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UNKNOWN OLD PHOTOS OF KARNAK MONUMENTS

The article introduces a set of photos capturing monuments and sites of the Karnak Temple Complex (Egypt) in 1907. These visual documents are held in the archival fond of D. Shcherbakivsky, in the Scientific Archive of the Institute of Archaeology, the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. Together with other visual materials, these photos appear to have been visual illustrations for lecture course on the history of ancient art by D. Shcherbakivsky. Investigation of the archival materials and study of the related textual documents from the Archive give reason to conclude that Ukrainian ethnographer and anthropologist O. Alesho seems to have been the author of these photos. He visited Egypt in winter 1907; Helwan and Luxor were among the sites which he visited, and the survived photos appear to have been a part of the photographic recording of his trip. He sent a postcard to his professor D. Shcherbakivsky with a note from Helwan, this note attests his trip to Egypt.

At present, the Institute of Archaeology of the NASU has eight black-and-white photographs capturing sites, objects and views of Karnak Temple Complex, as they were in 1907. So the photos of the Institute record one of the earliest known cases of the photographic recording of the Ancient Egypt sites and monuments made by Ukrainian scholars.

Key words: O. Alesho, D. Shcherbakivsky, Karnak, Egyptology, History of Ukrainian humanities.

The Scientific Archive of the Institute of Archaeology, the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, is one of the largest depositories of textual and visual materials on Ukrainian archaeology and history of Ukrainian humanities. It includes an impressive collection of photographic negatives and photos portraying archaeological excavations on the territory of Ukraine starting from the late 1890, as well as series of visual materials on the artefacts stored in Ukrainian museums, and other documents. The archive also has the collection of photographic negatives of Ancient Egyptian objects. This collection consists of two parts; the larger set of the photonegatives originates from

the archives of the restoration workshop in the All-Ukrainian Museum Town (Kyiv). In 1920-ies and 1930-ies this museum possessed a remarkable collection of Ancient Egyptian objects that were photographed in the process of their restoration by M. Kasperovych and his team (Романова 2017, с. 182—197; Romanova 2020). The other set of glass photonegatives comprises reproductions of old photos of Egyptian sites and monuments, collected, evidently, for publication. Both sets of the photonegatives will be discussed in detail in a further publication (Романова, Станиціна 2020).

The objective of the present paper is to introduce a newly found set of photos depicting some monuments of the Karnak Temple Complex¹. Being engaged in the project “Ancient Egypt in Kyiv mirrored on glass” whose goal was to catalogue the negatives collection, I was searching for documents that could shed light on the history of the negatives. Investigating other funds of the archive in collaboration with Anna Yanenko, we found these photographs.

This series of photos does not seem to be connected with the above-mentioned collection of the photonegatives of Egyptian objects and sites. The photos were apparently made earlier than 1920-ies or 1930-ies, and they are of excellent quality suggesting that their author was a skilled photographer. The monuments were photographed *in situ*, which means that somebody from Ukraine traveled to Egypt as early as in 1900-ies. These early photos of Karnak and its monuments *in situ* can be of some interest for Egyptologists.

The photos were a part of the personal archive of the famous Ukrainian archaeologist, the art histo-

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Photo 1. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

rian and the fine arts expert Danylo Shcherbakivsky (1877—1927) (Білокін 2013).

Together with some other photos of Asia and Middle East monuments, they probably belonged to the visual material that D. Shcherbakivsky used in his lectures. Since the 1910-s, D. Shcherbakivsky gave lectures on art and history of art in a number of Kyiv institutions including Kyiv Art Institute. Besides, he was a moderator of an art study seminar at the Taras Shevchenko All-Ukrainian Historical Museum. His personal archive has a draft and working materials for his lectures on the history of art; the document named “Lectures on the history of art, methodology of lecturing of the history of art, etc. (Art of Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, Mycenae etc.)” (Scientific Archive of the Institute of Archaeology, of the NAS Ukraine (further SA IA NASU), fond no. 9, file no. 185, fol. 1—163 (Щербаківський Б.р., арк. 1—163)). Judging by the archival documents, his course included a series of lectures on Ancient Egyptian art; eleven pages of these lectures drafts survived (SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 185, fol. nos. 1—11 (Щербаківський Б.р., арк. 1—11)). The file with the photos of Karnak sites also belongs to this personal archive (SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150, photos nos. 1—8). These photos were probably used as illustrations for his lectures, or were a part of the col-

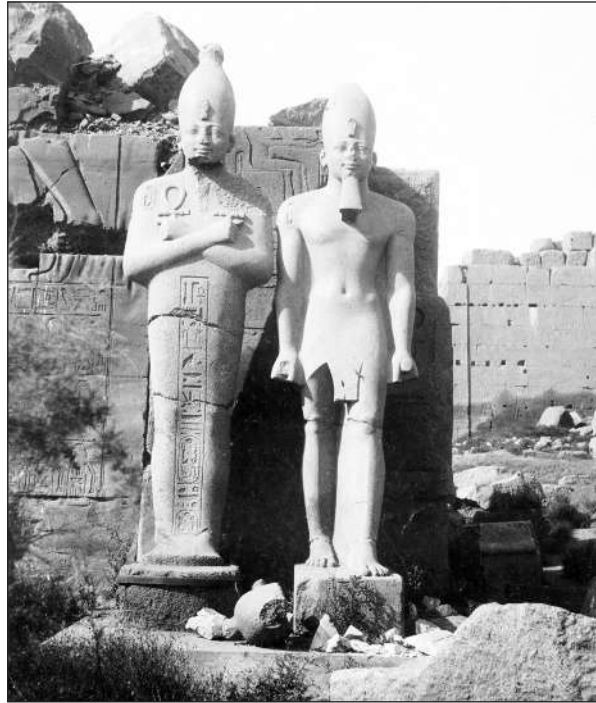


Photo 2. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

lection of photos of various cultural sites, monuments and objects that D. Shcherbakivsky used in his studies of ancient art.

The photos were made in Egypt, but it was unclear, who their author was. D. Shcherbakivsky is unlikely to have made these photos himself as there is no evidence of his trip to Egypt, only to Europe (Білокін 2013).

On the back of photo no. 5, there is a pencil inscription saying, “*Handed over to Museum by Ol[expander] Alesho*” (SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150, photo 5). The name of the museum mentioned in this inscription can be easily identified. From 1910 till his death, D. Shcherbakivsky worked in the same museum, though it was renamed several times. He started his activity when it was the Kyiv Museum of Arts, Industries and Sciences, then it became the First State Museum (1918) and later (1924) it was re-organized into the All-Ukrainian Historical Museum named after Taras Shevchenko. The inscription also identifies a person who offered these photos to museum (or to D. Shcherbakivsky).

Olexandr Havrylovych Alesho (1890—1922) was a disciple of D. Shcherbakivsky and Ukrainian ethnographer and anthropologist (Толочко 2015, с. 329—330). He could have been the author of the photos, as is evident from his correspondence, he was also a photographer (Алешо 1915, арк. 1), though he was not known to have visited Egypt either. However, the available information about him is scarce.



Photo 3. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

Fortunately, there is a document shedding light on the photos' provenance. The photos of Karnak monuments from Shcherbakivsky's archive come with a postcard depicting an Islamic vase (SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150, postcard no. 9). This postcard was printed in Cairo; the logo on the backside is in Arabic and in French, "Phot. Art. G. Lekegian & Co Caire" ("Photographie Artistique G. Lekegian & Co."). It was a well-known photo studio of an Ottoman painter and photographer Gabriel Lekegian who was of Armenian origin. His photo atelier was functioning in 1890-ies and in 1910-s. So, Gabriel Lekegian could have been the author of these photos. However, though his atelier is mentioned on the postcard, but its name cannot be found on any of the photos.

The postcard bears a note written by O. Alesho to D. Shcherbakivsky. Here is the Russian text of the note:

*Дорогой Даниил Михайлович!
Почему вы не отвечаете на мою открытку?
Посылаю Вам следующую с древней египет-
ской лампадой.*

От (подпись) Александра Алешо.

Translation:

*Dear Daniyil Mikhailovich,
Why don't you answer to my postcard?
I am sending you another one with an ancient
Egyptian oil lamp.*

From [signature] Alexander Alesho.

The backside of the postcard contains the address of the recipient and the postmark with dates and places of dispatch and delivery. The card is addressed to D. Shcherbakivsky's residence in the Ukrainian town of Uman:

*Russie Ummàgne, Uman
To His High Ancestry
Daniyil Mykhailovich Shcherbakivsky.
Offiterskaya street, Nr. 17.*

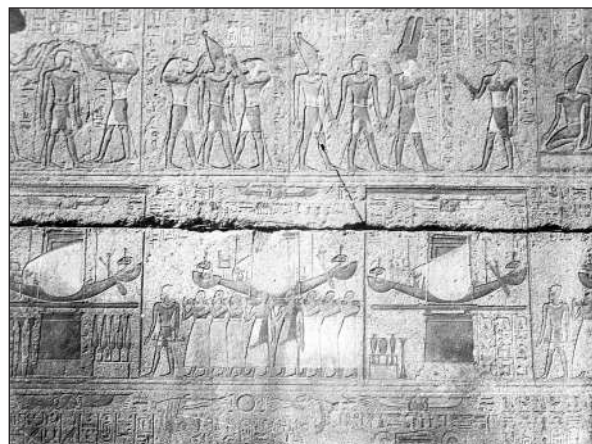


Photo 4. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

The word "Helwan" on the dispatch postmark survived only partially, and the date of dispatch is unclear.

The postmark of the place of receipt is visible much better: "Uman, 2.2.07." Thus, Helwan was the point of departure of the postcard and it is a document substantiating O. Alesho's visit to Egypt in winter 1907. O. Alesho mentioned in his postcard a note to another postcard sent by him to D. Shcherbakivsky, and, probably, there were a number of such cards sent from Egypt to Uman. This postcard, together with the above-mentioned inscription on the photo, verifies the assumption that O. Alesho might have visited Karnak during his trip to Egypt, and could have been the author of the photos. It is likely that this small set was a part of a larger set of photos made by him in Egypt.

Photo description

Photo 1. Scene of wall-relief representing rewarding of Amenhotep, the high priest of Amun, by Ramses IX (Karnak, Central Group, Court between Seventh and Eight Pylons) (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 172).

Photo 2. Two colossal statues with the name of Ramses IV, one is of Osiride-type and other is as human figure standing, the inscription with the King's names is visible. The colossi were actually made by Thutmose III and later were usurped by Ramses IV, they are situated in the temple of Amun, in front of the north face of Seven Pylon (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 168).

Photo 3. Avenue of ram-headed sphinxes protecting pharaohs, in front of the Great Temple of Amun (Karnak, Central Group) (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 22), general view.



Photo 5. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

Photo 4. Two registers of the wall relief from the Granite Sanctuary of Philip Arrhidaeus, Great Temple of Amun, Karnak, Central Group (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 100 (290)). The upper register represent a row of scenes with King and deities, King purified by Thoth and Horus, and King crowned with a white crown by the same deities, King led by Atum and Monthu to Thoth. Beneath is a fragment of the lower register showing the images of barks in naoses and a procession of priests carrying the sacral bark.

Photo 5. Two rows of columns and the upper window, the Great Hypostyle Hall of the Great Temple of Amun (Karnak, Central Group) (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 41ff).

Photo 6. Frontal image of Bes depicted on the wall relief from the Porch of the Temple of Mut (Karnak, Southern Group) (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 256).

Photo 7. General view of Propylon “Bab el-Abd” erected by Ptolemy III Euergetes I and Ptolemy IV Philopator (Karnak, Northern Group, Temple of Monthu) (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 2–4). The lower part of the photo has a hand-written inscription made by hand in English: “Entrance of temple Karnak, Nr. 9. G. Saif.” This photo seems to be one of the photographic cards made for tourists.

Photo 8. Statue of lion-headed goddess Sekhmet with a cartouche of Sheshonk I. The details of the inscription are visible on the photo. Inscription incised

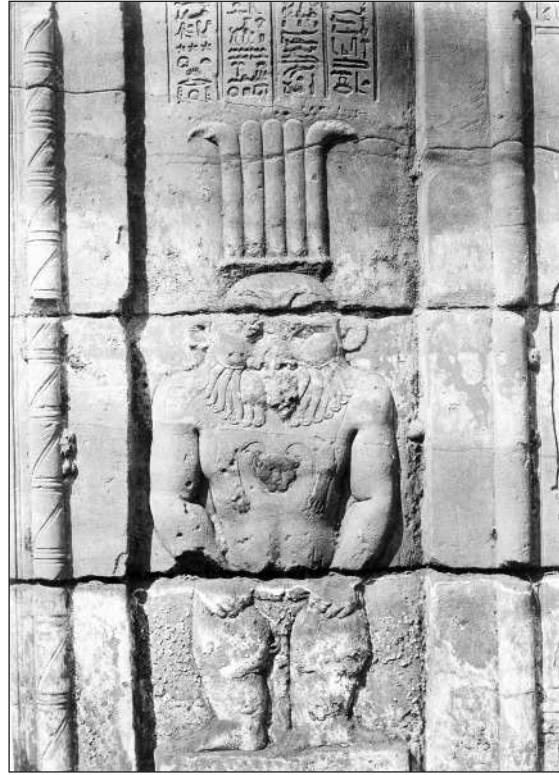


Photo 6. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

on the frontside of the chair, left of the legs of the figure, says *s3 R^c n ht.fmrj'Imn Ššnk* “The son of Re, from his body, beloved by Amon Sheshonk”. In the area of the Temple of Mut (the Southern Group of the Karnak Temple Complex), a series of Sekhmet statues were found (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 257–258), in particular, a statue of Sekhmet erected by Amenhotep III and usurped by Sheshonk I, in the forecourt of the Temple of Mut (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 257). However, the photo depicts another statue of Sekhmet with dedication of Sheshonk I. It is a large granite statue of the seated goddess wearing a crown with uraei and a solar disk above (lost) (Porter, Moss 1972, p. 258 (11)); the statue was found and described by M. Benson and J. Gourlay, the photo of the statue was placed in their monograph on p. 248 (Benson, Gourlay 1899, p. 247, and Pl. XIX on p. 248). The statue captured on the photo from the Institute of Archaeology of the NASU was represented *in situ* too; it was taken a bit later, and the photo is of fine quality. The statue on the photo represents a lion-headed female figure seated on the chair, shown from the left. The left and the right arms of the figure are damaged and partially lost as well as the top section of its crown.

Conclusion

Altogether, these photos are valuable visual documents recording some Karnak monuments *in*

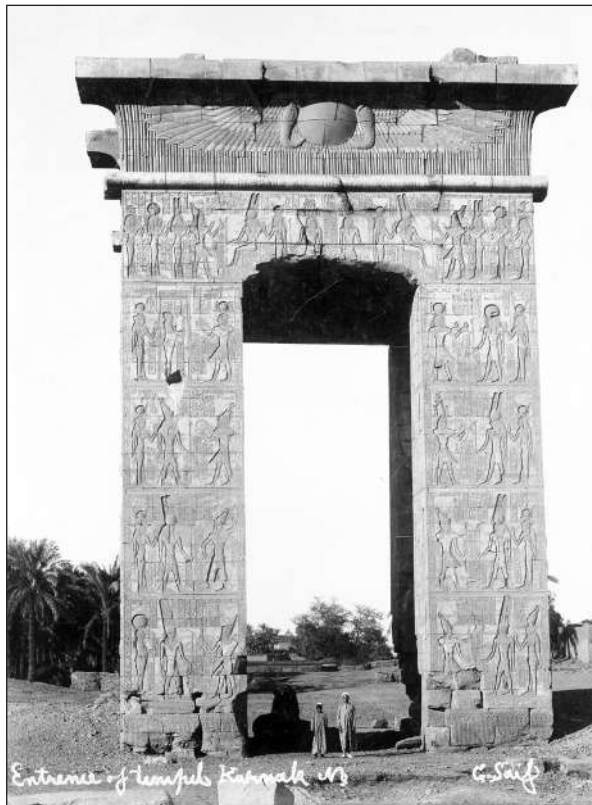


Photo 7. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

situ and some views of Karnak of the 1900-s. Besides, the study of their historical context and the relevant textual archival documents allows unveiling an unknown page of Ukrainian Egyptomania and an interest in the Ancient Egyptian civilization among Ukrainian academic circles at the beginning of 20th century. The study of the visual and textual documents provides an evidence of the trip made by the Ukrainian anthropologist Alesho to Egypt as early as in 1907, including at least Helwan and Luxor (Karnak Temple); and his efforts to make a photographic record of the visited sites. These are probably the earliest photos taken by Ukrainian scholars in Egypt, and the earliest photos of Egyptian sites and monuments kept in Ukrainian archives and museums. Regrettably, the first steps in observing and studying of Ancient Egypt by Ukrainian scholars never advanced to the development of professional Egyptology or foundation of an institution that could provide a proper basis for professional activities of Ukrainian scholars in this field. Further development failed due to the political vagaries of the 20th century, the fall of Ukrainian independent political project, and establishment of USSR with its ideologically biased interpretation of the world history.

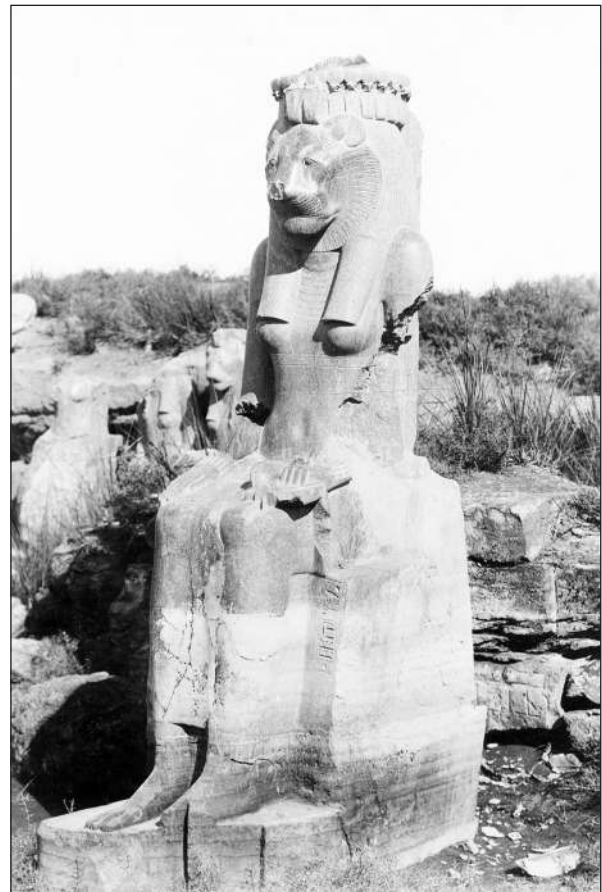


Photo 8. SA IA NASU, fond no. 9, file no. 150

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НЕВІДОМІ СТАРІ ФОТОГРАФІЇ ПАМ'ЯТОК КАРНАКУ

У науковий обіг вводиться невідома раніше серія старих фотографій, на яких зображені пам'ятки та види храмового комплексу Карнаку (Єгипет) в 1907 р. Ці візуальні документи зберігаються в архівному фонді Д. Щербаківського в Науковому архіві Інституту археології НАН України. Схоже, що ці фотографії, поряд із іншими матеріалами візуального характеру, були ілюстративним матеріалом для курсу лекцій з історії давнього мистецтва Д. Щербаківського. Пошуки архівних матеріалів та вивчення відповідних документів текстового характеру із архіву дають підставу для висновку, що автором цих фотографій був український антрополог та етнограф О. Алешо, який подорожував Єгиптом взимку 1907 р. Серед інших місць він відвідав Гелуан та Луксор, і досліджувані фотографії, схоже, є вцілілою частиною тих фотографій, котрі він робив під час своєї подорожі. Свідченням його поїздки до Єгипту є поштова листівка із повідомленням, яку він відправив своєму вчителю Д. Щербаківському із Гелуану.

Нині Інститут археології НАНУ має вісім чорно-білих фотографій, на яких зображені місця, пам'ятки та види храмового комплексу Карнаку, такі, якими вони були в 1907 р. Отже, ці фотографії засвідчують один із найбільш ранніх випадків, коли українські вчені знайомилися й фотографували історичні місця Стародавнього Єгипту.

К л ю ч о в і с л о в а: О. Алешо, Д. Щербаківський, Карнак, єгиптологія, історія української гуманітарної науки.

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НЕИЗВЕСТНЫЕ СТАРЫЕ ФОТОГРАФИИ ПАМЯТНИКОВ КАРНАКА

В научный оборот вводится серия фотографий, на которых изображены памятники и виды храмового комплекса Карнака (Египет) в 1907 г. Эти визуальные документы хранятся в архивном фонде Д. Щербаківського в Научном архиве Института археологии НАН Украины. Похоже, что эти фотографии вместе с другими визуальными материалами были иллюстративным материалом к лекциям по истории древнего искусства Д. Щербаківського. Поиски архивных материалов и исследования соответствующих документов текстуального характера из архива дают основания для вывода о том, что автором фотографий был украинский антрополог и этнограф А. Алешо, который зимой 1907 г. путешествовал по Египту. Среди мест, которые он посетил, были Хелуан и Луксор, а исследуемые фотографии, похоже, были сохранившейся частью тех фотографий, которые он делал во время поездки. Свидетельством его поездки в Египет является почтовая карточка с письмом своему учителю Д. Щербаківському, отправленная им из Хелуана.

Ныне в Институте археологии НАНУ хранится восемь черно-белых фотографий, на которых запечатлены места, памятники и виды храмового комплекса Карнака состоянием на 1907 г. Таким образом, эти фотографии являются свидетельством одного из наиболее ранних случаев, когда украинские ученые знакомились и фотографировали исторические места Древнего Египта.

К л ю ч е в ы е с л о в а: А. Алешо, Д. Щербаківський, Карнак, єгиптологія, історія української гуманітарної науки.

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