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| Statue of the Virgin with Child from Saint Mary Magdalene's Church in Wrocław. More about Peter Parler as Sculptor and Parlerian Art in Silesia in the Luxembourg Period[1]

A three-dimensional statue of the Virgin with Child, currently at the National Museum in Warsaw,[2] is one of the most valuable fourteenth-century stone sculptures in Polish collections. Until 1945 it adorned the north nave of the choir of Saint Mary Magdalene's Church in Wrocław (German, Breslau), where it stood on a sculptural console near the entrance to the sacristy. After the Second World War it landed in Henryków (German, Heinrichau), from where it was passed on to the National Museum in Warsaw in 1946. Even though the sculpture almost certainly had an association with the Prague cathedral workshop directed by Peter Parler, researchers only began to focus on it in the late twentieth century. Several outstanding art historians have written about it, attributing great artistic merit to it. It has been shown in three international exhibitions, in Prague and Legnica (German, Liegnitz).[3] Still, the figure remains outside the canon of the best-known pieces of medieval art in Poland today. Exhibiting the sculpture again, in a much more attractive setting, creates an opportunity for some to learn about it and for others to be reminded about the complex and fascinating artistic issues pertaining to this statue of the Virgin.

The sculpture was first mentioned in academic literature in 1886 by Hans Lutsch, who dated it to the first half of the sixteenth century.[4] Erich Wiese wrote about it at greater length, assessing it as a work of the soft style of c. 1400, but with some retrospective features (*mit altertümlichen Elementen*). This researcher of the Silesian medieval fine arts noted a connection to the

[2] Inv. no. Śr.157 MNW.

[3] *Těšínská Madona a vzácné sochy Petra Parléře / Cieszyńska Madonna i cenne rzeźby Piotra Parlera / Die Teschener Madonna und die wertvolle Statuen von Peter Parler*, Helena Dáňová, Ivo Hlobil, eds, exh. cat., Národní galerie v Praze, 2002–03 (Prague, 2002); *Śląsk – perła w Koronie Czeskiej. Trzy okresy świetności w relacjach artystycznych Śląska i Czech*, Andrzej Niedzielenko, Vít Vlnas, eds, exh. cat., Muzeum Miedzi w Legnicy, 2006, Národní galerie v Praze, 2006–07 (Prague–Legnica, 2007); *Karl IV. Kaiser von Gottes Gnaden. Kunst und Repräsentation des Hauses Luxemburg 1310–1437*, Jiří Fajt et al., eds, exh. cat., Správa Pražského hradu, 2006 (Munich–Berlin, 2006).

[4] Hans Lutsch, *Verzeichnis der Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Schlesien*, vol. 1: *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Stadt Breslau* (Breslau, 1886), p. 192.

wooden Virgin with Child in the parish (formerly Joannite) church in Kłodzko (German, Glatz), although he traced the origins of its style to Vienna, considering it a likely work of the Master of Mary of the Annunciation group on the embrasure of the Bishop's Door (*Bischofstor*) of the collegiate church (later, cathedral) in Vienna.[5] As late as 1967 Anna Ziomecka considered the Wrocław sculpture an example of the international style of the first half of the fifteenth century.[6]

In 1980 Rainer Palm was the first to discuss the Virgin from Saint Mary Magdalene's Church in the context of Parler's art of the 1370s. Palm noticed a similarity between this Virgin's belt and brooch and those of the figure of Mary in Vilich near Bonn, which he believed had been made by sculptors of the Prague cathedral workshop working on Saint Peter's portal on the south tower of Cologne cathedral in c. 1378–81.[7] Gerhard Schmidt picked up this idea. He imagined the Wrocław Virgin's creator to have been an itinerant sculptor employed in the cathedral workshop in Prague, who then moved to the North Rhine region where he worked on the Cologne portal and may have created the figure in Vilich – or at least come in contact with it – before returning to Silesia, where he made the sculpture for Saint Mary Magdalene's Church. In Schmidt's view, the sculptor adapted the model of the wooden Kłodzko Virgin, though here the latter's "woodcarver's" refinement gave way to a "more sturdy" style typical of the stonework being created by the master masons (*derbere Formensprache der Hüttenplastik*). In this context, Schmidt determined that the author of the sculpture in Mary Magdalene's Church was not a very talented artist, despite his diverse workshop experience. According to Schmidt, this is visible, for instance, in Mary's oversized hands, which lack articulated wrists, and the overly chubby hands of Baby Jesus.[8]

Romuald Kaczmarek is the only Polish art historian to have analysed this figure in detail, and his research is superb. His earlier publications follow Palm and Schmidt in assuming its close connection to the Vilich Virgin, and hence the artist's origins in Cologne. But Kaczmarek believes that the artist, who arrived in Wrocław around 1380, founded a workshop which made not only this sculpture and its base, but also the figure of the Virgin at the outside corner of a house at Kurzy Targ Street, the *gisant* on the tombstone of Duke Henry II the Pious (died 1241) in the Franciscan Church of Saint Jacob (both sculptures are now in the National Museum in Wrocław) and several smaller works.[9] Kaczmarek modified his views slightly in the exhibition catalogues in Prague and Legnica in 2002 and 2007, respectively. He was more emphatic on the Prague origins of the Virgin's style by proposing its date of creation as c. 1375–80, but did

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[5] Ludwig Burgemeister, Günther Grundmann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Niederschlesien*, vol. 1: Die Stadt Breslau, vol. 2: *Die Kirchlichen Denkmäler der Altstadt* (Breslau, 1933), p. 28 (Erich Wiese).

[6] Anna Ziomecka, "Sztuka gotycka 1250–1500. Rzeźba i malarstwo," in *Sztuka Wrocławia*, Tadeusz Broniewski, Mieczysław Zlat, eds (Warsaw–Wrocław–Krakow, 1967), p. 127.

[7] Reiner Palm, "Eine parlerische Madonnenstatue in Vilich," in *Die Parler und der schöne Stil 1350–1400. Europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern. Resultatband zur Ausstellung des Schnütgen-Museums in der Kunsthalle Köln*, Anton Legner, ed. (Cologne, 1980), p. 28.

[8] Gerhard Schmidt, "Paralipomena zu der Ausstellung 'Die Parler und der Schöne Stil,'" in id., *Gotische Bildwerke und ihre Meister* (Vienna–Cologne–Weimar, 1992), pp. 279–80.

[9] Kaczmarek counts the group on the tympanum with a representation of *Veraikon* (its elements are in the collection of the Museum of Architecture in Wrocław), the sculpture arrangement of the south arm of the transept in Saint Matthias Church and the decorations of the Reychard and Artzat family chapels in the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene and of the Chapel of Holy Trinity (also Saint Anne's) in the cathedral among the workshop's works. See Romuald Kaczmarek, "Droga ku stylowi pięknemu w rzeźbie wrocławskiej," in *Sztuka około 1400. Materiały Sesji Stowarzyszenia Historyków Sztuki. Poznań, listopad 1995*, vol. 2, Teresa Hrankowska, ed. (Warsaw, 1996), pp. 151–56; id., *Rzeźba architektoniczna XIV wieku we Wrocławiu* (Wrocław, 1999), pp. 38–39, 180–81, 230–31, 237–39.

not deny its connections to the Cologne sculpture. He brought up similarities in the shapes of the draperies in the frescos of the chapels in Saint Vitus's Cathedral in Prague and the female physiognomies codified in the wooden figure in Kłodzko and carved in the female busts in the cathedral's triforium. He determined that the mourners' figures on the tombstone of Bishop Przecław of Pogorzela (died 1376) in Saint Mary's Chapel (German, *Kleinchor*) in Wrocław cathedral were most like the sculpture and believed that they had been made by the same artist. He thought that the artist was one of the most important sculptors of the Prague workshop of Peter Parler and did not rule out that he had passed through Wrocław and worked there for some time. Kaczmarek did not ignore the North Rhine context of Parler's style, especially in view of the Virgin's connections to the Vilich figure he ventured, and he advanced the idea of the artist's close ties to Henry Parler IV, Peter's nephew who, according to Schmidt, had moved to the cathedral construction site in Cologne with other stonemasons after working in Prague for a long time.[10]

Robert Suckale has also discussed the Wrocław sculpture on several recent occasions, analysing the challenges in attributing the sculptures to Peter Parler himself. While concluding that attempts of this type are almost certainly destined to fail from the start, paradoxically, Suckale attributes the Virgin to the Master of Gmünd and Prague. He believes that it stands out with its much greater artistic assets and unusual inventiveness (*ungewöhnliche Erfindung*) than, e.g., the busts in the cathedral's triforium.[11] He restated this attribution and dated the Virgin to c. 1360 in a catalogue note he co-authored with Jiří Fajt for the Prague exhibition in 2006, where it was shown as a pair with another presumed work by Peter Parler, the remains of a Pietà group from Saint George's Church at Hradčany (1360/70?).[12] Fajt reiterated this attribution in 2006, maintaining its dating to the 1360s, and the Virgin's direct Prague origins without needing to refer to later Cologne works. He agreed with Kaczmarek on the sculpture's connection to the figures of mourners on the tombstone of Przecław of Pogorzela in Wrocław.[13] Kaczmarek, in turn, without abandoning the hypothesis that the master of the Saint Mary Magdalene Virgin had spent a longer time in Wrocław, responded by asking, quasi-rhetorically, whether he could have been Peter Parler himself. But he intentionally did not answer his own question.[14]

Even a peremptory glance at the sculpture confirms its exceptional artistic quality. It is an all-sided limestone sculpture measuring 116.5 × 37 × 30 cm (**figs 1–4**). Even though it is carved on all sides, it was to be placed against a wall, which is affirmed by the summary treatment of its flat back. Its polychrome has been restored many times. Much of its gilding originally had a base of

[10] Id., "Figura Marii z Dzieciątkiem z kościoła św. Marii Magdaleny we Wrocławiu," in *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., pp. 150–55. See also reviews of the catalogue, Milena Bartlová, *Umění*, vol. 51 (2003), pp. 518–22; Jiří Fajt, *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 2006, vol. 69, pp. 421–32. The note about the Virgin in the catalogue of the Legnica–Prague exhibition brings no new findings: Małgorzata Kochanowska-Reiche, "Maria z Dzieciątkiem," in *Śląsk – perła w Koronie...*, op. cit., p. 51, I.2.19.

[11] Robert Suckale, "Über die Schwierigkeiten, Peter Parler Skulpturen zuzuschreiben," in *Parlerbauten. Architektur, Skulptur, Restaurierung. Internationales Parler-Symposium Schwäbisch Gmünd 17.-19. Juli 2001*, Richard Strobel, Anette Siefert, Klaus Jürgen Herrmann, eds (Stuttgart, 2004), pp. 197–205, esp. p. 202.

[12] Jiří Fajt, Robert Suckale, "Madonna aus der Magdalenenkirche in Breslau," in *Karl IV...*, op. cit., pp. 225–26.

[13] Jiří Fajt, review of *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., p. 431.

[14] Romuald Kaczmarek, "Sztuka w księstwach śląskich a sztuka w Czechach i mecenat luksemburski. Między trudnym sąsiedztwem a pełną akceptacją?" in *Śląsk. Perła w Koronie Czeskiej. Historia – kultura – sztuka*, Mateusz Kapustka et al., eds (Prague–Legnica, 2007), pp. 138–39; id., "Związki artystyczne Pragi i Wrocławia w ostatniej tercji XIV wieku. Rzeźba i sklepienia," in *Slezsko – země Koruny české. Historie a kultura 1300–1740*, Helena Dáňová, Jan Klípa, Lenka Stolárová, eds, vol. B (Prague, 2008), pp. 435–43.

lead white (the outside of Mary's coat, hair and crown), as well as green and red glazes, while the coat's lining had blue azurite shading and her skin was painted with naturalistic flesh colours.[15]

The Virgin stands on an octagonal base, her right leg curved forward in an S-shaped contrapposto, her head slightly inclined towards her left shoulder. She is holding up the naked Baby Jesus on her left shoulder, just above her amply rounded bosom. She is wearing a smooth underdress with a rounded décolleté, lightly gathered over a belt that is tied high above her hips, which are decorated with square diamond rosettes. The exposed parts of her undergarments fall in huge, almost vertical folds, which rest in small, angled bends just above the base. Mary's withdrawn left leg forms an exceptionally deep, shaded recess, which at the bottom envelops a triangular shoe and is partly concealed by a flowing cascade of her outer coat. The coat in turn forms a triangular décolleté clasped on her bosom with a square brooch covered with beading and small diamonds. The coat's left side, which the Virgin is holding in her hand, covers the Child's hips and falls, creating a cascade whose form is both ample and quite modest. Standing out in its upper part is a three-dimensional, zigzagging drapery, which forms the "console" for the spatial Jesus figure. It then transitions to the hanging material which is treated more like a plane, as it is framed in a three-step unrolling of the side of the coat, which curves back into Mary's hand in a large arc of a tuck. The opposite edge of the outer dress is turned back all along its side in a monumental, triangular pleat ending in a slight point, which falls flat on the bevelling of the figure's base.

The coat's right side falls over a lightly bent arm, which protrudes to the front and which originally probably held a sceptre. The fluid S-shaped turn of the edge of the fabric is the main focus of this part of the sculpture, as it emphasizes the Virgin's contrapposto, and is adjacent to the triangular fold discussed above. The folds fan out like rays directly around her right hand, draping irregularly. The other edge of her clothing runs diagonally all the way to the figure's back, forming a *pendant* for the S-shaped turn of the coat which begins in the same spot. The opening of the top dress thus formed on Mary's right side exposes her triangular shoe, with its soft, flat creases. The back of her coat is almost flat, with the exception of a few shallow, wavy folds that run through the axis of the figure and contrast with the more dynamic, angled draperies along her sides.

The Virgin's girlish face, set on her sturdy, cylindrical neck, stands out with its almost perfect oval outline. Her large, straight nose, which meets her pronounced arched eyebrows is its main focus, and under them are her convex round eyeballs, their upper lids three-dimensional. Mary's gaze, seemingly lost in thought and looking into the distance, interplays with her melancholy expression, her small lips tight and the bottom lip fleshy, underscored by her concave cheeks. Her protruding chin with a subtle dimple on its axis is emphasized. The Virgin's hair is parted from the peak of her high forehead into symmetrical, undivided, lightly wavy strips. They frame her oval face, her neck and shoulders and drop onto her back in a tight "decorative mat." The crown that has been placed on her hair is a hoop with beading, filled with diamonds and cabochons. The fleurons, of which the one on the axis of her face is much larger than the others, are similarly decorated. The Child, shown from the waist up, is chubby and neckless.

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[15] The sculpture was most recently conserved in 2001–2 by Joanna Lis and Marcin Witkowski in the Conservation Workshop of Sculpture and Painting on Wooden Supports of the National Museum in Warsaw. The conservation documentation and the outcomes of the research on the painting layers conducted by Elżbieta Rosłoniec are kept on the work's register card in the files of the Collection of Old European Art of the National Museum in Warsaw. See also Joanna Lis, "Komunikat o stanie zachowania, wynikach badań polichromii i przebiegu prac konserwatorskich," in *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., pp. 150–51.

The features of his face, which tilts down slightly, are flatter, his eyeballs and eyebrows less pronounced, although his large auricles, missing from Mary's head, are carved. Jesus' hair is made up of wavy strands, two of which fall on his forehead symmetrically.

The figure must have sustained critical damage repeatedly and been subsequently repaired. Wiese notes that the Virgin's right hand was replaced with a piece of wood.[16] Her right shoe and the Child's right hand must have been filled similarly with wood, which can be judged from the square holes drilled out to accommodate support pegs, now filled with putty. Jesus' left hand was missing already in 1933 (**fig. 5**), and the wooden additions and fleurons in Mary's crown must have gone missing between 1945 and 1946.[17]

Even with the damage and repeated repainting, there is no doubt that this is an outstanding work of art. This is evident from its tasteful proportions, its elegant, understated contrapposto with a balanced distribution of the forms, and its unique, reserved monumentalism achieved despite the small size of the work. The folding of the textiles has a synthetic, virtually "architectural" quality, and the decorative dress does not obscure the anatomical frame. The artist was expert at knowingly contrasting the form. Framing the Virgin's torso on its two sides with decorative textiles strengthens the impression of the lumpy density of the torso; the left drapery's S-shaped line emphasizes the figure's contrapposto, while the right one places an expressive accent on the Child. To attain this effect, it was thus not necessary to bend Mary's whole figure artificially, while also emphatically pushing the little Saviour back forcefully in the opposite direction, which often is the case with sculpture predating the middle of the fourteenth century. The artist did not shy away from daring solutions both in composition and technique. This is evident, for instance, in the deep and high hollowing out of the recess of the dress over Mary's left shoe, which through its overshadowing clearly emphasizes the contours of the freely hanging cascade of folds on the same level as Jesus and in the monumental, triangular fold, which runs uninterrupted from the coat's clasp all the way to the figure's base. Mary's left hand is indeed a little oversized, but, challenging Schmidt's suggestion, the details of her anatomy are subtly formed. Besides, according to Suckale and Fajt, her hand was initially exposed less, having been concealed by the Child's hands, which later broke off.[18] The Virgin's striking face, filled with lyricism and reflection, and its gaze far into the distance, are not proof of the artist's disability to represent the Mother's interaction with her Son, but rather a way to accentuate her meditation on Jesus' mission of salvation. His attributes, which we regrettably do not know, may also have referred to his mission.[19]

From an art-historical perspective, the figure's three-dimensionality and fullness of volume, as well as the monumental shaping of the drapery, are the most important characteristics of its style. They depart decisively from the flattened linearism and graphic fragmentation characteristic of the stylistic formations immediately preceding this sculpture, the circles of the Virgin with Child from Michle in Bohemia and Moravia[20] and the stylistic convention

[16] Burgemeister, Grundmann, op. cit., p. 28.

[17] See also Lis, op. cit., pp. 150–51.

[18] See Fajt, Suckale, *Madonna…*, op. cit., p. 225.

[19] In the sole pre-Second World War photograph of the figure, which was published in 1933 in the inventory of Breslau's monuments (Burgemeister, Grundmann, op. cit., fig. 18, p. 30; see also fig. 5), the object the Child holds in his left hand is regrettably unrecognizable; in any case, it was a later wooden addition.

[20] There is a vast literature on this question, most recently (with a bibliography), Jiří Fajt, Robert Suckale, "Der 'Meister der Madonna von Michle' – das Ende eines Mythos? Mit einem Anhang zur „neuen" Löwenmadonna der

of the Madonnas on Lions in Silesia and Pomerania.[21] The "cubic solidification" (*kubische Verfestigung*), in Gerhard Schmidt's definition, is a key characteristic of Parler's sculpture. It is a broad yet heterogeneous current of sculpture, mostly stone, and also some surviving wood-carvings, made mostly by members of the Parler family, beginning around the middle of the fourteenth century, as the Parlers worked on the construction of several important churches in southern Germany (Augsburg, Schwäbisch Gmünd, Nuremberg, Freiburg im Breisgau, Ulm) and the Bohemian lands (Prague, Kolín).[22]

The Wrocław Virgin's place in this artistic circle can be seen not only in the figure's specific canon and the round spatiality of the draped material, but also in its specific decorative motifs. The square brooch, suspended upright and decorated with beading and cabochons, corresponds to applications in the armour of the figure of Saint Wenceslas in the chapel dedicated to him in the Prague cathedral (c. 1367 – before 1373? – **fig. 6**)[23] and in the clasp in the coat of the Madonna of Vilich (c. 1380 – see further **fig. 17**).[24] A similar brooch with an identical strap covered in square rosettes can be found on the figure of Mary in the Annunciation group in the south portal of the corpus of Mary's Church, the Frauenkirche, in Nuremberg (before 1360/61 – **fig. 7**).[25] Most characteristic is the regularly repeated identical oval of the woman's face with wavy strands of hair. It recurs in Parlerian sculptures again and again, often with minor variations. It evolves from the figures in the Nuremberg Frauenkirche,

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Prager Nationalgalerie," *Umění*, vol. 54 (2006), pp. 3–30; discussion: Ivo Hlobil, "Klosterneuburger Löwenmadonna angeblich eine Fälschung. Analyse einer falschen Behauptung," ibid., pp. 85–98.

[21] Basic discussions: Zofia Białłowicz-Krygierowa, "Ze studiów nad kręgiem Madonn na lwach. Motyw i system," in *Z dziejów sztuki śląskiej*, Zygmunt Świechowski, ed. (Warsaw, 1978), pp. 247–72; and recently Robert Suckale, "Die 'Löwenmadonna,' ein politischer Bildtyp aus der Frühzeit Kaiser Karls IV.?," in id., *Das mittelalterliche Bild als Zeitzeuge. Sechs Studien* (Berlin, 2002), pp. 172–84; Milena Bartlová, "Trůnící madony na lvech," in *Śląsk i Czechy. Wspólne drogi sztuki. Materiały konferencji dedykowane Profesorowi Janowi Wrabecowi*, Mateusz Kapustka, Andrzej Kozieł, Piotr Oszczanowski, eds (Wrocław, 2007), pp. 35–47; Aleš Mudra, "Madona ze Skarbimierze a otázka role českého sochařství a malířství při utváření slezsko-pomořského stylu madon na lvu," in ibid., pp. 49–61; Romuald Kaczmarek, "Iluzja przestrzeni: Madonna 'ze Skarbimierza' – krąg Madonn na Lwach," in id., *Italianizmy. Studia nad recepcją gotyckiej sztuki włoskiej w rzeźbie środkowo-wschodniej Europy (koniec XIII – koniec XIV wieku)* (Wrocław, 2008), pp. 227–34; *Gotické Madony na lvu. Gotische Löwenmadonnen. Splendoer et Virtus reginae coeli*, Ivo Hlobil, ed., exh. cat., Arcidiecézní Muzeum Olomouc, 2014 (Olomouc, 2014).

[22] There is an enormous literature, beginning at the end of the 19th century, about Parlerian art. Because of its size and because of the limits of this text, in my notes I cite only the most recent publications, which include references to earlier publications. The catalogue of the large 1978 Cologne exhibition summarizes earlier literature: *Die Parler und der schöne Stil 1350–1400. Europäische Kunst unter den Luxemburgern*, Anton Legner, ed., exh. cat., Museum Schnütgen, Cologne, 1978–79, vols 1–4 (Cologne, 1978). See also *Die Parler... Resultatband...*, op. cit.

[23] Ivo Hlobil, "Neue Beobachtungen zur Wenzelstatue im Prager Veitsdom," in *Parlerbauten...*, op. cit., pp. 221–27; id., "Der Prager hl. Wenzel von Peter Parler – Fortsetzung eines hundertjährigen Diskurses mit neuen Argumenten," *Umění*, vol. 54 (2006), pp. 31–56; Jiří Fajt, "Wenzelstatue der Wenzelkapelle," in *Karl IV...*, op. cit., pp. 222–24; Michael Viktor Schwarz, "Die Ostwand der Wenzelkapelle und ihre Bildausstattung," in *Prag und die grossen Kulturzentren Europas in der Zeit der Luxemburger 1310–1437*, Markéta Jarošová, Jiří Kuthan, Stefan Scholz, eds (Prague, 2008), pp. 635–52; id., "Wenzel in der Welt," in *Kunst als Herrschaftsinstrument. Böhmen und das Heilige Römische Reich unter den Luxemburgern im Europäischen Kontext*, Jiří Fajt, Andrea Langer, eds (Berlin–Munich, 2009), pp. 184–91.

[24] Palm, op. cit., pp. 25–30.

[25] Gerhard Schmidt, "Peter Parler und Heinrich IV. Parler als Bildhauer," in id., *Gotische Bildwerke...*, op. cit., pp. 208–12; id., *Paralipomena...*, op. cit., pp. 278–79; recently: Stefan Roller, "Die Nürnberger Frauenkirche und ihr Verhältnis zu Gmünd und Prag. Beobachtungen und Überlegungen zur frühen „Parler-Skulptur," in *Parlerbauten...*, op. cit., pp. 229–38; Gerhard Weilandt, "Der ersehnte Tronfolger – Die Bildprogramme der Frauenkirche in Nürnberg zwischen Herrschaftspraxis und Reliquienkult im Zeitalter Kaiser Karls IV," in *Kirche als Baustelle. Große Sakralbauten des Mittelalters*, Katja Schröck, Bruno Klein, Stefan Bürger, eds (Cologne–Weimar–Vienna, 2013), pp. 224–42.

through the wooden Virgin of Kłodzko (c. 1360 – **fig. 8**)[26] and the busts of Charles IV's wives in the triforium of Prague cathedral (Blanche of Valois, Anna of the Palatinate, Anna of Świdnica (German, Schweidnitz) – **fig. 9**, Elizabeth of Pomerania; c. 1375),[27] to the small figures of Saints Barbara and Catherine in the archivolts of the portal of Saint Peter in the Cologne cathedral (c. 1378–81),[28] the Madonna of Vilich and the famous "Parlerian console" at the Museum Schnütgen (c. 1390).[29] The edge of the material, curling in an S-shape, which runs from the Wrocław Mary's right hand, has an equivalent in a similar representation of textiles in the painted decoration in the Prague cathedral by Master Oswald, especially in the *Adoration of the Magi* in the Chapel of Saints Adalbert and Dorothea and Saint Relics, called the Saxon (1370s or 1376).[30] The iconographic type of the figure, represented by the sculpture from Saint Mary Magdalene's Church and called "Mary in an open coat," was picked up by artists of the Parlerian circle, including the Masters of the Virgins of Nuremberg, Kłodzko and Vilich. The distinctive feature of this model is the coat covering Mary hanging loosely on her shoulders or closed by a clasp only on her bosom. The Child's placement, usually on her left arm, is also characteristic. In the opinion of most researchers, the figure on the inside of the main portal of the Minster in Freiburg im Breisgau made in the last decade of the thirteenth century was crucial in the dissemination of this iconographic type (**fig. 10**).[31] The classic version of this iconography could already be seen in the early fourteenth century in the famous Madonna of Admont (c. 1300–10, now at the Joanneum in Graz)[32] and the sculptures modelled after it.[33]

There is no doubt that the Wrocław Madonna was made by someone from the Parlerian circle. But will anyone be able to determine its dating and origins more precisely? It seems possible, although such endeavours bump into a complex problem, especially in view of Robert Suckale's attempts at attribution: what do we know about Peter Parler the sculptor, and what can we say about the individual sculptors working in his Prague workshop? This issue has been discussed in a vast body of writings,[34] but it would be useful to give their overview.

[26] Romuald Kaczmarek, "Madonna z Kłodzka," in *Těšínská Madona…*, op. cit., pp. 112–15; id., "Madonna z Dzieciątkiem (tzw. z wróblem lub z czyżykiem)," in *Śląsk – perła w Koronie…*, op. cit., p. 97; Stefan Roller, "Glatzer Madonna," in *Karl IV…*, op. cit., p. 187; Romuald Kaczmarek, "Włoski impuls w praskiej strzeszе parlerowskiej: figura Madonny z Dzieciątkiem w Kłodzku," in id., *Italianizmy…*, op. cit., pp. 247–66.

[27] Schmidt, *Peter Parler…*, op. cit., pp. 220–28; Pavel Kalina, "Architecture and Memory. St Vitus's Cathedral in Prague and the Problem of the Presence of History," in *Kunst als Herrschaftsinstrument…*, op. cit., pp. 150–56; Jiří Kuthan, Jan Royt, *Katedrála sv. Víta, Václava a Vojtěcha. Svatyně českých patronů a králů* (Prague, 2011), pp. 219–29.

[28] Schmidt, *Peter Parler…*, op. cit., pp. 199, 206; Rolf Lauer, "Die Parler stecken im Detail (Teil II) – Maßwerk am Petersportal des Kölner Domes," in *Parlerbauten…*, op. cit., pp. 63–71; Charles T. Little, "Zwei Steinskulpturen vom Petersportal des Kölner Domes," in *Karl IV…*, op. cit., pp. 393–96.

[29] Id., "Büste einer jungen Frau mit dem Parlerwappen," in *Karl IV…*, op. cit., pp. 392–93.

[30] Kaczmarek, *Figura Marii…*, op. cit., p. 152.

[31] See, i.a., Fajt, Suckale, *Madonna…*, op. cit., p. 225; Kaczmarek, *Włoski impuls…*, op. cit., p. 251.

[32] Horst Schweigert, "Admonter Madonna," in *Geschichte der bildenden Kunst in Österreich*, vol. 2: *Gotik*, Günter Brucher, ed. (Munich–London–New York, 2000), pp. 328–29.

[33] See Lothar Schultes, "Die Marienfigur von Schinckau und der Admont-Freiburger Madonnentypus," in *Gotika v západních Čechách (1230–1530). Sborník příspěvků z mezinárodního vědeckého symposia* (Prague, 1998), pp. 33–41.

[34] Basic literature: Alfred Schädler, "Peter Parler und die Skulptur des Schönen Stils," in *Die Parler…*, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 17–25; Jaromír Homolka, "Peter Parler, der Bildhauer," in ibid., pp. 27–34; Schmidt, *Peter Parler…*, op. cit., pp. 175–228; Suckale, *Über die Schwierigkeiten…*, op. cit., pp. 197–205; Jiří Fajt, "Peter Parler und die Bildhauerei des dritten Viertels des 14. Jahrhunderts in Prag," in *Parlerbauten…*, op. cit., pp. 207–20.

We learn from the almost completely erased inscription under Peter Parler's bust in the cathedral's triforium, which we nonetheless know from copies, that *Petrus Henrici, [p]arleri de Polonia* [recte: *Colonia*]*, magistri de Gemunden in Suevia, secundus magister huius fabrice, quem imperator Karolus IIII. adduxit de dicta civitate et fecit eum magistrum huius ecclesie, et cum tempore fuerat annorum XXIII et incepit regere anno domini M CCC LVI et perfecit chorum istum anno domini M CCC LXXXVI* [recte: *LXXXV*] *quo anno incepit sedilia chori illius et infra tempus prescriptum etiam incepit et perfecit chorum Omnium sanctorum et rexit pontem Multauiae et incepit a fundo chorum in Colonya circa Albiam.*[35] Thus, the Master from Schwäbisch Gmünd, whom Emperor Charles of Luxembourg brought to Prague in 1356, and who by 1386 (in fact, 1385) had not only erected the choir of Saint Vitus's Cathedral and several other prestigious buildings, such as the castle chapel of All Saints, the bridge on the Vltava and the choir of the church in Kolín on the Elbe, but he also made the choir stalls in the cathedral (which, regrettably, have not survived). These must have been made of wood, most likely oak, and were certainly not the master's own work, since he must have been accompanied by a whole team of carpenters and woodcarvers.[36] In the surviving book of expenses of the *fabrica ecclesiae* for the years 1372–78, one receipt dated 30 August 1377 notes that the significant sum of 15 threescores (i.e., 900) of Prague groschen, ordered personally by Charles IV, was paid out to Peter Parler for making the tombstone of Přemysl Ottokar I, which survives to this day in the second from the south ambulatory chapel of the cathedral's choir: *De mandato domini imperatoris feci sepulchrum domino Ottokaro primo regi Boemie et solvi magistro Petro XV sexag. gr.*[37] Judging from this high compensation and the great meticulousness in recording payments to each stonemason in the workshop's accounting books,[38] Peter must have made the tombstone himself.[39] The *gisant* of Přemysl Ottokar I is made of Pläner limestone (French *gaize*, Czech *opuka*, Polish *opoka*), mixed rock with a preponderance of limestone and silicon dioxide, which was widely used in both construction and figurative sculpture. Its deposits could be found on the outskirts of medieval Prague.

Written sources tell us that Master Peter and his workshop accepted commissions in both stone and wood. Researchers have taken the certain attribution of the tombstone of Přemysl Ottokar I to the head of the cathedral workshop himself to make further attributions; one example is the attribution of the Virgin from Saint Mary Magdalene's Church by Suckale.

[35] As cited in Milena Bartlová, "The Choir Triforium of Prague Cathedral Revisited: The Inscriptions and Beyond," in *Prague and Bohemia. Medieval Art, Architecture and Cultural Exchange in Central Europe*, Zoë Opačić, ed. (Leeds, 2009), p. 95. *The British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions*, vol. 32.

[36] We should note, citing Milena Bartlová, that the text of the inscription on the Prague cathedral triforium should not be read uncritically regarding the events and persons living in the 14th century, since they were most certainly repainted or painted anew (retaining the 14th-century lettering) at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries. This is corroborated by many mistakes in years and facts; for instance, Anna of Świdnica was described as "Anna of Bosnia from the Kingdom of Croatia" [sic]. We also know that the bridge on the Vltava was built by Master Otto, and therefore only the design of the Old Town Tower on this bridge can be attributed to Peter Parler. It is thus also impossible to verify the information about Parler's construction of the stalls in the cathedral. See Bartlová, *The Choir Triforum...*, op. cit., pp. 81–100.

[37] As cited in Schädler, op. cit., p. 17.

[38] Accounting books of the Prague cathedral workshop are published in Joseph Neuwirth, *Die Wochenrechnungen und der Betrieb des Prager Dombaues in den Jahren 1372–1378* (Prague, 1890); new edition: *Solutio Hebdomadaria pro structura Templi Pragensis. Stavba svatovítské katedrály v letech 1372–1378*, Marek Suchý, ed. (Prague, 2003). Castrum Pragense, vol. 5.

[39] Schmidt, *Peter Parler...*, op. cit., p. 180.

There is no room here, of course, to discuss all such speculation. But it is worth noting that works ventured to have been Peter Parler's include the tombstone of Přemysl Ottokar II[40] and the figure of Saint Wenceslas in the Prague cathedral,[41] the Kłodzko statue,[42] the Virgin with Child from the Market Square in Cieszyn (German, Teschen),[43] and even the lost Beautiful Virgin Mary from Saint John's Church in Toruń (German, Thorn).[44]

For a long time, there has been much speculation about the aforementioned figure of Saint Wenceslas, which today can be found in the eponymous chapel in Saint Vitus's Cathedral. Gerhard Schmidt has described it as a work of Peter's brother's son, Henry Parler IV. It helped him to build the oeuvre of this sculptor, later active in Cologne and in the court of the Margraves of Moravia in Brno (German, Brünn).[45] The researcher has corroborated this notion with a mention in the cathedral accounting books, according to which on 3 April 1373 a certain Heinrich was paid 30 groschen for five days' work on a representation of the saint: *In hutta lapicide: Henrich pro V diebus laboris ymaginis sancti Wencelsai XXX gr. sol.*[46] Also used as evidence has been a notation dated 18 September 1373 about Master Oswald's painting of a representation of Saint Wenceslas next to the smaller door to the cathedral: *Item de pictura ymaginis s. Wenceslai ad hostium minus magistro Osvaldo dedimus 1 ½ sexag. gr.*[47] It is noteworthy that most of the latest scholarly literature questions these assumptions about the links between *ymago sancti Wenceslai* and the famous figure,[48] which was placed in the saint's chapel only in 1913. Michael Viktor Schwarz establishes, for the most part convincingly, that the sculpture was from the start destined for the buttress tabernacle on the outside of the church, directly above the chapel, from which it was taken down around 1847.[49] Thus, the oeuvre of Henry Parler, IV, constructed by Schmidt loses its foundation in written sources. Similarly doubtful is the attribution of specific works to Peter Parler, Henry's uncle. Suckale has recently noted the risks entailed in forming hypotheses of this kind, even though he has taken such a risk himself.[50]

Similarly, there exist reservations regarding the attempts to attribute the Virgin from Saint Mary Magdalene's Church to Peter Parler, his nephew Henry or a close collaborator of the latter. In this context, the issue of the diversity of stylistic sources that together have formed a specific artistic formation, which historiography calls Parlerian sculpture, is key. Indeed, the sudden "appearance" around 1350 of the Parler family on so many of the important building sites in southern Germany does not mean that they developed their distinctive style of "cubic solidification" without a deep knowledge of both earlier and contemporary sculpture, and not only in Germany.

[40] Ibid., pp. 180–87.

[41] Hlobil, *Neue Beobachtungen...*, op. cit., pp. 221–27; id., *Der Prager hl. Wenzel...*, op. cit., pp. 44–51.

[42] Schädler, op. cit., pp. 22–23.

[43] Iwona Kwaśny, "Cieszyńska Madonna," in *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., pp. 88–91.

[44] This is Jaromír Homolka's principal hypothesis in, e.g., Homolka, *Peter Parler...*, op. cit., p. 33; id., "Paris – Gmünd – Prag. Die königliche Allerheiligenkapelle auf der Prager Burg," in *Parlerbauten...*, op. cit., pp. 136–39.

[45] Schmidt, *Peter Parler...*, op. cit., pp. 197–208.

[46] As cited in Hlobil, *Neue Beobachtungen...*, op. cit., p. 226.

[47] As cited in ibid., p. 226.

[48] See ibid., p. 226.

[49] Schwarz, *Die Ostwand...*, op. cit., pp. 635–52; id., *Wenzel...*, op. cit., pp. 184–91.

[50] See Suckale, *Über die Schwierigkeiten...*, op. cit., pp. 197–205; Fajt, Suckale, *Madonna...*, op. cit., pp. 225–26.

Romuald Kaczmarek has recently advanced the thinking about the substantial inspirations by the art of the *Trecento*, especially in the circle of Giovanni Pisano and his successors, which are visible in the beginning stages of the development of sculpture in the Parlerian circle. Notable familiarity with the Tuscan narrative reliefs can be seen especially in the decorations on the south choir portals in the Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross in Schwäbisch Gmünd (after 1351) and Augsburg cathedral (after 1356), as well as in the south-west portal of the parish church in Ulm (c. 1360–75).[51] Kaczmarek argues that the same influences were present in the Prague workshop of Peter of Gmünd virtually from the beginning of his activity in the Bohemian lands. He uses the Kłodzko Virgin with Child of c. 1360, which according to him can be compared to the works of Andrea Pisano, as key evidence.[52] The method of displaying the coats of arms on the Přemyslid tombstones in Saint Vitus's Cathedral, which were designed and made by Parler's workshop on Charles IV's commission after the translation of the remains of Bohemian kings and dukes to the new church in 1373, is also of Italian provenance.[53] Kaczmarek argues persuasively (following in the footsteps of earlier researchers) that the monumentalization of the style of sculpture as well as of painting, which can be seen in the works of Master Theodoric, coincided with the 1355 Italian coronation journey of Charles IV. The patterns of Italian art of the day may have reminded the Roman emperor of the ability of the art forms that still breathed the tradition of antiquity and its "propaganda" value to represent the majesty of the ruler. Kaczmarek believes that Charles may have seen Peter Parler's understanding of this monumental style as one of the principal reasons for bringing the barely 23-year-old skilled master mason to Prague.[54] But this was most likely not the main reason, since Peter was primarily an architect, and so equally attractive to the ruler may have been his supposed knowledge of new trends in English architecture, which today's historiography calls Decorated Style. It seems that by 1356 Parler may already have taken an apprentice's journey to England, something absolutely exceptional in Continental Europe in that time.[55]

French art of the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries was an equally important component of the sculptural style being developed in the Prague cathedral workshop, which Robert Suckale noted a long time ago, stressing the retrospective nature of this type of inspiration. This stylistic direction may also have been an outcome of the personal tastes of Charles IV.[56] In c. 1323–30, the young prince lived at the Paris court of Charles IV the Fair and his aunt Marie of Luxembourg (his father's sister), the Capetian ruler's second wife. There, young Charles was immersed in the refined ideals of court life, and he certainly became familiar with the luxurious art cherished by the French monarchs beginning with Louis IX the Saint. He also acquired the great cult of relics, which he would adhere to all his life.[57] Equally relevant is the fact that sculp-

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[51] Romuald Kaczmarek, "Sztuka Parlerów a Italia," in id., *Italianizmy...*, op. cit., pp. 235–46.

[52] Id., *Włoski impuls...*, op. cit., pp. 247–66.

[53] Id., "Ostentacja heraldyczna 'modo italico': tumby Przemyślidów w katedrze praskiej," in id., *Italianizmy...*, op. cit., pp. 267–76.

[54] Id., *Sztuka Parlerów...*, op. cit., pp. 245–46.

[55] See Paul Crossley, "Peter Parler and England – A problem re-visited," in *Parlerbauten...*, op. cit., pp. 155–79; it includes older literature.

[56] Robert Suckale, *Die Hofkunst Kaiser Ludwigs des Bayern* (Munich, 1993), pp. 165–68.

[57] Jiří Kuthan, "Pařížská Sainte-Chapelle a trny z koruny Kristovy. Poznámky k vazbám mezi architekturou a sochařstvím ve Francii a zakladatelským a objednavatelským dílem posledních Přemyslovců a Lucemburků," in id., *Splendor et Gloria Regni Bohemiae. Umělecké dílo jako projev vladařské reprezentace a symbol státní identity*

ture of French origins, refined in its canon of figures and characterized by its three-dimensional volume of draperies, had appeared in Prague long before Peter Parler's arrival, in the era of John of Bohemia. The remains of the decorative figures in the supposed royal palace in the Old Town Square (later House at the Stone Bell, c. 1310–20) and the prominent statue of the Virgin at the corner of the Old Town Hall (c. 1356/60 – **fig. 12**) are its best exemplars. Also belonging to this current appear to be the oldest parts of the sculptural decoration of the cathedral, that is antependia from the Saxon and Saint Anne's Chapels (the latter now in the Chapel of Saint Wenceslas), and the tombstone of Bořivoj II by a sculptor who had clearly been trained in an earlier tradition.[58] Gerhard Schmidt has noted the retrospective features on the other Přemyslid tombstones made by Peter Parler and his closest collaborators. Most conspicuous of them is the spaciousness of the *gisant* of Přemysl Ottokar I, which at first glance resembles the tombstone of the Blessed Erminold in the monastery at Prüfening near Regensburg (1283 – **fig. 13**).[59] It was the principal work of the master considered the key figure in stone sculpture in the Empire in the later thirteenth century, who interwove the Parisian and Alsatian styles.[60] Keeping in mind the lineage of the Regensburg artist's work, it cannot be an accident that Peter Parler alluded to it. To complete a complex panorama of the sources of this Prague workshop's style, we must keep in mind that Schmidt ties the lyrical elegance of the Saint Wenceslas figure to the inspirations of the so-called Vienna ducal workshops, especially the many figures of Rudolf IV the Founder from Saint Stephen's collegiate church in Vienna.[61]

With this context in mind, where can we place the Virgin from Saint Mary Magdalene's Church in Wrocław? It is a work that reflects nearly all the components of the style of Parler's cathedral workshop. The characteristic three-dimensionality of the figure's volume and its ponderation, which has all the features of the most current stylistic form of the Prague circle of the time, harmonizes with the many retrospective features, which Wiese has already remarked on intuitively.[62] The Virgin's type itself, with her coat open, widely popular in court circles, refers to the tradition of thirteenth-century French art. The *Virgen Blanca*, Mary's figure in the choir of Toledo cathedral, traditionally thought to have been a gift from Louis IX the Saint (3rd quarter of the 13th c. – **fig. 14**), is geographically distant but makes for interesting comparison. Its style is obviously of Parisian origin,[63] and it is notable for the working of the belt with its four-petal rosettes and crowns with their protruding fleurons, the beading and the rose-cut diamonds that cover it, which are almost identical to the Wrocław figure. This shows the popularity of this model of the Virgin statue, both in iconography and decoration, in French court art, which was known and valued by Charles IV and, hence, by Peter Parler, the master

(Prague, 2008), pp. 387–408; Bernd Carque, "Leitbilder in Paris? Stilmerkmale und der Grad an Öffentlichkeit unter den letzten Kapetingern," in *Kunst als Herrschaftsinstrument*..., op. cit., pp. 56–66; Zoë Opačić, "Architecture and Religious Experience in 14th-century Prague," in ibid., pp. 136–49; Karel Otavsky, "Drei wichtige Reliquienschätze im Luxemburgischen Prag und die Anfänge der Prager Heiltumsweisungen," in ibid., pp. 300–308.

[58] Fajt, *Peter Parler*..., op. cit., pp. 207–20; Roller, op. cit., pp. 229–38.

[59] Schmidt, *Peter Parler*..., op. cit., p. 187.

[60] See Achim Huber, "Der Erminoldmeister und die deutsche Skulptur des 13. Jahrhunderts," *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bistums Regensburg*, vol. 8 (1974), pp. 53–241; recently: Marek Walczak, *Rzeźba architektoniczna w Małopolsce za czasów Kazimierza Wielkiego* (Krakow, 2006), pp. 29–31. Ars Vetus et Nova, vol. 20.

[61] Schmidt, *Peter Parler*..., op. cit., pp. 200–202.

[62] See Burgemeister, Grundmann, op. cit., p. 28.

[63] Paul Wiliamson, *Gothic Sculpture 1140–1300* (New Haven–London, 1995), p. 241.

of the cathedral workshop, who was no doubt responsible for the artistic implementation of the tasks assigned to him by the emperor.

The Wrocław Virgin possesses several other retrospective motifs in the folding of the drapery, which is not found in other Parlerian works nor in the sculpture of the second half of the fourteenth century, while at the same time evoking the "heroic" canon of thirteenth-century art. This is the case with the unusually deep carving of the folds around Mary's left shoe, which, incidentally, gives the otherwise compact figure an effect of spatial depth. This is a solution with roots in the northern French art of the second half of the thirteenth century, whose probably closest analogy can be found in the figure of Saint Anne in the church of Notre-Dame in Écouis (Eure), which was made in Paris in c. 1311–30 (**fig. 15**).[64] And the triangular fold in the Virgin's coat, which runs diagonally from the brooch on her bosom all the way to the figure's pedestal, irresistibly evokes associations with the monumental fold in the coat of Uta in Naumburg cathedral (which Peter Kurmann recently dated convincingly to the 1250s),[65] which like the Wrocław sculpture articulates the figure's left half (**fig. 16**). It is notable that Johann of Środa (German, Neumarkt), Charles IV's secretary and one of his closest associates, in 1352–53/58 was appointed the bishop of Naumburg, but did not in fact exercise his duties because of a dispute in the cathedral chapter.[66] It is certain that the Naumburg cathedral itself, with the supernaturally sized figures of its funders in the western choir, must have been very well known in the entourage of Charles IV, and perhaps even to the emperor himself. The sculptures, which moved people with their naturalism and monumentality, their French origins beloved by Luxembourg, must have been admired as much then as they are today. Thus, it is daring to suppose that the Master of the Virgin from the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene knew the Naumburg sculptures, but this is very likely. We must remember that Ivo Hobil and then Milena Bartlová have recently made a similar remark about the Virgin with Child from Cieszyn.[67]

This is also desirable to form an opinion on the suggested workshop connections between the Virgin statues from the parish churches of Saint Mary Magdalene in Wrocław and Vilich and the tombstone of Przecław of Pogorzela in Saint Mary's Chapel in Wrocław cathedral. The attempts to connect the two figures of the Virgin Mary are wide of the mark.[68] The physiognomy of the Vilich figure is less subtle, both in the Virgin's less successful face and the whole figure of the Child (**fig. 17**). It is also difficult to compare their draperies, since in the Virgin

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[64] Robert Suckale, "Auf den Spuren einer vergessenen Königin. Ein Hauptwerk der Pariser Hofkunst im Bode-Museum," Julien Chapuis, ed. (Saint Petersburg, 2013), pp. 19–20.

[65] Most recently, on the Naumburg Master see *Der Naumburger Meister. Bildhauer und Architekt im Europa der Kathedralen*, Hartmut Krohm, Holger Kunde, eds, exh. cat., Dom und Stadtmuseum Naumburg, 2011, vol. 2 (Saint Petersburg, 2011); *Der Naumburger Meister. Bildhauer und Architekt im Europa der Kathedralen. Forschungen und Beiträge zum internationalen wissenschaftlichen Kolloquium in Naumburg vom 5. bis 8. Oktober 2011* (Petersberg, 2012). Review: Peter Kurmann, "Der Naumburger Meister – ein Wiedergänger der Kunstgeschichte?" *Kunstchronik*, vol. 66 (2013), pp. 481–88.

[66] John was elected at the same time in 1353 as bishop of Litomyšl, and in 1364 of Olomouc. See Jan Bistřický, "Johann von Neumarkt (um 1310–1380)," in *Die Bischöfe des Heiligen Römischen Reiches 1198 bis 1448*, Erwin Gatz, ed. (Berlin, 2001), pp. 512–13.

[67] Ivo Hlobil, "Cieszyńska Madonna. Odkrycie cennej rzeźby ze strzechy Piotra Parlera," in *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., p. 37; Bartlová, review of *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., p. 520.

[68] Jiří Fajt has already discussed the futility of tracing the style of the Virgin from the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene as stemming primarily from its attribution to Peter Parler by Suckale; see Fajt, review of *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., p. 431.

of Vilich, more conventional in this respect and closer to the early Soft Style, the main stress is on the front of the coat, which crosses the figure and creates relatively shallow horizontal "bowl-like" folds. The similarity in the type of face of the Wrocław sculpture and the group of Rhineland works (including the figures in the archivolt of the Cologne portal) is simply due to the shared source of their styles, that of the Prague cathedral workshop. It is noteworthy that it is much more convincing to compare the sculpture from Vilich with the Virgin's figure on the corner of the house at Kurzy Targ Street in Wrocław, which Kaczmarek's early writings unconvincingly connect also to the figure from the interior of the nearby parish church of Saint Mary Magdalene.[69] The physiognomies of their faces are similar, but they are dissimilar to the subtle and ponderous Prague works (**fig. 18**). Their divided strands of hair are identical, as is the opening of the right side of the Madonna's coat across her figure.[70] This may confirm Kaczmarek's idea that a master trained in the Rhineland worked in Wrocław in the 1380s, but he is certainly not the same artist as the author of the sculpture from Saint Mary Magdalene's Church.

The *gisant* of Przecław of Pogorzela may have been made in the bishop's lifetime in the early 1370s and only assembled into a whole after his death in 1376 (**fig. 19**).[71] In its case, it can be said that the figures of the mourners do resemble the Virgin in their poses and some motifs of the draperies (**figs 20 a–d**). The folds, widening downward, diagonal, are especially characteristic. But their small scale and their limited ability to allow the sculptor to show his full artistic expression do not seem to enable the viewer to grasp fully their creator's individual style. Indeed, the tombstone is probably a collective work, since the monumental *gisant*, rightly considered to have been the work of the Master of the monument of Archbishop John Očko in Prague cathedral, represents a different kind of roundness and monumentalism from the little figures in the funeral procession. For this reason, we must treat guardedly the assertion that the mourners on the bishop's tombstone and the Virgin discussed here were made by the same artist, despite the similarities discussed above, although this is not out of the question.

The white marble used to make Przecław's figure most likely came from the deposits in Supikovíce–Velké Kunětice in the Sudeten Mountains.[72] John Očko's *gisant* is made of the same material, since the quarry near the Principality of Neisse, owned formerly by the Wrocław bishops, was the only source of white marble in this region of central Europe.[73] In this context, Kaczmarek argued that the Wrocław tombstone was probably carved in place, since transporting a block of white marble 300 km from the Jesenik Massif (where the quarry is located) to Prague and then moving the finished figure another 270 km to Wrocław would not have been economical. Therefore, he suggested, both the figure from the cathedral chapel and the Saint Mary Magdalene Virgin must have been made in Wrocław by a Parlerian sculptor who ran a workshop in Wrocław for some time.[74] Again, this is not out of the question, but we

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[69] Kaczmarek, *Droga ku stylowi…*, op. cit., p. 151–56; id., *Rzeźba architektoniczna…*, op. cit., pp. 38–39, 180–81, 230–31, 237–39.

[70] See Bożena Guldan-Klamecka, "Rzeźba Marii z Dzieciątkiem zw. Złotą Marią," in Bożena Guldan-Klamecka, Anna Ziomecka, *Sztuka na Śląsku XII–XVI w. Katalog zbiorów* (Wrocław, 2003), pp. 92–95.

[71] See Tomasz Mikołajczak, "Umělecká geneze náhrobku biskupa Przecława z Pogorzelu," *Umění*, vol. 51 (2003), pp. 474–83.

[72] Kaczmarek, *Związki artystyczne…*, op. cit., p. 435.

[73] I would like to thank Dr Michał Wardzyński for information on these materials.

[74] Kaczmarek, *Związki artystyczne…*, op. cit., pp. 435–41.

must consider the possibility that the Virgin's figure was made by another sculptor and that it was brought to Wrocław directly from Prague. The answer, unfortunately, will not come from determining what material was used to make it. Even without a petrographic analysis, Robert Suckale argues that it is Pläner limestone, and hence the sculpture must have been imported, since its deposits are found in the environs of Prague (but – let us add – not only there).[75] Still, this type of stone was used to make the principal Wrocław works of the Soft Style, which are considered of local origin, such as the Beautiful Virgin from Saint Elizabeth's Church.[76] On the other hand, Joanna Lis, stone conservator at the National Museum in Warsaw, argues that the figure was made of fine-grained limestone with binder lacking silica, which is characteristic of Pläner limestone, or containing only small amounts of it. The stone also lacks conchoidal fracture, which is characteristic of Pläner limestone.[77] Hence, any inquiry into the sculpture's origins must be purely historical.

We must remember that following the succession agreement signed on 24 February 1327 by John of Luxembourg and Duke Henry VI of Wrocław after the latter's death (24 November 1335), his lands, including Wrocław, would go to the Bohemian kings, becoming the principal source of support for the Luxembourgs' expansion in Silesia. After the Polish–Bohemian war of 1345–48, which ended with the Treaty of Namysłów (German, Namslau), and Casimir the Great's renunciation of claims to Silesia, on 7 April 1348 Charles IV issued an act of incorporation for the whole province to *Corona Regni Bohemiae*. He reiterated this document in 1352 and 1355, showing his interest in retaining this newly acquired and exceptionally valuable territory.[78] He named a starost, who would be based in Wrocław, to represent him.[79] Charles IV visited Wrocław on many occasions, and was popular with its people who did not deny his right to rule the city and all of Silesia.[80] The tympanum of the east portal of Wrocław City Hall, with its unique heraldic iconography, is the clearest evidence of this.[81] Charles began to rebuild the west-bank castle, and on 24 November 1351 founded the monastery of the Augustinian Eremites at Świdnicka Street.[82] He was very interested in the Holy Cross Collegiate Church whose chapter, in Kaczmarek's opinion, gradually came to represent the emperor's interests in Wrocław.[83] He also recognized parish churches by donating valuable relics to them; thus, in 1365 he gave Mary Magdalene's relics, a piece of the Holy Cross and a thorn from the Crown

[75] See Suckale, *Über die Schwierigkeiten...*, op. cit., p. 202; Fajt, Suckale, *Madonna...*, op. cit., p. 225.

[76] Kaczmarek, *Związki artystyczne...*, op. cit., p. 435.

[77] Conservator's oral assessment, February 2014.

[78] Kaczmarek, "Schlesien – die Luxemburgische Erwerbung," in *Karl IV...*, op. cit., pp. 309–17; Bogusław Czechowicz, *Między katedrą a ratuszem. Polityczne uwarunkowania sztuki Wrocławia u schyłku średniowiecza* (Warsaw, 2008), pp. 31–34.

[79] Wrocław's city council temporarily served as the starost in 1357–69; see Romuald Kaczmarek, "Gotycka rzeźba architektoniczna prezbiterium kościoła św. Elżbiety we Wrocławiu," in *Z dziejów wielkomiejskiej fary. Wrocławski kościół św. Elżbiety w świetle historii i zabytków sztuki*, Mieczysław Zlat, ed. (Wrocław, 1996), pp. 70–71.

[80] Jana Wojtucka, "Český král ve Vratislavi. Proměny vzájemného vztahu panovníka a jeho města od 14. do začátku 16. Století," in *Slezsko – země Koruny...*, op. cit., vol. A, pp. 145–49.

[81] Romuald Kaczmarek, "Portal z tympanonem w fasadzie wschodniej ratusza we Wrocławiu. Przyczynek do ikonografii lwa w hełmie," in *Nobile claret opus. Studia z historii sztuki dedykowane Mieczysławowi Zlatowi*, Lech Kalinowski, Stanisław Mossakowski, eds (Wrocław, 1998), pp. 95–105; id., *Rzeźba architektoniczna...*, op. cit., pp. 196–99.

[82] Czechowicz, op. cit., pp. 83–87.

[83] Kaczmarek, *Związki artystyczne...*, op. cit., p. 445.

of Thorns to the parish church of Saint Mary Magdalene.[84] He was almost certainly the one who placed relics of Saint Sigismund, a patron of the Kingdom of Bohemia, in the altar in the south choir apse of Saint Elizabeth's Church.[85] The relationships of Charles IV to the Wrocław churches were clearly shown in the elaborate heraldic programs, which referred to both the emperor and the Bohemian rule of Silesia. Series of coats of arms under the windows outside the choir of the church of the Augustinian Eremites, on the keystones in the lowest transept of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross and in the south nave of the choir of Saint Elizabeth's Parish Church, which Kaczmarek calls virtually an "imperial chapel," prove this relationship to the present day.[86]

This context helps us to understand the presence of the statue of the Virgin in the Parish Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, which without a doubt is the work of a sculptor of the Prague cathedral workshop. But who may have initiated the commission of this work for the church? The bishop of Wrocław owned the right of patronage (*ius patronatus*, the law of advowsons) to the church, even though in fact it was its users, the burghers, who carried the financial burden of its construction and the decoration of its interior. We must remember that in 1367–70 a great dispute raged over jurisdiction between the lay and spiritual authorities about the rights of the cathedral's canons to administer civil law. The emperor himself was engaged in the dispute as arbitrator, even though he favoured the burghers, especially since his official relations with Przecław of Pogorzela had previously been tense over Charles's attempts to include the Wrocław diocese in the Prague archdiocese (1346–60), which was actively opposed by the bishop. While Przecław successfully retained church ties between Wrocław and Gniezno, the Polish archbishopric, which meant significant sovereignty for the Wrocław bishops, it was the burghers who finally won the jurisdictional dispute.[87]

The figure of the Virgin and Child discussed here, despite its representative nature, which was originally emphasized by its gilding, is dramatically different in style from only slightly earlier monumental figures of the apostles from the church's pillars, held in the linear stylistic convention of the Madonnas on Lions (1360s, now in the National Museum in Wrocław).[88] It is paradoxical that the statue of the Virgin may have been funded equally well by any of the protagonists of the aforementioned jurisdictional conflict. Had it been funded by the bishop, it would have meant that late in life he commissioned for the parish church which he served as patron a sculpture representing the same Prague artistic formation as his tombstone, which was in the process of creation at that time. This would have been an exceptionally eloquent gesture in the context of the loss of jurisdictional rights over the burghers. One could interpret the funding of the Virgin statue similarly were she credited to the emperor himself, since he often stressed his interest in the churches of Wrocław. Especially important was his earlier

[84] Lenka Bobková, "Relikvie darované Karlem IV. Vratislavskému kostelu sv. Marie Magdaleny," in *Śródmiejska katedra. Kościół św. Marii Magdaleny w dziejach i kulturze Wrocławia*, Bogusław Czechowicz, ed. (Wrocław, 2010), pp. 175–88.

[85] Kaczmarek, *Gotycka rzeźba...*, op. cit., pp. 70–72.

[86] Ibid., p. 72; id., *Rzeźba architektoniczna...*, op. cit., p. 187.

[87] Jan Dąbrowski, "Dzieje polityczne Śląska w latach 1290–1402," in *Historia Śląska od najdawniejszych czasów do roku 1400*, vol. 1 (Krakow, 1933), pp. 481–87; Tadeusz Silnicki, *Dzieje i ustrój Kościoła katolickiego na Śląsku do końca w. XIV* (Warsaw, 1953), pp. 260–73; Michał Kaczmarek, "Przecław z Pogorzeli," in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 28 (Wrocław, 1984–85), pp. 682–84; Czechowicz, op. cit., pp. 74–81.

[88] See, i.a., Anna Ziomecka, "Rzeźby św. Marii Magdaleny i apostołów," in Guldan-Klamecka, Ziomecka, op. cit., pp. 77–81.

(1365) gift of the priceless relics to Saint Mary Magdalene's Parish Church.[89] The figure characteristic of the style of Peter Parler's team of craftsmen, which Suckale recently called simply "the Charles IV style,"[90] may have served as a visible sign of the ruler's unofficial "protection" of the church and its users, especially in view of the arguments with the bishop, who owned the right of patronage. This sign would be explicit if the sculpture was really to have been a workshop variant of the Virgin with Child that is supposed to have existed on the trumeau of Prague cathedral's south portal, as Fajt hypothesizes, albeit without tangible evidence.[91] Alas, we know of no sources to confirm any of the emperor's possible gifts of particular works of art to Wrocław, nor to tell us about his relations with the parish church late in life (he died in 1378). Finally, the burghers themselves may have funded the sculpture, whose imperial style, clearly associated with Prague and its court art, may have been an expression of their hopes for the protectorate of the great Luxembourg. The burghers would be using this artistic funding to challenge Przecław of Pogorzela to stress their loyalty to the emperor. It is noteworthy that the tombstone of Przecław, who clearly supported Charles through most of his term, represented the same type of style.[92]

It is regrettable that there is no clear answer to the question about who funded the Virgin with Child from the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene, as the hypotheses are virtually equally likely. It is fair to suppose that the figure was created in the mid-1370s, probably closer to 1380, and that it was imported from Prague. There is no question that it was made by one of the most talented and individualistic sculptors from the workshop of Peter Parler, who was very familiar with both the "canonical" style of the circle of Charles IV and 13th-century sculpture of northern French origins. It is very unlikely that Peter Parler himself made the sculpture. There is very little evidence to show that he made any sculptures, with a single one definitively attributed to him. Furthermore, as head of his workshop, he was extremely busy as the architect. It is also unlikely that he would have worked temporarily in Silesia. Parler did travel away from Prague, which Kaczmarek notes,[93] but mostly to Kolín on the Elbe just 70 km away.

The question of whether the creator of the statue worked in Wrocław for a time, remains unanswered. The destruction of the original angel console of the Virgin, which almost certainly was executed in Wrocław when the sculpture was already in the church, is regrettably a major loss. If this sculpture was indeed the work of a sculptor who made other works in Wrocław, as Kaczmarek argues compellingly,[94] then it becomes more likely that the figure came directly from Prague, since both Wrocław works differ in detail, while the console was of a somewhat lower artistic class.

There is no question that the tombstone of Przecław of Pogorzela and the figure of the Virgin with Child from the Church of Mary Magdalene are the best sculptural works found in Silesia that are directly tied to the work of Peter Parler's cathedral workshop. They come across as imports, probably brought to Wrocław because of their "imperial style." While their appearance in Silesia is characteristic of the time c. 1375, they only marginally contributed to

[89] Kaczmarek, *Sztuka w księstwach...*, op. cit., pp. 138–39, noticed this.

[90] See Suckale, *Über die Schwierigkeiten...*, op. cit., p. 200.

[91] Fajt, review of *Těšínská Madona...*, op. cit., pp. 431–32.

[92] Silnicki, *Dzieje i ustrój...*, op. cit., pp. 266–68.

[93] Kaczmarek, *Związki artystyczne...*, op. cit., p. 441.

[94] See n. 7.

the adoption of the Parlerian sculpture there – despite art historians' earlier assumptions.[95] Remarkably, from an art-historical point of view, this Virgin statue focuses virtually all the complex research issues about the sculptural work of the Peter Parler workshop and style, as well as Bohemian–Silesian relations in politics and art during the reign of Charles IV of Luxembourg. This, as well as its artistic class, is a key reason why this figure should be viewed as a masterpiece of Gothic sculpture in Polish collections.

Translated by Maja Łatyńska

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[95] To read more about works in Silesia that may be called Parlerian, as well as mistaken attributions in this area, see Kaczmarek, *Rzeźba architektoniczna...*, op. cit., pp. 36–39; id., *Sztuka w księstwach...*, op. cit., pp. 134–35; id., *Związki artystyczne...*, op. cit., pp. 446–49.