

OLD DONGOLA

EXCAVATIONS 1996

Stefan Jakobielski

The 29th field season of Polish excavations at Old Dongola lasted from January 8 to February 18, 1996.¹ The work program included full-scale excavations on two separate sites:

Kom H. A monastic compound located on the site of Christian cemeteries northeast of the town (directed by Dr. Stefan Jakobielski). Work concentrated in the monastery's so-called Western Annex: Site NW, Building NW-S,² as also at the south-western corner of the compound (Site SW, Building SW and its surroundings), the latter supervised by Dr. Bogdan Żurawski.² Continued explorations of the complex brought to light new rooms, preserved nearly to their original height of some 4 m, with mural paintings dating to the second half of the 11th and the 12th centuries (now under study by Dr. M. Martens-Czarnecka⁴). Most of the conservation effort was directed at protecting the paintings and the site, including reconstructing parts of the walls and arches and covering the building with a roof.

¹ The Mission comprised: Dr. Stefan Jakobielski, director; Prof. Dr. Włodzimierz Godlewski, Dr. Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka, Dr. Bogdan Żurawski, archaeologists; Dr. Adam Łajtar, epigraphist; Mr. Wojciech Chmiel, restorer; eng. Adam Wójcik, architect; Ms Dobrochna Zielińska, documentalist (student of archaeology). The Sudan National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums was represented by Syd. Mustafa M. El-Sherif, member of the staff of the Conservation Laboratories of the Sudan National Museum.

² Cf. *infra*, separate report, pp. 161ff.

³ Cf. *infra*, separate report, pp. 169ff.

⁴ Cf. M. Martens-Czarnecka, Wall paintings from the Monastery on Kom H at Old Dongola, *Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongress Münster, 20-26 Juli 1996* (in print); cf. also ead., New mural paintings from Old Dongola, [in:] *Actes de VIII^e Conférence Internationale des Etudes Nubiennes, CRIPEL XVII, 2* (in print).

Kom A. Prof. W. Godlewski continued investigations of the Old Dongola fortifications. The excavations covered an area in the northwestern part of the Kom (inside the fortifications) and to the south of the Pillar Church (PC). Inside the city walls, superimposed layers of dwellings of the Transitional and Early Christian periods were cleared. They support the previous suggestion that the city fortifications, as well as the earliest houses (A.96.105; A.96.106), can be dated to the end of the 5th or the beginning of the 6th century, i.e., the formative period of the Pre-Christian kingdom of Makuria.⁵

⁵ Cf. *infra*, separate report, pp. 179ff.