

The project has two fundamental objectives. The first, more detailed one is an analysis of Jan Bonawentura Krasieński's (1639–1717) artistic initiatives aimed at explaining whether it should be regarded as artistic patronage or merely an ostentation of social status. Works commissioned by Krasieński – legal secretary to the Crown, *voivode* of Płock and *starosta* of Warsaw – are among the most interesting Baroque monuments in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. They include his Palace in Warsaw (designed by Tilman van Gameren with some decorations by Andreas Schlüter), which is one of the most important achievements of architecture in the Commonwealth of the late seventeenth century, and Węgrów, Krasieński's private city where he concentrated a large part of his artistic initiatives.

The second, more general aim is to contextualize Krasieński's artistic initiatives within the network of similar enterprises in Central Europe, and consequently to reflect upon such categories as the artistic region, patronage, sponsorship as well as the relationship between the patron's pattern of activity and its socio-political conditions. The analyses of historical monuments and relevant written sources should lead to determining whether Krasieński stands out among other patrons of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Europe of the late seventeenth century. In Central Europe ca. 1700, there was a group of noble patrons of the arts who performed key political functions, however, their artistic commissions remained unrelated to their hereditary domain or role in the Catholic church. This group, which included, among others, Prince Eugene of Savoy (1663–1736) and Franz Anton von Sporck (1662–1738), should be compared to the patrons active in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of that time, such as Jan Wielopolski (1630–1688) or Kazimierz Jan Sapieha (1642-1720). Consequently, the main research questions of the project concern the pattern of the arts funding in Central Europe. They are:

- To what extent was Krasieński's activity representative of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth?
- To what extent was his pattern of patronage typical to the Central European model?

The answer to these questions will lead to indicating

- To what extent it is justified to discern two patterns of artistic patronage in Central Europe – one for the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and one for the Holy Roman Empire – and whether Krasieński's example could challenge such a dichotomy.

In the research on the particular aspects of Krasieński's patronage, classic tools of art history will be used, such as formal analysis and the interpretation of iconographic programs. Moreover, contextual research and "thick description" will be employed in order to situate a given artwork in relation to various culture-forming factors. A large part of research tasks requires archival queries and the analysis of written primary sources.

The methodological foundation for the general reflection on the patterns of artistic patronage in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Holy Roman Empire as well as the role of the geographical place in shaping both the image of art and the discourse around it are: Thomas DaCosta Kauffman's concept of "geography of art" and the "horizontal art history", as coined by Piotr Piotrowski.

Although Central Europe of the seventeenth century has often been regarded as one historical and artistic region, it was internally divided politically, economically, and socially. The differences between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Empire have usually been implicitly referred also to the realm of artistic patronage. Thus, the confirmation of the working hypothesis that Krasieński's artistic initiatives approximated the pattern followed by representatives of the German *Hochadel*, rather than members of magnate families in Poland-Lithuania, opens up new perspectives not just for research on the patronage of other noblemen in the Commonwealth, but also for the reflection on the artistic landscape of early modern Central Europe.