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THE FOUNDATION OF MONASTERIES IN TWELFTH-CENTURY POLAND BY MEMBERS OF THE NOBILITY: THE CASE STUDIES

M.A. Thesis in Medieval Studies

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The Foundation of Monasteries in Twelfth-Century Poland by Members of the Nobility:
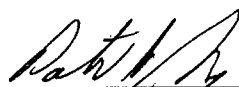## the Case Studies

by

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Poland

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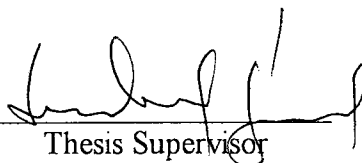requirements of the Master of Arts degree in Medieval Studies

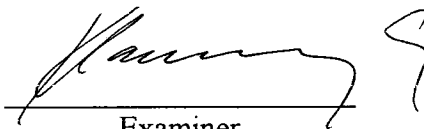Accepted in conformance with the standards of the CEU

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Budapest, 15 June 1997

Emilia Jamroziak

Signature

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In addition, I want to state that any remaining errors are exclusively my own.

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All the illustrations are scanned from *Sztuka romańska i przedromańska do schyłku XIII wieku* [Polish pre-Romanesque and Romanesque art to the end of the thirteenth century], ed. Michał Walicki, vol. 1 (Warsaw: PWN, 1971), 450-451.

INTRODUCTION

The main focus of my thesis concerns the foundation process and, more specifically, the relationship between the founder and the founded ecclesiastical institution in twelfth-century Poland. I am investigating this issue using four examples from Greater Poland and Silesia: the foundations of the Cistercian monastery in Lekno (1145-53), the Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno (circa 1190), the Benedictine monastery in Wrocław-Ołbin (1120-30), and the convent of canons regular in Wrocław-Piasek (1138-49). Currently, the information concerning the founders is quite meagre compared to the abundant literature concerned with the foundation process.

The issue of foundations has been researched primarily from the point of view of ecclesiastical history which dealt with the development of ecclesiastical institutions and from the point of vew of art history, archaeology, and literary history with the main focus being on remnants of architecture, sculpture, or literary production. These studies are generally not integrated even if they concern the history of the same monastery. This has also been the case of the four monasteries which provide the focus for the present thesis. In addition, there are studies concerning the genealogy of different noble families involved in monastic foundations, but they were investigated predominantly in terms of political history. The majority of these studies are, however, quite out of date in terms of methodology: they are based on an insufficient number of sources and are often rather acritical, presenting hypotheses as proven facts.

I selected these cases because they are the best represented in the sources and thus promise the most successful investigation. However, even in these cases the sources are very meagre. Therefore, one must construct hypotheses rather than attempt to reconstruct an exact picture. Indeed, there is also the serious danger of creating circular argumentation, which I have endeavoured to avoid.

There are three kinds of sources: charters, tympana, the architecture, and its remnants. Charters were issued to confirm foundations or donations, principally of estates granted to newly-established monasteries. In most cases, they were not issued by founders but by some

ecclesiastical authority. In contrary to these widely investigated charters, tympana commemorating foundations or donations have been neglected by the historians. There are four Romanesque tympana related to the monasteries I intend to study, and they will be the objects of detailed analysis. The standing architecture and its remnants offer evidence for the organisation of space and its usage by the patron and the monastic community. Archaeological materials are also important since many Romanesque churches were rebuilt in a later period (predominantly in the Gothic style), and thus their original appearance can only be reconstructed from archaeological study. In most cases these excavations are also crucial for a more precise dating of the church or the monastery itself.

The main part of my work is gathered in three case studies. Each of them consists of analysis of the sources, both written and material, and information about the founder and foundation process with special attention to the following questions:

1. How did the donors/founders present themselves in the charters?

2. What kind of information is given by the tympana?

3. How was the position of a founder reflected in the architecture?

4. What role does a private monastery play in a nobleman's property, his family life, and his social prestige?

My aim is to investigate these questions in order to see how different media—writing, sculpture, and architecture—reflect the founders' motivation and how founders used different means of communication for their self-representation. It is the sphere of these interactions which is the focus of my investigation, not the institutions and people in themselves, for which I have neither sources nor purpose. While examining the sources for every case, I treat them as a unit, attempting to complement written sources with the material ones and vice versa and not to study the different types of sources in terms of their own disciplines. Since the information, even in its complexity, is very meagre and scattered, only the interdisciplinary approach allowed me to see clearly the relationship between founder and monastery and, consequently, to offer hypotheses which are based solidly on the sources.

Although the source base is varied in every case, I tried to follow the same structure for presenting the material and the analysis although Chapter III had to be organised differently: it

consists of two cases of monastic foundations by Peter Włostowic. I decided to investigate them together since the founder and his relationship to the monastery is the focus of my attention, not the history of ecclesiastical institutions in and of themselves. The analysis of the specific cases is put into a broader context and summarised in Chapter IV.

Since the language of the sources is Latin, but the toponyms mentioned in them are predominantly Slavic, I decided to use their modern Polish versions. The geographical names which have standard English versions (e.g. Warsaw) are anglicised according to the Appendix of Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. The others are given in their original spelling (e.g. Ołbin). All Christian names which have English equivalents are given in that form (e.g. Peter instead of Piotr) while those which cannot be translated (e.g. Zbylut) are left in their vernacular form. Following the rules established in English scholarship, I decided to use the English equivalents for names of churches and saints (e.g. Holy Trinity church). The names of Polish dukes and kings are given in the anglicised versions used by Norman Davis in *Gods Playground: A History of Poland.*[1] All quotations from the Latin text are from the edited versions listed on the bibliography; the translations into English are mine.

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[1]Norman Davis, *God's Playground: A History of Poland,* vol. 1-2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATION PROCESS OF THE CISTERCIAN MONASTERY IN ŁEKNO

Recently there has been growing interest in previously neglected aspects of the history of the Cistercian order. But this research tends to cover Western Europe rather than the central part of the continent. This disproportion is due to a lack of sources for exhaustive monographs on Central European Cistercian convents.[2] Nevertheless, a new and interesting trend is present in the research on the monastic orders. This is the increasing role of archaeology to reconstruct the history of many ecclesiastical institution, particularly those for which we lack written sources. An example of this gap in the research on monasteries in Poland is the foundation process of the first Cistercian monastery in Łekno in Greater Poland in the middle of the twelfth century.

Until the beginning of the 1980s, the only source of information for the early history of this ecclesiastical institution was its foundation charter. A new stage was reached when excavations on the site of the former monastery were initiated by the research group from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. As a result, new data are now available. A recently published monograph by Andrzej M. Wyrwa is based on these excavations.[3] Sine this author concentrates on the history of ecclesiastical institution as such, he pays much less attention to the founder involvement and motivation, but material sources are particularly valuable for the reconstruction of the primary range of lands and the material support (buildings) donated by the founder.

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[2]For more information, see: *Historia i kultura cystersów w dawnej Polsce i ich europejskie związki*, [History and culture of the Cistercian order in Poland and their European connections], ed. Jerzy Strzelczyk (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1987); *Cystersi w kulturze średniowiecznej Europy*, [The Cistracian order in the culture of medieval Europe], ed. Jerzy Strzelczyk, (Poznań: Wydawnictwo UAM, 1992); *Cystersi w Polsce. W 850-lecie fundacji opactwa jędrzejowskiego* [Cistercians in Poland. The 850 anniversary of the foundation of the Jędrzejów monastery], (Kielce: Jedność, 1990).

[3]Andrzej M. Wyrwa, *Procesy fundacyjne wielkopolskich klasztorów cysterskich linii altenberskiej: Łekno-Ląd-Obra* [The foundation processes of the Cistercian monasteries of the Altenberg line in the Greater Poland: Łekno-Ląd-Obra] (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1995).

The aim of this chapter is to show how different types of sources can be used to reconstruct the foundation process of the Lekno monastery. The role of the founder will be also analysed with special attention to his probable motivations.

1. THE AFFILIATION OF THE LEKNO MONASTERY

The mother monastery of the Lekno abbey was Altenberg, a direct filia of Morimond, one of the five mother monasteries of the Cistercian order.[4] The Altenberg was in the beginning of the twelfth century founded by the two counts of Berg: Adolph and Eberhardt. Monks came from Morimond in 1133 and settled in the abandoned stronghold given them by the counts of Berg. Later, in the second half of the century, the convent moved to a new monastic complex with a newly-built Romanesque basilica.[5]

The first filiae of Altenberg were being created in the time of the organisation of the abbey, between 1136-1142. From the middle of the twelfth century to the end of thirteenth century, about fifty-two monks were sent from Altenberg to the newly created daughter houses. They were created in two periods. In the first one, which was parallel to the period of the most dynamic development of the order, two monasteries were founded: Mariental in Lower Saxony (between 1136/38 and 1143) and Lekno in Greater Poland (between 1143/45 and 1153). In the second period there were two foundations: Zinna in Brandenburg (1165-1171) and Haina in Hesse (established in 1188). After that, for over four hundred years no new monastery was established by Altenberg until 1651 when a monastery in Derneburg was created. Apart from the direct filiae listed above, Altenberg had also six nunneries in Germany under its care.

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[4]From the vast literature devoted to the Cistercian order, see, for example Clifford H. Lawrence, "The Cistercian Model," chap. in *Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in West Europe in the Middle Ages* (London: Longman, 1984); Marcel Pacaut, *Les moines blancs: Historie de l'ordre de Cîteaux*, (Paris: Fayard, 1993); *Die Cistercienser: Geschichte - Geist - Kunst*, ed. Ambrosius Schneider, Adam Wienand, Wolfgang Bichel, Ernst Coester (Cologne: Wienand Verlag, 1996); *Die Zisterzienser. Ordensleben zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit*, ed. Kaspar Elm, vols. 1-2 (Cologne, 1980-1982).There is also a series of volumes, devoted to various aspects of the history of this order, published by Cistercian Publications Inc. in Kalamazoo, Michigan. They are divided into series of sources: *The Cistercian Fathers Series, The Cistercian Liturgical Documents Series*, articles are published in *Cistercian Studies*. See also journal *Cîteaux: Commentarii Cistercienses*.
[5]Hans Mosler, "Das Erzbistums Köln. Die Cistercienserabtei Altenberg," *Germania Sacra Neue Folge* 2 (1965): 137.

Łekno abbey is important because, at the time of its foundation; it was the abbey farthest to the east of all those which belonged to the order. It soon became a mother monastery for the next two abbeys in Greater Poland: Ląd (founded about 1175-1186) and Obra (1231-1238).

2. SOURCES

Before I analyse of the main problem of this chapter, I shall present the available sources. The sources for the reconstruction of the foundation of the Cistercian monastery in Łekno are both written and archaeological. The first group consists of charters, and the latter, of the results of the archaeological excavations (remains of buildings and settlements).

2.1 WRITTEN SOURCES

The foundation charter of the Łekno monastery is preserved in two originals and two copies.[6] The originals are very rare examples from the twelfth century, and they were, therefore, published several times.[7] Since the second half of the nineteenth century, numerous works have been written about them, mostly devoted to the problems of diplomatics and palaeography. Those studies show that their authenticity is not in doubt.[8] The relationship between the two original charters and the two copies has been discussed for decades. According to Józef Dobosz, who made the best edition of the charter, both originals were written by the same hand around 1153; the two copies were written later, between 1190 and 1198. An additional part in the first original charter (now kept in the Poznań archive) was

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[6]One of the original charters is now kept in the State Archive in Poznan (Łekno A1), and the other, as well as the two copies, are in the Archdiocesan Archive in Gniezno (Dypl. Gn.3).
[7]*Monumenta Poloniae Paleographica*, ed. Stanisław Krzyżanowski (Krakow, 1907), charts 4, 5, 6.
Album Paleographicum, ed. Stanisław Krzyżanowski (Krakow, 1907), chart 2.
Codex Diplomaticus Poloniae Maioris, ed. Franciszek Piekosiński (Poznań, 1877), nr 7.
Franciszek Piekosiński, *Zbiór dokumentów średniowiecznych do objaśniania prawa polskiego ziemskiego służących* [Collection of medieval charters for the study of Polish land law] (Krakow, 1897), nr 19.
[8]Stanisław Kętrzyński, *Zarys dyplomatyki wieków średnich* [Polish medieval diplomatics], vol. 1 (Warsaw: n.p., 1934), 134, 156, 198; Władysław Semkowicz, *Paleografia łacinska* [Latin paleography] (Krakow: PWN, 1951), 336-342; Karol Maleczyński, *Zarys dyplomatyki polskiej wieków średnich* [Polish medieval diplomatics], vol. 1 (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1951), 36, 74 - 77, 86, 93.

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added later, probably by a monk from Łekno, between 1153 and 1198, in order to record and confirm legally the donation by Archbishop Peter of Gniezno[9] to the monastery.[10] This charter was probably kept by the *destinatarius*, that is, the monastery. In the copy, written between 1190-1198, this additional part is longer.

The spelling of the names of the villages given to the Cistercian monastery may suggest that the person who wrote the charter was a foreigner. The writing shows features of Romanesque minuscule with some elements of the Gothic style.[11] The wax archiepiscopal seal of John, Archbishop of Gniezno, is still attached to one of the originals. The other charter shows remnants in the form of a hole in the parchment what appear to be, an identical seal. The preserved seal has been applied in a technique typical for the twelfth century: hot wax pressed to the surface of the parchment with the seal immediately impressed on it. It is the oldest preserved example of an archbishop's seal from Poland.[12]

Because the seal on the charter is the archbishop's, and not that of Duke Mesco, who is also mentioned in the charter, the legal character of the charter — whether it was "private" or "public"—has been debated in the literature. It was considered private because of the archiepiscopal seal. But the document also has a *corroboratio*—a part typical for public charters. In the most recent study on this problem, Dobosz tries to end the discussion by explaining that the Łekno charters had a public character and could be used as legal evidence. His opinion is based on the fact that the archbishop's seal was commonly considered in the twelfth century as a *sigillum authenticum*.[13] Concerning the problem of the seal, his arguments are convincing; however, the problem of who actually issued the charter is still left

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[9]In the literature Peter Archbishop of Gniezno (died in 1198) is commonly connected to the family of Peter Wołostowic (possibly his grandson). He became archbishop sometime between 1180 and 1191. Peter was an active promoter of the reform movement in the Church in Poland and a generous donor for the various monasteries. Peter also might have been a donor of the famous bronze doors depicting the life of St Wojciech (Adalbert) for the Gniezno cathedral. For more information, see Stanisław Trawkowski, "Piotr" [Peter] in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary], vol. 26 (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1981), 361-362.

[10]Józef Dobosz, "Dokument fundacyjny klasztoru cystersów w Łeknie," [The foundation charter of the Cistercian monastery in Łekno] *Studia i Materiały do dziejów Pałuk* 1 (1989): 63-64.

[11]Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa, *Repertorium polskich dokumentów doby piastowskiej* [A collection of Polish medieval charters from the time of the Piast dynasty], vol. 1 (Krakow: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1937), 59-60.

[12]Marian Gumowski, *Sfragistyka* [Sigillography] (Warsaw: PWN, 1961), 211.

[13]Dobosz, "Dokument fundacyjny," 67-70.

unresolved. The charter was issued by a private person Zbylut (*ego Zbilut ciuis Poloniae*) and authenticated by the archiepiscopal seal.

Formally, the Łekno charter consists of the following traditional parts: *invocatio, promulgatio, arenga, narratio, dispositio, sanctio, datum, corroboratio,* and the list of witnesses. In the *invocatio* the formula typical for twelfth-century charters is used: *In nomine sancte et indiuidue Trinitatis.* Then a short *promulgatio* and *arenga* follow in which the idea of *sacrum commercium* is presented, to which I shall return later. The founder Zbylut appears in the *narratio* (see below). Afterwards comes the *dispositio* with the *laudatio* of the *actor* and *destinatarius,* and the list of the estates granted with a malediction, in case that someone dared to change the donor's will: *ubi ab utroque episcopo coram astaute multitudine sub perpetui anathemis obtentu confirmavi notis omnium michi congraudentium impetraui, ut si quis inpresens sine misericordia sententia incidat infernus eum uiuum, nisi resipuerit, absorbeat.* After this comes the *datum* consists of the year (1153) and the names of the current rulers: Boleslaus, Mesco, and Henry. The seal as a means of confirmation of legality is mentioned in the *corroboratio* in the following way: *acta sunt hec a Iohanne sancte Gneznensis ecclesie uenerabili archipreesule, cuius etiam sigilli inpresione signate sunt hec littere sub priuilegiali cautione.* Then last part, a list of witnesses, consists of the names of the duke's chancellor, *custos,* two *magistri,* and twelve noblemen.[14]

The style of the charter and the language are quite complicated. The elaborate form, the use of rhymed prose and some elements of Roman legal terminology (such as *civis* and *testamentum*) have been the subject of detailed studies.[15] The legal terminology suggests that the person who composed the charter had some knowledge of Roman law.[16]

Stylistic features of the charter show similarities to the foundation charter of the other Cistercian monastery founded in Poland, Jędrzejów in the middle of the twelfth century. That charter was written by archbishop John of Gniezno[17], founder of the monastery in Jędrzejów.

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[14]For the detailed analysis of the list of witnesses, see Dobosz, "Dokument fundacyjny," 73-80.

[15]Karol Maleczyński, *Studia nad dokumentem polskim,* [The study of Polish charters] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1971), 109-111.

[16]Oswald Balzer, *Pisma pośmiertne* [Studies published posthumously], vol. 1 (Lviv: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego, 1934), 128.

[17]John belonged to the Gryfici kindred and he was bishop of Wrocław from 1147 to 1149 and later, archbishop of Gniezno from 1149 to 1167 and also a chancellor of Prince Ladislaus II and later his brother Boleslaus the

Significant stylistic similarities between these two charters made Brygida Kürbis suggest that

archbishop John was also the author of the Lekno charter; with the possible help of *magister*

Folbert and *magister Stephanus,* mentioned in the list of witnesses.[18]

2.2 MATERIAL SOURCES

During the archaeological excavations in Lekno, between 1983 and 1990, on site number 3,

the remnants of a monastic complex were discovered. The monastic complex was built on the

top of an abandoned stronghold which may have been a property of the founder given to the

monastery. In the top layers of the stronghold, beside the ramparts, the remnants of a rotunda

were found. Originally, this church served the people living in the *castellum*, but the site was

probably abandoned by its inhabitants in the first half of the twelfth century. The church was a

simple rotunda with an apse on the east side; its walls built of sandstone. The remnants of the

floor, the altar's foundation, and over three hundred fragments of sculptural decoration from

the building have been discovered inside the foundations. The chemical analysis of these

ornaments revealed the existence of three layers of paint: white, yellow or red, and a white-

yellowish on the top, but nothing can be said about the actual decoration (wall painting ?) of

the church. The preliminary dating of these finds is to the eleventh century, but this appears

problematic because most of them are typical to a much longer period of time, from the

eleventh to the middle of the thirteenth century. Some of them might belong to the Cistercian

church, which was built in the middle of the twelfth century on the top of the former

rotunda.[19]

The archaeological excavations confirm that a church already existed at the time when

the monastery was founded. Then, it served as the abbey church. In the beginning of the

Curly. For more details, see Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa, "Jan," [John] in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [Polish Biographical Dictionary], vol. 10 (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1962-64), 428-430.

[18]Brygida Kürbis, "Cystersi w kulturze polskiego średniowiecza. Trzy przykłady z XII wieku," [Cistercians in the culture of the Polish Middle Ages: three examples from the twelfth century], chap. in *Na progach historii* [On the doorsteps of history] (Poznań: Abos, 1994), 332-343.

[19]Andrzej. M. Wyrwa, "Rotunda łekneńska w świetle dotychczasowych badań na tle architektury wczesnopiastowskiej w Polsce" [The Lekno rotunda in the light of the recent research on the background of the early Polish Romanesque architecture] *Kronika Wielkopolska* 3 (1992): 48-64.

thirteenth century, the rotunda was replaced by a small church in the form of an oratory. The main nave was rectangular, on the east, an apse was added, and on the west facade, a porch was placed. It is highly possible that this church was built with the financial help of the founder's descendants. By the end of the thirteenth century, the building was enlarged and took the form of a hall-church, but in the first half of the following century, its condition started to deteriorate. The walls cracked in several places. Although the monks tried to prevent the catastrophe by building a special system of support, but the decay was an inevitable process. Because the church had been located on the place of the former wooden-and-soil stronghold: the pressure of the heavy stone building compressed the material beneath causing the collapse of the church. Because of this situation the monastery was moved to Wągrowiec at the end of the fourteenth century. Part of the original building was then used as the cemetery chapel, but the deterioration of the abandoned site progressed; thus, by the end of the sixteenth century, the church was in complete ruin.[20]

3. THE FOUNDER IN THE SOURCES

The founder of the Cistercian monastery in Łekno was Zbylut, whose name appears in the foundation charter. For him, as for the other members of the twelfth-century nobility, information about his background, family connections, and life is rather scarce. Zbylut appears in several charters between 1140 and 1153, but no details about his life are known. Even the date of his birth and death are unknown as well as the names of his parents and wife. Apart from the foundation charter, little information about his life can be found. He is first mentioned in the list of witnesses in a charter issued by Duchess Salomea for the Benedictine monastery in Mogilno (dated between 1138-1144).[21] His name again appears in the list of witnesses in a charter issued by Duke Mesco the Old for the monastery of the Canons Regular in Trzemeszno (1145).[22] Next, Zbylut is a witness to a charter issued for the same monastery by the papal

[20]Wyrwa, *Procesy fundacyjne*, 64-73.
[21]*Codex Diplomaticus Poloniae Maioris*, ed. Franciszek Piekosiński, vol. 1 (Poznań, 1877), nr 9.
[22]Ibid., vol. 1, nr 11.

legate Humbald in 1146,[23] and his donation of St James Church and the village Bogussino to the Benedictine monastery in Mogilno is recorded, among other noblemen's donations, in a charter with the false date of 1065. This charter is known to be a forgery, but this does not necessarily mean that all of its contents are false.[24] Finally, Zbylut was also a witness to the foundation charter of the Cistercian monastery in Jędrzejów established simultaneously with the Łekno.[25]

Apart from these charters, he is also mentioned in the necrology of the Benedictine monastery in Lubin, where the names of noblemen from Greater Poland who made donations were recorded. There, his name appears under the date of 28 March, but the year is missing. This is typical for this type of source because mortuaries were written in order to recall the memory of the anniversary of the death of the benefactor, which was then commemorated in the monks' prayers.[26] Another date for his death appears in the *Nekrolog wągrowiecko-łekneń ski* [The Mortuary of Wągrowiec-Łekno monastery], a very late and unreliable source from the seventeenth century written in the Łekno monastery.[27] Zbylut's death is recorded on 8 May 1153. It is possible that the year is taken from the foundation charter which was kept in the monastery and known to the monks.

The fact that Zbylut was frequently mentioned in the charters, as well as the character of his donations, suggests that he was a rather prominent person among the twelfth-century nobility, but there is no specific information about offices he might have held.[28] Zbylut's belonging to the Pałuki kindred was established in the beginning of the twentieth century, and this is still accepted by historians.[29] The foundation charter is also the only source which

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[23]Ibid., vol.1, nr 12.

[24]Ibid., vol. 1, nr 3. The analysis of that charter is to be found in: Brygida Kürgis, "Najstarsze dokumenty opactwa benedyktynów w Mogile XI-XIII wieku," [The oldest tradition of the Benedictine abbey in Mogilno in the eleventh-twelfth centuries] chap. in *Na progach historii* [On the doorseps of history] (Poznań: Abos, 1994), 38-45.

[25]The charter is preserved in the thirteenth century copy. *Codex Diplomaticus Poloniae Minoris,* ed. Franciszek Piekosiński, vol. 2 (Krakow, 1881), nr 372.

[26]Zbigniew Perzanowski, ed. *Liber Mortuorum Abbatiae Sanctae Mariae Lubinensis,* in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica. Series nova,* vol. 9 (Warsaw: PWN, 1976), 48.

[27]This source is unpublished and kept in Archdiocesan Archive in Poznań (AZ 4/14). Extracts published in Wyrwa, *Procesy fundacyjne,* 61.

[28]There is a debate in the literature about the title *comes* which he might possesed. See: Dobosz, "Dokument fundacyjny," 71-72.

[29]Władysław Semkowicz, "Rod Pałuków" [The Pałuki kindred] *Rozprawy Akademi Umiejętności Wydział Historyczno-Filozoficzny* 49 (1907): 206-207.

consists of information about the existence of his wife and two sons because they simultaneously made donations for the newly-founded Cistercian monastery: *vxor ipsius contulit Gostizlaue et Kasckov, filii eius contulerunt Copriuce.* His nephews, Sławnik and Peter, also joined the family in the foundation of the monastery. This familial connection was made by Władysław Semkowicz, but it is still rather a hypothesis than a proven fact.[30] It is known from the charter that they donated a village: *villam Mocrhonoz contulerunt fratres duo Zlavnicus et Petrus.*

All these scattered bits of information about Zbylut and his family prove the hypothesis regarding his prominent activity, but on a rather local scale, in church foundations and donations in Greater Poland during the first half of the twelfth century.

4. THE FOUNDATION PROCESS

The foundation of a monastery has always been a fairly long process consisting of different stages and concerning both sides interested in the enterprise—the monastic orders interested in expansion and the potential founders. It has to be pointed out that the Łekno monastery was established in the time of the expansion of the Altenberg; thus, the active role of order should not be disregarded. Monks were also interested in establishing new daughter-houses and probably did not wait patiently for a potential founder. A hint of the conscious choice of this particular order is given in the foundation charter when Zbylut says that he had chosen this particular order because of defining qualities of the Cistercians.[31]

The foundation process was lengthy, sometimes taking years, and consisted of different stages:

- the idea to found a monastery by an individual or a group;

- the permission of the bishop or archbishop to establish it;

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[30]Ibid.

[31]The relevant passage from the charter: *Pro cuius ergo domicilii spirtaliter disponenda gubernatione, pro continuanda ibi diuinę seruitutis administratione, pro statuenda ętiam ibidem regularis ac spiritalis disciplinęreligione, uiros quosdam spiritales, personas uenerabiles, mortuos mundo, uiuentes Christo, cenobites re et habitu et professione, plenos Dei ac proximi dilectione, prout potui reuerender aduocaui, suscepi, dilexi, locaui.*

- efforts to invite a group of monks from an existing monastery or, in the case of the Cistercian order, from the *Capitula Generalis;*

- visitation of a site proposed for the monastery by a delegation from the   future mother-monastery or the *Capitula Generalis;*

- arrival of the group of monks;

- construction of the church and essential buildings for the monks;

- the issuing of the foundation charter;

- the consecration of the monastic church.

This ceremony formally ended the foundation process and marked the beginning of the functioning of the newly-established monastery. [32]

The reconstruction of the process above is impossible in the case of Lekno because the sources are so scarce that exact dating is impossible. There is a great variety of hypothetical dates for the establishment of the monastery, especially in the scholarship of the nineteenth century,[33] when it was common practice to take the earliest date from the sources, regardless of the stage of the process. The critical revision of this discussion is to be found in the recent publication by Andrzej M. Wyrwa.[34] From the analysis of the sources, including new data from unpublished sources, Wyrwa concludes that within the chronological framework of the process, only the date of the foundation charter—the year—is not in doubt. Apart from this, nothing certain can be said. Judging from the average time of the foundation process, the establishment of the Lekno monastery might have begun in the forties of the twelfth century and was completed in 1153.[35]

However, while the *actor* of the foundation charter is known, the person who helped Zbylut to invite the monks and who established the Cistercian convent in Lekno remains unknown. He was, presumably, a bishop or archbishop who was able to organise the legal side

[32]Józefa Zawadzka, "Procesy fundowania opactw cysterskich w XII wieku" [The foundation processes of the Cistercian monasteries in the twelfth century] *Roczniki Humanistyczne* 7 (1958): 121-50.

[33]Franz Winter, *Die Zisterzienser des nordöstlichen Deutschland. Ein Beitrag zur Kirche und Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Mittelalters,* vol. 2 (Gotha, 1868), 317, 335, 367, 374; Heinrich Hockenbeck, *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Klosters und der Stadt Wongrowitz: Nach den Urkunden zuzammengestellt,* vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1879), 81.

[34]Wyrwa, *Procesy fundacyjne,* 55-59.

[35]Ibid., 59.

of the process and to negotiate with the mother-monastery. The person who might have done that could be John, Archbishop of Gniezno. He was a founder of another Cistercian monastery in Poland in Jędrzejów (a daughter-house of Morimond). As has said before, the style of the foundation charter from the Łekno monastery shows prominent similarities to the one from Jędrzejów. Moreover, the Łekno charter was authenticated by the archbishop's seal; thus, all these details may suggest John's involvement in the foundation process. He might have been the person who suggested to Zbylut the idea of inviting Cistercians since we know that Zbylut was present at the consecration of the monastic church in Jędrzejów, this hypothesis, thus, appears rather convincing.

As already stated, the material aspect of the foundation process is known due to the archaeological excavations in Łekno. The information from the charter combined with the results of archaeological excavations allows us to state that the monastery was built in the place of the former *castellum*, which was part of property inherited by Zbylut from his ancestors (*patrimonii mei liberi portio*).

According to the *Carta Caritatis*,[36] a monastery should be built in a remote place, but there is no specification about how far from human settlements or strongholds the place should be. In the Łekno case, the high ramparts (up to 8 meters) of the former *castellum* provided appropriate seclusion. Moreover, the site of the monastery was surrounded by Lake Łekno from the north, east, and south. All of the estates given by Zbylut were located in the vicinity of the monastery. There was also a village nearby covering an area of 4 hectares. On the other side of the lake was a village called Łekno with the *forum et taberna* donated by Zbylut. The third estate given by Zbylut was placed in the area of the present village Tarnowo Pałuckie.[37] In the foundation charter the initial range of possessions donated by the founder is described as follows: *Ergelzko cum lacu integro et Ztrassowo, Pogengroza et in Lôkna forum cum taberna.* In the most recent publication on the Łekno monastery, Andrzej Wyrwa identified the villages from the charter with the excavated settlements. Concerning the properties of the monastery, the primary range of the estate consisted of 5 settlements given by Zbylut and his family, but it

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[36]Joseph M. Canivez, *Statuta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Cisterciensis ab anno 1116 ad annum 1786*, vol. 1 (Louvain, 1933), 13.
[37]Wyrwa, *Procesy fundacyjne*, 64-69.

was vastly enlarged by further donations, exchanges, and purchases. Until the end of the fourteenth century, the Lekno monastery enlarged its property to about 59 villages, covering an area of several thousand hectares.[38]

When the group of monks came to Lekno, the church of the Virgin Mary and St Peter (rotunda) had been there from the middle of the eleventh century. Some authors believe the information about the consecrated church, given to the Lekno, is to be found in the foundation charter of the monastery, and they quote this passage[39]: *omnium bonorum largitori Deo ad gloriam et laudem, eiusque genitrici et beato Petro ad honorem cum intime devotionis humilitate contradidit.* The existence of the church appears to be rather hypothetical and not well proven; however, in light of the recent archaeological results, the existence of a pre-Cistercian church on the site of the monastery is beyond doubt.

5. WHY DID ZBYLUT FOUND LEKNO MONASTERY ?

The intention of the founder is described in the charter as follows: *Notum sit omnibus catholicis tam futuri quam presentis temporis. Honestum ac beatum constat esse uotum, immo sanctum ac laudabile patet esse commertium, dare sua transitoria et recipere pro his ęterna, terrena sibi displicere et cęlestia possidere. Huius itaque tam sanctę negotiationis amore ego Zbilud Polonię ciuis superna inspirante gratia medullitus ignescens, decorem domus Dei et locum habitationis glorię suę diligens, simulque in libro uitę cum iustis conscribi cupiens, patrimonii mei liberi portionem [...] omnium bonorum largitori Deo ad gloriam et laudem eiusdem genitrici et beato Petro [...] institui.* This passage expresses an eschatological motivation which encouraged him to give some part of his property to the monastery. The importance of the eschatological motivation in the mentality of medieval people, which led them to abandon this earthly property and give rich donations to the Church, was pointed out by Jacques Le Goff, who said that the permanent fear of damnation was often stronger then

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[38]Ibid., 74-82.
[39]Dobosz, "Dokument fundacyjny," 81.

greed.[40] This eschatological motivation Zbylut wanted to show to his contemporaries and to posterity. Although the form was conventional, there is no reason to regard this motivation as an empty conventional gesture. Within this passage two layers can be distinguished. First, the founder, as a member of the Christian community, wanted to support the Church by giving part of his property to a highly respected ecclesiastical institution (in this case, a monastery); second, by this commitment, the founder hoped to secure eternal salvation for himself and his family.

Zbylut says that the exchange of earthly possessions for an eternal ones, the abandonment of one's property in order to obtain a heavenly reword is regarded as honourable and sacred. Being deeply impressed by the sanctity of the monastic community, he gives his earthly property to the Cistercian monastery in order to increase the *decorum* of the Church. He wants to be listed, together with the just, in the Book of Life.

Brygida Kürbis pointed out the absence of an expression typical in the foundation charters, *pro remissione peccatorum*, explaining the motivation for the donations.[41] She assumes that this was not merely a particular stylistic feature, but was the desire of the founder to leave this out. But this idea is based only on the assumption that the founder had an influence on the process of preparing the charter. This cannot be proved in any way because there are no sources which allow me to say anything about the active or passive role of the founder in this action.

Another unusual feature of the Łekno charter was also commented by Kürbis. The formula used by the founder to describe himself: *ego Zbilud Polonię ciuis*, has no parallels in the twelfth-century charters. She interprets this peculiar expression in the sense that Zbylut was "an equal to the congregation," having very high status in the society.[42] This not entirely clear expression, however, has not been sufficently proved. Certainly the use of a term taken from Roman law indicates the idea that the founder belonged to the nobility and possessed rights as

[40]Jacques Le Goff, *Kultura średniowiecznej Europy*, [The culture of medieval Europe] transl. Hanna Szumańska-Grossowa (Warsaw: Volumen, 1994), 196-197.
[41]Kürbis, *Cystersi w kulturze*, 341-2.
[42]Ibid.

a member of it. But the term does not refer to the relationship between the founder and the convent as Kürbis suggests.

The eschatological reasons for the foundations of monasteries also found expression in the tradition of commemorative prayers. A founder remained related to the founded institution by the prayers of the monks, because they were obliged to pray for him and his family. The evidence of this obligation are the mortuaries kept in many monasteries in order to record the anniversaries of the deaths of founders and donors. Such mortuary was also kept in the Lekno monastery, but it is preserved in the very late copy from the eighteenth century.

Another reason, which is never openly expressed but implied in foundation charters is the need for prestige. This particular aspect of the foundation of the ecclesiastical institution has been discussed in the literature.[43] The need for prestige and the various ways to show one's high social position was an important part of life for the medieval nobility. Being a founder showed that a given person had obtained a certain level of material and political power and wealth. The high cost of such an enterprise was an investment in the founder's social position and family status. In Zbylut case the importance of the foundation is emphasised by his spectacular gesture of giving a part of his *patrimonium*, which was regarded as the most precious part of one's property. This act means that whole thing was more than just a calculated investment.

Ludo J.R. Milis emphasises the social role of monasteries which played important role in the life of founders.[44] Monks and lay founders "made a deal": donations were given in exchange for more or less guaranteed salvation. This exchange was particularly visible in case of the so-called *Eigenklöster*.[45] Members of kindreds who founded monasteries maintained the economic side of the monastery's existence and the monks by their prayers maintained the Heavenly existence of their benefactors. Milis calls this a function of reciprocity:

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[43]Roman Michałowski, *Princeps fundator: Studium z dziejów kultury politycznej w Polsce X-XIII w.* [Princeps fundator: study on political culture in Poland in the tenth-thirteenth centuries.] (Warsaw: Zamek Królewski, 1993), 7-8.

[44]Ludo J.R. Milis, *Angelic Monks and Earthly Men. Monasticism and its Meaning to Medieval Society* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), 87-91.

[45]The Central European, particularly Hungarian equivalent of this institution was reaserch by Erik Fügedi, "*Sepelierunt corpus eius in proprio monasterio.* A nemzetségi monostor" [Kindred's monastery] *Századok* 125 (1991): 35-67.

The way it works is quite simple: 'We look after you on earth, you look after us in heaven'. Protection and security in the world is barter paid for salvation of the soul. So paradise or damnation after the Last Judgement is neither determined by predestination or the result of highly moral lifestyle on the part of the individual. Heaven is for sale. Heaven is bought. And anyone who does not have money, should be consoled with the idea that he is poor man in the parable of camel and the needle.[46]

As previously mentioned, Zbylut is known as the witness in several foundation charters which were issued before or in the time of the foundation process in Łekno. This means that he was present at many churches' consecration and witnessed the legal side of the foundation. Thus he may have literally seen both the prestigious and eschatological aspect of the foundation. This fact, in my understanding, could have played an important role in Zbylut's decision to undertake the foundation of Cistercian monastery in Łekno.

Therefore, the foundation of the Łekno monastery was not only a religious gesture but also a way to express the founder's belonging to the high strata of the medieval society.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The foundation of the Cistercian monastery in Łekno by the nobleman Zbylut in the middle of the twelfth century is one of the earliest Polish examples of the foundation of a large ecclesiastical institution undertaken by a nobleman, not by a ruler. Łekno was also the first Polish filia of the Altenberg monastery and the mother of the next two convents of the order in Poland (in Obra and in Ląd).

Due to the existence of the foundation charter and the published results of archaeological excavations, crucial information about the foundation process and the monastic church is known. Unfortunately, there is only one source, the foundation charter, which can be used to reconstruct the founder's motivation. Behind the elaborate and complicated style of the document a hint of the founder's motivation can be detected. This charter is important not only because of this, but also because of its unusual form among those preserved from the twelfth

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[46]Milis, *Angelic Monks,* 90-91.

century. It is clearly the work of an educated writer, but we have no evidence whether the founder's part in the foundation process was limited to supplying the monastery with property.

CHAPTER II

FOUNDATION OF THE PREMONSTRATENSIAN NUNNERY IN STRZELNO AND PROBLEMS RELATED TO ITS ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURE.

In the following chapter the foundation of the Premonstratensian nunnery[47] in Strzelno will be analysed. Strzelno, a settlement in southern Greater Poland (the Kuiavia region) was located on a strategic trade route from Silesia to the Baltic coast. In the neighbourhood there is a chain of lakes which in the Middle Ages served as a waterway connecting the River Warta and the River Vistula. The surrounding plains have been settled ever since neolithic times.[48]

The scholarly literature devoted to the various problems of the Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno, including the architecture of former monastic churches and their interior decoration, is abundant.[49] Recent archaeological excavations also resulted in publications.[50] Nevertheless, the complex of problems is far from resolution, as the results of historical, archaeological, and art historical analysis do not complement, but rather contradict each other.

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[47]Unfortunately the history of Premonstratensians in Poland is not well research field. The only one monograph of this order in Poland was written in 1884 by Wacław Knapiński and is very much out of date now. For information about early history of the Premonstratensians in Poland, see Stanisław Trawkowski, *Między herezją a ortodoksją. Rola społeczna premonstratensów w XII wieku*, [Between heresy and orthodoxy: the social role of the Premonstratensians in the twelfth-century Poland] (Warsaw: PWN, 1964); Czesław Deptuła, "O niektórych źródłach do historii zakonu premonstrateńskiego w Polsce w XII i XIII wieku" [About some sources for the history of the Premonstratensians in the twelfth and thirteenth century Poland] *Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne* 22 (1971): 187-220. For more information about Premonstratensian in Europe, see Lawrence, "The Premonstratensians," chap. in *Medieval Monasticism*, 169-173. A jurnal *Analécta Premonstratensia* established in 1924 publishes the results of the recent research on the history of this order.

[48]Zygmunt Świechowski, "Strzelno romańskie. Początki Strzelna na tle sieci drożnej," [Romanesque Strzelno: the beginnings of Strzelno on the background of neighbourhood area and its road system] in *Strzelno romańskie*, ed. Zygmunt Świechowski [Romanesque Strzelno: the collection of studies] (Strzelno: PTTK, 1972), 5-6.

[49]See, for example *Strzelno romańskie. Zbiór studiów*, [Romanesque Strzelno: a collection of studies] ed. Zygmunt Świechowski (Strzelno: PTTK, 1972); Brygida Kürbis, "Najstarsza tradycja klasztoru panien norbertanek w Strzelnie," [The oldest tradition of the Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno], chap. in *Na progach historii* [On the doorsteps of history] (Poznań: Abos, 1994); Brygida Kürbis, "Pogranicze Wielkopolski i Kujaw w X-XII wieku," [The borderland of Great Poland and Kujawy in tenth-twelfth centuries] chap. in *Na progach historii* [On the doorsteps of history] (Poznań, Abos, 1994); Krystyna Józefowiczówna, "Trzy romańskie klasztory," [Three Romanesque churches], in *Studia z dziejów ziemi mogileńskiej*, [A study of history of the Mogilno region], ed. Czesław Łuczak, (Poznań, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie), 165-265.

[50]Jadwiga Chudziakowa, "Zespół architektury romańskiej w Strzelnie w świetle najnowszych badań" [The Romanesque complex of architecture in Strzelno in the light of the recent research] *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici* 13 (1990): 6-19; Bożena Zimnowoda-Krajewska and Jan Salm, "Problematyka badań architektonicznych ponorbertańskiego kościoła p.w. Trójcy w Strzelnie" [The results of the recent research on architecture of ex-Premonstratensian monastic church of Holy Trinity in Strzelno] *Acta Universitatis Nicolai Copernici* 20 (1992): 21-47.

The Strzelno case is an interesting one for Polish Romanesque architecture mainly because of the unique state of preservation. The monastic complex has been an object of research for over a century. Controversy in the scholarly literature concentrates on three points: the identity of the founder, the time of the foundation, and the time of the building of the two monastic churches.

1. THE FOUNDER OF THE STRZELNO NUNNERY

The identity of the founder and the time of the foundation have been very intensively researched, but the results still remain inconclusive. This is due to the fact that the sources are inconsistent regarding the identity of the founder of Strzelno nunnery and the date of foundation. Proposed dates vary from 1133 to the beginning of the thirteenth century, which obviously have relevance for the identity of the founder.

The first evidence for the foundation is a passage from John Długosz's *Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae* under the year 1133:

> *Fundatio monasterii ordinis Premonstratensis in Strzelno. Decimo septimo Kalendas Aprilis Petrus Dacus comes de Skrzin fundat monasterium et ecclesiam quadro lapide fabricat ordinis Premonstrathensis in villa sua Strzelno Cruszvicziensis diocesis. Cui quidem monasterio prefatum villam suam Strzelno contulit cum pluribus aliis in dotem in die dedicationis ecclesie prefate, quam sub presencia Bernhardi episcopi Lubuczensis peregit, dedicando prefatam ecclesiam monasterii in honorem et titulum Sancte Crucis et Marie Virginis.*[51]

The structure of this piece of entry (the date, month, and information about consecration of the church) allowed Brygida Kürbis to assume that Długosz saw a charter, which has not survived to our time. She argues that the date (March, 16, 1133) and the information about the consecration performed by the bishop were taken from this lost charter.[52] However, this short passage from the *Annales* creates in itself several problems.

The first problem is that the year of foundation could be wrong. All Polish Premonstratensian convents had their mother-monastery in Strahov, near Prague, which was

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[51]*Ioannis Dlugossii Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae,* ed. Zofia Kozłowska -Budkowa and others, vol. 4. (Warsaw: PWN, 1970), 319.
[52]Kürbis, "Najstarsza tradycja," 134.

founded by bishop Jindřich Zdik and king Vladislav II, between 1140-1143, from a mother-monastery in Steinfeld.[53] The first Polish filia of Strahov was founded by Jaksa between 1158 and 1181 in settlement of Zwierzyniec near Krakow.[54] This obviously means that the Strzelno could not have been founded in 1133 if the first monastery of this order in Poland was established at least twenty years later.

The second problem is connected with the identity of the founder. The name *Petrus Dacus comes de Skrzin* refers to the Silesian *palatinus* Peter Włostowic who, according to many sources, was a founder of seventy-seven churches.[55] This information caused all nineteenth-century and pre-war historians to take for granted that Peter Włostowic was also the founder of the Strzelno monastery. This opinion was successfully challenged by Wiktoria Posadzówna in 1937. She pointed out that the mother-monastery of Strzelno was a double monastery in Kościelna Wieś; the female part of the double convent moved to Strzelno around 1175, and the monks moved to Wrocław-Piasek[56] sometime before 1190. Since Peter Włostowic died in 1153, he cannot be the founder of the nunnery.[57] As Brygida Kürbis pointed out discussing the *Cronica Poloniae Maioris*, Peter Włostowic, the Silesian *palatinus*, was confused with the Peter "the Old" Wszeborowic, *palatinus* of the Kuiavia region. Both sources, Długosz's *Annales* and the *Cronica Poloniae Maioris*, claim that Strzelno was founded by Peter Włostowic, despite the fact that in the beginning of the thirteenth century the Wszeborowice kindred still kept their patronage over the Strzelno nunnery.[58] After putting this information together, Kürbis proposed a hypothesis which appears rather convincing. The year 1133 refers to the foundation of the Holy Cross and the Virgin Mary church (the present-day St Prokop rotunda) in Strzelno by Peter Wszebor, and then, his son, Peter "the Old"

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[53]*Handbuch der Geschichte der Böhmischen Länder*, ed. Karl Bosl, vol.1 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1967), 294; Pavel Špunar, *Kultura Českého Středověku* [Culture of the Czech Middle Ages] (Prague: Odeon, 1987), 112.

[54]Jerzy Rajman, *Klasztor norbertanek na Zwierzyńcu w wiekach średnich*, [The Premonstratensian nunnery in Zwierzyniec in the Middle Ages] (Krakow: Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1993), 33-36. The sources for the earliest history of Zwierzyniec are meagre. Jerzy Rajmans's dating is based on the necrology of the monastery and information from chronic by Vincent of Prague.

[55]For the detailed analysis of Piotr Włostowic's enterprises see chapter III.

[56]Formerly Breslau

[57]Wiktoria Posadzówna, "W sprawie fundacji klasztoru norbertanek w Strzelnie" [The issue of the founder of the Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno] *Roczniki Historyczne* 13 (1937): 36.

[58]*Cronica Poloniae Maioris*, ed. Brygida Kürbis, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica Series nova*, vol. 8 (Warsaw: PWN, 1970), 50, footnote 266; Kürbis, "Pogranicze Wielkopolski i Kujaw w X-XII wieku," 239-240.

Wszeborowic, founded the Premonstratensian nunnery and the Trinity church around 1190.[59] This last dating is based on the first document connected with the nunnery, the papal bull issued by Celestine III in 1193 confirming the properties of the monastery.[60] The next secure date is 1216 when the Holy Trinity church was consecrated. At this time the patron of the church was Krystyn, the son of Peter "the Old" Wszeborowic. This fact appears to be a very strong argument for attributing the foundation of the Strzelno monastery to the Wszeborowice kindred and specifically to Peter "the Old."[61]

However, this hypothesis, has been recently challenged by Janusz Bieniak. He tries again to connect the foundation of Strzelno nunnery with Peter Włostowic's circle. In order to prove this hypothesis, Bieniak assumed the existence of an elder son of Peter Włostowic, named Wszebor, besides the two who are known from the sources: Świętosław and Idzi. Because Wszebor became independent during his father's life and received a part of the family possession in the Kuiavia region, he was not present in the sources which refer to his father and younger brothers.[62] In this way Peter "the Old" Wszeborowic becomes the grandson of Peter Włostowic. There are no sources which could prove this, but Bieniak argues his case by making the following points:

1) In both churches, that is, St Prokop rotunda and Holy Trinity church in Strzelno, one finds Włostowic's monogram PETRUS, inexpertly carved (known also from the buildings attributed to the Silesian *palatinus* or to his relatives.)

2) The fact is that Strzelno nunnery was subordinated to the Premonstrastensian monastery in Wrocław-Ołbin (which was founded by Peter Włostowic for the Benedictines, who were

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[59]Brygida Kürbis, "Dzieje fundacji strzeleńskiej w świetle dokumentów" [History of Strzelno's foundation in the light of sources] (Strzelno, PTTK, 1972), 44-45; Kürbis, "Najstarsza tradycja," 135-136.

[60]*Codex Diplomaticus Poloniae Maioris,* ed. Franciszek Piekosiński, vol. 1 (Poznań, 1877), nr 32.

[61]*Dokumenty kujawskie i mazowieckie przeważnie z XIII wieku,* [Charters from Kujawy and Mazowsze regions, mainly from the therteenth century], ed. Bolesław Ulanowski (Krakow, 1888) , nr 5. *MCCXVI Epacta VII concurrente V indictione III littera dominicali B ab episcopo Cuiauiensi Barthone felicis memorie, Duce Conrado dominante, patrono Cristion filio Petri existente, consecrata est hec basilica in honorem sancte et individue trinitatis et sancte Marie virginis.*

[62]Janusz Bieniak, "Polska elita polityczna XII wieku. Część III, Arbitrzy książąt - krąg rodzinny Piotra Włostowica," [Polish twelfth-century political elite: Part three: the arbiters of dukes, the family circle of Piotr Włostowic] in *Społeczeństwo Polski średniowiecznej,* vol. 4, ed. Stefan K. Kuczyński (Warsaw: PWN, 1990), 65.

expelled at the end of the twelfth century). Moreover, both convents received bulls of confirmation from Pope Celestine III at the same time (8-9 April 1193).

3) The similar style of inscriptions on the tympana in Strzelno and Piasek might have meant that they were designed by the same artist working for Peter Włostowic's circle.

4) Bieniak also claims that the confusion of Peter Włostowic and Peter Wszeborowic in the *Cronica Poloniae Maioris* occurred because they were close relatives.[63]

Bieniak's set of assumptions has been challenged by Krystyna Józefowiczówna and Kürbis on the following grounds:

1) The monogram PETRUS did not necessarily represent a personal sign, but it might have been the sign of an artist as Kürbis and Józefowiczówna assume.[64]

2) The close connections between the Premonstratensian monastery in Piasek founded by Peter Włostowic and the Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno were the result of their common filiation from the mother-monastery in Kościelna Wieś, and the abbot of the monastery in Piasek had the privilege of visiting and supervising the nunnery.[65] The monastery in Kościelna Wieś was a double one—that is, consisted of both convents, male and female—but this form of organisation was forbidden by the decision of the chapter general in 1135.[66]

3) Despite the similarities in inscriptions from the Strzelno and Piasek tympana, the overall artistic style is significantly different. Art historians attribute them to two different workshops.[67]

4) The confusion of the two *palatini* happened not because they were close relatives, but because Peter Włostowic was, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, a legendary founder of seventy-seven churches; thus almost all of the old churches were said to be built by him.[68]

Therefore, this set of arguments is not very likely to prove the hypothesis of family ties between the *palatinus* of Silesia and the *palatinus* of Kuiavia. But at the same time the counter

[63]Ibid., 53-63.
[64]Kürbis, "Najstarsza tradycja," 132; Józefowiczówna, "Trzy romańskie klasztory," 246.
[65]Ibid., 136.
[66]Lawrence, *Medieval Monasticism*, 171.
[67]Zygmunt Świechowski, *Sztuka romańska w Polsce* [Polish Romanesque art] (Warsaw: Arkady, 1990), 70.
[68]Leszek Kajzer, "Jeszcze o siedemdziesięciu siedmiu kościołach fundacji Piotra Włostowica (uwagi na marginesie studium Janusza Bieniaka" [Once again about the seventy-seven churches founded by Piotr Włostowic: the comments on the work of Janusz Bieniak] *Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej* 39 (1991): 179.

arguments are also mainly assumptions. Nevertheless, the hypothesis created by Kürbis is more consistent; therefore, I am going to accept her arguments for the time being.

2. THE TIME OF FOUNDATION

Another controversial problem related to the Strzelno nunnery is the time of the foundation, which is also closely connected with the problem of when both churches, St Prokop rotunda and Holy Trinity church, were built. The date of the foundation of the *monasterium* in the year 1133, given by John Długosz, cannot be related to the nunnery because the female part of the double convent, which existed in Kościelna Wieś, only moved to Strzelno around 1175, and the monks only moved to Wrocław-Piasek some time before 1190.[69] Nevertheless, this heavily debated date given by Długosz has been used for another purpose: Aleksander Holas connected 1133 with the consecration of the older of the two Strzelno churches, of St Prokop rotunda.[70] This hypothesis remained unquestioned until the end of 1980s when the archaeological excavations undertaken by the research group from Toruń University took place in Strzelno. The main aim of these excavation was to verify various hypotheses in the literature concerning the chronology of the two churches. The ceramic remnants discovered in the layers of the rotunda's foundations and its surroundings allow dating of the construction of the rotunda to a period between the end of the twelfth century and the first half of the thirteenth century. In the layers connected with the building of the Holy Trinity church, archaeological materials (mainly ceramic and various remnants of building activities) enabled the dating of this building as well to the end of the twelfth and the first half of the thirteenth century. These excavations also revealed that the area near the churches had not been inhabited before the time of the building of the churches. Thus, the church could not have been a "parish" church for the inhabitants of the settlement in Strzelno.[71]

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[69]Posadzówna, "W sprawie fundacji klasztoru norbertanek w Strzelnie," 36.
[70]Aleksader Holas, "Architektura kościoła św. Prokopa w Strzelnie" [The architecture of the St Prokop church in Strzelno], in *Strzelno romańskie. Zbiór studiów* [The Romanesque Strzelno: collection of studies] (Strzelno, PTTK, 1972), 28.
[71]Chudziakowa, "Zespół architektury romańskiej w Strzelnie w świetle najnowszych badań" 6-9.

Simultaneously with the archaeological excavation, architectural research on these churches has been carried out. The detailed analysis of construction and sculptural decoration allowed the dating of Holy Trinity to between the last quarter of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century.[72] This dating can be supported by information about the consecration of this church in 1216. In the copy of the charter connected with this event, Krystyn, a son of Peter "the Old" Wszeborowic, is named as a patron of the Premonstratensian monastery.[73] Given the problem of the inconsistency of the sources and multiplicity of hypotheses, it might be best simply to state that some members of the Wszeborowice kindred, who may or may not have been related to the Peter Włostowic circle, founded the Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno and somewhere around this time, also founded St Prokop rotunda. Then we can move to the next problem, which concerns the architecture and the sculpture of the churches.

3. THE COMPLEX OF ROMANESQUE ARCHITECTURE IN STRZELNO

The main methodological problems concerning the Strzelno complex is its unusual character among preserved examples of Romanesque art in Poland. The strikingly rich sculptural decoration of Holy Trinity church has caused many art historians and historians to comment that the architecture of Strzelno is remarkable within Polish Romanesque art in terms of the abundance of interior decoration. This notion can only be true in the relative sense because the number of preserved monuments of Romanesque architecture is very small. The large monastic complex in Wrocław-Ołbin was demolished during the Reformation and a great number of Romanesque churches were rebuilt in Gothic, and later in the Baroque style. Also, a great number of Romanesque churches were destroyed during the war with Sweden in the seventeenth century. Therefore, any comments about the typical or atypical character of any example of Romanesque art should be made very carefully as the present-day situation does not mirror the medieval one.

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[72]Zimnowoda-Krajewska and Salm, "Problematyka badań architektonicznych ponorbertańskiego kościoła p.w. św. Trójcy w Strzelnie" 21-47.
[73]*Dokumenty kujawskie i mazowieckie*, nr 5.

Presently, the Strzelno complex consists of two churches—Holy Trinity Church and the St Prokop rotunda—and remnants of dwellings. The most well-regarded scholars agree with the results of recent archaeological excavations, in dating Holy Trinity to between the last quarter of the twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth century.[74] St Prokop rotunda was dated by Michał Walicki to the second half of the twelfth century. This statement was revised by Zygmunt Świechowski, who, on the basis of recent archaeological excavations, established a new dating to the end of twelfth century and the beginning of the thirteenth.[75] The other monastic buildings, that is the dwelling facilities of the nunnery, were placed on the northern side of the Holy Trinity church. They were rebuilt several times and used by nuns until 1837 when the Prussian government closed the institution. There are some remnants of the thirteenth-century walls which suggest that it was a two-floor building, and the nuns' rooms were probably facing east.[76]

The circular nave of the St Prokop rotunda, with two apses facing north, is attached to the large square presbytery, and from the west, to the round tower. During the restoration work in 1948-1953, the presumed relics on the west gallery were discovered, and this part of the church was rebuilt, using elements which had not belonged to the building, in order to open the gallery to the nave.[77] The results of the examination of the architecture and the changes in its construction, done during the restoration work, have never been published. Andrzej Tomaszewski, who undertook the detailed investigation of Romanesque churches with west galleries, in the territory of Bohemia, historical Hungary, and Poland, tried to solve the problem of the existence of the west gallery in the St Prokop rotunda. He suggests rather that the first floor of the tower might have been a separate chapel having no connection with the nave. There are parallel examples from Bohemia where small churches or founders' chapels were sometimes placed near to monastic complexes. Tomaszewski's study was written and published before the results of the latest archaeological excavations became available, but his dating is similar to that of Jadwiga Chudzikowa, the head of the research team from Toruń

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[74]*Sztuka polska przedromańska i romańska do schyłku XIII wieku* [Polish pre-Romanesque and Romanesque art to the end of the thirteenth century], ed. Michał Walicki, vol. 2 (Warsaw: PWN, 1971), 759-60.
[75]Świechowski, *Sztuka romańska,* 122.
[76]Świechowski, "Strzelno romańskie," 20-21.
[77]Holas, "Architectura kościoła św. Prokopa w Strzelnie," 30-32.

University rather than to that of Holas, who suggested the first half of the twelfth century. Tomaszewski's arguments for dating the rotunda to the same time as the Holy Trinity church or even, later, are based on the analysis of the nave's vaulting and its material (bricks, which were not used earlier than from the turn of the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries). Such dating raises a question of the primary usage of the rotunda. Given the fact that this building is as old as the Holy Trinity church, which was built for the monastery, and that the St Prokop rotunda was also a property of the monastery, the hypothesis that the rotunda was a private church should be abandoned. Tomaszewski suggests that this building may have been used for the convents' liturgical purposes (*sorores cantantes*) or for the lay people living nearby when entry to the main monastic church was forbidden to them.[78]

Although the other monastic church is rather small, it presents an interesting case. The Holy Trinity church is a basilica with three naves and a transept with two western towers attached to the naves. The presbytery is terminated by a large apse, two additional small apses are placed at the ends of the transept.[79] The west gallery was placed between two towers of the facade and was open to the main nave, and light came inside the west gallery through the round window in the facade. The church was rebuilt in the fifteenth century, and later its interior and the facades of the towers were covered by Baroque decoration in 1728, but after the Second World War, restoration work uncovered the primary Romanesque phase.[80] The west gallery was demolished during the rebuilding of the fifteenth century; thus its original construction is unknown (specifically the vaulting and supporting columns). As Świechowski suggested, the west gallery might have been used by the nuns for liturgical purposes when lay people had access to the church.[81] The four columns in the main nave are richly decorated with eighteen symbolic representations of the Vices and Virtues, which are generally attributed

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[78]Andrzej Tomaszewski, *Romańskie kościoły z emporami zachodnimi*, [Romanesque churches with the west galeries] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1974), 133-137.
[79]*Sztuka polska przedromańska i romańska*, 129.
[80]Świechowski, "Strzelno romańskie," 10-11.
[81]Ibid., 12.

to the convent's initiative rather than to the founder's. This is a truly unique object, and its literary context (a possible literary source) should be a subject of further study.[82]

4. FOUNDATION TYMPANA FROM STRZELNO

Finally, the two last items—the foundation tympana—should be presented. Similar to the rest of the architecture in Strzelno, they have been the object of study for over a century. The foundation tympanum from St Prokop rotunda is known only from photographs because it was destroyed by fire in 1945. The scene on this tympanum consists of three persons. The central position, the highest point of the semicircular frame, is occupied by the significantly taller figure of Christ sitting on the throne.[83] He is addressed by two figures of donors, one on each side. The man seen on the left is bent almost in half and holds a realistic model of the St Prokop rotunda. A female figure on the right also shows deep respect through her body posture; in addition, she is holding an open book in her hands. There is no inscription which may reveal the identity of the couple. Świechowski assumes that the man depicted is Krystyn the son of Peter "the Old" Wszeborowic.[84] But this hypothesis cannot be proved because there is no inscription revealing the identity of the figures. The woman's head is covered closely by a veil, suggesting either her affiliation with a convent or her marital status, which seems to be more probable. However, the original placement of the tympanum is unknown because, oddly enough, the size of the tympanum does not match with the size of the portal which would have been the most obvious placement.[85] Świechowski assumes that the tympanum, from the turn of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, might have been placed above the door to the west gallery, designed to be used by the founder (unfortunately not now in existence).[86] However, this suggestion is easily challenged because it is based on the assumption that the west gallery

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[82]There is a suprisingly small number of publications devoted to this problem. The only one monographic study of it is MA thesis of Rozalia K. Markowska from Warsaw University, which was partly published in *Studia Źródłoznawcze* 26 (1981): 75-111.

[83]For the origins and development of the Christ's iconography, particularly Christ in Majesty, see Andre Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A study of its Origins,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 40, 79, 119, 120.

[84]Świechowski, *Sztuka romańska w Polsce,* 72.

[85]*Sztuka polska przedromańska i romańska,* vol. 2, 760.

[86]Świechowski, "Strzelno romańskie," 23-24.

was actually used by the donor or patron of the church. As this is only an assumption, and has never been proved, the whole hypothesis collapses if one removes this belief in the patron's.

The second tympanum is currently placed above the door of the Gothic St Barbara chapel inside the Holy Trinity church. The original location is unknown, but we can assume that it was rather central. Walicki dates this object to the end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth century.[87] The central position is occupied by St Anne holding the Virgin Mary as a baby. The donors are kneeling, one on each side. The man is seen on the left, holding a model of the basilica, and a woman occupies a corresponding position on the right, holding a book. Her dress implies marital status. On the semicircular frame the following text is inscribed:

TE VELVT OPTARET

HOC DONO PETRUS HONORAT

VIRGINIS ANNA PIE

MATER VENERANDA MARIE

The inscription is written in the type of majuscula called *capitalis quadrata elegans*. The style of letters suggest a dating for 1130-1150.[88] However, this cannot be a safe enough basis for the dating of the whole object because epigraphic styles tend to be rather conservative.

5. HOW DO THE SOURCES SUGGEST THE FOUNDER'S MOTIVATION?

In the case of Strzelno monastery, the only existing sources which are suitable for examining the founders' motivations are the foundation tympana and the architecture of both churches. Unfortunately, the foundation charter, if it ever existed, has not survived, and the first document related to the monastery is a papal bull from 1193.

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[87]*Sztuka polska przedromańska i romańska,* vol. 2, 760.
[88]Kazimierz Ciechanowski, *Epigrafika romańska i wczesnognogotycka w Polsce* [The Romanesque and Early-Gothic epigraph in Poland] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1965), 38-40.

Foundation tympana are a very significant type of source. In the literature the most common *terminus technicus* is "donation tympanum",[89] but I decided to use the non-standard term because it better reflects the actual role of these representations. They depict a person who might be dead or alive in the time of its sculpting, but is not a saint, addressing a centrally placed figure, either Christ, the Virgin Mary, or some saint. The donor's gesture represents an actual sign of his/her action and feelings. As Jean-Claude Schmitt points out, "The culture of the Middle Ages has sometimes been called a 'culture of gesture' or 'gestural culture'."[90] Gesture was considered by contemporaries as "inner movements of the soul, of feelings, of the moral values of individuals."[91] Unfortunately, because of the ephemeral character of gesture, they usually cannot be traced by historians, apart from the cases when an act of performing a gesture was depicted as a part of an object of art, sculpture, painting, or illumination. Some of these gestures "preserved" in art are the gestures of donation in the tympana from Strzelno. They present a complex of issues regarding the medieval symbolic representation of church foundation, which can be divided for the purpose of clarity into the following groups:

1) the placement of the figures in the tympanum and relations between them;

2) the gestures performed by donors and holy persons;

3) dress and attributes;

4) an accompanying inscription.

Concerning the first group, the frames were an organisation principle for the actual composition of the scene. Meyer Schapiro says "In the Romanesque sculpture the frame, by which I mean the architectural boundary of a sculpture, like the archivolt of a tympanum, or the rectangular border of lintel, is the generating principle of the enclosed relief."[92] Within this "boundary," a group of people is depicted. In the centre of the scene, according to the sacred

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[89]The donation/foundation tympanan are very neglected field. They are rarly mention in the large syntesis of medieval European art. The only one monoghraph of the problem is unpublished Ph.D. dissertation from Rutgers University in 1981 by Elisabeth Lipsmeyer, "The Donor and His Church Model in Medieval Art from Early Christian Times to the Late Romanesque Period".

[90]Jean-Claude Schmitt, "The Rationale of Gesture in the West: Third to the Thirteenth Centuries," in *A Cultural History of Gesture*, ed. Jan Bremner and Herman Roodenburg (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 59.

[91]Ibid., 64.

[92]Meyer Schapiro, "On Geometrical Schematism in Romanesque Art," in *Romanesque Art: Selected Papers* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 271. Similar conclusion in: Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages,* trans. Hugh Bredin (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 40.

tradition, the holy person is always placed. The placement clearly indicates the importance of the figure. In the tympanum from St Prokop church, the central person (Christ) is proportionally larger than the figures on the sides; however, it seems to be there were no specific patterns regulating the size because among the known examples, there is a variety of proportions.[93] On the other tympanum, the donors are as tall as St Anne. The figure of Christ sitting on the throne, presents, according to Walicki, the iconographical type *Rex gloriae*.[94] The St Anne figure is depicted less formally. She is standing in the centre of the scene, but her gesture of carrying the Virgin Mary as a baby is very maternal and appears quite casual, just as if she were any woman carrying a baby. Moreover, the donors are as tall as she is. They are placed in close vicinity to the sacred figures and, by the means of the gift, had obtained a special relationship. In this way donors ensured their social position, which meant not only being higher in the social structure but also being closer to God. Thus these two levels—the social and the sacred—were closely related to each other. Positioning in the social hierarchy determined not only the relationship with other people above and below, but also the relationship with the divinity. If the tympanum was placed above the main door this message was visible to everybody entering the church

Turning to the second group of problems, it is easy to notice that in both tympana the donors perform various gestures. The most striking one is body posture. In the tympanum from the Holy Trinity church in Strzelno, both donors are kneeling, and their heads are bent to show deep respect, but upon closer examination it appears that the man's face is turned to the viewer, but the woman is much more withdrawn, looking at the ground. Another posture is seen in the tympanum from St Prokop church where the bodies are bent almost in half. Yet another type of gesture is performed by the hands of donors. There are basically two types: a gesture of giving a model of a church or book and a gesture of praying. The first one is present in both objects. In the tympanum in which Christ is placed in the centre, this gesture expresses the hope that the gift will be accepted and, simultaneously, indicates a deep reverence which

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[93]Krystyna Mączewska-Pilch, *Tympanon fundacyjny z Ołbinia na tle przedstawień o charakterze donacyjnym* [The foundation tympanon from Ołbin in the relationship to the other representations of donations] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1973), 85.
[94]*Sztuka polska przedromańska i romańska*, vol. 1, 210.

also seems to be the awe of the sacred. On another tympanum, a centrally placed St Anne is approached by donors who adore her, but they are positioned closer to her than in the one with Christ.

Concerning the third group, the main attributes of the donors are the church models. They represent the actual gift in the form of a model of the church built by the noble people depicted in the tympana. Thus the meaning of the scene is *giving*. In one of his articles, Aaron Gurevich analysed the attitude towards property in Early Medieval Scandinavia. His conclusions are quite applicable to the problem of church foundation: "Wealth primarily fulfilled a social function in that the transfer of possession contributed to the acquisition and increase of social prestige and respect, and sometimes the handing-over of property could involve greater prestige than its retention and accumulation."[95] The need for prestige is clearly one of the reasons for church foundations and is also present in these tympana. The people depicted there wanted to show both their contemporaries and posterity that their social position was high and that they were wealthy. Therefore, the act of giving was a type of investment into one's own and one's family position.

Another dimension of the same action was also described by Gurevich: "Consequently, a connection would be stabilised between the donor and the recipient of a gift, and the latter would be put under an obligation to the former."[96] Here, we come to that aspect of church foundation, which is described in the foundation charters as *sacrum commercium*. It would be a simplification to say that donors wanted to "force" the sacred to give them eternal life in exchange for earthly property; however, these expectations reveal the donors' way of thinking in terms of *do ut des*.

The other meaningful items represented on the tympana are dresses. In fact, they constitute the identity of people and their membership in a noble stratum.[97] This is particularly visible in the garments worn by the two women. Both of their dresses have a particular type of long sleeve typical for the courtly dresses of that time.[98] The abundance of cloth was,

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[95]Aaron Gurevich, "Wealth and gift-bestowal among the ancient Scandinavians," in *Historical Anthropology of the Middle Ages,* ed. Jan Howlett (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 178-9.
[96]Ibid., 180.
[97]Anne Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 362.
[98]Ordericus Vitelis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. Marjorie Chibnall, vol. 4 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 189.

according to Anne Hollander, "by this time closely associated with luxury and treasure. For garments [,] its excessive use had long been a sign of wealth."[99] This sort of impractical clothing could have been worn only by a person who does not have to do any manual labour.

The second type of sources related to the founders' motivation is architecture, more specifically, the west galleries in both churches in Strzelno. The stylistic source of west galleries were derived from the tower gallery of Ottonian basilicas.[100] In the tenth century towers underwent a change in order to be proportional to the small one-nave churches; their first floor served as the narthex. At the turn of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the west galleries in one-nave churches appeared in central Europe. They became the most popular type of sacral building in this area up to the end of Romanesque epoch.[101]

The controversy over the role of the west gallery in the sacral architecture of Central Europe has been present in the literature for decades. Scholars have concentrated on the question of the relationship between Central European models and those of Western Europe, how the west galleries were used and by whom. There are two main hypotheses. The first one argues that the west gallery was used by the patron of the church and his family when liturgy was performed at the altar.[102] The second hypothesis was formulated by Vaclaw Mencl, who

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[99]Hollander, *Seeing Through Clothes*, 27.

[100]Kenneth John Conant, *Carolingian and Romanesque Architectue: 800 - 1200*, (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1993), 44-46. There is a vast literature concerning the "Westwerk" discussion in the western architecture, but I will leave this problem aside, as not directly related to my sources.

[101]Tomaszewski, *Romańskie kościoły z emporami zachodnimi*, 333-41.

[102]This hypothesis appeared in the Polish and Czech scholarship simultaneously but independently in the 1870s and is connected with such names as Marian Sokołowski, Wacław Łuszczkiewicz, and Martin Kolář. The hypothesis was later developed by another Czech scholar Vojtěch Birnbaum, but his research was based exclusively on Bohemian material. All of these authors connected closely the existence of west gallery with the patron of the church. Birnbaum created also hypotyhesis about direct connection of noble residence with the gallery, *Románské emporové kostely v Cechách*, in *Sbornik k sedmdesátým narozeninám K. B. Mádla*, (Praha: n.p., 1929). More recently, Jiří Kuthan, *Středověká architectura v jižnich Čechách do poloviny 13. století*, [Medieval Bohemian architecture] (České Budeějowice: Nakladalelstwi Růže, 1976). In the Hungarian scholarship Ladislas Gálin his book *L'Architecture religieuse en Hongrie du XI au XIII siécles*, (Paris, 1929) pointed out common appearance of the west galleries in the Romanesque basilicas founded by the nobles for the Benedictines and Premonstratensians monasteries. Another Hungarian scholar Géza Entz published in 1959 pioneering study titled "Westemporen in der ungarischen Romanik," *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 6 (1959): 1-19, on Hungarian west galleries in the wider Central-European context. He also pointed out differences in the Bohemian, Hungarian and Polish objects. Transilvanian west galleries were studied by Walther Horwath, "Der Emporenbau der romanischen *und* frühgotischen Kirchen in Siebenbürgen," *Siebenburgische Vierteljahrschrift* 58 (1935): 69-75. Virgil Vătăşianu, *Istoria artei feudale în tările romîne*, vol. 1, (Bucharest, Editura Academiei R.P.R, 1959) and Géza Entz, "Die Baukunst Transsilvaniens im 11-13 Jahrhundert," *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 14 (1968): 3-48, 127-175. More recently this author analysed the role of the wall-painting on the west gallery: "Die Wandmalereien der Westempore in Ják," in *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte und Denkmalpflege. Walter Frodl zum 65. Geburstag gewidmet* (Wien, 1975), 175-181. The work of Tomaszewski was an important step in the research and the first large-scale attempt to

thought that the gallery was a private chapel of the patron in those churches which also served the parish.[103]

The first hypothesis is based on the assumption that the west gallery, being above the nave, was the most important place in the church. Moreover, in some churches in Bohemia, the entrance to the gallery might have been directly connected to the noble residence. In the thirteenth century when the west gallery started to disappear, the patron's place was moved to the presbytery in front of the altar. This hypothesis has been challenged by the following arguments:

-the west gallery is the most distant place from the altar, which is the central and most important place in the church;

-the crowd standing in the nave was facing the altar not the gallery;

-in the large basilicas the distance between altar and gallery was sometimes so large that persons sitting in the gallery could not have even clearly seen the altar;

-the west galleries were not an exclusive feature of the private churches, existing also in monastic churches and private bishops' chapels.

The second hypothesis has been also challenged in the following way:

-there was no reason to build a separate chapel in the private churches because the patron could close the building if he wanted exclusive use of it.

-there is no explanation about how the chapels in the galleries of non-private churches were used.

Nevertheless, as Tomaszewski points out, there are strong arguments supporting the second hypothesis: the existence of separate *patrocinia* for altars in the galleries and the frequent appearance of religious wall painting (but not, surprisingly, scenes related to the

compare Central European one-nave churches with the west galleries. Nevertheless many of Central European churches which were rebuilt in the Gothic or Baroque style or simply destroyed are waiting for extensive archaeological research which would uncover their primary phase and give new material for the comparative study. The current state of debate was summarised by: Geza Entz, "Még egyszer a nyugati karzakról" [Once again about west gallery] *Épités-Épitészettudomány* 12 (1980): 133-141. The most recent publication concerning west gallery debate: Ernö Marosi, "Bencés épilészet ez Árpád-kori Magyarországon. A 'rendi épitö iskolák" problémája," [The architecture of the Benedictine order in the Arpadian age in Hungary: the problem of the 'order's workshops'], in *Mons Sacer 996-1996,* ed. Imre Takács, vol. 1 (Pannonhalma: Bennedictin abbey, 1996), 138-9.

[103]Vaclav Mencl, "Panskié tribuny v naši románské architekturě" [The nobles' galleries in our Romanesque architecture] *Uměni* 13 (1965): 29-62.

patron). Tomaszewski provides an example of the consecration of St Jacob church in Kutná Hora. The ceremony took place at the altar in the gallery, there was a priest and a patron, the common people stood in the nave. Thus, Tomaszewski created his own hypothesis about the role of west galleries in the private churches which also served as parish churches. There were two possibilities for using the space. When the liturgy took place at the main altar in the apse, the patron and his family were directly in front of the altar. In the cases when the liturgy was performed at the altar in the gallery, the patron was also there. All the other people stood in the nave facing the gallery. This hypothesis appears convincing because it connects two problems—the liturgical centre of the church and the placement of the patron.[104] The ideological message of the west gallery was also related to the social prestige of the patron. An owner of the church was demonstrating his own high position, his political and material strength, to the other members of the noble stratum but also to everyone entering the church, and, as Tomaszewski assumes, to the ruler in order to stress the growing position of the nobility, which was developing in the twelfth century.[105]

6. CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this case study was not to resolve conclusively the problem of the precise dating of the foundation or to decide exactly who founded the Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno since the literature already concentrates on these problems but to explore the reasons and motives of the founder as suggested in the surviving sources.

The Strzelno case differs from the others which are analysed in this work because only material sources (architecture and sculpture) are at our disposal and the usual written sources did not survive. The character of the sources, thus, leads us to utilise other methods of research and allows us to see the problem of the founders' motivation from a different perspective. I would like to stress, especially, the importance of the foundation tympana not only a

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[104]Tomaszewski, *Romańskie kościoły*, 339-59.
[105] Ibid., 359.

complementary source to the charters but also as an independent source which can be successfully used for an analysis of the founders' motivation.

Tympana served as "visual charters" commemorating the act of foundation. Their non-written character provided the possibility that the message would be visible to and understood by a much wider scope of the public. Literally everybody entering the church or even simply passing by could see the tympanum. In the case of charters, however, their message could be received only by a selected group of generally literate people. The tympana, in contrast, were visible not only to fellow noblemen but also to peasants, merchants, pilgrims, monks, foreign dignitaries, that is, all the people above and below in the social hierarchy. Thus, this "stone illustration" was designed to elevate the social position of the donators and insure their special relationship with God.

CHAPTER III

PETER WŁOSTOWIC AND HIS CIRCLE—THE FOUNDATION ACTIVITY IN WROCłAW

This case study differs in its structure from these in the first and second chapters. This is due to the fact that in this chapter I am analysing two of the foundations of Peter Włostowic in which his family actively participated, for which the source base is different. In the case of Peter Włostowic's foundation enterprises, we have narrative sources at our disposal. So this chapter consists of the analysis of the information about Peter Włostowic in the narrative sources as well as the analyses of to his foundations in which his family participated.

Peter Włostowic is one of the most interesting and well-known persons of twelfth-century Poland. There is a vast literature in Polish and German devoted to his political career, family connections, and foundation activity. He was born in the beginning of the twelfth century to an influential Silesian noble family whose land spread over the area of present-days Wrocław, and controlled a crossing of the River Odra (Oder). Sometime after 1117 he married the Ruthenian duchess Mary, a sister of the duke Jaroslav of Novogrod. They had at least two sons: Świętosław (called by some sources Constantine) and Idzi (the Slavic version of Gills), and one daughter called Agafia-Beatrice. Janusz Bieniak argues that Peter Włostowic had an older son Wszebor, but this hypothesis is highly debatable (I discussed this problem in Chapter II).[106] Mary was a relative of the first wife of Duke Boleslas the Wry-mouthed, and this marriage brought Peter prominent Byzantine connections through Mary's mother. In the first half of the twenties he became a key member of Duke Boleslas's court and played a very significant role in the Duke's foreign affairs (especially in Volhynia). This allowed him to reach the top level of the elite. However, his position become the object of attacks by the second wife of the duke and their sons. In 1125 Peter Włostowic lost his position as Silesian *palatinus,* probably because of the accusation that he had broken an oath and kidnapped duke Volodar while on political mission in Volhynia. Immediately after the death of duke Boleslas in 1138 his

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[106]Bieniak, "Polska elita polityczna XII wieku," 50-66.

son Ladislas II the Exile (Mary's relative) made Peter *palatinus* again. The persistent conflicts between Duke Ladislas and his younger brothers over the division of land and foreign politics put Peter into a difficult position, who at this point supported younger dukes. In consequence, the Silesian *palatinus* was blinded and his tongue torn out in the winter of 1145/6. All his property was confiscated by the duke Ladislas and he was expelled from the country. His fortune turned again after the civil war between Ladislas and his younger brothers. When Ladislas left the country in 1146, Peter's position was restored and he lived probably until 1151.[107]

1. THE FOUNDATION ACTIVITY OF PETER WŁOSTOWIC IN NARRATIVE SOURCES

The life of Peter Włostowic and his foundation activity, particularly its scale, were topics included in many thirteenth and fourteenth-century chronicles. The issues of the greatest interest to these authors were how many churches and monasteries Peter had founded and why he had done so. The three streams of the tradition concerning this problem were divided by Marian Plezia into the following groups:

-a courtly tradition recorded by Magister Vincentius Kadłubek in his *Chronicon Polonorum*[108] written in the beginning of the thirteenth century,

-a local Silesian tradition recorded in the *Chronica Polonorum*[109] from the end of thirteenth century and in the *Chronica Principis Poloniae*[110] dated to the second half of the fourteenth century,

-legendary stories reported by the author of the *Chronica Poloniae Maioris*[111], which is dated by its editor to about 1295.[112]

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[107]Stanisław Trawkowski, "Piotr Włostowic," [Peter Włostowic] in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* [Polish Bibliographical Dictionary], vol. 26 (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1981), 355-62.

[108]*Magistri Vincentii Chronicon Polonorum*, ed. and trans. Brygida Kürbis (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1992).

[109]*Chronica Polonorum*, ed. Ludwik Cwikliński, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 3 (Lviv, 1878), 578-656.

[110]*Chronica Principis Polonorum*, ed. Zygmunt Węclewski, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 3 (Lviv, 1878), 424-578.

[111]*Chronica Poloniae Maioris*, ed. Brygida Kürbis, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica, seria nova*, vol. 8 (Warsaw: PWN, 1970)

These sources contain information about *palatinus* Peter and about why he founded so many churches and monasteries. Magister Vincentius reports Peter Włostowic political career in Duke Boleslas's court in a very positive tone, but he made no mention about the foundations in the text.[113]

All the three chronicles gives information about the motive leading Peter to his pious activities. An entry in the *Chronica Polonorum* refers that Peter Włostowic built seven monasteries and seventy churches:

> *Iste Petrus tempore Boleslai Curvi regem Russie in dolo adierat et cum illo conmessans ceperat eum et vinctum Boleslao adduxit, et cum ille se pecunia liberasset, simili dolo per quendam Pannoniorum Cilciam urbem delevit cum magna strage Polonicorum ac captivitate. Propter quod idem Petrus iniuncta sibi penitencia septem cenobia et septuaginta lapideas construxit ecclesias.*[114]

A detailed story is in the *Chronica Principis Polonorum*, but the number of foundations is different:

> *Huic successit in regno WLadislas, primogenitus, tenens super omnes provincias monarchiam Poloniae. Qui cum quodam tempore hiemali venacioni ferarum intendens solus in silvis, ceteris - quo casu nescitur - ab ipsis dilapsis, esset cum Petro Vlascides dicto qui maior natu principique proximior tunc secum perrexerat, qui eciam Petrus pridem tempore Boleslai curvi predicti regem Russie accedens in dolo cum eoque convescens ceperat et ad Boleslaum vincum adduxerat se postea pecunia de vinculis liberantem, simili quoque dolo per quendam Pannoniorum Kelciam urbem delevit non sine magna Polonorum strage nec non captivitate multorum, propter quod iniuncta sibi penitencia fuit, ut septem fundaret cenobia, qui non contentus in septem pro peccatis suis construit ecclesie.*[115]

Yet another version of the origin of Peter's fortune and his penance appears in the *Cronica Poloniae Maioris*, which gives the some figures as *Chronica Polonorum* but there are additional information about his son's contribution:

> *Isti vero Peterkoni penitenciarius domini pape, cum Romam iniisset et de thezauro regis Danorum mortui asportato confessus fuiset, pro penitencia iniunxit, ut septem monasteria erigeret et convenienter dotaret.* [then follows a list of seven monasteries]; *ac alias septuaginta ecclesias ex lapide dolo et*

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[112]Brygida Kürbis, *Dziejopisarstwo Wielkopolskie* [Medieval history writing in Greater Poland] (Warsaw: PWN, 1959), 15-20, 90-224.

[113]*Magistri Vincentii Chronicon Polonorum,* III 20. He describes Peter Włostowic in the following way: *quidam alit sanguinis dukeps et pricipi dignitate proimus, vir magnanimitatis generosae, tam stremus manu, quam pectore industrius, ecce! ille famae celebrrimae Petrus Wlostides.*

[114]*Chronica Polonorum,* 630-1.

[115]*Cronica Principis Polonorum,* 476-477.

coctis lateribus fertur construxisse. Quarum quasdam imperfectas reliquit
morte preventes. Quas filius Constantinus iussu patris post mortem eiusdem
dicitur perfecisse.[116]

The fourth source is John Długosz *Annales* who gives quite different figures and reasons for the Peter's foundation. This author provides us with the list of the forty churches and monasteries presumably founded by Peter Włostowic, but the only reason for the foundation was piety.[117]

To a degree the number seventy-seven seems to have symbolical significance. Carol Heitz argues that this number has purely symbolic meaning. The number seven was interpreted as the sum of the four forces of nature and three elements of the Holy Trinity, which symbolises the mystery of Creation, and also in the Apocalypse seven Asian churches appear.[118] The use of repeated number seven emphases the symbolic connotation. Tomasz H. Orłowski argues that the repeated number seven was intended to mean "a big number", but probably no more than twenty: the use of this particular number emphasise the exceptional character of Peter Włostowic's foundation activity. Moreover the number seven was often related to penance, and seven years of penance was usually prescribed by the Church in the cases of deadly sins.[119] Many other scholars try to suggest that there is some relationship between the number seventy-seven and the real number of Peter Włostowic's foundations. It may seem that Długosz's figure of forty is more realistic given that he has the reputation of reliable writer. However, Marian Friedberg analysed Długosz's list and concluded that only four of them were undoubtedly founded by *palatinus* Peter, whereas all the other of the churches and monasteries from this list had other noble founders. Moreover, he pointed out that in the time of Długosz Peter was already a legendary figure and almost all old churches were said to be built due by him.[120]Janusz Bieniak agrees with Orłowski's suggestion, but imagined that a significant number of the Peter Włostowic's foundation are likely to have been

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[116]*Chronica Poloniae Maioris*, 50.

[117]Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronice incliti Regni Polonia*, ed. Zofia Kozłowska-Budkowa, vol. 5 (Warsaw: PWN, 1973), 22-31.

[118]Carol Heitz, "Architecture et symbolique des Nombres au Moyen Age" *Artium Questiones* 8 (1979): 10-18.

[119]Tomasz H. Orłowski, "Czy Piotr Włast zbudował 70 kościołów? Z dziejów mecenatu artystycznego w dwunastowiecznej Polsce," [Did Peter Włostowic build 70 churches? The beginnings of art patronage in twelfth century Poland, in *Mecenas - Kolekcjoner - Odbiorca* [Patron, collector, receptor], ed. Tadeusz S. Jaroszewski (Warsaw: PWN, 1981), 50.

[120]Marian Friedberg, *Ród Łabędziów w wiekach średnich*, [The Łabędzie kindred in the middle ages] (Krakow: Towarzystwo Heraldyczne, 1925), 86-94.

chapels.[121] Leszek Kajzer doubts that Peter Włostowic could possibly have built even twenty churches, because it would be almost one fifth of all Romanesque monumental buildings in Poland. He argues that Peter's foundation activity was not entirely his own initiative, but was very much supported by the dukes and later by his descendants.[122]

In the contrary to the conflicting numbers, almost all the chronicles cited above offer some information about Peter's motivations. All of them are consistent in one point: all (or part) of his foundations were to be penance for his behaviour on the mission in Volhynia. It is probable that this was part of a larger penance procedure, which included the pilgrimage that Peter and his wife made to St Gilles before 1126. They made a donation to this institution; thus their names are recorded in the *Liber Mortuorum* of St Gilles, under the date April 17.[123]

In the light of many narrative sources, especially *Magistri Vincentii Chronicon Polonorum*, Peter Włostowic appears as one of the leading political figures of the first half of the twelfth century.[124] Piotr Włostowic had international connections and participated in the same pool of patterns as the upper stratum of western European nobility, including pilgrimages, collecting relics and making large monastic foundation. So even if they were partially an effect of the penance order by the Church as all the sources emphases, his exceptionally large foundation enterprises must have been as much as anything an expression of his high social position and the role of his family.

2. THE FOUNDATION OF THE BENEDICTINE ABBEY IN WROCŁAW-OŁBIN

Among the many monastic foundations mentioned which were attributed to Peter Włostowic by the narrative sources, three of them were undoubtedly established due to his generosity. The first known document related to the foundation of the Benedictine monastery in

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[121]Bieniak, "Polska elita polityczna XII wieku," 48.

[122]Leszek Kajzer, "Jeszcze o siedemdziesięciu siedmiu kościołach fundacji Piotra Włostowicz (uwagi na marginesie studium Janusza Bieniaka)" [Once more about the seventy-seven churches founded by Peter Włostowic: comments on the work of Janusz Bieniak] *Kwartalnik Kultury Materialnej* 39 (1991): 177-85.

[123]Pierre David, "La Pologne dans l'obituaire de Saint Gilles en Languedoc au XII siécle," *Revues des Etudes Slaves* 19 (1939): 223. There is a discrepancy between dates in the mortuaries of St Gilles and St Vincent which is very common for this type of the sources.

[124]*Magister Vincentii Chronicon Polonorum*, III 20, III 28.

Wrocław is a charter issued by bishop Robert[125] in 1139, which is known from a notarial copy made in 1487. This charter recorded that the monastery was built by Peter:

> [...] *Anno dominice incarnationis MCXXXIX indictione secunda, epacta octavadecima concurrent secundo,* [...] *anno vero pontificis Roberti quartodecimo, idem presul concilio et ammonicione fratrum suorum canonicorum videlicet eiusdem ecclesie cappellam iuxta monasterium beate Mary Virginis, quod tunc Petrus edificabat in honore sancti Michaelis constructam cum omnibus, que ad eam pertinent,* [the rest of the text is related to the relationship between abbot and bishop].[126]

Another source confirming the identity of the founder is *Liber Mortuorum monasterii S. Vincentii,* in which the death of the founder *Petrus* is recorded under the date April 16.[127]

Ołbin was the core of the Włostowice kindred's estates and Peter probably had his residence there.[128] The time of the foundation process and actual building of the exceptionally large monastic complex is not entirely clear. The editors of *Liber Mortuorum Monasterii St Vincentii* argue that the whole process started sometime in the 1120s and lasted until 1145, when *palatinus* Peter was expelled from his office and had to leave the country. The basis for this assumption is that the abbey's necrology recorded the name of Heymon, known to have been bishop of Wrocław from 1120 to 1126.[129]

Next important ceremony related to the founder's involvement in the process of establishing of the monastery and his international connections happened in the spring of 1145. Peter Włostowic spent Christmas of 1144 at the court of the German king Conrad III in Magdeburg. Due to the king's support, Peter received a relic of St Vincent from Archbishop Fridrich. Peter left with the gift from Magdeburg on May 24 and arrived in Wrocław on June 6, 1145 and it was placed in the monastic church (at this point *patrocinium* of the church was changed from Holy Virgin to St Vincent.)[130] Another important event—the consecration of

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[125]He was bishop of Wrocław from 31 March 1126 to 1142.

[126]*Codex Diplomaticus nec non epistolaris Silesiae,* ed. Karol Maleczyński, vol. 1 (Wrocław: Wrocławskie Towarzystwo Miłośników Historii, 1956) nr 16.

[127]*Liber Mortuorum Abbatiae S. Vincentii Wratislaviensis,* ed. Karol Maleczyński, Brygida Kürbis, and Ryszard Walczak, in *Monumenta Poloniae Historica, series nova,* vol. 9, part 1 (Warsaw: PWN, 1971), 23. There is dicrepancy between dates in the mortuaries of St Gilles and St Vincent

[128]Marek Cetwiński, *Rycerstwo Śląskie do końca XIII wieku,* [Silesian knights to the end of the thirteenth century] (Wrocław, Towarzystwo Miłośników Historii, 1980), 65.

[129]*Liber Mortuorum Abbatiae S. Vincentii,* XLII.

[130]*Annales Magdeburgenses,* ed. Georg H. Pertz, in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores,* vol. 16 (Hannover, 1859), 187.

the monastic church, which usually ends the foundation process—took place in 1149.[131] This

ceremony was attended by the most prominent nobles and by Duke Boleslas IV the Curly,

who confirmed the right of the monastery to its estates. Benedictine monks came to Wrocław

from Tyniec near Krakow, one of the oldest Benedictine abbeys in Poland,[132] but they did not

remain there for long. In response to a request by the patrons of the monastery: Włodzimierz,

Leonard and Peter (the first two were the sons of Peter Włostowic's oldest son, Świętosław,

the third one a relative), a request from Duke Boleslas, a letter from the bishop of Wrocław,

and the archbishop of Gniezno, Pope Celestine III confirmed in 1193 the removal of the

Benedictines from the abbey and the installation of Premonstratensians (who came from the

double monastery in Kościelna Wieś).[133] This was later confirmed by a bull issued by the same

pope and a charter by Peter of Capua, papal legate in 1197/98.[134]

Unfortunately, very few material remnants survive from the abbey. In 1525, under the

threat of Turkish invasion, the city council of Wrocław decided to pull down the whole

monastic complex in order to prevent enemies from making their fortified camp there.

Building materials were reused all over the city. The portal of the main monastic church of St

Vincent was installed into the facade of St Mary Magdalen church, also in Wrocław. Five

other sculptured objects are presently kept in the Museum of Architecture in Wrocław. The

only sources which can help to reconstruct the abbey's possible appearance are drawings and

paintings from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries which are copies of earlier drawings,

which were contemporary or earlier then the destraction.[135] The centre of the whole monastic

complex was St Vincent basilica. Another church belonging to the monastery was the St

Michael, built at the end of the eleventh or the beginning of the twelfth century and several

other buildings including dwelling facilities for the monks. The complex was expanded in the

thirteenth century and later. The preserved remnants of the sculptural decoration from various

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[131]*Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae,* nr 25.

[132]This monastery was established by the donation of king Boleslas the Bold and his wife Judith in the 1070s. The abbey has been an object of many historical, art-historical and archaeological studies and is still inhabited by Benedictines. Tyniec is an active centre of research on the history of this order in Poland.

[133]*Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae,* nr 69.

[134]Ibid., nr 70, 73.

[135]For the description of the pictorial sources see: Marian Morelowski, "Studia nad architekturą i rzeźbą na wrocławskim Ołbinie w XII wieku" [Studies on the architecture and sculpture in Wrocław - Ołbin in the twelfth century] *Sprawozdania Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Naukowego* 7 (1952): 1-51.

buildings which belonged to the complex show great variety of styles and chronological differences.[136] A few preserved figures from the portal of the main church (dated towards the middle of the twelfth century) indicate stylistic similarities to the portals of St Gilles and Arles. They are some of the best quality Romanesque sculptures in Poland. Other elements of the lost decoration are known from eighteenth-century engravings, depicting a rood screen decorated with figures of saints and saints-knights. When the abbey was taken over by the Premonstratensians, the portal of the St Vincent church was demolished and a new one of north Italian origin, probably made by a workshop from the lake Como area, was installed (currently in St Mary Magdalene church).[137]

The foundation of the Benedictine abbey in Ołbin was one of the largest enterprises undertaken exclusively by a Polish nobleman in the twelfth century. The unusual scale of the foundation as well as its artistic quality indicates the exceptionally high position of the founder. Despite the ups and downs of his career, Peter Włostowic was a leading political figure in the first half of the twelfth century, whose international connections are reflected in the architectural style of his foundations and relic of St Vincent he had secured for the abbey.

3. THE FOUNDATION OF THE CANONS REGULAR MONASTERY IN WROCŁAW-PIASEK

The second foundation undertaken by the Silesian *palatinus,* and later continued by his wife and son, was the monastery of canons regular in Wrocław-Piasek.[138]

The precise time of the foundation process is unknown. The first document related to this institution is the charter issued by Bishop Walter in 1149/50 at the request of the founders:

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[136]*Sztuka przedromańska i romańska,* vol. 1, 123-124
[137]Ibid. 205-209.
[138]The most recent publication on the early history of the monastery: Anna Pobóg - Lenartowicz, "Stan badań nad klasztorem kanoników regularnych NMP na Piasku we Wrocławiu" [The current state of research on the Canons Regular monastery of Virgin Mary "On the Sand" in Wrocław] *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis: Historia* 101 (1992): 85-98.

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> *Notum sit omnibus presentibus et futuris, quod ego Waltherus dei gratia Wratislaviensis ecclesie episcopus pro singulis quibusque ecclesiarum necessitatibus ex debito sollicitus, honeste peticioni comitis palatini Petri simul et uxoris sue Mary, pariter et filii sui Swentoslai ceterorumque nobilium condescendere non distuli et ecclesiis duabus in Wratislavia iuxta pontem scilicet et in monte Silencij in honore sancte dei genitrici semperque virginis Mary constructis villarum novem decimas in consecracione earundem addidi iure perpetuo possidendas scriptoque pariter et sigillo meo incommutabili confirmavi. Quarum villarum scilicet ad ecclesiam Wratislaviensem pertinencium nomina sunt hec:* [the list of the villages follows][139]

The mount *Silencij* in the charters refers to a previous foundation by Peter Włostowic on the mount Ślęża.[140] This hill was a part of Peter's *patrimonium* and, until 1209, belonged exclusively to his descendants. A group of canons regular had come there sometimes after 1121 from Flanders, perhaps from Arrouaise, because they observed Arrouaisian customs, but stayed no later than 1148. The monastic building were probably wooden; hence, the beginning of the thirteenth century there were no remnants of it.[141]

The opinion that canons from mount Ślęża moved to the monastery in Piasek is commonly shared in the literature,[142] but the reasons are not quite clear. They could have been driven out by bad climate or the political fall of the founder, or drawn by the prospect of a better development in a political, commercial and economic centre like Wrocław. According to Orłowski, the consecration mentioned in the charter refers to the beginning of the process of establishing the monastery.[143] This charter names, apart from Peter and Mary, their son, and the *Chronica Poloniae Maioris* states that the foundation of those churches which Peter was not able to finish was accomplished by his son. The first document which refers undoubtedly to the functioning monastery is a papal bull issued by Celestine III in 1193, confirming its endowment.[144]

The building of the Holy Virgin monastic church was initiated at the end of Peter's life and finished in the sixties or early seventies of the twelfth century. The foundations of the

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[139]*Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, nr 26.

[140]Formerly Zobtenberge

[141]Wacław Korta, *Tajemnica góry Ślęży*, [The mystery of the Ślęża mount] (Katowice: Wydawnictwo Śląskie, 1988), 239-306. This book contains critical analisis of the sources related to the monastery and discuses the scholarly literature devoted to this problem.

[142]Pobóg-Lenartowicz, "Stan badań nad klasztorem" 86-91.

[143]Orłowski, "Czy Piotr Włost zbudował 70 kościołów?" 51.

[144]*Codex Diplomaticus Silesiae*, nr 71.

primary Romanesque phase were uncovered by the archaeological excavations in 1955-60 below the vast fourteenth-century Gothic building.[145] The first church was probably a basilica with a west gallery between two towers, and with a transept. The only depiction of this church is the model of it in the foundation tympanum.[146]

4. THE FOUNDATION TYMPANUM FROM PIASEK

The strong evidence supporting the hypothesis that the foundation was undertaken after the political fall of Peter, who being blind and mute could not be so active as before, and completed after his death, is the foundation tympanum of the monastic church depicting only Mary and Świętosław. This object presents the highest quality among all Polish foundation tympana from the twelfth century. It conveys the same ideological message as the others, but in a very different way. The scene is not so monumental as the Jaksa's tympanum and the human figures are carved with greater realism.

The central place is occupied by the figure of the crowned Virgin[147] with the Child. She is addressed by the donors: Mary the widow of Peter Włostowic, seen on the left, and Świętosław, her son, seen on the right. The Virgin Mary is sitting on a throne with the crown of a ruler, but the donors are almost as tall as she is. They show great respect to the sacred; however, the distance—both spatial and indicated by the posture—present in the tympana in which Christ is depicted, is not present here. Mary the widow of Peter Włostowic is standing upright and approaches the Virgin holding in her hands a model of the church. She is depicted as a great lady, a noble woman conscious of her high position. Her attire is depicted with the fine details indicating the abundance of cloth. The donation character and confidence of Mary are also emphasised by the inscription:

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[145]Tadeusz Kozaczewski, "Romański kościół N. Marii Panny na Piasku we Wrocławiu" [The Romanesque Holy Virgine church in Wrocław - Piasek] *Zeszyty Naukowe Politechniki Wrocławskiej* 16 (1957): 69-70.
[146]*Sztuka polska przedromańska i romańska,* vol. 1, 125.
[147]There is a vast literature devoted to the problems of the cult of the Virgin. A recent work with a good bibligraphy: Marina Warner, *Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and the Cult of the Virgin Mary* (New York: Knopf, 1976).

HAS MATRI VENIAE

TIBI DO MARIA MARIAE

HAS OFFERT AEDES

SWENTOSLAVS MEA PROLES[148]

Mary shares the name of the Virgin and the inscription draws attention to this fact in order to indicate her exceptionally high position.

Świętosław is placed symmetrically on the other side of the Virgin. He is portrayed as a young boy, wearing a knee-length tunic with embroidered edges. His posture is neither standing nor kneeling; his knees are bent, but they do not touch the ground. This posture is called genuflection. It was widely used in medieval monastic life to replace kneeling on holy days.[149]

Another important characteristic of the tympanum from Piasek is the iconography of the Virgin Mary and its implications. Until the late twelfth century, images of Mary in tympana were subordinated to the major representations of Christ in Majesty, the Apocalypse, or the childhood of Jesus. An important change in the iconography of the Virgin Mary occurred in the late twelfth century as the consequence of changes in religious thought. One of the first images of the Virgin and Child in architectural sculpture is the right portal of the west facade of Chartres, made between 1145 and 1155. They are represented frontally as a unit, the Child is sitting on the Virgin's lap.[150]

This tympanum suggests that Wrocław was not so provincial, and in this particular case, due to international connections of Peter, the latest French style in religious art was imported exceptionally quickly.

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[148]Ciechanowski, *Epigrafika romańska*, 22.

[149]Przemysław Mrozowski, "Genuflection in Medieval Western Culture: the Gesture of Expiation - the Praying Posture" *Acta Poloniae Historica* 68 (1993): 13-15; Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Le Raison des Gestes dans l'Occident médiéval*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 290-1, 294-6, 299-301, 303-5.

[150]Penny Shine Gold, *The Lady and the Virgin: Image, Attitude, and Experience in Twelfth-Century France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 43-49.

5. JAKSA'S DONATION FOR THE BENEDICTINE MONASTERY IN OŁBIN

Peter's son-in-law, Jaksa, may have continued his father-in-law's activity in founding monasteries. A person called Jaksa is one of the most debated figures in twelfth-century Polish history. His identity, family connections, and political activity have been the objects of endless hypotheses in Polish and German historiography.

The question is not only limited to these problems, but also to the issue of how many nobles of this name were active in that time: one, two or even three persons. Bieniak distinguished five hypotheses.[151] The first hypothesis, first presented by Marian Gumowski and shared by other historians such as Czesław Deptuła and Marek Cetwiński, argues that there was only one Jaksa, who was the last Slavic duke of Brandenburg and later Kopenick (today Köpenick near Berlin) in Lusatia. He was the same Jaksa, whose wife was Peter Włostowic's daughter and who made a donation to the monastery in Ołbin, and also founded the monastery of the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre in Miechów (Lesser Poland) after his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1163. The second hypothesis was created by Herbert Ludat, who claims there were at least three politically active persons holding the name Jaksa at that time: one who was Peter Włostowic's son-in-law, the second a *comes* who established a monastery in Miechów, and the third one, Jaksa duke of Brandenburg and Kopenick. The third opinion shared by many Polish medievalists, such as Karol Maleczyński and Benedykt Zientara, maintain there were only two persons called Jaksa, one Polish *comes* and the other from Brandenburg having no connection with the Silesian *palatinus* or any monastic foundation in Poland. The fourth hypothesis, proposed by Gerard Labuda, agrees that there were two persons but, assumes that Peter's son-in-law was duke of Brandenburg, not the *comes*. Finally, Kazimierz Tymieniecki questions the possibility of solving this problem at all.

Bieniak, on the contrary, strongly supports merging all three persons named Jaksas into one, a very active Slavic duke of Brandenburg who tried to obtained political support in Poland. The way to do it was through marriage with the offspring of the most prominent nobleman and through monastic foundations and donations.[152] This construction, however

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[151]Bieniak, "Polska elita polityczna XII wieku," 67-83.
[152]Ibid., 67-69.

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attractive, is not convincing. The Jaksa imagined by this scholar would be more active than any other twelfth-century noble or even duke, and extremely rich if he could afford donations and foundations in Silesia and Lesser Poland. Strategically, it would have made more sense to seek political support in the Greater Poland, not in the south of the country having much less contact with Lusatia and interest in political interferences there. I tend to agree with the opinion that the "Jaksa problem" is impossible to solve but, sources seem to suggest that were at least two Jaksas.

There is no doubt, however, that a certain Jaksa (whoever he may have been) made a donation for the Benedictine abbey in Ołbin. He was a benefactor of one of the monastic churches, St Michael church, which was built half a century earlier. Most probably, this church was simply renovated at his expense. The foundation tympanum commemorating this event, depicting him and his wife Agafia, was discovered, in 1962 in secondary use in a late eighteenth-century military building in Wrocław, by the art historian Krystyna Pilch. This tympanum was known from eighteenth-century drawings, but disappeared at the beginning of the last century. The object was discovered in rather good condition, though three out of four figures of donors are damaged.[153]

The central position in the tympanum, as usual, is occupied by the figure of Christ, which presents, according to scholarship, the mixture of two types of iconographic representation: Christ in Majesty and Christ the Teacher. The figure is surrounded by a mandorla with the inscription: IANVA SVM UITE PER ME QVICUMq/ve/ VENITE. He sits on a throne-rainbow, which might symbolise Heaven and Earth. Christ's robe is typical for this sort of representation; its form originates from Byzantine art, and its very formal character emphasises the role of Christ the Ruler. The open book's with inscription, coming from Hebrew Bible EGO SVM QVI SVM, and gesture of benediction, originates from Roman representations of philosophers and teachers.[154] The tympanum was placed above the main door of the church; it illustrates the meaning of the inscription: Christ as a gate to eternal

[153]Krystyna Mączewska-Pilch, "Tympanon romański z Ołbinia" [Romanesque tympanum from Ołbin] *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki* 25 (1963): 53-6.
[154]Krystyna Mączewska-Pilch, *Tympanon fundacyjny z Ołbnia na tle przedtawień o charakterze donacyjnym,* [The foundation tympanum from Ołbiń in the relationship to the other representations of donations] (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1973), 18-25.

life. The figures of the donors are half of the height of Christ, placed symmetrically on His sides. Jaksa, seen on the right, carries a model of St Michael church. Duke Boleslas the Curly is on Christ's right, in the position of greater honour and carries a model of the church with the inscription IN bITOM. Their identity is revealed by the inscription on the inner semicircular frame:

[ad hanc novella]

[du]X FERT SUA DONA CAPELLAM

QUE FERT IACXO CH[rist]OS

SUSCIPE TEMPLA PIU[s]

Both men are standing, and their dress is depicted with the details of the embroidery. The female figure kneeling behind Jaksa is his wife. Her dress has fashionable long sleeves, and her head is covered to indicate her married status. Her name is inscribed, in Cyrillic, above her: AGA[P]EA. In contrast to the gestures of the men, who are handing gifts to Christ, her gesture of praying and bent head indicate deep reverence. The use of Cyrillic letters is often interpreted as a personal choice of Agafia, who wanted to indicate her attachment to her mother's heritage. The last person depicted here is a son of Duke Boleslas. His figure, almost completely destroyed, is standing behind his father, with the name LESTEC inscribed above.[155]

The dating of this tympanum and of Jaksa's donation, is an object of controversy. Lestek, a son of Duke Boleslas, was born in 1160 and he is depicted on the tympanum as a child. The dress of all figures clearly indicates the second half of the twelfth century. Moreover, Duke Boleslas the Curly lost Silesia in 1163. On the basis of these evidences Pilch dates the object between 1161 and 1163.[156] Marian Morelowski suggests that Jaksa made his donation after his pilgrimage to the Holy Land,[157] and the works were completed by his wife, who was still alive at the beginning of the thirteenth century.[158] Kazimierz Ciechanowski, on

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[155]Ciechanowski, *Epigrafia romańska i wczesnogotycka w Polsce*, 23-28; Mączewska-Pilch, *Tympanon fundacyjny*, 9-13

[156]Mączewska-Pilch, *Tympanon fundacyjny*, 30-31.

[157]The annals of the Cracow chapter says: *Anno Domini MCLXII Iazko Ierosolimam invit. Annales Capituli Cracoviensis*, ed. August Bielowski, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 2 (Lviv, 1878), 798-9. However, we do not know to which Jaksa this information refers.

[158]Morelowski, "Studia nad architekturą i rzeźbą," 30.

the basis of the epigraph of the tympanum, dates the object between 1146-1163. Zygmunt Świechowski based his dating of 1160-1163 on how was depicted on the tympanum[159] Teresa Mroczko pointed out that the grammatical form, used in the inscription (the present passive) indicates that the action happened in the past, and implies that the donors may have been dead at the time the tympanum was made.[160]

In comparison with the other three tympana analysed, the tympanum from Ołbin presents its message particularly clearly. There are three levels, connected with each other—political, social and religious. The first alludes to the mutual political support between Duke Bolesłas the Curly and Jaksa, the second indicates a very high social position of Jaksa and his wife, and the third implies that donors made a pious gesture which increased their chances for the eternal salvation.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The third case study included in my thesis is devoted to the two main foundation enterprises in twelfth-century Silesia. Their importance for the analysis of the whole noble foundation activity in this time, lies in the fact that co-operation between members of the kindred can be seen. Penance, as a main founder's motif, suggested in the chronicles, does not appear convincing, especially in the light of the tympanum, which seems to suggest more pride than humility. The Benedictine abbey in Ołbin, established in the first half of the twelfth century, represents a traditional noble foundation, typical for this order, with a large monastic complex and rich endowment. The second of the analysed foundation, of the canons regular, represents an order originating from the reform movement in the Church. In the case of "new orders" Ludo J.R. Milis observes that "the cost of foundation was less. Most often abbeys of Cistercians and canons started with a very poor endowment which they had to extend themselves through 'found raising' and efficient management. A religious lifestyle considered

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[159]Zygmunt Świechowski, *Sztuka romańska w Polsce*, [Polish Romanesque art] (Warsaw: Arkady, 1990), 61.
[160]Teresa Mroczko, *Polska sztuka przedromańska i romańska w Polsce*, [Polish pre-Romanesque and Romanesque art] (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Artystyczne i Filmowe, 1988), 120.

decent was no longer 'the rich poverty' it used to be among black monks."[161] This is fully applicable to the monastery in Piasek which soon became one of the largest and richest monasteries in Silesia mainly due to the effective colonisation of monastery's land.

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[161]Milis, *Angelic Monks*, 66.

CHAPTER IV

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FOUNDER AND THE FOUNDED MONASTIC INSTITUTION: PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

The three case studies included in my thesis are examples of noble monastic foundation from twelfth-century Poland which differ not only geographically (Greater Poland and Silesia) but also in the scale and importance of the individual enterprise. The source base for researching these foundations differs greatly which thus determined the scope of my investigation. Nevertheless, certain conclusions can be drawn about all of these noble foundations. Significant differences can be pointed out especially those which can be verified on the basis of the sources.

The main focus of my investigation was to uncover the role of founders in the foundation process, their motivation, and their self-representation in this role. All these problems were investigated on the basis of charters, and tympana and, preserved architecture or its remnants. Unfortunately, for a long time foundation charters were commonly regarded as so conventional as to be not worthy of attention. But for certain purposes, the charters can be quite valuable. Firstly, the conventional formulas used in the charters are not necessarily meaningless because they present what the founders wanted to express; secondly, the charters can tell us something not only about the person's eschatological purpose but also about the founders' motivations and aims which are only indirectly stated.[162]

Before I conclude my analysis, I would like to clarify to which extent these foundations were enterprises of kindreds or of individuals. In all the cases I examined, the foundations of the monasteries were supported by other members of the kindred. Wives, children, and other relatives gave some of their own properties to support the enterprise, to enjoy certain privileges, and to increase their own chances for eternal salvation. Some Polish monasteries founded by noblemen became burial places for the members of the kindred; for example, the Cistercian monastery in Jędrzejów became the burial place of the Lisowie kindred. Nevertheless, on the basis of material collected for the purpose of my thesis it is

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[162]This opinion is shared in the literature, see for example Milis, *Angelic Monks*, 88.

difficult to distinguish the degree of participation of individuals or kindreds. There is quite a large amount of information suggesting participation by a kindred; however, these hints do not allow me to say whether these monasteries were "kindred monasteries" or not. Moreover, the concept of "kindred monasteries"[163] is a controversial issue in Central European, particularly Hungarian, scholarship, similar to the debate about the "west gallery."

The first focus of my investigation was the founders motivation and attitude to the founded institution. This issue should be regarded in two respects: "eschatological advantages" deriving from the pious gesture and the down-to-earth attitude towards monastic property. The foundation charters described the first issue as *sacrum commercium*—exchange of an earthly property for eternal goods. In other words, donors received for their material gifts a certain spiritual and social value which were of a great importance. But actually founders did not really give away these properties since they usually kept some sort of control over the finances of the monastery. Monasteries very often remained a piece of the families' property. Even in the time when patronage rights were reduced to an almost symbolic level, there is evidence of patrons regarding the monastery property as part of the kindred's estates. An example of such an attitude were the attempts by descendants of the patrons to reclaim lands given to monastery. One such unsuccessful attempt is known from the middle of the thirteenth century when heirs of Iwo bishop of Krakow tried to reclaim part of their heritage given away to a Premonstratensian nunnery in Imbramowice. Their attempts failed mainly due to the stubbornness of prioress Gertrud, who was a sister of bishop Iwo.[164] Thus, this is an example of the conflict between an ecclesiastical institution and lay people and also a conflict between a kindred and an individual formerly of the kindred. This problem is closely related to the debate about private church, its character, legal status, and evolution.[165]

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[163]Fügedi, *"Sepelierunt corpus eius"* 35-67; Ryszard Michałowski, "Klasztor prywatny w Niemczech IX-XII wieku jako fakt religijny i społeczny. Wybrane zagadnienia," [The private monastery in Germany in the eleventh-twelfth centuries as a religious and social phenomenon: the chosen asppects], in *Niemcy i Polska w średniowieczu. Materiały z konferencji naukowej zorganizowanej przez IH UAM w dniach 14-16 XI 1983.* [Germany and Poland in the Middle Ages: papers presented at the conference organized by the History Department of Adam Mickiewicz University on 14th-16th of November 1983], ed. Jerzy Strzelczyk, (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UAM, 1988), 47-66.
[164]Karol Górski, *Ród Odrowążów w wiekach średnich*, [The Odrowąż kindred in the Middle Ages] (Lviv: Polskie Towarzystwo Heraldyczne, 1928), 83.
[165]Magnus Stefánson, "Eigenkirche," in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, vol. 3, part 2 (Munich and Zurich: Artemis, 1986), 1705-1710.

Patrons could interfere greatly in the life of the monastery. This can be seen in the example of the Benedictine monastery in Ołbin. On the request of the patrons in 1193, Pope Celestine III confirmed the removal of the Benedictine monks and the installation of the Premonstratensians in their place.

Simultaneously, patronage rights could fulfil other needs. The monasteries founded by nobles often played a "waste-basket function." The founder's family continued to control the monastery and could send unmarried children, especially females, to pursue an ecclesiastical career there. For example, Beatrice, a daughter of the founder of the Strzelno monastery, was its first prioress. These monasteries were also places where widows could spend their "retirement." Nevertheless, the probability of a real religious calling should not be completely disregarded. Monastic life was attractive to medieval people in many aspects. Premonstratensian nunneries were particularly very often places of gathering for upper class women. This is true in the case of the Strzelno nunnery which became in the thirteenth century a fashionable religious house for the noble women from Greater Poland and the Kuiavia area. Nevertheless, the role of the nunneries in the life of noble kindreds requires further studies to evaluate their popularity in certain parts of Central Europe and their insignificance in others.

Two levels of the relationship between the founders and the institution can thus be distinguished. The first one—spiritual—fulfilled religious and psychological needs of the founders. The second one—material—consisted of benefits connected with the role of a founder and patron. The issue of prestige, to which I will return, appears to be related to both levels. Prestige, though an abstract value, could guarantee a stronger position within the local nobility and among the nobility at large.

Founders did not only "exploit" 'the monastery, they also played an important and positive role in its life. Evidence for this can be found in the belief existing in some German monasteries that founders did play a protective role even many years after their death.[166] A statement of Ludo Milis also refers to the beneficial relationship between lay founders and

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[166]Ryszard Michałowski, "Święta moc fundatora klasztoru (Niemcy XI-XII wiek)" [The sacral power of the founder: Germany eleventh-twelfth century] *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 91 (1984): 5-24.

their founded ecclesiastical institutions: "Abbeys with mighty and wealthy founders fitted into a powerful kin system and were sure to be rich."[167] This is fully applicable to the two Silesian cases—the Benedictine monastery in Ołbin and the monastery of canons regular in Piasek. In contrast, the Cistercian monastery founded by the less important nobleman in Łekno never achieved the importance of the Silesian institutions even if it soon became, by further donations, exchanges, and purchases, one of the richest institutions in the archdiocese of Gniezno.

The second focus of my investigation—the founder's self-representation—is related to the previous issue and is examined on the basis of foundation tympana, architecture, and charters. Although they use different media, the message is similar.

Foundation tympana portray the donor, who might be alive or dead at the time of sculpting, presenting his or her gift to the centrally placed sacred figure. The donor gesture represents a physical expression of action and feelings. Christ, the Virgin, or, a saint are depicted as the centre of the scene. In the art of the medieval West, in contrast to the Byzantine tradition in which donors were always depicted standing, there is a variety of postures for donors as well as the different central figures.[168] In the early twelfth century the most common central figure was Christ in Majesty, but at the end of the first half of this century, the Virgin as the central image became a more popular representation. Donors, lay people, bishops, or sometimes nuns were always placed symmetrically on both sides of central figure.[169] Sometimes the scene is accompanied by an inscription on the semicircular frame, but it is subordinated to the picture which carries the message that the church was built due to the generosity of the persons represented there. The tympana also made manifest the special relationship with the sacred which was the result of the pious gift. According to Paweł Sczaniecki, tympana commemorated not only the foundation as such but also the particular moment of consecration of a church, which was understood as the moment when a saint, the

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[167]Ibid.

[168]Pilch-Mączewska, *Tympanon fundacyjny z Ołbinia*, 62-91.

[169]Andrea von Hülsen-Esch, "Die Themen der italienischen Tympana des frühen 12. Jahrhunderts im europä ischen Vergleich," chap. in *Romanische Skulpturen in Oberitalien als Reflex der kommunalen Entwicklung im 12. Jahrhundert* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994), 131-140.

Virgin or Christ received a church.[170] The consecration ceremonies were important festivities, gatherings of the whole kindred, and important people from neighbourhood, sometimes even rulers, as was in the case of the consecration of the Benedictine abbey's church in Ołbin in 1149. The important people present were usually listed as witnesses of the foundation charters. These gatherings of the noblemen at the consecrations were, in my understanding, an important factor in spreading the idea of "being a founder": this is visible in the case of Zbylut, founder of the Łekno monastery, who after witnessing many consecrations made his own foundation.

Another type of visual source regarding founders' self-representation are architectural remains. It is not an accident that both Silesian foundations of Peter Włostowic show a very high, European standard of sculptural decoration. The beautiful and costly decoration of monastic churches was an important evidence of the founder's wealth and power. Similarly, the Strzelno monastery was richly decorated at the expense of the patrons to express the prestige not only of the ecclesiastical institution itself, but also the prestige of patrons.

Although, the problem of the west gallery remains controversial and is far from being resolved, there is no need to set these problems aside while discussing founders' self-representation. This opens the question of the usage of space to emphasise one's own position within the community and with the sacred. It is not clear how west galleries were actually used, but most possibly they were related to the lay patron of the church. A rather convincing hypothesis created by Andrzej Tomaszewski that the west galleries were actually patrons' chapels contradicts the idea that Central European west galleries played the same role as the Ottonian Westwerk, the only difference being the physical scale. But in my understanding aim of the patrons was not prestige, like in case of Westwerk, but rather religious needs. Private, small scale chapel provided a more intimate contact with God, enhancing the special relatinship with Him. The special relationship to God derived from being both the founder of the church and its owner.

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[170]Paweł Sczaniecki, "*Sacramentum dedicationis.* Obrzęd poświęcenia kościoła i jego znaczenie w dziedzinie religijnej, obyczajowej i kulturalnej na podstawie źródeł polskich z XII wieku," [*Sacramentum dedicationis.* The ceremony of the church's consecration and its importance in the religious and cultural sphere on the basis of the Polish sources] *Studia Kościelnohistoryczne* 3 (1979): 88-89.

Charters also shed light on the issue of donors' self-definition because they also carry a certain message. Firstly, they present an otherworldly motivation encouraging people to give property to the church. Pious generosity meant that founders or donors had more opportunity for the redemption of their sins and for eternal life, both for themselves and for their ancestors and descendants. Their gestures could also be an act of penance, as the narrative sources inform us in the case of Peter Włostowic. However, one is struck in this case by the fact that penance does not necesserily mean an act of humiliation. The nobleman who gave such substantial property for the purpose of establishing a monastic institution actualy increased his importance. Charters are also a means of self-representation. Zbylut is referred to in his charter as *ego Zbilud Polonię ciuis*. This peculiar formula refers to his self-identification as a nobleman and indicates conscious membership in a social stratum. Moreover, one of the ways of expressing one's belonging to this particular social group was through foundation activity.

Finally, a general problem concerning all of the cases is the question of their scale and importance. Certainly, the foundation activity of Peter Włostowic in Wrocław cannot be described as local, neither in its scale nor in its character. He had a wide range of international connections which enabled him to import relics from Germany, to invite canons from Flanders, and to introduce fashionable artistic styles from France and North Italy. The case of his son-in-law and of the person bearing the name Jaksa confirms the international connections and mobility of the elite of the Polish nobility. Despite its location on the eastern edge of Catholic Europe, Wrocław was not a provincial town.

On the basis of these examples it can be argued that a certain segment of the Polish nobility had truly European connections. They intermarried with noble families from elsewhere in Europe, travelled to European noble and royal courts, made their names known as far away as southern France (Peter Włostowic's pilgrimage to St Gilles), and brought artists and religious people from the convents of Europe to establish the same sort of foundations as nobles did throughout Europe. In other words, the lifestyle of this group of Polish nobles did not differ from the lifestyle of the parallel group of the western European nobility. On the contrary, the first two cases discussed above are much more local in scale and lack prominent foreign connections. Unfortunately, we do not know much about Zbylut, who founded the

Cistercian monastery in Łekno, apart from the fact that he was active on the regional scale, as proven by the appearance of his name in the list of witnesses in several charters from Greater Poland. The foundation charter of Łekno suggests that the only reason for Zbylut's enterprise was piety, but we have good reason to think that it was also a way to participate in the noble lifestyle and to manifest his self-importance and that of his family. The foundation of the Premonstratensian house in Strzelno by Peter Wszeborowic may have been inspired by the Silesian enterprises of Peter Włostowic. The whole debate about their hypothetical family connections, discussed above, is minor in the comparison to the more important issue of influences within the noble stratum. Strzelno was established by a nobleman without such prominent connections as Peter Włostowic, but the influence of the example of the Silesian palatine has to be taken into consideration when looking for the motives of Wszeborowic's foundation. Peter Włostowic could have been an influential example for other less important noblemen without necessarily being their relative.

The character of the case study does not allow us to provide a comprehensive picture of the foundation activity of Polish twelfth-century nobility, but this detailed analysis of the three cases of noble monastic foundations from twelfth-century Poland allows me to see the most crucial points of the process: the strategy of the founder's self-representation by the means of art (sculpture and architecture) and the methods of expressing their motivation which led them to undertake a pious enterprise. An analysis of these three cases also allows me to see the role of church foundation in establishing one's position within the noble stratum. Zbylut, a person of local importance, undertook his enterprise, not only because of an eschatological motivation (which should not be completely disregarded) but also in order to participate in the same lifestyle as the powerful Silesian palatine.

The focus of my investigation which is placed more on the founders than on ecclesiastical institutions leaves out the question regarding how these enterprises were related to the general strategies of the orders, especially the Cistercians and the Premonstratensians during their expansion to Central Europe. However, even on the parameters of my study the most crucial characteristics of the orders which attracted founder are hinted at by the sources. In the case of the Cistercian monastery in Łekno, the foundation charter suggests that Zbylut

invited this particular order because he was so much impressed by their exceptional piety. The Premonstratensian nunnery in Strzelno was an institution typical for this order, having an aristocratic profile and attracting local noblewomen. The rich decoration of the monastic church could have also been a part of this strategy.

To sum up my investigation into the various issues of noble monastic foundations in the twelfth-century Poland I would like to conclude with the statement that monastic foundation should be perceived on many levels, as an expression of noble lifestyle, as the outcome of down-to-earth calculations, and also as the result of genuine religious feelings and needs.

The character of the case study gives a rather good insight into the examined examples but does not offer a wide scope of investigation. I tried to overcome this limitation in this chapter; nevertheless, my work is only preliminary excursion into the field of monastic foundations and many issues are left aside.

To propose future direction for the research, it appears important to investigate much wider geographical area. The comparatives studies on the noble monastic foundations in the Central Europe should address questions of noble and monastic strategies: the choice of order, the scale of the foundations, the role of the kindreds in these enterprises, and the later role of the monastery in the life of the patrons' kindreds. The important issue of self-representation and self-definition should also be studied in more detail, using the comparative perspective. If these foundations are studied as a part of noble families' strategy for managing their property, the investigation could cover much wider scope of issues related to the self-definition and property relations of the Central European nobility. Finally, this will allow scholars to address fundamental questions about the Church and society.

ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Tympanum from St Michael church in Wrocław-Ołbin

2. Tympanum from St Prokop church in Strzelno

3. Tympanum from the Virgin Mary church in Wrocław-Piasek

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4. Tympanum from the Holy Trinity church in Strzelno

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