

## THE RENAISSANCE IN NORTHERN MAZOVIA

On September 21–22, 2001, in the academic centre of Pultusk School of Humanities a conference was held, organized by this School (WSH) under the patronage of the Bishop of Płock — Rev. Stanisław Wielgus, WSH Rector — Prof. Dr. Andrzej Bartnicki, Rector of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw — Prof. Dr. Adam Myjak as well as the General Restorer of old architectural and art works — Dr. A. Broda. Very active in the organization of this conference was also Rev. Wiesław Kosek from St. Matthew's Parish in Płock.

The conference was devoted to the 16th–17th c. history of Mazovia, however, its subject crossed the boundaries of this region, involving reflections upon the broadly conceived European Renaissance. The debates opened with an excellent paper by L. Kałińowski (Cracow), *The Renaissance in Europe*, which analysed the notion of the Renaissance in the works of Michelet, Burckhardt, and Witkower as well as its various conceptions in the studies of other researchers. The same issue was raised by Rev. H. Seweryniak (Warsaw) in his paper *Uomo fattura Tua meravigliosa* — on the Christian spirit in Renaissance art, where he showed the Renaissance from two perspectives: of Catholicism and the Reformation. The author devoted a lot of space to an interesting analysis of the decoration of the Sistine Chapel, defined by him as a sanctuary of the theology of the human body. A. Miłobędzki (WSH) presented in his paper the architecture of the Pultusk collegiate church against the background of other Mazovian churches. S. Stawicki (Warsaw) complemented this exposition by presenting the recently (1994) discovered frescoes, created in the middle of the 16th c. by a painter from Warsaw in the Pultusk collegiate church. Rev. M. M. Grzybowski (Płock) discussed the cultural patronage of the bishops of Płock in the Renaissance era, focussing especially on the fascinating figure of Erazm Ciołek.

On the second day of debate M. Bogucka (WSH) presented the position of Mazovia on the map of Poland and Europe in the 16th–17th cc., emphasizing the specificity of this region as well as its considerable political, economic and cultural role. Subsequent papers resumed the main thread of the conference — art in Mazovia. J. Chrościcki (Warsaw) discussed the influence of Michelangelo's art in Mazovia, J. Lewicki (Warsaw) presented the caisson decorations occurring in many churches of Mazovia, R. Kunkeł (Warsaw) discussed the state of research into the architecture of the Pultusk basilica, and finally P. Gorek (WSH) told about the new discoveries of polychromes in the little known but precious church in Brok. The sequence of papers was closed by Z. Morawski, who presented Pultusk in the 14th c. and compared its development with that of Łowicz.

An animated discussion followed, where among other scholars T. Zarębska showed the unusual, original characteristics of the architecture and town-planning of Pultusk; it was postulated to organize extensive research into the graffiti decorations in Mazovia, attention was drawn to the values of the church at Cegłów, then discussion focussed on the need for the restorers' initiatives and on their methods. The conference was summed up by H. Samsonowicz (WSH), who emphasized its two important achievements — the demythicization of the Renaissance as secular culture, totally contrary to the Middle Ages and Baroque, as well as the debunking of the picture of Mazovia as a culturally backward region.

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