The Abbey of Zirc, founded by King Béla III, in 1182, flourished until the mid 14th or early 15th century and played a significant role among the Cistercian Abbeys in Hungary. It received several delegations from the Pope and the General Chapter of the Cistercian Order also entrusted to the Cistercian Abbot the management of various official businesses. It is important to note that in the statute-books, the Abbeys of Zirc or Bakony never once appears as having any disciplinary problems.

However, at the beginning of the 15th century the Abbey of Zirc, similarly to most of the Cistercian Abbeys in Hungary, must have been in a run-down state. The monasteries of Hungary... have been corrupted spiritually in many respects and some of them are occupied by force by outsiders who are not members of the Order1, wrote the General Chapter in 1411. At that time, there certainly was a convent in Zirc2, but the charter issued 30 years later reports on impoverishment3. The impoverished abbey must have been directed by a commendatory abbot4 in 1462, but if it was not so at that time, by 1511 the abbey would certainly be run by a commendatory abbot, Miklós Maglódy5, and it would remain so until its reestablishment. From 1538 Zirc belonged to the Podmaniczky – another source6 gives details of its decline at that period – and if there was a monk at Zirc at that time abandon Zirc at latest after the capture of Buda by the Turks in 1541. The village itself was deserted shortly thereafter. By 1549 only four places are recorded as inhabited by serfs.

We do not have any sources concerning the construction of the abbey and neither of the medieval building operations. The archives of Zirc Abbey completely perished in the 16th century, therefore it is only from the above mentioned data that we can make the inference that the buildings of the abbey had started to decay from the 16th century and onwards. After the foundation, certain repairs, perhaps even transformations were made. We can draw this conclusion from a piece of a Gothic bevelled window frame from the 14–15th century7.

* The Cistercian Abbeys in Hungary.
** A presentation at the Catholic University of Péter Pázmány, held on 7th November 2005, at the Conference on the History of the Cistercian Order. It will be included in the study volume to be published on the theme of the Conference.
2 The charter issued on 17th May 1418 mentions “Andrew Cistercian abbot and his convent”, therefore we may assume that there is a monastic community and it seems that the abbot is also a member of the order. Magyar Országos Levéltár DI 43398.
3 According to a document dated 17th September 1450 at Pécs, if Abbot Peter should not pay back the borrowed 10 forints, the auxiliary bishop would enforce his claim by legal proceedings. J. Koller, Historia Episcopatus Quinqueecclesiast. IV. Pozsony, 1796, p. 336–337.
4 Peter Nagyváthy Cistercian abbot must have already been a commendatory abbot who appeals to Pope Pius II in 1462 as the abbott of Zirc his commission to be abbot of Bakonybél, resigning from his rights about Zirc. In 1464 he will get himself commissioned again to be the abbott of Zirc of the monastery that has “no more than 20 forints income per annum” (H. Konstantin O. Cist., Zirc története. Veszprém, 1930, p. 281. Oklevéltár, 130–032=HK 130–132).
5 On the 10th October 1513 Jákob, abbot of Cîteaux approves that Miklós Maglódy, commendatory abbot having been commissioned by János Szapolyai in 1511, who wants to become a monk following the general decree of the Parliament issued in 1486 and 1498, would join the Order by the abbot of Heiligenkreuz and so become abbott of Zirc. The abbot of Cîteaux stipulates that he has to “put the monastery right” – Budapest, Eötvös Lóránd Tudományegyetem Könyvtára, Kézirattár, Collectio Hevenesiana Tom. LXXIX p. 389.
7 Veszprémi Múzeum Veszprémvölgyi Kötiára, lsz: 255 (73.8.3) Zirc, 1972.
Sources on the construction of the Abbey of Zirc

The first authentic records about the medieval abbey and church come from eyewitnesses in the 17–18th century. The first source mentioning the Abbey of Zirc is the Celestial Crown by Pál Eszterházy, published in 1696 that source mentions the devotional pictures of the Holy Virgin. He writes as follows about the Abbey of Zirc:

CLIV. The Picture of Our Miraculous Lady of Zirc in Hungary.

There is a monastery in Zirc, in the Bakony Range, in the County of Veszprém, Hungary that had been built for the Cistercian monks four hundred years ago. Though it was a place where the Holy Virgin had been particularly venerated, it was razed to the ground by the pagan enemy in 1530. Now it is just barren with some walls of that sacred place here or there still standing. The source does not tell us anything about the details concerning the abbey and it also contains some inaccuracies with regard to the date of foundation and its destruction.

The second source comes from the refounders of Heinrichau. In 1699, before taking over the abbey of Zirc and its estates, the abbot of Heinrichau, Kalert Heinrich commissioned the monk Abraham Wabrzig with the inspection of Zirc and its properties and the survey of its economic potentials. He writes his report to his abbot in Wien on 17th October 1699 in which he describes the church as well as the abbey in detail, comparing it to the church of the Cistercian abbey of Heinrichau and to the neighbouring one of Rauden (Rudy). We quote the most important excerpts from that letter:

The monastery of Zirc is mostly in ruins. Its church is built of carved stone. The arches, windows and columns are also made of chiselled, still undamaged stones. It is cruciform as the church of Heinrichau with the exception that [...] the sanctuary is exactly the same width but not as long as in Heinrichau, and there are no side-aisles next to the sanctuary that would enable one to perambulate, however, continuing from both sides of the sanctuary there are two fairly wide chapels with a wall between them. Up to now, all four are still vaulted. Similarly to the church of Rauden, in other parts of the church at Zirc, continuing from the choir there are side-aisles and high arches, just as in Heinrichau. In its front, next to the high altar there are no side-corridors and as in Rauden next to the sanctuary there is one chapel. [In Zirc, there are two neighbouring chapels separated by a wall.]

The walls built on its middle columns still stand and the lateral ones up to the roof of the above mentioned church although there is no roof one could easily top it as the wall is as high as it was when covered with a roof. The walls are intact without any cracking of the carved stones, from the high altar to the third bay of the back part of the church as, for example in our church to the stairs of the pulpit. All the windows have the same shape as the new windows of the church of Heinrichau that are built from the pulpit. There is an enormous, beautiful window made of yet intact stones behind the high altar. The vestry is nice, wide and long, its walls are still standing. The lateral walls of the dormitory and the separation walls of the lower floor... are all still intact, however the upper floor, namely the dormitory is half ruined from the middle of the cell’s window. The other part of the dormitory has intact windows... but all the vaulting has fallen down, including all the corridors that had been arched. All the walls and the façade of the refectory are still intact but its vaulting has already fallen down. The length of the vestry, the dormitory and the refectory built southward, as in Heinrichau, is the same as in Heinrichau from the church to the refectory inclusive.

The following written memento dates from about 1729 subsequent to the move from Pápa to Zirc, to their temporary residence – called Bagolyvár – of the three Cistercian priests who were involved first-hand in the reestablishment in 1726. They soon started to compile the handwritten book listing in detail the estates and abandoned lands of the Abbey of Zirc, named after the Blessed Virgin, in order that the newly arriving monks might be informed, as they say in the foreword. The quotation

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8 Eszterházy Pál, Mennyei korona az az Az egész Világban lévő Családotos Boldogasszony Száz Képeinek röviden föl tett Eredeti..., Nagyszombat, 1696. p. 127 (no. CLIV).
9 The letter of Abraham Wabrzig to his abbot on the 17th October 1699. Heinrich Grüger: ‘Der Beginn der Union von Heinrichau und Zirc (1701–1752)’ Analecta Cisterciensia. 38 (1982) p. 68. (The original can be found at Breslau/Wrocław Diocesan Archive V-B-6c.)
10 The author (Abraham Wabrzig) himself repeats what had been written about the chapel. The plan designed by Tibor Hümptner that we have sketched above proved to be correct with regard to the side-chapels albeit he could not find the foundation walls of the chapel.
11 In the church of Heinrichau, the pulpit is in the nave on the third left pier counting westward from the transept. The altar-piece of Olaszfalu that we will detail below also depicts intact to this third pier the medieval church of Zirc. See the plan of Heinrichau, Figure 1.
12 The above mentioned window-frames dating from the 14–15th century could have been in the church. See Note 7.
13 We assume that “the enormous, beautiful window” refers to the six metre high rose window, reviewed below, found in fragmentary state in 2005.
14 It appears to us from the source that the refectory in Zirc was also situated in the southern end of the eastern wing. See the plan of Heinrichau. Figure 1.
15 In Heinrichau the distance from the vestry to the summer refectory is 43.2 m (namely the eastern corridor of the cloister) while in Zirc the length of the vestry, the dormitory and the refectory is 43.9 (according to the text it is the whole eastern wing.) – E. Łużyńiecka, Architektura klasztorów cysterskich, Wrocław, 2002, p. 462. made by the plan of Heinrichau and by the plan of Zirc of Tibor Hümptner.
below comes from the description of the estates and the comments relating to them:

[Zirc – p. 65] There remained standing, nevertheless, the tall ruins of the once magnificent Basilica, which are awesome even today, together with the ruins of one wing of the abandoned monastery. The foundation documents of the Abbey of Zirc have been lost, together with all the other documents. They diligently (instituted a search) at the archives of the Chamber of Pozsony, but found nothing. ... [Annotationes – p. 66:] N. 1o At one time there were two churches at Zirc: one more festive, that of the monastery, the other, by the side of which, as far as one can see from the ruins, the rectory building stood. We know nothing today of the patron saints of these churches. Márton T. Szentiványi, the Jesuit historian says that at one time there was a miraculous picture at Zirc, but one cannot tell where it originated from. In the church of the monastery two chapels have been cleaned and a shingled roof put over them, at the place where mass used to be celebrated under the open sky; before Zirc became a village, our priests used to spend the night there and, in place of the brothers’ singing of the psalms in the choir loft, they heard the howl of the wolves close by.

In the larger church and the monastery here and there a number of holes can be found where the swine-herd and other wretched sons of the mammon sought treasure, and they threw stones into the sanctuary behind the ruined altar through the larger round window, and they sometimes got frightened and stopped their activities when the moks in their habits appeared like (some) spirits.

This quotation places before us the same picture as that written 30 years earlier by Abraham Wabrzig: some parts of the church are still standing, including the eastern wing of the monastery, furthermore it specifies the presence of the rose window on the sanctuary wall.

The fourth source can be found in the work of Mátyás Bél concerning Veszprém County. Shortly before 1735, Mátyás Bél surveyed Zirc himself, not only the ruins of the medieval abbey but also the village of Zirc and the new abbey which was under construction. He speaks briefly about the construction of the medieval abbey: The building of the church was cruciform; all was built of ashlars made of rock beautifully interspersed with chiselled windows, gates and columns. It is a huge, magnificent building from all sides. [...] The whole was surrounded by a three-mile long wall...

The fifth source comes from the first monks of the reestablished abbey from 1738. It is preserved in the Historia domus of the abbey:

From time to time you can hear some rumours widespread in all Pannonia about the ancient ruins (that) are partly from the

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19 Historia domus, p. 43. (1738), New Library of the Abbey of Zirc.
monastery, mainly from the church in Zirc. (And they show) as I could see myself that it was not just a whatever artifact but it was really worthy of a king. But something that long-ago people once liked is not appreciated by present-day people. Though in the past it was a royal artefact, due to cruel storms, to the length of time that has past and to the corrosive effect of the air, and mostly to the enemy that has set it on fire, the monastery and the church have been ruined to such an extent that they were not like a royal ornament but like a beggar’s rags.

At the moment of my writing, the new monastery has already been built out of the old one and the same intention was kept in mind (this time as well), namely that the new church should be made out of the old ruins. As we can see from the previous description, the foundation-stone has been laid and the remaining ruins have been demolished one after the other. The last and most beautiful part of the façade was blasted on December 19th this year.

On this façade the window looked to be intact and very artistic but the weather has worn it very much. Its parts could not have been used for any other buildings.

The sixth written source on the medieval Abbey of Zirc can be found in the second edition of Topographia magni regni Hungariae (1750) by Father Bonbardius SJ and Father Trsztyánszki SJ. It tells us less than the description by Mátyás Bél.

Chronologically the last record which does not have full source value is the high altar-piece of the Roman Catholic Church of Olaszfalu. In the lower left corner the presumed ruins of Zirc Abbey can be seen together with two Cistercian monks. The ruins on the high altar-piece show us a Latin cross church with basilican layout and the eastern wing of the Abbey in ruins. It completely agrees with the above mentioned account of Abraham Wabrzig concerning its building and the designed items. Yet, the artist used his artistic freedom: he did not make a precise plan but a painting, therefore the piers and some other items are schematic. The name of the painter and the date of the painting are unknown. According to Mária Aggházy the painter may have been Bernhard Krause and the painting date from ca. 1770. We know that Krause has painted several pieces for Heinrichau and we can find some more paintings by him in other churches founded by the Abbey of Zirc. However, Krause himself could not have seen the ruins. At his birth, in 1743 they were no longer standing. Presumably he might have made that portion of the painting based on some other painting or drawing, if it was painted by Krause at all.

20 The text may leave us in doubt as to whether the eastern or western façade of the church was demolished last. But we see in the previous source that the western part of the church was in a bad state, or did not stand at all, and the “beautiful window” in both sources is similarly standing. Therefore we must regard the façade holding the "very artistic window" in the description dated 1738, also based on the contents of the previous source, as being "that behind the main altar".

By the 20th century the build-up and the layout of the ancient monastery had sunk into oblivion. At the beginning of his abbotship, Remig Békéfi had given his permission for Father Tibor Hümpfner to start an excavation in order to establish the layout of the medieval church and abbey. He initiated the excavation in February 1912 with six workers. He supposed that the only pier left for reminiscence in the 18th century stood at its original place. Thus, first he looked for the wall of the southern side-aisle, then following this he arrived at the transept. On the continuation of the transept, the chapter house was found, and soon a chiselled column base was discovered. Thus, their assumption was verified: the pier stood at its original place. Those people who at the beginning were doubtful about the excavation, gladly started to go to see it too. From the eastern wing of the cloister a door opened to the church. In front of this, a fine recumbent gravestone without inscription was found. Deep underneath there was an intact skeleton too. In front of the entrance of the chapter house, also in the cloister, another fine gravestone was found: one with a convex finely chiselled Gothic cross without inscription. During the excavation several smaller or bigger chiselled stone fragments were found. The chapter house and the community room\textsuperscript{28} have been completely excavated. The width of the chapter house helped to establish the width of the transept and the nave, therefore the layout of the medieval church could be established. Instead of the foundation wall of the sanctuary, on the rocky grounds mortar patches were found\textsuperscript{29}. The foundations of the pier at the junction of the nave and the transept, furthermore the ones of a pair of piers situated to the south from this, were found. The foundation wall of the western façade was not found, so the church is imagined to be seven-vaulted, relying on the place of the western wing and on analogy\textsuperscript{30}. In the wing of the lay brothers, by April the cellar was also excavated, more precisely its corners deep underneath and the foundation of its piers\textsuperscript{31}. Only the western and eastern foundation walls of the southern wing were found.

\textsuperscript{28} According to the above mentioned source from 1699, this room served as a refectory, in agreement with Tibor Hümpfner’s supposition that in the southern wing “the refectory had not been built”: l.c. p. 131. Hümpfner did not know about the 1699 report.
\textsuperscript{29} Though the exact place of the sanctuary wall is unknown, we may suppose that Tibor Hümpfner drew correctly on his layout the place of the sanctuary wall following the available signs and the principle of proportions. Today a modern excavation could shed light on this, as the mortar marks on the rocky substratum could give an explanation for this. More information can be drawn from the above mentioned source from 1699 saying that “the sanctuary is as wide but not as long as the one in Heinrichau” – thus it must have been made of less than three bays, making comparison with Heinrichau.
\textsuperscript{30} It is interesting to note that in 1930, Konstantin Horváth O. Cist. in his book about the history of Zirc (p. 4) describes the medieval church to be six-quarreled.
\textsuperscript{31} Though the refectory of the lay brothers was not found in the southern continuation of the cellar (ibidem, p. 136), it features on the layout drawn by Hümpfner.
There was no trace of the refectory. Relying on the general principles of Cistercian architecture, the corners of the cloister were also found. They did not have to look for the well as it had been known for a long time that the well on the site is of medieval origin. Around it, the hexagonal foundation walls of the well house were found.

Thus, on the basis of the excavation in 1912, in the spring of 1913, Remig Békefi, Abbot of Zirc commissioned Dr Oszkár Fritz, private teacher at the Polytechnic, to prepare the technical drawing of the excavated foundation walls and the chiselled stone fragments. Applying them to the Cistercian construction customs, Tibor Hümpfner drew the probable layout of the medieval abbey.

Further excavation and conservation did not take place, because the First World War and the ensuing difficult conditions in the country put a stop to any further researches. Then Abbot Remig Békefi, the initiator of the history writing of the Order in this country, died in 1924. The excavated sections were all buried, excepting the eastern wing.

In 1944 the young entrants to the Order cleaned down the ruins that were left uncovered. In 1950 when the monastery was disbanded, the excavation area was

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32 Nevertheless, it features on the layout drawn by Hümpfner.
33 Ibidem, p.137. – It is a pity that on the excavation plan the foundation walls of the well are not marked.
34 These plans – or perhaps only those parts of them that can be found in the quoted works of Tibor Hümpfner – can be found in the Archaeological Data Store of the Veszprémi Laczkó Dezső Muzeum.

The history of the excavated ruins since 1912

![Fig. 4. An adapted version of the plans drawn by Tibor Hümpfner. The excavated portions are coloured dark. The white areas, without specific finds, are presumed](image-url)
The place of the medieval Abbey church is almost precisely divided lengthwise to west/east by a stone wall. Within the wall is the yard of the Abbey, beyond the wall is Köztársaság Street along which the main road No. 82 runs between Veszprém and Győr. During the spring and summer of 1952 while laying pipes for the water supply on the southern side of the main road No. 82, some 15 metres west of the currently standing pier, the trench dig-

After 1958 the excavation area became abandoned for twenty years. During the school year of 1978–79 the secondary school teacher, Steven Szűcs and his pupils tidied up the area cutting out shrubs, trees, replacing loose stones. Besides the maintenance of the ruins, they undertook serious research work and made a maquette of the medieval monastery in two possible formats. In 1982, being the 800th anniversary of the Abbey of Zirc, they carried out further cleaning work. There were plans for displaying the ruins in a proper, worthy manner, but these could not be achieved because of lack of funds.

Following some 20 years of neglect, in 2003 the young Cistercian monks carried out the maintenance work of the excavation area, the last time. They cut out overgrown trees, sprawling shrubs, and removed the rubbish. But the excavation area – even though it is cleaned up – is exposed to the vicissitudes of the weather without the necessary protection and conservation work having been done over a period of nearly 100 years.

Excavations around the medieval Abbey after 1950

The place of the medieval Abbey church is almost precisely divided lengthwise to west/east by a stone wall. Within the wall is the yard of the Abbey, beyond the wall is Köztársaság Street along which the main road No. 82 runs between Veszprém and Győr. During the spring and summer of 1952 while laying pipes for the water supply on the southern side of the main road No. 82, some 15 metres west of the currently standing pier, the trench dig-

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35 Veszprémi Laczkó Dezső Múzeum, Archaeological Data Store No. 8809.
At the beginning of the 1990s during a walk-around, two smaller fragments were found at a house in Zirc. These were taken to theARCHIv. THE EÖTVŐS LORÁND UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE. As promised, these should find their way into the stone repository of Zirc when it is established. During the last year these were returned to Zirc and placed into the stone storage room of the monastery.

In 1995 on the first floor of the Abbey building, which was built prior to 1735, during alterations, chiselled stones from the medieval monastery were found.

In 1996 we opened a door into the cloister at the south-west corner of the present Abbey church. Several carved stone pieces were found during the breaking up of the wall. In the Baroque wall carved stones were embedded in mortar between two brick walls. At the opened up base of the church wall to about a 70 cm height we found chiselled stones and ashlars that were turned inward. Most important among the finds are: a fragment of the pier abacus of the medieval church, stringcourse and arches.

The most recent finds

In the summer of 2004 in the area of the arboratum, about 35 metres east-south/east of the eastern wing of the medieval monastery, during the laying of sewerage pipes a fragment of the outer crocket stringcourse was found. Based on the place and form of the discovery, it is probable that it was a part of the south façade of the eastern wing of the monastery. This construction piece weighed several hundred kilograms. Furthermore, the building layer from the 12–13th century and debris from the work of chiselling was also found.

Early in September 2005 town residents reported to the Abbey as well as to the Cultural Heritage Protection Office that some 40–50 pieces of chiselled stone were found during demolition of a building that stood at the inner corner of the bend of the main road No. 82 heading toward Felsőors, to the stone repository of the Dezső Laczkó Museum of Veszprém.

38 Veszprémi Laczkó Dezső Múzeum, Régiészeti Adattár, no. 8806. Archaeological report of Miklós Héjj.
39 Veszprémi Laczkó Dezső Múzeum, Régiészeti Adattár, no. 8807. Archaeological report by Dr Ákos Kiss.
42 This building is presumed to be the mill about which Konstan-tin Horváth writes at the place marked below (“in 1728 below the ruins of the old monastery”) and the hand-written map of Zirc of 1766 also marks it. – Horváth Konstantin O. Cist., op. cit., 169–172. – The map can be found in the Veszprém Megyei Levél-tár VeML T no. 112.
to Győr, and which once belonged to the Abbey, built by it around 1728 and 1766 and which was reconstructed several times. The investor had not informed the authorities. The salvaging of the finds was and is being carried out by the Archaeological Control, Veszprém, of the Cultural Heritage Protection Office. The chiselled stones found originate from the medieval abbey church, and were placed into the walls of the Baroque building during the beginning and the middle of the 18th century. The cataloguing of the find and their architectural interpretation are expected later, only the

Fig. 6. The fragments of the rose window found in September 2005: a) the hub of the rose window b) the outer frame of the window

Fig. 7. The stone fragments found in September 2005: a) column ring, b) rib vault, c) column capital, d) vault boss built into the wall of the cloister of the 18th Baroque Abbey

43 The renovators of the abbey church noticed the chiselled stones, they brought these to the attention of the abbey and they in turn informed the KÖH. Had the renovators not done this, perhaps these precious stones might have become buried forever.

44 Excavations are also taking place now not far from the building, around it and inside the building geophysical survey is being done, because on the basis of the information gained from Konstantin Horváth there is doubt that the building was erected on the spot “where hundreds of years earlier (that is in the Middle Ages) a mill” stood.
most important fragments found are the outer frame and hub (boss) of a wheel window about 6 metres in diameter, to which the spokes had joined. I assume this is the rose window mentioned in 1699 by Abraham Wabzig in his report; of which about 1729 the returned monks write; and about which the Abbey’s Historia domus speaks.

Some further important fragments: two crocket capitals, several fragments of rib vault, corner column ring, fragment of the outer crocket stringcourse.

45 The writer of the diary in 1738 on the demolition of the rose window of the eastern façade commented: "parts of it could not be used for any building whatever". That is why it was rebuilt many times, in the Baroque era, for the last time in 1766. (The round cut stones are difficult to use in building. Those pieces found had been truncated and bricks supplemented to be able to fit them into the wall.)

The reconstruction of the medieval Abbey church of Zirc

The computerized reconstruction of the medieval abbey, primarily the church, was raised in 2003, following the tidying up of the excavation area. Its implementation started in 2004 with the assistance of Csaba Benkő a graphic architect and visual artist. It was based on the reconstruction plans of Tibor Hümfpfer, with small adjustments that were made necessary by the finds discovered later. These same technical drawings of Hümfpfer were used to start the shaping of the interior of the church. Thereafter the interior was developed by the help of analogues, among which Orval played an important part, because of the preserved pier at Zirc, the closeness of the time of building, and the great similarity due to their affiliation. We also noted the above mentioned main altar picture of Olaszfalu to help us imagine, with the use of analogues, the bays of the transept and the sanctuary. Aided by these details the church could be reconstructed, apart from the east and west façade.

The exceedingly significant finds that surfaced in September 2005 were a great help in the reconstruction. This happened when two important pieces of the rose window were found, so it was possible to construct the window, although the missing parts could be replaced only by analogues. Those fragments found at Zirc originate in the eastern outer wall of the sanctuary, according to the sources quoted. It is true that outer walls with such a large rose window were not a common practice in Cistercian building, at the same time we can find examples at the Italian San Galgano and Arabona Cistercian abbey churches built in almost an identical period. Similar wheel windows, albeit in the western façade, can be found not far from Arabona, also in Italy, at Fossanova and Valvisciolo abbey churches, built at the turn of the 12–13th centuries. A wheel window, almost identical to that at Arabona, can be found in northern Italy at Vercell, in the Sant Andrea Benedictine abbey church, in the outer wall of the sanctuary as well as in the western façade.

However, it is not necessary to travel to Italy for an analogue, as one can be found 40 kms from Zirc at a Benedictine abbey church with a straight outer wall.

46 San Galgano of Casamari was founded in 1201. Its church was consecrated in around 1218. The rose window mentioned does not have its inner segments any more. Arabona was founded in 1209 from Tre Fontane. In the rose window the spokes structure can be seen today.

47 Cardinal Guala Bicchieri built it between 1219 and 1227. In the abbey and equally in the church French Burgundy influence shows. In some parts Cistercian influence can also be found.
and a large rose window with three simple windows under it – maybe due to Cistercian influence. The analogue is Pannonhalma. The large circular window of the sanctuary is about 4 metres in diameter, and this, in relation to the width of the sanctuary, is almost identical\(^{48}\) with the rose window of Zirc, looking at its proportions. It is true that at Pannonhalma in this circular window the spokes are no longer there, but in 1995 during the renovation of the façade, in the outer rim of the circular window a groove was discovered\(^{49}\) required for the insertion of tracery. Thus it is not unimaginable to find such a large rose window on the façade of the sanctuary at Zirc.

In the reconstruction of the church there are further details that can be imagined only conditionally, on the basis of analogues, for example the western façade is merely guesswork because no relic whatever has remained of it. We will start the reconstruction of the abbey buildings according to plans next year. When our work with the stone fragments is completed, we hope that will give us further points of reference to help in the reconstruction. At the same time there are several questions in which the entire excavation could reveal the direction. Up to date information is available at http://www.ocist.hu/zircz/.

\(^{48}\) At Pannonhalma the circular window measures about 60% of the width of the sanctuary, at Zirc 65–70% (taking into account the currently missing sections).

Fig. 11. Reconstruction of the medieval Abbey church; the nave

Fig. 12. Reconstruction of the outside of the medieval Abbey church; N–E view
Acknowledgement

I wish to express my gratitude and thanks before anything else to Fr Levente Hervay who led me to the love of our medieval monastery and who assisted in the present work several times. I would like to thank Balázs Bodó and Gergely Buzás, archaeologists, for their honest and quick assistance. They appraised the more significant stone fragments that were found in September 2005 and made the technical drawings to be inserted in the computerized reconstruction. They continue to provide useful information even today. Last but not least I thank Csaba Benkő, graphic architect, for the reconstruction of the medieval abbey church, which task demanded a great deal of work, challenges, and study of the history of art.

Appendix

Letter of Abbot Abraham Wabrizg dated 17th October 1699.


Zircium monasterium magna ex parte dirutum. Ecclesia est extructa ex meris lapidibus scissis; arcus, fenestrae, columnae item formatae ex lapidibus politis adhuc illaestis. Formam habet crucis ad modum ecclesiae Henrichoviensis, unico excepto, quod navicula seu pars presbyterii sit quidem tam lata, non autem tam longa sicut Henrichovii, nec penes presbyterium sint laterales ambitus, ut circumiri posset, sed ex utraque parte presbyterii duo sunt contigua sat ampla sacella, muro interposito, pro nunc omnia quam adhuc formicata. Ad modum denique ecclesiae Raundensis est Zircensis, nimisiam posterior ecclesia post Chorum, ut Henrichovii habet tales laterales ambitus et tam altos arcus; anterior autem pars penes majus altarenullolaterealibusambitus, et sicut Raundae penes presbyterium ex qualibet est unus, sic Zircii sint duo contigua sacella, interposito muro, v. g. ubi Henrichovii sacristia actualis aut repositarium est unum et alterum ubi est ambitus sacellum versus S. Josephi et eodem modo sunt in altera parte. – Extant praemominatae ecclesiae muri medi ecclesiae supra columnas extructi et laterales usque sursum ad tectum, et quamvis tectum nullum sit, possit sine magna difficultate superponi tectum, cum murus nulla indigeat elevacione, cum adhuc ejusdem altitudinis sit, cuius fuit, tum ut tecta Ecclesiae. Integri sunt enim muri, sive omni concussione lapidum politorum; ex parte altius majoris usque ad tertia partem inclusive posterioris ecclesiae, v. g. usque nostrae Ecclesiae ad arcum scannii D. Cancellarii inclusive, fenestrae omnes sunt in forma fenestrarum novarum Ecclesiae Henrichoviensis, quae in Ecclesia inferius et regione D. Cancellarii extructae sunt, et post majus altare est ingenis et pulchra fenestra integrae lapidum extructorium. Sacristia est pulchra, lata et longa, cuius muri adhuc integri extant. Dormitoriiorum laterales et medi ecclesiae muri in tractu inferiori, ubi est nostrum capitulum, omnes sunt adhuc integri; superiori tamen pars, hoc est dormitorium, media ex parte, cum mediate fenestrarum celarum est diruta; et in mediate altera dormitorii usque sunt fenestrarum lapide polito cinctae et modestissime formatae integrae, collapsis tamen omnibus formiculis, etiam omnium ambitum, quod formicatae fuerint. Refectoriorum muri omnes ad frontispicia etiam adhuc integri sunt, collapsis tamen formiculis. Longitudinii sacristiae, dormitoriiorum et refectoriorum, quae ad meridiem versus, ut Henrichovii, sunt extructa, tanta est, ut Henrichovii ab Ecclesia usque ad Refectorium inclusive.

Specifica enumeratio possessionum et desertorum praediorum abbattiae B.M.V. de Zirc appertinentium Zirc. 65-67. c. 1729, Zirci Apátság Újkönyvtára.


Historia domus. p. 43. (1738), Zirci Apátság Újkönyvtára.

Anna 1738. Eodem anno audieris subinde fuisse et per totam Pannoniam divulgatum rumorum de ruderebus antiquis tam monas-terii, quamque et vel maxime de ecclesia Zircii existentibus, vere uti et ego vidi, non opus fuisse simplex, sed vere regionum, ast, quod placuit antiquis, recentibus non assidet; quamquam opus regione omnino fuerat, tamen ob injurias tempestatum, longitudinem tem-porum et invasiones æris, et vel maxime ob fuorem incendi hostilis ita desolatum est monasterium et templum, ut non regio, sed mendicabolo hinc inde lacero aequiparatum fuerat. Cum igitur iam hoc tempore, quo haec insero, novum monasterium ex antiquo extrac- tum sit, etiam eadem mens consultuit, ut ex antiquis ruderebus ecclesiae, ecclesia formetur nova, uti videbis ex praeteritis scriptis, lapidem fundamentalem positis usque, adeoque una pars post alter- am extantium defacto ruderebus diruta est; ultima vero et quidem maxima miranda frontispicii anno supraposito 19 Decembris per artificium pyraboralum pulvere dejecta est, in quo frontispicio fenestrae apparebat integra et artificioissima, quae tamen per æris injuriam multum infestata, partes ejus pro nullo aedificio applicari potuerunt. 

Translated by Anna Varga