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THE ROLE OF CLUNIAC ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN TIMES OF DANGER

Abstract: Nowadays, people are confronted with ever new threats and challenges. In difficult times, integration based on cultural identity, which can be developed through the interpretation of works of art, is of high importance. For centuries, Cluniac art, including architecture, which is part of Europe's cultural heritage, has played a significant role in co-creating cultural memory by influencing imagination. Forms of promotion and dissemination of the legacy of the Benedictines of Cluny are crucial in this regard. This text reflects on the contemporary significance of Cluny's artistic heritage and the ways in which various narratives are built around it. It also addresses the multidimensional significance of the Abbey of Cluny as a lost and reconstructed historical site, and places it in a broader cultural context.

Keywords: Cluniac art, architecture, interpretation, reconstruction, Cluny Abbaye, *Maior Ecclesia*

The modern world faces many threats both locally and globally. In such trying times, societies are challenged to ally and support each other against adversities or enemies. Unity requires a sense of community, and the pursuit of social dialogue and integration based on cultural identity is crucial in this context. As a means of expressing ideas, emotions and experiences, art has played significant social, cultural and religious roles for centuries. It also has

a reminiscent function, shaping perceptions of progress in cultural and civilisational development.

The aim of this article is to present contemporary ways of promoting and interpreting the Cluniac artistic heritage, referring to the influence of the Cluniac congregation on the development of European civilisation in order to build a sense of community among the inhabitants of the Old Continent. It is imperative to state that the status of the modern human as a recipient of art is taking on a new meaning. Technological development is fostering the emergence of a new model of interaction with art and its (re)interpretation. On the other hand, the question of reconstructing and remembering art that has been lost or only partially preserved remains important. The creation of a European cultural identity is achieved by popularising knowledge of the power of Cluny, as the mother centre of the order, as well as by developing ideas about the abbey's materially non-existent monumental architecture.

Referring to a European identity is problematic and its real existence is sometimes questioned by many, as there is no consensus on the attributes of "Europeanness" in the context of external threats. However, Europe does need ideas that unite its citizens. The issue of unifying the "Europeans" can be linked to the creation of narratives for European integration in numerous programmes developed by the European Union and the Council of Europe, for example the European Cultural Routes. It is these narratives that influence people's perceptions of reality and their place in the world, and infrequently change previously held perspectives. In this sense, art does have the potential to build a sense of cultural community.

Art in times of danger

Art is the result of human desires and emotions, a way of expressing and transmitting them. A work of art, including architecture, conceals a message that "it means more than a philosophical work, because what is shrouded in signs is deeper than any obvious meaning"¹. Artwork contains creative thought to inspire and encourage reflections and actions in times of peace, it can be used to give expression to ideological claims². It carries the memory of social expectations which, despite the passage of years or centuries, may remain current in a sense. Artwork reflects the values that were important for specific communities in different historical periods and shows cultural transformations taking place throughout history. Direct contact with art allows people to streng-

¹ G. Deleuze, *Proust i znaki*, transl. M.P. Markowski, Gdańsk 2000, p. 34.

² Joanna Winnicka-Gburek, *O problemach z tożsamością narodową i sztuką*, "Estetyka i Krytyka" 2005/2006, vol. 9/10, p. 259.

then their cognitive, altruistic and creative attitudes³, it also constitutes a motivating factor for discovering cultural heritage and practising cultural tourism. Nowadays, in our multicultural times, art and culture have become bridges between communities, thus enabling dialogue to take place with respect for different world views and traditions.

In situations of emergency, especially in the face of conflicts and wars, works of architecture or art become carriers of cultural identity, representing specific values and giving meaning to reality. Architectural objects themselves, by being "rooted" in the landscape, play a special role in this respect. "With the annihilation of cultural heritage, the ethno-cultural character of a given land has been obliterated, an attempt has been made to deprive the people inhabiting it of their identity, memory and history"⁴. In this context, the aspect of the multifaceted relationship between art and memory, treated as a kind of cultural resource, also remains relevant. In literature, researchers address issues related to the ways in which cultural and historical memory is, among other things, manifested in works of art⁵, and recognise art as an important carrier of local, national, transnational and, naturally, European memory. Maurice Halbwachs⁶, the creator of the concept of collective memory (French: *mémoire collective*) as a central element of contemporary cultural memory research, emphasised the importance of its social framework. He pointed out that collective frameworks are "the instruments used by the collective memory to reconstruct an image of the past which is in accord, in each epoch, with the predominant thoughts of the society"⁷. Individual and collective memory interpenetrate each other and influence the processes of reconstructing and reinterpreting meanings and contents, depending on the nature and shape of the framework of thought, which makes it possible to build a sense of linearity, continuity of time and relationship with the past⁸. Thus, the essence of memory contained in artworks

³ M. Świeca, *O potrzebie rozwijania kultury estetycznej społeczeństwa*, "Acta Scientifica Academiae Ostroviensis. Sectio A, Nauki Humanistyczne, Społeczne i Techniczne" 2013, no. 1, p. 346.

⁴ A. Długozima, *Bośnia i Hercegowina - dobra kultury w czasie wojny i pokoju*, „Ochrona Zabytków” 2009, vol. 62, no. 3, p. 59.

⁵ F. Lipinski, *Figuracje pamięci w wirtualnym polu (historii) sztuki*, „RIHA Journal” 2014, vol. 113, no. 31, PDF: <file:///C:/Users/natal/Downloads/70217-Article%20Text-196219-3-10-20200206.pdf> [accessed: 12.07.2024], pp. 1-17.

⁶ The authors who developed the concept of cultural memory also include Aby Warburg, Pierre Nora and Jan Assmann; in: A. Erll, *Kultura pamięci*, transl. A. Teperek, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2018, pp. 31-32.

⁷ M. Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, transl. L. A. Coser, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London 1992, p. 40.

⁸ K. Kaźmierska, *Społeczne ramy pamięci*, Centrum Badań Historycznych PAN w Berlinie, <https://cbh.pan.pl/pl/spo%C5%82eczne-ramy-pami%C4%99ci> [accessed: 8.07.2024].

is not only the content itself, the form, the symbolism, etc., but above all their interpretation subordinated to the contemporary collective vision of the past. "Art is important regardless of war, but war raises its importance. Culture and art produce new meanings and messages, help the society analyse and interpret the events around it and to think about the future. If we forget to train these skills during the war, then after the victory we will not remember what we actually fought for"⁹.

The presented issue places the problem of cultural heritage at the centre, including architectural objects as a testimony to the past. Such objects combine the functions and forms ascribed to them with values that have been growing with historical changes. As a result of such a process, the material structure began to acquire reminiscent functions¹⁰. It is not just a question of a modern monument whose structure, by virtue of its antiquity and material originality, is subject to the protection of itself¹¹. It is clear that material objects, especially buildings, have played and continue to play an extremely important role in attempts at self-definition in a historical space. The present article puts emphasis on the contemporary way of defining cultural and artistic heritage. It should be remembered, however, that similar demands for self-definition in relation to time and space also took place in earlier eras¹². Jacek Banaszekiewicz pointed out that in the interests of collective and individual memory, efforts were made in the Middle Ages to associate historical events with more permanent material objects¹³. He even referred to such activities as the objectification of history,

⁹ N. Iwanowa, *Sztuka jest ważna niezależnie od wojny*, HERITO, 2023, <https://herito.pl/artykul/sztuka-jest-wazna-niezaleznie-od-wojny/> [accessed: 27.06.2024].

¹⁰ Objects conveying historical values help us ensure the continuity of social consciousness, while the actualisation of values associated with such objects legitimises the present, J. Banaszekiewicz, *Usque in hodiernum diem - Średniowieczne znaki pamięci*, „Przegląd Historyczny” 1981, no. 2, pp. 234-235; F. Graus, *Funktionen der spätmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibung*, in: *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im späten Mittelalter*, ed. H. Patze, Sigmaringen 1987, p. 23.

¹¹ E. Szumakowicz, *Fenomenologiczna definicja zabytku*, „Ochrona Zabytków” 2008, vol. 56, no. 2, pp. 93-100; M. Drela, *Definicja zabytku nieruchomego w prawie polskim i francuskim*, „Ochrona Zabytków” 2008, vol. 56, no. 1, pp. 111-118.

¹² Cf.: A. Nagel, Ch. S. Wood, *Toward a New Model of Renaissance Anachronism*, „Art Bulletin” 2005, vol. 87, no. 3, pp. 403-432; the assumptions therein were developed in subsequent publications: Ch. Wood, *Forgery - Replica - Fiction. Temporalities in German Renaissance Art*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago-London 2008; A. Nagel, Ch. S. Wood, *What Counted as an 'Antiquity' in the Renaissance?*, in: *Renaissance Medievalisms*, ed. K. Eisenbichler, Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, Toronto 2009, pp. 53-74; idem, *Anachronic Renaissance*, Zoone Books, New York 2010.

¹³ J. Banaszekiewicz, *Usque in hodiernum diem...*; F. Graus, *Funktionen...*, p. 23; Cf.: J. Banaszekiewicz, *Kultura i świadomość historyczna*, in: *Kultura Polski średniowiecznej XIV-XV w.*, ed. B. Geremek, Instytut Historii PAN, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Sentper, Warszawa 1997, pp. 603-606.

intended to serve the social remembrance of history. A material object that could be linked to past events became a visible tangible bridge between the past and the present. In the case of *sacred* buildings, each temple was part of the sphere of the *sacred*. At the same time, being a place of very specific events related to human history was seen in the interpenetration categories of *aeternitas*, *aevum* and *tempus*¹⁴. Besides, it should be noted that art monuments, both movable and architectural, enforce a completely different order of time perception. After all, their existence and impact may have related to different moments in history. The same objects may have repeatedly accompanied events and figures from distant eras. These problems were pointed out a few years ago by Alexander Nagel and Christopher Wood, who recognised that material objects reminiscent of concretised past can be seen as a kind of a topological system of reference. Their existence and links to different moments in history led audiences of the time to think quite flexibly and associatively about material testimonies immersed in time¹⁵.

In this context, it is worth referring to the relationship between memory and lost art, wholly or partly, whose influence or inspiration can be seen in other works. "Great art", which is counted as cultural heritage by a particular community, even if it itself - in material terms - does not survive or is only partially preserved, is able to remain in memory and contribute to it. It is present in narratives and messages, constituting, in fact, a kind of representation of the lost work. Astrid Erll, referring to Halbwachs, draws our attention to issues of valuing interpreted content that can be applied to art: "Groups are thus characterised by a strongly valuing and hierarchical memory. The main function of remembering the past within the framework of collective memory is the formation of identity. What is remembered fits into the interests and imagination of the group in question"¹⁶.

An object that persists in memory, remains a vehicle of being which allows for historical identity continuity and unites communities. In this sense, the possibility of transmitting historical memory, as well as the juxtaposed effects of research carried out by archaeologists or art historians, presents them in a modern form and, as such, is of great importance. In this context, it is worth

¹⁴ K. Pomian, *Przeszłość jako przedmiot wiary. Historia i filozofia w myśli średniowiecza*, ed. 2, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2009, pp. 225-264; on one of the medieval concepts of *aevum*, cf.: M. Michałowska, *Pomiędzy czasem a wiecznością. Roberta Kilwardby'ego koncepcja aevum*, „*Studia Warmińskie*” 2002, 39, pp. 105-112; on the modern interpretation: J. A. Drob, *Trzy zegary. Obraz czasu i przestrzeni w polskich kazaniach barokowych*, Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 1998, pp. 49-63.

¹⁵ A. Nagel, Ch. S. Wood, *Toward a New Model ...*, pp. 408-409.

¹⁶ A. Erll, *Kultura pamięci...*, p. 37.

noting that art, including Cluniac architecture, has been only partially preserved and can be admired mostly outside Cluny, in other parts of Europe.

The example of Cluny directs our attention to a building that no longer exists in its original form, but still functions in the public's consciousness. To some extent, its location, its history (including that of mythologisation), its architectural remains as well as its reconstructive imagery take on a reminiscent function.

The importance of the architectural ensemble at Cluny in the history of art

Cluny, together with the remains of the Benedictine Abbey of St Peter and St Paul, and the largest church in medieval Europe, the *Maior Ecclesia* or otherwise *Cluny III*, is a central historical and research centre where the Cluniac cultural heritage is cultivated. The significance of the medieval abbey complex in the history of European culture and art can by no means be underestimated, especially in its architectural context. Developed in the south of Burgundy, the monastic centre became one of the pivotal centres of Western Christianity in the 11th century¹⁷. Its importance was heightened by the process of shaping an entire network of monasteries organisationally centralised around Cluny. In the eyes of art historians, this centre is mainly seen through the prism of its material heritage (including the elements which were not preserved). It should be noted that the unprecedented monumentalisation of this ensemble was the consequence of a confluence of various historical factors. Among these was the supra-local importance of Cluny as a significant centre of the reformation of Western Christianity, an important sanctuary and pilgrimage destination. Its then favourable economic situation was also significant. "Cluny's original setting was not France, but the Church and the inter-aristocratic networks, which were both regional and <<European>> in scale"¹⁸. This state of affairs was illustrated by the process of systematic enlargement of the main church and abbey. The architectural history thus includes the church of *Cluny I*, *Cluny II* (completed after 955) and the most famous *Cluny III* (1089-1220). They focused, as if through a lens, on the most advanced transformations of the art of the time.

Already appearing in *Cluny II*, the monumental forms of the vaulted nave, developed in the later building, and the complex plan, influenced the development of Western European Romanesque architecture. As this church was demolished by the monks, much of the knowledge about it comes from

¹⁷ Its beginning is seen in the invasions and the fall of the Frankish state.

¹⁸ D. Méhu, *Les lieux qui ont fait la France - Cluny*, in: *Les lieux de l'histoire de France*, O. Wiewiorka, M. Winock, Paris: Perrin, pp. 79-80.

archaeological excavations. It is recognised that *Cluny II* had, in addition to a single central nave, a narthex with two towers to the west, a transept cutting perpendicularly through the main body of the basilica and a choir with a tower and chapels projecting one behind the other to the east. "This ensemble, especially the abbey church and the cistern designed according to the rules of early Romanesque architecture, will serve as a model for other constructions in the region (Chapaize, Massy, Saint-Point, etc.)"¹⁹. The plan of the temple also became the model for the largest English abbey churches associated with the mother church, such as *Castle Acre Priory* in Norfolk, which dates back to 1090, and *The Priory of Our Lady of Thetford*, founded around 1103-1104. The 12th-century layout of the walled *Castle Acre Priory* is remarkably intact: the priory buildings, especially the west façade of the church, characteristically Clunianly decorated with blind arcatures and flanked by two towers, completed around 1160, are among the best preserved in England. The plan of *Cluny II* is also the reference point for *The Priory of Our Lady of Thetford*, where excavations carried out in the first half of the 20th century have led to the uncovering of the layout of the 12th-century priory and its main buildings²⁰.

The significance of Clunian architecture cannot be considered in isolation from its wider regional context. All the important developments of the time must be seen as a system of interconnected vessels, interacting with each other through monastic, personal relationships or even an element of rivalry. For this reason, the phenomenon of *Cluny III*, whose construction was initiated in 1089 by Hugo of Semur, its abbot since 1049, was preceded by other buildings that foreshadowed the solutions used there, such as the churches of La-Charite-sur-Loire, from 1056, and Saint-Benoit-sur-Loire, from around 1070. The forms used in *Cluny III*, which is over 187 metres long, took up and uniquely monumentalised earlier solutions. These included a monumental ambit with a rim of chapels, as well as the modularity characteristic of developed Romanism²¹. The scale and grandeur of the *Maior Ecclesia* limited the possibility of its imitation, which manifested itself in a reduced way in the Epigonian buildings of the period. Among better-known imitations of Cluny are, among others, the *Autun Cathedral* (1120-1132), *Basilica of Paray-le-Monial* (c. 1100) and *Basilica of St Mary Magdalene in Vézelay* (after 1096). *The Maior Ecclesia* was also

¹⁹ M. Pacaut, *Dzieje Cluny*, transl. A. Ziernicki, Tyniec Wydawnictwo Benedyktynów, Kraków 2010, p. 202.

²⁰ Ch. Voros, *Sites clunisiens en Europe*, Fédération Européenne des Sites Clunisiens, Cluny 2013, p. 157.

²¹ B. Laule, U. Laule, *Architektura romańska we Francji*, in: *Sztuka romańska. Architektura, rzeźba, malarstwo*, ed. R. Toman, Konemann, Olsztyn 2000, pp. 121-134; Ch. Norberg-Schulz, *Znaczenie w architekturze Zachodu*, Murator, Warszawa 1999, pp. 85-87.

modelled on England, as evidenced by the *Monastery and Church of St Pancras in Lewes*, considered an English replica of *Cluny III*²².

The heritage of Cluny cannot, therefore, be limited to its artistic dimension. In this case, its significance is far greater and supra-local, linking historically, topographically and materially the numerous component centres, bound together by the commonality of the past. While emphasising its supra-local importance for Romanesque architecture, it is important to be aware that it was a subject to transformations in later eras. However, its scale and the sustained tradition of the site's importance maintained its Romanesque character until the late 18th century, when the building began to be systematically dismantled. The architectural work of *Cluny III* has survived in significant measure in memory and narratives, despite invasions (notably by the Huguenots in 1563), the dissolution of the order during the Great French Revolution and the conversion of the abbey into a quarry, culminating in 1810 with the blowing up of the church's famous façade, representing a symbolic collapse of past values. Today, all that remains of the abbey church is a three-bay arm of the 12th-century transept with its bell tower²³.

The activities of the monks of Cluny who began to develop the Romanesque style gave it a specific character and provided visible models of their presence. They also made it possible to draw people's attention to other distinctive elements of buildings associated with the congregation. The contribution of the Cluniacs to architecture consisted of stimulating the work of artists as well as paying attention to symbolic architectural and artistic details by introducing decorative elements, such as elaborate sculptural decorations, tympanums and ornamented portals, arcades, ornamental column capitals with floral and animal motifs as well as Cluniac rosettes, and combining them with special characteristics of the style of the regions. All these elements became, in their time, vehicles for the visual communication of the order's ideas.

Reproductions and interpretations of the Cluniac heritage

The case of the church of Cluny also prompts consideration of architectural reconstructions in the broadest sense. It is a classic example of a historically important site with a timeless tradition, linked with the need to reimagine the original appearance of the building. This is all the more interesting as it is regarded to be a vital monument in the development of Romanism and is also

²² Ch. Voros, *Sites clunisiens en Europe...*, p. 84.

²³ N. Moreno-Kamińska, *Trzy tożsamości. Badanie tożsamości kulturowej - analiza wybranych szlaków kulturowych w Polsce i we Francji*, rozprawa doktorska, Uniwersytet Łódzki, Łódź 2024, pp. 395-399.

referred to as "the greatest church of Christianity" or a "lost monument". Such valuations have been giving rise to the need to recreate a lost building, to erect a kind of a pictorial "substitution" of a physically non-existent monument²⁴. The tradition of reconstructing the appearance of non-existent buildings for the purposes of architectural analysis is extremely old. It dates back at least to the modern period, when there were more or less successful attempts to recreate the appearance of lost buildings. These, sometimes fantastic, acts of imagining were underpinned by the scientific knowledge of the time²⁵. The practice was systematically developed – it appeared in the academic education stream and became an important tool of art history. Even the earliest studies in architectural history were illustrated with drawn reconstructions of buildings. This type of modelling and visualisation of buildings also appeared in studies by archaeologists. Nowadays, such works are supported by the achievements of digital technology and present ever more perfect digital models of ancient buildings (existing or only designed in the past). The most perfect of these function as part of representations used in the interactive virtual space²⁶.

The defunct churches of the Abbey of Cluny, especially *Cluny III*, due to their importance in the history of Romanesque art, were very early on reconstructed in the form of plans and drawings. Among the most famous of these, which are still frequently used today, are the drawing depictions of the *Maior Ecclesia* published by Kenneth J. Conant²⁷. This was the result of a massive research effort that had been ongoing since the late 1920s, which combined archaeological, historical and art history work. As Conant himself emphasised, their aim was a "complete and accurate restoration of the great Abbey church as it was before the lamentable demolition of a century ago"²⁸. The aforementioned drawings to a large extent still shape our ideas of the abbey's original appearance, to some extent replacing a non-existent building. The importance of the Cluny ensemble influenced the very early use of the site also in computer reconstructions. The digital visualisation of *Cluny III*, created in the late 1980s by Horst Cramer and Manfred Koob, is one of the pioneering projects²⁹. This type of visualisation is very attractive to contemporary audiences, fostering

²⁴ A. Nagel, Ch. S. Wood, *Toward a New Model...*, pp. 403-432; idem, *Anachronic Renaissance...*

²⁵ J.S. Ackerman, *The Conventions and Rhetoric of Architectural Drawing, in Origins, Imitation, Conventions. Representation in the Visual Arts*, ed. James S. Ackerman, The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass 2002.

²⁶ S. Münster, K. Friedrichs, W. Hegel, *3D Reconstruction Techniques as a Cultural Shift in Art History?*, „International Journal for Digital Art History” 2018, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 40-45.

²⁷ K. J. Conant, *Early Medieval Church Architecture*, Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore 1942.

²⁸ J. T. Marquardt, *First Projects: Medieval Academy Support of Kenneth J. Conant's Cluny*, <https://www.medievalacademy.org/page/FirstProjects> [accessed: 17.07.2024].

²⁹ H. Cramer, M. Koob, *Cluny. Architektur als Vision*, Edition Braus, Heidelberg 1993, pp. 58-103.

popularisation and largely realising the need for substitution. Digital reality seeks to expand the real one, constituting, as it were, its continuum. Therefore, despite the material loss of *Cluny III* and the progressive secularisation of society, its imagery is still able to inspire successive generations of the French and Europeans, contributing to the construction of a community of cultural identity. However, it must be stressed that any such recreation, whether drawn or digital, is subject to the error of hypotheticality, remaining only a research proposal³⁰. At the popularisation level, this caveat usually escapes non-professional audiences of pictorial reconstructions.

Nowadays, the way in which cultural heritage is disseminated and interpreted is even more dependent on the development of information and communication technologies. This can be seen in the cultural route of the *Cluniac Sites in Europe*³¹ leading to Cluny, managed by the *European Federation of Cluniac Sites (Fédération Européenne des Sites Clunisiens: FESC)*, where every medium becomes a vehicle for a change of consciousness. New channels of communication are forms shaping the languages people now use, and the evolution of the means of expression is directing humanity towards a new pictorial-virtual perception of reality, the consequence of which seems to be changes in ways of its artistic (re)interpretation³². The Federation is using multimedialisation to unite places considered to be cloistered and is attempting to influence the presentation of objects, spaces as well as landscapes so that they fit into a common narrative. Prominent among the forms of presenting the preserved and materially lost Cluniac heritage on the trail are the virtual encyclopaedia *Clunypedia* and mobile applications based on virtual augmented reality, on-site mapping and storytelling elements.

Clunypedia is a digital compendium about the Cluny heritage, using the aforementioned digital reconstructions. It includes visualisations, graphics, videos and photographs, presents specific manifestations of the material heritage and selected architectural details. It considers the history and descriptions of major works of art. The content on the platform is written in accessible language, understandable to a wide audience³³. Even more effective are free

³⁰ S. Münster, K. Friedrichs, W. Hegel, *3D Reconstruction Techniques...*, pp. 46-52.

³¹ Since 2005, the Cluny Sites have been part of the European Cultural Routes in the Council of Europe programme due to its pan-European dimension and the central role played by Cluny in shaping European identity. There are currently around two hundred sites within the federation, which collaborate on regional and international projects; in: *Cluniac Sites in Europe*, Council of Europe, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes/the-cluniac-sites-in-europe> [accessed: 29.06.2024].

³² W. Urban, *Współczesny człowiek w polu relacji nowych mediów i współczesnej estetyki*, „Media – Kultura – Społeczeństwo” 2018, no. 13, p. 51.

³³ N. Moreno-Kamińska, *Trzy tożsamości...*, p. 371.

apps that engage the public, giving them easy access to shorter and longer but thoughtful and coherent descriptions that make up the interpretations of the heritage of the sites visited, as is the case with Cluny and the *ClunEtour* app. It offsets the problem of the fragmentary nature of the central site and, in particular, the absence of the *Maior Ecclesia* which remains a central reference point in interpretations of Cluniac heritage throughout the itinerary, testifying to the role, impact and expansion of the whole congregation throughout France and Europe. The introduction of an augmented reality application to explore the entire former abbey area allows the viewer to experience the presence of the non-existent largest temple of the Middle Ages and subconsciously inscribe it in the Burgundian cultural landscape. The tool recreates non-maintained elements of the buildings using attractive three-dimensional models which reconstruct their interiors and exteriors, with mappings to match the surviving elements. The app plays an identifying as well as an exploratory role for the surviving elements, explains their historical significance and the functions they may have performed in the complex³⁴.

The other two applications *Clunypedia Saône-et-Loire* and *Clunypedia Sauxillanges* are vehicles for interpreting the Cluniac heritage in the Saône and Loire departments and the Auvergne territory. The tools are enriched with historical photographs and graphics, showing objects in earlier periods, feature photographs taken during restoration work, and allow a close look at selected details and ornaments. The layout of the application is complemented by humorous graphics depicting monks – narrators who tell the stories of the sites³⁵. This allows the message to be appealing even to younger visitors up to the age of twelve. The preserved buildings and ruins take on specific characteristics and meaning in artistic and cultural terms, from the perspective of the viewers who interact with the interpreters. The interpretations are provocative and encourage their own explorations.

In order to achieve a coherent formula for interpreting the Cluniac heritage, the greatest emphasis, also due to the present-day secular nature of the federation, has been placed on the historical, artistic and architectural contexts. The dominant element is its very centrality as a stimulus for the development of European civilisation whose main symbol is still the *Maior Ecclesia*. In the descriptions that make up the interpretations of the heritage, the motif of equating Cluny with Rome as the capital of the Church is frequently repeated, for example, in the introduction to the use of the *ClunEtour* app, where one reads that "Cluny (...) is equal to Rome". There are also phrases such as "second Rome" or "little Rome"³⁶.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 371-372.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 373-375.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 378.; *ClunEtour app*, FESC/Paztec SAS, version for Android [accessed: 12.06.2024].

No less important for constructing interpretations of the Cluniac heritage along the route is the architectural detail. Although it varies according to the site presented, it has become its emblem, an element that distinguishes a given Cluniac site from others. The most important of these are the "*Cluniac rosette*" (French: *La rosace clunisiennne*), the Paschal Lamb of Cluny and the Porte Richelieu, one of the abbey's "recovered" monuments.

All the *Cluniac Sites* have been marked on the ground as part of a coherent visual identity. Significantly, its main element is the "Cluniac rosette", characteristic of Romanesque architecture and a symbol of Cluny's heritage. It was reserved when the FESC was created. Regrettably, the rosette from the main portal of the *Maior Ecclesia* did not survive but it has a special interpretative significance. The circular shape of the sign refers to the unity of the monastic community spread across Europe and the common heritage of *Cluniac Sites*. The shape and layout of the rosette is reminiscent of cradle vaults found in cloistered buildings, referring to the importance of the order in architectural development. It is also reminiscent of marguerite petals and often recurs in architectural details and Romanesque sculpture. At the same time, the ten petals correspond to the number of Cluniac order provinces³⁷. Inscribed in the rosette is the coat of arms of the Abbey of Cluny, with keys and a sword, symbolising Saints Peter and Paul (patrons of the abbey), recalling the historical identification. Rosette plaques are installed on or in the immediate vicinity of Cluny buildings and, in France, also along roads between villages with an accumulation of buildings.

One of the most important symbols of the abbey, which may have originated from the *Maior Ecclesia* and was used emblematically in interpretations of the Cluniac heritage, is the keystone of the fifth bay vault of the *Cluny III* basilica narthex from the first half of the 12th century. It is believed to have come from the eastern part of the nave. Decorated with sculptural decoration, it shows the Paschal Lamb symbolising Christ, carrying a cross with a combination of the letters X and P, the symbol of a leader. The motif of the Lamb as a symbol of Christ has survived in art over the centuries. The rim is engraved with the inscription IN CELO MAGNUS, HIC PARVUS SCULPOR AGNUS, meaning "Here I am carved a small Lamb, in Heaven I am great and magnificent". The original is in the Cluny Museum of Art and Archaeology. The likenesses of the lamb marks, among other things, the start of a walking tour at the Main Gate of Cluny Abbey, which includes a visit to the entire monastery area.

³⁷ *La rosace de la Fédération Européenne des Sites Clunisiens, tout un symbole!*, Fédération Européenne des Sites Clunisiens, https://fesc.sitesclunisiens.org/files/docs/Rosace_symbole.pdf [accessed: 12.07.2024].

The lamb leads visitors to the central point of the abbey, like a good shepherd leading his sheep to the Kingdom of Heaven. The symbolic importance of this architectural detail is confirmed by the presence of a copy of the keystone in the Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec, Poland's only *Cluniac Site*. Interestingly, the keystone was in fact manufactured in Cluny. The artefact was the central element of the exhibition "Cluny – a dream of tradition", inaugurating the Tyniec Abbey's accession to the federation in 2013 and, with regard to the exhibition issues, today is one of the most important elements linking the Polish monastery with the Cluny Abbey³⁸.

Interpretations of the Cluny heritage also focus on other movable and immovable objects that can testify to the former power of the Abbey of Cluny. In this context, it is worth noting the "lost but recovered" work of architecture, the so-called Porte Richelieu. At the start of the cardinal's reign at the abbey (1629 to 1642), a seven-metre-high monumental portal was erected into the medieval façade of the Palace of Pope Gelasius (originally dating from 1300-1330), making it the main entrance to the abbey buildings to draw the attention of passers-by and enhance the prestige of the place. Maintained in the Baroque style, it was richly decorated with bas-reliefs depicting vines with clusters of fruit. Dismantled in 1872 by the architect Laisné during the renovation of the building's façade, it was stored for more than a century in the abbey's gardens and then in a flour maker's cellar before being returned to the abbey in 2010³⁹. Since it was impossible to bring back the Porte Richelieu to its original location, a decision was made to place the portal in the courtyard of a small monastery together with other fragments of former buildings representing successive periods in Cluny's history. Only some of the missing elements of the portal have been reconstructed. Therefore, it cannot be considered fully original. However, it is another material object that makes it possible to stimulate the public's imagination and build a narrative about the artistic heritage of Cluny whose influence spread across Europe and contributed to the building of a community of history and civilisation through the prism of the expansion of the monks of Cluny.

Conclusion

Art, including Cluniac architecture with the largest Romanesque church of *Cluny III* ever built, became a vehicle for visual communication in its time. Nowadays, one can speak of the multifaceted impact of the Cluny ensemble.

³⁸ N. Moreno-Kamińska, *Trzy tożsamości...*, pp. 380-381.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 396.

It is a historical site whose architecture is analysed, subjected to systematic reconstruction and creates virtual images. Additionally, it is an important component of the wider problem of Cluniac architecture and is also present in other ensembles linked in form or history to the abbey. No less important remains the broader cultural dimension which also revolves around Cluny's past and provides an opportunity to develop a narrative of a community of European cultural heritage. Interpretive and reconstructive activities make it possible to create a memory of a lost heritage and to find its influences in objects that are often far from each other, thus rediscovering them and perceiving them as the aftermath of an already known creative thought. Cluniac art continues to inspire, move and encourage subsequent generations to think. The idea has prevailed in FESC's activities over the past thirty years, from establishing and running the European Cultural Route to the creation of an interpretive structure around the Cluniac heritage, using the potential of digital technologies. By popularising its artistic qualities, this heritage can be more appreciated and thus better protected and developed. By promoting the idea and artistry of art marked by the activity of the Benedictine monks of Cluniac, it is possible to deepen the sense of cultural community of the people of Europe, which is the core of the "European identity", so necessary in the times of conflict and other threats.

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ROLA KLUNIACKIEJ SZTUKI I ARCHITEKTURY W CZASACH ZAGROŻENIA

(streszczenie)

Współcześnie człowiek mierzy się z coraz to nowymi zagrożeniami i wyzwaniem. W trudnych czasach kluczowe znaczenie odgrywa integracja oparta na tożsamości kulturowej, którą rozwijać można poprzez interpretacje dzieł sztuki. Sztuka kluniacka, w tym architektura, stanowiąca element dziedzictwa kulturowego Europy, od wieków odgrywa znaczącą rolę we współtworzeniu pamięci kulturowej, oddziałując na wyobraźnię. Kluczowe w tej kwestii znaczenie mają for-

my promowania i upowszechniania spuścizny benedyktynów z Cluny. Niniejszy tekst stanowi refleksję nad współczesnym znaczeniem artystycznego dziedzictwa kluniackiego i sposobami budowania wokół niego narracji. Odnosi się także do wielowymiarowego znaczenia opactwa w Cluny jako utraconego i rekonstruowanego obiektu historycznego, wpisując je w szerszy kontekst kulturowy.

Słowa kluczowe: sztuka kluniacka, architektura, interpretacja, rekonstrukcja, Opactwo w Cluny, *Maior Ecclesia*

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