paper presented by L. Török from Hungary. The author focused on cultural influence and political relations, namely between Kush and Egypt. He reconstructed the contemporary views on Kush in ancient Egypt and in the works of ancient authors. He documented the trade contacts of the ancient Kush by presenting a selection of imported artifacts found in Meroic burials and in the archaeological layers of the Capital City Meroe. These documents are rather one-sided, we still do not know much about Meroic exports. The contributed papers presented by other participants completed the topic. E. Y. Kormysheva (U.S.S.R.) dealt with political relations between Rome and the Meroic Empire on the basis of inscriptions on potsherds found in Dodecaschoin (territory in the northernmost part of the Egyptian Nubia), S. J. Bersina (U.S.S.R.) analysed the content of the Papyrus of Milan No. 40 containing precious information about a hitherto unknown battle between Roman and Meroic forces between 89 and 92 A.D. A. K. Vinogradov (U.S.S.R.) commented on a revised translation of Diodoros' text on the election of the Maroic kings. I. Hofmann et al. (Austria) dealth with the migration of Nubian tribes in the Nile Valley. L. P. Kirwan (United Kingdom) concentrated on the downfall of Meroe as capital city and on the transfer of its function to Soba on the Blue Nile in connection with the constitution of Alodia (Alwa) following the fall of the Merovian Empire (about the year 360 A.D.) and F. W. Hinkel (G.D.R.) dealt with the problem of modules and harmonious proportion in the Merovic architecture. Other papers concentrated on Kush's external relations, namely with Axum (an empire in the territory of the present-day Ethiopia), Sudan (A. M. Abdalla), U.K. and Kenya (N. Chittick) and Italy (R. Fattovich) and with the Western Oasis (E. Seguenni, Italy), and perhaps also with Yemen, the Arabian Peninsula in general and with Lesser Asia (P. Scholz, Federal Republic of Germany).

The second block of topics was concerned with the application of mathematical methods in archaeology. The invited review paper delivered by F. Hintze (German Democratic Republic) was an extended version of the paper presented by the same author at the pre-Congress consultations mostly of scholars from the socialist countries, held in Steinförda (G.D.R.) in the autumn of the year 1983. He spoke about a selection of various statistical and computer methods suitable for the solution of problems connected with the history of the Merovian Empire. Practical application of statistics on dating the archaeological layers with the help of the relative frequency of pottery and potsherds was documented by W. Y. Adams (U.S.A.) on the example of processing the rich material found in the Kasr Imbrim layers. N. A. Pomerantseva (U.S.S.R.) dealt with relations between the composition of the architecture and sculptures of the Lion Temple in Musawwarat es-Sufra, D. Hartling (G.D.R.) classified the pottery of the same locality. S. Wenig (G.D.R.) presented general classification of the Kushitic temples and L. Török (Hungary) considered — from the position of art historian — the limits of mathematical methods. He rightly emphasized, that the hitherto existing shortcomings due to the extremely narrow material basis of the Meroitic studies cannot be overcome, not even with the help of the most outstanding methods.

The third topical area, linguistic approach to Meroitic studies, was opened by the invited review paper presented by R. Thelwall (Ireland) under the name "Merovian and African Linguistic Prehistory. He focused on the relations of the Merovian language to the languages of the Eastern Sudanese group, forming part of the Nilotic-Saharan area of languages. This widely-based synthesis was supported by A. M. Abdalla by documenting the Napatian-Merovian linguistic continuity. We must add that in spite of a number of partial achievements in identifying the meaning of Merovian words namely of titles, the Merovian language and its structure remain unknown, notwithstanding the efforts and the steadily growing number of Merovian words in the Paris data bank.

Under the name of „ethnoarcheology" a quasi new scientific discipline has been arising in the U.S.A. in the recent years; it explains the archaeological finds through ethnographic parallels. The procedure, however, is not new, it has been used by in archaeology since many years. The invited review paper in this group was delivered by T. Kendall and it dealt with the ethnoarchaeology of the Meroistic studies, documenting this approach on several examples of analysing several representations of Meroic objects, explaining the meaning of scars — marking the members of various Sudenese tribes with regards to similar scars on a Meroic *ba* head, the deformation of animal horns characteristic of certain Sudanese ethnic groups and finally he dealth also with possible ethnic interpretations of various historic texts. Ethnic aspects prevailed also in other papers. A. Vila (France) successfully distinguished two ethnic groups in the archaeological material found in various Nubian burials. Chronologically the two groups cover Merovian and post-Merovian (Balua) populations. P. Lenoble (France) compared the differences in the cultural development of the Merovian communities in the regions of Shendi and Khartoum. E. Strouhal (Czechoslovakia) arrived at the conclusion — on the basis of comparing the cultural, biological and behavioristic characters of the populations of Wandi Kitna and Kalibshi on the one side, and of Sayala, on the other, that the two groups ethnically differ, in spite of the fact that they are usually classed with the same cultural group X (Balanian culture).

The afternoon hours were reserved for the sessions of a section dealing with the latest achievements of the field research. F. W. Hinkel (G.D.R.) informed about the progress of the reconstruction and restauration work in the royal pyramids in Meroe. M. Hainsworth (U.K.) informed about the inscription of the king found last year in Kasr Ibrim. Others spoke about the latest discoveries of the French expedition to Sedeinga (C. Berger), about the results of the excavations realized by the Italian mission in Djebel Barkal (I. Liverani, C. Bosticco), about the Swiss research in Kerma (Ch. Bonnet and S. M. Ahmed), about the latest season of the British research of Kasr Ibrim (W. Y. Adams), and about the finds of textiles in Kasr Ibrim (N. A. Adams, both U.S.A.). Much interest was attracted also by a study on the clay figures from Kadada (B. V. Bothmer, U.S.A.) and by the Merovian burials from Ćeili (I. Caneva, Italy).

The numerous presence of researchers from the socialist countries, the papers they contributed and their frequent contributions to the discussion have documented their leading position in the Meroistic studies, thanks to the efforts of the Institute of Egyptology, Sudanese archaeology and Meroistic Studies at the Humboldt University in Berlin (German Democratic Republic). Since the year 1973 the institute publishes an international periodical called Meroitica; the 10th issue of Meroitica contained in extenso all the papers read at the congress. The exposition colour photographs on Merovian architecture was prepared by S. Wenig one of the leading scientific workers of the institute.

In conclusion it has been decided to held the next Congress of Meroistic Studies in Khartoum. The four sections of the forthcoming congress will comprise Dodecachoinos, Merovian burial customs. Convention and Invention in the Marovian arts and finally the Influence of the Egyptian religion on the Merovian society.

*Eugene Strouhal*

## *NEW INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER ON VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY*

The Commission on Visual Anthropology of the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences invites submissions for its forthcoming international newsletter (first issue to appear in spring 1985). The newsletter will publish articles in three languages (English, French and Spanish). Substantive articles should not exceed 15 pages typescript. Particularly important are reports on ongoing or forthcoming field projects, summaries of institutional activities and interests, individual queries about training or project development and reports on meetings and festivals. Please send all correspondance to Asen Balikci, Département d'anthropologie, Université de Montréal, C.P. 6128, succursala A, Montréal (Québec) Canada, H3C 3J7.

*Terms of reference*

The Commission on Visual Anthropology provides an international forum for the circulation of ideas and resources

overcoming in the field of visual anthropology. Its central mission is to integrate our profession internationally through the establishment of a communication network involving anthropologists, film-makers and communications specialists and to promote the application of the resolution on visual anthropology of the IUAES, Chicago, 1973. The Commission is aware that in the past decade no coordinated effort has been made to visually document rapidly vanishing cultures. The task of applying a systematic sample to traditional cultures for visual study is more urgent than ever. Equally important is the objective of locating existing ethnographic films and preserving them from destruction. The Commission fully admits the validity of different recording objectives and styles aiming at a variety of users and related audiences: national or international television and all levels of classroom instruction. The Commission will particularly encourage the use of audiovisual materials for scholarly research.

A serious international programme of visual recording should evolve in step with a provision for the training of a new generation of visual anthropologists, of which there is a dire need. In a rapidly shrinking world threatened by xenophobia it is imperative that visual enthnographics be given the widest national and international diffusion as an efficient format for cross-cultural understanding. All this rests on the clear assumption that visual anthropology is fully part of anthropology with the special ability to express succinctly the anthropological message and diffuse it to wide audiences.

In the exercice of its mission the Commission on Visual Anthropology adopts a policy of openness and collaboration with specialists from other fields; it avoids favouring a particular branch of the discipline to the detriment of others and it further seeks to avoid supporting personality cults or factional interests. The Commission will make a concerted effort to promote activities by Third World institutions.

The Commission will act as an international clearing house for information related to all aspects of visual anthropology including training possibilities, field production projects and distribution and use of audiovisuals and related materials.

The Commission will organize biannual international meetings on selected themes pertaining to our discipline leading to serial publications.

The Commission will also sponsor significant field projects, preferably initiated by Third World institutions. Such an initial project could consist in the institution of visual anthropology units in Third World national museums with the task of assembling video records of local vanishing cultures.

*Asen Balikci*

## *THE SYMPOSIUM "SCIENCE IN EGYPTOLOGY" IN MANCHESTER*

Five years after the first symposium dedicated to advanced scientific and medical methods applied in Egyptology and archaeology, organized by the Department of Egyptology of the University of Manchester in England headed by Dr. A. R. David (Mrs) there was another successful meeting of Egyptologists in Manchester between June 26—30, 1984. The event was attended by 83 delegates from 15 countries, including Czechoslovakia and Poland. A total of 60 papers were presented in 6 sections dealing with mummification, osteology and study of dentition, radiology, palaeopathology, scientific techniques and science and Egyptology.

The Manchester Museum has won excellent renown in the past decade in the study of ancient Egyptian mummies and mummification techniques thanks to the multidisciplinary research it organized with the participation of some of the leading specialists. The results of the first stage have been published in detail (Manchester Museum Mummy Project, edited by A. R. David, Manchester Museum 1979). At present runs already the second phase of the research with the application of serology and endoscopy connected with the foundation of an international data bank comprising data on mummies from the world's foremost collections. The most numerous data come from British collections (n = 134), followed by mummies in Czechoslovak collections processed by a research team in the years 1972—1974 and also published (E. Strouhal, L. Vyhnánek, Egyptian Mummies in Czechoslovak Collections, Sborník Národního muzea, 35 B, 1979). A similar project was started in the year 1982 by the Munich University. At present conservationists views begin to prevail, i.e. views that mummies represent unique and unreplaceable museum materials. It is therefore necessary to avoid the use of destructive methods, such as unwrapping and autopsy of mummies. Czechoslovak researchers upheld this approach from the very beginning of the mummy research in this country. We preferred non-destructive methods, such as X-raying. A. E. David in her thorough paper dealt with various methods that can be, and sometimes must be, used for the preservations of mummies. T. Dzierzykray-Rogalski drew attention to the problems of protecting the mummies in Egypt proper and put forward a suggestion to schedule the mummies on a worldwide scale. Other papers dealt with the survival of mummification in Egypt during the early periods of Christianization, about the detection of remnants of articulata (flees, lice, itch-mite insects, ticks, etc.) in the mummies, and about the dermatoglyphs of the group of royal mummies in the Cairo Museum. I was able to document four cases of removing the brains from mummies, reliably dated to the Mid-Empire; up to recently the application of this intervention was put into the mid-18th Dynasty, i.e. one thousand years later.

The main attention of the osteological-dental section focused on the results of the research of skulls found in Reisner's excavations of mastabas in the vicinity of the Great Pyramid near Giza, on the often discussed theory of post-Mesolithic reduction of the face in Sudanese Nubia, on determining the trace elements in the teeth of mummies in the Bristol Museum and compared with the present level of trace elements in the dentition, with the study of individual genetic relationship — here more emphasis should be placed on the epigenetic and rare characters than on the metric characters, on the microscopic study of the microwear of teeth as an indicator that certain individuals ate prevailingly vegetable food and on documenting the diseases of ears, nose and throat in the ancient Egyptian population.

A number of papers dealt with the results of radiological research of the mummies. The mysterious shadow on the margins of annulus fibrosus of the intervertebral discs; in the view of one group they are caused by saturation with calcium silicate from caustic soda, in the view of others by resin. Anyhow it is not a manifestation of disease it is the result of mummifications. The five mummies and the three isolated mummified heads recently acquainted by the Manchester Museum were subjected to radiological research with the use of its latest method, the so-called computerized tomography used in the research of mummies both in the Minneapolis Museum (U.S.A.) and also in Stockholm. With the help of this method it was possible to detect in some cases remnants of contracted brains, brain membrane, pleura, pericardium, remnants of the heart, lungs, liver and kidney. The research methods have been enriched also by having a look inside the mummy with the help of an endoscope. With endoscope we can also select and take samples of tissues for histological research. An enterprising company staged an exposition of the most advanced endoscopes in the hall in front of the lecture room. The papers presented by E. Strouhal, Kvíčala and Vyhnánek (all three from Czechoslovakia compared the diagnostic capabilities of the conventional radiological approach and of computerized tomography on studying the nasal skeleton destroyed during the removal of the brains, dealt with the problem of distinguishing various filling materials from remnants of tissues in the braincase and with determining the fillings of orbits, nose, mouth, throat and subcutaneous parts. Their papers were based on the study of 22 isolated heads of mummies from Czechoslovak collections.

For palaeopathological studies various staining histological methods and histochemical methods are used alongside with electron microscopy and other advanced methods. With the help of these methods it was possible to detect