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French Architects, Builders, Stone Masons and Sculptors in Latin Europe in the latter Thirteenth Century

Abstract: The article concerned the issue of French architects, builders, stone masons and sculptors in Latin Europe in the latter thirteenth century. The authors presented the travels and activities in Europe of Pierre d'Angicourt, Pierre de Chaule, Jean de Toul, and Étienne de Bonneuil. The heart of the analysis conducted in the article is an attempt to state the extent of the participation of architects, builders, stonemasons and sculptors from the territory of present-day France in the process in the latter half of the thirteenth century. It is worth noting that the topic is analyzed in view of written sources from the epoch, which are often disregarded in similar studies.

Keywords: Gothic-style, architects, builders, stone masons, Pierre d'Angicourt, Pierre de Chaule, Jean de Toul, Étienne de Bonneuil, Middle Ages, thirteenth century

Słowa kluczowe: styl gotycki, architektura, budowniczość, kamieniarze, Pierre d'Angicourt, Pierre de Chaule, Jean de Toul, Étienne de Bonneuil, średniowiecze, wiek trzynasty

When examining the issue of the spread of Gothic-style construction in Latin Europe in the latter thirteenth century, researchers to date (and especially art historians) have carried out hundreds of analyses of the building materials, architectural details, and stylistic features of particular monuments and building which have been preserved to the modern day and which in many cases have now been studied in great depth in this regard. Due to the state of preservation of the sources (and written sources in particular) it is much more difficult to answer the question of who specifically conceived, or was the designer or creator (architect) of, a given building and who participated in

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its physical construction (builders, stonemasons) or the creation of its decor (sculptors)¹.

And for these reasons it is most difficult to identify whether a particular building was built with a local workforce or through the (sometimes long-distance) transfer of people and technologies. That such transfers occurred in individual cases was already known to scholars by the nineteenth century, but no-one has ever addressed the issue comprehensively as a separate research problem. But the authors will try to that such an attempt is worthwhile in the present article, by looking at least for answers to the question of “progress” in medieval construction.

The gothic architectural style was undoubtedly born in the late 1140s in what is now northern France (Île-de-France)². The chronology, dynamics and direction of its later spread across Latin Europe is a broad, complex issue which is still the subject of intensive study³. However, simplifying greatly, it developed most dynamically in most of the analysed areas in the thirteenth century. The heart of the analysis conducted here is an attempt to state the extent of the participation of architects, builders, stonemasons and sculptors from the territory of present-day France in the process in the latter half of that century⁴.

Written sources, preserved in reasonable numbers, unambiguously indicate that a large group of French builders is traceable to southern Italy in the latter thirteenth century. This was undoubtedly influenced by the political situation in this part of Europe. As a result of a long-term political conflict, the Kingdom of Sicily and Naples was taken over in 1266 by the ambitious brother of the King of France, Louis IX, Charles, count of Anjou and duke of Provence. In the natural course of things, so to speak, he began to bring his fellow countrymen – Frenchmen – to his dominion (several thousand arrived during his rule), including no shortage of architects, builders, stonemasons and sculptors⁵.

¹ For more about terminology used for the architects, builders and other craftsmen specializing in the building professions see: M. Duda, S. Józwiak, M. Wiewióra, *Zagraniczne podróże* [in preparation].

² For an overview of the current state of knowledge on the subject, see: P. Plagnieux, 2000, s. 6–88.

³ It suffices at this point to refer to a few essential works on the subject: C. Enlart, 1894; idem, 1895, p. 445–464; É. Lambert, 1931; E. Marosi, 1984; M. Schwarz, 1995, p. 59–64; T. Biller, 2006, p. 237–261; P. Kurmann, M.C. Schurr, 2010, p. 385–394.

⁴ In this period was also active the great architect-builder-designer-painter and perhaps sculptor Villard the Honnecourt of Picardy, northern France. About him and the movements mentioned in his notebook see: M. Duda, S. Józwiak, M. Wiewióra, 2018, p. 134–140; idem, *Zagraniczne podróże* [in preparation].

⁵ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 97. The influx of French immigrants, including craftsmen specialising in the building professions, occurred particularly after the victory of Charles over Conradin of Swabia at the battle of Tagliacozzo (1268). The new absolute ruler of the Sicilian Monarchy realised the need to change the existing local administration and began to draw Frenchmen to his country. This was also the beginning of a far-reaching promotion of French culture and art, which included spreading the gothic style in new constructions – C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 402–420. On the influx of craftsmen (including builder-architects) – J. Dunbabin, 2011, p. 97–98.

Among them, the most famous was without doubt Pierre d'Angicourt (department of Oise, Beauvais diocese), who stayed there for nearly 30 years in the service of the French rulers⁶. He may have been associated with Charles earlier (perhaps at his Provence court), but he only began his real career in Italy, where he was most commonly referred to in the sources as “prothomagister operum curie”⁷. His activities (and those of other Frenchmen employed by the local Angevins) are known from the not-inconsiderable number of invoices, letters and monarchical documents which have been preserved. Angicourt's building activities were truly impressive. From at least September 1269 he led the team which erected the castle at Lucera (Apulia region, province of Foggia). After a time he travelled there periodically to oversee the works or to undertake a few projects of his own. In 1271 he led the reconstruction of the Canosa stronghold (Apulia region). In 1278–1279 he was mentioned in the construction of the donjon in Manfredonia (Apulia region), the castle walls in

⁶ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 97. Therein certain scholars also took into consideration his being from the town of Achicourt (Pas de Calais, 4 km south of Arras). For an overview of researchers' conclusions on this topic, see: A. Haseloff, 1920, p. 161.

⁷ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 97. Although Angicourt was still described in 1271 as “magister reparatorum castrorum” or “prepositus reparationi castrorum” – A. Haseloff, 1920, p. 160ff; E. Pitz, 1986, p. 48; N. Tomaiuoli, 1996, p. 51, 54–56, 59–62. Recently, Canadian art historian Alexander Harper published an article devoted to Pierre d'Angicourt, in which as one of his main objectives he set himself the task of showing that the scholars who dealt with this builder's activity in southern Italy have long been erroneously describing him as an “architect” – A. Harper, 2016, p. 140–157. And yet Harper's setting himself such a problem is flawed in principle because, since the beginning of the twentieth century, in practice, no researcher working on Angicourt's construction activity in southern Italy has described him as such. The scholars who analysed the written sources of that time were well aware of the complexity and diversity of their nomenclature in relation to the builders of the time there, and none of them described Angicourt as an “architect”, since during his long civil, clerical and administrative activities in the south Italian Angevin court he is never termed as such in any extant written sources. There is also a fundamental flaw in Harper's thesis that Angicourt fulfilled more organisational, administrative and bureaucratic duties at the building sites of the time, and that he was therefore not strictly concerned with the design and construction of buildings (A. Harper, 2016, p. 140). This thesis stands in opposition to what extant sources tell us, especially those from 1269 to 1282. If we assume – as Harper postulated – that the most famous and active French builder operating at the time in southern Italy did not also occupy himself with the design of buildings being constructed there, who would have? Moreover, all these issues were thoroughly analysed by the Italian researcher Nunzio Tomaiuoli (his important article was not taken into account by A. Harper at all). Not only did it present the wide spectrum of competences of officials described in sources from the 1270s and 80s as “prothomagister”, “praepositus” or “provisor castrorum” (and Angicourt most often appeared with these titles), but it also pointed out that early in his career in the Sicilian Monarchy some sources also described him as “magister lathomus” or “magister maczonerius” – N. Tomaiuoli, 1996, p. 59–62. And that contradicts Harper's suggestion that Angicourt basically did not also engage in stone masonry or brick masonry (i.e. that he was not a practising builder). This second thesis might be agreed with in relation purely to his second period of activity, but only after 1284, when he began to serve as a bureaucrat and administrator under the reign of Charles II. But Harper also fails to consider this change in Angicourt's career direction. And as a side note, the Canadian researcher also manages not to notice that the Latin noun “architectus” in reference to construction and builders actually appeared in the local sources of the 1270s – see below.

Melfi (Basilicata region, province of Potenza), Villanova (province of Brindisi), Bari and the palace of Mola (present-day Mola di Bari, Apulia region, province of Bari)⁸. He also had his misfortunes, such as the collapse in July of 1278 of a portion of the castle fortifications at Bartletta (Apulia region) which he had been responsible for erecting. This ended with a reprimand from Charles I⁹. It was certainly he, in conjunction with the French Architect and builder Paumier D'Arras, who designed and was the first constructor (starting in May 1279) of the "new castle" ("castrum novum") in Naples¹⁰. By the beginning of 1280, Pierre d'Angicourt was supervising the erection of a round tower in what was probably a partial reconstruction of Barletta castle, while in the second half of the year his presence is confirmed at, among others, the construction sites of strongholds in Bari and Brindisi (Apulia). For at least two years (from spring of 1282 to May 1284) Angicourt also led intensive works on the castle at Lucera¹¹.

Another important French builder in this area who is quite often mentioned in monarchical sources was Pierre de Chaule, but his role and range of skills are not easily identified. Only once, in 1282 in works near Castel Capuano (on the outskirts of modern-day Naples), was he referred to in source texts as "architectus"¹². It is known from other preserved sources that he was a priest in Picardie¹³, originally from Chaulnes (department of Péronne), and served in the court of the Angevin monarchs as an administrator/authorising officer (starting in 1274). In any case, besides that one cited example from 1282, he was never described as an "architect". There is no doubt, however, that he knew construction (or, rather, the organisation of construction), and wherever he appeared at a construction site, all the contractors (builders, stonemasons) were subordinate to him. He took part in at least the initial phase of the construction of the Cistercian Santa Maria della Vittoria¹⁴. We know this because in January 1274 two monks from Loroux (present-day Loroux-en-Vernantes in Anjou, département of Maine-et-Loire) named Pierre and Jean appeared there and, accompanied the abbot of Casmaria (in the present-day Lazio region, Frosinone province) and four envoys of Charles I (who also included Pierre de Chaules), conducted a local inspection and wrote a report on the siting of the church and monastery and the materials required for its construction¹⁵.

⁸ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 98; E. Pitz, 1986, p. 48–49; N. Tomaiuolo, 1996, p. 51, 54–56, 59–62; A. Harper, 2016, p. 143.

⁹ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 98.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 98–99; A. Harper, 2016, p. 143. The author of a separate work devoted to the construction of this stronghold, Francesco Aceto, did not take into account the conclusions of É. Bertaux, and completely failed to note the involvement of Pierre d'Angicourt and Paumier d'Arras in the design and building of this castle – F. Aceto, 1996, p. 251–268.

¹¹ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 99.

¹² *Ibidem*.

¹³ A. Harper, 2016, p. 143; F. Aceto, 1996, p. 256.

¹⁴ Regarding the building of this church and monastery, see below.

¹⁵ P. Egidio, 1909, p. 265–274; C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 411.

It would seem that the greatest achievement of Pierre de Chaules was the organisation of works and supervision of construction for the “new castle” at Naples (1279–1284). Sources from workers and craftsmen (stonemasons) employed dating from the period 1279–1280 also record the names of other Frenchmen (Adam de Saint-Germain, Guilloct de Braye, Roulin de Frenay, Jeannot “de Verdy”, Robin Le Sage, Guilloct Gonzègres and “magister Thibaldus”)¹⁶. From July 1278, another French builder-architect (“prothomagister”) began to appear at the construction in Melfi – Baucelin de Linais (who was undoubtedly from France, since he was described in the sources as “ultramontanus”, but it is now difficult to determine which specific town this may have referred to)¹⁷. And it was precisely then that six towers were erected in the external defensive walls and foundations were dug for a seventh. The sources do not tell us which tower Baucelin is supposed to have designed and built, but researchers long ago pointed out that French builder-architects in southern Italy at that time were specialising in round or, possibly, pentagonal towers¹⁸. Also, in July and August 1278, Baucelin and his newly-acquainted assistant Angicourt began working on the raising of vaulting in the palace of the castle at Melfi (although it is unfortunately not known what it looked like, because the structure did not last into modern times). This building was closely associated with the great stone buttresses designed and erected by the latter, and whose implementation here was also particularly characteristic of French builders¹⁹. A letter dated 22 February 1279 shows that for the continuation of work to erect this castle Baucelin required an additional 30 brickmasons, 20 stonemasons and a total of 200 diggers and labourers²⁰. Further probable examples of Angicourt’s design and construction work include three round corner (flanking) towers and defensive walls at the castle at Manfredonia²¹. One

¹⁶ C. Enlart, 1894, p. 22; F. Aceto, 1996, s. 252–268; L. Santoro, 1982, p. 66–67.

¹⁷ For more information, see: E. Pitz, 1986, p. 61–62.

¹⁸ For further comparison on this subject, see: É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 104.

¹⁹ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 105.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 103–104.

²¹ A. Haseloff, 1920, s. 393–403; É. Bertaux, 1905, s. 105. By way of example, it is worth taking a close look at the content of a very extensive document from 23 March 1278. It shows that construction began at that time on one of the towers of the castle there was then erected (at foundation wall stage), but that there was perhaps a change to the original design concept; in any case, at the request of the monarch, it was to be equipped with a three-storey-high cistern. As a result, a royal commission was assembled in Manfredonia, to which Pierre d’Angicourt presented the technical measurements of the future tower in great detail, as well as very precisely presenting all the organisational issues required to implement the project (the amounts of building materials needed, essential workers and cost projections) – E. Sthamer, 1912, no. 431. This document, among others, was used by Harper to conclude that Angicourt did not conduct any construction or any tasks as an “architect”, but was simply a sort of organiser and authorising officer responsible for preparation of works and estimating timeframes and cost requirements – A. Harper, 2016, p. 148–150. And yet close analysis of the information in this document leaves no doubt that the man behind the design of this tower was Angicourt. Would he not therefore have closely overseen its construction in person? In 1283, another French builder-architect (“prothomagister”), “magister Raynaldus Gallicus”, probably originating from Provence worked on the construction of the castle at Manfredonia – E. Sthamer, 1912,

particularly important building which Pierre Angicourt spent a good few years of his life extending was the castle at Lucera, built to an irregular pentagonal plan. Work on this stronghold lasted a relatively long time, due, among other things, to a shortage of funds. In any case, Angicourt initially oversaw it himself (from September 1269), but in later years turned up in Lucera only periodically. Undoubtedly attributable to him in both design and realisation are two round towers – in the north-eastern and south-eastern corners. The former (traditionally termed the “Queen’s Tower”), whose construction began in 1271, was particularly impressive. Émile Bertaux draws particular attention to the fact that in appearance, building materials, and architectural solutions (hoardings, battlements, consoles and pinnacles) it was something of an imitation of model buildings of this types from Northern France: the donjons in Louvre and Coucy (present-day Coucy-le-Château in Picardy). This last town is, coincidentally, less than 20 kilometres from Angicourt – Pierre’s hometown. In May of 1274 this tower was still incomplete but its construction was by then being overseen by another Frenchman, “magister Arditus Gallicus”²². The second tower, traditionally termed the “King’s Tower” and erected in 1275 or slightly later, was a smaller and lower copy of the first. It is particularly interesting that preserved on the interior walls are numerous stonemason’s marks in the shapes of crosses and lily flowers. These latter would be particularly indicative of the French origins of those working on them. Confirmation of this supposition is indeed to be found in a document from Charles I from 2 October 1273, in which the monarch commanded that craftsmen – and blacksmiths, carpenters and stonemasons in particular – be expedited from Provence to Lucera. It would appear that it was these very stonemasons who made the stonemasons marks in the tower²³. Other contemporary sources also confirm the presence of “muratorum Gallicorum” in Lucera²⁴. Everything also points to Pierre d’Angicourt having been the designer and builder of the separate chapel within the same castle. It certainly began to be constructed before 1276, and by March of 1279 was close to being completed (roof structures)²⁵.

Pierre d’Angicourt’s outstanding building expertise is demonstrated by the erection of the bridge to the castle at Lucera (and it must be clearly emphasised here that knowledge of building such structures in brick was at that time very

no. 539; N. Tomaiuoli, 1996, p. 62. It is, however, not known what specific works were being carried out at that time.

²² É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 106–108; A. Haseloff, 1920, p. 235, 238–239. See also: L. Santoro, 1982, p. 59–61.

²³ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 108–109. Drawings of the stonemason’s marks in the Lucera castle tower are reproduced in: A. Haseloff, 1920, p. 303. Meanwhile, in one document from 1274, Charles I requested 40 carpenters and stonemason from the districts of Forcalquier, Digne and Draguignan in Provence – C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 414.

²⁴ A. Haseloff, 1920, s. 169.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 322. A recent attempt to provide a timeline of the castle construction at Lucera was made by Hubert Houben, but he crucially failed to take into account the conclusions É. Bertaux cited here – H. Houben, 1998, p. 403–409.

limited)²⁶. The first mention of preparations to build a castle bridge appear in the sources in January 1276. It was to consist of permanent parts (in stone) and a double-leaf bascule bridge (in wood). It is not known whether the initial design was one of Angicourt's but, in autumn of that year, the builder-architect was the one to propose modifications to the planned construction. The source in question indicates only that the permanent part of the bridge was to be made of three arches founded on two pillars. Towards the end of 1276 work had begun on the foundations, but for unknown reasons construction was stopped. Finally, a royal decision was made on this matter (along with a cost estimate) in July 1278, but, interestingly, the document in question also included precise dimensions and technical specifications for the bridge: its tripartite nature was preserved (one solid part in stone and two wooden bascules); its width was set at 3.69 m, the length of the two bascules at 4.74 m each; and the length of solid, stone part at 9.49 m (18.98 m in total). The stone construction was to be supported on two stone pillars, while the three arches were to be made of volcanic tufa²⁷. It would therefore appear that the monarch agreed to implement Pierre d'Angicourt's design.

Despite doubts as to the identity of the people referred to in the source (due to the considerable time interval) scholars fundamentally recognise that in the early fourteenth century Pierre d'Angicourt was also employed (as an administrator?) at the construction of the cathedral in Lucerne which was then underway²⁸. He probably also periodically appeared in the years 1301–1308 at reconstruction works on the Altamura cathedral (to the south-west of Bari) financed by Charles II²⁹.

In looking for signs of French architects, builders, stonemasons and sculptors in the southern Italian kingdom of Charles I of Anjou, one cannot overlook the monarch's founding of two Cistercian monasteries in 1274: Santa-Maria di Realvalle, south-east of Naples, after Vesuvius, and near the village of San Pietro between the towns of Boscoreale and Scafati; and Santa Maria della Vittoria near the town of Scurcola and Tagliacozzo in Abruzzo. The very names of these abbeys alluded to Capetian traditions. Both churches and their associated monasteries were built very quickly (between 1277 and 1282) and their construction was entirely financed by the monarch. All the monks were brought from France. It is not surprising, therefore, that all five known builder-architects who oversaw the construction of these buildings (with a question over whether they also designed them) came from France. They were: Pierre de Chaules³⁰, Henri d'Assonne; Gautier d'Assonne (it is hard to say which town

²⁶ On this topic at least J. Mesqui, 1986, p. 197–215.

²⁷ This issue is extensively discussed in: A. Haseloff, 1920, p. 250–251.

²⁸ C. Enlart, 1894, p. 24–25; A. Haseloff, 1920, p. 165; A. Harper, 2016, p. 142, 144, 147.

²⁹ A. Harper, 2016, s. 144.

³⁰ The preserved sources indicate that Pierre de Chaules rotated between the construction sites of each of these abbeys for several months – C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 411.

this may have referred to)³¹; the aforementioned Baucelin de Linais³²; and Thibaud de Saumur (probably from Saumur on the Loire, west of Tours)³³. The preserved remnants of architectural details of the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria (the building did not survive to the modern day) and the ruins of the church of Santa Maria di Realvalle indicate that they were erected according to the plan and style of thirteenth-century French Cistercian³⁴ churches, while sources from the final construction stages state explicitly that even the flat roof tiles used to cover the roof were made “ad modum Franciae”³⁵. And that is not all. In one of the documents, issued on 30 June 1279 and recording outgoing payments for the execution of sculpted details, there is a notable difference in the amounts depending on whether the intended recipients were masters from France or were local, from Italy. The recipients of these sums included those listed as Guillaume de Blois (“de Blesi”) and Robert “de Reus”, who were undoubtedly Frenchmen³⁶.

Long ago, Austrian researcher Renate Wagner-Rieger noticed that the Franciscan church of St Lorenzo Maggiore built in Naples in 1270–1285 (founded by King Charles I) had features clearly recognisable as being in the northern-French Cistercian gothic style of the time³⁷. Unfortunately, the written sources contain no evidence of the involvement of builders, stonemasons or sculptors from France in the construction, but in light of the above analysis it is entirely likely³⁸.

There are difficulties at times in distinguishing founders from builders or craftsmen. One example is the church of saints Denis, Martin and Gilles outside the New Gate of Naples whose construction (including a hospital) was approved by Charles I on 02 July 1270. In the sixteenth century there was still an inscription in the temple, which read: “Johannes Dottun, Gugliermus Burgundio et Johannes Lions templum hoc cum hospicio a fundamentis erexerunt”. An analysis conducted at the time by scholars concluded that this related to French founders close to the monarch at the time, and not to the

³¹ Charles C. Perkins assumed that this concerned a town in the province of Poitou in western France – C.C. Perkins, 1864, p. 278.

³² He replaced Gautier d’Assonne, deceased in spring 1278, as construction supervisor – C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 412.

³³ É. Bertaux, 1905a, p. 314–316. Thibaud supervised works from the beginning of April 1278 – C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 412; J. Dunbabin, 2011, p. 97.

³⁴ Researchers point out that, according to the example of the Santa Maria della Vittoria abbey church it has nothing in common with the standard design of Cistercian churches being built at the time in Italy – C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 412.

³⁵ É. Bertaux, 1905a, p. 315–321.

³⁶ C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 414, 420.

³⁷ R. Wagner-Rieger, 1959, p. 139–144.

³⁸ Recently, in dealing with Pierre d’Angicourt himself, but not analysing the global involvement of French builders, stonemasons or sculptors in the process of erecting individual objects in the southern Italian kingdom, especially in the times of Charles I, A. Harper appears to understate the influence of their contribution to the development of Gothic architecture there – A. Harper, 2016, p. 150–151. However, this is a view which stands in contradiction of the preserved sources. In reality their role must have been significant.

church's designers or builders, who have in fact remained unknown since the time of its construction³⁹.

Starting in 1269, another Frenchman was active in the construction sites of the Sicilian Monarchy – the Lorrainian Jean de Toul (a town in north-eastern France) Contrary to some suggestions, including by contemporary researchers, he cannot be considered an “architect”⁴⁰. Existing sources list him as a “magister carpenterius”, “carpenterius curie”, “magister ingenierius”, “ingeniator” or “ingenierius”, and his competences were limited to erecting wooden constructions of all kinds, including military (siege engines). Jean de Toul probably died during a military campaign in 1280 in present-day Albania⁴¹.

It is important to remember that the strength of influence of the French “style” or “model” on Sicilian Monarchy architecture differed from period to period. During the reign of Charles I it was ostentatious, while under his successors there were clear changes in how the gothic style was promoted in new constructions, which probably reflected the new political vision of the rulers of the time, and their departure from promoting an external model in favour of coexisting with local traditions. As a result, it is significantly harder to discern French influences in late thirteenth-century Sicilian Monarchy architecture⁴². This is undoubtedly connected with to the fact that sources from that time contain no mention of builders there from the north

The area described here also contains traces of the French sculptors who were appearing at the time, not necessarily either inspired or invited by Charles I. One very good example of this was discovered towards the end of the nineteenth century in Cosenza cathedral (in Calabria) – a section of a mausoleum which initially housed the remains of Isabella of Aragon, deceased January 1271, the first wife of King Philip III the Bold of France. The bas-relief in limestone tufa presents the Holy Virgin Mary with Infant on her arm, with the king of France (N.B. the nephew of Charles I) kneeling, hands clasped, and his dead wife to the sides. This work was undoubtedly funded by Philip III himself. All scholars agree that it was made before 1276 by a French sculptor probably from Île-de-France⁴³.

Of particular interest is the issue of the involvement of French architects, stonemasons and sculptors in the raising of the cathedral in Uppsala in

³⁹ C. Enlart, 1894, p. 23–24; V. Lucherini, 2012, p. 184–188.

⁴⁰ And he is unjustifiably described in this way by Italian researchers – L. Santoro, 1982, p. 89; R. Licinio, 1994, p. 218.

⁴¹ É. Bertaux, 1905, p. 99–100; A. Haseloff, 1920, p. 167–168; E. Pitz, 1986, p. 52–54; N. Tomaiuoli, 1996, p. 54, 62–63.

⁴² C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 419–420. In another of her works she also formulated the opinion that the reign of Charles I was typified by the construction or reconstruction of numerous sacral buildings. These constructions were generally based on Mendicant models. Although still visible today, French architectural traits were already being eliminated, but in the case of some details there are still signs showing that they were made by craftsmen from France – C.A. Bruzelius, 1995, p. 99–114.

⁴³ An analysis of the work and the collected older literature on the work can be found in: A. Erlande-Brandenburg, 1975, p. 169–170; P.L. de Castris, 1986, p. 161, 170; C.A. Bruzelius, 1991, p. 415.

Sweden. The key to addressing this question is an agreement involving the prévôt of Paris and signed on 30 August 1287 between Étienne de Bonneuil, (this might have been the town of Bonneuil-sur-Marne, to the southeast of Paris), described in the source as “taillieur de pierre, maistre de faire l’église de Upsal en Suèce, proposant à aler en ladite terre, si comme il disoit”⁴⁴, who – as one excerpt says – set out for Sweden, and his sponsors (“sire Olivier et sire Charles”), clerics (?) studying at the university in Paris (“clercs escoliers à Paris”)⁴⁵ who laid out 40 Paris pounds for him and his team as a loan (“prest”) to cover the travel expenses⁴⁶. This entire, fairly extensive agreement was a written guarantee for the loan to cover Bonneuil and his team’s journey, and binding them to repay it (under certain conditions), while also protecting the travellers’ properties and belongings in Paris (which would suggest that they had been living and working there up to that time)⁴⁷. At this point it suffices to limit ourselves to discussing those questions pertinent to the subject at hand. And so the “stonemason” (“taillieur de pierre”) Étienne de Bonneuil, identified in the source as a “master” (“maistre”) – which might suggest that he may not have been a mere mason – set out by sea with a team consisting of an unspecified number of companions (who were probably also stonemasons) and servants (as many as would have been necessary to carry out the required work)⁴⁸ to Uppsala in Sweden for the construction (erection) of the “church” (i. e. the cathedral) there, but, as is apparent from the source, working within the scope of stone cutting and stone working (“pour ouvrier de taille de pierre en ladite église”). To cover the sea journey and expenses for himself and his team, Bonneuil received a loan of 40 Paris pounds “par les mains sire Olivier et sire Charles, clers escoliers à Paris”. The earlier fragment shows, however, that their journey was to be “at the cost of the said church [in Uppsala]”⁴⁹, so the lenders Olivier and Charles were clearly representatives or members of the church. Bonneuil undertook to pay off the sum in the shortest possible time after arriving in Sweden. If, however, it transpired that he and his people

⁴⁴ Henri Stein, referring most likely to the same source (although he did not provide a footnote for the relevant part of his book), cited the following quote as a reference to Étienne de Bonneuil: “maistre de l’euvre de l’église de Upsal en Suece” – H. Stein, 1929, p. 107. By inserting in the second place a noun which in fact does not appear in the source, he unjustifiably makes Bonneuil into the architect, works supervisor and builder of the entire cathedral, which in no way corresponds to the information in the cited source.

⁴⁵ The Swedish scholar C. R. af Ugglas, believed that “Olivier” and “Charles” were Parisian students (“étudiants parisiens”). This conclusion was not supported by any evidence, however – C.R. af Ugglas, 1913, p. 217. For the meaning of the word “clerc” in the context of students at the university in Paris in the thirteenth century – M.-M. Davy, 1931, p. 297–311.

⁴⁶ V. Mortet, P. Deschamps, 1995, no. 150, p. 941–942.

⁴⁷ Existing studies indicate that the early fourteenth-century construction sector in Paris employed 122 brickmasons, 108 carpenters, 54 joiners, 31 roofers, 31 stonemason-sculptors, 22 plasterers (“plâtriers”), six stonemasons and six specialists in making mortars (“morteliers”) – B. Geremek, 1962, p. 26–27.

⁴⁸ “[...] tex compaignons et tex bachelers comme il verra que il sera mestier et profit à ladite église”.

⁴⁹ “[...] au couz de ladite église”.

should die at sea *en route*, their financial obligations would be annulled. In this case the prévôt of Paris and his successors in office would take care that Bonneuil's estate, including properties and belongings, would not be in any way impacted. Neither the lenders nor their plenipotentiaries "in the Swedish church" would be able to demand financial compensation for any losses either from Étienne or from anyone he took with him, including after their deaths⁵⁰. The final fragment of the analysed source clearly indicates that Bonneuil's Parisian lenders had something to do with the church in Uppsala, and probably were from there⁵¹.

The fact that a French stonemason (probably with his team) did indeed arrive at the destination and spend at least a few years there is indicated by entries in invoice sources from the years 1291–1292. Bonneuil was mentioned in them as "Stephanus lapicida"⁵². The Latin noun used in this case leads us to conclude that he may have been not only a stonemason there, but also a brickmason or even a sculptor⁵³.

The most contentious issue for researchers is precisely which part of the cathedral at Uppsala these stonemasons from Paris erected, and how long they worked in Sweden for. These questions have been analysed closely by Christian Lovén. This researcher incontestably demonstrated that construction on this church began with the northern part of the choir in 1272, or 1273 at the latest. Later, however, as he began to depend entirely on analysis of preserved architectural details, the author made numerous contradictions. He claims that the first architect (the designer of the cathedral, which at this stage was limited to the choir and transept) was a Frenchman who came to Uppsala from Paris. The model for this first phase of the Swedish church is claimed to be the Paris church of Cordeliers⁵⁴. The author saw similarities with the basilica of Saint-Denis in the cross-section of the nave, except that the nave of the cathedral in Uppsala was erected first (in the latter fourteenth century) and had nothing to do with Bonneuil. C. Lovén claims that the first anonymous architect-builder

⁵⁰ "Et quant à ce tenir fermement, ledit Estienne a obligé et soubmiz lui et touz ses biens muebles et non muebles, presenz et à venir, ou qu'il soient trouvez, à jousticier par nous et par nos successeurs ou par la joustice souz qui il seront trouvez; et en seur que tout que, de la dite somme d'argent, lesdiz clers ou ceus qui auroient cause de eus en ladite eglise de Suèce ne peussent riens demander audit Estienne, [ne] à ceus qui li plera à mener en ladite terre, ne à leurs hers, pour nul perilz qui leur poist venir dont il alassent de vie à mort" – V. Mortet, P. Deschamps, 1995, no. 150, p. 942.

⁵¹ L. Lefrançois-Pillon has already pointed out the probable Swedish origins of the lenders, but did not notice that they may have been clerics – as the contents of the source indicate – L. Lefrançois-Pillon, 1949, p. 244.

⁵² F. de Mély, 1920, p. 317; H. Stein, 1929, p. 107. Source mentions from 1291 indicate that his unnamed son was in debt to the cathedral for the sum of four marks. C.R. af Ugglas doubted whether the "*Stephanus lapicida*" mentioned in this source was in fact Bonneuil – C.R. af Ugglas, 1913, p. 225.

⁵³ See "Lapicida" in: C. du Fresne domino du Cange, 1885, p. 27; M. Plezia [et al.], 1982, col. 1241–1242; J. Sondel, 2009, p. 557.

⁵⁴ The author in question did not clarify why this church was alleged to have been a model for the cathedral in Uppsala.

from Paris erected the chapter house (up to the base of the vaulting) and the lower parts of two chapels (all in the northern part of the choir). These works are claimed to have been stopped in 1281 due to lack of funds (the source of this information is unknown). Bonneuil is then claimed to have arrived with his team and erected subsequent chapels in the choir. However, it is very difficult to say when they stayed in Uppsala until. On the question of the raising of the transept, Lovén contradicts himself further. The design of this part of the cathedral is claimed to have been drawn up by the first architect from Paris, while Bonneuil and his people began its realisation. However, the southern arm of the transept is claimed to have only been ready in around 1300, while the northern arm was completed later. Meanwhile – according to the author – the northern portal of the transept (which was richer, and largely made in limestone) was designed by the first architect, but it was only actually built in the following decades. However, the impressive rose window it features (allegedly modelled on the Parisian cathedral of Notre Dame) is dated by Lovén to around 1330. Meanwhile, the more modest stone portal of the southern portal is ascribed by the author to Bonneuil “or his successor” on the basis of preserved architectural detail, but he is inclined to date it instead to the first half of the fourteenth century. From this point onwards, the contradictions only multiply. According to Lovén the lack of buttress arches on the external walls of the cathedral, its relatively small windows and the smooth walls of the *triforium* were mainly due to the climatic conditions, while he could have instead traced such architectural solutions to Burgundy. Moreover, Lovén thought that it was no problem for the first French builders that the cathedral in Uppsala was from the very outset built almost entirely in brick⁵⁵. Would the structural and architectural material for the building truly have been of no consequence to builders at the end of the thirteenth century? After all, both in a key document from 1287 (which Lovén completely excluded from his analysis) and in invoices from 1291–1292 it was expressly stated that Bonneuil and his people worked in stone. The doubts presented here force us to treat with some scepticism the Swedish researcher’s ideas when based exclusively on seeking architectonic analogues of varying conformity. Could perhaps the problem lie in the poorly defined chronology and could, for example, the two portals, both in grey limestone and soapstone, in the northern and southern transepts and the rose window in fact be older than has previously been assumed⁵⁶? At this stage in the research this cannot be decided, but one must

⁵⁵ C. Lovén, 2009, p. 3–33.

⁵⁶ C.R. af Ugglas ascribed the sculptural decorations in the south portal of the transept to Bonneuil, purely on the stylistic features. At the same time he concluded that the entire undertaking had been completed by the end of the thirteenth century – C.R. af Ugglas, 1913, p. 219–224. The French researcher L. Réau came to similar conclusions – L. Réau, 1931, p. 13. Michèle Beaulieu and Victor Beyer spoke in the same vein, as well as providing a detailed description of the sculptures. Therein, the one piece of evidence for ascribing the works to Bonneuil was their cited similarity to French art of the time. The authors did not concern themselves with the chronology of how the portal came into being – M. Beaulieu, V. Beyer, 1992, p. 58–59.

generally be extremely careful about formulating conclusions based solely on a fairly casual comparison of construction elements and architectural details.

And there is still the hard-to-answer question of whether Bonneuil and his people also undertook sculpture. For example, researchers' attention has long been drawn to the wooden figure of a seated Madonna with infant Jesus standing on her left thigh and giving a blessing (currently in a museum in Uppsala). Both Carl R. af Ugglas and Louis Réau attributed its authorship to Bonneuil or a sculptor in his team⁵⁷. The authors of the "Dictionnaire des sculpteurs français du moyen âge" were more cautious on this question, dating the creation of this work to the beginning of the fourteenth century⁵⁸. Louise Lefrançois-Pillon cited one more sculpture of the Madonna, this time in a standing position, which she claimed was stored in the museum in Uppsala (but unfortunately without including a source reference). This work represented, according to her, the clean style of Île-de-France (although the question of what period remains, given that L. Lefrançois-Pillon did not describe the chronology of the creation of this sculpture)⁵⁹. In summary then, it is hard to treat these propositions as certain and undisputed.

One of the most important sacral buildings in the Kingdom of Hungary, and one that was built over a relatively long time, was the Romanesque-Gothic cathedral in Gyulafehérvár (today Alba Iulia in Transylvania, central Romania). The first to conduct a comprehensive architectural analysis of this temple, which is preserved to this day, was the Hungarian art historian Géza Entz, in 1958. Unfortunately, the author was contradictory in his reflections in many places, and he also had serious problems determining the proper chronology of the various phases in the construction of this temple, thus casting doubt on his conclusions in many places. In general, however, he can be agreed with that the eastern part of the cathedral (the presbytery) was erected in the Romanesque style towards the end of the twelfth century⁶⁰. These findings by G. Entz were adopted by Imre Takács with minor reservations and corrections⁶¹.

Then, Gyulafehérvár cathedral was gradually expanded westwards in the Gothic style, so that by the Mongolian invasion of 1241/42 only the western part of the nave with its façade and towers was not completed. Somewhat inconsistently, G. Entz broadly decided that in this earlier phase of construction (up to 1241) French architectural influences (Île-de-France, Burgundy) predominated. After this time, however, the expansion of the temple was continued westwards with a concurrent reconstruction (unfortunately, it is not known how great the destruction by the Mongol invasion was). At this specific

⁵⁷ C.R. af Ugglas, 1913, p. 226–229; L. Réau, 1931, p. 13–14 (with photographic reproductions).

⁵⁸ M. Beaulieu, V. Beyer, 1992, p. 59.

⁵⁹ L. Lefrançois-Pillon, 1949, p. 244.

⁶⁰ G. Entz, 1958, p. 1–40.

⁶¹ I. Takács, 2012, p. 15–43.

point G. Entz saw a decidedly stronger German influence (Bamberg). In total, it is thought that the construction of the cathedral continued until 1269⁶².

Is there unambiguous evidence that this temple was built by foreign builders (including Frenchmen)? The many architectural and sculptural details which G. Entz indicates as belonging to the thirteenth-century phase do not allow this to be determined with any certainty. It is true that the author argued that they would attest to the foreign origins of their creators, but in this he could not distinguish Germans from possible Frenchmen, not to mention the serious difficulties in specifying the chronology of their creation. More convincing proof of the foreign origins of the cathedral builders is preserved in various of its parts' relatively numerous stonemasons marks. It can be agreed that, as G. Entz states, these were made by skilled workers (stonemasons) of foreign origin who were remunerated based on the amount of work done, which they recorded in just this way. The Hungarian researcher assumed that most of these came from the latter thirteenth century and were made by stone workers from the Reich⁶³. However, this cannot be incontestably proven, especially since the signs are spread throughout the cathedral and cannot be used to distinguish the teams who originally erected particular parts of the temple from those that extended or reconstructed them. They therefore do not provide the basis for reconstructing the chronology of the construction of successive phases of the cathedral. It is important, however, to note the fact (to which G. Entz paid little attention) that as many as three successive bishops of Transylvania (i. e. pastors of the diocese and cathedral of Gyulafehérvár) were of French origin: Guillaume (Vilmos), 1204–1221; Raymond, 1222–1241; and Gallus, 1246–1269⁶⁴. Would they not have looked to bring in architects, builders, stonemasons and sculptors from their former homeland?

All these assumptions are confirmed by written sources from the end of the thirteenth century. As a result of the civil war in 1277 the cathedral was seriously damaged (although it is not known to what extent). This resulted in it being rebuilt⁶⁵. This lasted for some time, and one of the final phases of work is discernible in the content of two contracts from 1 November 1287 and 31 May 1291 which the bishop of Transylvania, Pierre Monoszló and the Chapter entered into with the executors of the work. The first of these documents obliged the master stonemason (or master brick mason) (“magister Johannes lapicida”) Johannes, son of Tynon of Saint-Dié (“de civitate sancti Adeodati”) together with an unnamed assistant (“cum uno socio sibi adiuncto”) specialising in stone-working (“in poliendis lapidibus”), to perform works on the masonry in the vicinity of unspecified pillars near the bell tower (and in its interior, starting

⁶² G. Entz, 1958, p. 1–40.

⁶³ G. Entz, 1958, p. 3, 30–32. However, it is not clear why the author, using quite loose connections, found that these stonemasons' marks belonged to stonemasons of the regions of Hesse, Baden and Württemberg. After all, many analogues from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are also known to have originated from the territory of present-day France – Y. Esquieu, A. Hartmann-Virnich, 2007, p. 331–358.

⁶⁴ G. Entz, 1958, p. 20–21, 29.

⁶⁵ G. Entz, 1958, p. 27–28, 36.

from the southern part), and to continue previously started work on erecting the cathedral wall at (and above) the gate through which the bishop used to come in and go out to his offices (“pallatium”). In total, Johannes was to receive 50 marcas (half an English pound) in instalments, and the bishop committed to gather the required materials (stone, lime, sand, water, wood, etc.)⁶⁶, which indicates that the “magister lapicida” was also a brick mason. As can be seen, the information contained in the source is so enigmatic that it is difficult to say with certainty what part of the cathedral it was speaking of. G. Entz concluded that Johannes was working in the western part of the southern nave. Elsewhere, however, he suggested that his work was the southern transept with a square tower (which?) and the southern wall of the main nave⁶⁷. Later researchers generally decided, without attempting to pinpoint the part of the cathedral which Johannes was to have worked on, that it was the south side, because just south of the temple is where the bishop’s palace cited in the document was⁶⁸. However, it is hard to accept G. Entz’s attribution of the richly decorated capital keystones and columns in the western part of the southern nave to Johannes⁶⁹. After all, the above-cited source does not in any way indicate that he was a sculptor. Besides this – and as recently pointed out in the literature – one master stonemason and his assistant could not have executed construction work of such huge scope⁷⁰, especially since the sum the bishop was to pay for his services was not particularly large. However, what is particularly important in the light of the analyses carried out here is that both the “magister lapicida” and probably his assistant, were from Saint-Dié (a city in present-day eastern France in the department of Vosges). The second contract (1291) was entered into between the bishop and Chapter and four carpenters (“carpentarii”) of German origin (Syfridus de Crakow, Jacobus Albensis, Herbordus de Wrbow and Henc de Kelnuk), whom G. Entz for unknown reasons referred to as

⁶⁶ “[...] magister Johannes lapicida filius Tynonis de civitate sancti Adeodati in propria persona coram nobis constitutus, ex pacto inito cum venerabili patre domino Petro episcopo praelato nostro obligavit se elevaturum murum ecclesiae nostrae videlicet ecclesiae beati Micaelis archangeli et ipsius muri adiacentia praeter columnas simul cum turri seu campanili intus et exterius cum lapidibus politis praeter interiorem partem turris a parte meridionali incipiens ab antiquo opere et continuans ipsi antiquo operi iuxta ostium, per quod dominus episcopus in ecclesiam intrare solet et in suum redire palatium in ea altitudine in toto, in qua murus ipsius ecclesiae supra dictum ostium per antiquum opus exstitit elevatus pro quinquaginta marcis [...]. Nihilominus ab ipsa data praesentium praetactus magister Johannes cum uno socio sibi adiuncto in poliendis lapidibus statim absque medio aliquo debet ipsum opus inchoare et per totam hiemem absque aliquali intermissione laborare, lapides tamen, cementum, arenam, aquam et lignamina, si que erunt pro ipso opere necessaria, dominus episcopus deferri faciet et deponi iuxta ecclesiae fundamentum ponenda, ordinanda et locanda in opere prout debent laboribus magistri Johannis memorati” – F. Zimmereman, C. Werner, 1892, no. 221, p. 56. In footnote no. 36 of his article, G. Entz cited the content of this document referring to the same source, but it is not known why he made a lot of errors in reading, and in certain places even falsified, the information contained in the source text – G. Entz, 1958, p. 39.

⁶⁷ G. Entz, 1958, p. 27–28, 32–33, 36.

⁶⁸ E. Marosi, 2011, p. 262.

⁶⁹ G. Entz, 1958, p. 32–33, 36.

⁷⁰ E. Marosi, 2011, p. 263.

“Saxons”⁷¹ They were supposed to build roof structures over some precisely described fragments of Gyulafehérvár cathedral⁷², whose precise location, however, also causes great difficulties today⁷³.

Numerous controversies in historiography have long been sparked by the problem of the builders of Saint Peter’s collegiate church in Wimpfen im Tal, near Heidelberg (Germany). They stem from the source information, which is extremely interesting, but in its detail is just as diversely interpreted. This concerns a chronicle by Burkhard von Hall (from 1278 a member – and from 1296 to 1300 dean – of the collegiate Chapter) probably written in the 1280s, a fragment of which described the positive contribution of the former dean, Richard von Deidesheim (who served in the role in the period 1268–1278⁷⁴), in the work of erecting a new temple, which was most probably begun in 1269. The key part of the fragment is both significant and in places contentious, and so is worth citing in full (in its latest version, from the text by Günther Binding): “Richardus [...] monasterium a reverendo patre Crudolfo prefato constructum, pre nimia vetustate rimosum [recte: ruinosum], ita ut iam in proximo ruinam minari putaretur, diruit. Accitoque peritissimo in architectoria arte latomo, qui tunc noviter de villa Parisiensi e partibus venerat Francie, opere Francigeno basilicam ex sectis lapidibus construi iubet. Idem vero artifex mirabilis architecture basilicam, yconis sanctorum intus et exterius ornatissime distinctam, fenestras et columpnas ad instar anaglifi operis multo sudore et sumptuosis fecerat expensis, sicut usque [hodie]⁷⁵ in presens humano visui apparet. Populis itaque undique advenientibus mirantur tam opus egregium, laudant artificem, venerantur Dei servum Richardum, gaudent se eum vidisse, nomenque eius longe lateque portatur et, a quibus non cognoscitur, sepius nominator”⁷⁶. And so, dean Richard ordered the demolition of an older church which was in danger of partial collapse and he brought in the most expert stonemason (“latomus”) in architectural art (“in architectoria arte”), who had just arrived from Paris, from an integral part of France, and ordered him to

⁷¹ G. Entz, 1958, s. 39. Although no such conclusion can be arrived at based on the content of the source material, the analysis by the document’s publishers indicates that all of them were Germans settled in Transylvania. See publisher’s remarks – F. Zimmereman, C. Werner, 1892, p. 555ff.

⁷² F. Zimmereman, C. Werner, 1892, no. 247, p. 179–180. G. Entz, referring to the same edition, published the source content in footnote 36 of his article. It is difficult to explain, however, why his text contains numerous errors of misreading. There are enough of them that certain passages of the document he cites are simply incomprehensible to the reader – G. Entz, 1958, p. 39–40.

⁷³ Nevertheless, such attempts have already been made by researchers – E. Marosi, 2011, p. 263.

⁷⁴ And he was buried in front of the main altar in the church’s eastern part, which had probably been completed by then, which would in some sense be the *terminus ante quem* of its construction – G. Binding, 1989, p. 48.

⁷⁵ It is not known why this word was omitted from G. Binding’s rendering, but it does occur in this place in Victor Mortet and Paul Deschamps’ version – see: V. Mortet, P. Deschamps, 1995, no. 142, p. 932.

⁷⁶ G. Binding, 1989, p. 46–47.

raise a church “in the French building style” (“opere Francigeno”) from cut stone. Thus, “the creator (artist) of extraordinary building art”, with great labour and at considerable expense, erected a church (“basilicam”) most exquisitely decorated (furnished) with images of saints outside and in, [and also] with windows and columns in bas-relief as (dignified)[?] as [it] still presents itself at the moment to human eyes. People arriving from far and wide appreciated the fantastic work, praised its creator (artist) and venerated the servant of god, Richard, whose name would be made famous by this work.

Regardless of certain differences in the reading and translation of this excerpt of the source, the greatest differences of interpretation between researchers exist in relation to two questions: what was the “French style of building” cited by the author (“opus Francigenum”) and who and from where was the church’s builder? The solving of these issues is made quite significantly easier by the fact that the church itself has been preserved practically unchanged to the present day. The first divisive issue was the subject of an entire article by the aforementioned Swiss art historian, G. Binding. After detailed analysis of propositions by successive scholars (totalling several tens) over the last 150 years, he concluded that the author’s use of the term “opus Francigenum” in his chronicle should not be understood as “in gothic style on the French model” as earlier scholars had understood, nor “the French way of building, which was to spread across the territory of the Reich”. As a starting point for solving this puzzle, Binding took the view formulated in 1887 by Jacobus Reimers that, emphasising the importance of the key noun “opus”, it would not be about the style or method of building, but about the masonry technique itself⁷⁷. The German researcher therefore concluded that the chronicler’s writing was primarily highlighting the modern form of wall construction, which used appropriately cut stones. This technique was therefore supposedly exceptional and unknown in that area, and was itself the aspect that led the author of the source document to describe the work as an “opus Francigenum”⁷⁸. Is G. Binding’s proposition truly convincing? After all, in the very same text the researcher notes that this supposedly modern stonemasonry technique had been used in the Reich in both the earlier and latter twelfth century⁷⁹. It is therefore worth returning to the source text and considering what in the newly-built church in Wimpfen had so delighted the chronicler (and the building’s other admirers). Was it the overall final effect: the windows, the columns and the sculptural style. Would the viewers have cared what technique the builders had used to cut individual stones in erecting the building? One might doubt so. It therefore appears that G. Binding’s idea does not settle the question.

The same level of controversy (or more) was sparked by the issue of the origins of the stonemason cited in the source in question – the “stonemason who had just arrived from Paris” and who built the church in Wimpfen “opere Francigeno”. An overview of the main works in which individual authors have

⁷⁷ J. Reimers, 1887, p. 50, 52.

⁷⁸ G. Binding, 1989, p. 50–53.

⁷⁹ G. Binding, 1989, p. 50, 53.

voiced an opinion in this matter leads to a somewhat surprising conclusion. French researchers generally assume that the anonymous “stonemason” in the source text in question was simply French,⁸⁰ while German scholars almost universally conclude that he was a German who had trained in building in France.⁸¹ Might the presentation of such conclusions be influenced by subjective viewpoints? Such a trend was also noted across all of historiography (since the nineteenth century) with regard to determinations of, among others, the nationalities and origins of builders, stonemasons and sculptors of the thirteenth century in Latin Europe (outside their motherlands) in an extensive and very interesting analysis of the state of research by the German scholar Claudia Caesar. It turns out that the root of such an inference lies in the search, by art historians in particular, for alleged analogous uses of style and sculptural and architectural details, with only marginal consideration of information contained in the few (but nonetheless extant) written sources. For these reasons uncontested evidence is preplaced by various types of hypotheses (often with one built on top of another) or suppositions which are little scientific in nature. In general, for the vast majority of German scholars dealing with these issues, the inhabitants of the Reich in the thirteenth century travelled to France to augment their skills in construction, stonemasonry or sculpture (a conclusion based solely on analysis of objects and artefacts), but, for no apparent reason, no consideration is given to the possibility that Frenchmen might have come to the Reich to build some buildings there⁸².

Recently, the German researcher Marc Carel Schurr among others has returned to the question of the origins of the Wimpfen church’s builder⁸³. Again based on looking for analogues of style and a detailed study of the construction and architectural details he tried to show that the eastern part of the church (the choir) was completed by 1285. In the next phase (up to 1300) the main nave was built, but it is not certain whether it had been vaulted

⁸⁰ See at least: F. de Mély, 1920, p. 358; L. Lefrançois-Pillon, 1949, p. 243–244; R. Recht, 1999, p. 215–216. In this case only H. Stein considered the possibility of a German “architect” who had travelled to France to learn the local building techniques, to then return and fairly quickly modify what he had learned – H. Stein, 1929, p. 108. This researcher of course provided no evidence to confirm the reliability of such an idea.

⁸¹ Faced with the extensive literature which touches on this matter it is enough to refer here to a few key works: O. Kletzl, 1935, p. 10; P. Booz, 1956, p. 19; G. Troescher, 1953–1954, vol. 1, p. 104–105; G. Binding, 1989, p. 48 (this researcher collected extensive literature from the early nineteenth century onwards in which French and German scholars discussed the subject). Perhaps German art historians’ conviction regarding the German origins of the anonymous hero so central to these treatments of the excerpt of Burkhard von Hall’s chronicle stems from a slightly later obituary from the collegiate church in Wimpfen in the name of one “Bertholdus lapicida” (which of course, due to the peculiarities of the source, included only a date) whom Georg Dehio and Gustav v. Bezold equated with the anonymous builder in Burkhard’s chronicle – G. Dehio, G. von Bezold, 1901, p. 296. Modern researchers, however, are sceptical about this proposition – G. Binding, 1989, p. 48.

⁸² C. Caesar, 2012, p. 253–278. However, regarding the builder (stonemason) operating in Wimpfen, the authoress, not trying to determine his nationality, simply points out that fact that, as the source states, he arrived from Paris – *ibidem*, p. 255.

⁸³ M.C. Schurr, 2014, p. 45–55.

by that time. The author also tackled the problem of what the source-text phrase “opus Francigenum” might mean. He concluded that the key noun might refer to the whole building, its style, or to the techniques employed (for wall construction). Next, M.C. Schurr conducted an extensive discussion on architectural solutions similar to those in the church at Wimpfen and stated that they would be noticeable in certain churches in Lorraine (the cathedral church of Saint-Vincent in Metz, Stasbourg cathedral, Toul Cathedral) but not in Paris itself, where the Rayonnant gothic style – not seen in Wimpfen – was being used (Sainte-Chapelle, Notre-Dame, Saint-Denis). The same is supposedly true of the sculptural school, which – in the author’s opinion – does not look “Parisian”. In summary, M.C. Schurr concluded that the builder of the Wimpfen church more or less knew the principles of French Gothic (but rather by ear than by sight), while he himself had acquired his skills in Lorraine. The church was therefore undoubtedly a gothic building, but without the application of certain recent technical or construction techniques (although elsewhere the author did notice that it was the first purely gothic church in Swabia). Its style would probably have originated in Lorraine⁸⁴. How should we therefore understand the chronicler’s statement that the stonemason-builder arrived from Paris? According to the author this was an invention – propaganda to enhance the “French” inspiration behind the architecture and sculpture of the newly-built church (and thus its architectural prestige), or the builder himself simply gave false information. Nevertheless, M.C. Schurr is one of very few German researchers to have left the matter of the mysterious stonemason-builder open, and not to have made him into a German who developed his skills on construction works in France⁸⁵. All in all then, despite proposition which M.C. Schurr presents, we cannot rule out that the creator of the church in Wimpfen was a Frenchman. He need not have been from Paris at all, since the source text indicates only that that was where he arrived from. However, he must have been quite the building specialist, since the chronicler described him as “the most expert stonemason in architectural art” and “the creator (artist) of extraordinary building art” whose work had earned him praise. There is an interesting side story here, in that the “stonemason” may have been both the creator (designer) and builder of the church, and thus the “architect”⁸⁶. On the other hand, setting aside the supposed stylistic similarities in preserved buildings, the suggestion that inhabitants of the Reich travelled to France in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, that they learned about the art of building and sculpture and then returned to the homeland in order to

⁸⁴ M.C. Schurr, 2014, p. 45–55.

⁸⁵ *Ibidem*. Although it must be admitted that the author was less cautious in an earlier article published jointly with P. Kurmann. There, it was suggested that the builder of the church in Wimpfen would have been re-trained for this profession as a “Bauhütte” member, working in the west of the Reich, and possibly in Lorraine. He would therefore have been German – P. Kurmann, M.C. Schurr, 2010, p. 385.

⁸⁶ Scholars have already pointed out the difficulty in interpreting the ambiguous nomenclature employed in the source texts (see G. Binding, 1999, p. 7–28), but this issue needs more in-depth study.

oversee construction works is one which is not supported by any evidence in the written sources⁸⁷. Meanwhile, as indicated by the analyses conducted here, it can easily be proven that French builders, stonemasons and sculptors visited various countries of Latin Europe.

Their involvement in other such places in the latter thirteenth century can only be considered to be likely hypotheses. Here, our attention is drawn to certain buildings in Regensburg (a city on the Danube in Bavaria). Martin Hoernes recently drew attention to the practice of using plaster relief figures in the “Dollingersaal” there (opposite the town hall). These works date back to the first half of the thirteenth century, and partly to the second half. According to his findings, the use of this very rare technique at that time and in that territory led to a search for the makers of these sculptures in northern France, where it was not only most highly developed, but where there were also major deposits of gypsum⁸⁸. The literature contains the supposition that the Regensburg church of St. Ulrich, erected 1250–1260, may have been built by the French, but this conclusion was based solely on the similarity of the rose window there to that of Laon Cathedral (northern France)⁸⁹, which is a bit too thin to be considered incontestable evidence. There are also some interesting remarks regarding the cathedral itself in Regensburg. An extensive account of the stylistic traits of its choir and transept (both erected between the late 1270s and 1320), a search for architectural models and the cathedral’s possible creators was conducted by Swiss art historian Peter Kurmann. The researcher’s findings on the erection of individual phases of the cathedral, are noteworthy and based, among others, on the use of dendrochronology. It was built in the gothic style beginning a few years after an earlier church at the same site was destroyed by fire in 1273. Work was initially slow. By around 1290 only part of the choir was complete. Then – the author claims – the entire design of the cathedral was changed (including the designed nave) and work began to progress more quickly. By 1320 the whole choir and transept, with vaulting, were complete. P. Kurmann paid much attention to possible similarities, which – as art historians do – he sought by comparing the interiors and architectural details of other such buildings. In the end, after a long and somewhat confused argument, the researcher concluded that the original design for the cathedral in Regensburg would have been modelled on the cathedral in Auxerre (in Burgundy-Franche-Comté). However, after the original design was changed around 1290 it began to be built in the Rayonnant gothic style (which had begun in Île-de-France [Paris, Saint-Denis] around 1230), but in a slightly later version. In the end, the author concludes that the architect who built the cathedral at Regensburg after

⁸⁷ In his extensive analysis, C. Caesar pointed out that in Latin Europe during the period in question (the thirteenth century), foreign travels by artists (primarily sculptors) and builders were not at all rare, while not the slightest mention of any “training” trips to foreign countries for additional training in the profession is made anywhere in the existing sources – C. Caesar, 2012, p. 187–235, 253–278.

⁸⁸ M. Hoernes, 2003, p. 130–135, 138–141.

⁸⁹ G. Troescher, 1953–1954, p. 352, vol. 2.

1290 modelled the work primarily on the collegiate church of Saint-Urbain in Troyes (a town in Champagne, to the south-east of Paris), where he is supposed to have stayed for some time (the choir and transept there were erected between 1262 and 1266) and, for some unknown reason, that he modelled it also on the cathedral of Bordeaux (P. Kurmann did not show convincingly why), where the builder is also supposed to have stayed⁹⁰. Meanwhile, in the sources relating to the cathedral in Regensburg discussed here, “magister Ludwicus lapicida” appeared for the first time in 1283. By 1306 he was dead, because in a document issued at the time, his wife Anna was mentioned as a widow (“relicta quondam magistri Ludwici operis s[an]cti Petri Rat[isbonensis]). In addition, preserved on the eastern side of the cathedral’s western buttress is a Gothic majuscule inscription “LVDBICH”. This undoubtedly refers to the same builder⁹¹. It is worth mentioning here that in 1283 he was described as a “master stonemason”, while in 1306 he was “the master of the work”, or “the supervisor” of the construction of the cathedral. Should it be considered that he may have been promoted, or just that the source’s terminology is imprecise? P. Kurmann did not attempt to determine the origins of this Ludwig. In the context of his arguments one can only get the impression that he adhered to the theory of German builders who had had further training in the profession in France⁹². But in the light of the comparative analyses conducted by this researcher (even if his evidencing method raises some legitimate doubts in places) might he not have been of French origin? If so, the question would arise from where in France he had come to Germany. P. Kurmann overlooked the noteworthy fact that at the Council of Lyons in 1274 the bishop of Regensburg appealed to 22 bishops gathered there from all over Europe (including from Toledo and Santiago de Compostela) to announce indulgences would be given to all those who donated funds for the construction of his cathedral⁹³. So if the Bishop of Regensburg so broadcast the issue of erecting his temple in an international forum, it cannot be ruled out that some French builders were involved in work on at least some stage of it. All the indirect indications cited above at least suggest so.

There is no doubt that from at least the twelfth century onwards, architects, builders, stonemasons and sculptors from France appeared in various kingdoms of Spain⁹⁴. However, for the latter thirteenth century itself there is a lack of absolutely conclusive proof. It is indicated, however, by numerous

⁹⁰ P. Kurmann, 1995, p. 387–400.

⁹¹ See: *Inschriften des Regensburger Doms (I)*, no. 30 (“Lvdwich”) which can be accessed via Deutsche Inschriften Online website. Many earlier art historians addressing this question also accepted, on the basis of very questionable arguments, that this “Ludwicus” had some connection with Basel in Switzerland. Extensive discussion of all the more and the less fantastical proposals on this topic can be found in: C. Caesar, 2012, p. 273–276.

⁹² P. Kurmann, 1995, p. 391–400.

⁹³ P. du Colombier, 1973, s. 13 (with an erroneous year of this document’s origin).

⁹⁴ Which is unambiguously clear from Jacques Lacoste’s recent studies on the architecture and sculpture of northern Spain between the end of the 11th and the end of the twelfth century – J. Lacoste, 2006.

indirect pieces of evidence. Let us take the cathedral in Burgos (northern Spain) as one example. Some art historians point to the similarity of the sculptural school of the “Puerta del Sarmental” (c.1245) to the stylistic and sculptural forms used a little earlier in Amiens Cathedral, which led them to believe that their creators had come directly from there⁹⁵. Extensive comparative studies on the sculptural decoration of Burgos Cathedral (particularly from the latter thirteenth century) have been conducted by Angela Franco Mata. She was interested in the iconographic motifs used there, as well as the sculptural school itself. The author did indeed discern various types of sculptural similarities in the earlier French cathedrals in Chartres, Amiens and Reims, but her conclusions were based on aesthetic impressions rather than hard evidence and are unconvincing enough that nothing of the origins of the sculptors themselves can be stated with any certainty⁹⁶. Recently, and based more on supposition than on some convincing source, Swiss art historian P. Kurmann said that the decided majority (if not all) of the sculptors operating in Burgos were locals, and only a few of them had travelled to France to train further in the art of sculpture. From there, they had also brought “small malleable models”, which they then used as templates on site⁹⁷. But this completely theorised idea, which is not supported by any hard evidence, unnecessarily complicates the entire issue. Could it really be that no French sculptor travelled to Burgos in the thirteenth century? If such a solution were to be accepted it would be much easier to explain the question of the local training of local artists (who were probably not lacking) to the sculptural models being used in France at that time and it would not be necessary to invent the burdensome concept of allegedly imported “small malleable models”.

It is known from elsewhere that one “Peter son of Peter” took part in the reconstruction and extension of the cathedral in Burgos in 1290. Researchers to date have supposed that he may have come from northern France⁹⁸. However, this can not be undeniably proven. Besides, a certain similarity in styles has also long been established between the cathedrals of Burgos and Bourges (a city in central France, south-east of Tours)⁹⁹.

Earlier art historians assumed that the construction of the cathedral of León, which began around 1255, was conducted by a team which had arrived directly from Champagne. Both in the overall design and in the exterior architecture and interior construction it was supposed to have been a smaller version of the cathedral in Reims with certain additional elements borrowed from Paris’s Saint-Chapelle and the cathedral at Châlons-sur-Marne (a town

⁹⁵ Recently addressing this issue: J. Dubois, J.-M. Guillouët, B. van den Bossche, 2014, p. 11, 20. Perhaps its creator was the anonymous “magister operis” mentioned in a document from 1230. The first named creator (sculptor?), who was active there in the 1270s, was “magister Enrique”. It is difficult to say anything about his origins – A. Franco Mata, 1994, p. 322.

⁹⁶ A. Franco Mata, 1994, p. 321–324.

⁹⁷ P. Kurmann, 1999, p. 114–115.

⁹⁸ F. de Mély, 1920, p. 358.

⁹⁹ H. Stein, 1929, p. 111–112.

in Champagne, to the east of Paris) or Amiens¹⁰⁰. Later researchers not only propose a slightly earlier starting date for the construction (the 1240s)¹⁰¹, but they also present an opinion which changes the exterior models which its architecture were supposed to have been influenced by. Recently, the Swiss art historian, P. Kurmann performed an extensive comparative analysis of this building's plan and preserved structural elements (choir, transept, pillars, windows, tracery, triforium, rose windows) and concluded that the cathedral of León was erected from the very beginning according to a single design and modelled primarily on two French churches: Reims (choir, nave) and Saint-Denis (transept), and its creator tried to combine elements of classical and Rayonnant gothic. Unfortunately, P. Kurmann makes no reference at all to the fundamental question of where the designers and builders of the cathedral in León were from. He limited himself to stating that in the 1270s "Enricus", who died in 1277, was operating there, although, according to the German researcher, there had previously been an anonymous designer and builder of the first stage of construction working there¹⁰². However, one small but important trace was preserved which might have something to say about the cathedral's builder's provenance. Namely, in the diocesan museum there survived a thirteenth-century stone block engraved with one of the rose windows from the transept. It is particularly interesting that the diameter of the image is exactly one French foot in the measure of the time (0.324 m)¹⁰³, which P. Kurmann quite erroneously attributes to the creator of the drawing having studied in France¹⁰⁴. Could it not have been that the person behind the drawing was simply from there?

When examining the sculpting in the cathedral in León (iconographic motifs, school, technique) A. Franco Mata pointed to analogues primarily in the cathedrals of Paris, Bourges and Reims, but also in other smaller churches in northern France¹⁰⁵. Conversely, P. Kurmann concluded that direct French models for the sculptural works in the cathedral in León are highly doubtful, and the possible involvement of Frenchmen in making them is decidedly more difficult to demonstrate that in the case of Burgos¹⁰⁶. Considering, however, that the research method based primarily on comparing architectural and sculptural details found in preserved buildings does not lead to any certain conclusions about the origins of their authors, in the light of the analyses presented here, one can only assume that the activity of French builders and sculptors in the northern kingdoms of Spain in the latter thirteenth century is quite probable.

¹⁰⁰ H. Karge, 1989, p. 162.

¹⁰¹ M. Valdés Fernández [et al.], 1994, p. 57–60.

¹⁰² P. Kurmann, 1999, p. 106–107.

¹⁰³ M. Valdés Fernández [et al.], 1994, p. 105–106 and Fig. 52.

¹⁰⁴ P. Kurmann, 1999, p. 112.

¹⁰⁵ A. Franco Mata, 1994, p. 324–328.

¹⁰⁶ P. Kurmann, 1999, p. 115–116.

The sources preserved from the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries (the chronicle and obituary) show that in the mid-thirteenth century (before 1257) the builder of the transept walls, columns and vaulting at the Benedictine monastery church (which was later repeatedly rebuilt) at Kremsmünster (in northern Austria) was one Rugerus de Ripa¹⁰⁷. Besides him, the abbey's obituary also lists his sister, called Sigela¹⁰⁸, and their names' exoticness to that region lead the researchers to conclude that this builder had arrived there from Western Europe¹⁰⁹. Georg Troescher concluded that in reality he was called Rogier de Rive and was French by birth, although it is not known on what basis¹¹⁰. It is a very tempting proposition, but there is nonetheless no conclusive evidence for it.

Summarising the above analysis, it can safely be stated that in the latter thirteenth century French architects, builders, stonemasons and sculptors were active throughout Europe. Their presence can certainly be found in at least southern Italy, Sweden, Hungary and the Reich and probably also in the kingdoms of Spain and in Austria. They were most often invited by rulers and ecclesiastical institutions to erect secular and religious buildings in the gothic style which was then flourishing across Europe. And there are certain indications which suggest that French builders in some areas of Latin Europe were already building in the Rayonnant gothic style, which was novel at that time, having been created around 1230 in Île-de-France, northern France. It can be assumed with a high degree of probability that such distant expeditions were also undertaken by sculptors from France. Unfortunately, for their presence in some places (and thus their attribution to a particular work) it is difficult to show conclusive proof, except for the bas-reliefs in the cathedral in Cosenza.

The analyses carried out here are also significant from a methodological point of view. The methods proposed by most scholars to date (especially art historians) for studying the transfer of styles, models and technology, and the flow of people in medieval construction, are based purely on alleged similarities in building materials, sculptural decor and architectural details and are extremely unreliable; rather than leading to reliable conclusions, they often lead to the spread of unnecessarily weakly justified hypotheses and, consequently, to cognitive chaos. The most common reason for this is the formulation of various theses based on only part of the existing sources (and primarily material ones), while omitting or improperly analysing the written sources, which are few but highly valuable.

¹⁰⁷ L.C. Bethmann, G. Waitz, 1880, p. 673; A. Altinger, 1867, p. 45, 68.

¹⁰⁸ A. Altinger, 1867, p. 45. In reference to this obituary the Austrian scholar, Theophilus Dorn, for some unknown reason gave Rugerus' sister the name Sibilla – T. Dorn, 1929, p. 16. This is strange in that there had long been an edition of this source which gave her name as Sigela.

¹⁰⁹ For a summary of researchers' propositions to date on this subject, see: M. Schwarz, 2013, p. 341–342, 435.

¹¹⁰ G. Troescher, 1953–1954, vol. 2, p. 439.

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