

## Furniture



Furniture Elbląg, an exhibition at the City Museum and Artistic Crafts Gdańsk, approx. 1917, H. F. Secker, Die Kunstsammlungen zu them Franziskanerkloster Danzig, Berlin 1917.

Furniture in Prussia remained under the influence of European Baltic countries (Germany, The Netherlands, England). Only in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there evolved a distinctive type of furniture, and Gdańsk, Elbląg and Toruń - urban centers belonging to the Hanseatic League, became rapidly developing centers of furniture production, which was characterized by its own distinct style.

Furniture Gdańsk (European furniture) were made primarily of oak with veneers of expensive imported types of wood, such as walnut, mahogany, rosewood, or wood of native fruit trees. Down decoration woodcarver mostly used walnut wood. Also used en masse inlays of ivory. These products, stunning splendor carvings (especially Gdańsk cabinet vestibuls of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries), were recognized and appreciated in Poland and Europe, as status symbol nobility and rich bourgeoisie.

The furniture Elbląg main material was clear, warm shades, wood ash, which were decorated with inlay covering the whole cabinet fronts vestibuls, chests, clocks. In second half of the eighteenth century decorations inlaid mainly flowers and ribbons, and since the beginning of

the nineteenth century. used only marquetry band. The furniture was popular among the middle class, but also owners of stately arcaded houses in Żuławy.

Furniture Toruń differed from Gdańsk and Elbląg, mainly by Decoration intarsia figural. The content of these decorations prevail motifs depicting allegorical virtues or symbols of bravery and nobility. Carpenters Toruń adorned her almost all the furniture: cabinets vestibule, wall cabinets, wardrobes clocks, boxes, cases, as well as wood paneling and doors.



Wardrobe Gdańsk, k. Seventeenth century., Prussia-Museum in Königsberg, k. XIX in., A. Boetticher, Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Ostpreußen, Bd. 7, Königsberg 1897.

Typical vessels of the local centers of craft furniture:

Boxes of rectangular shape and flat-top, supported on low legs, most often with inlaid decoration, which is decorated with the face, sides and lid boxes or painted as imitating marquetry. In the majority of cases they have a castle, with brass banner on top studded with brass knobs and the side surface provided with a large, solid handle.

Cabinets are usually three-storey, with in-bin pedestal, equipped with a core single or double door, with a richly decorated gable. The culmination of a trapezium erected in the middle or made of two curved cornice separated volutes pinnacle, which placed inlaid decoration, carving or painted, often from the date of inscription.

The chairs are on low, turned rings feet, with back complex from small, balusters rungs and-woven seat. The decorations are ornamental, date and initials are mainly In the back of the chair. Among domestic appliances noteworthy other furniture: beds, benches, tables, cabinets corner, wall cabinets, ferruled boxes for documents and money, clocks in the housing furniture.

The output of the furniture craft workshops Prussia begins to fade in the early nineteenth century, displaced by the mass production of fashionable furniture in the Empire style and Biedermeier.

To year 1945 in palaces, mansions, townhouses, urban, rural homes, homes arcaded Żuławy was still a large stock of furniture from local workshops. Severe war losses, which took place in areas Prussia, included the historic furniture. Some very few copies, which today are mainly all in private collections and museums.

Presented in the exhibition are examples of types of furniture, decorative techniques and decoration common in ancient Prussia from the seventeenth to the late nineteenth century.

Dariusz Brzozowski, Jagoda Semków