Professor Jadwiga Lipińska — Jagoda to us and Madame Goda to the Egyptians — was among Professor Kazimierz Michałowski’s closest collaborators and, much like the Professor, she fulfilled her dedication to Egyptology in three main fields: studies of the Egyptian collection held in the National Museum in Warsaw, academic lecturing (universities in Warsaw and Łódź) and research in Egypt.

At the National Museum in Warsaw Jadwiga Lipińska worked from 1958 until her retirement in 2002, starting out as a lowly assistant and reaching the top as a curator of the collection in 1991. It was then also that she received the title of full professor, the highest in the Polish scholarly hierarchy. She published many of the objects of ancient Egyptian art in the collection, organized many exhibitions, including that all important one, The Mysterious Queen Hatshepsut, in 1997, and managed the renovation of the Egyptian Gallery. The new display is ultimately a resultant of her inspired vision, many heated discussions with her collaborators and capabilities of the museum’s technical staff.

As a university lecturer she supervised successive classes of students, sharpening an already sharp tongue on graduate students and practically force-feeding them knowledge and proper scientific practices. Mistakes
were not tolerated and weak studies never passed, hence those receiving a diploma under her supervision could be confident of a place in the scholarly field. A select team of her former students collaborated with her in Egypt on the Tuthmosis III Temple project at Deir el-Bahari which she started in 1978.

Research in Egypt was Jagoda’s undoubtedly most beloved professional activity. She participated in various excavations carried out by the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology (Tell Atrib in 1960, 1963 and 1965, Alexandria in 1963, also projects in Sudan and Syria), but already in 1961 she set her sights on the newly discovered Temple of Tuthmosis III at Deir el-Bahari. From this point on her life was to be linked with the fate of the work at Deir el-Bahari. In 1961 – 1967 she participated in the uncovering of the temple’s ruins, as an Egyptologist and as head of the team (in the 1964/1965 season), and for many years thereafter worked on the reconstruction of the temple, dreaming to complete the project and publish the results. A reconstruction of the plan and layout of the temple was the subject of her habilitation thesis and she also wrote a number of articles on various aspects of this important Polish discovery. She masterminded and then directed, from 1978 until 1996, the work of the Polish-Egyptian Archaeological and Conservation Mission to the Temple of Tuthmosis III. Team members started with finding connections between pieces of shattered stone blocks with relief decoration and went on to reconstruct the succession of scenes on the temple walls. The end effect was a theoretical reconstruction of the decoration of most of the rooms of the temple and a project to actually restore one of the walls. Working as a foursome at first — Jagoda with three of her students — the team grew to a sizable expedition which encompassed Egyptologists, restorers, architects, artists and experts from different fields as required. The suspension of the mission in 1996 interrupted the work at a promising stage, putting an end to any further reconstruction for several years. When fourteen years later, in 2008, the mission was reinstated, it was a great joy to Jagoda, even though she could no longer be head of the project.

Apart from research (which fruited in her case in more than a hundred published articles and books), Lipińska was deeply involved in popularizing the civilization of Ancient Egypt among the Polish public. Her books remain widely-read in Poland thanks to a vivid writing style and her deep knowledge of the subject.

An Egyptologist with high standing in the world community of scholars, known and respected for her expertise, she was from the beginning an active member of the International Committee for Egyptology (CIPEG) working within the framework of the International Council of Museums (ICOM). She kept up activity also in other societies and organizations.

Her strong personality, lively intelligence and witty if slightly malicious tongue won her as many enemies as friends. Indifference with regard to her person was never an option. Now we shall all miss her.

Monika Dolińska