MoTA)—decided to remove the sand from the northern part of Tomb QH34h, where a church might have been present.[10] The Egyptian team, led by Magdi Abdin, then cleared part of the site, but it was not until a decade later, in 2010, that the church was finally excavated. In the course of this excavation work, numerous Coptic, Greek, and Arabic secondary inscriptions and wall paintings were uncovered but remained mainly unrecorded.[11] Moreover, since 2008, new excavations have been taking place in various rock tombs of Qubbat al-Hawāʾ by a Spanish mission ("Proyecto Qubbet el-Hawa") of the University of Jaén, in cooperation with the MoTA, under the direction of Alejandro Jiménez Serrano, in the course of which various areas of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ have also been examined in greater detail.[12]

6. Descriptions of the monastery as well as Coptic evidence from Qubbat al-Hawāʾ are recorded, for instance, in Denon 1802, p. 127; Jomard 1809, p. 12; Light 1818, pp. 50–51 (with a drawing of the monastery); Burckhardt 1819, p. 131; Belzoni 1820, pp. 59–60; Budge 1887, pp. 39–40; de Morgan et al. 1894, pp. 157–162.

7. Monneret de Villard 1927, pp. 16–17.

8. Edel 2008.

9. The plans of the residential building of the monastery and its surrounding buildings drawn by P. Grossmann ("Dayr Qubbat al-Hawa: Monuments", *CoptEnc*, 1991, p. 852a) are still of particular interest as the monastery is only partially excavated and researched to date; however, his plan of the monastic church is out of date (1985). For a more recent plan of the monastic church, see Abdin 2013, p. 2, fig. 1; Barba Colmenero et al. 2022.

10. Abdin 2013.

11. For the work done by the SCA and further investigations in this area, see Gabra 2002, pp. 105–107, pls. 10.1–10.7; 2004, pp. 1074–1075, 1078–1079; Dekker 2008; 2013b; Abdin 2013; Middleton-Jones 2013.

12. The project "Excavación, estudio histórico y conservación de la tumba no 33 de la necropolis de Qubbet el-Hawa (Asuán, Egipto)", initiated by the University of Jaén, started in 2008 and is still ongoing (see Jiménez Serrano 2011). The textual evidence in the older Egyptian languages, Coptic, and Greek were recorded by Sofía Torallas Tovar in 2009–2010 and 2017, the Arabic textual evidence by Amalia Zomeño. Moreover, two articles focussing on the Coptic secondary inscriptions and the wall paintings were published by R. Dekker (2008; 2013b), while a digital reconstruction of the monastic church were created by Howard Middleton-Jones (2013). For the work of the Spanish mission in the area of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ, see Torallas Tovar 2010; Torallas Tovar, Zomeño 2011; 2013; Barba Colmenero, Torallas Tovar 2020; Barba Colmenero et al. 2022. See also the homepage of the project: http://www.ujaen.es/investiga/qubbetelhawa/index.php.

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Since the excavation of the monastic church began more than twenty-five years ago, numerous secondary inscriptions in Coptic, Greek, and Arabic have been uncovered and documented photographically, but only a very small number of these inscriptions have been published to date.[13] However, as the inscriptions are likely to make an important contribution to the study of the monastery, and of its church in particular, a project to compile and edit a multilingual corpus of secondary inscriptions from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ was envisaged by Sofía Torallas Tovar (Greek and Coptic inscriptions, Princeton University), Amalia Zomeño (Arabic inscriptions, Centro de ciencias humanas y sociales, Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, Madrid), and Renate Dekker (Coptic inscriptions, Amsterdam University) under the umbrella of the Spanish mission, but was never realised.[14] Therefore, as the previous editors do not expect to be able to edit and publish the inscriptions in the near future, they kindly handed over this material to the authors of this article.

1.2. *A new epigraphic project*

As the inscriptions have been exposed to the elements—sun, sand, wind, and rain[15]—and as environmental conditions, such as tourism,[16] have changed in recent years, it is necessary to record the remaining inscriptions comprehensively and as soon as possible. Therefore, one of the authors, Anna Lagaron, made a request to the MoTA in February 2024 for an epigraphic documentation of the site (project "Epigraphic Documentation of the Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ [Aswan, Egypt]") with a team of seven people including:

- A. Lagaron (Institut français d'archéologie orientale [IFAO]) and Sara Masood (MoTA, Aswan) for the Arabic epigraphy;
- Lena Krastel (Heidelberg University) for the Coptic and Greek epigraphy;
- Martina Ambu (Fonds de la recherche scientifique), historian and philologist, for other languages (Ge'ez, Armenian, etc.);
- Joachim Le Bomin (IFAO) and Vicente Barba Colmenero (Jaén University), archaeologists, to assess the prospects for research on the building;
- Matjaž Kačičnik (IFAO), photographer.

13. For the recorded and published Coptic secondary inscriptions, see Bouriant 1886; 1893; de Morgan et al. 1894; Monneret de Villard 1927; Grossmann 1985; Edel 2008; Dekker 2008; 2013b; Abdin 2013; Barba Colmenero, Torallas Tovar 2020. For the Arabic inscriptions, see Lagaron 2021, pp. 140–182.

14. See Dekker 2013a, p. 134. However, as the Coptic, Greek, and Arabic secondary inscriptions are of extraordinary interest for the study of the monastery complex, the Spanish team provided us with their notes and photographs.

15. There have been few rainstorms in recent years. One in November 2021 was particularly strong: a torrential rainfall poured down on Aswan in just a few minutes. The uncovered mud walls of the church turned into a mudslide, covering many of the walls.

16. Beside tourists leaving a short inscription, young lovers find in the church ruins a place sheltered from view and conducive to leaving a trace of their unconditional love (so-and-so + so-and-so = heart). This type of graffiti seems to have exploded in number in recent years.

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The various authorisations were obtained at the end of October 2024. Thus, from 16 to 21 November 2024, an epigraphic survey was directed by A. Lagaron, under the aegis of the IFAO in Cairo[17] and with financial support of the Max Van Berchem Foundation. The survey focussed on the monastic church and Tomb QH34f. The church was divided into sixteen sectors (fig. 2) to make the recording of inscriptions easier and their actual location more comprehensible. As many secondary inscriptions that were legible and in a good state of preservation several years ago are now poorly preserved or already almost gone due to the environmental influences mentioned above, in-situ surveys proved to be very difficult. Thanks to photographs, notably those taken by the Spanish team in 2010, the members of the survey were able to make an inventory of the site's inscriptions by numbering each inscription visible on the photographs and recording its state of preservation. A total of more than two hundred and fifty inscriptions were counted. Of these approximately one hundred and fifty are written in Coptic and/or Greek, and approximately one hundred in Arabic. It should be noted that about 63% of the inscriptions are either lost or almost lost, while 27% are in poor condition, 9% are considered average, and only 1% are in good condition. Due to the predominantly poor state of preservation of the inscriptions, their editing and analysis are mainly based on photographs taken during or shortly after the excavation of the church.

In what follows, we would like to make some interesting Coptic and Arabic secondary inscriptions available to the public. The publication of the entire corpus and a comprehensive study of these inscriptions is planned in the next few years.

2. Extract of corpus

In this article, we would like to present ten inscriptions collected in five sectors of the church (figs. 2, 14–17), covering a period from the 10th to the 14th c. CE. The examples of absolutely dated inscriptions start from the 11th c. CE, but some inscriptions are estimated to predate this period. For this reason, we would like to begin the extract of corpus with the presentation of two inscriptions dating probably from the 10th c. CE. All the other examples will be precisely dated.

When the inscriptions were recorded photographically by the Spanish mission in 2010, they were in a much better state of preservation than today. Therefore, the transcriptions given below reflect the state of preservation in 2010 and not the current one. In addition, we are able to provide the dimensions of the Arabic inscriptions, but unfortunately, those of the Coptic graffiti and *dipinti* are uncertain, as no Coptologist was on site during the 2024 campaign.[18] Moreover, as different eras were used for dating, we abbreviate the "Era of the Martyrs" to AM

17. As several team members were unable to take part in the epigraphic survey, it was carried out by A. Lagaron, Sara Masood, and Matjaž Kačičnik.

18. L. Krastel was originally supposed to document the Coptic inscriptions during the campaign in November 2024. However, she was unable to take part in the campaign for personal reasons.

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(*anno martyrum*) and the Hijri years to AH. It is also important to mention that we have chosen a model halfway between the norms of Arabist and Coptic editions for the presentation of the following inscriptions: transcription,[19] translation, critical apparatus, and commentary.

2.1. *Inscriptions dating from around the 10th c. CE*

The oldest secondary inscriptions from the monastic church known so far are undated, but the examination of the palaeography and formularies suggests that they may date from around the 10th c. CE. They are concentrated in the western apse of the church.

2.1.1. *No. 1: Coptic graffito of Antonios, son of Abraham (approx. 10th/11th c. CE)* (fig. 4a–b)

This inscription was left in the western apse (Sector 2) of the church and was incised into the plaster and whitewash layers of the wall. When it was recorded by the Spanish mission in 2010, the inscription was almost entirely preserved, with only a more recent Arabic graffito (no. 2, *infra*) cut into some of the letters in the last line. In recent years, however, the inscription has been badly damaged by modern graffiti, with the result that the ends of the lines are largely lost today.

This Coptic graffito does not show an absolute date but can be dated approximately to the 10th/11th c. CE for palaeographic reasons. Of particular interest is a graffito left by the same beneficiary in the residential building of the neighbouring monastery Dayr Anbā Hadrā (see *infra*).

1 ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ⲁⲛⲧⲱⲛⲓⲟⲥ
2 ⲡ̣ⲩⲓ ⲁⲃⲣⲁⲁⲙ ϣⲁⲏⲁ
3 ⲉⲭⲱⲓ ⲁⲣⲓⲡⲁⲙ-
4 ⲉⲉⲩⲉ ⲉⲕϣⲁⲛ-
5 ⲉⲓ ⲥⲛⲧⲉⲕⲙⲛ-
6 {ⲧⲉⲕⲙⲛ}ⲧⲉⲣⲟ

2 υι(οῦ)

|[1] I, Antonios, |[2] the son (of) Abraham. Pray |[3] for me. Remember |[4] me, when you |[5] will come in your |[6] kingship.

19. Regarding the transcriptions of Arabic, certain decisions have been made concerning *ḥamza*-s in particular: as they are very rarely used in medieval Arabic inscriptions and as their pronunciation can vary according to the registers of literal Arabic and dialectal Arabic, it was decided that, with the exception of the term *miʾa* (expression of the hundred within the dates), *ḥamza*-s would not be noted in the transcription of the texts. Also, the word *ḫāṭiʾ* ("sinner"), which modern orthography notes with a final *ḥamza*, will be transcribed *ḫāṭī* (with final long [i] noted with a *yāʾ*) in accordance with usage in Arabic-Christian inscriptions.

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1. The first two letters of the line are larger and need more space than the following letters.
3–6. The quotation ⲁⲣⲓⲡⲁⲙⲉⲉⲩⲉ ⲉⲕⲱⲁⲛⲉⲓ ⲛⲧⲉⲕⲙⲛⲧⲉⲣⲟ is borrowed from Luke 23:42 and is attested in various secondary inscriptions from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ and Dayr Anbā Hadrā. See Krastel et al. 2023, p. 321.

The inscription is located in the lower register of the western apse and was left below the feet of the second and third apostles to the right of Jesus Christ. It is written in a bilinear script with quadrilinear tendencies. The letters differ slightly in size but are mostly uniform in execution. The content of the inscription is composed of standardised elements that are also known from other monasteries, such as Dayr Anbā Hadrā. It begins with an independent personal pronoun in the first person followed by the beneficiary's identification and ends with two requests, the second of which is borrowed from Luke 23:42.[20]

Of particular interest is a graffito left in the monks' residential building in Dayr Anbā Hadrā. Although only fragments of this inscription have survived, it shows clear similarities not only in the wording but also in the execution of the letters, which indicate that both inscriptions were written by the same person.[21]

Neither the inscription in Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ nor that in Dayr Anbā Hadrā provides an absolute date. However, palaeographic features such as the pointed shapes of the *mu* and *pi*, the hooks on the *rho* and *djanja*, and the cursive *eta* as well as the overall appearance suggest an approximate dating to the 10th/11th c. CE.[22]

2.1.2. *No. 2: Arabic graffito of Aḥmad, son of Muḥammad, son of ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq (4th/5th c. AH = 10th/11th c. CE)* (figs. 5a–b, 18)

This Arabic-Islamic graffito is located in Sector 2, in the lower part of the western apse. The state of preservation of this two-line Kufic graffito is poor. It is inscribed on the yellowish whitewash that covers the paintings in the apse. It measures 10 × 82 cm. This graffito has never been studied.[23]

١ دخل احمد بن محمد بن عبد الحق
٢ بن [...]اني

20. For the borrowing of Luke 23:42, see Krastel et al. 2023, p. 321.
21. The inscription from Dayr Anbā Hadrā is published in Clédat 1915, p. 56, "*paroi est*", no. 1, and will be republished in L. Krastel's forthcoming PhD thesis. Interestingly, Abraham, the father of Antonios, also seems to have left an inscription in Dayr Anbā Hadrā directly below that of Antonios, while an inscription by Abraham in Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ has not yet been identified (see Clédat 1915, p. 56, "*paroi est*", no. 2).
22. Compare, for instance, the inscription no. 4 in this article, dating to the 11th c. CE, as well as two 10th-c.-CE inscriptions from Dayr Anbā Hadrā: DAHP-ID (= identification number of the Dayr Anbā Hadrā Project of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut Kairo [DAIK]) K_19_001 (962–963 CE; *editio princeps*: de Morgan et al. 1894, p. 140, no. 7; re-published in Krastel 2020, pp. 183–184, no. 2, fig. 11) and K_19_002 (956 CE; *editio princeps*: de Morgan et al. 1894, p. 136, no. 4, p. 140, no. 1; re-published in Krastel 2020, pp. 181–183, no. 1, figs. 9–10).
23. It was read by S. Masood in November 2024.

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|[1] Entered Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq […] |[2] son of […]

2. The ductus is illegible. It might be another part of the name, but no transcription is possible.

This graffito is large, inscribed in transitional Kufic script: the characters are angular but the *dāl* does not have an archaic style of *kāf*. It was engraved below and a little bit over the last line of the preceding Coptic graffito (no. 1, *supra*), indicating that it was executed later.

It is a visitor's inscription left by a certain Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq. The onomastic shows that he was a Muslim visitor. He used a specific formulary to express his visit, using the term *daḫala*, "he entered", which seems to be rarely used in the eastern Arab world,[24] except in Aswan. Indeed, further examples could be observed on site, and there are many examples in the near-by monastery of Anbā Hadrā, where two of them are dated to 359 AH (= 970 CE).[25]

2.2. *Inscriptions from the 11th c. CE*

2.2.1. *No. 3: Arabic graffito of Ḥasan, son of Aḥmad al-Qamūlī (426 AH = 1034–1035 CE)* (figs. 6a–b, 19)

This Arabic-Islamic graffito, dated 426 AH (= 1034–1035 CE), is located in Sector 5, halfway up the west wall. Its state of preservation is quite good, with several recent inscriptions partly covering it. It is a rather imposing two-line Kufic graffito inscribed on a layer of yellowish whitewash. It measures 60 × 130 cm. A drawing of a boat seems to complete the inscription. This unpublished graffito was the subject of a study in 2019.[26]

١ [حضـ]ـر حسن بن احمد القمولي
٢ سنة ست وثلاثين واربعمائة

|[1] Was present Ḥasan b. Aḥmad al-Qamūlī. |[2] The year 426.

1. The first word has disappeared but the *rāʾ* of the verb *ḥaḍara* is expected.

24. In the *Thesaurus d'épigraphie islamique*, the use of *daḫala* in the context of "entering a monument" appears only six times: five in Spain and one in Iran. See for example two 11th-c.-CE inscriptions: TEI nos. 53488 and 43085 (https://www.epigraphie-islamique.uliege.be).
25. There are more than a dozen examples of this formula in Dayr Anbā Hadrā. These are previously unpublished inscriptions recorded and analysed by the DAIK under the direction of Ralph Bodenstein. S. Masood is preparing an article about these specific inscriptions.
26. Lagaron 2021, DQH_I, QH. Gr2. MA_7, pp. 152, 182; proofreading by S. Masood.

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This graffito is also large, measuring more than a meter. It is inscribed in transitional Kufic script: the characters are angular but the *dāl* doesn't have the archaic style of *kāf*. A drawing of a boat seems to end the inscription. I supposed that the author of the inscription used the common term *ḥaḍara*, "he came", to introduce his text, but only the last letter of the word remains.

This large graffito was engraved by a certain Ḥasan b. Aḥmad from al-Qamūlā in 426 AH (= 1034–1035 CE). The onomastic reveals that this was the work of a Muslim passing through the monastery. His toponymic *nisba* al-Qamūlī could refer to the place al-Qamūlā (القمولا), which is in the governorate of Luxor. This graffito appears to be the oldest absolutely dated one in the church, in either Arabic or Coptic. It is found on a yellow plaster on a wall which, together with its paintings, had been covered at an unknown period. It is close to an Arabic *dipinto* dated 1147 CE (= 541–542 AH), indicating that these walls were not re-plastered for over a century.

2.2.2. *No. 4: Coptic inscription of Chael, son of Staurosa (461 AH = 1068–1069 CE)* (fig. 7a–b)

The oldest absolutely dated Coptic secondary inscription from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ so far is located on the east wall of Sector 3 in the monastic church. It is incised into the plaster and whitewash layers of the wall, and is comprised of two lines. While the inscription was in a good state of preservation in 2010 and only a few more recent graffiti had been cut into the older inscription, the first line as well as the beginning of the second line are badly damaged today.

The graffito is written in a bilinear script with quadrilinear tendencies and shows a few ligatures. In addition to the identification of the beneficiary and a request for commemoration, the inscription bears an absolute date without specifying the chronological system.

1 † ⲁⲛⲟⲕ ϫⲁⲏⲗ ⲩ̅ⲩ̅ ⲥⲧⲁⲩⲣⲱⲥⲁ ⲩ̅ⲍ̅ⲁ̅

2 ⲁⲣⲓⲡⲁⲙⲉⲑⲩⲉ ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓⲥ

1 υ(10)ϋ̂

|[1] † I, Chael, son (of) Staurosa, 461. |[2] Remember me, Lord.

1. **ⲥⲧⲁⲩⲣⲱⲥⲁ** Ligature of *sigma* and *tau*. Staurosa is the Nubianised variant of the well-attested personal name Stauros. For Staurosa, see DBMNT Name Variant 302137 (http://www.dbmnt.uw.edu.pl/namevariants/302137/). For Stauros, see e.g. Hasitzka 2007, p. 95; DBMNT Name 27470 (http://www.dbmnt.uw.edu.pl/names/27470/). Since the final *alpha* is unlikely to belong to the date (1461 AM = 1744–1745 CE), it has to be part of the personal name.
ⲩ̅ⲍ̅ⲁ̅ The chronological system of the year is not mentioned. As the oldest Coptic secondary inscriptions from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ known so far seem to date from the 10th/11th c. CE, a date according to Hijri years (= 1068–1069 CE) seems more likely than a date according to Diocletian era (= 744–745 CE).
2. **ⲡϫⲟⲉⲓⲥ** Ligature of *epsilon* and *iota*.

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This inscription belongs to the standard type of Coptic secondary inscriptions found in the monastery, starting with a self-designation mentioning a deixis in the first person and the name and filiation of the beneficiary, who identifies himself as Chael, son of Staurosa. As Staurosa is the Nubianised variant of the personal name Stauros and has so far only been attested in Nubia, it can be assumed that the inscription's owner is of Nubian origin.[27] The first line ends with an absolute date without specifying the chronological system, but only a date according to the Diocletian era or according to Hijri years is possible. In the first case, the inscription would have been left in 744–745 CE; in the second case, in 1068–1069 CE. However, as the Coptic secondary inscriptions from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ known to date are not older than the 10th/11th c. CE, a dating to the 11th c. CE seems more obvious. A securely dated Coptic inscription from the 11th c. CE is of particular interest, as this century has so far been poorly attested in inscriptions in the First Cataract region. For instance, not a single Coptic or Arabic secondary inscription bearing an absolute date from the 11th c. CE is attested from the neighbouring Dayr Anbā Hadrā. However, this inscription demonstrates—together with inscription no. 5 *infra*—that the palaeography of Coptic epigraphy in the Aswan region in the 11th c. CE was influenced by the inscriptions of the 10th c. CE and that a cursive handwriting involving ligatures was still in use at that time.[28] The inscription closes with a common prayer for remembrance.

2.2.3. *No. 5: Coptic commemorative inscription (802 AM = 1085–1086 CE?)* (fig. 8a–b)

The following inscription was incised into the plaster and whitewash layers of the west wall of the southern part of Sector 7. It is surrounded by an incised frame and comprised of four lines mentioning a prayer and probably an absolute date, indicating that the inscription was written in the year 802 according to the Era of the Martyrs (= 1085–1086 CE). In 2010, the graffito was almost completely preserved, although some letters were already difficult to identify. Today, the inscription is in a worse state of preservation, and many letters are damaged.

1 ⲁ̣ⲣⲓⲡⲁⲙⲫⲫⲩⲉ
2 ⲡⲭ̣ⲟⲑⲓⲥ . . . . ⲫ̣ⲃⲟ̣ⲗ̣
3 ⲛ̣ⲓ̈ ⲩ̣ⲯ ⲡⲁ . . . ⲣ̣ⲣⲟ̣
4 . . . . ⲃ̣ . . .

3 (χρόνος) μ(α)ρ(τύρων)

27. See DBMNT Name Variant 302137 (http://www.dbmnt.uw.edu.pl/namevariants/302137/).
28. Compare, for instance, the inscriptions DAHP-ID K_19_001 (962–963 CE; *editio princeps*: de Morgan et al. 1894, p. 140, no. 7; re-published in Krastel 2020, pp. 183–184, no. 2, fig. 11), DAHP-ID K_19_002 (956 CE; *editio princeps*: de Morgan et al. 1894, p. 136, no. 4, p. 140, no. 1; re-published in Krastel 2020, pp. 181–183, no. 1, fig. 9–10), and DAHP-ID K_4_003 (approx. 9th/10th c. CE; *editio princeps*: Clédat 1915, p. 43, "*paroi nord c*", no. 3—an improved reading will be given in L. Krastel's forthcoming PhD thesis) as well as DAHP-ID K_7_001 (1108–1109 CE; *editio princeps*: de Morgan et al. 1894, p. 140, no. 3; Clédat 1915, pp. 41–42, "*paroi ouest*"; re-published in Krastel 2020, pp. 184–185, no. 3) from Dayr Anbā Hadrā.

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|[1] Remember me, |[2] Lord […] |[3] (Era of the) Martyrs, 802 […] |[4] […]

2. ⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ Ligature of *epsilon* and *iota*. The letters of the second part of Line 2 are difficult to identify. The final ⲉⲃⲟϧ could indicate that another prayer was written, e.g. ⲕⲱ ⲛⲁⲓ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ, "forgive me".

The inscription starts with a prayer for remembrance addressed to God and mentions an absolute date according to the Era of the Martyrs. The beneficiary of the inscription is no longer preserved. Together with the inscription no. 4 *supra*, this graffito represents the only dated Coptic epigraphic evidence at Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ as well as the neighbouring Dayr Anbā Hadrā from the 11th c. CE to date and thus provides an important source for the palaeography of this period and region in Coptic epigraphy. Here, too, the ligated ⲡⲭⲟⲉⲓⲥ suggests that the palaeography of the 11th c. CE is still in the tradition of the previous centuries.

2.3. *Inscriptions from the 12th c. CE*

As some Coptic inscriptions from the 12th c. CE have already been published in recent years, we will not include them here.[29]

2.3.1. *No. 6: Arabic* dipinto *(ṭūba 537 AH = January 1143 CE)* (figs. 9a–c, 20)

This Arabic-Christian[30] *dipinto*, dated ṭūba 537 AH (= January 1143 CE), is located in Sector 3, halfway up the east wall and to the left of the door. It is in a poor state of preservation, with very pale brown ink. Several photographic treatments had to be carried out to propose a reading. This is a seven-line *dipinto* in *nasḫ* painted red. Underneath is a drawing of a church plan and a praying figure painted in the same colour. It measures 30 × 32 cm or 68 cm with the drawing. This unpublished graffito was studied in 2019.[31]

١ [بـ]سم الا[ب] والابن وروح ا[لقـ]ـدس ا[له] واحد
٢ [ا]رحم [عبد]ك الخاطي المذنب المحتاج الـ[ى رحمتك]
٣ […] [بـ]ـن […] بن فارس ؟ الاسناوي و
٤ حضـ[ـر في] هـ[ـذ]ا الديـ[ـر] المقدس في شهرطوبة
٥ سنة [سـ]ـبع وثلثين خمس مائة […]
٦ […]
٧ بمن؟ دعا له بالـ[ـرحمة؟]

29. See, for instance, Dekker 2008; Edel 2008, I, pp. 514–517, 519, no. 1, fig. 1.
30. The term "Arabic-Christian" instead of "Christian-Arabic" was chosen on purpose. It is a question of perspective. We are talking about the language of the inscriptions that are Arabic, even though they were left by Christians.
31. Lagaron 2021, no. 19 DQH_02, p. 147; proofreading by S. Masood.

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|[1] In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, God is unique. |[2] Have mercy on your servant, the sinner, the guilty, the one who awaits your mercy […] |[3] […] b. […] b. Fāris(?) al-Isnāwī, and |[4] he was present in this holy monastery during the month of ṭūba |[5] of the year 537. |[6] […] |[7] […] whoever will have prayed for him for mercy(?).

3. This line contains the name of the beneficiary with, notably, three generations, but the names of the first two are illegible.
5. The date is noted with the Hijra calendar. For the ten, I hesitated between "30" and "80", *ṯalāṯīn* or *ṯamānīn*, as the inscription is difficult to read at this point. The choice of "30" was made as this inscription could fit into a group of inscriptions datable to the first half of the 12th c. CE.

This inscription seems to have been produced fairly quickly, as evidenced by the tracing of certain words such as *al-ḫāṭī* or *al-muḫtāǧ* (l. 2). The author has a characteristic way of tracing his *lām/alif*, found in the *basmala*. It is also painted in a colour close to that of a group of Coptic *dipinti*.

This *dipinto* consists of a Christian *basmala* focussing on the Trinity: *bismi-l-āb wa-l-ibn wa rūḥ al-qudus ilāh wāḥid*, "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, God is unique". Next is the invocation with the term *Irḥam*, followed by three epithets, then the recipient's genealogy over three generations as well as the toponymic *nisba* al-Isnāwī. Then the visitor's inscription, the date, and an invocation to the reader. As far as the dating is concerned, it does not appear to be double, even if Line 6 is illegible. In fact, the author here directly uses a Coptic month coupled with the Hijri year, ṭūba 537, i.e. December 1142–January 1143 CE.

This *dipinto* is also remarkable for the drawing underneath, painted in the same colour. This is an orant surmounted by a plan that looks like a church but which would only have two three-bay aisles and where the chancel does not seem to be marked. This is not the plan of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ.

2.3.2. *No. 7: Coptic-Arabic* dipinto *of Abū al-ʿImād (544 AH/866 AM = 1149–1150 CE)* (figs. 10a–b, 21)

This Arabic-Christian *dipinto*, dated 544 AH/866 AM (= 1149–1150 CE), is located in Sector 5, halfway up the left wall. The current state of preservation is quite bad: the brown colour is fading, a large star has been engraved in the middle of the last three lines, and letters have been traced over the first part of the inscription. This ten-line *nasḫ dipinto* is painted in a brownish red. It measures 28 × 30 cm (without the chrism). This unpublished *dipinto* was studied in 2019.[32]

32. Lagaron 2021, no. 23 DQH_06, p. 158; proofreading by S. Masood.

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(Coptic)

1 χc

(Arabic)

٢ بسـ[ـم الا]ب والابن وروح الـ[ـقدس]
٣–٤ [...]
٥ [رو]ح القدس و[...] مريم العذر[ا]
٦ ارحمني ان عبدك الخاطي الـ[ـمذنب ؟]
٧ الفقير؟ ابو العماد بن ابو الشـ[ـ ؟]
٨ [الاسنـ]ـاوي حضر في هذا الدير الـ[ـمبارك ؟]
٩ ست
١٠ وستين وثمان مائة للشهد[ا]
١١ اربع واربعين وخمس مائة [...]

|1 Ch(risto)s. |2 In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit |3–4 [...] |5 The Holy Spirit and [...] Mary the Virgin. |6 Have mercy on me, your servant, the sinner, the guilty(?), |7 the poor Abū al-ʿImād b. al-Š[...] |8 al-Isnāwī, he was present in this blessed monastery(?) |9–10 866 of the Martyrs |11 544 [...]

1. In her PhD, A. Lagaron did not identify the reading of the Coptic line as the first line.[33]
3–5. These lines seem to be reserved for a formula dedicated to Jesus and the Virgin, but I have been unable to reconstruct it in its entirety.
7–8. The first part of the name is clearly legible, but the rest is damaged. The provenance can be guessed.
9. The word *sitta* is visible in the line spacing and between the words *ḥaḍara* and *fī* (l. 8).
11. It seems that after the Hijri year there is a term to qualify it but it is too faded to suggest a reading.

This *dipinto* is introduced by a Coptic abbreviation of Christos (*khi* and *sigma)* and by a cruciform symbol. The other lines of the inscription present Arabic cursive characters; only the final *kāf* of *ʿabdu-ka* (l. 6) presents a more rigid, archaic form, since it is similar to the *kāf* in its internal form. This inscription only shows diacritical points on the *šīn* of the second *kunya* (l. 7).

33. Lagaron 2021, p. 158.

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This *dipinto* is composed of a Christian *basmala* followed by a religious invocation in the first person singular, which is not common, then there are the epithets and the name of the beneficiary, and finally a double dating. The name of the beneficiary consists of the *kunya* "Abū al-ʿImād" followed by another *kunya* whose term is not legible in its entirety—only the first letters "Abū al-Š[...]" can be read, but the toponymic *nisba* al-Isnāwī, "of Esna", can be expected. The *kunya* generally consists in apostrophising a person by the name of his first-born, but here the presence of the determiner *al-* implies the designation of a term rather than a name—a designation in the form of a *laqāb*. Thus, in this Christian context, it seems to us that "ʿImād" refers more to baptism than to a column or a ship's mast. Indeed, Abū al-ʿImād, "the father of baptism", could refer to the name Yaḥya or Yūḥannā, the latter being referred to as *al-maʿmadānī* and *al-maʿmadān* respectively when referring to the biblical John the Baptist.[34] This *dipinto* also contains an original formula dedicated to Jesus and the Virgin Mary but it remains illegible at this stage.

2.4. *Inscriptions from the 13th c. CE*

2.4.1. *No. 8: Arabic* dipinto *(21 bašanās 952 AM = 16 May 1236 CE)* (figs. 11a–b, 22)

This Arabic-Christian *dipinto*, dated 21 bašanās 952 AM (= 16 May 1236 CE), is located in Sector 1, on the east wall, above and to the right of the door. It faces a Greek-Coptic *dipinto*. In a very poor state of preservation, it is almost lost, largely covered by a large mudslide. The presence of new wild engravings was observed. This ten-line *nasḫ dipinto* is painted in a brown colour and measures 34 × 50 cm. It is unpublished but was already studied in 2019.[35]

١ حضر الشماس[...] بن قمر وفي اليوم عشر شهر
٢ بشناس؟ وكان حضر الاب اسقف ابا سوارس و[...]
٣ المحترم اسقف بلاد أسيوط و[...] وكان [...] القلاية
٤ وكان له[...] وكان عيد [...] وكان شعب عظيم
٥ [...] اليوم الحادي والعشرين م[ـن]
٦ بشنـاس سنة تسعمائة اثنين وخمسين للشهدا
٧ وكان حضر والدي وال[...]
٨ [...] كرم [...] وحضر[...]
٩ [...]
١٠ [...] امين ⲥⲁⲗⲁ

34. Graf 1954, p. 79.
35. Lagaron 2021, no. 26 DQH_09, p. 165; proofreading by S. Masood.

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|[1] Was present the deacon […] b. Qamar, in day 10 of the month |[2] bašanās and was present the father, the bishop Abbā Sawārus and […] |[3] the respected bishop (from) the regions of Asyut and […] the cells |[4] and there was for him […] and there was the feast of […] and there were many people |[5] and he wrote on the 21st of |[6] bašanās the year 952 of the Martyrs |[7] and there were |[8] […] and he was present […] |[9] […] |[10] […] Amen, 952.

3. The word *qilāya*, translated as "cell", is a word of Greek origin known as *kellia*.[36]
10. Presence of epact numerals: *sampi* (900), *nu* (50), and probably *beta* (2).

This inscription is difficult to read. The characters are not fixed as, for example, the initial *sīn* of Sawārus is "flat" while the final *sīn* is "indented" (l. 2). The shape of the word *kāna* is hastily made: no bar to mark the initial shape of the *kāf* and the *nūn* are similar to *rā*ʾ. The first four lines are placed on the lintel of the door; in a roughly justified manner, they correspond in size to the inscription on the left side of the lintel.

The inscription is opposite to another bilingual Greek-Coptic *dipinto* of ten lines, the first three in Greek, the other seven in Coptic, dated 17 barmahāt 896 AM and 575 AH, equivalent to 3 March 1180 CE.[37] The author is a certain David of Armant, who attests to having paid for the consecration of the new church established by the father and bishop Abbā Severus. The latter consecrated it at the same time as the baptismal font on the given date. The church was consecrated in honour of Patriarch Severus of Antioch. Thus, this inscription testifies to the fact that at the end of the 12th c. CE, the church was indeed active and that its new patron was Severus of Antioch.

R. Dekker suggested that the whole might be a bilingual inscription, with the Greek-Coptic part on the left and the Arabic one on the right. However, the date of the Arabic *dipinto* does not coincide with that of the other inscription. Furthermore, the Arabic *dipinto* begins as a simple visitor's inscription. It is, however, the work of a deacon whose name is illegible, but it is known that he came to the *dayr* on 10 bašanās but he wrote on the 21st of the same month, so he stayed at the monastery for a while. The content of the inscription is not very clear, but it seems that the author intended to relate the event presented in the Coptic *dipinto*. Indeed, the mention of the visit of the "father and bishop Sawārūs" (Severus) leads to a connection between the two inscriptions, especially as the author of the Arabic inscription writes the action in the past tense: *kāna ḥaḍara*, "he had been present", which is unusual. However, the thread of what is said in the other inscription is not legible here. On the other hand, the author seems to provide some details about this coming, notably the presence of a bishop from Asyut and perhaps other regions, and he mentions the large number of people present that day. There is also mention of the *kellia*, the cells for the monks. The reading is still too incomplete for a full understanding of the text. Nevertheless, it seems obvious that this is not a bilingual inscription.

36. Graf 1954, p. 92.
37. Dekker 2008, p. 32.

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The date given, 21 bašanās 952 AM, corresponds to 16 May 1236 CE, more than half a century after the consecration of the church. This dating in the Era of the Martyrs is reinforced by the presence of epact numerals. The use of this type of dating from Coptic administration seems to be fairly common in the region.[38]

2.4.2. *No. 9: Arabic* dipinto (*ṭūba 989 AM = January 1273 CE*) (figs. 12a–b, 23)

This Arabic-Christian *dipinto*, dated ṭūba 989 AM = January 1273 CE, is located in Sector 15, halfway up the east wall. It is in a very poor state of preservation and is almost lost, damaged by time and the action of tourists. The end of Line 1 has been erased, and the end of Line 2 is damaged. This six-line *dipinto* in *nasḫ* is painted in a brown, purplish tint on brown plaster. It measures 20 × 51 cm. It is an unpublished *dipinto* that was studied between 2016 and 2019.[39]

١ حضر العبد الخاطي المذنب المحتاج [في رحمتك ؟]
٢ [سيد]نا ؟ يسوع المسيح [...]
٣ غفر الله له و[...] ودعا له بال[...] وفي الثاني [عشر ؟]
٤ من طوبـ(ـة) سنة تسع مائة تسع وثمانين
٥ للشهدا

|[1] Here was present the servant, the sinner, the guilty, the one who awaits Your mercy, |[2] our Lord, Jesus the Messiah [...] |[3] May God forgive those who read [...] and has prayed for him for [...] and in [the 12th(?)] |[4] of ṭūba, the year 989 |[5] of the Martyrs.

2. The word *sayyidnā* can be recognised.
3. Between the *wāw* and the *fī* at the end of the line, a sign is inserted. It could be a character fragment from the upper line. The continuation could be the day of the month, but if the first term (*al-ṯānī*) is clearly legible, the continuation is very strange: *al-ṯānī ʿašar* was suggested, but the ductus is uncertain.

This *dipinto* is painted in a dark, almost purplish hue. The line is quite thick in general, but some words are extremely fine, done with the tip of the brush, notably *miʾa* (l. 4). A few diacritical points are visible, including the *bāʾ* of *al-ʿabd* (l. 1) and the *nūn* of *sayyidnā* (l. 2).

This visitor's inscription is, at first sight, the latest in the corpus of Arabic-Christian inscriptions from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ. The author's name is illegible, only his epithets remain.

38. Ifrah 1994, p. 274.
39. Lagaron 2021, no. 27 DQH_10, p. 169; proofreading by S. Masood.

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The mention must have been coupled with a religious invocation since Jesus the Messiah is invoked in it, preceded by the mention of "our Lord". It is therefore dated to the month of ṭūba in the year 989. I have suggested reading the "12th" day of that month, i.e. the 7 January 1273 CE.

2.5. *Inscription from the 14th c. CE*

2.5.1. *No. 10: Coptic* dipinto *of Abū Mālik (1061 AM = 1344–1345 CE)* (fig. 13a–b)

This *dipinto* left in the mid-14th c. CE is written in red ink on a whitewash layer of the eastern wall of Sector 1 in the monastic church. When it was recorded by the Spanish mission in 2010, the inscription was in a good state of preservation although already faded and with some letters of the first and the end of the other lines missing. Today, the *dipinto* is badly damaged. The first line is almost entirely lost, the beginning of each line is covered by mud washed out by rain, and modern graffiti has been cut into the inscription.

1 ⲁⲣⲓ[ⲡⲁⲙⲉⲉ]ⲩⲉ
2 ⲁ̣ⲛ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ ⲙⲓⲗⲓⲥ
3 ⲡⲱϩⲣⲉ ⲡ̣ⲧ̣ⲏ̈ⲛ̣ⲗⲟⲛ
4 ⲁ̣ⲡⲟⲩ ⲛⲁ̣ⲃ̣ ⲫ̅ⲧ̅ ⲛⲁ ⲛ̣ⲁⲩ̣
5 ⲁⲙⲏⲛ ⳨ ⲛ̣ⲏ̣ ⲁ̣ⳝ̣ⲁ̣

3 διπλοῦς 4 ϕ(νογ)† 5 ἀμήν. χρ(όνος) μ(α)ρ(τύρων)

|[1] Remem[ber me,] |[2] Abū Mālik[(?)], |[3] son (of) the admirable |[4] Abū Nāḥ. God, have mercy on him. |[5] Amen. Era of the Martyrs 1061.

2. **ⲁ̣ⲛ̣ⲟ̣ⲩ̣ ⲙⲓⲗⲓⲥ** This personal name is attested in another Coptic secondary inscription from Dayr Qubbat al-Hawā' (ⲁⲡⲟⲩ ⲙⲏⲗⲏⲥ; unpublished), in the Coptic inscription DAHP-ID OT_137_W_003 left in Dayr Anbā Hadrā (ⲡⲁⲙⲓⲗⲏⲥ: de Morgan et al. 1894, p. 140, no. 14 [*editio princeps*]), and in a secondary inscription from Esna (ⲁⲡⲟⲩ ⲙⲓⲗⲉⲥ: Coquin 1975, p. 243–244, inscr. A7; SB Kopt. I 323). Could this be a Coptic rendering of the Arabic name "Abū Mālik" although Arabic *kāf* is usually transcribed as *khi* or *kappa* (see e.g. Legendre 2014, p. 391)? For the name "Mālik", see e.g. Legendre 2014, p. 420 (ⲙⲁⲗⲉⲕ, ⲙⲉⲗⲉⲕ, ⲙⲉⲗⲭ) and TM Nam 10484 (https://www.trismegistos.org/name/10484).

3. **ⲡ̣ⲧ̣ⲏ̈ⲛ̣ⲗⲟⲛ** See Cherix 2022, p. 43.

4. **ⲁ̣ⲡⲟⲩ ⲛⲁ̣ⲃ̣** For the personal name "Abū Nāḥ", see al-Zubair 1991, IV, p. 2487.

The inscription is introduced by a short prayer for remembrance and is followed by the identification of the beneficiary consisting of his personal name and a filiation. Of particular interest is the attribute to the father's name which is not a common term used in Coptic

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secondary inscriptions from the First Cataract region. The inscription closes with a prayer for mercy and an absolute date according to the Era of the Martyrs. Dating to the middle of the 14th c. CE, the *dipinto* belongs to the most recent Coptic secondary inscriptions from the monastery. Late Coptic tendencies, as the use of the Bohairic abbreviation ϕ(ⲛⲟⲩ)ϯ for "God" as well as traces of a kind of "Arabisation", which can be seen in the Arabic personal names, underline the comparatively recent date of the inscription.[40]

3. Conclusion

This article presents a selection of ten inscriptions from the monastic church of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ: two Arabic-Islamic, four Arabic-Christian, and four Coptic. This sample of texts does not allow us to go into the details of the comparison of formularies, but major trends are already emerging: most Coptic and Arabic secondary inscriptions in the church of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ were left by visitors to ask God or the passers-by for prayers. The Coptic graffiti and *dipinti* usually show a standard formulary that is either composed in the first person singular and gives the identification of the beneficiary after the initial personal pronoun (e.g. nos. 1, 4) or introduced with a request—often for remembrance—before the beneficiary's identification (e.g. nos. 5, 10). Arabic inscriptions, on the other hand, more systematically use the third person singular: there are very few examples where the first person is used (no. 6 is one of them); in addition to the Coptic inscriptions, invocations of remembrance are also found in Arabic-Christian inscriptions, whereas it is absent from medieval Arabic-Islamic invocations; on the other hand, invocations for forgiveness are the most frequent in the Arabic repertoire in general, but here in the two examples of Islamic inscriptions (nos. 2–3) only visitors are mentioned.

The inscriptions chosen in this article provide a glimpse of the epigraphic range of the site from the 10th to the 14th c. CE. Other, older inscriptions may be hidden beneath the layers of plaster and whitewash layers still visible today, but only an unfortunate and undesirable event could possibly bring them to light. In fact, according to the archaeological observations made in previous publications, the monastic settlement seems to have had its peak period during the 7th and 8th c. CE, while the activity of visitors is mainly attested in Coptic and Arabic secondary inscriptions in the church from the 10th/11th c. CE onwards.[41] In the table below, we have compiled the dated inscriptions that we were able to observe on site, some of which have already been published. We can thus observe a "dated" presence—of both Christian and Muslim visitors—in the 11th c. CE, followed by a peak of activity in the 12th c. CE for both Arabic-Christian and Coptic inscriptions. The 13th c. CE is still fairly dense from an

40. For traces of "Arabisation" in late Coptic inscriptions from the First Cataract region, see Krastel, forthcoming.

41. Barba Colmenero, Torallas Tovar 2020. It should be noted that these are the data provided by the Spanish team, as the results of the Egyptian mission has so far only been published in a short article (Abdin 2013).

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Arabic-Christian point of view, and we finally find evidence almost a century later with a few Coptic inscriptions. These observations are preliminary, as other dated inscriptions may be identified during the study of the whole data set, and further dating of inscriptions will substantially modify the estimate of periods of occupation.

Since the nature of the connection between the neighbouring monasteries of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ and Dayr Anbā Hadrā is still being researched and discussed,[42] it is of particular interest that not only the time frame of the surviving secondary inscriptions is similar—in Dayr Qubbat al-Hawāʾ it ranges, as far as we currently know, from the 10th/11th to the 14th c. CE, in Dayr Anbā Hadrā, from the 10th to at least the early 15th c. CE—but also some of the formularies used.[43] Furthermore, it is even possible to identify visitors who visited both monasteries (no. 1).

Inscriptions from the 11th c. CE (nos. 3–5), particularly Coptic inscriptions, also open a window onto a little-known period in this field of epigraphy. The Arabic inscriptions of the 12th c. CE (nos. 6–7) are also important, as this is a period that is under-represented in Arabic epigraphy,[44] and they open up the study of the relatively unknown sphere of Arab-Christian societies, whose continuity can be seen in the 13th c. CE (nos. 8–9). Finally, the 14th-century inscription (no. 10) offers an insight into the reminiscence of Coptic within a largely Arabic-speaking population, as evidenced here in particular by the onomastic.[45]

Finally, it should be noted that the oldest inscriptions dating from the 10th/11th c. CE seem to concern predominantly graffiti, often in large characters, whereas the inscriptions of the following centuries are mainly *dipinti*, some of which were written by deacons. Moreover, it should be noted that these inscriptions were never covered up, even though the church was restored, particularly during the 12th c. CE.

The history of the church and the monastic site of Qubbat al-Hawāʾ has to be established, but it is certain that the epigraphic context—especially when compared with that of the monastery of Anbā Hadrā—will shed light on certain aspects of its history.

42. See e.g. Barba Colmenero, Torallas Tovar 2020.
43. For the Coptic epigraphic evidence of Dayr Anbā Hadrā, see Krastel et al. 2023.
44. Imbert 1998, p. 46.
45. For traces of "Arabisation" in Coptic secondary inscriptions of Dayr Anbā Hadrā, see Krastel, forthcoming.

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Date	Arabic-Christian	Arabic-Islamic	Coptic
11th c. CE		**1034–1035 (426 AH), S3_G** 1058 (450 AH), S6_G	**1068–1069 (461 AH), S3_G** **1085–1086? (802 AM), S7_G**
12th c. CE	**1143 (537 AH), S3_D** [× 2] 1147 (541 AH), S3_D 1148 (542 AH = 864 AM), S3_D [× 2] **1149–1150 (544 AH = 866 AM), S5_D**		1125 (841 AM), S2_G [× 2]* 1173 (889 AM), QH34f_D* 1179–1180 (896 AM = 575 AH), S1_D* 1180 (896 AM = 575 AH), S2_D*
13th c. CE	1214 (930 AM), S15_D 1224 (940 AM), S1_D **1236 (952 AM), S1_D** **1273 (989 AM), S15_D**	1269(?) (668 AH), S5_G	
14th c. CE			**1344–1345 (1061 AM), S1_D** 1383–1384(?) (1100 AM), S1_D

Table of absolutely dated inscriptions.
In bold: those we are publishing in this article; S = sector; D = *dipinto*; G = graffito; [× 2] = the date exists two times;
* = inscription published in Dekker 2008, pp. 19–36, and Edel 2008.

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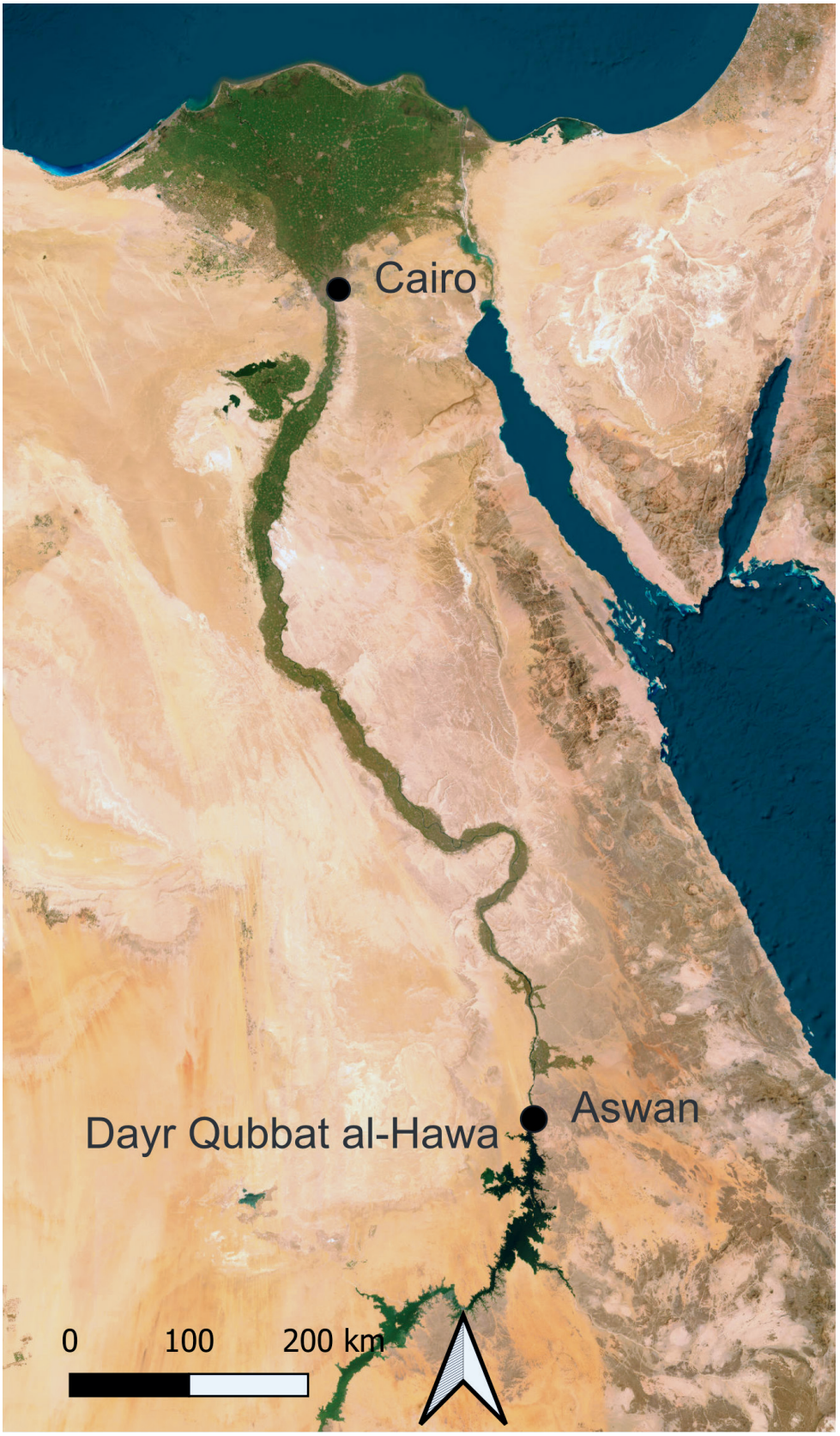
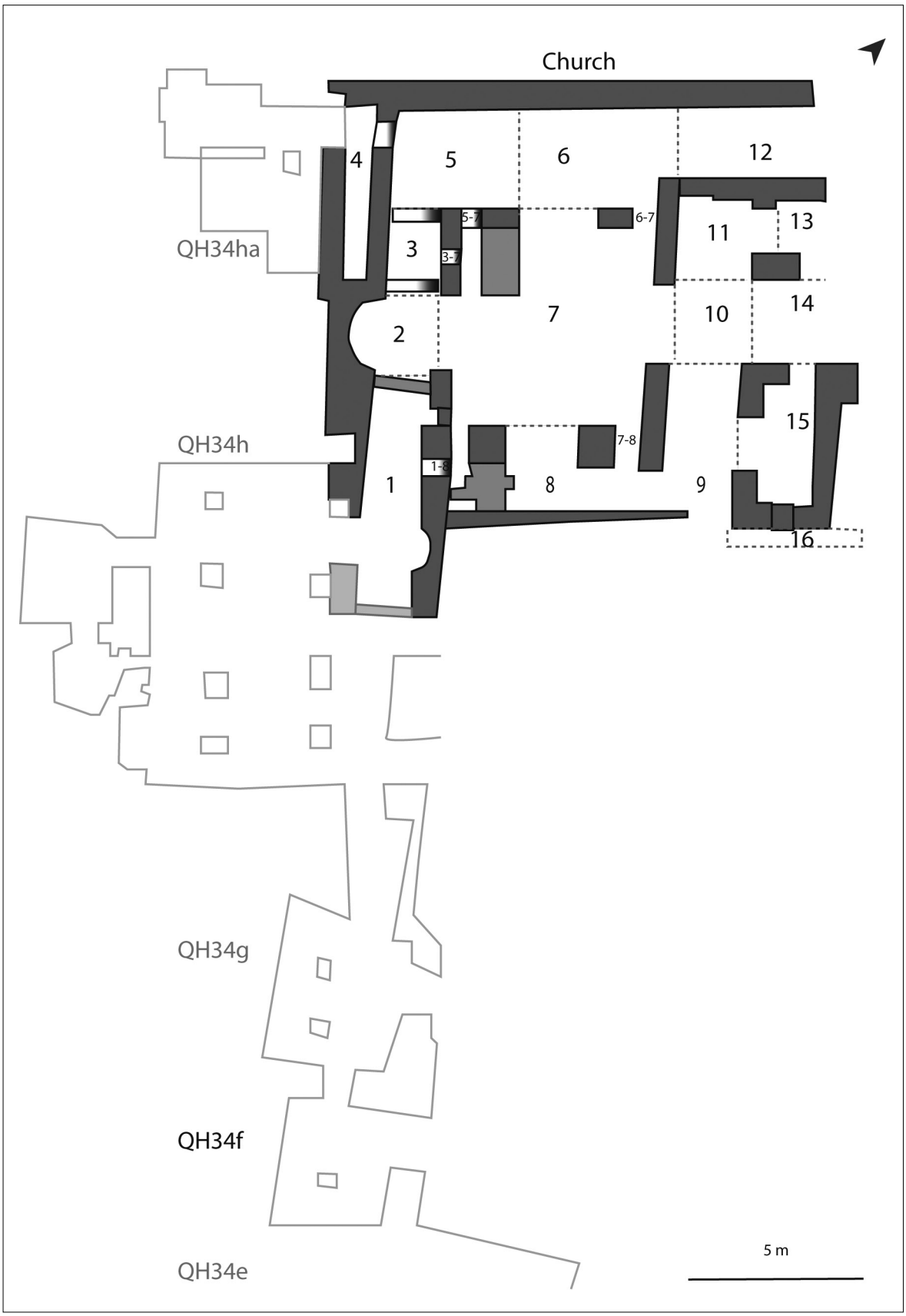


Fig. 1. Site location map.

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Fig. 2. Site plan based on a map of J.A. Martínez Hermoso (Barba Colmenero et al. 2022, fig. 12, p. 12) and a photogrammetric plan supplied by A.T. Mozas Calvache (Mozas Calvache et al. 2019).

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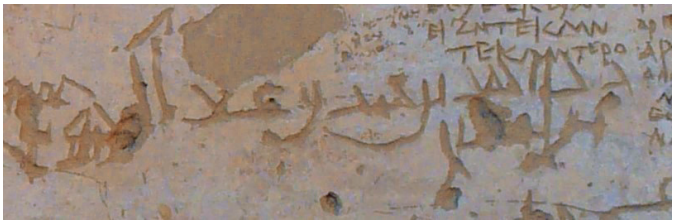
Fig. 3. View of Dayr Qubbat al-Hawā' from the north-east.



a b

Fig. 4. Inscription no. 1.
a. © S. Torallas Tovar, A. Zomeño, Proyecto Qubbet el-Hawa, Jaén University, 2010.
b. © IFAO, M. Kačičnik, 2024.

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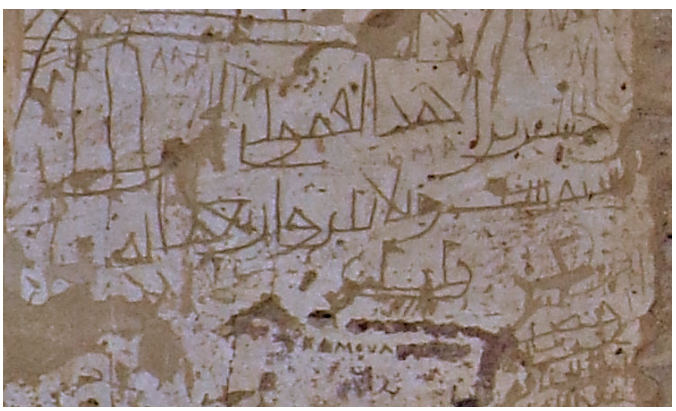


a



b

Fig. 5. Inscription no. 2.
a. © S. Torallas Tovar, A. Zomeño, Proyecto Qubbet el-Hawa, Jaén University, 2010.
b. © A. Lagaron, 2024.

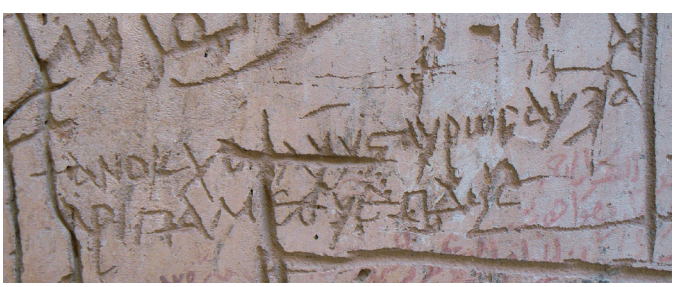


a



b

Fig. 6. Inscription no. 3.
a. © A. Lagaron, 2016.
b. © IFAO, M. Kačičnik, 2024.



a



b

Fig. 7. Inscription no. 4.
a. © S. Torallas Tovar, A. Zomeño, Proyecto Qubbet el-Hawa, Jaén University, 2010.
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a b

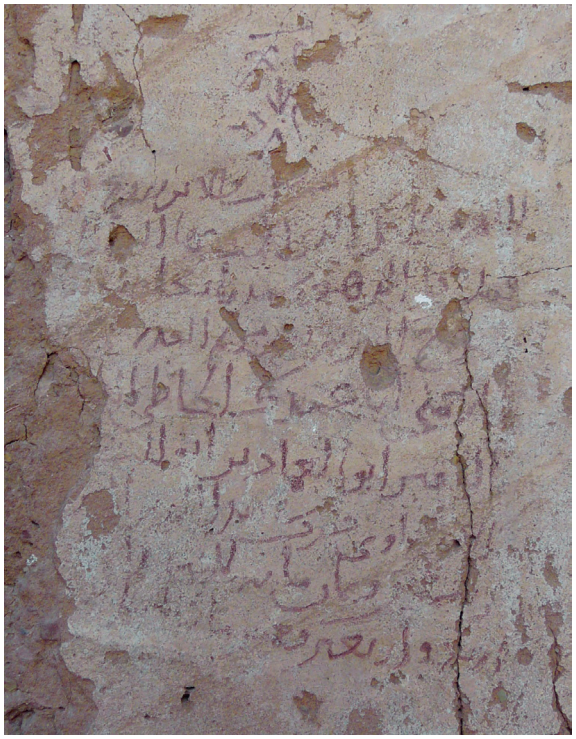
Fig. 8. Inscription no. 5.
a. © S. Torallas Tovar, A. Zomeño, Proyecto Qubbet el-Hawa, Jaén University, 2010.
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a b c

Fig. 9. Inscription no. 6.
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b. © IFAO, M. Kačičnik, 2024.
c. © IFAO, M. Kačičnik, 2024.

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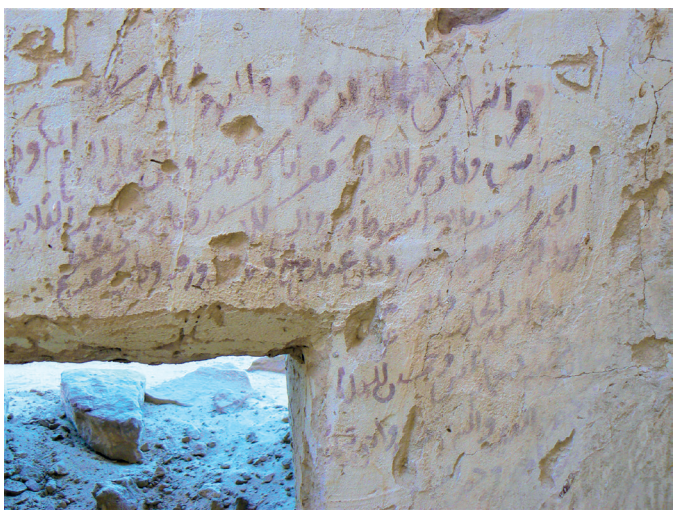


a



b

Fig. 10. Inscription no. 7.
a. © S. Torallas Tovar, A. Zomeño, Proyecto Qubbet el-Hawa, Jaén University, 2010.
b. © IFAO, M. Kačičnik, 2024.



a



b

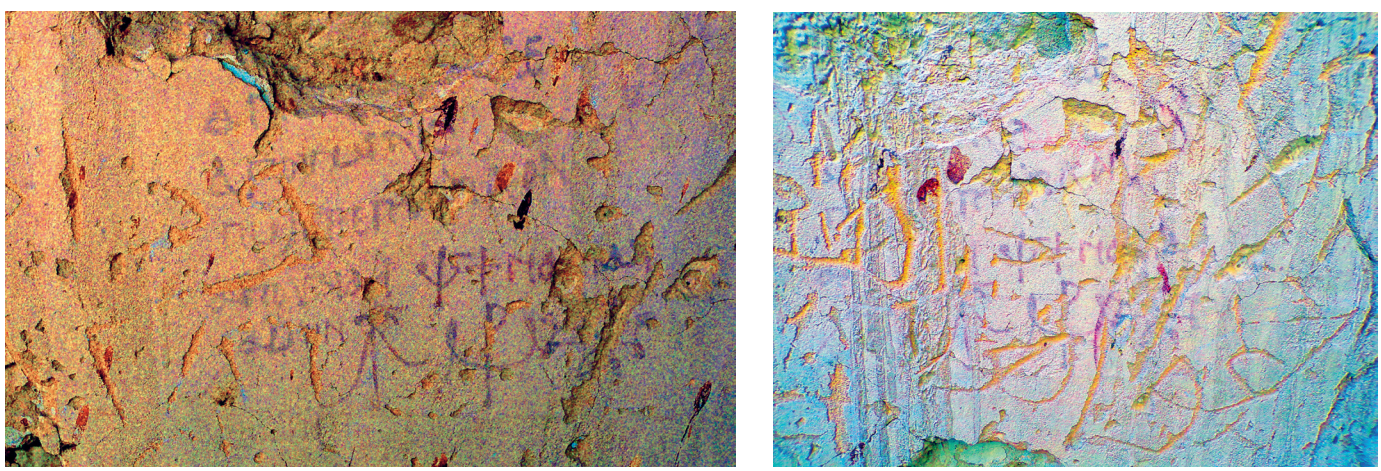
Fig. 11. Inscription no. 8.
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a b

Fig. 12. Inscription no. 9.
a. © S. Torallas Tovar, A. Zomeño, Proyecto Qubbet el-Hawa, Jaén University, 2010.
b. © A. Lagaron, 2024.



a b

Fig. 13. Inscription no. 10.
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Fig. 14. View of Sector 1.

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Fig. 15. View of Sector 2.

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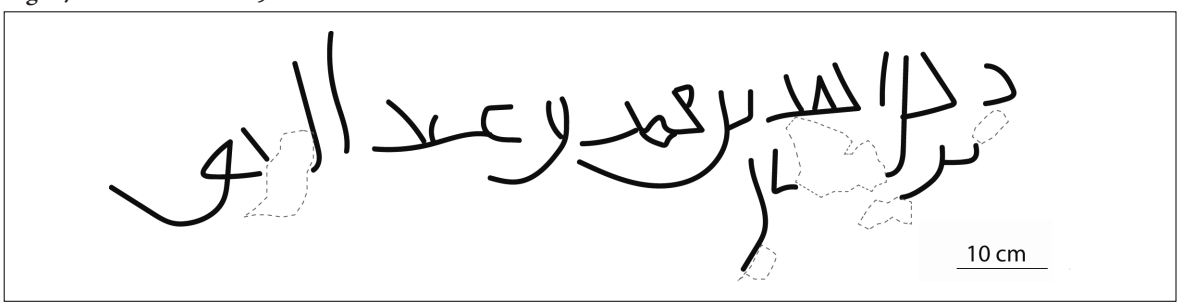
Fig. 16. View of Sectors 3 and 5.

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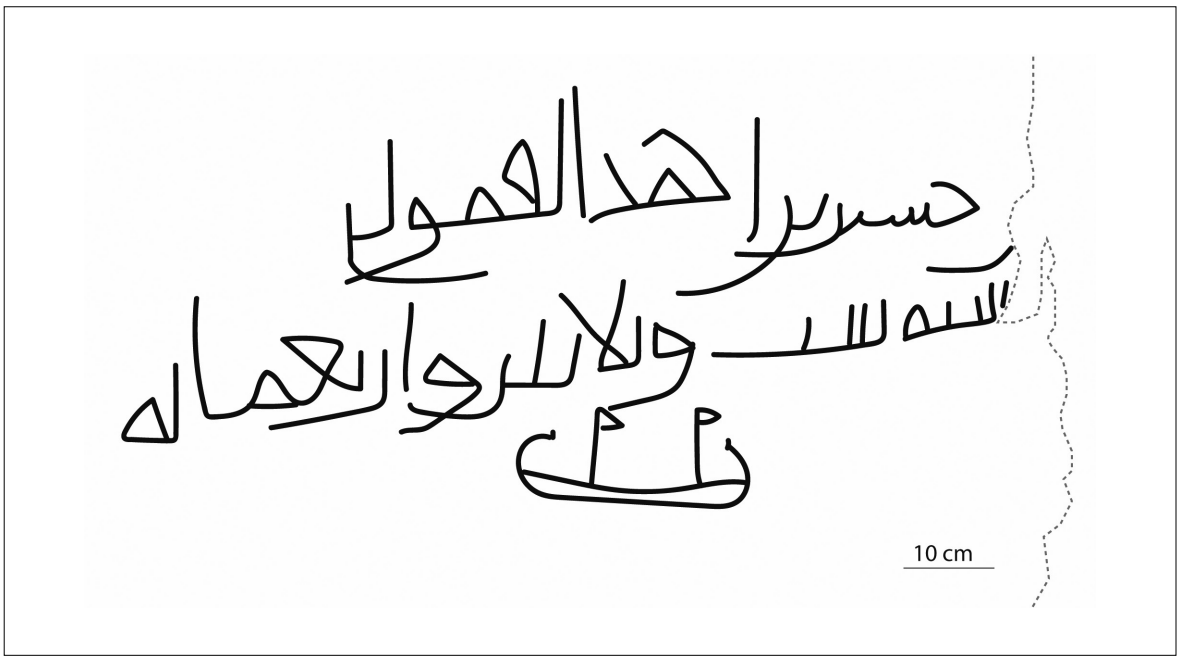
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Fig. 17. View of Sector 15.



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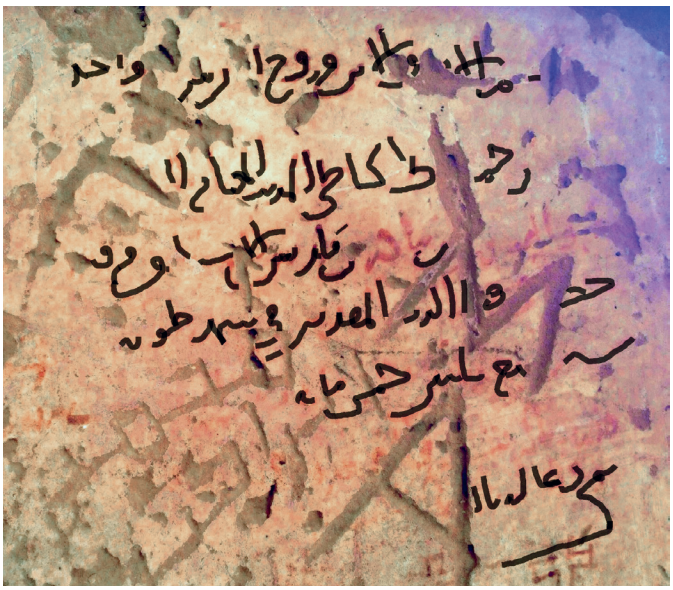
Fig. 18. Facsimile of the inscription no. 2.



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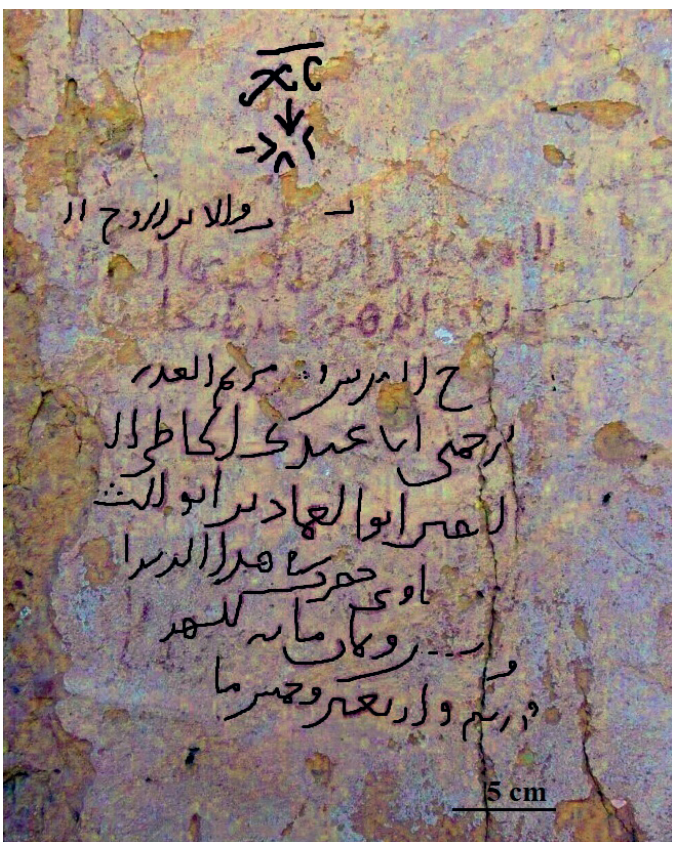
Fig. 19. Facsimile of the inscription no. 3.

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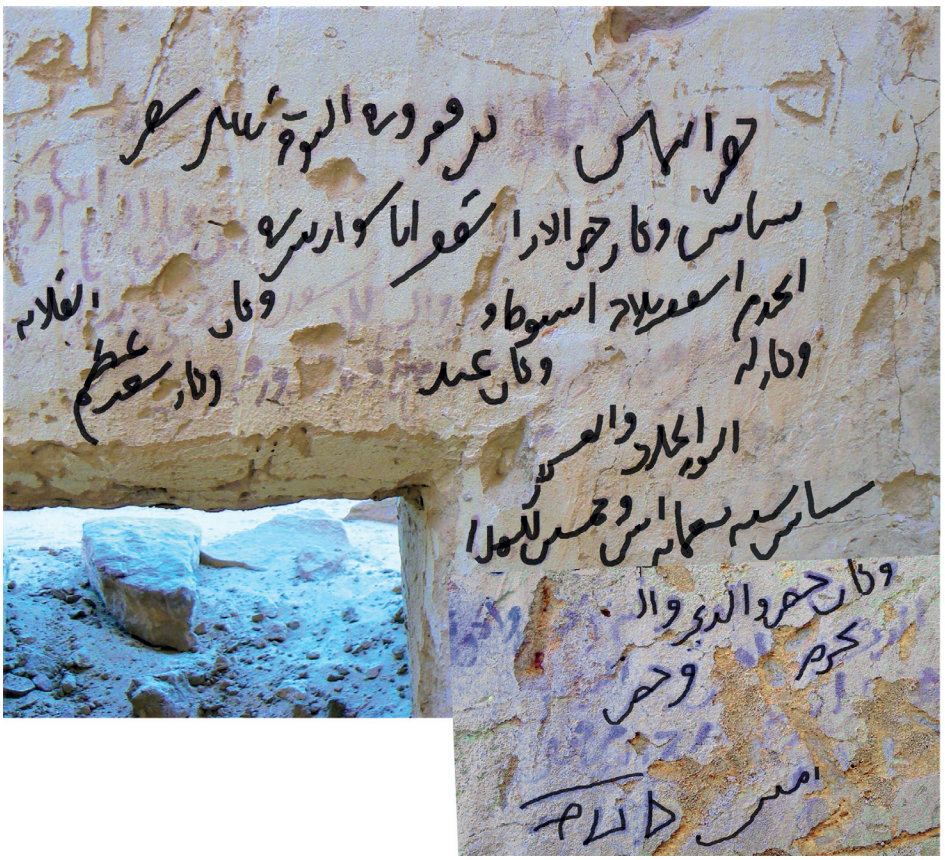
Fig. 20. Facsimile of the inscription no. 6.



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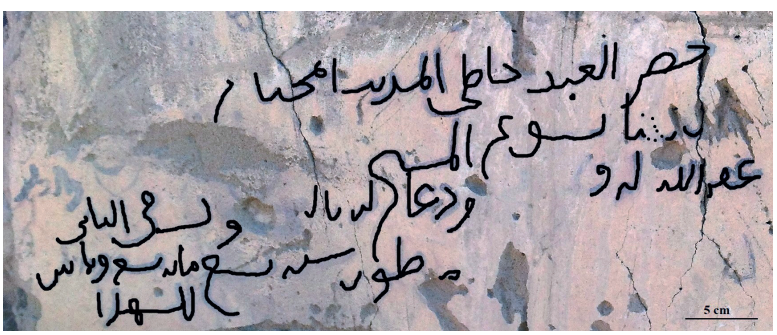
Fig. 21. Facsimile of the inscription no. 7.

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Fig. 22. Facsimile of inscription no. 8, based on two pictures enhanced with DStretch: one taken in 2010 (© S. Torallas Tovar, A. Zomeño) and another taken in 2018 (© A. Lagaron).



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Fig. 23. Facsimile of the inscription no. 9.

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