

# NEWSLETTER

## UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW POLISH CENTRE OF MEDITERRANEAN ARCHAEOLOGY IN CAIRO

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### EDITORIAL

The present Newsletter has been introduced as a means to provide a regular update on the activities of the Cairo branch of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology. The brief notices in it are designed to present the Centre's current archaeological researches in Egypt, based on reports submitted by mission and project heads. Two issues are planned annually: the summer one to present the results of the winter and spring seasons, the winter one to cover work carried out in autumn.

Detailed annual reports on all the archaeological investigations reviewed in the Newsletter, as well as on other projects undertaken by the Polish Centre in Syria, Sudan and Cyprus, are published in *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean (PAM)*, a periodical edited by Michał Gawlikowski and Wiktor A. Daszewski, published by the Centre. Consecutive volumes appear at the beginning of the year succeeding the reported activities. Interested institutions (and individuals) based in Egypt can receive PAM (current and back volumes) through the Polish Centre in Cairo. Those based elsewhere should contact the Centre's Warsaw office at Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28, Warszawa 64, Poland, tel/fax (+48 22) 265 216.

To receive the Cairo Newsletter, please send your request with address to the Polish Centre of Archaeology in Cairo at 11 Mahalla, Cairo-Heliopolis, fax 290 44 59.

*Tomasz Herbich*

### DEIR EL BAHARI, THE TEMPLE OF QUEEN HATSHEPSUT, PRESERVATION MISSION

The Polish-Egyptian Preservation Mission headed by Dr. Franciszek Pawlicki carried out its fourth consecutive season (after the 1989-1992 interval) from November 1995 to March 1996. The Supreme Council for Antiquities was represented by Mr. Azab Ismail Ali and Mohammed Shawky.

Restoration of the Solar Complex and the main court on the Third Terrace was continued. The works also comprised two Osiride statues in the Upper Portico. The conservation of painted reliefs, plaster and stone blocks progressed concurrently.

Recent egyptological and architectural studies have allowed 23 blocks to be attributed to the Upper Court's southern wall and repositioned in the eastern section of the upper register, thus completing its restoration. The recreated scene is a huge depiction of pharaohs being led by a pleiad of gods (Monthu, Amun, Thoth, Mut) and receiving the heb-sed jubilee sign, the nh sign, etc. Research also permitted the architrave settings to be restored in the Upper Court colonnade. The northern wall of the vestibule of Re-Horakhty achieved its full original height with over 50 blocks being replaced in their previous positions. The scene depicts Tuthmosis III offering incense to the god Atum (ir.t sntr). The niche in the eastern section of the wall was also restored, undergoing a complete conservation treatment. Almost 30 decorated blocks or fragments were replaced in the walls of the bark room in the main sanctuary and several more have been prepared for restoration in the coming

season. Soot-covered painted reliefs on the western and northern walls were cleaned and protected.

Preparations have been made for execution in the coming season of a number of engineering and egyptological projects (e.g. restoration of the Lower Ramp and of the Upper Court's northern wall, introduction of a drainage system above the Lower Shrine of Anubis). Work also continued on the consolidation of decorated blocks gathered in the temple's open-air storeroom.

### DEIR EL BAHARI, THE TEMPLE OF QUEEN HATSHEPSUT, EPIGRAPHIC MISSION

The Polish Epigraphic Mission to the Hatshepsut temple, headed by Dr. Janusz Karkowski, worked in Deir el-Bahari in autumn 1995 and spring 1996. The publication of the Hathor Shrine in the Hatshepsut temple (by Dr. Karkowski and Dr. Nathalie Beaux, IFAO) is in preparation. The first of two volumes is devoted to the shrine's architecture, the building stages and decoration of walls, columns and architraves.

Field work this year focused on making the necessary corrections and additions to the reduced drawings of the walls of the shrine's colonnade and to the final plates of the Hathor river feast (in 1:1 scale). The task of restoring destroyed scenes and texts is of particular importance in the case of the walls of the shrine's outer colonnade, rebuilt with many obvious mistakes in the twenties and thirties by Emile Baraize. Work has already advanced on recovering and attributing to the missing sections stone fragments now kept in the mission's stores, and this

season it was possible to make the proper restoration drawings of entire scenes. Research has provided new information for the correct understanding of the Hathor Shrine decoration; for example, one of the restored scenes on the northern wing of the eastern wall of the Outer Hypostyle shows Hatshepsut receiving the menat-necklace from Hathor. The accompanying text in four columns finds parallels in the song addressed by the royal children to the pharaoh in the famous Story of Sinuhe. All the important details of the large scene on the south wall of the same hypostyle were determined, including the texts; it shows the king consecrating offerings amassed before the statue of a cow. Only small additional fragments were reintroduced into the better preserved, northern part of the Outer Hypostyle's eastern wall, but research in the stores has led to the identification of a significant number of blocks from the top of the unpreserved southern stretch of this wall. The blocks bear the complete royal titles of Tuthmosis III and most of Hathor's address. Consequently, it became possible to attribute by elimination other blocks to less well preserved walls.

Significant progress on the restoration and documentation of the Hathor shrine's wall decoration has facilitated the process of identifying smaller fragments which can add the missing details to damaged scenes. Special emphasis was placed on the study of the colonnade texts; the places reworked in antiquity were subjected to particularly minute verification in an attempt to restore the original texts of Hatshepsut's times for proper interpretation. A photographic documentation project proceeded in the shrine's interior.

### **DEIR EL BAHARI, TEMPLE OF TUTHMOSIS III, PRESERVATION MISSION**

The Polish-Egyptian mission to the Tuthmosis III temple at Deir el-Bahari, headed by Prof. Jadwiga Lipińska, was concerned mainly with restoration and documentation. The work was carried out between January and March 1996. The Supreme Council for Antiquities was represented by Mr. Said Gubril Mohammed.

The richly painted wall reliefs from the temple, found broken, have now been reintegrated as blocks by restorers, following provisional assembly by egyptologists. Work proceeded on the reintegration of one of the temple walls inside the mission's stores at Deir el-Bahari. Once it is completed, a site museum can be opened in this part of the stores. Six blocks were re-erected during the past season, and the remaining ones should be added in the next two seasons.

At the site of the temple itself, one of the broken jambs of a great granite doorway was re-erected and the base of one of the large 32-sided column in the middle

of the former hypostyle hall was fully restored and protected.

### **VALLEY OF THE KINGS, TOMB OF RAMESSES VI, EPIGRAPHIC RESEARCH**

In February 1996, Prof. Adam Łukaszewicz carried out his first survey of Greek graffiti in the tomb of Ramesses VI in the Valley of the Kings (tomb no. 9). This new research project, which will have its continuation, has been designed to address questions connected with the Egyptian Memnon. The choice of the tomb of Ramesses VI was determined by the knowledge that in the Graeco-Roman period the monument had been regarded as the tomb of Memnon, compelling many ancient visitors to immortalize their stay in graffiti left on the walls of the tomb.

This season's two-week survey depended on locating and studying a number of graffiti from the Roman period, selected from the one thousand or so items published by J. Baillet in 1926. Baillet's reading were compared with the original texts. The results will be published as an article in an upcoming issue of JJP (no. 26, planned to appear next year).

### **ALEXANDRIA, KOM EL-DIKKA, PRESERVATION AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL MISSIONS**

The Polish-Egyptian Preservation and Archaeological Mission directed by Dr. Eng. Wojciech Kołataj worked from October 1995 to June 1996. Archaeological excavations, carried out in the spring of 1996, were headed by Dr. Grzegorz Majcherek. The Supreme Council for Antiquities was represented by Mr. Ahemd Mousa.

The present season saw the continuation of conservation measures both in the theater and the bath complex, as well as the cisterns.

In the theater, a large section of the uppermost row of seriously deteriorated seats was replaced with new ones. Two large fragmentary columns were reassembled in the portico fronting the theater. In the baths work focused on restoring the southern part of the outer wall (completely reconstructed additional buttress with part of abutting wall). A marble column flanking the bath entrance was re-erected in the frigidarium. A considerable fragment of the foundations of the main gate was thoroughly reconstructed, as well as stretches of walls of the vaulted entrance to the service area, as part of a general goal to restore the underground service area.

The cisterns were the focus of this season's activities. With the completing of work on the eastern facade, the project entered a new stage. Current tasks include the restoration of the huge perimeter wall encircling the public buildings' quarter (a long stretch was restored) and the conservation of the structure's eastern corridor;

a considerable part of the wall faces of this corridor was consolidated and protected during the past season.

As part of a general development project to open the southern part of the site to visitors, close to 40 m of the modern revetment wall were built.

Continued archaeological excavations of Early Roman domestic architecture in the central part of the site succeeded in clearing almost the whole area of the Roman house which has been under exploration in recent years. The unexpectedly well-preserved building follows a Greek plan, featuring a central, pseudo-peristyled courtyard with rooms grouped around it. Investigations focused on the eastern wing which accommodated a number of rooms serving typically domestic purposes. The house was found to be richly decorated, reflective of the occupants' rather high social status. In addition to a fine polychrome mosaic uncovered in 1995, excavators brought to light a marble pavement embellished with an opus sectile panel in the center. One of the more interesting finds is a fine marble head of Alexander the Great, bringing up to five the total number of statuary from the house. Recovered archaeological data suggests a construction date in the very beginning of the 1st cent. AD; the house remained in occupation, with some changes and modifications to the layout, until at least the end of the 3rd cent. AD. A test pit dug in one of the rooms of the Roman house revealed remains of another structure of roughly similar layout, presumably a dwelling too, dated to Ptolemaic times to judge by the finds. The most interesting conclusions arise from an urbanistic study of the building's location. The house was built apparently along a small side street which divided up the large insula into smaller quarters. Some of the rooms facing the street appear to have been used as shops. The discovery of this hitherto unknown street provides new evidence for the long-discussed problem of ancient Alexandria's city plan.

Another partly preserved Early Roman structure was explored in a trench abutting the northeastern corner of the cistern. The uncovered set of water basins forms what appears to be a private bath installation belonging to yet another house. Of the finds from this area, a finely sculpted male portrait head of black basalt deserves special mention.

### **MARINA EL-ALAMEIN, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MISSION**

The Polish Archaeological Mission to Marina el-Alamein directed by Prof. Wiktor A. Daszewski carried out explorations in March 1996, on three sites within necropolis. The Supreme Council of Antiquities was represented by Mr. Mohammed Ali Abd el-Razek.

On one of these sites, two huge underground hypogea were uncovered, each measuring 24 m in length and approached by a long staircase roofed over with slabs of limestone. The steps led down to a square open-air court with an altar in the middle. The rock-

hewn court was located about 8 m below ground level and gave entrance to a funerary chamber extending along the tomb's main longitudinal axis.

The first tomb had one large funerary chamber containing 18 loculi for the dead disposed along the three sides. An offering table was cut along the rear wall under the lower row of loculi.

In the second tomb, there was a two-pillar portico on the west side opening into a funerary chamber with four loculi, two of them hewn in the rear wall, facing the entrance. The upper loculus had once been sealed with a slab and decorated with a pediment, now lost. On three sides of the hall there were large rock-cut beds (kline) and in the space between them there stood a horned altar. The only small finds here were two glass unguentaria or lacrymaria and a glass rod with spiral ornament. The other funerary chamber in this tomb was located on the longitudinal axis, opening from the court's southern side. It was very large and provided with two pseudo-Doric columns hewn out of bedrock in the middle. All of the eighteen loculi cut on three sides contained skeleton burials. A single burial of an elderly man was found in the trench cut in the floor alongside the offering table abutting the south wall. Explorations revealed ancient looting: disturbed bones, sealing slabs removed and broken. A few local and imported amphorae sherds were found.

A much bigger tomb was discovered to the west of the two above-mentioned structures. This season, only a part of the banquet-hall pavilion with two large beds was cleared. All the tombs date to the 1st and 2nd century AD. Characteristically, the tombs were arranged next to each other, along a latitudinal axis with entrances always facing north. This was obviously not a haphazard layout, but a deliberate arrangement with the structures forming an impressive funerary complex which bordered one of the avenues of the necropolis and which belonged to the notabilities of the ancient town.

Excavations undertaken in a hypogeum uncovered a few years ago (56) concentrated on a well located in the corner of the court, important for understanding the funerary rites that were performed during funeral celebrations and on anniversaries. The well was found to be about 10 m deep, square in section, and provided with steps on two sides to facilitate climbing down. Water was reached 16 m below the present-day ground surface.

### **MARINA EL-ALAMEIN, PRESERVATION MISSION**

The Marina el-Alamein preservation project was carried out by a joint Polish-Egyptian Mission directed by Prof. Stanisław Medeksza from March to May 1996. The Supreme Council for Antiquities was represented by Mr. Mohammed Ali Abd el-Razek. The project's goal is to preserve a series of imposing architectural structures excavated at the site, in view not only of safeguarding

the buildings themselves, but also of developing the area as a prospective tourist destination. The first stage of the project is to restore dwellings in the ancient city's center, excavated by Egyptian archaeologists in 1985-87 and constituting an unique example of well-preserved Early Roman 1st-2nd century AD domestic architecture, and to integrate them into one large continuous complex of urban architecture.

Accordingly, the season was devoted to the buildings' preservation, anastylosis and partial reconstruction. As a result of current activities, House no.9 has been completed almost in its entirety, and work on another dwelling is considerably advanced. Activities covered various aspects of preservation, combining thorough research and actual restoration procedures. Walls which were heavily damaged by exposure to salty rains and frequent sand-storms - characteristic features of the local marine climate - had to be restructured and consolidated, and protected with a wall-coping well-insulated against penetration by rainwater. Missing fragments of the construction, mainly door jambs and thresholds were restored in new stone. The limestone drums of a number of peristyle columns were reassembled and topped with original Ionic capitals wherever possible. The cellars' and cisterns' preserved barrel vaults were repaired and consolidated. Clearing of the ancient drainage system was meant to ensure the building's proper draining. As a first step to the planned landscaping of the area, the excavation zone was extended, giving the building an appearance that has turned it into one of the site's landmarks.

## LECTURES

1. Karol Myśliwiec: *Polish-Egyptian rescue excavations at Tell Atrib (Athribis). Recent discoveries* (Oct. 25, 1995)
2. Włodzimierz Godlewski: *Polish excavation at Naqlun. Autumn 1996* (Nov. 14, 1995)
3. Wojciech Kołataj: *Restoration work at Kom el-Dikka. Future perspectives* (Nov. 11, 1995)
4. Grzegorz Majcherek: *Polish excavations in Alexandria (Kom el-Dikka). Recent discoveries* (Dec. 12, 1995)
5. Władysław Kubiak: *Medieval Alexandria in written sources and archaeological research. Main problems and prospects* (Jan. 16, 1996)

6. Michał Gawlikowski: *Palmyra - a city in the Syrian desert* (Feb. 6, 1996)
7. Wiktor A. Daszewski: *The people, the tombs and the town. Excavations at Marina el-Alamein* (Feb. 27, 1996)
8. Adam Łukaszewicz: *Observation on the Egyptian Memnon* (Mar. 12, 1996)
9. Jadwiga Lipińska: *Recent results of work on the restoration of the Tuthmoside reliefs at Deir el-Bahari* (Apr. 2, 1996)
10. Zbigniew Szafranski: *Temple reliefs from Tell el-Daba. A recent reconstruction* (Apr. 16, 1996).

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