

УДК 7.033.2...1

ББК 85.14; 6 3. 3 (0) 4

DOI:10.18688/aa155-2-25

Eirini Panou

The *Signum Harpocraticum* in the 8th-century Christian Art of Nubia

The Christianization of Nobatia

It is commonly accepted today that the Christianization of one of the African kingdoms of Nubia, the region that stretches between modern Sudan and Lower Egypt, Nobatia, was effectuated by 500. Church silver and bronze lamps from the Lower Nubian Ballana cemetery, which ceased its activity in the very beginning of the 6th century, demonstrate that the Christianization of the region was a slow process that had begun before the middle 6th-century Byzantine delegation arrived [4, p. 73; 35, pp. 89–90, 95; 63, pp. 11–2; 28, p. 257]¹. According to John of Ephesus, who recorded the events around the Byzantine mission to Nobatia, presbyter Julianus was eager to Christianize the “wandering people who dwell on the eastern borders of the Thebais” beyond Egypt, and so he visited empress Theodora, who informed her husband Justinian I (527–565) about her undertaking [14, p. 136]. Because Justinian I was not content with the fact that Julianus was an opponent of the Council of Chalcedon (451), he sent an embassy to Thebais in order to have the Nobatians converted by a Chalcedonian and not a Monophysite priest. When Theodora discovered her husband’s plan, she sent a letter to the duke of Thebais saying that if the Nobatians accepted the Chalcedonian embassy earlier than hers, the Monophysite one, he would pay for this with his life. When Justinian’s ambassadors arrived in Nobatia, they were made to wait by the duke in order to secure that Theodora’s embassy will be received first, as it happened [14, pp. 136–139].

The church metalwork in the Ballana cemetery as well as the account of John of Ephesus show that the Christianization of the kingdom of Nobatia was initiated around 500 and was further sustained in the mid-sixth century when the first religious infiltration of Byzantium into Nobatia was effectuated. Since then, the interaction between the Byzantines and the Nobatians was further cultivated, expanded and received various forms, one of which was political administration. Texts dating from the 8th to 11th century show that in their court and provincial administration the Nubians were influenced by the hierarchy of the Byzantine officialdom [99; 44, p. 168]. As a result of the political and religious interaction between Byzantium and Nubia²,

¹ See also [53] and [44, pp. 267–271].

² Grillmeier and Frend see the formation of Nubian kingdoms as an ‘offshoot of the imperial ecclesiastical structure of the Byzantine Empire’ [44, p. 277; 38, pp. 301–303]. The effort of Nubian kings to imitate the Byzantine rulers is implied by the resemblance of the crown of King George II with that of Leo VI [42, pp. 168, 170, fig. 2. and pp. 172, 176–177]. The association of the Nubian kings with the Byzantine rulers is

the church architecture and art of the Nubians was also affected by the Byzantine culture [41, p. 173–174]³. Nevertheless, Nubian art should not be considered a simple branch of Byzantine or Coptic art (since it borders with Egypt). As far as the iconography of the Cathedral of Paul is concerned, which will interest us in this paper, it owes influence to Coptic art as it is the case with the “Coptic in origin” “two-zone apse composition” [65, pp. 126–127]. Lower Nubia maintained and developed its local character and symbolisms in its mural paintings, but at the same time it retained artistic influence from Coptic Egypt and Byzantium. Lower Nubia was “often rich in imported Egyptian artefacts”, as Edwards notes in his book *The Nubian past. An archaeology of the Sudan* [33, p. 7], and the influence of Byzantine imagery is not questioned as Detlef and Müller have shown [31, p. 224]. On the whole, Lower Nubia developed its distinct artistic character without being left untouched by Byzantine and Coptic stylistic trends [63, p. 18]⁴. The image that will be discussed here is the result of Byzantine, Coptic and Nubian artistic interaction which shows the level of acquaintance of Nubian art not only with other artistic styles, but also with the major esoteric trends of Christian theology.

The Faras Cathedral

In Faras (today the area South of Egypt and North of Sudan), the construction of the three-aisled “Cathedral of Paul” dates to 707 based on two foundational inscriptions in both Greek and Coptic [42, pp. 104, 113; 66, p. 199]. The 8th-century structure postdates an earlier architectural phase, however the iconography of the 707 church, which was materialized during the reign of King Merkurios and the episcopate of Paul, the Faras’ fifth bishop, represents the peak of Nubian art and has dominated studies on Nubian art [62, p. 78; 42, p. 100]. The excavation of the Polish archaeological team under the supervision of *Michałowski* revealed a depiction of St. Anne, the earliest of the surviving images of a saint in Byzantine art, which dates to the early 8th century [49, p. 147]⁵.

Anne’s image has been considered a masterwork of the Christian painting of Faras [84, p. 66], and shows a youthful woman wearing a blue maphorion slightly inclining her head to her left [74, p. 200] (Ill. 47). The lack of organization between several paintings of the Faras Cathedral shows that the portraits had votive character and the image of St. Anne belongs to this category, as Weitzmann has argued: “[t]here are many figures or individual saints distributed over the walls which clearly reflect the character of icons such as the frontally standing S. Anna” (sic) [95, p. 338]. Anne’s aspect as a senior woman [39, p. 98]⁶, stems from the

obvious also in Nubian apocalyptic literature, where the last emperor of Byzantium will be Nubian [79, p. 84]. The trip of king George’s I wife in the 9th century to Byzantium could have invigorated the existing Byzantine influence on Nubia [41, p. 172] and is placed in the framework of close relations between the two states. For a more detailed discussion on Nubian titles and their influence from the Byzantine state, see [36, p. 238].

³ On Byzantine crosses found in Nubia, see [73, pp. 32, 34, 132, 389, no. 647].

⁴ It is there argued that the Faras paintings show relations with both Coptic and Byzantine art.

⁵ Michałowski [63, p. 15] initially dated the violet style (to which Anne’s depiction under discussion belongs to) to early 8th or the middle of the 9th century. Seipel also inclined to the 9th century [84, p. 67]. However, in a later publication, Michałowski dated it to the early 8th century [62, p. 78]. See also [54, p. 122, no. 62] for the 8th century dating.

⁶ According to Dionysios of Fourna, this is how Anne should be depicted in Byzantine art [71, p. 77]. In other cases such as the church of St. George in Kurbinono, Anne’s face is wrinkled “even as she suckles her child” [58, p. 31].

fact that she became a mother at an advanced age as the *Protevangelion of James* implies [86, pp. 74, 76, 78], and allowed painters to portray her with the external characteristics that go hand in hand with advanced age. Additionally, as Talbot has noted, “[i]n Byzantium sanctity and old age went together, since old people were highly esteemed because of their supposedly higher state of moral purity and the aging process itself was viewed as dulling sexual passions” [87, p. 273]. The *Protevangelion of James* had ascertained that Anne’s morality would be exposed, thus the saint had all the prerequisites to be portrayed as a senior woman, as it is the case in Byzantine art especially from the 11th century onwards in mural painting⁷. However, although the Byzantine and “the Egyptian church valued the advanced age of sacred persons” [40, p. 25], the case is different in the depiction under discussion.

The image is accompanied by an inscription in Greek: “Anne, Mother of the Theotokos, [the] saint and Mary”⁸. Jakobielski notes that the inscription implies either that Mary was also included in the depiction or that the most correct reading of the inscription should be: “Anne, Mother of the Theotokos, the saint, and Mariatokos” [62, p. 284]. From this very first mural iconic portrait, St. Anne’s motherhood is exposed because of the major role she played in Christ’s Incarnation. Her portrait is located on the northern wall of the nave and very close to the sanctuary [62, p. 74, plan no. 1]. Proximity to the sanctuary gave prominence against the rest of the saints depicted, and designates Anne’s incarnational purposefulness in God’s soteriological plan for the salvation of mankind. This idea stands in the foreground of almost all Anne’s iconic imagery in Byzantium⁹. Moreover, there was a special place reserved for Mary in Coptic Church and in the Cathedral of Faras alone she is depicted twenty-nine times [83, p. 324]¹⁰, which piles up to the explanations why Anne appeared that early in this particular monument. It seems that apart from motherhood and genealogical connection to Mary, matriarchy granted Anne a place in the Cathedral. Scholz justifies the strong matriarchal tradition in the Faras frescoes by the fact that the depiction of Anne was later covered by the depiction of Queen Martha “as a result of the succession of authoritative women” [83, p. 328]. Overall, special reverence was paid in the Cathedral of Paul to females who were either politically, religiously or theologically outstanding in Sudan, and this is what the iconography asseverates.

Anne is depicted without halo, which Michałowski saw as a result of the saint being mentioned only in the apocryphal *Protevangelion of James* [62, p. 76]. Pondering over this postulation from a different perspective, that of the theological messages conveyed through Christian imagery, one would argue that in the formative period of the 8th century — that the depiction of St. Anne dates to — iconographical deviations in comparison to what will follow in subsequent centuries are understood or even expected. For example, from the 11th century onwards Anne will be presented as senior woman and will almost always bear a halo. The notion that the removal of Anne’s halo is related to her apocryphal nature does not seem convincing if one considers her exposed location in the Cathedral of Paul. In chapel 46 in Bawit discussed later, in the scene of the Ascension which is found in the apse, the Apostles do

⁷ For a detailed treatment of the topic, see [70].

⁸ ‘Ἡ αγία Ἄννα ἡ μήτηρ τῆς θεοτόκ[ος] (sic) ἡ αγία κ(αί) Μα[ρ...]’ (sic).

⁹ For a detailed treatment of the topic, see [70].

¹⁰ It is there noted that the special place of Mary is in accordance with the special status of Egyptian goddesses [83, p. 326].

not bear a halo and they *are* mentioned in canonical works. Examples from the Christological and Mariological cycle show that other reasons might have generated this iconographical detail. In particular, the lack of halo from the Virgin in the Presentation of Christ scene of the 9th-century Pope Paschal's (813–820) cross, has been explained by Thunø as an effort to reveal Mary's holiness through her intimacy with Christ and as a declaration of her humanity [88, p. 46]. In the 15th-century scene of the Rejection of the Gifts in the St. Matrona church in Kimolos (Greece), Joachim and Anne do not bear haloes — as Xanthaki notes — because they gain their sanctity by Mary's future birth [97, p. 172]. If we followed Michałowski's train of thought then it would seem difficult to grasp why in other areas of Byzantine artistic influence such as in Santa Maria Antiqua (Rome, Italy) and Ekatonrapylianē (Paros island, Greece), which also date to the 8th century, Anne bears a halo¹¹. It would also be arduous to comprehend why in the 15th century, while feasts of the Byzantine Church celebrating Anne and Joachim had been established centuries earlier, while the production of works honouring the grandmother of Christ were by then numerous as were their images in art, Mary's parents still bore no halo. The promotion of the human nature of Mary's parents in contrast to the wondrous sanctity of Mary, who at the age of three had surpassed her parents in sanctity by entering the Holy of Holies seems to be the key in the St. Matrona church. Taking also into consideration that “[t]he images of figures from the apocryphal gospel in Nubian art are treated similarly to the canonical figures” [80, pp. 204, 213]¹², which is here suggested by her placement close to the sanctuary highlighting her importance, this might also suggest that Anne should be bearing a halo. But Anne does not, as a result of the promotion of her humanity independently of her apocryphal nature. As a symbol, the halo manifests a saint's spiritual qualities and in the Cathedral emphasis was placed upon her distinguished role in Christ's humanity. In Byzantine art, Anne's apocryphal nature never prevented painters from including her in iconographical programs, because her giving birth to Mary answered the need to underline the humanity of Christ. This is why Anne's cult spread especially after the end of Iconoclasm in 843 when the dogma of the Incarnation was officially formulated [70].

The silence gesture

Pomerantseva saw Anne's image as some kind of “abstract pattern that could have been used by a master working on a fresco [...] rather than a Byzantine painter having before him an iconographical model of a face” [74, p. 201]. In her discussion on the proportions of Anne's face, Pomerantseva identified affinities with the Fayum portraits, where the “standard type” of female depiction is considered to be the one “with its large eyes, neat straight nose and small mouth” [75, p. 61]. But, as she postulates, “its semantic role in Christian art is lost in comparison to the magical meaning of the eyes”. She writes that “the look has become more intense and dynamic, and dominates the face, and that the increased size of the eyes corresponds to the decrease in the size of the mouth” [74, p. 199]. This is probably why Pomerantseva sees a mystical symbolism in this depiction but it will be argued here that it should be orientated not in the eyes but in Anne's hand gesture.

¹¹ These images are treated in detail in [7].

¹² This view is contrasted by Rassart-Debergh [78].

In the Cathedral of Faras, Anne places her pointing finger on her lips [84, p. 65]. The importance of hand gesture in iconography has been highlighted by Kenna, who describes it as “essential to the study of images because it does not only inform the onlooker what is happening within an icon but also acts as a clue to the type, and therefore the meaning and significance, of the whole icon” [52, p. 14]. What is striking about this particular gesture in Faras is that we do not have examples of Christian female or male saints making the same gesture, which would facilitate us appreciate its semantic role. The examples available are female personifications such as the figure of ‘Truth’ placing her right pointing finger to her lips in the 11th-century crown of the emperor Constantine IX Monomachos. Bárányné-Oberschall argues that this gesture implies that truth comes from the mouth [5, p. 53, pl. 1, fig. 6, pl. X, fig. 2], which may very well be the case but it certainly does not offer any contribution to the image of Anne in Faras. Moving away from personified concepts, pre-Christian art shows actual women who were also portrayed bearing the silence gesture, as we see on the southern frieze of the 1st-century BC Ara Pacis. Although the identity of that female figure has been a matter of debate among scholars, it is conclusive that she does not constitute a goddess or a personification, but an actual family member of Augustus [85, pp. 272–4]. Therefore, the Faras Anne remains the only example of iconography in Eastern Christianity known to the author where a female saint bears the gesture of silence. Its excavator, Michałowski connected it to the Immaculate Conception of Mary since Anne conceived by kissing Joachim [84, p. 67; 60 p. 76]. However, this dogma, which was never officially formulated in Byzantine theology, deals with Mary’s purity at the time of her conception and not with the way Mary was begotten. And even this event, Anne’s method of conceiving Mary, was debated among Byzantine homilists. As we move on towards the 9th century, the majority of texts incline towards conception through prayer, for the reason that the veneration of Anne and Joachim was gaining ground and so was the *Protevangelion of James*, on which the notion that Anne conceive through prayer and not physical intercourse is based¹³. It has been claimed that this gesture might have also been a ‘sign of modesty, meditation, protection from bad thoughts, or a sign of prayer for a child’ [84, p. 67]. Tikkanen in particular sees Anne’s gesture as a sign of silence and thought [89, p. 4]. The different explanations provided by excavators and art historians is the conscious effort of scholarship to decode an image, which — as mentioned — does not have iconographical parallel and thus hypothesizing towards various directions seems to be an unavoidable path. It is also the result of what Van Moorsel has observed on the Faras iconography, that it is rich in mysticism [64, p. 217], which makes it even more difficult to know the semantic of this hand gesture adopted by a Christian female saint. Grillmeier took a more critical stand on the scholarly views on the Faras paintings and although accords the rich theological messages of Nubian art, he argued that the theological associations made by its excavators on the meaning of the images of the Cathedral have lead to misinterpretations [44, pp. 280–281 and n. 77].

Chapel 28 in the Necropolis of Bawit

Chapel 28 in the Bawit necropolis offers us the closest iconographical parallel to the image of St. Anne in Faras. For reasons explained below, this product of Coptic art is also unique,

¹³ For a detailed treatment of the topic, see [70].

and, because of its similarities with the Nubian image it is important to look at the possible significance of this chapel's iconography for the Cathedral of Faras.

The iconography of chapel 28 mainly incorporates healer saints, Old Testament martyrs of the Christian faith, monks and an imposing figure of the Theotokos. In more detail, on the eastern wall of the chapel we find the Virgin Mary holding Christ in the apse accompanied by two angels [21, p. 154]. Apa Pamoun the Deacon is placed to the left of the apse and the healer saints Cosmas and Damian to the right [21, pp. 154, 157]. On the western wall, opposite the image of the Virgin with Christ, three psalters are found to the right side of a blind arch, which portrays St. Azarias [21, p. 157]. These cantors, identified as such by Coptic inscriptions [21, p. 158 and pl. CIII; 43, p. 126, fig. 4], — ΨΑΛΤΗΣ — [21, pl. CII], are found to Azarias' left and put their index finger onto their mouth. Grabar argues that the *κατασιγάων δάκτυλος* or *signum harpocraticum*' [17, pp. 65–86]¹⁴, is an Egyptian motif [43, p. 126], a form of apotropaic gesture performed by priests who prayed in silent voice (σιγώση φωνῆ) [43, p. 127; 17, p. 74]. Egypt had been familiar with this gesture since the time of the ancient Egyptian kingdoms. The term *harpocraticum* derives from the name Harpocrates, the ancient Greek god of silence, who succeeded the Egyptian god Horus, the son of Isis and Osiris and who adopted this gesture. In Bawit however, the cantors do not call for silence as it is the case with Horus and Harpocrates, but their gesture is the visual equivalent of prayer. The inscription that accompanies the figures to the right and left of the blind arch says (starting from left to right): *The scribe Sarapamon, the head of our fathers; My brother Isaac, the son of Palau, the cantor; The scribe Helias; The scribe Macarius, the son of the scribe Menas, the great of the psaltes; The scribe Antonius*¹⁵. How can one justify the fact that the monks are mentioned as both scribes and cantors? Timbie explains that a scribe “as an ecclesiastical title” is “one who reads the λόγος [logos], the ἐξήγησις [exegesis] and ψάλλει [chants]” [90, p. 428], and here we are offered the visual equivalent of these acts. For the inscription under discussion, the phrase “the great of the psaltes” could be understood according to Timbie as “choir leader” [88, p. 428]. The inscription names Sarapamon as a “father” or “teacher” (ΠΕΝΕΙΩΤ), who is placed among cantors on his both sides (as the word for “cantor” is employed also for the monks that do not adopt the silence gesture), but only those to his left make the gesture of silence. Sarapamon is believed to have lived in the beginning of the 4th century and that his name is a derivative from merging the names of Serapis and Ammon [50, p. 15]. He had been anointed bishop of Nikiu (modern Menuf, at the Delta of the Nile), in the area of Dayrut (Terot), East of Bawit [50, p. 15; 76, p. 13]. The Arabic name of the area his monastery was located in was known as Deyr Abou-Sarabam, which also explains the variations of Sarapamon's name: Sarabam, Saraban, Sarban and Scherbam, which is the abbreviated form of Sarapamon or Serapion [3, p. 496; 76, p. 13; 50, p. 15; 46, pp. 94–95]. His identity as leader of a monastery is implied by the formula ΠΕΝΕΙΩΤ we see in the inscription in Bawit, which, as Clackson shows, signifies the head of a monastery in legal documents [19]. That is

¹⁴ For Horus, see [72, pp. 146–147] and the bibliography included there. The influence of Horus on Christian art is shown in the scene where he defeats evil (represented as a crocodile), which gave rise to the imagery of St. George killing the dragon. For this and other examples of infiltration of Egyptian deities into Christian art, see [45, p. 44].

¹⁵ I thank Chryssi Kotsifou, Alin Suciu and Alain Delattre for the translation and comments on this text.

why this and not Serapion of Thmuis is regarded to have been recorded in this iconographical programme, although this Serapion cannot be completely ruled out. This is because Serapion of Thmuis composed the *Sacramentary*, a collection of thirty prayers preserved in a lone 11th-century manuscript, but is attributed to the mid-4th-century pro-Nicene bishop in the Egyptian Delta [29, p. 100]¹⁶. The two saints bear the same name, they were both ordained bishops and were active in the Egyptian Delta. As to the area of Terot (Dayrut), where the first Sarapamon served as head of a monastery, Clackson has argued that although it is difficult to associate with certainty the name Terot to a specific location, in the inscriptions of Bawit the word appears to point the origin of some of its saints and for that reason it could highlight the particular area [18, p. 57]. Scholarship has associated this first Sarapamon with the monastery under discussion and the Bawit depiction, despite the fact that the evidence to correlate him with a specific monastery lacks firm archaeological grounds [21, p. 158, no. 1]¹⁷. When it comes to texts, the earliest connection between him and the specific monastery goes no earlier than the 13th century. The most straightforward connection made between Sarabamon, a saint, and the area of Dayrut is Maqrizi who tells us that there was *in the district of Dayrut a church near the town, as well as a monastery named after the monk Serapion, who lived in the time of Shenute and was elected bishop*¹⁸. The 13th-century Abu Salih the Armenian mentions only the two churches dedicated to Mary in the area [1, p. 222, no. 3, p. 223], and his contemporary writer Yaqut refers to the area but to not the monastery¹⁹. Recently, Jürgen Horn discussed in detail the information that correlates the monastery with the specific saint, relying however on the testimony of Wansleben and his 17th-century description of Egypt [46, pp. 94–95]. We are informed about Sarapamon's life from late sources, the Coptic *Synaxarium*, and in particular the 18th-century *psalis* composed for the saint's feast day (28 Hatour) [98, p. 264]²⁰, and the Arabic *Synaxarium*, which includes the *Gadla Sarābāmon*, his *vita* which has been preserved in a single 15th-century manuscript²¹.

On the southern wall of chapel 28, we find St. Misael, who together with Azarias depicted on the western wall, is known from the *Book of Daniel* (1:16, 3:5–28). According to their story, they were thrown to the furnace together with Ananias following the orders of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, as they refused to venerate his golden image. Because the fire caused no harm to the three men, the Babylonian king attested the magnitude of the Old Testament God. The dispersion of saints who are known from the same Biblical account in different walls shows that the painter(s) intended to have the wall images interact with one another. Another example of the interaction between the western and southern wall is the portrait of the scribe Pscha, the name of which is an alternative form of the town of Nikiou, where Sarapamon (depicted on the western wall) served as its bishop. On the southern wall we find other saints, Pamoun

¹⁶ In terms of content, the text may well fit to the necropolis of Bawit as it often relates to the salvation of souls, to the protection of solitaries, and has much reference to healing, see [96, pp. 64, 77, 79, 83, 87].

¹⁷ Serapis was not uncommon name for Early Christian martyrs in Egypt, see [8, p. 274, no. 191], where Sarapamon of Nikiou is also mentioned.

¹⁸ See the entry 'Dayr Abū Sarabām' in [25].

¹⁹ See the entry 'Dayr Abū Sarabām' in [25].

²⁰ The *psalis* is a hymn that accompanies a Theotokion or *hos*. The *hos* is a song of praise which comprises two biblical canticles and two Psalm selections.

²¹ For the original Arabic, see (PO, 3, 273–277). An English translation by Adam Carter McCollum is accessible online, see [59].

and Anoup, who are also together depicted in the Coptic monastery of Wadi Sarga and in particular in funerary context as they were known to protect the souls of the dead [27, pp. 64–66]. Finally, the inscription which mentions Sarapamon and the three cantors bears the name of Menas, which for sure appears to belong to an actual person mentioned as a scribe, but given funerary context of the cult of his namesake. One should include in the discussion the possibility that this name was not selected accidentally. From the first half of the 5th century, the martyr church of St. Menas in the Mareotis was a famous healing place and pilgrimage site where incubation was employed next to his tomb [91, pp. 303–304]. Located in a necropolis, chapel 28 served as a funerary one, its architecture presenting similarities with mortuary chapels — rectangular buildings covered with a dome, and their paintings conveying “physical death and spiritual rebirth” [10, p. 44]. Its funerary character influenced not only its architecture but also its paintings. The selection of saints included in the iconography emphasizes the element of death. Medical saints and holy figures function as protectors in afterlife and guarantee the salvation of a monk’s soul. In this context, the placement of cantors diametrically opposite the image of the Virgin, the most important mediator to Christ, could be understood as a reminder for constant prayers for the salvation of both the living and the dead.

Prayer was the corner stone of monastic practise. A Coptic/Greek text inscribed on the eastern wall of the oratory of Chapel LI at Bawit reads: *pray incessantly for the cause of the angels of the holy offering and say the psalm well* [91, p. 344]. Prayer was significant for a monk as it prevented “unstructured physical and mental activity. Where biblical words were absent, demonic suggestions and daydreams could seep into the mind” [23, p. 102]. Prayer in loud or low voice secured the unobstructed attention of a monk in his spiritual effort to communicate with God and that necessitated his full concentration and constant work. John Climacus in his nineteenth step of the *Ladder of the Divine Ascent*, tells us that because of the temptations that monks experience during their prayer they must engage in it incessantly and make sure there will be no distraction during the time of prayer. He concludes that just “as a furnace tests gold, so the practice of prayer tests the monk’s zeal and love for God. A praiseworthy work — he who makes it his own draws near to God and expels demons” [22, p. 195]. Thus, paintings in monasteries are “not made for decorative purposes” but are “material traces of spiritual work” [10, p. 44]. Mimesis was part of the “spiritual improvement” and the “ritualized act of looking was part of prayer” [9, pp. 420, 425], once would anticipate more images of men in the gesture of silent prayer. However, the example from the Bawit necropolis remains quite unique.

Silent prayer and female monasticism

We have no images of female nuns practising silent prayer even if some of them were included in the iconography of male monasteries of Egypt such as the 6th-century image of Ama Rachel, who figures prominently among monks in the monastery of Apa Apollo in Bawit [9, pp. 420, 425]. Female monasticism was practised in Coptic Egypt from the 4th century onwards [77, pp. 39–40] and by 346, for example, two nunneries had been built between Latopolis and Panopolis in the Thebaid [91, p. 85]. Palladius of Helenopolis in his *Lausiaca History* mentions Alexandra who secluded herself in a tomb and a nunnery in Tabennisi which accommodated 400 nuns [69, pp. 28–30, 160–2], less than ten miles from the location of Shenute’s White Monastery [51, p. 107]. Despite the qualitative number of nuns, texts do not refer to silent prayer

as method practised by women, which explains the lack of analogous imagery. The 6th-century *vita* of Andronikos and Athanasia, and later Athanasios, refers to the couple's preservation of silence, which however does not refer to prayer but the actual ceasing of speech which is closer to the semiotics of silence promulgated by Horus and Harpocrates rather than their Christian counterparts [2, p. 261]²². But when it comes to explicit references to prayer as we see it in Bawit, references are something more than scarce even for monks. The following testimony remains a rare example of visualising silence using the finger on the lips. From the *Sayings of the Desert Fathers* we learn that Macarius the Great said to the brothers at Scetis, when he dismissed the assembly, "Flee, my brothers". One of the old men asked him, "Where could we flee to beyond this desert?" He put his finger on his lips and said, "Flee that" [94, p. 131]. We have no clue on whether the placement of the finger on the lips was a ritual or it simply designates silent prayer and if the second guess is valid, why other similar images have not survived? Muers' observation highlights in best terms the implications of silent prayer: "Part of the difficulty of talking about silence lies in the interplay between the function of (any given) silence as *sign* and the common-sense identification of silence with the absence of signification" [67, p. 146]. In other words, how to depict the absence of words? As we will see later, silent prayer was not a widely distributed form of prayer before the 5th century with John of Apamea (the Solitary) or after him, but nevertheless we do have a few examples that refer to silence, although the context in which it appears differs from text to text. This leaves us to admit that the gesture of silent prayer adopted by St. Anne in the Faras Cathedral is open to speculations mostly because there is no other iconographical parallel to draw theological connections with. Could it be that St. Anne owes her posture to current practices performed by male and female monks during prayer in Coptic Egypt? Unfortunately, the existing evidence does not allow for assumptions of that kind to be made or it could be that her silence conveys a message of different nature.

Silence as a symbol of birth

The first explanation of Anne's gesture is that it constitutes a pictorial allusion to the command of Paul in his first *Letter to the Corinthians* (Cor 1, 14:34): "Women are to keep silent in churches; for they are not permitted to speak" [37, pp. 699–705]. This is however reference to women's asking questions during liturgy, which Paul says they should be addressed to their husbands at home, when they don't understand something. (Cor 1, 14:35): *If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.* In his commentary on the first *Letter to the Corinthians*, Origen refers to the prophetess Anne and writes: "In the Gospel it writes Anne prophetess [...]; but she did not speak in church, so that a prophetic sign will be given that she was a female prophet; but it is not allowed to her to speak in the church" [26, p. 279]. According to Origen, Anne's silence shows her understanding the God's word, for which she needed no explanation. Elsewhere in the New Testament, we find references to keeping silence during prayer. The *Gospel of Matthew* (Matthew 6.7) reads: "When you pray, do not speak a lot as the pagans do", and the Old Testament Psalm 38.2 includes the following guidance: "I will be careful on how I walk, so my tongue

²² Athanasia became a transvestite saint, Athanasios. For the date of the text, see [2, p. 7]. For women that assumed male attire to pass as monks see [60, p. 10].

will not make me sin, and I shall put a gag in my mouth, as long as the impious stands in front of me". This was the phrase that Saint Pambo used, a follower of Saint Amon (4th century), when he decided that he would not speak again. It reveals that silence was regarded one of the virtues of Coptic asceticism [61, p. 31]. It is in this sense that John Climacus refers to the dangers of not keeping silent when praying, as obstructed prayer results in failure to communicate with God as we saw above. In ancient Egypt, warning against articulated speech had twofold meaning. Firstly, that people should not let bad words enter their mouth, and secondly, when they pray they should do it in silence [43, p. 128]²³. Hieroglyphics refer to the attendee's responsibility to stay silent in the presence of the divine out of respect [32, p. 19], and claim "*Put the good word on your tongue, but the bad (word) is (= should be kept) hidden in your body*" [32, p. 19]. The gesture of silence in Faras is an Egyptian motif originating from Horus and then Harpocrates, and was given Christian connotations in the silent cantors of Bawit. However, applying silence was not limited to the idea of Christian prayer since "black magic [...] is most frequently mentioned in ancient sources as a reason for inaudible praying. There can be little doubt that it was the notorious character of magic in the view of most ancients that made practitioners hide the contents of their prayers, or rather curses and spells; hence these were often said either silently or in a low voice or murmur" [47, p. 7]²⁴. Despite various applications silence had in Antiquity, in ancient Egypt and Greece it was related to the believer's behaviour in confrontation with the holy in religious space and during prayer. Athanasios of Alexandria in his *Second Letter to the Virgins* refers to the silent virgins in the sense that they should be silent and that they should "speak only to God" [11, p. 296]. A similar concept is expressed by Ephrem the Syriac, who is against the inappropriate use of speech: "*You may learn admirably from your own word a glorious word: The Word of God. In your own word ever does not know what to say, honour with your silence the Word of your Creator, Whose silence cannot be inquired into*" [81, pp. 29–30]. Similarly, Cyril of Jerusalem writes: "*O God, pass not over My praise in silence; for the mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful, are opened against Me; they have spoken against Me with a treacherous tongue, they have compassed Me about also with words of hatred*" (Ps. 1–3) [82, p. 85]. Cyril of Jerusalem, in his *Procatechesis* 14 refers to the epistle of Paul to the Corinthians and writes "*But let the young women's group gather in such a way that, whether it is praying psalms or reading in silence, their lips move but the ears of others do not hear. [...] And let the married woman do likewise, and let her pray and move her lips, but let no sound be heard, so that Samuel may come, so that your barren soul may give birth to the salvation of God who hears you; for that is what Samuel means*". All the above examples pertain to the significance of silence as method of obtaining spiritual connection to God by controlling words and negative thoughts. Cyril's remark however, is the best example to incorporate the significance of silence as it seems to unfold in Faras. Cyril refers to the metaphorical birth that prevails during silence in the sense that by praying in such manner God is born in us and we are able to grasp the mystery of our salvation.

²³ For this double meaning, which Chastel explains as being simultaneously a passive (I am silent) and an active (You stay silent) form of prayer, see [17, pp. 32–34, 67]. The same concept is reflected in hieroglyphics: "The Gods will be quiet from you, when Gods' novelty has laid its hand onto its mouth". According to this sentence the beholder is asked to stay silent (active) when the God makes the gesture of silence (passive), see [32, p. 19].

²⁴ For a few examples, see [6, pp. 49, 52].

The interpretation of Anne's gesture proposed in this article is related to the silence that prevails during birth as it has been developed in Eastern Christianity. The meaning of silence by Basil the Great is associated not only with behavioural types in churches or with personal prayer but also with birth in a wide framework. Grillmeier has claimed that the patristic thought of the 4th and 5th centuries influenced the images in the Cathedral of Faras [44, p. 280], and it has been argued that Basil's homilies were very influential in the Coptic Church [33, p. 86]. In his *Hexaemeron*, in one of Basil's homilies *On the end of the world*, Basil elaborated on the silence in which the world was created in contrast to the disturbance that will prevail when the world will be destroyed [15, p. 248]²⁵. Similarly, Patriarch Proklos of Constantinople in the 5th century writes "*When creation was mute He graced it with speech*"²⁶. On a different level, silence during creation does not pertain only to the creation of the world but it also applies to the creation of human beings, and their birth. In the 7th century, St. Isaac the Syrian in his homily *On silence* writes: "*Let us force ourselves first to be silent, and then from out of this silence something is born*" [48, p. 310]. He refers to the creation of angels and humans and writes that although they "are not necessarily speaking parts", they were created in silence [56, pp. 107–8]. In his sermon *On Christ's Nativity* Ephrem the Syrian (4th century) "employs the imagery of giving birth, voice, and silence to denote the dynamic of faith and prayer and their necessity for Christians" [7, p. 319]: "*Your Birth is sealed up within silence, what mouth then dare to meditate upon it?*" [12, p. 203]. Ignatios, bishop of Antioch (2nd century), welcomed the idea that silence was present in Christ's life not only before he was born but also and after he had died [57, p. 54]. In his *Letter to the Ephesians* he writes: "*Now the virginity of Mary was hidden from the ruler of this world, as it was also the case with her offspring and the death of the Lord; three mysteries of noise which were wrought in God's silence*" (PG, 5, 753 A)²⁷. Here, one finds affinities with Gnostic literature since it identifies God as silence [16, p. 171], an association "first attested in Gnostic sources" [13, p. 86]. But the idea of the God's Incarnation from silence moves away from Gnostic context as it is the case with John of Apamea [13, p. 86], where the incarnation does not refer to God's Incarnation but to the prayer's self transformation through prayer [7, p. 328]. It is in this sense that Cyril of Alexandria uses it. Nevertheless, according to Ignatios, who largely influenced John of Apamea [7, p. 326], Mary's virginity and Christ's Nativity were formed in silence because of their paradoxical nature, which cannot be perceived by human mind and thus cannot find vocal expression. That silence is required since the magnitude of God and his works are beyond human reasoning, is shown (according to Clédat) in a 10th-century depiction in chapel 46 in the Bawit necropolis [20, p. 87]. In the apse of the chapel we find the imposing Ascension of Christ under which lies the *Orans* Virgin Mary surrounded by the Apostles. To the very right of the viewer, and on the level of Mary's and the Apostles' depiction, a standing figure is depicted in a different manner than the

²⁵ The notion of silence transcends his *Hexaemeron* less directly though: 'ἡ μεγάλη καὶ ἄφατος τοῦ Θεοῦ δύναμις' [71, 148C]; 'Ἡ μὲν φωνὴ τοῦ προστάγματος μικρὰ, μᾶλλον δὲ οὐδὲ φωνὴ, ἀλλὰ ῥοπή μόνον καὶ ὄρμη τοῦ θελήματος' [71, 149A]; 'ἡ ἄφατος ἐκείνη παρήγαγε δύναμις [71, 152B, *Περὶ ἐρπετῶν*]; Ἄλλ' ὅμως κοιμίζονται μὲν πάντες ἄνεμοι, ἡσυχάζει δὲ κύμα θαλάσσιον, ὅταν ἄλκυων ἐπωάζῃ τὰς ἑπτὰ ἡμέρας' [71, 177B, *Περὶ πτηνῶν καὶ ἐνύδρων*].

²⁶ Κωφευούση γὰρ τῇ κτίσει γλωτταν ἐχαρίσατο, see [24, pp. 166–7].

²⁷ For the translation of 'ἡσυχία' as 'silence' and 'tranquility', see [55, p. 658].

Apostles who are amazed by the event. This haloed figure is depicted frontally, in contrast to the various postures of Christ's disciples and places his pointing finger on his lips calling for silence of the viewer, who is identified by the inscription as "brother, scribe Andreas" [20, p. 88].

In the single story "in the Bible that speaks about silent prayer" [47, p. 13], before her conception of Samuel, Hanna prayed in silence (Sam.1:13) but was disrupted by the 'noise' of her husband's words who could only see Hanna's mouth moving [57, pp. 20–1]. In the *Protevangelion*, Anne secluded herself in her garden where she compared herself with the universe/earth and after her silent prayer — like the universe — Mary was created. It is in this sense that in his *Commentary of the Hexaemeron*, Pseudo-Eustathios (5th century) included the story of Anne and Joachim as recounted in the *Protevangelion of James* [100, p. 55]²⁸. Silence as expression of the world's creation is illustrated in the Chludov Psalter (fol. 88r) [93, p. 285]²⁹, where the wind is depicted making a gesture of silence and the text that accompanies it (Psalm 88:10) "praises the powers of the Creator"³⁰. Anne's gesture is a pictorial reference to the silence in which creation is developed, because the conception of Mary by a sterile woman is a work of God not easily perceived. Thus Anne calls for silence in order for the believer to understand the way God's works are created.

The *Protevangelion* in Coptic Egypt

It was mentioned earlier that Anne's biological relationship to Mary, matriarchy and the Incarnation were the reasons for the early appearance of Anne in this monument. It was also argued that Coptic art influenced the Faras iconography. The *Protevangelion of James*, the only account on Anne's life, was not unknown in 8th-century Coptic Egypt as it is demonstrated in a homily *On the Incarnation*, where among other sources the *Protevangelion of James* is used [40, p. 21]³¹. The Coptic frescoes of Deir Abu Hennis and Bawit in particular also bear witnesses to influence from the apocryphal gospel [30, p. 187]. We also know that the Coptic texts of Pseudo-Cyril of Jerusalem (first half of the 6th century) or Pseudo-Demetrios of Antioch (after 642) express the interest of Coptic Egypt in the apocryphal childhood of Mary by providing their own variations of the original Greek *Protevangelion* [15, pp. xxxvi, xxxix]³². Thus, apart from matriarchy and genealogical succession, Anne's imagery in Faras owes its influences to the use of the *Protevangelion* in 8th-century Egypt and the fact that she is given a prominent place — near the sanctuary — verifies that from an early period she was perceived as a female who via the Virgin Mary is closely aligned with Christ's Incarnation.

²⁸ For the influence of the *Protevangelion* on this work, see [100, pp. 19-21].

²⁹ The text of the Psalm 88 that appears on that page is *οικοδομηθήσεται, εν τοις ουρανοίς ετοιμασθήσεται η αλήθεια σου. Διεθέμην διαθήκην τοις εκλεκτοίς μου, ώμοσα Δαυίδ τω δούλω σου. Έως του αιώνος ετοιμάσω το σπέρμα σου και οικοδομήσω εις γενεάν και γενεάν τον θρόνον σου. Εξομολογήσονται οι ουρανοί τα θαυμάσια σου, Κύριε, και την αλήθειαν σου εν εκκλησία αγίων. Ότι τίς εν νεφέλαις ισωθήσεται τω Κυρίω; και τίς ομοιωθήσεται τω Κυρίω εν νοις Θεού; Ο Θεός, ο ενδοξαζόμενος εν βουλή αγίων, μέγας και φοβερός έστιν επί πάντας τους περικύκλω αυτού. Κύριε ο Θεός των δυνάμεων, τίς όμοιος σοι; δυνατός εί, Κύριε, και η αλήθεια σου κύκλω σου. Σύ δεσπόζεις του κράτους της θαλάσσης, τον δε σάλον των κυμάτων αυτής σύ καταπραύνεις. Συ επαλείνωσας ως τραυματίαν υπερήφανον, εν τω βραχίονι της δυνάμεως σου.*

³⁰ Gregory of Nyssa: *ή μὲν τοῦ ἀέρος κατασκευή σιωπᾶται* (the creation of the wind becomes silent), see (PG, 44, 85D).

³¹ It however starts with the story of Mary shortly after her Presentation.

³² The relationship of these and other similar texts to the original Greek apocryphal account is discussed in [70].

The legacy of Nubia in the imagery of St. Anne

The inclusion of Anne into the iconographical programme of Nubian churches is the result of the “concrete consideration and defence of the economy of the incarnation and the presentation of the mysteries of the life of Jesus and their celebration in the liturgy [that] stand in the foreground” [44, p. 281]. St. Anne in Nubia promulgates that Christ’s apocryphal progenitors resulted in his humanity which is a mystery above human comprehension. And although it expresses a crucial dogma of the Christian faith, whether Nubian, Coptic or Byzantine, it does so by stressing the importance of locality when decoding Christian imagery. The iconography of St. Anne is not new to regional diversity, nevertheless, similar characteristics, whether in terms of style, iconography or ideology, transcend the majority of her images [70]. Yet, Faras remains the only image to my knowledge where Anne adopts this particular gesture and the lack of counterevidence shows that this seems to be the case for the majority of female saints in Christian iconography.

In terms of style, the group of the “violet style”, to which the image of St. Anne belongs, is influenced by Byzantine art through frescoes, manuscripts and icons [95, pp. 333–334, 336, 338]. Nubian kings, who imitated Byzantine rulers, were also ordained priests and were permitted to celebrate the liturgy [44, p. 278]³³, which makes it plausible that the depiction of St. Anne is the result of the Nubian reception of a Byzantine practice concerning icon veneration of the saint as early as the 8th century. If we consider that Nubian Church “owed much to the patronage of the Nubian monarchy and elite and that kings as well as other individuals both founded and “owned” churches and commissioned wall paintings and books” [36, p. 244], we can assume that a member of the elite stands behind the commission of this image. What is also important to note, is that in Faras we see the early development of a custom we see later in Byzantine iconography, where Anne was placed in churches commissioned by important donors, or already from the 6th century was associated with significant political figures such as the Byzantine emperors themselves, as, for example, is the case of Justinian I and his church in the quarter of Deuteron in the Byzantine capital [70]. As mentioned above, Lower Nubia between the 8th and 11th centuries was in political exchange with the Byzantine civilization, which had acknowledged the *Protevangelion* from the 8th century onwards, and by the 10th century feasts celebrating Mary’s early past had made their way to the official calendar of Constantinople [70]. Could we be seeing in Nubia the survival of Constantinopolitan art that is now lost? We can never know, but the contribution of the Faras imagery for the study of the cult of St. Anne in Christian art is immense and, as it has been shown above, it widens our understanding of the ideas that lie behind the commission of certain images.

Finally, matriarchal succession was a key point in the iconography of Faras and, in the case of Anne and her daughter, this succession celebrates the birth of Christ. This is why even if Mary was not included in the depiction epigraphy reminded the viewer that the cult of St. Anne is not to be examined outside Mariology and consequently Christology. The same message is transmitted through another depiction in the Cathedral of Faras, which dates to

³³ Merkurios of Makuria (died after 710) was celebrated as the ‘new Constantine’ the actions of who seemed to resemble the two men, especially in the transformation of the old Pharaonic temples into Christian churches, see [41, pp. 177–178].

the 10th century and it is located to the North of the prothesis' entrance. It is largely destroyed and what is left is the upper part of a throne which implies that we are dealing with a seated figure. The identification of the person sitting is clear from the surviving inscription on top of the throne: "Saint Anne mother, Mary mother", which identifies the figures with Anne and Mary [54, p. 121, no. 61, fig. 55; 84, p. 66; 62, p. 57; 31, p. 214, no. 1], and implies that here Anne follows the Kyriotissa type of Mary. It is the earliest known image of St. Anne sitting on a throne and will reappear in the late Byzantine period again. An additional 10th-century fragmentary depiction of Anne is found in the church of Abdallah-n Irqi or Abdallah Nirqi also in Lower Nubia. St. Anne is identified by a Greek inscription "The holy Anne, Mother" and is shown as Orans (in supplication)³⁴. Similarly to Paul's Cathedral, the epigraphy in these two 10th-century depictions underlines the motherly relationship of Anne to Mary, which is valid for almost all images of St. Anne in Byzantine art.

The examination of various issues that underpin the iconographical singularities we find in the Cathedral of Faras shows that the gesture of St. Anne in the Cathedral of Paul is unique in the corpus of female saints' iconography and demonstrates the shaping power of art. A religious practise is adapted to accommodate the peculiarities of a saint's cult and indicates how the rich mysticism of Nubian iconography translated Coptic asceticism in its own distinct way. An ancient Egyptian religious gesture makes its way into Christian iconography and manages to express the most central tenet of Christianity, the Incarnation of Christ.

Title. The *Signum Harpocraticum* in the 8th-century Christian Art of Nubia.

Author. Eirini Panou — Ph. D., post-doctoral fellow. Centre for the Study of Christianity, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Mount Scopus, 91905 Jerusalem, Israel. eirini.panou@gmail.com

Abstract. The Egyptian god Horus was known from the second millennium BC as "the child with a finger in his mouth". Hieroglyphics show that the placement of fingers onto the lips pertains to the believer's responsibility to stay silent in the presence of the divine out of respect. In Eastern Christianity, the ancient Egyptian prohibition of speaking when God is present – now effectuated in churches – was continued more prominently both in texts and less often iconography. In general, the significance of the gesture of silence is defined as the appropriate behaviour that the faithful should adopt when confronting god in their prayers or when entering religious spaces. However, textual and iconographical evidence shows that this particular gesture was multilayered and could be explained on a theological or philosophical level depending on the era and region it appears. This article explores the semiotics of the silence gesture for a female saint in the 8th-century Cathedral of Paul, in Faras, Nubia.

Keywords: St. Anne; silence; signum harpocraticum; Nubia.

Название статьи. Жест *signum harpocraticum* в религиозном искусстве.

Сведения об авторе. Эрини Пану — Ph. D., научный сотрудник. Центр христианских исследований, Иерусалимский гебраистский университет, Маунт Скопус, Иерусалим, Израиль, 91905. eirini.panou@gmail.com

Аннотация. Со II тыс. до н. э. египетского бога Гора изображали в виде ребенка с пальцем во рту. С позиций иероглифики прикосновение пальца к губам указывает на обязанность верующего из почитания хранить молчание перед лицом божества. В восточном христианстве древнеегипетский запрет на разговоры в присутствии Бога — ныне принятый в церкви — всегда наиболее явственно был выражен в текстах и реже проявлялся в иконографии. Вообще жест молчания имеет смысл как обозначение подобающего поведения, которого верующий должен придерживаться, находясь в религиозном пространстве и обращаясь к Богу в своих молитвах. Однако письменные и иконографические источники свидетельствуют, что именно этот жест был многозначным и его объяснение можно развернуть и в теологическом, и в философском аспекте в зависимости от хронологических и региональных особенностей его использования. В статье дается семиотический разбор жеста молчания применительно к одному из женских образов святых, представленных в росписях VIII в. собора Св. Павла в Фарасе (Нубия).

Ключевые слова: св. Анна; молчание; жест молчания; Нубия.

³⁴ I thank Dobrochna Zielińska of the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw, who brought this depiction to my attention. For this depiction, see [66, p. 93].

References

1. Abu Salih al-Armani. *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt and some Neighbouring Countries*. Oxford, Clarendon Press Publ., 1895. 346 p.
2. Alwis A. P. *Celibate Marriages in Late Antique and Byzantine Hagiography: the lives of Saints Julian and Basilissa, Andronikos and Athanasia, and Galaktion and Episteme*. London, Continuum Publ., 2011. 308 p.
3. Amélineau E. *La Géographie de l'Égypte à l'époque copte*. Paris, Prix Bordin Publ., 1890. 583 p. (in French).
4. Anderson J. R. Monastic Lifestyles of the Nubian Desert: Seeking the Mysteries Monks of Makuria. *Sudan and Nubia: the Sudan Archaeological Research Society Bulletin*, 1999, no. 3, pp. 71–83.
5. Bárányné-Oberschall M. *The Crown of the Emperor Constantine Monomachos*. Pl. XIX. Budapest, 1937. 96 p.
6. Betz H. D. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells*. Chicago — London, University of Chicago Press, 1986. LVIII, 339 p.
7. Bitton-Ashkelony B. “More Interior than the Lips and the Tongue”: John of Apamea and Silent Prayer in Late Antiquity. *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 2012, no. 2, 20, pp. 303–331.
8. Blumell L. H. *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*. Leiden — Boston, Brill, 2012. 427 p.
9. Bolman E. Depicting the kingdom of heaven: paintings and monastic practice in early Byzantine Egypt. *Egypt in the Byzantine world, 300–700*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 408–436.
10. Bolman E. Joining the Community of Saints: Monastic Paintings and Ascetic Practice in Early Christian Egypt. *Shaping Community: the Art and Archaeology of Monasticism: Papers from a Symposium Held at the Frederick R. Weisman Museum, University of Minnesota, March 10–12, 2000*. Oxford, Tempus Reparatum Publ., 2001, pp. 41–56.
11. Brakke D. *Athanasius and the Politics of Asceticism*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995. 356 p.
12. Brock S. P. John the Solitary, On Prayer. *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1979, no. 1, 30, pp. 84–96.
13. Brock S. P.; Kiraz G. A. (trans.). *Ephrem the Syrian. Select poems*. Provo, Brigham Young University Press, 2006. 279 p.
14. Brooks E. W. (ed., trans.). *Iohannis Ephesini Historiae Ecclesiasticae Pars Tertia: (Syr. III, 3)*, V. Louvain, Peeters Publ., 1936. 261 p. (in Latin).
15. Budge E. A. W. (trans.). *Coptic Homilies in the Dialect of Upper Egypt*. London, the Trustees of the British Museum Publ., 1910. 424 p.
16. Chadwick H. The Silence of Bishops in Ignatius. *The Harvard Theological Review*, 1950, vol. 2, no. 43, pp. 169–172.
17. Chastel A. *La geste dans l'art*. Paris, Liana Levi Publ., 2001. 95 p. (in French).
18. Clackson S. *Coptic and Greek texts relating to the Hermopolite monastery of Apa Apollo*. Oxford, Griffith Institute, Ashmolean Museum Publ., 2000. 187 p.
19. Clackson S. Jonathan Byrd 36.2: Another Πνευματ Περτελλι Text? *The Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists*, 1993, no. 30, 67 p.
20. Clédat J. *Le Monastère et la nécropole de Baouït, Notes mises en œuvre et éditées par D. Bénazeth et M.-H. Rutschowskaya vol. 111*. Cairo, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1999. 437 p. (in French).
21. Clédat J. *Le Monastère et la nécropole de Baouït, vol. 12*. Cairo, Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1904. 164 p. (in French).
22. Climacus J. *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. London, SPCK Publ., 1982. 301 p.
23. Columba S. The Practices of Monastic Prayer: Origins, Evolution, and Tensions. *Living for Eternity: The White Monastery and its Neighborhood. Proceedings of a Symposium at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, March 6–9, 2003*. Minnesota, The University of Minnesota Publ., 2009, pp. 97–108. Available at: <http://egypt.ca.umn.edu/events.html> (Accessed March 10, 2015).
24. Constan N. (ed.). *Proclus of Constantinople and the Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity: homilies 1–5, texts and translations*. Leiden — Boston, Brill Publ., 2003. 450 p.
25. Coquin R. G., Martin S. J. M. *The Coptic Encyclopedia*. vol. 3, New York, Macmillan Publ., 1991, pp. 709–710.
26. Cramer J. A. (ed.). *Catenæ græcorum patrum in Novum Testamentum*, vol. 5. Oxford, E. Typographeo Academico Publ., 1844. 406 p. (in Latin).
27. Crum W. E.; Bell H. I. (eds.). *Wadi Sarga: Coptic and Greek Texts from the Excavations Undertaken by the Byzantine Research Account*. Hauniae, Gyldendal, Nordisk forlagl Publ., 1922. 233 p.
28. Dann R. J. *The archaeology of late antique Sudan: aesthetics and identity in the Royal X-Group tombs at Qustul and Ballana*. Amherst — New York, Cambria Press Publ., 2009. 291 p.
29. Davis S. J. *Coptic Christology in practice: incarnation and divine participation in late antique and mediaeval Egypt*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008. 371 p.
30. Der Nersessian S. Some aspects of Coptic painting. *Études byzantines et arméniennes: Byzantine and Armenian studies*. Louvain, Impr. Orientaliste Publ., 1973, pp. 185–191.
31. Detlef C.; Müller G. Grundzüge der Frömmigkeit in der Nubischen Kirche. *Études nubiennes: colloque de Chantilly, 2–6 juillet 1975*. Cairo, Institut Français d'archéologie orientale du Caire Publ., 1978, pp. 210–224 (in German).
32. Dominicus B. *Gesten und Gebärdens in Darstellungen des Alten und Mittleren Reiches*. Heidelberg, Heidelberger Orientverlag Publ., 1994. 191 p. (in German).
33. Doresse J.; Lanne E.; Capelle B. *Un témoin archaïque de la liturgie copte de s. Basile par J. Doresse et E. Lanne; en annexe, Les liturgies «basiliennes» et Saint Basile*. Louvain, Publications universitaires Publ., 1960. 74 p. (in French).

34. Dreuille M. de (trans.). *The rule of Saint Benedict and the ascetic traditions from Asia to the West*. Leominster, Gracewing Publ., 2000. 377 p.
35. Edwards D. N. The Christianisation of Nubia: Some archaeological points. *Sudan and Nubia: the Sudan Archaeological Research Society Bulletin*, 2001, no. 5, pp. 89–96.
36. Edwards D. N. *The Nubian Past: an Archaeology of the Sudan*. London, Routledge Publ., 2004. 348 p.
37. Fee D.G. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, Erdmans Publ., 1987. 880 p.
38. Frend H. C. W. *The rise of the Monophysite movement: chapters in the history of the Church in the 5th and 6th centuries*. London, Cambridge University Press, 1972. 405 p.
39. Gerstel S. Painted Sources for Female Piety in Medieval Byzantium. *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 1998, no. 52, pp. 89–111.
40. Giamberardini G. *Il culto mariano in Egitto*, sec. VII–X, vol. 2. Jerusalem, Franciscan Printing Press Publ., 1974. 307 p. (in Italian).
41. Godlewski W. Nubia, Egypt and Byzantium. *Perceptions of Byzantium and Its Neighbours (843–1261)*. New Haven, 2001, pp. 168–181.
42. Godlewski W. Some Remarks on the Faras Cathedral and Its Painting. *Journal of Coptic studies*, 1992, no. 2, pp. 99–116.
43. Grabar A. Une fresque visigothique et l'iconographie du silence. *Cahiers archéologiques*, 1945, vol. 1, pp. 124–128 (in French).
44. Grillmeier A. *Christ in Christian tradition, From the Council of Chalcedon (451) to Gregory the Great (590–604)*. Pt. 1. *Reception and Contradiction: the Development of the Discussion about Chalcedon from 451 to the Beginning of the Reign of Justinian*. London — Oxford, Mowbray Publ., 1987. 340 p.
45. Holthoer R. Byzantine Egypt: Cultures in collision. *Aspects of late antiquity and early Byzantium: papers read at a colloquium held at the Swedish Research Institute in Istanbul, 31 May–5 June, 1992*. Stockholm, Swedish Research Institute Publ., 1993, pp. 43–56.
46. Horn J. *Studien zu den Märtyrern des nördlichen Oberägypten*, vol. 2. Wiesbaden, Otto Harrassowitz Verlag Publ., 1992. 210 p. (in German).
47. Horst P. W. van der. Silent Prayer in Antiquity. *Numen*, 1994, no. 41, pp. 1–25.
48. Isaac the Syrian. *Ascetical Homilies of Saint Isaac the Syrian*. Boston — Mass, The Holy Transfiguration Monastery Publ., 1984. 143 p.
49. Jakobielski S. Remarques sur la chronologie des peintures murales de Faras aux VIII^e et IX^e siècles. *Nubia Christiana I*. Warsaw, Akademia Teologii Katolickiej Publ., 1982, pp. 142–172 (in French).
50. Jomard E. F. *Description de l'Égypte: ou, Recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée française, publié par les ordres de Sa Majesté l'empereur Napoléon le Grand, Band 2,1,2: Text 2*. Paris, Impr. Impériale Publ., 1818. 1032 p. (in French).
51. Katos D. S. *Palladius of Helenopolis: the Origenist Advocate*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2011. 218 p.
52. Kenna M. Icons in Theory and Practice: An Orthodox Christian Example. *History of Religions*, 1985, vol. 24.4, pp. 345–368.
53. Kirwan L. P. Christianity in the Central Sudan. The Byzantine mission and Nubian Alwa. *Hommages a Jean Leclant*. Caire, 1994, (reprinted in). Hägg T.; Török L.; Welsby D.A. (eds.). *Studies on the history of late antique and Christian Nubia*. Aldershot, Ashgate Variorum Publ., 2002, XXII, pp. 245–249.
54. Kubińska J. *Inscriptions grecques chrétiennes. Faras, IV*. Warsaw, PWN-Éditions Scientifiques de Pologne Publ., 1974. 192 p. (in French).
55. Lampe G. W. H. A. *Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1961. 1568 p.
56. Lossky V. *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church*. London, James Clarke & Co. Ltd. Publ., 1957. 252 p.
57. MacCulloch D. *Silence: A Christian History*. London, Allen Lane, The Penguin Press Publ., 2013. 337 p.
58. Maguire H. *The Icons of Their bodies: saints and their images in Byzantium*. Princeton, N. J., Princeton University Press, 1996. 222 p.
59. McCollum A. C. The Story of Sarabamon, from the Arabic Synaxarion. Available at: <https://hmmllorientalia.wordpress.com/2014/01/15/the-story-of-sarabamon-from-the-arabic-synaxarion/> (Accessed March 10, 2015).
60. Meinardus O. Coptic Christianity, Past and Present. *Christian Egypt: Coptic Art and Monuments Through Two Millennia*. Collegeville, MN, Liturgical Press Publ., 2002, pp. 8–20.
61. Meinardus O. *Coptic Saints and Pilgrimages*. Cairo, American University in Cairo Press Publ., 2002. 112 p.
62. Michałowski K. *Faras: Wall Paintings in the Collection of the National Museum in Warsaw*. Warsaw, Wydawnictwo Artystyczno-Graficzne Publ., 1974. 329 p.
63. Michałowski K. Open Problems of Nubian Art and Culture in the Light of the Discoveries at Faras. *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit. Ergebnisse und Probleme auf Grund der jüngsten Ausgrabungen*. Recklinghausen, Aurel Bongers Publ., 1970, pp. 11–28.
64. Moorsel P. van. La signification des icônes dans le sanctuaire des églises coptes, in *Nicée II (787–1987) Douze siècles d'images religieuses, Actes du Colloque international Nicée II tenu au Collège de France, Paris les 2, 3, 4 octobre 1986*. Paris, Cerf Publ., 1987, pp. 209–218 (in French).
65. Moorsel P. van. Bilder ohne Worte. Problems in Christian Nubian iconography. *Nubia, récentes recherches: actes du Colloque nubologique international au Musée national de Varsovie, 19–22 Juin 1972*. Warsaw, National Museum Publ., 1975, pp. 126–129.
66. Moorsel P. van. *The Central Church of Abdallah Nirqi*, Leiden, Brill Publ., 1975. 132 p.
67. Muers R. *Keeping God's Silence: Towards a Theological Ethics of Communication*. Malden — Mass — Oxford, Blackwell Publ., 2004. 246 p.

68. Orlandi T. Letteratura copta e cristianesimo nazionale egiziano. *L'Egitto cristiano: aspetti e problemi in età tardo-antica*. Rome, Institutum Patricium Augustinianum Publ., 1997, pp. 39–120.
69. Palladios. *La storia Lausiaca*. Bartelink G. J. M (ed.), Barchiesi M. (trans.). Milano, Fondazione Lorenzo Valla, A. Mondadori Publ., 1974. 245 p.
70. Panou E. *The Cult of St. Anne in Byzantium*. Farnham, Ashgate Publ., 2015 (in press).
71. Papadopoulos-Kerameus A. (ed.). *Dionysiou ek Phournia Hermēneia tēs zografikēs tehñēs*. Petersburg, B. Kirschbaum Publ., 1909. 351 p. (in Greek).
72. Pinch G. *Egyptian Mythology: a Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford — New York, Oxford University Press, 2004. 272 p.
73. Pitarakis B. *Les croix-reliquaires pectorales byzantines en bronze*. Paris, Picard Publ., 2006. 446 p. (in French).
74. Pomerantseva N. The iconography of the Christian painting in Nubia (Frescoes of Faras VIII–X cent. AD). *Nubian Studies proceedings of the symposium for Nubian studies Selwyn College Cambridge 1978*. Warminster, Aris and Phillips Publ., 1982, pp. 198–207.
75. Prag A. J. N. Proportion and personality in the Fayum Portraits. *British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan*, 2002, no. 3, pp. 55–63. Available at: <http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/bmsaes/issue3/prag.html> (Accessed March 10, 2015).
76. Quatremère E. *Observations sur quelques points de la géographie de l'Égypte, pour servir de supplément aux Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur l'Égypte et sur quelques contrées voisines*. Paris, Chez F. Schöhl Publ., 1812. 73 p. (in French).
77. Rapp C. Early monasticism in Egypt. Between hermits and cenobites. *Female 'vita religiosa' between Late Antiquity and the High Middle Ages: structures, developments and spatial contexts*. Berlin — Lit — London, Global Publ., 2011, pp. 21–42.
78. Rassart-Debergh M. Littérature apocryphe et art copte. *Apocrypha*, 1996, no. 7, pp. 253–259 (in French).
79. Reinink G. J. The romance of Julian the apostate as a source for 7th century Syriac apocalypses. *La Syrie de Byzance à l'Islam: VIIe–VIIIe siècles : actes du colloque international Lyon. Maison de l'Orient méditerranéen*; Paris. Institut du monde arabe, 11–15 Septembre 1990. Damascus, Institut français de Damas Publ., 1992, pp. 75–86.
80. Roquet G. La "réception" de l'image et du texte a motifs d'apocryphes dans les chrétientés d'Égypte et de Nubie: quelques aperçus. *Apocrypha*, 1991, no. 2, pp. 181–215 (in French).
81. Russell P. Ephraem the Syrian on the Utility of Language and the Place of Silence. *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, 2000, vol. 8:1, pp. 21–37.
82. Schaff P., Wace H. (eds.). *Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, 2nd Series, vol. 7*. Buffalo, New York, Christian Literature Publ. Co., 1894. 621 p.
83. Scholz O. P. Bemerkungen zur Ikonologie der Theotokos. *Acts of the Second International Congress of Coptic Study. Roma, 22–26 September 1980*. Rome, C.I.M. Publ., 1985, pp. 323–338 (in German).
84. Seipel W. (ed.). *Faras: die Kathedrale aus dem Wüstensand: Kunsthistorisches Museum, 23. Mai bis 15. September 2002*. Milan — Skira — Wien, Kunsthistorisches Museum Publ., 2002. 153 p. (in German).
85. Stern G. *Women, Children, and Senators on the Ara Pacis Augustae: A Study of Augustus' Vision of a New World Order in 13 BC*. PhD Thesis. University of California, Berkeley, 2006. 549 p.
86. Strycker É. de (ed.) *La forme la plus ancienne du Protévangile de Jacques / recherches sur le papyrus Bodmer 5 avec une édition critique du texte grec et une traduction annotée*. Brussels, Société des Bollandistes Publ., 1961. 480 p. (in French).
87. Talbot A. M. Old Age in Byzantium. *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 1984, no. 77, pp. 267–78.
88. Thunø E. *Image and Relic: Mediating the Sacred in Early Mediaeval Rome*. Rome, "L'Erma" di Bretschneider Publ., 2002. 216 p.
89. Tikkanen J. J. *Zwei gebärden mit dem Zeigefinger*. Helsingfors, Druckerei der Finnischen Literaturgesellschaft Publ., 1913. 107 p. (in German).
90. Timbie J. A. A Liturgical Procession in the Desert of Apa Shenoute. *Pilgrimage and Holy Space in the Late Antique Egypt*. Leiden, Brill Publ., 1998, pp. 415–441.
91. Török L. *Transfigurations of Hellenism: Aspects of Late Antique Art in Egypt AD 250–700*. Leiden, Brill Publ., 2005. 400 p.
92. Vantini G. *The Excavations at Faras: A Contribution to the History of Christian Nubia*. Bologna, Editrice Nigrizia Publ., 1970. 311 p.
93. Walter C. Christological Themes in the Byzantine Marginal Psalters from the 9th to the 11th century. *Revue des études Byzantines*, 1986, no. 44; reprinted: *Prayer and Power in Byzantine and Papal Imagery*. Aldershot, Ashgate Variorum Publ., 1993, vol. IX, pp. 269–288.
94. Ward B. (trans.). *The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: the Alphabetical Collection*. Kalamazoo, Cistercian Publications and Oxford, A. R. Mowbray Publ., 1975. 228 p.
95. Weitzmann K. Some Remarks on the Sources of the Fresco Painting of the Cathedral of Faras. *Kunst und Geschichte Nubiens in christlicher Zeit. Ergebnisse und Probleme auf Grund der jüngsten Ausgrabungen*. Recklinghausen, Aurel Bongers Publ., 1970, pp. 325–346.
96. Wordsworth J. *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer-Book: an Egyptian Pontifical Dated Probably about AD 350–356*. London, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge — New York, E. & J.B. Young Publ., 1899. 124 p.
97. Xanthaki T. II. Theomētōrēkos kyklos ston nao tēs Hagias Matronas stēn Kimolo. *Deltion Christianikēs Archaologikēs Hetaireias*, 2008, no. 29, pp. 169–184. (in Greek).
98. Youssef Y. N. Liturgical Texts Relating to Sarapamon of Nikiu. *Ancient Near Eastern Studies*, 2013, no. 50, pp. 263–280.
99. Zabkar L. V. The Eparch of Nubia as King. *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 1963, vol. 3, no. 22, pp. 217–9 (in Greek).
100. Zoepfl F. *Der Kommentar des Pseudo-Eustathios zum Hexaemeron*. Münster, Verlag der Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1927. 59 p.