

Prof. Stanisław Medeksza

1942–2011

Our colleague and longtime associate at the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of the University of Warsaw, Prof. Stanisław Medeksza passed away on 10 September 2011 after a long illness. Professor Medeksza, long dean of the Faculty of Architecture of the Wrocław University of Technology, was a known expert on ancient architecture and co-founder of the Polish school of conservation and restoration of monuments of ancient architecture. He has worked on many sites around the Mediterranean, in Bulgaria, Italy, Cyprus, Egypt and Sudan and has published the results of his research, contributing importantly to his field of science.

He first came to work for the Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology in 1979 when the Centre's founder and director, Prof. Kazimierz Michałowski entrusted him, already accomplished researcher in the field of ancient architecture, with the architectural study and documentation of finds made by Polish archaeological missions in Alexandria and Tell Atrib in Egypt and shortly thereafter, also in Dongola in Sudan. Soon he was called up as Chief Architect of the Centre in Cairo, opening a lifelong association of Professor Medeksza with the Centre and its archaeological and conservation projects, such as the Mausoleum of Qurqumas in Cairo, the temples of Hatshepsut and Tuthmosis III in Deir el-Bahari and the Roman residential architecture in Nea Paphos on Cyprus. The latter site proved to be of special importance in Prof. Medeksza's career, for it was his analysis and theoretical reconstruction of the building and development of the so-called Villa of Theseus in Paphos that was accepted as a habilitation dissertation, a stepping stone to full professorship in Poland. His partial reconstruction and site display of the Temple of Tuthmosis III in Deir el-Bahari earned him the highest marks in terms of designing. It presented an innovative approach to the issue of displaying ancient Egyptian antiquities, by creating under the reconstructed temple pavement a series of rooms for displaying remnants recovered from the destroyed temple, as well as a variety of other monuments originating from the immediate neighborhood. In 1994 Professor Stanisław Medeksza took over the Polish–Egyptian Preservation Mission in Marina el-Alamein on the northern coast of Egypt, directing architectural research and preservation work at the site until the end. Years of experience in executing conservation projects in Poland and abroad, combined with outstanding professionalism in his field and real concern for preserving relics of ancient civilization helped to save, restore and display many monuments from this ancient site.

As a lecturer of architectural history and ancient architecture in particular he was unmatched in Poland. For years Dean of the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Technology in Wrocław, he has educated several architects and students of architecture who are now associated with the archaeological and conservation projects carried out by the Centre. They will undoubtedly carry forward the torch lighted for them by Professor Stanisław Medeksza.