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Articles

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THREE EGYPTIAN SCARABS WITH PHRASES FROM THE
COLLECTION OF CONSTANTINE SCHMIDT-CIĄŻYŃSKI IN CRACOW

In the course of works on preparation of the catalogue of Egyptian scarabs and other seal amulets in Cracow collections, a trace of such several objects has been encountered, which come from the collection of Constantine Schmidt-Ciążyński¹.

Towards the close of the 19th century, Constantine Schmidt-Ciążyński happened to be an owner of a large collection, composed of about 2.500 ancient gems and cameos (including also modern specimens, i. a. those with signatures of Pichlers, Girometti, Brown, Marchant and others, as well as later ones, dating back to the second half of the 19th century)². At present, for lack of sources, it is difficult to render Schmidt-Ciążyński's curriculum and to reconstruct the provenance of objects in his collection. Basing on an information imparted by M. Sokołowski³, we learn that he had spent his childhood in Warsaw (where he was born in 1815) and then resided for many years in Russia, Germany and Italy. All the longest he lived in Paris and then settled down in London. Since his young days he got engaged in antiquarian business and kept in touch with

many eminent collectors of his century. At his life's end, "he turned over his memories to the country and offered to her what he had the dearest". A considerable collection of pieces of art offered he to the Polish National Museum at Rapperswil (Switzerland) and to the Museum of Sciences' Lovers Society in Poznań, whereas "the most precious and to his heart dearest collection of the engraved stones assigned he for the National Museum in Cracow"⁴. Constantine Schmidt-Ciążyński died in Gorizia in 1889.

A detailed review of the hitherto not yet scientifically described collection of Schmidt-Ciążyński, presently in the Department of Artistic Handicraft of National Museum in Cracow, has enabled a separation of highly interesting group including 50 Egyptian scarabs, scaraboids and plaques⁵, 8 Etruscan scarabs and a set of 105 magical gems, unique among Polish museums. At present, these groups are being prepared for a publication by the author of this paper, while the text presented here is modestly aimed at evocation of Constantine Schmidt-Ciążyński's merits exactly a century after his collection had been overtaken by the National Museum in Cracow⁶.

1. Scarab

Inv. No. MNK IV-Zł-2776 (formerly No. 3111; Schmidt-Ciążyński's file No. 1994).

Beige slate.

16.5/ 12/ 6.8 mm.

State of preservation: good.

New Kingdom.

Bibliography: unpublished.



On the flat base, in an oval enclosure, there are carefully incised hieroglyphic signs, forming a relative popular motto:

Jmn-R^C ḥpš n w^C "Amun-Re is the strength of an isolated".

The object is pierced along the axis.

Cf.: W. M. F. Petrie, Tanis II, London 1888, pl. XLI, 63; Petrie, Illahun, Kahun, Gurob 1889-1890, London 1891, pl. XXIX, 51;

A. Grenfell, The Scarab Collection of Queen's College, Oxford, "JEA" 2, 1915, pl. XXXIV, 156; G. Brunton, Matmar, London 1948, pl. LXIII, 69-72; P. E. Newberry, Ancient Egyptian Scarabs. An Introduction to Egyptian Seals and Signet Rings, London 1905 (repr. Chicago 1975), pl. XL, 24; Newberry, Scarab-shaped Seals, London 1907, pl. X, No. 36619; F. Matouk, Corpus du scarabée égyptien. II, Beirut 1977, p. 373, No. 11 f.; Abdel Hamid Zayed, Egyptian Antiquities (from the collection of Albert Eid), Cairo 1962, p. 121, fig. 207 i; E. Hornung, E. Staehelin (ed.), Skarabäen und andere Siegelamulette aus Basler Sammlungen (Ägyptische Denkmäler in der Schweiz, Bd. 1), Mainz 1976, Cat. No. 584 and the bibliography quoted there; I. Vodoz, Les scarabées gravés du Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève (Aegyptiaca Helvetica 6, 1978), Genève 1979, No. 52, p. 98; E. Brunner-Traut, H. Brunner, Die ägyptische Sammlung der Universität Tübingen, Mainz 1981, Cat. No. 537, p. 178, pl. 102.

2. Scarab

Inv. No. MNK IV-Zł-2783 (formerly No. 3113; Schmidt-Ciążyński's file No. 1992).

Slate, traces of light beige glaze.

14.5/ 10/ 5 mm.

State of preservation: right edge of the clypeus is injured.

New Kingdom or later.

Bibliography: unpublished.



On the surface of the flat base, in an oval encircling, there are incised four hieroglyphic signs forming a following phrase:

ḥzj nb ḥ "The one praised by the Lord of Palace".

The object is pierced along the axis.

Cf.: P. E. Newberry, Scarab-shaped Seals, London 1907, pl. VI, No. 36616; E. Hornung, E. Staehelin (ed.), Skarabäen..., Cat. No. 742 and also Cat. Nos. 738, 741 (slightly different graphic variants of the same phrase).

3. Scaraboid

Inv. No. MNK IV-Zł-2808 (formerly No. 3108; Schmidt-Ciążyński's file No. 1996).

Faience, light green glaze.

18/ 13/ 13.6 mm.

State of preservation: heavily damaged; head of the animal is missing, edge of the base strongly abraded.

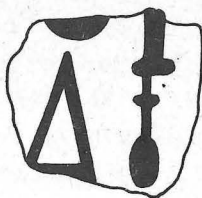
Late Period.

Bibliography: unpublished.

Scaraboid with 'a hedgehog modelled in the upper part. An aperture was drilled in the body of the animal, at the axis of the object. On the surface of the base, there is a fragmentarily preserved text, belonging to a relatively popular phrase:

[B3stt].dj nfr [r^g] nb "Bastet, may you give the daily good".

Cf.: V. von Droste zu Hülshoff, Der Igel im alten Ägypten (Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge, 11), Hildesheim 1980, Cat. No. 351 and parallels quoted there.

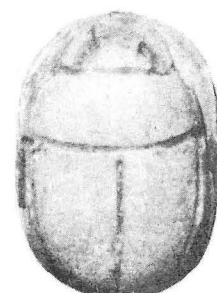


Notes

¹ J. Śliwa, Egyptian scarabs, scaraboids and plaques from the Cracow collections [in:] Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego DCCLX. Prace Archeologiczne, z. 38. Studia z Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej, z. 8, Warszawa-Kraków 1985, p. 11, note 19 and Cat. Nos. 5 and 63. From the present documentation appears, however, that four other objects published previously as belonging to the collection of A. Grubbissich, should be added to the collection of Schmidt-Ciążyński (cf. Cat. Nos. 13, 134, 137, 139).

² Cf. M. Sokołowski, Zbiór gemmo-gliptyczny Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie [in:] Studia i szkice z dziejów sztuki i cywilizacji, T. 1: Starożytność i wieki średnie. Kraków 1889, pp. 179-201; E. Bulanda, Kilka gemm ze zbioru Schmidta-Ciążyńskiego, "Wiadomości Numizmatyczno-Archeologiczne" V, 1913, pp. 44-45, 51-52, 71-74, 84-86, 104-

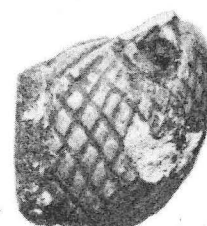
1



2



3



-108 and pls. 9-10; M. Fredro-Boniecka, Gemmy z podpisami artystów w Muzeum Narodowym w Krakowie. Cz. I, "Wiadomości Numizmatyczno-Archeologiczne" XX, 1938/39, pp. 278-292; ead., as above, Cz. II, "Wiadomości Numizmatyczno-Archeologiczne" XXI, 1940-1948, pp. 53-84.

³ M. Sokołowski, Zbiór gemmo-gliptyczny..., p. 180-181. See also a short note in: "Biblioteka Warszawska" 1889, I, p. 321.

⁴ The National Museum in Cracow has acquired this collection as a whole in June, 1886 on very moderate conditions, being supposed to secure the former owner "livelihood and composure for life".

⁵ Moreover, 6 other objects from Schmidt-Ciążyński's collection presently in Czartoryski Collection should be added here (cf. note 1).

⁶ The author hastens to express his gratitude to the managing staff of the National Museum in Cracow in person of Mrs. Jadwiga Bezwińska, Ph. D. as well as to the Curator of Department of Artistic Handicraft, Mrs. Stanisława Odrzywolska, M. A. for their consent on scientific treatment of that part of collection and their kind making the objects accessible. Photos are made by Mr. Konrad K. Pollesch from the Institute of Archaeology of the Jagellonian University.