

GIEDRÉ MICKUNAITE, *Maniera Greca in Europe's Catholic East. On Identities of Images in Lithuania and Poland, 1380s–1720s (Central European Medieval Studies 6)*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 2023. 238 pp. – ISBN 978-90-485-3270-4

• MIROSLAW PIOTR KRUK, University of Gdansk / National Museum in Krakow (miroslaw.kruk@ug.edu.pl)

GIEDRÉ MICKŪNAITĖ discusses a significant and curious phenomenon, namely, the fact that some representatives of the Roman-Catholic Jagiellonian dynasty would commission 'Greek' (i.e. Byzantine-style) paintings for church buildings in the Polish-Lithuanian state. The scholarly literature on this subject is already quite extensive.¹ ANNA RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK has made a particularly important contribution by focusing on individual complexes in an attempt to define their iconographic programmes, their stylistic features, and the artistic origin of their creators.² In recent years, questions

1. Selected literature of recent years: M. P. KRUK, *Obraz religijny w kręgu kościoła ortodoksyjnego w państwie polsko-litewskim*. In: J. ZIĘTKIEWICZ-KOTZ et al. (eds), *Obraz złotego wieku. Kultura wizualna w czasach ostatnich Jagiellonów*. Cracow 2023, vol. 1, pp. 153–166; P. Ł. GROTOWSKI, *Freski fundacji Władysława Jagiełły w kolegiacie wiślickiej*, Cracow 2021 (reviewed by M. P. KRUK in *Nowe Książki* 7–8 (2022) pp. 77–78); M. P. KRUK, *Исторические и религиозные контексты фундаментации Ягеллонами т. н. рус(с)ко-византийских фресок в католических храмах Польши*. In: A. V. DORONIN (ed.), *Религия и Русь, XV–XVIII вв.* Moscow 2020, pp. 52–92; G. JURKOWLANIEC, *The artistic patronage of Ladislaus Jagiełło. Beyond the Opposition between Byzantium and the Renaissance*. In: M. JANOCHA et al. (eds), *Bizancjum a Renesansy. Dialog kultur, dziedzictwo antyku. Tradycja i współczesność*. Warsaw 2012, pp. 271–281; M. SMORAĞ RÓŻYCKA, *Bizantyńskie freski w sandomierskiej katedrze: królewski dar na chwałę Bożą czy odblask idei unii horodelskiej?* *Prace Historyczne* 141 (2014) pp. 235–255; M. WALKOWIAK, *Graeco opere in Władysław Jagiełło's Royal Power Theatre. Introduction to the Study*. *Res Historica* 48 (2019) pp. 77–101; W. DELUGA, *Ukrainian Painting Between the Byzantine and Latin Traditions*. Ostrava – Warsaw 2019; M. P. KRUK, *Malowidła „Graeco opere” fundacji Jagiellonów jako postulat unii państwowej i kościelnej oraz jedności Kościoła*. In: W. WALECKI (ed.), *Między teologią a duszpasterstwem powszechnym na ziemiach Korony doby przedtrydenckiej: dziedzictwo średniowiecza XV–XVI wieku*. Warsaw 2017, pp. 145–201. For a fuller list see: M. P. KRUK, *Malowidła Graeco opere*, footnote 1.

2. Major publications: A. RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK, *Росписи капеллы Казимира Ягеллона на Вавеле*. In: M. A. ORLOVA (ed.), *Художественная жизнь Пскова и искусство поздневизантийского эпохи. К 1100-летию Пскова*. Moscow 2008, pp. 217–240; EADEM, *Malowidła ścienne bizantyńsko-ruskie*. In: A. S. LABUDA – K. SECOMSKA (eds),

have multiplied about the patrons' intentions, which unfortunately are not sufficiently illuminated by the sources and can be subject to various hypotheses.³ It should be stressed that scholars, primarily Polish ones, have focused on foundations established along the Vistula line, on the route connecting the two state capitals Cracow and Vilnius, i.e. they have analysed mainly monuments preserved in the area of the Kingdom of Poland.

Recent discoveries have made it possible to focus to a greater degree on monuments created in the area of the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Byzantine-style paintings from that region survive in the form of small fragments, and sometimes, as in the case of the castle chapel in Trakai, in nineteenth-century copies.⁴ MICKŪNAITĖ has treated these monuments as case studies, reconstructing their original appearance and programme, the artistic background of their creators, and the intentions of their commissioners. Her monograph's starting point is the concept of a *maniera graeca* that spread across Europe at the end of the Middle Ages and in the Early Modern period. I must point out that perhaps more use should have been made of extracts from church visitations and other old documents, where we can find the term *graeco opere* in its historical context. I have included such examples in a monograph discussing icon-images in the churches of the old Polish-Lithuanian state.⁵

MICKŪNAITĖ pays great attention to Gregory Camblak (Tsamblak), Orthodox Metropolitan of Kyiv.⁶ In the past, I have stressed Camblak's task

Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce. Warsaw 2004, vol. 1, pp. 155–184; EADEM, Bizantyńsko-ruskie malowidła w Polsce wczesnojagiellońskiej. Problem przystosowań na gruncie kultury łacińskiej. In: S. STĘPIEŃ (ed.), Polska – Ukraina – 1000 lat sąsiedztwa 2. Studia z dziejów chrześcijaństwa na pograniczu kulturowym i etnicznym. Przemyśl 1994, pp. 307–326; EADEM, Bizantyńsko-ruskie malowidła w kaplicy zamku lubelskiego, Warsaw 1983; EADEM, Bizantyńsko-ruskie malowidła ściennie w kaplicy Świętokrzyskiej na Wawelu. Studia do Dziejów Wawelu 3 (1968) pp. 175–287; EADEM, Zarys historyczny badań nad bizantyńsko-ruskimi malowidłami ściennymi w Polsce. Biuletyn Historii Sztuki 27 (1965) pp. 291–294; EADEM, Bizantyńsko-ruskie malowidła ściennie w kolegiacie wiślickiej. Folia Historiae Artium 2 (1965) pp. 47–82.

3. See M. P. KRUK, Malowidła Graeco opere, tab. 1.

4. A. RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK, Niezachowane malowidła „graeco opere” z czasów Władysława Jagiełły. *Analecta Cracoviensia* 19 (1987) pp. 295–318, at p. 308; EADEM, Malowidła ściennie bizantyńsko-ruskie, p. 165.

5. M. P. KRUK, Ikony-obrazy w świątyniach rzymsko-katolickich dawnej Rzeczypospolitej (Biblioteka Tradycji 105). Cracow 2011.

6. For select literature on Gregory Camblak see: M. P. KRUK, Gregory Tsamblak and the Cult of Saint Parasceva. In: M. KAIMAKAMOVA – M. SALAMON – M. SMORAĞ-RÓŻYCKA (eds), *Byzantium, New Peoples, New Powers. The Byzantino-Slav Contact*

of bringing about ecclesiastical union, which he was to present at the Council of Constance. MICKŪNAITĖ emphasises that he may have used his Serbian contacts to bring in painters' workshop who would produce murals in the 'Greek style'. It is indeed interesting to what extent Camblak's personal connections would have enabled him to bring representatives of the Morava School to Lithuania (pp. 23–24). In this context, the presence of Serbian painters led by one Nectarius in mid-16th century Suprasl forms an interesting parallel. A separate study of the programme and style of his work was carried out by ALEKSANDER SIEMASZKO.⁷ MICKŪNAITĖ does mention him in a footnote on p. 162, but does not outline the artistic context of the Suprasl paintings.

Camblak has recently been named with greater confidence as the possible mastermind of certain iconographic programmes. Piotr GROTOWSKI agreed with ANNA RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK that Serbian painters were active in Sandomierz, adding that they may have been invited on the initiative of the metropolitan.⁸ LYUDMILA MILAYEVA, in her turn, stated that Camblak might even have been the author of the programme for the Lublin murals,⁹ while MICKŪNAITĖ adds that Camblak's biography (as outlined by FRANCIS J. THOMSON) 'enabled the naming of this metropolitan of Kyiv as a credible cultural agent at the Lithuanian grand ducal court, providing him with the role of the mediator for commissioning the Trakai murals' (p. 24).

MICKŪNAITĖ is correct in stating that each set of paintings should be treated separately in order to draw more far-reaching conclusions. (A good example is PIOTR GROTOWSKI's study of the paintings of the church in Wiślica.¹⁰ Simple, monocausal explanations of their artistic character may lead research astray.) It is worth noting that the last item on a long list of foundations, viz., the paintings of the Chapel of the Holy Cross in Cra-

Zone from the Ninth to the Fifteenth Century (Byzantina et Slavica Cracoviensia 5). Cracow 2007, pp. 331–348.

7. A. SIEMASZKO, *Freski z Supraśla. Unikatowy zabytek XVI-wiecznego pobizantyjskiego malarstwa ściennego*. Białystok 2006.

8. A. RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK, *Cykl maryjny we freskach „graeco opere” fundacji Władysława Jagiełły w katedrze sandomierskiej*. Modus. *Prace z Historii Sztuki* 7 (2006) pp. 33–52, at p. 48; P. Ł. GROTOWSKI, *Freski fundacji*, p. 168.

9. L. MILYAEVA, *Фрески каплиці Святої Трійці Люблінського замку і українське мистецтво*. *Записки Наукового товариства імені Шевченка* 236 (1998) pp. 76–84, at p. 82.

10. P. Ł. GROTOWSKI, *Freski fundacji*; M. P. KRUK, Piotr Ł. Grotowski, *Bizantyńskie freski w Wiślicy*, pp. 77–78.

cow Cathedral from 1470, is persistently added to the group of paintings funded by Władysław (Ladislaus) II Jagiełło (Lithuanian: Jogaila) and by Duke Vytautas the Great between ca. 1390 and 1450. The fact that the Cracow murals may have signalled the Jagiellonians' attachment to a tradition brought from their Lithuanian homeland was argued by MICHAŁ WALICKI, followed by ANNA RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK and MARIA BOGUCKA,¹¹ and to some extent repeated by MICKŪNAITĖ, who states that 'the paintings of the Chapel of the Holy Cross declared continuity and demonstrated the exceptionality of the fallibility of Casimir IV and his nascent Jagiellonian dynasty. These murals emphasized sameness with paternal commissions present in the chapels of Cracow Cathedral and showed that the royal couple were commemorated in a visual language other than that of their subjects' (p. 225). But another interpretation is also possible. The murals' date coincides with an attempt by the north Russian city of Novgorod the Great to seek military alliance with Poland-Lithuanian.¹² The aim was to protect Novgorod's security threatened by the expansion of Muscovy. The result of these negotiations was to be the admission of Novgorod to the Polish-Lithuanian state: the Polish king, who was also Grand Duke of Lithuania, was also to become Prince of Novgorod in place of the Rurikids.¹³ The paintings of the Cracow chapel, unlike those created earlier, betray north-eastern origin, which confirms the thesis for the political context of these paintings. If they were executed by Pskov painters, it is important to remember the temporary sovereignty that Novgorod exercised over Pskov. In any case, sending a workshop from such a distant centre must have been intended as an expression of goodwill and as the seal for an alliance.

The idea of the Jagiellonians' predilection for Greek frescoes goes back to a single sentence in the chronicle of Jan Długosz, who explained in this way why Jagiełło brought in Orthodox artists to decorate Catholic churches. As Długosz puts it, the king had a predilection for Greek manners, brought from the home of his mother, Juliana, Princess of Tver: *Gnesnensem, San-*

11. M. WALICKI, Polichromia kościoła św. Trójcy na Zamku w Lublinie. *Ochrona Zabytków* 7 (1954) pp. 183–188, at p. 187: „osobiste zainteresowania Jagiellonów”; A. RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK, Malowidła ściennie bizantyńsko-ruskie, p. 182: „jednorazowość fundacji wskazuje na osobiste motywacje”; M. BOGUCKA, Kazimierz Jagiellończyk i jego czasy. Warsaw 1981, p. 261.

12. Грамоты Великого Новгорода и Пскова. Moscow – Leningrad 1949, pp. 129–132, no. 77. Cf. M. P. KRUK, Malowidła Graeco opere, p. 194.

13. А. MUSIN, Церковь и горожане средневекового Пскова. Историко-археологическое исследование. Saint-Petersburg 2010, p. 289.

*domiriensem et Wisliciensem ecclesias sculptura Graeca (illam enim magis quam Latinam probabat) adornavit.*¹⁴ In the mid-19th century, JÓZEF MUCZKOWSKI interpreted this as follows: ‘Both King Jagiełło and his wife Zofia, a Ruthenian princess, as well as their son Casimir, as they grew up under the influence of the Ruthenian language, were particularly fond of this Greek style of painting, which in Latin is called *mosaico* or *graeco more* in documents’.¹⁵ However, KAZIMIERZ OSIŃSKI has revised STANISŁAW SMOLKA’s and ANTONI PROCHASKA’s views that Jagiełło’s mother had special influence on him, considering them exaggerated and anachronistic.¹⁶

Related to this issue is a question of the intention and circumstances that underlay the patronage for this group of paintings, which I shall discuss in a forthcoming monograph. I do not claim that all of them were created in pursuit of ecclesiastical union. It is true that Jagiełło’s intensive contacts with the Byzantium in the 1390s were aimed at laying the foundations for such a union. This is evidenced by some partly surviving letters, as well as by the mission which the Polish King Władysław and the Lithuanian Duke Vytautas entrusted to Camblak on the occasion of the Council of Constance.¹⁷ The Polish-Lithuanian correspondence with Patriarch Anthony IV of Constantinople and with Emperor Manuel II Palaeologus (r. 1391–1425) has not been fully preserved, but nevertheless its content can be reconstructed.¹⁸ Commissioning paintings in the ‘Greek style’ stressed

14. Joannis Długoszi Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae, lib. XI et XII, 1431–1444. Warsaw 2001, p. 126; J. MRUKÓWNA (ed.), Jana Długosza Roczniki czyli kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego, księga dziesiąta, księga jedenasta, 1406–1412. Warsaw 2009, p. 142; A. RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK, Malowidła ścienne bizantyńsko-ruskie. In: A. S. LABUDA – K. SECOMSKA (eds), Malarstwo gotyckie w Polsce. Warsaw 2004, vol. 1, p. 159.

15. J. MUCZKOWSKI, Dwie kaplice jagiellońskie w katedrze krakowskiej. Cracow 1859, p. 21. Transl. M. P. KRUK.

16. K. OSIŃSKI, Pozycja Julianny Twerskiej w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w latach 1377–1382. Próba charakterystyki problemu. Przegląd Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Społeczny 1 (2013), pp. 80–87, at p. 85.

17. See e.g. V. ZEMA, O przemówieniu Grzegorza Camblaka na soborze w Konstancji. Studia polsko-ukraińskie 10 (2023) pp. 44–58.

18. These letters have been analysed, among others, by OSKAR HALECKI and JOHN W. BARKER: O. HALECKI, La Pologne et l’Empire Byzantin. Byzantion 7 (1932) pp. 41–67; J. W. BARKER, Manuel II Palaeologus (1391–1425). A Study in Late Byzantine Statesmanship. New Brunswick 1969, pp. 151–152. Their context was reported by MACIEJ SALAMON at the XX Byzantine Congress in Paris in 2001: M. SALOMON, A Project of Church Union in 1396–1397. The Polish and Byzantine Perspectives. In: XXe Congrès

the common origins of a common faith. Church unity was undoubtedly desirable in view of the need to govern a vast state in which the ruling class was Catholic but the majority of subjects were Orthodox. The king tried to convince Pope Martin V that there was no need for re-baptism and, at the same time, emphasised the Gospel message of ‘many mansions’: it was possible to build a community of citizens of one house, albeit of different denominations. The presence of Orthodox paintings in the interiors of Catholic churches was a perfect visualisation of unity in diversity. The message could be nuanced depending the circumstances, as evidenced by the heraldic frieze recently discovered in the Sandomierz collegiate church, where the coats of arms of each land indicate a tendency to build a dynastic position and reference to the great Piast predecessors by a neophyte king newly arrived from a distant country.

One may also be tempted to make case studies not only of individual paintings, but also of single themes within them. An example of this is the question of monarchical self-representation. Thus, the royal equestrian portrait in the Lublin paintings refers to a long tradition of similar depictions of patrons and saints in the Byzantine East and to which a separate study has been devoted.¹⁹ MICKŪNAITĒ refers to a study by DRAGAN VOJVODIĆ, stating that these ‘portraits show the king without a halo; that is, represent him not as a true Christian – understood as Orthodox – ruler, but merely as the king of a Catholic realm’ (p. 84). It is hard to argue with this. The tradition of haloed ruler’s images goes back to antiquity, as testified, for instance, by the Missorium of Emperor Theodosius I (388). However, this tradition was not always observed: compare, for instance, the coronation of Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus by Christ on a mid-tenth-century ivory plaque (Moscow, Pushkin Museum), which was, as it were, echoed in the coronation mosaic of King Roger II at the Martorana. At Lublin, a king on a white horse is simultaneously given a crown and a lance topped with a cross by a messenger of God, and thus the act of anointing acquires a transcendent dimension. As in the case of the acheiropoietic images, i.e. images not made by human hands, this pictorial motif emphasises the fact that royal dignity does not come from any human being, but is a gift of God.

International des Études Byzantines. Pré-Actes. III Communications Libres. Paris 2001, p. 140.

19. M. WALCZAK, *Sic enim Constantinus*. Portret konny króla Władysława Jagiełły w kaplicy Trójcy Świętej na zamku w Lublinie. In: IDEM, *Do źródła* (Studia z historii sztuki dawnej Instytutu Historii Sztuki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego i Muzeum Narodowego w Krakowie 9). Cracow 2021, pp. 61–76.

This exalts the monarch and proves that his power neither comes from nor can be taken away by men. For a full understanding of the meaning of this scene it is important to analyse the Psalm verse that accompanies it, but this requires a longer argument which I will present in a future publication. It may be worth noting, in the context of the analysed links with the Serbian milieu, that there is a particular iconographic similarity in detail between the images of King Władysław II Jagiełło and of Despot Stephen Lazarević (d. 1427) at the Manasija (Resava) Monastery. The despot erected for himself this sepulchral church dedicated to the Holy Trinity, thus continuing an old family tradition.²⁰ His portrait there was executed in the same time as the Lublin depiction of Jagiełło.

In a second scene at Lublin, Jagiełło kneels before the enthroned Virgin Mary with Christ. It is intriguing to see the king deprived of the easily recognisable attributes of power. His deep bow before divine persons emphasises the virtue of Christian humility and piety, which we can relate to the bowing of Emperor Manuel II in the frescoes at Mistra.²¹ The Lublin frescoes are foreshadowed by those of the church at Sopočany, whose founder King Uroš I (1242–1276) is depicted together with Stephen Nemanja and Stephen the ‘First-Crowned’, all three being led by the Mother of God to the enthroned Christ. Related to these themes is the question of the accompanying inscriptions, not all of which have yet been read – or properly interpreted. In Eastern art, the image is inseparably linked to the word and the two must be analysed together, which is why this aspect of the Lublin wall paintings must also be clarified.

The above remarks concern only a few problems raised by MICKŪNAITĒ’S valuable book. It is gratifying that another attempt has been made to shed light on the phenomenon of ‘Greek’ paintings at Jagiellonian foundations. It highlights the issue of *maniera Graeca* and its understanding in a historical context, includes ensembles from the Lithuanian area in the discussion, indicates the potential links of their creators with the Morava school, and emphasises the role of Gregory Camblak. An interesting discussion of image of Our Lady of Trakai raises the question of not only frescoes but also panel paintings of Eastern provenance being present in the Catholic churches of the Polish-Lithuanian state. It is important to remember the special reverence that the image of Our Lady of Częstochowa, according

20. D. РОРОВИЋ, Гроб и култь деспота Стефана Лазаревића. Despotovac 1995, p. 37.

21. G. MILLET, Monuments byzantins de Mistra. Paris 1910, tabl. 91, pl. 3.

to legend brought by the Ruthenian princes from Constantinople, would have gained at that particular time, as well as King Jagiełło's reverence for the relics of the Holy Cross:²² the Benedictine monastery at Łysa Góra,²³ which contains 'Eastern-style' painting, was founded as a kind of expiation for the abduction of these relics by the king's father.²⁴ This would have been one of many specific reasons for commissioning 'Greek' murals for a Catholic church building.

A separate issue raised by the example of Our Lady of Trakai is the attitude to cult images of representatives of other faiths and the legends of miraculous conversions, injuries, or various types of interventions associated with them. MICKŪNAITĖ touched on the tense relationship between Protestants and cult images, which in many cases is a distinctive feature of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. This is another topic that has recently gained popularity, treated in fact as a Second Iconoclasm, this time a modern one. It deserves separate discussion.²⁵

Keywords

Byzantine art; maniera Greca; reception

22. A. RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK, *Obraz Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej. Pochodzenie i dzieje średniowieczne*. *Folia Historiae Artium* 26 (1990) pp. 5–26; M. P. KRUK, *Ikony-obrazy*, cat. 6.

23. I.e. Bald Mountain; also known as Łysiec or Święty Krzyż/Holy Cross in Świętokrzyskie Mountains.

24. A. RÓŻYCKA-BRYZEK, *Malowidła ściennie bizantyńsko-ruskie*, pp. 159, 162.

25. V. BARYSENKA, *The Representation of Protestants in the Legends of Marian Images in the Territories of the (Former) Grand Duchy of Lithuania*. *Studia Historica Gedanensia* 13 (2022) pp. 135–148; M. P. KRUK, *Echoes of Iconoclasm in the Modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*. *Ibid.*, pp. 149–161.