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Poland

Figural Embroidery from Tum Collegiate Church – Analysis, Reconstruction and Identification

Because of the millennium of the State of Poland and the millennium of Christianity of Poland, numerous excavations were conducted in the 1950s. Among many objects, the 12th century roman collegiate church in Tum near Łęczycza was investigated. The church is one of the most beautiful examples of roman architecture in Poland. Excavations conducted in the church interior disclosed the foundations of the earlier abbey and a number of graves of the church dignitaries from the Middle Ages and later. In one of these graves the numerous residues of figural embroidery were found. They were probably a decoration of liturgical vestment – most likely a *chasuble*. Among the fragments preserved one can find more or less distorted figures embroidered with silk, different kinds of metal thread and precious stones, using different embroidery techniques, as well as a fragmented coat of arms. Identification and dating consisted in careful analyses of materials and dyes. On the basis of results of the analyses the reconstruction of figural embroidery has been done. Comprehensive analyses with similar works from different periods of time taking into account the decoration pattern and material and techniques used allows to at least approximately determine the origin of the object. Dating the embroidery can be additionally verified by an examination of the church archive and the reconstruction of the coat of arms.

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