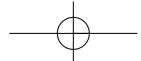
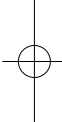
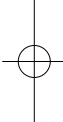


*The level of culture in any country is measured
by whether it runs its own excavations in Egypt.*

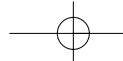
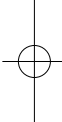
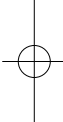
Kazimierz Michałowski



Jadwiga Lipińska



**KAZIMIERZ
MICHAŁOWSKI
1901-1981**





In winter 1919 Kazimierz Michałowski, then a young officer cadet, was granted three months' leave from the Polish army to begin university studies. He chose the Philosophical Faculty of Lvov University and embarked on what was to be a long and fruitful scholarly career, taking courses in literature, philosophy, art history and later in classical archaeology. He spent a year traveling to Vienna, Paris and several centers in Italy before finally receiving his PhD degree in 1926. For three years he worked as an assistant at his *alma mater* before leaving on a modest ministerial grant to continue post-graduate studies at the universities and archaeological institutes in Berlin, Heidelberg, Münster, Paris, Rome and Athens. The names of his tutors read as a list of the most prominent European scholars of the time. He gained from them a deep knowledge of classical archaeology, which he later broadened in the field, excavating for the French Institute in Athens on the Greek islands of Delos, Tasos and Crete.

His habilitation thesis was concerned with the Greco-Roman portraits from Delos and the volume, considered a major contri-

bution to the study of ancient portraiture, was awarded the prestigious George Parrot price of the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*.

The year after receiving his *veniam legendi* in 1929 he started at Warsaw University as assistant professor, organizing and then heading the university's first Chair of Classical Archaeology in 1931. Grandiloquent as it sounds, it was no more than a single small room at the university. He became Professor *ordinarius* in 1939.

Michałowski made it his prime objective to establish Mediterranean archaeology as a regular branch of learning in Poland and he spent a lifetime working toward this goal. Step by step, he made it cover the broadest possible chronological and geographical range. His *Memoirs* are a record not only of the actual events, but also of his thoughts on the subject and diligent studies of methodology and aspects of fieldwork in the different countries. He had become a scholar competent in various aspects of art history and archaeology, and at the same time a brilliant teacher to whom students flocked, and a scrupulous excavator, always

taking advantage of a deep understanding of human nature and resources. The Chair of Classical Archaeology which he headed at Warsaw University soon drew an enthusiastic group of specialists and students, willing to work for the objectives set down by the Professor.

First and foremost were archaeological excavations. Without genuine ancient relics available for study, there was little hope of generating a wider interest in ancient cultures. The existing Polish collections were few and dispersed, and they were in private hands, hardly open to the general public. This was due to the political situation in the country in the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th. Until 1918 Poland did not exist as an independent country. The few Polish collectors, such as Michał Tyszkiewicz, who amassed fabulous collections of antiquities, preferred to sell or donate them to West European museums. Others were interested in objects of patriotic value and seldom did antiquities from the Mediterranean area bear such significance. In these circumstances, the only way to build up a comprehensive ancient art collection was to purchase objects on the art market or to uncover them by excavating on ancient sites. Buying exhibits was possible but costly – quite unacceptable in the position of a country which had only just regained its independence. Michałowski knew the way out of this dilemma: he needed to start archaeological excavations in the Mediterranean.

He also knew he wanted to excavate in Egypt, a plan that was impossible without a formal education in the field of Egyptian Archaeology. But Michałowski found a way around this. In 1934, with the help of French colleagues in Athens, he be-

came *attaché étranger* of the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology in Cairo where he was befriended by Jacques Vandier, Alexandre Varille, Clement Robichon, Georges Posener, Michel Malinine and life-long dear friend Jaroslav Černý, all future scholars of eminence. With Polish historian Tadeusz Wałek-Czernecki he took part in the excavations at Deir el-Medineh run by the prominent French archaeologist Bernard Bruyère. Michałowski's *Memoirs* provide a colorful description of lodgings in an ancient tomb pervaded with the stench of mummies stored in the back room.

Michałowski returned from Egypt with a promise of joint Polish-French excavations at Tell Edfu in Upper Egypt, a site already partly explored by a French mission. In Poland, he persuaded Warsaw University authorities to cover part of the excavation costs. The general director of the National Museum in Warsaw, Professor Stanisław Lorentz, agreed to create a gallery of ancient art in the new building of the museum (still under construction at the time!). The excavations started in 1936 and continued for three winter seasons, only to be rudely interrupted by the outbreak of World War II. Two volumes of excavation reports were published directly following the close of the fieldwork; the third, although ready to be printed, had to wait until the end of the war.

Michałowski was well aware of the need to stimulate public interest in his beloved archaeology. In 1935, he had translated into Polish a book by W.H. Boulton "The Romance of Archaeology", adding an introduction in which he wrote: "The archaeology of Mediterranean and Near Eastern countries is hardly a popular subject in Poland". It is largely to the credit of this

dedicated man that visitors were soon crowding into the newly opened gallery at the National Museum in Warsaw to see real Egyptian antiquities.

War put a stop to these activities. Michałowski, an officer in the Polish army, spent the war imprisoned in a Nazi POW camp. Upon returning home to a ruined Warsaw, he immediately set himself to the restoration effort, acting first as dean of the faculty, then vice-rector of the University, simultaneously serving as deputy director of the National Museum and Secretary General of the Warsaw Scientific Society (later transformed into the Polish Academy of Sciences). He distinguished himself as an outstanding lecturer and administrator. In a short time he succeeded in reconstructing the staff at both the university and museum, educating a solid group of specialists in Classical, Near Eastern and Egyptian art and archaeology. In 1949 a new permanent Gallery of Ancient Art was opened in modernized halls with specially designed showcases and lighting. It came to be considered then (and long after) as one of the best presentations of ancient art in Europe.

Michałowski did not stop dreaming of excavations in the Mediterranean. In 1956, Russian colleagues invited him to excavate part of the Greek colony of Mirmekeion on the Black Sea coast in Crimea. A year later he was already back in Egypt, lecturing as visiting professor at Alexandria University and carrying out some limited excavations with associates and students in Alexandria. Given the chance, he chose to work at Tell Atrib in the Delta, near the modern town of Benha, turning the project into a veritable training school for young Polish archaeologists. He did not reopen the Edfu dig out of loyalty to his French colleagues, whose

Institute had been temporarily closed down for political reasons. Understanding the need for a logistic and administrative base for the various projects envisioned and initiated in Egypt as well as in neighboring countries, Michałowski took another step and established a Polish institute in Cairo. In 1959 fieldwork started in Syria, in the desert town of Palmyra. In 1960 excavations began at Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria. Soon Polish archaeologists reached into Sudan (Faras in ancient Nubia) and later Cyprus (Nea Paphos). A major restoration project started at Deir el-Bahari, in the temple of Queen Hatshepsut, and in 1962 a hitherto unknown temple of Tuthmosis III was discovered there. In his *Memoirs* Michałowski wrote that “the beginning of the 1960s witnessed our greatest and most spectacular discoveries, and it was then that the further development of Polish archaeology was determined and its international standing established”.

The Polish Centre of Mediterranean Archaeology of Warsaw University was opened in Cairo with help from the Polish Ambassador, His Excellency Aleksander Krajewski, and support from the Egyptian Minister of Culture, Mr. Saroit Okacha and Professor Anwar Shoukry, then chief of the Antiquities Service and a friend of Michałowski. The opening ceremony took place in April 1960 in a rather small rented building in the district of Heliopolis. The worst *chamsin* ever that spring blew on the day of the inauguration, canceling plans for a terrace and garden party and forcing guests to crowd inside. Neither the stifling heat nor the crowded rooms exacerbated the congenial mood that day...

The greatest discovery – for Michałowski as well as for the National Museum

in Warsaw – was made in the Sudanese village of Faras far to the south. Over 120 murals were excavated in an early Christian Cathedral and subsequently removed from the walls by Polish restorers. Half of these wall paintings is now in Khartoum, and the other half was brought to Warsaw, where they are exhibited in a gallery that is unique in Europe. Michałowski not only conducted the excavations, but also served as chairman of the International Committee of Experts created by UNESCO to supervise the removal of the Abu Simbel temples and their reconstruction on a site beyond the reach of the rising waters of the new Nasser lake. Michałowski was also elected chairman of the

ICOM International Committee of Historical and Archaeological Museums (1965-1971), then served as an expert of UNESCO for museums and excavations in Algiers (1966) and was a member of the UNESCO Committee for Mohenjo-Daro (1969). In international recognition of his scholarly achievement, he was awarded *honoris causa* doctoral degrees from Cambridge, Strasbourg and Uppsala universities. His *oeuvre* includes hundreds of papers and several volumes reporting on the results of his excavations. And seventy years later, it can be said that his numerous students and their students in turn have successfully taken up and continued his legacy.

Select bibliography

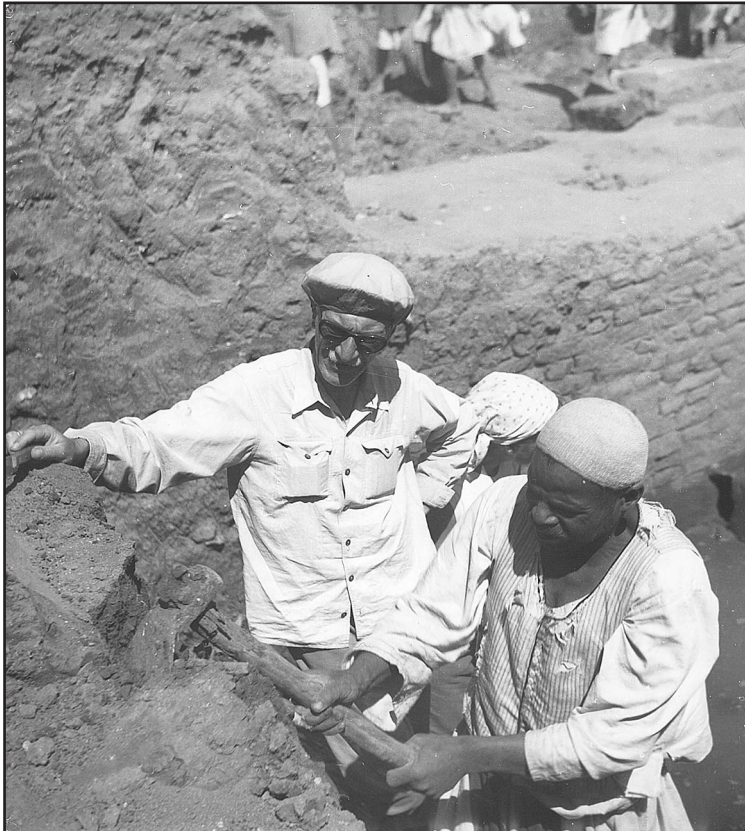
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*Kazimierz Michałowski supervising fieldwork at Faras
(National Museum in Warsaw photo archive)*





*Kazimierz Michałowski at Tell Atrib
(National Museum in Warsaw photo archive)*

*Tell Atrib 1962. Michałowski's team at work
(Photo T. Biniewski)*





*Kazimierz Michałowski with collaborators at the National Museum in Warsaw
(National Museum in Warsaw photo archive)*

*Kazimierz Michałowski with wife Krystyna and guests at Deir el-Bahari
(Photo J. Lipińska's archives)*





*Kazimierz Michałowski discussing
the work at Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria
(Photo J. Lipińska's archives)*

*The first quarters of the Polish Centre of Mediterranean
Archaeology in Baron Empain Street, Heliopolis, Cairo
(Photo J. Lipińska's archives)*

