



Kazimierz Majewski: A Marxist among Classicists

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COMMUNISM - NO SUCH WORD IN POLISH

For Poles, Communism has become synonymous with Soviet domination at the end of World War I, an ideological smokescreen hiding imperial aspirations inherited from czarist Russia. In the chapter *Nation or Class?* Piotr Wandycz carefully documents how the Bolshevik right to national self-determination theoretically accorded to all nations of the empire evolved into the right to self-determination of working peoples of these nations. When Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia declared their independence from Russia in 1918, their “national masses” allegedly could not accept separation from Russia and “clamored” for a return to the former empire. Similar scenarios developed in all border states. In late 1918 and early 1919, the Red Army invaded and, using tactics adapted to each situation, installed national Soviet governments in Latvia, Lithuania, and Belarus. Ukraine declared independence already in 1917. It was a crucial territory for Russia, but its situation was more complex as it struggled between two competing projects, the Ukrainian People’s Republic and Soviet Ukraine. Poland became fully independent in November 1918.¹

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1 Wandycz, *Polish-Soviet Relations*, 65–72; for the right to self-determination of minorities, see Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union*, 55–58. Schnell, *Empire in Disguise*, 208–215, provides the details of the Sovietization of Ukraine and a precise timeline of the former czarist territories becoming independent and then returning under the Russian Soviet control, a process ironically labeled the Reconquista. Only Poland and the Baltic states escaped the reintegration.

The word Communism entered the Polish public sphere in 1918 when the radical wing of the Polish Socialist Party (called “The Left”) merged with the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL). They took the name of the Polish Communist Workers’ Party (*Komunistyczna Partia Robotnicza Polski*, KPRP).² At a time when the country was united in the hope of regaining a sovereign state after one hundred and twenty-three years of foreign occupation and several major armed uprisings against the partitioners, especially Russia, the new party championed the renunciation of Polish independence. It advocated joining the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR), as the country was called before the creation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on December 30, 1922.³ Lenin and the KPRP leaders, most of whom resided in the RSFSR, were convinced that the victorious march of Communism was unstoppable and expected an imminent and spontaneous outbreak of revolution in Poland, reinforced by the advance of the Red Army into Polish territory in 1920. This was a gross miscalculation on the part of Lenin. Along with Stalin and other Soviet generals, he underestimated the Polish Army’s military and intelligence expertise.⁴ The 1921 Peace Treaty of Riga ended the Polish-Soviet war. The RSFSR was forced to recognize sovereign Poland and abandon its plans of spreading the revolution to Germany and, eventually, to the rest of Europe.⁵

The PCWP had minimal success in the Polish parliamentary elections of 1922; three years later, at the Third Party Congress in Minsk, a turn toward Bolshevism was decided, and the party dropped “Workers” from its name, becoming the Communist Party of Poland. Within a few years, it met with a tragic fate. Stalin took a personal and rather unsympathetic interest in the organization, blaming it for consecutive electoral failures, and finally disbanded it in 1938. Most of the Party’s active membership (approx. 5000 people) were summoned in groups to Moscow during the years of

2 On the birth and evolution of Polish socialism, see Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations*, 20–22; on the political thought of the PCWP, see Trembicka, *Między apologią a negacją*; see also Koredczuk, “Zwalczanie działalności ugrupowań komunistycznych w polskim prawie,” 119–120.

3 See Davies, *God’s Playground*, vol. 2, 403, and Kenez, *A History of the Soviet Union*, 53–58.

4 See Hanyok, “Before Enigma,” 25–32, as well as Bury, “Polish Codebreaking during the Russo-Polish War,” 199–200, about the Polish Cipher Bureau breaking Soviet codes and jamming internal communication of the Red Army.

5 See Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations*, 279–290.

the Great Purge and promptly executed (like, for instance, Julian Leszczyński (1889–1937), the driving force behind the ideological left turn of the party and the 1925 change of name), or sent to the gulags on Stalin's orders.⁶

Stalin's alliance with Hitler – the secret protocols of the infamous Ribbentrop-Molotov non-aggression pact (August 23, 1939) – and the coordinated attack on Poland in September 1939 did nothing to improve the image of Communism. Neither did the Soviet refusal to assist in any way in the Warsaw Rising in 1944, when the Red Army, stationed on the opposite shore of the Vistula, let the Germans raze Warsaw to the ground. Given over four decades of a Soviet-enforced regime, it is no wonder that no political organization has dared to include the word “Communist” in its name since 1938.⁷ Ironically, the name “Polish Workers' Party” (*Polska Partia Robotnicza*, PPR) was suggested in 1941 by Stalin, who realized that openly calling the new party Communist may disincline prospective members.⁸ The PPR ruled Poland from the end of the war. It then merged with the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) forming, in 1948, the Polish United Workers'

6 See Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, 402–406; on the activities of the Communist movement in Poland in 1918–1925, see Sacewicz, “Organizacja i działalność ruchu komunistycznego,” 367–393.

7 The only exception was the illegal Communist Party of Poland, a Maoist group with anecdotal membership founded in 1965 by the anti-Gomułka Stalinist politician Kazimierz Mijal (1910–2010), who, after fleeing from Poland to Albania, used the Polish shortwave programs of Radio Tirana as his propaganda medium from 1966 to 1977. After spending five years in China (1978–1983), he illegally returned to Poland and unsuccessfully attempted a political comeback. See Dziuba, *Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu* and Mijal's entry in the Parliamentary Library [Biblioteka Sejmowa] database, available online. After the collapse of Communism, a small group of veterans who still believed in the ideology were happy to abandon hypocrisy and created, in 1990, a short-lived Union of Polish Communists, “Proletariat” (UPCP). Twelve years later, once the UPCP officially ceased to exist, it was replaced with the Polish Communist Party (KPP, est. 2002), which has not yet succeeded in having a single representative elected to the Polish parliament. Based on Article 13 of the current Polish Constitution, which “prohibits the existence of political parties or organizations whose programs refer to totalitarian methods and practices of Nazism, fascism, and Communism (...) and allow violence as a means to obtain power or to influence state policies,” Polish authorities have been attempting to delegalize KPP, so far unsuccessfully. Article 13 of the Polish Constitution may be accessed online.

8 See Stalin's instructions to Georgi Dimitrov, Secretary General of Comintern, in Banac, *The Diary of Georgi Dimitrov, 191–192*.

Party (*Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza*, PZPR), which would rule the Polish People's Republic as a one-party state until 1989.⁹

THE POSTWAR SITUATION OF CLASSICS IN POLAND

Among Polish classical scholars decimated during the six years of Nazi occupation,¹⁰ some opportunists viewed Party membership as an aid in their academic careers. Still, few were convinced Marxists or even Marxist sympathizers.¹¹ How these few fared in the tense and highly uncertain situation of the first postwar decade depended on their personalities and connections in the Party and the community. Along with all their compatriots, classicists were traumatized by the atrocities and losses they suffered during the war. Those from Eastern Poland, occupied by the Soviets in September 1939, already knew how the ideology, from 1945 imposed on the whole country, translated into practice. They were under no illusion as to what was coming. Archaeology and ancient history were two disciplines considered helpful by the Party for legitimizing, if not the new regime as such, at least the new western Polish borders, as they provided evidence of Polish and Slavonic pre-historical presence in the territories "recovered" from Germany. The ideological pressure on these disciplines was the most noticeable and resulted in a higher proportion of Party members among historians and archaeologists.¹²

KAZIMIERZ MAJEWSKI

For Polish scholarship, the redrawing of the Polish borders in 1945 meant that two universities, Jan Kazimierz in Lviv (est. 1661) and Stefan Batory (est. 1579) in Vilnius, became part of the Soviet educational system. Classicists who worked there before the war found refuge in the new universities in Wrocław and Toruń. Kazimierz Majewski (1903–1981), an ancient historian and archaeologist from Lviv, was tasked by the Ministry of Education to oversee the opening of the

9 See Lukowski and Zawadzki, *A Concise History of Poland*, 285–286.

10 For some classicists, World War II was an indirect cause of death, like for Tadeusz Zieliński (1859–1944) or Ludwik Ćwikliński (1853–1942). Others disappeared, were killed by the Gestapo, or died in concentration camps, like Leon Sternbach (1864–1940), Kazimierz Zakrzewski (1900–1941), Marian Auerbach (1882–1941), or Emil Urlich (? – 1942); see Kowalski, *Elogia defunctorum*, 3–9.

11 Axer, "Kazimierz Kumaniecki," 194–195; Olechowska, "Bronisław Biliński," 213; "Mulierem fortem quis inveniet," 46.

12 See Axer, "Kazimierz Kumaniecki," 194.

University of Wrocław as a new Polish university. Alongside the former rector of the Jan Kazimierz University, the botanist Stanisław Kulczyński (1895–1975) and other colleagues, including the classicist Jerzy Kowalski (1893–1948), Majewski managed, against all odds, to inaugurate the University of Wrocław in the 1945/1946 academic year.¹³ Majewski was a *rarissima avis*, a Marxist who commanded quasi-universal respect in the classical community as an outstanding scholar, academic leader, and honorable individual. A brief analysis of his academic career and priorities may help to explain what it meant to be a Marxist scholar in postwar Poland.

BEFORE AND DURING WORLD WAR II

Kazimierz Majewski enrolled in Jan Kazimierz University in 1922. An unfortunate event during his second year of study impacted his *cursus honorum* in rather unexpected ways. He was falsely accused of illegal political activities and arrested. The police found reports from a cause célèbre in Majewski's possession, the so-called St. George's trial (1922–1923), against members of the Communist Party of Eastern Galicia (*Komunistyczna Partia Galicji Wschodniej*, KPGW) who assembled in an underground hall of the Greek Catholic St. George [St. Jur] Cathedral in Lviv on October 30, 1921. Professor Edmund Bulanda (1882–1951), chair of classical archaeology at Jan Kazimierz University, intervened on Majewski's behalf and had him released after almost a year of detention.¹⁴ Nothing untoward happened during the rest of his studies. He began to teach ancient history, research, participate in archaeological excavations, and travel abroad on grants from the National Culture Fund (*Fundusz Kultury Narodowej*) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education (*Ministerstwa Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego*). He visited universities and museums in Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, and, first and foremost, Italy and Greece.¹⁵ Interested by what he heard about research conducted by Soviet scholars, Majewski also visited Soviet Ukraine in 1934 but was not impressed with their theories about Aegean culture.¹⁶ He was probably the only Polish scholar

13 For Majewski's activities in Wrocław from his appointment to the team organizing the university to his departure for Warsaw, see Press and Kolendo, "Kazimierz Majewski," 157–159.

14 *Ibid.*, 153.

15 *Ibid.*, 154–155.

16 *Ibid.*, 155.

whose publications were listed in the *Bibliography of Archaeology of the USSR 1918–1980* (Kyiv 1989).¹⁷ He was appointed head of the Department of Ancient History at Jan Kazimierz University in 1939.

When the Red Army occupied Lviv in 1939, Majewski remained the head of Ancient History at the renamed Ivan Franko University and worked as a senior researcher at the Lviv Section of the Institute of Archaeology of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In January 1941, he traveled to Kyiv to speak at a conference organized by the Institute. When the Germans attacked the Soviet Union in 1941 and entered Lviv, they closed the University. Majewski sought alternative employment, joining a construction company. Immediately following the German withdrawal from Lviv in 1944, he began to organize teaching ancient history and archaeology at the reopened Ivan Franko University. He also headed the Department of Archaeology at the Lviv Historical Museum.¹⁸

The City of Lviv changed hands three times during World War II. It was occupied by the Soviets in 1939, by the Germans in 1941, and again by the Red Army in 1944. About half of the prewar Jan Kazimierz University professors lost their lives during successive waves of occupation. They were targeted first by the Soviets as potential anti-Communists and then by the Nazis as the undesirably educated elite. Shortly after the war, Majewski joined the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) and became a member of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) when the PPS and the Polish Workers' Party (PPR) merged in 1948. PZPR was an organization under Soviet control, Communist in all but name.

THE NEW REALITY

In July 1945, Majewski was tasked by the Polish Ministry of Education to protect exhibits and monuments in the partially devastated museums in Lower Silesia. Furthermore, as mentioned above, he was to organize the opening of the University of Wrocław, or more specifically, the new Departments of Classical Archaeology, Ancient History, and Art History on the smoking ruins of Festung Breslau, defended, on Hitler's orders, to the last German soldier.¹⁹ Majewski was able to create modern structures for classical archaeology and

17 Quoted by Gurba, "Kazimierz Majewski," 286.

18 Ibid., 286–287.

19 Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, 382; see also Hargreaves, *Hitler's Final Fortress*, 165, and Głowiński, *Zaopatrzenie lotnicze Festung Breslau w 1945 roku*, 160.

ancient history, which were needed for the development of teaching and research. He founded the Polish Archaeological Society, the yearly journal *Archaeologia* and other serial publications, *Biblioteka Archeologiczna* and *Studia Pradziejowe*.

THE MILLENNIUM PROGRAM

In the darkest Stalinist era, Majewski played a significant role in transforming Polish medieval studies. He was a leading member of an unusual body called the Department of Studies on the Origins of the Polish State (*Kierownictwo Badań nad Początkami Państwa Polskiego*), which had been created in 1949 as a Marxist counter-balance to the expected religious celebrations coinciding with the millennium of Polish Christianity in 1966.²⁰ Piotr Węcowski's article on the role of the Department of Studies highlights Majewski's effective handling of the Communist officials of the Ministry of Culture and the ensuing benefits that would prove to be crucial to Polish scholarship. These included continuous and generous funding, a collaboration between various related disciplines, and the elaboration of a *modus vivendi* between academics and Party executives. In the Millennium Project, Aleksander Gieysztor (1916–1999) was the leading figure in all matters apart from complex dealings with the Party. This delicate task was performed expertly by his two deputies, scholars and Party members, Kazimierz Majewski and Zdzisław Rajewski (1907–1974), who were happy to play this role.²¹ Under the Department's guidance, historical and archaeological research was undertaken in large interdisciplinary teams who worked closely and harmoniously for almost two decades leading up to 1966. The Party's goal in financing this collaborative research was to produce evidence for Poles' descentance from pre-Slavonic peoples who originally inhabited the lands within the 1945 Polish borders, i.e., including the so-called Recovered Territories (*Ziemie Odzyskane*) to the North and West of prewar Poland. It was a central element legitimizing the change of borders and integrating the old and new territories as traditionally Polish, or at least pre-historically Slavonic (not German) lands.

20 Noszczak, "Sacrum" czy "profanum"? 29–64.

21 Węcowski, "Między nauką a ideologią," 59–100; see also Szczerba, "Powołanie Kierownictwa badań," 13–18, and "From the History of Polish Archaeology Studies," 247–254; Reichenbach, "Research Program on the Beginnings of the Polish State," 19–34.

As discussed above, the direction of the Department was given without much enthusiasm from the Communist side to an eminent historian of the Middle Ages, Aleksander Gieysztor, who had been an active member of the non-Communist World War II resistance, or “Home Army” (*Armia Krajowa*), established in the aftermath of September 1939, in German-occupied Poland.²² His two deputies, Majewski and Rajewski, were both ostensibly nominated to guarantee the promotion of Marxist research methodology. They, Majewski in particular, provided a buffer in case of problems or frictions between the Department and the Party. Contact with the authorities, mainly the Ministry of Art and Culture (from 1947–1952 under Minister Stefan Dybowski),²³ was the special responsibility of the two archaeologists. Węcowski draws on Gieysztor’s correspondence and Ryszard Kiersnowski’s article in *Przegląd Historyczny* (2000). Both illustrate Majewski’s crucial protective role for the Millennium Project active during the unfor-giving Stalinist period.²⁴ Given the importance of the Millennium Project for Polish scholarship, Gieysztor, Kiersnowski, Szczerba, Reichenbach, and most recently, Węcowski provide precious data on its activities and quite admirable achievements. The last four who did not participate but only researched the project all regret the continuing lack of a comprehensive historical study of the entire enterprise.

22 See Koczerska, “Aleksander Gieysztor,” 345–351.

23 The Millennium project was under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture and Art because the organizational impetus for its creation came from The General Direction of Museums and Protection of Monuments, which was initiated and headed by Stanisław Lorentz (1899–1991), an art historian and pre- and post-war director of the Polish National Museum. Since 1939, Lorentz managed to curtail Nazi theft and devastation of Polish art collections and, since 1945, championed restitution of masterpieces that survived the war. His authority and expertise were unquestionable and acknowledged by the Communists, who granted him considerable autonomy. At his instigation, on April 3, 1949, Stefan Dybowski, the Minister for Culture and Art, created the Department of Studies on the Origins of the Polish State, financed by the General Direction of Museums and Protection of Monuments.

24 Ryszard Kiersnowski (1926–2006), a historian from the Jagiellonian University and a former soldier of the Home Army, worked closely with Gieysztor as head of administration for the Department; see Reichenbach, “The Research Program on the Beginnings of the Polish State,” 24; Węcowski, “Między nauką a polityką,” 74–75, 100.

HISTORY OF MATERIAL CULTURE

After six years of pioneering work in Wrocław and four years of contributions to the Millennium Program, Majewski convinced the Communist authorities to create, in late 1953, the Institute of the History of Material Culture (IHKM)²⁵ within the Polish Academy of Sciences. It was to assume administration of the millennial research, as shortcomings in managing such a massive undertaking were becoming evident, causing instability in the workforce and administrative problems. It was not a coincidence that the creation of the Institute happened when the Party attempted to restructure Polish research and higher education to subject them to the totalitarian Party-state, Soviet institutional and methodological models.²⁶ That such a structure followed a Soviet template helped him in his proposal for the new Institute. This template (scholarship organized in specialized institutes within an academy of arts and sciences in parallel to the same disciplines practiced and taught at universities) was also introduced in many countries of the Soviet bloc. When IHKM took over from the defunct Millennium Program, Majewski became the Institute's director for the first year of its existence. The new Institute began publishing the *Quarterly of the History of Material Culture* the same year – a journal still going strong after seven decades; its 70th issue appeared in June 2022. Unfortunately, Majewski's successor, Witold Hensel (1917–2008) from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, followed the Party directives rigidly and without imagination and an attempt at innovation.

Additionally, he was the first who mentioned the need to prepare for the millennial anniversary in 1946.²⁷ He resented not having been appointed head of the Millennium in 1949.²⁸ This was at least part of the reason he gradually reduced the interdisciplinary collaboration which had previously flourished and was a fundamental premise of the program.²⁹

25 In 1992, IHKM was renamed the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology.

26 Degan and Hübner, "Polityka naukowa władz polski ludowej," 11–38; Stobiecki, "Między kontynuacją a dyskontynuacją," 127–155. Szczerba, "Powołanie Kierownictwa badań," 16.

27 Hensel, "Potrzeba przygotowania wielkiej rocznicy," 193–206.

28 See Reichenbach, "The Research Program on the Beginnings of the Polish State," 21–22. Hensel, while a Communist, was not a member of the Polish United Workers' Party but belonged to a Communist satellite party called the Alliance of Democrats. From 1985 to 1989, he was a Member of Parliament.

29 See Szczerba, "Powołanie kierownictwa badań," 15; Węcowski, "Między nauką, a polityką," 100.

NEW DIRECTIONS

Majewski, having set up the organization to his satisfaction in 1954, became the head of the Department of Ancient Archaeology within the Institute and had developed new priorities, which found the approval and support of the Communist authorities. Formulated early on and repeatedly expressed in his writings, these priorities were all rooted in Majewski's understanding of the obligations of classical archaeologists toward their own society. First, he believed that the studied topics should illuminate both Graeco-Roman antiquity and the history of the scholars' own country. Their most essential duty in that respect is to work on the collections of ancient artifacts held in Polish museums and publish catalogs and monographs to make these collections more accessible and valuable to the public. He started implementing this when still in Lviv and wrote several papers about it.³⁰ According to Majewski, another duty of the archaeologist was to increase awareness of ancient culture in society through popular literature, lectures, and exhibitions, reinforcing general education, and preparing and encouraging school students to study antiquity.³¹

Links and contacts between ancient Greece, Rome, and the Polish territories were another priority area. Majewski began researching Roman imports to Polish territories when he was still in Lviv and continued this work in Wrocław. At that time, such studies were rare, innovative, and pioneering. In 1949 he published *Roman Imports in Slavonic Lands* (*Importy rzymskie na ziemiach słowiańskich*), and in 1960, when Majewski had already been appointed Professor in Warsaw, came out *Roman Imports in Poland* (*Rzymskie importy w Polsce*).³² This publication strongly advocated the need to research the Roman *limes*, provinces, and neighboring territories, which were also sources of imports. The priority Majewski gave to the study of imports was directly connected to the vital role he attributed to material culture as

30 See Press and Kolendo, "Kazimierz Majewski," 164.

31 Majewski blamed secondary schools for lack of adequate preparation for studies and spoke at conferences of the Polish Philological Society, suggesting to Latin teachers how to increase awareness of Antiquity at school. He also insisted well before the war on the importance of popularization of scholarship and published in the classical journal for the general public, *Filomata* (1929, 1931, 1932, 1934); see Kołakówna, *Bibliographie des travaux de K. Majewski*, 15–16. He was giving public lectures long before he could have encountered any outside pressure "to educate the masses." See Press and Kolendo, "Kazimierz Majewski," 156.

32 Majewski, *Roman Imports in Slavonic Lands*; Majewski, *Roman Imports in Poland*.

a historical source, crucial to understanding antiquity as an essential complement to ancient art, the traditional, single focus of prewar Polish archaeology.³³ This change of research emphasis was combined with advancing studies on ancient technologies, occupations, and crafts, which created a unique resource: a quasi-journalistic Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How of ancient labor and its reality.³⁴ It was also a thrust toward, if not interdisciplinarity in the current sense, at least collaboration between different disciplines, classical archaeology, national archaeology, ancient and pre-history, ethnology, and classical philology. Majewski, for example, recruited several early-career philologists to a) participate in his material culture seminars, b) collect *testimonia* from ancient Greek and Roman literature related to material culture and ancient labor, and c) discuss them with archaeologists and historians. Professor Anna Komornicka (1920–2018) worked for Majewski from 1953 to 1960 at the Department of Ancient Archaeology of the Institute of the History of Material Culture and published three papers on Aristophanes' comedies as sources for the history of Greek material culture in 1955–1958, see Rybowska and Witczak, 1995, 11. Her colleagues at the ИКМ, all future professors of archaeology at the University of Warsaw, included Ludwika Press (1922–2006), Maria Nowicka (1927–2015), Aleksandra Dunin-Wąsowicz (1932–2015), and Małgorzata Biernacka-Lubańska (1933).³⁵ There were no Communist sympathizers in the group.

Along with the emphasis on historical research on slavery championed by Professor Iza Bieżyńska-Małowist (1917–1995), a specialist on slavery in Greek and Roman Egypt,³⁶ there was a series of dissertations and monographs on artisans and workers in general, as well as works on specific ancient authors. For example, A. M. Komornicka wrote an MA thesis entitled “Workers in Aristophanes' Comedies” (1951), O.

33 See, e.g., Majewski, “Uwagi do metodologii historii kultury materialnej,” 113–118.

34 See, e.g., Press, *Problemy periodyzacji budownictwa sakralnego na Krecie*; Wąsowicz, “Remarques sur la chronologie,” 739–743; and Nowicka, *Budownictwo mieszkalne w Egipcie hellenistycznym*.

35 Based on the interview given in Polish on April 6, 2010, for Classics and Communism project by Komornicka preserved in the archive of materials recorded during the project, frequently referred to but never published.

36 Since 1971 she was part of the Groupe International de Recherche sur l'Esclavage dans l'Antiquité (GIREA), her bibliography lists many publications on the theme of slavery from 1959 to 1989, including *La schiavitù nell'Egitto greco-romano*, published in Rome with Editori Riuniti, 1984, and *La schiavitù nel mondo antico*, published in Naples with Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1989.

Jurewicz wrote a PhD dissertation, which was later published as *Slaves in Plautus' Comedies* (1958).³⁷

In 1960, Majewski also succeeded in launching Polish-Bulgarian joint archaeological excavations in Novae on the Danube in northern Bulgaria. Now in their sixty-second year of continued operations, they have resulted in many seasonal reports and other scholarly publications.³⁸ None of the historians quoted in this paper expressed a negative opinion about Majewski, regardless of their political views; neither Communist censorship nor post-1990 reluctance to value anything from that period appears to have colored the image of this exceptional scholar.

CONCLUSION

The consecutive excavations combined Majewski's priorities of *limes* research and hands-on field training for young archaeologists. He succeeded in his attempts to bring to the fore what had previously been neglected and reorganize the teaching of ancient history and archaeology. He widened research horizons and initiated collaboration between related disciplines. Moreover, he accomplished all this using the Soviet blueprint, automatically approved by the Polish Party. He was able to translate it into a vision that was logical, sensible, and acceptable to the largely non-Communist and receptive milieu.

In the words of his Communist friend and colleague, the ethnologist Witold Dynowski (1903–1986),³⁹ Kazimierz Majewski owed his prominent position and official support for his academic endeavors to his “prewar connections, which allowed him to play a significant role in the organization of scholarly and cultural life in the situation of a state being reborn after the war.”⁴⁰ Dynowski did not elaborate on the origin and nature of these “connections,” neither did his other colleagues or

37 Komornicka wrote her thesis under the direction of Professor Tadeusz Sinko at the Jagiellonian University; Jurewicz's PhD advisor was Kazimierz F. Kumanięcki at the University of Warsaw.

38 See Kołkówna, “Bibliografia prac,” 221–237, listing bibliography related to Novae for 1961–1978. In 1989, Majewski's former student, Professor Ludwika Press, became editor-in-chief of an annual journal *Novensia* focussing on the excavations in Novae. The journal is now past its 30th issue; its editor-in-chief is Piotr Dyczek, current director of the Archaeological Research Centre “Novae” of the University of Warsaw.

39 Dynowski was Majewski's contemporary and the author of his obituary in *Etnografia Polska*, published in 1981.

40 Dynowski, “Kazimierz Majewski (1903–1981),” 9–10.

students who have written about Majewski. Two possibilities come to mind: 1. Connections made during his lengthy detention in 1922–1923 prior to an anti-Communist trial may have provided him with credentials and an introduction to Soviet educational decision-makers who took over the university in 1939. His status as a victim of the anti-Communist Polish regime could have strengthened his academic position during the Soviet occupation. 2. (And in my opinion, this is more likely) Dynowski is referring to Majewski's contacts with Soviet scholars since at least 1934, which intensified during both periods of Soviet occupation, in 1940–1941 and 1944–1945, and which were reflected in his papers published only shortly after the war as Soviet journals were in practice as silent during the war as the Polish ones.⁴¹ Both these reasons may have given Majewski the credentials required for successfully navigating the corridors of power.

This was, however, only one side of the coin. He must have also been simply lucky, but the core reason for his successes was his extraordinary tenacity in following his priorities and his intellectual capacity for explaining and using those credentials. He used them in teaching, research, national and international networking, and publishing activities in classical studies, to name his main lasting achievements.

Looking briefly again at over three decades of Majewski's postwar academic career, one may observe a characteristic evolution of his priorities constructed as a series of connected goals. Once a goal was achieved, he let someone else continue on the path he paved and began pursuing another goal, repeating the same sequence again and again. When the war was over, he accepted the challenge of creating an academic home for classical scholars among the refugees from Lviv, on the ruins of *Festung Breslau* and within new Polish western borders. Four years later, he moved to Warsaw, leaving behind three well-functioning and vibrant departments of Classics (philology, archaeology, ancient history), a scholarly association, specialized journals, colleagues, and students ready and willing to continue his task. In Warsaw, he created an institute of material culture. A year later, he left the running of the place to others and concentrated on creating a multidisciplinary research team and model training of archaeologists for which he needed active excavation sites. Staking

41 For Majewski's publications from 1928 to 1972, see Kołkówna, "Bibliographie des travaux," 15–52, who lists a significant paper on his participation at an archaeological conference in Moscow in 1940, published in 1947: "Kultura egejska na obradach konferencji archeologicznej w Moskwie w 1940 r." For his bibliography from 1972 to 1981, see Press et al., "Kazimierz Majewski," 40–42.

his reputation on international cooperation within the Soviet bloc, he was able to conduct digs in Olbia and Novae and train generations of classicists. Under his leadership, scholarly journals flourished, publishing the results of the conducted fieldwork.

His legacy remains in institutional infrastructure, renewed research themes (material culture, Roman imports, limes, museum collections), publishing, and didactics. If new generations changed the name of his Institute to the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology in 1992, this only marked a departure of the history of material culture from the main road to a side track, but certainly not to an archive or a discard pile.

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ABSTRACT

There were few Marxist sympathizers among Polish classicists decimated during World War II. How they fared during the tense and uncertain first postwar decade depended on their Communist connections and personality. Kazimierz Majewski (1903–1981), a classicist from Lviv, commanded quasi-universal respect in the academic community – despite his Communist views – because of his scholarly, organizational, and didactic achievements. Tasked with organizing and inaugurating a new Polish University in Wrocław in 1945, he contributed to creating three thriving classical departments – philology, ancient history, and archaeology – a scholarly society, academic journals, and a vibrant academic community. When he moved to Warsaw four years later, he founded an institute for material culture, developed a multidisciplinary research team, and launched within the Soviet bloc two major archaeological excavation projects, in Olbia and in Novae, where generations of archaeologists learned how to perform fieldwork and communicate its results internationally through regular publications and cooperation. Through his Party connections, he protected and ensured support for colleagues less fortunate in this respect.

KEYWORDS: Kazimierz Majewski, University of Wrocław, classical tradition, history of classical scholarship, Olbia, Novae

Kazimierz Majewski: Marksist med klasičnimi filologi

IZVLEČEK

Med poljskimi raziskovalci antike, zdesetkanimi med drugo svetovno vojno, jih je le malo simpatiziralo z marksizmom. Toda njihove perspektive v napetem in negotovem prvem povojnem desetletju so bile odvisne od njihovih povezav s komunisti in njihovih osebnosti. Kazimierz Majewski (1903–1981), znanstvenik iz Lviva, je zaradi svojih znanstvenih, organizacijskih in didaktičnih dosežkov kljub komunističnim stališčem užival skorajda vsesplošno spoštovanje akademske skupnosti. Leta 1945 je bil zadolžen za organizacijo in odprtje nove poljske univerze v Vroclavu, kjer je prispeval k ustanovitvi treh uspešnih klasičnih oddelkov – filologije, antične zgodovine in arheologije – ter znanstvenega društva, akademskih revij in živahne akademske skupnosti. Ko se je štiri leta pozneje preselil v Varšavo, je ustanovil Inštitut za materialno kulturo, razvil multidisciplinarno raziskovalno skupino in v okviru sovjetskega bloka začel dva velika projekta arheoloških izkopavanj, Olbia in Novae, kjer so se cele generacije arheologov naučile terenskega dela in kako z rednimi objavami in mednarodnim sodelovanjem sporočati njegove rezultate. S svojimi partijskimi povezavami je zaščitil in zagotovil podporo kolegom, ki so imeli v tem pogledu manj sreče.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: Kazimierz Majewski, Univerza v Vroclavu, klasična tradicija, zgodovina klasične filologije, Olbia, Novae