

Méditerranée occidentale (pp. 151–187); VIII. L'Iran du XIII<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle (pp. 188–218); IX. La Syrie et l'Égypte du XIII<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle (pp. 219–233); X. L'Afghanistan. Le Sind et L'Inde (pp. 234–240); XI. La charnière turcomane (pp. 241–250); XII. L'Azerbaïdjan et Le Caucase du XVI<sup>e</sup> au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle (pp. 251–259); XIII. L'Asie Centrale (Le Turkestan) du XV<sup>e</sup> au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle (pp. 260–267); XIV. L'Iran séfévide et Qadjar (pp. 268–306); XV. L'Empire Ottoman (pp. 307–358).

Cependant, en informant les lecteurs sur la parution de cette oeuvre belle et importante, je crois devoir souligner les lacunes considérables existant dans les matériaux élaborés par J. Soustiel et conçus par lui comme une édition intégrale. Elle est donc en même temps un guide incomplet dont les blancs exhortent à combler les lacunes.

Je considère également qu'il serait utile d'évoquer à ce propos quelques idées de H.-P. Fourest exposées dans son introduction, lesquelles j'approuve entièrement.

Il écrit, entre autres (p. ex. p. 9): «Qui pourrait aujourd'hui nier l'importance de la céramique comme expression des civilisations, en tous temps et en tous lieux? C'est grâce à l'art de la terre que l'archéologue a pu, à travers quelques exemplaires ou quelques fragments, rendre vie à l'histoire humaine la plus reculée. Les scènes reproduites sur certains vases grecs ont permis de se faire une idée de la peinture du monde hellénique. Enfin, les fouilles entreprises dans le Henan et le Gansu ne laissent plus aucun doute sur l'origine néolithique de l'art chinois.

Situé à mi-chemin entre la Chine et l'Europe, au carrefour de toutes les voies de communication, le monde islamique allait tout naturellement subir l'influence des cultures environnantes. Cette pluralité a favorisé l'éclosion d'un art aux multiples facettes, d'une extrême complexité... Inévitablement, la céramique musulmane reflète une incroyable variété de techniques et de conceptions décoratives, puisées dans cet héritage» (tant dans son propre héritage que dans les apports extérieurs)...

«Ainsi, le potier musulman travaille à partir des connaissances acquises aux époques antérieures; s'il n'ignore rien des relations entretenues par le monde islamique avec le grand Empire chinois, il utilise cependant toutes les possibilités qui lui sont offertes pour créer une céramique originale, dont cet ouvrage (soit l'ouvrage ici examiné) permet de mesurer la très haute valeur».

Witold Hensel

Tadeusz Dzierżykray-Rogalski, *The Bishops of Faras. An Anthropological-Medical Study*, PWN, Warszawa 1985, 272 pp., 6 figures, 4 tables, 168 photographic tables.

The study is authorized by two institutions – Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology, Polish Academy of Sciences, and Polish Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology in the Arabic Republic of Egypt in Cairo. It is the eight volume of the publishing continuation of the series edited by K. Michałowski under the collective title FARAS. Present-day Faras is the ancient Pachoras, the centre of political, cultural and religious life in the ancient Nubia. It is situated near a little town of Wadi Halfa on the left bank of the Nile in northern Sudan.

“The Polish history of Faras” began by the end of the 50' s while the decision of the construction of a great dam at Assuan was taken. That undertaking involved inundation of a considerable region by the waters of the Nile. The considerable part of ancient Nubia with her unique, invaluable relics was to be destroyed. Poles headed by Prof. K. Michałowski, then the head of Polish Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo, were the first to answer the UNESCO appeal. The author of the discussed study also took part in the rescue works. In 1961 excavations on the Kôm hill began. It appeared that its interior contained a number of very interesting features: a cloister, a group of early Christian shrines, a bishop's palace and tombs of the bishops. The history of their rule was described by S. Jakobielski,<sup>1</sup> and their bone remains are the subject of the discussed study.

Part of the rich materials collected during the excavations, including the bishops' skeletons, is the Polish property,<sup>2</sup> according to the agreement with the Sudan government.

The study by T. Dzierżykraj-Rogalski consists of three basic parts, including 21 chapters preceded by a short introduction with general data about research in Faras. The list of the literature referred to (122 items, in these 25 by the author) and the list of figures close the study.

Part I – “Historical Information” – consists of two chapters. The author presented historical-religious past of Nubia from the 6th to 15th century in the first chapter. The more extensive second chapter contains the history of the discovery, a list of measurements taken *in situ* and the description of the way the bishop's bone remains were excavated from the tombs, which were located nearest to the Cathedral. The table of the chronology of ruling of the succeeding bishops worked out by S. Jakobielski<sup>3</sup> is also annexed. The whole is completed with the proper situational plans of burials, photographs of the exposed skeletons and architectonic features exposed during excavations.

The second part of the study begins with a chapter concerning the method of description of the bishops' bone remains presented in the following fourteen chapters. Each of the chapters deals with one bishop. The short history of the rule is followed by an extensive, penetrating anatomic-anthropological description of the skeleton stressing the pathological changes. Bones of the cranium and depending on the condition of a postcranial skeleton, separate bones of the axial skeleton, of the upper and the lower

limbs are described. Measurements and indexes calculated from them are given for most of the bones. The conclusion of each description gives us, depending on the conditions of a skeleton: the sex and probable age at the moment of death, which could be often compared with the age of the dead given on a sepulchral stele<sup>4</sup> and the calculated height of a body and its specific-typological belonging.

Part III of the study includes four chapters of “Recapitulation” (Chapters 18–21). The author, in Chapter 18, carries out the differentiation of pathological changes from those typical of the old age and then he gives their anatomical description. The author states that all bishops’ skeletons show pathological changes. It is evident from the description that the changes concern mainly backbones and bones of axial skeletons. Generally they are of a degeneration character, deformation stiffening of various degree of intensification. These changes, according to the author, are typical of that geographical region and the age of bishops.

In Chapter 19, the author gives the individual specific-typological description of bishops on the grounds of the skeletons and in case of their missing – on the grounds of the wall portraits assuming that they were their true pictures and that they are sufficient for this type of estimation. He gives also the assumption of the origin of the bishops of Pachoras – local or from other regions (of Egypt).

We learn from the next chapter – “Demographic Problems” – basing on the description and two tables, that the average age of the described bishops was long – 71.3 years and that none of the bishops died before the fiftieth year of his life. On the ground of the steles, it was stated that they died most often in the period between May and September, it is during the hottest season in that region. It should be mentioned that in case of a missing skeleton, the author stated the age basing on the portrait and historically certified duration of the bishopric, which then was also lifelong.

The author describes the environmental and living conditions of the monks of Faras in the last chapters of the conclusions. He considers them good though simple. He also thinks that their stability together with the moderate manual labour and the sufficient quantity of food were good for their long life and the simple living conditions and lack of sanitation did not affect their health in any vital way.

Concluding, it should be stated that it is a loss that such a good anatomical description of skeletons in the second part of the study does not give the measurements of vertebrae, state of preservation of which, judging by the photographic records, allows it, and which had undisputable value for research works.

Rich, mostly technically very good records, particularly of the bone material, worked out by S. Biniewski and the author himself are worthy of notice. They help the reader considerably. However, the evident technical

shortcoming are some of not much legible black and white reproductions of mural paintings, all of them lacking their beauty.

Summing up, the study makes in the first place a valuable comparative material for anatomists or anthropologists, because of its good anatomic-pathological analysis. It can also serve as a source of valuable information for historians.

Mira Pyżuk-Lenarczyk

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> S. Jakobielski, *FARAS III. A History of the Bishopric of Pachoras*, Warszawa 1972.

<sup>2</sup> T. Dzierżykraj-Rogalski, *Weznochrześcijańskie cmentarzysko z VI–VII w.n.e. w Faras (Sudan)* [The Early Christian Burial Ground from the 6th to 7th Century AD in Faras (Sudan)], "Człowiek w Czasie i Przestrzeni", vol. 6: 1963, pp. 91–96; the same (review): K. Michałowski, *FARAS I. Faras – Fouilles Polonaises 1961*, Warszawa 1962, "Człowiek w Czasie i Przestrzeni", vol. 6: 1963, pp. 97–99.

<sup>3</sup> Jakobielski, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> On the basis of the bone material so-called biological age is stated, which need not agree with the calendar age of the individual.

*Teoria i praktyka badań archeologicznych* [Theory and Practice of Archaeological Research], W. Hensel, G. Donato, S. Tabaczyński (eds), vol. I, *Przesłanki metodologiczne* [Methodological Premises]. Ossolineum, Wrocław 1986, pp. 412.

The book reviewed is the first volume of a three-piece publication *Theory and Practice of Archaeological Research* prepared by representatives of the milieu of Polish archaeologists, working closely with centres abroad, especially the Italian ones. One of the most important tasks of this collective work is, as the authors themselves say, to "[...] show the complex and internally manifold-related structure of scientific cognition with which one has to deal in archaeological research and to which the close connection between theory and practice corresponds" (p. 10).

The assumptions made in the present work, previous achievements and possibilities of the development of empirical theory in archaeology constitute the content of the first volume which was published simultaneously in Poland and Italy<sup>1</sup> in 1986. Also, it is supposed to be a sort of introduction to the problems of field research (Volume II), analysis, interpretation and the problems of inference and the publication of the results of archaeological studies and their exhibition and popularization (Volume III).