



POLISH CENTRE OF MEDITERRANEAN
ARCHAEOLOGY IN CAIRO

WARSAW UNIVERSITY

Newsletter

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This issue covers the activities of the Polish Centre since the end of summer 2001. Excavation and restoration work was resumed in Alexandria in September after the summer break, and the Hatshepsut team started in Deir el-Bahari in mid-November. On March 21st, 2002, President Hosni Mubarak opened the Upper Terrace of Hatshepsut, accompanied by the Minister of Culture Farouk Hosni, Dr Gaballa Ali Gaballa, and Dr Zahi Hawass, in presence of many international visitors who happened to be there on that day. This great occasion marked forty years of nearly continuous restoration work of our team and the conclusion of the most important stage of the Hatshepsut project. It gave an immense satisfaction to all concerned.

Shorter missions took place in Egypt, the Sudan, in Syria and on Cyprus. Extensive reports on these activities will be published later on, in our annual bulletin *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* (PAM).

The volume 12 of PAM appeared in December. It contains reports on excavations, restoration, and related work in 2000. It was dedicated to the founder of this Centre, Kazimierz Michałowski, in commemoration of the centennial of his birth (as well as the twentieth anniversary of his passing away). The anniversary was also celebrated by other events.

On December 10th, a session was held in Damascus under the auspices of Dr. Maha Qannout, Minister of Culture of the Syrian Arab Republic, presided by Dr. Abdel Razzaq Moaz, Director General of Antiquities and Museums. In the magnificent Damascene Hall of the National Museum several Syrian and Polish speakers gave papers on past and present Polish excavations in Syria. The Polish Ambassador Jacek Chodorowicz gave a party to mark the occasion.

Another celebration was held on December 15th at Warsaw University. Monsieur Jean Leclant, Secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, has honoured us with his presence and delivered a moving *éloge* of his older colleague, before giving a brilliant lecture on *Dernières découvertes à Saqqara* („*Textes des Pyramides*”). An exhibition illustrating the life and work of Kazimierz Michałowski was opened on this occasion by the Rector Magnificus, Professor Piotr Węgleński, in the presence of the Ambassador of Egypt Hamdi Loza and the Polish Ambassador to Egypt Mrs Joanna Wronecka. The venue was attended by Mrs Krystyna Michałowska, the Late Professor's companion in so many expeditions, and members of his family.

On the following day, an exhibition *Queen Hatshepsut and her Temple 3500 years later* was opened in the Royal Castle in Warsaw. A companion volume under the same title (in English and Polish) was presented on this occasion.

An exhibition *Forty Years of Co-operation in Archaeology between the Sudan and Poland* was opened on January 10th in the National Museum in Khartoum by the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Sd. Abdel Bassit Abdel Magid, and the Polish Ambassador Mrs Joanna Wronecka. The exhibition has been prepared by the Archaeological Museum in Poznań in cooperation with the Polish missions working in the Sudan, and shall remain open until September of this year.

The end of 2001 saw the retirement of Wojciech Kołataj, Director of the joint Polish-Egyptian mission in Alexandria and the Chief Architect of this Centre. The best part of his professional life was devoted to Alexandria. He was first associated with this Centre in 1964. He soon headed the Alexandria mission, and worked there uninterruptedly for the next ten years. After a brief period of activity in Poland, he returned in 1983 to supervise the Kom el-Dikka Preservation Project, leaving Alexandria only for the summer months. His contribution to the site can hardly be overestimated.

Excavations and Restoration in Egypt

ALEXANDRIA

Five months into the winter season 2001/2002 on Kom el-Dikka it is already possible to report on some new results.

Two more columns of the Theatre Portico have been raised by Wojciech Kołataj. Of these, the northern one now marks the far end of the sector within the limits of the Kom. Though Kołataj retired in December, we hope he will soon be back to raise more columns discovered in the meantime.

The Polish-Egyptian mission is headed now by Grzegorz Majcherek, long-time supervisor of the excavation project. His chief objective is to bring the first stage of the Kom el-Dikka Preservation Project to a successful end.

Impressive progress in the removing of late soil deposits from the western part of the site has enabled the mission to excavate yet another section of the vast Moslem graveyard, the so-called Upper Necropolis (11th-12th century AD). Graves have been discovered over the entire width of the Theatre Portico, occasionally clustering behind enclosure walls and probably belonging to specific families. The finds from the graveyard include an assortment of both Egyptian and imported glazed pottery sherds, lamps, glass fragments, as

well as a number of funerary stelae with Kufic inscriptions. Also discovered in two of the tombs were the remains of wooden coffins, fairly unexpected as a find in a Moslem cemetery.

An auditorium of Late Roman date has been brought to light in the section immediately north of the Theatre. Comparably to similar auditoria from the area, it features benches lining the walls on three sides and a prominent seat in the middle of the back wall of the room. Access was through a large door from the Portico. It seems likely now that the whole length of the Portico, once excavated, will reveal similar rooms behind its back wall.

A section of the back wall, 26 m in length, has been restored, consolidating the disintegrated core and rebuilding the missing facing with original stones found nearby, up to 3 m above the pavement.

MARINA EL-ALAMEIN

A new season has started at the beginning of March under the direction of Wiktor Andrzej Daszewski. It will be reported in our next issue.

MAREA

Hanna Szymańska directed the second season in Marea on Lake Mariout between August 13th and September 30th, 2001. The established identification of this town and port as the ancient Marea has been contested recently, proposing instead the name of Philoxenite, which refers to a resting place for pilgrims *en route* to Abu Mena founded under the emperor Anastasius. Indeed, no pottery earlier than the 6th century has been found. One of the mission's chief objectives is to clarify this issue.

More work has been done on a public bath building uncovered during the first season. It is now clear that it was divided into two separate parts, one intended for men and the other for women, the entrances being located on opposite sides. A hypocaust cellar and more rooms have been cleared in 2001. The pottery, lamps and coins have confirmed a 6th-7th century date for the occupation of the structure, after which it underwent substantial modifications in the Early Islamic period up to the 8th century.

Visible remains continued to be recorded all over the site, the four piers extending into the lake in particular. The port installations in Marea are certainly among the best preserved in Egypt, at least above water.

DEIR EL-BAHARI

The winter season of restoration work in the Hatshepsut Temple started on November 15th, 2001, and is due to be closed end of March 2002. The work is directed by Mirosław Barwik. While the Upper Courtyard and the main sanctuary were opened to the public at the end of the season, the mission was engaged in completing the restoration of the so-called Solar Complex. It is an open-air courtyard with an altar in the middle, provided with a covered vestibule and a lateral chapel of Anubis. Substantial parts of this courtyard have been already rebuilt and many original blocks replaced. The main task of this season consists in reassembling what remains of the dividing wall between the vestibule and the altar court. The task is extremely painstaking. It took years to identify progressively more and more fragments belonging to this wall, now partly restored together with the original doorway.

Also the northern wall of the courtyard was rebuilt, and the roofing of the Anubis chapel behind it secured.

Last December, Madame Nathalie Beaux-Grimal put final touches to the documentation of the Hathor Shrine, which she is preparing in association with Janusz Karkowski for publication by IFAO.

SAQQARA

The Polish-Egyptian mission under Karol Myśliwiec worked in Saqqara from October 7th till November 22nd, 2001. Conservation work was first and foremost, chiefly of the paintings in the funerary chapel of Meref-nebef, but also of other objects, including a lot of pottery and stone vessels discovered by Egyptian colleagues in the tomb of Qar last September and treated on their request.

The excavations were limited to two locations: a long trial trench extending from the funerary chapel to the rock shelf to the west, and the area between the enclosure wall of the Djoser pyramid and the mudbrick mastaba of Peh-en-Ptah excavated in 1999. The goal is to obtain a complete cross-section running from the enclosure wall to the alleged dry moat.

The long trench section was prepared and studied comprehensively in order to clarify the order of formation of natural strata covering and containing the remains of funerary structures and simple burials. The skeletal material from the latter – 28 skeletons and 9 mummies – have been studied by anthropologist Maria Kaczmarek.

Another find of note is a boundary stele of King Netjerikhet (Djoser), of which several fragments were found in the sand. Indeed, a part of the western boundary wall of his

pyramid has come to light at the far end of the excavation. The cleared sector of this enclosure is 21 m long. It was found that the wall does not stand on rock, but on a solid foundation of irregular stones, 1.30 m deep and advancing for nearly 2 m west beyond the enclosure wall.

NAQLUN

The work in Naqlun, directed by Włodzimierz Godlewski, commenced on August 28th and went on until October 3rd, 2001. The excavations covered an area east of the present-day monastery, extending toward the *gebel*, where an extensive Christian cemetery of the Fatimid period had been investigated in 2000. A building, measuring 12 m by 8 m, now cleared under the burials, was most certainly part of a monastic complex, which also included a massive square keep, preserved in the foundations and excavated earlier.

The walls of the building survive to a height of 1.70 m. On the ground floor the structure consisted of a large room with an asymmetrically positioned pillar and a staircase that may have given access to the keep over a drawbridge. The building existed from the 6th century down to the 10th, when it was burned down.

Limestone and marble architectural fragments from the upper stories were found in the fill, accompanied by ceramic sherds, glass and coins, dating the destruction to the early 10th century.

Later during the same century, a new church was built on the ruins, and beside it residential structures, where a cache of legal manuscripts in Arabic – the archive of one Giorgi Bifam - was discovered in 1997.

In the late 11th century a cemetery developed around the church, and remained in use until the 13th and 14th centuries, perhaps even later, the latest burials being made already inside the abandoned church.

An earlier cemetery existed in the 6th-7th centuries in an area southwest of the monastery. Some fragmentary shrouds as well as stone stelae with Greek inscriptions are associated with this burial ground.

The restorers on the team worked on the conservation of wall paintings in the church of Archangel Gabriel. In the central niche of the apse, below a mural representing the enthroned Virgin and Child, another and much better preserved painting was discovered. Accordingly, the later Theotokos painting, dated to the 1020s, has been removed and shall be displayed elsewhere in the church.

The newly discovered underlying painting was created in two stages. First, there was the image of the Cross Victorious, apparently painted right after the construction of the church in the early 9th century. Later on, some time in the late 9th or in the 10th century, the painting was altered, with a half-figure of Christ as a young man being added immediately above the arms of the cross. The new composition recalls the series of Palestinian pilgrim flasks in Monza, and also some gems and paintings. The original mural has been consolidated by Cristobal Calaforra-Rzepka and remains in the central niche of the apse, behind the altar.

DENDERA

In February, the Centre participated for the fourth time in the IFAO project in Dendera. The team under François Leclère and Adam Łukaszewicz concentrated again on excavating the remains of a bakery and houses of the Old Kingdom and First Intermediate Period, situated east of the Hathor temple.

More pottery, including bread moulds of the First Intermediate Period, and a deposit of 12th Dynasty pots in a silo, were fou

Excavations in the Sudan

KADERO

In November and December yet another season was carried on the site of Kadero, in the vicinity of Khartoum. As in the previous fourteen seasons, the team was headed by Lech Krzyżaniak (Poznań Archaeological Museum). With the assistance of geomorphologists and a physical anthropologist two Neolithic middens and a burial ground were tested. The middens are the remains of a settlement dated to the 5th millennium BC. A series of soundings yielded samples of artefacts, animal bones and vegetal remains. In the local burial ground, one of the largest Neolithic cemeteries in the Nile valley, 12 new graves were excavated. One of them contained a decorated bone implement which seems to have been a musical instrument: restoration work, now under way, should clarify its original form. The geomorphologists were able to locate in the vicinity an old Nile channel, now filled with sediments. Samples of these sediments have been taken for laboratory examination.

WADI AWATEB

In February and March 2001 Messrs P. Bobrowski and M. Jórdeczka (PAN, Poznań), members of the mission of the Aegyptologisches Museum in Berlin at Nagaa, proceeded to survey the middle sector of Wadi Awateb, between Jabal al-Nagaa and Jabal al-Kufundjar. Some 80 archaeological sites have been located and 18 of them documented in detail. The sites include settlements, camps, burial grounds, and loose finds ranging from the Palaeolithic, through the Early Khartoum, Khartoum Neolithic and Meroitic periods. The survey is intended to continue in 2002.

DONGOLA

The mission under Stefan Jakobielski continued its work in the monastery of Holy Trinity in January-February. The results shall be reported later.

BANGANARTI

Bogdan Żurawski is excavating since mid-January a rather mysterious building adorned with mural paintings in the village of Banganarti some 10 km south from Old Dongola. A report will follow in the next issue.

Members on the Polish Centre

active with other missions in Egypt and the Sudan

Tomasz Herbich, Przemysław Wielowiejski (geophysicist):

Buto (DAI), survey of pottery kilns with Pascale Ballet;

Abydos (survey for Pennsylvania University Museum, Matthew Adams).

Anna Południkiewicz (ceramologist):

Tebtynis (IFAO - Università di Milano, Director Claudio Gallazzi).

Tomasz Górecki (ceramologist):

Shenhur (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Director Harco Willems).

Barbara Lichoeka (numismatist):

Shenhur (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Director Harco Willems).

Ewa Parandowska, Cristobal Calaforra-Rzepka (art restorers):

Deir Suriani, Wadi Natrun (Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, Director Karel Innemée).

Marek Puzkarski (draughtsman):

Sabil-kuttab Muhammad Ali, Cairo (ARCE, Director Agnieszka Dobrowolska).

Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal (Egyptologist), **Iwona Antoniak** (Coptic epigraphy):

Elephantine (DAI - Schweizerisches Institut, Director Cornelius von Pilgrim).

Lech Krzyżaniak, Przemysław Bobrowski, Maciej Jórdeczka, Ewa Kuciewicz, Eliza

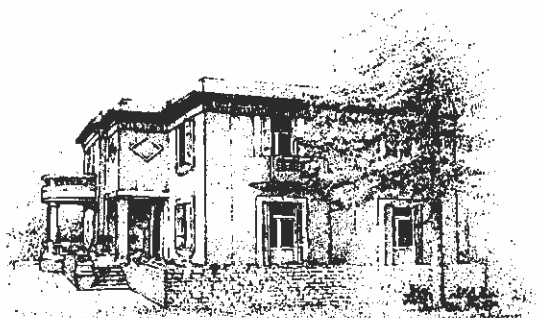
Jaroni (archaeologists):

Nagaa, Sudan (Aegyptisches Museum, Berlin, Director Dietrich Wildung, Karla Kroeper).

Iwona Zych (archaeologist):

Berenike (NVIC Cairo, Directors Steven Sidebotham, Willeke Wendrich), brief study session in lieu of postponed fieldwork.

Lectures held in the Polish Centre in the autumn-winter season



Karol Myśliwiec, Professor at Warsaw University

Saqqara 2000. The Newest Discoveries and Conservation Work (October 9th, 2001)

Lech Krzyżaniak, Director of the Archaeological Museum, Poznań

Excavations of the Neolithic Site at Kadero, Central Sudan (October 30th, 2001)

Anthony Mills, Director of the Dakhla Oasis Project

Art in the Dakhla Oasis (November 6th, 2001)

Edwin C. Brock, Co-Director of the Amenmeses Project

The Clearance of KV 10, the Tomb of Amenmeses, and other recent work in the Valley of Kings (January 29th, 2002)

Wiktor A. Daszewski, Professor at Warsaw University

Marina el-Alamein – the Town and the Necropolis after 13 Years of Excavations (February 26th, 2002)

Michał Gawlikowski, Director of the Centre

Cities in Transition: Urban Life in Byzantine and Early Islamic Syria (March 26th, 2002)

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