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Castles, Horses and Angels. Noble Patrons, Earthly Knowledge and Heavenly Wisdom in the Oeuvre of Tomasz Makowski (ca 1575 - ca 1630)

My project aims to explore the significant, but still neglected oeuvre of Tomasz Makowski (ca 1575 - ca 1630) – the Polish printmaker and one of the first local engravers. The objective is not only to elaborate on the rise of engraving in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, but also and above all to investigate the function of prints in the transmission of knowledge.

Makowski's prints cover a vast array of topics: **geography, current events and political propaganda** e.g. views of Lithuanian towns, the map of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; **horse breeding and equitation** – illustrations in *Hippica to iest o koniach Xsiegi*; **religion** – illustrations in *De Santctis Angelis Libellus*. His main patron was Krzysztof Mikołaj 'the Orphan' Radziwiłł – one of the most prominent magnates and the best-educated people in the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth.

What was Makowski's role as a designer and printmaker in the light of the local development of the engraver profession? Answering it will enable us to gain exceptional benefit of studying his oeuvre which is understanding of the mechanisms of implementing the new technique – that is engraving – in the peripheral regions of Europe. Eastern Europe, as underexplored as it is, appears likely to bring a new perspective on the functions of prints and also to shed fresh light on the criteria for evaluating artistic production. For instance, it seems plausible that Makowski's Polish patrons considered his works as exceptional for the technique of engraving as much as for the quality or informative value of designs. To understand patrons' positions and influence on Makowski's prints and to reconstruct the whole process of creating the impressions it is necessary to address another question: **What was Makowski's network – including his patrons and publishers, scholars, and fellow printmakers?** The final question is: **What was Makowski's contribution to different fields of knowledge, most notably geography of Central and Eastern Europe, zoology, and religion?** The study of selected Makowski's works will bring various additions to the history of early modern geography and zoology in Eastern Europe.

My project is empirically oriented. The research on Makowski's oeuvre will primarily consist of scrutiny of his prints, which also involves comparisons with works by other contemporary artists; and also of analyses of written sources. Seeing the works and archival sources will not be always possible due to their supposed location – some of them are stored e. g. in Belarus. This situation exemplifies how current political affairs influence research and could be seen as typical of studying Eastern European art now.

The theoretical framework of the project is informed by Michael Baxandall's seminal concept of the 'period eye' – a method that includes a choice of sources from the examined epoch, which makes a researcher conscious about the way of looking and considering art objects of those times. This classical concept still remains relevant for any kind of research that touches on the social and epistemic background of artistic production. In Makowski's case this entails enquiries into such specific factors as the intellectual and artistic background of his patrons, the artistic conventions widespread in their milieu, technical conditions and constraints and the mechanisms of production and transfer of knowledge. Applying the method, by focusing on the concrete factors mentioned above, will be the base for a better understanding of local production and reception of prints. The chosen methodological approach will give an opportunity to describe the Eastern European way of considering prints. Comparing it with other regions will enable us to answer whether there was a kind of Polish Lithuanian 'period eye' which differed from other parts of the continent.