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Wall-Paintings in a Roman House at Ancient Kysis, Kharga Oasis

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Wall-Paintings in a Roman House at Ancient Kysis, Kharga Oasis

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Introduction

The ancient site of Kysis (tell Douch) is dominated by a stone-built temple at the southern edge of the tell, dating back to the late 1st century AD, and set within an extensive enclosure (the "kasr") bounded by a thick mud-brick wall (fig. 1). Originally the site of the temple magazines, this enclosure was appropriated for military use during the later Roman Empire. On both sides of the dromos leading northwards from the temple are the remains of a settlement dating from the 2nd to the late 4th centuries AD; the western area of the settlement is more extensive than the eastern sector, and includes a mud-brick temple of modest size. Visible remains on the site, including the vestiges of both temples, were recorded by sporadic visitors from the 17th century onwards, and more systematic surveys and documentation were carried out between the end of the 19th century and the early 1950s.[1] In the second half of the 1970s, at the prompting of S. Sauneron, the site became the focus of investigation and excavation by the Ifao; in some of the earliest seasons of work, quantities of ostraca documenting the activities of the Roman army detachments in Kysis and its surrounding area during the 4th century AD were retrieved from the temple enclosure.[2] Successive seasons of work were carried out in various parts of the site under the direction of M. Reddé between 1985 and 1990,

1 See the resumé of earlier citations and publications in M. Reddé *et al.*, *Douch* III. *Kysis: fouilles de l'IFAO à Douch Oasis de Kharga (1985-1990), DFIFAO* 42, 2004 (afterwards *Douch* III. *Kysis*), p. 1-10.

2 G. Wagner, *Les Oasis d'Egypte à l'époque grecque, romaine et byzantine d'après les documents grecs, BdE* 100, 1987, p. 382-385; G. Wagner, H. Cuvigny, *Les ostraca grecs de Douch (O. Douch) I-V, DFIFAO* 24, 1986-2001; *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 199-205.

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in the course of which four brick buildings in the settlement, three located on the eastern side of the dromos (fig. 2) and one over to the west, on the plateau between the two temples, were excavated. Building 1 on the east side, slightly to the north of the house published here, contained traces of paintings (see below).[3] In 1989, the "Douch treasure," a cache of cultic objects in gold, which had been crammed into a pottery jar, was discovered in a niche at the side of the temple enclosure immediately adjacent to the temple.[4]

Excavations at tell Douch came to a halt in 1992 when the focus of interest shifted to another important site, Ain Manawir, 3,5 km to the west of Douch, where the Ifao started to excavate and study the Persian Period temple and the surrounding settlements, together with the irrigation system of *qanats*. Conservation and restoration work at Douch directed by M. Wuttmann continued after that date, however, and in the 2008-2009 season, a decision was taken to carry out a limited excavation by B. Gehad and M. Wuttmann within a mud-brick house on the western side of the dromos, where wind erosion and the passage of visitors' feet across the site had revealed ruined walls with traces of painting on them. The room with the painted walls was temporarily cleared to its ancient floor-level, and the salt-encrusted paintings were cleaned, documented, and consolidated, after which the room was backfilled.[5]

Previous Discoveries of Wall-Paintings at the Site

During his stay at Douch from 1st to 4th July 1818, F. Cailliaud, who described the temples and also observed the streets and houses of the Roman settlement, noted some Christian paintings in a vaulted brick structure, which seems to have been an earlier shrine converted into a church:

> *[…] in the interior are some quite good Coptic paintings, the colours of which are very fresh: in them we see a St. George and another figure, armed with a lance, in the act of killing a serpent; at his feet is a lion, also a long procession of men holding a candle in their hands, and all are dressed in flowing robes, enhanced with drapery and worn over the arm.*[6]

The location of these paintings is not clear from F. Cailliaud's text: the description of the vaulted structure opens with the words "Près de là …", following immediately upon sequential descriptions of the main "temple Égyptien" and then the smaller brick temple to the west of it; no traces of the paintings have been found in the successive seasons of work by the Ifao at Douch.[7]

3 For these structures, see *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 25-74.

4 M. Reddé, *Douch* IV. *Le trésor*. *Inventaire des objets et essai d'interprétation, DFIFAO* 28, 1992 (afterwards, *Douch* IV. *Le trésor*).

5 M. Wuttmann, dans L. Pantalacci, S. Denoix, "Travaux de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 2008-2009", *BIFAO* 109, 2009, p. 590-591, fig. 39.

6 F. Cailliaud, *Voyage à l'oasis de Thèbes et dans les déserts situés à l'Orient et à l'Occident de la Thébaïde, fait pendant les années 1815, 1816, 1817 et 1818*, Paris, 1821, p. 89-90; for the inscriptions, see p.112-113, pl. XXII nos. 3-6; pl. XIII.4 shows no. 3 *in situ*, flanked by vertical inscriptions in hieroglyphs.

7 M. Reddé associated them with ruins identified in the 1980s in the eastern annexe of the stone temple, and suggested that they would date at least to the 5th century: *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 1-6.

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Building 1 of the group excavated on the eastern side of the dromos in the 1980s had been modified in the 3rd phase of its structural history by the addition of columns within the largest interior space, testifying to its use at that time as a church.[8] Traces of polychrome painted decoration were preserved on two of the column drums (an amphora and a foliar wreath enclosing a fleuron) and several fallen fragments of arches (friezes composed of geometric and floral motifs).[9] During restoration work on the Trajanic pylon of the temple in 1992, two units of the southern corner of a house were found in a sondage made under the eastern foundation of the pylon: a vaulted room with a bench and a hearth, and a doorway leading into a second space (a room or open court?), the southern wall of which had been plastered and painted with panels filled with geometric designs (fig. 3), in a chequerboard arrangement.[10] Traces of geometric painted ornament can also be seen within panels on the screen-wall of the contra-temple.[11]

The use of geometric patterns in painted decoration seems to have been of widespread occurrence in the oases of the western desert,[12] and fragmentary painted decoration in churches has also been found at Kellis, in the Dakhla Oasis,[13] but the content and style of the paintings uncovered in the 2008-2009 season is so far unique in this area, and almost unparalleled anywhere amongst the surviving wall-decoration of Roman Egypt.

The Painted Room and its Excavation

The painted room is in a building identified as a house and located on the western side of the north-south dromos, at the southern end of which lies the major temple of tell Douch (fig. 4). The house occupies an area around 95,5 m², the eastern wall is about 9,55 m; this wall opens onto the main N-S street via an entrance of the house with a width of about 1,00 m; the northern wall is about 12,10 m, the western wall about 10,20 m and the southern wall is about 10,00 m. The thickness of the walls ranges between 0,35 m and 0,55 m; a difference of levels between the highest level at the N-W corner and the lowest point at the N-E corner is about 1,80 m.

The room lies at the centre of a building: coordinates (taken using GPS. *GERMAIN 76S*) were 24.581113N, 30.717111E and Altitude 96,01 m. The opening at the N-E corner of the house, nearly 1,00 m wide and leading directly off the dromos, seems to have been the principal entrance. From this, a short corridor, flanked by a small room with a narrow entrance in its western wall, leads into a roughly square area, at the S-W corner of which is another corridor

8 C. Bonnet, in *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 75-86.

9 A. Barbet, in *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 87-91.

10 N. Grimal, "Travaux de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 1991-1992", *BIFAO* 92, 1992, p. 234.

11 *Ibid*., p. 234; *Douch III. Kysis,* p. 117, fig. 118.

12 H. Whitehouse, "Wall Paintings in Shrine IV of the Temple of Tutu", in C.A. Hope, G.E. Bowen (ed.), *Dakhleh Oasis Project: Preliminary Reports on the 1994-1995 and 1998-1999 Field Seasons,* Oxford, 2002, p. 311-321, esp. p. 317.

13 See, for instance, the fragments of painting in the large East Church at Kellis: G.E. Bowen, "The Fourth-century churches at Ismant el-Kharab", in C.A. Hope, G.E. Bowen (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 65-85, esp. p. 69, 71.

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where traces of a staircase were observed (fig. 5). At the S-E corner of this area is the painted room; the smaller room lying to the north of it, which showed traces of burning, awaits excavation, as does the rest of the structure outlined on the plan.

The exposure of mud-brick architecture at archaeological sites presents difficulties both during and after excavation, because the buried structure, together with its artefacts and associated features such as wall paintings, exists in a unique micro-environment which, over centuries of interment, has reached an overall thermo-hygrometric equilibrium. Since this equilibrium can be destabilized as a result of excavation, thus causing structural instability, a comprehensive conservation strategy was devised to accompany the excavation work (fig. 6). A shelter measuring 4 × 4 m was designed to protect the newly-revealed mural paintings from the detrimental effects of the environment, such as direct sunlight and the wind action which is an important issue in desert excavation. Structural requirements for the shelter to achieve this aim were handled according to the materials and equipment that could be provided in such a remote site: 18 steel beams, 10 cm in diameter and each about 2,5 m long, were used to create a framework, secured with rounded steel connectors and then covered with a thick tent fabric. To avoid any impediment in the work, or overloading of the walls, no beams were placed inside the room. All subsequent excavation and conservation works were performed inside the shelter.

Work started from the room entrance, on the N-E side, and the walls were cleaned to enable a plan of the room to be drawn (fig. 7). In the first phase of excavation a 30 cm depth of *débris* (mainly windblown Aeolian sand) was removed, with no specific stratigraphy observable at this depth. Fragments of wood and bone were recorded and removed for identification. With the removal of another 30 cm of sand fill, in 10 cm stages, collapsed bricks began to emerge, scattered from the entrance towards the central and N-W parts of the room; these were logged and documented prior to removal. Clearance continued until, at a depth of 75 cm, very small fragments of coloured plaster started to appear amidst the brick rubble; these pieces were photographed and collected. At a depth of 80 cm, the sand layer began to give way to dark-coloured silt and a further quantity of bricks that had fallen from the entrance towards the middle of the room. At 105 cm, a shallow spouted basin made of local sandstone in poor condition was found upside-down near the middle of the west wall (fig. 8); after photography *in situ*, the basin was transported to the conservation laboratory. A further 10 cm below there was much broken pottery, including fragments of a vessel decorated with concentric circles, and of rings or rims, together with remains of bone, and fragments of animals modelled in unbaked clay (see annexe, fig. 16-20). Also found at this level, at the entrance to the room, was a lintel formed of a stone slab, with bricks still attached.

Origin	taxon	bone	No. of remains	Part	side	Remarks
Tell- Douch	Cattle (Bos Taurus)	Rib	1	Diaphysis		Fragments
Tell- Douch	Sheep / Goat (Caprinae)	Scapula	1	Diaphysis		Fragments
Tell- Douch	Sheep / Goat (Caprinae)	Captitato trepezoide	1		Right	Trace of corrosion
Tell- Douch	Rodent	Femur	1		Right	
Tell- Douch	Rodent	Mandibula	1		Left	Fragment
Tell- Douch	Unidentified	Unidentified	9			Fragment

TABLE 1. Bones found during the excavation of the Roman painted room and their taxonomy.

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In the N-W corner of the room, stuck to the original floor, was a heavily corroded piece of metal—a metal wall-hook (fig. 9); the floor at this level was composed of compacted dark silt and sand, with the sandstone bedrock appearing in the S-W corner.

Dating of the Painted Room from the Material Evidence

Samples of the organic material represented by the chopped straw inside the bricks and the mud-plaster rendering of the painted room were taken for processing in the Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory of the Ifao in Cairo. Pre-treatment of the samples was carried out with hydrogen peroxide (H_2O_2), and the calibration was performed using the INTCAL04 dataset.[14] Laboratory analysis no. 0265 (sample inv. no. 7309) gave the following results:

Uncalibrated conventional (yBP) dating	Calibrated dating AD with a probability of 68.2 % (1σ)	Calibrated dating AD with a probability of 95.4% (2σ)
1664 ± 48 BP	326-430 (61 %)	254-465 (85,3 %)
	261-280 (7,2 %)	482-533 (10,1 %)

The calibrated dating with a 68,2 % probability gives the most likely dating range (AD 261-430), within which the suggested date of the pottery fragments would sit comfortably. The wider range at the higher probability level of 95,4 % gives the broadest spectrum (AD 254-533), outside which the date of the paintings could not lie; the latter segment of this (AD 482-533) might be discounted in light of the chronology suggested by the documentation of the military presence at Douch, thus taking the terminus of this spectrum down to AD 485. On the same grounds, the lowest range in the other spectrum (AD 261-280) might be set aside, giving a tighter window—the 1st quarter of the 4th century—in which to place the paintings in conjunction with the pottery dating. Although there can be issues in some contexts with the date of straw extracted from mud-brick anticipating by some time the date of the bricks, this is probably not a weighty consideration with reference to these Douch samples.[15]

Description of the Paintings

Polychrome figure-paintings had been executed only on the west and north walls of the painted room (fig. 10), although the south and east (entrance) walls had also been prepared for painting with a thin (*c.* 11 mm) layer of lime whitewash applied to a 15 mm rendering of fine silty clay, under which were two thicker layers (32-42 mm) of rougher mud rendering with straw inclusions. Although the use of tempera on dry plaster (*secco*) is the more commonly

14 See M. Wuttmann, in B. Midant-Reynes, S. Denoix, "Travaux de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale 2009-2010", *BIFAO* 110, 2010, p. 363.

15 See F. Brock, "Preparing Samples for AMS Radiocarbon Dating", in A.J. Shortland, C. Bronk Ramsey, *Radiocarbon and the Chronologies of Ancient Egypt,* Oxford, 2013, p. 48-52, esp. p. 49.

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attested technique for Roman wall-paintings in Egypt,[16] examination of the lime wash layer here has shown the kind of absorption of pigments typical of wet plaster, indicating the use of true *fresco* technique (fig. 11).[17]

Only the lower part of three figures is preserved. Further details and attributes that might help identify them are missing, and the paint surface is lost in many places, as are patches of the painted plaster.

The West Wall

The wall (fig. 12), which is 2,85 m wide, is preserved to a maximum height of 1,30 m. At the southern end, on a now discoloured white ground, is the lower part of a standing male figure in frontal view, preserved from mid-thigh downwards and wearing military dress; this comprises a dark-red cloak which falls in a curve behind the figure, and a skirt in two fringed layers, painted in white shaded with grey, giving the effect of stripes or pleats, with the fringes picked out in yellow and red. Below the lower fringe is the hem of a yellow under-tunic, which ends just above the knees; both skirt and tunic are interrupted by a central strip of red paint matching the colour of the cloak, giving the curious impression that the figure is wearing some ancient equivalent of Bermuda shorts (see discussion below). The legs are apparently bare as far as mid-calf, painted pink with red shading at the sides. On the knees, however, lion heads in frontal view have been painted in dark brown lines with lighter brown shading (fig. 13); that on the knee of the left leg, on which there has been some damage and surface loss, is less clearly discernible. The feet are completely enclosed in boots, which extend to mid-calf and are painted in a rich yellow ochre, with dark-brown outlines and internal details; some finer black lines at the top of the outer side of the left boot might indicate a knotted thong (fig. 14). The right foot rests firmly on an area of dark reddish-brown paint which seems to end in a horizontal line beside the right leg, but beyond this, and also below the right foot, the painted surface has been lost, so whether this darker mass represents a ground line or part of a plinth or similar structure is impossible to judge.

At the figure's right, and presumably held by his missing right hand, is a yellow shaft outlined in brown; it ends in a sharply highlighted grey metal spearhead outlined in black, with a central constriction across its width that gives it an undulating profile like an elongated figure-of-eight; it has an emphatic midrib and a slightly flaring socket where the shaft enters. The spearhead points downwards into a grapevine, the brown stems of which extend upwards on either side of the spear and are hung with bunches of red and black grapes, together with a few leaves, light green with darker outlines. Traces of the brown stems of a similar vine can be seen at the figure's left.

Further right, and set a little higher, is the lower part of a seated figure wearing a purple garment decorated with golden-yellow eight-pointed stars of the "Macedonian" type interspersed with a few motifs composed of four dots; black lines outline this garment and indicate

16 As observed in connection with paintings at Kellis, in the Dakhla Oasis: L. BLONDAUX, "Conservation of Archaeological Wall Paintings in the Temple of Tutu", in C.A. Hope, G.E. Bowen (ed.), *op.cit.*, p. 61-63.

17 B. GEHAD *et al.*, "Integrated non-destructive analysis for the identification of the pigments used in the mural painting from a third century c.e. Roman house, Kharga Oasis-Egypt", forthcoming.

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the transverse folds of the fabric over the lap and knees. The feet are completely enclosed in footwear painted a rich yellow with black outlines and inner details, the upper part hidden beyond the hem of the garment. The feet rest on a rectangular mass of colour, yellowish-pink above dark brown, seemingly a footstool seen in perspective. At the figure's right is the yellow shaft of a sceptre *vel sim*., the end of which is poised at the upper corner of the footstool. There is no clear indication of a stool or chair on which the figure is sitting, but at the figure's left, and extending to the western corner of the wall, is an upcurving dark-pink mass outlined with dark purple-red and shaded at the right, where there seems to be a cross-shaped motif in the upper corner. There are some further traces of paint below this at the level of the footstool. Above the pink-purple feature, and filling the space between this and the outline of the purple garment, is an area of creamy-yellow paint scattered with a few purple motifs resembling of rosettes or flowers, suggestive of a patterned textile.

The North Wall

The north wall, which is 2,80 m wide, has survived to a maximum height of 1,65 m. At the western end, on a discoloured white ground, is the lower part of a standing figure preserved to mid-thigh height and wearing a purple tunic ending a little above the ankles; the outline of the garment and folds in the fabric are painted in black (fig. 15). Over the tunic a narrow golden-yellow mantle, with folds indicated in brown lines and lighter brown shading, is draped upwards across the body from the right side, with a loose end, possibly ending in a tassel, falling at the figure's left. The feet are, like those of the adjacent seated figure, completely enclosed in yellow footwear with outlines and inner details in dark-brown, with some brown shading. At the figure's right is a brown-stemmed grapevine similar to that on the adjacent wall, bearing red and black grapes and a few green leaves, with a similar metal spearhead on a yellow shaft, presumably held in the figure's right hand, pointing downwards into the vine. Traces of brown paint on the figure's left may again indicate a matching vine on that side. An area of red-brown paint under the feet, defined with straight lines, might represent ground, or the upper surface of a dais or plinth seen in perspective, but there is no clear indication below it of the frontal view of such a feature. The figure occupies a space about 1 m wide, leaving ample room on the rest of the north wall as far as the entrance for the insertion of another figure, but the discoloured white surface in this area shows only marks and staining apparently related to later damage to the wall, and not the remains of any painted surface.

The three figures are viewed frontally and in isolation from each other. The feet of both the standing figures are similarly posed, turned slightly outwards, the right foot set firmly down, the left shifting forward onto the toes: the folds in the tunic of the north wall figure show that this is accompanied by a slight flexing and outward turn of the left leg, the stance thus echoing the *contrapposto* pose of formal statuary. On both walls, the grapevines beside the standing figures extend somewhat lower than the areas of dark paint on which the figures stand. The yellow colour used for the footwear of all three figures and the shafts of the spears and staff or sceptre suggests leather and wood respectively; soft leather, in the case of the footwear, which follows the contours of the lower legs and feet quite closely, making a pointed profile around the toes.

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Discussion

Given that so much is missing, we can only speculate upon the identity of the figures with the aid of the limited evidence of footwear, part of their clothing, and the two spears, which are unusual in both their form and position. The dress of the military figure on the west wall is the most immediately distinctive: although depicted with the softness of fabric falling in folds, the fringed white skirt in two layers recalls the strips of leather or stiffened linen (*pteryges*), typically white fringed with gold, which hung in one or more tiers from a vest worn under a metal cuirass, with further fringed strips over the shoulders. Together with a red cloak pinned on the right shoulder and a short-sleeved under-tunic, this outfit formed the uniform proper to those of higher rank in the Roman army, from senior officers to the emperor himself, who alone was entitled to wear a purple cloak. By the time that the Kysis painting was executed, this costume, which incorporated several Hellenistic elements, would have been modified in reality with long sleeves to the under-tunic, and the addition of close-fitting trousers, or breeches which ended below the knee.[18] The separation of the skirt and under-tunic in the painting by the strip of red paint which merges into the cloak is a curious feature: the red does not exactly follow the contour of the legs, but cuts into the inner profile of the figure's left leg, as though it were a sash hanging down the centre of the skirt—but there is no parallel for such a feature in traditional wear. Perhaps this confusion arose from the painter's greater familiarity with the real military dress that he could see around him (especially since many of the personnel at Douch would be trouser-wearing cavalrymen or *dromedarii*, to judge by the evidence of the ostraca),[19] rather than the details of the formal representation that he was supposed to be executing.

The uniform described above was the essence of the "heroic" military garb seen in the representation of figures who might be triumphant emperors,[20] or the god of war; their customary footwear was boots of mid-calf height, which usually left the toes bare. These were fastened with frontal lacing and finished with flaps at the top, decorated with a feline head at the front.[21] The mid-calf-length boots worn by the military figure here do not appear to be of this type, though as parts of the painted surface are missing on both the left and right legs, not much detail is visible: they have a kind of rolled-under edge, rather than flaps, at the top, and apparently no lacing up the front, only the feature possibly to be interpreted as a knot at the outside of the left boot (fig. 14).

In Graeco-Roman Egypt a number of divine figures were shown in military dress, in a phenomenon aptly dubbed "Gods in uniform" by E. Kantorowicz in his fundamental study of this type of representation;[22] as he noted, distinguishing emperors from gods in such cases

18 M.C. Bishop, J.C.N. Coulston, *Roman Military Equipment: From the Punic Wars to the Fall of Rome,* 2nd ed., Oxford, 2006, p. 184, 224-225; B. Rankov, *Guardians of the Roman Empire,* Oxford, 1994, p. 59-61, pl. L, illustrates the likely appearance of the emperor Maxentius and his officers, AD 312.

19 *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 204-205.

20 As in the large corpus of examples assembled by C. Vermeule, "Hellenistic and Roman Cuirassed Statues. The Evidence of Paintings and Reliefs in the Chronological Development of Cuirass Types", *Berytus* 13.1, 1959, p. 1-82, pl. I-XXVI.

21 Cf. P. Knötzele, *Römische Schuhe. Luxus an den Füssen, Schriften des Limesmuseums Aalen* 59, 2007, p. 71, fig. 70: detail of a statue of the emperor Trajan as Mars.

22 E.H. Kantorowicz, "Gods in Uniform", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 105, 1961, p. 368-393 (= E.H. Kantorowicz, *Selected Studies,* Locust Valley, New York, 1965, p. 7-24).

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is not easy. Examples range from relief sculptures and small terracottas showing a conqueror "in uniform" ready to strike a cowering foe,[23] to the images of military gods (Heron apparently predominant among them) painted on walls and wooden panels, and associated particularly with the Fayum.[24] The costume of these figures is quite diverse, incorporating more Hellenistic than Roman features, but also foreign elements in the case of gods who have brought their own uniform from further afield.[25] Their bodies are shown in frontal view, but their legs and feet are almost always shown in profile, in the traditional Egyptian format, directed towards the focus of the scene. They wear various styles of shoes or ankle-boots, usually with tied thongs shown on either side at the top, and these are sometimes surmounted by greaves secured with straps, reminiscent of the full-length greaves extending from ankle to knee that were worn above shoes or sandals.[26] Perhaps the painter had something like this in mind when he added the lion heads to the bare knees of the Kysis figure: greaves with feline heads over the knees, and straps around the legs (which are shown in profile), are worn by the bearded figure in military dress on a Roman relief from Luxor which presents an adaptation of the traditional pose of the conquering pharaoh;[27] some of the military gods of the panel paintings also wear greaves decorated with zoomorphic heads.[28]

The pose and dress of the Kysis figure seem to set him apart from the category of "Hellenistic-Egyptian" images to which these figures belong.[29] If the upper body had survived, further similarities in dress and attributes might be visible, though the details of the skirt suggest not: it is quite distinct from the tunics worn by most of the military figures on painted panels and walls; only a minority of such figures has been shown in something recognizably derived from the tiered skirt of *pteryges*, but they are more schematically depicted than in the Kysis painting.[30] A better comparison might be made with the statues of three military gods "in uniform," standing on circular bases, depicted in the wall-painting from the temple of Bel at Dura-Europos, *c.* AD 239, showing the tribune Julius Terentius and the Palmyrene cohort

23 The traditional pose of the pharaoh overcoming evil forces: D.M. Bailey, "Little emperors", in D.M. Bailey (ed.), *Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt. The Proceedings of the 17th Classical Colloquium of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum,* Ann Arbor, 1996, p. 207-213.

24 Preliminary checklist published by T. Mathews ("The Emperor and the Icon", *ActaArtHist* 15, 2001, p. 163-177, esp. p. 175-177), anticipating the corpus and analytical study by V. Rondot, *Derniers visages des dieux d'Égypte. Iconographies, panthéons et cultes dans le Fayoum hellénisé des IIe-IIIe siècles de notre ère,* Paris, 2013.

25 V. Rondot (*op.cit.*, p. 311-320) provides an overview of their characteristics.

26 See S. James, *Excavations at Dura-Europos. 1928–1937. Final Report VII. The Arms and Armour and Other Military Equipment*, London, 2004, p. 12-18, no. 447.

27 Cairo CG 27572, reassembled from fragments found in the Luxor temple: C.C. Edgar, *Greek Sculpture,* Cairo, 1903, p. 57, pl. 27. The figure has been variously identified as an emperor or a god (Serapis?) with the attributes of Zeus-Helios, and the relief dated to the 2nd century AD (D.M. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 209-210, 211). Cf. the greaves with horned animal heads (lion or griffin?) shown in the much earlier wall-paintings of the shrine at Kom Madi, worn by the fragmentary figure who was probably grasping the hair of the nude captive kneeling before him: E. Bresciani, *Kom Madi 1977 e 1978. Le pitture murali del cenotafio di Alessandro Magno*, 2nd ed., Pisa, 2003, p. 152-153, pl. XXVIII, XXIX (a, b), XL (c), dating the monument to the end of the 2nd century BC.

28 V. Rondot, *op. cit.*, p. 315-316.

29 As categorized and discussed by M. Bergmann, "Stile und Ikonographien im kaiserzeitlichen Ägypten", in K. Lembke *et al.* (ed.), *Tradition and Transformation: Egypt under Roman Rule,* Leiden, Boston, 2010, p. 1-36, esp. p. 16-20, fig. 7b, 10d.

30 Examples in V. Rondot, *op. cit.*, p. 141-143 (Brussels E 7409), p. 152 (private coll. Etampes); and on figures only partly preserved, p. 128 (Berlin 15979), p. 174-5 (Oxford 1922.239); see also the wall-painting from Theadelphia: *ibid.*, p. 54-55, fig. 19-20.

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sacrificing to the Fortunes of Dura and Palmyra (seated goddesses), and the gods.[31] Though somewhat earlier than the likely date of the Kysis paintings, these images, too, belong to an area at the very edge of the Roman Empire into which a military presence had intruded,[32] and there are further iconographic similarities with the Kysis imagery, discussed below.

The red colour of the military figure's cloak would be appropriate to all save the emperor, who was entitled to wear purple, the prestigious colour of the clothing shown on the other two figures, whose footwear also seems noteworthy. The details are most clearly seen on the north wall figure, where the yellow leather is marked with diagonal lines over the foot, reminiscent of the straps of the *calceus senatorius* or *patricius* that crossed over the foot and were then wound horizontally around the ankles, where they were secured with frontal or side knots, the ends of which hung free;[33] the top of the *calceus* was hidden beyond the hem of the wearer's toga or tunic. No horizontal binding or knots are visible here, but the diagonal lines continue up the leg until they disappear beyond the garment hem; similar, but less well-preserved, features can be made out on the feet and ankles of the seated figure. Despite the fact that the details do not completely tally, it seems likely that the intention was to show *calcei* or similar soft leather footwear that completely enclosed the foot and denoted the wearer as a figure in some position of authority, shown in the formal dress related to their office or official activity.[34] They are in marked contrast to the boots of military figures, and the sandals or bare feet seen in other Romano-Egyptian representations of divinities or private individuals.[35]

The clothing of the north wall figure is probably to be identified as a tunic and mantle (*himation*), the formal dress of a Greek citizen of the eastern Roman Empire, occasionally worn by the emperor himself when in the east.[36] The yellow mantle is rather narrow, more like a woman's shawl (*stola* or *palla*), but the footwear suggests that the figure here is male (although female personifications are sometimes shown with their feet shod in boots).[37] A similarly narrow *himation* (with a fringe) is shown on an unusual Romano-Egyptian terracotta figure of a bearded emperor who has been identified as Marcus Aurelius, a visitor to Egypt in AD 176.[38]

The surviving extent of the seated figure on the west wall apparently shows only one garment —the starry textile extending across the width of the figure—, probably to be understood as a mantle, either worn over a tunic which would be seen on the lost upper body, or (less likely)

31 S. James, *op. cit.,* p. 39, 41-42, fig. 18-20, noting the vicissitudes this painting has undergone, and the lack of a definitive image.

32 S. James, *op. cit.*, p. 16-20.

33 P. Knötzele, *op.cit.*, p. 19, fig. 11.

34 For *calcei* in general, see N. Goldman , "Roman footware", in J.L. Sebesta, L. Bonfante (ed.), *The World of Roman Costume,* Madison, 1994, p. 101-129, esp. p. 116-122.

35 But note the brown/yellow boot-like footwear of a figure seated on a cushioned throne in the fragmentary wall-painting recorded by J. Schwartz, H. Wild, *Qasr-Qarun/dionysias 1948, Fouilles franco-suisses Rapports* I, Cairo, 1950, p. 72-80, pl. I, XX; colour illustration republished in V. Rondot, *op.cit.*, p. 65, fig. 32.

36 S. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in the East,* Oxford, 1984, p. 182.

37 See, for instance, three of the four silver-gilt city personifications from the 4th century Esquiline treasure: K.S. Painter, in S. Ensoli, E. La Rocca (ed.), *Aurea Roma. Dalla città pagana all città cristiana*, exhibition catalogue, Roma, 2000, p. 491-493, cat. no. 114a-d. Detailed descriptions: G. Bühl, *Constantinopolis und Roma. Stadtpersonifikationen der Spätantike*, Zürich, 1995, p. 107-120.

38 D.M. Bailey, *op. cit.*, p. 212-213, noting that there are few surviving sculptures of emperors in Greek dress; *id.*, *Catalogue of Terracottas in the British Museum* IV: *Ptolemaic and Roman Terracottas from Egypt*, London, 2008, p. 139, no. EA 3522, pl. 93. The figure's tunic is quite short, and the lower legs are lost.

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the figure's only garment. Some part of the tunic is usually visible below the hem of the mantle, or covering the left leg from the knee down when the mantle is draped upwards over a seated figure's lap, as is the case with the toga worn by the headless porphyry statue of an enthroned emperor in Alexandria.[39] The view of only the mantle over the lower limbs of a seated figure, however, is not unparalleled in more abbreviated depictions, such as those on coins.

The purple textile ornamented in golden yellow recalls the material of a *toga picta*, the garment of purple silk and gold thread that was worn by a Roman general or emperor celebrating a triumph, and was also reflected in the clothing of the cult image of Jupiter Optimus Maximus in his Capitoline temple. From the later 2nd century AD onwards, this toga was also worn by the consuls on specific official occasions, including the celebration of a triumph, and their official attendance at the circus games.[40] In the most detailed illustrations of this garment, the carved ivory consular diptychs of the 5th-6th centuries AD, the consuls' entire clothing is richly ornamented with pictorial elements as well as repeat patterns; amongst the patterns, a motif of rosettes with four, six, eight or more petals predominates, often set within circles or squares.[41] The precise ornamental details of the *toga picta* throughout its history are not known. However, they very likely included figural motifs.[42] Stars seem to have been a recurrent feature of triumphal garb, however: Appian's description of Scipio Africanus as triumphator in 201 BC mentions his being clothed "in the manner of his country in the purple garment interwoven with golden stars;"[43] and Suetonius relates that on his return to Rome from Greece in AD 67 as a triumphant performer and athlete, the emperor Nero wore a star-spangled Greek cloak (*chlamys*) over a purple robe.[44] The eight-pointed stars scattered sparsely over the purple textile in the painting are of the type particularly associated with the Macedonian dynasty,[45] and textiles decorated with this motif may have had a long association with high, and also celestial, status in the eastern empire, in representations if not in actual wear; a star-strewn mantle or cloak is associated with Jupiter in some eastern manifestations.

The pose of the incomplete figure in the Kysis painting could be seen as a very simple version of the iconography of a seated official, as shown in detail on the ivory diptychs of the earlier 6th century, where the consul in his ornate finery sits on the folding stool, the *sella curulis*, which was the norm for emperors and officials on public occasions; his feet, shod

39 Graeco-Roman Museum 5934: R. Delbrueck, *Antike Porphyrwerke,* Berlin, Leipzig, 1932, p. 96-98, pl. XL, XLI, identifying the subject as Diocletian; more recently, L. Török (*Transfigurations of Hellenism. Aspects of Late Antique Art in Egypt AD 250-700*, Leiden, Boston, 2005, p. 184-186, 191) favouring Constantine; but see the fuller discussion and bibliography by L. Faedo, *Aurea Roma*, p. 258-259, cat. no. 218, supporting a tetrarchic date. According to R. Delbrueck, the emperor's feet are shod in *calcei* (not *campagia*), as appropriate for his toga and formal pose.

40 R. Delbrueck, *Die Consulardiptychen und verwandte Denkmäler (*afterwards *Die Consulardiptychen),* Berlin, Leipzig, 1929, text vol., p. 43-65.

41 See *Die Consulardiptychen,* plates vol., *passim.*

42 H.R. Goette, *Studien zu römische Togadarstellungen,* Mainz am Rhein, 1990, p. 6; also p. 9, 18-19 for the *tunica picta*/*palmata* and texts describing triumphs.

43 Appian, *Punic Wars*, c. 66.

44 Suetonius, *Nero* 25. 1-2; perhaps the ornamentation as well as the style of this garment would have seemed more Greek than properly Roman.

45 S. Miller, *The Tomb of Lyson and Kallikles: A Painted Macedonian Tomb,* Mainz am Rhein, 1993, p. 58, col. pl. IIIb; for the funerary use of the motif in combination with purple textiles, see A.-M. Guimier-Sorbets, "Mobilier et décor des tombes macédoniennes", in R. Frei-Stolba, K. Gex (ed.), *Recherches récentes sur le monde hellénistique. Actes du colloque international organisé à l'occasion du 60e anniversaire de Pierre Ducrey (Lausanne, 20-21 novembre 1998),* Bern, 2001, p. 217-229.

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in *calcei*, rest on a footstool.[46] The legs and projecting ends of the front rail of the stool are shown at either side, often surmounted by a plump cushion covered in a patterned textile.[47] In the Kysis painting, there is no trace of the structure of a stool (nor the legs of a throne, either) flanking the frontally-viewed figure; the light-coloured patterned feature at the figure's left could be a cushion, but the darker curving area below, if meant to represent a seat, looks more like the side view of a throne with solid sides, and there are no corresponding details at the figure's right. The combination of footwear and textile suggest a figure of high, but not divine status, whose identity might be clarified if the upper end of the shaft at the figure's right (a sceptre, standard, or *vexillum*?) had been preserved, together with the rest of the figure and any further attributes.

The spearheads on the shafts held by the other two figures are of unusual form, they seem too extensive and detailed to be taken for the metal butt of a spear which is being held in the usual upright position, but more likely indicate that the spears are held in reverse.[48] The blades are not of the functional leaf-shape, but are somewhat similar to the ornamental blades seen on Roman spears or lances which were badges of office rather than practical weapons, such as those associated with the *beneficiarii* (officials with judicial or policing duties who were attached to the staff of senior officers, prefects, or consuls), or those carried by imperial attendants such as the emperor's shield-bearer.[49] In outline, they resemble some of the surviving *Benefizierlanzen*, or models of them, though they lack the extra decoration of these.[50] The normal type of spearhead is shown in most other Romano-Egyptian representations of military figures with spears or lances, including the military divinities depicted in panel-paintings.[51]

Reversed spears are not seen in these the painted images, nor in other Romano-Egyptian depictions of soldiers who are armed but not in active combat, but there is an example at Kysis itself: the seated figure of the god Serapis, the centrepiece of the gold crown from the "Douch treasure," holds in his left hand a reversed spear ending in a conventional leaf-shaped spearhead, instead of the expected sceptre.[52] In his publication of the treasure, M. Reddé noted a single parallel for this image, a sardonyx gem of early Roman Imperial date showing Serapis enthroned between the Dioscuri, with the reversed spear in his upraised left hand, his right

46 See, for instance, those of Areobindus, Anastasius and Magnus (*Die Consulardiptychen*, nos. 10-11, 21, 22 respectively): in *Byzance. L'art byzantin dans les collections publiques françaises*, exhibition catalogue, musée du Louvre, Paris, 1992, p. 49-51, nos. 12-13; p. 54-55, no. 15; p. 56-58, no. 16.

47 *Die Consulardiptychen,* p. 63.

48 A double-ended spear is a possibility, but rare: the goddess Minerva is shown with one on a coin issued by the mint of Rome under Domitian (H. Mattingly, *Roman Imperial Coinage* II. *Vespasian to Hadrian*, London, 1968, p. 307, no. 45a, pl. 60.11).

49 A. Alföldi, "*Hasta – Summa Imperii*. The spear as embodiment of sovereignty in Rome", *AJA* 63, 1959, p. 1-27, pl. 1-10, esp. p. 2, 11, pl. 10; S. James, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

50 See, e.g., some German finds with openwork decoration: G. Behrens, "Mars-Weihungen im Mainzer Gebiet", *Mainzer Zeitschrift* 36, 1941, p. 8-21. esp. p. 18, fig. 19, nos. 1 (Ehl), 6 (Kastellen Niederbieber}, and 7 (Weissenburg). For the example from Ehl, see also G. Faider-Feytmans, "Enseigne romaine découverte à Flobecq (Hainaut)", *Helinium* 20, 1980, p. 3-43, esp. p. 30-33 on the distinction between ensigns and *Benefizierlanzen*.

51 A notable exception is the incomplete panel found by O. Rubensohn at Tebtunis (Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung inv. 15979), which shows two elaborate blades or finials, more like standards or sceptres, one held in the left hand of a military god (Heron?), the other belonging to the lost figure on his right: V. Rondot, *op. cit.*, p. 128-131.

52 Cairo JE 98535: *Douch* IV. *Le trésor*, p. 9-10, 63, fig. 14 and colour pl.; M. Reddé, in *25 ans de découvertes archéologiques sur les chantiers de l'IFAO,* exhibition catalogue, Cairo, 2007, p. 44-49, with a suggested date in the first half of the 2nd century AD.

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resting on Cerberus, and a thunderbolt below the group.[53] Reversed spears or lances appear in both Greek and Roman representations where the context alludes to peace: the image of a god (Mars or Jupiter), or an emperor as a military figure standing with a reversed spear in his left hand appears on the obverse of coins from the time of Trajan onwards until at least the mid-4th century AD, and the emperor is also sometimes shown on horseback holding a lance pointing downwards.[54] The image apparently signifies the peace following upon victory, though E. Simon, noting the reversed spear held by the Roman cult statue of Mars Ultor as shown on a sestertius of Antoninus Pius, has suggested an extended meaning to include the role of the ruler or god as the ever-vigilant guardian of peace.[55] A particular statue-type may lie behind the golden image of Serapis, and likewise the two painted figures with their reversed spears. For the military one, the Terentius painting from Dura Europos provides a parallel—all three statues of military gods therein hold reversed spears in their right hands, with shields in the left hands of two of the gods, who also wear helmets, but the central statue holds a celestial globe in his left hand.[56]

A specific meaning that the spears might have had in relation to the grapevines in the Kysis paintings is obscure. Pictorially, they could have served to frame the figures, perhaps even twining around the spearshafts further up and meeting overhead, but this is not a familiar type of composition. Spear and vine together could be seen to associate the fruit of the earth with the security and peace guaranteed by imperial power, but there is no immediate parallel for such an image in the form seen here.[57]

Style and Date

Although its imperfect state of preservation makes it hard to judge the quality of the original painting, the artist has been at some pains to model the figures and their garments with various styles of shading, and the lion head on the right knee of the military figure has been deftly sketched; in contrast, other details, like the vine-leaves with their squiggly outlines and dashes of paint within (the grapes look as though they have been stencilled), have been dealt with quite summarily. The overall effect is of rapid and rather modest work and an executant

53 Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung inv. FG 2307: O. Deubner, "Sarapis und die Dioskuren", in *Marburger Winckelmann-Programm 1947*, p. 13-16, fig. 1; W. Hornbostel, *Sarapis. Studien zur Überlieferungsgeschichte den Erscheinungsformen und Wandlungen der Gestalt eines Gottes*, Leiden, 1973, pl. VI.8. In sculpted images the sceptre is not infrequently missing or damaged, so there may have been more with a reversed spear.

54 G. Hafner, "Sieg und Frieden. Zur Deutung des Reiterreliefs von Forum Romanum", *JdI* 93, 1978, p. 228-251, esp. p. 237-240; G. Hafner notes that use of the image in coinage goes back to at least the 2nd century BC.

55 E. Simon, in *LIMC* II.1, p. 530, no. 233, with earlier bibliography.

56 Detailed description: F. Cumont, *Fouilles de Doura-Europos*, 1922–1923, Paris, 1926, p. 99-100; J.H. Breasted, *Oriental Forerunners of Byzantine Painting: First-century Wall Paintings from the Fortress of Dura on the Middle Euphrates*, Chicago, 1924, p. 97, pl. XXI (line-drawing). All three gods have nimbuses, and F. Cumont suggested that their cloaks were originally painted purple, possibly dotted with stars, of which a trace remained.

57 See however, the seated figure of the personified Earth with her lapful of fruit below the rearing horse of the triumphant emperor (whose lance is thrust blade downwards) on the 6th-century "Barberini Ivory", the iconography of which has invited many different readings: G. Hafner, *op. cit.*, p. 240; *Byzance*, p. 63-66, cat. no. 20.

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who was not entirely familiar with the images he had been commissioned to paint.[58] A few thin, straight lines visible on the white surface around the lowest part of the figure on the north wall—one beside his right boot, and below his left foot, a pair at right-angles to each other, intersecting at a dot—suggest that the painting may have been drafted on a grid. The painter was probably not local to Kysis, and for the oases of the western desert in general the existence of peripatetic painters and decorators seems likely, given that the amount of work in any one settlement would have been quite limited. Like the oasis dwellers themselves, such craftsmen may have moved freely between the desert and the Nile Valley. The particularly unusual nature of the images here raises interesting questions as to what models the painter brought with him, or was provided with on the spot.

The images are viewed in strict frontality and separation from each other, without any spatial reference—they cast no shadows—; they are posed like statues, the objects of contemplation, cult, or commemoration. Dominant figures seen frontally and in isolation are a feature of later Roman art in general, and the Kysis pictures seem to belong to this wider milieu rather than contemporary local representations. The parallels with the Dura-Europos painting suggest that they may belong to a genre of military representations for which there is very little comparable material.

The radiocarbon dating of straw from the mud-plaster rendering and brick substrate broadly supports the date range of later third to early 4th century AD suggested by the pottery found within the room. The history of the site would favour the later end of this range: the greatest expansion of the village apparently took place in the course of the 4th century, to which period belong the majority of the military ostraca found within the "kasr."[59] This space had apparently been appropriated for administrative activities and the storage of grain, but not used as housing for troops, who were billeted in some of the village houses;[60] an explanation, perhaps, for the presence of these paintings with distinctly military or official/imperial content in a house situated on the main thoroughfare and within a short distance of the temple.

Though used by the military, the "kasr" was not a true fort, and it has been suggested that Douch did not have a permanent military garrison but was serviced by detachments sent at intervals from the Nile Valley.[61] Stationed at the southernmost extreme of Roman Egypt, the army was there to police the trade routes, regulate the passing traffic, and ensure the security of the locality's agricultural regime. These paintings seem to reflect aspects of this military presence and its personnel, but their content and situation hardly suggest the kind of official cult place enshrining the standards and the imperial images that would be found within a regular army camp, though they could however represent the provision of something of this kind at a domestic level, whether for serving soldiers, or simply the householder. Further investigation of the house and its layout could clarify this.

If the imagery of the spears evokes a specific instance of "peace" obtained by military action, the suppression of the revolts of the 290s would be the most obvious occasions, in particular

58 Cf. the remarks of A.L. Perkins (*The Art of Dura-Europos*, Oxford, 1973, p. 35) on the lack of skill in foreshortening shown in the Terentius painting, with particular reference to feet in the *contrapposto* pose.

59 *Douch* III. *Kysis,* p. 72.

60 O. Douch 1 and 144 are billeting orders: *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 205.

61 *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 204.

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Diocletian's action against Domitius Domitianus in AD 296-297, when the emperor himself travelled south and initiated the reorganization of the army in Upper Egypt.[62] A second, briefer, visit in AD 302 has been linked with the celebrated depiction of an imperial *adventus* painted within the most sacrosanct part of the Luxor temple of Amun, which was by now a legionary camp.[63] These are the only paintings comparable in their subject matter to the Kysis pictures, albeit at a technical and artistic level far removed from the latter, and showing the imperial troops and attendants in contemporary dress and active movement.[64] The focus of the composition is the only static element, the representation of Diocletian and his fellow tetrarchs (one subsequently erased) in the central niche, dressed in imperial purple mantles, and posed like statues, divine images for devotion. In this latter aspect alone, and the fact that the Luxor paintings were also executed as true frescoes,[65] the Kysis paintings resemble them. Douch itself had no significance at the time of this event,[66] so any connection with it, other than through some filter of "regimental history," is unlikely.

Perhaps some official visitation at a lower level (the highest rank recorded in the ostraca is a visiting tribune),[67] or a particular celebration was the trigger for the Kysis paintings, but the identity of the three Kysis figures remains unclear: a military god and two representatives of imperial authority in Egypt, or other gods, or even imperial persons? It is possible that the paintings were never finished, and the intended programme would have contained further figures; the blank area over more than half the north wall, and the absence of painting on the prepared surfaces of the south and east walls could imply this, and would also account for anomalies like the divided skirt of the military figure, and the lion heads sketched on his knees but left without the greaves to which they would belong.

Annexe [FIG. 16-20]

Le mobilier archéologique de la pièce

Sylvie MARCHAND (Ifao)

Le nettoyage[68] de la pièce de la maison réalisé afin de restaurer les peintures murales (cf. fig. 5, 7), a livré du mobilier archéologique daté probablement de l'époque romaine tardive au IV^e^ s. apr. J.-C. Outre huit tessons de céramique, deux flacons décorés archéologiquement complets ont été mis au jour. Ces conteneurs miniatures d'origine locale n'ont jamais été identifiés pendant les fouilles et la prospection du bassin sud de l'oasis de Kharga réalisées par l'Ifao.

62 A.K. BOWMAN, "The Military Occupation of Egypt in the Reign of Diocletian", *BASP* 15, 1978, p. 25-38.

63 M. EL-SAGHIR *et al.*, *Le camp romain de Louqsor,* Cairo, 1986, p. 21, 27-31.

64 J. DECKERS, "Die Wandmalerei im *Kaiserkultraum von Luxor*", *JdI* 94, 1979, p. 600-652. The fragmentary wall-painting noted in a Roman tomb at Asyut by F.W. von Bissing ("Altchristlichen Wandmalereien aus Ägypten", in W. Worringer *et al.* (ed.), *Festschrift zum sechzigsten Geburtstag von Paul Clemen,* Bonn, 1926, p. 181-188, esp. p. 185-186 with fig. 5 on p. 187) shows too little (only the sandaled feet and the hem of a long garment) to be indicative of anything other than a scale and style typical of late Roman paintings.

65 M. JONES, S. MACFADDEN, *Report on the Luxor Paintings Conservation Project*.

66 M. REDDÉ, "À l'ouest du Nil: une frontière sans soldats, des soldats sans frontière", in V. MAXFIELD, M.J. DOBSON (ed.), *Roman Frontier Studies 1989*, *Limeskongress* XV, Exeter, 1991, p. 485-493, esp. P. 492.

67 O. Waqfa 79: *Douch* III. *Kysis*, p. 205.

68 Pour une description du dégagement de la pièce, voir texte *infra,* p. 159-161.

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Un lot de dix anneaux de petite taille en terre cuite complets était associé aux céramiques. La fonction de ces objets est énigmatique. Ils pourraient être utilisés comme séparateurs dans les fours de potier, mais l'engobage des anneaux s'explique difficilement pour ce type d'objet. Cependant, plusieurs ateliers de potiers d'époque impériale ont été repérés sur le site de Douch [69]. Dans ce contexte, la découverte d'au moins quatre fragments non cuits de figurines animales dans la pièce nous conforte dans l'existence d'ateliers diversifiés, fabricant de vases mais également de figurines, sur le site de Douch à l'époque romaine tardive.

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69 Voir P. Ballet, dans *Douch III. Kysis*, p. 210.

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FIG. 1. The archaeological site of Douch, and the painted room after excavation in 2008, picture to the south looking towards the Roman temple and the Kasr (photo B. Gehad).



FIG. 2. The mud-brick buildings excavated by M. Reddé between 1985-1990 (after M. REDDÉ *et al.*, *Douch* III. *Kysis : fouilles de l'IFAO à Douch Oasis de Kharga (1985-1990), DFIFAO* 42, 2004).

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FIG. 3. The painted geometric patterns found during restoration work on the Trajanic pylon of the temple in 1992 (photo M. Wuttmann).



FIG. 4. Plan of the archaeological village of Douch and the painted Roman room (B. Gehad, 2008).

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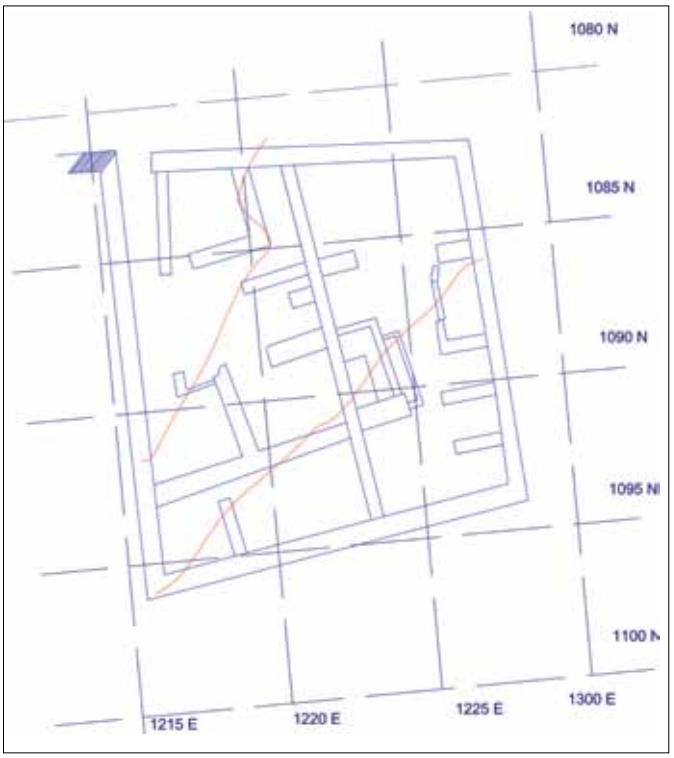


FIG. 5. Grid plan for the house where the painted room was found (B. Gehad, 2008).

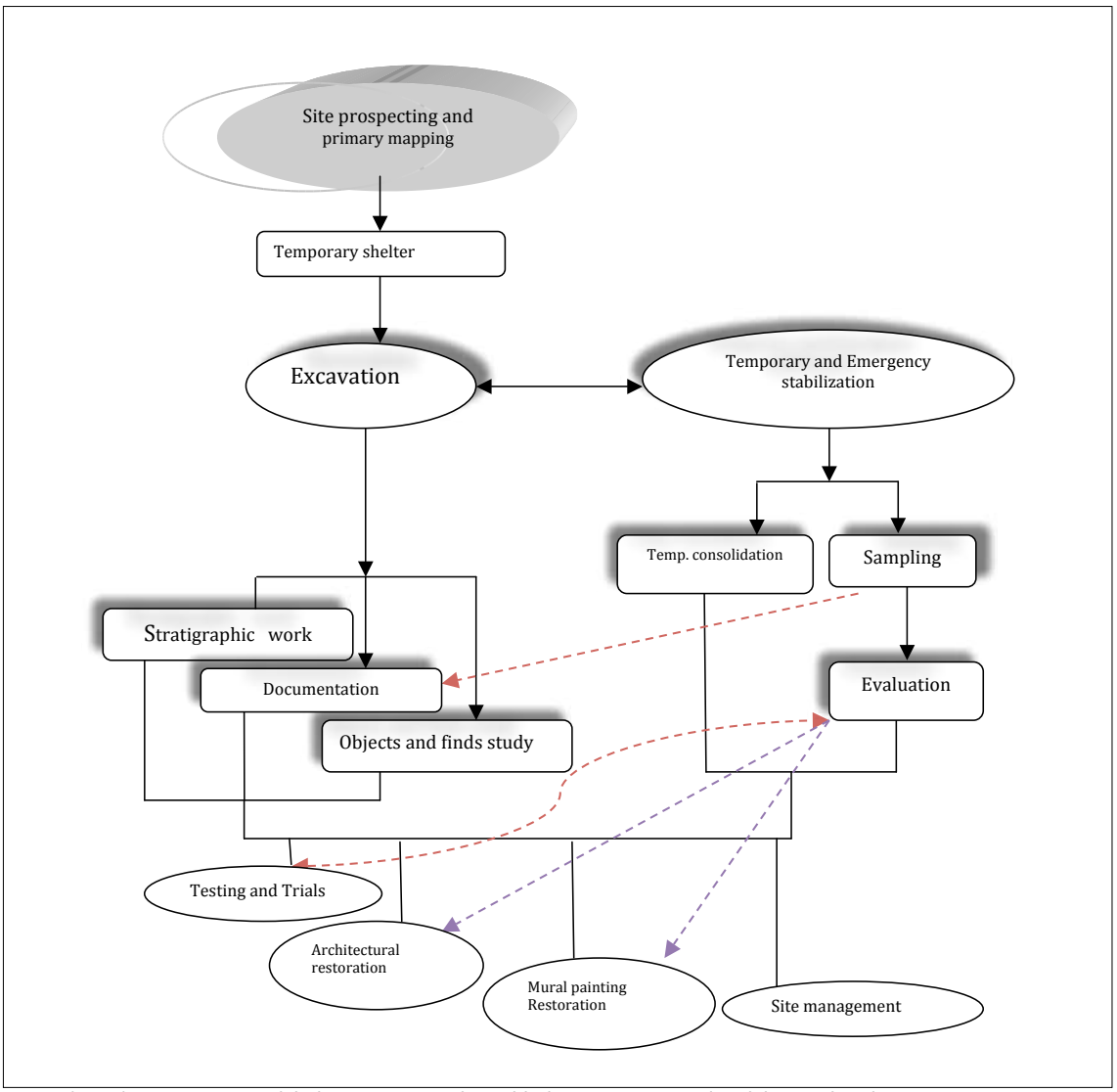


FIG. 6. The schematic strategic planning for the excavation and the site management of the painted room. Douch, Kharga Oasis (B. Gehad, M. Wuttmann, 2008).

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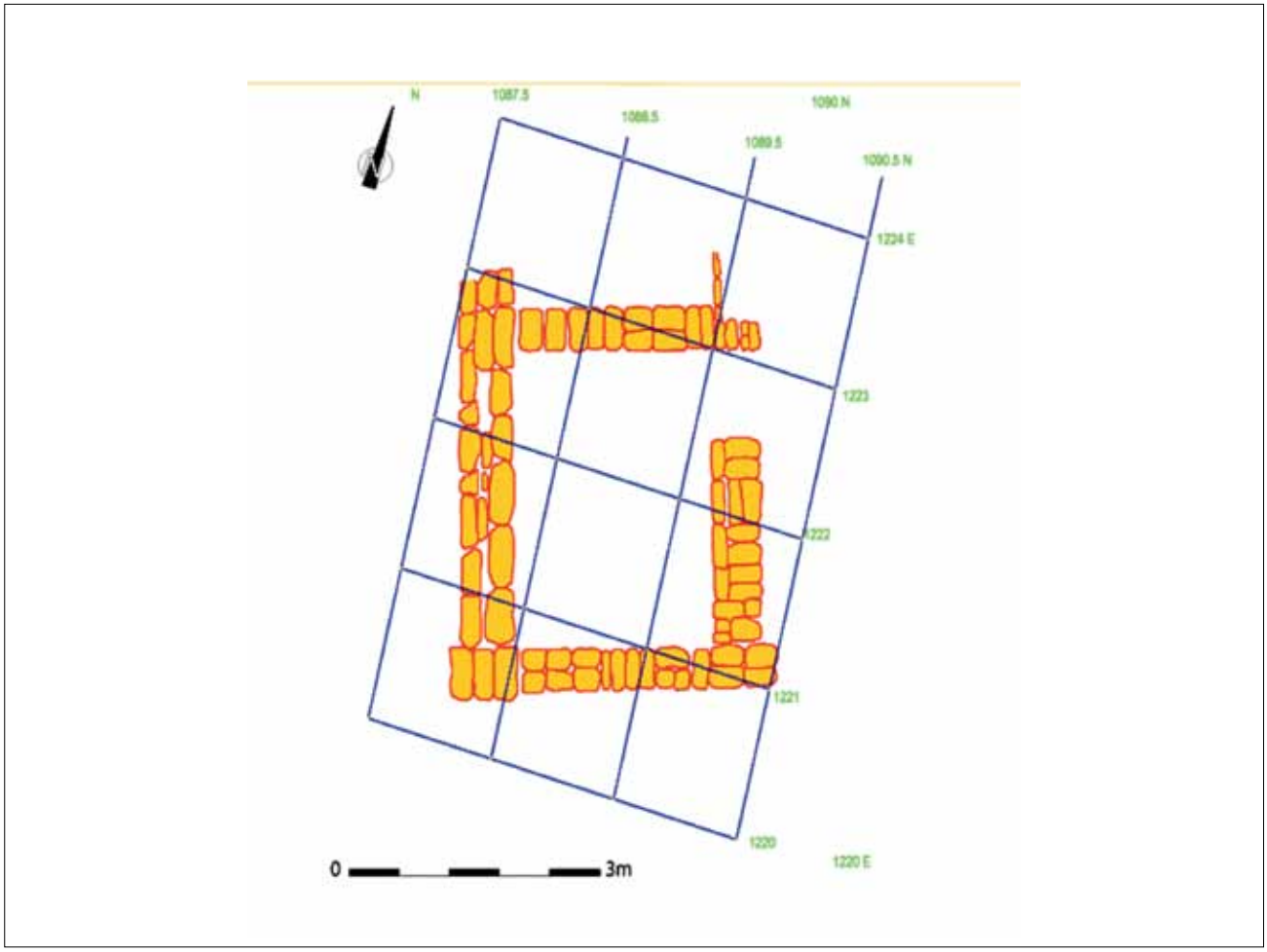


FIG. 7. Plan of the painted room within the grid of the excavation and the mud brick wall documentation (B. Gehad, 2009).



FIG. 8. Shallow spouted basin made from local Nubian sandstone (photo B. Gehad, 2008).



FIG. 9. Stuck to the original floor: heavily corroded piece of metal, N-W corner of the room (photo B. Gehad, 2008).

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FIG. 10. The painted room after excavation, view towards the N-W corner (photo B. Gehad, 2008).

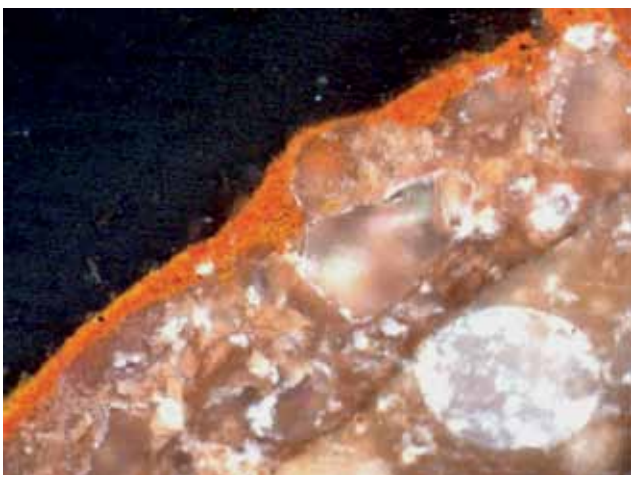


FIG. 11. Cross section microscopic image for the painted layer from the north wall, representing the fresco paint layer indicated by the orange pigment integrated inside the paint layer (B. Geahd, 2010).

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FIG. 12. Polychrome figure-paintings executed on the western wall of the painted room (photo I. Mohamed, 2008).



FIG. 13. Detailed view of lion heads on the knees of the military figure, western wall (photo B. Gehad, 2008).

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FIG. 14. Detailed view of the left boot with a knotted thong, on the military figure, western wall (photo B. Gehad, 2008).



FIG. 15. The northern wall of the painted room, tell Douch (photo I. Mohamed, 2008).

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FIG. 16. Flacon de petite taille complet (inv. Ifao 7452). Vase confectionné en argile locale fine à engobe blanc épais, à décor peint de bandes de couleur rouge. Façonnage irrégulier et peu soigné. Dimensions : h. 10,7cm.



FIG. 17. Flacon de petite taille fragmentaire (inv. Ifao 7453). Vase confectionné en argile locale fine à engobe blanc épais, à décor peint de bandes de couleur rouge. Façonnage irrégulier et peu soigné. Dimensions : h. 8,5 cm.

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18.



19.

FIG. 18-19. Deux anneaux ou séparateurs complets (inv. Ifao 7142, inv. Ifao 7143).
Objets confectionnés en argile locale sableuse, dure. Façonnage irrégulier. Dimensions moyennes : ∅ 5,6 <8,1 cm ; h. 1,3 <1,6 cm.

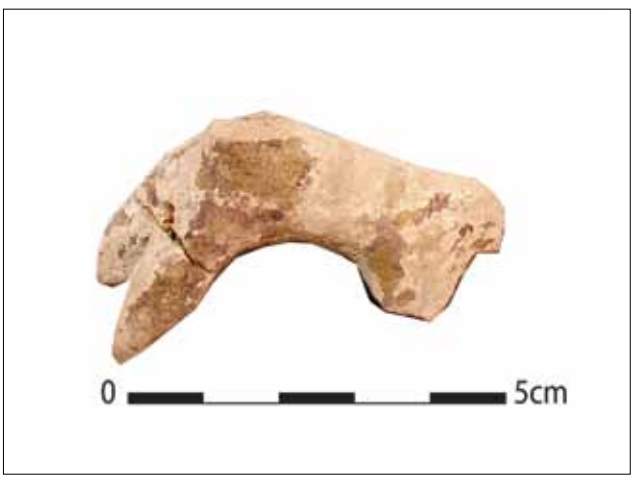


FIG. 20. Fragment de figurine animale, quadrupède indéterminé.
Objet modelé dans une argile locale. Non cuit.
Dimensions : L. conservée 5 cm.

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