

# [Malczewski and the ideas of young polnd](https://assignbuster.com/malczewski-and-the-ideas-of-young-polnd/)

[Art & Culture](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/art-n-culture/), [Painting](https://assignbuster.com/essay-subjects/art-n-culture/painting/)

According to Satanists Stopcock. The break of the 19th and 20th centuries in Poland was a time well known for the problem that many artists who represented that period had: they were constantly looking for their own truth(s), they own way(s), their own style. They developed into two main categories, those who made work for " today', that fulfilled itself during the lives of the artists and those who tried to develop a new style (Art Novel to be precise) and regime for creating aesthetic forms and applied art.

It's appropriate to add that the latter, that was created with the intention of a style was crushed by steel constructions and/or lost it's truth on the production line, leaving It simply a historical phenomenon. I however will concentrate on the former. The Young Poland art movement, that was centered In Kara? w and took place in the years 1891-1918 and is widely accepted as the Polish version of modernism. (1) I shall start with a bit of cultural and historical context.

The last decades of the XIX century and the first 1 5 years of the Sixth, were said to be the worst time for post- partition Poland, but also a period full of hope and a slow gathering of collective activism after an opaque of complete hopelessness. Various factors led to Pollard's politics not being taken into account in the scheme of European politics, but rather left to be resolved internally by the Probationers (???? ).

These factors included the fall of the January Uprising, the creation of the victorious and united Bismarck Reich the French-Russian alliance and the military and political failures of Austria, which led the Austrian partition to be more and more jumbles and dependent on Germany. This turn of events In combination with a respiratory atmosphere and the loss of hope for a better future, due to the Inability to accept defeat, led to the overall loss of patriotic morale and the formation of so called " tribalism". The Polish people tried to form a policy of agreement.

They tried to work with the probationers, patiently focusing on social, economical and cultural development of Poland rather than trying any risqué, bold actions toward autonomy, which was In the consciousness and hopes of most, but accepted to be a distant dream rather than Immediate possibility. This Is the synthesis of what thephilosophyf positivism in Poland meant. Cultural and rustication proved the policy of agreement not that effective. (4) Galatia (which is where Maleness's was born and raised) had the best conditions for the development of " Polish national life".

The status-Hungarian monarchy had quickly changed to a democratic-liberal state after a series of political failures and guaranteed the many nations that It Incorporated much political freedom. Calla had it's own government, the administrative language was Polish, it had two Universities, in Kara¶w and Law¶w as well as many schools. In return forloyaltyto the Viennese government they had freedom to manifest theirpatriotism.. (3) The social situation in Poland was getting worse and worse for the middle class: the cheap labor and was the reason for massive migration from the country to cities and their rapid growth.

The proletariat was exploited, and they were becoming unhappy. They were turning into a massive socio-political force, that could demand change. Industrialization was taking it's toll, the market was being flooded with factory-made consumables and was creating an atmosphere of depressing, Lourdes uniforms. The young characterized the " midyear" (which translates into soap-maker), the townsman, owner of a small business or property, whose sole philosophy was common materialism, his only values weremoney, his only goal was gathering goods and only norm and rule of conduct opportunism and looking for the easy way out.

Modernism all around Europe, was a broad avian-grade movement that started as a result of rapid cultural changes and transformations in the modern world. All modernism shared the feeling that the modern world was substantially different and hat " art needed to renew itself by confronting and exploring it's own modernity' (2). In Poland specifically it was triggered by feeling of being shut off in a hopeless situation. It started with a crisis of values, when positivism which was perhaps the most prevalent and representative world-view had become materialistic and lay, modernism found the metaphysical and transcendental.

Artists started going back to Christian ideas (this started in France, one might say as a defensive reaction after the division between church and state in 1871). Christian ideas linked them back to a renewed interest in the Middle Ages. The middle ages led to exploring black and white magic, secret sects and cults, demons and Satanism. Chariot made sensational discoveries in the etiology of madness, and scientists made connections between ideas from the middle ages and modern discoveries that led to the creation of parapsychology - thepsychologyof abnormal, transcendental phenomena.

Life and it's tendencies was represented in artwork in a personal fashion, filtered through the artists feelings and thoughts. Modernism, symbolism, nonromantic, decadence, was all encompassed in one particular movement, under the banner of Ewing young: Young Germany, Young Belgium, Young Vienna, Young Scandinavia and of course Young Poland. The first painting I shall discuss is the 1894 " Melancholia" which translates to " melancholy'. The painting shows an artists studio, a painter's studio to be precise.

On the left side, at the top we can see the infinitesimal figure of the painter, concentrated on the task in front of him on the easel. A cacophony of figures pours out of the canvas the artist is currently working on. They are all allegorical fugues, personifying the tragically history of Poland in the XIX century. You can tell by their loathing and attributes that they are representations of various layers of society. Upraises, women in tears of despair, convicts in handcuffs and peasant soldiers.

It seems that the figures are arranged in chronological order, starting with youngsters on the brighter left side, near the artists, ending with old men on the contrasting right. The young seem to be looking forward with faces full of conferment and pain. Of the painting we see a dynamic, chaotic mass of writhing figures. Most are looking angrily towards the window. At the bottom of the artwork they seem to be floating above the ground focusing on fighting one another rather than looking toward the main focus of the painting which is the lady shrouded in black, who is on the windowsill, looking outside into the sunny garden.

I think that this lady is Melancholy. She is guarding the window, the gate to freedom. There is an old man on the windowsill looking at her with despair, another in the middle facing her with his hands holding his shirt back as if to say " stab me! Kill me! ". It's quite obvious that the Polish viewer will interpret this painting as a representation of Polish history that had oaken place in the last century, but this painting is actually said to be one of the first examples of Symbolism in the Visual Arts in Young Poland (1).

It shows patriotic historical content but not directly but rather through a metaphor. Maleness's didn't try to find or manifest universal truths but rather showed his own subjective view on the situation in his country. My interpretation is that he was showing the futility of the national uprisings, the armed excursions, the suffering and the hopes of revolt, through the woman blocking the passage to freedom.