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Anton Martin Lublinský, that is Karl Dankwart

A few words about the painting *Martin Středa* *as defender of Brno* and its author

Andrzej Kozieł

The painting Martin Středa as defender of Brno (Moravian Gallery in Brno) is the most monumental representation of the Jesuit Martin Středa / Stredonius (1587–1649), who won fame and the eternal gratitude of the citizens of Brno for his active participation in the defence of the city during the four-month siege by the Swedish army in 1645. Older authors saw Michael Willmann as the author of the painting. However, Milan Togner attributed this work to Anton Martin Lublinský (1636–1690). As it turns out today, the author of this monumental work was Karl Dankwart († 1704) – the author of numerous fresco decorations and oil paintings and court painter to the Polish king John III Sobieski. The authorship of this Silesian artist of Swedish origin is supported both by formal analogies and the provenance of the painting from the former Jesuit convent in Brno. Dankwart's painting of Father Středa was probably a part of the gallery of full-figure portraits of the founders and benefactors of the convent. We can assume that the picture was not the only work that Dankwart produced for the Jesuits of Brno.

Keywords: Martin Středa / Martin Stredonius; Anton Martin Lublinský; Karl Dankwart; Brno; baroque painting

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There is no doubt that the life and achievements of the Silesian Martin Středa / Stredonius made a lasting mark on the history of the city of Brno.¹ Born on 11 November 1587 in Gliwice in Upper Silesia, this Jesuit was associated with the Moravian capital from his very youth – not only did he make his novitiate in the local Jesuit monastery, but he also began his theological and philosophical studies there; these he later continued in Prague. Moreover, already as a Doctor of Philosophy (14 November 1622) and a renowned preacher, he twice held the honourable position of rector of the Jesuit college in Brno from 1627 to 1629 and 1641 to 1646. However, he won fame and the eternal gratitude of the citizens of Brno for his active participation in the defence of the city during the four-month siege by the Swedish army in 1645. At that time, he provided spiritual and organisational support to Colonel Jean-Louis Raduit de Souches (1608–1682), the commander of the city's defence, and with its inhabitants prayed for the town's salvation to the Virgin Mary through the miraculous paintings of the Virgin in the Augustinian Church of St Thomas (Our Lady of St Thomas) and the Jesuit Church of the Assumption of Mary (Our Lady of the Snows). When the Swedes were storming the city, he would appear on the walls among the defenders and lift their spirits with his prayers. The power of these was so great that there were witnesses who saw him almost hovering over the city. Moreover, during the last unsuccessful attack by the Swedes on 15 August 1645, a cannonball fired by them was said not to have hit the buildings of the town, but to have fallen harmlessly at his feet. This was interpreted as a sign of the attackers' helplessness; they abandoned the siege two days later.

What is important is that the memory of these admirable achievements of Father Středa was not only kept alive among his contemporaries, as evidenced by the

statement of the Brno City Council on 23 November 1671, which explicitly stated that “it was he who, with God’s help, defended the city of Brno”, but has also survived to the present day. This is best evidenced by the almost three-metre high full-figure statue of the defender of Brno by Jan Šebánek, erected on 15 August 2020 on the square in front of the Church of the Assumption of Mary in Brno,² and the motion to initiate the process of beatification of the heroic Jesuit, approved the following year (28 March 2021) by the Czech Bishops’ Conference.³

The importance of Father Středa for the city of Brno and the Bohemian Jesuit province led to the creation of representations of him soon after his death on 26 August 1649. The relatively rich iconography of the soon-to-be beatified has already been the subject of several studies, including excellent articles by Jan Royt and Petra Zelenková.⁴ Among the representations discussed in them, mainly graphic works of various kinds, the large-format painting *Martin Středa as defender of Brno* [Fig. 1] definitely stands out. It is undoubtedly the most monumental representation of the heroic Jesuit. The work, whose current owner is the Moravian Gallery in Brno, was painted in oil on canvas with dimensions of 232 × 137.5 cm. The painting refers directly to the miraculous events that took place during the defence of Brno against the Swedes in 1645. It shows Father Středa, dressed in a black Jesuit habit, kneeling and levitating above the Moravian capital, which was under siege by Swedish troops.⁵

As Petra Zelenková has shown, this monumental painterly representation was modelled on the graphic theses of a student at Charles University in Prague, Michael Elbel, which were prepared in 1689 by the Augsburg engraver Gabriel Ehinger (1652–1736) according to a drawing design by the distinguished Moravian artist Anton Martin Lublinský (1636–1690).⁶ The graphic representation was the source of both the overall composition of the painting and its individual motifs, such as the centrally situated kneeling figure of Father Středa, the veduta of the city of Brno with Swedish troops or the figures of saints and angels surrounding the Jesuit. Above him, two saints are depicted on the right-hand side: Methodius – symbolising the centuries-old presence of Christianity in Moravia, and Ignatius of Loyola – a sign of Středa’s religious affiliation. On the left there is an angel presenting the kneeling Jesuit with a cartouche in a laurel wreath with the now invisible monogram IHS and a medal with the image of Emperor Leopold I in a starry mandorla accompanied by Old Testament quotations inscribed on the banner around the cartouche and the angel (Job 11,17; Psalm 16,8).⁷

Earlier authors (Jan Tenora, Heinrich Albin, Moriz Wilhelm Trapp) saw Michael Willmann (1630–1706) himself as the author of the painting.⁸ However, Milan Tognier rejected this traditional attribution and attributed this work to Lublinský.⁹ The findings of the Olomouc art historian



1 – Karl Dankwart, *Martin Středa as defender of Brno*, around 1690. Moravian Gallery in Brno

were accepted by most later researchers.¹⁰ What is more, in the image of the man on the medal in the starry mandorla, even a crypto portrait of the artist was noticed.¹¹ Although the close compositional analogies of the painting with Elbel’s theses designed by Lublinský also seemed to support such authorship, over time doubts about this attribution began to appear in the works of some researchers.¹²

As it turns out today, these doubts were correct. Indeed, it is not Lublinský who is the author of this monumental work, but another outstanding artist, Karl Dankwart († 1704) – the son of a Swedish army colonel who settled in Nysa in Silesia in 1688, the author of numerous fresco decorations and oil paintings and court painter to the Polish King John III Sobieski.¹³ The authorship of this artist, trained in Moravia in the circle of Lublinský and Giovanni Giacomo Tencalla (1593–1653), is unambiguously supported both by general compositional analogies of the



2 – Karl Dankwart, **Apotheosis of Saint Nicolas**, around 1690. Żelazna near Opole, the parish church of Saint Nicolas



3 – Karl Dankwart, Johann Balthasar Liesch von Hornau, around 1693. Wrocław, the Historical Museum



4 – Karl Dankwart, **Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus**, 1688–1693. Jeseník, Vlastivědné muzeum Jesenicka

Brno representation with other works by the painter and characteristic Morellian anatomical details of the human figures depicted. The central composition with a supernaturally enlarged human figure shown against a background of clouds and a landscape surrounded by angels is often encountered in Dankwart's works, the best evidence

of which is the recently discovered painting *Apotheosis of St Nicolas* by the artist in the main altar in the parish church of St Nicolas in Želazna near Opole.¹⁴ [Fig. 2] On the other hand, the characteristic way of showing the faces of people and angels, with an elongated, almost triangular shape, with a straight nose and deep eye sockets, and with hair that

is often arranged in fancy curls, can almost be considered Dankwart's signature.¹⁵

The provenance of the painting also seems to point to its authorship. Although the work came into the collection of the former Franzensmuseum (today's Moravian Museum) in Brno in 1821 from a private collection as a gift of the councillor Franz Georg Eberl (1753–1837),¹⁶ as Tenora established, the original place of origin of the painting was the former Jesuit convent in Brno. This researcher even attempted to identify the commissioner of the work as the Brno Jesuit Wenceslaus Skodowsky (1637–1680) and to date the commissioning of the painting to 1678.¹⁷ Although the new attribution of the painting makes us strongly reject this suggestion for the commissioner and the time of its commissioning (the painting could have been created at the turn of the 1680s and 1690s at the earliest), it is most consistent with the Jesuit provenance of the work.

After settling in Nysa and starting to work for Silesian and Polish patrons, Dankwart accepted commissions from representatives of the Jesuit order from the Bohemian province, including convents in Moravia. His works known to us today include an impressive set of a dozen paintings on the main and side altars of the Church of St Michael the Archangel in Znojmo,¹⁸ four lost paintings from 1690 depicting the coronation of Joseph I as King of Rome, which decorated the façade of the Jesuit monastery in Olomouc, and the painting *Apotheosis of the foundation of the Jesuit convent in Olomouc* from the lunette of the Chapel of St Stanislaus in the Cathedral Church of St Wenceslas in Olomouc.¹⁹ As you can see, nothing would prevent this artist who was so closely connected to the Society of Jesus from accepting a commission from the monks of Brno to paint a representation of their local hero, Father Středa.

We do not know what function the painting of *Martin Středa as defender of Brno* performed in the building of the former Jesuit monastery in Brno. Unfortunately, this building, together with the college buildings, was demolished in 1904.²⁰ Its original furnishings have not been preserved either. Of the entire complex, only the stone portal from the so-called Cardinal Court (now moved to Mozart Street) has survived to the present day. It was fashioned by the sculptor Johann Caspar Pröbstl to a design by the archi-

tect Johann Baptist Erna (around 1625–1698). The portal was completed in 1690 and we can assume that it was not a single work, but a part of a larger project also related to the decoration and furnishing of the Jesuit College. Dankwart's painting of Father Středa was probably also part of this project and was probably added to the gallery of full-figure portraits of the founders and benefactors of the Jesuit monastery in Brno. Although we do not know any painting of this type from Brno, such depictions have survived from other Jesuit monasteries, such as Dankwart's portrait of Johann Balthasar Liesch von Hornau (1592–1661), the auxiliary bishop of Wrocław, from the former building of the Jesuit convent in Kłodzko²¹ (now the Historical Museum, Wrocław). [Fig. 3]

We can assume with a high degree of probability that the painting *Martin Středa as defender of Brno* was not the only work that Dankwart produced for the Jesuits of Brno – the most important Jesuit monastery in Moravia. The effect of the artist's collaboration with less significant Jesuit centres in Nysa, Kłodzko, Olomouc or Znojmo were groups of several to over a dozen oil paintings, and sometimes also sets of frescoes.²² The Silesian artist painted a lot and quickly in various techniques. It may have been similar in the case of Dankwart's cooperation with the Jesuits from Brno. This may have concerned not only his Jesuit patrons but also other ecclesiastical and secular clients from Bohemia and Moravia. Unfortunately, based on the current state of research into Dankwart's work, we are unable to determine the true extent of the Silesian painter's activity in this area.

However, I feel certain that churches and monasteries, museums and galleries in the Czech Republic still hide many unknown works by the Silesian master. I am convinced of this by the discovery of another unknown work by him in the collection of the Vlastivědné muzeum Jesenícka in Jeseník – a small painting of *Virgin Mary with the Child Jesus*. [Fig. 4] This meticulously finished work of high artistic quality was probably the object of an elite foundation and probably served for private devotion.²³ As you can see, the study of Karl Dankwart's activities on the territory now within the borders of the Czech Republic has a bright future ahead of it!

Translated by Alicja Cimała

Photographic credits – Původ snímků: 1: repro: Zuzana Macurová – Lenka Stolárová – Vít Vlnas (edd.), *Tváří v tvář. Barokní portrét v zemích Koruny české*, Brno 2017, Cat. No. IV.13; 2: foto Jerzy Buława; 3, 4: foto Andrzej Kozieł

Notes:

¹ On the life and religious activities of Martin Středa see Bohuslav Balbín, *Ctihodný P. Martin Středa*, Brno 1942. – Vladimír Kučera, *Ctihodný Martin Středa*, Brno 1941. – Jan Tenora, *Život sluhu Božího P. Martina Středy z Tovaryšstva Ježíšova*, Brno 1898. – Franciszek German, Marcin Strzoda, gliwiczanin, pierwszy polski historyk Śląska (1587–1649), *Rocznik Muzeum we Gliwicach* 1990, pp. 229–245. – Milan Kopecký, *Život a dílo Martina Středy*, [s. l.] 1996. – Jiří Novotný, *Události ze života P. Martina Středy SJ*, Olomouc 2007.

² See *Socha ctihodného P. Martina Středy SJ už stojí na svém místě*, www.jesuit.cz/clanek.php?id=2230 (viewed October 15, 2021).

³ See www.martinstreda.cz (viewed October 17, 2021).

⁴ Jan Royt, Příspěvek k ikonografii Martina Středy, in: Jan Skutil (ed.), *Morava a Brno na sklonku třicetileté války*, Praha 1995, pp. 178–181. – Petra Zelenková, „Protegam Urbem istam“ („Budu štítem tomuto městu“). Panna

Marie a pater Martin Středa jako ochránci Brna na dvou augsburských mědirytinách ze 17. století, in: Jiří Kroupa – Michaela Šeferisová Loudová – Lubomír Konečný (edd.), *Orbis Artium. K jubileu Lubomíra Slavička*, Brno 2009, pp. 341–351.

⁵ People who have written about the painting so far: Heinrich Albin, *Franzensmuseum*, Brünn 1853, p. 58, No. 6. – Moriz Wilhelm Trapp, *Das Franzens-Museum in Brünn*, Brünn 1882, Cat. No. 16. – *Průvodce obrazárnou musea Františkova*, Brno 1899, p. 5, Cat. No. 55. – Tenora (note 1), pp. 612–613. – Bohumil Samek, *Brno v obrazech pěti staletí* (exhib. cat.), Brno 1969, p. 220. – Milan Togner, *Antonín Martin Lublinský 1636–1690*, Olomouc 2004, pp. 228–229, Cat. No. 6.1.20, Fig. 199. – Zelenková (note 4), p. 345, Fig. 6. – Petra Zelenková, *Martin Antonín Lublinský jako inventar grafických listů. Pohled do středoevropské barokní grafiky druhé poloviny 17. století*, Praha 2011, p. 237. – pt [Petr Tomášek], in: Michal Konečný (ed.), *Kryštof Pavel z Lichtensteinu-Castelkornu a Morava v časech třicetileté války* (exhib. cat.), Brno 2010, pp. 116–117, Cat. No. 1.30. – (PT) [Petr Tomášek], in: Petr Tomášek (ed.), *Moravská národní galerie* (exhib. cat.), Brno 2011, p. 126. – ZM – TV [Zuzana Macurová – Tomáš Valeš], in: Zuzana Macurová – Lenka Stolarová – Vít Vlnas (edd.), *Tváří v tvář. Barokní portrét v zemích Koruny české*, Brno 2017, p. 191, Cat. No. IV.13. – Andrzej Kozieł (review), Zuzana Macurová – Lenka Stolarová – Vít Vlnas (edd.), *Tváří v tvář. Barokní portrét v zemích Koruny české*, Moravské zemské muzeum, Brno 2017, *Umění LXVII*, 2019, pp. 246–249, Fig. 1. – Zora Wörgötter, *Father Martin Stredonius with a View of Brno from the East*, in: *Discover Baroque Art*, Museum with No Frontiers, 2021; http://baroqueart.museumwnf.org/database_item.php?id=object;BAR;cz;-Mus11;3;en (viewed October 20, 2021).

⁶ Zelenková, „Protegam Urbem istam“ (note 4), pp. 344–348, Fig. 4.

⁷ These quotations, absent from the graphic design, referred together with the portrait medal of Emperor Leopold I to Father Středa's prophecy about the future of the Habsburg dynasty. Cf.: Tenora (note 1), pp. 604–610 and Macurová – Stolarová – Vlnas (note 5), p. 191.

⁸ Tenora (note 1), p. 612. – Albin (note 5), p. 58. – Trapp (note 5), Cat. No. 16. ⁹ Togner (note 5), p. 228.

¹⁰ Konečný (note 5), pp. 116–117. – Tomášek (note 5), p. 126. – Wörgötter (note 5).

¹¹ Šárka Berger – Petr Berger, *Restaurátorská zpráva o opravě závěsného obrazu „P. Martin Středa s pohledem na Brno od východu“ od M. A. Lublinského*, 2005 (typescript in possession of the Moravian Gallery in Brno), p. 7.

¹² Zelenková, „Protegam Urbem istam“ (note 4), p. 347. – Macurová – Stolarová – Vlnas (note 5), p. 191.

¹³ Unfortunately, no monographic study on the life and work of Karl Dankwart has been written so far. From the previous publications cf.: Anna Ptak, *Stan badań nad życiem i twórczością Karla Dankwarta (Carolina Tanquarda)*, in: Andrzej Kozieł – Beata Lejman (edd.), *Willmann i inni.*

Malarstwo, rysunek i grafika na Śląsku i w krajach ościennych w XVII i XVIII wieku, Wrocław 2002, pp. 176–181. – Mariusz Karpowicz, Karol Dankwart, malarz znany i nieznan, in: ibidem, pp. 164–175. – Ryszard Hołownia, Nieznane oblicza Karola Dankwarta, in: *Marmur dziejowy. Studia z historii sztuki*, Poznań 2002, pp. 237–248. – Andrzej Kozieł, Szwed i jezuita. Karl Dankwart i jego nieznanne prace malarskie dla nyskich i kłodzkich jezuitów, in: Jan Harasimowicz – Piotr Oszczanowski – Marcin Wisłocki (edd.), *Po obu stronach Bałtyku. Wzajemne relacje między Skandynawią a Europą Środkową / On the Opposite Sides of the Baltic Sea. Relation between Scandinavian and Central European Countries*, vol. 1, Wrocław 2006, pp. 265–276. – Andrzej Kozieł, *Dankwart (Tanquart, Tanguart, Tancquard, Dankhart, Danquart) Karl (Carolus)*, in: Andrzej Kozieł (ed.), *Malarstwo barokowe na Śląsku*, Wrocław 2017, pp. 349–358.

¹⁴ See Kozieł, Dankwart (note 13), p. 358, Fig. 453.

¹⁵ For more on the formal characteristics of Dankwart's paintings see Hołownia (note 13), pp. 237, 242.

¹⁶ Togner (note 5), p. 228. Cf. also Josef Hájek, *Dějiny obrazové sbírky Františkova muzea v letech 1817–1841* (diplomová práce), FF MU, Brno 1997, p. 21.

¹⁷ Tenora (note 1), p. 613.

¹⁸ See Antonín Jirka, *Obrazy Karla Dankwarta v jezuitském kostele ve Znojmě*, in: Jaroslav Sedlář (ed.), *Uměleckohistorický sborník*, Brno 1985, pp. 270–271. – Anna Ptak-Gusin, *Kilka uwag o szwedzkim malarzu Karlu Dankwarcie i jego sygnowanym obrazie ze sceną Śmierci św. Barbary w kościele św. Michała w Znojmie*, in: Harasimowicz – Oszczanowski – Wisłocki (note 13), pp. 287–301.

¹⁹ See Milan Togner, *Barokní malířství v Olomouci*, Olomouc 2008, pp. 20–21, Fig. 8.

²⁰ See Bohumil Samek, *Umělecké památky Moravy a Slezska 1, A–I*, Praha 1994, p. 200.

²¹ See Kozieł, *Szwed i jezuita* (note 13), p. 270, Fig. 15.

²² See for example Maria Katarzyna Frańczak, *Karl Dankwart w służbie nyskich jezuitów* (MA thesis), Institute of Art History, University of Wrocław, Wrocław 2018 (typescript in the library of the Institute of Art History at the University of Wrocław).

²³ Inv. No. H/JE 950, oil painting on canvas, dimensions: 68 × 57.3 cm.

The original baroque frame with gilded acanthus decoration has survived, dimensions: 101 × 89 cm. The work was found in 1960 on a rubbish heap in Jeseník and underwent conservation a year later by the conservator Raimund Ondraček. On the basis of an old 19th century inscription on the reverse, the painting was attributed to Michael Willmann. See Jan Petrásek, *Nowo odkryty obraz Karla Dankwarta znalezionej na śmietniku, Nyskie Szkice Muzealne XIII*, 2020, pp. 47–51. To Jan Petrásek, M.A., of the Vlastivědné muzeum Jeseník in Jeseník, I offer my sincere thanks for his invaluable help in researching this work.

RESUMÉ

Antonín Martin Lublinský – to je Karl Dankwart Několik slov o obrazu *Martin Středa jako ochránce Brna* a jeho autorovi

Andrzej Kozieł

Jezuita Martin Středa (1587–1649) získal slávu a trvalý vděk obyvatel Brna za svou aktivní účast na obraně města během čtyřměsíčního obléhání švédskou armádou v roce 1645. To vedlo ke vzniku řady jeho zobrazení, mezi nimiž rozhodně vyniká velkoformátový obraz *Martin Středa jako ochránce Brna* (dnes Moravská galerie v Brně). Dílo bylo namalováno olejem na plátně a představuje klečícího otce Středu v černém řádovém oděvu jezuitů, jak se vznáší nad hlavním městem Moravy, které je obklíčeno švédskými vojsky. Toto monumentální zobrazení bylo vytvořeno podle univerzitní teze studenta pražské Karlovy univerzity, Michaela Elbela, kterou vyryl v roce 1689 augsburský rytec Gabriel Ehinger (1652–1736) podle kresebného návrhu významného

moravského umělce Antonína Martina Lublinského (1636–1690).

Ve starší literatuře byl za autora obrazu považován sám Michael Willmann (1630–1706). Tuto tradiční atribuci však odmítl Milan Togner a dílo připsal Lublinskému, což přijala většina mladších badatelů. Jak se nyní ukazuje, autorem monumentálního díla byl Karl Dankwart († 1704) – autor četných freskových maleb a obrazů a dvorní malíř polského krále Jana III. Sobieského. Autorství tohoto slezského umělce švédského původu, školeného v okruhu Lublinského a Giovanniho Giacoma Tencally (1593–1653), podporují kompoziční analogie brněnského zobrazení s dalšími umělcovými díly a charakteristické „morelliovské“ anatomické detaily zobrazených postav. Pro Dankwartovo autorství by svědčila také provenience obrazu v někdejší jezuitské klášterě v Brně. Po svém usazení v Nyse v roce 1688 a zahájení práce pro slezské a polské objednavatele Dankwart přijímal zakázky od představitelů jezuitského řádu z české provincie, včetně klášterů na Moravě (Olomouc, Znojmo). Dankwartův obraz P. Martina Středy byl pravděpodobně součástí galerie celofigurálních portrétů zakladatelů a dobrodinců jezuitského kláštera v Brně. Můžeme předpokládat, že tento obraz není jediným dílem, které Dankwart vytvořil pro jezuitu v Brně – kostely a kláštery, muzea a galerie v České republice stále ukrývají mnoho neznámých děl slezského umělce.

Obrazová příloha: **1** – Karl Dankwart, **Martin Středa jako ochránce Brna**, kolem 1690. Brno, Moravská galerie; **2** – Karl Dankwart, **Apoteóza sv. Mikuláše**, kolem 1690. Želazna u Opole, farní kostel sv. Mikuláše; **3** – Karl Dankwart, **Johann Balthasar Liesch von Hornau**, kolem 1693. Wrocław, Muzeum Historyczne; **4** – Karl Dankwart, **Panna Marie s dítětem**, 1688–1693. Jeseník, Vlastivědné muzeum Jesenicka