Vyšší Brod 42

A Unique Music Source from Pre-Hussite Bohemia

Edited by Hana Vlhová-Wörner

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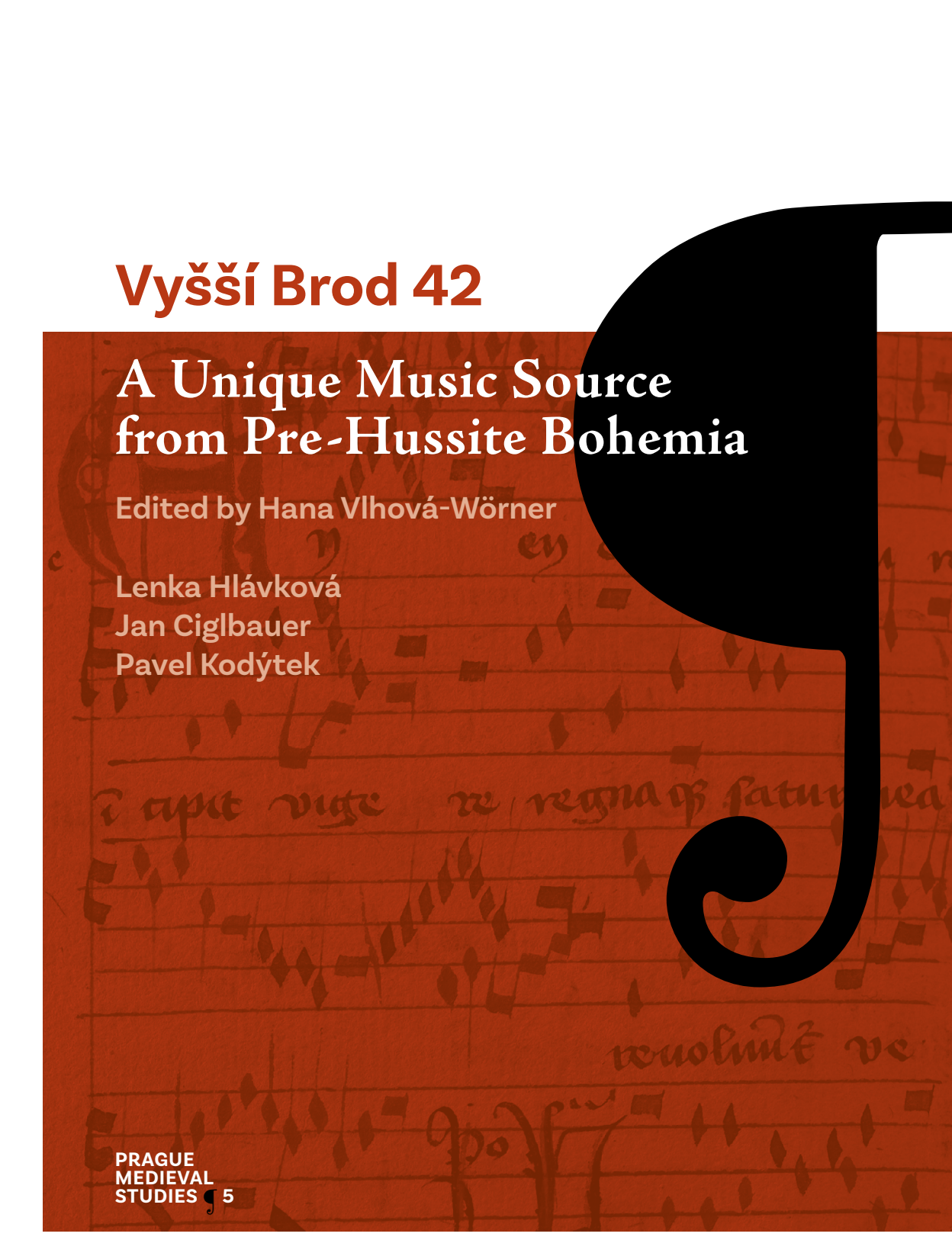

PRAGUE MEDIEVAL STUDIES 5

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Hana Vlhová-Wörner (ed.), Lenka Hlávková, Jan Ciglbauer, Pavel Kodýtek

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In memory of Lenka Hlávková (1974–2023)

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Introduction

Hana Vlhová-Wörner

The music collection from the monastery in Vyšší Brod in South Bohemia from 1410 (paper manuscript 42) is an extremely valuable source for the study of new musical repertory from the period before the outbreak of the Hussite wars in 1419. For its exceptionally wide selection of late plainchant and monophonic and polyphonic sacred songs in both Latin and Czech, the manuscript has been well-known to researchers since the early twentieth century. The first description was prepared in 1937 by Dobroslav Orel, one of the founders of musicology in Czechoslovakia.[1] Czech musicologists in the second half of the twentieth century, such as František Mužík and Jaromír Černý, were attracted by its polyphonic repertory and the early use of mensural notation in monophonic and polyphonic pieces.[2] Most recently, its rich collection of tropes was published in four volumes of the critical edition *Repertorium Troporum Bohemiae Medii Aevi*.[3] Similarly, the manuscript has long retained the interest of historians of the Czech language. The texts of vernacular prayers and songs were included in Jan Lehár's monograph on Czech vernacular poetry of the Middle Ages from 1900.[4] Special attention has always been paid to the inscription of the song *Otep myry*, which, in Jan Lehar's words, "belongs among the most beautiful expressions of Czech medieval spiritual poetry."[5] The field trip by the Slavic Seminary of the University of Bonn to the archives of the then-dissolved Cistercian monastery in the early 1980s prompted the

1 Orel, *Hudební prvky*, 556–60.

2 Mužík, *Úvod do kritiky*, 33, 56 and elsewhere; Černý, *Středověký vícehlas*. The manuscript was also included in the international catalogue of medieval polyphonic sources *RISM B IV*^{3} (here at p. 306).

3 *RTB I–IV.*

4 Lehár, *Česká středověká lyrika*.

5 Ibid., 70. See also Lehár, „Staročeská píseň" and März, „Das Canticum boemicale."

publication of a complete black-and-white mechanical photocopy of the manuscript, which was complemented by the first index of its chants and texts.[6]

For all these reasons, manuscript 42 from Vyšší Brod has become one of the sources on which the project *Old Myths, New Facts: the Czech Lands at the Centre of 15th Century Music Developments* (a joint project of the Masaryk Institute and Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Faculty of Arts of the Charles University in 2019–2024) has based its research. In the selection of most important music documents from the "long fifteenth century," manuscript 42 represented the project's earliest document, an "entrance gate" to the rich world of fifteenth-century musical culture in Bohemia. The original research question was rather simple: to look more closely at the circumstances in which such a particular collection of late medieval repertory was compiled in a Cistercian monastery, that is, in a milieu known for its strictly regulated liturgy.

The very first inventory of the liturgical repertory and its comparison with the sources of the "Cantus Index" database, carried out in 2019, challenged – and changed – the existing view of the entire manuscript.[7] The contents of the opening section with processional chants, which until then had stood completely outside the research focus, were clearly connected to genuine Cistercian liturgy. It suddenly became clear that the manuscript was not written, as had been previously assumed, as a "memory book" of the "secular" (in the sense of "non-monastic," that is, alien) repertory compiled within the walls of a Cistercian monastery.[8] On the contrary, case studies of individual genres, such as antiphons to the Virgin Mary, chants of the Mass Ordinary, and prefaces, have uniformly pointed to the close links of the manuscript's content to liturgical practice in Vyšší Brod. A first glance at other manuscripts from Cistercian monasteries in Central Europe (especially from Silesia and Southern Germany) confirmed that the situation in Vyšší Brod was by no means exceptional. By the end of the fourteenth century at the latest, the strict division between the regulated Cistercian liturgy and the flourishing music composition in the surrounding regions had loosened in many other places. In that moment, one simple research question developed into a complex and entirely unexplored topic: the music and musical culture of Cis-

6 Rothe, *Die Hohenfurther Liederhandschrift*.
7 See https://cantusindex.org/ (last visited 11 November 2024).
8 This thesis was first expressed by Nejedlý, *Počátky*, 239–40.

tercian monasteries in Central Europe in the late Middle Ages.[9] The decision to devote more attention to the Vyšší Brod collection, a glorious example of such a hybridized music culture, led to the preparation of three extensive chapters that are included in this edited volume.

The opportunity to study the manuscript directly in the library was an irreplaceable experience, but not something to be taken for granted. After the closure of the monastic houses by the communist regime in the 1950s, the Vyšší Brod library was administrated by the Research Library of South Bohemia in České Budějovice for several decades. It was returned – fortunately without much loss – to its original owners in 1991. The monastery is, however, still struggling with the consequences of its tragic past and current staffing does not allow researchers to stay inside the monastery for more than a few hours. It was therefore not possible to explore this extraordinarily rich library – one of the most extensive and best-preserved monastic libraries in Central Europe, with approximately 1,300 volumes – in depth during two short visits in 2019 and 2020. Still, the members of the team were given opportunity to consult a handful of selected manuscripts, which provided a better view into medieval music repertory. Some of them turned out to be crucial for the better understanding of manuscript 42 from 1410, such as the Processional from 1395 (parchment manuscript XXXIV) that obviously served as one of its models. A few questions, however, still remain open for the future. For example, the library keeps liturgical and musical documents that definitely depart in their content from the strict Cistercian tradition, such as books with the liturgy of the Prague diocese or recordings of polyphonic music (parchment manuscripts LXXII and LXV). Was the monastery collecting liturgical books with secular use? Did polyphonic singing occupy more space in the monastery? Further information about the musical culture of the period might also become clear from a thorough study of manuscript fragments. This will be, however, only possible when the circumstances in the monastery allow extensive work with manuscripts and early prints directly in the library.

The three extensive studies included in the present edited volume are the result of teamwork in the strictest sense of the word. From the very beginning, the members of the project have worked closely together, from the detailed reading of the manuscript to the many discussions of the chapter drafts. They

9 For a recent assessment, see Mitterschiffthaler, "Zisterzienser."

are therefore closely linked in thought and content. Many valuable conclusions that substantially advance today's understanding of music and musical culture in the monastic environment in the early fifteenth century are the result of many joint discussions about contemporary documents and transcriptions of musical pieces. For this reason, the reader will encounter some of the information repeatedly, but each time explored from a different perspective.

Perhaps the most significant case are the valuable observations concerning the individual setting of the Marian antiphon *Regina celi, letare* in the style of rhythmic chant (cantus fractus), recorded twice in manuscript 42. In Hana Vlhová-Wörner's contribution, the practice of singing Marian antiphons (including *Regina celi, letare*) is illuminated in the context of the centralised Cistercian liturgy and monastic statutes. The practice of indulgences, closely related to the promotion of the singing of the antiphon *Regina celi, letare*, is explained in her chapter and in Jan Ciglbauer's study. Lenka Hlávková and Pavel Kodýtek then follow with their discussion on the musical transformation of antiphon *Regina celi*, perhaps influenced by the influx of lay visitors to the monastery, who now were able to participate in its performance. The joint reflection on the distinctive form of this song and the study of contemporary historical sources finally opened up a second large topic that has been only randomly mentioned in publications on musical culture of the late Middle Ages: the votive practice associated with the granting of indulgences, which flourished from the second half of the fourteenth century onwards.[10]

The volume opens with a detailed palaeographical and codicological analysis of the manuscript, "The Scribe(s), Genesis, and Use of the Manuscript Vyšší Brod 42" by Jan Ciglbauer. Based on a meticulous analysis, Jan Ciglbauer vividly depicts the genesis of the collection, which was, as he demonstrates, conceived well before 1410, the year indicated in the opening inscription. His identification of a number of scribes of texts and music – at least in the last part of the manuscript with sacred songs – highlights the role of the monk Przybico (Přibík) in the compilation process. The palaeographical analysis provides a point of departure for further observations on scribal work and on the administrative responsibilities held by the manuscript's main compiler. Ciglbauer's observations are based on study of a selection of manuscripts from the

10 Some of the conclusions formulated in the studies of this publication have since been taken up in the study by Ciglbauer, "Votivní bohoslužby."

historical monastic library (as wide as the limited study time in the monastic library allowed) as well as historical charters and visitation protocols.

The extensive plainchant repertory that constitutes the main part of the manuscript is discussed in the following chapter, "*Secundum morem nostrum* and *secundum morem secularem*: the Liturgical Repertory in the Manuscript Vyšší Brod 42" by Hana Vlhová-Wörner. For the first time since the introduction of this manuscript into the scholarly literature, this part of the manuscript is subjected to a thorough analysis. As demonstrated in the chapter, the compilation is unique in its symbiosis of chant for Cistercian liturgy with the wide spectrum of genres representing late medieval chant compositions: tropes to the Mass Ordinary and Mass Proper, antiphons to the Virgin Mary, parts of rhymed offices to Bohemian patrons and other saints, and sequences. One question runs through the whole study: what was the motive of the scribe, a monk of Cistercian order, in recording such a remarkable selection of the most recent musical pieces? A particular enchantment with symmetrical and song-like melodies comes to the fore in almost all genres and forms. In this point, this part of the manuscript shares some common features with the final section with monophonic and polyphonic songs.

The repertory of sacred songs, which has been a centre of interest for decades, is the subject of the last study, "Manuscript Vyšší Brod 42: a New Perspective on the Tradition of Late Medieval Cantiones" prepared by Lenka Hlávková and Pavel Kodýtek. Including some thirty songs, the manuscript of Vyšší Brod stands at the beginning of a long tradition of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century collections of sacred Latin and vernacular songs that belong to the most characteristic repertory of the late medieval and early modern musical tradition in Bohemia. Consulting several dozen music sources, the authors were able to follow the repertory's continuous development over two centuries. They demonstrate that the lineal development concept "from monophonic to polyphonic composition" cannot be applied to this repertory. As they explain, monophonic melodies were subjected to ad-hoc improvisation, the so-called "cantus mensuratus binatim," which was only randomly captured in the written records. The varying polyphonic tradition of the song *Cedit hiems eminus* serves as a striking example of such vivid performance practice. Special attention is paid to early notations of rhythmically organized melodies, for which scribes used signs of mensural notation.

All three studies were already completed by 2021 and were originally accepted in the same year for publication in a leading international musico-

logical journal, which, however, ceased publication shortly thereafter. The authors would like to express their gratitude to Karolinum Press for accepting these studies, collated in one separate edited book, in the recently established monograph series "Prague Medieval Studies" (PRAMS). The authors would also like to thank many colleagues who contributed to the final form of this publication. Members of the project *Old Myths, New Facts*, especially Viktor Velek, Rhianydd Hallas, and Jana Franková, participated in many joint discussions during the course of the chapter preparation. Both peer-reviewers, Irina Chachulska and Charles Brewer, provided valuable comments on all three chapters. Matthew Franke and Scott Edwards undertook the revision of the English texts of the individual studies. The authors greatly benefited from consultations with specialists on medieval Latin Zuzana Silagiová, Adéla Ebersonová, and Lucie Doležalová. The members of the research team *Old Myths, New Facts* are also indebted to the Cistercian monastery in Vyšší Brod for the opportunity to study the manuscript *in situ* and especially to Vladimír Krop for his assistance during the team's visit to the monastery in 2019 and 2020.

When the editor of this volume last met with Lenka Hlávková on 19 December 2023 over some questions related to her contribution, no one knew that just two days later, she would become a victim of the mass shooting at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University on Palach Square. Her study, on which she collaborated with her student Pavel Kodýtek, thus remains one of her last contributions to a better understanding of the musical culture of Bohemia in the late Middle Ages.

1.
The Scribe(s), Genesis, and Use of the Manuscript Vyšší Brod 42

Jan Ciglbauer

Introduction

Looking back at the range of scholarly literature and editions which use the manuscript Vyšší Brod 42 (VB 42) as a source – whether originating in the fields of musicology, Bohemian or German studies – an article focusing on its basic codicological and palaeographical features and questioning its genesis may at first seem redundant, given the fact that VB 42 is still the only Bohemian manuscript that is available in a generous facsimile (black and white) edition with commentary.[1] Although the commentary to this edition provides many valuable insights into VB 42 and its context, it leaves some fundamental aspects unclarified, or not explicitly addressed. These concern especially the genesis and purpose of the source taken in conjunction with the history and liturgy of the monastery, and the changing "national" and educational background of the monks.

The person of the main compiler and his role also deserves a reappraisal. Up to recent times, the manuscript was implicitly understood as a collection made single-handedly by Przybico (Přibík), a Czech monk who was active in the monastery in the second half of the fourteenth century and the first quarter of the fifteenth. The introduction to the facsimile edition draws a picture of

1 Rothe, *Die Hohenfurther Liederhandschrift*.

an orphan who was admitted to the monastery, later becoming a "cellerarius" (cellarer). He was also known as a prolific scribe, and he finally rose to lead the abbey as abbot between ca. 1415 and his resignation in 1426.[2]

Even a brief look at VB 42 reveals that it may not, after all, be the sort of manuscript that is written by one person as a kind of "memory book" for private use without any specific local musical practice in mind.[3] VB 42 consists of three separately created sections: register, chant, and Latin and Czech songs (see **table 1.1**, pp. 54–71). These threee sections are also distinguished by the use of different scripts. This immediately raises questions about the exclusivity of Przybico's role in the genesis of VB 42. The presence of two visually distinct main sections also enhances concerns about the dating of the codex – especially the song section, which has traditionally generated most of the interdisciplinary interest. A thorough codicological analysis allows us to scrutinize the existing conclusions and interpretations of VB 42. By looking deep into the manuscript's genesis, including at the scribal hands, it should become clearer whether it is a "memory book" of a single scribe or a kind of edition project driven by a small group of equally minded and educated monks, motivated by the changing liturgical requirements in the context of their monastery.

A codicological and palaeographical analysis will be the point of departure for the reconsideration of VB 42 as a musical and liturgical source. What happens to the traditional notion of VB 42 when it emerges that it may have been a long-used liturgical source? What do we learn from VB 42 about Bohemian songs of around 1410, their relation to the liturgy and their transmission? Further, a closer examination should give more precision to our notion of the musical history of the Vyšší Brod abbey at the beginning of the fifteenth century and provide a basis for some revised general thoughts about the state of late-medieval chant and the early tradition of Latin songs in Bohemia and their use: VB 42 remains the earliest collection of sacred songs with a clear connection to the liturgy and notated with black mensural notation.

VB 42 is also the only preserved collection of songs originating from a monastic environment that we have from around 1400 in Bohemia. If we understand manuscripts from different periods as a system of optical elements through

2 Vácha, "Přibík."

3 An example of a personal miscellany or "memory book" from the same period – the second decade of the fifteenth century – is the manuscript of Nicolaus Cosel (PL-WRu I Q 466), see Bein, "Nikolaus," Kouba, *Slovník*, 274–79.

which we may observe musical practice, VB 42 would be the first extensive, and the most important one for the Bohemian tradition of Latin song: as such, this source requires special treatment and inspection from more angles.

Musical and liturgical culture at the Vyšší Brod abbey

The history of the Vyšší Brod abbey has already been described in several studies. Dominik Kaindl's *Geschichte des Zisterzienserstiftes Hohenfurt in Böhmen*, and especially its recently revised and supplemented edition, still provides a solid base for contemporary research, narrating the general history from the beginning to the twentieth century.[4] The most detailed description of the library, which is one of the most complete medieval libraries preserved in the Czech lands, is found in Raphael Pavel's catalogue from 1891[5] and the supplement to this work by Bohumil Ryba.[6] In recent times, a series of texts about Vyšší Brod have been published by Kateřina Charvátová.[7] There are also studies of the architecture,[8] fine art originating in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the abbey,[9] and the musical contents of the library.[10] Book culture flourished in Vyšší Brod from the second half of the fourteenth century until the Hussite wars.[11] In search of the historical context of VB 42, we rely on a set of documents edited by Mathias Pangerl, Valentin Schmidt and Augustin Alois Neumann.[12] In recent years, the analysis of well-preserved visitation protocols has provided some complementary insights, which will also be taken into consideration later.[13] In order to contextualize VB 42, a brief sketch of the

4 Kaindl, *Geschichte*; Kaindl, *Dějiny* (with bibliography after 1930).
5 Pavel, "Handschriften"; Hlaváček, "Zisterziensische Bibliotheken."
6 Ryba, *Codices*. Supplementum.
7 Charvátová, *Dějiny cisterckého řádu*, 9–80; Charvátová, *900 let*.
8 Kuthan, *Baukunst*, 175–209.
9 Friedl, *Iluminované rukopisy*; Bartlová, "Madona"; Hlaváčková, "Panel Painting"; Kuthan, *Umění*, 66–67, 104, 326–32.
10 Fink and Horyna, "Hohenfurter Handschriften"; Horyna, *Ad noticiam*.
11 Bok, "Literaturpflege," 185–91.
12 Pangerl, *Urkundenbuch*; Schmidt, "Nachträge"; Neumann, *Prameny*.
13 Sources published by Grillnberger, "Kleinere Quellen"; "Grillnberger, "Wilheringer Formelbuch," recently analyzed by Lomičková, "Visitationsurkunden"; Lomičková, "Vizitační protokoly."

most important moments in the history of the monastery is necessary: these are moments that made it possible for such a collection of liturgical chants and songs to be written around 1410 in Vyšší Brod.

The Cistercian abbey Vyšší Brod was founded in 1259 by Peter Vok of Rosenberg. Members of the house of Rosenberg consistently held high and important offices close to the royal court. As a result, the monastery maintained intensive contact with Prague despite its relatively remote location in the south of the Kingdom of Bohemia. The Vyšší Brod abbey also became one of the most important foundations and burial sites of the Rosenberg house, and as such, the monastery enjoyed generous material as well as political support throughout the Middle Ages.[14]

The first monks of Vyšší Brod came from its mother house, the Upper Austrian abbey of Wilhering. In accordance with the Rosenbergs' policy, the monastery was oriented mostly towards the Southern German territories and their culture, and it accepted German-speaking novices only. Around 1350, the emperor Charles IV and archbishop Arnestus (Arnošt) of Pardubice interceded at Cîteaux for more members of Bohemian nobility to be accepted in Cistercian houses in Bohemia.[15] In the second half of the fourteenth century, the community did indeed start to adopt Bohemian and specifically Czech-speaking novices, as we will observe in the names of scribes and abbots.

With the rise of Prague as imperial capital under Charles IV, the orientation of Vyšší Brod turned to the north and intensified on many levels. Peter II of Rosenberg (1326–1384), provost of the Chapter of All Saints connected with Prague University, engaged himself in many affairs of the monastery.[16] From 1374, the Cistercian order had a university college in Prague where selected members of Bohemian monasteries could obtain general and theological education.[17] It was ordered by the general chapter in Cîteaux that the abbot of each Cistercian house in Bohemia select two candidates to study in St. Bernard's College.[18] This college was active until the beginning of the Hussite wars (1419–20), although after the Decree of Kutná Hora in 1409, most of the students moved to Leipzig to form a new Bernard's college at the newly-

14 Charvátová, *Dějiny*, 9–31.
15 Vácha, "Přibík," 2–3; Neumann, Prameny, 108–10.
16 Kadlec, "Petr II.," 95.
17 Kadlec, "Studia," 95–107.
18 Canivez, *Statuta* 3: 554.

founded university. Unfortunately, documents from St. Bernard's college in Prague have not survived to our times. Only in the fragmentarily preserved registry of the Faculty of Arts do we find a couple of Cistercian students, but no one from Vyšší Brod.[19] Still, the connection with Prague University is most likely the reason for an early example of practically used black mensural notation and the presence of some notable Pragensia in VB 42.[20] Prague University was an intellectual centre where black mensural notation had been known since around 1370.[21]

Nevertheless, according to the register, VB 42 is almost entirely a liturgical codex mixtus combining Cistercian and secular repertoire. The selection of Cistercian processional chants, Mass Ordinary chants with and without tropes, sequences, prefaces, antiphons with texts based on *Canticum canticorum*, and songs is puzzling: especially the consistent division between the Cistercian and "secular" repertoire.[22] What reason and function has diocesan repertoire in a Cistercian liturgical book? If we do not want to settle for VB 42 as being a mere music repository, we have to look for a possible purpose within the monastery.

Besides the main church, there were further sacred spaces where divine services took place and for which VB 42 could have been intended. The chapel at the entrance to the monastery is probably the most important of them. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, pilgrims, visitors, and secular members of the monastery community of Cistercian houses were usually not allowed to take part in the services in the main church. Instead, they could visit a special chapel located at the entrance.[23] In Vyšší Brod, the existence of such a chapel is securely documented in 1379, but this chapel has not survived to our time.[24] The document in which the chapel dedicated to St. Mary Magdalene appears

19 Kadlec, "Studia," 98.

20 The mention of "civitas Pragensis" in the fragmentary text of *Ascensus regine* on fol. Dv, and the "cancio contra wiclefistas," *Omnes attendite* on fol. 174r, reflecting contemporary intellectual disputes at Prague University.

21 Vlhová-Wörner and Černý, "Hudba," 299.

22 See the contribution by Hana Vlhová-Wörner in this volume, pp. 163–73.

23 There was a gradual process during which the chapels first served for Offices mainly on ferial days. Later, Masses on great feasts were also celebrated. In the next stage, lay people began to be allowed to enter the conventual church in the monastery for more and more services. See Müller, "Kapelle."

24 According to Lomičková, "Vizitační protokoly," 75n417, only a few chapels of this kind survived; one of those still in existence is found in Neuzelle, Germany.

confirms 100 days of indulgence for every penitent who attends Holy Mass on the Nativity, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, Marian feasts, the feasts of St. Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, and the Dedication feasts of the monastery, chapel or the infirmary.[25] An indulgence of 100 days was granted in 1384 by the archbishop John of Jenštejn for praying in front of an "ymago" of the Virgin Mary.[26] Besides these documents, there are three further indulgences in the pre-Hussite period.[27] In VB 42, a rubric connected with the song *Jezu Kriste, štědrý kněže* states that it is a "stara pyesen a dobra odnyezto gsu odpusstczy" (old and good song for which there are indulgences); it indicates a certain connection with this liturgical practice. Another significant chapel is the chapel of Virgin Mary, located at the cemetery. The list of expenses from 1400 mentions a purchase of a lamp for this chapel and candles for *Salve, regina*, which suggests a special regular performance of this Marian antiphon in the monastery.[28] There are indications in VB 42 of the possibility that the sequence *Stabat mater dolorosa* and cantio *Ave yerarchia* might be sung as a trope to *Salve, regina*.[29]

Yet another institution with its own specific liturgy was the infirmary and its chapel.[30] Healthcare was an integral part of the life of Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries, as already confirmed in the Rule of St. Benedict. The infirmaries were often located on monastery grounds, but divided to a certain extent from the main buildings.[31] Vyšší Brod was certainly not an exception even though the medieval building itself does not exist anymore: the infirmary and healthcare is mentioned several times in written documents.[32] In

25 Pangerl, *Urkundenbuch*, CLIV and CLV, 77–179. The indulgences were issued at the request of the brothers Peter II and John of Rosenberg.

26 Ibid., CLXIII, 191–92. The "ymago" (statue) of Virgin Mary appears also in an indulgence granted by the archbishop Zbyněk Zajíc in 1411. The indulgence of forty days was connected with singing *Regina celi, letare* in front of the statue. See ibid., CCV, 252.

27 Ibid., CLXXVIII, 211; CLXXIX, 212; CLXXXIII, 215.

28 Ibid., CLXXXIX, 225. "Et de lampade ad capellam beate virginis et pro candelis ad Salve regina x sol. xii de." The ceremony most likely took place at the statue of Virgin Mary.

29 VB 42, fols. 140v, 145r. See also the contribution by Hana Vlhová-Wörner in this volume, pp. 143–44, and below, p. 35, n. 49.

30 Charvátová, "Cisterciáci a medicína," 35, 40.

31 Sommer, "Infirmarium."

32 Pangerl, *Urkundenbuch*, LXXXVIII, 88. A document from 1347 allocates yields from the village of Nesselbach to maintain six ill persons; for further documents from 1380 and 1384, see ibid., CLVII, 179–85, and CLXII, 190–91.

Vyšší Brod, the infirmary chapel was dedicated to St. Elizabeth of Hungary.[33] Unfortunately, no liturgical source connected to the chapel has been identified so far. However, the visitation protocols provide some indirect testimonies about what was going on in practice in the infirmary.

Visitation protocols – "kartae visitacionis" – provide valuable information about the everyday practice of the monastery, although their vocabulary was mainly standardized. They are relatively well preserved in the case of Vyšší Brod.[34] Among common and repeated provisions concerning silence, private property, the presence of women, attendance of services and punishments for several other forms of misbehavior, from time to time there are instructions that may point to locally specific practices and controversies.

In one of the "kartae," the celebrant of the services in the Magdalene chapel is criticized for maintaining inappropriate contact and communication with lay people of both genders:

> Item clamosa insinuacione intelleximus aliquos sacerdotes volentes in porta missam legere eundo et recedendo de altari irreverenter se habere in confabulacionibus populi astantis utriusque sexus, per quod scandalum intuentibus generatur.[35]
>
> (Item, we have learned through strident accusation that some priests, wanting to celebrate the Mass at the gate, when coming or going from the altar, conduct themselves irreverently in conversations with those present of both sexes, by which those who see it are offended.)

If it was necessary to control what happened in the chapel, then this instruction suggests that the chapel was a living liturgical space.

Visitation protocols confirm several times that, alongside the main church, the infirmary used to have its own liturgy celebrated by the "infirmarius" (infirmarer): "… ut omnes et singuli monachi canonicas horas in capella

33 As mentioned in the already cited document from 1379, see ibid., CLV, 178. A census from 1400 mentions candles for the infirmary chapel: "½ tal. pro lampade ante capellam infirmorum," see ibid., CLXXXIX, 221–27 at 225.

34 Lomičková, "Visitationsurkunden"; Czech version available under the title "Vizitační protokoly."

35 Lomičková, "Vizitační protokoly," 75; Grillnberger, "Formelbuch" (SMBCO 20), 486 (Vyšší Brod, 1360).

infirmorum simul cum infirmario persolvant."[36] (… so that each and every monk may perform the canonical hours in the chapel of the sick also with the infirmarer). These protocols focus on diligent execution of the office "secundum ordinis nostri antiquam institucionem" (according to the ancient provision of our order). The careful division between what is "nostrum" and what is "secularis" that we can observe in VB 42 may be a reflection of this provision.

But the infirmary was also a place where monks gathered to drink and sometimes meet lay people after Compline was finished.[37] It was part of a phenomenon often criticized in other Cistercian monasteries as well. Thanks to its main purpose, the infirmary was usually heated and the rules were less strict. Sick monks were allowed to eat meat and drink wine more often than healthy members of the community. This led to the generosity of the infirmaries sometimes being abused. Such undesirable practice was often addressed in the visitations of Vyšší Brod.[38] Thus, the "kartae" may provide a glimpse into an otherwise undocumented, unofficial and less restrained aspect of culture in the monastery, which may have been tolerated to a certain extent in the course of everyday life within the community.

Could VB 42 maybe reflect this more "human" environment in the monastery by incorporating an indecent song[39] and the Czech love song *Otep myry* next to respected Cistercian chant and Latin songs? Although it seems that VB 42 fits the needs of the Magdalene chapel rather than the infirmary chapel, it is evident that, from time to time, "singuli monachi" (each and every monk)

36 Lomičková, "Vizitační protokoly," 85–89; Grillnberger, "Formelbuch" (SMBCO 21), 387; a visitation from the monastery of Žďár (German: Saar) from 1350 mentions explicitly "vigilias et completorium": Neumann, *Prameny*, 124–25.

37 For Wilhering, the mother-house of Vyšší Brod see "De nocturnis potacionibus," Grillnberger, "Formelbuch" (SMBCO 19), 242.

38 Grillnberger, "Formelbuch" (SMBCO 19), 590 (1350?); Grillnberger, "Formelbuch" (SMBCO 20), 487 (1355), 490 (1354). More recent, not precisely dated visitations from 1370–1421 do not mention potaciones specifically. Instead, they still remind monks of the duty to come to sleep in the common dormitory. See Grillnberger, "Kleinere Quellen," 443.

39 At first sight, the song in question, *Quidam triplo metro* on fol. Gv, seems to be a sacred strophic song to the Virgin Mary. However, the rhymes are constructed in a way that leads the singer's or listener's expectation to a rude word at the end of the second line of each strophe. The obscene meaning is always skillfully evaded at the last moment so as to apparently preserve decency. Only a good knowledge of Latin ensures a full grasp of the wit. A study on the transmission of this song is in preparation.