



Seweryn Kuśmierczyk

The Pharaoh (Faraon). An Analysis of the Opening Scene

The Pharaoh directed by Jerzy Kawalerowicz opens with a scene in which the Egyptian officer Eunana runs to deliver a message regarding the sightings of the sacred scarabs to Ramesses, who commands the manoeuvres.

This scene is filmed as a single long shot. A long and flat enough space was found at the Kyzylkum Desert in Uzbekistan.

The distance of two hundred meters was covered with panels, allowing for the cart dragged by several men to move through without undesirable shocks. It is shown in the documentary entitled *One hundred and fifty days of The Pharaoh*. Witold Sobociński, the operator standing on the cart, was holding a very heavy camera and could not adjust the focus. It became necessary to maintain the same speed for the cart and the running actor, Ryszard Ronczewski. After many attempts, the problem was solved by attaching a long pole to the cart. The actor, shown in a medium close-up, had to make sure that the pole touched his stomach during the run.

The camera angle changes in the final stage of the shot. The stroboscope-like effect, the flickering of light between the silhouettes of the soldiers, leads to the impression of increased run speed.

The means of cinematic expression highlight Eunana's emotions and the importance of the carried message.

The bow before the scarabs and the bow before Ramesses constitute a frame for the scene.