



– **JOSEF STRZYGOWSKI** –
AND THE SCIENCES OF ART

international scientific conference
on the 150th anniversary of his birthday

29-31 March 2012
Bielsko-Biala (Poland)

1st circular – *invitation*

The Austrian art historian Josef Strzygowski (1862-1941) was born on 7 March 1862 in Biala and died 70 years ago. His memory motivates us to dedicate a conference to a now nearly forgotten but once one of the best-known and controversial art historians.

In 1891 Josef Strzygowski founded the field of art history at the University of Graz. Following the death of Franz Wickhof (1853-1909), he succeeded him at the University of Vienna. He continued there until his retirement in 1933 with an institute of his own, which was then disbanded. Strzygowski's extraordinary academic influence manifests itself in diverse attempts to call him to different universities from New Delhi to Yale. In 1921 he conceived an institute in Warsaw according to his notions which, however, was not to be realised. Colleagues in Vienna denounced and found him (especially M. Dvořák and J. von Schlosser). However, he polarised the humanities and till today his ideas still find their echo. One cannot ignore him.

Strzygowski's activity included nearly all areas of art history (cf. Karasek-Langer, *Verzeichnis der Schriften von J. Strzygowski*, Klagenfurt 1933). Moreover, he was also one of the first to accept contemporary art, then ignored by most historians. Although his notions, especially his later works, in many ways are subjective, and often were exaggerated, they still had influence. The seminal power of his theses, attempted to overcome the Eurocentric vantage point. His 'World Art' (*Kunst der Welt*) which considers all from a single point of view was then opposed by many. His dedication to the Orient, to 'borderline' cultures found insufficient

resonance. But the today's globalisation has re-awakened Strzygowski's discourse. One should reflect critically and open, and parse what can remain and what is not acceptable any more.

The time has come to reflect on the work and views of Strzygowski which the art historical community spalted. The content that would suffice for several conferences, forms a basis for discussion as well in a large circle as also in sections the number and character result from the suggested contributions. Therefore, this first call for papers is intended to determine your interest and invite you to name a topic (each to 30 minutes in congress languages).

We should be grateful for your response by **15 October 2011**. A second circular shall follow with all necessary information.

Our conference is planned between **29-30 March 2012** (on 1 April an excursion is planned) in Bielsko-Biala. The conference fee (100€) covers the organisation and the publication of the papers.

Questions and suggestions can be directed via email and telephone (see below) to us. We will answer as soon as possible.

Do visit our website http://strzygowski.umcs.lublin.pl/index_en.html

The conference will be held in cooperation with Prof. Dr. Heinrich Dilly (Halle/S.).

For the organisation committee

Prof. Dr. Piotr O. Scholz
Magdalena Dlugosz, MA (Koordination)

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