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STEFAN KRUKOWSKI AND LEON KOZŁOWSKI IN GEORGIA

ABSTRACT

Stefan Krukowski describes the fuss that followed when Leon Kozłowski helped to persuade the Motsamet

monastery in Georgia to give up the material from the Sakajia Cave.

Keywords: Stefan Krukowski, Leon Kozłowski, Sakajia

Stefan Krukowski was a self-taught man without a maturity diploma who was hired by E. Majewski and later by K. Stołyhwo (Fig. 1). A poor boy, fiercely ambitious, with some emotional problems and mental issues, very gifted. While working for Majewski, he takes the time to read, studies the collection, performs excavations, does editing work for *Światowit*, and learns. In 1915, he runs his own excavations in Kostienki I and Gwardzilas Klde.

He reaches the Caucasus in June 1915, during World War I, as a member of 'Opolchenie', a conscript of the 3rd Army of General Yudenich fighting the Turks in Anatolia. Miraculously, he is spared service at the front and allowed to work for the Caucasian Museum in Tbilisi. Strange.

Next are 1.5-month-long excavations in the Gwardzilas Klde cave, with a trench spanning several hundred square metres, stratigraphy, documented profiles, malaria, abundant Upper-Palaeolithic finds of the Imeretian style; documentation drawings are prepared for a planned publication whose Russian text will be published and translated into three languages by the young scholars from the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw, led by Małgorzata Kot.

The young author's text demonstrates his already quite advanced professionalism (as shown by elements of the 'chaîne opératoire' or 'core-reduction process'), while at the same time including certain typological oddities (such as ascribing the term 'scraper' to a particular retouch on a stone tool rather than the whole artefact form) – the latter to be rejected by the scholar as he matures.

The Gwardzilas Klde monograph was supposed to be published in Tbilisi (hence the choice of language), but Vladimir Ilyich Lenin decided otherwise and the

whole project collapsed, just as the Empire itself not long afterwards. Georgia, Gwardzilas Klde and Tbilisi lost all their appeal to Stefan, since the Brightest Polish Commonwealth was about to be reborn. Hence, in 1918 Stefan's mind was set on returning to Warsaw (over 2200 km away!) as soon as possible.

However, before departing he performed a sort of investigation on the Caucasian actions of his friend but also rival, Leon Kozłowski (Fig. 2). Already before the war, Leon excavated another Georgian cave – Sakajia – under the auspices of Rudolf Schmidt. That one also yielded Upper/Late-Palaeolithic material.

In the archives of Stefan Krukowski, a text was preserved describing Kozłowski's adventures related to the Sakajia finds. Its fragments are quoted below.

The first witness:

R. R. S[chmidt] and L. Kozłowski arrived at Kutaisi in the second half of May 1914.

Towards the end of the digging, one evening L. Kozłowski, assisted by his diggers, tried to transport bags full of finds across a stream. Alarmed, the prior (of the Motsamet monastery) went out and started to scold Kozłowski for his impertinence and takeover of the monastery's property. L. K[ozłowski] replied something impudent. Nevertheless, he was held back with the finds. The bishop in Kutaisi was notified immediately. R. R. Schmidt visited the bishop and offered his deep apologies. This incident gained publicity in the town and local press.

The second witness:

L. Kozłowski was a young, self-confident, impetuous and very clever man who would play by fair means or foul; he asked the then prior for a permit to dig in



Fig. 1. Photograph of S. Krukowski (PMA).



Fig. 2. Photograph of L. Kozłowski (NAC).

the caves, to which he obtained a conditional approval. Sometime afterwards, he returned with a letter from the bishop and started his excavations, routinely staying overnight in a tent near the cave. The witness emphasised the fact that nothing of what was found therein was ever moved to the monastery where Kozłowski temporarily resided.

And here in a different tone (Stefan Karol Kozłowski):

"The finds were deposited in one of the rooms for visitors in the monastery. Before attempting to cart everything away from Motsamet, he [Leon Kozłowski] tried to carry the full bags across the stream on the backs of his diggers to the rallying point by the cave, wherefrom nine bags in total were to be transported in a similar way across a steep mountain ascending above the cave to the other side; there, carts awaited ready to carry the load to Kutaisi.

The monastery was alarmed by observant monks and additionally warned in advance by the diggers. The prior arrived and, having gauged the situation, exclaimed his outrage at L. K., all the more so since L. K. had always been treated politely and hospitably in the monastery, more than once dining with the prior upon invitation. While explaining to L. Kozłowski the inappropriateness

of his demeanour – carrying away things found in the monastery's soil in secret, under the cover of darkness and through byways – he put particular emphasis on the fact that he, as prior, was morally and formally responsible for handling this incident on behalf of the monks and the local populace.

To this L. K. replied defiantly, ignoring the prior's remarks. L. K. was then demanded not to take the unearthed relics away from the monastery until his unintelligible conduct was reported to the bishop who would make a final decision. L. K. angrily reproached the speakers that they were dealing with men of science, not thugs, and should be grateful that scholarly material had been excavated in their land. Then, he moved on to insisting on the finds being released, in support of which he pulled out his Mauser and pointed it at the prior. This caused a stir among those present. Persuaded by a gun barrel pointed at him by a guard, L. K. lowered his Mauser and only through the agency of their spiritual leader did the young monks restrain themselves from getting even with the turkey-cock. Afterwards, he went on foot to Kutaisi and returned with a new permit from the bishop to take away the finds."

And a commentary – it remains unclear why Stefan gathered all the information about Leon. While by all probability he never used it, the very idea of keeping a record of unflattering accounts about a friend suggests that our protagonist's mental disorder had already surfaced by then.

In 1918, the garrison in Tiflis sides with the Bolsheviks, simultaneously the National Council is established and pushes for Georgian independency, the Turks intervene in March, and the Transcaucasian Republic is

founded in April, only to be replaced by the Democratic Republic of Georgia in May, while the Germans take over the Caucasus in April 1918. In June of the same year, Stefan sets forth on his journey to Warsaw: he takes a train to Batumi, makes it to the Crimea by ship, continues his sea travel to Odessa, changes back to train to get to Hołuby, next arrives in Równe (how?), and finally gets off the train in Warsaw.

Thus Stefan's youthful adventure in the Caucasus came to a conclusion.