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Redefining Polishness: The Revival of Crafts in Galicia around 1900

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THE BRIDE'S ROOM AT THE LVIV EXHIBITION OF HOME AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES IN 1894

In 1894, the city of Lwów (now Lviv), seat of the ancient Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, hosted the Exhibition of Home Agriculture and Industries, one of a spate of such displays, organized in Europe since the end of the eighteenth century. Following the model of the Viennese World Exposition (Weltausstellung) of 1873, one section was allocated for ethnographic display and featured peasant costumes, pottery, domestic tools and utensils, blacksmith ironwork, and festive objects such as Easter eggs and wedding trees, each accompanied by photographs and drawings depicting peasant life.¹ Visitors to the ethnographic section could also inspect six wooden houses brought from different parts of Galicia and representative of vernacular building traditions, which included a dwelling from the mountain village of Zakopane.² The high point of the exhibition, however, proved to be silk hangings from the weaving mills in Buczacz, not far from Lviv, run by the Potocki brothers, Oskar and Artur. The Potockis employed a local family of weavers, skilled in the craft for three generations, and furnished the entire stall with their silks, which were unanimously praised for their beauty and quality. As one of the visitors to the exhibition recounted: "It was for the first time that the Potockis from Buczacz displayed their silks, woven with silver and gold in decorative motifs taken from old Polish sashes and Oriental wall hangings. This was really a small domestic-scale industry, taken up by Arthur, one of the Potocki brothers and an amateur painter himself, but it was very well organized indeed.... Everyone desired to have one of these silks, which were very cheap indeed, but the few on display were sold in an instant, so there were very few lucky buyers."³

1 Jan Bujak, *Muzealnictwo etnograficzne w Polsce do roku 1939 (Zeszyty Naukowe UJ, Prace Etnograficzne, z. 8)* (Cracow, Warsaw: PWN, 1975), p. 32.

2 Bujak, *Muzealnictwo etnograficzne*, p. 22.

3 The fragment comes from the memoirs of diplomat Kazimierz Chłędowski, and quoted by Zofia Chruszczyńska. Chruszczyńska also recalls the comment made by Kajetan Sołtan-Abgarowicz, then reviewer of the display, published in *Gazeta Lwowska* (1894, no. 177). Sołtan-Abgarowicz described ten weavers, members of the Nagórzański family, living alone in a forest, half a mile from the town, and not resembling in any way "the factory workers of today." As Abgarowicz writes: "Just as their products bring to mind the Orient and the Middle Ages, so they themselves have something mediaeval about them." Jadwiga Chruszczyńska, *Tapestries from Buczacz in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw* (Warsaw: National Museum, 1996), pp. 14–15.

The silks from Buczacz could also be seen in the Bride's Room, arranged by Countess Anna Potocka of Rymanów, who placed them together with furniture and domestic objects handmade in the Tatras and Podhale region. As Potocka later recalled in her memoirs: "In 1894 at the Lviv Exhibition, I arranged the Bride's Room to show that a useful and beautiful dowry can be made at home. And lovely indeed it was! The furnishings of the room and all the items inside such as the linen, clothes, overcoats, and the like were each and every one of them made here: pieces of furniture from Zakopane, lovely *kilims*, hangings from Buczacz, sheer curtains embroidered by highlander women from Rymanów, curtains handwoven in Zakopane and Gliniany, vestments woven from fine linen from Krosno and Korczyn, which was thin like cambric and trimmed with lace from Zakopane and Rymanów, lovely bobbin laces for trimming bed linen, a wash basin from Kołomyja, flower pots, Hutsul knick-knacks, and sculptures from Rymanów and Zakopane." And she continued: "The aim of furnishing the Bride's Room in the exhibition was to prove that everything can be made at home and that our Polish groschen need not be spent abroad but even most sophisticated and fine tastes can be satisfied with dowries made here."⁴

Anna Potocka's arrangement of the Bride's Room at the Lviv Exhibition was emblematic of the endeavor of the Polish patriotic elite towards the end of the nineteenth century to sustain a nation without state by resorting to economic, cultural, and educational measures after military actions to regain independence had failed. The Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania (Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów) disappeared from the map of Europe in 1795, when in the course of three subsequent partitions, its territories were annexed by the Russian Empire, the Habsburg Empire, and Prussia (since 1871, the German Empire), becoming three politically distinct units. The partitions also put an end to a separate Polish economy and social structure and with the decline of home industry, the former Commonwealth was becoming a market for imported goods. Potocka envisaged her arrangement of the Bride's Room with a dowry "made at home" as an alternative to the then-common practice of importing domestic furnishings from Vienna and other European cities, and the words from her memoirs ("no need to spend our Polish groschen") echo the ethos of the "organic work" that gained currency among the Polish intelligentsia in the latter half of the century.

Organic work meant activities at the grassroots level to resist cultural and economic colonization of the former Commonwealth, and the program was first masterminded in the intellectual-literary circles of the so-called Warsaw Positivists, who borrowed the concept from Herbert Spencer and argued that improvement of trade and industry as well as raising the literacy levels and national consciousness of the population were prerequisite to sustaining an

4 Anna Potocka z Działyńskich, *Mój pamiętnik* (1927) (Warsaw: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1973), pp. 292–293.

independent state.⁵ Implicitly, the organic approach was also related to cultivating things that were identified as homely and familiar, and the Polish word *swojski*, used to designate them, in the course of time became hugely popular and evolved into the name of a style of architecture and interior design, equated with Polishness, which could not be voiced overtly in all partitions.⁶ The outcome of organic endeavors was manifest, among others, in the establishment of vocational schools and workshops in Galicia, educating in handicrafts such as weaving, lace making, pottery, and woodcarving, which provided training and thus prospective employment to peasants; Potocka herself was a founder of three such establishments: in Krosno, Rymanów, and Korczyn. Other objects displayed in the Bride's Room and listed by Potocka include a wash basin, handwoven curtains, and pieces of furniture coming from similar establishments in Kołomyja, Zakopane, and Gliniany.⁷

Interestingly, Potocka's enthusiastic description of "a useful and beautiful dowry" that was "made here" and that could "satisfy even the most sophisticated and fine tastes" was also the mark of a novel perception of hand-crafted things, praised not only on economic grounds for "being made at home," but also for their aesthetic quality ("And lovely indeed it was!"). This re-appreciation of handicrafts was part of the broad sweep of the Arts and Crafts Movement that was spreading from Britain, whose reception has been the subject of increasing research, and the concurrent rise of ethnographic interests and studies, especially in the north of Europe. While British Arts and Crafts architects and designers, however, sought to save some crafts from extinction and to revive others (such as plasterwork, handweaving, and stained glass) largely in response to the effects of the Industrial Revolution and machine production, in the territories of the former Commonwealth as well as in still predominantly agrarian areas of northern and central Europe, such as Ireland, Hungary, and Finland, the resurgence of interest in handicrafts and vernacular revivals have

5 Norman Davies, *Heart of Europe: The Past in Poland's Present*, new edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 148–149. Brian Porter discusses the Positivists' activities at greater length in the section "Work, Work and Work" (p. 48 ff) of his book, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-century Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

6 The *swojski* style, inspired by the wooden architecture of southern Poland, had already been promoted in the 1880s by Franciszek Ksawery Martynowski, an art historian, and it became a viable notion in the first decade of the twentieth century. See Andrzej Szczerski, "Sources of Modernity: The Interpretation of Vernacular Crafts in Polish Design around 1900," *Journal of Modern Crafts* 1:1 (2008), pp. 57, 60.

7 The recently published book by Rostyslav Shmahalo on art education in Ukraine offers, among others, an interesting list of schools of weaving, embroidery, and lace-making in Galicia, with names of teachers and their own educational background. See Rostyslav Shmahalo, *Mystets'ka osvita v Ukraini seredyny XIX XIX-seredyny XX st.: strukturuvannia, metodolohiia, khudozhni pozytsii* (L'viv: Ukrain's'ki tekhnolohii, 2005), p. 188.

mostly been discussed in the historiography of the subject in terms of national romanticism or national revival.⁸

In Polish scholarship, a call for a “return to crafts,” voiced by a Romantic poet, Cyprian Kamil Norwid, in his *Promethidion*, has been accepted as one of the inspirations on the way to Polish applied art.⁹ Though the respective histories of these revivals, formally heralding modernity but ideologically subject to differing interpretations,¹⁰ are now part of the mainstream narrative of European modernism, there are still questions and points in this narrative that deserve further research, elaboration, or clarification. The fact that within the two decades around 1900 Galicia witnessed the revival of vernacular building and highlanders’ crafts in the Tatras, a proliferation of weaving workshops and schools of handicraft instructing in carpentry, embroidery, and lace-making, the revival of stained glass, and the emergence of Polish applied art should be viewed from a historical perspective that takes into account not only the otherwise unquestionable relationship of these developments to nascent modernity, but also the background to the complexities of Polish history in the nineteenth century against which they were set. Whereas it has been acknowledged that the vernacular revival was related to the rise of ethnography,¹¹ there has been little research done to discuss this aspect further. An entirely missing link in this narrative is that of the rise in collections of national memorabilia and historical artifacts, built up by the Polish nobility since the early nineteenth century, which was driven as much by the impetus of the age towards historical research as by the recognition of the political and aesthetic significance of collecting old Polish handicrafts. The history of “manor museums” in Wielkopolska and their collections has been an important area of research in Polish art history, but their relationship to the vernacular revival and modernity in architecture and interior design has not so far been analyzed or discussed.

8 At the conference in Helsinki, organized by the Ateneum Museum to accompany the “Kalevala” exhibition, the term “European revivals” was used in reference to the above developments in northern Europe.

9 Irena Huml, *Polska sztuka stosowana XX wieku* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, 1988), p. 9.

10 For example, Elizabeth Clegg draws attention to the overlapping Polish and Ukrainian claims to the culture of the Hutsuls, who regarded themselves as neither Polish nor Ruthenian, writing: “While the ‘Zakopane style’ was not without its exponents in Lemberg [Lviv], there was here less enthusiasm for the vernacular architecture of the Podhale region than for the traditional decorative forms – sartorial rather than architectural – associated with its eastern Galician counterpart.” Elizabeth Clegg, *Art, Design and Architecture in Central Europe 1890–1920* (London: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 122.

11 Małgorzata Omilanowska, “Searching for a National Style in Polish Architecture at the End of the 19th and Beginning of the 20th Century,” Nicola Gordon Bowe, ed., *Art and the National Dream: The Search for Vernacular Expression in Turn-of-the-Century Design* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1993), p. 100; Szczerski, “Sources of Modernity,” p. 60.

This paper sets out to put some hitherto separate threads in the history of Polish crafts around 1900 together, and it is a first attempt to highlight the bearing of the early collections of historical handicrafts in manor museums on the zeal for collecting ethnographic objects, which resulted in the subsequent creation of *styl swojski* in interior furnishings and architecture. Passionate interest in history and serious historical studies also underpinned



Illust. 1. Stanisław Witkiewicz, drawing of Koliba, 1892 (Photo: courtesy of the Tatra Museum in Zakopane)



Illust. 2. Poster advertising the Exhibition of Architecture and Interiors in Garden Settings, organized by the Polish Applied Arts Society in Cracow in 1912

the work of Stanisław Wyspiański, one of the most outstanding representatives of Polish modernism and a moving force behind the foundations of the Polish Applied Art Society, whose contribution to the Polish Arts and Crafts Movement at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is discussed later in this paper. The notion of Polishness, used in the title, touches upon a set of complex and sensitive issues related to the multi-ethnicity of the Commonwealth and its religious and linguistic diversity. As Norman Davies wrote, in the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries, a Protestant or Orthodox nobleman could have considered himself a Pole, even if his mother tongue were German or Ukrainian, yet in 1850, it would not be natural for his descendants to persist with such an idea. Though in terms of numbers, Polish national consciousness did not diminish and there were more people who regarded themselves as Poles in 1900 than in 1800, the understanding of their Polishness was varied.¹² This paper does not seek to enter an ideological debate on the changing perceptions of Polish national identity.¹³ It aims, instead, to offer an overview of the phenomenon

¹² Davies, *Heart of Europe*, p. 221.

¹³ A useful distinction in this respect has been drawn by Brian Porter, who distinguished between "an enacted Polishness (understood as a cluster of cultural practices) and the idea of the Polish nation" (Porter, *When Nationalism*, p. 7).

of “return to crafts” in the nineteenth century and in particular to probe more deeply into some self-conscious and deliberate articulations and enactments of Polishness in the revival of crafts in Galicia around 1900, with occasional reference to architecture. The time scope for this paper is the period between 1892 and 1912. In 1892, the first Polish Arts and Crafts house was built in Zakopane in the Tatras, giving birth to the so-called Zakopane style (**Illust. 1**). In 1912, the Exhibition of Architecture and Interiors in Garden Settings, organized by the Polish Applied Arts Society, was held in Cracow (**Illust. 2**), which further contributed to the shaping of a Polish way (*styl swojski*) of domestic architecture and interior design.

THE IMPACT OF PARTITIONS

According to Norman Davies, “for most of the period ‘Poland’ was just an idea – a memory from the past or a hope for the future.”¹⁴ Four hundred years of initially thriving state existence were followed by a century of struggle and action to restore independence.¹⁵ The means and measures adopted to achieve this purpose changed throughout the century and differed under three imperial governments. They ranged from military uprisings and diplomatic action to cultural resistance and economic effort, with education playing a consistently significant role throughout the century. The two abortive uprisings of 1830–1831 and 1863–1864 were followed by severe persecution of insurrectionists, who faced imprisonment, the death sentence, deportation, exile, and confiscation or sequestration of property and estate. The call to arms was replaced by a call to work.

The repressions were harshest after the January Uprising of 1863 and under Russian and Prussian governments. In 1876, in the territories annexed by Prussia, German became the exclusive language of administration and in 1887, the study of Polish as a second language was abolished.¹⁶ In 1886, Bismarck launched a campaign to buy out Polish landowners and a Colonization Commission was set up to enable the purchase of land by Junkers. The campaign provoked energetic economic resistance, triggering enterprise and resourcefulness to retain the land in the hands of Polish landowners and as a result, in Posnania, industriousness and efficient management became part of the patriotic ethos. It went in hand with efforts to reclaim sovereignty in learning

14 Davies, *Heart of Europe*, p. 139.

15 Norman Davies writes of the two great themes of the age being “the preservation of national identity and the restoration of national independence” (Davies, *Heart of Europe*, p. 152).

16 For a discussion of Polish nineteenth-century history, see Adam Zamoyski, *The Polish Way: A Thousand-year History of the Poles and Their Culture* (London: John Murray, 1989), especially chaps. 18 and 19, “Captivity” and the “Making of Modern Poland,” which have been used as a reference for this article.

and culture.¹⁷ In 1869, the Warsaw Main School (that had replaced Warsaw University) was turned into Russian University and in 1885, Russian became an official teaching language, with Polish a subject of clandestine instruction. The Russian governor of Vilnius, the ancient capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, in 1865 forbade the use of Latin fonts for books in Lithuanian, and a year later ordered the printing houses to destroy the Polish fonts as well as the forms for their casting.¹⁸ They were replaced by those of the Cyrillic alphabet.

The situation was different in Galicia, which in the late 1860s was granted considerable political and economic autonomy with Lviv becoming a seat of the Galician Diet and an administrative center of the region and a number of Polish MPs also sitting at the Reichsrat in Vienna. In western Galicia, towards the end of the century, Cracow was growing in importance as a cultural center. It was in Galicia that former insurrectionists could settle without the threat of imprisonment or exile and in the last decades of the century, the region naturally became the arena of concentrated Polish activity. Adrian Baraniecki, who on his return from England founded the Museum of Science and Industry in Cracow (Muzeum Techniczno-Przemysłowe), modeled on London's South Kensington Museum, or Kazimierz Dłuski, coming back from Paris to build a sanatorium in the Tatras, like many others, were former insurrectionists of 1863 or their descendants.

Throughout the period of partitions, culture was used as a powerful political weapon and from the beginning, literature provided an outlet for national feeling, aided by works of art, historical research, and the preservation of national and cultural heritage. Landscape painting became charged with coded emotions and in Warsaw, a group of painters known as the Gerson School (after the painter Wojciech Gerson) painted the fields, orchards, and wayside chapels set in the vast landscape of the Polish plains. The "secret speech of the landscape" – in the expression used by the poet Wincenty Pol – spoke as much of nature, whose symbolic potential was being explored elsewhere in Europe, as of the mother country.¹⁹ In Cracow, Jan Matejko, historical painter and professor at the Academy of Fine Arts, to elevate the national spirit, populated huge canvases with scenes from Polish history in which details of costume and armor were meticulously rendered and recreated with painstaking accuracy.

17 Zofia Kębłowska-Ostrowska, "Ze studiów nad architekturą XIX wieku w Wielkopolsce," *Sztuka XIX w. w Polsce. Naród-Miasto* (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1979), p. 73.

18 Kinga Szczepkowska-Naliwajek, *Dzieje badań nad dawnym rzemiosłem artystycznym w Polsce 1900–1939* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2005), p. 116.

19 A poet, Wincenty Pol, writing on native landscape painting ("O malarstwie i żywiole jego w kraju naszym," *Tygodnik Literacki* (no. 22–4, 1839)) used this expression, which is quoted by Ewa Micke-Broniarek in her excellent essay, "Pejzaż w malarstwie polskim drugiej połowy XIX wieku," *Krajobrazy* (exhibition catalogue) (Warsaw: Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, 2000), p. 217.

Matejko also prepared one of the early albums of Polish historical costumes, *Ubiory w Polsce 1200–1795* (1860), illustrated with his own drawings.²⁰

HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS IN MANOR MUSEUMS

One of the first responses to the ultimate partitioning of the Commonwealth was the surge of interest in national history and the ensuing rise in the collections of historical documents and memorabilia. They were founded by historical families and coincided with the all-European interest in the past and the advancement of historicism. For the Polish nobility, the collections were both a repository of family history and increasingly of national memories. The first of such establishments, which was both a family seat and a purposefully set up national shrine, was founded in Puławy by Princess Izabela Czartoryska in 1801. The Armory arranged in the Ball Room was furnished with war trophies reminiscent of past military feats,²¹ while works of art and antiquities were on display in the Gothic House.

Puławy provided a precedent, followed by the manor museums of Wielkopolska (under Prussian authority), notably Kórnik, Gołuchow, and Rogalin.²² In the borderlands of the Commonwealth (known in Polish as *kresy*) an important collection of this kind was founded by the Pawlikowski family of Medyka. The house in Kórnik, seat of the Działyński and afterwards the Zamoycki family, in the first half of the nineteenth century was rebuilt in a neo-gothic style by its energetic owner Tytus Działyński (1796–1861) and opened in 1858. Having witnessed the failure of military action,²³ he thought of Kórnik as “an edifice to store monuments of the national past.” In his notes, he referred to the castle as a “canvas for the embroidery of our most cherished hopes.” Building up a collection became an alternative for political activity “when the opportunity for action was missing”²⁴ and as such can be viewed as part of a greater educational idea. Działyński also believed that Polish peasants should be encouraged, too, to take pride in their national history and to safeguard old household objects, reminiscent of their own past.²⁵

While rebuilding Kórnik, Działyński employed local carpenters and craftsmen, who worked on the door frame and wooden floor of his bedroom and on the gilding, joinery, and woodwork of the Moorish Room, inspired by the pal-

20 Szczepkowska-Naliwajek, *Dzieje badań*, p. 52.

21 Kębowska-Ostrowska, “Ze studiów nad architekturą,” p. 75.

22 Kębowska-Ostrowska, “Ze studiów nad architekturą,” p. 73.

23 Działyński was an insurrectionist of the November Uprising of 1831, after which the Prussian authorities sequestered the estate in Kórnik. The authorities allowed Działyński to return after amnesty was granted in 1839.

24 The quotes come from “Notatki i bruliony T. Działyńskiego,” *Archiwum Działyńskich* 7296, Biblioteka Kórnicka (Kórnik Library), cited by Kębowska-Ostrowska in “Ze studiów nad architekturą,” p. 79.

25 Kębowska-Ostrowska, “Ze studiów nad architekturą,” p. 87.

ace of Alhambra, whose model by British architect Owen Jones Działyński saw in London in 1851.²⁶ A considerable number of pieces of furniture were made by local and Posnanian joiners and cabinetmakers, in collaboration with woodcarvers and woodturners. The models were provided by Działyński and his wife Cecylia and often copied from pattern books in the family library, especially after Loudon and Feucher.²⁷ The dining room had a wooden coffered ceiling, modeled upon the coffers at Wawel Royal Castle in Cracow and decorated with coats of arms of the most illustrious Polish knights from a mediaeval chronicler.²⁸

The core of Działyński's collection were books, documents, engravings, paintings, and old handicrafts. Textiles featured prominently in the collection, and included seventeen Polish silk sashes from renowned workshops (called *persjarnie*) of Lipków, Słuck, and Kobyłka, founded in the eighteenth century, as well as carpets and hangings embroidered with gold.²⁹ Two-sided Eastern sashes up to four meters long, usually of silk and often with gold and silver threads, grew to popularity in the seventeenth century. They became part of the traditional costume of the Polish nobility and gentry in the eighteenth century, and were made at the above mentioned *persjarnie* and in Przeworsk, Grodno, and Łańcut. The partitions contributed to their decline around 1800 and their ultimate closure, and the Potockis' weaving workshop in Buczacz, founded at the end of the 1870s, revived this tradition.³⁰ Towards the end of the nineteenth century, it would not have been unusual for a Polish nobleman to have his portrait painted in eighteenth-century costume, with a silk sash wrapped round his waist.

Jan Kanty Działyński, who inherited Kórnik in 1861, followed in his father's footsteps. For his participation in the January Uprising of 1863, he was sentenced to death by the Prussian authorities, but was able to return to Kórnik in 1869, being granted amnesty. Like his father, Tytus Działyński, he treasured old handicrafts and in a letter to his father, he wrote of gold embroidered caparisons from the family collection, which he intended to have repaired by a conservator in Paris: "I always think that it is our sacred duty to rescue our old monuments of past fame and wealth. It is not enough to selfishly enjoy them ourselves, but we must bequeath this heritage of eloquent memorabilia to future generations – the sight of beautiful models of our ancient accoutrements may then strike in many an indifferent heart a Polish chord."³¹ Like his father, he would also collect old Polish handicrafts: in 1861, he purchased a

26 Róża Kąsinowska, *Zamek w Kórniku* (Kórnik: Biblioteka Kórnicka Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1998), p. 142.

27 Kąsinowska, *Zamek*, p. 168.

28 Szczepkowska-Naliwajek, *Dzieje badań*, p. 42.

29 Kąsinowska, *Zamek*, p. 157.

30 Jadwiga Chruszczyńska, *Tkanina polska XV–XX wieku ze zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie* (exhibition catalogue) (Łódź: Biuro Wystaw Artystycznych, 1981).

31 A letter from Jan Kanty Działyński to his father from February 1860, Biblioteka Kórnicka (Kórnik Library) BK 7330, quoted after Kąsinowska, *Zamek*, p. 157.

silver gothic chalice and two gothic ampullas from the church in Kościan in Wielkopolska, which were shown in Paris in 1878 and in Lviv in 1894.³² Jan Kanty was the only son of Tytus Działyński, and his two sisters were Anna Potocka of Rymanów, who arranged the Bride's Room in Lviv, and Maria Zamoyska, mother of Władysław Zamoyski, to whom Kórnik passed in 1880 after Jan Kanty Działyński's heirless death. When in 1885 the Prussian government introduced severe restrictions on non-Prussian citizens in Wielkopolska, Zamoyski with his mother and sister were forced to move to Galicia and settled in Kuźnice, now part of Zakopane in the Tatras,³³ where his mother and sister founded the Home School for Women's Work (Szkoła Domowa Pracy Kobiet) and Zamoyski himself became active in local society. When in 1889 he purchased the lands of Zakopane, putting Kórnik in pledge and outbidding prospective non-Polish buyers, there was already in the village a small but lively community of doctors, artists, and landed gentry well integrated with the *górale* (local highlanders), for whom Podhale had been an area of considerable political freedom, healthy lifestyle, and artistic potential.

VERNACULAR REVIVAL IN THE TATRAS

The Tatras were introduced into the Polish collective imagination shortly after the partitions by Stanisław Staszic, founder of the first Society of the Friends of Science. In a study of the geological formation of the Carpathians, Staszic associated the mountain crags with the indomitable spirit of independence and later in the century, the peaks, lakes, and waterfalls of the Tatras featured prominently in Polish poetry and painting.³⁴ The attraction of the Tatras, however, like that of the Alps, was not confined to the sublime and the literary. In the 1870s, it had been recognized that the air of the Tatras, like that of the Alps, was particularly suitable for the treatment of respiratory diseases. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Tytus Chałubiński (1820–1889), a professor of surgery from Warsaw, in 1886, Zakopane, the major village of the region, obtained the status of climatic station, gradually transforming itself into a health resort. Chałubiński settled in Zakopane and actively took part in local life as a doctor, botanist, and organizer of group treks in the mountains, using local highlanders as guides. In 1873, he was one of the founders of the Tatra Society, whose initiative resulted in the founding of the School of Wood Carpentry. In 1883, Chałubiński's encouragement and the financial aid of actress Helena Modrzejewska, who was successful in American theaters under the stage name

32 Szczepkowska-Naliwajek, *Dzieje badań*, p. 43.

33 Kąsinowska, *Zamek*, p. 95.

34 Stanisław Staszic, *O ziemiórództwie Karpatów*, discussed by Jacek Kolbuszowski in his book on the Tatras in Polish literature, *Tatry w literaturze polskiej 1805–1939* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1982), p. 34.

Helena Modjeska, made it possible to establish the School of Lace-Making.³⁵ Both schools aimed to educate highlander boys and girls in useful crafts and to encourage the application of highlanders' motifs in woodwork and lace and both were also an economic endeavor to provide work for local people, when Galicia was notorious for its poverty. They grew out of the same ethos as that of organic work, sense of social responsibility, and economic concern that governed Potocka in founding the School of Carpentry in Rymanów (1873), the Weaving Society in Korczyn (1883) and, together with her daughter, a workshop of mechanical weaving for girls in Krosno (1901).

Countess Róża Krasińska and Maria and Bronisław Dembowski were among the earliest visitors to Zakopane. They came to the Tatras for health reasons and contributed to the rise in interest in the highlanders' culture. Krasińska, who lived in a basic wooden cottage for the sake of her children's health for over a decade, became fascinated with the highland culture in which she lived, and started to collect local handicrafts. One of the rooms of the cottage was furnished with genuine highlanders' items and in 1885, she commissioned a suite of furniture decorated with folk motifs, which is considered to be the first Polish instance of self-conscious application of vernacular ornamentation.³⁶ Krasińska was later remarried, to Edward Aleksander Raczyński of Rogalin, and the couple put together a significant collection of Polish and European paintings in Rogalin, for which a gallery was built. Raczyński seriously considered approaching Wyspiański to design a stained glass window for the gallery. One may find Raczyński's letter to Prof. Julian Nowak, a renowned bacteriologist and Wyspiański's friend, dated July 31, 1900, in the Rogalin archive. Raczyński asked for Nowak's help in making arrangements with the artist.³⁷ The idea did not get beyond that stage and ultimately, Raczyński purchased from Tiffany's stained glass in Paris and had the gallery designed so as to fit the window.

Bronisław Dembowski was a lawyer with considerable ethnographic interest, shared by his wife Maria, with whom they systematically built one of

35 The School of Carpentry within a short time changed its status and became one in the network of government-supported schools in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was renamed the School of Wood Industry and until 1901 was headed by non-Polish directors. David Crowley discussed the story of the school and Witkiewicz's campaign against it at length. See his *National Style and Nation-state: Design in Poland from the Vernacular Revival to the International Style* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), p. 22. On the oldest vocational schools at Zakopane, see also Halina Kenarowa, "Trzy najstarsze szkoły zawodowe w Zakopanem," Renata Dutkowska, ed., *Zakopane. Cztery lata dziejów* (Cracow: Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1991), pp. 605–634 *passim*.

36 Teresa Jabłońska, *Muzeum Stylu Zakopiańskiego im. Stanisława Witkiewicza* (Zakopane: Muzeum Tatrzańskie, 2002), p. 37.

37 Letter no. ROG 24 in the collection of Rogalin Palace Museum (*Muzeum Pałacu w Rogalinie, Oddział Muzeum Narodowego w Poznaniu*). I wish to extend my thanks here to Joanna Nowak, keeper of Rogalin Palace Museum, who drew my attention to this letter.



Illust. 3. Dembowski's ethnographic collection reconstructed in the Gąsienica-Sobczak Museum in Zakopane (photo: Jacek Możdżyński, courtesy of the Tatra Museum in Zakopane)

the first collections of highlanders' costumes and domestic objects, such as intricately carved wooden spoon holders, cheese moulds, pieces of embroidered clothing, and metalwork brooches, frequently saving from destruction unique eighteenth-century items (Illust. 3 and 4). In Lviv, Dembowski's collection was on loan in the ethnographic section.³⁸ The collection was also meant to provide models for domestic crafts and Dembowska herself designed a hanging inspired by broad forms of folk



Illust. 4. A set of old wooden spoons, cheese moulds, and a wooden ladle with a characteristic handle in the same collection as Illust. 3

pattern (Illust. 5). Yet another early collection of old highland farm tools, pottery, furnishings, and dresses that belonged to Zygmunt Gnatowski, a landowner from Ukraine, consumptive and Chałubiński's patient, who since 1883 had been coming to Zakopane. Gnatowski initially intended to have a wooden hut built for himself in Zakopane, with one room for the display of his collection, but he became converted by Stanisław Witkiewicz, an artist friend of the Dembowskis, to the idea of a house modeled on vernacular buildings but adapted to the more sophisticated needs of a modern villa dweller. Finished in 1892, Koliba became the first Polish Arts and Crafts house (Illust. 1).

Stanisław Witkiewicz (1851–1915) who provided drawings for the layout and interior furnishings of Koliba, was not an architect.

He spent his youth in Siberia, where his family was exiled for his father's participation in the January Uprising of 1863 and he later studied painting in St. Petersburg and Munich. It is not unlikely that during his studies in Russia he came across Russian vernacular revival,³⁹ whereas in

³⁸ Bujak, *Muzealnictwo etnograficzne*, p. 32.

³⁹ Zbigniew Możdziej, "Koncepcja stylu narodowego Stanisława Witkiewicza i jej realizacja," Z. Możdziej, ed., *Stanisław Witkiewicz. Człowiek-artysta-myśliciel* (Zakopane: Tatra Museum, 1997), p. 304.

Munich, he became enthused with a modern notion of form, autonomous of content. On his return, Witkiewicz settled in Warsaw, ardently advocating modernist art theory in Warsaw journals.⁴⁰ Like Gnatowski, Witkiewicz was a consumptive and when he moved to Zakopane to recuperate, he immediately acted as a catalyst to the developments that were already under way. Witkiewicz brought to the Tatras his unquenchable aesthetic standards, commitment to the national cause, and the eye to



Illust. 5. Koliba (1892), Zygmunt Gnatowski's room reconstructed by the Tatra Museum, with textiles embroidered to Maria Dembowska's design (photo courtesy of the Tatra Museum in Zakopane)

see and use the artistic potential of the place. The dramatic photographic views of the mountains that he painted are among the best of their kind. Witkiewicz saw this rich culture debased and shortly became involved in a campaign for the application of vernacular models to buildings and decorations, which for him epitomized *styl swojski* and the old Polish ways of building, and which in the end became known as the "Zakopane style."⁴¹

Koliba, which in the local dialect meant the "shepherds' shelter," was his first exercise in vernacular idiom, but despite its name, it marked a departure from modest highlanders' houses. Witkiewicz did not aim to reproduce the form of the highland hut in Zakopane, but sought to employ the vernacular building tradition, with its characteristic proportions, carpentry joints, and ornamentation to "more elevated architectural forms" of mountain villas.⁴² He drafted his vision on paper and the interior arrangement of space was left to Maciej Gąsienica Józkowy (the master carpenter) and *budarze* (highlander builders) Jasiek Stachoń, Staszek Bobak, and Klimek Bachleda. Wojciech Brzega and Józef Kaspruś Stoch worked on the woodcarvings.⁴³ Witkiewicz

40 Witkiewicz is most often discussed as the founder of the Zakopane style. Jan Cavanaugh's focus on his modernist dedication to form reminds of his role as art critic and painter, likely to be overshadowed by his design of houses and interiors, and of the existence of a firm theoretical basis for his aesthetic views. See Jan Cavanaugh, *Out Looking In: Early Modern Polish Art 1890–1918* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 25–27.

41 In 2008, Teresa Jabłońska's authoritative survey of Witkiewicz's houses in the Zakopane style was published, rich in period photographs and selections from the writings. See her *The Zakopane Style of Stanisław Witkiewicz* (Olszanica: Bosz, 2008).

42 Jabłońska, *Muzeum*, pp. 31–32.

43 Jabłońska, *Muzeum*, p. 12.



Illust. 6. Stanisław Witkiewicz, stylized lily in the window, Koliba (photo courtesy of the Tatra Museum in Zakopane)

himself was responsible for the design of the decorative motifs and most of the furnishings, including the curtains with an embroidered pattern derived from woolen trousers worn by highlanders, the doors and windows, with characteristic joints in the framing and a motif of sun rays, the iron gratings in the windows, and the wood carvings with stylized lily flowers (Illust. 6). In the Arts and Crafts manner, he designed some minutiae of the decoration, such as the ornamental hinges of the shelves or a coffee set, whose handles were modeled on wooden ladles used by shepherds (Illust. 7). The set was made of porcelain in Sevres and was known as "Le Style Polonaise," and another version of it in engraved silver was made by a Cracow jeweler, Wojciechowski.⁴⁴

Witkiewicz's rich knowledge of repertory forms and decorative motifs, characteristic of the folk arts in the Tatras and Podhale region, was a result of his collaboration with Władysław Matlakowski, the author of two monumental volumes, *Budownictwo ludowe na Podhalu* (Vernacular building in Podhale) and *Zdobienie i sprzęt ludu polskiego na Podhalu* (Decorations and domestic utensils of Polish people in Podhale), published respectively in 1892⁴⁵ and 1901 (Illust. 8). Matlakowski (1850–1895) was a distinguished surgeon from Warsaw, who modernized Warsaw hospital wards and introduced Joseph Lister's antiseptic method into hospital practice, and was very well-read and traveled.⁴⁶ In 1891, because of advances in the treatment of tuberculo-



Illust. 7. Stanisław Witkiewicz, tea set (photo courtesy of the Tatra Museum in Zakopane)

44 Jabłońska, *Muzeum*, p. 74.

45 Władysław Matlakowski, *Budownictwo ludowe na Podhalu* (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności, 1892).

46 Janusz Kapuściak, *Władysław Matlakowski. Lekarz-Pisarz-Uczony* (Warsaw: Biblioteka Medyczna, 1995), p. 78.

sis, Matlakowski gave up his practice in Warsaw and moved with his family to Zakopane. In the Tatra, he devoted most of his impressive energy to documenting vernacular buildings and ornamentation, and Witkiewicz provided some drawings for his first volume, published in 1892, the same year in which Koliba was built. At the Home Exhibition in Lviv in 1894, it was Matlakowski who was responsible for the presentation and interior furnishing of a wooden cottage from Zakopane displayed in the ethnographic section.⁴⁷ While Koliba was Witkiewicz's first house in the Zakopane style, the house Under the Firs was his most eloquent and elaborate product on the subject, a perfect embodiment of the ambition "to elevate" vernacular forms. The House was built in 1896 for Jan Gwalbert Pawlikowski, whose family in Medyka owned a notable collection of national antiquities. Like Koliba, it conformed to the ideal of the unity of arts and architecture, and its furnishings made generous use of local craftsmanship and vernacular ornamentation.

Identified as quintessentially *swojski*, the Zakopane style was gaining momentum and popularity among more progressively minded Poles and it soon became successfully promoted outside the Tatra. Costumes decorated with highlander motifs or pieces of furniture and textiles were displayed with great success during the exhibitions, and an outlet in Warsaw was opened for the sale of clothes in the Zakopane style. Witkiewicz himself launched a campaign for the introduction of the style into furniture design and in 1904, the first issue of Witkiewicz's

Zeszyty o Stylu Zakopiańskim (Cahiers on the Zakopane style) was published,



Illust. 8. Władysław Matlakowski, highland cheese moulds illustrated in *Zdobienie i sprzęt ludu polskiego na Podhalu*, 1901



Illust. 9. Jan Szczepkowski, interior of a chapel with Szczepkowski's woodcarvings and Wanda Kossecka's kilims (photograph from the exhibition in Paris, 1925)

⁴⁷ Bujak, *Muzealnictwo etnograficzne*, p. 22.

devoted to the furnishing of the dining room.⁴⁸ Witkiewicz's message was taken across the partitioned territories and in the interwar period, after Poland reappeared on the maps of Europe in 1918, it contributed to the shaping of the "national style" in Polish architecture and interior design, underpinned by folk inspiration. The chapel, designed and sculpted by Jan Szczepkowski, himself a disciple of the School of Woodcarving in Zakopane, for the Polish section of L'Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs in Paris in 1925, which was purchased by the French government, may be viewed as an exemplar of the style (**Illust. 9**).



Illust. 10. Karol Kłosowski, *Willa Cicha*, contemporary view of the woodcarvings on the balcony (photographed by the author)



Illust. 11. Karol Kłosowski, *Willa Cicha*, floral pattern on the wall of the kitchen (photographed by the author, courtesy of the artist's family)

While Witkiewicz's ambition was to extract all-Polish forms from the vernacular traditions of the Tatras and use them as the foundation of the national style, Karol Kłosowski employed the highland culture to create in Zakopane a house beautiful for himself. Kłosowski was thirty years younger than Witkiewicz, his family roots were in the borderlands, and as a boy, he attended the School of Wood Industry (formerly the School of Carpentry) in Zakopane. He then went to Vienna to study sculpture and afterwards studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow. In 1907, because of tuberculosis, Kłosowski settled in Zakopane, where he married his first wife, a highlander poet. They started to live in his wife's modest dwelling, which in the course of years was transformed into an artistic house, rebuilt, furnished, and decorated by Kłosowski himself (**Illust. 10**). The

house was named *Cicha*, the "silent villa," and it has survived in the hands of the family like a fairytale dwelling until today: modest in size, richly decorated with woodcarvings, and lined with handwoven textiles, with Kłosowski's canvas paintings and handpainted ornaments on the walls (**Illust. 11**). The motifs profusely drawn from the world of nature share the subtle fretwork quality with Kłosowski's lacework and paper cut-outs (**Illust. 12 and 13**).⁴⁹ There is

48 Stanisław Witkiewicz, *Zeszyty o Stylu Zakopiańskim. Zeszyt I – Pokój Jadalny* (Lviv: H. Altenberg, 1904).

49 Edyta Supińska-Polit, "'The World Is Different Here': Arts and Crafts in the Polish Tatras," *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History* 9 (2004), p. 45.

a frieze of grasshoppers painted on the stove and a spider's web intricately chiseled on the door that bears the inscription "Aurora Musis Amica" (Illust. 14). Even the dog's kennel and children's sledges were richly carved in wood.

Although Cicha stands out as a unique instance of dedication to art, nature, and handicrafts, Kłosowski's contribution to the revival of craftsmanship was not confined to his own house. In Zakopane, he worked as a teacher at the School of Wood Industry and later at the School of Lace-Making and in 1909, he was one of the founding members of the Podhale Arts Society, which included among others Witkiewicz's collaborators (Stanisław Barabasz and Wojciech Brzega) and Jan Rembowski, painter and designer. The Podhale Arts Society organized joint exhibitions of painting, sculpture, furniture, and textiles (Illust. 15), initially held in private rooms and in 1910, it was followed by Kilim, one of the weaving workshops that contributed significantly to the revival of handwoven textiles.⁵⁰ By then, however, another body dedicated to the ideals of craftsmanship and modernity emerged, the Polish Applied Art Society, founded in Cracow in 1901. The Society's first commission was for Dr. Kazimierz Dłuski's sanatorium in Kościelisko, a village neighboring Zakopane.



Illust. 12. Karol Kłosowski, a paper cut-out with a decorative motif of mountain goats in the collection of *Willa Cicha* (photographed by the author)



Illust. 13. Karol Kłosowski, lacework (photograph from the exhibition in Paris, 1925)

THE POLISH APPLIED ARTS SOCIETY AND THE ADVANCE OF MODERNITY

Like Chałubiński and Matlakowski, Dłuski was one of those Polish doctors whose contribution to culture is no less significant than to medicine and the natural sciences. The family came from the borderlands, and Dłuski was first the educated as a lawyer. In his youth, he was involved in the socialist movement and in 1863 took part in the January Uprising, for which he was sent

⁵⁰ Huml, *Polska sztuka*, pp. 44–45.



Illust. 14. Karol Kłosowski, a detail of the frieze (photographed by the author)

sanatorium in Kościelisko was modeled upon Dr. Turban's establishment in Davos, employing climatic and dietary treatment. In line with the thinking that an agreeable ambience was as important for the well-being of patients as healthy air and a nourishing diet, Dłuski invited artists of the just-founded Polish Applied Art Society to furnish the common rooms.⁵² Work on the sanatorium began in 1900 and it was opened in 1902. Between 1908–10, some alterations and refurbishments were introduced into the original arrangement and in the end, the sanatorium had its library cum reading room and music room designed by Karol Frycz and Henryk Uziembło from the Polish Applied Art Society, and a living room designed by Jan Rembowski, a member of the Podhale Arts Society. The furniture for the little dining room was made in the Zakopane style by

to Siberia. Having managed to escape, Dłuski made his way to France. In Paris he studied medicine at the Sorbonne, where he met his future wife, Bronislawa, sister of Marie Curie, who became one of the shareholders in the building of the sanatorium. In 1900, the Dłuskis moved to Zakopane.⁵¹ Dłuski was well acquainted with the most recent European developments in the treatment of respiratory diseases and his



Illust. 15. The Podhale Arts Society exhibition rooms (photo courtesy of the Tatra Museum in Zakopane)

51 More information on Dłuski's sanatorium is in my paper "La station de montagne de Zakopane 1886–1914. Les insurgés, les médecins, les artistes," *Les 15 glorieuses de l'architecture sanatoriale* (Passy: C.R.E.H.A., 2006), pp. 73–75. In this paper, I referred to Darmas Zofia, "Wnętrza Sanatorium Dłuskich w Zakopanem i Domu Towarzystwa Lekarskiego w Krakowie," unpublished M. A. manuscript (Lublin, 1988) preserved in the library of the Tatra Museum, sign. AR/No 10/16.

52 Such a view was espoused earlier in England by the philanthropic Kyrle Society, which invited artists to decorate, for example, hospital wards.

Wojciech Brzega (**Illust. 16**).

Though stylistically varied and ranging from vernacular to neo-classical idiom, the interiors of the rooms testified to the new recognition of a parity between arts and crafts. The library cum reading room by Frycz was a par excellence embodiment of the ideal of unity and stylistic integrity, sought by the Arts and Crafts Movement and Art Nouveau, and well known to Frycz, who was educated in Munich, London, and at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Vienna. In a frieze running along the room, he combined an Art Nouveau peacock with highlanders' *parzenica*, and the stylized peacock was repeated in the decoration of an impressive doorframe linking the library with the reading room, and in the balusters and the glass cover of the bookshelves. The spacious living room was connected to the music room and was also used for theatrical performances and lectures.

Its walls were paneled in wood and decorated with built-in canvases painted in oils by Rembowski, Dłuski's friend and protégé. Rembowski's painting of the "Highlanders Marching" was a homage to the richness of the highland culture and to the local carpenters and builders, who worked on the sanatorium, and whose faces feature in the canvases (**Illust. 17**). Rembowski also designed the stained glass window for the living room – a majestic representation of the Queen of the Tatras, which may have been inspired by the work of Stanisław Wyspiański, Rembowski's teacher in Cracow. In contrast to the living room and library, whose designs drew upon vernacular traditions and Art Nouveau, the music room by Henryk Uziembło revived the classical spirit. Uziembło, like Frycz, studied in Austria, and in France became acquainted with the work of Eugene Grasset, a renowned stained glass designer and in England with the



Illust. 16. Karol Frycz and Franciszek Mączyński, Interior of Jama Michalika's cafe in Cracow



Illust. 17. Jan Rembowski, "Highlanders Marching," living room in Dr. Kazimierz Dłuski's sanatorium in Kościelisko-Zakopane, 1908–10 (photo from *Sztuka Stosowana*, Cracow 1910)

collection of applied art at the South Kensington Museum. In its classical restraint, the music room represented a modern attitude, geared towards function and emphatically committed to space and light.

Despite its stylistic diversity, Dłuski's sanatorium represented well the advance of modernity and its liaison with medicine, whereby the medical discoveries and hygiene considerations of the nineteenth century translated themselves into a novel commitment to space, air, and light. The collaboration between Polish artists and architects on the one hand and doctors on the other, and the latter's enlightened patronage and encouragement of modern attitudes, may have been due to the fact that these circles were particularly susceptible to new developments in the arts as much as in the sciences. Doctors, like Matlakowski or Dłuski, were well familiar with current discoveries and trends in medicine, and artists who embraced novel ideas responded to what was going on in Paris, Vienna, and London. Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau, and Sezession were not only in the air but were part of the life experience of a generation that, as a rule, was educated as much abroad as at home, partly because of the political situation. The work of the Polish Applied Art Society on Dłuski's sanatorium spanned the two forces that had already been at work behind the revival of Polish crafts: the early ethnographic research and collecting and the influence of modern art movements in Europe. The former was particularly concerned with central and northern Europe and Russia, and it contributed to the Arts and Crafts Movement in the Tatras as well as to artistic colonies in Gödollo and Abramtsevo. The latter, which produced van de Velde in Belgium, Mackintosh in Scotland, and Saarinen (the elder) in Finland, in Poland found its most potent expression in the work of Stanisław Wyspiański.

STANISŁAW WYSPIAŃSKI AND THE POLISH ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT

Stanisław Wyspiański (1869–1907) was a painter and playwright, who also designed theater costumes and stage sets, furniture and textiles, stained glass and wall paintings, room interiors and exhibition displays, book covers, vignettes, and typefaces. He was born in Cracow, at that time a town enclosed within decaying medieval city walls, pulled down and replaced by the green belt of Planty during Wyspiański's lifetime. His father was a sculptor, and the view from his study in Kanonicza Street at Wawel Hill and Royal Castle early on impressed itself on Wyspiański's imagination. In 1887, Wyspiański joined the Cracow School of Fine Arts, headed by Jan Matejko, a celebrated historical painter, and in the same year, he enrolled at the Historical-Philosophical Faculty of the Jagiellonian University to study the art history. It was also the year of his first independent tour round eastern Galicia, through Lviv, Drohobycz, and Stanisławów (now Ivano-Frankiv'sk) to study old religious buildings and draw sketches of Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches, synagogues, and

53 Marta Romanowska, *Stanisław Wyspiański* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Kluszczyński, 2004), p. 11.

parish buildings.⁵³ Wyspiański's apprenticeship to Matejko and their later collaboration on the polychromes for St. Mary's Church (Kościół Mariacki), where he could examine daily the best mediaeval stained glass in Cracow, marked his introduction into the crafts.⁵⁴ Wyspiański's interest in handicrafts and his habit of documenting old objects and buildings were also triggered by his contacts with art historians: Marian Sokołowski, a professor at the Jagiellonian University and author of pioneering studies on mediaeval goldsmiths,⁵⁵ and Władysław Łuszczkiewicz, one of the initiators of the documentation of historical buildings.⁵⁶

In 1890, Wyspiański embarked on a tour to study European gothic cathedrals and his itinerary included Venice, Basel, Como, Chartres, Augsburg, and Prague. A year later, he went to Paris and enrolled at the Académie Colarossi. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Paris took over the position of Munich for Polish art students and during his three years in France, Wyspiański would draw Gothic cathedrals, systematically survey museum collections, study, and lead a bohemian life. When leaving for Paris, he took with him a peasant's scarf, visible in the pastel drawing of his Parisian atelier in 1893, a gesture symptomatic of the time, when folklore and primitive cultures were being discovered. In Galicia, it was the richness of the costume and traditions of the highlanders in the Tatras and of the Hutsuls of Czarnohora in the Eastern Carpathians that mostly engaged artists' imaginations.⁵⁷ The same instinct for vibrant colors and homespun textures made Wyspiański hunt out Cracow market places and purchase peasant clothing, which later inspired some designs of his actors' costumes. In search of decorative motifs, Wyspiański also consulted the pattern book of folk ornaments by Seweryn Udziela, Oskar Kolberg's pioneering work on ethnographic studies, and Matlakowski's already-mentioned studies on vernacular buildings and ornaments in Podhale.

Elements of the stage set for *Bolesław Śmiały* were on display in the exhibition, organized by the Cracovian Society of Friends' of Fine Arts in 1904 to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary and presented in the show room of the Society of Polish Artists or "Sztuka" (meaning "art"). Founded in 1897 in Cracow by a group of painters, with Wyspiański as one of the leading founding members, "Sztuka" maintained close links with Vienna Sezession, and in March 1898,

54 Romanowska, *Stanisław Wyspiański*, pp. 12–13.

55 Szczepkowska-Naliwajek, *Dzieje badań*, p. 92.

56 Romanowska, *Stanisław Wyspiański*, p. 11.

57 In 1902, Wyspiański was on holiday in Zakopane, where he met Maria Dembowska and saw her ethnographic collection. He also went to Kołomyja to purchase Hutsul items, bringing home, among others, painted pottery (Anna Rudzińska, "Kalendarium Życia i Twórczości," *Stanisław Wyspiański* (centenary exhibition catalogue), Warsaw: Muzeum Narodowe, 2007, p. 33). Patrice M. Dabrowski's essay offers an informative and insightful account of the "discovery" of the highland culture of the Hutsuls and the phenomenon of *Huculszczyzna*. See his "'Discovering' the Galician Borderlines: The Case of the Eastern Carpathians," *Slavic Review* 64:2 (2005), pp. 380–402.

Wypiański, together with "Sztuka," took part in the Sezession's first exhibition (Vereinigung der Bildenden Künstler Österreichs).⁵⁸ In 1904 in Cracow, he was responsible for the arrangement of the Society's room and his juxtaposition of a stage set together with paintings and sculptures was one of the earliest instances of the recognition of the new status of crafts on parity with the fine arts. In the same year, "Sztuka" was also represented at the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition in St. Louis and at exhibitions in Lviv, Düsseldorf, and Leipzig.⁵⁹ The year 1904 marks the high point in Wypiański's career as a designer: in addition to his design of the exhibition room and of the interior furnishings in the apartment of the newlyweds Zofia and Tadeusz Żeleński in Cracow, he completed work on the House of the Medical Society and the stained glass and wall paintings in the Franciscan church, his opus magnum.

There is a continuity of approaches between the Bride's Room in Lviv and the Żeleńskis' apartment in Cracow (**Illust. 18**), as both were furnished with hand-



Illust. 18. Stanisław Wyspiański, living room of Zofia and Tadeusz Żeleński reconstructed in Wyspiański Museum, Cracow

crafted pieces "made at home," and both very deliberately chosen to be so. Wypiański was a good friend of the bride's mother, an enthusiast of his art, and the idea of Wypiański taking charge of the design was born between the two. The furnishings were a wedding gift, in line with Potocka's thinking that "even the most sophisticated and fine tastes can be satisfied with dowries made here." In the meantime, another magnificent handcrafted wedding gift was commissioned in

Cracow, which was a six-meter-long sash from weaving mills in Buczacz for the marriage of the daughter of Stanisław Badeni, then-governor of Galicia, to Count Adam Krasiński in 1897.⁶⁰ Twenty years later, Tadeusz Żeleński, doctor and translator of Montaigne and Proust, who for a couple of years lived with his wife Zofia in an apartment at 6 Karmelicka Street in Cracow, recollected the experience as follows: "Ruthlessly uncomfortable as they were, they were beautiful as a whole,"⁶¹ adding elsewhere: "I imagine that Wypiański arranged

58 Romanowska, *Stanisław Wyspiański*, p. 25.

59 Cavanaugh, *Out Looking In*, p. 245.

60 Chruszczyńska, *Tapestries*, p. 15.

61 Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński, "Historia pewnych mebli," *Tadeusz Żeleński-Boy o Wyspiańskim* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1973, first published in *Kurier Poranny*, no. 322 in 1927), p. 76.

furniture for a private home a little as he would have arranged a stage design, without any consideration of the 'actors,' who were to live among it day in and day out for the rest of their lives."⁶²

Ponderous pieces for the living room, veneered with sycamore wood, were upholstered with harsh cloth, made of tightly spun hare wool and dyed amaranth. The narrow seats were frugally filled with sea grass, and instead of ribbon lining, finished with hand-driven studs. Curtains and hangings were embroidered with geranium flowers, popular in Cracow homes and commonly referred to as "Cracovians."⁶³ There is a description of the apartment by Tadeusz Żeleński: "It was Wyspiański's principle to have the walls, upholstery, and curtains in one color, curtains and upholstery of thick, homespun cloth, and muslins in the windows dyed in the same elementary color. The bedroom was of Scotch elm, with walls lined in grey; grey curtains were embroidered with a magnificent border of apple flowers drawn by Wyspiański. The dining room was in the color of hazelnut, with dark blue walls."⁶⁴ The pieces were deliberately austere and their styled simplicity was to evoke associations with Polish mediaeval history. Wyspiański designed all the details, too, and as the scheme was quite exclusive, only his own paintings and drawings were hung on the walls so as not to interfere with the unity of the interior. This can be viewed as a model application of the then viable idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

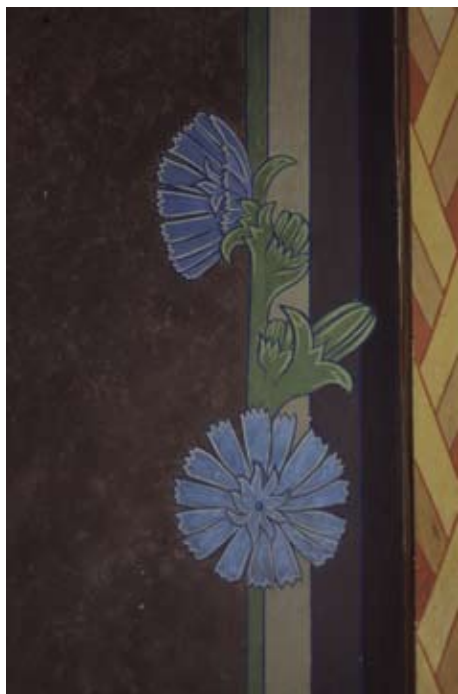
The old Gothic church of the Franciscan Order, whose interior decorations designed by Wyspiański have survived intact until now, was substantially damaged by the great fire of 1850 in Cracow and again in 1895, Wyspiański was invited by Władysław Ekielski, an architect, to work on the reconstruction of its interiors. The work was carried out in two stages: in 1895–6, the walls of the chancel and transept were decorated with polychrome paintings, and in 1904, the stained glass windows were completed. Wyspiański's work in the Franciscan church is a magnificent hymn to creation and the forces of life. The stained glass window above the western entrance, with the figure of God the Father, in the dramatic gesture of *Fiat*, is towering above the nave. Representations of the four elements and the outburst of vegetal life in the windows at the opposite end respond to the Word, subtly orchestrated with a flow of sunlight. The colors in the northern windows of the eastern end are warm; on the southern side, greens and blues prevail. St. Francis, patron of the church, and blessed Salomea, prioress of one of the first Polish monasteries of the Order of Poor Clares, are represented in the eastern windows of the apse. Wyspiański was personally responsible for the selection of high-quality glass for the windows: in 1898, he visited Tiroler Glasmalerei und Cathedralen-Glashutte from

62 Boy-Żeleński, "Historia," p. 72.

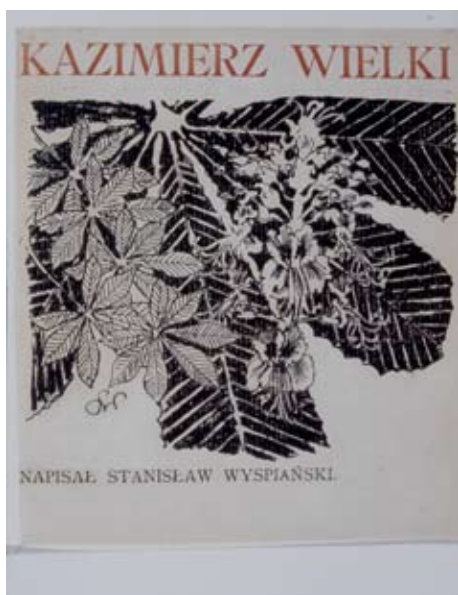
63 This insight into Cracoviana as well as information on several other details of Wyspiański's work I owe to my conversation with Marta Romanowska, curator of Wyspiański Museum in Cracow, in 2005.

64 Boy-Żeleński, "Historia," p. 76.

65 Romanowska, *Stanisław Wyspiański*, p. 25.



Illust. 19. Stanisław Wyspiański, detail of a wall painting with a chicory flower in the chancel of the Franciscan Church in Cracow, 1897–1904 (photographed by the author)



Illust. 20. Stanisław Wyspiański, book cover for the artist's play *Kazimierz Wielki* (Casimir the Great), with a motif of a chestnut flower, 1900

Innsbruck,⁶⁵ which made special iridescent glass and later, he spent two weeks in the town, supervising the making of stained glass for the Franciscans. During World War II, the glass was dismantled and reassembled afterwards.

The rampant vegetation in the stained glass was matched by profuse polychromatic flowers on the walls: nasturtium and roses, cornflowers and chicory, geranium and dead-nettle (Illust. 19). Through his studies of old herbals, painted *retabula*, embroideries, and ecclesiastical garments, Wyspiański developed considerable expertise in plants. In 1896–7, he produced his own *Herbal*, a sketchbook of over fifty pages, filled with drawings of common flowers, a number of them local wayside perennials. In a spirit akin to Burne-Jones's *Book of Flowers*, Wyspiański invented his own names, different from botanical or common ones. In the Franciscan church, flowers and plants, though stylized in the characteristic manner of their time, constitute an organic part of the interior, whose selection might have been governed by a handbook for naturalistic gardeners of the time. Dead-nettle (*Lamium album*), which until today has persisted as a common weed in Cracow's Planty, was also used by Wyspiański on the cover of *Rocznik Krakowski* (Cracow yearly) in 1900, published by the Society of Friends of Cracow History, while roses and thistles were part of the decorative border of the art magazine *Życie* (Life), with whom Wyspiański collaborated between 1898 and 1900. Wyspiański's contribution to typography and book printing, however, was not confined to sheer ornamentation. The artist was also responsible for the reform of typefaces and he designed the types used by three printing houses in Cracow: *Czas* (Time) daily newspaper, Jagiellonian University, and *Rocznik Krakowski* (Cracow

yearly). Wyspiański also designed covers for his plays (**Illust. 20**) and posters, thoroughly respectful of the idea of visual unity and integration of text, image, and layout,⁶⁶ which underlay the Arts and Crafts revival of high-quality book printing, initiated by William Morris's Kelmscott Press in England. On one of the covers, for his play, *Bolesław Śmiały*, he incorporated into the design a reproduction of a precious sixteenth-century ecclesiastical embroidery, from the Treasury of Wawel Royal Castle.

Wyspiański's last major project of 1904 was for the House of the Medical Society in Cracow, a commission he received on recommendation from Prof. Juliusz Nowak, his friend and collector, mentioned before in connection with Rogalin stained glass. While the interior of the Franciscan church was Wyspiański's theater for the creation of life, the decorative scheme for the House explored solar symbolism. As the Society's patron was Mikołaj Kopernik (Copernicus), references to the heliocentric system and *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium* provided the basis for the overall design. The stained glass in the staircase was occupied by Apollo, a Greek god embodying solar energy and perhaps subtly alluding to the healing power of sunlight. The staircase was painted bright yellow and decorated with a frieze of chestnut flowers, and its pillars were modeled upon the courtyard of Collegium Maius, the oldest college of Jagiellonian University, where Copernicus studied astronomy. The assembly hall was painted pink, and a kilim with geranium flowers, designed by Wyspiański and handwoven in the workshop of Antonina Sikorska in Czernichów, lined the wall.

Sikorska's weaving workshop in Czernichów near Cracow was one of several such workshops founded at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Galicia to revive the tradition of handwoven kilims, used in the Commonwealth since the sixteenth century. Until the second half of the nineteenth century, kilims were very popular in the furnishings of country manors (the "courtly" type) and peasant houses (the "folk" type), not least for the sake of warmth during the long winters. In the second half of the nineteenth century, they were increasingly replaced by machine-made products and around 1900, attempts were made to revive traditional kilims made by peasants. Weaving workshops, such as Sikorska's in Czernichów or Władysław Fedorowicz's in Okno, became increasingly popular and the craft received a further boost from the Polish Applied Art Society and the Hutsul Art Society.⁶⁷ Sikorska's workshop was used by artists such as Wyspiański, Trojanowski, and Tichy for its high-quality weaving and continued until around 1910, when some of its skilled weavers were taken over by the Kilim workshop of Zakopane, mentioned before.⁶⁸ The last major

66 Romanowska, *Stanisław Wyspiański*, p. 28.

67 Marta Michałowska, *Słownik terminologiczny włókiennictwa* (Warsaw: Ośrodek Dokumentacji Zabytków (Seria B, Tom XCII), 1995), pp. 132-135.

68 Beata Biedrońska-Słota, *Kilimy i batiki z pracowni krakowskich (1900-1930) w zbiorach Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie* (Museum Narodowe w Krakowie, 2004), p. 4.

commission for kilims from Czernichów was for the Exhibition of Architecture and Interiors in Garden Settings, organized by the Polish Applied Art Society in 1912 and shown in Cracow and Warsaw, at which handwoven textiles featured prominently in interior furnishings. In 1913, the Society organized a Home Exhibition of Old and Contemporary Kilims in Lviv.⁶⁹ Wyspiański's geranium hanging for the Medical Society contributed to the awakening of interest in handwoven textiles and their revival, which continued well into the twentieth century, making decorative wall hangings of sophisticated simplicity part of the furnishings of many a home of the Polish intelligentsia.

THE EXHIBITION OF ARCHITECTURE AND INTERIORS IN GARDEN SETTINGS (1912)

The revival of craftsmanship was an integrating factor for that section of Polish society wishing to sustain and cultivate Polishness under the partitions and at the same time responding to novel trends and modernity. The Polish Applied Art Society (Towarzystwo Polska Sztuka Stosowana), founded in 1901 in Cracow, soon became popular among the Polish intelligentsia of the three partitions,⁷⁰ and among its members, the Society included painters, sculptors, and architects as well art historians, art lovers, and patrons of the arts and crafts. The founding members were painters Józef Czajkowski, Stanisław Goliński, Włodzimierz Tetmajer, Karol Tichy, and Edward Trojanowski, and Jerzy Warchałowski, a lawyer and art historian, first acted as the Society's secretary and then as its president. In 1909, Warchałowski translated Hermann Muthesius's *Applied Art and Architecture*, which was published in Cracow by Baraniecki's Museum, and in 1912, he was commissioning kilims in Czernichów for the Cracow Exhibition. Stanisław Witkiewicz and Stanisław Wyspiański were appointed as honorary members of the Society. The program of the Society, announced in its first cahier, issued in 1902 in Polish and French, aimed first and foremost to encourage home enterprise through exhibitions and competitions, and since 1902, also through the publication of the cahiers, illustrated with photographs of folk art, old handicrafts, and modern works designed by its artist-members. Competitions, such as the one for a plan of Greater Cracow in 1910, introduced more prominently architectural and urban considerations into the Society's profile.⁷¹

The Polish Applied Art Society's cahiers came in hand with the promotion of rural handicrafts, vernacular building, and historical ways of furnishing houses that made generous use of handwoven textiles, but they also contributed to the dissemination of modern attitudes towards architecture and design and in particular to the idea of unity and functional considerations. In 1902,

69 Huml, *Polska sztuka*, p. 39.

70 Huml, *Polska sztuka*, p. 23.

71 Andrzej K. Olszewski, *Polish Art and Architecture 1890–1980* (Warsaw: Interpress Publishers, 1989, translated by Stanisław Tarnowski), p. 28.

its first exhibition was held in Cracow, which consisted of three sections: folk materials, contemporary endeavors, and historical materials. The section of historical materials featured, among others, a rich collection of over a hundred silk sashes, including ones from a renowned manufacturer in Słuck, Polish silver spoons from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, old porcelain, faience, and glass works. Folk materials were represented by objects used by peasants from the three partitions such as jugs, wooden ladles, clasps, highland shoes made of embossed leather (*kierpce*), regional costume, embroidery, paper cutouts, and decorated Easter eggs (*pisanki*). Contemporary endeavors were illustrated mostly by the work of Witkiewicz and the Zakopane style, with a model of Koliba on display, and in Warsaw, even more prominence was given to the Zakopane style and folk art.⁷² The display threaded together three major concerns and inspirations underlying the Society's work, namely ethnographical and historical research, collecting, and international modernity.

In 1903, a joint exhibition of the Polish Applied Art Society and "Sztuka" was held in Cracow, each listing Wyspiański as its member, which was a significant rapprochement between fine and applied arts. The Society also assumed patronage of different activities and enterprises along its lines, for example, over Adrian Baraniecki's Museum of Technology and Industry in Cracow (Muzeum Techniczno-Przemysłowe), modeled upon the South Kensington collection, and Sikorska's workshop in Czernichów. In 1905, the Exhibition of Contemporary Textiles and Ceramics was organized jointly by the Polish Applied Art Society and Baraniecki's museum.⁷³ Between 1901 and 1914, when the Society joined forces with the Cracow workshops and in practice ceased to exist, it received several commissions, which apart from the Dłuski Sanatorium, included interior decorations of Teatr Stary (Old Theater) in Cracow and the interiors of Cracow Town Hall. Karol Frycz, who designed a library in the sanatorium (1908–1910) was soon to design together with Mączyński the interiors of a renowned Art Nouveau café in Cracow, Jama Michalika (Michalik's Den), with high-backed chairs, resonant of Mackintosh's tea rooms in Glasgow, lavishly decorated with stained glass and woodcarvings.

The last major enterprise of the Polish Applied Art Society was the Exhibition of Architecture and Interiors in Garden Settings, organized with local architects in Cracow in 1912. The idea was triggered partly by the garden cities movement, and Ebenezer Howard, who came to Cracow in 1912 for the World Congress of the Esperantists, visited the exhibition and delivered a lecture.⁷⁴ The centerpiece of the display was the house (*dworek*) designed by Józef Czajkowski, whose architecture followed that of traditional country manors of the landed gentry, not infrequently of modest size, but whose interiors conformed

72 Huml, *Polska sztuka*, pp. 25–27.

73 Huml, *Polska sztuka*, p. 28.

74 Adam Czyżewski, *Trzewia Lewiatana. Antropologiczna interpretacja utopii miasta-ogrodu* (Cracow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2001), p. 92.



Illust. 21. Edward Bartłomiejczyk, children's room in the Exhibition of Architecture and Interiors in Garden Settings, Cracow 1912 (photo from *Sztuka Stosowana*, Dworek, 1912)

to the new ideals of modernity with its claims to space and light. The revival of crafts had by then become an assimilated experience and the rooms, designed by individual artists, were furnished with pieces of often simplified design and made generous use of handwoven kilims and carpets, hanging on the walls and lining the floors (**Illust. 21**). Though evocative of the homes of the Polish gentry and nobility of the past, whose walls were richly lined with hangings, the modern design of the textiles in the Cracow exhibition, no less

generously applied in the interiors, was derived from folk forms and heralded the geometrical patterns of Art Decó, which a decade later featured in the Polish Pavilion in Paris in 1925. The novelty and sign of the time in Cracow in 1912 was the inclusion into the exhibition of a worker's and a craftsman's house, designed by Franciszek Mączyński and Karol Maszkowski.

The vitality of the new way of defining Polishness – through the language of architecture and interior design and with things handmade rather than machine-produced – was proven in the arrangement of a Polish section at the Exhibition of Decorative Arts in Paris in 1925, seven years after the restoration of the Polish state. The Polish Pavilion, designed by Józef Czajkowski, architect and one of the founding members of the Polish Applied Art Society, was furnished with handicrafts, designed largely by the artists and architects whose work has been discussed in this paper, such as Bohdan Treter, whose kilim can be seen in the period photograph of the main hall, and Karol Kłosowski, whose lacework was awarded a golden medal and was featured alongside the works of the Zakopane School of Lace-Making, in the section dedicated to artistic education in "Republique Polonaise." Szczepkowski's chapel, already mentioned, and the presence of highlander musicians at the opening acknowledged the cultural allegiance of the new state to the Podhale region and the Tatras.⁷⁵

75 The materials from the exhibition in Paris were collected in a book by Jerzy Warchałowski, *Polska Sztuka Dekoracyjna* (Warszawa, Kraków: Wydawnictwo J. Morkowicza, 1928), which is also a source of period photographs documenting the Polish section.

CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS POLISHNESS REDEFINED

The revival of crafts in Galicia towards the end of the nineteenth century, if not of major economic significance at the time, nevertheless contributed to relieving poverty in Galicia and to the shaping of more socially sensitive attitudes. The emphatic commitment to the issue of craftsmanship, as one of the ways of sustaining and defining Polishness, had originated with building up collections of old handicrafts by Polish historical families, especially after 1864, "when the opportunity for action was missing." This practice concurred with the program of organic work, whose ethos came to be accepted among Polish patriotic circles, leading to educational, cultural, and economic endeavors. The founding of numerous schools educating in useful crafts was both an economic enterprise, undertaken to provide practical skills useful for future employment, and an educational one. With the rise of ethnographic research and collecting, recognition of the value of historical crafts was extended to folk crafts, too. The "turn to crafts" received an additional boost from parallel developments in Europe, notably in its central and northern parts, and the emergence of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which was responsible for the theoretical justification of the aesthetic value of craftsmanship, first and most forcibly voiced by John Ruskin. One of the central postulates of the Movement, which came to be adopted by modernism, was that of the unity of arts and architecture, which translated itself into a heightened sense of awareness of interior design, expressive no longer exclusively of taste, but also of moral values, viewed as intrinsic in manmade objects.

The revival of crafts in Galicia should be viewed against the background of the above-outlined developments, some of which have been discussed at some length in this paper, while others, such as the relationship of what was going on in Galicia to the Arts and Crafts Movement in England and Scotland, have only been hinted at. What was characteristic of Polish developments, as well as of developments in those countries or regions in Europe that either lost their independence or were struggling against more powerful neighbors, was that the "outburst" of crafts, manifested through the revival of those that were in decline or verging on extinction (notably handweaving), came to be viewed as expressions of national identity. The same applied to some developments in architecture, particularly vernacular inspiration, which have only been hinted at here. The search for *styl swojski* in architecture and interior design was the search for a new tool of self-expression. The crafts, appropriated by modernist aesthetics, offered vast potential to define Polishness again, this time not in terms of political borders, which did not exist, nor in terms of romantic ideas, which did not offer much hope or solution for the future, but in terms of energetic, hopeful, and modern endeavor to alleviate those social, economic, and educational ills that could be alleviated and to bring the experience of Polishness closer to the experience of beauty in everyday life. For some, it may have mattered more that it was familiar; for others, that it was modern.