

Table of Contents

<i>Table of Contents</i>	1
<i>Introduction</i>	3
<i>Introduction to Fulnek</i>	5
<i>History</i>	6
<i>Culture as Seen in Fulnek</i>	9
<i>John Amos Comenius (1592 – 1670)</i>	11
<i>Other prominent citizens</i>	16
<i>Cultural Institutions in Fulnek</i>	18
<i>M stské kulturní centrum Fulnek (MKCF)</i>	19
<i>(Cultural Centre of Fulnek)</i>	19
<i>Comenius Fulnek</i>	24
<i>Muzeum Novojiínska (Museum of the Nový Jiín District)</i>	25
<i>T.O. Touhy</i>	26
<i>Moravské Kravaísko</i>	26
<i>Sponsors</i>	27
<i>Summary</i>	28
<i>Cultural Projects and Events</i>	30
<i>Edu&Art</i>	30
<i>The Cultural History Trail</i>	37
<i>Princezna Tereška (Princess Tereška)</i>	39
<i>Patchwork Exhibitions</i>	40
<i>The Days of Czech-Polish Culture</i>	40
<i>A ladies' session - Dámy na slovíko</i>	41
<i>Contest for the most charming gingerbread cabin</i>	41
<i>The Town Ball</i>	42
<i>The Day of the Town</i>	42
<i>Fulneíka Festival</i>	43
<i>Exhibitions in MKCF's non-smoking restaurant</i>	43
<i>Summary</i>	44
<i>Monuments and Sights</i>	46
<i>The Castle</i>	47
<i>The Capuchin Monastery</i>	54
<i>The Parish Church of the Holy Trinity</i>	57
<i>The Comenius Memorial</i>	59
<i>The Knurr Palace</i>	65
<i>Vila Loreta</i>	67
<i>Summary</i>	70
<i>Strong and Weak Points of Fulnek</i>	72
<i>Conclusions</i>	77
<i>Sources</i>	80
<i>Printed Sources</i>	80

<i>Online sources</i>	81
<i>Interviews</i>	82
<i>E-mails and Facebook chat</i>	82
<i>Lecture</i>	82

Introduction

In my thesis, I would like to evaluate the development of my home town's cultural policies and the general state of the "cultural life" in the town. The time span for the research will be from 1989 onwards. I have chosen this topic both for personal interest and because the town itself might benefit from my findings – providing my research brings any useful conclusions, of course.

Speaking about culture is always complicated for the vague and numerous definitions of the word. My first task will, therefore, be to identify what the leadership in Fulnek perceives as culture, and make a starting point from there. Then I would like to identify the cultural institutions in Fulnek and find out their roles in the cultural life of the town. Subsequently, I want to take a look at where the culture of the town stems from (cultural heritage); what it is based on today (cultural events), evaluating whether the town is doing the maximum it can to benefit from its cultural background. With a similar goal, I will also look into the town's cooperation with other cities, regions, the state, other countries and the EU.

As far as I know, there have been no studies published yet on this particular topic. Books have been written on Fulnek's architectural heritage and its history, especially related to Jan Amos Komenský (John Amos Comenius), the philosopher who stayed in Fulnek from 1618-1621. A more relevant publication could be the bachelor thesis written in 2010 by the director of Fulnek's Information Centre, which deals with the marketing opportunities in Fulnek. The author places emphasis on the cultural sphere and provides useful suggestions for changes in the town's cultural policies.

My thesis should offer an insight into the development of cultural policies and cultural life in general in a small town with a rich heritage. According to my findings, it could serve as a positive or a negative example for other similar towns; or it might possibly become a basis for further comparative research. In any case, the main contribution my thesis should bring is offering evaluation of the town's policies, possibly even suggestions on further actions in the cultural sphere; thus helping the Fulnek's authorities realize the full potential of the town.

My main sources will be e-mail/ verbal communication with the Town Hall, the Cultural Centre of Fulnek (MKCF), the Information Centre (IC), Comenius Fulnek o.s.

(dedicated to promoting the philosophy of J. A. Comenius) and the District Museum of Nový Ji ín; their reports on activities and budget; the official websites of the town, MKCF, IC and Comenius Fulnek; the monthly town newsletters and the official town hall notice board. Of course, Fulnek is also my primary home, therefore I know a lot about it from my own experience and learning.

As far as the structure is concerned, I will start with some introductory chapters, as Fulnek is, after all, a small town, and people are possibly not quite familiar with it. The first of these chapters speaks of the town itself and its history; the second one looks for “Fulnek’s” definition of culture; the third one introduces the “main selling point” of the town: J. A. Comenius¹ and the last one the other prominent citizens who have lived in Fulnek throughout centuries.

Following there will be three main chapters – the first one identifying the cultural institutions in the town, their purpose and scope of activities; the second one focuses on various cultural projects and events these institutions have organised or set in motion; the third one describes the prominent sights and monuments in Fulnek and how they have been treated throughout centuries (with the view of whether they have been treated better after the Revolution than before it). There will be an introduction and a summary part to all three of these chapters.

Afterwards, there will be a section on the weak and strong points of Fulnek – not only in the cultural sphere, although that will be a priority, but also in general, as the state of the town as such and the level of its cultural activities, are directly linked to one another.

At the end, I will evaluate my research and suggest where a follow-up may be directed to find out even more interesting facts and/or help out Fulnek in the search for its new direction.

¹ More than writing his biography, though, I will try to convey what makes him so worth everyone’s attention.

Introduction to Fulnek

At first sight, this little town in the Moravian-Silesian region of the Czech Republic aspires to be the local hidden treasure. It lies in a small valley interlocked by several hills – a valley that was practically a swamp all those centuries ago when the town was founded.

The main road from Olomouc to Ostrava used to go directly through Fulnek's square, until a bypass was built in early 1990s. Travellers were thus deprived of close contact with the town centre's beauty, but the road still led right between the Renaissance chateau and the Capuchin Monastery, the two most prominent landmarks of the town. Then, in late 2009, the D47 motorway was opened, and Fulnek became a road sign. Unless you know already how much the town is worth seeing, there is not much to point it out to you.

From most viewpoints, Fulnek is indeed perfectly hidden, and had it not been for the splendidly renovated chateau towering over the edge of the Moravian Gate² in its shiny new coat of yellow plaster, you might not even believe there is a settlement here.

However, Fulnek is a true “Baroque pearl” of the Nový Jiřín district, with an astonishing density of listed buildings and other monuments, despite being nicknamed “Little Warsaw” after the Second World War due to the level of destruction. Seeing as the district is packed with places of similar significance³, Fulnek's current designation gains all the more prestige.

The town's square offers a view of the most prominent sights. The stone staircase on the south side leads you up to a unique Baroque church dedicated to the Holy Trinity⁴, a bell tower and, even further up the hill, the afore-mentioned chateau. The southeast corner of the square boasts a Baroque Knurr Palace with the memorial of J.A. Komenský adjacent to it.

² The Moravian Gate is a lowland corridor dividing the Jeseníky and Beskydy mountain ranges, stretching all the way from Písek up to Ostrava.

³ Písek, the birthplace of Sigmund Freud; Hynčice, the birthplace of J.G. Mendel; Hodslavice, the birthplace of one of the most important Czech politicians of the 19th century: František Palacký; Hukvaldy, the birthplace of the composer Leoš Janáček, and Štramberk, the Moravian Venice and an archeological site, to name but a few.

⁴ The closest church in a similar architectural style, is in Písek, 27 km away, although that one has a tower, which the church in Fulnek lacks.

Most of the square was obliterated by bombs and fire in 1945, but the reconstruction in 1950s was fairly sensitive (although some architectural treasures were lost for good). Fortunately, some of the Baroque remnants survived, and so the square is still adorned by the St. John Sarkander Fountain in the northwest corner, the Plague Column in the centre and the statue of St. John of Nepomuk in the southeast corner.

The hill on the north side offers the partly reconstructed monastery, the St. Rochus Chapel in the middle of the old cemetery, Villa Loreta, another palace built by a wealthy citizen centuries ago, which hosts a home for children now; and a statue of Our Lady of the Snow.

*History*⁵

Fulnek developed in the 13th century as a settlement under the castle guarding an important trade route – a branch of the Amber Route connecting the Baltic to the Mediterranean. It is supposed that the lords of Lichtenburg, who were given land in this area by King Přemysl Otakar II., founded the town. The first written record comes from 1293, but by then, Fulnek already had a church, a rectory, town walls and a mayor. Apparently, there were great expectations for Fulnek. The plan was to make the town a centre of a larger dominion; this assumption supported by the town's large, regular-shaped square built right on the road leading through the valley.

Geographically, Fulnek sits on the ambiguous line between Moravia and Silesia, but in 1481 it was decided the town was going to be Moravian for good.

Most of the citizens always used to be German; the Czech element only shining through in the Hussite period⁶. In the 16th century, however, the official language was back to German for the prosperous Renaissance town of Fulnek.

The town became an important centre of the protestant religion called the Brethren Union. This is where Jan Amos Komenský comes in; being the last bishop of this Church and forced into exile after the Battle of Bílá Hora (White Mountain) in 1621, he spread the ideas of the Brethren across Europe. The later Brethren missionaries then brought

⁵ Most of the information in this section comes from the article on Fulnek's history written by Petr Dohnálek for one of the Cultural History Trail boards; translated by Sylvie Doláková.

⁶ 15th century

the religion to different parts of the world, helping to make Fulnek known across the globe⁷.

The Thirty Years' War was as decimating to the town as to the rest of the country. After Bílá Hora, about 320 noble families and 30 000 peasant families had to emigrate because of their faith⁸. Furthermore, about one quarter of the Moravian population was killed in the war⁹. Count in the destruction of property, and you can imagine just how much work was required for Fulnek to rise from the ashes.

As early as 1632, however, the owners of the town, the Bruntálští of Vrbno, began construction works in early Baroque style. These works continued throughout 18th century, turning Fulnek into a true architectural gem. The town made a fortune through cloth and weaving industry and grew in size considerably at the end of 18th and the beginning of 19th century.

Fulnek started the 20th century in a very radical way: basically, it became a nest of future Nazis. When the independent Czechoslovak Republic came into being, the German nationalists in Fulnek lobbied for the separation of Sudetenland; which, in the end, indeed happened in 1938. During the Second World War, the town served as a directorial centre of German relocating activities in Sudetenland.

Massive damage was inflicted to Fulnek at the end of the war by both Germans and Soviets. Up to 70% of the town was in ruins¹⁰; in the square, a few front walls and the town hall tower remained. In 1946, it was decided the town would be renewed after all, and the project for the reconstruction of the town centre was designed by Z. Sedlá ek, an architect from Brno. The row of houses on the southern side, which had been completely obliterated, was never renewed, to give way to a small park and uncover the view of the Holy Trinity Church.

As mentioned earlier, the reconstruction of the other buildings in the square was done sensitively, thus making Fulnek the only Moravian town affected by WW2 where the renewal works had positive results. This led to the creation of the Municipal Cultural

⁷ There is even a town called Fulneck in the UK, named after the Moravian original.

⁸ Numbers given to the visitors of the J.A.K. Memorial in Fulnek during a guided tour. I came by this information through my occasional interpreting for this institution.

⁹ Doc. Kolejka of the Masaryk University in Brno during his lecture on Komenský's Map of Moravia in St. Joseph's Church, Fulnek, on 24th May 2012.

¹⁰ Komenského Fulnek. *TK Press Foto*, 1992.

Zone in 1992, which should, at least in theory, protect the historical centre from harmful interventions. Whether it works in practice, is arguable, though¹¹.

¹¹ I am specifically concerned about the dormer windows on one of the houses in the northeast corner, which really look like a bad joke. Also the painting on the façade of the Capuchin Monastery, although I am assured is authentic, looks like a young artist was just given this space to paint a religious scene of their own liking and their own style.

Culture as Seen in Fulnek

History has turned culture into an extremely vague, complicated subject; mainly because of the broad fields it encompasses and because anyone can take any segment of culture and use it for their own purposes. Essentially, culture is the process and result of cultivation¹², and for the purposes of this thesis, it is the cultivation of the human soul. Again, this is treading dangerous waters, since the concept of the human soul is somewhat controversial. Years ago, I discussed this matter with Daniel Gildenlöw¹³, based on the Introduction of *A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson, and Daniel offered me a very useful metaphor: imagine a human body is the hardware – then the soul would be the software; the basic predispositions would be most likely the operating system, and whatever we learn throughout our lives would be the programmes and other kinds of data. Regardless of the nature of this explanation, it is basically just taking the mechanistic principles from the Age of Enlightenment slightly further; and it suits my purposes perfectly.

So, in a broad sense, as was mentioned above, culture is the cultivation of the human soul. It seems to be inherent to human nature to strive for improvement, and, to slightly abuse the relevant Marxist theory, the improvement of oneself, the personal development is anything not directly connected with mere survival. In a very idealised tone, it could be said that this particular type of culture is what distinguishes human beings from the other living creatures. This is, of course, the sheer essence of the term and is debatable.

But from this sheer essence stems the branch which is understood as culture in Fulnek. I asked several representatives of various institutions in town to define culture for me.

The director of the town's official cultural institution, MKCF (the Cultural Centre of Fulnek), told me that culture for them was “an entertainment and educational programme for all age groups”, which is possibly the most fitting description of culture in Fulnek. The educational part undoubtedly plays an important role in all cultural

¹² Or bettering

¹³ Who is not a scientist, but a Swedish musician

institutions of Czech towns and villages and even more so in Fulnek, which builds its reputation on its most famous citizen of all times – John Amos Comenius, a pedagogue who had in his times much impact on European education and whose works are still very relevant today (more on him in the next section).

Comenius's legacy is promoted by Comenius Fulnek, a non-governmental cultural-educational organisation. One of the founding and most active members, Mrs. Pavlína Vráblová, defines culture in the broadest sense, similarly to my own definition, as the process of bettering oneself, a kind of self-development. Her words cannot be interpreted as the official Comenius Fulnek's statement on the matter, but looking at the organisation's scope of activities and reading their rules and regulations section, one can assume the philosophy of the other members is very similar.

The Mayor gave me the vaguest answer, citing a definition from an unspecified dictionary with which she identifies, that „culture is a set of material and spiritual values created by mankind“. However, in practice, it is not quite the case that local administration can afford to be so broad – as the cultural departments need to have a very specific agenda for their daily dealings. For the official bodies, I would say a kind of a Marxist approach is taken, in which particular departments get their particular agendas (education, economy, urban planning, environment, public order, legal issues etc.) and the rest, the part not directly related to the very survival in a civil society, gets to be culture.

In any case, I would like to leave the matter open and let the following chapters shed more light onto it, if not solve it once and for all.

John Amos Comenius (1592 – 1670)¹⁴

Comenius, like the town where he allegedly spent the happiest three years of his life, seems to be a well-kept secret – at least outside the Visegrad Four – despite his great influence on education, religion and philosophy, which is apparent even today.

Several villages in South Moravia still argue where Comenius was born, but at least we have the exact date: 28th March 1592. He lost most of his family at a very early age, and was raised by his aunt. He studied in Germany, and when he came back, he was appointed a priest of the Union of Moravian Brethren, a Protestant branch quite widespread through Moravia at that time. Comenius was sent to Fulnek to become the director of the local Brethren convent and the headmaster of its school, and he married a wealthy young widow, Magdalena Vizovská. This was in 1618. Then came the lost battle of Bílá Hora (1620) and the end of what religious freedom there was in the Czech lands. The Brethren were vilified and hunted.

Comenius's wife was pregnant with their second son when the situation became so unbearable that he had to flee from Fulnek. Because of his wife's condition, he could not take her with him, and he would never see her or his two sons again, for they fell prey to an unknown disease in 1622.

Comenius married three times in the end. His second wife gave him four children - three daughters and a son. Comenius's second wife died in 1648, leaving the aging man with a little child; thus he married again to have someone to look after the boy, and later after him.

The family constantly moved around Europe¹⁵, as invitations came from various countries for Comenius to come and do his work, mostly in the pedagogical field. This might have been somewhat disappointing to Comenius, who saw himself primarily as a priest and teaching was only second to his serving his God, but he did his best everywhere he went anyway, justly earning the later title "The Teacher of Nations".

¹⁴ The sources of information for this section were my old research for a seminar work on Comenius during my Grammar School years and the exposition at the Comenius Memorial in Fulnek, including all the complementing information I was given by the custodian, Mrs. Marie Mrtvá.

¹⁵ Namely the northeast of Bohemia, Leszno in Poland, London, Elbing (now in Poland, in times of Comenius part of Sweden), Sarospatak in Hungary, Hamburg and Amsterdam.

Comenius was a pioneer of the science of education and theory of teaching. His views were that of universal, pansophic nature: he wanted to create a system for teaching everything to everyone. Starting with the latter, he lobbied for teaching both girls and boys across all social and economic strata, all nations, all religions and all races. He proposed that all children be sent to vernacular schools. The practice then was to send those children “predestined” for higher social roles straight to Latin schools, while the less fortunate children had to make do with vernacular schools where they would only learn the basics and given little attention simply because they were not expected to climb the social ladder. Comenius opposed this system very strongly, claiming that God gave the gift of intellect across the whole spectrum, not just to the rich. He went even further in proposing that even the intellectually impaired children should be educated, since he did not believe there was anyone on this Earth who would be unable to grasp knowledge in the end – with patience and proper guidance, that is.

Although Comenius called for morality in pupils and education towards good manners, he encouraged free thinking (pupils were supposed to come to their own conclusion, regardless of what authorities would tell them), fought against corporal punishment and promoted positive motivation instead of the negative if at all possible. As his book named *School of Infancy* says, a child is extremely precious, yet extremely fragile, and inconsiderate treatment can maim the child for life¹⁶. One sees an analogy with Rousseau’s *Emile*. However, Comenius actually lived by his teachings, whereas Rousseau rid himself of his own children as if they were vermin he could not be bothered to keep around.

Comenius proposed a universal system of education, which he hoped to be implemented in all countries. He divided education into four stages: nursery school for the youngest children (this would be carried out by the children’s mothers), public/national schools for children over six years of age, grammar/ secondary schools for older children and academies for young adults. Watching over education was supposed to be the so called *Collegium lucis*, a kind of an international Ministry of Education. Comenius, after all,

¹⁶ Komenský, Jan Amos. *Informatorium školy mate ské*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1972.

called for greater international cooperation in several areas: research, education, politics¹⁷, religion¹⁸.

As far as actual teaching/ learning process was concerned, Comenius suggested that education was a natural process of an individual and society¹⁹. It is not that knowledge only comes from the senses, but perception inspires intellectual activity. Special emphasis was, therefore, put on learning through examples from practice, from nature and real life²⁰. Children were not supposed to be taught theories and rules about subjects with which they were unfamiliar. They were supposed to know the basics first and especially know why they needed to know what the teachers would ask them to learn. Comenius also laid special emphasis on sparking the children's interest in what they were taught. Grammar school mathematics in the Czech Republic nowadays are a shining example of how it should not be done: one learns of functions, logarithms, derivations and integrals without these terms ever being properly explained, not to mention knowing their practical use (this comes later, if you choose to study a university programme which makes use of natural sciences, that is)²¹.

Essence first, rules later, said Comenius and in that spirit he proposed a gradual system of teaching. Children were to learn in the order and volume appropriate for their age and their knowledge to be broadened and deepened as they grew up. What was also important was making connections between disciplines/ fields of study. Comenius was a supporter of a holistic approach to education, which was rather unfortunate at the beginning of the Age of Enlightenment when most scholars were particularly ardent about mathematics and physics as separate scientific disciplines.

¹⁷ The objective was to maintain peace through international institutions, which is basically the original idea behind the EU.

¹⁸ One can, however, observe certain contradictions in Comenius's religious ecumenism. On one hand he called for education for people of all faiths, as was already mentioned, on the other, he resented Catholics for banishing the relative religious freedom in his homeland, and thus driving him and countless others into exile.

¹⁹ According to Comenius, there is a parallel between the actions of man and of nature, and nature is a creator of forms.

²⁰ For example, he would take his pupils outside into the woods and teach them the names of plants and animals, just as his own mother allegedly used to teach him. In Fulnek, there is a place in the forest close to the castle called Žákovský háj (the Disciples' Grove), where Comenius allegedly used to bring his pupils to learn.

²¹ To add an example from own experience: I was barely seven years old when my parents took us to a summer course of English. Our teacher, who was responsible for a group of children aged seven to fourteen and most of them absolute beginners, made us learn the English alphabet in one afternoon and then practise spelling.

If children were to be taught in a classroom, Comenius had specifications as to what such a classroom should look like. It was to be light and airy with big windows, and walls should be covered with pictures from which children could learn²². He also promoted libraries from which poor children could borrow books if they could not afford to buy them. In such cases, he would advise to make notes while reading, so that students would not forget the contents of the books even after they had to return the books. This was especially important since he proposed that children should more or less learn out of their own volition, while teachers were there to show them the best way to achieve their goals, and supervise their work, making sure they performed all their tasks and that they performed them well. With respect to this shift in the teacher's role, Comenius required that children do not spend too much time at schools and spend half of their education time by independent studying. Such practice is quite common in the world today, and it remains an embarrassing fact that in Comenius' homeland the independent studying mostly constitutes occasional homework easily accomplished within an hour.

But Comenius did not just offer suggestions, propositions and new ideas. He also pointed out problems all educationists have to take into account, in an age when practically no one else realized them:

“...mental development, the psychological basis of teaching methods, the relationship between school and society, the need to organize or regulate syllabuses and the administrative organization of education, and lastly, the international organization of research and education.”²³

Comenius's main educational works include the *School of Infancy* (the first ever book on education of the youngest children), the *Great Didactic*, *Orbis Pictus* (the first ever picture textbook), *School of Pansophy*, *Gates of Languages Unlocked* and the *General Consultation on an Improvement of All Things Human*. But Comenius's works are much vaster than these few volumes, of course. He wrote about socio-economic and religious problems of the time. He even created a *Map of Moravia*, so accurate that geographers today are still amazed²⁴. His *Labyrinth of the World* and *Paradise of the Heart*, essentially

²² Again, children were to be shown the relations between what they were taught and that which they could see and experience in their everyday lives.

²³ Piaget, Jean. “The Significance of John Amos Comenius at Present Time,” in *Selections*. UNESCO, 1957. Available online as: <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications/ThinkersPdf/comeniuse.PDF>

²⁴ Even in his drawing of Vysočina (the Highlands), a range between Bohemia and Moravia, which was his least accurate, the worst misplacement he made was 4.3 km compared to the real position of the settlement in

an allegorical autobiography not dissimilar to Dante's Divine Comedy, is still considered a jewel of Czech literature.

In short, Comenius was a great man and a visionary whose ideas bridge centuries, and it is beyond shame that his own homeland seems unable to make proper use of his legacy – unlike some other European countries.

Other prominent citizens

There are over twenty people who were born in Fulnek or lived there at some point of their lives, who are worth mentioning. However, they are not what this thesis is about, and therefore I have chosen but a few of them not to make this an encyclopaedic list²⁵.

From all the painters of Fulnek there is one name that cannot be omitted, and that is the one of *František Kledenský*²⁶ (1766-1853). This artist painted towns, settlements and landmarks in the region with great precision; therefore has provided a valuable insight into what those places looked like in the first half of the 19th century²⁷.

The former director of RETEX²⁸, *Jaromír Peterek* (1931 – 2006), also cultivated his interest in local and regional history. He published about a hundred articles on Fulnek and its surroundings and compiled studies on the history of Fulnek's voluntary fire brigade, the Loreta complex, the Capuchin Monastery; he wrote about significant descendants of Fulnek.

Ferenc Hopp (1833 – 1919) was also a businessman, but Fulnek was merely his place of birth, while his business was based in Budapest. He was a great traveller and photographer, and founded the "Ferenc Hopp Museum of East Asian Art" in Budapest. Although he did not spend much time in his birthplace, he never forgot about it and even made possible the construction of the town's sewage system by a generous sponsorship.

The charitable bishop of Hradec Králové, Fulnek-born *Johann Leopold von Hay* (1735 – 1794), played cards with Mozart during the musician's unfortunate stay in Olomouc. But the bishop's most important contribution to the Czech nation was the major role he played in the issuing of the Edict of Tolerance by Emperor Joseph II in 1782. He also supported learned men and artists, including his friend and linguist Josef Dobrovský.

Sylvie Doláková (*1957) is an inconspicuous second Comenius of Fulnek. With vast experience from teaching in kindergarten and primary school and passion for teaching English, she has become an advertiser of Comenius's principle of teaching

²⁵ The list is available on the website of the Fulnek Information Centre: http://www.ic-fulnek.cz/vismo/zobraz_dok.asp?id_org=200101&id_ktg=1045&p1=1171

²⁶ Sometimes spelt Kletenský

²⁷ http://www.ic-fulnek.cz/vismo/dokumenty2.asp?id_org=200101&id=1324&p1=1171

²⁸ A textile factory based in Fulnek which no longer exists

through games and focus on the practical. She leads seminars for teachers all over the Czech Republic, lectures at the Pedagogical Faculty of the Masaryk University in Brno, attends conferences and courses across Europe and has published an aid book for English teachers named *Playing English*.

The chemist *Stanislav Oppl* (1871 – 1939) wrote fairy tales for children in his free time, and also a lovingly biased history book on Fulnek, “The Chronicle of the Venerable Town of Fulnek, Once Home to J.A. Comenius”²⁹, which was published in 1928.

The father and son *Konwitschny*, both sharing the first name Franz, were both renowned musicians. The father (1876 – 1938) was a chapel-master and a music teacher in Fulnek, who founded several orchestras in town and took care of the local musical youth. The son (1901 – 1962) became a famous conductor and the director of the State Opera in Dresden and later the State Opera in Berlin. He regularly appeared at the Prague Spring, the annual festival of classical music.

Anton Gödrich (1859 – 1942) represented the Austrian-Hungarian Empire at the first modern Olympics in 1896. He won a silver medal in individual road cycling.

Fulnek came to the attention of the whole country once more in 2011 when the tennis player *Petra Kvitová* (*1990) won both the WTA Tour Championships and Wimbledon. Petra became a new celebrity of her home town and a “godmother” to Fulnek’s new literary hit, “Terezka, the Princess of Fulnek”³⁰ by Milan Barbořík.

²⁹ Kronika staroslavného města Fulneku, p. sobišt J.A. Komenského

³⁰ Terezka, princezna z Fulneku

Cultural Institutions in Fulnek

When you try to find out about the cultural department and its workings before 2007, it is almost as if the two decades between 1989 and 2007 did not exist. The Town Hall employees are usually quite new, and when asked about culture, no matter the time scope, they refer you to the Cultural Centre³¹. In the end, I was able to conduct a short interview with Mrs. Marie Válová, who used to work in the cultural sphere in Fulnek since 1970s and after the revolution became the head of the new Cultural Department within the Town Hall.

Before 1989, there were two cultural spheres: the state culture and the union culture. State, or rather regional-wise, Fulnek was under the District Cultural Centre in Nový Jičín. Union-wise, Fulnek's cultural life was the domain of the local ROMO Company; the country's most prominent producer and exporter of washing machines at the time; namely the United Worker's Club. The Club building is southwest of the square, and nowadays there is a Vietnamese restaurant and bowling in it. Cultural events were financed through sponsorship; mostly by ROMO.

In the 1990s, the Club was closed down and a new department of culture created at the Town Hall. It operated on a one-year-plan with the budget of about 3.5 million CZK (140 thousand Euros), which less than a half of what the current Cultural Centre has at its disposal.

Culture in Fulnek was always connected with education to a certain extent. Mostly this was visible during the initial Town Days³², but also through cooperation between the Cultural Department and local schools. The so-called "culture to schools" programme entailed organising concerts, theatre performances, artwork and other kinds of events for the pupils.

Mrs Válová also described the attitudes of three Mayors she had worked under towards culture. Mr. Pazdera, a Social Democrat who became the Mayor in 1994, was a "fan" of culture, but somehow lacked the relevant vision/ knowhow. Mr. Blaheta,

³¹ The Cultural Centre is the official institution in charge of culture in Fulnek, and was founded in the aforementioned year of 2007.

³² There is a separate section dedicated to this annual event later in the thesis.

an independent candidate proposed by the Christian Democrat Party elected in 1998, was a constructor and, among others, projected the town's new library on the ground floor of the massive kindergarten building. The kindergarten thus lost its changing rooms (inconvenient), its gym (a shame, since it was the venue for children's performances, yoga classes and – as there was a piano there – choir rehearsals), its sauna (a truly dreadful place) and the access to the incredibly scary cupboards underneath the staircase where a hedgehog slept and ate naughty children if they were noisy and woke him up. But at the time, there was nowhere else the library could be placed.

Mr. Richtárik, elected in 2002 at the age of thirty-six as an independent candidate, was young and vain, Mrs. Válová tells me, but he was definitely a man of vision.

The problem Fulnek has had to face is that it has ten villages under its administration, most of which have schools and other public institutions whose buildings are owned by Fulnek. According to Mrs. Válová, as much as half of the town's budget each year goes is consumed by the maintenance costs for Fulnek's properties. This corresponds with the findings of the current Budget Outlook for 2012-2015³³, whose authors advise the Town Council to lower the number of buildings in its possession to free its funds for other purposes.

Returning to the question of cultural institutions in Fulnek, the main ones at present are the following:

M stské kulturní centrum Fulnek (MKCF)³⁴

(Cultural Centre of Fulnek)

MKCF was founded in 2007 as a contributory organisation and its headquarters are, as one might expect, in the building of the new Cultural Centre. This building had been the town's cinema, with a pub on the ground floor, and has been extensively renovated through 2004-2006. Currently, there is a multi-functional hall there, a non-smoking

³³ Available at <http://fulnek.cz/rozpocetovy-vyhled-mesta-fulnek-2012-2015/ds-1004>

³⁴ The main source of information was the MKCF website: <http://mkcf.cz/>

restaurant and a conference room for hire. The multi-functional hall serves as a cinema café most of the time, with space for other events, such as the annual town ball.

In 2007, the main competences of the Cultural Centre were:

Organisation of cultural/educational events and activities, such as public lectures, exhibitions, courses, theatre performances, markets, the Town Day and others. Within this scope of activities the Cultural Centre also publishes the monthly bulletin, informing the citizens of current events in Fulnek.

Screening films in the cinema. Unfortunately, since the screening hall needed to be reconstructed in a way that would serve other purposes as well, and thus turned into a cinema-café, it has been unable to provide a comfortable environment for watching longer films. The new hall has the capacity of 110 seats, but the average number of visitors per screening in 2009 was 51.4³⁵, 63.4 in 2010³⁶ and 60 in 2011³⁷. Apart from the lack of comfort, the delay in showing films compared to major cinemas in larger cities is considerable – so by the time the hits get to Fulnek, most potential viewers have already seen them in cinemas in Ostrava or Nový Ji ín. A recent article spoke of debates at the Town Council about the future of the cinema with the following result: the town intends to keep the cinema running, while at the same time has rejected the plan to digitalise the cinema (this would require a two million investment)³⁸. I also talked to Mgr. Darina Kova íková, a member of the Town Council, about one possible solution for the cinema being independent/ rare films, since it cannot compete with the modern multiplexes in larger cities anyway. However, there is always the question whether Fulnek has a sufficient target group to ensure the sustainability of this solution. Mrs. Pavlína Tvardková, MKCF's current director, says there already have been attempts at screening rare films in the cinema; but these attempts were cut short once it became clear that they would not even pay for the expenses of the actual screening³⁹.

Running the library. The library occupies the ground floor of the kindergarten building⁴⁰, and apart from book-lending, it also offers the use of the internet, copying,

³⁵ *MKCF Annual Report*, 2009.

³⁶ *MKCF Annual Report*, 2010.

³⁷ *MKCF Annual Report*, 2011.

³⁸ „Promítání nekon í, ale...“. *Novoji ínský deník*. 28 February 2012.

³⁹ Interview I conducted with Mrs. Tvardková on 12th June 2012.

⁴⁰ There are also local libraries in the villages under Fulnek's administration – D rné, Lukavec and Stachovice.

printing, laminating and ring binding. The annual report from 2010 shows that the state of the library was below standard in 2006-2010, the worst year being 2007 when the library was transferred under the administration of the Cultural Centre. Acquisition of new books seems to be the gravest problem, along with the age of electronic equipment. The situation has slightly improved since 2007 (increase in budget, book acquisitions and opening times), however, it is still far from satisfactory⁴¹. One then wonders why the child section offers a book called “The Vomitting Fox and Other Stories”, while there is no single Plato in the adult department.

Running the non-smoking restaurant on the ground floor of the Cultural Centre building. The restaurant was originally intended for a lease; therefore its management was excluded from the original budget of MKCF, and only added once it became clear the lease was not happening. The initial feedback for the restaurant was on the positive side and it was turning a reasonable profit (more than 1.5 million CZK – nearly 60 thousand Euros)⁴². After all, the idea of a non-smoking place where employees could go for lunch menus is definitely a good one. Unfortunately, this seems to be the major reason people come to the restaurant, while for the rest of the opening hours, the restaurant remained practically empty. This resulted in the amendment of the opening hours: from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays and being closed entirely on weekends (although it is still available for hire). Such a solution is very unfortunate, indeed; a much better one would have probably been to turn the place into a café-restaurant. After all, the only other viable café in Fulnek⁴³ has allowed smoking in the conservatory (which you have to walk through to get inside), making it very unpleasant for families with children; and the MKCF restaurant already has children play facilities in its garden. Without doubt, other non-smoking inhabitants and visitors of Fulnek, not only mothers with children, would greatly appreciate a good cancer-free café. Unfortunately, there is always the question of how much this solution would cost and if MKCF would be willing and able to accept such a challenge. Still, according to its latest annual report, MKCF is once again turning a profit: about 180 thousand CZK (about 7 thousand Euros)⁴⁴, and this investment has the potential of paying itself off quite soon.

⁴¹ MKCF Annual Report, 2010.

⁴² MKCF Annual Report, 2009.

⁴³ Kavárna Fulnek near the train and bus stations

⁴⁴ MKCF Annual Report, 2011.

Naturally, I brought up this option in the interview I did with Mrs. Tvardková. I learned that the opening hours were prolonged again for the summer – during weekends and evenings it will be possible to have a drink/ snack there; but the restaurant will remain closed but for the lunch menus during week days.

Mrs. Tvardková claims the facilities for children are insufficient. There is a sand pit, a couple of swings and a trampoline outside in the garden, while inside there is a play corner with toys and crayons for drawing. Right now, this is probably the best equipped and child-friendly restaurant in town; although, of course, there is always space for improvement. The bar inside also already has a coffee machine; ice cream and some cakes are available, too. Mrs. Tvardková is of the opinion that mothers on leave are not interested in different kinds of coffee; this is rather contrary to my observations and experience. Furthermore, even if the mothers were not interested in a variety of good quality hot beverages, who is to say that neither are other non-smokers?

Running the Information Centre. The IC was initially under the culture department of the Town Hall and then moved under MKCF in 2007. However, this did not prove to be an ideal solution, and since 2010, the IC has managed by Town Hall's Department of Internal Affairs. The main task of the IC, naturally, is to take care of tourists: it provides free guided tours of the town, information on local sights and landmarks, accommodation and places to eat, gives travel advice, sells souvenirs, publications related to Fulnek, postcards, provides Internet and other services. It launched a new website very recently, which functions as a twin site to the official town one, and they were voted the 3rd best Internet presentation of a town in the regional round of the Golden Coat of Arms 2012 contest⁴⁵.

MKCF is in a rather unfortunate position, in a way. Its role is to provide “culture” essentially for everyone. As Mrs. Tvardková says, they are not there to do specialised culture like the other organisations in town, but need to satisfy the general masses. The director's interest is in organising big events with high attendance which would pay for themselves, otherwise MKCF's focus might become too fragmented. Personally, without pretending to understand the economics working behind the cultural processes, I do

⁴⁵ <http://www.fulnek.cz>. (This contest is held annually under the patronage of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry for Local Development, Ministry of Healthcare and Ministry of Environment.)

not believe you can just please everyone at once; therefore this fragmentation might actually be a way to reach more people. There are only so many grand events a small town can take in a year, and it makes no sense for the chief cultural organisation of the town to remain idle for the rest of the year. Besides, as Mrs. Tvardková points out herself, MKCF does have only two fixed employees in the “organising” department.

People often complain they are ill-informed of cultural events in the town. There are reasons, however, to suspect this is simply making excuses; each event is advertised by posters, in the monthly town bulletin⁴⁶, on the internet, and you can even subscribe to the e-mailing list of the Information Centre and stay informed about everything that happens in Fulnek.

While I appreciate MKCF’s difficult position and all the hindering factors, I rather resent their apparent no-go attitude (if one presents an option to them, they seem to immediately look for reasons it would not be possible to achieve), which is, after all, present in Fulnek and its citizens.

⁴⁶ MKCF has divided the events, however, by their organizers. The back page, which used to show all events and still most likely is the only part of the bulletin people read to inform themselves on cultural events, now only shows events organised by MKCF. This is because MKCF would be held responsible for any changes to events organised by other subjects, which is understandably unpleasant. All the other events are therefore presented inside the bulletin, where the average citizen never looks for them.

Comenius Fulnek⁴⁷

This association, as the name already implies, is dedicated to the legacy of Jan Amos Komenský (Johan Amos Comenius), who had spent the beginning of his career in Fulnek. The main scopes of the association's activities are, therefore, education, environment and humanities. Comenius Fulnek was registered on 14th May 2008, and its membership is virtually open to persons over eighteen years of age without a criminal record and sharing the same interests and "ideology" as the association⁴⁸.

According to its website, the association's goals are the following:

- to educate and work with youth and adults
- to help realise the second phase of the Capuchin Monastery renovation and its active use
- to help to get to know all aspects of the micro-region; to support and document local traditions in order to preserve the uniqueness of the micro-region
- to map local cultural, spiritual and natural heritage in cooperation with heritage and environmental protection organisations
- to promote tourism and build tourist infrastructure
- to promote citizen initiatives based on their interest in their own town, humanities and inter-cooperation
- to help with the integration of ethnic minorities and handicapped persons
- to spread information and to educate in the area of environmental protection
- to participate in administrative and other procedures where the interests of environment, landscape and heritage protection may be at risk
- to promote local businesses
- to positively motivate citizens to take care of the local landscape and heritage, and thus to help the preservation of the afore-mentioned and the unique local gene pool

⁴⁷ Information on this organisation available at: <http://www.comeniusfulnek.cz/>

⁴⁸ Comenius Fulnek Charter, 2010. Available for download at <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/o-sdruzeni/>.

- to promote the visions of J.A. Comenius and help them become part of everyday life and thinking again⁴⁹

The association is financed through membership fees, grants and gifts, and so far has mostly turned profit (with the exception of 2009, when grants and gifts received in 2009 had to be paid out – but such development was to be expected). Also, the turnout at the Comenius Fulnek – organised events is very high⁵⁰. It can therefore be safely assumed that this association is the most successful one of all Fulnek's culture-related organisations.

*Muzeum Novojiínska (Museum of the Nový Jiín District)*⁵¹

This museum encompasses a number of museums and/or listed buildings, such as the chateaus in Nový Jiín and Kunín and museums of Mendel, Freud and Palacký. In Fulnek, the mother organisation takes care of the J. A. Comenius Memorial and the Church of St. Joseph at the Capuchin Monastery, which it shares with Comenius Fulnek.

The Memorial hosts a permanent exhibition on Comenius and the Brethren missionaries, who spread the religion practically to all corners of the Earth. In the chapel, which is part of the Memorial building and the last place in Europe bearing witness to Comenius's preaching, the Brethren still celebrate masses. Couples can also, strangely enough, get a civilian wedding in the chapel and have beautiful pictures afterwards taken in the Memorial's park, adorned by a statue of Comenius by a famous Czech sculptor, Jan Štursa.

St. Joseph church is the only re-constructed part of the Capuchin monastery. This job was done amazingly (apart from the questionable painting on the façade, that is) and the inside of the church is magnificent. Since most of the inside had been broken or stolen, and since one church for a town this small is enough, St. Joseph's was never re-

⁴⁹ <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/o-sdruzeni/>

⁵⁰ Comenius Fulnek Annual Reports 2008-2009. Available for download at <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/vyrocní-zprava/>

⁵¹ <http://www.muzeum.novy-jicin.cz/>

consecrated, and instead has been used as a venue for cultural events, such as exhibitions, public lectures and concerts.

T.O. Touhy

This organisation is essentially a group of friends whose main interest is holding events for children with special focus on nature, camping, friendship and showing the younger generation the beauty of the Czech lands. Touhy also leads a forestry club for children.

The regular events include a pétanque tournament, Partysan's Machine Gun (a contest in speed, shooting, anti-chemical preparedness and such – a parody of the former regime's military training for children), push-scooter rides, Easter Egg Run (a run from the square up to the chateau gate), and Saying Hello to Holidays (with contests such as throwing schoolbags, stacking school books and sling-shooting at school windows).⁵²

The organization has also cooperated on a number of projects with Comenius Fulnek and the Cultural Centre, namely the Fairy-Tale Forest⁵³, witch burning⁵⁴ and the board game club.

Moravské Krava sko

This is the historic name of the region where Fulnek belongs, and also a free association of local towns and villages, aiming to improve local tourism. Currently a foundation of an official organisation is planned, documents and forms drawn out, and a grant request for the design of a new website has been sent to the relevant authorities (the Moravian-Silesian Region Office). The following towns and villages are involved: Bílovec, Klimkovice, Odry, Albrechtí ky, Bartošovice, Jeseník nad Odrou, Kunín, Mošnov, Sedlnice, Fulnek, P íbor and Studénka⁵⁵.

⁵² <http://www.totouhy.wz.cz/>

⁵³ An event as old as I can remember. Children walk through specific routes through the forest on the Castle Hill, meeting characters from fairy-tales who give the children various tasks. If the children complete the task, they are rewarded, usually with sweets.

⁵⁴ On 30th April. Not literal, obviously!

⁵⁵ <http://moravskekravarsko.cz/tema/tema.phtml?id=3345&lng=&menu=3>.

The rest of the information was obtained during an interview with Mrs. Pavlína Vráblová, the director of Fulnek's Information Centre and an active member of Comenius Fulnek, 12th June 2012

Sponsors

Cultural events and projects in Fulnek are often sponsored by prominent subjects, such as the Moravian-Silesian Region, the EU, OKD Foundation⁵⁶ and Hyundai⁵⁷. The Region occasionally sends its prominent representatives to appear at a project's opening or closing for appearance's sake, but otherwise the cooperation between Fulnek's cultural organisations and the Region is strictly about finances. The same goes for the EU: apart from the project called The Days of Czech-Polish Culture (details in the chapter on cultural projects in Fulnek), its support has mostly been financial.

⁵⁶ OKD = Ostravsko-Karvinské doly (Ostrava-Karviná Mines), the major mining corporation in the region

⁵⁷ Hyundai built their European plant in the Moravian-Silesian region in 2006, and perhaps because of the plant's controversial origin (mainly its location close to a natural reserve, and therefore its questionable environmental impact), the company wishes to be seen in a better light.

Summary

There has been a major development in the structure and number of cultural institutions in Fulnek in the past two decades or so. While before 1989 most of the cultural life was organised as a kind of a side project of the major factory in town; in the 1990s a new Cultural Department at the Town Hall was established. There were hardly any non-governmental organisations involved in the cultural life, unless one takes in account the Salvation of the Capuchin Monastery Fund aiming for the reconstruction of the said monastery⁵⁸. The Museum of the Nový Ji ín District only played a very minor role, as it only took care of the Comenius Memorial – and that particular sight was largely inaccessible at first, although the new exposition was opened in 1992. It therefore follows that the Cultural Department encompassed the widest range of cultural activities, while also operating on a relatively low budget.

This changed in 2007 when the Cultural Department was taken out of the Town Hall structure to form the “independent” MKCF. Very soon afterwards, Comenius Fulnek was founded (its members had been active in cultural life in the town even before that, though). The Chapel of St.Rochus and Sebastian was reconstructed and so was the Church of St. Joseph at the Capuchin Monastery, thus giving the Museum of Nový Ji ín District and Comenius Fulnek both an administrative centre and two venues to organise cultural and/or educational events. This gives each of the main cultural institutions in Fulnek space for their “own kind of culture”.

MKCF is mostly financed from the town’s budget and from its own direct profit. It is therefore under significant pressure not to support any event which would not pay for itself. MKCF’s focus, therefore, is virtually providing entertainment for the “masses”. This means, of course, that this entertainment mirrors the desires of the populus, and since only about two hundred people in Fulnek have a university diploma and over fifteen hundred only completed their compulsory education⁵⁹, the desires are not necessarily highly intellectual.

⁵⁸ More on the topic in the Sights and Monuments chapter.

⁵⁹ Czech Statistical Office. Citizens over 15 years of age according to their highest completed level of education in individual settlements, 2001. Available online at:
http://vdb.czso.cz/vdbvo/tabparam.jsp?voa=tabulka&cislatab=OB026_OK.40&vo=null

This is, however, balanced out by the activities of Comenius Fulnek and the District Museum. Comenius has proven very successful at securing funding from the major corporations in the region, and thus can fully focus on its cultural/educational/environmental activities, regardless of the attendance⁶⁰. The District Museum lives off contributions and provides a different kind of cultural output corresponding to its vocation – preserving the legacy of the past and acquainting its visitors with it.

There are certain worries concerning MKCF's attitude towards new development suggestions, but it remains to be seen how justified they are.

⁶⁰ Ironically, this is sometimes higher than that of MKCF's events.

Cultural Projects and Events⁶¹

This chapter will offer an insight into the kinds of cultural projects and events citizens and visitors of Fulnek can enjoy. Their range is very colourful and their number is quite high for such a small town. I have chosen a representative sample of them, either the most important long-term projects or one-off events which help to illustrate the diversity of cultural life in Fulnek. The projects and events are mainly coordinated and organised by Comenius Fulnek, MKCF and the District Museum, with occasional assistance from other smaller organisations, or in (financial) partnership with the Moravian-Silesian Region, the EU and the major regional corporations.

Edu&Art

This is a large project, coordinated by Comenius Fulnek, encompassing a number of smaller projects and series of events organized by the above-mentioned Comenius Fulnek, MKCF, Museum of Nový Ji ín District (Muzeum Novoji ínska) and several smaller organisations. As the name implies, these projects and events revolve around culture in its broader sense (promoting folk traditions, exhibitions, concerts, games etc.) and education. The financing of Edu&Art is shared among the OKD Foundation, the Moravian-Silesian Region, the Town of Fulnek and individual or company sponsors.

Edu&Art started out in 2009 with the following projects:

Teachers' Day

This is an attempt at renewing the tradition of J. A. Comenius Days in Fulnek – a meeting of teachers from all over the Czech Republic and abroad and their participation at seminars and conferences, accompanied by cultural events. Of course, the organizers are well aware that such a huge project cannot be brought back to life within a few years, but they are hoping for the best in the long-term horizon. In 2009, the turnout was

⁶¹ <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/projekty/>,
<http://kultura.mkcf.cz/>

seventy-six and the event was positively received by the general public as well as the participating teachers. The project participation rose to 120 the following year.

Schola Ludus

In 2007, a few people, who would later become Comenius Fulnek members, founded the Board Game Club, which became very popular. It started organising tournaments in Sudoku, Carcassonne and later in board games, too, with participation of pupils from schools in the region. The estimated turnout during the school rounds in the first year was 700 pupils. In 2010, the participation decreased slightly to 600 pupils⁶². It was also the year the newly forming phenomenon of Fulnek, the princess Tereзка, was introduced, and found its way to this event through a new tournament – “Win the princess Tereзка prize!”⁶³

A Crayon for Tibet

A project originated with the thought of making humanity an integral part of people's minds. Following an auction of paintings made by orphans from Kathmandu and organising material help for the orphanage, a week-long experience project was realised at the primary school in Kunín. The children were introduced to the environment and the living conditions of the Tibetan orphans, and the outputs were presented on the last day of the event, when a financial and material donation was presented to the Tibetan Jingme Tenzi.

Accompanying this project were the following events:

- an exhibition of photographs and Tibetan artifacts brought home by Tereza Mroková from Fulnek, who has spent time teaching English to the orphans in Kathmandu
- painting and assembling a puzzle of the Tibetan flag
- putting together material donations for the orphanage in Kathmandu
- a didgeridoo concert performed by Jakub Slovák
- screening of feature films and documentaries
- a Tibetan Singing Bowls concert

⁶² This, however, might not mean the project became less popular; the numbers are very likely influenced by the numerical strength of particular grades participating in this event.

⁶³ More to be written about this phenomenon later in the chapter.

About 200 people participated in the first year of this event. The following year, a similar event took place at the primary school in He mánky. Also, a series of lectures and music productions were carried out at primary schools in Fulnek, Odry, Kunín and He manice as well as for general public. The turnout in 2010 was approximately 300 people. The plan for 2012 is to start virtual adoptions – that is, a joint project of Comenius Fulnek and the general public (or other interested parties) to “adopt” children from the Third World countries and support them through their education. These adoptions will most likely be aimed at helping under-privileged children in South Asia, as the polls at Comenius Fulnek’s website show⁶⁴.

The Folk Tradition Renewal

In some of the villages under Fulnek’s administration, folk traditions are still very much alive and popular among the inhabitants. The purpose of this particular project is to sustain the already renewed tradition of “Throwing Mo ena into Water”⁶⁵. This ancient pagan celebration of spring is, according to the event organisers, an important legacy of the ancestors of local people, which needs to be kept and nourished. A procession carrying Mo ena was organised, accompanied by a related cultural programme and a small feast. In 2009, forty people participated, increasing to sixty the following year.

Ekofór – Eco-cartoon

The Brontosaurus movement allowed Comenius Fulnek to use its idea of using cartoons to promote environmental education and the Earth Day. An exhibition of environment-protection-themed cartoons was organised to show visitors of all ages a lighter side of the topic. Accompanying this event was a lecture on Power and Climate Change delivered by Prof. Ing. Jaroslav Kadrnožka, CSc. (Power Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering, Technological University in Brno). The lecture was organized in cooperation with Europe Direct, Nový Ji ín.

Divadlo žije! – Theatre’s not dead!

⁶⁴ <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/>

⁶⁵ Throwing a straw figure representing death into the river, an allegory for chasing the winter away so that the spring (and new life) can come back to the village.

The amateur theatre ensemble was revived in 2008 after having been dismissed for a long time. Members of Comenius Fulnek employed the group at cultural events, such as the folk tradition renewals, and helped build/ create the theatre scene. Unfortunately, the ensemble disassembled the very next year; Comenius therefore started assisting another amateur group consisting of members mainly from Fulnek and Suchbát nad Odrou.

The World of Word and a book restoration exhibition

This project came into being in 2008 as a reminder (and in defiance) of an event which took place in May 1623, when Protestant books were burned publicly at the town square. These pyres burned for as long as five hours at a time, as the exposition in Comenius Memorial testifies. The purpose of the new project was to renew young people's interest in books and dramatic art.

About 1200 people attended this event (consisting of a literary contest, reading of grandparents to children, workshops on restoration of books and hand-crafting paper, author reading and various contests) in 2009⁶⁶. Apart from children and teachers from local schools, Comenius Fulnek also invited participants from Slovakia, Hungary and Nepal⁶⁷.

The World of Word has, according to Comenius Fulnek annual reports, become a highly acclaimed event, and it has been held each year. Rather unfortunately, it has been handed over to MKCF, which has been unable to keep the standard set by the first two years. Comenius still participates by providing finances for contest prizes.

A Summer School for University Students

About 35 students of the Regional Environmental Economics Department of the Technical University in Ostrava came to Fulnek twice in 2009 to take part in Regional Development workshops. The workshops were, in particular, dedicated to the reconstruction of the Capuchin Monastery; and students were asked to think of options for new uses of the complex. They also conducted a survey with the locals⁶⁸.

A Fountain Watch and the Spring in the Monastery

⁶⁶ Comenius Fulnek Annual Report, 2009. Available for download at: <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/>.

⁶⁷ Source: see above.

⁶⁸ Source: see above.

A Fountain Watch (2009) was a joint exhibition by visual artists Jan and Adam Soušek and jeweller Radka Kovaříková, who wanted to point out different ways of artistic expression to the people of Fulnek. The event was accompanied by a fashion show (models designed by another young artist, Lenka Sršňová, from Slovakia) and included a commentary on all the works by their respective authors. About 400 people attended this one-off event⁶⁹.

The following year, an international symposium on arbitrary jewellery was held at the Monastery, accompanied by an exhibition of Radka Kovaříková's work and Lenka Sršňová's fashion show. The jewel, for the sake of the symposium, was defined very loosely: as a piece of architecture, graphic design, statue, fashion -generally a product of various artistic disciplines; and it was up to everyone to find their favourite. The purpose of the event was to link art and education and give young artists a chance to meet. Around 300 people visited/ participated in this event⁷⁰.

Sixty Years of ROMO Fulnek

ROMO used to be the industrial Comenius of the town. That is – the town's most prominent selling point. ROMO's washing machines were a phenomenon in the socialist era, and a great percentage of households used to own one. However, the factory was later split into several branches and as of now, it does not exist anymore.

This event brought together former colleagues, enabled collection of a vast amount of archive materials on the factory from the citizens themselves⁷¹. A short film was also created about the factory, so there is a remainder of the days passed by for future generations.

The attendance was about 700 people and the feedback was, according to Comenius Fulnek's Annual Report 2009, very positive.

J. A. Comenius – Philosopher

This event opened with an exhibition of life-sized statues and other likenesses of J. A. Comenius by the academic sculptor Igor Kitzberger. Accompanying this exhibition was another one, created by director emeritus of the Comenius Museum in Pátek,

⁶⁹ Source: see above.

⁷⁰ Comenius Fulnek Annual Report 2010.

⁷¹ These then went to the Land Archive in Opava

PhDr. František Hýbl, and named “J. A. Comenius: polyhistor, citizen of the world and pacifist”. Visitors were shown dates and places Comenius visited, key events in his life, his works in the fields of philosophy, theology, pedagogy, history, cartography, medicine, politics and astronomy. There were also portraits of prominent figures of Comenius’s times with whom he exchanged correspondence; and documents related to his descendants, who are still among us today.

To make these exhibitions livelier, Igor Kitzberger came to give a commentary on his pieces; and the musician Štěpán Rak and the actor Afréd Strejček, both well-known in the Czech Republic, came to perform their concert, *Vivat Comenius*. This concert is for guitar, human voice and Orff armamentarium, with words from Comenius’s “General Consultation of an Improvement of All Things Human”.

Vivat Comenius

This is a new tradition Comenius Fulnek, the Museum of the Nový Jičín District and local schools started in 2010. At the heart of the event, there is a symbolic saying goodbye to the 9th graders⁷² from both of the primary schools and the special school in Fulnek by their teachers and the town leadership. The first year was accompanied by an exhibition of newly discovered historic photographs of the Disciples’ Grove and multimedia presentations of the individual grades.

Advent Concerts

This new and rather beautiful tradition began in 2007 when the concerts were first organised in St. Joseph’s Church. Soon it spread further than just the music, and it became sort of a pre-Christmas get-together, with Christmas decoration of the church, exchanging recipes for Christmas sweets and mutual tasting of the results.

Excursions and debates

The aim of this chain of events was to promote the positive feelings of local people to their region. Trips were organised to the chateau in Kunín, the museum in Suchbátka nad Odrou, to Nový Jičín and Rožnov pod Radhoštěm. There was also a guided tour

⁷² This is the last grade of the primaries in the Czech Republic

through Fulnek, which was, according to Comenius Fulnek's Annual Report 2009, very successful. About 150 participated in this project.

Edu&Art for the Loreta Home for Children

This project has been going on for a few years already. Comenius Fulnek aims to help integrate the children from this home into the "majority society". The children participated in activities organised by Comenius, and Comenius also made a donation to the home, from which Christmas presents for the children were bought.

For the organisation, this is fulfilling the most important teachings of J. A. Comenius – education, working with the youth and not forgetting the handicapped.

The Cultural History Trail⁷³

This project was born from the acute need to build proper tourist infrastructure in a town of such rich heritage as Fulnek is. As an initial step in this process, Comenius Fulnek decided to create an educational history trail, which would inform visitors of the most remarkable landmarks in Fulnek.

The project was carried out in 2009 and was financed mainly by the OKD Foundation, the Town of Fulnek and a number of other sponsors.

In the end, thirteen information boards were made and placed in the vicinity of the most important sights or monuments. Each of the board carries information (in four languages: Czech, English⁷⁴, German and Polish) on town's past and present, including information on remarkable people who came from or at a time dwelled in the town. If situation permitted, a bench and a waste bin were placed at the boards.

The installation of the boards, benches and bins was carried out through cooperation on an international level. The INEX-SDA organisation, which specialises in volunteer work for international students, found participants, whose stay in Fulnek (accommodation, meals and cultural programme) was financed by Comenius Fulnek. The cultural programme entailed exhibition of photographs taken throughout the project realisation, a concert, discussions with pupils at the local primaries and general public, and trips across the region. In the end, about ten international students (from Slovakia, Japan, Korea, Turkey, Spain, Poland and Israel), ten local secondary school students and fifteen volunteers participated in the work. Due to the nature of the project's realisation, it also served other commendable purposes, such as inter-cultural exchange and overcoming language barriers⁷⁵.

The trail was finally opened with the participation of the Vice-Governor of the Moravian-Silesian Region, Ing. Jiří Zvientek, who cut the tape together with the association's director, Ing. Renáta Václavková, and a participant from Japan.

⁷³ <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/projekty/clovece-zastav-se/>

⁷⁴ I was privileged to have been tasked with creating the English version together with my mother.

⁷⁵ Comenius Fulnek Annual Report 2009, available for download at: <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/vyrocní-zpráva/>

The association still uses all of the outputs of the project, such as an audiovisual presentation or a multilingual quiz. The trail has been offered into the databases of various tourist information centres (with the all-country scope) and promoted at schools in the region as a tip for a trip or an excursion.

The maintenance of the trail is ensured by volunteer work of Comenius Fulnek members or school pupils participating in the environmental education programme within the framework of the Edu&Art project.

In May 2012, Comenius Fulnek's website informed that two of the information boards had been damaged. One of them was situated at the railway station and informed on the nearby villa Moraw and of the unfinished railway which was supposed to connect Fulnek to Opava. This board was possibly damaged by accident by one of the lorry drivers who like to park in this area. The second board is situated in the Disciples' Grove, where the philosopher Komenský used to bring his pupils, as he firmly believed that the best way to learn about nature was directly from nature. This board, unfortunately, was clearly vandalised. The total damage was estimated at 20 thousand CZK (almost 800 Euros). Since the organisation is financed mostly through sponsorship and gifts, finding the funds for the repairs is fairly complicated. Fortunately, the website informs that the works have already begun⁷⁶.

⁷⁶ <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/aktualne/naucna-stezka-je-ponicena/>

Princezna Tereška (Princess Tereška)

Tereška, Princess of Fulnek by a local resident named Milan Barbořík was first published almost a decade ago. Its main character, Tereška, turns into a princess each night in her dreams and has to fight latent evil lurking in her castle, and to prevent a war. The original purpose of the book was for the author's daughter to have a story about Fulnek with all the interesting stories of its people and houses⁷⁷.

After a long strive, the book will be published again by a major publisher of children's books, Albatros, and Mr. Barbořík is already working on a sequel. The town is, understandably, very keen on this kind of advertising, and gives Mr. Barbořík its full support. Tereška was turned into an icon. She is on bookmarks, postcards, even the menu in the non-smoking restaurant. There was a contest to find „real life“ Tereška, who would then appear at local cultural events. The winner, Gabriela Šerková, was then crowned by the new illustrators of the book, Mr. And Mrs. Anlauf, at the last Day of the Town on 2nd June 2012. Fulnek intends to make Tereška the face of its cultural life for a whole year⁷⁸.

The idea of the book and its propagation of Fulnek is an excellent one, to speak generally. The story is intriguing and adventurous, and the writing style is good for a first time author. It is, therefore, only logical the local authorities snatched at this chance to promote Fulnek, and one could even relate to this enthusiasm, which blew this little book for children into gigantic proportions. Tereška virtually became the Harry Potter of Fulnek. It is a deep shame, though, that Fulnek had so far been unable to do the same for its other treasures, such as John Amos Comenius, who, for all his faults, was undoubtedly a great man.

⁷⁷ Interview with Milan Barbořík. *Novojičínský deník*, 2.1.2012. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/kultura_region/milan-barborik-druhe-vydani-terezky20120102.html

⁷⁸ Tereška bude provázet obyvatele Fulneku celý rok. *Novojičínský deník*. 29.12.2011. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/kultura_region/terezka-bude-provazet-obyvatele-fulneku20111229.html?diskuse=1

Patchwork Exhibitions

These exhibitions have a long tradition in Fulnek. They are organised by the 1st Moravian Patchwork Club in cooperation with the District Museum and usually held on one of the June weekends. In 2012, it was the 9th year of the exhibitions, it took place on 15th-17th June and, compared to the first years when you could see a dozen or so quilts hanging from the walls of St. Joseph's, was huge. St. Joseph was full of patchwork quilts, bags, pillows, table/bed spreads and tapestries manufactured in many different styles. However, it was not just St. Joseph's, but also the nearby chapel of St. Rochus and the Brethren chapel at the J. A. Comenius's Memorial. The scale of the exhibition was stunning, and so were the exhibited items. It would seem that from an accidentally organised event years ago⁷⁹, the exhibitions grew to a major attraction of the patchwork society's social calendar.

The Days of Czech-Polish Culture

Fulnek participated in this EU project⁸⁰ in 2011. On 21st May, a few Czech bands played in the garden of the House of Culture in Rybnik-Niedobczyce (PL) within the "International Integration Music Picnic". On 17th June, an international contest of brass music bands named "Złota lira" took place in Rybnik and the following day was the Czech Day in Chorzow. Fulnek's brass orchestras (D rni anka and Fulnecká kapela) and Majorettes in Sport Line⁸¹.

On 26th August, a mini-tournament was held in bowling and table tennis. Presumably, these tournaments had international participation, but MKFC's website does not mention where they were held. In the evening of the same day, an exhibition was opened of photographs of Fulnek's and Rybnik's cultural sights by Czech and Polish authors.

⁷⁹ Ms. Dana B ezinová, one of the prominent members of the Patchwork Club, originally comes from Fulnek. Although she now lives and works in Ostrava, the tradition of these exhibitions rooted so deeply that they are still held in Fulnek.

⁸⁰ European Fund for Regional Development – Crossing the Borders.

⁸¹ <http://kultura.mkcf.cz/?page=12&rocnik=2011>

The main event took place on 27th August, when the participants of the initial events in Poland (brass bands and majorettes) came to perform in Fulnek. There were also various activities for children, and in the evening there was a concert of Czech and Polish bands.

On both of the final days, MKCF's non-smoking restaurant offered typical Polish meals⁸².

A ladies' session - Dámy na sloví ko

As the name suggests, this is an afternoon dedicated to women. It is a pseudo-cultural event that takes place annually, and involves such (stereo)typically female activities as talks on cosmetics, hair/nail care healthy lifestyle, alternative medicine or jewellery sale. The formerly mentioned topics are not necessarily negative as such, but then it gets interesting with talks on astrology, invisible (energy) worlds, numerology and tarot cards.

Women's self-perception is a very delicate thing, and if this event helps its visitors learn how to "make themselves more beautiful/healthier", then such results would be good. What is not so good is the advertising nature of these talks, propagation of certain beauty products or services, as this puts a question mark behind the true purpose of these presentations.

As far as the occult spirituality is concerned, it is potentially extremely dangerous. Of course, self-delusion is harmless in itself, but there are always individuals prepared to prey on weaker and easily manipulated minds⁸³, and it is therefore questionable whether the Cultural Centre should support the spread of such ideas.

Contest for the most charming gingerbread cabin

Baking gingerbread cabins is quite popular here in the Czech Republic. Fulnek holds this contest every year and the turnout is always high. You can enter the competition in three categories: children, youth and adult.

⁸² <http://kultura.mkcf.cz/?page=12&rocnik=2011>

⁸³ They are mostly people with elaborate psychological skills, who are able to turn their victims into gamblers within a week. It would be impressive if it was not so terrifying at the same time.

The Town Ball

Events like this are typical for Czech (but not exclusively) winters. In Fulnek, they are organised by MKCF and held in the multi-functional hall in its building. Before 2006, however, they had to be held in the Cultural Hall in Dřevěná, one of the villages under Fulnek's administration and about one kilometre from Fulnek.

In 2012, it was the 14th Town Ball, and the first time the town hall did not need to subsidise the event, while it was still profitable. Unfortunately, since the modern trend is for young people not to attend the traditional ballroom and Latin dancing classes when they are sixteen, MKCF took that into consideration and included very few „classical“ pieces in the programme. The result was a fancy dress disco, which was very entertaining, but “true spirit” was gone. There were also some suspicions that there might have been some tampering with the prize draw results; however, that is all speculation⁸⁴.

The Day of the Town⁸⁵

Town Days, something like town birthdays (for lack of a better word), have become popular after the Revolution. In Fulnek, this tradition was started in 1992 with the celebrations of the 400th anniversary of J. A. Comenius's birth. Thus the Day of the Town in Fulnek was always associated with its most prominent citizen, and therefore education. In the interview I did with Mrs. Marie Válová, she said that because of this the Cultural Department always strived to have Fulnek's schools performing at the celebrations⁸⁶. I asked Mrs. Tvardková if this is still the case at present and learned that the connection has been lost. “Everyone who wants to perform can perform,” she informed me, indicating that this is possibly the only rule the Days of the Town have now.

In 2012, the Day was organised in the garden of the Cultural Centre building. The garden is very large and definitely a pleasant place for such an event. However, the morning programme went down with few witnesses, and viewers mostly started

⁸⁴ Although the Mayor winning the first prize and then donating it to the children's home was very touching.

⁸⁵ <http://kultura.mkcf.cz/?page=12&rocnik=2012>

⁸⁶ I did my part at the very first Day of the Town in 1992 as Snow White in a dance performance my mother, who was an infant school teacher then, choreographed.

to come in the afternoon and for the evening concert of Anna K., a popular Czech singer, which got glowing reviews.

This was also the first year that MKCF charged for this event – in the previous year the Day of the Town took place at the town square and entrance was, quite logically, free. Day tickets were 120 CZK (slightly less than 5 Euros) for adults and 50 CZK (about 2 Euros) for children under twelve. Morning tickets were for 40 CZK and evening tickets for 200 CZK.

Fulne ka Festival

This festival started as an exhibition of local bands years ago. At first, it was held in the garden behind one of the local pubs; which is, incidentally, the garden of the MKCF building at present, and also the festival's current venue.

Fulne ka is what the locals call the train that connects Fulnek to Suchdol nad Odrou⁸⁷. In 2011 the railway line celebrated 120 years since its opening, and thus part of the festival took place directly on board of the train.

In any case, the festival has ceased to be only about local bands, and instead it now strives to offer something to all age groups and music preferences, while trying to engage the “more established” Czech bands as well⁸⁸.

Exhibitions in MKCF's non-smoking restaurant

When you come for a lunch menu to the non-smoking restaurant, one thing that can make your visit more pleasant is the ever-changing wall décor. This happens because MKCF has dedicated the space on the restaurant walls to regional artists to exhibit their works. The range of the art-pieces is wide – from illustrations to graphics to photographs to paintings to embroidery to such little insanities as “power paintings”⁸⁹.

⁸⁷ A railway knot on the Ostrava – Prague corridor

⁸⁸ The official website of the festival: <http://www.fulnecka.cz/>

⁸⁹ Paintings of “power flows” in the world. There is a community in Fulnek which relishes in this sort of thing.

Summary

Over the two decades and counting after the regime change, the cultural projects and events in Fulnek have considerably grown in number and diversified. This can be attributed to the growth in the number of institutions and organisations taking part in the cultural life of the town, the growth in the number of venues (the newly reconstructed building of the Cultural Centre; St. Joseph Church; the St. Rochus and Sebastian Chapel at the old Baroque cemetery and the building of the Brethren convent), the existence of new investors (the EU, the Region and major regional corporations such as Hyundai and OKD), and, of course, to the heightened activities of Fulnek's natives who strive to make the town a more interesting town for both the locals and tourists.

Activities span in several directions: some are specifically targeted at the local population (most events organised by MKCF), some aim to make Fulnek more visible on a regional/ national level (renovation of the Capuchin Monastery and its subsequent use as a cultural-educational centre, the Patchwork exhibitions, the Fulne ka festival, the Summer School for University Students), some cross borders (Days of the Czech-Polish Culture, the Cultural History Trail project, the first year of the World of Word).

Also, the nature and purpose of the events and projects is diverse: some are educational – local history, bringing children back to reading, some promote arts and crafts or local art, some are pure entertainment, some are aimed at promoting tourism and a good image of the town in the region and a lot of them are good for socialising. Some of them are quite universal, some of them specialised; the first kind being aimed for the benefit of the general population, the latter for different social groups.

While looking at the mere number of cultural events and projects going on in Fulnek, one must come inevitably to the conclusion that Fulnek is a vibrant centre of culture for everyone. Unfortunately, it has a long way to go to become just that. A great portion of cultural events are met with little interest from the general population. On the other hand, the locals are often quite lazy when it comes to finding out about events; or it happens sometimes that people are unable to go to a particular event, even though they are interested in what it has to offer. I have even heard the opinion that maybe there are too many things going on that the locals are overwhelmed by it.

The question indeed is whether such a small town needs all the activity that its cultural institutions and organisations develop. This, however, has to do with the historical

significance of the town and the aim to rise up to it again. The current financial crisis is not helping the situation, either, as almost a fifth of Fulnek's citizens are striving to get a job⁹⁰ and make a living in the first place. That does not leave them a lot of time or energy for extra activities (and sometimes even money for tickets – it adds up, of course, especially if you have a family).

On the other hand, when one looks at the progress the cultural institutions and organisations have already made – and most of it was made in 2000s – it is clear that while the flourishing might be somewhat haltered by the crisis and the lax attitude of the citizens (or even members of the cultural organisations themselves), things are headed in the right direction.

⁹⁰ Czech Statistical Office. The percentage of unemployed individuals in selected settlements of a selected district in 2010. Available online at:
http://vdb.czso.cz/vdbvo/tabparam.jsp?cislotab=TPR6010PU_OB1.119&kapitola_id=15&voa=tabulka&go_zobraz=1&verze=0&cas_3_9=20101231

Incidentally, the unemployment rate was just 9.5% in 2008, then it sky-rocketed to 18.2% in 2009.

Monuments and Sights

Despite its size, Fulnek is possibly the town with the greatest number of sights and monuments in the Nový Jičín District – or at least one of them. There are over thirty listed buildings, complexes and outdoor works of art in Fulnek. The most prominent of these sights, the dominant landmarks, are undoubtedly the Castle and the Capuchin Monastery, sitting on opposite hilltops. Right next to the monastery, there is Vila Loreta and the old Baroque cemetery with the Chapel of St. Rochus and Sebastian. The cemetery was cleared out for the most part in the early 1990s to be replaced by a simple little English landscape park and the chapel reconstructed to become one of the town's main exhibition and concert venues.

On the Castle Hill, hidden in the forest, is the Disciple's Grove and below, the unique Baroque Holy Trinity Church, the Black Tower (a former bell tower and the only remaining part of the town walls), the former Augustinian school and a Baroque staircase leading from them to the Town Square. Slightly off the Square, there are the Comenius Memorial and the Knurr Palace. The Town Hall's tower, the only part of the building not completely destroyed in the last war, is a valuable piece in the town's architectural heritage collection, too. There is a number of other sights and monuments in the town, mostly town houses or statues. Unfortunately, describing the fate of all of them is not in the power of this single thesis – although it would, without a question, be extremely interesting. I have, therefore, chosen only the most prominent ones, illustrating, where the sources enabled me to, the twists and turns in their history, ownership and appearance throughout the centuries.

*The Castle*⁹¹

Fulnek's most dominant landmark is once again like a little sun perched on top of its hill. The citizens of the town below are very happy about this in general, because, maybe even without realising it, they had lost all faith that this beautiful ruin might one day be saved. Fulnek's Castle complex was bought in an auction by a businessman from Ostrava in 2008, but having heard of the unfortunate fate of castles such as the one in Bravantice⁹², some people were sceptical about Mr. Reinhold's intentions and abilities. The fears must have dissipated considerably with the extensive reconstruction works that began soon after Mr. Reinhold bought the Castle.

The Castle complex consists of the old Upper Castle and the more recently built Lower Castle, a large landscape park and a former French garden with a little empire villa. The entire exterior of the Upper Castle and the French garden have already been renewed.

The first mention of the Castle is from 1372, although it is probably, just like the town below, slightly older than that. The first owner was Old ich of Lichtenburk, who acquired the Castle, together with the adjoining estate, from the king Přemysl Otakar II. However, Old ich's son lost Fulnek for his participation in the uprising of 1316, led by Jindřich of Lipá.

Fulnek passed on to the lords of Kravaře, who probably held the estate since 1318, but the first record of them comes from 1324. A century later, the town was conquered by Hussites, while the Castle's formidable fortifications held. The lord of Fulnek at the time, Jan VI. of Kravaře, showed kindness to his suffering subjects and exempted them from their dues for six years. The good lord, however, owed a lot of money to his neighbours, which led to long court disputes after his death.

⁹¹ The information for this section comes mainly from the following source:

Tichánek, Jiří and Zdeněk Šerý. *Šlechtická sídla na Novojičínsku*. Opava: Jiří Miller, 2003.

⁹² The castles in the 15-km-distant Bravantice (a still beautiful Baroque one and an architectonically ruined Renaissance one right behind) were made a part of the local agricultural co-operative by the previous regime. After the revolution, it was the town which came into the possession of the castles, but having no money for necessary re-construction, it sold the castles for three million Czech crowns to a businessman who promised to turn the buildings into a spa resort. Unfortunately, the castles were never touched, and now, with significant damage due to leaking drains, is being sold by an estate agency for 20 million.

Fulnek was held by the lords of Lešany for a short time, until new disputes arose regarding the sale of the Castle in 1464. The king at that time, Jiří of Podbrady, intervened, and in the end he bought Fulnek himself for his sons, angering the princes of Opava in the process. Unfortunately, the king's sons did not care much for the estate and soon leased it to the lords of Žerotín, who later officially bought Fulnek in 1475. Jan of Žerotín was given the option to have Fulnek written down into either the Silesian or the Moravian land register. He chose the latter, thus making Fulnek part of Moravia since 1480 until present times.

Jan was a religiously tolerant person and his sons were quite civilised in sharing and giving up the estate for each other. Fulnek was, in the end, passed on to Jan's youngest son Bernard. Bernard had studied abroad and put his experience to good use. He was generally well respected among his subjects. He died in 1532, followed by his wife a year later. Fulnek passed on to their nephew, Karel.

The new lord spent most of his time on the war path, and in the end sold Fulnek to the Cetřyš family. In 1544, Baltazar Švajnic married into the family and became the new lord of Fulnek. This man was kind to his subjects; he converted to the Brethren faith and supported education, science and art. The Švajnic family seems to have been plagued by a genetic illness, which caused them to die young. This was the case with most of Baltazar's heirs, and brought about new disputes with the Cetřyš family about whom the Fulnek estate belonged to – these lasted from 1581 to 1583.

In the following year, the Skrbenský family of Hřib gained the estate. The nephew of the first Skrbenský lord, Jan II, was ruling over Fulnek when John Amos Comenius was in town. Jan II was an ostentatious anti-Catholic and started many disputes with the Augustinians from the monastery adjacent to what is today the Church of the Holy Trinity.

Not all of Jan II's fights were as banal as who gets to use the bells on the Black Tower⁹³. He took his anti-Catholicism to the next level and openly fought against the Habsburg family. In 1621, he was present at the coronation of the Winter King of Bohemia, Friedrich of Palatinate. For his relentless opposition, Jan II earned a warrant for his arrest and had to flee from Fulnek. He went into hiding for a time before joining

⁹³ The bell tower used to be part of the town's fortifications and today is the only remaining part of it.

the Danish army. In 1626, the Danish army with Jan II even conquered Fulnek⁹⁴, but it remains a mystery as to how long Jan was allowed to stay. He died together with most of his company in an ambush by the Imperial Army at Granov, Poland, in 1627, the same year Comenius left his home country for ever.

Fulnek was given to the catholic Bruntálský family of Vrbno in 1622. However, in the course of the Thirty Years' War, the estate, having the unfortunate location on the route of many armies, often changed hands. It was gradually conquered by the Danish, the Swedish and the Imperial Army. The Swedish stayed until 1650, having pillaged the Castle and terrorised the region⁹⁵ for five years.

After the war, the estate returned to the hands of the Bruntálský family, who stayed until 1788 when they had to sell Fulnek due to extensive debts. The estate was bought by the Badenfeld family, who held it until 1842 when it was secretly bought for the Belgian king Leopold I⁹⁶ by Friedrich Christian Stockmar. Fulnek officially passed on to the Belgian royal family in 1855, when king Leopold I. bought it for his second-born son. The prince's two daughters stayed at Fulnek until 1926 when the estate was confiscated from them under the authority of the new land register reform (1925) of the newly independent Czechoslovakia.

The Castle was then bought by a lawyer and a Member of Parliament, Mr. Jaromír Špaček from Ostrava, and Mr. Chrastina, a businessman. In 1928, Mr. Špaček bought his partner out and became the sole owner of the Castle and its estates (forests on adjoining hills). Mr. Špaček was an educated man and a close friend and co-worker of the first Czechoslovak president, Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk. At the beginning of the Second World War, he fled and spent the war in exile in the United Kingdom, while Fulnek became the seat of the Relocation Commission of the SS, an institution aiming at eliminating the Czech element in the Sudetenland, into which Fulnek belonged. The Commission was led by Fulnek's native, Ernst Müller. Müller was a convinced Nazi and lobbied for the "solution to the Czech problem"⁹⁷ to be implemented as soon as possible, which he also diligently put into practice with his team.

⁹⁴ Meanwhile, Jan's wife and many children, who had been initially allowed to stay at the castle but relocated later, all died.

⁹⁵ Asking for money and crops under threats of destruction.

⁹⁶ Foreign monarchs in office were not allowed to hold properties abroad at that time.

⁹⁷ The relocation of the Czech people into the swampier parts of Europe.

At the end of the war, the town was destroyed by fire, but the Castle remained virtually intact. It was returned to Mr. Špaček for a time, but in 1948, a part of his estate was confiscated when the power changed in Czechoslovakia. Mr. Špaček sued the state, claiming that he had lawfully bought the property and needed the profits from the forests for the maintenance of the Castle. The court proceeding went on for three years, with a rather cynical conclusion that the initial confiscation was indeed wrong, since the whole property should have been confiscated – and it dutifully was. Mr. Špaček then died in a studio in the square in 1953, while his two sons⁹⁸ emigrated to the USA.

Under the new regime, the Castle was used as barracks – at first of the Czechoslovak army and then Soviet troops – and later as a storage facility for a medical institute in Ostrava. In the late 1980s, the authorities came up with the idea to turn the Castle into a luxury hotel – under the management of Vítkovické Železářny⁹⁹, but the works were halted by the events in 1989.

The original Castle was roughly a rectangular building with a prismatic tower. Its fortifications were strong enough to resist the Hussite attack in 1427. The initial area below the Castle was probably protected by a mound or a palisade, later by a stone wall with a dyke. The second line of fortifications was built between 1475 and 1480.

In the second half of the 16th century, the Castle was rebuilt into a two-floor Renaissance building according to the project of the resident Italian constructors – Antonín Kapelita, Antonio Horella of Luis and Antonín Teyen Vlach. The main castle hall was frescoed and covered with portraits of all the Roman Emperors up to Maximilian II. The last mention of these is from 1655; they were destroyed in one of the subsequent fires and lost forever. The Castle was also adorned by beautiful stone coats of arms of its owners, some of which were preserved for the present times.

In 1627, when Václav Bruntálský of Vrbo regained the previously conquered estate, he started with reconstruction works immediately; perhaps not the wisest decision he had ever made. He added one more floor to the main palace, and then came the Swedish again. The Swedish added fortifications to the Castle, but otherwise pillaged its insides. When they left in 1650, there was hardly any furniture left in the property. Five years later,

⁹⁸ The elder was expelled from the university and sentenced to forced labour in his absence in 1948, for fighting in the Czechoslovak troops abroad during the war.

⁹⁹ The Ironworks in Ostrava Vítkovice.

the Imperial general Montecuccoli began, with the consent of the owner, disassembling the fortifications. The works, however, took longer than expected, and the last of the fortifications only disappeared in 1716.

In 1676, the Castle was damaged by fire, and another wave of reconstruction began. Even so, the Castle kept its former character of a cold fortress. The main palace was lined with battlements, and had a flat roof. The building had four wings already by this time, separated by a little courtyard. The palace was protected by a double wall with gates, and the outer wall also had roundels.

In the second half of the 17th century a fruit tree orchard was founded on the premises, which was turned into a French garden with fountains.

In April 1801, the Castle was devastated by a massive fire. After this, only the east wing was salvaged and re-built. It had the shape of an irregular rectangle, was given a mansard roof and had decorated terraces. The tower was newly topped by an early Baroque helm roof. The works were started in 1803 and led by the Liechtenstein builder Jan Mihatsch.

In 1818, the renovation of the first floor and the chapel was completed, but the rest of the palace remained in poor conditions. By 1828, the third floor was still uninhabitable. It is from this period that we have the inventory of all rooms, their furnishings and what purpose they served.

The Lower Castle, located in place of the former outer walls, whose construction began in mid-18th century, was rebuilt almost immediately in 1803. It contained offices, apartments of the high castle employees, stables, shanties and also a pub, which was closed down in 1848.

The garden was enhanced by greenhouses, orangery, a paradise garden inspired by those grown at monasteries, and a small temple in the Empire style.

The Castle underwent major renovation works in 1912. However, it suffered a lot during the Second World War years, not to mention the subsequent use to which the socialist republic put it.

In the mid-1980s, when the Castle was supposed to become a hotel; the static of the building was so poor that the authorities decided to take drastic measures to ensure the Castle would remain standing. The walls and the rafters were strengthened by steel; the wooden ceilings on the upper floors were removed and replaced by solid concrete.

Rooms were divided up into smaller parts – future hotel rooms. Also, a lift shaft was constructed, which damaged some valuable 15th century vaulting.

Rostislav Špa ek, the previous owner's first-born son, was an architect and a designer for General Motors in the States. Some of his work for the government, however, required a certain level of secrecy and security clearance, which meant that Mr. Špa ek had to become a US citizen, thus losing his Czechoslovak one. After 1989, he immediately started procedures to regain his Czechoslovak citizenship, so that he could return home and take care of his “family heirloom”. His intention, actually, was also to turn the Castle into a hotel¹⁰⁰. But an administrative miscommunication caused Mr. Špa ek to ask for his properties back in restitution without his citizenship procedure being complete yet. This prompted his cousin to contest the restitution and demand the Castle and its estate be given to him instead. The ensuing law battle was lengthy and demanding. It was only concluded by the ruling of the Constitutional Court¹⁰¹ that the Castle and the forests indeed belong to Mr. Rostislav Špa ek. By this time, however, the lawful owner was in his eighties and unsuccessful in finding investors for his venture. Thus, the auction came about.

Teodor Reinhold, the current owner, bought the Castle and some of the surrounding land for 10.8 million CZK (slightly more than 420 thousand Euros), with the same vision as Mr Špa ek and the communist authorities had before him: to turn the place into a hotel. The Lower Castle was then deemed to provide unspecified services to the elderly citizens, which is also a recurring thought, and it is quite amazing that not one of its proponents ever cared to explain how they imagined the elderly people would actually get so far uphill¹⁰².

Mr. Reinhold reconstructs the Castle as fast as he can procure new funds for it. The town of Fulnek contributed too, with over a million CZK, and Mr. Reinhold applied for some European grants.

The first major change in the image of the Castle was a new roof and chimneys it was given. Then the tower was reconstructed and returned a black clock with golden

¹⁰⁰ There are few things you can do with such a massive structure these days, after all.

¹⁰¹ The highest instance in the Czech Republic, which shows just how much the cousin wanted to get the castle.

¹⁰² Not that it's not a brilliant idea; that is precisely the kind of a purpose the Lower Castle should serve, but the question of accessibility should be given some attention, to say the least.

ciphers such as it used to have, and all windows had to be replaced. Nothing visible happened for a while afterwards, but the works continued inside. A new natural gas pipe was built to the Castle, electro installation replaced¹⁰³. In late summer 2011, the whole new façade was finished on the Upper Castle. Presumably, some further works on the interior are going on at present times, but I have been unable to get any confirmation of this, apart from the word of Fulnek's Mayor that the hotel should be opened some time in 2013. Unfortunately, Mr. Špaček is no longer alive to see these changes.

¹⁰³ Zámek prochází složitou rekonstrukcí. *Novojičínský deník*. 5.5.2010. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/zamek-prochazi-slozitou-rekonstrukci-20100505.html

The Capuchin Monastery

The complex is a beautiful example of monastic Baroque architecture in North Moravia. It is situated on a hill north of the town square, separated from the inner town by one of Fulnek's small rivers, Husí potok. Even if it is not perched as high as the Castle, it provides a visual balance to it. The convent is a three-wing building three floors high, enclosed from the fourth side by the Church of St. Joseph. The church and the inner yard of the monastery are at the first floor level. The monastery was surrounded by an orchard and vegetable and decorative gardens, as depicted by František Kledenský in 19th century. The orchard used to be accessible to public, and as it is across the road from Fulnek's kindergarten, it was where little children were often brought to play if the weather was good. However, as the state of the buildings deteriorated, the entire complex was fenced off from the public.

Capuchins were invited to Fulnek in 1668 by František Bruntálský of Vrbno, the lord of the town at that time. The building of the convent and the adjacent St. Joseph Church were built in 1670s, and the church was consecrated in 1683. The complex was damaged in the fires of 1676 and 1695, but soon re-built in both cases. Additional construction works were carried out in 18th century.

In April 1950, the State Security Forces (STB) entered the premises and all the monks were forced into internment. Afterwards, the monastery served as a storage facility for furniture, vegetables, the factory ROMO, or it was used as workshops for the apprentice school next door, which used to be Vila Loreta. The artwork, the crystal chandeliers and other furnishings from St. Joseph's Church and the convent were lost in gradual looting. The valuable altar was saved, fortunately, and re-discovered in the church at the Lower Square in Opava, where it has stayed since St. Joseph does not serve its religious purposes any longer.

After the revolution in 1989, the monastery was in ruins. No single window was glazed, the outer plaster was very much gone, the roof was caving in and subsequent leaks damaged the structure of the complex. An organisation was founded in 2002 – the Salvation of the Capuchin Monastery Fund, which, as its name indicates, was trying to raise the necessary funds to save this historical monument. Among other activities, it organised events (concerts and exhibitions) in the ruined church to raise public awareness

of the dismal condition of the monastery. Meanwhile, the ownership of the complex went from the Nový Jiřín District to the Moravian-Silesian Region.

The European Union, the Moravian-Silesian Region Office and the Ministry of Culture provided funds for the first phase of the reconstruction¹⁰⁴: the church. The works were carried out between 2003 and 2006 and cost more than 36 million CZK (almost 1.5 million Euros). But the convent needed some urgent care too because of its catastrophic static, and in 2006 it was at least given a provisional roof to prevent further leaks. The total costs of the repairs so far have thus surpassed 102 million CZK (almost 4 million Euros).

The Fund has run its course and is in the process of dismissal, but its goal was taken up by other organisations, such as Comenius Fulnek. Comenius has developed a plan for the reconstruction and the new use of the convent part of the monastery. In the words of the Comenius Fulnek's website:

“The aim of the project titled ‘The House of Arts’¹⁰⁵ is the conversion of a ruined historical monument into a unique multi-functional art, social and educational centre, which would form a highly attractive destination for a specific kind of tourism. The building of the convent will provide facilities for artistic symposiums, workshops, internships, educational activities and celebrations of different kinds of arts organised for large, medium-sized and small groups or individuals, including the general public. Among others, there should be a permanent exhibition on the history of the Capuchin order, the history of their Fulnek monastery including a 3D visualisation of the life in the monastery and an exhibition showing the gradual reconstruction and revitalisation of the property.”¹⁰⁶

The project documentation was submitted to the Moravian-Silesian Region Office in August 2010 with the hope of eventually acquiring fund for the realisation of the project from the EU Structural Funds.

At the moment, the building of St. Joseph's church is in shared custody of the District Museum and Comenius Fulnek. Unfortunately, it remains to be seen

¹⁰⁴ Fortunately, it had been agreed that both the convent and the church would be saved, although there had been doubts whether the ruined convent even could be reconstructed.

¹⁰⁵ Which is a rough translation – the literal one being “the centre where different kinds of arts meet” (Centrum setkávání umění)

¹⁰⁶ <http://comenius-fulnek.webnode.cz/projekty/nove-vyuziti-kapucinskeho-klastera/>

if and when the neglected garden surrounding the monastery will be restored to its former state. According to Mrs. Válová, there is some unclarity about the ownership of the plots in question. The land register puts them in the hands of the state, specifically the Land Fund of the Czech Republic^{107 108}, however, it is possible that this particular ownership is being contested – or the state is reluctant to let non-governmental organizations interfere with its property. Then there is the possibility that the gardens are subject to restitution claims – after all, the property had been forcibly taken away from the Capuchins – which would mean that until the matter is resolved, the plots may not be touched.

¹⁰⁷ Pozemkový fond české republiky

¹⁰⁸ <http://nahlizenidokn.cuzk.cz/VyberParcelu.aspx>, katastrální území Fulnek, parcela 703

*The Parish Church of the Holy Trinity*¹⁰⁹

The original church, mentioned in the very first document confirming the existence of Fulnek (from February 1293), did not share the location or the consecration of the present-day church. Admittedly, it was right next door, but instead to the Holy Trinity, it was dedicated to the saints Philip and Jacob. The change of the consecration happened in 1389 when the Augustinian Monastery, adjacent to the present-day church, was founded.

In 1648, the local Mudrák family lost their younger son, Pavel, in a shooting in the local animal reserve. As if that was not tragic enough, their other son, Ondřej, died the following year. The bereaved parents had an epitaph made for their children – a picture of Our Lady the Helpful, which the family gave to the church in 1678. The painting was moved several times, almost forgotten gradually and even broke. The father superior of the monastery then had it repaired and placed on the wall behind the church. The parishioners started gathering there, adorning the painting with flowers, praying and singing and celebrating the Lady.

In 1749, several people who were praying at the picture noticed that there were “tears” coming from the Madonna’s eyes. The dean dried them with a handkerchief, which was allegedly not an easy task at all, but they re-appeared. The dean invited several “educated” witnesses¹¹⁰ again some days later to determine the mysterious origin of the tears. They then agreed that the tears cannot be caused by anything natural, and therefore must be a miracle.

The news spread very fast among the parishioners, who flocked around the painting and prayed at it ever more vigorously. Accounts of successful prayers amounted to more than a hundred by 1753. The citizens of Fulnek suggested a fundraising for a new chapel built to house the miraculous painting.

Works started in late 1749, but there were unexpected delays, as it was necessary to mine out a great chunk of rock from the slope to make space for the new chapel.

¹⁰⁹ Information for this section comes predominantly for the articles Mr. Petr Dohnálek created for the Cultural History Trail, having researched for them in archives for years.

¹¹⁰ Other clergymen, an official and an architect.

By the time this was achieved, the plans had changed completely and it had been decided to build a great new church instead of just a chapel. And that is what happened – foundations were laid for a new church and the foundation stone was tapped ceremoniously in October 1750 by the dean, the other clergymen, the magistrate and members of noble families. Afterwards, everyone else who wanted could tap the stone once¹¹¹. The new church was designed by the afore-mentioned architect Mikuláš Thalherr, and its construction took a decade. In October 1760, the new Church of the Holy Trinity was consecrated by the Duke Jan of Schärffenberg, the suffragan of Olomouc. Twenty-four years later, the monastery was closed down on Emperor Joseph II's orders.

The Baroque design of the church is quite unique. A slightly similar façade can be seen on St. Valentine's church in Píbor or the church of St. Vojtěch in Opava¹¹²; however, they are nowhere close the imposing beauty of the Holy Trinity Church in Fulnek with its richness of pilasters, niches, statues and other ornaments.

The monumental single-navy church is enclosed from the left by the Chapel of St. Joseph and from the right by the cloister of the former Augustinian Monastery with a paradise garden in the centre. The church itself is as heavily decorated inside as it is on the outside. The frescoes on the walls and ceilings of the cupolas are attributed to Ignác Viktorin Raab, while the altarpiece – a painting of St. Augustine searching for the truth - is the work of Felix Ivo Leicher.

In glass cabinets on either side of the nave are the relics of St. Valentine and St. Vital.

The original organ was constructed by Jan Jiří Schwartz of Libavá and consecrated in 1766. It boasted two manuals and eighteen registers. Due to the bad state of the woodwork, the organ was sent for repairs to the state-owned Organ Factory in Krnov and rebuilt with accordance to the design of Ing. Ota Veverka to have three manuals instead of the two it used to. The repaired and enhanced organ was consecrated in 1955.

¹¹¹ This particular instance of togetherness in the citizens of Fulnek bears a strong analogy with the town wanting to get a new statue of J.A. Comenius (its fourth one) several years ago. As the Vice-Mayor, Mr. Štekbauer, said: "We have the money to buy the statue. But we want the people to have the opportunity to contribute to it themselves, so we're having a fundraiser." The whole situation, of course – including the brag factor of having the most statues of Comenius of all places he ever lived – speaks volumes about the economical intelligence of the Town Council in 2008.

¹¹² The church where the altar from St. Joseph's Church of Fulnek's Capuchin Monastery has been placed.

The entire church including the parish house (formerly part of the Augustinian Monastery) were given a new façade in the early 1990s; however, I was unable to find out when exactly it was.

*The Comenius Memorial*¹¹³

The Memorial is situated in the building formerly occupied by the Moravian Brethren. The congregation was established in 1484 and the complex was constructed shortly afterwards. Many alterations have been made to the buildings – for example, the school building was turned into what is today the Knurr Palace. The memorial itself consists of the original chapel and the house of the director. On the south side, it is bordered by the rather steep slope of the Castle Hill and on the north side, there is a small park with a statue of J.A. Comenius by one of the most prominent Czech sculptors, Jan Štursa.

The guided tour of the Memorial starts in the entrance hall, where visitors are greeted by the temporary custodian of the Memorial, Mrs. Marie Mrtvá. On the wall, there is an artistic map of Europe showing the routes of Comenius's journeys. The hallway is L-shaped, and at the far end around the corner, there is a seventeen-metre deep well (with nine metres of very clear water) accessible from the former school, now the Knurr Palace, by a door on a subterranean level. Through the door on the left, the visitors are taken into the first chamber of the exposition – dedicated to the foreign missions of the Moravian Brethren. The Brethren certainly got around: in 1992, they had 320 thousand registered members in 537 congregations across the whole world. One of the reasons behind their success was their anti-discriminatory policy; they strived to educate people of all races, and even wrote textbooks in the native tongues of the peoples they set off to teach, including various Native-American dialects. The Brethren did not distinguish between races and ethnicities even after death – their cemeteries were unsegregated. Thanks to them, there is a Fulnek in the north of England, in Barbados, Jamaica and close to New York.

¹¹³ Information for this section comes from the paper on the exposition written by Mrs. Marie Mrtvá, from my own notes on the exposition and from my experience as the Memorial's exclusive interpreter.

Mrs. Mrtvá also tells her visitors about the amazing Irene, a boat which crossed the Atlantic fourteen times, and carried the missionaries to their destination in the New World.

The wall in the next room bears the names of all the directors of the Brethren convent in Fulnek. Mostly, these were very well educated and capable men. The first one, Michal Weisz (from 1530), collected 157 German songs into a hymn-book and translated sixteen of them into Czech. Mikuláš Albrecht of Kamének (1598-1602) was one of the translators of Bible kralická (the Bible of Kralice), the first version of the Bible to be translated into Czech from its original languages as opposed to Latin. Albrecht's eldest daughter Kateřina Alžběta knew six languages. She left for Lešno with Comenius's family and was his close colleague and his second wife's friend. The next three directors also cooperated on the translation of the Bible. The fact that four of the fifteen members of the translator team came from Fulnek proves the quality of the school here. The showcase in this room holds a copy of another Czech translation of the Bible: the Melantrich Bible. It is a true work of art, but the connection to the rest of the exposition pieces in this room is somewhat lost to me. In the showcases on the walls, there is a plaster model of Fulnek in the times of Comenius – a town with a fairly regular planning; perpendicular streets and an almost rectangular square, 198 houses including those outside the walls and about a thousand inhabitants. The other showcase bears a copy of a document verifying that Baltazar Švajnic was the owner of the Brethren convent and school.

After being told all about the convent directors' chamber, the visitors will be ushered away to the chapel. The chapel is extremely cold, with thick walls, gothic-style windows with ogives and a modern stained-glass glazing, and the worst kind of acoustics imaginable. The "altar" with the traditional Lamb of God, the sign of the Moravian Brethren, is also of a modern design. What remained, however, is the arch beneath which Comenius used to stand when he preached: possibly the only remaining witness to his activity in Europe. In the floor, there are brass slabs with the names of all places Comenius has lived for an extended period of time. The Brethren still gather here for prayers regularly every second and fourth Sunday of the month, but the chapel is also used for civilian weddings, concerts and exhibitions, and it is the venue where the town and schools welcome the first-graders and says goodbye to the ninth-graders of the primaries.

The room in between the entrance hall and the chapel used to be the director's study. There are rotating canvases on one of the walls with the history of Europe

and the events in Comenius's life (so that Comenius's story can be observed contra the story of Europe). Another wall bears vedutas of Fulnek from 1730 by G. Herbert and 1820 by F. Kledenský together with a photograph of the bombed and burned out square after the Second World War. In between the windows, there is a glass show-case displaying remnants of the centuries past (a slipper, some tiles and jars), possibly dating as far as 17th century. But undoubtedly the most interesting is the rotary wood and glass showcase with different editions of Comenius's books. There are editions in several languages, and even Jesuit editions – given that the Jesuits and Comenius were close to being sworn enemies, it says something about the man's merit in the order's eyes.

The exposition continues upstairs, where all the rooms are dedicated to each of the social roles Comenius played in his life. The large landing has been converted into a classroom as it used to look in the 17th century. In the corner, there is the famous Map of Moravia by Comenius.

The first room to the left is dedicated to Comenius being a teacher: one of the walls bears a quotation from his School of Infancy – “A child is a jewel more precious than gold, but more brittle than glass. They can be hurt easily, and the consequent damage is enormous.”¹¹⁴ Below are cute animals made of plaster and gauze, with their ears painted blue. They are there to remind the visitors that Comenius's teaching methods stressing the practical and direct examples were apparently very much influenced by his mother, who used to take their children outside and teach them about animals and plants right in their natural habitat. Glass showcases hold the front pages of Comenius's educational works, mostly different editions of *Orbis Pictus*.

The second room introduces Comenius as a priest and the director of the convent. Well, partly. The burnt sheets of paper hanging around the table at the window serve as a reminder of how Fulnek was after Comenius left – in May 1623, pyres of evangelical books burnt at the town square, and newly-fanaticised youth hurried to add more Protestant books to the flames so ardently that their hair and clothes often caught fire too. According to the report of the originator of these burnings, the Catholic Bonaventura, which lies on the table among the charred paper, the pyres went on for five hours at a time. On the wall on the left, there is a fitting quotation from *Via Lucis* (1641-42): “It is most

¹¹⁴ Komenský, Jan Amos. *Informatorium školy mate ské*. 1630.

terrible when the state or the Church base their power on the ignorance of man.” The showcases on the opposite wall contain the front pages of *Letters to Heaven* and *Utterance against the Antichrist and His Temptations*. The latter was never officially published, since it was feared to be extremely controversial (as it was the Catholic Church which was meant to be the Antichrist), and was written anonymously. In between the front pages of the two books, there is the symbol of the Brethren, the Lamb of God, and the symbol of the Augustinians, portraying the everlasting conflict between the two forms of Christianity.

Next door is the room titled “A writer and a philosopher”. Glass showcases are full of front pages of his books again, such as *Manual*, or the *Whole Core of the Holy Bible*, *Letters to Heaven*, *Thinking About Christian Perfection*, *Theatrum Universitatis Rerum*, *The Great Didactic*, *Hymns* and the *Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of Heart*. On the table at the window lies a magnified list of everything Comenius ever wrote (over 200 items), printed on a large piece of goat hide. Above the table hang samples of materials books used to be made of in the 17th century. On the wall on the right, there is, again, a quotation, this time from Comenius’s letter to P. Montano from 10th December 1661: “Early in my youth, a longing overcame me to write some books in my mother tongue only for my nation, so that I could serve it well, and the longing has not left me even after these fifty years.”

This is where the visitor gets to the end of the corridor and the open through-view to the chapel, which may or may not be the cause of the horrible acoustics. The room to the right is dedicated to Comenius’s cartographic work, and is now closed for public, since archaeologists have been taking samples from the rubble filling of the floor for the new exposition. The glass cases on the left wall contain copies of the oldest Map of Silesia from 1561 by Martin Helwig, the Map of Moravia by Petr Kaerlus from 1620, drawn according to the most famous map of Moravia at the time, from 1569 by Pavel Fabricius. In the middle section, there are black outlines of vedutas of P erov, Nám š na Hané and Záb eh na Morav on the covering glass, while below is a drawing of Uherský Brod on fire – a scene Comenius would remember from his childhood years. In the section on the right, there is a copy of G. C. Vignola’s Map of Moravia dated 1692 and drawn according to Comenius’s version, with Fabricius’s version below. On the covering glass, another black outline, this time the comparison of the accuracy of Fabricius’s and Comenius’s maps, showing, of course, that Comenius was much more successful

in this respect. The wall opposite bears a citation from *Theatrum Universitatis Rerum* from 1618: "...My mind, in its craving of skill and knowledge, led me to search through all the liberal arts and note down to myself and gather whatever I came to learn so that I could remember it for times to come, putting everything to a certain order."

The room next door is supposed to show that wherever Comenius was teaching at any time, he also lived, and therefore titled: "A husband and a happy father." Of course, nothing of the authentic furniture had survived, thus all the items on display here are what the Comenius family would have, but in a different form, since these come from the 19th century. There is a table, chairs, a rocking horse and a baby crib, a bird cage fashioned out of twigs hangs from the window, and next to it, there are some handmade curtains – to show how skilful wives can be. Several pieces of kitchen utensils are also scattered around the room. The wall on the left has a colourful inscription on it saying: "My dear wife, Magdalena, my treasure most precious to me after God..." This is the first line of Comenius's letter to his wife from 1622, when he was in hiding, which accompanied a small book he sent to her, the *Thinking about the Christian Perfection*. Nowadays the letter serves as a preface to the book. It is, however, unknown, whether the letter or the book reached the poor Magdalena before she passed. Next to the inscription, there is another one – an unbelievable kitch: "Jan + Magdalena" (the former name in blue, the latter in red), accompanied by the interlinked, likewise coloured, and . The wall with glass cases opposite is much more interesting. It contains the marriage contract between Comenius and his first wife, stating Magdalena was bringing into the marriage 1189 three-scores of dowry from her father and 1140 three-scores of inheritance from her late first husband, Jiřík Loubský. Around this document, there are decorations in the form of pictorial engravings from *Orbis Pictus* – God on the left, and the world and family on the right.

The next door is always closed, hiding a stairwell to the attic. However, the whole letter to Magdalena/preface of the *Thinking about the Christian Perfection* hangs on it in a wooden and glass showcase. The last room of the exposition is little more than a small closet, containing a tall candle-holder, some minute black crosses painted on the white wall and a projector. On a good day (= when the old technology happens to be working), the visitors are shown pictures from the greeting of the Winter King Friedrich of Palatinate, the Battle of White Mountain and the subsequent execution of twenty-seven lords on the Old Town Square in Prague in 1621. The room is titled "Haunted after the Battle

of White Mountain”. The walls remind the visitors of how Comenius was forced to flee Fulnek, how his first wife and two children died and how Comenius had to leave his homeland for good, all in black letters against the whitewashed walls.

*The Knurr Palace*¹¹⁵

As the Brethren convent was closed down and abandoned, the building of the derelict Brethren school was bought in 1692 by Eliáš Knurr and his wife together with a few adjacent little houses. They had the estate turned into a glamorous Baroque palace, possibly taking inspiration in the town palaces of Prague's Malá Strana. The façade is remarkable for the rich decoration – pilasters, ornaments around the windows, stuccos and its beautiful portal, restored in 2004 by the academic sculptor Vojtěch Míša. The portal depicts the Coronation of Mary, who is surrounded by angels and the heads of angels. There were other palaces of great architectonic value like this in Fulnek, especially in its times of cloth-making richness, but a lot of them fell victim to the destruction after the Second World War.

The palace has four wings around an inner yard, but the side-wing facing the Square and the back wing were only added around 1840. The back wing served as a cloth-making factory. Unfortunately, the palace burned down in July 1870, and three years later, as a result of the fire and the economic crisis, the cloth-making ceased.

The front wing hosted the district court with a prison and the revenue office from 1849-1938. During the Second World War, the prison held English captives. After 1945, the palace was abandoned and only used sporadically; as the Land Registry, the District Department of the House of Culture, archive and a library.

The palace was reconstructed in 1968-1970 and as part of celebrations of the 300th anniversary of J. A. Comenius's death, a new school for children with special needs, a canteen, a children's home and a place for after-school activities. These facilities were in the palace until 2009 when they moved to the newly reconstructed Vila Loreta. The Knurr Palace then became the town's property in December 2009 and the ground floor has been occupied by the town's Information Centre and a mothers' centre Sluníčko. The town has great plans for the palace – a project was designed for the building to become a museum of puzzles, a museum of Fulnek's firemen and a museum of local sights. It would also have a music hall, a ceremonial hall, a study and host the town's library.

¹¹⁵ Information for this section comes from the article written by the expert on local sights and monuments, Mr. Pavlíněk, for the Information Centre.

The highest floor was meant for various leisure time activities organized by local clubs and associations.

However, this would require an investment 42 million CZK (1.7 million Euros) and thus Fulnek has applied for a 31 million grant from the Regional Development Programme NUTS II – Moravia-Silesia. The application was rejected, however, and now the town searches for new, partial, uses for the palace, which would help finance the maintenance of the enormous building. Since there is no café in the centre, the Town Council is thinking of establishing one in the palace; surprisingly united in the idea throughout the political spectrum¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁶ Bude v Knurrov paláci kavárna? Novojičínský deník. 13.9.2012. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/bude-v-knurrove-palaci-kavarna-20120913.html

*Vila Loreta*¹¹⁷

Jan František Bruntálský of Vrbno, the lord of Fulnek towards the end of the 18th century, decided he wanted a proper place of pilgrimage in his town, and took inspiration in the Italian Loreta. He had a Santa Casa built next to the new Capuchin Monastery. It was consecrated in 1683 and its inner painting decoration was created by the local painter Gottfried Herbert between 1703 and 1706. Jan Franišek was advised to build some protective features around the Santa Casa, but financial reasons had it that he could only commission the construction of ditches. Jan František's wife Terezie Františka of the Martinic family, however, donated the funds necessary to build cloisters around the Santa Casa, with arcades opening into the inner yard. Only the cloisters on the east and the west side remain to this day.

A series of chapels was erected within the space of the cloisters – St. Anna's in the north wing, St. Gaudentius's in the north-west corner, and the chapels of St. Mary Magdalene and the Holy Cross in south-east and south-west corners. There was also a vestry and a treasury.

The south façade was gradually turned into a truly spectacular Baroque building, among whose constructors was Milkuláš Thalherr – the architect who is also signed under the Holy Trinity Church – and whose sculptures/ statues were made by Filip Sattler (Sadler) of Olomouc, who partly decorated the beautiful St. Moic Church. The rest of the cloisters were adorned by statues created by Johann Sturmer.

As a result of all these architectonic and artistic activities, the Loreta became one of the most splendid of its kind in the entire country. However, its glory did not last long; as the complex was shut down as soon as in 1786 following the Josephine Reforms and left to ruin for about four decades.

The derelict complex was bought by the local businessman, Felix Jaschke, who was, apparently, very pragmatic and sold all the interior furnishings and decorations. Santa Casa was demolished in 1806 and the whole complex was then turned into a textile manufacture through a series of rather insensitive reconstructions.

¹¹⁷ Augustinková, Lucie; Grepl, Emanuel and Zdeněk Orlita. *Příběh o Loretu (Proměny fulnecké Santa Casy od barokní kaple ke klasicistní vile)*. Krajský úřad Moravskoslezského kraje, 2010.

In 1829, Loreta was bought by the local merchant Valentin Knopp, whose intentions were very different from Felix Jaschke's. Knopp wanted to save the Loreta and re-build it into a representative villa; thus "making the surroundings more beautiful". In 1832 a commission was assembled to evaluate the true state of the complex and draw a preliminary plan for the subsequent works.

The chapels on the south side were lowered by a floor and their niches were turned into large windows, thus creating two architectonically interesting pavilions. Between the pavilions, where the most glamorous part of the Loreta used to be, a fence was erected on the bases of the old construction. The north wing became the main building, whose façade was decorated by pilasters with Corinthian capitals and stuccos with Ancient mythology motifs. The villa got a Classicist look, but a very specific, decorative version of it which was then typical for Fulnek's architecture of the time, and especially the construction group around Carl Klumpner.

The reconstruction made use of the old to create the new – most of the building materials were recycled from the Baroque version of the Loreta, and only the stuccos on the façade were new.

The last alteration works on the complex, while it was in private hands and used for living, began shortly after its acquisition by the Weisheit family in 1908. Some of the inner walls were brought down to make space for larger kitchens, larger bathrooms were built and the waste tanks made bigger so as not to endanger the source of drinking water in the well.

In 1925, the complex was bought by the Jewish businessman named Nathan Hamburger, who allegedly intended it for a powder milk factory, but it seems the villa only ever served as a representative seat of the company. In 1941¹¹⁸, a school was established in the villa, a purpose it was going to retain all the way to the 21st century. In the second half of the 20th century, there was a kindergarten in the villa. The pavilion which used to be the Chapel of St. Mary Magdalene, was turned into a polytechnic workshop of the Primary School of J. A. Comenius next door. The workshop stayed until 1961 when it was moved into the complex of the Capuchin Monastery.

¹¹⁸ The book does not mention what happened to the Hamburgers during the Second World War, but as Fulnek was a true Nazi nest, one can assume it was something rather awful.

In 1969, the socialist disaster happened. The complex was given new two-section windows with terrazzo inner sills, a metal plate roof, metal inner doorframes and new doors instead of the wooden originals, the wooden floor on the ground level was torn out and replaced with concrete. The wooden staircase was also replaced with a metal construction with terrazzo steps. The original balcony door was also lost. For the first time, the complex was electrified and central heating was installed.

In 1987, the town gave the villa to ROMO, who established their Engineering Secondary School there. The pathways in the yard were then covered with asphalt and cage dressing rooms were added in the north-east of the building. There was also a counter-proposal of using the complex as an art gallery, claiming that it would be a more dignified purpose for a building of such historical value. However, it was not the time for such proposals to be considered seriously yet.

In 1991, after the school reform, the Secondary School ceased to be under ROMO's administration and supervision, and became independent. However, it was closed down in 2000s. Then a major reconstruction began, including extensive archeological research, and finished with stunning results in 2009 when the school facilities from the Knurr Palace were moved there.

Summary

There is, quite logically, a different story behind each of the buildings and complexes introduced in this chapter:

Different ownership: the Castle is owned by a private investor, the Holy Trinity Church and the adjacent former Augustinian Monastery are owned by the Roman Catholic Parish of Fulnek, the Comenius Memorial and the Capuchin Monastery are owned by the Moravian-Silesian Region, but in the care of the District Museum of Nový Ji ín. Vila Loreta is also owned by the Region, but it is in the care of The Home for Children Loreta and the School Canteen Fulnek, contributory organization (D tský domov Loreta a Školní jídelna Fulnek, p íspěvková organizace). The Knurr Palace is owned by the town.¹¹⁹

Different state of reconstruction: the Castle is being reconstructed at the moment, with a view of the entire project being finished in 2016¹²⁰. The Holy Trinity Church was given a new façade in the early 1990s, but it is in need of some repairs again. The Knurr Palace is in a similar state, its situation complicated by the lack of funding for its conversion into museums and leisure centre. The Comenius Memorial was reconstructed after the Revolution and a new exposition opened in 1992; however, works have already begun on the creation of an exposition (hopefully) much better than the current one. Otherwise, the buildings are not in a bad shape. The park in front of the Memorial has been recently cleared and new flower-beds added. St. Joseph's Church was reconstructed fairly recently¹²¹, but the reconstruction of the rest of the convent has been put on hold. Vila Loreta is in a perfect state following the general reconstruction finished in 2009.

Different uses: of course, the complexes served different purposes even when they were first built. The Castle was the seat of the Lords, and went through periods of being a Nazi stronghold, army barracks and a warehouse, until it was bought by Mr. Reinhold

¹¹⁹ The Land Register online. <http://nahlizeniidokn.cuzk.cz/VyberParcelu.aspx>

¹²⁰ This is stated on the Approval of Construction form attached to the fence around the Castle.

¹²¹ Although I fear for the sustainability of this reconstruction, since the plaster has begun to crack again. As someone who was inside the convent before the reconstruction, I had doubts whether saving the complex was still possible – there were too many cracks in the walls and too much mold. But time will tell, of course.

and works began to turn it into a hotel, this time with respect to the original architecture. The Holy Trinity Church is very constant in its use – it was built to be a big Catholic church, and it still is a big Catholic church. The Augustinian Monastery was closed down during the Josephine Reforms, but parts of it (the cloister and the current parish building) are still used by the Catholic Church today. The Comenius Memorial used to be a Brethren church, a house of the director and a school, nowadays the church is a venue for cultural events as well as non-religious and religious ceremonies; the house of the director is the museum/ memorial, and the school was turned into the Knurr Palace. The Knurr Palace was supposed to be a town palace with a textile manufacture in the back wing; then it was a court, a prison and a revenue office, then a boarding school for orphans and children with special needs. Nowadays, there is the town's Information Office and the mothers' centre. The Capuchin Monastery used to serve religious purposes and nowadays St. Joseph's Church is a venue for exhibitions and concerts, while there is a plan to turn the rest of the convent to a cultural centre of a supra-regional importance. Vila Loreta went from a place of pilgrimage to a textile factory to a representative villa to different kinds of schools, and nowadays it hosts the local home for children.

Most of the sights have been taken care of at least to a certain extent after the Revolution, with the sad exception of the Capuchin Monastery convent. But overall, the sights are much better off now than they used to be in the era of deep socialism. At least now when they are being reconstructed, their original materials and appearance are taken into account, and there is a firm aim for authenticity.

Even though the care for the sights and monuments may not have been perfect in the last two decades, everything humanly possible was done for their preservation and reconstruction as far as finances would allow. And what has been done has significantly improved the aesthetic qualities of Fulnek, helping it to become a truly beautiful town again.

Strong and Weak Points of Fulnek

Fulnek is not a bad place to live as such. Its location is quite strategic, with only 5 km to the new motorway running between Olomouc and Ostrava, while it maintains its tranquillity of a small town. You can find all signs of civilisation in this little valley surrounded by forests and fields.

There are four grocery shops and a supermarket in Fulnek. A lot of locals will get their big shopping in Ostrava, but if you run out of something on a short notice, you can replenish your supplies easily, as the first shop opens at 5:15 a.m. and the last one closes at 8 p.m. There are two pharmacies and two chemist's, hairdressing salons, beauticians, clothes shops, opticians, electronics shop, bicycle shop, florist's, a bank, hardware stores, artisans and mechanics of all kinds and more – in short, at least in theory, there is everything you need.

When it comes to medical care, there are a number of GPs, dentists, a gynaecologist and even an allergist. In case of emergency, there is a police station, fire brigade and emergency ambulance service based right in Fulnek.

Transport between Fulnek and its surroundings as well as the important regional centres (Opava, Ostrava) and more distant locations such as Olomouc, Brno and Prague, is ensured by both railway and bus services. For those who own their own means of transport, the new motorway, as was mentioned in the first paragraph, is very close. You can get to Nový Jiřín (the district's capital), Hranice na Moravě, Opava and Ostrava within half an hour and to the closest towns (Studénka, Odry and Bílovec) within ten to fifteen minutes.

As far as services for tourists are concerned, the town's Information Office is conveniently located at the square. You can follow the Cultural History Trail with its boards in four different languages, or you can ask for a guided tour of the town – and this service will cost you nothing at all.

The Comenius Memorial next door to the Information Office is open daily except Mondays and so is St. Joseph's Church on the opposite hill. Unfortunately, most of the other sights are only open on specific occasions, such as exhibitions (St. Rochus and Sebastian Chapel), masses, concerts (the Holy Trinity Church), annual Open Days (all the sights mentioned in this paragraph, the Black Tower and the Town Hall's

tower). Vila Loreta and the Castle, due to their specific use, will not likely join this list, although it might be possible that Mr. Reinhold will use some of the Castle's halls for a museum. And maybe, if the town succeeds in lowering the maintenance costs on its estates, it will find enough finances to create the various museums and the town library in the Knurr Palace, in which case it is probable that the Open Days would include this significant historical building as well.

Another highly positive aspect of Fulnek is how it has been raising from its ruined state: after the revolution, the dominant landmarks in the town (the Castle, the Capuchin Monastery, the Holy Trinity Church, the Chapel of St. Rochus and Sebastian, Knurr Palace) were all in desperate need of renewal, or at least a "face-lift". The Knurr Palace, the Holy Trinity Church and St. Rochus and Sebastian Chapel were among the first to get new façades, but the Capuchin Monastery and the Castle still towered over the city in near disrepair. For the Monastery, everything changed when citizens themselves actively started lobbying for the complex to be saved. The Castle was saved by a private investor.

Fulnek is fortunate in that there is so much to delve into when it comes to tourist advertising and ways the cultural life can go: it has more than seven centuries of eventful history, many more sights and monuments than have been properly made use of so far and a whole list of prominent citizens, not only J. A. Comenius, Petra Kvitová and Milan Barboík. And there is more than culture and history that Fulnek can offer: there are splendid views from the surrounding hills, forests for hikes and mushrooming, a landscape made for bicycle rides. Furthermore, Fulnek is within a short drive from Heipark Tošovice, a sports centre (offering bobsleigh tracks, a ski slope and a semi-natural lake for swimming), several indoor swimming pools and ice rinks in the surrounding towns, not to mention the natural beauty and sights, museums and birthplaces of famous people (Freud, Mendel, Janáček and others) within the district.

It would seem, then, that Fulnek is on its way to a better phase of its existence. But for all the positive aspects of the town's development after 1989, one cannot ignore the negative ones, and there is a great number of them.

First and foremost, the Town Council's membership does not change very much. After the last election two years ago the power changed after a period of predominantly left-wing rule. It was the result of citizens not being satisfied with the local politics anymore and wanting a change that the current leadership had offered. However, it is very

difficult to actually have some work done when all you ever have to do is fight with the opposition. In a recent article in a local newspaper, *Novojiínský deník*, the reporter described the first session of the Council after the summer holidays¹²²: the opposition stirring up a rather violent dispute – and that was not the first time such an article was published. Without trying to take sides in the matter, but with the knowledge that the former Vice-Mayor is the main instigator of these arguments based on personal insults, I would advise him especially but the whole council at the same time that there are more important things to do when you are the town's authority than letting your bitterness over election loss drive you to kick around like a spoiled child.

So the Town Council is constantly fighting and little gets done. To make matters worse, the town's budget is full of expensive of the maintenance nature¹²³. There are no plans whatsoever to invest into architectural heritage. The town will, however, spend 3.5 million CZK (143 thousand Euros) on “interests and hobbies in the cultural sphere”, whatever that is, and 81 thousand (3 320 Euros) on “other cultural and religious purposes”.

The camp in Jerlochovice¹²⁴ with an outdoor swimming pool and mini-golf is in a wretched state and the company which used to run it was fired by the Council for owing the town about three years worth of rent. The town has been trying to sell or rent the place unsuccessfully ever since¹²⁵.

There are no facilities for tourists in the very centre of the town. The only hotel which was there, *Zlatý Jelen*, has closed down and is currently being offered for sale. The Vietnamese restaurant and bowling in the building of the former United Workers' Club has very recently met the same fate. There are a number of pubs around Fulnek, but for a decent meal, you have to either go to the non-smoking restaurant, which is only open until four in the afternoon, or to Pension Na Stovce, where the quality of the service and food is extremely unpredictable (not to mention both places being somewhat distant

¹²² Fulnek: Lepší už to nebude? *Novojiínský deník*. 9.9.2012. Available online at:

http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/fulnek-lepsi-uz-to-nebude-20120909.html

¹²³ Fulnek's budget for 2012. Available online at: <http://fulnek.cz/rozpocet-na-rok-2012/ds-1077/archiv=0>

¹²⁴ About two kilometers from Fulnek's Square.

¹²⁵ Zachrání osud fulneckého autokempu nějaký kupec? *Novojiínský deník*. 13.3.2012. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/zachrani-osud-fulneckeho-autokempu-nejaky-kupec-20120313.html

to the town's centre), or to Hotel Amos a few hundred metres off the Square. As far as a good café is concerned, I have dealt with this problematic issue in the section on MKCF and the Knurr Palace.

In her analysis of the state of tourist facilities in Fulnek, done for her bachelor thesis in 2010, Mrs. Pavlína Vráblová criticises the town for not having any suitable hotels¹²⁶. There are, of course, accommodation facilities, but their capacity is rather insufficient. She claims that Fulnek needs a hotel which could take a bus of tourists and not cost much at the same time. This would be an ideal role for the abandoned Zlatý Jelen on the Square, as it has become apparent that the future Castle hotel is meant for a slightly richer clientele than an average Czech/ German/ Austrian/ Polish/ Slovak family.

Transport in and out of Fulnek is also a problem, unless you own a car, of course. Buses and trains have serious gaps in services during the weekends (= days with the greatest tourist potential) and in the evening. If you want to go to a cultural event in Ostrava or Opava in the evening, you may as well forget about it or find a place to sleep over, since there is no way you can get back home after eight.

It was stated earlier in this work that active citizens have begun to appear gradually after the Revolution and that their fight to make Fulnek a better place to live has been showing more and more results. However, there still only a handful of them and the rest of the town does not really want to get involved.

The convent of the Capuchin Monastery got its provisional roof six years ago, to prevent further leaking in and deterioration of the structure. That roof is still there today, and the part that has not been under its protection has crumbled down. The town also failed to get a subsidy for the renovation and alternate use for the Knurr Palace.

Perhaps the problem that hurts the most at the moment, however, has only indirect connection with culture: it is the unemployment, the brain drain and the absolute shortage of apartments for rent (not that there is enough of even those for sale, but there is literally no supply of those for rent whatsoever). There were rumours of a project for a new apartment building, but the plot it was supposed to be built on is, in fact, composed

¹²⁶ Vráblová, Pavlína. *Marketingová strategie rozvoje cestovního ruchu ve Fulneku*. Vysoká škola podnikání, 2010.

of several small plots with different owners, so one would assume the land was impossible to be bought out¹²⁷. When I asked Ms. Darina Kovaříková of the Town Council about the chance of new apartments being built, she just said the town is now investing into power-saving mechanisms on its buildings so it has more money for other projects. Thus, there is no immediate plan. Of course, without places to stay and without places to work, young people will move out of the town. Then it follows that investors are not interested in Fulnek due to lack of qualified labour force, driving young people out of the town to follow where the jobs are. Similarly, train and bus services do not operate late or during weekends because there are hardly any tourists in and out of Fulnek because there are insufficient tourist facilities because the town has little money to invest because investors do not bring money and jobs to the town which leads to halted development, not to mention the problem with the housing. It is hard to determine which of these problems should be tackled first, as they all are interconnected through this vicious circle. This should, theoretically, be the Council's job to decide, but they cannot, for most of the time they are in session they argue about how their predecessors had not done anything.

As the previous paragraphs show, Fulnek is in a whirlpool of trouble, with an occasional highlight of success. Do the successes outweigh the failures? No, not yet. But hopefully we are on the right track.

¹²⁷ I have done the relevant research for my job as a local estate agent.

Conclusions

In this thesis, I have tried to find out what the cultural life in Fulnek encompasses, how it has been developing after the Revolution, who is involved and what culture is anyway, at least in the eyes of the representatives of both the town and its cultural institutions.

I have found out that there is no official definition of culture, apart from the one Mrs. Tvardková of MKCF gave me as the policy of her organisation, as everyone else I asked gave me their own opinions rather than company statements. I have re-discovered how important and up-to-date J. A. Comenius was, and that the town has a whole list of other prominent citizens accumulated throughout centuries.

I did identify the cultural institutions in the town, with their different spheres of influence and different projects, and hopefully managed to convey the diversity of all the projects and one-off events, together with the excitement and the drive of the people involved. I found out about local historian amateurs who have spent hours in archives to discover more about their town. I also confirmed my theory that Fulnek must be cooperating with the EU institutions and other partners in the Region.

The sights and the monuments rather speak for themselves. The Socialist Era left them to their own devices most of the time, or damaged their original structure and character with no regard for preserving the authenticity of the buildings for future times. After the Velvet Revolution, some of the sights were not even worth saving and no one is taking care of them now. The arguably most important ones, however, have been relatively lucky and efforts have been made to rebuild, reconstruct or rebuild them to their former state.

There have been positive changes in Fulnek, of course, but a lot of negative aspects remained, people's indifference, high unemployment, brain drain, lack of housing and lack of good-quality tourist facilities being the most severe ailments of the town. Perhaps by identifying the points of struggle, this Thesis might help with their gradual elimination, even if finding a simple solution is extremely difficult.

I have, therefore, partly succeeded in achieving my goals. However, I have also experienced great trouble in locating relevant sources. It was virtually impossible to find

out anything on the period between 1989 – 2006, before MKCF was founded. When I asked the Town Hall staff for information, they re-directed me to MKCF anyway, even though I inquired after the times before it was founded. And when I asked at MKCF, naturally, the young new staff had no information for me either. It was a sheer accident that I came across Mrs. Válová, who was kind enough to answer my questions – still, it was a single interview with a single person without any solid data to provide me with¹²⁸.

Since the thesis was originally meant as a study of the policy development throughout the modern era, these missing facts took the intention apart, and I had to fit the entire period between 1989-2006 onto a page. Instead of comparing the times before and after MKCF and finding out whether MKCF was a good idea and whether it is doing a good job, I could practically only compare the last six years with the sketchy information on the Era of Socialism and the 1989-2006 period, which is a serious hindrance and does not make too much sense. Missing pieces also prevented me from writing a coherent, unified chapter on the sights and monuments, since the available sources sometimes described the history of the building and sometimes its appearance, but not always both. The most important thing, though, the fate of the sights after the Revolution, is always there.

To conclude, as far as I could tell, the situation is improving when it comes to preservation of the architectural heritage and to citizen activity and interest in their town's fate. There is, however, still considerable space for improvement in the governance, certain cultural policies and the overall support for tourism.

For further research, I would therefore recommend delving deeper into the policies of 1989-2006. A study of social conditions in Fulnek would undoubtedly be fascinating as well. But there are many directions a further research could go: the previously-mentioned social aspects; writing a story about all of Fulnek's sights and monuments including the latest development; analysing the activities of the local cultural institutions, perhaps finding out which approach of which institution is the most successful one. Different methods can also be employed; not only interviews, articles

¹²⁸ She did tell me that the Capuchin Monastery was full of esoteric sediment that she had to clear out with the help of her spiritually sensitive friends, though.

and the detailed study of the official websites¹²⁹. Or, to be original, research can also be led into the forgotten architectural heritage of the town.

¹²⁹ Although, the official websites of institutions in Fulnek boast very good and very exhausting amount of information.

Sources

Printed Sources:

Komenský, Jan Amos. *Informatorium školy mateřské*. Praha: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství, 1972.

Piaget, Jean. "The Significance of John Amos Comenius at Present Time," in *Selections*. UNESCO, 1957. Available online as:

<http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications/ThinkersPdf/comeniuse.PDF>

Oppl, Stanislav. *Kronika staroslavného města Fulneku, připravená J.A. Komenského*. 1928.

Barbořík, Milan. *Tereška, princezna z Fulneku*. Albatros, 2012.

MKCF Annual Report, 2009.

MKCF Annual Report, 2010.

MKCF Annual Report, 2011

Tichánek, Jiří and Zdeněk Šerý. *Šlechtická sídla na Novojičínsku*. Opava: Jiří Miller, 2003.

Augustinková, Lucie; Grepl, Emanuel and Zdeněk Orlita. *Příběh o Loretu (Proměny fulnecké Santa Casy od barokní kaple ke klasicistní vile)*. Krajský úřad Moravskoslezského kraje, 2010.

Komenského Fulnek. *TK Press Foto*, 1992.

Vráblová, Pavlína. *Marketingová strategie rozvoje cestovního ruchu ve Fulneku*. Vysoká škola podnikání, 2010.

Online sources:

Fulnek's official website: www.fulnek.cz

Fulnek's Information Centre official website: www.ic-fulnek.cz

MKCF's official website: www.mkcf.cz

Comenius Fulnek's official website: <http://www.comeniusfulnek.cz/>

The District Museum of Nový Jičín's official website:

<http://www.muzeum.novy-jicin.cz/>

Moravské Kravarsko's official website:

http://www.moravskekravarsko.cz/_moravskekravarsko/menu.phtml

TO Touhy's official website: <http://www.totouhy.wz.cz/>

Czech Statistical Office's website: <http://www.czso.cz/>

Land Registry online: <http://nahlizenidokn.cuzk.cz/>

Novojičínský deník: <http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/>

Promítání nekončí, ale...". *Novojičínský deník*. 28 February 2012.

Interview with Milan Barbořík. *Novojičínský deník*, 2.1.2012.

Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/kultura_region/milan-barborik-druhe-vydani-terezky20120102.html

Terežka bude provázet obyvatele Fulneku celý rok. *Novojičínský deník*. 29.12.2011. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/kultura_region/terezka-bude-provazet-obyvatele-fulneku20111229.html?diskuse=1

Zámek prochází složitou rekonstrukcí. *Novojičínský deník*. 5.5.2010. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/zamek-prochazi-slozitou-rekonstrukci_20100505.html

Fulnek: Lepší už to nebude? *Novojičínský deník*. 9.9.2012. Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/fulnek-lepsi-uz-to-nebude-20120909.html

Zachrání osud fulneckého autokempu nějaký kupec? *Novojičínský deník*. 13.3.2012.
Available online at: http://novojicinsky.denik.cz/zpravy_region/zachrani-osud-fulneckeho-autokempu-nejaky-kupec-20120313.html

Interviews:

Pavčina Tvardková, director of MKCF

Pavčina Vráblová, founding member of Comenius Fulnek and the director of the IC

Marie Mrtvá, the custodian of the Comenius Memorial

Darina Kovaříková, a member of the Town Council

Marie Válová, a former head of the town's Cultural Department

E-mails and Facebook chat:

Pavčina Tvardková, director of MKCF

Darina Kovaříková, a member of the Town Council

Jana Mocová, the Mayor of Fulnek

Lecture:

Doc. Kolečka of the Masaryk University in Brno. Lecture on Komenský's Map of Moravia. St. Joseph's Church, Fulnek, 24th May 2012.