

# Tourism and Guidebooks in the Activities of Academic Staff at the Faculty of Fine Art at Stefan Batory University in Vilnius

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**Abstract.** Stefan Batory University in Vilnius was established in 1919 as a regional entity to carry out scientific research and develop Polish academic education. One of its faculties – the Faculty of Fine Arts (1930–1939) – gathered charismatic and popular artists, historians and architects. Among them, two professors – Juliusz Kłos (1888–1933) and Marian Morelowski – published the guidebooks for Vilnius and Wileńszczyzna region (*Wilno. Przewodnik krajoznawczy*, 1937; *Zarys sztuki wileńskiej z przewodnikiem po zabytkiem między Niemnem a Dźwiną*, 1939). The book written by Kłos gained popularity and was often purchased by the tourists who visited Vilnius. The aim of the article is to determine the main methodology, historical approaches and working styles of both authors. Moreover, the paper involves their attitude towards developing tourism, cultural heritage and historical research. The article also involves the main ideas of artistic education professors had and how much tourism was involved in the whole education process for them.

**Keywords:** Vilnius in the interwar period; tourism in the interwar period; pre-war guidebooks; Wilno; Vilnius.

## Introduction

The interwar period made a change in Polish cultural and scientific life. Regaining independence in 1918 enabled Poles to create the structures of academic education and scientific centres. One of them was located in Vilnius and was called Stefan Batory University. One of its five faculties – the Faculty of Fine Arts, gathered many remarkable authority figures and respectful teachers with impressive academic achievement. Most of them were involved in cultural and artistic life in Vilnius and Wileńszczyzna region. They supported cultural development and accomplished many artistic initiatives such as exhibitions, open-to-public lectures and historic preservation projects. The article is focused on the activities of two professors: Juliusz Kłos and Marian Morelowski, and

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their contribution to cultural development. The paper involves their interests in cultural heritage and local history. Moreover, it shows their vision of education and the importance of cultural heritage in the educational process. The paper is mainly based on the pre-war guide books written by Kłos and Morelowski<sup>1</sup>.

## 1. References

The primary sources presenting the important information of the academic staff's activities at the Faculty of Fine Arts can be found in the Lithuanian Central State Archive in Vilnius. There are the files concerning the administrative and management works, for instance: the annual activity reports of each chair. Moreover, the personal files of the academic staff are located there as well. The files concern their biographies, careers as well as scientific and cultural activities. Essential sources are also located in the Lithuanian State Historical Archive in Vilnius. Particular archival fonds involve the professional and academic career of professor Juliusz Kłos, the long-time teacher at the Faculty. The biographical fonds presents his handwritten lectures, photographs taken during his touristic trips, and sketches of his architectural projects. His inheritance constitutes the main sources of both urban and architectural development in Vilnius during the interwar period.

The documents concerning the professional activities and academic works of the professor Marian Morelowski can be found in the National Ossliński Institute in Wrocław. Many files involve the documents of his professional career and private life, lectures, articles and papers of art history and culture heritage.

## 2. Historical context

The end of WWI changed the political, social and economic situation of many European countries. New order changed the pre-war borders of Central and Eastern Europe. Names of some states appeared on the map, whereas the other states changed their territories. In 1918, Poles obtained their independence and proclaimed the Second Polish Republic. The political position of the new country was very complex. Polish authority had to face conflicts related to borders with neighbouring countries. Difficulties were also caused by unstable political situations, especially conflicts between opposing parties, which desired a different political vision of the new country. One of the most problematic issues involved the north-east part of the land named Wileńszczyzna<sup>2</sup>. The strife between Poles and Lithuanian was mainly focused on the historical and cultural commitment of the value of the land (Davis, 1999).

Both Lithuanian and Poles claimed Vilnius (Polish: Wilno; Lithuanian: Vilnius) the significant cultural, scientific and industrial centre. Indeed, Vilnius is known as the historical

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<sup>2</sup> In the interwar period, „Wileńszczyzna” meant Vilnius and the land located within the borders of the wileńskie voivodeship. Lithuanian did not use this term (Mędrzecki, 2007).

cradle of Lithuanian dukes and the Grand Duke Gediminas's residence. Moreover, in the last decades of the 19th and the first years of the 20th, increasing awareness of Lithuanian identity caused the necessity of the establishment of an independent Lithuanian country. Lithuanian emphasised Polish cultural influence to have a damaging impact on Lithuanian culture and concerned the results of Polonisation as the impediment to Lithuanian identity and its statehood (Łossowski, 1997; Antanavičiūtė, 2015).

However, Vilnius was also known as the significant objective of Polish historical policy. Although it was a relatively small, provincial town in the Russian Empire, Poles considered Vilnius in the 19th as the centre of Polish Romanism. It also played a crucial role in the Polish high-education process because of the Imperial University of Vilnius. This entity consisted of many remarkable Polish artists such as Jan Śniadecki, Franciszek Smuglewicz and Jan Rustem. Polish was a legally instructional language. At this university, Belarusian and Lithuanian culture studies were also possible (Malinowski, Woźniak, Janoviene, 1996).

In 1918 both – Poles and Lithuanian – declared their independence. Each of those countries aspired to join Vilnius within its own country limits. Lithuania considered it the capital city, whereas the Second Polish Republic claimed Vilnius as the important centre of Polish science and culture. After the Polish-Bolshevik war in 1920, the so-called General Lucjan Żeligowski's Mutiny, the Republic of Central Lithuania Vilnius, was established. Finally, Vilnius was ceded to Poland and stayed until 1939 (Łossowski, 1997). Nevertheless, neither reconciliation nor cooperation between those two countries was possible. The tense relationships and the hostility existed throughout the whole period.

### **3. The Faculty of Fine Arts**

The young Polish authority had to face up to the problems involving issues such as the economy, industry, agriculture, and the system of education. In 1918 the milieu of different Polish scientists, artists, and politicians organised the university in Vilnius. There had been working many remarkable representatives from different scientific institutions and centres of scholarship until the new university was founded in 1919. It was named Stefan Batory University in Vilnius. This entity was divided into six faculties: Humanities, Theology, Law and Social Science, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Medicine and Fine Art (Przeniosło, 2015).

The Faculty of Fine Art gathered many remarkable artists, historians and philosophers. The researchers working on the regional history area, cultural heritage, monuments preservation and tourism's enthusiasts were in their midst. Thanks to this diversity, the Faculty became the significant centre of local cultural research and initiatives. Moreover, their main objective concerned the education of future artists, architects, art teachers, and heritage conservationists (Poklewski, 1992; Kania, 2015).

The idea of cultural education was supported and popularized by respectable professors such as Ferdynand Ruszczyc, Jerzy Hoppen, Jerzy Remer. Among them, only two of the Faculty representatives: professor Juliusz Kłos and professor Marian Morelowski

developed and published the guidebooks. Those works contain many issues related to the history of Wileńszczyzna and Vilnius, its culture, maps of heritage sites and remembrance places. The authors also gave practical guidelines and advice for tourists.

#### 4. Juliusz Kłos

Professor Juliusz Kłos started to work at Stefan Batory University in 1920. During his career, he acted as a head of the Department of Architecture, a dean of the Faculty of Fine Art in 1926–1929 and its pro-dean in 1920–1929. As an academic teacher, Kłos conducted lectures and workshops regarding urban and rural architecture history. Besides his activity at the Faculty, he worked as an architect and was involved in architectural projects. His scientific activities were mostly focused on the history of Vilnius and its architectural aspects. As a result, Kłos first compiled and then described the historical buildings inventory in both wileńskie and nowogrodzkie voivodships.

Furthermore, he worked as a supervisor and a contraction manager of many building constructions located in Vilnius or its nearby provinces. For instance, the building of the Systematic Anatomy Workshop at the University was constructed according to one of his projects. Apart from his professional career, Kłos spent his free time taking photographs. He merged photography and tourism, making photos of famous and barely known heritage sites in Wileńszczyzna (Ruszczyk, 1929).

The results of Kłos's regional research were published in local papers and technical, professional magazines. Nevertheless, one of his most popular pre-war works became a guidebook entitled: *Wilno. Przewodnik turystyczno-krajoznawczy (Vilnius. Tourist and sightseeing guidebook)*, published in 1923. Its popularity was confirmed by the fact that *Wilno* was reprinted two more times: in 1927 and after its author's death in 1937 (LSHA, f. 12, ap. 1135, b. 1, 21, 23).

This guidebook is a kind of monograph focused on the historical values of Vilnius, especially on the history of architecture. It describes the architectural development and the fundamental changes of the city from the pre-Christian era to the present-day time. Besides the information about the history, the guidebook presented the knowledge of Vilnius current topography and its several districts. Furthermore, the author recommended visiting Trakai (Troki) – a historical place located near Vilnius with beautiful landscapes, the castle, and many heritage sites, regarding the examples of Karaites culture. He recommended the program of the touristic trips with practical tips and detailed descriptions. In one chapter of his book, Kłos suggested visiting the important places in Vilnius related to Józef Piłsudski, his political activities, and private life. Piłsudski was a remarkable politician who always emphasized his love and affection for Vilnius. It is known that Piłsudski played a crucial role in the process of gaining Polish independence. He also avidly supported the multicultural model of the country based on diversity with a strong belief in federalism. The last chapter of the guidebook concerned useful advice on seeing the city and its historical places efficiently.

According to the introduction written by Jan Bułhak in the third published edition, the guidebook was both: artistic and scientific work. It presented the knowledge of history, history of art, culture and society. Bułhak emphasized the author's perfect writing style that made the guidebook available and understandable for almost everyone.

In his work, Kłos frequently referred to the results of research carried out by Mieczysław Limanowski, a well-known and prominent geographer. The author also cited books and papers of Władysław Zahorski, who had a reputation for researching Vilnius history and publishing popular books. Describing the history of Vilnius art, Kłos focused on monuments, cemeteries and cultural sites such as The Gate of Dawn with the picture of Mother of God, the Town Hall or the building of the Society of Science Friends. He devoted much space to present the history of gravestones of prominent people connected with Vilnius history and cultural life. They all were located at the Rossa cemetery. The extensive descriptions were completed by photographs taken by the author himself and Jan Bułhak.

The author focused on both theoretical and practical information. He gave detailed directions on how to visit and sightsee the heritage sites most effectively. The last subchapters involved the complex programs of well-organized trips. The proposed examples were the trips for half-day, one full-day, two- or three-days, including visits to attractive places beyond the city such as Trakai (Troki) and Verkai (Werki). He emphasized the importance of the places and their crucial role in Polish identity. According to Kłos, cultural and historical education should be a part of every human being general educational process. He was convinced to claim that the knowledge of history could help people to take responsibility for the future of Polish identity. According to the author, tourism should also be the dimension of cultural and historical education. Due to its value and wide range of knowledge, his book was intended not only for tourists who visited the city for the first time but also students, Vilnius's inhabitants, and others interested in the history and architecture of Vilnius.

Kłos often emphasized how the national identity based on culture and cultural heritage is important for society, especially for the young generation. His vision of education concerned interdisciplinary research, and methods were merged with humanities. Being a patriot meant to Kłos to be well-educated, responsible and conscious of cultural value. Creating affection to the local history and its comprehensive responsibility might positively influence youth and their future choices or decisions related to the cultural state policy. In his opinion, the knowledge of Polish history and esteeming of cultural heritage could be an essential dimension of future generation breeding. Kłos claimed that historical education was one of the most important factors of the process of Polish identity building.

## **5. Marian Morelowski**

Marian Morelowski started his career in Vilnius in 1929 as a professor of Art History. He was known in the cultural circles as a great scientist with long-standing experiences in scientific activities. Describing Morelowski as a person, it is worth emphasizing his

ambitious, creative, hardworking personality and multitasking skills. He worked as the supervisor of the Art History Department and the head of The Faculty's Library at the same time. Furthermore, he was the chairperson of The Art History Section of The Society of Science Friends. He became the prime mover of the Art History Section and its great supporter. Professor popularized his scientific results in many magazines and scientific papers. He was a great enthusiast of scientific meetings, cultural events, lectures and public speeches for members of the Society of Science Friends. Thinking about the culture and cultural activities as part of the educational process, he also organized educational events for Vilnius inhabitants (NOI, t. 1–3).

Within the framework of his scientific activities, the professor studied the history of Polish baroque, especially on Vilnius art history, including the monuments, architecture, and other heritage sites. As a historian, he published among ten articles and few shorter works in the 1930s. According to his own CV Morelowski published above two thousand pages of the scientific dissertations in 1912–1940. Most of them concerned with the issues of Vilnius history, art and its cultural heritage. As the author, he made Vilnius a particular place and emphasized its important role in European culture.

The guidebook is written by Marian Morelowski: *Zarys sztuki wileńskiej z przewodnikiem po zabytkiem między Niemnem a Dźwiną* (*An outline of Vilnius art with a guidebook of monuments between Niemen and Dźwina*) was published in 1939. The handwritten note of the author, included on the bottom of the front page, informed that the part of the edition was destroyed during WWII. Morelowski also informed that he had finished his work hastily because the bombing of the German invasion started in Vilnius. In the introduction, the author explained that the guidebook was intended for tourists interested in culture, art and history. Besides this information, this work included basic knowledge of geography, landscapes, and practical tips for tourists visiting Wileńszczyzna.

Guidebook by Morelowski includes his beliefs on the value of sightseeing. In his opinion, visiting new places and learning new stories about their past improves civil education and personal development. Moreover, he claimed that his guidebook should help readers and tourists to choose the best trip depending on their expectations and personal preferences. Morelowski entwined sightseeing and domestic tourism by protecting cultural heritage and monuments. He, just as Kłós, found artistic and cultural education as important elements – the crucial part – in the raising process, especially in academic education. He claimed that academic staff – especially teachers – were strongly responsible for future citizens, esthetic feelings and artistic beauty awareness. His guidebook could help to strengthen that educational and informational role.

Morelowski divided his work into two main parts: first, prepared by his co-worker Dr J. Tochten. This part involved geographical issues as well as information about ethnography. There was also an overview of the most important monuments in the region (with detailed historical descriptions and explanations, especially about the artistic aspects). In particular, Dr Tochten prepared the theoretical part of the guidebook.

The part of the guidebook prepared by Morelowski involved practical information about tourist routes, including bus journeys and walking tours. The author focused on the

important – but often less-known – places nearby Vilnius. Professor included his scientific description of the valuable cultural sites and monuments such as abandoned castles and ruins that had been the last vestige. He encouraged tourists to visit the small villages located in wileńskie voivodeship because of their folk architecture and demotic character. Morelowski frequently emphasized the value of symbols regarding tradition and religious meaning, such as paintings presenting the saint patrons, churches or small shrines. Among the practical tips and information were maps of the Vilnius and Wileńszczyzna region, public transportation schedules, and many recommendations of beautiful and inspiring places. Morelowski proposed to tourists to visit the various possibilities of trips, for instance, from Vilnius to Trakai (Troki), Verkai (Werki), or Penariai (Ponary).

## 6. Tourism in the educational process

According to Ferdynand Ruszczyc's opinion, the Faculty of Fine Arts was especially appreciated by the student community at Stefan Batory University. Students used to claim the Faculty as an open-minded and tolerant place (Ruszczyc, 1996). Meetings in the restaurants, discussions, cooperative works on the artistic and cultural projects, and common trips aided the community integration based on universal values, such as historical and cultural heritage and freedom of artistic expression. These values were nurtured carefully by many of the academic staff, including Kłos and Morelowski. Both Professors were known as authority figures in the academic circles at Stefan Batory University in Vilnius. Each of them created their own pedagogical and didactic methods to educate the Faculty of Arts students.

The crucial concept of the educational process involved coherent activities merging the field of knowledge and skills. Students who participated in the lectures and workshops held by Kłos were also obliged to participate in the architectural tasks and the preservation practicals. Moreover, students were taught how to document the monuments and heritage sites properly to provide their appropriate preservation. The activities conducted by Kłos aimed at the modernisation of the rules of the architectural techniques to prepare young people for future challenges and motivate them to stay in Vilnius and work for the Wileńszczyzna region eagerly. His educational program was based on the vision of the responsible, well-educated and conscious society focused on the value of its historical heritage.

Morelowski's educational methods were mostly concentrated on art experiencing and professional art analysis. He encouraged students to sightsee Vilnius and collect aesthetic impressions. Furthermore, he tried to acquaint young people with local cultural and historical places. Everyday trips and intellectual discussions become significant aspects of Morelowski's vision of education as well. As an academic teacher, he was focused on the activities regarding skills improvement such as critical thinking, proper presentation, sources analysis, academic paper writing. The professor claimed that conscious and well-educated citizens should be creative, open to artistic and aesthetic feelings, and critical. Due to their social efficiency, they should also organise cultural events in the city and

participate in art exhibitions. Professor emphasised the value of humanistic skills, calling them a useful and desirable element of modern society.

Morelowski was also focused on local history and heritage sites at his theoretical lectures and practical seminars. He encouraged students to discuss and present their opinions to practice and develop useful skills, such as communication, public speeches, and critical thinking. He claimed those skills as the crucial competencies in scientific jobs. The participants of the historical seminars were required to prepare and present the paper concerning monuments, architecture, pieces of art and cultural sites. The topics aimed to broaden students' minds and raise their awareness of cultural heritage.

Both professors used to say Vilnius as a unique, magic place. They defined their local identity by place attachment, sense of place, place dependence and place responsibility. The activities and projects focused on local history and heritage sites led their students to develop emotional bonds with the Wileńszczyzna region. The emotional involvement helped to overcome potential identity crises and gave the youth a sense of stability strongly needed in the socially and economically uncertain time after WWI. Ensuring students place attachment and identity facilitated their involvement and eagerness in local activities (Hay, 1998). Tourism became a core point of the place attachment developing in the Faculty of Fine Arts community. Students were invited to the trips and journeys held by Marian Morelowski, Juliusz Kłos, Ferdynand Ruszczyc, Jan Bułhak. Many small towns and villages were visited to plant the emotional involvement, growing affection and sense of responsibility for the future in students' minds.

## Conclusions

Thinking about Vilnius in the interwar period needs defining how multicultural and diverse the city was. The diversification factors were: Roman Catholic religion, Orthodox religion, Jewish religion, cultural ties with a particular religion, ethnic structure, identity and cultural attitudes. The character of the city resulted from its complex history and tradition of cultural diversity. The time of the Russian Empire showed that the city functions were within the multicultural social structure. Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, Belarusian and Jewish communities lived together, shared the same places but developed their own cultures. The intercultural activities and initiatives were not frequent, and the cultural separation became more popular because the awareness of one's own identity was risen and hardened in the 19th century (Sadowski, 2011). The guidebooks are written by Kłos and Morelowski were the examples of Polish perspective in scientific activities. They presented a one-sided vision of history and its cultural values. Although Morelowski tackled Karaim's issue in Wileńszczyzna, he deliberately decided to avoid the Lithuanian influence on the regional culture and art. Kłos even more eagerly focused on Polish aspects of the cultural heritage.

Both Kłos and Morelowski were not local inhabitants. They moved to Vilnius as respectable professors with impressive academic achievements. Thus, the exclusion of the topics did not result from their alignment to the local history related to their youth. It



has not to be considered as affection to their “homeland roots”. However, it can be treated as a chosen land that provides them with opportunities to develop their interests, passions and professional competences.

Being famous authority figures in the scientific circles, they used the fact that they were concerned as influential figures whose opinions mattered. Therefore, it was an easier way of popularising Polishness narrowed to Polish cultural heritage. This was a crucial element of the strategy many Polish humanists did in the interwar period. The common issue involved the educational program and its content. According to the papers, guidebooks and other written works, youth could know the history of Wileńszczyzna based on the Polish point of view, selected sources and aspects of the selected cultural patterns. Multiculturalism and diversity were intentionally barely tackled in the guidebooks.

The historical value of the guidebooks is still undeniable. Both guidebooks became significant sources of the cultural history of interwar Poland. Authors alleged the previous researchers, emphasizing the respectfulness to their works, engagement and research effort. They both can be called the enthusiasts of “aware tourism” regarding the basic conversance of sightseeing sites. Thanks to that approach, they ensured coherence and continuity between the past and the present.

Tourism was considered as a part of local identity as well. It helped youth find stability and a sense of responsibility for the place and its cultural and artistic future. Place attachment and identity were promoted as an important part of Polishness. Guidebook, written by Kłos, contains a comprehensive background in the history of architecture in Vilnius. The author claimed that local education should be a significant component of social awareness, especially among youth. His confidence that Vilnius was a typical “Polish” city excluding the possibility of cooperation or agreement with Lithuanian. Focusing on Polish aspects of the city and its heritage, he strengthened the Polish character of the city. Therefore, the guidebook was a reflection of his political views and his clear statement that Wileńszczyzna belonged to Polish culture.

As an art historian, Morelowski created a new kind of guidebook. He recommended tourists to visit the small villages and less-known sites, emphasizing their value for Polish culture. His book was a historical and scientific work based on scientific sources and the poetical description of the Wileńszczyzna region. The author repeatedly enriched his work with descriptions regarding art and cultural heritage. He based his work on historical and cultural sources and his long-standing experiences in the cultural field. He was focused on the beauty of local geography and heritage sites. According to him, tourism might help people to know better their culture and history.

Both authors considered tourism as an important part of patriotic education. Thanks to guidebooks and touristic initiatives, Poles were able to discover the beauty of their country and the uniqueness of monuments, cultural and artistic sites. Authors educated that awareness of the value of Polish art could lead to assuming responsibility for the future of the young Polish country and its cultural development. Moreover, thanks to them, tourism has become an important aspect of the local community.

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