

## The Exhibition Entitled *Europa Jagiellonica 1386–1572. Art and Culture in Central Europe during the Reign of the Jagiellon Dynasty* from a Polish Perspective

### Summary

From 10 November 2012 to 27 January 2013, the Royal Castle in Warsaw and the National Museum in Warsaw hosted an international exhibition entitled *Europa Jagiellonica 1386–1572. Art and Culture in Central Europe during the Reign of the Jagiellon Dynasty*. This large museum undertaking had been prepared by Geisteswissenschaftliche Zentrum Geschichte und Kultur Ostmitteleuropas (GWZO) at the Leipzig University. The exhibition in Warsaw was one of three parts of the international project. It had been earlier shown at the Galerie Středočeského Kraje (GASK) in Kutna Hora (9 May – 30 August 2012), and after the presentation in Warsaw it moved to Haus der Brandenburgisch-Preußischen Geschichte in Potsdam (1 March – 16 June 2013). Each of the three parts presented the artistic legacy of the Jagiellon dynasty in a slightly different context depending on the place where it was shown. The author of this review concentrates on the Polish stage of this great project and considers its significance for Polish academic circles.

The ambition of the exhibition went far beyond issues related to the Jagiellons and their influence on art. The main aim was to present essential phenomena in Central-European art during the reign of the Jagiellon dynasty. This way of putting the problem naturally results in many questions which, unfortunately, were not posed at the exhibition. Contrary to its title – suggesting the existence of a political and cultural union across the regions during the reign of the Jagiellons – the exhibition showed a picture of Central Europe dominated by differences rather than similarities.

Moreover, it seems the potential of the works of late-medieval and Renaissance art was not fully exploited. Most of the objects on display were not placed in an appropriate context. The exhibits, differing in style and function, were in fact grouped in the simplest fashion possible, by the donor and their geographical provenance. As a consequence, the exhibition showed a number of paintings, sculptures and objects of decorative arts by and large unconnected with one another and accompanied by long descriptions.

As a consequence of such an arrangement of the exhibition, many phenomena crucial for an understanding of culture and art under the Jagiellons at the same time constituting the basis for the development of modern art in Central Europe were unnoticed.