



Mansoura University
Faculty of Tourism and Hotels

**MONASTIC HEADRESSES IN COPTIC ART:
QASLAH OR QALANSUWA”?
AN ICONOGRAPHICAL STUDY ON COPTIC
ARTIFACTS FROM THE 10TH TILL THE 18TH CENTURY**

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Abstract

Monastic vestment composes a fundamental and crucial part of Coptic heritage. It distinguishes the monastic life and form a distinctive image of the new monk. Liturgical headdress was an early part of the monastic costume, and they were used to distinguish the monk in the monastic hierarchy. The qaslah and the qalansuwa are among those headdress applied on Coptic artifacts; and looks similar and confusing to distinguish among them thus; this paper aims to study their symbolism, history and depictions on Coptic artifacts from the 10th till the 18th century, through an iconographical and analytical methodology of work.

Keywords

Headdress, monastic, Qusla, qulunsua, Caps, Coptic art.

Introduction

Jewish and Christian environments introduced distinctive costumes as for women, virginity and even white dresses for Baptism to signify purity and new life. Prophets were distinguished for their camel clothes and animal skins in the desert. The early asceticism in Egypt witnessed an extreme poverty; hermits only wear their long beards or even their sleeping mats, later the basic model of the religious dress was the sleeveless white garment bare of decorations; a crucial change took place in the fourth century when clothes became a first rule in the monastic life¹. Later on; examples like *skhema*², *Koukle*³, *girdle*⁴, *the tunic*, and

¹ N. M. Gourdiier, Costume of the Religious, Coptic Encyclopedia 2 (Cairo, 1991), 654.

² A garment marked by a cross.

³ A hood, a qalansuwa or a cap.

sandals were introduced; they varied according to their level of asceticism, different materials as well as the personal preferences; thus it helped to distinguish one group of monks from other⁵.

It should be noticed that Jesus himself did not set special requirements for the dress of the new religion except for; his advices of using no gold nor silver nor copper and even he advised them not to carry a bag⁶. The Christian liturgy vestments; it can be either a developed form that had its origin in Jews priest' costumes⁷; or it is a development⁸ or it's the form of

⁴ A leather belt worn by soldiers.

⁵ N. M. Gourdiér, *Costume of the Religious, Coptic Encyclopedia 2* (Cairo, 1991), 653.

⁶ Matthew 10:9-10.

⁷ R. A. S. Macalister, *Ecclesiastical Vestment: their Development and History* (London, 1896), 2-3. Jews were the first convertors to Christianity thus the religious costume like dresses of the hermits and secular clergy of the Christians did not differ from their coreligionists. The Jews had

followed the orders of Moses in the Old Testament. امال جورجى، الملابس الكهنوتيه في الكنيسه القبطيه، أسبوع القبطيات السابع كنيسه العذراء بروض الفرج (القاهره، 1998) 28.

⁸ The Christian liturgies had developed out of the late antiquity recognizable shape; differences and similarities may connect and separate the Christian and Jews liturgies. Langer, Ruth and Leonhard, Clemens. "Liturgy, Ritual, Worship" In *Encyclopedia of Jewish-Christian Relations* Online edited by Walter Homolka (inactive as of May

the early contemporary dresses of nonbelievers⁹; both suggestions were accepted as well¹⁰. Further opinions agreed that the vestments of the eastern and western church were similar but each developed in its distinguishing way¹¹.

Liturgical vestments were used primary for the purpose of ‘Glory and for beauty’ in front of god to glory his attendance and presence¹². Other important perspectives should be put into consideration like; political, social religious and economic progress, fashions also affected the religious costumes and had its influences due to the successive cultures into Egypt; ancient Egyptians, Greco-Roman, Syrian and Byzantine¹³. Liturgical vestments¹⁴

2022), Rainer Kampling, Amy-Jill Levine, Christoph Marksches, Peter Schäfer and Martin Thurner. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter,

2021. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ejcro.4414975>.

⁹ R. A. S. Macalister, Ecclesiastical Vestment: their Development and History (London, 1896), 2-3.

¹⁰ H. Jenner, Christian symbolism (Chicago, 1910), 132-133.

¹¹ H. Norris, Church Vestments: Their Origins and Development (London, 1949), 9.

¹² 2 Corinthians 3:7-11.

¹³ N. M. Gourdiar, Costume of the Religious, Coptic Encyclopedia 2 (Cairo, 1991), 654.

¹⁴ Liturgical vestment should be consecrated by a bishop in the name of the father, the soul and the Holy Spirit. See: عيد المسيح الصليب البراموسي المسعودي ، الخولاجي المقدس (البحيره، 1992) .62-58

assigned to each rank can be witnessed in Egypt since the 4th century especially for bishops and deacons; a slight development during the 7th and 8th century like the phelonion¹⁵. Certain prayers and consecrations should be held rather than the usual appointment of the bishop himself and the order of his ordination¹⁶.

Coptic monastic vestments

By the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th century; the monastic vestments were almost in its final stage of development; no other new monastic pieces were added to the usual priesthood ordination order as follows; the seven pieces are: the tunic *تُونِيَه*, the taylasan, girdle *زَنَار*, epitachelion *بَطْرَشِيل* ، then the phelonion *لِيرَنَس*¹⁷. The different grades of the ecclesiastical hierarchy like bishops, priests and deacons, had their own liturgical vestments especially this of the episcopate.¹⁸

The bishop phelonion *الأفلونيه أو البرنس*¹⁹ or the chasuble²⁰ as mentioned by Butler²¹ was originally the formal dress of

¹⁵ R. Mikhail, Towards a History of Liturgical Vestment in the Coptic Rite, *Coptica* 15(Cairo, 2016), 65.

¹⁶ P. F. Bradshaw, *Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches of East and West* (New York, 1990), 148.

¹⁷ R. Mikhail, Towards a History of Liturgical Vestment in the Coptic Rite, *Coptica* 15(Cairo, 2016), 68.

¹⁸ W. Lyster, *The Cave Church of The White Monastery* (Cairo, 1999), 87.

¹⁹ Bulletin of Abba Nifin Jirjis Rashedi, *الملابس الكهنوتيه*, 3 (القاهره، 2020)، 125، *Athanasius for Christian Studies*.

prophets and kings²²; later on in Christianity it became the chief vestment worn by priests²³, bishops and patriarchs; colored in white but later on colors as black were introduced by the sixth century²⁴. The tunic was first known garment in the Coptic ecclesiastical vestments followed by the hood and the Omophorion, it is used to be made out of linen or silk ornamented with golden or silver threads²⁵.

Coptic monastic caps

The idea of covering the head in Christianity had its origin in Jewish cult; but it differed in its shape. Hoods in Coptic Church used to distinguish priests from bishops. Wearing a cloth on the head is connected to the apostolic tradition

²⁰ A long wide sleeveless dress open from neck downwards; usually made out of linen or silk. It is a rounded sleeveless loose robe. It represents the honor and divine righteousness of the priesthood the robe was also used by the kings & prophets in the Old & New Testament [the robe of Elijah 2 kings2:13, the robe of Aaron exodus 28:4, and the robe of Herod Acts 12: 21). G. Ferguson, Signs & symbols in Christian art. (London,1989),157.

²¹ A. J. Butler, Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt (Boston, 2005), 92.

²² 1Kings 11:29, 2 kings 2:13.

²³ In present churches; it is an outer vestment in the form of a sleeveless gown made of linen or silk and embroidered with crosses and some religious inscriptions. تادرس يعقوب ملطي، قاموس المصطلحات الكنسية، (القاهرة، 1991)، 52.

²⁴ منصور، فيكتور الأب الكنيسة، حققه علوم في النفيسة الجوهرة سبّاع، بن ، (1966. 319) القاهرة، الفرنسيكاني (المركز مؤلفات

الراهب أنثاسيوس المقاري، القديس الإلهي سر ملكوت الله، الجزء الأول²⁵ (القاهرة، 2011)، 5.

especially in the episcopal vestment as they occupy the same rank; this hood can either be attached or not attached to the phelonion²⁶.

Pope Gabriel II from the 11th century denied performing the liturgical prayers without being bareheaded; he was trying to stop the habits of the urban clergy. Later on by the 12th century the same habit was in use as the Coptic clergy to use headdresses and to cover their heads; by the 13th century it became a custom to cover their heads during clergy which is different than which is followed in nowadays churches as headdress should be worn during different prayers and ceremonies²⁷.

²⁶ Innemee, K., *Ecclesiastical Dress in the Medieval Near East* (Leiden, 1992), 26.

²⁷ R. Mikhail, *Towards a History of Liturgical Vestment in the Coptic Rite*, *Coptica* 15(Cairo, 2016), 66.

i- Qaslah

Known in Coptic by ‘ Koulla’ and in Arabic by qaslah ²⁸فصله; means the little or the small hut; as it resembles the shape of a little bell attached to the main garment or the phelonion²⁹. Fig.1. The phelonion resembles the mantle of Aaron the prophet; made out of silk or wool usually ornamented by religious decorative elements³⁰. The qaslah reserved only to the high priest or the head of the priests³¹.



Fig.1. A painting on canvas depicts patriarch Peter VII from the 18th century. After; Z. Skalova and G. Gabra, icons of the Nile Valley, 221.

The origin of the word qaslah was driven a Latin word given to a whole vestment that has a hood attached to its back. This hood had also a Syrian influence as an equivalent

²⁸ O. H. E. Burmester, The Egyptian or Coptic Church (Cairo, 1967), 30.

²⁹ It is similar to the Latin cope it may differ that the Latin one is usually attached by a hood at the back, while the Coptic Burnus; the hood at the back is only reserved for patriarch and bishops. الراهب أنثاسيوس المقاري، القديس الإلهي سر (الجزء الأول) (ملكوته الله، الجزء الأول) ، 5. (2011، القاهرة) And A. Basilios, Liturgical Vestments, Coptic Encyclopedia 4 (Cairo, 1991), 1476

³⁰ M. M. Anwar, Des Pièces Représentant les Insignes et les Vêtements Liturgiques Coptes Conservés dans les Musées Archéologiques D'egypte, Journal of The Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, Volume 12, Issue 2, (Cairo, 2016), 18.

³¹ R. Mikhail, Towards a History of Liturgical Vestment in the Coptic Rite, Coptica 15(Cairo,2016), 60.

named as ‘qaslah ’ forms a monastic mantle attached by a hood; which still in use in nowadays Syrian churches. The same word “qaslah” was used to name a liturgical vestment means chasuble; being the priestly upper gown; later on this term was narrowed to be held to distinguish the hood of the phelonion in nowadays churches. The Coptic language signifies the word qaslah for only the hood³².

The qaslah or the hood was first introduced by Pope Cyril I the 24th known by “pillar of religion” who was the first one to popularize the usage of the qaslah in the year 431 AD; when he preside Ephesus council³³. It was not an obligatory to put on chasuble along with qaslah during prayers but it was more like practice as in the monastery of Abū Maqar as mentioned in a manuscript from the 16th century kept in the library of St. Antony³⁴. According to the order of the priesthood in the 13th century and during the ordination of the priest; the clergyman must be dressed the phelonion without the qaslah³⁵. By the 14th century it became a must to place the phelonion attached with the qaslah if the ordination was to a bishop or a patriarch³⁶.

³² K.Innemeer, Ecclesiastical Dress in the Medieval Near East (Leiden, 1992),23.

³³ الملابس أي الشرق اكليروس زي الليتورجيات المسيح، عبد يسى (209)، 1931 (القاهرة، الرابع الكرمة الجزء مجلة، ”الكهنوتية

فليمون كامل، الملابس الكهنوتية في العباده الليتورجية و الحياه اليوميه ³⁴ (2021، 2018) (القاهرة،

³⁵ R. Mikhail, Towards a History of Liturgical Vestment in the Coptic Rite, Coptica 15(Cairo, 2016), 68.

³⁶ R. Mikhail, Towards a History of Liturgical Vestment in the Coptic Rite, Coptica 15(Cairo, 2016), 70.

ii- The monk's hood the (*qalansuw*)

Sozomen the historian has also mentioned in the 4th century; that the monks³⁷ of Egypt used to wear such qalansuwas to symbolize innocence, purity and childhood³⁸. According to Abo al- Makaram in 11th century; St. Antony³⁹ was the first one who adopted the distinctive black dress attached with the black hood or qalansuwa⁴⁰. It resembles the soldier's helmet adorned with crosses to protect him against devil strikes⁴¹.



Fig.2. An icon depicts the visit of St. Antony to St. Paul. Coptic Museum of Cairo; After: وزارة الثقافة، المجلس الاعلى للآثار المتحف القبطي:مرايا التاريخ ، عبق العراقة (القاهرة، 2006) ، 77.

³⁷ Hood or qalansuwas were an outer garment used by both sexes later on it became a part of the monastic costume. M. Davenport, The Book of Costume (New York, 1948), 99.

³⁸ W. Lyster, The Cave Church of The White Monastery (Cairo, 1999), 68.

³⁹ The father of the monasticism whose fame had spread out of the Egyptian desert; Egyptian by birth from an illustrious family from Come, he led the movement of the monasticism; he was a young contemporary of Paul the Thebes. Sozomen, Philostorgius, Photius, and Edward Walford, The Ecclesiastical History of Sozomen: the Ecclesiastical history of Philostorgius, as epitomized by Photius, translated by Edward Walford (London, 1855), 30 and [D. L. O'Leary](#), The Saints of Egypt (New York, 1937), 76.

⁴⁰ الراهبان (وادي بستان، أبيفانيوس نيافة الأنبا المقاري، أبيفانيوس الراهب 2013 ، (22) ، النظرون،

⁴¹ الأنبا مارتيروس الأسقف العام، تاريخ القلنسوه (القاهرة، 2016) ، 10.

Each of the Coptic hierarchy enjoys its own ecclesiastical vestment; the monastic hood was assigned to early monks. The new monk should receive a sleeveless tunic, goat leather mantle and a qalansuwa (or sometimes two qalansuwa) and a sandal, the qalansuwa was worn during the time of Eucharistic meals despite the fact that both monk's belts and mantels were put aside⁴². It is a piece of cloth stitched together to form a cap to cover the head in the form of a hood usually covers the head and the back part of the monk's head known by the Coptic word "koulla" It should be fastened just under the chin to secure a tight fitting to the head⁴³. Fig.2. shows saint Antony wearing the black hood (*galansuwah*).

In early monasteries *galansuwah* was depicted plain, or decorated by only one or two crosses which symbolize protection and following of Jesus and his principles⁴⁴, and a few religious decorative elements⁴⁵, this type of hoods had disappeared from Coptic monasteries and later introduced after the Syrian model.⁴⁶

⁴² الأنبا مارتيروس الأسقف العام، تاريخ القلنسوه (القاهرة، 2016) ، 5. ⁴³ الثالث الجزء الكنسية، المصطلحات المقارى، معجم أثناسيوس الراهب (القاهرة ، 2003) 112.

⁴⁴ العامر، سموالرهينة السريان العذراء دير ورئيس أسقف متاؤس الأنبا (القاهرة ، 1984) 113.

⁴⁵ Nowadays qalansuwah is decorated by twelve crosses six at each side and a large one on the front referring to Jesus the Christ and the twelve apostles.

⁴⁶K. Innemee, Ecclesiastical Dress in the Medieval Near East (Leiden, 1992), 117.

- Iconographical Study:

Plat. One	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
Primary shape of qaslah	mural paintings	Samuel, Pishoi the Great, and John the little	Monastery of Saint Antony at the Red Sea the southern nave of St. Antony main church ⁴⁷	early 13 th century

Description: The saints are depicted standing raising their hands in a prayer attitude on different raising hands level. They are depicted bearded wearing the phelonion or the over dark tunic or garments with different colors; the phelonion of the two saints on the left side looks identical; it covers their chest with an opening on its frontal part shorter from the front and run longer from the back; it is colored with geometrical patterns; only the middle saint; his phelonion is ornamented with a white rim. The saint on the right side had a slightly different decoration pattern on his phelonion in the form of crosses. The three figures are wearing the qaslah? on their heads. It is not attached to the phelonion



Pl.1. Monastery of Saint Antony at the Red Sea, After Bolman, *Monastic*

⁴⁷ Saint Antony lived during the fourth and early fifth century at almost the same time of Mercurius the Great in a spiritual friendship. E. Bolman, *Monastic Visions: Wall paintings in the Monastery of St. Antony at the Red Sea* (Connecticut, 2002) p. 53.

and had its different color and decoration; the two on the left had some geometrical strips while the one on the right had a solid pattern. The three headdress looks like pointed headdresses in its upper part.

Plate. Two	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
qaslah	an illustrated Gospel, drawn by Saint Michael, Bishop of Damitta	Pope Mark III, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark the 73rd.	the French national library in Paris ⁴⁸	11 th - 12 ^t century.

Description: This illustrated Gospel has been copied and illustrated by Saint Michael; during the papacy of Pope Mark III thus his photo was placed on its first page. He is represented sitting on a low chair with no back surmounted by an arcade, and a decorative rim contains Arabic calligraphy. He is depicted wearing a dark red tunic with wide sleeves leaving his right arm uncovered while he is holding a Tau-staff in his left hand. The tunic is surmounted with a blue phelonion with a decorative rim covering a part of its shoulders and chest, a qaslah is covering his head with the same blue color of the phelonion. The pope's head is depicted



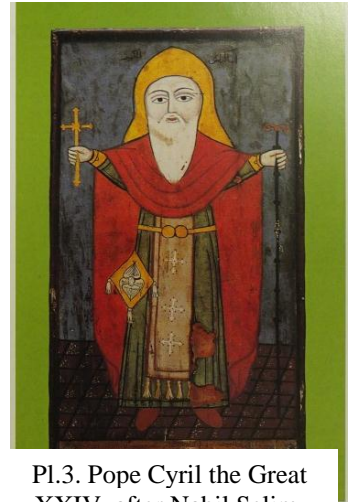
Pl.2. Pope Mark III, photographed by the researcher

⁴⁸ E. Stephen, *Le Mystère Du Manuscrit Copte, Pages Chrétiennes d'Égypte: Les Manuscrits Des Coptes 13* (Paris, 2004), 16.

completely covered by the qaslah , the example of the qaslah here is very clear as it hold its shape and volume putting in consideration that the profile aspect gave a clear example of this headdress rather than the usual depiction of the frontal faces in Coptic art.

Plate. Three	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
qaslah	Coptic icons	Pope Cyril the Great XXIV, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of St. Mark the 24 th	Old Cairo	The end of the 17 th or the beginning of the 18 th century.

Description: he was the 24th patriarch of Alexandria in 4th century (412-444 A.D) known by ‘Amood el- Deen, during his life time a crucial controversy took due to the teaching of Nestorius; thus pope Cyril held a protest and leaded a vital role in the council of Ephesus; as a result Nestorius thoughts were condemned⁴⁹. He is depicted standing raising his two arms as a sign of victory holding a cross in his right hand and a *Tau* stick in his left arm, a napkin is shown hanging down on the left side. He is depicted as a bearded man wearing an olive tunic surmounted by red Phelonion and a qaslah painted in bright yellow color, the details of his headdress are clear it covers his head; ears and back neck the pointy edge is clear here from a frontal view. His name is written in Arabic on the background with clear letters. It is worth mention that Pope Cyril the Great was the first one to adopt using the qaslah during Ephesus council.



Pl.3. Pope Cyril the Great XXIV, after Nabil Selim, Coptic Icons II, p. 129.

⁴⁹ N. S. Atalla, Coptic Icons II (Cairo, 1998), p. 129..

Plate. Four	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
qaslah ?	Incised painting in glazed bowl.	a clergyman holding a lamp or an incense burner	Victoria and Albert museum in London ⁵⁰ .	11 th century ⁵¹ .

Description: this piece of art was found in Luxor, dates back to the Fatimid period, it depicts a clergyman? In a standing position facing the viewer as one of the most important characteristic features of the Coptic art, there is an abstracted form of the tree gives the impression of a cross is depicted next to him. He is wearing a long tunic with wide sleeves, his facial features reflects somber and mercy, holding an incense burner or maybe a lamp in his right hand while his left hand is placed upon his chest. His tunic is lavishly decorated by circular motives; a belt is placed upon his waist and a decorative rim surrounding his sleeves and collar; a religious cap or a qaslah headdress? Is drawn to cover his



Pl. 4. A Coptic clergymen holding a lamp or an incense burner?
https://islamicart.museumwnf.org/database_item.php?id=object;ISL;uk:Mus02;3;ar

⁵⁰ A. Contadini, and Victoria and Albert Museum, Fatimid Art at the Victoria and Albert Museum (London, 1998), 86.

⁵¹ Z. Skalova and G. Gabra, Icons of the Nile Valley (Cairo, 2006), 96.

head, in the form of a hood with a pointed edge seen from the front it covers his ears and the back of his neck, and left unattached to his tunic. The headdress is slightly decorated with curved motives while the frontal part is left plain

Plate. Five	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
qaslah	a miniature in a Coptic manuscript	Apa sawris Ibn el- Muqaffa' Bishop of el- Ashmonin.	Library of Saint Antony, number: 104, second page ⁵² .	tenth century ⁵³

⁵² https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y0ue-8cJ_0wtHxUjsj6ZSnn8B_x8FrGt/view

⁵³ <https://coptic-treasures.com/person/st-severus-of-ashmonin/>

Description: Apa sawris Ibn el- Muqaffa' the bishop of el-Ashmonin in Upper Egypt during the Fatimid period around the tenth century. He accomplished many works among which; History of the patriarchs of Alexandria, and the arrangement of the priesthood. He is depicted sitting on a low back ornamented chair, holding a cross with a base in his right hand and folding the other hand on his chest.

He is wearing a dark green tunic, bearded, barefooted. He is wearing a qaslah distinguished by its red color and connected by a piece of cloth covers the back of his neck and ears his head is surrounding by a halo as well, an Arabic calligraphy is seen at the background read as: " صورت الأب ساويرس ابن المقفع "



Pl.5. Apa sawris Ibn el-Muqaffa' the bishop of el-Ashmonin in a Coptic manuscript kept Library of Saint Antony

Plate. Six	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
Qalansuwa	mural painting	A group of Saints	church of Virgin Mary, the eastern chapel at the monastery of St. Macaruis at Wadi el Natrun;	the 15 th century ⁵⁴

⁵⁴ G. Gabra, T. Vivian, Coptic monasteries: Egypt's monastic art and architecture (Cairo, 2008), 44.

Description: the opposite plate is an aquarelle copy after Leroy; this group of monks is all represented standing under an arcade, wearing ample patterned robes, they are bearded, their heads is surrounded by a halo while they are depicted wearing qalansuwa, it seems like its colors are lighter than their robes color. The middle depicted saint has a circular headdress while the two saints on both sides their qalansuwa had a slightly pointy hood. The Coptic qalansuwa covers their head, ears leaving only their faces in an oval shape. The qalansuwa s are depicted plain with no ornaments or decorations that is unfortunately due to the fact that it is aquarelle copy; while the original mural paintings in a very bad state of preservations.



Pl.6. A mural painting shows a group of monks standing under an arcade, after: Gabra, Coptic monasteries 44

Plate. Seven	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
qolnswah	Coptic icons	St. Shenute; abbot of the monastery of St. Shenute (white monastery) and his disciple	The church of St. Mercurius at Old Cairo	19 th century ⁵⁵ .

Description: St. Shenute is one of the most important figures in Coptic heritage, he led the leadership of the white monastery; he also allowed using his monastery to shelter refugees in time of crisis in Egypt⁵⁶ is depicted standing next to one of his disciples, but represents the main scene in the center of the icon to reflect his importance. He is wearing a long blue tunic and a phelonion in a beige color holding a Tau stick on his right hand, his disciple is depicted just next to him wearing a dark olive tunic and a red outer garment, wearing no headdress except for a halo surrounding his head.



Pl.7.A icon depicts St. Shenute, after: Gabra, the churches of Egypt, 105.

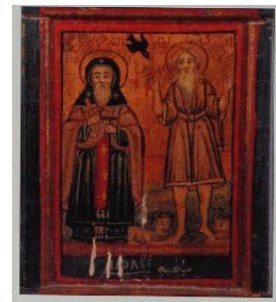
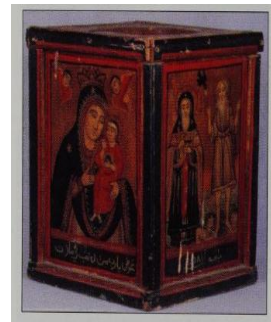
⁵⁵ G. Gabra, G. J. M. van Loon, C. Ludwig, and Sh. Sunbul, *The Churches of Egypt: from the Journey of the Holy Family to the Present Day* (Cairo, 2012), 105.

⁵⁶ C. T. Schroeder, *Monastic bodies: Discipline and salvation in Shenoute of Atripe* (Philadelphia, 2007), 22.

The qalansuwa worn by Abbot Shenute is colored in black covering his head, ears and neck and reaches his chest. It is plain with no decorative elements or religious symbols except for two golden crosses decorating his shoulders and a rim running around the edges of the qalansuwa .

Plate. Eight	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
Qalansuwa	wooden chalice box	St. Antony and St. Paul	monastery of Saint Paul	the 17 th century ⁵⁷

Description: the scenes on the chalice box commemorate the visit of St. Antony to St. Paul from one side while the other side represents a depiction of Virgin Mary holding Jesus Christ. St. Antony next to St. Paul while the crow holding the half bread is clearly seen depicted e upper register; two lions are approaching the legs of St. Paul as a symbolism of his burying. St. Antony is standing wearing dark tunic surmounted by yellow phelonion and a Coptic qalansuwa. The qalansuwa is plain tightly fit on his head, ears and back of his head stretches tell his shoulders. It is colored in black decorated by only three crosses one on the top of his head while two crosses are decorating his shoulders, a halo is seen on the head of the two figures.



Pl. 8. Wooden chalice box depicts the visit of St. Antony; to St. Paul, after: Lyster, Monastery of Saint Paul, 84.

⁵⁷ W. Lyster, Monastery of Saint Paul (Cairo, 1999), 84.

Plate. Nine	Type of art	Portrayed figures	Location	Dating
Qelnsua	icon	Markus al-Antuni	Monastery of St. Antony, Egypt	The end of the 17 th and the beginning of 18 th century ⁵⁸

Description: One of the important figures in the monastery of St. Antony where he spent his early days before moving to the monastery of St. Paul; sources mention that he dug his tomb by his own self and started fasting; thus he was sent back to his own monastery. He inspired many of his students who turned to be patriarchs later on. He is represented standing wearing a light red tunic and a blue phelonion resting his right hand on a Tau stick while his left hand is holding a praying rope; the background is full of floral motives and decorations to reflect nature while the ground is decorated by Arabic calligraphy. The saint is depicted bearded with a long white beard covers his chin and half of his face, while his head is covered by the qalansuwa painted in black ornamented with white crosses and other



PI.9. St. Markus al-Antuni, after; Swanson, *The Monastery of St. Paul in Historical Context*, p. 49.

⁵⁸ Swanson, *The Monastery of St. Paul in Historical Context*, in W. Lyster, *The Cave Church of Paul the Hermit at the Monastery of St. Paul* (New Haven, 2008), 49-50.

decorative elements colored in white, the headdress form a distinguished shape around the saint face forming waves while the rest of it resting upon his shoulders and covers a part of it. The stability of the qalansuwa affirms that most probably this cap used to be fastened just under the chin to secure its arrangement.

- Analytical study

	Coptic ' Koulla' or qaslah قصله	The monk's hood the (qalansuwh) قانسوه
Symbolism	Symbolize innocence, purity and childhood.	It resembles the soldier's helmet adorned with crosses to protect him against devil strikes
Shape	It resembles the shape of a little bell attached to the main garment or the phelonion	Hood or qalansuwa , firmly fitting the head covers the ears, the back neck, and firmly fastened under the chin
usage	To distinguish the Bishop or the patriarch	The early monks
First usage	First introduced by Pope Cyril I the 24 th known by "pillar of religion" in Ephesus council	St. Antony was the first one who adopted the distinctive black dress attached with the black hood or qalansuwa
Rules of wearing	It was not an obligatory to put on chasuble along with qaslah during prayers; by the 14th century it became a must to place the phelonion attached with the qaslah if the ordination was to a bishop or a patriarch; except for the	A fundamental part of the monastic dress even during the time of Eucharistic meals despite the fact that both monk's belts and mantels were put aside

	monastery of St. Mercurius when they used to wear it during their prayers.	
Halo	Usually depicted surrounded by a halo	Usually depicted surrounded by a halo
Depiction in Coptic art	Rarely on icons	Frequently depicted on icons
Color	Depicted in different colors	Depicted only in black color
Figures depicted wearing this headdress	Patriarchs, bishops, monks, and saints	Only monks

- **Final remarks:**
- **How can we distinguish between the Qaslah and Qalansuwa in Coptic art?**

It should be stated that the two headdresses were among the monastic liturgical vestment reserved only for monastic hierarchy; the difficulty of the recognition based on that one of the main features of the Coptic art is that; it depicts figures on a frontal pose; thus the volume of the qaslah was hardly recognized except for profile depictions as in Coptic manuscripts; but:

- The usage of the qaslah was only reserved for bishops or patriarchs but some mural paintings depict saints and monks wearing it as in the example in the monastery of St. Antony; thus this was an early usage of the qaslah and formed an early stage of its development. The early depictions of qaslah on Coptic mural paintings were most probably an early form of the qaslah which developed later on to distinguish the Coptic patriarchs.
- The monastic hood, qalansuwa can be distinguished by its decorations. It is usually black; adorned with crosses one at the frontal part on the forehead of the saint and one on his side on the part covering his shoulders.
- While the qaslah was depicted in different colors and different decoration ornament, some examples followed the same patterns of the tunic even the geometrical ones.

- The recognition of the qalansuwa or the qaslah helps to recognize the depicted figures and his monastic hierarchy.
- It is much easier to recognize the difference among them on manuscript rather than Coptic artifacts because figures were usually depicted in a side view.

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