

ČLÁNKY — ARTICLES

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**IDEA AC CONCEPTUS :
PREMONSTRATENSIAN MONASTERIES IN MORAVIA
OF THE BAROQUE EPOCH AS A "BEL COMPOSTO"
IN THE COUNTRYSIDE***

In March 1685 the abbot of the Cistercian monastery in Lubiąż (Leubus) in Silesia wrote a letter to Anton Martin Lublinský, the dean of the Augustinian monastery in Olomouc (Olmütz). The letter, concerning some works of art, was thus concluded: "*I very much wish to make the acquaintance of the Italian artist, skilled with fresco and oil paints and well-versed in the Roman brush — because you recommend him so highly and because you will certainly provide him, out of your rich treasure of talents, with concept and ideas.*"¹ Which of the traveling Italian artists was recommended so highly to the abbot, we do not know. Noteworthy for this symposium — "Struggle for Synthesis" — however, is the fact that the abbot appreciated the addressee's willingness to provide another artist with "concept and ideas" (*conceptus ac ideas*). It is through these notions that we can perceive the "*Gesamtkunstwerk*" of a Baroque work of art.²

Anton Martin Lublinský (1636-1690) has gone down in the history of Moravian Baroque especially as a painter and a draftsman. The aforementioned letter presents three facets of this Augustinian canon regular: a painter, an artistic counselor and a designer of iconological and emblematic programs. Historical sources reveal that Anton Martin Lublinský presented himself in Moravia as

* This paper was held at first at the symposium **Struggle for Synthesis. The Total Work of Art in the 17th and 18th Centuries, Braga (Portugal) 11.-14. June 1996**. The proceedings from this Symposium are published only in the form of the Abstracts until these days. Therefore I am giving here a short version of my paper.

1 Slezské zemské muzeum (The Silesian Land Museum) Opava, The E. W. Braun's archives: password „Lublinský“.

2 Cf. Götz Pochat — Brigitte Wagner (ed.), *Barock regional — international. Kunsthistorisches Jahrbuch Graz* 25, 1993. See the articles by Irving Lavin, Hellmut Lorenz, Bernd Euler-Rolle.

a “learned painter” who supports the resurrection of all forms of arts in the second half of the 17th century. Thus he participated in the design and decoration of festal halls in Moravia in the 1670's and 1680's — both religious (he was called the “*delineator*” of foremost monasteries, such as Velehrad or Hradisko) and secular (House of Estates in Brno). In this light we should view the paired paintings he created, probably for his private monastic “Academy”. Their themes — *Allegory of Painting* and *Allegory of Architecture and Sculpture* — demonstrates that in these works he aimed at emblematic self-presentation as a learned painter, an intellectual and, at the same time, a patron of art, who, as a dean of the monastery, was in the position to commission works from artists.³ On the other hand, these paired pictures represent the traditional humanistic union of the three visual arts as *ars*. In the Baroque period, this union becomes a *Gesamtkunstwerk* and based as it, is on an idea, a theoretical concept.

Lublinský's ideas are an example of how to project the construction or reconstruction of an important monastery (cf. Velehrad). Naturally, Lublinský was not the only “*inventor*” of monasteries in Moravia — in this paper I see in him rather a symbolic figure, a personality capable of producing an artistic and conceptual whole. It is my intention to use the reconstructions of two most important monasteries in Moravia to compare the artistic concept in the late 17th century (a time when striving for synthesis as a *Gesamtkunstwerk* in Central Europe essentially begins) with a similar undertaking dating a hundred years later (when that synthesis ended).

I chose for my examples two monasteries of the Premonstratensians: being the richest and most influential order in Moravia, they were able to engage leading Central European artists. This comparison may even provide an outline for a more general paradigm, as the artistic influence of the two monasteries reached beyond the borders of the Moravian land.⁴ The Premonstratensians would build their monasteries close to major cities of the land and an integral part of them would also be important places of pilgrimage in the vicinity, frequented by pilgrims from larger regions. My first example is the abbey Hradisko (Hradisch) near the city of Olomouc, the second is the abbey Louka (Klosterbruck) at Znojmo in Southern Moravia.

I. Hradisko

The beginning of early Baroque construction at Hradisko was inspired by the idea of reconstructing an older, devastated monastery, and began at first with

³ Jiří Kroupa, *Znovuvzkříšení umění: emblematika v díle Antonína Lublinského* (Resurrection of the arts: the emblematics in the work of Anton Lublinský). *Bulletin Moravské galerie v Brně* 51, 1995, pp. 67–72.

⁴ The newest literary work on the baroque art in Moravia: Ivo Krsek — Zdeněk Kudělka — Miloš Stehlík — Josef Válka, *Umění baroka na Moravě a ve Slezsku* (The art of Baroque in the Moravia and Silesia). Praha 1996.

the construction of the church (1659–1676).⁵ The church (reconstructed with fresco paintings of A. M. Lublinský) became later the basic "module" to which other buildings of the abbey were attached. The front of the temple was situated at the exact center of the western church facade. In 1686, master-builder Mathias Porst began the construction work "after the supplied plan", i.e. according to the project of Imperial engineer Giovanni Pietro Tencalla from Vienna and the concept of Anton Martin Lublinský. By 1694, the master-builder had finished the first courtyard with the wings of canon house and prior's tower. The main staircase had been decorated by painter Justus van den Nypoort, and by sculptors Balthasare Fontana and Michal Mandík. Also the construction of the second courtyard had been started, with a new chapter house and ambulatory around a well replacing the original chapel of Virgin Mary of the Snow. For a brief period, master builder Adam Glöckl was in charge of the construction, succeeded to this position by Johann Mathis (Matthias) from Brno. Mathis finished, in 1697, the North-Eastern "superior's" tower. It was at this time that the argument about the central tower began. The tower had already been embodied in the original project by Tencalla; now, however, its appearance was being disputed. In the project of Christian Alexander Oedtl from 1694, it was to have an eight-sided apex, in Mathis's project the apex was four-sided. In 1697, the tower was finished with a portal on the ground floor serving as an entry to the canon house. The different approaches of the two conceptions were not the sole cause of the hesitation and doubts about the look of the tower — these reflected, iconographically, the most significant motif of the original project.

At this point I should stop and attempt to outline the importance of Lublinský's and Tencalla's project in Central European architecture. The traditional manner in which monasteries were built in the second half of the 17th essentially meant additive attachment of specific functional units (canon house, prelature) one to another, each with their own yard. The new and distinctive architectural concept was the idea of "Solomon's temple", first and best embodied in the Spanish Escorial (1563–1584): it was a rectangle with 3 x 3 courtyards and notable for the disposition of the temple in the center. This concept often appears in historical sources, well into the 18th century, when monasteries were compared with Solomon's temple (the best-known example is in Melk by Jakob Prandtauer, naturally modified to fit the site, or in Göttweig by Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt and Franz Anton Pilgram).⁶ As opposed to these structures, Tencalla's older project follows a different tradition — that of hospital architecture. The layout is similarly quadratic, but divided by two basic axes. The crossing of the axes forms the ideal center of the whole arrangement. In hospital architecture, it was usually a chapel with a pinnacle. In the mid-17th century, two fundamental changes took place in monastic architecture: the temple's fa-

⁵ Leoš Chvostek, *Kláster Hradisko v době barokní*. Diss., I–II. Brno 1951; Leoš Mičák, *Hradisko u Olomouce*. Olomouc 1978; Jana Opletová, *Barokní slavnosti v premonstrátské kanonii Klášterní Hradisko*. Diss. Brno 1994; Jiří Kroupa, *Hradisko — ikonologie architektury ve 20. a 30. letech 18. století*. In: Milan Togner (ed.), *Historická Olomouc X*, 1995, pp. 53–62.

⁶ Wilfried Hansmann, *Baukunst des Barock*. Köln 1989, pp. 67–86.

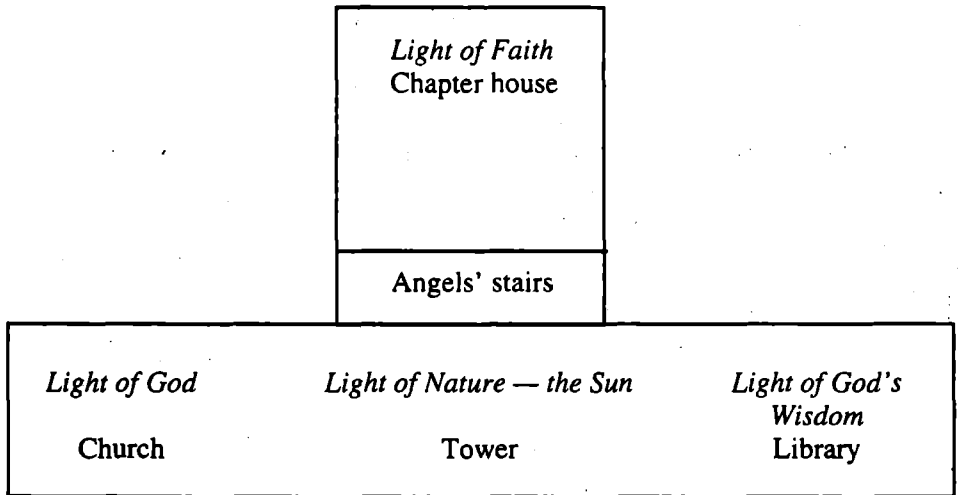
çade was drawn into the axis of the front of the whole complex, and the residential facade scheme was introduced into the whole architectural conception. These appear first in Albergo dei Poveri in Genoa in 1654 and then in Ospedale di San Giovanni Battista in Torino in 1680 (the hospital, however, remained unfinished till the 19th century).⁷ It is to this line that Tencalla's project belongs. A little known fact that I would like to point out is this: the Hradisko abbey was one of the first places north of the Alps where this scheme was used.

The above mentioned tradition of hospital architecture also explains why there was such a debate concerning the tower of the abbey. According to the project it was intended to be the true iconological dominant feature of the structure. By 1702, the whole of the canon house had been completed, with several architects (Johann Mathias, Christian Alexander Oedtl and Domenico Martinelli) taking part in both technical discussions and meetings. What remained to be decided were adjustments to the finished canon house and the consequent construction of the prelatore. At this stage, another surviving project is ascribed to Viennese architect and master builder Christian Alexander Oedtl (art historian Václav Richter believed it to be the work of Domenico Martinelli). It presents a revision of the original conception, accentuating the entrance part of the prelatore with a new portal in the center of the southern façade and, most notably, a new main hall of the prelatore. This change in the original project is apparent when we compare the first depictions of the abbey under construction. In the oldest ones, the abbey is always shown from the west, i.e. with the church in the front. The church has a tower and a dome, behind it, there is the main tower and the four corner towers. In the later depictions, however, the southern view is emphasized, with the new prelatore hall as the dominant feature.

The original project indicates that the fundamental iconographical configuration is the light motif of the sun — the main tower was covered with sheets of gold, shining bright and far. Around it, like beams, spread the nave, the chapter house and the library — symbolic of the church, life in religious order and education under the Sun — God's Light. In the northern part, towards the garden, there was a refectory, built on the same level as the chapter house. The abbey's interior decoration is unknown to us — only the library with its original decoration has been preserved, in the refectory there were paintings of the three theological virtues. It is beyond doubt, however, that the three-part scheme around the tower was the true iconological center of the whole arrangement.

⁷ Elisabeth Mahl, Donato Felice d'Allio und die Planungsgeschichte des Stiftes Klosterneuburg. *Jahrbuch des Stiftes Klosterneuburg* 1965, pp.163-166.

Tab. I. Iconography of the project of G. P.Tencalla and M. A. Lublinský



Only after twenty years had passed, did abbot Robert Sancius (1721–1732) finish the construction of the abbey, and at this time it was in a different concept. The new emphasis on the prelature, its entrance and main hall has some Central European and Viennese precedents — we might name Oedtl's early collaborator Jakob Prandtauer and his projects of monasteries, such as St. Florian a.o. The festal hall of the prelature becomes a "secular" space: a place for the abbot to meet, and impress, his secular guests. Early 18th-century sources mention this space in association with "Solomon's house": "*et hoc e norma regis Salamonis, qui primo aedificavit Domum Dei, deinde domum regis*".⁸ We find references to the Old Testament description of Solomon's palace (pillar hall, vestibule and staircase in the front) in the prelature hall in Hradisko. As with "*Domus regis*", the "Marble" hall of the prelature was likewise decorated with sculptures and paintings:

- a) sculptures: *Samuel Anoints Saul* („the people will not begin eating until he comes") and *King David Receives Blessed Bread from Priest Achimelech* ;
- b) reliefs of *St. Paul and St. Peter* as the leaders of Christ's representatives, spreading His teaching — all by Joseph Winterhalder Senior.
- c) fresco of the "*King of Kings under the Sun of God*" (Sermon on the Mountain and Jesus Feeds the Multitudes) by Paul Troger.

The most significant structure to be erected in the final stage of the construction was the this main hall of the prelature. The changes in the iconology of the abbey were thus concluded and the original "hospital" project of Giovanni Pietro Tencalla finally abandoned. Its last wing was built in 1730–1736, with

⁸ Moravský zemský archiv (Moravian Land Archives) Brno; E 55 — Klášter premonstrátů Louka (Premonstratensian abbey Louka): the journals of the abbey 1693–1783.

the interiors finished in 1739. It had a monumental front using distinctive decorative symbols. The main hall was highlighted even more by a central projection. The engravings of the period always depict it with the golden central tower as a virtual "crown".

Tab. II.: New Construction in the 1720's and 1730's (Prelature):

Imperial rooms	vestibule and staircase Life of St. Norbert and cardinal virtues	winter dining hall
Guest rooms Corner tower	"Marble hall" Corner tower	Abbot's rooms (festal hall)
Transfiguration of Christ	"King of Kings"	Holy Trinity
<i>Light of Truth</i>	<i>Christ the Light</i>	<i>Light of Holy Ghost</i>

With further light elements in the temple, library and tower, the symbolism of light is very distinctive. The center of the new iconology is shifted to what is known as the "*Marble hall*", a rather unusual feature in Central European monastic architecture of the 1730's. It was done almost in the manner of "Royal hall" and the resemblance to existing "Imperial halls" in other Central European monasteries is quite remarkable.

Along with the new prelature, a church of St. Stephan was erected, with a three-part crypt inside. In 1730, builder Wolfgang Reich was to construct a new chapel of St. Stephan, probably of an oblong shape. Yet there are also plans bearing the signature "*Antonio Ricca, stuccatore in Radis et Olmütz*".⁹ Antonio Ricca was mentioned as a stuccatore in Hradisko in 1726, 1727 and later. His name on the plans suggests that they are somehow related to Hradisko. Iconographically they are related to St. Cross (cf. the main altar) or St. Michael (figure in the front). An explanation might be based on a rather unclear note in historical records saying that the abbot of Hradisko Benedikt Bönisch (1714–1721) intended to build a new mausoleum for the founders of the abbey. In the end, however, the founders were buried in the sacristy of St. Stephen's church. The annals of the abbey from the end of the 16th century (by Johann Tetzelius) mention two small churches of St. Stephan and St. Michael, situated outside the premises of the abbey (later a chapel was placed within the abbey). Therefore it is not entirely impossible that the original intention was to build both the new

⁹ Jiří Kroupa, *Moravská léta Antonia Beduzziho (Moravian years of Antonio Beduzzi)*. *Studia comeniana et historica* XX, 1990, pp. 74–105.

central chapels. The mausoleum might have been planned as an antipole to the noble "Imperial" eastern façade of the prelature. In the end, however, only the church of St. Stephan was built, also as a central, but according to different plans.

Baroque iconology as a whole may be described as evolving from the original idea of the closed "God's hospital," to which later on, the mausoleum and "Marble hall" were added. Nevertheless, a discussion of the inner scheme of unity of architecture and decoration would not be complete without mentioning the surrounding landscape. Even in the first stages of the construction of the monastic complex, the project included a spiritual and public "antipole" to the abbey: the place of pilgrimage, with a church and a residence Svatý Kopeček (Heiliger Berg) above the city of Olomouc. The inventor of ideas was again Anton Martin Lublinský, the project is believed to be the work of Giovanni Pietro Tencalla. The pilgrimage church, devoted to Virgin Mary, was situated on the prolonged axis of the abbey, directed towards its central point — the golden dome of the abbey. There was a road lined with trees and sculptures leading to the monastic complex. Its rich sculptural and emblematic decoration linked the road to both the iconography of the interior of the monastic structures and the symbols of Virgin Mary designed for the place of pilgrimage on top of a hill by Anton Martin Lublinský. The pilgrimage church has remained a landmark of central Moravia. In the 18th century, it was a genuine public counterpart to the abbey. Major pilgrimages and religious festivities took place there. Numerous engravings of the period reveal the importance of symbolism and emblematics for the creation of a *bel composto*, especially in the 1730's.

The shifts and changes in the project and the iconography of particular components of the Hradisko monastic complex imply a gradual departure from the early Baroque concept of "God's hospital". The significance of its composition, both in layout and decoration, resides in the fact that it was the very first such complex in Central Europe. The project for Hradisko led the way for further important monasteries in Austria and Hungary, and also to the completion of Baroque temple iconology in the sense of built and painted *Theatrum Mundi*. A new *Gesamtkunstwerk* is created: a theater of the world consisting of four basic elements: earth, air, fire and water. Consequently, the division emerges of the imperial and library sections, the prelature and the temple. The decorative architecture of Hradisko, as completed in the 1730's, falls within this historical framework, half way between the original idea of "God's hospital" dating from the late 17th century, and the approaching Central European "Theater of the world" of the mid-18th century.

II. Louka (Klosterbruck)

Similarly to Hradisko, the original conception of the Louka abbey is only known through reconstruction, as both monasteries were abolished by Joseph II at the end of the 18th century. What did the Louka abbey look like at the time it

was abolished? Let us consult the historical sources from the period — such as the notes of a learned sculptor from Brno, Andreas Schweigl:¹⁰

„The Premonstratensian abbey in Louka on the Dyje/Thaya river, previously part — Gothic, received its present large and splendid appearance through reconstruction carried out at the end of the last century and at the beginning of this one. Its shape was divided into four parts, of which two have already been finished; each corner ends with a copper-covered rondelle — like structure and in the centers of the sides, projections stand out, with triangle frontispieces painted in fresco. The windows are done in the Roman manner and the whole shows proportional order and makes excellent impression from afar. Inside, there is a magnificent staircase, embellished with painting and sculpture, and a summer refectory with architectural decoration by the sculptor Winterhalder; the ceiling was painted by Anton Maulbertsch and its architectural component by one Fischer, the Viennese painter; that is a work of great beauty. Thirdly, there is a library of the same height and size, adorned by the same painter. The garden of the abbey accommodates very beautiful sculptures by Lorenzo Mattielli, of themes from Ovid. The remaining two parts, together with a gothic church of old, complete an edifice that, though yet unfinished, already is one of the largest and grandest monasteries in Moravia.”

Andreas Schweigl wrote these words a short time after the abbey was abolished: he knew already that it had been converted into military barracks, that the sculptures had been sold and transported to Jevišovice (south Moravia) and its interior furnishings transported to the Strahov monastery in Prague. His observations leave out only the sala terrena, which, at that point, was still being decorated and has probably never been finished. What then can we say today about the abbey which was for a long time afterwards virtually inaccessible and whose former appearance has to be reconstructed from documents and historical sources of the period? Fortunately enough, there are a large number of these, as the Louka abbey, together with Hradisko, ranked among the most important Baroque monasteries in Moravia. Therefore, in spite of the fact that the interior decoration has been removed, we can reconstruct quite accurately what the Baroque look of the abbey and its interiors used to be and thus attain a basis for a consequent iconological interpretation.¹¹

The Baroque period brought a gradual reconstruction of the originally Gothic abbey, which dated back to the year 1200. In the early Baroque period, a new front of the temple was built with a pair of towers in 1689–1696 (sculpture in the front), a new vaulting of the temple roof was installed and construction began of a new prelature, situated between the temple and the manor house with administrative offices. The project is known from a late 17th century engraving of the abbey. This remarkable conception reveals again an effort to regulate the

¹⁰ Andreas Schweigl, *Bildende Künste Mähren. Umění XX*, 1972, p. 185.

¹¹ The sources for the history of Louka-abbey are in the Moravian Land Archives. My interpretation follows the reconstruction of another Austrian monastery. Cf. Friedrich Polleroß, *Bilderwelt und Schatzkammer des Stiftes Altenburg*. In: *Kamptal-Studien*, Bd. 5. Gars am Kamp 1985, pp. 247-298.

monastic edifices in the sense of "God's hospital". And again we come across the name of Anton Martin Lublinský who participated in the reconstruction of the abbey (in particular, he seems to have been involved in the decoration of terrace gardens). Similar to Hradisko, also a pilgrimage church was included in the project, situated on a hill above the city of Znojmo (Lechovice) and connected to the monastic complex by an alley.

Around 1733, new projects for the reconstruction of the abbey were drafted by Imperial court engineer Antonio Maria Nicolao Beduzzi from Vienna. Beduzzi, known as an "inventor" and "iconographer" too, might have taken part in designing the projects for decoration and the "monastic iconology" in a similar manner as he did previously with the project of the monastery in Melk. Hypothetically, his project included a garden, *maison de plaisance* and also the interior decoration. There are certain clues to be found in the drawings of F. B. Werner from the mid-18th century, although they depict an earlier stage. A view from the Dyje (Thaya) river shows the garden with a *maison de plaisance*. That was the garden with the "Ovid statues", as mentioned by Andreas Schweigl.¹² We can assume that they were a part of some large, so far unknown project for the reconstruction and modification of the abbey. Beduzzi was primarily a decorative builder and he was apparently attempting to tie the various parts of the Louka abbey into an ephemeral, theatrical world, playful in form and full of sculpture. He may have designed the *maison de plaisance* in the abbey garden, he certainly drafted the project for the structure on the island in the Dyje and for the reconstruction of the nearby chapel of St. Barbara. Comparison of the history of construction of the Louka and the Hradisko monasteries reveals a notable similarity in the decorative manner of the style of both structures, built in the same time. The style in fact also corresponds with other monasteries built at that time in the Danube region.

Ten years later, however, the concept of further artistic decoration of the abbey underwent a substantial change and the projects for the Louka abbey became utterly different. First in an ideal project, then in reality, a monumental edifice began to emerge at the city of Znojmo, an edifice of feudal representation, a symbol of secular and religious power, represented by the Premonstratensian monastic complex, designed by Franz Anton Pilgram. The land constructor of Lower Austria, he devised a new general plan for the new construction in 1748 and began the work. When he died in 1761, the project was passed on to Viennese court architect Franz de Paula Hillebrandt.¹³

Before going into further detail concerning this construction, we have to clarify the nature of the task that was assigned by the abbey to the architect and eventually fulfilled. A Baroque monastery was a center of religious, spiritual activities, a center of education, culture and theater; and also, at the same time,

¹² Some of these statues are in drawings of J. W. van der Auwera, but they are not discerned yet; cf. Heinrich Ragaller, *J. W. van der Auwera, Ein Skizzenbuch. Dokumente zur Gartenplastik für den Prinzen Eugen*. Würzburg 1979.

¹³ Pál Voit, *Franz Anton Pilgram*. Budapest 1982.

the headquarters of the monastery's economic operations. Its most important function was "to represent": to represent the position of a given monastery in the social hierarchy of the period (not only in relation to the subjects, but also other estates), as well as to represent the standing, the prestige, of the monastery's abbot. A statement dating from the end of the 17th century claims that the actual *raison d'être* of the new, magnificent edifices was "*der unsterbliche Namen und Ruhm und ewige Gedächtnuss*". The necessary expenditures were enormous and only those prelates who were capable organizers, managers and economists were able to make their ideas come true. One such successful builder was Berthold Dietmayr, the abbot at Melk. A number of others, however, ended in bankruptcy, in debt, dismissed from their post, or fighting unrest within their monasteries: no wonder that the overdimensioned structures of monastic residencies of the mid-18th century in Göttweig, Klosterneuburg and Louka as well remained unfinished.

A Baroque monastery was also, in some manner, an emblematic depiction of the triumph of church — through a "*Theater of the world*" and especially through the symbolism of light. A record written by former Louka librarian Gregor Norbert Korber (who later became Gregor Ritter von Korborn, the author also of the iconological program of the fresco in the Louka library) and posthumously published in 1855 says that the Louka abbot and other "*majores domus*" were choosing among three architects. The final selection, he claims, was made in accordance with the principle of "*medium tenuere beati*". What exactly is it that these words, reminding us of the "middle of the road" rule, suggest? Could there have been an even more monumental project than that finally selected, with "*medium*" implying the "middle of the road" compromise between a rich project and a meager one? I believe another interpretation could be provided, based on the classic theory of the 17th and 18th century: the theory of "*decorum*" and "*modus*".

"*Decorum*" in the Mannerism-Baroque art theory simply meant that which was decent, suitable — a certain convention, a function of a work of art in its particular context, its particular relation to its environment. It was often an unwritten principle governing the construction of buildings and palaces, as well as their interior furnishings and decoration. *Decorum* was the guiding rule for decorating the main halls of chateaux and the libraries of monasteries, *decorum* dictated the topics for works of art, etc. Another term of the period was "*modus*", meaning the stylistic manner of solving an artistic task, observing at the same time the "*decorum*" principle. Since Ancient times, there were three main stylistic modes rhetoricians considered binding in the creation of art: a) *grave* (Cicero), *grande* (Quintilianus): grand — to express magnificence, seriousness and greatness of power; b) *medium, subtile*: medium, middle — to convince and to illustrate; c) *tenuē, floridum*: simple and decorative — to express joy and amusement, pleasant dwelling in Nature.

In my opinion, it is this middle, medium stylistic mode that the above quotation refers to. The typology of monasteries I have already mentioned allows us to identify the "tenuē" *modus* as the decorative one: such was the construction

presumably of Louka at the end of the 17th century, such could have been the project of Beduzzi that remains unknown to us. A monastery in the "tenue" modus would be clearly differentiated with regard to function, the distinctive role played by the diverse decorations of the facade structures. The "grande" style is also quite recognizable: it was the "Solomon's temple". The one remaining style, then, is the "medium" one: it continued the concept of a monastery as "God's hospital". If this hypothesis is correct, this was the character of the task faced by Franz Anton Pilgram, the land architect and builder of the Lower Austria in the period 1745 — 1748. His plans of the prelature of the Louka abbey were inspected, in 1748, by the "arbiter elegantiarum" of the Viennese court, Conrad Adolph von Albrecht, whose opinion was quite favorable. There is a possibility that it was this "arbiter" who played the role of the "iconographer" of the whole abbey.

Let us consider now the examples or models Franz Anton Pilgram followed in his work. The essential model is indisputable: the projects for a new Benedictine monastery in Göttweig, drafted as early as in 1713 by Imperial architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt. He "competed" with Baltazar Neumann and Jakob Prandtauer (perhaps just here the "medium" modus was chosen?).¹⁴ In Hildebrandt's first project, the monastery was designed in the usual scheme: a rectangular layout with four wings, divided in the axis by the temple. This project was also the model for Pilgram's later projects of monasteries in St. Gotthard and in Jasov. Soon afterwards (in 1722), however, Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt drafted a more significant and larger project, conceived as "Solomon's temple": before the temple's facade, there would have been the "Imperial" wing with a monumental staircase and prefect's house. It was this very part that Franz Anton Pilgram was to have completed and designed himself. Pilgram states in his biography that he built the "Imperial monastery Montecassino", thus implying the main reason for the transformation of the project. In its front part, the Imperial section was to be treated as a monumental chateau edifice. Pilgram's changes in Göttweig remind us of the new project for the Louka abbey in their monumentality.

In Louka, Franz Anton Pilgram carried out a similar iconographical project, yet in a somewhat more moderate layout. The fundamental scheme was "medium": the idea of "God's hospital". However, the project attached the administrative house, an older residence adapted in the Baroque manner, directly to the main body of the monastic complex, thus shifting the overall concept towards the idea of "Solomon's temple". Typical for Pilgram was the monumentality of the unified blocks of all the wings of the abbey, quite different from Hildebrandt's original project, which simply connected particular, relatively independent plastic units. If we compare the project with the actual present day appearance of the facades, a notable feature will stand out — the cannellure in the pilasters of high order giving a varied appearance to the central projections.

¹⁴ Hans Tietze, *Österreichische Kunsttopographie I.: Die Denkmale des politischen Bezirkes Krems*. Wien 1907, pp. 445–449.

This solution, remarkably close as it is to the formal apparatus of Joseph Emanuel Fischer von Erlach (Jr.), might even indicate that Conrad Adolph von Albrecht, iconographer at the Imperial court and Fischer's close collaborator, may have taken a more substantial part in the construction of Louka than the historical sources suggest. Magnificence and monumentality are similarly features of the interior decoration of the abbey. I suppose that the iconological unity of the whole abbey appears in the fact that the abbey was conceived as a real, built and decorated "*Theatrum Mundi*". Its four sides were the four corners of the world and, at the same time, the four basic constants of the world and Nature: the image of the four elements, the four seasons of the year, the four units of the abbey. According to the Baroque theory of convention and decorum, this basic idea was to be reflected in the decoration, paintings and sculptures, of the main edifices of the abbey.

Let us now focus on particular elements of the decoration and the period and manner in which they were created. So far, the efforts to complete the art-historical reconstruction of the Louka abbey have suffered from uncertainty about the correct dating (even the most recent study by Karl Mösender includes some information long regarded as fact, yet incorrect concerning both the period when specific artworks were created and the identity of the artists).¹⁵

New historical sources as well as new interpretation of historical documents allow us to distinguish the three following stages in the decoration of the abbey from 1740's to 1770's:

- (A) Decoration related to the initial stage of the Louka reconstruction (i.e. the garden, *maisons de plaisance*, the chapel of St. Barbara, the pilgrimage church in Lechovice etc.) under abbot Anton Nolbeck (1729–1744): builder Christian Alexander Oedtl, Antonio Beduzzi; sculptors Lorenzo Mattielli and Johann Wolfgang van der Auwera (ca 1735), Georg Anton Heinz (as late as 1748–1759); fresco painter Michael Fissé and painter Anton Schoonjans (till 1732).
- (B) The newly built canon house and a part of the new prelature under abbot Hermengild Meyer (1745–1764): architect Franz Anton Pilgram.
- (C) The completion of the canon house and the newly constructed library under abbot Gregor Lambeck (till the 1770's): architect Franz de Paula Hillebrandt.

As the construction work proceeded, the interiors of the abbey were decorated by a succession of artists. The main fresco works were performed in both concluding stages by Franz Anton Maulbertsch. First, in 1765, he worked together with the Winterhalders: both, Josef the sculptor, who died in 1766, and his nephew — Josef the painter, who at the time was Maulbertsch's pupil and assistant. They all worked together with "quadrature-painter" Vincenz Fischer and, most importantly, Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer (1719–1775) who, however,

¹⁵ Karl Mösender, *Franz Anton Maulbertsch. Aufklärung in der barocken Deckenmalerei*. Wien 1993.

soon afterwards contracted a long-term illness. Mildorfer did the fresco decoration of the abbey's façades and interiors (the grand staircase). By 1778, Mildorfer was no longer alive for the second stage, being succeeded by his contemporary Johann Wenzel Bergl (1718–1789). Bergl created numerous paintings for the "library wing" of Louka abbey, such as those of the saints related to the abbey: St. Augustin, St. Norbert and St. Ambrosius, as well as the legends of King Solomon for the lower floors of the library wing. Even today, we can not be certain about the identity of the sculptor who worked in Louka at that stage: it may have been Andreas Schweigl. Josef Winterhalder, Jr. returned to Louka only when the abbey had already been abolished. He then copied several parts of the frescoes but, more importantly, wrote down a list of works of art belonging to the abbey at the time it was abolished.

These are the sources that made possible my attempt to reconstruct the original decoration of the abbey. The following scheme of decoration indicates that my reconstruction is based on the idea of symmetry in all the interior iconography and on the concept of complementary symbolic and allegorical images. This scheme essentially divides the abbey into the following elements:

a) The prelature (NB! the new edifice of the prelature was never erected, substituted instead by an older, already existing early Baroque prelature, located next to the temple and the residence building). In it, many of the paintings mentioned in the inventory listings of the period were placed. According to the project, the prelature was to contain the abbot's rooms, the grand staircase and the great hall, indubitably conceived as the "Marble" or "Imperial" hall.

When construction began, there was a temporary dining hall on the first floor of the canon house, full of sunshine and opening into the garden through high windows, that served as the abbot's dining hall. In the last inventory, it is referred to as the "*Offizier-Taffelzimmer*"; it was intended to accommodate the portraits of abbots and both the Hapsburg rulers (Maria Theresia and Joseph II).

b) The canon house — the conceptual counterpart to the temple; in contrast to the "Light of God", the fresco in the main hall on the main floor was an allegory of the "Light of Faith" — a three-part allegory representing the Premonstratensian order, history and moral *exemplum*.¹⁶ As the counterpart to the crypt in the abbey temple, grottoes were built underneath the canon house, and the counterpart to the temple itself was the newly reconstructed church of St. Barbara, with important sculptures by Georg Anton Heinz.

c) The library was intended to be the conceptual counterpart to the prelature, serving at the same time as the uniting element between the canon house and the temple. Counterpoising to the concept of secular rule as represented by the prelature, and that of Premonstratensian faith in the canon house, the frescoes here depict the idea of advancement of human spirit towards the ideal of God's Wisdom. The lower floors of the library accommodated schools, a museum and

¹⁶ Lubomír Slaviček, Franz Anton Maulbertsch und Joseph Winterhalder. Zur Ausschmückung des Sommerrefektoriums in Prämonstratenserkloster in Klosterbruck bei Znaim. *Acta historiae artium* 34, 1989, pp. 221-226.

a winter refectory with pictures illustrating Solomon's wisdom. Across from the grottoes and the temple crypt, there was a sala terrena. Similarly, the prelatore, which was never constructed, was to be the counterpart to the *Ovid statues* in the garden (inspired, in fact, by Ovid's *Fasti* and the temporality of secular love, rather than by erotic tales). Thus we can assume it would have included symbols of timeless spiritual love in the sense of eternal charity — caritas.

The last remaining part of the iconological concept to be discussed is the administrative house, located in front of the abbey proper. This edifice was not finished in the 18th century either. In Pilgram's plan, it is referred to as the *château*. Hence we may suppose that its primary function was to serve as administrative headquarters of the abbey's economic operations, managing the Premonstratensians' vast holdings. The château would have hidden the front part of the temple and thus provided the former simple scheme of "God's hospital" with the dimension of "Solomon's temple". The following diagram shows the scheme of the decoration, as I have reconstructed it from the descriptions of the period and also from the corresponding iconography of similar monasteries decorated around the mid-18th century.

Tab. III.

Prelature:

(not constructed)

Marble hall

Emperor's portraits (Maria Theresia — Joseph II)

Prelate's rooms, abbot's rooms

Grand staircase

Grottoes

Canon house:

Summer refectory

Light of Faith — the Premonstratensian order

"Officer dining hall"

(Mildorfer: Herod's feast ?)

Staircase

Light of the Holy Ghost

Hermitages (Grottoes)

Chapel of St. Barbara

outside the area proper of the abbey

Library wing:

Library

Light of God's Wisdom — Advancement of human spirit

Vestibule

School — "Museum"

Winter refectory

Light of Truth (Solomon)

Sala terrena

Water — Nature

Garden

Time — Love

Church:

Exterior of the church/Towers Light of God

Interior of the church

Crypt

The complex of the abbey was iconographically isolated from the world outside. The topics of decoration of the frontispieces in the projections were clearly meant to symbolize the imagined protection offered the abbey by the order's founder: on the side towards the main road, there was St. Norbert, facing the observers, holding high a monstrance; on the library wing, towards the garden, there was depicted the Conversion of St. Norbert. The road leading from the abbey in the opposite direction, towards the capital of Moravia, the city of Brno, rose steeply up the hill, where the Premonstratensian residence and pilgrimage church of Lechovice were situated. The prominent silhouette of the church became a distinctive feature of the landscape panorama. Similar to the Heiligenberg (Svatý Kopeček), it was also a place of the Baroque *Theatrum* and a great number of pilgrimages and feasts were held there.

Even though the abbey had not been entirely completed, it was still, in the second half of the 18th century, one of the most important monasteries in Central Europe. When it was abolished as a result of Josephinian reforms, the reflection of its glory passed on to two other Premonstratensian monasteries:¹⁷ to the Strahov monastery in Prague, where the library and its furnishings were transferred, along with a newly painted fresco by Franz Anton Maulbertsch, depicting a topic similar to the one in Louka, and to Geras in Austria, where the last wing of the monastery was finished in a manner imitating the Louka architecture, and also with a fresco after the Louka pattern, painted by Josef Winterhalter, Jr. The iconography of the fresco's theme, however, was quite different: as opposed to the fresco on the library vaulting in Louka, with its Catholic Enlightenment motif, the Geras fresco was clearly counter-Enlightenment.¹⁸

III. The End of Decorum

Although far apart in time, the concepts and ideas represented in the Hradisko and Louka abbeys were close in their contents. This was due to the *decorum*, outlined already through *idea ac conceptus* of Anton Martin Lublinský. Baroque artists presented an idea, not reality: the idea of a whole, of *un bel composto*. The world of Baroque artistic representation is harmonic, ideal, emotional, stimulating and beautiful. The rich Premonstratensian monasteries were a distinguishing feature of the cultural situation of the Baroque period in Moravia. They were always incorporated into a cultural landscape and connected to pilgrimage churches in the surrounding countryside. These churches were consecrated mostly to miraculous pictures of Virgin Mary. The whole of Moravia was, in fact, proposed to be under her protection. The concepts of the Premonstratensians influenced the construction of further pilgrimage sites by other re-

¹⁷ Cf. Pavel Preiss, in: Pravoslav Kneidl — Anna Rollová — Pavel Preiss, *Strahovská knihovna* (The Library at Strahov abbey). Praha 1988, pp. 99-149.

¹⁸ Jiří Kroupa, *Osvícenství a jeho protipól — poznámky k námětům skic Josefa Winterhaldera ml.* (Enlightenment and its opposite — notices on the themes of sketches by Josef Winterhalter, Jr). *Sborník prací filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity* F 34-36, 1993, pp. 117-131.

ligious orders. Even today, numerous sites of pilgrimage adorn the Moravian countryside. In the Baroque period, a great number of pilgrimages and feasts were held there. Conceived as *Gesamtkunstwerk* involving both the pilgrimage church and its parent monastery, the festivities were staged both in the space of the monastery's temple and the whole area around the place of pilgrimage, including the alley that led to the pilgrimage church. This culture of pilgrimages culminated in the 1730's with several grand festivities, symbolically coronating the Virgin Mary as *Queen of Moravia*, held by the Premonstratensian order (Hradisko) and Augustinians (Brno). Both orders published commemorative reports, giving a detailed account of the course of the celebrations. Then, however, this festal culture slowly disappeared in Central Europe. The "stage set" of the Baroque period, its rhetoric manifested a certain escape from reality, which naturally inspired an ever more frequent criticism and growing resentment against the lavish wastefulness in decoration of large complexes such as the monasteries. Norbert Korber, the "*inventor*" of the decoration program of the library in Louka, was one of the critics. When the abbey was abolished, he became an advisor to the bishop in Brno, attaining an influential position in the Catholic hierarchy in Moravia in the 19th century.

The artists who lost their commissions from grand monasteries nevertheless kept creating large ensembles of art works as *Gesamtkunstwerk*. These endeavors, however, were no longer concentrated around the "*inventors*" and "*iconographers*" of monasteries: their role passed on to the new Kupferstecherakademie in Vienna or on the private *House Academy* of Brno sculptor Andreas Schweigl. Instead of philosophical "concept and idea", artistic *Master-drawing* became the core of collaboration between different visual arts. In his academy, Schweigl instructed young architects, sculptors and painters chiefly in the art of drawing. He himself drafted numerous finished designs for interiors of temples and chateaux, for the decoration of "*maisons de plaisance*" and parks. His drawings and designs were the basis and inspiration for the works of his collaborators and students, who were producing large ensembles of art commissioned by the aristocracy.

The "*Lieux de plaisance*", "*sentimental*" gardens and Masonic forests bring an end, however, to the Baroque world of mystical connection between history and faith, the secular and the holy.¹⁹ The "God's hospitals" and "Solomon's temples" of the monasteries, connected with the magic sensation of a sacred space, are replaced by a sentimental place, naturally accessible to the perception and emotion of the visitor and observer.

¹⁹ Jiří Kroupa, „Lieu de plaisance“ und das barocke Mähren. Notizen zu einem „französischen Modus“ in der Architektur des 18. Jahrhunderts. *Umění* XLIII, 1995, pp. 317-337.

Supplement — Diagram of works of art in Louka-Klosterbruck

Canon house wing (round 1765):

Frontispiece on the front of the monastery: Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer, St. Norbert with a monstrance.

Staircase: Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer (the topic so far unidentified).

Summer refectory (Summer hall): Franz Anton Maulbertsch and Josef Winterhalder, Jr. as his assistant, "quadrature" painter Vincenz Fischer; sculptor Josef Winterhalder, Sr.

Theme — *Allegory — exemplum — fatto:*

1. Alexander The Great spares the city of Jerusalem through divine intervention: moral exemplum,
2. Otto, the Czech prince, founds the monastery: history — fatto,
3. Allegory and apotheosis of the Premonstratensian order: hieroglyphic allegory.

Abbot's dining hall ("Offizier-Taffelzimmer"): Joseph Ignaz Mildorfer?, Herod's Feast, Dance of Salome.

Paintings: (a) Franz Anton Maulbertsch, Vision of St. Norbert — allegorically connected with laudation of the Premonstratensian order.

(b) Anton Glunck (after Franz Anton Palko), Imperial portraits of Maria Theresia and Joseph II — at the point when the abbey was abolished, both the large paintings were in the canon house, in the summer refectory. Maybe both paintings had been commissioned, meant ultimately for the prospective "Marble hall" in the new prelatore. They may have been temporarily placed in the summer refectory, thus giving it a double function: as a refectory and as the Imperial hall (similar to the decoration of Hradisko abbey).

(c) Anton Glunck (or Franz Anton Palko ?), Portrait of Abbot Lambeck.

Library wing (round 1778):

Frontispieces on the front of the abbey: Johann Wenzel Bergl, Scenes from Life of St. Norbert: Conversion of St. Norbert.

Library: Franz Anton Maulbertsch: Allegory of Advancement of Human Spirit (Catholic Enlightenment motif following the program of Norbert Korber (knight Gregor Ritter von Korbom)).

Museum (possibly still library): Stucco relief portraits of abbots (1778, the circle of Andreas Schweigl), painted portraits of artists (for example of Pietro da Cortona) and writers (1779, Franz Lorenz Korompay).

Winter refectory: Johann Wenzel Bergl, Tales of Solomon (paintings?).

Franz Anton Maulbertsch, The Washing of His Feet and the Last Supper.

Sala terrena: Johann Wenzel Bergl, themes from Nature.

Garden: Lorenzo Mattielli, sculptures with "Ovid themes", brought over from the original, older garden (Flora, Hesperus, Bacchus a. o.)

