

# Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis

Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia 20 (2022)

ISSN 2081-1861

DOI 10.24917/20811861.20.29

**Leszek Zinkow**

Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures of the Polish Academy of Sciences

ORCID 0000-0003-0681-7428

## Issues of the Ancient Near East in Polish Women's Press in the 19<sup>th</sup> – and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries (2) – *Bluszcz* [Ivy]

This article is another link in the chain of my *Ancient Near East in Polish Press: 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> Century* project. The aim and objectives of the research, the geo-historical conditions indicated in the title, and the criteria for the selection of materials are presented in the first part<sup>1</sup>. The selected periodical, in this case is the women's weekly magazine, *Bluszcz* [Ivy]. Initial analysis of this publication indicated potentially more abundant and interesting research material, in addition to the magazine's high-status readership during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries<sup>2</sup>. The analysis was preceded by a general, brief presentation of the magazine, omitting several less important side issues, such as detailed publishing and editorial history, profile analyses, programmatic evolution, typography, etc. I limit the discussion to the necessary minimum, referring the reader to separate studies for more extensive information. In accordance with the criteria adopted, I have generally excluded texts relating exclusively to the present (for example, current socio-political issues), limiting the discussed publications to those somehow related to the history of civilisation of the ancient Near East, travel, archaeological research (discoveries, excavation sites, architecture, monuments of material culture), symbolic culture (languages and writings, science, art, beliefs) and contexts (archaeological museum collections, profiles of scholars and travellers, bibliographical notes, discussions of works of fiction alluding to the subject matter and their reviews).

The illustrated women's weekly *Bluszcz*, established by Michał Glücksberg, was issued in Warsaw between 1865 and 1918, the period which will be the subject of our study here, and later: in 1921–1939 and 2008–2012. The profile of the periodical and the journalism gave priority to the program of women's emancipation in the broadest sense<sup>3</sup>, female role models, and ambitious examples to follow. This was presented

1 Issues of the Ancient Near East in Polish Women's Press in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1), *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia* 19: 2021, pp. 283–296. There is also a summary of my previous publications in the project.

2 Z. Kmiecik, *Prasa warszawska w latach 1886–1904*, Wrocław 1989, p. 138.

3 M. Brykalska, Emancypacja kobiet. In *Słownik literatury polskiej XIX wieku*, Wrocław 1991, 225–229; J. Dobkowska, Poglądy w kwestii potrzeby oraz zakresu edukacji kobiet

in the form of reports, columns, and various literary forms<sup>4</sup>. Only some materials (especially in the earlier period) were signed with authors' names or in some other identifiable way (e.g., nickname, codename)<sup>5</sup>.

The first dozen or so annuals brought a moderate number of publications of interest. Some references to ancient Egypt can be found in a text about the story of the biblical Joseph (Władysław Ludwik Anczyc, 1866: issue 24, pp. 101–102). Interestingly, the author mentions the ancient writings of Herodotus and Manetho<sup>6</sup>. There are also discussions of travel to the Near East. There is an interesting article in several parts, *Kobieta podróżnik* [Traveling woman] (1866: 34, 146–147; 35, 150–151; 36, 155–156; 39, 168–170), while reminiscing about several European female travellers (Esther Stanhope, Ida Pfeffer, Alexine Tinne, et al.) digresses and mentions ancient monuments on the Nile<sup>7</sup>. Isolated references to oriental voyages by Florence Nightingale<sup>8</sup> (1866: 56, 65–66; 57: 69–70, auth. Maria Ilnicka) and Ida Pfeffer (1868: 45, 285–286, Hieronim Ciemniowski) were also made. There was also an extensive discussion of Arthur Stahl's book about his trip to Egypt (1869: 45, 300)<sup>9</sup>. Another intriguing feature was the report from an opera based on Bulwer-Lytton's novel *The Last Days of Pompeii* staged in Paris, which discusses Arbaces, a priest of the Egyptian goddess Isis (1869: 42, 275–276).

After the 1870s, however, more appealing materials related to the Near East began to appear. During that period, a well-known Polish writer, Józef Ignacy Kraszewski,

---

panujące w drugiej połowie XIX i na przełomie XIX i XX wieku. *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis Folia Historica* 66: 2016, pp. 89–107.

4 The magazine does not have any monograph, especially on the period up to 1918 (cf. J. Chwastyk-Kowalczyk, *"Bluszcz" w latach 1918–1939: tematyka społeczna oraz problemy kultury i literatury*, Kielce 2003); a passage was devoted to it in J. Franke, *Polska prasa kobieca w latach 1820–1918*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 92–163; *Prasa polska w latach 1864–1918*, ed. J. Łojek, Warszawa 1976, pp. 49–50. Cf. also: Z. Zaleska, *Czasopisma kobiece w Polsce. (Materiały do historii czasopism)*, Warszawa 1938, pp. 66–70, 144–146; K. Kamińska, *Kwestia kobieca na łamach "Bluszczu" (1865–1885)*, *Prace Polonistyczne*, Seria 34: 1978, pp. 105–131; Z. Sokół, *Z badań nad polską prasą kobiecą w latach 1818–1939*, *Kwartalnik Historii Prasy Polskiej* R. 22/3: 1983, pp. 5–12.

5 Decoded on the basis of: *Słownik pseudonimów pisarzy polskich XV w.–1970 r.* 1–4, Wrocław 1994.

6 Herodotus (5<sup>th</sup> century BC) devoted the second book of his *Histories* to Egypt; while Manetho (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC) wrote the *Aegyptiaca* (*History of Egypt*) – preserved fragmentarily, but still valid in the research on Egyptian chronology.

7 See e.g., B. Hodgson, *Dreaming of East: Western Women and the Exotic Allure of the Orient*, Vancouver–Berkeley CA 2005; B. Hodgson, *No Place for a Lady: Tales of Adventurous Women Travelers*, Vancouver 2002; D. Manley, *Women Travelers on the Nile: An Anthology of Travel Writing through the Centuries*, Cairo–New York 2016; J.E. Tucker, *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*, Cambridge 2002; *Women Travelers on the Nile: An Anthology of Travel Writing through the Centuries*, Cairo–New York 2016.

8 Cf. footnote above, and J. Rees, *Writings on the Nile. Harriet Martineau, Florence Nightingale, Amelia Edwards*, London 1995, pp. 46–68.

9 Arthur Stahl [Valeska Voigtel-Bolgianni], *Im Lande der Pharaonen. Reisebilder aus Egypten*, Leipzig 1868, Wien 1869.

became active as a writer for *Bluszcz*, and discussed synthetically Edward Webbe's 16th Century journey to Turkey, the Levant, and Egypt (1870: 12, 87)<sup>10</sup>. In his two-part article, *Kobiety jako podróżniczki i geografki* [Women as travellers and geographers] (1875: 26, 207; 27, 214) he mentions a "Lady Rich, wife of James Rich, an orientalist and archaeologist", who took part in his studies at Persepolis, Babylon, and Nineveh<sup>11</sup>; Lucie Duff Gordon<sup>12</sup>, who spent a few years in Egypt; and the aforementioned Alexine Tinne. In the column titled, *Kronika działalności kobiecej* [Chronicle of women's activities], some women travellers were discussed, including Emily Beaufort and her book, *Egyptian shrines and Syrian sepulchres* (1878: 3, 24)<sup>13</sup>. It should be noted Aleksander Jabłonowski's diary of eastern travels, printed in *Bluszcz*<sup>14</sup> (1871: 23, 179–181; 24, 187–189; 25, 196–198; 26, 204–206; 27, 212–213). In his correspondence from Rome, the aforementioned Kraszewski described several Egyptian obelisks located there (1871: 28, 219–220); in another letter, we find an excursus on the lotus in ancient Egypt (1871: 43, 336; 1872: 47, 374); and in another, he writes on the practice of trading Egyptian mummies (1874: 38, 303). Subsequent texts provided for *Bluszcz* by Kraszewski are more extensive. He discusses Georg Ebers'<sup>15</sup> "Egyptian" novel, *Uarda*, and Ebers' scientific activities and literary works (1877: 4, 31), or about the papyri in the Louvre and Turin in the context of Ebers' work *Ägypten in Bild und Wort* and its availability in Warsaw, where he also mentions other German Egyptologists of the time: Heinrich Brugsch and Karl Lepsius<sup>16</sup> (1878: 21, 167; 26, 204). This synthetic, albeit factual, information about scholars and their research was innovative in the magazine. Of particular note, for example, are Kraszewski's mentions of the death of George Smith, an Assyriologist, and his work on cuneiform writing<sup>17</sup> (1876: 48, 383); the studies of François Lenormant, French Hellenist and Assyriologist (1877: 24, 190); as well as a three-part article on a highly prominent orientalist, historian of religion and biblical scholar of the time, Ernest Renan (1879: 17, 133–134; 18, 140–141; 19, 148–149). There are also remarks about Arthur (-Ali) Rhoné, French

10 The British scholar made a journey in 1583 and reported on it in his *The rare and most wonderful things...*, London 1590.

11 Cf. Claudius James Rich, *Memoir on the Ruins of Babylon*, London 1816; K.M. McGeough, *The Ancient Near East in the Nineteenth Century. Appreciations and Appropriations*, Sheffield 2021, vol. 2, p. 119.

12 Cf. footnote 5, and L. Duff Gordon, *Letters from Egypt*, London 2002; K. Frank, *Lucie Duff Gordon. A Passage to Egypt*, London–New York 1995.

13 Emily Ann Beaufort, *Egyptian Sepulchres and Syrian Shrines, Including Some Stay in the Lebanon at Palmyra and in Western Turkey*, London 1861.

14 Jabłonowski was a historian and ethnographer, who traveled widely, mainly across Asia Minor.

15 Georg Moritz Ebers was a German Egyptologist and author of a few "Egyptian" novels, also translated into Polish. Cf. *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, London 1995, p. 136; S. L. Marchand, *The End of Egyptomania: German Scholarship and the Banalization of Egypt, 1830–1914*. In *Ägyptomanie. Europäische Ägyptenimagination von der Antike bis heute*, Wien 2000, pp. 127–128; McGeough, *The Ancient Near East*, op.cit., vol. 3, pp. 196–198.

16 *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., pp. 67–68, 249–250.

17 McGeough, *The Ancient Near East*, op. cit., I, pp. 140–141, 393–395.

amateur Egyptologist<sup>18</sup> and his book, *L'Égypte à petites journées: études et souvenirs. Le Kaire et ses environs*, Paris 1877 (1877: 28, 223).

During that period, *Bluszcz* also printed poetry relating to the Near East, broadly – namely, a translation of the poem by Victor Hugo, *Moïse sur le Nil* [Moses on the Nile] (1872: 44, 348, trans. Klemens Podwysocki, accompanied by an “Egyptian” drawing by Gustave Doré, p. 349) and an intriguing poem by Felicjan Faleński, titled *Królowa Nofreari* [Queen Nofreari] (1874: 11, 82)<sup>19</sup>. In this context, the series of articles on the Polish feminist writer, Narcyza Żmichowska, should be considered, where one of her works, *Zwaliska Luxoru* [The Ruins of Luxor] (1877: 6, 41), is mentioned<sup>20</sup>.

In the next decade, there was a noticeable increase in the number of texts related in many ways to the ancient Near East. The obituary and biography of Auguste Mariette, the most prominent Egyptologist at the time and founder of the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities in Cairo-Boulaq (1881: 7, 56 – the intriguing text *Kwiaty i owoce z czasów faraonów* [Flowers and fruits from the time of the pharaohs] in the Boulaq Museum exhibit; 1882: 44, 352)<sup>21</sup> should be mentioned here, along with news on the excavations by Gaston Maspero in Meidum (1882: 5, 40)<sup>22</sup>, Luxor (and the study of the mummy of Pharaoh Ramesses II, 1886: 39, 310), the unearthing of the Great Sphinx in Giza (1886: 8, 64)<sup>23</sup>; and the work of Georg Schweinfurth at Fayum (1884: 36, 291)<sup>24</sup>. However, archaeological studies outside of Egypt are also mentioned. These include the excavations by Hormuzd Rassam at Nineveh and Babylon, conducted for the British Museum (1881: 15, 120)<sup>25</sup>. Meanwhile, Maria Ilnicka authored an extensive biography of Heinrich Julius Schliemann and his wife Sophia (1881: 17, 135–136; 18, 143–144;

---

18 *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., p. 356.

19 Egyptian queen Nefertari (not “Nofreari”) was a wife of Ramesses the Great (13<sup>th</sup> century BC). “Egyptian” poems by Faleński and their contexts are discussed in: L. Zinkow, *Starożytny Egipt w poezji polskiej. Od Biernata z Lublina do Macieja Zembatego*, Kraków 2018, pp. 135–145.

20 *Zwaliska Luxoru. Wyjątek z podróży kobiety* [The ruins of Luxor. An exception of a woman's journey] is literary fiction (“an imaginary journey”), since Żmichowska never went to Egypt; J. Śliwa, *Starożytny Egipt oczami Polaków*, Kraków 2019, pp. 347–348.

21 *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., pp. 275–277.

22 Maspero succeeded Mariette as the director of the Cairo Museum: *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., pp. 278–279. In Meidum, south of Cairo, there are many tombs and pyramids.

23 The Great Sphinx was buried under desert sand for most of modernity, and only its head was visible. The Sphinx was excavated in 1853, 1886, 1925, and finally 1936.

24 The Faiyum Oasis, south of Cairo. German archaeologist and botanist, Schweinfurth, worked there in 1876–1888; *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., p. 381.

25 Iraqi Rassam was a student and assistant of famous Austen Henry Layard, the founder of Assyrian Studies, discoverer of Nineveh and Nimrud; the British Museum owes the core of its magnificent collection of Mesopotamian artifacts to their work; *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*, Oxford 1997, vol. 3, pp. 337–338, vol. 4, pp. 141–148; McGeough, *The Ancient Near East*, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 140–143.

29, 232)<sup>26</sup>. *Bluszcz* also printed a substantial report of the works by Ernest de Sarzec in Chaldea (1882: 2, 15)<sup>27</sup>, an account of looking for the Biblical Eden in Mesopotamia (1885: 45, 360); of Ernest Renan's discoveries in Syria with a captivating comparison between the Syrian and Egyptian styles (1887: 29, 231–232); on top of a short note about a book by Italian archaeologist and papyrologist Giacomo Lumbroso, *L'Egitto al tempo dei Greci et dei Romani* (1882: 5, 38). Occasionally, the pieces focused on specific artifacts. As examples, the so-called Mesha Stele, located in Paris (1885: 33, 262)<sup>28</sup>, and the article on "Fayum mummy portraits" (1889: 31, 245–246)<sup>29</sup>. Moreover, a set of facts about perfumes used in ancient Egypt was published (1886: 48, 384).

Travel motifs in this period are not abundant<sup>30</sup>. Only Kraszewski, in his correspondence from Paris, discusses an expedition of two Frenchmen, photographer Maxime Du Camp and writer Gustave Flaubert to Egypt (1883: 43–44, 342, 351)<sup>31</sup>. Of literature-related publications, there was a report of a newly published "Egyptian" novel by Ebers, *Der Kaiser* (1881: 13, 102) along with the translation of his work, *Ägypten in Bild und Wort* into French by Gaston Maspero (1882: 33, 263). A short note about German scholar and writer's illness was placed in *Bluszcz* in 1884: 49, 396).

An article appeared in *Bluszcz* in 1886 that Anna Neumann's book, *Zza Dunaju nad Nil. Wspomnienia z podróży po Egipcie* [From Over the Danube to the Nile Valley. Memoirs of an Egyptian Voyage] published in Lviv in 1886, warrants specific discussion as well (1886: 48, 382). This is probably the most outstanding work of Polish women's travel literature, comparable to similar works of Western European writing, such as Florence Nightingale's or Amelia Blanford Edwards'. Anna Neumann (née Szawłowska)<sup>32</sup> accompanied her husband, Austro-Hungarian consul Theodor

---

26 Heinrich Schliemann, mainly known as the discoverer of Troy and Mycenae, also ran excavations in Egypt (Alexandria).

27 Ernest Choquin de Sarzec, French diplomat and archaeologist (his discoveries included the Sumerian civilization), conducted numerous works for French museums: *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East*, op.cit., vol. 1, pp. 482–484.

28 The appointed artifact is the priceless Mesha Stele (or Moabite Stone); inv. no. AP 5066, found in Musée du Louvre and discovered in 1868 in Dibon (Jordan).

29 In Egypt's Greco-Roman period, naturalistic portraits of the dead were placed with embalmed corpses in the tombs, according to Egyptian tradition. They were mainly found in the necropolis of the Faiyum Oasis, and date to the 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> centuries AD.

30 In the weekly at the time, one can find some relatively extensive writings about the modern Middle East (1882: 34–35; 1885: 8, 58–59; 9, 66–67; 10, 75–76; 11, 85–86; 12, 94–95; 13, 102).

31 Du Camp and Flaubert traveled in Egypt for several months in 1849–1850. It is worth pointing out here that Du Camp, a passionate photographer, made the first such extensive – and today priceless – documentation of the monuments of ancient Egypt: J.-M. Carré, *Voyageurs et écrivains français en Égypte*, Le Caire 1956, vol. II, pp. 81–134; V. Magri-Mourgues, *Les Détours fictionnels du récit de voyage: "Le Nil, Égypte et Nubie" de Maxime Du Camp*. In *Egypt through the Eyes of Travellers*, eds. P. Starkey, N.El Kholy, Durham 2002, pp. 149–165; *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op.cit., pp. 131, 152.

32 H. Kaczmarek, *Polacy i Egipt na przestrzeni wieków. Zapiski, dzienniki, wspomnienia z podróży*, Warszawa 2018, passim; *Śliwa, Starożytny Egipt*, op.cit, pp. 198–199.

Neumann to diplomatic missions from 1879 to 1893 in Bulgaria, Romania, Egypt and Greece. Anna received a thorough home education, and her marriage to a diplomat enabled her to pursue her academic and literary passions, which were embodied in her reports to the Lviv, Warsaw, and St. Petersburg press, which she compiled as *Zza Dunaju nad Nil*, an expanded version of which was published as *Obrazy z życia na Wschodzie* [Images of Life in the East, Warszawa 1899]. The Neumanns stayed in Egypt for 10 years (1883–1892). Anna was interested in ancient and modern history and recorded stories and tales she heard, which she later collated in the volume *Legandy i baśnie Wschodu* [The Legends and Fairy-tales from the East, Kraków 1899] and in several chapters of the book *Ze świata. Akwarelle i szkice* [From around the World. Watercolours and Sketches, Warszawa 1900]. In her Cairo home, she was visited by Poles either residing in the city or merely passing through Egypt. She actively participated in the social and scholarly life of Cairo's elite, gave piano concerts, and was a member of the *Société Khédiviale de Géographie*. Thanks to her diplomatic and social connections, she got to know Gaston Maspero personally, which facilitated her access to many of the historical monuments while touring Egypt. Additionally, after the completion of her husband's diplomatic missions, and then following his death, she stayed active in social and patriotic activities, in addition to women's activism until she died in 1918.

In keeping with its ideological message, *Bluszcz* pointed out examples of women's scientific endeavours (especially in *Kronika działalności kobiecej* [Chronicle of Women's Activities]). Here, in line with our main theme, let us note the information about the lectures at the British Museum: by Margaret Harkness about Assyria (1882: 45, 360), Helen Beloe on Egypt (1884: 51, 412; 1885: 11, 88) and Miss Peek's (not identified) on the cities of the ancient Near East (1884: 41, 331)<sup>33</sup>. There was also a mention of the financial support provided by Catherine Lorillard Wolfe, an American philanthropist and art collector, for the William Hayes Ward's excavations at Babylon (1884: 36, 290)<sup>34</sup>.

Two poems, unfortunately only with titles referring to antiquity, *Wobec sfinxa* [Facing the Sphinx] by Adam Asnyk (alias El-y) (1884: 1, 1–2) and *Do piramid* [To The Pyramids] by Józefa Jaxa-Bąkowska (alias Szczęсна) (1885: 24, 185) are interesting as well.

The last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century brought somewhat less intriguing materials in *Bluszcz*. In the series of articles titled *Z Ziemi Świętej* [From the Holy Land], one can find some information about the ancient history and monuments of the region (1890: 15, 116–117; 16, 124–126; 17, 132–134; 18, 142–143; 19, 151–152), just like in the text *Egipt* [Egypt] by Adam Dobrowolski (1896: 32, 253–255). A more interesting description concerned Cairo, Heliopolis, and Giza in *Z Egiptu* [From Egypt], signed by

---

33 Helen Mary Beloe Tirard was a writer and translator interested in ancient Egypt (cf. *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., pp. 416), as was Margaret Elise Harkness (aka John Law).

34 Ward was an American Orientalist; he led a scientific expedition to Babylonia in 1884–85, which was named the "Wolfe Expedition" in honor of its sponsor.

M.F. 1892: 46, 363-364)<sup>35</sup>. Also of note is the extensive, multi-part article by Ferdynand Hoesick on Polish Romantic poet Juliusz Słowacki's 1836 trip to Egypt (1894: 2, 13; 3, 21-22; 4, 27-29; 5, 37-38; 6, 45-47; 7, 54-55; 8, 63-64. See also 1897: 2, 14)<sup>36</sup>.

The publications in *Bluszcz* that refer to one of the most remarkable "Egyptian" novels, by both Polish and global standards: *Faraon* [Pharaoh] by Bolesław Prus (pen name of Aleksander Głowacki) are also worth note. *Faraon* was published in episodes in the then highly read *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* [The Illustrated Weekly] in 1895-1896, and as a book in 1897<sup>37</sup>. *Bluszcz* first published a short note about the novel (1897: 2, 10), which was soon followed by an extensive study by Jan Nitowski (1897: 31, 243-245 – one should also note a mention of an earlier Egypt-themed story by Prus, *Z legend dawnego Egiptu* [From the Legends of Old Egypt]<sup>38</sup> 1895: 4, 27). In the same year when Prus started issuing *Faraon*, a bizarre novel by Wojciech Dzieduszycki, *Święty Ptak* [The Sacred Bird] appeared. Rightly forgotten today, the novel was poorly written, and the depiction of the ancient Egyptian setting was completely bogus, however, *Bluszcz* published an enthusiastic review by Jan Nitowski, calling the novel "outstanding" (1895: 48, 382)<sup>39</sup>.

A few more small details about the 19<sup>th</sup> Century pieces published in *Bluszcz* warrant discussion. There is a review of an exhibition of Egyptian antiquities in Vienna (1894: 23, 176)<sup>40</sup>. In the first part of an essay by Władysław Mieczysław Kozłowski, *Z dziejów wiedzy* [From the History of Knowledge], with commentary on the Egyptian and Babylonian astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, and writing (1895: 31, 241-243), a mention of x-raying Egyptian mummies within the United States (1896: 51, 408) was printed later. This publication was followed by information on a popular brochure by Rozalia Brzezińska, *Egipcjanie: ich religia, zwyczaje, urządzenia społeczne, nauki i sztuki przed tysiącami lat* [The Egyptians: their Religion, Customs, Social Relations, Sciences and Arts Thousands of Years Ago] (1892: 5, 40). Also included were remarks on ancient Egyptian literature by Antoni Pilecki *Przyroda w poezji* [Nature in poetry] (1897: 24, 190). Finally, there was a text by Anna Neumann, *Wróżbiarstwo w Egipcie* [Divination in Egypt] (1898: 23, 183-185).

---

35 „Kto nie widział Kairu, nie widział piękności świata...”. *Egipt w relacjach prasowych polskich podróżników drugiej połowy XIX wieku*, Kraków 2011, pp. 313-321. On doubts about authorship *ibid.* p. 36.

36 J.W. Weryho, Juliusz Słowacki in Egypt. In *Travellers in Egypt*, eds. P. Starkey, J. Starkey, London-New York 1998, pp. 215-221; Kaczmarek, *Polacy i Egipt*, *op. cit.*, *passim*; Śliwa, *Starożytny Egipt*, *op. cit.*, pp. 276-278.

37 C. Kasperek, Prus' *Pharaoh*: the Creation of a Historical Novel, *The Polish Review* 39 (1): 1994, pp. 45-50.

38 L. Zinkow, Pharaonic Disguise. Egyptianizing Staffage of Modern Politics, *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 16: 2012, pp. 269-276.

39 L. Zinkow, From Egyptology to Novel. Ups and Downs of Polish Literary "Egyptological" Fiction, *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 10: 2007, pp. 165-179.

40 Cf. H. Satzinger, *Das Kunsthistorische Museum in Wien. Die ägyptisch-orientalische Sammlung*, Mainz 1994.

Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, despite some publishing woes, there are more texts related to the Near East. In some annuals double and even quadruple issues were published, however, with the rise of political problems in Europe, more space was devoted to current affairs. Contributing further to *Bluszcz*, Anna Neumann authored a description of Alexandria in Egypt – *Stolica Kleopatry niegdyś i dziś* [The Capital of Cleopatra in the Past and Today] (1900: 35, 279–280; 36, 286–287)<sup>41</sup> and a philosophical sketch, *Myśl i słowo* [Thought and Word], about the language and writing in antiquity (Egypt, Assyria, Phoenicia, and Greece) (1901: 11, 81–82). There was also information about Neumann's book *Ze świata* (1901: 9, 71, see above). In connection with the greater socio-political context of women's issues of the time, there was also an anonymous short essay titled *Kobieta egipska dawniej i dziś* [Egyptian Women in the Past and Today] (1901: 45/46/47, 371) on top of one signed by Stanisław Krzemiński, *Stanowisko kobiety w Egipcie starożytnym* [The Position of a Woman in Ancient Egypt], as the author stressed – “based on Herodotus and translations of the papyri” (1903: 12, 141–142). The issue is discussed much more extensively by Julia Terpilowska in her series of articles, *Historia kobiety. Studium społeczne* [History of a Woman. A Social Study]. In the editorial, she points out the chronological order of discussion and reservations: “...Egyptian hieroglyphs and Babylonian cuneiform... tell the story of the first inhabitants of the world so obscurely and ramblingly, in such a clearly fantastic manner, that no serious conclusion can be drawn from such tales” (1903: 36, 425–427). She begins her next texts with “women of the ancient East” (1903: 40, 474–475; 41, 481–483; 42, 497–499; 43, 510–512) to discuss Egyptians in more detail (1903: 45, 536–537; 46, 548–549) and proceeds to talk about Biblical era Israeli women (1903: 49, 581–583; 50, 595–597; 51, 606–607; 52, 616–618). Similar topics, but in fictional form, were published in the pages of *Bluszcz* by Maria Łopuszańska, author of historical novels and publicist. In her series of short stories, *Obrazy z przeszłości niewiast* [Images from the Past of Women], the heroines of the narrative set against the backdrop of the history of the ancient Near East are: *Mylitte, branka asyryjska* [Mylitte, an Assyrian captive] (1904: 31, 367–368; 32, 379–380); *Miriam prorokini* [Miriam the prophetess] (1904: 33, 390–391; 34, 404–405; 35, 415–416); *Elissa, kapłanka bogini Asztaroth* [Elissa, the priestess of the goddess Astarte] (1904: 37, 436–439; 38, 447–450); *Piękna na wozie różanym. Legenda egipska* [Beautiful on a rose carriage. An Egyptian legend] (1904: 39, 462–464; 40, 474–476); *Król Salomon i Abisay Sulamitka* [King Solomon and Abisay, the Sulamite] (1904: 44, 523–524; 45, 534–535); *Królowa Hatszepsu i księżę Parihu* [Queen Hatshepsut and prince Parihu] (1904: 46, 544–545; 47, 558–559). Of course, despite many apt observations, the stories cannot be treated as a source of reliable historical knowledge. Also of note is a series of essays with a coincidentally similar title: *Z przeszłości niewiast* [From the Past of Women], in which there are reflections on the relationship

---

41 Cf.: *Kto nie widział...*, op. cit., pp. 323–339. The text was signed by Celina Neumannowa which was a mistake; the author sometimes used the pseudonym “Kalina” (corrected in 1900: 37, 296)

of Greek civilization with the heritage of the ancient Near East (1907: 8, 86–87; 11, 118–119; 12, 131–132).

We find very few travel-related pieces. A series of memoirs by a traveller, writer, and journalist, Aniela Tripplinówna, *Z pobytu na dalekim szlaku* [From a Stay on a Long Trail] include picturesque descriptions of Syria and Lebanon including Beirut, Tyre, Palmyra, and Baalbek (1905: 38, 439; 39, 451–453; 40, 463–464; 41, 476–477; 42, 489–490; 43, 501–503; 44, 510–511; 45/46, 527–528; 47/48, 541–542; 49, 553–554; 50, 565–566; 51, 575–576; 53, 599–600)<sup>42</sup>. A biography of Ignacy Holownski, a Polish clergyman and writer, who was the author of an important account of his several-month pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1839 was published as well<sup>43</sup> (1905: 53, 595–596). Additionally included are information about the activities of Margaret Murray, British Egyptologist (1904: 2, 23)<sup>44</sup>, two “science talks” by Tadeusz Harajewicz: one on making bread in ancient Egypt (1902: 22, 260) and another on embalming methods. The study of Egyptian mummies in London by an English Egyptologist, Ernest Wallis Budge<sup>45</sup> (1902: 29, 342). Also published were short remarks – in one of the articles on literature, there was a digression inconsistent with the facts: “In ancient Egypt, a hundred thousand people spent fifty years building a single pyramid” (1906: 8, 89, Zofia Seidlerowa), while in *Dziecko i kot. Studium psychologiczne* [Baby and Cat. A Psychological Study], mentions of cats and their mummies in ancient Egypt were included (1906: 13, 150; 16, 182, Anna Grudzińska). was made in Róża Hemplówna’s made an untrue statement that Egyptian hieroglyphs were “pictorial writing” in *Sposób pisania przed laty i dziś* [The Way of Writing Years Ago and Today] (1909: 18, 199–200).

The last years of the weekly publication until its closure in 1918 were marked by the impending, and later ongoing, World War I. During this period, however, we find a few minor items relating to the ancient Near East and significantly more interesting literary pieces. Mentions of Egypt are included in the summarized text of a lecture by Hanna Krzemieniecka, *O mistycyzmie* [About Mysticism] (1910: 7, 75), an article *Jak poznać człowieka. Szkic psychologiczno-wychowawczy* [How to Get to Know Man. Psycho-Educational Sketch] (1910: 46, 440) as well a text on the history of occultism and alchemy by Roman Nowakowski, *Wiedza tajemna* [The Secret Knowledge]. In this piece, Nowakowski notes, among other things: “the system of secret knowledge [of Egypt] recreated must have been the work of centuries of Champollionian pietism, from the hieroglyphs of the temples and pyramids, from the fragments of the papyri” (1911: 17, 177). Furthermore, various remarks on the *Faraon* by Prus were also published (1907: 37, 419; 1912: 22, 250–251; 1914: 23, 251).

Other literary themes from this phase of *Bluszcz* are engaging. *Córka Syońska* [Daughter of Zion], a short story by Jadwiga Marcinowska, includes a few mentions of the temple in Jerusalem in antiquity (1910: 39, 428–429). Alluring fictionalized

---

42 Tripplinówna was the niece of a well-known Polish traveler and writer, Teodor Tripplin.

43 Kaczmarek, *Polacy i Egipt*, op. cit., p. 40.

44 *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., p. 303.

45 *Who Was Who in Egyptology*, op. cit., pp. 71–72.

memoirs of Marcinowska's travels in Egypt from Alexandria to Elephantine Island, *Do królestwa słońca* [To the Kingdom of the Sun] – were included in *Bluszcz* (1911: 27, 281–282; 28, 290–291; 29, 301–302; 32, 334–335; 33, 345–346; 39, 406–407; 40, 417–418; 42, 455–456; 45, 489–490; 51, 555–556; 52, 580–581)<sup>46</sup>. Moreover, all of the issues from 1913 included her novel on the ancient Israel, *Vox Clamantis*. Two other unusual stories: *Mumia* [The Mummy] by Anna Limprechtówna, (1915: 3/4, 29–30) and Zofia Wojnarowska's: *Ametys* [pseudo-Egyptian name], “a tale of the times of eleventh Dynasty” merit note as well<sup>47</sup> (1918: 31/32, 236–237).

## Conclusion

The search of the *Bluszcz* repository revealed 166 publications of varying genres and volumes that introduce reflections on the material or spiritual cultural heritage of the ancient Near East. These reflections included whole publications or mentions of Near Eastern-related topics and other significant themes, including related scholarly research, information on researchers, or aspects of reception, including travel descriptions, publications (or reviews) and finally various texts (even curiosities) and literary texts. About 100 of them can be described as relating more closely to archaeological, historical or philological research, research methods, the researchers' profiles as well as texts related to the acquisition of ancient artifacts for museums, with most in the form of brief notes, usually printed in a permanent column. The imprecise term “about” here is the result of an inability to indicate the demarcation between loose, individual, or scattered remarks in the texts and a deeper and competent reflection on these issues. References to ancient Egypt predominate, with fewer pointing to Syro-Phoenician (including biblical lands), Mesopotamian, and Persian heritage. The texts were written by journalists/writers, and as such, their knowledge of the topics was superficial. *Bluszcz* published 51 travel accounts from thus defined Near East, all of which referred to the antiquity of the visited areas.

Extensive statistical analyses and conclusions cannot be legitimate against a relatively small group of texts. The numerical distribution of press materials is more or less even, although there are annuals in which the search yielded no result. It is impossible to speak of any regularity in reference to the ancient Near East, as fluctuations are noticeable. However, it is usually impossible to relate these references, for example, to the progress of research at the time or to significant archaeological discoveries. Most texts were very short, so small that essentially random fluctuations in repartition do not allow for firm interpretations or conclusions. In no way can it be said that content related to the Near East was favoured in *Bluszcz*, especially when compared to similar

---

46 *Współcześni polscy pisarze i badacze literatury. Słownik Biobibliograficzny*, vol. 5, Warszawa 1997, pp. 284–284; Kaczmarek, *Polacy i Egipt*, op. cit, pp. 51, 145; Śliwa, *Starożytny Egipt*, op. cit, p. 177.

47 The times of the eleventh Dynasty of ancient Egypt (ca. 2150–1991 BC) constituted an important period in the history of Egypt, when the state was reunited into the so-called Middle Kingdom.

publications relating to other areas of the world. It should also be emphasized that despite the popular nature of the weekly, the intellectual-cognitive level of the printed texts did not differ from the average, contemporary “men’s magazines”. This was no doubt due to progressive female editors and the rising feminist and equality trends in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## Bibliography

- Brykalska M., Emancypacja kobiet. In *Słownik literatury polskiej XIX wieku*, eds J. Bachórz, A. Kowalczykova, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1991, 225–229.
- Carré J.-M., *Voyageurs et écrivains français en Égypte*, Le Caire 1956.
- Chwastyk–Kowalczyk J., „Bluszcz” w latach 1918–1939: tematyka społeczna oraz problemy kultury i literatury, Kielce 2003.
- Dobkowska J., Poglądy w kwestii potrzeby oraz zakresu edukacji kobiet panujące w drugiej połowie XIX i na przełomie XIX i XX wieku. *Acta Universitatis Lodzianis Folia Historica* 66: 2016, 89–107.
- Frank K., *Lucie Duff Gordon. A Passage to Egypt*, London–New York 1995.
- Franke J., *Polska prasa kobieca w latach 1820–1918: w kręgu ofiary i poświęcenia*, Warszawa 1999.
- Hodgson B., *Dreaming of East: Western Women and the Exotic Allure of the Orient*, Vancouver–Berkeley CA 2005.
- Hodgson B., *No Place for a Lady: Tales of Adventurous Women Travelers*, Vancouver 2002.
- Kaczmarek H., *Polacy i Egipt na przestrzeni wieków. Zapiski, dzienniki, wspomnienia z podróży* (Transfer kultury arabskiej w dziejach Polski VII) Warszawa 2018.
- Kamińska K., Kwestia kobieca na łamach „Bluszczu” (1865–1885), *Prace Polonistyczne*, Seria 34: 1978, 105–131.
- Kasperek C., Prus’ *Pharaoh*: the Creation of a Historical Novel, *The Polish Review* 39 (1): 1994, 45–50.
- Kmieciak Z., *Prasa warszawska w latach 1886–1904*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1989.
- “Kto nie widział Kairu, nie widział piękności świata...”. *Egipt w relacjach prasowych polskich podróżników drugiej połowy XIX wieku*, ed. L. Zinkow, Kraków 2011.
- Magri-Mourgues V., Les Détours fictionnels du récit de voyage: “Le Nil, Égypte et Nubie” de Maxime Du Camp, In *Egypt through the Eyes of Travellers*, eds. P. Starkey, N. El Kholi, Durham 2002, pp. 149–165.
- Manley D., *Women Travelers on the Nile: An Anthology of Travel Writing through the Centuries*, Cairo–New York 2016.
- Marchand S.L., The End of Egyptomania: German Scholarship and the Banalization of Egypt, 1830–1914. In *Ägyptomanie. Europäische Ägyptenimagination von der Antike bis heute*, ed. W. Seipel, Wien 2000, 125–133.
- McGeough K.M., *The Ancient Near East in the Nineteenth Century. Appreciations and Appropriations. I: Claiming and Conquering; II: Collecting, Constructing and Curating; III: Fantasy and Alternative Histories*, Sheffield 2021.

- The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* 1–5, ed. E.M. Meyers, Oxford 1997.
- Prasa polska w latach 1864–1918*, ed. J. Łojek, Warszawa 1976.
- Rees J., *Writings on the Nile. Harriet Martineau, Florence Nightingale, Amelia Edwards*, London 1995.
- Satzinger H., *Das Kunsthistorische Museum in Wien. Die ägyptisch-orientalische Sammlung*, Mainz 1994.
- Słownik literatury polskiej XIX wieku*, eds J. Bachórz, A. Kowalczykova, Wrocław 1999.
- Słownik pseudonimów pisarzy polskich XV w.–1970 r.* 1–4, ed. E. Jankowski, Wrocław 1994.
- Współcześni polscy pisarze i badacze literatury. Słownik Biobibliograficzny* 1–9, eds J. Czachowska, A. Szałagan, Warszawa 1994–2004.
- Sokół Z., Z badań nad polską prasą kobiecą w latach 1818–1939, *Kwartalnik Historii Prasy Polskiej*, R. 22/3: 1983, 5–12.
- Śliwa J., *Starożytny Egipt oczami Polaków. Słownik biograficzny egiptologów, archeologów i badaczy pokrewnych dziedzin, podróżników i kolekcjonerów oraz literatów i malarzy zafascynowanych przeszłością i teraźniejszością Egiptu*, Kraków 2019.
- Tucker J.E., *Women in Nineteenth-Century Egypt*, Cambridge 2002.
- Weryho, J.W., Juliusz Słowacki in Egypt. In *Travellers in Egypt*, eds. P. Starkey, J. Starkey, London–New York 1998, 215–221.
- Who Was Who in Egyptology*, eds. W.R. Dawson, E.P. Uphill, M.L. Bierbrier, London 1995
- Women Travelers on the Nile: An Anthology of Travel Writing through the Centuries*, ed. D. Manley, Cairo–New York 2016.
- Zaleska Z., *Czasopisma kobiece w Polsce (materiały do historii czasopism) rok 1818–1937*, Warszawa 1938.
- Zinkow L., From Egyptology to Novel. Ups and Downs of Polish Literary “Egyptological” Fiction, *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 10: 2007, 165–179.
- Zinkow L., Issues of the Ancient Near East in Polish Women's Press in the 19th- and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1), *Annales Universitatis Paedagogicae Cracoviensis. Studia ad Bibliothecarum Scientiam Pertinentia* 19: 2021, 283–296.
- Zinkow L., Pharaonic Disguise. Egyptianizing Staffage of Modern Politics, *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 16: 2012, 269–276.
- Zinkow L., *Starożytny Egipt w poezji polskiej. Od Biernata z Lublina do Macieja Zembatego*, Kraków 2018.

### Issues of the Ancient Near East in Polish Women's Press in the 19<sup>th</sup> – and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries (2) – *Bluszcz* [Ivy]

#### Abstract

The Polish magazine for women: *Bluszcz* [Ivy] (1865–1918) included pieces on the history of culture, literature, issues of scientific progress, travels, and descriptions of foreign countries. This paper discusses texts referring to the ancient Near East as published in *Bluszcz*. It includes a review and analysis of press materials dealing with various aspects of this heritage: notes, reviews, announcements, articles, digressive travel reports, and fiction, among others.

These articles were published in the context of the specific kind of press and former understanding of 19<sup>th</sup> Century women's intellectual needs. The more prominent or characteristic publications are synthetically discussed, while the summary presents reflections of a statistical nature, on the distribution and formal transformations.

Keywords: *Bluszcz*, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Polish press, Women's press, Ancient Near East (reception), Egypt (reception).