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Ancient Egypt and the Polish Archaeological Research in Egypt in Popular Science Magazines in 1946–1990

Archaeology has the largest number of attractive items among all historical sciences, which in some ways makes it a branch of science, which can and should play a key role in the dissemination of knowledge. Nothing contributes more to arousing interest in scientific issues than science with a light taste of mystery that accompanies each archaeological discovery¹.

As Professor Kazimierz Michałowski (1901–1981) – an outstanding Polish archaeologist and researcher of ancient Egypt² – wrote in 1960, archaeology has fascinated people for many reasons, which were mentioned and discussed in numerous publications³. Often against the wishes of professional scientists, this discipline is part of contemporary demand for pop-cultural entertainment. In fact, it tells stories about interesting, mysterious, and beautiful objects from distant and exotic

¹ K. Michałowski, *Rola i znaczenie archeologii w zakresie popularyzacji wiedzy*, "Problemy" 1960c, no. 5, p. 374.

² *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, ed. M.L. Bierbrier, Egypt Exploration Society, London 2012, p. 371–372.

³ *Presenting Archaeology to the Public: Digging for Truths*, ed. J.H. Jameson, AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek 1997; C. Holtorf, *From Stonehenge to Las Vegas. Archaeology as Popular Culture*, Walnut Creek, Walnut Creek 2005; C. Holtorf, *Archaeology is a brand: the meaning of archaeology in contemporary popular culture*, Walnut Creek 2007; *Archaeological Heritage: Methods of Education and Popularization*, eds. R. Chowanec, W. Więckowski, Oxford 2012; in Polish, e.g.: K. Michałowski, *Rola i znaczenie...*; A. Kowalska, K. Kuraszkiewicz, *Aspekty popularyzacji egiptologii w Polsce. Egiptolog i dziennikarz: sprzeczność czy zbieżność interesów* [a lecture presented at the conference:] "Dziedzictwo archeologiczne – formy edukacji i promocji", 1–3.12.2011, Warsaw 2011; K. Jarosz, *Popularyzacja archeologii w czasopiśmie popularnonaukowych w Polsce w latach 1945–2000*, 2012 (PhD dissertation, led by professor R.F. Mazurowski, submitted to the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw, <http://depotuw.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/item/166/Praca.pdf>); P. Kołodziejczyk, *Archeolog w labiryncie popkultury*, "Perspektywy Kultury" 2014, no. 10; L. Zinkow, *Kilka uwag o kulturotwórczych aspektach odkryć archeologicznych w Egipcie*, *Prace Komisji Filologii Klasycznej PAU*, t. 46, Kraków 2014; R.M. Zając, *Czasopisma popularnonaukowe w Polsce w latach 1945–1989*, Kraków 2016, p. 103–106.

places, and also conveys across time a history of places we know and love. It brings a taste of adventure and associations with an exciting hunt for treasures. There is no coincidence that in the 20th century, due to the rapid development of the media, mass press, film, and television, the work of archaeologists became a characteristic motif of the Western popular culture and spectacular discoveries excited millions of people. One can not forget about a specific symbiosis between archaeology and the media, from which also science draws benefits. Promotion⁴ of archaeological discoveries is a very important way of promoting science, which in turn translates into, for example, better effectiveness of research fundraising.

I would like to analyse the most characteristic aspects and motifs of the coverage related to the achievements of Polish archaeologists who were working in Egypt as found in the Polish press. It will be supplemented with some other accessorial topics related to ancient Egypt and will cover the second half of the 20th century, until the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s. Having the English speaking reader in mind, the author based this article on the selected bibliography, which does not exhaust the issue. What he would rather want would be to examine the background of the issues and problems against which these studies struggled in the country, where science did not develop "linearly" but was conditioned by ideology, occasional politics change, and state controlled financial patronage. These underpinnings were in turn strongly associated with the changing forms of dissemination of science in the periodicals⁵, and were treated instrumentally as tools and vehicles of ideology, and also, more often than not, of propaganda.

Professional Polish archaeological explorations in Egypt began at the end of the interwar period, although we should bear in mind Tadeusz Smoleński

⁴ Popular science media (especially the press) are understood here in accordance with the definition proposed for example in *The Literature of Science: Perspectives on Popular Scientific Writing*, ed. M.M. William, Athens 1993, p. 1-11 (= M.W. McRae, *Introduction: Science in Culture*); in Polish, e.g.: W. Pisarek, *Media masowe wobec upowszechniania nauki*, "Zeszyty Prasoznawcze" 1989, no. 1; A. Pawłowski, *Rola prasy codziennej w prezentowaniu informacji popularnonaukowych*. In: *Media a edukacja*, ed. W. Strykowski, Poznań 1997; J.W. Adamowski, *Upowszechnianie nauki w polskich środkach przekazu: uwagi i refleksje*, [in:] *Teoria i praktyka upowszechniania nauki: wczoraj i jutro*, eds. F. Grucza, W. Wiśniewski, Warszawa 2005; F. Grucza, *Wyrażenie "upowszechnianie nauki" – jego status i znaczenie w świetle teorii aktów komunikacyjnych i lingwistyki tekstów*, [in:] *Teoria i praktyka upowszechniania nauki: wczoraj i jutro*, eds. F. Grucza, W. Wiśniewski, Rada Upowszechniania Nauki przy Prezydium PAN, Warszawa 2005; A. Mączyńska, *Archeologia i media – małżeństwo z rozsądkiem*, [in:] *Współczesne oblicza przeszłości*, eds. A. Marciniak, D. Minta-Tworzowska, M. Pawleta, Poznań 2011; G. Wrona, *Polish scientific magazines on Classical philology, archaeology and prehistory in the period 1918–1939*, "Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization" 2011, no. 15, p. 263–264; R.M. Zając, *Czasopisma popularnonaukowe...*, p. 15–28.

⁵ Cf A. Starzec, *Przemiany w popularyzacji prasowej*, "Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis" 2002, no. 2444.

(1884–1909)⁶, who conducted archaeological works in the first decade of the 20th century in Egypt. However, he was not a formal representative of Poland until it regained independence in 1918, but a citizen of the Austro-Hungary. In 1936 he inaugurated a Polish-French archaeological mission, in which the Polish side was represented by Michałowski⁷. The area of exploration was a necropolis next to the city of Edfu (Upper Egypt) and the artefacts imported from there significantly enriched the collections of the Gallery of Ancient Art at the National Museum in Warsaw⁸. Summaries of his mission were published by Michałowski in periodicals directed to the scientific community⁹, however, there was practically no information about it in the popular press¹⁰.

World War II interrupted the Polish excavations and the political situation in the country after the end of the war did not foster them anymore. There were several reasons for this. As a consequence of the war, Poland found itself behind the Iron Curtain, under the orbit influence of the Soviet Union. During the apogee of totalitarian rule of Joseph Stalin, the deep transformation of socio-political regime translated directly into the applicable perception of science and its reorientation towards ideological tools. A dramatic division of Europe caused also a rapid disruption of exchange within the international scholarly community, and made it extremely difficult for Polish scholars to have access to up-to-date international publications. This was also the case with archaeology¹¹. What is more, if a resumption of domestic archaeological excavations could be justified in the light of the Marxist ideology – an “exotic” Mediterranean archaeology was sometimes seen as a “bourgeois science”¹². As a result of the war, many collections were lost and en-

⁶ *Who Was Who...*, p. 518. Let us add that Smoleński sent the information about his research to the national press, for example, the Lviv “Słowo”.

⁷ J. Thompson, *Wonderful Things: A History of Egyptology*, vol. 3: *From 1914 to the Twenty-first Century*, Cairo 2018, p. 185–186.

⁸ W.A. Daszewski, *50 Years of Polish Excavations in the Eastern Mediterranean – the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of Warsaw University*, [in:] *50 Years of Polish Excavations in Egypt and the Near East. Acts of the Symposium at the Warsaw University, 1986*, eds. S. Jakobielski, J. Karkowski, Warszawa 1992, p. 39–40, Cf K. Michałowski, *Wystawa wykopalisk egipskich Uniwersytetu Józefa Piłsudskiego. Przewodnik. Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie*, 1937.

⁹ *Sprawozdania z Czynności i Posiedzeń PAU (1937, 1938)*.

¹⁰ Cf G. Wrona, *Polish scientific...*

¹¹ A. Abramowicz, *Historia archeologii polskiej. XIX i XX wiek*, Warszawa–Łódź 1991, p. 144 et seq., P.M. Barford, *Marksizm w archeologii polskiej w latach 1945–1975*, “Archeologia Polski” 1995, t. XL, z. 1–2; J. Gąssowski, *Archaeology and Marxism in Poland: A Personal Account*. In: *Archaeology of the Communist Era: A Political History of Archaeology of the 20th Century*, ed. L.R. Lozny, Cham 2016.

¹² *Archäologien Europas / Archaeologies of Europe. Geschichte, Methoden und Theorien / Histories, methods and theories*, eds. P.F. Bieleh, A. Gramsch, A. Marciniak, Münster–New York–München–Berlin 2001, p. 276 et seq.

tire museums, library and academic facilities, not to mention the very eminent scientists and their pre-war students, were lost. Another very important consequence of the war was the need to rebuild the ruined state, which simply did not allow the luxury of costly and “unnecessary” disciplines¹³.

In the Stalinist times – Joseph Stalin died in 1953, but his political and ideological policies were faithfully carried out until 1956 – one can not only hardly observe any interest in the subject of ancient Egypt but also almost total absence of information on archaeological research in periodicals published at that time, the aim of which was to promote scientific ideas¹⁴. The latter can partly be explained by the lack of activity of Polish scholars in Egypt. What is more surprising is that our research has brought about a sparse evidence of the latter, which can be narrowed down to one single article published by Michałowski, who having luckily survived the war, published a short article in 1948 about Egyptian mummies from the collections of the Warsaw National Museum¹⁵. In 1954, he authored a series of small articles about other monuments housed in this Museum: Egyptian vessels¹⁶, sarcophagi¹⁷, and a papyrus¹⁸ in the “Stolica” [“The Capital City”] illustrated magazine, which was addressed to the general public.

After 1956 there was a very clear political breakthrough not only in the countries dependent on the Soviet Union, such as Poland, but also in Egypt. In Eastern Europe, the totalitarian structure loosened its grip, which resulted in a relative liberalization of science, while in Egypt, president Gamal Abdel Nasser started a re-orientation of the state towards the declared “building of a socialist society”. This development in Egypt obviously influenced the warming of relations with the USSR and Eastern European countries. The so-called “Suez crisis” caused a setback in Egypt’s relations with Britain and France. In these favourable circumstances, there was a real prospect of Polish archaeology to return to Egypt. In 1957, Michałowski began excavations in the village of Tell Atrib (Athribis) in the Nile Delta¹⁹ and in

¹³ K. Jarosz, *Popularyzacja archeologii...*, p. 299–300.

¹⁴ It should be pointed out that in 1945 a monthly “Problemy” magazine began to appear, dedicated to the popularization of the different areas of knowledge. Until 1993, when the issue stopped, it was one of the major popular science magazines in Poland. J. Hurwic, *Miesięcznik “Problemy” w polskim życiu intelektualnym po drugiej wojnie światowej*, “Nauka” 2000; cf. also the “program” article thereof: J. Hurwic, *Popularyzacja wiedzy – obowiązek i przywilej pracownika nauki*, “Problemy” 1990.

¹⁵ K. Michałowski, *Odkrycie mumii egipskiej w Muzeum Narodowym w Warszawie*, “Problemy” 1948, no. 11.

¹⁶ K. Michałowski, *Sarkofagi egipskie*, “Stolica” 1954b.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ K. Michałowski, *Warszawski papirus egipski*, “Stolica” 1954c, no. 3(317).

¹⁹ Polish research in Tell-Atrib was continued until the 1990’s. Initially it was led by Michałowski, later by Barbara Ruszczyk (from 1969 to 1984), and then by Karol Myśliwiec (since 1985); W.A. Daszewski, *50 Years of Polish Excavations...*, p. 40.

June of that year his first article, entitled *Wykopaliska polskie w Tell Atrib w Dolnym Egipcie* [Polish excavations in Tell Atrib in Lower Egypt]²⁰ appeared on the pages of "Problemy".

Michałowski attached importance to the popularization of archaeology. He wanted the readers, especially the ones of "Problemy" and "Wiedza i życie" ["Knowledge and Life"] magazines²¹, to be kept informed about the progress of the work. In fact, the real start date of the presence of the Egyptian and Polish archaeological exploration in the Nile Delta is 1957. Michałowski also desired that the dissemination of the findings taken up by his students and collaborators, probably, to certain extent, inspired and coordinated the publishing policy. The group of disseminators grew as a result of establishing, due to his efforts, of the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology – a division of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Department of Mediterranean Archaeology (University of Warsaw) and Polish Research Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo – which he chaired until his death in 1981. Michałowski, the indisputable leader of the Polish Mediterranean archaeology, who initiated and also conducted excavations outside Egypt, in the Crimean Myrmekion, Syrian Palmyra and in Nea Pafos on Cyprus²², saw undoubtedly something more in the press popularization of his research. Promoting science under the socialist regime in Poland had a vastly different meaning than marketing a product in liberal economy. Having in mind the traditional position of archaeology as a scientific discipline, Michałowski skilfully moderated its "elitarian" aspects²³. Leszek Dąbrowski, his close co-operator and participant of the works in Tell-Atrib, carefully avoided the "adventure" aspect and the exotic reality of archaeology, which was unattainable for the people living behind

²⁰ K. Michałowski, *Wykopaliska polskie w Tell Atrib w Dolnym Egipcie*, "Problemy" 1957, no. 6.

²¹ W.M. Kolasa, *Współczesne czasopismo popularnonaukowe: studium analityczne na przykładzie "Wiedzy i Życia" oraz "Świata Nauki"*, "Rocznik Historii Prasy Polskiej" 1998, z. 1–2. I point to these two titles, because the negligible presence of articles to promote their Polish, especially Egyptian, archaeology in other than national periodicals is quite noticeable.

²² The perspective of Polish archaeological research in the East was discussed by Michałowski in the newly founded "Mówią Wieki" magazine: K. Michałowski, *Polskie badania archeologiczne na Bliskim Wschodzie w r. 1958*, "Mówią Wieki" 1959, no. 2/1 and the weekly "Polityka": K. Michałowski, *Polska archeologia na Bliskim Wschodzie*, "Polityka" 1960b, no. 1(148).

²³ For interesting comments on the popularization of similar dilemmas, cf. for example: J. Kubin, *Czy popularnonaukowe czasopisma i książki zmniejszają lukę informacyjną pomiędzy warstwami społecznymi o różnych poziomach i kierunkach wykształcenia?*, [in:] *Upowszechnianie nauki w świecie: nowe doświadczenia i badania*, eds. J. Kubin, G. Labuda, Wrocław 1990; M. Kosińska, *Artykuły popularnonaukowe – egalitaryzm czy elitaryzm nauki?*, [in:] *Współczesna polszczyzna: stan, perspektywy, zagrożenia*, ed. Z. Cygal-Krupa, Kraków 2008. Also cf. the "program" article: K. Michałowski, *Rola i znaczenie archeologii w zakresie popularyzacji wiedzy*, "Problemy" 1960c, no. 5.

the Iron Curtain, in his extensive article published in "Problemy"²⁴. Instead, he shifted the focus towards a detailed description of the excavations: the planning, the logistics – i.e. towards intense, systematic and difficult down-to-earth scientific obligations. It is also worth noticing that also Professor Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogalski (1918–1998), a prominent anthropologist and a colleague of Michałowski, wrote an interesting article written in this period. He, as a matter of fact, introduced some elements of "adventure" in his *Wyprawa archeologiczna do oazy Siwah [Archaeological Expedition to the Siwah oasis]*²⁵.

Polish archaeology in Egypt was developing very dynamically. Already in 1960, Polish archaeologists received a license to conduct excavations in Alexandria. Over the years, the research delivered spectacular results: a large fragment of a city district from the Roman period with well preserved amphitheatre and luxurious, richly decorated villas from the beginning of our era, a complex of public baths with swimming pools and a heating system, and in later years also a necropolis (Kom el-Dikka) were discovered. The aforementioned Dąbrowski, who directed the excavations in the following season, in replacement of Michałowski, published a "report" discussing the circumstances of how these works had started²⁶. Emphasis was placed on the fact that the Polish archaeologists enjoyed recognition and appreciation of the Egyptian government. It is worth remembering that up until 1952 the Egyptian Antiquities Organization had been managed by the French. The article stressed the achievements of Polish science in the global context. Dąbrowski pointed out that such meticulous excavations carried out at one of the most interesting and ancient cities in the Mediterranean was a symbol of international recognition. However, there was another purpose in writing this article and it was to justify the need and validity of developing this branch of knowledge in Poland. It should be added that in the coming years anthropologists, linguists, architects, conservators, numismatists, or papyrologists also participated in the works. Popular articles appeared several times on the subject of excavations in Alexandria. A kind of summary was provided by Wojciech Kołataj in his text entitled *Teoria i praktyka konserwacji na Kom el-Dikka w Aleksandrii [Theory and practice of conservation at Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria]*²⁷, by Elżbieta and Mieczysław

²⁴ L. Dąbrowski, *Praca w obozie archeologicznym na przykładzie wykopalisk w Tell-Atrib w Egipcie*, "Problemy" 1958, no. 1.

²⁵ T. Dzierżykray-Rogalski, *Wyprawa archeologiczna do oazy Siwah*, "Problemy" 1959, no. 10. It should be added that the scientist possessed a rare ability of writing about archaeology in a uniquely catching and popular way. An example of this can be the text *Tajemnice kapłanów egipskich [Secrets of the Egyptian priests]* about mummy artefacts on the occasion of the Polish research in Deir el-Bahari (Dzierżykray-Lien 1964).

²⁶ L. Dąbrowski, *Polskie wykopaliska w Aleksandrii*, "Problemy" 1962, no. 2.

²⁷ W. Kołataj, *Teoria i praktyka konserwacji na Kom el-Dikka w Aleksandrii*, "Problemy" 1977, no. 12.

Rodziewicz in an article *Alexandria*²⁸, and five years later, by Elżbieta Promińska in a cross-sectional presentation of the research²⁹.

The 1960s were the time of multi-faceted activity of Polish scholars in Egypt. Practically all directions of activity were inspired and initiated by Kazimierz Michałowski. In 1960 he was included by UNESCO as one of the experts in the campaign to rescue the monuments of Nubia – the modern southern Egypt and northern Sudan were threatened (in practice they were doomed) by the construction of Aswan High Dam on the Nile³⁰. During the works in Faras³¹ an early Christian cathedral with greatly preserved frescoes was found³². As a result of developed methodology, that is by combining archaeological techniques with the state-of-the art restoratory technology, the so-called “Polish School of Mediterranean Archaeology” was established. Together with it a new sub-discipline of nubiology and the International Society for Nubian Studies were founded. The discovery and the works in Faras was the most acclaimed project of the Polish archaeologists. In 1964, Dzierżykray-Rogalski, the already mentioned anthropologist and research participant, published an article in “Problemy”, which was very extensive for a popular science text³³. Also, Polish journalists soon wrote several bestselling books about Faras. Twenty years after the first article about Faras, Dzierżykray-Rogalski wrote a short memory for “Problemy”³⁴. Almost simultaneously with the rescue mission in Nubia, other Polish projects started at Old Dongola³⁵ (in Nubia) and in Deir el-Bahari. The latter – the reconstruction of the temple of Queen Hatshepsut near the city of Luxor – so well-known for all visitors to Egypt – is today regarded as a “hallmark” of Polish archaeology.

A major promoter of Egyptian excavations was Jadwiga Lipińska (1932–2009)³⁶; a student and close collaborator of Michałowski³⁷. She was associated in

²⁸ E. i M. Rodziewiczowie, *Aleksandria*, “Problemy” 1977, no. 12.

²⁹ E. Promińska, *Miasto Aleksandra Wielkiego po inwazji arabskiej*, “Problemy” 1982, no. 9.

³⁰ J. Thompson, *Wonderful Things...*, p. 281.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 300–302.

³² It is worth using the opportunity to add that in the second half of the 1980s, Polish archaeologists and conservationists also conducted research on other sites related to post-antique, non-pharaonic Egypt, for example, in the Coptic monastery in Naqlun (J. Dobrowolski, *Polskie badania w klasztorze Naqlun w Egipcie*, “Problemy” 1990, no. 5).

³³ T. Dzierżykray-Rogalski, *Ziemia skazana na zagładę*, “Problemy” 1964a, no. 1.

³⁴ T. Dzierżykray-Rogalski, *Cud z Faras*, “Problemy” 1984, no. 7.

³⁵ S. Jakobielski, *Badania archeologiczne w starej Dongoli (Sudan)*, “Problemy” 1977, no. 12.

³⁶ *Who Was Who...*, p. 335.

³⁷ Lipińska was a long time curator at the Gallery of Ancient Art, the National Museum in Warsaw. She also Regularly took part in the excavation studies in Egypt: at Tell Atrib (from 1960), Alexandria (1963), Faras (1962/3) and in Syria (1965), then for many years at Deir el-Bahari (from 1964), and in the years 1978–1996 she was head of the research

particular with the long-standing exploration in the above-mentioned temple of Hatshepsut. The most interesting articles popularizing the highly complex nature of these studies and the many discoveries accompanying them, were written by her³⁸, as well as by other participants', especially Dąbrowski³⁹ and an architect Zygmunt Wysocki⁴⁰.

The 1970s were marked by the appearance of "westernization" of a coarse reality of the socialist Polish state. About mid-decade several articles about Egypt appeared in popular magazines, which were not associated with the Polish excavations. For example, Lipińska published an article entitled *Zagadki nieznanych pism i języków* [The riddles of unknown alphabets and languages] for "Problemy", where she wrote about the hieroglyphs and the history of deciphering them⁴¹, and in another monthly, "Mówią Wieki", two of her texts were printed: *Jak Egipcjanie sporządzali mumie* [How Egyptian mummies were made]⁴², *Złoto faraonów* [Pharaoh's gold]⁴³, along with a third one, co-authored with an egyptologist Marek Marciniak, *Magia w Egipcie faraonów* [Magic in the pharaoh's Egypt]⁴⁴. Interestingly, one of the 1974 covers of "Problemy" featured a reproduced famous gold death mask of Pharaoh Tutankhamun, although, in the form of a simplified poor quality graphics. In the same issue there was a short article about the tomb of this ruler⁴⁵. In 1977, to celebrate twenty years of existence of the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology and the creation of the Polish Research Centre in Cairo, the December issue of "Problemy" was devoted to the multi-layered retrospective on the post-war Polish research on Egypt and a presentation of an ambitious plan for the future. There was also however, a subtle reference to financial problems faced by the discipline.

project at the temple of Thutmose III discovered there; W.A. Daszewski, *50 Years of Polish Excavations...*, p. 42.

³⁸ E.g., J. Lipińska, *Deir el-Bahari. Wykopaliska świątyni Totmesa III*, "Problemy" 1966, no. 9.

³⁹ L. Dąbrowski, *Rekonstrukcja świątyni Hatszepsut w Deir el-Bahari*, "Problemy" 1964, no. 9.

⁴⁰ Z. Wysocki, *W świątyni królowej Hatszepsut*, "Problemy" 1979, no. 6.

⁴¹ J. Lipińska, *Zagadki nieznanych pism i języków*, "Problemy" 1974c, no. 10. The text was undoubtedly associated with the cooperation of Polish egyptologists with an international research team tasked with the analysis of the papyrus documents from the collections of East Berlin, which took place at the invitation of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR.

⁴² J. Lipińska, *Jak Egipcjanie sporządzali mumie*, "Mówią Wieki" 1974a, no. 1.

⁴³ J. Lipińska, *Złoto faraonów*, "Mówią Wieki" 1974b, no. 6.

⁴⁴ J. Lipińska, M. Marciniak, *Magia w Egipcie faraonów*, "Mówią Wieki" 1975, no. 5. One can also recall the interesting "egyptological commentary" to the screening of a 19th-century novel by Bolesław Prus *Pharaoh* (1965, dir. J. Kawalerowicz – the film was a candidate for the Oscar Awards). E. Wipszycka, *Faraon, który nie istniał (na marginesie powieści i filmu)*, "Mówią wieki" 1966, no. 7(103).

⁴⁵ M. i B. Mrozek, *Grobowiec Tutanchamona*, "Problemy" 1974, no. 8.

The 1980s were a period of severe political crisis and the financial collapse of the socialist state. The beginning of that decade was marked by the introduction of martial law, the consequence of which was a virtually complete cessation of the work of Polish archaeologists in Egypt, and it coincided with waning press coverage. The articles on the subject were isolated and sporadic in that period.

To conclude: about 80 texts⁴⁶ promoting Polish archaeology in Egypt and Sudan were published in the period discussed. These include texts a few pages long, short references of a descriptive-synthetic nature, occasional testimonies and personal memories. Nearly half of this material was published in "Problemy" and "Wiedza i życie" magazines, the rest in "Wszechświat", "Świat Nauki", "Mówią Wieki", other periodicals, and in daily newspapers⁴⁷. At the same time, they accounted for about 10% of the texts generally popularizing archaeology⁴⁸. Sporadic articles about ancient Egypt were published in the years 1946–1957, but did not discuss Polish excavations, because none were conducted at the time. They were undoubtedly influenced by the political and ideological perception of this discipline of science. The breakthrough came after 1957 as a result of political change, which was an indirect consequence of the possibility for Polish archaeologists to work on the Nile. The "Golden Decade" of the press releases popularizing Polish Egyptology were the 1960s, and a key figure, an undisputed leader and authority was Kazimierz Michałowski with his direct collaborators. Very few texts were produced by journalists. It should also be noted, as a peculiarity, that near the end of the 1970s, it is almost impossible to find a separate text on other than Polish archaeological research in Egypt in the Polish press⁴⁹. There are no translated articles related to this issue. A breakthrough, with a clear political agenda, came at the beginning of the 1990s, when fundamental changes in the Polish press market took place. Nowadays, archaeological excavations are mostly carried out by professional archaeologists and the promotion of archaeology is done by journalists who are familiar with archaeological education. The following names, representing two sides of the same coin, should be mentioned: Karol Myśliwiec, Zbigniew Szafranski, Bogdan Żurawski, Stefan Jakobielski, Andrzej Niwiński, Włodzimierz Godlewski, Agnieszka Krzemińska, Szymon Zdziebłowski, Agnieszka Kowalska and Bartosz Nowacki.

⁴⁶ Digressions on the subject inside articles on many topics, such as text on the *Polish excavations in the Mediterranean* (J. Friemann, *Polskie wykopaliska śródziemnomorskie*, "Problemy" 1966, no. 1) pose some difficulty here.

⁴⁷ K. Jarosz, *Popularyzacja archeologii...*, p. 104–105.

⁴⁸ K. Jarosz, *Popularyzacja archeologii...*, p. 57.

⁴⁹ In 1978, "Wiedza i Życie" published a text (A. Markert, *Polscy archeolodzy w dorzeczu Nilu*, "Wiedza i Życie" 1978, no. 8) on the topic which had hardly been discussed in the Polish periodicals – one of archaeological research on prehistoric Egypt. It describes the digs of Combined Prehistoric Expedition, Southern Methodist University, Dallas and Geological Survey of Egypt, performed in fact in cooperation with Polish Academy of Sciences, Institute for the History of Material Culture.

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Ancient Egypt and the Polish Archaeological Research in Egypt in Popular Science Magazines in 1946–1990

Abstract

The article outlines the press coverage of the Polish archaeological excavations in Egypt in the popular science magazines in Poland during the communist period, touching upon the specifics of the socio-political conditions of the time.

Keywords: Popularization of science, popular science magazine, Poland 1946–1990, archaeology, Egypt, Kazimierz Michałowski.

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