

CENTRE D'ARCHÉOLOGIE MÉDITERRANÉENNE
DE L'ACADÉMIE POLONAISE DES SCIENCES

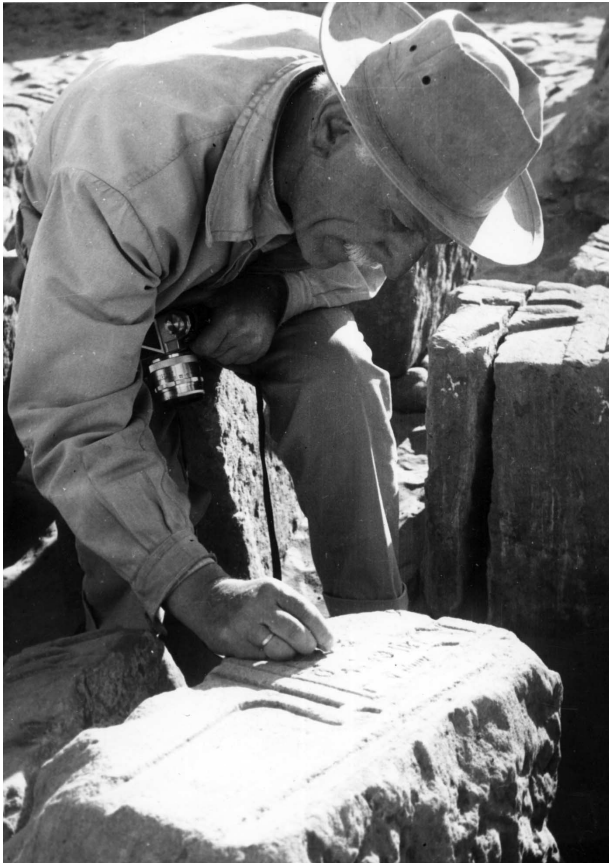
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*“Nothing is impossible”
– the Professor and the Academy*

Professor Kazimierz Michałowski, the “Father of Mediterranean Archaeology” in Poland, was a man of belief. Although he believed in various things, one of his most frequently repeated principles was that everything is possible, if one desires it enough. Nothing illustrates this better than his own biography. He never gave up, not even in the long years of complete “darkness” (1939–1956), when cherishing any hope in Poland seemed rather naive and ridiculous. As soon as the slightest ray of “light” had appeared on the horizon, he immediately ran towards it with the enthusiasm of a child, forgetting that he was already fifty six years old. What is more, this was happening more than fifteen years after the outbreak of World War II had dramatically interrupted his activities in the Mediterranean (in Edfu).

Younger generations can hardly imagine the post-war reality, when merely obtaining permission to visit a Western country became an event comparable to today’s expeditions to the moon, and many scholars were completely deprived of that possibility for political reasons.



1. Faras 1961. Professor at work, studying pharaonic blocks.
(Phot. T. Biniewski).

After the political “thaw” in Poland in 1956, Professor Michałowski, already Vice-director of the National Museum in Warsaw and Professor at Warsaw University, immediately started to prepare a “comeback” to Egypt and to other countries of the Mediterranean. He considered it evident and absolutely necessary in the case of a country possessed of a long tradition of cultural identity rooted in ancient civilizations; a country where every child grew up knowing Henryk Sienkiewicz’s *Quo Vadis* (Nobel Prize in 1905) and Bolesław Prus’ *The Pharaoh*, two of the greatest achievements of Polish literature. Polish travellers and writers (for example Juliusz Słowacki, one of the greatest Polish poets, first half of 19th century) left not only works of art inspired by Mediterranean culture, but also precious descriptions of ancient monuments (sometimes unique testimonies of their existence), as well as unparalleled collections of ancient art, nowadays distributed throughout the greatest museums of the world. Poles have always considered the heritage of ancient Mediterranean civilizations as part of their own culture.

This is why Professor Michałowski persistently repeated that “our country cannot afford not to excavate in Egypt”. He chose Egypt not only because it was here that he directed



2. Kazimierz Michałowski and his deputy in the Academy Centre, Barbara Filarska, during the campaign of 1961 in Palmyra (Syria). (Phot. T. Biniewski).



3. Tell Atrib 1962. Professor Michałowski, Stanisław Jasiewicz – conservator, Tadeusz Biniewski – photographer, and the members of the Mission from the Academy Center (from left to right): Marek Marciniak, Kamila Kołodziejczyk, Antoni Ostrasz and Stefan Jakobielski. (Phot. H. Romanowski).

the French-Polish excavations just before World War II, or because many archaeological sites in Egypt constitute a genuine cross-section through subsequent ancient civilizations, but also in respect to the current political situation, which excluded Polish archaeological activities in some other countries.

Professor Michałowski realised another long-cherished idea of his by including other areas into the sphere of our activities as well. He soon started excavating in Syria (Palmyra), Sudan (Faras) and Cyprus (Nea Paphos), where he found friendly support and help from many old-days foreign friends. This broad-minded scholar was also very open to cooperation with Russian colleagues, among whom he had many friends, including Mikhail I. Artamonov – the then director of the Ermitage, and Victor F. Gaidukevich, the director of the Institute of Archaeology at the Russian Academy of Sciences. It was actually there, in the Crimea (Mirmeki), that Kazimierz Michałowski (accompanied, among others, by Ms. Hanna Stefańska from the Academy Centre) made his first steps as an excavator after the war. Unfortunately the Polish-Russian excavations, which started in 1956, had to stop two years later, when the archaeological site became part of a Soviet “military zone”.

Almost concurrently, in 1957, Polish excavations started at Tell Atrib, *c.* 50 kms north of Cairo. The institution which organised these two early expeditions was the National

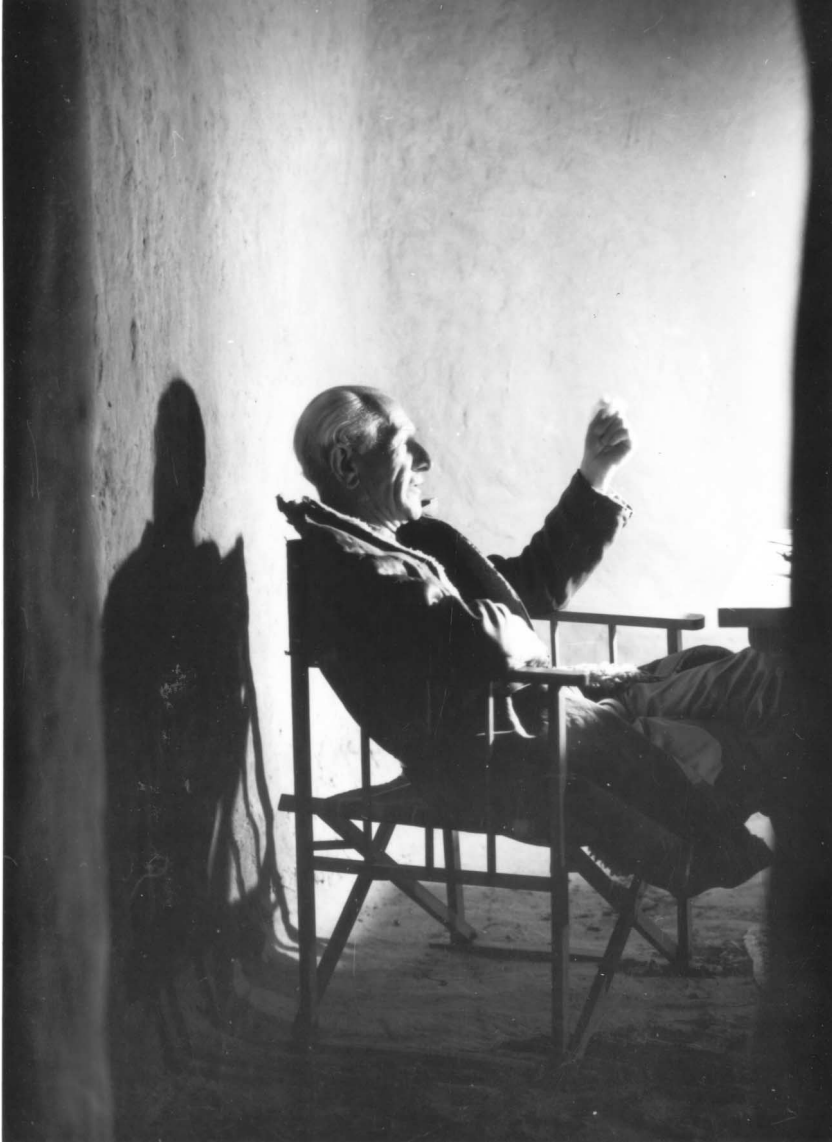


4. Tell Atrib 1962. Michałowski's team at work. (Phot. T. Biniewski).

Museum in Warsaw, of which Professor Michałowski was the vice-director from the end of the war until his death. This achievement was possible thanks to harmonious collaboration of two friends and colleagues who led this institution for so many years after the war; Professor Stanisław Lorenz, its director, and Professor K. Michałowski, his second-in-command. Professor Lorenz well understood the importance of excavations to the collection of ancient art, which had suffered so many losses and so much damage during the war. This enabled Professor Michałowski to take long leaves from the Museum to pursue his archaeological activities. The greatest success of this policy is the Faras Gallery in the National Museum, a collection of unique Early Christian art from a site in Sudanese Nubia, which was chosen and excavated by K. Michałowski himself.

It soon became obvious, though, that further Polish excavations would require another institutional base to provide both logistical and scientific support, in the field, as well as in Warsaw. In 1959, Professor Michałowski created the Polish Station of Mediterranean Archaeology in Cairo, which is responsible for the organization of our activities in the field, primarily in Egypt, but likewise in other countries of the Mediterranean. Today this institution, belonging to Warsaw University, is no longer a "Station", but a "Centre" bearing the name of its Founder. It currently plays the role of an Archaeological Institute or School.

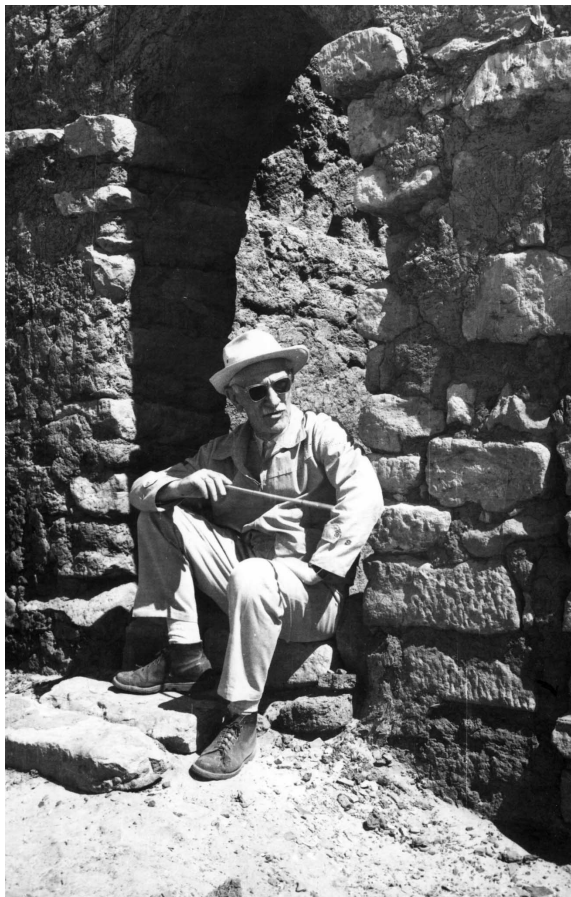
Three years earlier, in 1956, another "scholarly child" of the Professor was born in Warsaw. It is the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Its aim and tasks are different. This institution is primarily responsible for scientific documentation coming from our excavations in various countries and for publi-



5. An evening at Faras, 1961. Professor in the House of the Expedition. (Phot. T. Biniewski).

cation of their results. Thus, the Academy Centre and the University Centre are complementary in their functions, and only the harmonious cooperation of these two institutions guarantees the success of our common task.

As far as the Academy Centre is concerned, it was not an easy birth. One may doubt, whether its creation would have been possible, had Professor Michałowski not been chosen a member of the Academy's Presidium from the very beginning of its existence after



6. Faras 1963. Professor resting at the threshold of the North Palace.
(Phot. M. Niepokólczycki).

World War II. This independent scholarly “nucleus” was derived from the Workshop of Antique Archaeology, already in existence at the Institute for the History of Material Culture. The decision of founding it took much time and was only possible thanks to the determination of some enduring enthusiasts. The “*spiritus movens*” among them was Professor Barbara Filarska. Her inexhaustible energy and invention, her engagement and sensitivity guaranteed the healthy development of the newborn. While created by K. Michałowski, the Centre was practically directed by her for long years, until 1969, when she became professor of archaeology at the Catholic University in Lublin. In the beginnings, she was greatly helped by Mss. Hanna Stefańska and Kamila Kołodziejczyk.

At the beginning, there was but one person (beside the Professor himself), one small room (in the Palace of Culture, the highest building in Warsaw, famous for everything except its beauty), one table and one chair. Everything had to be created out of nothing,

beginning with the library. Private donations of books, first of all by Professor Maria-Ludwika Bernhard, and a deposit by the Warsaw Scientific Society (which did not exist any more) essentially contributed to the creation of a library which is now one of the principal “tools” used by Poland’s scholars working in various fields of Mediterranean culture. The library is proud of holding many books that are not available anywhere else in Poland, not because this library was ever spoilt with money for new acquisitions, but because the Centre’s own scholarly publications facilitate an extensive international exchange. In the beginnings of the Centre, however, even the purchase of a ream of writing paper was a bureaucratic problem necessitating written permission. Almost nobody had a per-



7. Krystyna and Kazimierz Michałowski in 1945. Honey-moon travel to the Nieborów Castle nearby Warsaw. (Phot. Courtesy of Michałowski family archive).



8. The Michałowski's villa in Podkowa Leśna, housing the Documentation Workshop of the Academy Centre. (Phot. Courtesy of Michałowski family archive).

manent job; young scholars were engaged for short-term contracts, which thus enabled Professor Michałowski to help many people who would never find employment for political reasons. This was particularly true in the case of the Centre's Cracow branch, the Workshop for the Archaeology of the Near East, grouping two assistants of Professor Stanisław J. Gąsiorowski, who had become *persona non grata*.

The room on the 19th floor of the Palace of Culture soon turned out to be too small for our needs, as a wealth of documentation from various excavations, initiated by the Professor, started coming to Poland. In 1962, while looking for more space, he decided to change the ground floor of his home at Podkowa Leśna into a branch of the Centre. This beautiful villa with a splendid garden surrounded by a large forest, some 25 kms west of Warsaw, was erected in the inter-war period by Mr. Tadeusz Baniewicz, the father of Ms. Krystyna Baniewicz, whom professor Michałowski had married in 1945. Mr. Baniewicz became famous as the engineer who had built a local railway connecting Warsaw with its western suburbs after World War I. The home was, however, not the only contribution made by Mrs. Krystyna Michałowska to the development of our Centre. As patient as she was elegant, always smiling and ready to share any hardship, this *grande dame* had played a variety of roles in the group of young and passionate scholars that every year was becom-



9. Professor Michałowski and his wife Krystyna at Tell Atrib, 1958.
(Phot. H. Romanowski).

ing larger and larger. Mme Krystyna was both “mother” and mediator, not only in Warsaw, but also during the most difficult moments at excavations.

The “workshops” created at Podkowa Leśna were not only the place where documentation from our excavations in various countries was stored and worked on. The villa’s spacious rooms housed important parts of our library, particularly those connected with Nubia and Early Christianity. It was here that the “Nubian Workshop”, directed by Dr. Stefan Jakobielski, concentrated its activities. Its research originally focused on the discoveries of our mission in Faras (Sudanese Nubia), and today focuses on the excavations in Old Dongola, this being a continuation of our interest in Early Christian Nubia. For all intents and purposes it is in Podkowa Leśna that the International Society for Nubian Studies was truly born. Frequent visits by foreign scholars, meetings and symposia spontaneously turned this home into a centre sharing both scientific and social functions, a place of some unforgettable garden parties, for example.

Three main fields of Mediterranean Archaeology constituted the “scholarly nucleus” of the Centre from the very beginning of its existence: Nubian Studies with Dr Stefan



10. A discussion with Professor Louis Robert (Paris) in the Documentation Centre at Podkowa Leśna (from left to right: Zsolt Kiss, Stefan Jakobielski, Mieczysław Rodziewicz, Hanna Stefańska, Karol Myśliwiec, Jadwiga Kubińska), 1967. (Phot. W. Jerke).

Jakobielski at the head; Egyptology led for long years by the late Dr Marek Marciniak (1937–1996), and classical archaeology headed first by Prof. Barbara Filarska, and later by Prof. Zsolt Kiss. In its origins, the Centre also had a Workshop of Archaeological Methodology (with the late Professor Jerzy Kulczycki, 1898–1974), Workshop of Excavations, and Workshop for the Publication of Antiquities in Polish Collections. At the beginning of the sixties, two more workshops were created: Workshop of Documentation, and Workshop of Anthropology (the latter directed by Prof. Tadeusz Dzierzykraj-Rogalski, 1918–1998).

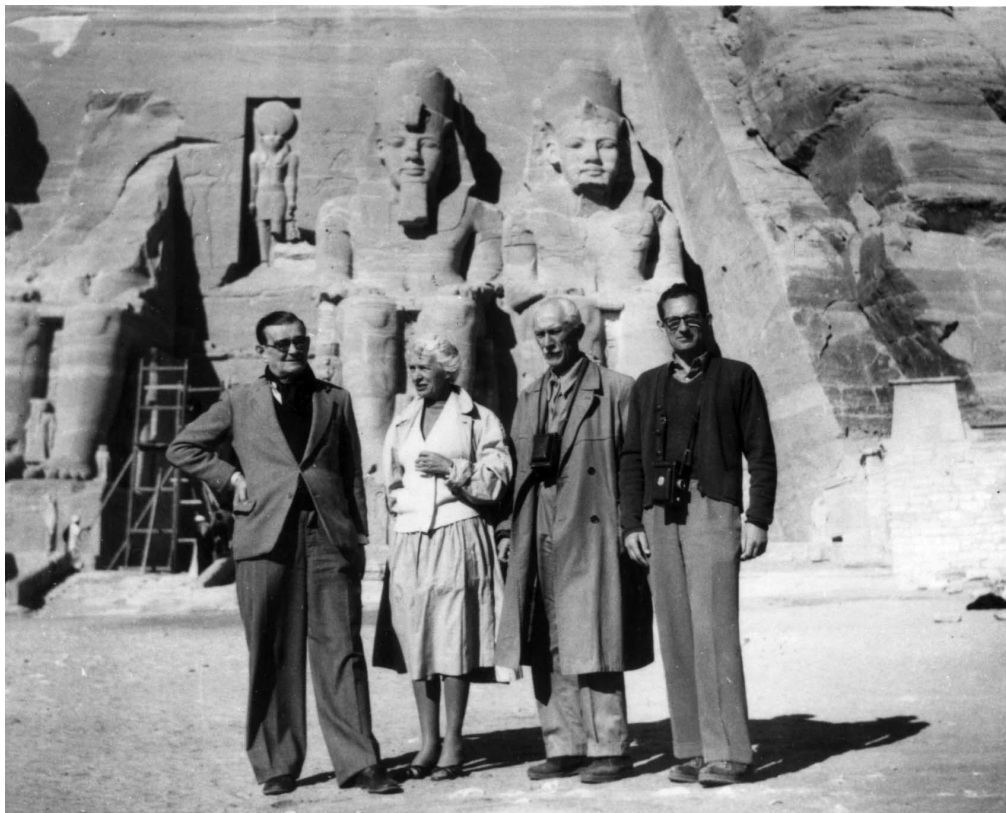
The first publications of the Centre concerned antiquities in various collections: in 1959 Dr Tadeusz Andrzejewski (1923–1961) published the mythological papyrus of Te-hemen-Mout (National Museum, Warsaw), and in 1964 Professor Anna Świderek (with Mariangela Vandoni) – the Greek papyri from the Graeco-Roman Museum in Alexandria.



11. Professor Fritz Hintze (Humboldt University, Berlin) visits Podkowa Leśna, 1966. (Phot. U. Hintze).

Another important project, that of publishing the tomb of Ramesses III in the Valley of the Kings, inherited by Dr Tadeusz Andrzejewski from Alexandre Piankoff, became the share of Dr Marek Marciniak after Andrzejewski's tragic death in 1961. Marek Marciniak, in cooperation with Maciej Witkowski, made a complete documentation of the tomb, which is now ready for publication.

The publication of the excavations at Mirmeki (Crimea) was the first monograph on Polish excavations in the Mediterranean to appear in our series (first volume – in 1958). Almost every site excavated by Polish missions in those years had its own series: Deir el-Bahari, Faras, Alexandria, Palmyra and Nea Paphos. Professor Michałowski's ambition



12. Professor Michałowski with Professor Jarosláv Černý from Oxford, Dr Tadeusz Andrzejewski and journalist, Mrs Zofia Jeżewska, in front of the Great Temple in Abu Simbel, 1958. (Phot. Courtesy of Archives of the National Museum, Warsaw).

was to publish a yearly report on the results of each subsequent campaign in the form of a volume as soon as possible. He considered it extremely important that each archaeologist should provide and make easily accessible sources for the study of ancient history.

As monographs and studies of various aspects of ancient civilizations, not only those resulting directly from our field work, became more and more frequent in Michałowski's "school", the Centre opened a series called *Travaux du Centre d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne de l'Académie Polonaise des Sciences*, which counts 34 volumes to date (2001). An important branch of this series is a periodical, *Études et Travaux*, the present publication being its 19th volume. Some catalogues have been published by our Centre in the international series: *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* and *Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani*. We have also contributed in various respects to the publication of a monumental international project, the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*. Out of the series appeared the Acts of three international symposia and congresses that took place in Warsaw: *Coptic Studies – Third International Congress of Coptic Studies* (1984), *50 Years of Polish*



13. Professors Kazimierz Michałowski and Jean Vercoutter (Lille) in Podkowa Leśna discussing programme of the first conference of the Society for Nubian Studies, Warsaw 1972. (Phot. Courtesy of Michałowski family archive).

Excavations in Egypt and the Near East (1992), and *Hellenistic and Roman Pottery in the Eastern Mediterranean – Advances in Scientific Studies* (1995).

The death of Professor Michałowski in 1981 became a difficult challenge to his “school”, and particularly to the Research Centre for Mediterranean Archaeology at the Polish Academy of Sciences. This moment coincided with dramatic political changes in Poland which created various difficulties, beginning with the financing of scientific research in our country, and not ending with repeated bureaucratic efforts to annihilate the Centre. Despite this we never forgot what our Master used to say: “Nothing is impossible”. Hard work and determination of the twenty scholars constituting a solidarian team ensured that the Centre has not only subsisted, but also overcome its perils, strengthened and developed.

The excavations and conservation work at all archaeological sites to which Professor Michałowski had introduced his “school” were continued. New concessions of great importance have been granted to His “scientific children”. In Egypt, these are, among others, Naqlun, Marina and Saqqara. Some long-term projects have been accomplished, e.g. the excavations at Tell Atrib, the conservation and reconstruction of the upper terrace in the temple of Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahari, as well as important parts of the *zona monumentale*



14. A visit of Sir Lawrence Kirwan, President of the Royal Geographic Society (London) in Podkowa Leśna, 1979. (Phot. Courtesy of Michałowski family archive).

at Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria, the latter having been a long-cherished dream of Kazimierz Michałowski. Many studies concerning these works have been published. In order to facilitate access to early work by K. Michałowski, scattered in various journals, our Center has collected and published His *Opera Minora* in 1990.

All these achievements have been possible thanks to close cooperation between our Centre in the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Centre of the Warsaw University. Scholars from the Academy have directed or still direct some field projects on behalf of the University Centre. These are, e.g., Prof. Zsolt Kiss (Alexandria), Dr Stefan Jakobielski (Dongola), Dr Janusz Meuszyński (1946–1976) (Nimrud), Dr Janusz Karkowski (epigraphic mission at Deir el-Bahari), and the author of the present article (rescue excavations at Tell Atrib and the excavations at Saqqara). Members of the Academy Centre participate in various archaeological activities of the University Centre as well, e.g., in Egypt: Alexandria (Prof. Karol Myśliwiec, Dr Barbara Lichočka, Dr Jolanta Młynarczyk, Dr Barbara Tkaczow, Ms. Kamila Kołodziejczyk, Dr Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka, Dr Maciej Witkowski, and Mr. Henryk Meyza), Tell Atrib (Ms. Kamila Kołodziejczyk and Mr. Henryk Meyza), Deir

el-Bahari (Dr Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal and Dr Maciej Witkowski), Marina (Mr Henryk Meyza), Qurqumas in Old Cairo (Dr Maciej Witkowski), Saqqara (Ms. Teodozja Rzeuska); Sudan: Faras (Dr Stefan Jakobielski, Dr Marek Marciniak and Ms. Kamila Kołodziejczyk), Old Dongola (Dr Małgorzata Martens-Czarnecka, Ms. Ida Ryl-Preibisz and Dr Bogdan Żurawski); Cyprus: Nea Paphos (Dr Jolanta Młynarczyk, Dr Barbara Lichočka and Mr Henryk Meyza); Syria: Palmyra (Prof. Zsolt Kiss, Prof. Karol Myśliwiec, Ms. Dorota Bielińska and Mr Henryk Meyza), Djassa El-Gharbi, Tell Abu Hafur, Tell Rad Shakra and Tell Arbid (Ms. Dorota Bielińska). A brand new field of our activities is the Dongola Reach where a survey is being directed by Dr Bogdan Żurawski. This huge area in Sudan has never been subject to any archaeological research before, and the first results of the survey are extremely promising.

It would be difficult to enumerate all archaeological sites in various countries where scholars from the Academy Centre participated and participate in international archaeological projects. Beginning in Sudan: Hambukol (Dr Bogdan Żurawski), Meroe (Ms. Bożena Rostkowska), *via* Egypt: Dabod and Qasr el-Wizz (Dr Marek Marciniak), Qasr Ibrim (Dr Marek Marciniak and Dr Stefan Jakobielski), Elephantine (Dr Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal and Ms. Teodozja Rzeuska), Karnak (Dr Janusz Karkowski), Qurna temple of Seti I (Prof. Karol Myśliwiec), Alexandria and Kanopos (Prof. Zsolt Kiss), Minshat Abu Omar (Prof. Karol Myśliwiec), Syria: Apamea (Prof. Zsolt Kiss), Cyprus: Kourion and Hala-Sultan-Tekke (Mr. Henryk Meyza) and Greece: Delos (Mr. Henryk Meyza), through to Israel: Sha'ar ha-Amakim and Sussita (Dr Jolanta Młynarczyk).

The variety of these activities has enriched our scientific profile with fields and aspects which had so far been absent in our research, such as Islamic studies and the ancient Near East. Some scholarly publications presenting original results of long time research done by members of the Centre have recently found high appreciation in the form of rewards granted by Poland's Prime Minister (Dr Ewa Laskowska-Kusztal in 1999 for: *Die Dekorfragmente der ptolemäisch-römischen Tempel von Elephantine*, Mainz 1996, and Dr Barbara Lichočka in 2000 for: *L'Iconographie de Fortuna dans l'Empire Romain*, Varsovie 1997) and by the Polish Academy of Sciences (the Erazm Majewski reward in 2000 for Dr Jolanta Młynarczyk, author of *Alexandrian and Alexandria-influenced Mould-made Lamps of the Hellenistic Period*, Oxford 1997).

Finally, the Centre changed its seat in 1997. Both its branches, the workshops in Podkowa Leśna and the departments in the Palace of Culture have moved to the Palace of Staszic, a historical building located just beside the University of Warsaw. Stanisław Staszic, scientist, philosopher and nobleman, who lived at the turn of 18th/19th centuries, a remarkable personality of Polish Enlightenment, seems an excellent patron for the school of Professor Kazimierz Michałowski. The generous decision taken by the President and the Scientific Secretary of the Polish Academy of Sciences enabled us to consolidate the organisation and research activities of our Centre. Both parts of our specialized library, joint together at one place, became easily accessible not only to scholars, but also to students from all over Poland, particularly those looking for books which are not readily accessible at any other place in the country. Teaching activities of almost all members of the Centre, and not only

in Warsaw, but also in other academic centres, have thus been facilitated and encouraged. They constitute a natural link between research and education, preparing the next generation of scholars in our field.

Moreover, foreign colleagues are frequent guests in the Centre, and not only on occasion of international symposia organized by the Centre, such as the Polish-Canadian conference in 2000, commemorating 25 years of close cooperation between the two countries in Mediterranean archaeology. Many of them have presented their research at subsequent sessions of the archaeological seminar organized by the Centre. Like in the days of Professor Michałowski, an interdisciplinary society comprising scholars and students from various institutions in Poland and abroad meets once a week in order to discuss the results of the latest research. This seminar, these days led by Professor Zsolt Kiss, plays an outstanding role for integration of our scholarly effort. It would not be just to say that this is our archaeological way to Europe and to the West in general. We have always been there, and if somebody has to be thanked for this, it certainly is Professor Kazimierz Michałowski, whose vision of science always encompassed a broad international family.