Abstract

Monastery library of Order of Hermits of Saint Augustin in Prague is an outstanding book collection of considerable scientific and historical value. Nowadays, it consists of more than 18,000 volumes. Saint Thomas monastery was founded by Wenceslaus II. in 1278 and had, from the very beginning, a leading role among other monasteries of this order in Bohemia. From the early 14th century an Augustinian university was run there – as the only one in vast province of Bavaria, to which Bohemia belonged. In the 17th century, an independent Bohemian province was established and Saint Thomas monastery became a natural centre of it. This diploma thesis aims to provide an overview of a history of library and to introduce significant members of Augustinian order, who contributed to development (in time of prosperity) of library. Author is particularly focused on early modern period, to which scholars have not paid attention yet, and events connected to the end of the Thirty Years War, when, as it was assumed in the past, the library sustained big damage. Apart from that, everyday interest and care for books and libraries inside the order will be characterised and the cultural and historical impact of the library of Saint Thomas convent will also be emphasised.

Origins and medieval period of the library is described on indirect sources only, i.e. on the contemporary book catalogues, as nothing from the medieval collection stayed preserved. History of the library in early modern period is based on records from the monastery chronicals and other archival sources, study of secondary literature and results of provenience research of the preserved collection.

After brief introduction of Order of Hermits of Saint Augustin and its activity in the Czech lands a part follows which is dedicated to relationship of Augustinians to books in general. The core of the thesis consists of history of the monastery library and of information about several members of the order with special significance for development of the library (Mikuláš Teschl from Louny, Johannes Klenkok, Hieronymus Ebenauer, Paladius Küttl, Cosmas Schmalfus, Guillelmus Dienzenhoffer, Aloysius Ficker).

During the research the author did not come to a definitive answer to question how events in the end of Thirty Years War actually influenced development of the library, i.e. whether confiscations of the Swedish army has been as devastating as some authors in the past have claimed to be.