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*Relics of the Original Décor
in the Arch-Collegiate Church in Tum*

In the Tum Collegiate Church, a two-chancel basilica with a matroneum, consecrated on 21 May 1161, possibly started in the 1140s, there have been preserved, scarce in Poland, remains of an extraordinary Romanesque décor: northern portal, the mural on the western apse ceiling, and the sculpture of Christ Pantocrator.

The northern portal. The main portal in Tum is supported on columns placed on protruding rectangular wall offsets, thus creating a so-called 'portal house'. Such a solution has numerous analogies in Romanesque architecture of Lombardy, the fact previously pointed to by Michał Walicki and Piotr Skubiszewski.

The analysis of the technique of the portal authors stems from a meticulous examination of its structure. In order to place the tympanum slab, the bottom archivolt edge and that of the tympanum were significantly cut off. Quite evidently the figure of the enthroned Blessed Virgin suffered, as she was literally 'scalped' by having a fragment of her head chopped off. The tympanum must have been fitted to the jamb set in the wall. Hence a conclusion that it came from a different, most likely earlier portal which may have been executed in ca. mid-12th c. and was transferred on the occasion of the church's consecration in 1161.

There are also visible sculptural differences in respective portal parts, thus pointing to at least three different artists. Sculptor I executed the tympanum. Sculptor II was the author of the archivolt ornamented with medallions featuring zoomorphic elements and a figural scene in above the archivolt on the right. Two internal archivolt arches and capitals point to the authorship of Sculptor III. Exquisite reliefs of the external archivolt presenting animals are inspired by the works of Nicolo known, first of all, for the sculptural décor of the Ferrara Cathedral and the Signs of the Zodiac at Sacra di San Michele. Some former researchers used to be confused by the fact that certain, actually close, analogies are provided by the sculptural décor of Rhineland cathedrals. Today it is beyond any doubt, as confirmed by German, Scandinavian, and Italian historians of architecture, that hundreds of Romanesque Rhineland capitals were executed by stonemasons of the seasonal 'corrente comasca'. It

can be thus safely assumed that the Rhineland workshop which constructed the Tum Cathedral employed more and less talented Italian craftsmen.

In order to identify the ideological premises that the portal stemmed from, one should refer to the message contained in the contents of the tympanum sculptures. The intention of the tympanum scenario author, most likely a learned canon, was to glorify the Collegiate Church's patroness presented as the Queen of Angels, enthroned Mary with a Child on her knees, adored by angels. Differently than in other classical presentations, in Tum the angel with a sceptre crowned with a lily as in the Annunciation can be seen on the right. Meanwhile, the attribute of the angel on the opposite side is the cross, heralding the Passion, similarly as the accentuated cruciform nimbus of Baby Jesus.

Apart from the tympanum, figural motifs appear in the reliefs secondarily planted on the archivolt's outside. The better preserved relief presents a standing figure of Christ (most likely) blessing four water pots with his right arm, which unequivocally defines the scene as the transformation of water into wine at the Marriage at Cana. Meanwhile, the headless female figure is Mary whose intercession the marriage guests owed the miracle to. A non-committal assumption can thus be made that further reliefs related to the figure of Our Lady were featured in the so-called "portal house" face.

The remaining sculptural elements rank in their majority among zoomorphic presentations, extending the interpretative basis with a circle of animal symbolism: the capital of the left jamb featuring an eagle, while the capital of the right one showing fighting goats with one shared head and many-point stars in a border carved out of the goats' body. This may have been linked to sideric issues. Solar or star references in Romanesque sculpture using zoomorphic motifs may have been a legacy of Persian and Hellenistic art. It is among the circle of legendary hybrids that the majority of some dozen, genuinely possibly 12 animals framed in the medallions adorning the outside archivolt can be ranked. Those exquisite reliefs present imaginary creatures, constituting most incredulous combinations of representatives of different animals, also legendary ones of long-standing traditional typological features.

The western apse mural in the Tum Arch-Collegiate Church was discovered in 1952. The centre of the upper part of the vault conch is filled with a strongly outlined mandorla border, sharply oval with enthroned Christ. To the right of the mandorla there is the figure of the Blessed Virgin, with John the Baptist to its left; two pair of tetramorphs are planted below. In the lower section, the Apostolic College is seated.

The apocalyptic inspiration according to St John is additionally confirmed by the star motif in the background of enthroned Christ. The introduction of tetramorphs instead of the symbol of four Evangelists is unquestionably far rarer. The tetramorphs, peculiar creatures of four heads, derived from the Evangelists' symbolism, with hooped legs and four eye-strewn wings standing on four wheels, link to the Old-Testament vision of the Prophet Ezekiel. This may have resulted as a reaction to the theological ideas in the writings of the Benedictine Rupert of Deutz, future Abbot at the Rhineland convents in Siegburg and Deutz. Both the iconographic analogies and the location in the western nave culmination do not allow to date the mural to before the 1150s.

The sculpture of Christ Pantocrator. In the course of the wall restoration of the Collegiate Church in Tum near Łęczycza carried out in the 1930s, a torso of a figural sculpture was discovered. Some dozen years later, during the reconstruction of the church after the WW II destruction, the upper part of the very same sculpture, including the head and the right shoulder, were found. Michał Walicki, when in 1938 publishing for the first time the newly discovered torso, regarded it as a fragment of the 'antependium or of the matroneum sill'. The substantial thickness of the block featuring the sculpture of Christ, and additionally a sort of a parpaing featured on the reverse, do not allow to treat it as remains of a tympanum block, or the balustrade of the rood screen or matroneum, while the reverse size and shape can be fully harmonized with an altar function, as was the case in Avenas. The frontal axis features enthroned Christ in a mandorla border with Evangelists' symbols in the corner and the full Apostolic College.

The preliminary identification of the content of the Tum relief featuring Christ never caused any difficulty. A convincing confirmation of the sculpture's identification can be found in the inscription in the lower and upper border: the lower featuring the letter 'M' and the upper, the word 'LUX'. This undoubtedly refers to the verse from the Gospel of St John, namely: 'EGO SUM LUX MUNDI', as a comment on the presentation of Christ in Majesty.

Despite many damages to the Tum Pantocrator sculpture, its current state allows to define the quality of craftsmanship of its executor, and additionally justifies the attempt to ascertain the milieu he was affiliated with. What stands out is the refined quality of spatial composition. The concave cruciform nimbus enhances the almost in the round sculpture of Christ's head. A similar emphasis is put on the torso volume and protruding knees. What strikes is their asymmetric arrangement: the vertical line of the left leg contrasted with a slightly sideway arrangement of the right one. This very detail seems of major importance for the attempt at identifying the specific artistic circle that the Tum sculpture can be affiliated with. As is common knowledge, the presentation of Pantocrator remained dominated by a strictly symmetric variant until the 13th c. Some exceptions to the rule can be found among the leading pieces of 12th –c. Burgundy art. The most prominent example of this tendency is to be seen in one of the leading pieces of Burgundy Romanesque sculpture: an inspiring figure of Christ in the huge tympanum in the western façade narthex of the convent church in Vézelay dated to 1115-30. The analysis of details seems to confirm the hypothesis, only apparently risky, suggesting the possible relation between the two as that of a model and copy. The Burgundy sculpture in question is of a very high quality, without any provincial delays and simplifications, following the convention of the 2nd quarter of the 12th c. Such dating convincingly fits in the construction history of the Tum Arch-Collegiate Church, initiated most likely in the early 1140s.

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska

ARKADIUSZ WAGNER

*Kraków Binding with the Tabula Ansata Decoration Motif.
On the Research into Antiquising in Polish Fine Arts and
Artistic Craftsmanship in the 16th Century*

The Kraków Jagiellonian Library collection boasts of a binding executed at an anonymous and local book-binding workshop in 1583-84, protecting Andrzej Patrycy Nidecki's printed copy of *De Ecclesia Vera et Falsa Libri VI* (Kraków 1583 or early 1584). Its covers are decorated with a characteristic *tabula ansata* motif featuring an inscription commemorating the donation of the book to the Kraków Academy by Nidecki. The paper analyzes the binding's decoration. Firstly, the genesis of the *tabula ansata* motif is characterized in Roman art in which it was mainly associated with sepulchral works. Several motif adaptations in medieval art are also mentioned. However, the major emphasis is put on the motif's proliferation in Italian Renaissance art, this including sepulchral sculpture, painting, and graphic art. Sixteenth-c. Italian book-bindings (from Naples, Venice, Florence, and Rome), decorated with the *tabula ansata* in various forms and compositional arrangements constitute a separate section. As results from the analysis, in early 16th c. the motif spread into Polish art where it was mainly placed on tombs (e.g., tombstones founded by Bishop Erazm Ciołek and Primate Jan Łaski; the tombs of Bishops: Tomicki, Gamrat, Dzierzgowski, and others). The *tabula ansata* was also exposed on the elevation of the Sigismund Chapel raised by Bartolomeo Berrecci, there bearing a commemorative inscription, as well as on other works from the circle of the royal court at Wawel (e.g., painted frieze with the busts of Roman

emperors and their wives in the royal castle galleries). A clear reference to the ancient function of the *tabula ansata* can be seen in the placing of the motif on the sarcophagus of King Sigismund the Old; the silver tablets put in the coffins of two wives of King Sigismund Augustus were also *tabula ansata*-shaped. Moreover, the very motif was repeated in Kraków's Renaissance illumination and book-binding works.

The fact that the antiquising *tabula ansata* was featured on the book founded by Nidecki did not only account for the motif's popularity in Kraków's Renaissance fine art, but also expressed Nidecki's fascination with ancient Rome. The latter being confirmed by him, e.g., editing fragments of Cicero's works in 1561 as a result of, among others, his contacts with famous classical philologists (Francesco Robotello, Paolo Manuzio). Nidecki must have been familiar with the application of the *tabula ansata* in Roman art and in Italian Renaissance art thanks to his travels there; moreover, he may have had Italian prints/printed books in bindings featuring a similar motif in his rich book collection. Placing the *tabula ansata* on the book donated to the Kraków Academy clearly related to the tradition of commemorative inscription tablets from the Roman times. If approached from a wider perspective, it testified to the knowledge the Krakow intellectual and political elite of the Renaissance had of the genuine forms and functions of the motif.

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska

PIOTR OCZKO JAN PLUS

*Cobalt-blue of Marie Casimire?
Dutch tiles and the iconographical programme of Fontana's
Room in the "House Under the Pear" in Kraków*

In the paper the authors deal with the Baroque interior of the so-called Fontana's Room in the "House Under the Pear", 1 Szczepańska Str., Kraków, decorated with Dutch tiles and stuccoes made by an Italian artist Baldassare Fontana in ca. 1698-1702. The interpretation of the stuccoes (allegories of various arts and sciences, peace and wealth, moreover, a Polish eagle treading upon a Turkish crescent) leads to the conclusion that a deliberate iconographic programme has been applied in the interior in question, referring to the Polish King Jan III Sobieski who in 1683 defeated the Turkish army at the gates of Vienna. The stuccoes show the glory of the monarch under whose rule arts and sciences could flourish – quite a conventional theme at that time, deeply rooted in ancient Roman literature. Dutch tiles decorating the walls consist of two thematic groups: shepherd

tiles (made in Harlingen ca. 1690-1700) and landscapes and genre scenes (made in the workshop of Willem van der Kloet in Amsterdam ca. 1690-1700), the latter being possibly added in the 19th century. Shepherd tiles, constituting the majority in the room, may also correspond to some official representations of Sobieski's rule of the time in which the emphasis was often put on the joys of country life, an idea based on Virgil's *Georgics* and *Eclogues*. Owing to the fact that the fashion for Dutch tiles was introduced to Poland by the King's French wife, Marie Casimire Louise de La Grange d'Arquien, Fontana's Room actually follows the taste of the royal family and imitates the types of decoration used in their palaces (e.g., the Faience Room at the Wilanów Palace). The authors trace the history of the room and the changes in its interior. Finally, they describe its present miserable state and urge its immediate restoration.

DARIUSZ KONSTANTYNÓW

*'An Outstanding Painter
and a Citizen Motivated by the Best of Intentions'.
Maurycy Gottlieb in the Eyes of Polish Press (1877-80)*

The paper aims at reconstructing the image of Maurycy Gottlieb created in the Polish press during the artist's lifetime and immediately following his death. It is based on all the texts (from exhibition reviews, through obituaries and posthumous tributes) traceable in periodicals and dailies published in the three partition zones (in Warsaw, Lvov, Cracow, Poznań), which has allowed to present the whole abundance and variety of perspectives, both on Gottlieb's art, and on him as a person.

The press image of the artist has been presented in three sections. The first: 'The Talent Which Has Already Soared High' is dedicated to the reception of the Gottlieb's art known, first of all, from his exhibitions at the Lvov Society of

Friends of Fine Arts (1877, 1878), Society for the Encouragement of Fine Arts (1878), and Józef Unger's Fine Arts Salon (1879-80) in Warsaw. The reviewers' attention focused on four paintings: *Uriel Da Costa and Judyta Vanderstraten*, *Shylock and Jessica*, *Jews Praying in the Synagogue on the Day of Atonement*, and *Christ Teaching at Capernaum*. These served as the basis for the assessment of and for providing characteristics of Gottlieb's painting. And although some errors in approaching the topic, the composition, or the execution were pointed to, the reviewers unanimously remarked that each of the artist's work met all the correctness standards of the time. Gottlieb was praised for the accuracy of the psychological profile of the presented characters, a skillful 'harmonizing' of the content and expression

means; the reviewers admired the arrangement of figures, subtlety in the painting manner, precision of the drawing, depth of hues. Apart from the aforementioned works, the critics also appreciated Gottlieb's portrait painting, presented in the largest array at the exhibition at Unger's Salon. Overall, Gottlieb's art was highly appreciated. The reviewers remarked that despite his young age and limited experience, the artist had managed to express his genuine artistic personality, reveal the power of imagination and feeling, as well as to demonstrate outstanding capacity for artistic synthesis which made even the most ordinary objects acquire the dimension of perfection and outstanding expression. Gottlieb's painting contained, in their view, 'poetry which speaks today to the beholders in a mysterious language', lures and forces them to reflect. They also noticed exceptional inventiveness and original ideas, as well as a skillful expression of even the most abstract content with the visual language, which made Gottlieb a truly modern artist, 'the talent of the present moment', having a feeling 'for all the tendencies of his era'.

In view of the unquestioned qualities of his painting, Gottlieb was straight away and unhesitatingly ranked among the most outstanding representatives of Polish art, while after he had passed away, people lamented that he had died 'prematurely for Polish art' and his loss also meant a great loss 'for native art in whose sky he was to shine as one of the brightest stars'. The more meticulous authors, however, would remind the readers that Gottlieb was a Jew and that the fact must have had some impact on his art. This very aspect of the reception of his art is the subject to analysis of the paper's second section: 'The First Jewish-Polish Artist'. The topics of his works were the most frequently pointed to expressions of their Jewish character'. The proof for a relation between Gottlieb's Jewish descent and his art was seen not only in the selection of topics, but also in their presentation. Attempts were made to demonstrate this statement right through the analysis of the painting *Shylock and Jessica*. Reviews had it that Shakespeare's character was idealized, deprived of any negative repulsive attributes bestowed upon him by the very author of the *Merchant of Venice*. An assumption was made that Gottlieb wanted to show Shylock not only as a "meat-eater", but also an 'avenger for the harm inflicted on Jews all over the West by mediaeval Europe', who wanted 'to trample on Christianity by trampling on one Christian'. The reflections on Gottlieb's attitude to Judaism and Jewish tradition inevitably became the essential premise in the analysis of the *Jews Praying in the Synagogue on the Day of Atonement*, perceived as a

reflection of 'various hues of religious proselytism in the Jewish faith', a peculiar lecture 'on the natural history of the Jewish <species> in its attitude to God and the Talmud'. From among all the presented figures it was the young man lost in thought that intrigued the most; critics generally suspected he was dreaming 'of a moral transformation of his religion in the spirit of new principles, in the spirit of freedom of conscience and the laws of science'; that he wished for 'a refreshment in the healthy source of modern civilization'. Some authors perceived him as the expression of the intellectual-religious attitude which the painter must have considered a 'moral necessity for contemporary Jewish faith'. A similar attitude could be read in the comments on *Christ Teaching at Capernaum* – a painting intriguing due to the fact that it was painted by a religious Jew and presented Christ, 'on top of it, in a synagogue, thus with Judaism in the background'. Despite the analyses pointing to a different approach to Christ resulting from a different understanding of the figure between Christians and followers of Judaism, the painting was regarded to be 'one of the most sublime religious inspirations in the 19th century', an outstanding voice of a contemporary man speaking on the current relevance and universality of Christ's preaching. The expression entailed in the painting was so powerful that some critics were ready to see it as Gottlieb's readiness to convert to Christianity. On the whole, Maurycy Gottlieb's works allowed Polish reviewers to claim that the artist had succeeded in 'ranking among the most accurate restorers of the Jewish element in modern art', not merely for presenting some peculiar topics, but due to his attempt to grasp and convey in his paintings 'the psychology of the tribal spirit' and 'Judaism in its essence and major manifestations'. In the critics' words, the artist 'was practicing to become a representative of the Jewish factor in painting' expressing 'that religious and solemn atmosphere inherent in the Hebrew spirit'. On the other hand, however, they would emphasize the difference between his painting revealing an evident inclination to dreaming and elegiac pensiveness, and the works of old Hebrew literature full of 'violent rapture and passionate solemnity', qualities that could be even contemporarily 'traced among the manifestations of Jewish fanaticism'. In the eyes of Polish critics, Gottlieb was an artist and a Jew who succeeded in having introduced 'an element of his nationality into our painting'. Had it not been for his premature death, he would have become one of the most illustrious 'painters of modern Judaism', quite simply for the fact that other Jewish artists had not dared to 'openly present their Judaic ideals and inclinations', while he had.

In Polish press, next to Gottlieb the artist, also Gottlieb ‘the citizen of this country’ was present. The latter incarnation of the painter serves as the focal point of the paper’s third part: ‘He Was Always a Jew, Although He Was Also a Pole’. This part analyzes the Polish press claiming that Gottlieb seemed to be an almost perfect personification of ‘a Pole following the Jewish faith’, the kind that Jewish integrationists and their Polish allies wanted to transform Jews into. Being both emancipated and enlightened, he identified with Polish culture, he could speak Polish, and lacked any symptoms of the distinctness within customs and mentality characteristic of ‘uncivilized’ Jews; last but not least, he dealt with art, a sphere of human activity considered to be more sublime, and it was using art that he aspired to make the bond between Polish and Jewish communities, between Christians and followers of Judaism, tighter. At the same time, he did not opt for a total integration. Gottlieb’s acculturation to Polish identity and national assimilation did not eliminate his Jewish identity, revealed first of all in his faithfulness to the religion of his ancestors and his interest in the past of the Jewish people conveyed in his paintings. In the

debate on the ‘Jewish question’ carried out in the Polish territories in the 1870s, the example of Maurycy Gottlieb rose almost to become the symbol of how right and effective the integrationist concept proved to be. Gottlieb was to serve as a model for Jews and to be highly respected by Poles. Since by expressing their respect for the artist, the latter were able to manifest how true they were when declaring readiness to coexist with Jews ‘on the principles of equality’, unrestricted by any factors’. while also proving that ‘there should be no reason why two individuals, educated and understanding their common goal – a Christian and a Jew – would not be able to communicate, to reach a consensus, to shake hands in order to reconcile’.

Ezra Mendelsohn was perfectly right: Maurycy Gottlieb happened to be truly lucky to have lived in the 1870s, as in the Polish territories this was the time favouring the Jewish integration, a period of kindness to those who would pick that very way. However, already the following decade brought about a stronger and better organized wave of modern anti-Semitism, adhered to, by among others, Gottlieb’s sincerely adored ‘Master’, his true artistic and ideological idol, Jan Matejko.

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