

UDC 272-789(477)“16/17”
DOI: 10.24919/2519-058x.16.210907

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Бібліографічний опис статті: Sheretiuk, R. (2020). Artistic activity of the Roman Catholic Orders in the Eastern lands of the Commonwealth: outstanding personalities and monuments (the XVIIth – XVIIIth centuries). *Skhidnoevropeyskyi Istorychnyi Visnyk [East European Historical Bulletin]*, 16, 8–15. doi: 10.24919/2519-058x.16.210907

**ARTISTIC ACTIVITY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ORDERS
IN THE EASTERN LANDS OF THE COMMONWEALTH:
OUTSTANDING PERSONALITIES AND MONUMENTS
(THE XVIIth – XVIIIth CENTURIES)**

Abstract. *The purpose of the research consists in the analysis of the essence and direction of artistic activity of the Roman Catholic monastic orders, characteristics of the circle of artists, who worked in the Ukrainian and Belorussian lands of the Commonwealth during the XVIIth – XVIIIth centuries, as well as the characteristics of their creative work. The research methodology is based on the principles of scientificity, historicism, a systemic principle. During the research work, both general scientific (analysis and synthesis, systematization and generalization) and special scientific methods have been used: problem-thematic, prosopographic, chronological, as well as systemic structural. The scientific novelty of the article is to reveal the little-known pages of the history of the Roman Catholic monastic orders in the Ukrainian and Belorussian territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the XVIIth-XVIIIth centuries, to clarify biographical information and analyze the creative achievements of prominent representatives of the artistic circle. The Conclusions. The Roman Catholic Orders occupy a special place in the history of religion and church in the territory of the Commonwealth, which included Volyn and Podillya during the second half of the XVIth – the end of the VIIIth century. Undoubtedly, their missionary work was aimed at strengthening the position of the Roman Catholic Church, however, at the same time the local Roman Catholic monasteries played a leading role in promoting and affirming the cultural and artistic heritage of the Western civilization, including the artistic heritage of the Baroque era. They were the place where outstanding artists of the Order worked – architects, artists, sculptors, whose activities became a significant factor not only of Western European influence on the cultural and artistic life of the eastern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but also the process of intensive development of a national art. Thus, owing to the work of hundreds of Western European educators, architects, artists, writers, whose creative destiny was closely connected with the Catholic monastic orders, Ukraine became not only the country, which over the centuries accumulated and preserved the cultural heritage of its own people, but also gradually became involved into the European process of creating something new.*

Key words: *the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Roman Catholic Order, artistic activity, sacred art, baroque.*

ХУДОЖНЬО-МИСТЕЦЬКА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ РИМО-КАТОЛИЦЬКИХ ОРДЕНІВ НА СХІДНИХ ЗЕМЛЯХ РЕЧІ ПОСПОЛИТОЇ: ВИДАТНІ ОСОБИСТОСТІ І ПАМ'ЯТКИ (XVII – XVIII ст.)

Анотація. Мета дослідження. У статті крізь призму ідеології католицизму і руху Контрреформації досліджено сутність і спрямованість мистецької діяльності римо-католицьких чернечих орденів на українських та білоруських землях Речі Посполитої впродовж XVII – XVIII ст., окреслено коло митців, а також охарактеризовано їхній творчий доробок. **Методологія** дослідження ґрунтується на принципах науковості, історизму, системності. Під час дослідницької роботи використовувалися як загальнонаукові (аналізу і синтезу, систематизації та узагальнення), так і спеціально-наукові методи: проблемно-тематичний, просопографічний, хронологічний, а також системно-структурний. **Наукова новизна** статті полягає у розкритті маловідомих сторінок історії римо-католицьких чернечих орденів на українських та білоруських теренах Речі Посполитої XVII – XVIII ст., з'ясуванні біографічних відомостей і аналізі творчих здобутків видатних представників їхнього мистецького кола. **Висновки.** Було встановлено, що особливе місце в історії релігії і Церкви на теренах Речі Посполитої, до складу якої продовже другу половину XVI – кінця XVIII ст. входили Волинь і Поділля, посідають римо-католицькі ордени. Їхня місіонерська діяльність була спрямована на зміцнення позицій Римо-Католицької Церкви. Водночас тамтешні римо-католицькі монастирі відігравали провідну роль у пропагуванні та утвердженні культурно-мистецьких набутоків західної цивілізації, зокрема художніх надбань доби бароко. Вони були місцем, де працювали видатні орденські митці – архітектори, художники, скульптори. З'ясовано, що творчий доробок окремих представників їхнього мистецького кола, зокрема домініканця Гіларія Хоєцького, бригідки Йоанни Потіївни, єзуїта Ієнатія Барча, піара Кароля (Лукаша) Гюбеля, а також тринітарія Яна (Йосифа) Прехтля є яскравим прикладом привнесення на вітчизняний ґрунт культурно-мистецьких набутоків західної цивілізації. Підсумовано, що Україна, завдяки праці сотень західноєвропейських діячів освіти, архітекторів, художників, письменників, творча доля яких тісно була пов'язана з католицькими чернечими орденами, стала не лише країною, яка впродовж віків накопичувала і зберігала культурні надбання власного народу, але й поступово включалася у загальноєвропейський процес творення нового.

Ключові слова: Річ Посполита, римо-католицький орден, художня діяльність, сакральне мистецтво, бароко.

The Problem Statement. With the emergence of the independent state of Ukraine on the political map of the world and with the emergence of new socio-political realities, the need for a radical revision of established approaches to assessing the national cultural and artistic heritage became relevant. Primarily, it is due to the fact that traditional views on Ukraine's geographical boundaries, components and stylistic features, as well as basic theoretical principles, conceptual positions and directions were formed during the unfavourable times of statelessness, under conditions of an ideological dictatorship and the party voluntarism of the Soviet era. The change of the geopolitical status of the Ukrainian lands, legitimization of the Ukrainians as a self-sufficient national community, equal to other European nations caused the need for rethinking of common stereotypes and the development of new views on the entire artistic heritage of the nation, new approaches to the periodization and expansion of the geography of the Ukrainian artistic heritage, without restricting it to the administrative boundaries of modern Ukraine (Skrypyuk, 2008, p. 3).

Among these tasks there became topical the need to return from being forgotten the lost pages of the history of the Ukrainian art, the memory of artistic achievements was made a taboo by the totalitarian system, and artistic achievements themselves were for a long time removed from the artistic heritage of the nation. We mean, in particular, the artistic heritage

of the Roman Catholic monastic orders, the achievements of which for a long time were deliberately levelled first by the Russian autocracy and later by the Soviet authorities. One of the consequences of this was that “In the darkness of the past there remained the names of domestic and invited artists from other countries – the creators of the sacred space of Catholic churches”, which eventually led to “erasing in people’s minds the value of giant work in the history of national art” (Ursu, 2006, p. 10).

The Analysis of Recent Researches. In modern domestic art history the evidence of actualization of artistic achievements of Roman Catholic orders in Ukraine are, in particular, the researches of Peter Rychkov (Rychkov, 1989) and Natalia Ursu (Ursu, 2006). Polish historiography in this context has a more significant array of researches. The subject of scientific attention of Ioannina Dzik (Dzik, 2015) and Róże Jodłowska (Jodłowska, 1962 – 1964) was the study of the creative path of individual representatives of the artistic circle of Roman Catholic orders, which functioned in the eastern territories of the Commonwealth, in particular, in Volyn. Thorough works of well-known Polish art critics Edward Rastawiecki (Rastawiecki, 1850) and Thaddeus Dobrowolski (Dobrowolski, 1948) contain both valuable factual material on various aspects of the artistic activity of the Order’s artists, and a number of important analytical generalizations about its stylistic features. The source base of the study was the fundamental publication of the Institute of Arts of the Polish Academy of Sciences “Dictionary of Polish and foreign artists...” (Słownik, 1971; Słownik, 2003; Słownik, 2007), where biographical data and characteristics of the creative work of the Polish artists during the XVth – the middle of the XXth centuries are represented.

The purpose of the research consists in the analysis of the essence and direction of artistic activity of the Roman Catholic monastic orders, characteristics of the circle of artists, who worked in the Ukrainian and Belorussian lands of the Commonwealth during the XVIIth – XVIIIth centuries, as well as the characteristics of their creative work.

The Statement of the Basic Material. In the middle of the XVIth century the wide spread of the Reformation and social movements, which took place against the Reformation’s background, led to resistance and a general offensive of the forces of the feudal Catholic reaction, which was called the Counter-Reformation (Lat. *contra* – against, *reformatio* – reformation). Its task was, on the one hand, to stop the onset of the Protestant Reformation and, on the other, – to complete the renewal of the Roman Catholic Church. The quintessence of the Counter-Reformation was the Council of Trent (1545 – 1563), which declared any deviation from Catholicism – a heresy. During the Council, in particular, a number of resolutions were adopted on the activities of monastic orders.

As monastic orders were entrusted with a special mission in the struggle against Protestantism, it was during this time that the renewal of existing and active formation of a number of new monastic communities took place. In 1540 the Roman Catholic Jesuit order was founded (“Society of Jesus”). In 1525 the Order of the Capuchins was founded, in 1527 – the Order of the Theatines, in 1530 – the Order of the Barbanites and Ursulians, in 1535 – the Order of the Oratorians, in 1537 – the Order of the Bonifratrri, in 1617 – the Order of the Piarists, in 1633 – the society of apostolic life or sharytok, etc. They expanded their activities not only in Western Europe, but also in the Ukrainian and Belorussian lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and later – the Commonwealth.

In this regard, it should be noted that the less well-known but not less important consequence of the Council of Trent was its decrees concerning religious art. In particular, at the Council it was proclaimed that not only education but also art should be used to explain the

dogmas of the faith. To achieve this goal, religious art was required to be direct, emotionally persuasive, powerful, focused on the spiritual imagination, and it should inspire the person, who contemplates religious art, to even more piety.

All these tasks were successfully performed by a new artistic style – Baroque, which was, according to the French medieval scholar E. Malia, “The highest embodiment of the ideas of Christian art” (Vlasov, 2000, p. 562). Being closely connected with the ideology of Catholicism and the Counter-Reformation movement, Baroque embodied the same features that were peculiar to the religious worldview: increased expressiveness, mysticism, illusionism, immateriality. Therefore, precisely because of the combination of Baroque art forms with the official ideology of the Vatican, this style is also called “Jesuit” (Vlasov, 2000, p. 575). At the same time, it was also called because of the very representatives of the Catholic orders, especially the Jesuits, who promoted and affirmed it in every possible way.

The evidence of this promotion is the artistic heritage of the Roman Catholic monastic orders in the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands of the Commonwealth, the pages of the history of which the researchers try to return from oblivion nowadays, collecting information, literally, pieces by pieces. In this context, the information presented by the author contains important empirical material.

Thus, in the XVIIth century Hilary Khoyetsky, a monk of the Dominican Order, lived in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and created in the field of oil painting. Nowadays very little information is preserved about him. It is known that Hilary Khoyetsky was the author of the icon painting “Holy Family”, which until 1939 was in the fund collection of the Museum of Grodno. At the same time, experts hypothetically associate his name with paintings of a completely secular nature, dating from 1636 – 1645, which were found in one of Grodno’s Catholic monasteries. These are “Portrait of Marshal of the Great Lithuanian Krzysztof Veselowski”, “Portrait of Gryselda Veselowska”, and “Portrait of Alexandra of Sobieski Veselowska” (Słownik, 1971, p. 329), which are now the part of the collection of the National Art Museum of the Republic of Belarus in Minsk.

The Roman Catholic Monastic Order of the Brigids, whose activities were closely connected with the book – not only with its study, but also with the book’s copying and artistic design, also had its artistic achievements in the Commonwealth. In particular, the nun of the Order of Brigids, which had its headquarters in Brest, was Joanna Potiivna, the daughter of the mayor of Brest, Adam Poti, who occupied the post of a commander of the royal troops in 1664. Joanna Potiivna was recorded in the register of outstanding artists of that time as a well-known scriptwriter and illuminator. Thus, it is known that she, together with another nun, Constance Kropinska, copied and illustrated the books on church singing, in particular, “Antiphonies” for the monasteries in Sokal (1707) and Brest (1720) (Słownik, 2003, p. 333).

At that time, the reputation of a highly qualified master of wood gained a representative of the Jesuit order – Ignatius Barch (or Barsch) (July 27, 1697 – July 5, 1753). In the archival documents he is mentioned as a skilled craftsman, a good connoisseur of woodworking (“*arcularius, opificio arcarius fabriliumque e ligno operum artifex peritus*”) (Słownik, 1971, p. 100).

It is known that on September 4, 1720, in Krakow, Ignatius Barch joined the Jesuit Order, and for the next 5 years (1720 – 1725), while being at the local cathedral of St. Stephen, he served as a carpenter. He worked in the Jesuit collegiums in Brest (1725 – 1728), Kalisz (1728 – 1730) and Piotrkow Trybunalski (1730 – 1731) as a carpenter as well. In 1731 he

was sent to the Lithuanian province of the Jesuit Order. Finally, Ignatius settled in Vilnius at the cathedral of St. John. In Vilnius he performed extensive work on furnishing both the Roman Catholic cathedral and its collegium, the premises of which were damaged by a series of fires. Thus, there is information that during 1733 – 1736 and 1738 – 1744 Ignatius worked on the artistic decoration of the theatre hall of the local Jesuit collegium. In 1744, he finished the artistic decoration of a wooden construction for the seating of the clergy, who sat in the presbytery during prayers or important cathedral meetings. In 1752 he finished the work on the decorative design of the premises of the Jesuit collegium, namely, the laboratory of experimental physics and the library. It should be noted that Vilnius period of Ignatius Barch's work in the field of wood carving was highly appreciated by experts, as evidenced by the fact that his artistic achievements were included into the striking examples of Vilnius Baroque of the XVIIIth century (Słownik, 1971, p. 100).

In his work "Polish portrait painting. From studies on the art of the Sarmatian era" (Краків, 1948) an authoritative Polish art critic T. Dobrowolski provides the data on the activities of monks and artists in the Commonwealth. In particular, for the XVIIIth century T. Dobrowolski defines the following leading circle of artists of the Order: the Anthony Vengzhynovych – a reformer, the Dominicans – Casimir Tsisovsky and Bernard Voshchinsky, the Basilians – Anthony, Lukasz Gubel, the Carmelite – Gregoz Tchaikovsky, the Bernardines – Benedict Mazurkiewicz and Valenty Zhebravsky, the Jesuit – Andrzej Ahorn and the Trynitarian Joseph Precht (Dobrowolski, 1948, pp. 164–165).

Karol Hubel (in monasticism – Father Łukasz, in Polish – *Karol (Łukasz Hubel or Hübel, Huebel, Hybel)*) was born on January 19, 1722 in Świdnica, a small town in Silesia. It is known that on August 24, 1748, Karol Hubel joined the Order of Piarists, under the monastic name Łukasz, and the following month, in September 1748, he was sent to the novitiate in Lyubeshiv in Volyn. It was there that for the next few years he worked on the interior decoration of Lyubeshiv Collegium of the Piarists (Rastawiecki, 1850, pp. 199–200).

The works of art painted by Karol Hubel in Lyubeshiv Piarist's center occupy a prominent place in his artistic career. Thus, from 1751 to 1754, he painted the wall of his monastery refectory with oil paints, which included the compositions depicting Saints Joseph de Calasans and Anthony of Padua, as well as Our Lady of Sorrows. It is known that other premises of Lyubeshiv Collegium were decorated with his works "Holy Family" (after Raphael), "Saint Joseph de Calasans Accepts the Vows of the Novice Skomorowski", "Saint Joseph – the Elected with the Baby Jesus", "Saint Michael – the Archangel Defeats the Evil Spirit", "Saint Jerome", "Saint Augustine", "Saint Mary Magdalene", "Saint John the Evangelist", "Saint Peter the Apostle". In the premises of the rector of Lyubeshiv Collegium there were portraits painted by Karol Hubel: Saint Francis, Saint Joseph de Calasans, Saint Elizabeth, as well as the portraits of the Polish Kings Jan III and Stanislaw August. On the walls of the corridors of Lyubeshiv monastery, there were found oil portraits of Joseph de Calasans, the provincials of the Order and prominent Piarists, as well as 15 landscapes of Lyubeshiv area and scenes of a rural life (Rastawiecki, 1850, pp. 201–202).

Karol Hubel created in the style of the late Baroque. It is noteworthy that his paintbrush included not only paintings on religious themes, but also compositions of a secular content. The evidence of this is the fact that his artistic work contained a number of portraits of both cathedral figures, such as provincials and well-known members of the Order of the Piarists and prominent politicians. The latter include, first of all, the portraits of the Polish kings Jan III Sobieski and Stanislaw August Poniatowski, and according to some researchers,

the portrait of the Russian Tsar Peter III. In addition, Karol Hubel was also the author of landscapes and pastorals (Jodłowska, 1962 – 1964, pp. 124–125).

In 1755 Karol Hubel was sent to the Piarists center in Dubrovysia, where the work on the construction of the brick buildings of the cathedral and collegium premises had been recently finished. It should be noted that the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist (1742), which was the part of the architectural ensemble of the monastic center of public relations in Dubrovysia, was a vivid embodiment of the best achievements of Western European late Baroque architecture. The Cathedral, as well as other Piarist sacred buildings in Volyn, in particular, the Cathedral of Saint Anthony of Padua in Mezhyrich Koretsky (1725), according to Peter Rychkov, are illustrative examples of the Catholic cathedrals of Baroque architecture, which was actively established in Western Ukraine by the monastic orders, in this case – by the Piarists (Rychkov, 1989, p. 31).

Of all the picturesque images of the Dubrovysia Piarist Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist, only one fresco survived till nowadays. The fresco is located in the central part of the apsis of the cathedral. Rectangular in shape, the size of 4,65 x 1,97 m, it recreates the scene of Baptism of Jesus Christ by John in the Jordan River. Its author is Karol Hubel. It should be noted that of all his artistic achievements in the lands of Volyn, only this painting survived in the interior of the former Piarist cathedral, and nowadays – the parochial Roman Catholic Cathedral in Dubrovysia.

260 years ago, Jan (Joseph) Prechtl, an outstanding artist of Austrian origin, a monk of the Trinitarian order, began working in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, decorating the local cathedrals with frescoes for the next 40 years.

Jan (Joseph) Prechtl (Prächtl, Prestl) – an artist, a monk of the Order of the Trinitarians, his monastic name – Joseph of Saint Teresa (born in 1737, Vienna – died in 1799, Brailov). Jan (Joseph) Prechtl belongs to the circle of prominent, but little-known artists of the XVIIIth century. This is primarily due to the fact that the vast majority of his works of art, which adorned the cult buildings of monastic complexes of the Roman Catholic Orders in the lands of the Right Bank Ukraine, were destroyed during World War II and the Soviet totalitarian regime.

Jan Prechtl received his art education at the Academy of Arts in Vienna. After that, for unknown reasons, he moved to the south-eastern part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, namely to Berestechko in Volyn. It is known that there on March 6, 1758 he joined the Roman Catholic Order of the Trinitarians (Dzik, 2015, p. 246).

Jan Prechtl worked, primarily, for cathedrals and monasteries of the Catholic Order of the Trinitarians, but experts also know about his ornament work in the sacred buildings of other Roman Catholic Orders. Father – Joseph was the only known Trinitarian artist of the second half of the XVIIIth century in the south-eastern part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. He was extremely hardworking. That is why, he left behind a huge artistic output.

Thus, to his paintbrush belong about 30 large religious paintings, illustrating the circumstances of the life of the founders of the Order of the Trinitarians, Jan of Mafi and Felix de Valois of the Order Cathedral (Lutsk), the icon of Saint Michael in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul (Vilno), the frescoes on the walls and vaults, as well as 16 altar icons in the Trinitarian Cathedral (Berestechko), the fresco ornament, as well as 20 large paintings in the monastery corridors (Braille), the wall paintings and altar icons in the parochial Cathedral of Holoby (in Volyn), the fresco decor in the Trinitarian Cathedral in Kamianets-Podilskyi, as well as artistic decoration of the Dominican Cathedral in Sharovky (nowadays – Sharivka) in Podillya and the Chatsky palace in Boremlya, in Volyn (Słownik, 2007, pp. 10–11).

According to the Polish researcher J. Dzik, Jan Prechtl perfectly mastered the artistic techniques of creating the illusion of space, depicted perspective brilliantly, as well as composed large planes freely. His virtuosity is also evidenced by the fact that his frescoes on the vaults were marked by the lightness of the Rococo style, but his religious paintings were created in the best traditions of the Baroque style (Dzik, 2015, p. 246).

An analysis of Jan Prechtl's paintings preserved till nowadays, namely, the illusionist altars, frescoes on vaults and religious paintings, gives grounds to conclude not only about his high skill level in the execution, but also the original style of this artist, whose work has its own compositional and stylistic features (Dzik, 2015, p. 254). One of the evidences of his talent was the following fact: in 1787 King Stanislaw August of Poland visited Brailov on purpose, where Jan Prechtl stayed at that time, to get acquainted with the creative work of this outstanding artist. The admiration of the monarch after meeting the painter, as well as the positive reviews of experts are explained, in particular, by the fact that the works of Father Joseph were characterized by "a perfect acquaintance with the rules of spatial illusion and masterful freedom of composition" (Słownik, 2007, p. 11).

The Conclusions. The Roman Catholic Orders occupy a special place in the history of religion and church in the territory of the Commonwealth, which included Volyn and Podillya during the second half of the XVIth – the end of the VIIIth century. Undoubtedly, their missionary work was aimed at strengthening the position of the Roman Catholic Church, however, at the same time the local Roman Catholic monasteries played a leading role in promoting and affirming the cultural and artistic heritage of the Western civilization, including the artistic heritage of the Baroque era. They were the place where outstanding artists of the Order worked – architects, artists, sculptors, whose activities became a significant factor not only of Western European influence on the cultural and artistic life of the eastern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but also the process of intensive development of a national art. Thus, owing to the work of hundreds of Western European educators, architects, artists, writers, whose creative destiny was closely connected with the Catholic monastic orders, Ukraine became not only the country, which over the centuries accumulated and preserved the cultural heritage of its own people, but also gradually became involved into the European process of creating something new. The author considers the **prospects** for further researches in this direction – the return from oblivion of the names of prominent architects, artists, sculptors from the environment of the Order's monasticism, as well as the revitalization of their artistic works.

Acknowledgments. The author of the article is grateful to the staff of the library of the Polish Academy of Arts and the Polish Academy of Sciences in Krakow (the Republic of Poland), who kindly helped to find the information necessary for the realization of the author's idea.

Funding. The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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*The article was received on November 21, 2019.
Article recommended for publishing 26/08/2020.*