



Stanisław Medeksza
1942–2011

He asked that he be called either “Boss” or by his given name. So he was Boss, a perfect boss. He trusted in the knowledge and skills of his team members and everything got done by itself, everyone acting with full responsibility. He was like that also in his favorite mission, which he had organized and which he directed, in Marina el-Alamein. Passionately he used his vast experience to preserve the relics of this splendid ancient town.

He had many more beloved places, ancient monuments, archaeological sites. His adventure with Antiquity started in 1970 (previous to that he had studied and preserved architectural monuments in Poland). He was invited then by Prof. Stefan Parnicki-Pudetko from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań to work with the freshly formed Poznań team of the archaeological expedition to Novae in Bulgaria. Investigations of the Roman legionary camp and Byzantine episcopal complex at this site introduced Medeksza to the ancient world. It was the beginning of a lifetime of research on ancient architecture, which he undertook at every possibility, even traveling on different occasions, like during a visit to the Italian architect Vincenzo Cancila, when he organized the exploration of a Hellenistic town and house in Solunto.

His long cooperation with the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology began in 1979. Prof. Kazimierz Michałowski employed him then as the architect of archaeological missions working in Egypt (Alexandria and Tell Atrib) and shortly after that also in Sudan, in Old Dongola. He worked for these projects repeatedly, the last time in Sudan in 2008.

In 1980 he took up the position of Chief Architect of the Polish Archaeological Station in Cairo. For five years he participated in many of the Centre's numerous missions working in Egypt, Sudan and on Cyprus. The site of Nea Paphos on Cyprus, where he worked from 1980 to 2008, grew to occupy a special place in his scientific career. His habilitation thesis on the Villa of Theseus, an important contribution in the field of Polish Mediterranean archaeology, came from this site, along with several dozen other publications, including also reports published in the journal Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean.

He was widely appreciated as a conservator and restorer of architectural monuments on archaeological sites. Among his best projects is the innovative design for the conservation of the relics of the Temple of Tutmosis III in Deir el-Bahari, which he prepared in 1985. For a number of years after that he was included in the work of the Polish-Egyptian egyptological and conservation mission charged with the implementation of this multi-stage project. In 1995 he was asked to organize his own mission to preserve another important site – that was when he first arrived in Marina el-Alamein. In his last years he was interested primarily in this site.

From the start he brought younger colleagues into his projects, establishing at the Faculty of Architecture of the Wrocław University of Technology a group of researchers which has already earned merit in Mediterranean archaeology and monument conservation. Its status is further enhanced by cooperation with eminent art conservators from a number of renown Polish centers. In this respect the Wrocław University of Technology is one of a kind among Polish universities.

That is because Professor Stanisław Medeksza was more than just the outstanding researcher, conservator and expert on ancient architecture whom we remember from sites in the Mediterranean, an indefatigable wanderer from Sudan all the way to the Tauric Chersonesus. His other great passion was the Wrocław University of Technology and its Faculty of Architecture, which he was dean of repeatedly starting from 1992. Continuous and consistent support for younger colleagues and their advancement has made it into a leading research center and not just in monument conservation, even though this was always closest to his heart. He was a conservator by soul, longtime member of the Association of Conservators of Architectural Monuments and of the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). He headed the Department of Monument Protection and initiated a new specialty in monument protection in the university curriculum.

He was born 69 years ago in Vilnius, set down roots in the scientific life of Wrocław where he became an important figure; he also earned appreciation for his work in the Mediterranean world. He graduated from the Wrocław University of Technology and climbed the academic ranks there. In 2007 he was nominated to full professorship. He was decorated with the Medal of the National Education Commission and numerous other distinctions for outstanding achievement in his field.

Grażyna Bąkowska and Rafał Czerner

OBITUARIES



Eliza Szpakowska
1978 – 2008

Single-handed she resurrected the Egyptological Section of the Student Scientific Club at the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw. She was a talented student. One winter afternoon she ran in her slippers from the dorm to the Institute to ask about the possibility of working with a mission in Egypt. It was then that she made her choice.

For a few years (from 2004) she was part of the PCMA mission in Hermitage TT 1152 in Sheikh Abd el-Gurna in Upper Egypt. They called her the mission's "hard drive". She also participated in the work of the Polish-Egyptian Mission to the Temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari. She was preparing a publication of Pharaonic finds. From the start of her studies she was interested in the Amarna period. She visited Amarna several times. She lived with the hope that the Centre would go back to doing research in Ashmunein or Tuna el-Gebel. From there it was just a step to Akhetaton.

In 2007 she took up work as an assistant in the PCMA's Research Station in Cairo. It was an unusual year marked by intensive preparations for the celebration of seventy years of Polish archaeological presence in Egypt. A year of challenges and Eliza stood up to all of them. Her contribution to the success of that event was substantial. She worked long hours but still found time for travel, short trips to work in the missions, evening movies and games.

OBITUARIES

The Institute in Cairo has its unique atmosphere formed over the years, a spirit all its own. Eliza became part of that spirit. We still say we are going to do this or that the way Eliza wanted it.

We remain with images of Eliza, her smiling face. We remain with Eliza in the library of the Institute, concentrating on her studies of hieroglyphic texts from the hermitage in Sheikh Abd el-Gurna and making plans for the work at the Institute, what should be done within the week and what can wait the month.

We remain with Eliza intelligent, inquiring, passionately scholarly, Eliza well organized, principled, wise and courageous, demanding of herself and of others, gifted with an incredible memory, Eliza always searching.

We remain with Eliza good and cheerful, fiendly and helpful, forgiving (even when gritting her teeth), patient.

Eliza – she played ping-pong well and liked to swim; she loved to wander the unknown paths of the Western Desert of Egypt, Sinai, Sudan, Negev – she had plans for many more new paths to follow...

Eliza – pragmatic despite everything, launching her doctoral studies connected with Deir el-Bahari, West Thebes, tombs a few hundred years later than her beloved Amarna age.

Eliza will stay with us, in our home in Cairo, in the dighthouse at Deir el-Bahari: every evening she shall be comfortably smiling from her armchair to the left of the fireplace.

*On page 141 of the Handbuch der Ägyptischen Königsnamen I have added a new graphy of the name of Tuthmosis IV, one she discovered (Szpakowska, in: *EtTrav XVII* (2007), 277, Fig. 4) on a brick found during the excavations in Hermitage TT 1152.*

Eliza – so many tasks interrupted...

Katarzyna and Zbigniew Szafranski



Hanna Szymańska
1944 – 2010

Death is always premature, no matter when it comes and why. For Hanna Szymańska it came too soon, not only because she loved life and people, and because her life as a researcher, lecturer and field archaeologist was constantly brimming with new ideas and projects, but also because she left so many works in progress.

*All her adult life Hanna Szymańska was connected with Kraków, with Jagellonian University where she studied Mediterranean archaeology in 1962–1967, and with the Archaeological Museum where she worked from 1971 to her retirement, rising to the position of head of the ancient art collection. She was longtime editorial secretary of the Museum's journal *Materiały Archeologiczne* (1984–2000) and valued associate of the international "Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae". The peak in her museum career came with the launching in 2000 of a highly successful state-of-the-art permanent exhibit, *The Gods of Ancient Egypt* (prepared in association with the present writer). Of special interest is the five-year program of interdisciplinary studies of an Egyptian mummy in the Museum's own collection, which she initiated as the first such program in Poland and one of only a few completed worldwide at the time (it was published in book form in 2001).*

A trained archaeologist, she participated in fieldwork on a number of ancient sites: Novae in Bulgaria (University of Warsaw, Institute of Archaeology, 1973 and 1975), and in Egypt in Alexandria Kom el-Dikka (PCMA, 1979 and 1989), Dendera (Polish–French expedition

of the PCMA and IFAO, 1999–2000), and *Tell Atrib* (PCMA), as a team member in 1991–1995 and as head of the mission in 1998–1999. From 2000 she directed the work of the Polish Archaeological Mission on the Byzantine site of Marea (in the Mareotis region of Egypt), a joint undertaking of PCMA and the Archaeological Museum in Kraków. Her research was supported from several sources, among others, the Polish State Committee for Scientific Research, Fondation Hardt, Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (Berlin), Deutsches Akademisches Austauschdienst (Trier University), Mellon Research Fellowship, Lanckoroński Foundation. She lectured extensively, as guest lecturer at home and abroad, and at international archaeological conferences, as well as regularly at the John Paul II Papal University in Kraków. Not the least, she participated actively in the political opposition movement of the 1980s, heading the Solidarity Labor Union cell at the museum.

Her extensive research was focused primarily on issues connected with the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine art of Egypt, especially terracotta figurines. Her master's thesis on Ancient terracotta reliefs from Kraków collections was followed by a doctoral dissertation, defended in 1979, on *Stylistic trends in the coroplastic arts of Graeco-Roman Egypt*, written under the supervision of Prof. Maria Ludwika Bernhard, and her habilitation thesis, accepted in 2007, devoted to the terracottas from PCMA excavations at Tell Atrib in Egypt. (*Terres cuites d'Athribis*, covering material from 1985–1991, was published by Brepols in 2006). Her lifetime of research on the subject brought ancient terracotta sculpture, previously largely ignored by scholars, into the limelight, demonstrating its intrinsic value as a source of information on a broad range of religious, social and political aspects of ancient life. Setting it in the broader context of Egyptian, Greek and oriental art of different periods led to original conclusions concerning mutual influence and inspirations. Her work in this field was of breakthrough significance, substantially broadening the source base and providing new important elements for dating cultural assemblages from the Graeco-Roman period of Ancient Egyptian civilization.

Hanna Szymańska will not publish the second volume of her research on terracottas from Tell Atrib, covering the years 1992–1999, nor will she see in print the final publication of the basilica in Marea, the explorations of which she had supervised for the last time just weeks before her death. Others will see that her work will not be forgotten. Those who knew and loved her will keep her always as a beacon in their lives.

Krzysztof Babraj