

NEWSLETTER

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW

POLISH CENTRE OF MEDITERRANEAN ARCHAEOLOGY IN CAIRO

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SAQQARA, ARCHAEOLOGICAL MISSION

The Polish-Egyptian Archaeological Mission headed by Prof. Karol Myśliwiec continued its research in Saqqara in September and October 1996. The Supreme Council of Antiquities was represented by Mr. Kazzafi Abdel Rahem.

The campaign was designed to extend the excavations begun in 1987 on the west side of the Djoser Pyramid complex. Subject to the present works was our previous trial pit I which is located some 100 m west of the pyramid's western limit.

Remains of large-size tombs, hewn in the rock and dating from the 2nd and 3rd Dynasties, were unearthed under a 6m deposit of sand, gravel and stone debris. Poor burials of the Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine periods were discovered in the subsequent strata.

The early funerary structures reveal three stages of construction and use:

A. Wall surrounding a levelled rock-cut court covered with mud and bearing extensive traces of ritual fires. The masonry of the wall is analogous with that of the superstructure of Ninetjer's tomb (2nd Dynasty).

B. Two large rock-cut shafts in the court's eastern side, one covered with a sophisticated roof consisting of several mudbrick courses. The big tomb of which the shafts are a part was the reason for the destruction of the eastern part of the original court. (Early 3rd Dynasty).

C. Shaft in the southeastern corner of the excavated area. Its construction intruded on the southern shaft of phase B. (Also 3rd Dynasty).

Both the pottery, which is typologically homogeneous and found in quantity, and the fragmentary blue faience tiles like those decorating some of the subterranean rooms in the Djoser complex, date the three phases to the Archaic period and the early Old Kingdom.

Concurrently with the excavations, a German-Egyptian-Polish geophysical team conducted a magnetic survey of an area of ca. 40,000 sq.m., using cesium (Smartmag, Scintrex) and fluxgate (FM36, Geoscan Reserach) magnetometers. Several archaeological structures (at least three mudbrick superstructures of shaft tombs) were identified to be verified in the future. A more definite analysis of the results will be possible after a study of correlation between the geophysical data and a precise contour map of the surveyed area.

NAQLUN, ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND PRESERVATION MISSION

Archaeological and conservation work at Naqlun in the 1996 fall season (September-October), directed by Prof. Włodzimierz Godlewski, constituted a continuation of two projects that had been started in earlier seasons: the exploration of Hermitage no. 44 and the conservation and recording of paintings in the Church of the Archangel Gabriel. The Supreme Council of Antiquities was represented by Mrs. Atka Abdallah Hassanin and Mrs. Magda Abdallah Goma.

Hermitage no. 44, which is located in the northwestern part of the gebel, has turned out to be the oldest so far discovered in the Naqlun complex. It is entered through a small wadi in the west, between two rooms which may have served as vestibules. One of them led to a large well-lighted and finely plastered hall with a bench running along three sides and traces of shelves above it. This may have been an assembly hall or area for receiving guests from outside. The other room leads to yet another hall, still to be excavated. Ceramic finds included imports from North Africa and Cyprus, as well as a number of early Egyptian imitations, setting a provisional date for the complex in the second half of the 5th century. The relative homogeneity of the material would indicate that the complex remained in use for not longer than 30 to 60 years, and was abandoned probably when the roof caved in.

The mission's other goal was the continued cleaning and conservation of the early 11th century paintings that have been successively uncovered on the walls of the Church of the Archangel Gabriel in the modern monastic complex. The conservation program, which is being implemented since 1991 by Mrs. Ewa Parandowska, beside progressive cleaning and structural reinforcement of the ground of all of the paintings, was devoted to final treatment procedures involving an aesthetic color integration program.

Studies of the inscriptions discovered in the cleaning process have made it possible to determine beyond all doubt that the paintings were already in existence in 1033 when Bishop Isaac of Aphroditopolis left a commemorative inscription in Coptic on the wall during a visit to the church. Another inscription seems to belong to deacon Ioannes from Heracleopolis Magna, apparently the artist who painted the murals.

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

The second season that the Mission carried out in 1996, between Oct.13 and Dec.), was directed by Dr. Janusz Karkowski. The Supreme Council of Antiquities was represented by Mr. Sayed Gebril.

The principal task was to correct and supplement the existing documentation of the Sanctuary of Amun and the wall with niches that forms the sanctuary's monumental facade. Work on the tracings of the sanctuary of the Hathor Shrine was also continued.

Apart from its tasks at Deir el-Bahari, the mission involved itself in an eight-day survey of a small Ramesside temple at lower Assasif. The structure had been built of reused limestone blocks. Among the royal names attested on the reused fragments Hatshepsut's is frequent, the only other name being that of Tuthmosis III. The main purpose of the survey was to determine whether at least some of the blocks could not have come from the Upper Temple at Deir el-Bahari. Two of the recorded blocks bear names of two temples of Hatshepsut: Djeser-Djeseru and Khenemet-ankh. The first name refers to the Deir el-Bahari temple, but the size of the block is much larger than is the case with the wall blocks at Deir el-Bahari. This means that the block may have come from Hatshepsut's Valley Temple. The second attested temple name concerns the queen's temple built close to the border of cultivated land, to the north of the mortuary temple of Tuthmosis III, Henket-ankh. Excavations of this temple by Abou el-Youn Abd el-Aziz Barakat, then inspector of Guma, enabled the ruins to be identified. The temple had been used as a quarry and only small fragments of decorated blocks were found; the few architectural remains in situ included column bases from the peristyle court. Altogether 115 decorated blocks were recorded, including 60 with Tuthmoside decoration.

CAIRO, RESTORATION MISSION FOR ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

The Polish-Egyptian Mission for Restoration of the Islamic Architecture in Cairo headed by architect Mr. Jerzy Kania continued the year-round program of restoration work at the funerary complex of Amir Kebir Qurqumas (Reg. no.162) in the Northern Necropolis of Cairo. The Supreme Council of Antiquities was represented by Mrs. Fatin Hassan el Fayyz.

In the reported period work concentrated in: the Khanqah (habitable part), Qasr (founder's residence) and Madrasa.

In the Khanqah, reconstruction and rebuilding operations centered on replacing the eroded ashlar on the ground level and on reconstructing the missing outer door sills. A limestone pavement was re-introduced in the arcades of the Qasr. Emergency repairs were carried out in the western end dome to remove damages caused by the 1992 earthquake. The conservation of the original wooden ceiling in the NW-liwan of the Madrasa (some 37 sq.m.) was completed using mechanical and chemical means determined in an earlier expertise. A full documentation of the process has been prepared.

Levelling work in the founder's residence arcades led to the uncovering of an earthen grave under the second transversal arcade from the south. The tomb was explored and recorded; the remains of five burials have been preserved for anthropological examination in the future.

The assembled archaeological material from excavations in 1995 and 1996 - mainly common wares and pipe-bowls - was studied and recorded. A facette with inscriptions in the NW liwan of the Madrasa was also recorded epigraphically.

Architectural studies that are currently in progress, in preparation for further stages of the restoration process, include a conceptual design for lighting and spotlighting in the Qasr; design for glazing the windows in the Qasr; technical design of the Qasr's inner stairways; technical opinion on the existing wiring in the whole complex; technical opinion on the methods of conservation designed to preserve and reinforce the original wooden ceilings in the Madrasa.

OBITUARIES

Antoni Ostrasz (1929-1996)

Antoni Ostrasz, former chief architect of the Polish Centre of Archaeology, died suddenly in Amman on October 9, 1996. He first came to Egypt in 1960 to take part in the excavations at Tell Atrib and then in Faras from 1961 to 1964. At the same time or later, he worked at Dongola, Alexandria, Palmyra and Paphos.

Antoni Ostrasz returned to Warsaw in 1967 and took up a position as lecturer at Warsaw University's Institute of Developing Countries. He obtained his PhD in 1976. In 1982, he joined the Polish team in the Jerash International Project in Jordan. He remained in Jerash for the rest of his life, working on the restoration of the Roman hippodrome for the Department of Antiquities of Jordan. It was his great ambition to see the work completed. Although this was not given to him, he left it greatly advanced. He also left a manuscript of a monograph he wrote on the monument.

He will be well remembered by those who knew him.

Marek Marciniak (1937-1996)

It is with deep sorrow that we inform of the death on October 11, 1996 in Berkeley (California) of Dr. Marek Marciniak, an outstanding scholar, member of the international family of egyptologists, whose work and personality have contributed so much to the progress of studies on Ancient Egypt.

Marek Marciniak received an M.A. in Egyptology from Warsaw University in 1959 and a Ph.D. in 1967. He studied under Dr. Tadeusz Andrzejewski, Prof. Kazimierz Michałowski and Prof. Jaroslav Černý. As a member of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo, he took part in the Polish archaeological missions in Tell Atrib, Alexandria, Deir el-Bahari, Palmyra (Syria) and in the Egypt Exploration Mission at Qasr Ibrim. In 1961-1964, during the Nubian Campaign, he offered his scholarly abilities and enthusiasm to the Faras and Dabod salvation projects. While in Poland he was an Assistant Professor at the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Later he served in the capacity of scientific secretary of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo (1981-1984), before taking up the position of Assistant Professor at Berkeley University.

The scholarly world knows him primarily as a specialist in hieratics, the author of *Les inscriptions hieratiques du Temple de Thoutmosis III, Deir el-Bahari I*.

SYMPOSIA

On October 15, 1996, the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo and L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale organized a symposium to commemorate the 60th anniversary of French-Polish excavations at Edfu. Nicolas Grimal and Michał Gawlikowski, who chaired the meeting, presented introductory remarks and later jointly summed up the conference. The following papers were read:

1. Ewa Wipszycka: *Les documents papyrologiques contre les textes littéraires*
2. Anne Boud'hors: *Réflexions préalable a la publication des textes coptes d'Edfou (papyrus et ostraca)*
3. Adam Łukaszewicz: *Le papyrus Edfou 8 soixante ans apres*
4. Aleksandra Majewska: *La cooperation franco-*

polonaise et la Galerie d'Art Antique du Musée National de Varsovie

5. Marie-Hélène Rutschowskaya et Dominique Benazeth: *Apport des fouilles d'Edfou au Musée du Louvre*
6. Teodozja Rzeuska: *La céramique du Nouvel Empire provenant des fouilles franco-polonaises a Edfou (collection du Musée National de Varsovie)*
7. Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal: *Encore sur les fragments architectoniques d'Edfou au Musée National de Varsovie*
8. Hanna Szymańska: *Les terres cuites d'Edfou*
9. Jean Gascou: *Edfou au Bas Empire d'apres les documents inédits de l'IFAO*

The papers (as well as a number of articles not read during the meeting but submitted for publication) are in preparation for publishing by IFAO.

To celebrate the occasion, the Polish Ambassador in Cairo, Mr. Grzegorz Dziemidowicz (himself a graduate of egyptology) gave a cocktail party for all of archaeological Cairo.

LECTURES

1. Karol Myśliwiec: *The soldiers of Alexander the Great in Athribis* (Sept. 17, 1996)
2. Włodzimierz Godlewski: *The churches in Old Dongola (Sudan)* (Oct. 1, 1996)
3. Włodzimierz Godlewski: *The hermitages in Naqlun* (Oct. 8, 1996)
4. Karol Myśliwiec: *The necropolis on the west side of the pyramid of Djoser* (Oct. 22, 1996)
5. Lech Krzyżaniak: *Polish excavations at Kadero (Sudan) and the Neolithic of the Nile basin* (Oct. 29, 1996)
6. Nasry Iskander: *The royal mummies in the Egyptian Museum - study, preservation, conservation* (Dec. 10, 1996)
7. Andrzej Niwiński: *Recent discoveries in mummy research in Poland* (Dec. 17, 1996)
8. Anthony Mills: *Dakhleh oasis project: recent researches* (Jan. 7, 1997)
9. Michał Gawlikowski: *Hatra: an Arab fortress between Persia and Rome* (Feb. 4, 1997)
10. Piotr Parandowski: *The Egypt of Juliusz Słowacki* (Feb. 25, 1997; in Polish)

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