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TWO RENAISSANCE STONE SLABS FROM SZTUM AND BORECZNO WITH REPRESENTATIONS OF ARMOURED MEN

Dwie renesansowe płyty nagrobne ze Sztumu i Boreczna z przedstawieniami rycerzy **Abstract**

Among the tombstones preserved in the territory of former East Prussia, two Renaissance effigies deserve attention: the slab showing Johannes von Schönaich kept at Boreczno (Ducal Prussia) and the other one of Achatius von Zehmen from the church of Sztum (Royal Prussia). The deceased belonged to the local gentry and were depicted in similar poses. The authors discuss the appearance of both stone slabs, trying to compare the visible armour representations with surviving examples from the period in question and, on this basis, identify one of the tombstones as belonging to Johannes von Schönaich (IV, died 1549), one of the six representatives of the family bearing that name who lived in the 15th and 16th centuries at Boreczno.

Keywords: Renaissance tombstone, armour representations, Sztum, Boreczno

Abstrakt

Wśród zachowanych na terenie dawnych Prus Wschodnich płyt nagrobnych zwracają uwagę dwie renesansowe: Johanna von Schönaich w Borecznie i Achacego Czemy w kościele Sztumie. Zmarli przedstawieni w podobnych pozach należeli do lokalnej arystokracji. Autorzy omawiają wygląd płyt, datują i konfrontują przedstawione na nich uzbrojenie z zachowanymi przykładami z epoki oraz na tej podstawie starają się zidentyfikować Johanna von Schönaich, jednego z sześciu przedstawicieli rodu o tym imieniu, żyjących w XV-XVI w. w Borecznie.

Słowa kluczowe: renesansowa płyta nagrobna, zbroja, Sztum, Boreczno

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Among the relatively few Renaissance effigy stone slabs with figurative representations from the former East Prussia, we should note two examples kept in the churches located at Boreczno (former Schnellwalde) and Sztum (former Stuhm) – the two towns of different status from the Upper Prussia (Oberland). Both belong to the group of representatives of the local gentry associated with Royal (the stone slab from Sztum) and Ducal Prussia (the slab from Boreczno).

Although both monuments in the moment of creation were positioned on the territories of two different countries, it had no impact on their design. That particular political division was a consequence of the 2nd Toruń treaty (1466). The nobility of Royal Prussia was very frequently of the Empire's origins and they came to the territories of the Teutonic Order's state during the 1st half of the 15th century. They obtained indigenate and offices in the Polish Crown, but more important was the fact that their powerful representatives, including the person presented on the tombstone in Sztum, were related to both the Polish and German aristocracy, often also converted to the Protestantism dynamically progressing in the post-Teutonic Order's areas.³

The tombstone of Achatius von Zehmen (Polish: Achacy Czema) (fig. 1) has been placed on the northern outer wall of the Gothic church of St. Anna in Sztum.⁴ It measures 2.56 × 2 m and is made of white limestone. In the middle of the slab, we can see the figure of the deceased in armour. Achatius von Zehmen was sculpted in a standing position, slightly leaning to the left. In his raised right hand he holds a lance that rests on his right foot, tilted outwards. The left hand is shown slightly bent and rests on the shield with the family's coat of arms. The stone slab is lined with a border stripe sculpted in stone, and in its upper left corner an image was added that had been interpreted by B. Schmid as a symbol of John the Evangelist.⁵ Below, on the border, there is a partially legible inscription that reads: "MAY A(NNO) 1565."

The current condition of the tombstone precludes reading either the inscription on the bordure or the coat of arms. B. Schmid had information about the sketch copy of the slab made in 1710,⁶ when the inscription was still legible. According to it, the inscription reads as follows: "MAGNIF DNS ACHATIUS CZEME PALATIN MARIAEBURG CAPITANEUS STHUMENSIS AC MEVENS ET HAERES IN CHRISTBURGK OBIIT 24 MAY A° 1565." It allowed the identification of the deceased shown on the slab.

³ The Lutheran was Achatius von Zehmen buried at Sztum (R. Fischer, *Achatius von Zehmen, Woywode von Marienburg*, Danzig 1897, p. 4), probably the Reformation was also favoured by Johannes von Schönaich from Boreczna (B. Eckart, *Die Geschichte des Kirchdorfes Schnellwalde*, in: *Aus Vergangenheit und Gegenwart des Kreises Mohrungen: Selbstverlag des Kreisausschusses in Mohrungen*, ed. W. Friedrich, Mohrungen 1930, p. 65).

⁴ The slab in question was moved to the outside of the church of St. Anna in 1904. For now, it is not known where it was originally located inside the church. The degree of surface damage visible in the photograph published by B. Schmid in 1909 suggests that it could have been embedded into the floor. It happened that the stone slabs built in the floor were removed or moved during the relocation of the church floors, as it happened in the case of the slab dedicated to Johannes von Schönaich from Boreczno (the subject will be enlarged below) or slabs from the church of St. Jacob in Toruń placed in the church area due to the works in progress in 2022. Now, after almost 120 years of exposure to weather conditions and elements, the relief is almost illegible. Therefore, the authors use the illustration provided by B. Schmid in the work cited below. When Schmid's work was published, the tombstone of Achatius' wife, Helena von Merklchenrade, was located in the northern aisle, but that was also not its original place, see B. Schmid, *Bau- und Kunstdenkmaler Pomesaniens. Kreis Stuhm*, Danzig 1909, pp. 358-359.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 358, Fig. 140.

⁶ The drawn copy of the stone slab in question was kept in the archive of the von Zehmen family in Stauchitz, Saxony, and persons that had access to it provided B. Schmid with the information about the content of the inscription (*ibidem*, p. 359).

Achatius von Zehmen, son of Nikolaus, burgrave of Sztum and Dorothea von Baysen (Polish: Bażyńska), was born around the year 1485.⁷ He held a number of offices in Royal Prussia. He was a chamberlain (Polish: *podkomorzy*) of Malbork (1518-1531, then his brother Fabian took over this function), a captain in Dzierzgoń, Człuchów and Sztum (from 1520). Pomeranian castellan (1517-1531), then Gdańsk castellan (1531-1546, after the death of Jan Baliński). Then he was elected (in place of J. Baliński) to be one of the nine permanent councillors appointed by the Polish king to the Prussian council (together with his brother Fabian) As one of the most influential figures in the council, he supported the agenda of the separateness of Royal Prussia, Surprisingly enough, he was also a member of the party of Albrecht Hohenzollern. In 1546, he became the voivode (Polish: *wojewoda*) of Malbork and held this office until his death. He also applied for posts of *starosta* (mayor or governor) of Przemark and Miłomłyn (both located in the area of Ducal Prussia) These efforts ended in success in 1534.⁸ A. von Zehmen's wife was Helena Merkliehenrade from the line of Powarschen (Polish: Powiersze).⁹ She gave birth to nine children: Christoph (lived 1518-1581), Achatius (died in 1576), Fabian (lived 1539/40-1605), Katharina (1513-1558), Anna, Helena, Barbara, Justina (1526-1589) and Euphrosyne.

The von Zehmen family came from Saxony, where its representatives appear in sources from the beginning of the 13th century onwards. On the basis of the family names appearing in sources connected with the Royal Prussian branch of the family (Achatius and Fabian) and the fact that these names were listed together with Melchior, Christoph and Sigmund in Saxon sources, German genealogists put forward a hypothesis that the Prussian branch of von Zehmen family was descendant from the Meissen line that resided in Muckern.¹⁰ Achatius' ancestor, Nikolaus, probably came to Prussia during the Thirteen Years' War and at the end of the 15th century became burgrave of Sztum,¹¹ and soon married Dorothea von Baisen (Bażyńska), daughter of Jan, castellan of Elbląg, *starosta* of Sztum and Tolkmicko, a Prussian nobleman, one of the leaders of the anti-Teutonic opposition and the co-founder of the Prussian Union.¹² Their sons – Achatius, Fabian, Stanislaus (royal secretary from 1524), Georg (1526 a Gdańsk official) and Martin (1531 canon in Chełmno and Toruń) – held offices in Royal Prussia or at the Polish court and in the Catholic Church hierarchy.¹³

Achatius von Zehmen the Elder was the most prominent representative of the Prussian line of the family, an active politician, he had apparent connections at the Polish court in Kraków (Krzysztof Szydłowiecki and Bishop Piotr Tomicki) and was related, thanks to the marriages of his children, with powerful Prussian, Polish and Lithuanian families, e.g., with zu Dohna,

⁷ R. Flanss, *Die von Zehmen (Czema) in Westpreussen*, "Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für den Regierungsbezirk Marienwerder," 10/1884, pp. 5-13.

⁸ On the political role of A. Czema in the contacts between the Polish Crown and Prussia, see J. Małek, *Prusy Książęce a Prusy Królewskie w latach 1525-1548*, Warszawa 1976, pp. 59-174 and R. Flanss, op. cit., pp. 5-13.

⁹ About the Achatius von Zehmen's family, see R. Fischer, op. cit., pp. 6-11 and R. Flanss, op. cit., pp. 14-21. A. von Zehmen's wife was also buried in the church of St. Anna in Sztum (ibidem, p. 14).

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 3.

¹¹ Ibidem.

¹² T. Oracki, *Słownik biograficzny Warmii, Prus Książęcych i Ziemi Malborskiej od połowy XV do końca XVIII wieku. A-K*, Olsztyn 1984, p.14.

¹³ R. Flanss, op. cit., p. 4.

the Konopacki family, von Bröck, von Borck, and also with the powerful Radziwiłł magnate family from Lithuania.

The second of the dead discussed in the present paper, Johannes von Schönaich, was not such a well-known figure, although his family belonged to significant landowners, and the military careers of its male representatives were typical for the Prussian aristocracy.

Currently, the stone slab of Johannes von Schönaich's effigy (fig. 2) is still embedded in the floor of the Church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross at Boreczno. It was built into the floor near the northern wall of the church, under the pulpit.¹⁴ The traces of damage visible on its surface, such as the blurred contours of the relief especially traceable on smaller details, like the details of coats of arms and of the inscription, are typical for tombstones built into the floors of churches.

The stone effigy slab measures 2.3 × 1.61 m. In the middle, the figure of the deceased in armour was placed. In his raised, bent right arm, he holds a lance resting on his right foot, tilted outwards. With his left hand, slightly bent, he holds a sword resting on his left leg. There is a pillow under his head. The representation is framed with a bordure. It is made up of coats of arms, placed four along the longer sides of the slab. The upper edge is worn, and the lower edge bears a currently illegible inscription consisting of four verses. The symbols of the four Evangelists were placed at the corners.

The inscription was probably illegible already at the end of the 19th century when Adolf Bötticher examined and described the slab, identifying the deceased, without justification, with another Johannes von Schönaich who died somewhere between the years 1592-1595.¹⁵

Johannes von Schönaich was shown sculpted in relatively deep relief, in a standing position, as it is evidenced by the position of the hand holding the spear. Under the head of the deceased a rectangular, flat pillow can be seen. It was decorated with four tassels. On the border stripes positioned parallel to the central figure eight sculpted shields bearing coats of arms can be seen, four on each side. These border stripes displayed the coats of arms of von Lacken, von Taubenheim, von Lichten, von Eppingen on the left side, and von Schönaich, von Falkenheim, von Sack and von Eichholz families to the right.¹⁶ Not surprisingly, these heraldic emblems belonged to the families of the ladies married to various members of the von Schönaich family, even to those who came from distant lines. The list of persons married

¹⁴ The slab was moved to its present location in 1882. Previously, it was located in the middle of the church, and underneath it was a vaulted burial chamber opened during the renovation of the church floor, see M. Żurek, *Boreczno i Baloszyce. Archeologia dworów wczesnonowożytnych w Górnych Prusach*, Warszawa 2021, p. 30; see also B. Eckart, op. cit., pp. 62-64.

¹⁵ A. Bötticher gives a description of the tombstone, identifies the coats of arms, and gives – without justification – the name and surname of the deceased (A. Bötticher, *Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Ostpreussen*, vol. 3 (Das Oberland), Königsberg 1898, p. 121). However, he does not include the content of the inscription. Yet, A. Bötticher had made a detailed description of the inside furnishings of the church of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross in Boreczno where he meticulously noted all the initials of the founders on them, and just below the description of the tombstone he quotes the entire inscription on the church bell. It seems reasonable to conclude that the inscription on the slab was already illegible at that time. The description of the tombstone, without the content of the inscription, was also given by B. Eckart, who – as a local teacher – knew the monument well. However, Eckart also follows Bötticher in that subject (B. Eckart, op. cit., p. 62. Besides, B. Eckart (ibidem, p. 81) while describing the history of the family gives two presumed dates of the death of the younger Johannes von Schönaich (1592 and 1595 respectively).

¹⁶ The identification of coats of arms after B. Eckart (ibidem, p. 62), see also S. Szczepański, *Płyta grobowa Johannesa von Schönaich z kościoła Podwyższenia Krzyża Św. w Borecznie (Rozważania nad „Skamieniałym Rycerzem” i rodem von Schönaich)*, „Studia Angeburgica,” 15/2009, pp. 79-80 and M. Żurek, op. cit., p. 30.

into the von Schönaich family looks as follows: Sibylla von Eichholz, wife of Johannes (died 1528), Gertrud von Lacken, wife of Sebastian (died 1543), and the unknown lady of von Sack family together Anna von Falkenheim were the two wives of Georg (died 1543). Apparently, all the affinities documented by the heraldic emblems shown on the tombstone occurred in various branches of the family till the end of the first half of the 16th century. On the contrary, the coats of arms of von Rauschke, von Gablenz and von Oelsnitz families are absent on the stone slab in question. These belonged to the ladies married into the von Schönaich family later, to the brothers: Johannes (who, together with his wife, restored the Boreczno church tower in 1601 or 1608¹⁷), Fabian and Sebastian. Moreover, the border of the discussed stone slab does not show the coat of arms of the von Brandt family, from which the wife of another Johannes von Schönaich (died 1592/95) came and to whom, as it was said earlier, A. Bötticher, erroneously attributed the stone slab in question. However, that particular Johannes von Schönaich was a descendant from a less significant sideline of a family which resided in Karnity.¹⁸

In the middle of the 16th century, another important change in the heraldry of the von Schönaich family occurred. In 1549, Ferdinand I Habsburg, then the king of Germany, included the coat of arms of the von Löwen family which belonged to the wife of elder Johannes (died 1549) to the coat of arms of the von Schönaichs, simultaneously raising the family to the rank of barons of the Reich. The new shield emblem was divided horizontally: at the top, there was an oak wreath of the von Schönaichs, and at the bottom – the von Löwen's emblem: lion facing right, with a sword in his paw.¹⁹

The problem with the chronology of the tombstone and identification of the member of the von Schönaich family depicted on it only partially comes from the fact that the inscription on the slab is now illegible and the exact date of the death of the shown person remains unknown. The regular repetition of the names "Johannes," "Georg" and "Sebastian" in all Prussian branches of the family, often during the same generation, causes additional difficulties. For example, the most popular name – "Johannes" – appeared six times during four hundred years. In addition, it appeared twice in combination with other names. Therefore, only the study of the power position held by the supposed candidates within the family, the examination of the arrangement of the figure shown on the slab and the analysis of the presented weapons and armour could provide us with some clues.

The von Schönaich family came to Prussia from Silesia. Its male members are attested in Prussia as early as 1412 when Johannes von Schönaich (I)²⁰ was mentioned in the service of the Teutonic Order. During the Thirteen Years' War, six men from this family fought in the mercenary forces on the side of the Order. In 1470, the Grand Master Heinrich von Richtenberg granted Johannes (III) a complex of villages, including Boreczno, as compensation for the thirteen years' pay: Johannes' earnings remained unpaid after the war due to the cash shortages that troubled the Order at the end of the war. The family lived at

¹⁷ B. Eckart, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 57 and 62.

²⁰ The history of the family after B. Eckart, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-81; S. Szczepański, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-87 and M. Żurek, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-30.

Boreczno until the beginning of the 19th century. Its male members took military careers typical of the Prussian gentry.

The period when Johannes IV von Schönaich (died 1549) took leadership seems to be particularly favourable for the family. He took part in the wars with the Ottoman Empire in the service of Louis II of Hungary, and then served Ferdinand I. He participated in the famous defence of Vienna in 1529. Participation in the Turkish wars probably brought considerable benefits. Soon, after his return, Johannes IV von Schönaich has begun the construction of the manor house at Boreczno. Undoubtedly, his service to Ferdinand I also contributed to the increase of the family prestige: the von Schönaichs became barons of the Reich.

The burial place of the person shown on the slab – in the middle of the nave, in front of the altar – was reserved rather for a representative of the main line of the family, the heir of the village and the benefactor of the church. It seems obvious that Johannes IV von Schönaich, who died in 1549 and who significantly increased the power and prestige of the family, was buried in such a prominent place in the church.

Both effigy slabs – dedicated to Achatius von Zehmen and Johannes von Schönaich – although not identical, are distinguished by the way in which the central figures were arranged. These are something unusual among the relatively few 16th-century figural tombstones from East Prussia. Curiously, all these effigies, like stone slabs under discussion, are usually located elsewhere than originally placed.

A similar arrangement of the slab – the deceased sculpted in an upright position in the centre, shields with coats of arms on longer sides of the slab border, an inscription under his feet, and an undecorated band above the head – can be seen on the tombstone of Peter zu Dohna (died 1553) in the church of St. Peter and Paul in Morağ, located in the vicinity of Boreczno.²¹ However, in the great majority of cases, there is only an inscription on the border which mentions the name and offices held by the deceased, without any heraldic emblems.²² In clear contrast to the case discussed above, heraldic shields were often placed at the corners of the slab, though in the case of both tombstones discussed in the present paper the symbols of Evangelists appeared at the corners. These symbols, less common in sepulchral art on the territories of the Polish Crown, can be seen on the fifteenth-century Prussian tombstones, as well as on the Gothic and Renaissance gravestones from Western Pomerania.²³

The arrangement of Johannes von Schönaich's figure is similar to the depictions traceable on Renaissance tombstones from Pomerania, Silesia and the Polish Kingdom, although in the last case, the deceased was more frequently shown lying on one side, with the body resting on the forearm, and with the leg bent at the knee, in the manner popularized by the Italian

²¹ A. Bötticher, op. cit., p. 90.

²² Such was the case with tombstones of Achatius von Zehmen and Wolf von Oelsnitz (died 1593, now in Malbork) or members of Truchsess family: Wilhelm (died 1585) and Hans (died 1608) – both stone slabs are now on display in lapidarium near the Church of St. George at Kętrzyn (former Rastenberg).

²³ The symbols of the Evangelists can be seen at the corners of the tombstone slabs of the Teutonic Order's knights: Kuno von Liebenstein (died 1392) from Nowe Miasto near the Drwęca River, and, most probably, Heinrich von Plauen (died 1430) from Malbork. They also appear on Renaissance tombstones from Western Pomerania: those of Arent von Wopersnow (died 1548) at Stanomin (A. Puławski, *Renesansowe zbroje płytowe z napierśnikiem bombiastym w dawnym księstwie pomorskim w świetle wybranych zabytków sztuki*, „Kwartalnik Historii Kultury Materialnej,” 67 (4)/2019, p. 423) or Reimer von Wolde (died 1559) and his wife at Anklam (H. Lemcke, *Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler des Regierungsbezirks Stettin*, vol. 1, fasc. 2: *Der Kreis Anklam*, Stettin 1899, p. 127, fig. 35).

sculptor Andrea Sansovino. A similar arrangement of figures appears on the tombstones sculpted by Bernardino de Gianotis and Giovanni Cini for Krzysztof Szydłowiecki (died 1532), Stanisław Lasocki (died 1535) and Olbracht Gasztołd (died 1539), now on display at Opatów, Brzeziny and Vilnius. All these dignitaries were shown wearing armours of Maximilian type, tough without helmets, they hold a lance in their right and a sword in their left, their heads are resting on pillows and their eyes are closed.²⁴ That particular type of tombstone gained popularity, as is evidenced by the slab dedicated to Stanisław Szczurzyński (died 1556), now in the Church of the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Ciechanów, Poland. Undoubtedly, it was a work of a local master, but faithfully copying the layout of the former figures.

On the other hand, Europe's most popular Gothic tombstones looked somewhat different. The figures of the deceased were shown in an upright posture, usually with hands folded in prayer or holding the attributes of the functions held in life (swords, crosiers, sceptres or apples). Here one can adduce a stone slab representing Hans von Stauff (died 1470) from the church of St. Peter and Paul in Beratzhausen shows him holding a lance and a sword.²⁵ Curiously, the arrangement of hands looks similar to that visible on the monument from Boreczno. Such representations are dominant in the tomb sculpture of the Holy Roman Empire. They are also popular in Pomerania. For example, the tombstone of Arent von Wopersnow from Stanomino (died 1548) shows him holding a mace in a hand instead of a lance;²⁶ a similar arrangement of the main figure can be seen on the tombstone from Anklam dedicated to Reimer von Wolde (died 1559) and his wife.²⁷ Similar representations can be found in Moravia, like the one from the tomb of Jiří of Žerotín (died 1507) from the Church of the Holy Trinity in Fulnek,²⁸ and Silesia, e.g. the tomb of Charles I of Podiebrad (died 1536) and his wife Anna Žagańska from the church of Saint Anna in Ząbkowice Śląskie.

While the arrangement of Johannes von Schönaich's figure is quite traditional, that visible on Achatius von Zehmen's tombstone seems to be less common. Undoubtedly, here the deceased is shown standing in a slight *contrapposto*.

Depictions of the deceased standing in a slight *contrapposto* appeared in the Polish Kingdom and in the Holy Roman Empire during the second quarter of the 16th century. At the end of that century, these were combined with a mannerist bend of the torso. For example, the representations in *contrapposto* posture can be seen on effigies from Cracow (showing Seweryn Boner, cast in 1538 in the workshop of Hans Vischer in Nuremberg); Czchów (dedicated to Kacper Wielogłowski died around 1580); on the one dedicated to Barnim III, currently on display at Szczecin, cast in 1543; from Witków (Wittgensdorf) made for Nicolaus von Warendorf (died 1548); Nowizna (Neudorf Eule) dedicated to Bernhard von Schellendorf (died 1593) – on the border a shield with the coat of arms is still visible; Uherské Hradiště made for Mikulaš Hrda (died 1508; Rokytnice – commemorating Vaclav

²⁴ The state of preservation of the Boreczno stone slab does not allow us to determine whether Johannes von Schönaich was sculpted with his eyes closed.

²⁵ F.H. Hofmann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Königreichs Bayern*, fasc. 4: *Bezirksamt Parsberg*, München 1906, p. 32 and Pl. 1.

²⁶ A. Puławski, *Renesansowe zbroje...*, p. 423.

²⁷ H. Lemcke, *Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler des Regierungsbezirks Stettin*, vol. 1, fasc. 2, p. 127, fig. 35, see also: A. Puławski, *Renesansowe zbroje...*, p. 426.

²⁸ H. Myslivečková, *Late Gothic, Renaissance and Manneristic figural sepulchral monuments in Moravia and Czech Silesia*, „Acta Historiae Artium,” 60/2019, p. 124.

of Ludanice (died 1557); the one from Slavkov made for Petr Velk (died 1572) and another one from Letovice dedicated to Jan Proček (died 1580).²⁹

However, these stylistic analogies cannot help in setting the doubts raised about the chronology of the slabs under discussion. Therefore, we should look elsewhere. The analysis of armour shown on Johannes von Schönaich's slab may clarify the problems with its chronology and attribution. Moreover, observations concerning the differences in armour construction shown on two similar stone slabs, most probably created in a time span lasting less than 20 years, may help in better understanding the monuments in question.

The beginning of the 15th century saw a remarkable improvement in armour-making, introducing the so-called "uncovered" or "white" plate armour. Firm dates are difficult to establish, though such harnesses appeared in the iconographical record on British soil around the year 1416.³⁰ Yet, the Italian workshops should have been making these defences since the very beginning of the 15th century.³¹

In 15th or 16th century Europe, the workshops specialized in armour making were located mainly in southern Germany or northern Italy, at Augsburg, Nuremberg, Landshut or Milan, in places where good quality iron ore was abundant.³² For our consideration, the German production centres are the most important.

Around the year 1440, the process of a "Gothic" armour-style development was completed. According to Charles Ffoulkes, "the salient points of Gothic armour are the sweeping lines embossed on its surface."³³ As stated by Zdzisław Żygulski, the main features of the Gothic harnesses are: "mannerist slenderness of the silhouette, elongation of forms, sharpness of contours, enrichment of surfaces with a dynamic arrangement of grooves, decoration of the edges with small precise motifs."³⁴ The "Gothic" harness made in Augsburg for Archduke Sigismund Habsburg of Tyrol about AD 1480 by Lorenz Helmschmied and now kept in Waffensammlung, Vienna, remains the most iconic example of that particular style.³⁵

At the same time, a distinctive form of an "Italian" harness evolved. In clear contrast to the aforementioned "Gothic" style, it was characterized by smooth surfaces which gave no anchor point to edged or pointed weapons. As Zdzisław Żygulski put it, the style of Italian armour, although chronologically belonging to the Late Middle Ages, brings to mind solutions from the Renaissance: the simplicity of rounded lines and broad surfaces, and the gentle, soft harmony of the silhouette.³⁶ A good example of such a harness comes in the form of a harness made in about AD 1440 for a member of an Alpine Matsch family – for a long time it was

²⁹ The tombstone slabs with the figure of the deceased in *contraposto*: Czchów (R.S. Nawrocki, *Equus polonus*, Lublin 2021, p. 254, fig. 55); Szczecin (H. Lemcke, *Die Bau- und Kunstde nkmäler des Regierungsbezirks Stettin*, fasc. 1: *Das Königliche Schloss in Stettin*, Stettin 1909, p. 19-21); Witków (H. Lutsch, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Regierungsbezirks Liegnitz*, Breslau 1891, p. 120); Uherské Hradiště, Rokytnice, Slavkov and Letovice, see respectively H. Myslivečková, op. cit., p. 125, fig. 4, p. 131, fig. 13, p. 140, fig. 28 and p. 136, fig. 20.

³⁰ Ch. Ffoulkes, *Armour and Weapons*, Oxford 1909, p. 68.

³¹ Z. Żygulski jun., *Broń w dawnej Polsce na tle uzbrojenia europejskiego*, Warszawa 1975, p. 103.

³² Ibidem, p. 105.

³³ Ch. Ffoulkes, op. cit., p. 69.

³⁴ Z. Żygulski, op. cit., p. 108.

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 106 fig. 49d.

³⁶ Ibidem, p. 107.

kept in Churburg Caste in the North Italian Alps and now it belongs to the Robert Lyons Scott Collection, Glasgow.³⁷

Both styles gave way to the new distinctive design introduced at the beginning of the 16th century period. It combined the most characteristic features of “Gothic” and “Italian” harnesses. After the name of the Roman Emperor Maximilian I, it was named a “Maximilian” style. The Emperor himself was a great armour enthusiast and spend hours working with his court armourers to create new designs.³⁸

Generally speaking, the “Maximilian” style drew on earlier “Italian” designs, but the armour surfaces were adorned and strengthened by rows of flutes hammered painstakingly to nearly all parts of the harness except the lower legs.³⁹ Like in the case of corrugated sheets, all defences made in such a way were more durable and offered better protection against blows.

Two good examples of such harnesses of German production are now kept in Wallace Collection, London. One was made in Germany for Alfred Emilien, Count of Nieuwerkerke ca. 1515-1525. Another one was made at Nuremberg ca. 1530.⁴⁰ It has elongated articulated fauld extensions that cover the tassets. That particular construction anticipates later solutions with articulated tasset extensions visible on the second effigy under investigation.

However, some German harnesses produced at the beginning of the 16th century, including best-quality princely armour, were made without these flutes. At this time, the traditional “Gothic” groves were discarded in favour of plain surfaces, perhaps under the influence of Italian fashion. In both cases, armour suits were made with armet-type helmets, with solid cuirasses consisting of three parts: breastplate, placart and backplate. Moreover, the connection with the fauld and tassets formed a straight line positioned parallel to the ground. A good example of such style comes in the form of a harness made for Wladislaus II, King of Bohemia and Hungary (Władysław II Jagiellończyk) in Augsburg about the year 1510 and now kept in Wallace Collection, London (fig. 3).⁴¹ Another splendid example of such “plain style” is on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. It was made about AD 1505 at Landshut by Matthes Deutsch for Duke Ulrich von Württemberg.⁴²

Such armour suits were certainly used in the realms under the control of the Teutonic Order. A decorative breastplate with fauld, adorned with arms of Grand Master of the Teutonic Order and once belonging to Grand Master Albrecht Hohenzollern, is now kept at Museum für Deutsche Geschichte, Berlin. The armour in question can be dated to the time of AD 1510.⁴³ Moreover, an obverse of a silver coin minted by the Land Master of Livonian Order Wolter von Plettenberg (dated 1525) shows him wearing such armour.⁴⁴

³⁷ T. Capwell, *The Real Fighting Stuff. Arms and Armour at Glasgow Museum*, Glasgow 2007, pp. 26-29; see also Ch. Gravett and G. Turner, *The English Medieval Knight 1400-1500*, Oxford 2001, p. 59 and Pl. E for another description and reconstruction of the aforementioned armour suit.

³⁸ T. Capwell, *Masterpieces of European Arms and Armour in the Wallace Collection*, London 2011, p.75.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 75.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 78-79.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, pp.72-73.

⁴² P. Terjanian, *Princely Armor In the Age of Dürer. A Renaissance Masterpiece in the Philadelphia Museum of Art*, London and New Haven 2011, pp. 32-33.

⁴³ A. Nowakowski, *Arms and Armour in the Medieval Teutonic Order's State in Prussia*, Łódź 1994, pp. 72-74, 137 fig. 23; K. Kwiatkowski, *Wojska Zakonu Niemieckiego w Prusach 1230-1525*, Toruń 2016, p. 385 fig. 74a.

⁴⁴ K. Kwiatkowski, *op. cit.*, p. 385, fig. 74b.

The attribution of the first effigy under investigation to Achacius von Zehmen raises no doubts. However, the state of preservation of the effigy of Achacius von Zehmen prevents categorical statements and all observations on armour details are somewhat speculative. Nonetheless, we are able to set some chronology for the shown harness. Judging from the characteristics of the silhouette, especially from the straight line that divides the breastplate and fauld, the armour that served as a model for the artist should have been made during the first quarter of the 16th century. Most probably, it was a poorer quality version of the above-mentioned princely armour suits made for Wladislaus II and Ulrich von Württemberg. If a certain degree of speculation is allowed, one can point to the years 1510-1520 as the chronology for making Achacius von Zehmen's armour. The harness made during that period was later sculpted on his effigy.

The following years of the 16th century had seen further evolution in armour-making. The harnesses (sometimes called garnitures) were now made with multi-purpose interchangeable parts. A good example of such practice comes in the form of armour made at Greenwich by a master Erasmus Kirkener (thought to be of German origin) for Sir William Herbert, First Earl of Pembroke.⁴⁵ The garniture in question was made before the year 1557 when the Earl was preparing for a French campaign in support of a Spanish monarch Ferdinand II. Its interchangeable parts allowed for use in different roles. The Earl could fight in a traditional role of a knight, as an armour designed for mounted combat. However, it contained some parts that allowed use in a different way. For example, the specially designed articulated tasset extensions of the fauld (ended with knee defences) could replace the traditional poleyns. Such parts allowed foot combat or light cavalry use, as they facilitated mobility.⁴⁶ We should point out that such solutions were known earlier: a magnificent German three-quarter armour from Glasgow Museums' collection, made in a Maximilian fluted style, shows such tasset extensions. The bottom ending of the sculpted cuirass was made in the shape of a flattened letter "V."⁴⁷ It was made between the years 1535-1540 by Michael Witz of Innsbruck (fig. 4).⁴⁷ The presence of an armet-type helmet that restricted vision, instead of a burgonet usually used on foot, suggests that the armour in question was designed for light cavalry use.

Another example of such a harness, also made in a Maximilian fluted style, comes from the same collection. It is dated some ten years earlier and the bottom of the cuirass was left straight.⁴⁸

The second effigy under investigation shows the deceased knight dressed in a similar mid-16th century three-quarter armour designed for light cavalry service. In the contrast to the previous case, all sculpted details are clearly visible. The elongated tasset extensions can be easily recognised on the sculpture, they are similar to the ones attached to the above-mentioned German armour from Glasgow Museums' collection, though they are left plain without fluted decorations and they are somewhat wider. The bottom ending of the sculpted

⁴⁵ Ch. Gravett, G. Turner, *Tudor Knight*, Oxford 2006, pp. 28-29; Capwell, *The Real Fighting...*, pp. 48-55; M. Cieśla, *Zbroja angielska z królewskich warsztatów w Greenwich*, in: *Cum arma per aeva. Uzbrojenie indywidualne na przestrzeni dziejów*, eds. P. Kucypera and P. Pudło, Toruń 2011, p. 292-294.

⁴⁶ T. Capwell, *The Real Fighting...*, p. 48. That planned expedition was due to the anti-French policy of Mary Tudor.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 41.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 43.

cuirass was made in the shape of a flattened letter “V.” That style replaces earlier straight endings and was introduced during the second quarter of the 16th century. The child armour made for the Polish King Sigismund II Augustus in the year 1546 shows such a solution.⁴⁹ The other parts shown on the effigy under question, such as gauntlets, vambraces, pauldrons and a visored helmet of the armet variety are typical for the first half of the 16th century. Most probably, the effigy was made for Johannes von Schönaich who died before 1548. As that particular Johannes von Schönaich took part in the defence of Vienna in 1529 and fought against the Turks, one can make a supposition that light cavalry combat styles were essential for keeping the more mobile Turkish horse at a bay. There should be no doubt that the effigy shows him in the armour he used in time of the Vienna campaign, during the period of his greatest glory. The analysis of the armour shown on the effigy sets the date of the original production about the year 1530.

The general conclusion is that the analysis of armour shown on the monument of Boreczno confirms setting its chronology in the middle of the 16th century. Moreover, it makes its attribution to Johannes IV von Schönaich, who died in 1549, plausible. We can also put forward a hypothesis that the Achatius von Zehmen’s slab was ordered earlier during his life. Perhaps, it happened before the middle of the 16th century. Showing the figure of the deceased Achatius in a rather old-fashioned harness can be adduced as an argument in favour of such a theory. In general, the popularity of Maximilian-type armour whose chronology is well understood can help in establishing the more exact chronology for some monuments, especially for those stones whose attribution and chronology remain disputable.

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⁴⁹ Z. Żygulski, op. cit., pp.88-89, pl. II.

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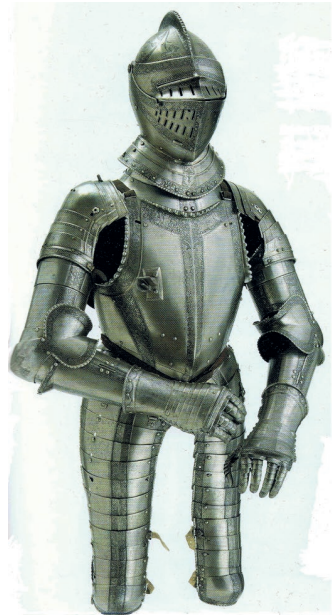


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