

## WORLD HERITAGE LIST

### Kromeríz (Czech Republic)

No 860

#### Identification

<i>Nomination</i>	The gardens and castle at Kromeríz
<i>Location</i>	District of Kromeríz, South Moravian Region
<i>State Party</i>	Czech Republic
<i>Date</i>	30 June 1997

#### Justification by State Party

The Pleasure Garden and the Castle at Kromeríz represent a unique artistic execution of a masterly early concept on the threshold of the great period of the Baroque style. The property has been documented without interruption from the start and can be shown to be connected with the creative design of Filiberto Lucchese and the masterly execution of his design by Giovanni Pietro Tencalla, both Imperial architects and engineers whose work has been highly respected by succeeding generations of professionals. **Criterion i**

The Pleasure Garden influenced Moravian garden design, whilst the influence of the Castle spread further, to the Danube region. The Castle Garden is significant in the development of the type of landscape park that makes extensive use of water. The gardens and castle at Kromeríz represent an advance on the excellent values of a feudal residence, and were able to function perfectly during subsequent periods (18th century classicism, 19th century romanticism) up to the present day. The property may be considered to be a synthesis of architecture and garden design and an authentic manifestation of style and artistic expression not preserved elsewhere. **Criterion ii**

The gardens and castle at Kromeríz illustrate a type of early Baroque architectural ensemble which introduced to central Europe, ravaged by war, high architectural values of Italian origin, linked with high-quality sculpture, paintings, and applied arts and enhanced by the acme of garden design in which the technological potential of the use of water was developed with virtuosity. The Castle Garden demonstrates in an extraordinary way the creative affinity between the

garden art of central Europe and broader European trends in the design of landscape parks. **Criterion iv**

#### Category of property

In terms of the categories of cultural property set out in the 1972 World Heritage Convention, this is both a *group of buildings* and a *site*. It is also a *cultural landscape* as defined in paragraph 39(i) of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.

#### History and Description

##### History

The history of Kromeríz began with the establishment of a settlement in the floodplain of the Morava river in the 9th century AD during the Greater Moravian Period. By the 12th century, when it belonged to the Bishopric of Olomouc, the original fortified site had disappeared. It did not achieve the status of a fortified town again until the mid 13th century, when a Gothic fort was constructed. The town prospered in the succeeding centuries, becoming the centre of the organization of vassals of the episcopal domains.

In 1497 the wealthy and well connected Stanislav Thurzo became Bishop of Olomouc. He set about reconstructing and modernizing his castle at Kromeríz. At first this work was carried out using the Late Gothic style of the period, but Renaissance elements began to filter in as the work progressed. Bishop Thurzo also established a garden, comprising orchard, kitchen garden, and flower garden, which was praised by King Vladislav II when he visited Kromeríz in 1509.

Thurzo's successors made minor modifications and additions to his castle. The castle suffered grievously in the Thirty Years' War when the town was sacked by the Swedish army in 1643, a disaster followed by an outbreak of plague two years later. It was not until Count Karel Liechtenstein-Castelcorn became Bishop of Olomouc in 1664 that the town's fortunes began to change. He wanted the town where he lived to have an aristocratic air, and so he undertook many building projects, as well as compelling the burghers to renew their buildings and equipment.

He brought in the talented Imperial civil engineer and architect Filiberto Lucchese, who designed an entirely new Pleasure Garden (*Lustgarten*) for him after having brought the ruined castle back into a habitable state. When Lucchese died in 1666, his work was taken over by his successor as Imperial architect, Giovanni Pietro Tencalla; the work on the Garden was not completed until 1675.

Once the garden was finished Tencalla's attention turned to the design and construction of a magnificent episcopal castle and residence. This was to be his masterpiece, in the tradition of the north Italian Baroque school of Genoa and Turin. Nonetheless, it respected its Gothic predecessor, elements of which were blended into the new complex. Meanwhile, Bishop Karel was furnishing the interiors, creating a picture gallery that contained many masterpieces.

The castle was affected by the fire that swept through the town in March 1752. Bishop Leopold Bedrich Eghk oversaw the restoration, bringing in artists and craftsmen to carry out the work, notably the Viennese painter Franz Anton Maulbertsch and the Moravian artists Josef Stern.

The see was raised to an archbishopric in 1777 and the first archbishop, Colloredo-Waldsee, was responsible for the restyling of the Castle Garden in accordance with the romantic approach of the late 18th century. The Pleasure Garden, however, preserved its Baroque geometrical layout. The work on the Castle Garden continued well into the 19th century, with the construction of arcades, bridges, and even a model farmstead. Much of this was carried out under the supervision of the architect Antonín Arche between 1830 and 1845.

#### *Description*

Kromeríz is situated at the site of an earlier ford across the river Morava, at the foot of the Chriby mountain range that dominates the central part of Moravia. The castle and its garden are located in the north-western part of the historic centre of the town.

The main building of the *Castle* is a free-standing structure with four wings round a trapezoidal central courtyard and rising to three storeys, with an attic half-storey above. The ground floor is set on a high platform, built to compensate for the uneven nature of the ground. It was originally surrounded by a moat, filled in 1832. The main facade has eleven window axes, optically prolonged by pilasters, doubled at the buttress corners, with cornice capitals; three more project at one end. They are linked by sunken rectangular panels. This decoration is repeated on all the facades. The garden front has fourteen axes and the two side facades ten and thirteen respectively. The medieval tower is preserved within the fabric of the Baroque building, surmounted by a decorative drum and spire.

In the interior, the first floor is, according to custom, the *piano nobile*, where the main rooms were located - Throne Room, Conference Hall, and two dining rooms (one large, one small). The second floor houses the guest rooms, the Library, the Vassal or Feudal Hall, and the Chapel. The main rooms are lavishly decorated with paintings by Maulbertsch (Vassal Hall), Stern (Library, Chapel), and Franz Adolf von Freenthal (Large Dining Hall).

The Castle houses a splendid art collection, with works by Dutch, Flemish, and Italian masters, many of them acquired by Bishop Karel in 1673, when he purchased the collection of two rich Cologne merchants. The Kromeríz musical archive is an outstanding one, as is the Library, with more than 33,000 manuscripts, incunabula, books, and prints.

On the garden front of the Castle there is a small Baroque terrace garden, the *giardino segreto*, which is approached by means of an arcaded corridor with a double staircase, known as the Colloredo Colonnade and built in 1795.

The Castle is linked with the *Castle Garden* through spacious ground-floor rooms (*salas terrenas*) with grottoes opening out of them, one of them reproducing a mine. It covers an area of 47ha and is planted with many exotic species of tree, both coniferous and deciduous, arranged either singly or in groups. Within the Garden there are several important architectural features. A semi-circular colonnade in classical style was built in 1846 to house sculptures from Pompeii, hence its name, the Pompeian Colonnade. On the western periphery Max's Farmstead is a luxurious building in French Empire style, with an impressive colonnade and projecting wings. Cast iron, produced at the archiepiscopal foundry, was used for the elegant Little Silver, Vase, and Little Lantern Bridges.

The *Pleasure Garden*, covering 10ha, is in the south-western part of the historic centre of Kromeríz. It is a formal garden in the Italian style, entered by means of an arcaded gallery 244m long which contains many statues and busts. This opens out on the first section of the garden, the central feature of which is an octagonal rotunda with a ground-floor gallery, articulated entrances, and four grottoes with fountains; it is crowned by a cylindrical drum surmounted by a dome and lantern tower. The interior is elaborately decorated with mythological scenes. Arranged symmetrically around the rotunda are geometrical plots containing mazes and flower gardens, defined by low espalier hedges. This part of the garden leads to a section whose main features are two low mounds with arbours on them and two rectangular ponds, again laid out symmetrically on the main axis of the garden. This in turn gives access to the aviary, built on a small island in an ornamental pond and thence through some impressive greenhouses back to the main garden and its colonnade.

#### **Management and Protection**

##### *Legal status*

The individual monuments that make up this nominated property are all protected under the provisions of Law No 20/87 on State Care of Historical Monuments, implemented by Decree No 66 of the Ministry of Culture of 26 April 1988. The Castle and Gardens were designated a National Cultural Monument by Statute No 262 of the Government of the Czech Republic on 16 August 1995. The ensemble is also covered by Decree No 1589/78-VI/1 of the Ministry of Culture which designated the historic centre of Kromeríz as an urban reservation.

On 30 July 1984 the Kromeríz District Committee established a protection zone around the monument by means of Regulation No 401-13/84, within which any form of development or intervention within its setting must be authorized by the appropriate authorities.

##### *Management*

The Castle and Gardens are the property of the Czech State, represented by its Kromeríz District Office.

Management is allocated under the terms of the 1987 Preservation Law and the Local Authorities Areas Act No 369/1990 as follows:

- Kromeríz Municipal Office: responsibility for upkeep of the urban reservation and the monuments, and for giving permission for building activities;
- Kromeríz District Office: responsibility for budgets relating to maintenance and repairs of the monuments in its care and supervision of their protection;
- Ministry of Culture: responsibility for overall supervision, decisions on protection and conservation policies, and inspection of the monuments.

In addition, the Brno Institute for Monuments and the State Institute for the Protection of Monuments collaborate in advisory capacities.

An urban plan for Kromeríz drawn up in 1987 and revised in 1995 emphasizes the key function of the Castle and Gardens in the spatial structure of the historic town. This is refined and developed in the 1992 plan for the historic centre.

Over 60 professional and manual staff are employed in the administration of the Castle and Gardens. There is a Programme of Renovation and Use for 1996-2000 relating specifically to the monuments in force, with detailed costed projects scheduled for each of the years involved.

A Programme of Regeneration for the Kromeríz Urban Reservation, which takes account of the monuments, was put into effect in 1995. This is headed by a Regeneration Commission with seven members which advises the Municipal Office. As part of its work it has surveyed the present state of all the monuments in the town.

## Conservation and Authenticity

### *Conservation history*

Throughout the 19th century the Castle and Gardens were carefully and conscientiously managed and conserved by the archiepiscopal administration, which set up a special office for this purpose. As a result the monuments were maintained in impeccable condition. A major restoration project on the facades of the Castle took place in 1948 on the occasion of the Assembly of the Nations of Austria, and further work has been carried out subsequently.

There was some deterioration of the condition of the gardens, especially the Pleasure Garden, during and after World War II. A restitution project for the Pleasure Garden was drawn up in 1964 and is moving towards completion. Comparable work has also been carried out in the Castle Garden.

### *Authenticity*

The authenticity of the complex is high. The Castle has preserved its original form and decoration to a very high degree. Both gardens are regaining their original appearance as a result of rehabilitation work based on careful study of the relatively copious documentation that is available, and in accordance with the ICOMOS Florence Charter on Historic Gardens (1982).

## Evaluation

### *Action by ICOMOS*

An ICOMOS expert mission visited the property in December 1997. The ICOMOS International Committee on Historic Gardens and Sites also commented on the nomination.

### *Qualities*

The Castle and Gardens at Kromeríz constitute a remarkably well preserved and basically unchanged example of a Baroque aristocratic ensemble (in this case the seat of an influential ecclesiastic) of residence and pleasure garden, with a larger park that reflects the Romanticism of the 19th century.

### *Comparative analysis*

The Castle is a good but not outstanding example of a type of aristocratic or princely residence that has survived widely in Europe. Similarly, the Castle Garden in its present form, deriving from the Romanticism of the late 18th and early 19th centuries can be duplicated elsewhere. The Pleasure Garden, by contrast, is a very rare and largely intact example of a Baroque garden. Others such as the Neugebäude and Kielmansegg gardens in Vienna or the Hortus Palatinus at Heidelberg have disappeared, whilst those at the Villa Pamphilia in Rome or at Wilton House have been radically altered, especially in the 19th century. The claim of Kromeríz to uniqueness and outstanding universal value rests on the completeness of the ensemble and the survival of its key Baroque elements.

### *ICOMOS recommendations for future action*

The ICOMOS expert mission recommended that a board be set up to coordinate the work of the different bodies involved in the management of the site. This is being implemented by the State Party.

## Brief description

The Gardens and Castle of Kromeríz constitute an exceptionally complete and well preserved example of a European Baroque princely residence and its associated gardens.

## Recommendation

That this property be inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of *criteria ii and iv*:

**Criterion ii:** The ensemble at Kromeríz, and in particular the Pleasure Garden, played a significant role in the development of Baroque garden and palace design in central Europe.

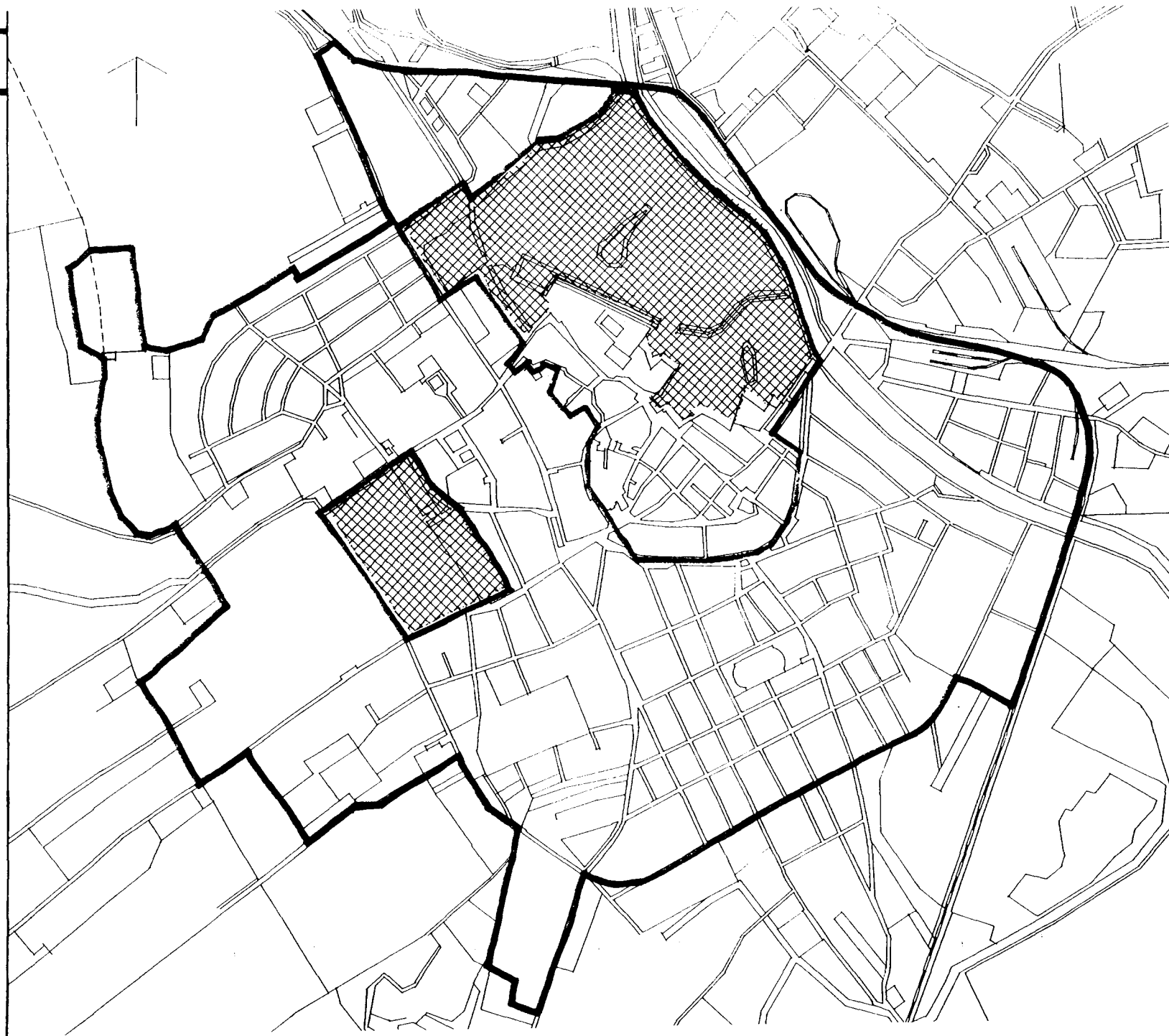
**Criterion iv:** The Castle and Gardens of Kromeríz are an exceptionally complete and well preserved example of a princely residence and its associated landscape of the 17th and 18th centuries.

ICOMOS, October 1998

HISTORICAL TOWN RESERVATION

BUFFER ZONE

NATIONAL CULTURAL MONUMENT



GARDENS AND CASTLE AT KROMĚŘÍŽ

**Jardins et Château de Kromeriz / The Gardens and Castle at Kromeriz :  
Plan indiquant la zone proposée pour inscription et la zone tampon / Map showing nominated property and buffer zone**