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THE BEGINNINGS OF POLISH ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUMS IN THE 19TH CENTURY

ABSTRACT

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The first Polish archaeological museums or those with archaeological departments – institutions dealing with gathering collections, conducting research, organizing exhibitions and publishing works devoted to archaeology, as it was understood at that time – began to be established in the mid-19th century. They were created by scientific societies or on the initiative of private individuals. They were: the Museum of Antiquities of the Kraków Scientific Society, the Museum of Antiquities in Vilnius, the Museum of Polish and Slavic Antiquities in the Grand Duchy of Poznań, the Museum of the Toruń Scientific Society, the Museum of the Lubomirski Princes in Lviv and the Dzieduszycki Natural History Museum in Lviv. The article discusses the beginnings of Polish archaeological museums, their creation, the scope and shape of the collections, methods of obtaining artefacts, the headquarters and the further fate of these institutions.

Keywords: archaeological museums, archaeological collections, antiquities, Poland, 19th century

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Before specialized museums began to be established in Europe in the 19th century, archaeological artefacts – mainly from the ancient world – were gathered in various collections. Interest in objects of this type increased especially from the 18th century, as a result of spectacular, imagination-stirring discoveries made in Italy, in Pompeii and Herculaneum. This trend also affected Poland. King Stanisław August Poniatowski was a collector of antiquities, as were a number of members of the Polish aristocracy. During this period, finds of local prehistoric cultures aroused less interest than works from classical antiquity. It often was the case that prehistoric artefacts were classified as “fossil objects” and thus were considered the subject of interest to scientists dealing with natural history. On the Polish lands, it was only since the beginning of the 19th century that small collections of prehistoric artefact were collected by various institutions and associations. They were, for example, in the possession of the Warsaw Society of Friends of the Sciences, the Office of Antiquities at the University of Warsaw, the Secondary School in Krzemieniec, the Płock Scientific Society and the Society of Collectors of National Antiquities in Szamotuły. However, they constituted a rather random part of the collections, which generally consisted mainly of historical artefacts, works of art, various historical souvenirs or mementoes and natural specimens (Abramowicz 1967, 31-41; 50-51; 1991, 19).

In the 19th century, a museum was a “public institution”, that is, one “to which everyone has access” (Słownik Arcta 1916/2, 462) and which is “dedicated to the general benefit” (Słownik Arcta 1916/3, 484). Meeting these requirements was the ambition of the creators of the Public and School Museum of the Płock Voivodeship, founded in 1821 by the Płock Scientific Society. Its various collections were used by pupils of the school, and there were plans to make them available to a wider audience. However, in 1830, the Society was dissolved and the collection it had gathered was transferred to the Provincial Junior High School (Szczerba 2012, 98; Kruszewski 2021, 13).

The first archaeological museums or those with archaeological departments – institutions dealing with collecting collections, conducting research, organizing exhibitions and publishing works devoted to archaeology, as it was understood at that time – began to be established on the Polish lands in the mid-19th century (Kostrzewski 1949, 39-40). They were created by scientific societies or on the initiative of private individuals.

In 1850, the Museum of Antiquities of the Kraków Scientific Society (TNK) was established (Abramowicz 1967, 99-101; 1991, 30-31; Nosek 1967, 19; Schnaydrowa 1971; Woźny 2016, 214-222). In 1855, thanks to the efforts of Eustachy Tyszkiewicz [1814-1873], a Polish-Lithuanian archaeologist, the Archaeological Commission was established in Vilnius, and a year later the Museum of Antiquities operated within it (Fig. 1; Kirkor 1856, 227-228; Ustawa 1856; Urządzenie Muzeum 1856; for the arrangement of the museum, see Abramowicz 1967, 105-107; 1991, 35-37; Blombergowa 1992, 69-71; 1993, 39-42; 1997, 91-92; Ilgiewicz 2005, 105-146; Mizerniuk-Rotkiewicz 2016, 39-51). In 1857, the Society of Friends of Sciences was established in Poznań, and the Museum of Polish and Slavic Antiquities in the Grand Duchy of Poznań was established (Działyński 1860, 587, 596; cf.



Fig. 1. A. Żamett, C. C. Bachelier; Archaeology room in the Museum of Antiquities in Vilnius, 1855.
From the collections of the National Library in Warsaw

Wojtkowski 1928, 260-266; Abramowicz 1967, 116-117; 1991, 38-39; Kaczmarek 1996, 56-60; Linetty 2020, 222-223). A little later, in 1875, the Toruń Scientific Society began its activity, and a museum was established in 1876. In this institution, the archaeological department was a separate, dynamically developing section (Abramowicz 1967, 151-152; 1991, 72; Lech 2002; Wawrzykowska 2002, 38-41; Małecka-Kukawka and Wawrzykowska 2004, 110-112). Two museums founded on private initiative in Lviv also had a public character. These were the Museum of the Lubomirski Princes attached to the Ossoliński Institute in Lviv (opened to the public in 1870) and the Dzieduszycki Natural History Museum (opened in 1880). In both of these institutions, archaeological artefacts also constituted only part of the collections – in the case of the Dzieduszycki museum these were mainly natural history exhibits (Dzieduszycki 1895) and in the case of the Lubomirski museum they were historical objects and works of art (Zawadzki 1874; Katalog 1877; Bulyk 2014, 49-59). In the second half of the 19th century in Warsaw, however, the conditions for the establishment of a museum were not favourable. The former collections of the Archaeo-

logical Cabinet of the University were kept in the Government Library (later the Main Library). Archaeological collections were also gathered by the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts, established in 1860, and the Museum of Industry and Agriculture, established in 1875. However, a public archaeological museum in Warsaw was established only in the 20th century (Piotrowska 2003, 13-15; Szczerba 2012, 153-159).

In the 19th century, there were also a number of private archaeological collections created (such as those of Tomasz Zieliński [1802-1858] in Kielce or that of Karol Rogawski [1820-1888] in Ołpiny – see Łepkowski 1860; Śliwa 2015; Woźny 2022). Collections were also accumulated by various institutions (*e.g.*, an Archaeological Cabinet was established in the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, to perform teaching functions – see Woźny, Dziegielewski 2018). However, they were not museums and did not have a public character, so their discussion is beyond the scope of this article.

An important inspiration for the first museum institutions collecting archaeological artefacts in the lands of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was the museum operating at the Royal Nordic Society of Antiquaries founded in 1825 in Copenhagen. In his “Letters on Sweden” Eustachy Tyszkiewicz (the founder of the Museum of Antiquities and the Archaeological Commission in Vilnius), spoke with admiration about the activities of the Danish association and its museum, in which prehistoric artefacts were collected in several rooms (Tyszkiewicz 1846, 5-17). He emphasized the close relationship between these collections and scientific research. He noted: “When looking through the treasures of northern antiquities in Copenhagen, one cannot fail to be reminded and not be indifferent to the fact that the same kind of artefacts are also found in our lands. The desire to explore our past awakened today, the collections being created here and there in private hands, fill the mind with sweet comfort” (Tyszkiewicz 1846, 17). Karol Kremer [1812-1860], the initiator of the creation of the Museum of Antiquities at the Kraków Scientific Society, postulating activities in the field of research and protection of historical monuments and calling for the establishment of a museum, also encouraged the use of Danish models (Kremer 1849, 559-560).

In the mid-19th century, archaeology was understood not only as the study of prehistory – it also included the history of art and other auxiliary sciences of history. This was reflected in museum collections. In addition to archaeological finds, the Museum of Antiquities of the Kraków Scientific Society also collected works of art, handicrafts, ethnographic objects, engravings, maps and archival materials. Józef Majer [1808-1899], president of the Society, said after the opening of the first exhibition in the museum:

“Today it [the Museum] is located in a spacious and bright room on the first floor and in an adjacent room, decorated in accordance with our possibilities and in accordance with their purpose. The more spacious premises allow for a more appropriate layout to facilitate scientific viewing. (...) The Museum in its current state includes: 1) Ethnographic department, including cultural objects of contemporary peoples and nations, namely Chinese and Nubian; 2) The section of pre-Christian antiquities, namely: a) Antiquities of the clas-

sical world, b) Antiquities of pagan Slavs; 3) Department of medieval artefacts, namely a) weapons, b) works of painting and sculpture, c) household utensils, d) clothes, e) badges of dignity and honours, f) musical instruments, g) objects of religious associations, h) artefacts of domestic industry, i) graphics, k) sphragistic collection, l) numismatic collection, m) collection of engravings, n) archival materials, o) gallery of casts, p) finally, objects with the character of historical mementoes” (Majer 1866, 20-21; *cf.* Schnaydrowa 1971, 68-69).

The beginnings of the Museum of Antiquities in Vilnius were the collections of its founder, Eustachy Tyszkiewicz – a library, a collection of numismatics, engravings and works of art, as well as a collection of manuscripts. Prehistoric artefacts, initially numbering over 2,000 specimens, constituted only part of the museum’s collection (Kirkor 1856; see Tyszkiewicz 1874, 10; Cehak-Hoľubowiczowa 1938, 9-10; Mizerniuk-Rotkiewicz 2016, 44-45).

The collections of the Museum of Polish and Slavic Antiquities of the Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences also reflected the very broad definition of archaeology of the time. Thus, in addition to prehistoric finds and numismatics, there were also memorabilia of historical figures and events, works of art, engravings, archival materials and books (Wykaz 1860; see *Sprawozdanie* 1865, 621; 1869, 366-367). In 1882, the museum was named the Museum of the Mielżyński family. Its inventory still included primarily works of art, as well as (apart from archaeological), historical, natural, ethnographic, numismatic collections and a cabinet of engravings (Kłudkiewicz 2018; *cf.* Wojtkowski 1928, 97-98; Kaczmarek *et al.* 2013, 16).

Museum exhibits were primarily obtained from donors. With a view to expanding the collection, after the Museum was founded in 1850, the Kraków Scientific Society published two appeals to the public to donate artefacts (*Odezwa* 1851; 1857). Thanks to this, a year after its establishment, the Museum received its most valuable exhibit – a statue of the Slavic god Światowid (Fig. 2), excavated from the Zbruch River (now in western Ukraine), which later became its symbol (*Wiadomość* 1851). Initially, numismatic items dominated among the gifts. In the years 1848-1852, the Kraków Scientific Society received 800 coins and medals; and only 46 pieces that consisted of “ancient artefacts, equipment and curiosities” (Majer 1858, 79). This trend continued in the following years – for example, in 1861, approximately 900 coins and medals and 29 pieces of “equipment, tools and various relics” were donated to the Museum (Majer 1862, 23). In 1871, when the Kraków Scientific Society was transformed into the Academy of Learning, the assets of the association were counted, which also included the Museum of Antiquities. At that time, it had in its possession: “a) 2,250 Polish coins and medals, b) 520 foreign coins, c) 850 engravings, maps, photographs, d) 1,000 mementoes and archaeological items” (*Inventory of the assets of the TNK*, 1871, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU, No TNK-4, p. 83).

In the Museum of Polish and Slavic Antiquities in Poznań there were also collections that had been obtained primarily through gifts (see Działyński 1860, 596; *Sprawozdanie*



Fig. 2. Statue of the Slavic god Światowid.
From: Przędziecki, Rastawiecki 1860-1869



Fig. 3. The Mikorzyn stones with the “Slavic runic writing” and other archaeological artefacts. 1859.
Photo: K. Beyer. From the collections of the Polish Academy of Learning

1865, 623; 1872, 252; Wojtkowski 1928, 261-262). In 1857, a proclamation was published in one of the Poznań daily newspapers encouraging the donation of artefacts (Muzeum 1857, 1; see Kaczmarek *et al.* 2013, 14-15). It listed groups of objects that the Museum wanted to acquire: “items found in ancient graves”; “items belonging to Slavic rituals” (especially figurines of Slavic deities); “weapons, medieval and later equipment”; and any memorabilia related to historical figures; coins; works of art and objects of artistic crafts (Muzeum 1857, 1). The scale of donors’ generosity is illustrated by the correspondence preserved to this day, sent along with the finds to the Poznań Museum (see Kaczmarek *et al.* 2013). In Toruń, the issue of expanding the museum collection through gifts was even included in the statute of the Toruń Scientific Society (Ustawy 1878, 88).

Gifts came from private researchers and collectors, but museums themselves also exchanged them. In 1861, the Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences donated the Mikorzyn stones to the Kraków Museum of Antiquities (Majer 1862, 26). The famous stones (as it later turned out, forgeries) with the “Slavic runic writing” aroused great interest among researchers at that time (Fig. 3). Gifts from the Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences were also in the collections of the Museum of the Lubomirski Princes in Lviv (Zawadzki 1874, 360; Katalog 1877, 14-15).

Material to augment the collections were also obtained through archaeological research. For example, in the Vilnius Museum, many artefacts came from the excavations of Eustachy Tyszkiewicz and his brother Konstanty [1806-1868], as well as those of Adam H. Kirkor [1818-1886] (Kirkor 1856, 245-247; see Blombergowa 1997, 92). In Poznań, the

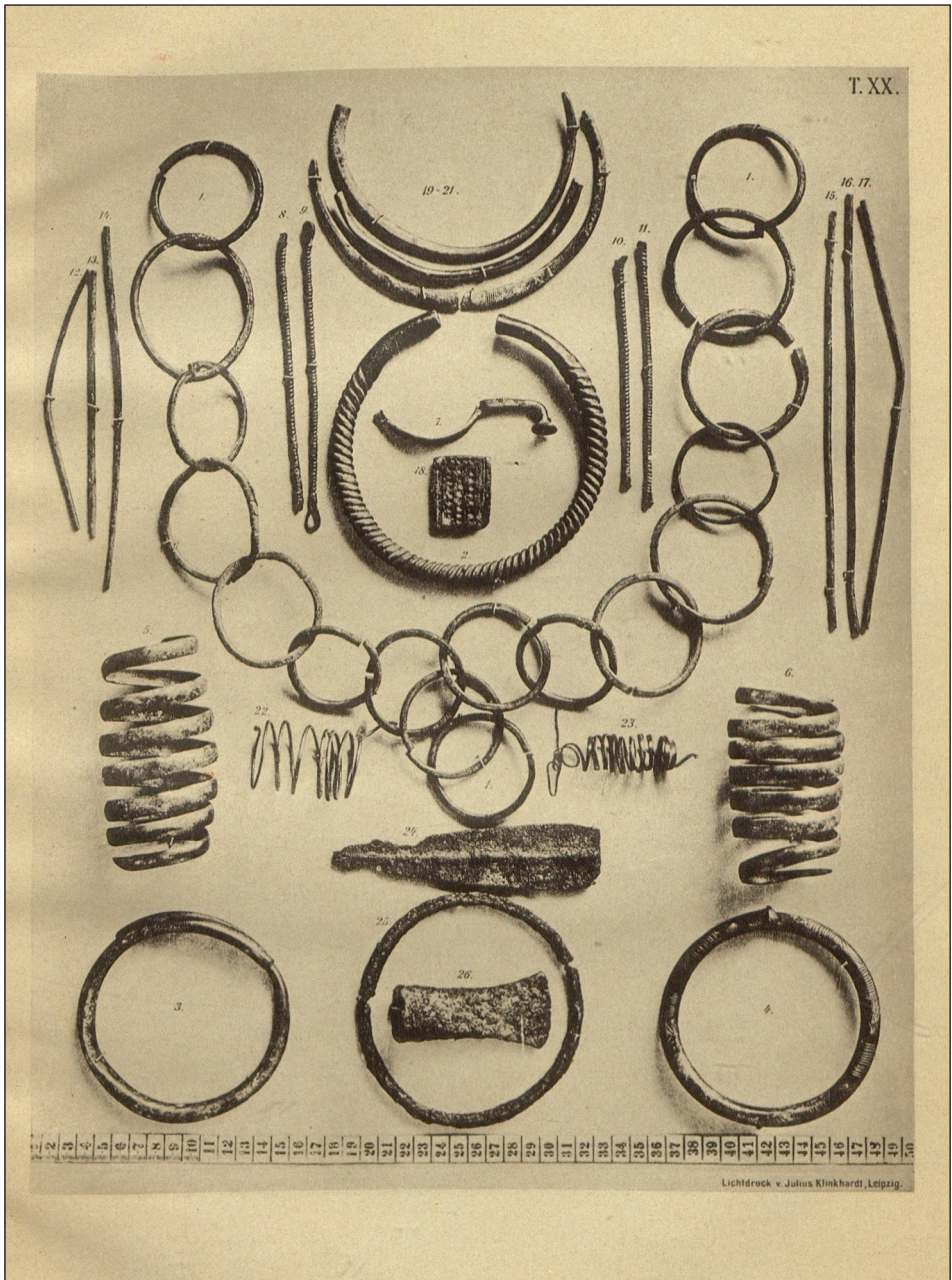


Fig. 4. Archaeological finds from the collection of the Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences.
From: Erzepki 1893



Fig. 5. Archaeological finds from the collection of Bolesław Podczaszyński. From the collection of the Archaeological Museum in Kraków

development of the collections was supported by the Archaeological Commission (later becoming the Archaeological Section, and finally the Archaeological Department), operating within the Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences. Members of the association conducted a number of excavations in Greater Poland, donating the finds to the museum (Fig. 4, Abramowicz 1967, 117-120; Kaczmarek 1996, 56-58; Kaczmarek *et al.* 2013, 16; Linetty 2020, 197-222). In Toruń, on behalf of the Society and to enrich its collections, archaeological research was conducted by the museum curator Gotfryd Ossowski [1835-1897] (Działowski 1878, 11; Ossowski 1878; Przegląd 1880, V-VII; see Lech 2002, 19-24). At the end of the 1870s, a resolution was even passed to organize archaeological expeditions on behalf of the Society (Przegląd 1880, V). The collections of the TNK Museum of Antiquities were enriched to a small extent by field research, but since the 1870s, *i.e.* after the institution was transformed into the Archaeological Museum of the Academy of Learning, annual research expeditions were organized on behalf of the Academy, during which numerous finds were acquired for the collections (Kostrzewski 1949, 64-68; Nosek 1967, 45-63).

Only rarely were antiquities acquired by purchase (*cf.* Majer 1852, 168). However, attempts were made to obtain financial resources for them. In Kraków, for example, a small amount was raised through the sale of admission tickets to the Exhibition of Antiquities of 1858/9 (Schnaydrowa 1971, 71). In 1880, the Academy of Learning in Kraków allocated a significant amount of money to purchase the collection of the architect and collector Bolesław Podczaszyński [1822-1876] (Fig. 5, Woźny 2022, 87-91).

In the period when archaeology was synonymous with antiquarianism (from the end of the 18th century to around the 1860s), prehistoric artefacts were generally organized according

to aesthetic criteria, taking into account the raw material from which they were made and their mutual similarity. Therefore, bronzes were placed next to bronzes, iron objects next to other items of iron, ceramics next to ceramics, swords next to swords, spearheads next to spearheads, regardless of where they were found (Leitfaden 1837; Tyszkiewicz 1846, 5-17). Later, attempts were made to give them a substantive arrangement, but often without meaningful consequences. The decisive factor here was the creativity of the organizer of the collection. For example, in the Museum of Antiquities in Vilnius, archaeological collections were assigned to several sections. The first contained artefacts (originals and copies) considered to be statuettes of Slavic deities. The second one contained “excavated objects from the earth”, *i.e.* various archaeological finds as well as human remains. The third one contained artefacts from barrows (almost 30 items), brought to Vilnius by Eustachy Tyszkiewicz. The fourth one contained archaeological artefacts dating back to Christian times. The fifth section – one of the richest – contained stone weapons from both prehistoric and historic times (*e.g.*, stone balls). The sixth, by analogy, held weapons from different periods and eras made of metals. The seventh room was used to store artistic crafts and souvenir items. The last, eighth section consisted of archaeological finds from the excavations of A. H. Kirkor (Kirkor 1856, 237-247). The Vilnius Museum developed very dynamically during the short period of its existence. In 1862, two new departments were created – ethnographic (with exhibits donated by members of the Kronstadt naval expedition around the world) and a department consisting of Egyptian antiquities donated by the collector Michał Tyszkiewicz [1828-1897] (Ilgiewicz 2005, 124-126; Mizerniuk-Rotkiewicz 2016, 47).

Over time, however, archaeological museums became more and more specialized. In the second half of the 19th century, even strictly archaeological institutions were created in Europe, such as the Museum of Celtic and Gallo-Roman Antiquities in Saint Germain-en-Laye near Paris, founded in 1862, headed by the famous anthropologist and prehistorian Gabriel de Mortillet [1821-1898]. In Europe, the issue of establishing museums, their contents and methods of organizing them was discussed at many universities at that time. In Oxford, there was a debate on how to isolate, organize and complement the specimens in the Ashmolean Museum and create a historical and archaeological museum on their basis (Resolutions [1864]).

The creation of a new type of institution was possible thanks to the transformation of archaeology as a scientific discipline (focusing on the study of prehistory), as well as thanks to the establishment of other museums specializing in art, craft and ethnographic collections, which began to receive other collections. Established in the mid-1870s, the museum of the Scientific Society in Toruń from the beginning gathered collections in three separate sections – historical, natural and archaeological, clearly separating prehistoric and historical artefacts as well as works of crafts and art (Działowski 1878). In the early 1890s, the Archaeological Museum of the Academy of Learning in Kraków (formerly the Museum of Antiquities of the Kraków Scientific Association) was transformed into a specialized archaeological museum where prehistoric artefacts were collected. Its curator was Godfryd



Fig. 6. Prehistoric pottery from Horodnica (today in Ukraine) in the Museum of Academy of Learning in Kraków 1878. From the collection of the Archaeological Museum in Kraków

Ossowski, who came from Toruń to Kraków (Demetrykiewicz 1929, 19-20; Chochorowski 2016, 37). In the Museum of the Lubomirski Princes in Lviv, archaeological collections constituted a separate department (archaeological and historical; historical souvenirs; works of art; “miscellaneous”). The prehistoric artefacts in the archaeological and historical section were separated from those from historical times, antiquities, coins, documents, and seals (Zawadzki 1874, 359-360; Katalog 1877, IV). In the Dzieduszycki Natural History Museum, the prehistoric department was one of seven departments (along with zoological, botanical, paleontological, geological, mineralogical, ethnographic sections) (Dzieduszycki 1895, XIII, XVI).

At the end of the 19th century, the arrangement of museum collections began to take on a scientific character. Efforts were made to convey information obtained during research, among other things, by showing the artefacts in the context in which they were discovered. It was in this way that the archaeological collections from the excavations of Gotfryd Ossowski and collected in the archaeological department of the museum of the Toruń Scientific Society were arranged:

“When collecting and arranging our treasures, we were guided by this guiding principle: to collect everything from a given place, not omitting the most inconspicuous things (...) and to move and arrange them in such a way that things from one place, coming from one place, appear to the viewer in one place. From this principle came the second one, which required us to immediately arrange the collections in geographical order, keeping as far as our Prussia is concerned with the course of the Vistula from south to north and both of its banks” (Działowski 1878, 11).

The artefacts were accompanied by explanatory boards that made them easier to study: “all uncovered graves are fully prepared, and next to them there is a plan with a cross-section of the grave and its drawing” (Sitting of the Archaeological Commission of the AU, 7 V 1878, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU, No PAU W II-51, pp. 60-60'). The Toruń museum owed this shape and systematization of its collections to Ossowski (Działowski 1878, 9-12; cf. Ossowski 1878; Demetrykiewicz 1929, 19; Lech 2002, 19-25; Wawrzykowska 2002, 38-40; Małecka-Kukawka and Wawrzykowska 2004, 112; Chochorowski 2016, 13-17). At the end of the 1870s, it was decided to organize and catalogue the prehistoric collections in the Archaeological Museum of the Academy of Learning in Kraków (Fig. 6). This task was entrusted to the archaeologist Teodor Ziemięcki [1845-1916]. He was instructed “that fragments of pottery, flint products, bronze objects, *etc.* extracted from one grave, are to be placed together on one box. This will make it easier to see the whole excavated material and prevent individual items from getting mixed up or lost” (Letter of P. Umiński to T. Ziemięcki, 20 I 1879, Archive of Science of PAN and PAU, No PAU W II-51a). In May 1879, the catalogue, prepared on separate pages, was two-thirds ready (Letter of P. Umiński to T. Ziemięcki, 20 I 1879, *Ibid.*). In the early 1890s, Gotfryd Ossowski developed the “Catalogue of Anthropological and Archaeological Collections at the Anthropological Commission of the Academy of Learning in Kraków”. However, he did not manage to complete it because he left Kraków in 1893 (Chochorowska 2001, 14; Chochorowski 2016, 37; Skrzyński 2018, 158-162). Neither of these inventories have been published. The catalogue of the collections of the Museum of Antiquities in Vilnius, prepared by Adam H. Kirkor (1856), was published, and later also those of the collections of the museums in Poznań and Lviv (Katalog 1877; Erzepki 1893; Dzieduszycki 1895; see Wojtkowski 1928, 264-265).

From the very beginning of the existence of public collections, it was important to provide appropriate rooms for their storage and exhibition. Almost all Polish museums struggled with this problem. From its foundation in 1815 until the mid-1850s, the Kraków Scientific Society was connected with the Jagiellonian University. For this reason, its collec-



Fig. 7. Exhibition of antiquities and art objects in Kraków. 1858/9.
From the collections of the Museum of Kraków

tions were initially kept in the Jagiellonian Library. After the Society separated from the University in 1856, until the construction of the Society's own building in 1864, the collections were kept not only in the Jagiellonian Library, but also in the private home of one of the TNK members. In 1864, they found a permanent home in the Society's building (Schnaydrowa 1971, 71; Woźny 2016, 220).

Eustachy Tyszkiewicz's collections were initially stored in his private homes, and then also in rented rooms. It is worth mentioning that they were already made available to the public at that time. Ultimately, the Vilnius Museum of Antiquities was located in the auditorium of the former Vilnius Imperial University (Kirkor 1856, 227; Mizerniuk-Rotkiewicz 2016, 41). The Poznań collections were initially kept in the Raczyński Library, but after twelve years they had to be taken away (Sprawozdanie 1871, 361; cf. Kaczmarek 1996, 59-60). They found temporary shelter first in the building of the Poznań Bazaar, and later, thanks to the donation by Seweryn Mielżyński [1804-1872] of a building plot, from the end of 1872 in the seat of the Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences at 17 Młyńska Street (currently Mielżyńskiego Street; Sprawozdanie 1871, 362; 1872, 253; cf. Kaczmarek *et al.* 2013, 12). In 1881, the cornerstone was laid for the building that was to house the collections of the Toruń Scientific Society. A year later, the collections were made available in new rooms



Fig. 8. Archaeological finds from the collection of the Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences at the first Kraków Exhibition of Antiquities and Objects of Art in 1858/9.
Photo: K. Beyer. From the collections of the Polish Academy of Learning

(Sprawozdanie 1884, 127; Wawrzykowska 2002, 40). Only the archaeological collections in Lviv were exhibited from the beginning in the offices of the institutions to which they belonged. The exhibits of the Museum of the Lubomirski Princes were housed in the headquarters of the Ossoliński National Institute (on Ossoliński Street), and those from the Museum of the Dzieduszycki family in a tenement house in Lviv, specially purchased for museum purposes. The issue of the availability of collections for researchers and the public is directly connected with the matter of the premises where they were kept. Before they obtained their own premises, the museums in Kraków and Poznań displayed their collections only during exhibitions organized on various occasions and in various places. Part of the Poznań and Kraków collections was shown, for example, during the first Kraków Exhibition of Antiquities and Objects of Art in 1858/9 (Cieszkowski, Wegner 1863, 782; Fig. 7, 8). Before the collections of the Toruń Scientific Society were made available in their own building in 1882, part of them was exhibited in 1878 during the World Exhibition in Paris and in 1880 during the Congress of the Anthropological Society in Berlin (Sprawozdanie 1884, 127-128; see Wawrzykowska 2002, 40; Małecka-Kukawka and Wawrzykowska 2004, 114).

Museums played a variety of roles in the 19th century. It was around them and around scientific societies that archaeology developed before it achieved the status of a university discipline. In 1900, Włodzimierz Demetrykiewicz [1859-1937], curator of the Archaeological Museum of the Academy of Learning, the most important Polish archaeological museum at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, emphasized that they played a key role in the organization of archaeology as a scientific discipline (Demetrykiewicz 1900, 4).

These early museums had a variety of fates. The Museum of Antiquities in Vilnius ceased to exist after only ten years of existence as a result of repression by the Russian authorities after the 1863 January Uprising. They began its liquidation in 1865. A year later, the collection was parcelled out and the most valuable part was sent to Moscow. Some artefacts, including prehistoric antiquities, remained in Vilnius but were transferred to the public library (Blombergowa 1997, 92; Ilgiewicz 2005, 136-142; Mizerniuk-Rotkiewicz 2016, 51-58). The archaeological department of the Toruń museum went into decline after Gotfyd Ossowski left. After a period of prosperity, there was a stagnation in the Historical and Archaeological Department of the Scientific Society in Toruń. It was even considered whether to transfer the collection to Poznań (Osmólska-Piskorska 1948, 21-22; Abramowicz 1967, 159; Wawrzykowska 2002, 40). The museums in Kraków and Poznań were much luckier. They developed dynamically – and although they underwent organizational changes – they survived and continue to operate to this day. The Dzieduszycki and Lubomirski Museums operated in Lviv until the mid-20th century. After World War II, most of their collections were taken over by the USSR and today they are divided among several Ukrainian institutions. Only a small part of the Dzieduszycki museum collection was transported to Poland.

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