

PROFESSOR MARIA L. BERNHARD
(1908 - 1998)

This year is the tenth anniversary of the death of Professor Bernhard, who for a quarter of a century has directed the Chair of Mediterranean Archaeology of the Jagiellonian University (1954 - 1978)¹. It is simultaneously also a year in which we celebrate the centenary of her birthday and on this occasion we dedicate this volume to her memory - it consists of works by her students and authors of the younger generation - students of her students.

Maria L. Bernhard was born in Łódź on the 6th of August 1908, but the rest of her life was always connected with Warsaw. Here she attended high school and later started her studies on the Warsaw University in 1930. Classical archaeology and art history were the subjects of her greatest interest. She was at that time one of the first students of professor Kazimierz Michałowski (1901 - 1981), and later his assistant, beginning her scholar career in 1934 under his directions. Her dissertation regarded a group of Greek vessels from one of the Warsaw collections². Since 1938 she was also connected to the Warsaw National Museum as an employee of the Ancient Art Gallery, later to become its curator and director.

¹ For a more detailed biography of professor Bernhard with her full bibliography see: *Archeologia* XLIX, 1998 [1999], p. 117 - 123 (J. Śliwa). See also: *Uniwersytet Jagielloński. Złota Księga Wydziału historycznego*, Kraków 2000, p. 511 - 515. The following publications were devoted to professor Bernhard's jubilees: *Ancient Pottery in Polish Collections*. *Studia ad Archaeologiam Mediterraneam Pertinentia* 5, Cracow 1980; *Études consacrées à Marie Louise Bernhard par ses amis, collaborateurs et élèves*. *Études et Travaux* XIII, Warsaw 1983; *Meander* XL, fasc. 5-6, Warsaw 1985; *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization* 8, Cracow 1997.

² This work was published shortly afterwards: *Wazy greckie z Muzeum im. Erazma Majewskiego w Warszawie* („Greek Vases from the E. Majewski Museum, Warsaw”) [Uniwersytet Józefa Piłsudskiego. *Prace Zakładu Archeologii Klasycznej* Nr. 1], Warsaw 1936.

The years 1937 - 1938 was also her stay in École Française d'Athènes, an extremely important institution for the formation of a classical archaeologist. There she became acquainted with the technical aspect of running an excavation as well as with the rich collection of ancient art, travelling to Greece and other Mediterranean countries. During her stay in Athens she worked under the direction of professor Robert Demangel (1891 - 1952) on stamped handles of Delian amphorae. By the end of 1938 Maria Bernhard obtained a 3-month long scholarship of the National Culture Fund, which enabled her to journey to Italy and continue her research on her dissertation, and later a 4-week stay in Athens, and finally a journey to Egypt, where professor Michałowski together with French researchers was conducting excavation works in Edfu. Her dissertation written under the direction of professor Michałowski was titled "Ancient lamps in Warsaw collections" allowed her to obtain a doctoral title on the 13th of June 1939, just before the start of World War II³. Unfortunately, wider research was interrupted by the outbreak of war and most of the materials were burnt in Warsaw.

Maria Bernhard spent the period of German occupation in Warsaw, engaged in conspiratory activities⁴. Continuously working in the National Museum, she had great merits in preserving the collection. She also took active part in saving the book collection and the documentation of the Chair of Classical Archaeology of the Warsaw University in 1939, she also gave lectures as part of the Secret Warsaw University. She took active part in the Warsaw Insurrection (1944). After it had been suppressed she took part in an action of salvaging and securing the museum collections from the burning city.

After the war Maria Bernhard at once returned to her duties at the National Museum and the University. As a curator of the Ancient Art Gallery she has been connected to that institution until 1962. Her part in creating permanent and travelling exhibitions was very important, as it was in publishing catalogues and materials popularising ancient art. An important element of her activities was also revindication of works of art stolen during the war and reconstruction of the Warsaw National Museum collection. At the University, as a collabo-

³ The dissertation survived war in just fragments, therefore after the war had ended the author reconstructed her work. An expanded version with a substantial catalogue was published: *Lampki starożytne* („Ancient Lamps”), Warsaw 1955. An exalted ceremony of renewing her doctoral diploma after 50 years took place on the 16th of November on the Warsaw University.

⁴ She was a liaison in the structures of the secret National Army (pseudonym “Marianna”). In June 1940 she was arrested by the Germans and later released as a French citizen after an intervention of the National Museum. During the Warsaw Insurrection (01.08. - 02.10.1944) she directed the female services of the Warsaw District Command of the National Army.



Professor Maria L. Bernhard (1908 - 1998)
Oil on canvas by Grażyna Korpala. Jagiellonian University Museum

rator of professor Michałowski, she organised from scratch the workshop of scientific and didactic activities that had been destroyed during the war.

On the 1st of November 1954 Maria Bernhard was granted an university docent title and shortly after (the 1st of December that same year) she was appointed director of the Chair of Mediterranean Archaeology of the Jagiellonian University. Therefore she moved a part of her research and scholar activities to Cracow, since 1962 mainly focusing on the Cracow institution. She received a nomination for the professor title in 1957. That year individual studies in Mediterranean archaeology were resumed in the Jagiellonian University under her auspices. During the following years in Cracow she educated numerous students - masters of arts, soon to become doctors.

In her activities professor Bernhard knowingly referred to earlier achievements of the Cracow centre, and particularly to some directions marked out by its founder, professor Piotr Bieńkowski (1865-1925). She concentrated her attention on rich Cracow collections, particularly on the University collection. A temporary exposition of the collection of the Chair of Mediterranean Archaeology was prepared under the direction of professor Bernhard, allowing for original artefacts to be used by students during practice and a study on separate groups of relics⁵. At the same time professor Bernhard initiated archival research in order to establish the provenience of a number of objects as well as works aimed to recreate the history of the Cracow collections as a whole⁶.

As a field researcher Maria Bernhard took part in Polish-Soviet excavations in Mirmeki on Crimea in 1956 - 1958. She later undertook her own research there, excavating the Elizavetovskoe grad in 1958 and in Kalos Limen in 1959. In 1967 she led a team working in Palmyra in the so called Diocletian camp.

The most important research topic that interested professor Bernhard was connected to Greek art, mainly pottery and vase painting. She was faithful to this topic since her scholar debut, and she devoted her most important work to this subject, that is seven volumes published in the "Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum" series, where she made objects from the National Museum in Warsaw available to all scholars⁷. She is also an author of an important academic compendium on this subject⁸.

⁵ This resulted in a catalogue of the collection being published under her direction: *Zabytki archeologiczne Zakładu Archeologii Śródziemnomorskiej Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Katalog*, Kraków 1976.

⁶ The results of the research she initiated were lately presented in a separate publication: *Egipt, Grecja, Italia... Zabytki starożytne z dawnej kolekcji Gabinetu Archeologicznego Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Praca zbiorowa pod redakcją Joachima Śliwy*, Kraków 2007.

⁷ Further volumes of *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* Pologne 4-10, Varsovie - Musée National 1-7 were published in 1960 - 1994.

⁸ *Greckie malarstwo wazowe („Greek Vase Painting”)*, Wrocław 1966.

The crowning of the many years of research of professor Bernhard is her extensive work “History of Ancient Greek Art”⁹. This work was the first academic book in Polish that included all aspects of Greek art from its beginnings until the end of the Hellenistic era, taking into account the results of the latest research and numerous discussions regarding individual topics. This study for many years to come will serve generations of students and a growing group of scholars in Poland.

It is hard to describe all the publications of professor Bernhard here or even to signalize the issues she researched. Among others, we cannot forget her research on the history of archaeology and collections in Poland, including, among others, her studies on the deserts of Stanisław Kostka Potocki (1755 - 1821) as an antiquity scholar. It was her as well that encouraged the entire team of her students and collaborators to undertake this kind of research.

Professor Bernhard was also very active in the field of international cooperation, undertaking numerous study journeys and welcoming representatives of institutions from all over the world in Cracow and Warsaw. She also took part in numerable international workshops and archaeological conventions, thus keeping contacts between the Cracow centre and the fundamental trends of international science. In recognition of her merits professor Bernhard was appointed a member of many institutions and committees and editorial boards, she was also awarded with numerous decorations and medals.

Professor Bernhard donated her rich book collection to Cracow archaeological institutions - mostly to the university Chair of Mediterranean Archaeology. Therefore substantial deficiencies in our book collection were supplemented, mostly with works on Greek pottery.

Professor Maria L. Bernhard died after a short illness on the 4th of August, 1988 in Warsaw, leaving her rich scholar output and the grateful memory of a large group of students and collaborators.

Cracow, August 2008

Joachim Śliwa

⁹ Four subsequent volumes were published in 1970 - 1989 with later reprints: *Sztuka grecka archaiczna* („Greek Archaic Art”); *Sztuka grecka V wieku p.n.e.* („Greek Art of the Fifth Century B.C.”); *Sztuka grecka IV wieku p.n.e.* („Greek Art of the Fourth Century B.C.”); *Sztuka hellenistyczna* („Hellenistic Art”).

