

According to tradition Rathgeber left the monastery without permission from his abbot as his mind was too excited and could not get along with the monastic system:

*„His music talent was too excited so that he could not sate with the quiet monastic system. But he managed to keep silent more than 20 years due to musical distractions. As recently as his displeasure came up to the highest degree he dared to ask his abbot Benedikt Lurz for permission to make a genius' journey which was refused to him. Thus, he made off arbitrarily out of the monastery in common suit on the 22nd of October 1729 without worrying about questions from the abbot and other fellows of his status about his exit.“ (J.H. Jaeck)*

Due to this legend many scholars thought that Rathgeber undertook an escape out of the narrowness of the monastery. In most publications his tour is called a genius' journey. However, the term "genius" stems from the second half of the 18th century.

Rathgeber did not undertake a real educational journey. Of course, he might have felt isolated from many new developments in the music sphere. However, to advance in music he must have gone to Italy because there have been the centers of music education and music exercise. Instead Rathgeber went in the first place to centres of parochial and monastic life to learn about the needs of local performance practise. It is highly unlikely that he could advance his composing skills. During his journey Rathgeber studied extensively the local liturgical conditions. With these insights, he could perfectly respond to the needs of the music market of his time and publish functional compositions for every purpose. Interestingly enough, the style of his compositions has not changed though his journey lasting 9 years.

Serious doubts could also be raised regarding the heroic escape out of the monastery. The Benedictine monk Rathgeber was surely bound to the *stabilitas loci* of his order. The abbot of Banz could not give the permission to Rathgeber to leave the monastery for commercial purposes since this would violate the statutes of the observance. But he could turn a blind eye and let him go although he could not allow his exit plainly. Within all publications Rathgeber pointed out that he had the permission of the abbot to publish every single work. One can assume that he also avows his affiliation to the monastery of Banz. The abbot of Banz most probably knew the itinerary of Rathgeber since there have been well functioning connections between the monasteries. Other fugitives out of monasteries were caught up rather fast like the Benedictine monk Benedict Reindl of the monastery of Disentis/Switzerland. Usually after a short escape they were brought back rather inconveniently.

After considering all arguments the journey of Rathgeber was neither educational nor a genius journey nor an escape out of the monastery. In the instructions of Opus IV Rathgeber already reacted on the criticism raised on his compositional efforts. However, his basic answer was a public relations tour. All sources found so far agree in principle that Rathgeber gave recitals of his compositions and advertised for his compositional style.

The following map shows the itinerary reconstructed of Rathgeber's dedicatory lines and further

archival notes.

{mosmap

kml='http://www.rathgeber-gesellschaft.de/images/test.kml|kmlsbwidth='2'|mapType='Terrain'|showMaptype='1'}