

## **Lukasz Kościółek**

### **Kazimierz Michałowski (1901-1981)**

Kazimierz Józef Marian Michałowski was born on December 14th, 1901 in Tarnopol [today's Ukraine territory]. He was the firstborn son of Marian Gottlieb, an Austrian army officer and state official, and Kazimiera Michałowska. He had a younger brother, Marian. After their father's death in 1910, both boys were raised alone by their mother, who ran a bookstore and library in Tarnopol.

Michałowski received his primary education in his hometown. His secondary school education was interrupted by World War I and then by the Polish-Soviet War. During it, he graduated from the Infantry Cadet School and served as a volunteer in the Polish Military Organization. For this activity, he was imprisoned and miraculously avoided the death penalty. During the war, he studied at a secret gymnasium in Tarnopol and passed his high school leaving examination. In the winter of 1919, under the regulation of the then Minister of Military Affairs, he received a three-month leave from the military unit to undertake university studies. At the beginning of January 1921, Michałowski was placed on indefinite leave. He returned to Lviv, where he continued his studies at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv, specializing in the history of art and philosophy.

He graduated in 1924 and was employed at his alma mater as a junior assistant in the Classical Archaeology Department. On May 6th, 1926, he defended his doctoral dissertation, was promoted to senior assistant, and a year later he received a scholarship from the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment to undertake foreign specialized studies in Germany, England, France, Italy, and Greece. In 1928, Michałowski began working on excavations in Greece, in Thasos and Delos on Crete. Based on this work, he wrote his habilitation thesis and in December 1929 he was appointed assistant professor of classical archaeology at the Jan Kazimierz University in Lviv. In 1930, Michałowski was offered the position of chair of the Classical Archaeology Department at the University of Warsaw, and in 1933 he became an associate professor.

In 1936, he led the first Polish archaeological excavations in Edfu, Egypt, which he organized together with the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology in Cairo. Three campaigns organized in subsequent years enriched the collections of the National Museum in Warsaw with dozens of ancient monuments. Therefore, in 1938, it opened a permanent Gallery of Ancient Art presenting museum collections and the achievements of Poles in Edfu. Among others thanks

to these undertakings, in 1939 Michałowski was appointed full professor.

Excavations in Egypt were interrupted by World War II. Michałowski, as an officer of the 5th Legions Infantry Regiment in Vilnius, took part in the fighting in September 1939. He fought in the Pułtusk - Wyszaków - Siedlce - Łuków area. On September 14th, he was captured by the Germans. Through the transit camps in Hohenstein [today's Olsztynek] and Riesenburg [today's Prabuty], in November 1939 he was sent to Oflag XVIII A Lienz in Austria. Half a year later, together with other prisoners of war, he was transported to Oflag II C Woldenberg [today's Dobiegniew], where he stayed until January 1945.

Behind the barbed wire of the Oflags, he actively participated in the life of the POW community. Already in Lienz, he gave numerous lectures on the current situation of prisoners of war and gave lectures on history, art, and archaeology. In Oflag II C, Woldenberg was one of the organizers of teaching among prisoners. He founded the Oriental Scientific Circle, which over time gained the informal name of the "Woldenberg University". Michałowski was its head from the very beginning, and in August 1944 he was formally elected its Director [Rector] by a group of professors. From March 1st, 1944 he was a member of the Cultural and Educational Committee. He was also the chairman of the Examination Committee for higher teacher courses of the Teachers' Circle and several academic study committees. The scrupulous records of students' learning after the war were used to verify the years of study and courses taken. During the war, Michałowski lost his only brother Marian, who died during a combat flight over Essen [today's Germany] on the night of June 9th, 1942. After regaining freedom in January 1945, Michałowski came to Krakow, where his mother took refuge after the Warsaw Uprising (1944).

After returning to the destroyed Warsaw, Michałowski was elected dean of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Warsaw (1946-1948), then vice-rector of the University of Warsaw (1948-1949), deputy director of the National Museum in Warsaw and head of the Gallery of Ancient Art (from 1945), and in 1951 he took up a managerial position at the Polish Academy of Sciences. Michałowski perfectly combined the functions of individual institutions, building on their basis a strong archaeological research center. Formally, since 1952, Warsaw has become the only place in the world where Mediterranean archaeology was practiced, which combined classical and Egyptological archaeology.

On April 1st, 1945, he met his future wife, Krystyna Boniewicz. The wedding took place on December 26th, 1945 in Podkowa Leśna. The Michałowski family had two children: Jan (1946) and Małgorzata (1948). In 1949, he also took over the care of his orphaned nephew,

Andrzej. The whole family first lived in Warsaw, and then in Krystyna's family home in Podkowa Leśna.

Ten years after the end of the war, Michałowski led archaeological excavations in Crimea (1956-58), which he conducted together with scientists from the University of Leningrad. In the following years, he organized and participated in expeditions in Egypt (from 1957), Syria (from 1959), Sudan (from 1961) and Cyprus (from 1965). He made the greatest archaeological discoveries on the Egyptian-Sudanese border (1961-64). The excavation of the early Christian cathedral in Faras by Polish archaeologists provided scope for the development of a new science - nubiology. Thanks to Michałowski's research, the Faras Gallery was opened at the National Museum in Warsaw, presenting monuments brought to the country by Polish archaeologists. The capital of Poland became the center of research on Christian Nubia, and Michałowski was elected the first president of the Society of Nubian Studies.

In 1972, Michałowski retired. However, he still served as deputy director of the National Museum in Warsaw. He died on January 1st, 1981 as a result of complications following an accident. He was buried at the cemetery in Brwinów near Warsaw.

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Echom Clutch.