

FOREWORD

The Polish-Egyptian co-operation on a project the main object of which is to perform a partial reconstruction of the Temple of Queen Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari has already a history of its own.

All this was initiated in 1961. Soon afterwards, however, there occurred an event which caused the problem proper of the referred to reconstruction to be postponed until a later date. This event was the discovery of an until recently unknown temple of Tuthmosis III situated in the Deir el-Bahari Valley between the temple of Queen Hatshepsut and that of Mentuhotep which proved to be of vital importance for us, for Egypt and Egyptology. The Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology, in the performing of these works, was confronted with a task greatly exceeding its labour potential and more than this, its capabilities.

The architects at the Centre were unprepared for works of this kind and furthermore, these were replaced each year by others, since their sojourns in Egypt are on the basis of yearly scholarships, a situation which necessitates a permanent rotation of the personnel with the exception of the Chief Architect - so these were in no position to cope with such an undertaking.

I was however, fully successful in my endeavours to establish co-operation with the Ateliers for the Conservation of Cultural Property, a State enterprise in Warsaw, Poland and since 1968 onwards, the Mission of this enterprise, which was in the main, staffed by employees from the Gdańsk branch of this enterprise, has actively joined the group performing the works at Deir el-Bahari.

The co-operation between the Polish engineer-conservators and the archaeologists specializing in Egyptology at our Centre in Cairo, has produced excellent results that are already at present apparent to those visiting the site at Deir el-Bahari and in particular, when the present condition of the temple is compared with that prior to 1968.

However, it is not only the architectural conservation measures consisting of an anastylosis of the structural parts of the temple which provide convincing evidence of our achievements in our work on this unique monument, since as a result of the research and investigations conducted during the reconstruction of Hatshepsut's Temple a great many purely scien-

tific in nature discoveries have been made which have enriched our knowledge in the spheres of the history and architecture of Egypt. It is not surprising then, that apart from the publications appearing in the Polish and before all, in the foreign scientific periodicals, that a well justified need has emerged for the organization which has performed the lion's share of the campaign undertaken to restore to this object as much as possible of its original appearance so that among others, such events like superb light and sound performances could be held in it, should at the same time, be the promotor of an entire series of its own publications on the subject.

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