



Cistercian Trail in Poland – European cultural route under the patronage of PKN ICOMOS

This year we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of creating the Cistercian Trail in Poland – a European cultural route which since 2006 has been under the patronage of PKN ICOMOS. The history of the trail dates back to 1990 when we celebrated the 900th anniversary of the birth of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, a mystic and spiritual father of the order. This fact made the Council of Europe decide to create a tourist trail that followed Cistercian paths as part of the international program of ‘European Cultural Routes’. The basic aim of this program is to show the shared, centuries-old heritage which unites all the countries of our continent. It was then that the logo of the European Cistercian Trail was created by the working group ‘Itinéraires Culturels Européens’ in Strasburg. Therefore, we would like to present the most important events from the history of the formation of this cultural route in Poland.

1990

– Council of Europe submits to the Minister of Culture and Art, Izabella Cywińska, the proposal to open the European Cistercian Trail in Poland.

– Spiritual patronage is entrusted to Cistercian fathers and citizen committees from Cistercian communities are requested to help.

– Ceremonious opening of Cistercian Trail in the Cistercian Abbey in Kraków Mogiła in the presence of visitors from Poland and abroad (Council of Europe). The visitors were received by Father Abbot Jacek Stożek PhD – the Director of Polish Cistercian Congregation.

– International Conference ‘Cistercian Way in Poland’ in Kraków. The Polish part of the European route comprises all the priories in Poland. There are plans for four loops of this trail:

– Małopolska (Little Poland) loop with centres in Jędrzejów, Sulejów, Wąchock, Koprzywnica, Mogiła and Szczyrzyc;

– Śląska (Silesian) loop with centres in Rudy, Krzeszów, Henryków, Kamieniec Ząbkowicki, Lubiąż as well as Trzebnica;

– Wielkopolska (Great Poland) loop with centres in Paradyż, Zemsko-Bledzew, Łekno-Wągrowiec, Łąd, Wieleń-Przemęt as well as in Obra and Owińska and Ołobok;

– Pomorsko-kujawska loop with centres in Bierzwnik,

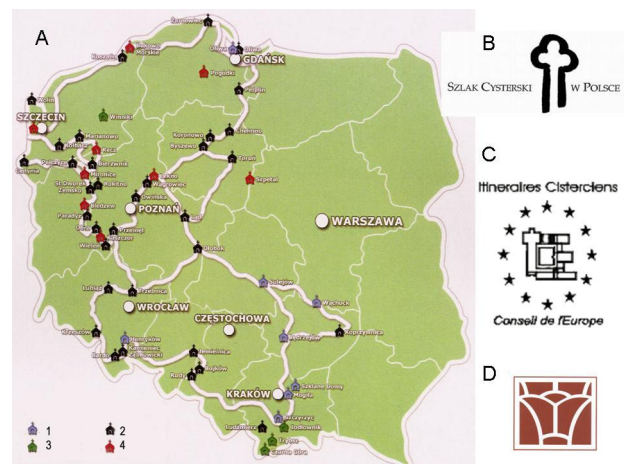


Fig. 1 The Cistercian in according to Andrzej Wyrwa (A): 1) active abbeys, 2) former abbeys, 3) other places of Cistercian spirituality, 4) abbeys not preserved. Logo of the Cistercian Trail in Poland (B), and logo of the Cistercian Trail in Europe (C) and logo of the European Abbey and Cistercian Places (D)

Il. 1. Szlak Cysterski w Polsce według Andrzeja Wyrwy (A): 1) klasztory czynne; 2) dawne opactwa; 3) inne miejsca duchowości cysterskiej; 4) klasztory niezachowane. Logo szlaku cysterskiego w Polsce (B) i w Europie (C) oraz logo Karty Europejskiej Opactw i Miejsc Cysterskich (D)



Fig. 2. The latest Cistercian Trail Forum in Poland in 2009; 1) Koprzywnica; 2) Sulejów.

Il. 2. Ostatnie Forum Szlaku Cysterskiego w Polsce w 2009 r.; 1) Koprzywnica; 2) Sulejów.

Kołbacz, Mironice, Buków Morski, Oliwa, Pelplin and Kujavian Byszew-Koronów and female centres of bishop obedience.

1993

– Creation of the Cistercian Trail logo in Poland in cooperation with Cultural Foundation.

1993–1998

– Local initiatives of Cistercian communities, associations of communes and churches and other organizations in form of fairs, feast, concerts, exhibitions, for example: ‘Cistercian Fair’ in Pelplin and Łekno, archaeological feast „Na Zabylutowym Grodzie” in Łekno, Cistercian feast in Wągrowiec and Bierzwnik, promotion of Cistercian Trail in Lower Silesia, exhibitions and concerts in Rudy.

1998

– National celebrations of the 900th anniversary of the Cistercian Order in Europe organized by the Research Team for Cistercian History and Culture in Poland as part of the Institute of History of Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań as well as the Director of Polish Cistercian Congregation Father Abbot Jacek Stożek PhD.

2003

– Conference ‘Program and promotional concept of Cistercian Trail in Poland’ in Pelplin and a meeting initiated by Starostwo Powiatowe (Local Authority) in Tczew who invited the following guests: representatives of the Polish Cistercian Congregation, Research Team for Cistercian History and Culture in Poland, scientists, local government delegates on various levels from the territories where former and present Cistercian abbeys are situated and tourist associations representatives. Through the unanimous decision of all the participants, the Cistercian Trail in Poland Coordination Council was established by the Director of Polish Cistercian Congregation in order to commence activities connected with re-activation of the trail as well as elaboration and evaluation of the program and promotional assumptions.

2004

– Confirmation of names of the Council members that were elected on 20 September 2003 in Pelplin and presenting decrees by Father Abbot Jacek Stożek PhD. The decrees were given to:

Professor Andrzej M. Wyrwa (UAM in Poznań) – Chairman

Alicja Słyszewska (Local Authority in Tczew) – Secretary

Members:

Professor Ewa Łuzyniecka (Wrocław University of Technology)

Dariusz Dekański PhD (Institute of History of UG)

Edward Imiela (Local Authority in Starachowice)

Przemysław Majchrzak (Commune Council in Wągrowiec)

Teresa Świercz (Post-Cistercian Heritage Protection Association, Bierzwnik)

Father Bernard A. Grenz OCist (Priory – Oliwa)

Father Mateusz Kawa OCist (Cistercian Abbey in Mogiła)

Dariusz Stoces (Lubiąż Foundation)

Stanisław Szmajdziński (Local Governor of Kamienna Góra)

– Works conducted on drawing up the basic documents characterizing the Council activities: ‘Regulations’ and ‘Program declaration’; writing a letter to the so called Cistercian communes which informed about creating, aims and tasks of the Council; starting cooperation with the magazine ‘Holy Places’ (presence and declaration of support from Editor-in-chief E. Czumakow).

– Decision of the Council to organize the National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures in Bierzwnik in June 2005 and to request financial help from the Polish Tourist Organization. The Forum’s objectives are as follows: presentation of program concept of the Trail Coordination Council, mutual exchange of experiences connected with actions aimed at creating a coherent system of cultural routes connected with Cistercian heritage and familiarizing the participants with the marked out section of the Cistercian Trail in West Pomerania which has the connection with the Cistercian Trail in Brandenburg.

- Working session of the Council in Wagrowiec: discussing the state of preparations to the First Forum of Cistercian Communes;
- elaboration of materials with regard to cooperation of Cistercian communes and owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian structures in the scope of organization and promotion of the Cistercian Trail in Poland under the aegis of the Cistercian Trail Coordination Council in Poland;
- setting tasks for the Council members in the scope of presentation of the Council activities (as an organ and its members in the particular regions) during the sessions of the First Forum.

2005

- National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures in Bierzwnik.
- Council meeting in Krzeszów: authorization of report from the First Forum of Cistercian Communes and discussion of its effects;
- discussion about the need to formulate ‘Declaration of the will to cooperate in the scope of Cistercian heritage protection’ and sending suggestions of the document to Cistercian and Post-Cistercian centres (preparation to sign the document during the Second Forum);
- meeting with Counselor of the Legnica Curia, Lower Silesia Governor (Chairman of the Lower Silesian Regional Tourist Organization) as well as representatives of organizers of the Second Forum of Cistercian Communes in Henryków – initial discussion as to the organization of this action.

2006

- Meeting of the Coordination Council in Mogiła: appointment of the Council Office and its director – Father Abbot Piotr Chojnacki PhD Ocist.; the Council Office is entrusted with the task of elaboration of a multi-language Internet portal of the Cistercian Trail in Poland and applying for financial support from the Minister of Culture and National Heritage within the deadline of 15.04.2006;
- preparing proposals for Cistercian Communes – approval of the document ‘Declaration of the will to cooperate’ as well as the initiative to create National Association of Cistercian Communes. Discussing the state of preparations to organize the Second Forum in Henryków;
- applying in writing to ICOMOS for patronage over the Cistercian Trail in Poland and the activities of the Coordination Council;
- accepting the invitation to co-organize a scientific session in Katowice 31 V–3 VI 2006: ‘Intellectual culture of orders – historical cloister collections’;
- making decision about the creation of a consultation scientific team that would evaluate the existing publications which present the Cistercian heritage – the team would then grant the logo of the Cistercian Trail for the particular publication;
- taking the initiative to prepare the Memorial Book

dedicated to Father Abbot Director of Polish Cistercian Congregation, Eustachy G. Kocik, on the occasion of his 75th birthday;

- appointment of the Council member T. Świercz to participate in the meeting of the European Charter in Herkenrode (April 2006) in order to present the current organizational and promotional activities on the Polish section of the Cistercian Trail;
- initial approval of the outline of the statute of the future National Association of Cistercian Communes.
- Council takes part in the Second National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures in Lower Silesia with the participation of visitors – representatives of the European Cistercian Charter (Pontigny):
- signing ‘Declaration of the will to cooperate’ of the so called Cistercian communes and owners of Cistercian and post-Cistercian structures;
- information from Professor Ewa Łużyniecka about the fact that the Cistercian Trail in Poland is now under the care of ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites);
- Council’s approval for the initiative of the Wagrowiec Association to issue a series of postage cards and stamps illustrating the Cistercian heritage and the Cistercian Trail in Poland;

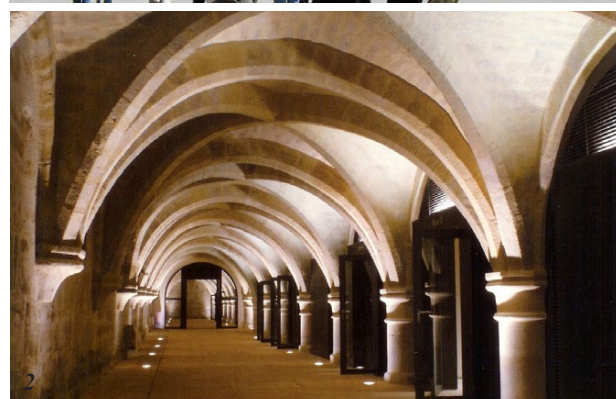


Fig. 3. Participation of representatives of Cistercian Trail Coordination Council in Poland at the General Assembly of the European Charter of Abbeys and Cistercian Places in the Portuguese abbey of Batalha in 2009 (1) and the place of this year's meeting of the Charter in Paris (2).

Il. 3. Udział przedstawicieli Rady Koordynacyjnej Szlaku Cysterskiego w Polsce na Zgromadzeniu Generalnym "Karty Europejskiej Opactw i Miejsc Cysterskich" w portugalskim klasztorze Batalha w 2009 r. (1) oraz miejsce tegorocznego spotkania karty w Paryżu (2).

– Council's approval for the attempts to validate Blessed Wincenty Kadłubek as a patron of Polish historians. Abbot Director Eustachy G. Kocik as well as Chairman of the Council A.M. Wyrwa issued, on behalf of the Council, a formal letter to scientists from Polish universities and the top church authorities.

– Council's representatives participate in the session: 'Forum: Cistercians of the North and Baltic Sea' in Iłhów.

2007

– Session of the Council in Mogiła;

– Council's approval for the new Abbot Director of Polish Cistercian Congregation P. Chojnacki PhD. from Mogiła;

– Approval for Father Eustachy G. Kocik as the Honorary Abbot Director of PKC;

– Council's approval for the proposals to appoint new Council members: Father Eugeniusz Augustyn – Abbot from Wąchock and Father Edward Stradomski – Abbot from Jędrzejów;

– Abbot Director P. Chojnacki is given the insignia of the Polish Cistercian Congregation – a Congregation cross and book 'Declaration of the will to cooperate in the scope of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian heritage protection' – a result of the activities of the Second National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures (by Father Abbot E. Stradomski);

– Council Chairman A.M. Wyrwa announces the acceptance of patronage over the Cistercian Trail in Poland by the Minister of Culture K. Ujazdowski;

– Supporting regional initiatives for the participation of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian centres in 'European Heritage Days' which take place in Poland in 2007 under the banner of 'People of the track. Wanderers, pilgrims, drifters';

– appointment of the Council member T. Świercz to represent the Council at the General Assembly of

'European Charter of Abbeys and Cistercian Places' in Pontigny in France (April 2007) and the Council secretary A. Słyszewska at Fifth Forum of Parliaments of Baltic Countries in Gdynia (May 2007);

– Council's representatives participate in the session: 'Forum: Cistercians of the North Sea and Baltic Sea' in Marianów (West Pomerania). Members of the Cistercian Trail Coordination Council in Poland are asked to join in the works on shared European projects.

– Speeches of representatives of the Cistercian Trail Coordination Council in Poland at the General Assembly of 'European Charter of Abbeys and Cistercian Places' in Pontigny in France and at Fifth Forum of Parliaments of Baltic Countries in Gdynia.

– Council takes part in the Third National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures in Wielkopolska and Lubuska Provinces (Paradyż):

– supporting the creation of the National Association of Cistercian Communes in Poland;

– A. Słyszewska makes a proposal to organize the next – fourth Forum of Cistercian Communes in Pelplin in September 2008;

– Official promotion (laudation by Professor A.M. Wyrwa) of jubilee book 'Ingenio et humilitate'

2008

– Council's session in Mogiła;

– Director of Polish Cistercian Congregation nominates Father Eugeniusz Augustyn (Abbot of Wąchock) as a member of the Cistercian Trail Coordination Council in Poland;

– Governor of Kamienna Góra Stanisław Szmajdziński (on behalf of the National Association of Cistercian Communes) presents the history of legal powers of the Association, election of its authorities as well as objectives, tasks and nearest plans;

– Decision about writing a thank-you note to the

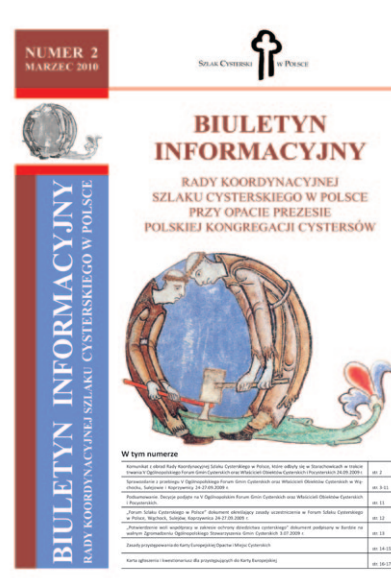
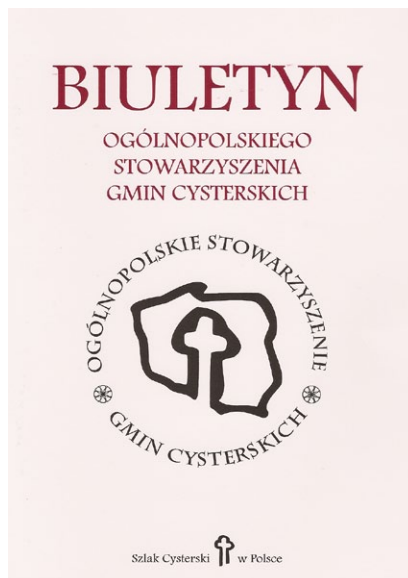
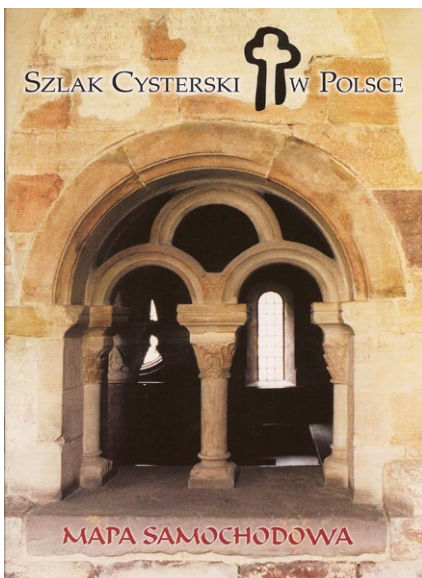


Fig. 4. Lastest publikation of the Universally Polish Association of Cistecian Communes (1, 2) and Coordinatio Counsel (3).

Il. 4. Ostatnie wydawnictwa Rady Koordynacyjnej i Ogólnopolskiego Stowarzyszenia Gmin Cysterskich.

Chairman of the National Association of Cistercian Communes for his entire contribution and inviting him to the next session in order to discuss principles of cooperation between the two organizations promoting the Cistercian Trail in Poland;

- Andrzej Lazar, an employee of A.R.L. AGROTUR S.A. – the firm which, on behalf of the Diocese Curia in Gliwice, deals with the Internet portal www.szlakcysterski.org – presents the current legal situation of the portal, informs about the suggested changes in its layout and suggests inviting all the interested organizations which promote the Cistercian Trail in Poland to cooperate in the scope of the portal functioning;

- Decision of the Council to place the message that the portal is the official forum which presents information about the Council's activities as well as the actions of other persons and entities organizing and promoting the Cistercian Trail in Poland; however, it is explicitly stated that the Cistercian Trail Coordination Council in Poland is not responsible for any other information which might be presented on other websites (of natural persons, institutions and organizations);

- Decision about submitting a written request to the Minister of Culture and National Heritage Mr. Bogdan Zdrojewski asking him to accept Honorary Patronage over the actions of the Cistercian Trail Coordination Council in Poland by Abbot Director of Polish Cistercian Congregation;

- Acceptance of information about preparations for the Fourth National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures (20–24 September 2008), Conference 'Libraries and Cistercian scriptoria in Pomerania' (23–25 May 2008) as well as other Pomeranian initiatives presented by the Council secretary Alicja Słyszewska who represented the organizers of actions within the framework of the Cistercian Year 2008 on the Pomeranian Cistercian Trail;

- Information about the issuance of another postage card as part of the series illustrating former and present Cistercian abbeys in Poland – 'Pelplin – former Cistercian abbey';

- Discussing the nearest actions within the framework of cooperation with the European Charter of Abbeys and Cistercian Places (T. Świercz was delegated for the meeting on 19 April in Pontigny) and with Forum 'Cistercians of the North Sea and Southern Baltic Sea' (T. Świercz and A. Słyszewska were delegated for the meeting on 4-7 April 2008 in Aurich).

- Council's session in Pelplin:

- Council participates in the inauguration of scientific conference 'Libraries and Cistercian scriptoria in Pomerania';

- Discussing preparations to the Fourth National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures (Pelplin);

- Accepting new members of the Council: Andrzej Wieczorek (Wągrowiec Cistercian Trail Association), Jerzy Bakiewicz (Local Governor of Bierzwnik, Director of the National Association of Cistercian Communes);

- Decision about inviting the following persons to the Council's activities: Father Jan Rosek (Culture and Education Foundation of Gliwice Diocese), Father Zenon Klawikowski PhD (President of Salesian Society Seminary SDB); Father Jarosław Stoś PhD (President of Zielonogórsko-Gorzowska Diocese Seminary), Father Jan Adamarczuk PhD (Catholic Secondary School in memorial of Edmund Bojanowski in Henryków Śląski);

- Preparing changes in the Council Regulations and Council Program Declaration – because of wider representation by Council members in relation to the Polish section of the Cistercian Trail at European assemblies;

- Preparing materials for the participants in the Fourth Forum of Cistercian Communes in Pelplin – suggestions regarding European cooperation on the basis of the experiences gathered by the Council members so far;

- Council takes part in the celebrations of the 15th anniversary of Pelplin Diocese and jubilee celebrations of Jan Bernard Szłaga – Pelplin Ordinary Bishop.

2009

- Fifth National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures. The meeting was attended by 100 persons – representatives of local governments, owners of structures and representatives of non-government organizations who are involved in Cistercian heritage protection.

- Accepting the proposal of the Coordination Council to change the name 'National Forum of Cistercian Communes and Owners of Cistercian and Post-Cistercian Structures' into 'Forum of Cistercian Trail in Poland';

- Elaboration of the document entitled: 'Forum of Cistercian Trail in Poland' which outlines the new rules of meetings of all the persons who are united by the desire to protect the heritage of the Cistercian Order and formation of the future which will be based on the Cistercian spiritual and material tradition;

- Father Abbot Piotr Chojnacki is given the document signed on 3 July 2009 in Bardo during the sessions of the General National Assembly of Association of Cistercian Communes, which confirmed, on the part of the Association of Cistercian Communes, the will to cooperate in the scope of Cistercian heritage protection;

- Accepting the proposal of Paweł Skrzywanek, Chairman of the Board of Lubiąż Foundation, to organize the Sixth Forum of Cistercian Trail in Poland on the premises of Post-Cistercian Lubiąż Abbey in Lower Silesia.

Alicja Słyszewska, Teresa Świercz

