

## **MANQABAD (ancient Mallidis)**

A site of a complex of ruins dating from the late [Roman](#) period, the classification of which has not yet been ascertained with certainty. The building remains have definite [Christian](#) characteristics, so that the foundation of the buildings may be ascribed to the sixth century A.D. It remained in use until the eighth century.

The buildings are laid out in an extensive and more or less rectangular, walled precinct. Close to the middle of the western [circular](#) wall a finely constructed gate decorated with corner pilasters and [niches](#) was found. The thickness of the wall, however, is not very great, and it lacks towers.

Within the walls several small churches and chapels were found, all of which, however, belong to a later period. Evidently the oldest ecclesiastical building is a small chapel (A) on the south wall that once had a cupola. Inside, it is furnished with a number of [niches](#) and windows. On the west side two more rooms are attached, which may be entered only from within the chapel.

[Church](#) B, which follows immediately to the east, is appreciably larger and already presupposes chapel A. Two different states of development may be noted in it. The sanctuary in the east originally consisted of a simple three-room group. This was later abandoned and a new apse attached with two lateral side rooms. The facing wall of the original sanctuary was preserved and reused for the *khurus* (choir) partition wall. The new apse contains several rectangular wall [niches](#) as well as a curious round [niche](#) in the vertex which is markedly out of alignment.

The third church, which was found on the south side of the street leading out from the west gate of the settlement, was from the beginning provided with a *khurus* situated in front of the three-room group of the sanctuary. Also it has a single nave and is entered from the north. The apse also contains a [niche](#) rising up from the floor and in this particular

instance a rectangular one. A small courtyard situated on the west side was added later.

The churches described all come from the period following the ARAB CONQUEST OF EGYPT. In any case, the two churches equipped with a *khurus* could have been built only at the turn of the seventh to the eighth century.

More to the center of the area, a complex of buildings was exposed consisting of different, and in some cases modified, structures, which contained several rooms with round benches and wall seats. One of the rooms exhibits numerous graffiti in Coptic and Arabic. Buildings of a similar kind were discovered at BAWIT. It is, therefore, conceivable that here, too, the buildings had a monastic function. Not very far away the most recent excavations (spring 1985) unearthed a large, multiroomed building, in which two consecutive phases lying one on top of the other could clearly be distinguished. The latest structure was presumably an ecclesiastical building, the arrangement of which had completely destroyed the older, substantially smaller-roomed building.

The crypt of the later phase lay well below the floor of the earlier phase.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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