

## “Dungeon marble” (wapień lochowy) from Dębnik (southern Poland) in architecture and sculpture of the 17th-18th century

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**Abstract.** “Dungeon marble” has been the least known stonemasonry raw material so far, and has only occasionally appeared as a sculptural material throughout the Early-Modern history of the mining and stonemasonry centre in Dębnik. Despite its beautiful colours and diverse structure, it did not gain the recognition it deserved from local workshops and the wider clientele. One of the reasons was initially difficult access to the deposit made available for underground exploitation and, above all, unsatisfactory technical properties. The majority of works carried out with his very modest quantitative share took place in the 1620s and 1740s, exclusively for the production of floor tiles. They were ordered for only a few of the most important temples in Kraków, with Wawel-Hill Cathedral and St. Mary’s Basilica at the forefront, and in several others churches in central Lesser Poland. This catalogue is certainly far from complete. However, careful observation of the historic stone floors preserved there reveals the presence of Biała Góra limestone from Dębnik or “marble of blessed Salomea” from Grodzisko near Skala. These two species of Jurassic limestone replaced the previously mined brittle and splintered “dungeon marble” in the stonework of Dębnik-Kraków in the 4th quarter of the 17th, and in the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, the somewhat forgotten Dębnik “dungeon marble” is rather a geological curiosity, but the history of its excavation and artistic use deserves scientific reminder. With regard to the activities of monument protection services and repair work on historic floors, it is also worth mentioning that this deposit is still available in the Łom Karmelicki, aka Dębnik I quarry site, in case of urgent conservation needs.

**Key words:** Dębnik, Lesser Poland, “dungeon marble”, limestone, porphyry intrusion, masonry, architecture, sculpture.

### INTRODUCTION

Dębnik, a hamlet of the village Paczółtowice near the Carmelite monastery in Czerna and Krzeszowice, became famous in the history of stonework and sculpting crafts in the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as one of the most important places for obtaining and processing decorative rocks. The activities of local stonework and sculpting workshops, which are closely related to the builders’ and stonemasons’ guild in Kraków, were of fundamental importance in the 17th and 18th centuries for the development of small architecture and sculpture not only in the capital of Lesser Poland and the entire region, but also in the remotest regions of the Polish Crown and Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Works made of “black marble” and alabaster made in both centres filled the interiors and furnishing elements, among others in the cathedrals in Kraków, Gniezno and Poznań, Przemyśl, Płock and Włocławek, Chełmża and Frombork, in the residences and temples of Warsaw and Mazovia, in Vilnius, Pažaislis and Jieznas in Lithuania, and in Lviv and Zhovkva in Ukraine. The popularity of the stonework in Dębnik is best demonstrated by prestigious orders in Lower and

Upper Silesia – Wrocław, Głogówek, Racibórz, Trzebnica or Czarnowąsy, in the Spiš Levoča, Trenčín and Trnava in Slovakia, or in the the cathedral in Gyulafehérvár (Alba Iulia) in Romania (Tatarkiewicz, 1953; Tatarkiewicz 1966; Marszałek and Skowroński, 2010; Sylwestrzak and Kachnic, 2010; Marszałek, 2014; Wardzyński, 2015a; Skrabski, 2016; Fig. 1).

Historians of the economy, material culture and art have focused mainly on the “black marble” of Dębnik, devoting little space to other species of stones mined around this settlement from the 17th to the 90s of the 20th century (Weber, 1948; Tatarkiewicz, 1953; Tatarkiewicz 1966; Kula, 1956; Pęczkowska, 1976; Wanat, 1979; Miłobędzki, 1980; Karpowicz, 1983; Wanat, 1992; Niemcewicz, 2005; Skrabski, 2009; Graczyk and Marszałek, 2014; Marszałek and Skowroński, 2010; Marszałek, 2014; Wardzyński, 2015a; Wardzyński, 2015b; Skrabski, 2016). It was not until 2005 that research of Paczółtowice “Różanka marble” from Eliaszkówka and Raclawka valleys developed (Rajchel, 2005; Wardzyński, 2012, 2015a, b; Wardzyński et al., 2013), and only a few short notes have been whitish Jurassic limestone from Biała Góra and the most mysterious of the Dębnic materials – multicoloured, and thus extremely decorative “dungeon marble” (wapień lochowy or marmur lochowy in Polish) from Dębnik himself (Gradziński, 1972, Kamieński, 1975; Tolkanowicz, 2002; Rajchel, 2005; Wardzyński, 2015a).

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Fig. 1. Map of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th-18th centuries with inventoried sites of localisation of objects of sculpture and small-scale architecture made of 'black marble' from Dębnik near Kraków during 17th and the first third of the 18th century. Prepared by MW (2014–2024)

#### SOURCE BASE

In archival sources and historical accounts, the first information about the existence near Tenczyn and Siedlec (identical with the Discalced Carmelite monastery founded in neighbouring Czerna) of white marble (next to the best known black and red) dates back to 1632 (Starowolski, 1632–1976). The record in the chronicle of the 'desertum' hermitage of Czerna dates from 1643, saying: "on this Paczółtówice land there is a mountain from which black and white marble break and pass"<sup>1</sup>. Jesuit Gabriel Rzączyński, pioneer of native natural science, in his famous 'Historia Naturalis Curiosa Regnia Poloniae Magni Ducatus Litvaniae ...' mentioned among the varieties of rocks obtained in the Dębnik quarries, marbles decorated in the texture with a dense network of shining veins and bright – whitish (Rzączyński, 1721). Geographica Dictionary of the Kingdom of

Poland mentions that there were even ten different species of marble extracted here (Gustawicz, 1881). This trail was followed by subsequent researchers of the region's geological and geological history as well as historiographers in the 19th century (Lissowski, 1845; Grabowski, 1852; Louis, 1874; Sippel, 1898; Zaręczny, 1894).

#### PETROGRAPHY AND TECHNICAL PROPERTIES

The term "dungeon marble" is usually used for many-coloured (whitish, yellow, orange, red, pink, green and other) Dębnik limestones changed in colour by thermal and hydrothermal effects. Known outcrops of these limestones are located in the lower part of the Devonian black Dębnik limestone complex in the area of Dębnik at N from Krzeszowice near Kraków.

<sup>1</sup> Kraków-Prądnik Biały, Archive of the Kraków Province of the Order of Discalced Carmelites [further: AKKKr], sign. AKC 62, Inwentarz majątności y wsztikich prowentów do klasztoru Puszcze świętego Naszego Oycy Eliasza należących. Przytym opisane powinności poddanych y wsztikie okoliczności i postanowienia któregokolwiek się roku którego dział y na potym dział się będą między nimi, spisany za rozkazaniem Wielebnego Ojca Naszego Oycy Ignacego od św. Jana ewangelisty, przeora tegoż klasztoru w Roku Pań[skiego]. 1643, p. 6.

From a geological point of view, "dungeon marble" was exploited within the Variscan tectonic structure, commonly known as the Dębnik anticline. This structure was finally shaped under the influence of the porphyry intrusion type of a laccolith of the Early Permian age, ~3 km in diameter and a few hundred metres in thickness at least (Bogacz, 1977; Bogacz 1980; Muszyński and Pieczka, 1994). These magma rocks connect in the top with various Devonian units (Łaptaś, 1982). The oldest rocks are here a few tens of metres thick complex of black, marly dolomites of Middle Devonian age (Eifel) strongly discoloured and partially recrystallized under the influence of the this intrusion. Above there is a 150 m complex so-called dolomites from Zbrza (Givetian). The next deposit in this part of the Dębnik anticline is a complex of a thickness ~40 m of black Dębnik limestone of the Givetian and partly of the Frasnian age (Łaptaś, 1982; Narkiewicz and Racki, 1984; Marszałek, 2014) developed as a set of micritic, often laminated limestone, often with *Amphipora* sp. and *Stromatopora* sp. fossils and stromatolite structures, accompanied by minor corals, gastropods, brachiopods, pelecypods and crinoids (Narkiewicz and Racki, 1984; Bednarczyk and Hoffmann, 1989; Bromowicz, 2001). Their characteristic dark-grey, almost black colour is associated mainly with dispersed, very fine-grained pyrite but bituminous smell with hydrogen sulphide resulting from the decomposition of this mineral. According to other views, it comes from a dispersed and altered organic substance (Gradziński, 1972; Marszałek, 2014). Within this complex, four lithologically different sets of layers can be distinguished; the lowest of which has a thickness of ~10 m (Łaptaś, 1982) and contains, in the floor, the "dungeon marble" mentioned above. The youngest sedimentary deposits of the Devonian period are here a formation of brown and black limestones and dolomites ~350 m thick of the Upper Frasnian and Famennian age (Łaptaś, 1982; Narkiewicz and Racki, 1984). The "dungeon marble" is visible in the SE part of the Carmelite quarry (the Łom Karmelicki, aka Dębnik I quarry).

It is likely that the limestones, lower still in the stratigraphic profile and exploited in the vicinity of this quarry using the quick-fill method, had a similar type and broad spectrum of stained colours: yellow, orange, red, brown and green with a series of chaotically arranged mineral veins usually white or pink calcite, as evidenced by the preserved elements of architecture made of this rock. Probably the limestones lying below in the stratigraphic profile and exploited in the area of this quarry by shafts method, had a similar type of colours with a series of chaotically arranged mineral veins usually white or pink calcite. The preserved elements of architecture made of this rock are evidence of this. Another, small exposition of similarly shaped variegated limestones, located in a stratigraphic position on the border of the Dolomites of Zbrza with black limestone of Dębnik, was described in Łysa Góra hill above Siedlec. According to Rutkowski (1928), these rocks probably corresponded to "dungeon marble" from Dębnik.

The "dungeon marbles" (wapień lochowe) occurring within the old Carmelite quarry in Dębnik, have been seen until recently as a complex of 4 m in thickness along a length of ~15 m, separated by a thin clay shale laminae from the overlying black Dębnik limestones. There were layers of thickness from a few to ~80 cm. Thicker banks were very strongly discoloured and usually had a white or grey, yellowish, often mottled, thinner layers – greenish or pinkish, usually with a banded pattern of colours relative to the bedding.

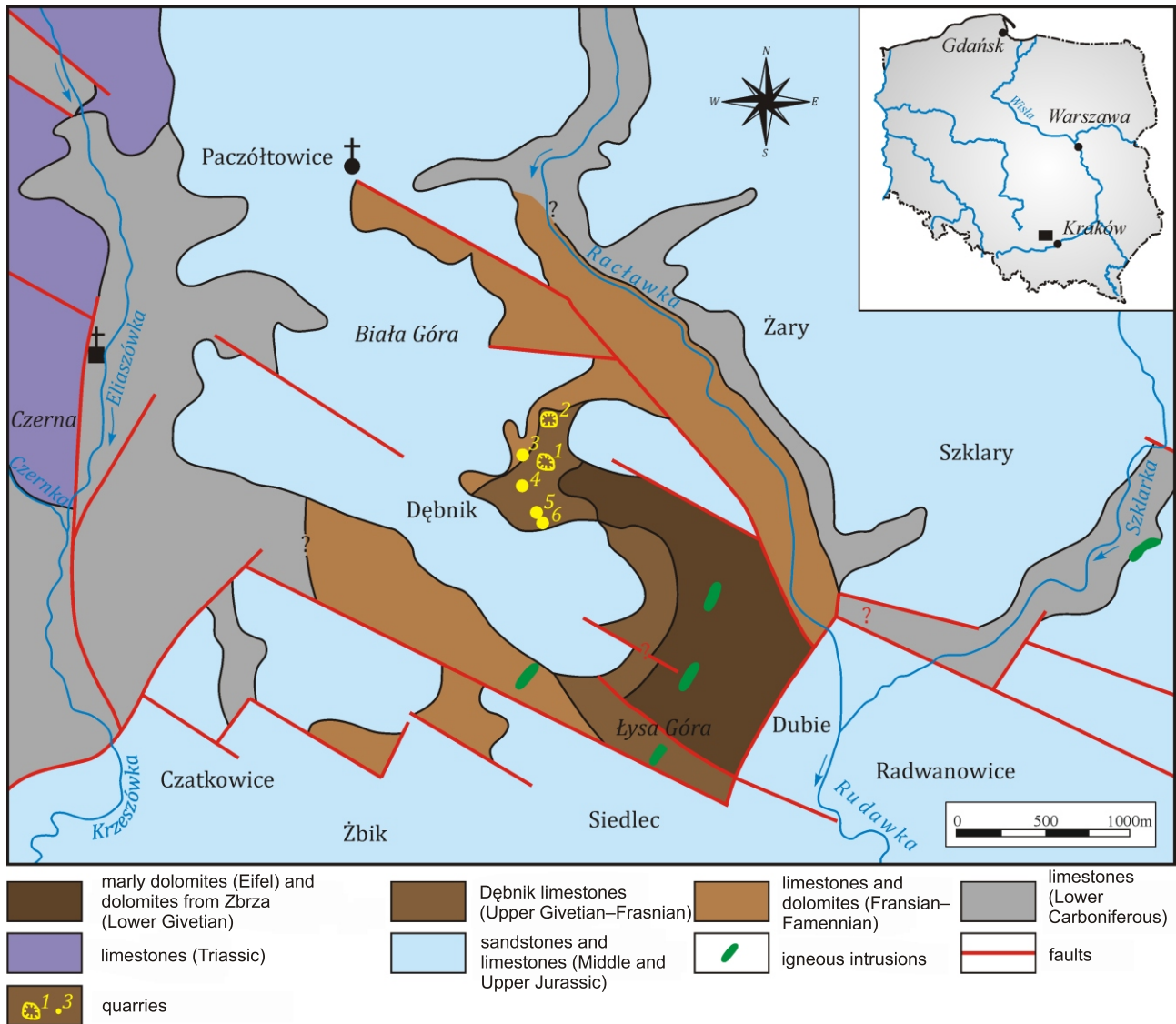
This limestone deserves to some extent the name of a marble from a petrographic point of view, because it has recrystallized, which was particularly evident in its whitest variants. In the mineral composition of these limestone more than a dozen

percent of the  $Mg(OH)_2$  brucite mineral was detected, which explains the high magnesium content in these rocks (Buczek, 1965). In addition, there are minerals from the serpentine group, probably responsible for the greenish discoloration of these rocks (Kubisz and Buczek-Półka, 1972). They also have an irregular silification, mainly in thinner layers also present in the form of thin laminae of silica. In this limestone irregularly distributed calcite veins are also present, less often white and pink geodes of this mineral. Some parts of these rocks are also distinguished by semi-transparency. The result of these processes is probably the higher hardness of the "dungeon marble" limestone and exceptionally high roughness in relation to the black Dębnik "marble".

The rocks of the above-mentioned porphyry intrusion, with a mineral and chemical composition corresponding to rhodacite (Harańczyk and Wala, 1989), underwent intense deuteric processes. They consisted in the modification of minerals present in it under the influence of hot gases and mineralized solutions emitted during its cooling. Thermal influence zone of the intrusion is estimated at ~30 m (Łaptaś, 1982), whereas changes in the mineral composition of the surrounding rocks are visible even at a distance of 300 m (Lewandowska and Rospondek, 2000). The described "dungeon marble" also had to be in the zone of influence of these factors (Muszyński and Pieczka, 1994). A similar influence was also applied to rocks located in the vicinity of a number of different sizes of apophysis, mentioned intrusion piercing carbonate rocks forming the of Dębnik ridge (Harańczyk and Wala, 1989; Kozłowski, 1955). Such a situation has been documented for the Devonian Dolomites from Zbrza and Lower Carboniferous limestone, including in Dubie, Siedlec, in the Szklarka river valley and on the Zamczysko hill in the Zbrza stream valley (Siedlecki, 1954; Kozłowski, 1955; Lewandowska, 2000a, b; Lewandowska and Rospondek, 2000; Lewandowska and Kmiecik, 2002; Fig. 2).

The specific name of this "marble" – dungeon or underground – is related to the extraction of this limestone on the lowest exploitation bed of the Dębnik deposit by subsurface method, in shafts, dungeons, tunnels and other underground workings (Buczek, 1965; Tołkanowicz, 2002; Rajchel, 2005). Until the beginning of the 20th century, on the site of the existing Dębnik I deposit (also known as Łom Karmelicki, Carmelite Quarry), there were three different quarries, still in the 17th and 18th centuries; the largest – Góra Karmelicka (Carmelite Mount / Quarry), belonging directly to monks from Czerna, opened on their initiative in 1644, as the so-called Druga or Nowa Góra (Second, or New Quarry) and then leased to Szymon Lepiasz vel Spatek (also called Witkowski), and Czarna Góra and Łom Sotecki (Black Mount, and Village Quarry) belonging to the community of the then inhabitants of Dębnik). They were connected and deepened by wanting to expand mining (Wardzyński, 2015a).

The seam of the layers in this deposit on WNW made the "dungeon marble" only revealed in the SE part of this quarry, in the contact zone between lying below the Zbrza dolomites and those lying above (and completely in this place excavated in the 20th century) Dębnik limestone (Buczek, 1965; Figs. 3–5). These exceptional colour features make "dungeon marble" the most decorative stonework in the former Commonwealth – apart from both varieties of vein calcite and accompanying breccia's "Różanka" from Paczółtowice and "Różanka" from Zelejowa Mount in Holy Cross Mountains (Wrzosek and Wróbel, 1961; Rubinowski, 1979; Wardzyński, 2015a). Unfortunately, the decorative qualities of "dungeon marble" did not go hand in hand with its technical properties, because it has a small-sized and irregular blockings, the above-mentioned greater hardness and the ability to chipping than black Dębnik



**Fig. 2. Geological map of the discovered Dębnik anticline with the location of historical and modern limestones deposits (according to: Rutkowski, 1928; Kozłowski, 1955; Bogacz, 1977; Łaptaś, 1982; Kurek and Preidl, 1992; Płonczyński and Łopusiński, 1992, changed, simplified)**

List of quarries: 1 – Carmelite Mount (Carmelite Quarry aka Dębnik I), 2 – Quarry 'On the Rokiczański Dół' aka Dębnik II, 3 – New Quarry of Mr Tumidalski, 4 – Cekiera Quarry, 5 – Grey Mount (Carmelite Quarry II), 6 – Red Mount. Prepared by JR (2019)

limestone. While in "Różanka" from Zelejowa or Paczółtowie it was possible incidentally, in the case of employing a very skilled stonemason or statuary sculptor, forging a human statue or capital (Wardzyński, 2012; Wardzyński, 2015a), the discussed limestone was suitable only for the production of straight-cut and one-sided polished floor panels or cladding boards.

Despite the high competence of local craftsmen, the quality of the prepared slabs was not always adequate, as evidenced by the report from 1686 by the Swiss-Italian architect Pietro Puttini, who mediated by letter on behalf of the Camaldolese monks from Pażaislis with the contractor from Dębnik, the then administrator of the centre, the Hungarian Michał Poman, asking him to "(...) deign to see that the pieces of white flooring are good, at least as good as the last one sent to the great altar, because you cannot hold another one in your hand – it has fallen apart like pea

soup and we cannot lay it in any way, and its strength is such that money was taken for nothing" (Pagaczewski, 1898; Rolska-Boruch, 2008; Wardzyński, 2014).

#### ARCHITECTURAL APPLICATION OF THE DĘBNIK "DUNGEON MARBLE"

Almost all applications of this specific material are for flooring and small marquetry elements in "black Dębnik marble" wall cladding. Despite the high competences of local craftsmen, the quality of the prepared slabs was not always adequate.

Taking into account the negligible percentage of preserved original stone floors from the 17th and 18th centuries in former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth territories, it can be assumed



Fig. 3. Dębnik, quarry 'Łom Karmelicki' aka Dębnik I; SE part of the deposit with a visible layer of "dungeon marble". Photo by MW



Fig. 4. Dębnik, contemporary quarry Dębnik II; a block of "dungeon marble" transported from the 'Łom Karmelicki' aka Dębnik I historic quarry, dimensions: c. 110 x 175 x 90 cm. Photo by MW

that they were traditionally made of black and white (dungeon) "marble" from Dębnik in the *opus alexandrinum* arrangement (i.e. in diamonds), with octagonal plates and small square keystone plates or the so-called perspective (geometric, with the illusion of depth of stacked cubes, created three-coloured rhombus-shaped tiles, called "pointed" in sources from the 17th and 18th centuries) floors dominated in the ceremonial interiors of residences, churches and chapels in Kraków and Lesser Poland (Rajchel, 2004; Wardzyński, 2015a). In Mazovia, Kuyavia and Greater Poland, products from Dębnik-Kraków competed during this period with imported limestone from the Baltic islands of Gotland and Öland as well as from the Netherlands and

Italy, and manufactured from prefabricated elements mainly in Gdańsk, Elbląg and Królewiec (Walendowski, 2000; Król et al., 2004; Wardzyński, 2015a).

Floors from Royal Prussia "ex lapidibus suecis" or "ex marmoribus transmarinibus" were shipped up the Vistula by raft, which significantly reduced their final price and contributed to their significant popularization in many places along the watercourses belonging to the Vistula, Neman and Daugava (Dvina) basins (Walendowski, 1997; Walendowski, 2000; Wardzyński, 2015a). It was only in the second quarter of the 17th century that floor slabs made of *marmo bianco ordinario* from Italian Carrara, usually contrasting with one of the black



**Fig. 5.** Dębnik, quarry ‘Łom Karmelicki’ aka Dębnik I; SE part of the deposit with a visible layer of “dungeon marble”, a rock fragment. Dimensions: c. 40 x 35 x 22 cm. Photo by MW

Mosan homogenic limestones, began to reach the main centers of the Crown and Vilnius via the same route from Gdańsk, Elbląg and Królewiec. Their first examples were inventoried about ten years ago among marble and stone relics from Villa Regia (Kazimierzowski’s Palace) in Warsaw, 1637 (Wardzyński et al., 2013; Kowalski et al., 2013), excavated from the bottom of the Vistula, and in the cathedral basilica in Gniezno, 1652–1653 (Wardzyński, 2015a). The Discalced Carmelites from Czerna also used the same transport route, regularly using the help of the Camaldolese Fathers from the hermitage called Srebrna Góra Bielańska – Silver Mount – near Kraków. The Vistula pile belonging to them – an artificial cargo harbour on the Vistula – was, next to Stradom and Kazimierz in Kraków, the main shipping port for Dębnik products throughout the country. Transports recently traced in detail in the years 1667–1709 from Dębnik via Warsaw, Gdańsk and Królewiec to the distant Pažaislis near Kaunas in terms of the organization of the route and the rafting itself (Wardzyński, 2014) can be used *pars pro toto* for the reconstruction of similar undertakings in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Fig. 6).

A crucial issue that requires discussion is the role of light “dungeon marble” in the local range of materials used in Dębnik and Kraków at that time. “Black marble”, mined from the early 17th century, was used in the widest range of needs, from the creation of architectural elements and details for façades and interiors to complete stonemasonry and sculpture decorations, with wall coverings, altars and tombstones (or epitaphs) in the chapels of the Lipski bishops, Jakub Zadzik and St. Mary’s in the Kraków cathedral and for the Denhoff magnate family at the Pauline pilgrimage basilica at Jasna Góra in Częstochowa. Due to its high fragility, Dębnik “black marble” was not used either in statuary sculpture or in full-plastic, compositionally complex ornamental elements, and apart from Bartholomeo Stoppano and Martin Christian Peterson, it is difficult to indicate any 17th-century sculptors with qualifications that would allow them to freely

process this material (Tatarkiewicz, 1953; Tatarkiewicz, 1966; Rożek, 1980; Targosz, 1991; Marszałek and Skowroński, 2010; Wardzyński, 2012). From the 1620s, polished inserts from patterned “Różanka” breccia from Paczółtowice began to fill the fields in the plinths and entablatures of altar structures, tombstones and portals, and it was not until the 4th quarter of the 17th century that the first more complicated details appeared in the works of the then administrators of the centre: the Hungarian Michał Poman (d. 1708) and the Poles: Stefan Bystrzycki (1686-89) and Jakub (d. 1715) and Stanisław (d. 1721) Bielawskis: bases and Ionic, Corinthian and composite capitals. The unique set of statues forged from this extremely difficult material in the tombstone of the Bishop of Poznań Andrzej Opaliński (d. 1623), built in 1685 in the parish church in Radlin near Jarocin, can also be associated with the first of the Bielawskis (Wardzyński, 2015b).

The most serious problem of the Kraków community and the Dębnik centre was the lack of appropriate bright materials in the region for carving figural sculpture: marble, limestone or alabaster. Too little blockiness and brittleness disqualified “dungeon marble” in this category, so appropriate raw materials were searched far beyond central Lesser Poland, in Pińczów on the Nida (Badenian lithothamnium limestone, mined and imported to Kraków since the end of the 10th century) and in Vasyuchyn and Zhuravno in Podolia (Ukraine) where the Badenian gypsum alabaster was exploited since the mid-16th century (Wardzyński, 2010; Rajchel et al., 2014). The most prestigious royal and episcopal foundations used fire-gilded bronze (Czyżewski, Walczak, 2015), but woodcarvers were generally invited to cooperate, offering statues and ornaments in linden wood, polychromed and gilded with flakes (Wardzyński, 2012). The crisis in this important matter was fully revealed in the years 1686–88, when the Camaldolese monks from Pažaislis tried to order in Dębnik magnificent figuratively decorated marble sarcophagi for the founding couple, the



Fig. 6. Map of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 17th-18th centuries with the location marked in Figure 2 (geological map of the Dębnik anticline)

red circle – inventoried sites of dissemination of the “dungeon marble”, blue circle – sites obtained from archival research. Prepared by JR and MW, 2019-2024

Grand Chancellor of Lithuania Krzysztof Zygmunt Pac (d. 1684) and Clara Isabella de Mailly (d. 1685). Presenting their own offers, Michał Poman, Jakub Bielawski and Jacek Zielaski (?) suggested during a long discussion the purchase of the above-mentioned types of rocks and even an undetermined type of “red marble” in Chęciny. Due to the failure of such transactions, these negotiations ended in fiasco and the sarcophagi were not built - the only traces of them are drawing designs and the discussed correspondence (Rolska-Boruch, 2008; Wardzyński, 2014).

A breakthrough in the impasse in the supply of whitish species of decorative rocks on the market in Kraków and in central Lesser Poland came only after 1689 when the extraction of light-beige, Upper Jurassic sponge limestone, the so-called “blessed Salomea’s marble” in a small crowbar in the eastern wall of the Prądnik Valley, below the Poor Claires’ hermitage in

Grodzisko near village of Skała (Holcer and Krajewski, 2001a; Holcer and Krajewski, 2001b; Rajchel, 2005; Bromowicz, Figarska-Warchoł, 2016; Kurzej, 2018; Wardzyński, 2024).

This deficiency turned out to be the greatest weakness of the Dębnik centre until the end of its activity in the early modern era. The range of materials was enriched around 1700 by the Jurassic, creamy ammonite limestone from Biała Góra, located between Dębnik and Paczółtowice, used mainly in floor slabs, most often as a replacement for “dungeon marble”. In the same period, near Tenczyn, in the villages of Regulice and Zalas, small deposits of light and yellowish limestone were discovered (Tatarkiewicz, 1953; Tatarkiewicz, 1966; Gradziński, 1972; Rajchel, 2005), which local masters Jacek Zielaski and Poman used to a narrow extent in a set of floors university collegiate church of St. Anna in Kraków (Kurzej, 2008; Wardzyński, 2015a) and in the nearby parish church in Bolechowice.

The lack of appropriate field inventory research, contributed to the poor knowledge about Dębnik “dungeon marble”. Such analysis were carried out according to the principles of a new research method – historical and materials science – related to the methodology of ancient marble studies (Fant, 1988) and archaeometry/ archaeopetrography/ petroarchaeology (Prinke and Skoczylas, 1980; Skoczylas and Prinke, 1981; Skoczylas and Prinke, 1987; Chachlikowski, 1994; Skoczylas 1998; Gediga, 2008; Skoczylas and Gunia, 2016). There was also no comparison of the identified monuments with historical sources, primarily with the economic acts of the Carmelite ‘desertum’ in Czerna relating to the centre in Dębnik (Wardzyński, 2015a). The account book of the convent from the years 1646–1740 allows us to relatively precisely track the ‘olbora’ fees – a turnover tax of approximately 10% on the extraction of marble blocks and slabs. It was paid by individual stonemasons from Dębnik itself and their Kraków contractors – sculptors and builders, including: Italians Sebastiano Sala and Bartholomeo Ronchi (both died in 1652), later Francesco Mucini and the unknown Gimary (Gennaio or January?), the Dane Martin Christian Peterson from Copenhagen (recorded 1649-65), and the local Wojciech and Adam (died 1683) Gabrysiaks / Gabrysiowicz *aka* Negowicz, as well as Marcin (died after 1689) and Jakub (died 1715) Bielawski. A supplement for the years 1691–1711 is the detailed collection book of the “marble olbora” from Dębnik, used by researchers (MW), which precisely records the contemporary work of two competing studios: Poman and both Bielawskis (Tatarkiewicz, 1953; Tatarkiewicz, 1966; Graczyk and Marszałska, 2014; Wardzyński, 2015b; Skrabski, 2016).

The earliest, general mention of the extraction of “dungeon marble” in Dębnik dates back to 1631<sup>2</sup>. Between 1633 and 1648, such limestone, next to the “black marble” from Dębnik, was obtained for floors by a stonemason named Maciej, constantly employed in various works in the Camaldolese church and hermitage of the Srebrna Góra, including the decorations of the side chapels of St. Ladislaus and St. Romualdus, founded by King Ladislaus IV Vasa and the monastic authorities<sup>3</sup>. In the years 1646–52, the first financial statement recorded only general amounts for the extraction of Dębnik marbles. For the first time, the entry “pro Marmore et alio lapide or a M[a]gn[ific]o D[omi]no Piszarsowski” appears under the monthly date of November 1652<sup>4</sup>. This information exactly corresponds to the order addressed to Negowicz and Wojciech Zielaski for the placed originally, in the marble floor, there was a bas-relief, engraved tombstone of Jan Piszarsowski of Piszarowice, who died in the same year, royal secretary and land judge in the Duchies of Zator and Oświęcim, placed in the wooden parish church in Głębocice near Oświęcim. Unfortunately, the original floor in this temple was replaced after a new brick presbytery was built in 1931. At the same time, it cannot be ruled out that this “white stone” from Dębnik could also have been intended for the brick manor house of the Piszarsowski family, expanded in 1646, which has been in complete ruin since the fire in 1889 (KzsP, 1953). From later records, including: from the years 1664-85, which generally mention the purchase of floors by Peterson or Bielawski, there is no mention of the use of “dungeon

marble”<sup>5</sup>. Under the year 1679 there are no references to the epitaph of Teresa Eidner in Tarnowskie Góry (Tarnowitz in Upper Silesia) discussed below.

In the most carefully kept book of the “marble olbora” from 1691–1711, the number of entries relating to the construction of the “white marble” floor from Dębnik increased (July 1682, February 1698, October 9, 15 and 30, 1698, July 13, 3 and 8 September 1703, April 1, 1708 to the Holy Sepulchry Order abbey in Miechów and to the Camaldolese monks in Bielany near Kraków, May 1700 to the parish church in Lublin; January 30 and 31 and February 17, 1706 to the Paulines from the famous pilgrimage center of Jasna Góra, March 4, May 21 and 24, 1696, respectively<sup>6</sup>; parish church in Stary Szaniec near Busko, August 6 and December 4, 1696, January 1697– September 1699, August 1703 to St. Mary’s Church in Kraków, and September 1708 again for the Holy Sepulchers in Miechów)<sup>7</sup>. However, it should be remembered that only a small part of them and all sculptural elements, e.g. paid for in October 1701 by Poman for the monastery of the Congregation of the Mission in Stradom, “white heads of a corpse” and “two 8-inch white marble angels” (i.e. 20.3 cm), was carved from whitish limestone from Grodzisko near Skała, suitable for such purposes. The disappearance of the extraction of “dungeon marble” in Dębnik after 1700 is also proven by reading the account book kept in the years 1694–1703 for the construction of the new university collegiate church of St. Anne in Kraków. It records numerous deliveries of “white marble” floor tiles, paid for, among others, by: residents of Dębnik, mainly Jacek Zielaski, concerned only limestone from Biała Góra quarry. The main beneficiaries of the orders of Rev. Canon Sebastian Piskorski, however, were then Kraków stonemasons, who obtained the material mainly from the crowbar under the hermitage in Grodzisko (Kurzej, 2008; Wardzyński, 2024)<sup>8</sup>. We are dealing with a similar situation in the ‘factory’ of church of The Order of the Visitation in Biskupie suburb in Kraków, which was run at the same time, where in the years 1694–96 Poman delivered a three-coloured floor with “white marble”, laying it in the nave – but it was already “marble of blessed Salomea.” Jan Liszkowicz, a Kraków stonemason employed there at the same time, also prepared some of the balusters of the communion balustrade from this material in 1694 (Włodarek, 2010).

#### STONEMASONRY WORKS FROM “DUNGEON MARBLE” IN THE FORMER POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH

The search for stoneworks from Dębnik and Kraków using “dungeon marble” is difficult today, mainly due to the phenomenon of mass replacement or far-reaching transformations of floor areas in historic interiors, which has been gaining momentum since 1989 and 2004. This is due to the fault of investors and contractors and the insufficient knowledge of the monument protection services and conservation companies on this subject. The only criterion for assessing the usefulness of a given historic floor is its general condition of preservation, which

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Kraków, Jagiellonian Library, Manuscript Department, Camaldolese Archives in Bielany, folder Church, p. unnumbered (a contract for the supply of black and white flooring in the years 1633–43 for over 770 florins).

<sup>4</sup> Kraków-Prądnik Biały, Archive of the Kraków Province of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, sign. AKC 322, Accepta pieniędzy z różnych prowentów, folwarków naszych w roku 1646, 1646–1740, fol. 21 verso.

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, fol. 51 recto.

<sup>6</sup> Kraków-Prądnik Biały, Archive of the Kraków Province of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, sign. AKC 82, Connotationes mensurarum marmoris /vulgo olbora/ extraditi a magistris in Dembnik, arendariis montium, seu fodinarum marmorearum inchoatae anno a partu Virginis 1691 mense Junio, 1691–1711, fol. 2 verso, 18 recto, 18 verso, 21 recto, 24 verso, 29 verso, 37 recto.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem, fol. 68 recto, 69 recto, 69 verso, 70 recto-75 verso, 78 recto, 79 verso.

<sup>8</sup> Kraków, Jagiellonian University Archives, sign. rkps 318/4087, Fabryka kolegiaty św. Anny, In nomi[n]e D[omi]ni amen. Rationes perceptorum et expensorum pro fabricae ecclesiae S Annae Crac. anno Dni 1692 d. 1 decembris, 1692–1754, passim.



**Fig. 7. Czerna, church of the Discalced Carmelites, nave, floor, after 1640–before 1690, tile made of "dungeon marble", an example of a greenish discoloration. Dimensions: 42 x 42 cm**

in the case of fragile "dungeon marble" usually ends with the decision to remove the original tiles, later replaced by a poorly selected, most often foreign – today generally Chinese, Turkish, Iranian or Latin American – varieties of decorative stone. It is worth adding that such works are beyond the interest of art historians and are not included in the Catalogue of Art Monuments in Poland. The only source that gives partial insight into monuments of this type are cards of architectural monuments or movable monuments in the collections of the National Heritage Institute in Warsaw and in the Provincial Offices for the Protection of Monuments and their regional delegations.

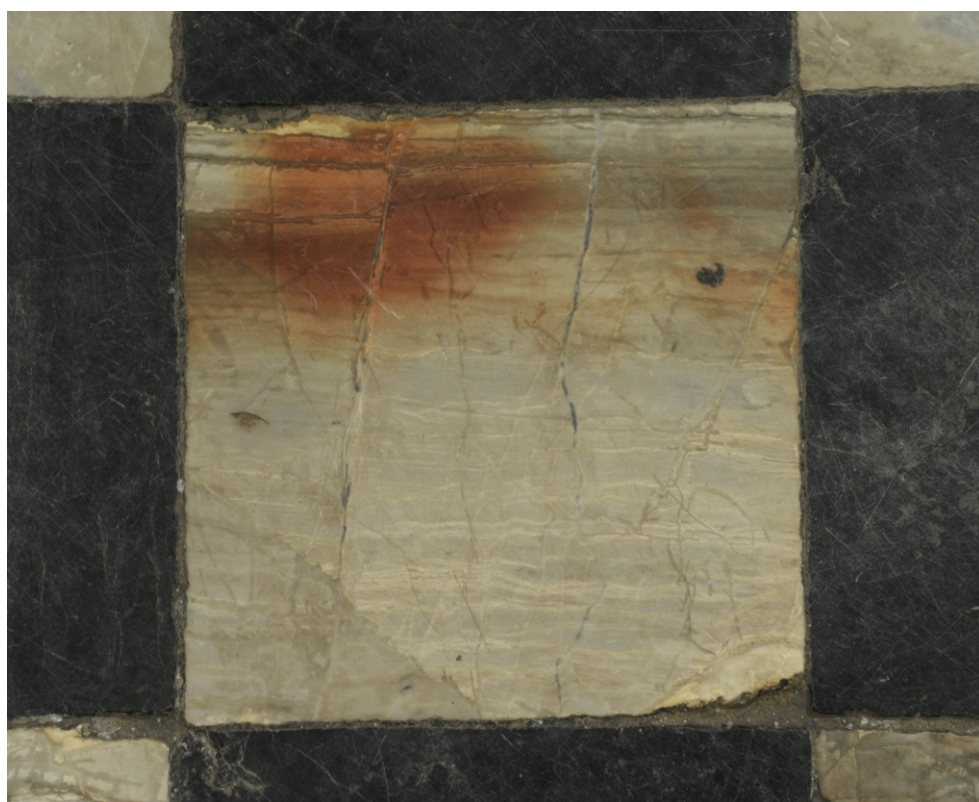
Among the two- or three-coloured floors from the 17th and early 18th centuries, in which the discussed species of whitish limestone from Dębnik was used, the floor lining the interior of the Discalced Carmelites 'desertum' church in nearby Czerna deserves special attention. There are no precise archival sources regarding its creation, however, it can be assumed that it took place either already in the 1640s or at the latest during the intensification of work on the completion of the black marble decoration of the temple in Dębnik in the 4th quarter of the 17th century, as part of the work carried out in parallel by the workshops of Poman and Jakub Bielawski. Subject to ongoing repairs from the mid-17th century to the beginning of the 21st century, it has retained the original layout of the *opus alexandrinum* and is an isolated example of the use of square slabs of relatively large dimensions (Figs. 7–9). In the monastic choir located behind the presbytery, there was a small aedicule altar of The Holy Cross, consecrated in 1657. A central niche with an illusionistic "perspective" in the main field, reproducing an architectural interior with a highly stacked two-colour floor with an identical composition. Poman probably used this type of white

stone in the 1680s or 1690s when he placed carefully rolled balls in the canopy of the tempietto-throne for the Most Holy Sacrament above the tabernacle of the high altar (Wanat, 1979, 1992). In turn, Adam Gabrysiowicz's workshop, before 1681, decorated the black and white floor of the presbytery of the wooden parish church in Paczółtowice, to which Dębnik itself belonged, thanks to a private donation of this master stonemason. In 1814 and 1820, the sacristy and nave were covered with "marbles", respectively – but here the "dungeon marble" replaced the limestone from Biała Góra quarry (Małkowska-Holcer, 1998).

In the capital city of Kraków, the main works of Dębnik stations were concentrated in the most important temples: Cathedral on the Wawel Hill, St. Mary's Basilica and the main monastic churches. These monuments have not yet been identified in historical and petrographic terms. In the cathedral, two-coloured floors with small square tiles of "dungeon marble", inserted as keystones of large octagonal slabs of Dębnik limestone, decorate the steps surrounding the canopy reliquary altar of St. Stanislaus at the intersection of the naves (1624–29, designed by Giovanni Battista Trevano the elder or Matteo Castello, executed by Bartholomeo Stoppano with his studio, attributed) and the floors and steps of the mensas in the side chapels: St. James' / Bishop Jakub Zadzik (1645–47, executed probably by Martin Christian Peterson) and St. Mary's / King Steven I. Bathory (1649, performed by Stoppano with workshop) (Rożek, 1980; Przybyszewski, 2012). In the royal *sacellum* of the Vasa family / Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (1665–67, performed by Marcin Bielawski from Kraków with the participation of Adam Negowicz's studio; Rożek, 1980; Czyżewski, 2016; Chromy-Rościszewska, 2016) used the tradi-



**Fig. 8.** Czerna, church of the Discalced Carmelites, nave, floor, “dungeon marble” tile from Dębnik, example of yellow discoloration. Dimensions: 42 x 42 cm



**Fig. 9.** Czerna, church of the Discalced Carmelites, nave, floor, “dungeon marble” tile from Dębnik, example of orange discoloration. Dimensions: 42 x 42 cm



**Fig. 10.** Kraków-Wawel Hill, cathedral, side chapel of St. James the Apostel / Bishop Jakub Zadzik, altar step, floor, 1645–47, tiles made of "dungeon marble" from Dębnik, Dębnik limestone and vein calcite Różanka Paczółtowicka. Dimensions: 25 x 25 cm



**Fig. 11.** Kraków-Wawel Hill, cathedral, side chapel of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary / Vasa dynasty, floor, 1665–67, tiles made of "dungeon marble" from Dębnik and Dębnik limestone, executed by Marcin Bielawski from Kraków and Adam Gabryśik / Gabryśiowicz aka Negowicz from Dębnik (attributed). Dimensions: 25 x 25 cm

tional theme of *opus alexandrinum*. The "dungeon marble" tiles on the step of the side altar of St. James in the Zadzik's chapel (tones of orange) and in the floor of the Vasa *mausoleum* (greenish-grey with abundant veining) were particularly carefully selected (Figs. 10 and 11). After 1747, while carrying out a comprehensive replacement of the floors of the royal temple, stonemason Tomasz Górecki from Dębnik used small "dungeon marble" tiles in the composition of the floor in the presbytery area. Work on the main nave was completed only in the years 1778–80 (Przybyszewski, 2012; Wardzyński, 2024).

A small fragment of the original 17th-century floor of the first type was probably moved after the memorable fire of the convent in 1850 from the church or the unidentified interior of the

Dominican monastery to the eastern part of the southern wing of the cloister (Fig. 12). The tiles are dominated by the most decorative yellow, orange and reddish tones there. Tiles of this material were also used to cover some of the preserved original floors from the 17th and early 18th centuries in the arms of the transept of the Jesuit temple of Saints Peter and Paul. The greenish-coloured tiles were placed in 1647 on the step preceding one of the "black Dębnik marble" altar in the famous pilgrimage church of the Carmelites in Piasek suburb (Rajchel, 2005). The two-coloured floor in the temple of Discalced Carmelite Nuns, dedicated to Saint Martin, came from a similar time. In 1787, due to the dissolution of the latter convent, this floor, composed of square and rhomboid tiles of "black" and "dun-



Fig. 12. Kraków, Dominican monastery, southern arm of the cloister, floor, 17th century, “dungeon marble” tiles from Dębnik. Dimensions: 16 x 16 cm



Fig. 13. Kraków, Discalced Carmelites Nuns’ church of St. Martin, “pointed” floor (today in parish church in Krzyżanowice Dolne near Pińczów on the Nida), c. 1647, “dungeon marble” tiles from Dębnik. Dimensions: 28 x 28 cm and 26 x 16 cm

geon" marbles, was purchased for the newly built abbey church of the Premonstratensian Nuns (currently the parish church) in Krzyżanowice Dolne near Busko, situated in central part of Lesser Poland (Maćczyński, 2011; Fig. 13). The source information discussed earlier about the purchase and installation of floors and architectural elements of furnishing made of "dungeon marble" can be successfully applied to the preserved monuments in St. Mary's Basilica. Poman's bills from Dębnik from 1706 for the "white floor" most likely refer to elements of the floors in the side chapels of St. Valentine (unique circular keystones) and the Transfiguration of the Lord (rhomboid parts of the perspective floor – "pointed"; Rożek, 1977). Most likely, the floor in the corridor between the sacristies at the Franciscan church also comes from the beginning of the 18th century.

Outside Kraków, analogous historic coverings of usable surfaces have so far been identified in the collegial church in Zamość (after 1635; Kowalczyk, 1968), the abbey church and cloister of the Benedictine abbey in Tyniec (1740s–1760s) and in the temples of the Bernardine nuns in Chęciny near Kielce (4th quarter of the 17th century) and in the Discalced Carmelites in Warsaw (c. 1700) as well as Discalced Carmelite Nuns of St. Immaculate Conception Virgin Mary in Lublin (early 18th century; Fig. 14).

Similar ventures in at least three Polish hermitages of the Camaldolese Order deserve special attention. After the oldest monastery of Srebrna Góra in Bielany near Kraków, founded by Mikołaj Wolski, the Grand Marshal of the Polish Crown, where the "dungeon marble" in a large supply of floor slabs was already delivered to the first pair of side chapels in 1633, and later decorated the entire nave. An order for such material itself was soon sent by monks from the Golden Forest hermitage in Rytwiary near Staszów, central Lesser Poland, founded by the magnate Opaliński family. In the pre-1637 floor in the nave of the local church, squares of "dungeon marble" are complemented by alternating octagonal slabs of limestones from Bolechowice near Chęciny and from Dębnik (Wardzyński, 2021; Fig. 15). A unique feature in the entire Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth is the marble and stone setting of the façade and interior design of the church and the most important rooms of the monumental hermitage in Pažaislis near Kaunas, in the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania. On February 3, 1667, under a special agreement between the founder Krzysztof Zygmunt Pac, the Grand Chancellor of Lithuania, and Adam Gabryśik *aka* Negowicz, a new "black marble" quarry was opened in Dębnik for the exclusive needs of this colossal investment (Graczyk and Marszalska, 2014; Wardzyński, 2014; Skrabski, 2016). Starting in the 1680s, large river transports of prefabricated floor slabs according to Pietro Puttini's designs for the six-sided nave and the presbytery, four side chapels and the porch of the Hermitage temple began to reach the Neman. Initially, the brothers Adam and Wojciech Negowicz were responsible for their implementation, and later subsequent administrators of the center in Dębnik: Stefan Bystrzycki and Poman and Jacek Zielaski (Kairiäkštytė-Jacinien, 2001; Paknys, 2013). In all these interiors, floors with sights have been preserved, as well as the most valuable ones – perspective ones, composed here in a three-colour arrangement of rhomboid ("pointed") tiles made of "black marble" from Dębnik, "Różanka" from Paczółtowicka and "dungeon marble" (Fig. 16)<sup>9</sup>. The latter, due

to the fragility of the material itself reported in the archives and the carelessness of the "stones" themselves – today their state of preservation can be described as definitely poor. At the end of the 17th and in 18th centuries, attempts were made to gradually replace them with more durable "marble of the blessed Salomea" and even ordinary sandstone, taken mainly from the Baltic island of Gotland and from Szydłowiec in Lesser Poland. The latter material was purchased from a royal architect from Warsaw who was related to and collaborated with Puttini – the Valsoldian Giuseppe Simone Bellotti (Wardzyński, 2014; Wardzyński, 2015a).

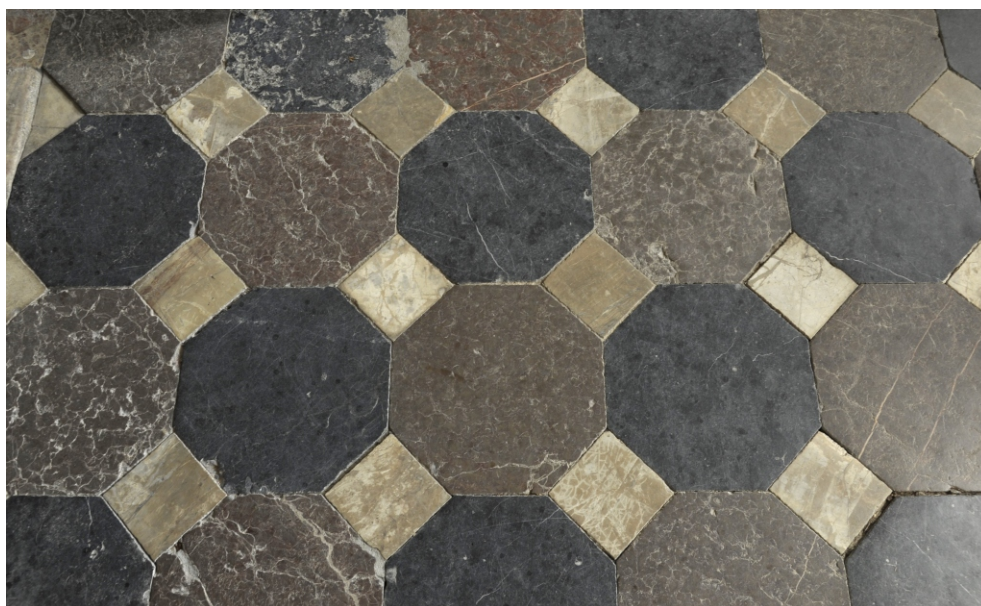
One of the authors (MW) recently identified five examples of the use of the discussed material in sculptural and statuary creations. Two busts are unique stereometric works. The first is a tombstone portrait of the Michał Bartłomiej Tarło (d. 1715), Bishop of Poznań and the provincial of the Polish-Lithuanian Congregation of the Missionaries of St. Vincent de Paul, which is placed in the central oval niche of the overhanging monument dedicated to him in the Warsaw parish church of The Holy Cross (Fig. 17). It was made together with the entire tombstone in 1716 in Dębnik, with the participation of the stonemason Tomasz Górecki. However, the bust itself indicates the authorship of another local stonemason who occasionally dabbled in figurative sculpture, Stanisław Bielawski (d. 1721), the son and grandson of the previously mentioned Jakub and Marcin (Wardzyński, 2011; Wardzyński, 2021). Most likely, a small bust of St. Francis was created around this time in the same artistic circle. It was used to decorate the cartouche at the top of the "black marble" portal carved in Dębnik, leading from the southern arm of the church transept to the old sacristy of the Franciscan convent in Kraków (KzSP, 1971; Fig. 18). In both works, the characteristic orange and reddish discolorations of this unusual rock are clearly visible on the polished surface of the garments. They are also characterized by overall shape development and reduction of details, which can be explained by the difficulty of processing caused by the high roughness of the dolomitized material.

A little later, in 1741, a bas-relief depicting the Penance of St. Mary Magdalene may have been created, placed in the central field of another "black marble" side altar of Dębnik provenance. It was then moved to the choir of the Pauline pilgrimage church in Jasna Góra from the chapel of the St. Mary's Miraculous Image (Rozanow and Smulikowska, 2009; Fig. 19). The relief was unveiled after several dozen years only in 2011, during comprehensive conservation works in this temple. The stage was carved from a heavily dolomitized slab of dark beige "dungeon marble", strongly cracked and with local darker discolorations, while at the same time giving the impression of being semi-transparent and retaining a long-lasting, deep polish on the surface. The specific visual features of this rock have numerous analogies with smaller floor slabs in churches in Czerna, Kraków and Tyniec. The above-mentioned hardness and flakiness of this limestone contributed to the simplification of the relief forms, which is characterized by a certain naivety of the composition arrangement. The latter feature may result to a similar extent from the shortcomings of the artist's talent, inspired by an unidentified engraving. At that time, in Dębnik and Kraków there was a lack of qualified artists working with marble and limestone.

<sup>9</sup> Wrocław, Ossoliński National Institute, Manuscripts Department, sign. ZNOs rkps 1901/I, Korespondencja, ugody, plany i rachunki prowadzone za pośrednictwem oo. kamedułów na Bielanych przy Krakowie względem dostarczenia marmurników dębnickich i siedleckich do budowy kościoła kamedułów na eremie Montis Pacis na Pożajściu (przy Kownie) w Litwie, fundowanego r. 1664 przez Krzysztofa Paca, kanclerza w. litewskiego, a dokończonego przez synowca jego, Kazimierza Michała Paca, w r. 1706, 1675–1709, documents no. 15, 19, 20.



**Fig. 14.** Lublin, Lesser Poland, church of the Discalced Carmelites Nuns of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, porch, fragment of perspective floor, after 1700, “dungeon marble” from Dębnik. Dimensions: 28 x 18 cm



**Fig. 15.** Rytwiany by Staszów, Lesser Poland, church of the Camaldolese hermitage, nave, floor, tiles made of “dungeon marble” from Dębnik, Dębnik and Bolechowice limestones, before 1637. Dimensions: 14 x 14 cm. Photo by MW, 2021

In addition to the few examples of the artistic use of “dungeon marble” in the architecture and stonemasonry decoration of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, two exceptions confirming this rule were identified. The first is the early Baroque-Mannerist sacristy portal in the presbytery of the Benedictine abbey church in Tyniec near Kraków. In the frieze of this portal there are symbols of the patron saints: Peter and Paul, carved by sculptor – two crossed books and swords (the latter not preserved, a negative visible at the place of installation). The preserved iconographic records from before the reduction of the frame of this entrance in the years 1942–1944 allow us to associate its creation with the person of the Dębnik master and administrator of the quarries, Adam Gabryśik, Gabryśiowicz *aka* Negowicz, who worked there from the late 1640s until 1683.

In turn, in the former parish church in Tarnowskie Góry (Tarnowitz) near Bytom (Beuthen) in Upper Silesia, a “black marble”, suspended and recomposed epitaph of the townswoman Teresa Eidner (d. 1679), made in Dębnik or Kraków, has been preserved. The main field of this monument in the shape of a late Mannerist aedicule is flanked by stylized columns. Their bases and capitals are cut in Ruthenian alabaster, as well as shafts carved in “dungeon marble” (KzsP, 1968; Fig. 20). The very characteristic forms of the ferruled and rolled lugs and the top framed with herm pilasters indicate inspiration from the work of the leading sculptor from Kraków at the time – Martin Christian Peterson (Wardzyński, 2015a; Wardzyński 2022). In Tyniec and Tarnowskie Góry, carefully selected lumps of “dungeon limestone”, devoid of major breccias and veins and uniformly coloured, were used to carve the details discussed.



Fig. 16. Pažaislis near Kaunas, former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, church of the Camaldolese hermitage, side chapel of St. Christopher, "pointed" floor, tiles made of "dungeon marble" from Dębnik, Dębnik limestone and vein calcite Różanka Paczółtowska, around 1686, executed by Stefan Bystrzycki or Michał Poman with their studios from Dębnik. Dimensions: c. 28 x 28 cm. Photo by MW, 2013



Fig. 18. Kraków, Franciscan monastery, southern porch of the church, side portal, bust of St. Francis, around 1715, made by Stanisław Bielawski from Dębnik (attributed)



Fig. 17. Warsaw, Mazovia, parish church of the Missionaries of the Holy Cross, tombstone of Michał Bartłomiej Tarło (d. 1715), bishop of Poznań and Polish provincial of the Congregation of Missions, portrait bust, 1716, executed by Tomasz Górecki and Stanisław Bielawski from Dębnik (attributed)

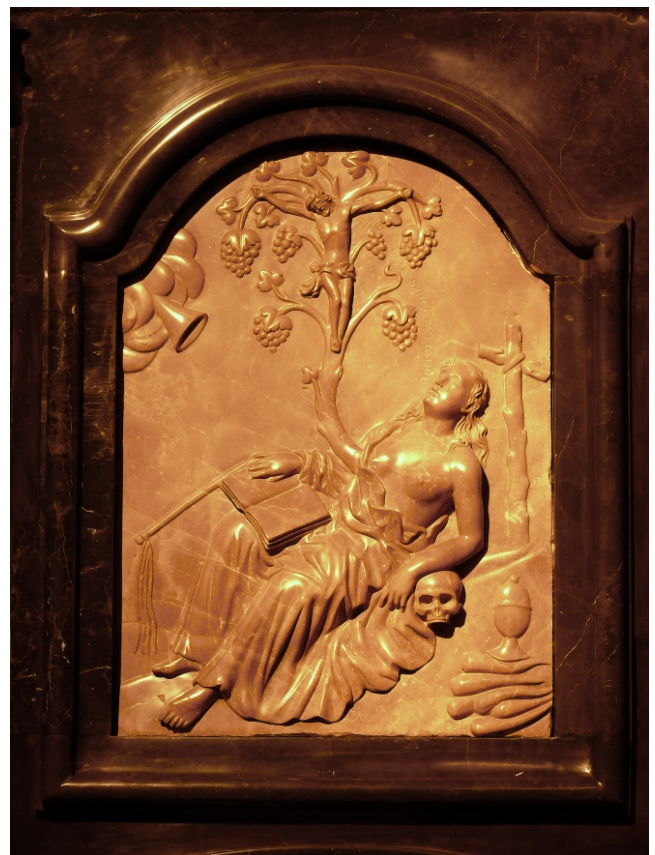


Fig. 19. Jasna Góra, Lesser Poland, pilgrimage Paulines church, side altar of St. Zita of Lucca, central bas-relief with a depiction of St. Mary Magdalene, 1741, made by an unknown workshop from Dębnik or Kraków



**Fig. 20.** Tarnowskie Góry, Upper Silesia, parish church, epitaph of Teresa Eidner (d. 1679), “black marble” and “dungeon marble” from Dębnik, Ruthenian alabaster from Vasyuchyn (?), designed by Martin Christian Peterson from Kraków, executed by Adam Gabrysik / Gabrysiowicz aka Negowicz from Dębnik (attributed). Photo by MW, 2009

### CLOSING REMARKS

“Dungeon marble” has been the least known stonemasonry raw material so far, and has only occasionally appeared as a sculptural material throughout the modern history of the mining and stonemasonry centre in Dębnik. Despite its beautiful colours and diverse structure, it did not gain the recognition it

deserved from local workshops and the wider clientele. One of the reasons was initially difficult access to the deposit made available for underground exploitation and, above all, unsatisfactory technical properties. The majority of works carried out with his very modest quantitative share took place in the 1620s and 1740s. They were related to the activities of Bartholomeo Stoppano, as well as Adam Gabrysik aka Negowicz, Stefan Bystrzycki and Michał Poman, who all collaborated in the 4th quarter of the 17th century with a talented stonemason-incisor (creator/maker of reliefs and inscriptions) and statuary sculptor Jacek Zielaski. It is worth noting that Jakub Bielawski settled the collection of blocks of “white marble” with the Carmelite treasurer in Czerna at the turn of the 17th and 18th centuries exclusively for the production of floor tiles. They were ordered for only a few of the most important temples in Kraków, with St. Mary’s Basilica at the forefront, and in several others churches in central Lesser Poland. However, careful observation of the historic stone floors preserved there reveals the presence of Biała Góra limestone or “marble of blessed Salomea” from Grodzisko near Skala. These two species of Jurassic limestone replaced the previously mined brittle and splintered “dungeon marble” in the stonework of Dębnik-Kraków in the 4th quarter of the 17th, and in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Administrative, financial and geographical conditions meant that the main beneficiaries of orders for “dungeon marble” floors were the authorities of two orders closely related to Dębnik – the Camaldolese monks and the Discalced Carmelites. Inventory research revealed purchases of such material for three hermitages (Bielany near Kraków, Rytwiary and Pożajście) and at least four Carmelites monasteries (Czerna, Kraków, Warsaw and Lublin, perhaps also Wiśnicz Nowy). This catalogue is certainly far from complete.

It is a “marble of blessed Salomea” from the Prądnik Valley from the end of the 17th century achieved the prestigious status of the main medium in figurative sculpture in Kraków and Lesser Poland. It became, among others, for famous sculptors: Wojciech Rojowski, Leonardo Galli and Ferdinand Kuhn, a local surrogate for *marmo bianco statuario* from Italian Carrara, and remained in current use at least until the end of the first quarter of the 19th century (Weber, 1948; Tatarkiewicz, 1953; Tatarkiewicz, 1958; Tatarkiewicz, 1966; Kula, 1956; Holcer and Krajewski, 2001; Bromowicz and Figarska-Warchoł, 2016; Wardzyński, 2024). Today, the somewhat forgotten Dębnik “dungeon marble” is rather a geological curiosity, but the history of its excavation and artistic use deserves scientific reminder. With regard to the activities of monument protection services and repair work on historic floors, it is also worth mentioning that this deposit is still available in the Łom Karmelicki, aka Dębnik I quarry site, in case of urgent conservation needs.

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rozkazaniem Wielebnego Ojca Naszego Ojca Ignacego od św. Jana ewangelisty, przeora tegoż klasztoru w Roku Pań[skiego], 1643.

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ZNOs, sign. 1901/I, Korespondencja, ugody, plany i rachunki prowadzone za pośrednictwem oo. kamedułów na Bielanych przy Krakowie względem dostarczenia marmurników dębnickich i siedleckich do budowy kościoła kamedułów na eremie Montis Pacis na Pożajściu (przy Kownie) w Litwie, fundowanego r. 1664 przez Krzysztofa Paca, kanclerza w. litewskiego, a dokończony przez synowca jego, Kazimierza Michała Paca, w r. 1706, 1675–1709.

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