

Krzysztof Wroński
(Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2848-1718>

The church within the walls. Sacred spaces in Hospitaller castles¹

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The idea of military orders combined two seemingly opposed estates of medieval Christian society: the *bellatores* and the *oratores*. The activities of these orders, though rooted in the foundation and running of hospitals in the case of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem and the Teutonic Knights, focused on the fight to defend Christendom. However, the rules and statutes of military orders clearly defined the religious obligations of their members, be they ordained or lay brethren. The *vita communis* revolved around collective prayer, which had to take place in an appropriate consecrated space. The houses of the knight-brothers, particularly the fortified ones, had to include facilities that enabled them to fulfil both their ecclesiastical and military duties.

In the case of Hospitaller houses in Pomerania, Brandenburg and Mecklenburg, which made up a distinct group known from 1382 onwards as the Bailiwick of Brandenburg, they can be divided into two categories: manors (both rural and urban) with limited fortifications; and castles (Fig. 1). The castles best illustrate the difficulty of blending military and religious functions. Notably,

¹ This article expands on the issues examined in my doctoral thesis, *Architektura obronna joannitów na terenie baliwatu brandenburskiego od pierwszej połowy XIV w. do początków XVII w. (do 1618 r.). Forma i funkcje*, completed at the Faculty of History, University of Gdańsk under the supervision of Prof. Dr hab. Rafał Kubicki.

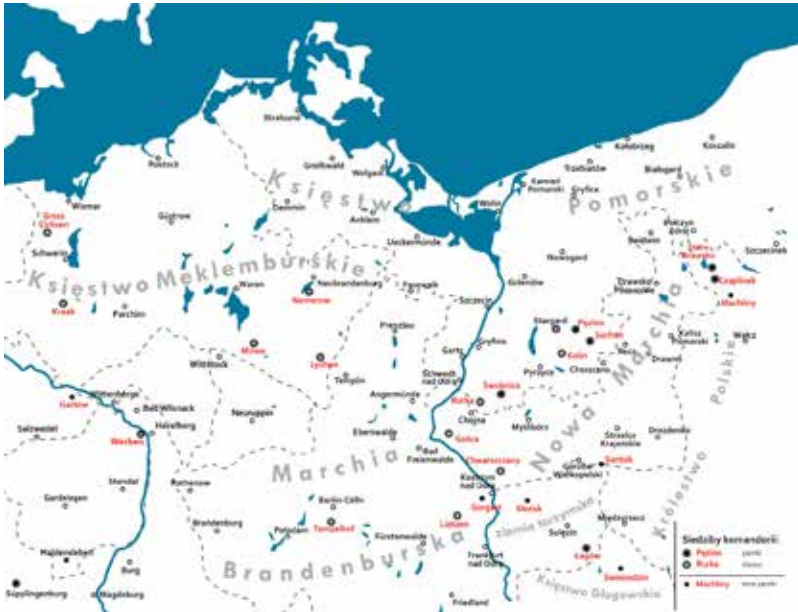


Fig. 1. Hospitaller houses in the Bailiwick of Brandenburg, mid-14th–mid-16th century (drawing: K. Wroński)

the purpose served by castles (both secular and monastic) was rarely purely military; their primary role was residential (the house of the convent) and administrative (the seat of the commandery). However, chapels inside these castles had to be incorporated into the fortifications. Although the latter may have been designed more for effect, as a show of feudal power, they nonetheless limited and dictated the layout of buildings within their bounds.

Starting in the mid-14th century, with the Order's acquisition of Templar holdings and the focus of their activities gradually shifting to rural areas, a growing number of Hospitaller houses became overtly defensive in character. The fortified complexes had to feature amenities fundamental to the routine functioning of the convent – a dormitory, refectory and chapel. This article examines the castle commanderies of the Brandenburg Hospitallers,² which

² In addition to castles that served as conventual seats, the Brandenburg Hospitallers also had a number of castles in the region that were used as residences

had to be built so that they adhered to the rule and statutes governing conventual life. I attempt to provide an overview of sacred spaces within castles raised by the Hospitallers,³ giving an idea of the form and layout of these private places of worship. Given the diversity and regional variation of Hospitaller building traditions, it is a topic all the more worthy of research.⁴ To date, scholarly interest in this issue has mostly concentrated on the Order's surviving chapels and churches, such as those at Chwarszczany (*Quartschen*), Rurka (*Rörchen*), and Słońsk (*Sonnenburg*).⁵ In the case of those inside castles, by the early modern period many fortresses and their interiors had often been significantly remodelled, meaning that their chapels survive in remnant form, and in some instances it is even difficult to determine where they were located. There are few sources that offer any additional

for dignitaries or officials (Santok, Słońsk, Świebodzin); there was no convent at any of the latter.

³ In consequence, I have omitted, among others, the Hospitaller castle of Süplingenburg, which centred around an earlier basilica church.

⁴ On the ecclesiastical architecture of the Hospitallers, see E. Grunsky, *Doppelgeschossige Johanniterkirchen und verwandte Bauten. Studien zur Typengeschichte mittelalterlicher Hospitalarchitektur*, Düsseldorf 1970; on early ecclesiastical architecture of the Order, see P. Gorazd-Dziuban, *Sacred Romanesque Architecture of Knights Hospitaller in the Polish Lands*, "Acta Fakulty filozofické Západočeské univerzity v Plzni" 2018, vol. 10(2–3), pp. 35–52.

⁵ For example, J. Jarzewicz, *Gotycka architektura Nowej Marchii. Budownictwo sakralne w okresie Askańczyków i Wittelsbachów*, Poznań 2000, pp. 215–245; E.-J. Schilling, E. Stege, *Westminster Ziemi Lubuskiej: 500 lat joannickiego kościoła zakonnego w Sonnenburgu/Słońsku (1508–2008) na tle rozwoju miasta, tłum. E. Szymońska, P. Szymoński, Słońsk 2012*; P. Kolosowski, *Z badań nad siedzibami templariuszy na ziemiach pogranicza wielkopolsko-pomorsko-lubusko-brandenburskiego*, in: *Nowa Marchia – prowincja zapomniana – wspólne korzenie. Materiały z sesji naukowych organizowanych przez Wojewódzką i Miejską Bibliotekę Publiczną w Gorzowie Wlkp. wspólnie z Stiftung Brandenburg w Fürstenwalde od czerwca 2006 r. do lutego 2007 r.*, red. E. Jaworski, G. Kostkiewicz-Górska, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2007 ("Zeszyty Naukowe", nr 7), pp. 37–73; P. Kolosowski, D. Siemińska, "The Templars" Sites in Rurka (*Rörchen*) and Chwarszczany (*Quartschen*) in the Light of the Latest Studies, in: *Regionalität und Transfergeschichte. Ritterordenskommenden der Templer und Johanniter im nordöstlichen Deutschland und in Polen*, hrsg. v. C. Gahlbeck, H.-D. Heimann, D. Schumann, Berlin 2014, pp. 442–457; Z. Radacki, *Średniowieczne zamki Pomorza Zachodniego*, Warszawa 1976, pp. 111–121; D. Schumann, *Zamek i kościół joannitów w Słońsku*, in: *Joannici i ich mistrz Jan Maurycy von Nassau-Siegen (1604–1679). Materiały z konferencji naukowej zorganizowanej przez Polsko-Niemieckie Stowarzyszenie Educatio Pro Europa Viadrina, Stiftung Brandenburg, Gorzów Wlkp. 9 października 2004*, eds. E. Jaworski, D. Handt, Z. Czarnuch, G. Kostkiewicz-Górska, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2006, pp. 49–66.

clues, hence this article is merely an attempt to outline the problem. The building which serves as my main point of reference throughout is the castle chapel at Swobnica (*Wildenbruch*), which is evidenced by both structural remains and mentions in written records. Although the rule and statutes of the Knights of St John seldom refer explicitly to facilities that were essential to conventual life, inventories of Hospitaller houses compiled in the 16th century reveal certain similarities in the layouts of the castles discussed herein.⁶

Thus, with a good dose of caution, we can use comparative and retrospective techniques to estimate where chapels were located at other Hospitaller castles.

The churches and chapels of rural houses are only mentioned in passing in written sources, primarily in the context of religious endowments and the obligations they entailed.⁷ There are far fewer references to castle chapels: a note dating from 1420 records that a grant was made to maintain an eternal light in the chapel (*capelle*) at the castle in Swobnica.⁸ Mentions of other castle chapels in medieval sources are equally brief. In 1451 a new altar was founded in Łagów (*Lagow*),⁹ though the source does not make clear whether it was in the castle chapel or the local parish church, over which the Hospitallers also held patronage. The next mention of a Hospitaller church at Łagów is not noted until 1575 and refers to the one built within the castle grounds (*tempel am schloß*).¹⁰ This situation is entirely different to that attested

⁶ This issue is extensively addressed in my PhD thesis.

⁷ One example is the foundation of side altars at the Mecklenburg commandery of *Mirow*, MUB, Bd. 13, p. 126; MUB, Bd. 14, pp. 29–30.

⁸ “Der lampe in der capelle to Wildenbruke upme slote”, after: A. Breitsprecher, *Die Komturei Rörchen-Wildenbruch. Geschichte d. Landes Bahn u. Wildenbruch*, Stettin 1940, p. 104.

⁹ Brandenburgisches Landeshauptarchiv Potsdam [hereafter: BLHA], Rep. 9B Johanniterorden, U 270; C. Gahlbeck, *Lagow (Łagów) oder Sonnenburg (Słońsk). Zur Frage der Residenzbildung in der Ballei Brandenburg der Johanniter von 1317 bis 1527*, in: *Regionalität und Transfergeschichte. Ritterordenskommenden der Templer und Johanniter im nordöstlichen Deutschland und in Polen*, hrsg. v. C. Gahlbeck, H.-D. Heimann, D. Schumann, Berlin 2014, p. 284.

¹⁰ C. Gahlbeck, *Lagow (Łagów) – Kommende des Johanniterordens*, in: *Brandenburgisches Klosterbuch. Handbuch der Klöster, Stifte und Kommenden bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts*, hrsg. v. H.-D. Heimann, K. Neitmann, W. Schich, Bd. 2, Berlin 2007, p. 733. The castle chapel was closed down sometime between 1543 (when commander Andreas von Schlieben entered into matrimony) and 1575. A new “castle church” was built after 1569, when a fire destroyed the settlement at Sokola Góra.

in written records from the State of the Teutonic Order, which usually include references to churches and chapels.¹¹

Slightly more information begins to appear in sources dating from the first half of the 16th century, a fact attributable to the growing need to make inventories of commandery properties. These were most often drawn up when a new commander was appointed. Unfortunately, inventory entries concerning churches and chapels are laconic in comparison with the remaining content of these documents (Kraak,¹² Nemerow,¹³ Mirow¹⁴), and in most cases they are of relatively late date, which means that we have to rely largely on retrospective method to try and recreate the picture from earlier periods. In the case of Swobnica, the earliest inventories to mention a chapel date from 1560 and 1576, providing some details¹⁵ about its location, layout and fittings. Notably, the oldest known inventory of Łagów Castle, completed in 1533, during the pre-Reformation period, makes no mention of a chapel. We can only speculate as to the reasons for this – it is possible that church furnishings may have been listed in separate registers that have not survived. However, this is only a hypothesis, especially given that commandery inventories compiled during the post-Reformation period at Mirow¹⁶ (in Mecklenburg) and Swobnica (in Pomerania) do include lists of chapel fittings.

Location

One of the fundamental rules of design for a medieval church was that its chancel and main altar should face east. Exceptions to this

¹¹ S. Józwiak, J. Trupinda, *Krzyżackie zamki komturskie w Prusach. Topografia i układ przestrzenny na podstawie średniowiecznych źródeł pisanych*, Toruń 2012, p. 294.

¹² 1539: “inn der kirchenn an silber, clinodienn, meßgewannndt [...]”, G.C.F. Lisch, *Geschichte der Comthurei Kraak und der Priorei Eixen, Johanniter-Ordens*, “Jahrbücher des Vereins für Mecklenburgische Geschichte und Altertums-kunde” 1836, Bd. 1, pp. 31–32, n. 2.

¹³ 1552: “Ihnn der kerckenn: [...]” (followed by descriptions of equipment and furnishings), BLHA, Rep. 9B, 1966.

¹⁴ 1541: “Folget was inn der kirchenn noch inn vorrath und an barschafftenn an gelde: [...]”, BLHA, Rep. 9B 1991, f. 22r–22v.

¹⁵ 1560: “kirchen”; 1576: “capellen oder kirchen”, Archiwum Państwowe w Szczecinie [State Archives in Szczecin, hereafter: APS], Archiwum Książąt Wologoskich [hereafter: AKW], 65/3/0/70/2040, ff. 147, 230.

¹⁶ BLHA, Rep. 9B 1991, f. 22r–22v.

rule were rare within the Bailiwick of Brandenburg, and may have been dictated by spatial considerations preventing proper orientation.¹⁷ In the case of extensive estates that were relatively sparsely built up, such as Lietzen, Rurka and Chwarszczany, the orientation of a church would have posed no problems. However, the limited, enclosed space surrounding a castle, hemmed in by fortifications, and the fact that it had to accommodate buildings serving a wide range of functions, meant that their layout had to be carefully coordinated. It is worth bearing in mind that it was not only the outer bailey that contained service facilities – inner baileys featured residential chambers, reception halls and rooms used for religious purposes, as well as numerous outbuildings, including armouries, kitchens, bakehouses, brewhouses, servants' quarters, and even malshouses and stables.

It is doubtful that the earliest Hospitaller castles built in the 1230s at Korytowo (*Kürtow*) and Recz (*Retz*), which were probably of the motte-and-bailey variety,¹⁸ had separate chapels. These castles were in operation for too short a period and, more importantly, they never served as seats of the convent.¹⁹ Given that fully-fledged chapels were a rarity at knightly castles in this region,²⁰ areas temporarily demarcated by screens or portable altars may have functioned as sacred spaces at Korytowo and Recz. Similarly, corners of rooms, alcoves and niches may have been used to accommodate sacred objects.²¹ Before a brick-built castle was raised at

¹⁷ Due to the existing network of streets and urban quarters in Szczecin, the chancel of the Franciscan Church of St John the Evangelist was built facing north-east.

¹⁸ A mound survives at Korytów, whilst there are no earthwork remains at Recz. Z. Radacki, *Średniowieczne zamki Pomorza Zachodniego...*, pp. 124–125; S. Słowiński, *Wyniki badań sondażowo-wiertniczych przeprowadzonych na stanowisku nr 3 w Korytowie, gm. Choszczno*, "Materiały Zachodniopomorskie. Nowa Seria" 2012, t. 9, pp. 524–525.

¹⁹ H. Hoogeweg, *Die Stifter und Klöster der Provinz Pommern*, Bd. 2, Stettin 1925, p. 876; E. Rymar, *Historia polityczna i społeczna Nowej Marchii w średniowieczu (do roku 1535)*, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2015, p. 178.

²⁰ Cf. O. Auge, S. Magnussen, *Burgkapellen in Norddeutschland und Dänemark: Der Norden als Sonderfall?*, in: *Burgkapellen. Formen – Funktionen – Fragen. Akten der Internationalen Tagung Brixen, Bischöfliche Hofburg und Cusanus-Akademie, 2. bis 5. September 2015*, hrsg. v. G. Pfeifer, K. Andermann, Innsbruck 2018 ("Veröffentlichungen des Südtiroler Landesarchivs", Bd. 42), pp. 271–283; M. Saczyńska, *O kaplicach w siedzibach rycerskich i możnowładczych późnośredniowiecznej Polski uwag kilka*, KHKM 2016, R. 64, nr 3, pp. 311–313.

²¹ O. Auge, S. Magnussen, *Burgkapellen in Norddeutschland und Dänemark...*, pp. 271–283; M. Saczyńska, *O kaplicach...*, pp. 307–308, 310–313; E. Bünz,

Łagów, the Hospitallers, who arrived there around 1347, probably spent the first few years living in a motte-and-bailey castle located atop a neighbouring hill known as Sokola Góra. When this site was excavated, liturgical book fittings were discovered in deposits dated to the 14th century.²² The motte-and-bailey castle was intensively occupied around the mid-14th century (when construction work began on the brick-built fortress) and it remained in use to a lesser degree during the 15th and 16th centuries; the sacred space probably took the form of a temporary oratory.²³ Although the castle at Peżin (*Pansin*), raised in the late 14th/early 15th century, was similar in form to the commanderies at Łagów and Swobnica (Fig. 2: 1, 2a–b, 5), extensive remodelling of the original residential wing makes it difficult to determine its interior layout. Given that the castle was only used as the seat of the Hospitaller convent for a short time,²⁴ a chapel may never have been built there, or else it

Kapelle (Doppel-), in: *Handbuch Höfe und Residenzen im spätmittelalterlichen Reich*, Bd. 15.II–1, 2007, pp. 37–40, https://adw-goe.de/fileadmin/forschungsprojekte/resikom/dokumente/pdfs/HBII/S_109.pdf [accessed: 23.09.2024]. See also D. Adamska, “*In domo sua.*” *Kaplice rycerskie na dworach i zamkach księstwa świdnicko-jaworskiego w średniowieczu*, in: *Náboženský život a církevní poměry v Zámch Koruny české ve 14.–17. století*, eds. L. Bobková, J. Konvičná, Praha 2008, pp. 497–498.

²² M. Paczkowska, *Łagów Lubuski, woj. zielonogórskie. Studium historyczno-urbanistyczne Łagowa Lubuskiego*, Szczecin 1984, p. 16 (typescript held by Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa [Poland’s National Cultural Heritage Board, hereafter: NID], Szczecin).

²³ A. Kołodziejcki, *Badania archeologiczne muzeum ziemi lubuskiej*, Zielona Góra 1966, pp. 46–47; M. Nowacki, *Powiat Świebodziński. Szkice Historyczne*, Świebodzin 2006, p. 86. This may have been the case up until the settlement at Sokola Góra burned down in 1569.

²⁴ Peżino was acquired in 1382, and the castle was built in the late 14th/early 15th century. Shortly thereafter it was pledged as collateral to the Güntersberg family (1418–1482). In 1486 and 1490 the commander was replaced, though we know nothing about the remaining members of the convent. APS, Pozostałe Pomoce Archiwalne, 65/78/0/3.86/2195, no. 226; *Geschichtsquellen des burg- und schlossgessenen Geschlechts von Borcke*, hrsg. v. G. Sello [hereafter: Borcke], Bd. 1: *Bis zum Ausgang des 14. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1901, p. 282; Borcke, Bd. 2: *Bis zum Ausgang des 15. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1903, pp. 227–228; Borcke, Bd. 4: *Urkunden, Akten und Briefe des 14.–19. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin 1912, p. 18; *Diplomatische Beiträge zur Geschichte Pommerns aus der Zeit Bogislafs X.*, hrsg. v. R. Klempin, Berlin 1859, p. 483. In the 16th century the secular owners built a small, masonry chapel in the outer bailey. I. Kukla, R. Rogosz, B. Makarewicz, *Kaplica przy zamku w Peżinie woj. szczecińskie, badania architektoniczne*, Szczecin 1988 (typescript held by Wojewódzki Urząd Ochrony Zabytków [Provincial Office for the Protection of Historical Monuments], Szczecin), p. 6.

may have been relocated to a site that had originally been designed for a different purpose. At Suchań (*Zachan*), where the Hospitalers had a commandery from the late 13th/early 14th century²⁵ to the mid-16th century, the convent resided within an extensive motte-and-bailey complex (Fig. 2: 4). Although the sacred space at Łagów Castle was probably temporary in nature, the fact that the commandery at Suchań lasted until the mid-16th century suggests that it must have had a permanent chapel. Unfortunately, the only inventory we have from Suchań, dating from 1545, makes no mention of any liturgical equipment,²⁶ though it is possible that by that time there was no longer a convent there. We can only speculate that a separate chapel building may have stood in one of the two baileys, or that there may have been an oratory in the convent house, which would have been located either in the keep on the motte or on the Hospitaller estate.

There is no doubt that the majority of residences, whether ducal or private, had chapels or small, improvised oratories.²⁷ Within the study area, we know of only a handful of chapels that were integrated into brick-built castles. The earliest example appears to be the chapel inside the keep of the Eberstein family's castle at Nowogard (*Naugard*), which was built in the late 13th century;²⁸ the original chapel in the castle of the Dukes of Pomerania at Darłowo (*Rügenwalde*) was located on the upper storey of the gate tower;²⁹ there was also a chapel at the castle in Szadzko (*Saatzig*), probably somewhere in its residential wing.³⁰ The Teutonic Order castle in Świdwin (*Schievelbein*) featured a chapel on the upper storey of its main wing.³¹

Given this scant number of known examples, it is all the more difficult to try and ascertain where chapels were positioned within Hospitaller castles, though the fact that they had to be duly orientated does help pinpoint their most probable location. In contrast

²⁵ D. Wybranowski, *Jeszcze raz o konflikcie z joannitami ze Stargardu i Korytowa z lat 1268–1271. Próba identyfikacji osób wasali książęcych z dokumentów Alberta Wielkiego*, PZ 2001, t. 16(45), nr 3, p. 20.

²⁶ APS, Archiwum Książąt Szczecińskich, 65/2/0/1.87/1/4031, ff. 230–235.

²⁷ M. Saczyńska, *O kaplicach...*, p. 311; D. Nowakowski, *Siedziby książęce i rycerskie księstwa głogowskiego w średniowieczu*, Wrocław 2008, pp. 222–223.

²⁸ Z. Radacki, *Średniowieczne zamki Pomorza Zachodniego...*, p. 159.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 95.

³⁰ A. Puławski, *Zamek Szadzko w średniowieczu*, "Stargardia" 2013, t. 7, p. 141.

³¹ Z. Radacki, *Średniowieczne zamki Pomorza Zachodniego...*, pp. 62, 64.

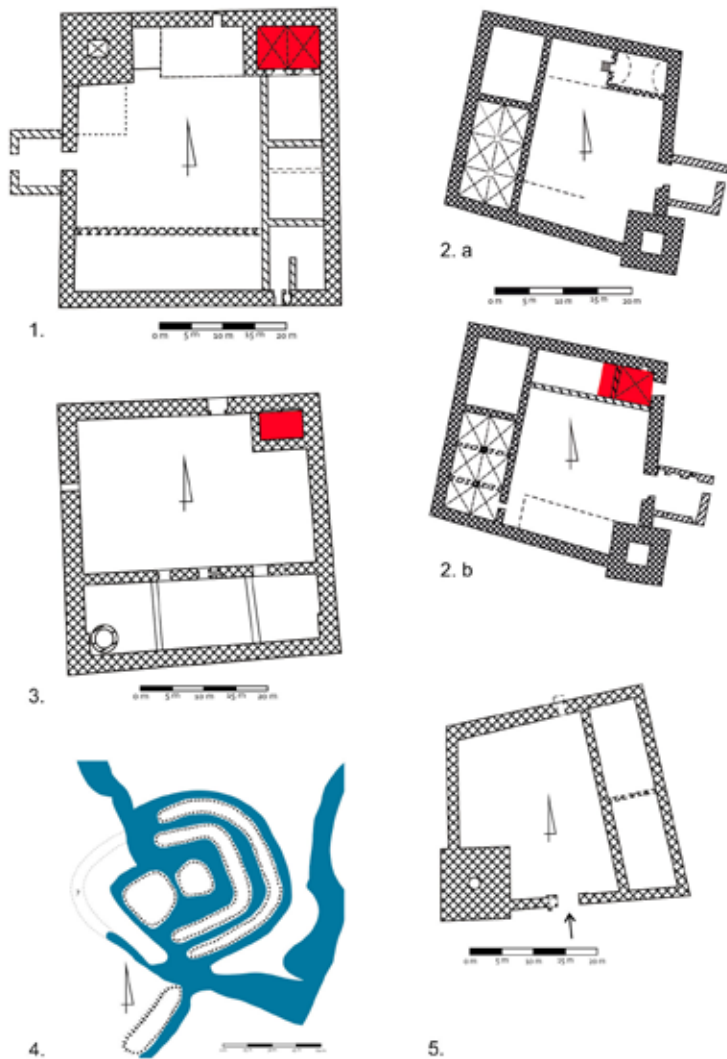


Fig. 2. Castle ground plans: Swobnica (1. – ground floor), Łagów (2. a – cellar, 2. b – ground floor), Stare Drawsko (3. – ground floor), Suchań (4. – fortifications), Pęzino (5. – ground floor). Chapel locations are marked in red (drawing: K. Wroński)

to the layout seen at Teutonic Order castles in Prussia,³² chapels were not integrated into conventual or residential wings. They were probably most often housed in separate buildings that were taller than they were wide, taking the form of quasi-towers or tower houses, making them somewhat similar to free-standing churches. Construction work on the castle at Swobnica began after 1377.³³ The chapel building was probably finished in 1420 or earlier, as records make mention of a grant for the maintenance of an altar lamp that year.³⁴ The chapel, with a floorplan of 7.45 × 11.8 m, occupied the north-east corner of the castle (Fig. 2.1; Fig. 3). The absence of neighbouring buildings is evidenced by the south façade, which originally featured windows, and by the fact that one of the main tower's arrow loops pointed straight at the chapel's north-west corner, which connected to the battlement in the north curtain wall.³⁵ The chapel was situated on the raised ground floor.³⁶ Surviving sources and architectural evidence indicate that a similar location may have been used for chapels in two other brick-built castles: at Łągów and Stare Drawsko (*Draheim*) (Fig. 2: 2a–b, 3). In both cases, buildings separate from the main wings may have originally

³² The Teutonic rule and statutes did not specify where the chapel should be built, but more often than not (also for practical reasons) it was located on the first floor of one of the wings of the convent. Cf. S. Józwiak, J. Trupinda, *Krzyżackie zamki komturskie w Prusach...*, pp. 41, 296–300; T. Torbus, *Zamki konwentualne państwa krzyżackiego w Prusach*, Gdańsk 2014, p. 359.

³³ A. Breitsprecher, *Die Komturei Rörchen-Wildenbruch...*, pp. 98–99.

³⁴ “Der lampe in der capelle to Wildenbruke upme slotte”, after: *ibidem*, p. 104. Piotr Oliński points out that endowments for keeping the altar lamp burning continuously were usually secured at the time of a chapel's construction; however, in the case of Swobnica it is difficult to imagine that the castle chapel was built almost 40 years after the process of relocating the convent from Rurka to Swobnica had begun. P. Oliński, *Światło w brackich i prywatnych fundacjach religijnych w kościołach parafialnych wielkich miast pruskich w XIV–XV w.*, KHKM 2008, R. 56, nr 3/4, p. 369.

³⁵ No trace of any architectural structures was found during archaeological core sampling; it was only next to the main tower that a small cellared building was detected. E. Cnotliwy, R. Kamiński, R. Rogosz, E. Wilgocki, *Swobnica – zamek (woj. szczecińskie). Dokumentacja z archeologicznych badań wiertniczych przeprowadzonych w 1979 r. na terenie założenia zamkowego w Swobnicy*, Szczecin 1979 (typescript held by NID, Szczecin), p. 11.

³⁶ A. Kamiński, *Swobnica – zamek. Badania architektoniczne*, Szczecin 1982 (typescript held by NID, Szczecin), pp. 17–20; Z. Radacki, *Średniowieczne zamki na Pomorzu Zachodnim. Suplement do monografii z 1976 roku*, “Materiały Zachodniopomorskie. Nowa Seria” 2005/2006, t. 2/3(2) [hereafter: Z. Radacki, *Suplement*], p. 10.

stood in the corners of the curtain walls. At Łagów, up until the 1970s a barrel-vaulted undercroft survived in the north-east corner; the storey above it was described in 1705 as the remains of an earlier structure (*eine gewolbete cammer ist schlosswest undt noch von dem alten gebäude stehen blieben*).³⁷ Meanwhile, in the north-west corner at Stare Drawsko, there was a cellared building whose floorplan and massive, reinforced corner abutting the curtain wall suggest that it was meant to be a much larger structure, possibly a tower.³⁸ It is not clear whether, apart from the cellar, this building was ever finished, as 17th-century sources refer exclusively to its underground storey.³⁹ Archaeological evidence indicates that in the late 14th/early 15th century the cellar was used as an armoury where weapons were both made and stored;⁴⁰ the fact that this would have involved the use of an open fire (a furnace was discovered near this building) is at odds with the idea that there was a chapel on the ground floor.

Originally, all of the above facilities were isolated from areas of routine domestic activity. In the case of Swobnica and Łagów this was achieved by positioning them at a maximum distance,

³⁷ BLHA, Rep. 9B, 1663; C. Gahlbeck, *Lagow (Łagów) – Kommende...*, p. 733. It is thought that this was located beneath a south or north room of the west wing (Z. Radacki, *Suplement*, p. 15; E. Kulke, *Die mittelalterlichen Burganlagen der mittleren Ostmark*, Frankfurt an der Oder, 1934, p. 36), or in the north-east corner (C. Gahlbeck, *Lagow (Łagów) – Kommende...*, pp. 733–734; H.E. Kubach, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kreises Oststernberg*, Stuttgart, 1960, p. 126). The north-east corner seems the most likely location, though the vaulted room there is later than the slightly larger undercroft below it. The floorplan of the undercroft reveals the outline of the earlier room, which was demolished in the latter half of the 16th century. A window that was originally a niche in the east wall may evidence the existence of a chapel.

³⁸ Its construction may not have been completed, or it may have been severely damaged in the Middle Ages. Cf. T. Balcerzak, *Sondażowe badania architektoniczne na zamku w Starym Drawsku*, Szczecin 1984 (typescript held by NID, Szczecin), p. 7; H. Janocha, *Badania archeologiczno-architektoniczne na grodzisku wczesnośredniowiecznym i zamku średniowiecznym w Starym Drawsku (Drahimiu), pow. Szczeciński (stanowisko 1), w latach 1964–1965*, "Materiały Zachodniopomorskie" 1965, t. 11, p. 464.

³⁹ 1616: "Po lewej ręce piwnica murowana" (*Lustracja województw wielkopolskich i kujawskich, 1628–1632*, cz. 1: *Województwa poznańskie i kaliskie*, red. Z. Guldon, Wrocław 1967, p. 33); 1672: "ein keller zur muniton aufgemauwert und mitt diehlen gedecket" (APS, *Urząd Domenalno-Rentowy w Drahimiu*, 65/56/0/1/6).

⁴⁰ H. Janocha, *Badania archeologiczno-architektoniczne...*, p. 465; H. Janocha, F. Lachowicz, D. Ptaszyńska, *Gród i zamek w Starym Drawsku*, Poznań 1972, p. 52.

diagonally across the courtyard, from the kitchen and refectory, located in the opposite wing (Fig. 2: 1, 2a–b).⁴¹ Only in the case of Swobnica, approximately 5.4 m west of the former chapel, there are relics of a latrine(?) bay window in the curtain wall at the ground level, so in this case we cannot rule out the existence of some kind of timber-framed building next to the chapel.

The location of the chapels raises certain doubts about their practical use, because as well as being far away from any domestic amenities, they were also a good distance from the conventual buildings. It seems likely that there would have been some covered passages making it easier to attend the liturgy at various hours of the day and times of the year. Unless, of course, these chapels were more like the ones found at rural commanderies, where a freestanding structure set apart from the remaining buildings was usually the focal point of the complex, thus visually emphasising its distinctiveness and clearly demarcating a sacred precinct. Examples include Mirow⁴² (although there the chapel was most probably immediately next to the convent house), and Nemerow, where the chapel was among a group of buildings on a hilltop, in close proximity to the convent house,⁴³ but outside the domestic activity zone lower down the hill. Chapels in similar locations in relation to the convent building were also found at the commanderies of Chwarszczany, Lietzen and Rurka, which had been taken over from the Templars.⁴⁴ In castles, there was also a military aspect to the positioning of chapels: at Swobnica the chapel occupied the corner overlooking the village, whilst the ones at Łagów and Stare Drawsko were next to the gateway. Thus, creating detached structures reminiscent of towers, reflected both utilitarian features typical of the

⁴¹ Kitchens, bakehouses and brewhouses were located at the south end of the courtyards of both castles. BLHA, Rep. 9B, 1660, ff. 4r–4v, 6r, 10r, 15r, 46r–46v; C. Gahlbeck, *Łagow (Łagów) oder Sonnenburg (Stońsk)*..., p. 281, Fig. 3, p. 280; APS, AKW 2040, ff. 6–7, 21–22, 29–30, 140–142, 237–239; APS, AKW 65/3/0/70/1999, ff. 9r–10r; G. Bülow, *Inventarium der S. Johanniterordenscomthurei Wildenbruch aus den Jahren 1547 und 1560*, BS AF 1879, Bd. 29, p. 17.

⁴² “[...] he scal noghten vp vnseme hou to kore gan vnde misse holden”, MUB, Bd. 14, p. 30.

⁴³ BLHA, Rep. 9B, 1666.

⁴⁴ P. Kolosowski, D. Siemińska, *The Templars' Sites in Rurka (Rörchen) and Chwarszczany (Quartschen)*..., pp. 450, 455.

practical architecture of the Cistercians,⁴⁵ whilst also symbolically highlighting the separation of the holy from the everyday.



Fig. 3. Swobnica Castle. Reconstruction showing the position of the demolished west wall of the chapel and the line of its vaulting. The east wing on the right (remodelled) was added in the latter half of the 15th century (photo: K. Wroński)

Architecture

Hospitaller castles were of characteristically simple form: a rectangle of high, windowless curtain walls pierced by a gateway and with a donjon in one corner. As with other structures within the upper ward, chapel buildings were not usually prominent features. In contrast to Teutonic Order castles, the outer walls did not have window openings, as these could have been defensive weak spots. Architectural features such as chancels projecting from external walls were also avoided, as were decorative details signalling the chapel's location. This austerity was further accentuated

⁴⁵ J. Jarzewicz, *Architektura średniowieczna Pomorza Zachodniego*, Poznań 2019, pp. 51–55, 73, 281.

by the uninterrupted row of defensive galleries that ran along the top of the curtain walls.

At Swobnica, the chapel building had an undercroft with two vaulted chambers accessed from the south. At Łagów the undercroft was a single, barrel-vaulted room entered from the west (Fig. 2: 2a), whilst at Stare Drawsko there were two underground rooms (possibly originally vaulted), with an entrance in the west wall.⁴⁶ The largely extant battlements and the attic storey of the chapel building at Swobnica indicate that the chapel may not have originally had brick gables, but rather a hipped roof, which made it even more reminiscent of a defensive tower (Fig. 6). In 1560, a *kirchoffe* was mentioned in the description of the chapel at Swobnica. According to the description, the *kirchoffe* also featured a place or devices (*2 helm*) where water was apparently heated, or more likely, where “firewater” was produced (!).⁴⁷ This issue remains unresolved.

The building’s vertical dimension was further emphasised by some of its other features. The ground floor was raised considerably above the level of the courtyard (1.5–2.3 m), hence it



Fig. 4. South elevation of the undercroft below the former chapel at Swobnica (the dashed line approximates the original occupation level) (photo: K. Wroński)

⁴⁶ T. Balcerzak, *Sondażowe badania...*, p. 7; H. Janocha, *Badania archeologiczno-architektoniczne...*, p. 464.

⁴⁷ “2 helm uf dem kirchoffe, da mahn wasser in brendt”, APS, AKW, 65/3/0/70/2040, f. 147; G. Bülow, *Inventarium...*, pp. 11, 31.

must have been accessed via an external flight of stairs. The ascetic form of the tower was highlighted by the construction of its walls: the face of the south wall, almost up to the springers of the windows' arches, was built of broken fieldstone bonded with large amounts of mortar to which pieces of brick were added. The doorway and cellar window were framed with bricks. Notably, the stonework above ground was laid in neat courses (Fig. 4). The window reveals and the upper sections of the walls were of brick, which in the latter half of the 14th century was still considered a more prestigious building material⁴⁸ (Fig. 5). This could be an echo of earlier construction techniques; it could also be a technique used by the team of builders who erected the chapel. However, the symbolic significance of the stone wall cannot be ruled out, as will be discussed later.

The interior of the chapel at Swobnica was a single, rectangular space measuring 7.5×11.2 m and ca. 5.5–6 m high,⁴⁹ with no separate chancel. Surviving in the south wall (adjoining the courtyard), and central to each bay, there are two wide (total size c. $2.5\text{--}2.8 \times 3.3\text{--}3.6$ m, opening c. 1.7×3 m), now bricked-up windows with a pointed arch and simple reveal featuring a stepped profile



Fig. 5. Bricked-up windows of the former chapel at Swobnica. On the left is the west window seen in the outer elevation, and on the right – the east window seen in the interior elevation (photo: K. Wroński)

⁴⁸ J. Jarzewicz, *Gotycka architektura Nowej Marchii...*, Poznań 2000, pp. 69–72.

⁴⁹ A. Kamiński, *Swobnica – zamek...*, pp. 17–20; Z. Radacki, *Suplement*, p. 10.

(Figs. 5 and 6). It was plausibly accessed via probably not until the latter half of the 16th century that further windows were added⁵⁰ when the chapel was remodelled (Fig. 3). Unspecified window openings may have already appeared by the latter half of the 15th century, when the east wing was built, blocking the chapel's windowed elevation. It was plausibly accessed via an entrance in the west wall, which probably also included a window opening illuminating the altar. At Łagów there is an extant window opening (originally blank?) in the east wall with a splayed reveal provided with two alcoves.

The chapel ceiling at Swobnica Castle comprised two bays of ribbed vaulting (Figs. 3 and 7). In contrast to the heavy rib vaulting of the refectory at Łagów, which was built slightly earlier, the vault at Swobnica was installed high above the chapel, creating a lofty hall and optically counterbalancing its compact size. The vaulting sprang from wall-mounted shafts that terminated slightly below the line of the keystones of the recessed windows. In the case of Łagów and Stare Drawsko, the interiors I believe to have been chapels were of similar proportions to the one at Swobnica, though their floorplans were smaller, measuring 4.58×7.68 m⁵¹ and 3.87×6.52 m respectively.⁵² The proportions of the chamber at Łagów suggest that its vaulting may have been similar to that at Swobnica, with one or two rectangular bays. At Stare Drawsko there are no surviving traces of the vault supports, but the ground-floor layout was accentuated by two wide (c. 2.6 m), shallow recesses, topped by a segmental arch⁵³ (Fig. 8). The height of the chapels at Łagów and Stare Drawsko was not as great as that of the one at Swobnica, and probably amounted to around 4 m.

⁵⁰ New windows were added to the north wall central to the bays of the vaulting and the earlier Gothic windows.

⁵¹ Z. Radacki, *Zamek w Łagowie pow. Sulęcín woj. zielonogórskie*, Szczecin 1959 (typescript held by NID, Szczecin), p. 27.

⁵² T. Balcerzak, *Sondażowe badania...*, p. 7; H. Janocha, *Badania archeologiczno-architektoniczne...*, p. 464.

⁵³ T. Balcerzak, *Sondażowe badania...*, graphic supplement no. 4; H. Janocha, *Badania archeologiczno-architektoniczne...*, p. 465.

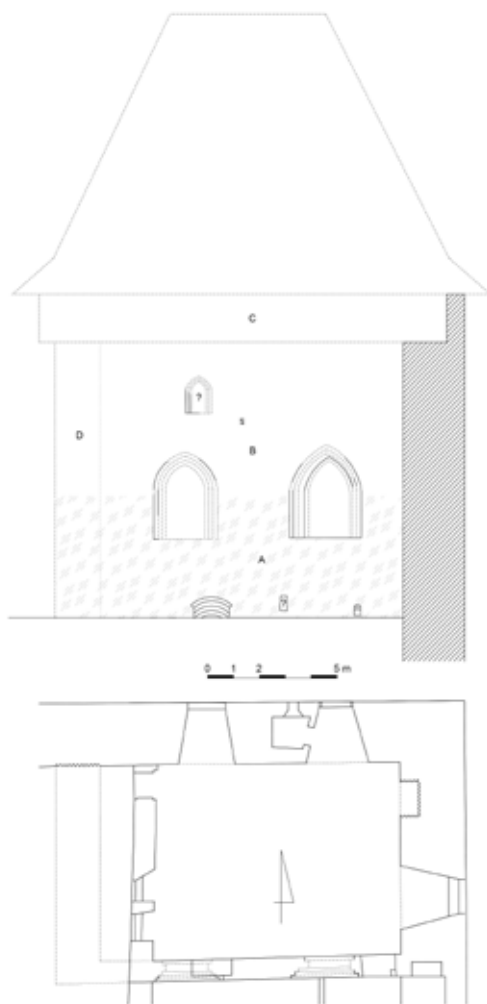


Fig. 6. Theoretical reconstruction and the ground floor plan of the former chapel at Swobnica (14–16th c.). Dashed line – reconstruction, [A] stone and brick wall, [B] brick wall, [C] attic (timber-framed?) [D] unpreserved part of the building (drawing: K. Wroński)



Fig. 7. Removal of plaster from the east wall on the second storey of the castle at Swobnica revealing the outline of the pier that once supported the ribbed vault of the former chapel (photo: K. Wroński)

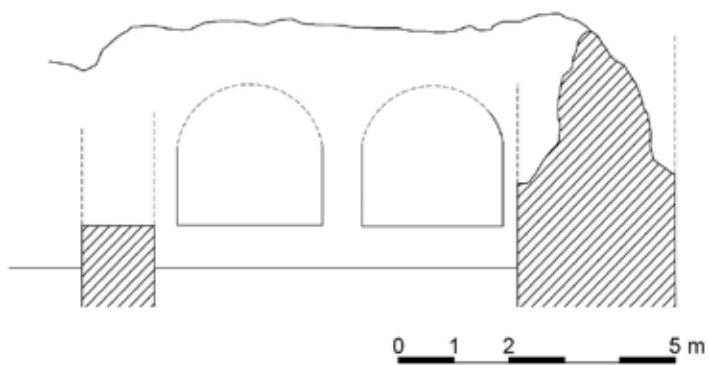


Fig. 8. Layout of blank windowrecesses in the north wall of the building in the north-east corner of the castle at Stare Drawsko (drawing: K. Wroński, based on photo by B. Sańko, after T. Balcerzak, *Sondażowe badania...*)

Furnishings

Because castle chapels were closed to outsiders, serving only the convent and its few guests (confreres, monastic and ecclesiastical dignitaries, familiars and territorial rulers), they did not have choir screens. Numerous instructions in the Order's statutes dictated the maintenance of chapels and their lighting;⁵⁴ thus, a note dating from 1420 mentions an endowment for the maintenance of an altar lamp in the chapel at Swobnica. That particular chapel retained its Catholic furnishings at least until 1560, when it was recorded that there was a main altar (*auff dem hohen altar*), provided with two crucifixes, as well as six large and two small candlesticks. Although the chapel comprised a single space, the presence of small side-altars cannot be ruled out. Examples of these are noted in chapels at Teutonic castles,⁵⁵ whilst in 1552 records show that the not preserved chapel in the commandery at Nemerow, which was probably comparable in size to the chapels at Lietzen and Rurka, had two older altars in addition to the main one.⁵⁶ In 1451 a new altar (*nyghen altare*) of the Virgin Mary and Three Kings was installed at Łagów.⁵⁷ Marian devotion, an important aspect of late medieval knightly piety, was strong in the Bailiwick of Brandenburg;⁵⁸ however, there is no certainty as to whether the new altar at Łagów was intended for the convent chapel. There are no inventory entries about the chapel's furnishings, though it is worth noting that a wooden crucifix dated to the latter half of the

⁵⁴ A. Luttrell, *The Spiritual Life of the Hospitallers of Rhodes*, in: *Die Spiritualität der Ritterorden im Mittelalter*, hrsg. v. Z.H. Nowak, Toruń 1993 ("Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica", vol. 7), p. 79.

⁵⁵ A. Błażewicz, *Wyposażenie kaplic w krzyżackich zamkach wójtowskich w Grabinach-Zameczku, Laskach i Sztumie*, in: *Komturzy, rajcy, żupani*, red. B. Śliwiński, Malbork 2005 ("Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza", nr 11), pp. 26–27; W. Rozyński, *Przestrzeń liturgiczna w kaplicach krzyżackich domów zakonnych w Prusach – zarys problematyki*, in: *Pogranicza. Przestrzeń kulturowa*, red. S. Fafiński, Olsztyn 2007, p. 34; *idem*, *O kaplicach w pokrzyżackich domach zakonnych w świetle nowożytnych inwentarzy – wybrane przykłady*, in: *Od Torunia do Charkowa*, red. M. Grupa, A. Pydyn, Toruń 2016, pp. 143–154.

⁵⁶ "[...] noch 2 alte Altar", BLHA, Rep. 9B, 1966 (no page numbers).

⁵⁷ BLHA, Rep. 9B, U 270; according to Christian Gahlbeck, this information referred to the castle chapel; C. Gahlbeck, *Łagow (Łagów) oder Sonnenburg (Słońsk)*..., p. 284.

⁵⁸ A. Baumert, *Frömmigkeit und Ritterorden. Ein neuer Blick auf die Johanner in der Ballei Brandenburg*, "Potestas" 2011, Nr. 4., pp. 164–165.

14th century was part of the pre-war fittings of an 18th-century church built in the outer bailey.⁵⁹ Chapel furnishings doubtless included choir stalls, or more likely, given the small number of priests, seats or benches with kneelers for the use of members of the convent.⁶⁰ Free-standing Hospitaller chapels were equipped with bells, as evidenced by the existence of ridge turrets (Lietzen) and by early post-medieval sources that mention bells suspended in gables, as well as smaller bells used during the liturgy (Nemerow).⁶¹ Some original bells have also survived (Kraak).⁶² It is reasonable to assume that castle chapels were also furnished with bells (possibly hand-held) which were used primarily to call members of the convent to prayer.⁶³ Up until 1902, in the parish church at Swobnica there was an uninscribed bell with a depiction of a stag on it, which according to local tradition came from the chapel of the Hospitaller castle.⁶⁴

The Swobnica inventory tells us about other pre-Reformation items of liturgical equipment. These consisted of chasubles, a set of robes with a chasuble (*kassel*), a black camel-hair fabric (*zamlott*) with a crucifix, a choir cope (*khorkappe*), four albs, altar coverings and a chalice with a paten.⁶⁵ An inventory of 1560 records that most of this liturgical paraphernalia was still kept in the chapel, though it does not specify whether in the sacristy, armarium or predella.

⁵⁹ H.E. Kubach, *Die Kunstdenkmäler des Kreises Oststernberg...*, p. 131. It might also be noted that a figurine of Our Lady was discovered in a fortified residential tower of the castle at Santok; however, this figure was of post-Hospitaller date, *Zantoch. Eine Burg im deutschen Osten*, hrsg. v. A. Brackmann, W. Unverzagt, Leipzig 1936, pp. 120–121.

⁶⁰ Cf. M. Arszynski, *Der Deutschordensburg als Klosterbau*, in: *Die Spiritualität der Ritterorden im Mittelalter*, hrsg. v. Z.H. Nowak, Toruń 1993 (“Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica”, vol. 7), p. 153.

⁶¹ 1552: “Ihnn dem ghiebel: 2 hangenete glocken mit 2 kripen”, BLHA, Rep. 9B, 1966.

⁶² These bells probably date from the early 14th century. G.C.F. Lisch, *Geschichte der Comthurei Kraak...*, p. 65.

⁶³ W. Rozynkowski, *Funkcje dzwonów w krzyżackiej wspólnocie zakonnej w Prusach*, in: *Dzwon w chrześcijańskiej Europie*, red. G. Guźlak, Bydgoszcz 2017, pp. 104–105.

⁶⁴ H. Lemcke, *Die Bau- und Kunstdenkmäler der Provinz Pommern*, T. 2, Bd. 2, H. 6: *Der Kreis Greifenhagen*, Stettin 1902, pp. 144–145.

⁶⁵ “2 gulden stueck, ein roth dass ander grun verblumet, 1 altt gulden stueck, 1 kassel von verblumeter leinewandt, 1 schwarz zamlott mit einem crucifix, 1 rothe khorkappe verblumet, mit einer christall in sylber gefasset, 4 alwen, 1 kelch mit einer pathen”, APS, AKW 2040, f. 147; G. Bülow, *Inventarium...*, p. 31.

The window niche with two alcoves in the north wall of the chapel in its current form is a post-medieval construction,⁶⁶ though we cannot rule out that there was originally a small room or recess there which served as a sacristy, much like the recess in the wall of the chapel at Darłowo. Another room which was clearly used for storing liturgical equipment was one referred to as a “priory” (*prioratt*),⁶⁷ though it was located some distance from the chapel, in the south wing, next to the priests’ chambers.

Priests’ chambers

Sources (unfortunately relatively late ones, dating from the early to mid-16th century) indicate that Hospitaller priests occupied separate rooms⁶⁸ within the inner bailey. These were not, however, immediately next to the chapel, but near the residential quarters of other members of the convent and (secular?) officials.⁶⁹ At the castle in Swobnica two priests lived in separate rooms in the south wing. There were a number of other rooms in this building, including the convent’s chancellery, but most of the space appears to have been taken up by service facilities (among them a kitchen and a brew-house) and accommodation for servants. It is possible that before the expansion of the castle in the latter half of the 15th century, this wing served as the original convent house. In 1545 the priests’ chambers neighboured the aforementioned room referred to as a priory.⁷⁰ The content of the inventory indicates that at that time this may

⁶⁶ A. Kamiński, *Swobnica – zamek...*, [sheet] 2, *Swobnica – zamek, rzut przyziemia*.

⁶⁷ APS, AKW 65/3/0/70/2040, ff. 9, 23, 53, 147; G. Bülow, *Inventarium...*, pp. 17, 30. In 1545 there were 11 unspecified books (1546/1563 – 8 books), a table, a cabinet and a bench, as well as a brass *handfass* (a vessel from which water was poured for the washing of hands) and a chalice in this room. The chalice was recorded in the chapel in 1560. APS, AKW 65/3/0/70/2040, ff. 9, 147.

⁶⁸ In 1545 at Swobnica: “h. Adams gemach, h. Mattheus gemach”, APS, AKW 65/3/0/70/2040, ff. 9, 23r, 25, 31; G. Bülow, *Inventarium...*, pp. 17–18; also a certain “Er Mathens Werner”, APS, AKW, 65/3/0/70/2040, ff. 23r. In 1533 at Łagów: “Jacobus kammer”. This room was shared with a gunsmith. BLHA, Rep. 9B 1660, f. 3r.

⁶⁹ K. Wroński, *Zamek w Łagowie w świetle najstarszego inwentarza z 1533 r.*, “Rocznik Chojeński” 2018, t. 10, pp. 49, 55.

⁷⁰ APS, AKW 65/3/0/70/2040, ff. 9, 23, 53, 147; G. Bülow, *Inventarium...*, pp. 17, 30.

have been the priests' dayroom,⁷¹ though earlier, during the pre-Reformation period, the priory served a different purpose. It was the seat of the prior, who led the assembly of priests (clerics) at the convent,⁷² as confirmed by the only recorded mention of him, which appears in a source of 1420: "Dns Cristoferus Scroder, frater ordinis f. domus hospitalis S. Johannis Jerosolimitani, ac Prior Conuentus et fratrum Castri Wyldenbruke".⁷³ Thus, the assembly of priests at Swobnica represents a continuity of the assembly at Rurka, whose prior (Johann von Stettin) is mentioned in 1334,⁷⁴ and which in 1367, 15 years before the commandery was transferred to Swobnica, was served by a priest and two clerics whose names were not recorded.⁷⁵

At other castles there were fewer priests: in 1367 only one priest was recorded at Łagów, and this number remained unchanged until the Reformation,⁷⁶ whilst at Suchań mention was made of a priest and a cleric in 1367.⁷⁷ By comparison, at the commandery in Mirow

⁷¹ An inventory of 1545 makes no mention of beds: "in der prioratt: 6 bucher, 1 tische, 1 spindt, 1 banck, 1 missing handfass, 1 kessell", APS, AKW 65/3/0/70/2040, f. 8.

⁷² S.W. Wohlbrück, *Geschichte des ehemahligen Bisthums Lebus und des Landes dieses Nahmens*, Th.1, Berlin 1829, pp. 591–592. Cf. A. Luttrell, *The Spiritual Life ...*, pp. 79–80. The fact that books were still kept in this room in 1545 seems to confirm that it belonged to the prior, who was responsible for religious affairs at the convent, including the care of liturgical books.

⁷³ Source unknown (cited as *U.U. – Ungedruckte Urkunden*), S.W. Wohlbrück, *Geschichte...*, p. 593. In 1424 Johann Penkun was also mentioned as a parson in the village of Swobnica ("Johannis penckun, plebani ville wildebruk"), CDBrand, A Bd. 19, p. 324.

⁷⁴ "Johannes de Ztetin prior in Roreke", S.W. Wohlbrück, *Geschichte...*, pp. 591–592.

⁷⁵ Strasbourg, Archives départementales du Bas-Rhin, H 1363, ff. 16–36v, after: K. Borchardt, *Soll-Zahlen zum Personalstand der deutschen Johanniter vom Jahre 1367*, "Revue Mabillon. Nouvelle série" 2003, n° 14, p. 109. Priors were also recorded at other commanderies, such as Nemerow – Gebhard von Goslar (1339), "Martin van dem Barge, Prior des Huses [...] to Nemerow" (1392), GSPK Urk. Johanniterorden no. 112, G. v. Hacke, *Geschichte der Vorderstadt Neubrandenburg*, I 53, after: G. Wentz, *Das Bistum Havelberg, Berlin–Leipzig 1933* ("Germania Sacra", Bd. 2, Abt. 1: *Die Bistümer der Kirchenprovinz Magdeburg*). p. 387 – and Mirow (where as late as 1540, hence after the Reformation, the priest of the chapel was referred to as a prior ("Henrico priore in Mirowe", 1309), MUB, Bd 5, p. 479; Joachim Scheper (1540), GSPK, Rep. 9A Fach 27 I 1, after: G. Wentz, *Das Bistum Havelberg...*, p. 386).

⁷⁶ A single priest by the name of Jacobus was noted in 1533. There were also fewer knight-brethren at that time than in 1367. BLHA, Rep. 9B 1660, f. 3r; K. Wroński, *Zamek w Łagowie...*, pp. 48–49.

⁷⁷ K. Borchardt, *Soll-Zahlen zum Personalstand...*, p. 109.

there were three priests and four clerics in 1367, and at the one in Nemerow there were two priests and three clerics.⁷⁸ Karl Borchardt believes that these numbers indicate that candidates were accepted when needed, after which they were assigned to other convents or parish churches run by the Hospitallers,⁷⁹ though some of them may have formed colleges of priests.⁸⁰

The functions of Hospitaller chapels

The size of a castle chapel depended on the numbers that made up the convent community.⁸¹ For obvious reasons, these chapels did not serve as parish churches, but as private, conventual sanctuaries used for the communal celebration of liturgy by resident members of the Order and any occasional guests. In view of the requirements set out in the Order's rule and statutes, the distance to the residential quarters may have been problematic in the winter months and at times of bad weather, as there was no covered passage leading to the chapel, which would have been irksome when it came to celebrating the canonical hours. Thus, although the chapel was the focal point of the religious *vita communis* of the convent, the sacred rites performed there would have been kept to a minimum: namely, observance of daily Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours⁸² for members of the convent, and conducting funeral

⁷⁸ There is mention of three priests (*tres sacerdotes ordinis*) at Nemerow in 1302, when the rights of the commandery were confirmed. G.C.F., Lisch, *Urkunden zur Geschichte der Johanniter-Comthurei Nemerow*, "Jahrbücher des Vereins für mecklenburgische Geschichte und Altertumskunde" 1844, Bd. 9, p. 259. Later, there are references to a single chaplain, and in 1310 to two priests(?): "Johanne de Holdenstede, Johanne de Ruthenberch, conventualibus in Nemerowe predieta", MUB, Bd. 25, T. A, p. 335.

⁷⁹ K. Borchardt, *Fratres clerici und beneficia ecclesiastica im mittelalterlichen Johanniterpriorat Alamania*, "Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders" 2019, vol. 24, p. 166. See also A. Luttrell, *The Spiritual Life...*, p. 78.

⁸⁰ A. Luttrell, *The Spiritual Life...*, p. 79

⁸¹ Łagów: 35 m², required minimum area for the convent: c. 16 m²; Stare Drawsko: c. 28 m², required minimum area for the convent: c. 16 m²; Swobnica: c. 73.5 m², required minimum area for the convent (based on conditions at Rurka): c. 28 m².

⁸² There is a mention in 1560 of a choir cope (*chor kappe*) at Swobnica, which was used by priests during the celebration of the canonical hours. APS, AKW 2040, f. 147. Cf. A. Błażewicz, *Wyposażenie kaplic...*, p. 34.

or memorial Masses for deceased brethren.⁸³ Other celebrations may have been held at local parish churches that were under the patronage of the Hospitallers.⁸⁴ These churches are also where members of the convent were most likely buried.⁸⁵ Finally, the very specific location of chapels within castle fortifications limited the options for any type of expansion. There was far more leeway with chapels and churches at Hospitaller houses in monastic estates; their size and information about their side altars and the presence of altarists shows that, unlike castle chapels, they could fulfil a greater range of sacred functions, and were not limited exclusively to serving the convent community. Some of them probably also served the local population, and together with their adjacent graveyards were used as burial sites for members of the convent.⁸⁶

As castle chapels were component parts of fortresses, their architecture, whilst satisfying their primary religious function, was clearly subordinate to military considerations, which imposed certain spatial constraints. The very location of these chapel buildings meant that they were of defensive significance. Above the one at Swobnica (*uber der capellen oder kirchen*)⁸⁷ there was a defensive attic storey where, from 1545 at latest, heavy firearms were kept ready for use, and which opened onto a gallery that ran along the top of the curtain walls (Fig. 6). We can surmise that the other castle chapels discussed herein also featured defensive storeys.

⁸³ In 1431 conventual priests were obliged to say Mass for the soul of Brother Heinrich von Arnim. GStA PK, U. 271, after: A. Breitsprecher, *Die Komturei Rörchen-Wildenbruch...*, p. 124. The 1560 inventory from Swobnica also makes mention of a black fabric with a crucifix. APS, AKW 2040, f. 147.

⁸⁴ Cf. C. Gahlbeck, *Die Rolle der Stadtkirchen Brandenburg des Johanniterordens*, "Ordines Militares. Colloquia Torunensia Historica. Yearbook for the Study of the Military Orders" 2020, vol. 25, p. 343.

⁸⁵ There are numerous post-medieval examples of this, such as the burial sites of the commanders of Lagów (Andreas von Schlieben, †1571, parish church in the outer bailey at Lagów) and Swobnica (Martin von Wedel, †1575, parish church of Swobnica). In the chapel at Lietzen, as well as the ledgerstone of Johannes de Niendorf (†1276), canon of the collegiate Church of St Sebastian in Magdeburg, there are also many post-medieval memorials, some of them dedicated to contemporary figures (Zacharias von Grün[e]berg, †1581, Hans von Thümen, †1595, Adam von Schlieben, †1628), and others commemorating masters and commanders who died much earlier (Master Balthasar von Schlieben, †1437). Burials of convent members at Chwarszczany and Nurka were discovered during archaeological excavations. P. Kołosowski, *Z badań nad siedzibami templariuszy...*, pp. 47–48, 53.

⁸⁶ Cf. n. 84.

⁸⁷ APS, AKW 65/3/0/70/2040, f. 230.

To date, it has been assumed that directly above the chapel at Swobnica there was also a low room, evidenced by the remains of a window reveal (Fig. 6). Zbigniew Radacki believed that this may have been an infirmary,⁸⁸ though there are no parallels at other castles. Two-storey chapels are seen in Hospitaller architecture, primarily in southern Germany, but this concept is also noted in secular chapels and parish churches with no links to military orders. The storeys above Hospitaller chapels had multiple functions;⁸⁹ but the case of Swobnica may be different. A remnant of the window can be found below the reconstructed outline of the pier that once supported the vault of the west bay (Fig. 6). Its atypical positioning, as well original single beam seat and fragmentarily preserved relics of a brickwork pattern painted on the wall suggests that a some sort of suspended porch leading to this window existed. The function of this window is unclear – it may have been used to observe the interior of the chapel from the porch or, less likely, to provide light for a possible gallery for the convent's important visitors (such as dignitaries of the order, representatives of the bishop or lay rulers). Following the later construction of an eastern wing, it is plausible that the window was adapted into an entrance opening, directly connecting to the guest chamber on the first floor. Given the necessity for further research, the possibilities outlined here are hypothetical.

Finally, we cannot overlook the symbolic aspect of the monastic oratory nestled within the castle walls: its location, form and architectural details as well as the building materials used in its construction. It is notable that large parts of the chapel building at Swobnica were made of stone at ground-floor level. This was a cheap material, widely used in masonry structures in the 13th century;⁹⁰ however, given that the castle was built almost entirely of brick (other than the foundations and the wall socle), the use of stone in the windowed elevation of the chapel seems not so much a question of economics or old-fashioned building traditions, but an expression of certain symbolic values. The range of meanings conveyed was very wide: from the chapel's form and

⁸⁸ Z. Radacki, *Suplement*, p. 11.

⁸⁹ E. Grunsky, *Doppelgeschossige Johanniterkirchen...*, pp. 259–269.

⁹⁰ The latest example in the Swobnica area is the Chapel of St George near Banie, built before 1417. J. Pilch, S. Kowalski, *Leksykon zabytków architektury Pomorza Zachodniego i ziemi lubuskiej*, Warszawa 2012, p. 17.

structural materials evoking a knight's tower, thus signifying durability, strength and feudal power,⁹¹ to the austere details calling to mind the Cistercian plain aesthetic, indicating modesty and antiquity. The chapel building seems to be a synthesis of two estates: the *oratores* and the *bellatores*, though it is worth pointing out that among the Brandenburg Hospitallers the knight-brothers clearly held precedence over the priestly class; they also represented many of the local knightly families.⁹²

Conclusion

Nothing remains of the earliest castle chapels; they were probably makeshift facilities that left no archaeological evidence and were not recorded in any sources. We can assume that once masonry castles began to be built, convent chapels took the form of free-standing structures separated from the castle's other buildings, and very different from the conventual castle chapels of the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia. The castle chapel at Swobnica provides a good example of the nature of these buildings in terms of their architecture and the range of purposes they served, both sacred and military. Their sacred capacity was of principal importance to the convent, but because of their limited size, chapels could only play the role of private oratories for small Hospitaller communities. Their significance must, therefore, have waned as secularisation progressed. Members of the Order, in particular commanders, became increasingly dependent on territorial rulers. Active involvement in secular affairs and taking up secular posts hastened these processes. It is difficult to assess how the convents operated, as their superiors spent a lot of their time away from their communities. There is no doubt that they grew fewer in number over time, ultimately being whittled down to solitary brother-commanders. Covering up the windowed elevation of the chapel at Swobnica with a prestigious new wing was in a sense the physical embodiment of these processes. The advent of the Reformation further accelerated them. The former convents

⁹¹ Cf. P. Lasek, *Turris fortissima nomen Domini. Murowane wieże mieszkalne w Królestwie Polskim od 1300 r. do połowy XVI w.*, Warszawa 2013, pp. 263–265.

⁹² M. Starnawska, *Mnisi, rycerze, szlachta. Templariusze na pograniczu wielkopolsko-brandenbursko-pomorskim*, KH 1992, R. 99, nr 1, pp. 19–20.

gradually disappeared, and the Order lost its patronage over parish churches, which began to be served by lay ministers no longer appointed by the Hospitallers.⁹³ Initially, like numerous rural churches in Pomerania,⁹⁴ Hospitaller chapels retained their Catholic furnishings, though with the addition of evangelical writings, as evidenced by lists of the book collections they held. By the third quarter of the 16th century, the clergy had gone from the houses of the Bailiwick of Brandenburg,⁹⁵ and the chapels, devoid of priests and convents, were comprehensively remodelled or dismantled, and ultimately they ceased to serve their original purpose as a house of God and the fortified home of a feudal lord.

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⁹³ Previously, most rural parishes were served by secular priests; however, they were appointed by the Order. Starnawska, *Mnisi, rycerze, szlachta...*, pp. 17–18.

⁹⁴ M. Wislocki, *Sztuka protestancka na Pomorzu 1535–1684*, Szczecin 2005, pp. 55–56, 63–65.

⁹⁵ K. Wasilkiewicz, *Zarys dziejów baliwatu brandenburskiego joannitów do końca XVI w. Wpływ reformacji na jego funkcjonowanie*, “Studia Europaea Gnesnensia” 2018, t. 18, p. 422.

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Streszczenie

Świątynia za murami. Problem przestrzeni sakralnej zamków joannickich

Specyfikę życia zakonnego łączącego w sobie modlitwę i walkę zbrojną dobrze obrazuje kwestia kaplic zamkowych joannitów baliwatu brandenburskiego. Świątynie, obok refektarza i dormitorium, służyły funkcjonowaniu konwentów, lecz położone w obrębie zamków były ściśle powiązane z surową joannicką architekturą obronną. Przykład Swobnicy, mimo skąpych źródeł, pozwala na podstawie metod porównawczych i retrospekcji podjąć próbę odtworzenia przestrzeni i pewnych cech architektonicznych kaplic na joannickich zamkach. Wbrew przykładom z terenów państwa krzyżackiego w Prusach rysują się one jako odseparowane, być może wieżowe budynki o niewielkich przestrzeniach służących celebracji wspólnej liturgii przez nieliczne konwenty. Spełniały one jednak i inne, choćby militarne funkcje. Kaplice zamkowe zapewne straciły na znaczeniu wraz z nadejściem reformacji, zanikiem stanu kapłańskiego i rozpadem konwentów.