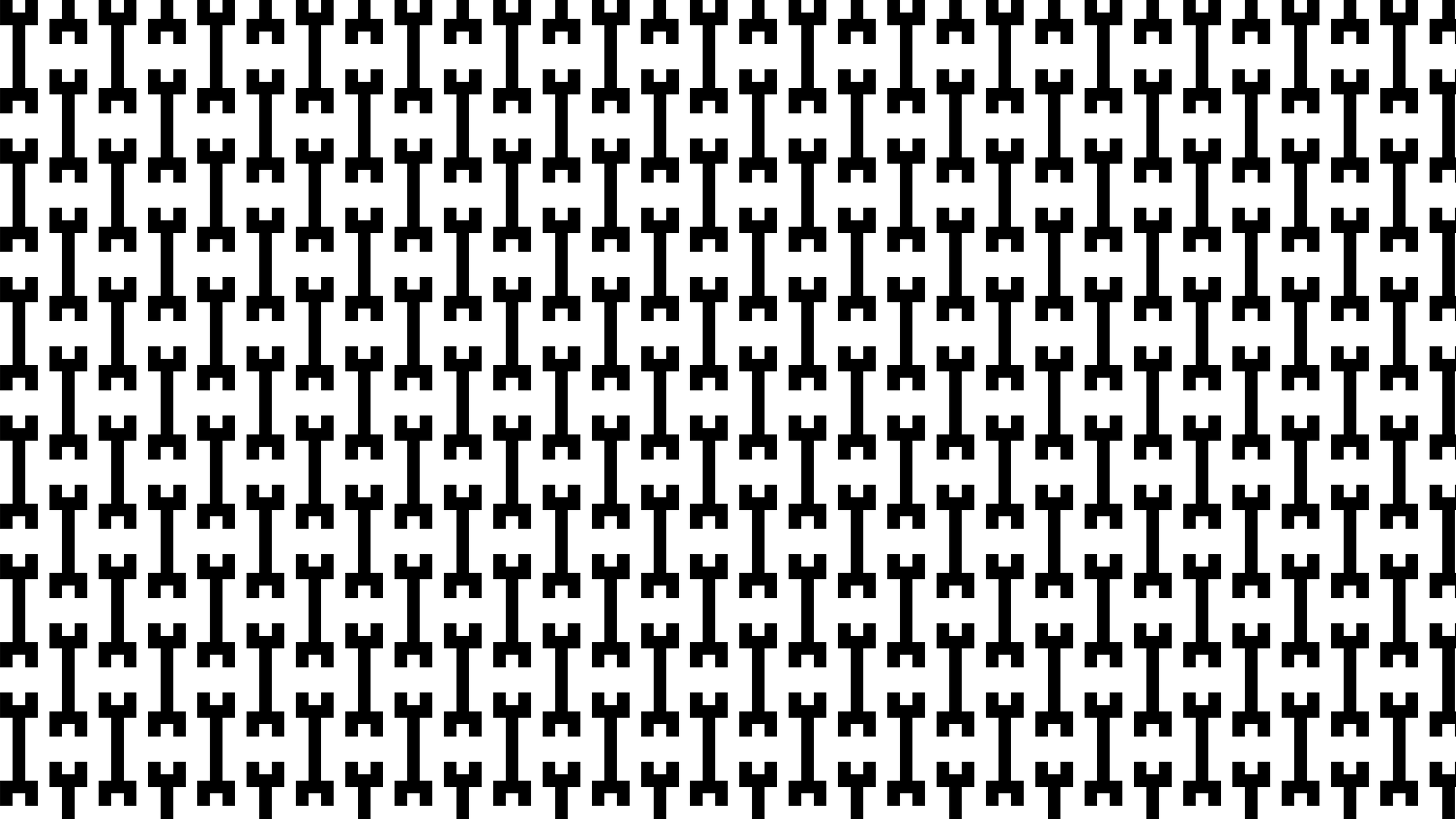
ALL IS DARKNESS, ALL IS QUIET...

conservation of Polish graves at Montmorency Cemetery



The Polish Campo Santo

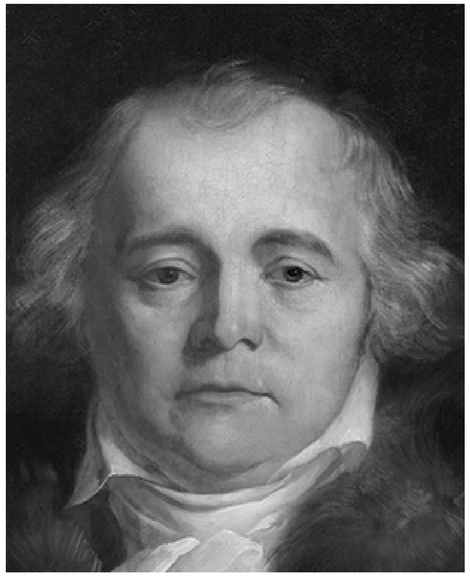
Le Cimetière des Champeaux de Montmorency is a remarkable site steeped in historical and cultural significance. Situated about twenty kilometres north of Paris, in the department of Val-d'Oise, it stands out among historic Parisian cemeteries, such as Père-Lachaise, Montmartre, or Montparnasse, which are also home to many Polish graves. What sets Montmorency apart is its deep-rooted connection to Poland and its vital role in the history of the Polish diaspora.

Founded in the eighteenth century as a burial ground for the local Montmorency community, the cemetery became important to Polish exiles in the early nineteenth century, when Montmorency began to draw Polish political émigrés after the downfall of the November Rising (1830–1831). This bid for national liberation aimed at emancipating the Congress Kingdom of Poland from Russian dominion, a rule that began with the First Partition of Poland-Lithuania in 1772. Despite its initial success, the Rising ended in failure. Severe reprisals ensued, which were intended to crush any further independence efforts, as captured in the words of Tsar Nicholas I of Russia: "I do not know whether there will ever again be a Poland, but I am certain there will no longer be Poles." In the wake of these persecutions, many Polish patriots, particularly those involved in the Rising, were forced to flee the country to escape Russian retribution. Most Polish émigrés settled in France, particularly in Paris, a natural choice due to the country's republican traditions, liberal ideas, and the support it had extended to Polish insurgents during their struggle for independence. Paris soon became the principal hub of the Polish diaspora, serving as the centre of their political, cultural, and intellectual life. The Polish émigrés in Paris established various organisations to preserve Polish culture and continue the fight for independence. Among the most notable were the Polish National Committee, founded in 1831 by Joachim Lelewel, which acted as a government-in-exile and coordinated efforts towards independence; the Polish Democratic Society, established in 1832, which promoted democratic and republican ideals; and the Hôtel Lambert, a conservative-liberal monarchist faction led by Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski. The Great Emigration profoundly influenced Polish culture and played a vital role in shaping modern Polish national identity.

Located just outside Paris, Montmorency became a favoured settlement for Polish émigrés, mainly due to its proximity to the capital and idyllic setting, which was conducive to creative endeavours. Maurycy Mochnacki, a political journalist and pianist suffering from tuberculosis, was the first to introduce the Polish community to Montmorency. He was followed by General Karol Kniaziewicz, a veteran of the Napoleonic Wars and a commander of the Polish Legions in Italy, who, well in his years, brought with him his friend, the esteemed poet and historian Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz. Niemcewicz's funeral at Les Champeaux marked the beginning of a 170-year tradition of Polish burials in the area. Over time, Montmorency became a popular retreat for members of the Polish diaspora, including figures such as Adam Mickiewicz, Prince Adam Czartoryski, Delfina Potocka, and Fryderyk Chopin.

Since the transmission of Adam Mickiewicz's remains from Istanbul, Turkey, in 1856 and the transfer of his wife Celina's remains from Père-Lachaise, Montmorency Cemetery has gradually evolved into a symbolic national pantheon for the Polish émigré community. Many of the burials were initially connected to Prince Adam Czartoryski and the Hôtel Lambert faction. Prince Czartoryski himself was laid to rest here, alongside his family and his close associate, Count Władysław Zamoyski. Numerous members of the Polish Historical and Literary Society, a political and cultural association operating in Paris, were also buried at Montmorency. By the late nineteenth century, the cemetery had become a popular resting place for the Polish intelligentsia, liberal professions, clergy, artists, aristocrats, and other creative figures. These prominent and celebrated individuals left an indelible imprint on the cultural life of the Polish diaspora and sustained the cause of Polish independence throughout the years of foreign rule. Montmorency became a national necropolis-in-exile, echoing the nineteenth-century burials at Wawel Cathedral in Kraków. The political, cultural, and intellectual endeavours of those interred here played a crucial role in shaping future ideas for an independent Poland. The émigrés in Paris envisioned a country that would be sovereign, democratic, and free from foreign domination. After the Second World War, the cemetery expanded to accommodate the graves of members of both the Polish and French resistance movements, soldiers, concentration camp survivors, and those who chose to remain in exile in response to the imposition of a Communist regime in Poland. For many years, Les Champeaux Cemetery at Montmorency has been a place of pilgrimage for Poles living in France and those visiting from Poland.

Today, the cemetery's modest grounds contain nearly 280 Polish graves. Les Champeaux Cemetery at Montmorency serves as a place of eternal rest and a powerful testament to Poland's turbulent history and the enduring spirit of its exiled citizens.



Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz (1758–1841) i Karol Otto Kniaziewicz (1762–1842)

The Polish presence at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, was established early in the nineteenth century. Among the first Poles buried there were Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, a politician, writer, and poet, and General Karol Otto Kniaziewicz, a veteran of Kościuszko's Rising of 1794 and the Napoleonic Wars. They were laid to rest on 24 May 1841 and 12 May 1842, respectively.

Their choice of final resting place was a thoughtful and deliberate one. The two friends, particularly Kniaziewicz, were deeply fond of the small town north of Paris, where they spent their final summers together. In accordance with their wishes, they were buried side by side in a shared grave. Today, their resting place is marked by two modest white marble slabs atop a common limestone plinth, enclosed by an iron fence with their names cast in bronze. The funerals of Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz became important patriotic demonstrations for the Polish community. Kniaziewicz's burial, in particular, was a grand affair, accompanied by full military honours befitting a French general and a Knight of the Legion of Honour. These ceremonies, which marked the beginning of the "Polish cemetery" at Montmorency, set a precedent for later burials at Les Champeaux.

Amid the fierce disputes that divided the Polish émigré community in France after the collapse of the November Rising (1830–1831), Montmorency was initially promoted as a burial ground for Poles by the conservative-liberal circle led by Adam Jerzy Czartoryski (1770–1861). Both Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz and Karol Otto Kniaziewicz were his close associates. Shortly after Niemcewicz's demise, the Polish Literary Society, chaired by Czartoryski, proposed erecting a grander monument in his honour. Rather than the then-remote hillside of Montmorency, they considered the Gothic Collegiate Church of Saint Martin. There were even ambitious, though unrealised, plans to create a Polish mausoleum in the adjoining churchyard. However, in 1850, a tomb containing the remains of Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz was placed inside one of the church's chapels. Designed by Władysław Oleszczyński, the monument features reclining figures of the two men, with a statue of a standing angel between them, the coats of arms of Poland and Lithuania lying at his feet. Above the tomb was a stained-glass window depicting Our Lady of Częstochowa, inscribed with the words *Regina Regni Poloniae, ora pro nobis* ("Queen of the Kingdom of Poland, pray for us"). During the remodelling of the collegiate church between 1877 and 1909, the monument was moved to a shallow niche at the end of the left aisle, and the coffins were returned to their original resting place. As the political divisions from the post-November period gradually diminished, the

cemetery at Les Champeaux became one of the most important resting places for Polish émigrés. The annual Mass commemorating Niemcewicz's death, held on 21 May, became a pilgrimage tradition that continues today.

Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz belonged to the last generation of the Enlightenment era. Their youth and early careers unfolded during the reign of Stanisław II August (1764–1795), a period when reformist ideals, which had taken root during the Saxon era under the Wettin dynasty, i.e. the reigns of Augustus II and Augustus III (1697–1763), began to yield tangible results. Efforts towards the social and political overhaul of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, which had been tottering into a decline since the mid-seventeenth century, culminated in the Great Sejm (1788–1792) and its crowning achievement, the Government Act of 3 May 1791, which introduced a new political order based on an efficient constitutional monarchy. Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz then faced the collapse of the Commonwealth, an ordeal made all the more bitter by what Niemcewicz described as "a nation newly revived, only to be handed over as prey to the triumph of violence, barbarism, and crime," which was a reference to the dismemberment of his homeland by Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

Both men hailed from noble families. Born in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Niemcewicz inherited his father's patronage ties with the influential Czartoryski magnate family. At the recommendation of Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski (1734–1823), father of Adam Jerzy, the young Julian entered the Warsaw Cadet Corps. Founded in 1765 by King Stanisław II August, the school aimed to educate enlightened patriots, and was primarily intended for sons of middle-ranking noble families. Notable alumni and teachers included Tadeusz Kościuszko (1746–1817). It was here that Niemcewicz met Kniaziewicz, born in Courland, a fief of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Family connections to the magnates were equally crucial for Kniaziewicz's career. When his impoverished father could no longer afford his education at the Warsaw Cadet Corps, Kniaziewicz's patron, Alois Friedrich von Brühl (1739–1793), General of the Crown Artillery, arranged his enrolment in the artillery school and later, as was the custom of his time, purchased him a sub-lieutenant's commission in a fusilier regiment. As a junior officer, Kniaziewicz spent the following years stationed in various Commonwealth garrisons until the Russo-Polish War of 1792. Upon completing his education, Niemcewicz served as a courtier to his magnate patron, Adam Kazimierz Czartoryski. In 1788, he was elected a deputy to the Great Sejm, where he emerged as one of its most active members, supporting reform with speech and pen. His notable achievements during this period included his celebrated 1790 play *Powrót posła* ("The Deputy's Return"), which championed the patriotic faction and their programme. During the Russo-Polish War of 1792, Kniaziewicz was promoted to the rank of major and particularly distinguished himself at the Battle of Dubienka, where he effectively covered Tadeusz Kościuszko's retreat, for which he was awarded the Virtuti Militari. Both Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz were involved in Kościuszko's Rising: Niemcewicz served as an aide-de-camp to Tadeusz Kościuszko and Kniaziewicz as a military officer, advancing to the rank of major general. Both were captured alongside Kościuszko at Maciejowice on 10 October 1794. Niemcewicz and other insurgent leaders were imprisoned in the Peter-Paul Fortress in Saint Petersburg, while Kniaziewicz was held in Kiev (modern-day Kyiv, Ukraine). They were released in November 1796.

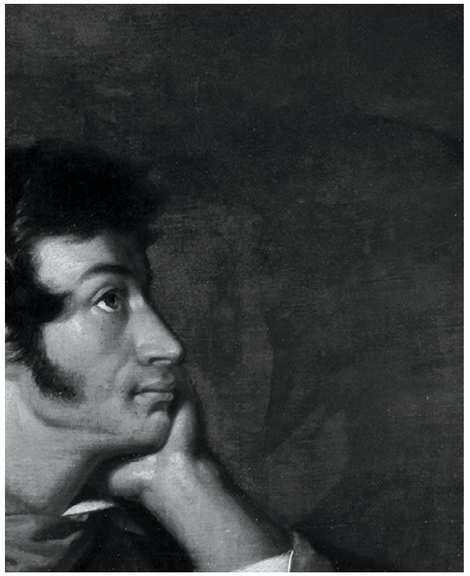
In the wake of the Third Partition, the Enlightenment-era aim to "reform the Commonwealth" was supplanted by the question: "How can Poles regain independence?" This shift also brought the challenge of redefining the Polish nation, previously deemed equivalent to the nobility, in a context of statelessness. In the turbulent years that followed, Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz, before reuniting in Paris in 1834, responded to the demands of the time differently; they alternated between periods of frenzied activity and phases of voluntary or enforced withdrawal. After his release, Niemcewicz travelled to the United States, where he spent nearly a decade (with a brief interruption), married, and obtained citizenship. For Kniaziewicz, this period marked the height of his military endeavours as he strove to restore Polish independence alongside France amid international instability and the War of the Second Coalition (1798–1802). He co-founded the Polish Legions in Italy under French patronage. Following the Italian campaigns, he organised the Polish Danube Legion, which he also led to his greatest victory by playing a decisive role in the French triumph over the Austrians at the Battle of Hohenlinden on 3 December 1800. However, the French-Austrian Treaty of Lunéville, signed in 1801, dashed hopes for a swift restoration of Polish statehood. Kniaziewicz, like many Polish officers,

resigned in protest, as he saw no prospect for Poland in the new political order. Returning home without financial support, he spent the subsequent years living as a landowner, enjoying a favourable lease arrangement. Kniaziewicz refused offers to form a Polish army under Russian patronage, which were made personally by Tsar Alexander I. He only returned to the battlefield in 1812 to join the army of the Duchy of Warsaw, where he again distinguished himself for bravery during Napoleon's campaign against Russia.

Niemcewicz returned to Poland in 1807 when the French *Grande Armée* entered Polish territory. He hoped, as many others did, that the nation might be reborn under Napoleon's star. In the newly established Duchy of Warsaw, which was a semblance of statehood created from Polish lands previously under Prussian and Austrian rule, he became Secretary of the Senate, a member of the Directory of National Education, and a contributor to the Warsaw Society of Friends of Learning. After Napoleon's defeat, like many others, he turned his hopes to Tsar Alexander I, who enjoyed a reputation as an enlightened liberal. The Polish question became a vital issue at the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815), which concluded with the creation of the Kingdom of Poland from parts of the Duchy of Warsaw and in personal union with Russia. The Tsar granted it a relatively liberal constitution and considerable autonomy. Niemcewicz remained Secretary of the Senate and continued his work in educational administration, but he soon grew disillusioned with the government's misuse of power and disregard for the constitution. He dedicated himself to historical research, including documenting national relics during his travels around the country. Most notably, he composed *Śpiewy historyczne* ("Historical Songs"), a history of Poland in verse. Aimed at the general public, the poem celebrated the "most glorious moments of the Polish nation." Published in 1816, Niemcewicz's work achieved considerable success. Despite his disappointment with the Congress Kingdom, Niemcewicz, like many of his generation, saw no viable alternative for Polish statehood under the circumstances and regarded the outbreak of the November Rising on 29 November 1830 with scepticism. Nonetheless, he joined the insurgent authorities while expressing a moderate stance and advocating for compromise with Russia. In July 1831, he was sent on a diplomatic mission to London, from which he would never return to his homeland. In 1817, Kniaziewicz settled in Dresden and, like Niemcewicz, viewed the Rising's prospects cautiously. Yet he, too, became involved in the insurgent cause, serving as Poland's emissary in France.

In their final years in France, Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz became active contributors to the Polish Literary Society and the Polish Library.

Cenotaph of Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz and Karol Kniaziewicz in the Collegiate Church of Saint Martin, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855)

Adam Mickiewicz died in 1855 in Istanbul, Turkey, where he had travelled to champion the Polish cause during the Crimean War. A conflict initially involving only Russia and Turkey soon developed into a European war when France and Britain intervened on the Sultan's side (1853–1856). The mounting international tensions preceding the war had mobilised Polish émigré circles, including the associates of Adam Jerzy Czartoryski and his Paris residence, the Hôtel Lambert. Polish patriots hoped that the anti-Russian coalition would advance the struggle for Polish independence, lost nearly sixty years earlier when Russia, Prussia, and Austria dismembered their homeland. Mickiewicz shared these hopes. In 1855, he aligned himself with the Hôtel Lambert, which sought support from the great powers for the Polish cause, and received a tentative commitment to form a Polish division stationed in Turkey and funded by Great Britain. Later that year, following the death of his wife, Celina, Mickiewicz volunteered to travel to the East to support the Polish military mission. Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski sought backing for Mickiewicz's expedition from Emperor Napoleon III, who fully endorsed the plan. A few months later, Mickiewicz received official approval and funding from the French authorities for his mission in Turkey.

The poet departed for Istanbul in September and passed away by November 1855. Thus, his mission in the East was short-lived, and he failed in his plan to form multinational regiments, including a Jewish battalion under the command of General Michał Czajkowski. Mickiewicz's plans were thwarted by illness, likely cholera. Nevertheless, he died believing that his mission was nearing a successful outcome and the prospect of independence for his beloved homeland was more tangible than ever. "Tell them to love one another" were among his final words, later conveyed by a witness to his death, Henryk Służalski, to Mickiewicz's children. Over time, this phrase became a message to a divided and fractured Polish society.

Rumours regarding the true cause of Mickiewicz's death surfaced shortly thereafter. One of the doctors who examined him was convinced it was not cholera, and there were also speculations of poisoning. Intense debates arose over the choice of his final resting place. The Polish community in Istanbul wished for the poet's body to remain in Turkey, and they suggested various churches or the still-existing Polish settlement of Adampol, founded in 1842 by General Michał Czajkowski at the behest of Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski. Ultimately, family considerations led to the transfer of his remains to Paris, where the poet's children resided. It is also worth noting that Montmorency was reportedly Mickiewicz's choice, a preference he had confided to friends on the day of his wife's funeral. There was hope that Mickiewicz's remains, resting there, might exert a stronger unifying influence on the divided Polish émigré community.

On 31 December 1855, a ship carrying the poet's coffin departed from Istanbul, arriving in Marseille eight days later. From there, a hearse transported his body to the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene in Paris, where a funeral service was held on 21 January 1856. The church was filled to capacity with friends, Polish and foreign admirers, and other mourners. Among those in attendance were Adam Jerzy Czartoryski and Cyprian Kamil Norwid, who fervently argued for an honourable burial on Polish soil, one that would serve as a unifying national symbol. Following the Mass, the funeral procession made its way to Montmorency, where the coffin of Celina Mickiewicz, who had died just nine months earlier and was originally interred at Paris's Père-Lachaise Cemetery, awaited in the parish church. After the service, the coffins were buried together at Les Champeaux Cemetery.

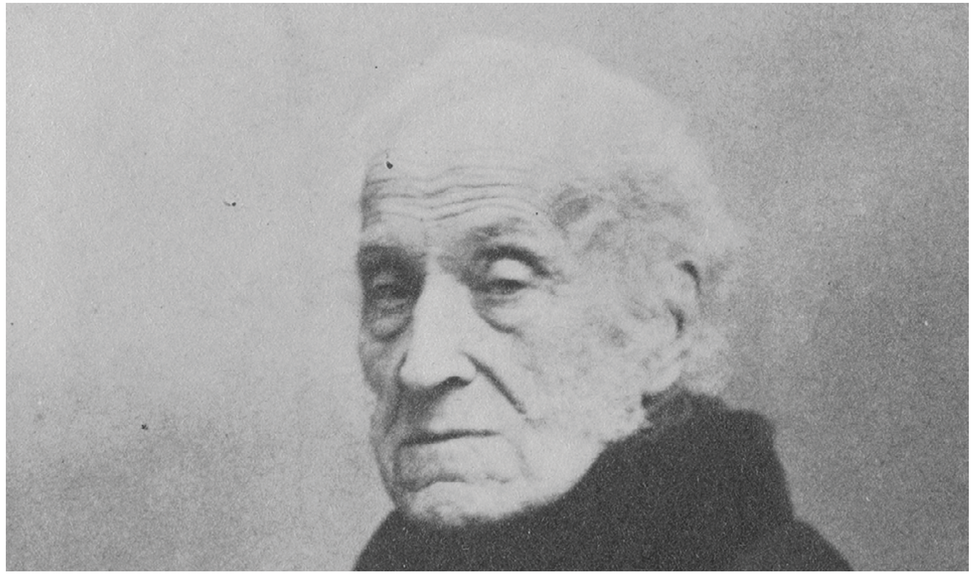
When the Mickiewiczes were laid to rest at Montmorency, there were fewer than ten Polish graves there. The poet's funeral transformed the cemetery's standing, elevating it to a national shrine. The poet and Mickiewicz's friend, Józef Bohdan Zaleski, whom some saw as his successor, expressed this sentiment in his funeral oration: *And how entirely Montmorency has changed its appearance today! [...] It has become a sacred site of national mourning for Poland, a locum requisitions for veterans; it has become like an exile's Ukraine, bristling with famous graves. Here again, stand before us our venerable, honourable patriots, Niemcewicz and Kniaziewicz. [...] And now there arrives another guest, a distinguished guest, all the way from Constantinople. [...] Montmorency is [...] a roadside inn for Polish souls awaiting their return. These illustrious dead shall rise and march northwards on the day of our Homeland's resurrection. Adam Mickiewicz, we pledge to you and those here with you a grander procession in an independent Poland!*

The historic funeral that Norwid had called for would be delayed by thirty-five years. The idea of bringing Mickiewicz's remains to Kraków first emerged in 1869, but tangible efforts were not undertaken until 1883. The effort was led by the Academic Reading Room, a mutual aid society founded partly by students from the Jagiellonian University, who proposed interring the poet at Wawel Cathedral. Fund-raising began and was soon followed by negotiations with the poet's son, Władysław, and the cathedral chapter. The process came to a successful end on 27 June 1890, when Mickiewicz's grave at Les Champeaux was opened, and his remains were prepared for the journey home. The route from France to Poland passed through Switzerland and Austria. In Zurich, a dignified and grand ceremony marked the passing of the funeral procession, attended by local Poles and Swiss citizens, including the university's rector and professors. In Vienna, however, Austrian authorities refused to permit a formal reception for the poet's remains. The coffin transfer from the French to the Austrian train carriage occurred covertly, without family or designated delegates. On 4 July 1890, the remains reached Kraków. After being addressed by Władysław Mickiewicz and Jan Tarnowski, Marshal of the Galician National Sejm, the funeral procession moved towards Wawel Hill. The route was adorned with flowers, rugs, and banners sent from around the world. Thousands accompanied the poet on his final journey: peasants in traditional folk dress, nobility in kontusz robes, townspeople in distinctive coats, clergy, professors from the Jagiellonian and Lwów (present-day Lviv) Universities, deputies of the National Sejm, family, and friends. Upon arrival at the cathedral, the poet's coffin was placed on an imposing, uniquely designed catafalque, and a funeral service was held to the strains of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Requiem*. Mickiewicz's coffin was then laid in a sarcophagus lined with sand from the River Niemen (Lithuanian: Nemunas), the largest river in his native Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and from Nowogródek (present-day Navahrudak), his birthplace, now located in Belarus.

Adam Mickiewicz sparked controversy both in life and after death. Various legends circulated about him, including claims of him being a phantom. This myth became so entrenched that, reportedly, certain circles demanded the poet's decapitation before his remains were transferred from Montmorency to Kraków. One must return to the poet's youth to understand why some viewed Mickiewicz as a spectral figure. In the 1820s, Mickiewicz studied at the University of Wilno (now Vilnius University) and was active in the paramasonic organisations of the Philomaths and Philarets, which opposed the classical Enlightenment order. At this time, ideas of Romanticism began to take root, focusing on the spiritual and otherworldly, rejecting a purely scientific view of the world. In 1820, Mickiewicz wrote *Oda do Młodości* ("Ode to Youth"), which echoed the work of Friedrich Schiller, who, turning away from the earthly and unsightly, preferred to create imagined, spiritual worlds. A year later, influenced again by Schiller, Mickiewicz wrote the poem cycle *Romantyczność* ("Romanticism"),

which also features spirits understood as phantoms and ghosts returning from beyond the grave. This collection, which became the manifesto of Polish Romanticism, countered the arguments of Jan Śniadecki's essay *O pismach klasycznych i romantycznych* ("On Classical and Romantic Literature"). Śniadecki, a prominent scholar and former Rector of the University of Wilno, extolled reason and condemned the inclusion of phantoms in literature as pandering to ignorance and common tastes. The culmination of the spectral elements in Mickiewicz's work came in 1823 with the publication of *Dziady* ("Forefathers' Eve"), Parts II and IV, and the preceding poem *Upiór* ("The Phantom"). In Part II of *Dziady*, we encounter a folk ritual of summoning the dead, referred to as phantoms and as spectres, spirits, souls, and even "little angels." At the poem's end, the phantom from the prologue appears: a young man who took his own life due to unrequited love. Mickiewicz portrays this figure not as a demon or immaterial soul but simply as a human being. The phantom returns in Part IV of *Dziady*, now the main protagonist. Mickiewicz uses this figure as his alter ego, interweaving themes of his unrequited loves into the story. *The phantom shifts form in Part III of Dziady, which was published nearly ten years later. It represents not only a person but can also serve as a metaphor for various events, such as political turmoil, or even embody Poland, divided by partitioning states and social rifts. Mickiewicz explained this in his 1841 lecture at the Collège de France: The phantom is not possessed by an evil spirit; it is a human and natural phenomenon, yet extraordinary and beyond rational explanation: The phantom, it is said, is born with a dual heart and a dual soul. Until adolescence, it lives without self-knowledge or awareness of its being; but when it reaches a decisive point in life, it begins to feel the stirrings of a destructive impulse in its heart, and this soul, which the scholar Dalibor calls a negative soul and a negative heart, begins to take control.* Thus, The phantom became strongly associated with the poet himself, and it is little wonder that Mickiewicz came to be identified with this haunting figure.

The choice of Adam Mickiewicz's burial site was the subject of extensive debate, with some émigrés arguing for his interment in Turkey. Grave of Adam Mickiewicz at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Adam Jerzy Czartoryski (1770–1861)

In the 1850s and 1860s, the cemetery at Les Champeaux gained popularity as a final resting place for the Polish émigré community, primarily for wealthier exiles, often aristocratic and aligned with the conservative-liberal faction known as the Hôtel Lambert, named for the Parisian residence of its leader, Adam Jerzy Czartoryski. It is, therefore, unsurprising that Prince Czartoryski, who spent nearly the last thirty years of his life in exile in Paris, advancing the Polish cause through quasi-diplomatic and propagandist means, was also laid to rest, albeit temporarily, at Montmorency. By this time, his sister, Princess Maria Wirtemberska (1768–1854), Poland's first novelist, had already been interred at Les Champeaux alongside Cecylia Beydale (1787–1851), most likely the illegitimate daughter of Czartoryski's mother, Izabela Czartoryska (1745–1835).

Amid the resurgence of Polish national sentiment across the three Partitions and renewed hopes for Western support, Czartoryski's funeral was conducted with remarkable grandeur, considering the émigré circumstances. Its style was almost regal, and it reflected the aspirations of some of the prince's supporters, who saw in him Adam I, a potential king of a restored Poland. The remains of Czartoryski, who passed away on 15 July 1861 at a rented château in Montfermeil, were transferred on 18 July to the chapel at the Hôtel Lambert on Paris's Île Saint-Louis. This is where his body lay in state and where Requiem Mass was held several times daily. Czartoryski was dressed in a red velvet cloak trimmed with sable, which lent him an air of royalty. Four days later, the official funeral ceremonies took place, attended by several thousand people, including the chamberlain and aide-de-camp of Emperor Napoleon III, the British ambassador, and other dignitaries. The coffin was solemnly carried from the Hôtel Lambert to the parish Church of Saint-Louis, where the Archbishop of Paris, François-Nicholas-Madeleine Morlot (1795–1862), participated in the service. A smaller procession then accompanied the prince to Montmorency, where, after further services and eulogies, he was laid to rest in the vault of the Collegiate Church of Saint Martin.

Nevertheless, Montmorency would not become Czartoryski's final resting place, despite the hopes of his followers, who wished for their leader to remain as a symbol of their shared exile, separated from their oppressed homeland. Even before his death, Czartoryski had envisioned a posthumous return to his family estate at Sieniawa (in what was then Galicia, under Austrian rule), where his father Adam Kazimierz (1734–1823) lay in the family vault and where, in 1860, his mother's remains had also been transferred. In December 1864, Czartoryski's wife, Princess Anna née Sapieha (1799–1864), passed away and was buried in the collegiate church beside her husband. However, by August 1865, all family members, including Maria Wirtemberska and Cecylia

Beydale, had been transferred to the church at Sieniawa. This move can be seen as a response to shifting circumstances following the failed January Rising (1863–1864), which marked the fading hope for the swift restoration of Polish independence and the political rapprochement of Czartoryski's son, Władysław (1828–1894), with the Austrian authorities in Vienna. Another manifestation of this shift came in the 1870s with the transfer of the renowned Puławy collection of art and national mementoes, originally gathered by Adam Jerzy's mother and preserved in Paris after the November Rising, to Kraków, where they became the foundation of the Czartoryski Museum, opened in 1878. Today, the only remaining tribute to Adam Jerzy Czartoryski at Montmorency is a modest epitaph from 1868, placed opposite the impressive monument to Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz and Karol Kniaziewicz. This epitaph is a neo-Gothic wall-mounted shrine featuring a bust of the deceased by Klemens Boryczewski (1828–1894), set on a console bearing the Pogoń coat of arms above a black marble plaque.

The grand funeral of the exiled prince marked Czartoryski's final role in a distinguished career spanning more than seventy years. A unifying feature across these roles was his embodiment of the enlightened aristocrat, holding liberal views shaped by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century's elite salons. His approach was moderately reformist and Anglophile in that he wished to maintain the nobility's role and standing in society. This ideology was reflected in the Constitution of 3 May 1791, the crowning achievement of the Great Sejm (1788–1792), which established an effective constitutional monarchy in Poland. While Czartoryski was seen as conservative among the democratic Polish émigrés in Paris after the November Rising (1830–1831), he was considered progressive compared to the more conservative landowning class in Russian- or Austrian-occupied Poland. Even in the late 1850s and early 1860s, he urged Polish landowners under Russian rule to renounce class-based self-interest and grant freehold to the peasantry in hopes of aligning them with the national cause. He also encouraged the Galician nobility to ally with moderate democrats while acknowledging that "the nobility can no longer represent the entire nation as it once did."

As such, Czartoryski continued the legacy of his distinguished family, which was related to the House of Jagiellon and influential in shaping the future of the Commonwealth during its eighteenth-century crisis. Alongside the Poniatowskis, the Czartoryskis formed the powerful magnate faction known as the *Familia*, which sought to reform the state under Augustus III (reigned 1733–1763) with support from Russia. Through Russian influence, Stanisław August Poniatowski, a member of the *Familia*, ascended to the Polish throne as Stanisław II August (reigned 1764–1795). However, during Adam Jerzy's youth, the Czartoryskis clashed with their royal relative, and they formed the nucleus of what became known as the magnate opposition. In 1788, on the eve of the Great Sejm, this opposition strove to gain the political upper hand. Adam Jerzy's initial independent political moves included developing a rather ambitious plan for an aristocratic *quattuorvirate* to assume control and enact reform. Although he did not join the efforts to renew the Commonwealth, the young Czartoryski fought in the Russo-Polish War of 1792, and he earned the Virtuti Militari for his service.

Czartoryski's independent political career began after the Third Partition of Poland. In May 1795, along with his brother Konstanty (1773–1860), he travelled to Saint Petersburg, like many Poles, to seek favour from Catherine II (who reigned from 1762 to 1796) and request the release of his family's sequestered estates in Russian-controlled territories. Warmly received in Saint Petersburg, where he would spend the next thirteen years intermittently, Czartoryski succeeded in his aims and embarked on a distinguished courtly career. He most notably developed a close friendship with Grand Duke Alexander, who became Tsar Alexander I in 1801 (reigned 1801–1825). As his trusted advisor, Czartoryski assisted with early reforms in Russia and served as Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1804 to 1806. During this period, he orchestrated the formation of the Third Coalition against France, which Napoleon ultimately shattered with his victory at Austerlitz on 2 December 1805. Tolstoy later created an ambivalent portrayal of Czartoryski in *War and Peace*; he depicted him on the eve of this defining defeat, which marked the end of his influence and the fall from grace at the imperial centres of power.

During this period, and until the November Rising, Prince Czartoryski remained firmly committed to a pro-Russian orientation, which he viewed as the most advantageous route for Polish national aspirations. He hoped, at best, for the restoration of a Polish state in some form through an alliance with Russia or, at the very least, for the unification of all Polish territories under Romanov rule. His efforts to liberalise Russian policies towards Poles saw some success, and he substantially impacted

Polish education in Russian-controlled territories through his long tenure as Superintendent of the Wilno (present-day Vilnius, Lithuania) School District (1802–1824). During the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815), which redefined Europe after the Napoleonic Wars, Czartoryski played a decisive role on the side of Tsar Alexander I while championing the Polish cause. Ultimately, the Congress created the Kingdom of Poland, to which the Tsar granted a liberal constitution. Czartoryski became fully committed to the November Rising against Russia. As President of the National Government, he urged many aristocrats to support the Rising. However, he guided the effort in a conservative direction, as he mistakenly believed in the possibility of a compromise with Russia.

During his thirty-year exile, Czartoryski sought to establish himself as the central decision-making figure in the Polish diaspora, a leader in restoring independence or, at the very least, the autonomy envisioned by the Congress of Vienna. He saw an opportunity for the Polish cause to influence the policies of Western governments, particularly Britain and France, and win their support. His political engagement was complemented by attempts to shape public opinion, including through press influence. Czartoryski and his associates closely monitored international developments, and they established a network of agents throughout Europe with the hope that a favourable political climate would allow diplomatic and military efforts, including the formation of Polish battalions, to alter Poland's unfortunate position. In this endeavour, Czartoryski maintained connections with other stateless nations, particularly those in the Balkans, and he promoted a liberal vision of international relations grounded in the right of nations to determine their future.

Additionally, Czartoryski, alongside his wife, supported educational and charitable initiatives for the Polish émigré community. He presided over the Polish Literary Society and co-founded several institutions, including the Polish Library, Saint Casimir's Institute (a charitable house for the émigré community), the Polish School at Batignolles, Paris, the Polish School at Montparnasse, Paris, and the Institute for Polish Maidens.

Funerary monument with bust of Adam Jerzy Czartoryski at the Collegiate Church of Saint Martin in Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.

Delfina z Komarów Potocka (1807–1877)

Along the cemetery wall at Les Champeaux stands one of its more impressive tombs. Resting on a high limestone base, now carved and filled with gravel and greenery, is a tomb capped with an elegant slab crafted from the celebrated white Carrara marble and marked by a simple cross. Previously, the grave was separated from the rest of the cemetery by an iron fence with floral motifs, no longer extant, and flanked on three sides by greenery. Although these elements have since disappeared, a melancholic quatrain by Zygmunt Krasiński (1812–1859) remains inscribed in marble and visible from the pathway: *Jeszcze kielich mojej doli / wiele kropel ma / Muszę cierpieć, pić powoli / wypić aż do dna* (“Yet the cup of my fate / Has many drops still / I must suffer, drink slowly / Drink it to the dregs”). In his 1843 poem *Przedświt* (“Dawn”), the poet immortalised Delfina Potocka, his long-time lover and the one interred here, as Beatrice. This explicit reference to Dante’s *Divine Comedy* hints at Potocka as a steadfast companion to the poet, exiled from his ancestral homeland, in his journey towards the messianic truth of Poland’s mission to renew humanity. Towards the end of her life, Potocka took great care to highlight her role as a muse to a great artist, and she championed this legacy for both her contemporaries and posterity. In this spirit, she meticulously preserved the many letters Krasiński had written to her over the years. Thanks to her efforts as the poet’s Beatrice, much of this correspondence survives, a total of several hundred letters of immense literary value. The choice of Montmorency Cemetery as her final resting place underscored Delfina Potocka’s connection to her Polish heritage, despite her cosmopolitan life spent mainly in France, where she was more comfortable speaking French than her native tongue. Potocka’s role as Beatrice was but one among many in her life. She was an iconic figure of the Romantic era, celebrated not only for her success as a socialite and numerous romances but also for her musical talent. Fryderyk Chopin (1810–1849), who maintained a close friendship with Potocka, and Franz Liszt (1811–1886) admired her singing. Indeed, as Chopin lay dying, he asked his friend Delfina to sing for him in his final moments.

Delfina Komar was born in 1807 in Murowane Kuryłowce, Podolia (Murovani Kurylivtsi, present-day Ukraine), a Russian-controlled region after the Second Partition of Poland (1793). Her father, Stanisław Delfin Komar (1770–1835), hailed from the moderately wealthy Masovian nobility. Initially serving in the Polish military, Komar rose to prominence in Russia when he joined Catherine the Great’s army before the Second Partition and distinguished himself at her court. He acquired substantial estates in the Russian Partition through influential connections in Saint Petersburg. These previously belonged to Katarzyna Kossakowska, née Potocka (1722–1803), who had refused to pledge allegiance to Catherine II, a requirement

for retaining property under the new rule. This fortune, which Komar secured partly through family connections, was augmented through marriage to Honorata Orłowska (1780–1845) from the respected Orłowski family in Podolia. Over time, the Komars rose to prominence and became a wealthy and influential family with a status approaching that of the magnates. Their ambitions for social ascendance were reflected in the impressive Neo-classical mansion they built at Kuryłowce, a beautiful setting emblematic of their aspirations, and in a lifestyle steeped in French culture and enriched by international travel, which were the hallmarks of the early nineteenth-century aristocracy.

The Komar family's aristocratic ambitions were fulfilled through Delfina's marriage. As the eldest sibling, Delfina married, as one might expect, the most eligible match in Ukraine at the time: the fabulously wealthy Mieczysław Potocki (1799–1878), son of Szczęsny Potocki (1751–1805), a prominent figure in the Targowica Confederation (1792–1793), an alliance of nobles who acted under Russian patronage to oppose the reformist Constitution of 3 May 1791. The wedding, initially met with reluctance from the bride's father, took place in October 1825 at Kuryłowce. However, the marriage soon dissolved due to Mieczysław's cruelty, eccentricities, and parsimony. By 1828, Delfina had left him and moved abroad, securing a substantial allowance of 100,000 francs annually. She retained Countess Potocka's title and financial independence throughout her life, even after their divorce in 1843.

Potocka settled in Paris and, apart from brief intervals, spent the rest of her life abroad. Financial independence and freedom from her husband allowed her to immerse herself fully in the aristocratic elite. In that era, opportunities for women, even those from the elite, to participate in public life were limited. One of the few accessible spheres was social life, whose centre stage among the elite was the salon: a setting for gatherings and intellectual exchange and for building social prestige. The salon followed established codes of behaviour and influenced politics and the arts. In the salon, the hostess held a unique role as the guiding spirit of social exchange. The idea of the salon was notably well developed in France, where, in the nineteenth century, people eagerly revived the traditions of the old order and drew on examples from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Raised in the spirit of French aristocratic culture, Potocka quickly adapted to this world, and she achieved remarkable success, aided by her beauty, intelligence, and artistic flair. She rose through numerous romantic liaisons, notably with members of royal families such as Ferdinand, Duke of Orléans, heir to the French throne (1810–1842), and Jérôme Bonaparte (1814–1847), nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821). Potocka also hosted her salon, which was frequented by Poles and foreign guests from the realms of politics and the arts. Politically engaged, she aligned closely in Polish émigré circles with the faction centred around Adam Jerzy Czartoryski (1770–1861), and was a frequent guest at his Parisian residence, the Hôtel Lambert.

In her later years, Potocka was less active in elite society and resided mainly in Nice, where she owned a villa inherited from her mother. She devoted herself to charitable activities and established an educational institution for young ladies.

Grave of Delfina Potocka at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Dąbkowska, 2024, Polonika.

Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821–1883)

One of the most distinguished Romantic poets and thinkers, Cyprian Kamil Norwid was underappreciated in his lifetime. He only secured his rightful place in the Polish literary pantheon several decades after his death. The poet passed away in Paris, ailing and alone, in an émigré charitable house run by Polish nuns. His funeral took place on 25 May 1883. Initially, he was buried in a modest cemetery at Ivry, but upon the expiration of the plot's lease, his remains were moved to a collective Polish grave at Montmorency Cemetery. Later, following another expired lease, his remains were transferred to the communal grave of the residents of the Hôtel Lambert.

Cyprian Kamil Norwid, of the Topór coat of arms, was born on 24 September 1821 in the Masovian village of Laskowo-Głuchy. Orphaned by his mother at the age of four, he was taken in by his grandmother, Anna Hilaria Sobieska. As he liked to emphasise later, he was related to King John III Sobieski on his mother's side. A few years later, he moved with his father and siblings to Warsaw, where he attended gymnasium. However, he dropped out of school before completing his fifth year, only to enrol in a private art school. He pursued painting in Kraków and travelled extensively abroad to Dresden, Florence, and Venice, where he continued his explorations and established numerous social, artistic, and political connections. At the age of twenty-one, Norwid left Poland permanently. In Rome, he met the love of his life, Maria Kalergis. Though his love was unrequited, he followed her throughout Europe for years despite his persistent financial struggles.

Norwid also spent time in Berlin, where he attended university lectures and joined gatherings of the local Polish community. An unfortunate turn of events in 1846 led to his detention in a high-security remand prison, where harsh conditions permanently affected his health. It was during this period that his hearing issues began, and they worsened steadily over the years. Upon his release, he left Prussia and resumed his travels. In Italy, he met Adam Mickiewicz and Zygmunt Krasiński, and while in Paris, he crossed paths with ailing Juliusz Słowacki and Fryderyk Chopin; these encounters profoundly influenced his work. Norwid settled in Paris in early February 1849, where he remained until his death over thirty years later, with a two-year interruption for a brief "emigration from emigration" to North America.

The Paris period marked the longest and most challenging chapter of his life. His circumstances were often difficult, marked by financial hardship, personal disappointments, harsh reviews from the critics, and political tensions.

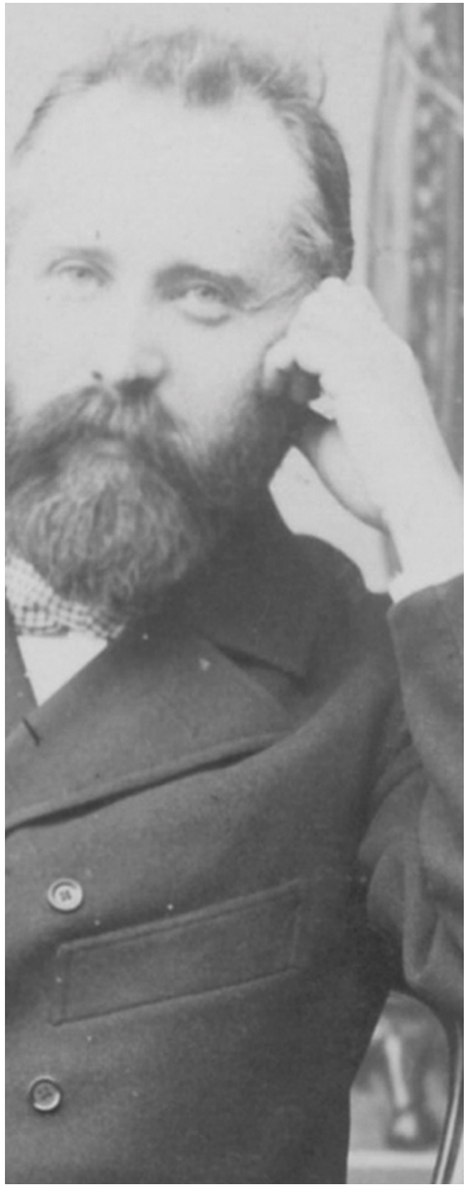
Driven by severe financial hardship in Paris, he arrived in New York on 12 February 1853 aboard the steamer Margaret Evans, entering as an economic emigrant.

He managed to secure a position in a graphic design studio. His American experience profoundly shaped his life, as reflected in his work titled *Praca* ("Labour"), where he explores the role of professional work in human existence. Despite improved personal circumstances in America, he returned to Paris via London in mid-1854 upon hearing of the outbreak of the Crimean War (1853–1856), which Poles hoped might have led to the restoration of their independence. However, his return soon became a chain of further disappointments: an unsuccessful trip to Florence, in which he had invested high hopes; persistent financial troubles; and the aggravating effects of tuberculosis, which increasingly wore him down physically.

Ultimately, Cyprian Kamil Norwid found refuge at the House of Saint Casimir, near Paris, a shelter for Polish orphans and military veterans run by nuns and established by philanthropist Anna Czartoryska, née Sapieha, to aid those Poles in exile who lived in deplorable conditions. Taken there by his cousin Michał Kleczkowski on 9 February 1877, Norwid spent nearly five years at the shelter. Despite many hardships, he continued his literary and artistic work until the end of his life, producing such works as the novellas later termed his "Italian Trilogy," including *Stygmat* ("The Stigma"), Ad leones, and the remarkable *Tajemnica lorda Singelworth* ("The Secret of Lord Singleworth"), all rich with Italian influences. These final years were deeply sorrowful for Norwid; he grew weaker and eventually stopped leaving the premises. He died in solitude on 23 May 1883. His final moments were recorded by Mother Superior Mikułowska, who recalled: "Norwid was abandoned and impoverished, brought low more by sadness, longing, and the neglect of so many who had once been close to him, all of which left him melancholy and hastened his end. His near-total deafness further isolated him from the world. His final moments were deeply peaceful: he seemed to fall asleep rather than die. He often wept but never shared his innermost feelings with anyone, and I believe that silence broke him in the end."

Cyprian Kamil Norwid never knew the warmth of a family home, nor did he establish a family of his own. Throughout his exile, he moved continually between studios, rented rooms, hotels, and boarding houses. His life was marked by constant material insecurity, and he often turned down promising opportunities, relying solely on his intellect and art, which remained his faithful companions to the end. Norwid is sometimes called the "poet of Polish statehood," a figure who deliberately transcended the conventions of his time and culture. He was also a master of neologisms. Unrecognised during his lifetime, Norwid's work remained undervalued for many years after his death. Only a tiny portion of his writings was published while he was alive. However, at the end of the nineteenth century, his work was rediscovered and gradually brought to light by writer and critic Zenon Przesmycki, nom de plume Miriam. The first complete edition of all extant and recovered works by Cyprian Kamil Norwid was finally published between 1971 and 1976, including an extensive collection of lyrical poetry, dramas, and novellas. Dismissed by his contemporaries, Norwid was destined to be fully understood only by the "late-coming posterity" of future generations.

Grave of Cyprian Kamil Norwid at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Bronisław Piłsudski (1866–1918)

A chronicler of the vanishing cultures of the Far East, Bronisław Piłsudski and his achievements have long remained in the shadow of his brother, Józef Piłsudski, the founder of the Polish Legions and first marshal of independent Poland. Bronisław died tragically in Paris, drowning in the River Seine, and was laid to rest at Montmorency Cemetery on 29 May 1918.

Born in 1866 in Zułów in the Wilno (modern-day Vilnius, Lithuania) region, he grew up immersed in the patriotic atmosphere of his family estate. Initially, there was little indication that he would dedicate himself to a career in ethnography. His future seemed set in law, which he studied at Saint Petersburg University. However, in 1887, following his involvement in a plot against Tsar Alexander III, he was expelled and sentenced to death, which was later commuted to fifteen years of exile on Sakhalin Island in the Pacific. A remote penal colony for both criminal and political prisoners, the island officially became Russian territory in 1875. At first, Piłsudski undertook manual labour, felling trees in the village of Rykovskoye. Yet the aspiring lawyer, fluent in Russian, soon came to the attention of local authorities, who needed skilled professionals to advance the ongoing development of the island. He was transferred to the police office, where he documented records for the penal colony. Eventually, he was allowed to settle in a local village. Piłsudski quickly adapted to the cultural peculiarities of the local people, and he became enthralled by their customs, folklore, and rituals. Although officially still a convict, he was supported in his research endeavours by Russian authorities, who recognised their value to the Tsarist regime. Of strategic value to Russia, Sakhalin's ports facilitated connections between mainland settlements and the islands of the Kuril Archipelago and the Kamchatka.

A formative moment in Bronisław Piłsudski's career came when he met a fellow exile and eminent ethnographer, Lev Sternberg. Under the governor's orders, Sternberg conducted extensive studies on Sakhalin Island and its inhabitants. He introduced the younger Piłsudski to the intricacies of ethnographic research, then an emerging academic field. Piłsudski subsequently wrote a paper on the island's climate, which served as his gateway to further research opportunities and increasing independence. Despatched to the island's southern regions to conduct meteorological studies, he encountered the Indigenous Ainu population. After ten years in exile, his sentence was commuted to enforced settlement in the Russian Far East; however, he remained prohibited from leaving the region. Soon thereafter, the Imperial Academy of Sciences invited him to study the cultures of the Ainu, Gilyak, Oroks, and Manguns on Sakhalin.

In 1904, Piłsudski and a fellow former exile, the Polish

BRONISŁAW PIŁSUDSKI (1866–1918)

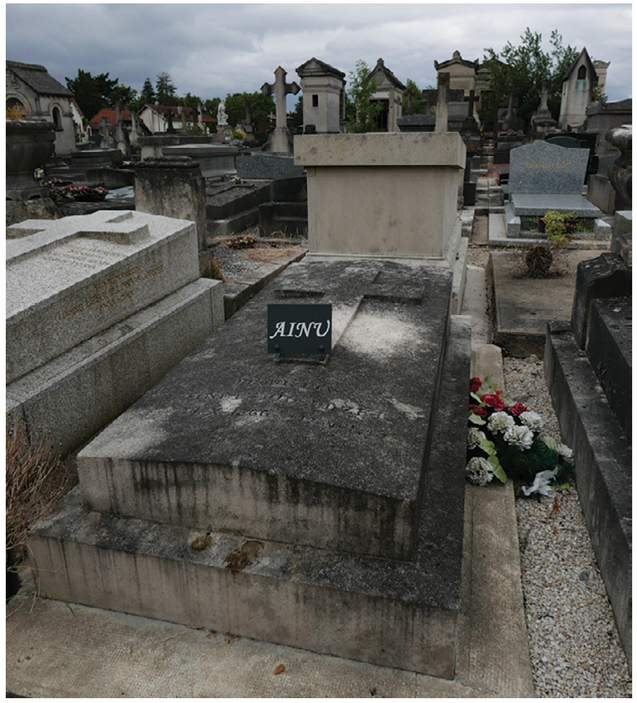
writer and traveller Wacław Sieroszewski, travelled to Japan's Hokkaido to continue researching the Ainu, who also inhabited this island. The expedition was funded by the Russian Geographical Society. Using the latest phonograph technology from the United States, invented by Thomas Edison, they recorded over a hundred wax cylinders of native conversations and songs. As a free man, Bronisław Piłsudski settled in the village of Ai, where, beginning in 1905, he studied local communities and started a family and had two children; his descendants still live in Japan today. In one of his articles, Piłsudski wrote of how he viewed the Indigenous People as "(...) the only morally uncorrupted community on the entire island (...). I drew close to these people, dying out and wronged, to breathe better air among them and to offer help." He supported the Ainu by teaching children and adults to read and write in Russian and by establishing schools with a curriculum he developed, focused on arithmetic, craftsmanship, basic agriculture, and hygiene. His primary interests were in linguistics, folklore, and anthropology, as well as in the study of medicine, shamanism, and the bear cult. He also compiled a foundational work: the Ainu-Russian dictionary.

After the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, Piłsudski, who faced potential conscription into the Tsarist army, left the island. However, the tribal authorities denied his family permission to join him. In August 1906, he travelled through North America and Western Europe to reach Polish territories, where he resided in Kraków, Lwów (present-day Lviv, Ukraine), and Zakopane. There, he conducted ethnographic research on the inhabitants of the Podhale region, founded the Ethnographic Section of the Tatra Society, and co-established the Tytus Chałubiński Museum. Despite lacking formal academic credentials, Piłsudski enjoyed considerable support from the scholarly communities in Lwów and Kraków. An eminent linguist, Professor Jan Rozwadowski of the Jagiellonian University, edited Piłsudski's folkloric and linguistic materials from his studies on the Ainu and published them in English. His 1912 work, *Materials for the Study of the Ainu Language and Folklore*, published by the University of Michigan Library, is hailed as "the pinnacle achievement in the study of Sakhalin Ainu culture and language." Much of what modern scholarship understands about the Ainu's lives, traditions, and customs can be attributed to Piłsudski. Piłsudski's Ainu language dictionary and audio recordings, later edited by Professor Alfred Majewicz, stand as his final scholarly contribution. Piłsudski was deeply respected and even beloved by this people, threatened by Russian encroachment on Sakhalin and Japanese expansion on Hokkaido. Today, fewer than one thousand Ainu remain in Russia and approximately thirty thousand in Japan. Their language and culture remain at serious risk of extinction.

After the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, Piłsudski, a Russian subject, left Zakopane for Switzerland and later moved to Paris, where he became involved with the Polish National Committee as a delegate of Lithuania. Growing family pressures and political tensions led him to suffer from periods of depression. He never again saw the family he had left behind on Sakhalin. Piłsudski died tragically at the age of fifty-two, drowning in the River Seine under circumstances that remain unclear to this day.

Despite his significant contributions to world scholarship, Bronisław Piłsudski remains known only to a small circle of specialists and enthusiasts. His name was consigned to obscurity during the Communist era in Poland, and he remains in the shadow of his younger brother, Józef Piłsudski. However, monuments honouring this extraordinary researcher can be found in Sakhalin and Hokkaido, and a symbolic grave commemorates him at the Old Cemetery in Zakopane.

Grave of Bronisław Piłsudski at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Helena Paderewska (1856–1934)

A Polish social activist, deeply dedicated patriot, and the devoted wife of a composer and the Prime Minister of the Second Polish Republic, Ignacy Paderewski, Helena Paderewska passed away from pneumonia at the age of seventy-eight. She was laid to rest at Montmorency Cemetery beside Ignacy's son, Alfred (1880–1901).

Born Helena Rosen in Warsaw in 1856, she was the daughter of Władysław Rosen, an officer in the Tsarist army, and a Greek mother, from whom she inherited beauty and a Mediterranean temperament. Her first marriage was to Władysław Górski, a soloist at the Grand Theatre, Warsaw, with whom she had a son and spent nearly twenty years. In 1899, after her first marriage was annulled, she married Ignacy Paderewski, whom she had known for many years and whose disabled son, Alfred, she had cared for. Alfred had suffered from polio since infancy, his mother having passed away shortly after his birth. Helena and Ignacy settled in their newly acquired estate, Riond-Bosson, near Morges on Lake Geneva, Switzerland. However, their extensive travels meant they only spent a few months there every year.

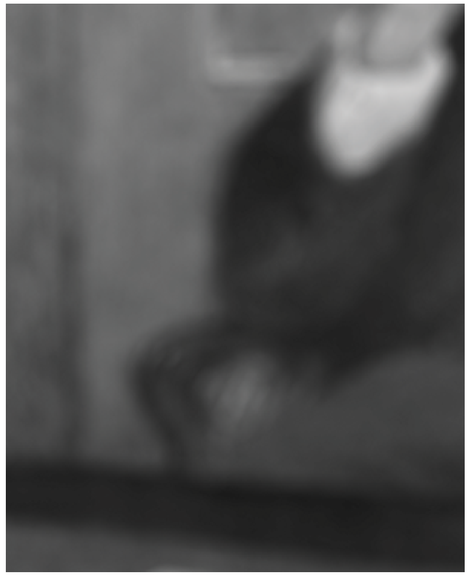
The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 reignited hopes for independence in Polish society. The Paderewskis were vigorous champions of the Polish cause, and they leveraged the extensive social and political connections that Ignacy commanded as a world-renowned virtuoso. It was mainly due to his influence that U.S. President Woodrow Wilson, in his famous proposal for ensuring a just and lasting peace following the Allied victory in the First World War, argued that "an independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant."

During the Great War, Helena Paderewska worked tirelessly in the United States to support those affected by the conflict in Polish territories and soldiers serving in the Polish Army in France, otherwise known as the Blue Army. She organised care packages, and in early February 1918, she established the Polish White Cross, a charitable organisation she led. Her husband supported this cause by holding concerts and other cultural events to raise funds. Helena Paderewska's relentless dedication to the Polish cause was recognised even during the war, and a medical train serving the front lines in eastern Lesser Poland was named in her honour. Another iconic service to the nation was her "Helena Paderewska Dolls," tiny rag dolls dressed in traditional Polish folk costumes, sold to raise funds for an artists' support fund. These dolls became popular among America's cultural elite, and are now preserved in the Polish Museum of America in Chicago.

She continued her work after Poland regained independence. By that time, she was the wife of a renowned artist and the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Second Polish Republic, a position Ignacy Paderewski assumed in 1919. She actively supported the Polish branch of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), the world's largest and oldest women's organisation, and was an honorary member of the Polish Women's Alliance of America. Additionally, she co-founded the Intelligentsia Assistance Society, which aimed to support an impoverished Polish Christian intelligentsia in the Poznań region, and founded a girls' school at Julin. In 1921, she was honoured by Pope Benedict XV with the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice cross. She also pursued rather unique interests: she excelled at pedigree poultry breeding at her Swiss residence, Riond-Bosson, where she won over three hundred Swiss and international awards. This passion led her to organise poultry-farming courses for Polish women. In independent Poland, she founded a school for poultry farming and household management, which she later bequeathed to the Central Agricultural Society in Warsaw.

Towards the end of her life, Helena Paderewska fell seriously ill, which led her husband to cancel his winter tour of the United States. She passed away on 16 January 1934 at the Paderewskis' estate in Switzerland, and was buried in a shared grave with her stepson, Alfred. After a period of mourning, Ignacy Paderewski resumed his concert tours and re-engaged in political activity. He survived his wife by seven years, passing away in New York in June 1941. In accordance with his wishes, Paderewski's heart remained in the United States, while his body was to be buried in a free Poland, a wish fulfilled only in 1992. On the fifty-first anniversary of his death, his remains were transferred to Poland aboard a US military aircraft. Paderewski was interred at Warsaw's Archcathedral Basilica of Saint John the Baptist, beside Henryk Sienkiewicz.

Grave of Helena Paderewska at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Henryk Babiński, also known as Ali Bab (1855–1931)

A French engineer, traveller, and cookbook author of Polish descent, Henryk Babiński passed away on 20 August 1931 and was interred in the family tomb at Montmorency, where his parents and brother are also laid to rest.

Born on 2 November 1855 in Paris to Henrietta Warren and Aleksander Babiński, a respected mining engineer, geologist, and topographer who had emigrated to France after the failure of the Greater Poland Rising of 1848, Henryk was raised with a strong sense of Polish identity. Two years later, his younger brother, Józef, was born; he later gained fame as a neurologist and head physician at the Hôpital de la Pitié in Paris. Despite their exile, the Babiński parents ensured a patriotic upbringing for their sons, who spoke fluent Polish and attended the Polish School at Batignolles, Paris. Founded in 1842, this Polish lycée aimed to preserve Polish traditions among émigré children, most of whom were born in France to Franco-Polish families. Henryk Babiński graduated with honours from the École des Mines and was appointed director of the zinc smelter at La Pise, which soon became profitable under his leadership. The French government subsequently commissioned him to explore gold deposits in French Guiana. Following his father's footsteps, the young Babiński spent years conducting geological research in South America, where he primarily searched for gold and diamonds. While he did not discover any gold or diamond deposits, he did locate and document extensive coal reserves in Chile and Tierra del Fuego in 1893, and later conducted similar research in Brazil and other regions.

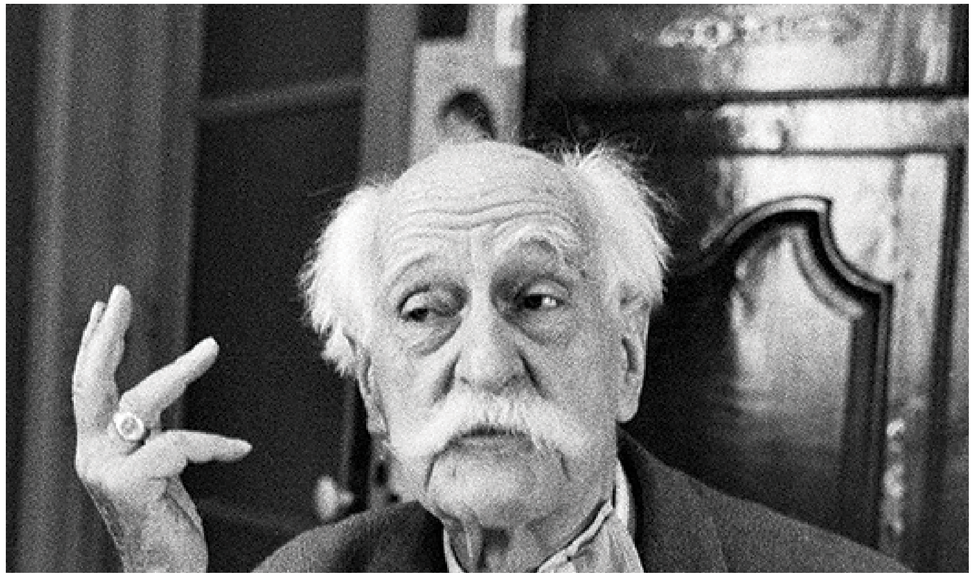
When, after many years, Henryk Babiński returned to Paris to live with his brother, this seasoned traveller and respected engineer and geologist discovered a new passion in cooking. His interest in gastronomy was undoubtedly sparked by the plain, monotonous diet that had sustained him through nearly three decades of research expeditions in remote regions of the world. In 1907, he published the first edition of his seminal work, *Gastronomie pratique*. At the time, cooking was widely considered unworthy of a scholar's attention, so Babiński released his work under the nom de plume Ali Bab, which shielded him from personal criticism. However, prominent French chefs and culinary critics knew his identity.

Babiński continued expanding various sections of the book for another twenty years, and he cooked and tasted to his heart's content. This dedication produced new recipes and resulted in a significant weight gain, as the enthusiastic cook and devoted gourmet reached an impressive 150 kilograms. In its final edition, *Gastronomie pratique* included updated recipes and insightful reflections on the history of gastronomy in different countries. The

book also provided guidance on organising social gatherings, with menu suggestions for lavish luncheons and dinners, and a treatise on managing obesity. The recipes, which the author referred to as "culinary formulas," were arranged across nineteen chapters covering soups, soup accompaniments, hors d'oeuvres, eggs, frogs, crustaceans and molluscs, fish, beef and pork offal, beef and pork dishes, poultry, game, pasta and vegetarian dishes, mushrooms, salads, cheeses, desserts, preserves, fruit jellies and syrups, ice creams and sorbets, and beverages. Henryk Babiński remained mindful of his Polish heritage, and Gastronomie pratique includes several Polish recipes, such as traditional hare pâté, *babka*, *pierogi*, pancakes, *barszcz*, and *krupnik*. Notably, in the final edition of his book, Babiński added an impressive monograph on French wines, for which he was awarded a prestigious 10,000-franc prize by the Comité de la Vigne, granted to the author who best depicted and assessed French wines.

Babiński's *Gastronomie pratique*, a work born from the experiences of a self-taught chef, was widely celebrated in culinary circles. The French journalist Léon Daudet, known for his scepticism towards foreign influences, praised Henryk Babiński's cookbook as a masterpiece of its genre, and he described its author as the most significant moderniser of French cuisine since the esteemed gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, author of The Physiology of Taste. The book also garnered international recognition, with news of it eventually reaching Poland. A review of *Gastronomie pratique* appeared in the Ilustrowany *Kurier Codzienny* ("Illustrated Daily Courier") in 1913, even though the reviewer remained unaware of the author's Polish heritage. Nearly seven decades after its first imprint, Henryk Babiński's culinary bible captivated the renowned American chef Julia Child. One of Europe's foremost culinary masters, Guy Martin, owner of the legendary restaurant Le Grand Véfour, also discovered his passion for cooking at the age of fourteen thanks to *Gastronomie pratique*.

Grave of Henryk Babiński at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Dąbkowska, 2024, Polonika.



Edouard de Pomiane, born Edward Pożerski (1875–1964)

A scientist by profession and a gastronome by passion, Edward Pożerski died tragically in a car accident on 26 January 1964. During his funeral, he was honoured with these words: "(...) You were a Pole through your noble bearing, bright and cheerful gaze, and droopy moustache (...). You were a Frenchman by intellectual disposition, with a clear and elegant style and a technical education infused with the clarity and integrity that characterises the Pasteur School (...)."

Edward Pożerski was born on 20 April 1875 in Paris, in the impoverished Montmartre district. His family had lived there since emigrating from partitioned Poland after the January Rising. His father, a veteran of the Rising who had spent twelve years in forced labour in Siberia, served as librarian and treasurer to Prince Władysław Czartoryski. At the age of five, Edward enrolled in the renowned Polish School at Batignolles, Paris, where he received a thorough patriotic education.

After completing his secondary education, he studied mathematics at the Sorbonne before moving to natural sciences and finally committing to medicine. In 1902, he presented and defended his doctoral thesis on digestive enzymes. During his doctoral studies, he began preparing his meals in the laboratory, which was a practical and cost-effective habit, albeit not officially permitted at the time. One rainy day, with the building's ventilation out of order, the aroma of Pożerski's cooking spread through the corridor, which prompted an intervention from his supervisor, the celebrated physiologist Albert Dastre. To explain himself, the young doctoral candidate returned the next day at lunchtime with two exquisite cutlets and a cake for dessert. Impressed by Pożerski's culinary skills, Dastre wanted to know where he had acquired such talent. Pożerski replied that he had learned to cook from Dastre's very own physiology lectures. Far from dismissing his student's culinary talent, Dastre remarked that anyone could prepare meat well if they understood the chemical processes involved in cooking.

After the First World War, Edward Pożerski headed the physiology laboratory at the Pasteur Institute, where he focused on food chemistry and dietetics. His research on digestion led him to explore healthy eating, including techniques for optimal food preparation. Henryk Babiński, a generation his senior, was his mentor in this endeavour, with whom he shared a genuine friendship. Inspired by Babiński, Pożerski decided to publish his insights on cooking not only delicious but also healthy meals. However, unlike Babiński, who was fond of elaborate dishes, Pożerski became a pioneer of quick and affordable

cuisine. Since culinary pursuits were then deemed unworthy of a scientist, Pożerski, who published all his scientific work under his Polish name, decided to write on the culinary arts and gastrotechnics under a nom de plume. Thus, he created the name "Edouard de Pomiane" from the French version of his first name and a French adaptation of his family's noble Polish lineage.

The book *Bien manger pour bien vivre* ("Eat Well to Live Well"), published in 1922, received enthusiastic praise from chefs and restaurateurs alike. In it, Pomian introduced the principles of a new field he called "gastrotechnics," asserting that food undergoes significant chemical and physical transformations when exposed to heat during cooking. He explored how ingredients are altered in the kitchen, how they are digested and absorbed by the body, and why each nation's cuisine is unique. Unlike traditional culinary mentors, he did not write for master chefs aspiring to create refined dishes for sophisticated palates; instead, his recipes were intended primarily for homemakers looking to cook healthily, affordably, and efficiently. Pożerski explained the chemical processes occurring during cooking in a clear, accessible way, and he argued that anyone could learn to cook by understanding six fundamental chemical and physical principles of food preparation: boiling, frying, baking and grilling, stewing, thickening, and emulsifying. These foundational rules were compiled in *La Cuisine en six leçons, ou l'Initiation à la cuisine familiale*, later translated into Polish before the Second World War as *Nauka przyrządzania potraw w sześciu lekcjach* ("Learning to Prepare Meals in Six Lessons").

While today's culinary experts vie to create quick and nutritious meals, few realise that Edward Pożerski pioneered this approach nearly a century ago. In the 1930s, he published his most famous work, *La Cuisine en dix minutes* ("Cooking in Ten Minutes"), a guide aimed not only at those with limited time but also at those who lacked enthusiasm for cooking yet still wished to prepare tasty and nourishing meals. The first rule he outlined in this guide was simple: "Start boiling water as soon as you walk in the door." The next: "Put the frying pan on the stove before you even take off your hat."

The roots of Pożerski's research and publications on the art of cooking lie in his personal history. Reflecting on his school years, he recalled often going hungry, a memory that shaped his attitude towards preparing and appreciating food. He recounted how students at the school he attended as a boy were visibly pale from inadequate nutrition: "In the morning, we were given soup and a piece of bread (...). At noon: a bowl of soup, a tiny piece of boiled meat, and a serving of dried vegetables, repeated in steady rotation: on Monday, lentils; Tuesday, green beans; Wednesday, pea purée; Thursday, potatoes; Friday, rice; Saturday, potatoes. For thirteen years of my life, this was my menu." Memories of these hardships stayed with him, as shown by his series of wartime guides on nutrition principles suited to conditions of food scarcity.

Edward Pożerski was a captivating figure in 1920s and 1930s Paris. Known as "Docteur de Pomiane," he hosted the world's first culinary radio broadcasts on Radio Paris from 1929 to 1943, where he used humour and flair to share culinary stories and reveal the scientific principles behind cooking. These broadcasts enjoyed immense popularity, and their transcripts were published in a two-volume work titled Radio Cuisine. Pożerski's books were also well received in France and translated into English, Czech, Danish, Spanish, Polish, German, Dutch, and Swedish. His lasting influence on modern cuisine is evident: in 2010, *La Cuisine en dix minutes, ou l'Adaptation au rythme moderne* ("Cooking in Ten Minutes or Adapting to the Modern Rhythm") was named among "The 50 Greatest Cookbooks of All Time" by *The Observer*.

Pożerski maintained a strong Polish identity and often introduced French audiences to Polish culinary traditions, sharing recipes for soups, pierogi, and hare with beetroot. He even authored *La Cuisine polonaise vue des bords de la Seine* ("Polish Cuisine from the Banks of the Seine"), a book intended to familiarise the French with Polish dishes and culinary customs. While he avoided politics, Polish affairs always remained close to his heart. He was deeply involved with the Society for the Preservation of Graves of Poles Who Served the Homeland in France, where he served as president, and he actively contributed to the Polish Society of Book Lovers in Paris, along with other émigré initiatives that sought to introduce Polish history and culture to the French public. He visited Poland several times; notably, in 1927, he represented the Polish community in France at ceremonies for the reinterment of Juliusz Słowacki's remains at Wawel Cathedral, Kraków. In his farewell to the national poet, he remarked: "I saw, as if in a dream, all the émigrés returning to Poland. They walk in numbers so great that they form a second Milky Way in the narrow sky, shining with ideals. They reach Polish soil, stop, and at once kneel

to kiss this sacred ground.” Many Polish graves were saved and restored thanks to his initiatives and financial support. These included the tomb of King John II Casimir Vasa at the Church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, numerous gravesites at Montmorency Cemetery, such as those of Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, General Karol Kniaziewicz, and Władysław Zamoyski, and the collective grave of members of the National Government of 1830–1831 at Montmartre. This government was formed during the November Rising in the Congress Kingdom of Poland, which challenged the rule of Imperial Russia in a bid to restore Poland’s independence.

Grave of Edward Pożerski at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.

Olga Boznańska (1865–1940)

One of Poland's most original and internationally acclaimed artists, and a Grand Prix laureate at the Paris World Exhibition, she passed away in solitude on 26 October 1940 in Paris.

The artist was born in 1865 in Kraków to a Polish-French family; her father, Adam Boznański, held the Nowina coat of arms and worked as an engineer, while her mother, Eugénie Mondan, was a certified drawing instructor. She initially studied in Kraków, where she and her sister Izabela received a well-rounded education, taking drawing lessons with the prominent portrait artist Kazimierz Pochwalski and attending Adrian Baraniecki's Higher Courses for Women. In 1886, she moved to Munich, home to a vibrant community of Polish painters led by family friend Józef Brandt, who offered her valuable artistic mentorship. As a woman, she was barred from studies at the Academy of Fine Arts, so she trained at the "free studios" of Carl Kircheldorf and Wilhelm Dürr. Before long, however, she had established herself as an independent artist and opened her studio by 1889. Boznańska later regarded her time in Munich as the most formative period of her artistic career. During these years, she developed her distinctive style and palette. In Munich, she painted portraits, depictions of children, scenes of motherhood, the interiors of her studio, and still lifes. Leading a vibrant social life, she attracted significant attention and regularly exhibited her works in Kraków, Warsaw, Lwów (present-day Lviv), Prague, Vienna, Berlin, London, and Paris. Despite her growing international acclaim, Olga Boznańska's talents went underappreciated in her native Kraków. Consequently, a few years later, she emphatically declined when the well-known painter Julian Fałat offered her a professorship in the women's department at Kraków's Academy of Fine Arts.

A fully matured artist, Boznańska moved permanently to Paris in 1898, where her artistic career flourished until the outbreak of the First World War. She received numerous commissions and awards, including a gold medal at London's New Gallery and honours at the Paris World Exhibition. Her studio became a magnet for Polish émigrés and artists alike. From Paris, as she had from Munich, she sent her works to exhibitions in Europe's most prominent cultural centres, and her reputation eventually extended to the United States. In 1913, she submitted *Portrait of a Woman in a Shawl* to the Carnegie Institute, which now graces a distinguished New York collection. One of the most significant exhibitions she participated in was the 1909 *Cent tableaux. L'Exposition des "Mademoiselles,"* where she presented thirty paintings. In Paris, she taught briefly at the Académie Vitti and the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. She was a member of both the Polish Artists' Society "Sztuka" and the Association of Polish Artists in Paris.

OLGA BOZNAŃSKA (1865–1940)

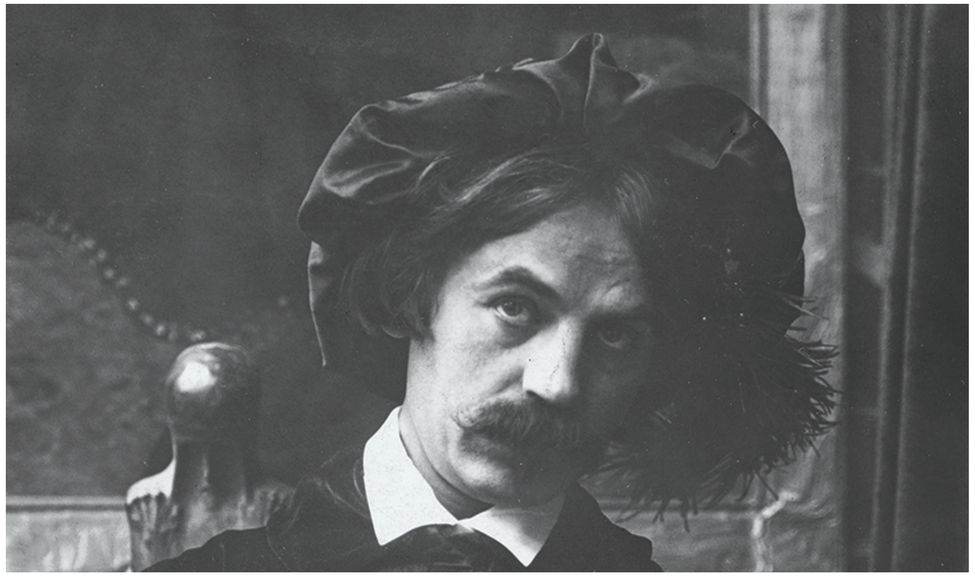
In Paris, Boznańska continued to paint the same subjects she had in Munich: portraits, still lifes, and studio interiors. Her art is marked by an intimate mood and a remarkable sensitivity to colour. She avoided sharp contrasts and favoured a limited palette that gave her works a hazy quality, with few defined lines or forms. While critics often linked Boznańska's work to Impressionism, which was popular at the time, the connection is somewhat superficial. Unlike artists of that movement, she strove to convey the psychological depth of her sitters, and she opted not to use the bright colours or outdoor scenes typical of Impressionism. Though hardly pandering to common tastes, her pieces still attracted many buyers. *Portrait of Konstancja Dygatowa*, set against a backdrop of golden greens, was purchased by King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy. Boznańska's guiding principle in her portraits was to capture the psychological truth of her sitters, a skill she mastered to perfection: "My paintings look splendid because they are truthful; they are honest and noble. There is no petty-mindedness, no affectation, no pretence. They are quiet yet alive, as though a delicate veil separated them from the onlooker. They exist in their own atmosphere" (from a letter by Boznańska to Julia Gadomska, 1909).

Despite the recognition she garnered as an artist, Boznańska struggled with mounting financial difficulties, exacerbated by the outbreak of the First World War. Although she continued to paint tirelessly, she remained on the periphery of the bustling art scene, thoroughly indifferent to new artistic trends or the rapidly shifting world around her. Even in dire poverty, she painted undeterred, hauling buckets of water to her unheated studio, where mice scurried across the floor. Her only surviving close relative was her sister, who, after years of struggling with mental illness and addiction, took her own life in 1934, which came as a profound shock for the artist. Boznańska died in solitude on 26 October 1940 at the Sisters of Mercy Hospital in Paris.

Olga Boznańska rarely commented on or theorised about her painting; when she spoke of it, she typically detached herself from broad artistic affiliations and underscored her independence. Her work reveals influences from Édouard Manet and James McNeill Whistler, as well as clear inspiration from Diego Velázquez. Boznańska did not follow the latest artistic trends; she dressed in styles from an earlier era and never replaced her long skirts with shorter ones or trousers, a choice many women, particularly those in artistic circles, eagerly embraced at the time. In lifestyle, however, she was ahead of her era. An independent, single woman devoted to her art, she was indeed an extraordinary figure.

Most of Boznańska's paintings reside in museum collections and rarely appear on the antique market. However, when they do, they command prices well above a million *złoty*.

Grave of Olga Boznańska at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Bolesław Biegas (1877–1954)

A Polish sculptor, painter, and playwright, Bolesław Biegas achieved considerable artistic and commercial success in France. However, he was largely marginalised in Poland, where he remains relatively obscure. The artist passed away on 30 September 1954 at the Necker Hospital in Paris at the age of seventy-seven. His funeral Mass was held on 5 October at the Polish Church on Rue Saint Honoré. Dying without descendants, he bequeathed his artistic legacy to the Polish Historical and Literary Society in France.

Biegas's biography is marked by an extraordinary, almost Dickensian turn of fortune. Born to a poor peasant family, he was orphaned early and set to various jobs, including herding cattle, assisting a carpenter, and training under a minor woodcarver. A transformative moment in his life came in 1896, when his clay sculptures caught the attention of Dr Franciszek Rajkowski, a physician from Ciechanów, who took Biegas into his home, fostered his sculptural skills, and helped him learn to read and write. With support from Father Aleksander Rzewnicki, Count Adam Krasiński, and the literary critic and philosopher Aleksander Świętochowski, Biegas was able to develop his artistic potential. In 1896, Świętochowski organised Biegas's first exhibition in Warsaw. He also initiated a public fund-raising effort for his education, which allowed the nineteen-year-old artist to study at Kraków's Academy of Fine Arts under the guidance of Konstanty Laszczka. However, in 1901, Biegas was expelled from the academy after his piece, *The Book of Life*, caused a scandal. That same year, he participated in the Tenth Vienna Secession Exhibition, where his sculptures were displayed in Vienna and at Munich's Glaspalast. Thanks to a scholarship from the Warsaw Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts, Biegas moved to Paris, where he would spend the remainder of his life despite periodic returns to Poland.

The *fin de siècle* introduced Symbolism, Art Nouveau, and decadence to the visual arts and literature, which profoundly shaped Biegas's work. The young artist moved away from genre scenes and naturalism, instead embracing metaphysical and aesthetic themes under the strong influence of Stanisław Przybyszewski's concept of the "naked soul," a pure essence unbounded by reason or sensory perception. Przybyszewski believed this essence could only be reached through the emotional experiences evoked by art. Biegas quickly captured the attention of French art critics and received the patronage of Baron and Baroness Henryk and Jadwiga Trütschel, who provided financial support. He also established extensive connections in the Polish artistic émigré community, and formed close friendships with many, including Olga Boznańska. His exhibitions were generally well received, and they

often sparked intense reactions and were reviewed by prominent critics such as Guillaume Apollinaire, Émile Verhaeren, André Fontaines, and Louis Vauxcelles. Biegas remained engaged in Poland's artistic life and exhibited his works at the Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts in Warsaw (1901), Kulikowski's Salon (1909), and the Society of Friends of Fine Arts in Kraków (1902–1904, 1911). He also wrote works infused with symbolism, most notably poetry collections: *Przeszłość i przyszłość* ("Past and Future," 1902); novels: *Graczak* (1904) and *Wędrówka ducha myśli* ("The Journey of the Spirit of Thought," 1904); and plays: *Lachit* (1906), *Orfida* (1908), and *Bramir* (1909).

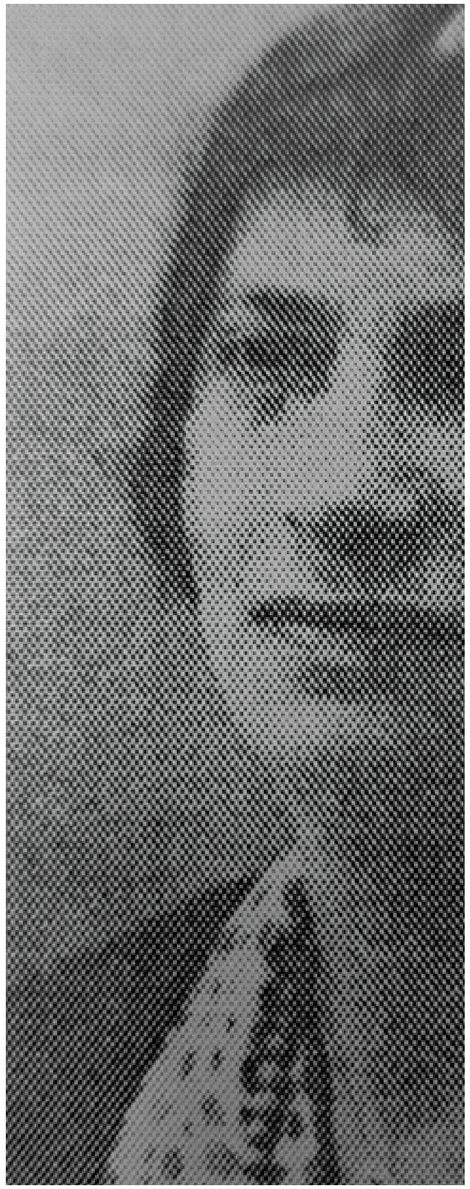
Around 1900, following advice from Stanisław Wyspiański, Bolesław Biegas began painting. While he drew inspiration from the symbolism of Gustave Moreau and Arnold Böcklin, his early works also reflect the influences of Art Nouveau and the distinctive style of Wyspiański. Exhibitions of his politically charged paintings, such as *The Russo-Japanese War* (1907), established Biegas as a rebellious artist and sparked a broader debate around artistic censorship. In 1909, he formed a connection with the Indian princess Perinette Khurshedbanoo, whose likeness he captured in numerous portraits. His best-known works include "spherical portraits," which portray figures through abstract ornamental patterns. During the First World War, he created *Vampires of War*, a series illustrating the brutality and futility of war. He later completed *Mysticism of Infinity* and a collection of dreamlike, symbolist portraits depicting key cultural figures. After the Second World War, he created the politically resonant series *Nations and Politicians*.

In the 1920s, Biegas's popularity waned dramatically due to his limited engagement in social and artistic circles and the diminishing public interest in Symbolism. During the inter-war period, his participation in exhibitions in Warsaw and Kraków nearly ceased. Despite numerous fortunate turns throughout his life, Biegas's star had faded by the 1930s. After the Second World War, he lived a quiet, solitary life in modest conditions until his death on 30 September 1954.

Bolesław Biegas did not establish a lasting presence in Poland's national awareness, a fact attributed to his permanent relocation to Paris in 1901, the critical reception of his work in Poland, and his passing during the Communist era; a system he resolutely opposed, evidenced by his decision to entrust his entire artistic legacy to the Polish émigré community in France.

Renewed interest in Biegas's work emerged in the late twentieth century, along with a revival of appreciation for Art Nouveau and inter-war art. Today, his works are highly sought after by collectors.

Grave of the Historical and Literary Society, where Bolesław Biegas is interred, Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Dąbkowska/ Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Franciszka Granier (1883–1963)

In early 1963, in a span of just ten days, on 23 February and 5 March, Emile Granier (1879–1963) and his wife, Franciszka, née Neymark, passed away. The couple, who had been married for over forty years, were laid to rest together at Les Champeaux under a shared tombstone. The monument is now a slightly inclined slab with a cross set atop a tall plinth, crafted from polished red and black granite, with a jardinière at the foot of the cross. It is likely that the choice of Montmorency's "Polish" cemetery as their final resting place was made by Franciszka, who, at the time of her passing, was one of the oldest Polish expatriates in France. Her funeral service was held at Paris's principal Polish church, *Notre Dame de l'Assomption*. A Sorbonne graduate and philosophy teacher at French lycées, Granier was awarded the *Ordre des Palmes académiques*. A prominent figure in the socialist French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO) and the union-based General Confederation of Labour (CGT), she was also an active member of the Polish Historical and Literary Society, and she was recognised with the Gold Cross of Merit by the Polish government-in-exile. She embodied a remarkable blend of French and Polish identities.

Franciszka Neymark was born in 1883 in Łódź to a wealthy lawyer, Gerszon Gustaw Neymark, and Lea Hejman. Family accounts describe Franciszka as someone who actively resisted injustice during her school years and campaigned for the right to use the Polish language in her Russian-language gymnasium. Early on in life, she was also inspired by socialist ideas. In Congress Poland at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, socialist involvement took two principal forms. One was represented by the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), which primarily sought to establish an independent and democratic Polish state. The other was embodied by the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL), a movement more closely aligned with Marxist ideology and class struggle. The SDKPiL called for the unified efforts of the Russian proletariat to overthrow Tsarist autocracy, and it viewed integration in a new, democratic Russian state as the most viable path for the development of Polish society, which was economically intertwined with the empire. The ideological foundations of this approach were laid by Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919). In her youth, Franciszka Neymark became Luxemburg's enthusiastic follower; she joined the SDKPiL and embarked on her first political actions by engaging in factory outreach and organising meetings at her parents' home. Like many of her generation, she experienced the 1905 Revolution as a formative moment in her life. Russia was swept by spontaneous workers' demonstrations, which in Congress Poland were supported by both the PPS and the SDKPiL. The revolution ended with a wave of reprisals, during which Neymark was

also arrested; however, she managed to leave the country with her family's assistance.

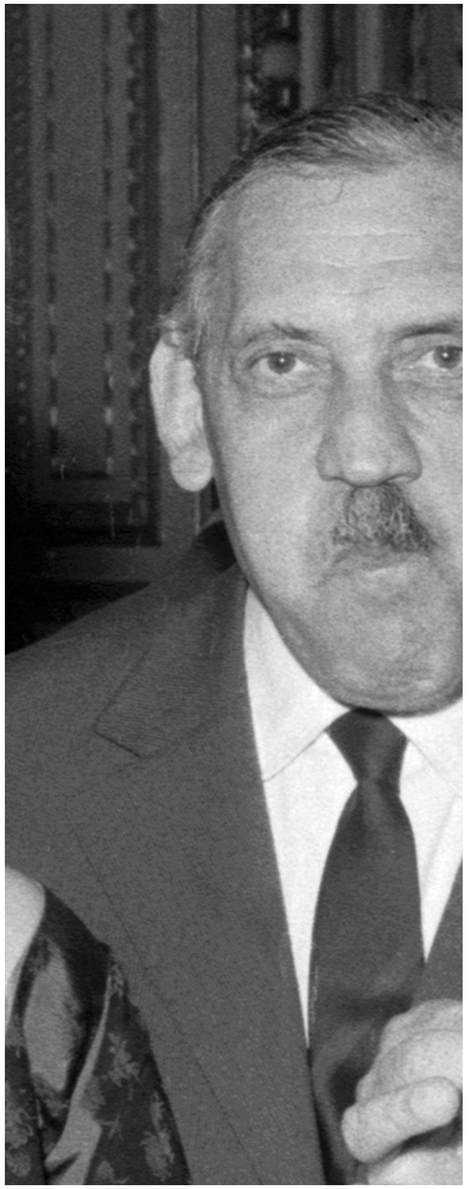
In the West, she continued her studies in philosophy in Brussels and Paris. In Paris, she immersed herself in the writings of prominent philosophers, including Henri Bergson (1859–1941), whose portrait she kept on her wall for the rest of her life, Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), André Lalande (1867–1963), and Victor Delbos (1862–1916). Under Delbos's guidance, she developed a dissertation on Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677). After earning her *licence ès lettres*, she taught philosophy at various lycées, including schools in the front-line region during the First World War (1914–1918) in Abbeville and Coulommiers, and later in Paris.

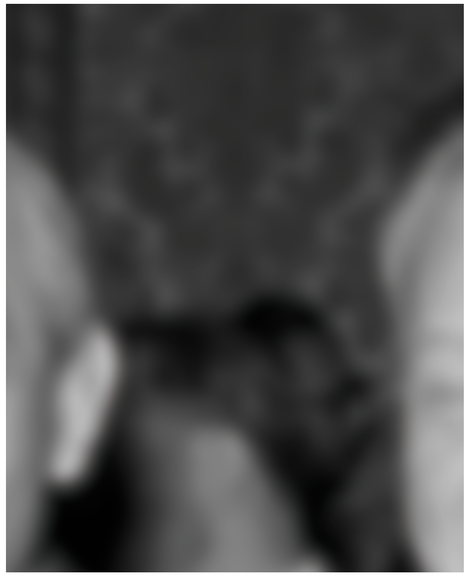
In 1908, she most likely married Kazimierz Gierdawa (1879–1924), an SDKPiL activist who had led a party cell in Łódź during the 1905 Revolution and was subsequently forced to flee the country. While in exile, Gierdawa gravitated away from his former comrades and drew closer to the PPS; in 1917, he joined the Blue Army, a Polish military contingent formed under French patronage, and returned to Poland with the rank of lieutenant. He died in 1924 in Warsaw, where he was a deputy director in one of the city's department stores. However, their marriage had already been annulled, and on 20 January 1921, Franciszka married Emile Granier, a First World War veteran and history teacher at Parisian lycées. Despite their separation, it seems likely that Franciszka Granier's ideological path followed a similar course to that of Gierdawa. As her son, Jean-Lucien (1920–2012), insightfully noted in a memoir published in 1968, Granier's French idol became Jean Jaurès (1859–1914), who softened the severity of Marxist historical laws by championing human kindness and friendship. The second portrait in the Granier home was, in fact, of Jaurès. In 1920, the French socialist movement split into the SFIO and the Communist Party, the latter aligning with Lenin's (1870–1924) Comintern. Granier remained loyal to the former and was actively involved with it until the end of her life. During the First World War, she organised lectures on Poland at meetings of the Parisian section.

Granier was actively involved in the trade union movement. Beginning in 1923, she co-founded and served multiple times as treasurer for the first French trade union for secondary and higher education teachers, the *Syndicat national confédéré des membres de l'enseignement des second et troisième degrés*, which was affiliated with the CGT. As a trade unionist, she dedicated herself to advancing gender equality for female teachers and students, including pay equity. She remained committed to the feminist movement throughout her life, and in her later years, she became involved with the *Mouvement pour le planning familial*, which advocated for the rights to sexual education, contraception, and safe abortion. From 1927, she also supported Polish workers in France through their CGT-affiliated organisation, where she served as editorial secretary for their publication, *Prawo Ludu* ("The People's Law").

During the Second World War (1939–1945), Granier likely participated in resistance activities organised by the SFIO. After the war, she firmly opposed Communist dictatorships in Central Europe. Her apartment became a place of gatherings for members of the Polish Socialist Party in exile and prominent figures from the French socialist elite; there, she presented the Polish perspective and tried to influence French policy and public opinion. Granier founded the *Amis de la démocratie en Pologne* in 1948, an association that organised lectures at the Sorbonne on Poland's contributions to European civilisation. She also used her connections to champion the independence of the Polish Library in Paris, which the Polish People's Republic authorities sought to take over. Rallying French parliamentarians from across the political spectrum and engaging the public—she published a pamphlet in 1956 titled *Les Tribulations de la Bibliothèque polonaise de Paris*—Granier played a crucial role in securing the National Assembly's resolution of 3 June 1959, which urged the French government to take steps to protect the library's freedom and independence.

Grave of Franciszka Granier at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.





Aleksander Wat (1900–1967)

A Polish writer and poet of Jewish origin, and a translator from Russian, French, and German, Wat was among the founders of Polish Futurism. He died on 29 July 1967 in France after a protracted illness. Wat's life and works epitomise the experience of a twentieth-century artist who, initially entangled in the leftist avant-garde, ultimately became a victim of the Communist regime.

Wat was born to a Jewish family; his father was Rabbi Mendel Michał Chwat, and his mother, Rozalia, was née Kronsilber. In 1918, Wat completed his secondary education at Warsaw's Roch Kowalski Gymnasium before studying philosophy at the University of Warsaw, where he came under the profound influence of Professor Tadeusz Kotarbiński. That same year, he co-founded a group in Warsaw with the poet and prose writer Anatol Stern; they hosted eccentric literary evenings and quickly became leading figures of Polish Futurism. During this period, he produced numerous poems published in literary magazines and declared his commitment to "freeing words" and breaking free from the constraints of spelling, grammar, and punctuation. This was when his first poetry collection emerged; *Ja z jednej strony i Ja z drugiej strony mego mopsożelaznego piecyka* ("Me from One Side and Me from the Other Side of My Pug Iron Stove," 1919) drew upon key motifs from European classical and Christian culture and heroic epics, which were nonetheless marked by grotesque and anti-aesthetic elements. In 1924, together with the painter Henryk Berlewi and the poet Stanisław Brucz, Wat established the design office "Reklamo-Mechano" to apply avant-garde poetics and stylistics to commercial advertising texts.

In the mid-1920s, with the decline of Futurism as an artistic movement, Wat turned to translating French, German, and Russian literature, including *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. In 1927, he published a collection of grotesque fantasy stories entitled *Bezrobotny Lucyfer* ("Lucifer Unemployed"). Concurrently, he developed an interest in social issues and politics, and his acquaintance with Marxist journalist Andrzej Stawar gave rise to his leftist sympathies. This led to collaboration with other intellectuals sympathetic to Communism, including Władysław Broniewski and Bruno Jasieński. Together, they launched *Miesięcznik Literacki* ("The Literary Monthly"), an unofficial organ of the Polish Communist Party. The publication was shut down two years later, and its editorial team was arrested. Wat's alignment with Communism also brought about a creative crisis, as his style failed to adhere to the principles of socialist realism. After the outbreak of the Second World War, he relocated to Lwów (present-day Lviv, Ukraine), where he initially welcomed the

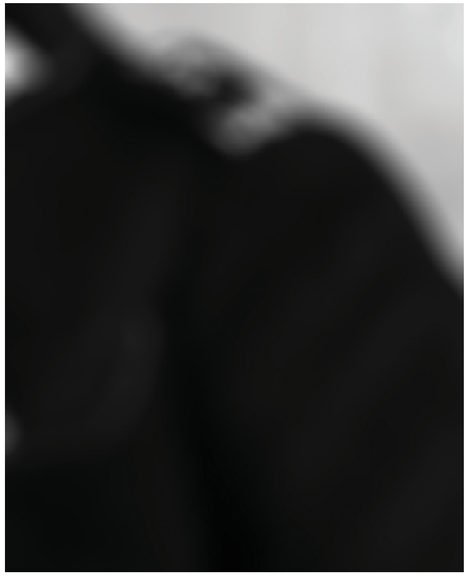
incorporation of Western Ukraine into the USSR. At that time, he contributed to *The Red Banner*, a newspaper published by the Soviet occupation authorities. In January 1940, War and other Polish writers were arrested by the Soviets; he was held in Lwów, Kiev (modern-day Kyiv, Ukraine), and Moscow before being deported deep into the USSR, to Kazakhstan. Released under an amnesty in November 1941, he was reunited with his wife and son. In Alma-Ata (present-day Almaty, Kazakhstan), he served as the regional delegate of the Polish government-in-exile. Wat remained in Soviet Russia until 1946, but he never accepted Soviet citizenship, and his experiences in NKVD prisons left him disillusioned and permanently severed from Marxist ideology.

Upon his return to Poland, Aleksander Wat briefly served as Editor-in-Chief of the State Publishing Institute PIW (1946–1948). From 1947 to 1949, he co-edited *Odrodzenie*, the first socio-cultural weekly in post-war Poland. Wat was outspoken in his criticism of the emerging Communist system, and he worked to introduce literature outside the confines of socialist realism into the journals he managed. Although he contributed to *Kuźnica* and *Twórczość* literary magazines and took an active role in Poland's post-war literary life, the mounting restrictions on creative freedom eventually silenced him. In January 1953, Wat was struck by a severe illness known as Wallenberg's bulbar syndrome, which caused intense headaches and rendered him unable to work. Seeking treatment abroad, he travelled to Sweden in 1954 and southern France, where he stayed from 1955 to 1957. Despite his illness, he continued to write. After many years of creative silence, he published a collection titled *Wiersze* ("Poems") in 1957, which explored the multifarious, metaphysical pain he endured as he grappled with his condition. The publication garnered widespread interest and acclaim, earning Wat a prize from the *Nowa Kultura* weekly in Poland.

The writer sought solace and relief from his illness in France. Wat and his wife developed a deep affection for Paris and Provence (Cabris), where he composed a series of poems later included in *Wiersze śródziemnomorskie* ("Mediterranean Poems"). In 1963, Wat decided to remain in exile and settled in the West. He published in the Paris-based *Kultura*, was a frequent guest on Radio Free Europe's Polish section, and received a fellowship at the Center for Slavic and East European Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. However, his illness aggravated, and writing became increasingly arduous. During his time abroad, he gave a series of interviews to Czesław Miłosz, which became the basis for the book *Mój wiek* ("My Century").

In 1965, he returned to France. However, he travelled to Mallorca for therapeutic purposes, where he completed his final collection, *Ciemne świecidło* ("Dark Lustre"). Throughout this period, he suffered from excruciating headaches, which eventually led him, on 29 July 1967, to take his own life by overdosing on painkillers. Ultimately, the illness prevailed.

Grave of Aleksander Wat at Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



Kazimierz Sosnkowski (1885–1969)

He was among the most distinguished Polish military leaders and political figures of the twentieth century, and a champion of Polish independence. He passed away on 11 October 1969 in Arundel, Canada, at the age of eighty-four. The urn containing his ashes was initially interred at Montmorency Cemetery near Paris and later transported to Poland on 12 October 1992.

Born on 19 November 1885 in Warsaw, he was descended from a noble family with roots in the Podlasie region. His father, a chemical engineer by profession, was also an avid musician and composer; his mother, also of noble descent, was daughter of the landowner of the Gintowce estate in Samogitia (Gintaučiai in modern-day Lithuania). Following his father's death, he was raised solely by his mother. Sosnkowski joined a clandestine self-education circle already as a student of a Warsaw gymnasium. However, the suspicions of Tsarist authorities led him to relocate to Saint Petersburg, where he completed his secondary education. He initially pursued studies at the Faculty of Architecture at the Warsaw Polytechnic Institute. However, amid political turbulence and due to his involvement in independence efforts, he moved between institutions, studying architecture in Milan, Italy, and Lwów (present-day Lviv, Ukraine). The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 and his political commitments prevented him from completing his final exams. From 1905, he was a member of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS). After its split, he joined the Revolutionary Faction. In the PPS Combat Organisation, he served as district commander, chief of staff, and deputy commander of the Union of Active Struggle.

During the First World War, he worked closely with Józef Piłsudski and served as Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff of Piłsudski's First Brigade of the Polish Legions. In 1917, he was appointed Piłsudski's deputy as Head of the Military Commission in the Provisional Council of State in the Kingdom of Poland. Following the so-called "oath crisis," Kazimierz Sosnkowski was imprisoned first in the fortress of Wesel and later in Magdeburg. Orchestrated by Piłsudski in light of Germany's reluctance to grant Poland complete independence, this crisis unfolded when soldiers of the Polish Auxiliary Corps, including members of the Polish Legions, refused to pledge allegiance to the German and Austro-Hungarian emperors. While in captivity, Sosnkowski experienced a personal tragedy: his ten-year-old daughter, Zofia, succumbed to the Spanish flu pandemic. This loss deeply affected his first wife, Stefania, who experienced a severe mental health crisis. The marriage was ultimately annulled. After the war, he married Jadwiga Żukowska, who was sixteen years his junior; they had five sons, four of whom followed their father into military service.

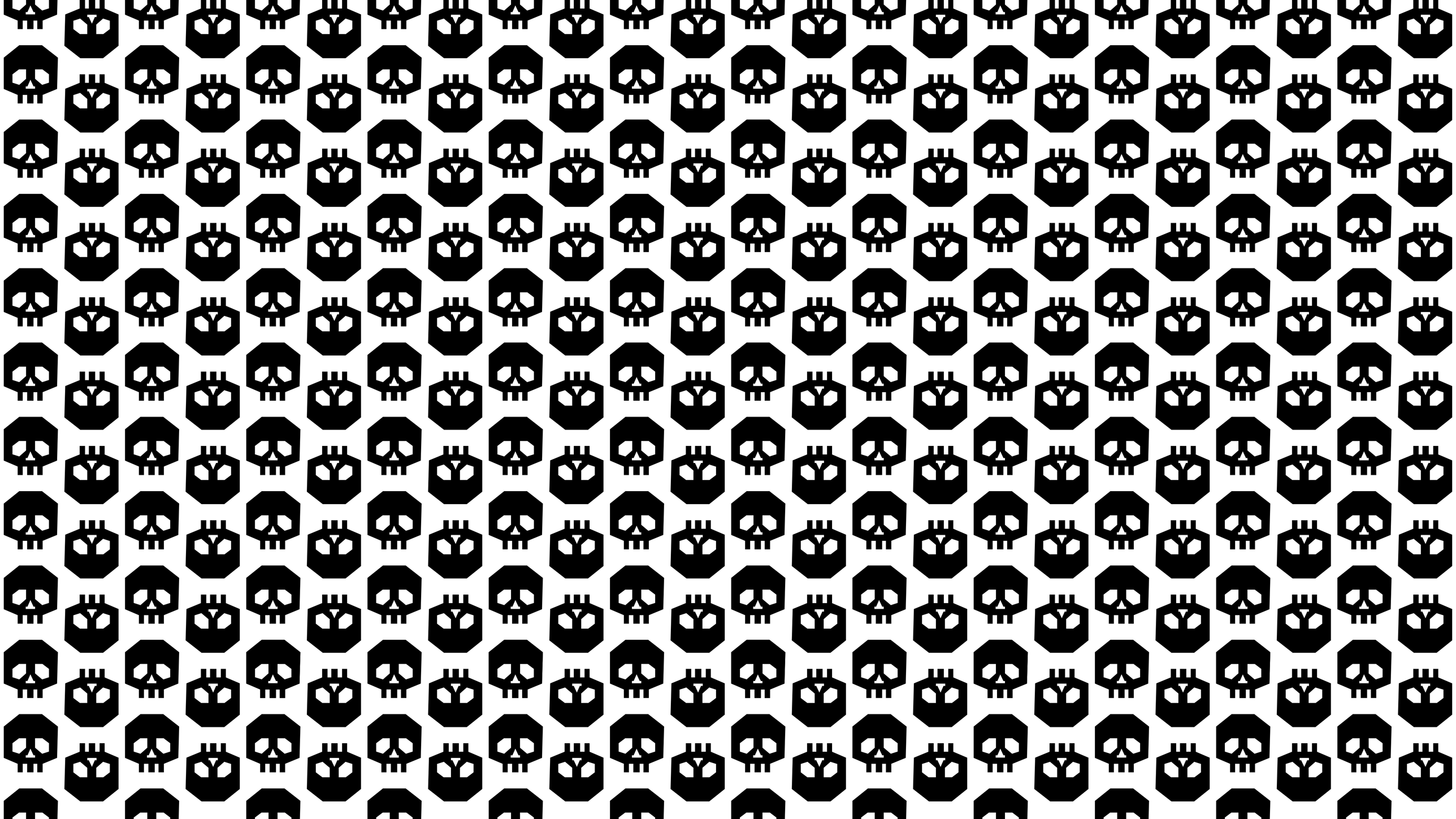
After Poland's rise to independence, Kazimierz

KAZIMIERZ SOSNKOWSKI (1885–1969)

Sosnkowski was promoted to general and shortly thereafter appointed Deputy Minister of Military Affairs (1919–1920). During the Polish-Soviet War, he served on the Council of National Defence and commanded the Reserve Army in 1920; he played a pivotal role in organising the armed forces and defending Poland at the most critical moment of the conflict. In August 1920, when appointed Minister of Military Affairs, he effectively led the defence of Warsaw. In 1925, he became Commander of the Corps District in Poznań. During the May Coup of 1926, Sosnkowski attempted suicide. After his recovery, he was appointed Army Inspector (1927). From 1928, he chaired the Committee for Armament and Equipment at the General Inspectorate of the Armed Forces, and twice assumed the duties of General Inspector of the Armed Forces. Despite his considerable service to the country, Sosnkowski was increasingly marginalised in military and political spheres after the death of Józef Piłsudski. On 11 November 1936, he was promoted to three-star general. During the Second World War, following the defeat in the September Campaign of 1939, Sosnkowski evacuated to the West, where he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces in the West. However, his adamant stance against the Soviet Union and disputes with Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski led to his removal from command. In July 1943, after General Sikorski's death, Sosnkowski resumed the role of Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, though he was dismissed from this position on 30 September 1944.

After the war, Sosnkowski settled in Canada with his family, where he led a quiet life in exile and was removed from politics and public activity. Although no longer holding military or political office, he remained a prominent figure for the Polish diaspora and a symbol of steadfast commitment to Poland's independence. In his last will, General Kazimierz Sosnkowski expressed a desire for his ashes to be interred as close to his homeland as possible, hoping to rest in Poland once Communist rule had ended. His ashes were first laid to rest in 1969 at the Church of St Stanislaus in Paris and later moved to the grave of the Polish Historical and Literary Society at Montmorency Cemetery near Paris. In 1992, they were brought to Warsaw and interred in the vault of the Archcathedral Basilica of Saint John the Baptist, side by side with King Stanisław II August, Presidents Gabriel Narutowicz and Ignacy Mościcki, and the composer and Prime Minister Ignacy Jan Paderewski.

Grave of the Historical and Literary Society, where Kazimierz Sosnkowski is interred, Les Champeaux Cemetery, Montmorency, photograph by Aleksandra Rodziewicz, 2024, Polonika.



The POLONIKA Institute at Les Champeaux

The Cimetière des Champeaux de Montmorency near Paris holds a special place in Polish hearts. Often referred to as the Pantheon of Polish Emigration, it is the resting place of many eminent Poles: politicians, social activists, scholars, and cultural figures. Among them are Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, Karol Otto Kniaziewicz, Olga Boznańska, Bolesław Biegas, Tadeusz Makowski, Cyprian Godebski, Roman Palester, and Cyprian Kamil Norwid, who rests in a communal grave. Adam Mickiewicz was also originally interred here until his ashes were transferred to Wawel Cathedral, Kraków, in 1890. After many years without restoration, the monuments have required, and many still do, complete conservation and repair. These monuments hold exceptional historical, educational, and emotional value, and they attract visitors from Poland and around the world. Funded by the Polonika Institute, conservation work has been carried out by the Society for the Preservation of Polish Historic Graves and Monuments in France since 2018. The project aims to restore the historical and architectural legibility of the monuments.

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Tombstones in outdoor settings are exposed to various environmental factors: rainfall and associated relative humidity, fog, groundwater from the capillary rise, wind, sunlight, daily and seasonal temperature fluctuations, and air pollution typical of the area. Over decades, tombstones at Montmorency have been continually subject to those climatic elements and rising levels of chemical pollution, especially from the latter half of the twentieth century onwards. Over time, the tombstones accumulated secondary biological and chemical layers, often described as a "fake patina" of urban origin. All the tombstones under conservation exhibited varying degrees and types of deterioration, including the loss of form, surface layer erosion, leaching, and biological and chemical deposits. Migration of the binding agents resulted in the loss of form in multiple areas and a significantly weakened stone structure. Rainwater dissolved and washed away many of the more vulnerable components from the stone surfaces, creating localised surface erosion. Some of the most severe damage in specific tombstones was likely caused by the deliberate toppling and breaking of cross finials.

Between 2018 and 2023, conservation work was carried out on the following graves: in 2018, the graves of Bronisław Piłsudski and Helena and Alfred Paderewski; in 2019, the Jaroszyński Family Chapel (Phase I), and the graves of Jadwiga Ostrożyńska, Irena Stokowska, the Makowski family, and Olga Boznańska; in 2020, further work on the Jaroszyński Family Chapel (Phase II) and the graves of the Mickiewicz family, Jan Szymański, and the Suzin-Souzine family; in 2021, the symbolic grave of Cyprian Kamil Norwid, the Mickiewicz family grave (Phase II), and the grave of Franciszek Stępiński; in 2022, the double grave of Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz and Karol Kniaziewicz (Phase I), further work on the Jaroszyński Chapel (Phase III), and the grave of Bronisława Królikowska; and in 2023, the double grave of Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz and Karol Kniaziewicz (Phase II), along with the graves of Kazimierz Szwykowski and Władysław Strzecki (Phase I).

BRONISŁAW PIŁSUDSKI'S TOMBSTONE

The tombstone slab, pedestal stones, and chest blocks were initially cleared of loose and compacted surface deposits using mechanical methods, assisted by pressure washing, and followed by a biocidal solution. Further cleaning of more tightly bound deposits was performed mechanically with pressurised water and nylon and steel brushes. A 20% aqueous solution of calcium hypochlorite was locally applied on the slab and base stones to remove persistent dark discolouration. Stone surfaces were subsequently refined using an abrasive jet method, with localised sandblasting employing fine quartz sand (0–0.2 mm). After cleaning, remnants of weathered joint

filler were removed, and the surface was lightly abraded in areas of loss in preparation for sealing. All joints and gaps in the tombstone were filled with mineral cement mortar containing quartz-limestone aggregate and tinted with dry pigments for a unified appearance. The final stage of the restoration involved enhancing the clarity of the inscriptions with colour infilling.

PADEREWSKI FAMILY TOMBSTONE

All tombstone elements were cleared of loose and compacted deposits using mechanical methods supported by pressurised water. The surrounding green spaces were also tidied. The final cleaning of the stone surfaces was performed with a micro-sandblasting method. Remnants of weathered joint filler were removed, and joints between the individual elements of the tombstone were refilled with mineral cement mortar, which was tinted with dry pigments. Cracks in the marble were filled with a polyester resin-based compound mixed with marble filler. The final stage of the restoration involved enhancing the clarity of the inscriptions with colour infilling. All stone elements received preliminary treatment with a biocidal agent, followed by a protective hydrophobic coating, and were finished with a layer of microcrystalline wax.

JAROSZYŃSKI FAMILY CHAPEL

Stage One focused on the tiered roof and cross finial. Stone elements were cleared of loose and compacted deposits using mechanical methods supported by pressurised water and nylon and steel brushes. A 10% aqueous solution of calcium hypochlorite was applied to remove persistent dark stone discolouration. For dark gypsum deposits beneath the cornice, cellulose poultices saturated with 10% ammonium bicarbonate and EDTA solutions were applied. Additional cleaning was conducted using steel brushes and fine corundum. During conservation, major areas of loss in the cornice were restored with inserts of natural stone, specifically Saint-Maximin limestone from the Paris region. The inserts were affixed with mineral adhesives, and minor gaps were filled with suitably matched mineral compounds. Joints between individual stone blocks were filled with mortar, which was customised in character and treatment to match the original. The iron gate securing the chapel entrance also underwent restoration. This process began with identifying the historical colour of the door, followed by removing secondary layers of paint, cleaning the surface, eliminating corrosion, chemically stabilising the metal, and conserving the lock and hinges. A decorative layer of paint was then applied in a colour determined by prior stratigraphic cross-section analysis. The conservation of the stained glass window involved removing the glass from the lead profiles and cleaning it with non-ionic surfactants. The lead profiles were replaced with new ones that were identical in thickness and shape. Seal putty was applied to secure the glass in the lead profiles, and a new steel frame, based on the original and constructed from stainless steel, was installed. Finally, protective glazing was added to the outer side of the stained glass to shield it from the elements.

Stage Two involved replacing all corroded mounting clamps. A detailed dimensional map of the metal components was produced. In areas where cracks and stone detachments occurred, detached fragments were carefully removed, and the corroded clamps were manually extracted. Holes were drilled, which allowed the installation of new stainless-steel clamps. Original stone fragments were reattached using polyester resin. Where metal clamps had not yet caused significant displacement, minimal rectangular openings were cut in the chapel interior to access the corroded metal. Following the removal of rusted clamps and the insertion of new ones, the wall was restored with precisely fitted limestone inserts that closely matched the geological and colour characteristics of the original stone. Pińczów limestone, sourced from Poland, was used. Minor gaps were filled with mineral mortar, and final colour unification was applied to the repairs. A total of 34 clamps were replaced across four levels of stone blocks. In the uppermost level, work was paused due to an iron bar spanning the length of the wall, which presented an additional challenge. After further consultations, work on this element was scheduled to continue the following year.

Stage Three focused on the highly decorative external stone walls and the base. The stone was disinfected, and loose and compacted biological deposits were removed using mechanical and chemical methods. In areas where the limestone had weakened and begun to crumble, the resulting loss of form was counteracted by structural reinforcement using a flow-injection method. Persistent dark chemical deposits remaining in crevices, which appeared as thick encrustations, were removed with an abrasive jet method. Areas of form loss and surface layer loss were filled using carefully

selected mineral compounds, which were based on air-setting and hydraulic binders, and suitable fillers. The colour of the reconstruction and repairs was unified with a suspension of dry pigments in a silicate binder. Joints between individual stone blocks were filled with a mineral-based compound comprising slaked lime and fine quartz filler. Due to weather conditions, the final biocide treatment and hydrophobic sealing of the stone were deferred to the following spring.

TOMBSTONES OF IRENA SARYUSZ-STOKOWSKA AND JADWIGA OSTROŻYŃSKA

The stone elements of these tombstones were cleared of loose and compacted deposits using mechanical methods supported by pressurised water and nylon and steel brushes. During preliminary cleaning, a biocidal agent was applied. A 10% aqueous solution of calcium hypochlorite was used to remove persistent dark stone discolouration. Fractured and displaced elements required reassembly, which almost amounted to a complete reconstruction. The process began with dismantling the stele components and transporting fractured crosses to the workshop for thorough conservation treatment. Marble plaques were also transported for restoration. Subsequently, the curb stones, concrete slabs, and fractured base stones were dismantled, with all corroded connecting parts removed. Simultaneously, conservation work was carried out on the fractured base and curb stones, which were reassembled using epoxy resin. Additional reinforcement of fracture lines was achieved with fibreglass and stainless-steel rods. All joints between the tombstone elements and any other gaps were filled with mineral mortar. The final stage of the restoration involved enhancing the clarity of the inscriptions with the deepening and colour infilling of the letters.

OLGA BOZNAŃSKA'S TOMBSTONE

As previous renovations in 1982 and 1990 had replaced the stele and the cross with recycled components, conservation work began with an examination of archival sources held by the Society for the Preservation of Polish Historic Graves and Monuments in France. This research covered historical photographs and documents on the 1980s renovations. The next stage involved dismantling the cross and the stele. Plans were made to craft a new stele from limestone with properties resembling the original tombstone. The stele's surface was designed to assume a bas-relief form inspired by the nearby Makowski family tombstone. Based on recovered archival information and inscriptions on tombstones from a comparable period, an inscription was then composed and carved into the stele. The lettering style was two-part with serif detailing. The stele and the cross were mounted using adhesives and fibreglass components. Minor gaps and cracks at the joints were filled with cement-lime mineral mortar containing limestone-quartz aggregate and tinted with dry pigments. The colour of these repairs was then unified using a suspension of dry pigments in an acrylic binder, and the cross was treated with a hydrophobic acrylic solution.

MAKOWSKI FAMILY TOMBSTONE

After carefully removing debris from the fracture lines, a 2% acrylic resin solution was applied for insulation. The fractured sections of the cross were bonded with epoxy resin and further reinforced using fibreglass rods. Minor gaps and cracks at the joints were filled with cement-lime mineral mortar containing limestone-quartz aggregate and tinted with dry pigments. The cross finial was then reattached with mineral adhesives, and a structural fibreglass stem was added for extra stability. The joint between the cross and the stele was filled with limestone-based mineral mortar containing limestone-quartz aggregate and tinted with dry pigments. The colour of these repairs was then unified using a suspension of dry pigments in an acrylic binder.

MICKIEWICZ FAMILY TOMBSTONE

Stage One of the restoration involved cleaning the stone elements to remove loose and compacted deposits using mechanical methods supported with pressurised water, followed by wet cleaning with steel brushes and fine corundum. The stele was further cleared of greenish-black corrosion from the bronze. Following this initial cleaning, a fine quartz abrasive was applied using an abrasive jet method. After prior tests, stone discolouration was treated with chemical processes. Finally, the stele underwent repeated desalination with cellulose poultices. After the medallion was removed, the stele was consolidated, and the diameter of the medallion socket was slightly enlarged. The bronze bas-relief was cleared of harmful

black deposits, protected against corrosion, and reinstalled with a flexible adhesive.

Stage Two involved removing a thick layer of secondary concrete and stone cladding while restoring the tombstone to its original architectural form, which was followed by the complete restoration of the heavily damaged base stones. This restoration was preceded by emergency reinforcement to strengthen the load-bearing capacity of the main structural elements of the burial vault, which also served as the base for the monumental stele. Simultaneously, conservation work was carried out on the metal fencing.

JAN SZYMAŃSKI'S TOMBSTONE

The restoration began with dismantling the stone elements of the tombstone, after which the covering slab, sarcophagus walls, and fractured base stones were transported to the workshop for complete conservation treatment. Parts of the pedestal were disassembled, and all corroded connecting elements were removed. The fractured pedestal stone was bonded with mineral adhesive mortar, and masonry work reinforced the upper section of the tomb niche. Around the tomb, the top layer of humus and clay was replaced with quarry gravel. Simultaneously, conservation work was carried out in the workshop on the fractured base stones, which were reassembled using epoxy resin. Additional reinforcement of fracture lines was achieved with fibreglass and stainless-steel rods. After disinfection and cleaning, the surface of the covering slab and its sides were polished with fine corundum discs to even out the weathered stone surface. Lettering work involved deepening the original font style. The pedestal and sarcophagus elements were reassembled, and mineral adhesive mortar was applied at the joints. Corner joints between stone blocks were reinforced with stainless-steel clamps, while connections between the pedestal and the sides of the sarcophagus were strengthened in two places with stainless-steel rods. Finally, the covering slab was remounted using a crane and chain hoist. All joints between the tombstone elements and any other gaps were filled with mortar. The final stage of the restoration involved enhancing the clarity of the inscriptions with colour retouching.

COLLECTIVE TOMB, KNOWN AS CYPRIAN KAMIL NORWID'S TOMBSTONE

The stele and the covering slab were cleared of harmful biological and chemical deposits. After degreasing the surface of the bronze medallion, conservation work was carried out on-site. A corrosion inhibitor was applied, which was followed by a synthetic wax coating for protection. The most significant damage, namely, stone loss at the base of the covering slab on the left side, was repaired with two inserts of natural stone closely matching the original material. Minor gaps at the base and covering slab were filled with mineral mortar containing limestone-quartz aggregate and tinted with dry mineral pigments. Joints between the stone blocks were filled with limestone-cement mortar containing coarse quartz aggregate. The inscriptions on the covering slab were enhanced for clarity.

STĘPIŃSKI FAMILY TOMBSTONE

The tombstone was fully dismantled and reassembled, as the pronounced tilt of the tall stele posed a risk of collapse. To stabilise the monument's foundation, additional base stones were inserted, which allowed the monument stones to align more closely with the slope of the terrain and the positioning of neighbouring tombstones. As with the Norwid tombstone, comprehensive cleaning and protective treatments were applied to stone and bronze elements. The stele was consolidated, and the tondo bearing the likeness of the deceased was reinstalled in its socket using a flexible binder. The complete restoration also involved reconstructing missing sections of the iron fencing.

DOUBLE TOMB OF JULIAN URSYN NIEMCEWICZ AND KAROL KNIAZIEWICZ

Stage One of the restoration involved removing the secondary marble slabs covering the original limestone slabs and base stones. Around the tomb chests, secondary layers, including stone cladding and a thick concrete overlay, were removed to expose the original base stones. The metal fencing was dismantled and transported to the workshop. The covering slabs and chest blocks were carefully disassembled, and the individual base stones, which were fully embedded in humus, were excavated or chiselled out as necessary. A new foundation was laid for the base stones, which was raised by approximately 15 cm to the height of the removed concrete and limestone slabs. The limestone base stones were then reinstalled on the new

foundation, and a horizontal layer of insulation was added. The base stone elements were aligned and bonded, with joints reinforced by stainless-steel clamps. Simultaneously, complete restoration and conservation work on the iron fencing was carried out in the workshop. This began with the removal of flaking paint and corrosion using an abrasive jet method with carefully selected media. The metal surfaces were then treated with hot-dip galvanisation, followed by a protective and decorative powder coating.

As part of Stage Two, the covering slab was consolidated with epoxy resin. New stone elements were ordered for the base stones, with recesses crafted to match the thickness of the covering slabs. Major gaps in the stone elements were repaired with inserts of natural stone closely matching the original material, reinforced with additional stainless-steel and fibreglass structures. Minor gaps were filled with mineral compounds. In areas requiring more extensive repairs or where surfaces protruded from the stone, thin steel wire and epoxy resin reinforcements were added. The inscriptions on the covering slabs were made more legible by deepening the engraving and restoring the damaged lettering. The tomb chests were reinstalled on their base, while horizontal insulation and corner bracketing were added. New limestone blocks were inserted around the tomb chests to support the covering slabs.

Inscription slabs were mounted into the recesses using an inlay method: installed “dry” to maintain a clear distinction between the original and the new slab, the latter restoring the original dimensions. Joints between the base stones supporting the covering slabs were sealed with mineral mortar, while gaps between individual stone blocks were filled with mortar selected to match the original material. The colour of the reconstruction and repairs was unified with a suspension of dry pigments in a silicate binder. In the workshop, a complete reconstruction of the missing metal fencing elements was carried out, and the fencing was reinstalled in the monument’s stonework.

BRONISŁAWA KRÓLIKOWSKA’S TOMBSTONE

Due to the need for stabilisation and consolidation of the entire monument, the tombstone was fully dismantled and rebuilt. Work began with the disassembly of the stone elements. Conservation work on the stele with the cross was carried out in the workshop, where all corroded connecting elements were removed. The stone components were cleared of loose and compacted deposits, and natural stone inserts were added in several areas. After cleaning, the stele was structurally reinforced, its surface levelled and gaps filled, particularly along the edges of the chipped lettering. The depth of the engraved letters was also restored. After transporting the stele and the cross back, all stone elements of the monument were reassembled.

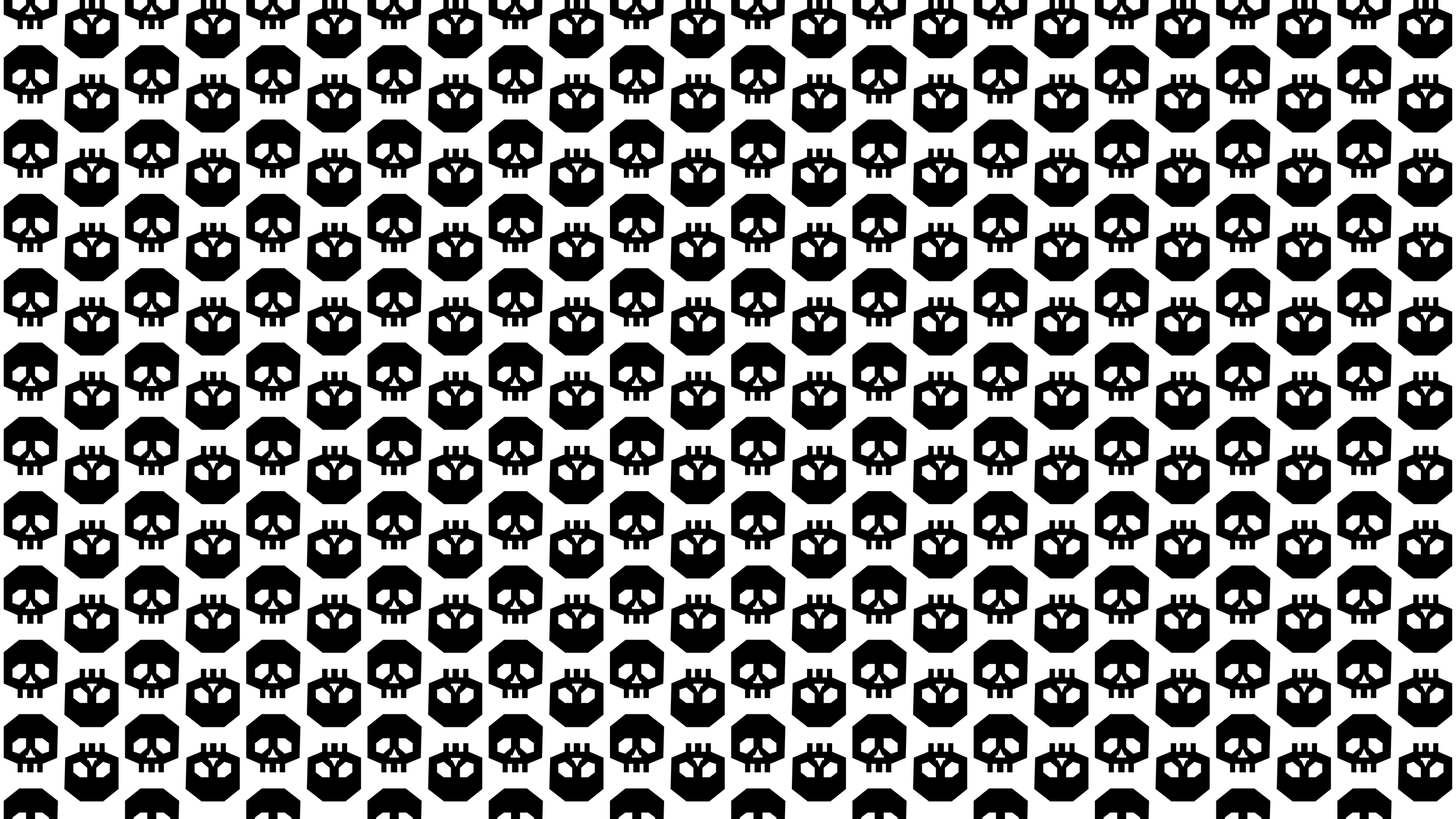
The base stone elements were mounted with a horizontal layer of bituminous insulation. Mineral adhesive mortar was applied at the joints, which were further reinforced with stainless-steel clamps and pins. All joints between the tombstone elements and any minor gaps were filled with mineral mortar. Finally, the grave perimeter was covered with decorative gravel.

KAZIMIERZ SZWYKOWSKI’S TOMBSTONE

Stage One involved cleaning the entire surface of the stele, including all symbolic and decorative elements. In areas where the limestone had weakened and begun to crumble, the resulting loss of form was counteracted by structural reinforcement using a flow-injection method. Loose biological deposits were removed mechanically with pressurised water, while more compacted deposits were cleaned using a combination of mechanical and chemical processes. Dark gypsum-calcite deposits were removed chemically, and persistent dark deposits were treated with an abrasive jet method. Green verdigris deposits and chemical discolouration from the corrosion of the bronze medallion were removed through micro-sandblasting and stain-removal solutions. The medallion’s surface was degreased with non-polar solvents, which preserved the green patina. Gaps in the patina were restored with thermochemical methods. The medallion was then treated with a corrosion inhibitor. Major gaps in the stone elements were repaired with inserts of natural stone closely matching the original material, bonded with mineral adhesives. Minor gaps were filled with mineral compounds containing suitable air-set and hydraulic binders. Joints between the stone blocks were filled with mortar selected to match the original material. The colour of the reconstruction and repairs was unified with a suspension of dry pigments in a silicate binder.

WINCENTY STRZECKI'S TOMBSTONE

The restoration began with the removal of the marble plaque, which was taken to the workshop for conservation treatment. Secondary biological deposits were cleaned from the limestone elements of the tombstone using both mechanical and chemical methods. Cement and adhesive mortars at the joints were removed, as were dark chemical deposits on the limestone, which were treated with mechanical methods. In the workshop, the marble plaque was disinfected and cleaned using techniques similar to those used for the limestone. Weathered layers on the marble surface were then removed by polishing with fine diamond discs. After complete desalination and drying, the fractured sections of the marble were re-bonded and reinforced on the reverse side with a fibreglass mesh. Gaps along the fracture lines in the inscription plaque and any other gaps were filled with polyester resin. The inscriptions on the plaque were deepened and enhanced for clarity with colour infilling. Fractured limestone corners of the pedestal were bonded, and gaps in the pedestal and base of the covering slab were repaired with inserts of natural stone closely matching the original limestone material. Joints between the stone blocks were filled, and the colour of the restoration and repairs was unified. A hydrophobic treatment was applied to the limestone elements of the monument and the concrete curbing. The marble inscription plaque was then reinstalled using decorative brass screws.



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