



Pachoras. The Wall Paintings from the Cathedrals of Aetios, Paulos and Petros

Edited by Stefan Jakobielski

This monograph catalogues wall paintings from the early Christian cathedral in Faras, explored in the 1960s by a Polish team as part of the Nubian Campaign, a UNESCO-led program of archaeological salvage operations prior to the construction of the Great Aswan Dam. It covers all of the paintings that were recorded – not just those transferred to the National Museums in Khartoum and Warsaw, but also those that were not removed from the walls before submerging of the site in the waters of the dam lake. The murals are richly illustrated with field photos of the paintings both before they were taken down from the walls, and post-conservation (recently repeated at the National Museum in Warsaw for the part of the collection prepared for display in the recently opened new Faras Gallery).

The study was written and edited by Stefan Jakobielski, a participant of the cathedral's exploration (introduction, architectural resume and the chronology of the murals) with Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka adding a chapter on the manner of the painting. The main body of the volume is composed of a catalogue of 154 paintings, the descriptions of which were written by Jakobielski and Martens-Czarnecka, collaborating with Bożena Mierzejewska, Bożena Rostkowska and Magdalena Łaptaś. The descriptions follow a set scheme: composition, dress and ornaments, attributes and coloring, ending in a commentary discussing the interpretation of the scene or motif. Inscriptions are treated separately, presenting a transcription and translation, all by Jakobielski, revised by Adam Łajtar. A set of references updated to 2015 has been presented with each entry.

The catalogue includes a chronological overview of all the paintings, a series of drawings of the cathedral walls presenting the location of all of the murals, and a table of all the ornamental motifs, patterns and pattern repeats as well as plates collecting comparative drawings of the bishops of Pachoras, kings of Makuria, and Nubian dignitaries in their robes. They are accompanied by indices and concordance tables, all of which provide essential tools for the study and interpretation of the wall paintings.

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