

The Altarpiece from Biecz - An Export Product of the Silesian Handicraft of the Mannerist Period

Summary

This report aims to analyse graphic motifs used by the artist who made an exceptional object of Wrocław handicraft, namely an *églomisé* altarpiece from the parish church in Biecz (in the collection of the National Museum in Krakow since 1913, Inv. No. Dział Rzemiosła MNK-IV-Mal-286) dating back to 1617. It has been established that the figure of Christ holding a cross in one hand and pointing to his wounds and blood flowing into a chalice at his feet with the other was modelled after a copperplate made by Hieronymus Wierix according to a drawing by Maarten de Vos (Holl., 715); the angles adorning the Host – after etchings by Johannes Sadeler I or Anton Wierix (Holl., 717 and M.-H., 1348); and busts of the Apostles – after the prints made by Johannes I and Raphael I Sadeler according to drawings by Maarten de Vos (Holl., 831–844).

The report has also settled the question of the authorship of the altarpiece from Biecz – it was made by Daniel Schneider, who left his signature and the date of execution on the work: *1617 / Daniel Schneider / zu Breslauu / ein glasshenttler / gemacht*. The name of this craftsman is mentioned in the Wrocław archival sources between 1611 and 1618, where he is described as *Maler, Glasmaler, Amalierer und Glashändler in Breslau*.

Our knowledge of the creator of the altarpiece from Biecz makes it also possible to inquire into the scale of production of this type of works made in the *églomisé* technique in the capital of Silesia. The fact that it existed in this area in the Renaissance and Mannerist periods is evidenced by the objects found in the collection of the National Museum in Wrocław: a wooden case decorated with the images of the twelve Apostles and Christ (Inv. No. IV-198) and an altar plate, or the so-called home altarpiece made in a similar way (Inv. No. II-1928).