

The cemetery with a single domed mausoleum in the village of Deir al-Barsha, archaeological and architectural study

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Abstract: *This research deals with an archaeological and architectural study of the single-domed mausoleum cemetery in the village of Deir al-Barsha, which came in more than one style. The third: the three-roomed cemetery. A great similarity was found between the planning of this type of cemetery with many cemeteries inside Egypt, including the Coptic cemeteries in Bagwat, and the Islamic cemeteries in Zawyat al-Amwat, Aswan and Bahnasa. The research questions revolve around the first style of Coptic tombs in Deir al-Barsha. In essence, this style consists of a square area topped by the dome, which is based on a transition area from the corner arches, spherical triangles and muqarnas, and this style is the oldest models in funerary architecture. The research consists of two axes: It deals with the first types of tombs, which include: the domed cemetery without an Iwan (one dome), the two-chambered cemetery, one of which is square with a dome and the other is rectangular with a vault, and the cemetery has three rooms, the second deals with the analytical study.*

Keywords: Deir al-Barsha, Minya, Iwan, dome, cellar, al-Bajwat, Zawyat al-Amwat.

First: the descriptive study

The village of Deir al-Barsha¹ [1] is located northeast of the city of Mallawi² [2] - east of the Nile - 40 km south of the city of Minia, and on the eastern bank of the Nile opposite the city of Mallawi, and is bordered to the north by the antiquities of Sheikh Abada, which is the cemetery of the fifteenth region of Egypt The Upper Kingdom in the Old Kingdom and the Middle Kingdom, and some kings of the modern state chose to use it as limestone quarries to build their temples in the capital of the region, "Khmenu" Ashmounin, and the area was used in the Coptic era by monks.

Al-Barsha is one of the largest areas inhabited by monks and gathered around it from the eastern mountain, and it is filled with pharaonic monuments that the monks exploited and inhabited. From the fifth and sixth families. The edges of the mountainside, where the tombs of the two families are located, extend from the northwest to the southeast, and all the tombs are oriented to the southwest.

Deir al-Barsha includes a large number of Coptic tombs that are worth studying, as their patterns varied as follows [3]:

First style: the domed tomb without an Iwan (single dome), plate (1).

Cemetery No. (1) (fig. 1) (published for the first time by the researcher)

First model

Chamber A (pl. 2)

It is a square area covered with a dome of dimensions (3.10 x 3.10 m), and on the eastern side is the entrance leading to the cemetery. The entrance is topped by a pointed arch with a height of (1.00 m). The transition areas are spherical triangles, and inside the cemetery are two rectangular entrances knotted with a semi-circular arch, and these entrances were used to put the bays, and above the entrances there are windows to let the light enter the dome, which are simple lunettes.

Chamber B (pl. 3)

It is a square area with dimensions (3.2 x 3.20 m), and the entrance opening is in a square dome on the northern side and its height is (1.00 m), and its facade is arched with a pointed arch.

Inside the cemetery, there are two entrances similar to the one inside the room (A), and above the entrances are a small slit in the circle of the dome.

The second model Cemetery No. (1) (fig. 2)

The entrance, arched with a pointed arch, is located on the western façade, and on both the northern and southern walls there is a window below which there is an entrance. The entrance opens to a corridor on either side of two tombs, and the Durqa'a is surmounted by a dome carried on spherical triangles [3].

The second style: The cemetery has two rooms, one square topped by a dome, and the other rectangular topped by a vault:

Cemetery No. (2): (fig. 3), Pl. (4) (published for the first time by the researcher)

First model

This cemetery includes two rooms, one of which is square and covered by a dome, and the other is rectangular, covered by a barrel vault. This vault is common in the cemeteries of Deir al-Barsha, and this cemetery is among the ruins of ruined tombs, of which only these two rooms remain.

Room A:

In the middle of the dome square is the entrance block on the eastern side. It is a simple entrance (0.90 m) high, without decorations. The dome is a square area (3.5 x 3.5 m). The transition areas are spherical triangles, and on the eastern and western sides of the dome from the inside there are two entrances to put the lamps and the dome have no decorations and the dome circle has simple moonlights.

Room B

It is a rectangular area (4.10 x 2.10 m) covered with a half-barrel vault, and in the middle of this room was the entrance and its height was (1.20 m) and this room was built of bricks. The cemetery is preceded by another cemetery, which is a terrace in which a man and his wife are buried, and this cemetery is carved with carved bricks.

The second model: Cemetery (2) (Fig. 4)

The entrance is located on the north face and is arched with pointed arches. The tomb consists of the Durqa'a, topped by a dome built on spherical triangles, opening to the south through an entrance arched on an Iwan topped by a dome on corner niches. The eastern, western and southern walls have double windows with pointed arches topped by moonlights. We find that the floor the Durqa'a is lowered from the floor of the two Iwans [3].

The third style: the three-chambered tomb:

It includes two models

First Model Cemetery No. (3) (fig. 5)

General Description:

This cemetery includes three burial chambers, one of which is a chamber covered with a dome, and the other two chambers with half-barrel vaults.

Compartment A: (pl. 5)

It is a square area of dimensions (3.5 x 3.40) in the middle of the square of the entrance dome, its height is (0.90 m).

The transition areas consisted of four corner niches in the corners, and there were two entrances on the southern and eastern sides of the dome. The entrances consisted of a rectangular area with pointed arches, which had a developed shape from the previous two tombs. The dome had windows that consisted of simple lunettes, and the eastern wall of this room B.

Compartment B: (pl. 6)

It is a rectangular area of dimensions (2.70 x 2.10) covered with a vault in the middle with a high entrance (0.90 m). This room was built with bricks and does not have any decorations³ [4].

Room D: (published for the first time by the researcher)

In the middle of the room is a simple entrance, its height is (90 cm), and the room is a rectangular area of dimensions (2.50 x 3.40 m) and the room was covered with a longitudinal or half barrel vault.

The second form: (fig. 6)

The cemetery with a mausoleum dome and two Iwans on both sides and three domes. The entrance is located in the north and leads to the Durqa'a, topped by a dome resting on corner niches. There is a doorway in the northern wall, and on the west of the Durqa'a a burial shed, and in the east a door opening to an open space that was its tomb is represented by a dome, and the mausoleum dome of the tomb has been destroyed, but the presence of the entrance in the north confirms that it was double-domed, and the Iwan opens with an arch resting on two shoulders [3].

Cemetery No. (4) (The barrel vault pattern) (fig. 7)

The cemetery: It consists of two burial chambers, preceded by an open courtyard. The entrance is located on the northern facade and is 1.60 m high. On the eastern side of the yard there is another rectangular room. The three rooms are covered with a barrel vault. Each vault rests on corner niches. The three rooms are built with bricks. (fig. 5 pls. 7-8-9).

Room A, Cemetery (4) in Deir al-Barsha:

The entrance is located at the northern end. It is a simple entrance with a height of (1.85 m). The room is a rectangular area of (3.35 x 2.00 m) dimensions. It is topped by a barrel vault. The transition areas are corner folds. The room is covered with yellow mortar, and in the middle are the burial chambers.

The two rooms (B and C) in cemetery (4) in Deir al-Barsha: (published for the first time by the researcher).

These two rooms are similar in shape and architectural proportions, and the means of covering is the barrel vault, and the building material used in building the tomb was mud bricks⁴ [5].

Secondly, the analytical study

The tombs of this type consist of a single mausoleum dome, and it includes five models: the first: the domed tomb without an Iwan (single dome) in cemetery (1), and the second: the tomb with a barrel vault, and this appeared in cemetery No. (2), where it is found in this cemetery has two rooms, each of which is covered by a barrel vault, the third: the mausoleum dome and one Iwan (two domes) as in cemetery (3), and the fourth: the cemetery with the domed mausoleum and two Iwans as in cemetery (4), and on both sides there are three domes, and the fifth: the Durqa'a It is preceded by the cemetery Iwan (5).

As for the rooting of this type of domes, we find that it was known in Islamic architecture, and the Crusader dome in Samarra, Iraq (248 AH / 862 AD), is one of the oldest surviving examples of Islamic architecture.

As for Egypt, it is found in the Aswan cemetery⁵ [6], especially the domes that are likely to date back to the era of the rulers, as well as several models from the Fatimid period. There are found in the Aswan necropolis, including the seven domes (at the end of the Great Qarafa) around (400-411 AH / 1009-1020 AD), and Al-Haswati Dome (Fig. 17), the Dome of Atika and Al-Ja'afari⁶ [7], and these models are from the Fatimid era, as they appeared in the Ayyubid era in the dome of the Abbasid Caliphs.

It appeared in pattern No. (4) in the Bajwat cemetery⁷ [4], and the shrines of this pattern are scattered all over the cemetery, and the simple pattern of it is a simple, small and square room topped by a dome like shrine No. (1), and the pattern with a barrel vault appeared in pattern No. (10) in the Bajwat cemetery In Shrine No. (178,173,172,165)⁸ [4], it appeared in the mausoleum domes in Bahnasa⁹ [8] and the mausoleum domes in Zawyat al-Amwat¹⁰ [9-10].

Conclusions

- This research deals with an archaeological and architectural study of the single domed cemetery in the village of Deir al-Barsha, which came in more than one style. The third: the three-chambered cemetery.
- The research consists of two axes: It deals with the first types of tombs, which include: the domed cemetery without an Iwan (one dome), the two-chambered cemetery, one of which is square with a dome and the other is rectangular with a vault, and the cemetery has three rooms, the second deals with the analytical study.
- The tombs of this type consist of a single mausoleum dome, and it includes five models: the first: the domed tomb without an Iwan (single dome), and the second: the tomb with a barrel vault, and this appeared, where it is found in this cemetery has two rooms, each of which is covered by a barrel vault, the third: the mausoleum dome and one Iwan (two domes), and the fourth: the cemetery with the domed mausoleum and two Iwans, and on both sides there are three domes, and the fifth: the Durqa'a It is preceded by the cemetery Iwan.
- A great similarity was found between the planning of this type of cemetery with many cemeteries inside Egypt, including the Coptic cemeteries in Bagwat, and the Islamic cemeteries in Zawyat al-Amwat, Aswan and Bahnasa.
- It appeared in the Bajwat cemetery, and the shrines of this pattern are scattered all over the cemetery, and the simple pattern of it is a simple, small and square room topped by a dome, and the pattern with a barrel vault in the Bajwat cemetery, it appeared in the mausoleum domes in Bahnasa and the mausoleum domes in Zawyat al-Amwat.

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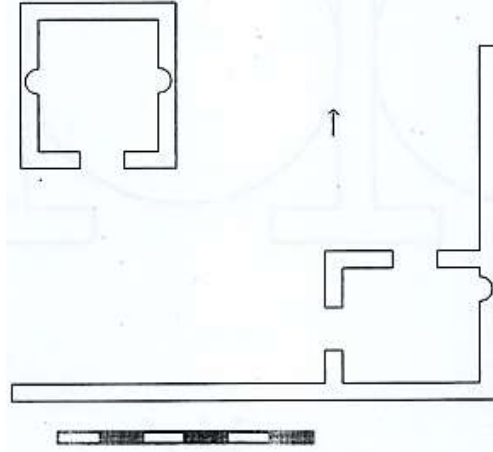


Fig. (1) Cemetery (1), by the researcher

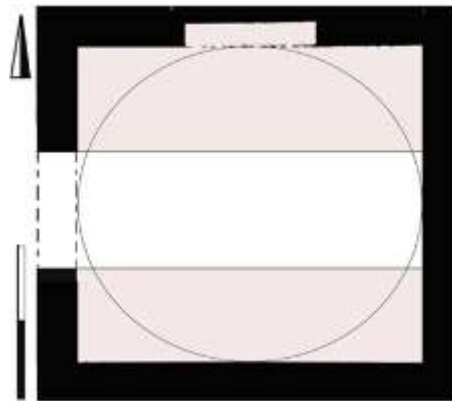


Fig. (2) The second model, cemetery (1), by Mahmoud Darwish

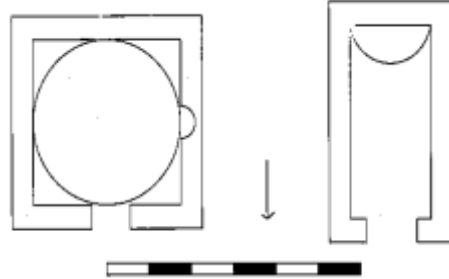


Fig. (3) Cemetery (2) in Deir al-Barsha, by the researcher

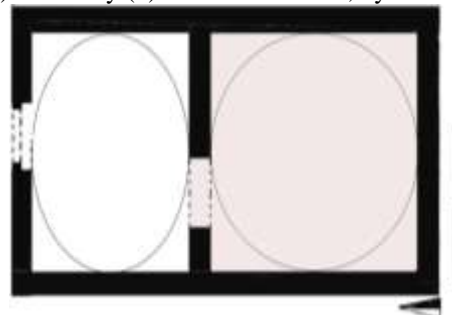


Fig. (4) Cemetery (2) The second model in Deir al-Barsha, by Mahmoud Darwish

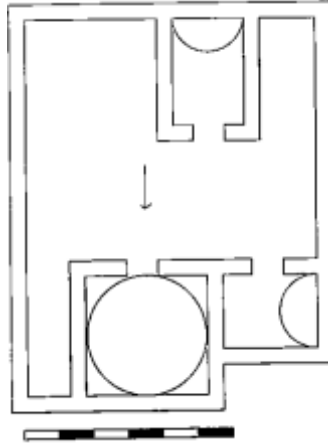


Fig. (5) Cemetery (3) in Deir al-Barsha, by the researcher

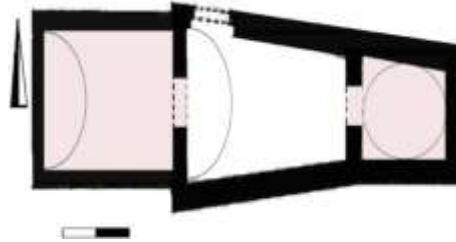


Fig. (6) Cemetery (3) The second model in Deir al-Barsha, by Mahmoud Darwish

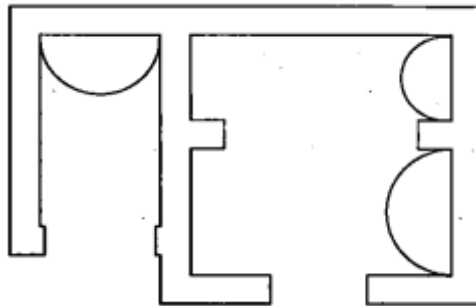


Fig. (7) Cemetery (4), by the researcher

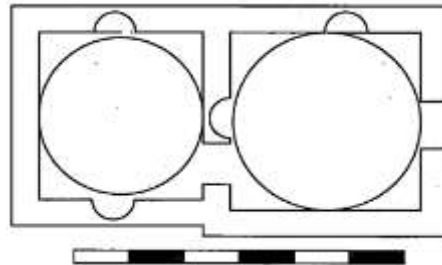


Fig. (8) Cemetery (5), bt the researcher



Pl. (1) A general view of the Coptic cemeteries of Deir al-Barsha



Pl. (2) Cemetery (1) in Deir al-Barsha, photographed by the researcher



Pl. (3) Cemetery (1) in Deir al-Barsha, photographed by the researcher

Pl. (4) Cemetery (2) in Deir al-Barsha, photographed by the researcher



Pl. (5) Cemetery (3) Room (A) runs the Barsha, photographed by the researcher



Pl. (6) Cemetery (3) Room (B) in Deir al-Barsha, photographed by researcher



Pl. (7) Cemetery (4) Room (A) in Deir al-Barsha, photographed by researcher

Pl. (8) Headquarters (4) Room (B) in Deir al-Barsha, photographed by the researcher



Pl. (9) Cemetery (4) Room (C) in Deir al-Barsha, photographed by researcher

Notes

¹ Deir al-Barsha (The monastery of Al-Barsha), from the ancient aspects, was called in the past, Abrahah, and it was mentioned in the Coptic text that Deir al-Barsha, which was named Abrahah, was a Roman military site, and the Islamic texts called the same place "Abrahah". Abrahah appeared in the year (1230 AH) with its current name (Deir al-Barsha).

² Mallawi is located to the south of the city of Minia, and it represents the eighth center of the Minia governorate from the north, and it is bordered on the south by Deir Mawas center and on the north by Abu Qurqas, which are affiliated to the Minia governorate. Mallawi was known in Pharaonic times as Marw, which means the warehouse of things. Mallawi was one of the Ashmounin villages.

³ This type was found in the Bajwat tombs in pattern No. (10) and the burial chambers in this type of Bajwat tombs are not carved in the rock as in the previous patterns of Bajwat tombs and the number of its shrine is seven and is divided into two types, simple shrines with a barrel vault, which are the shrines (156-172-173-178), and shrines with barrel vaults and buttresses (171-175-176).

⁴ Mud bricks have been used since ancient times. It was used in ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian architecture. Mud bricks were a flat-sided block of dry silt. Pre-dynastic buildings began to use bricks, and the cheapness of silt caused its widespread use in civil buildings. Military, funeral and even religious.

⁵ It is evident through the study of the mausoleums in Aswan that there is a large group of approximately thirty cemeteries at least, whose history can fall to the era of the rulers and predate the fifth century AH (11 AD), and this group is the one in which there is one or another model of the simple transition areas / from a flat slab And pyramidal or spherical triangles and semi-conical bends or muqarnas.

⁶ These two small mausoleums are located within the walls of the same hospice as the shrine of Sayyida Ruqayyah. The two mausoleums contain the tombs of Muhammad, son of Imam Jaafar al-Sadiq and Atika, the aunt of the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace. They are of great importance, because they include the first step in the evolution of the transition from a simple corner apse to a muqarnas pendant.

⁷ Ahmed Fakhri divided these tombs into two main types: the first simple, consisting of one room, and the complex type consisting of several rooms, most of which are two rooms.

⁸ Shrine No. (172), It is a shrine of the barrel vault style that opens to the east. The shrines of this style consist of two parts, the lower part for burial and the upper part used as a shrine, and the vault was decorated with bunches and branches of grapes.

⁹ Al-Bahnasa is located at a distance of twenty kilometers from the city of Bani Mazar, and was the capital of the nineteenth region of Upper Egypt. Individual domes such as the dome of Prince Ziyad, the dome of Muhammad al-Ansari, the dome of Muhammad bin Othman, the dome of Muhammad Fath al-Bab, and the dome of Abdul Rahman bin Abi Bakr.

¹⁰ Zawyat al-Mawat is located on the eastern bank of the Nile, near the city of Minia, at a distance of seven kilometers to the south. It includes a cemetery confined between the urban area to the west and the eastern mountain. It includes an infinite number of mausoleum domes dating back to the Islamic era, similar to the Islamic cemetery in Aswan and Bahnasa.