

Małgorzata Jarczewska-Podejma

AESTHETIC VIEWS OF KONSTANTY MARIA GÓRSKI

Summary

In an innovative doctoral dissertation, the author takes up the hitherto unexplored topic of the aesthetic views of Konstanty Maria Górski (1862-1909). The results of the research are largely based on numerous manuscripts and a few scientific studies, thanks to which she discovers the figure of a comprehensively gifted poet, an excellent short story writer and a brilliant theater critic, and finally a respected lecturer in the history of painting and architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow and the head of the Polish Library in Paris. The author refers to the classification of Zdzisław Piasecki, according to which he qualifies Górski to the second generation of Polish positivists. The author proves that Górski was an arbiter of elegantiarum, but he remained in the shadow of other artists of the late 19th century. Although he created in the years 1878-1904, during the period of positivism and Young Poland, he did not succumb to the moods of the latter era, did not influence it and functioned socially in it.

This work introduces Górski's ties with influential intellectuals, journalists and artists of the late 19th century. The work uses Górski's correspondence, selected from a twelve-volume epistolography in the collections of the Jagiellonian Library in Krakow, which is an illustration of his aesthetic tastes and friendships.

The dissertation also deals with the topic of his friendship with Helena Modrzejewska, Jacek Malczewski, Józef Chełmoński, Józef Weyssenhoff and the topic of theatrical criticism practised by Górski.

In the doctoral dissertation, the ideas of European Philhellenism were referred to, which were an inspiration for Polish (Romantic) Philhellenism, and references to the correspondence of arts: literature and fine arts (painting and sculpture), which are reflected in the artistic criticism of Górski, devoted to European and Polish art at the end of the 19th century; all are related to his aesthetic views. Showing Górski's connections with the Age of Enlightenment completes the knowledge of his aesthetic tastes.

The author conducted scientific research inspired by the so far unpublished literary works of *Statues. Unscientific sketch, Changeover, Our Times, Civil Courage* (original titles: *Posągi*.

Szkic nienaukowy, Odmiana, Nasze czasy, Odwaga cywilna), as well as a published collection of poems and a published short story entitled *The Bibliomaniac (Biblioman)*. Their content reveals the aesthetic taste of Górski, who equipped the literary heroes he created with the ability to experience the surrounding reality aesthetically. In this way, he revealed the precursorship of narratives about artists typical of Young Poland. Among these attitudes we find sensitivity to the beauty of ancient Greek art of the classical period, we find references to European Philhellenism and the development of Philhellenism in Poland; we set off on a European Grand Tour of German museums and painting galleries abroad and in the country, thanks to which we get to know works of old art (especially ancient and Renaissance) and that from the end of the 19th century, heralding new trends in European and Polish art. Works in the field of art criticism reveal the clear predilections of Górski, who appreciated painters of the Quattrocento, preferred impressionistic and landscape painting, as well as painting inspired by nature and mythological scenes and the aquatic motif; he did not identify with Ryszard Wagner's aesthetic concept and his idea of a total work. As a Philhellen, and at the same time a supporter of the Apollonian idea promoting fine arts, he was faithful to the assumptions of old art. Such an attitude precluded Górski from being interested in the Dionysian attitude proclaimed by Friedrich Nietzsche.

The literary works by Górski cited by the author illustrate the evolution of his aesthetic views. In *Selected Poems (Wiersze wybrane)* an image of Hellas was presented in relation to ritual rituals and mythological contexts. In the youthful comedies *Our Times (Nasze czasy)* and *Civil Courage (Odwaga cywilna)* as well as the short story *The biblioman (Biblioman)*, there was a bold assessment of the situation of Poland at that time against the European background. They also featured: Romantic Philhellenism, corresponding to the works of Adam Mickiewicz, Juliusz Słowacki, Zygmunt Krasiński, and the activity of Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, as well as an interest in Byzantineism and Pan-Slavism with a hint of Mickiewicz.

In this doctoral dissertation, the author takes up the topic of the influence of Herman Grimm's views on Górski's interest in the art of ancient Greece of the classical period, which turned into a cult of the beauty of ancient Greece and into a fascination with European Philhellenism, shaped under the influence of the works of Johann Wolfgang Goethe, the education reform of Wilhelm von Humboldt, the literature of Georg Gordon Byron, the ideals of ancient Greece based on Pausanias and the aesthetics of Johann Joachim Winckelmann, who opened the fashion for Philhellenism in the 18th century. Opinions expressed by literary heroes correspond with the aesthetic views and biography of Górski – an aristocrat.