

JERZY MIZIOŁEK

University of Warsaw, Institute of Archeology

PETER MARTYN

Warsaw, Institute of Art, PAN

Robert Anderson, Awarded the Institute of Art Medal



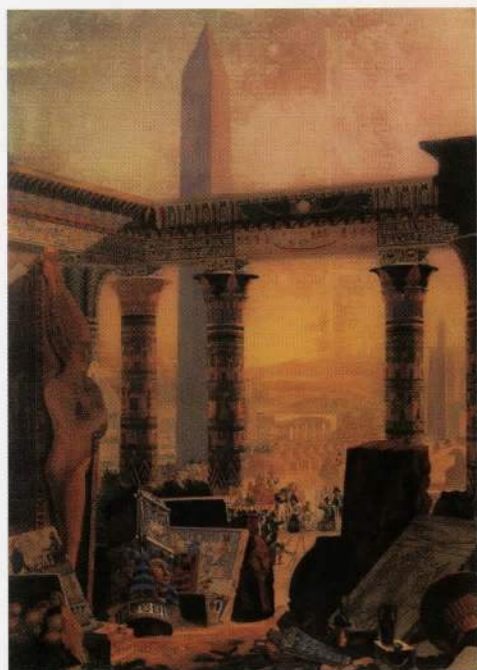
1. Prof. Robert Anderson presented with the Institute of Art Medal

1. Prof. Robert Anderson z Medalem Instytutu PAN

On 4th October 2000 an event of considerable importance to Polish studies in humanities was held in the Institute of Art (IS PAN): the awarding of dr. Robert Anderson of London, founder and chairman of 'The Robert Anderson Research Charitable Trust', of a medal specially minted to mark the Institute of Art's twenty-fifth anniversary, celebrated in 1974. The Institute of Art Medal (*Medal Instytutu Sztuki*) is awarded persons of merit for services rendered to the Institute, as well as to those who have offered their worthy support to the research conducted under its aegis. Thanks to 'The Robert Anderson Research Charitable Trust', since the end of the 1980s almost twenty academics based in the Institute have been given the opportunity to conduct their research in London, supported by grants offered by the said Trust.

Apart from receiving his award and the formal honours of an eminent guest to accompany the actual ceremony, during his three-day visit to Warsaw dr. Anderson also delivered a lecture in the Institute of Art and visited a number of places in the vicinity, including Łowicz, Nieborów and Arkadia.

Robert Anderson, whose father owned a prospering tea plantation in Assam, was born in 1927 in India. Following a childhood spent in the Sub-continent, he was sent to the homeland of his parents who, apart from owning the plantation also possessed two houses in London. He studied Egyptology at Cambridge University and Musicology at University College in London, and it was these two disciplines which were to become the leading passions of his whole life. Having completed his postgraduate studies, dr Anderson, as has often been the case with British academics, became an independent and largely unaffiliated scholar, maintaining contacts with



2. Egypt in 1800. Scenes from Napoleon's „Description de L'Égypte”. Ed. by Robert Anderson and Ibrahim Fawzy, London 1987
2. Egypt in 1800. Scenes from Napoleon's „Description de L'Égypte”. Red. przez Roberta Andersona i Ibrahima Fawzy, Londyn 1987

During his travels through Central-Eastern Europe and Russia, conducted long before the end of the Iron Curtain, in the 1970s as well as the 1980s, Anderson soon recognized the need to support young university and museum researchers from this part of the world, deprived even of the possibility of visiting London, let alone staying there long enough to be able to make use of its famous museums, galleries and such exceptionally well-stocked libraries as, to name but one, the Warburg Institute. The estate he inherited from his parents and funds he realised himself to be capable of amassing with such an aim in mind led him to establish a charity through which it would be possible to allocate money for research grants. Long before ‘The Robert Anderson Research Charitable Trust’ came into being, in the early 1990s, it became his custom to invite students and postgraduates from Poland and other Central or Eastern European countries to visit London on a grant and to live in one of his two houses, on Horn-ton Street and Highgate. As a true polyglot and erudite scholar, Anderson would introduce his visitors into the world of London's museums and research institutions. Conversations with him in the atmosphere of his great house filled with books on Horn-ton Street (situated round the corner from Kensington Gardens and close to the Victoria and Albert



3. Robert Anderson, Elgar in manuscript, London 1990
3. Robert Anderson, Elgar in manuscript, Londyn 1990

a considerable number of universities, academic associations and museums throughout the world. His favourite pursuits have always been travelling and writing books. In the field of musicology he has authored, among other publications, a monograph on Richard Wagner (*Wagner. A biography, with a survey of books, editions and recordings*, London 1980) and two volumes of basic significance devoted to Edward Elgar (*Elgar in Manuscript*, vols. I and II, London 1990, 1999; ill. 2). On the subject of his beloved Egypt, to which he regularly travels each year, where he was introduced to and thereafter met on a regular basis the celebrated Polish archaeologist Kazimierz Michalowski, he was responsible for editing, together with Ibrahim Fawzy, a monumental and superbly illustrated publication titled *Egypt around 1800* (1987; ill. 3). Having already compiled the third volume dealing with musical instruments for the *Catalogue of Egyptian Antiquities in the British Museum* (1976), he is currently preparing a similar register of Egyptian instruments housed in the Hermitage collections at St. Petersburg. His books, both those regarded as being strictly specialist and those of a more popularist character, are characterised by extraordinary preciseness of expression and sophistication.



4. Dr Robert Anderson and prof. Lech Sokół, director of IS PAN
4. Dr Robert Anderson i dr hab. Lech Sokół, dyrektor IS PAN

Museum) proved for young scholars from the East a marvellous *introductio* to the academic world of the great metropolis. How many male and female Egyptologists, musicologists and art historians from Cracow, Gdańsk and Warsaw, but equally from Moscow, Kiev, Prague and Belgrade, began or continued their research programmes, destined to become Ph.D. or even more ambitious theses, due to his initial and generous support. Since the Trust was established, with its main offices at Highgate, the duties of secretary have been carried out by dr. Anderson's long-standing associate, Howard Davies.

It would be difficult to count the number of books and articles, published on occasion in the most prestigious academic journals, including the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, or *Apollo*, which were written during the time of London grants and even dedicated to the chairman of ‘The Robert Anderson Research Charitable Trust’. A very clear instance of how close the achievements of former scholarship holders are to dr. Anderson is reflected in his attendance of the presentation in London of the publication titled *Borders in Art. Revisiting ‘Kunstgeographie’*, ed. K. Murawska-Muthesius, Warsaw 2000, containing the proceedings from a joint conference of Polish and British art historians. In a letter addressed to one of the authors of this text, written shortly after the said presentation, the following words were written: ‘I attended the launching of *Borders in Art* at the Polish Cultural Centre here the day before my departure for India. I was delighted to see three ‘Trust’ names among the contributors, and very proud’.

Dr. Anderson's October visit had been preceded by a number of earlier sojourns in Poland. Even

though these were as a rule for no more than a few days, he always found time for at least one, if not two lectures on a subject relating to Egyptology or musicology. Among other places, he has lectured at Warsaw University's Institute of Archaeology, the Art Historians' Association in Warsaw and the Jagiellonian University's Institute of Musicology. During his most recent visit, and in his capacity of both a musicologist and Egyptologist, dr. Anderson also delivered a lecture, titled ‘Gods and goddesses of Egyptian music’. The favourable reception of his earlier lectures and the virtually complete presence of those academics associated with the Institute who have thus far benefitted from ‘The Robert Anderson Research Charitable Trust’ guaranteed an impressive attendance. The Institute's sizeable lecture hall, named in memory of Juliusz Starzyński, was filled almost to the last free seat. An increasingly uncommon experience in the British Isles and Poland alike, it was indeed a pleasure to hear a speaker both willing and able to speak without the aid of any notes for a prolonged length of time. In an authoritative, distinctly scholarly style that could well be on the very verge of extinction, Anderson led his Warsaw audience, by way of introduction, through the complexities of the Ancient Egyptian deities and belief systems that functioned for some three millennia to culminate in a series of instruments of greater or lesser familiarity known to specialists from what was discovered and later preserved from the mastabas, is known from literary sources, or has been recognised from iconography. In the figure of Ihy, the ancient Egyptians had their own god of music, while Amun, Hathor, Isis and Osiris all had strong musical associations. While

aerophones and chordophones would appear to have prevailed, the very earliest, as well as simplest instruments are assumed to have been clappers and rhytons. It is still impossible to ascertain precisely the extent to which the music of Egypt influenced the classical world, and particular excitement in the audience was stirred by the emphatic confirmation that the syrinx, alternatively referred to as panpipes, were already known to the Ancient Egyptians long before their first appearance, around 500B.C., in Ancient Greece. The lecturer was introduced and ensuing discussion conducted by the Institute of Art's current director, prof. Lech Sokół.

Accompanied by a generous selection of non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages, cakes and other snacks, the actual presentation of the Institute Medal was staged in Director Sokół's study. With the formal part of the ceremony over, the distinguished guest was able to exchange some words with a significant proportion of his own former guests, apart from being introduced to one or two future visitors to the houses on Hornton Street or Holly Terrace. This was an opportunity he very clearly enjoyed, and one he took full advantage of with a heartwarming openness and candour to demolish all those stereotypes concerning the cold aloofness of 'the English' that are still actually believed in by

a substantial proportion of Polish, but not only Polish, academics.

On the following day, Robert Anderson was given a tour of some of the more important places of historic and cultural interest outside Warsaw in the company and under the guidance of Tadeusz Zadrożny, an Institute employee and supervisor of the Count Leopold Cicognara book collection housed on microfiche in the IS PAN Library. Starting in Łowicz, one of Poland's more important regional centres of folk arts and culture, where he was shown the rarely accessible cathedral treasury, the esteemed guest was then driven to the famous Baroque palace at Nieborów, whose interiors were remodelled after 1880 to resemble those of an English manor house, and finally the nearby romantic gardens of Arkadia with its various architectural follies. Perhaps it ought to be made clear that dr. Anderson had already fulfilled his natural duty as a musicologist and made the obligatory pilgrimage to the manor house associated with Fryderyk Chopin at Żelazowa Wola on one of his previous sojourns in the country.

It is to be hoped that Robert Anderson shall return in the not too distant future to Poland, undoubtedly certain in the conviction that he shall always be welcome in this still comparatively poorly known part of Europe.