

DAYR AL-MALAK MIKHA'IL or Dayr Bakhum (Idfu)

This monastery, still in existence, is situated on the left bank of the Nile, almost 4 miles (7 km) west of the town of Idfu, on the slope of a hill in the stony area (*hajir* in Arabic) at the foot of the Libyan Mountains. It bears the names of the archangel MICHAEL and of PACHOMIUS in S. CLARKE (1912, pp. 111-13), the first in the body of this work, when Clarke gives its plan, and the second at the end of the book in the Coptic patriarchate's list of the churches (p. 216, no. 12). Daressy (1917, p. 204) thinks that the Dayr Mansur (Victor [?]) cited by the *Book of the Hidden Pearls* is identical with this monastery.

The atlas of the [Description d'Egypte](#) (fol. 3; 1821-1829) names it Mahallet Mangourah ([perhaps](#) Marqurah, Mercurius). An English traveler at the beginning of the twentieth century called it the Monastery of Saint George (Weigall, 1910, p. 397). The present monastery was built on the ruins of an ancient monastery, according to Fakhry (1947, p. 47). It is briefly described by Meinardus (1st ed., p. 326; 2nd ed., p. 441). About 1975, monastic life was restored there by a monk who came from DAYR ANBA MAQAR in Wadi al-Natrun.

It should be noted here that the [British Library](#) in 1913 and 1923 acquired twenty-two manuscripts, the majority on parchment, dating from the tenth and eleventh centuries, which derive from a Monastery of Saint Mercurius at Idfu (O'Leary, 1923, p. 234; Hyvernat, Vol. 16, pp. 29-30; de Rustafjaell, 1909, passim). If one believes the colophons, these manuscripts come from several monasteries at Idfu: *topos* (church or monastery) of Saint Michael, *topos* of [Apa](#) Aaron, the Monastery of Saint Mercurius. This shows that there were formerly several monastic sites at Idfu and that the present Monastery of Saint Bakhum was not unique in this region.

This monastery was also mentioned by 'ABD AL-MASIH SALIB AL-

MASU'DI AL-BARAMUSI (1924, p. 181), who called it Bakhum.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 'Abd al-Masih Salib al-Masu'di al-Baramusi. *Kitab Tuhfat al-Sa'ilin fi Dhikr Adyirat Ruhban al-Misriyyin*. Cairo, 1924.
- Clarke, S. *Christian Antiquities in the Nile Valley*. Oxford, 1912.
- Daressy, G. "Renseignements sur la provenance des stèles coptes du Musée du Cairo." *Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte* 13 (1914):266-71.
- . "Indicateur topographique du 'Livre des perles enfouies et du mystère précieux.'" *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'Archéologie orientale* 13 (1917):175-230, and 14 (1918):1-32.
- [Description](#) de l'Égypte. Paris, 1821-1829.
- Fakhry, A. "A Report of the Inspectorate of Upper Egypt." *Annales du Service des antiquités de l'Égypte* 44 (1947):25-54.
- Hyvernat, H. "Coptic Literature." In *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 16, pp. 27-30. New York, 1914.
- Meinardus, O. *Christian Egypt, Ancient and Modern*. Cairo, 1965; 2nd ed., 1977.
- O'Leary, De L. "Christian Egypt." *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 9 (1923):8-26.
- Rustafjaell, R. D. de. *The Light of Egypt*. London, 1909.
- Weigall, A. E. P. B. *A Guide to the Antiquities of Upper Egypt*. London, 1910.

RENÉ-GEORGES COQUIN

MAURICE MARTIN, S. J.

Tags: [Places](#)