


The Collection of Egyptian Mummies of the University of Warsaw and their Role in the ‘Prehistory’ of Polish Egyptology

WOJCIECH EJSMOND, MARZENA OŹAREK-SZILKE

Abstract: The University of Warsaw has a collection of ancient Egyptian objects, including four human mummies (200334 MNW, 236805/3 MNW, 236806 MNW, along with the mummy remains under two numbers KMS St. 0089 and KMS St. 0096 from the coffin 236804 MNW). They were donated by various persons in the nineteenth century. This paper establishes their dating, history, provenances, and research history in the context of the university’s antiquities collection, interests in ancient Egypt, and the development of Egyptology in Poland, especially in Warsaw. Previous studies on the subject were problematic owing to the limited and dispersed nature of sources and the fact that some of them were ambiguous and sometimes contradictory. Since then, more information has become available, especially computed tomography and X-ray scans of the mummies made by the Warsaw Mummy Project in cooperation with the National Museum in Warsaw. This has allowed further elaboration on the history of the collection and to re-establish identities of some of the deceased.

Keywords: Egyptian mummies, human remains, museology, University of Warsaw, Egyptomania

Wojciech Ejmond, Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures, Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw; wojtek.ejmond@wp.pl;  0000-0003-2413-8728

Marzena Ożarek-Szilke, The Oncology Clinic of the Medical University of Warsaw, Warsaw; mnauka.edu@gmail.com

The history of Egyptology at the University of Warsaw begins in 1934 when Antoni Śmieszek received the chair of the Egyptological Seminar founded at the Oriental Institute of the University of Warsaw. These professional studies were continued by Kazimierz Michałowski, Tadeusz Andrzejewski, and their followers. However, before formal establishment of Egyptology at the University of Warsaw several persons were engaged in studies on ancient Egypt due to artefacts, especially mummies, owned by the university.

The collection of ancient Egyptian objects belonging to the University of Warsaw has thus far been presented in two articles. Tomasz Mikocki and Zbigniew E. Szafrąński made a list of classical archaeological objects belonging to the university and preserved at the National Museum in Warsaw as loans. Szafrąński was responsible for the Egyptian ones.¹ Monika Dolińska made a detailed study of the history of ancient Egyptian mummies and coffins.² Her work enabled the establishment of the provenance and recent history of several objects, as well as clarifying a number of issues. Szafrąński's and Dolińska's pioneering studies on the history of the collection were problematic owing to the limited and dispersed nature of sources and the fact that some of them were ambiguous and sometimes contradictory. Since their publications, new evidence and studies have been carried out, enabling some corrections and the establishment of new facts regarding the history of the collection.

The launch of the Warsaw Mummy Project in 2015, an interdisciplinary research programme of ancient Egyptian mummies preserved at the National Museum in Warsaw, prompted a need to study the history of the examined specimens. The first results of the project provided new information on the identities of some of the individuals.³ The current paper presents the human mummies belonging to the University of Warsaw: a so-called pseudo-mummy of a child, the so-called Mysterious Lady, Djed-Khonsu-iuf-anekh, and Amenhotep. It also considers the history of a lost mummy donated by Karol Ignacy Zamoyski. These were acquired in the nineteenth century by travelers and came from Thebes, with the exception of the pseudo-mummy of a child, while the provenance of Zamoyski's gift is unknown.

Ancient Egyptian mummies are an important source for Egyptology, medicine, and other disciplines.⁴ Their findspots and modern history are important for increasing their research potential, e.g. where and when these individuals lived is crucial for studies of ancient diseases. Furthermore, while preparing this paper the current authors came across information that shows how the collection of mummies belonging to the University of Warsaw stimulated the development of Egyptology in Warsaw.

Other Egyptian artefacts will not be discussed here in such detail as the mummies because of the lack of material for researching. Only mummies and their coffins attracted enough attention in past centuries to trace their whereabouts. To better understand this and the expansion of the collection, they are presented in the context of the history of the university, its other collections, and interests in ancient Egypt in Poland. The first part of the paper aims at illustrating the general history of the collection, enabling an understanding of the context of acquisitions of the mummies and the history of research on them.

¹ Mikocki, Szafrąński 1993.

² Dolińska 2003.

³ E.g. Ejsmond *et al.* 2021.

⁴ See, e.g.: Price *et al.* 2016.

ORIGINS OF THE COLLECTION

Egyptian antiquities have been coming to Poland since at least the sixteenth century,⁵ among them human mummies.⁶ One can speak of some interest in ancient Egypt and serious scholarly studies in Poland in the seventeenth century,⁷ but until the early nineteenth century there was no scientific collection that would include ancient Egyptian artefacts and would foster their study. One finds mentions of Egyptian mummies in several aristocratic⁸ and royal⁹ collections, but these were treated either as curiosities or were intended for medical use, as was common at that time.¹⁰

It is worth mentioning that ancient Egyptian history was present in the curricula of high schools in Poland from the late eighteenth century. Students were usually acquainted with up-to-date knowledge on ancient Egypt and sometimes were reading selections of texts of classical authors writing on Egypt.¹¹ Opinions on the pharaonic state were ambivalent: from admiration of a country that was thought to be a source of wisdom, to criticism of degenerated despotic rule.¹²

Among the pioneers of Egyptology in Poland was Stanisław Szczęśny Kossakowski, who was Jean-François Champollion's friend and proponent of his theory explaining hieroglyphic writing. He had been delivering talks in European cities in Polish, French, and English from 1825, promoting Champollion's discovery. The text of the lecture was prepared in consultation with the French scholar and is still preserved in archives in St. Petersburg and Vilnius.¹³

The first collection in Poland at least partly related to interest in the study of antiquities was established by King Stanisław August Poniatowski (reign: 1764–1795) in the Royal Castle in Warsaw.¹⁴ He had mummies and several statuettes from Egypt that were acquired for the king by Fryderyk August Moszyński in Marseille in 1785.¹⁵ His collection began to be broken up after he was deposed in 1795.¹⁶ Part of his possessions were acquired

⁵ For an overview of the history of Polish Egyptology, see: Śliwa 2020.

⁶ It is hard to say which of them were genuine antiquities and which were fakes because most of them have not survived. For the early interest in ancient Egypt in Polish lands, see: Kaczmarek 2016 and Zinkow 2000.

⁷ E.g. Jan Jonston was publishing results of his own, original, studies on ancient Egypt. For an overview of his research and references, see: Kaczmarek 2002; 2016: 45–60. Worth mentioning is Lithuanian-Polish aristocrat Mikołaj Krzysztof 'the Orphan' Radziwiłł, who visited Egypt in 1583 and published his memoirs that presents his inquisitive and scientific interests in ancient Egypt (Radziwiłł 1601).

⁸ E.g. Zinkow 2000: 159. A very interesting case is the mummy which belonged to King Jan III Sobieski, which survived and is preserved in Lithuania (National Museum of Lithuania, Vilnius 6283; Śliwa 2019: 283).

⁹ Zinkow 2000.

¹⁰ Dannenfeldt 1985.

¹¹ Kaczmarek 2016: 214ff. For the teaching of ancient history at the University of Warsaw, see: Kolendo 1993a.

¹² Kaczmarek 2016: 100ff.

¹³ Niwiński, Snitkuvienė 1999.

¹⁴ Mikocki 1984.

¹⁵ Mikocki 1984: 407; Zinkow 2000: 158–159; Kaczmarek 2016: 96.

¹⁶ Kaczmarek 2016: 96.

from the king's heirs by the University of Warsaw, which was established in 1816.¹⁷ However, there is no information regarding the whereabouts of ancient Egyptian objects from his collection.

Poland was not an independent country through most of the nineteenth century and her history is marked by national uprisings. The Russians, who took control of Warsaw after the Napoleonic Wars and held it until 1915, seemed to be more interested in confiscating classical antiquities than taking Egyptian oddities to Russia as punishment for the national uprisings.¹⁸ This led to a situation in which the University of Warsaw acquired and retained, despite difficult circumstances, a collection of Egyptian objects, while many Greek and Roman artefacts were taken from Warsaw.

Since its foundation, the university had been an important part of Polish intellectual life and played a crucial role in the development of studies in ancient history, archaeology and Egyptology. The institution was originally under the administration of the State's Commission for Denominations and Public Enlightenment (later the Ministry of Religions and Public Enlightenment, i.e. the Ministry of Education), first directed by Count Stanisław Kostka Potocki, from 1815 to 1820. He was an accomplished antiquarian, e.g. he conducted archaeological excavation in the vicinity of Pompeii and adapted into Polish Johann Joachim Winckelmann's *History of ancient art*, supplementing his translation with his own ideas and a his own chapter on ancient Egyptian art.¹⁹ The count supported the establishment of the scientific cabinets related to the faculties of the university. They were intended to help academic staff and students. Topics related with the classical archaeology were present in the curricula for students of ancient history, classical philology, law, and philosophy.²⁰

FROM CURIOSITIES TO MUSEUM SPECIMENS

Mummies, among other ancient Egyptian artefacts, were preserved at several institutes of the university. The Cabinet of Antique Curiosities was established in 1821 and its prime area of collecting was (but not limited to) objects from Poland.²¹ It developed very poorly in contrast to, e.g. Zoological, Botanical or Mineralogical cabinets. Thus, the Ministry of Education publicly encouraged Poles to donate antiquities.²² The collection encompassed a variety of ancient objects from many periods and regions, not all of which could be called antiques by today's standards, e.g. the bone of a whale that was originally hanging in a church.²³ Also, Egyptian antiquities started to be donated from the 1820s, but only

¹⁷ For an overview of the history of the University of Warsaw, see: Miziołek 2017. Note that the chapter on the collection of ancient Egyptian mummies (pp. 341–344) contains some errors.

¹⁸ See below.

¹⁹ Potocki 1815.

²⁰ Kolendo 1993a; Jaworski 2001: 464; Kaczmarek 2016: 241–272.

²¹ Kolendo 1993b: 30.

²² Texts of the addresses in Wierzbowski 1904: 19–20. Judging by the document there was no clear division between historical artefacts and natural history specimens.

²³ Kolendo 1993b: 30.

mummies caught enough attention and references in contemporary sources to allow their history to be traced at the university. Smaller artefacts, like figurines and amulets, usually went unnoticed.²⁴

A specific situation must be mentioned regarding the formal categorisation and storage of ancient Egyptian mummies at the university. Not all antiquities went to the Cabinet of Antique Curiosities. The inventory of the Zoological Cabinet contains an Egyptian mummy, brought from Egypt by Jan Wężyk-Rudzki in late 1826 or early 1827.²⁵ This inclusion of a human mummy as a part of the Zoological Cabinet saved it from being taken to Russia after the November Uprising of 1830–1831, in contrast to the rich collection of ancient coins in the Numismatic Cabinet and some other objects that were sent to St. Petersburg.²⁶

After the crushing of the November Uprising the university was closed until 1862. The remaining part of the collection of antiquities was transferred to the Government's Library, which was located in the Kazimierz Palace, the main seat of the former university (**Fig. 1**). The artefacts were exhibited as part of the Zoological Cabinet, along with other objects (e.g. bronzes from China), despite the formal nonexistence of the university.²⁷

The university was re-opened under the name of the Main School in 1862. The ancient objects from its cabinets, including mummies from the Zoological Cabinet, were transferred to the Museum of Fine Arts, which was established as part of the university in this same year. This transfer was made before the January Uprising of 1863–1864. The fallout from this event practically halted the development of cultural institutions in the Kingdom of Poland for several years.²⁸ Later on, the Main School was renamed the Imperial University of Warsaw in 1869 – a university with Russian as its official language.²⁹

The popular publicist and antiquarian, Hipolit Skimborowicz, tried to develop an institution for archaeology at the university. His efforts resulted in the founding of the Archaeological Museum of the university in 1869, housed in the Kazimierz Palace (**Figs 1–2**), exhibiting ancient objects from different cabinets. Its name was changed in 1871 to the Archaeological Cabinet.³⁰ Part of the inventory list made by Skimborowicz is preserved

²⁴ A list of the objects which belong to the university (see: Mikocki, Szafrński 1993: 156–168) shows that plenty of smaller ones, such as amulets, beads, and figurines, is of unknown origin. However, the list seems not to be complete (see below). Jan Wężyk-Rudzki donated to the university some artefacts (Dolińska 2003: 445–450). Besides a mummy in coffin and cartonnage, other objects from his donation are rarely mentioned. Forty-six Egyptian amulets belonging to the University of Warsaw were under two inventory numbers when transferred to the National Museum in Warsaw. A document attached to them states '1826 from Thebes by Rudzki'. It is hard to say whether this information is correct since numerous errors occurred in the course of the history of the collection (Dolińska 2003: 455).

²⁵ Bieliński 1907: 534–535. There should be listed one more mummy (today 200334 MNW, see below), which was thought then to be a fake and this may be the reason why it was not included.

²⁶ Kolendo 1993b: 31; Mikocki, Szafrński 1993: 148.

²⁷ Sobieszański 1848: 459; Dolińska 2003: 447.

²⁸ Jaworski 2003: 468.

²⁹ Miziolek 2017: 191–194.

³⁰ Jaworski 2003: 459–470.



1. The University of Warsaw c. 1824 by Jan F. Piwarski; Kazimierz Palace in the middle (courtesy of the University of Warsaw Museum).

at the Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw.³¹ This document is crucial for studying the history of the collection, because other inventories were either destroyed or lost due to the uprisings and wars that affected Warsaw. It is a short list with basic information concerning objects, provenience, who brought them to the university, and when. Piotr Jaworski, who published it,³² and Monika Dolińska³³ noticed some errors in the inventory, which will be discussed later when describing the history of individual objects. Skimborowicz also published a paper describing the museum in a local newspaper: ‘Just by the entrance a visitor is spectating three mummies and a container of a fourth one, which, due to its poor packaging, fractured during its journey from Egypt; the body that was extracted from its wrapping is stored at the cabinet of the comparative anatomy’.³⁴

Skimborowicz passed the charge of the museum to a committee directed by Józef Kasznica.³⁵ The cabinet was later directed by the professor of Latin philology Antoni Mierzyński up to 1877.³⁶ In this same year, the collection was combined with the newly

³¹ Jaworski 2001.

³² Jaworski 2001.

³³ Jaworski 2001: 50; Dolińska 2003: 451.

³⁴ Skimborowicz 1869: 264–265. Translated from Polish by the authors.

³⁵ Dolińska 2003: 452.

³⁶ Kolendo 1993b: 34.



2. The interior of the Archaeological Museum of the Imperial University of Warsaw (Anonymous 1869b: 364).

founded Numismatic Cabinet.³⁷ The new merged assembly was under the supervision of historian Adolf Pawiński and was not available to the general public due to the small space of the exhibiting area. Nevertheless, it was accessible for teachers of the university and other scholars, like Russian Egyptologist Boris Turayev.³⁸ Both combined collections were under the management of Pawiński, until his death in 1896.³⁹ Two years before his death four showcases were ordered to exhibit mummies and coffins.⁴⁰ Pawiński's position was taken by Professor Teodor Wierzbowski, who published a book on the history of the university.⁴¹ He was responsible for the collection up to the evacuation of the university from Warsaw with the Russian army to Rostov on Don in 1915 during the First World War.⁴² As a result of the event, a large number of ancient objects were taken, as well as the inventories of the collections, which are now considered lost, which makes the research of the history of the collection very difficult.⁴³ Fortunately, the Egyptian objects, at least most of them, were left in Warsaw.

³⁷ Kolendo 1993b: 34.

³⁸ Kolendo 1993b: 35; Dolińska 2003: 455.

³⁹ Kolendo 1993b: 34.

⁴⁰ Dolińska 2003: 454.

⁴¹ Wierzbowski 1904.

⁴² Kolendo 1993b: 34.

⁴³ Kolendo 1993b: 35.



3. The current seat of the National Museum in Warsaw designed by Tadeusz Tołwiński and opened for public in 1938 (Phot. C. Olszewski, public domain, www.wikipedia.com).

Artefacts that stayed in Warsaw were ordered by anthropologist Kazimierz Stołyhwo and archaeologist Roman Jakimowicz.⁴⁴ Assistant Professor in classical philology, Ryszard Ganszyniec, became the director of the Archaeological Cabinet in 1916, but was quickly sent to take part in the First World War.⁴⁵ By a decision in 1917 of the re-established University of Warsaw, its antiquities were transferred as loans to the newly founded National Museum in 1918 and 1919.⁴⁶ The museum did not have any permanent residence until its present seat was opened to the public in 1938. From that time on it encompasses the Gallery of Ancient Art that exhibited the Egyptian collection (**Figs 3–4**).⁴⁷

The list of the Egyptian objects belonging to the university and loaned to the museum was published by Szafrński.⁴⁸ It included before the Second World War: four human mummies (Amenhotep, the one in the coffin of Hor-Djehuty, pseudo-mummy of a child, ‘mummy in a box in a showcase’, i.e. Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh), four coffins (Amenhotep,

⁴⁴ Kolendo 1993b: 35.

⁴⁵ Kolendo 1993b: 35.

⁴⁶ Text of the document in: Mikocki, Szafrński 1993: 153. See also: Dolińska 2003: 455–458 for more details.

⁴⁷ Jaworski 2003: 472–473; Dobrowolski (Ed.) 2007; Ambroziak 2016.

⁴⁸ Mikocki, Szafrński 1993: 156–168.



4. The Egyptian section of the current Ancient Art Gallery, National Museum in Warsaw re-opened in 2021 (Phot. W. Ejsmond).

Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh, Tai-akhut, and Hor-Djehuty), cartonnage of Hor-Djehuty, two animal mummies (ibis and turtle or ibis), forty-three amulets,⁴⁹ twenty figurines, three strings of beads, fragments of a papyrus,⁵⁰ wooden tablet with a script,⁵¹ two 'bricks' (described in Polish as 'cegiełki kątowe', probably one or two amulets in the shape of a carpenter's setsquare and plummet that always went in pairs as amulets),⁵² and a stone or a mortar allegedly from the Great Pyramid.⁵³ There is also one shabti figurine considered lost. The number of the objects after the Second World War is reduced to: four mummies, four coffins, one complete and one set of fragments of cartonnage (the latter from the mummy of Amenhotep, see below), twenty-eight amulets, and six figurines. There is no information on the strings of beads⁵⁴ as well as shabti figurines and a box of Tai-akhut (see the section on Zamoyski's mummy). Two shabties, which reached Warsaw

⁴⁹ It is sometimes difficult to understand what the person making the inventory in 1919 had in mind and thus interpret the object. Therefore, the number also includes pieces of jewellery and small figurines.

⁵⁰ 236809 MNW; Dolińska 2003: 458; its image published in: Mikocki, Szafrński 1993: Fig. 21.

⁵¹ Now lost, Dolińska 2003: 458.

⁵² Andrews 1994: 85–86.

⁵³ Now considered lost. Wrongly described in Skimborowicz's inventory as a piece of granite (Dolińska 2003: 458).

⁵⁴ Dolińska 2003: 456–458.

via Odessa, belonged to Tai-akhut and were identified by Mykola Tarasenko at the National Museum in Warsaw (38379 MNW and 41556 MNW).⁵⁵

In the meantime, classical archaeology, including classes on ancient Egypt, was established as an independent field of studies at the University of Warsaw in 1931, lectured by Professor Kazimierz Michałowski. His cooperation with the French Institute for Oriental Archaeology resulted in the joint Polish-French excavations at Edfu.⁵⁶ As a result, numerous artefacts from these excavations, as well as those donated by the French Institute for Oriental Archaeology in Cairo to the University of Warsaw, greatly enriched the collection that was preserved at the National Museum in Warsaw.⁵⁷ Egyptian antiquities became the predominant part of the collection. Before the Second World War started the last transport of artefacts from the excavations at Edfu arrived at the museum, but the boxes with the objects were not even opened and the artefacts were not catalogued due to the rush related to the beginning of the war. As far as is known, there were no mummies that arrived in the collection of the University of Warsaw in the 1920s and 1930s.

In the meantime, Professor Antoni Śmieszek owned the chair of oriental languages at Poznań University (1921–1933). He was later transferred to Warsaw, where he received the chair of the Egyptological Seminar founded at the Oriental Institute of the University of Warsaw in 1934 and became director of the faculty in 1937.⁵⁸ He published the first Polish Egyptological works.⁵⁹ His suicide during a research stay at the University of Göttingen in 1943 marked the end of the first attempt to create Egyptology as an independent field at the University of Warsaw.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, his short tenure and Michałowski's excavations can be treated as the beginning of Egyptology in Warsaw.

The war also greatly affected the state of the collection. As Michałowski wrote after coming back from a prisoners' of war camp in Germany and visiting the museum in 1945: 'In the rooms of the museum one could find ancient pottery scattered on the floor, shattered stone and wooden sculptures, cartonnages, sarcophagi trampled by military shoes and partly unwrapped mummies, in which German soldiers had been looking for *hidden treasures*'.⁶¹

The Department of Ancient Art was established at the re-opened National Museum in 1949. Due to new acquisitions, Greek and Roman art became the dominant section of the collection.⁶²

⁵⁵ Tarasenko 2019: 313.

⁵⁶ Sainte Fare Garnot *et al.* 1937.

⁵⁷ Dolińska 2003: 458–461.

⁵⁸ Rudnicki 1938–1945. This was the first chair of Egyptology in Poland as a philological university discipline. He gave lectures on Egyptian grammar, literature, and the history of ancient Egypt (Śliwa 2022: 349). Worth mentioning in the context of philological Egyptology in Poland is also Zygmunt Konopczyński (1878–c. 1950), an entrepreneur and independent scholar, whose translation of Adolf Erman's *Die Hieroglyphen* (Erman 1937), is the first introduction to the ancient Egyptian language in Polish (Śliwa 2019: 127).

⁵⁹ E.g. Śmieszek 1930; 1935; 1936.

⁶⁰ Rudnicki 1938–1945.

⁶¹ Michałowski 1957: 120. Translated from Polish by the authors.

⁶² Michałowski 1957: 124.

Meanwhile, at the re-opened (after the war) Department of Mediterranean Archaeology (formerly the Department of Classical Archaeology) of the University of Warsaw, masters and PhD theses focused on the objects in the collection held at the National Museum,⁶³ because the Gallery of Ancient Art required cataloguing of the objects and urgent restoration works. This led to the partial arrangement and research of the collection, but Egyptian mummies were never the subject of complex and comprehensive studies. There was a project to conduct such research and a radiological examination of human Egyptian mummies in Polish collections in the late 1990s, but its results were never fully published and not all the mummies were examined.⁶⁴

A new enterprise was undertaken by members of the Warsaw Mummy Project in 2015, where human mummies are researched by co-directors of the project, Wojciech Ejsmond and Marzena Ożarek-Szilke. Its objective is to deliver a multidisciplinary study of all Egyptian mummies stored at the National Museum in Warsaw. This collection includes the property of the University of Warsaw, the National Museum in Warsaw, and also other institutions, such as the Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw and Zachęta Museum – National Gallery of Art. The present ensemble at the National Museum in Warsaw includes human and animal remains, as well as body parts (hands, head, feet etc.), forty-two objects in total.⁶⁵ This paper focuses mostly on human mummies. Animal mummies attracted less attention, thus it is difficult to trace their history and they will be only briefly mentioned.

HISTORY OF THE MUMMIES

Due to frequent moves, and loss of documentation during wars and uprisings it is difficult to trace the history of ancient Egyptian artefacts in the collection of the University of Warsaw. Fortunately, human mummies have always attracted attention and the lack of proper documentation may be partly substituted by mentions of these objects in newspapers and other publications and sources. The collection will be presented in chronological order of the acquisitions.

⁶³ Michałowski 1957: 130; Sztetyło 1993: 292–294.

⁶⁴ Urbanik 2001; Urbanik *et al.* 2001a and 2001b. Six mummies in total, from Krakow and Warsaw, were subject of the research. The aforementioned authors did not write the inventory numbers of the examined specimens in their publications, with the exception of the monograph on the Krakow mummy (Babraj, Szymańska 2001). Only in one case the name ‘Hor-Dzehuti’ (should be spelled Hor-Djehuty, i.e. 236805/3 MNW) was mentioned. Therefore, it is hard to establish which of the mummies in Warsaw were examined. It is thought that these were: pseudo-mummy of a child (200334 MNW), Panepy (147801/2 MNW), and the ‘Mysterious Lady’ (236805/3 MNW).

⁶⁵ Some individuals are under two inventory numbers (e.g. two hands of one mummy), so it is difficult to provide the exact quantity of the mummies. Thus, the number provided here is the amount of the inventory numbers of the mummies – including animal ones – examined by the Warsaw Mummy Project. Further research will allow the exact number of individuals to be established.



5. Pseudo-mummy of a child, 200334 MNW (Phot. A. Oleksiak, courtesy of the National Museum in Warsaw).

PSEUDO-MUMMY OF A CHILD (200334 MNW)

Count Jan Alojzy Potocki of Tykocin donated this mummy to the university in 1822 (**Fig. 5**).⁶⁶ Already in the nineteenth century, it was thought to be a forgery.⁶⁷ The object is wrapped in bandages covered with a black, bituminous substance, mainly consisting of asphalt. Its upper part is smeared with gypsum, upon which the face is crudely modelled. The face was painted on paper glued to the gypsum, covering the bandages, thus it cannot be authentic.⁶⁸ Dolińska suggested that this may be a forgery.⁶⁹ Analogous objects can be found in numerous museums, e.g. Berlin,⁷⁰ and a very similar mummy was studied by

⁶⁶ Anonymous 1822.

⁶⁷ Copy of the protocol from the transfer of objects at the university to the newly established Museum of Fine Arts (1869) suggests that it is a forgery of a mummy. It is not included in Skimborowicz's inventory of ancient objects probably because it was thought that it was inauthentic. See also for the discussion regarding its history and authenticity: Dolińska 2000: 32–33; 2003: 445.

⁶⁸ Dolińska 1997; 2000: 32–34.

⁶⁹ Dolińska 1997; 2000: 32–34; 2003: 445.

⁷⁰ Germer, Kischkewitz, Lüning 1994.



6. The mummy of the 'Mysterious Lady', coffin and cartonnage of Hor-Djehuty, 236805/3 MNW (Phot. Z. Doliński, courtesy of the National Museum in Warsaw).

Alessia Amenta from the Vatican Museum.⁷¹ The latter was made of ancient, medieval and eighteenth or nineteenth-century materials, probably brought together to make such a 'mummy' in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Previous and current radiological investigations of Potocki's gift revealed the presence of human bones inside. This fact does not prove that the object is entirely authentic or unauthentic.⁷² Current studies of the object are in process.

THE 'MYSTERIOUS LADY' (236805/3 MNW)

This is the first undoubtedly authentic mummy, tentatively dated to the Ptolemaic times, which entered the collection (**Fig. 6**). It was donated to the University of Warsaw by Jan Wężyk-Rudzki at the end of 1826 or the beginning of 1827,⁷³ but the story behind the acquisition is complex.

⁷¹ Personal communication in December 2021.

⁷² For the so-called pseudo-mummies or fake mummies, see, e.g.: Marshall 2018.

⁷³ Dolińska 2003: 457; Ejsmond *et al.* 2021.

According to Jaworski, Wężyk-Rudzki went to Egypt thanks to the Minister of Denominations and Public Enlightenment Stanisław Kostka Potocki.⁷⁴ The minister was a great supporter of the development of antiquities collection at the university, which he sometimes sponsored.⁷⁵ He also hired Wężyk-Rudzki as his secretary.⁷⁶ In the aforementioned inventory of the collection written by Skimborowicz, Stanisław Potocki is named as the person responsible for acquiring the mummy,⁷⁷ but Potocki died in 1821 and Wężyk-Rudzki came back from Egypt in 1826. Is this information an error?

It is unlikely that Wężyk-Rudzki could have spent the previous years in Egypt since he was working at the Ministry of Denominations and Public Enlightenment.⁷⁸ According to Dolińska and Jaworski, Wężyk-Rudzki was not wealthy enough to pay for his travel and acquisitions. Jaworski suggested that Wężyk-Rudzki's travel was sponsored by Potocki and planned in advance or postponed after the death of the minister. This theory may be supported by the following: Wężyk-Rudzki informed the Government's Commission for Enlightenment that if it would cover 200 *scudi* for the transport of the mummy from Florence to Warsaw he would donate it to the university.⁷⁹ Skimborowicz ascribed the acquisition of the mummy to Potocki,⁸⁰ thus it is linked with the ministry directed by Potocki and maybe there was some oral information or now lost documents detailing the role of Potocki in the acquisition. It also cannot be excluded that the Potocki family felt uncomfortable with the donation of the fake mummy, and thus wanted to give to the university a proper one. One should remember that Egyptian mummies were sometimes forged at that time, as the previously described example demonstrates. Therefore, travel to Egypt would be a good solution to acquire undoubtedly authentic specimens. Another possibility may be that Wężyk-Rudzki went to Egypt as a sort of agent of the ministry to acquire undoubtedly authentic antiquities for the university collection. This was a common practice in the third decade of the nineteenth century when state museums were being formed.⁸¹ However, the modest number and quality of the artefacts that he brought from Egypt do not support this thesis. Since the ministry paid for the transport, one may speculate that Wężyk-Rudzki undertook his journey with permission and maybe even some support from the ministry.

Wężyk-Rudzki's journey is very enigmatic. It is unknown when and where he started it and where he went in Egypt. According to Skimborowicz's inventory, he also brought back to Poland other antiquities, besides the mummy: two fragments of granite block from the royal chamber (called in the inventory *cella dell Re*) in the Cheops Pyramid at Giza (see below), a mortar from the upper part of the pyramid, fragments of a papyrus, and a wooden

⁷⁴ Jaworski 2001.

⁷⁵ Dobrowolski 2003.

⁷⁶ Jaworski 2001; Dolińska 2003: 445–447.

⁷⁷ Jaworski 2001: 51.

⁷⁸ Jaworski 2001; Dolińska 2003: 445–446.

⁷⁹ Bieliński 1907: 534–537; Dolińska 2003: 451.

⁸⁰ Jaworski 2001: 51; Dolińska 2003: 451.

⁸¹ Colla 2007: 96–115.

tablet.⁸² An inventory card at the National Museum in Warsaw repeats after a now lost inventory of the university that forty-six amulets were brought ‘from Thebes by Rudzki’ in 1826.⁸³ According to a list of objects of the university transferred to the museum, the mummy was accompanied by: ‘a piece of wood, 4 inches wide, 10 inches long, fractured in some places, with a black inscription’ and ‘a wooden tablet[,] 6 inches long, 3 inches wide[,] with an inscription, found on the breasts of the mummy’ (both are considered lost).⁸⁴ Furthermore, a turtle, most probably a live one, was donated to the university in 1828 by Wężyk-Rudzki.⁸⁵ These are rather modest acquisitions for an early nineteenth-century collector visiting Egypt when a traveler could bring practically anything out of the country. Thus, the officially listed objects seem not to justify the expenses made for the journey, if it had been an official one to make a collection for the university. However, the mummy that he brought back was in a visually attractive coffin and covered by equally good-looking cartonnage. It also included the aforementioned wooden label with an inscription that is now lost and a fragment of papyrus.⁸⁶ It is worth mentioning that Wężyk-Rudzki in a letter sent to Polish newspaper editors in December 1826 wrote that the mummy is in ‘three boxes’.⁸⁷ Thus, one may speculate whether or not there was an external coffin⁸⁸ that did not survive. It is more likely that he had in mind that the coffin consisted of two pieces and the third one was the cartonnage. In an obituary published many years later it is also said that Wężyk-Rudzki brought two mummies.⁸⁹ The latter information on the second mummy may be a mistake, since there are some errors in the obituary, or the second mummy is the turtle, that could have been embalmed after death in Poland(?), or it was lost on the way to Warsaw.

A description of the set published in December of 1830 by a certain ‘J. R.’⁹⁰ provides many details and interpretations of the decoration of the coffin and cartonnage. The author was well informed on the state of the research on ancient Egyptian iconography and religion. He named the deities depicted on the coffin, of course, according to 1820s spelling, i.e. instead of Re he wrote Fre. He also read the names of the four sons of Horus as: Anmset, Hapi, Sumotf and Kebhsnif and called them the ‘geniuses of death’. What is more important, the author attempted to read one of the inscriptions on the cartonnage. More exactly, the one on the solar disc in the middle of the cartonnage: ‘This is the person

⁸² Jaworski 2001: 51; Dolińska 2003: 446.

⁸³ Dolińska 2003: 455.

⁸⁴ Dolińska 2003: 450.

⁸⁵ Anonymous 1828: 472; Dolińska 2003: 446.

⁸⁶ Dolińska 2003: 450–451. Image of the papyrus published in: Mikocki, Szafranski 1993: Pl. 21.

⁸⁷ For the text of the letter, see: Dolińska 2003: 445–446.

⁸⁸ For such extra coffins, see, e.g.: Grajetzki 2007: 125.

⁸⁹ Noskowski 1874; Dolińska 2003: 446.

⁹⁰ J.R. 1830. ‘J.R.’ is most probably Jan [Wężyk-]Rudzki, who sometimes omitted ‘Wężyk’ and was using Rudzki only, e.g. in the aforementioned letters to editors of newspapers and the aforementioned inventory card related to the forty-six amulets. The current authors are very grateful to Kacper Laube for the information about this publication.

of the deceased soul-scribe of gods Horus and Thoth... the son of Petesokrim (that is the one who comes from Sokrim)'.⁹¹ The inscription reads:



Comparison with other similar inscriptions of the cartonnage enable collation and it can be translated as: '1The words spoken by Osiris, scribe of 2the priest Hor-Djehuty, true of voice, 3the son of Padiamonet, true of voice' (¹*dd mdw (j)n Wsjr sš n 2hm ntr Hr-Dḥwty m3^c-ḥrw 3s3 n P3-dj-Jmn.t m3^c-ḥrw*).⁹² This is the first scientific attempt to translate into Polish a hieroglyphic text.⁹³ The author underlines that there are some signs that he does not know. Nevertheless, the information that he was the scribe Horus-Thoth, that is Hor-Djehuty,⁹⁴ is correct.

Thus, Wężyk-Rudzki was interested in ancient Egypt, was up-to-date with the current state of Egyptological knowledge, and could go there because of his interest. His passion for past centuries is expressed in the form of a mansion house in Sławsk that he built in 1837–1845. It encompasses Gothic and Renaissance inspirations.⁹⁵

The mummy, coffin, and cartonnage under the number 236805/3 MNW were identified by Dolińska as the set brought by Wężyk-Rudzki on the basis of the illustration published in 1862 (**Fig. 7**) as well as other sources. It shows two mummies: those of a child and a woman.⁹⁶ Since there were no other mummies of adults in the collection of the university, that we know of before 1864,⁹⁷ and they resemble the specimens described above,

⁹¹ Translated from Polish by the authors.

⁹² For other inscriptions and translation into Polish, see: Pomorska 1963. There are some errors in her copies of the inscription, especially the one discussed here. The current authors would like to thank Dawid F. Wiczorek, Filip Taterka, and Jadwiga Iwaszczuk for comments regarding the inscription.

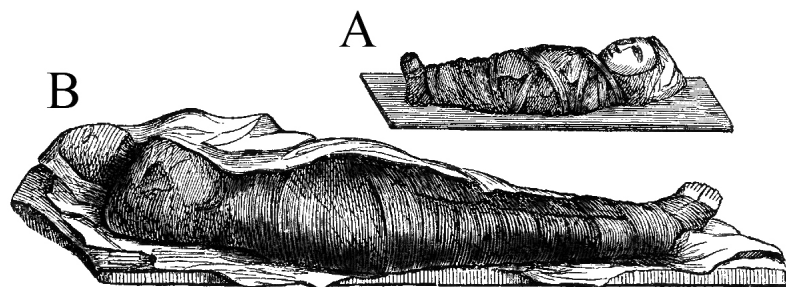
⁹³ Amelia Hertz – who was one of the first Egyptologists in Poland, but was killed during the Second World War by the Germans due to her Jewish origin – was also translating inscriptions from the coffins at the National Museum, including the one made for Hor-Djehuty (Śliwa 2019: 95–96).

⁹⁴ The name can be read in both ways depending on preferences.

⁹⁵ For the history of the area and the manner, see: Wojciechowski 2005.

⁹⁶ Dolińska 2003: 447–449, 457.

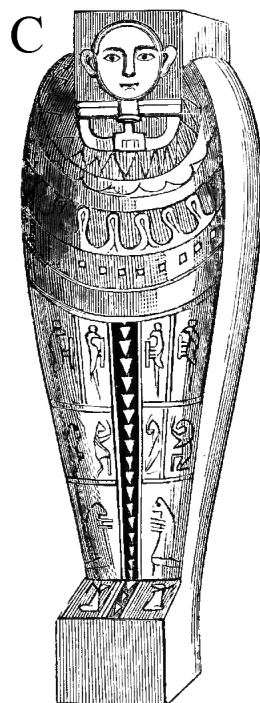
⁹⁷ From Bieliński (1907: 534–537) we know that there were two mummies (the fake one and that of a lady) in the collection of the Zoological Cabinet by the 1832. Only one is mentioned in Sobieszański's (1848: 459) description. Skimborowicz's inventory from 1867 mentions only two mummies (Dolińska 2003: 450) despite of Branicki's donation of several mummies in 1864. Probably they were donated to the Zoological and



Mumija dziecka i kobiety.



PIERWSZE WIEKO.



DRUGIE WIEKO.

7. Mummies 200334 MNW
(A) and 236805/3 MNW
(B) with its coffin (C),
and cartonnage (D)
(J.Ł. 1862: 379).

Mumije Egipskie znajdujące się w gabinecie Hist. Natur. w Warszawie.

the interpretation of them as the pseudo-mummy of a child 200334 MNW and a woman 236805/3 MNW is certain.

The mummy 236805/3 MNW was originally thought to be the body of a woman,⁹⁸ probably due to the pendant painted on the neck of the colourful cartonnage, and soft facial features, despite the fact that the faces on the coffin and cartonnage have a beard. According

Comparative Anatomy Cabinets, thus not included in the inventory of 1867, because they were not in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, which was not interested in mummies *per se*.

⁹⁸ Skimborowicz's inventory in Jaworski 2001: 51; Dolińska 2003: 450.

to the information provided in Wężyk-Rudzki's letters sent to the editors of, for example, *Monitor Warszawski* [*The Warsaw Monitor*], *Gazeta Warszawska* [*The Warsaw Gazette*] (14th and 16th of December 1826, respectively) and other newspapers, the mummy was: 'excavated in Thebes from the tombs of the Kings and [it is] so well preserved that, as he declares, there is no such object in the museums in Vienna, Tuscany, Rome, and Naples that could match it in terms of beauty'.⁹⁹ But, according to Skimborowicz's inventory¹⁰⁰ and Władysław Noskowski (author of an obituary dedicated to Wężyk-Rudzki),¹⁰¹ the mummy came from the Pyramid of Cheops at Giza. There are some errors in the latter press article and both accounts were written many years after the event, so one should be careful and examine them critically. It is not an isolated case that antiquities are ascribed to famous places to increase their value.¹⁰²

The name and inscription written in hieroglyphic and Demotic on the coffin and cartonnage were translated in the 1920s¹⁰³ and 1960s:¹⁰⁴ 'A scribe, priest of Horus-Thoth worshipped as a visiting deity (*hr-jb*) in the Mount of Djeme, the royal governor of the town of Petmit of Sobek, Hor-Djehuty, justified by voice, son of Padiamonemipet and lady of a house Tanetmin'.¹⁰⁵ Another inscription on the set also mentions that he was a singer to the god Montu.¹⁰⁶ This information allows us to establish the origin of the set since Djeme is in modern-day Medinet Habu¹⁰⁷ in western Thebes. The coffin and the cartonnage are dated to the late first century BC – early first century AD.¹⁰⁸ Thus, this confirms Wężyk-Rudzki's information that it came from Thebes.

The provenance of the set from the royal tombs should be treated with great caution. At that time the historical topography of Thebes was poorly recognised and the only known royal tombs in the region in the 1820s were located in the Valley of the Kings.¹⁰⁹ Of course, numerous tombs at the Theban necropolis were re-used during the Graeco-Roman period.¹¹⁰ But no Graeco-Roman period burials have been reported from the Valley of the Kings so far.¹¹¹ Therefore, the coffin and cartonnage may have been found elsewhere within the vast Theban necropolis or this is the first reported such late find from the Valley of the Kings. At this stage of the research, the exact findspot cannot be safely established.

⁹⁹ Anonymous 1826. Translated from Polish by the authors. Other newspapers (e.g. *Kurier Litewski*) were repeating this news without any substantial changes.

¹⁰⁰ Jaworski 2001: 51.

¹⁰¹ Noskowski 1874; Dolińska 2003: 446.

¹⁰² Dolińska 2003: 451.

¹⁰³ Henzel 1929.

¹⁰⁴ Pomorska 1963; Marciniak 1964.

¹⁰⁵ Marciniak 1964. Translated from French by the authors.

¹⁰⁶ Marciniak 1964: 97.

¹⁰⁷ For the location of toponyms and divinities, see: Marciniak 1964: 100; Fazzini 1988: 24.

¹⁰⁸ Pomorska 1963; Marciniak 1964; Dolińska 2003: 457; Ejsmond *et al.* 2021.

¹⁰⁹ See, e.g. Jacotin 1826: Pl. 5. Robert Hay discovered tombs in the Valley of the Queens at the beginning of 1826, but it is unknown whether they were recognised as royal. Nevertheless, Greco-Roman period mummies were found there (Cannata 2020: 347).

¹¹⁰ Cannata 2020: 347.

¹¹¹ Cannata 2020: 347.

The interpretation of the mummy's sex as a male was established by radiological examination in the 1990s.¹¹² The current research by the Warsaw Mummy Project proves that the sex of the mummy is undoubtedly female. She died in her 20s and was between the twenty-sixth and thirtieth week of pregnancy.¹¹³ Thus, the location of the original findspot of the body itself is further complicated since the coffin was originally made for someone else. One can only speculate that the mummy was placed in the wrong coffin by accident in ancient times, or coffin and cartonnage were re-used,¹¹⁴ or was put into a random coffin by an antiquity dealer(s) in the nineteenth century.¹¹⁵ If the latter happened, there is no guarantee that she is from Thebes.

The mummy is the subject of ongoing research of the Warsaw Mummy Project.¹¹⁶

AMENHOTEP (236804 MNW)

The mummy was brought to Warsaw by Count Aleksander Branicki and Antoni Waga in 1864 in bad condition, due to possible plundering that took place already in Egypt and poor packaging of the object for its travel to Europe.¹¹⁷ Because of its state of the preservation (**Figs 8–9**), it was 'excavated' by Aleksandra Majewska and Andrzej Niwiński in 1988.¹¹⁸ The coffin belonged to Amenhotep, who was a priest of Thoth and a doorkeeper of the Treasury in the Temple of Amun in Thebes. According to Niwiński, it dates to the Late period (the fourth century BC).¹¹⁹ Niwiński probably relied only on the dating of the coffin, which can be attributed to the terminal part of the Late period, but its cartonnage is of an early Ptolemaic date.¹²⁰ Thus, the dating of the set to the fourth century, as suggested by Niwiński, seems to be correct, but the mummy was probably made at the beginning of the Ptolemaic rule in Egypt.

Worth mentioning is press information stating the delivery of the mummy to the university: 'Two mummies also arrived, one male and one female. The body of the latter, after removing the sarcophagus, i.e. the coffin in which it was located, crumbled to dust, and after removing the covers, it turned out that the tendons suffered the same fate, so much so that every bone and tiny bones, even vertebral ones, were falling apart'.¹²¹ The mummy of Amenhotep was probably wrongly identified as the female one. The male mummy is the below-described Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh.

¹¹² Urbanik *et al.* 2001a.

¹¹³ Ejsmond *et al.* 2021.

¹¹⁴ Cooney 2020.

¹¹⁵ Ejsmond *et al.* 2021.

¹¹⁶ See current publications: Ejsmond *et al.* 2021; 2022.

¹¹⁷ Dolińska 2003: 450–452.

¹¹⁸ Niwiński 1993: 354; Dolińska 2003: 457.

¹¹⁹ Niwiński 1993: 354; Dolińska 2003: 457.

¹²⁰ Uchman-Laskowska 2003.

¹²¹ Taczanowski 1864: 496–497. Translated from Polish by the authors.



8. Professor Kazimierz Michałowski with the mummy of Amenhotep, 236804 MNW (Michałowski 1962: 135).

The artefacts extracted from the mummy include fifty-four amulets,¹²² three pieces of inscribed bandages (two covered by Demotic script, one with depictions of human feet and clothing), hypocephalus, and numerous fragments of cartonnage that were reconstructed by Niwiński. After exploration of the remains of the mummy, two groups of objects were distinguished and given separate numbers: lumps of bandages and resins are preserved under the number KMS St. 0089 and bones under the number KMS St. 0096.

According to nineteenth century press information, Branicki brought to Warsaw ‘a beautiful mummy of an adult man, bones of another one which will be reconstructed in their anatomical order; a mummy of an ibis, crocodile, a small bunch of several small crocodiles’.¹²³ The animals were given to the Zoological Cabinet of the University of Warsaw in 1864.¹²⁴ From Skimborowicz’s inventory and his press publication, we learn that some mummy donated by Branicki was located in the Cabinet of Comparative Anatomy.¹²⁵ Thus, Amenhotep is the disarticulated one and the well-preserved one is Djed-Khonsu-iuf-anekh (see below) that went to the Cabinet of Comparative Anatomy.

¹²² Niwiński 1998.

¹²³ Taczanowski 1864.

¹²⁴ Dolińska 2003: 450. The whereabouts of these mummies are unknown.

¹²⁵ Skimborowicz 1869; Jaworski 2001: 51.



9. Coffin of the mummy of Amenhotep, 236804 MNW (Phot. Z. Doliński, courtesy of the National Museum in Warsaw).

Recently, Kacper Laube studied an unpublished journal detailing the travel made by Antoni Waga, who accompanied Branicki in Egypt. It contains a short mention dating to the 5th of April 1864: ‘Luxor. Ancient Thebes. Tombs of kings and queens. Mummies. &c. Colossi of Memnon. Memnonium’.¹²⁶ One may only speculate that the word ‘Mummies’ refer to some sort of excavation or other forms of spectating or acquiring them on site. During his visit, he also acquired a coffin and mummy of God’s Father Djed-Khonsu-iuf-anekh. The latter was recently identified (see below).

According to Cecylia Gałczyńska, who studied Branicki’s voyages to Egypt,¹²⁷ he most probably conducted archaeological excavation, but it is unknown where exactly the exploration was made.¹²⁸ It should also be mentioned that Branicki brought mummies to scientific institutions in Krakow and Vilnius as well.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ The journal belongs to the documents of Antoni Waga (Archive of Science of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Krakow K III-141), consists of seven pages and does not have numbers written on its pages. Kacper Laube, Hubert Kowalski and the current authors are preparing a separate article about the mummy and its history.

¹²⁷ Gałczyńska 2015; 2019.

¹²⁸ Gałczyńska 2015: 279–280.

¹²⁹ Gałczyńska 2013.

The remains of the mummy of Amenhotep were examined by the Warsaw Mummy Project and contained very few bones, thus supporting the interpretation that this is the one described as the ‘other which will be reconstructed in their anatomical order’. The current location of the bones is unknown. Coffins of Amenhotep and Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh were made for Theban priests, thus confirming their provenience and possibly that they were acquired at Theban necropolis by Branicki.

GOD’S FATHER DJED-KHONSU-IUF-ANKH (236806 MNW)

This coffin (**Fig. 10**) at the National Museum in Warsaw was made for Priest Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh, who was buried at the Theban necropolis during the late Twenty-first or the early Twenty-second Dynasty.¹³⁰ However, currently, it does not contain any mummy nor is ascribed to any.

Its nineteenth and twentieth-century history is the same as that of Amenhotep. Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh is the mummy mentioned in press as ‘a beautiful mummy of an adult man’.¹³¹ The above-quoted fragment from article continues: ‘As for the male, this one is a rare specimen of its kind. The features of the face can still be recognised today. Red hair and a short haircut cover the skull, and veins sprinkled with balms testify to the advanced perfection of the art of embalming by the Egyptians’.¹³² Skimborowicz wrote in his catalogue that there is a poorly preserved covering of a mummy donated by Count Branicki.¹³³ In his description of the Archaeological Museum at the University of Warsaw, there were three mummies,¹³⁴ which can be now identified as the pseudo-mummy, the ‘Mysterious Lady’, and Amenhotep, and added that there is also a covering¹³⁵ for the fourth one, which was destroyed during its shipment from Egypt to Warsaw. The body that was in the covering was unwrapped and was transferred to the Cabinet of Comparative Anatomy. He also added that this is a gift from Count Branicki.¹³⁶ The poorly preserved covering of the fourth one probably refers to the badly preserved coffin of Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh that consisted of numerous pieces that were reconstructed in the 1990s.¹³⁷ This allows identifying the coffin in the collection of the National Museum.

Tarasenko read the name of the owner of the coffin as Djedkhonsuefankh,¹³⁸ which according to him, is identical to the name of the owner of a funerary papyrus from Bab

¹³⁰ Niwiński 1988: 178 (wrong inventory number, corrected by Dolińska 2017: 158). Niwiński specified later that it is dating to the Twenty-second Dynasty (Tarasenko 2021: 276).

¹³¹ Taczanowski 1864: 496.

¹³² Taczanowski 1864: 496–497. Translated from Polish by the authors.

¹³³ Jaworski 2001: 51.

¹³⁴ Probably he meant three mummies in their coffins. Coffins with mummies may have been treated as one object or a set and thus they may have been referred to as mummies.

¹³⁵ The original Polish word used here ‘obślonki’ is ambiguous.

¹³⁶ Skimborowicz 1869.

¹³⁷ See: Dolińska 2003: Pl. 285.

¹³⁸ Tarasenko 2021: 276.



10. Coffin of Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh, 236806 MNW (Phot. P. Ligier, courtesy of the National Museum in Warsaw).

el-Gasus (Cairo S.r. VII. 11498) bearing the name of Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh (**Fig. 11a**).¹³⁹ Tarasenko speculated that the Warsaw mummy came from Bab el-Gasus but excluded such a possibility on various grounds.¹⁴⁰ It is worth noticing that the spelling of the name on the coffin is not consistent (**Fig. 11b**).¹⁴¹

According to Dolińska, the set was donated by Konstanty Branicki,¹⁴² but Laube rightfully established that the credits for its acquisition should be attributed to Konstanty's

¹³⁹ Sadek 1985: 196–208, Pl. 41C.

¹⁴⁰ Tarasenko 2021: 275–276.

¹⁴¹ See also: Niwiński 1988: 178.

¹⁴² Dolińska 2003: 457.



11. Spelling of the name of Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh from his papyri from Bab el-Gasus (a) and of Djed-Khonsu-iuf-ankh from his coffin in the National Museum in Warsaw (b), 236806 MNW (a. Cairo S.r. VII. 11498; Sadek 1985: Pl. 41 C; b. Phot. W. Ejsmond).

brother Aleksander Branicki.¹⁴³ The mummy was thought to have been lost, but recently found photographs at the Archive of the Polish Academy of Sciences and another one acquired by the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures of the Polish Academy of Sciences allowed to identify the body with that which is currently preserved at the Medical University of Warsaw, but belonging to the University of Warsaw.¹⁴⁴ The provenance of the mummy at the Medical University was previously unknown.¹⁴⁵

ANIMALS

The mummies donated by Branicki were acquired along with other objects, including animal mummies.¹⁴⁶ The history of animal mummies is more difficult to trace since they attracted less attention than human remains. An ibis mummy was mentioned in 1864¹⁴⁷ and this

¹⁴³ Laube, Kowalski and the current authors are preparing a separate article about the mummy and its history.

¹⁴⁴ Compare: Mańkowska-Pliszka, Piotrowski, Niewiadomski 2016 and the aforementioned paper by Laube, Kowalski and the current authors in preparation.

¹⁴⁵ Mańkowska-Pliszka, Piotrowski, Niewiadomski 2016.

¹⁴⁶ For the travel and other objects that he brought and are now stored in Vilnius, see: Piombino-Mascali *et al.* 2017. For the objects in Krakow, Warsaw, and Vilnius, see: Gałczyńska 2013; 2015. A publication in preparation by Laube, Kowalski and the current authors will contain corrections of Gałczyńska 2013 in light of new sources.

¹⁴⁷ Taczanowski 1864: 496; Dolińska 2003: 458.

may be the specimen Vr.St.89.¹⁴⁸ A few years later other mummies at the Museum of Fine Arts of the University of Warsaw were mentioned, including possibly another mummy of an ibis,¹⁴⁹ but the lack of special features prevents their identification. There is only one piece of information regarding Vr.St.88 or Vr.St. 90. It is an inventory card made between the First and the Second World War, which contains a note based on the Inventory of the Museum of Fine Arts of the University of Warsaw stating that the object (we do not know which of the two) ‘arrived on 11th November 1867[...] a mummy of an ibis’.¹⁵⁰ Thus, it arrived at the university three years after Branicki’s travel and may be from a different donour.

ZAMOYSKI AND THE LOST MUMMY

Count Karol Ignacy Zamoyski donated a mummy in a coffin to the University of Warsaw in 1883.¹⁵¹ The mummy was unwrapped and its ‘sarcophagus, along with what remained from bandages was donated to the Cabinet of Antiquities’.¹⁵² It was not mentioned in the list of the objects transferred as loans to the National Museum in 1918 and 1919¹⁵³ and is considered to be lost.

According to Dolińska, the coffin under the number 236807 MNW, which belonged to Amun’s Singer Tai-akhut,¹⁵⁴ who lived in Thebes during the reign of the Twenty-first Dynasty,¹⁵⁵ was donated by Zamoyski.¹⁵⁶ However, recent research by Tarasenko showed that the coffin of Tai-akhut came from the burial known as Bab el-Gasus at Deir el-Bahari, which contained Twenty-first Dynasty mummies of Theban clergy of Amun. The proof of that is an inscription on a label stuck to the artefact: ‘To the Imperial University of Warsaw, No. 6. Sarcophagus’.¹⁵⁷ A similar one is still preserved stuck to a coffin in Odessa that came from Bab el-Gasus and the number on the Warsaw coffin corresponds with the number provided in documents related to the sending of the object to Warsaw.¹⁵⁸ In addition, Bab el-Gasus was discovered in 1891, while Zamoyski’s mummy arrived at the university in 1883.

The circumstances of the acquisition of the mummy and accompanying objects are worth mentioning. Artefacts from the Bab el-Gasus were distributed during a lottery for diplomats to various European countries in 1892, including the Russian empire. One of several ensembles of objects went to the Imperial University in Warsaw in 1895. It is the aforementioned coffin of Tai-akhut, a shabti box, and nine shabti figurines.¹⁵⁹ The box is

¹⁴⁸ Dolińska 2003: 458.

¹⁴⁹ Anonymous 1869a: 299.

¹⁵⁰ Dolińska 2003: 456.

¹⁵¹ Anonymous 1883; Dolińska 2003: 453.

¹⁵² Dolińska 2003: 453.

¹⁵³ Mikocki, Szafranski 1993: 156–168.

¹⁵⁴ For the image and description of the coffin, see: Dolińska 2017: 157.

¹⁵⁵ Dąbrowska-Smektała 1967.

¹⁵⁶ Dolińska 2003: 457.

¹⁵⁷ ‘В Императорский Варшавский университет. № 6. Саркофар’; Dąbrowska-Smektała 1967: 7.

¹⁵⁸ Tarasenko 2017: 108, 118.

¹⁵⁹ Tarasenko 2021.

considered to be lost, but two shabtis from the set (38379 MNW and 41556 MNW) are still at the National Museum in Warsaw.¹⁶⁰ According to Tarasenko, a mummy board from the coffin is preserved at the National Museum of Finland under the number 14656.¹⁶¹

It is worth quoting the report from the autopsy of Zamoyski's mummy: 'Egyptian mummy in Warsaw. The Zoological Cabinet of the local university received as a gift from Count Karol Zamoyski of Paris, a mummy brought from Egypt. Her sarcophagus was opened, and the Egyptian was unwrapped in these days. The sarcophagus does not feature anything extraordinary, but usual colourful ornaments and hieroglyphic inscriptions. The only interesting feature that was observed after removing the numerous wrappings was that the body was not embalmed, as was done by the Egyptians, who wanted to protect the bodies of the deceased. Thick layers of embalming resin were found in its chest and along the lower part of the spinal. This seems to indicate that in this case the embalming process was made very carelessly, by thick varnishing of the bones to prevent their decomposition. The skull is well preserved and represents the usual type of long-headed Egyptians.¹⁶² The sarcophagus with the remains of wrappings was donated to the local antiquities cabinet'.¹⁶³ And this is the last that we hear about the mummy and its coffin.

The high quantity of resin suggests the mummy dates rather to Graeco-Roman times.¹⁶⁴ It is unknown what happened with the coffin and body. The dating and provenience of the set are also unknown.

Jaworski came across several mentions of an ancient Egyptian mummy in coffin published in Warsaw's newspapers in 1890 that belonged to the Zamoyski family. Since this mummy was not at the university it is not the same as the one donated in 1883 and the whereabouts of the one owned by the Zamoyski family are also unknown.¹⁶⁵

Since other mummies and coffins mentioned in the list of the objects transferred from the University of Warsaw to the National Museum in Warsaw as loans in 1918 and 1919¹⁶⁶ were identified there are four possibilities: 1. the coffin was taken to Russia during the First World War; 2. it was loaned to some institution or individual before the transfer and thus not included in the list; 3. the coffin was lost or destroyed before the transfer; or 4. for some unknown reason it was not included in the inventory made during the First World War. That period was a very difficult time, not to mention that the custodians of the collection changed frequently. This may also explain why shabties of Tai-akhut were not listed in the inventory of objects loaned to the National Museum. Thus, it is possible that the mummy, or whatever is left of it, is still preserved at the National Museum, but was not included in the inventory of the transfer.

¹⁶⁰ Tarasenko 2019: 313.

¹⁶¹ Tarasenko 2019: 313.

¹⁶² This is not clear reference to the shape of the skull.

¹⁶³ Anonymous 1883; see also: Dolińska 2003: 453.

¹⁶⁴ Carruthers 2017.

¹⁶⁵ Piotr Jaworski personal communication in December 2021.

¹⁶⁶ Mikocki, Szafranski 1993: 156–168.

CONCLUSIONS

Egyptian artefacts, especially mummies in coffins, drew the attention of the fascinated by ancient Egypt and thus stimulated further interest in ancient Egypt in the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth centuries. Some enthusiasts tried to translate inscriptions from these coffins. Such early attempts can be called the prehistory of Egyptology in Warsaw and Poland.

Archival and bibliographic surveys together with radiological and anthropological research allowed an establishment of the history of the collection of ancient Egyptian mummies in Warsaw belonging to the University of Warsaw and loaned to the National Museum in Warsaw. The current study also allowed clarification of some errors which occurred due to the ambiguous, limited and fragmentary nature of their documentation.

Ancient Egyptian mummies and coffins of the University of Warsaw are still inspiring Egyptological interest in their new hometown. Further archival and museum surveys are necessary because the coffin donated by Zamoyski is considered lost. Also, there are errors in inventories and many issues require clarification. Thus, a review of the collection of coffins and mummies at the National Museum in Warsaw should be continued.

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