

Summary

UNA PERUANA EN POLONIA. THE PRESENCE OF SAINT ROSE OF LIMA IMAGES IN THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH

The popularity of Isabel Flores de Oliva, commonly known as Saint Rose of Lima, in the Latin America iconosphere has endured since the 17th century and is still spectacular. Images of this Third Order of St. Dominic member proliferated soon after her demise (1617), not only in the New World, but also in Europe, multiplied in countless cheap copies. Nevertheless, her person also inspired renowned artists as famous as Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, sevillean Juan de Valdes Leal or cordoban Antonio Palomino. Even before canonisation (1671), the fame of the Peruvian ascetic reached the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, due to the efforts of the Order of Preachers, i.a. Tomasz Tomicki O.P., who translated into Polish the Latin biography of Isabel Flores de Oliva written by Leonard Hansen O.P. Tomicki's book, which was printed in Cracow in 1666, contains the first known Polish image of the future saint. The year of canonisation is also a date of establishing first devotional paintings for Dominican churches in the major cities of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. An oil painting attributed to Tomasz Muszyński in Warsaw St. Hyacinth's Church presents St. Rose among other Dominicans active in the New World: Martin de Porres, John Macías and Vicente Bernedo. Paintings for an altar in St. Nicholas church in Gdańsk ("Saint Rose with the Child Jesus" and "The Vision of Saint Rose") were made by Andreas Stech, a popular artist active in this city. Apart from that, we know quite a numerous range of anonymous devotional images of St. Rose of Lima – or at least pieces passing for her images. "The Catalogues of Art Monuments in Poland" – an inventory published by the Polish Academy of Science Institute of Art – enumerate over a dozen paintings and sculptures devoted to the ascetic from Peru, which can be found in various places within the present borders of Poland: i.a. Brześć Kujawski, Hrubieszów, Klimontów, Kraków, Kraśnik, Mokobody, Markowice, Niwiski, Piaski, Sandomierz, Staszów, Turobin, Zareby Kościelne. However, not all art historians agree with such recognition; there are arguments that in some cases we are faced with images of St. Catherine of Siena rather than St. Rose. In spite of these doubts, it is proved that Isabel Flores de Oliva gained her own place in the iconography of Polish Dominicans and played a significant role in their efforts to promote certain forms of spirituality.