

OBITUARIES



Michał Neska
1971–2012

So many thoughts keep whirling through my head when I remember Michał, Mike to his many foreign friends. For many and for me in particular, it is still unbelievable, unacceptable in fact, that He is no longer with us.

Mike. Energetic, passionate Mike. Everything he did, no matter how crazy on the face of it, he did with utmost commitment. He was like that ever since I got to know him while we were both freshmen at the University. He was special and he had an unmatched sense of humor that won people over.

From the start he was fascinated by the Bronze Age, in the Near East in particular. His interests evolved, but they remained centered on the archaeology of Hittite Anatolia on one hand and ancient weaponry on the other, with tactics and strategy in the ancient world as a side issue. Chariotry in war was the subject of his Master's thesis, which he defended in 1997. A few years later, under a government grant from the Polish Committee for Scientific Research, he completed a study of the domestication of horses and use of chariots in the Near East.

He joined a reconstruction group in order to improve his understanding of ancient military techniques. He was known as an excellent archer. He devoted a great deal of time to studying the execution and practical use of ancient weapons.

These comprehensive studies and activities led to a very ambitious doctoral program that involved exhaustive research on weaponry in the terminal Bronze Age and there would be

nothing surprising in this were it not for the fact that this innovative program of research was to cover a region extending from the Near East to the Carpathian Valley.

Ever restless, Michal engaged in all kinds of fieldwork, finding time for numerous scientific projects, which was not always easy. He participated in excavations in Chhim in Lebanon and Nea Paphos on Cyprus, directed a survey project in the Auali Valley in Lebanon, took part in the work of a Polish–Sudanese team in Sudan and traveled widely in the Near East in search of material for research.

For me, however, our joint project in the Auali Valley was the most important. There we could work together, implement different ideas and share the joys and anxieties of directing fieldwork. When I go back to those days, I remember how after a hard day's work we would sit down on the terrace in the monastery, look out to the sea and ... be silent for a long time. It was the best kind of friendship that I could imagine — being able to be silent together and still be sure that we were thinking of the same thing. It will be difficult to go back to the monastery in Deir Moukhallys in Joun. It will always, irrevocably, remind me of Michal.

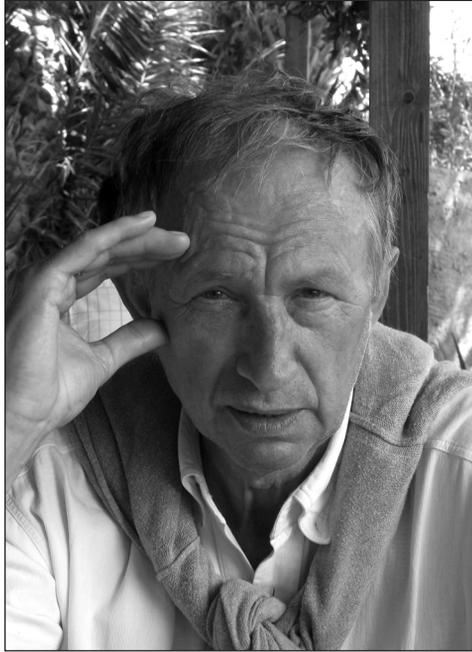
Mike's time at the PCMA's Research Center in Cairo was an important part of his too short life. He worked as an assistant there with excellent results from 2006 to 2010. During his term of duty the Polish Centre organized in 2007 an exhibition at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Polish archaeological presence in Egypt. Michal was one of the organizers of this event and his contribution was invaluable. He was ingenious and effective, placing his job above all and deriving satisfaction from solving problems that seemed insolvable. The success of this festival of Polish archaeology was to a large degree Michal's achievement and these few words express the gratitude we felt as a community and which — as so many things — went unexpressed at the time.

From Cairo Mike moved to Ethiopia where he found a job with the Polish embassy in Addis Ababa. He would not have been himself had he not taken the opportunity to start mounting yet another archaeological project with his usual fascination and determination.

Constantly on the move, Michal tended to forget — or belittle — his health condition. Even his family sometimes forgot that he was a sick man who should be looking out for himself. Michal was always joking about his health, as if laughing it off would make the problem go away. After his return from Ethiopia it even seemed that he was feeling better; the diagnoses were good and he was looking forward to a life with his Ethiopian wife and small daughter. Just a few days before his death we were talking of new research projects, his work on his doctoral dissertation, the articles he thought he would write.

Let it be a consolation that this last Hittite warrior has found peace among those whose deeds he had so admired.

Krzysztof Jakubiak



Piotr Parandowski
1944–2012

Piotr was a frequent and prominent member of many archaeological expeditions. Early in his career, he decided that he was not interested in minute exploration and systematic recording of finds, no more than in pedantic erudition. His was definitely the realm of imagination and not the rigors of academic scholarship that he was introduced to, together with many of his friends, at the seminar of Kazimierz Michałowski. So his early research on the Dionysiac symbolism of Roman sarcophagi quickly fell fallow.

The youngest son of a well-known author Jan Parandowski who chose in the post-war years to write about Classical Antiquity (his “Mythology” and his translation of the “Odyssey” remain evergreen to this day), Piotr was of course familiar with the ancient world long before he entered University. The example of his elder brother Zbigniew, an architect passionate of photography, led him to filming. Seeing the promise in this young man, Michałowski encouraged him to follow his path.

Piotr understood the world, past and present, with an artistic mind and the everyday life of our teams in Egypt, Sudan and Syria was very much enlivened by his conversation. He brought much more than charm and wit, however. Piotr arrived always with his camera, an old-fashioned contraption moved by turning a handle, which he exchanged only lately and reluctantly for a more updated model. Over more than thirty years he made sixty films, partly traditional documentaries, but at the same time evocative impressions of the ancient land-

scape and the modern world. These films documented not only the excavations and ancient ruins, but also the life around, the hectic street of an Arab town, the people working, moving or sipping tea, seen with empathy and understanding. He portrayed thus his beloved Alexandria where he first met the Near East (and also his wife Ewa): not only the Polish excavations on Kom el-Dikka, but also the streets and houses now bearing witness to a more recent past of this Levantine metropolis, as well as merchants and passers-by crowding the city today and boarding "The Alexandrian Tram", as the film is called.

With the same insight he documented the Syrian Orontes valley and the village of Hawarte, where he documented the Mithraic grotto and its paintings restored by Ewa. On other occasions, always in her company, he filmed Naples, Rome, Siena, Jerusalem, Zanzibar, and the life of Nubian peasants. On occasion, he followed with his camera in the footsteps of great writers, as the Romantic poet Juliusz Słowacki who traveled in Egypt in 1836, and even of fictional characters, filming the streets of Dublin once trod by Leopold Bloom. All his films are accompanied by his own commentary, genuine literary compositions that are free of shallow banality. These are great films, so different from the superficial clips of today. I am sure they will endure as testimony not only of the work of archaeologists, but also of a changing world which Piotr understood and managed to capture before it passed away.

In recent years he started to write memoirs. Not an orderly chronicle or a collection of anecdotes, but rather portraits of people and things as reflected in the author's emotional memory, with no pretence to objectivity, even to factual exactitude at times, but showing them as he remembered with great sensitivity and sympathy. Piotr's first book is called, in free translation, "Absent but Present" ("Nie ma, a jest"), a collection of short sketches on his travels, people he met and thoughts that were inspired in a mysterious order no doubt obvious to him. This is a "Mythology of Memory" ("Mitologia wspomnień"), as he called his second book. The third and last one is about "The Guests of Nieborów" ("Goście Nieborowa"), a line of personalities, usually artists and literati who frequented this palace near Warsaw in the years when he used to spend the vacations with his parents there, but also later when he used to go there on his own. This gallery of various greater or lesser celebrities, sometimes depicted movingly, sometimes amusingly, never with malice, is a portrait of a society which has marked quite notably the second half of the last century in Poland.

Piotr himself is a lively presence in the memory of those who knew him.

Michał Gawlikowski



Adam Stefanowicz
1929–2013

Adam studied the plastic arts in artistic schools in Sopot and Warsaw. In 1953 he started working for the Gdańsk branch of the Polish State Ateliers for the Conservation of Cultural Property (PP PKZ). He had a passion for architecture and he prepared a historical and photographic documentation of numerous churches in Pomerania, the castle at Reszel, the granaries and the Wistoujście fortress in Gdańsk. He designed and carried out reconstructions of the original interiors of the churches in Kwidzyn, Lubartów, Łęborg and Gniezno.

For more than a decade (1976–1989) he was assistant designer for the Polish–Egyptian Archaeological and Reconstruction Mission of the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari, working within the frame of the PCMA's scientific program. His main task was the documentation and studies of the architecture of the Upper Terrace of the temple. He recorded the foundations of temple walls, tracing and studying subsequent building phases and processes. This task required the digging of shallow architectural test pits along the walls in order to clean the foundations so that they could be documented. As an archaeologist, I had the opportunity to work with Adam on these test pits, which usually produced archaeological material and I could observe his growing interest and passion for archaeology and archaeological documentation. In the course of our cooperation he prepared many plans and sections of the test pits we excavated and photographed many of the finds. Indeed Adam was present during the discovery and documentation of one of the first Third Intermediate Period shaft graves that

were rediscovered in the Upper Terrace of the temple, belonging to a large necropolis (which we were not aware of at the time) of tombs of members of the ruling elite of the time. We enjoyed „reading” the building techniques exemplified by the foundations of the walls of the Temple of Hatshepsut, descending often almost 3.5 m below the surface in narrow trenches that reached bedrock (gebel).

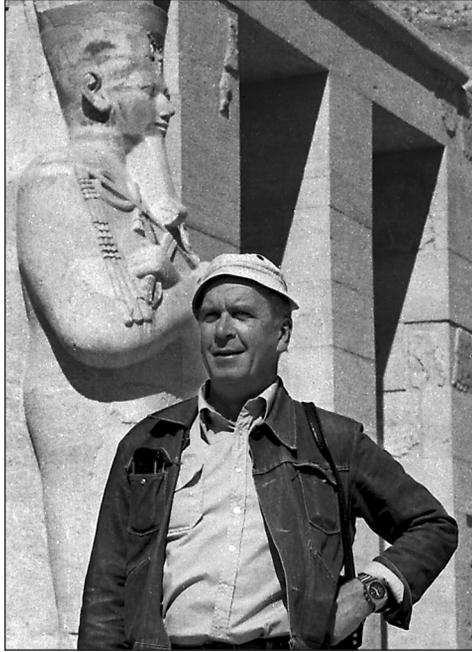
Documenting the construction phases of the temple loomed large in Adam's work. Successive phases of the development of the ramp leading to the Hathor Shrine, which could be observed on the southern retaining wall of the Middle Terrace, were recorded in Adam's drawings and photographs. As a matter of fact, photography was Adam's other passion, one he inherited from his father Jan. At a time of analog cameras and traditional film, he made thousands of photos recording people at work in the temple of Hatshepsut, pictures from the everyday life of the team, portraits of Egyptian workers. He was in this respect the mission's self-appointed chronicler.

I remember him as a colorful figure, a man of various idiosyncracies like his habit of wrapping a woolen scarf around his head, which he was convinced made one feel better. He introduced the term „rabuba”, which the mission continues to use even today as a convenient reference to things all and sundry, not quite defined but having the general meaning of things being in a mess, dissatisfaction, importune course of events etc.

Adam's photography extended well beyond the temple, his place of work. Hundreds of photo negatives have captured the inhabitants of Western Thebes, genre scenes from life in the village of Gurna, the people, the houses, the bread ovens, the craftsmen making tourist souvenirs and many others. The village exists no more — it was dismantled recently by the Egyptian antiquities authorities — making Adam's photographs an invaluable, already historical record of this locality which had been part of the rich and colorful history of Western Thebes for so long.

Adam Stefanowicz remains in our grateful memory as a kind and generous colleague, ever bent over his drawing board or busy developing negatives in his photo lab.

Zbigniew E. Szafranski



Zygmunt Wysocki
1923–2013

Architect and painter, graduate of the Engineering School in Gdańsk, involved with conservation and revitalization of historical architectural monuments throughout his professional career. A pillar of the Polish State Company Ateliers for the Conservation of Cultural Property (PP PKZ), he organized (in 1971) and then directed the Gdańsk Egyptian Architecture Center. Managerial skills, know-how and experience working on the rebuilding of, among others, the Castle in Malbork, the Town Hall, Green Gate and House of Polish Kings in Gdańsk determined the decision to entrust him with managing the Polish–Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission to the Temple of Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari, a grand research and conservation project coordinated jointly by the Station (later Centre) of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw, Gdańsk PKZ branch and the Egyptian Antiquities Organization. Of equal merit in making him head of the mission was his proficiency in foreign languages, which he owed to his academic studies in Vilnius.

It took simple human courage, beside professional know-how and spatial imagination, to undertake the restoration of the Upper Terrace of the temple of Queen Hatshepsut in Deir el-Bahari without in-depth understanding of egyptological issues, knowing on one hand the deadlines involved and the potential for sudden changes that ongoing archaeological work in the temple could result in, and on the other, being fully aware of the unique class of the monument and therefore the absolute lack of any margin for error. Courage was not lacking

in a man who had been in the War, belonged to the underground resistance (Union for Armed Combat or ZWZ), escaped from a Soviet lager in the mines of the Donbas in 1945 and reached home in Vilnius and later Gdańsk on foot. Neither did he lose courage after the first season at Deir el-Bahari, when an earthquake brought weathered rock from the cliff above the temple crashing down on the Upper Terrace (fortunately during a break in the work), partly destroying the work that had already been done. And in December 1981, after martial law was declared, he was not afraid to have a poster put up announcing to tourists that it was a “Polish Group of Solidarity” that was working on the Temple of Hatshepsut, instigating a diplomatic intervention.

The Deir el-Bahari project constituted teamwork at its best and Zygmunt masterfully directed the team for twenty years (1968–1988) until his retirement. He is responsible, among others, for the reintegration of the Upper Portico, casing wall and rock platform above the Upper Terrace, recreating for the first time since antiquity the original form of the temple. This new panorama of Deir el-Bahari he immortalized in his painting, which proved to be his second passion, one he realized in retirement. The scope of his building-conservation work in Deir el-Bahari was tremendous, leading in effect to the Polish team being able to open the Upper Terrace of the temple to visitors. The Egyptian authorities were sufficiently impressed to offer Zygmunt the direction of other prestigious projects, such as the conservation of the tomb of Nefertari in the Valley of the Queens and of the collapsed statue of Ramesses II in the Ramesseum, which he on behalf of the Polish side could not undertake for various reasons. He authored an engineering method of reconstructing ancient walls in a way that permitted additional elements to be introduced into standing parts of the reconstructed wall. He also discovered and opened two niches in the Bark Hall of the main sanctuary of Amon-Re that no one had known about as they had been blocked since the Ptolemaic period. He published the results of architectural studies that contributed to recreating the history of construction and operation of the Temple of Hatshepsut in, among others, the JEA 66 (1980), MDAIK 39–43 (1983–1987), 48 (1992) and BIFAO 47/2 (1985).

Zygmunt, the demanding but just boss, who was always at odds with the local bureaucracy about workers’ pay, was greatly respected by the Egyptian Theban community. There is hardly any family in Gurna that had not had someone working on the reconstruction of the temple under Zygmunt. Even today, despite the years that have passed and the fact that the village of Gurna no longer exists, his memory is alive among the “Gurnau” — colleagues working with him for many years at Deir el-Bahari and friends from the other foreign archaeological missions. Hearing of Zygmunt’s passing, Reiner Stadelmann and Hourig Sourouzian working in Western Thebes wrote: “Das tut uns sehr leid. Er war ein grosser und sehr lieber Herr.”

Right on!

Franciszek Pawlicki