

ZIEROTIN LIBRARY IN VELKÉ LOSINY  
IN SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

Petr Mašek

At the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century the old Moravian family of Zierotin gained the North-Moravian estate in Velké Losiny. The Zierotin family belongs to the oldest and most well known Moravian aristocratic families. It was the 16<sup>th</sup> century when they were at their height and the family survived until our time. The oldest ancestor is said to be Hincó of Zierotin<sup>2</sup>, who was a Crusader at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The recorded ancestor was Blud of Bludov (1195–1215), the warden in Přerov. the family members used to be wardens in Přerov and Olomouc in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The name „of Zierotin” was established in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and used by the family thereafter. The family had split into two branches by the 15<sup>th</sup> century; Napajedla and Fulnek. The first part ceased to exist at the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Fulnek part was split again at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Firstly into two, later into seven other branches. The most well known family member was Karel the Elder of Zierotin (1564–1636) who was famous not only for his political activities, but for being a founder of one of the widest Renaissance libraries placed in Náměšť nad Oslavou. This collection in its entirety did not unfortunately survive up to the present time. The main part was transported to Vratislav in Silesia, the other was inherited by the counts of Wr̃bno in Hořovice.

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1 This article is a result of the project “*The virtual reconstruction of scattered provenance-bohemical book units in domestic and foreign libraries*” (č. DG18P02OVV009) financed by the Ministry of Culture Czech republic within *The Programme for the Support of Applied Research and Experimental Development of National and Cultural Identity* (NAKI II).

2 *Gothaisches Genealogisches Taschenbuch der Gräflichen Häuser*, Gotha 1938, 667. Genealogy information in this work are mostly taken from Dr. Vladimír POUZAR Genealogy database.

An additional Zierotin library was established in Velké Losiny containing several works from the Karel's collection<sup>3</sup>. The library in Velké Losiny might have been founded by Petr of Zierotin (1488–1528). However there is no proof of this conjecture. Neither is there conclusive proof of Jan, the younger of Zierotin (†1608). The oldest zierotin provenance inscriptions belong to Bernard of Zierotin (†1615)<sup>4</sup>, a renowned scholar who was elected as honorary rector of Prague university in 1614. His books originate from 1494–1596 and they represent a typical cross-section of that period. There are both works of church fathers – Johannes Chrysostomus and Augustinus Aurelius, *Sermones*, Basel, 1494–1495 and works of lutheran theologists, such as Johann Brenz, *Samuelis liber prior*, Francofurti 1554. There are moreover historic and Antic books, e.g. Suetonius, *De vita duodecim Cesarum*, Selestadii 1520. According to provenance inscriptions on Bernard's books we gain an understanding of the transportation difficulties when reaching Moravia; mostly through German scholars. There are other pieces from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, mostly non-catholic and lutheran without the provenance marks. However we believe they also belonged to Bernard's library. Until present times the Zierotin library is a castle with the widest non-catholic, mostly German lutheran collection of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Another figure who enriched the Zierotin library was Přemysl of Zierotin, lord of Vizmburg (Loučná at the Desna), who lived at the turn of the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>5</sup>. His inscript "Sum ex libris Primislai de

3 There are numerous works about Karel Elder's Library. mentioned by: Čeněk ZÍBRT, *Bibliography of Czech history, vol. I*, Prague 1900, No. 3911, 23145–23151. The basic study is: Běda DUDÍK, *Karl's von Žerotin böhmische Bibliothek in Bresslau*, Reports of the Royal Czech Society of Doctrines, 1877. Regarding the comparison of other zierotin books. Bohumír LÍFKA, *Exlibris a supralibros in Czech crown countries in 1000–1900*, Prague 1980, 229.; About Bludov library Petr MAŠEK, *Zierotin library in Velké Losiny and Bludov*, Cour d'honneur, 1(1998), No. 1, p. 41–43.

4 Constantin von WURZBACH, *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*. Wien 1891, vol. 60, p. 78.

5 Constantin von WURZBACH, *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*, Wien 1891, vol. 60, p. 94.

Zierotin 1603" we see in Cicero's *Epistolae ad familiares* issued in 1597 in Frankfurt at the Odra.

Přemysl I of Zierotin actively participated in the Estate rebellion and was duly fined, however he managed to redeem the Estate of Loučná. His wife Anne – daughter of Jáchym Ondřej Schlik (1596–1621), was executed on the Old Town Square. Jan Hertvícius wrote a celebratory booklet<sup>6</sup> to their wedding, which is preserved in the Zierotin library even today. Fortunately due to this marriage the library obtained the works of Aristoteles: *Ad filium Nicomachum de vita et moribus scripti*, Lipsiae 1572, se supralibros "*Hieronymus Schlich, Graff zu Passann, Herr zu Wiesenkirchen Elbogen und auff Schlach*", who is Jeroným Schlik<sup>7</sup>, uncle of the earlier mentioned Jáchym Ondřej.

From the following generations the library was expanded by Přemek II of Zierotin (1590–1652) and his son with the same name Přemek III (1629–1673). We lack solid evidence of their activities, except the works of Diomede Pulaccio, *Conceptum praedicabilium...* Olomouc 1667 (there are two copies in the library), whose translator – Ritter von Knilling dedicated them to Přemek III. Přemek III's son, Maxmilián František (†1706) left evidence on several Baroque prints – his signatures<sup>8</sup>.

In the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, early Baroque cabinets which were built for the library had closable latticed doors. They represent the ideal library cabinets even today. Such cabinets met the requirements of protection against thieves and at the same time they are not airlocked – the air has necessary access to books. It furthermore enables visitor's visibility to the books.

Zierotins managed to retain their non-catholic religion long after the defeat of the Estate rebellion in 1620. In 1652 they were given a three month period to convert to catholicism. Přemek III was forced to accept these terms.

6 *Literary of Czech and Slovak prints from early days until the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century*, Prague 1939–1965. Nr. 2964.

7 Constantin von WURZBACH, *Biographisches Lexikon des Kaiserthums Oesterreich*, Wien 1875, vol. 30, p. 111.

8 Bohumír LIFKA, *Library of Zierotin-Lilgenav frol Velké Losinya and Bludov*, In: *Anthology of National museum*, row C, 1958, vol. III., No. 3–4, p. 48/.

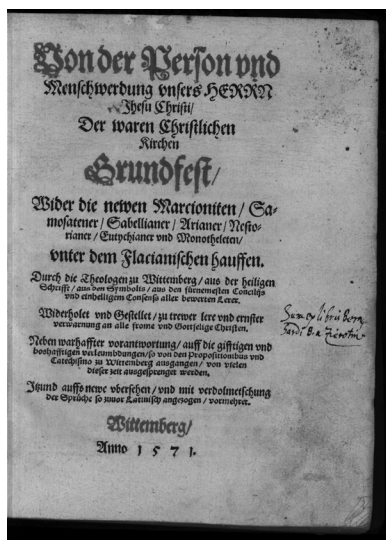
Jan Jáchym of Zierotin (1666–1716) expressed a huge interest in the library, a successful bailiff and first earl of Zierotin who had the library catalogue produced. For aesthetic reasons he changed the appearance of the collection in particular, he had the spines of many of the books painted black and the remainder were bound to the white leather, and some of them were perhaps even golden engraved. The colour rows were alternating. The earl was probably inspired by some of the Italian monasteries. However



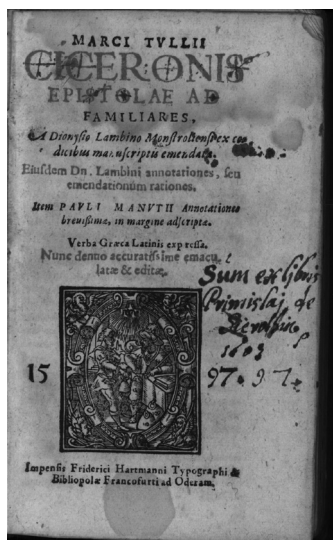
Die Bücherschränke

this led to the completely unfounded legend that the black ones were (as a warning) painted for all non-catholic, prohibited books, and white books were the catholic „permitted” books. At first sight the book spines colour does not match this concept and the confessional matter did not influence the colour. The „harmless” books such as the ones written by Antique authors have black spines as well as books written by church fathers. At the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century the library contained about 1 000 books. The interior, cabinets, colour scheme of the spines and other aspects such as the „reading wheel” mentioned by the old library catalogue created both an aesthetic and practical complex.

During Jan Jáchym's lifetime there were the famous „witch” processes in Velké Losiny. The inquisition court was led by unqualified lawyer, František Jindřich Boblig of Edelstadt. He was famous for his manic zeal. The dreary result of his operation was 56 innocent victims from Losiny Estate and several dozens from nearby Šumperk. It was the only case of such scale. Jan Jáchym was an under-age orphan at the time and had no influence on the process. The library keeps information about the



Unterschrift von Bernard von Zierotin  
(† 1615)



Unterschrift von Přemysl von  
Zierotin

processes in the contemporary manuscript "Inquisitionen – acta und gerichtlicher ordentlicher process über gewisse zauberische persohnen" where inquisitors reports can be found. The manuscript is not only a report of single interrogations, but a complex literary processing of the trial.

In 1802 Ludvik Antonin of Zierotin (1722/1723–1808) sold the chateau in Velké Losiny and the whole estate to guardians of Karel of Liechtenstein<sup>9</sup>. The library as well as other precious collections were moved to another family chateau Bludov. The library shares the fate of Bludov from that time. After 1948 when the Bludov chateau was confiscated, the Zierotin library was reinstalled in the interior of Velké Losiny. After 1989 the property was returned to its rightful owners and they decided not to claim the library. Currently it is a part of a visitor route of the Renaissance chateau.

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Castles, chateaux and fortresses in Czech, Moravia and Silesia, Prague 1983, vol. II p. 265.

Today the total number of volumes in Bludov library is more than 12000, of which there are 250 manuscripts, 8 incunabula, more than 200 prints from 16<sup>th</sup> century and over 500 prints issued until the end of 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The collection of manuscripts in Zierotin library was elaborated thoroughly in the past<sup>10</sup>. In addition to the already mentioned „witch protocols” there are other interesting pieces in the collection. For example a narrative manuscript by Octavianus Strady (1550–1615) who was a court antiquarian of Rudolf II the Emperor. The manuscript is called “*Simbola Illvstrivm virorum ac mulierum*” and contains 140 sheets with drawn characteristic symbols of significant historical personalities, mainly popes and Roman emperors including several variations of Rudolf II. This manuscript has several copies in other libraries, however the Zierotin copy is the most comprehensive and probably the oldest one.

The library keeps a very valuable manuscript from the music department, Samuel Marechal, *Les pseumes de David en tablature sur l'espinete* from 1593<sup>11</sup>. This manuscript belonged to Ladislav Velen of Zierotina (1581–after 1637) however we do not know how this piece found its way to the Zierotin library.

Zierotins incunables represent a collection of eight issues in the seven volumes. The oldest is „*Scriptores historiae Augustae*” issued by Bonus Accursius. Printed in Milan in 1475. A rare incunable is the second oldest work „*Vocabulatus iuris utriusque*” printed in Spyr by Petr Drach around the year 1477. It is worth mentioning the Lucius Annaeus Senecas’ *Tragoediae* from the mid 80s printed in the Italian Ferrara. These incunables are mostly without any illuminations, simple, in classic wooden or leather binds with the black spines. Some of the books originate from the religious fathers of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, such as

10 František ČÁDA–Miroslav BOHÁČEK, *Zierotin manuscripts of Bludov*, In: Anthology of National Museum, row C, 1958, vol. III, 3–4.

11 Marie KUČEROVÁ, *La tablature d'espINETTE de Samuel Mareschal*, In: Revue Musicale de Suisse romande. N. 2, Juin 1986, 39 année, 71–81.

saint Augusting. These newer incunables are more narrative, with the initials decorated with the plant tendrils.

The Library contains 207 prints from the 16<sup>th</sup> century (including the track volume additions) that are 90% in Latin, the rest is in German and two books in Czech. The content is 70% religion, 12% based on the works of antic authors, 8% law and 10% other topics. Many are protestant commented editions of the biblical books by the german reform theologists, for example Caspar Cruciger, *In Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos scriptam commentarius*, Witebergae 1567, or Victorinus Strigelius, *Conciones Ieremiae prophetae ad Ebraicam veritatem recognitae, et argumentis*, Lipsiae 1565.

Comments by this author are very frequent and similar to the comments by Martin Luther, for example *In Cantica Canticorum* Witenbergae, 1539. Moreover numerous are protestant theological tracts e.g. Johann Brenz, *Apologia Confesionis*, Francofurti 1557. Attention was furthermore given to contemporary european authors, naturally D. Erasmus and P. Melanchthon, their works are widely present in the Zierotin's library. Minor protestant prints are often concentrated to the track volume. Apart from the reformation authors, we may encounter the works of other religious fathers, for example saint Augustin's Aurelius, *Principilium sententiarum in explanationem libri Psalmorum*, Lugduni 1519. Naturally the editions of biblical books are also present, including the Unity of Brethren's Bible of Kralice from 1596. A big portion of the books were printed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century in Sachsen cities, Wittenberg and Leipzig and in swiss cities Basel and Zurich. Another group of books from the 16<sup>th</sup> century forms editions of the antic authors e.g. Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Epistolae ad familiares*, Francofurti ad Oderam 1597 or Isocrates, *Opera*, Basileae 1555. The law books are represented by the parts of Codex juris civilis by the emperor Justinian and by comments of Giasono del Maino.

From other fields, there are contemporary secular texts present by Conrad Gesner, *Thierbuch*, Zürich 1583 and Georg Ruxner, *Thurnierbuch*, Siemern, 1532. There is also an interesting track volume of four pieces by Johann de Sacrobosco, the English medieval mathematician and astronomist.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the content of the library changed in all aspects. Originally predominant Latin forms only a 33% and stands behind the German (46%), followed by French (13%), Italian (8%). Further languages, Czech (3 books), Spanish (2 books) and English (1 book) are rare. Most of the books were issued in German cities, mostly in Nurnberg, Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig, then in Vienna and Paris. Smaller numbers in Prague, Cologne, Strasbourgh, Amsterdam, Venice and Augsburg, Rome, Lyon and Ulm and previously most often present Witenberg and Basel are only rarely found.

The content of the library in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was obviously more varied, there is about 25% of religious texts, 17% is devoted to history, 15% are law books, 7% are political books and 6% deals with geography and knowledge of the contemporary world. The same percentage equates to work of Antique writers and the whole quarter of books is devoted to other fields.

From the 17<sup>th</sup> century preachings by the protestant priest Gregorius Strigenitius can be found, but later the reform works are completely absent and are replaced by the catholic works, sometimes even anti-lutheran, for example a track volume of the polemical works by Johannes Scheffler who was originally a protestant, but later converted to catholicism. Occasionally we may encounter works related to the marian topics for example *Atlas Marianus* by Guilielmus Gumpennberg. Furthermore the works of the Czech patriotic jezuit and historian Bohuslav Balbin are commonly found, for example *Diva Wartensis, oder Ursprung und Mirackel*. Moreover works of the religious fathers, for example the saint Augustin and Thomas Aquinas are present.

Historical works are dedicated to the history of the european stats, for example Alessandro Maria Vianola, *Historia Veneta*, Venetia 1680 nebo Ferenc Nádasdy, *De monarchia et sacra corona regni Hungariae centuriae septem...*, Francofurti 1659. We may frequently encounter the history of the kings and monarchical dynasties, for example. Johann Christin Beer, *Der Herzogen und Königen in Böhmen Leben, Regierung und Absterben*, Nürnberg 1685 nebo Johann Jacob Fugger, *Spiegel der Ehren*



*des höchslöblichen Kayser- und Königlichen Erzhauses Oesterreich... Nürnberg 1668.*

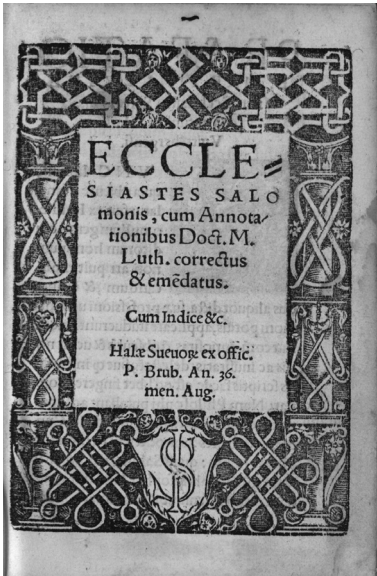
The most common legal books are written by Johann Jakob von Weingarten, e.g. *Prodromus redivivus speculi judicum, seu trifolium per quod judicibus justitia, prudentis, et Concordia...*, Vetro-Pragae 1690 and *Panoplia judicialis in se continens sententias...* Norimbergae 1696.

The political books are represented for example by Giulio Belli (=Philippus Honorius), *Praxis prudentiae politica...* Francofurti 1611 and Christian Weise, *Politischer Redner, das ist kurtze und eigentliche Nachricht wie ein... Hofmeister seine Untergebene zu der Wolredenheit aufführen soll*, Leipzig 1691. Only several books deal with military topic, e.g. Johann Sebastian Gruber, *Die heutige Kriegs-Disciplin...* Augspurg 1697.

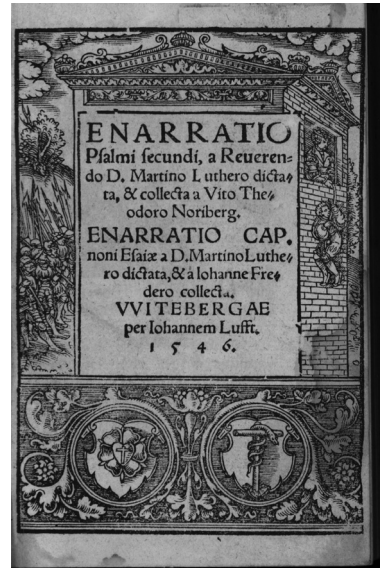
The creators of the library tried to obtain information about the world, from these works we can mention for example *Galliae sive Franciae Geographica descriptio Frankreich nit Angräntzen den Königreichen, Ländern und Provinzien*, Augspurg, cca 1700 nebo Benjamin Olitsch, *Ost Indische Reise- Beschreibung oder Diarium...*, Leipzig 1690. Higher attraction caused Turkey for example Stephan Gerlach, *Tag-Buch einer in die Türckey 6jährigen röm. kayserl. Gesandtschaft...* Franckfurth am Mayn, 1674 nebo Johann Scheffler (=Angelus Silesius), *Türken-Schrifft von den Ursachen der türckischen Überziehungen und der Zerthretung dess Völkes Gottes...* Bresslau, 1664.

Among antique works we may come across favourite authors such as Ovidius, Cícero or Caesar. There is an interesting collection of Italian theater literature issued at the end of the century in Vienna here.

From other fields there are few works about botany, gardening, numismatics, riding, equine medicine, mathematics, architecture, astrology and firework art. Only a few pieces are devoted to belletrist and poetry, e.g. Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, Venetia 1630 and Miguel Cervantes, *Don Quixote von Mancha*, Basel 1683. The collection also contains foreign language dictionaries and textbooks.



Tittelblatt von M. Luther:  
IN CANTICA CANTICORUM,  
brevis, sed admodum dilucida enarratio.  
WITENBERGAE, 1539.



Tittelblatt von M. Luther: ENARRATIO  
PSALMORUM LI. MISERERE MEI  
DEUS, ARGENTORATI 1539.

At first sight it is evident that during the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Zierotin library changed radically. The transformation was occurred not only due to religious conversion, but mainly due to new purposes of the library. The owners needed to gain the knowledge of the current world, about new geographic and scientific development.

LES BIBLIOTHÈQUES ET L'ÉCONOMIE DES CONNAISSANCES  
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1450–1850

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Volume VIII

École pratique des hautes études, Paris  
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Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Könyvtár és Információs Központ  
Budapest  
2020

Mise en page

Viktória Vas

ISBN 978-963-7451-57-7

[DOI 10.36820/SAROSPATAK.2020](https://doi.org/10.36820/SAROSPATAK.2020)

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