

## THE CIRCULAR ROTUNDA CHURCH IN THE WEST OF PELUSIUM - NORTH SINAI, IN LIGHT OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

**Sayed Mohamed Al Hadi**

Inspector of Archaeology, Ministry of Antiquities, Egypt

[sayedelhadi222@gmail.com](mailto:sayedelhadi222@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

In this paper I will discuss the study of the circular church west of Pelusium. It has a unique style in the architecture of churches, especially in Egypt. This circular church is considered the only discovered in Egypt and there is no church like it inside Egypt, and I will mention the role of Sinai in the transmission of Christianity through it to Egypt from Palestine, the spread of monasticism and the most important Christian places in both south and north Sinai, as well as it was linked to the flight of the Holy family to Egypt especially Pelusium city. And I will talk about the most important Saints of Pelusium, the main planning of the churches and their important styles.

Then I explained the circular church in the light of the excavations, their location, their history, their baptistry and their architectural description especially the eastern (Rotunda) and western building (crypt).

The research ended with result proving that the western building (the crypt) was more recent than the eastern building (Rotunda).

**Keywords:** The circular church, Pelusium, architecture, Sinai, Christianity, excavations, Rotunda.

### **1. Introduction**

Pelusium (AL-Farama) is located 35km from Qantara east city, 20km east of Suez canal, 7km northwest of Baluza village north Sinai, 43km southeast of Port Fawad, 3km southeast of Qalat AL-Tinah, 3km south of Mediterranean and 1km north of the peace canal.

Egypt entered or received the ruler of Romans in the year 30 BC, it remain a Romans state to 640AD until the Islamic conquest. Thus, Egypt continued under the umbrella of the Roman rule 670 years, that long period was full of injustice and unfair from the Romans [1], [2], [3], [4], [5]. At this time, the tolerant Christianity appeared in Egypt and Egyptian accepted it. But the beginning of Christianity and its spread in Egypt is surrounded by a lot of ambiguity [6], [7], [8], there are different views about the date it reached and entered Egypt between (60, 61, 65AD) [9], [10], [11], [12]. [13], [14]. All opinions agreed that ST. Mark was the first person to preach Christianity in Egypt. And here, Opinions differed about the year he came to Egypt [15], [16], [17], [18], [19], [20].

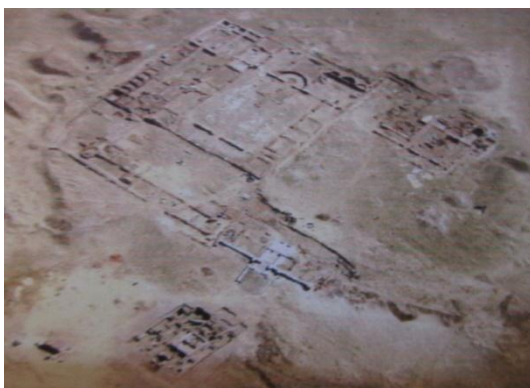
Some people said years (43, 45, 48, 55, 60,61AD), but the most suitable dates for the arrival of ST. Mark according to his biography was (43AD) [21], [22], [23],as there were different opinions about the arrival date of Christianity to Egypt, Also differed about the place which it was carried out or entered to Egypt. Some people referred to Alexandria as having creating the geographical conditions or location to be one of the biggest ports in the east of the Mediterranean Sea during the first century AD [24], [25], [26].

A lot of people came to it from Syria and Asia Minor, therefore Alexandria was one of these places. Others said that Christianity spread in Egypt because it is so near to Palestine. It spread in the first century AD through trade roads and parades of armies with soldiers. North Sinai had a great role especially the coastal route in entering Christianity to Egypt [27], [28], [29], [30], because it's geographical location and its connection to the commercial and war routes between Egypt and Palestine, the source of the new religion [31], [32].

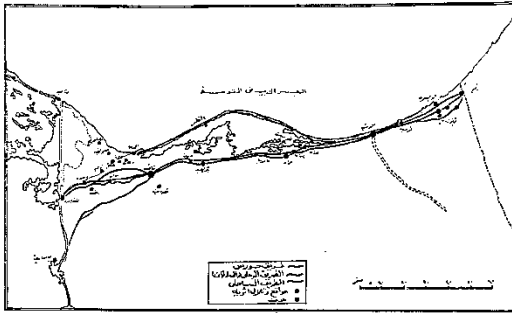
It is thought that Sinai is one of the places where Christianity carried out to Egypt because it was linked to the crossing of the holy family during its journey or flight to Egypt, [2],[12], [15] (fig1-2-3). All Arab historians, travellers and the monks agreed to that Al-Pelusium was one of the most important stations located on the road of the holy family in Sinai [33], [34], [35], which stopped in Pelusium for rest or break during the escape from Emperor Hero do's reign.They said that Al-Pelusium had many fortresses, churches and monasteries the evidence for that was the many churches discovered in Pelusium and many still lies under the ground[36], [37], [38] (pls.1-2-3figs.4-5).



***(pl.1) Pelusium archaeological area and its contents from Google earth.***



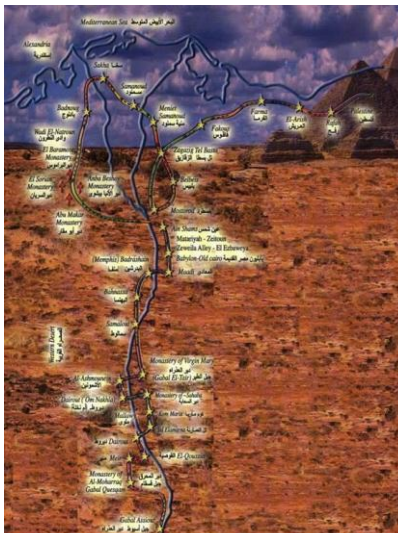
***(pl.2) Tell AL-Makhzan monastery in Pelusium east of Google earth.***



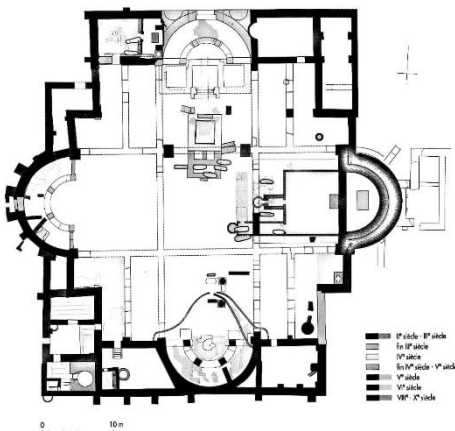
(fig.1) Map of north Sinai roads (Coastal road or Horus military, the sandy or royal road)



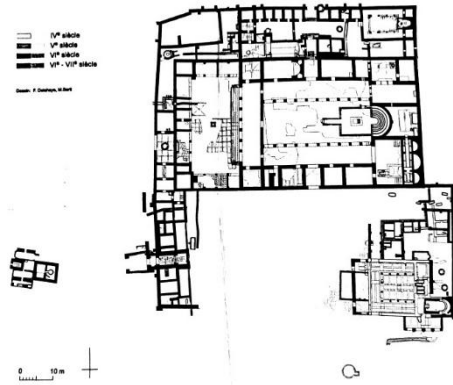
(fig.2) the holy family road in Palestine and north Sinai and its stations



(fig.3) the route of the holy family from Palestine to Egypt by Bishop Bishop



(fig.4) Plan of The southern church for the Swiss mission headed by Charles Bonnet



*(fig.5) Plan of Tell AL-Makhzan monastery for the Swiss mission headed by Charles Bonnet*

Monasticism started in Sinai in the third century AD and helped spread in Sinai sanctuary of the place inspired by God to Moses, Also its isolated nature is suitable for monastic life, As well as the availability of plants and water sources of natural eyes, weels and rain [39], [40], [41], [42]. Besides, the social factors and tyranny that Christians faced at the beginning as any new religion. Christians faced different kinds of torture and persecution or tyranny on the hands of Romans, South desert of Sinai became a shelter for Christians during the rule of Empire Deqledyanos, Christians ran away from him with their new religion lest falling in the hands of non-believer roman soldiers [43]. The sheikhs of the Christians in Sinai desert found their desired destination of quiet and isolation, so they immigrated to it and lived in its holy places since the second century AD [44]. Holy places helped monasticism to spread in Sinai where Sharia Mountain and places which prophet of God Moses passed by its when he got out with Israelis from Egypt and places that were visited by holy family. Besides availability of building materials of different stones and mud from floods in Sinai, All this helped monastic buildings spread and multiple, because it provides the monks with hardship to bring these materials from far places [45]. The movement of Monks from Syria and Palestine has had a great impact on monastic life in Sinai and Egypt in general [43].

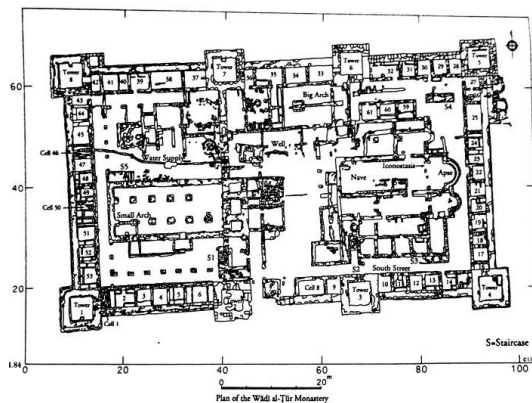
Several communities and monistic societies were established in south Sinai in the areas ST. Catherine (pl.4) and in Wadi Firan area, Northwest of ST. Catherine about (50km) from Al-Tur city. Also the most important of these places are Moses Mountain, Wadi Firan, Wadi Al-Hamam AL-Shamali and the ancient city of Tur Which is known Retho or Raya [46](fig.6-7). The monk Amonius Al-Sakandari, who visited Sinai through Jerusalem described us the state of monks in AL-Tur area [44].



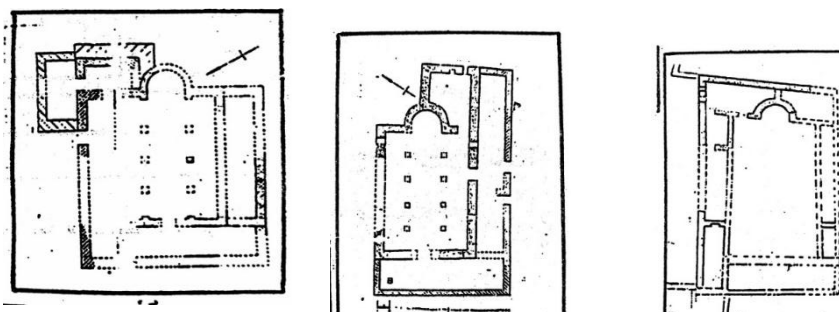
*(pl.3) the south church in Pelusium south for the Swiss mission.*



*(pl.4) Monastery of St. Catherine in south Sinai.*



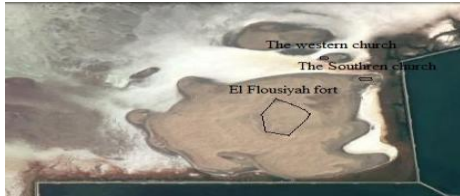
*(fig.6) Plan of Wadi Tor Sinai monastery in the south Sinai for Japanese mission*



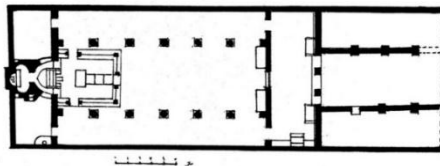
*(fig.7) Plans of churches discovered in the mountain of the mill in Wadi Firan by Ahmed Issa*

In the northern Sinai monistic societies were established in the city of Pelusium Parma (Al-Pelusium now). There was a great bishopric in Pelusium and it had the bishop called Dartius[3]. The city of Ostrakine (El-Flousiyeh now) is located 35km west of EL-Arish, northeast of Sabika village, it is

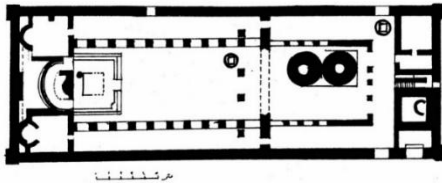
accessed from the entrance to Zaraniq reserve west of Mazar village, there was a great interest in this city by Justinian who expanded the city and continued its building to the sea and became the center to an important religious chair, The city was inhabited in the Christian period and it had a bishop [3]. Most of these monuments belong to the historical period from the second century AD to the seventh century. (pl.5-figs.8-9).



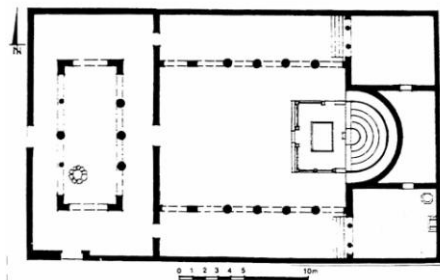
*(pl.5) El Flousiyeh area and its archaeological contents from Google earth.*



*(A) Plan of northern church*

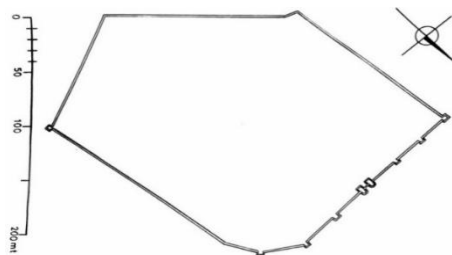


*(B) Plan of southern church*



*(C) Plan on western church*

*(fig.8) Plans of churches of El Flousiyeh by Jean Cledat and Oren.*



*(fig.9) Plan of fort El-Flousiyeh work researcher.*

The Christian inhabitants of Sinai were also envy honored and respected of the Muslims and on their heads prophet Mohamed PBUH, who was said to have given the monks of ST. Catherine's monastery a written promise and covenant to protect their lives, souls and luggage under the Islamic rule, you can read in this covenant and promise "No change to any bishop from any bishopric or a monk from his monasticism or a church from their churches and None of money from their churches enters in a mosque or houses of Muslims" [3], [35], [47], [48], [49]. Love and friendship between Muslims and Christians appear clearly in Sinai in that area. What we are watching today is the presence of the mosque next to the church inside ST. Catherine's monastery. That phenomenon will be repeated inside EL-Flousiyeh fort in the future when completing archaeological excavation in the area.

## **2. The most important saints in Pelusium**

Pelusium was one of the oldest diocese in Egypt and it contains many monasteries and churches. There is no doubt that this diocese has a large number of bishops who do not know much about them. St. Palladus mentions that Pelusium had five hundred priests in the early fifth century AD [50]. St. Abimeakhus the martyr worshipped in it then headed for Alexandria in the reign of Emperor Dakius and he was captured by the ruler Abelianus and killed him in (251AD) [3], [51], [52], [53]. During the reign of Emperor Theodosius (409/450AD), a Christian scientist named Isidorus stayed in it and wrote many articles in religion and directed them to his beloved and enemies [3], [14], [18], He was called Isidorus Al Farami, born in Alexandria and was the head of a monastery in Sahal Al Tena known as Al Hear monastery (may be Tall Al Makhzan monastery which was discovered west of Abbasid Pelusium fort) [24], [35], [41], [45]. This monastery follower of Pelusium episcopate [50], [54], [55], [56].

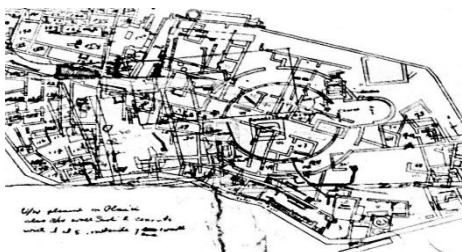
### **The main planning of churches**

The church [3], [28], [42], [58], [59] took different styles and forms between longitudinal and the central, the latter falls under it several forms such as square, circle, octagon, cross, polygon and mixed. The main different between both longitudinal and the central forms is that in the first form the parts of the church are arranged or organized on longitudinal axis and all its architectural parts were distributed. The roofs are divided between gabled and semi-gabled, flats, vaulted. As far the central forms, the dome is the dominant element only and the central point is the basis where parts of the church surround it [60]. The planning of church was different from a region to another and the most important was the rectangle planning (known as Basilica) which is the most spread in Christian world. Square planning (known as Byzantine) this planning came in essence and its appearance is contrary to rectangular planning. While the rectangular form was the most important feature of Christian church, as the form of the church in this planning becomes a square instead of a rectangle. Timber roofed and gabled are the most important means of coverage in rectangular planning while square planning depends on the coverage of domes, semi-dome and vaults. As a result of using the square form in

planning and domes in covering, the square Iwan was replaced by the rectangle form which is famous in planning for old church. All sides of the square become a short passage that covered with vault and thus the surface of church became form of a cross, so that the direct view of the church with square planning towards the domes instead of directing or moving in the rectangular planning church to the main apse[3], [13], The churches of this planning took the shape of cross as pattern for their overall planning [61], this style is attributed to the Byzantine state, Because it's one of its innovations and was unknown before and spread inside and outside the Empire borders after the period of Justinian[15]. This planning was called central planning which means the church buildings surround a center or middle. The circular church (Rotunda) in Pelusium is the only church which was discovered in Egypt of this relatively rare style in early Christian architecture in the Roman Empire, though there is in every region of the Empire a famous example of this style of churches.

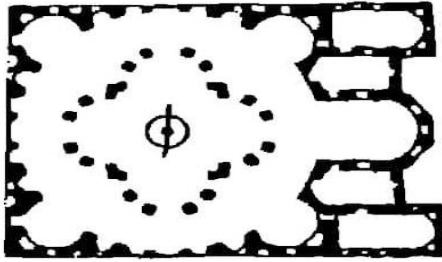
### 3. The circular church excavations

It is located in the northwestern of Pelusium city (pl.1) and to the west of the western wall of Abbasid Pelusium fort, about (200m). it has been discovered in excavation season (1984-1985AD) [3], [25], [45], [62] and continued until (1996 AD) [63] by the mission of the supreme council of antiquities, Islamic archaeology sector, North Sinai area. This circular church is considered the only discovered in Egypt and there is no church like it inside Egypt. It follows a very rare and unique style in early Christian architecture in the Roman Empire. Although in every region of the Roman Empire, there was a famous example of this style of churches. One of the most famous example of this style in eastern states is Beth SheanScythopolis church [43], [62], [64] (fig.10), Bosra church [62], [65] (fig.11) and Apamea church which consists of two circular buildings, the southern one is a church [62], [66], [67], Moreover Rotunda of the Anatasia church in Jerusalem is one of these churches in the eastern region, Although the outer wall is not completely round and has two aisles that are not in accord with the Rotunda axis [62], [66], [67] (fig.12). The famous examples of this style in the western states of the Roman Empire are the famous churches of St. Constanza's mausoleum of Constantine in Rome [62], [62], S.Stefano Rotunda church too [62], [70](fig.13) and Baptistery of Nocera in Campania in south of Italy [62], [71], [72]. The circular church in Pelusium is considered the first example of this style was discovered in the Egyptian state.

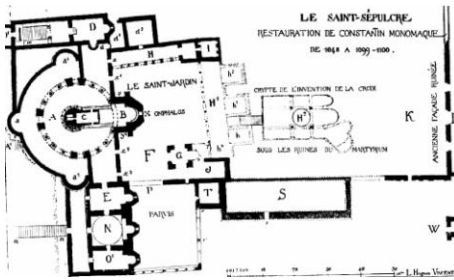


*(fig.10) Plan of church Beth SheanScythopolis for Matthew Chalmers, Fitzgerald*

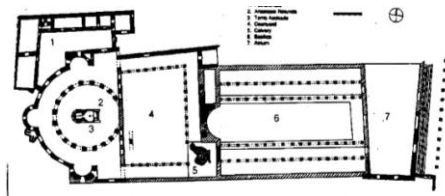




*(fig.11) Plan of Basra church about IzzatQadus*

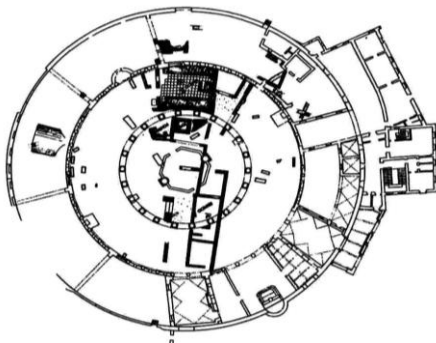


*(A)*



*(B)*

*(fig.12) Plan of the church of Constantine in Jerusalem Rotunda of Anastasia about Corbo*



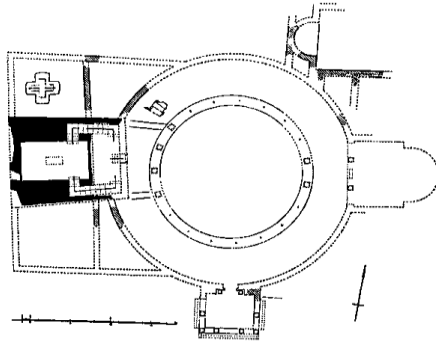
*(fig.13) Plan of church of S. Stefano rotunda about Ceschi*

### 1. 3. Architectural description

The circular church consists of two different architecture units in the design but linked to each other the eastern building circular (Rotunda) and the western building rectangular (crypt). (pl.6 fig.14).



*(pl.6) the circular church and crypt in Pelusium west by Google earth.*



*(fig.14) Plan of the circular church and the crypt west of Pelusium about Refa'at Al-Tahir*

### **2. 3. The eastern building (Rotunda)**

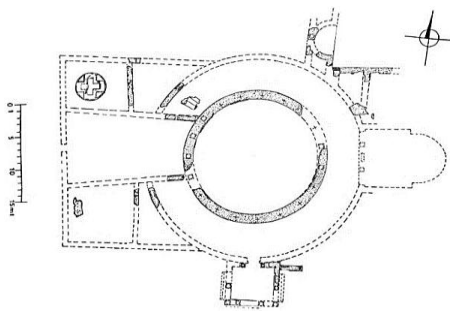
It is a circular church (Rotunda) consisting of two circular walls with one center built of red bricks and mortar of lime mixed with sand and red. The interior wall diameter is (17.5m) and it is completely circular with destruction in the north-west side and another in the south-west side, that is less deep than the outer wall, which has small section remains in the north-west and south-west side, The reason for this is goes to the destruction of all Pelusium church after the second Persian conquest. In addition to that, After the Islamic conquest most of Pelusium bricks were used to build other places such as Tina castle, Qatya area and other places near it. Besides, the largest destruction in Pelusium happened in the modern time by the Jews when they used the red bricks to pave roads in Sinai.

The outer and inner walls of Rotunda have interior space between them about (5m) that was covered with large white marble tiles and represent aisle for Rotunda, Some of its sections were found in the northwestern side of aisle which was put in a regular way each one is more than (1m). The inner wall is large than the outer which is about (0.80cm) width and the interior is (1.30m), the remaining of this wall is about (50cm) high. That wall was built in this thickness to be able to carry heavy weights and may be it is used as a base for marble columns to be put on it in a circular row above it arches that carried the dome or the cone form which covered the church as it is followed in Rotunda roofing system. Some Remains of marble columns bases were found on the interior wall. Perhaps the space between the interior and outer walls of Rotunda was covered semi- gabled; this aisle represents the wings of the nave in the rectangle church. (pl.7 fig.15).



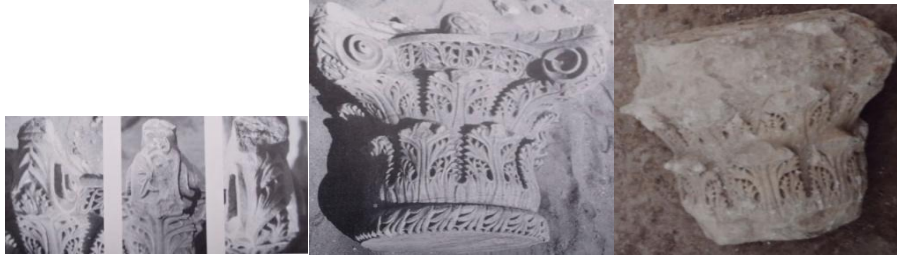
(B)

*(pl.7) Remains of the inner wall of the circular church and crypt and the picture on the south from Refa'at AL-Tahir*



*(fig.15) Plan of the circular church west of Pelusium the work of researcher*

It is clear that this circular building (Rotunda) had a lot of architectural and decorative elements. An evidence for that the finding of a large quantity of marble columns, capitals of columns different styles and pieces of marbles, all of these are made with a great art and craftsmanship, which was imported directly from Constantine (pl.8). These columns and capitals were found under a wall dating to the Islamic period on the western side of the crypt. The reason usually goes back to Islamic architecture in using such as these columns, capitals and big stones as a foundation for the walls (pl.9). This is very clear in the base of the northern gate of Abbasid Pelusium fort (pl.10) and the foundation of the minaret of Al-ZaherBaybars mosque in Qatiya(pl.11). One model of the discovered capitals in Rotunda was preserved in the museum store in Port Said museum and its now in the museum store in Qantara east. On the other hand, many of antiquities pieces plates, ewers, pots, vessel, bottle, jar and oil lamps were discovered and registered in the book of archaeology in Qantara area.(pl.12).



*(pl.8) some of the capital of the columns discovered in the circular church and its details from Refa'at AL-Tahir.*



*(pl.9) A wall in the western part of the crypt from a later period below it is capitals and columns from Refa'at Al-Tahir.*



*(pl.10) Stone bases the northern gate of fort AL-Pelusium about from Refa'at Al-Tahir.*



*(pl.11) the minaret of mosque of Al-ZaherBaybars in Qatiya from Refa'at AL-Tahir.*



*(pl.12) some of plates, ewers, pots, vessel, bottle, jar and oil lamps discovered in the circular church*

On the north eastern side of Rotunda inside the outer wall, there is a room with a western apse. It was built in the same building material and the same way of building Rotunda, but the building of the Rotunda dates back to the later period of the building of this room because the ground level of the room is lower than the ground of Rotunda. It is similar to the room that is located to the east of the northern apse in the southern church of Pelusium (pl.3). It was found on the base of the building south of the Rotunda adjacent to the outer wall of the Rotunda in the shape of (U). This appears from the shape of the bricks at the northern end of the eastern wall. These may be remains that represent the foundation of a corridor leading to the entrance to the Rotunda. There are other examples of this style of Rotunda include large outside halls connected to it from the west and contains narthex leading to the court of Rotunda. This applies to the circular church in Pelusium, where there are sections of two walls on the western side, in the north and south between them an area about (8.75cm). Both walls are vertical on the outer walls of the crypt, west of the Rotunda and on each wall there are remains column base. The distance between these two walls may have been the main entrance to Rotunda. This appears in some walls extending from north to south and remains of baptistery building in the northwestern corner and remaining section of the eastern wall extending from the east to the west. Which is located near the northeastern corner of baptistery room, this small section may be the remains of the original northern outer wall.

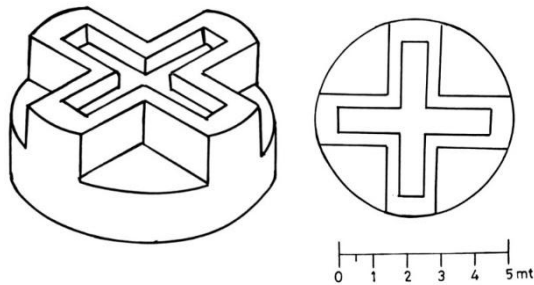


*(pl.13) the baptistery of the circular church by Refa'at AL-Tahir.*

### 3. 3. Baptistery

It is located northwest of Rotunda and crypt. It is a basin built of red brick in the form of an equilateral cross (Crux Quadrata), it is one of the biggest baptistery basins discovered till now in Pelusium

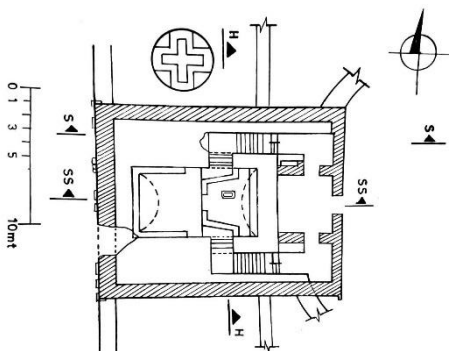
churches. The length of the basin side is (2.60m), its width (0.60cm) from inside and its height is (0.50cm). The basin covered with mosaic and many of them were found inside it. It was tiled with white marble from the inside and outside. This basin is located on a high building base on the ground in a circular form with a diameter (5.20m). The ground of baptistery corresponds to the ground of crypt and they were lower than the ground of Rotunda. (pl.13fig.16).



*(fig.16) Plan and perspective of the baptistery of the circular church west of Pelusium worked researcher.*

#### **4. 3. The western building (crypt)**

It consists of a block of construction built of red brick and limestone rectangular form (15m) length from east to west and (12.30m) width from north to south and this building is in a good condition of preservation, the crypt didn't broken down but it lost all its marble whether burnt or stolen. The reason of the destruction of the circular church during the Persian conquest of Egypt in (619AD). The crypt was established in this low part after this conquest and the destruction of Rotunda, Perhaps this happened after the Arab conquest of Egypt (640AD). (fig.17).



*(fig.17) The Church of the Cave*

In the middle of this building, the crypt is lower than the level of the church's circular ground and it is reached to it by two down stairs. The northern staircase consists of seven steps and was covered with barrel vault that still had clear remains and ends at the bottom with an entrance topped by semi-

circular arch opens to the south in front of sanctuary of crypt. The southern staircase consists of nine steps and is also covered with barrel vault, and also ends at the bottom with an entrance topped by semi-circular arch and opens the north side in front of crypt sanctuary in face of the north stair (pl.14). The crypt is a rectangular hall that was covered by barrel vault its remains are still clear. This hall is a church with its entrance to the eastern wall of the upper building, Which leads to a square room with a side length (3.5m) on its sides two rectangular rooms, the size of each is (2.40m) length from north to south and (1.80m) width from east to west. Both had an entrance to the western wall leading to two stairs which leading to the crypt hall and the area or hall is (8.50m) length from west to east and (5m) width from north to south. A long the northern, southern and western walls, there is a terrace to sit prayers or patients (0.50m) width and height (0.40m) was built from red bricks covered with a layer of white stucco, this style was followed in old churches. The floor of the hall is tiled with red bricks in its middle, there is in deep hole it may be a basin tiled with red bricks is known as the Laqan or the Pelvis [71], It is usually a basin or a vessel of stone or marble, in the ancient churches it was built in the ground of the church and put in it the water for pray on it in Epiphany, confiding Thursday and the apostles feasts.



***(pl.14) the northern and southern staircase of the crypt and their covering with a vault from Refa'at Al-Tahir.***

The walls of the crypt were covered and decorated (2m) high above the floor level of the hall with marble tiles fixed with bronze hooks distributed in systematic manner, some of which still exist in the walls. This rich decoration, splendid covering and arch entrance through the descending and ascending to this crypt indicate of its importance. This crypt may have the remains of one of the saints, it does

not have apse in the eastern wall and there may have been a mausoleum in its middle. The crypt was covered with barrel vault of red brick that an interior cladding of limestone to be suitable for the splendid building as a whole, the sanctuary is located in the eastern part of the crypt an area of (3.5m) from the north to the south and (2.20m) from east to west and it is separated from the hall of crypt by a wall (0.90cm) high with an opening (0.90cm) wide. The sanctuary has a terrace along the eastern wall, (0.40cm) high and (0.50cm) wide of red bricks covered with white stucco, it is thought to for the pastors and the clergy. The sanctuary contains the altar, which is built here with red bricks, the remains of which no more than two courses of bricks and some remains of burned wood were found above it. (pl.15-16-17, fig.18-19).



*(pl.15) the crypt from inside appears covering from vault, the entrances above semi- circular arch, alter inside sanctuary and the ground from Refa'at AL-Tahir.*

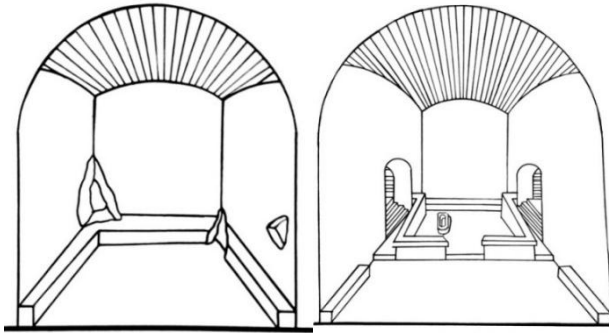


*(Pl.16) The crypt from the inside shows terraces, broken walls and floor with Laqun*

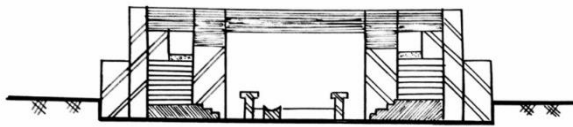


*(pl.17) it shows that the wall of the crypt was built on the wall of the circular church from Refa'at AL-Tahir.*

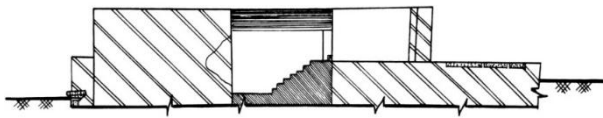




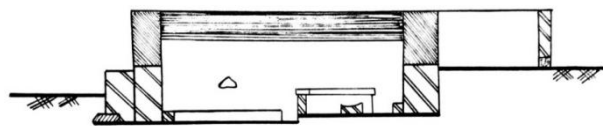
*(fig.18) Perspective of the crypt from inside showing the coverage, fraction, entrances and terraces of the researcher's work.*



*(A) Section (H)*



*(B) Section (S)*



*(C) Section (SS)*

*(fig.19) Different sections in the crypt (H-S-SS) worked by researcher.*

### **5. 3. Rotunda dating**

First, we should refer that during the excavation; an added wall was discovered that surrounds both the northern, western and southern walls of the crypt from the Islamic period. A great number of capitals, as well as some white and green marble columns, there were crosses on some of them. It is usually a Muslim architect in the use of such big parts as foundation to support the walls. It is not reasonable that Coptic architect put these columns with crosses and their capitals under the walls [3].

We can be depending on the dating of this circular church through the capitals of columns used in the foundations of the wall added around the crypt. These are all beautiful examples of Corinthian capitals with floral design especially Acanthus. These examples of capital were produced in Constantinople from the second half of fifth century to the first half of the sixth century and there is no doubt that these capital belong to the circular church. Besides, several marble blocks proconnesian were used at the same time in alternative to Corinthian capitals. So, we can say that the church goes back to the end of fifth century and beginning of sixth century AD [62].

## Conclusions

- We are asked a question which has something of confusion that the axis of this crypt (the western building) does not agree with the axis of the circular church (the eastern building). It is far away from the center of geometric circle of the circular church more than (2m) to the south.
- The reason for this difference is not known and we believe that the crypt does not belong to the original building (circular church), but it was added at a later date and therefore is newer. The opposite may be true that the crypt was probably a huge shrine and then the circular church was added to it later, therefore it is older.
- The architect failed to make the axis of the circular church consistent or agree with the axis of the crypt. That is unanswered question or this is a question that is asked, whether the crypt is older or newer than the circular church both existed when the other added to him.
- The question now is, why did the architect fail to match the two building axis. Was it done in an inaccurate and irregular and when he discovered this mistake, he had finished the construction and it was too late to correct the mistake and could not do change.
- It seems that the eastern and western buildings are connected together without a hinder among them is rectangular area its length is (12,70m) and width (2,60m). It was tiled with large marble tiles and its remains were clear in the north side. The construction was at that time for one purpose.
- The part between the crypt and the circular church, especially inside the aisle of circular church from the west side and under marble tiles, shows some foundations are completely different from the building material and mortar and the form of bricks used in building the crypt and the circular church and may due to a previous period on their construction. But there is something of confirmation by excavations, which resulted in the crypt, is more recent than the circular church.
- The evidence for that the outer walls of the north and south for the crypt were built on the beginning of outer walls of the circular church in the west side where they are connected or linked together.

## References

- [1] Walters, Colin Christopher (2005). *Archaeological monasteries*, translated by Ibrahim Salama, Al-Osra library, pp.15-16.
- [2] Ahmed, Ahmed Issa (2006). *Architecture of church in Islamic Egypt*, 1, Qena: Al-Khalifa press, pp.3-4.
- [3] Omran, Refa'at Al-Tahir (2012). *The Christian pilgrimage road and the Holy family route in Sinai, historical archaeological study*, Zagazig: Al-Sawaf printing press, pp.17-18-29-106-152-163-164-184-186-190-191.
- [4] Rufaylih, YaecoubNakhla (2000). *History of the Coptic nation*, presented by JawdatJaber, 2, Metropolo press, p.15.
- [5] Patcher, A.L. (1901). *History of the Coptic nation*, 1, Misr press, p.9.
- [6] Fowlre, (1901). *Christian Egypt, past, present and future*, London, p.1.
- [7] Paul Cheneau, (1923). *Les saints d'Egypte*, Jerusalem, p. 497.
- [8] Saint Peter, others (1936). *Coptic Synaxarium for the Saints and martyrs in the Egyptian church accidents*, 30B aramouda, 2, Cairo, pp.147-150.
- [9] Al-Atar, Francis (1951). *ST. Mark*, pp.25-30.
- [10] Amin, Hakim (1968). *Saint Mark in Africa*, in *Saint Mark and the Coptic Church*, Coptic orthodox patriarchate, p.10.
- [11] Atiya, A.S. (1968). *A history of eastern Christianity*, London, p.25.
- [12] Maher, Soad (1977). *Coptic art*, Central organization for university and school books and scientific letters, pp.5-7-62-63.
- [13] Habib, Raouf (1979). *Historical summary of ancient Coptic Church in Cairo*, p.9.
- [14] John, Mansi (1983). *History of the Coptic Church*, Cairo, AL-Mahaba library, pp.13-24-248-251.
- [15] Shiha, Mustafa Abdalla (1988). *Studies in architecture and Coptic arts, archaeological and historical culture series, project one book*, Cairo, printed by the Egyptian antiquities authority, pp.9-13-14-61-62.
- [16] Salim, Sabri Abo EL-Kheir (1997). *History of Egypt in the Byzantine period*, Cairo, house of studies and human and social research, p.30.
- [17] O'leary, De Lacy Evans (2000). *Egypt saints*, translated by Mikhail Maxi Iskander, Cairo, pp. 153-154-283-285.
- [18] Lawqa, Malak (2001). *Coptic Copts and conflict of the first century to twentieth*, Cairo, Angelus library, pp.40-46-276-278.
- [19] Bishop Isoudurs (2002). *The most precious in the history of the church*, Cairo, AL-Mahaba library, pp.46-49.
- [20] Durlian, Paul Chino (2002). *The Egyptian saints*, translated by Mikhail Maxi Iskander and Myriam Jamil Suleiman, Cairo, AL-Mahaba library, pp.157-161.

- [21] Al-Naciri, Sayed Ahmed Ali (2002). The national role of the Egyptian church through the ages, Shnouda founder of the Egyptian national church, Cairo, general authority for book, p.36.
- [22] EL-Masry, Iris Habib (2003). History of the Coptic Church, 1, Alexandria, church of ST. George in Sporting, pp.24-25.
- [23] Gerges and Asad, Samir and Morris (2004). Coptic heritage encyclopedia, the first volume of Coptic history, 1, the house of ST. John beloved for publication, pp.39-60.
- [24] SawirisIbn AL- Muqaffa', Abu Basheer (2006). History of Egypt from the beginning of the first century A.D until the end of the twentieth century from the manuscript of the history of patriarchs from Mary Marcus to patriarch 38 Benyamin 622-661A.D, prepared and investigated AbdulazizGamal Al-Din, 1, Madbouli library, 1, pp.59-144-940-941.
- [25] Omran, Refa'at Al-Tahir and others, Excavations of the western church, Qantara east area, seasons of excavation from 1984 to 2005 AD.
- [26] Hussein, Ahmed, Encyclopedia of the history of Egypt, 1, pp.140-145. E
- [27] Ders, Bal, Egypt from Alexander great until the Arab conquest, translation of Abdullatif Ahmed Hussein and Mohamed Awad Hussein, p.169.
- [28] Abdul Jawad, Nafin, monasteries of Wadi AL-Natroun, tourism archaeological study, p. 425.
- [29] Jabra, Jawdat, Coptic museum and old Cairo churches, p.19.
- [30] Kamel, Murad, Egypt civilization in the Coptic age, Dar AL- Alam AL- Arabi press, p.77.
- [31] Fawzy, Samir, ST. Mark and the establishment of the Alexandria church, translation of Nassem Ali, general authority for book, p.61.
- [32] Al-Abadi and Ismail, Hossam and Anter, Concise guide to monuments of Alexandria, Alexandria, university youth foundation, pp.7-19.
- [33] AL-Arini, AL-Baz (1961). Byzantine Egypt, Cairo, AL-Nahda AL-Arabia house, p.33.
- [34] Ahmed, Anayat Mohamed (1989). Emperor TraianusDickius and decision of ideological oppression, journal of faculty of archaeology, Cairo University, 3, p.166.
- [35] Choucair, Naoumbik (1995). History of ancient and modern Sinai and geography, edition of Saint Catherine monastery, pp.109-213-481-524-531.
- [36] Nashi, Ibrahim, Egypt in the eyes of the Romans from 30 B.C to 284A.D, 2, Egyptian general establishment for translation, authoring, review and publishing, p.139.
- [37] AL-Tabee, Ahmed (2012). Pelusium, archaeological and historical study, master thesis, higher institute of civilizations of the ancient near east, department of Egyptian civilization, Zagazig University, pp.39-40.
- [38] Habib and Yousef, Malika and Habib, The holy family, pp.12-13.
- [39] Nasser Khusraw (1983). Safer Naama, Nasser khusraw journey, AL-Riyad, pp.81-82.
- [40] Yaqut AL-Hamwi (1990). Mojam AL-Buldan, investigation of FaridAbd Al-Aziz AL-Gandi, 4, Beirut, Dar Sader, p.265.

- [41] Abu AL-Makarem (1895). Church and monasteries of Egypt, 2, Bulletin event, Oxford, pp.58-103.
- [42] AL-Maqrizi (1998). Al-Mawaeizwaleatabarbzikr al-khutatwalathar, 1, Beirut, scientific book house, 2, pp. 212-464.
- [43] Tsafrir, Y. (1993). The development of ecclesiastical architecture in Palestine, in IDEM, ancient churches revealed, Jerusalem, pp.1-16-315.
- [44] Ramadan, Ahmed (1974). Sinai Peninsula in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, master thesis, Islamic archaeology department, faculty of archaeology, Cairo University, p.19.
- [45] Barakat, AbdalrahimRehan (2006). Christian archaeology in Sinai, cultural archaeological study, master thesis, Islamic archaeology department, faculty of archaeology, Cairo University, pp.26-191-193-194.
- [46] Hamdan, Jamal (1993). Sinai, al halal book series, 511, p.87.
- [46] Ramadan, Ahmed (1977). Sinai Peninsula in the middle ages, Cairo, Central organization for university and school books and scientific letters, p.26.
- [47] Dionithus, Christianity in Sinai, Peninsula, p.23.
- [48] Ahmed, Ahmed Issa (2000). Wadi Tor Sinai monastery In the Fatimid period through the season of excavations in 1989, article of the third book of the forum of the Arab archaeologists, 2, Cairo, pp.767-769.
- [49] Ahmed, Ahmed Issa, Manuscripts and documents of ST. Catherine monastery in Sinai Peninsula, pp.105-124.
- [50] Habib, Raouf, The history of monasticism and monks in Egypt and their humanitarian impact on the world, AL-Mahaba library, pp.122-124-125.
- [51] Saint Peter, others (1936). Coptic synaxarium, 1, accident 10 Amshir, p.318, 2, pp.178-179.
- [52] AL-Masry, Iris Habib (1988). News of the holy martyrs according to the synaxarium secretary, 2, Cairo, Mary Girgis library, pp.140-143-406-407.
- [53] St. Michael, synaxarium Forge of the whole news of the prophets, messengers and the holy martyrs, 2, pp. 119-260-261.
- [54] Abdalhamid, Rafat (2000). Egyptian thought in the Christian period, Cairo, Dar Kebaa publishing, p.11.
- [55] Dorelian, Paul Chino (2002). The Egyptian saints, pp. 77-78-398-401.
- [56] AL-Masry, Iris Habib (2003). History of the Coptic church, pp.440-442.
- [57] IbnKathir. Interpretation of the great Quran, 3, p.226.
- [58] Awad Allah, Menkarios (1947). The lighthouse of the liturgies to explains the rites of the church, 1, p.3.
- [59] Bahman, RushdiWassef, The church interior environment and the spiritual dimension, p.48.

- [60] Kaddous and Abdel Fattah, Izzat and Mohamed (2002). Byzantine and Coptic antiquities, faculty of literature, Alexandria University, AL-Hadary press, p.284.
- [61] Butler, Alfrid (1993). Ancient Coptic churches in Egypt, 1, translated by Ibrahim Salama Ibrahim, general authority for book, p.24.
- [62] Al-Taher& Grossmann, Refaat& Peter. (1997). Excavation of the circular church at farama-west, MDAIK53, pp.255-260-262.
- [63] Grossmann & Hafiz, Peter & Mohammed. (1998). results of the (1995-1996) excavation in the north-west church of pelusium (farama-west), MDAIK54, pp.177-182.
- [64] Crowfoot, J.W. (1941). Early church in Palestine, London, p.99.
- [65] Dentzer, J.M. (1988). Fouillesfraco-syriennesa' l'est de l'arcnabateen (1985-1987), une nouvelle cathedrale a' bosra, corsi Ravenna 35, pp.13-28.
- [66] Balty, J. &Balty, J.CH. (1969). le cardetopographiqueethistoriqueapamee de Syria, recherches (1965-1968), fouillesd'apam'eedesyrie, Bruxelles, pp.29-46.
- [67] Balty, J.CH. (1981). Guide d'apamee, Bruxelles, p.146.
- [68] Patrich, J. (1993). The early church of the holy sepulcher in the light of excavation and restorations, in Y. Tsafirir, ancient churches revealed, Jerusalem, pp.101-117.
- [69] Deichmann, F.W. (1948). Fruhchristlichekirchen in Rom, Basel, p.25.
- [70] Ceschi, C. (1982). S. Stefano rotunda, Rome.
- [71] Butler, Alfrid (1996). Arab conquest to Egypt, translated by Farid Abo Hadid, 2, Cairo, Madbouli library, pp.305-309.
- [72] AbdalGhawad, Mustafa (1969). Ewan and the church in Islamic architecture, Sumer magazine, part1, 25, pp.172-173.
- [73] Papayuano, Afanjlws, Dier Sinai monastery, translated of SalibKhoury, issuing Dier Sinai monastery, pp.7-40.
- [74] Shenouda, Zaki (1968). Coptic history encyclopedia, 1, Cairo, p.29.