

Rita Twardziak

Doctoral School of Humanities, Institute of Art History, University of Warsaw

Romanesque Architecture in Poland and the Church Reforms in the 11th-13th Centuries

The aim of the project is a new analysis of Romanesque architecture in Poland from the 11th to 13th century in its relation to the reforms of the Church within movements of a monastic nature (the Gregorian, Lorraine, Cluniac and Hirsaugian Reforms). The main research question is: did these reforms influence the form and style of the churches built in Poland? Although the Rule of St Benedict does not specify a preferred model of church building, it is possible to distinguish groups of model churches, corresponding to the specific needs of the convents. While the relationship of these reforms to architecture in the West has long been the subject of research, their influence on Romanesque architecture in Poland has not yet been studied. Filling this lack is the most important objective of the project. The project focuses on research into Romanesque architecture in Poland. Due to the nature of the research it will also be necessary to refer to European analogies, including examples from Central and Eastern Europe.

Benedictine churches (Tyniec, Mogilno, Lubiń, Ołbin, Płock) constitute an important group of the temples discussed. Their diversity forces us to reflect on the directions of the search for architectural patterns by the principals of new monasteries. In this context, influences from many Western centres were pointed out (mainly Italy, Lorraine and Rhineland-Mozo areas, Carolingian and Ottonian architectural traditions), as well as examples from Central Europe. On the other hand, what is the real contribution of patterns from these centres to Romanesque architecture in Poland and why were these directions of inspiration chosen? Was it intended to show a connection to the tradition of the place, the person, to build prestige?

A separate issue is the architecture of the new orders, especially the Norbertines (Ołbin, Strzelno), which drew on models from the 'reformed' Benedictines. To what end and why did the Norbertines choose precisely these typological models? The architecture of the Canons Regular (Czerwińsk, Trzemeszno, Piasek in Wrocław) requires a similar study. Can consistent typological and stylistic features be discerned in it? What is its relationship with the architecture of the Benedictine churches?

Patterns of "reformed" architecture can also be found in cathedrals (Poznań, Gniezno, Kraków, Wrocław, Płock) and collegiate churches (Opatów, Łęczyca, Kruszwica). As the most important religious buildings in the country, cathedrals played an important role as local architectural models. What were the reasons for the use of monastic designs in these buildings? Was it a manifestation of the ruler's connections or the Church's policy directions?

It seems that the reforms of the Church influenced not only the spatial type of the buildings, but also their style. It is necessary to examine the stylistic features of the churches (space formation, articulation, architectural details, sculpture decoration) and to determine which of them result from the influence of the patterns of 'reformed' architecture. Were the sources of building type and style usually the same? Who decided about these forms and was there a special aim behind it?

The basic method of research will be a comparative formal and stylistic analysis, leading to the identification of the genesis of individual church forms. The specific nature of the research necessitates an interdisciplinary approach. In addition it will be necessary to use the methods of the archaeologist (especially stratigraphic research) and the historian (critic of historical sources). Such an interdisciplinary approach will minimise the risk of failure of the planned research. At the same time, the proposed methodological approach will require care due to the balance of methods used, with the knowledge that the project is being developed within art history as a discipline.