

Summary

The Korneckis: a Family of Artists and Their Activity in the Lesser Poland Region from the Mid-18th to the Mid-19th Century

The dissertation is dedicated to the life and work of painters and sculptors belonging to three generations of the Kornecki family from the Lesser Poland region (Małopolska) in the context of their mutual relations and artistic dependencies, analysed against the background of the social and historical changes of the second half of the 18th and first half of the 19th centuries. Until now, no attempt has been made to develop a monographic study of Kornecki's artistic activity, neither of individual representatives, nor the entire family. Only Piotr Kornecki's artistic activity, which had been treated in a fragmentary way, was in the circle of interest of Art Historians, when the activity of other members was only slightly recognized. The archival, bibliographical, photographic and iconographic material which I collected has been used to elaborate the most complete possible biographies and artistic achievements of all the Korneckis for the first time. The work contains six chapters discussing the activity of the family workshop in Gdów, the activity of these artists in Wieliczka and the autonomous work of subsequent artists.

The starting point for my research was the figure of Piotr Kornecki, the protoplast of the discussed family of artists. This painter and sculptor, in the 1740s set up a sculpture and painting workshop in Gdów, where he came from. Over time this workshop became a family business because of the training and working therein of his four sons: Antoni, Ignacy, Jan, Stanislaw (the younger) and his half-brother Stanislaw (the older). This workshop fulfilled a complete need for architectural, sculptural and painting furnishings for churches in southern Lesser Poland for about three decades (from before 1748 to 1776). It became a monopolist in the area, and by the third quarter of the 18th century had achieved the status of an art enterprise producing dozens of works.

The results of field query, archival research and extensive formal-stylistic and comparative analyses have brought many new findings. It allowed to verify the current state of knowledge in relations to the activities of the Korneckis and their *oeuvre*, which was enlarged by a number of works hitherto unconnected with them, while at the same time, many erroneous attributions were rejected. This thesis presents for the first time the painting work of Piotr Kornecki, which has never been studied before. The analysis of the collected material made it possible to describe the stylistic features of works of art of the workshop, including a

characteristics of the style of his master Piotr Kornecki, create a typology of works, as well as to identify the sources and models of the forms and patterns used by the workshop. It has been possible to present the origins of the painting and sculpting work of Piotr Kornecki and his workshop in a new light. The mentioned origins have its source in the works of Cracow artists from the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries and the first half of the 18th century.

The following chapters of my dissertation analyse the work and activity of the next two generations of artists from the Kornecki family. After the closure of the workshop in Gdów in 1776, the Korneckis moved to Wieliczka where they continued their artistic activities. Antoni and Ignacy Kornecki, in collaboration with their father Piotr, continued to produce altars, pulpits, sculptures and paintings for churches in the Lesser Poland region until around 1790. An analysis of their works has shown that they were passive imitators of their father's style and never went beyond the models and patterns learned in the Gdów workshop. At the end of the 18th century Ignacy Kornecki and his family moved to Cracow. Thus, the Kornecki family split between two cities – Wieliczka and Cracow – where they worked from then on. The collective work formula of the family members within the workshop faded away in favour of their autonomous activities.

The third generation of the Kornecki family were the sons of Antoni and Ignacy who also worked as painters and sculptors. Ignacy's sons, Jakub and Joachim, began their joint and then autonomous artistic activities, which focused on the restoration of church furnishings, the production of single works for churches (altars, pulpits, sculptures, paintings) and the production of devotional figurines. Antoni's son Józef, trained in Cracow as a painter in the guild structure, after returning to Wieliczka had to change his profession from artist to mine worker due to lack of work. The artistic activity of Jakub and Joachim, the last representatives of the Korneckis artistic family, reflects the changes taking place in art at this time, as well as changes in the status of the artist producing religious works.

On the example of the Kornecki family, it was possible to discuss in detail the circumstances which have influenced on the formation of artistic families. Family ties determined the choice of profession, the type of artistic education and further career paths, as well as fostered cooperation and mutual dependence in gaining employment. The analysed material focused on three generations of the Kornecki artistic family has allowed to present the problem of artistic education of its members in the wide perspective of cultural and social changes taking place in the 18th and 19th centuries in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the later times of national bondage. On their example, it was possible to show similarities

and differences in the issues of the education of provincial artists and artists from urban artistic centres as well as those with workshop and academic backgrounds, and above all the influence of family relationships on the process of training and further career paths.

The work of artists from all generations of the Korneckis family was presented against the broad background of sacral art in southern Lesser Poland region at their time. The Korneckis became participants in the social and cultural changes occurring at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and after the loss of independence. It was a time of change in the status of the artists, the birth of new themes and functions of art, the formation of the first artistic academies and new patronage, among which the creators of sacral works of art were already a relic of the past and their activity were losing popularity and meaning. As a result, this perspective made it possible to distinguish and discuss the phenomenon of the "long duration" of Late Baroque forms in the sacral art of Lesser Poland region during the Classical and Romantic periods. In the sacral painting and sculpture of that period a strong traditionalism is visible. It was connected with attachment to old compositional and iconographic forms and patterns which was a result of the lack of new formulas and low skills of artists producing sacral art at that time. A factor conditioning this situation was precisely the lack of education other than workshop training among artists creating sacral works of art. They had no competence to create their own compositions which made it impossible for them to create and present new proposals or forms in current or new style.

The dissertation concludes with a catalogue of the Korneckis' works, resulting from the verification of the current state of knowledge and new findings in regards to the work of artists from this family. The thesis also includes a short source annex, as well as a bibliography, a list of illustrations and extensive illustrative material.