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Group rituals of Brotherhood of Saint Luc

Last year I presented a short speech about my PhD project. It concentrated on the theatricalisation of life in the artists' colony in Kazimierz Dolny during the interwar period. Since the last forum, after meetings with my doctoral supervisor and wide research in the Polish archives I have decided to change a little bit the direction, to concentrate on a artistic group that can show it specific in European context. All that appeared because of the exhibition of Antoni Michalak, that I am organising in charge of Lublin Museum, as member of staff in National Museum in Warsaw.

Michalak was a member of Brotherhood of Saint Luc. During the preparations for his monographic exhibition we found a lot of interesting materials that describe their group rituals - photography, memories, paintings, sketches and even a photos taken from the surrealist film. All that documental material is lightly studied by the Polish art history. This group, even very prominent in the interwar period, is forgotten because of the "traditionalist" label given to them by the avantgarde supporters. The paradox is that the Brotherhood of Saint Luc made traditional art - figurative, thematic, based on the Old Masters like Frans Hals or Caravaggio, but in group rituals they were very close to their avantgarde colleagues. In my dissertation I would study those group rituals and compare them the other artists' group in those times, especially in artists' colonies in Europe, but also for e.g. cabarets. I would search for the roots of group myths, masks, poses, roles.

The innovation of my research is not only the subject, but also the use of methodological tools that fit the artistic groups, tools that are close to sociology, used by, among others, by Georg Simmel or prof. Małgorzata Leyko.