

| Professor Jadwiga (“Jagoda”) Lipińska

(29 November 1932 – 4 October 2009)

Professor Jadwiga Lipińska devoted her entire professional life to Egyptology. Her work was both theoretical and practical, as she studied the antiquities in the holdings of the National Museum in Warsaw and published her research, lectured, wrote both academic and popular books and took part in excavations in Egypt. With enough energy for several people, she divided her time between all these activities effortlessly.

She worked at the National Museum in Warsaw from 1958 until 2002, when she retired after serving as curator of the Collection of Ancient Art for eleven years. In 1991 she was appointed full professor. Her scholarly studies of many Egyptian antiquities in the Collection of Ancient Art appeared in both Polish and foreign journals. She curated numerous exhibitions, of which the most important one, in 1997, was devoted to the mysterious Queen Hatshepsut. She also directed the 1999–2001 renovation of the Egyptian gallery. The many discussions, studies and efforts this project entailed gave rise to a totally new conception of arranging the Egyptian collection, which today optimally shows off the collection’s assets. Crowning this new arrangement was the publication in 2007 of a beautifully illustrated guide to the Egyptian and Middle Eastern section of the Gallery of Ancient Art, to which Jagoda contributed significantly, already as a retiree.¹

As a university teacher of many student cohorts, she mercilessly highlighted any and all errors and slip-ups in fact, methodology or language. The Master’s theses she passed met all scholarly criteria and were often published in the *Annuaire du Musée National de Varsovie*. Employers snatched up her students like hot buns. In 1978 she put together a team of her former students to work in Egypt on the Tuthmosis III mission in Deir el-Bahari. She also advised several doctoral students, the last of whom, in 2008, was this author, whose dissertation was – of course – about the temple of Thutmosis.

Working in Egypt itself was probably her favourite professional activity. Collaborating closely with Kazimierz Michałowski, she took part in many missions coordinated by the University of Warsaw’s Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology (Tell Atrib in 1960, 1963 and 1965 and Alexandria in 1963; also Sudan and Syria). But already in 1961 she bound her life with Deir el-Bahari and the newly discovered temple of Thutmosis III. As an Egyptologist and director of the site, she took part in excavating the temple in 1961–1967. She participated in the astounding discoveries of its stunning polychrome reliefs and of many high-quality sculptures, with the splendid statue of Thutmosis III on his throne foremost among them. The whole world saw the photographs and heard the news about these findings.

For a long time, Jagoda (whom the Egyptians called “Madame Goda” or “Mudira,” boss) dreamed about restoring the temple and writing about it. In her habilitation thesis she reconstructed its layout and its appearance, and her many articles covered various aspects of this great Polish discovery. She infected her students with her passion for the Egyptian iconography of the New Kingdom. And she succeeded in creating the Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission for Thutmosis III, which operated from 1978 to 1996. The team’s first

¹ *Galeria Sztuki Starożytnej. Egipt, Bliski Wschód. Przewodnik*, Witold Dobrowolski, ed. (Warsaw: Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, 2007).

job was to join together small fragments of splintered walls to recreate sequences of scenes covering entire walls. This allowed for the theoretical reimagining of the decorations of most of the temple's rooms and the practical reconstruction of one of its walls. The mission, initially made up of only four people, Professor Lipińska and three of her students, gradually grew into a large team made up of Egyptologists, conservators, architects, artists and temporarily engaged specialists from other disciplines.

The mission's house in the Valley of the Monkeys, an enchanted rocky valley neighbouring the Valley of the Kings and, across the mountains, Deir el-Bahari, became Jagoda's second home. We often had to scale steep cliffs to reach our workplace, a storeroom near Thutmosis's temple, after the mission's faithful cars refused to start. The house was well-cared for, and its decorations included finishing touches such as lampshades hand-woven by us out of palm leaves, the walls we painted ourselves and gorgeous flower gardens at the entrance, not to mention the dazzling views from its windows. The only thing missing for Jagoda's total bliss was a forest where she could pick mushrooms...

When the mission suspended its activity in 1996, the reconstruction of the temple stopped. It was only fourteen years later, in 2008, that the mission was reopened, to Jagoda's enormous joy, albeit no longer under her leadership. But she continued to maintain a lively interest in all news coming from Egypt.

Jagoda not only published more than 100 scholarly books and articles about Egyptian culture, but she also popularized it. Thanks to her lively writing and to her professionalism, many years later her books continue to be read by people interested in Egypt. They are sought after and sometimes reappear in new editions, and they retain their freshness.

Jagoda had many close friends and extensive professional contacts in the international community of Egyptologists. From its very beginning she was active in the International Committee for Egyptology, under the auspices of the International Council of Museums, and in other associations and organizations: she was a corresponding member of the German Archaeological Institute, a member of the Council of the International Association of Egyptologists, a member of the Society for Nubian Studies, the German Oriental Society, Institute of Mediterranean Archaeology and the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities in Toronto and the Polish Archaeological Society. She was also a member of the Polish Mediterranean Archaeology Centre of the University of Warsaw, of the Council of the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology of the Polish Academy of Sciences and of the Council of the National Museum in Warsaw.

Jagoda had the gift of a sparkling intelligence, a critical spirit, a lively sense of humour and a large dose of malice. She travelled through life like a tornado, attracting friends but also making enemies. She was one of those people who leave a deep, multihued imprint on the reality that surrounds them.

Monika Dolińska