

# Under the Pressure of 'Polonization' Ideology: Renaissance and Baroque Art in Silesia in the Works of Polish Art Historians after 1945\*

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## **Abstract**

This article explores a neglected topic: Polish research into the Early Modern period of Silesian art under Socialism. Although this epoch has never been quite as popular as the Medieval period as a subject of art historical research, its position was to fall victim to the 're-Polonization' efforts of Polish art historians during the period after Silesia had been incorporated into the Polish state. This paper gives an overview of the numerous studies on Renaissance and Baroque art and architecture that appeared in the period from the difficult first years after the Second World War until the early 1960s, when the phenomenon of 'Polonization' of Early Modern Silesian art began to subside. It raises issues relating to the compatibility of Communist and nationalist ideologies and seeks to give reasons for the stance taken by the art historians involved in the story.

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## **Description of the Phenomenon**

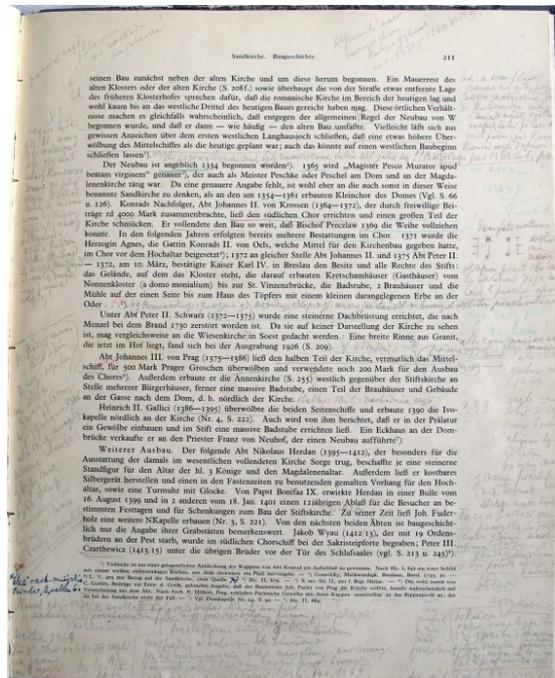
[1] When, as a student, I first accessed the three-volume catalogue of the monuments of Wrocław compiled in German by Ludwig Burgemeister and Günther Grundmann<sup>1</sup> in the library of the Institute of Art History at Wrocław University, my attention was drawn to the large number of Polish language commentaries and notes written in pencil in the margins of the pages (Figs. 1, 2).

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\* A first version of this article in Polish was published in 2015, see: Andrzej Koziel, "'Polonizacja' nowożytnej sztuki na Śląsku w pracach polskich historyków sztuki po 1945 roku", in: *Barok. Historia - Literatura - Sztuka* 22 (2015), no. 2 (= 44), 149-161. - Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine.

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Burgemeister and Günther Grundmann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Breslau* [Art Historical Monuments of the City of Wrocław], vols. 1-3, Breslau 1930-1934 (= *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Niederschlesien* 1).

All written by the same hand, they mainly took the form of short commentaries, interpolations and emphases, though some of them were lengthy enough totake up the entire free space available around the printed text and illustrations in the book.



1 Handwritten commentary by Marian Morelowski on a text about the architecture of the Church of the Virgin Mary on Sand Island in Wrocław, in: Ludwig Burgemeister and Günther Grundmann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Breslau* [Art Historical Monuments of the City of Wrocław], vol. 1, Breslau 1930, 211; copy kept in the library of the Institute of Art History at the University of Wrocław, shelfmark 2579 (photograph provided by the author)



2 Handwritten commentary by Marian Morelowski: "A. Kowalski ein Pole!", in: Ludwig Burgemeister and Günther Grundmann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Breslau*, vol. 1, Breslau 1930, 135; copy in the library of the Institute of Art History at the University of Wrocław, shelfmark 2579 (photograph provided by the author)

[2] As I read their content, my initial curiosity increasingly turned into perplexity. Systematically and with great passion, the notes described the Polish roots of the artists and patrons enumerated in the catalogue, as well as of the persons depicted in the monuments they had commissioned and created. The notes emphasized the merits of creative Polish individuals and ruthlessly uncovered and ridiculed any anti-Polish 'errors' that had been made by the authors of the catalogue; they even went so far as to claim to find Polish facial features in the figures represented in the works. At first I thought that the text were a prank played by one of the older students at the institute. But it was not long before I learned that the author of these notes and commentaries was no less a person than the late professor at the University's Institute of Art History, Marian Morelowski (1884–1963). It soon began to dawn on me that these disparaging comments written on the pages of the German catalogue were no random hoax by an eccentric professor of art history, but a symptom of a more problematic phenomenon, namely the 'Polonization' of Silesian art that formed part of the scholarly output of Polish art historians after 1945.

[3] This shameful strand in the Polish history of art, which constitutes the backdrop of a wider problem usually described in Polish as *badania zachodnie* (Western research) – in contrast to the German *Ostforschung* (Eastern studies) – has so far not been reflected upon in any substantial way by art historians. More importantly, the few existing articles on the topic (mainly written by Adam Labuda, b. 1946)<sup>2</sup> have primarily focused on issues related to works of medieval art in Silesia. That is why I will concentrate in this article on an issue that has been neglected up to now: the early modern period in the history of Silesian art and its Polish researchers. Although this epoch was never as popular a research topic as the Middle Ages among art historians, it was to fall victim to the 're-Polonization' efforts of Polish art historians, particularly during the period after Silesia became politically incorporated into the Polish state.

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<sup>2</sup> Adam S. Labuda, "Polnische Kunstgeschichtsschreibung und die 'Wiedergewonnenen Gebiete'" [Polish Art Historiography and the 'Regained Territories'], in: *Deutsche Ostforschung und polnische Westforschung im Spannungsfeld von Wissenschaft und Politik. Disziplinen im Vergleich* [German Eastern Studies and Polish Western Studies in the Tensions between Research and Politics. Two Disciplines Compared], eds. Jan M. Piskorski, Jörg Hackmann and Rudolf Jaworski, Osnabrück and Poznań 2002 (= *Deutsche Ostforschung und Polnische Westforschung* 1), 135-159; see also: Marta Leśniakowska, "Polska historia sztuki i nacjonalizm" [Polish Art History and Nationalism], in: *Nacjonalizm w sztuce i historii sztuki 1789-1950* [Nationalism in Art and Art History 1789-1950], eds. Dariusz Konstantynow, Robert Pasieczny and Piotr Paszkiewicz, Warszawa 1998, 33-59: 44-45; Ewa Chojecka, "'Polnische 'Westforschung' und das Syndrom des Eisernen Vorhangs" [Polish 'Western Studies' and the Syndrome of the Iron Curtain], in: *Die Kunsthistoriographien in Ostmitteleuropa und der nationale Diskurs* [Art Historiographies in East Central Europe and the National Discourse], eds. Robert Born, Alena Janatková and Adam S. Labuda, Berlin 2004, 411-422; Ewa Chojecka, "Wprowadzenie" [Introduction], in: *Sztuka Górnego Śląska od średniowiecza do końca XX wieku* [Art in Upper Silesia from the Middle Ages to the End of the 20th Century], ed. Ewa Chojecka, Katowice 2004, 7-18: 14-15.

[4] Mieczysław Zlat (1927–2014), in his detailed elaboration on Polish post-war research into Silesian art, showed that in the years 1945 to 1964 at least 54 studies were published devoted to the periods of the Renaissance and Baroque.<sup>3</sup> The lion's share of these works is made up of monographs encompassing a wide spectrum of topics ranging from a study on Jan Turzo,<sup>4</sup> bishop of Wrocław (all names mentioned in this text follow Polish orthographical conventions), to papers on such architectural monuments as the Piast Castle in Brzeg,<sup>5</sup> the town hall in Wrocław,<sup>6</sup> the town hall in Lubań<sup>7</sup> or the former monastery of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star in Wrocław<sup>8</sup>. Monographs devoted to particular artists include works on sculptors Andrzej Walter I and Jan Jerzy Urbański,<sup>9</sup> painters Ezechieł Paritius and Jerzy Wilhelm Neunhertz<sup>10</sup> or engravers of the Strachowski

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<sup>3</sup> Mieczysław Zlat, "Polskie badania nad sztuką Śląska w latach 1945–1964" [Polish Research on Silesia's Art 1945–1964], in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 27 (1965), 93-104. See also: Józef Gębczak, "Bibliografia historii sztuki na Śląsku za lata 1945–1963" [Bibliography of Silesian Art History for the Period 1945–1963], in: *Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej* 5 (1967), 1-120.

<sup>4</sup> Exhaustively in: Janina Smacka, "Jan Turzo humanista i mecenas kultury renesansowej" [Jan Turzo as a Humanist and Patron of Renaissance Culture], in: *Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej* 2 (1963), 77-91.

<sup>5</sup> Jerzy Łomnicki, "Rezydencja Piastów Śląskich w Brzegu" [The Residence of the Silesian Piasts in Brzeg], in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 17 (1955), 371-372; Stanisław Kramarczyk, "Renesansowa budowa zamku piastowskiego w Brzegu i jej tło historyczne" [The Renaissance Building of the Piast Castle in Brzeg and its Historical Background], in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 24 (1962), 323-343; Mieczysław Zlat, "Brama zamkowa w Brzegu" [The Castle Gateway in Brzeg], in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 24 (1962), 284-322; Mieczysław Zlat, *Brzeg*, Wrocław 1960.

<sup>6</sup> Exhaustively in: Marcin Bukowski and Mieczysław Zlat, *Ratusz wrocławski* [The Wrocław Town Hall], Wrocław 1958.

<sup>7</sup> Tadeusz Broniewski, "Renesansowy ratusz w Lubaniu Śląskim" [The Renaissance Town Hall in Lubań Śląski], in: *Teka Konserwatorska* 3 (1956), 103-116.

<sup>8</sup> The earliest is in: Marian Morełowski, "Architektura Wrocławskiego gmachu Ossolineum" [The Architecture of the Ossolineum Building in Wrocław], in: *Sprawozdania Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* 7 (1952), 34-38.

<sup>9</sup> Exhaustively in: Janusz Kęłowski, "Ze studiów nad renesansową rzeźbą śląską. Andrzej Walter I – zagadnienie osoby i działalności rzeźbiarskiej" [From the Studies on Silesian Renaissance Sculpture. Andrzej Walter I – Questions Relating to the Person and his Sculptural Oeuvre], in: *Rozprawy Komisji Historii Sztuki* 2 (1960), 127-172; Adam Więcek, *Jan Jerzy Urbański. Studium o rzeźbie wrocławskiej pierwszej połowy XVIII stulecia* [Jan Jerzy Urbański. A Study on Sculpture in Wrocław in the First Half of the 18th Century], Wrocław, Warszawa and Kraków 1963.

<sup>10</sup> The earliest of these monographs is: Aleksander Rombowski, "Ezechieł Paritius, nadworny malarz piastowski w Brzegu" [Ezechieł Paritius, Piast Court Painter in Brzeg], in: *Sprawozdania Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* 7 (1952), 43-45. Exhaustively in: Anna Dobrzycka, *Jerzy Wilhelm Neunhertz, malarz śląski* [Jerzy Wilhelm Neunhertz, a Silesian Painter], Poznań 1958.

family<sup>11</sup>. Then the flagships of funeral sculpture, the burgher tombstones in Wrocław<sup>12</sup> or the tombstone of Jakub von Salza, bishop of Wrocław,<sup>13</sup> must be mentioned as well as the decorative arts, e.g. the ceramics manufactured in Bolesławiec or the faience made in Prószków.<sup>14</sup> There also appeared a number of typological studies, such as a survey of decorative attics in Silesia authored by Zlat<sup>15</sup> or exhaustive accounts of the beginnings of Italianizing Renaissance art and of the burgeoning of Baroque art in Silesia by Morelowski.<sup>16</sup> In addition, there are three synthetic studies on Early Modern art in Silesia to be mentioned: *Sztuka na Śląsku* [Art in Silesia], published in 1948 and authored by Tadeusz Dobrowolski;<sup>17</sup> a volume of collected papers that appeared in the same year under the title of *Dolny Śląsk* [Lower Silesia] with chapters devoted to Silesian art by Gwido Chmarzyński;<sup>18</sup> and finally the volume *Górny Śląsk* [Upper Silesia], which came out in 1959 as part of the series *Ziemie Staropolski* [Lands of Old Poland], comprising chapters on Upper Silesian art, again authored by Chmarzyński.<sup>19</sup> Taking into account the difficult situation that Polish art history

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<sup>11</sup> Exhaustively in: Adam Więcek, *Strachowscy. Z dziejów ilustratorstwa śląskiego XVIII wieku* [The Strachowski Family. From the History of Illustration in 18<sup>th</sup>-Century Silesia], Wrocław 1960.

<sup>12</sup> Exhaustively in: Janusz Kębłowski, "Marmurowe płyty St. Sauera i H. Rybischa. Ze studiów nad renesansową rzeźbą na Śląsku" [The Marble Tomb Slabs of St. Sauer and H. Rybisch. From the Studies on Renaissance Sculpture in Silesia], in: *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu. Historia Sztuki* 2 (1960), 3-75.

<sup>13</sup> Janusz Kębłowski, "Renesansowy nagrobek biskupa Jakuba von Salza w Nysie" [The Renaissance Tomb of Bishop Jacob von Salza in Nysa], in: *Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu. Historia Sztuki* 3 (1961), 77-122.

<sup>14</sup> Maria Starzewska, "Kamionka bolesławiecka" [Bolesławiec (Bunzlau) Stoneware], in: *Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej* 1 (1959), 121-130; Anna Ziomecka, "Prószkowska plastyka figuralna" [Figural Sculpture in Prószków], in: *Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej* 1 (1959), 82-96.

<sup>15</sup> Mieczysław Zlat, "Attyka renesansowa na Śląsku" [The Renaissance Attic in Silesia], in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 17 (1955), 48-79.

<sup>16</sup> Marian Morelowski, "Początki italianizującego renesansu na Śląsku" [The Beginnings of Italianizing Renaissance in Silesia], in: *Rocznik Historii Sztuki* 2 (1961), 31-84; Marian Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650-1750. Wystawa grafiki i rysunków maj-lipiec 1952* [The Heyday of Baroque in Silesia 1650-1750. Exhibition of Prints and Drawings, May-July 1952], Wrocław 1952.

<sup>17</sup> Tadeusz Dobrowolski, *Sztuka na Śląsku* [Art in Silesia], Katowice and Wrocław 1948.

<sup>18</sup> Gwido Chmarzyński's chapters in *Dolny Śląsk* [Lower Silesia], eds. Kyrył Sosnowski and Mieczysław Suchocki, Poznań 1950, vol. 1, part 1, are: "Czasy wielkiej uprawy" [Times of Great Cultivation], 92-117; "Wieki zbierają plony" [The Centuries Gather the Crops], 142-159; "Ugór na piastowskim łanie" [Fallow Land on the Piast Field], 178-191; "W cieniu drewnianych kościółków i klasztornych murów" [In the Shade of Small Wooden Churches and Monastic Walls], 278-294; "Sztuka miast sławi ród książęcych mecenasów" [The City's Art Praises the House of Aristocratic Patrons], 350-369; "Piastowski renesans kwitnie pałacami" [The Piast Renaissance Blooms Through Palaces], 423-452.

experienced in the first years after the Second World War in the completely destroyed and devastated country, this was a truly prodigious output.

[5] The phenomenon of the 'Polonization' of their subject matter is a common one in these works. It is already present even at the very first stage of the scholarly process: the stage of choosing the topic, as the subject matter was frequently chosen not for its artistic merit or for its class character – the latter being something that might be expected in a context where art history was ideologically framed within Marxist-Leninist terms in the new Socialist Republic, but above all for its effectiveness in demonstrating the 'Polishness' or in diluting the 'Germanness' of Early Modern art in Silesia.

[6] Accordingly, preference was given to artists with Polish-sounding names: to the aforementioned Urbański (Fig. 3), for example, or to a portrait painter called Tomszański,<sup>20</sup> an artist particularly favoured by Polish scholars, or to the court painter to the bishop of Wrocław bearing the classic Polish name of Andrzej Kowalski.<sup>21</sup> An extreme example of this attitude is the book by Adam Więcek *Polscy artyści Wrocławia w wieku XVIII* [Polish Artists in Wrocław in the 18th Century], published, as proclaimed in the introduction, "on the tenth anniversary of the return of the Piast Silesian lands to the motherland, together with its capital, Wrocław".<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Gwido Chmarzyński, "Sztuka Górnośląska" [Upper Silesia's Art], in: *Górny Śląsk* [Upper Silesia], ed. Kazimierz Popiołek et al., Poznań 1959, vol. 1, 367-406.

<sup>20</sup> Exhaustively in: Adam Więcek, "Jan Jerzy Tomszański – nieznan malarz śląski XVIII wieku" [Jan Jerzy Tomszański – an Unknown Silesian Painter of the 18th Century], in: *Kwartalnik Opolski* 6 (1960), no. 4, 79-83.

<sup>21</sup> Exhaustively in: Adam Więcek, *Polscy artyści Wrocławia w wieku XVIII* [Polish Artists in Wrocław in the 18th Century], Warszawa 1956, 22-24.

<sup>22</sup> Więcek, *Polscy artyści Wrocławia w wieku XVIII*, 5.



3 Jan Jerzy Urbański, statue of *St. John of Nepomuk*, 1723, sandstone. Wrocław, at St. Matthias Church (photograph © Jerzy Buława)

In cases where artists with a German-sounding surname were chosen as the object of scholarly enquiry, a necessary prerequisite was that they have some connection with Poland: having made a trip to Kiev, for example, as in the case of the sculptor Andrzej Walter, who was interpreted as being inspirational for the Renaissance art of Cracow.<sup>23</sup>

[7] But the ethnic criterion was also applied to artistic patronage: to the activities of John Thurzó (1466–1520), bishop of Wrocław, for example, who had been raised in Cracow,<sup>24</sup> or to the founding role of the abbots and abbesses of Silesian monasteries with Polish-sounding names,<sup>25</sup> which were viewed as a positive influence. There were also numerous studies produced on the artistic patronage of the Piasts of Legnica and Brzeg (Fig. 4), whose lack of Polish ethnicity was compensated for by their affiliation to a Polish royal dynasty and by the ascription of pro-Polish sympathies to them.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Kęblowski, “Ze studiów nad renesansową rzeźbą śląską. Andrzej Walter I”, 134, 160.

<sup>24</sup> Smacka, “Jan Turzo humanista i mecenas kultury renesansowej”, 78-79.

<sup>25</sup> Morelowski, “Architektura Wrocławskiego gmachu Ossolineum”, 36.

<sup>26</sup> For example: Anna Burzec, “Rola Piastów legnicko-brzeskich w rozwoju kultury na Śląsku” [The Role of the Legnica and Brzeg Piasts in the Development of Culture in Silesia], in: *Z dziejów postępowej ideologii na Śląsku w. XIV-XVI* [From the History of Progressive Ideologies in Silesia in the 14th to 16th Centuries], ed. Ewa Maleczyńska, Warszawa 1956, 188-225; Tadeusz Rutkowski, “Mecenat Jerzego II Piasta na Brzegu” [The Patronage of Jerzy II Piast in Brzeg], in: *Sprawozdania Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* 13 (1958), 82-83; Józef Lepiarczyk, “Legnickie Monumentum Piasteum” [The Piast Monument in Legnica], in: *Szkice Legnickie* 1 (1963), 99-111.



4 Piast Mausoleum, Legnica, 1677-1678, design: Carlo Rossi (c. 1630-1688), view of the interior (photograph © Martin Mádl)

[8] In a similar vein, allegedly Polish characteristics were emphasized in works of art and architecture. Particularly popular was the ornate attic, a form of architectural decoration widespread throughout Poland and acknowledged as “one of the greatest achievements of Renaissance art in the Slavic countries”.<sup>27</sup> Much valued also was the Renaissance castle in Brzeg (Fig. 5) with its “Wawel-like” arcaded courtyard<sup>28</sup> and in “Slavic” wooden architecture.<sup>29</sup>



5 Piast Castle, Brzeg, arcade courtyard (photograph © Martin Mádl)

<sup>27</sup> Złat, “Attyka renesansowa na Śląsku”, 53.

<sup>28</sup> Chmarzyński, “Wieki zbierają plony” [The Centuries Gather the Crops], in: *Dolny Śląsk*, 152.

<sup>29</sup> Dobrowolski, *Sztuka na Śląsku*, 302-315.

[9] The ethnic classification of artists and patrons as 'Poles' was usually based exclusively on the form of their surname, with no need perceived to seek archival verification. This approach resulted in numerous errors and even intentional abuse. For example, a sculptor called Briccius Gauske, born in the region of Lusatia (Lausitz), was assumed to be a Pole and had his name polonized to Brykcy Gąska.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Czechs and Moravians working in Silesia were referred to as Poles. This was what happened to sculptors Jan Jerzy Urbański,<sup>31</sup> who was born in Chabařovice near Chlumeč in Bohemia, and to Samuel Pardynsky, who worked closely with Ferdinand Maximilian Brokoff in Wrocław and whose name was transformed into Bardziński,<sup>32</sup> not to mention the stepson and fellow painter of Michael Willmann, Jan Krzysztof Liszka,<sup>33</sup> or the Strachowski<sup>34</sup> family, which was of Moravian descent.

[10] A similar fate awaited some founders. For example, the *supremus magister* of the Wrocław branch of the order of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star Johann Chrysostom Neborak, originally from Bohemia, was given the more Polish-sounding name of Jan Chryzostom Nieborak,<sup>35</sup> and an abbot of the Cistercian monastery in Kamieniec Ząbkowicki named Gerhard Woywoda was declared a "Pole".<sup>36</sup> Unfortunately, these practices of 'Polonization' at any cost often produced deliberate falsities. As an example, let us take the painter Paritius, who was said to have descended from a Polish family, Paryckis, and who was proclaimed an epitome "of the bond of Silesia with Poland",<sup>37</sup> although his

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<sup>30</sup> For the first time in: Gwido Chmarzyński, "Nowe opracowanie dziejów sztuki na Śląsku" [A Revision of the Art History of Silesia], in: *Przegląd Zachodni* 5 (1949), 140; later in: Morelowski, "Początki italianizującego renesansu na Śląsku", 47-48.

<sup>31</sup> For the first time in: Dobrowolski, *Sztuka na Śląsku*, 342; later in: Adam Więcek, "O Janie Jerzym Urbańskim, sławnym polskim rzeźbiarzu (Przyczynek do dziejów kultury polskiej na Śląsku)" [On Jan Jerzy Urbański, a Famous Polish Sculptor (A Contribution to Polish Cultural History in Silesia)], in: *Dziennik Zachodni* 7 (21 February 1954); Adam Więcek, "Strachowscy - Urbański - Zbaraski. Sylwetki polskich artystów we Wrocławiu w XVIII w." [The Strachowski Family - Urbański - Zbaraski. Contours of Polish Artists in 18th Century Wrocław], in: *Kwartalnik Opolski* 1 (1955), no. 1, 99-115: 107; Więcek, *Polscy artyści Wrocławia w wieku XVIII*, 40-41.

<sup>32</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650-1750*, 2.

<sup>33</sup> For the first time in: Chmarzyński, "Wieki zbierają plony" [The Centuries Gather the Crops], 154; later in: Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650-1750*, 32, 36.

<sup>34</sup> For the first time in: Adam Więcek, "Osiemnastowieczni ilustratorzy polscy we Wrocławiu" [18th-Century Polish Illustrators in Wrocław], in: *Przegląd Zachodni* 11/12 (1954), 361-365; later repeated in: Więcek, *Strachowscy, Z dziejów ilustratorstwa śląskiego XVIII wieku*, 9.

<sup>35</sup> Morelowski, "Architektura Wrocławskiego gmachu Ossolineum", 35.

<sup>36</sup> Morelowski, "Architektura Wrocławskiego gmachu Ossolineum", 35.

<sup>37</sup> Rombowski, "Ezechiel Paritius, nadworny malarz piastowski w Brzegu", 43-44.

birthplace was at that time known to Polish researchers to be “Lytomysl Bohemiae” – most probably Litomyšl in Eastern Bohemia.<sup>38</sup>

[11] The output of artists with a Polish-sounding surname was purposely promoted, thus agrandising their importance to Silesian art in scholarly elaborations. A classic example in this regard is a painter called Kowalski. Although not a single signed work of his has survived, Kowalski was proclaimed an outstanding Wrocław painter.<sup>39</sup> Sometimes art historians even adopted the practice of juxtaposing the creative output of ‘Polish’ artists in Silesia against the output of acknowledged masters with a German-sounding surname. That was the case with Jan Krzysztof Liszka, for example, who as “a son of the Silesian land”<sup>40</sup> was turned into a kind of antithesis to Michael Willmann, who was born in Prussian Königsberg. What is more, Liszka even came to be considered a co-author of his stepfather’s success and was assumed to have authored Willmann’s best paintings (Fig. 6).<sup>41</sup>



6 Michael Willmann, allegedly with the collaboration of Jan Krzysztof Liszka, *Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, 1681, oil on canvas, 486 × 297 cm. St. Peter’s and St. Paul’s Church, Warsaw-Pyry (photograph © Jerzy Buława)

<sup>38</sup> This interpretation was indicated by an inscription: “Ezechiel Paritius natus Lytomysl Bohemiae 1622, 16 April. Aetat. 36”, copied from a lost graphic portrait by Paritius that was located in the collection of the former Municipal Library in Wrocław. Rombowski, “Ezechiel Paritius, nadworny malarz piastowski w Brzegu”, 44.

<sup>39</sup> Więcek, *Polscy artyści Wrocławia w wieku XVIII*, 22.

<sup>40</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650–1750*, 32.

<sup>41</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650–1750*, 36, 57.

[12] In the same line of thinking attempts were made to give the credit for introducing the Renaissance to Silesia to ‘Polish’ patrons. The artistic patronage of bishop Turzo was assumed to have been inspired by the Cracow environment, and, as a consequence, his activities were regarded as the true source of the Renaissance throughout Silesia. Furthermore, it was claimed that the Renaissance movement in Silesia was more powerful than similar movements in other German countries because of the “Polish impulse” that powered it.<sup>42</sup> Another alleged pioneer of the Renaissance in Silesia was the Jagiellonian Prince Sigismund the Old, who ruled the duchy of Głogów from 1497 to 1506.<sup>43</sup> In addition, the artistic patronage of the dynasty of the Piasts of Legnica and Brzeg (whose lineage died out in 1675) was said to have been responsible “for the development of the late Baroque of Silesia, which began in or around that very year of 1675 [...]”.<sup>44</sup>

[13] In cases where it was impossible to prove the ‘Polishness’ of a particular Silesian artist or work of art, attempts were made to demonstrate their non-German artistic provenance. Thus, for example, it was assumed that the Baroque movement in Silesia was initiated by five Italian artists who had been brought to Oława by the Piasts of Legnica and Brzeg.<sup>45</sup> Domenico Martinelli, an artist active in Austria and Italy, was recognized through formal analysis as the author of the Baroque architecture of the main building of the University of Wrocław (Fig. 7).<sup>46</sup>



7 Main building of the University of Wrocław, 1728-1740, view from the north (photograph © Martin Mádl)

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<sup>42</sup> Morelowski, “Początki italianizującego renesansu na Śląsku”, 32.

<sup>43</sup> Chmarzyński, “Wieki zbierają plony” [The Centuries Gather the Crops], 152.

<sup>44</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650–1750*, 6.

<sup>45</sup> Marian Morelowski, “Ocalone rękopisy F. B. Wernhera i ich znaczenie dla historii sztuki i kultury Śląska” [The Surviving Manuscripts of F. B. Werner and their Significance for the History of Art and Culture in Silesia], in: *Sprawozdania Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* 5 (1950), 1-31.

<sup>46</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650–1750*, 21.

As for the construction of the former monastery of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star in Wrocław (Fig. 8), the pre-war archival discovery by a German scholar, Johann Joseph Morper, allowed Polish scholars to triumphantly ascribe the authorship of the design to a French architect who had been active in Prague, Jean-Baptiste Mathey (c. 1630–1695); a fact that gained in importance as it was used as a pretext to emphasize the French influence on residential architecture all over Silesia.<sup>47</sup>



8 Former Monastery of the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star, Wrocław, 1675-1715, design: Jean-Baptiste Mathey (photograph © Martin Mádl)

[14] A weapon used with particular assiduity to prove the existence of Italian and French influences on Silesian Baroque architecture was provided by the rediscovery in 1950 of a copy of the *Topographia seu Compendium Silesiae* by Friedrich Bernhard Werner (1690–1776), a five-volume comprehensive description of Silesian cities and villages and their major buildings encompassing over 3,000 pages with text and coloured pen-and-ink-drawings. Werner, a self-taught draughtsman originating from Lower Silesia and later on Royal *Scenographus* in Wrocław, had produced four handwritten exemplars of the *Topographia*. His work came to be regarded as a key visual source for the original appearance of Silesian works of architecture.<sup>48</sup>

[15] More importantly, while frequently emphasizing the dominance of Italian influences on the art of the Renaissance, and the impact of Italian, Bohemian and French influences on the art of the Baroque in Silesia through the use of generalisations, the same scholars at the same time either denied the importance of German or Austrian influences or denigrated their impact, even to the extent of questioning the originality of such works or adjudging them to be of secondary importance. As a result, the art of the Renaissance in Silesia was often described as ‘Italian’, and the art of the Baroque as ‘cosmopolitan’ and

<sup>47</sup> Morelowski, “Architektura Wrocławskiego gmachu Ossolineum”, 34-36; Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650-1750*, 19-20.

<sup>48</sup> Morelowski, “Ocalone rękopisy F. B. Wernhera i ich znaczenie dla historii sztuki i kultury Śląska”, 4.

international in character. This marginalization of the German element by Polish scholarship allowed it to effectuate a rather far-fetched assimilation of Renaissance and Baroque art in Silesia into the foundations of Polish national culture. Accordingly, the 'Piaśt' Renaissance was treated as a 'Polish' epoch in the history of Silesian art. International Baroque in turn, which had "detached itself from the German-Austrian" Baroque,<sup>49</sup> was regarded as having been created with considerable help from foreign (non-German) artists and was connected with Polish Baroque. This set of strategies becomes particularly evident against the background of the decidedly negative attitude that Polish scholars had towards the art that was produced after the incorporation of Silesia into the Prussian state in 1741, which they described as being 'Prussian Junker' or 'military' in character. In practice, this negative bias resulted in a total failure to study it.

[16] Of course, the 'Polonization' of Early Modern art in Silesia in the works of Polish art historians had one main objective: to prove the constant presence of a Polish element in Silesia despite the changes in the political affiliation of the region. As Morelowski concluded,

*there can be no other explanation but the superordinate fact, the social fact, that the population of Silesia had, for the most part, a Polish background; and it was that Polish element that had shaped the culture there and the mentality of all Silesians, regardless of their origin.*<sup>50</sup>

This 'Polish' art of the Renaissance and of the Baroque in Silesia was presented as the cultural expression of the ethnic identity of the patrons. Hence, for example, the motif of the Renaissance attic

*did not encounter particular recognition in major Silesian towns. Nonetheless a propitious climate for adopting and developing this form persisted in small-town and village communities, at that time decidedly Polish.*<sup>51</sup>

Wooden architecture, in turn, "documented [...] the far-reaching diffusion of our folk all across our country".<sup>52</sup>

[17] The various aforementioned forms of 'Polonization' of Early Modern art in Silesia had already appeared in the first Polish overviews of the art history of this region. Of paramount importance for the inception of this way of interpreting Silesian art were two syntheses published in 1948. The first one, *Sztuka na Śląsku* [Art in Silesia] by Dobrowolski,<sup>53</sup> was written during the war and had a restrained tone. The other one, published by the Instytut Zachodni [Western Institute] in Poznań with splendid graphic design and entitled *Dolny Śląsk* [Lower Silesia],<sup>54</sup> was openly propagandist. However, the apogee of the phenomenon of 'Polonization' was only to come in the 1950s.

<sup>49</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650-1750*, 64.

<sup>50</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650-1750*, 64.

<sup>51</sup> Zlat, "Attyka renesansowa na Śląsku", 53.

<sup>52</sup> Morelowski, *Rozkwit baroku na Śląsku 1650-1750*, 31.

<sup>53</sup> Tadeusz Dobrowolski, *Sztuka na Śląsku* [Art in Silesia], Katowice and Wrocław 1948.

[18] Władysław Podlacha (1875–1951), the holder of the chair in art history at Wrocław University since 1946, had not embarked on any Silesian topics during his post-war research. After his death in 1951, Marian Morelowski (1884–1963) (Fig. 9) was appointed head of this chair in 1952.<sup>55</sup> In addition, he was named chairman of the art history committee of the *Wrocławskie Towarzystwo Naukowe* [Wrocław Scientific Society], which at that time was the main forum for discussions on Silesian art. Both collaborators and students of Morelowski remembered him as a righteous man of immense talent for research and great cultural knowledge.<sup>56</sup> The central positions he held in art history institutions combined with his outstandingly energetic and charismatic personality meant that Morelowski exerted enormous influence over the work of Polish art historians and on their interpretations of Silesian art.<sup>57</sup>



9 Marian Morelowski and his students on a fallen Prussian monument, photograph, after 1948 (© Ossolineum, Wrocław, photographer unknown)

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<sup>54</sup> Kirył Sosnowski and Mieczysław Suchocki, eds., *Dolny Śląsk* [Lower Silesia], Poznań and Wrocław 1948.

<sup>55</sup> Mieczysław Zlat, "Pierwsze lata historii sztuki na Uniwersytecie i Politechnice we Wrocławiu" [The First Years of Art History at Wrocław University and Polytechnic], in: *Dzieje historii sztuki w Polsce. Kształtowanie się instytucji naukowych w XIX i XX wieku* [The History of Art History in Poland. The Formation of Research Institutions in the 19th and 20th Centuries], ed. Adam S. Labuda in cooperation with Katarzyna Zawiasa-Staniszevska, Poznań 1996, 224-236.

<sup>56</sup> See: Janina Orosz, "Marian Morelowski (1884–1963)", in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 26 (1964), 208-210; Mieczysław Zlat, "Morelowski Marian (1884–1963)", in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 21, Warszawa 1976, 767-768.

<sup>57</sup> See: Andrzej Kozieł, "Marian Morelowski (1884–1963)", in: *Rocznik Historii Sztuki* 36 (2011), 47-56.

## Reasons and Aims of the 'Polonization' Ideology

[19] There is no doubt that the phenomenon of the 'Polonization' of Silesian art would not have been as strong a feature in the oeuvre of so many Polish art historians if there had not been the huge ideological pressure from the communist regime, to which all researchers at that time were subjected in the post-war reality of Silesia. The primary aim of historical elaborations was not – as explicated in the introduction to *Dolny Śląsk* (1948) – to engage in “writing what is referred to as objective history”, but to reflect on “the spiritual consolidation of the Polish society with the regained territories through instilling the conviction that we have returned to the trail of our old motherland”.<sup>58</sup>

[20] A most telling sign of the ideological pressure on scholars analyzing the history of art in Silesia was a scholarly conference organized on 11-12 October 1954 in Wrocław with the participation of senior representatives of the competent ministry as well as guests from the Soviet Union. The conference was reported on in detail in the journal *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* [Art History Bulletin].<sup>59</sup> The political aim of the studies of art historians was formulated from the outset, that is in the opening speeches of the head of the *Stowarzyszenie Historyków Sztuki* [Association of Art Historians], Władysław Tomkiewicz, and of the vice-minister of culture and art, Jan Wilczek. It was defined as “the scientific documentation of the numerous bonds existing between Silesia and the remaining regions of Poland”.<sup>60</sup>

[21] As is evident from Morelowski's programmatic talk entitled “Stan i rezultaty badań z okresu powojennego nad historią sztuki Śląska we wrocławskich ośrodkach” [State and Results of Post-War Research in the History of Silesian Art at the Wrocław Research Centres],<sup>61</sup> all current works were subordinated to this objective. The approach was described as putting an emphasis on research directions that aimed to unveil “the Polish contribution to the development of Silesian art from the eleventh to the eighteenth century”.<sup>62</sup> This was also to be the goal for future research of art historians, which was set out by Gwido Chmarzyński in his speech “Postulaty badawcze w zakresie sztuki śląskiej” (Research Postulates within the Field of Silesian Art).<sup>63</sup> The list of “issues of primary importance” presented by Chmarzyński encompassed, among other

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<sup>58</sup> Zygmunt Wojciechowski, “Słowo wstępne” [An Introductory Word], in: *Dolny Śląsk* [Lower Silesia], eds. Kirył Sosnowski and Mieczysław Suchocki, Poznań 1950, vol. 1, 10-11.

<sup>59</sup> B. W. [B. Wolff], “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki poświęcona sztuce na Śląsku (Wrocław, 11-12.XI.1954)” [Academic Conference of the Association of Art Historians Dedicated to Art in Silesia (Wrocław, 11-12 September 1954)], in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 17 (1955), 180-185; see also: Labuda, “Polnische Kunstgeschichtsschreibung und die ‘Wiedergewonnenen Gebiete’”, 151.

<sup>60</sup> Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 180.

<sup>61</sup> See the report by: Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 180.

<sup>62</sup> Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 180.

<sup>63</sup> See the report by: Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 185.

topics, the architecture of castles and urban architecture at the time of the Renaissance, the Polish attic, the patronage of bishop Turzo, sixteenth-century epitaphs to burghers, the relations between the Silesian Baroque and the regions of *Wielkopolska* (Greater Poland) and *Małopolska* (Lesser Poland), graphical illustrations in Renaissance books in Silesia, and also wall paintings in churches from the fifteenth until the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>64</sup>

[22] The sort of pressure that was exerted on scholars can perhaps be best shown by relating a discussion that arose from a presentation by Anna Dobrzycka on the oeuvre of the Silesian painter Jerzy Wilhelm Neunhertz (Fig. 10).<sup>65</sup>



10 Jerzy Wilhelm Neunhertz, fresco decoration, 1736, Piast Mausoleum, Krzeszów (photograph © Martin Mádl)

Morelowski, commenting on the presentation, expressed the opinion that it would have been more appropriate to direct the scholarly attention to Polish painters.<sup>66</sup> More interesting still is the fact that the author also resorted to a ‘Polish’ argumentation in her reply. She claimed that Neunhertz’ artistic output was, as she put it, “a problem meriting attention due to the abundant activities he undertook across substantial areas of Poland”.<sup>67</sup>

[23] Notwithstanding the ideological pressure, it seems that many researchers embarking on a study of ‘Polish’ topics were also spurred by other motifs. As observed by Adam Labuda, the character of Polish-language publications in Silesia in the first years after the war was to a great extent affected by patriotic

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<sup>64</sup> Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 185; Adam Więcek, “Postulaty badań naukowych nad sztuką regionu opolskiego” [Research Prerequisites for the Art History of the Opole Region], in: *Komunikaty Instytutu Śląskiego* 8 (1959), 1-4, makes similar demands on research into Silesian art in the Opole region.

<sup>65</sup> Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 184.

<sup>66</sup> Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 184.

<sup>67</sup> Wolff, “Sesja naukowa Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki”, 184.

and national factors.<sup>68</sup> Morelowski was renowned for his anti-communist views, and it would be a huge error to assert that the 'Polonization' activities he engaged in were driven exclusively in response to a call from the communist authorities. It seems also that other Polish art historians from Wrocław shared similar anti-communist views. Hence, their involvement might have been due to a feeling of national duty to join in the great cause of 'assimilation' of a region recently incorporated into the Polish state. But this deep engagement was certainly enhanced by the policy propagated at the time by the Communist state authorities. The compulsory ideology of 'Polonization' aimed at what officialdom called the *Ziemie Odzyskane* [Regained Territories], a territorial concept that included Silesia, was de facto based on the radically nationalistic idea of an ethnically homogenous state that appealed directly to the tradition of the Poland of the Piast kings.<sup>69</sup> Here, the pragmatic ideological horizons of the authorities met with the nationalist worldview of many Polish scholars; the latter was to a great extent formed on the grounding of pre-war 'Polish Western thought', which defined Silesia as a part of the 'territories of the Polish motherland', that is to say, the areas included in Piast Poland in the tenth century.<sup>70</sup>

[24] In this respect, Morelowski is comparable to the figure of the medievalist Zygmunt Wojciechowski (1900–1955) who, although he had declared openly radically nationalistic views after 1945, managed to gain the support of the Communist authorities for his idea of creating the *Instytut Zachodni* [Institute for Western Affairs] in Poznań as a flagship of the 'Polonization' propaganda effort in the Western Territories, which he was to head until his death in 1955.<sup>71</sup>

[25] The shared efforts of Polish art historians at 'Polonizing' Silesian art were also prompted by the state of the discipline at the time. Since the second half of the nineteenth century, art history in Poland had been constructed largely in opposition to German history of art, and especially to its nationalist and colonialist variety.<sup>72</sup> During the inter-war period, Polish art history had operated under a nationalistic research paradigm grounded in the idea of an independent

<sup>68</sup> Labuda, "Polnische Kunstgeschichtsschreibung und die 'Wiedergewonnenen Gebiete'", 151.

<sup>69</sup> See: Marian Orzechowski, "Tradycje piastowskie w polskiej myśli politycznej XX wieku" [Piast Traditions in Polish Political Thinking of the 20th Century], in: *Piastowie w dziejach Polski. Zbiór artykułów z okazji trzechsetnej rocznicy wygaśnięcia dynastii Piastów* [The Piasts in the History of Poland. A Collection of Articles on the Occasion of the Tercentenary of the Extinction of the Piast Dynasty], ed. Roman Heck, Wrocław 1975, 269-285; Chojecka, "Polnische 'Westforschung' und das Syndrom des Eisernen Vorhangs", 412.

<sup>70</sup> See: Marian Mroczko, *Polska myśl zachodnia 1918-1939. Kształtowanie i upowszechnianie* [The Polish Western thought 1918-1939. Its Formation and Diffusion], Poznań 1986; Grzegorz Strauchold, *Myśl zachodnia i jej realizacja w Polsce Ludowej w latach 1945-1957* [Western Thought and its Implementation in People's Poland in the Years 1945-1957], Toruń 2003.

<sup>71</sup> On the topic of Wojciechowski's political views see his magnumopus: Zygmunt Wojciechowski, *Polska - Niemcy. Dziesięć wieków zmagania* [Poland - Germany. Ten Centuries of Conflict], Poznań 1945.

Polish nation that was talented in the realm of the arts, well capable of creating original national art and giving expression to its geographical-ethnic identity.<sup>73</sup> The post-war struggle for evidence of the national character of Silesian art can thus be inscribed into the wider context of spectacular disputes that preceded it: the claims in regard of the national identity of Daniel Chodowiecki or Wit Stwosz resp. Veit Stoß, for example.<sup>74</sup> The adoption of this radical nationalistic research paradigm by Polish art historians was thus a logical consequence of pre-war polemics, and it constituted a response to the works of German scholars that had made similar efforts on the same issues.

[26] These German efforts are particularly striking in works published after 1939, which were closely connected to the Nazi ideology of the 'Third Reich' and with the policy of legitimising the conquests of the German army in the East.<sup>75</sup> Such arguments, however, had a far wider spread over time. They had started with publications on the art of Upper Silesia before 1939,<sup>76</sup> and were to terminate in two separated ends: for obvious reasons, works with a close relationship to Nazi ideology by such German scholars as Dagobert Frey or Günther Grundmann, published during the war and dealing not just with Silesian but also with 'German art' produced in *Małopolska* (Lesser Poland) and in *Mazowsze* (Masovia),<sup>77</sup> were

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<sup>72</sup> Adam S. Labuda, "'... eine von sinnvollen Zweckgefühlen erfüllte, herbe und großartige Kolonialkunst ...'. Zum kunsthistorischen Diskurs über Ostmitteleuropa", in: *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 56 (1993), 1-17.

<sup>73</sup> More on that topic in: Leśniakowska, "Polska historia sztuki i nacjonalizm", 33-44.

<sup>74</sup> See: Hanna Faryna-Paszkiwicz, "Spór o Wita Stwosza" [The Controversy over Wit Stwosz], in: *Nacjonalizm w sztuce i historii sztuki 1789-1950* [Nationalism in Art and Art History 1789-1959], eds. Dariusz Konstantynow, Robert Pasieczny and Piotr Paszkiewicz, Warszawa 1998, 61-70.

<sup>75</sup> On this topic see: Beate Störckuhl, "Deutsche Ostforschung und Kunstgeschichte" [German Eastern Studies and Art History], in: *Deutsche Ostforschung und polnische Westforschung im Spannungsfeld von Wissenschaft und Politik. Disziplinen im Vergleich* [German Eastern Studies and Polish Western Studies in the Tensions between Research and Politics. Two Disciplines Compared], eds. Jan M. Piskorski, Jörg Hackmann and Rudolf Jaworski, Osnabrück and Poznań 2002 (= *Deutsche Ostforschung und Polnische Westforschung* 1), 119-134; Beate Störckuhl, "Paradigmen und Methoden der kunstgeschichtlichen 'Ostforschung' - der 'Fall' Dagobert Frey" [Paradigms and Methods of Art Historical 'Eastern Studies' - the 'Case' of Dagobert Frey], in: *Die Kunsthistoriographien in Ostmitteleuropa und der nationale Diskurs* [Art Historiographies in East Central Europe and the National Discourse], eds. Robert Born, Alena Janatková and Adam S. Labuda, Berlin 2004, 155-172.

<sup>76</sup> Chojecka, "Wprowadzenie", 12-14.

<sup>77</sup> For example: Günther Grundmann, *Deutsche Kunst im befreiten Schlesien* [German Art in Liberated Silesia], Breslau 1941; Dagobert Frey, *Die deutsche Leistung in Ostmitteleuropa. Die deutsche Kunst* [German Achievements in East Central Europe. The German Arts], [s. l.] 1943; Dagobert Frey, *Krakau* [Cracow], Berlin 1941; Heinrich Kurtz, *Krakau. Bildnis einer deutschen Stadt im Osten* [Cracow. Portrait of a German City in the East], Bayreuth 1944.

left entirely unanswered by the Polish side. On the other hand, the 'Polonizing' works by Polish art historians that started to appear after 1945 met with only a feeble response from German researchers,<sup>78</sup> who were at the time cut off from that research field and who, for political reasons, refrained from raising the topic of 'German art' in their post-war publications.<sup>79</sup>

[27] The phenomenon of 'Polonization' of Early Modern Silesian art began to subside in the early 1960s. Its abatement was due not only to the reduced political temperature after 1956, but also to progress achieved in the research of Polish art historians that tended to lead them row back on earlier hasty 'Polonization' claims.<sup>80</sup> Of crucial importance in this context was the death of Morelowski in 1963, which enabled a younger generation of Polish art historians, including Mieczysław Zlat, Tadeusz Chrzanowski, Konstanty Kalinowski, Janusz Kębłowski, Henryk Dziurla, Bożena Steinborn, Jan Wrabec and Samuel Gumiński, to have their say. The majority of these new figures came from the regions of Lesser or Greater Poland and defended a new 'Habsburgian' paradigm in Silesian art research. As early as 1965, Zlat argued for the need to investigate Silesian art in a framework that went beyond Polish borders, within the wider context of a 'Central European region'. He asserted that Silesia takes up an exceptional place "in this delineated geographical circle: being not only at the crossroads of the cultural transits of Central European countries, but also a melting pot in a historical process that unified diverse ethnical, religious and political elements".<sup>81</sup> The first formal result of this new approach, published in 1967, was a work that was quite outstanding for the standards of its day, a collection of studies on *Sztuka Wrocławia* [The Art of Wrocław],<sup>82</sup> edited by Zlat and Tadeusz Broniewski, entirely free of any attempt at 'Polonizing' Early Modern Silesian art.

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<sup>78</sup> See: Mieczysław Zlat, [review of] "Zeitschrift für Ostforschung – Länder und Völker im östlichen Mitteleuropa. Im Auftrage des J. G. Herder-Forschungsrates e.V. herausgegeben von H. Aubin, E. Keyser, H. Schlenger – Jahrgang 1-5, Marburg a. L. 1952–1956" [Journal for Eastern Studies – Countries and Peoples in East Central Europe. On Behalf of the J. G. Herder Research Council ed. by H. Aubin, E. Keyser and H. Schlenger – annualissues 1-5, Marburg a. L. 1952–1956], in: *Roczniki Sztuki Śląskiej* 1 (1959), 162-170.

<sup>79</sup> On the topic of German Ostforschung (Eastern studies) after 1945 see: Störtkuhl, "Deutsche Ostforschung und Kunstgeschichte", 131. According to Hans Belting, the topic of 'German art' became a taboo for Germans after 1945; Hans Belting, *Die Deutschen und ihre Kunst* [The Germans and their Arts], Munich 1992, 8.

<sup>80</sup> As an example worth mentioning here, we could take the sculptor Urbański, who, based on archival research, was proclaimed a Bohemian as early as 1963 in Adam Więcek's book; Więcek, *Jan Jerzy Urbański*, 11.

<sup>81</sup> Zlat, "Polskie badania nad sztuką Śląska w latach 1945–1964", 103.

<sup>82</sup> Tadeusz Broniewski and Mieczysław Zlat, eds., *Sztuka Wrocławia* [The Art of Wrocław], Wrocław 1967.

## Evaluation

[28] A much more difficult job than providing a description of the phenomenon of 'Polonization' of Early Modern art in Silesia is the task of evaluating its effects. Although the issue deals with works that appeared 60 years ago, it still arouses controversy and heated discussion amongst scholars young and old even today. On the one hand, it is precisely due to the 'Polonization' efforts of Polish art historians that Early Modern art in Silesia has become culturally absorbed by the new Polish society; and it was through such efforts that many Renaissance and Baroque works of art – in contrast to the monuments of later epochs – have managed to survive into our times. Given the socio-political situation of post-war Poland and the nationalistic bias of Polish art history as an academic discipline, the 'Polonization' of the history of art in Silesia was in all probability the most efficient way of achieving its acceptance by the newly arrived Polish inhabitants of the region.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, though, the effects of the efforts by these art historians are still being felt today. The ideas of 'Polonization' that were propagated back in their time influenced to a very large extent the direction of the renovation works undertaken to restore Silesian monuments destroyed during the war. As one example, let us just mention the restoration, carried out from 1953 to 1960, of the nineteenth-century tenement houses at the Market and the Solny Squares in Wrocław which had been destroyed during the siege of Wrocław in 1945. Based on a pre-war elaboration by Rudolf Stein, they were given mainly Baroque facades from the period before 1800.<sup>84</sup> Another example is the reconstruction of the 'Wawel'-arcade courtyard at Brzeg castle, carried out in the 1970s. The castle had been destroyed during the Prussian siege of the town in 1741.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> See: Gregor Thum, *Obce miasto. Wrocław 1945 i potem*, trans. Małgorzata Słabicka, 3rd edition, Wrocław 2008, 232; originally the book was published in German: Gregor Thum, *Die fremde Stadt. Breslau 1945*, Berlin 2003. See also the English edition: Gregor Thum, *Uprooted. How Breslau Became Wrocław during the Century of Expulsions*, trans. Tom Lampert and Allison Brown, Princeton 2011.

<sup>84</sup> See: Olgierd Czerner, *Rynek Wrocławski* [The Market Square in Wrocław], Wrocław 1976.

<sup>85</sup> See: Tomasz Torbus, "Resuscitating the 'Polish Periods' in the Reconstruction Process in Western and Northern Poland post 1945", in: *Borders in Art. Revisiting Kunstgeographie* (Proceedings of the Fourth Joint Conference of Polish and English Art Historians, University of East Anglia, Norwich 1998), ed. Katarzyna Murawska-Muthesius, Warsaw 2000, 175-180; Tomasz Torbus, "Auf der Suche nach der polnischen Vergangenheit – politische Ikonographie beim Wiederaufbau der Städte und Baudenkmäler in den sogenannten Wiedergewonnenen Gebieten Polens nach 1945" [Searching for the Polish Past – Political Iconography in the Reconstruction of Cities and Monuments in the 'Regained Territories' of Poland after 1945], in: *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte Ostmitteleuropas* [Contributions to the Art History of East Central Europe], eds. Hanna Nogossek and Dietmar Popp, Marburg 2001, 365-386; Olgierd Czerner, "Zabytki Śląska w Polsce dyktatury proletariatu" [Silesian Monuments in Poland under the Dictatorship of the Proletariate], in: *Badania i ochrona zabytków w Polsce w XX wieku* [Research and Preservation of Historic Monuments in Poland in the 20th Century], eds. Andrzej Tomaszewski and Ewa Mockało, Warszawa 2000 (= *Materiały konferencji naukowej zorganizowanej staraniem Wydziału Architektury*

[29] Despite numerous subsequent publications by Polish art historians, Dobrowolski's and Morelowski's books remain the only synthetic works on the complete art heritage of Lower Silesia and, in particular, on the region's art of the Renaissance and Baroque periods. Although the contemporary reader of these works may smile at the 'Polonizing' conclusions arrived at by their authors, I still encounter, in the library of the Institute of Art History at Wrocław University, students who, upon reading the three-volume work by Burgemeister and Grundmann, as I did myself a quarter of a century earlier, ponder over Morelowski's remarks.

### **About the Author**

Born in 1966, Andrzej Koziel is an art historian and professor at the University of Wrocław. He specializes in Baroque painting and drawing in Central Europe and is the author resp. co-author of: *Rysunki Michaela Willmanna (1630-1706)* [Drawings of Michael Willmann (1630-1706)] (2000), *Op Nederlandse manier: inspiracje niderlandzkie w sztuce śląskiej XV-XVIII w.: katalog wystawy* [Op Nederlandse Manier. Netherlandish Inspirations in Silesian Art of the 15th-18th Century] (2001), *Michael Willmann und sein Kreis: Johann Christoph Liška, Georg Wilhelm Neunhertz und Johann Jacob Eybelwieser – Zeichnungen* (2001), *Angelus Silesius, Bernhard Rosa i Michael Willmann, czyli sztuka i mistyka na Śląsku w czasach baroku* [Angelus Silesius, Bernhard Rosa and Michael Willmann or Art and Mysticism in Silesia in Baroque Times] (2006), *Obrazy Michaela Willmanna pod lupą* [with German summary: Michael Willmanns Gemälde unter der Lupe] (2010), *Michael Willmann i jego malarska pracownia* [Michael Willmann and His Studio] (2013) and over 60 articles. He was organizer and co-organizer of several exhibitions and international conferences and is engaged in several projects promoting Baroque art in Silesia, e.g. "The Virtual Museum of Baroque Ceiling Paintings in Silesia".

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