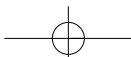
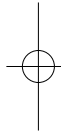
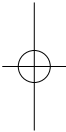


Zbigniew E. Szafrński



OUR MILESTONES





Speaking of Polish archaeology in Egypt, one needs to go back to the first days of excavations at Edfu. The 1936/1937 season is the first milestone on the Polish road to the scientific status that the Polish Centre enjoys in Egypt today. It was the visionary approach of Kazimierz Michałowski (1901-1981) and his personal efforts that led to the establishment of a Franco-Polish Mission which arrived in the town of Horus in December 1937 and started excavations on 7 January 1937 (cf. J. Lipińska, Kazimierz Michałowski, in this volume).

It is to the Centre's founder, Professor Michałowski, that we owe foremost our friendship with the land on the Nile and with our Egyptian colleagues, the dozens of years of warm intimacy with all our associates without whom Egypt would not have become a second home for so many of us, a home to which we return with the greatest joy.

Fascination with ancient civilizations of the Near East came to Poland much later than to other countries in Western Europe and it never reached the same peak of intensity as in France, England, Prussia and Italy. Even so, the land on the Nile was present in Polish culture starting with the 12th century. Egypt and its "seven-sleeved Nile" was for the Renaissance poet Jan

Kochanowski (1530-1584) an exotic place situated at the antipodes of the world; other poets like Wespazjan Kochowski and Sebastian F. Klonowic expressed similar sentiments. The famous diary of Prince Mikołaj Krzysztof Radziwiłł (1549-1616) is a typical example of travel literature of the period. It should be noted, however, that his "*Hierosolymitana peregrinatio...*" (published in Brunsbergae in 1601) was an European bestseller (*sic!*) of the 17th century. The sixth edition of the *Peregrinations*, printed in Latin, appeared in Antwerp in 1614; earlier it had already been published in German and Polish, and the Russian edition came out in 1787. Altogether 20 times within two hundred years! Radziwiłł's descriptions of Egypt are still quoted in the literature of the topic today, just as is the report of another Polish traveler, Count Jan Potocki (1761-1815), included in his "*Voyage en Turquie et en Égypte, fait en l'année 1784*" (Warsaw 1788). Undoubtedly one of the best books about Egypt, "*Travels in the Ancient World*" (Warsaw 1842), was written by a young traveler called Władysław Bey Wężyk (1816-1848). In 1861 and 1862, Count Michał Tyszkiewicz (1828-1897), a collector of world renown, was the first Polish amateur archaeologist to dig in Karnak and in West Thebes (presumably close to Deir el-Bahari)

and Esna; he published a description of his accomplishments in French in Paris. During the same period (1861-1871), Prince Ignacy Żagiell (1826-1891), court medic to Prince Halim (1831-1894), youngest son of the great Mohamed Ali, resided in Egypt. Jan Ciałgliński (1858-1913) painted numerous pictures of Egypt of the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century.

A tragic illness cut short the brilliant career of the first Polish Egyptologist Tadeusz Samuel Smoleński (1884-1909), then a citizen of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (a free state of Poland did not exist at the time). A hundred years ago this student of Gaston Maspero carried out excavations at the sites of Sharuna and El-Gamhud (1907-08) in Middle Egypt.

Thirty years later Kazimierz Michałowski (1901-1981), already a professor of the University of Warsaw, came to Edfu, first as an associate of Bernard Bruyère, then as an independent director of the Franco-Polish Mission in the 1937/38 and 1938/39 seasons (cf. J. Aksamit, in this volume). Michałowski had set his goals on laying the foundations for the field of Polish Egyptology and Mediterranean archaeology. He introduced this branch of Polish science to the world arena. His discoveries at Edfu contributed to an awakening of interest not merely in ancient Egypt, but more broadly in Near Eastern civilizations as a whole. Perhaps it was then that the Professor formulated this often quoted conviction: *...in the judgment of not only the scholarly world, but also the broadest public opinion of a civilized society, the current level of culture in any country is measured by whether it runs its own excavations in Egypt*. After all, until the middle of the 19th century objects from ancient Egypt tended to be shown in “chambers of

curiosities”, with Egyptian mummies being displayed to the public next to turtle shells and other exotic items.

From the beginning Michałowski strived for international cooperation, primarily with the Institut français d'archéologie orientale (IFAO) in Cairo, the Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte (SAE) and foreign archaeological institutes. Bonds of friendship were formed in many cases. During the war, lieutenant Michałowski imprisoned in a POW camp in Woldenberg received a packet of dates. How touched he was when he saw that the packet had been sent to him by his *rais* from Edfu (!).

As a result of the war Polish researchers had to wait another twenty years before they could return to the land on the Nile. Michałowski was invited to lecture at the University of Alexandria (1957) and he knew he wanted to dig in this famous town. First, however, he started excavations in Tell Atrib (1957) on the outskirts of Benha, right at the base of the Nile Delta. Immediately he launched a broad cooperation with the Egyptian Antiquities Service. With his associates he carried out an extensive archaeological prospection of sites in Upper Nubia (1958) and in the Delta (1959). This initial reconnaissance was organized in response to an appeal (1955) by Prof. Selim Hassan of the Service *for the protection and scientific documentation of monuments of Egyptian architecture and art in Nubia*. Michałowski's survey report covered 17 sites from Philae to Abu Simbel, extending over a stretch 600 km long. A long time earlier, in 1821, this route was traveled by Orientalist Józef Sękowski (1800-1858) who left a colorful description. The survey report, and especially Michałowski's letter containing a proposal for the protection of specific

features, was addressed to the General Director of the Service; it proved inestimable in pushing through UNESCO's decision (end of 1958) to announce an international action for the salvage of monuments in Nubia.

The Joint Polish-Arabic Anthropological Expedition started work at about this time (1958-1962). The expedition carried out the first ever investigations of morphological structure and certain physiological features of the Egyptian population inhabiting the Western Desert and the oases of Siwa, Bahariya and Fayum, carried out jointly by the Polish Academy of Sciences and the National Research Centre in Cairo. One of the scholars behind the idea for this project and the co-publisher of a four-volume publication was eminent anthropologist Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogalski (1918-1998), a member of the Centre's expeditions, working on numerous sites in Egypt ever since the early 1960s.

Michałowski had extensive plans. Foremost among these was setting up an institute in Egypt, no easy matter when more than just meritorious considerations played a role. His efforts in this direction were greeted with applause when he presented his ideas at the Senate of the University of Warsaw, which in a meeting on 19 January 1959 called into being the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology with quarters in Egypt. In August the Centre received authorization from the government of the then United Arab Republic. This was the second milestone on the road.

In that early period the annual budget was determined at about 8000-9000 Egyptian pounds (which translated into about 16,000-18,000 dollars). Tadeusz Andrzejewski (1923-1961), an amazingly talented Egyptologist, took up work as the

Centre's first secretary. There were three other employees: architect Leszek Dąbrowski, accountant M. Strachota and administration clerk Władysław Kubiak. One other member of that first household should be remembered here: Mohamed Said Saleh (1931-2003), more than just a cook, indeed, a friend. Starting out as a helper to his father, Saad, the Centre's first cook, for almost forty years Mohamed filled the house with his warm attention and care.

Kazimierz Michałowski served as the Centre's Director until his death in 1981. The institute rented a villa in the Heliopolis district of Cairo where it is today and only the name of the street has changed from Baron Empain to Nazih Khalifa. Recently, the Centre was able to purchase another villa in the vicinity thanks to funds provided by the Foundation for Polish Science.

The establishment of the Centre in Cairo had the full support of the Egyptian Ministry of Culture and the Antiquities Service (SAE). Relations with Prof. Anwar Shoukry, later President of the SAE, were particularly cordial. The Polish Ambassador in Egypt, Aleksander Krajewski, was also extremely helpful and effective in calling into being the Centre as a research institution of the University of Warsaw with a seat abroad, in Egypt. Its main task was to coordinate the activities of Polish missions working in the Mediterranean. Until the 1980s it had no quarters in Warsaw, even though Professor Michałowski managed it from Poland, through the Polish Academy of Sciences, the University of Warsaw, the National Museum in Warsaw, all of these being institutions in which he held directorial posts. Formally, the Centre was subordinated to the Rector of the University of Warsaw. Responsible for current affairs

in Cairo was a Scientific Secretary and for a time the Centre also employed full-time architects and photographers who resided in Cairo, especially Waldemar Jerke, whose entire professional life has been associated with the institution. From the start it was operated as a base for archaeological missions in the field, a place for scholars preparing publications of excavation results and researchers studying monuments in Egyptian museums, etc. Team members and directors have always been recruited from many different Polish research institutions and they have always represented their own universities, museums, institutes and labs while participating in the Centre's research programs. Their success has been the Centre's success, their great intellectual potential, organizational skills and didactic talents have always set directions for research. The Centre is as much as the people in it.

Following Michałowski's death, it became necessary to institutionalize the Centre within the structure of the University of Warsaw (1981). Krystyna Polaczek was the first full-time employee of the Warsaw office and she has been there every step of the way, from a small room with telephone to the extensive quarters of today. After a quarter of a century she continues to manage the daily operations of the institution with an astuteness and personal warmth that have become legendary.

A bilateral Polish-Egyptian cultural agreement signed in the late 1950s has been the base of a scholarship exchange that assisted the Centre in implementing its research projects and has allowed many young Egyptologists and conservators from Egypt to study in Poland, thus establishing bonds of friendship that have lasted

through the years. The Agreement was followed by executive protocols initiating the archaeological and conservation work of the first Polish-Egyptian missions.

Let us, however, return to the Nile where Tell Atrib (1957-1999) had become the first training ground for young Polish archaeologists and an excellent opportunity for close contacts with Egyptian colleagues, including Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim Bakr whose scientific career started here. When the fate of the site was being decided, it was the personal involvement and help of Dr. Kamal Fakhmy, General Director for Lower Egypt, that allowed us to continue the work. Meanwhile, according to expectations, the ruins turned out to belong to an extensive town from the period of the last pharaohs of Egypt and in Ptolemaic through Byzantine times. The Greek Athribis was after all the capital of the tenth pharaonic nome of Lower Egypt. With each field season, knowledge of the ancient town as an important administrative and artistic center of the ancient Mediterranean grew. Michałowski ceded the direction of the excavations to Barbara Ruszczyc and she to Karol Myśliwiec, who left it in turn to Hanna Szymańska (*cf. K. Myśliwiec, Tell Atrib, in this volume*) Barbara Ruszczyc localized the site of Egypt's first legendary cathedral dedicated to the Holy Virgin Mary. According to the written sources, the columns of the nave were gilded. There are those among the Copts of Benha who will swear that they can hear the ringing of the bells of this cathedral coming from underground.

Alexandria, Egypt's capital in the times of the Hellenes and Romans, became a veritable jewel in the crown of the Centre's achievements. Returning one day from University of Alexandria where he had been

invited to lecture as a Visiting Professor in 1957, Michałowski observed concrete pillars being driven into the ground on Kom el-Dikka in the very center of the town. In his own words, “a fountain of mosaic cubes” went up into the air. The Egyptian authorities needed little cajoling to decide (1958) to call in Polish and Egyptian archaeologists instead of building machines and in 1960 the mission began fieldwork, headed initially by Arabist Władysław Ku-biak and architect Antoni Ostrasz (1929-1996). The uncovering of a Roman bath (1962) was followed by a sensational discovery (1963), the first theater building unearthed on the Nile (*cf. Z. Kiss, in this volume*). Recently, after many years of investigations, the building was found to have functioned at one time as a huge assembly hall, a kind of *auditorium maximum* of the ancient academy of Alexandria (*cf. G. Majcherek, in this volume*). The ruins are the oldest known standing remains of an ancient university, meaning that you can actually touch the walls and sit on the stone seats in one of the lecture halls. Thus, Alexandria became the third milestone on the Centre’s road to success.

The discoveries in Alexandria were followed with a cordial interest by the Centre’s Egyptian partners and colleagues. The Polish-Egyptian Preservation Mission was established based on a bilateral Cultural Agreement and thanks to the dedication of Dr. Gamal Eddin Mokhtar, then President of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization. His successor in office, Dr. Ahmed Kadry mediated in the purchase of land from the army which occupied part of Kom el-Dikka. This helped immensely in the progress of excavations, leading in effect to the transformation of the site into a *zona*

monumentale. Dr. Henry Riad shared with us the hardships of regular excavations on the kom and Dr. Dorea Said, then Director of the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria, was extremely effective in her assistance. Young scholars enjoyed the opportunity to spend nights reading in the library of the Société Archéologique d’Alexandrie thanks to the late lamented Prof. Daoud Abdu Daoud and many of them owe him words of kind and sound advice.

The 1960s witnessed a series of spectacular successes and scientific achievements. The Centre’s excavations in the famous desert city of Palmyra in Syria (starting in 1959) brought the discovery of a few hundred statues and inscriptions. The Christian basilica uncovered in Faras in 1961, together with an eparch’s palace and a bishop’s burial ground were termed the “Miracle of Faras” in the world press, especially because of the splendid murals preserved on the walls of the church. In Nea Paphos, capital of Cyprus in the reign of the Ptolemies, a team from the Centre (working since 1964) uncovered the residence of Roman proconsuls-governors of the island. The mosaic floors, sculpture and other finds from this town continue to draw attention of scholars even today.

The 1960s was also the time of the great scientific success of the American-Polish-Egyptian Combined Prehistoric Expedition, co-directed by Fred Wendorf of Southern Methodist University in Dallas and Romuald Schild of the present Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. While not a part of the Centre’s program, this project can hardly be overlooked when writing of Polish achievements in the Valley of the Nile. Since 1962 the expedition has been investigating the Quaternary geomorphology and the Palae-

olithic of the Nile Valley, Eastern Sahara, Sinai, North Sudan, Ethiopia and Yemen. Their work has helped to recognize the cultural transformations that lay at the root of Egyptian civilization.

As for the Faras mission, it constituted the Polish response to UNESCO's appeal to save the monuments of Nubia which were to be inundated by the waters of an artificial lake (Lake Nasser) created behind a dam on the Nile. Faras turned out to be a great conservation challenge. Józef Gazy (1910-1998) took down more than 120 murals from the walls of the cathedral. Properly protected, these murals were transported to museums in Khartoum and Warsaw. They have been exhibited all over the world. The colors of these paintings, so adroitly preserved by conservators, continue to be admired by crowds of visitors. Faras confirmed the fame of the Polish school of conservation.

During the Nubian Campaign, the Egyptian authorities requested assistance from Polish architects in dismantling the temples at Tafa (1960) and Dabod (1960-61), both to be inundated by the waters of the dam lake. Marek Marciniak (1937-1996) conducted excavations at Dabod (in 1961) discovering the vestiges of earlier sacral architecture from the New Kingdom. A Polish proposal for saving the Abu Simbel temple of Ramesses II was among the projects submitted to UNESCO. Professor Michałowski was called upon to preside over the international commission of the Egyptian Government and UNESCO for the dismantling and transferring to a higher location of the Abu Simbel temples. This most splendid monument of Nubian art was saved for successive generations of tourists who travel from around the world to see it.

While in Faras in 1961, Michałowski received a cable from the Director of the Department of Archaeology in Cairo asking him to commence the conservation of the famous terrace temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari. It was a great distinction for the Centre considering the uniqueness of the temple in world architecture and the fact that the lower terraces had already been restored by important and meritorious institutions: the Egypt Exploration Fund directed by Edouard Naville and the Metropolitan Museum of Art under the direction of H.E. Winlock. The third terrace of the temple had been excavated by Naville but it remained in ruins. Some 10,000 blocks and fragments of blocks had been left by our illustrious predecessors to be inserted in their proper place in the temple walls.

In response to the cable, Leszek Dąbrowski was sent to Deir el-Bahari in the autumn of that year. The task facing the team was gigantic (cf. Z.E. Szafrński, *Deir el-Bahari. Temple of Hatshepsut, in this volume*). Concealed among the thousands of blocks standing in rows on the temple terraces was the message of an exceptional queen who became king of Egypt in the Eighteenth Dynasty (mid 15th century BC). The architectural form had to be reconstructed, the images identified and the texts read. The polychromy and stone had to be preserved. The implementation of a project on such a scale with all the inherent technical problems required the cooperation of specialists in various fields. Slowly, this huge puzzle was put together. The reconstruction of the Upper (Coronation) Portico with its columns, pillars and a few Osiriatic statues of Hatshepsut was ready for the last day of the Eight International Congress of Egyptol-

ogists held in Cairo in April 2000. The colonnades and walls of the Upper (Festival) Courtyard and the Main Sanctuary of Amun-Re were also completed.

Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak officially opened this part of the temple to the public on 21 March 2002. The ceremony served to underline the temple's status as one of the monuments on UNESCO's list of world cultural heritage (since 1977), expressing at the same time presidential appreciation for the Queen and the role she played in Egypt's history, not to mention the Polish effort in returning the temple to its former magnificence. The Temple of Hatshepsut was another milestone in the Centre's activities in Egypt.

Clearance of eroded rock that commenced with the start of work at Deir el-Bahari revealed (in 1962) a structure that no one had expected next to Hatshepsut's edifice. In those days, the discovery of an entirely unknown temple was an exceptional event and it was widely commented in the world media and appeared on the covers of some of the most renowned periodicals. The structure was identified as a previously unknown temple of Hatshepsut's successor, Tuthmosis III (*cf. J. Lipińska, Deir el-Bahari. Temple of Tuthmosis III, in this volume*). Jadwiga Lipińska headed a mission which investigated the remains of the temple formally until 1996, but the project for a theoretical reconstruction is ongoing and has recently been resumed (in 2000) also in Egypt as an autonomous part of the research program of the Polish-Egyptian Mission to the Temple of Hatshepsut.

The Polish presence in Deir el-Bahari gave a start to some other Polish projects in West Thebes. The tomb of New Kingdom pharaoh Ramesses III in the Valley of the

Kings was documented by Marek Marciniak, who continued the work commenced in 1959 by his professor, Tadeusz Andrzejewski, and interrupted by the latter's premature death in 1961. Unfortunately, Marciniak died suddenly in 1996 without completing the project. Studies of ancient Greek and Latin graffiti in the tomb of Ramesses VI in the Valley of the Kings were undertaken in 1996 by Adam Łukaszewicz. Polish engineers, geologists, architects and restorers have repeatedly answered requests from the Egyptian antiquities authorities to give opinions on the current condition of various royal tombs, especially that of Seti I. In 1979, a Polish project for the conservation of the tomb of Queen Nefertari, wife of Ramesses II, located in the Valley of the Queens, was among the submitted proposals.

Day-to-day activity in Deir el-Bahari has always abounded with its share of more or less difficult problems to solve and the friendly relations with the local SCA department in Thebes is instrumental in pushing the work forward. Always greatly appreciated was the assistance of Dr. Mohamed El Saghir, later Director of the Luxor Museum and General Director for Upper Egypt, Dr. Mutawa Balbush, General Director for Upper Egypt and an advocate of our reconstructions, and most recently the current General Director for Upper Egypt, Mr. Sabry Abd El Aziz, Mrs. Sanna Ali, currently Director of the Luxor Museum and Mr. Ali al-Asfar, currently General Director for West Thebes.

The dighouse in Deir el-Bahari has also served specialists from other fields, like anthropology, sedimentology and geology, working on separate research programs, as well as Egyptological studies. Working under the Centre's auspices for two seasons (1999-2000), Andrzej Niwiński's Cliff Mission

documented the graffiti and glyphs found on the rocky cliff above the temples in Deir el-Bahari. Of the more than 200 previously unknown inscriptions, of greatest interest were those dating to the Old Kingdom. In nearby Sheikh Abd el-Guma, Tomasz Górecki discovered and has been excavating since 2003 Coptic hermitages installed in and in front of rock-cut tombs of the Middle Kingdom (TT 1151 and TT 1152) (*cf. T. Górecki, in this volume*). His discovery in 2005 of three manuscripts of the mid 8th century in the hermitage's rubbish dump became the talk of the season. The books are in the process of conservation by specialists from the Polish Ateliers for Conservation of Cultural Property (PPKZ S.A.) at the labs of the National Museum in Alexandria. Already this excellent example of Polish-Egyptian cooperation has made it possible to study the manuscripts even while the treatment is ongoing.

There is hardly a mission without its own dedicated *ghafir* (guard) or *rais* (supervisor), much like the *Rais* from Edfu who was mentioned at the beginning. The *ghafirs* and *raises* from Deir el-Bahari exemplify this relation. The world's best *ghafir* was our one-eyed Abu Kashur, who saw everything despite his handicap, and who was absolutely honest and dedicated to his work. Our longtime workers' supervisor, *Rais* Bakhgad, lived next to the dighouse and received a pension from the Centre even after he retired. The highly intelligent and versatile *Rais* Ragab Ahmed Yassin is an exceptional person. He has been with us for 25 years, having started out as a helper to his father, Ahmed Yassin Ahmed, who was also *rais* at Deir el-Bahari. Ragab's sons, the third generation, also work with us sometimes. This friendship of many years has

even been recorded in a huge inscription, "Polish House No. 2", painted in Polish and Arabic on the wall of Ragab's living-room.

Once the excavations in the temple of Tuthmosis III were completed and the thousands of polychromed blocks transported to a storeroom built specifically for the purpose, work inside the temple of Hatshepsut was intensified. The restoration of the Upper Terrace and the rock platform discovered above it and identified as an ingenious solution designed to protect the edifice from rocks falling from the cliff above, required a specialized task force. Gamal Eddin Mokhtar and Kazimierz Michałowski together decided to bring in (1968) the Polish Ateliers for the Conservation of Cultural Property (PKZ). With specialized knowledge in their own fields, the architects, engineers and constructor who now arrived in Deir el-Bahari contributed substantially to the Egyptological studies being carried out on Hatshepsut's great enterprise. Blocks collected in the stores gradually found their way back to the Upper Terrace and the architectural form of the building slowly took shape. The mission in this formation worked for 20 years under the able leadership of Zygmunt Wysocki. Following in its wake was an Epigraphic Mission from the Centre (1989-1992), directed by Janusz Karkowski. In the next years (1993-1999), Franciszek Pawlicki (who was the Centre's Secretary in 1985-1995) put emphasis on restoration issues. From 1999 the scope of activities has been broadened to include also conservation work, as well as a broad range of Egyptological, archaeological and architectural studies. The Mission is now directed by Zbigniew E. Szafrński, since 2005 also Director of the PCMA's Cairo Branch.

The PKZ activity in Deir el-Bahari resulted in other restoration projects that Polish conservators undertook as part of the Centre's program grounded in a bilateral cultural agreement signed between Poland and Egypt. Gamal Eddin Mokhtar was instrumental in establishing these Polish-Egyptian Preservation Missions in Deir el-Bahari and Cairo, and his successor Ahmed Kadry in calling to life the missions in Ashmunein and Marina el-Alamein.

The Cairo Preservation Mission (1972-2001) was charged with the restoration of the early 16th century funerary complex of Amir Qurqumas located in Cairo's "Northern Necropolis" (*cf. M. Witkowski, in this volume*). Of the various directors of this mission, Jerzy Kania worked the longest, devoting 20 years of his life to the project and sacrificing his health in the process. The EAO's role in helping to save Kania after a horrible road accident will not be forgotten. The Mosque of Qurqumas was also where our bonds of friendship with Dr. Methat Husein El Menabbawy grew strong. This Egyptian archaeologist, Director of the Islamic Department in the SCA, was invaluable when it came to 'digging up' the foundation act of the mosque from the archives; moreover, there was no such conservation material that he could not somehow get his hands on.

Today, "our" mosque stands out among the many buildings in Cairo's City of the Dead. The minaret is seen by all those driving up Saleh Salem street in the direction of the international airport. Sticking out from the windows on the highest floor are wooden poles that were used to hang up colorful lanterns.

The success of the Qurqumas project brought an extension of the restoration

program with the Egyptian authorities inviting the Preservation Mission to begin work (in 1989) on another great monument of Islamic architecture, the adjacent complex of Sultan Inal.

Polish specialists arrived in picturesque Ashmunein, the Greek Hermopolis, in 1987. A Christian basilica with granite colonnades was the object of studies and provisional restoration by a team headed by Marek Barański. For two seasons (2004-2005), at the invitation of SCA Secretary-General Dr. Zahi Hawass, the Centre took up cooperation with Dr. Ahmed Sayed Shoaib, then General Director of Restoration, on a project to conserve murals from one of the ancient structures in Tuna el-Gebel. Thus have Polish specialists returned to Middle Egypt, near to sites excavated eighty years earlier by Tadeusz Smoleński.

Egyptology cannot thrive without international cooperation and we have subscribed to this idea right from the start of Polish presence in Egypt. Occasionally, it took on the shape of formal undertakings, such as the participation of Polish specialists in the British-Polish-American Archaeological Expedition working on the island of Qasr Ibrim (1972-75).

In 1986, a Petroglyph Unit was formed with the Dakhla Oasis Project directed by Anthony J. Mills. For several seasons Lech Krzyżaniak (1940-2004) documented the rock art of the oasis and the Western Desert. After Krzyżaniak's death, the survey was resumed by Michał Kobusiewicz, who has extended the scope of the project to include Neolithic remains, primarily the North African Neolithic.

Two Polish-French undertakings have progressed in cooperation with the IFAO: the Hathor Project Epigraphic Mission in the

Hatshepsut complex in Deir el-Bahari, co-directed since 1992 by Nathalie Beaux-Grimal and Janusz Karkowski, and the Archaeological Mission in Dendera (1999-2002), headed by Adam Łukaszewicz. Excavations at Dendera have uncovered a section of the town from the end of the First Intermediate Period and the beginnings of the Middle Kingdom, that is, close of the 2nd and beginning of the 3rd millennium BC. Recently (2007), a Polish-Slovakian Archaeological Mission under the direction of Sławomir Rzepka has started exploration of Tell er-Retaba, a site at the exit of Wadi Tumilat, the “land of Goshen”, which according to the Old Testament the pharaoh gave to Joseph, his father and his brothers.

The early 1980s were an important *caesura* in the history of the Polish Centre. Prof. Kazimierz Michałowski died on 1 January 1981. The first years of the decade saw the introduction of martial law in Poland. Everywhere during this difficult period we met with support and words of solidarity on the part of Egyptologists in Western Europe, Egypt and the United States. The Centre’s position in the scholarly world was strong and unquestioned. The time had come to see how well we could live up to it.

Cooperation with the Egyptian Antiquities Organization, then presided over by Dr. Ahmed Kadry, continued on a sound basis. Michałowski’s students and followers now came forward with their own ideas for new research projects, broadening the Centre’s program. In 1986, Włodzimierz Godlewski opened excavations in Naqlun lying in Fayum Oasis, identified by Ewa Wipszycka on the basis of written sources as Nekloni (*cf. W. Godlewski, in this volume*). Lech Krzyżaniak continued documenting petro-

glyphs in Dakhla Oasis in the Western Desert. The next year in Marina el-Alamein on the Mediterranean coast, Wiktor Andrzej Daszewski (longtime Secretary of the Centre and then its Director) saved an entire ancient town from the bulldozers of building contractors (*cf. W.A. Daszewski, in this volume*). Karol Myśliwiec cut the first test pits in Saqqara, locating his excavations in the shadow of the oldest pyramid of the world. Marek Barański re-erected the columns in the basilica at Ashmunein, and Jan Borkowski ran a conservation project on the mastaba of prince Nefermaat in Meidum. Nefermaat was a son of King Snofru of the Fourth Dynasty and older(?) brother of Cheops. The idea originated with Dr. Ali el-Khouli, then EAO Director for Middle Egypt and a great advocate of our cause; his assistance is gratefully remembered. Dr. Gawdat Gabra, General Director of the Department of Coptic Monuments in the EAO and Director of the Coptic Museum, generously supported the Polish work in Naqlun and our research on Egypt of the Byzantine age.

A Polish-Egyptian Preservation team shortly took up work in Marina (1988); it was directed first by Włodzimierz Bentkowski, then by Jarosław Dobrowolski, and most recently by Stanisław Medek-sza. At the invitation of Dr. Zahi Hawass, a complementary project for visiting the site was prepared in 2006 together with guidelines for a site museum designed by Rafał Czerner. Thus, Marina will shortly become a major tourist attraction on the Mediterranean coast.

Michałowski had wanted to dig in Saqqara from the start. He often repeated the archaeological adage that we should be digging in ancient capitals because we cannot afford to excavate other sites. His

students, Michał Pietrzykowski and Karol Myśliwiec, drew up specific projects. Myśliwiec directed the first campaign in 1987 (cf. *K. Myśliwiec, Saqqara, in this volume*), but for reasons beyond his control could not return to the field for the next nine years. Prof. Abou Al-Youn Barakat proved to be a good friend in this situation and Dr. Nabil Swelim suggested the right moment to apply again for a digging permit, granted by Prof. Abdel Halim Nur el-Din, then President of the EAO. In 1996 the mission took to the field and a mere year later the present author had the opportunity, together with Karol Myśliwiec, to crawl through a narrow hole near the ceiling into the tomb of the vizier Merefnebef of the early Sixth Dynasty, then still unknown to the world. Crawl we did, because entering even on the knees would have been an act of disrespect for the nobleman. Six years later Myśliwiec opened another unknown tomb belonging to the priest Nyankhneferem from the same Dynasty. More tombs of noblemen of the Sixth Dynasty are waiting to be discovered in this veritable "Avenue of Notables" in Saqqara, as Myśliwiec once wrote.

Whatever is uncovered needs to be protected and returned to its original form. Conservation has always been an indispensable part of the Polish effort. Great conservation and restoration challenges, like the temples at Deir el-Bahari and the urban complex in Alexandria, required a professional staff and appropriate technologies. Both were available in a country recently destroyed by war where specialists were trained, methods developed and materials for conservation tested on a regular basis. Specialist conservation labs existed in Warsaw, Toruń and Kraków, and new centers were established in due course.

This was the "Polish school of conservation". High-class specialists like Ewa Parandowska have contributed enormously to the saving of Egyptian monuments on a great number of sites. Today, every archaeological mission working in Egypt has a conservator on the team.

Many Polish conservators are active with Egyptian and foreign missions, taking part in programs for saving the heritage of the ancient civilization on the Nile. Many Egyptian colleagues, too many to mention here, have studied conservation and gained experience at Polish universities. Dr. Ahmed Sayed Shoaib still speaks Polish. My friendship with Dr. Mohamed Abdel Hady, later Dean of the Conservation Faculty at Ain Shams University in Cairo, started when he was settling in with his family in Warsaw. Dr. Saleh Ahmed Saleh, now head of the conservation department at Cairo University, is also remembered from his studies in Poland.

Our conservators had the knowledge and skills, but what distinguished them was their inventiveness in difficult situations. One legendary solution were the steel tripods that Wojciech Kołataj mounted on top of the Kom el-Dikka theater to raise shattered granite columns, toppled either in earthquakes or in effect of the passage of time. There was no way that he could have used heavy equipment in this and many other reconstruction situations on Kom el-Dikka. Instead, he set up ingenious tripod constructions made to order out of easily available steel pipes, mounted a pulley and chains, and used the power of human muscles to lift the different pieces in place. It mattered not whether the fragment to be raised weighed a few or a few dozen tons. His experience in the successful application

of this method is unmatched. Moreover, many of the ancient buildings of Alexandria have been protected and restored thanks to the ingenuity of this longtime head of restoration works on Kom el-Dikka.

SCA appeals to focus scholarly interest on the threatened regions of the Nile Delta and Sinai raised a response from the Polish Centre. In 1993, Wojciech Kołataj, then the Centre's architect, Grzegorz Majcherek and Dr. Mohamed Abd el-Moksoud (SCA), accompanied by the Centre's photographer Waldemar Jerke, undertook the documentation of a Roman theater in Pelusium (Tell Farama), a site located on the northwestern edge of the Sinai. In 2003, a regular Polish-Egyptian mission took up work on the site, initially headed by the Centre's longtime director, Michał Gawlikowski, since 2006 by Krzysztof Jakubiak. The main objective of the work in this famous town destroyed by time and recent military conflicts in the region was the protection of an ancient theater. Probes dug in the town resulted in the unexpected discovery of a Late Roman mosaic which, after conservation, can now be seen on display in the museum in El-Arish on the Sinai.

The last few seasons of fieldwork at Tell el-Farkha in the eastern Delta have brought sensational results (*cf. K.M. Ciałowicz in this volume*). The site is of particular importance for research on Predynastic and Early Dynastic Egypt in the second half of the 4th millennium BC. The discoveries have demonstrated the position of the Delta in contacts with the Sinai, Palestine and Upper Egypt, and its role in the emergence of the pharaoh's state at the dawn of Egyptian history. The oldest breweries discovered by Marek Chłodziński and Krzysztof Ciałowicz, who have headed the team since 1998,

were already a sensation, but nothing like the most recent find of a deposit of 62 figurines carved from hippo tusks and two large figures of gold sheet on a presumably wooden core. The objects from Farkha are unparalleled among finds from Egypt of the period.

Excavations and conservation work have been carried out since 2000 in the Byzantine harbor town of Marea picturesquely located on Lake Maryut. Under the direction of Hanna Szymańska, archaeologists have been bringing out of the salty ground, one by one, buildings that testify to the magnificence and importance of this Christian city from an age when Islam was on the rise in Egypt (*cf. H. Szymańska, K. Babraj, in this volume*).

Our concern for the fate of archaeological sites in the Delta was expressed already in 1957 with the first excavations that the Centre undertook in Tell Atrib. The newest project started in 2007 in Tell er-Retaba is the latest example of the Centre's involvement in saving the heritage of this region.

From the start of Polish activity in Egypt in the early 1960s, Polish specialists have been sought-after members of international projects. Conservator Józef Gazy, already mentioned with regard to the Faras operation, was invited to work in Meinarti in Sudan. The SAE employed Polish architects Leszek Dąbrowski, Wojciech Kołataj and Antoni Ostrasz for their projects; Ostrasz was later hired to work in Syria. Dąbrowski and Ostrasz supervised the dismantling and reassembly of two Nubian temples in Tafa and Dabod, both to be inundated by the waters of the Aswan dam lake then under construction. Many of the Centre's researchers are or have been members of

foreign archaeological missions and many of the Centre's missions have foreign specialists on their teams. There can be no better proof of the high skills and capabilities of these specialists than their extensive participation in international research projects. For the past ten years Tomasz Herbich, who served as the Centre's last Secretary, and his assistants have joined in the work of many Egyptian, Polish and foreign teams bringing in expertise in geophysical research. Herbich is one of the pioneers of the method in Egypt. Indeed, geophysical prospection is an example of broadly understood international cooperation.

The Centre has also benefited from considerable assistance on the part of Egyptian Egyptologists, as much as the Egyptian authorities. We hold in grateful memory successive SAE Presidents: Prof. Anwar Shoukry, Dr. Gamal Eddin Mokhtar (decorated with the Commander's Cross of Merit of the Republic of Poland), Dr. Ahmed Kadry, Dr. Abdel Halim Nur el-Din, Dr. Gaballa Ali Gaballa (decorated with the Centre's Medal), and Dr. Zahi Hawass who is currently in office. Long is the list of Egyptian colleagues associated with the Centre. Let me mention a few of those who happened to share with us the hardships of work inside the hot walls of the temples at Deir el-Bahari: Prof. Labib Habachi (1906-1984), Dr. Mohamed Ali, who was later to become director of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, and Dr. Abou Al-Youn Barakat (1939-2002), then Chief Inspector of West Thebes and later a professor at the universities of Sohag and Alexandria. Abou was indeed a special friend and the Commander's Cross of Merit of the Polish Republic that he received from the Polish authorities in 1989 was but a symbolic gesture of appreciation for his

generosity and goodwill towards Poles in Egypt over the years.

The first time that Labib Habachi accompanied us was during the memorable reconnaissance in Egyptian Nubia in 1958. From then on we could always count on his well considered advice. When it came to commemorate him, the plaque erected in his final resting place in the courtyard of the monastery of St Theodoros, lost out in the desert south of Thebes, was made by Wincenty Surzyn from the Hatshepsut Temple mission.

Polish-Egyptian cooperation tended to extend beyond the frame of archaeology alone. For many years Kazimierz Michałowski served as Vice-President of the Polish-Arab Friendship Society. First Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogalski and more recently Zbigniew E. Szafranski presided over the Polish-Egyptian Friendship Society. In one of his lectures, Michałowski recalled the discussions that accompanied the organization of the First International Congress of Egyptologists. Many sites important for the history of Egyptology were then considered, but it was Cairo, which Michałowski proposed as the most obvious solution, where it was finally held in 1976. His proposition was a natural expression of respect and gratitude to the second home of all Egyptologists. The feeling was mutual and in 2000, during the Eight International Congress of Egyptologists held again in Cairo, Michałowski was honored posthumously with the medal "*In Honor of Kazimierz Michałowski. In Memoriam*".

Michałowski's legacy has been taken up and extended. His contribution to world Egyptology is unquestioned, his achievements for Polish science extraordinary, his influence on his students and followers unmatched. The Centre in Cairo has helped to

shape our view of the world, in the past as much as in the present, and it has given each one of us a base from which to develop our research activities. The Centre is Egypt. Its walls echo the great civilization of the pharaohs, the rumble of Africa, the glory of the Greeks and Romans, the illuminations of early and mature Christianity and the world of Islam. There is a long tradition behind it, a tradition that grows with every passing year, turning the Centre into a timeless value, overcoming differences of opinions and contrary emotions. Indeed, the Centre is as much an intellectual as a material value, it has both soul and body. The body are the houses in Cairo, the offices, labs and

archives in Warsaw, the cars, equipment, computers and, personally detested, accounting, the excavation documentation, reports and publications with deadlines that are hard to meet. The soul on the other hand is a being that sometimes requires a whole life to be understood.

Profesor Michałowski can only be commended for his astuteness in making the Centre a purely scientific institute and keeping it out of any other spheres of activity. The various ups and downs of recent history have borne out the wisdom of his vision. It is one of the reasons behind the Centre's success. However, with all humility he used to say, *onlookers get to see most of the game*.

Select bibliography

K. MICHAŁOWSKI, The Polish archaeological reconnaissance trip to Nubia, *Review of the Polish Academy of Sciences* VI/3, 1959, pp. 47-85

K. MICHAŁOWSKI, Deir el-Bahari, in: *The Frontiers of Human Knowledge*. Acta Universitatis Uppsaliensis, Uppsala 1978, pp. 163-169

W.A. DASZEWSKI, 50 years of Polish excavations in the Eastern Mediterranean, in: S. JAKOBIELSKI and J. KARKOWSKI (eds), *50 Years of Polish Excavations in Egypt and the Near East. Acts of the Symposium at Warsaw University 1986*, Warsaw 1992, pp. 39-47

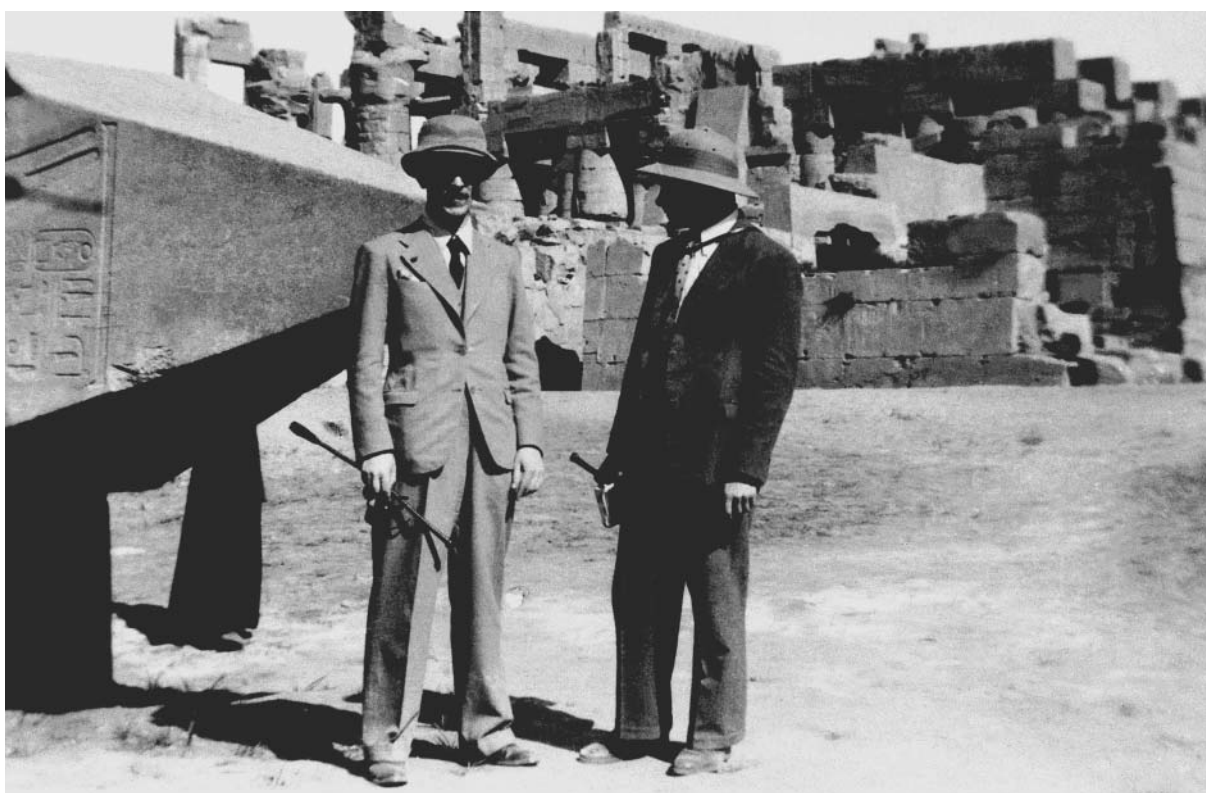
M. GAWLIKOWSKI, Kazimierz Michałowski and his school, in: Z.E. SZAFRAŃSKI (ed.), *Queen Hatshepsut and her temple 3500 years later*, Warsaw 2001, pp. 17-37

Z.E. SZAFRAŃSKI, Polish archaeologists in Egypt, in: *Polish Egyptian Review (Bulletin of the Polish-Egyptian Friendship Society)*, no. 1, Warsaw 2003, pp. 12-14



Jan Ciagliński (1858-1913). Avenue of sphinxes leading from the temple of Amun-Re in Karnak in the direction of Deir el-Bahari MNW 180107 (deposit of the National Museum in Warsaw at the Cairo branch of the Polish Centre) (Photographic copy M. Jawornicki)

Kazimierz Michałowski and Henri Chevrier, head of the French Mission in Karnak, 1930s (University of Warsaw Museum Archives)





*Kazimierz Michałowski with students from
the University of Alexandria visiting Edfu, 1958
(PCMA Archives)*

*Egyptian inspectors visiting the Polish
excavations in Tell Atrib, 1959
(Research Center for Mediterranean Archaeology PAN Archives)*





Alexandria, 2 December 1964. Kazimierz Michałowski with the Governor of Alexandria and Minister Sawi during a conference on Kom el-Dikka, deciding the future shape of the envisaged "zona monumentale")
(Research Center for Mediterranean Archaeology PAN Archives)

Alexandria, 2 December 1964. Participants of the conference on Kom el-Dikka filing down into the area of the theater excavations
(Research Center for Mediterranean Archaeology PAN Archives)

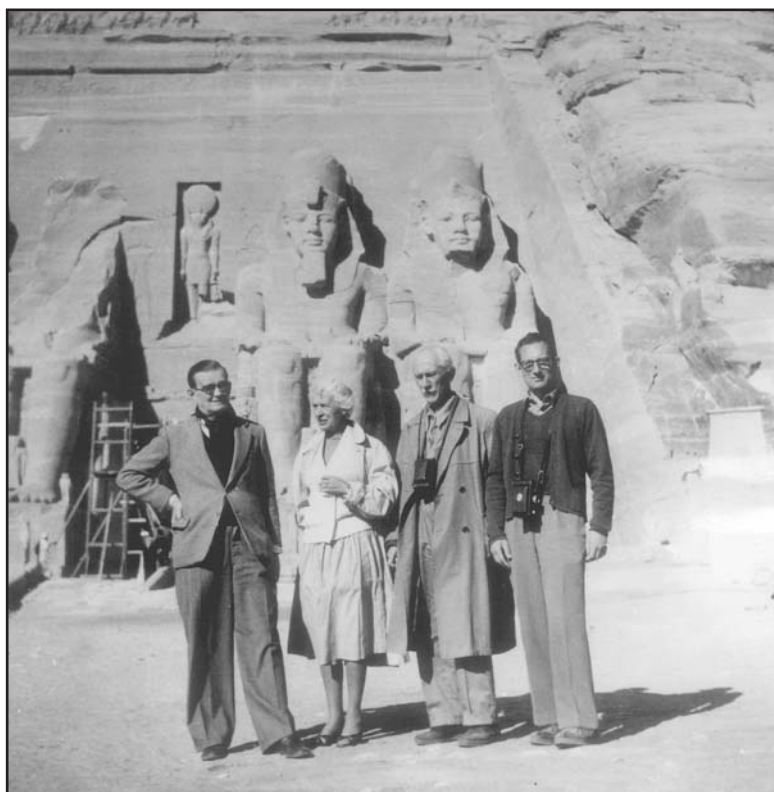




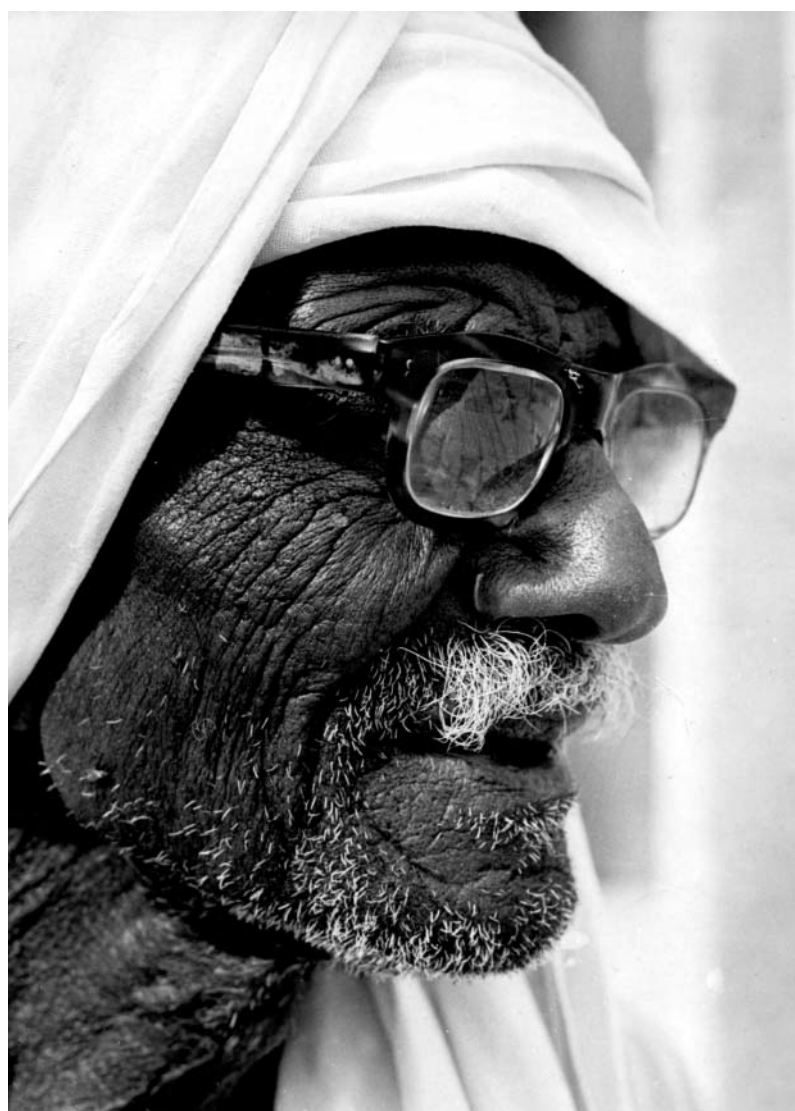
Alexandria. The uncovered ruins of the theater building, 1965
(Research Center for Mediterranean Archaeology PAN Archives)

Marek Marciniak at work in the temple in Dabod, 1960/61
(PCMA Archives)





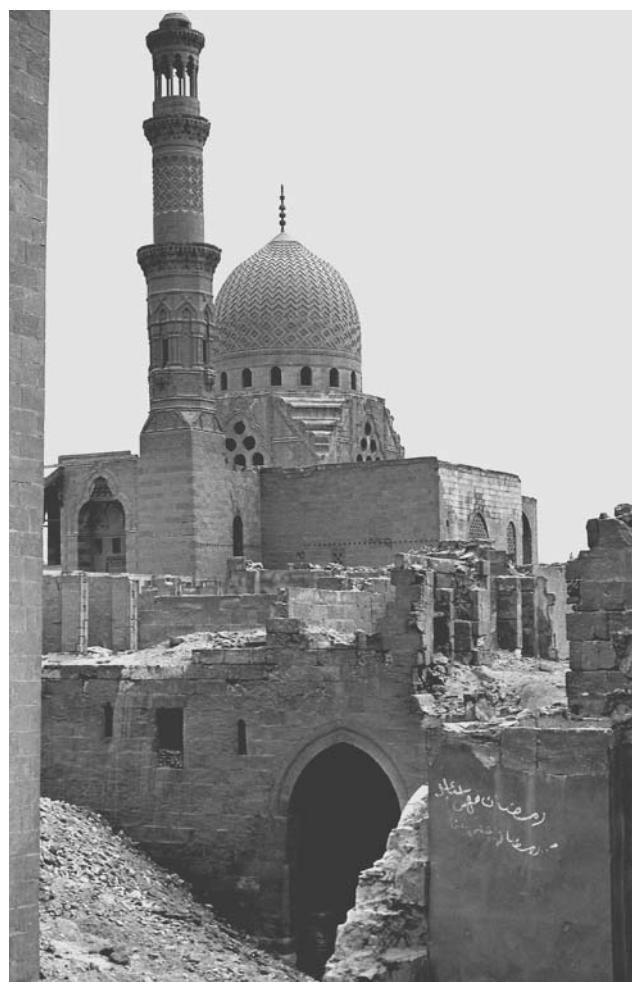
Kazimierz Michałowski with Jaroslav Černý, Tadeusz Andrzejewski and journalist Zofia Jeżewska in front of the Great Temple in Abu Simbel, 1958 (Research Center for Mediterranean Archaeology PAN Archives)



Rais Bakhgad (PCMA Archives)



*Corridor of the tomb of Ramesses III in
Valley of the Kings
(Photo Z. Doliński)*



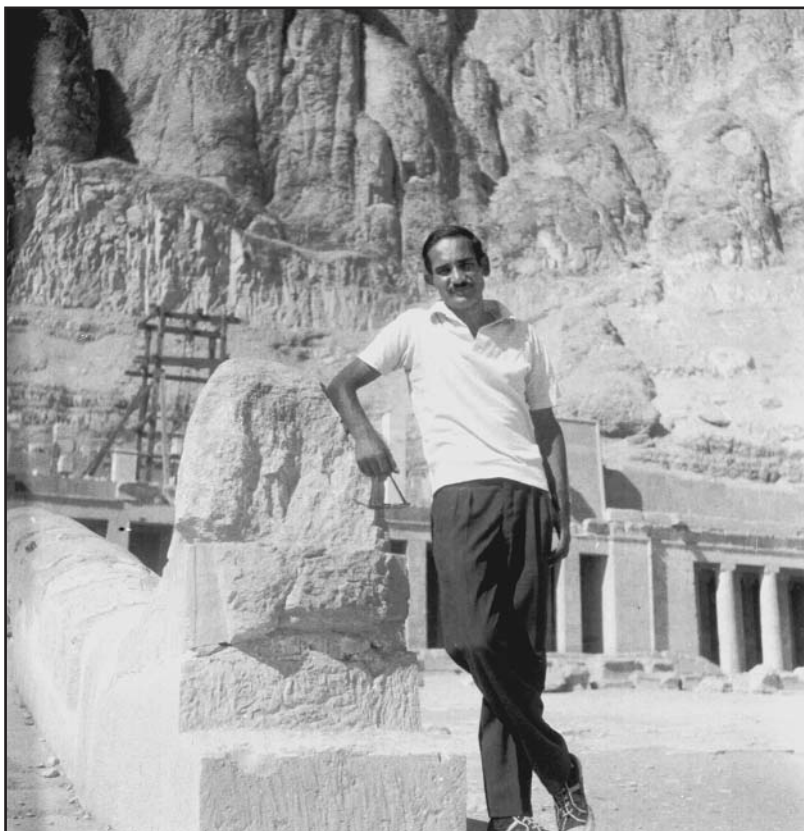
*Funerary complex of Sultan Qurqumas before
protection and conservation work by a Polish-
Egyptian team, mid 1980s, as seen from
Sultan al-Ashraf Inal surroundings
(PCMA Archives)*



*Saqqara, 1970s. Kazimierz Michałowski in discussion with
Geoffrey J. Martin, head of the British Mission in Saqqara
(Photo Z. Doliński)*

*Gamal Eddin Mokhtar and Ahmed Kadry during the decoration
ceremony at the Polish Embassy in Cairo in 1986
(PCMA Archives)*





*Abou Al-Youn Barakat, then inspector
at Deir el-Bahari in the late 1960s
(PCMA Archives)*

*Enjoying the view from the terrace of Metropolitan
House in Deir el-Bahari. First from right,
Labib Habachi, next to him, Kazimierz Michałowski
(PCMA Archives)*

