

Art History, Political Legitimacy and Royal Heritage Management. Tadeusz Mańkowski and a Historic Interior Exhibition in Wawel Royal Castle, 1945–1951*

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ABSTRACT The article is devoted to the conceptual genesis of the exhibition of historic rooms in the Wawel Royal Castle in Cracow in the late 1940s and early 1950s, i.e. the period when the foundations of the Polish socialist state as a satellite of the USSR were being laid. At that time, the castle housed a state museum headed by the art historian Tadeusz Mańkowski (1878–1956). This was a crucial time in the history of the castle’s musealisation. On the one hand, the post-war opening of the castle to the public resulted in the process of designing new interiors necessitated by the absence of the famous Jagiellonian tapestries (evacuated abroad in 1939). On the other hand, the socialist authorities recognised Wawel as a “monument of national culture”. This official status influenced the direction taken by Mańkowski when designing the exhibition of historical interiors. He emphasised objects related to the history of the Polish state, deliberately giving the exhibition a “native” character. This was in line with the legitimisation policy of the state authorities at the time, which highlighted their roots in national history while limiting the evidence of Western culture’s influence on Poland.

KEYWORDS Tadeusz Mańkowski, Wawel Castle, socialism, interior museum, historic interiors, Marxism, agricultural reform

ABSTRAKT Historia sztuki, legitymizacja polityczna i zarządzanie dziedzictwem królewskim. Tadeusz Mańkowski i ekspozycja wnętrz historycznych w Zamku Królewskim na Wawelu, 1945–1951. Artykuł poświęcony jest genezie koncepcji ekspozycji zabytkowych sal Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu w Krakowie na przełomie lat 40. i 50. XX w., czyli w okresie formowania się polskiego państwa socjalistycznego jako satelity ZSRR. W zamku znajdowało się wówczas państwowe muzeum, którym kierował historyk sztuki Tadeusz Mańkowski (1878–1956). Był to kluczowy okres w historii muzealizacji zamku na Wawelu. Z jednej strony powojenne udostępnienie go publiczności wiązało się z nową aranżacją wnętrz, wymuszoną brakiem słynnych arrasów jagiellońskich (ewakuowanych za granicę w 1939 r.). Z drugiej strony władze socjalistyczne uznały Wawel za „pomnik kultury narodowej”. Ten oficjalny status wpłynął na kierunek, jaki obrał Mańkowski, projektując ekspozycję wnętrz historycznych. Położył nacisk na obiekty związane z historią państwa polskiego, celowo nadając wystawie „rodzimy” charakter. Było to zgodne z ówczesną polityką legitymizacyjną władz państwowych, podkreślającą ich zakorzenienie w historii narodowej, przy równoczesnym ograniczaniu wpływów kultury zachodniej w Polsce.

SŁOWA-KLUCZE Tadeusz Mańkowski, Wawel, socjalizm, muzeum wnętrz, wnętrza historyczne, marksizm, reforma rolna

THE ARTICLE is devoted to the conceptual genesis of the exhibition of historic rooms in Wawel Royal Castle in Cracow (Kraków) during the second half of the 1940s and the early 1950s. It was the period when the foundations of the Polish socialist state as a satellite of the Soviet Union were being laid. The regime had gradually subordinated all public heritage institutions to its priorities in the field of artistic, historical and academic policies. At that time, Wawel Castle was managed by a state-run museum headed by Tadeusz Mańkowski (1878–1956). He was an art historian who worked also at the Polish Academy of Learning (Polska Akademia Umiejętności) and the Jagiellonian University. His directorship was a key period in the history of the musealisation of the castle. On the one hand, its post-war opening to the public resulted in the new interior arrangement, necessitated by the absence of the famed Jagiellonian tapestries, also known as the Wawel arrases (evacuated overseas in 1939). On the other hand, the socialist regime recognised Wawel Castle as a “monument of national culture”. It was this new official status, associated with the government’s resignation from the building’s residential role, that influenced the direction taken by Mańkowski – who was not only an administrator and chief curator, but also a scholar and a specialist on Wawel interiors – in designing the interior exhibition. Mańkowski placed an emphasis on objects related to the history of the Polish state, intentionally giving the exhibition a “native” character. This was in line with the contemporary legitimisation policy of the Polish early socialist regime, stressing its roots in national history, but at the same time tending to limit the influence of Western culture on Polish society. Mańkowski’s concept of the exhibition corresponded with his specific vision of the history

of Wawel interiors which he concurrently presented in his academic publications.

This case study is a contribution to scholarship concerning the relationship between art history (as an academic discipline), political legitimacy and heritage management in Soviet-controlled countries of post-war Central and Eastern Europe. As Eszter Gantner observed in her recent essay on the political background of Buda Castle’s reconstruction in the 1950s, a royal residence “constituted something of an ideological contradiction” for a socialist state, being a symbol of both the feudal (and also bourgeois) past and of national sovereignty. For socialist leaders, wary of their insecure legitimacy, it was therefore essential to “incorporate [...] ambivalent symbolic and historic legacy into newly created ‘socialist’ narrative of the country’s history”.¹ Particularly interesting in this respect are the initial years of post-war socialist regimes. It was the period of their original confrontations with the past, when first political strategies relating to heritage were developed and implemented, setting the pattern or the point of reference for the subsequent decades of socialist rule. In the case of Wawel Castle, which, unlike Buda Castle, had not been destroyed during the Second World War, scholarly attention must be drawn to the historic interior exhibition as a problem for post-war users of former royal residences. Hitherto, the problem itself has not managed to attract interest from scholars investigating the history of heritage management in the Eastern Bloc. Even though there are studies that concern the fate of royal residences in socialist Europe, historic interiors have not been so far analysed in their own right as objects of ideologically informed interventions.² The case of Wawel Castle evidences how important the interiors of former royal residences could be in that period as

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1. Eszter Gantner, “Socialist Royalty? The Ambiguities of the Reconstruction of the Royal Residence in Budapest in the 1950s”, in: *Heritage under Socialism. Preservation in Eastern and Central Europe, 1945–1991*, eds. Eszter Gantner, Corinne Geering and Paul Vickers (New York: Berghahn Books, 2021), 129.

2. See Erzsebet C. Harrach, “The Reconstruction of the Buda Castle Hill after 1945”, in: *Rebuilding Europe’s Bombed Cities*, ed. Jeffrey M. Diefendorf (London: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), 155–169; Piotr Majewski, *Ideologia i konserwacja. Architektura zabytkowa w Polsce w czasach socrealizmu* (Warszawa: Trio, 2009); Steven Maddox, *Saving Stalin’s Imperial City. Historic Preservation in Leningrad, 1930–1950* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015); Veronika Rollová, *Pražský Hrad na cestě ke komunistické utopii (1948–1968)* (Praha: UMPRUM, 2019); *Nach der Monarchie. Das Residenzschloss in Weimar 1918–2018. Funktion und Nutzung im Wandel*, ed. Gert-Dieter Ulferts (Wiesbaden: Verlagshaus Römerweg, 2022), 130–147.

carriers of meaning and historical narrative, especially in a museum context.³

HISTORIC INTERIOR EXHIBITION AT WAWEL CASTLE DURING THE PRE-SOCIALIST PERIOD

Wawel Castle in Cracow was the main seat of Polish monarchs between the 12th and the late 16th century. After the transfer of the royal court to Warsaw ca. 1600, it still remained in use as an occasional residence of Polish kings until the state's partitioning between Russia, Prussia and Austria in the late 18th century. Situated in the Austrian part of the former Polish-Lithuanian monarchy (an area known as Galicia), the castle served initially as barracks for the local garrison of the Habsburg army. This resulted in its prolonged devastation. Owing to the progressing liberalisation of the Austrian imperial regime in the second half of the 19th century, the building was eventually given to the Municipality of Cracow in 1905. At that point, it was intended to become a Polish national museum. The change in ownership started a process of its thorough external and internal renovation in the years preceding the First World War.⁴

When Poland regained independence as a democratic republic in 1918, the years-long process of the “renewal” or “rebuilding” of Wawel Castle entered a new phase. Since it became one of official residences of Poland's president, restoration activities had to conform to the specific requirements of this role. Although the visits of the head of state were rare (the country's capital city was Warsaw) and the castle proved to be mainly a tourist attraction, the very prospect of state celebrations and events occasionally hosted by the president became the driving force behind the activities of the Management for the Renovation of Wawel Royal Castle

(Kierownictwo Odnowienia Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu). It was headed by the architect and conservator Adolf Szyszko-Bohusz (1883–1948), who was responsible for the internal design. Moreover, he also supervised the curators of the artistic collection, only theoretically subordinate to the independent Directorate of the State Collections of Art (Dyrekcja Państwowych Zbiorów Sztuki).⁵ Szyszko-Bohusz publicly admitted that “when designing and decorating the interiors [...] it was considered necessary to treat the castle as a monument of the past, which should impress with its magnificence and testify to the greatness of Old Poland also through the richness of its internal arrangement”.⁶ However, this emphasis on “magnificence” and “richness”, intended to demonstrate “the greatness of Old Poland”, brought highly controversial results. The architect combined original walls, proportions and details with ahistorical (though historicised) interventions such as multi-coloured marble floors, richly gilded ceilings with contemporary paintings, or polished doors made of various kinds of exotic timber.⁷

However, even though the site was so evocative of the national past, the problem of the interiors' Polishness did not become a subject of discussion at that time. Although the main objection was that the new interiors were detached from their historical roots, critics such as the architect Tadeusz Stryjeński (1849–1943) or art historian Stanisław Tomkiewicz (1850–1933) evidently did not expect them to be “Polish” or “native” in character; in their opinions, they were more likely to make references to the civilisational opposition between the East and the West. They pointed out, for example, the “Russian pomposity” of Szyszko-Bohusz's design, an allusion to his Petersburg education.⁸ Stryjeński even

3. On the musealisation of Wawel Royal Castle after the Second World War (with only a short discussion of the interior exhibition) see Mikołaj Getka-Kenig, “Musealization of Wawel Castle 1945–61 – Royal heritage and political legitimacy in early socialist Poland”, *Museum History Journal* 18, no. 1 (2025): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19369816.2024.2407784>.

4. Marcin Fabiański, “Lata 1905–1916”, in: *Zamek królewski na Wawelu. Sto lat odnowy (1905–2005)*, eds. Paweł Dettloff, Marcin Fabiański and Andrzej Fischinger (Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 2005), 17–51; Petro Andreas Nungovitch, *Here All Is Poland. A Pantheonic History of Wawel, 1787–2010* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019), 1–151.

5. Franciszek Fuchs, *Z historii odnowienia wawelskiego zamku 1905–1939* (Kraków: Ministerstwo Kultury i Sztuki, 1962), 17.

6. “Rektor Szyszko Bohusz o restauracji Wawelu”, *Głos Narodu*, no. 104 (20 April 1930): 15.

7. Tadeusz Mańkowski, *Dzieje wnętrza wawelskich* (Warszawa: Ministerstwo Kultury i Sztuki, Centralny Zarząd Muzeów, 1952), 69–70, 72; Paweł Dettloff, *Odbudowa i restauracja zabytków architektury w Polsce w latach 1918–1939* (Kraków: Universitas, 2006), 203–208.

8. Tadeusz Stryjeński, “O wnętrza Wawelu. Z powodu restauracji wnętrza wschodniego skrzydła Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu”, *Czas*, no. 136 (17 June 1930): 1–2.

provided critical statements of foreign experts, representatives of “cultured countries” such as France, Germany or Spain, in order to substantiate his criticism.⁹ Tomkowicz accused Szyszko-Bohusz of lacking international experience, because “to properly decorate the interior of a historic palace [...] it is necessary to get acquainted with what is beautiful in the world”.¹⁰ Those discussions were not thus about preserving or creating the impression of “nativeness”, but rather about proving that Poles belonged to the “family of cultured nations”, identified with Western Europe.¹¹ Wawel Castle was seen as an ultimate evidence of Poland’s belonging to the Western civilisation.

POST-WAR CONCEPT OF TADEUSZ MAŃKOWSKI

During the Second World War, when Poland became occupied by Nazi Germany, Wawel Castle served as a residence of the German General Governor Hans Frank, who worked and lived there with his family between 1939 and 1945. Like the rest of Cracow’s architectural heritage, the building was practically saved from any serious wartime damage.¹² After the city’s liberation by the Red Army in January 1945 and the consequent reinstatement of the Polish government (with the state becoming a Soviet protectorate), the castle was taken over by the Ministry of Culture and Art (Ministerstwo Kultury i Sztuki). The ministry re-established the Wawel branch of the State Collections of Art as a separate institution (the pre-war Directory of the State Collections of Art was not revived). Tadeusz Mańkowski (1878–1956) was nominated the institution’s new director by the will of Stanisław Lorentz (1899–1991),

director of the General Directorate of Museums and Monument Protection (Naczelna Dyrekcja Muzeów i Ochrony Zabytków) at the Ministry.

Mańkowski, originally from Lwów (now Lviv, Ukraine), was known for his influential studies on early-modern applied arts.¹³ Before the war, he conducted a research project on the Jagiellonian tapestries in the Wawel collection. It resulted in a monographic study co-authored with Mieczysław Gębarowicz (1893–1984), published in 1937.¹⁴ The famous collection of 137 splendid wall hangings, mostly commissioned by King Sigismund II Augustus and woven in the Low Countries in the mid-16th century, was the only preserved element of the castle’s historic movable interior decoration. However, when Mańkowski took over as director, the Jagiellonian tapestries were no longer in Wawel Castle: evacuated overseas in 1939 for fear of looting or destruction, they had been deposited in Canada since 1940.¹⁵ Their absence proved a challenge for Mańkowski. As an art historian interested in interior decoration, he wanted to develop and consolidate the role of the castle as a museum of historic interiors. In his perception, the exhibition design ought to have been dictated by the knowledge of history. Importantly, this idea was also espoused by Stanisław Lorentz, also an art historian. Both Mańkowski and Lorentz critically assessed Szyszko-Bohusz’s legacy in the castle’s interiors. According to Mańkowski, it was probably this shared criticism that inspired Lorentz to nominate him the director of the Wawel State Collections of Arts.¹⁶

In April 1945, Mańkowski informed the General Directorate that the “renovation” of the castle interiors

9. Ibid.

10. Stanisław Tomkowicz, “Odnawianie Wawelu”, *Wiadomości Literackie*, no 30 (1930): 1.

11. Stanisław Tomkowicz, “Jak restaurować zamek wawelski”. *Czas*, no. 190 (22 August 1929): 1; no. 191 (23 August): 1.

12. Mikołaj Getka-Kenig, “Historic Architecture Losses in Kraków during the Second World War (1939–1945)”, *Totalitarian and 20th Century Studies* 4 (2020): 398–400.

13. On Mańkowski’s contribution to art history, see *Sylwetki badaczy. Tadeusz Mańkowski*, ed. Karolina Stanilewicz (Warszawa: Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki, 2023).

14. Mieczysław Gębarowicz, Tadeusz Mańkowski, “Arrasy Zygmunta Augusta”, *Rocznik Krakowski* 29 (1937): 1–220. On the Jagiellonian tapestries from the Wawel collection, see Maria Hennel-Bernasikowa, *The Tapestries of Sigismund II Augustus. A History*, transl. Sabina Potaczek-Jasionowicz (Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 2014).

15. Piotr Majewski, *Wojna i kultura. Instytucje kultury polskiej w okupacyjnych realiach Generalnego Gubernatorstwa 1939–1945* (Warszawa: Trio, 2005), 181–216; see also Gordon Swoger, *The Strange Odyssey of Poland’s National Treasures, 1939–1961. A Polish-Canadian Story* (Toronto: The Dundurn Group, 2004); Bernasikowa, *The Tapestries of Sigismund II Augustus*, 126–147.

16. Tadeusz Mańkowski, *Pamiętniczek*, ed. Maria Kuczyńska, 38, accessed 6 May 2025, <https://www.lwow.com.pl/mankowski/pamietniczek.pdf>.

was already “nearing completion”.¹⁷ Soon, the castle was opened to the public, although the exhibition was still evolving. Mańkowski’s main resources were objects preserved from the pre-war Wawel collection as well as “ex-German” artworks (which the Nazis had left at Wawel). From June 1945, there were also objects recovered from Silesia (originally plundered in Poland and hidden there by the Nazis).¹⁸ Mańkowski wanted to bring “individual rooms to a certain stylistic uniformity, and at the same time ensure that their arrangement met the requirements of good taste that was not a museum-like combination of furniture and art objects, but an interior at least similar to what they might have looked like in the past”.¹⁹ From his point of view, the problem lay in the lack of “authentic works from the 16th and 17th century” and in Szyszko-Bohusz’s quite irreversible pre-war interventions.

However, the Ministry of Culture and Art, supporting Mańkowski in his endeavours to transform Wawel Castle into a museum of interiors, initially encountered resistance from Bolesław Bierut, the President of the State National Council (Krajowa Rada Narodowa). The latter considered himself the legal successor of the pre-war presidents of Poland and, like them, wanted to use the castle as his secondary official residence. For this reason, the fate of the building remained unresolved for some time. Finally, at the end of 1945, the Presidium of the State National Council expressed its intention to grant the castle the status of a “monument of national culture”, while “repealing the previous character of a residence and its utilitarian purpose”.²⁰ That decision was crucial for the further development of the castle’s exhibition of historic interiors.²¹

The original post-war interior exhibition has virtually no documentation, including photographs. There

is only a sketchy description in the first post-war guide to Wawel Hill, published in 1945.²² However, its author Jerzy Zanoziński wrote very little about movable decorations, such as paintings and works of applied arts. He mentioned three portraits of “famous Polish warriors” and the scene of the Battle of Lepanto in the Battle of Orsza Room, as well as trophy Ottoman tents in the Senate Hall. He probably focused on only those objects that could be of special interest to Polish visitors.²³ The fact that Mańkowski richly decorated the rooms with many objects of art, although ones not particularly associated with Polish history, is known from reports submitted to the Ministry of Culture and Art towards the end of 1945. Their authors pointed out the absence of connection between the interior exhibition and the castle’s architecture or the history of the place.²⁴ One of them was Szyszko-Bohusz, still in office as chief conservator of the castle (until 1946). Understandably, Szyszko-Bohusz was especially critical. In his view, Mańkowski’s exhibition was “a dead warehouse of artefacts”, “a collection of specimens of applied art and artistic industry”, and not “a living interior in harmony with architecture, having the character of historic interiors intended for ceremonial or residential purposes, or even for a museum”. He emphasised that these “specimens” represented “average international production”. In order to avoid “a series of insipid, international interiors” it was necessary, in his opinion, to replace the treasures remaining in Canada, at least temporarily, with “other similar” monuments from public and private collections, not necessarily of high artistic value, but “spiritually more closely related” to Wawel Castle.²⁵ Another expert, Tadeusz Cybulski, a painter and professor of the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow, expressed his view in a similar tone. In his opinion, “well-decorated interiors

17. Archive of the Wawel Royal Castle (henceforward: AWRC), AZK PZS-II-22, p. 2: Mańkowski’s report for the Ministry of Culture and Art, 9 April 1945.

18. See Lidia Małgorzata Kamińska, “Wawelska i warszawska – największe powojenne składnice przemieszczanych dóbr kultury w Polsce. Przyczynek do szerszego opracowania”, *Muzealnictwo* 58 (2017): 186, <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0010.3026>.

19. Mańkowski, *Pamiętniczek*, 40.

20. Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw, Ministry of Culture and Arts, General Directory of Museums and Monument Protection, 387/3, p. 1: draft decree on ending a residential role of Wawel Castle and returning it to the nation, November 1945.

21. On the castle’s use as a presidential residence in 1945 and its eventual “return” to the nation as a monument of national culture see Getka-Kenig, “Musealization of Wawel Castle”, 5–7.

22. Jerzy Zanoziński, *Wawel. Krótki przewodnik dla zwiedzających katedrę i zamek królewski* (Kraków: Księgarnia Wawelska, 1945), 18–20.

23. *Ibid.*, 20.

24. See Getka-Kenig, “Musealization of Wawel Castle”, 10.

25. AWRC, AZK PZS-II-47, no pagination: Szyszko-Bohusz’s opinion dated 22 July 1945.



1 Unknown painter, *Portrait of Tsarina Maryna Mniszech*, ca. 1606.
Photo by Wawel Royal Castle

are the culmination of the monumentality of the castle itself, while bad interiors lead to the destruction of its monumental architecture". He accused Mańkowski of creating an image of "an anecdotal Poland" instead of "an old sovereign state". He envisioned a modern Pole entering "the house of his past, which he should leave with a sublime feeling". At that time, however, the interiors did not say anything about the greatness of Old Poland either to Poles or to foreigners.²⁶

Tadeusz Dobrowolski (1899–1984), an influential left-wing art historian from the Jagiellonian University and the pre-war director of the Silesian Museum in Katowice, also commented on this problem. He did it, however, in public. In an article in "Biuletyn Historii Sztuki i Kultury", a leading Polish art-historical journal, he admitted that due to the fact that Wawel Castle had not survived "in its original state together with all the contents of the interior", any attempts at its musealisation bore "the character of arbitrariness". He noted, however, that the current exhibition lacked the character appropriate for the official "monument of national culture". The interiors were "decorated with antiques, very numerous and tiresome in their repetition, with chalk-white, smoothly polished rooms, with new floors, generally new ceilings and schematically profiled and veneered doors". He questioned the social function of such an exhibition, which "actually introduces one to a stylish type of secondary equipment". He noted that, at least before the war, "the tapestries saved the situation" as they were the only element "historically connected with Wawel Castle". Therefore, he questioned the sense of further "multiplication of foreign furniture and paintings, not always of great value", instead proposing the transformation of the castle into a Louvre-type museum. Some of the rooms could still be used for interior exhibitions, but the rest would be turned into a "museum of national culture". As a result, "Wawel Castle would find a practical use, it would fulfil its role better than before, it would evoke specific experiences that would have positive social significance", without

doing harm to "our pietistic attitude to the seat of the Piast and Jagiellonian dynasties".²⁷

In April 1946, Lorentz held a meeting at the castle, attended by Mańkowski, his deputy Adam Bochnak (1899–1974), Szyszko-Bohusz, Dobrowolski, Director of the National Museum in Cracow Feliks Kopera (1871–1952), Director of the Czartoryski Museum Stanisław Gąsiorowski (1897–1962) and Provincial Conservator Józef Dutkiewicz (1903–1968). Lorentz proposed that a special commission should be charged with the planning of the interior exhibition. Some participants of the meeting accused Mańkowski of overloading the interiors with artefacts. Gąsiorowski was in favour of limiting their number in order to focus the visitors' attention on architecture. He was supported by Kopera and Szyszko-Bohusz. Dobrowolski proposed that the castle become the seat of the Wawel History Museum. Dutkiewicz and Dobrowolski also stressed the need of making clear references to the history of Poland. In response, Mańkowski expressed his reluctance to decrease the number of exhibits. He believed that the interiors should not be empty, because the castle's status as a national monument was to be "formed" by an indoor exhibition.²⁸ The discussion is in itself evidence of how important this question was to the Ministry of Culture and Arts.

The proposed commission was never established, however, with the result that the arrangement of the interior exhibition remained solely in Mańkowski's hands. Mańkowski proved not to be completely deaf to the above-mentioned criticism. Until his resignation in 1951, he concentrated on increasing the number of objects directly connected with Polish history, especially portraits of kings and state dignitaries from the early modern period (the Commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania).²⁹ He partially acquired them through purchases from private owners, for instance the portraits of Maryna Mniszech (Fig. 1) and Andrzej Zborowski, or the enigmatic scene of a Saxon royal election by Jan Piotr Norblin.³⁰ In the case of the 17th-century copy of

26. AWRC, AZK PZS-II-47, no pagination: Cybulski's opinion dated 28 September 1945.

27. Tadeusz Dobrowolski, "Zagadnienia muzealnictwa", *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki i Kultury* 8, no. 3–4 (1946): 172–173.

28. AWRC, AZK PZS-II-42, p. 5: protocol of the first meeting of the Expert Commission, 15 April 1946.

29. See Getka-Kenig, "Musealization of Wawel Castle", 10–11.

30. *Portrait of Maryna Mniszech*, 1606 or 1609, oil on canvas, inv. no. 3252 (acquired from Franciszek Salezy Potocki); *Portrait of Andrzej Zborowski*, 1582, oil on canvas, inv. no. 2114 (acquired from Aleksander Zborowski); *Royal Election of a Wettin*, ca. 1790, oil on canvas, inv. no. 3238 (acquired from Stanisław Augustynowicz-Ciecierski). Kazimierz Kuczman,



2 Unknown painter, *Portrait of King Sigismund the Old*, first half of the 17th century. Photo by Wawel Royal Castle



3 Tommaso Dolabella, *Portrait of Stanisław Tęczyński*, ca. 1633.
Photo by Wawel Royal Castle

a full-length portrait of Sigismund I the Old (Fig. 2), the owner Ludwik Hieronim Morstin (1886–1966) eventually decided to donate it as a gift, even though Mańkowski expressed the museum's willingness to purchase it. This was, however, a rare occurrence. It must be noted that Morstin, an acclaimed and well-connected journalist, poet and playwright, was not only a state official (acting director of the Silesian Theatre in Katowice) and public figure, but also a former landowner and scion of an aristocratic family.³¹ He inherited the painting that was a symbol of his family's centuries-old elite status. His rather unusual decision to gift it rather than sell it to a public museum may therefore have been motivated by some fears of potential (and quite common at the time) anti-noble sentiments in early socialist Poland.

Many objects that enriched the Wawel collection during Mańkowski's directorship came from museum deposits and donations from the General Directorate of Museums and Monument Protection. The Ministry of Culture and Art acquired most of them as a result of the land reform of 1944–1945, involving the appropriation of not only country houses themselves, but also their furnishings of artistic or historical value. Such was the

case of monumental equestrian portraits of kings Sigismund III, Ladislaus IV and John II Casimir that came from the Tarnowski collection at Sucha near Cracow.³² There were also such objects as a portrait of Stanisław Tęczyński by Tommaso Dolabella (Fig. 3), which was confiscated from its owners, the Potockis of Krzeszowice near Cracow, after their unsuccessful attempt to smuggle it to the West. The painting was originally placed in the National Museum in Warsaw, but later moved to Wawel Castle at Mańkowski's request.³³

However, not all of Mańkowski's endeavours proved successful. For example, he was unable to obtain the oil scene of the Battle of Orsza attributed to the workshop of Lucas Cranach the Elder. In 1945, the painting was transferred from the Silesian Museum of the Fine Arts in Wrocław (formerly Breslau) to the National Museum in Warsaw as a war trophy (similarly to many other objects from former German collections in Silesia, an area that became a part of Poland in 1945). Mańkowski wanted to display it in the Battle of Orsza Room, named after a lost 16th-century frieze depicting this event (in the inter-war period, Leonard Pękalski created a new one on the same subject). In his correspondence with Lorentz, Mańkowski emphasised the historical rather

Malarstwo polskie XV–XVIII wieku w zbiorach Zamku Królewskiego na Wawelu (Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 2021), 92–94, 213, 432–433; AWRC, AZK PZS-II-25/2a, pp. 52–52v: Mańkowski's report to General Directory concerning Norblin's painting, March 28, 1947 (copy); AWRC, AZK PZS-II-25/2a, p. 82: Mańkowski's letter to Lorentz concerning the portrait of Zborowski, 8 March 1948 (copy); AWRC, AZK PZS-II-25/2a, p. 84: Mańkowski's report to General Directory concerning the portrait of Mniszech, 3 April 1948 (copy).

31. *Portrait of Sigismund the Old*, 1546 or first half of the 17th century, oil on canvas, inv. no. 3239. Kuczman, *Malarstwo polskie*, 214–216. AZKW, PZS-II-125/1, p. 44: Morstin's letter to Mańkowski concerning the portrait of Sigismund the Old, February 5, 1947; AZKW, AZK PZS-II-22/1/1, pp. 915–916: Lorentz's letter to Mańkowski, 13 March, 1947. On Morstin, see Stanisław Witold Balicki, "Morstin (Morsztyn) Ludwik (1886–1960)" in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 21, ed. Emanuel Rostworowski (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1976), 794–797.

32. *Equestrian Portrait of King Sigismund III*, third quarter of the 17th century, second quarter of the 17th century, oil on canvas, inv. no. 3228; *Equestrian Portrait of Ladislaus IV*, third quarter of the 17th century, oil on canvas, inv. no. 3229; *Equestrian Portrait of John Casimir*, third quarter of the 17th century, oil on canvas, inv. no. 3230. Kuczman, *Malarstwo polskie*, 54–55, 202, 222–223. AZKW, AZK PZS-II-22/1/1, pp. 891, 901: Mańkowski's letter to Lorentz concerning the pictures, 2 July 1946, and Mańkowski's report to General Directory, 4 August 1947.

33. *Portrait of Stanisław Tęczyński*, 1633–1634, oil on canvas, inv. no. Dep. 935. Kuczman, *Malarstwo polskie*, 176–180; AZKW, AZK PZS-II-22/1/1, 919: Mańkowski's letter to Lorentz, 15 April 1947. The portrait of Tęczyński, until 1946 in the possession of the Potockis of Krzeszowice near Cracow, was confiscated together with other precious belongings of this family, such as paintings (including many portraits), silverware and historic mementos. *Pokaz obrazów i dzieł sztuki ze zbiorów Potockich* (Warszawa: Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie, 1946), 7; Wojciech Szafranski, "Dekret o rejestracji i zakazie wywozu dzieł sztuki z 1946 roku – czy praktyka rozmięła się z celami regulacji prawnej?", *Studia Iuridica Toruniensia* 11 (2012): 225–239.

than artistic value of this panel painting, suggesting its relevance for the castle's exhibition of interiors. However, Lorenz, doubling also as director of the National Museum in Warsaw, was adamant. He responded by stressing his museum's loss of the pre-war collection of Old Polish art, as well as the alleged Warsaw origin of the painting (ironically, not long afterwards a study by Warsaw scholars argued in favour of its Cracow roots).³⁴ Despite Lorenz's well nigh proverbial obsession with developing the Warsaw National Museum into the central art collection of the state, it is probable that he also wanted to avoid a potential political controversy. The Battle of Orsza (1514) was a famous victory of the Polish army over the Muscovites. Therefore, to exhibit it as an artwork in an art museum rather than a historical relic in a national monument was much more prudent in Soviet-dominated Poland.

In 1951, after six years of developing the exhibition of historic interiors, Mańkowski summarised his achievements in this field in an introduction to his guide to the castle:

The emphasis on Polishness was more pronounced than before. The nation's knightly past was represented by the rooms containing pieces of armour and portraits of commanders (Fig. 4). Next to the room, in which there had already been a painting of the sea battle at Lepanto, another one was furnished with parts of a tent [one of the elaborate Turkish tents captured by King John III's army during the Battle of Vienna in 1683 – MGK] hanging on the walls, pieces of solely Polish armour, and portraits of commanders. Generally, more portraits of kings and persons belonging to royal families were gathered there than before (Fig. 5). The room on the first floor refers to Báthory's times, with portraits of the king and Anna Jagiellon, his wife. A portrait of Ladislaus IV hangs in the Hen's Foot [Tower]. In the Bird Room on the second floor, there are portraits of the three kings

of the Vasa dynasty (Fig. 6), they are also partly in the adjacent room behind it, followed by two further rooms with historical portraits from the second half of the 17th century, in particular the times of John III. As a passage to the neoclassical Merlini Room, one of the rooms on the first floor was decorated in the style of the Saxon era, with portraits of outstanding personages of that era hanging on its walls. The Merlini Room was decorated with objects from Warsaw Castle in the style of the era of Stanislaus Augustus.³⁵

When one considers the reasons why Mańkowski focused on the "Polonization" of interiors, attention should be paid to the political context of his directorship. The first years of post-war Poland were a period of consolidation of the socialist power. Despite the support of the Soviet Union and the permanent presence of the Red Army in Poland, Polish socialists still strove for popular legitimacy. To that end, they emphasised attachment to Polishness, including the distant national past, while doing their best to isolate Poles from Western influences. It is true that when the regime became stronger as a result of the manipulated referendum of 1946 (which concerned political and socio-economic reforms) and the first post-war parliamentary elections of 1947, the nationalist rhetoric of the government weakened. Nevertheless, the more or less distant history of Poland continued to be a point of reference for official propaganda. The eras of cultural history particularly preferred by Marxist scholars included the Renaissance (as well as the Enlightenment, to which the above-mentioned Merlini Room was a reference³⁶), associated with humanism, rationality and the rejection of the Church's authority. During the Stalinist period, for example, Renaissance architecture was an influential source of inspiration for the architecture of socialist realism. It is true that Mańkowski collected portraits

34. AWRC, AZK PZS-II-22/1/1, pp. 873, 875: Mańkowski's report to General Directory, July 8, 1946 (copy) and Lorenz's letter to Mańkowski, 24 July 1946; Stanisław Herbst and Michał Walicki, "Obraz bitwy pod Orszą. Dokument historii sztuki i wojskowości XVI w.", *Rozprawy Komisji Historii Sztuki i Kultury Towarzystwa Naukowego Warszawskiego* 1 (1949): 33–68. On the history of this picture, today still in the collection of the National Museum in Warsaw (inv. no. MP 2475), see Volodymyr Hucul, "The Battle of Orsza – Court Propaganda or Chivalric Epic", *RIHA Journal* 0093, 3 July 2014, <http://www.riha-journal.org/articles/2014/2014-jul-sep/hucul-orsha-en>.

35. Archive of Science of PAN and PAU in Cracow, Legacy of Tadeusz Mańkowski, 15, p. 2: T. Mańkowski, Przewodnik po Wawelu – a fragment.

36. On the arrangement of the room as a museum space, see Weronika Rostworowska-Kenig, „Sala Kolumnowa – kreacja muzealna na 'pamiątkę' pobytu na zamku króla Stanisława Augusta Poniatowskiego w 1787 roku”, in: *Wawel i XVIII wiek*, eds. Andrzej Betlej and Natalia Koziara-Ochęduszek (Kraków: Zamek Królewski na Wawelu, 2024), 363–392.



4 Planet Room in 1947. Photo by an unknown author, Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw

Visible pieces of Polish hussar armour, a portrait of King Stanisław Leszczyński by Daniel Klein (ca. 1733, deposited by the Society of the Friends of Sciences in Poznań in 1933, far right) and portrait of Antoni Mikołaj Radziwiłł by an unknown painter (ca. mid-18th century, transferred by the Ministry of Art and Culture from an unknown collection in 1946, far left).

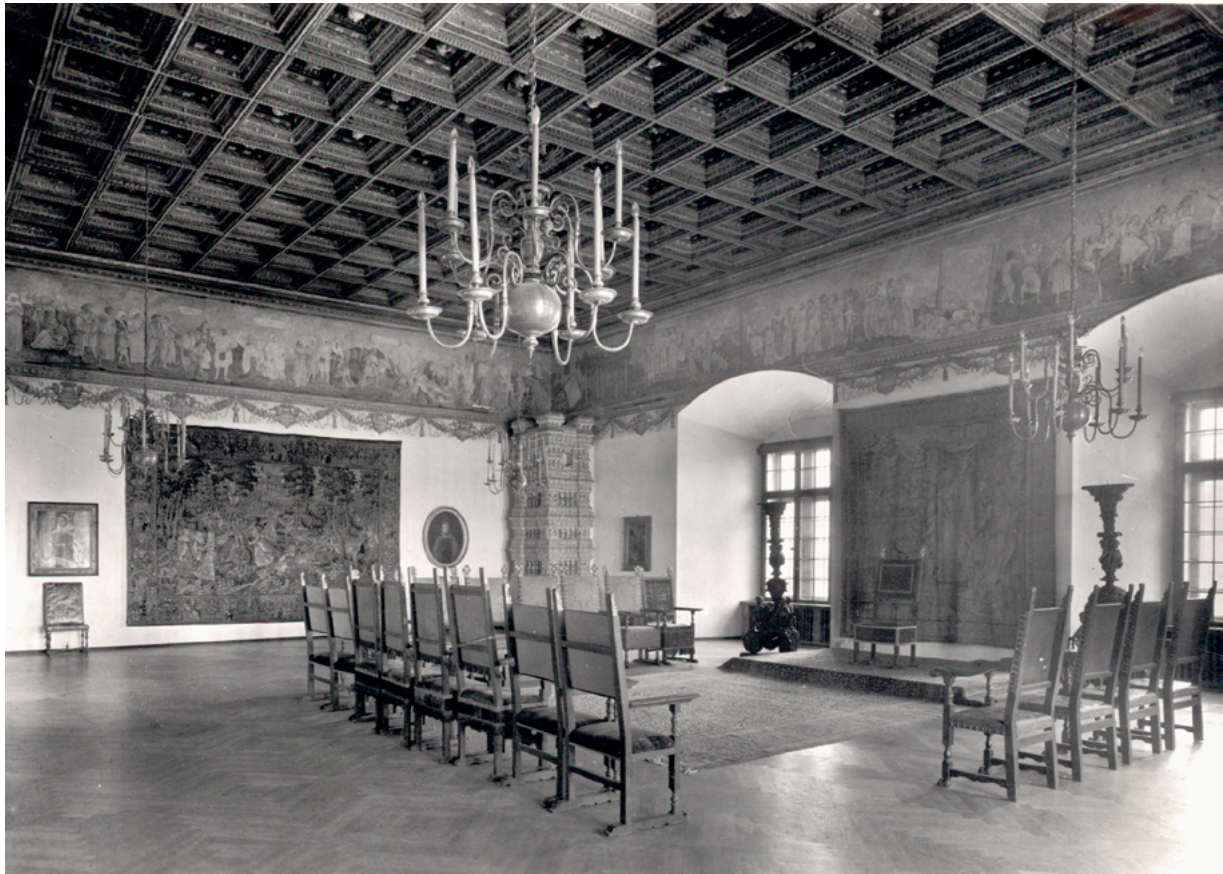
and other artistic objects dating predominantly from the 17th and early 18th century, and thus ones which did not fully fit into this trend (but which were much more available than those of the Renaissance provenance). However, their status of national mementoes helped to distract the castle from the associations with Western culture. This remained the government's cultural priority at the turn of the 1950s.³⁷ Last but not least, since almost all of these paintings came from private collections, their public exhibition at Wawel Castle was in itself an expression of the same idea that drove the castle's elevation to the status of "the monument of national culture": a transfer from the elite and private context to the egalitarian and public one.

A BOOK ON THE HISTORY OF WAWEL INTERIORS

The above-mentioned guide to Wawel interiors, preserved only in typescript, was not the only publication that Mańkowski was working on at that time. Another was a study on the history of Wawel interiors. The book was published in 1952 and reprinted (in a slightly edited version) after the author's death in 1957. It supplemented the old monograph on Wawel by Tomkiewicz (1907) "in those directions in which it requires supplementation", provided that there existed some pertinent published or handwritten sources.³⁸ However, the aim of the book was also "to highlight, in the name of historical truth and accuracy, the difference between what the visitors to the castle see today and what once

37. Marcin Zaremba, *Komunizm, legitymacja, nacjonalizm. Nacjonalistyczna legitymizacja władzy komunistycznej w Polsce* (Warszawa: Trio, 2001), 135–173, 175–222.

38. Mańkowski, *Dzieje wnętrz wawelskich*, 5.



5 Deputies' Hall in 1947. Photo by an unknown author, Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw

Visible an oval portrait of Queen Barbara Radziwiłł, wife of King Sigismund II Augustus (a late 19th-century copy of a 17th-century painting by an unknown painter), in the centre, next to stove, transferred by the Ministry of Art and Culture in 1946.

existed there”.³⁹ Mańkowski further emphasised that “if we want to characterize them [the interiors – MGK] in general, we will find in them a certain native originality and Polish features”, which included carved and polychrome portals, painted “ends” [in Polish *krańce*, that is friezes – MGK], stoves with colourful tiles, as well as figural and floral scrollwork frescoes on the walls, subtle colour contrasts, generally the predominance of “colourfulness” and the limitation of “ornamental art [...] in the lintels of the portals and the openwork acroteria of the tops of majolica stoves”.⁴⁰ In his opinion, the “Wawel of the 16th century” was an expression of “the taste of the people of the Polish Renaissance, not completely permeated by the Italian way of understanding beauty, but having their own, specific views on beauty”.⁴¹ Mańkowski’s findings indirectly justified the

emphasis on “Polishness” in the contemporary interior exhibition.

The problem of “nativeness” was even more strongly emphasised in the second edition of the study. Mańkowski declared that the main contribution of his book to “the history of Polish artistic culture” was “primarily to emphasise the native elements that played an important role in the interiors of Wawel Castle”. The idea was to undermine the thesis that “the Italian taste came to Poland with Bona [Sforza, wife of King Sigismund I the Old – MGK], which should have found expression primarily in the interior design of the royal residence”, while “a closer acquaintance with and an insight into archival sources” helped to demonstrate that “Polish influences prevailed over foreign influences at that time”.⁴² As an example of the direct impact

39. *Ibid.*, 6.

40. *Ibid.*, 28.

41. *Ibid.*, 30.

42. Tadeusz Mańkowski, *Dzieje wnętrz wawelskich* (Warszawa: Sztuka, 1957), 39.

of his book on the development of Polish art history, Mańkowski pointed to a recent article on Wawel Castle by Tadeusz Dobrowolski, where the latter referred to the first edition of Mańkowski's book. It is worth noting that Dobrowolski's article, analysing Wawel as "a work of Polish native art that had gone beyond the cosmopolitan convention of the European Renaissance", was an example of the straightforward reception of Marxist historiography. The article was expected to contribute to the emancipation of Polish art historiography not only from "a methodological one-sidedness", but also "a disbelief in the strength and distinctiveness of native or national culture".⁴³ Although Mańkowski's book was not so openly ideologically engaged, its conceptual affinity with Dobrowolski's work was not a coincidence; it was a result of the same political context.

THE WAWEL CASE AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF OTHER ROYAL RESIDENCES IN THE EASTERN BLOC

How did the problem of interior design at Wawel Castle compare to other royal residences of East and Central Europe in the early years of socialist rule? Did they also pose a problem for the socialist authorities? It appears that controversies regarding historic interiors concerned primarily buildings that were supposed to perform official functions as ceremonial spaces and those that had been destroyed (to a greater or lesser extent) during the recent war. In Poland itself, this was the case of the Royal Castle in Warsaw, the state's capital. The Germans first burnt the building down in 1939 and then razed it to the ground after the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. During the first post-war decade,

the socialist authorities wanted to rebuild the castle in a historical form, but with the exception of interiors, which were to be modern. It must be noted that the state rooms of Warsaw Castle, dating from the end of the 18th century, were well documented, and many original elements of their furnishings (paintings, sculptures, pieces of furniture, and even doors or fragments of wainscoting) had survived the war, evacuated and rescued by Polish art historians and museum curators under the guidance of Stanisław Lorentz, then already the director of the National Museum in Warsaw. However, the authorities were not interested in the reconstruction of historical interiors; to them, the demands of conservators and art historians (such as Lorentz) represented a "fossilised conservation attitude".⁴⁴ The authorities intended the castle to serve official functions and the style of its interior was to be an expression of their own progressive political agenda.⁴⁵ Remarkably, the case of Buda Castle in Budapest in Hungary, intended as a headquarters of the ruling party and government, was similar. Its original, Baroque and historicist interiors were irrevocably lost during the castle's long-standing reconstruction after 1948, despite the fact that their restoration after the wartime destruction was possible. There was, however, no ideological stimulus to recover those spectacular mementos of the Habsburg monarchy.⁴⁶

However, the Polish socialist authorities simultaneously consented to a detailed reconstruction of the interiors of another royal palace in the capital, dating back to the same period as the interiors in Warsaw Castle. It was the former villa of Poland's last king Stanisław Augustus known as the Palace on the Isle (Pałac na

43. Tadeusz Dobrowolski, „Zamek na Wawelu. Dzieło architektury polskiej”, *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 15, no. 3 (1953): 24.

44. Majewski, *Ideologia i konserwacja*, 188.

45. *Ibid.*, 158–192. The idea of the castle's rebuilding was suspended in the 1950s and returned to only in the early 1970s. Then, the socialist authorities (by then, a new generation of national leaders) decided to restore the building to its pre-war form, including the neoclassical rooms that were meticulously recreated. The castle was opened to the public as an interior museum in 1984. See Ingrid Appelbom Karsten, "Reconstruction of Historic Monuments in Poland after the Second World War – the Case of Warsaw", in: *Authentic Reconstruction. Authenticity, Architecture and the Built Heritage*, eds. John Bold, Peter Larkham and Robert Pickard (London–New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), 60–61; Ewa Klekot, "Constructing a 'monument of national history and culture' in Poland: the case of the Royal Castle in Warsaw", *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 18, no. 5 (2012): 459–478, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527258.2011.637944>; Przemysław Mrozowski, "Aleksander Gieysztor, the First Director of the Royal Castle in Warsaw", *Muzealnictwo* 61 (2020): 253–263, <http://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0014.3515>.

46. Gantner, "Socialist Royalty?", 134; Harrach, "The Reconstruction of the Buda Castle Hill", 155–169.



6 Bird Room in 1950. Photo by Stanisław Kolowca, Wawel Royal Castle
Visible a portrait of King Władysław IV by an unknown painter (after 1648), in the National Museum in Warsaw's collection since 1925, after 1945 loaned to the Wawel State Art Collection; in the ceiling: paintings by Felicjan Szczęsny Kowarski (1929).

Wyspie), situated in the Royal Baths Garden (Łazienki Królewskie) on the outskirts of the city centre. It was reconstructed between 1945 and 1965. The building was not expected to serve as a ceremonial space for the ruling elite, but as a museum of the Polish Enlightenment culture.⁴⁷ As it has already been mentioned, the Enlightenment was an epoch that was highly esteemed by Marxist historians as a continuation of the Renaissance.

In post-war Soviet Russia, heavily damaged interiors were also reconstructed in former imperial palaces in

the environs of Leningrad (St. Petersburg), namely in Pushkin (Tsarskoye Selo), Petrodvorets (Peterhof) and Pavlovsk. The reconstruction process started shortly after the war, although it took many years. The decision to restore these objects together with their interiors was due to the rehabilitation of the Romanov heritage during the war with Germany, in official propaganda known as the Great Patriotic War. This name itself was a clear allusion to the previous “patriotic war” with Napoleon in 1812. The former imperial palaces,

47. Jan Dąbrowski, „Pałac na Wodzie w Łazienkach”, *Ochrona Zabytków* 9, no. 3 (1956): 176; Władysław Tatarkiewicz, *Łazienki Królewskie i ich osobliwości* (Warszawa: Arkady, 1986), 18.

having served as interior museums already before the war, were symbols of the political and military strength of the Russian Empire. Soviet Russia could therefore directly refer to this legacy as its modern successor and follower.⁴⁸

The above-mentioned palaces in Warsaw and the vicinity of Leningrad were restored to their former glory because they commemorated and celebrated specific historical legacies or cultural epochs that were, for one reason or another, important to socialist regimes. In Prague, however, the preservation of the historic rooms of the royal castle, then the seat of the country's leader, was seemingly only a consequence of the fact that the whole residence was spared from war damage.⁴⁹ Potsdam in East Germany constituted a similar case, as the preserved residential complex of Sanssouci Palace remained intact (and functioned as a museum) also after the war, despite its quite controversial associations with not only the Prussian, but also the Nazi past (because of Hitler's admiration for its creator, King Frederic II). It seems that if the war had left Sanssouci Palace in ruins, it would have shared the fate of other important monuments of the despised Prussian monarchy, such as the royal castle in Berlin or the city castle in Potsdam. The socialist authorities did not rebuild them in any form, obliterating their imposing and salvageable ruins in 1950 and 1960 respectively.⁵⁰

Against this background, the case of Wawel Castle, where the interior exhibition was intentionally arranged in such a way that the interiors could fit into current ideological trends, appears to be quite unique. It was a consequence of the pre-war experiences on the one hand, and the lack of a clear post-war purpose for its interiors on the other. To some extent, however, its case seems comparable with that of Sanssouci Palace. Since the historic interiors of the latter were well preserved, the palace served as an interior museum even despite its highly controversial historical background. However, although Wawel Castle was not technically destroyed, the absence of the Jagiellonian tapestries deprived its rooms of their only (and very spectacular) element of original movable decoration. Moreover, the concepts of the rebuilt residences-museums such as the Palace

on the Isle in Warsaw or the palaces in the vicinity of Leningrad were ideologically motivated and justified. In the case of Wawel Castle, it would be difficult to find such a coherent ideological reason behind the existence of an interior museum there. It might have seemed natural to transform it into a museum of the Renaissance because of its exterior. However, the castle's interior architecture was stylistically heterogenous. What is more, there was also a shortage of movables from the Renaissance period that could be shown there. Even if the socialist political revolution was an opportunity for Mańkowski and Lorentz to realise their old dreams about the historically-informed arrangement of the castle's rooms, this idea was not self-evident from the political point of view. Its implementation had to be somehow ideologically substantiated. It was apparently the official status of the Monument of National Culture (with the emphasis placed on the word "national") that determined the nationalist course which Mańkowski pursued after 1945.

CONCLUSION

Mańkowski ended his mission as director of the Wawel State Art Collections in late 1951 at the age of 73, three years before his death. Although his arrangement of the historic interior exhibition had its time-specific context, it was further developed in the same spirit by his successor Jerzy Szablowski. This art historian and professor of the Jagiellonian University served as director of the Wawel State Art Collections between 1952 and 1989.⁵¹ The continuity was not broken even by the long-awaited recovery of the Jagiellonian tapestries in 1961, thus in the period of the post-Stalinist liberalisation of socialist rule in Poland. Despite these political and personal changes, Mańkowski's original concept turned out to be the best answer to the persistent problem of the socialist regime, which was the lack of firm grounding in national history – such a key factor of popular legitimacy. Mańkowski's arrangement of Wawel Castle's interiors is a characteristic example of the political entanglement of museology and art history in early socialist Poland. The clear emphasis on the national character of the interior exhibition in

48. See Maddox, *Saving Stalin's Imperial City*, 126–144.

49. On Prague Castle's opening to the public, see Rollová, *Pražský Hrad na cestě ke komunistické utopii (1948–1968)*, 80.

50. Marcus Colla, *Prussia in the Historical Culture of the German Democratic Republic. Communists and Kings* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022), 44–68.

51. See Getka-Kenig, "Musealization of Wawel Castle", 11.

the castle, which was a novel tendency when compared with the pre-war period, was a sign that the director of the Wawel State Collections of Art adapted to the current historical and cultural policies of the state. Although the criticism of the first arrangement in 1945 referred to various issues (in particular the mismatch between movable objects and the monumental architecture), it was no coincidence that Mańkowski particularly focused on the Polonization of the exhibition. This direction also influenced his general vision of the history of Wawel interiors. The emphasis put on their native character, even if confirmed by source queries, had a strong political justification.

The situation resulted from specific circumstances, including, above all, pre-war experiences and related controversies among art historians. It determined the adoption of such an attitude on the part of the management of the castle museum. However, the comparison of Wawel Castle with other former royal residences in the Eastern Bloc proves that the interiors of former royal residences could be a problematic

legacy in the socialist political context. This was due to the fact that they were carriers of meaning in themselves. Both their style and furnishing elements (such as portraits or paintings featuring historical scenes) had a symbolic or even narrative potential. Consequently, their preservation or destruction, restoration or rearrangement were not ideologically neutral from the point of view of national heritage policies or cultural policies in general. In the Wawel case, it was the museum's director – an active scholar – who played the most active role in the ideologically-motivated arrangement of the interiors. There is no proof that he was directly pressed by the authorities to do so, although he was clearly inspired by the opinions of other experts. Therefore, the Wawel case was not only an example of how historic interiors could be accommodated to the socialist ideological agenda; it also was indicative of the survival strategy of academic experts. This strategy aimed to save a potentially controversial heritage without undermining its essence – in this case, the connection with the royal past.

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