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## HISTORIC COLOUR SCHEMES IN SILESIAN SECULAR INTERIORS

### KOLORYSTYKA ŚWIECKICH WNĘTRZ NA ŚLĄSKU

#### Abstract

While searching for valuable wall paintings, examinations may also reveal the colour scheme of the whole interiors. Such discoveries deepen our knowledge about trends in historic design in the Lower Silesia region and are used in conservation for preserving monuments closer to their original state. Selected results from examinations conducted by conservators in secular public and residential buildings from the Middle Ages to the 20<sup>th</sup> century are presented in this article.

*Keywords: colour, secular interior, history, Silesia*

#### Streszczenie

W trakcie poszukiwań wartościowego malarstwa ściennego określone zostają do celów konserwacji także dyspozycje barwne dla całego wnętrza. W artykule zaprezentowano wyniki badań wykonanych przez konserwatorów dzieł sztuki we wnętrzach świeckich, zarówno publicznych, jak i mieszkalnych na terenie Dolnego Śląska. Wybrane przykłady pochodzą z różnych okresów stylistycznych od późnego Średniowiecza po połowę XX wieku.

*Słowa kluczowe: kolor, wnętrze w budynku świeckim, historia, Śląsk*

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## 1. Introduction

Trends in historic colour schemes may be traced by analysing various sources such as reports from investigations, colourful depictions of buildings, design drawings and written sources. Documents of examinations conducted by conservators in Silesian secular interiors from the Middle Ages to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century have been analysed and, as a result, selected discoveries of the first chronological phase are presented in the article in chronological order<sup>1</sup>. On-site removal of paint layers to reveal the sequence of the applied decoration is the most common method described by the cited authors. Cross-sections and chemical analyses are seldom mentioned in documents. Non-invasive methods were not used. A few descriptions come from written sources.

Interiors are exposed to much more frequent changes than elevations and therefore, discoveries of original decorations are infrequent and usually partial. Additionally, the colour scheme of a whole space is often revealed while searching for valuable wall paintings. In this case, remaining items such as architectural details and sculptures might be the only traces of the colourful past of a whole interior.

Historic colour schemes in Silesian secular interiors have not been the subject of regular studies. The term *Farbigkeit der Architektur* in the lexicon *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte* presents examples of original colour schemes in interiors from 800 to 1840 in German-speaking countries [8]. Scattered information is occasionally mentioned in publications on historic architecture and magazines dedicated to its preservation. M. Chorowska (1994) described tendencies in decorating medieval dwelling houses located around the marketplace in Wrocław [2]. M. Jagiełło (2003) mentioned hues used in the sgraffito technique in the Silesia region [6]. A. Zabłocka-Kos (2006) presented two colour schemes of Wrocław classical interiors, the Opera Hall and a non-existent ballroom in the former Old Exchange [13]. A. Gryglewska (2008) discussed original decoration of two Wrocław interiors, the Market Hall at 17 Piaskowa Street and the Faculty of Architecture at 53–55 Prus Street [4, 5]. J. Urbanik (2009) included a few descriptions of colour schemes of residential buildings in a publication on the 1929 housing exhibition in Wrocław [10]. Three case studies from Wrocław were discussed by the author at the AIC congress in Newcastle upon Tyne in 2013 [1].

## 2. Historic colour schemes

### 2.1. The medieval colour schemes

A room in Świdnica Town Hall, dating back to 1536, originally housed the treasury<sup>2</sup>. Traces of late Gothic polychrome made in the tempera technique were discovered on selected

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<sup>1</sup> The presented information is part of PhD research on historic colour schemes in the Silesian architecture.

<sup>2</sup> E. Grabarczyk, *Dokumentacja prac badawczo-poszukiwawczych. Pomieszczenie dawnego skarbcza przy Sali Rajców – Muzeum Dawnego Kupiectwa, Świdnica, Rynek 37, Wrocław 2000, typescript, Urząd miejski w Świdnicy.*

architectural details during on-site examination. The entrance door and edges of the north and south walls and a vault were decorated with a red, twelve-centimetre-wide stripe in a hue close to vermillion. Round the entrance door, the red stripe was additionally embellished with the black decorative motifs and outlined with a brown ornamental border. The walls were painted green and the vault was blue. A conservator suggested the use of azurite on the vault, a blue pigment discolouring with the lapse of time to green. The rib crossing was adorned with grey and black stripes.

## 2.2. The Renaissance colour schemes

The half-timbered manor house located in Oporów, Wrocław was built in the second quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century and frugally decorated. On-site examination was conducted in selected interiors<sup>3</sup>. Traces of the original paint were revealed on the west wall and the ceiling in the hallway. The spaces filled with clay were covered with creamy mortar, whereas the timber beams and ceiling were painted a graphite shade. Since the timber used was rough-hewn the paint layer covering the timber structure was extended beyond the beams in order to create straight composition. Additionally, the layout was underlined with red lines (Ill. 1). Traces of a warm pink-yellow paint were discovered on the timber ceilings in two rooms on the ground floor, while the other ceilings were left uncoated and were probably waxed. Whitewash was applied to the walls in the remaining rooms on the ground floor. The hallway on the second floor was decorated in the same way as the downstairs, with the exception of the ceiling which was unpainted. The walls in the other rooms on the upper floor were coated with creamy mortar hiding the half-timbered structure, the timber ceilings were originally left uncoated.



Ill. 1. Oporów, Wrocław, a manor house, polychrome remains in the hallway-detail  
(photo by Cezary Wandrychowski)

<sup>3</sup> J. Burnita, C. Lasota, C. Wandrychowski, *Badania dworu we Wrocławiu-Oporowie, ul. Wiejska 17*, Wrocław 2002, typescript, MKZ Sygn. 475/03.

Colourful colour schemes were revealed on a few Renaissance architectural details in Wrocław<sup>4</sup> and Lubań<sup>5</sup>. The medieval house at 4 Kurzy Targ Street in Wrocław, the former apothecary, was refurbished in the Renaissance style in 1554. Multi-coloured colour schemes were traced on eight internal columns. Highly saturated hues like red, blue, green, yellow, cream and black, were juxtaposed in contrasting compositions. Gilding and imitation of marble were discovered on some shafts, bases and heads [1] (Ill. 2). Similarly, a two-coloured, contrasting yellow and blue scheme was discovered on the internal stone portal placed in the town hall in Lubań. Traces of yellow paint were revealed in two places on figural decoration, while blue paint was uncovered in the background and on the pilasters' head. The lips, eyes and nostrils were coated with red and black paints.



Ill. 2. Wrocław, 4 Kurzy Targ Street, the Renaissance colour schemes on internal columns after conservation-details (photo by the author)

<sup>4</sup> P. Wanat, *Dokumentacja konserwatorska. Badania stratygraficzne kamiennego detalu architektonicznego we wnętrzu kamienicy przy ul. Kurzy Targ 4 we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 2011, typescript, MKZ Sygn. R/36/11.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem, Badania stratygraficzne na elewacjach oraz wybranym detalu architektonicznym wewnątrz w budynku ratusza w Lubaniu*, Wrocław 2010, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Piotr Wanat.

The oldest Renaissance decoration in Luboradz castle<sup>6</sup>, dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century, consisting of tiny triangles achieved by divisions of rectangles, resembles sgraffito. The ornamentation detected in the south wing was originally applied in various rooms in different juxtapositions: pink and white, black and white, grey and white and blue and white with yellow ochre suggesting shadow. The other type of Renaissance decoration was revealed in the west wing. Floral ornamentation decorated windows and niches. Decoration was painted dark red, green, brown, black and grey on the white background. The ceiling polychromes were kept dark red, emerald green and lighter shades of those colours.

Partial discoveries also took place in a manor house in Komorowice<sup>7</sup>. Renaissance decoration, dated from circa 1600, divided walls into three zones – a grey plinth topped with a dark red stripe, light yellow walls and a frieze. Ornamental fringes enclosed with black stripes were revealed round window and door embrasures, while orange-yellow ochre acanthus leaves decorated the surface below the windowsills. Red-brown hues enriched the floral decoration. Relicts of yellow polychrome were traced on stone window and door surrounds.

Partial Renaissance decoration was also revealed in a few representative rooms at 6 Rynek<sup>8</sup> in Wrocław. Traces of red polychrome and an ornamental frieze were uncovered on the south wall in a room located on the first floor, the room with a coffer ceiling. The frieze was placed beneath the ceiling and along former stairs (Ill. 3). According to a conservator, the composition of plaster painted red proves that its Renaissance in origin. The multi-coloured ceiling was coated with ultramarine, iron red, yellow ochre and chalk.



Ill. 3. Wrocław, 6 Rynek, relicts of the renaissance frieze after conservation-detail  
(photo by the author)

<sup>6</sup> T. Zarkowska, J. Stokłosa, T. Stopka, A. Kałużny, *Zamek w Luboradzu, dokumentacja stratygraficzno-opisowa ścian wewnętrznych i elewacji zamku wykonana w 1976 r.*, sale i pomieszczenia od nr 1 do 15, od nr 16 do 53, Sygn. R/94, R/94 a, R/94 b, typescript, WKZ Legnica.

<sup>7</sup> M. Delimat, *Badania stratygraficzne późnogotyckiego dworu obronnego rodu von Kaltenbrunn w Komorowicach*, Wrocław 2007, typescript, WKZ Wrocław, Sygn. 6636/08.

<sup>8</sup> G. Zielińska, *Wstępne prace badawcze i odkrywkowe na ścianach, na stropach w kamienicy przy ul. Rynek 6*, Wrocław 1982, typescript, MKZ Sygn. R/346.

A style of decorating in the room with acanthus ceiling was also described as Renaissance in origin. Illusionist polychrome imitating architectural decoration was discovered on the south and west walls. A red coating imitating brick with black and white stripes imitating mortar was two meters height from the floor level. Grey mortar was applied above and topped with a multi-coloured frieze. A copper pigment, iron black and chalk were discovered by chemical analyses.

### 2.3. The Baroque colour schemes

A representative room on the first floor at 6 Rynek in Wrocław was created during refurbishment in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century and ornamented in a new fashionable Baroque style. The room was richly decorated with two-coloured stucco pilasters with gilded bases and capitals and silvering ornamentation on plinths and embrasures. Two separate examinations of the room revealed two different styles of wall decoration and colour schemes. Traces of fabrics of Italian origin dating back to the late Renaissance were discovered during the first examination<sup>9</sup>. Remaining scraps suggested a raspberry red fabric with gilded ornamentation. The flat parts of the ceiling were probably painted pink and an ivory hue was applied to bulging stucco decoration. The second examination<sup>10</sup>, conducted thirty years later, revealed quite a different colour scheme and style of decorating from the Baroque refurbishment. Relicts of light blue paint close to a light Prussian blue were discovered on walls directly on the original mortar (Ill. 4). A similar blue hue was discovered on the ceiling [1].



Ill. 4. Wrocław, 6 Rynek, traces of bluish paint from the first chronological phase (photo by Wiesław Piechówka)

<sup>9</sup> *Eadem, Wstępne prace badawcze i odkrywkowe na ścianach, na stropach w kamienicy przy ul. Rynek 6, Wrocław 1982, typescript, MKZ Sygn. R/346.*

<sup>10</sup> *W. Piechówka, Dokumentacja konserwatorska prac związanych z konserwacją dekoracji: malowidła plafonowego, kolorowej scali dekoracji sztukatorskiej i złoceń we wnętrzu Sali plafonowej w kamienicy Pod złotym słońcem w Rynku we Wrocławiu, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Wiesław Piechówka.*

Wall and ceiling paintings decorated many Silesian Baroque interiors. Examination of the 18<sup>th</sup> century palace in Pakoszów-Piechowice concentrated on wall paintings made using a lime technique<sup>11</sup>. Investigations were conducted in selected interiors in the west wing – a drawing room, a ballroom and a smaller drawing room decorated with Dutch ceramic tiles.

The original wall painting detected in the first drawing room probably dates back to 1725. Partial discoveries allowed for the estimation that the decoration was unsymmetrical and that the colours were applied in an irregular way. An oblique, criss-crossed, linear pattern was located on the ceiling and in the upper parts of the walls. Dark red, black and white hues were traced. The ceiling was probably coated with a warm grey shade. The discovered traces of items like arrows, yellow scales and possibly other signs of the zodiac were probably related to astrology. The revealed hues were described as pink, grey, grey-yellow ochre in the east-south corner and light grey and yellow ochre in the west part of the room.

Relicts of wall paintings were also uncovered in the ballroom. The walls were originally decorated with a painted plinth and cornice. Remains were discovered above the doors and in the window embrasures. Grey and green hues were enriched with yellow ochre, white, dark red and brown.

The other drawing room was tiled with pottery made in Delft in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Square tiles were connected without joints. Various scenes from the Bible, genre scenes and landscapes in blue shades were glazed on the white background (Ill. 5).



Ill. 5. Pakoszów-Piechowice, left: a drawing room tiled with Dutch ceramic, right: remains of wall paintings in a former ballroom (photo by the author)

<sup>11</sup> K. Gwoźdź (under supervision of Grażyna Schulze-Glazik), *Dokumentacja prac badawczo-konserwatorskich. Pałac w Pakoszowie-Piechowicach, woj. dolnośląskie*, Wydział Konserwacji i Restauracji Dzieł Sztuki ASP w Krakowie, 2011, typescript, WKZ Jelenia Góra.

Frugal colour schemes were detected in the three Baroque interiors in Nysa<sup>12</sup>, Lubiąż<sup>13</sup> and Świdnica<sup>14</sup>. Examinations of an assembly hall in a former Jesuits school in Nysa revealed two colour schemes from the Baroque period. The first colour scheme dates back to the erection time of around 1677 and the other, to circa 1725. Originally, white lime paint close to NCS S 0 500-N was applied to all the surfaces. The blue background of the Jesuits' shield together with the black outlining of the angels' eyes were the only colourful accents in the assembly hall. The second chronological colour scheme from the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century was two-coloured, additionally enriched with a wall painting. The walls and ceiling were painted white, whereas oval areas on the ceiling and a part of the stucco decoration were painted pink.

A gatehouse in a convent in Lubiąż dates back to 1710. Examination revealed monochromatic colour schemes in a hallway and three other rooms. Light sienna was applied to the hallway walls, whereas the walls in the other rooms and all the ceilings were painted grey with lime and organic black.

A similar white-grey colour scheme dating back to the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was revealed in a former apothecary in Świdnica market square. The walls of a representative room were painted light grey (nearly white), with lead white and organic black. The stucco decorated ceiling was differentiated with shades ranging from white to grey. The frames were the lightest features and the ornamental background was the darkest.

#### 2.4. The classical colour schemes

A representative drawing room from 1776–1781 of the palace in Samotwór<sup>15</sup> was originally decorated in cool hues: green, turquoise, grey and white. The walls and ceiling were painted turquoise with lighter shade on the ceiling. The column shafts and frieze were light turquoise and white, the architrave was light green, the stucco decoration and cornice were light grey and the tondi were coated with light green paint. Traces of light grey and bright red paint were discovered in the hall.

The palace in Żerków dates back to 1791. On-site examination<sup>16</sup> was conducted in a representative oval room, acting in the past as a ballroom, and in a study. Traces

<sup>12</sup> P. Wanat, *Dokumentacja konserwatorska. Badania stratygraficzne auli w budynku dawnego Kolegium Jezuickiego. Obecnie Liceum Ogólnokształcące „Carolinum” nr 1 w Nysie, ul. Sobieskiego 2*, Wrocław 2010, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Piotr Wanat.

<sup>13</sup> E. Grabarczyk, *Dokumentacja badań stratygraficznych. Barokowy budynek dawnej kancelarii w zespole zabudowań klasztornych pocysterskich w Lubiążu*, Wrocław 2011, typescript, WKZ Wrocław, Sygn. 716.

<sup>14</sup> Eadem, *Dokumentacja prac badawczych przy sklepieniu dawnej apteki w bloku śródrynkowym w Świdnicy*, Wrocław 1997, typescript, Urząd miejski, Świdnica, Sygn. BS 6.

<sup>15</sup> Eadem, *Program prac konserwatorskich. Detal architektoniczny na elewacjach pałacu i bramy do zabytkowego założenia w Samotworze, gmina Kąty Wrocławskie. Zabytkowy wystrój wnętrz pałacu*, typescript, WKZ Wrocław, Sygn. 680.

<sup>16</sup> W. Piechówka, *Dokumentacja badań stratygraficznych na elewacji i w dwóch pomieszczeniach pałacu klasycystycznego w Żerkowie, powiat Brzeg Dolny*, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Wiesław Piechówka.



of original lime-sand plaster and lime paint were discovered in both rooms. It was estimated that the oval room was either coated with both cool and warm whitened hues or with off-white hues. Warm colours were juxtaposed with cool colours, for example, warm pink, cool white and warm bright pale yellow ochre.

The colour schemes of two assembly halls popular among the wealthy middle class in 19<sup>th</sup> century Wrocław are known from written sources. The audience room in the opera house was kept as red, white and gold. A red hue was applied to wall decorations, draperies, balustrades and upholstery, whereas decorations were enriched with white shades and gilding [13].

The former exchange building at Solny Square was designed in 1821. The no longer existent assembly room was described in a travel diary from 1825. A white hue was predominant in a two-storey room decorated with twenty eight columns. The draperies hanging among the columns were light green and additionally interwoven with golden strings. Gilding was applied to the cornice and the ornamentation below the balconies [13].

## 2.5. The colour schemes of the Historicism

Examinations conducted in the representative room of the main railway station in Wrocław revealed partial findings from a few chronological phases [12]. The so called ‘Sala Secesyjna’, designed in 1860<sup>17</sup>, was located above the main entrance on the first floor. The number of chronological phases was established on between three to eleven since most of the original substance was removed during various refurbishments. According to written sources, the walls were originally covered with wallpapers divided by vertical laths. Three-four-feet-high, timber wall panelling protected the walls against damage. The first phase plaster (painted blue) was uncovered on walls only in the annex and a multi-coloured colour scheme was discovered on the arcade columns between the main room and the annex. Shafts were painted blue, similar to the hue applied to the walls. The bases and leaves were gilded and heads were painted blue and red. Red, blue and gilding also decorated arcade profiles and the annex ceiling. The discovered hues were described in comparison to the NCS colour chart in the following way: walls – NCS S 3060-R80B; arcade and beam profiles – NCS S 5030-B90G, S2570-R; columns in the annex – NCS S 3010-B; floral decoration on arcade arches – NCS S 4040-Y 60R; leaves – NCS S 35 60 Y 70R.

Richly decorated multi-coloured colour schemes were discovered in a few representative hallways of tenement houses from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The dwelling house at 16 Wit Stwosz Street in Wrocław was rebuilt in a neo-Renaissance style in 1810<sup>18</sup>. The entrance area originally had a frugal colour scheme. After an on-site examination, two samples were chosen from ninety-one on-site removals and analysed under the microscope. The discovered hues were compared to the CAPAROL 3D+ colour chart. It was estimated that mortar and sand stone were painted identically. Both the hallway and

<sup>17</sup> P. Wanat, *Dokumentacja konserwatorska, badania stratygraficzne oraz program prac konserwatorskich tynków ścian oraz elementów wystroju dawnej sali secesyjnej (B02.010) ryzalitu centralnego, obszar B, budynku Dworca Głównego we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 2011, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Piotr Wanat.

<sup>18</sup> A. Witkowska, *Badania stratygraficzne w sieni i głównej klatce schodowej kamienicy, Wrocław, ul. Wita Stwosza 16*, Wrocław 2010, typescript, MKZ Sygn. 362/10.

staircase walls were plastered with lime, whitewashed and coated with a sandy hue similar to sienna 55, palazzo 180 and palazzo 210. The ceilings were painted a light creamy-grey similar to sienna 30. The window and door frames on the staircase were painted beige (palazzo 250, palazzo 315, marill 70) and a light brown imitation of oak was applied on top and varnished. The stairs were dark brown similar to papaya 5 and magma 5. Heads and bases of the balusters made of copper were left exposed as natural material and those made of timber, located above the third floor, were gilded with a yellow foil. The balusters were coated with a black hue. The timber columns located between windows in the hallway were painted a sandy colour (onyx 110, sienna 105). A few decorative details were introduced in the next chronological phases.

The hallway and staircase in a house at 66 Podwale Street<sup>19</sup>, dating back to the mid 50s, were originally painted red, green and yellow ochre. The floor and landings were grey, green and red, and a grey hue was applied to plinths. Handrails and timber cubes under the bells were painted black. Gilding was discovered on one balustrade ball.

The extension of the former villa at 72 Piłsudski Street in Wrocław<sup>20</sup> was built in 1873. Pinkish stripes were applied to the walls in the hallway. Pilasters were painted pink, grey and red. The bordure was coated with dark red, dark brown, grey-blue and light green paints. The tondi were filled with circles starting in the centre with brown, white, brown, light grey, green and maroon. Other details were kept in grey-blue shades. It was only possible to trace relicts of green, creamy and bluish grey paints on the staircase. The timber parts of the stairs were partly painted brown, partly left unpainted and varnished.

The dwelling house at 15 Waryński Street in Kamienna Góra dates back to 1885<sup>21</sup>. The representative entrance area consisted of two, originally multi-coloured, halls. The walls in the smaller hall were painted white, yellow ochre and brown in a style imitating marble. The space between the doors was divided and filled with a green marble imitation on a black background. Pilasters were painted grey and gilded. The ceiling was kept in warm grey shades and surrounded by a brown ornament and a grey border with gilding. An architrave and cornice were grey, whereas a dark red hue imitating marble was applied to a frieze. The other hall was painted grey and black in the lower part. A plinth, column shafts and frieze were decorated with black, green and red marble imitation respectively. An architrave and cornice were painted dark grey. The dome was kept with blue, green and yellow ochre hues.

The former Schultheiss brewery complex at 204–210 Jedność Narodowa in Wrocław was erected between 1884 and 1911<sup>22</sup>. Four remaining buildings include two villa buildings

<sup>19</sup> Eadem, *Badania stratygraficzne elewacji, sieni i klatki schodowej kamienicy. Program prac konserwatorskich detali architektonicznych, Wrocław, ul. Podwale 66, Wrocław 2009*, typescript, MKZ Sygn. 448/09.

<sup>20</sup> Eadem, *Badania kolorystyki fragmentów wystroju wnętrza i piętra oficyny kamienicy, Wrocław, ul. Piłsudskiego 72 a, Wrocław 2000*, typescript, MKZ Sygn. 69/2000.

<sup>21</sup> A. Hermanowicz-Hajto, *Dokumentacja konserwatorska*, typescript, WKZ JG Sygn. A/R-1679.

<sup>22</sup> A. Witkowska, *Dokumentacja konserwatorska. Budynek „H” dawnego browaru przy ul. Jedności Narodowej 204/200 we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 2009; eadem, *Dokumentacja konserwatorska. Budynek „I” dawnego browaru przy ul. Jedności Narodowej 204/220 we Wrocławiu*, Tom 1, Wrocław 2008, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Agnieszka Witkowska.

dating back to 1894, the chimney and a warehouse dating back to 1897. Examinations were conducted in selected rooms of the villa buildings originally housing administration offices. Interiors of the brewery office were coated with bright, pastel-coloured, yellow shades. Stucco decoration was gilded. The hallway was decorated with stripes painted black, olive and brown. Internal window frames were painted light grey and ivory. The main hallway in the other building was painted green and yellow ochre and decorated with a golden stripe. A maroon stripe enriched with grey-blue floral and linear ornamentation divided the walls into smaller sections. The red and yellow masonry walls in the corridor were partially uncoated and partially painted ochre (dado) and cream (above the dado). An olive and cream hues were applied to the staircase walls. The stairs and the balustrade were also painted a similar olive-green hue and enriched with gilding and silvering.

The office rooms located downstairs had frugal cream decoration but the rooms on the first floor were covered with wallpapers in green, creamy-yellow and cream hues with gilding. Similar green and yellow shades were applied to the ceilings on the first floor. Imitation of timber and geometrical floral ornamentation were discovered on ceilings in some rooms. Brown and yellow shades enriched with red and green dominated.

The audience hall in a theatre from 1896 in the spa town Szczawno-Zdrój was examined twice on-site<sup>23</sup>. Differentiated shades of green and gilding were detected during both examinations. Additionally, warm grey and alabaster white were uncovered on selected items during the other examination. The walls had darker hues than the ornamentation. Paints were probably mixed with black and complementary colours. The discovered green shades were described as dark bottle green similar to NCS S 4010-G30Y on walls and ceiling, emerald green as NCS S3030-G20Y in the background of details and light green as NCS S 1010-G60Y on ornaments.

## 2.6. The colour schemes form Art-Nouveau to the Modern Movement

Examinations conducted in a tenement house, dating back to 1903–1904, at 5 Chemiczna Street<sup>24</sup> in Wrocław revealed rich floral ornamentation on walls and ceilings (Ill. 6). The walls in the hallway and on the staircase were painted green. A decorative, flat imitation of a dado rail, consisting of a few parallel narrow green stripes, was painted 120–150 cm above the floor. The walls on the fourth floor were painted beige and decorated with a black stripe beneath the ceiling. The plinth was dark grey and the stairs and handrails were painted brown in different shades. The internal side of the entrance door was also brown, whereas grey-green was applied to internal window frames.

<sup>23</sup> L. Stanisław, *Badania projektu kolorystyki Sali teatru zdrojowego w Szczawnie-Zdroju*, Wrocław 1988, NID, sygn. PBA 179; D. Wandrychowska, *Teatr Zdrojowy im. Henryka Wieniawskiego. Widownia. Badania stratygraficzne. Ramowy program prac konserwatorskich*, Wrocław 2009, typescript, WKZ Wałbrzych, Sygn. 6699.

<sup>24</sup> A. Witkowska, *Badania stratygraficzne elewacji oraz elementów wystroju architektonicznego sieni i głównej klatki schodowej kamienicy, Wrocław, ul. Chemiczna 5*, Wrocław 2010, typescript, MKZ Sygn. 41/11.



III. 6. Wrocław, 5 Chemiczna Street, the tenement house hallway original decoration  
(photo by the author)

The two buildings at present housing the Faculty of Architecture at 53/55 Prus Street in Wrocław were erected in 1901–1904<sup>25</sup>. The original colour schemes were similar in both of these buildings. The floors, plinths, corners, stairs and ground floor columns were grey. Grey-green or olive dominated on the dado in the corridors. The remains of a decorative floral frieze in green and red hues placed on the top of the dado were discovered only in one place. Internal window frames were painted with a warm red-brown hue. The remaining columns, balustrades and washbasins were made of red-brown sand stone. Red stripes decorated the floors and a reddish aggregate was added to the green-grey terrazzo. The partially remaining metal laths in movement joints were additional shining accents. The walls in the assembly hall were partly painted purple and partly covered with timber panelling in a red-brown hue. Decorative ornamentation visible on archive pictures did not survive [5].

Colourful colour schemes were discovered during examinations conducted in a few modernist buildings in Wrocław: Four Dome Pavilion on Wystawowa Street<sup>26</sup>; the south

<sup>25</sup> *Eadem*, *Rozpoznanie konserwatorskie wybranych elementów wystroju wnętrz gmachu E-1 i E-5 Wydziału Architektury Politechniki Wrocławskiej*. Wrocław, ul. Prusa 53/55, typescript, Wrocław 2010, investor's archive.

<sup>26</sup> R. Wójtowicz, *Rozpoznanie konserwatorskie oraz określenie pierwotnej kolorystyki elementów architektury Pawilonu Czterech Kopuł we Wrocławiu*, Wrocław 2008, typescript, MKZ Wrocław, Sygn. A 181/11.

water power station at 46 Nowy Świat Street<sup>27</sup>; in the former C&A department store at 10–11 Oławska Street<sup>28</sup>.

The Four Dome Pavilion was erected in 1912–1913 as an exhibition pavilion and the original decoration of the whole interior was probably related to the planned display. Different colour schemes were revealed during on-site examination. The hallway and the dome room in the entrance area were painted grey with a slightly lighter shade on the ceilings. A black hue was discovered on a plinth and on the pilasters' edges in the hallway. Niches were probably decorated with colourful ornaments as the following colours were revealed: sienna; purple; pale umber. Wallpapers are believed to have decorated the rooms in the south wing, yet they did not survive.

The walls in the west wing were painted uniform grey and the pilasters, skylights and beams' edges were outlined with black stripes. The ten centimetre wide stripe located below the beams was probably originally covered with wallpaper. The dome room located in the west wing was painted dark grey, nearly black, with lighter grey stripes. The big windows of the dome were outlined with a black hue. Iron crosses and inscriptions were additional colour accents. Traces of light blue, grey, brown and black hues were discovered.

The room in the west-north corner was painted blue-grey and decorated with black frames criss-crossing beneath the beams. The rooms located in the north wing were painted blue-grey with a lighter shade on the ceilings, additionally, they were decorated with a linear design. The walls and the floor of the dome room in the north part were dark grey, nearly black. The bases of columns were also dark grey, whereas shafts and capitals were painted light yellow ochre. The dome, frieze and columns between the windows were decorated with frugal meanders and frames. The patterns were painted black on the yellow background. The adjacent garden room was warm red. The linear frames on the pilasters were black and the columns and architrave – warm grey.

The rooms located in the east wing were also kept with grey shades. Similarly, the west wing pillars, skylights and beams were outlined with black stripes. Additionally, a ten centimetre wide stripe made of a wallpaper beneath the beams is believed to have decorated the rooms. The east dome room was also painted grey. Cool malachite green and dark grey hues were discovered in the architrave background. The plinth was black and the dome and columns between the windows were painted a hue similar to golden ochre [1].

The interior of a power station erected in 1921–1924 was originally coated with different green shades. Examinations conducted on-site revealed emerald green on the north wall, light green on the west wall, grey-green on concrete pillars and dark green on a portal made of granite.

Relicts of original decoration were revealed by on-site investigations in a former C&A department store dating back to 1930–1931. Both the reinforcement structure and

<sup>27</sup> E. Grabarczyk, *Program prac konserwatorskich przy elewacjach budynków oraz ścianach wnętrza hali turbin elektrowni południowej we Wrocławiu, ul. Nowy Świat 46*, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Elżbieta Grabarczyk.

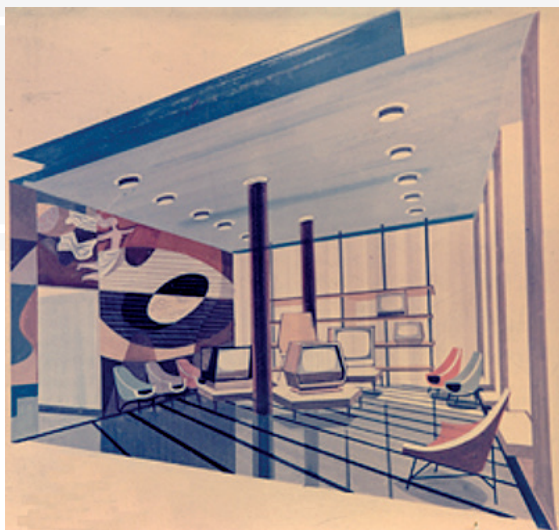
<sup>28</sup> C. Wandrychowski, *Budynek handlowo-usługowo-biurowy, ul. Oławska 10-11, Wrocław. Badania stratygraficzne wnętrz*, typescript, private archive, courtesy of Cezary Wandrychowski.

the masonry walls were originally plastered and either painted or covered with wallpapers. A plinth on the staircase was made of travertine and the walls were painted bright creamy-yellow. The remains of decorative friezes from the first chronological phase were discovered on the third floor on beams and ceilings. The uncovered thirty centimetre wide friezes decorating beams consisted of stripes in contrasting hues. The first frieze was painted blue and dark red and the other frieze was grey-blue and black. The six centimetre wide stripes detected on the ceilings were originally part of the friezes that were also decorating the girders. Light red and dark brown hues were revealed in two places. Traces of wallpapers with a geometrical floral pattern were discovered after removing partitions from later refurbishments. A black motif was placed on the bright background.

A few original colour schemes of buildings erected for a housing exhibition in Wrocław in 1929 are known from written descriptions. Examination was conducted only in a building designed by Hans Scharoun. Highly saturated hues juxtaposed in contrasting compositions were often applied to walls, ceilings and fitted furnishing. Grey, black and white interiors contrasted with red shelves and a yellow table in a house designed by Henrich Lauterbach. Red and black were juxtaposed in houses designed by Moritz Hadda and Adolf Rading, too. Blue and red hues were revealed in the hallway and the dining room of the residential building designed by Hans Scharoun [10].

### 2.7. The colour schemes in the 50s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

The colour schemes of the architecture erected in Wrocław after 1945 have so far not been examined by conservators. However, quickly changing tendencies might be traced in publications on interior design. A few colour schemes from the 50s are mentioned briefly in the article to outline the topic and to encourage further research.



III. 7. Wrocław, design for a shop at former Młodzieżowy Square in Wrocław city centre (private archive, courtesy of Jerzy Tarnawski)

The three described public interiors from the late 50s were kept in sober shades. Various pieces of art and furnishing often provided colourful accents (Ill. 7). Intense yellow and red hues of the bookshelves contrasted with off-white walls of a bookshop on Świdnicka Street. A colourful mosaic was designed on one wall of a florist on Kościuszko Square to break the dominance of the plants' greenery, there were also grey-purple walls and a terrazzo grey floor. Similarly, painted fabrics and ceramic sculptures enriched a frugally designed café on Podwale Street [12].

### 3. Conclusions

Interiors have always been a subject of constant and comprehensive change as investors refurbished their premises in accordance with temporary fashions and their own tastes in relation to their social status and financial possibilities. Painted surfaces were enriched with, or even dominated by, colourful wall and ceiling paintings, frescos, mosaics, etc. Available pigments and techniques used influenced the range of the achieved hues.

The presentation of results from the examinations in chronological order aimed to render tendencies in historic colour schemes in the Silesia region from the Middle Ages to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, limited discoveries allowed only for the presentation of selected examples of colour schemes from different historic styles.

Examinations often bring limited results due to the presence of only a small amount of the original substance. At the same time, the presented results must be considered in relation to the applied methods and the scope of the conducted investigations. Additional pigment analyses and the use of non-invasive techniques may bring more exact information in the future.

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