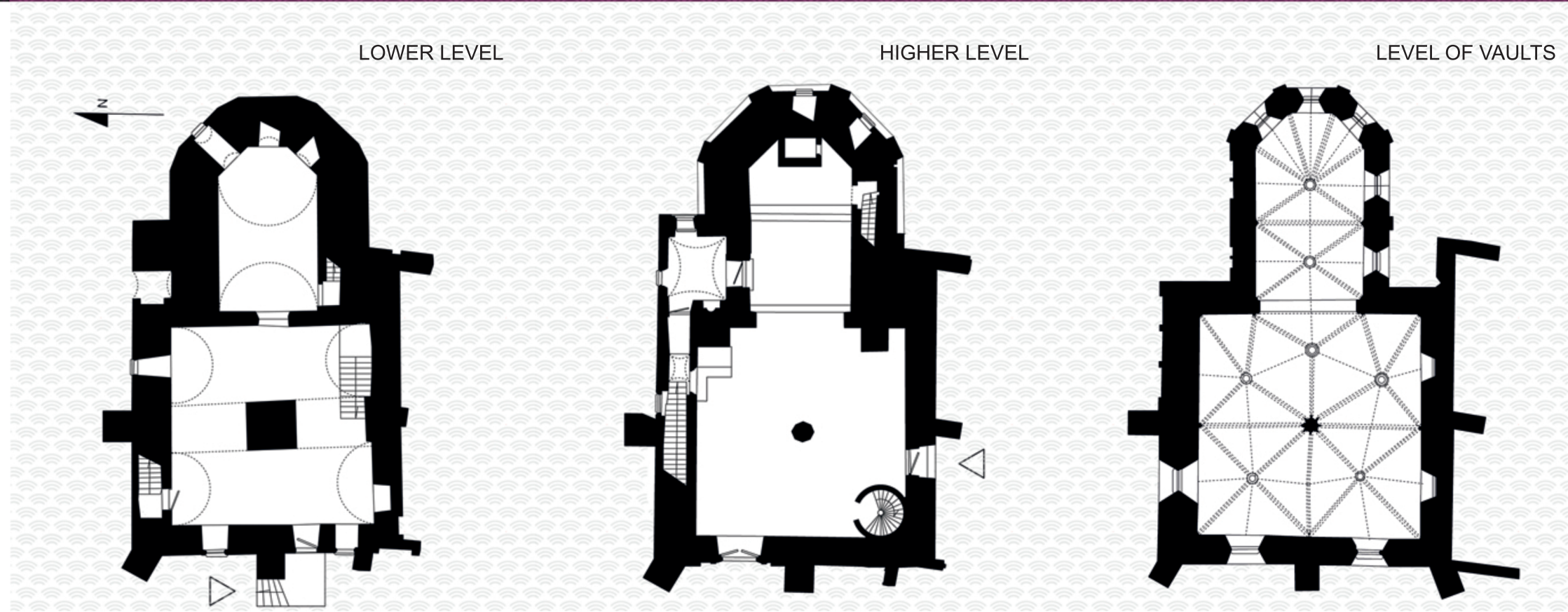




The chapel is situated in the south-east part of the castle hill and included in the buildings of the present Lublin Museum. It consists of a square body with an elongated, two-bay, three-sided chancel and a chancel arch. In the middle of the nave there is an octagonal pillar, called the column of heavens, supporting the rib vault. In the north, there is a square sacristy with stairs leading to the lower storey of the chapel. Elevations are articulated with three-setoff buttresses, between which lancet windows and blends (blind windows) are situated. In the front facade there is a renaissance



portal (transformed into a window after the stairs were pulled down) and a high late-renaissance gable decorated with pilasters, arcaded recesses, volutes and pinnacles. The chapel represents the type of one-pillar resident chapel, known also from other foundations of king Kazimierz Wielki in Stopnica and Wiślica.

The interior of the chapel is covered with iconographically complex Byzantine-Ruthenian polychromes. In the chancel vault there is a depiction of Christ in Majesty and dove of the Holy Spirit surrounded by Our Lady, John the Baptist, four archangels and the symbols of four Evangelists. In the nave vault there are sixteen angels repre-

senting the three highest angelic hosts – Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones. On the walls of the chancel and the chancel arch there are scenes from the New Testament – from the Last Supper to the Ascension of Christ, with the Old Testament image of the Holy Trinity, the image of St. Paul and three fathers of Eastern Church. The walls of the nave contain evangelical scenes from the lives of Jesus and Mary as well as the images of prophets and saints. It is worth noting the inscription commemorating the foundation of the chapel and the horse portrait of Władysław Jagiełło on the inside of the chancel arch, as well as the scene of the founder's prayer before the triumphant Mary with the Child on the stairs to the matroneum. What is more, all free

surfaces are covered with polychrome representing various ornamental decorations and draped fabrics. Frescoes in the Holy Trinity Chapel are an excellent example of the reception of Eastern painting in the Kingdom of Poland. Similar polychromes were also found in other cities. Their remains have been preserved to the present day, among others, in Sandomierz and Wawel Cathedrals or in the Collegiate of Wiślica. The chapel in Lublin is distinguished by its completeness and the condition of the preserved frescoes, as well as the harmonious combination of Gothic architecture and Eastern painting. This makes the chapel a perfect example of the penetration of Latin and Byzantine influences on the territory of Jagiellonian monarchy.





## HISTORY

According to some scholars, the earliest record of the first unpreserved church of the Holy Trinity on the castle hill can be found in the Cracow accounts of Peter's Pence dated 1326. It does not contain, however, any information about the construction or the interior of the church. Architectural studies or archaeological discoveries do not confirm the existence of the alleged first church. The building preserved to this day was built on the initiative of king Kazimierz Wielki (Casimir III the Great) in the years 1342-1370 as a Gothic, oriented, two-storey, brick chapel. At the turn of the 15th century it was rebuilt. The upper storey was reworked and the northern portal was moved more to the west. Significant changes took place inside the church, where two altar stones and a matroneum were added. Thanks to the foundation of king Władysław Jagiełło, the interior was decorated with Byzantine-Ruthenian polychromes. The first record of works on paintings in the chapel can be found in the oldest city register of Lublin from 1407. The date of completion is also provided: on St. Lawrence's day, 10 August 1418.



*N. Orda, The courtyard of the Lublin Castle, about 1873, National Museum in Warsaw.*

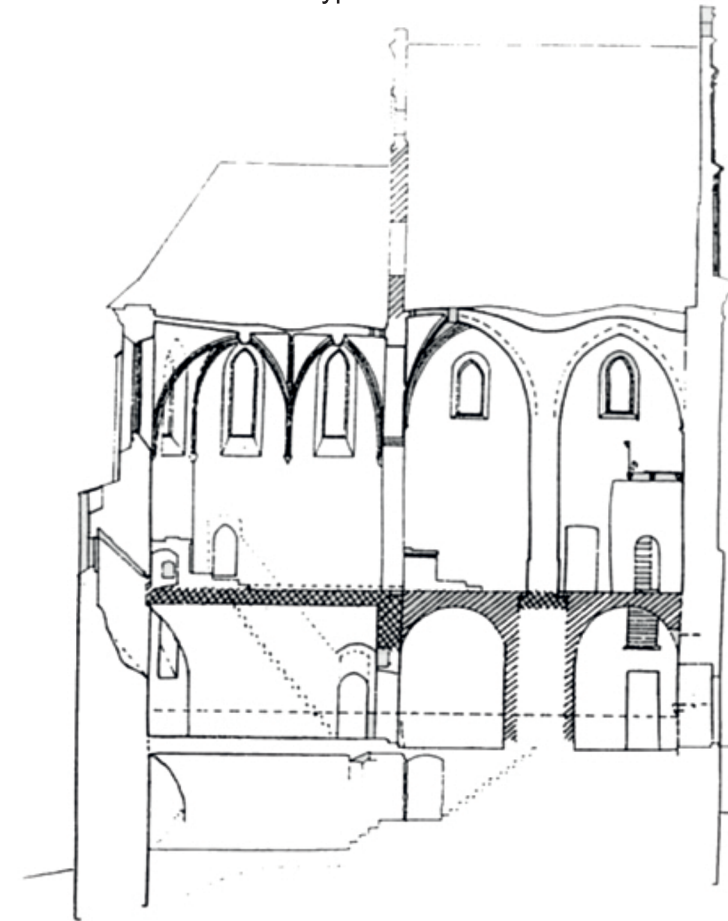
The paintings were made by a group of painters led by master Andrzej in cooperation with masters Kuryło and Juszko. In the second half of the 15th century, a vicars' house was built by the southern elevation of the chapel. In the 16th century, a sacristy was built on the northern side of the chancel. Around the half of the 16th century, the main entrance to the chapel from the west side was decorated with a renaissance portal and stairs. In the first quarter of the 17th century, the interior was equipped with three late-renaissance altars: the main altar with the paintings of the coronation of Virgin Mary and the mysteries of the rosary; and two side altars presenting the Crucifixion and St. Anthony (now in the church of St. Adalbert). In the same century, the facade was crowned with a gable in the Lublin renaissance style. Scarce funds for the maintenance of the castle church in the 17th and 18th centuries led to its slow deterioration.



The church was also significantly damaged during the wars with the Cossacks and Swedes. The funds were sufficient only for immediate repairs. In the 1820s and 1830s, the castle hill was rebuilt and a neo-gothic prison was erected on the ruins of the castle. The old castle chapel was preserved and included in the walls of the new building. During modernisation works external walls were plastered and polychromes were covered with a layer of plaster and lime. During construction works in 1890, the external stairs to the chapel were pulled down, the chancel roof was lowered, renaissance portal was transformed into a window and the entrance to the prison in the south wall



of the chapel was made. In 1899, Józef Smoliński discovered a fragment of the medieval polychrome in the chapel. The nature of the discovery prompted the Imperial Archaeological Institute of St. Petersburg to unveil other parts of the polychrome, which was to be used for political purposes. Since then, the polychromes have been repaired, renovated and preserved many times. In 1954, the castle with the chapel were handed over to the Lublin Museum. After extensive conservation works in 1954 and 1976-1997, the chapel was opened to the public in 1997. In 2015, the exhibition area was expanded with a lapidarium in the lower church and a crypt.



*Castle Chapel, longitudinal section, 1955 by Maria Brykowska.*

## GLOSSARY

**Altar stone** – a slab constituting the "tabletop" of a church altar.

**Matroneum** – a kind of gallery of tribune, supported by pillars, mainly in churches, whose aim is to enlarge the area or separate space for particular group of people (especially women).

**Lublin renaissance style** – architectural style developed in the Lublin province at the beginning of the 17th century by masons of Italian origin; the term introduced to the history of art by Władysław Tatarkiewicz in the first half of the 20th century. The style combines elements of Gothic with Italian and Dutch renaissance. It is characterised by slender body and architectural details, such as richly decorated cornices and pilasters, stucco networks of decorations on barrel vaults with lunettes;

**Chancel arch** – in Catholic church, the upper part of the arcade at the junction of the central nave and the chancel.

**Rib vault** – built on a square plan with two intersecting barrel vaults, strengthened with ribs at the intersections.

**Buttress** – external vertical element of a building's structure, most commonly a pillar built against the wall as a means of providing support to act against lateral forces arising out of the roof structures that lack adequate bracing.

**Blende** – "blind window"; kind of recess in the wall, usually an arcade or window, often used as architectural decoration.

**Pilaster** – a vertical element of architectural decor with a capital and plinth – the equivalent of a column, used to divide the space of the wall.

**Volute** – architectural element and ornamental motif in the form of a spiral or coil.

**Pinnacle** – vertical, crowning and decorative element in the form of a slender turret, obelisk, etc.; mostly used in gables and attics.

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