

## FOREWORD

It is not without a certain extent of personal gratification that we hand readers the second volume of the Proceedings of the 11th International Conference of Nubian Studies which was held at the University of Warsaw between 28 August and 2 September 2006. Part One appeared in print already over a year ago. The editorial work on the second volume took longer than expected for a number of reasons, none of which need to be gone into in detail, but for which we hope to apologize — to the readers and especially to the contributors of this volume.

Part One of the Proceedings contained the texts of invited papers delivered during the plenary sessions. The second volume brings papers read during the thematic sessions, as well as the presentations made during the two workshops, iconographical and linguistic, along with the minutes of the discussion that followed. The sheer volume of material to be included in the second part imposed on us a need to produce two fascicles, something which hopefully will not be an inconvenience.

Articles published in this book cover a wide range of subjects relating to the Nubian past from prehistory through Kerman, Napatan, Meroitic, post-Meroitic, Christian and Fung periods to relatively recent times. They also present a variety of methodological approaches from descriptive reports from the field, through technical and formal analyses of the material, to synthetic studies frequently making use of results coming from related social sciences. Thus, the book testifies to the richness and the rapid development of our still young discipline, called to life a mere forty years ago and concentrated mainly on the Christian period at first. There is nothing better to show how far Nubiology has come since its creation than a comparison of the acts of the first Warsaw conference of Nubian studies held in 1972 with the proceedings of the present conference. Then just 22 papers, of which 17 were devoted to Christian Nubia and its relations with the contemporary Christian world, now 80 published presentations (added to the 17 main papers in the first volume of the proceedings), including the workshop material, of which the Christian period is represented by no more than a seventh.

Any publication of this size and content is naturally dependent on the work of many people and it is the time and place here to express our thanks to all who have had a hand in bringing out these volumes. We would like to mention especially Iwona Zych for the smooth organization of the publication process and her editorial *acribia* which gave the book its final form, Ewa Czyżewska, as well as Marta Momot and Marek Puzkarski, for processing the illustrational material which is never to be underestimated because of its important informative and commenting role, Dorota Dzierzbicka for her patient and often inspirational transcription of the minutes of the discussion during the workshops, Kamil Kuraszkiwicz for checking the correctness of all the hieroglyphic transcriptions, and finally Dobrochna Zielińska, who has designed the covers and the volume art. Last but not least, Martyna Chołuj of WUW and Eliza Suchocka of Logoscript have been extremely helpful and forbearing in the long process of bringing the two volumes to print.

There would be no book without our Contributors. Hence, we take the opportunity here once again to express our warm thanks to all the participants of the Warsaw conference who kindly submitted their contributions to the proceedings and greatly facilitated the editing process with their answers to various questions and proofreading.

Consistency has stood at the root of all our editing efforts and it is with some regret that we have to say that we have not quite achieved our goal in full. This concerns in particular the writing of Arabic proper names, especially the writing of the article el- (al-) with the so-called solar letters. The -l at the end of the article is assimilated to the following letter, if it is a solar one, but only in the spoken language. In writing, it remains the letter for /l/. At the advice of our Sudanese colleague Mahmoud El-Tayeb, we have adopted a graphic, not phonetic transcription, hence el-Sufra not es-Sufra, el-Zuma not ez-Zuma, el-Turuk not et-Turuk, and so on. If the form of transcription in the published texts is different from that adopted by the publishers, it is on specific request of the authors.

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