

Music publishing in Cracow, 1850–1918

The objective of the project is documentation, research and assessment of the editorial output of the Cracow music publishers in the years 1850–1918.

Music print was the most important means of dissemination of musical works in the nineteenth century. Thanks to music publishers and music sellers, musical repertoire was available not only for the few who could afford to participate in the concert life, but also for amateur musicians, cultivating the art of music in their homes and music salons. Thus music publishing was one of the most important elements of musical life in nineteenth-century Europe.

Music publishing in Cracow, which flourished in the 16th and 17th centuries, became stagnant in 18th century. It started to recover only in the next century. Regular production of published music began in the middle of the 19th century with the arrival of Juliusz Wildt, the German bookseller and publisher. In the second half of the century music publishing in Cracow became more enlivened, what resulted mainly from the activity of two music bookstores and publishers: S. A. Krzyżanowski and A. Piwarski & Co. Moreover there were several dozens of minor music publishers active in Cracow in years 1850–1918, e.g. bookstores of Daniel Edward Friedlein, Franciszek Grzybowski, Leonard Zwoliński & Co and Kasper Wojnar. At that time Cracow was the third major center of music publishing on Polish lands after Warsaw and Lviv.

However, despite its great importance for the history of Polish musical culture, the achievements of the Cracow music publishers of this period were not, so far, satisfactorily documented, tested and critically evaluated. Existing publications are treating this subject in a fragmented and superficial way.

This project aim is to investigate these unexamined areas in the historiography of Polish musical culture through comprehensive query and research of the available source material. Research will be conducted on the multilateral basis involving critical analysis and assessment of the activity and editorial output of Cracow music publishers, both from the perspective of bibliology (which treats music prints as a works of book art, and studies its functioning in specific technical, financial and market conditions) as well as from the perspective of musicology (focusing on the analysis of the published repertoire of musical works in terms of, among others, represented genres and functions of the musical works in the musical life and the role played by the publisher in the musical culture of the city and the region).

As a result of the project two publications will be released: monograph, collecting the results of research on the editorial output of music publishers in Cracow in the years 1850-1918, and a catalog of Cracow music prints from that period.