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BETWEEN TWO EMERGING DISCIPLINES ART HISTORY IN VIENNA AND CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY IN CRACOW ON THE BREAKTHROUGHS IN ART

The second half of the 19th c. marked the birth and definition of many Humanities disciplines, among which studies on the arts took a significant place. Studies in art history, of course, had been conducted earlier, especially when the focus was on ancient art. In this regard, the 18th c. was a pivotal period, particularly with the discoveries of Pompeii and Herculaneum, and the groundbreaking work of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *The History of Art in Antiquity*, opened up the history of classical archaeology as the field of research of ancient art¹. The art historians and archaeologists based in Vienna played a significant role in shaping both disciplines, although their activity primarily unfolded in the 19th c., with the work of Rudolf Eitelberger considered as a starting point.² The beginnings of the history of art in Cracow and, almost simultaneously, of classical archaeology, are closely tied to this center due to its political affiliation, as well.

The influence of the Viennese center, particularly the school of art history, on Cracow in the realm of research on ancient art and the formation of modern archaeology as a university discipline in the Polish territories can be examined on several levels. Firstly, in terms of the chosen

research topics, there is often a connection with the Viennese inclination towards studying late ancient and early Christian art, as well as decorative arts, which aligns closely with archaeology. The second level involves the adopted research methodology, focusing on in-depth analysis of source materials available in Vienna or Cracow collections, leading to the application of methods such as stylistic analysis. The third dimension encompasses institutional and organizational issues, inherently linked to Cracow's affiliation with the Habsburg Monarchy and the presence of shared political views and the social climate of the era.³ These dimensions are particularly significant in the context of research on ancient art, but they do not exhaust all the dependencies and relationships concerning the influence of Vienna on the emerging center of art history and archaeology in Cracow.⁴

¹ J. J. WINCKELMANN, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, Dresden 1764 [Polish version *Dzieje sztuki starożytnej*, transl. T. Zatorski, ed. W. Bałus, Kraków 2012]; cf. also R. BIANCHI BANDINELLI, *Introduzione all'archeologia classica come storia dell'arte antica*, Roma 1976 (2022) [Polish version *Archeologia klasyczna jako historia sztuki*, Warszawa 1988] and idem, *Nozioni di storia dell'archeologia e di storiografia dell'arte antica: lezioni introduttive del corso di archeologia*, Florence 1952.

² About the Viennese art history school cf. M. RAMPLEY, *The Vienna School of Art History, Empire and the Politics of Scholarship, 1847–1918*, Pennsylvania 2013.

³ M. OLIN, 'Alois Riegl: The Late Roman Empire in the Late Habsburg Empire', in: *The Habsburg Legacy: National Identity in Historical Perspective*, eds R. ROBERTSON, E. TIMMS, Edinburgh 1994, pp. 107–120.

⁴ A more comprehensive exploration of the relations between the Viennese center and the Cracow center in the field of art history – cf. A. MAŁKIEWICZ, 'Historia sztuki w Polsce a "wiedeńska szkoła historii Sztuki"', *Rocznik Historii Sztuki*, 16, 1987, pp. 331–336; M. KUNIŃSKA, 'Marian Sokołowski: Patriotism and the Genesis of Scientific Art History in Poland', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 8, 2013, pp. 1–17; eadem, 'Identity Built on Myth. Fact and Fiction in the Foundational Narrative of the "Cracow School of Art History" and its Relations to Vienna', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 25, 2021, pp. 1–20. Regarding the history of classical archaeology in Cracow – J. ŚLIWA, 'Archeologia śródziemnomorska w Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim (1897–1998)', *Meander*, 72, 2017, pp. 143–163.

It is evident that the Vienna School was fundamentally rooted in a particular interest in ancient art. The groundbreaking *Stilfragen* by Alois Riegl from 1893 introduced a systematic approach to the issue of ornamentation, primarily in relation to ancient times.⁵ Stylistic analyses not only allowed for the chronological understanding of ornamentation but also facilitated the aggregation of patterns into stylistic groups based on predominant geometric, heraldic, or floral and scroll forms. As is well known, Riegl based his study on the results of his earlier works, notably those that were dedicated to artifacts from the Oriental, including Egyptian, cultures. These artifacts were, in fact, housed in the collections of the Vienna-based Österreichisches Museum für Kunst und Industrie, where Alois Riegl was employed.⁶

An essential aspect of another groundbreaking work by Riegl, dedicated to late Roman artistic industry, was the reorientation of researchers' attitudes toward the art of late antiquity.⁷ The change in style described in *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn* was considered an artistic achievement rather than a sign of decline. A pivotal contribution in this regard was Franz Wickhoff's work, *Die Wiener Genesis*, where he notably revalued early Christian art.⁸ These works contributed to the rejection of the Winckelmann paradigm which regarded late ancient art as the final, declining phase in the development of ancient art, characterized by a supposed lack of creative force. This rehabilitation of late ancient art would influence not only the thematic focus but also the research methodology in other archaeological centers. It would also, as is well known, be a catalyst for the famous dispute with Josef Strzygowski concerning the genesis of late ancient art.⁹

An essential aspect of relations between genesis of art history and classical archaeology is also a problem that still engages the attention of many researchers. It concerns the relationship and demarcation line, if one exists, between both disciplines. Importantly, these relationships

looked quite different during the period under discussion than they do now, and what is even more significant, they are conditioned by the academic traditions of a given center or country. In the case of Cracow, the influence of Vienna and the broader German scientific circle is significant. The close connection between both centers is evident, for instance, in the biographies of archaeologists and art historians in Cracow who had contacts in Vienna. The close ties between Polish classical archaeology and art history were significantly severed in later Polish history when archaeology was merged with the so-called history of material culture, following the Soviet pattern, thereby bringing it closer to universal archaeology and disrupting what was valuable in 19th-c. art history – the community of research areas and the complementarity of methods. However, this issue is an entirely separate research topic.

The innovative views of the Vienna school of art found fertile ground in the emerging and shaping environment of classical archaeologists in Cracow. At this point, we must pay attention to the founder and, importantly, the organizer of classical archaeology in Cracow – Piotr Bieńkowski, who set the tone and direction of research in the initial phase of the development of Polish studies on ancient art in the early decades of the 20th c. [Fig. 1]. The figure of Bieńkowski is well-known and esteemed in the community of Cracow's researchers of Antiquity, especially as he taught several students who later initiated studies on ancient art in the academic centers of revitalized Poland.¹⁰ Born in 1865, a graduate of ancient history studies at the University of Lviv, where his mentor was Prof. Ludwik Ćwikliński, Piotr Bieńkowski quickly developed an interest in art and archaeology under the influence of his subsequent studies in Berlin with Theodor Mommsen and in Vienna with Otto Benndorf.¹¹ Immediately after his period of education, he embarked on scientific journeys to Rome and Athens, where he familiarized himself with the activities of archaeological institutes. However, the key influence on the choice of his research direction came from his studies in Berlin and Vienna. Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903), the author of the multi-volume *History of Rome* and a historian of Antiquity, instilled a methodical approach to historical sciences

⁵ A. RIEGL, *Stilfragen, Grundlegungen zu einer Geschichte der Ornamentik*, Berlin 1893.

⁶ Idem, *Die ägyptischen Textilfunde im K. K. Österr. Museum*, Wien 1889; idem, *Altorientalische Teppiche*, Leipzig 1891. Cf. also M. OLIN, *Forms of Representation in Alois Riegl's Theory of Art*, Pennsylvania 1992.

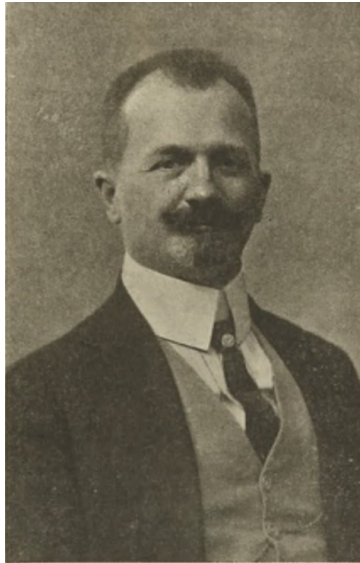
⁷ A. RIEGL, *Die spätromische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn*, Wien 1901.

⁸ F. WICKHOFF, W. VON HARTEL, *Die Wiener Genesis*, Wien 1895.

⁹ J. STRZYGOWSKI, *Orient oder Rome. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Spätantiken und Frühchristlichen Kunst*, Leipzig 1901; A. RIEGL, 'Spätromisch oder orientalisches?', *Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung*, 93, 1902, pp. 152–156; cf. also J. ELSNER, 'The Birth of Late Antiquity: Riegl and Strzygowski in 1901', *Art History*, 25, 2002, pp. 358–379 and M. OLIN, 'Art History and Ideology: Alois Riegl and Josef Strzygowski', in: *Cultural Visions: Essays in the History of Culture*, eds P. SCHINE GOLD, B. C. SAX, Amsterdam 2000, pp. 151–170.

¹⁰ Several publications have been dedicated to the figure of Piotr Bieńkowski, unfortunately appearing only in Polish, which has resulted in his achievements and contributions being less well known outside of Poland – cf. J. ŚLIWA, 'Piotr Bieńkowski (1865–1925). Badacz – nauczyciel akademicki – organizator nauki', in: *Archeologia śródziemnomorska w Krakowie 1897–1997. Materiały sympozjum naukowego. Kraków, 21–23 października 1997* ed. idem, Kraków 1998, pp. 15–34.

¹¹ Ludwik Ćwikliński (1853–1942), a classical philologist and ancient historian, was the rector of the University of Jan Kazimierz in Lviv. From 1902 he resided in Vienna, where, in 1917 and 1918, he held the position of Minister of Education and Religious Affairs – cf. K. KRÓLCZYK, 'Ludwik Ćwikliński (1853–1942)', *Nowy Filomata*, 14, 2010, no. 2, pp. 83–94.



1. Piotr Bieńkowski (1865–1925), reprint after: R. GOSTKOWSKI, *Piotr Ignacy Bieńkowski*, 'Sprawozdania z posiedzeń Komisji Historji Sztuki za czas od I stycznia 1923 r. do 31 grudnia 1925 r.', *Prace Komisji Historji Sztuki*, 4, 1930, no. 1

among his students.¹² Otto Benndorf (1838–1907), a German-Austrian archaeologist, assumed the Chair of Archaeology at the University of Vienna in 1877.¹³ In 1898, he founded the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Vienna, of which he was the director until his death in 1907. Bieńkowski was fascinated not only by Benndorf's scientific activities but also by his organizational skills. He entertained plans to establish a similar Polish Institute in Athens or Rome, which, however, did not materialize at that time. Benndorf conducted or co-conducted excavations in the ancient world, including Samothrace, Lycia, and Ephesus. His discoveries enriched the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. Among his students were not only those focused on ancient history but also those who engaged in art history: Julius von Schlosser (1866–1938) and Franz Studniczka (1860–1929).¹⁴

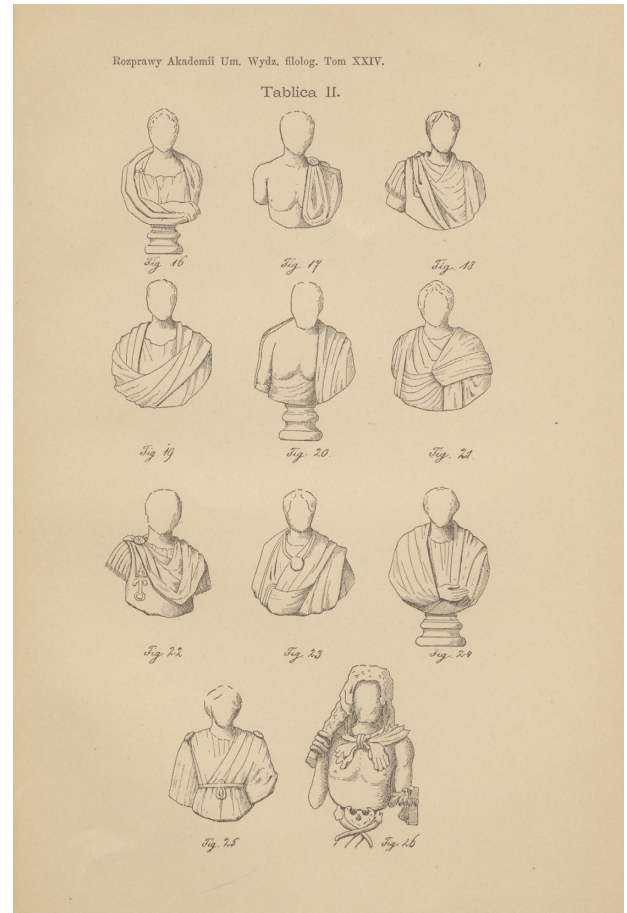
Upon his return to Cracow, Bieńkowski dedicated himself to studies on ancient art, which resulted in his habilitation thesis, titled *History of Shape of Ancient Bust*, published in 1895 [Fig. 2].¹⁵ An important year in the life of the

¹² F. STURM, *Theodor Mommsen. Gedanken zu Leben und Werk des großen deutschen Rechtshistorikers*, Karlsruhe 2006.

¹³ H. D. SZEMETHY, 'Von Greiz nach Wien. Das außergewöhnliche Leben von Otto Benndorf, Nachfolger Alexander Conzes und Gründer des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts', in: *1869–2019. 150 Jahre Klassische Archäologie an der Universität Wien*, eds G. SCHÖRNER, J. KOPE, Wien 2021, pp. 163–186.

¹⁴ K. T. JOHNS, 'Julius Alwin Ritter von Schlosser: Ein bio-bibliographischer Beitrag', *Kritische berichte*, 14, 1988, no. 4, pp. 47–64; H. U. CAIN, 'Studniczka, Franz', in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 25, Berlin 2013, pp. 621–622.

¹⁵ P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Historja kształtów biustu starożytnego*, Kraków 1895.



2. Illustration from P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Historja kształtów biustu starożytnego*, Kraków, 1895, pl. II

researcher, and as it turned out, in the history of classical archaeology in Cracow, was 1897, when Bieńkowski was appointed the head of the Chair of Classical Archaeology, a position created specifically for him.¹⁶ This date, similar to the year 1882 and the figure of Marian Sokołowski for art history, marks the beginning of classical archaeology in Cracow.¹⁷ In his habilitation thesis, Bieńkowski perhaps for the first time presented the methodology of his research, combining what archaeology had already developed, rejecting individual assessment of works of art. In the introduction to *History of the Shape of the Ancient Bust*, he writes:

On the other hand, it was important to establish a chronological basis for reconstructing the history of the bust's form. It must be emphasized that the style of portraits, the manner of conceiving and rendering the human face, could not and should not provide any guidance in this regard. This dissertation aims to create

¹⁶ J. ŚLIWA, 'Piotr Bieńkowski (1865–1925)', in: *Uniwersytet Jagielloński. Złota księga Wydziału Historycznego*, ed. J. DYBIEC, Kraków 2000, pp. 165–171.

¹⁷ M. KUNIŃSKA, 'Marian Sokołowski', pp. 1–17 (as in note 4).

a foundation independent of individual perspectives for evaluating the style of portraits in various epochs.¹⁸

Before assuming the chair, Bieńkowski undertook numerous journeys to places with monuments of ancient cultures, including not only Italy and Greece but also Asia Minor and North Africa. He also acquainted himself with European collections of ancient art. These trips were financed by, among other sources, the Austrian government and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences in Cracow. In 1899, he was elected a full member of the Austrian Archaeological Institute. He was also a member of the Central Commission for the Investigation and Conservation of Artistic and Historic Monuments in Vienna. His connections with Vienna resulted in his participation in excavations in Egypt. In the 1910/1911 season, he took part in the work at El-Kubanie in Lower Nubia. Karol Hadaczek and Tadeusz Wałek accompanied him on the expeditions until 1914. The artifacts they collected enriched the collections of the Cracow Academy of Arts and Sciences.¹⁹

Following the example of his colleagues in Vienna, Bieńkowski was also an academic organizer. He established the Chair of Classical Archaeology from scratch, enriched the library collections, and provided direction for his students' research. He initiated the inventory of ancient monuments, which were then housed in private and partially public collections. Similarly to what had been done in Vienna, he aimed to establish a Polish Institute of Archaeology in Athens or Rome. However, this effort was not successful at that time.²⁰

In the context of the early connections between Cracow's classical archaeology research and Vienna, and the art history community there, it's also worth mentioning a well-known and significant figure in Viennese art history, whose relationship with Bieńkowski is less well known. Count Karol Lanckoroński was an art enthusiast, collector, patron, and sponsor of numerous scientific

endeavors, as well as a Viennese politician. Despite residing outside of Poland, he maintained connections with his homeland.²¹ This figure becomes even more significant as, according to family accounts of the Bieńkowskis, it was Lanckoroński who likely influenced the appointment of the first Chair and its faculty and library. Bieńkowski's connections with Lanckoroński go back a generation or more, as Bieńkowski's father served as the administrator and plenipotentiary of Lanckoroński's estates in Podole. The acquaintance with Karol Lanckoroński held importance for the young archeology enthusiast, as Lanckoroński financed his studies and travels, and presumably, as mentioned, contributed to the equipment of the new Chair. The patronage of Lanckoroński was also associated with the art historian Marian Sokołowski, who likewise benefited from Lanckoroński's financial support. In 1911, after Sokołowski's death, it was Bieńkowski who took over the management of the combined Collection of Art and Archaeology, which included a substantial collection of plaster casts of artworks, including those that had been acquired by Lanckoroński in consultation with Sokołowski and Bieńkowski.²² There is another noteworthy fact that testifies to the contacts of these scholars. After the famous expedition to Asia Minor undertaken by Karol Lanckoroński and his circle of acquaintances in the years 1882–1883, he published two volumes in German in 1890 and 1892 on the cities of Pamphylia and Pisidia.²³ This work was soon translated into Polish by Sokołowski (vol. I) and Bieńkowski along with Ćwikliński (vol. II).²⁴

Let us return to Cracow and Piotr Bieńkowski. His scholarly and literary output is substantial.²⁵ Along with his work dedicated to Greek and Roman busts, a particular focus of his interest was the iconography of barbarian peoples in Greek and Roman art. He devoted numerous works to this subject. However, one of his works is particularly significant in the context of the influence of Viennese art history. This work is *Impressionism in Roman and Early Christian Art* published in 1896 [Fig. 3].²⁶ The

¹⁸ P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Historia kształtów*, pp. 4–5 (as in note 15).

¹⁹ It is worth mentioning the forgotten figure of Karol Hadaczek at this point. He initially studied in Lviv and, from 1897 onwards, in Vienna, where he delved into classical archaeology and art history. He served as the head of the Department of Classical Archaeology and Prehistory at the University of Lviv. Additionally, he was the curator of Lviv's collections of antiquities and a member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. Among his numerous works, it is noteworthy to mention those where the influence of art theory can be observed, such as *Polygnotos, pierwszy klasyk malarstwa greckiego / Polygnotos, the First Classic of Greek Painting* (1908), passages from the monograph on Phidias: *Styl Fidiaszowy w rzeźbie szkół współczesnych / The Phidian Style in the Sculpture of Contemporary Schools* (1911), and *Rzeźby architektoniczne Partenonu / Architectural Sculptures of the Parthenon* (1912) – cf. J. PILECKI, 'Hadaczek Karol (1873–1914)', in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 41, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1961, pp. 223–224.

²⁰ The Polish Institute of Archaeology in Athens was established in 2019.

²¹ J. ŚLIWA, 'Piotr Bieńkowski (1865–1925) w opiekuńczym kręgu Karola Lanckorońskiego', *Folia Historiae Artium*, 4, 1998, pp. 81–85. Cf. also J. A. OSTROWSKI, 'Karol Lanckoroński, Archäologe, Kunsthistoriker und Sammler', in: *Zur Geschichte der klassischen Archäologie Jena-Kraków*, eds E. KLUWE, J. ŚLIWA, Jena 1985, pp. 100–120.

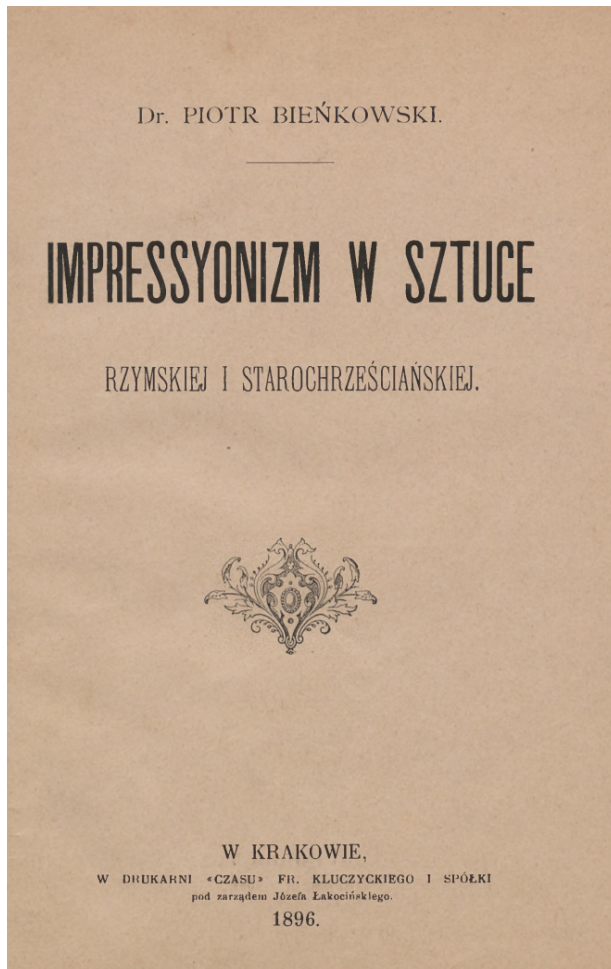
²² A. BETLEJ et al., *Zapomniane dziedzictwo: zbiór odlewów gipsowych Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, Kraków 2019.

²³ *Städte Pamphylens und Pisidiens*, ed. K. LANCKOROŃSKI, unter Mitwirkung von G. NIEMANN und E. PETERSEN, vol. 1: *Pamphyliden*, Wien 1890; vol. 2: *Pisidien*, Wien 1892.

²⁴ K. LANCKOROŃSKI, *Miasta Pamfilii i Pizydii*, vol. 1, transl. M. SOKOŁOWSKI, Kraków 1890; vol. 2: transl. L. ĆWIKLIŃSKI, P. BIEŃKOWSKI, Kraków 1896.

²⁵ J. ŚLIWA, 'Piotr Bieńkowski (1865–1925)', pp. 15–34 (as in note 10), especially compiled by K. Stachowska bibliography (pp. 27–34).

²⁶ P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Impressionizm w sztuce rzymskiej i starożytności*, Kraków 1896 – offprint from *Przegląd Polski*, 31, 1896, no.

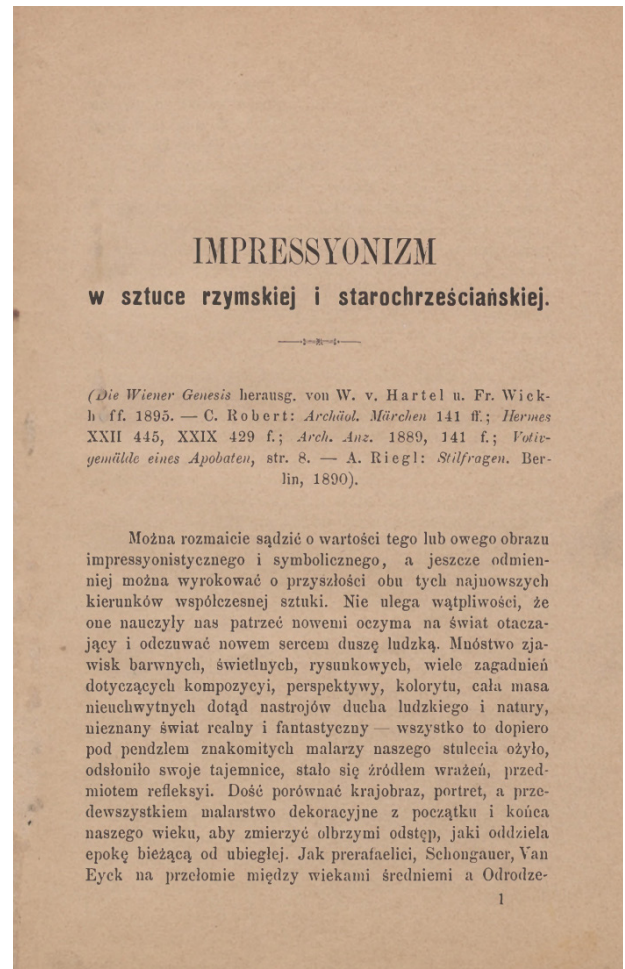


3. Cover of P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Impressyonizm w sztuce rzymskiej i starochrześcijańskiej*, Kraków, 1896

title itself alludes to the contemporary art of that time, and simultaneously to a subject that preoccupied Viennese researchers – Wickhoff, Riegl, and later Strzygowski – namely, the genesis and significance of Roman art in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD.²⁷ Among all the important works by Bieńkowski concerning the theme of ancient art, this one is the least known. Its current value lies not only in its scientific significance, although it can still serve as a valuable reference point for researchers on this issue, but more in recognizing the reference point of Viennese art historians' thoughts and the consequences for the further work of the Cracow center. This publication represents a kind of bold and scholarly polemic with Wickhoff, who also, in his *Die Wiener Genesis*, refers to the illusionism of late Antiquity, in this case regarding the illustrations of early Christian art. As we remember, Wickhoff considers it,

4, pp. 27–46, 337–358.

²⁷ J. ELSNER, 'The Birth of Late Antiquity', pp. 358–379 (as in note 9); A. RIEGL, 'Spätromisch oder orientalisches?', pp. 152–156 (as in note 9) (translated into English by P. WORTSMAN as 'Late Roman or Oriental?', in: *German Essays on Art History*, ed. G. SCHIFF, New York 1988, pp. 173–190).



4. First page from P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Impressyonizm w sztuce rzymskiej i starochrześcijańskiej*, Kraków, 1896

much like impressionism, as a creative achievement of the era.

In the introduction to the book, after citing the works of Wickhoff and Riegl in the bibliography, Bieńkowski writes:

Various opinions may be held about the value of this or that painting from the Impressionist and Symbolist movements, and even more diverse judgments may be made about the future of both these newest trends in contemporary art. There is no doubt that they have taught us to see the surrounding world with new eyes and to feel anew, with the heart and soul of humanity. Numerous colorful, luminous, and graphic phenomena, many issues related to composition, perspective, coloration, and a whole host of hitherto elusive moods of the human spirit and nature, the unknown world – both real and fantastical – have only come to life, revealed their secrets, and become a source of impressions and reflections under the brush of the outstanding painters of our century [Fig. 4].²⁸

²⁸ P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Impressyonizm*, p. 1 (as in note 26).

Here, Bieńkowski invokes examples from contemporary works that seek the origins of many artistic phenomena in earlier epochs. The goal of the work is to draw attention to changes in ancient art, at a crucial moment of its apparent decline, through the eyes of a connoisseur of contemporary art, which was also experiencing dynamic changes, of which Impressionism and Symbolism were manifestations. The author continues:

Finally, Mr. Wickhoff, a professor at the University of Vienna and before him, to some extent, Professor Robert from Halle in the works whose titles we list at the beginning, had already reached even further into the past. Not the last four centuries, but the partly pagan, partly Christian era of the Roman Empire, the 1st to 4th centuries AD, were the oldest theater of such artistic struggles that shake today's art. To objectively present and then, if justified, evaluate this reflection of contemporary painting on the historiography of ancient art will be the task of these remarks.²⁹

In the reevaluation of Roman art, Bieńkowski places emphasis in a different area, drawing attention to the scarcity of ideas and motifs. He suggests that the Romans were creatively reproducing Greek achievements but with richness in form, including technique and the way of depicting ideas, namely style. It is precisely the style that is significant here, and Wickhoff's illusionism is supposed to represent the creative achievement of Roman art during a period when, as Bieńkowski writes, 'the native Roman genius engaged in a fierce struggle with imported Hellenism.'³⁰

Bieńkowski traces these changes, among other things, based on plant ornamentation and Riegl's findings in his *Stilfragen* regarding Greek ornamentation, which, in essence, was considered quite conservative. He emphasizes the shift in Roman ornamentation during the Flavian period, when it departed from Greek traditions and became more naturalistic and impressionistic.³¹ This process also finds analogies in the changes in decoration in 19th-c. art. According to Bieńkowski, creative changes in Roman art from the early 2nd century are evident in relief sculpture and statuary, but especially in painting. As we know, in Pompeii and Herculaneum, proper illusionism emerged, as we define it today, along with impressionism seen in landscapes and still life. Bieńkowski identifies the essence of Roman art's value precisely in these aspects. He writes:

The illusionistic landscape in Pompeii is most closely associated with the continuity norm that we have already

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 2. Carl Robert (1850–1922), classicist and archaeologist associated with the University and Museum in Halle. The museum was named after him 'Robertinum' (now Archäologisches Museum der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg) – cf. O. KERN, *Hermann Diels und Carl Robert. Ein biographischer Versuch*, Leipzig 1927.

³⁰ P. BIEŃKOWSKI, *Impressionizm*, p. 6 (as in note 26).

³¹ Ibidem, pp. 11–12.

encountered in relief sculptures. Only through the coherence of these two styles did Roman art become what constitutes its highest glory, becoming universal art, the art of the entire world. The widespread impressionistic-continuity style, spread throughout the corners of the Roman Empire, endured for 15 centuries of our era and had a decisive influence on artists throughout almost all of Medieval Europe. Sandro Botticelli still pays homage to it in his illustrations for the *Divine Comedy*; even Raphael in the *Liberation of Saint Peter* and Michelangelo in the Sistine Chapel ceiling pay tribute to it.³²

This is manifested in the decoration of Roman sarcophagi from the 3rd century and early Christian mosaics from the 4th century AD. However, the continuity norm, along with illusionism, achieved a special position in early Christian art, as evident in the *Wiener Genesis*. Bieńkowski continues:

Impressionism and the continuity norm – these are the two enduring achievements of Roman and early Christian art. Both can be reduced to a common denominator, which is realism, or concerning faces, individualism. While Eastern and Greek art always strives for the ideal, or at least for the type, the Etruscans and, following them, the Romans, always seek to impart individual characteristics to works of art. This Roman individualism has left an indelible mark on Western art as a whole. Even when external conditions, such as devotional needs, fashion, or market demand, favor the creation of types, artists in Western Europe strive to individualize them to a greater or lesser extent.³³

At the end, Bieńkowski directly addresses Wickhoff's work and the methodology he adopted. He writes:

At the outset, it should be emphasized that this is a work of exceptional talent, opening up new horizons for scholarship. I would be proud if Polish academia produced similar works. The author has risen to the highest position, as a philosopher of art history. From this summit, he not only embraces the entirety of its history but also sees the course and direction of issues that the eye of an ordinary art historian would struggle to discern. Hence, he often succeeds in presenting views and ideas for which an ordinary art historian would strive in vain. Moreover, beyond this knowledge, his thorough understanding of painting and sculpting techniques has been invaluable. It has allowed him to build his argument on a scientific basis, independent of personal preferences and pseudo-aesthetic deliberations. It is also to him that we must attribute the fact that ancient art stands in Mr. Wickhoff's book in an individual light, free from the civilizational-cultural nimbus with which ignorance or dilettantism typically obscures it. Lastly, it is worth mentioning, as we highlighted at the outset,

³² Ibidem, p. 28.

³³ Ibidem, p. 34.

that Mr. Wickhoff is a fervent supporter of contemporary Impressionism and Symbolism, that he has absorbed all the contentious issues of the day, fertilized his mind with them, sharpened his perceptive senses, and armed them against all suggestions and old prejudices. This imparts to his work a somewhat polemical and proselytizing character, which is in any case full of life, temperament, and relevance.³⁴

However, Bieńkowski also proceeds to offer rather severe criticism of Wickhoff's work and the method adopted by the author. He accuses him of methodological shortcomings and a lack of insight into available materials concerning the decline of Roman art, as well as its earlier periods. Bieńkowski believes that the breakthrough Wickhoff attributes only to this period was already foreshadowed in Greek art of the 4th c. BC, in Athenian tomb reliefs. Therefore, illusionistic Impressionism appears earlier than Wickhoff indicated, and later in Rome, it occurs in various forms and shapes as decorative elements in ancient art, in general in Roman, and in Early Christian art in particular.³⁵

In conclusion, Bieńkowski states:

The above-mentioned shortcomings, both fundamental and formal, in my opinion, resulted unconsciously from a misguided understanding of art history. Art history is an art form, indeed, but primarily a science. It demands from the writer passion, intuition, and so on, but above all, it requires reflection. An author should master the material and be intimately acquainted with subject-specific and cautious criticism, enabling control over the most elusive topics and commanding their pen, as Goethe demands from a true poet to „command poetry”. In contrast, Wickhoff, in my opinion, does not control the tumult of his own soul or imagination; he allows them to carry him away, creating a work more akin to art than science. Hence, his discussion of Impressionism is excellent but immature, captivating the reader but not convincing them [...].

Wickhoff's artistic talent, closely resembling the painterly Impressionism of the present day, is well-suited to move the least sensitive minds. The reader finishes Wickhoff's book with a pensive, enriched, elevated state, different in a single word from when they began reading. Therefore, the purpose of all writing for the public — a certain spiritual catharsis — has been achieved. This quality of the book also explains why I allowed

myself to present it to my readers despite considering it incomplete.³⁶

Dispute over Late Antiquity and the methodology of the new, young discipline was, as we can see, not only a subject of debate for Wickhoff, Riegl, and Strzygowski, but also involved Piotr Bieńkowski. Importantly, this somewhat forgotten publication by Bieńkowski opens a new chapter in the study of the origins of Cracow's archaeology and its connections to art history. It's not just about personal aspects — the fact that Cracow's students gained scientific knowledge in Vienna. It's also not only about institutional and organizational connections resulting from Vienna's status as the capital and its influence on other academic centers in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. As we can see, these connections are made manifest not only in the flow of ideas and scientific novelties but also, most importantly, in the engaging in substantive disputes with Vienna's leading researchers in the field of Antiquity — a topic of significant importance at that time. The question of late ancient art was not just about another phase in the development of ancient art, which, of course, interested archaeologists the most, but also about the genesis of post-ancient art from the Middle Ages to later periods — a question that engaged the minds of art historians. Of course, we can interpret this debate today as reflecting the different views of art historian and classical archaeologist, but that would be a misleading approach. At that time, the differences between the two disciplines, especially in the field of Roman and early Christian art, and to a degree early Medieval art, were not as significant. We must also reject the idea of an ambitious or nationalistic approach by mature and already recognized researchers. We can only accept that Bieńkowski's research horizon was somewhat broader, reaching into periods of Greek Archaic art, for example, but even this statement would be unfair to Wickhoff.

We can believe this debate reflects not so much potential differences in the workmanship and methodology of the emerging disciplines in art, but rather the influence of contemporary changes in art on the perception of ancient art during a phase of dynamic transformation. The key to understanding Bieńkowski's reasoning may lie in another quote from his work, where he sees changes in Roman art against the backdrop of broader changes, with Greek art as the starting point:

The danger that loomed over Impressionism from its inception did not fail to materialize. What began as virtuosity degenerated into negligence, and the ease of composition turned into an artificial genius that, with time, acquired almost crude characteristics. Especially miniatures depicting various animals and geographical maps stand out for their peculiar neglect of drawing and coloration. Manuscripts from the second half of the Middle Ages, in general, guard against the deviations into which

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 35.

³⁵ 'If, therefore, Impressionism was already known to the Greeks and is not the exclusive legacy of Roman art, then it is impossible to accept the further conclusions of Mr. Wickhoff that illusionism and individualism were passed down to Western arts from the Romans and Etruscans, when the preference for types was imparted to the Byzantines by the Greeks and Asians' (*ibidem*, p. 38).

³⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 40–41.

illustrative art fell from the 7th to the 10th centuries. The illusionism is replaced by a penchant for details, and drawing regains its rightful place even in colorful miniatures. This was, therefore, a kind of return to Greco-Roman naturalism. Thus, the circle of Roman and early Christian art, which, in formal terms, constitutes an equally organic whole, closed in a way similar to the writings of the Church Fathers with classical literature.³⁷

SUMMARY

Grzegorz First
 BETWEEN TWO EMERGING DISCIPLINES.
 ART HISTORY IN VIENNA AND CLASSICAL
 ARCHAEOLOGY IN CRACOW
 ON THE BREAKTHROUGHS IN ART

The second half of the 19th c. marked the beginning of the institutionalization of two great disciplines in the Humanities – art history and classical archaeology. This process took place in many European centres, including Vienna, and influenced other university cities in the Habsburg Monarchy. There are obvious connections between the beginnings of art history and the interest in ancient Greek and Roman art. It is visible in the works of both art historians, who often referred to the ancient roots of artistic phenomena, and archaeologists, who often referred to parallels and concepts developed by art historians. On the basis of the connections between the Viennese and Cracow centres, this is visible, for example, in the works of Alois Riegl and Franz Wickhoff and their influence on the work and research undertaken by Piotr Bieńkowski, the founder and organizer of the Department of Classical Archaeology in Cracow (1897). These connections are visible, for example, in Bieńkowski's work *Impressionism in Roman and Early Christian Art*, which was published in 1896 and referred to Viennese theoreticians of art history.

³⁷ Ibidem, pp. 33-34.