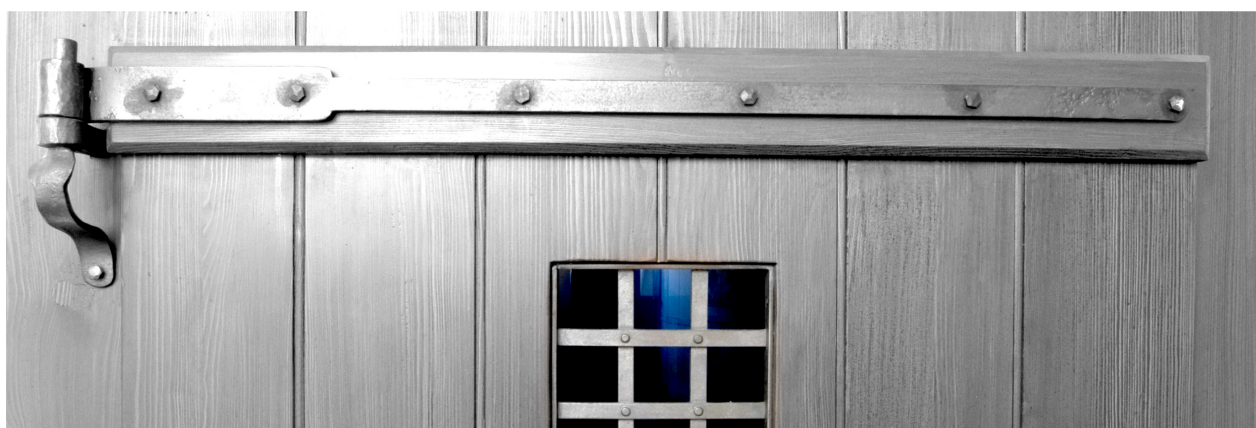


The Prison of Nations

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Špilberk - The Prison of Nations

This exhibition acquaints visitors with a chapter in the history of Špilberk Castle that made it famous throughout Europe - its era as the legendary prison of the Habsburg Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. People whose only crime was seeking to unite their country and create their own nation endured a hard fate inside these walls, alongside real criminals.

The most famous of these 19th century political prisoners were the "Hungarian Jacobins" (members of the Hungarian independence movement), Italian patriots and Polish revolutionaries. The writer Ferenc Kazinczy, the founder of modern Hungarian literature, and the Italian poet Silvio Pellico have become symbols of this struggle.

The tragic era of the Nazi occupation is recalled here as well. For a period of more than a year Špilberk served as the prison of the Brno Gestapo, and it was from here that Czech patriots were sent on to concentration camps and penitentiaries, or to face execution.

The items displayed here documenting daily life, diet and health in the prison, as well as the work done by inmates and the articles they produced, are certain to be of interest. Life-size models of the cells of 19th century prisoners enable the visitor to form an idea of what their life was like. The Silvio Pellico Memorial Cell is sure to make a great impression on Italian visitors in particular. The Italian poet's book "My Prisons" (1832) first acquainted the European public with the reality of how the Habsburg monarchy punished its political opponents.

Today thousands of visitors from all over the world come here to pay honor to man's struggle for a more just society, acting in the spirit of these words written in 1843 by the Italian poet Gioberti: "Špilberk shall not remain a living hell and the shame of our century. It will become a memorial to the martyr's love for his country, a place where later generations of the free will gather."

Room 1

panel 1

Špilberk Castle played an important role in Brno's successful defense against the Swedish army in 1645. It made the city the most important stronghold in the province of Moravia after the middle of the 17th century.

Brno's Baroque fortifications and Špilberk Castle as they appeared in 1700, rendered by the prominent Brno engraver J. C. Laidig.

Špilberk and Old Brno viewed from the south; a brass engraving by Martin Engelbrecht from the first half of the 18th century.

The Špilberk citadel viewed from the northeast. Around 1700.

Pierre Philippe de Bechade de Rochepine, an important builder of fortresses, provincial engineer in Moravia and designer of the final phase of Baroque fortifications for Brno and Špilberk.

The Baroque-era fortification of Špilberk and Brno, under the direction of Colonel de Rochepine, had nearly been completed (including the Špilberk casemates) when Brno was besieged by the Prussians for a short time in 1742.

panel 2

Špilberk - from provincial fortress to state prison.

Špilberk was originally a royal castle, and became the most important military fortification in Moravia after the middle of the 17th century. It was also occasionally used for prison purposes before the 18th century, with such use becoming regular thereafter. After the fortress was abolished in 1820, it served exclusively as a large state prison for a period of 35 years.

The Brno provincial fortress with the Špilberk citadel at the beginning of the Seven Years' War in 1757.

panel 3

In 1783, following the abolition of the military prison, Emperor Joseph II decided to establish a civilian prison at Špilberk, intended for the severest offenders. He ordered that several older prison buildings in the rear moat of the fortress be modified for this purpose, as well as the casemates, which originally served to shelter the garrison's personnel, equipment and supplies.

Plan for conversion of the casemates for prison purposes, 1784.

The casemates received their first inmates at the beginning of July 1784.

On November 6, 1783 all 31 prisoners of the abolished military prison at Špilberk were transferred from the administration of the military commander there and placed under civilian control.

The Špilberk jailer Semann's first "weekly line-up".

Less than two years later there were already 154 convicts in the Špilberk casemates and the original prison buildings, with 7 female convicts in the separate women's prison in the "hornverk". According to this report by head jailer Sturm, there was still room for 103 male and 49 female prisoners at Špilberk.

panel 4

The prison building in the rear moat of the fortress, as shown on an original plan from 1725.

Plan for modification of the upper floor of this building around 1800.

Various prison operations were gradually established here, including a hospital, workshops and storerooms.

As a result of the growing number of prisoners from Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and, especially, Polish Galicia, the ground-level barracks building on the north side of the fortress was made available for prison use in 1800. An upper floor was added, and other building modifications continued over the following years. The cells on the upper floor were designated for so-called state prisoners. Plan from 1809.

The fortified outpost at the foot of Špilberk Hill, called the "hornverk", was converted into a detached prison for women in 1784.

A new prison kitchen was established on the lower level of the southern casemates in 1809. The guard room for the upper, prison level was located above it.

panel 5

The French army of Emperor Napoleon occupied Špilberk for a short time in 1809. On his orders they destroyed some important parts of the fortifications, including the arsenal building and several fortified gates, along with portions of the outer walls, on their departure. Špilberk thus lost its former military significance.

display case

Objects found during reconstruction of the Špilberk National Landmark Site.

A set of items for daily use walled up in the eastern wall of the castle during one of its reconstructions after 1721.

panel 6

The well at Špilberk Castle supplied both the fortress and the prison with water. Between 1714 and 1717 it was deepened from not quite 40 meters to 114 meters. French soldiers blocked up the well in 1809. This plan was made after the well was cleaned out in 1811.

The well and its pumping device - a treadwheel - were covered by a thick vaulting roof, as was the nearby cistern.

Drawing from a small plan of the Špilberk fortifications, 1745.

Convicts were enlisted to pump water using the treadwheel. According to an October 1783 report by the commander of Špilberk fortress, Colonel Garay, eight men were required daily to tread the wheel.

The commander required a further 12 men for ordinary clean-up work at the fortress. The remaining prisoners were used for other kinds of work, both at the fortress and outside it.

panel 7

In 1820 Špilberk officially ceased to function as a military fortress, and changed entirely into a civilian prison. It was substantially rebuilt for this purpose during the 1830s. In 1855, however, Špilberk prison was abolished by Emperor Franz Joseph I.

In 1821 a drainage ditch leading down the southern slope of Špilberk Hill, from the castle's front moat to Pekařská Street, was built to serve the needs of the expanded prison facility.

Plan of Špilberk prison from 1842. The colors distinguish older parts - the eastern and northern wings - from the entirely new ones built in the 1830s (southern and western wings, central section).

After the prison was abolished, the last inmates left Špilberk during the year 1857. A record of the transfer of the legendary prisoner Václav Babinský to Kartouzy near Jičín, taken from the Basic Register of Špilberk Prisoners.

key to plan

Špilberk Fortress (after 1750)

1. Fortress commander's quarters
2. Barracks from 1754-56
 - a) southern wing
 - b) western wing
 - c) northern wing - upper floor added and converted to prison in 1800
3. Flat roof with airshaft over the northern casemates
4. Old prison building in the rear moat
5. Chapel
6. Arsenal (destroyed by the French, 1809)
7. Northeastern and southeastern fortified gates (destroyed 1809)
8. Castle well
9. Cistern
10. Lower well
11. Powder magazine
12. "Hornverk" - adapted into women's prison in 1784
13. Brno Gate
14. Pekařská Street
15. Švábská Street (today Údolní Street)

The Prison of Nations

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Room 2

panel 1

Špilberk prison was always rightfully considered the hardest prison in the entire Habsburg Empire. Its history reflects the evolution of law, justice and penology in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Constitutio Criminalis Theresiana (1768)

Torture, i.e. physical duress applied with the aim of obtaining a confession, became the chief and decisive form of evidence. Precise regulations for torture were defined for the first time - its degrees, technical conditions and period of duration. Torture was divided into five degrees:

1. Binding of the hands
2. Thumbscrews
3. The "Spanish Boot"
4. "Dry" torture on the rack
5. Torture with fire

No one degree was to last longer than 15 minutes, and the entire period of torture was not to exceed one hour. It was assumed at the outset that the accused was guilty and had to prove his innocence himself. Torture was already considered a relic at the time the Theresian Code was issued, and its use was outlawed in 1776. Punishment had the character of an act of revenge against the condemned: the convicted offender was to repay the damage he had caused to an individual or society. Punishment was very cruel and complicated, and was meant to deter people from committing crimes.

panel 2

January 3, 1776

Introductory part of letters patent abolishing torture.

panel 3

The reforms introduced by Emperor Joseph II (reigned 1780 - 1790) substantially affected justice and penology as well. A number of court decrees and rescripts preceded the issue of his criminal code. Some of these also concerned Špilberk, which the emperor visited in person several times. Špilberk became the most severe prison in the empire by the emperor's own orders.

July 15, 1783

In a court decree, Emperor Joseph II orders that convicts sentenced to labor and imprisonment at the fortress are to be transferred from military control to civil administration. The military authorities at Špilberk were to yield "unneeded dark cells" to the prisoners. Part of the fortress thus passed under the administration of the Moravian-Silesian government and court of appeal.

September 1, 1783

In a further court decree, the emperor orders that convicts sentenced to life imprisonment and other especially dangerous criminals are to be imprisoned at the Špilberk and Graz fortresses.

October 3, 1783

Governor Cavriani informs the appellate court in Brno that the emperor has ordered the military authorities to adapt dark cells and vacated casemates for prison purposes.

September 4, 1784

After making a personal visit to Špilberk, Emperor Joseph II decided that criminals sentenced to life imprisonment were to be moved to the "deepest and worst casemates" and chained to wooden cells similar to those used in Graz.

The basic method of chaining up inmates sentenced to life imprisonment.

General Law on Crime and Punishment (1787)

The chief attributes of the code were its conciseness and completeness. For the first time a principle of proportionality between the danger posed to society by the criminal act and its subsequent punishment was applied. Punishment was no longer a form of revenge, but was to serve the offender's re-education. The principles "nullum crimen sine lege" ("no crime without law") and "nulla poena sine lege" ("no punishment without law") were made use of for the first time. Court procedures were to be carried out secretly and in writing, and the sentencing court was to be composed exclusively of experts. In place of torture, an accused person who denied his guilt was to be punished for contempt of court (by beating - up to 100 blows over 14 days). The death sentence was eliminated (except in states of emergency). In 1795, under the influence of the French Revolution, the death sentence was re-introduced in the empire for cases of treason or attempted treason.

panel 4

The General Code of Criminal Justice, issued in 1788, directly specifies which criminals are to be imprisoned at Špilberk and Graz prisons (paragraphs 187 - 189).

May 6, 1784

Czech copy of a verdict by the appellate court in Brno, sentencing the robber Ondřej Laštůvka to an additional six years of imprisonment "in irons and fetters", and further sharpening his punishment by 20 lashes of the whip twice a year.

April 28, 1787

Jan Střešňák was sentenced to have the gallows branded on both his cheeks and serve life imprisonment at Špilberk for attempted murder, highway robbery and theft. His accomplice, Jiří Jaroušek, was sentenced to 20 years of "Špilberk labor" and 30 lashes of the whip on the anniversary of his crime.

display case 1

Collar with the so-called "pear", placed in the mouth of an offender as he stood in the stocks so that he could not make inflammatory remarks.

Cord for binding the hands.

Bundle of candles for use in torture with fire on the rack.

Branding irons with the symbols of capital justice, the gallows and the wheel.

Gouging implements. The letter "R" stands for "Relegatus", i.e. sentenced to banishment. The offender was usually marked on his cheek or shoulder.

display case 2

Items of capital justice used up until 1776 in the torture chamber at the Old Town Hall in Brno. They were donated to the museum collections one hundred years later by the Brno city council.

Thumbscrew

Executioner's sword

Bone and joint crushers

Spanish Boot

Pan for heating up torture instruments.

Pliers

Stone weights bound to the feet during torture on the wheel.

panel 5

May 14, 1790

Draft of a resolution by the Moravian-Silesian government informing the Špilberk head jailer, the Brno town authorities and the regional administrators of the contents of the imperial decree. As a consequence of this decree, the use of wooden cells and chains for prisoners serving a life sentence on the lower level of the casemates was abolished, and these inmates were now placed among the other prisoners on the upper level of casemates.

Beginning in the first half of May 1790, only the upper levels of the casemates were used for prison purposes, and these were successively reconstructed. Among the slight improvements in conditions was the more extensive use of airshafts. Plan for further modifications from 1809.

Leopold II (reigned 1790-1792)

The new emperor began making changes in the area of justice - including penology - shortly after his ascent to the throne. His decree of May 10, 1790 altered the harshest provisions of the criminal code and other regulations issued by his brother and predecessor, Joseph II. It abolished several cruel punishments, in particular towing boats, branding, and the chaining up of convicts sentenced to life imprisonment. It also did away with the public beating of condemned criminals. The decree also substantially alleviated prison conditions, primarily by forbidding confinement in badly-ventilated areas without access to daylight. Hot food was now to be provided even to prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment, who had formerly been kept alive on bread and water alone. These measures changed life in Špilberk prison considerably.

panel 6

Law on Crimes and Severe Public Offenses (1803)

This code was outstanding for the preciseness of its formulations and the clarity of its arrangement. The criminal intent of the offender was required as a precondition of the criminal act, and responsibility for a crime was ruled out in cases of insanity (temporary or permanent), insufficient age (under 14 years), chance occurrence or negligence. Ignorance of the law, however, was unacceptable as an excuse. Punishment by imprisonment could be made more severe by forced labor, exhibition in the stocks, beating with a stick or birch rod, fasting, or banishment after the sentence had been served out. In practice, the code remained valid in this country until 1949, since the 1852 law was merely an amended version of the 1803 code. The code was in two parts, the first concerning felonies and the second misdemeanors. All the Italian patriots and Polish revolutionaries imprisoned at Špilberk between 1822 and 1848 were sentenced for the crime of high treason according to this law.

May 29, 1823

Muster sheet of the military guard designated for external protection of Špilberk prison.

panel 7

A thorough inspection of prison conditions in the Austrian monarchy preceded the issuing of the new criminal code.

A report on Špilberk prison from 1851 lists a total of 401 criminal offenders, mentioning a further four political convicts in a note. At that time the prison authorities continually opposed demands for an increase in the number of prisoners, pointing out the poor and completely unsuitable condition of the prison facilities here.

Criminal Law No. 117 of the Imperial Code (1852)

The chief attributes of this law were its accurate and concise formulation, its grading of offenses according to the danger to society involved, and its precise stipulation of punishments. It still contained several relics of feudal criminal law, particularly in the paragraphs concerning protection of the emperor and his family. For instance, a physical attack on the emperor was an act of high treason punishable by death, while a verbal attack ("insulting His Majesty") was punishable by one to five years in prison.

The sharpening of sentences by means of beating and fettering also remained; physical punishment, including fettering, was abolished only in 1867 by Law No. 121 of the Imperial Code. The code distinguished between felonies, misdemeanors and, for the first time, petty misdemeanors as well.

panel 8

The new criminal law of 1852 was also accompanied by a modification in the way prison sentences were carried out. They were now to be served exclusively in regional facilities, some of which exist to this day.

on the wall

Anonymous: Scenes from the Torture Chamber, paintings on tin, 18th century

The Prison of Nations

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Room 3

panel 1

The majority of the prisoners at Špilberk were real criminals. Work became part of the re-education of all offenders and their preparation for life after their release from prison; its proceeds also covered the prison's expenses. Work was no longer considered the chief form of punishment - rather, this was now the restriction of personal freedom - but was meant to prevent the "gradual bodily and moral degeneration" of the prisoners.

While at first the washing was done by a laundress in the town, this was later one of the tasks assigned to female convicts at Špilberk. A bill for the washing of 120 items of clothing in June 1786.

November 23, 1799

Cyril Johann Riedel, the owner of a drapery and rug factory in Bruntál, submits a bill for the delivery of 100 blankets for Špilberk prisoners.

Plan for the founding of a laundry in the women's section of the prison (ground plan and cross-section).

October 29, 1827

Report by chief prison head Smrczek on the work done by Italian *carbonari* during the past year: sewing socks, tearing up old cloth and chopping wood.

The men worked on rebuilding and repairing the buildings, outer walls and courtyards, and were also sent to work outside the prison. After 1781 it was possible to receive a partial wage, which was given to the prisoner upon his release.

June 5, 1799

Statement of accounts for work done by 15 Špilberk prisoners on the building of a canal in Vienna. Prisoner no. 3 had just been released, and took an amount of 9 guilders and 20 crowns away with him.

Reconstruction of a criminal convict's daily routine in 1829, based on archive sources.

Daily routine of a criminal convict at Špilberk prison during the winter period (October - March).

Morning:

6:00 a.m.: The beating of a drum tells prisoners that they are to get out of bed, wash, comb their hair and get dressed. Afterwards they sit on their beds awaiting morning inspection, including examination of their cells and fetters. They kneel and say their morning prayers.

7:00 a.m.: The drum signals the start of work. Under guard, the prisoners are released from their cells and led to their place of work. Everything is done so that work can begin at half past seven.

10:30 a.m.: The drum announces that it is time to eat. The prisoners are searched again, which lasts until eleven. Then the food is distributed. Eating ends at

noon. Under guard, the prisoners leave in groups for their designated places, taking a breather as they walk.

Afternoon:

1:00 p.m.: At the sound of the drum work continues as in the morning.

4:30 p.m.: The beating of the drum announces the return from work, carried out according to set rules. Accompanied by a guard, the prisoners assemble in the moat, where they are assigned their following day's work.

5:30 p.m.: Evening inspection of cells and fetters, evening prayers.

9:00 p.m.: The prisoners lie down to sleep.

During the summer period (April - September) the entire routine was shifted forward by one hour. The time period from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. was still maintained. Prisoners returned from work at 5:30 p.m. In the case of political prisoners, the time designated for work was also used for walks.

Špilberk prison gradually became self-sufficient, with its own labor force not only ensuring all its needs but also manufacturing prison uniforms, blankets and other supplies for other Moravian correctional facilities as well. Plan of the spinning shops, 1814.

panel 2

The archive sources record only exceptional occurrences among criminal offenders, deviating from the ordinary prison routine.

March 22, 1786

A report in Czech concerning the circumstances in which female inmate Veronika Pešková became pregnant. This occurred while she was still being held in the municipal jail in Uherské Hradiště, and the father of her child was a prisoner who was working there as a cook. The boy was born on July 13, 1786, baptized in the Špilberk chapel and handed over to the Brno foundling hospital. The mother came through childbirth in good health, as her name continued to appear afterwards on the prison records.

July 1, 1786

The weekly report announced the first death of a woman imprisoned in the "hornverk", Barbora Greslová, as well as the death of a male prisoner. The names of dead or sick prisoners was accompanied by the name of their illness as well. Veronika Pešková, still in childbed, was given a separate cell.

The first record in the Basic Register of Špilberk Prisoners, the primary prison document, gives the name of 28-year-old Brigita Oulehlová, sentenced to fifty years' penal servitude for theft and three counts of infanticide. She was pardoned after 20 years and released on July 3, 1822.

A guide to the argot used by Czech robber bands, compiled by the authorities in 1802 for use in investigations.

August 4, 1817

A description of the prisoners who escaped from Špilberk on the night of July 30, 1817. Most of them were apprehended while committing further crimes and brought back to prison by 1820.

Plan of the Špilberk drainage canal leading to Pekařská Street, which the prisoners used in their escape. More often, however, inmates attempted escape while working outside the prison, as they could then more easily hide and get rid of their fetters and prison outfits.

panel 3

The Basic Register of Špilberk Prisoners contains the names not only of ruthless criminals, but also of unfortunate persons who gave in to momentary human weakness.

In 1817 Tomáš Grasl, father of the legendary Jan Jiří Grasl, began his life sentence at Špilberk, together with an accomplice. He died here on September 17, 1835, at the age of 72. The word "grázl", taken from the family name, is still used by people on both sides of the Moravian-Austrian border to denote a bad character.

November 8, 1815

Announcement by the regional authorities in Brno of the hunt for Jan Jiří Grasl, leader of a well-known band of thieves and robbers, offering a reward for his capture.

On the night of September 3, 1850, Filip Smutný, a butcher from Habrovany near Vyškov, murdered his wife and three young daughters. In court Smutný explained the motive of his crime: his wife had reproached him for having an affair with a housemaid. He then killed his daughters, because he knew that he would be executed for his deed, and did not want to leave them all alone in the world without parents. As expected, the court issued the death sentence in the Smutný case. The emperor's clemency reduced his sentence to 20 years of penal servitude at Špilberk, where he was admitted in January 1851. He became seriously ill in prison and died on June 20, 1857.

Smutný's crime became the subject of broadside ballads, which told the tragic story of a marriage destroyed by "the sin of fornication". The maid, who was the cause of the entire misfortune, reportedly bought up the broadsheets and destroyed them.

Jan Jiří Grasl (center) was publicly executed in Vienna on January 31, 1818, together with his accomplices Jakub Fährding and Ignác Stangel.

panel 4

The robber Václav Babinský became a true legend of Špilberk prison.

Václav Babinský

born August 20, 1796 in Pokratice near Litoměřice

died August 1, 1879 in Řepy near Prague

After being released from prison, Babinský gradually lost his shame. He liked to be photographed in a black suit and tie like a respectable citizen.

Entry from the Basic Register of Špilberk Prisoners. Babinský was admitted to Špilberk on June 10, 1841 to serve a sentence of 20 years' penal servitude for robbery, violent

conduct and complicity in fraud. He was described here as a very dangerous individual, cunning and resourceful, who had attempted escape twice already.

Crimes which Václav Babinský was accused of before the Prague Criminal Court:

1. Robbery of tax office in Dětenice, October 1827 (unanimously cleared of guilt)
2. Murder of Václav Domin near Skramouš, September 17, 1830 (unanimously cleared of guilt)
3. Robbery of Anna Krouská in Brodce on the night of May 30, 1831 (unanimously cleared of guilt)
4. Robbery and murder of Stránský and his wife in Mankovice on the night of Oct. 8, 1833 (unanimously cleared of guilt)
5. Damaging a vehicle near Upeřiny, October 16, 1833 (unanimously cleared of guilt)
6. Reported robberies in Brno and at a mill on the Bohemian-Saxon border (unanimously cleared of guilt)
7. Robbery of the retired farmer Heine in Mikulášovice on the night of March 23, 1830 (judged guilty by nine voices)
8. Robbery of the ferryman Krejza in Brozany on the night of January 14, 1831 (judged guilty by nine voices)
9. Robbery of the pensioner Jan Paul in Lysá nad Labem on the night of May 1, 1830 (judged guilty by seven voices)
10. Robbery and murder of Jan Blumberg in Horní Kamenice on the night of July 4, 1833 (unanimously found guilty)
11. Violent behavior during his arrest in Kuří Vody, January 19, 1830 (unanimously found guilty)
12. Falsifying travel papers (using the names Josef Schmidt and Antonín Müller) (unanimously found guilty)

The proceedings of the Prague Criminal Court went on at great length. Babinský either denied the charges or else kept silent. Several of the judges remained unconvinced of his guilt up to the very last moment. Sentence was passed by the court of appeals on May 4, 1841.

After his release from Kartouzy near Jičín, where he served out the rest of his sentence following the abolition of Špilberk prison, Babinský worked as a gardener in the women's penitentiary in Řepy near Prague.

Babinský's grave may still be found in the old cemetery in Řepy.

Title page of the autobiography of Countess Albertina Coudenhove, sister of charity and head of the monastery in Řepy. In the tenth chapter of her book she mentions an old gardener, Babinský, who complained of how rotten the world was when strawberries were stolen from his garden...

One of the many ballads about Babinský, called "Babinský is Alive".

Babinský was even said to have bought copies of these songs, so that he could keep on telling the stories he read about himself in his favorite Prague taverns. He thus helped to create the false legend of a robber who took from the rich and gave to the poor.

panel 5

Baron Trenck was one of the most famous Špilberk inmates.

Franz Freiherr von Trenck

born January 1, 1711 in Reggio

died October 4, 1749 in Špilberk prison

The legendary leader of the Pandur regiment, which he formed at his own expense and lent to the service of Empress Maria Theresa. Despite the excellent military results he achieved in the first stage of the War of Austrian Succession (1740 - 1745), his lack of discipline and savagery brought him into conflict with his superiors and the imperial court alike. He was sentenced to life imprisonment at Špilberk for serious military and moral offenses, and died there after one year.

Family tree of the house of Trenck, a family of warrior-aristocrats from eastern Prussia.

The prison building in the rear moat, on the upper floor of which Baron Trenck was confined.

Title page of Baron Trenck's memoirs, which were published during his lifetime.

The Capuchin Monastery in Brno, where Trenck was buried according to his own wishes.

panel 6

The official documents devote great attention to political offenders. Although these prisoners were fewer in number, both the state authorities and the prison administration carefully planned out everything connected with them. These so-called traitors were considered dangerous because of their thoughts and ideals, and it was for attempting to realize them that they had been sent to the harshest prison in the empire.

Prison governor Antonín Bedřich, Count Mitrovský had the most complicated task, in that principles concerning the treatment of "traitors" were still being formulated during his term of duty. The imprisoned *carbonari* appreciated that fact that, even as an exemplary state official, he showed a certain understanding for some of their requests in the areas of hygiene, health and the like.

The supreme general in Moravia, Count Lichtenstein, was responsible for selecting a suitable person from the military staff to serve as head of Špilberk prison.

An example of prison administration, based on the case of Polish prisoner August Náhlik

June 23, 1847

Minister Sedlnický informs Governor Stadion of the arrival of a further group of Poles, whose final sentence was determined by the emperor.

June 30, 1847

The so-called notification table, filled out at the court in Lvov, was sent along with the convict, and he was entered into the Špilberk Basic Register based on the information contained in it.

July 9, 1847

The daily report announces that a further seven traitors were added to the inmate population of Špilberk prison the preceding afternoon. August Náhlík was given prisoner number 40. The new arrivals were assigned cells 24 through 26 on the upper floor.

October 19, 1835

Confirmation that the released Špilberk inmates Longoni and Lobar have been received by the police authorities in Milan.

A released prisoner did not return home on his own, but rather was always accompanied by a member of the Brno police department, who personally handed him over to the local police authorities.

June 7, 1838

Chief prison head Bayer announces the death on June 3 of criminal convict Johann Graf. For years Graf, who was sentenced to life imprisonment, had helped ailing Italian political prisoners. One of them, Count Confalonieri, had given him 10 guilders upon his release, and Graf wanted to use it to buy tobacco. The prisoner died before this unusual case could be handled, and the money went into the prison coffers.

panel 7

Spiritual care for the prisoners was considered an important part of their reform. On Sundays and holidays a priest of the Capuchin order celebrated two masses for ordinary inmates and a special mass for political prisoners. For the latter, there was also a special weekly session of spiritual exercises meant to bring them back within the ranks of "decent citizens".

October 10, 1824

Final statement of accounts and travel expenses for the priest Štěpán Pavlovič's stay in Brno. The mention of a trip to Baden to see the emperor indicates that conjectures about the priest's misuse of information obtained from the prisoners were not without substance. Court chaplain Pavlovič was the first priest chosen directly by Emperor Franz I to serve the spiritual needs of the Italian prisoners.

June 15, 1821

Proclamation by the Moravian-Silesian government, stating that Špilberk chapel is closed to the public.

The Brno bishop was responsible for choosing the most suitable local priest to serve the spiritual needs of political prisoners at Špilberk.

Final part of the text of an oath taken by Vincenc Žák, chaplain of St. Thomas' Church in Brno, upon his assuming the role of spiritual administrator for Špilberk political prisoners, and sent to Governor Inzaghi. The priest swore, among other things, to maintain the secrecy of all matters concerning these prisoners and not to associate with any secret organization, either at home or abroad.

August 18, 1832

Vincenc Žák submits to Governor Inzaghi a list of books recommended for the prisoners' reading. The comment on item no. 14, Robertson's "History of America", is interesting: "This work only goes up to the first half of the last century, and thus does not contain North America's secession from England."

Most of the priests were recalled in the memoirs of Špilberk political prisoners as men who fulfilled their duties with kindness and sympathy for the fate of their charges.

April 21, 1825

Governor Mitrovský denies the priest Pavlovič's request that the playing of the organ be allowed during the reading of the mass to Italian prisoners. Later, when the Polish revolutionaries were confined here, one of them, Jan Andrusikiewicz, was allowed to play the organ.

The priest Baptista Vorthey, frequently recalled in Silvio Pellico's memoirs.

June 6, 1828

Emperor Franz I writes to Governor Inzaghi concerning the matter of a priest for religious duties at the prison.

panel 8

The arrival of political prisoners at Špilberk brought along with it special problems in the area of health. In general the prisoners held up very poorly, while the prison doctor was forced to adhere to a number of security measures and to provide a thorough justification for each of his recommendations for improving the state of the prisoners' health.

June 22, 1799

Bill for medicines from the physician Vincenc Petek. Medicines for use at Špilberk were provided by Brno pharmacies such as The Golden Crown, The Red Lobster and The Black Eagle.

Plan for rebuilding the prison building in the castle's rear moat as a prison hospital. The prisoners were frightened of sick leave, and preferred to return to their cells as soon as possible. This was because they knew that while patients received better food, they also received less of it - the prisoners suffered from hunger.

Dr. Ondřej Morsetig was summoned for consultation in undertaking serious medical procedures.

Excerpts from instructions for the Špilberk doctor assigned to political prisoners (1826)

- The doctor is to carry out all his duties with care and devotion, as befits an educated and well-bred physician and as his profession requires.
- Hours of consultation thrice weekly, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- More frequent consultation hours in extraordinary circumstances; the doctor shall even come at night if danger threatens.

- His work begins at nine o'clock precisely.
- Prisoners who report themselves ill will be examined in a designated place.
- The doctor must see to obtaining all prescribed medicines himself.
- In prescribing diets and other measures he is to bear in mind real needs, so that no unnecessary expenses arise.
- The removal of chains and other relaxations are to be announced to the chief head of the prison, who is acquainted with the decrees of the supreme authorities and the orders of local officials.
- The doctor is forbidden to speak with the prisoners about their former profession or family or personal affairs or about conditions in the prison. Should the prisoner begin to speak about such matters himself, the doctor shall not listen.
- Should serious complications threaten a patient, the doctor shall see to the fulfillment of his religious obligations.
- In the case of a patient's death, the doctor shall see that deceased is transported immediately to the mortuary, and that he is not buried before the expiration of a period of 48 hours. An exception is to be made in the case of hectic and infectious diseases.
- The bed of a deceased prisoner is not to be used again immediately, but must be properly aired, cleaned and washed.

Dr. Karel Arnošt Rincolini (1785 - 1867) served as prison doctor on Cejl Street and at Špilberk.

Title page of a specialist publication in which he drew on his experience in the prisons of Brno.

Prison diseases

Illnesses arising from prison conditions:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| Menostasis | - Women imprisoned over a longer period of time stopped menstruating, and so were prone to epilepsy. Their normal condition returned only after their release. |
| Scurvy | - Caused by a lack of vitamin C. Its symptoms are hemorrhaging in the tissues, swelling, gum disorders. The primary curative aid used was sauerkraut. |
| Ague | - Especially frequent in the autumn months. Its symptom is spotty hemorrhaging on the skin, flatulence is also common. |
| Malaria | - A disease caused by parasites, with alternating fits of ague and fever. |
| Constipation | - Problems with excretion were especially common in prisoners as a result of changes in their living conditions, as well as in cases where work was done sitting down (prisoners working as tailors), etc. Physicians prescribed enemas as a cure. |
| Calf Ulcers | - Especially common in prisoners sentenced for longer periods. |
| Scrofula | - A form of non-pulmonary tuberculosis with inflammation and swelling of the lymph nodes in the throat. Caused by closed, poorly-ventilated spaces and prisoners' neglect in matters of hygiene. |
| Dropsy | - Common among prisoners serving long sentences. Often a cause of death among prisoners at Špilberk. |

Illnesses brought to the prison by prisoners themselves:

- Syphilis: - A disease transmitted through sexual intercourse. In the past it was detected only in its final stage, when damage to the heart, brain or motor apparatus had already occurred.
- Epilepsy - Leads to loss of consciousness accompanied by spasms.
- Dysentery - Caused by prisoners' poor hygiene. Its symptoms are diarrhea, pains in the stomach (colic), fever or ague. The patient had to be isolated immediately; diet was the main component of the cure. Dysentery could even be fatal in patients suffering from poor health or exhaustion.
- Scabies - Another disease typical of places with poor hygienic conditions. Especially widespread among prisoners working with wool. Its symptoms are small red pimples that itch severely. Prisoners afflicted with this disease had to wash their own clothing.
- "Flechten" - General term for asthma, headache, chronic inflammation of the eyes.

Illnesses transmitted by other prisoners. Not often met with by doctors outside of prison practice:

- "Geschwülste" - Suppurating inflammation of subcutaneous tissue.
- "Geschwüre" - Ulcer or malignant tumor.
- "Bluthusten" - Severe coughing up of blood, a symptom appearing in the final stages of pulmonary tuberculosis. Another frequent cause of death among Špilberk inmates.

The Prison of Nations

④



M
M

Room 4

panel 1

The French Revolution marked the beginning of a new epoch in human history. Its ideas of freedom and equality for all called forth enthusiasm and horror alike, and found both devoted advocates and sworn enemies.

The beginning of this new epoch was to be signified as well by a new revolutionary calendar, starting with the proclamation of the Republic of France on September 22, 1793.

May 5, 1789

An omen of revolutionary events - the commencement of the Estates-General in Versailles.

July 14, 1789

The storming of the Bastille, the legendary prison fortress, was the earliest culmination of the revolutionary events in France.

September 14, 1791

The proclamation of the Constitution, based on the ideas of freedom and equality, marked the end of absolute rule by a monarch.

August 10, 1793

Celebration of the passage of the new republican constitution, which brought about the definitive end of royal power.

panel 2

October 6, 1789

The king promised to return from Versailles to Paris along with his entire family.

In June 1791 the royal family attempted to escape from France. Thanks to Jean-Baptiste Drouet, however, they were captured in Varennes on the night of June 21.

The king arrived in Paris on June 25, 1791, greeted by the menacing silence of a crowd of onlookers. His return was seen as the monarchy's funeral procession.

The king's attempt at escape was taken as proof of his ties with the enemies of the revolution, both at home and abroad. Louis XVI - citizen Louis Capet - was sentenced to death by the Convention and executed on January 21, 1793.

After their unsuccessful escape, the royal family was imprisoned in the Temple.

Queen Marie Antoinette, daughter of the Austrian empress Maria Theresa and sister of the emperors Joseph II and Leopold II, in prison before her execution.

The execution of the French queen on October 16, 1793.

panel 3

The events in France also echoed loudly throughout the lands of the Austrian monarchy. They not only caused alarm in government circles, but also led to a number of reactionary measures. One of these was the renewal of the death sentence.

December 18, 1793

Count Botta, supreme general of Moravia, notifies Governor Ugarte of the "danger" posed by the uniform of captured French officers. Their buttons carried "a revolutionary message with the words Liberté et Egalité".

March 2, 1794

List of French military buttons seized from Karl Schweitzer and prepared by Brno police chief Okáč.

July 1, 1793

The writings of Baron Friedrich Trenck, a kinsman of the famous Pandur colonel, were included among those books said to contain ideas dangerous to the Austrian state. Both men met a tragic fate - Franz Trenck died in Špilberk prison in 1749, while Friedrich met his end under the revolutionary guillotine in Paris in 1794.

February 1, 1794

A description of suspicious foreigners, thought to be French emissaries, sent to the Moravian governor.

Friedrich Trenck (1726 - 1794)

An officer in the Prussian army, after the outbreak the second Silesian War he was suspected of having ties with his relative the Austrian Pandur colonel, and was imprisoned in Klodzko fortress. His life, too, was marked by scandals, dramatic turnarounds and adventures. He was imprisoned in Magdeburg from 1754 to 1763. Later, during his stay in Paris, Robespierre had him executed as a suspected secret agent of the Prussian king.

panel 4

An engraving entitled "the wonderful bird of revolution", printed in Moravia in 1793 and subsequently banned.

Even Haydn's song of praise "Gott! Erhalte Franz den Kaiser", which became the Austrian national anthem, was meant to inspire feelings of love and confidence towards the emperor among his subjects.

In 1793 an apprentice in Znojmo reported on his master for making remarks that betrayed a lack of patriotism and respect for the imperial family.

November 2, 1794

A warning to Governor Ugarte from the Vienna authorities about the arrival of French emissaries carrying falsified Swiss passports.

The execution of the French royal couple was made use of in propaganda directed against revolutionary France.

panel 5

Period documents reflect fears about the spread of revolution, and record the severe punishments dealt out to proponents of revolutionary ideas. A considerable number of Frenchmen appeared in Moravia after 1789. Among them were immigrants who had fled the revolution, as well as captured officers of the French revolutionary army and, later, the army of Emperor Napoleon.
Brno around 1800.

July 12, 1800

A notice from the ministry of police in Vienna concerning the émigré French major-general Count de la Ferronnais.

July 24, 1800

Brno police chief Okáč presents Governor Ugarte with a report on the conduct and means of livelihood of Count de la Ferronnais, who had served in the army of Prince de Condé.

July 24, 1800

Personal declaration by Count de la Ferronnais, who at this time was living in Brno as an immigrant.

August 18, 1800

Notice from the ministry of police in Vienna concerning French immigrants living in Brno.

December 30, 1800

Travel papers for a journey to Krakow by the French émigré Count de la Faire, who resided in Brno after February 18, 1799.

A page from a list of foreigners living in Brno in 1800.

panel 6

General Dumouriez, defeated at the Battle of Neerwind, placed himself "under the protection" of the Austrian army. He handed over Convention members Camus, Lemarque, Bancal and Quinett and minister of war Beurnonville, and later Maret, Semonville and Drouet, to the Austrians as hostages. All of them were imprisoned at Špilberk, and were exchanged for the daughter of the executed royal couple, Maria Theresa Charlotte, at the end of 1795.

Jean-Baptiste Drouet (1763 - 1824)

The son of a postmaster from St. Menehould, it was he who recognized the fleeing Louis XVI and took part in his arrest. He was elected a member of the National Convention, where he voted in favor of the king's execution. Drouet was arrested by the Austrian army near Maubeug in 1793 while serving as a military commissioner, and was imprisoned first in Olomouc and later at Špilberk. In November 1795 he was released in exchange for the French princess, together with other French prisoners.

Captured soldiers of the French revolutionary army were also interned in Moravia.

The Carthusian monastery in Královo Pole in Brno, where 1,200 captured French soldiers were said to have been imprisoned.

Count Baillet de Latour

December 29, 1800

Count Baillet de Latour informs Governor Ugarte of the internment of French prisoners of war in Louka Monastery in Znojmo, Hradiště Monastery in Olomouc and the former Carthusian monastery in Královo Pole in Brno.

panel 7

In July 1809 - after the victorious Battle of Wagram - the French army of Emperor Napoleon occupied Brno, including Špilberk fortress. The French occupation brought freedom to some of the political prisoners interned in Brno, but it also meant the end of Špilberk's military significance.

The newspaper "Brünner Zeitung" carries news of Emperor Napoleon's visit to Brno.

On September 16, 1809 Emperor Napoleon rode to Špilberk fortress on horseback.

The governor's residence, where Napoleon stayed during both of his visits to Brno - in December 1805 and September 1809.

Fragment of a plan of part of the Špilberk fortifications destroyed by the French army on October 28, 1809.

December 19, 1809

Minister of Police Hager requests a report from Governor Lažanský concerning measures taken to safeguard prisoners during the enemy army's attack on Špilberk.

A description of Andreas Riedel.

As a leading figure in the Jacobin movement, Baron **Andreas Riedel (1748 - 1837)** was arrested in Vienna in 1794, and served a sentence of 60 years' penal servitude in Mukačev. He was transferred to the Minorite monastery in Brno in 1806, and liberated there by the French army in 1809. He lived out the rest of his life in France, where he was forced to go into hiding after the fall of Napoleon, in order to avoid being turned over to the Austrians.

March 26, 1810

Request for information about the escape of János Bacsány, formerly a draftsman to the court chamber and later a supporter of both the French Revolution and Emperor Napoleon, from internment in Brno.

panel 8

Josef Hormayr (1782 - 1848)

A historian and organizer of scientific activities, Hormayr was at first an enthusiastic admirer of the house of Habsburg-Lorraine, but later its adversary. In 1809 he directed the anti-French uprising in the Tyrol, and even after the Peace of Vienna his conduct was such that he was interned at Špilberk in 1813-14, at the request of Emperor Napoleon. The Tyrolean appellate counsellor Schneider was imprisoned along with him, enduring the poorer conditions in the military part of the prison.

A list of the books owned by Baron Hormayr in Špilberk prison.

January 14, 1814

The chief head of Špilberk prison gives evidence of the use of a sum of 200 guilders for the needs of the prisoner Hilbert. The prisoner confirmed the correctness of this evidence using his real name - Josef Hormayr.

Josef Hormayr maintained contact with scientists in Bohemia and Moravia, and was one of the spiritual fathers of the founding of the Emperor Franz Museum, today the Moravian Museum, in Brno in 1818.

The owner of the castle in Rájec nad Svitavou, Count Salm, was also a friend of Hormayr, who stayed with him several times.

April 16, 1814

A report on the imprisonment of court adviser Hormayr (under the pseudonym Hilbert) and appellate counsellor Schneider (under the name Schuster) at Špilberk.

June 10, 1814

A list of the possessions of state prisoner Hilbert, submitted by the head of Špilberk prison, Martin Gruber.

The Prison of Nations

5



M
M3

Room 5

panel 1

The first large group of "national" political prisoners at Špilberk were the so-called Hungarian Jacobins. Influenced by the ideals of the French Revolution, the republican movement in Hungary rose up in opposition to the reactionary Habsburg monarchy and strove for national independence.

A period engraving showing Buda and Pest.

The initiator and central figure of the Hungarian republican movement was Ignác Martinovics (1755 - 1795), a monk and an important scholar.

Martinovics' followers formed two associations in the spring of 1794 - the more moderate Reformers' Society and the radical Freedom and Equality Society. The activity of both groups was short-lived: they were uncovered after just two months, and 75 "conspirators" were arrested.

A list of the members of both organizations.

The "catechism" of the Reformers' Society - the first page of a manuscript setting out the program of the moderate Hungarian republicans.

panel 2

Emperor Franz I (1792 - 1835) saw advocates of progressive and revolutionary ideas as a great danger to his monarchy. The extraordinary session of the royal court held in Buda in May 1795 therefore passed extraordinarily cruel sentences on participants in the "Jacobin conspiracy" - eighteen death sentences and nearly thirty long prison sentences.

The sentences passed on two "conspirators" convicted of injury to property and high treason, Samuel Vrchovský and György Szlavy, who were later imprisoned in Brno along with thirteen of their fellows. The remaining convicts were assigned to the prisons in Mukačev, Graz and Kufstein.

The regional administrator, Count Ugarte, was informed of the upcoming transport of fifteen Hungarian "traitors" to Brno in a letter from Vienna during the first half of September 1795.

A period engraving entitled "Tree of the Jacobins", giving the names of the principal convicts. Seven of the eighteen men sentenced to death were executed, while the remaining eleven had their sentences commuted to unspecified prison terms. The other convicts were likewise sentenced to many years in prison.

Among those executed was the leader of the conspirators, the former imperial adviser to Joseph II and mitered abbot Ignác Martinovics.

On May 20, 1795, shortly after sentence was passed on them, five of the chief representatives of the Jacobin movement were executed on the so-called "General's Field" in Buda (later renamed "Bloody Field"), and a further two were executed a week later. This is one of several period illustrations of the executions.

panel 3

At Špilberk
October 1795 - January 1796

Brno was chosen by the imperial authorities as one of four places suitable for imprisonment of the condemned "state criminals". Since cells for the Hungarian prisoners in the originally-designated prison on Cejl Street could not be prepared in time, their first, temporary place of confinement here was Špilberk fortress.

János Rosti poetically reworked his impressions of the way to Špilberk and imprisonment there in two Latin "Elegies" (1796).

The route taken from Buda to Brno by the condemned Jacobins, who were transported in sealed carriages under military guard.

A list of fifteen Hungarian prisoners transported to Špilberk on October 5 and 7, 1795. The cell number and length of sentence, with starting and ending dates, is given for each.

In order to temporarily house the convicted Hungarians, the military administration at the fortress had to free up several rooms in the barracks located in the ground-level section of the western and northern wings of the castle. There was no other suitable area for these state prisoners, who had to be kept isolated in individual cells; the casemates and the buildings in the moat served as a common prison for ordinary criminals.

A sketch by Ferenc Kazinczy of the location of his own cell, taken from the manuscript copy of his memoirs. Cell no. 1 was situated in the western wing next to the entry bridge; Kazinczy was transferred there from cell no. 14 because of the poor condition of his health.

panel 4

With regard to the location and furnishings of their cells, their clothing and diet, and the ability they had to make use of various personal items, the state prisoners differed substantially from ordinary criminal inmates, who were kept in common cells in the gloomy casemates. Yet considerable differences were also to be found among the individual Hungarian prisoners, all depending on their material situation. A list of the things in cell no. 2 (J. Rosti) and cell no. 5 (P. Lukács).

A list of sums of money the convicts brought with them to Špilberk. By using these funds, as well as money sent by relatives, they could later buy themselves better food, beverages and clothing and other needed items.

A description of J. Rosti's cell from his "Prison Elegy" (1796).

Although they were provided with exceptional health care, the prison environment considerably worsened the mental and physical condition of the Hungarian Jacobins, most of whom came from the higher levels of society. Record of the total amounts of visits paid by Dr. Vincenc Thal to the Hungarians imprisoned at Špilberk (from October 6, 1795 to January 23, 1796).

A statement of expenses for the Hungarian prisoners' term of confinement at Špilberk, which ended on January 23, 1796. Only two of the fifteen - Pál Lukács and Dominik Mak - remained there, as their sentence was to end soon. Both were released in May 1796. Johann Brehm had already been released in December 1795, while the remaining twelve prisoners were transferred to the prison on Cejl Street.

panel 5

In Cejl Street Prison
January 1796 - June 1799

On January 23, 1796, after spending sixteen weeks at Špilberk, the Hungarian Jacobins were transferred to their originally-designated prison on Cejl Street in Brno (established 1786).

Plan for conversion of the orphanage on Cejl Street into a prison (1784).

A list of cells at Cejl Street prison prepared for the remaining twelve Hungarian prisoners (January 22, 1796).

The location of the Hungarian prisoners, based on a drawing by Ferenc Kazinczy from the manuscript copy of his memoirs.

A proposal for furnishing the Hungarian state prisoners' cells submitted by the director of the prison on Cejl Street, Franz Schramek, two months before their arrival in Brno, and also containing the amount of expenses to be made on these facilities.

panel 6

During the period 1797-98 five Jacobins were successively released from Cejl Street prison after serving out their terms. Nine Hungarian prisoners still remained in prison there in 1799. These included four men serving an indefinite term after commutation of the death sentence: Hirgeist, Szmetanovics, Uza and Kazinczy. Laczkovics still had six years left to serve, while Ujgyörgyi and Baranyay had one year left. There were also two prisoners transferred from Graz: János Szlavy and Szulyovsky. At the beginning of June 1799 the emperor resolved to transfer all nine inmates from Brno to Kufstein, because of the friendly behavior shown to the Hungarian prisoners by prison officials and staff and various unauthorized privileges and alleviations of their confinement. Soon afterwards - on June 22 - the Hungarian Jacobins left Brno.

Fortress Kufstein in the Tyrol.

A further four Hungarian Jacobins were to have been transferred from Graz to Brno in April 1797. One of them - Bujanovics - was released one month before his sentence expired, and so only the remaining three were transferred to Cejl Street prison.

The fortresses in which the Hungarian Jacobins were imprisoned from 1795 to 1803.

The first of the Jacobins to be released was the physician Johann Brehm, whose one-year sentence expired on December 16, 1795, after he had spent 70 days at Špilberk. His journey home led him - according to this official notice - through Holíč and Bratislava.

A list of the Hungarian prisoners at Cejl Street prison, indicating the date their sentence began.

Some of the convicted Hungarians were able to make their stay in prison at least slightly more pleasant, thanks to the money their families sent them. With it they were permitted to buy new bed linen, clothing and other necessary items.

panel 7

Ferenc Kazinczy (1759 - 1831)

Writer, dramatist and translator, founder of modern Hungarian literature, and organizer of cultural life in Hungary. He is the most famous of the Hungarian Jacobins who were imprisoned at Špilberk in Brno.

Kazinczy was not quite 36 years old when he came to Špilberk. When he left Brno four years later, he was nearly 40. He was transferred to the Tyrolean fortress Kufstein, and released from it on amnesty in 1801. Thereafter he devoted himself to literary and cultural activities once more. In 1830 Kazinczy was named a member of the Hungarian Academy. His manuscripts include "Fogságom naplója" ("My Prison Diary"), which is also a valuable source of information on the history of the Jacobins' internment in Brno.

The title page of the judgement passed on Ferenc Kazinczy.

An excerpt from the manuscript of Kazinczy's diary (beginning of the chapter "In Zábřdovice Jail", not far from Brno), 1796.

Samuel Vrchovský (1770 - 1797)

Lawyer, a native of Skalica in Slovakia, the son of a local butcher and a descendant of Czech exiles. He was the only one of the Hungarian prisoners who found his grave in Brno. His illness (scrofula) worsened in prison, and he was not helped even by undergoing treatment at the military hospital in nearby Zábřdovice, where he died on August 3, 1797.

A list of the money, articles of clothing, linen, other personal items and books Vrchovský had with him when he was transferred to Cejl Street prison.

The ban on correspondence during the early period of imprisonment also had an unfavorable effect. A list of withheld letters from the families of individual prisoners, dated November 29, 1795.

The envelope of a letter sent to Vrchovský by his father. The letter was not passed on to the prisoner.

A note on Vrchovský's illness in prison director Schramek's daily report of October 28, 1796.

The military hospital was relocated from Špilberk to the abolished monastery in Zábřdovice in 1786. A general view of Zábřdovice Monastery, the place where Samuel Vrchovský died.

The Prison of Nations

⑥



M
M3

Room 6

panel 1

There were a number of smaller or larger states on the Apennine Peninsula at the beginning of the 19th century, and this fragmentation had unfavorable political as well as economic consequences for the entire area. The unification of all Italian territories into one state was the desire of the rising bourgeoisie above all, as well as the majority of educated people and the more progressive members of the aristocracy and the officer class.

The 1815 Congress of Vienna, a meeting of the victorious powers of the anti-Napoleonic coalition, signified the consolidation of reactionary politics throughout Europe. Austria was assigned the task of "maintaining order" in northern Italy, that is, the Kingdom of Lombardy and Venice, which became part of the Austrian Empire.

panel 2

The secret movement of the *carbonari*, whose primary goal was to fight tyranny using all means available, played an important role in Italian history. The *carbonari* successively instigated unrest in Naples, Piedmont and Lombardy and Venice.

The government of the Austrian emperor Franz I unleashed the forces of police terror against the *carbonari*. After 1818 the police gradually uncovered groups of *carbonari* in Fratta-Polesine, Milan and Brescia, and the investigations ended with their being sentenced to death for high treason. The emperor showed clemency to the condemned *carbonari*, yet their sentences were still commuted to many years of confinement in the hardest prison in the empire, Špilberk in Brno.

A guardsman of the *carbonari* legion.

A patrol of *carbonari*.

The title page of a bull issued by Pope Pius VII, opposing the *carbonari*.

The seizure of documents from the *carbonari*.

The investigating judge reads the sentence: "Sentenced to death".

Public proclamation of the sentence was meant to humiliate the condemned in the eyes of the public, but it achieved the opposite effect - sympathy for them and hatred for the Austrian authorities.

Leaving their homeland.

Those *carbonari* who were able to flee abroad were sentenced *in absentia*, and the Austrian authorities continually checked to see that they had not re-entered the territory of the empire. A part of the list of names.

June 16, 1832

Minister Sedlnický warns Governor Inzaghi of the danger of assassinations which, according to information obtained from informers, were being prepared by "known members of the *carbonari* sect" living in Marseilles. It was, therefore, necessary to keep an especially close watch on persons arriving from the south of France.

panel 3

The Austrian government feared even those Italian patriots who had been imprisoned. Emperor Franz I in particular observed all matters concerning the Italians closely, from the first moment of their arrest to their return home after years in prison.

The transport routes to the prison were deliberately chosen so as to avoid Vienna. No one was to suspect that political prisoners were being kept alongside ordinary criminals at Špilberk.

Routes taken to Špilberk by the convicted Italian *carbonari*:

1822: Venice - Udine - Ljubljana - Graz - Bruck - St. Pölten - Krems - Sitzendorf - Znojmo - Pohořelice - Brno

1824: Milan - Mantua - Verona - Villach - Klagenfurt - Bruck - Maria Zell - St. Pölten - Krems - Sitzendorf - Znojmo - Pohořelice - Brno

1826: Ljubljana - Graz - Bruck - St. Pölten - Krems - Sitzendorf - Znojmo - Pohořelice - Brno

The 1822 route led through Ljubljana because prisoners sentenced to confinement at the prison there (sentences of less than 10 years) were being transported at the same time.

In 1826 a further four *carbonari* arrived at Špilberk from Ljubljana, as punishment for their "bad conduct" and offenses against the prison code.

Pohořelice was always the final overnight stop because, "even though the journey from Znojmo to Brno takes only one day", it was possible to adjust the time of departure so that the transport arrived at Špilberk late in the evening or early in the morning.

Despite the efforts of the Austrian officials, the prison transports did not always arrive without the public's notice.

"Brno is the capital city of Moravia, and the governor of two provinces - Moravia and Silesia - has his seat here. (...) A hill rises above the city to the west, and on it towers the legendary rock Špilberk, once the princely castle of the lords of Moravia, today the cruellest prison in the entire Austrian monarchy."

(Silvio Pellico: "My Prisons", ch. 55)

A record concerning the assignment of the Italian prisoners to their cells, dated March 30, 1827. It also shows how much care the prison administration took to see that groups of prisoners sentenced at the individual trials be kept separated from one another by empty cells, stairways, and the like.

During a prison transport in 1824, Federico Confalonieri became so seriously ill that he had to stay behind in Villach for several days. It was necessary to take special measures for his transport to Brno. A route of the journey, including overnight stops.

April 10, 1822

The chief head of Špilberk prison announces that, on this day, "two Italian traitors, Silvio Pellico and Petro Maroncelli (written Moronielli) arrived at the prison, accompanied by high police commissioner Engebart".

November 27, 1825

Emperor Franz I informs Governor Mitrovský that he was displeased to learn that the Italians have no other form of occupation besides chopping wood.

panel 4

The Italians who came to Špilberk prison found it hard to endure the harsh climate there. Frequent illness weakened their physical health, while the uncertainty of their fate and fears for their closest relatives had adverse effects on their mental state. In all, five Italian patriots did not live to return to their beloved homeland and their families.

The following died at Špilberk:

June 13, 1823 Antonio Fortunato Oroboni 30 years old, after a year's imprisonment.
His death was so sudden that the prison materials say almost nothing about him.

June 23, 1827 Antonio Villa 39 years old, after five years' imprisonment
full of mental torment and pangs of remorse that he could not care for his old parents
"like a good son".

August 21, 1832 Silvio Moretti 60 years old, imprisoned for nearly eight years. Despite his physician's recommendation and the intercession of prison officials, the emperor refused to pardon him. Already in 1825 he had had an outburst of madness, but the emperor remained adamant, insisting on complete isolation of the prisoner, who was not permitted to read books, had to stand alone at mass, etc.

October 30, 1833 Cesare Albertini 62 years old, served more than nine years in prison, died of dropsy.

March 21, 1845 Giovanni Vincenti 29 years old, died of tuberculosis three years after arriving.

The burial of a prisoner.

"It seems to me one cannot sleep so well here as at home on our beautiful peninsula..."
(S. Pellico: "My Prisons", ch. 76)

May 20, 1825

Chief prison head Smrczek announces that Moretti's mind has been clouded: "He says an evil spirit would not let him sleep the whole night, it appeared first in one corner of his cell, then in another..."

June 30, 1825

A statement of expenditures made on sick prisoners, including guarding the mentally ill Moretti at night.

September 28, 1828

Assistant head Wegrath states that during evening cell inspection he overheard the end of a conversation between the prisoners Villa and Albertini, who said "they believed they would not be here much longer". Their hope was in vain, for both died at Špilberk.

Seriously ill prisoners were given last rites.

According to tradition, the prison cemetery was located at the foot of Špilberk Hill, but in reality prisoners were buried in the city cemetery near what is today Antonínská Street.

The gravity of Villa's state of health required the summoning of a physicians' council.

panel 5

Silvio Pellico (1789 - 1854)

The Italian poet, writer and dramatist served more than eight years of his sentence of fifteen years' penal servitude at Špilberk.

No. 303 - Silvio Pellico

Born in Saluzzo in the kingdom of Sardinia, 32 years old, Catholic, unmarried, a former secretary, speaks Italian, French, Latin and some German. Short, of weaker physique, has good color in his cheeks, brown hair, blue eyes, a straight nose and a small mouth. Traitor. Start of sentence February 21, 1822, end of sentence February 20, 1837. Arrived at Špilberk April 10, 1822. Pardoned and transferred to Brno police headquarters on August 1, 1830.

From the official description of prisoner no. 303

"The prison uniform was complemented by fetters on the legs, that is, a chain running from one leg to the other, the metal anklets of which were joined by nails bent on an anvil."

(S. Pellico: "My Prisons", ch. 57)

"Fate, sir, made a fool of me, and gave the name of a great man. My name is Schiller."

(S. Pellico: "My Prisons", ch. 58)

An old jailer, a man rough and even crude on the outside, compassionately and considerately helped Pellico and his friends to overcome the hardships of prison during the first months, within his own modest means. Pellico preserved an image of this man for all time in his memoirs.

"During the first days it was stated that each of us would have a walk twice a week. (...) I labored to drag my fetters all the way to the recreation yard, and there I threw myself on the grass, usually remaining there the entire time..."

(S. Pellico: "My Prisons", ch. 65)

The years passed by, and news of his release caught Pellico nearly unawares: at 10:00 a.m. on August 1, 1830 Brno police chief Muth informed Pellico and his fellow prisoners Pietro Maroncelli and Andrea Tonelli that the remainder of their sentence had been remitted. On the evening of the same day the prisoners were inconspicuously moved to police headquarters. After the necessary formalities and items of clothing were arranged for, they left for Italy on August 5, accompanied by a police officer.

May 27, 1832

Minister of Police Sedlnický writes to Governor Inzaghi, requesting an investigation of several claims made "in a pamphlet" published in France. This concerned in particular the amputation of Maroncelli's leg, why the prisoner Confalonieri's pillow had been taken from him, etc. The appendix to this letter lists several of the points contained in the French pamphlet.

December 10, 1832

Minister Sedlnický reports on the publication of Pellico's "My Prisons", stating that although "it is written in a reserved and circumspect manner, it still clearly shows tendencies opposed to the Austrian government and its officials". The Brno police chief minutely investigated the information concerning Pellico's confinement at Špilberk, and in his reply to Vienna rejected the work for "its author's sentimental tendencies, aimed at disgracing the Austrian state authorities. (...) The poet has exercised his imagination here, exaggerating his sufferings."

The title page of Silvio Pellico's "My Prisons", the book which made Špilberk prison famous throughout Europe. Here the public learned for the first time that the Austrian government also imprisoned its political opponents there. Chancellor Metternich is said to have declared that this book caused Austria greater shame than a lost battle. The book was published in 1832, and was translated almost instantly into French, German and English as well.

panel 6

Pietro Maroncelli (1795 - 1846)

A composer, Maroncelli served eight years of his original twenty-year sentence at Špilberk. He died in America in conditions of extreme destitution, having gone blind and mad there.

No. 302 - Pietro Maroncelli

Born in Forli in the Papal State, 26 years old, Catholic, unmarried, master of music and the arts, speaks Italian and French. Of middle height and weaker physique, with chestnut brown hair and eyebrows, a regular forehead, grey eyes, a large nose, medium large mouth and rounded chin. Traitor. Start of sentence February 21, 1822, end of sentence February 20, 1842. Arrived at Špilberk April 10, 1822. Healthy. Pardoned and transferred to Brno police headquarters on August 1, 1830.

From the official description of prisoner no. 302

In 1825 Maroncelli suffered digestive problems of varying severity.

The frequency of illness among the Italian prisoners led to a decision to pair them in cells so that they could take care of each other. Thus Pellico's wish that he might share a cell with his friend Maroncelli was fulfilled: this was always the cell designated as number 1.

"We have been authorized to give you Maroncelli as a cellmate. (...) Oh, what a moment that was! (...) But I could hardly recognize him. His face, which had once flowered so beautifully, was worn out by pain and hunger..."

(S. Pellico: "My Prisons", ch. 74)

June 20, 1828

Draft of a letter in which Governor Inzaghi informs Vienna that "the amputation was successfully performed on June 18 at ten in the morning. The prisoner is in satisfactory condition and, if no unusual circumstances arise, will be entirely healed in several weeks."

Since the beginning of 1828 references to pains in the left knee had begun to appear next to Maroncelli's name in the medical reports, and these pains became greater after he fell during one of his walks. In May the prisoner could no longer walk at all, and the only way of improving his condition was to amputate his leg.

Despite many difficulties Maroncelli gradually recovered, thanks in particular to the devoted care of his friend and fellow prisoner Silvio Pellico. He was given crutches to help him move about, and so was able to go out for walks.

Maroncelli later repaid his debt by taking care of the ailing Pellico.

Neither the amputation of his leg nor the great pains in his arm joints, caused by gout, were the reason for the prisoner's release. The emperor did not request a report on Maroncelli's conduct in prison until April of 1830, and it was based on this that he was released on August 1, 1830.

panel 7

Federico Confalonieri (1785 - 1846)

A journalist and an important figure in the economic and political life of northern Italy. He served the longest term of imprisonment of all the Italian inmates at Špilberk, a full eleven years.

No. 413 - Federico Confalonieri

Born in Milan, Italy, 39 years old, Catholic, married, a landowner. No physical description given. Last place of residence Milan. Traitor. Start of sentence January 21, 1824, end of sentence - at his death. Arrived at Špilberk March 5, 1824. Often has fainting spells. Behaved defiantly during the investigation. His morals are completely corrupted. His moral conduct cannot be described as good in any respect. Confalonieri was turned over to government councillor von Guth at his spoken request on December 11, 1835 at noon.

From the official description of prisoner no. 413

The health problems that had already accompanied Confalonieri on his way to Špilberk only worsened during his imprisonment: he suffered from pain in the joints, insomnia, lack of appetite and numerous bouts of fever, which greatly reduced his strength.

The doctor prescribed a cup of black coffee a day to improve the state of Confalonieri's health. A guard often had to be placed in his cell at night, and he was often entirely relieved of his fetters at his doctor's recommendation.

Countess Tereza Confalonieri made dedicated efforts to improve her husband's situation in prison. She tirelessly corresponded with Austrian officials, and sometimes succeeded in achieving minor concessions. She died on September 21, 1830, but her death was not announced to Confalonieri until August 9, 1832, nearly two years later.

The countess often sent her husband parcels containing newly-published books and magazines, some of which were even passed on to the prisoner.

The priest Jiří Vrba was a great source of support for Confalonieri in the despair he felt following his wife's death. At that time Vrba devotedly came to see the prisoner nearly every day, in order to provide him with the necessary comfort. Count Confalonieri behaved magnanimously upon his release as well: he gave his guard a financial reward, and made a gift of his books to Vrba.

The prisoner Confalonieri enjoyed the almost constant attention of the authorities. In 1829 exceptional security measures were undertaken at Špilberk when it was suspected that an attempt to free him was being prepared in Milan. A loyal servant of the family, Karl Rainer, had disappeared, and Countess Confalonieri was unwilling to give the reason for his departure. Rainer had even been in Brno once, and so it was thought necessary to watch carefully to see that he did not attempt to make contact with the prisoner. This was, however, a false alarm. This description of Rainer was enclosed with a letter from Minister Sedlnický.

Confalonieri also remembered the criminal inmate Johann Graf with a small sum of money. For years Graf had been assigned to serve Italian prisoners who were especially ill. The count could not have guessed how much worry this gesture would cost the prison administrators. The problem of how to deal with the money was solved only by Graf's death.

After returning home, Confalonieri, too, issued his "memoirs of an Austrian state prisoner", dedicating them to his departed wife.

panel 8

Alessandro Filippo Andryane (1797 - 1863)

French politician and writer, sentenced to life imprisonment for aiding the Italian *carbonari* movement. He served eight years of penal servitude at Špilberk.

No. 412 - Alessandro Filippo Andryane

Born in Paris, France, 28 years old, Catholic, unmarried, fervently interested in literature. No physical description given. His health is good. His conduct during the investigation was likewise good. He is entirely devoted to his political ideals. Traitor. Start of sentence January 21, 1824, end of sentence - at his death. Arrived at Špilberk February 29, 1824. Transferred to Brno police headquarters on March 13, 1832 at 7:00 p.m.

From the official description of prisoner no. 412

The fact that Andryane was re-baptized at Špilberk prison in 1824 was looked upon by the authorities as evidence of the prisoner's desire to reform.

Andryane bore the hardships of prison life quite well during the first years. Reports on the state of his health indicated that it was good, even though "he has lost most of his physical strength and good looks". Later his health, too, worsened, particularly the problems he had with his eyesight.

This list of books which Andryane brought to Špilberk testifies to his literary interests.

August 2, 1826

In a letter written in Kynžvart, Chancellor Metternich requests that Governor Mitrovský inform the prisoner Andryane of the contents of a letter from his sister-in-law Pauline, and transmit an oral message from the prisoner to his family in reply. Metternich would then pass this message on to the imperial ambassador in Paris.

Klemens Lothar Metternich, the former Austrian ambassador to France, involved himself personally in the case of Andryane, whose family persisted in seeking his release. Archive documents indicate that Metternich considered the imprisonment of political opponents, particularly foreigners, to be harmful to Austria's reputation.

March 12, 1832

Minister Sedlnický informs Governor Inzaghi that Andryane has been pardoned. Before leaving Brno the released prisoner signed a written pledge that he would not enter the territory of the Austrian Empire without the consent of the emperor.

Alessandro Andryane also gathered up his prison experiences in a book of memoirs that attracted public attention.

The Prison of Nations

7



M
M

Room 7

panel 1

Following the three-way division of Poland among Russia, Prussia and Austria between 1772 and 1795, Austria gained control of the "Kingdom of Galicia and Sandomierska". The struggle for Polish national liberation, numerous uprisings and many secret revolutionary conspiracies all called forth acts of repression from the great powers, and led the Polish revolutionaries to prison. Among Austrian prisons, it was Špilberk, where a total of 196 Polish political convicts were imprisoned between 1839 and 1848, that became especially notorious.

panel 2

In 1846 an uprising occurred in Krakow, and similar rebellions were also to have begun in Austrian-occupied Lvov and Tarnow. There, however, the rebels did not succeed in their basic task of winning the support of peasants, who formed the majority of the population.

Ludwik Mierosławski (1814 - 1878) was designated chief commander of the 1846 uprising by the Polish Democratic Organization in France.

Eduard Dembowski (1822 - 1846) - writer, philosopher and planner of the revolution. Killed by the Austrians in Podgórze during the uprising.

The death of Dembowski, February 27, 1846.

Josef Leopold Kmietowicz (1819 - 1859) - parish priest in Chochołów, a participant in the uprising by mountain villagers there in 1846.

Jan Kanty Andrusikiewicz (1815 - 1850) - a teacher, one of the organizers of the uprising in Chochołów. During his imprisonment he was permitted to play the organ during the mass for prisoners at Špilberk chapel.

The old church in Chochołów, where Kmietowicz summoned people from the surrounding mountain villages to take part in the anti-Austrian uprising.

Dominik Dyzma Chromy (1809 - 1883) - organizer of an uprising by salt mine workers in Wieliczka in 1846.

Mikołaj Kański (1818 - 1899) - a law candidate, at first sentenced to death for revolutionary agitation, his sentence was later commuted to 18 years' penal servitude. After his release in 1848 he became a member of the Austrian parliament.

Michał Stanisław Głowacki - priest, organizer of Polish-Czech literary cooperation, took part in the Chochołów uprising in 1846.

Jakub Szela (1787 - 1866) - a peasant farmer from the village of Smarzew, the main leader of the peasants who, with the support of the Austrian authorities, helped capture the rebels after the defeat of the uprising. It was actually good luck to get into an Austrian prison then, as the regional administrator paid farmers 10 guilders for every dead body they brought to Tarnow, whereas a live rebel fetched a mere 5 guilders.

Title page of a period publication containing political commentary on the events and legal acts of the 1846 revolution.

panel 3

After the defeat of the uprising, court proceedings were held in Lvov, resulting in a number of death sentences for high treason or disturbance of public order. The emperor made use of his power of clemency to commute these sentences to life imprisonment at Špilberk.

Beginning in the second half of 1847, transports of prisoners arrived from Galicia almost daily.

Stanislaw Brzeźciański (1782 - after 1860) - sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment for planning the attack on Sanok in 1846. He was greatly respected by the other prisoners, not only because of his age (he was 65), but especially for his pronouncement "I am happy to wear such heavy irons for my beloved country".

Albin Dunajewski (1817 - 1894) - a member of conspiratorial organizations in Lvov between 1833 and 1842, later a priest and the bishop of Krakow. He was imprisoned at Špilberk from 1845 until the March amnesty of 1848.

Jan Weigel came to Špilberk in 1840, and was sent by the prison administration to another facility a year later, due to his "highly dangerous political ideas", which he attempted to inculcate in his fellow-prisoners as well.

September 6, 1841

Police headquarters in Ljubljana confirms that it has received the convicted Galician traitor Jan Weigel, who was sent there from Brno.

June 10, 1847

Minister Sedlnický informs Governor Stadion of the names of 52 convicted Galician traitors who will serve their sentences at Špilberk. The list also gives the lengths of their sentences. The governor was instructed to ensure that the greatest care be taken with these prisoners.

In 1842 the prison was enlarged, because of the growing number of prisoners. Plan of the third floor, including the central section.

August 18, 1847

Daily report on the arrival of a new transport of convicted Galician traitors, who had been admitted to the prison the preceding evening.

panel 4

The Grajgorska Republic

The large number of Polish political prisoners at Špilberk brought a number of problems as well. Alongside revolutionaries with strong, mature principles, who devoted literally their entire lives to the idea of Polish independence, there were also those who had been swept along by the general excitement into revolutionary acts. The latter often reacted to their imprisonment by defying prison order (opposing the shaving of their beards, complaining about the food, throwing their caps over the wall during walks, etc.), which in turn brought harsh retaliation from the guards. The task of the so-called Grajgorska Republic was to circumvent punishment, and also to use the time spent in prison to gain knowledge which could later be turned to the benefit of the Poles' subjugated homeland.

Ignác Komorowski (1798 - 1873) - took part in planning the first Galician revolution in 1846, served only five months of a five-year sentence at Špilberk. After the amnesty he became commander of the Lvov company of the National Legion and a member of the Central National Council in Galicia.

Artist's rendition of a Špilberk cell, based on the recollections of Polish prisoners.

"O karze śmierci, rozprawa ... Mikołaja Kańskiego, Kraków 1850." A doctoral dissertation on the death sentence, written in part at Špilberk.

December 31, 1844

Police chief Hasenöhrl informs the governor that prisoner Jan Gudziak has been punished for insulting and disobeying assistant prison head Thum.

November 3, 1846

Chief prison head Bayer hands over a doctor's report on the health of Henryk Hubicki. Hubicki later became the only Polish prisoner to die at Špilberk, the result of his being punished in the casemates for refusing to let his beard be shaved.

February 18, 1848

A request for approval to purchase the necessary clothing for Piotr Koloizaj upon his release from Špilberk.

panel 5

In the first months of 1848 incoming prisoners brought hopeful news of the proclamation of a republic in France and the revolution in Vienna. No one, however, could guess that their captivity would end...

The revolution in Paris, February 1848.

Milan, February 1848.

Fighting in Vienna, March 1848.

A notice concerning the proclamation of a constitution for all provinces of the empire, dated March 15, 1848.

Emperor Ferdinand's letters patent of March 20, 1848, granting amnesty to political prisoners.

March 21, 1848

The chief head of Špilberk prison announces that "7 Galician traitors arrived at Špilberk on the afternoon of this day". The convicts therefore arrived after the amnesty had been declared.

The first Poles to leave prison, on March 23 and 24, 1848, were those who had arrived only lately and whose clothes had not yet been sold. A list of prisoners released on March 23.

On the afternoon of March 23, 1848 the prisoners were unexpectedly led to the place where they usually took their walk. The governor of Moravia, Count Leopold Lažanský, appeared together with the prison officials, and informed all assembled of the emperor's letters patent granting amnesty to political prisoners who had been convicted of treason.

Lažanský then made his own, highly insensitive speech to the freed prisoners, calling them criminals who deserved death, not amnesty. His words aroused great indignation, and the governor was later compelled to explain their meaning to his superiors in Vienna.

panel 6

The Špilberk prison administration made considerable efforts to see that the liberated Poles, full of revolutionary spirit, left Brno as soon as possible.

April 8, 1848

The chief head of Špilberk prison submitted a report indicating that six Polish prisoners, to whom the amnesty of March 20 did not apply, were still confined there.

On the day of their release the Polish patriots headed for the city, where they were enthusiastically greeted by numerous citizens of Brno.

At an assembly in the garden courtyard of Hotel Padowetz, there were words of honor for the sufferings of the Polish nation and expressions of Slavic fellowship.

Banishment from the territory of the empire was part of the sentence of foreign prisoners. Brno police officials accompanied them as far as Trieste, where most of them set sail for America. The return ticket from Trieste to Graz of one of the police officials accompanying the freed prisoners.

April 14, 1848

Transcript of a telegraph dispatch in which the minister of the interior orders the immediate release of Špilberk prisoner Franciszek Marcel Czaplicki. It was discovered that certain information on his prison documents had been filled in incorrectly, and therefore he was not included on the list of prisoners to be released.

April 14, 1848

Count Pillersdorf requests an explanation as to who caused the error in the prisoner Czaplicki's documents.

The last Polish prisoners to remain in Brno were Justyn Begejowicz and Jan Pulnarowicz. They stayed in the city while Begejowicz voluntarily looked after the ailing Pulnarowicz. They received money for their livelihood from the funds of Špilberk prison during this entire time. The former prisoners left Brno at the end of June 1848.

The freed Polish political prisoners were seen by Špilberk police officials to their final place of destination, where they were handed over to local police headquarters. A ticket from Ostrava in Moravia to Wadowiec, Poland, for the police official Schuh and the former prisoners Pawlikowski and Wolski.

June 3, 1848

Chief prison head Adelburg announces the departure of four Poles who were pardoned on May 26. Pulnarowicz, who was ill, and Begejowicz, who was taking care of him, would remain in Brno.

Immediately after their return home the Polish revolutionaries began publishing their memoirs of imprisonment at Špilberk.

Galician deputies to the Austrian parliament in 1849.

June 2, 1848

On May 26 the emperor extended the March amnesty even to those prisoners convicted of other crimes. This concerned five Špilberk inmates.

The journey home by train was a great experience for the prisoners, as it was their first personal encounter with an invention they had seen from a distance during their outings at Špilberk.

panel 7

The year 1848 was one of great hopes for the nations of the Austrian monarchy, but the Austrian army successively drowned all attempts at national liberation in blood.

Fighting in Vienna, October 26, 1848.

Jägerzeile, October 28, 1848.

Jelačić's frontier guards on the watch at their camp outside Vienna.

A poster with telegraph dispatches announcing that General Jelačić's army has surrounded Vienna.

General Alfred Windischgrätz (1787 - 1862) bloodily suppressed both the June 1848 uprising in Prague and the October 1848 uprising in Vienna.

General Josip Jelačić (1801 - 1859) helped to liquidate the October uprising in Vienna, as well as the revolution in Hungary.

Marshal Radetzky (1776 - 1858) suppressed the movement for Italian liberation and unification in 1848-49.

Information on the situation in Vienna on the night of October 31, 1848.

The execution of Robert Blum, a member of the imperial German parliament, in Brigittenau near Vienna on November 9, 1848.

Lesław Łukaszewicz (1811 - 1855) - writer, took part in the uprisings in 1830-31, as well as the Galician uprising of 1846. After his release from Špilberk he worked for the Central National Council in Galicia. He was sentenced to ten years' penal servitude for his role in the Goslar conspiracy and sent to Terezín, where he died.

Julian Mateusz Goslar (1820 - 1852) - Polish revolutionary during the period 1845-50. After his release from Špilberk in March 1848 he again resumed his involvement in revolutionary activities, and fought on the barricades in Vienna in October 1848, for which he was sentenced to prison in Kufstein. On February 3, 1852 he was executed for his role in planning a conspiracy in Galicia.

March 7, 1850

In a telegraph dispatch the minister of the interior requests information as to whether there is room for two political prisoners at Špilberk.

panel 8

Two new political prisoners, participants in the revolutionary events of 1848, came to Špilberk during 1850.

August Silberstein (1827 - 1900) - writer and political commentator. He served more than two years of a sentence of five years' penal servitude for treason at Špilberk.

September 20, 1851

Chief prison head Adelburg states that Albert Trampusch, sentenced to two years' penal servitude for taking part in the October uprising, has asked that he be allowed to live with his brother in Frývaldov after his release from Špilberk.

August 30, 1854

A report on the transfer of political prisoner Johann Kladrobtz, sentenced for taking part in revolutionary activities, from Terezín to Špilberk, as he had received clemency and was to serve out his sentence in a civilian prison.

October 18, 1851

Notification of the conviction of political prisoner Johann Cogorno, who was to be transported to Brno under police escort the following day and admitted to Špilberk.

January 18, 1855

Chief prison head Adelburg announces the pardon of 10 Špilberk political prisoners.

Prison information file on August Silberstein.

The birth of a daughter, Gisela, to Empress Elisabeth on June 12, 1856 meant the pardoning of several dozen political convicts in various Austrian prisons, including Špilberk.

The reorganization of the Austrian prison system did not plan on further use of Špilberk prison, which was old and no longer suitable. The prison's female inmates, a total of 58 women, were the first to be transferred, moving to the prison in Valašské Meziříčí from April to June 1855. The problem of political prisoners was solved by their pardon in 1856. The male criminal inmates, a total of 481 men, left in August and September of 1857, being transferred to Kartouzy near Jičín, while the remaining 30 inmates moved to the prison on Cejl Street in Brno. Špilberk became an Austrian army barracks.

The Prison of Nations

8



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M3

Room 8

panel 1

Under the Nazi Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, Špilberk was full of political prisoners once again. Brno became the headquarters of the Gestapo for all of Moravia, and from the very start the occupying Nazi authorities dealt severely with all forms of protest or resistance. The first prisoners arrested on political or racial grounds came to Špilberk as early as the end of March 1939. Špilberk served the Brno Gestapo up until the first half of July 1940, and during this time - not quite sixteen months - hundreds of opponents of the Nazi occupation passed through its gates. Among them were German anti-fascists from the Mikulov region who rose up to defend the borders of Czechoslovakia in 1938; citizens of the town of Kladno arrested in retaliation for the shooting of a German police officer; figures from Brno and South Moravian public and political life from the hostage-taking action of September 1, 1939; members of the Moravian branch of the illegal organization National Defense; organizers of illegal border crossings; members of the Communist resistance, and others. Following the defeat of Poland, dozens of Polish citizens were temporarily imprisoned in Špilberk as well. Prison life here showed the typical features of all Nazi prisons: inhuman treatment during Gestapo interrogations, abuse by SS guards, uncertainty, and the constant humiliation of human dignity through acts of incivility, insults and beatings.

display case 1

A message left by bricklayers who worked on the reconstruction of Špilberk in 1940, discovered in 1991.

Material from which the stars used to identify Jews were cut.

A stamp certifying so-called Aryan racial origin.

A collection of items found in 1945 at Brno Gestapo headquarters in the Faculty of Law building on Veverí Street.

The miniature gallows that stood on the desk of the chairman of the Brno court martial. The underside is inscribed with a dedication.

An album containing the signatures of Špilberk prisoners, secretly passed on to relatives during a change of linen.

The badge of a political prisoner from the Kounic Student Dormitories in Brno.

Bullet fragments found after the war in the execution yard at the Kounic Student Dormitories.

A book bound in human skin, brought back after the liberation of Buchenwald.

Water cans.

Eating utensils used in Špilberk prison during the occupation.

panel 2

Prisoners who died at Špilberk included the mayor of Kladno, František Pavel, Kladno town employee František Louda, Brno Zbrojovka (Armory) workers Karel Bauer and Josef Kulka, Czechoslovak army officers Čeněk Krap and Vladimír Štěřba, teacher Ladislav Horník and Antonín Chaloupka, a worker.

In 1940 Špilberk inmates were transferred to newly-built prison facilities in the Sušil and Kounic student dormitories and, following extensive reconstruction, Špilberk served as a German army barracks until the end of World War II.

The members of the anti-fascist resistance movement began their terrible journey through the Nazi penitentiaries and concentration camps here at Špilberk and at other Brno prisons, a journey from which many of them would never return. Špilberk has thus remained a symbol of the struggle for the common human ideals of freedom, democracy and human dignity even in the 20th century.

display case 2

Each of these historical objects contains the hidden testimony of people who placed the struggle for the liberation of their country and the renewal of the Republic of Czechoslovakia above their own lives. They are reminders of suffering, but also a message of hope and faith in victory. The small items secretly manufactured by prisoners while carrying out their assigned work served as gifts for fellow prisoners in the inhuman conditions of a Nazi prison, or were sent home illegally as a memento for loved ones.

The Spanish textbook which Major František Ptašinský was allowed to study from after being sentenced to death. His last day of study was the day he was executed, November 16, 1942.

This folded handkerchief, returned to an executed prisoner's relatives along with his clothing, contained a hidden message to them. The man who wrote it, Alois Králík, was executed on April 6, 1944 in Pankrác prison in Prague for taking part in the resistance movement. A copy of the text written on the handkerchief displayed here.

A portable mimeograph machine for producing illegal leaflets.

A banner made by Czech prisoners after the liberation of Dachau concentration camp.

Mementos brought home by liberated prisoners.

Prison uniform from Sachsenhausen concentration camp.

Prison uniform from the penitentiary in Brieg.

A box of the personal items that Captain Čestmír Jelínek was permitted to keep with him after being sentenced to death. It was returned to his family after his execution in 1942.

The Prison of Nations

9



M
M3

Room 9

display case 1

In the 19th century political prisoners usually reached Špilberk late at night or early in the morning, so that their arrival would remain secret. Special fetters, linked by a stiff iron rod, were used during transports to prevent their escape. After arriving, the prisoners were given fetters designed for their confinement in prison, the connecting chain of which allowed a kind of hopping motion. Traditionally, a blacksmith joined these fetters, in which the convict both worked and slept, by hammering in a connecting nail on the anvil. The removal of one or both of the fetters could be proposed by a physician only in the case of a seriously ill prisoner. New arrivals were entered into the Basic Register of Špilberk Prisoners, the primary prison document, in the prison's administrative office.

display case 2

The political prisoners were a group of educated people, for whom reading, study and writing were vital needs. All of this was forbidden to them. Regardless of the punishments that threatened them, prisoners sought for ways of communicating among themselves by talking, tapping on the walls or even writing. Under investigation they defended themselves by saying that the possession of writing materials could not be considered an offense, since "every person needs them". It was the complete isolation from their closest relatives that weighed most heavily on them. They were not allowed to write letters, and correspondence from home was never passed on to them. A prisoner could only be acquainted with the content of a letter orally, and only with the emperor's consent.

Prisoners communicated by tapping a hard object on a certain part of the wall. They improved their hearing of the message by placing their drinking cups against the wall. Tapping could not, however, convey long or complex sentences, even though some prisoners were able to tap with great skill.

"My Dear Son... My Dearest... Greetings from your father... Kisses from your loving mother..." - thus began or ended dozens of letters, whose addressees at Špilberk never received them. Today they bear witness to the Austrian emperor's rigidity with regard to political prisoners at Špilberk. Facsimiles of the original letters kept in the Moravian Regional Archives in Brno.

Sources of unauthorized writing materials:

- paper: medicine wrappers
absorbent paper for use in carrying out bodily functions (reinforced with a paste made of bread and water)
- pens: fish bones reshaped using a piece of glass
chicken or bird feathers pared down with a knife for cutting fingernails,
borrowed from a guard
- ink: soot mixed with water in a medicine bottle
brick dust
tooth powder
rhubarb (rhubarb root was used in treating colic)

display case 3

After arriving at Špilberk, political prisoners were stripped of their civilian clothing, personal effects, books, money and mementos of loved ones, everything that might even remotely remind them of their former lives. The lists of personal items, valuables and books which survive indicate that they had no idea of what awaited them at Špilberk. Items belonging to Baron Franz Trenck during his imprisonment.

A Pandur knife from the 1740s, the personal weapon of Baron Trenck.

Similar items were brought to Špilberk by political prisoners.

panel

on the left:

Those who decided the fates of Špilberk prisoners...

The emperor determined the final length of the sentence, and authorized all changes in the lives of prisoners, even the smallest alleviations of their hard fate.

Joseph II
(1780- 1790)
Leopold II
(1790-1792)
Franz I
(1792-1835)
Ferdinand V
(1835-1848)
Franz Joseph I
(1848-1916)

The Moravian governor gathered all reports concerning Špilberk prisoners, and informed his superiors in Vienna of them. His opinion was of particular importance for the emperor's later decisions.

The Brno chief of police was obliged to visit Špilberk every month to ensure that all orders and instructions with regard to the handling of prisoners were being fulfilled. These visits took place irregularly, and coincided with a thorough inspection of both the cells of political prisoners and the prisoners themselves.

Jan Okáč
(1785-1817)
Petr Muth
(1817-1837)
Karel Ludvík Maltz
(1838-1841)
Bedřich Hasenöhr
(1841-1847)
Leopold Bezděk
(1848-1859)

on the right:

...and those who carried out their orders at Špilberk.

The director of Špilberk prison (also called the chief prison head) was directly appointed by the emperor, based on the recommendation of the Moravian-Silesian government. As such he also became administrator of the "secret department" concerned with political prisoners. This function was usually held by members of the military staff. The chief prison head was given personal quarters at Špilberk, and his pay amounted to as much as 1,200 guilders per annum.

Requirements: mature age, solid health, courage, a strict but humane approach, proper political ideas, unshakeable silence on matters of secrecy, and skill in maintaining discipline.

Matyáš Sturm

(1785-1805)

Martin Gruber

(1806-1816)

Mořic Smrczek

(1817-1828)

Alois Dickmann

(1828-1833)

Antonín Bayer

(1833-1847)

Josef Abramovič von Adelburg

(1847-1855)

Alois Geisler

(1856-1858)

The prison guards were mostly retired soldiers who had already served at Špilberk for some time. In the case of criminal inmates, they accompanied their charges in carrying out their assigned work. Guards assigned to political prisoners carried out so-called internal supervision, i.e. observing them from the corridor, seeing to their needs, and accompanying them on walks.

Common soldiers carried out so-called external supervision for the entire fortress. They did not enter into immediate contact with the prisoners.

Accompanying materials

EN

The Prison of Nations

10



M
M3

Muzeum města Brna

hrad Špilberk

Room 10

display case 1

Care for the prisoners' health was seen to by a carefully-chosen Brno doctor who visited Špilberk. He carried out even more demanding procedures on his patients under prison conditions, including the amputation of Italian prisoner Pietro Maroncelli's leg in 1828. The doctor could propose improvements in the prison diet and the removal of fetters. He personally obtained medicines for the political prisoners, and dealt with problems concerning the mental health of the inmates, several of whom had attempted suicide. The doctor could even prescribe smoking a pipe or taking snuff as a curative measure. The prisoner used smoking implements in a special room under the supervision of a guard, and these were put back among his store of personal effects after the "cure" had ended. Prisoners often demanded increased weekly allowances of tobacco, saying they would "rather miss out on a bit of meat than their snuff".

January 24, 1847

Report by chief prison head Bayer on Polish prisoner Stanislaw Cymborski's self-inflicted wound. The original nail displayed here, which was included with the report, was lent by the Moravian Regional Archives.

Places for "letting blood".

display case 2

The feeding of prisoners also underwent a complicated course of development, one linked to the humanization of prisons. There were differences between the diet of criminal inmates and that of political prisoners, as well as differences within each group according to the prisoner's length of sentence and current state of health. However, it was always a rule that food was "to be provided sparingly". So it is no surprise to find that prisoners frequently complained of hunger, regardless of their status.

The basis of the prison diet was bread, supplemented by soup, legumes and meat; the sole beverage for criminal inmates was water. Any improvement in rations or increase in the amount of food, proposed by the doctor, had to be approved by the higher authorities. Prisoners who were ill could be given better food, but in smaller amounts.

A political prisoner's diet, November 25, 1824:

Normal ("gross" = standard) portion:

Browned soup with slightly larded and soured barley and beans, 1 3/4 to 2 pounds of well-baked day-old black bread.

Diet for sick prisoners:

full portion: thick meat soup with bread roll, a piece of beef, cooked sauerkraut, 13 ounces of high-quality day-old white bread.

half portion: thick meat soup with bread roll, a smaller piece of beef, sauerkraut or noodles ("made of black flour, but edible") as a side dish, 1/2 pound of day-old white bread.

one-third portion: thick meat soup with bread roll, noodles made from white flour in milk, roast veal or meatballs ("tasty and well-prepared"), 3 ounces of day-old brown bread. This portion was the best in terms of quality, but the smallest in terms of quantity.

Governor Mitrovský often personally inspected the rations given to political prisoners. During his inspection of November 25, 1824, he stated that the food was "tasty and well-prepared", and remarked that some of the *carbonari* "could hardly have had better food when they were free, though persons of higher station might certainly wish for more refined fare".

Reconstruction of a criminal inmate's weekly rations in 1799:

1 pound = 1/2 kg 1 pint = 3.5 dl 1 ladle = 4 dl

key to chart:

pondělí = Monday, úterý = Tuesday, středa = Wednesday, Čtvrtek = Thursday, pátek = Friday, sobota = Saturday, neděle = Sunday, nejtěžší zločinci = heaviest offenders, těžcí zločinci = heavy offenders, lehčí zločinci = light offenders, 1 žejdlík silné polévky = 1 pint of strong soup, 2 libry chleba = 2 pounds of bread, 1 žejdlík luštěnin = 1 pint of legumes, 2 naběračky silné polévky navíc = 2 additional ladles of strong soup, 1/2 libry hovězího masa s přílohou (kroupy, zelí) = 1/2 pound of beef with side dish (barley, cabbage)

display case 3

Examples of handiwork by Špilberk prisoners. The smaller items, made using wood chips, paper, fruit pits, human hair or bread as materials, are apparently the work of individual inmates, while the more complicated and richly decorated objects using wood, glass, bone and the like come from organized manufacturing activities equipped with the necessary instruments and materials.

on the wall:

Josef Altenkopf

(born Vienna 1818)

Špilberk Inmates Working at the Stone Quarry on Yellow Hill, after 1850

The man who painted this picture was imprisoned at Špilberk for stealing and selling pictures from the Esterházy gallery, where he had served as director.

model

Pump for the Špilberk Castle well

(first third of the 19th century)

Eight prisoners were required daily to "tread water" from the 114-meter-deep well - evidently the deepest castle well in this country. Drawing up one bucket with a volume of approximately 50 liters of water took four men four hours.

Original buckets brought up during research on the castle well in 1991.

Rooms 11 and 12

Reconstructed cells of Špilberk political prisoners from the 1830s.

Basic furnishings:

wooden bunk, straw mattress filled with rye straw, pillow filled with chopped straw, linen bed sheet, cloth blanket, small table for eating vessels, small shelf, small coat rack, chamber pot, wash tub, coarse towel, comb, hairbrush, drinking cup, wooden spoon.

Basic prison clothing:

tight-fitting coarse linen jacket, linen trousers with horn side buttons, hemp shirt, wool socks, felt cap, tight ankle boots, short cloth winter coat ("spencer"). Women wore sleeved linen bodices and skirts, with scarves on their heads. All clothing was two-color, brown and off-white, to make it more conspicuous.



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