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THE ACTIVITY OF THE LANDED GENTRY OF THE KINGDOM OF POLAND DURING WARSAW'S AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITIONS IN THE 19TH CENTURY

SUMMARY

For two decades after the defeat of the January Uprising, the programme of organic work prevailed in the Kingdom of Poland, whose creators envisaged as one of the most important programme points the modernisation of society and the economy of the Polish lands, including agriculture. One of the important tools in the implementation of the programme was to be the organisation of agricultural and industrial exhibitions. After the January Uprising, four such exhibitions were held in Warsaw, and the first three were clearly dominated by sections related to agriculture and the food industry. They were attended by, among others, landowners of the Kingdom of Poland presenting their achievements. The aim of this article is to identify those most active representatives of the landed gentry community in the organisation of the exhibitions and their contribution to the modernisation of the economy, especially agriculture.

KEYWORDS: landowners, exhibition movement, Warsaw, 19th century, agriculture, industry

STRESZCZENIE

Aktywność ziemiaństwa Królestwa Polskiego podczas warszawskich wystaw rolniczo-przemysłowych w XIX wieku

Przez dwie dekady po klęsce powstania styczniowego w Królestwie Polskim dominował program pracy organicznej, którego twórcy jako jeden z najistotniejszych punktów programowych zakładali modernizację społeczeństwa i gospodarki ziem polskich, w tym rolnictwa. Jednym



z ważnych narzędzi w realizacji programu miała być organizacja wystaw rolniczo-przemysłowych. Po powstaniu styczniowym w Warszawie odbyły się cztery takie wystawy, a podczas trzech pierwszych wyraźnie dominowały działy związane z rolnictwem i przemysłem spożywczym. Uczestniczyli w nich m.in. ziemianie Królestwa Polskiego prezentując swoje osiągnięcia. Celem artykułu jest wskazanie tych najbardziej aktywnych przedstawicieli środowiska ziemiańskiego w organizacji wystaw, a tym samym ich wkładu w modernizację gospodarki, a szczególnie rolnictwa.

SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: ziemiaństwo, ruch wystawienniczy, Warszawa, XIX w., rolnictwo, przemysł

Introduction

After the defeat of the January Uprising in the Kingdom of Poland, the program of organic work, advocated by representatives of Warsaw positivism, dominated for two decades. The proponents of organic work rejected armed struggle, replacing it with programmatic slogans aimed at creating a strong, modern society through the extensive modernization of social and economic relations in Polish lands¹. This process particularly affected rural inhabitants and agriculture, which had dominated the economy of a significant part of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for centuries. Landowners were expected to play a key role in this modernization. As the so-called rural intelligentsia, the ideologists of positivism assigned them specific tasks, including the modernization of the rural economy through improvements in agricultural techniques, the mechanization of farming, and the development of the agri-food industry². One of the key tools for implementing this program was the organization of successive agricultural and industrial exhibitions, in which representatives of the landowning community of the Kingdom of Poland played a significant role. After the January Uprising, four major agricultural and industrial exhibitions were held in Warsaw. During the first three events, the exhibition sections related to agriculture, the agri-food industry, and rural culture clearly dominated³. Landowners, estate owners,

¹ I share Tomasz Kizwalter's perspective on the modernization of Polish lands in the 19th century. The Warsaw historian highlights two key issues: firstly, the formation of collective identity and its redefinition in the face of social democratization, and secondly, the agrarian question, which increasingly revealed the necessity of transforming social and economic relations in agriculture. These two significant issues placed Polish lands on the European and global map of modernization processes. Vide: T. Kizwalter, *Polska droga do nowoczesności – zwyczajna czy wyjątkowa?* – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yr3iAolxKHM> (accessed: 25.09.2024); T. Kizwalter, *Polska nowoczesność. Genealogia*, Warszawa 2020.

² More widely: J. Kita, *Zemiaństwo polskie a modernizacja gospodarki rolnej do 1914 r. (zarys problematyki)*, „Zeszyty Wiejskie” 2016, vol. 22, pp. 435–443; W. Caban, J. Kita, *Zemiaństwo Królestwa Polskiego wobec modernizacji rolnictwa. Stan i potrzeby badań*, „Rocznik Łódzki” 2017, vol. 66, pp. 167–179.

³ Vide: J. Kita, *Wytwory wsi polskiej i innowacje z zakresu agrotechniki na warszawskich wystawach rolniczo-przemysłowych w drugiej połowie XIX wieku*, [in:] M. Klusek (ed.), *Wieś polska na przestrzeni wieków*, vol. 1: *Od utraty niepodległości do I wojny światowej*, Warszawa 2024, pp. 213–232.

tenants, and agronomist-managers regularly participated in these exhibitions, showcasing their achievements in crop cultivation and livestock breeding, as well as presenting products of local crafts and small-scale rural industries associated with their estates. The aim of this article is to identify the most active representatives of the landowning community in organizing the Warsaw exhibitions and to highlight their contribution to the modernization of the economy, particularly agriculture and the so-called rural industry. The analysis covers four events held in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland between 1867 and 1885, while also considering the history of organizing agricultural and industrial exhibitions in this part of Polish lands and in the broader context of the tri-partition exhibition movement.

The reflections presented in this text are the result of an analysis of sources from various origins. Contemporary press proved to be particularly useful, especially Warsaw newspapers such as "Gazeta Warszawska" and "Kurier Warszawski". Additionally, various types of periodicals were valuable, including specialist journals like "Gazeta Przemysłowa", "Gazeta Przemysłowo-Rolnicza", and "Przegląd Techniczny", as well as socio-cultural magazines such as "Kłosa", "Przegląd Tygodniowy", "Tygodnik Ilustrowany", and "Wędrowiec". These periodicals not only provided daily reports on the exhibitions but also featured detailed assessments of individual exhibition sections. Journalists often offered in-depth evaluations, highlighting positive aspects while also pointing out observed shortcomings. It can therefore be assumed that contemporary journalism significantly shaped the public perception of the national exhibition movement, particularly for readers who had no opportunity to personally witness the exhibitions. However, it is important to remember that, under the repressive policies of the Tsarist authorities following the defeat of the January Uprising, the press was subjected to extremely strict preventive censorship. This had a considerable impact on the content, especially the evaluations published in periodicals. Journalists had to be exceptionally cautious to avoid emphasizing national-patriotic themes that emerged during the exhibitions. As a result, they either omitted such facts or attempted to convey them subtly by using so-called Aesopian language. In addition to the press, an extremely valuable source of information was the successive editions of the *Warsaw Popular-Scientific Illustrated Calendar for the Ordinary Year...*, published by Józef Unger's printing house⁴. Another important source was the *Catalogue of the Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition in Warsaw*, published in 1885 through the

⁴ The *Warsaw Calendar* took an active role in shaping the reading tastes of society and in forming the values that were subsequently accepted by that society. Vide: E. Ihnatowicz, *Kalendarze drugiej połowy XIX wieku jako źródło do badań literackich – „Kalendarz Ungra”*, [in:] E. Jankowski, J. Kulczycka-Saloni (eds), *Problemy literatury polskiej okresu pozytywizmu*. Seria 2, Wrocław 1983, p. 238.

efforts of Kazimierz Sulistrowski⁵. The *Calendar* featured extensive reports on the exhibitions, written from a retrospective perspective. As a result, these accounts included reflections and conclusions drawn from past events, with a particular focus on their social reception. Additionally, the text incorporates normative sources (mainly the “Journal of Laws of the Kingdom of Poland”) and ego-documents (primarily memoirs). To my surprise, however, references to the exhibitions of interest were not particularly frequent in these personal records.

Several publications on the exhibition movement in Polish lands have been produced since the early 20th century. Among the authors contributing to this subject are Stanisław W. Tylicki, Kazimierz Ołdziejewski, Anna M. Drexler, Roman Hauk, as well as Mateusz Kowalski, Dariusz Złotkowski, and Andrzej Przegaliński⁶. Findings from some of these researchers’ works have been utilized in this text, although they most often focused on aspects related to industry or exhibitions held outside the capital of the Kingdom of Poland.

Agricultural and Industrial Exhibitions in Warsaw Until 1863

The origins of organizing agricultural and industrial exhibitions in Warsaw date back to the constitutional period of the Kingdom of Poland. On May 30, 1818, Governor General Józef Zajączek issued a decree mandating that exhibitions of agricultural and industrial products be held every two years at the Warsaw Town Hall. The rationale for organizing these exhibitions was explained as follows: “Considering the beneficial influence, confirmed by the experience of other countries, of public exhibitions of outstanding works of national industry on the progress

⁵ *Katalog wystawy rolniczo-przemysłowej w Warszawie wydany staraniem Kazimierza Sulistrowskiego*, Warszawa 1885 (accessed via: <https://polona.pl/item/katalog-wystawy-rolniczo-przemyslowej-w-warszawie,NjIxNTk5NzU/> – 17.10.2023).

⁶ S.W. Tylicki, *Rys historyczny wystaw w Królestwie Polskim i szkic projektu planowej ich organizacji na przyszłość*, „Praca. Dodatek poświęcony artykułom w sprawach administracyjnych, ekonomicznych, prawnych i społecznych, oraz materiałem spraw tych dotyczącym” 1909, No. 2, pp. 1–24; 1909, nr 3, pp. 1–23; K. Ołdziejewski, *Wystawy powszechne. Ich historia, organizacja, położenie prawne i wartość społeczno-gospodarcza*, Poznań 1928; A.M. Drexlerowa, *Wystawy wytwórczości Królestwa Polskiego*, Warszawa 1999; A.M. Drexlerowa, A.K. Olszewski, *Polska i Polacy na powszechnych wystawach światowych 1851–2000*, Warszawa 2005; R. Hauk, *Wystawy przemysłowe w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1821–1857*, Opatówek 1996; M. Jaskulski, *Wystawy przemysłowe w czasach Królestwa Polskiego*, Łódź 1988; M.J. Kowalski, *Warszawskie Wystawy Rolniczo-Przemysłowe*, Łódź 2021; J. Królikowski, *Polska wystawa rolnicza i przemysłowa w Toruniu z roku 1874. Szkic monograficzny*, Toruń 1926; D. Złotkowski, *Wystawa Przemysłu i Rolnictwa w Częstochowie 1909 roku w świetle prasy polskiej*, Częstochowa 2009; A. Przegaliński, *Wokół wystawy Rolniczo-Przemysłowej w Lublinie w roku 1901*, Lublin 2010; A. Przegaliński, *Z dziejów wystaw rolniczych. Trzecia Wystawa Rolnicza (1860) i Wystawa Rolniczo-Przemysłowa (1901) w Lublinie*, Lublin 2012.

of the inhabitants in science, labor, and useful undertakings (...) public exhibitions shall be held every two years in the capital city of Warsaw (...)”⁷. Starting from 1821 until the outbreak of the November Uprising, the exhibitions were held regularly. However, they attracted only a modest number of exhibitors, and agricultural products were remarkably scarce. Nevertheless, landowners who held prominent government and administrative positions at the time were involved in organizing these events.

After the defeat of the November Uprising, the exhibition movement in the Kingdom of Poland was suspended for a decade. It was not until 1838 that another exhibition was organized in the halls of the Warsaw Town Hall. This event featured several inventions and technical applications related to estate-based agriculture, some of which were created by landowners. For instance, a “reaping machine [harvester] and a model of an apparatus for macerating beet pulp, both inventions of Count Stanisław Kossakowski”, were presented. Additionally, the first domestic sugar refineries participated in the exhibition, including those of Count Henryk Łubieński from Guzów and Countess Potocka from Tykocin⁸.

Under new regulations issued in 1840 by the Russian governor Ivan Paskevich, the principles for organizing Warsaw exhibitions were redefined. It was decided that they would be held every four years, following the concept of exhibitions from before 1830⁹. In 1841, the Industrial Exhibition took place in Warsaw, and in 1845, the Exhibition of National Industrial Products was organized¹⁰, which symbolically marked the end of the first phase of the Polish exhibition movement.

The Russian policy of unifying the Kingdom of Poland led the Tsarist authorities to issue a new decree on January 31, 1848, establishing uniform exhibitions for the entire Russian Empire. These exhibitions were to be held every four years, alternating between St. Petersburg, Moscow, and Warsaw. The decree also specified the contributions required for the development of national agriculture to qualify for an award. Paragraph 29 stated:

⁷ „Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego” 1819, vol. 6, pp. 42–43.

⁸ S.W. Tylicki, *Rys historyczny...*, 1909, No. 2, p. 11.

⁹ Exhibitions were, according to contemporary inhabitants of Polish lands, extremely necessary. The recognized landowner activist, Aleksander Kurtz, justified the need for organizing them in 1841, stating: „Craftsmen, manufacturers, and farmers find in these [exhibitions] a means of ceremonial public presentation, and the possibility of mutually comparing the excellence of their products – the voice of public opinion – provides them with the most accurate guidance for further work and efforts aimed at achieving a higher level of education in their profession, on which true progress in general industry depends”. „Biblioteka Warszawska” 1841, vol. 2, p. 237.

¹⁰ F. Miaskowski, *Wystawa płodów przemysłu krajowego*, „Biblioteka Warszawska” 1845, vol. 3; Cf. K. Ołdziejewski, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

Since items related to agriculture are permitted at exhibitions in Warsaw, the following contributions in this field shall be considered merits warranting an appropriate award: a) the introduction of useful exotic crops and plants (...); b) the improvement of cultivation methods for various crops and plants (...); c) the utilization of domestically produced agricultural yields (...); d) the promotion of crops whose local cultivation benefits other branches of industry (...); e) the enhancement of various agricultural tools aimed at reducing the number of laborers required for cultivation (...); f) any improvements in farm management as well as the discovery of previously unknown sources of agricultural income¹¹.

These initiatives, however, did not yield the expected results and attracted only a limited number of exhibitors from the Kingdom of Poland, particularly from the landowning community. The Warsaw exhibition of 1857 was the last to be held under the legal framework established in 1848. Its organization primarily rested on the shoulders of the local society, while the role of the Russian authorities was largely limited to oversight functions. The participation of landowner-exhibitors from the Congress Kingdom was also minimal, influenced by political factors. In the case of exhibitions held in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland, financial support came, among others, from the Land Credit Society¹².

A significantly more important role in the development of the rural economy and the participation of the landowning class in the exhibition movement was played by the initiatives undertaken by the Agricultural Society in Warsaw, established in 1858. One of its key statutory goals was to promote competitions and exhibitions related to agriculture and livestock¹³. For this purpose, the livestock exhibitions organized annually by the Warsaw Horse Racing Society were utilized¹⁴. Łowicz was designated as the permanent venue for these annual exhibitions, and the first one, initiated by the Agricultural Society, took place there on September 21–24, 1858. Exhibitors from most counties of the Kingdom of Poland attended the event. Large estate owners dominated among them, but unlike previous exhibitions, a small number of peasants and rural craftsmen also participated¹⁵.

¹¹ „Dziennik Praw Królestwa Polskiego” 1848, vol. 41, pp. 81–83.

¹² S.W. Tylicki, *Rys historyczny...*, 1909, No. 2, pp. 17–18; K. Ołdziejewski, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

¹³ More widely *vide*: W. Grabski, *Historia Towarzystwa Rolniczego 1858–1861*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1904.

¹⁴ The statute of the Warsaw Horse Racing Society, founded in 1841, included a provision that allowed for the organization of livestock exhibitions in conjunction with horse races.

¹⁵ Article 4 of the Administrative Council’s Resolution on organizing an exhibition of agricultural products, rural goods, and domestic animals of all kinds in the Kingdom of Poland, announced on January 16, 1858, stated: „Residents of all classes, as well as all agricultural enterprises and items related to rural economy, are allowed to participate in the exhibition of agricultural products.” „Roczniki Gospodarstwa Krajowego” 1858, vol. 32.

The highest distinctions – two government-issued gold medals – were awarded to Count Andrzej Zamoyski and Piotr Walewski, the owner of the Parzymiechy estate. Additionally, more than a hundred awards of various ranks were distributed, the vast majority of which were granted to representatives of the landowning community.

According to contemporary assessments, the 1858 Łowicz exhibition was considered a successful initiative of the Agricultural Society, an institution well-suited for this purpose and deemed the appropriate body to be entrusted with organizing such events¹⁶. At the beginning of 1860, however, the Agricultural Society decided to organize such exhibitions regularly in various cities of the Kingdom of Poland. This initiative aimed to increase exhibitor participation and accelerate modernization processes. The landowners associated with the Society were also involved in preparing the agricultural exhibition in Lublin in 1860¹⁷. Unfortunately, the following year, the association was dissolved by the Tsarist authorities amid the growing wave of patriotic demonstrations in the Kingdom of Poland.

In the first half of the 19th century, the exhibition movement did not develop significantly in the other partitions, particularly in the Prussian-occupied territories. Only in Galicia did local agricultural exhibitions begin to be held regularly from 1850 onward¹⁸.

Warsaw Agricultural and Industrial Exhibitions in the Second Half of the 19th Century

The defeat of the January Uprising, along with the entire system of Russian repressions against the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Poland, might have raised concerns about the future of the exhibition movement. However, the authorities in St. Petersburg concluded that the continuation of agricultural and industrial exhibitions could, in fact, support the policies of Russification and unification. It was assumed that such events could encourage producers from various parts of the Russian Empire to visit Warsaw while simultaneously prompting residents of the Congress Kingdom to participate in exhibitions held in Russian cities. It is important to emphasize that supporters of the exhibition movement in the

¹⁶ W. Grabski, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 47.

¹⁷ More widely *vide*: A. Przegaliński, *Z dziejów wystaw...*

¹⁸ The Galician Economic Society aimed to support the economic development of Galicia, primarily in the areas of agricultural production and livestock breeding, including by regularly organizing exhibitions in Lviv, Kraków, and larger provincial cities. In the Austrian partition, agricultural production dominated, providing a livelihood for as much as three-quarters of the population in Galicia. *Vide*: F. Bujak, *Wieś zachodniogalicyska u schyłku XIX w.*, Lwów 1904, p. 63.

Kingdom of Poland included both the “old” and the “young” – that is, proponents of organic work from the conservative circles, as well as representatives of Warsaw positivism¹⁹.

The first post-January Uprising Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition in Warsaw was opened on September 21, 1867, in the warehouses of the Bank of Poland on Nowogrodzka Street. The ceremony was attended by the Governor of the Kingdom of Poland, Count Theodor Berg. The exhibition lasted until September 29, 1867²⁰. At this event, agriculture, horticulture, and forestry clearly dominated. Industrial products were present only to a limited extent and were mainly related to the production of agricultural machinery and tools, as well as the so-called forest industry. The distinctly agricultural nature of the exhibition was emphasized by the Warsaw press many days before its official opening²¹. The Exhibition Committee was predominantly composed of representatives of the landowning community. The chairman was Count Józef Zamoyski²², who also provided financial support for the event from his own funds. Other committee members included Jan Górski, Ludwik Okęcki, and Count Kazimierz Starzeński. Similarly, among the judges evaluating the competitions, landowners were well represented, serving as experts in agriculture and animal breeding²³. In the first two sections of the exhibition – Agricultural and Horticultural Products (I) and Livestock (II) – landowner-exhibitors from various regions of the Kingdom of Poland dominated. They also received the largest number of medals and distinctions. Landowning exhibitors were also present in the other two sections – Agricultural Machinery and Tools (III) and Agricultural and Forestry Products (IV) – winning awards as well. Notable winners included Count Cezary Plater from Niekłań (for agricultural machinery) and Count Tomasz Zamoyski (for contributions to the forestry industry).

Just three years later, on September 15, 1870, the second Warsaw Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition opened its doors to exhibitors and the public. Due to

¹⁹ More widely *vide*: A. Jaszczuk, *Spór pozytywistów z konserwatystami o przyszłość Polski 1870–1903*, Warszawa 1986.

²⁰ „Kurier Warszawski” 1867, No. 211, p. 1331; No. 214, p. 1349–1350; No. 217, p. 1376.

²¹ *Kronika Tygodniowa*, „Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1867, No. 416, p. 122.

²² Count Józef Zamoyski (1835–1878) was a highly well-educated individual, having studied at universities in England and France. He was the owner of a modernly managed estate in Stara Wieś (Kobielskie estates), particularly known in the country for his horse and sheep breeding. He was a co-founder of the Commercial Bank of Warsaw, the Warsaw Land Credit Society, and the Museum of Industry and Agriculture. From 1864 to 1867, he served as the president of the Warsaw Horse Racing Society.

²³ J. Aleksandrowicz, *Krótką relacją. O wystawie płodów gospodarstwa wiejskiego i ogrodnictwa, odbytej w Warszawie w roku 1867*, [in:] *Józefa Ungra Kalendarz Ilustrowany na rok zwyczajny 1868*, Warszawa 1867, pp. 116–117.

unfavorable weather conditions, the event was extended by two days. As with the first exhibition, agriculture and related industries continued to dominate the event, reaffirming its primarily rural and agricultural character. The report on the exhibition, prepared by Professor Jerzy Aleksandrowicz, a member of the Exhibition Committee, explicitly emphasized this fact. His account, titled *Report on the Exhibition of Agricultural and Farm Products Held in Warsaw in 1870*, was published in Unger's calendar and underscored the event's predominantly agricultural character²⁴. From the perspective of organization and the number of exhibitors representing various social classes, the 1870 exhibition undoubtedly surpassed the previous one. It also occupied a larger space, as it extended beyond the Bank of Poland buildings to include the surrounding squares on Nowogrodzka Street²⁵. The Exhibition Committee included the following landowners: Jan Górski, heir to the Wola Pęcorkzewska estate; Count Aleksander Ostrowski from Maluszyn, owner of several estate complexes; Ludwik Rossman, owner of the Bielawa estate; Władysław Wolf, heir to the Cielądz estate; and Count Józef Zamoyski. All of them owned prosperous and modernly managed estates. Additionally, many judges in the exhibition competitions also came from the landowning class, further highlighting the strong engagement of the nobility in the event²⁶. Among the awardees and honorees across all five exhibition sections – though to a lesser extent in Section V (Construction) – were estate owners, who particularly dominated the competitions in livestock and agricultural products²⁷.

The first exhibition in 1867 featured 268 exhibitors and was attended by approximately 21,000 visitors. In 1870, the number of exhibitors increased to 354, while the number of visitors was slightly lower, at around 20,000, primarily due to unfavorable weather conditions. Both of these early Warsaw exhibitions had a strongly agricultural character, as reflected in their exhibitor structure and the dominance of agriculture-related displays²⁸.

²⁴ J. Aleksandrowicz, *Relacja o wystawie płodów rolniczych i gospodarskich, odbytej w Warszawie w roku 1870*, [in:] *Józefa Ungra Kalendarz Ilustrowany na rok zwyczajny 1871*, Warszawa 1870, pp. 171–180.

²⁵ *Ibidem*; „Gazeta Warszawska” 1870, No. 196, p. 1; No. 198, p. 1; „Kurier Warszawski” 1870, No. 203, p. 1; No. 205, p. 2.

²⁶ J. Aleksandrowicz, *Relacja o wystawie płodów...*, pp. 171–172.

²⁷ „Gazeta Warszawska” 1870, No. 205, p. 1; No. 208, p. 1; No. 211, p. 1; „Kurier Warszawski” 1870, No. 206, p. 1–2; „Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1870, No. 144, p. 162; „Kłosa” 1870, No. 275, p. 211–212; No. 276, p. 230–231.

²⁸ „Gazeta Przemysłowa” 1867, No. 94, pp. 167–168; No. 95, p. 171; No. 96, p. 175; „Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1867, No. 419, pp. 160–162; 1870, No. 144, p. 162; „Kurier Warszawski” 1867, No. 218, p. 1383; 1870, No. 206, pp. 1–2; No. 207, p. 1; No. 209, p. 2; „Gazeta Warszawska” 1870, No. 205, p. 1; No. 206, p. 1; No. 208, p. 1; „Kłosa” 1870, No. 275, p. 211; No. 276, pp. 230–231.



1. The opening of the agricultural and industrial exhibition in Warsaw in 1874
fig. F. Tegazzo (Mazowiecka Biblioteka Cyfrowa – accessed: 15.12.2024)

Compared to the first two events, the third Warsaw Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition, held in 1874, reached a significantly higher level in terms of organization and product presentation. It can be concluded that this exhibition began to take on a more European character, particularly in terms of its layout and the number of visitors, marking a step forward in the modernization and prestige of such events in Warsaw. Several factors contributed to this enhanced level of the 1874 exhibition: The scope was expanded, both in terms of the variety and number of exhibits; Exhibitors from outside the Kingdom of Poland were invited to participate; The exhibition was relocated to a more prestigious venue – Ujazdów Fields, covering approximately 70,000 m²; Improved organization and the acquisition of substantial government funding allowed the Exhibition Committee to give the event a much grander scale. The President of the Exhibition Committee was Warsaw Governor, Major General Nikolai Nikolayevich Baron Medem, who

officially opened the exhibition on September 14, 1874. The event lasted 10 days and attracted a record-breaking number of visitors – over 120,000 people. The number of exhibitors was also impressive, reaching 710, with approximately 10,000 exhibits on display. The largest section was Section II – Agricultural, Horticultural, and Forestry Products, which featured the most exhibits. Agricultural production still dominated the exhibition, although a small number of exhibitors represented other industries and sectors. Despite being an organizational success, the exhibition ended with a deficit of over 9,000 rubles²⁹, which was a common occurrence for the exhibition movement at the time. This time, the Exhibition Committee was significantly larger than in the previous two events. Landowners continued to play a leading role, especially among those who were actively involved in the committee's work rather than being appointed by the government. Several landowners from the previous exhibition remained on the committee, while a new group of individuals was invited, particularly to collaborate within the newly established sections of the exhibition³⁰. As an interesting fact, it is worth noting that three members of the Ostrowski family from Maluszyn participated in the preparations for this exhibition – father Aleksander and his two sons, Jan Leon and Józef. The Korabit Ostrowski family was among the most successful landowners in adapting to the post-emancipation reality. Their large estate complex – referred to as the “Maluszyn estate” – was industrialized and utilized the latest agrotechnical innovations³¹. Given their modern approach to agriculture, it is unsurprising that they were invited to contribute to the organizational work of the exhibition. Landowners clearly dominated among the exhibitors in three out of the six exhibition sections: Section I – Agricultural, Horticultural, and Forestry Products; Section II – Livestock; Section VI – Model Farms and Agricultural Accounting (a newly introduced category). In Section I, the main awards went to large estate owners, including: Count Ludwik Krasiński (Złoty Potok), Count Aleksander Ostrowski (Maluszyn), Count Artur Potocki (Staszów)³². A similar pattern was observed

²⁹ „Gazeta Przemysłowo-Rolnicza” 1874, No. 38, p. 297; No. 40, p. 315; „Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1874, No. 345, p. 81; „Kurier Warszawski” 1874, No. 200, p. 1; No. 201, pp. 1–2; No. 202, p. 1; „Kłosa” 1874, No. 478, p. 142; No. 483, p. 218; „Gazeta Warszawska” 1874, No. 202, p. 2; No. 203, p. 1; No. 204, p. 1; *Wystawa rolnicza w Warszawie*, [in:] *Józefa Ungra Kalendarz Warszawski Popularno-Naukowy Ilustrowany na rok zwyczajny 1875*, Warszawa 1874, p. 13; K. Ołdziejewski, *op. cit.*, pp. 45–46.

³⁰ *Vide*: „Kurier Warszawski” 1874, No. 201, pp. 1–2.

³¹ *Dzieje Maluszyna i jego dziedziców z opowiadania i z pamięci zebrane przez hrabinę Helenę [z Morstinów] Ostrowską*, wstęp i oprac. A. J. Zakrzewski, Warszawa 2009; J. Kita, *Nadpilickie majątki ziemskie Ostrowskich z Maluszyna w XIX wieku w świetle archiwum rodzinnego*, „Między Wisłą a Pilicą. Studia i materiały historyczne” 2002, vol. 3, pp. 139–153; J. Kita, *Cukrownictwo w majątkach ziemskich Potockich i Ostrowskich w okresie zaborów*, „Studia z Historii Społeczno-Gospodarczej XIX i XX Wieku” 2008, vol. 5, pp. 27–49.

³² „Gazeta Przemysłowo-Rolnicza” 1874, No. 42, pp. 331–332.

in Section II, where most award-winning livestock specimens came from large landed estates. However, Section VI was an exception – among the awardees, there were no major landowners, indicating a broader representation of smaller and more diverse farming operations³³.



2. The pavilion of Count Ludwik Krasieński at the Warsaw exhibition in 1874
fig. B. Podbielski (Mazowiecka Biblioteka Cyfrowa – accessed: 15.12.2024)

Parallel to the exhibition, daily agricultural conferences were held in the Ministry of Finance building. These conferences featured lectures aimed at presenting agricultural issues from a scientific perspective, effectively combining theory with practice³⁴.

The success of the exhibition and the social drive for economic development of Polish lands, especially during the intensified Russification following the defeat of the January Uprising, led to the establishment of the Museum of Industry and Agriculture in Warsaw in 1875, just a few months after the exhibition closed. The founding of this institution was influenced by a campaign conducted in the contemporary press, supported by various economic and social circles. The museum's initial resources came from: funds generated from net profits collected through

³³ „Gazeta Warszawska” 1874, No. 214, p. 2.

³⁴ „Gazeta Warszawska” 1874, No. 204, p. 1.



3. Exhibits from the Warsaw exhibition of 1874 in the hall of the Museum of Agriculture and Industry, fig. J. Schübeler (Mazowiecka Biblioteka Cyfrowa – accessed: 15.12.2024)

admission fees to the 1874 exhibition, exhibits donated by some of the exhibitors, helping to establish the museum's early collections³⁵. This institution, whose founding was primarily driven by the landowning community, included among its initiators Prince Jan Lubomirski, Count Feliks Sobański, and Count Józef Zamoy-ski. One of its key decisions was to regularly organize industrial and agricultural exhibitions, leading to the establishment of a museum-exhibition section for this purpose. The exhibition initiative launched by the Museum was well received by society. Despite initial obstacles imposed by the Russian administrative authorities, the Museum Committee, led by Count Ludwik Krasieński, successfully continued to organize exhibitions on a regular basis³⁶. It is important to emphasize

³⁵ *Dwudziestopięćciolecie Muzeum Przemysłu i Rolnictwa w Warszawie: 1875–1900*, Warszawa 1901; S.W. Tylicki, *Rys historyczny...*, 1909, No. 2, p. 23.

³⁶ Count Ludwik Krasieński (1833–1895) was the owner of several estate complexes and a co-author of the *Encyclopedia of Agriculture and Related Knowledge*, volumes 1–5 (Warsaw, 1873–1879). He was one of the most active landowner activists in the Kingdom of Poland during the second half of the 19th century. His horse stud farm „Dobrogost” was considered one of the best in Polish lands.

that Count Ludwik Krasieński was undoubtedly one of the greatest advocates of the Polish exhibition movement. He had already been actively involved in exhibitions organized by the Agricultural Society and later played a key role in organizing subsequent Warsaw exhibitions in the second half of the 19th century. Another significant contributor to the development of the Warsaw exhibition movement during this period was Count August Potocki, Vice President of the Warsaw Horse Racing Society³⁷. He made notable contributions in organizing livestock exhibitions and advancing domestic animal breeding³⁸.

The largest event ever organized in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland was the fourth Warsaw Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition. However, it took significantly longer to organize compared to previous exhibitions, which had been held every 3–4 years. This event did not take place until 1885. Like the previous exhibition, it was held at Ujazdów Fields, but this time it covered an even larger area – over 141,000 m². A correspondent from “Przegląd Techniczny” wrote:

This year’s industrial and agricultural exhibition, which closed on July 12 of this year, exceeded expectations both in terms of the number and quality of the exhibits presented, as well as in its overall arrangement. (...) For this year’s industrial and agricultural exhibition, a quadrangle of 427,152 square cubits was allocated at Ujazdów Square. The exhibition grounds were enclosed by a wooden fence, stretching along Ujazdów Avenue to the west, Piękna Street to the north, parallel to the buildings of the Ujazdów Hospital to the east, and extending toward the road leading to the Royal Łazienki Park to the south³⁹.

The Exhibition Committee was chaired by Warsaw Governor General Józef Hurko. Among the main organizers of the event was also the Warsaw Horse Racing Society, and financial support came from the Land Credit Society. Landowners from various parts of the Kingdom of Poland dominated the ranks of these associations. The official opening of the exhibition took place on June 9, 1885. Due to the vast size of the exhibition grounds, streets were laid out to help visitors navigate the layout of the different sections. In the agricultural part of the exhibition, these streets were named: Rolniczo-Przemysłowa, Komitetowa, Akcyjna, and Wąska. In 1885, more than 800 exhibitors participated, showcasing their products

³⁷ Count August Potocki (1847–1905) was the owner of several modernly managed estates, including Zator, where the most modern fishery of the era was established. He was a pioneer of horse racing and a strong advocate for organizing agricultural exhibitions and competitions.

³⁸ S.W. Tylicki, *Rys historyczny...*, 1909, No. 3, pp. 3–4.

³⁹ *Wystawa przemysłowo-rolnicza w Warszawie w r. 1885*, „Przegląd Techniczny” 1885, vol. 22, No. 7, pp. 8–9.

and exhibits in 166 pavilions and tents, which was quite impressive. The scale of the exhibition was also reflected in the number of visitors. On the closing day, July 12, the exhibition was attended by as many as 35,000 people⁴⁰. The fourth Warsaw Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition proved to be financially successful for the organizers, as it resulted in a net profit of 15,000 rubles by the time it closed. Furthermore, this amount was later increased by the proceeds from the sale of pavilions and various dismantling materials. In 1885, several pavilions were purchased by the renowned wood engraver and illustrator Michał Elwiro Andriolli, who transported them to the Świder River (near Otwock) and converted them into summer cottages⁴¹.

The fourth Warsaw exhibition, however, clearly had an industrial and agricultural character. This time, the urban industrial production was notably overshadowed by exhibits related to rural life and farming. This was evident not only in the list of exhibitors but also in the structure of the exhibition sections, with those related to industry and science being more numerous⁴². Landowners predominantly featured among exhibitors in the following groups: Section IX – Plans and descriptions of agricultural, agrarian-industrial, and peasant farm facilities; Section XII – Livestock.

The 1885 exhibition was the largest event of its kind ever organized in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland. Its preparation and execution were very much in line with similar events organized in Russia and other European countries. Compared to previous exhibitions, the scale of this event was indeed huge. The 1885 Warsaw exhibition shifted the focus predominantly toward industry, with agriculture taking a secondary role. As a result, the participation of landowners was proportionally smaller. Even within the Exhibition Committee, landowners formed a minority this time (mainly active members such as Count August Potocki, Count Ludwik Krasiński, and Wojciech Count Poletyło)⁴³. It can therefore be assumed that by the turn of the 1870s and 1880s, industry had undoubtedly become the leading sector of the economy in the Kingdom of Poland. A technical revolution had occurred in virtually all industrial sectors. This exhibition was also a sort of evaluation of

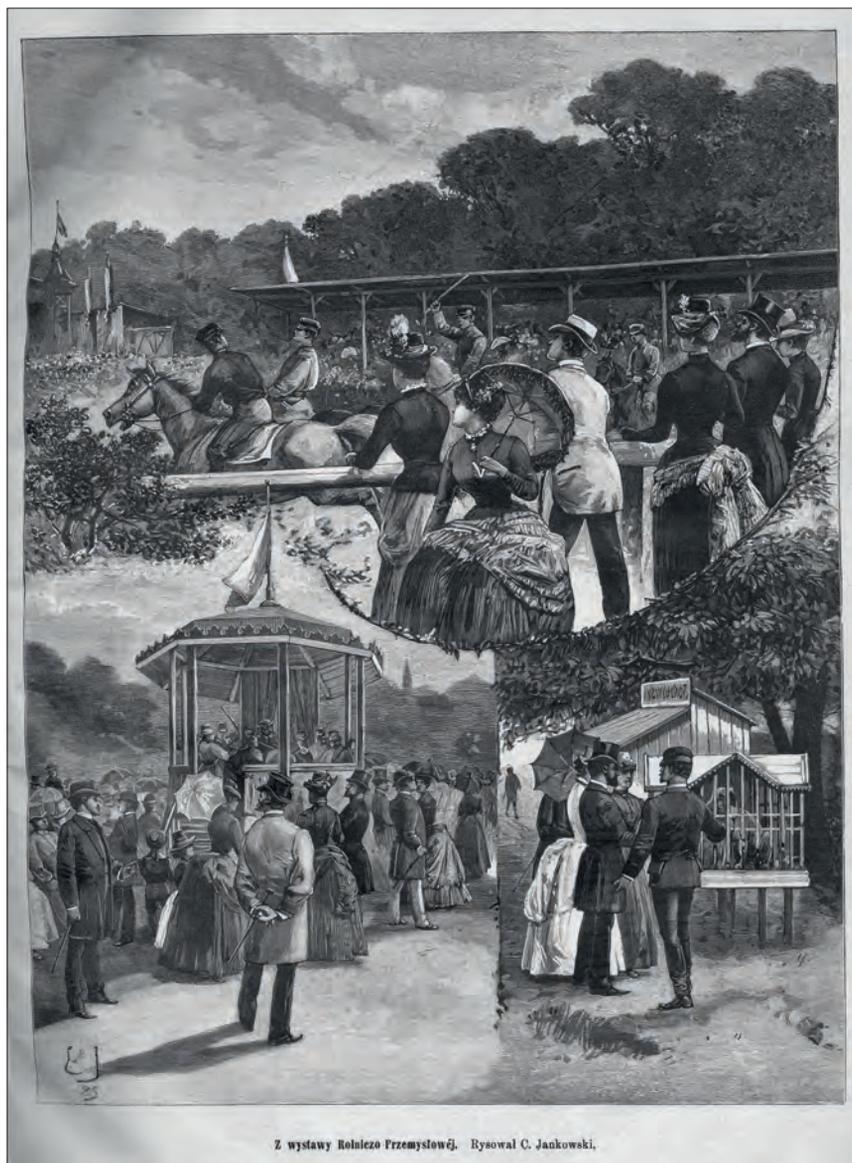
⁴⁰ „Kłosy” 1885, No. 1041, p. 384; No. 1042, p. 392; No. 1045, p. 22; No. 1047, p. 58; „Przegląd Techniczny” 1885, vol. 22, No. 7, p. 9; „Wędrowiec” 1885, No. 29, p. 342; No. 30, p. 353; „Przegląd Tygodniowy” 1885, No. 25, p. 364; No. 31, p. 417; No. 32, p. 425; „Tygodnik Ilustrowany” 1885, No. 128, p. 375; No. 129, p. 395; No. 130, p. 412; „Kurier Warszawski” 1885, No. 191, p. 3.

⁴¹ J. Kita, *Wilegiatury – moda na dziewiętnastowieczny „urlop”*, [in:] J. Kita, M. Korybut-Marciniak (eds), *Życie prywatne Polaków w XIX wieku*, t. 6, „Moda i styl życia”, Łódź–Olsztyn 2017, pp. 31–50.

⁴² *Katalog wystawy rolniczo-przemysłowej...*, pp. 3–6.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 11.

the state of the national economy, encompassing industry, trade, and agriculture. Journalists from Warsaw's press conducted an analysis of the state of the economy's various sectors, branches, and industries, highlighting which were in stagnation or decline, and which were experiencing periods of prosperity.



4. From the agricultural and industrial exhibition of 1885, fig. C. Jankowski (Mazowiecka Biblioteka Cyfrowa – accessed: 15.12.2024)



5. The exhibition of horses and livestock in Warsaw, fig. Masłowski
(Mazowiecka Biblioteka Cyfrowa – accessed: 15.12.2024)

After the four Warsaw exhibitions, two more significant events of this kind took place outside the capital of the Kingdom of Poland. In 1901, Lublin became the site of a major exhibition, which lasted from June 9 to 17. It covered a vast area, a rectangular square with a surface of 17 morgs⁴⁴. The last of the major events characterizing the national exhibition movement was the 1909 Exhibition of Industry and Agriculture in Częstochowa. It lasted for a long period, with its official opening on August 5 and closing on October 3. According to various estimates, over 815 exhibitors showcased their products on a site covering around 37 morgs. The number of visitors varies depending on the source, with estimates ranging from around 350,000 to as high as 500,000 to 700,000⁴⁵. This exhibition was undoubtedly the largest event organized in the Kingdom of Poland before the outbreak of World War I.

The Warsaw exhibitions certainly had an impact on the economic and commercial communities in Galicia, as from the second half of the century, similar events began to be organized in this region as well. In Galicia, the landowning community played an even more visible role in the organizational and exhibition activities. In 1877, the first National Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition of this scale in this part of Polish lands took place in Lviv. It lasted from September 6 to October 7 and was organized in the Jabłonowski Garden under the initiative of the Galician Economic Society and the leadership of Count Włodzimierz Dzieduszycki⁴⁶. Subsequent large-scale exhibitions included the regional agricultural and industrial exhibition in Przemyśl in 1883 and the national exhibition in Kraków in 1887. Drawing on their previous experience, Galician economic activists decided to organize the largest exhibition to date in this part of Polish lands, which was held in Lviv in 1894. The exhibition took place in Jan Kiliński Park (also known as Stryiskyi Park) and covered an area of about 25 hectares. It lasted from June 5 to October 16 and was attended by more than one million visitors. This event became an opportunity for organizing numerous gatherings, banquets, and congresses of various societies and associations. It was a clear sign of the strong involvement of Poles in the socio-economic life of Galicia. The 1894 National Exhibition in Lviv resonated widely, not only in Polish but also in foreign press. "Kurier Lwowski" and "Gazeta Narodowa" both reprinted certain articles or published summaries

⁴⁴ More widely vide: A. Przegaliński, *Wokół wystawy...*; idem, *Z dziejów wystaw rolniczych...*

⁴⁵ Cf. D. Złotkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 350; W. Garbaczewski, *Przemyśl, sztuka, polityka. Wystawy gospodarcze na ziemiach polskich i z Polską związane ok. 1850–1914*, Poznań 2015, p. 54; K. Ołdziejewski, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

⁴⁶ Vide: *Katalog krajowej wystawy rolniczej i przemysłowej [od 6. września do 4. października] we Lwowie*, Lwów 1877; „Wystawa Krajowa Rolnicza i Przemysłowa: organ komitetu wystawy” 1877, No. 1–24; *Wystawa rolniczo-przemysłowa we Lwowie*, „Gazeta Przemysłowo-Rzemieślnicza” 1877, No. 43, pp. 171–172.

of them in their issues. This coverage highlighted the significance of the exhibition beyond the local and national context, bringing attention to the event across different regions⁴⁷. The 1894 National Exhibition in Lviv, alongside the exhibition held in Częstochowa, was the largest exhibition event in Polish lands during the era of the partitions. Due to the nature of the Galician economy in the 19th century, the landowning community in this part of Poland played a central role in organizing these events and was also a numerous group among the exhibitors.



6. The Warsaw exhibitions in the satire of F. Kostrzewski (Mazowiecka Biblioteka Cyfrowa – accessed: 15.12.2024)

⁴⁷ W. Paduchowski, *Galicyjskie górnictwo i hutnictwo w świetle Powszechnej Wystawy Krajowej w 1894 roku*, „Folia Historica Cracoviensia” 2014, No. 2, pp. 155–177.

In the Prussian partition, the Polish exhibition movement remained very weak, as any such activities were severely hindered by the Prussian authorities. Polish agricultural exhibitions in this part of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were essentially not organized. When they did occur, they were usually initiated by the German authorities and were generally boycotted by Polish landowners and peasants⁴⁸.

Conclusion

The exhibition movement played a significant role in the socio-economic development of Polish lands during the period of the partitions. Organized exhibitions focusing on agriculture and industry often became places for showcasing technological and agronomic innovations. They provided a broad audience with insight into the changes taking place in the “age of steam and electricity”, which were occurring in practically every aspect of economic life in the Kingdom of Poland. It was during these types of exhibitions that leading landowner activists, alongside industrialists and scientists, could initiate efforts aimed at the modernization and industrialization of Polish lands. They made attempts to encourage fellow countrymen to become more active in various areas, including agriculture, industry, construction, and transportation.

The landowning elite supported the exhibition movement, not only those focused on agriculture but also the so-called general exhibitions, becoming heavily involved in them. They saw this as an important goal for a nation without its own state. Exhibitions, as they believed, could facilitate and accelerate progress in the economic and cultural development of Polish lands and its society, especially when serious support from the partitioning authorities was not to be expected. Exhibitions, which were organized with the approval of the administrative authorities, were primarily arranged by society itself and private institutions in the second half of the 19th century. A high percentage of those involved at that time were landowners and intellectuals with landowning and noble roots.

At the same time, landowners could treat their participation in exhibitions as an excellent form of advertisement. The visiting public could see for themselves the advantages of the products on display, making it the easiest way to popularize the latest products from the agri-food industry and methods for the new use of older ones. The best specimens of livestock were presented, and those competing in the contests could earn medals and distinctions. This allowed stud farm, sheepfold, and barn owners to attract the interest of potential buyers for their breeding stock.

⁴⁸ K. Ołdziejewski, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

The press – both daily and specialized – also became a form of advertising for these landowners. It widely covered not only the events themselves but also the individuals who were awarded and recognized in various fields of production. Exhibition successes provided an opportunity for further development of the estate economy and increased profitability of landed estates. On the other hand, landowners and tenants visiting exhibitions could be inspired by the successes of their peers and try to introduce agrotechnical innovations, modern tools, and new breeds of animals to their estates. This allowed them to attempt the modernization of estates, many of which were undergoing significant crises in the new post-emancipation reality.

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