

## Introduction

The Picture Gallery of the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu holds several very interesting paintings, so far insufficiently studied, which are related to some well-known figures and events from the history of Poland. Most of them are portraits, such as: *Jan III Sobieski King of Poland* (inventory number 1010) by Johann Säger, a Viennese miniaturist (documented in Vienna in 1717), *Prince Karol Radziwiłł Stanisław* (inventory number 741) by Martin van Meytens the Younger (1695–1770), *Count Seweryn Rzewuski* (inventory number 447) by Joseph Grassi (1757–1838). This study discusses additionally several battle scenes, namely: *The Allegory of the Battle of Vienna* (inventory number 680) by Johann Philipp Lemke (1631–1711) and three paintings inspired by the events of the „Swedish Deluge”: *Battle Between Cavalry and Infantry* (inventory number 764) by Pieter Molyn (approx. 1600–1661), *Cossacks Following Cuirassiers* (inventory number 643) and *Battle Between Cossacks and Cuirassiers* (inventory number 644), both latter pieces by Johann Ferdinand Kien (documented in Vienna in 1682–1730).

The only work by a Polish painter in the museum collection, which accidentally does not concern a Polish theme or subject, is a portrait of Carol I, the first King of Romania, painted by Tadeusz von Ajdukiewicz (1852–1916) in Bucharest, on the 20<sup>th</sup> of August 1897 (inventory number 1657). The painting formerly belonged to the old collection of the Museum of the Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and Culture of the Romanian People (ASTRA), which merged in 1950 with the Brukenthal Museum.

Two works of art, namely the triumphal posthumous portrait of King Jan III Sobieski (which shall be discussed henceforth) and the allegory of the Battle of Vienna, reveal clear correlation. They both refer to the most important event of the Great Turkish War (1683–1699), the event that brought eternal fame to the king, i.e. the relief of the besieged Vienna (1683) and the final stop to the Ottoman Empire offensive against the Christian Western World, followed immediately by the counteroffensive of the Holy Roman Empire and by military actions of other member states of the Holy League as well as Russia, which joined the League informally on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 1686 through the Treaty of Eternal Peace with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth<sup>1</sup>. An immediate consequence of the aforementioned events was the liberation of Hungary, Croatia and Transylvania from the Ottoman rule.

Profound consequences of the battles fought in 1683–1739 by these states against the Ottoman Empire were reflected in the course of history of Central and South-Eastern Europe from the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards. This explains the presence in the Museum collection of other works of art, such as several portraits of emperors of the Holy Roman Empire<sup>2</sup>, a portrait of Tsarina Anna Ioannovna (inventory number 310) after Louis Caravaque (1684–1752), a portrait of Prince Johann Georg Christian von Lobkowitz

# THE PORTRAIT OF JAN III SOBIESKI, KING OF POLAND, BY JOHANN SÄGER (1717)

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- 1 B.L. Davies, *Warfare, State and Society on the Black Sea Steppe, 1500–1700*, London – New York 2007, p. 175–183.
- 2 Generally, for more on the portraits of the members of the House of Habsburg in Sibiu see: A.Gh. Sonoc (coord.), *Efigii imperiale habsburgice din Sibiu*, Sibiu 2011.

3 *Die Gemälde Galerie des freiherrlichen v. Brukenthalischen Museums in Hermannstadt*, Hermannstadt 1844, p. 111, cat. no. 102 (German monogrammist JS); *Freiherr Samuel von Brukenthal'sches Museum in Hermannstadt: Führer durch die Gemäldegalerie*, Hermannstadt 1893, p. 59, cat. no. 267 (unknown German painter); M. Csaki, *Baron Brukenthal'sches Museum in Hermannstadt. Führer durch die Gemäldegalerie*, Hermannstadt 1901, p. 277–278, cat. no. 991; M. Csaki, *Baron Brukenthalisches Museum in Hermannstadt. Führer durch die Gemäldegalerie*, Hermannstadt 1909, p. 304, cat. no. 1010 (Johann Säger); V. Mureșan, *Scena de luptă în pictura germană și austriacă din secolele XVII-XVIII în colecția Galeriei Brukenthal*, „Ars Transilvaniae” 1995, no. 5, p. 181, fig. 9 (Johann Säger).

(inventory number 41) by Johann Gottfried Auerbach (1679–1743), a battle scene from the campaign for the conquest of Buda (1686) by Johann Ferdinand Kien (inventory number 645) and an allegorical work (cut into two fragments, inventory numbers 736 and 735), dedicated by Felix Meyer (1653–1713) to the pandurs who defended the frontiers against the attack of the Ottoman Empire.

### The work and its documentary importance

The discussed work (41 x 29 cm, inventory number 1010)<sup>3</sup>, [fig. 72](#) painted on parchment, is categorized as a triumphal posthumous portrait. It was glued on wood, possibly at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, as indicated by an inscription in German-Austrian dialect with Slavic and Hungarian influences, Gallicismes and Latinismes, in cursive Latin characters, abbreviations and ligatures, typically used in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup> century, visible on the wood surface. The text

Zdjęcie dostępne w wersji papierowej

s. 253 [fig. 72](#) *The portrait of King Jan III Sobieski, King of Poland*, by Johann Säger. © Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu, România

## Zdjęcie dostępne w wersji papierowej

of the inscription **fig. 73** **fig. 74** goes as follows: *Pordere Seiner künigl(icher) Mäy(e)st(ät) Johannes / Suwisgÿ Künig In Pohlen gemahlen / anno '683 In wien Von Jahan Säger / miniatur Mahler pinsit von 25ten Septemder* (which translates into „a portrait of His Royal Majesty Jan Sobieski, King of Poland, painted in '683 in Vienna by Johann Säger, painter of miniatures. Painted on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September”). The inscription was reproduced (with some reading errors) in successive guides to the Brukenthal Picture Gallery published by M. Csaki in 1901 and 1909. The author believed that the painter's name was *Säger*, still he took into account the possibility of reading it as *Jäger*, despite the fact that the monogrammed signature inscribed on the front had been known already since 1844, mentioned in 1893 and 1901 (the first reference to its date) and also despite the fact that in 1909 he published a facsimile of the signature and the date on the front side **fig. 75** : *J(ohann) S(äger) :717 f(ecit)*. Both, the S initial and the diacritical sign on top of the letter *a* in the painter's

**fig. 74** *The portrait of King Jan III Sobieski, King of Poland*, by Johann Säger. Backside (detail). © Muzeul Național Brukenthal, Sibiu, România

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**fig. 75** Detail from the catalogue of the Brukenthal Gallery published by Michael Csaki (1909) with a facsimile of the signature and of the date on the front side of the painting

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last name are clearly visible. Hence, the last name is neither *Sager* (meaning „the Teller”, „the Storyteller”), a word derived from *Sage*, nor is it *Jäger* (meaning „the Hunter”), but *Säger*, derived from *Säge* (meaning „saw”) and is the name of a water bird, more specifically the merganser (*Mergus sp.*).

The painting is in a poor condition caused by an inundation and a fungal attack, which resulted in a minor loss of its colour coat. In view of the fact that the monogram signature and the date are inscribed on the front, that is on the work itself, and since the painting was glued onto a wood panel bearing an ink inscription, it seems justifiable to assume that the inscription was made at the same time as the gluing, probably by another person than the painter himself. Clearly, the main intention was to deceive potential buyers by making them believe that the work had been painted *ad vivum*, while the glorious king was still

present in Vienna. The author of the inscription failed to realize that the painting itself had been signed and dated, or he relied on the fact that the small size characters were hardly legible.

For the time being, there is no available data on Johann Säger, the author of the work, other than the ink inscription on the wood panel used for gluing the painting<sup>4</sup>. At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century there was another artist with the same initials, namely a wood sculptor Jakob Sager; assisted by three co-workers, in 1708 he created church pews of Saint Martin Church in Landshut<sup>5</sup>. However, he cannot be the author of this miniature on parchment, even if no credibility is granted to the inscription on the wooden panel, on which the painting is glued.

The king is depicted in front of a tent, his right hand on his hip, his left hand holding a golden mace (*bulawa*), its big, profusely decorated knob featuring light blue stones (possibly turquoises). It is a night scene, with a moon crescent visible in the sky. The king is rendered in a majestic pose and his facial expression is grave, melancholic, but kind-hearted, even a little tired. He is of a strong built and has a „Sarmatian” moustache. He is wearing an *allonge* grey wig and a pink-lilac mantle (*żupan*) with a lining of golden brocade decorated with an Oriental pattern, fastened with a row of golden sea snail-shaped buttons, a type contemporarily popular in the Ottoman Empire and in Eastern Europe. The king is also wearing a light blue waistband decorated with a golden vegetal pattern, fastened with a golden knot, tight crimson trousers and ochre boots. Near his left thigh, beside the sword sheath, the mantle is painted in purple. The painter used this clumsy subterfuge (of selecting a darker colour to represent the shaded part of the garment) in order to counter-balance the reduced difference in tone between the pink-lilac mantle, its golden lining, the crimson trousers and the orange fabric of the tent. This problem could have been avoided simply if the king’s trousers had been crimson and if the mantle had not been painted pink-lilac (a strange choice, hard to explain), but crimson (*karmazynowy*), a shade made from an insect-extracted pigment, the Polish cochineal (*Porphyrophora polonica*), became widespread in various countries of Eastern Europe<sup>6</sup>. Together with the blue sash, it would have corresponded with the colours of the „winged hussars” unit (*chorągiew*) led by the king in the Battle of Vienna<sup>7</sup>. Hanging on the king’s sash there is a short sabre (*karabela*) with a golden guard and a golden handle, in a green painted sheath with golden metal fittings on the top and on the edge. Next to the king’s right foot there are six cast iron cannon balls, arranged in two rows. In the foreground, towards the left corner of the painting, among vine tendrils, the viewer can notice three decapitated heads and a turban. Among the heads, there is one with Mongoloid features, lying in front of the king’s right foot; it is a head of an older man, possibly a Tatar, with a moustache, whiskers and a strand of hair on the shaved head, with a bleeding scar on the forehead above the right eyebrow. Visible in the centre of the painting on the ground there is a cuirass painted in black. It is inscribed with the monogram signature and the dating. The foreground in the right corner of the painting, down

4 V. Mureşan, *op. cit.*, p. 181.  
7. R. Brzezinski, A. McBride, *Polish Armies 1569–1696*, London 1987, vol. II, p. 16.

5 H. Vollmer (ed.), *Allgemeines Lexikon der Bildenden Künstler von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. XXIX, Leipzig 1929, p. 311.

6 R. Brzezinski, V. Vukšić, *Polish Winged Hussar 1576–1775*, Oxford–New York 2005, p. 22.

7 R. Brzezinski, A. McBride, *Polish Armies 1569–1696*, London 1987, vol. II, p. 16.

- 8 E.G. Astvacaturjan, *Турецкое оружие в собрании Государственного Исторического музея*, Sankt-Peterburg 2002, p. 70–73, cat. no. 7851 (16<sup>th</sup>–17<sup>th</sup> century).
- 9 V. Mureşan, *op. cit.*, p. 181.
- 10 *Ibidem*.

on the ground and over another cuirass, features a purple flag with a broken flagpole; seen somewhere in the background, behind the king's legs, there is another grey-colour fabric with a golden pattern, presumably another flag, or a small-sized Oriental carpet, possibly a prayer rug (*namazlık*). Inside an orange tent, which serves as the background for the king's portrait, there are several trophies: a fabric with golden edges (probably from an Ottoman tent, which was later used in sewing liturgical vestments for Catholic priests), a turban, a crimson dolman (in Turkish *mintan*) with a light blue lining and golden buttons (quite similar to the ones from the Polish king's mantle), a helmet with nasal protection and a panache (of the type known in Poland as *kapalin*) and one of the lateral rectangular plates of a „mirror armour” (*зерцальный доспех*)<sup>8</sup>, of an Ottoman rather than a Persian model, or of the model known in Central Asia (*шар-айна*), as indicated by its suspension system. Visible behind the king and his tent there is a cannon, its barrel pointing to the left. Above the tent there is a white eagle (the heraldic bird of Poland), descending in flight, carrying in its claws a laurel wreath and an olive branch, both symbols of victory. In the background, a battle against the Ottoman army is being fought, most probably relating to the relief of Vienna (1683). It shows a clash between sipahis and the Christian light-cavalry as well as hand-to-hand fighting between horsemen, whose horses had been either injured or killed. The scene seems sketched, with only a few colours applied. The most dominating element of the scene features a soldier cutting an enemy's throat with a sword. The soldier (fighting now as an infantryman) is dressed in a similar manner to the king's (which confirms, once again, the painter's intention of representing the king in the colours of the unit that he was leading). Scattered on the ground there are some cut-off heads of the Ottomans and some fallen-off turbans.

So far the painting in question has not been the subject of a sufficiently thorough study and it has more of a documentary value than an artistic one. Based on battle scenes represented in the 17<sup>th</sup>–18<sup>th</sup>-century German and Austrian paintings from the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum, V. Mureşan argues that the piece is “interesting in conception and manner, but it's failing in execution”, because of the king's posture and ostentatious gestures, as well as the blunder depict of the defeated enemies, which “render the painting an exaggerated laudatory note, making it involuntarily comic”<sup>9</sup>. V. Mureşan notices also that the battle scene in the background receives a truly flattering and celebratory role by evoking the deeds of arms of the depicted character<sup>10</sup>. Despite the numerous shortcomings of the painting, it can be related to other portraits of King Jan III Sobieski with battle scenes in the background, such as the ones that depict him in the Battle of Chocim (Hotin) in 1673 by Andreas Stech (1635—1697), dating to 1674–1679, and in the Battle of Vienna by Jerzy Eleuter Szymonowicz-Siemiginowski (1660–1711), from Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie (oil on canvas, 105 x 76 cm, inventory number 183342/129850), dating to 1686, as well as another very similar work painted by Georg Philipp Rugendas the Older (1666–1742) from Muzeum Narodowe w Krakowie (oil on canvas, 141 x 6,5 cm), dating to the 1690s. The

last two portraits were used later on, with minor changes, by Martino Altomonte (1657–1745) in his two large works depicting the Battle of Vienna. Both of them are now in Ukraine, one at the Olesk castle (oil on canvas, 765 x 738 cm) and the other one in the National Art Gallery of Lviv (oil on canvas, 806 x 833 cm). The latter painting, recently restored in Warsaw, was ordered in 1693 by King Jan III Sobieski for the church in Żóvkva (Żółkiew) and is dated to 1693–1695. Its pendant (oil on canvas, 886 x 782 cm), which features the Battle of Párkány (in German Gockern, in Turkish Çiğerdelen, now Štúrovo, Slovakia), also fought in 1683, has also been recently restored in Warsaw.

I believe that the colour of the flag with the broken flagpole lying at the king's feet calls for a more thorough analysis. In line with the Roman and Byzantine tradition that used purple red to represent the emperor, the colour of the Ottoman dynasty is also red<sup>11</sup>, but it is a distinctive shade of dark red known as *al*<sup>12</sup>. Red flags are not to be considered simply as dynastic symbols because, as a rule, red flag (*kızıl bayrak*) was characteristic for the sipahi units<sup>13</sup>. According to a tradition mentioned only in the 15<sup>th</sup> century by the chroniclers Aşıkpaşazade and Uruç, during the reign of Orhan Bey (1326–1362) red was the colour of the provincial cavalry units and white was assumed by newly created ones or those recruited from slaves and prisoners<sup>14</sup>. But the oldest sipahi units had their own banners: the two units of mercenaries (*ulufeciyan*) had bicolour red and white or red and yellow flags respectively, while the two units made up of foreigners (*gureba*) had solid green or white flags<sup>15</sup>. At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the flag adopted by the imperial janissary units stationed in Constantinople was of red colour<sup>16</sup>. It was also customary for the janissary's flag to be white, to suggest their special relation to the Sufi Order of Bektaşî<sup>17</sup> or their subordination to the sultan. That was because the rule banner (*sançak-i şeref*) received in 1299 from Alaeddin Kayqubad III, the Seljuq Sultan of Rum (1298–1302) by Osman Gazi (1281–1326) as a sign of recognition for his autonomy was white, possibly with reference to the Chinese cosmology, wherein white colour stands for the Western World (which was assumed by the Mongols and by various Turkish-Mongol dynasties)<sup>18</sup>. According to a holy Islamic tradition (*ḥadīth*) the flag representing the Quraysh tribe, which the Prophet Muhammad belonged to, was white<sup>19</sup>. Actually, it is a traditional banner of identity (*al-`alam* or *al-liwa`*), which was later (in the Umayyad period) known as „the Banner of the Caliphate”. As guardian of the Holy Grounds, the Mameluke sultan of Egypt used as his war banner a relic from the other flag of the Quraysh tribe, „the Black Banner” (*rāyat al-sawdā`*, in short *al-rāya*, i. e. „the banner”), which featured an image of an eagle (whence also its other name, *rāyat al-`uqāb*, i. e. „the Eagle's Banner”) and was also known as „the Banner of the Holy War” (*rāyat al-jihād*). There was a common belief that the banner had been from the head-cloth of Aisha, the wife of the Prophet<sup>20</sup> and that it was an eschatological flag, because according to an Islamic tradition it would announce the coming of the Savior (*Mahdī*)<sup>21</sup>. As a consequence of the Ottoman conquest of Egypt, it was taken to Constantinople and kept inside the imperial

- 11 J. Hathaway, *Beshir Agha: Chief Eunuch of the Ottoman Imperial Harem*, Oxford 2005, p. 22.
- 12 J. Hathaway, *A Tale of Two Factions: Myth, Memory, and Identity in Ottoman Egypt and Yemen*, Albany 2005, p. 101.
- 13 G. Gush, *Renaissance Armies 1480–1650*, Cambridge 1975, p. 80.
- 14 J. Hathaway, *A Tale...*, p. 99–100.
- 15 G. Gush, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
- 16 J. Hathaway, *A Tale...*, p. 102.
- 17 *Ibidem*, p. 98–101.
- 18 *Ibidem*, p. 98–99.
- 19 *Ibidem*, p. 96.
- 20 D. Nicolle, A. McBride, *Armies of the Muslim Conquest*, Oxford 1993, p. 6.
- 21 D. Cook, *Studies in Muslim Apocalyptic*, Greenwich 2002, p. 197.
- 22 J. Hathaway, *A Tale...*, p. 98.

- 23 *Ibidem*, p. 98–99.  
 24 *Ibidem*, p. 96–97.  
 25 *Ibidem*, p. 97.  
 26 *Ibidem*, p. 101.  
 27 *Ibidem*, p. 102, 110.  
 28 D. Kolodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th–18th Century). A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents*, Leiden–Boston 2011, p. 190–191.  
 29 S. Millar, P. Dennis, *Vienna 1683: Christian Europe Repels the Ottomans*, Oxford–New York 2008, p. 80.  
 30 J. Stoye, *The Siege of Vienna: The Last Great Trial between Cross & Crescent*, New York 2007, p. 175.  
 31 S. Millar, P. Dennis, *op. cit.*, p. 85.  
 32 J. Pałubicki, *Malarze, szklarze, rysoownicy i rytownicy w okresie nowożytnym w gdańskich materiałach archiwalnych*, Gdańsk 2009, vol. I, pl. 190.

palace at Topkapi<sup>22</sup>. Still, in line with the chronicler Silahdar Mehmed Ağa's statement, this war flag was made of black wool drapery<sup>23</sup>. Black was also the official colour of the Abbasid dynasty, due to the fact that the official colour of the preceding Umayyad dynasty was white<sup>24</sup>. Red became the official colour of the Ottoman dynasty not only in order to increase its legitimacy and prestige as successors of the Roman and Byzantine emperors, but possibly also because white, the dynastic colour inherited from Osman Gazi and the colour of the Shiite Ismaelites' dynasty (as a reaction against black, the official colour of the Abbasid caliphs) became the distinctive colour of the Shiites<sup>25</sup>, who were endorsed by Persia, the formidable enemy of the Ottoman Empire. Later, each janissary unit (*orta*) had its own flag with a particular colour and emblem, often employing the image of the *Dū al-Fiqār* (Zulfikar) sabre with a split blade that belonged to Caliph Ali<sup>26</sup>. In the Ottoman Empire both red and white flags were considered complementary symbols of the Ottoman authority. Still, the Ottoman authorities ignored the distinction between the two colours, which they came across in the Arab territories as a result of the rivalry between religious factions that used white and red flags as distinctive elements<sup>27</sup>. Consequently, the depicted cannot be the holy flag (*alam-i şerif*) of Prophet Muhammad, speaking of which, even if it had been captured, it was re-conquered right in the battlefield by Hacı II Giray, the Khan of Crimea (1683–1684)<sup>28</sup>, during an attack of the Grand Vizier's guard (in which the Khan could have taken part) and which was carried away by the Grand Vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Paşa on his leaving the battlefield<sup>29</sup>. Another flag, which had been captured by the Polish army, was said to be the real flag of Prophet Muhammad. Being first exhibited in Vienna, it was later sent to the Pope and was exhibited in each and every town on its way to Rome<sup>30</sup>. Actually, the flag sent to Pope Innocent XI is the one of the Grand Vizier<sup>31</sup> and it does not resemble the flag represented in the discussed painting. The flag seen in the painting seems more likely to be an Ottoman dynastic flag.

A close examination of the painting for the identity of the rendered character (mentioned by the inscription on the back side of the painting, but failing to have the physical features of King Jan III Sobieski) brings forth some doubts on the identity of the character, even if the signature and the dating on the front side are assessed as genuine. The reason being that generally the king tends to be represented as a stouter figure with a thick moustache. Besides, unknown is any other portrait representing the king wearing an *allonge* wig, which was in vogue at European courts at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, the question arises whether the Viennese miniaturist actually adopted and adjusted a portrait of another Polish monarch, as he did not know the physiognomy of Jan III Sobieski, not even from another of the king's portraits. A comparative study of the discussed portrait with the representation of a different Polish king, Jan II Kazimierz Vasa (1648–1668), as depicted around 1659 in a portrait by Daniel Schultz the Younger (aprox. 1615–1683), a painter from Gdańsk, and currently held in Muzeum Łazienki Królewskie w Warszawie (oil on canvas, 137,5 x 99

cm, inventory number Ł. Kr. 776)<sup>32</sup>, and even more so with another portrait of the same king, created around 1649 by the same painter and held in the national collection of portraits in Gripsholm castle in Stockholm (oil on canvas, 210 x 154 cm, inventory number. NMGrh 1273), and finally with an anonymous portrait from Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nürnberg (oil on canvas, 210 x 137 cm, inventory number Gm 751), dated to the 1630s, seems to suggest that in creating the Sobieski's painting in Sibiu its author might have adopted key elements of Jan II Kazimierz's physiognomy (i.e. his reduced corpulence, long hair or, eventually, the *allonge* wig, even the strabismus), probably from a portrait or an engraving. Still, there are major differences between King Jan II Kazimierz's physiognomy and the one of Jan III Sobieski in the picture which is part of the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum. First of the differences refers to the shape of the face and the eyebrows. Among the period portraits owned by King Jan III Sobieski, the most exact representation of his physiognomy (and even his look, to a certain extent) would be the aforementioned anonymous portrait, painted before 1696, wherein the king's chest is decorated with a gorget (*ожерелье*) featuring the image of the Black Madonna from the Jasna Góra monastery in Częstochowa.

Even if its value is purely documentary, the discussed portrait, forming part of the collection of the Brukenthal National Museum in Sibiu, bears testimony to the popularity, which Jan III Sobieski, the liberator of Vienna, enjoyed in the Viennese environment even long after his death. The presence of the work of art in this collection also indicates that despite lacking information on the time and circumstances of its purchase, its documentary value has been acknowledged and proves that also in Transylvania was the King of Poland highly revered as a hero, the conqueror of the Ottoman armed forces and the protector of Christian Europe.

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### Streszczenie

W zbiorach Galerii Malarstwa Narodowego Muzeum Brukenthala w Sibiu, w Rumunii znajduje się kilka interesujących, a nie dość zbadanych obrazów związanych z historią Polski. Większość z nich to portrety, np.: *Jan III Sobieski* Johanna Sägera, wiedeńskiego miniaturzysty, *Książę Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł* Martina van Meytensa Młodszego, *Hrabia Seweryn Rzewuski* Josepha Grassiego, lecz także sceny batalistyczne, mianowicie: *Alegoria bitwy pod Wiedniem* Johanna Philippa Lemkego oraz trzy obrazy zainspirowane wydarzeniami z „potopu” szwedzkiego: *Bitwa pomiędzy kawalerią a piechotą* Pietera Mołyna, *Pogoń Kozaków za kirasjerami* i *Bitwa pomiędzy Kozakami a kirasjerami* autorstwa Johanna Ferdinarda Kiena.

Jedynym obrazem w kolekcji wykonanym przez polskiego malarza jest portret Karola I, pierwszego króla Rumunii, namalowany przez Tadeusza Ajdukiewicza (1852–1916) 20 sierpnia 1897 w Bukareszcie. Obraz początkowo należał do kolekcji ASTRA (Museum of the Transylvanian Association for Romanian Literature and Culture of the

Romanian People), a od roku 1950 jest własnością Muzeum Brukenthala. Dwa dzieła sztuki – triumfalny portret króla Jana III i alegoria bitwy pod Wiedniem (1683) – zdradzają bliską współzależność; oba odwołują się do najważniejszego wydarzenia z wojny polsko-tureckiej (1683–1699), które rozślawiło króla i zatrzymało ataki imperium osmańskiego na chrześcijański Zachód.

Omawiany tutaj *Portret króla Jana III* autorstwa Johanna Sägera (41 x 29 cm, nr. inw. 1010), namalowany na pergaminie i naklejony na drewno, jest triumfalnym portretem powstałym po śmierci monarchy. Prawdopodobnie pochodzi początku XVIII w., na co wskazuje inskrypcja w dialekcie niemiecko-austriackim z wpływami z innych języków (m.in. słowiańskich, a także węgierskiego, francuskiego i łacińskiego). Pisane kursywą litery łacińskie, abrewiacje oraz ligatura, widoczne na powierzchni drewna, są typowe dla XVII i XVIII w. Napisy były reprodukowane w przewodnikach po Galerii wydanych przez Michaela Csaki w latach 1901 i 1909. Autor uważał, że autorem portretu był człowiek o nazwisku *Sager* („Opowiadacz”, „Bajarz”) lub *Jäger* („Łowca”, „Myśliwy”). Wydaje się jednak, że nazwisko autora zostało błędnie odczytane i powinno brzmieć *Säger*, od słowa *Säge*, będąc zarazem nazwą ptaka wodnego – tracza (*Mergus sp.*).

Niestety, dzieło jest złym stanie zachowania spowodowanym wilgocią i zainfekowaniem grzybami. Utraciło dawną kolorystykę. Zarówno sygnatura (monogram), jak i rok powstania są zapisane z przodu, na obrazie, pochodzą jednak z czasu, gdy naklejono go na deskę i prawdopodobnie nie zostały naniesione przez autora. Chodziło o wprowadzenie w błąd potencjalnego nabywcy i przekonanie go, że obraz został namalowany *ad vivum*, w czasie pobytu znakomitego monarchy w Wiedniu.

Król przedstawiony został przed namiotem, jego prawa dłoń spoczywa na biodrze, w lewej zaś trzyma złotą buławę, bogato zdobioną niebieskimi kamieniami (być może turkusami). Tłem dla postaci jest ciemne niebo i widoczny półksiężyc. Króla ukazano w majestatycznej pozie z melancholijnym, poważnym, ale przyjaznym – może nawet nieco zmęczonym – wyrazem twarzy. Jest okazałej postury i nosi sarmackie wąsy. Nosi szarą perukę; różowo-liliowy żupan zapinany na złote guziki w kształcie ślimaka, popularne w tym czasie w imperium osmańskim oraz na wschodzie Europy; jasnoniebieski pas dekorowany złotym wzorem roślinnym, przymocowany czerwonym węzłem; obcisłe czerwone spodnie i buty o barwie ochry. Poniżej jego lewego uda, obok pochwy karabeli, żupan przybiera kolor purpury.

Tuż obok prawej nogi króla leży sześć kul armatnich ułożonych w dwa rzędy. W lewym dolnym rogu obrazu, pośród winorośli, leżą trzy odcięte głowy i turban. Na pierwszym planie, w prawym rogu umieszczono purpurową flagę i złamany maszt. Z tyłu, za monarchą widać szarą tkaninę ze złotym wzorem, kolejną flagę oraz niewielki orientalny dywan, prawdopodobnie *namazlik* (dywanik modlitewny). W środku, w pomarańczowym namiocie przedstawiono inne wojenne trofea. Nad namiotem namalowano białego orła, który trzyma w szponach wieniec laurowy i gałązkę oliwną – symbole zwycięstwa. W tle została przedstawiona bitwa, nawiązująca do wyzwolenia Wiednia (1683). W porównaniu ze scenami bitewnymi z XVII–XVIII w. z kolekcji Narodowego Muzeum Brukenthala, portret ten ma większą wartość dokumentalną niż artystyczną.

Dzieło nawiązuje do portretów Jana III ze scenami bitewnymi w tle, np. *Bitwy pod Chocimiem* Andreeasa Stecha (1635–1697), datowanej na lata 1674–1679, oraz *Bitwy pod Wiedniem* Jerzego Eleutera Szymonowicza-Siemiginowskiego (1660–1711) ze zbiorów Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie. Jeśli porównamy omawiany portret Jana III z obrazami przedstawiającymi króla Jana Kazimierza (1648–1668) autorstwa gdańskiego malarza Daniela Schulza Młodszego (Muzeum Łazienek Królewskich w Warszawie oraz zamek Gripsholm w Sztokholmie) i z anonimowym portretem z Germanisches Nationalmuseum w Norymberdze (1630), okaże się, że autor obrazu z Sibiu zapożyczył elementy fizjonomii Jana Kazimierza. Prawdopodobnie korzystał zarówno z portretu, jak i ryciny.

Obecność obrazów związanych z osobą Jana III w kolekcji Narodowego Muzeum Brukenthala w Sibiu świadczy o tym, że również w Siedmiogrodzie król Polski był postrzegany jako bohater, pogromca Turków i obrońca chrześcijańskiej Europy.

*Krystyna Nowek*