

BENEDICTINES AND CENTRAL EUROPE

Christianity – Culture – Society, 800–1300

LIBRETTO¹

Aim: Presentation of the spiritual and material culture of the Benedictine monasteries and the role of the Benedictines in Christianisation, the reception of Antique-Christian culture, the birth and solidification of the state in Central Europe.² The presentation of the key figures of the Benedictine Order and its centres as mediators of cultural exchange between Western and Southern Europe and the newly Christianised Slavic and Hungarian territories.

Exhibition areas: the main exhibition area of the **Waldstein Riding School**, accompanying thematic exhibitions at the **National Library – Klementinum Gallery** (book culture, education), **St George's Monastery** (monastery of Benedictine nuns) and **St George's Basilica at Prague Castle** (St George's Basilica and Monastery and the beginnings of the Bohemian state), **Břevnov Archabbey** (presentation of the results of the archaeological survey of the locality)

A) THE MAIN EXHIBITION AREA OF THE WALDSTEIN RIDING SCHOOL, basic layout – three chronologically connected thematic blocks (considering the uneven development in the individual lands, there are necessary time overlaps). **Ca 400 exhibits, of which ca 200 foreign loans; in the selection, artistically interesting originals are preferred.**³

I. FOUNDERS (evidence of the key role of the Benedictines-missionaries in the Christianisation of Central Eastern Europe). Demarcation: missionary territories and the activity of the missionaries, ca from St Vergilius of Salzburg, 'Apostle of Carinthia' (d. 784), to Otto of Bamberg, 'Apostle of Pomerania' (d. 1139).⁴ **Terminus ante quem: the birth of a stable ecclesiastical organisation and of the first abbeys active in the long term. Emphasis mainly on Pre-Romanesque art. An overall endeavour to capture the contrast between the pagan and Christian worlds in a way attractive for the viewer.**

Introductory text panel with a map 'Starting Points of the Missions of the OSB, Mission Areas and Directions of the Missionary Journeys'

I.1 The Rule of St Benedict with a shorter reminiscence on the earlier rules of St Columbanus and St Basil; exhibits: normative texts (rules⁵, decrees of the Aachen Synods...), plan of the ideal monastery⁶, period iconography of St Benedict ...

I.2 The Monasteries of the OSB as Starting Points of Missions to Central Europe⁷; exhibits: precious items⁸, Ottonian illuminated manuscripts ...

¹ Basis for the elaboration of a point scenario

² Delimited by the space of the medieval Bohemian, Polish and Hungarian states (without Croatian Coastal and Dalmatia), with overlaps into the territories of the Polabian, Baltic and Alpine Slavs.

³ In the architectural solution of the exposition, also copies of architectural members can be partially used; in the case of manuscripts, their gradual replacement by copies is necessary considering the length of the exhibition.

⁴ Examples of figures: Bishop of Nitra Wiching, missionary Bishop Bruno (Prunwart) from Saint Gall, St Wolfgang, St Adalbert, Five Saint Brothers, Bruno of Querfurt ...

⁵ Codex 914

⁶ The Plan of Saint Gall

I.3 Contact with the pagan milieu; exhibits: evidence of pagan cults, idols and other archaeological finds⁹, or pagan idols and cult places in medieval illuminations¹⁰ and Baroque graphic sheets ...

I.4. Stories of the missionaries; exhibits: memorabilia, or period scenes from the saints' legends, concluded by the reminiscence of St Wolfgang as the last bishop of Regensburg administering Czech territory¹¹ and St Adalbert as the first significant Benedictine missionary of Central European origin¹²

I.4.2. Byzantine missions; exhibits: grave finds¹³, Old Church Slavonic texts ...

I.5. Evidence of gradual Christianisation; exhibits: finds illustrating the first contacts of the Slavs and Hungarians with the Christian milieu¹⁴, Great Moravian grave finds¹⁵ ...

I.5. The first attempts at establishing order houses¹⁶, the very beginnings of ecclesiastical organisation on the territories of the Bohemian, Polish and Hungarian states (before the creation of a stable network of bishoprics); exhibits: archaeological finds from the relevant localities¹⁷ ...

II. BUILDERS (the establishment of the first abbeys of the OSB in Central Eastern Europe as a manifestation of the endeavour to consolidate the new states on a Christian basis and their inclusion in the Western Christian cultural area). Demarcation: ca from the foundation of Břevnov (993) to the foundation of the Pomeranian Abbey Slup nad Piańa (Stolpe, 1153).¹⁸ Main thematic area: Everyday Life in the Monastery.¹⁹ Emphasis especially on Romanesque art.²⁰ The exhibition block is roughly conceived as a walk through the main areas of a Benedictine monastery.²¹

⁷ Reichenau, Salzburg (St Peter), Kremsmünster, Innichen/San Cándido, Regensburg (Monastery of St Emmeram) etc.

⁸ E.g. Tassilo Chalice*** (Kremsmünster)

⁹ E.g. from Wolin

¹⁰ E.g. *Liber depictus*

¹¹ E.g. the so-called crosier and chalice of St Wolfgang (Regensburg)

¹² Gniezdno Doors – copy (dominant of the space and its visual separation from the following block), collection of St Adalbert monuments (the so-called Adalbert ring ...)

¹³ E.g. pendant cross with a Greek inscription from Uherské Hradiště-Sady

¹⁴ Treasure from Bojná***, treasure from Kolín***

¹⁵ Bronze and lead crosses from Mikulčice, Staré Město, Zlaté Moravce etc.; a belt end with a praying figure from Mikulčice, kaptorga ...

¹⁶ Uherské Hradiště-Sady, Mikulčice, Nitra-Zobor, Miedzyrzeczcie

¹⁷ E.g. metal and bone pens from Uherské Hradiště-Sady

¹⁸ E.g. Pannonhalma, Pécsvárad, Tyniec near Kraków, Pegau, St Paul im Lavanttal ...

¹⁹ Accompanying themes: reform movements of Cluny, Gorze and Hirsau; other contacts with eastern monasticism (Visegrád, Sázava); cases of a 'pagan reaction'; stabilisation of Central European states; the role of founders and contacts of the monasteries with the external milieu.

²⁰ I.e. a collection of artefacts comprising the equipment of an ideal Benedictine monastery of the Romanesque Period. The exhibits should at the same time be evidence of cultural flowering and the social significance of monasteries of the OSB at the time when they were the foremost mediators of the cultural exchange between Western Europe and its Eastern 'Periphery'.

²¹ With the individual areas, citation from the rule or period narrative sources etc. + a schematic plan of the ideal monastery with marking of the relevant area.

Introductory text panel with a map ‘New Central European States, Their Ecclesiastical Organisation²² and Monasteries²³,

II.1. Hermitages-cells, provisional monasteries, the first years of their building: mentions of Central European Benedictine hermits: iconography²⁴

II.2. cloister background (pre-monastic lay settlements, outbuildings): evidence of newly located lay residences and economic operation²⁵, foundational and confirmation charters with lists of servants

II.3. closure

II.3.1. ambit hallway: entrance by portal, dioramic apertures to selected areas (cellarium, staircase to the dormitory, vestiarius ...), architectural members or their copies are used here as well as in the areas below, capitals of the windows of the ambit etc.²⁶

II.3.2. refectory and kitchen: ...

II.3.3. friary²⁷: evidence of the manual labour of the monks ...

II.3.4. chapter hall; exhibits: reconstruction of the paving stones²⁸, pulpit, abbot's crosier²⁹

II.3.5. archive: foundation charter³⁰, monastic annals³¹, constitutions³², a selection of seals

II.3.6. library: a selection of manuscripts with the exception of the liturgical ones³³

II.4. sacral areas (reproduced music)

II.4.1. church

II.4.1.1. altar: altar Marian sculpture³⁴, mensa with the mass chalice with the paten³⁵ ...

II.4.1.2. liturgy: liturgical manuscripts (sacramentarium ...), precious items ...

II.4.1.3. graveyards of the founder and abbots: funeral sculpture, gravestones of the abbots³⁶, grave furnishing³⁷

II.4.2 crypt: a selection of Romanesque and older reliquaries, necrology³⁸ ...

²² With a graphic distinction of the bishoprics which were demonstrably headed by members of the OSB (Kraków, Olomouc, Ostřihom, Pécs, Prague, etc., etc.)

²³ With the dates of foundation, possibly with connections to the maternal monasteries (Niederaltaich – Ostrov u Davle, Zwiefalten – Kladruby), marking of the reform centres: Trier (Monastery of St Maximinus), Hirsau ...

²⁴ Gunter, Svorad and Benedict, Procopius, Gerhard of Csanád ...

²⁵ E.g. the relation of the Ostrov monastery and the settlements of Sekanka, Opatovice and Předklášterní ostrůvek, Kladruby and Pozorka ...

²⁶ Parts from the Lapidarium of the National Museum in Prague.

²⁷ A scriptorium will be installed in the exhibition area B (Klementinum Gallery).

²⁸ E.g. from the Ostrov monastery

²⁹ E.g. the crosier of St Gothard (Niederaltaich)

³⁰ E.g. Pannonhalma, or the foundation charter of the Scottish Monastery in Vienna, 1161 (archive of the monastery there).

³¹ E.g. from Melk.

³² E.g. Hirsau from Admont.

³³ E.g. from the National Library of the Czech Republic, Rajhrad Library

³⁴ Madonna from Celldömök***

³⁵ E.g. from the treasury of the monastery of St Peter Salzburg.

³⁶ Possibly the gravestone of Beatified Gunter (cast)

³⁷ E.g. from the Tyniec monastery

³⁸ E.g. from Regensburg-Obermünster.

III. HEIRS (coming to terms with the loss of the exclusivity of the classic Benedictine monasticism and attempts for its renewal). Demarcation: from the arrival of the ‘White Monks’, the concluding milestone of the block corresponds roughly to the dying out of the ‘national’ dynasties in Hungary (1301) and the Czech lands (1306) in the male line. Evidence of the cult of the founding personalities etc., also High Gothic artefacts partially possible. Thematic areas: rise of the new reform orders³⁹ and new types of orders (chivalric, mendicant); forced transfer of some monasteries to the new orders⁴⁰; development of the cult of the founding personalities, support of the pilgrimage sites⁴¹.

Initial text panel with a map ‘The Rise of New Orders in Central Europe’⁴²

III.1. New orders partially take over some functions of the OSB; exhibits: particularly illuminated manuscripts of Cistercian, Premonstratensian, Minorite and Dominican provenance⁴³ ...

III.2. Return to the roots, legacies of the Benedictines to their longer local tradition, the cult of the Benedictine saints (focused in the area under the balcony); exhibits: memorabilia (crossiers, chalices, combs⁴⁴ ...), reliquaries of the Central European saints of the OSB⁴⁵

III.3. The ‘second life’ of the Benedictine missionaries and founders of the monasteries of the OSB (balcony); exhibits: small-format legend cycles of paintings⁴⁶, Baroque, possibly also later figurative graphic sheets, the iconography of the Central European saints of the OSB

IV. CHILDREN’S WORKSHOP AND PLAY AREA (area above the cashier’s, possibility to try on Benedictine habits ...)

B) EXHIBITION AREA OF THE NL – KLEMENTINUM GALLERY

I. Strongrooms:

- I.1.** Vyšehrad Codex and other manuscripts of the same workshop provenance.
- I.2.** Wolfenbüttel Codex etc., possibly the Opatovice Homiliary

II. Corridor on the First Floor: book culture and education, OSB as a mediator and creator, divided by field

- II.1. Scripture**
- II.2. Spiritual literature**
- II.3. Liturgy, music, poetry**
- II.4. History, hagiography**
- II.5. Normative texts**
- II.6. Reception of Antique culture**
- II.7. Medicine, Botany ...**

³⁹ Augustinian Canons, Premonstratensians, Cistercians, Carthusians

⁴⁰ Olomouc-Klášterní Hradisko, Želiv, Wrocław-Olbin, Stolpe ...

⁴¹ E.g. Dömölk ...

⁴² With a graphic distinction of the individual waves of the arrival of new orders, demarcation of the Benedictine foundations of the same time

⁴³ Especially depictions of the habits (contrast with the Benedictines as the ‘Black Monks’) suitable

⁴⁴ Liturgical comb of St Adalbert of Würzburg (Lambach monastery), St Wolfgang.

⁴⁵ It is possible to use also Gothic artefacts significantly here.

⁴⁶ E.g. legend of St Otto of Bamberg (Michelsberg)

II.8. reconstruction of a scriptorium

III. Corridor on the Ground Floor: programme for families with children

III.1. exposition of dyer's plants

III.2. children's workshop furnished with pulpits

C) EXHIBITION AREA OF ST GEORGE'S BASILICA AND MONASTERY

I. South wing of the basilica: new permanent panel exposition 'St George's Basilica and Monastery and the Beginnings of the Bohemian State'

II. Crypt: architectural members from St George's Basilica and from the monastery in Teplice⁴⁷

III. Chapel of St Anne (Mary) and part of the ambit: a collection of manuscripts⁴⁸ and other objects of St George's provenience⁴⁹, with a possible overlap to the 14th century

D) EXHIBITION AREA OF THE ARCHABBEY OF BŘEVNOV

I. Crypt and connected areas: presentation of the results of an archaeological survey of the locality

E) EXHIBITION AREAS OUTSIDE OF PRAGUE: After an agreement, the possibility of involving the existing expositions in other Bohemian and Moravian Benedictine localities, e.g. in the form of joint promotion (Broumov, Chrast, Kladruby, Rajhrad, Police nad Metují, Sázava, Teplice, Třebíč etc.).

⁴⁷ Palmetto capital, window side post from the chapter hall ...

⁴⁸ The Passional of Abbess Kunigunde***

⁴⁹ E.g. textiles from the grave of St Ludmila