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The former abbey of Canons Regular of St. Augustine in the context of the city of Żagań

A city reflects the culture of its residents, it is a social product that fulfils complex and overlapping functions
[4, p. 227]

Introduction

The monastery complex of Canons Regular of St. Augustine was built in Żagań. The buildings connected with the old canonry have a historical value and are entered in the register of monuments of Zielona Góra Voivodship: the church as an example of the 14th and 15th/16th-century Gothic pseudo-hall church with the former fragments, whereas the monastery has the Gothic relics of the original structure. On 11th March 2011 the entire monastery complex in Żagań along with the church was granted the title of historical monument.

Żagań is situated in the southern part of Lubuskie Voivodship; in the beginning, starting from the 12th century it was a market settlement, then it became a castellan town and from the mid-13th century it was a foundation town.

The abbey development is situated in the northwest part of the city plan, on Klasztorny Square (Fig. 1, 2). From the north and west the buildings adjoin the old city defensive walls (second half of the 13th century) and there are green areas on this side (Fig. 3). From the southern and eastern sides the monastery development borders on the city space and along its southern side there is Armii Wojska Polskiego Street leading to the Market Square. Nowadays, the old monastery complex consists of Assumption of the Virgin Mary Parish Church – b.1 (Fig. 1) which adjoins a three-wing cloister from the northern side – a parish house at present – b.2, northwest of the complex there is a convent school building – a PTTK shelter (Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society) – b.3 and from the west there is
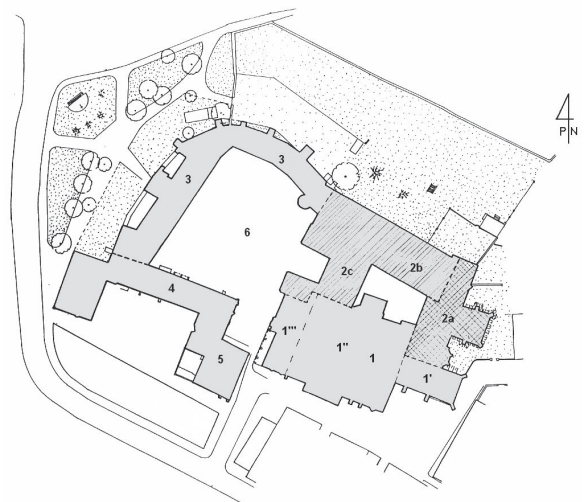

Fig. 1. Situation, a post-cloister complex of Canons Regular of St. Augustine in Żagań, source: Voivodship Office of Historical Buildings Preservation in Zielona Góra 19 (ed. by M. Doroz-Turek, 2007)

Il. 1. Sytuacja, zespół poklasztorny kanoników regularnych św. Augustyna w Żaganiu, źródło: Wojewódzki Urząd Ochrony Zabytków w Zielonej Górze 19 (oprac. M. Doroz-Turek, 2007)

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a monastic granary – b.4 which adjoins a tenement house from the end of the 14th century – b.5. The preserved com-plex of buildings has a readable spatial arrangement which is grouped around a polygonal monastery courtyard – b.6.

The beginning of history of Canons Regular of St. Augustine in Żagań

The history of Canons Regular of St. Augustine in Me-diaeval Poland is connected with first of all Silesia. This is the third Polish district where Canons Regular appeared, at the same time when they started their activity in Greater Poland and Mazovia in the 12th century, and then during the next two centuries they founded new centres, thus ex-periencing the best period of their development. The be-ginning of the Canons Regular expansion in Silesia consti-tuted a monastery in Wrocław [2, pp. 36–40].

The Wrocław Holy Virgin Mary Abbey was one of the biggest Canon centres in Mediaeval Poland. The Abbey in Żagań was the second canonry in Poland that was founded in Silesia at the end of the 13th century – its origins were inextricably linked with the Wrocław Abbey and it was equally famous. The Wrocław Abbey supervised a preposi-ture in Nowogród Bobrzański founded in 1217 which was the germ of the Abbey in Żagań [3].

In 1284 Canons Regular moved to from Nowogród Bobrzański to Żagań. The initiator of this translocation and founder of the monastery in Żagań was Przemko (died in 1289) the then Żagań Prince in cooperation with Bishop Tomasz II [14, Vol. 5, No. 116; 12, p. 49]. The canonry monks settled by the Holy Virgin Mary Parish Church [1, p. 177].

The transferred convent school required immediate reforms of the internal spiritual life. They were made by one of the most remarkable Żagań abbots – Trudwin (1325 –1347) who treated the intellectual life of the convent school members in a particular way. He supported their studies and developed the already existing monastery li-brary which with time became one of the biggest libraries in the Central Europe [16]. An equally remarkable abbot who took care of the moral and intellectual level of the convent school turned out to be Ludolf from Żagań (1394 –1422). During Ludolf's times, the library collections were enriched, therefore, the abbot also enlarged library rooms.

The organization development and endowment of the Żagań monastery is connected with its subordinate affilia-tions and local prepositures [2, pp. 40–46].

Architectural transformations. Author's studies and research results

Fig. 2. General view of the church from the western side
(photo by M. Doroz-Turek, 2006)

Il. 2. Widok ogólny od strony zachodniej na kościół
(fot. M. Doroz-Turek, 2006)

The author carried out her own architectural and his-torical research in Żagań in the years 2005/2006 and 2006/ 2007. Thanks to the conducted research, it was possible to distinguish six mediaeval building phases, the first of which is Roman, while the other ones are Gothic. Drawing conclusions and distinguishing particular building phases, while taking into consideration their scope, enabled us to summarise the results of other researchers, including the recent studies of Antoni Kąsinowski and Stanisław Kowal-ski [7, 8], and of course to collect our own data.

Middle Ages

The original architecture of the monastery complex has not survived until the present times. It results from the re-search that the Roman church was replaced by the existing Gothic church [7, p. 39], and possibly a part of the Roman walls was adapted. As for the monastery, the oldest part is in the eastern wing as well as under the western and north-ern wings and a part of the monastery courtyard.

PHASE I – Roman (second half of the 13th century)

The Holy Virgin Mary Parish Church in Żagań where Canons Regular of St. Augustine were located already ex-isted and was built probably before 1272 [13, Vol. 7, No. 1399; 10, p. 151]. The only remnants of the oldest church building are fragments of a stone wall and a fragment of an architectural detail. The relic in the form of a segment of a brick arch and a sill fragment – O–1 (Fig. 4), which is placed in the stone wall of the southern façade of the pres-

bytery – M–1 (Fig. 4), interpreted as a Roman window is an element dating this phase for the 13th century [2, p. 294; 8, p. 211]. Judging by the position of the revealed window fragment, we can say that the southern façade could have had three axes. A material source probably connected with the Roman monastery church is also a stone western presbytery top preserved in the attic space. The location of the window relic as well as the gable between the presbytery and the body shows that the former church was smaller than the present one and occupied the southwest part of the present presbytery and the eastern part of the nave body. The Roman presbytery – room I.1 (Fig. 4) built of stone, according to a hypothetical reconstruction, could have been a two- or three-span structure on the rectangular projection roofed with a ceiling rather than a vault.

The nave body – room I.2 (Fig. 4), in the author's opinion (which differs from S. Kowalski's view [7, p. 92]), before the 14th-century reconstruction could have had one nave on the projection of the oriented rectangle slightly wider than the choir. The stone part built similarly to the presbytery, probably reached as far as the end of the third span of the present Gothic church body. The southern façade could have had two or three axes, which corresponded with the interior consisting of two or three spans on the square-like projection. The body, similarly to the presbytery, was probably roofed by means of a ceiling.

Fig. 3. General view from the northeast side from behind the city walls (photo by M. Doroz-Turek, 2006)

Il. 3. Widok ogólny od strony północno-wschodniej, zza murów miejskich (fot. M. Doroz-Turek, 2006)

Relics which are associated with the prince stronghold structures mentioned in sources were found in the area of the eastern wing. The remnants after the castle dated back to the middle of the 13th century are perhaps in the northeast corner of the present monastery complex – b.II.3 and
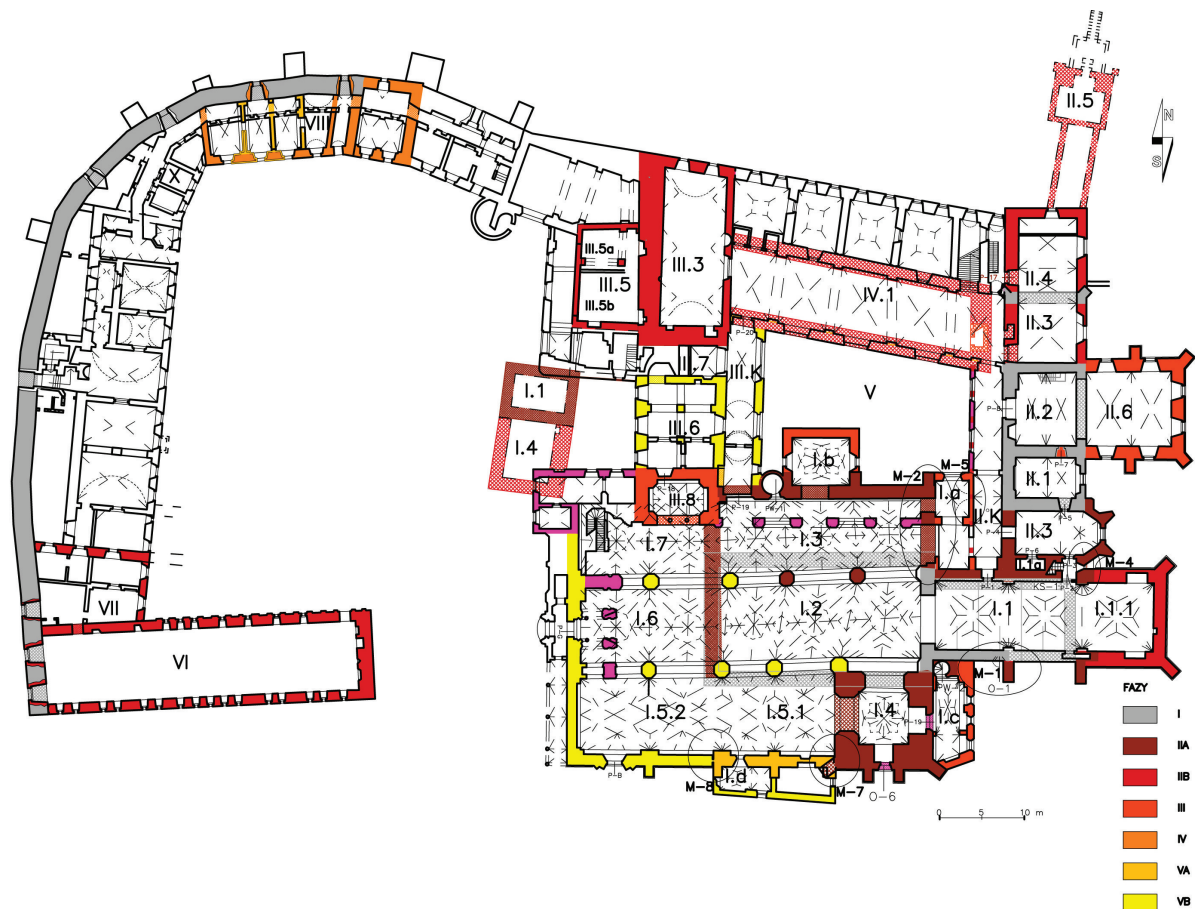

Fig. 4. Building phases I-VB (ed. by M. Doroz-Turek, 2007)

Il. 4. Fazy budowlane I-VB (oprac. M. Doroz-Turek, 2007)

in the middle part of this wing – b.II.1 and II.2 at the place of the original sacristy and the chapter-house (Fig. 4). According to Stanisław Kowalski's hypothesis, the castle was a building made of field stone and brick on the quadrilateral projection and perhaps it had three floors [7, p. 53]. In the author's opinion, the entire development could have ended on the line of the city wall which reached the eastern wall of the wing. This is proved by a part of the wall in the form of an oblique buttress sticking out on the eastern side apparently coming from the northeast corner of the former structure. On the axis east – west from this architectural element, inside, there could probably have been a northern wall closing the eastern wing and not – as Kowalski supposes – the southern wall of the castle which was situated there [7, p. 54].

PHASE II A-1. Stage II of the Gothic phase (beginning of the 14th century)

Construction of the monastery complex itself as well as a bigger Gothic church, its presbytery – room I.1.1, to which a nave body was built from the west side – room I.2 and I.3 (Fig. 4) took place during the second mediaeval building phase.

The first to be built was the presbytery dated back to the first half of the 14th century. The presbytery walls were built of layered field stones, which originally were not plastered. Unchanged upper fragments of the wall arrangement are preserved inside above its vault. Judging by the revealed window relic (see phase I), we can guess that the eastern side of the former choir was probably used for its extension. This is also proved by the fact of using the same material (stone).

The presbytery was connected with the body from the western side. There is no clarity as to the time and method of construction and transformation of the church nave body. The preserved western stone top of the choir can suggest that the body was joined to it. Analysing the research results, we can claim that before the present arrangement there was another concept of building the church. As the reconstruction shows most probably a brick two-nave structure in the hall system was built first. One nave was the existing northern side aisle – room I.3, whereas the other one – the nave – room I.2, which equalled the length of the three existing spans (Fig. 4).

The northern and eastern walls were preserved from the nave body of the first Gothic church – these walls create a northeast corner of the aisle. Earlier origin of this part is also confirmed by a couple of preserved details, apart from the arrangement and material, such as buttresses which are different from those on the southern side. On the northern side three buttresses in the two-offset form with oblique covers similar to those at the presbytery are preserved, the only difference being that those at the nave are built of the Gothic brick. The northern wall of the body was built along with the buttresses and originally it was not plastered. This is further confirmed by the original upper fragment of this wall associated with this phase that is available from the attic space of the western monastery wing. The northern nave was originally lighted by three Gothic windows, one of which was bricked up, while the

other two were transformed in the 18th century. There is a trace of the removed window on the aforementioned original wall fragment, which proves that the windows were originally closed ogivally. At the same place, there is also a preserved detail of the fragment of the authentic cornice along with the frieze, which is a proof that the façade was closed by means of a four-offset cornice with a decorative, brick, crystal frieze.

The eastern wall of the northern aisle is also connected with the first Gothic sacral building – M-2 (Fig. 4). On the level of the present choir there is an ogival window which most probably originally lighted the aisle from the east. Other elements, which prove that this wall was originally the external wall, are also preserved. On the eastern wall – M-2, from the attic space there is a visible offset covered with ceramic tiles; moreover, on the eastern side this wall is plastered, which means that it has exterior finish.

We are not sure whether the body that was completed before 1394 was vaulted together with the presbytery by means of the cross and ribbed vault, similarly to the 14th-century rooms in the eastern wing or at most by means of a ceiling. It is also possible that this part was vaulted, according to the sources, only at the beginning of the 16th century during the last mediaeval building phase.

In the 14th century, from the southern side in the southwest corner of the body and presbytery, a tower was built. There is no information about its construction; however, its existence is pointed by several mentions coming from the second half of the 14th century [2, pp. 268–271]. The fact of earlier erection of the tower from the southern aisle is proved by a seam resulting from the lack of dressing between the southern wall of the tower and the aisle – M-7 (Fig. 4).

The tower, in the outline of the interior of the present chapel – room I.4 (Fig. 4), constitutes a rectangular form on the square projection. Its original height is not known; the tower experienced several building catastrophes. Massive and thick walls, which were built on the northern side next to the body nave and high buttresses at the height of the ground floor, may indicate high towering buildings. The tower walls, associated with the 14th-century building, have a stone construction with external Gothic brick facing. This material, which is connected with the second building phase, was used at least at the height of two floors: ground floor and one level above the ground floor vault. The tower ground floor has a stellar vault with profiled ribs originating from the end of the phase; it was most probably made together with the presbytery cover and it had the same vault scheme – stellar.

Originally the ground floor was lighted by means of three windows; at present there are two windows – southern and eastern with a changed form – O-6 (Fig. 4). The Gothic windows were higher, narrower and ogivally closed. On the external southern façade there are high, two-offset buttresses – two of them are perpendicular and one, and originally perhaps even two, are oblique situated on the corner with stone covers.

Construction of the monastery complex itself also took place during the second building phase. During the times of Abbot Jan I (1311–1314), a chapel, dormitory as well

as the abbot's house were built earlier than the church. Some structures adapted earlier for monastery purposes were handed over by the prince and then incorporated into the eastern wing that was under construction. One of the rooms situated close to the presbytery started to be used as a sacristy or a library – room II.1 (Fig. 4), whereas the other room on its northern side served as a chapter-house – room II.2 (Fig. 4).

Room II.1 has two spans with one window from the eastern side and it is roofed with a cross-ribbed vault supported by cantilevers. Originally, this room was connected by means of a portal (P–7) with the other room (II.2), consisting of one rectangular span roofed by a groin vault (at present the western part of St. Anne Chapel). A new part, which formed an element of the eastern wing, was built as a chapel – room II.3 (Fig.4); afterwards it was located between the already existing building on the southern side – room II.1 and the northern wall of the presbytery of the original church.

As it follows from the sources, the chapel (room II.3) was built before a bigger presbytery was erected, in order to collect money for the further construction works. The room that was built had a rectangular projection and from the eastern side it was closed by a three-sided apse coming from the eastern wing face with a window opening that provided light. The two-span room was roofed by a cross-ribbed vault touching geometrical cantilevers; on the ribs' crossing there are preserved keystones in the shape of medallions; there are also cantilevers similar to those in the presbytery and medallions close in character to the ones preserved in the gallery. The fact that the northern wall of the presbytery was built before the chapel was erected may be evidenced by a fragment built of stone in the lower part of the eastern wall of the monastery wing – M-4 (Fig. 4); the analysis of the presbytery spatial arrangement may indicate that the central buttress of the church was incorporated into the monastery development.

Between the presbytery and the chapel at the entrance a staircase was located – KS-1, which was a vertical communication of the eastern wing (Fig. 4). The stairs partially built into the northern presbytery wall led to the first floor of the monastery and to the dormitory which was originally situated there; most probably, the first floor was then made of wood.

Along with construction of the eastern wing from the western and northern side of the church a gallery was built. The preserved southeast gallery corner was built at that time – II.K (Fig. 4); it was probably closed from all sides during the next phase forming an interior garth. One square span of the original 14th-century gallery is roofed by a cloister vault – a cross-ribbed one with stone profiled inter-span ribs and buttresses closed ogivally with a detail in the form of stone cantilevers supporting ribs as well as keystones on the ribs' crossing. Originally, the gallery opened to the cloister garth by means of ogival arcades. A relic of clearances bricked up with the Gothic wall was found in the area of the western wall – M-5 (Fig. 4) next to the southeast corner.

At the same time when the eastern wing was built also buildings on the western side of the complex, which was on the lower level, were erected. Therefore, the structures built here during the second building phase – in the 14th century – were situated lower; most probably, it was at the turn of the 15th century that the terrain was levelled.

As the research results indicate, in the first part of the century most probably on the western side an abbot palace was built whose relics were encountered underground on the level –3,45 m. The building associated with the abbot palace was built of layered field stone, similarly to the presbytery and buildings connected with the castle. There is another structure dated from the same period, which is also preserved in the outline of the basement room. On the level of –3,45 the relics of stone walls belong to a room with unspecified functions, perhaps it was an abbot kitchen.

The next structure, which is situated more to the north, is a building of a winter refectory which was erected during the first half of the 14th century. This structure is preserved in the outline of the walls of the present basement room on the level of –4,70.

In the monastery chronicle there is also a mention of a summer refectory which was probably built in the mid–14th century during the times of Abbot Trudwin and it was situated to the east of the abbot palace between this building and the winter refectory.

From the monastery sources it is known that around the middle of the 14th century the monastery complex in Żagań, apart from the aforementioned functions, comprised a well developed monastery school and a library along with a scriptorium [1, p. 187; 16, p. 25].

PHASE IIB – 2. Gothic stage (mid and second half of the 14th century)

During the second part of the 14th century construction of the bigger church was continued. Building works on the presbytery were also carried out; they were still continued in 1376 [1, p. 204] and in 1383 [6, pp. 34–35, 569; 9, pp. 18–19].

The presbytery was built – room I.1.1 on the projection of the elongated rectangle closed straight from the east (Fig. 4). The whole interior was divided into three spans similar to a square and covered with a stellar vault with diagonals and with profiled ribs going down to the cantilevers; two Gothic cantilevers are preserved in both eastern corners of the presbytery. The form of the vault as well as the authentic cantilevers show stylistic features which are typical of the second half of the 14th century. The interior of the choir is lighted with five windows; originally, perhaps seven windows were situated on the axis of spans. From the traces on the stone façade face we can conclude that the openings associated with the second building phase were originally higher than the present ones, namely, they were widely splayed on both sides, closed ogivally and divided by tracery.

On the exterior, the presbytery part buttressed system consisted of three-offset buttresses, one two-offset northern buttress built of stone with stone covers along with the choir construction, perhaps also partially joined to the former wall, whilst on the east in the corners there are oblique buttresses.

On the basis of analyzing the projection of the available walls and architectural elements and taking into consideration a mention of prolonging the choir, it is possible that the presbytery was first adapted and broadened and then the choir was extended towards the east. It was a continuation in the same material – field stone with the usage of brick for performing details.

During the second half of the 14th century when the building works were still continued at the church body and tower, probably the next stage of the monastery development started possibly with the purpose of replacing the makeshift wooden buildings with more permanent structures [12, pp. 125–126].

During the times of Jan II (1376–1390) the eastern wing from the northern side was extended by another building made of stone which is preserved in the outline of room II.4 (Fig. 4) performing the function of a fraternity room. The room on the rectangular projection had two levels. The original first floor constituted the monks' chamber, a large-sized room roofed by a cross-ribbed vault with profiled ribs divided into three spans. The room situated under the fraternity room, now a basement room at the level of –4,70 m, was probably used as a pantry. The lower level originally lighted by daylight, i.e. five window openings, was covered with a brick barrel vault. Later construction of this part is indicated by lack of connection of the eastern and western walls with the northern wall of the former chapter house – both of these walls were joined to it only later.

In the second part of the 14th century there were also extensions of the buildings on the western side of the complex. Another building was added to the abbot palace on its southern side; it is now an underground part. The structure was built of stone and brick, roofed by means of a brick barrel vault and connected with the existing building.

The winter refectory was extended by building up a floor – III.3 where a dining room was moved (at present St. Cecile Chapel) (II.4), while on the lower floor a pantry was installed. In the western monastery wing a kitchen room with a hearth was built and it was joined to the refectory from the west; its Gothic walls were made of brick.

A granary was erected to the west of the church (room VI) and it is preserved in the outline of the 14th-century building walls (Fig. 4). The structure was a five-storey brick building on the rectangular projection with a basement. The courtyard façade had a rich Gothic blend articulation, now it has traces of conversions dated from 19th and 20th centuries.

Slightly later, towards the end of the 14th century, most probably the northern wing was built, thus closing the quadrilateral garth; it is preserved in the outline of the basement rooms of the southern narrow track of the actual northern wing at the level of –5,05 m. In this way, an interior on the elongated rectangular projection was created on the axis east-west, which was later divided into two smaller interiors. This part was made of stone and it was lighted by windows on the northern side only. A brick barrel vault was made during the next stage, possibly along with a partition wall. This wing probably had two storeys and the levels were the same as the levels of the already existing monastery complex buildings, namely, the refectory and fraternity room. It is possible that in this wing the ground floor performed the role of cellarium or infirmary whilst on the first floor there was a lecture hall or recreation room or even dormitory.

PHASE III – Gothic (end of the 14th century – first part of the 15th century)

At the end of the 14th century and in the first part of the 15th century, next to the already existing church, additional chapels were built which were joined to it in the inter-buttress parts.

The first chapel was built on the northern side of the church in the northeast corner of the garth – room Ia (Fig. 4). An interior on the square-like projection was created, covered by means of a cross-ribbed vault with a pear-profiled brick ribs and cantilevers in the form of a cone. On the same side of the church the second chapel – Our Lady of Częstochowa Chapel – was built – room Ib. The eastern and western walls which were the extension of perpendicular church buttresses along with the longer northern wall constitute an interior on the rectangular projection covered by a stellar vault (Fig. 4). Some time later at the beginning of the 15th century a porch with a sarcophagus of Duke Henry IV the Faithful was built – room Ic (Fig. 4). This Gothic structure was added to the tower on the east. The fact that these chapels were added to the façade contributed to shortening the height of two windows – the one in the northern aisle of the church and the eastern window of the tower.

In the first half of the 15th century during the third building phase, more important construction activities were carried out in the monastery complex than in the church. All these works were connected with extending the already existing monastery buildings.

A room which was used so far as a chapter house (room II.2) in the eastern wing was enlarged by adding new parts on the east on the square-like projection – room II.6 (Fig. 4). The two-span interior was built of brick with six windows and it was roofed, similarly to the previous part, by means of a cross vault. Both parts were joined by puncturing the existing eastern wall at the entire interior width. The new room took over the function of St. Anne Chapel (Fig. 4).

As it follows from the sources, along with St. Anne Chapel, a library was built. The new room for growing collections of books was built on the first floor of the eastern wing – room II.I.2 and II.I.5 (Fig. 5), above the aforementioned chapel (room II.2 and II.6). One-space room was built probably covered with a vault; the form of the original cover of the interior, which was destroyed after a fire in 1472, remains unknown. Apart from the library, a special room was built with the purpose of rewriting and studying books, the so called scriptorium.

Due to rebuilding of the eastern wing floor, the dormitory was moved to the storey above the fraternity room II.I.4 (Fig. 5).

In the Middle Ages, most probably at the beginning of the 15th century or at the turn of the 16th century the area in the western part of the complex was levelled. After level-
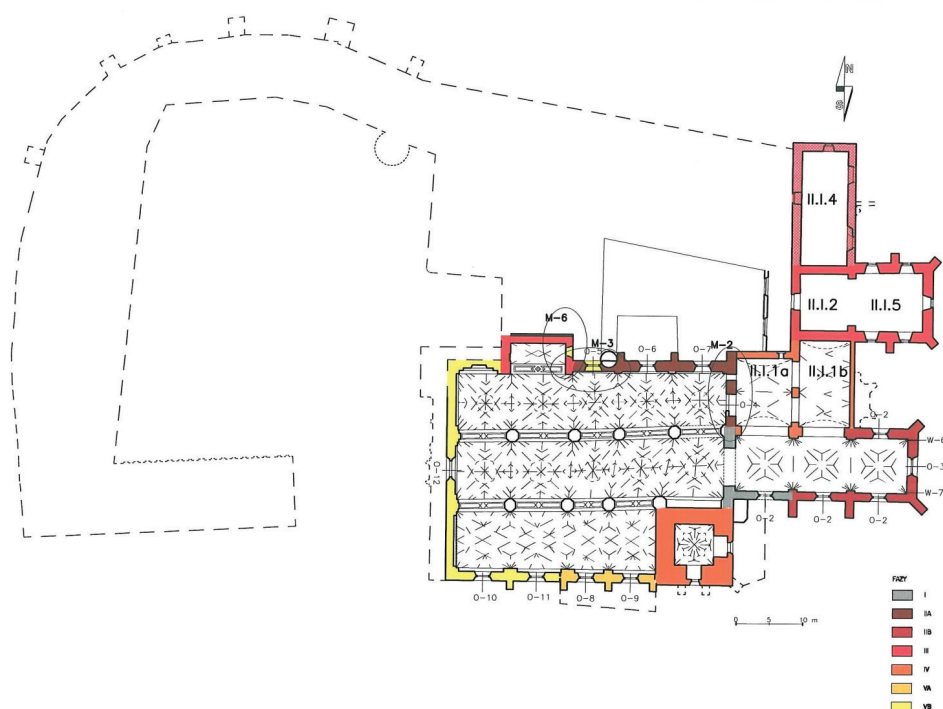
Fig. 5. Phase I-VB, storey (ed. by M. Doroz-Turek, 2007)

Il. 5. Faza I-VB, piętro (oprac. M. Doroz-Turek, 2007)

ling, at the church level in the 15th century a new building was erected or another building was adapted and transferred to the Canons in which a new chapter house was organised. This brick structure, preserved in the outline of the current Holy Baptism church chapel (room III.8) was located in the northwest corner of the then church body or it was already standing next to it (Fig. 4). The interior on the rectangular projection was covered with a stellar vault. This building could have had two or three floors with rich architecture, which is indicated by a brick Gothic top with numerous window openings framed with brick profiled shaped stones and ornamental tracery, detail M–6 (Fig. 5) preserved at the attic. The wall was added or built above the existing Gothic one connected with the previous phase (phase IIB). The chapter house was probably connected with the church and the summer refectory. The location of this function in this place is proved by a mention in the monastery chronicle under the year 1534 – the source mentions that the monastery chapter house was situated next to the summer refectory [1, p. 474].

The subsequent mediaeval building activities are connected with rebuilding the complex after the invasion of the Hussites (the period of the Hussite Wars 1419–1436), but first of all following the destructions as a result of a building catastrophe in 1439 when the church tower collapsed and after the fires in the years 1472 and 1473.

PHASE IV – Gothic (after 1439 – second half of the 15th century)

After 1439 the church tower was rebuilt – room I.4 (Fig. 4) at least from the level of the body aisles up by giving it its present form in the Gothic style. A four-storey brick structure was built on a high brick basement which was situated on an equally high pedestal. On the façades the floors were divided by a band frieze and additionally emphasized by a row of high blind windows closed ogivally. The first and the second level had seven blind windows each; only on the second level on the southern façade there were six blind windows, two of which were broader. On the third level on the axis of each façade there was a big, profiled-brick, off-set splayed window closed ogivally with pairs of blind windows on both sides. On the highest floor of each façade there were rectangular, originally bigger openings closed with a segmental arch, supposedly for bells, and a clock on the axis (II.3).

Destructions caused by the fires in 1472 and 1473 [1, p. 365] inspired the abbot to introduce spatial changes in the presbytery and the first storey adjacent to the eastern monastery wing which, as it was made of wood, must have been destroyed in the fire. While rebuilding the storey of the eastern wing southern side, it was made higher in relation to the northern side part and it was given the form of an inner gallery that opened to the presbytery. The so called upper choir consisted of two spaces 'optically' divided by means of spanned arcades on one column. Both interiors were on the rectangular projection and both were roofed by vaults later on. The inner gallery was opened from the south to the presbytery interior by two arcades closed originally probably ogivally, with a balustrade between the wall and the column, whereas from the west to the northern side aisle by means of two windows, including one former external window opening

which was situated in the eastern wall of the first Gothic church.

The process of rebuilding lasted at least until 1479 when the church was re-consecrated by the Wrocław bishop; another church blessing ceremony took place again three years later in 1482 during the next visit [1, p. 385; 12, p. 205].

The construction works connected with rebuilding the monastery, particularly with the development of the monastery complex, were continued in spite of the fact that the church was consecrated. During the fifth building phase the monastery function was changed. Rebuilding of the eastern wing probably resulted in the necessity to move the dormitory for monks to a completely different location.

Another structure that dates from the first part of the 15th century is preserved in the walls of the former convent school in the outline of rooms – structure VIII (Fig. 4), which probably housed a dormitory for canons. Brick walls were added from the south to the stone defensive walls. The interiors on the rectangular projection were lighted by windows on the north side punctured in the defensive wall and on the south they were built along with the walls. This structure might have been built during two stages of the mediaeval building phase, while during the second stage a new part was added from the east.

PHASE V – Gothic (end of the 15th century – beginning of the 16th century)

Around the end of the 15th century the last fifth mediaeval building phase started. The building activities taken up then were connected with rebuilding the complex after another fire which occurred in 1486. While rebuilding the church, decisions were made to extent the nave body by other parts preserved in the outline of the church interior – room I.5–I.7 (Fig. 4). The programme of building two-nave hall body was changed into a three-nave one in the pseudo-basilica system. First, a part of the southern aisle was built; its two spans were added to the already existing body from the south and to the tower from the west – room I.5.1. The interrupted construction was continued until the western façade was built at the width of three naves and two spans of the three-nave body towards the east – room I.5.2, I.6 and I.7 by adding them to the already existing part (room I.2, I.3 and I.5.1). The new part was built with a higher nave; in the existing body the nave was made higher by creating a pseudo-basilica interior. In this way, a nave body in the outline of the current spatial arrangement of the church body was built, i.e. the nave and two aisles.

The fact of extending the body towards the south and west is indicated by the lack of dressing the walls – M-8 (Fig. 4), which is visible on the southern façade at the third buttress from the east. Analysing the wall tissue, we can assume a hypothesis that the eastern part was built earlier than the western part. This is further confirmed by the examinations carried out at the attic where dilatation and various building materials on both sides were found. A various material is also visible on the southern façade face – on the eastern part there is a brick wall in the Gothic arrangement with the use of over-burned brick (burr) in the end face, whereas in the western part there is the Gothic arrangement with 'inserted' field stones of various sizes, the so called boulders. The buttresses in both parts are also slightly different.

As it follows from all of the previous analyses, the fifth mediaeval phase is divided into two stages. During the first stage two spans of the southern aisle were built ending at the aforementioned third buttress, while during the second stage the construction works were continued by erecting the western façade and two spans of the three-nave body to the east, in this way reaching the already existing walls of the structure.

During the last part of the stage, a network of vaults above 12 inter-nave octagonal columns was built. Irregular spacing of the columns also proves that the southeast part of the structure was built at a different time than the southwest part. Roofing is dated back to the beginning of the 16th century at the latest. The nave and the northern aisle were given stellar-net vaults, while the southern aisle was given a net vault. It is still not known which of them was built first. Perhaps, according to the sources, the church was vaulted from the north to the south [6, p. 572]. However, when we consider the employed schemes of vaulting, we can conclude that the first to be built was the vault above the southern aisle dated from the last quarter of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th century [5, pp. 92–93, 95]. The nave and the northern aisle were covered with a stellar-net vault based on the cupola and telescope construction.

Originally, the nave body was lighted by Gothic bilaterally splayed and ogivally closed windows, narrower and higher than the existing ones. On the façade face above the windows at their semicircular closing there are traces of the ogival form, which proves the mediaeval shape of the openings.

The interior was lighted from the south as well as from the west by means of windows which originally were probably ogivally closed. One window is situated on the façade axis and it provides light to the nave, while the other two placed symmetrically on the sides provide light to the aisles (II.2). The interior of the three-nave pseudo-basilica is accessible by means of two entrances. From the west on the western façade axis there is the main entrance portal – P-G (Fig. 4); at present it is preceded by a renaissance arcade portico. The other entrance – a side entrance – is on the southern side – P-B, on the axis of the first western span, at present in the form of a baroque portal (Fig. 4). The church was also connected with the monastery – the presbytery with the chapel in the eastern wing, the northern aisle with the eastern gallery and originally with the western wing.

On the western side, by making the nave higher, the form of the church was closed by means of a wide and high façade, surmounted by a step-wise twenty-axis top (II. 2). The top was divided into five rows by means of plastered friezes in which about 59 ornamental blind windows were placed closed by a segmental arch. The eastern body top was given a similar artistic shape. The presbytery and the body were covered by separate gable roofs.

In about 1520 the church, which was most probably completed, was consecrated. *The Chronicle of the Abbey* mentions the consecration of the church, which took place during the times of the next abbot Krzysztof Mechil III (1514–1522) [1, p. 446].

Probably at the same time the final works were conducted, which lasted since the previous phase during the reconstruction of the church tower. The works connected with the church *campanilli* were finished five years after the consecration of the church, i.e. in 1525. The tower was originally surmounted by means of a mediaeval cupola of an unknown form; in the 18th century a baroque copula was added and at present the tower is covered with a mansard roof.

In the first half of the 16th century the southern façade of the church between the first and the third buttress (from the east) was extended by a chapel and an annex – room Id (Fig. 4).

During the stages of church reconstruction, works in the monastery were also carried out. As the monastery chronicle mentions, in 1531 each cell of the dormitory was inhabited by two monks [1, p. 464]; we also know that the next abbot Paweł Haugewicz (14 V 1489–12 VII 1507) ordered to divide the dormitory into smaller separate rooms.

During the times of Jodok Jechel (18 VII 1507–3 II 1514), who was the successor of Paweł (although there are no written accounts about it), works on constructing the monastery complex were probably continued. At the beginning of the 16th century the area on the western side of the complex was leveled again. The fact that these works were carried out is indirectly indicated by a mention dated 1534 [1, p. 474] from which we can infer that the western wing – apart from the chapter house – consisted of two refectories – the winter refectory and surely the summer one.

After the area was levelled, the summer refectory was probably moved to the level of today's basement, joining the northern wall of the building where the chapter house was situated. It was probably an interior in the outline of the rooms of the current entrance hall and the parish office – room III.6 (Fig. 4). Originally, the room was probably divided by means of two columns between which there was a vault lighted from the west by three windows, accessible on the north and east from monastery corridors – structure III.K and III.7 (Fig. 4). The corridor – room III.7 between the two refectories is mentioned in the monastery chronicle during the times of Abbot Paweł Haugewicz [1, pp. 398, 402, 474].

Leveling of the terrain made it possible to integrate all the former buildings with the new ones into the western wing which was connected on the level of the present basement by a gallery (room III.K) with the church and the northern wing. It was then that an internal monastery courtyard closed from the west side was made – interior V (Fig. 4).

As a result of leveling of the terrain, the so far basement of the existing buildings on the western side of the monastery complex which was built during the first mediaeval building phases was under the ground. These rooms can be recognized by the bricked up window openings, which originally provided them with daylight.

Summary

The preserved monastery complex has a great significance for Żagań and the community living there, which can be exemplified by the fact that on 11th March 2011 the old complex of buildings was granted the title of historical monument by the President of the Republic of Poland Bronisław Komorowski.

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Dawne opactwo kanoników regularnych św. Augustyna w kontekście miasta Żagań

W artykule przedstawiono przeobrażenia architektury zespołu poklasztornego kanoników regularnych św. Augustyna wraz z kościołem w Żaganiu. Badany klasztor od czasów powstania jest związany z kulturą miasta, w którym został ufundowany. O tym, jak ogromne znaczenie dla Żagania i dla społeczności w nim żyjącej ma zachowane założenie klasztorne, może świadczyć staranie o uznanie dawnego kompleksu zabudowań za pomnik historii. Stosowny dokument został podpisany przez prezydenta Bronisława Komorowskiego 11 marca 2011 r.

Artykuł powstał na podstawie pracy doktorskiej pt. *Średniowieczna architektura klasztorna kanoników regularnych św. Augustyna na Śląsku*, napisanej na Wydziale Architektury Politechniki Wrocławskiej. Na podstawie badań architektonicznych, prowadzonych przez autorkę w sezonach 2005/2006 i 2006/2007, udało się ustalić sześć średniowiecznych faz budowlanych założenia klasztornego. Średniowieczny okres trwał od XIII do XVI wieku, następnie był renesans i barok. Do XVIII wieku ukształtowała się monumentalna architektura zachowanego założenia o cechach stylu średniowiecznego – gotyku, renesansowego i barokowego. Przez te stulecia opactwo było nie tylko przodującym ośrodkiem religijnym, ale i naukowym, miało skryptorium i bibliotekę, która z czasem stała się jedną z największych w Europie Środkowej.

Można stwierdzić, że działalność opactwa kanoników regularnych św. Augustyna i imponujące poklasztorne założenie architektoniczne ma nierozłączny związek z kulturą miasta Żagania.