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THE FIRST KASHUBIAN ETHNOGRAPHICAL EXHIBITION  
IN KOŚCIERZYNA IN 1911\*

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In his article published on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1911, a “Poznań Courier” (“Kurier Poznański”) journalist noted that: “after a long but scenic journey [...] I have reached at 8.30 this morning [of the 29<sup>th</sup> June – E.K.] Kościerzyna, this burgeoning capital of Kashubia. [...] without hearing from Poznań to Tczew the utterance of a Polish word. I was disgusted by being surrounded by nothing but Germanness and felt like... cursing and my bitter feelings were soothed only by the sight of the angry faces of these «land owners» returning from a German exhibition in Poznań,<sup>1</sup> cursing at [...] East German fraud: and the expensive exhibition beer. [...] Only from Pszczółka did Polish words start reaching my ear. At each station new groups entered the train, in festive outfits, country men, «churls», craftsmen and so on all heading in the direction of Kościerzyna, to «our exhibition». When I heard them say that my spirits rose”<sup>2</sup>

After a fifteen-minute-drive from Kościerzyna station by horse-drawn cab, the journalist got off in front of the “Bazar” (“Bazaar”) building, in which “[...] the first regional Polish exhibition of industry and Kashubian regional folk

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<sup>1</sup> The industrial exhibition in Poznań (Ostdeutsche Ausstellung für Industrie, Gewerbe und Landwirtschaft Posen) took place from 15<sup>th</sup> May–30<sup>th</sup> September 1911.

<sup>2</sup> K., *Wystawa przemysłowa i ludoznawcza w Kościerzynie, Kościerzyna 29 czerwca* [1911], *Kurier Poznański*, vol. 6: 1911, no. 148 from 2 July 1911. See also *Pamiętnik siódmego zjazdu Towarzystw Przemysłowych z okr. Zach. Pr. w Chełmnie w roku 1909*, Toruń 1909, pp. 28–29.

collection was being held”.<sup>3</sup> Given a priestly blessing on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1910 and situated a little to the edge of town, the Kashubian House – “Bazaar”<sup>4</sup> was owned by the local Polish Industrial Society.<sup>5</sup> It housed a hall, restaurant, hotel, Polish reading room and the editorial board of “Gryf” (“Gryphon”). The planned ten-day exhibition was accompanied by a separately organised first time exhibition of Kashubian regional art.

Such a Polish cultural and economic event for this part of Poland was unprecedented as the region was a quiet one and subject to administrative and financial restrictions. Up to this time, there had never been such an exhibition devoted to the achievements of Polish industry, agriculture and education. What in the Kwidzyn or the Wielkopolska district was common practice<sup>6</sup> was in the northern frontiers of Western Prussia unexpected but visible proof of the social activism of the Polish Kashubian people who were more often associated with passivity rather than active organisers of economic exhibitions.

The renowned exhibitions of industrial achievements, artistic creations and national works of art, held as early as from London’s “Great Exhibition” in 1851, were fast becoming fields for international competition in all spheres of production, culture and historical remembrance. The practice of holding local exhibitions emanated from gigantic events like the Paris exhibitions (1889 and 1900), becoming one of the characteristics of socio-economic life during the era of industrialisation.<sup>7</sup> The inventions and products exhibited created civilizational and cultural trends, attracting huge numbers and were widely

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> On the initiative behind creating the “Bazar” see Józef BORZYSZKOWSKI, *Aleksander Majkowski (1876–1938). Biografia historyczna*, Gdańsk 2000, pp. 227–240.

<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, the Kashubian House, a historical property and first residence of “Gryf” (“Gryphon”) located on The Eighth of March Street has been forgotten by contemporary Kashubian activists and run to ruin.

<sup>6</sup> See: An outline for Polish land: Witold GARBACZEWSKI, *Wystawy gospodarcze we wschodnich prowincjach Królestwa Prus, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Prowincji Poznańskiej*, [in:] *Przemysł – sztuka – polityka. Wystawy gospodarcze na ziemiach polskich i z Polską związanych ok. 1850–1914* [katalog wystawy], ed. idem, Poznań 2015, pp. 12–45. Unfortunately, the author had to refrain from referring directly to literature discussing the problem. It is however still worth reading the work: Kazimierz OŁDZIEJEWSKI, *Wystawy powszechne, ich historia, organizacja, położenie prawne i wartość społeczno-gospodarcza*, Poznań 1928, pp. 77–83 (exhibitions under Prussian occupation). The development of Polish entrepreneurship was discussed in: *Historia Pomorza*, vol. 4: (1850–1918), pt. 1: *Ustrój, gospodarka, społeczeństwo*, ed. Stanisław SALMONOWICZ, Toruń 2000. On the relationship between industrial exhibitions and regional art see: Aleksander WOJCIECHOWSKI, *Elementy sztuki ludowej w polskim przemyśle artystycznym XIX i XX wieku*, Wrocław 1953. See also: Anna M. DREXLEROWA, Andrzej K. OLSZEWSKI, *Polska i Polacy na powszechnych wystawach światowych 1851–2000*, Warszawa 2005.

<sup>7</sup> There was even a special encyclopaedic entry devoted to the art of exhibition: *Wystawy przemysłu i sztuki*, [in:] *Encyklopedia Powszechna*, vol. 28, Warszawa 1868, pp. 88–89.

discussed in the newspapers of the day.<sup>8</sup> Anthoni Kalkstein, when giving a speech at Toruń's Economic Parliament on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1875 stressed the fact that “the spread of exhibitions, international congresses and scientific competitions are a lever for growth and progress for a New Age society”. Exhibitions “[...] in a very short period of time become so widespread [...] that even the uninitiated started to like them and they in turn began attracting more public interest”.<sup>9</sup>

Exhibitions organised in border or ethnically mixed and divisive areas were acts of the socio-national struggle especially given the fact that industrial or agricultural exhibitions were accompanied by art exhibitions of both contemporary and older art along with regional products which were not free from patriotic and historical meaning.<sup>10</sup> The first Polish industrial exhibition in Western Prussia was organised in Toruń on 2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> June 1874<sup>11</sup> and its aim was to show “strength, national solidarity and an ability to work together so as to reassure society of its own power and strength in times of the strongest political oppression”. Apart from the big exhibitions which were held, there were also many small events in provincial towns (suffice enough to mention Krotoszyn and Strzelno (1910), Ostrów Wielkopolski and Inowrocław (1909)).<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Separate initiatives are discussed by some specialised weeklies, for example, „Przemysłowiec. Tygodnik dla rzemiosła, przemysłu i handlu” published since 1904 in Poznań by the Association of Industrial Societies along with daily papers; see: Zbigniew ANCULEWICZ, *Świat i ziemia polskie w oczach redaktorów i współpracowników „Kurieru Warszawskiego” w latach 1868–1915*, Warszawa 2002, pp. 556–559, footnote 26. Also see: Łucja LISIECKA, *Wystawy gospodarcze w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1850–1914*, [in:] *Przemysł – sztuka – polityka*, pp. 46–71. The bibliography of catalogue exhibitions of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Poland, see in: *Bibliografia polska XIX wieku*, vol. 15: *Katalogi*, Kraków 1991 (ed. 2), pp. 7–27.

<sup>9</sup> *Roczniki sejmików gospodarskich w Toruniu od roku 1867 aż do roku 1879*, Toruń 1879, p. 275.

<sup>10</sup> The 2004 exhibition entitled: “Wystawy Przemysłowo-Rolnicze w Pleszewie w latach 1862–1938”, held in the Regional Museum of Pleszew was the first time attention was drawn to the role regional exhibitions played. See also information on one of the biggest Polish exhibitions before the First World War, in Częstochowa in 1909 at: <http://www.wystawa1909.pl> (available from: 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015).

<sup>11</sup> Janusz KRÓLIKOWSKI, *Polska wystawa rolnicza i przemysłowa w Toruniu z roku 1874. Szkic monograficzny* (from „Tygodnik Toruński”) (Biblioteczka Toruńska, no. 2), Toruń 1926. The text was published to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Toruń exhibition and the First Pomeranian Agricultural-Industrial Exhibition in Grudziądz (from 26<sup>th</sup> June to 12<sup>th</sup> July 1925); *Katalog wystawy rolniczej i przemysłowej w Toruniu 2-ego i 3-ego czerwca 1874*, Toruń 1874. The catalogue was printed in German.

<sup>12</sup> K. OŁDZIEJEWSKI, op.cit., pp. 82–83. At the same time there were some regional exhibitions organised such as for example: the exhibition in Szamotuły, in 1910, where your eyes are “drawn to a line of 13 dolls wearing breath taking outfits showcasing a Szamotuły wedding. There are also some other objects of significant value such as mob caps and elaborative pieces of craft which are not worn today” on display (Kurier Poznański, vol. 5: 1910, no. 29 from 6<sup>th</sup> February 1910).

While the larger exhibitions would usually attempt to stay politically neutral,<sup>13</sup> small and local events took on a more political tinge thus sparking local businessmen to form national, self-help organisations (such as: banking, local chambers of trade and commerce). The exhibition organised in Kościerzyna in June–July 1911 in the background of a big East German Exhibition of Industry, Craft and Agriculture in Poznań, which lasted (from 5<sup>th</sup> May to the end of September 1911)<sup>14</sup> was such a case in point.

Although the topic under consideration is the first exhibition of folk Kashubian craft, it needs to be stated that in the records so far only some general remarks on the enterprise can be found.<sup>15</sup> And it seems that this local venture is a perfect illustration of not only the Polish-German tension existing at that time but also the mechanisms which accompanied the birth of the Kashubian political movement. The actions of its main characters and the role played by local scientific societies during the escalation of the national conflict before the First World War can be discerned and evaluated.

At this point the reader is owed an introduction into the origins of research on Kashubian folk art. The Polish-German couple who had the most significant impact on the creation of the folk cottage industry (embroidery, ceramics and braiding) and systematic collecting were Izodor Gulgowski and Teodora Gulkowska (maiden name: Fethke).<sup>16</sup> The first museum exhibition was in a Kashubian cottage bought by Gulgowski in Wdzydze near Kościerzyna (1906). This was made possible thanks to an allowance he was granted by Gdańsk district authorities; another success came with the creation of Neo-

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<sup>13</sup> A lot of controversy related to the subject of national character on the basis of press notes is presented by J. KRÓLIKOWSKI, *op.cit.*, pp. 77–81. See also: W. GARBACZEWSKI, *op.cit.*, pp. 32–43. At the Poznań exhibition in 1895, both German and Polish industrialists were exhibiting which was the result of the liberal rule of Leo von Caprivi (1890–1894); see: *Katalog prowincjonalnej wystawy przemysłowej w Poznaniu 1895 z przewodnikiem po mieście Poznaniu i poglądem historycznym na stosunki przemysłowe prowincyi*, Berlin 1895.

<sup>14</sup> The German exhibition gained special propaganda interest and its political character was additionally stressed by a congress of the main authorities of Ostmarkverein. The meeting took place on 26–27 May; the next day there was a union demonstration on Livonius Square, see: Witold JAKÓBCZYK, *Hakata w latach 1901–1914*, [in:] *Dzieje Hakaty*, ed. Janusz PAJEWSKI, Poznań 1966, pp. 226, 233.

<sup>15</sup> J. BORZYSZKOWSKI, *Aleksander Majkowski*, pp. 293–296; Józef BOBER, *W państwie pruskim*, [in:] *Kościerzyna. Zarys dziejów miasta do 1939 roku*, ed. Marian KALLAS, Toruń 1994, pp. 110–111; Andrzej BUKOWSKI, *Regionalizm kaszubski: ruch naukowy, literacki i kulturalny*, Poznań 1950, pp. 179–180, 264; Anna KWAŚNIEWSKA, *Badania etnologiczne na Pomorzu Wschodnim w XIX i XX wieku. Ludzie, instytucje, osiągnięcia badawcze*, Gdańsk 2009, pp. 203–204.

<sup>16</sup> Edmund KIZIK, *Verein für kaschubische Volkskunde w latach 1907–1914. Ludoznawstwo kaszubskie między niemieckością a polskością*, *Zapiski Historyczne*, vol. 80: 2015, no. 2, pp. 31–54; idem, *Współpraca Izidora Gulgowskiego z gdańskim Kunstverein w 1909 r. U źródeł ceramiki nowokaszubskiej*, *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej*, vol. 63: 2015, no. 3, pp. 495–510.

Kashubian embroidery by Teodora Gulgowska (1906) which was meant as an occasional profit-making activity for the village girls during the winter months. After Izydor Gulgowski and the German linguist and Slavonist, Dr. Friedrich Lorentz established the Kashubian Ethnic Society (Verein für kaschubische Volkskunde) in 1907, all the exhibits which had been brought together garnered scientific importance, were systematised and analysed. In 1909, within this Society, a committee was inaugurated to organise an exhibition of Kashubian art. Izydor Gulgowski together with the Gdańsk Kunstverein organised a Kashubian-ceramic-exhibition. This initiative led to the creation of Kashubian ceramics based on designs prepared by the Gdańsk painter, Bertold Hell-ingrath (1877–1954). In these, the patterns he found on mob caps from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which came from Gulgowski's collection. Based on these, Franciszek Necel, a potter from Chmielno prepared the first sets of ceramics. The fruits of his labour reached Gdańsk market in December 1909<sup>17</sup> and were as successful as Wdzydze embroidery.<sup>18</sup> The archives tell us not only the circumstances in which the ceramics were created but also the types and prices of these first line products of Kashubian pots and plates.<sup>19</sup>

The next step in the Society's activities was a Kashubian exhibition in the refectory of an ex-Cartusian monastery. The exhibition consisted of household equipment, decorations, drawings of pinnacles, tools, woodcuts, weaving and embroidery, braiding and pottery works as well as examples of church art works and even some photographic documentation. The plans and ideas were commented upon by Alexander Majkowski in "Gryf" in the spring of 1910. "[...] near Kościerzyna, with the support of the authorities, Mr Gulgowski's, a teacher in Wdzydze, country museum is to be found. [...]. Soon enough in Kartuzy an ethnic Kashubian collection through the endeavours of the Germans will exist".<sup>20</sup>

This comment was quite cynical as Mr A. Majewski was an active member of the scientific community himself and would make speeches within the Statutory activities of the Society in which he talked about Kashubian culture. Aleksander Majkowski was fully aware of the organisers' intentions but as a politician he saw Kashubian ethnicity as an instrument in the national fight.

<sup>17</sup> I have devoted a separate article to discussing the issue: E. KIZIK, *Współpraca Izydora Gulgowskiego z gdańskim Kunstverein w 1909 r.*

<sup>18</sup> On the exhibition of craft from Wdzydze at the International Folk Art. Exhibition in Berlin January 1909 see: *Wystawa haftów kaszubskich*, Gryf, vol. 1: 1908/1909, no. 4, p. 126; E. KIZIK, *Współpraca Izydora Gulgowskiego z gdańskim Kunstverein w 1909 r.*, pp. 495–496, there is also more on the subject.

<sup>19</sup> E. KIZIK, *Współpraca Izydora Gulgowskiego z gdańskim Kunstverein w 1909 r.*

<sup>20</sup> *Narada względem mającej być urządzanej latem wystawy kaszubskiej*, Gryf, vol. 2: 1910, no. 1, p. 61.



The more he appreciated Gulgowski's work, the more he stigmatised it as editor of "Gryphone" by describing it as German initiative. In Alexander Majkowski's view, the nation's geographical borders are decided by its culture so documenting all the aspects of the culture in disputed territories was synonymous to stating their Polishness.

In spite of the variety of financial support available, an exhibition of Kashubian art organized by Gulgowski-Lorentz and people in their environs did not take place in 1910. Allegedly, the organisers had not managed to gather enough objects<sup>21</sup> or at least this is how the German press of Gdańsk explained the failure in November 1910.<sup>22</sup> What can be said with certainty is that this was not the reason as Gulgowski had in Wdzydze ample fare to display, even if the ceramic works of F. Necel's or Wdzydze's embroidery samples were not counted. The major obstacle which forced them to postpone the event and to suspend the activities of the Society was the fierce criticism emanating from both The German Eastern Marches Society (Deutscher Ostmarkenverein) and the Society of Young Kashubians led by Majkowski in regards to the non-political activities of ethnic scholars. The decisive blow came with Lorentz's usage of membership fees for his own purposes which forced him in turn to resign from his post in the Society.<sup>23</sup> The new management decided to hush matters up and Lorentz eventually returned the money but for the damage to be repaired, time was required.

The situation was dynamic and Majkowski took full advantage of the race for primacy. In the spring of 1911, he presented his own vision of the Polish Kashubian exhibition,<sup>24</sup> which was planned as a side event of the industrial exhibition in the "Bazar" in Kościerzyna.<sup>25</sup> The exhibition in Kościerzyna, with

<sup>21</sup> According to a note from "Danziger Neuesten Nachrichten" (dated 8<sup>th</sup> August 1910) the exhibition was to be a seasonal one and last from May to September; the note also contains some information on the committee convened.

<sup>22</sup> On the failure of the enterprise: *Danziger Allgemeine Zeitung* on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1910 (Wednesday): „Die für dieses Jahr geplante Ausstellungen für Kunst und Hausfleiss in der Kasubei, zu deren Abhaltung die Gemeinde und der Kreis Ausschuss des Kreises Karthaus Beihilfen von je 200 Mark bereitgestellt haben, mußte wegen Unvollständigkeit der auszustellenden Gegenstände und anderer eingetretenen Umstände wegen vorläufig noch verschoben werden”.

<sup>23</sup> On the basis of the documents preserved, see: E. KIZIK, *Verein für kaschubische Volkskunde w latach 1907–1914*, pp. 31–54.

<sup>24</sup> *Gryf*, vol. 2: 1910, no. 4–5, pp. 100–101; *Komitet Wystawy*, *ibid.*, no. 11, pp. 350–351.

<sup>25</sup> [Wystawa przemysłowa mająca się odbyć w czerwcu 1911 r. w Kościerzynie], *Gryf*, vol. 2: 1910, no. 11, pp. 350–351; J. BORZYSZKOWSKI, *Aleksander Majkowski*, pp. 294–296; *idem*, *O Izydorze Gulgowskim, jego żonie Teodorze z Fethków oraz ich dokonaniach i związkach z młodokaszubami. Über Ernst Seefried-Gulgowski, seine Ehefrau Theodore Gulgowski-Fethke und ihren Errungenschaften und Bindungen zu Jungkaschuben*, [in:] Ernst SEEFRIED-GULGOWSKI [Izydor GULGOWSKI], *Von einem unbekanntem Volke in Deutschland. Ein Beitrag zur Volks- und Lan-*

its convention of Polish singing, agricultural and industrial societies and finally historical-ethnic exhibition frightened some of the local Polish exhibitors because they perceived it as having negative consequences.

Combining ethnic and industrial exhibitions into one was a very clever move which led to ethnic issues gaining some political currency, ensured proper organisational and financial support of the enterprise; thereby garnering greater publicity and leading to increased interest. Organising the exhibition in Kościerzyna was a clear act against The German Eastern Marches Society which operated and was one of the most active in the territory of Western Prussia.<sup>26</sup>

The organisation of the exhibition was mainly entrusted to the Industrial Society of Kościerzyna together with the Association of Polish Industrial Societies of Western Prussia.<sup>27</sup> This coincided with a convention of delegates of some of the western Prussian local societies which had been scheduled for the 29<sup>th</sup> June<sup>28</sup>. In the province, there were 16 active industrial societies, 13 of which amalgamated. The organising committee was led by a priest, Francis Wróblewski<sup>29</sup>, the head of the “Bazar” Association. According to plans which were published by the press, on 25<sup>th</sup> June, Kościerzyna was due to welcome singing groups<sup>30</sup> and on the following day representatives of machinery rings. On the 29<sup>th</sup> June a meeting of the Polish industrialists of Western Prussia was also planned.<sup>31</sup> As the organisers faced some problems with renting extra

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*deskunde der Kaschubei. O nieznanym ludzie w Niemczech. Przyczynek do ludoznawstwa i krajoznawstwa Kaszub*, transl. by Magdalena DARSKA-ŁOGIN, ed. Józef BORZYSZKOWSKI, Berlin 1911 – Gdańsk 2012 [bilingual edition of the first printing from 1911], p. XLIII; some exhibitions of Neo-Kashubian craft were noted by: A. BUKOWSKI, *Regionalizm kaszubski*, p. 139.

<sup>26</sup> W. JAKÓBCZYK, *op. cit.*, pp. 191–192.

<sup>27</sup> *Wystawa przemysłowa w Kościerzynie*, *Przemysłowiec*, vol. 8: 1911, no. 25 (402) from 18<sup>th</sup> June 1911, p. 3; in the paper there is also some information about organising the Polish Industrial Exhibition in Berlin.

<sup>28</sup> See: *Gazeta Toruńska*, vol. 47: 1911, no. 111 from 16<sup>th</sup> May 1911; the coverage of the meeting: *Postęp*, vol. 22: 1911, no. 149 from 4<sup>th</sup> July 1911.

<sup>29</sup> Henryk MROSS, *Wróblewski, Franciszek*, [in:] *Słownik biograficzny Pomorza Nadwiślańskiego*, vol. 4, ed. Zbigniew NOWAK, Gdańsk 1997, pp. 487–488; Józef BORZYSZKOWSKI, *Z dziejów pracy organicznej na Pomorzu. Działalność gospodarcza Stanisława Sikorskiego w okresie zaboru pruskiego*, Gdańsk 1979, pp. 151–155.

<sup>30</sup> The earlier singing groups meetings which accompanied the industrial meeting of Western Prussia took place in Chełmno in 1892 and in Pelplin in 1894; see occasional medals: *Przemysł – sztuka – polityka*, p. 193.

<sup>31</sup> *Gazeta Toruńska*, vol. 47: 1911, no. 111 from the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1911; *Program wystawy Przemysłowej w Kościerzynie od 25 czerwca do 6 lipca*, *Przemysłowiec*, vol. 8: 1911, no. 26 from 25<sup>th</sup> June 1911; *Zjazd Towarzystw Przemysłowych okręgu zachodnio-pruskiego w Kościerzynie*, *ibid.*, no. 28 from 9<sup>th</sup> July 1911 (according to experts there were 250 delegates); the text of Dr. Kazimierza Karasiewicz from Tuchola's presentation: *ibid.*, no. 30 from the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1911.

premises for the exhibition, some of the exhibits were put in a garden next to the “Bazar”, where a stage was raised and some tents or provisional covers could be placed. As already mentioned, some of the exhibitors were fearful of some administrative problems so they resigned but all in all the exhibition encompassed the products of 99 industrialists, mostly from the southern regions of Western Prussia and also from the Wielkopolska region.<sup>32</sup>

An appeal by the organisers announced on 10th May reads as follows: “the ethnic section will be supervised by Dr Majkowski and antiquities and examples of regional products of Kashubian character should be sent directly to him”.<sup>33</sup> The financial security of the enterprise was guaranteed with a loan of 200 marks from Society “Straż” and some private donations. Alexander Majkowski, who represented the Society in the Pomerania region<sup>34</sup> made sure that Kashubian affairs were also discussed in Warsaw papers. In June 1911, a special edition of the “Ziemia” magazine was published with some articles written by experts in the field<sup>35</sup> and illustrated with pictures and vignette drawings of Kashubian motifs made by Teodora Gulgowska.<sup>36</sup> However, no mention was made of Izydor Gulgowski’s contribution to the region.

The organisers did not neglect knitters: “We would like to address the Ladies and declare that it would be our privilege to exhibit the fruits of their housework as we are planning to have a ladies’ section here as well which will include some knitting and artistic female creations.” This part of the exhibition was supervised by Leokadia Klińska, Józefa Połczyńska and Stefania Kręcka from Kościerzyna.<sup>37</sup> It is quite clear from descriptions that in the ladies’ section only the works of poor girls who worked for the Brotherhood in Pelplin were shown. Ms T. Bronikowska from Grudziądz exhibited a cushion with “an artistic image of a pheasant and a number of beautifully embroidered Kashubian landscapes on canvas”. In the industrial part of the exhibition there were

<sup>32</sup> K. OŁDZIEJEWSKI, op.cit., p. 83.

<sup>33</sup> *Wystawa przemysłowa w Kościerzynie*, Przemysłowiec, vol. 8: 1911, no. 23 from 4<sup>th</sup> June 1911, in a shortened version again in no. 25 from 18<sup>th</sup> June 1911.

<sup>34</sup> Witold MOLIK, *Działalność Straży na Pomorzu Nadwiślańskim*, [in:] *Związki Pomorza Zachodniego z Polską* [The relationship between the Duchy of Pomerania and Poland], Koszalin 1996, pp. 107–117.

<sup>35</sup> *Ziemia*, vol. 2: 1911, no. 22 from 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1911 (a Pomeranian-Kashubian monographic notebook) with texts by W. Budzisz, B. Chrzanowski, W. Kętrzyński, A. Majkowski, K. Nitsch, S. Thugutt, A. Sujkowski and a bibliography of the subject.

<sup>36</sup> The Kashubian motifs which decorated the notes were made by Mikołaj Wisznicki (1870–1954), an illustrator and battle painter who was one of the founders of the Polish Society of Local History.

<sup>37</sup> See: *Wystawa przemysłowa w Kościerzynie* (Przemysłowiec).



also some of Marian Mokwa's pictures from Górką displayed which showed "Kashubian spring moods".<sup>38</sup>

The industrial and ethnic exhibition was widely covered by the Polish press of Western Prussia and Wielkopolska. A case in point being the "Gazeta Toruńska" ["Toruń Gazette"] of 28<sup>th</sup> June 1911 which published an extensive report on the exhibition with a long introduction about the history of the Kashubian region, Kościerzyna's past and an analysis of the weaknesses of Polish industry in the region. The report states: "the opening of the exhibition took place under the so called Muzzle Act [which had forbidden usage of the Polish language at gatherings in cities where there were less than 60% of Poles – translator's comment] in silence, at 3 p.m. and the Prussians do not allow any beer to be sold in any of the rooms". Other coverage also mentioned "the silent opening"<sup>39</sup> which happened in spite of the fact that at the exhibition some parliamentarians were present: Wiktor Kulerski, the publisher of the "Gazeta Grudziądzka" ["The Grudziądz Gazette"]; Jan Brejski and Leon Janta-Pończyński, the publisher of the "Gazeta Gdańska" ["The Gdańsk Gazette"] who joined later.

During the exhibition there were a number of incidents which could have been identified as acts of harassment on the part of the Prussians. For instance, Jan Ruchniewicz's firm from Toruń<sup>40</sup> which specialized in Coat-of-Arm symbols in gingerbread put on a display of gingerbread with the symbol of the White Eagle which was immediately questioned by the policemen overseeing the exhibition and the incriminating gingerbread had to be covered by another<sup>41</sup>. In the "Gazeta Grudziądzka" ["The Grudziądz Gazette"],<sup>42</sup> a report stressed that some of the publications exhibited by the publisher, Wiktor Kulerski (such as: songbooks, patriotic postcards and colourful pictures exemplifying Polish historical paintings) were confiscated or ordered to be taken away from the exhibition.

Polish coverage stressed the significance of the exhibition: "Hurry to the Kościerzyna exhibition, small in size but a huge first step for Polish craft and industry".<sup>43</sup> As an aside, reporters mentioned the problems faced by the Poles

<sup>38</sup> *Wystawa przemysłowa i ludoznawcza w Kościerzynie*, Kurier Poznański, vol. 6: 1911, no. 150 from the 5<sup>th</sup> July 1911.

<sup>39</sup> *Wystawa na Kaszubach*, Dziennik Poznański, vol. 53: 1911, no. 145 from 28<sup>th</sup> June 1911.

<sup>40</sup> The firm has operated from 1907, see: Ryszard SUDZIŃSKI, Michał SAMULSKI, *Dzieje przemysłu piernikarskiego w Toruniu*, Rocznik Toruński, vol. 6: 1971, p. 23.

<sup>41</sup> *Zjazd przemysłowców Prus Zachodnich*, Kurier Poznański, vol. 6: 1911, no. 147 from 1<sup>st</sup> July 1911.

<sup>42</sup> *Policja na wystawie kościerskiej*, Gazeta Grudziądzka, vol. 17: 1911, no. 78 from 1<sup>st</sup> July 1911. See: Kaszuba, *Wystawa przemysłowa w Kościerzynie, stolicy Kaszub*, *ibid.*, no. 77 from 29<sup>th</sup> June 1911.

<sup>43</sup> *Wystawa na Kaszubach*, Dziennik Poznański, vol. 53: 1911, no. 145 from 28<sup>th</sup> June 1911.

in the region and the efforts being exerted into awakening the national consciousness of Kashubians. This, amongst others, was discussed by the accomplished social and industrial activist, Antoni Donimirski, in an ample-sized article in "Dziennik Poznański".<sup>44</sup> The German press kept quiet about the exhibition in Kościerzyna, concentrating instead on describing its impressive Poznań counterpart.

Apart from all the publicity he gained, Majkowski also achieved propaganda and political success and managed to marginalise Verein für kaschubische Volkskunde to boot. The fact that initially he had neither extensive ethnical knowledge nor enough exhibits did not matter. When he became a member of the Committee of Ethnic Collections of the Poznań Society of Sciences, Gulgowski ceased to be viewed as the only collector and organiser of Kashubian collectibles.

Let us now return to the exhibition. The guide to it was published by "Gryf" which makes it possible to build upon the information provided by the Poznań journalist.<sup>45</sup> The author of the introduction to the exhibition guidebook, presumably Majkowski himself, asked visitors: "while visiting this very first Kashubian ethnic exhibition, bear in mind all the difficulties involved and do not raise your expectations too high". There were only two rooms and in the first room there was a pre-historic section whilst the second concentrated on the history of the Pomerania region from the Middle ages to modern times, focusing especially on the fact that the land belonged to Poland. There were also exhibits regarded as Kashubian handicraft or of those created in the Kashubian region. The key was to present the continuity of Kashubian settlement in the region ranging from the Bronze Era through the period of the Pomeranian Earls to modern times. The archaeological section was organised by Father Kazimierz Chmielecki from Wabcz<sup>46</sup> on the basis of the Toruń Society of Art and Sciences (Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu, TNT) collection. Chmielecki was an amateur archaeologist who discovered numerous gravestones which he do-

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<sup>44</sup> Antoni DONIMIRSKI, „Kwestya” kaszubska, *Dziennik Poznański*, vol. 53: 1911, no. 150 from 5<sup>th</sup> July 1911. The author also mentions the Kashubian-pomeranian issue of "Ziemia" (vol. 2: 1911, no. 22) and his efforts in relation to Kashubian issues.

<sup>45</sup> *Przewodnik po wystawie ludoznawczej kaszubsko-pomorskiej w Kościerzynie w 1911 roku od 25 czerwca do 23 lipca*, Gryf, vol. 3: 1911, no. 6 (a separate issue); [Aleksander MAJKOWSKI], *Wystawa ludoznawcza kaszubsko-pomorska w Kościerzynie*, *ibid.*, no. 4–5, pp. 153–156; *idem*, *Przewodnik po wystawie ludoznawczej kaszubsko-pomorskiej w Kościerzynie 1911 roku od 25 czerwca do 23 lipca*, Kościerzyna 1911; J. BORZYSZKOWSKI, *Aleksander Majkowski*, pp. 293–295.

<sup>46</sup> Henryk MROSS, *Chmielecki Kazimierz (1880–1929)*, [in:] *Słownik biograficzny Pomorza Nadwiślańskiego*, vol. 1, ed. Stanisław GIERSZEWSKI, Gdańsk 1992, pp. 205–206.

nated to the Toruń Society; he published articles about his research in “Roczniki” [“An Almanac”] and “Zapiski TNT” [“Toruń Scientific Society Records”].<sup>47</sup>

Local handicraft was not represented at the exhibition in large numbers. Some exhibits such as Delft tiles, tin plates and an old lock (donated by Stanisław Sikorski, a landlord who was friends with Majkowski) were not local products. Apart from the foreign handicraft on display, there were mostly coins or other objects of historical significance shown which stressed the connection between Pomerania and Poland; the coins displayed the faces of Polish kings and some minted medals from various towns of Royal Prussia were exhibited which honoured Polish rulers. All these belonged to a much bigger collection in the possession of Walery Amrogowicz,<sup>48</sup> a litigation counsel and member of the Toruń Society of Art and Sciences who lived in Kościerzyna and also belonged to Kartusian Verein für kaschubische Volkskunde. He wrote part of the guidebook entitled *Monety Słowiańszczyzny przedhistorycznej* [“Prehistoric Slavic coins”]<sup>49</sup> and was also a collector of ancient Kashubian mob caps, ceramics, snuff boxes and some leaders’ staffs. He donated the objects he possessed together with some, photographs and drawings to The Toruń Society of Art and Sciences (TNT).<sup>50</sup> It can be assumed that the mob caps or the famous cloth of gold, embroidered on “blue silk” also came from him. In later ethnic publications the credit for mob caps was given to Kashubian folk artists<sup>51</sup> however in the *Przewodnik* [“Guidebook”] there is a statement that: “mob caps were embroidered mostly in the Kashubian women convents”, in Żarnowiec and Żukowo.<sup>52</sup>

In the guidebook some information about a Kashubian outfit which is probably the same “traditional Kashubian outfit”, reconstructed by Majkowski’s

<sup>47</sup> Piotr GUŻYŃSKI, *Zbiory archeologiczne*, [in:] *Nauka, sztuka, edukacja. 140 lat działalności Towarzystwa Naukowego w Toruniu*, ed. Magdalena NIEDZIELSKA, Toruń 2015, pp. 87–88.

<sup>48</sup> Andrzej BUKOWSKI, *Amrogowicz Walery Cyryl*, [in:] *Słownik biograficzny Słownika Nadwiślańskiego*, vol. 1, pp. 28–29.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* (under the pen name of Wakowicz). A negative opinion of Amrogowicz’s role in creating the exhibition was introduced by Majkowski in a letter to his sister, Franciszka from 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1911. See: Andrzej BUKOWSKI, *Listy Aleksandra Majkowskiego do siostry Franciszki z lat 1910–1918*, *Rocznik Gdański*, vol. 51: 1991, no. 2, pp. 158–162 (no. 5). On W. C. Amrogowicz’s collection see: Adam MUSIAŁOWSKI, *Zbiory numizmatyczne*, [in:] *Nauka, sztuka, edukacja*, pp. 91–110; on W. C. Amrogowicz’s participation in the Kościerzyna enterprise see: *ibid.*, pp. 96–97.

<sup>50</sup> A. MUSIAŁOWSKI, *op.cit.*, pp. 98–103.

<sup>51</sup> Tadeusz SEWERYN, *Kaszubskie złotogłowie i nowe hafty wdzydzkie*, *Lud*, vol. 7: 1929, pp. 17–39; Eugeniusz FRANKOWSKI, *Złotogłowie kaszubskie*, *Polska Sztuka Ludowa*, vol. 8: 1954, no. 3, pp. 148–161.

<sup>52</sup> *Przewodnik po wystawie ludoznawczej kaszubsko-pomorskiej*, *Gryf*, vol. 3: 1911, no. 6, p. 19.

sister, Franciszka<sup>53</sup> can be found. It was decorated with Scottish bows, embroidered blouses and the so called oak silk shawl which indicated ethnicity, but had no relationship with historic Kashubian outfits.

The fact that in the exhibition there was also a photo of Drzymała's wagon on display was to highlight the fact that Drzymała's idea originated much earlier.<sup>54</sup> Reports state that the exhibits were shown in two rooms, one which was normally used by the editors of "Gryf" and the other a reading room.<sup>55</sup> 50 pfennig had to be paid to visit the exhibition and for this money such items as a 19<sup>th</sup> century wardrobe, with "colourful Kashubian ornaments", pottery plates with German inscriptions such as "Denk oft an mich" or "Erlebe frohe Tage" along with "household snuff boxes", a spinning wheel and a loom "on which blooming girls were making some cloth" could be seen. Figures of saints and fishing equipment completed the exhibition. The "Kurier Poznański" ["Poznań Courier"] reporter finished his article with a very enthusiastic comment: "What we have seen at the ethnic exhibition was very impressive. The exhibits come partly from the main organizer's collection and some from The Toruń Society's coin collection. We have found out that Dr M[ajkowski] is considering setting up a regular Kashubian museum in Kościerzyna."<sup>56</sup>

Even though the guidebook mentioned them, none of F. Necl's ceramics were exhibited. Kashubian ceramics had become very fashionable and appeared in Gdańsk at a Christmas fair in 1909. "This is where we get ash trays, vases or plates to put on the wall. German visitors have appreciated the decorative value of the objects much faster than our own. The Axta company in Gdańsk and Wertheim from Berlin<sup>57</sup> bring the products in large quantities and sell out very fast"<sup>58</sup>

Replacing Necl's works were the works of a stove fitter, Sielski from Kartuzy and instead of embroidery from Gulgowska's school there was needle-

<sup>53</sup> It happened at a nightly meeting in the Polish Reading Society, in January 1910, which was mentioned by "Gryf" in 1910 (p. 61); Bożena STELMACHOWSKA, *Strój kaszubski*, [in:] *Atlas Polskich Strojów Ludowych*, pt. 1: *Pomorze*, no. 2, Wrocław 1959, pp. 14, 62, footnote 39; A. BUKOWSKI, *Regionalizm kaszubski*, p. 230.

<sup>54</sup> It is about Aleksander Pepliński from Wieprznica near Kościerzyna, see: A. BUKOWSKI, *Regionalizm kaszubski*, p. 181, footnote 110. Probably the same picture taken by A. Majkowski ("kaszubski wóz Drzymały" ["The Kashubian Drzymała's wagon"]) was reproduced in: *Ziemia*, vol. 2: 1911, no. 22 from 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1911, p. 38.

<sup>55</sup> *Wystawa przemysłowa i ludoznawcza w Kościerzynie* [part 2] (Kurier Poznański).

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Hans Eduard Axt glass and porcelain products store was in Długa Street no. 57/58; in 1897 Wertheim Brothers' warehouse was opened at Leipziger Straße, and it was one of the biggest stores in Europe.

<sup>58</sup> *Przewodnik po wystawie ludoznawczej kaszubsko-pomorskiej*, *Gryf*, vol. 3: 1911, no. 6, p. 37.

work made by Gruchałowa from Kościerzyna, “beautiful, in a Kashubian style”, however there is no detailed description of these works. There was one mention of “Gulgowski, the teacher”, in relation to works made of pine roots (baskets, plates and boxes); production which he also initiated.

The industrial part of the exhibition came to a close on Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> July at 3 p.m. with a closing ceremony during which some producers were given special awards.<sup>59</sup> The folk section of the exhibition continued for another 3 weeks, until 23<sup>rd</sup> July when “Gryf”’s editorial office together with Majkowski moved to Gdańsk.<sup>60</sup> This was like an escape from the problems which were piling up with colleagues and creditors alike who had lost patience with Majkowski’s ventures. Together with their change of residence, the collections left Kościerzyna and soon became the basis for the Kashubian museum in Sopot, established in 1913 in an attempt to influence Polish holidayers’ impressions of Pomeranian people.

Undoubtedly, Majkowski was successful.<sup>61</sup> The news of the Polish-Kashubian venture crossed the borders of Western Prussia and reached other Polish provinces with its ideological and political message.<sup>62</sup> There was even a separate article discussing the initiative in the faraway Lublin “Kurjer” [“Courier”].<sup>63</sup>

Majkowski also managed to use the interest in folk culture and inculcate Kashubian ethnicity within the minds of the Society of Young Kashubians thus introducing into Polish political debate symbolism based on folk motifs. Undeterred, Gulgowski kept endeavouring to realise his goals. In 1911, he curated two exhibitions devoted to Kashubian craft. The first exhibition was in Gdańsk, in the Gewerbehalle premises which he introduced with his lecture on the development of folk craft in the Kashubian region.<sup>64</sup> Another, much bigger one was held in the Hasse Hotel in Kartuzy between 23<sup>rd</sup>–30<sup>th</sup> July 1912. At the exhibition, *Ausstellung für Hausfleiss und Volkskunst in der Kaschubei*, F. Necl’s root works along with works of embroidery were exhibited.

<sup>59</sup> A list of award winners was published in the “Gazeta Grudziądzka” [“The Grudziądz Gazette”] (vol. 17: 1911, no. 82 from 11<sup>th</sup> July 1911).

<sup>60</sup> Wiktor PEPLIŃSKI, *Czasopiśmiennictwo kaszubskie w latach zaboru pruskiego. Aspekty programowe, publicystyczne i wydawnicze*, Gdańsk 2002, pp. 131–132; Andrzej ROMANOW, *Gdańska prasa polska 1891–1920*, Warszawa 1994, p. 55.

<sup>61</sup> *Przemysłowiec*, vol. 8: 1911, no. 26 from 25<sup>th</sup> June 1911.

<sup>62</sup> Michał RAWITA-WITANOWSKI, *Wycieczka oddziału kujawskiego na Kaszuby*, Ziemia, vol. 2: 1911, no. 32 from 12<sup>th</sup> August 1911, p. 532.

<sup>63</sup> *Kurjer*, vol. 6: 1911 from 7<sup>th</sup> July 1911.

<sup>64</sup> *Ausstellung für Volkskunst und Hausfleiss in der Kaschubei*, *Danziger Zeitung*, No. 275 from 14<sup>th</sup> June 1912 (evening issue); there was Gulgowski’s lecture announced, entitled: “Die volkswirtschaftliche Bedeutung der Hausindustrie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner [eg. Gulgowski – E.K.] persönliche Erfahrungen”.



This work does not fully cover all issues regarding the beginnings of Kashubian ethnicity before the First World War. The research so far contains a lot of misunderstandings and too many resources have not been fully checked. It is worth looking at all the ethnic exhibitions of Kashubian craft together in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The issue of Kashubian art exhibition of this period will be returned to in a separate article.

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THE FIRST KASHUBIAN ETHNOGRAPHICAL EXHIBITION  
IN KOŚCIERZYNA IN 1911

Summary

**Key words:** national relations in Pomerania, the beginnings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Society of Young Kashubians, Aleksander Majkowski

The Kashubina exhibition of 1911 was the first one to present the achievements of Polish industrial, agricultural and educational organizations in the north-west area of the Polish territories under the Prussian occupation. It is one of the proofs of the political activity of the Kashubian movement and the various communities functioning within it. The works on its organization, development and press accounts serve as an opportunity to illustrate the German-Polish tensions of that time. The article presents the activity of the main organizations involved in the preparation of the exhibition such as the Ethnographic Kashubian Society, the Industrial Society of Kościerzyna, the “Bazar Society”, and the various undertakings of those societies. The structure of the exhibition, its exhibits and products were briefly described.

DIE ERSTE KASCHUBISCHE VOLKSKUNDE-AUSSTELLUNG  
IN BERENT (KOŚCIERZYNA) IM JAHR 1911

## Zusammenfassung

**Schlüsselwörter:** Nationalitätenverhältnisse in Pommern, Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts, jungkaschubische Bewegung, Kaschubische Volkskundliche Gesellschaft, Aleksander Majkowski

Die kaschubische Ausstellung von 1911 war die erste Ausstellung, die die Präsentation der Errungenschaften polnischer Industrie-, Landwirtschafts- und Bildungsorganisationen im nordwestlichen Teil des preußischen Teilungsgebiets ermöglichte. Sie ist eines der Zeugnisse für die entstehende politische kaschubische Bewegung und die verschiedenen Milieus in ihr. Zugleich bieten die Arbeiten an ihrer Organisation, ihrem Verlauf und ihren Beziehungen zur Presse eine Gelegenheit, die deutsch-polnischen Spannungen in dieser Zeit aufzuzeigen. Im Artikel geht es um die Aktivität der wichtigsten Organisationen, die an der Vorbereitung der Ausstellung beteiligt waren, nämlich der Kaschubischen Volkskundlichen Gesellschaft, der Industriegesellschaft von Berent, der Gesellschaft „Bazar“ und ebenso der in diesen Gesellschaften tätigen Funktionäre. Beschrieben wird die Struktur der Ausstellung, und die dort gezeigten Exponate und Produkte werden kurz vorgestellt.



TNT

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