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Church in Marianka by Pasłek. The results of analysis of the inner face of the walls carried out during research and conservation works on the mural paintings

Gothic church of St. Peter and Paul¹ in the village of Marianka by Pasłek is a single-aisled building with narrower, single-spanned choir with a five-angled closure², with adjoining rectangular vestry from the north. Half the way along the side walls, both from the north and from the south there are small, rectangular porches. There is also a rectangular, four-storey tower adjoining from the west (Fig. 1a). The choir has been covered with a crystal vaulting, the vestry with groined one. In the ground floor of the tower there are abutments preserved, for an intended vaulting that however has never been executed. The nave and both porches have been covered with flat wooden ceilings. The church was built of brick, on field-stone foundation, erected in several stages. The choir is regarded to be the oldest part of the edifice (according to various authors ca 1334 or after 1342, the nave, tower and north porch followed in mid- or in the 4th quarter of 14th cent. The south porch might have been erected in the same time, or later. The vestry is

dated back to the same period as the choir to mid-14th cent. [11, p. 157], [9, p. 588–589]. Perhaps architectonic research, currently carried out, will allow for more precise dating of the subsequent phases of the church. Spatial layout of the building is comparable with – among others – churches in Srebrniki (1444), Zieleń (1445), Przeczno (1445) or Łopatki (1414) [10, p. 266–267, figs 120a, c, 121a, b].

Recently the church came within a program of general revitalisation, realised under auspices of Scientific Committee on Shared Built Heritage of the ICOMOS Polish National Committee. Conservation research in the church started in autumn 2007 (Fig. 1b, c). In that time a group of employees of Department of Conservation of Paintings and Polychrome Sculpture (Institute for the Study, Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland) performed an on-site evaluation of the building's condition and preliminary investigation on painted decoration of the walls. At the turn of 2007 the results of research had been presented in a documentation, comprising also the guidelines for conservation and restoration project regarding the mural paintings and other elements of the interior furnishing [14]. In the same time the team of employees and students of the Faculty of Architecture, (Gdańsk Technical University, Chair for the History, Theory of Architecture and Conservation of Monuments) prepared a preliminary drawn measurement and conservation assessment of the church architecture [12]. Both studies served for drawing up in 2008 a management plan for a historic site of the church in Marianka [6], that allowed for launching activities aiming for rising the funds to finance the most urgent works. In summer 2008, within the framework of a field workshop for the students of conservation and restoration NCU in Toruń the strip-

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¹ In the literature the church is also being mentioned under the name of Assumption of Virgin Mary; see: Mroczko T., Arszczyński M. (ed.) *Architektura gotycka w Polsce*, Warszawa 1995, vol. 2, *Katalog zabytków*, Włodarek A. (ed.), p. 157.

² Some authors – e.g. DEHIO G., GALL. E., *Handbuch der Deutschen Kunstdenkmäler Deutschordensland Preussen*, München/Berlin 1952, p. 144, Antoni M., *Dehio – Handbuch der Kunstdenkmäler West- und Ostpreussen. Die ehemaligen Provinzen West- und Ostpreussen (Deutschordensland Preussen) mit Bütower und Lauenburger Land*, München/Berlin 1993, p. 398, Herrmann Ch., *Mittelalterliche Architektur im Preussenland. Untersuchungen zur Frage der Kunstlandschaft und -geographie*, Petersburg (D) 2007, p. 588 – describe the choir as one-and-a-half span, with three-angled closure.



Fig. 1. Church in Marianka by Pasłęk: a) view from south-east, b) view of the interior towards east, before starting research and conservation works, c) view of the interior towards west, before starting research and conservation works (photo: J.M. Arszyńska)

Il. 1. Kościół w Mariance k. Pasłęka: a) widok od strony południowo-wschodniej, b) widok wnętrza w kierunku wschodnim przed rozpoczęciem prac badawczych i konserwatorskich, c) widok wnętrza w kierunku zachodnim przed rozpoczęciem prac badawczych i konserwatorskich (fot. J.M. Arszyńska)

sampling of mural paintings was performed, concentrated on – so far barely diagnosed – north wall of the nave [2]. The results of this research project proved that the walls of nave are covered with rich painted decoration, consisting on the cycle of representations of the Twelve Apostles (Collegium Credo), the scene of Ecstasy of Mary Magdalene, Annunciation and most probably the scene of mediacy at the Last Judgement (Intercessio). Figurative compositions have been surrounded by – filling the free spaces – ornamental decoration. The so-far progress of conservation works as well as a preliminary historic and artistic analysis of the murals are discussed in separate publications [4, p. 56–59], [13, p. 112–118].



Fig. 2. Photograph of the inner face of the wall in raking light, a base for further analysis (detail of the south wall) (photo: J.M. Arszyńska)

Il. 2. Fotografia wewnętrznego lica ściany nawy w świetle bocznym, stanowiąca podstawę do dalszej analizy (fragment ściany południowej) (fot. J.M. Arszyńska)

First pieces of information on the occurrence of bricked-up recesses in the church walls have been obtained already during the initial research works carried out at the end of the year 2007, when – among others – an analysis of the nave walls in raking light was performed (Fig. 2) More information was collected during the mentioned above strip-sampling carried out in summer of 2008. At the end of 2008 and in summer of 2009, following the conservators' recommendations the secondary plastering – applied in the 1950's – along with a layer of bitumen insulation of lower section of the walls have been removed – except the west and east (rod) wall³. In result of those works the brick face of the lower part of walls has been revealed, which allowed to complement the information on the size, shape and location of the existing alterations and bricked-up recesses (both in the nave and in the choir). Subsequent information on the recesses has been collected during conservation works on mural paintings on the north wall of the nave initiated in summer of 2008. In that time the scene of the Ecstasy of Mary Magdalene has been revealed from under numerous secondary layers of white-wash and paint, as well as the boundaries of five recesses present in the east section of northern wall [3]. Two of them, accessible from ground level without any scaffolding have been next completely uncovered (i.e. emptied of secondary bricks), which allowed to measure their depth.

³ Next to the leaking roof, broken gutters, concrete paving along the outer walls and the configuration of the churchyard area, hindering free drainage of rainwater, this insulation was the factor causing dramatic dampness of the church walls, threatening the valuable painted decoration. see: Arszyńska J.M., „Dokumentacja badań konserwatorskich dekoracji malarzkiej kościoła p.w. św. Piotra i Pawła w Mariance k. Pasłęka, Toruń 2008; Arszyńska J.M., *Kościół w Mariance. Kościół w Mariance. Stan zaawansowania badań i konserwacji malowideł ściennych oraz wskazania do badań architektonicznych*. [in:] *Materiały posesyjne: Malowidła kościoła gotyckiego w Mariance - stan dzisiejszy, perspektywy*. Gdańsk 2009, p. 128–134.

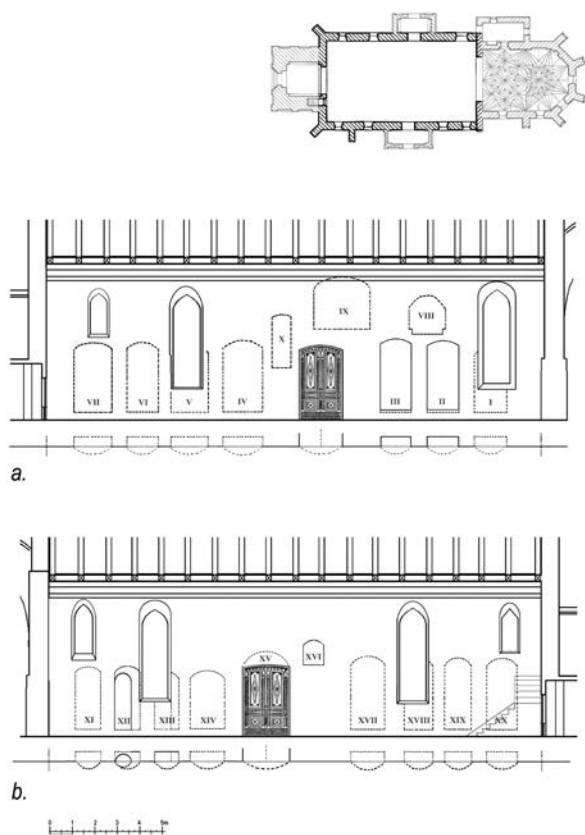


Fig. 3. Recesses in the church walls: a) south wall, b) north wall (drawn by M.R. Gogolin, J.M. Arszyńska)

Il. 3. Wnęki w ścianach nawy kościoła: a) ściana południowa, b) ściana północna (rys. M.R. Gogolin, J.M. Arszyńska)

In the south wall of the nave the location and extent of 9 large recesses have been traced (ca. 120–150 cm wide and ca. 200–300 cm high) in the bottom part of the wall (ca. 30 cm above the present floor level). Two of them (No. XIII and XVIII) are only partially preserved (damaged during enlarging the windows) and two (No. XII and XIII) have been at least two times altered and changed both their shape and dimensions. Moreover, in the upper part of the wall, in its central area one recess have been found (No. XVI), of much smaller size (ca. 100 × 100 cm). There is a secondary opening, in which a door leading to the south porch has been set in 19th cent., located in a large recess found in the middle section of the wall (No. XV). The original shape of the recess is marked by a characteristic, regular outline of the boundary of modern plaster patch above the door, on the level matching the upper edges of recesses located in the west section of the wall (Fig. 3a). Earlier, this recess contained much smaller, pointed arch opening, the remnants of which are traceable on the porch-side of the wall.

In the north wall of the nave the location and extent of 7 large recesses (ca. 150 cm wide and ca. 300 cm high) have been found in the bottom part of the wall (ca. 30 cm above the present floor level), including two only partially preserved (No. I and V – damaged in 19th cent. during enlarging the windows). Moreover, one smaller recess (No. VIII, ca. 150 × 150 cm) has been found in the upper part of the wall in its east section as well as two openings (No. IX and

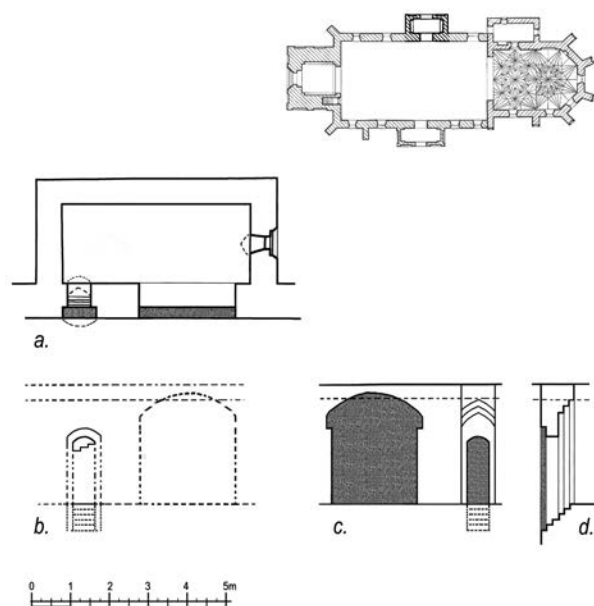


Fig. 4. Preliminary interpretation of the openings in the upper floor of north porch: a) throw on the level of discovered openings, b) view from the church side, c) view from the porch side, d) cross-section on the level of smaller opening (drawn by M.R. Gogolin, J.M. Arszyńska)

Il. 4. Wstępna interpretacja układu otworów w górnej kondygnacji kruchty północnej: a) rzut na wysokości odkrytych otworów, b) widok od strony nawy, c) widok od strony poddasza, d) przekrój na wysokości mniejszego otworu (rys. M.R. Gogolin, J.M. Arszyńska)

X), that used to connect the church with some room on the upper floor of the north porch (Fig. 3b and Fig. 4).

The works carried out so far did not allow to establish whether the door opening (in its present shape a secondary one, made in 19th cent.) leading to the north porch, was executed as independent from the original system of recesses, or whether it was made in place of one of them.

In the walls of the choir the location and extent of 11 recesses of various shape and dimensions have been traced. Some of them have been emptied off the secondary bricks. In the north part of rod wall (the choir side) one small recess (ca. 70 cm wide and 100 cm high) has been found. This is the only one that has originally been plastered inside. Directly on the plaster there are traces of quite long inscription executed in bright-red paint, unfortunately hardly readable. In the north wall of the choir, right of the vestry door there is one recess ca 120 cm wide and ca. 150 cm high. Further to the east a set of three recesses have been discovered. Their composition suggested, that they might have served as sedilia. The middle recess, ca. 120 cm wide and ca. 170 high (measured from the present, secondary floor level, the original profile reached much deeper) is closed – as the majority of others – with a segmental arch. Both side recesses, lower and narrower, each measuring ca. 80 cm. wide and ca. 120 cm. high (from the present floor level) end 30 cm. above the present floor level and are closed with half- segmental arches, sloping sidewise. After emptying those recesses off secondary bricks (summer 2009) it turned out, that inside the middle one there is next, somewhat narrower (ca. 100 cm. wide) and lower, pointed-

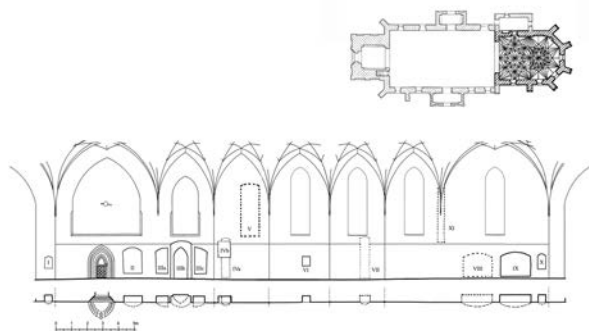


Fig. 5. Recesses in the walls of the choir (drawn by M.R. Gogolin, J.M. Arszyńska)

II. 5. Wnęki w ścianach prezbiterium kościoła (rys. M.R. Gogolin, J.M. Arszyńska)

arched recess. A crevice in plaster along the brickwork filling the recess and its side wall suggested, that the bond between them is rather weak. This has been confirmed by a strip-sample, that revealed information indicating, that there was an opening in the choir wall. Its inner walls have been carefully plastered and its location and dimensions roughly match the location and dimensions of a bricked up, pointed-arched opening visible from the outside. This may suggest, that at the early stage of the church history, there was a vestry adjoining this section of the choir wall, probably erected in a not durable technology, that was later replaced by the present, brick-built one. After the inner opening was bricked-up, the remaining three recesses might have for some period serve as sedilia; later they have been closed and the inner face of the wall was smoothed.

In the next section of the choir wall (north-east) an elongated, narrow recess (No. IVa) has been discovered, completely bricked-up. In its upper part later another recess (No. IVb) has been made, to house a wooden sacarium with painted, figurative decoration, dated back to mid-15th century⁴. On the wall above the sacarium,

⁴ This historic artefact is currently under conservation treatment carried out within the framework of a diploma project in the Department of Conservation of Paintings and Polychrome Sculpture, Institute for the Study, Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage, NCU Toruń. The project is supervised by Prof. D. Markowski and J.M. Arszyńska MAC, with collaboration of M.R. Gogolin D. Sc. (Tech.), Kazimierz Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Institute of Technology, Chair for Wooden Structures.

right of it, observation in raking light revealed an outline of another, large (ca. 120 × 320 cm) recess (No. V), closed with a segmental arch.

The east wall does not contain any original, medieval recesses. There is only one small, rectangular recess, housing the control board for the wiring, made probably in early 20th cent. In the lower part of the south-east wall there is a trace of bricked-up recess resembling that in north-east wall, however here it is not disturbed by further alterations. The upper end of this recess reaches the window level. In the south wall of the choir appear two large, quite low recesses, ca. 200 cm wide and ca. 150 high (from the floor level), as well as one small, resembling the above described small recess in the north section of rod wall.

In the south wall of the choir, below a console supporting the vaulting a narrow (38 cm) recess was found, ending at the level of 262 cm above the present floor level. Defining its function requires further research. If the presence of the same structures is confirmed in proximity of other supports of the vault, one will be entitled to draw a theory, that there was some other conception of vaulting planned at the stage of building the walls, finally not executed (Fig. 5).

All identified recesses, both in the nave and in the choir walls have been repeatedly whitewashed inside before being bricked-up. The altered recesses have been whitewashed also after alteration and before final closing. This fact has been discovered when some of the recesses have been emptied, during strip-sampling and during detailed observation of the edges of bricked-up ones. One can assume, that the recesses have been bricked-up in several stages, and finally resigned on in mid-17th century, when the interior was adapted before introducing new, Baroque furnishing, the preserved part of which is dated back to 1690's [5], [8], [15].

The results of research carried so far confirm, that the interior of Gothic church in Marianka underwent numerous alterations – both in terms of its distribution and its painted decoration and was far more rich, that it was assumed up to the present. At this stage it is still hard to make any definite statements of chronological nature. Especially the facts, that would allow for more precise dating of the subsequent parts of the edifice, need to be defined more accurately – and this shall be enabled by both the architectonic research and information acquired during continuation of conservation treatment of mural paintings.

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Kościół w Mariance k. Pasłęka. Wyniki analizy wewnętrznego lica ścian wykonanej podczas badań i prac konserwatorskich przy zespole malowideł ściennych

Tekst prezentuje wyniki analizy rozczłonkowania wewnętrznego lica ścian gotyckiego kościoła w Mariance k. Pasłęka, budowanego etapami od 2. ćwierci do 4. ćwierci XIV w., ze sklepieniem prezbiterium z ok. 1520 r. Kościół został objęty programem kompleksowej rewitalizacji – realizowanym pod auspicjami Komisji Wspólnego Dziedzictwa Polskiego Komitetu Narodowego ICOMOS – w którego ramach realizowane są m.in. badania architektoniczne oraz badania i prace konserwatorskie przy istniejącym tam zespole malowideł ściennych z połowy XV w. W toku przeprowadzonych w latach 2007–2009 badań i prac konserwatorskich zlokalizowano liczne

zamurowane wnęki i otwory w uważanych dotąd za jednolite wewnętrznych ścianach nawy oraz prezbiterium. Wyniki dotychczasowych prac świadczą o tym, iż wnętrze kościoła podlegało licznym przekształceniom – zarówno w zakresie aranżacji wnętrza, jak i malarskiego wystroju ścian – i było znacznie bogatsze, niż dotąd przypuszczano. Obecnie trudno jeszcze o jednoznaczne rozwarstwienie budowli i weryfikację datowania poszczególnych jej elementów. Pomocne w tym będą zarówno dalsze szczegółowe badania architektoniczne, jak i informacje uzyskane podczas kontynuacji prac konserwatorskich przy malarskim wystroju ścian.

Key words: Gothic brick-wall, Gothic architecture, building initiatives of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, architectural research, conservation research, Marianka by Pasłek (Marienfelde Kr. Preussisch Holland)

Słowa kluczowe: mur gotycki ceglany, architektura gotycka, budownictwo zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach, badania architektoniczne badania konserwatorskie, Marianka k. Pasłęka