

I Schongauer's Echo in the Polish *Herbal* of 1568 by Marcin Siennik

The beginnings of printmaking in the Kingdom of Poland continue to raise more questions than answers among researchers – and it is a result of many circumstances, not only of the fact that only some of the early prints that can be associated with Poland have been preserved.¹ Even a selective review of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century written sources reveals a significant presence of prints in Poland² – however, neither the scale of such phenomenon nor the number of these mentioned “sets” of prints can be precisely determined. Furthermore, such accessibility of prints (most of which probably originated abroad) might have contributed, to a certain extent, to the delayed development of printmaking in Poland.³ The analysis of graphic prototypes of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Polish art remains still the best source of information on the local “collections” of prints during those times. Such investigations show not only the diversity of the models used, but also the popularity of that practice in different areas of artistic production. Although many publications have been devoted to this subject,⁴ there is still no comprehensive, monographic study.

Martin Schongauer's engravings have constituted an important source of inspiration for Polish art since the 1480s.⁵ Just like in other countries, Schongauer's models were mainly used in religious works, the majority of which had been executed by the 1520s.⁶ The woodcut illustration (**fig. 1**) included in the herbal entitled *Herbarz to iest ziół tutecznych, postronnych y zamorskich opisaniu* [Herbal or a Description of Local, Foreign and Overseas Herbs] – a book compiled

¹ For example the activity of Krakow playing-card makers is known only from written sources. See *Cracovia impressorum XV et XVI saeculorum*, Joannes Ptaśnik, ed. (Leopoli: sumptibus Instituti Ossoliniani, 1922), nos 80, 84, 95–8, 110, 123, 126. *Monumenta Poloniae typographica XV et XVI saeculorum*, vol. 1; *Cracovia artificum 1300–1500*, Jan Ptaśnik, ed., nos 1346, 1364. *Źródła do Historii Sztuki i Cywilizacji w Polsce*, vol. 4.

² A good example is the last will and testament of the famous Krakow goldsmith Marcin Marcinek drawn up on 18 August 1517, in which, among the items left in the legacy to his grandson, he lists: “alle kunst am bley ader peppir geschniczten pilder.” See *Cracovia artificum 1501–1550*, compiled by Jan Ptaśnik, edited by Marian Friedberg (Krakow: Państwowa Akademia Umiejętności, 1936), no. 379. *Źródła do Historii Sztuki i Cywilizacji w Polsce*, vol. 5, fasc. 1.

³ A similar situation can, to a certain extent, be seen in book editions dating from that time (many significant works were published in printing houses of Mainz, Nuremberg, Leipzig, Metz or Strasbourg). See Zofia Ameisenowa, *Rękopisy i pierwodruki iluminowane Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1958), pp. 153–5.

⁴ For the bibliography see Adam S. Labuda, “Les gravures de Schongauer et l'art gothique tardif en Pologne,” in *Le beau Martin. Études et mises au point. Actes du colloque organisé par le musée d'Unterlinden à Colmar les 30 septembre, 1er et 2 octobre 1991*, Albert Châtelet, ed. (Colmar: Musée d'Unterlinden, 1992), pp. 285–97.

⁵ Labuda, *Les gravures de Schongauer...*, op. cit., pp. 288ff.

⁶ See Pantxika Béguerie, “Postérité de Martin Schongauer,” in *Le beau Martin...*, op. cit., pp. 453ff.

by Marcin Siennik and published in Krakow in 1568 by Mikołaj Szarfenberg⁷ – proves for how long Schongauer's prints continued to inspire. This publication, dedicated to the castellan of Sanok, Jan Herbut of Fulsztyn, was planned – as indicated in the foreword – as a study embracing the latest achievements in the fields of healing and medical knowledge. However, the edition of the herbal turned out to be so costly that finally – for financial reasons – this ambitious undertaking was only limited to a kind of “improvement” (based on the works by Piero Andrea Mattioli, Valerius Cordus, Hieronim Bock, Leonard Fuchs and others) of another earlier Polish work on the same subject. This source was a herbal by Hieronim Spiczyński, entitled *O ziołach tutecznych y zamorskich y mocy ich* [On Local and Overseas Herbs and their Powers], first published in Krakow in 1542 by Ungler's widow, and secondly, in 1556, by Marek Szarfenberg's heirs. Spiczyński's work itself was a kind of rewriting of Stefan Falimirz's herbal – *O ziołach y mocy ich* [On Herbs and their Powers] – published by Florian Ungler in Krakow in 1534. All these three publications are an excellent example of the trend for illustrated works connected with healing and medical knowledge that flourished so dramatically in the sixteenth century, and – moreover – they constitute also the essential group of the oldest health guides written in the Polish language.⁸

It would appear that the illustrations in Siennik's work are mainly re-used illustrations from those two earlier Polish herbals, which derive, among others, from the woodcut illustrations of famous *Hortus sanitatis* (especially the Mainz edition of 1491 by Johann Meydenbach, and the Strasbourg edition by Johann Prüss the Elder from the early sixteenth century). However, the woodcut, which is the subject of this investigation, presents surprisingly individual endeavour. It illustrates a chapter devoted to boars, and turns out to be a transposition of an engraving by Martin Schongauer, *The Pig Family* (L. 91, **fig. 2**). In the mentioned woodcut we can find three “quotations” from Schongauer's print, and they are all presented in mirror reflection:⁹ the sitting sow with a piglet, and a pair of piglets from the foreground of Schongauer's engraving, to which a third piglet was added, being a reversed reflection of the piglet which in Schongauer's engraving is seen behind the standing boar. The woodcut transposition lacks the rich chiaroscuro of Schongauer's engraving – this fact can be partially explained by a change of the graphic technique.

⁷ *Drukarze dawnej Polski od XV do XVIII wieku*, vol. 1: *Małopolska*, part 1: *Wiek XV–XVI*, Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa, ed. (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1983), pp. 274ff.

⁸ Such a prestigious fact resulted in early research dealing with these publications – the first investigations dated already from the early nineteenth century. Herbals were mentioned by Józef Maksymilian Ossoliński and Joachim Lelewel, who discussed their affiliations. Later they were mainly analysed by historians of natural sciences. See J. Kołodziejczyk, “W poszukiwaniu źródeł do botanicznej księgi herbarza Stefana Falimirza,” *Archiwum Historii Medycyny*, vol. 20, nos 1–2 (1957), pp. 35–44; Jan Szostak, “Zielnik Stefana Falimirza z 1534 roku,” *Ze skarbca kultury*, fasc. 28 (1977); Jan Szostak, *Farmakognozja, farmacja galenowa i aptekarstwo w renesansowych zielnikach polskich* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Lekarskie PZWL, 2006) – which gives a comprehensive bibliography of works on the subject. See also Ellen K. Shaffer, *The garden of health. An account of two herbals, the Gart der Gesundheit and the Hortus sanitatis* (San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1957); Frank J. Anderson, *An illustrated history of the herbals* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977); Agnes Arber, *Herbals. Their origin and evolution. A chapter in the history of botany 1470–1670* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); David Landau, Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print 1470–1550* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 245ff.

⁹ It is worth noting that a woodcut by Hans Baldung *Wild Horses* (B. 58; H. 240) was used in an analogous manner in the herbal by Siennik. Motifs and parts of the composition were shifted around. For example, the foreground depicting two horses was utilized, to which the horse's croup from the left of Baldung's composition was added (see the book from the collections of the National Museum in Warsaw, inv. no. SD 304 MNW, fol. 135 r.).

Schongauer's model used therein is extremely rare today.¹⁰ Researchers have different opinions regarding the interpretations of this engraving. For example, Alfer von Würzbach speculated that it may have been intended as a playing-card or a pattern for goldsmiths,¹¹ while in Alan Shestack's opinion,¹² Schongauer executed it "for his own pleasure." On the other hand, in the most recent publications it has been noted that the engraving, which comes from the mature period of the engraver's *œuvre*, might be associated with another Schongauer's engraving presenting St Anthony the Eremit (L. 53), made probably for the Antonite monastery at Isenheim.¹³ Such a hypothesis certainly gives *The Pig Family* a new, "non-genre" meaning: while it does not negate its novelty as the first "autonomous" study of that animalistic subject in the graphic arts, it emphasizes engraving's relations with Isenheim (close to Colmar), along with its monastery, hospital and pig farm. This can suggest that the print was executed with the interest in the observation of nature and, on the other hand, it also justifies a certain "idealization" in the depiction of the pig family.¹⁴

Despite or maybe because of the iconographical novelty of this engraving, it had insignificant impact on Schongauer's contemporaries as well as later: there are only two engraved copies, or rather free transpositions of it, mentioned in literature on the subject.¹⁵ In this context, woodcut illustration in Siennik's *herbal* seems to constitute an all the more interesting contribution to the reception of the art of *beau Martin*. Moreover, the use of Schongauer's model in the illustration of a work aspiring to be a kind of scientific manual anticipates a similar practice known from Conrad Gessner's *Historia animalium* (ed. Konrad Froschauer, Zurich 1583, fol. 144 r.), in which the images of the boar and sow were "borrowed" from Schongauer's engraving.¹⁶

Further analysis of the illustration in Siennik's *herbal* shows that Schongauer's engraving was not the only inspiration behind this composition. Another part of it, a man preparing to kill the pig he is holding, is also a reversed "quotation" taken from another graphic work. In this case, the prototype was a woodcut depicting Saturn and his "children" from the Seven Planet series (fig. 3). There is still controversy among researchers regarding the author of the mentioned work: it has been attributed either to Sebald Beham or to Georg Pencz.¹⁷ The

¹⁰ See Hollstein's *German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700. Ludwig Schongauer to Martin Schongauer*, vol. 49, compiled by Lothar Schmitt, edited by Nicholas Stogdon (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 1999), no. 91.

¹¹ Alfred von Würzbach, *Martin Schongauer: eine kritische Untersuchung seines Lebens und seiner Werke, nebst einem chronologischen Verzeichnisse seiner Kupferstiche* (Vienna: Manz, 1880), p. 114, no. 81.

¹² Alan Shestack, *Fifteenth Century Engravings of Northern Europe from the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.*, exh. cat., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 3 December 1967 – 7 January 1968 (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1967), cat. no. 89.

¹³ See Thomas Hirthe, "Zur Ikonographie im graphischen Werk Martin Schongauers," in *Martin Schongauer. Das Kupferstichwerk, Ausstellung zum 500. Todesjahr*, Tilman Falk and Thomas Hirthe, eds, exh. cat., Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, 11 September – 10 November 1991 (Munich: Staatliche Graphische Sammlung München, 1991), pp. 20–1; *The Illustrated Bartsch: Sixteenth Century German Artists*, vol. 8: *Commentary Part 1 (Le Peintre-Graveur 6 [Part 1])*, Jane Campbell Hutchison, ed. (Norwalk: Abaris Books, 1996), no. 91.

¹⁴ *The Illustrated Bartsch...*, op. cit., no. 91.

¹⁵ See Max Lehrs, *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, vol. 4 (Wien: Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst, 1921), p. 284, no. 93; Hollstein's *German...*, op. cit., vol. 49, no. 91; *The Illustrated Bartsch...*, op. cit., no. 91.

¹⁶ See *The Illustrated Bartsch...*, op. cit., no. 91.

¹⁷ See Hollstein's *German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts 1400–1700*, vol. 31, Tilman Falk, ed., compiled by Robert Zijlma (Amsterdam: Koninklijke van Poll, 1991), pp. 186–7, no. 89.

author of the Krakow woodcut used two more motifs from this print: the hanging, slaughtered pig (only partially visible), and the black cooking pot.

The complementing of Schongauer's "quotation," and the pig-slaughtering scene with the motif of a hearth with a saucepan hanging over the fire, and a leafless tree, poses the questions concerning another – would-be – model inspiring the author of this woodcut. Since, from the iconographical point of view, the entire composition is associated with activities carried out in the month of December, it is reasonable to raise the question, if the work must have been inspired directly by the prints of Schongauer and Pencz (or Beham). Or, was it possible that the author of the Krakow woodcut was only familiar with a certain transposition of these prints, dealing with calendar illustrations, which were undergoing rapid development in Krakow at that time? Such a supposition is not groundless – it is well known that calendar prints were often used as the sources for illustrations in all of the three Polish herbals. Moreover, this hypothesis can be forced by the fact, pointed out by Ewa Chojecka, that a number of Krakow calendars from this time have disappeared, and their illustrations are completely unknown.¹⁸

The use of Schongauer's engraving as a model is not surprising in the second half of the sixteenth century – at that time, a great number of printed copies of his works were made in the numerous artistic centres – among authors of such works one can mention Virgil Solis and Balthasar Jenichen in Nuremberg, then Peter Huis, Philips Galle, Hieronymus Wierix and Adriaen Huybrechts the Elder in Antwerp, as well as Raphael Mey in Cologne.¹⁹ However, the publishing houses in Krakow at that time preferred the models from the contemporary – that is the sixteenth century – German prints.²⁰ The origins of the illustrations in the books published by Mikołaj Szarfenberg,²¹ the editor of Siennik's herbal, were similar (e.g., his famous Bible of 1577 includes copies of illustrations by Jost Amman). In contrast, Siennik's heterogeneous boar constitutes a *curio* that is worthy of attention.

¹⁸ See Ewa Chojecka, "Krakowska grafika kalendarzowa i astronomiczna XVI wieku," in *Studia renesansowe*, vol. 3, Michał Walicki, ed. (Wrocław-Warsaw-Krakow: Państwowy Instytut Sztuki, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1963), pp. 319–482.

¹⁹ Another issue is the inspiration drawn from Schongauer's *œuvre*, which is presented in works by Hans Baldung and Hans Burgkmair the Elder, as well as the information provided by Vasari about the traces of Schongauer in works by the young Michelangelo. See Jane Campbell Hutchinson, "Schongauer Copies and Forgeries in the Graphic Arts," in *Le beau Martin...*, op. cit., p. 122; Stephan Kemperdick, "Nachfolge und Nachbilder," in idem, *Martin Schongauer. Eine Monographie* (Petersburg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2004), pp. 247ff. *Studien zur internationalen Architektur- und Kunstgeschichte*, 32.

²⁰ Apart from the constantly present inspirations taken from prints by Albrecht Dürer, the Little Masters, Hans Burgkmair, Erhard Schön, Hans Baldung and Hans Springinklee, an important source became, above all, the prints by such artists as Virgil Solis, Jost Amman, Tobias Stimmer. See Ewa Chojecka, "Sztrasburskie drzeworyty inkunabułowe w Krakowie XVI w.," *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, vol. 28, no. 1 (1966), pp. 32–6; Ewa Chojecka, "Polska grafika renesansowa. Stan i postulaty badań," in *Renesans. Sztuka i ideologia. Materiały Sympozjum Naukowego Komitetu Nauk o Sztuce PAN, Kraków, czerwiec 1972 oraz Sesji Naukowej Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki, Kielce, listopad 1973*, Tadeusz S. Jaroszewski, ed. (Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1976), pp. 551ff.

²¹ Mikołaj Szarfenberg (1519?–1606) came from a family of Silesian printers, his publishing house in Krakow was active in the period of 1565–1606. However, first he ran a publishing house together with his brother Stanisław (1546–1564) – a significant basis for their activities was the printing house and books bought in 1551, after the death of heirless Helena Ungler. See *Drukarze dawnej Polski...*, op. cit., pp. 264ff.