Black Patriotic Fashion in Central Europe: Warsaw, 1861–1866

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on fashion as a tool of research and reflection of social, cultural and political processes and of various transnational influences in a nineteenth century European city. It highlights the way in which the Polish "People's Mourning" fashion or "Black Fashion" turned into a female tool of protest against the Russian government before and after the Polish January Uprising 1863–1864. It also traces in what mean the creation of certain visual images of the self can reflect not only the daily life of female patriot inhabitants of Warsaw, but rather the process of transformation of local and international political and social ideals into material culture (i.e. attire and accessories). The article focuses both on the visual importance of the items which were related to the mourning fashion, and on the martyrological and eschatological messages, imprinted in the patriotic female mourning attire in the second half of the nineteenth century. Finally, I analyze the political role of this sartorial phenomenon, its philosophical and ideological message both on the personal and public level as well as its transnational connections.

KEYWORDS: fashion, mourning, nationalism, January Uprising, gender

Declaration on Possible Conflicts of Interest
The author has declared that no conflicts of interest exist.

Funding Statement
The author received no specific funding for this work.

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Black Patriotic Fashion in Central Europe: Warsaw, 1861–1866 – ZfO / JECES 72/2023/2
(received 2021-07-01, accepted 2022-01-24)
DOI: 10.25627/202372211340 – eISSN 2701-0449, ISSN 0948-8294

Since the dawn of civilization, attire has been broadly used not only as a necessary body covering, but also as a powerful social and political tool. At different times, various groups and individuals have become the subjects of dress prescriptions, restrictions, and regulations. Weddings and celebrations, births and burials, and the whole range of human emotions associated with such events, were (and still are) strictly sartorialized. At the same time, attire has played an active role in allowing people to express their views, and to show support for or criticize the existing order. In religion and politics, dress was (and still is) broadly used as a key element of mass propaganda. Since the visualization of messages directed at audiences of supporters is an essential part of every political ideology, and the connection between dress and politics is far from being new, broad research has been undertaken on the topic of ideological and political usage of attire by various countries and governments in different historical periods.[1]

Fashion can be a useful lens in research because it reflects social, cultural and political processes, as well as transnational influences within a city, and the transformation of local and international political and social ideals into material culture (through attire and accessories). Extensive research has been done on this topic all over the world, which underlines how the relationship between politics and fashion is a global phenomenon. For instance, in her famous book *Nazi Chic*, Irene Guenther focuses on the meaning of sartorial ideology during the National Socialist time.[2] Lou Taylor and Dominique Veillon focus on the same period of World War II in France in general and in Paris in particular, while Anat Helman deals with the ideological meaning of dress in the young state of Israel, and Christoph Breward analyzes the history of London through the prism of fashion.[3]

On 3 October 2016 was proclaimed "Black Monday," first in Poland and then across the world. On this day, hundreds of thousands of Polish women left their workplaces and joined huge demonstrations in Warsaw, Kraków, Poznań, and other cities, wearing black clothes. The protest was organized in response to the governmental ban on abortions, which was passed on the first call that year. A year earlier, in 2015, the new Polish government had failed to pass the ban.[4] The second attempt, however, proved to be more successful. According to the organizers of the demonstration, this piece of legislation

1 For instance, ALEXANDER MAXWELL: Patriots against Fashion: Clothing and Nationalism in Europe's Age of Revolutions, London 2014; DJURDJA BARTLETT: FashionEast: The Spectre that Haunted Socialism, London 2010.

2 IRENE GUENTHER: Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich, Oxford 2004.

3 LOU TAYLOR, MARIE MCLOUGHLIN: Paris Fashion and World War Two: Global Diffusion and Nazi Control, London 2020; DOMINIQUE VEILLON: Fashion under the Occupation, Oxford 2002; ANAT HELMAN: A Coat of Many Colors: Dress Culture in the Young State of Israel, Boston 2011; CHRISTOPHER BREWARD: Fashioning London: Clothing and the Modern Metropolis, Oxford 2004.

4 https://tvn24.pl/polska/sejm-odrzucil-projekt-ustawy-zaostrzajacej-przepisy-aborcyjne-ra576201-3311768 (2020-03-04).

represented a move by the government to take control over women's bodies and lives and a death sentence for many who would be forced to undergo a full-term pregnancy that endangered their lives. The protest proved successful, and the new law was rejected and postponed until the next attempt in October 2020, when the government decided to ban nearly all abortions.[5]

"Black Monday" or, as it was also called, the "Black Protest" turned out to be an event in which women of all professions and ages across the whole country participated, along with many men, not to mention the support of various media outlets. Thus, black dress appeared as a symbol of political protest among Polish women.

However, this was not the first time in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that women left their workplaces and used their clothing as a tool of protest. Other prominent examples include the case of the Icelandic women who went on strike declaring their importance beyond housework and childcare on 24 October 1975, the Women's International Solidarity against War (or simply "Women in Black" movement), which started in Israel in 1988, and the "Women's March" on 21 January 2017, which was a protest against the sexist statements of the newly inaugurated Donald Trump, where participants wore so-called "pussy hats."[6] In recent years, Polish women have also connected to the protest practiced by their great grandmothers through dress more than 150 years ago.[7]

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5 Polska: Minął już rok—orzeczenie w sprawie aborcji krzywdzi kobiety. Rocznica w cieniu nieustających ataków na prawa kobiet i praworządność [Poland: One Year Has Passed—Abortion Ruling Hurts Women: Anniversary Overshadowed by Continued Attacks on Women's Rights and the Rule of Law], in: Human Rights Watch from 2021-10-21, https://www.hrw.org/pl/news/2021/10/21/380183 (2023-03-01). KATARZYNA BIELINSKA-KOWALWSKA: #czarnyprotest: The Black Protest for Abortion Rights in Poland, in: New Politics 16 (2017), 2, pp. 53–60; ELŻBIETA KOROLCZUK: Explaining "Mass Protests" against Abortion Ban in Poland: The Power of Connective Action, in: Zoon Politikon 7 (2016), pp. 91–113.

6 KIRSTIE BREWER: The Day Iceland's Women Went on Strike, in: BBC News from 2015-10-23, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-34602822 (2020-03-04); Iceland: Strike, in: Off Our Backs 15 (1985), 11, p. 6; ELIZABETH CURRANS: Demonstrating Peace Countertopographically: Women in Black's Solidarity at a Distance, in: Women's Studies Quarterly 42 (2014), 3/4, pp. 103–118; SARA HELMAN, TAMARA RAPOPORT: Women in Black: Challenging Israel's Gender and Socio-Political Orders, in: The British Journal of Sociology 48 (1997), 4, pp. 681–700; GILA SVIRSKY: Local Coalitions, Global Partners: The Women's Peace Movement in Israel and Beyond, in: Signs 29 (2004), 2: Development Cultures: New Environments, New Realities, New Strategies, pp. 543–550; JOANNA NIKAS: What 11 Protesters Wore to the Women's March on Washington, in: The New York Times from 2017-01-23, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/23/style/what-11-protesters-wore-to-the-womens-march-on-washington.html (2020-03-04).

7 See KOROLCZUK; ANNA NOVIKOV: Hanashim Be Shahor Shel' Varsha [The Women in Black of Warsaw], in: Haaretz from 2016-10-23.

The phenomenon of "black fashion" was a politically motivated initiative that developed in various areas of partitioned Poland during the "People's Mourning" period and involved the wearing of mourning clothes and jewelry. Warsaw became a center of the movement and of so-called "black fashion." This article traces the local phenomenon of mourning fashion, which became a public and gendered political statement and was part of the global transnational nineteenth-century fascination with mourning fashion and rites, the elaboration of which became easier due to the impact of the Industrial Revolution. The article analyzes visual and material sources, traces how the People's Mourning period and its fashion became on a local level a frame for this transnational mourning culture, and examines the process whereby local ideological (symbolic, messianic and eschatological) content was channeled into a global fashion trend.

It highlights the way in which the Polish people's mourning fashion or "black fashion," which included clothing and jewelry, turned into a tool of protest used by women against the Russian authorities before and after the Polish January Uprising of 1863/64. The article is based on three different kinds of sources: a) visual sources, such as paintings and photographs produced by the most prominent artists, which depicted scenes of the Russian authorities' violence, daily life during the People's Mourning period, and images of the January Uprising, and therefore became famous during this time period; b) material artefacts, including fabrics and jewelry; c) written sources, encompassing contemporary newspapers, fashion magazines, and literature. It focuses both on the visual importance of items related to mourning fashion, and on the martyrological and eschatological messages imprinted in the patriotic mourning attire of women in the second half of the nineteenth century. Finally, I analyze the political role of this sartorial phenomenon and its ideological message both at a personal and public level within a transnational and global mourning fashion context.

Previous research done on this topic, for instance by Polish scholars Aleksandra Krypczyk, Anna Maria Bauer and Małgorzata Możdżyńska-Nawotka, analyzes material artefacts, photographs and periodicals from the 1860s and describes the history of black fashion.[8] Mostly it focuses on the reasons behind its appearance, its dynamics during the several years of its existence, describing the daily life of patriotic women of Warsaw, its political

[8] ALEKSANDRA KRYPCZYK: Czarna sukienka: Wizerunek Polki w twórczości Artura Grottgera [Black Dress: The Image of Polish Women in the Art of Artur Grottger], in: Rozprawy Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie, Nowa Seria 5 (2012), pp. 117–136; ANNA MARIA BAUER: Moda na czarną biżuterię [Black Jewelry Fashion], in: Niepodległość i Pamięć 21 (2014), 1–2 (45–46), pp. 53–72; DANIEL BRZESZCZ: Rosyjskie haki, polskie krynoliny: Żałoba narodowa 1863 roku [Russian Hooks, Polish Crinolines: The 1863 People's Mourning], in: JUSTYNA JAWORSKA, KLAUDIA RACHUBIŃSKA et al. (eds.): Bądźmy realistami, żądajmy niemożliwego Utopie i fantazje w modzie i dizajnie, Warszawa 2014, pp. 118–124, here p. 122; MAŁGORZATA MOŻDŻYŃSKA-NAWOTKA: O modach i strojach [About Fashion and Outfits], Wrocław 2002.

meaning within the Polish society, and its international background. However, focusing mostly on the Polish context, this research does not link the "black fashion" phenomenon to the global nineteenth-century *Zeitgeist* around mourning rites, nor does it analyze deeply the material and symbols it used or their link to the international background. Rather, based on this extensive research as well as on additional visual and written sources and on research literature, the article elaborates on the transnational character of black fashion, its link to the European culture of death and grief perception, and on its martyrological and eschatological philosophical meaning.

The "Mourning Century" and the People's Mourning

The second half of the nineteenth century was a time when visual images and appearance, first and foremost dress and accessories, became increasingly influential as transmitters of messages about people's social and ideological position. After the 1848 Springtime of Nations, in the age of national revival on the one hand and of technological development on the other, various styles of dress were adopted throughout Europe that demonstrated their wearers' affiliation to different patriotic groups.[9] Sometimes, these styles became transnational, spreading from one European state to another and creating various new "fashions." At the same time, during this style migration between different political regimes, a garment, color or accessory could often have a certain meaning in one place and transmit a very different message in another place. Sometimes, elements of foreign attire crossed borders, were "adopted" and combined with elements of local dress to create a new sartorial culture that either carried new political, social and cultural messages or the old ones, borrowed from the original source.[10]

In Poland, black clothing seems to be a quite recent symbol of protest against state violence (for instance in the case of the abovementioned "Women in Black" movement). However, black dress as a symbol of protest in Poland in fact dates back more than 155 years, when women protested

9 MISCHA HONECK: Garibaldi's Shirt: Fashion and the Making and Unmaking of Revolutionary Bodies, in: CHARLOTTE A. LERG, HELENA TOTH (eds.): Transatlantic Revolutionary Cultures, 1789–1861, Leiden 2018, pp. 140–168; MAXWELL; CHARLOTTE JIROUSEK, SARA CATTERALL: Ottoman Dress and Design in the West: A Visual History of Cultural Exchange, Bloomington 2019; ANITA STAMPER, JILL CONDRA: Clothing through American History: The Civil War through the Gilded Age, Santa Barbara 2011, pp. 103–104; DANIEL J. MILLER: American Zouaves, 1859–1959: An Illustrated History, Jefferson 2020.

10 For instance, the "Garibaldi shirts" or Italian-style shirts fashion should be mentioned. These shirts, named after the "red shirt," the hero Garibaldi, became very popular among women in the 1860s. Another example is the "Zouave" military dress, which travelled all the way from Algeria to France and inspired Zouave regiments in British and American armies, while the Zouave jacket became a significant element of female fashion.

against the violence of the Russian authorities in Warsaw. It was a period when nationalistic ideals and ideas of uprising were being created and transformed through the visual prism of Romanticism and through attempts by various groups to unify the population within partitioned Poland. Pursuing ideals of freedom, their aim was to liberate the country, mainly from Russian, but also from Prussian rule. Patriotic outfits and fashion came to play a significant role in this, as well as anything that used symbols and visual language that could unify the Polish people into an independent nation.

Most of the events that brought about the People's Mourning movement and, in turn, the black fashion phenomenon took place in the Russian-controlled part of Poland, in particular in Warsaw, between 1861 and 1864. During the nineteenth century, two major national insurrections unfolded, both aiming at the restoration of independence. They had a lasting impact on the Polish collective memory. After the Congress of Vienna, Russia turned its Polish territory into a polity known as Congress Poland. In the 1820s, intellectuals in several cities formed societies with the aim of plotting an insurrection. In November 1830, Polish troops in Warsaw and then throughout Congress Poland rose in revolt. After almost a year, the resistance failed, and many fighters went into exile in France. The second uprising began in January 1863 and lasted until the last insurgents were captured in 1864–1865. Before, during and after the collapse of the Uprising, the Russian authorities executed almost 400 insurgents and exiled to Siberia almost 19,000. In total, the Russian authorities imprisoned or exiled about 70,000 people, deporting many to remote regions of the Russian Empire.

The period of People's Mourning started already in 1861, before the Uprising took place, with patriotic, anti-Russian protests taking place in Warsaw. After one such protest on 27 February, Russian soldiers killed five people. A few days later, their funerals turned into yet another demonstration, where thousands of people of different religious confessions and political beliefs came together to protest against Russian rule. The next massacre took place in April, when about 100 people were shot during a demonstration. In response to this, in March 1861, it is believed that it was the archbishop of Warsaw Antoni Fijałkowski who officially declared the beginning of the People's Mourning: "Across all the parts of Poland people should wear black for an unlimited time. Ladies should wear white only on the day of their wedding."[11] From then on, the inhabitants of Warsaw, especially women, started to wear modest long-sleeved and high-collared black clothes. However, men soon had to stop wearing black and patriotic clothes because of the danger of punishment from the authorities. Therefore, the symbolic opposition reflected in mourning dress and jewelry became the females' prerogative and turned into a gendered protest.

[11] KRYPCZYK, p. 125.

According to the requirements of "black fashion" at this time, ladies were to wear mourning dresses, which had to be simple and black, or white on their wedding day, and their hairstyles were very basic: either modest knots or braids, which again had to be reminiscent of the old Polish style, or eventually half-mourning ones as black and white dresses among the little girls. No jewelry was worn, with the exception of so-called "black jewelry," often made from simple materials, symbolizing the suffering of the people. Usually, these included crosses or national symbols, and sometimes chains which recalled *kajdanki*, the handcuffs of the Polish prisoners.[12] Although the period of People's Mourning was proclaimed as "unlimited," and for some it only ended when the Second Polish Republic was created, its visual expressions took place mostly before and during 1866. Thus, the female patriots of Warsaw regarded themselves as the widows of the Polish heroes who fell during the Uprising against Russian rule and, moreover, of the whole suppressed Polish nation.

The patriotic phenomenon of Polish black fashion was part of a broader European interest in mourning fashion. In 1861, two key events took place that influenced this trend. The first was the death of Prince Albert in the United Kingdom on 14 December and the second was the period of People's Mourning in the Polish lands. On the one hand, both events transferred the issue of mourning from the private to the public sphere, shifting grief from a personal to a group emotion, which had the effect of emphasizing the individuals' sense of group belonging. On the other hand, the visual expressions of this grief were used politically, either in order to support the existing regime (as in the case of the United Kingdom) or in order to protest it.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, technological developments meant that ideological and patriotic garments could be manufactured with more ease and speed. The increased amount of patriotic clothing on the one hand, and constantly developing patriotic ideologies on the other, assisted in the growing distribution of patriotic fashions. First of all, the process of producing garments became easier and much more mass-oriented, which caused a decline in the prices of certain fabrics, clothes and accessories.[13] This in turn allowed increasingly broad sectors of the population to be able to purchase and adapt these items to serve their ideological aims and emphasize their belonging to certain social or patriotic groups, also in the lands of partitioned Poland.

Secondly, due to the constant improvement and development of transport, the transfer of goods became easier. This enabled fashions to spread across Europe faster and reach the remotest areas. Finally, the development of pho-

12 BRZESZCZ, pp. 119–124.

13 CHRISTOPHER BREWARD: The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, Fashion, and City Life, 1860–1914, Manchester 1999; Textile History 28 (1997), 1: Special Issue on the History of the Ready-Made Clothing Industry; NANCY L. GREEN: Ready-to-Wear and Ready to Work: A Century of Industry in Paris and New York, Durham 1997.

tography and printing techniques together with growing opportunities for their distribution enabled ideological images and messages to be disseminated widely and quickly through illustrated periodicals, which in turn assisted in the spreading of various patriotic fashions.

During this time, art and sculpture (and later on also photography) came to play a key role in conveying patriotic messages. Some of these drawings, paintings and objects visually emphasized the importance of patriotic attire through symbols, colors and forms. All these visual messages were supposed to unify the inhabitants of the former Polish lands (the "ideal" Polish frontiers were actively discussed by various nationalist movements during the first half of the nineteenth century) and were part of a vision to establish a future Polish nation of independent citizens.[14] These visual depictions made by the followers of Romantic nationalism, most notably paintings, emphasized the ideology of their creators: unification of various population groups under a single, noble aim: freedom and independence. Depending on the party and its agenda, these included various social groups that shared the same Polish ethnic origin, a number of Slavic groups, a unified Catholic population, or different ethnic groups, for instance Jews.[15] However, the Romantic nationalist direction of the first half of the nineteenth century (for instance the federalism of Joachim Lelewel, which was followed by the Young Poland movement and was also supported by the Polish emigres), which extended the influence of Romanticism from art and literature to encompass nationalism as well, promoted the new idea of a Polish nation based on citizenship[16]. This Romantic nationalist ideology still existed in the period of the January Uprising and some of its supporters, eager to restore the old model of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, aimed to avoid ethnonationalism, giving the possibility of the inclusion of new population groups (such as Jews and peasants for instance), which came to replace the old "patriotic noble" citizenship idea that existed in Poland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[17] This change

[14] SERHIY BILENKY: Romantic Nationalism in Eastern Europe: Russian, Polish, and Ukrainian Political Imaginations, Stanford 2012, pp. 103–181; NORMAN DAVIES: God's Playground: A History of Poland. Vol. II: 1795 to the Present, Oxford 2005, pp. 3–40. More on national romanticism and national heroism in: MIROSLAV HROCH: National Romanticism, in: BALÁZS TRENCSÉNYI, MICHAL KOPEČEK (eds.): National Romanticism: The Formation of National Movements, Budapest—New York 2007 (Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe (1770–1945), 2), pp. 4–18.

[15] DAVIES, pp. 3–40.

[16] HROCH.

[17] JOHN CONNELLY: From Peoples into Nations: A History of Eastern Europe, Princeton—Oxford 2020, pp. 54–55, 130–156; ILYA PRIZEL: National Identity and Foreign Policy: Nationalism and Leadership in Poland, Russia and Ukraine, Cambridge 1998, pp. 41–47; BILENKY, pp. 17–43; TIMOTHY SNYDER: The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569–1999, New Haven 2003, pp. 1–14; DAVIES, pp. 3–40.

was stressed by visualizing these "new" groups of the Polish population appearing together with the bourgeoisie and nobility. This visual change came about during the time of ideological romanticized strengthening of Polish-Jewish relations (1861–1863) and created the image of a somewhat idyllic or utopic fraternity between Poles and Jews, which appeared if not always, at least as an element within the nationalist ideologies that led to the January Uprising.[18]

As for the Jewish component of the Polish nation, Polish Romantic national ideology during this period emphasized the active participation of the Jews of Warsaw in the political demonstrations taking place in the spring of 1861. This ideology was depicted in several paintings and emphasized a desire for fraternity.[19]

Patriotic Dress and Iconography

Famous paintings by two patriotic painters of this period, Henryk Pilatti and Alexander Lesser (who himself was of Jewish origin), depict the funeral of the so-called "five fallen" in March 1861. Both paintings stress the unification of various groups of the Polish population, first and foremost of Catholic priests, Jews and Protestants. This was supposed to represent symbolically the unification of different communities of citizens of Warsaw at this time. A prominent role in this unification is given to the rabbis of the city, who in turn represent the unification of different currents of Judaism. Thus, Izaak Kramsztyk, who held the position of rabbi of the city's Reform community is clearly depicted in the Jewish Reform dress (which was regarded as relatively modern and Western European in style, similar to the official attire of the German rabbis of this time, such as Abraham Geiger), while Dov Beer Meisels, the Orthodox chief rabbi of Warsaw (who had previously been a chief rabbi and member of the City Council of Kraków as well as a participant of the Kraków Uprising of 1846) appears wearing what would have been considered more traditional Jewish attire (a rather Hassidic costume that includes a long garment and a fur hat). In both paintings, the rabbis accompany the Archbishop of Warsaw. Another popular and very symbolic motif was the depiction of the death of Jewish student Michał Landy, who took part in the April protests. After a priest who was holding a cross next to him was shot,

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18 BRIAN PORTER: When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland, Oxford 2000, pp. 37–42. For more on the controversial debates on the image and the role of Jews in the January Uprising, see JOANNA B. MICHLIC: Poland's Threatening Other: The Image of the Jew from 1880 to the Present, Lincoln 2006.

19 AGNIESZKA JAGODZIŃSKA: Pomiędzy: Akulturacja żydów Warszawy w drugiej połowie XIX wieku [In-between: Acculturation of Warsaw Jews in the Second Half of the 19th Century], Wrocław 2008.

Fig. 1: Aleksander Lesser: The Funeral of the Five Fallen (Pogrzeb Pięciu Poległych), 1861. Burial of victims of Polish patriotic manifestations in Warsaw in 1861, https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pi%C4%99ciu_poleg%C5%82ych#/media/Plik:Burial_of_victims_of_Polish_patriotic_manifestations_in_Warsaw_1861 (2022-10-04)

Fig. 2: Henryk Pillati: Mourning of Five Manifestation's Victims in Warsaw, 1861 (Pogrzeb pięciu ofiar manifestacji w Warszawie w roku 1861), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Henryk_Pillati_-_Funeral_of_the_Five_Victims_of_the_Manifestation_of_1861_in_Warsaw_-_MNK_II-a-49_-_National_Museum_Krak%C3%B3w.jpg (2022-10-04)

Michał picked up the cross and continued to carry it until he himself was shot by a Russian soldier.

In his patriotic drawings cycles ("Warsaw I" and "Warsaw II"), Artur Grottger clearly emphasized the motif of unification between peasants, Jews,

and the Polish nobility.[20] Thus, in the picture "Three Ranks: Peasant and Nobleman" (Trzy stany: Chłop i szlachta) from the cycle "Warsaw I" a Polish gentryman, dressed according to the Sarmatian fashion which was supposed to symbolize the greatness of Poland, appears hand in hand with a bourgeois man and with a peasant (who is recognizable due to his traditional long peasant's garment).[21] In "The Warsaw Jews" (Żydzi warszawscy) a tsaddik or rabbi surrounded by his followers appears as a participant of the Polish anti-Russian demonstrations, wearing a red and white patriotic Polish cockade. Other pictures depict a Catholic mass attended by various types of citizens of Warsaw. The painter shows through their attire that bourgeoisie (wearing fashionable clothes), nobility (in Sarmatian attire), peasants (in long garments and kerchiefs) and Jews (in traditional fur hats and robes) are unified in a common prayer.

The second component of Polish nationalism was linked to the romanticization of peasants—a popular nationalist motif in other parts of Europe as well. Nationalist ideology portrayed them as the soul and foundation of the nation and artists included them in their drawings, paintings, and sculptures as an attempt to connect with and portray these ideals.[22]

Thus, in the Polish art of this period (and also later on), peasants were depicted wearing colorful, aesthetically good-looking garments, very often in the style of the peasants from the area of Galicia, who were regarded as fine examples of Polishness. For example, the 1865 painting of Grottger "Cross-

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20 Artur Grottger was one of the most prominent and famous nineteenth-century Polish artists who dedicated a significant number of works to the depiction of Polish patriotism during the uprisings, including a series of black and white panels. See MARIUSZ BRYL: Cykle Artura Grottgera: Poetyka i recepcja [Cycles of Artur Grottger: Poetics and Reception], Poznań 1994; MAGDALENA CZAPSKA-MICHALIK: Artur Grottger, Warszawa 2007.

21 The Orientalist Sarmatian attire was inspired from the Baroque period and became one of the Polish visual national symbols. This dress, which was rather the privilege of the nobility, emphasized the wearer's devotion to the "true" Polish ideals. The most significant traditional elements were: a long robe called a *kontusz*, then a long garment over it, called a *żupan*, then wide trousers, the so-called *szarawary*, together with the Polish cap called *rogatywka* or later *confederatka*. See STANISŁAW GRZYBOWSKI: Sarmatyzm [Sarmatism], Warszawa 1996; ANDRZEJ WASKO: Romantyczny sarmatyzm: Tradycja szlachecka w literaturze polskiej lat 1831–1863 [Romantic Sarmatism: The Noble Tradition in Polish Literature in the Years 1831–1863], Kraków 1995.

22 JOHN PAUL HIMKA: The Construction of Nationality in Galician Rus': Icarian Flights in Almost All Directions, in: RONALD GRIGOR SUNY, MICHAEL D. KENNEDY (eds.): Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation, Ann Arbor 2001, pp. 109–169; KEELY STAUTER-HALSTED: The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848–1914, Ithaca—New York 2004; JOACHIM LELEWEL: Legitimacy of the Polish Nation, in: TRENCSÉNYI/KOPEČEK, pp. 33–41; JAN MOLENDA: The Formation of National Consciousness of the Polish Peasants and the Part They Played in the Regaining of Independence by Poland, in: Acta Poloniae Historica 63–64 (1991), pp. 121–148.

ing the Border" (Przejście_przez_granice), features a handsome peasant girl in Kraków-style attire, who is assisting the insurgents seen in the background of the painting in crossing the border. The girl's clothes hint at her peasant background and the painting demonstrates not only the patriotism of the Polish peasants but also their cooperation with compatriots from the bourgeoisie and nobility.

The red beads (*korale*) worn by the girl became one of the most prominent symbols of Polish folk dress at this time.[23] Thus, both peasant women and ladies of high social rank wore *korale*, which were originally supposed to be made of coral and came from Italy. These beads gained special popularity in Poland and were brought there from Southern Europe across the Tatra Mountains. In his painting, Grottger used both the symbolic meaning of *korale* and their color, which, in combination with the white blouse of the girl and her red skirt, evoked the Polish patriotic red and white colors. Additionally, the girl's black apron symbolized the People's Mourning.

Fig. 3:
Artur Grottger: Crossing the Border (Przejście_przez_granice), https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artur_Grottger#/media/Plik:Przejscie_przez_granice.jpg (2022-10-04)

[23] Teresa Karwicka: Ubiory ludowe w Polsce [People's Attire in Poland], Warszawa 1995, pp. 37, 137; Irena Turnau: Ubiór narodowy w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej [National Dress in the Former Polish Republic], Warszawa 1991, pp. 96, 122; Hipolit Studnicki: Galicya pod względem topograficzno-geograficzno-historycznym [Galicia in Topographical-Geographical-Historical Terms], Lemberg 1869.

The Transnational Impact on the People's Mourning Attire

Despite the patriotic character of the People's Mourning black fashion within the Polish public sphere, the phenomenon of mourning fashion as a patriotic tool used by the people to support or protest against their governors was a subject of intercultural and transnational influence. Its uniqueness in the Polish context could be demonstrated through its clear ideological character. However, the visual aspects of mourning—the wearing of black attire and black jewelry as a group phenomenon—had already long existed in Europe and spread further during the nineteenth century. It is still not entirely clear when the color black first came to unambiguously symbolize mourning. Globally, a variety of colors were associated with death or mourning. For instance, in many nomadic cultures, gold was regarded as the color of death and of burial, while in certain ruling dynasties (for instance in Spain or France) white was the official color of mourning.[24] However, already from the late Middle Ages there are mentions of black as a color of mourning among the aristocracy, while later on black as a mourning color spread to the lower layers of society.[25] In general, in the modern period, black and white as well as combinations of the two became the major colors of mourning (white for females, white elements on black clothes for males, etc.).

In addition, regarding the black items which became fashionable at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the black cast iron jewelry in the fashion of Berlin should be mentioned. This trend of cast iron jewelry, produced in the royal foundries of Berlin and Gleiwitz, was popular from the late eighteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century, favored by Queen Louise and reached its height of popularity in 1813, during the Napoleonic wars.[26] After Napoleon's defeat in Russia, Prussia re-entered the war with France and the citizens of Berlin had to donate their gold and silver jewelry in order to support the war against Napoleon. As a substitute, they received iron jewelry, often fashioned in a neo-gothic style, which was covered with a black lacquer coating in order to prevent corrosion. Sometimes, these jewelry items were

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24 LOU TAYLOR: Mourning Dress: A Costume and Social History, London 2009; MARGARET SCOTT: Medieval Clothing and Costumes: Displaying Wealth and Class in Medieval Times, New York 2004; ELLEN D. REEDER (ed.): Scythian Gold: Treasures from Ancient Ukraine, Baltimore 1999; NICOLA DI COSMO: Ancient China and Its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asian History, Cambridge 2004, pp. 272–274; LARISSA BONFANTE: The Barbarians of Ancient Europe: Realities and Interactions, Cambridge 2011.

25 TAYLOR.

26 SUSANNE GÄNSICKE, YVONNE J. MARKOWITZ: Looking at Jewelry: A Guide to Terms, Styles, and Techniques, Los Angeles 2019, pp. 30–31; GUSTAV LAMPRECHT: The Lamprecht Collection of Cast Iron Art, Birmingham 1941, p. 24; ELISABETH SCHMUTTERMEIER: Cast Iron from Central Europe, 1800–1850, New York 1994; PAUL BAILLEU: Königin Luise: Ein Lebensbild, Cambridge 1940, p. 86; GILBERT LEVINE, LAURA VOOKLES: The Jeweler's Eye: Nineteenth-century Jewelry in the Collection of Nancy and Gilbert Levine, New York 1987, p. 97.

emblazoned with the statement "Gold gab ich für Eisen" (I gave gold for iron), which was supposed to emphasize the patriotism of the donators (this practice was used again during World War I). From time to time, because of its black color, the jewelry was used as mourning accessories, although this was not its original purpose per se as it was primarily worn in order to symbolize patriotism and faithfulness to the motherland, in the same way that Polish patriots adopted this popular European cast iron trend later on.[27]

I assume that the Polish mourning fashion was not only influenced by trends from Berlin, which at this time were popular throughout Europe, with France overtaking Berlin and creating its own cast iron jewelry in the mid-nineteenth century, but also by British mourning fashion, which started in 1861 as well, when Queen Victoria began to wear black clothes after her husband passed away. Black jewelry was also based on the nineteenth-century global trend among the elite, to wear mourning dress and accessories (fabrics, colors, relics of death). It became particularly popular in female fashion, which also brought about new aesthetic influences, especially in the field of jewelry. Moreover, I presume that both the cast iron jewelry and Queen Victoria's mourning style wouldn't have become so fashionable if they had not developed during this "century of mourning attire."[28] One should be careful, however, not to assume too direct an influence of the British mourning fashion on the Polish trend, since the period of Polish People's Mourning began in March 1861, while Prince Albert only passed away in December of that year. Thus, mourning fashion became a European and American trend long before Prince Albert's death. Since the People's Mourning in Poland continued for several years, the global trend of black mourning fashion (and especially the jewelry in the Queen Victoria style), could have influenced the Polish patriots and vice versa, creating a mutual impact in terms of mourning fashion items.[29] It is important to mention that, while in Berlin and Great Britain black fashion and the wearing of black accessories were adopted by

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27 ERNST MÜSEBECK: Gold gab ich für Eisen: Deutschlands Schmach und Erhebung in zeitgenössischen Dokumenten, Briefen, Tagebüchern aus den Jahren 1806–1815, Braunschweig 1998 (reprint of the edition Berlin 1913); L. MÜHLBACH: Napoleon in Deutschland, vol. 3, Berlin 1860, pp. 351–354; GÄNSICKE/MARKOWITZ, pp. 30–31; JEANENNE BELL: Collecting Victorian Jewelry: Identification and Price Guide, Iola 2004.

28 The term had been adopted from the exhibition "Death Becomes Her: A Century of the Mourning Attire" at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, from 2014-10-21 to 2015-02-01, https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2014/death-becomes-her (2022-10-04).

29 DEBORAH LUTZ: Relics of Death in Victorian Literature and Culture, Cambridge 2015; PATRICIA JALLAND: Death in the Victorian Family, Oxford 1999; TAYLOR; KATE STRASDIN: Inside the Royal Wardrobe: A Dress History of Queen Alexandra, London 2017; MARY BRETT: Fashionable Mourning Jewelry, Clothing & Customs, Atglen 2006; JAMES STEVENS CURL: The Victorian Celebration of Death, Thrupp et al. 2001; RICHARD DAVEY: A History of Mourning, London 1848.

the citizens as symbols demonstrating their patriotic feelings, in the case of partitioned Poland in general, and Warsaw in particular, the adaptation of this transnational phenomenon turned into a symbol of protest and of rebellion against the Russian government.

Mourning Fashion and Patriotism

The period of People's Mourning in Warsaw (as well as in other parts of the partitioned Poland) symbolically started after the above-mentioned sermon of Archbishop Fijałkowski, which was a response to the burial of the five fallen at the beginning of March, 1861. After this sermon, the inhabitants of Warsaw started to wear black clothes.

Fig. 4: Artur Grottger: In the Saxon Garden (W Saskim Ogrodzie), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grottger_In_the_Saxon_Garden.jpg (2022-10-04)

According to the conventions of black fashion and also those of the contemporary transnational European and American mourning fashion, females' dresses were supposed to be humble, made of simple textiles, especially crepe, without a hint of vanity or luxury, and be black or white and black in color. As shown in paintings and photographs from this period, hairstyles were also supposed to be modest, either simple knots or braids as we see, for instance, in contemporary studio photographs, in the illustrations of women's magazines, or in the paintings of Grottger from 1863–1864 "In the Saxon Garden" (W Saskim Ogrodzie) and "On the Way to Church" (W drodze do kościoła). In Grottger's paintings, women in mourning for the fallen soldiers

Fig. 5:
Artur Grottger: After the Insurgency: On the Way to Church (Po powstaniu: W drodze do kościoła), https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Artur_Grottger#/media/File:Artur_Grottger_-_Po_powstaniu._W_drodze_do_ko%C5%9Bcio%C5%82a_1864.jpg (2022-10-04)

support the wounded ones. The paintings demonstrate that black and white dresses were even made for little girls, who in turn sewed black dresses for their dolls (although the doll in fig. 4 wears mostly red).[30]

According to the pan-European fashion of this time, people continued to sew garments in mourning style, using patterns from Paris. Those women who wore black dresses but decorated them encountered harsh criticism, as would have happened to any European widow who failed to observe the prescriptions of widowhood attire. One article published anonymously in the famous fashion magazine *Magazyn Mód* stated that "the black dress has come to express deep spiritual suffering and should be free from false decorations."[31] In order to prevent women from adopting any personal interpretation of the style or hint of luxury that was not in line with mourning attire, the magazine published recommendations for ladies, describing how mourning dresses, coats, shawls, headpieces and accessories should look and in which stores one could buy them.[32] In order to avoid Russian censorship, the People's Mourning was not mentioned directly. Instead, the Polish women received recommendations in the form of articles on the general history and

30 KRYPCZYK; STEFAN KIENIEWICZ: Powstanie styczniowe [The January Uprising], Warszawa 2009; TAYLOR; STRASDIN; BRETT; CURL; DAVEY.

31 Magazyn Mód i Nowości Dotyczących Gospodarstwa Domowego (1861), 10 (63), pp. 7–8. This magazine appeared in Warsaw in 1835 on the initiative of printer and bookseller Jan Glücksberg. It changed its titles several time. First, it was named *Magazyn Mód: Dziennika Przyjemnych Wiadomości* and, from 1860, *Magazyn Mód*. The magazine focused mostly on topics deemed to be of interest to women, such as the household, European fashion, both for adults and children, and education.

32 Ibid., p. 8.

customs of mourning fashion, which started to appear in 1861.[33] These articles sometimes referred to mourning fashion in other countries. In this way, the city's female population gained access to ideas on how to design their dresses according to the rules of European mourning fashion, as in the following example from France: "During the first three and a half months (a widow) wears a thick woolen dress […] For going out, she should wear a crepe hat with a veil, and the same collar and cuffs. Her jewelry should be made from lava stone, and her handkerchief must have a black border."[34]

In addition to the black clothes, various forms of People's Mourning jewelry were developed before and after the January Uprising. The so-called "black jewelry" was almost exclusively worn during this time, the materials and style of which were similar to the other kinds of mourning jewelry worn elsewhere in Europe.[35] Black jewelry was supposed to be made from simple, inexpensive materials, such as wood, iron, bone or hair (following the common nineteenth-century European fashion around death relics), often covered in black or white enamel, and only rarely made from silver or gold. The preferable gemstones were lava or onyx, which were black in color, relatively cheap, and used for mourning jewelry all over Europe. The forms and motifs of this jewelry symbolized suffering, death, and hope for resurrection. Today, the Museum of Independence in Warsaw houses a rich collection of such artifacts, together with photographs of various types of mourning jewelry.

While the form and materials of the objects followed global nineteenth-century trends, the content often featured patriotic Polish mourning symbols. One can divide this Polish patriotic mourning jewelry into several types, according to these motifs. Some items combined traditional and religious motifs with patriotic ones, which symbolized death and resurrection. For instance, one very common symbol was the cross, which related to the death and future resurrection of Poland as "Jesus" of the nations and to the suffering of all those who sacrificed their lives fighting for freedom. This idea can be traced back to the works of Adam Mickiewicz (who himself was inspired in the early 1840s by the mystical and messianic aspects of the *towianizm* movement and the "Circle of God's Cause" sect, which emphasized the messianic role of three chosen peoples: the French, the Jews and the Slavs) and his comparisons of Poland to Jesus Christ, saving the world through suffering.[36] This in-

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid. For more information on the magazines during this time period see JERZY ŁOJEK (ed.): Prasa polska w latach 1864–1918 [The Polish Press in the Years 1864–1918], Warszawa 1976.

35 MICHAŁ GRADOWSKI: Motywy patriotyczne w biżuterii polskiej [Patriotic Motifs in Polish Jewellery], in: Polski Jubiler (2000), 2 (10), pp. 12–13.

36 ADAM MICKIEWICZ: Dziady czesc III [Forefathers' Eve], in: Poezje, vol. IV, Paryż 1832; ADAM MICKIEWICZ: Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego [The Books of the Polish Nation and the Polish Pilgrimage], Paryż 1832; EUGEN WEBER: Apocalypses: Prophecies, Cults, and Millennial Beliefs through the Ages, Cambridge 1999, pp. 128–129. Some contemporary authors mention that the "chosen people" ac-

terpretation is supported by the fact that, instead of Jesus, often a crucified Polish eagle appeared on the crosses. Sometimes hearts appeared on these crosses as well, symbolizing love for the motherland and its people. Crosses could also appear in combination with Jesus' crown of thorns or with a palm leaf referencing his last days in Jerusalem. Here, again, the cross delivered messianic visual messages about suffering, death for the sake of future atonement of sins, and resurrection.

In addition to crosses, pendants or pins were very popular, among both men and women, and featured similar motifs, such as crucified eagles, crowns of thorns, hearts, and palm leaves. Sometimes the motif of Holy Mary defending her children appeared as well.

From time to time, other motifs appeared on this jewelry. One of the most noteworthy was a pendant in the form of a triangle, combining a cross, a heart and an anchor. In addition to a clear connotation of the Holy Trinity, the image had a further religious meaning: it symbolized the postulates of Christianity and the three most important features for each Christian. These were faith (symbolized by a cross), hope (anchor), and love (heart).

While the cross symbolized the suffering of Jesus and the faith in him and the heart is a symbol of love in many Christian traditions globally, the meaning of the anchor has ancient roots and combines various Pagan and Christian beliefs. To give just one example, in ancient times the anchor symbolized peace and salvation from danger. Early Christianity inherited this symbol from earlier Pagan traditions and added to it an additional meaning of hope. The first Christians sometimes used the symbol of the anchor instead of the symbol of the cross. Modern Christianity in general and the Polish Catholic Church in particular continued to use the anchor as a significant symbol of redemption, hope for salvation, security, tolerance, faith in God's help, and victory. Thus, the usage of these symbols through jewelry as applied by Polish patriots was supposed to strengthen their hope for victory, to comfort them in their losses and to support their faith in salvation from the Russian regime and in the future independence of Poland.

Bracelets and rings were also a significant part of black jewelry. They were mostly made of black materials and also incorporated religious or traditional motifs of mourning, faith and resurrection. Additional items, such as medallions, pins or ribbons were not jewelry par excellence, but also became popular dress accessories. It is worth mentioning the unique jewelry made by Polish exiles in Siberia, such as pins of bone or wood, bracelets of hair, as well as items made of bread.[37]

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cording to Towianski were French, Jews and Poles and not all of the Slavs: JĘDRZEJ MORACZEWSKI: Rok 1843 pod względem oświaty, przemysłu i wypadków czasowych [The Year 1843 in Terms of Education, Industry and Temporary Accidents], Poznań 1843, pp. 52–53.

37 Various collections of black mourning jewelry are nowadays located in the Warsaw City Museum, the Museum of the Polish Army and in the Museum of Independence in

It is worth adding that, during this period, in addition to jewelry, cards with motifs symbolizing death and resurrection became popular and were distributed among the Polish patriots in all areas of partitioned Poland and among supporters of the Polish Uprising in Western Europe (especially in Great Britain and France). Following the demonstrations of 27 February 1861, five participants were shot by Russian soldiers and the funeral of these "Five Fallen" itself turned into a patriotic demonstration. Before the funeral, the coffins were placed in the lobby of the Hotel Europejski and Karol Beyer, the owner of a photography studio, photographed the faces of the victims.[38] His pictures were made into cards and distributed among patriots in various parts of the Polish lands and Europe. Therefore, it is legitimate to say that, in 1861, protest gained a dimension of visual expression for the first time in Polish history. Moreover, these photographs can be related to the global trend of "post mortem" photographs, which was part of a larger interest in mourning rites in the nineteenth century that became extremely popular in Europe and the United States.[39] Often the picture of the deceased was his or her first and only photographic representation and would be kept by the family as a memento. Usually, a photographer was invited to take a photograph in the house of the deceased person, thus the whole process of creating the picture inside the house was a private event. Poland adopted this tradition from Western Europe, however, in 1861, the events around the Five Fallen saw this tradition move from the private to the public sphere in Polish society: The bodies of the five victims were located in a hotel, their photographs were taken in a public space and turned into a postcard that was later reproduced and distributed among the population.

Polish Mourning and International Politics

Some Western European activists, inspired by the Polish "insurrectionary nationalism," supported the Polish resistance in 1863/64.[40] Although this period of support was rather short, people in the United Kingdom, France and the Habsburg Empire sent letters to the Russian government, demanding broad

Warsaw, as well as in private collections, in the former exhibition of the museum of Chrzanów and in some Polish city museums.

38 https://polona.pl/item/portrety-posmiertne-pieciu-poleglych-podczas-manifestacji-patriotycznej-27-lutego-1861,Mzg4NDEy/0/#info:metadata (2022-10-04); https://polona.pl/item/portrety-posmiertne-pieciu-poleglych-podczas-manifestacji-patriotycznej-27-lutego-1861,MzQxNjI2/0/#info:metadata (2022-10-04). NIKOLAJ BERG: Zapiski N. V. Berga o pol'skikh zagovorakh i vosstaniiach [N. V. Berg's Notes on Polish Plots and Uprisings], Moskva 1873, pp. 200–236.

39 JACK MORD: Beyond the Dark Veil: Post Mortem & Mourning Photography from the Thanatos Archive, San Francisco 2014; MONICA MILLIAN: A History of Post-Mortem Photography and Contemporary Post-Mortem Photographers, Charleston 2011.

40 DAVIES, pp. 26–27.

autonomy for the Polish Kingdom. Pro-Polish organizations were created both in Great Britain and in France and were linked to Polish emigrants who arrived in these countries after the collapse of the November Uprising of 1830/31. In 1863, the National League of the Independence of Poland was created and led by Edmond Beales in Great Britain. This league aimed to return Poland its independence and was very active in its attempts to influence public opinion by means of articles in periodicals and rallies.[41] British workers also organized demonstrations in support of Poland. Russian democrats and revolutionaries in Great Britain equally supported the Polish fight for freedom. British Catholics identified with the Polish uprising and wrote an article demanding the British government support the "tortured people".[42]

Of all the countries, France showed the most fervent support for Poland. This was related to the fact that, for many years, Polish emigres there had been engaged in a high level of pro-Polish activity. The French press strongly criticized Russia's actions, starting with the Russian government's violent treatment of the Polish insurgents in 1861. Pro-Polish organizations, both Catholic and secular, unified their efforts to organize protests and to collect money in order to support the Polish fight. Victor Hugo was among those who showed an increased interest in the fate of Poland. In his verse "Poland" written as part of the "Songs of Twilight" cycle after the Polish November Uprising in 1833, Hugo compares Poland under Russian control to a humiliated lady. Moreover, he wrote several letters to the Russian government. To give just one example, in 1863, during his exile, he appealed to the Russian soldiers, depicting Poland as a part of the "European heart" and asked them not to fight the Polish insurgents.[43]

The *à-la Polonaise* fashion existed in Europe already before the events of 1861–1866. However, these events strengthened the trend of wearing clothing and accessories that were regarded as Polish attire. Thus, the almost unknown British author Arden Holt in his book *Fancy Dresses Described* from 1879 recommended to his readers (especially women) several versions of Polish costumes. These included "Polish Princess," "Polish Hussar," "Polish Peas-

41 Francis Barrymore Smith: Radical Artisan: William James Linton, 1812–97, Manchester 1973, pp. 139–141; Michael G. Esch: Refugees and Migrants: Perceptions and Categorisations of Moving People, 1789–1938, in: Włodzimierz Borodziej, Joachim von Puttkamer: (eds.) Immigrants and Foreigners in Central and Eastern Europe during the Twentieth Century, London 2020, pp. 7–32; Peter Brock: Joseph Cowen and the Polish Exiles, in: The Slavonic and East European Review 32 (1953), 78, pp. 52–69.

42 Edmond Beales: Poland, France, and England: Extracts from State Papers, Showing the Proposals Made from Time to Time by the French to the British Government to Unite in a Joint Intervention for the Preservation of the National Existence and Political Independence of Poland, and the Rejection or Evasion of Such Proposals by the Latter Government, Paris 1864.

43 Victor Hugo: Poland, in: Victor Hugo: The Songs of Twilight, transl. by George W. M. Reynolds, Paris 1836, p. 124.

ant," "Polish Attire from the Krakow Area," "Polish Snow," "Polish Skating Dress," and even "Lady Colonel of the Polish Regiment."[44] These descriptions, while aimed solely at a female readership, especially emphasized the importance of the so-called "Polish cap," which was mentioned by Holt as one of the most significant elements of Polish dress: "… the Polish cap edged with minever. This cap is a distinctive feature of the costume; it is square at the top, and hard and stiff, the four sides diminishing in size where they rest on the head."[45]

From Private to Public: Mourning, Sexuality and Messianism in Black Fashion

The two major features that characterized the mourning dresses of the female inhabitants of Warsaw during this period in addition to their black color were their simplicity and their modesty, following the common features of European/Western mourning fashion.[46] The mourning dress was supposed to have a high collar, long sleeves, and a heavy shawl covering the waist, which was usually emphasized by a corset. A crepe veil was also worn half covering the face of the widow in order to cover her body. The special mourning status of the widow did not allow her to show her bare shoulders and bosom as was common at evening parties and balls at this time. Since she was not allowed to remarry during her official period of mourning, she was expected to demonstrate her special status by wearing dark, simple and modest clothes, which were intended to prevent any expression of sexuality or to attract male interest. These dresses were usually made according to the conventions of European mourning fashion, based mostly on British and French patterns. So, according to the generally accepted rules pertaining to mourning in Europe at this time, the widow had to hide her body from the public by wearing a modest dress that created a sort of barrier between the world of life and the world of death, to which the mourning person symbolically belonged.[47]

These debates have been well explored in research on the sexuality of Victorian period dresses, which were accepted and fashionable in the Western world, including Poland. The dresses of the 1860s, which generally covered the female figure, led to the stereotype that this was an "asexual" time, however the later generation of scholars on sexuality and dress disagree with this

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44 ARDEN HOLT: Fancy Dresses Described; Or What to Wear at Fancy Balls, London 1879, pp. 181–182.

45 Ibid., p. 181.

46 Magazyn Mód i Nowości Dotyczących Gospodarstwa Domowego (1861), 10 (63), pp. 7–8.

47 TAYLOR; PHILLIS CUNNINGTON, CATHERINE LUCAS: Costume for Births, Marriages and Deaths, London 1972, JULIA DEMIDENKO: Smert' im k litsu [Death Becomes Them], in: Teoria Mody: Odezhda, Telo, Kultura 20 (2011), pp. 257–283; BRETT; CURL; DAVEY.

idea. They claim that the most important female roles during this time were to be beautiful and to be the keepers of moral standards, which did not exclude physical pleasures, eroticism, concealing and revealing (deep cleavages and bare shoulders and backs for evening gowns) and attracting attention to a slim waist, bosom and hips, which dresses of this era emphasized.[48] Thus, the exaggeratedly female shape created by wide crinolines and tight bodices emphasized a woman's reproductive role and her image as a seducer, which was augmented by complicated hairstyles and bright colors (especially for a young girl seeking to attract a suitor and to get married). In addition, the fashion of uncovering the shoulders and the cleavage at balls also linked beauty, eroticism, sexuality and reproductivity.[49] "In a sense, a woman's profession was to be beautiful, to please, and to marry."[50] A widow in her mourning state was forbidden to demonstrate all these qualities that would lead to marriage and procreation, instead she was expected to embody grace and chastity. This echoes the abovementioned reference to the *Magazyn Mód* from 1861. In discussing the mourning clothes that the women of Warsaw should wear, the authors of those articles claimed that their attire should demonstrate grace, since grace is important in female appearance. However, at the same time, the mourning dress should strive for simplicity and seriousness.[51]

Thus, the sexuality of a Victorian widow was "hidden" behind her mourning attire, which was designed to cover the body as much as possible and render her appearance as plain as possible, in order to deter male interest. The state of mourning demonstrated a proximity to death for a period of time. This period was defined differently by each society and was supposed to be a time where any opportunity for fertility was avoided, after which a woman could "return to life."

A philosophical aspect of the state of mourning comes into play here, as it emphasized a lack of life and fertility and, therefore, also a lack of sexuality. Mourning attire was clearly of an asexual character. In 1861, the state of mourning was "transferred" to the whole Polish nation, which was symbolically deceased and, therefore, there was no sartorial space for sexuality and fertility (which, as mentioned above, were female prerogatives), but rather for simplicity and solemnity, as was expressed by women's clothes. The motif of the death of the nation is closely linked to the motif of martyrology and messianism.[52] First of all, the fashion of black jewelry demonstrated these motifs

48 MIMI MATTHEWS: A Victorian Lady's Guide to Fashion and Beauty, Barnsley 2018; VALERIE STEELE: Fashion and Eroticism: Ideals of Feminine Beauty from the Victorian Era to the Jazz Age, Oxford 1985, pp. 41–42, 102–112.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., p. 105.

51 Magazyn Mód i Nowości Dotyczących Gospodarstwa Domowego (1861), 10 (63), pp. 6–8.

52 BRIAN PORTER-SZŰCS: Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom, Chichester 2014.

through inscriptions and symbols of martyrdom and messianism, which emphasized both suffering and hope.

In the Polish national narrative, this martyrological motif is closely linked to the death of the insurgents or their exile to Siberia and their suffering there. These two elements, martyrological and messianic, are part of the tradition of many societies and they are demonstrated in various ways.[53] Moreover, in various cultures we find the motif of the ruler who dies as a sacred victim. In mythological circular time, death closes the old circle and opens a new one, symbolizing resurrection and continuation. "Formerly, the king (also god) had to die, therein lay his power."[54]

In this narrative of sacred death, God brought power and legitimization to the ruler's successor, who continued the legacy of the deceased and who symbolized resurrection and salvation. This stage of salvation was linked to the narrative of messianism, where the Messiah followed the martyr. Both of them were important for the nationalist narrative. As *imitatio Dei*, which occurred in mythological sacred time and space, the death of all those who sacrificed their lives (soldiers, insurgents, victims) for the sake of their people, "sanctified" and even "purified" national values, legitimized them and, moreover, assisted to create a future independent nation.

Thus, martyrological and messianic aspects are an integral part of the nationalist patriotic discourse and symbolize the temporality of group suffering, which will end only with resurrection and salvation. In accordance with this, the state of mourning was extended from the private sphere to public space and developed into a significant symbol of group unification around common values. According to Mircea Eliade, who broadly refers to the cultural phenomenon of sacral time, the beginning and end of sacral time was defined by special mythological events as well as by material objects, which symbolized its holiness.[55] Reconstruction of sacral time enables a religious person to maintain a sacredness in their daily life.

Nationalism, which includes many religious features, adopts this perception of mythological sacral time and thus unifies its believers and supporters. In this context, it is worth mentioning symbols of the sacral space known as *lieux de mémoire*, which Polish patriots created during the second half of the nineteenth century (such as places where killings had occurred, places of

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53 ERIC REBILLARD (ed.): Greek and Latin Narratives about the Ancient Martyrs, Oxford 2017; WILLIAM HORBURY: Messianism among Jews and Christians: Biblical and Historical Studies, London 2003; RA'ANAN S. BOUSTAN: From Martyr to Mystic: Rabbinic Martyrology and the Making of Merkavah Mysticism, Tübingen 2005; MOSHE IDEL: Messianic Mystics, New Haven 1998; STANISLAW EILE, URSULA PHILLIPS: New Perspectives in Twentieth-Century Polish Literature: Flight from Martyrology, London 1992.

54 JEAN BAUDRILLARD: Simulacra and Simulation, Paris 1981, p. 20.

55 MIRCEA ELIADE: The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion, New York 1958, pp. 68–73.

group gatherings and battlefields).[56] These places were "sacralized" and represented as spatial symbols, providing territorial legitimacy, for instance, in the case of Warsaw, the return of the city from being part of the Russian Empire into the hands of the Polish nation, thus bringing a religious feature to nationalism.[57]

In the sacral time of mourning, a special attire plays a double role in the frame of time and space. On the one hand, on a material level, it symbolizes a special period of mourning, while on the other hand, it becomes a symbolic spatial frame that divides the mourning person or group from the secular world. In this way, attire keeps the individual/group inside sacral space and time. Mourning attire also serves as a clear sign dividing the time prior to death, the time of mourning and the time of symbolic resurrection or continuation of life, when one may finally shed the garments.

Conclusion

Between 1861 and 1866, the Russian authorities tried in vain to outlaw and eliminate black attire. In the autumn of 1863, The Viceroy (*namiestnik*) of Poland, General Fiodor Berg, issued a decree banning any visual expression of mourning in dress or jewelry. Special permissions were granted to citizens, first and foremost women, who had suffered a personal loss and were indeed in a state of private mourning and therefore, from the authorities' point of view, had a right to wear black. All those who acted against the law, had to pay high penalties.[58]

However, female citizens of Warsaw found a way to circumvent Russian regulations. Instead of the traditional black, they switched to colors that were regarded as "half-mourning" ones, such as purple, or a patriotic combination of white and red.[59] As a result, Polish women continued to visually express their support and love of their homeland.

From a patriotic point of view, the women of Warsaw were finally able to take off their mourning attire in 1866 after the amnesty granted by Russian authorities to participants of the Uprising. Polish patriots had to wait another 52 years to see an independent Polish state restored. Unlike the violence caused by the Uprising itself and by its abolition, wearing black as a peaceful patriotic protest and act of civil disobedience has sometimes been forgotten

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56 PIERRE NORA (ed.): Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Vol. I: Conflicts and Divisions, New York 1996; PIERRE NORA: Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire, in: Representations (1989), 26: Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory, pp. 7–24.

57 DAVID STEVENS: Nationalism as Religion, in: Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review 86 (1997), 343, pp. 248–258.

58 BRZESZCZ, p. 122.

59 Ibid., pp. 123–124.

and became regarded as a less relevant part of Poland's historical memory. However, as the example of the 2016 Black Monday has shown, this kind of female sartorially-driven protest is effective and may have an even greater impact than violent forms of resistance, usually connected to male uprisings. The 2016 Black Monday and, moreover, the women's protests of 2020 and 2021 became a transnational issue, being influenced not only by the Polish historical example, but also by international historical cases of women wearing black as a form of protest. Similarly, the 1861 black fashion phenomenon was a result of a transnational channeling of nineteenth-century European and American mourning and grief fashion rites, attire, and accessories into a local political and ideological statement. This mourning fashion became gendered on the one hand because of the nineteenth-century global mourning traditions mostly focusing on females' attire and, on the other hand, because of restrictions imposed by the Russian authorities. So, regarding the visual specifics of mourning fashion and restrictions mostly relating to women's attire, their local Polish patriotic interpretation and the sartorial restrictions of the Russian authorities created a unique phenomenon of mourning fashion as a tool of resistance.

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