

Summary

KONRAD NIEMIRA (University of Warsaw) / Your money or your life, or why Jean-Pierre Norblin de la Gourdain left Paris

The subject of the article is the youth of the painter and illustrator Jean-Pierre Norblin de la Gourdain (1745–1830), and the circumstances that led him to enter the service of Princess Izabela Czartoryska and her husband Adam Czartoryski. Starting from a thorough examination of Norblin's earnings in Poland, I analyze the non-economic factors that have caused his move there. The hypothesis presented in the text assumes that one of them was the artist's difficult professional and social situation. In the first years of his stay in Paris, Norblin used to be associated with a circle of painters of low social renown. For almost a decade he was employed by Francesco Casanova, a painter who has been a controversial figure for both the Royal Academy and critics. He also failed to gain an influential patron or loyal clientele in the Academy circles. It seems that he had no prospects for not only making a career in Paris, but also for becoming independent of Casanova. Perhaps it was this social and professional stalemate that prompted him to undertake the "recruitment journey" via London and Spa, which eventually led him to Puławy and Warsaw.