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KAROL BEYER'S ALBUM WYSTAWY STAROŻYTNOŚCI I PRZEDMIOTÓW SZTUKI AND ALEXANDER VON MINUTOLI'S VORBILDER FÜR HANDWERKER UND FABRIKANTEN. BETWEEN HISTORY AND INDUSTRY¹

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When the invention of photography was announced in 1839, the potential usefulness of the new medium was immediately put under debate. The scientists dreamed of capturing the microscope images and photographing the moon. The artists both marvelled at the possibility to use the camera in their work and feared it would soon replace them. The journalists printed and reprinted scattered pieces of information on photography, quite often before they even had a chance to see the images in question.

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At first, the idea of the photographic image made part of a printed page also seemed like an invention which discovery should be announced and under patent protection. On June 1, 1843, Henry Fox Talbot (1800-1877), one of the first and most important photography researchers and practitioners, patented 'photographic publication'.² Talbot was amongst the first to succeed in producing a paper negative from which numerous positive copies could be printed. Nevertheless, a general opinion held that Talbot's insistence on claiming each and every one of his discoveries eligible for patent protection was exaggerated and that at this rate, soon he declares 'his right to patent the sun'.³

Given numerous patent restrictions in England, it does not come as a surprise that the mass production of photographic prints and incorporating them onto a printed page of a book became possible and more economical thanks to a French photographer and merchant from Lille, Louis Désiré Blanquart-Evrard (1802-1872). The Frenchman's improvements on the salt print positive photographic process and the invention of the albumen process mark the true beginning of the history of the photographically illustrated book.⁴

Books illustrated with photographs attracted the attention of scholars accordingly to the publications' subject matter and to the biographies of the people involved in their production. The field of study is difficult because it slips away from easy categorisation. Indeed, photographically illustrated books fall within the scope of various disciplines: print history, book history, photography history, and art history. The result is a wide range of approaches and meth-

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- 2 L. Goldschmidt and W.J. Naef, *The Truthful Lens: A Survey of the Photographically Illustrated Book 1844-1914*, New York, 1980, p. 16.
 - 3 After H. Gernsheim and A. Gernsheim, *The History of Photography. From the Camera Obscura to the Beginnings of the Modern Era*, London, 1955, p. 179.
 - 4 To be precise, one should consider the first instant of the book and photography coming together already in the case of books with illustrations based on manual copies of daguerrotypes in the 1830s. The following definition is proposed for the purposes of this article: a photographically illustrated publication is understood as a book or a booklet produced in more than one copy and illustrated with one or more original photographs. This also includes loose plates with photographic prints offered to subscribers as instalments in portfolios.

odologies. While some researchers focus on investigating the size and technical or aesthetic features of this type of book production, others analyse the photographic illustration in the general framework of cultural and local history.⁵ Both are usually national in their perspective.

The research on the early photographically illustrated publications in the Polish lands is practically non-existent. Hence, the need to first identify the material under study⁶. There is a number of ways to approach the subject, which could each be discussed at considerable length, but there is one in particular this article aims to undermine: when discussing this kind of cultural material, it is very easy to investigate it only in its national context, in this case it would be the country-specific situation of the nineteenth-century Polish lands divided into three partitions. However, if one follows considerations broader than location alone, fewer meanings are lost and many become more accurately explained.

The case study presented here reduces the scale of observation to a pair of publications: the first Polish photographically illustrated book,⁷ Karol Beyer's (1818–1877) *Album wystawy starożytności i przedmiotów sztuki* (published 1856) and a Prussian book, Alexander von Minu-

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- 5 One recent example of the former category is S. Joseph, *Belgian Photographic Literature of the 19th Century. A Bibliography and Census. L'édition photographique belge au 19e siècle. Bibliographie et recensement*, Leuven, 2015. The latter approach is represented for example by Joan Schwartz, who looks into photography and the processes of structuring Canadian national identity in the nineteenth century, see J. Schwartz, 'With Word and Image: Notman and the Photographically Illustrated Book', in: H. Samson and S. Sauvage (eds), *Notman: Visionary Photographer*, Montreal, 2016, pp. 144–151.
- 6 The author of this article is working to fill this gap by preparing a specialised bibliography of photographically illustrated publications in the Polish lands and would be grateful for any input received. The database is available online: fedorowiczjajkowska.pl/katalog-baza [accessed 25.12.2019].
- 7 The use of the wording 'Polish book' begs a fundamental question what precisely constitutes the 'Polishness' in the nineteenth century and which photographically illustrated publications should be considered 'Polish'. If the principles of selection applied here followed those of the nineteenth-century Polish bibliographical practice, the discussed here German book would have been considered as Polish, as it was published in Liegnitz, a Silesian town, once ruled by a branch of the Polish Piast dynasty, it presents also Polish historical artefacts, and the author of the photographs was Polish. However, it is not this author's intention to suggest such a method of classification.

toli's (1806–1887) *Vorbilder für Handwerker und Fabrikanten* (published 1854/1855).⁸

As the first part of this article will show, Alexander von Minutoli's artistic and social concerns resonate especially well through the words of a German architect, Gottfried Semper (1803–1879), who in response to the Great London Exhibition of 1851 wrote: 'Collections and public monuments are the true teachers of a free people. They are not merely the teachers of practical exercises, but more importantly the schools of public taste'.⁹ Minutoli somehow unselfishly sought to bring industry and arts together for the benefit of local craftsmen, manufacturers, and Prussian citizens. Minutoli's lessons in good design practices are quite different from Karol Beyer's motivations. Beyer, Polish photographer, antiquarian, and numismatist, also a visitor to the Great Exhibition in London in 1851,¹⁰ with his Album exploited historicism and the popularity of antiquarianism in the Polish lands. In short, his was a history lesson, which at first glance had little in common with Minutoli's 'school of public taste'. Nevertheless, as the second and final part of this study will aim to clarify, Beyer in his very different pursuits still followed Minutoli's example in more ways than one, situating himself somewhat between history and industry.

ALEXANDER VON MINUTOLI'S WORKS OF INDUSTRY

In 1839, Prussian civil servant, Alexander von Minutoli (1806–1887), found himself in the city of Liegnitz (modern-day Legnica, Poland) in the province of Silesia. He was a lawyer and an economist by training, and an

8 Beyer's book was published also in French under a title *Album de l'exposition des objets d'art et d'antiquité*. The full title for Minutoli's *Vorbilder* is *Vorbilder für Handwerker und Fabrikanten aus den Sammlungen des Minutolischen Instituts zur Veredlung der Gewerbe und Beförderung der Künste zu Liegnitz*.

9 G. Semper, "Science, Industry and Art. Proposals for the Development of a National Taste in Art at the Closing of the London Industrial Exhibition (1852)", in: idem, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. by H.F. Mallgrave and W. Herrmann, Cambridge, 1989, 160; originally published as *Wissenschaft, Industrie und Kunst: Vorschläge zur Anregung nationalen Kunstgefühls*, Braunschweig, 1852.

10 Beyer announced his departure for London in: *Kurier Warszawski* 31:253 (25 September 1851), 1335. See also *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 8:209 (26 September 1863), p. 378.

officer for industrial politics by appointment. His father and both brothers were archaeologists and art collectors. This context proved crucial in his later undertakings and not only for the reason that the family collection served as a good jumpstart to Minutoli's subsequent ventures.¹¹

In Liegnitz his task was to find ways to improve the state of the industry in this economically underdeveloped region. With the strong antiquarian interests that run in the family and the financial independence, he was able to complement his official duties by setting up a collection of works of industry and various items of handicrafts, which were to be used as examples for contemporary craftsmen.¹² In 1845, Frederick William IV of Prussia allowed Minutoli to store the collection in one wing of the Liegnitz castle with an idea to have it soon open to the public. At the time the collection listed 3 687 objects ranging from iron-work to porcelain, pottery, glass, leather and textile fabrics, and paintings.¹³

Attesting to the European wide explosion of interest in the promotion of industry and the establishment of suitable resources for contemporary designers, Minutoli did not explicitly aim at gaining profit or developing Prussian or Silesian identity, but rather his goal was to educate manufacturers and craftsmen and inspire them to revital-

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- 11 S. Netzer, "The Revival of Art in Industry: The Minutoli Collection", in: J. Bryant (ed.), *Art and Design for All. The Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, 2012, 48. Netzer's chapter draws heavily on A. Sammt, *Verzeichniss diner Sammlung von Erzeugnissen der Industrie der Vorzeit*, Liegnitz, 1844; idem, *Das Minutoli'sche Institut der Vorbildersammlung zur Beförderung der Gewerbe und Künste*, Liegnitz, part I 1851, part 2 1866; B. Vogelsang, *Beamteneinkauf. Die Sammlung des Freiherrn von Minutoli in Liegnitz*, Dortmund, 1986; and records on file at the Secret State Archives of the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation in Berlin. For further readings on Minutoli, see M.D. Minkels, J.S. Karig, *Heinrich Menu von Minutoli und seine herausragende Familie*, Norderstedt 2019; M.D. Minkels, *Alexander von Minutoli. Der Gründer des ersten Kunstgewerbemuseums der Welt (1844)*, Norderstedt 2018; R. Łuczyński, "Alexander von Minutoli jako kolekcjoner dzieł sztuki", *Orbis Linguarum* 36 (2010), 423-431; R. Łuczyński, "Baron Aleksander von Minutoli, kolekcjoner z Biedrzychowic", *Karkonosze* 1 (1995), pp. 13-15.
- 12 In a letter to the Prussian king, Minutoli describes his actions as the extension of the government's policy, see B. Vogelsang, *Beamteneinkauf. Die Sammlung des Freiherrn von Minutoli in Liegnitz*, Dortmund, 1986, p. 243.
- 13 In 1859, the collection included already 18 000 and only one year later 28 000 works. S. Netzer, "The Revival of Art in Industry: The Minutoli Collection", in: J. Bryant (ed.), *Art and Design for All. The Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, 2012, pp. 48-49.

ise traditional trades and industries of the region. Be that as it may, soon enough he discovered that neither manufacturers nor craftsmen bothered to visit his collections in a town of Prussian Silesia. Hence, with the help of a Silesian traveling daguerreotypist, Louis Birk,¹⁴ Minutoli produced over a hundred portable daguerreotypes, which he subsequently sent to local manufacturers and several exhibitions organised in the 1850s.¹⁵ Following the introduction of the wet collodion process in 1851 and concurrent Blanquart-Evrard's improvements on paper photography, Minutoli decided to publish a monumental book containing a few hundred photographic reproductions of items from his collection, hence securing its wider dissemination.¹⁶

Minutoli's *Vorbilder für Handwerker und Fabrikanten* was named after the celebrated pattern book published between 1821 and 1837 by two Prussian industrial reformers, Karl Friedrich Schinkel and Christian Peter Wilhelm Beuth. Two volumes of *Vorbilder für Fabrikanten und Handwerker* contained engravings of Greek and Roman antiquities and advocated a union between 'the highest perfection of form' and economic performance and social utility in the industry.¹⁷ Clearly, Minutoli was inspired not only by the publication's title.

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- 14 Z. Wielowiejski, "Louis Birk i jego trzyletnia podróż po Dolnym Śląsku jako wędrownego dagerotypisty", *Dagerotyp* 20 (2001), pp. 5-16.
- 15 For the list of exhibitions, see A. Hamber, 'A Higher Branch of the Art'. *Photographing the Fine Arts in England, 1839-1880*, Amsterdam, 1996, 227. Most importantly, the official catalogue of the 1851 Great Exhibition in London lists "Photographic copies of models for manufactories in clay, glass, or wood, executed by the photographer Birk", see *Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, 1851*, London, 1851, p. 1058.
- 16 Blanquart-Evrard-Minutoli connection is suggested by Rolff Sachsse in: "Belitski, Ludwig (1830-1902) and von Minutoli, Baron Alexander (1806-1887)", J. Hannavy (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography*, New York, 2008, p. 142.
- 17 J.E. Toews, "Building Historical and Cultural Identities in a Modernist Frame. Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Bauakademie in Context", in: M.S. Micale and R.L. Dietle (eds), *Enlightenment, Passion, Modernity. Historical Essays in European Thought and Culture*, Stanford, 2000, 188. On a side note, contemporaneous English translations of Schinkel's and Minutoli's books differ considerably. Interestingly, in J.C. Robinson, *Catalogue of the Art Library, South Kensington Museum*, London, 1862 the word 'Vorbilder' is translated as 'patterns' in Schinkel's case (p. 246) and as 'examples' in the Minutoli book's case (p. 196). One has to wonder whether this inconsistency has its source only in the translator's mistake. Perhaps, involuntarily, it marks the difference between two methods of reproduction: engravings and photography. Only the latter one allows for capturing of actual objects (examples).

Minutoli's publishing initiative was presented in detail by the pioneering research of the German art historian, Wilhelm Lübke, in an influential journal on art history and criticism in July 1854.¹⁸ On the pages of the *Deutsches Kunstblatt* one reads that the first of 25 fascicules of the first volume of the book will have six plates each and will be sold for eight Prussian thalers. Lübke further informed the reader that the following objects have been selected for the first instalment: a piece of an architectural decoration, a relief sculpture of Christ on the Mount of Olives in a Renaissance frame,¹⁹ a set of three vessels and items of glass, a lion-supported stool with 'graceful arabesque ornaments', and a piece of fine embroidery praised for its 'elegant splendour'. The author marvels at the exquisite finishing of the objects as well as the technological expertise and the skill of the photographer. The careful examination of the objects' surface features was additionally facilitated by placing some of the illuminated objects against a black backdrop. This clever trick brings to mind the technical drawings or monochrome engravings from Schinkel and Beuth's *Vorbilder* (figure 1). Photographic prints from Minutoli's *Vorbilder* are like their negatives and they reflect strong technical considerations of his project (figure 2).

Most photographs were taken by a young photographer and Liegnitz mechanic Ludwig Belitski (1830–1902).²⁰ They varied in size and most had trimmed corners. Images were salt prints from glass collodion negatives, mounted one-per-page with a plate number and Minutoli's collection blind stamp.²¹ The *Deutsches Kunstblatt* informs

18 W. Lübke, "Photographisches Werk", *Kunstblatt. Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, Baukunst und Kunsthandwerk* 30 (27 July 1854), pp. 266–267.

19 It seems important to note here that in the copies consulted for this study the plate with a relief of Christ on the Mount of Olives (detail, figure 3) bears a number nine, hence it would not be part of the first fascicule of the book. Partially visible 'No. 2' in the lower part of the photograph attest to the fact that originally this photograph was supposed to be included in the first fascicule and the mistake occurred perhaps due to the incorrect binding of the plates.

20 For information on Ludwig Belitski see L. Hoerner, *Frühe Photographie in Nordhausen: Ludwig Belitski 1830–1902, Prominenter Photograph und Engagierter Bürger*, Marburg, 1992.

21 The stamp bears an inscription: 'Sincere et Fideliter'. The words especially apt to describe photography.



FIG. 1. Vorbilder für Fabrikanten und Handwerker, 1821/1830, Volume 1, Instalment 2, Plate 12 (Public Domain)

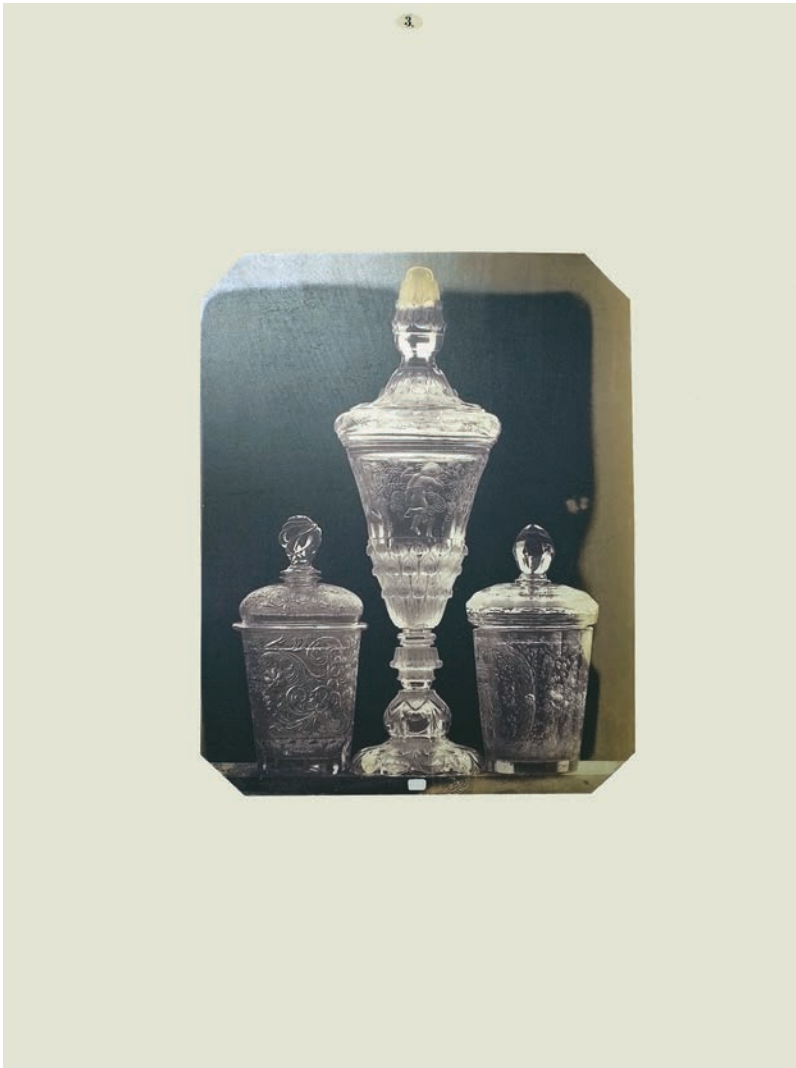


FIG. 2. *Vorbilder für Handwerker und Fabrikanten*, 1855, Volume 1, Instalment 1, Plate 3. From the collection of the British Library, London (photo: A. Fedorowicz-Jackowska)

that a short text will be added after the fifth instalment.²² In accordance with the contemporary practice, the fascicules were most likely bound together by individual subscribers. Plates were then mounted with a lithographic title page, a foreword, and frequently, printed section headings. Several distinct copies of the publication have been examined for this study and unsurprisingly none were identical, neither in terms of their contents, nor the page layout, nor the prints appearance.²³

The idea to present his collection as two-dimensional prints was also something that Minutoli's father, a famous archaeologist, Heinrich Menu von Minutoli (1772-1846), used in his archaeological practice and research. One of such publications, *Über antike Glasmosaik* (1817), privately published with Martin Heinrich Klaproth (1743-1817) in fewer than ten copies, was an exquisitely illustrated treatise on ancient mosaic glass.²⁴ This folio-sized booklet has engravings of 8 glass

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- 22 W. Lübke, "Photographisches Werk", *Kunstblatt. Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, Baukunst und Kunsthandwerk* 30 (27 July 1854), p. 267.
- 23 First, it seems important to mention that Minutoli's publication has later editions (1872-1873) and that the first edition was being published in instalments, hence some confusion concerning the number of the volumes published and its date of publication. The first instalments of *Vorbilder* were published in 1854 as indicated e.g. by the fascicule from the collection of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences Print Room, Kraków (AF 16). Second, this article refers only to the first edition which was published in 25 instalments comprising 150 photographs in total. The copies consulted for the purposes of this study belong to the collections of the National Art Library (56.H.6) and the British Library in London (1800.b.15), the library of the National Museum in Warsaw (6015 Cim), and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences Print Room, Kraków, which under the same inventory number (AF 16) holds a group of loose plates with the same photographs as in *Vorbilder* and a loose title page displaying yet another title version of the Minutoli and Belitski's work: *Photographisches Album Darstellungen von Kunst-Gegenständen aus der Sammlung des Königlichen Regierungs-Raths Alexander Freiherrn von Minutoli zu Liegnitz*. The holdings of the National Library in Warsaw include also *Album für Künstler, Gewerbetreibende, Kunst-Freunde und Sammler. Photographische Darstellungen seltener Gegenstände aus den Sammlungen des Minutolischen Instituts zur Veredelung der Gewerbe und Beförderung der Künste zu Liegnitz*, dated 1855, with a title page, 6 unnumbered plates with Belitski's photographs, and a handwritten dedication by Alexander von Minutoli (A.3724/F.XIX/IV-16). The author is aware of only one more copy of the album bearing the same title, now in the collection of Münchner Stadtmuseum (FM-2014/300.302). The exact character and intended number of copies of these albums require further research.
- 24 Not to be mistaken with an earlier edition of the text published in 1815 and accompanied only with two plates, only one of which was coloured.

objects, all coloured with gouache. Although Minutoli's *Vorbilder* could not stand in bigger contrast in terms of their monumental size and extravagance, father's and son's publications seem to have more in common than the mere fact of being exquisitely illustrated. Minutoli senior and Klapproth subjected samples of antique glass to a series of chemical analyses in search of the better understanding of the antique methods to make and fix colours. The booklet informed about their findings. A few decades later, Alexander von Minutoli used their pioneering work to instruct local Silesian glass factories and even invited other glass painters to conduct similar experiments based on his glassware collection.²⁵ *Vorbilder* did not reveal the secrets behind the many patterns and techniques in words or drawings, but showed them by making use of the new type of illustrative evidence and scientific document: photography. Karol Beyer's *Album wystawy starożytności i przedmiotów sztuki* also takes advantage of the new medium, but presumably seems to be more concerned with history than works of industry.

KAROL BEYER'S WORKS ON HISTORY

Karol Beyer visited Liegnitz for the first time in 1853. On February 3rd, in the *Gazeta Warszawska's* section entitled 'The Chronicle of Arts and Industry' one reads: 'Mr Beyer is back!'.²⁶ Then goes a long report on his travels, things he returned with, such as medals, stamps and seals, sculptures, but also a note on the discovery of the tomb of the daughter of the King Sigismund I of Poland, Silesian coins, and a carved ivory sceptre. Most importantly, with this report the Polish reader was introduced to the information on the 'collection of design patterns from Mr Minutoli in Liegnitz.' It is also in the same article that one finds an information about the planned publication of the Minutoli collection catalogue.

25 K. Suska, "Historia zbioru gemm szklanych Aleksandra Minutolego z Legnicy", *Archeologia* XLV (1994), 105; S. Netzer, "The Revival of Art in Industry: The Minutoli Collection," in: J. Bryant (ed.), *Art and Design for All. The Victoria and Albert Museum*, London, 2012, p. 51, footnote 9.

26 B. Podczaszyński, "Kronika sztuk i przemysłu", *Gazeta Warszawska* 31 (3 February 1853), p. 2.

Three years later, during which he experimented with paper photographs and glass negatives²⁷ and once again visited Liegnitz,²⁸ Beyer produced a full-leather album with 30 hand-mounted salted paper prints showing selected artefacts from the Exhibition of Antiquities and Objects of Art organised in 1856 by the Warsaw antiquarian and aristocratic milieu.

Both Minutoli's and Beyer's albums conformed to the same universal model of presenting the pictures, with one image mounted per page; both use photographs in their title pages (although different in style and presentation), and both, which should be considered quite forward-thinking at the time, use artefact scales to give a sense of the object's size. In Minutoli's case the application of the scale is very consistent, it appears in the lower part of the image, next to the collection's trademark: a small plaque with handwritten words 'Institut Minutoli' (figure 3). In Beyer's book the application of the scale seems much more haphazard and is not always included in the picture. On the other hand, when it does appear it becomes an intrinsic element of the whole composition, almost one of the artefacts itself (figure 4). Perhaps it was there to give the image a scholarly weight and credit, perhaps it was something Beyer copied from Minutoli.

Comparing the few wider shots from both albums one may easily find a similar approach to the strategies of display of objects, typical for this epoch, as for example in the photographs presenting groups of carved cameos and medals arranged on a flat surface and photographed from

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- 27 According to Adam Wiślicki, who already in 1863 tried to write the history of photography in the Polish lands, Beyer, while in London for the 1851 Great Exhibition, studied the wet collodion process with its inventor, Frederick Scott Archer himself, and was first to introduce it in Warsaw, see *Tygodnik Ilustrowany* 8:209 (26 September 1863), 378. In 1853 *Gazeta Warszawska* informed that Beyer abandoned the idea to produce photographs on paper on account of the process being too unpredictable and impractical. See B. Podczaszyński, "Kronika sztuk i przemysłu", *Gazeta Warszawska* 6 (8 January 1853), p. 4.
- 28 In August 1855 Beyer informed Józef Ignacy Kraszewski about the details of his trip, see D. Jackiewicz, *Karol Beyer 1818-1877*, trans. by A. Rodzińska-Chojnowska, Warszawa, 2012, 12. Hence, even if Minutoli's *Vorbilder* was still in its preparatory phase in 1853, Beyer should have seen some parts of the book in 1855 when he came back to Liegnitz for the second time.



FIG.3. *Vorbilder für Handwerker und Fabrikanten*, 1855, Volume 1, Instalment 2, Plate 9. From the collection of the British Library, London (photo: A. Fedorowicz-Jackowska)



FIG.4. Album de l'exposition des objets d'art et d'antiquité, 1856, Plate VI. From the collection of the National Library of Poland, Warsaw (Public Domain)



FIG.5. *Vorbilder für Handwerker und Fabrikanten*, 1855, Volume 1, Instalment 4, Plate 24. From the collection of the British Library, London (photo: A. Fedorowicz-Jackowska)

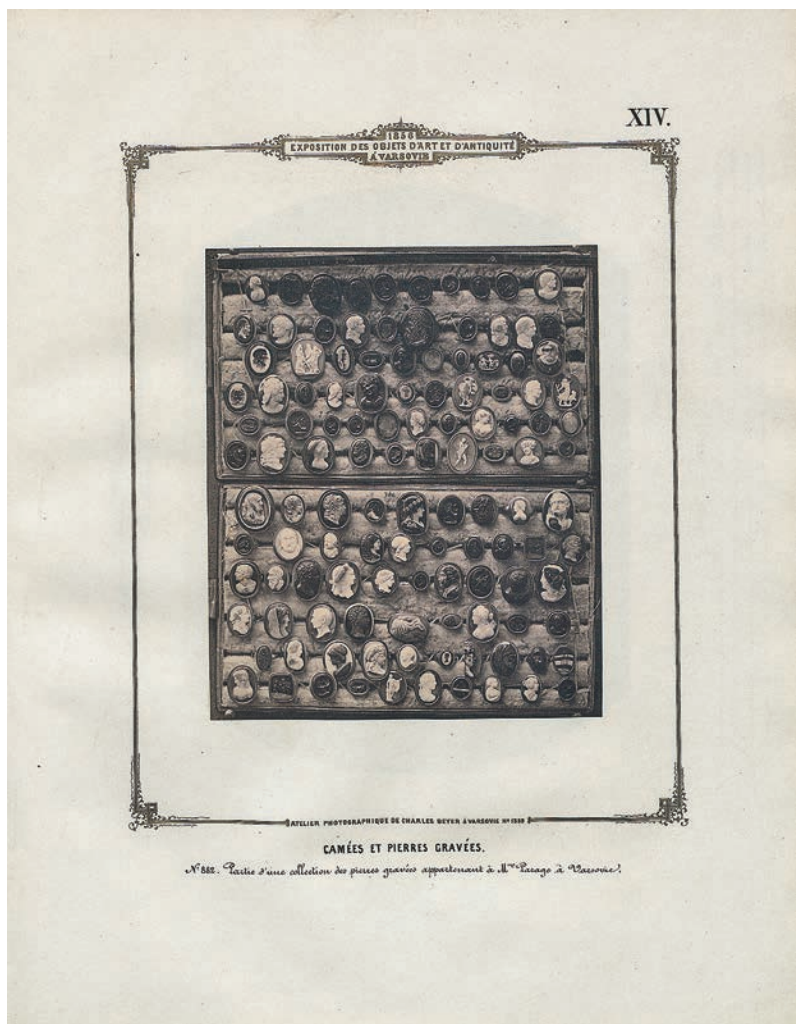


FIG.6. *Album de l'exposition des objets d'art et d'antiquité*, 1856, Plate XIV. From the collection of the National Library of Poland, Warsaw (Public Domain)

above (figures 5 and 6) or numerous variations of more or less similar compositions with pottery and porcelain, glass and stone work (figures 3 and 9). However, while Minutoli and Belitsky were praised in the *Deustches Kunstblatt* for their use of photography as a fitting new research tool, Beyer allows the viewer to trace in the pictures his experience as a studio photographer, where he worked with requisites and various backdrops, arranging the setup according to a certain agenda and with a clear representational purpose. The most evident of his involvement with studio photography, and somehow disturbing amongst all the still life compositions, is the carte-de-viste-like plate III with a handsome model wearing a seventeenth-century bronze hauberk and a pickaxe (figure 7).²⁹ Further in the book, in the plate number XXX, a seventeenth-century dressing table with mirror and a gilt-bronze sewing table decorated with Sèvres porcelain plaques are set in a very domestic environment (figure 8). The surfaces are draped in fabrics, the composition framed by oleander, one potted cactus euphorbia on the left, and philodendron and geranium on the right. The arrangement is animated by the inclusion of cleverly chosen and set up objects including one ivory figurine, a silver and pearl jewellery holder in the form of a figure bearing fruits, and a gold and chalcedony cup with a saucer.

Beyer's book - when compared with its Prussian predecessor - seems also much more user-friendly, to borrow a word from our twentieth-first-century vocabulary. Each photographed object has its own handwritten identification number and there's always a caption beneath the image which informs the viewer about the genealogy of the photographed object. Add to that the lithographed gold frame used by Beyer to enrich the simple layout of the book's pages and the photographed object is somehow transformed. The examples of techniques,

29 One finds a similar photograph in Minutoli's *Vorbilder* (plate 93, volume 6, in the British Library copy of the book) and later in the nineteenth century, for example, in: *Album dzieł sztuki zastosowanej do przemysłu z wystawy urządzonej przez Muzeum przemysłu i rolnictwa w Warszawie, 1881 r.*, Warszawa, 1883, plate LXXX. There is a question then, whether this type of photographic composition's origins is with studio photography or rather it was a conventionalized exhibition practice. I am grateful to Ewa Manikowska for this remark.

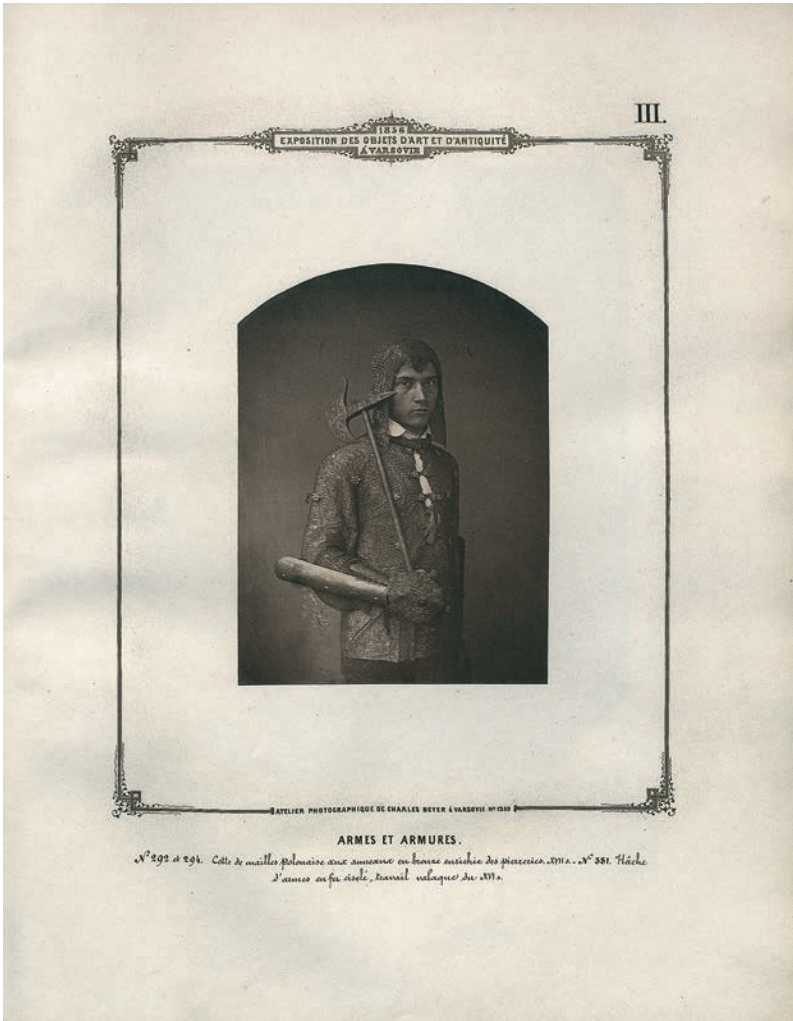


FIG.7. *Album de l'exposition des objets d'art et d'antiquité*, 1856, Plate XIV. From the collection of the National Library of Poland, Warsaw (Public Domain)



FIG.8. Album de l'exposition des objets d'art et d'antiquité, 1856, Plate XIV. From the collection of the National Library of Poland, Warsaw (Public Domain)



FIG.9. *Album de l'exposition des objets d'art et d'antiquité*, 1856, Plate XIV. From the collection of the National Library of Poland, Warsaw (Public Domain)

materials, and style become monuments of art and realise some deeper symbolic meaning.³⁰

The dressing table from plate number XXX is not just any dressing table. It features the coat of arms of the queen consort to the Polish king Jan III Sobieski and the Polish emblem. The gold and chalcedony

30 Objects become monuments when they are involved in historical events or are presented as such, for example, at the exhibition or in the book. The organisation of the exhibition of the Polish monuments of art and antiquities seemed impossible in Warsaw, the capital city of the Kingdom of Poland, which in the mid-century was marginalised as a part of the Russian Empire and subjected to its anti-Polish policy. It seems interesting to point out that in 1858 in Kraków, a part of the Habsburg monarchy, the Exhibition of Antiquities and Monuments of Art (as opposed to the Warsaw exhibition of 'objects of art') opened its doors to the public. The exhibition was inspired by the Warsaw event and was similarly photographed by Beyer, see K. Beyer, *Album fotograficzne wystawy starożytności i zabytków sztuki urządzonej przez c.k. Towarzystwo Naukowe w Krakowie 1858 i 1859 r.*, Warszawa, 1859.

cup from the same plate belonged to Stanisław Małachowski, the first Prime Minister of Poland. Furthermore, plates number XVI and XXVIII refer to the Battle of Vienna, which was the crowning and final achievement of the Polish protection of Europe against 'barbarian' enemies, when the Polish king led the Polish army to rescue Vienna from the Turks. The plate number XVI shows an oval gold-plated salver embossed with a scene of the triumphant entry of Jan III Sobieski into the city of Kraków. Plate XXVIII presents an ebony cabinet inlaid with tortoise shell and ivory. The piece of furniture is adorned with the Sobieski's coat of arms. The photograph's caption informs that the cabinet was a gift to the Polish king from Pope Innocent XI following the 1683 siege and the liberation of Vienna.³¹

CONCLUSION. BETWEEN HISTORY AND INDUSTRY

Exhibition objects as presented by Beyer in his album were less concerned with good pattern designs or the industry sector, which at that time was practically non-existent in the Kingdom of Poland, but first and foremost carried information to the reader about the finest points of the Polish history. Beyer knew, just like the exhibition organisers did, that the matters of composition and style, even the advanced technology, were secondary in the Polish mid-nineteenth-century context.³² What accounted for any cultural initiative's success at the time was whether the said cultural undertaking answered to the need of the society at large for the national distinction.

While Alexander von Minutoli, a Prussian government official, operated from the position of power, Beyer first and foremost was a businessman and he ran a business enterprise, so he had to ask himself a

31 The decision to include in the album the cabinet received from Pope Innocent XI could have triggered the memory of a careful Polish reader of other papal gifts to Sobieski, which were at this point already confiscated and moved to Saint Petersburg, see F. Pułaski (ed.), *Pamiętki polskie na obczyźnie 1* (1907), p. 9.

32 Beyer's involvement in the exhibition did not end with the book. Not only did he exhibited numerous works from his own collection, he was also actively involved in the preparations of a catalogue of all exhibits included in the show (responsible mainly for the section with antiquities), see *Katalog wystawy starożytności i przedmiotów sztuki 1856 urządzanej w Pałacu Jw. hr. Augustostwa Potockich w Warszawie na Krakowskim-Przedmieściu na korzyść Domu Schronienia Opieki Najświętszej Maryi Panny*, Warszawa, 1856, pp. v-vi.

question how best present the book so that it would sell well and how to do it so that the book would be a success in different social, economic and political contexts.³³

If the way the Polish press spoke of the Minutoli collection in Liegnitz is any telltale sign of interests and needs of the Polish audience, it would seem that the subject is interesting inasmuch as it is about Polish things and answers to the 'Polish question' of the country's past or future independent existence.

Whenever mentioning Minutoli, Polish journalists focused on two things: the collection display and the fact that it included also Polish monuments of art. The author of one of the articles felt even compelled to make an entirely unexpected for this type of text footnote and explain how the collection represents also the history of the duchies of Silesia once ruled by the Polish Piast dynasty³⁴. Similar preoccupations with Polish objects can be seen in the published overview and reviews concerning the 1856 Warsaw exhibition. For example, in a small booklet with a historical account of the objects on display one finds out that the examples of Chinese art, which were presented at the exhibition, 'will not be even mentioned in this overview because as such they are not of interest'.³⁵ Furthermore, the author of an exhibition review in one of the Warsaw newspapers when discussing plate number XXVII from *Album* felt the need to rationalise the decision to include there a French (not Polish!) artwork. The 'offense' was excused on account of the work's exquisite finish and the beauty of the composition.³⁶

33 In the end, the story of Beyer's involvement with the photographic book is marked by failure, given that many of his ideas for photographically illustrated books were never realised due to the lack of sufficient subscribers. He complained about the Polish readers' indifference as early as December 1859, see *Gazeta Warszawska* 330 (13 December 1859), p. 6.

34 "Korespondencja Gazety Warszawskiej (Listy Wędrowca)", *Gazeta Warszawska* 203 (6 August 1857), 5; "Część literacko-artystyczna. Minutolego zbiór przedmiotów sztuki i starożytności w Lignicy", *Czas* 176 (3 August 1859), 1-2. Interestingly, Minutoli's collection was described in the *Czas* as a collection of 'art and industry produce', using the wording reserved typically for agricultural nomenclature and bringing to mind, for example, the title of the Exhibition of Handicrafts and Agricultural Produce organised in Warsaw in 1857.

35 B. Podczaszyński, *Przegląd historyczny starożytności krajowych z powodu wystawy urządzonej w Warszawie w roku 1856 w pałacu JW. hr. Aug. Potockich*, Warszawa, 1857, p. 78.

36 *Gazeta Warszawska* 288 (1856), p. 5.

The link between print and nation remains strong and the Polish print culture of the nineteenth century is clearly nation-based.³⁷ Beyer capitalised on the moment. In his book he used and expanded the 1856 Warsaw exhibition's narrative. His clear association of objects with events in the album's captions acted as fuel for the creation of monuments as memorials of the nation's past, its previous glory, military prowess, and cultural taste. In that sense, the book was both ideological and commercial, in accordance to the exhibition's organizers it also aspired to be scientific.³⁸ However, it was clear that Beyer also looked for alternative readings and channels of distribution for his publication.

The organisers of the 1857 Warsaw Exhibition of Handicrafts and Agricultural Produce awarded Beyer and his work for 'the popularisation and technical improvements to the photographic art'.³⁹ In the catalogue of the exhibition one reads a praise for Beyer that both in form and content is similar to one Minutoli and Belitski received for *Vorbilder*.⁴⁰ Clearly, Beyer's book could not be presented as patriotic, or significant from the national perspective, while being applauded in the context of the officially organised exhibition, which sole purpose was to mark the Russian Empire's - in its expanding borders - place

37 In the chapter 'Books in nation' Trish Loughran describes in a brilliant and concise manner how the book and the nation came to be synonymous in history and the literature, see T. Loughran, "Books in nation", in: L. Howsam (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the History of Book*, Cambridge, 2015, pp. 36-52.

38 The exhibition was accompanied by two publications: Beyer's *Album* and a comprehensive list of works printed in the official exhibition catalogue *Katalog wystawy starożytności i przedmiotów sztuki 1856 urządzona w Pałacu Jw. hr. Augustostwa Potockich w Warszawie na Krakowskim-Przedmieściu na korzyść Domu Schronienia Opieki Najświętszej Maryi Panny*, Warszawa, 1856.

39 *Kurier Warszawski* 203 (4 August 1858), 1085. The 1857 exhibition in Warsaw clearly followed example of other national and international exhibitions that were being organised all over Europe. It was the third exhibition of a similar character organised in the Russian Empire, the first was organised in Saint Petersburg, the second was held in Moscow, see *Opis wystawy WYROBÓW RĘKODZIELNICZYCH I PŁODÓW ROLNICZYCH ODBYTEJ W WARSZAWIE 1857 r.*, Warszawa, 1860, p. 1. The 1857 exhibition was also the first exhibition in the Polish lands to include photographic works, see W. Mossakowska, *Początki fotografii w Warszawie (1833-1863)*, vol. 1, pp. 71-72.

40 W. Lübke, "Photographisches Werk", *Kunstblatt. Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, Baukunst und Kunsthandwerk* 30 (27 July 1854), pp. 266-267.



FIG.10. *Album photographique de l'artiste et de l'amateur*, 1851, Instalment 6, Plate 17.
From the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles (Public Domain)

on the map of Europe in the industrial age. Here Beyer advertised and received the well-deserved acknowledgement of his expertise as a photographer-technician.⁴¹ Furthermore, around 1859 he sold his album to the Imperial Public Library with a 10% discount of the original price.⁴² In this case the book was advertised as fitting addition to the art section of the library – a material proof and a representative of the high level of professional photography in the Russian Empire. Moreover, the British Museum, which purchased Beyer's book as early as September 1860 could hardly have been interested in this publication solely because of its patriotic imprint or information it provided about the Polish history. Clearly, in the British context Beyer's photographically illustrated publication answers to a more universal set of concerns, such as the international discussion on decorative art and the idea to use it for the improvement of industrial design.⁴³

This article aimed to show that by placing the book such as Beyer's *Album wystawy starożytności i przedmiotów sztuki* next to similar books published around that time and circulating within the same social network, stimulated by correspondence, press coverage, and exhibitions, new meanings are revealed with every subsequent reading. In Beyer's case, the careful reading of the periodical press and archival material will point not only to Minutoli's handbook of good design practices, which was discussed in this article, but also reveals that Blanquard-Evrard's album was in Beyer's studio in Warsaw for the visi-

41 *Opis wystawy WYROBÓW Rękodzielniczych i Plodów Rolniczych odbytej w Warszawie 1857 r.*, Warszawa, 1860, p. 309.

42 Antoni Iwanowski to Karol Beyer, 20 February 1859, *Korespondencja Karola Beyera*, MF33513, National Library of Poland. Iwanowski was a junior librarian at the Imperial Public Library in Saint Petersburg. Favourable to Poles, he advised Beyer how to best present his work to the director of the Imperial Library and in his correspondence, he confirms the purchase of Beyer's publications. They are listed in a specialized catalogue of the library compiled in 1885, see V. Stasov, *Fotograficheskie i fototipicheskie kolekcii Imperatorskoj publichnoj biblioteki*, St Petersburg, 1885, p. 162. I would like to thank Ewa Manikowska for introducing me to Stasov's work.

43 In addition to his Warsaw album, Beyer sent (sold?) to the British Museum also a copy of the album he produced for the Exhibition of Antiquities and Monuments of Art in Cracow, see footnote 30 in this article. I am indebted to Anthony Hamber who helped me decipher the meaning behind the British Museum's inventory numbers.

tors and clients to see already in 1853 (figure 10).⁴⁴ From the contemporary press coverage one will also find out about Maxime du Camp's album *Égypte, Nubie, Syrie: Paysages et Monuments*⁴⁵, and the 'American antiquities book' by Violet-le-Duc and Desire Charnay describing their journey to North America and Mexico.⁴⁶ Situating photographically illustrated publications in relation to the multitude of other texts and visual materials which circulated in the nineteenth century helps the researcher to expand his or her investigative standpoint.

The only useful way to think of nineteenth-century publications illustrated with photographs, such as the two presented in this article, is not in terms of uniqueness and individual authorship or national origins, but instead one should look for patterns of imitation or else networks of references and quotations. The complexity of the photographic medium and its uses in the nineteenth century suggest that the subject requires careful study and discussion which will express multiple standpoints rather than a singular point of view that characterises disciplines such as history of photography.

SUMMARY

Karol Beyer (1818-1877), a Warsaw based antiquarian and photographer by vocation, self-published his first photographically illustrated publication in 1856. His work also became the first photographically illustrated book published and marketed in the Polish lands. The full-leather album with 30 hand-mounted salted paper prints showed photographed artefacts from the Exhibition of Antiquities and Monuments of Art in Warsaw. In its scope, it was concurrently ideological and commercial.

44 B. Podczaszyński, "Kronika sztuk i przemysłu", *Gazeta Warszawska* 6 (1853), 4. Most probably this reference concerns L.D. Blanquart-Evrard, *Album photographique de l'artiste et de l'amateur*, Bar-sur-Seine, 1851.

45 "Kronika z Paryża literacka, naukowa i artystyczna", *Biblioteka Warszawska* 2 (1854), 130-134, concerns M. du Camp, *Egypte, Nubie, Palestine et Syrie*, Paris, 1852. Du Camp's photographs were printed by Blanquart-Evrard.

46 *Tygodnik Poznański* 9 (28 February 1862), pp. 70-71, concerns D. Charnay and E.E. Violet-le-Duc, *Cités et ruines américaines: Mitla, Palenqué, Izamal, Chichen-Itza, Uxmal*, Paris, 1862.

As a business enterprise, the album will be considered as a means of exploiting financially the wish for national distinction in a time when Poland was erased from the political landscape of Europe. However, instead of a solely nation-based reading of the Beyer's book, the author will turn to international discussion on the nature of decorative or applied art and the idea to use it for the improvement of industrial design. Drawing on archival material and periodical press, this article presents Beyer's early undertakings in the context of the exhibiting activity and publishing ventures of the Institut Minutoli in Liegnitz in Silesia, and specifically, a photographically illustrated volume of *Vorbilder für Handwerker und Fabrikanten*.

KEYWORDS: photographically illustrated publication, nineteenth-century photography, history and industry, printing, nation, Karol Beyer, Alexander von Minutoli