

Creation of Nicolaus Wolcet in Pažaislis Monastery: Reconstruction of Historic Reality

Straipsnyje tyrinėjama skulptoriaus Mikalojaus Wolscheido, dirbusio Pažaislio kamaldulių vienuolyne iki 1676 m., kūryba. Pagrindinė kūrybos dalis – aštuonios akmens statulos – neišliko. Remiantis vizualine-ikonografinė medžiaga, dokumentiniais ir literatūriniais aprašymais bei daugiasluoksne aptariamojo vienuolyno dekoru ikonografinė programa, taip pat išlikusiomis kelių skulptūrų liekanomis, įvairiapusiškai rekonstruojama prarastosios skulptūros raiška, kuri aptariama Pažaislio vienuolyno dekoru kontekste. Pirmą kartą skelbiami išlikusių M. Wolscheido figūrinių skulptūrų fragmentai.

The article investigates the works of sculptor Nicolaus Wolcet who worked in Pažaislis Monastery of Camaldolese until 1676. The pinnacle of his works – eight stone statues – has not survived. Following the visual-iconographic material, documentary and literary descriptions and multi-layered iconographic program of the discussed monastery décor, also the remaining fragments of several sculptures, the expression of the lost sculptures is miscellaneously reconstructed within the context of Pažaislis Monastery décor. The fragments of the remaining N. Wolcet figure sculptures are published for the first time.

Preface

The short life of man ought to be prolonged by good works¹.

The Church of *The Visitation of Virgin Mary* of Pažaislis and the Camaldolese Monastery of the Mountain of Peace (*Eremus Mons Pacis*), including all the buildings and the former or current pieces of art serve as the object of the research. Great attention is paid to the interior elements, decorations, mural paintings of the church and the monastery, former altars and other pieces as well as peculiarities of interior design, paintings created for the decoration of the altars and those meant for other spaces, the treasury, reliquaries and the liturgical paraphernalia. The architectural analysis is employed to help realize concrete functions of certain premises and discover their symbolic meaning or to provide necessary data in order to set exact dates or to localize some pieces of art. This ensemble should be characterized not only as a unique baroque monument but as a phenomenon of Christian spiritual culture as well.

The aim of this research is the analysis of works of the sculptor of German origin Nicolaus Wolcet, who worked in Pažaislis Camaldolese Monastery until 1676. The object of this research is the reconstruction of historic reality. Until recently the stone sculpture of Pažaislis Monastery was not analyzed separately. The main part of figurative

works – eight stone statues – had not survived; these are the statues sculpted of stone in the façade and the Grand Gate of the Visitation of Virgin Mary Church, which were destroyed at the end of the third quarter of the 19th century. Following the visual and written sources and multilayer iconographic program of the décor of the discussed monastery and also the remaining fragments of several sculptures, the expression of the lost sculptures is miscellaneously reconstructed within the context of Pažaislis Monastery décor. The article indicates that all these pieces of art which have not survived were significant in the iconographic program of Pažaislis Monastery in semantic, artistic and compositional aspects. For the first time, the remaining fragments of N. Wolcet's figure sculptures have been analyzed and the traits of his creation have been revealed. The article is illustrated by fragments of N. Wolcet's pieces of art, which are published for the first time.

Analysis of Epitaphic Plate of N. Wolcet



Figure 1. N. Wolcet's tombstone epitaph. After 1676. Marble.
Kaunas St. George the Martyr Bernadine Church

Nicolaus Wolcet², a sculptor and mason from Trier, who *improved his art for a short time* in the Pažaislis Camaldolese Monastery, died on 8 June 1676 and was buried in Kaunas at St. George the Martyr Bernadine Church. The small, modest epitaphic plate of stone devoted for remembrance of the late sculptor has still remained in the pre-nave of this church (see Figure 1); it has been set in the northern wall on the Gospel side. The laconic and informative content of the epitaphic entry, on the one hand, visually specifies the posture of the baroque man, and, on the other hand, certifies, and that is important as

well, that the contemporaries valued the works of the sculptor, as every citizen of Kaunas City wished to be buried in this sanctuary:

In this grave Nicolaus Wolcet,
A splendid mason from Trier, rests who at the time
When he improved his art for a short time in the Erem basilica of
The Mountain of Peace died on 8 June 1676
Since the delivery of the Virgin in pastors Camaldolese
Erem in 34th year of his life.
You, traveller, learn to build eternal houses
Of firm stones of virtue
And pray to the Lord for me.³

This epitaph appears for the first time in 1848 in the *Chronicle of Kaunas Monastery of Bernardines*⁴. In 1928 Halina Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniene published the epitaph text in the monograph “Pažaislis, the Baroque Monastery in Lithuania”⁵. In 1946 Euzebiusz Lopacinski in the *Dictionary of the Artists of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania* also uses the epitaph of Nicolaus Wolcet as a source and quotes a fragment of the entry⁶. One can consider that the discussed epitaph is probably the principal and still the only source of reliable information about N. Wolcet’s work in Pažaislis, and it, therefore, serves as the basis for further investigations. As a matter of fact, by the text of the epitaph it is not clear what specific work was done by N. Wolcet in Pažaislis Monastery. However, in the text he is named as a mason, since J. Kołaczkowski⁷ has attributed both eight stone statues and the elements of décor of the church façade to this sculptor; the same is repeated by H. Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniene⁸. Besides, within this epitaph a certain divergence of interpretation can be observed. Here the errors of the entry of the epitaph published in the monograph resulted in an inexact translation into Lithuanian in which a very important aspect describing the period disappeared. At that time, a particularly important event or happening was calculated not since the Nativity of Christ, but since the Virgin Mary’s childbirth; and so here, in the entry of the discussed epitaph the basis for the counting time is namely the Virgin Mary’s childbirth⁹.

Reconstruction of Historic Reality

However, let’s return to Pažaislis and try to imagine how the monastery looked at the time when the Grand Gate and the facade of the Church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary were still decorated by eight monumental statues which N. Wolcet sculpted from sandstone. Indeed, every person who visits Pažaislis Monastery has to pass through three gates: the first gate consists of two overlooking stones that mark the beginning of the road leading to the house of the Lord and limited sacred space; the second, the Grand Gate, leads to the more intense sacred space; the third, the Sacred Gate, reveals the very sanctuary. Traveller D’A De La Motraye who visited Pažaislis Monastery in 1726 and was the first to publish the impressions of his journey, alas, did not mention the appearance and décor of the last two gates by a single word.¹⁰



Figure 2. The Grand Gate of Pažaislis Camaldolese Monastery. End of the 17th cent. Sandstone

The earliest short description of the Grand Gate was found in 1797 in the visitation of Pažaislis Monastery by which we learn that the top of the gate and the niches present below as well as the four statues, two on each side, were sculpted out of the same stone; still, they were not named¹¹. Apparently, these sculptures were lost and forgotten long ago (see Figure 2). So it is important to try to elucidate what these four meeting statues depicted, stationed as if to guard the cartouche framing the luxurious double lily flower hanging above the crossing arch. So far the only source in which the unrecognized stone statues are seen visually is the drawing of this gate in the amateur sketch¹² published in 1871 according to H. Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniene¹³ (see Figure 3). It is obvious that in the present situation only this source and the recreated iconographic program of the Camaldolese Monastery can name the statues which had stood here.

As it is known in this program the most important theme of the apotheosis of Virgin Mary begins in the most important point of the Grand Gate – cartouche (see Figure 4). An epitaph and double lily of double semantics as in K. Ž. Pacas' coat of arms and as the Virgin Mary's flower have been sculpted in green-gray sandstone. The text of the epitaph, which in 1974 was restored by Stefanija Čerškutė, belongs to prophet Isaiah (Is 35, 1–2) and is addressed to Mary as the Mother of the Messiah, i.e. the cartouche becomes the prologue of Mary's theme¹⁴.

As the drawing of this gate is approximate in comparison with reality, evidently the statues have been drawn very roughly. Still, we can perceive that the statue of St. Romuald¹⁵, the founder of the Camaldolese Order, used to stand on the top of the northern side of the Grand Gate: even in a poor drawing it is not difficult to recognize the abbot holding a shepherd's staff in one hand and a skull in another, usual attributes for him. Besides,



Figure 3. The Grand Gate of Pažaislis Camaldolese Monastery. Drawing. Illustration from the publication: Tyszkiewicz K. Wilija i jej brzegi. Dresden. 1871

the theme of St. Romuald is further continued in the same level of the western part of the Sacred Gate and is finished in the chapel devoted to this Saint, which is arranged on the same northern side.

On the opposite, southern side, most probably St. Benedict of Nursia¹⁶ stood. The drawn statue is dressed similarly to St. Romuald. The mitre on the head and shepherd's staff in the left hand indicate that this saint is the abbot of Monte Casino Monastery. The theme of St. Benedict is again analogically extended in the eastern part of the Sacred Gate and finished in the church, in the fresco of the porch "St. Benedict Visits His Sister St. Scholastica". (It is not accidental that St. Benedict is painted on the same southern side in this fresco.) The fact that both Saints Romuald and Benedict were depicted on both the Grand and the Sacred Gate and later in the church corresponds to the principle of pairing (and trebling) in the composition of the iconographic program of the monastery¹⁷.

It is much more complicated to recognize the sculptures of the niches not only because we see only one statue in the drawing, but also because the latter is drawn as if impersonal. Still, the words of the prophet Isaiah quoted in the cartouche of the Grand Gate enable us to predict that the statues of the niches could depict the characters of the Old Testament who foretold Mary's role relating to the Messiah in different ways. In the iconographic program of Pažaislis Monastery all the characters of the Old Testament – patriarchs Abraham and Jacob, king David and Cumae Sibil, prophets Isaiah and the author of Siracides book Ben Sira have gathered in the porch of the church. Therefore, one should question which two of the six named above would reveal the symbolic meaning of the gate as the beginning of the road the most completely and emphasize the messianic aspect of the Virgin Mary the most vividly. The least doubts arise for the candidate



Figure 4. Nicolaus Wolcet. Cartouche of Pažaislis Monastery Grand Gate, End of the 17th cent. Sandstone

Isaiah, the statue of whom could really stand in the southern niche. (That niche is covered by a big bush in the drawing.) As a prophet, Isaiah painted on the southern fresco of the church porch holds a band with a messianic entry: *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel (Isaiah 7:14)*¹⁸ in the right hand.

It is much more complicated to name the second character. It would be logical to think that it is the author of Sirach's book, the withering image of whom is arranged in the northern fresco in front of the painting of Isaiah; the entry of the band declares: *I struck root among the glorious people, in the portion of the Lord, his heritage (Sir 24, 12)*. That is a fragment of the hymn *Praise of Wisdom*; Antanas Rubšys¹⁹ emphasizes that in the liturgy this hymn is related to Mary, the Mother of the Lord, due to her constant and close tie with Christ embodied Wisdom. So the author of Sirach's book markedly emphasizes the Mary's messianic aspect, but does not emphasize the symbolic meaning of the gate as the beginning of the road²⁰.

On the other hand, it would most probably be Cumae Sibil's statue in the northern niche (that impersonal figure in the drawing may be more reminiscent of a woman than a man); in the Christian tradition Cumae Sibil is the most respected among the pagan prophets as a proclaimer of the coming of Christ (the Delivery of the Virgin). In the church porch, she is painted in the north-western corner fresco. Still it is more likely that this statue depicted the author of Sirach's book.

The assumption that the bottom statues which stood in the niches must have depicted the characters of the Old Testament is grounded by the decorative elements with the motifs of the flame tongues; arranged on both sides of the Grand Gate on cylinder columns at

the edges of the brick fence, they fix and distinguish a narrow alley leading towards the Sacred Gate. On the other hand, this motif of the flaming fire recalls the events of the Old Testament: when Moses was pasturing animals at the mountain of the Lord Mount Horeb (Sinai) the Lord manifested himself in the “flames of fire” (Exodus 3, 2) that did not consume the bush, and He ordered Moses to take the Jewish nation from the captivity of the Egyptians: “So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.” (Exodus 3, 10). It is obvious that this motif of the *flames of fire* is related to the fresco painted on the porch of the church northern wall in which “Crossing the Red Sea”, i.e. the salvation of the Jews from the slavery of Egypt, is depicted.²¹

The attempt to reconstruct the former view of the Grand Gate of Pažaislis Camaldolese Monastery as a historic reality by naming the statues and feeling the iconographic expression of the sculpture décor as a whole is most probably the first step in a process. At the same time the four statues of the façade of the church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary, as has been mentioned, also sculpted from sandstone, have been known for a long time: as in the case of the Grand Gate the only source in which these statues are seen visually is the drawing of the façade of the Church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary published in the same publication²² (see Figure 5). Although this drawing of the façade is not very professional, it could not be complicated for anybody to recognize the composition of the Visitation of Mary presented in the center. To tell the truth, for a long time it was considered that this composition consisted of the statues of Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph and Zachary; for example, H. Kairiūkštytė-Jacinienė writes in the monograph that “on the sides the group was completed by the accompanying figures of Joseph and Zachary, as can be seen in the illustration²³, i.e. the aforementioned drawing. However, in 1832, it was indicated in the inventory of Pažaislis Monastery and its property that “four stone figures of Mary with Elizabeth, the just Joseph and Simeon who has accepted the Lord have been erected”²⁴. The same statues were named in all the later inventories of the monastery, for example of the year 1836, 1840, 1845, 1850²⁵.

Perhaps it would be worth to separately discuss the reasons of Simeon to whom it was manifested by the Holy Spirit that he wouldn't die until he saw the Messiah, introduced in the Visitation composition of the church façade. First of all, the very subject of the sacrifice of Jesus in the temple in the tradition of Camaldolese piety has been very important; it is closely related with the prophecy of pious Simeon: “This child is chosen by God for the destruction and the salvation of many in Israel. He will be a sign from God which many people will speak against and so reveal their secret thoughts” (Lk 2, 34–35). Most probably due to this reason Michelangelo Palloni gave a sense to the subject of Jesus' sacrifice in the temple in a big canvas which at present is exhibited in the Guest House, the so-called Pacas hall. On the other hand, since 1832, as has been mentioned above, the outside man's statue behind the back of St. Elizabeth is called Simeon in the inventories of Pažaislis Monastery; it seems that it was obvious for the contemporaries (it is possible that the statue was depicted dressed in the clothes of a Jews' priest or held something unique identifying him).

One must admit that for some time these sculptures were cared for: here on 3 November 1844 in the terms of the Agreement it is clearly indicated that while repairing the



Figure 5. Façade of Pažaislis Church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary. Drawing. Illustration from the publication: Tyszkiewicz K. Wilija i jej brzegi. Dresden. 1871

façade of the church it is obligatory to “clean and repair”²⁶ the four statues of this façade. So it seems nobody foresaw a sad ending for them.

Unfortunately, Kaunas Bishop Vicar Alexander Dobrynin was appointed the Head of Pažaislis Orthodox Monastery in 1860; during the eight years he held the bishop’s

position he mostly distinguished himself by both pocketing funds allotted for repairs of the church and monastery (1864) and demolishing the baroque art valuables. For such “valiant” work he was first appointed the bishop of Minsk, later of Vilnius and all of Lithuania²⁷. This Orthodox bishop is namely the person at whose initiative the pieces of art of sculptor Nicolaus Wolcet were destroyed.

Art critic Leonidas Žilevičius found and described the letters which were sent by bishop Kirijon from Pažaislis Orthodox Monastery at the beginning of the 20th century²⁸ in the Archives of Manuscripts of the Institute of Georgian Academy of Sciences. Here on 23 May 1907 in his letter Bishop Kirijon writes that after a thorough examination of the church attic he found three heads of stone statues covered under a thick layer of dirt: one was of a lady, the other two – of men. After washing them it became clear that they were well kept up and made by a good artist. Bishop Kirijon learned Vikenty Makarovich, who was still working as a cook at Pažaislis Monastery, that forty years ago (c. 1867) the bishop of that day (Dobrynin) ordered that the sculptures of the church facade would be broken in his presence. It seems that the statues of the Grand Gate were destroyed at about the same time. To tell the truth, by destroying the statues Bishop Dobrynin completely ignored the directions of the Holy Synod not to restore or otherwise arrange the artistic valuables of Pažaislis Monastery²⁹. In the opinion of Bishop Kirijon the newly recovered statue heads, although injured, retained all their beauty: every line, every curving retained something solemn, celestial.

H. Kairiūkštytė-Jacinienė in her monograph writes about the statues of the church facade: “The balustrade between the two towers is interrupted by pedestals in three spots. A long ago sculpted stone figures used to stand on them – as if an energetic final accord of vertical distribution of the facade, at the same time the central accent. The statues decorated the attic until the end of the 19th century. On the middle pedestal the Visitation of Virgin Mary is depicted (by the way, the monastery church is called by Mary’s name.)”³⁰ The author is convinced that “These figures sculpted by Nicolaus Wolcet must have been particularly artistic”. She adds that “in the monastery she found a single humble relic – a fragment. That was a little head of a charming young lady which most probably belonged to the figure which had depicted Virgin Mary”³¹.

At present three statue heads, two of ladies and one of a man, sculpted from sandstone are stored in the museum. So remembering the two men’s heads found by Bishop Kirijon, one can presume that all four of them were in the monastery at that time. The remaining statue heads have been injured very much: the noses of all the three were chipped, the chin and lips of a man and one lady were chipped as well. In spite of that fact, the remaining sculptures certify that they were really sculpted by a talented sculptor of high qualification. One can only agree with the opinions of Bishop Kirijon and H. Kairiūkštytė-Jacinienė that the statues of the façade must have been particularly artistic.

As we already know what characters were depicted by the sculptures of the church facade, it remains to establish who is whom; so in elucidating their identity the person’s age was chosen as the principal criterion. Out of the two ladies’ sculptures, the less injured head with lively eyes, not high, even forehead, and slightly parted lips of a much younger lady was attributed to Virgin Mary (see Figure 6). The face of this sculpture is oval and



Figure 6. Nicolaus Wolcet. Head of the statue of Virgin Mary: en face. About 1674. Sandstone. A fragment of sculpture of the Church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary façade

Figure 7. Nicolaus Wolcet. Head of the statue of St. Elizabeth: en face. About 1674. Sandstone. A fragment of sculpture of the Church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary façade



Figure 8. Nicolaus Wolcet. Head of the statue of Pious Simeon: from the left side. About 1674. Sandstone. A fragment of sculpture of the Church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary façade

the roundedness of cheeks is softly highlighted. The cloak or coat which was covering the head does not hide Mary's beautiful curls combed upwards and downwards (The greater part of the coat has been split, but a small fragment, the height of which reaches 1.5 cm, remained). The other head of an older lady with very deeply set eyes, two marked vertical wrinkles between the eyes and one broad horizontal wrinkle on the forehead seems to depict St. Elizabeth (see Figure 7). Most probably the head of the Saint was covered by a cloak. (This sculpture suffered more – the stone is split as if on purpose down the contour of the whole face.) A bit broader than Mary's face, Elizabeth's eyes are set farther apart, and their vividness must have expressed surprise. The head of an elderly man with beard and moustache of expressive traits with broad, lush eyebrows has been attributed to pious Simeon (see Figure 8). That is the only sculpture which is nearly completely whole on the sides and back (including both the entire right ear and the upper part of the left ear). The eyes of Simeon are as deeply sunken as Elizabeth's; however, they are set nearer to each other. The high forehead of the Saint is creased by horizontal wrinkles: one above the eyebrows, as if separated into two, another short crease farther above the nose. These wrinkles are important for the expression of Simeon's face which is framed by hair modelled by big hanks.

The height of the heads of these monumental statues fluctuates from 36 cm to 37.5 cm. By employing the canons of depiction of human body proportions, it is not difficult to approximately establish their former size. According to the Greek proportions system, when vertical head's measurement is roughly of this size, the height of the statues ought to reach about three meters.³²

The four stone statues – Virgin Mary with Saint Elizabeth in the center, Saints Joseph and Simeon on the edges – stood above the balustrade in the background of the dome and were a very important compositional, artistic and semantic part of the principal façade of the church. On the one hand, these statues both softened the separated verticals of the towers and must have emphasized the second ground of the dome in the distance, i.e. created a perspective. On the other hand, the motif of Visitation was strongly emphasized in the idea program of the temple in general. The very church was dedicated to the Visitation of Virgin Mary; moreover, the composition of the Virgin Mary's visitation at St. Elizabeth's house repeats three times in the iconographic program of the temple décor: these four statues on the balustrade, the fresco in the porch arch and the painting of the big altar³³. It is worthwhile to remember the essence of the Visitation in Elizabeth's greeting: "And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Lk 1, 43). In this way for the first time in the history of Salvation the coming of the Savior is publicly proclaimed.

It is possible that Nicolaus Wolcet performed the work of wooden sculpture in Pažaislis Monastery as well. The remaining Vera icon with angel sculptures made of wood enables such a prescience (see Figure 9). One piece of baroque art which earlier belonged to the altar of the chapter hall is the painting entitled "The Crucifix" (see Figure 10). In 1832, after the cancellation of the Camaldolese Monastery, the relief of the Vera icon with angels was employed in the iconostasis arranged in 1840³⁴. All the surface of the descriptive sculpture composition was completely covered with a thick layer of ground



Figure 9. Nicolaus Wolcet (?). Vera icon with Angels. About 1674–1676 (?). Wood, carving, rolled gold. The relief of the Crucified Jesus altar. Chapter Hall. Pažaislis Monastery



Figure 10. Vera icon (Face of Jesus Christ). Fragment

gold for the iconostasis; although that layer was rubbed or crumbled in certain places by now, it is still hiding the subtleties of the carving. Nonetheless, if we compare the Vera icon sculpture composition of the altar with the heads of statues of the church façade, we can envisage the hand of the same master: that is noticed, for example, in the modelling of the curly hair and beard (as in the images of Mary, Elizabeth, Simeon and Jesus Christ), the style of setting the eyes, and certain emphasized roundedness in the faces. No doubt, under the absence of written sources, the authorship of separate pieces of art can be established according to the stylistic touch of the artist as well. However, only the restoration of Vera icon relief and further investigations could assist in confirming or denying this presumption.

Conclusions

The reconstructed historical reality – creation of Nicolaus Wolcet in Pažaislis – raises rather many questions and encourages us to look for answers. It is obvious that the desired expression of the artist's figure sculpture was very important by its compositional, artistic and semantic aspects in the context of Pažaislis Monastery décor. However, it is also obvious that its absurd loss is significant both in the context of Pažaislis Monastery décor and Lithuanian sculpture too.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Vitae humanae brevitatem benefactis extendendum. See: *Sarbievijus M. K. Lemties žaidimai / Ludi fortunae*. Vilnius: Baltos lankos. 1995. P. 84–85.
- ² Mikalojus Wolscheidas (Volšeidas; pl. and lot. Nicolaus Wolcet), who was, according to H. Kairiūkštytė-Jacinienė, a sculptor of German origin invited to Pažaislis from Vilnius. Following B. Schmidt's article in the publication *Denkmalpflege*. 1918. No. 1. P. 106, this investigator indicates that Mikalojus Wolscheidas, born on 12 October 1645, is the son of Dietrich Wolscheid. In Lithuania traditionally the spelling of this last name has consolidated as *Volšeidas*. See: *Kairiūkštytė-Jacynienė H. Pažaislio vienuolynas ir jo meninės vertenybės*. Kaunas: Spindulys. 1930. P. 5; *Meškauskas S. Pažaislis*. Vilnius: Mintis. 1983. P. 9.
- ³ Copy of the epitaph text: IN HOC TVMVLO REQUIESCIT FORMOSVS
NICOLAVS WOLCET ARTI LAPICTA
TREVIRENSIS QUI DUM ARTEM SVAM EXER –
CIRCA FABRICUM BASILICÆ AREMI MONTIS
PACIS MORTVR DIE 8 JVNIJ AÑO A PARTV
VIRGENIS 1676 IN EREMO PATRUM CAM –
ALDVLENSIVM ANNO SVÆ 34
TV VIATOR DISCE FABRICARI DOMU
ÆTERNITATIS DE LAPIDE SOLIDÆ
VIRTVTIS ET ORA DEVM PRO ME
I thank Canon Algimantas Kajackas for the consultation in the translation of this text.
- ⁴ Kaunas Bernardine Guardian indicates the location of Nicolaus Wolcet's tomb plate, specifies that it is marble, and presents the whole text of epitaph entry. See: VUBRS F. A2206. P. 3.
- ⁵ *Kairiūkštytė-Jacynienė H. Pažaislis, ein Barockkloster in Litauen*. Kaunas: Spindulys. 1928. P. 81. There are inaccuracies in this publication of the epitaph: here two words are missing and one word

is divided into two. The author also indicates that the tombstone plate is made of black marble; in the same source, p. 32. Black marble, which has been brought to Pažaislis from Debniki near Krakow in fact, is not real marble: in its natural state it is gray, and it becomes black only after polishing.

- ⁶ *Lopaciński E.* Materiały do dziejów rzemiosła artystycznego w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim (XV–XIX w.). Warszawa. 1946. Poz. 344.
- ⁷ *Kołaczkowski J.* Wiadomości dotyczące przemysłu isztuki w dawnej Polsce. Kraków-Warszawa. 1888. P. 662.
- ⁸ *Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniėnė H.* Pažaislis, baroko vienuolynas Lietuvoje. Vilnius: VDA leidykla. 2001. P. 43.
- ⁹ *Ibid.* P. 43.
- ¹⁰ *Op. cit. Kairiūkštytė-Jacynienė.* 1928. P. 102–105.
- ¹¹ *Wizyta Kosciola y Ereemu Pozayskiego... Roku 1797 miesiqca Junij 5 dnia Sporządzona.* MABRS F. 43-3631.
- ¹² *Op. cit. Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniėnė.* 2001. P. 226.
- ¹³ *Tyszkiewicz K.* Wilija i jej brzegi. Dresden. 1871.
- ¹⁴ The cartouche in 1997–1998 was restored by Daiva Jakelaitytė. The restored cartouche text was published in: *Šinkūnaitė L.* Program ikonograficzny kościoła i klasztoru Kamedułów w Pożajściu // *Sztuka ziem Wschodnich Rzeczypospolitej w XVI–XVIII wieku.* Lublin. 2000. P. 428.
- ¹⁵ *Metford J. C. J.* Krikščionybė ir legendos. Vilnius: Alma litera. 2001. P. 220–221.
- ¹⁶ *Šinkūnaitė L.* Šv. Benedikto gyvenimo freskos Pažaislio kamaldulių vienuolyne // *Benediktiniškoji tradicija Lietuvoje.* Vilnius: Aidai. 2008. P. 182–203; *Metford.* *Ibid.* P. 46–48.
- ¹⁷ Also see: *Šinkūnaitė L.* Pažaislio vienuolyno dekoro ikonografinė programa: nauji tyrinėjimų aspektai // *Lietuvos Didžiosios Kunigaikštystės barokas: formos, įtakos, kryptys.* Vilnius: VDA leidykla. 2001. P. 17 the same, Pažaislio bažnyčios choro patalpos dekoras // *Vaizdas ir pasakojimas.* Vilnius: VDA leidykla. 2002. P. 85, 103.
- ¹⁸ The Holy Writ is quoted according to *Šventasis Raštas.* Comp. and transl. by: ST – A. Rubšys ir NT – Č. Kavaliauskas. Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulis. 1998.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.* P. 1098.
- ²⁰ *Marienlexikon Institutum Marianum Regensburg E. V. Von Professor Dr. Remigius Bäumer und Professor Dr. Leo Scheffezyk.* T. 1. 1988.
- ²¹ Certainly one cannot completely ignore the possibility that in the niches the statues of Moses and prophet Daniel could have stood. Prophet Daniel is also depicted in the southern fresco of the porch of the church “The Feast of Balthazar” telling of the exit from the Babylon captivity. The latter fresco in front is “Crossing the Red Sea”.
- ²² *Op. cit. Tyszkiewicz.*
- ²³ *Op. cit. Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniėnė.* 2001. P. 162.
- ²⁴ *Поставлены четыре каменные фигуры Марии с Елизаветою, Праведного Иосифа и Симеона Богоприимца.* See: *Opisanije Požaiskogo monastyria...* Marta 1832 goda. KAA. I 1468. Ap. 2. B. 16. L. 1.
- ²⁵ KAA. I 1468. Ap. 2. B. 166 (1836 m.); b. 543 (1845 m.); b. 949 (1850 m.).
- ²⁶ KAA. I 1468. Ap. 52. B. 536. L. 4.
- ²⁷ *Пашкевич М.* Пожайский Успенский первоклассный монастырь. Вильна. 1906. P. 1–89. There at the initiative of A. Dobrynin, the crypt of Pacas was “murred” bricked over, and the houses of the Eremites were demolished (10) among others.
- ²⁸ G MAR Kirijono II fondas. B. 300, 301, 307. The letters certify that Bishop Kirijon of Georgian origin valued the art of Pažaislis Monastery very much.
- ²⁹ Document of 28 May 1843. KAA. I 1468. Ap. 2. B. 506, l.
- ³⁰ *Op. cit. Kairiūkštytė-Jaciniėnė.* 2001. P. 162.

- ³¹ Ibid. P. 163 and citation 18.
- ³² The measurement of the statues heads: Virgin Mary – 37,5 x 26 x 34; St. Elizabeth – 36 x 29 x 30, Saint Simeon – 36 x 30 x 30.
- ³³ In general the motif of Visitation was repeated three more times in the church interior: in the porch fresco “St. Benedict visits his Sister St. Scholastica” and in the high relief compositions of the monk choir Saints Paul and Onuphrius. In two frescoes of refectory the same semantic motifs of visitation and miraculous feeding are represented as well.
- ³⁴ The iconostasis was arranged according to the project of Polock bishopric architect Peter Port; in the drawing of the iconostasis the relief of Vera icon with angels is easily recognized. See: KAA. I 1468. Ap. 2. B. 180. L. 1.

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Laima ŠINKŪNAITĖ

MIKALOJAUS WOLSCHIEDO KŪRYBA PAŽAISLIO VIENUOLYNE: ISTORINĖS TIKROVĖS REKONSTRUKCIJA

S a n t r a u k a

Pažaislio Švč. Mergelės Marijos Apsilankymo pas Elzbietą bažnyčia ir kamaldulių vienuolynas Ramybės kalne (*Eremus Mons Pacis*), apimantis visus ankstesnius ir esamus pastatus bei sklypus kaip visumą, sukuria puikias galimybes šio objekto meno tyrimui. Dėmesio vertas bažnyčios interjeras, stebinantis puikiomis freskomis, nutapytomis ne tik šventovės sienose ir skliautuose, bet ir kitose vienuolyno patalpose. Šie sienų tapybos paveikslai, stiuko lipdiniai ir kita itin savita įranga turi galias simbolines prasmes. Architektūros analizė irgi svarbi tiek aiškinantis simbolines prasmes bei atpažįstant tam tikrų meno objektų datas, tiek lokalizuojant meno faktą. Šis ansamblis gali būti apibūdintas ne tik kaip unikalus baroko paminklas, bet ir kaip krikščioniškosios dvasinės kultūros fenomenas.

Šio tyrimo tikslas – skulptoriaus Mikalojaus Wolscheido kūrybos istorinės tikrovės rekonstrukcija Pažaislio vienuolyne. Straipsnyje tyrinėjama vokiečių kilmės skulptoriaus Mikalojaus Wolscheido, dirbusio Pažaislio kamaldulių vienuolyne iki 1676 m., kūryba. Iki šiol Pažaislio akmens skulptūra atskirai nagrinėta nebuvo. Pagrindinė figūrinė kūrybos dalis – aštuonios akmens statulos – neišliko; tai Švč. Mergelės Marijos Apsilankymo bažnyčios fasado ir didžiųjų vartų iš akmens iškaltos statulos, sunaikintos XIX a. trečiojo ketvirčio pabaigoje. Remiantis vaizdiniais ir rašytiniais šaltiniais bei daugiasluoksne aptariamojo vienuolyno dekoru ikonografinė programa, taip pat išlikusiomis kelių skulptūrų liekanomis, įvairiapusiškai rekonstruojama prastosis skulptūros raiška, kuri aptariama Pažaislio vienuolyno dekoru kontekste. Straipsnyje parodoma, jog Pažaislio vienuolyno idėjinėje programoje visi šie neišlikę kūriniai buvo reikšmingi semantiniu, meniniu ir kompoziciniu aspektais. Pirmą kartą analizuojami išlikę M. Wolscheido figūrinių skulptūrų fragmentai ir atskleidžiami jo kūrybos bruožai. Straipsnis iliustruojamas išlikusiais M. Wolscheido kūrinių fragmentais.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: Mikalojus Wolscheidas (Nicolaus Wolcet), Pažaislio kamaldulių vienuolynas, Švč. Mergelės Marijos Apsilankymo bažnyčios fasadas, Didieji vartai, ikonografija, ikonografinė programa, skulptūra.

KEY WORDS: Nicolaus Wolcet, Pažaislis Monastery of Camaldolese, façade of the Church of the Visitation of Virgin Mary, the Grand Gate, iconography, iconographic program, sculpture.

Laima ŠINKŪNAITĖ – humanitarinių mokslų daktarė, Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto profesorė, vyriausioji mokslo darbuotoja. Mokslinių tyrimų sritis – Lietuvos sakralinis menas.

Laima ŠINKŪNAITĖ – Doctor in Humanities, professor at the Faculty of Arts at Vytautas Magnus university. Address: Laisvės al. 53, 44039 Kaunas. E-mail: l.sinkunaite@mf.vdu.lt.