

Summary

ROMUALD KACZMAREK/ From Messina to Opava. About a probable wandering of Madonna from the museum in Opava

The figure of Enthroned Madonna in the museum in Opava (inventory number U 178 B) has been lately the subject of two analyses in the Czech literature, analyses of which the results have been discrepant. In the latter the author A. Mudra denied fairly the hitherto indicated Italian provenience of the sculpture as far as its style is concerned and its dating from the turn of the 14th c., he has proposed instead the second quarter of the 13th c. as the time of its origins. The main purpose of the article, however, is an attempt at explaining the information delivered by a donor of the relic to the museum, namely count Wilczek, indicating Messina on Sicily as a place of origin of this sculpture. This information, later on forgotten, initially was the basis for defining this Madonna as an artefact from Southern Italy from the time of "early Renaissance". Although this dating and stylistic description were false, it still seems to be probable that Wilczek had brought the sculpture from this Sicilian city. He might have obtained it while he was delivering help, together with Viennese Rettungsgesellschaft, to Catania and Messina, both destroyed by an earthquake in December of 1908. The figure bears distinct traces of sculpture originated in the German Empire in the second quarter of the 13th century. It might have reached Sicily during the rule of Frederic II over the island. As long as till 17th c. Messina could take pride in numerous revered Marian images. It is little probable that the sculpture obtained by Wilczek had been situated in this church or another as a revered figure till 1908. Quite surely it was earlier – maybe after the earthquake of 1783 – when the sculpture had been acquired by a local collector.