

The Polish Review

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Cathedral of Gniezno, in Western Poland, Poland's earliest Cathedral built nine centuries ago.

The Cathedral of Gniezno is dedicated to the memory of Poland's Patron Saint, whose story is commemorated in bronze in a series of magnificent bas-reliefs on the great XIIIth Century door.

(See article on page 6)



AMERICA SPEAKS TO POLAND...

WRUL has started a regular series of special shortwave broadcasts to Poland in which every Monday some prominent American will address the Polish people. This "America Speaks to the Poles" program is for all Poles, who in all parts of the world, are carrying on the fight against Hitler's Germany. It will give encouragement and moral support to Poles in Poland who, undaunted by all attempts to exterminate them, are fighting the enemy at home and on all possible fronts.

Americans of all classes and professions will address the Polish people and hearten them with the assurance that in their struggle for freedom the American people are with them to the last.

Despite the death sentences imposed upon all who tune in on foreign radio programs in Poland, British and American broadcasts are most eagerly listened to and are reprinted in the underground Polish press.

Dorothy Thompson inaugurated the "America Speaks to Poland" programs with a splendid talk to Polish Women. She was followed last week by Dr. William M. Agar of Columbia University, the Vice-Chairman of the Fight For Freedom Committee.

THE message that we in America send tonight to our friends in Poland is this: We know that America has been slow to realize the true meaning of the scourge which devastated your land; slow to comprehend the unspeakable degradation of the Nazi mind and soul. Because, unlike you, we have lived safely, far removed from aggressor nations for a long time. We have not been very realistic. We have permitted ourselves the dangerous luxury of believing that if we do not want a thing to happen, it cannot really be true. That is why we have not been quite willing to believe that the stories of suffering in Poland are true, that a whole nation is being systematically starved, plundered and enslaved, that its contributions to our civilization are being obliterated, its churches profaned and closed, its religion proscribed, its priests and nuns murdered or banished.

But, truly, we are beginning to understand. We see now that you fought our fight, defended our heritage as well as your own, to the utmost limit of your powers. We were shocked when you were overrun. I like to believe that we became a little less complacent then. We started sending tools and guns to those whose blood was flowing for our salvation as well as theirs, a form of aid which our President has recently extended to the Polish army in Britain and Canada.

... Of course, we *did* shed tears of pity over the torture you endured. We are an emotional people, and tears can be human and good. But we should have kept our pity for ourselves, we should have shed our tears over our own weakness and indecision, reserving our admiration and our reverence for you. *You* have suffered and fought. *Your* voice will be heard again in the world. But we, as an American recently wrote, are in danger of entering "into the unspeakable loneliness of those who play it safe during common catastrophe." I do not like to say these things of America, so far, however, they are true. But we *are* beginning to understand and, in the end, we shall not fail you.

It is true that the other nations of Europe were just as fearful of war as we are now. They permitted the Nazi beast to rearm, to swallow Austria, to destroy Czechoslovakia without making a move to resist. But, when Poland was attacked, Britain and France were stirred sufficiently to declare war,

though the others still held to a neutrality as stupid and as dangerous as our own. They also wanted to believe that peace and freedom could be preserved without effort and without recourse to arms.

Poland was the first to take up arms against the Nazi tyranny, and she received no help. So Poland fell, and war came to each nation in turn. One by one they learned the lesson we should all have known from the beginning—namely that decent men must unite to fight the evil power which has set itself the task of destroying our world. They beheld chaos unfolding before their eyes, yet they would not unite to stop it at its source. So, when its own turn came, each nation was as helpless as a trapped animal paralyzed by fear. Thus it came about that Britain was left alone until Stalin, whose pact with Hitler had sanctioned the Nazi reign of terror, was himself attacked.

But why did drugged Europe suddenly stir itself when Poland became the victim of aggression? Europe sensed, it would seem, that the limit of endurance was surpassed, that the destruction of Poland could not be permitted if Europe was to endure. Europe knew, instinctively, that its own welfare was somehow linked to that of Poland. As an American historian explained it, Poland is great in both the Catholic and the revolutionary-liberal traditions. That is why Hitler "could not kill Poland without arousing Europe, for all its forgetfulness and dormancy, to some kind of defensive move."

Poland was for centuries the spearhead of Catholic Christendom against Baltic paganism and Byzantine Moscow; a hundred years ago she was the spearhead of the struggle for political liberty against Prussian and Czarist despotism; and in our day she has done like service against the new socialist paganism of Nazi Germany...

... That is the fact. Poland is necessary to Europe. But Poland has ceased to exist. Late, very late, America realizes that not only Poland but Europe is necessary to her. Late, but not too late, America is arousing itself to do something about it.

I do not intend to tell you only of our effort to equip ourselves for war while we also supply Britain, Russia, and China, though I do not minimize the tremendous importance of that task. We can do it if we will. We are well supplied with natural

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POLAND'S FRONTIERS

A Plea for Security by "Scrutator"

PERHAPS the most serious mistake made by British statesmanship in 1919 was its failure to appreciate the importance of Poland. It tended to regard the Poles as if they were merely one little nation among a lot of other little nations in Central Europe. In reality they were the sole people in that area who, by virtue of numbers, history, courage and culture combined, had the quality of a great nation.

For the stability of enfranchised Central Europe it was essential that Poland should develop as a great power and for that should have territory and frontiers that were reasonably defensible.

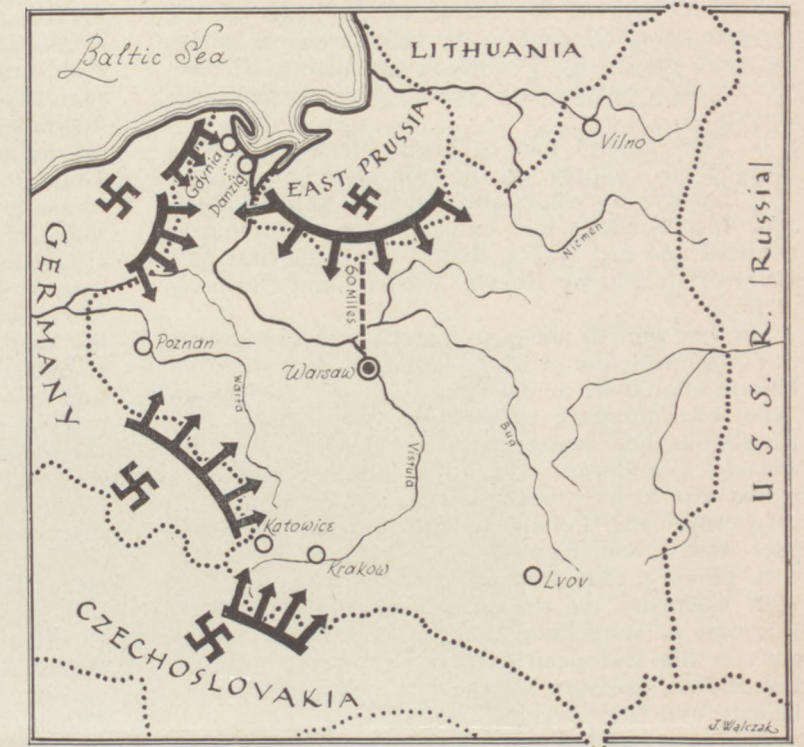
President Wilson saw this and so did the French. Great Britain did not.

By British insistence Poland was deprived of Danzig and her Baltic zone, which was still pretty wide in the Treaty as originally presented to the Germans, was clipped back on both west and east till what was left earned the contemptuous name "Corridor."

I, myself, at the time wrote strongly against these policies and argued that we were creating the probable starting point for Germany's war of *revanche*. What happened just twenty years later proved this fairly accurate forecast. But it was not difficult for anyone to make who had grasped the character of Prussian militarism and the geography of the Baltic.

It is a fortunate chance that events of the present war have brought Polish politicians and soldiers from France to Great Britain. During 1914-1918 they were in France only and from Napoleon's days they had developed an almost exclusive regard for that country. Since France's collapse British and Poles have really got to know each other for the first time and have developed strong mutual regard. The bravery of the Polish airmen and soldiers has impressed everybody and intercourse between politicians has revealed natural similarities between British and Polish psychology which the frenchification of the latter had tended to obscure.

Britain came into this war over her guarantee to Poland and she has an honorable obligation to see, as far as she can, that Poland emerges from the war territorially not worse off than she entered it. But that does not exclude some compromises over the Russo-Polish frontier if, as is highly desirable,



A MAP OF CRISS CROSS UNTENABLE FRONTIERS

The above map strikingly illustrates the force of SCRUTATOR'S argument that the Poland of the future must have frontiers that can be defended. It shows the main lines of German attack, pinching out the so-called corridor by simultaneous thrusts from PRUSSIA and East Prussia, and from Silesia and the Carpathians.

she receives substantial Baltic enlargements at the expense of Germany.

Few will dispute that this time she ought to have Danzig and a much widened "Corridor." But a very strong case can be put up for handing over all of East Prussia to her and so ending the "Corridor" feature.

It would mean, of course, transferring the German population to Germany. But for such transfer there would be ample warrant in Hitler's recent practice. And indeed transfers are essential if one of Versailles' main mistakes—a map of criss-cross untenable frontiers—is not to be repeated.

The new agreement with Russia is on sensible lines and, if Russian good will continues, the points outstanding should be clarified in due course. Friction might arise over the new Polish army in Russia if attempts were made to sovietise it. Let us hope that they will not be, and that Soviets may be content to regard the Polish soldiers as fellow fighters and not as a political handle.

SCRUTATOR in *The Sunday Times* (London)

POLAND — BASTION OF PEACE

by G. M. GODDEN

THE outrage committed on European peace and security by the invasion and temporary destruction of Poland at the hands of the Nazi in the autumn of 1939, cannot be fully realised unless the part played by Poland in stabilising Europe, during the past twenty years of her rebirth, be known.

In 1918 Poland had to begin life anew, as an independent country, on the ruin of the three warring Empires by whom she had been held in bondage. Her bondage had extended for more than a hundred and fifty years, that is since the first partition of Poland by Russia, Austria, and Germany in 1772.

For her rebirth she was fortunate in choosing a ruler, the principle of whose foreign policy was that Poland should be a "Bastion of Peace"; a bastion based on adherence to the part of a neighbor to Russia on her eastern and to Germany on her western boundaries. Poland in concert with Rumania was to form peace bloc.

In July, 1932, Poland concluded a non-aggression pact with Soviet-Russia.

In January, 1934, Poland concluded a similar Pact with Germany on the initiative of Herr Hitler. This had an immediate effect, as *The Times* pointed out, on the European balance of power, and "diverted Nazi pressure, for the time being, away from Danzig and the Corridor."

This Pact had still, in law, five years to run when Herr Hitler's armies were launched against Poland in the wanton aggression of September, 1939. It is of tragic interest today to recall its provisions. "The two Governments," the Pact stated, "think it time to initiate a new era in German-Polish relations by direct agreement with each other. They start from the fact that the maintenance and ensuring of a durable peace between their countries is an essential condition for general European peace . . . If disputes incapable of composition through direct negotiations arise, the two Governments would seek agreement in mutual understanding by other peaceful means . . . but in no circumstances would they proceed to the use of force for the purpose of settling such disputes."

Herr Hitler was cheered in the Reichstag, a few days after the signature of this Pact, when he affirmed that "Germans and Poles must reconcile themselves to each other's existence." When, next year, Marshal Joseph Pilsudski died, the Polish "Bastion of Peace" was still a factor in Europe; and it was announced from Berlin that "Germany has concluded a non-aggression Pact with Poland which is more than a valuable contribution to European peace, and she will adhere to it unconditionally. . . . We recognise the Polish State as the home of a great patriotic nation."

POLAND AND DANZIG

In 1936 Poland showed a tolerant attitude towards Nazi activities in the Free City of Danzig. A new declaration on minority questions was signed in November, 1937, between Poland and Germany;

and Herr Hitler affirmed that this declaration would "have the effect of improving and cementing the relations between the two peoples."

The annexation of Austria in 1938 was an event, coming as it did in flagrant contradiction of the German assertion, issued only three years earlier, that "Germany neither intends nor wishes to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria, or to annex Austria," that could not but cause profound uneasiness in Poland. Was it to allay obstinate questionings as to the value of Nazi treaties, and of Nazi expressions of friendship, that Herr von Ribbentrop, visiting Warsaw on January 25, 1939, declared that the Pact of 1934 "had stood the test and strains of the last five years, and would remain the surest foundation of relations between Germany and Poland . . . Poland and Germany can look into the future with complete confidence."

Within less than eight months of the utterance the massed armies of Germany had fallen on Poland, had destroyed her cities and massacred her people. Within one month public places in Danzig were placarded "Poles, dogs and Jews not admitted."

From February onwards events moved swiftly. German students fomented an anti-Polish campaign in Danzig. The independence of Poland was openly threatened; and Herr Hitler, having swept over Bohemia and Moravia, launched his "minimum demand" for the possession of Danzig, a German route and railway across the Corridor, and an extension of German territory in Silesia.

This was an abrupt and unilateral denunciation of the German-Polish Pact, still in force, of 1934. It was, as *The Times* pointed out, a "wholly unprovoked threat to the security and territorial integrity of a friendly power."

German history repeats itself. Again the brute force of the Big Power threatened the lesser Power, as Germany had threatened Belgium in 1914. The Nazi aggression was openly let loose against Europe's Bastion of Peace.

As the British Ambassador to Berlin, Sir Nevile Henderson, says, summing up the first six months of 1939, Herr Hitler had now "appeared under his true colors as an unprincipled menace to European peace and liberty."

Poland's Bastion of Peace was not to fall without weeks of anxious effort. Up to the beginning of August, Sir Nevile tells us, "though the clouds were black and the peace front negotiations dragged on interminably, the situation remained serious but not immediately dangerous." German provocation increased in Danzig; and Poland was constrained to point out in a Note of August 10 that the future intervention by the Nazi Government "to the detriment of Polish rights and interests in Danzig would be considered as an act of aggression." Sir Nevile Henderson's comment is candid and illuminating: "I have little doubt but that the latter phrase served more than anything else to produce

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Pole in Canada Sends Bombs to Hitler

A STOCKY, blond, Polish engineer is a member of the inspection staff in a Quebec factory that will turn out more than one hundred thousand 500-pound aerial bombs in the next twelve months.

His inspection is more rigorous than most. No slightest flaw escapes him. He wants every bomb to be as perfect as human skill can make it.

He seems to make a mental note as he gauges each 300-pound shell of metal before sending it on its way to the plant where it will be filled with about 200 pounds of high explosive. This one is for Goering, this one for Himmler, this one for Goebbels, and this one—isn't it a perfect beauty? — for Hitler himself. He probably says a little prayer over that one, hoping it will fall some day right in Hitler's backyard.

His fellow workers call him

Teddy, but that isn't his name. His real name cannot be revealed. It might give the Gestapo a clue to his whereabouts, and they might visit their displeasure upon his young wife and their eight year old son who are still somewhere in Poland. Teddy is not sure where they are. He had word from them some months ago by devious routes, but no scrap of information has reached him since. He feels certain they are alive, but he does not know how they live nor where they live . . . nor what their fate may be at the hands of Poland's conquerors.

Judged by any standards, Teddy was an important man in his native Poland before the war broke out. He was reasonably wealthy, owned a beautiful villa not far from the capital, had his own cars. He was one of his country's most outstanding engineers. For years he had been connected with a great industrial concern with factories near Warsaw, factories that turned out guns, torpedoes, cars, trucks and other war materials.

When the German blitzkrieg was launched against Poland, this plant was one of the first targets of Hun bombers. The Government decided that the factory should be evacuated and Teddy and his fellow engineers were ordered to move to another city. But war spread too quickly. There was no time to set up another plant far from the

battle lines, no time to resume the making of war materials. German hordes swept across Poland. The Russians began moving in from the rear.

Teddy and his colleagues escaped into Rumania, thence into France, where they placed their services at the disposal of the French Government. When France fell, they moved again to England. Some have since come to Canada to occupy comparatively minor positions in munitions plants until

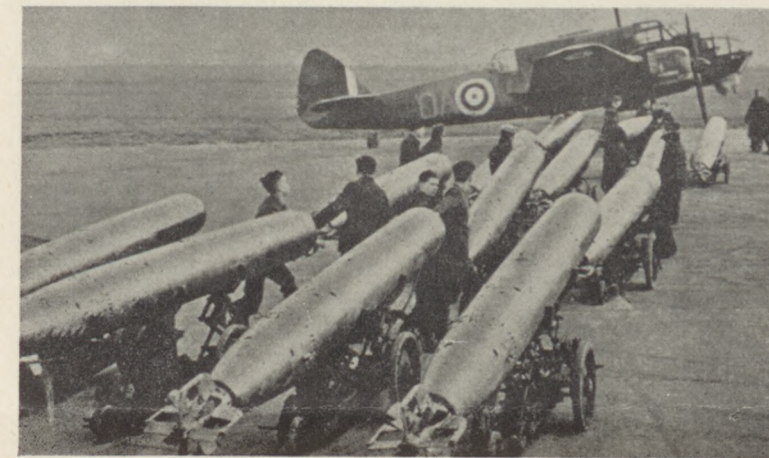
they have learned sufficient English to enable them to apply their specialized knowledge to better advantage. As technicians, Teddy and his comrades are unsurpassed. They are perfectly content in their humble jobs. They feel that now, far removed from the scene of conflict, they are able to make a really worthwhile contribution to the task of defeating Hitler

and all he stands for.

Teddy, in particular, is happy about his work, despite his loneliness in a new country and his concern over his family.

"I have seen many bombs fall," he related. "I saw them first in Warsaw. There was little or no anti-aircraft defence, either on the ground or in the air, and the German bombers could fly so low over the capital that they could pick out the upturned faces of the frightened crowds in the streets below. I saw them drop their bombs right into those sections where no military target could possibly exist, where there was nothing but homes, churches, schools, hospitals, and stores.

"I saw them again in France. The technique was the same. The target did not matter, so long as human lives were snuffed out and destruction wrought. I saw them again in London, but it was different there. The defences were better and the British took a heavy toll of their attackers. It was different, too, in the morale of the people. The British took the worst the Germans had to give and never flinched."

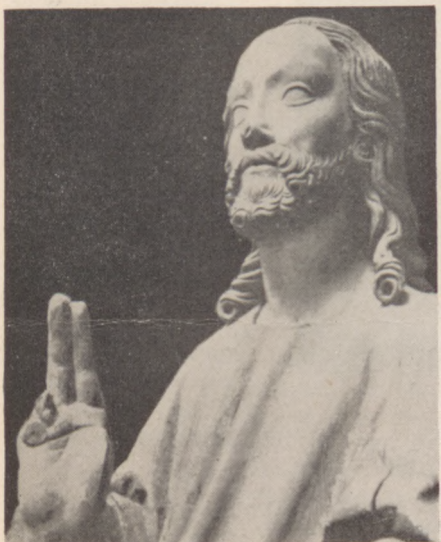


Bombs Loaded on Polish Plane

PRIMITIVE ART IN POLAND



Starogard Crucifix



Jesus Christ Szydłowa



The Adoration of the Magi.
Cracow. Church of St. Catherine.

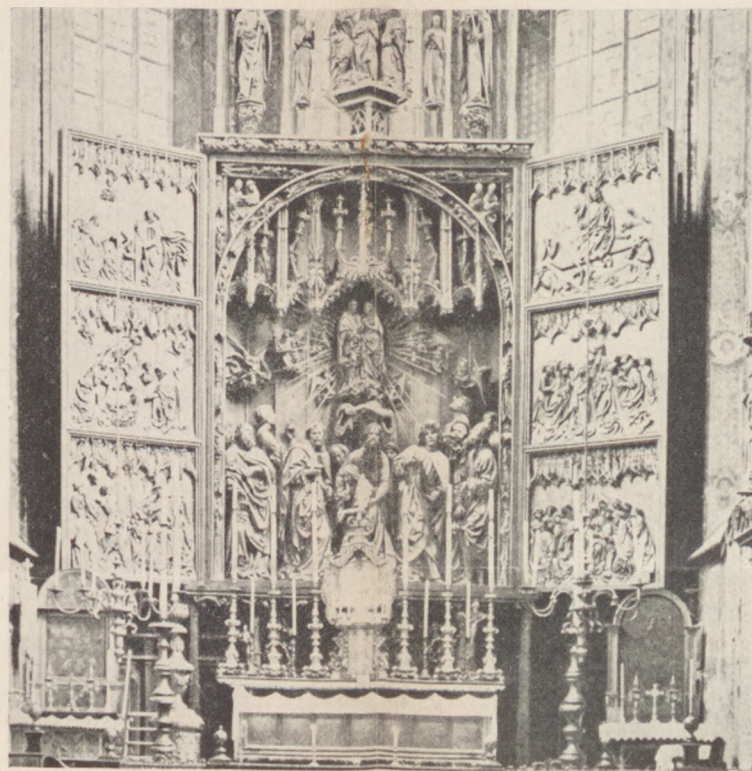
THE first teachers of Poland in the field of art of the early Middle Ages were the French and the Belgians, and to a lesser degree the Italians. Both architecture and artistic industry show express traces of their "Romance" lessons. Beginning with the first comparatively small rotundas on the Cracow Wawel, and continuing through the more important cathedrals and monastic churches—the thread of French influence is everywhere clearly to be seen, their Thenish taste provides sufficient evidence of the approximation to Franco-Belgian border models.

The tradition of artistic cooperation with France were renewed at the turn of the twelfth century, when a group of Cistercian abbeys, occupied by monks from Morimund, arose in central Poland. Their builders brought with them the purest forms of Burgundian architecture, stylistically part of the Early Gothic. In comparison with these abbeys, those of the same order in Great-Poland, which were subordinate houses of monasteries in Germany, seem almost conservative in style. And what is more interesting, one of the monasteries in Little-Poland (at Wachock) is a modification, not only of French but actually of Italian building-style, as is show by the walls of its church, faced with two-colored stone. We are therefore the less surprised to find the early thirteenth century Dominican church at Sandomierz — a singular work of Romanesque architecture in brick in central Europe—actually reminding us of the brick construction of Lombardy. St. Jacek, a Polish Dominican and one of the first companions of St. Dominic, contrived to give his work in Poland something very closely akin to Italian form. Just as an enthusiastic gardener does not hesitate to incur increased transportation costs if he can only be certain of getting a selection of good-quality seedlings at first hand, so the cultural initiative of the early members of the Piast dynasty was not discouraged by the difficulty of coming into direct contact with the leading centers of western European culture, to the exclusion of chance, merely territorial, intermediation.

It is likewise an important fact that the native "lust for building" manifested by Poland was encouraged by increasing imports of the products of artistic industry, the best of which likewise came from the district of the Meuse. A noble example of this is afforded by the famous bronze doors of the Cathedral at Gniezno, which are partly at least, inspired by the style of Belgian miniatures. We also have reason to believe that the slowly awakening artistic activity of the towns had important results in this field, remembering the flattering commentaries,

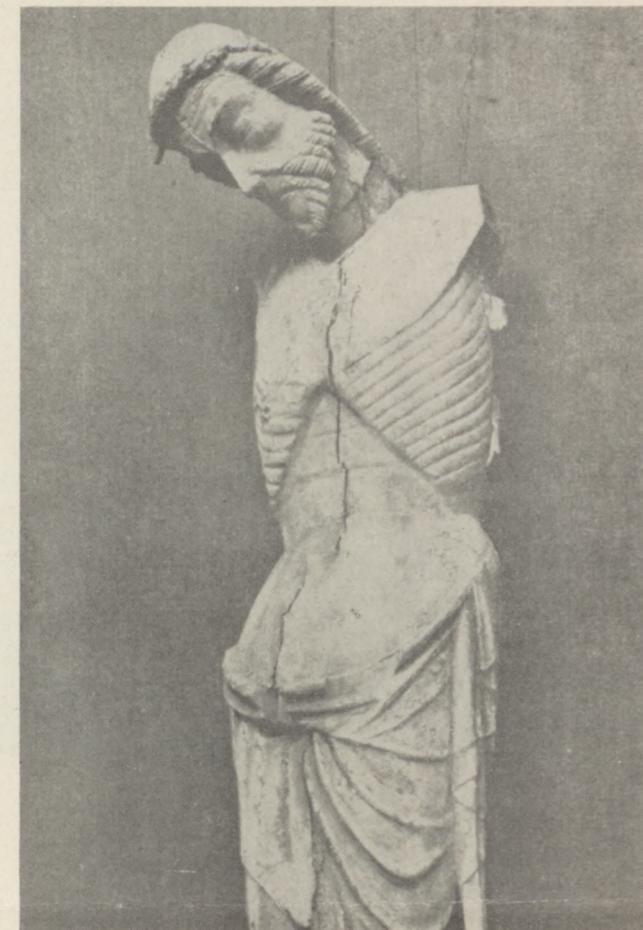
accompanying the Polish gifts sent to German monasteries, a portion of which, it seems, came from the hand of the duke's court goldsmith, Leardo. An eloquent precursor of this indigenous peculiar native creative impulse is to be found in a twelfth century silver cup from Breslau engraved with

the history of the warlike Gadeon — a surprising mixture of ancient, oriental traditions and modern Romance threads. The thirteenth century in Poland may well be called the period of struggle between the Romance and the triumphal advance of the Gothic. The early Gothic art of the Cistercians was in itself an epoch-making factor. The mendicant orders, and the Franciscans in the first place contributed to the popularization of this new form, drawn from the work of the Cistercians, the so-called *opus francigenum*.



Wit Stwosz, Greatest of Mediaeval
Woodcarvers, Spent Twelve Years on This
Triptychon for St. Mary's Church in Cracow

A clearer formulation of a native architectural style, this time really monumental, was not in Poland until about the middle of the fourteenth century, with the building of the Gothic basilica at Cracow. Its most characteristic feature was the use of brick for walls and stone for the constructive and decorative parts, as well as by employment of buttresses directly in contact with the wall instead of flying buttresses carried slanting over the roofs of the aisles. This independent modification of the brick basilica with nave and aisles gives the Little-Polish churches a more slender silhouette than that of many other forms (German for example), but at the same time diminishes the lighting of the interior. By its side there appeared in the fourteenth century a second type—a two- or three-aisled church built of free-stone, adapted from Bohemian and south-German models.



Starogard Crucifix

At the same period the northern parts of the country were subjected to architectural influences from Pomerania, where the Teutonic Order were developing a great architectural activity. To the builders of the Order Polish Pomerania owes its numerous ruins of former castles, sometimes quite fantastic in their outline, whose monastic and military tradition is disquietingly combined with variegated ceramic decoration, peculiar slenderness of the corner towers (as at Radzyn)—a plastic reminder of the scorching air of the Holy Land. How different are the castles of the Little-Polish highlands and the Silesian border district, built of stone, picturesque in plan, and in perfect harmony with the rocky, unlevelled terrain!

The works of Gothic painting and sculpture which have been preserved correspond to the heterogeneous motives and inspirations which governed the art of the Polish guilds at the period when it was taking shape. The clarity of the picture is obscured by the great number of losses and devastations which this

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Courtyard of the Wawel in Cracow

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inheritance has suffered in the course of centuries. Of the works which have been preserved, besides the enthroned Madonna at Olubok it will be enough to mention the powerful figure of Christ from Starogard, the existence of which teaches us that there must have been some contact, by ways as yet little investigated, between local and the distant sources of the monumental cathedral sculpture of the West. Susceptibility to the art of the Romance countries after being dulled for a time, once more became an actual fact, as we may convince ourselves by looking at the tomb of Casimir the Great in the Wawel cathedral at Cracow. The end of the century brought a unification of style, which was brought into conformity with the universal and idealistic tendency. Particular themes and forms of presentation enjoyed special popularity, the chief being the lyric conception of the "Beautiful Madonna" type which originated at the German-Slavonic border region. The numerous examples of it preserved in a few fundamental varieties have an unusual

House in Kazimierz on the Vistula, Central Poland



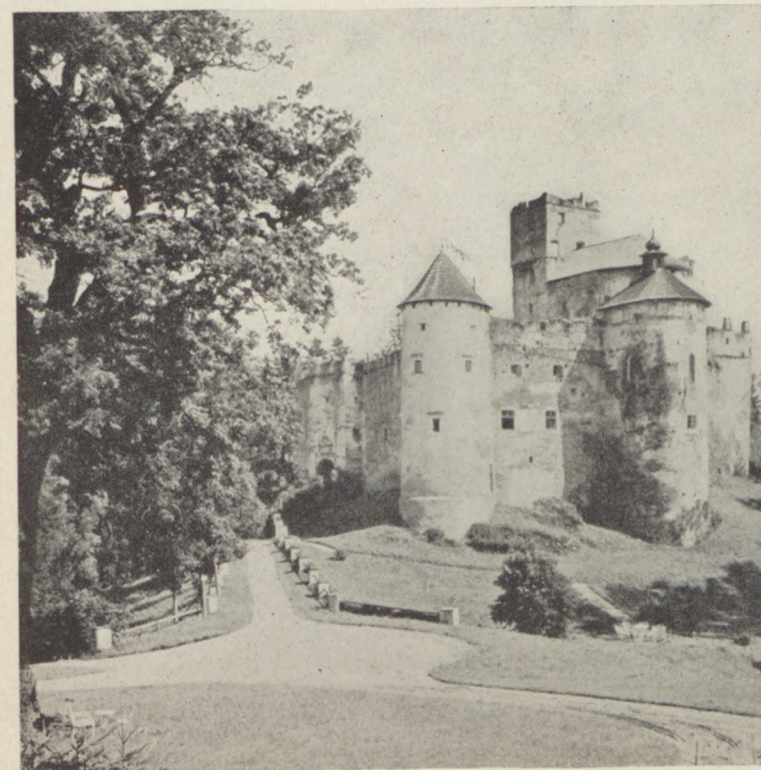
charm in their contours which are dominated by a fanatical rhythmicity of their line. The timid attempts at realism in the second half of the fifteenth century, first exemplified in stone sculpture already in the sides of the tomb of Ladislas Jagiello (about 1421), receive a powerful impulse and extension by the work of Wit Stwoszcz, who began his activity in 1477 with the huge high altar of the church of Our Lady at Cracow. In the city, the capital of Poland, the great artist spent the longest and the best period of his creative life. His hand produced the tombs of King Casimir Jagiellonczyk, of Piotr of Bnin, and of Filip Kallimach—this most outstanding works, stylistically distinct from his works outside of Cracow. Master Wit's individuality long weighed heavily on the activity of Polish sculptor workshops.

Polish Gothic painting, though sometimes received with incredulity as an unlikely counterpart to the Italian or Flemish primitives, existed and is worthy of attention.

Worthy of attention for the very reason that in spite of its numerous points of resemblance the art in Germany or Flanders, in spite of the number of borrowed Burgundian and Italian motives, scat-

tered and floating in the artistic atmosphere of Europe at that period—it is yet native and represents a different country from the Gothic ones. Like every branch and school of art it has its masterpieces, in fact a whole series of them in the altar-pieces of the Cracow Cathedral, the Dominican and Augustinian churches there, the polyptych at Olkusz, and the pictures at Warta, Chomranice and Torun. Real originality and individuality of expression is to be found in hundreds of other pictures which form the actual pith and marrow of this school. Their leading features are flat, linear composition, dislike of genre scenes, the arabesque significance of figures, decorative rhythm in the arrangement of groups extraordinarily persistent addition to the gold background in the more important altar-pieces. However, at the turn of the fifteenth century the art of miniature developed to an unexpectedly high level, and could point with pride to works like the codex of Baltazar Behem, a unique historial illustration of the mediaval activities of the craftsmen's guilds (about 1505).

The new Renaissance style found the road to Poland straight and short, but its development and struggle for its due place was a more complicated



Mediaeval Castle at Niedzica, South-west Poland

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Manor House at Krasiczyn, Eastern Poland

matter. On the personal initiative of King Sigismund I, the mediaval castle, however, on the Wawel hill at Cracow was modernized under the direction of an architect known as Franciszek Wloch, receiving a three story collonade of arcades and a cloister

with a fascinating design of columns (1502-16). Bartolomeo Berecci, summoned by the wise king at the same time, built the Sigismund chapel in 1517-33, the loveliest pearl of the Italian Renaissance in this part of Europe beyond the Alps, a tasteful mausoleum chapel of Florentine-Roman type, resembling the creation of Antonio da San Gallo and his school. The intervention of a king of so refined taste also probably helped to preserve such Gothic remains as fill the modernized Wawel castle. The main course of conservative currents is confined to ecclesiastic architecture, where Gothic forms almost without exception were preserved; forms which were still in the second half of the century capable of creating such a rich variety of shapes as earlier centuries had not known (e.g. St. Anne's at Cracow).

The new style, however, found wide application in castles and towns. This may be seen by the numerous town halls still preserved, the most imposing being the facade

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that final brainstorm in Herr Hitler's mind on which the peace of the world depended."

LIES AS ALLIES

After August 8 an exact replica of the Nazi preliminary barrage of Czech atrocity stories, let loose before the annexation of Czechoslovakia, was launched against Poland; by August 17 the "Polish atrocity" campaign was in full swing.

Information was received by the British Ambassador on August 21 that the carefully concealed Nazi military concentrations were already in progress; and late that evening "the bombshell exploded," to quote again the vivid narrative of Sir Nevile Henderson, of the announcement that negotiations had been concluded for a Russo-German non-aggression Pact to be signed in Moscow two days later. It was an act which, as *The Times* later declared in a notable leading article, "liberated and encouraged Hitler to light the first flames of world war in Europe."

It will be recalled that the British Prime Minister despatched a personal letter to Herr Hitler, delivered by the British Ambassador on August 23, in which the British Government declared their determination to fulfill their obligations to Poland, together with a readiness for peaceful discussion. Herr Hitler, Sir Nevile records, received Mr. Chamberlain's letter "in a mood of extreme excitability" and with violent language. Two days later Herr Hitler invited the British Ambassador to a further conversation. On this occasion "the Chancellor spoke with calm and apparent sincerity"; but Sir Nevile felt it necessary to point out that "my country could not possibly go back on its word to Poland, and that, however anxious we were for a better understanding with Germany we could never reach one except on the basis of negotiated settlement with Poland." On August 28 Poland declared her readiness to enter into negotiations with the German Government. The German military concentrations against Poland were now reaching completion.

Then came the final stage of the Nazi diplomacy, in an act which it is difficult to dissociate from a deliberate effort to put Poland in the wrong. Herr Hitler demanded the immediate presence of a Polish "emissary with full powers" in Berlin; the emissary was to arrive on the day following the demand. On that day, August 30, the Nazi Foreign Minister, Herr von Ribbentrop, received the British Ambassador "with intense hostility, which increased in violence . . . he kept leaping from his chair in a state of great excitement." The obvious suggestion that the Polish Ambassador in Berlin was perfectly qualified to conduct any negotiations was rejected by Herr von Ribbentrop with indignation as being utterly unthinkable and intolerable; and the German Foreign Minister then produced a lengthy document "which," writes Sir Nevile, "he read out to me in German, or rather gabbled through to me as fast as he could in a tone of the utmost annoyance. Of the sixteen articles in it I was able to gather the gist of six or seven, but it would have been quite impossible to guarantee even the exact

accuracy of those without a careful study of the text itself. When he had finished I accordingly asked him to let me see it. Herr von Ribbentrop refused categorically, threw the document with a contemptuous gesture on the table, and said that it was now out of date (*ueberholt*) since no Polish emissary had arrived in Berlin by midnight."

Sir Nevile emphasized that while it is true that these German proposals, with sixteen articles, were read to him, "it was in such a manner as to make them practically unintelligible."

NAZI AGGRESSION

On the day following, these proposals were broadcast at 9 p.m.; and a copy was given to the British Ambassador at 9:15 p.m. with a refusal for any explanation. Sir Nevile rightly inferred that Herr Hitler had taken his final decision. That night the advance into Poland was ordered, and, to quote once more from Sir Nevile's own narrative, "in the early hours of September 1, without any declaration of war the German army crossed the frontier and the German air force proceeded to bomb the Polish aerodromes and lines of communication . . . Never can there have been, or even be, a case of more deliberate or carefully planned aggression."

At dawn on September 1, Poland, the Bastion of Peace of Europe, was invaded by the Nazi armies, Germany having completed the disposition of her forces on the last day of August.

The speed of the motorised German forces and the tremendous bombing to which the Polish railway stations, bridges, cross-roads, aerodromes, staff headquarters, and factories were subjected, together with the immense German numerical advantage, made the outcome of the invasion little more than a forlorn hope. After forty-eight hours of desperate fighting Poland's frontier defences gave way. But Warsaw was still holding out. Modlin was also resisting with success. German forces at Lublin and at Zamosc were in danger of being cut off.

The forlorn hope seemed to be changing, if not to a national victory at least to a stabilised Polish front. Then came the fatal stab in the back from the hand of Germany's new ally, Soviet Russia. On Sunday, September 17, the Soviet troops invaded Eastern Poland.

The passion of Poland was to be suffered to the full. Not the least bitter moment was that of the first days of the Soviet onslaught, for it was just in those days that the Polish army had achieved a position in which effective resistance could be made. No apology is needed for quoting the eloquent words of *The Times* in the leading article published on September 19, 1939: "Her army, attacked without provocation by a Power deeply pledged to peaceful relations with her, compelled to defend three open frontiers at once against overwhelmingly superior numbers, harassed by every device of modern mechanical warfare without any comparable equipment to oppose them, and ceaselessly bombarded from above by fleets of aircraft five-fold superior to its own, has held the pass for civilisation with a valor no less heroic than that of

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